

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION





# 5 Implementation

This chapter describes the different actions or measures that the City may pursue to implement the Master Plan. This chapter describes the recommended redevelopment process for the Opportunity Hill area, implementation priorities and strategies, and potential financing tools for the project, based on the recommended actions described in Chapter 4, “Strategy for Downtown Development.”

## 5.1 Redevelopment Proposal Process

The *Opportunity Hill Master Plan and Design Guidelines* represents the first step in the revitalization of the Opportunity Hill area. The Master Plan sets forth a set of actions that serve as a focus for continued efforts toward downtown revitalization. It also provides a framework for priority actions and future implementation efforts. As each priority action item is implemented, the Agency can move forward to review additional opportunity sites and steps to advance its downtown revitalization efforts. A key implementation step that the Agency should consider is determining the best methods to solicit development proposals from qualified parties or entities to develop the area in different phases by various developers. This process may involve the Agency initiating negotiations with individual developers or conducting an RFP/RFQ process as needed.

### Implementation Priorities

1. Develop opportunity sites through solicitation of development proposals.
2. Initiate General Plan amendments and zoning changes to implement the land uses and design guidelines recommended in this Master Plan.
3. Complete the infrastructure system plans and improvements to serve the build-out of the Opportunity Hill area.
4. Amend the downtown parking zoning ordinances to:
  - expand the downtown parking district that includes the Opportunity Hill area,
  - reduce the number of podium parking spaces required for small residential units between 650 and 1,050 square feet, and
  - allow on-street parking to count toward commercial parking requirements.
5. Work with the owners of the adjacent opportunity sites in the downtown area to develop those sites, including:
  - the proposed mixed-use project at Wilson and Main Streets,
  - the proposed office project at Mason and Wilson Streets, and
  - the site located at McClellan and School Streets owned by the Vacaville School District.

### Continued Revitalization Efforts

As part of the ongoing implementation process, the City should update its downtown revitalization strategies and continue to review and implement priority actions over time. The *Opportunity Hill Master Plan and Design Guidelines* is one part of an overall downtown revitalization effort. To help ensure that the community's vision is achieved, the following guiding principles should be considered.

- **Build on Strengths**

Downtown Vacaville has a number of assets and strengths: its historic character, its civic and cultural functions, Andrews Park and Ulatis Creek, unique stores, and entertainment venues and restaurants that make it a destination. New projects and programs should continue to support and build on these existing strengths and the role of the downtown area in the community.

- **Concentrate on High-Priority Actions**

Not all actions and improvement projects are equal. Given limited resources—staff time, financing funds, and community acceptance to implement projects—the City should identify and concentrate efforts on a limited number of priority projects, such as changes to the legal framework and strategies to address future parking demands. Priority projects should be “doable” with available funding sources and contribute to the overall success of downtown Vacaville. Identify high-priority actions given limited resources.

- **Develop a Realistic Timeframe**

Not all action steps identified in this Master Plan can (or should) be undertaken immediately. The five highest priority actions, identified as implementation priorities above, offer a guide for staging revitalization efforts over time.

- **Identify Roles and Responsibilities**

The dedication, commitment, and accountability provided by lead organizations and staff are key to successful implementation. The Vacaville Housing and Redevelopment Agency and Community Development Department are the key organizations for determining the next action steps. The Downtown Vacaville Business Improvement District and the Vacaville Public Works Department can also play an important role in championing ongoing revitalization efforts and actions.

- **Establish Measurable Performance Indicators**

To determine the success of each action, it is necessary to create measurable performance indicators. These indicators provide the community and City Council with objective measures on the progress of each project or program as it is completed. Easily measurable outcomes help create realistic goals and objectives.

- **Monitor and Evaluate Ongoing Progress and Set New Priority Actions**

As high-priority projects and programs for the Opportunity Hill area are completed, the City should reassess its downtown revitalization strategies and identify new high-priority projects. This ongoing process of setting priorities and implementing new actions will help the community achieve its vision for the downtown area.

## 5.2 Implementation Financing Tools

Potential funding sources are key components for the implementation of a successful Master Plan. Some potential financial resources explored were determined not to be viable alternatives for the City of Vacaville such as Project Area Development Impact Fees and Quimby Act Park Fees. Other local funding sources such as General Funds, the City's Gas Tax funds, and Community Development Block Grant funds have already been committed for other projects.

The following list identifies other potential funding sources that may be available or pursued in implementing the Master Plan:

### **Redevelopment Funds (Tax Increment Financing) and Low Income Set-Aside Funds**

The Opportunity Hill area is within the Vacaville Community Redevelopment Area, managed by the Vacaville Housing and Redevelopment Agency. This redevelopment area will sunset in 2013, so these resources are limited. However, a total of 20% of the tax increment received in a redevelopment area must be spent on the development and conservation of affordable housing and placed into a low-income set-aside fund. This money is to be used to provide for low- and moderate-income housing. Some of the Agency-owned properties in the project area were acquired using the low-income set-aside fund. Purchase prices for Agency-owned properties shall be fair market value in accordance with State Redevelopment Law and other applicable requirements of the funding sources used by the Agency for the acquisition of the sites.

### **Property-Based Business Improvement District**

Property-based business improvement districts (PBIDs) allow local property owners to tax themselves for specific activities clearly detailed in their PBID service plans. PBIDs are self-assessed and self-governed by the affected property owners. A PBID is an enhancement of city services and may not be used to replace services already provided by the City. PBIDs normally become a means to improve business conditions by acting as a collective marketing and maintenance district, although they can support capital improvements as well. A PBID can earmark monies for capital improvements consistent with the district's adopted management plan. (The formation of a PBID is contingent on interest among property owners in paying for the physical improvements and service improvements envisioned.) Normally, forming a PBID can take anywhere from one to two years.

### **Business Improvement District**

A business improvement district (BID) is similar to a PBID; however, rather than assessing property owners, it assesses the owners of businesses located within the district. The DVBID was formed in 1996 and represents approximately 550+ business owners located in the Downtown Vacaville area that also includes the Opportunity Hill area. Since its formation the DVBID has been active in enhancing, promoting, and preserving Downtown Vacaville by representing the issues affecting its members, promoting the downtown and various special events, helping to facilitate business retention and development, and continuing to work with the City to enhance the Downtown environment.

*Improvement programs typically funded by a BID can include parking district, streetscape improvements and maintenance, public events coordination, business retention and development, and joint marketing efforts.*

### Special Assessment District

Special assessment districts can pay for both capital facilities and city services, including the operation and maintenance of public facilities within a district. The formation of a special assessment district requires a majority vote from property owners within the special assessment area, with their vote weighted based on their proportionate share of the total annual assessment. The majority of special assessment districts are formed within planned greenfield developments and not within existing neighborhoods. This is partially because of state constitutional requirements imposed in the late-1990s by Proposition 218, which mandates public notification of property owners, conformance to clear administrative and reporting requirements, and a majority vote of property owners, weighted by their proportionate share of the assessment. Nevertheless, a special assessment district could support the operation and maintenance of services in the Opportunity Hill area (such as landscape maintenance) in addition to paying for street improvements and infrastructure improvements.

