WEST OAKLAND SPECIFIC PLAN

Appendix A: Design Guidelines

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Adopted July 15, 2014

Appendix A: Design Guidelines

New development in West Oakland should aesthetically respond to the unique characteristics already found in the area, including the character of land uses and building types, thus honoring the culture, legacy, and history that have made West Oakland special. All development must be of high quality, emphasizing the project's role in the larger neighborhood, West Oakland, and the region.

The purpose of these design guidelines is not to impose a uniform design palette on individual parcels, but rather to ensure that individually designed projects and buildings pursuant to the West Oakland Specific Plan:

- use design as a means for advancing the qualities that makes West Oakland unique;
- do not detract, overpower, or conflict with existing neighboring buildings;
- when combined with existing buildings, create a composition "greater than the sum of the parts"; and
- raise the standard of design and construction to a high level that respects West Oakland's past while embracing the future.

These design guidelines supplement the regulations set forth in the zoning districts for the West Oakland Specific Plan, by providing further direction for project designs to meet the goals expressed for the character of new construction and alteration of existing facilities in the area. They highlight general considerations and offer examples, solutions, and techniques to address issues that may arise in the design process. These guidelines are not meant to supersede the regulations in the Oakland Planning Code. Conformance with these guidelines and with the design review criteria contained in Chapter 17.136 of the Oakland Planning Code is required to receive City approval for projects in West Oakland. Applicants may submit design proposals that deviate from these guidelines, but must offer clear explanations that proposed solutions meet their intent.

HOW TO USE THESE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The West Oakland Specific Plan Design Guidelines are intended to aid building designers, property owners, business owners, developers, residents, and public agencies in achieving employment, residential development, and other Plan goals while improving livability and retaining West Oakland's unique and diverse character. City staff will utilize these guidelines to determine project conformance in meeting the goals set for West Oakland.

Related Design Guidelines

These design guidelines are specifically crafted to apply to the context in West Oakland, while building upon citywide design guidelines already in place or currently proposed.

Existing documents include:

- Design Guidelines for Corridors and Commercial Areas;
- Design Review Manual for 1- and 2-Unit Residences;
- Small Project Design Guidelines;
- *Rehab Right* - historic rehabilitation guidebook; and
- Housing and Business Mix (HBX) Design Guidelines;
- Design Guidelines for Commercial and Corridor Areas.

Design Guidelines for West Oakland

These guidelines apply to a variety of architectural contexts in West Oakland, including Victorian and early 20th century residences, neighborhood commercial arterials, and early 20th century industrial areas. The Design Guidelines address:

Character Defining Features

Character-defining natural and architectural features of West Oakland are illustrated here to help designers understand the context of the area, and to encourage creative design solutions. Intact historical residential areas and a mixture of industrial and commercial uses define West Oakland's eclectic charm.

Site Planning

Site Planning refers to the placement and relationship of buildings, open spaces, parking, and service areas on a site. The predominant character of an area can include block size, lot size, massing, building height, and the context of existing uses. Projects that set a design precedent, which may occur on larger sites or in underutilized areas with few buildings, may deviate from the existing context to shape future development. For these projects, applicants should work closely with the City to ensure that the project appropriately responds to the future vision for the area, as defined in the West Oakland Specific Plan.

Building Design

Building design must respect the area's diversity, yet at the same time create a sense of cohesion. Regardless of the form, scale or character of new development, projects should respect the public realm: streets, block pattern, and open spaces. These design guidelines do not require a specific architectural style or set of styles. However, cues should be taken from the surrounding context of a project, particularly where a defined character is presented. Where the character of a district is less defined, projects may set new precedent within the context of West Oakland's overall goals.

Application

These Design Guidelines apply throughout the West Oakland Specific Plan Area. Each of the Design Guidelines is geographically organized as follows (see **Figure A-1**).

- ***All Residential Areas***: For areas generally described in the West Oakland Specific Plan as the "Residential Areas."
- ***All Opportunity Areas***: For areas identified in the Plan as "Opportunity Areas".

