

 City of Patterson
Community Design Guidelines
&
Downtown Physical Design Plan

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Part I

Community Design Guidelines



Chapter 1 - Introduction and Applicability

1.1 - Purpose of the Community Design Guidelines

These design guidelines are intended to describe, and inform project designers and applicants of the City's expectations and preferences for the quality and character of new development. Development projects of all types should be designed in a manner that responds to the unique characteristics of their individual sites, but also to fit into the wider context of Patterson.

These guidelines have been prepared because Patterson has become a city with a physical character and identity that are distinct, attractive, and widely appreciated by residents and visitors. At the same time, changes in the nature of business, marketing and the overall economy beyond our community have created pressures for types and styles of development that have, without strong local guidance, made many other communities lose their distinctiveness and look and feel like everywhere else, and nowhere in particular. Patterson intends to maintain and enhance its present character as a compact community, with attractive and pedestrian-oriented commercial areas, well-designed neighborhoods and a vital downtown.

In addition to assisting project designers and developers, these guidelines are considered by the Planning Commission and City Council in the Design Review process. The Commission uses the guidelines when they evaluate the suitability and appropriateness of individual project design, and as a basis for exploring changes to proposed projects to better satisfy the community's objectives for attractive and environmentally sensitive development. The details of how the design guidelines are applied, and the requirements of the Design Review process are described in Chapter 1.6.

The remainder of this introductory chapter provides more detail about the specific goals for the design guidelines, and the background about the setting and development patterns of the city.

1.2 – How The Design Guidelines Were Prepared

To help prepare these Design Guidelines, the City retained the help of a consultant who worked closely with staff of the Planning Department. For the Design Guidelines to effectively capture the community's 'vision' for new development, it was essential that the consultants gain a better understanding of community preferences. A public workshop was conducted at which citizens

participated in group exercises which were intended to foster discussion and the sharing of ideas. This input helped shape the public review draft Guidelines that were considered by both the Planning Commission and the City Council at a series of public hearings.

1.3 - Use of the Design Guidelines by the Planning Commission

These design guidelines will be used by the Planning Commission in the review of projects (additions, remodeling, relocation, or new construction) that require design review in accordance with Section 18.94 of the Patterson Zoning Ordinance.

- A. The design elements of each project (including site design, architecture, landscaping, signs, and parking design) will be reviewed on a comprehensive basis. The City's other design guidelines dealing with signs, landscaping, and parking shall also be addressed whenever applicable.
- B. The Planning Commission may interpret these design guidelines with some flexibility in their application to specific projects, as not all design criteria may be workable or appropriate for each project. In some circumstances, one guideline may be relaxed to facilitate compliance with another guideline determined by the Planning Commission to be more important in the particular case. The overall objective is to ensure that the intent and spirit of the design guidelines are followed.
- C. The graphics included in these guidelines are intended to be illustrative, but not prescriptive.

1.4 - Goals for Design Quality and Character

How the built environment appears in relation to the surrounding landscape, and the quality of the architecture and site design within the city, are key to continuing and advancing the quality of life enjoyed in Patterson. This section describes several means to achieve the long-term economic and environmental health of the community.

The primary goals of the City's design review process are to:

- Maintain and enhance the community's quality of life for residents;
- Maintain property values;
- Attract growth in the local economy; and
- Preserve the City's natural beauty and visual character.

To achieve the above goals, the following objectives have been developed to assist designers and developers in understanding the City's preferences for design quality. All development should be designed to accomplish the following.

- A. Keep Patterson architecturally distinctive, don't let it become "anywhere USA."
1. Maintain a high quality of craftsmanship in development through use of authentic building styles, design elements, and materials.
 2. Integrate local cultural and historical themes into building and site design where appropriate.
 3. Pay attention to gateways and key corridors to enhance the overall city image.
 4. Design for surrounding context and scale of urban form and land uses.
 5. Protect the scale and character of older neighborhoods, and cultural context of the city.
 6. Require design excellence for infill and redevelopment sites, especially in the downtown area.
 7. Minimize the use of "stock" plans and design in corporate and franchise architecture.
 8. Encourage traditional neighborhood building and street patterns.
 9. Integrate public squares and art that respond to local cultural and historical themes in development.

