



APPENDIX B:

Design Principles for the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor

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B Design Principles for the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor

I. INTRODUCTION

Bordered by the ocean to the south and Portola Drive to the north, and located west of 41st Avenue, Pleasure Point is a unique community with a strong connection to the ocean and surf culture, outdoor living, and with vibrant local businesses and eclectic architecture. Seeing an increased interest in developing the commercial area of Pleasure Point, in 2018 the County initiated a community planning effort focused on the commercial corridor (Corridor) along Portola Drive between 26th Avenue and 41st Avenue, and including lower 41st Avenue north of Portola Drive to the border with Capitola (see map below).



East Cliff Drive in Pleasure Point



The Pleasure Point Commercial and Mixed-Use corridor includes both Portola Drive and lower 41st Avenue, as shown in the figure above.

Working collaboratively with the community through a series of public workshops, the county developed a Planning Study (Study) with a vision and guiding design principles for the Corridor. The Study can be viewed [here](#):

<https://sccoplanning.com/PlanningHome/SustainabilityPlanning/PleasurePointCommercialCorridor.aspx>.

This Appendix incorporates the vision, private realm design principles, and public realm design principles from the Study that apply to private development. Other public realm design principles have been incorporated into the Santa Cruz County General Plan. Quantitative standards provided in the Study have been codified in the Santa Cruz County Code as special standards for commercially zoned sites in the Pleasure Point commercial corridor.

This Appendix, along with General Plan policies and County Code standards, ensures that future development contributes to the community vision for the Corridor as a vibrant, active, locally focused community where people shop, dine, live, relax, and interact, that is safe and convenient for all modes of travel, with varied architectural styles, attainable workforce housing, and interesting open spaces.



Lower 41st Avenue

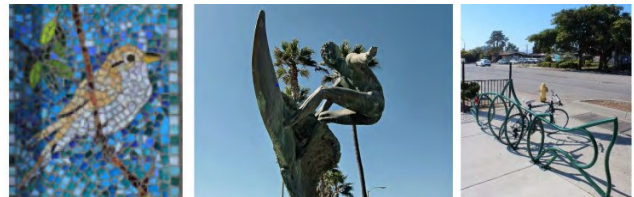
The Study also included streetscape concepts that provided various options for reconfiguring the Portola

Drive streetscape and roadway. These concepts are being further evaluated and will be considered in future planning efforts.

HOW TO USE THIS APPENDIX

This Appendix applies to all new development and redevelopment projects on parcels within the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor, as identified in the County [GISWeb \(santacruzcounty.us\)](#). The Vision (Part II of the Appendix), Private Realm Design Principles (Part III), and Public Realm Design Principles (Part IV) provide guidance for site planning and building design, addressing design considerations such as architectural style and community character and compatibility, active street frontages, transitions to residential parcels, on-site parking, circulation and access, public art and green street features.

The Private Realm Design Principles in Part III of the Appendix also identify distinct character areas within the corridor and desired land uses within these areas that should be considered when establishing new uses in the corridor.



This Appendix is to be used in conjunction with the Santa Cruz County General Plan, County Code, Design Criteria, and Design Guidelines. As the Design Principles for the Corridor address several aspects of building and site design comprehensively, only the following sections of the Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines apply to development within the Corridor:

- Chapter 2, Overarching Design Guidelines
- Appendix A, Street Zone Standards

Where conflicts exist between the Design Principles for the Corridor and the applicable sections of the Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines, the Design Principles for the Corridor will take precedence.

II. VISION

Identifying a shared vision for the future of the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor was a key step in the community planning process. Each of the design principles are consistent with, and help implement, the Vision.

Vision Statement

This Vision Statement is key for describing how future public and private improvements shall meet community desires:

“Pleasure Point is a vibrant and eclectic place where people shop, dine, live, relax, and interact. A place where people can walk safely along wide and active sidewalks, ride bikes and skateboards on safe and comfortable bicycle lanes, drive cars and access transit on streets designed for all modes of transportation. A place characterized by buildings with varied architectural styles and sizes, compatible with local character, interesting open spaces, and with attainable workforce housing. Where parking is convenient but does not dominate the area. An active, locally-focused social and commercial center where the neighborhoods on the north and south sides of Portola Drive meet.”



