



CHAPTER 4

UNIFYING FEATURES

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Stone Creek's Vision to create a sense of place reaches beyond its diverse mixed-use neighborhoods, ample park space, inviting public gathering places, and recreational amenities. Drawing from European villages and traditional American neighborhoods for inspiration, the *Stone Creek* Vision looks to incorporate unifying features that are timeless and enduring. These elements will play a unique role in placemaking at *Stone Creek* and will incorporate beauty and inspiration into everyday life, while at the same time reflecting *Stone Creek's* Vision of creating an enduring community of connected neighborhoods.

Unifying features within *Stone Creek* will take a variety of forms. Sculptures, statues, fountains, obelisks, artistic walls, and imaginatively designed play structures are examples of the variety of elements that will occur in *Stone Creek* to enliven public enjoyment and cultivate a sense of pride in the community. A cohesive theme or palette at key locations, such as entries to *Stone Creek* or outdoor gathering spaces, will create a strong sense of place for *Stone Creek*.



Within its piazzas and park elements, *Stone Creek* will provide a setting for cultural performances and outdoor festivals to take place and provide opportunities for members of the community – both young and old – to enjoy. Seasonal installments will include various thematic displays; while permanent installations, including statues, fountains, and walls, may express the vision for a specific neighborhood.

Unifying features are planned to be viewed and enjoyed by *Stone Creek* visitors, residents, and employees. The primary purpose is to reflect *Stone Creek's* Vision and enhance the overall quality of life and experience for those who live, work, and visit *Stone Creek*. Within *Stone Creek*, unifying features will contribute to the visual landscape and enhance its surroundings. Through storytelling and informational signage, unifying features will further reinforce the *Stone Creek* Vision and make the community a highly-desired place to live, work, play, and visit.



4.1 OVERVIEW

Unifying features will reflect the Vision of *Stone Creek* and will encompass a variety of forms. Some form of unifying features shall be required in all development projects and gathering spaces within *Stone Creek*.

This chapter provides examples of the type and primary locations for unifying features within *Stone Creek*. The form, design, and placement may change as build-out occurs to respond to the desires and identities of individual neighborhoods, as well as to add variety and intrigue in different places at different times. Nevertheless, cohesion is critical within *Stone Creek*.



Elements selected as unifying features should be reflective of *Stone Creek's* Vision and should be connected in a spirit that embodies *Stone Creek* when viewed comprehensively. This will serve to enforce placemaking and be unified so that observers sense that the various neighborhoods and spaces of *Stone Creek* are all part of one cohesive project.

As presented in this chapter, unifying features within *Stone Creek* will generally take the form of sculptures and statues; fountains; play structures; way-finding elements, such as clock towers and obelisks; and unifying wall elements and entry monumentation. Elements may also be used to frame vistas and announce arrival to a new space within a park or a special part of a piazza. This may also be applied to community signage, lighting, and monumentation.



Unifying features shall exemplify Stone Creek's Vision and contribute to the enduring character of the neighborhoods within Stone Creek. The basic elements that should be considered for unifying features are:

- ❧ Integrate elements and amenities that respond to nature and the context of their surroundings.
- ❧ Use elements and amenities as community landmarks, encouraging public gathering and way-finding.
- ❧ Take advantage of opportunities to emphasize the connections between Stone Creek and naturally occurring amenities, such as Carroll Canyon Creek.
- ❧ Encourage temporary displays and exhibits to create a dynamic changing and engaging environment.
- ❧ Utilize Stone Creek's various piazzas and pocket parks to provide opportunities for outdoor displays.
- ❧ Promote artistic treatments of infrastructure improvements such as utility boxes, street-end bollards, lampposts, and street furniture to create a distinct sense of character and identity, while integrating the Stone Creek project as a whole.

Figure 4-1, *Potential Locations for Unifying Features*, identifies logical areas within Stone Creek for unifying features to occur. Figure 6-8, *Locations of Wall Elements Within Stone Creek*, shows locations for unifying wall elements in Stone Creek. Additional opportunities will present themselves within each private development in Stone Creek's various neighborhoods.