DESIGN GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO ALL RESIDENTIAL AREAS

This section of the Design Guidelines addresses the urban design strategies and guidelines that are applicable throughout this Plan's Residential Areas, and apply particularly to restoration and infill development within areas that include mostly 19th century housing.

Character Defining Features

One-story and two- and raised basement late 19th and early 20th century houses, usually on narrow lots.

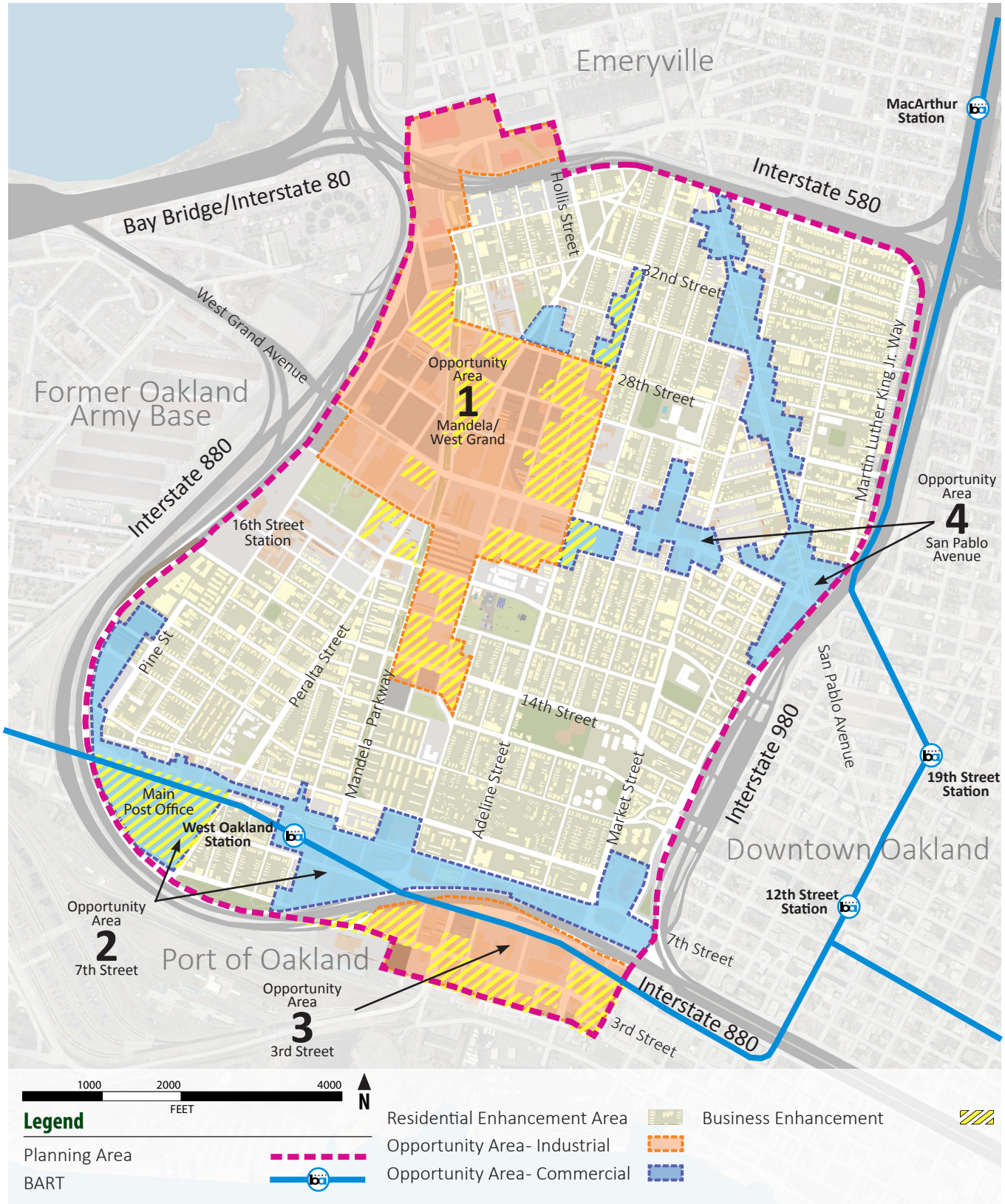
Intent: New construction and additions to residential homes in the Residential Areas should be designed to enhance and maintain the existing historical character of each residential neighborhood.