The formation of a special assessment district is contingent on the magnitude of cost to each property owner and the political support for forming a special assessment district. As an example, if property owners were asked to pay half of the estimated \$7.7 million in costs for street work, each property would pay approximately \$40 per linear foot of frontage per year for 10 years, meaning that a property owner with 50 feet of frontage could pay \$2,000 per year for 10 years (assuming a bond rate of 6.5% and bond administrative costs of 2% of the loan with a term of 10 years).

*Possible applications of the special-assessment-district include a parking district, or special assessment districts for streetscape improvements and maintenance or infrastructure improvements.*

### Mello-Roos Community Facilities District

Mello-Roos districts are similar to special assessment districts except that they must be approved by a two-thirds majority of noticed voters (*not* proportionate to their assessment). Mello-Roos districts are not special assessments, but a special tax used to pay for public facilities and/or services. Many practitioners feel that the Mello-Roos proceedings provide more flexibility in allocating district costs than special assessment districts.

The City currently has a Community Facilities District (CFD) for infill development for the purpose of funding ongoing police and fire services. Although not all small, infill projects are required to participate in this CFD, the recommended higher-density development in the Opportunity Hill area may be required to annex into this CFD during the development review process.

*Possible applications of the Mello-Roos district include parking district improvements, streetscape improvements, infrastructure improvements, and operations and maintenance.*

### Park Impact Fees

The City charges a park impact fee to new development. These funds must be spent within the planning area of the proposed development. Through a park impact fee, new development would help pay to acquire and build planned park space within the project area.

*Possible applications of Quimby Act fees include acquisition of parks or public open space, park development, and/or improvements.*

## Regional, State, and Federal Funding Sources

The City may have the opportunity to pursue federal, state, and regional funding sources to fund improvements detailed in this Master Plan. Federal funds described are distributed through the State Transportation Improvement Program and through the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC's) Regional Transportation Improvement Program. The Bay Area will receive an injection of transportation-related funds generated from Proposition 1A and 1B bonds. These funds will augment existing transportation-related improvement programs, focused primarily on capital improvements related to roadways and public transportation.

### Metropolitan Transportation Commission

Through federal funding programs, the MTC has developed regional funding programs to promote smart growth and improve air quality. The programs available are described below.

#### Transportation Development Act

The Transportation Development Act provides two funding sources for public transportation—the Local Transportation Fund and the State Transit Assistance fund. Locally, these funds are distributed to the MTC. Transportation Development Act funds distributed to the MTC can be used for improvements along public-transportation corridors. Furthermore, a small portion of the Local Transportation Fund (2%) is directed toward pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

*Possible applications of Transportation Development Act funds include planning and engineering, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian improvements.*

#### Regional Transportation Improvement Program

The Regional Transportation Improvement Program is the regional plan to fund transportation improvements. It identifies a number of federal and state transportation programs that will be used in transportation capital improvement projects. These include federal distributions such as those from the Transportation Enhancement Activities Program, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, and the Regional Surface Transportation Program.

*Possible applications of Regional Transportation Improvement Program funds include planning and engineering, capital financing, operation and maintenance of streetscape improvements, and bicycle lane and bicycle path improvements in the downtown area.*

#### Recreation Trails Program

The California Department of Parks and Recreation administers the Recreation Trails Program, which finances trail improvements in cities and counties. Cities must match at least 12% of the planned capital improvement costs. This is a competitive program with a small annual budget of approximately \$5 million statewide.

*Possible applications of Recreation Trails Program funds include enhancements to the Ulatis Creekwalk and improvements to bikeways and pedestrian trails in the downtown area.*

### **Livable Communities Initiative**

The Livable Communities Initiative provides funding for planning activities and capital improvements that facilitate public transportation ridership and alternative means of transportation. Eligible capital activities or capital project enhancements of demonstration projects include property acquisition, restoration or demolition of existing structures, site preparation, utilities, building foundations, walkways, and open spaces that are physically and functionally related to mass transportation facilities. The Initiative can also be used for site design improvements including sidewalks, aerial walkways, and bus access. The Federal Transportation Administration administers this program.

*Possible applications of Livable Communities Initiative funds include planning and engineering, capital financing, operation and maintenance of streetscape improvements, infrastructure improvements, transit-oriented developments in the downtown area, and projects related to improving bus routes and bus connections downtown.*

### **California Housing and Community Development Sources**

The California Department of Housing and Community Development manages a number of housing and community development activities that support redevelopment and affordable housing in urban infill areas. The following are programs that Vacaville could access to implement the Master Plan.

#### **The Multi-family Housing Program**

The Multi-family Housing Program provides deferred loans for acquisition, rehabilitation, and new construction of housing, and the conversion of nonresidential structures to rental housing.

*Possible applications of this program include infrastructure improvements, transit-oriented development, affordable housing, and conversion of underutilized commercial and industrial buildings to residential uses.*

#### **The Brownfield Economic Development Incentive**

The Brownfield Economic Development Incentive (BEDI) is a competitive grant program to stimulate and promote economic and community development. BEDI assists cities with the redevelopment of abandoned, idle, and underused industrial and commercial facilities where expansion and redevelopment is hindered by real or potential environmental contamination.

*Possible applications of this program include purchasing property, infrastructure improvement, and environmental remediation, and business/development financing that spur economic benefits. BEDI projects must increase the economic opportunity for persons of low-and moderate-income or stimulate and retain businesses and jobs that lead to economic revitalization.*

**Vacaville's Downtown Loan Program**

Vacaville's Downtown Loan Program may be a potential funding source for development in the Opportunity Hill area. The Downtown Loan Program is designed to stimulate building improvements and seismic upgrades for commercial properties in the Downtown Economic Development area. The current program consists of Design Assistance Grants, Façade Loans, and Building Loans. An analysis of this program is currently underway and may be modified.

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## 6. DESIGN GUIDELINES





## 6 Design Guidelines

The purpose of these design guidelines is to direct the quality and character of future development. The guidelines are intended to ensure that new developments in the Opportunity Hill area are consistent with the historic themes and architecture of Downtown Vacaville and are consistent with the City's goals and objectives for downtown revitalization and the vision and goals of this Master Plan. Conformance with the design guidelines will ensure that new development projects within the Opportunity Hill area enhance the downtown environment and establish quality standards for site planning, architecture, and landscape design.

The design guidelines describe and illustrate approaches to site, building, and landscape design that are appropriate for the Opportunity Hill area. The design guidelines provide an explanation for each design element and standards that provide a framework for project review. The design guidelines are required actions. However, exceptions to the design guidelines may be permitted through the City's Design Review Process so long as the intent of the guideline is upheld. All developments within the Opportunity Hill area shall be subject to the City's Design Review Process and the approval of the Director of Community Development.

### 6.1 Site Design

This section of the Design Guidelines provides direction for the site design of new development or renovation of existing structures. The design of the streetscape should address the relationship between buildings and the public realm by providing amenities such as street trees, street furniture, landscaping, and paving. These elements contribute to a more pleasant and pedestrian-friendly downtown environment and support public activity and interaction.