- B. Design for the pedestrian scale in appropriate areas.
 - 1. Encourage pedestrian oriented buildings and site planning.
 - 2. Incorporate design elements that respond to environmental conditions such as wind, sun, shade, etc. to protect and shelter pedestrians, and that will provide an enjoyable pedestrian experience.
 - 3. Encourage an appropriate scale of building height to street width in commercial areas. Prohibit or minimize parking between buildings and the street.

- C. Respect the natural environment by protecting natural resources and integrating the natural environment into building and site planning, where appropriate.
 - 1. Maintain views of the foothills west of the city.
 - 2. Continue streetscape landscaping.
 - 3. Control outdoor lighting to provide necessary security, but not create spillage onto adjacent properties or interfere with views of night skies.

1.5 - The Community Design Context

The City's preferences and expectations for design quality and character are shaped by the nature of this place. Consideration of this "context" in the design and development process is vital in achieving and maintaining the physical environment the community wants.

The Patterson Landscape

Patterson lies in the heart of a fertile agricultural region in the western San Joaquin Valley. The foothills of the Coast Range provide a scenic backdrop to the west, and on clear days, the Sierras are clearly visible to the east. Although the pace of development in Patterson is changing, residents are mindful of protecting its small-town character and remembering its agricultural heritage.



Patterson is also a city of trees. The rich alluvial soils of the western San Joaquin Valley and abundant sunshine create ideal growing conditions for trees of almost every variety. Whether along a quiet residential street or a busy commercial district, trees have a unifying quality that is both comforting and attractive.

Community History and Form

In the late 1800s the portion of the San Joaquin Valley between the Coast Ranges and the San Joaquin River consisted of immense grain fields. The grain was harvested and shipped down the San Joaquin River and eventually to markets all over the western United States. By 1887, the Southern Pacific Railroad had pushed north along the west side of the Valley supplanting the river as the main conduit for the thriving agricultural economy.

In 1908, an enterprising young man named T.W. Patterson envisioned a land west of the San Joaquin River filled with irrigated farms that could be settled by families. He constructed a pump station to lift drinking and irrigation water from the San Joaquin River – an engineering marvel of its time – and began subdividing the land into 5, 10 and 20 acre plots which were marketed to residents of the midwest.

The town envisioned by T.W. Patterson was modeled after Washington D.C., with streets radiating outward from a central “hub” which served as the center of commerce and local government. The first buildings to be constructed were the Patterson Ranch Company offices and the Del Puerto Hotel. In 1911, the Las Palmas Grammar School and the Bank of Patterson building were constructed. All of this initial construction took place on El Circulo, the circular portion of the “wheel” which eventually became Downtown Patterson.

Patterson Architecture

Patterson also has a rich architectural heritage. Over time, each successive era has added a new chapter to the form and character of the City. Early twentieth century buildings of wood and brick possess a unique charm that is both functional and durable – qualities valued by the farmers who settled the area. California Bungalow, and Craftsman-style residences adorn shady, tree-lined streets, conveying a sense of ‘neighborhood’ rooted in the architectural traditions of the early 1900s. Thus, no single style characterizes local residential or commercial architecture. Although it is not the intent of the design guidelines to require any particular architectural style in new



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construction, it is important that proposed development be designed to be compatible with its surroundings. Therefore, an understanding of the architectural styles found locally can be helpful in considering design alternatives.

Good examples of modern architecture are also evident. Today, Patterson is an eclectic mix of architectural styles. Housing tracts of the 1960s share the landscape with small, more modern commercial buildings and residential neighborhoods. Residential development during the last 20 to 30 years has been of styles common in California communities, incorporating neo-Mediterranean, neo-Spanish, and other eclectic modern and contemporary styles.

