AGENDA ITEM 8.A File No. PL16-0133 - Black Elk Hotel Preliminary Review

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

PROJECT SUMMARY: Preliminary review of an application for a new four story mixed-use development

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: 728 First Street, APN 003-182-007

GENERAL PLAN: OBC, Oxbow Commercial

ZONING: Oxbow Commercial (OBC); Building Form Overlay (BF); Floodplain Management Overlay (FP)

APPLICANT: Black Elk LLC (Andrew Siegal)

728 First Street

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II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this study session is to provide a preliminary review of the application for a proposed mix-use commercial building at 728 First Street. Preliminary review is a process applied to significant projects which would benefit from early consultation while an application is being processed for formal review. This process is encouraged by the Planning Commission and City Staff for most commercial developments. Comments received during this informal process are intended to serve as guidance only and should not be considered as preliminary support of or opposition to an application.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION, CONTEXT, AND BACKGROUND

The Applicant, Andrew Siegal, is requesting approval to construct a new four story mixed use commercial building (with underground parking) on a 0.36 acre property at 728 First Street. The first floor of the proposed building is approximately 7,250 square feet and features a restaurant/bar, hotel lobby area, and retail space. The second, third, and fourth floors support a 27 room hotel. Parking will be provided under the building within an automated parking structure that is proposed to accommodate 56 vehicles and two ADA accessible parking spaces. Access to the parking structure is from First Street, using the existing driveway that currently serves the property. A full-time parking attendant will assist motorists to and from the parking garage. The Applicant is proposing to extend the driveway to McKinstry Street, crossing an abutting property under the Applicant’s ownership, thereby providing secondary and emergency access capabilities.

The property is currently improved with a single-story office building, surface parking and open space (Flood District easement) along the northern edge of the property. It is bordered by the Napa Valley Wine Train tracks to the west, a mix of single family homes and small businesses to the south, a single story commercial/retail building to the east and the flood control bypass channel to the north.

On March 6, 2014, the Planning Commission approved a three-story mixed use project for the property (File No. PL13-0072 – Resolution No. PC2014-7). The project consisted of a 5,500 square foot restaurant on the first floor, 4,500 square feet of office space on the second floor, and three residential condominium units on the third floor. Parking for the project consisted of 17 on-site spaces located under the building and 15 spaces located off-site on the Napa Valley Wine Train parking lot (see Attachment 1, renderings of original project).

IV. ANALYSIS

A. GENERAL PLAN, DOWNTOWN SPECIFIC PLAN, AND ZONING

The property is designated and zoned Oxbow Commercial (OBC) in the General Plan, Downtown Specific Plan (DTSP), and Zoning Ordinance. This designation and district applies to the eastern portion of downtown Napa generally between Soscol Avenue and the Napa River and north to the River Terrace Inn. The OBC designation and district allow for uses oriented to tourists such as hotels and their related amenities; recreational facilities, community and visitor serving retail, commercial entertainment and restaurants; and similar compatible uses. The proposed retail and restaurant uses are consistent with this designation and are listed as permitted. A hotel is listed as a conditionally permitted...
use and requires approval of a Use Permit by the Planning Commission. Design Review Permit approval by the Planning Commission is also required for the new commercial building.

The property is also located within the Downtown II (DT-II) Building Form Overlay District, which encompasses blocks between the center and edges of downtown, and which establishes the physical development standards for property. The DT-II Overlay District requires compliance with Section 4.7.2 of the DTSP. DT-II establishes property development standards such as development intensity, height, setbacks, and step backs. The proposed mixed-use commercial building meets the afore-mentioned standards.
B. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Although this project is undergoing an assembly of materials and internal staff review to prepare for formal review of the entitlements (e.g. Use Permits and Design Review Permits) there are several project design features that the Planning Commission may want to discuss as part of the preliminary review of the project. These include:

1. Land Use Compatibility – Does the proposed development of a restaurant, retail and hotel satisfy the objectives of the Mixed Use Development Objectives (see Attachment 3) as established in Napa Municipal Code (NMC) Section 17.52.280?

