

3.1 Urban Design Vision and Principles

This Precise Plan establishes a new urban design direction for North Bayshore which is very different from the area's existing suburban business park character. New development will contribute to a highly-sustainable district interwoven with new, complete, walkable neighborhoods and natural habitat.

New development will be distinctively urban in form and character, with taller and varied building heights. Smaller building setbacks and design elements, such as stoops, entries, storefronts, and dining areas will support lively pedestrian-oriented streets and public spaces. Ground floors of buildings will include living, working, and shopping spaces to make it comfortable and convenient for residents, employees and visitors to walk or bike to work, transit, open space, and services. New development will use high quality design and detailing, emphasizing the use of natural building materials. Buildings will include varied elements such as simpler building facades and massing breaks; projections and recesses; and rich and varied architectural detailing to create cohesive and attractive designs and signature buildings.

Building this vision requires a plan that allows innovation and creativity in the design of each project while ensuring that they form a coherent whole. The urban design principles that underlie the Plan are presented in the following section. This forms the framework to guide the systematic remaking of North Bayshore, one project at a time. The design principles express a set of values that set a new direction for North Bayshore. The principles help define the characteristics and placement of buildings on a parcel, as well as the relationship between buildings and public spaces.



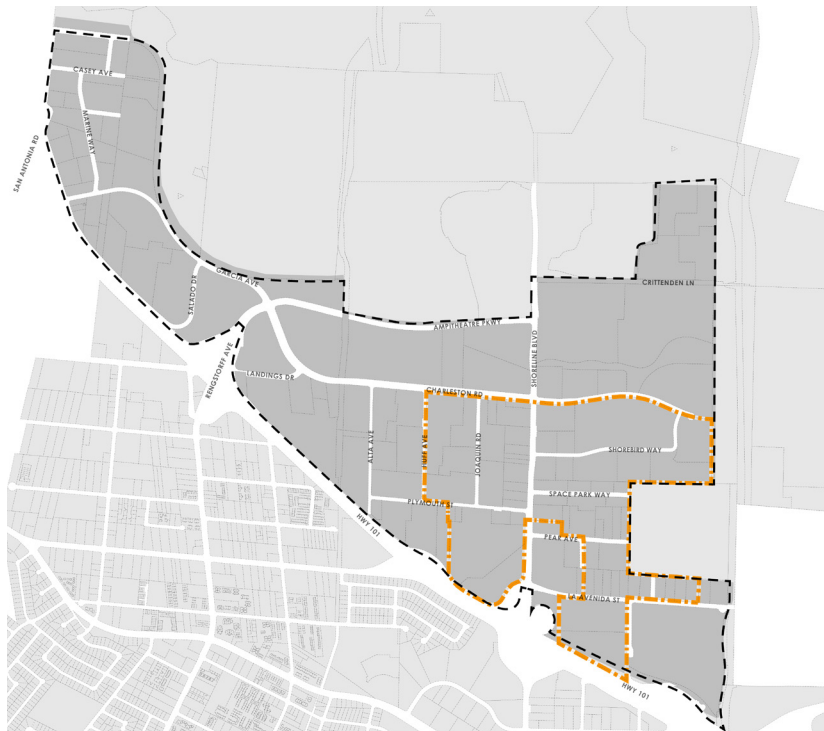
Building massing helps shape public spaces.



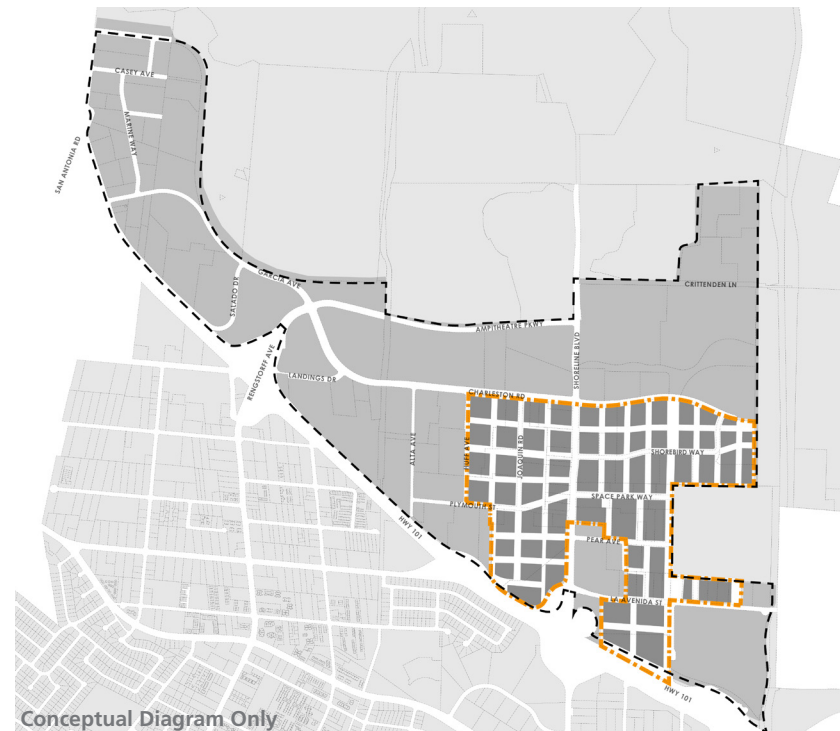
Active building frontages define lively public spaces.

