DOWNTOWN CODE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Nashville, TN

June 2024

NASHVILLE PLANNING

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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The ***Downtown Code (DTC)*** is a form-based zoning code that applies to much of the Downtown Nashville Community Plan area. Since its adoption in 2010, the DTC has shaped the growth and development in Downtown Nashville. The DTC has been amended from time to time over the ensuing decade, as downtown neighborhoods have continued to grow and evolve.

The ***Downtown Code Design Review Committee (DRC)*** is composed of design professionals with experience in architecture, landscape architecture, planning, or urban design. The DRC's current responsibilities include reviewing and approving Concept Plans, Major Modifications, and revisions to previously approved plans. Additionally, the DRC makes recommendations to the Planning Commission regarding Overall Height Modifications.

In 2021, Metro Council amended the DTC to require that the DRC review and approve a Concept Plan prior to the approval of a Final Site Plan. The Downtown Code Design Guidelines, a design-based document, was created to support this procedural change.

The ***Downtown Code Design Guidelines (Guidelines)***, main purposes are to:

- provide guidance for Metro Nashville Staff and the DRC in their evaluation of a development proposal's design merits.
- provide property owners, developers, and designers with predictable and implementable guidance based on planning and design policies and best practices.
- encourage and emphasize best-in-class site and architectural design.
- articulate the overarching goals necessary to create a Downtown Nashville that works for everyone.

Each of the design guidelines in this document support one of four key Goals that are critical to the success of a development proposal in Downtown Nashville: Future-Focused Ecological Design; Human-Oriented Design; Contextual and Connected Design; and High-Caliber Architectural Design.

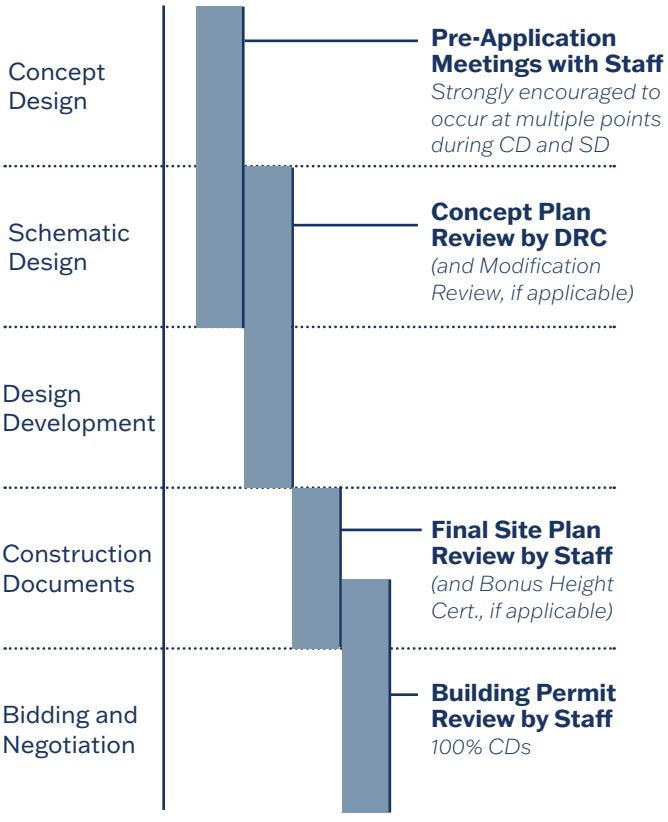
Nashville, Tennessee. USA. February 13, 2023 (vecteezy.com via Marianne Pfeil)

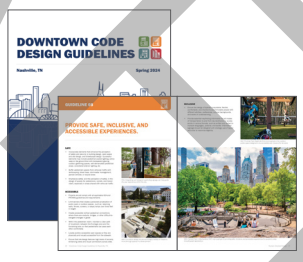
APPLICATION AND USE

Applicants seeking approval for development within DTC zoning can refer to this document to explain how the proposal fulfills and addresses the four Goals, as demonstrated through a written narrative in the DTC Concept Plan application, design drawings, and supportive illustrative materials, such as diagrams and 3D views.

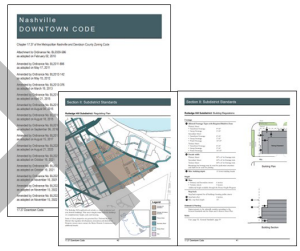
The Guidelines and DTC Zoning

The Guidelines document is design-based guidance for the DTC zoning district. This content has been formulated to support, and to work in tandem with, the DTC's existing zoning entitlements. While the DTC remains the sole regulatory tool, the Guidelines establishes design-based support for applicants to use through the development review process.





Design Guidance
Downtown Code Design Guidelines

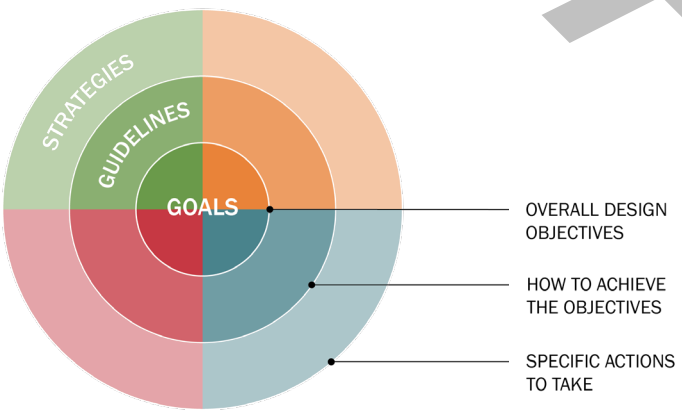


Regulatory Zoning
Downtown Code

Successful projects will be able to clearly express how their proposal fulfills each of the four goals throughout the development process.

DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

The Guidelines document is organized around four Goals: Future-Focused Ecological Design; Human-Oriented Design; Contextual and Connected Design; and High-Caliber Architectural Design. The structure of this content is organized to allow the design teams flexibility to determine how a specific project achieves the four Goals.



Goals:

Overarching design objectives for development proposals.

Guidelines:

Key directives to achieve the Goal.

Strategies:

Actions to implement a Guideline. The included lists of Strategies describe possible ideas, and are not meant to be exhaustive.

GOAL 1 Future-Focused Ecological Design

Guideline 01 Bolster natural features and ecosystem services.

Guideline 02 Incorporate and maintain sustainable site and building design technologies, materials, and systems.

GOAL 2 Human-Oriented Design

Guideline 03 Create an active and dynamic streetscape and public realm.

Guideline 04 Minimize the impacts of parking and building services.

Guideline 05 Provide safe, inclusive, and accessible experiences.

GOAL 3 Contextual and Connected Design

Guideline 06 Recognize and enhance the site context.

Guideline 07 Prioritize multimodal transportation.

GOAL 4 High-Caliber Architectural Design

Guideline 08 Demonstrate a clear and coherent organizing design concept in the project massing and site layout.

Guideline 09 Support the design intent through considered architectural expression at different scales.

FUTURE-FOCUSED ECOLOGICAL DESIGN

Future-Focused Ecological Design is an approach to designing in Downtown Nashville with careful consideration to the environmental impact of proposed projects. This section outlines strategies for climate mitigation and adaptation, including efforts to supplement stormwater infrastructure in order to help reduce flash flooding events, and planting shade trees to help mitigate increasing climate temperatures.

Nashville can play a key role in prioritizing a climate-aware and proactive design approach while also embracing resiliency and the protection of natural resources, including the Cumberland River and the significant topographical landscape of Downtown.

GUIDELINE 01

Bolster natural features and ecosystem services.

GUIDELINE 02

Incorporate and maintain sustainable site and building design technologies, materials, and systems.