Residential Area - Site Planning 1*: Pedestrian Circulation.* New additions to existing buildings and infill development should reinforce the pedestrian scale and character of the neighborhoods by including raised, street-facing porches and front entries approached from the street with ample space for seating.

Residential Area - Site Planning 2*: Vehicular Circulation.* A garage should generally be located in a separate structure behind the main house or as part of a "raised basement" below the main house. The garage should always be viewed as secondary to the larger and more significant pedestrian entrance.

Residential Area - Site Planning 3: *Service Circulation.* Service areas for larger structures, such as multi-family residential and commercial buildings should be shielded from view from city sidewalks whenever possible.

Fig. A-1: Design Guidelines Map



Residential Area - Site Planning 4: *Building Footprint*. New infill structures and additions to existing structures should be set back from front and side lot lines on the site in a manner consistent with those historical buildings in the immediate vicinity.

Residential Area - Site Planning 5: *Open Space*. New projects should have front yards similar in scale and character to historical buildings in the immediate vicinity.

Residential Area - Building Design 1: *Massing*. Roof elements, bay windows, and other projections should be consistent with those of buildings in the immediate vicinity.

Residential Area - Building Design 2: *Fenestration and Material*: Fenestration refers to the design and construction of openings in a building. Fenestration includes windows, doors, louvers, vents, wall panels, skylights, storefronts, curtain walls, and other glazed systems. Building fenestration, which can be either more historic or more contemporary, should be articulated to project a sense of scale characteristic of West Oakland's residential areas.

Residential Area - Fencing 1: *Height and Materials*: Front yard fencing located within or in proximity to Residential Areas should be designed and of a height that doesn't result in the creation of 'fortresses' within the residential neighborhood.

DESIGN GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO ALL INDUSTRIAL/ BUSINESS/ COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITY AREAS

These guidelines are applicable throughout the West Oakland Specific Plan's industrial/ business/ commercial Opportunity Areas.

Intent: New construction and renovation in the four identified Opportunity Areas should be designed to maintain continuity with West Oakland's unique history and character.

Site Planning

Site Planning 1: *Pedestrian Circulation*. Active street edges with entrances from city sidewalks should directly face streets, maximizing the utilization of city sidewalks by users of the buildings.

Site Planning 2: *Vehicular Circulation*. Vehicular entrances and garages should be less prominent than pedestrian entrances.

Site Planning 3: *Service Circulation*. Service areas should be hidden from view from sidewalks whenever possible.

Site Planning 4: *Building Footprint*. New construction should be built to the edge of sidewalks to maintain the continuity of the area's street walls. Small ground-level inset bays for entrances, outdoor seating, and special corner features are appropriate variations within the street wall. In addition, an occasional plaza may be also appropriate.

- Relate to existing buildings and utilitarian structures, which need to be rehabilitated and reused.
- Expansion of existing buildings is encouraged, with unique aspects of existing buildings respected, featured, and protected.
- Surface parking is strongly discouraged along frontages facing public streets.

Site Planning 5: *Open Space*. West Oakland's public streetscapes along with its parks need to be embraced, improved, and enriched as public open space elements. Any new open space located in public view should not be walled from the street by dense planting or a tall fence.

Building Design 1: *Massing*. New buildings should be designed with major massing elements that are consistent with those found in existing desirable buildings located in the immediate vicinity.

Building Design 2: *Fenestration and Materials.* Fenestration elements, such as windows, doors, louvers, vents, wall panels, skylights, storefronts, curtain walls, and other glazed systems, can be either more historic or more contemporary depending on the context, and should be articulated to maintain the sense of scale found in the immediate context.

DESIGN GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO THE MANDELA/WEST GRAND & 3RD STREET OPPORTUNITY AREAS

This section of the Design Guidelines addresses the urban design strategies and guidelines that are particular to the Mandela/Grand and 3rd Street Opportunity Areas, industrial and commercial areas without housing or neighborhood commercial corridors.