Develop a connected network of pedestrian-oriented blocks and streets

A new grid pattern should be overlaid onto existing streets and blocks to create a fine-grained network of human-scale streets that encourages walking and bicycling. This block structure places services, retail, and recreational activities within a short distance of new homes and jobs.



Existing large block pattern in North Bayshore with complete neighborhood boundary.



Conceptual Diagram Only

Block sizes should be small enough to create frequent intersections and encourage walking and bicycling. Typically intersections should be spaced at least every 400 feet.



Mid-block paseos enhance pedestrian connections to destinations.



Active ground floors should front paseos.



The layout and size of blocks may be adjusted to the size of proposed development and should integrate with the surrounding block plan.



New streets and Greenways should align across existing rights-of-way with safe and convenient crossings.

Create high-quality public frontages

The public frontage is the area between the street curb and the back of the sidewalk or cycletrack, and is important to facilitate pedestrian activity and access to sites and buildings. It includes landscape planting strips, street lighting, street trees, and sidewalks, and off-street cycle tracks. The area serves as an important component of the mobility system where people gather and socialize.



Street trees and furniture and sidewalk design should help maintain and reinforce pedestrian scale.



Building setback areas should be landscaped using design strategies that improve the pedestrian environment.



Public frontages should meet the street type standards in the Mobility Chapter (See Section 6.3).



Seating for active uses such as a restaurant or cafe area may encroach into the public frontage area.

Front buildings toward streets and shared open spaces

New buildings should be located close to the street to create a vibrant and pedestrian-oriented street. Buildings should create a continuous streetwall that defines the edge of the public frontage (sidewalk, landscape area, and street) and helps to establish “outdoor rooms.” The streetwall should be predominately 45 feet to 65 feet in height.



Buildings should be placed close to the street within Complete Neighborhood areas to create a streetwall and define the edge of the public space.



Buildings within the General and Edge Areas outside complete neighborhood areas are permitted greater setbacks to create a more landscaped, campus-like look and feel.



Breaks in the streetwall for entry to courtyards, buildings, and mid-block pedestrian paseos and Green Ways may be acceptable. Some break locations may include larger setbacks to provide additional open space.

Vary building massing to shape space and enhance building and neighborhood character

Building massing breaks should articulate the building as a series of clear masses with a range of depth, width, and height. Massing changes may be used to ensure transitions between buildings and adjacent lots, accentuate neighborhood character, and help define public and private spaces. New buildings and building heights should vary across North Bayshore to create visual interest and break up the scale of development while contributing to an area's overall streetwall form.



Buildings help form open spaces and are compatible in scale with adjacent buildings.



Residential building mass should be typically expressed by unit-sized vertical increments. Office building mass should be typically expressed by clean horizontal massing.



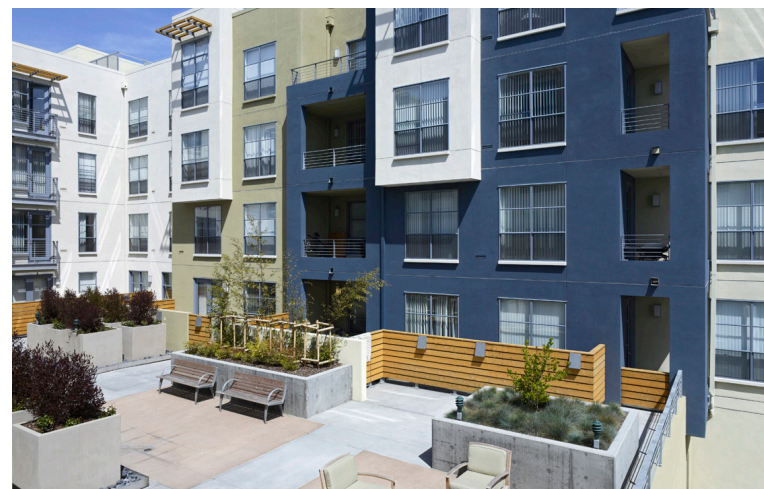
Residential buildings may accentuate vertical massing with smaller scale vertically-oriented elements, emphasizing their height and access to light and views while providing a clearly residential building scale and character.