Pleasure Point Street Fair, Portola Avenue

III. PRIVATE REALM GUIDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following guiding design principles apply to new and remodeled development projects on privately owned land in the study area. The “**private realm**” includes all uses located on private property, such as buildings, on-site parking, plazas and landscaping. While each parcel has its own unique size, shape and design constraints, the following design principles apply to all new private development along the Pleasure Point Commercial and Mixed-Use Corridor.

Purpose: To facilitate review and design of development projects so that each project contributes to the Vision for the area.

OVERARCHING PRIVATE REALM DESIGN PRINCIPLES



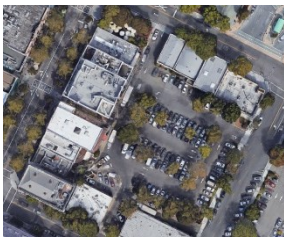
A. Support local economic vitality by encouraging a mix of businesses and uses that complement and support the surrounding residential neighborhoods, encouraging the inclusion of workforce housing, and discouraging new hotels.



B. Require quality architecture and materials that reflect the eclectic character of Pleasure Point. This includes supporting a variety of materials, colors and styles. However, large expanses of stucco on front and side facades are discouraged in the Pleasure Point community.



C. Encourage publicly-accessible plazas and landscaping to be incorporated into the site design of new development projects in order to improve aesthetics, create more shade, increase pedestrian activity and promote sustainability through the application of on-site prefiltration of stormwater.



D. Require private parking to be located at the rear of parcels where feasible so it is not fronting Portola Drive. This will allow buildings to be closer to street and allow for a more active pedestrian environment.



E. Minimize the appearance of building height by locating taller portions of buildings in the center of parcels and requiring articulated frontages.



F. Require buildings in the Corridor to respect the existing height limit with no exceptions and minimize the appearance of height through setbacks, upper story step-backs and articulated frontages.



G. Encourage the transition of underutilized properties and auto-oriented properties on the north side of Portola Drive west of 36th Avenue to mixed-use and residential development, with zoning and development standards that support attainable housing (including smaller units suitable for seniors and singles).



H. Support the transition of underutilized parcels east of 36th Avenue to predominantly commercial uses, with some residential units predominantly on the upper floors.



I. Encourage publicly accessible art on privately-owned parcels though the installation of murals, creatively designed bicycle racks and benches, and other decorative and functional art, especially within sites east of 36th Avenue.

Eastern Portion (38th Avenue to 41st Avenue)

A commercial mixed-use area that builds on the existing mix of retail, restaurant and other commercial uses. New mixed-use projects are possible with residential uses on upper floors. Continue the diversity of uses and architectural character present on lower 41st Avenue.





STYLE AND CHARACTER

Intent: To protect and enhance the eclectic character of the Pleasure Point community by ensuring that future developments and improvements reflect the unique nature of the area.

- 1. Architecture.** Require varied architectural styles and the use of natural materials that support the character of Pleasure Point. Discourage large expanses of stucco on front and side facades, corporate or franchise-specific architecture, or other styles that do not reflect the Pleasure Point community.
- 2. Maximum Building Size.** Encourage small or fine-grain buildings that provide space for small local “mom & pop” stores, cafes and restaurants. Prohibit individual tenant spaces larger than 20,000 square feet from locating in the corridor to support local businesses and discourage larger chain or “big box” stores.
- 3. Building Scale Character/Street Interface.** Require new buildings to be of an appropriate scale for the corridor, with building articulation and/or upper story step-backs from public streets.
- 4. Massing.** Locate shorter (one to two story) buildings closer to Portola Drive and any three-story elements towards the middle of a parcel or site to reduce the feel of building mass from the street.
- 5. Height.** Respect the existing height limit for any new building along the corridor.
- 6. Setbacks.** Ensure variable building setbacks:
 - a. Minimum:** Enough distance from face of curb to allow for a 10-foot sidewalk fronting Portola Drive and 6-foot sidewalks on side streets. Encourage larger sidewalks fronting Portola Drive when located in front of restaurants, cafes or similar uses to encourage outdoor dining.
 - b. Maximum:** 20 feet from the edge of the sidewalk to any new building with ground floor commercial, restaurant or office uses fronting Portola Drive, or 30 feet from the edge of the sidewalk for any new building with ground floor residential uses fronting Portola Drive or for outdoor cafes. Allow outdoor

