6. Design Standards and Guidelines

Quality development is achieved through attention to detail that is implemented from the initial conception of a project to the final construction of buildings, pathways, entry features, signage, and other design elements. This section establishes design standards and guidelines to ensure that Artesia Corridor will possess an identifiable look and feel, and to establish an expectation for quality development features in the specific plan through site planning, architecture, landscape, and streetscape components.

All development within the Artesia Corridor Specific Plan must address the fundamental elements of the design features outlined in this section. These standards and guidelines comprise the basic framework that the City will use to evaluate proposed development projects. The pictures presented in this section are intended to convey the general design purpose of the guidelines, and are not intended to require the specific design style depicted.

Like development standards, design standards constitute regulations, requirements and by-laws by which development must abide, and are indicated by the use of the word "shall." Design guidelines generally use the word "should" and identify actions or outcomes that are encouraged but not mandatory.

6.1 Site Design

The integration of buildings, entries, parking lot layout, opens spaces, and pedestrian and vehicular circulation is critical to achieving an overall sense of place. With the mix of proposed land uses within the Artesia Corridor area, it is important to set guidelines to coordinate site planning between distinct building types and to ensure the connectivity of public spaces. The guidelines below are organized by the different components of site design.

6.1.1 Building Orientation and Site Planning

A. Buildings and major pedestrian entrances should be oriented towards centers of activity, such as the internal main street, pedestrian pathways, and public plazas.

B. Where possible, buildings should be clustered along the length of the internal main street to demonstrate a positive functional relationship to one another. The clustering of buildings should provide focal areas and define public spaces. Where clustering is impractical, a visual link between structures should be established through the use of an arcade, trellis, or other open structure.

C. Provide special, enhanced, "signature" architecture at prominent locations. Buildings with unique architectural elements, such as clock towers, and landmark structures should be positioned on corners of significant intersections or entryways to enhance the sense of arrival and project monumentation.

D. Buildings at corners should receive special treatment to enhance the pedestrian experience, such as building cut-offs and corner entrances with additional architectural details.

E. Commercial buildings shall provide for loading and service areas to be located away from public view and screened from residential buildings.

Unique architectural elements should be placed on corners of significant intersections.

Pedestrian access should link residential areas to the internal main street.

Public spaces located along the internal main street maximizes their use.

Straight-in, diagonal, or parallel parking should be provided along the main street.

F. Commercial buildings should face pedestrian streets and plazas and should incorporate design features that provide visual interest at the street level.

G. Residential projects shall include pedestrian access towards the main street and public spaces to link these areas to the rest of the project.

H. Residential structures should be configured and oriented to afford a sense of individuality and privacy and to create small scale public spaces.

I. Residential building orientation and placement of windows and balconies should maximize view potential and shield residents from commercial loading areas, utilities, and mechanical equipment, trash areas, and major street noise.

6.1.2 Pedestrian Pathways and Public Open Spaces

A. Uses should coordinate their open space requirements to provide larger public spaces that are centrally located and serve multiple uses.

B. Public spaces should be located along the internal main street, near building entrances or areas of high pedestrian traffic, to ensure their use and highest functionality.

C. Public spaces shall be oriented to maximize their visual and physical link from adjacent streets and pathways.

D. Pedestrian pathways should emphasize links between different uses and provide connectivity through the project.

E. Pedestrian connections through parking areas should provide landscaping and amenities to create visual interest, pedestrian access, and rest breaks over long distances of pavement.

F. Safety and visibility shall be considered in the design of both pathways and public spaces.

6.1.3 Parking and Parking Structures

A. Parking areas shall be located behind or to the side of commercial buildings where possible.

B. Parking areas should be clustered where feasible, and large, expansive parking lots should be minimized to the greatest extent possible. This maximizes security and efficient access.

C. On-street parking should be provided along the main street, and should include areas for straight-in, diagonal, or parallel parking, particularly near high activity areas.

D. Where parking structures are needed, shops, offices, or other commercial spaces should be incorporated on the ground level of the parking structure along street frontages, where feasible to maintain the pedestrian experience.

E. Entrance and exit points should be well marked with streetscape and landscape features.

F. Public parking for commercial or office uses should be separated from private residential parking areas.

G. Residential parking areas should be located as close as possible to residential uses.

6.1.4 Service, Trash, and Utility Areas

A. Service and utility areas should be incorporated within the building. If not possible, orient these areas away from public view and provide ornamental screening.

