

CITY OF GREENFIELD

# DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

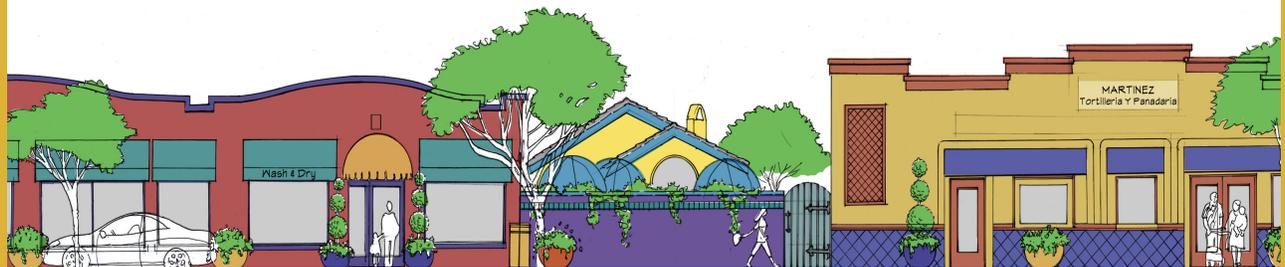
October 2001

Bellinger Foster Steinmetz  
*Landscape Architecture*

■  
The Paul Davis Partnership

■  
S. Muñoz & Associates

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*And special thanks to the Greenfield Downtown Association.*

# INTRODUCTION

Greenfield is a unique, agriculturally-based community with a rich diversity of cultures and traditions. The *Greenfield Downtown Vision*, prepared in 2000, was the first step in developing a vision for downtown Greenfield based on the community's rich history.

Some of the implementation recommendations in the *Vision* report include the following:

1. Initiate a Downtown Business Association or other advocacy group to monitor and promote the Downtown.
2. Develop design guidelines for private improvements and development.
3. Develop a streetscape plan for public improvements.
4. Implement a facade and signage improvement program with grants and/or loans.

These actions are all interrelated in the effort to create a cohesive downtown combining public and private improvements. They also reinforce a partnership between the City and private business and property owners.

As an integral part of the downtown improvement strategy, these guidelines provide a proactive means of encouraging development that is consistent with the Downtown Vision.

1. Developers and property owners can use the guidelines to better understand the potential for development consistent with the community's vision for downtown, prior to implementing new buildings or renovation projects.
2. The City's Planning and Building Inspection Department and Planning Commission can use the guidelines as a consistent framework for reviewing future projects.

3. The guidelines will provide the City a basis for providing financial incentives to encourage business and property owners to comply with design or building requirements as part of an area-wide commercial facade program.

#### **DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS**

No new design review process or commission is proposed as a part of the design guidelines. The current appeals process would remain in place. Existing uses that are not in conformance with the guidelines would be allowed to remain until there is a change in use, or building remodeling/renovation is undertaken.

#### **GUIDELINES AREA**

The Downtown Design Guidelines apply to all parcels within the C-1 and C-2 zoning districts. This includes parcels along El Camino Real between Apple Avenue and Elm Ave. In addition, the guidelines apply to commercially zoned parcels on Oak Avenue between Eighth Street and Ninth Street.

While El Camino Real between Walnut Avenue and Apple Avenue is considered part of the downtown, development patterns in this area are different than the downtown core. Specific recommendations are included for this area at the end of the guidelines.

# DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## Building Siting & Massing

- All buildings shall be constructed on the El Camino Real property line. Variances can be considered for front yard uses such as outdoor seating for cafes and restaurants, or for landscape features such as raised planters, arbors and trellises, etc., which complement the building facade.
- Parking, if required, should be provided to the rear of the building with access from the service alley.
- Buildings sited on a corner shall have no front yard or side yard set backs except for variances, as noted above.
- Building setbacks from side yard property lines are discouraged unless necessary for access to parking, for utilities, and/or pedestrian access.
- Street trees are required at approximately 35' on center. Street tree placement shall take into account driveways, building entrances, signage, street lights, and spacing along entire block. Tree species shall comply with the Downtown Streetscape Plan.
- One and two story buildings are permitted. Mixed use projects are encouraged for two story buildings.



