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## Character & Design

### INTRODUCTION

The focus of Downtown’s character and design is urban design, which includes the connections between people and places, movement and urban form, nature and the built surroundings. As the design of the public realm, its focus is the quality and usefulness of the public spaces that are enclosed and defined by the built environment.

Physical elements of urban design include buildings, public spaces, transportation systems, public art, and landscape improvements. Urban design brings these elements together with vision and purpose, so that there is an identifiable character to a group of buildings, to an urban neighborhood, and even to a city. Establishing identifiable urban neighborhoods through context-sensitive architecture, aesthetically pleasing vistas, landmarks and focal points, safe and attractive streets and public places, should result in Downtown character and design that is functional, sustainable, and distinctive. Regional climate is another element influencing urban design. This can be seen in the human-scale elements, and landscape features that contribute to the design of individual buildings, public places, and developments.

Scottsdale has well established community expectations for superior design and quality in its built environment. For decades, the site planning and aesthetic design evaluation through the development review process has instrumentally shaped the community that exists today. The Downtown Plan and its associated *Urban Design and Architectural Guidelines* provide the framework that guides how individual developments visually and physically work together to form the cohesive fabric of Downtown Scottsdale’s identity.

*“Downtown must continue to function and thrive while maintaining its character and quality.”*

*~ Downtown Scottsdale Town Hall Report, 2006*



*The modern office building (background) sits respectfully next to Cavalliere's Blacksmith Shop (foreground) in Old Town. These buildings illustrate that contemporary and traditional styles can coexist; and that effective sensitive transitions can be achieved through the appropriate use of materials, building massing and other design elements.*



*Valley Ho 1956*



*Valley Ho 2009*

*As one of Scottsdale's early resort hotels, the refurbishment and expansion of the historic Valley Ho is a good example of a public / private partnership, the use of innovative zoning practices and a demonstration of the value placed by the community on protecting its historic resources and unique character.*

## **GOAL CD 1:**

***THE DESIGN CHARACTER OF ANY AREA SHOULD BE ENHANCED AND STRENGTHENED BY NEW DEVELOPMENT THAT PROMOTES CONTEXTUAL COMPATIBILITY.***

### **Policy CD 1.1.**

Incorporate, as appropriate, in building and site design, the distinctive qualities and character of the surrounding, and/or evolving context.

### **Policy CD 1.2.**

Encourage creative and innovative civic and prominent developments to establish new urban design character and contextual interpretations of the Downtown, for areas where development patterns are fragmented or are in transition.

### **Policy CD 1.3.**

Preserve and enhance the character and scale of Old Town with new development and redevelopment that reflects its western theme.

### **Policy CD 1.4.**

Promote Downtown urban and architectural design that is influenced by, and responds to, the character and climate of the Sonoran Desert.

### **Policy CD 1.5.**

Encourage urban and architectural design that addresses human scale, and provides for pedestrian comfort.

### **Policy CD 1.6.**

Protect prominent historic resources, and promote innovative new neighboring development that respectfully coexists with their established character and context.

### **Policy CD 1.7.**

Maintain the pedestrian oriented small town character and human scale in the Downtown Core areas of Main Street, Marshall Way, 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Craftsman Court, and Old Town. Incorporate similar elements of pedestrian character and scale at the street level throughout all of Downtown.

**Policy CD 1.8.**

Encourage new development and revitalization that is composed of complementary and/or supportive design relationships with the established urban form, as well as design features and materials of the neighborhoods within which they are sited.

**GOAL CD 2:**

*DEVELOPMENT SHOULD SENSITIVELY TRANSITION IN SCALE, HEIGHT, AND INTENSITY AT THE DOWNTOWN PLAN BOUNDARY AND BETWEEN ADJOINING URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS OF DIFFERING DEVELOPMENT TYPES.*

**Policy CD 2.1.**

The scale of existing development surrounding the Downtown Plan boundary should be acknowledged and respected through a sensitive edge transition buffer, established on a location specific basis, that may include transitional development types, landscape buffers, and sensitive architectural design solutions to address building mass and height.

**Policy CD 2.2.**

Transitions between Downtown development Type 1 areas and Downtown development Type 2 areas should be addressed through sensitive architectural design options that step down building mass and height.