B. Exterior on-site facilities, including sewer, gas, water, electric, telephone, and communications equipment should be installed underground where feasible. Transformers and other utility equipment that must be above ground should be screened and incorporated into the landscape wherever possible.

C. Trash enclosures shall be enclosed within the building envelope. If infeasible, locate them in discrete places, and design enclosures to architecturally integrate with the overall design theme of the development. Trash enclosures should be planted with vines if located adjacent to or within a landscaped area to help screen the enclosure.

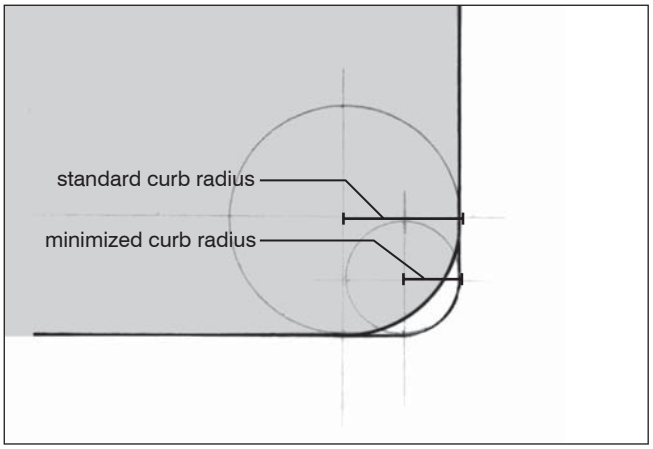
6.1.5 Traffic Calming

A. Use of neck-downs, bulb-outs (which can also act as planters), and other traffic calming

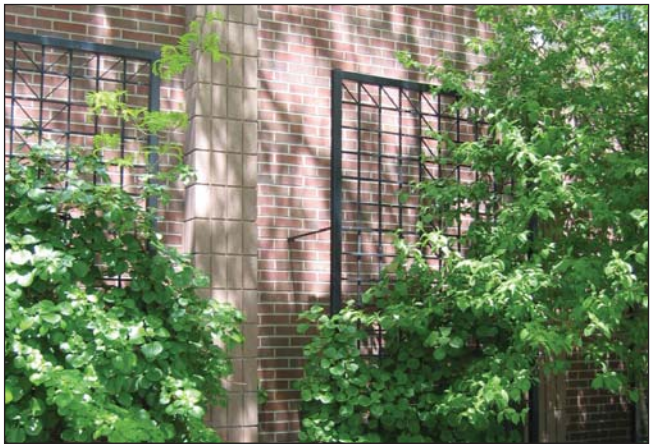
Utility areas should be discretely located and screened from view.

Service areas and trash enclosures should be incorporated into the building structure and screened from view.

Bulb-outs at intersections, and special paving treatments for crosswalks act as traffic calming elements.



Vehicles must slow to turn when the radius of the corner is minimized.



Use of trellis and landscaping provides visual relief to break up building facades.

Building articulation and modulation provides an attractive streetscape.

measures are encouraged along the length of the internal main street.

B. Minimize the radius of corners where pedestrian walkways cross at intersections.

C. Utilize a variety of special paving treatments to identify and visually enhance intersections and pedestrian crossings.

D. Discourage cut-through vehicular movement to ensure that residential areas are preserved as "slow-go" streets.

6.2 Architecture

The purpose of the architectural standards and guidelines is to ensure a high level of architectural quality with attention to details. The Artesia Corridor Specific Plan does not recommend a particular architecture style for development, but recommends consistency in architectural style throughout the project, and promotes a unique style of architecture achieved through the creative use of massing, roof forms, and facades. Architectural styles complementary of the proposed commercial development should be applied and integrated into any proposed residential components of the project.

6.2.1 Massing, Scale, and Form

A. Buildings should be divided in distinct massing elements, and facades should be articulated with significant use of architectural elements and details.

B. Building facades should be detailed in a way that makes them appear smaller in scale. This can be achieved by articulating the separate floor levels with horizontal bands or by increasing the level of detail on the building at the street or ground level.

C. Avoid repetitive elevations by using a variety of building forms.

D. Allow for visual relieve to break up long, blank, inarticulated building facades. There shall be no long flat expanses of walls that exceed 50' (100' for buildings larger than 50,000 square feet in size) without at least two of the following: color change, material change, texture change, plane projections or recesses, trellises or vines, balconies, or windows.