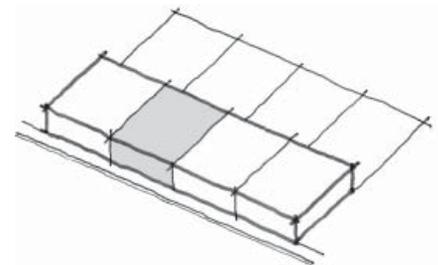
#### Building Orientation

Building orientation is an essential element of site design that helps to define pedestrian access and the relationship to the street. Buildings in the historic downtown area are oriented to create a continuous street wall along the major pedestrian streets—Main Street, Merchant Street, Parker Street, Mason Street, and Dobbins Avenue, with parking located behind the buildings. Historic buildings are rectangular, approximately 20–40 feet wide, and placed perpendicular to the front property lines. Newer, contemporary buildings have larger office floor plates and are typically oriented east-west on the lots. Contemporary building patterns with deeper setbacks and parking located in front of the buildings shall be avoided. New buildings in the Opportunity Hill area should be oriented to access and use solar energy, to the extent possible, except when this creates issues of neighborhood incompatibility with the development pattern in the historic downtown district.

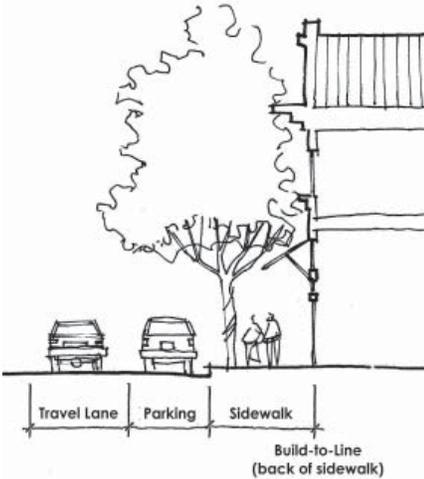
#### Guidelines

The guidelines for building orientation are as follows:

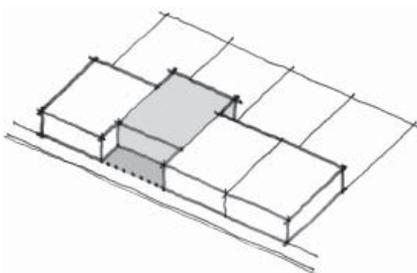
- The orientation of buildings shall follow traditional and historic development patterns of downtown Vacaville, in which buildings are parallel to lot lines and the street.
- Parking areas shall be easily accessed and located to the side or rear of the buildings.



*Traditional development pattern— buildings are oriented parallel to lot lines and form a continuous street wall along the main street*



*Buildings located along a build-to-line create a well-defined building edge*



*A building set back from the build-to-line allows for public uses such as outdoor dining*

- Primary building entries shall be oriented to the major pedestrian-oriented streets—Main Street, School Street, McClellan Street, Wilson Street, and Catherine Street.
- Secondary building entries shall be oriented to parking or service areas.

### Building Setbacks and Build-To-Lines

A build-to-line is generally used in urban or downtown settings to define locations where the building façade should be located within a certain distance of the public right-of-way. The street wall may be varied to create usable outdoor public space such as entries, outdoor dining areas, sidewalk seating, public plazas, and other amenities in the public realm. The design intent of setbacks and build-to-lines in the context of the Opportunity Hill area is to ensure that buildings are pulled forward toward the sidewalk and street to create a well-defined building edge or street, consistent with the historic development pattern of downtown Vacaville. The building setback line and sidewalks widths should be of sufficient width to support activity between the building and the edge of the sidewalk and the street.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for building setbacks and build-to-lines are as follows:

- Buildings shall be sited to the front of the property line and behind the sidewalk in the downtown area, to the extent feasible (see Figure 6-1, “Build-to-line Diagram” for locations where build-to-lines shall be required).
- Façades that front onto a public street shall be built parallel to the public right-of-way.
- Where build-to-lines are required, a portion of the front setback may be increased by as much as 15 feet, if the additional setback is used as public space for outdoor dining, or as a courtyard or entry area for public access. A minimum of 60% of the front façade of each building shall be constructed up to the front setback.
- Side yards shall be of sufficient width to create usable space between buildings. Small, narrow side yards between buildings without a well-defined purpose shall be avoided.
- Buildings on street corners shall be set back to create corner entries.
- Build-to-lines for residential buildings shall be set back from the back of the sidewalks a maximum of 10 feet to accommodate entry stoops and porches. Front setbacks for residential façades shall be landscaped between the entry stoops and porches.
- Overhangs, awnings, bay windows, and upper floor shall not project more than three feet over the sidewalk and shall provide a minimum height clearance of 8 feet from the top of the sidewalk.



Figure 6-1: Build-To-Line Diagram

## Public and Private Open Space



Open space in the Opportunity Hill area includes public open space such as the Ulatis Creekwalk and Town Square and private open space such as planters, landscaped yards, and common open space in private development projects. Common open space may include courtyards, play areas, pools, recreation facilities, tennis courts, spas, and hot tubs. A variety of open space is encouraged in the Opportunity Hill area to encourage outdoor activity and connections to the parks and open spaces system provided in the downtown area.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for public and private open space are as follows:

- Open space areas shall be designed to complement the existing site, built, or natural environment.
- Existing natural features such as mature trees shall be maintained, whenever feasible.
- Public open spaces shall connect to the on-site pedestrian circulation system, sidewalks and/or trails, to provide maximum accessibility to all residents and users.
- Shops or residences shall be sited to provide visual surveillance of parks and open spaces for the safety and security of residents and users.
- To the extent possible, open spaces shall be designed to take advantage of solar orientation, shade in the summer months, and natural breezes.
- Common open space amenities shall be designed to serve the anticipated residents (such as play areas for families with children, less parking and more accessible walking paths for senior housing, etc.).
- Private open spaces (porches, patios, stoops, balconies, and/or decks) shall be designed at a reasonable size to provide a functional and comfortable outdoor living environment.



*Andrews Park and the Ulatis Creekwalk are public open space amenities that bring nature into the downtown area*

## 6.2 Streetscape Design

This section of the design guidelines provides direction on streetscape design. Components of streetscape design include streets and paths; street trees; pedestrian street furniture; plazas, parks, and outdoor gathering spaces; parking; signage and graphics; building and site lighting; and service areas and utilities.

### Landscaping

Landscaping helps foster an attractive and comfortable downtown environment. Well-designed landscaping in the downtown area also helps to reinforce the historic character of the public realm, provide for safety and security of residents with “eyes on the street,” improve air quality, and help reduce heat gain on paved surfaces.

Landscaping of the public realm in the Opportunity Hill area consists of street trees, flowers and shrubs in parking islands and the Town Square Plaza, Andrews Park, and the extension of Ulatis Creekwalk.

The landscaping of private and semi-private areas of projects in the Opportunity Hill area is also critical in maintaining an attractive and functional environment for downtown users. Landscaping in yards, patios, private plazas, and courtyards within new projects should be well designed with high-quality materials and details. Well-maintained landscaping within each site helps preserve property values and contributes to the character and quality of life for residents and downtown users.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for landscaping are as follows:

- Plant species shall be selected that are suitable to the Vacaville climate and complement the existing plant palette established for the Vacaville Downtown Historic District (refer to the “City of Vacaville Downtown Street Tree List”).
- Use of low-water and low-maintenance landscaping materials is encouraged.
- Minimize the area of impervious surfaces of pavements, sidewalks, and parking through the use of landscaping, permeable paving materials, and landscaped open space.
- The full growth of landscaping shall be anticipated so that trees and shrubs do not conflict with lighting and roofs.
- Deciduous shade trees and shrubs shall be planted, where appropriate, to shade the west and south sides of buildings and shade paved areas to reduce heat transmission and be consistent with City shading requirements..
- Irrigation controls shall be adequately screened from view, to the satisfaction of the Director of the City’s Community Development Department with landscaping materials or other attractive site materials.