seating/active patio areas within setbacks in front of commercial and restaurant uses. Building setbacks within the allowable range shall be appropriate for specific conditions, including building height, the proposed use, and allowances for landscaping.

- 7. Neighborhood Transitions.** Ensure that commercial buildings along Portola Drive provide a minimum 30-foot buffer between the building and the property line adjoining a residentially zoned parcel. Encourage landscaping, plazas, mini-parks or parking in these buffer areas. Ensure new residential buildings along Portola Drive provide a minimum 20-foot buffer between the back of the building and the property line facing existing residential parcels. An additional 5-foot setback from the property line shall apply to the third story of any commercial or residential building adjoining a residential lot.
- 8. Step-backs.** Step back the third floor of all commercial and mixed-use buildings an additional 10 feet from the first two floors along Portola Drive to break up building bulk and maintain the eclectic character of the corridor.
- 9. Articulated Frontages.** Ensure that new buildings and projects include articulated frontages with alternating setbacks, building planes, and varied colors and materials to break up bulk and create more pedestrian interest.
- 10. Active Street Frontages.** Encourage active street frontages, new alleys and active use of alleys along the corridor that incorporate features including outdoor seating, landscaping, and decorative and functional art such as decorative bike racks, fences, and murals. These areas should enhance the experience for pedestrians and bicyclists while encouraging people to linger and visit local businesses. They should also have varied and articulated front facades with extensive window glazing at the ground floor, to support an interesting and comfortable pedestrian streetscape.
- 11. Activated Corners.** Encourage the repurposing of corners in existing large parking lots for more active uses, such as flower stands, micro-cafes, and public art, to assist in activating the corridor and neighborhood, while maintaining onsite parking requirements.
- 12. Plazas.** Encourage new plazas along the corridor that have a blend of hardscape and natural landscaping to create areas of social gathering and interest.
- 13. Pop-Up Events.** Encourage temporary pop-up events and joint use of private parking lots to activate them.
- 14. Mountain Views.** Ensure that new or substantially remodeled projects on the north side of Portola Drive continue to provide views of the Santa Cruz mountains through the site from the sidewalk on the south side of Portola Drive. Corridor views may be acceptable.



DESIRABLE USES

Intent: To ensure the future economic vitality of the area by supporting local businesses and encouraging a mix of commercial, office, public/quasi-public, and residential uses that complement the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

- 1. Vertical Mixed-Use.** Encourage vertical mixed-use projects where the ground floor includes commercial and/or restaurant uses, and upper floor(s) contain commercial, office or residential uses. Vertical mixed use is the preferred type within the eastern portion between 38th Avenue and 41st Avenue.
- 2. Horizontal Mixed-Use.** Encourage horizontal mixed-use projects on larger parcels where a variety of uses can be in different buildings on the same site. When utilizing horizontal mixed-use, orient commercial, restaurant and office uses closer to Portola Drive, and residential uses either set back from the street or located towards the sides, middle or rear of the project. Public/quasi-public uses such as community centers may also be incorporated.
- 3. Workforce Housing.** Encourage new multi-family residential units consisting of attached housing developed at a density sufficient to support smaller dwellings, especially studios and one-bedroom units, that are more affordable by design to Santa Cruz residents and workers.
- 4. Hotels.** Discourage new hotels within the corridor, which are less favored by the community.



ON-SITE PARKING

Intent: To avoid negative impacts on surrounding residential neighborhoods and existing businesses, new or substantially remodeled projects should provide adequate on-site parking that is convenient for patrons and residents while also ensuring adequate space for enlivening uses on the street and convenient access for bicyclists and pedestrians.