Character Defining Features

Many of the Mandela/Grand and 3rd Street area's 19th and early 20th century factory buildings feature large windows, skylights, and clerestory windows providing maximum access to sunlight. Building materials include brick, concrete, and corrugated metal. Although primarily utilitarian, building facades were often articulated by pilasters, decorative brick work and ornamental parapets, representative of the craftsmanship of the time. Industrial buildings are characterized by specific shapes, walls and roofs. Features common in the industrial areas of West Oakland include:

- Saw-tooth roofs for well-lighted space;
- Monitors and roof projections creating interesting roof lines;
- Metal sash, roof with partial saw-tooth form; mix of corrugated metal and concrete;
- Corrugated metal siding;
- Large plain gabled sheds;
- Stepped parapet with coping;
- Patterned brick work creating decorative accents;
- Large floor to ceiling steel sash windows with concrete lintels;
- Building façades articulated by structural bays;
- Parapet details;
- Change in materials and decorative detail accentuate building entrances;
- Sign components painted directly onto siding;
- Steel sash factory windows; and
- Brick arched openings.

Traditional Industrial Blocks

Intent: The rougher workmanlike texture of the area's traditional industrial buildings needs to be preserved and honored even as new commercial uses fill in between and adaptively reuse existing buildings.

The following Design Guidelines apply to traditional industrial blocks.

Traditional Industrial Blocks 1: *Site Planning*. Additions and new construction should generally connect to and face public streets.

Traditional Industrial Blocks 2: *Massing*. Buildings should generally be composed of simple shapes reflecting the industrial heritage of the area.

Traditional Industrial Blocks3: *Height*. New buildings that are more than two stories taller than the existing buildings adjacent to or across the street from the site should include transitions in scale to better relate to the existing height context.

Traditional Industrial Blocks 4: *Fenestration and Materials*. A combination of punched openings and curtain wall areas is encouraged. Generally, punched openings should be located at the base of the building to relate to historical industrial buildings.

Traditional Industrial Blocks 5: *Landscape*. Street trees and consistent sidewalk paving should be part of a larger, phased streetscape composition.

Mandela Parkway

Intent: Buildings facing Mandela Parkway should respect its civic prominence, quality of public landscaped areas, and unique history.

The following Design Guidelines apply particularly to properties and buildings facing onto Mandela Parkway.

Mandela 1: *Site Planning*. The most distinguished public features of a building should be oriented towards and visible from Mandela Parkway.

Mandela 2: *Massing*. Projects are encouraged to have dramatic architectural features visible along the Parkway.

Mandela 3: *Height*. Taller buildings are encouraged along the Parkway.

Mandela 4: *Fenestration and Materials*. Incorporate large openings that create visual connections to Mandela Parkway.

Mandela 5: *Landscape*. Landscaping should be coordinated with that of the public landscaped areas along Mandela Parkway, and the new planting and paving should be of a similarly high quality.

West Grand Avenue

Intent: Buildings facing West Grand Avenue should be designed to enhance the street as an important boulevard and as the most important surface street gateway leading from West Oakland to downtown Oakland.

The following Design Guidelines apply particularly to buildings and properties facing West Grand Avenue.

West Grand 1: *Massing*. Buildings along the highly trafficked West Grand Avenue leading to I-880 and the Bay Bridge should be carefully massed given its importance as a key gateway to Oakland from the region.

West Grand 2: *Height*. Distinctive, taller buildings are encouraged on this important gateway street, especially at major intersections, such as that of West Grand and Mandela, and West Grand and San Pablo.

West Grand 3: *Fenestration and Materials*. The ground floor of buildings should have large openings and a high degree of transparency in the blocks between Myrtle and San Pablo Avenue where West Grand is an important neighborhood commercial street.

West Grand 4: *Landscape*. Sidewalks should include densely spaced street trees that establish West Grand as a boulevard gateway leading to I-880 and the Bay Bridge, as well as buffer to uses along this highly trafficked arterial.

Priority Pedestrian Streets

Intent: Priority Pedestrian Streets are important pedestrian-focused streets that lead from Mandela Parkway into areas planned for substantial new employment. It is hoped that many employees will come to the area as pedestrians from enhanced transit on Mandela Parkway.