*Landscaping, placed along the public right-of-way, enhance the pedestrian experience along the street*



*The use of low-water, low-maintenance landscaping materials is encouraged*

### Streets and Paths

Streets and paths should be designed to provide efficient circulation through the downtown. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are encouraged to promote walking, bicycling, and bus transit.

#### Guidelines

The guidelines for streets and paths are as follows:

- The street widths of new streets shall be minimized to maintain the pedestrian character in the downtown area. Sidewalks shall conform to the City Standard Downtown Commercial width of 10' for Main and School Streets. Additional concrete patio areas, behind the City rights-of-way, are recommended for outdoor dining opportunities.
- Sidewalks shall be a minimum of five feet on residential streets and eight feet for main pedestrian sidewalks in the downtown area.
- Pedestrian amenities including benches, trash cans, street furniture, and signage shall be placed at regular intervals along sidewalks and paths, where appropriate, without obstructing the minimum required sidewalk widths for handicap accessibility.
- Alleyway connections or paths are encouraged between developments or commercial and high density residential blocks.
- Pedestrian paths and access connections shall be clearly visible in the day and well lit at night.



*Bike rack facilities are encouraged to promote biking in the downtown area*



*This midblock alleyway leads to parking located behind Main Street*



*Street trees soften the building and street edge*



*Street trees evenly spaced frame the street and provide shade and comfort along the street*

### Street Trees

Street trees should be planted on all streets to frame the street, soften the appearance of the commercial streetscape, and provide shade and comfort to pedestrians. Historically, London plane trees were used as street trees downtown to create a large deciduous canopy along the streets. Currently, Flowering Pear, Crape Myrtle, and Liquid Almond trees are also included. School Street uses a formal row of palm trees, spaced evenly down the street, while plazas and public entry areas include ornamental varieties such as pear and crape myrtle varieties. Light poles are often decorated with banners or with flowering plants and vines.

#### Guidelines

The guidelines for shade trees are as follows:

- Street trees shall be London plane trees or conform to the "City of Vacaville Downtown Street Tree List" and spaced no farther than 25 feet on center, and shall be located in a metal-grated tree planter adjacent to the curb, with an area of at least four feet by four feet. Tree grates shall allow adequate area for tree growth.
- Street trees shall be chosen that are easy to maintain, cause minimal or no sidewalk damage, and provide a sufficiently large canopy to shade the sidewalks.
- Street trees must be pruned in accordance with City standards to provide a clear space between the lower branches and sidewalk and to maintain a clear view of building signage, ground floor windows, and doors.
- Street trees species selected shall be water conservative and suitable to the Vacaville climate, in accordance with City standards.

## Plazas, Parks, and Outdoor Gathering Spaces

Plazas and small public gathering places should serve as focal points for development. Opportunities to create small plaza spaces may exist in the Opportunity Hill area by continuing the existing pedestrian plaza along School Street; providing an end cap to School Street on the Depot Street site; on East Main Street near the pedestrian bridge; and at the north end of Wilson Street. These small plaza spaces can help define the eastern edge of downtown Vacaville, serve as visual focal points to the Ulatis Creek spine, and draw visitors to the north-south pedestrian connection on Wilson Street from East Main Street to Mason Street. These outdoor gathering spaces can be easily created by widening the sidewalk, placing building entries next to the sidewalk, and extending pedestrian paths along the creek.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for plazas, parks, and outdoor gathering spaces are as follows:

- Parks, plazas, courtyards, and entry plazas shall include landscape elements such as ornamental plants, public art, seating, streetscape furniture, and water features to create a visually interesting, comfortable, and functional outdoor environment for the pedestrian.
- The pattern and texture of ground-paving materials shall fit into the context of the downtown environment. Hardscape materials shall be selected to endure the weather conditions in Vacaville. Use of high-quality paving materials, such as brick, set stone, or interlocking paving materials consistent with existing materials in the downtown area, is recommended.
- The color of the plaza paving materials shall be consistent with those used in the downtown area. The use of red brick colors is appropriate.

### Pedestrian Street Furniture

Street furniture—pedestrian kiosks, benches, transit shelters, newspaper racks, trash cans, and café tables—should be selected and installed to encourage strolling, window shopping, and casual social interaction. Well-designed street furniture enhances the appeal and vitality of the downtown area.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for pedestrian street furniture are as follows:

- Street furniture shall be attractive, functional, easy to maintain, high quality, and vandal resistant.
- Street furniture shall not obstruct sidewalks or access to parking.
- Seating is highly encouraged. A variety of seating alternatives is possible including benches, seat walls, and café tables.
- Street furniture shall be compatible with the quality of selections currently used in the downtown area.
- Flowering pots, landscaping, and colorful banners on lampposts in the historic downtown shall be extended into the Opportunity Hill area to create a festive, downtown commercial atmosphere.
- Public art is encouraged to be incorporated into site and building designs. Public art may include monuments, sculpture, or building design elements attached to building façades. Refer to the City of Vacaville’s public art policy.



*Plazas serve as landscaped outdoor spaces that enhance the ambiance of the downtown*



*Street furniture placed in relationship to the pedestrian path should not block sidewalks or access to parking*



*Public art such as sculptures are encouraged along the Main Street*

## Parking

Parking areas should provide vehicular access without compromising pedestrian accessibility or the character of the public realm on primary public streets in the historic downtown area. Parking in the downtown area needs to be convenient, accessible, safe, screened from street views, and well landscaped to reduce summer heat gain. All parking areas shall be designed in accordance with Chapter 14 of the City's Land Use and Development Code.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for parking are as follows:

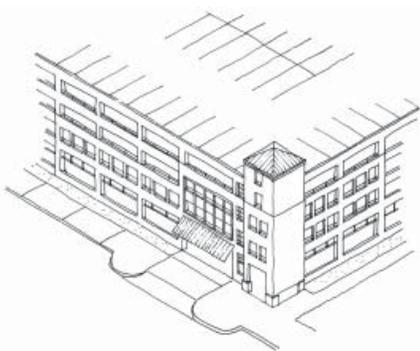
- Large surface-parking lots shall be avoided in favor of several smaller parking lots and on-street parking.
- Parking lots shall be located behind commercial and residential frontages on major pedestrian streets, including Main Street, McClellan Street, Wilson Street, and School Street. Angle parking is encouraged on major pedestrian streets.
- Where parking behind the building is not possible, parking shall be located on an interior lot.
- When feasible and in accordance with city standards, driveways into parking lots shall be located on side streets such as Bush Street, Wilson Street, and Catherine Street. Access to parking on major pedestrian streets shall be minimized.
- Parking lots shall include signage, locations for ingress and egress, and clearly defined pedestrian paths and/or routes.
- Access to buildings from rear or side parking lots or alleys shall be well maintained and kept clear of obstructions.
- Parking lots, driveways, and walkways shall be consolidated with adjacent sites, whenever feasible, to minimize the number of curb cuts and reduce conflicts with pedestrian and automobile circulation.
- Parking structures are encouraged where financially feasible. Public/private partnerships to construct parking structures are encouraged.
- Parking structures located on primary commercial streets shall be designed with retail, office, or other uses at the street level to avoid monotonous blank walls.
- Parking structures shall be designed with architectural features that complement existing commercial, office, and mixed-use buildings in the downtown area.
- All parking structure designs shall include security features that ensure personal safety within the parking structure as well as provide safe access and egress routes to or from the parking structure.
- Entry and exit ramps to parking shall be located midblock or toward service areas rather than facing the primary pedestrian street—Main Street, School Street, or McClellan Street.
- Pedestrian entries to parking structures shall be clearly marked and open onto pedestrian streets and routes.