The Applicant characterizes the project as a high-quality small-scale inn, and establishes at the ground or street level space for restaurant and retail uses to serve both tourists and locals. The proposed development includes a favorable blend of uses that complement each other through site design details and orientation of public spaces. Hotel uses are an increasingly common proposal in many of the City’s downtown developments, as is proposed here on the project site on the upper floors where 27 keys are proposed. Extending the pedestrian experience along first street is important and this project will further this goal. While staff has expressed to the Applicant that the former project with its office and residential uses is a preferable mix of uses (there are several projects in the downtown proposing accommodations) there has been no significant direction provided by the Council on the issue of overconcentration of hotel uses at this time. Therefore, provided the project does not adversely affect other permitted projects which have already been entitled in the area City staff believes that the proposed mix of uses is both internally compatible and compatible with the surrounding area.

2. Building Design – Does the proposed development provide high quality design consistent with the Design Guidelines established in Chapter 5 of the DTSP?

The proposed architectural design is described in the plans as “Agri-Industrial.” The building features horizontal wood siding, laser cut sliding metal barn doors on the upper floors of the south elevation facing First Street, glass balcony railings along the west elevation serving the hotel guest rooms and a standing seam metal roof. The First Street elevation also features 10 foot tall glass doors providing entry to the hotel lobby, restaurant, and retail space. A front entry porch “canopy” roof and patio extend outward towards the sidewalk to enhance the pedestrian experience. The building design creates an elevated ground-floor outdoor patio on the rear of the project, affording nice views of the Oxbow Bypass.

The building design is simple and uncomplicated in its architectural form and use of materials. However, as described below, the context of this four story building (five stories when viewed from the rear) could be considered out of scale with its surroundings. The properties to the west and east of the project site are low scale one story buildings and the Oxbow District contains a mix of buildings including the Oxbow Public Market and CIA at Copia Buildings which are approximately 40 to 45 feet tall with two stories, whereas this much smaller property contains four to five stories in height. There are also a number of traditional scaled two story residential buildings in the surrounding area. These are significant in that they provide a character of an eclectic neighborhood which has become a significant draw to visitors and locals alike who
come to the area to enjoy uses and activities. This mix of building styles, scale and uses makes the area truly unique to Napa and staff is concerned that each property, large or small, built to the maximum floor area could adversely alter the character of the area. The original design of the property provided similar height, but did so by creating more horizontal building offsets, softening the upper-most story and implementing elements such as rooflines that projected from the wall planes as lower levels to bring the scale of the building down.

3. Building Height and Neighborhood Context – Does the proposed building height satisfy the Design Guidelines in Chapter 5 of the DTSP and is the size and scale of the building compatible in the Oxbow Neighborhood?

The maximum height the City may allow in the DT-II Overlay Zone is 60 feet; however, the determination of actual height is subject to consideration of a design review permit relative to how a project complements and respects its surroundings. The proposed building height is 59 feet – 11 ¾ inches. The height of the previous commercial building approved by the Planning Commission in 2014 was 54 feet and three stories plus the garage. One of the more significant elements of the previous design was the top floor which stepped back from the lower floors tapering the building down and grounding it, providing more of a human scale. Step backs are an important part of the City’s design guidelines, and staff believes that this Project has neglected this guideline in the proposed design resulting in more apparent height and bulk to the building (see Attachment 4 containing the DTSP Guidelines including relating to stepbacks). Heights of adjacent and nearby buildings are generally one and two stories in height. The Oxbow Public Market is approximately 40 feet in height. The CIA at Copia building is approximately 45 feet in height. Many of the existing structures are older in age and as property continues to rebuild, it is expected that building heights will generally increase. However, until this happens at some point in the future, the proposed building will initially appear visually dominant and out of scale in the neighborhood. The height of the proposed building is also accentuated by the open space to the north of the property that cannot be developed (the Flood District easement and flood control bypass channel). As envisioned in the DTSP, development is encouraged to step back at the third floor to reduce building mass and provide a more human scale. Along a pedestrian street such as First Street, this is an important element which helps to define the larger downtown with the more substantial buildings located in the center or downtown core tapering down to the outer edges of the downtown where the buildings are less substantial.