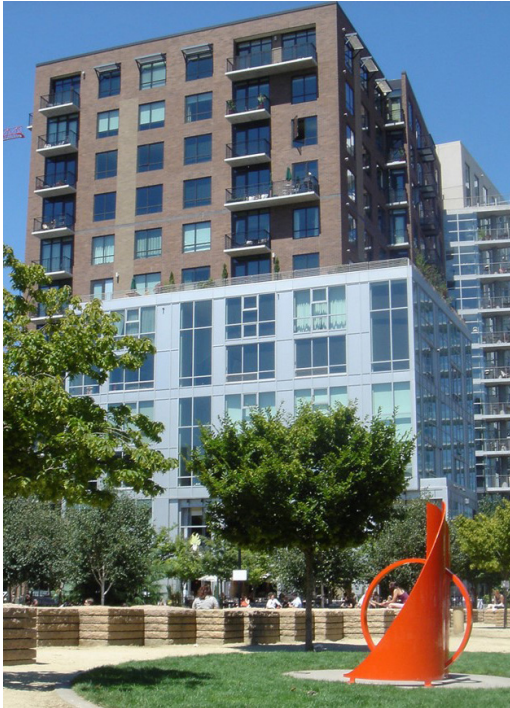
Building height should vary to create visual interest while maintaining the streetwall.



Office buildings may have simpler massing with relatively large unbroken façades, horizontally-oriented proportions, and repetitive fenestration.



Building massing may be used to create private, semi-private, and semi-public spaces in residential and office ground-floor court yards, dining forecourts, paseos, and other public spaces.



Tall buildings should mark prominent locations within the area, reinforcing key public open spaces, pedestrian and retail activity areas, and major intersections and transit routes.



High-rise residential building forms, above 95 feet, should be integrated into the design of the structure through massing, materials, and detailing to ensure the high-rise form is connected to the building base or podium.



Upper stories should be designed to be slender and graceful in form to reduce their visual appearance of bulk and mass. Upper-story building design strategies may include, but are not limited to, front stepbacks, horizontal and/or vertical articulation, building base or podium designs emphasizing human-scale features, and other design strategies. Stepbacks over the building base or podium should balance massing reduction objectives with creating a strong upper-story street presence.

Active ground floor frontages

Buildings should orient active frontages to public spaces. This helps define vibrant and human-scale public areas, which is critical to pedestrian activity, transit accessibility, and generating street life. Building frontage is the entire space between the public sidewalk and the building, including any low walls, stairs, ramps, building entries, landscaping, and the face of the building itself. The building frontage should be designed to clearly communicate the use of the ground floor, and whether it is open to the public or only to employees or residents.

Active Uses. Locating active uses on the ground floor of buildings that face public spaces helps create attractive and interesting streetscapes.



Ground-floor residential units are strongly encouraged to orient visible entries so they face streets, sidewalks, open spaces, and/or greenways.



Outdoor dining areas are encouraged and may be permitted in the public right-of-way (i.e. sidewalk areas) to enliven public areas. Outdoor dining areas should keep building entrances clear and unimpeded for building access.



Where ground-floor dwelling units are not provided, active non-residential uses should be located and oriented to public areas. Example of active non-residential uses include community spaces, common areas, cafes, restaurants, retail, personal services, salons, gyms, grocery stores, banks, and pharmacies. Transparent retail shopfronts should be used in areas where active, pedestrian-oriented frontages are encouraged or required.