*Example of building with setback for courtyard space, but walls maintain "zero setback" character.*



*This courtyard feels like a storefront even though the building entrance is set back.*



*Side street frontages should also have a zero setback.*



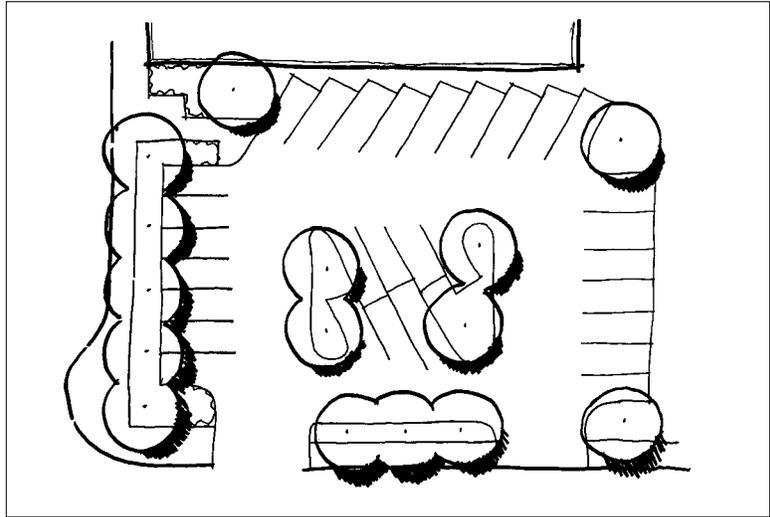
*Small landscape setbacks are permitted if they enhance the building's architecture.*



*Setbacks may be permitted for courtyards.*

## Parking

- Shared parking lots between adjacent businesses are encouraged.
- Parking lots of 20 or more spaces require landscaped islands and a minimum of 1 tree per every eight spaces.



- In areas where existing parking is between the building and El Camino Real, encourage use of planting and/or low walls to screen parking.



## Signage

Building signs can be attached or painted onto the face of the facade:

- Signs can be painted on facade elements or can be carved into, painted on, or constructed of wood, plastic, or metal materials with a maximum depth of 12" and attached directly to the facade.
- No internally illuminated signs are permitted; external illumination is permitted.
- Pole signs are not permitted.  
Fin signs are attached and suspended perpendicular to the building facade and are encouraged:
- Design and locate fin signs to be compatible with the building facade and store entrances. Fin signs can be of unique shapes that reflect the business's products or services.
- Do not locate fin signs on upper building stories unless clear historical evidence of their use exists. Locate fin signs over sidewalks and not the roadway area.
- Mount fin business signs perpendicular to the facade of the building, and at least 8 feet above the sidewalk. The outside edge must be at least 2 feet from the curb line, and no more than 4 feet from the face of the building.
- Mounting hardware should be an attractive and integral part of the sign design.

## Window Signs

- Window signs should be limited to 25% coverage of the window area, including temporary and "sale" signs. Seasonal window displays and seasonal lighting may exceed this coverage for a maximum of sixty days. Internally illuminated flashing signs in windows are also prohibited.
- Sign lighting, if any, should utilize spotlighting or halo lighting. Exposed neon may be considered if architecturally compatible.



*Signage can also be placed on the vertical face of awnings.*



*Fin sign placed at entrance area. Note the attractive mounting hardware.*



*Example of simple painted sign placed in sign band area.*



*Fin signs add color and visual interest. Note how the sign reflects the product being sold.*



*Carved wood sign with spot lighting.*



*Illuminated individual letters. Note also the clutter-free windows invite potential customers.*



*Simple sign in sign band area with spot lighting.*

## Site Features

- New development shall be required to install streetscape elements along El Camino Real and side street frontages consistent with the Streetscape Plan. Streetscape elements may include special paving, materials, benches, bicycle racks, news racks, and other site furnishings.
- Trash dumpsters and cans are encouraged to be located at the alley and shall be screened from view from El Camino Real and side streets. They shall be placed in common collection areas with screening walls and gates.



*Attractive split-faced block enclosure with wood gate.*



*Simple enclosure with painted walls and wood gates.*

- Exterior vending machines are prohibited along El Camino Real (except for newspaper racks), unless they are located in building recesses that are architecturally suitable for this purpose.

## ARCHITECTURAL COMPONENTS

Architectural guidelines are intended to encourage compatibility with adjacent buildings and reflect the overall character and scale of downtown. All building facades should have a rhythm and balance of design elements that are inviting to pedestrians and work together as an overall composition. Overall facade widths should be limited to 30' without a change of plane (provided by columns, window bays, or other architectural features) to divide larger buildings into smaller scale elements that relate to the scale of existing buildings.