*This parking court is located on the side of the retail buildings along the main street*



*Pedestrian entries and routes to parking lots or structures should be clearly defined*



*Parking structures should be designed with architectural features that compliment historic buildings in the downtown*

## Signage and Graphics

Signage should be used for information, direction, and wayfinding and should not advertise specific products. Signs should relate in placement and size to other site and building elements. Signage should enhance the character and attractiveness of streets in the downtown area, while minimizing the appearance of clutter.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for signage and graphics are as follows:

- Signage shall be modest in scale and appearance and complement, not overpower, the building structure. Signs shall also not obscure important architectural elements such as windows, cornices, or decorative details.
- The materials and colors of signage shall be compatible with those of the building as well as adjoining buildings.
- Signs shall be professionally designed and fabricated with high-quality materials such as metal, stone, and wood.
- Signs shall be wall mounted, projecting, combined with awnings, or placed on windows consistent with the historic character of downtown Vacaville.
- Multiple signs detract from the building's overall appearance and shall be discouraged.
- A sign program shall be provided for multitenant buildings to coordinate all signs to create a consistent and compatible image.
  - Combined directories located at the building entry for multitenant buildings are encouraged.
  - Individual shop signs on a single storefront or multitenant building shall be designed to relate to each other in size, color, lettering style, and/or building placement.
- All other signage standards shall be established by the City's Sign Ordinance, and the number of signs used shall be consistent with the ordinance.
- Animated, moving, flashing, blinking, reflecting, and revolving signs that detract attention from the buildings and historic character of downtown Vacaville shall not be permitted, in accordance with the City's Sign Ordinance.
- Exposed conduit and tubing are not permitted. All transformers and other equipment shall be concealed.
- Cabinet- and pole-mounted signage is not permitted.



*Signs should be designed to relate to and enhance the character of the building and/or site*



*Multi-tenant building directories such as the above are encouraged*

### Building and Site Lighting

Lighting should be provided on the site and on buildings to improve the safety and security and pedestrian-friendly character of the downtown area during the evening hours. The form, quality of light, and character of the lighting contribute to the attractiveness and distinctiveness of the historic downtown area. The design and placement of lighting shall complement existing lighting and shall be compatible with the character of the area.

#### Guidelines

The guidelines for building and site lighting are as follows:

- Street lighting shall match the existing street light system and conform to the City's decorative street light standards.
- Light fixtures shall be installed on buildings in appropriate locations and shall not obscure major architectural features.
- The material, size, color, design, and brightness of exterior light fixtures shall be considered when selecting a light fixture.
- Lighting shall provide an even illumination level. Flashing or pulsating light fixtures are not permitted.
- Exterior light fixtures shall not cast glare on the public way and adjacent properties.
- Pedestrian-scale lighting fixtures along the sidewalk, at the edge of the property, are encouraged to enhance pedestrian safety and the walkability of the downtown area.
- Sign lighting shall not cause glare or light spillover to other properties.
- Lighting shall conform to the provisions of the *Downtown Vacaville Historic District Design Guidelines*.



*Pedestrian-scale lighting fixtures placed along the sidewalk enhance the pedestrian safety and quality of the downtown*

### Service Areas and Utilities

Areas used for services should be designed to protect nearby areas and the pedestrian streets from unsightly, noisy, or other noxious environments.

#### Guidelines

The guidelines for service areas and utilities are as follows:

- Service areas—loading docks, storage areas, trash bins, and rooftop and ground-mounted mechanical equipment—shall be screened from view from adjoining properties and public rights-of-way to the satisfaction of the Director of the City's Community Development Department.
- Evergreen vines, evergreen shrubs or trees, or decorative walls or fences shall be used to screen mechanical equipment, loading areas, and other service areas.
- Loading areas shall be accessible from side streets or alleys rather than from the front of buildings, where feasible. Such areas shall be functionally separated from parking and pedestrian walkways for safety and shall provide convenient access for delivery trucks, to the satisfaction of the Director of the City's Community Development Department.



*Decorative fencing used to screen the service area*

- Trash receptacles shall be located in the rear of buildings, with alley access for sanitation trucks.
- Roof-mounted satellite dishes and antennas shall be placed as far back from the front roofline as possible and shall be adequately screened from view on public streets, to the satisfaction of the Director of the City's Community Development Department.
- All existing overhead utilities and proposed utilities shall be undergrounded in accordance with the City's Undergrounding ordinance.
- Utility boxes or meters shall be installed on secondary building façades instead of primary building façades.



*Side street designed to provide service area access*

### 6.3 Building Design

The guidelines for building design address the exterior of buildings and their relationship to the surrounding built context. Building styles in historic downtown areas are often various turn-of-the century Victorian, Spanish Colonial, and Tudor styles. However, no matter what the building style may resemble, buildings should complement the community setting and should contribute to historic character and public realm of the downtown area. Figures 6-2 and 6-3 are examples that apply the building design guidelines that follow in this section. These figures illustrate various design features to help describe the intent of the guidelines in ensuring new building designs in the Opportunity Hill area complement the historic architecture in downtown Vacaville.

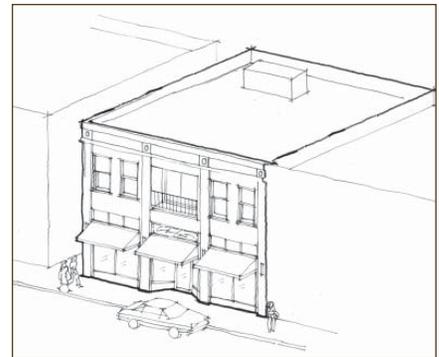
#### Building Height, Massing, and Scale

The size and scale of buildings should be compatible with existing development in the historic downtown area and should ensure a human-scaled environment. To ensure compatibility with existing development in the historic downtown area, new development should appear similar in massing and scale. New buildings and additions to existing buildings should generally fall within the height range of existing buildings along each block. Larger scale buildings containing blank, uninteresting, and unappealing street walls should be avoided. Most commercial buildings in the historic downtown area are one or two stories high with a high floor-to-ceiling measurement (typically 15 feet or more). Building parapets on one-story commercial buildings create the illusion of higher buildings and help to create the sense of street enclosure along the commercial street.