4. The building design attempts to soften and minimize the height and scale of the structure with the balconies and architectural details to the building. The Applicant states in the project description that “the visual connection of a tall building, with a highly articulately western elevation, visible from downtown, is a key component of the project design”. However, as noted above, there are no recommended step backs on the street façade and the simple building form provides a potentially “blocky” appearance that could be considered out of scale with its surroundings. Additionally, the building sets the tone for other development in the area to maximize the number of stories and height in the Oxbow District. What City Staff believes makes the area unique is its mix of building heights, styles and the scale presented on this peninsula of land creating a comfortable and walkable environment. How the building achieves this objective, if determined to be important to the Commission, is a question that warrants consideration.
during the preliminary review. The attached DTSP Guidelines (see Attachment 4) will help facilitate the Commission’s discussion as the project relates to the site, the transition to adjoining properties and the larger environment of the Oxbow District.

5. Public Art – Does the proposed living wall sculptures satisfy the intent of the Public Art Ordinance?

The NMC defines “Public art” as an original work of a permanent nature in any variety of media produced by an artist which may include sculpture, murals, photography and original works of graphic art, water features, neon, glass, mosaics, or any combination of forms of media, furnishing or fixtures permanently affixed to the building or its grounds, or a combination thereof, and may include architectural features of the building such as decorative handrails, stained glass and other functional features which have been enhanced to be visually appealing. Public art does not include landscape architecture and landscape gardening, except where these elements are designed by the artist and are an integral part of the work of art by the artist.

The proposed development involves the construction of a new commercial building having a construction cost exceeding $250,000 and therefore the Applicant will need to demonstrate compliance with the Public Art Ordinance (NMC Chapter 15.108). The proposed method of compliance with the Public Art Ordinance requirements shall be submitted in conjunction with the development application.

In order to satisfy the public art requirements, the Applicant is proposing to install a pair of living wall sculptures or green screens extending vertically on the west facing elevation of the building. The art walls will be designed and built using native plants of varying colors and textures. The first living wall measures approximately 64’x10’ and the second wall 84’x12’. This artistic landscape form could be a beautiful addition to the building and would be highly visible to the public when entering the Oxbow area from Soscol Avenue and First Street. However, given the information submitted as part of the initial proposal it is uncertain whether the living walls are “public art” as defined above. Additionally, it is uncertain at this time whether the element, if considered art as defined in the Public Art Ordinance, would meet the requirement of 1% of the cost of the construction as provided in the ordinance. Consideration of this issue at the preliminary review will shed more light on the elements needed for final review when the project is forwarded to the Commission in the summer.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This preliminary review is not subject to a formal CEQA determination as the preliminary review does not constitute a “project”. Formal approval of the project will be subject to environmental review in accordance with CEQA at the “earliest feasible time” prior to “approval” consistent with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15004 and 15352. Staff will conduct a CEQA analysis of the project prior to formal review and approval of the required entitlements.

VI. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff supports the Applicant’s desire to develop the property with higher quality design elements and finishes, although Staff is concerned about the overall number of stories
and height of the structure relative to its lot size and the surrounding context of the greater Oxbow District. At this point, the Applicant is looking for feedback from the Planning Commission. The Commission may want to consider issues of building use, design, access, materials and quality, and area context. These issues will be addressed in more detail at the time this application is deemed complete and scheduled for a formal public hearing.

VII. REQUIRED ACTION

No formal action is required by the Planning Commission as this study session is for preliminary comments only. Other issues such as environmental impacts, General Plan and Zoning consistency will be addressed in more detail at the time a future application is deemed complete and scheduled for a formal public hearing.

VIII. DOCUMENTS ATTACHED

1. Original project approval
2. Project Description and Plans
3. Mixed Use Development Objectives
4. Downtown Specific Plan Design Guidelines
Black Elk Restaurant & Inn Project

Project Description
September 12, 2016

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Andrew Siegal of Black Elk LLC proposes to construct an inn and restaurant development on a 0.36-acre property at 728 First Street in the Oxbow area of downtown Napa. The property currently holds an office building, parking area and developed open space at its north edge. It is bordered by the Wine Train tracks to the west, a mix of single-family homes and small businesses to the south, a commercial/retail building to the east and the future bypass channel to the north. The site is zoned CT/Downtown II and has an MU-485 General Plan land use designation.

The Applicant bought the property in January 2008 and is using the existing building as office space. Since then, the rear portion of the property was developed as an open space area with benches and a shade structure. And recently, as part of the Flood Control Project, First Street was raised in front of the property, a new access driveway with walls and railings was constructed down to the existing parking lot and on site drainage improvements were made to collect the storm water.