BOLSTER NATURAL FEATURES AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Respond to topographical conditions and the ground plane in a sensitive manner.
- Respect and frame visual connections to natural features such as the Cumberland River and hilltops.
- Embrace a performative design approach that highlights environmental systems and functionality within the design intent.
- Preserve and protect healthy, mature trees, especially native species. Contribute to a contiguous tree canopy where mature trees do not exist. Limit use of columnar/fastigiata tree varieties.
- Plant street trees in suspended pavements, such as silva cells, and provide appropriate watering and maintenance, to maximize health.

01A: Incorporating park spaces adjacent to prominent natural features, such as Cumberland Park on the Cumberland River, offer an opportunity for views, interaction, and re-centering of these important elements within the urban core.

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

- Integrate stormwater management and flood mitigation into the site design.
  - » Utilize stormwater modeling inclusive of climate change projections.
  - » Increase stormwater capture and pollutant removal with bioswales and bioretention areas, permeable pavers, cisterns, water recycling, blue roofs, and green roofs and walls.
  - » Minimize stormwater run-off via green roofs, pervious surfaces, intentional grading, and planting.
  - » Reduce water consumption with xeriscaping (utilizing native, drought-tolerant plants).
- Promote biodiversity, preserve native habitats, and support functional ecosystems with year round interest.
- Utilize landscape design strategies that optimize micro-climatic conditions and extend seasonal comfort.
- Minimize the urban heat island effect by planting canopy trees, incorporating green roofs, providing water features, and/or optimizing pervious surface coverage.
- Contribute shade and shelter by providing canopy trees, furnishings, or building elements like awnings or loggias.
- Minimize surface areas comprised of turf grasses, sod, and mulch, in favor of more permeable groundcovers such as native grasses and perennials.
- Protect against light and noise pollution.

01B: High-quality green roof systems can help with stormwater management, mitigate the heat island effect, create habitats, filter pollutants, sequester carbon, and increase agricultural and amenity space.

01C: Green roofs, like the one at The Pinnacle at Symphony Place (SoBro), can double as outdoor spaces for building occupants.

01D: Native plantings occupy a bioswale that is integrated into public open space.

01E: Noble Park (Gulch South) is a pocket park lined with active uses that features places to sit and quality landscaping materials.

INCORPORATE AND MAINTAIN SUSTAINABLE SITE AND BUILDING DESIGN TECHNOLOGIES, MATERIALS, AND SYSTEMS.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

- Strive for green building and/or sustainable site certification, a minimum of LEED Silver or equivalent, for all new buildings.
- Employ sustainable operations and maintenance strategies for buildings and landscape areas.
- Consider using building materials that are made from recycled or renewable resources (such as Mass Timber or Cross Laminated Timber), and prioritize the use of locally sourced materials.
- Reuse existing, viable structures to reduce the unnecessary use of additional resources when possible.

BUILDING ENVELOPE

- Design fenestration to maximize on natural daylighting for inhabitable spaces.
- Design roofs and/or walls to generate renewable energy.
- Design roofs and/or walls to provide habitat-supportive vegetation, along with a clear maintenance plan for those planted areas.
- Design façades with attention to light reflectivity, glare, and bird-friendly glazing when possible.
- Design roofs with white or reflective paint and light-colored paving materials to reflect heat away from buildings and reduce the loads on building mechanical systems.

02A, left / 02B, right : The Neuhoff District (Germantown) provides many ways of integrating reused structures and materials within a new development – for example, concrete columns from a portion of a rehabilitated structure have been repurposed as a sculptural element within the atrium space of an office building.

BUILDING SYSTEMS

- Provide building and landscape irrigation systems that reduce water use.
- Exceed energy performance requirements by employing passive solar design strategies, high-performing envelope assemblies, and energy efficient heating, cooling, and lighting systems.
- Encourage sustainable transportation modes in all aspects of building and site design, layout, and operations. This includes active transportation modes, transit, and parking spaces prioritized for carpool groups and electric vehicles (including EV chargers), wherever parking is provided.

02C: Glazing with contrasting patterns can help prevent bird mortality and increase energy efficiency in buildings.

02D: Music City Center's (SoBro) four-acre green roof protects the expansive roof from harsh UV rays, wind, and stormwater runoff.

HUMAN-ORIENTED DESIGN

Human-Oriented Design focuses on strategies that prioritize creating spaces for people in the urban context. Through activation along street frontages and the integration of accessible ways to move through, around and between spaces, people are empowered to actively engage with the built environment, making the city feel safer and more inclusive for all users.

GUIDELINE 03

Create an active and dynamic streetscape and public realm.

GUIDELINE 04

Minimize the impacts of parking and building services.

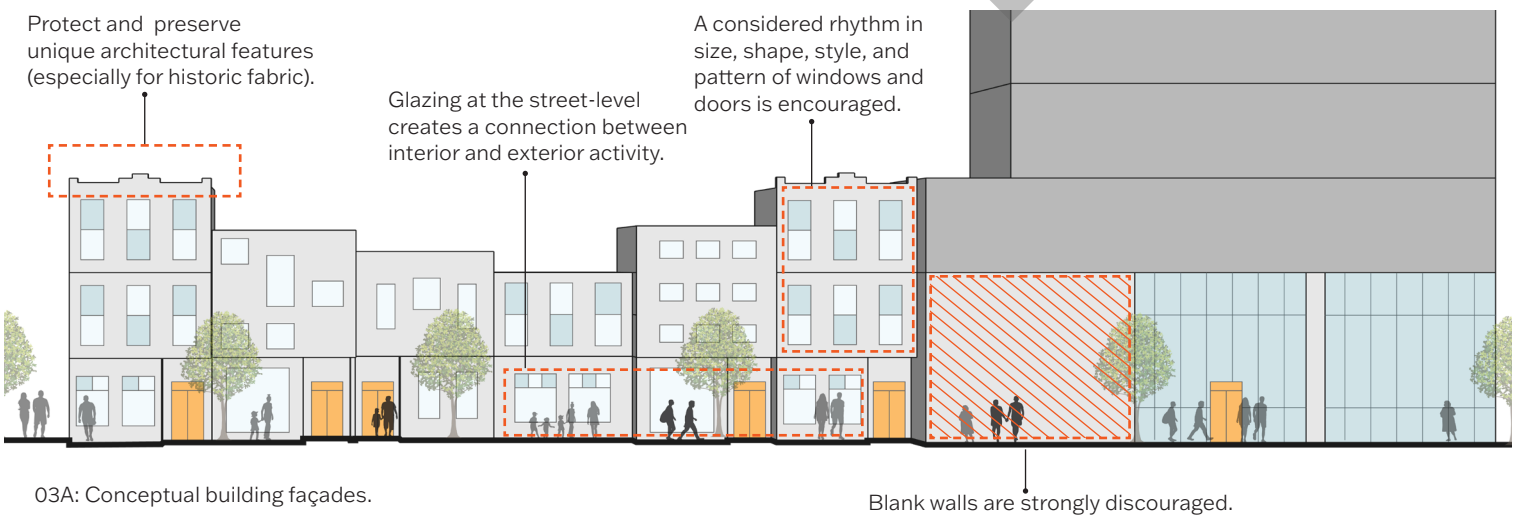
GUIDELINE 05

Provide safe, inclusive, and accessible experiences.

CREATE AN ACTIVE AND DYNAMIC STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM.