Commercial buildings in the Downtown include traditional and historic architectural design themes, as well as contemporary styles. Outside of the Downtown, most commercial buildings are of contemporary design, with Spanish or other Mediterranean influences.

Regarding urban form, the density and linkages between districts and neighborhoods is, in general, fairly compact. In the Downtown, the presence of several structures that are two or three stories, organized around the El Circulo “wheel”, and the arrangement of public open spaces and



landscaping elements supports the Downtown area’s cohesiveness in urban design. Thus, the scale of structures and overall size of the community helps maintain the character of a "small town," with many visual and physical connections to the surrounding natural landscape.

1.6 - Applicability of the Design Review Process

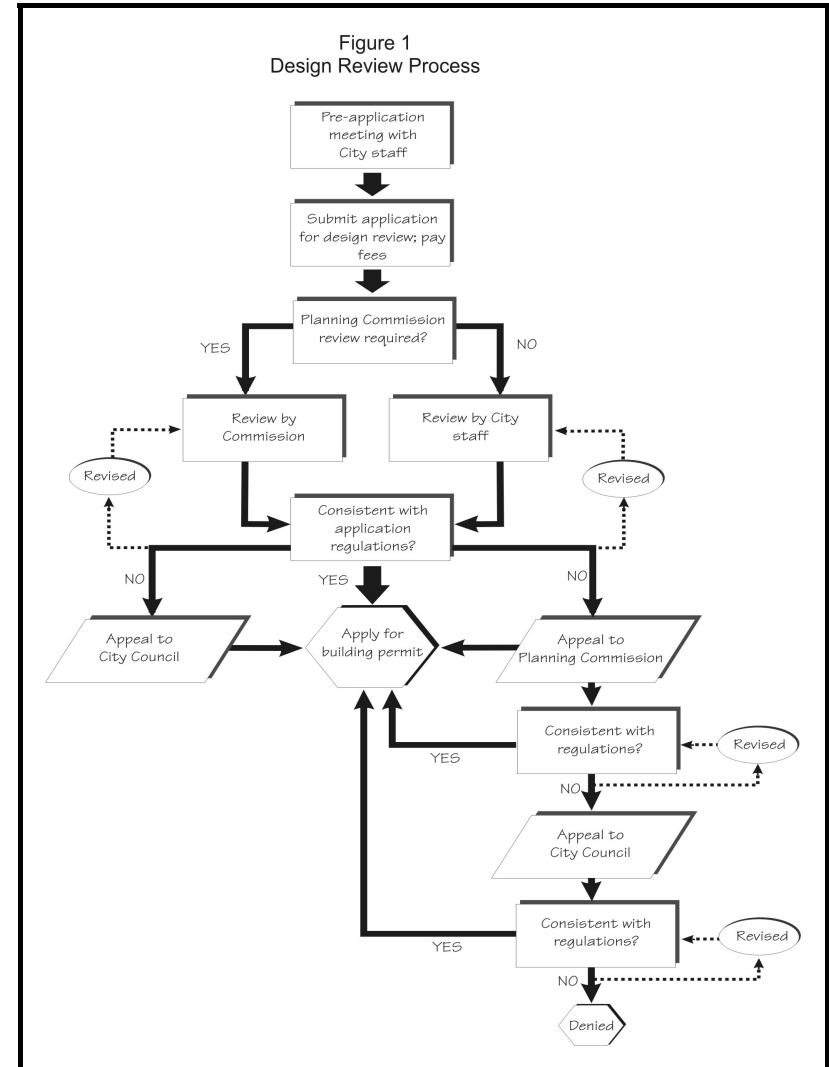
Design review is one of several procedures used by the City to guide development in the interest of public health, safety and general welfare. Design review is largely the responsibility of the City Planning Commission who is the deciding body for new development.