### GOAL CD 3:

***DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT SHOULD RESPECT AND RESPOND TO THE UNIQUE CLIMATE AND CONTEXT OF THE SOUTHWESTERN SONORAN DESERT.***



*Create microclimates that result in usable outdoor space.*

#### **Policy CD 3.1.**

Enhance outdoor pedestrian comfort through microclimatic design that incorporates a variety of shade conditions, landscape, and features that are drought tolerant, as well as offer attractive spaces, and passively cooler temperatures.

#### **Policy CD 3.2.**

Public realm and site design should incorporate techniques for efficient water use. Water, as a landscape element or design feature, should be used judiciously and placed in locations with high pedestrian activity.

### GOAL CD 4:

***STRENGTHEN PEDESTRIAN CHARACTER AND CREATE STRONG PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES.***

#### **Policy CD 4.1.**

Develop an attractive, interconnected network of safe and walkable pedestrian linkages to, within, and between, the various Downtown urban neighborhoods.

#### **Policy CD 4.2.**

Development should demonstrate consideration for the pedestrian by providing access and connections to adjacent developments.

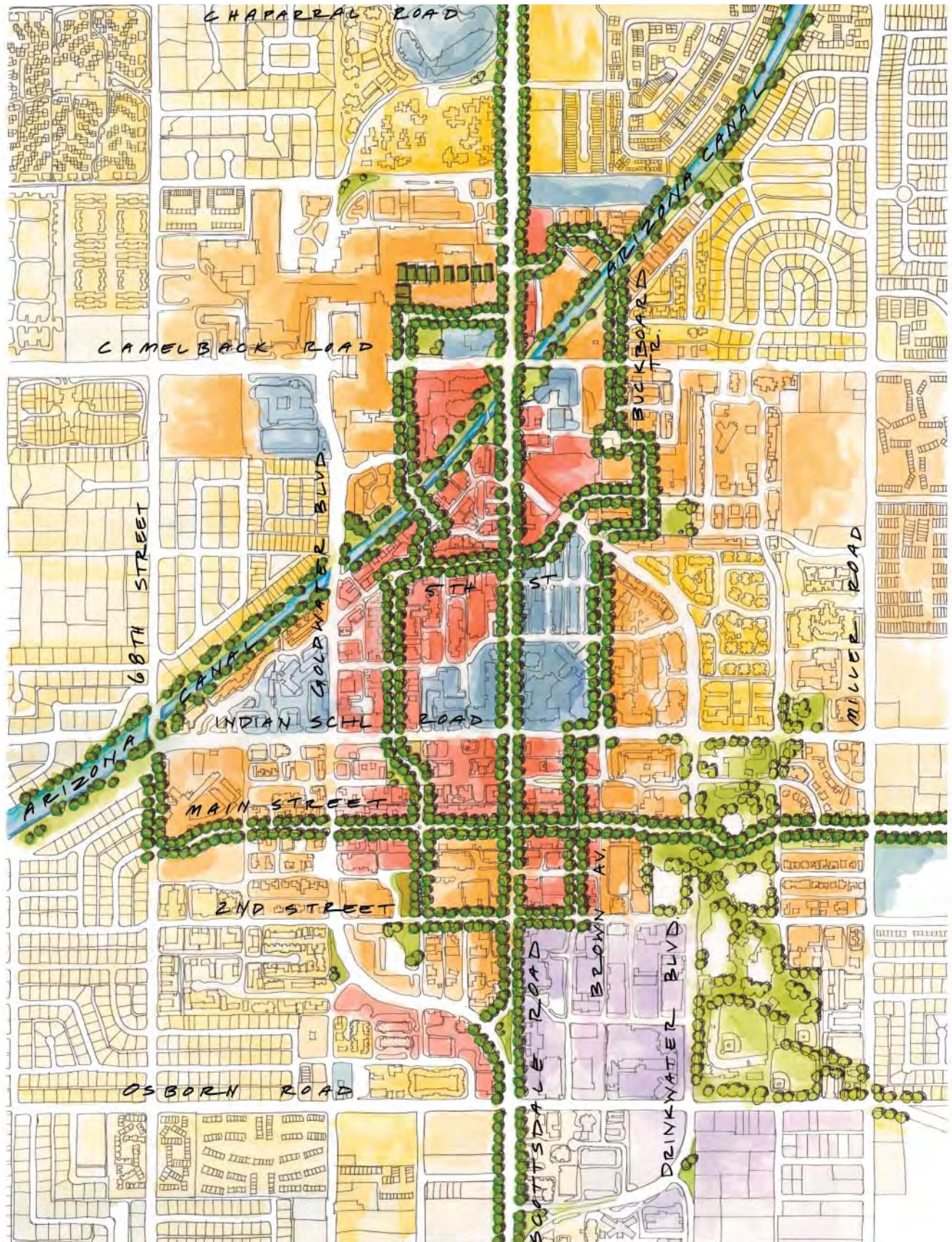
#### **Policy CD 4.3.**

Retain and expand the tradition of Downtown's covered walkways.



*Increase pedestrian comfort through the use of covered walkways, shade features, and landscape improvements.*





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# Conceptual Pedestrian Corridors





## **GOAL CD 5:**

### ***CREATE COHERENT AND CONSISTENT STREET SPACES.***

#### **Policy CD 5.1.**

Create a unified public realm through the design of Downtown's streets, building setback areas, and building frontages. Setbacks may only be compromised after clear demonstration that other significant public benefits are achieved.

#### **Policy CD 5.2.**

Street spaces are components of the overall public realm and should be logically interconnected with other pedestrian spaces.

#### **Policy CD 5.3.**

Streetscapes should provide continuity among adjacent uses through comprehensive sustainable landscape improvements, shade elements, decorative paving, street furniture, public art, and integrated infrastructure elements.

*"Downtown is a patchwork quilt that needs to be connected."*

*~ Focus Group Participant, 2007*

## **GOAL CD 6:**

### ***INCORPORATE A REGIONAL LANDSCAPE PALETTE THAT COMPLEMENTS DOWNTOWN'S URBAN CHARACTER.***

#### **Policy CD 6.1.**

Downtown landscape elements should project a desert oasis design character, providing an abundance of shade, color, varied textures and forms.