BUILDING DESIGN

- Provide pedestrian entrances at the ground level that are inviting and appropriate for the scale of the interior use and its street frontage.
  - » More prominent public uses should feature celebrated pedestrian entrances – this could include wide, set back, landscaped spaces with taller ground floor heights and overhead projections.
  - » Non-residential pedestrian entrances should be located at grade or slightly above (accessed by steps or ramps) and visible from the sidewalk. Entrances below street level are discouraged.
  - » Residential pedestrian entrances at the ground level (such as walk-up units) should be distinguished by changes in materials and colors, and by slightly elevating and/or setting back the entry from the primary façade.
- Employ active ground floor uses, such as storefronts and lobbies, and design these to be open to the public.
- Feature glazing at street-level façades that is highly transparent to allow for visibility and a connection between the interior and exterior activity. Where possible, include operable windows to help animate a building.
- Avoid blank walls uninterrupted by pedestrian entrances or glazing at the sidewalk.
- Maintain and shape a streetwall on street-fronting projects. Incorporate an appropriately-scaled rhythm of elements, such as entrances to active uses, inset reliefs, ground level glazing, and human-scaled materiality to maintain a dynamic street edge that helps shape and define the pedestrian realm.
- When designing across sites with significant grade change, coordinate the finished floor elevations of the ground level with the adjacent topographical conditions in order to facilitate access and activation.



03A: Conceptual building façades.

03B: Design ways to thoughtfully navigate grade changes through integrating seating and other human-scale spatial elements.

03C: Public art can facilitate opportunities to enhance the design of the public realm at a variety of scales.

STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM DESIGN

- Plan for utilities such that they do not interfere with the pedestrian right-of-way – bury overhead utility lines and place utility elements outside of the pedestrian zone.
- Activate the street with landscaping, street trees, and other street furniture (such as lighting, seating, planters, wayfinding, transit stops, bicycle racks, pedestrian scaled public art, etc.). Elements within the furnishing zone should be scaled appropriately for their context.
- Consider how a project's use and street frontage can best play a role in maximizing efficient use of the curb.
- In order to maintain levels of transparency along the street, limit the height of plantings in planters and delimb trees within pedestrian viewsheds.
- Grade changes should be navigated gracefully with attention to the creation of inhabitable outdoor spaces using seatwalls, water features, and other vegetation to shape outdoor rooms and pathways. Vegetation and lighting should be layered and the ground, mid, and canopy levels to create these human-scaled outdoor spaces.
- Outdoor spaces in the public realm should be designed to respond to micro climatic conditions - such as sunlight, heat, wind, and noise - to optimize human comfort throughout the seasons.
- Foster civic pride through the strategic integration of art, murals, and local artifacts as essential public amenities, thoughtfully positioned to enhance visibility, offer educational value, and align with the surrounding urban context.
- Developers, local institutions, and other private property owners are encouraged to integrate their outdoor spaces into a Downtown network of publicly-accessible open spaces through the creation of Privately-Owned Public Spaces (POPS). POPS are encouraged to be:
  - » Sited, designed, and identified as accessible and welcoming to the public.
  - » Integrated and connected to the broader open space network.
  - » Include canopy trees, seating, shade, furnishing, public art, native planting, and the integration of stormwater capture where possible.
  - » Create functional, interesting, and engaging spaces that are accessible, connected, safe, and comfortable year-round.
  - » Accommodate and engage people of all ages and abilities, providing neighborhood gathering places and civic spaces that support social interaction, healthy lifestyles, and a range of activities.
  - » Provide amenities such as public restrooms, seating, and drinking water stations, where feasible.
  - » Utilize durable materials and be designed with a clear maintenance plan.

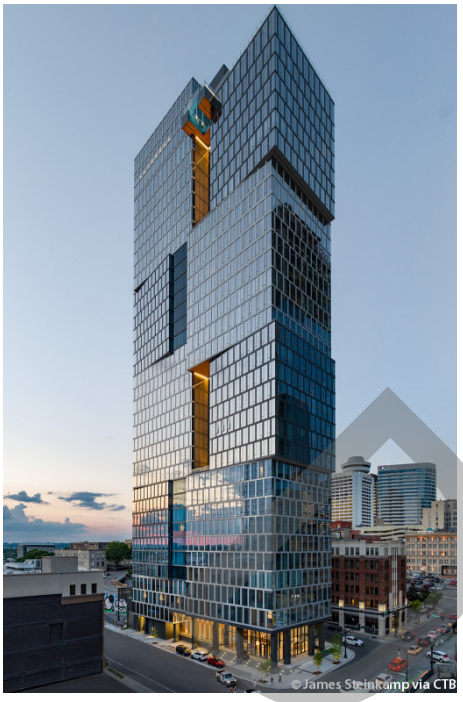
MINIMIZE THE IMPACTS OF PARKING AND BUILDING SERVICES.

VEHICULAR PARKING

- Vehicular parking is not required in the DTC. Therefore, the inclusion of vehicular parking within the program of a project should be constrained as much as possible.
- Where vehicular parking is provided, it is strongly encouraged that all parking should be located below-grade in order to prioritize the inclusion of active and habitable uses in above-grade building spaces.
- Below-grade parking should not encroach into the public right-of-way.
- Above-grade vehicular parking should only be proposed when:
  - » There are significant infrastructural impediments to placing parking below grade, such as, for example, the presence of district-wide infrastructure within 20' of the ground surface.
  - » It is lined with habitable space with active uses.
  - » The massing plus lining/screening of the above-grade vehicular parking is meaningfully integrated into the overall project.
- Un-lined above-grade parking is discouraged and should only be proposed when:
  - » An aesthetically considered, high-quality screening on the exposed parking façade area(s) is included. The screening should fit with the design of the rest of the building to create visual interest and enhance the overall pedestrian and streetscape experience.
  - » Parking level floor plates shall be level except to the minimum extent required for drainage and access between levels; Parking level structure shall be constructed to accommodate occupant loads associated with uses consistent with the program above the parking levels; Parking level floor-to-floor heights shall be a minimum of ten feet.

04A: Upper-level habitable liner buildings with residential uses, such as Prima at Paseo South Gulch (Gulch South), have program and activation along the perimeter of the above-grade structured parking garages.

04B: Buildings with all parking underground – such as Peabody Plaza (Rolling Mill Hill) – create opportunities for integrated outdoor spaces.



04C: Buildings that provide no parking – such as Alcove (Downtown Core), allow for compact or unique tower forms.

04D: Parking levels, at the Bridgestone Tower (SoBro) are screened from view with materials that fit seamlessly into the tower design.

04E: A screening element features similar repetition and patterning to the glazing of the habitable levels at The Joseph (SoBro).

ALL VEHICULAR ACCESS

- Drive-thru establishments and surface parking lots are discouraged.
- Minimize the number of curb cuts and their widths. Cross and Joint Access may be appropriate and encouraged in some scenarios.
- Shared parking agreements should be considered.
- In a scenario where alley access is unavailable, vehicular access should be taken from the lowest classified street frontage.
- Utilize a site's topography, when possible, to facilitate below-grade vehicular access.
- Use materiality (such as pavement patterns or colors) or changes in elevation (such as raised pedestrian crossings) to distinguish vehicular and pedestrian spaces.
- Avoid vehicular access points that conflict with existing or planned bikeways and transit.

BUILDING SERVICES

- Locations and sequencing for rideshare and other pick-up/drop-off services should be carefully considered with NDOT to ensure they do not adversely effect the pedestrian realm, bikeways, or transit.
- Access for deliveries, loading, waste pick-up, utilities, and other back-of-house services should be concealed as much as possible.
- Incorporate ample space for waste management services into the building footprint, to facilitate the storage and movement of building waste and recycling. These areas should be thoughtfully designed for access and movement and also screened from the pedestrian realm. Consider working with neighboring properties to facilitate shared waste management collection areas.

PROVIDE SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND ACCESSIBLE EXPERIENCES.