Design review considers building design, site planning, landscaping, parking layout, signs, and other features that affect a project’s appearance and function. In examining these project features, the design review process looks at the way a project relates to the site, the surrounding neighborhood, and the community as a whole.

Design review is intended to help achieve a project that strikes a balance between the sometimes competing interests of the applicant and the City. The City does not dictate particular styles of architecture or design. The City instead strives to encourage creativity and architectural variety, while advocating new development that is comparable in scale and fits in with its setting and surroundings.

Why is Design Review Needed?

The City is committed to maintaining excellence in building design, site planning, and community form. Public input on community design issues is also important so that the end result of development reflects the desires of the community. Therefore, the City conducts design review on development projects to assist the design community in creating a project that will fit in with the community.



These design guidelines play an important role in the design review process because they express general design preferences for typical project situations in Patterson. A project that is consistent with the guidelines is likely to be well-received and move more quickly through the design review process. These guidelines cannot provide information on every potential situation or detail that may arise on a project. They do identify general concepts considered in the review of projects and provide more specific information on aspects of project design such as site planning, building design, parking, landscaping and signs.

When is Design Review Required?

Design review is accomplished concurrently with the review of the entitlements that may be required for a given development project. In general, Planning Commission review is required for all new and remodeled multi-family residential projects, commercial and industrial projects. Some types of changes to properties are considered “aesthetically insignificant” and can be reviewed by the Planning Director. The types of projects that fit into these different categories are as follows:

- A. Single family homes.** Plans for single family homes need design review only when considered as part of a Planned Development in accordance with Zoning Ordinance Section 18.68.
- B. Aesthetically insignificant projects.** The Planning Director may determine that a new small structure, or a change or addition to an existing building or other site feature, has no potential for conflict with the objectives of design review due to its size, location, form, materials, or colors. In these cases, a separate application or fee are not required. The determination will be noted in the project building permit file, if one exists, or in the site address file.
- C. Minor or incidental projects.** The Community Development Director may determine that a project, such as a sign, building addition or remodel, or a new small is minor or incidental to a larger, previously approved project. Plans for projects which an applicant believes are minor or incidental are submitted for staff review, along with an application and fee. The Director will decide within about 10 days if the project is required to be reviewed by the Planning Commission. The Director’s action may be appealed to the Planning Commission.

- D. Demolitions.** A request to demolish a structure that is listed on the Inventory of Historical Resources may be reviewed by the Planning Commission. If the Director determines that the structure to be demolished has historical, architectural or aesthetic significance, it will direct the applicant to submit plans for each proposed replacement structure to the Planning Commission.

Roles and Responsibilities

There are four important parties who play a role in and have responsibilities in the design review process. They include: property and business owners, design professionals, the Planning Commission, and the public.

- A. Property and business owners** initiate the design review process when they propose new development on their property. They work with design professionals to design their projects and with the Planning Commission to refine their projects. They have several responsibilities including financial responsibilities for processing and development of their property. They also have a responsibility to consider the quality of their project design and how it will affect their property value and the property values of surrounding development. They also need to consider how their project supports, enhances and/or fits in with existing development in Patterson and the City's overall desired image. The effects of their project on potential impacts to environmental, historical, and aesthetic resources should also be considered.
- B. Design professionals** including architects, landscape architects, engineers, planners, etc. have a responsibility to design quality projects that respond to the sites surroundings and the City as a whole, so that their project will be a positive addition to the community.
- C. The Planning Commission** is a panel of citizens appointed by the City Council to provide aesthetic evaluations on proposed development projects in the City.

The Commission has four responsibilities:

1. Review development proposals for conformance with the design guidelines.

2. Update the design guidelines, when necessary, to be used by persons planning a construction project.
 3. Advise developers, designers and the City on how to apply the guidelines.
 4. Develop design guidelines for citywide design issues.
- D. The Public** is to be a sounding board with regard to new development so that decision-makers remain in touch with the preferences of Patterson citizens.