#### Guidelines

The guidelines for building height, massing, and scale are as follows:

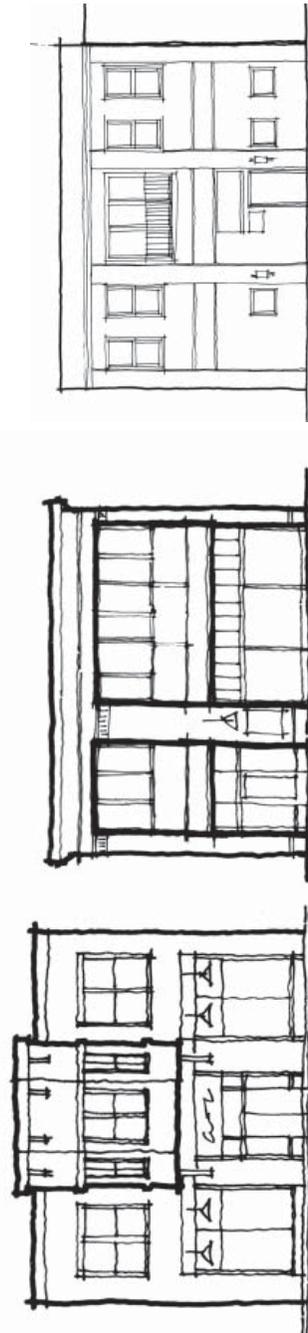
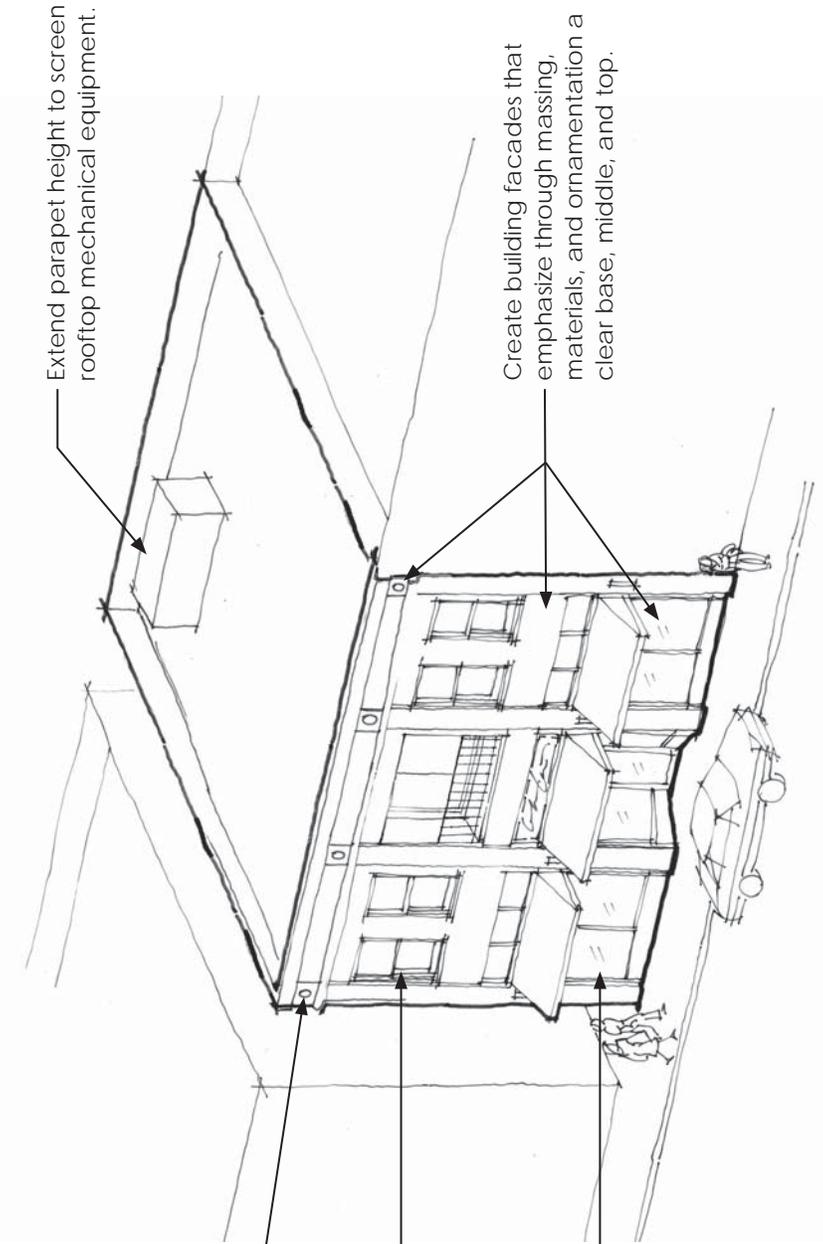
- Larger-than-average buildings on the same block should break up the mass of the structure with articulation of the structure into smaller components to maintain the traditional human scale. Architectural treatments such as building setbacks, cornice lines, parapets, and header and sill details on upper-story windows, as well as bay windows shall be used to break up the massing of building façades.
- Appropriately scaled doors, windows, awnings, and detailing can reduce the appearance of mass.



*New or infill buildings should be designed to be pedestrian friendly and compatible with the character of the historic downtown*



*A variety of architectural features such as articulated entries and window openings break up the building mass along the street*



Rear Elevation

Variations of Front Elevation

Figure 6-2: Building Design Guidelines—Mixed-Use Infill Example

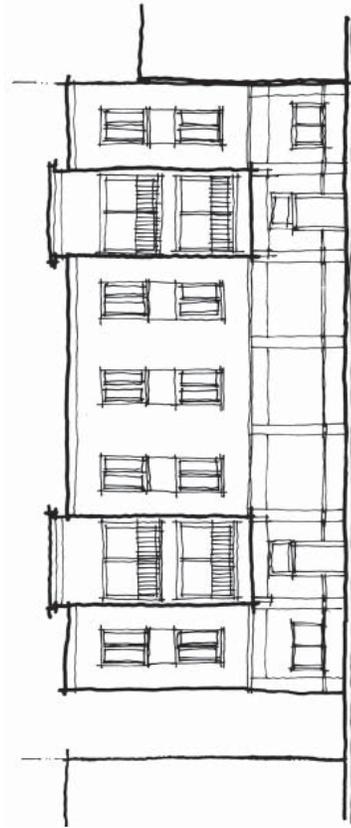
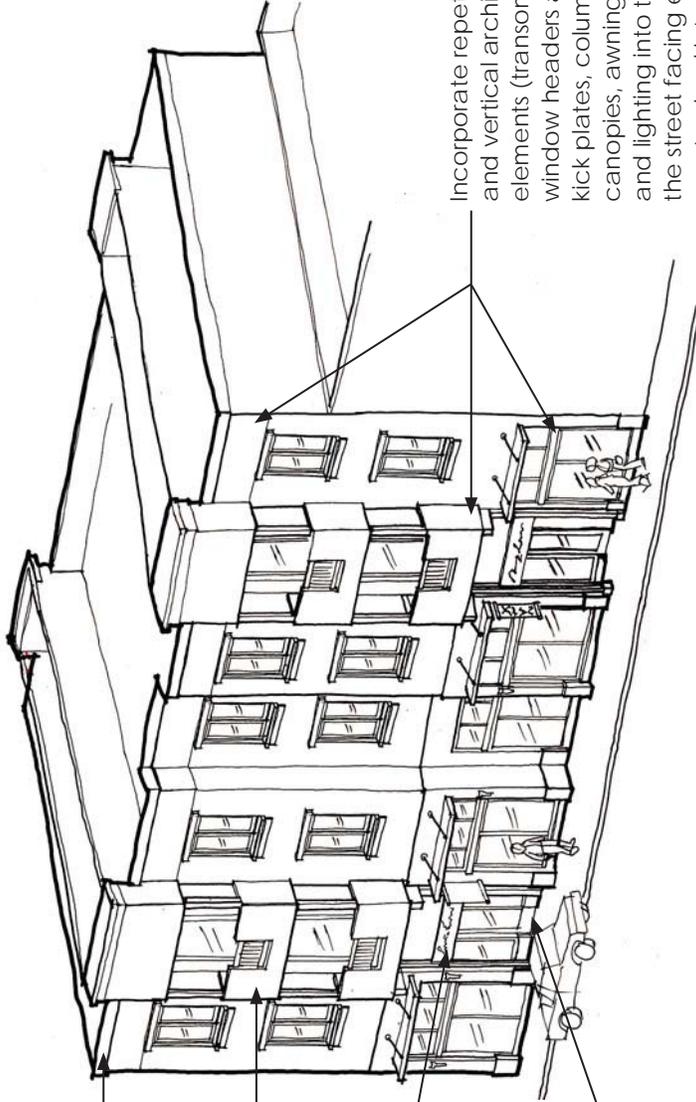
Use high quality building materials commonly found in the Historic District (stone, brick, stucco, and tile) especially at the street level to add to the richness of the pedestrian experience.