SAFE

- Incorporate elements that enhance the perception of safety and security in building design, open space and site design, and streetscape design. Successful elements may include pedestrian-scaled lighting, active uses on the ground floor with transparent glazing, outdoor gathering spaces, well-demarcated pedestrian areas, considered exterior lighting, etc.
- Buffer pedestrian spaces from vehicular traffic with landscaping, street trees, stormwater management, parked vehicles, or bicycle lanes.
- Emphasize safety, and the perception of safety, in the design of spaces for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders, especially in areas shared with vehicular traffic.

05A: Integrating well-designed wayfinding signage can help guide the user experience within the city.

ACCESSIBLE

- Projects should comply with all applicable ADA and PROWAG guidelines and requirements.
- Limit barriers that create a perceived privatization of public open or outdoor spaces, such as: retaining walls, fences, screens, or steps/ramps over three feet in height.
- Create accessible vertical pedestrian connections where there are viaducts, bridges, or other difficult-to-navigate changes in grade.
- Within the pedestrian realm, maintain a clear path of movement, between the frontage zone and the furnishing zone, so that pedestrians can pass each other comfortably.
- Locate publicly accessible open spaces so they are physically and visually accessible from the sidewalk.
- Ensure that site design features high levels of porosity, enhancing views and visual connections across sites.

05B: Circulation design should encourage a variety of means to move through spaces in a development.

INCLUSIVE

- Ensure the design of spaces is equitable, flexible, comfortable, and intuitive to accommodate people with different abilities, preferences, cultural backgrounds, and levels of understanding.
- Provide essential wayfinding information for all modes of transportation to and from key landmarks or access points in various formats, such as written and verbal (in multiple languages), pictorial, and tactile. Informative signage should be designed with strategic use of layout and color to maximize legibility.

05C: Promise Park (Nashville Zoo) is an example of an outdoor public space designed to be accessible and inclusive for all users.

05D: Central Park in Manhattan, NYC is an example of providing safe, inclusive, and accessible experiences for people to relax including each generation.

CONTEXTUAL AND CONNECTED DESIGN

Contextual and Connected Design emphasizes the important role each project plays in shaping the urban fabric. The placement and orchestration of built context with open spaces and paths of movement help define urban layers, and support growth across the distinct neighborhoods of Nashville.

Facilitating multimodal transportation is a priority for our growing city, in order to best support the growing population and density in Nashville's urban core.

GUIDELINE 06 **Recognize and enhance the site context.**

GUIDELINE 07 **Prioritize multimodal transportation.**

RECOGNIZE AND ENHANCE THE SITE CONTEXT.

URBAN NETWORKS

- Extend and enhance the fabric of streets, alleys, sidewalks, paths, and open spaces to create walkable neighborhoods.
- Seize design opportunities to celebrate and reinforce unique conditions in the urban fabric as points to shape and support neighborhood identity.
- Shape site layouts to respond, connect, and engage with existing and planned parks, greenways, and open spaces.
- Consider proximities to multimodal transportation routes when considering site selection and layout.

NATURAL CONDITIONS

- Integrate the site design and placement of structures harmoniously with existing topographic conditions.
- Provide sun/shade studies (for solstice/equinox dates) to demonstrate the design response to solar orientation, and the impact of site and building design on the surrounding context.
- Actively engage the Cumberland River and other waterways in site design.

SCALE AND FORM

- Align building scale and mass with neighborhood structures, employing setbacks and side terracing as needed to minimize impact on light, air and the aesthetic continuity, especially when transitioning to smaller residential neighborhoods.
- Protect and re-purpose historic and culturally significant structures and thoughtfully incorporate their significant elements into new project proposals.

PLACE AND COMMUNITY IDENTITY

- Refer to a site's history and cultural context, and weave this into the project approach and site planning. For example, Downtown Nashville is built upon a rich indigenous history, as well as its key role in the Civil War and the Civil Rights movement. New projects are encouraged to demonstrate a connection back to this history and unique sense of place in creative ways. This could be done through the design of shared spaces that facilitate a connection to the city's history and to the land, through community gardens or other thoughtfully considered placemaking.
- Engage the community to identify and address their needs, through the contribution of infrastructure, publicly accessible open spaces, or specific uses or programming.

06A: Gulch Crossing (Gulch South) responds to its site context by providing a publicly-accessible stair that connects the Demonbreun Street viaduct to 11th Avenue South.

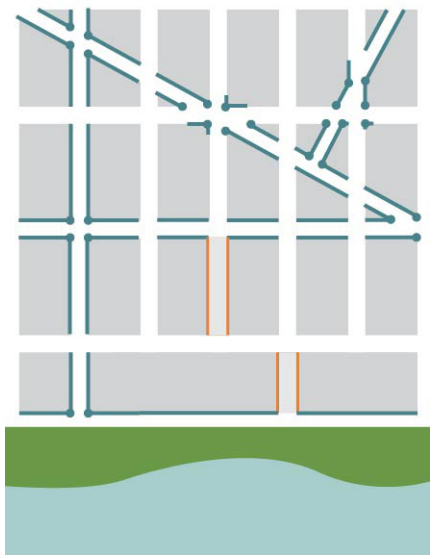
06B: Along the Colorado River in Downtown Austin, development scale and intensity increases as it gets further inland.

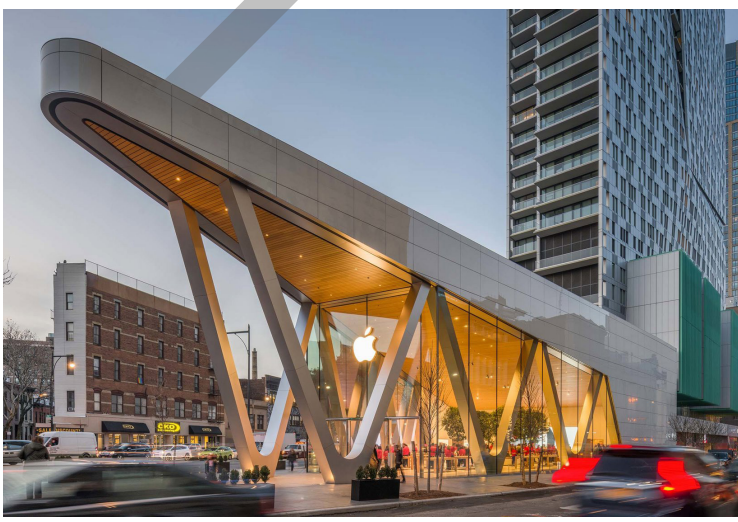
06C: An infill building under construction matches the existing architectural contexts (street wall, glazing pattern, and step-back) of the surroundings.

06D: At the South Boston Waterfront in Boston, MA, site design provides opportunities for engaging and observing the waterfront context through massing, height, and outdoor spaces.

06E (right): Conceptual street and block network.

- Design responses at the intersection of prominent or irregular streets, or along prominent frontages (such as streets or open spaces) are encouraged.
- Design responses to existing and planned urban networks are encouraged. Here, several large blocks were broken into smaller sites to match context.





06F: An architectural design gesture, at the ground level of this development, is provided at the intersection of two streets that create an irregular block shape and size.

PRIORITIZE MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION.

- Incorporate specific and relevant recommendations from adopted transportation studies and plans; refer to the Additional Resources section of this document.
- Connect and enhance existing and planned multimodal networks.
- Minimize opportunities for vehicular conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists.
- All aspects of site and building design and operations should prioritize and encourage the efficient and safe use of multimodal transportation (pedestrian, bicycle, and transit) over vehicular transportation.
- Prioritize multimodal transportation options through wayfinding signage.
- Integrate physical and programmatic Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies.