The following Design Guidelines apply to buildings and properties along Priority Pedestrian Streets, particularly along 18th, 20th, 24th and 26th Streets (see **Figures A-2 and A-3**).

Priority Pedestrian Street 1: *Site Planning*. Public uses in buildings such as retail, outdoor seating, lobbies, and galleries should be placed along the priority pedestrian streets, particularly at corners.

Priority Pedestrian Street 2: *Massing*. Building massing should be articulated to establish a pedestrian scale at the sidewalk level while respectfully relating to adjacent buildings. Ground floors should generally have a minimum of 15-foot clear height.

Priority Pedestrian Street 3: *Height*. New buildings that are more than two stories taller than the existing buildings adjacent to or across the street from the site should include transitions in scale to better relate to the existing height context.

Fig. A-2: Existing View at 26th Street from Mandela

Fig. A-3: Proposed Infill Development at 26th Street from Mandela Parkway

Priority Pedestrian Street 4*: Fenestration and Materials*. Provide as many door and window openings as possible at the sidewalk level.

Priority-Pedestrian Street 5*: Landscape*. Street trees and paving should be part of larger phased streetscape compositions, enhancing the pedestrian experience.

3rd Street

Intent: Third Street needs to be enriched and recognized as the primary connection between West Oakland and the Jack London District waterfront area.

The following Design Guidelines apply to buildings and properties along 3rd Street (see **Figure A-4 and A-5**).

3rd Street 1*: Site Planning*. Create at least one major pedestrian entry facing 3rd Street for each new building project.

3rd Street 2: *Massing*. Buildings can be massed in simple rectangles, usually the width of their parcels, as are many existing buildings on this street.

3rd Street 3*: Fenestration and Materials*. Building facades can be simple but should include detail around entrances. Use of decorative brick is encouraged, but not required.

3rd Street 4*: Landscape*. Dense street planting should be included to buffer the large volume of traffic along 3rd Street.

DESIGN GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO THE 7TH STREET AND SAN PABLO AVENUE OPPORTUNITY AREAS

This section of the Design Guidelines addresses the urban design strategies and guidelines that are particular to the 7th Street and San Pablo Avenue Opportunity Areas, especially as to neighborhood commercial corridors with housing.

Neighborhood Commercial

Intent: 7th Street and San Pablo Avenue should become the focus of the surrounding neighborhoods with active street edges that encourage neighbors and visitors to enjoy a high-quality urban streetscape.

Neighborhood Commercial 1*: Site Planning*. Buildings should be built immediately fronting 7th Street and San Pablo to emphasize and re-establish where necessary the continuity of the neighborhood commercial street.

- Ground floors should have active publically accessible uses such as restaurants, retail, lobbies and galleries (see **Figure A-6 and A-7**)
- Driveways and vehicular entrances are discouraged from accessing directly from 7th Street and moved to side streets where feasible.
- Small segments of roadway adjoining West Grand Avenue, San Pablo, and Market Street could be repurposed to accommodate the site planning of larger projects (see **Figure A-8 and A-9**).

Neighborhood Commercial 2*: Massing*. Residential upper stories are encouraged to include bay windows above the ground floor to provide light and air, and to break up the scale of buildings and convey residential use.

Neighborhood Commercial 3*: Height*. Except when located at important intersections such as Mandela Parkway and 7th Street, buildings over 5 stories in height should generally include a significant step-back along commercial arterial roadways to harmonize the scale of new buildings with the existing neighborhood.

Neighborhood Commercial 4*: Fenestration*. Ground floors should have as many openings as possible with as few blank wall sections as possible. Awnings and canopies are encouraged.