Incorporate semi-public spaces such as balconies and patios into the design of the building elevations.

Integrate signs into the design of the building, respecting important architectural features.

Locate a minimum of 60% of the street facing building edge along the property line to allow for public open space such as outdoor dining, courtyards, or distinguish public entryways.

Incorporate repetitive horizontal and vertical architectural elements (transom windows, window headers and sills, kick plates, columns/pilasters, canopies, awnings, balconies, and lighting into the design of the street facing elevations to create visual interest and break up the mass of the building.



Rear Elevation

Figure 6-3: Building Design Guidelines—Mixed-Use Infill Example

- New, higher buildings can reinforce the established building heights along a block by stepping back upper floors that are above the average building height for the street.
- Buildings on corner lots provide an opportunity for the use of building elements that exceed the average height on the block and that serve as a focal point for the block.
- Architectural features such as display windows, pilasters, lattices, and alcoves for product display can provide visual relief to buildings that cannot achieve continuous openings along the street and sidewalk.

### Materials, Finishes, and Textures

Buildings should be constructed with high-quality materials that are durable and enhance the building character, particularly on the ground floor, where people are most likely to come in contact with the building and can easily see and touch the materials.

#### Guidelines

The guidelines for materials, finishes, and textures are as follows:

- Use of materials commonly found in the historic downtown area is encouraged. Stucco, brick, stone, terracotta, and tiles are common in historic downtown Vacaville.
- Durable, solid facing materials shall be used.
- Use of the following materials are not permitted:
  - Vinyl, synthetic wood, grooved plywood, or metal siding;
  - Sprayed on, textured stucco; and
  - Raw, raised grain, or rough sawn wood



*Example of appropriate building materials—brick and steel*

### Color

Color should be used in a way that complements the colors of the surrounding structures, adds to the liveliness and character of the downtown area, and appropriately reflects the downtown area’s historical character.

#### Guidelines

The guidelines for color are as follows:

- Primary building colors shall complement natural materials such as brick, stone, tile, and terracotta. Buildings shall avoid using more intense colors as primary design elements.
- Contrasting accent colors are required for architectural details, awnings, and entrances.
- Colors shall be selected with consideration for the orientation of buildings and historical character of the downtown area. Because of sun exposure, colors on south- and west-facing façades will often appear warmer than the same colors on the north or east sides.
- Fluorescent, neon, and Day-Glo colors are not permitted.



*Building colors complement the natural materials such as brick and stone found on the building façades*

## Façade Rhythm

Building façades create the interface between the building face and the public realm of the street. Historically, commercial districts have consisted of buildings that are one or two stories high and repeat a consistent rhythm along the street. This pattern creates a regular rhythm of smaller, 20- to 40-foot building widths and 30- to 45-foot-high street walls. In larger towns, the downtown building heights may be higher—three to four stories. The pattern and rhythm of architectural elements such as window openings, commercial display windows, frequent building entries, ornamentation, awnings, and canopies also contribute to the historic urban streetscape.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for façade rhythm are as follows:

- Building openings such as windows and doors shall maintain the proportions and spacing of openings on the block. The rhythm of commercial street façades is typically divided into 20- to 40-foot-wide increments.
- Buildings on wider lots shall maintain the rhythm of the front façades by breaking the building's façade into small increments of window displays and entries.
- Horizontal and vertical elements shall be used to articulate a building facade and create a top, middle, and base to give definition to the building and break its elements down to a more human scale. Building proportions used in new construction or additions shall be consistent and compatible with the proportions of buildings in the Historic Main Street District (see figure 6-4 for an illustration of these concepts).
- Doors, windows, floor heights, cornice lines, signage, and awnings shall be appropriately scaled to reduce the mass of buildings experienced by the pedestrian.
- A building façade facing the street shall be lined with windows, entries, and openings that provide indoor and outdoor views to the public rights-of-way and sidewalks.
- Windows, doorways, and storefront entries shall repeat the rhythm of historic buildings in downtown Vacaville.



*Doors, windows, cornice lines, and awnings establish the façade rhythm for the building and the street edge*



Maintain these proportions

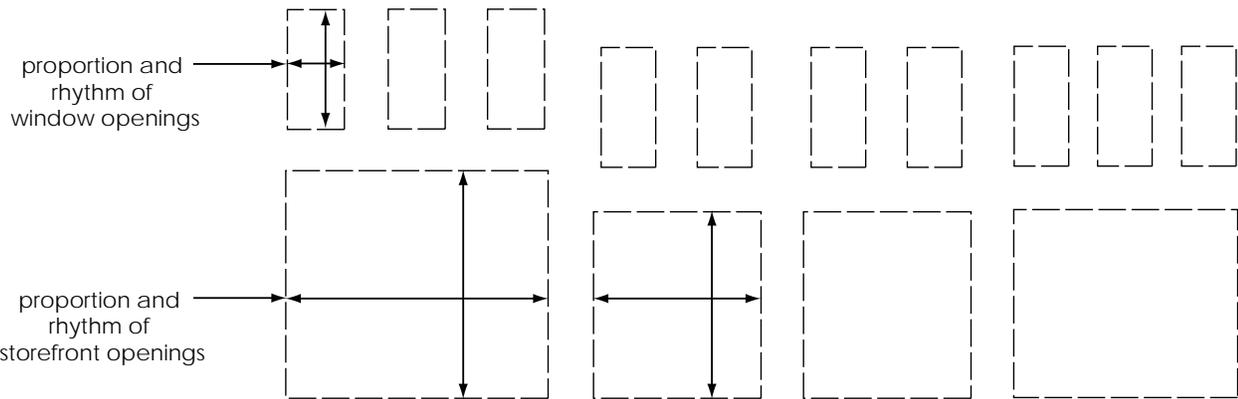


Figure 6-4: Illustration of Facade Rhythm

## Roof Forms and Parapets

Historically, building roofs in downtown Vacaville used flat roofs, or pitched or arched roofs hidden behind a parapet. Parapets are often capped with a cornice and provide space for wall-mounted signs. Residential buildings are generally provided with steep-sloped roof forms and articulated with dormers, parapets, and varying shapes and heights.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for roof forms and parapets are as follows:

- Variation of roof lines and a variety of roof forms, including flat roofs or sloped roof forms, is appropriate in Opportunity Hill area.
- Free form and geometric roof shapes shall not be permitted.
- In general, sloped roofs shall be steeply pitched with multiple shapes and variations. Use of dormers, special corner design elements, and varying roof heights to break down the massing of the roof form is appropriate.
- Roof equipment shall be screened from view on public streets and/or integrated into the roof design.
- Roof materials in view of the public streets shall be of high quality, solid materials such as tiles, metal, and terracotta.