E. Maximum total bland wall (without windows or entrances) shall not exceed 30 percent of the first story wall.

F. Vertical and horizontal articulation should be incorporated which include the strategic placement of window and door openings, or through the use of balconies, awnings, and canopies.

G. For commercial development, public plazas, outdoor dining, and other pedestrian oriented activities may divide ground-level building facades.

H. For residential development, visual interest and distinction between units is encouraged with projecting features such as balconies, porches, bays, and dormer windows.

6.2.2 Style

A. The overall character of the Artesia Corridor project should be established through a chosen set of complementary architectural styles that are compatible with the surrounding architecture of the existing community.

B. Chosen architectural styles should incorporate high quality architectural detail that includes the use of arches, arcades, loggias, towers, variations in building form, and color blocking to define buildings.

C. Visual diversity should be promoted through the use of different architectural styles, but chosen architectural styles must be complementary. For example, different architectural styles may be used to distinguish between residential and commercial buildings, but the styles must be harmonious.

Architectural details such as awnings and planters add interest to the building facade.

6.2.3 Design Details

A. Design details should be included for each building. These include some combination of the following:
- Light fixtures
- Balconies on the second or third floors
- Decorative bulkheads
- Shutters
- Awnings for windows or balconies
- Decorative cornice
- Pedestrian arcades

B. Building elements should be designed in a way that enhances the visibility of merchandise and encourages window shopping.

C. Depth and shadow interest should be incorporated with the addition of offsets, pop-outs, and overhangs.

D. Energy efficiency is encouraged, through the use of window overhangs, arcades or loggia, solar hot water heating, advanced heating and cooling systems, or other conservation measures.

Example of different colors, textures, and materials.

6.2.4 Material & Color

A. High quality materials that weather well over time, with the appropriate use of colors and textures, should be used for building materials and design elements.

B. Materials and colors should be consistent with the architectural style.

C. Colors should include a base color and accent colors. Generally, a minimum of three colors should be used for each building. Color schemes should be selected with a harmonious range of accent materials and roof profile and colors.

D. To avoid monotony, a variety of color schemes is encouraged to provide visual interest. However, building color and materials should be complementary throughout the project.

E. Prohibited materials include: plain concrete block, plain concrete, corrugated metal, plywood, sheet pressboard or vinyl siding.

6.2.5 Roof Form

A. Breaks should be provided in roofline ridges so that there is variety in roof form and elevation appearance.

B. A variety of roof types are permitted and encouraged within the project, including hip, gable, and shed roofs.

C. The roofs should be consistent with the architectural concept and the style, materials, and scale of the building.

D. Roof heights, pitch, and planes should vary to create interplay between the roof and walls of the structure. Varying roof pitches on the same building shall be avoided unless they are integral to the architectural style or extending over porches and balconies.

Tower features add a landmark character to the project.

E. Roofing trim materials should be of similar materials and complementary colors. Roof vents and appurtenances shall be painted to match the roof color.

F. Roof overhangs are permitted and shall be designed as an integral part of the roof form.

6.2.6 Entryways

A. Building entryways shall be highlighted to establish an architectural focal point. Roof overhangs, canopies, columns, lighting features, landscaping treatments, and signs are examples of architectural elements that can achieve this.

B. Entry doors should be recessed to allow the pedestrian space to transition from the sidewalk to the interior of the building.

6.2.7 Tower Features

A. Tower features help to create the image of a landmark place and add architectural interest to otherwise standard structures.

B. The scale of tower elements should be designed to create an architectural statement, but should not be so grand as to appear imposing to plazas and walkways adjacent to them.

6.2.8 360-degree Architecture

A. 360-degree architecture shall be used to ensure that areas of structures typically considered as the "rear" of the building still convey the quality and attention to detail of the project.

B. Elevations which do not face major streets should not be neglected. Each side of the building should have similar design features.

C. Vines and trellises are encouraged for large expanses of building faces to cool the building surface and soften the wall's appearance.

6.3 Streetscape

Streetscape incorporates community features and elements related to the street environment such as signage, lighting, furnishings, walls & fences, paving materials, and public art. These components also apply to public spaces and pathways. Design and use of streetscape elements work to create pedestrian friendly areas along the internal streets and public spaces.

The different streetscape components identified below should carry common design themes through architecture, color palettes, and use of quality materials. With consistent and complementary design themes across the different streetscape elements, the Artesia Corridor project presents a unified image and an established a sense of place.

6.3.1 Signage

Signage works to identify places, provide direction, and advertise businesses. Along with communicating information, signage should add to the character of the community and reinforce a sense of place. The systems of signage addressed in these guidelines are monument entry signs, directional signs, retail monument signs, and building identification signs.

