DESIGN GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES

CALIFORNIA
SEPTEMBER, 2005
INTRODUCTION ................................................. 4
DESIGN APPROVAL PROCESS ............................ 5
GOALS & INTENT ............................................... 6
ARCHITECTURAL STYLES ........................................ 8
  Commercial ............................................... 9
  Preservation ........................................... 12
I. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES ....................... 15
  A. Setbacks & Mini Plazas ............................ 16
  B. Parking & Service Areas ......................... 18
  C. Outdoor Spaces .................................. 20
  D. Building Corners ................................ 24
  E. Entrances ........................................... 26
  F. Storefronts ........................................ 28
  G. Display Windows .................................. 34
  H. Upper Facades ..................................... 36
  I. Rooflines ........................................... 38
  J. Small Facades ...................................... 40
  K. Rear Facades ....................................... 42
  L. Awnings ............................................. 44
  M. Arcades ............................................. 46
  N. Canopies .......................................... 48
  O. Lighting ............................................. 50
  P. Color ................................................ 52
  Q. Additions & Renovations ....................... 54
  R. Landscaping ....................................... 56
  S. Materials .......................................... 59

II. SIGNAGE GUIDELINES ................................. 60
  A. General Guidelines ............................... 62
  B. Transom Signs .................................... 64
  C. Awning Surface Signs ............................ 68
  D. Edge Signs ......................................... 72
  E. Wall Signs ......................................... 74
  F. Projecting Signs ................................... 76
  G. Window Signs ..................................... 80

SPECIALTY SIGNS ........................................... 82

PROHIBITED SIGNS ..................................... 83

TEMPORARY BANNERS ................................. 84

MAINTENANCE .............................................. 85

DESIGN CHECKLIST ......................... Appendix A

CONTENTS
INTRODUCTION

Located along the Sacramento River Delta, Pittsburg is a city rich in history. The railroad from the Black Diamond coal mining area in the mid-1800’s ran right through the heart of Pittsburg to the docks, where the coal was transferred to ships and barges. The town grew up around this critical railway line, and although the railroad itself is gone, the right-of-way became the present-day Railroad Avenue. Today, Pittsburg is a diverse and growing community that is rediscovering its Old Town main street.

Pittsburg’s rich history has created a city with varied architectural styles and uses. These guidelines are offered as a tool to property and business owners so that they may rekindle the community life and retail vitality of Old Town while being sensitive to its historic past and modern needs.

These guidelines are broken down into various subjects for easy reference and application. Although every instance is unique, the guidelines are relevant to new building projects as well as renovations and additions throughout the Old Town Pittsburg area.

Page 5 outlines the Design Approval process. Design considerations commence on page 16 and the checklist, provided at the end of the document, outlines all sections. Read the text and as creative design is encouraged, the photos within each section reflect visual examples intended to assist with the creative application of the guidelines.

As Pittsburg continues to grow and evolve, it is the City’s hope that Old Town will become a successful retail, and entertainment service area that is pedestrian friendly and welcoming to residents and visitors.

DESIGN GUIDELINE BOUNDARIES

The area on Railroad Avenue between 3rd and 10th streets bound by Cumberland and Black Diamond as outlined herein and as referred to as the Commercial Core in the August, 2001 City of Pittsburg General Plan Figure 5-1, page 5-6.
DESIGN APPROVAL PROCESS

1. The following types of improvements to properties in Old Town are subject to review and approval or denial by the City Planner/Zoning Administrator:
   · New Signage. New sign must be consistent with these adopted Old Town Design Guidelines and architecturally compatible with the associated building.
   · Minor storefront remodels, including building colors, awnings, fenestration and finishes.
   · Replacement of existing landscaping with new landscaping.
   · Additions to existing buildings. Addition must be less than 2,500 square feet and be designed to complement existing building architecture.
   · Changes in building color.

   The applicant shall submit a completed Planning Application to the City of Pittsburg for City Planner/Zoning Administrator consideration. For applications requiring City Planner/Zoning Administrator consideration, the applicant shall submit five (5) sets of plans with the Planning Application. Contact the Planning Department for application materials and submittal requirements at 925-252-4920 or find additional information at the City’s web site at www.ci.pittsburg.ca.us.

2. New construction and all other development proposals not listed under Section 1 above that would require a building permit are subject to review and approval or denial by the Planning Commission. The Commission shall also review and approve or deny applicants’ requests for exceptions to these Old Town Design Guidelines, as well as any application referred to it by the City Planner/Zoning Administrator. The applicant shall submit a completed Planning Application to the City of Pittsburg Planning Department for Planning Commission consideration. For applications requiring Planning Commission consideration, the applicant shall submit twenty (20) sets of plans with the Planning Application. Contact the Planning Department at (925) 252-4920 for application materials and submittal requirements, or find additional information at the City’s web site at www.ci.pittsburg.ca.us.

3. If any part of the approved design improvements shall encroach upon the public right of way, the applicant must fill out an application for encroachment permits to be approved by the City Engineer. Contact the Planning Department for application materials and for more information relating to encroachment, or visit the City’s web site at www.ci.pittsburg.ca.us, refer to Municipal Code, Title 12, Streets, Sidewalks and Utilities.

4. Design Review approval terminates according to its terms, if any, or upon the expiration of one (1) year from approval, unless a building or grading permit has been issued for the approved project. The duration of the approval may be extended for an additional year by the Planning Commission or Zoning Administrator, as applicable, upon written request filed within the effective period of approval.