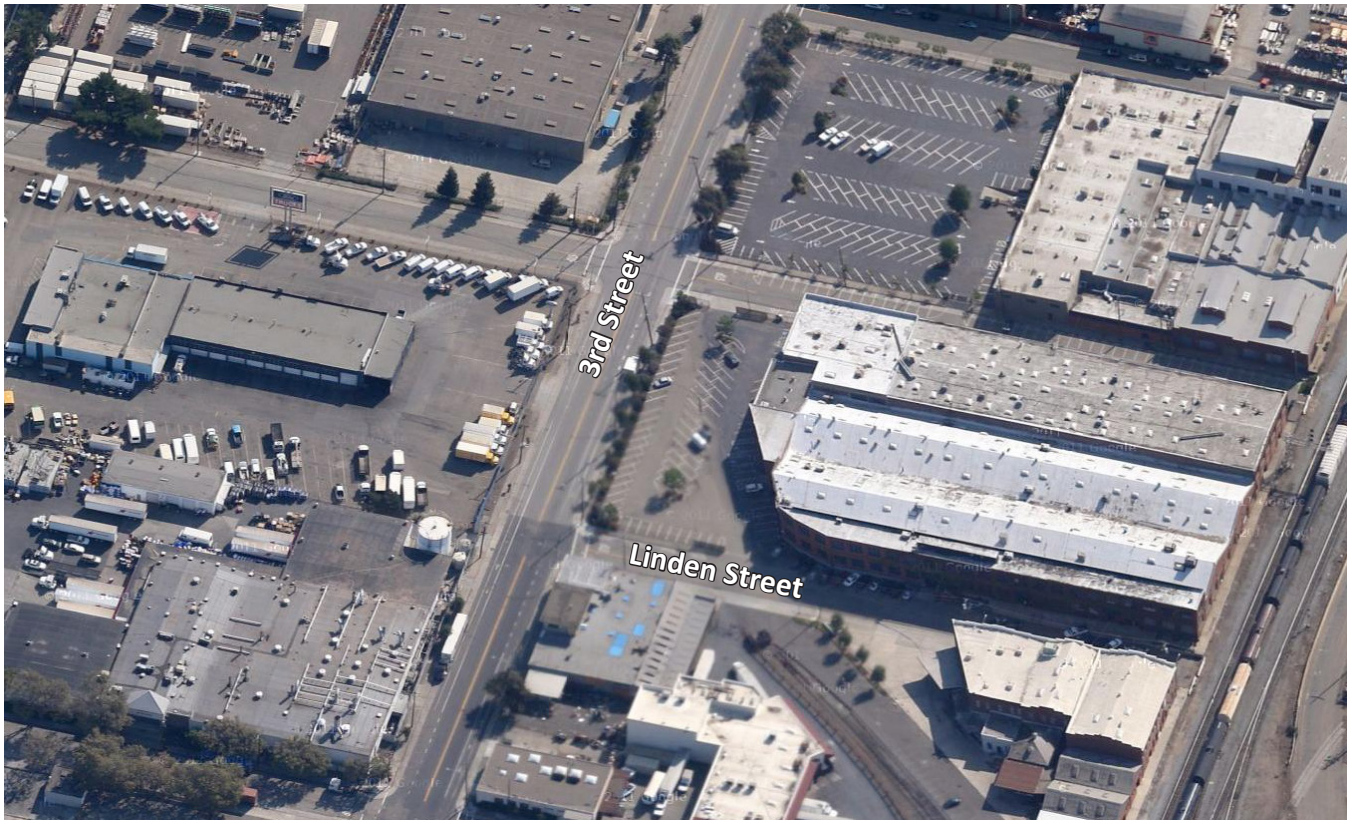


Fig. A-4: Existing View at 3rd Street and Linden Street

- **Opportunity Site #35 at Linden & Third Street**

Fig A-5: Proposed Development at 3rd Street and Linden Street

- **Adaptive reuse and preservation of historic industrial buildings**
- **3rd Street as enhanced connection between West Oakland and Jack London Square**

Fig. A-6: Existing view of 7th Street and Peralta

Fig. A-7: Example of renovated historic building at 7th Street and Peralta

Fig. A-8: Existing view of San Pablo Avenue near West Grand Avenue

Fig. A-9: Proposed development at San Pablo Avenue near West Grand Avenue

Neighborhood Commercial 5: *Materials*: Buildings should have a variety of high quality materials that will define an interesting character when viewed up close and from a distance.

Neighborhood Commercial 6*: Renovation of Older Buildings.* Older commercial buildings should be restored in a manner consistent with their original architectural style.