In addition to these guidelines, a Sign Program shall be required on a project by project basis. The Sign Program will identify the hierarchy of signs with a common theme, as well as specifying the signage location and style. These Sign Programs shall be consistent and complementary within the specific plan.

General guidelines that pertain to all of signage within the Artesia Corridor project are listed below, followed by guidelines specific to the different signage systems.

Signs should be externally illuminated.

A. General Guidelines:

1. Signs shall consist of high quality materials and color palettes that reflect the architectural themes of the Artesia Corridor project. The designs should also complement the architecture of the surrounding environment.
2. Internally illuminated signs are discouraged. Externally illuminated signs, or the backlighting of individual sign letters should be the standard.
3. Signage shall be well maintained, especially display surfaces.
4. Location and placement of signs should not obstruct pedestrian or vehicular movement.
5. Pole signs shall not be used.

B. Monument Gateway Signs:

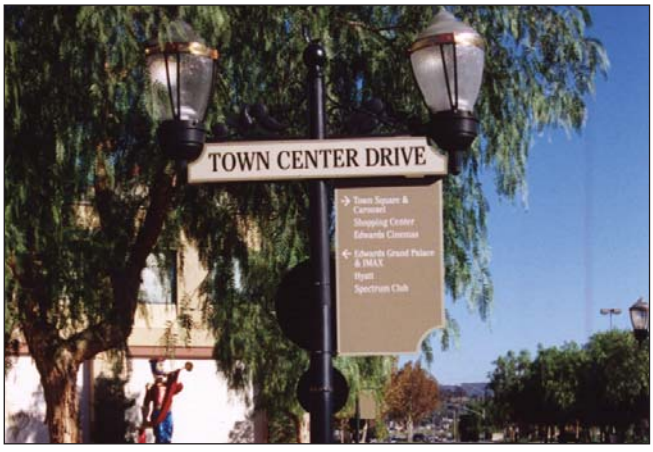
Major intersections, or gateways, present a first impression of the Specific Plan area and are intended to be distinct and identifiable. Monument gateway signs should be used to indicate entrance to the City of Gardena and the Artesia Corridor project along Artesia Boulevard.

1. Locate monument gateway signs near entries and major intersections for the project.
2. Monument gateway signs require special design treatments to announce arrival, identifying the major development or activity center.
3. Monument gateway signs may flank either side of the entry, or one monument gateway sign may be placed in the roadway median.

C. Directional Signs:

Directional signs are used to identify destination points and direct pedestrians and vehicles to those areas. These signs should not be used for advertising. Directional signs include directory monuments, public service signs, traffic safety signs, and street signs. These signs should embody the character of the Artesia Corridor area, and remain uniform throughout the project.

1. Directional signage should be of consistent design throughout the community.



Directional signage should share consistent design themes throughout the project.

2. Use of a directory monument, to direct users to multiple uses, instead of using several individual signs is preferred.
3. Public service signs should help to direct users to restrooms, telephones, information centers, and other uses. These signs shall be placed at pedestrian eye-level.
4. Street numbers should be clearly displayed on every building. It is important that drivers be able to quickly locate building numbers.

D. Retail Monument Signs:

Retail monument signs, a marker advertising numerous establishments, are used when multiple

retailers are located on one site. This reduces the cluttering of signs that would result if every tenant had its own freestanding sign. These monuments shall be located at entries, pathways, or in landscaped setback areas.

1. Major tenant portion of a monument sign shall not exceed 18 inches in height.
2. There should be elements of consistency between the colors, fonts, and sign dimensions on each of the sign fascias advertising various retailers.
3. As a general rule, no more than three colors should be used on each monument sign.
4. Consistent monument and directional signs will reinforce the community theme.
5. Integration with landscaping is encouraged.

Retail monument signs should have consistent colors and fonts.

E. Building Identification Signs:

Within retail areas, building identification signs indicate the retailer located within each specific tenant space. Signage should be incorporated on building walls, canopy signs, or hanging signs.

Example of building identification signs.

1. Signage should be coordinated in design and location along the building facade, and oriented for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
2. Signs shall be limited to one per building, per tenant, unless the building fronts an intersection, where two signs are appropriate. Additionally, a second sign is allowed in the form of a hanging sign oriented for pedestrians or under an arcade.
3. Hanging signs are encouraged as an alternative to wall signs, and the use of natural materials are recommended.