5. Appeals: Any person aggrieved by the action of the reviewing authority may appeal the action to the next highest reviewing authority as prescribed in Section 18.36.360 of the Pittsburg Municipal Code. If no appeal is filed within ten (10) days after a decision is made on an application, the action taken on the application is final.
PRESERVING AND CREATING OLD TOWN CHARACTER

A thriving Old Town makes a large contribution to the creation of the community’s quality of life. It provides a central gathering place (living space) for entertainment, civic life, every-day commerce and socializing.

Once the area encompassing Old Town achieves a critical mass of activity through individual efforts, it becomes a destination in and of itself, essentially it becomes its own unique place and recognized by the community as Pittsburg’s shopping, dining and lifestyle destination.

Basic Principles that can be used to guide Old Town Pittsburg toward this goal are:

Quality
Old Town needs to be mindful of its history, and utilize its existing assets such as buildings, plaques, monuments and other focal points of interest. Renovation and additions to Old Town need to be made with pride and a personal touch. A ‘made to last’ feel should be cultivated through neighborhood improvements as a counterpoint to everyday, fast-paced commercial activities.

The Public-Private Partnership
The Public-Private Partnership between individual property owners and the City needs to be strong. Both parties need to do their part in collaboration – the City in creating streetscape improvements in public areas such as street lighting, benches and other public amenities, and the property owners in making property improvements that attract commercial attention, create pedestrian activity and foster a sense of place.

Incremental in Nature
Rome wasn’t built in a day, and Old Town will come to life in a step-by-step effort over time. As improvements are made, a tipping point will be reached that will activate Old Town’s potential and create the commercial and historical environment that is desired.

Collective Implementation and Constant Maintenance
In order to safeguard the progress being made in Old Town, and maintain it for years to come, it will be necessary for businesses to work together to ensure that high standards of improvements, cleanliness and service are being met by everyone. One of the best ways to do this is for businesses to create an Old Town Association with maintenance guidelines, group advertising and public events to attract shoppers to the area. Vigilance by both the City and Old Town businesses to the attractiveness of the district will be an invaluable tool in maintaining civic pride in Old Town.
Tall graceful storefronts are distinctly characteristic of old towns.

A place to celebrate everyday life!

To see and be seen!
OLD TOWN PITTSBURG ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Historically, California architecture has borrowed from many sources. The discovery of gold brought eastern immigrants along with their Colonial and Victoria architectural styles to northern California. These varied styles and techniques mingled and developed with rapid speed as each new development occurred, particularly with the establishment of lumber mills.

By the beginning of the 20th Century, the earlier styles of the region were revisited with the introduction of Mission Revival and Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The 20th Century also brought one of the most influential factors to California Architecture: the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake. Post-earthquake design embraced the latest construction technology, such as reinforced concrete.

The second half of the 20th Century brought modern styles to California Architecture. Plain facades with large amounts of glass found its way into more and more buildings. Today you can find all types of architecture in California. Historic styles are as common as contemporary. Style itself became less important than the basic principles, shared by all styles, of unifying the street level uses and public street into one living space. Well-maintained storefronts that interact with the public through vertical rhythms of columns and glass with open doorways encourage the pedestrian and shopping activity.

The following pages describe some of the more common architectural styles found in Old Town Pittsburg.
TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY COMMERCIAL

The Turn-of-the-Century Commercial model is loosely based on Italianate elements. Most Turn-of-the-Century commercial buildings are characterized by one or two stories in height, flat roofs, large glass openings and a variety of ornamental details. They often have recessed central entrances with large display windows with kick plates and transoms over both doors and windows. Often a cornice line with brackets adorned the top of the flat-roofed building. Limited ‘wall’ areas were panelized and provided space for business signs.
CLASSICAL REVIVAL

The Classical Revival style was a reaction against the elaborately picturesque styles of the Victorian period. It was more subdued than showy.

Identifying features include monumental proportion with large columns, pediments and a restrained approach to ornamentation and details.
**ART DECO**

Art Deco was a widely popular style in the United States, to break the revivalist tradition. Fashion and industrial designers used art deco designs in streamlining cars, trains, appliances and jewelry.

Identifying features include articulated stucco wall surfaces, metal trims, simplified forms and geometric designs, including zigzags, waves, vertical grooves, etc.

**BEAUX ARTS**

Beaux Arts is an architectural style that was always grandiose and emphasized classic forms, and elaborate and rich detailing. Structures were symmetrical and often an eclectic mix of various revival styles.
ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

PRESERVATION

Historic buildings in Old Town are tremendous assets to the community. There are many wonderful and architecturally rich buildings in Old Town that are worthy of preservation. The Design Guidelines and Principles should be applied to insure preservation and enhancement of the historical and architectural characteristics of the structure through rehabilitation. Restoration of buildings to their exact former appearance is encouraged but not required. Building colors, accessories, and lighting are all tools to build upon the original details of historic buildings. Specific uses of historic buildings will need to be evaluated in terms of possible alterations and how they can ‘fit’ and enhance the overall quality of these buildings. To strengthen the presence of a business, buildings with deep recesses and/or frequent columns should be enhanced by adding canopies in between columns or by adding bay windows that project over the sidewalk. The sketches on the adjacent page reflect conceptual application of the Old Town Pittsburg Design Guidelines and Principles.
ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

HISTORIC FACADES