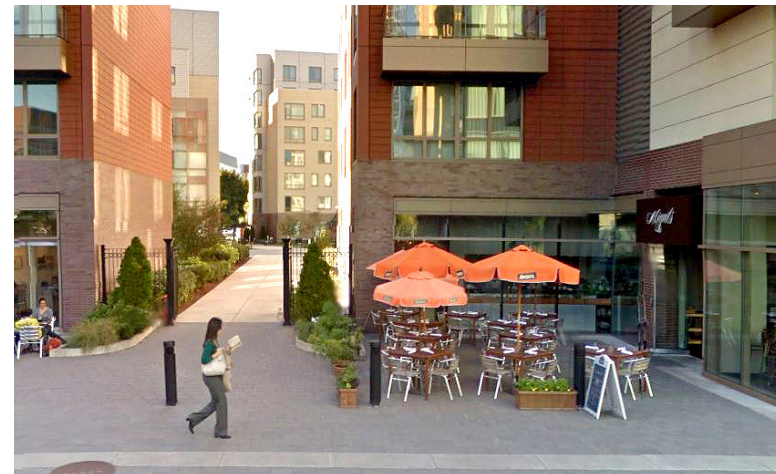
Setback areas. Setback areas allow a comfortable transition space between the ground-floor interior of a building and the street. Setback areas should be designed to be comfortable for people, and should include outdoor seating and dining areas, pedestrian access to front doors, and well-landscaped areas to allow for social interaction.



Residential entries from the sidewalk may have stoops, porches, dooryards, and landscaping to provide a transition space between the sidewalk and private units within the setback area.



Office and R&D uses may use low walls and landscaping to create areas of privacy while also enhancing adjacent public areas.



Outdoor dining areas may be permitted in the setback area to activate the street.

Transparency and privacy. Buildings should maintain a high degree of transparency to maximize the visual connection to the street by providing clear and unobstructed windows, doors, and other openings. Street-level glazing should be clear. Design techniques may be used to create an appropriate degree of privacy for ground floor residences and office spaces.



Retail shopfronts should have relatively large, transparent first floor windows tall enough to provide adequate view into ground-floor spaces. Retail shopfront glass should be transparent.



In ground-floor residential spaces, common rooms should front the street and include ample openings (doors and windows) which face the street. Private frontages such as stoops, door yards, and terraces can increase the privacy of these spaces.

Building entries. Building entries reinforce building character, increase visual interest, break up massing, and provide inviting entrances into buildings and residential units. Primary building entrances should be spaced to encourage access by pedestrians and oriented towards primary or retail streets. Building access should be calibrated to land use and building activities. The primary entrance to each street or ground-level tenant space along a public street should be provided from that street.



Retail shops and restaurants should have direct access from the sidewalk. Shopfront entrances should be easily recognizable from office and residential entrances, using design techniques such as transparency, awnings, and changes in color. Primary entrances should meet the sidewalk at grade.



Offices will typically be accessed through a circulation system of lobbies, hallways, stairs and elevators. Primary office entrances should meet the sidewalk at grade.



Direct access to residential units from the sidewalk is strongly encouraged. Residential entries should be frequent with entry doors facing the street, and may include stoops, porches, and dooryards to create a fine-grained pedestrian-oriented street.



Residential entries should be sheltered from the rain and wind and include an entry light.



Residential buildings may provide unit access with shared entries, hallways, stairs, and elevators from prominent lobbies facing the street.



Articulate building facades to create human-scale buildings that emphasize the uniqueness of North Bayshore



Buildings should be designed with a defined base; middle or body; and a top, cornice or parapet cap. Building ground floors should provide a solid base and strong frontage design, anchoring it to its lot. The middle floors should provide well-proportioned sets of windows and other elements framed within the building's top and bottom. The cornice or top of the building should provide a strong architectural termination and add visual interest, and in some cases include roof terraces or upper floor balconies.



All building facades should be designed to a human-scale with well-defined ground floors on the building base (or podium) with pedestrian-scale details and design elements that add visual interest and comfort to pedestrians.

Use architectural details and building materials to create visual interest and high-quality buildings

Building architecture and frontage design should express a building's function, provide interior spaces with natural light and views, and project the image of North Bayshore as a unique, sustainable urban place.



Buildings should include a variety of design details and materials to create distinctive architecture, such as changes in height, building shapes, window forms, color, location of entries, and projections to create visual interest and variety.



The composition of windows, bays, balconies and other architectural elements on building facades should reinforce the identity of each building and its use.



High-quality materials, design details, and color are encouraged to enhance the building base and ground-floor space and entrances.



Building materials and finishes should express a sense of permanence and durability.



