

Introduction

“Community streets are public rights-of-way, which unite neighborhoods, provide access for motorists and non-motorists, and promote neighborhood identity, health, comfort, and safety.” -Moorish and Brown, *Planning to Stay*

Streets play a major role in shaping the form of the urban environment. The quality of the street experience is a key element in the quality of a neighborhood. The City's 1989 *Progress Guide and General Plan* contains language that is still relevant that describes the function of the City's street system as follows:

Streets serve a variety of purposes. One is for the circulation of people, vehicles, goods, and services (utilities). Streets also serve as shopping corridors, restaurant rows, linear parks, residential front yards, extensions of office lobbies, ceremonial gathering places, parade grounds, racing courses, display areas, entertainment strips, etc. The street is really the City, organized along a corridor. It is a continuous forum for gathering where all those activities have their overture, making city life what it is. It has economic, social, aesthetic, political, ecological—even philosophical—implications. And all this is in addition to providing a right-of-way for people and things.

The City's current *General Plan* with its City of Villages strategy continues the tradition of calling for streets to be designed for all users of the right-of-way and recognizes streets as an important element in shaping our urban form and improving our neighborhood quality by:

- Balancing the needs of emergency vehicles with everyday traffic concerns—such as vehicle speeding and pedestrian safety—through street design policy.
- Promoting an interconnected street network that includes pedestrian and bicycle facilities where topography and land form permit.
- Creating a more attractive and safe pedestrian environment through the promotion of an active streetscape and the use of public art and artistic elements.
- Reducing peak energy demand through the incorporation of urban heat island reduction measures into the appropriate site and street design guidelines, landscape standards, and building codes.
- Promoting pedestrian- and transit-friendly design of City streets.
- Providing capacity and operational improvements to streets to minimize congestion and focus on persons and goods, not just vehicles.

These are the guiding principles of the Street Design Manual.

The purpose of the Street Design Manual is to provide information and guidance for the design of the public right-of-way that recognizes the many and varied purposes that a street serves. The Street Design Manual is intended to assist in the implementation of the *General Plan*, the *Strategic Framework Element*, the *Transit-Oriented Development Design Guidelines*, and the *Land Development Code*. In addition, it is intended to assist in the implementation of the special requirements established through community plans, specific plans, precise plans, or other City Council-adopted policy and/or regulatory documents.

Applicability

These guidelines are applicable to newly developing areas and to older areas that are undergoing major revitalization and redevelopment. In areas with sensitive habitat or unusual and difficult terrain, these guidelines may be modified as appropriate.

In historic and older, developed neighborhoods, the existing character of the streets should be maintained and enhanced. In these older neighborhoods, nonstandard street widths are frequently in place in many locations. Existing street designs and configurations not illustrated in this manual may be considered appropriate for continued use in such neighborhoods. The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide, Urban Bikeway Design Guide, and Transit Street Design Guide may be referenced when designing an existing road for traffic calming, bike facilities, and for retrofitting for all modes of travel. Sound engineering judgement should be applied to protect public health, safety and welfare, subject to approval of the City Engineer. Final decision should consider future maintenance cost, in perpetuity.

This manual establishes guidelines to carry out the City's street design functions. It does not establish a legal standard for such functions nor is it intended to do so. Moreover, these guidelines do not supersede requirements and policies established through community plans, specific plans, precise plans, and City standard drawings, or other City Council-adopted policy and/or regulatory documents; rather, they are designed to work in concert with them.

Note: All drawings included in this manual are for illustrative purposes only and should not be used as design or construction plans.

How to Use This Manual

The Street Design Manual is divided into six chapters:

- Chapter 1: Roadway & Alley Design
- Chapter 2: Pedestrian Design
- Chapter 3: Traffic Calming
- Chapter 4: Street Lighting
- Chapter 5: Parkway Configurations
- Chapter 6: Design Standards

It is important to understand how all six sections work. All six elements should be considered in order to design an effective street system. This manual complements the *Transit-Oriented Development Design Guidelines* and substantiates the importance of site planning in the design of an effective street system.

Each of the street classifications described in this manual includes references to Chapter 5 which indicates the appropriate parkway configuration for the type of street.