BICYCLES AND MICROMOBILITY

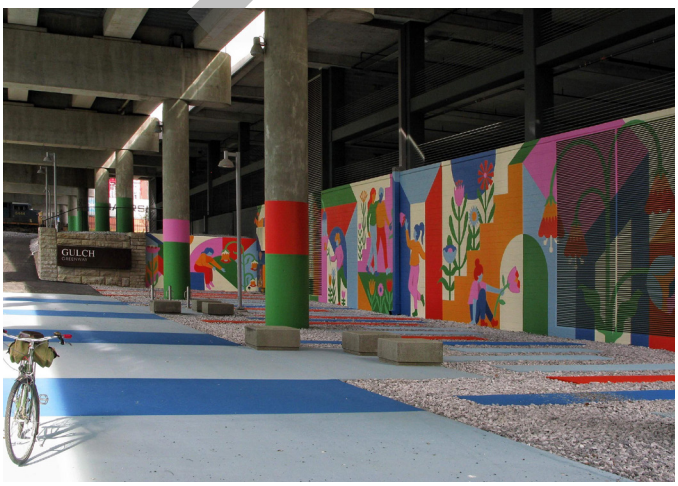
- Meet and exceed the recommendations of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) Bicycle Parking Guidelines.
- Integrate ample amounts of both short-term and long-term bicycle and micromobility parking in new projects. Ensure that a portion of the parking is publicly accessible, such as in corrals at the curb. Ensure that a portion of the parking can accommodate e-bike charging and/or larger cargo bikes.
- Utilize intuitive bicycle racks, such as an “Inverted U,” that allows for multiple points of contact between the rack and the bicycle.
- Incorporate amenities for bicyclists in new projects. Amenities may include bike-share, showers, changing rooms, bicycle parking, lockers, and/or bicycle repair tools and should be easily accessible from the ground level of the building.

WALKABILITY

- Design public open spaces to complement and connect with the streetscape design.
- Incorporate mid-block pedestrian crossings to match projected pedestrian desire lines, particularly along lengthy street blocks.
- Expand and make clear, robust, connections to the greenway network, activating these greenways by connecting them to open spaces and mixed-use projects.

TRANSIT

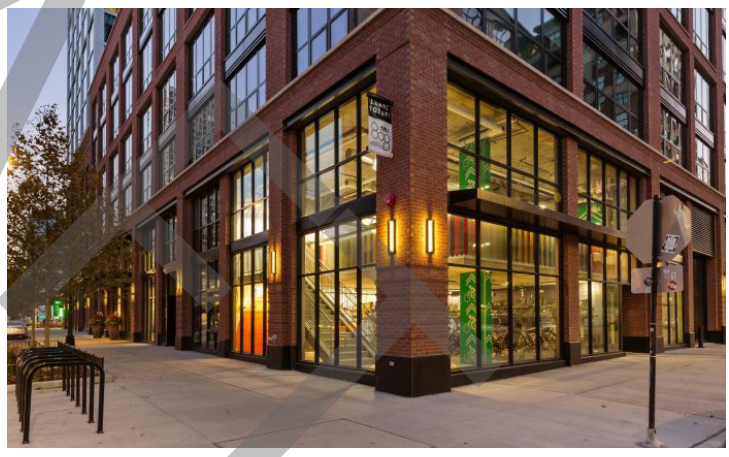
- Establish intermodal transit centers that facilitate the smooth interchange between various transportation nodes, encompassing elements such as bus terminals, railway stations and transit centers.
- Provide or upgrade transit stops to be compliant with WeGo’s Transit Design Guidelines.
- Link building and site with direct, legible, safe and attractive connections to transit.



07A: The underside of a viaduct has been used as a connection to a greenway, activated with murals and seating (Gulch South).

07B: Bicycle and transit facilities are integrated into the streetscape and design of adjacent development.

07C: The Imagine East Bank Vision Plan includes conceptual renderings of safe and connected multimodal transportation networks for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit.



07E: "Inverted U" bicycle racks are located on the sidewalk for short-term bicycle parking, while an interior bicycle storage room allows for more secure, long-term parking.

07D: Bike and Scooter-share stations provide dedicated spaces for micromobility devices outside of the pedestrian path of travel.

07F: Secure indoor bicycle storage and other amenities for bicyclists are encouraged.

HIGH-CALIBER ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

High-Caliber Architectural Design highlights the goal of achieving excellence in Nashville's architecture. A considered site design sets the foundation for any built project, and the design of both site and architecture should be thoughtfully and reciprocally symbiotic.

Each architectural proposal should demonstrate a clear design concept through massing, materiality, and articulation across scales - from that of the material unit to the greater city skyline.

GUIDELINE 08

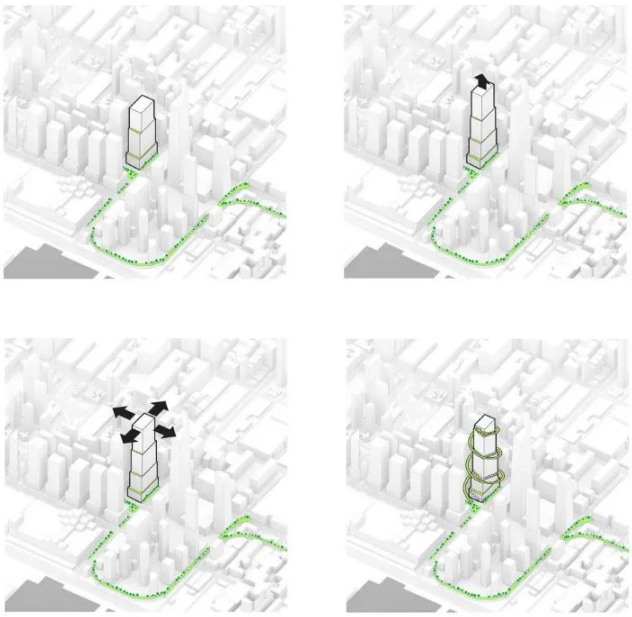
Demonstrate a clear and coherent organizing design concept in the project massing and site layout.

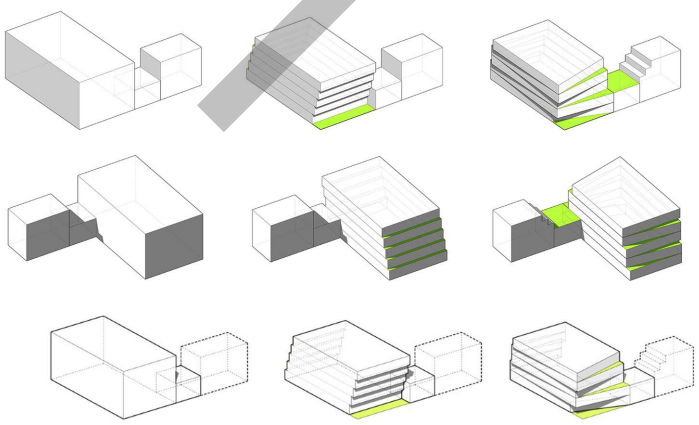
GUIDELINE 09

Support the design intent through considered architectural expression at different scales.

DEMONSTRATE A CLEAR AND COHERENT ORGANIZING DESIGN CONCEPT IN THE PROJECT MASSING AND SITE LAYOUT.

- Make architectural concepts clear, compelling, and consistent to their own guiding logic. Consider and design building massings with attention to solar orientation, access to open spaces, street adjacencies, and existing fabric. Shape buildings to respond to the surrounding context, through setbacks, fenestration patterns, horizontal datums, and other key visual relationships.
- Design sites, building massing, pathways, and the approach to respect existing view corridors and create new viewpoints from public streets and spaces where feasible. Take note of which elevations are visible from different vantage points and design with those in mind, including from major thoroughfares and open spaces.
- Create a complementary relationship between structures (new, existing, and approved) with clear attention to views from all sides and approaches. Buildings should be spaced apart, avoiding long, uninterrupted building lengths. The building footprints should be carefully shaped and laid out on site to support these views and access to light on all frontages.
- Design buildings that relate to the human scale – carefully consider the proportions of the base of the building in relation to the pedestrian and creating an active pedestrian realm. Refer to Guidelines under Goal 2 – Human-Oriented Design.
- Consider the transition between the design of the base and the design of upper floors to be visually cohesive and compatible, through material and façade separation, treatment, and proportions.