*This building uses columns, windows and awnings to break a longer facade into narrower "storefront" widths.*



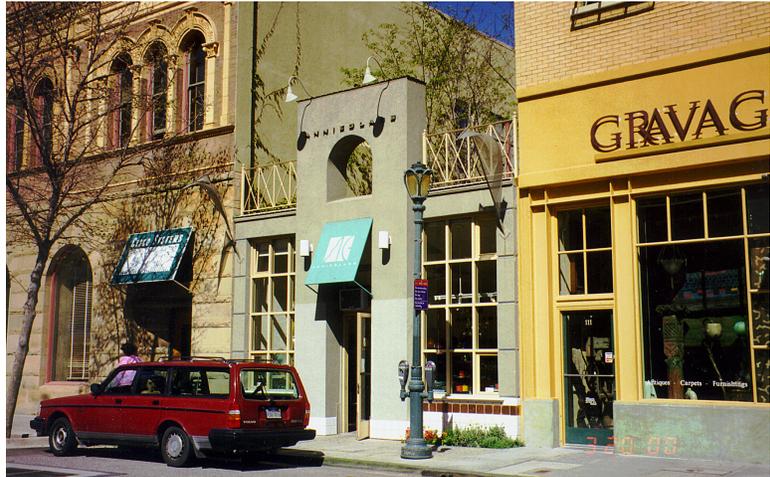
*The scale of this large building is broken by changes in plane, use of awnings and definitions of the entrance area.*



*These facades complement each other even though each one is unique in its signage, color, and architectural detailing.*



*Examples of contemporary building that maintains pedestrian scale through breaks in facade treatment.*



*Example of a contemporary building using traditional downtown architectural elements and composition.*

## Facade Components

**Windows/Fenestration** The storefront windows should consist of a majority of the first floor frontage. Materials are strongly encouraged to be wood with true divided glass if panes are used. Aluminum or vinyl windows are acceptable but should be styles with wider frames and sash profiles to approximate wood proportions. Transom windows above storefront doors and windows are encouraged.



*Windows should create the majority of first floor frontage.*



*Clean, unpainted transom windows are encouraged.*

Upper floor windows are differentiated from the first floor in terms of size, proportion and rhythm. However, they are organized in relationship to first floor elements.



*Second floor windows are generally smaller than first floor windows, but are organized to complement the first floor.*

**Base** An appropriately scaled base under the storefront windows (maximum 3' high) is required and should utilize materials that are durable and relate to the facade design. The base can also be used as a design feature by utilizing tiles, patterned stucco or painted patterns.



*Example of painted base and column.*



*Painted wood base.*



*Tile base.*



*Tile base.*

**Sign Area** Single story buildings may have a sign band located above the store front area, or signage should be integrated into the design of the facade, taking on characteristics of the scale, lines and features of the facade.

For two story buildings a horizontal transition element should be utilized between the first floor and upper stories. Typically, this is a location for signage, canopies or awnings. The detail should break the plane of the wall surfaces and create a frame for the first floor storefront design.

**Upper Floors** Upper floors shall be differentiated from the storefront through the use of greater percentage of wall surfaces, changes in fenestration design and may include a minor change in siding materials.



*Sign band, awning and architectural detailing differentiate first and second floors.*

**Pediment/Cornice** The “top” of the facade provides a visual “cap” and a purposeful termination to the design. Parapets, cornice elements or sloped roofs provide detail on the upper most edge of the facade. Varied vertical parapet/cornice shapes and heights are encouraged.



*Simple "cap" treatment provides a top to the building facade.*



*Sloped roof and ornamentation provide cap to building.*

**Details/Ornamentation** Downtown building facades are detailed to create variety within an organized rhythm and composition. Detailing provides unique features that can reinforce structural elements, signage, fenestration, corners and cornices/parapets. They provide for the interplay of shade and shadow that makes each building unique and creates interest for pedestrians.