6.3.2 Lighting

Lighting design throughout the Artesia Corridor project will highlight design and landscaping features, reinforce the community theme, and help ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety. Well designed lighting fixtures also establish quality design. The following lighting program addresses lighting for roadways, parking areas, pedestrian areas, architectural and landscape lighting.

A. General Guidelines:

1. Warm white light is encouraged. Blinking, flashing, and oscillating lights are prohibited. Colored lights are not encouraged unless they contribute to the theming of commercial areas or establishments. Overly bright or glaring lights should be avoided.

2. Light fixtures should be consistent throughout the Artesia Corridor project.
3. Fixtures should be complementary to the architectural styles of the area.
4. Standards and fixtures should comply with local and state safety and illumination requirements.
5. Exterior lighting should be designed and located as to not project off-site or onto adjacent uses. This is especially critical with neighboring residential uses.
6. Outdoor lighting associated with the commercial uses shall not adversely impact the on-site or surrounding residential uses, but shall provide sufficient illumination for access and security purposes.
7. Automatic timers should be programmed to maximize personal safety at night while conserving energy. They should be reset seasonally to match the flux of dusk and dawn.

Example of stylized roadway lighting.

B. Roadway Lighting:

Lighting fixtures on roadways contribute greatly to the visual quality of a streetscape, and improve vehicular and pedestrian safety.

1. Stylized roadway lighting fixtures will contribute to the community theme and establish a standard of quality for the entire development.
2. Lighting should be positioned to enhance safety at key points along the roadway, including intersections and crosswalks.

C. Parking Area Lighting:

Lighting for parking areas is crucial to the personal safety of the user, and should be designed at a human scale.

1. Parking area lighting should be designed using many small scaled lights versus using fewer excessively tall lights.
2. Lighting fixtures should be a continuation of the theme of surrounding architectural styles, and be in keeping with the quality of surrounding buildings.

D. Pedestrian Area Lighting:

It is very important that pedestrian areas including public spaces and pathways, are well lit for evening and night use to ensure safety of residents and visitors.

1. Lighting in these areas should be scaled for pedestrians and of a style consistent with the surrounding architectural theme.
2. If the lighting product is a lamppost style, the fixture should be not more than 12 feet high. No lamppost style lighting shall be more than 20 feet high.
3. Where appropriate, “pocket lighting” may be incorporated in walls, stairs, or bollards.

E. Architectural Lighting:

To accent walls, entries, and decorative architectural features, architectural lighting should be included into the design of buildings. Lighting should be used to subtly highlight architectural features, but not as an attempt to advertise the building to passing vehicles.

1. Architectural lighting should either be incorporated into design features of the building or concealed and flush with building walls.
2. Architectural lighting should not be visible in daylight.

Pedestrian spaces should be well lit for evening and night use.

F. Landscape Lighting:

Landscape lighting should be used to highlight important landscape features.

1. String lights, non-blinking with white bulbs, can be used to accent trees or trellises within public spaces to create a festive atmosphere at night.
2. If not designed to add to an area's character, landscape lighting fixtures should be concealed or flush with grade.

String lights may be used to accent trees and create a festive night atmosphere.

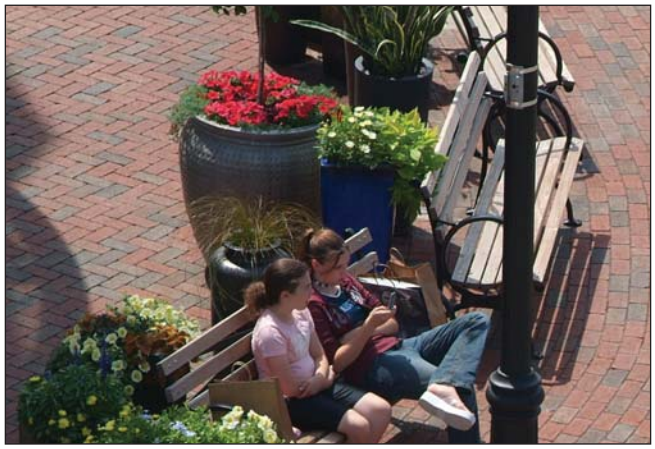
6.3.3 Street Furnishings

Street furnishings are decorative and functional elements of the streetscape. Furnishings can include benches, chairs, tables, shade structures, bollards, drinking fountains, tree grates, trash receptacles, planters, bicycle loops, and newspaper stands. Some combination of these should be used as decorative elements for streetscapes and public spaces.