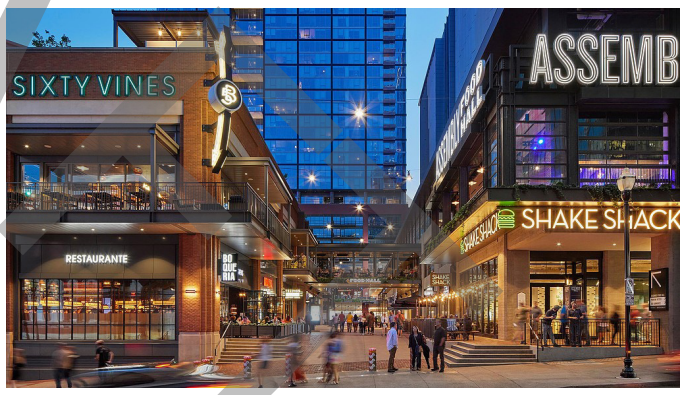


08A, left / 08B,right: Diagrams can help graphically translate the conceptual intent for a project – highlighting derivation of form, organization of program and circulation, and the logic behind interior and exterior organizing principles.

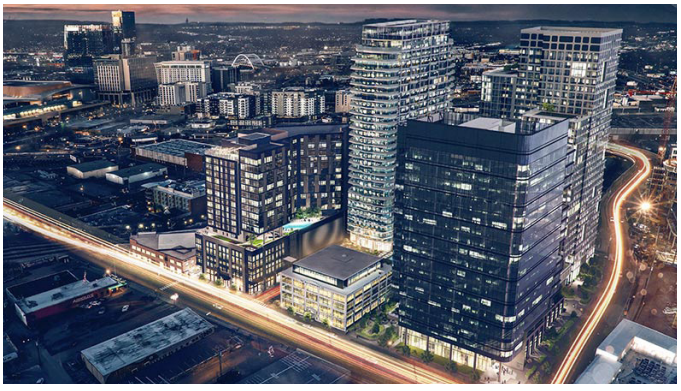
08C: The Virgin Hotel (Music Row) features a design that responds to its context at a major intersection. It presents a unified aesthetic between its lower levels and their relationship to the human scale and the upper floors, through clear massing, articulation, and fenestration.

08D: The Albion (Gulch South) features a design that reflects its prominence and visibility in the downtown skyline, a consistent material treatment between the base and tower, and effective articulation to break down of large expanses of glazing.

08E: Contrasting a tower from the base of a building in a complementary way, as seen in Parke West (Midtown), is an appropriate way to consider transitions in scale.



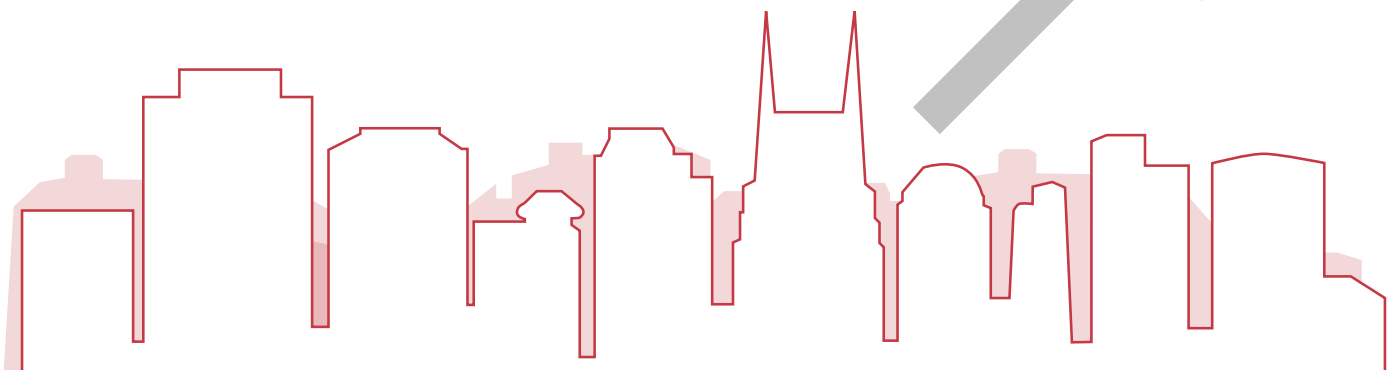
08F: Fifth + Broadway (Upper Broadway) presents a unified concept of dining and shopping district at the base of high-rise towers.



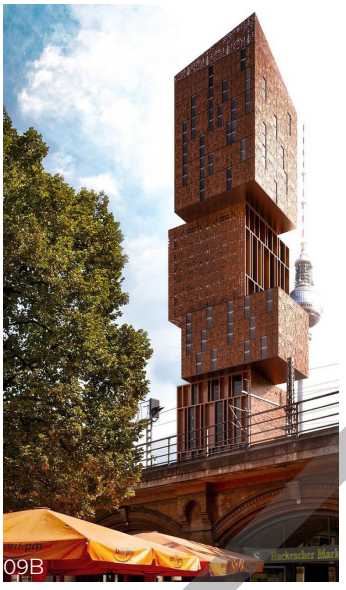
08G: Paseo South Gulch (Gulch South) presents a unified design concept in its relationship between the lower levels of new towers to the scale of surrounding historic buildings and outdoor spaces.

SUPPORT THE DESIGN INTENT THROUGH CONSIDERED ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION AT DIFFERENT SCALES.

- Buildings should have dynamic forms and meaningful architectural expression.
- Design all visible façades with the same level of deliberate and thoughtful consideration as that given to primary façades.
- Design façades and elevations to have texture, depth, and variation through the use of elements such as relief, inset areas, and shadow lines. Vary the heights and widths of façade features, and articulate forms with materiality. Have the façade express cues from the internal building program, if applicable.
- Use performative materials and construction techniques to minimize a building's internal energy usage, as well as to mitigate any urban heat island effects to its surrounding context.
- Design fenestration with a rhythm that relates to the base building form, achieving a harmonious balance between solid and glazed areas. Take into account neighboring window patterns and proportions when appropriate.
- Decorative building components should clearly relate to the overall concept, form, and massing of the building.
- Avoid large expanses of undifferentiated, blank surfaces. Add depth and articulation to façades; avoid relying on simple, coplanar changes of color or material as a means of adding variation.
- Shape the roof lines of buildings. Consider the effect of the form and placement of new structures on the greater urban skyline.