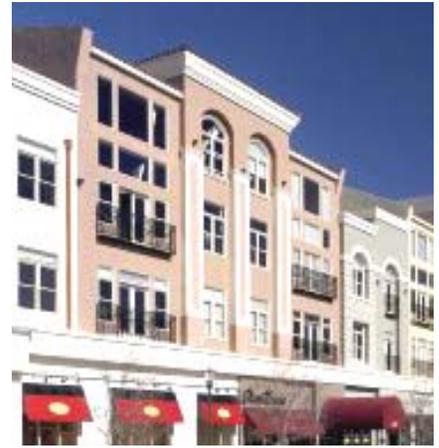
## Windows, Bays, And Storefronts

The placement of windows and doors along a street frontage is one of the best methods of creating visual interest in a building. Storefront windows at the street level can be used to allow pedestrians to see into the structure and improve the visual surveillance of the area outside of the building.

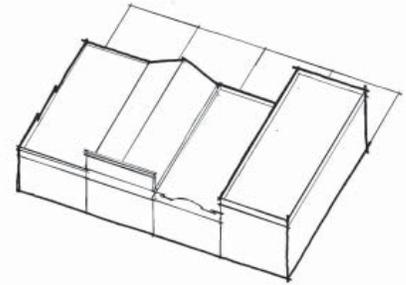
### Guidelines

The guidelines for windows, bays, and storefronts are as follows:

- Windows, entries, and doors shall occupy the wall surface in the ground-floor retail spaces along all major pedestrian streets—Main Street, McClellan Street, and School Street. Retail display windows and entries shall occupy at least 60% of the ground-floor building façade.
- Buildings shall follow the historic use of windows, in which windows were rectangular and vertically placed on the building façade.
- Headers, trims, and sills of windows of new buildings shall be well articulated in design, dimensions, and patterns of historic downtown architecture. Building façades of the Historic District follow a consistent pattern of building lines at each floor level, along the eaves of roofs, at the building base on the ground level, and following common window sill heights.
- Storefront windows shall be made of clear glass to allow pedestrians to see into the structure and allow interior users to see out onto the street. Mirrored or dark-tinted glass is not allowed. Interior-lighted storefronts in the evening hours provide additional lighting to the sidewalks, increasing safety and security at night.
- Windows with articulated mullions and true divided lights are encouraged. Long, continuous ribbon windows are not permitted.



*Example of a flat roof form similar to buildings in the historic downtown*



*Building with a variety of roof forms, shapes, and heights*



*Maintain the transparency of windows and entries along the street front facade to provide eyes on the street*



*Corner entries are clearly defined with a unique massing form and articulated with signage, awnings, and lighting*

### Commercial Doorways and Entrances

The entry features of commercial buildings should be clearly visible to pedestrians, with a defined relationship to the street and sidewalk. Recessed entries help break up the massing of a building and can make the entry threshold more immediately apparent to pedestrians. Decorative features such as awnings, canopies, lighting, and signage can also be used to clearly define and articulate an entryway.

#### Guidelines

The guidelines for commercial doorways and entrances are as follows:

- Windows and entries of ground-floor storefronts shall be compatible with the pattern of historic retail buildings in downtown Vacaville. Historic storefront windows include larger retail window displays and entries with overhanging awnings, a tile base, and a transom with a sign frieze above. Retail storefronts extend the length of the building façade and are approximately 40–50 feet in width. Wider buildings (100 feet wide or more) shall break up the façade length into smaller segments with building columns or pilasters, consistent with the pattern of the commercial block.
- Primary entries shall be located on the primary façade of the building facing a public street and provide clear and visible pedestrian access.
- The size of the entry shall be proportional to the building.
- The main entrance of a building along a street-edge façade shall open directly onto a publicly accessible walkway that connects directly into adjacent street sidewalks. An entry foyer or landing may be inset into the building façade to prevent doors from opening onto and blocking the public way.
  - New buildings in the downtown area shall include details such as sidelights, transoms, columns, and pediment trim that are often inset and embellished on traditional entries.
- Secondary entries may be located at the side or rear of the building to provide access from parking areas.
- Entries shall be clearly defined with signage and architectural details.

### Residential Doorways and Entrances

Residential doorways and entries in downtown Vacaville should be clearly visible to pedestrians, with a defined relationship to the street and sidewalk. Recessed entries, entry stoops, and entry porches help break up the massing of a building façade and help make the entry threshold immediately apparent to pedestrians. Raised stoops and porches help provide a small separation and sense of privacy between the private residence and the public realm along the sidewalk. Decorative features such as awnings, canopies, lighting, and signage can also be used to clearly define and articulate the entryway.

#### Guidelines

The guidelines for residential doorways and entrances are as follows:

- Primary residential entries shall be located on major sidewalks to provide clear and visible pedestrian access.
- The size of the entry shall be proportional to the building.
- New buildings in the downtown area shall include details such as sidelights, transoms, columns, and pediment trim that are often inset and embellished on traditional entries.
- Secondary entries may be located at the side or rear of the building to provide access from parking areas.
- Residential mixed-use projects, townhomes, and apartments shall provide multiple entries, stoops, and/or porches along the streets whenever possible. Multiple entries to ground-floor flats and townhomes improve the sense of safety and security along the street and help to activate the public realm.



*Residential entry articulated using the architectural details of the building*



*Porches and entry stoops activate the street edge*

## Canopies, Awnings, and Arcades

Canopies, awnings, arcades, and other overhangs are traditional elements of commercial design that articulate the building façade and create variety and interest at the street level. They also provide space for signage, shade windows during the summer to reduce energy use, and provide weather protection for pedestrians.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for canopies, awning, and arcades are as follows:

- Use of canopies, awnings, arcades, and overhangs is encouraged over window displays and entries along the public sidewalk on the ground floor of commercial buildings.
- Canopies, awnings, and arcades shall be designed with respect for the size, shape, and placement of the building, unless a unique architectural style encourages something different.
- Canopies and awnings shall fit within individual bays or structural divisions of the building façade rather than extending beyond a single bay, unless the building structure dictates an alternative placement.
- A variety of solid- and stripe-colored awnings may be considered.
- Canvas, fire-resistant acrylic, and metal are preferred materials for awnings. Vinyl, plastic, plasticized fabric, fiberglass, and glass awning are not permitted.
- Awnings, decorative roofs, and miscellaneous entry features may project into the front public right-of-way, provided that they are not less than 8 feet above the sidewalk.
- Canopies and awnings shall only be internally illuminated where appropriate to the architectural style of the building.
- Canopies and awnings shall be designed to provide window shading to reduce energy use.
- Overhangs, awnings, bay windows, and upper floor shall not project more than three feet over the sidewalk and shall provide a minimum height clearance of 8 feet from the top of the sidewalk.



*Awnings used to protect building storefront windows and entries create variety and interest at the street level*