4.2 ELEMENTS

Sculpture/Statues – Sculptures and statues are two of the most common and versatile forms of unifying features. These are often constructed of durable, easily cared-for material. Permanent works may be integrated with architecture or landscaping to aid in the creation of a site or neighborhood's enduring identity and character. Other statutes and sculptural elements, however, may be intended to have only a seasonal or temporary existence. Within Stone Creek, sculptures may be installed as a focal point in a piazza or arranged as a series of sculptures within one of Stone Creek's neighborhoods.



Figure 4-1. Potential Locations for Unifying Features



Conceptual design for illustrative purposes only. Actual design may vary from this typical representation.

Fountains – Fountains are a multipurpose aspect of the public experience. At their best, fountains are monuments to the fascination of water. Water soothes and relaxes, inspires reflection, and is a source of beauty. The gentle gurgle of water from fountains can help screen out noises present in urban environments, such as those emanating from automobiles or airplanes. Within San Diego's water-sensitive environment, fountains additionally provide educational opportunities relative to origins and conservation of water.

Within *Stone Creek*, fountains are ideally suited for the piazzas. Fountains may be grand or intimate in scale and may be interactive, inviting both the young and young-at-heart to play and cool off in their



waters during warm summer months. Fountains should be reflective of the presence of Carroll Canyon Creek and allow individuals and families to indulge in the pleasures of free-flowing water. All fountains within *Stone Creek* shall consider the use of recirculated or reclaimed water and may include educational signage to explain the value of water and the importance of water conservation.



Play Sculpture – To create a healthy community, Stone Creek strives to not only be walkable, but actively engage the young—and young at heart—through innovative play sculptures. Early exposure to physical activity is important to the development of healthy exercise habits and engaging skills that allow for a lifetime of fitness. Play sculptures in the form of bulky, kid-friendly pieces and novel play structures allow children to exercise body and mind in a dynamic environment. Stone Creek’s various park spaces provide opportunities to engage the public—children and parents alike—in active play. Locations for play sculptures should consider not only accessibility, but also the element of surprise. Locating a play sculpture within a “room” in Stone Creek Central Park or Westside Gardens, for example, allows for unexpected discovery and enjoyment.



Wall Elements – Walls will be located throughout Stone Creek to serve a variety of functions. Within Stone Creek’s parks and open space elements, low stone walls will define Stone Creek Central Park and Westside Gardens and may be used to create terraces, separate park features, or allow for slope stability. Low stone walls will also be used to signify trail entrances and as a unifying feature throughout Stone Creek. Walls should be made of natural materials, such as stone or brick, or in neutral colors of patterned or stamped concrete.



Way-Finding – Within a community as large and diverse as *Stone Creek*, way-finding is especially important to ensure a pleasant and efficient experience and to provide cohesiveness to the neighborhoods. Way-finding can also be used to direct pedestrians and motorists to the different neighborhoods within *Stone Creek* and, once within the desired neighborhood, to direct patrons to various

neighborhood components and amenities. Way-finding signage can take a variety of forms. Design elements of *Stone Creek*'s Vision should be incorporated into these signage opportunities. Way-finding is further facilitated by elements easily discernable from a distance, such as clock towers or obelisks, which can also provide opportunities for artistic expression.



4.3 SPECIAL EVENTS AND FESTIVAL SPACES

The temperate year-round climate that is characteristic of San Diego affords ample opportunity for outdoor events at Stone Creek. Stone Creek's expansive network of parks and open spaces further expands possibilities for outdoor performances and festivals. Performances and festivals may be accommodated in the outdoor "rooms" of larger park spaces or in pocket parks. The network of unencumbered piazzas at the heart of Stone Creek provides additional space for alfresco opportunities. Both parks and piazzas may offer the ideal setting for evening film screenings or musical performances. These performances and festivities will serve to enliven Stone Creek's parks and piazzas, as well as neighborhood streets. Outdoor opportunities from a variety of forms will energize urban spaces and create an enduring identity for Stone Creek.