09A: The design of each project can help shape space at multiple scales; the impact of skyline forms should be considered in the greater urban context.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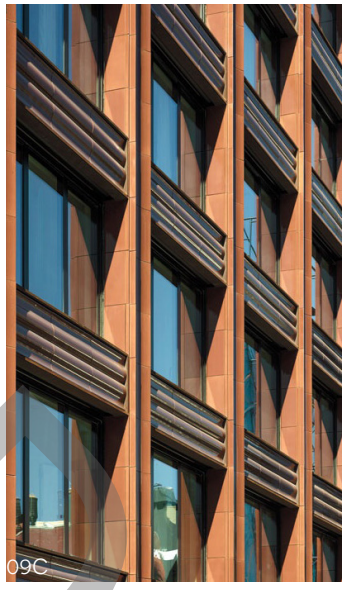
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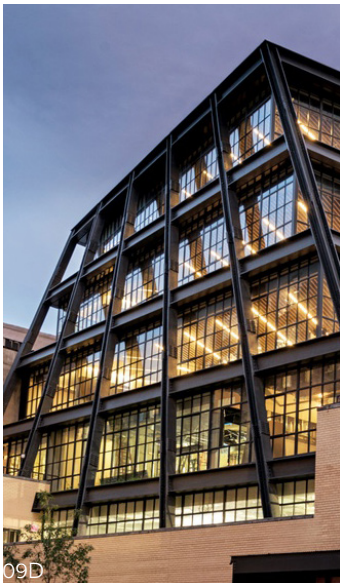
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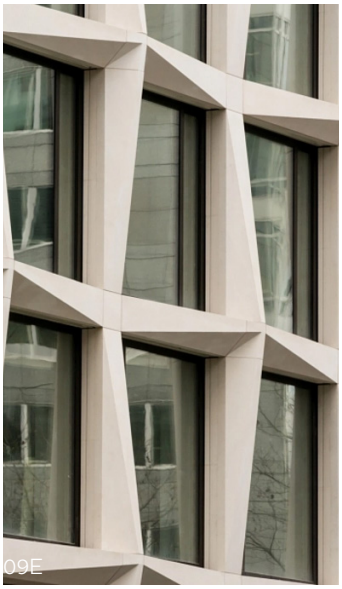
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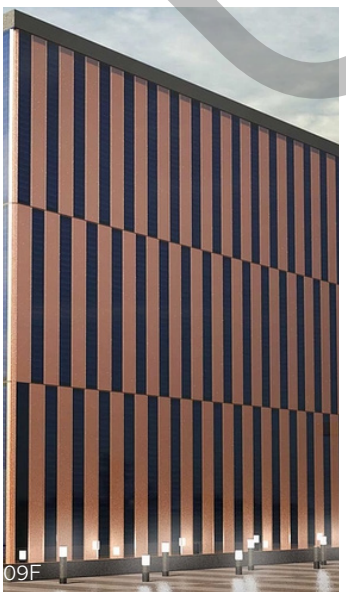
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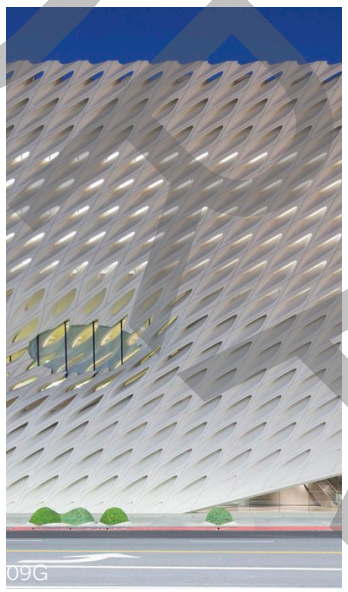
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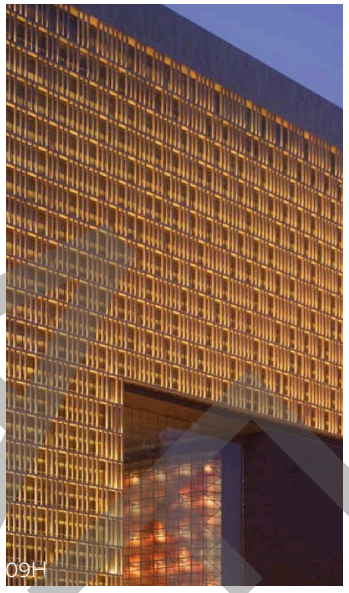
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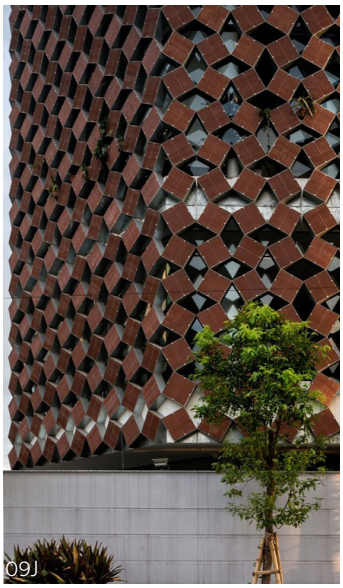
09I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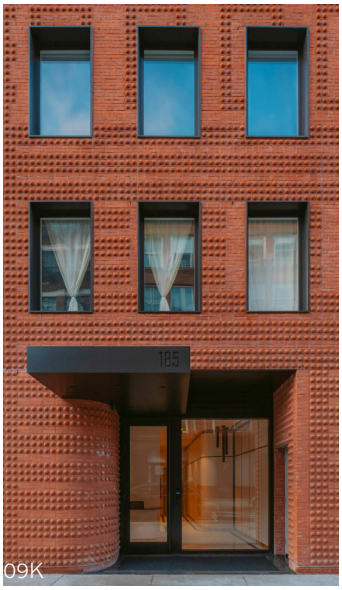

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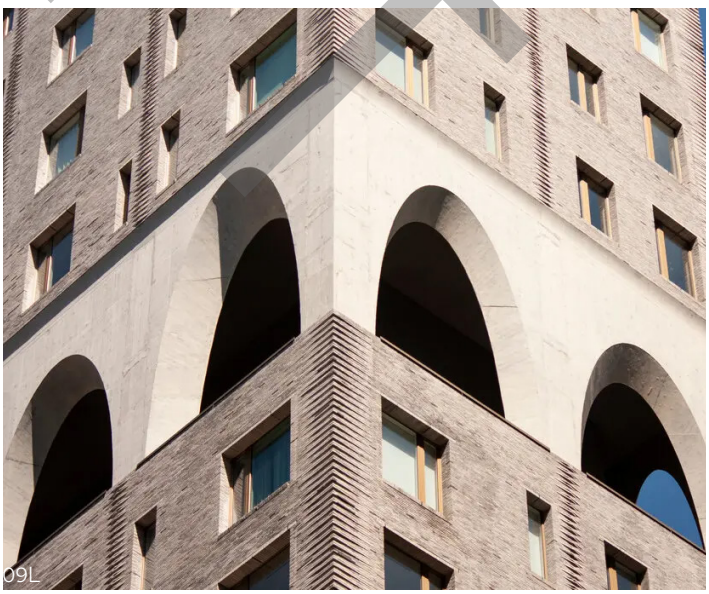
09L

09B-L: Façade articulation can be implemented with different scales of granularity, responding to and maximizing on the inherent nature of the selected materials, and adding aesthetics and texture to the street wall. Performative systems that help reduce energy loads should be considered whenever possible.

GLOSSARY

ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act
A Federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in everyday activities

Biodiversity
The variety of life forms present in a particular habitat or ecosystem, encompassing plants, animals, and microorganisms, and the ecological roles they perform.

Bioretention
A sustainable stormwater management practice that involves the use of vegetation, soils, and natural processes to capture, treat, and infiltrate runoff from impervious surfaces.

Bioswales
Channels designed to concentrate and convey stormwater runoff while removing debris and pollution. Bioswales can also be beneficial in recharging groundwater.

Blue Roof
A roof of building that is designed explicitly to provide initial temporary water storage and then gradual release of stored water, typically rainfall.

Building Envelope
The physical layers of enclosure between the interior and exterior environments of a building.

Coplanar
Being in the same plane or level, often used to describe surfaces or features that are aligned or parallel.

Curb Cuts
A solid (usually concrete) ramp graded down from the top surface of a sidewalk to the surface of an adjoining street.

Drive-Thru
A type of take-out service provided by a business that allows customers to purchase products without leaving their cars.

E-Bike
A bicycle equipped with an integrated electric motor for propulsion, providing assistance to the rider's pedaling efforts.

Ecological Design
The practice of designing structures, landscapes, and systems with consideration for environmental sustainability and ecological principles. It aims to minimize negative impacts on ecosystems and maximize benefits to both humans and the environment.

Facade
An exterior face of a building.