Neighborhood Commercial 7*: Landscape*. Street trees should be of a type that allows high visibility to storefronts and spaced to allow street lights to penetrate to sidewalks during nighttime.

Neighborhood Commercial 8*: Landscape*. Publicly accessible outdoor space areas should be comprehensively designed with high quality pavement, landscaping, and seating, and are encouraged at the following locations:

- Mandela and 7th Street
- San Pablo and West Grand Avenue
- San Pablo and 32nd Street

Adjacent to Residential Areas

Intent: Buildings need to make gentle transitions from the larger commercial buildings facing 7th Street and San Pablo Avenue to the residential side streets of historic houses.

The following Design Guidelines apply to those buildings and properties facing residential side streets in the Residential Areas.

Residential Area 1*: Site Planning*. Create active entry points facing the street to roughly match porches and entrances on historic housing elsewhere on the street.

Residential Area 2: *Massing* Modulate front facades facing streets into segments to roughly match the scale of historic housing elsewhere on the street. Bay windows and porches are encouraged. Building heights and setbacks should transition from neighborhood commercial arterials to residential side streets. Buildings that are taller and built to the lot line should be located near the commercial street and have setbacks closer to the adjacent lower-scale residential buildings (see **Figures A-10 and A-11**).

Residential Area 3*: Height*. Buildings directly facing residential side streets should be appropriately massed to best relate to the residential scale within the immediate context.

Residential Area 4*: Fenestration and Materials.* Employ high quality building openings with high quality detail around entries and primary windows.

Residential Area 5*: Landscape*. Establish landscaped front yards between the sidewalk and the face of the building that reflect the landscaping context in the immediate area.

Mandela/7th

Intent: The intersection of Mandela Parkway and 7th Street needs to establish an important civic focus adjacent to the West Oakland BART station.

The following Design Guidelines apply to properties immediately fronting onto the intersection of Mandela Parkway and 7th Street (see Figure **A-12 and A-13**).

Mandela/7th 1*: Site Planning*. Close to the West Oakland BART station, a large civic plaza should be created near the intersection of Mandela Parkway and 7th Street that is surrounded by ground floors that include publicly accessible uses such as restaurants, retail, building lobbies, galleries, and studios.

Mandela/7th -2*: Massing, Height*. Taller buildings are encouraged along Mandela Parkway and in particular to mark the intersection of 7th Street and Mandela Parkway.

Mandela/7th- 3*: Height*. It is encouraged that taller buildings mark the intersection of 7th Street and Mandela Parkway.

Fig. A-10: Existing view of 5th Street at West Oakland BART station

Fig. A-11: Proposed Transit-Oriented Development at 5th Street looking east.

Fig. A-12: Existing view of West Oakland BART station at 7th Street and Mandela Parkway

Fig. A-13: Urban open space at 7th Street and Mandela Parkway

Mandela /7th -4*: Fenestration*. Ground floors should have large openings and a high degree of transparency in the blocks adjacent to the West Oakland BART station.

Mandela/7th - 5*: Landscape*. Landscaping should be coordinated with that of the existing public landscaped areas along Mandela Parkway and should include a similarly high quality of planting and paving.

Pine Street

Intent: The section of Pine Street identified as part of the 7th Street Opportunity Area needs to be carefully respected, as it includes some of the oldest Victorian houses in West Oakland.

The following Design Guidelines apply to properties directly facing onto Pine Street.

Pine 1*: Site Planning*. Create entries facing Pine Street that are compatible with the porches and entrances on historic houses on the opposite side of street.

Pine 2*: Massing*. Articulate facades on the west side of Pine Street into segments that are generally 25 to 35 feet wide to roughly match the scale of historic housing on the opposite side of the street. Bay windows and porches are encouraged.

Pine 3*: Height*. Buildings directly facing Pine Street should relate to the scale of historic housing on the opposite side of the street.

Pine 4: *Fenestration and Materials*. Employ clear, logical, and high quality building openings appropriate detail around entries and primary windows.

Pine 5*: Landscape*. Establish landscaped yards between the sidewalk and the face of the building.