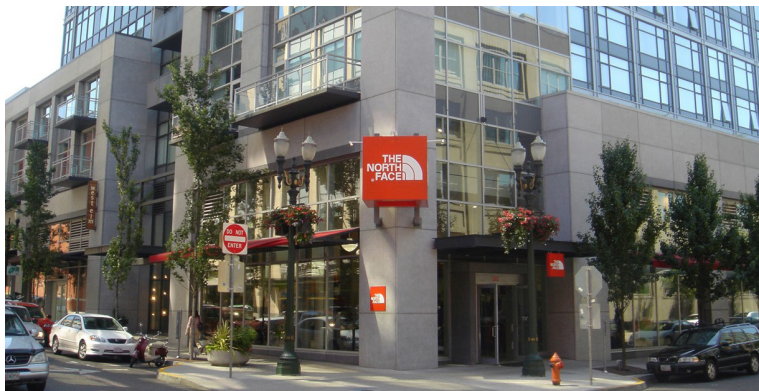
When multiple buildings are developed on a single block or parcel, each building should be differentiated through site design, building massing and design, and building materials and finishes.



Within a block, building variety is encouraged while maintaining a consistent streetwall and frontage.

Design corner buildings to emphasize an entry, shape a public space, or provide a unique building image

Each corner building should hold the corner of the parcel by placing a building façade within the build-to area at the block corner for a distance of at least 50 feet from the corner, and by providing distinctive building elements or other treatments.



Building corners should include special design features, such as taller or shorter building elements, tower features or architectural details and materials, including unique shapes for entrances.



Buildings may be setback or recessed at a corner to create a plaza.



Adjoining façades should be designed with equivalent architectural detail and materials.

Create high-quality on-site open space

On-site open space is a key element to reshape the character of North Bayshore. An appropriate amount of usable open space area should be provided within a site's open area based on the proposed building intensity, site design and expected number of residents, employees, and visitors. Open space should be visually integrated within the overall design and architectural character of the project. Spaces should be centrally focused, including near building entrances and along pedestrian paths between buildings. Active open spaces are encouraged along portions of building frontages for outdoor gathering, working, shopping and dining, with amenities such as bicycle storage, seating, and other furnishings to support the outdoor area. Open space areas should also meet the following principles:

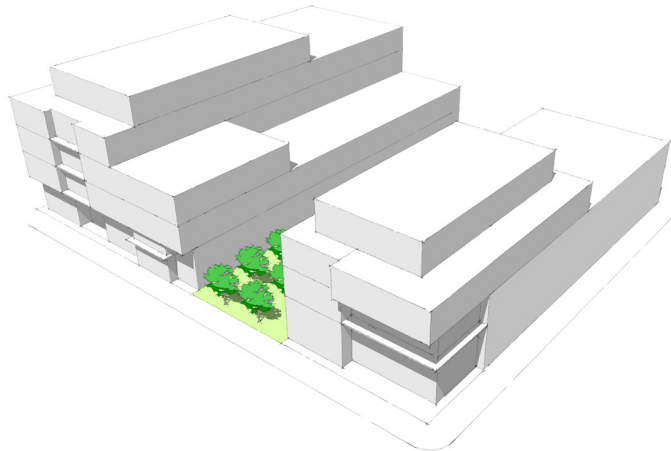
- Provide both shaded and unshaded areas, adequate lighting for nighttime use and security, and well-designed seating options, including seat walls, planter ledges, benches, moveable seating, fixed seating and seating steps.
- Integrate open space with the landscaping/open areas of the site. Open spaces on rooftops or upper-levels should include landscaping. Spaces should be landscaped according to Precise Plan standards and guidelines for landscaping and water use.
- Allow a clear distinction between public, semi-public, and private open space areas to preserve security and privacy. More private spaces may be defined using planting beds, trellises, arcades, seating areas, and low landscape walls, and where appropriate attractively designed security fencing and gates. Public open space is strongly encouraged.
- Combine open spaces for multiple projects into a single open space area if the combined open spaces remain accessible to all residents, employees, and visitors.



On-site open space for non-residential projects should be designed as plazas, courtyards, parks, forecourts, community gardens, and other open spaces for pedestrian and bicycle circulation and outdoor gatherings.



On-site open space for residential projects should be a combination of private balconies, enclosed common courtyards, rooftop and podium level grades, decks, terraces, plazas, pedestrian mews, larger publicly-accessible open spaces, or recreational facilities.



On-site open space should be visible from adjacent streets and/or building and should be at the same level as the public sidewalk.



Buildings should be connected by a well-landscaped network.



Building massing can be used to shape on-site open space areas.