The applicant has since also purchased 1031 McKinstry and received planning approval (building permit pending) to relocate, remodel and add to an existing structure. The site will join the Black Elk site at its northern half and will provide secondary site access for existing and for accessibility.

Black Elk LLC originally proposed a three-story mixed-use restaurant-retail-office-residential over parking podium and with this revised application proposes to construct a four-story plus loft 27-room inn and restaurant with retail area over a podium garage level. The building above the podium is comprised of a “ground floor” level of restaurant with a rear deck, retail and lobby entrance are for the inn; three floors with a loft level at the fourth floor for the proposed guest rooms. The applicant has proposed an automated parking system that will accommodate spaces for 56 cars two additional surface parking spaces for accessibility. Based upon the proposed uses a total of 47 parking spaces are required. The applicant is aware of the impact of parking in the Oxbow District and will be providing a total of 58 spaces or 11 spaces over the calculated requirement. Applicant also intends to provide valet parking at the busy times of operation for the guests of the inn and the restaurant, a turn out along the entrance/exit driveway is shown to stage valet parking for guests leaving the property.

The entitlements being requested are:
- Major Design Review—Modification of previously approved (now expired) project, see attached City approval letter.
- Tentative Map—previously approved
- Use Permit for:
  - Offsite Parking—previously approved 15 spaces, to be modified to 16 spaces
  - Liquor License—previously approved
  - Accommodations for 27-guest room Inn—pending approval
Step-backs create a pedestrian scale

The building steps back at front and rear corners, along its west and east sides, deferring to its eastern neighbor, and creating visual interest on the west, facing the Napa Wine Train.

3. Preserve historic resources

There are no historic resources on site, but the building massing and details refer to agri-industrial context: a simply-detailed but durable modern barn aesthetic.

4. Durable and historically appropriate materials and details create visual interest

See #3.

5. Pedestrian safety and comfort should be addressed by lighting and landscape

The south elevation (First St.) modulates a difficult section of sidewalk grade, and extends a porch “canopy” roof and patio out toward the pedestrian. Upper levels focus activity and “eyes on the street” from decks and from windows and balconies of Inn guest rooms and decks.

6. Sustainable building design contributes to neighborhood identity

The proposed building is a wood frame over a concrete podium using high quality shell components and the design of the west elevation is driven by the desire to modulate solar gain while maintaining views and outdoor activity using planted “green” screens and covered deck areas.

7. Take advantage of public improvements to foster a safe and inviting downtown

The proposed building creates an elevated ground-floor patio on the rear of the project, adjacent to the Napa River bypass, to allow outdoor social and dining activity, rather than back-of-house infrastructure.

Urban Design Principles:

1. Enhance connection to open space and pedestrian networks

The building is positioned to connect to the First Street pedestrian experience, and to pedestrian approach from the rail corridor.

2. Take advantage of the Napa River

The design of the public improvements to the river landscape makes direct connection difficult (flood walls), but the building takes advantage of adjacency to the open space with a substantial plaza in the rear of the site, and with views from both windows and from outdoor and semi-enclosed decks and planted areas of the building.

3. Reinforce unique zones of the city

The unique character of the Oxbow district has informed the design of the site: urban uses creating closer connections and views of the recently completed Oxbow By-pass public area and the other natural character elements of the land forms surrounding Napa.

4. Facilitate connections to other zones of the city

This site is seen as the first built project which will mark arrival in the Oxbow / First Street district, connecting this growing neighborhood visually and programmatically to the established downtown. The visual connection of a tall building, with a highly articulated western elevation, visible from downtown, is a key component of the project design.

5. Facilitate the efficient use of space for auto parking

This sloped site created the opportunity for podium level parking, using current parking design strategies, the project proposes to use an automated parking system referred to as “puzzle parking” to efficiently park up to 56 automobiles in an area that would typically accommodate 16 or 17 surface parking spaces.
Mixed Use Principles:
1. Mend retail frontage (Main Street, but applicable to First Street)
The existing site is currently a gap in the retail-restaurant identity. The proposed project extends commercial existing to the east with ground level restaurant, while adding an upper-story inn.
2. Anchor projects with river and street orientation
The proposed project addresses both the river, oxbow by-pass and the street, with additional emphasis on the elevation facing the rail corridor and Soscol.
3. Use combinations of mixed-use inn and restaurant to reinforce activity on First Street.
The multi-use concept is key to the proposed project: 24 hour use of the site is anticipated with inn; and the restaurant will bring visitors and residents to the area.