Fenestration
The design, arrangement, and proportion of windows and other openings in a building, influencing natural light, ventilation, and aesthetic appeal.

Footprint
The area of ground covered by a building or structure.

Green Roof
A roof of a building that is partially or completely covered with vegetation and a growing medium, planted over a waterproofing membrane.

Loggia
A covered exterior gallery or corridor, usually on an upper level, but sometimes on the ground level of a building. The corridor is open to the elements because its outer wall is only partial, with the upper part usually supported by a series of columns or arches.

Mass or Massing
The overall form, shape, and arrangement of buildings or structures within a site or area. It involves considerations such as building height, bulk, and orientation.

Micromobility
A range of small, lightweight vehicles, driven by users personally.

Multimodal Transportation
Transportation systems that accommodate various modes of travel, (including walking, cycling, and public transit), promote accessibility and reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles.

Native Plant Palettes
A collection or selection of plant species that are native to a specific region or ecosystem. These palettes are curated based on the indigenous plants that naturally occur in a particular area without human intervention.

Natural Resources
Elements of the natural environment, such as waterways and vegetation, that contribute to ecological health and sustainability.

Operable Windows
Windows that can be opened and closed manually to allow for ventilation and airflow within a building.

Passive Design
Design that utilizes natural elements such as sunlight, shade, and airflow to maintain comfortable indoor environments, reducing the need for mechanical heating or cooling.

Placemaking
A collaborative process of creating public spaces that foster and promote community engagement, social interaction, and a sense of identity and belonging.

POPS - Privately-Owned Public Space
Open to the public, yet privately owned and maintained. They play an important role in supplementing Nashville's network of open spaces.

PROWAG - Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines
A guideline addresses roadway design practices, slope, and terrain related to pedestrian access to walkways and streets, including crosswalks, curb ramps, street furnishings, pedestrian signals, parking and other components of public rights-of-way.

Recess
A design strategy that sinks or sets back a portion of a plane from another, creating an indentation.

GLOSSARY

Sustainable Design
Design practices that prioritize environmental sustainability by incorporating technologies, materials, and systems that minimize negative impacts on the environment.

Suspended Pavement
Technology that prevents soil from getting compacted around tree roots allowing them to grow freely without buckling sidewalks.

Transit Center
A facility that facilitates transfers between different modes of transportation.

TDM - Transportation Demand Management
The use of strategies to inform and encourage travelers to maximize the efficiency of our transportation systems leading to improved mobility, reduced congestion, limit single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips, and lower vehicle emissions.

Urban Fabric
The physical elements and patterns that make up the built environment of a city, including streets, buildings, and open spaces.

Viaduct
An elevated structure carrying a road or railway over a valley, road, or other obstacle.

View Corridor
A protected line of sight that offers scenic or significant views.

Xeriscaping
Landscaping method that utilizes drought-tolerant plants and efficient irrigation techniques to conserve water in arid or semi-arid climates.

Note:

This list of terms included in this glossary is not exhaustive. Additional terms may be defined or described in other resources including, but not limited to, the Metropolitan Code of Ordinances.

Definitions used in the glossary have been sourced, and in some cases adapted, from online resources.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In addition to the strategies described in the DTC DG, additional strategies that fulfill the goals and guidelines of this document may be outlined in the following resources. Design teams are encouraged to discuss the ways in which strategies outlined in these resources (or others not included on this list) may be applicable to their development proposals with Metro Staff.

Downtown Code

Downtown Community Plan

Nashville Next

Community Character Manual

Nashville Connector

MDHA Redevelopment Districts

Major and Collector Street Plan

Urban Forestry Recommended and Prohibited Tree and Shrub List

APBP Bicycle Parking Guidelines

WeGo Transit Design Guidelines

Connecting Housing to Infrastructure Program (CHIP)

Multimodal Transportation Analysis

Connect Downtown

Pie Town Mobility Study

11th Avenue Corridor Study

SoBro Strategic Master Plan

WalknBike Nashville

Complete and Green Streets Implementation Guide

Low Impact Development Standards Manual

nMotion Transit Plan

Plan to Play: Countywide Parks and Greenways Master Plan

Imagine East Bank

IMAGE CREDITS

GOAL 1 Future-Focused Ecological Design

01A	Cumberland Park (enr.com)
01B	Advantages of Green Roofing (ecoideaz.com)
01C	Sitephocus Archives courtesy of Brian Phelps
01D	Water Conservation with Plants (facilities.northeastern.edu)
01E	Noble Park (nashvilleguru.com)
02A/B	Neuhoff Curve Building (smithgeestudio.com)
02C	Making Buildings Bird-Friendly with Safety Glass (archdaily.com)
02D	Music City Center (aerialsoutheast.com)

GOAL 2 Human-Oriented Design

03A	Diagram by Yuqing Wang
03B	Public Landscapes at Forumtorget Square (landezine-award.com)
03C	Public Art at the front of Blanton Museum of Art (blantonmuseum.org)
04A	Prima at Paseo South Gulch (primasouthgulch.com)
04B	Peabody Plaza / HASTINGS Arch. (archdaily.com via Kendall McCaugherty at Hall + Merrick Photographers)
04C	Alcove (skyscrapercenter.com via James Steinkamp Photography)
04D	Bridgestone Tower | 200 4th Ave S (loopnet.com)
04E	The Joseph Hotel in Nashville... (interiordesign.net)
05A	Domino Park (segd.org)
05B	Architecture & Design for the disabled people (arch2o.com)
05C	Thisbe & Noah's Promise Park: A Playground for All (promisepark.org)
05D	Central Park, New York City, USA (istockphoto.com)

GOAL 3 Contextual and Connected Design

06A	Gulch Crossing (esarch.com)
06B	Austin, Texas. (traveler.marriott.com)
06C	Warren Street Hotel's Exterior Nears Completion (newyorkyimby.com via Michael Young)
06D	Welcome to Fan Pier (fanpierboston.com)
06E	Diagram by Jared Islas
06F	Apple Downtown Brooklyn (fosterandpartners.com)
07A	Gulch Greenway in Nashville (reddit.com)
07B	Downtown Seattle Corridor Gets Visioning Treatment (pedbikeimages.org)
07C	Imagine East Bank: A Vision Plan for Nashville's Next Great Neighborhoods (nashville.gov)
07D	Lift's Pillar system (bloomberg.com via Mat Rick at Lyft Photographers)
07E/F	Making the case for bike rooms (activetrans.org)

GOAL 4 High-Caliber Architectural Design

08A	The Ultimate Guide to Mastering Architectural Diagrams (firstinarchitecture.co.uk)
08B	DRAW Architecture + Urban Design, LLC (facebook.com)
08C	Virgin Hotel (hodgsondouglas.com)
08D	Albion in the Gulch (albionresidential.com)
08E	Parke West in Nashville (apartments.com)
08F	Assembly Food Hall (gensler.com)
08G	Paseo South Gulch (someraroadinc.com)
09A	Diagram by Yuqing Wang
09B	Originality and luxury Hotel in Berlin (aasarchitecture.com)
09C/D	12 Simply Amazing Building Facades (interiordesign.net)
09E	Facade Panels - Portuguese Limestone (archdaily.com)
09F	Solar Walls - eBLADE (archdaily.com)
09G	The Broad Museum / Diller Scofidio + Renfro (archdaily.com)
09H	Poly Corporation Headquarters (som.com)
09I	Redchurch Townhouse / 31|44 Architects (archdaily.com)
09J	Properly Breathing House / H&P Architects (archdaily.com)
09K	The Grand Mulberry (archpaper.com)
09L	Bricks Return With Style in New High-End Buildings (nytimes.com)

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NASHVILLE

PLANNING

Downtown Code Design Guidelines for Nashville, TN