#### **Policy CD 6.2.**

Landscape materials should complement Downtown's built environment, land uses, and activities through the careful selection of plant materials with regard to scale, density, placement, and arrangement.

## GOAL CD 7:

*THE EXTENT AND QUALITY OF LIGHTING SHOULD BE INTEGRALLY DESIGNED AS A PART OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT.*

### **Policy CD 7.1.**

Achieve a balance between ambient light levels and designated lighting needs.

### **Policy CD 7.2.**

Encourage lighting that is energy efficient and designed to serve both pedestrian and vehicular travel for safety in public/private spaces.

## GOAL CD 8:

*IMPLEMENT HIGH QUALITY DESIGN IN DOWNTOWN ARCHITECTURE.*

### **Policy CD 8.1.**

Encourage contemporary and historical interpretations of regional Southwestern Sonoran Desert architectural traditions.

*“Pay attention to craftsmanship and quality to create authenticity.”*

*~ Focus Group Participant, 2007*

### **Policy CD 8.2.**

Promote the “*Scottsdale Sensitive Design Principles*” in the creation of architecture in Downtown.

### **Policy CD 8.3.**

Promote the principles of design in the “*Downtown Urban Design and Architectural Guidelines*” in all Downtown development.

### **Policy CD 8.4.**

Emphasize thorough design review and management of the built environment to achieve the benefits of high quality design.

### **Policy CD 8.5.**

Encourage the integration of art into Downtown urban design and architecture.

## **GOAL CD 9:**

### ***DEVELOPMENT SHOULD INCORPORATE SUSTAINABLE BUILDING PRACTICES AND PRODUCTS.***

#### **Policy CD 9.1.**

Development should strive to incorporate sustainable planning, design strategies, building techniques, and the use of durable indigenous materials, to minimize environmental and maintenance impacts, and endure over time.

#### **Policy CD 9.2.**

Encourage green building design strategies such as building orientation, passive solar response, natural day lighting, passive cooling techniques, and the integration of regional plant materials.

#### **Policy CD 9.3.**

Promote the use of energy efficient systems, construction methods, and alternative energy sources.

#### **Policy CD 9.4.**

Encourage the extended life cycle of existing building stock through adaptive reuse.



*Incorporate green building design strategies into Downtown architecture.*