*Ornate detailing of historic downtown building.*

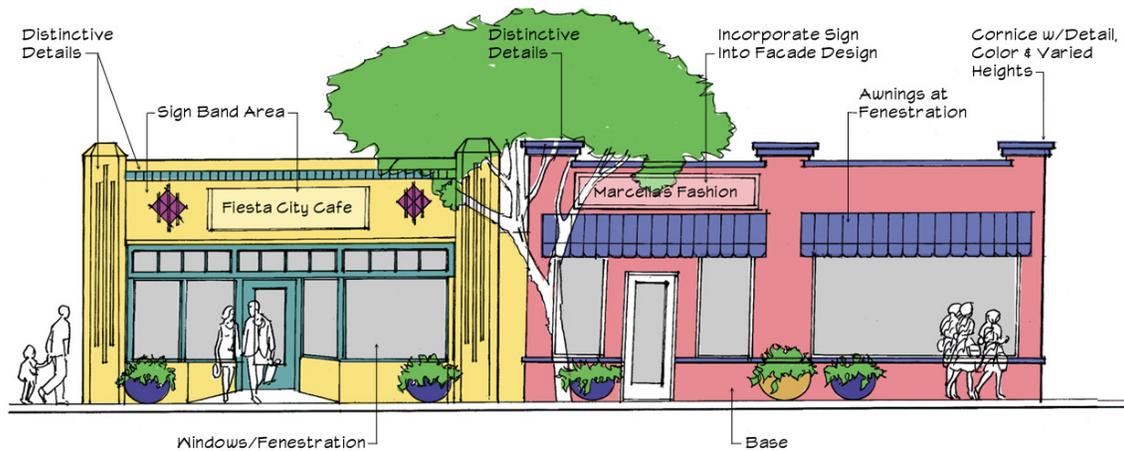
**Awnings** It's important that awnings are integrated into the design to support the proportion, rhythm, scale and architectural style of other facade elements. It is preferred that awnings relate



*Awnings complement the window and door layout.*

directly to fenestration layouts, between and not covering vertical structural elements. Continuous awnings along entire storefronts are discouraged.

**Materials** Downtowns are typically stucco, painted wood, brick or stone veneer. Granite, marble, steel, concrete and contemporary glass curtain walls are not allowed for the general exterior wall surfaces, although they may be considered for architectural detailing and base material if compatible with the overall building design.



**Colors** The use of vivid and saturated color combinations is encouraged to brighten and enhance properties and buildings on El Camino Real. While rich, saturated colors with bright trim accents are encouraged, reflective colors, fluorescent or luminous colors, or colors that contain phosphorescent substance are prohibited.

The context of the entire block should be considered when evaluating proposed facade and color ranges. Combinations of color on a single building which create a discordant effect with other colors used on the block should be avoided.

White, tan, beige or grey are discouraged unless bright accent colors are used for trim, signage, awnings, railing, flower boxes, tile or other such embellishment, or if such "neutral" colors complement the color composition of the entire block, as noted above. Accent colors should harmonize with adjacent buildings and other buildings on the block.

Larger buildings should incorporate multiple color schemes to help reduce the perception of overall building mass and encourage a sense of rhythm along the street.

Color palettes and other recommended facade improvements are shown on the attached "before/after" illustration for one block of El Camino Real. Other color palettes may be used, provided that they are consistent with these guidelines and are complementary to the overall block composition. A paint sample (minimum 2' square of wall surfaces and 2 lineal feet of trim or accents) shall be painted on the actual building for approval prior to complete painting.

**Murals** Murals and other colorful accents should be considered along the backs and sides of buildings where appropriate, to enhance rear entrances and to add visual interest.



**Mechanical Screening** Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be screened by architectural elements.



*200 Block before/after facade illustrations.*

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
EL CAMINO REAL FROM  
WALNUT TO APPLE**

This area serves as a gateway and transition into the downtown. As such, consideration should be given to ensure consistency with the Downtown Vision.

**Building Siting & Parking**

- A minimum landscape setback of 10' is recommended from the back of the sidewalk.
- Driveways are permitted in the setback, but not parking.
- If parking is located between the setback and the building, it should be screened by trees, shrubs, and/or low walls.
- Two story maximum building heights are permitted.
- Shared parking lots between adjacent parcels is encouraged.
- Parking lots of 20 or more spaces require landscaped islands and a minimum of one tree for every eight spaces.
- Placing the building at the landscape setback is encouraged, especially at intersections where parking access can be reached from side streets.

**Site Features**

- Trash dumpsters and cans shall be screened from view from El Camino Real and side streets. They shall be placed in common collection areas with block walls or other suitable enclosures.
- Additional landscape areas are encouraged to reduce the mass of paving adjacent to El Camino real and site streets.
- Bicycle parking facilities are strongly encouraged.
- All landscape areas shall include an automatic irrigation system.

**Signage**

- Monument signs are encouraged within the landscape setback but cannot be more than 6' in height. Pole signs are strongly discouraged.
- Individual business signage should be placed in the area defined for signage by the building architecture and relate to the main entrance.
- Internally illuminated cabinet signs are discouraged.