Urban Design Concepts:
1. Preserve downtown character: reflect scale and pattern of first floor uses
The proposed first floor restaurant is reflected in ground floor window and door patterns, and the inn use above is reflected in scale and repetition of fenestration.
2. First Street should show storefronts for retail uses, less open for restaurants
The primary use at street level is restaurant, retail and inn entrance, which is quite open to the street and marked by an awning. The west elevation brings unique interest with its dramatic restaurant “glass wall”, the planted vertical “green” screen and the multi-level decks above.
3. Pedestrians should glimpse and be invited to private open spaces
Primary open spaces are the covered but open decks at upper levels, and the outdoor dining / activity space behind the building. Both are visible and articulated to draw interest from the street, the oxbow by-pass and from the rail corridor.

Zone “C1”
Encourage amenities for visitors: retail / commercial / restaurants, with possible residential uses:
The project team feels that, as pioneers in this rapidly changing zone of the city, a small single-project with a mix of uses such as the proposed retail/restaurant and inn would include a lot of uses for one isolated location. And with the current planned redevelopment of 1031 Mckinstry a synergy will be created between the two projects as both will view into and be seen from the Oxbow By-pass public area.
17.52.280 Mixed use development objectives.

A. Purpose. To describe objectives for horizontal and vertical mixed use development projects. The General Plan includes a “mixed use” land use category that allows and encourages varied land uses. In addition, several other commercial, office and the residential office land use categories provide for mixed use development.

B. Definitions.

1. Mixed Use. A mixed use project is an integrated combination of two or more land uses on a lot or lots included in a development permit application. Land uses may include retail, commercial, office, light manufacturing, attached residential uses, or other uses as permitted by the General Plan land use category and base zoning district.

2. Horizontal Mixed Use. A development pattern that combines one type of use on one part of a lot or lots involved in a development permit with a second use on another part of the same lot(s).

3. Vertical Mixed Use. A vertical mixed use project combines uses vertically in a building, such as retail on the ground floor with residential above.

C. Development Objectives.

1. To create a mix of uses that relate to and complement each other through site design, for example, through shared use of public spaces and landscape connections.

2. To create a mix of uses that respond to their context and complement each other in their building design and street orientation.

3. To facilitate linkages among uses on and off site through use of pedestrian, bicycle and circulation connections, shared access and parking.

4. To address General Plan direction to include residential uses on key larger sites, and evaluate projects on smaller sites in accordance with the “mixed use” land use category description.

5. To utilize the city’s residential design guidelines for residential mixed use projects.

(See Section 17.52.120, Density and FAR Calculations, for calculating mixed use densities and floor area ratios.)

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5.1 OVERARCHING DESIGN GUIDELINE POLICIES

The intention of design guidelines is to provide a framework for development design. Design guidelines are not intended to be rigid or inflexible. The City requests that every project in Downtown follows these guidelines. However, the City also encourages creative solutions to design challenges, design that is high quality and reflects “outside the box” ideas.

Design guidelines focus on relationships between buildings, space and people. They are used to coordinate and enhance the diverse activities in Downtown. There are many ways to meet a particular guideline and exceptions may be granted such as in the case of an extraordinary design.

This chapter covers both private and public realm design, as well as guidelines related to historic resources, parking and circulation. The following overarching design policies set the tone for future development.
1. Foster a pedestrian environment by orienting buildings to the street.
2. Maintain the rhythm and scale of the Downtown environment by designing buildings with articulation and architectural features.
3. Strongly encourage the use of stepbacks to reduce the impact of taller buildings on pedestrians.
4. Preserve and protect historic resources.
5. Use quality materials and façade elements to provide visual interest and durability.
6. Enhance the ambiance and safety of Downtown through the use of strategically placed lighting elements.
7. Encourage the use of sustainable building design.
8. Ensure that public improvements further the goal of a safe and inviting Downtown.
5.2 PRIVATE REALM DESIGN GUIDELINES

Downtown Napa is the symbolic center of the community. It is an identifiable place with distinct boundaries and a unique urban scale. A range of architectural styles and periods is represented and serves to create a distinctive character for the area, one that is highly valued by the city’s residents and leaves a lasting, positive impression upon visitors. New buildings and rehabilitation projects should complement this character.