A. General Guidelines:

1. Consistent design themes should be used for all the street furnishing elements throughout the project, and compliment the surrounding architectural styles.
2. Furnishings should be constructed of high quality, durable materials that can withstand the elements without showing wear.

Examples of street furnishings.



Seating areas should be located at around public spaces and at focal points along the streetscape.

Shade structures provide comfort and incentives for pedestrians to use public spaces.

Planters may also be used as bollards.

3. Furnishings should be placed where pedestrian traffic, viewsheds, or building ingress and egress will not be obstructed.
4. Decorative features that prevent skateboarding along street furnishings shall be incorporated within the design of the street furnishings.

B. Seating Areas:

1. Benches should be placed at selected locations along the internal main street, and focused around public spaces.
2. Providing seating areas adjacent to landscaping and public spaces invites people to enjoy the amenities provided.
3. Moveable furniture should be provided to encourage pedestrian use.
4. Planters that also function as seating areas should be provided.

C. Shade Structures:

1. Trellises, umbrellas, gazebos, and other forms of shade structures are encouraged along the internal main street and public spaces within the Artesia Corridor project.
2. Market umbrellas and awnings provide shade, "soften" hard building edges, and add color to the sidewalk area in front of shops and restaurants.

D. Bollards:

1. Bollards should be located at intersections of local internal access streets and external periphery streets and thoroughfares, and in combination with handicapped/wheelchair access ramps, in order to protect pedestrians from vehicular traffic which might inadvertently try to access sidewalk areas via ramp sections along the street edge.
2. Bollards should be placed a maximum of four feet on center in order to prevent vehicular access, and chain loops between bollards

should be avoided in order to minimize "trip and fall" hazards.

3. Bollards should be fabricated and finished to match surrounding street furnishing elements.

Example of tree grates used in an urban setting.

E. Tree Grates:

1. Tree grates should be provided for trees along the internal main street.
2. Tree grates should uniform in size according to the tree hierarchy established in the landscape plan. For example, major trees along the main street should share similarly sized tree grates, and different trees clustered around public spaces may share a different set of consistently sized tree grates.

F. Trash Receptacles:

1. Trash receptacles should be located at all internal street intersections.
2. Additional trash receptacles should be located adjacent to outdoor dining areas and parking areas.

6.3.4 Walls, Fences, and Gates

The design and placement of walls and fences are essential to site design, connectivity, and theme of the project. Gates are also necessary to separate residential and commercial components of the Artesia Corridor project. These features help identify separate areas within the community, as well as provide needed privacy and security.

A. Although needed in certain locations, solid walls should only be used when absolutely necessary.

B. Walls, fences, and gates should appear consistent in style and material, complementing the surrounding architectural styles.

C. Walls, fences, and gates should be constructed of high quality, durable materials.

D. Landscaping elements should be densely planted and layered to provide screening. Vines and trellises are encouraged to help soften hard edges and screen walls from view.

E. Where feasible, dense planting and hedges should be used in place of a wall or fence.

F. Chain link fences shall not be allowed within the Artesia Corridor project.

Dense planting and hedges may be used to screen wall surfaces.

Unique paving treatments highlight public spaces and pedestrian areas along the streetscape.

Paving treatment and public art both add interest to public spaces.

Water features may be interactive elements of the streetscape.

6.3.5 Paving Materials

Distinctive paving treatments give visual clues to users and emphasize different areas within the streetscape and public spaces. Patterned, enriched, or textured paving treatments should be used to denote important crosswalks, highlight pedestrian pathways and public spaces, and delineate parking areas along the internal main street. The use of specialized paving materials is encouraged along the internal main street and through public spaces.

A. Acceptable paving materials for the streetscape and public spaces include interlocking concrete pavers, native stone, pre-cast pavers, and brick. The use of stained or stamped concrete should be discouraged, unless highly decorative and creative in nature.

B. Painted paving surfaces should not be used except to indicate traffic lanes or parking spaces.

6.3.6 Water Features and Public Art

Water features and public art are streetscape elements that may be used to highlight public spaces and focal points along the streetscape. These components add an interesting characteristic to public spaces, and may be used as decorative features or interactive elements.

A. Water features and public art pieces should be located along viewsheds as accent features for public spaces and nodes along the internal main street.

B. These streetscape elements should not be placed where pedestrian traffic or building ingress and egress would be obstructed.

C. Water features and public art shall be well maintained to preserve their quality appearance.