- 1. Amount.** New projects in the study area shall comply with parking standards in the Santa Cruz County Code.
- 2. Tandem Parking.** Tandem parking is allowed for single and multi-family uses in the Corridor.
- 3. Location.** Encourage the efficient layout of on-site parking to reduce the overall amount of parking coverage on the site and limit the number of unique ingress and egress points from the site to either Portola Drive or side streets.
- 4. Rear Parking.** Require new developments to locate on-site parking towards the rear of the site whenever feasible. Parking is allowed within setback and buffer areas when there are appropriate edge treatments to limit impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- 5. Stormwater Capture.** Encourage the use of permeable pavers, bio-swales and other methods in parking areas to capture onsite stormwater and pre-treat it before it goes into the public storm drain system.



INTERNAL CIRCULATION AND ACCESS

Intent: To ensure new projects prevent circulation conflicts and enhance connectivity through improved site access, cross easements, enhanced safety and reduced delivery truck conflicts.

- 1. Driveways.** Design driveways and alley access points to improve site access, enhance safety and reduce vehicle conflicts with all modes of travel. Encourage shared driveways.
- 2. Long Blocks.** Provide safe and comfortable pedestrian paths along driveways and alleys to help “break up” larger blocks and allow for a more pedestrian scale along the corridor.
- 3. Cross Easement Coordination.** Encourage property owners to create connections behind and between adjacent parcels by adding new easements, and to better coordinate existing easements to provide more alley access and site access through the back side or middle of larger blocks or sites. Encourage vehicular access between parcels to reduce on-street congestion. Specifically, when Assessor’s Parcel Number 032-041-68 is redeveloped, a vehicular cross easement is desired to extend Avis Lane through the parcel to connect with 35th Avenue on the western boundary of the site.
- 4. Truck Delivery Coordination.** Encourage businesses to schedule truck deliveries during off-peak daylight hours (between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM) so trucks do not conflict with commute times or create unwanted nighttime noise impacts for surrounding neighborhoods. Encourage deliveries and pick-ups for Portola Drive businesses to occur on Portola Drive rather than side streets.

IV. PUBLIC REALM GUIDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES



GREEN STREET FEATURES

Intent: To create and maintain an integrated green street system that allows for stormwater runoff capture and filtration as part of the overall streetscape design of Portola Drive.

- 1. Stormwater Planters.** Install naturally drained, landscaped stormwater planters where possible, exploring the transition from piped to natural percolation and including these planters on sidewalks, medians, bulb-outs, quasi-public parks and plazas.
- 2. Integration with Private Development.** Work with property and business owners to find creative ways to integrate private drainage/outflows with stormwater management systems located within the public realm.
- 3. Permeable Paving.** Encourage the use of permeable paving materials or porous asphalt within the public realm along parking lanes.
- 4. Plant Selection.** Use low-maintenance native or drought-tolerant plant species in streetscape landscaping to minimize water consumption and maintenance. Incorporate street trees that provide shade at regular intervals to improve the pedestrian experience and the scenic qualities of the corridor.

PUBLIC ART



Intent: To promote creativity and support the eclectic character of Pleasure Point through the placement of unique and functional public art.

1. **Location.** Display public art pieces at entry gateways, along Portola Drive, and on wide sidewalk spaces so they are highly visible and become iconic features for Pleasure Point.
2. **Style.** Create a cohesive series of art pieces either by theme, artist, style or materials and explore installation of artistically designed bicycle racks, trash receptacles, seating, lighting posts and utility boxes.
3. **Local Artists.** Explore opportunities for local artists to design, fabricate and install public art that reflects and promotes the surf and ocean culture of Pleasure Point.
4. **Dual Purpose.** Encourage art pieces that serve both an aesthetic and functional purpose, such as sculptural bicycle racks, trash receptacles, seating, lighting posts and utility boxes.
5. **Character and Style.** Encourage public art that reflects Pleasure Point's unique history and culture.