The variety of architectural styles is an asset to Downtown. Regardless of architectural style, development should exhibit attention to detail, quality architecture and materials, and a pedestrian-friendly scale.

The design guidelines in this chapter coordinate the design of private development and public improvements to create a complete, vibrant Downtown environment.
The design and orientation of buildings and the spaces around them greatly influence the character of a place. The design of the “private realm” (buildings and land that are on privately-owned lots or parcels) can have a significant impact on the quality of the “public realm,” as private buildings typically provide the edges to streets, sidewalks and open spaces. This interrelationship is critical because together these two realms shape the character, experience and functionality of the city center. New developments should incorporate a diverse range of architectural styles from historically-inspired to modern.

A. SITE LAYOUT AND BUILDING DESIGN
Downtown Napa is characterized by buildings that have strong relationships to the streets. Buildings are generally built up to or close to the sidewalks, providing a well-defined sense of space. Doors and windows orient directly to the streets, creating a feeling of activity and vibrancy. These design relationships should continue to be fostered throughout Downtown.

Site Layout and Building Orientation Guidelines:

1. Orient buildings so that primary façades and key pedestrian entries face major streets or plazas.
2. Locate ground-floor commercial uses on street corners at key intersections.
3. Corners should be accentuated with height, articulation and unique roof silhouettes to emphasize their presence.
4. Locate semi-private open spaces such as common courtyards to face major streets, activating the street corridor and providing “eyes on the street.”
5. In the Transition area, maintain privacy by positioning windows and upper floor balconies so as to minimize views into neighboring properties.
6. Encourage pedestrian passages that enable through-block pedestrian circulation.

Design buildings to be oriented to the street. Every building should have its main entrance on a public street.

Encourage pedestrian passages that enable through-block pedestrian circulation.
6. Locate private parking lots, driveways and loading areas behind buildings, with access from side or rear streets to facilitate active pedestrian edges along building frontages.

7. Design river and creek frontages to:
   - Ensure building façades facing the river are articulated with design elements that activate the riverfront, and with buildings that are massed and sited so as not to "wall in" the river;
   - Encourage mid-block breaks between buildings along the Riverfront promenade, that are pedestrian-oriented spaces such as plazas, paseos or courtyards;
   - Encourage every building and/or shop to provide direct pedestrian access to the Riverfront Promenade, where applicable;
   - Encourage access drives to be centralized wherever possible;
   - Discourage service areas on the river side of any property (or camouflage from public view); and
   - Discourage surface parking lots between buildings and the river edge. However, under certain circumstances parking may extend into river edge setback areas if adequate landscape screening is provided and pedestrian access to the river is not diminished.

B. MASSING AND SCALE

The original Downtown Napa plat contained blocks measuring 240 feet on each side, divided into parcels with frontages typically ranging from 30- to 60-feet wide. This module is evident in the massing and scale of existing buildings, creating the rhythm and "fine-grained" pedestrian scale of Downtown's streets and should be retained whenever possible.

Massing and Scale Guidelines:
1. Encourage new development to reflect the narrow parcel increments that characterize Downtown (30- to 60-foot typical), with sensitivity to the traditional building size and storefronts.
2. At major street corners, at the terminus of a street corridor, at gateway locations and at other highly-visible building locations, utilize special architectural features such as gables, turrets, towers and loggias to accent buildings.
3. On highly visible corner parcels, encourage new developments to incorporate special features such as rounded or cut corners, corner towers, inviting corner entrances, corner roof features, special shop windows and/or special base designs, etc.
4. Ensure that projects built adjacent to existing lower-scale residential development respect the scale and privacy of adjacent properties. Transitions can be made by varying the massing within a project, stepping back upper stories and varying sizes of elements to transition to smaller-scale buildings.
5. In areas with a predominantly residential character, create individual front entries for residential units at the street level, or ground floor, to maximize activation, reduce building bulk and emphasize building frontages.

6. Break up the mass of large-scale buildings with articulation in form, architectural details, and changes in materials and colors:
   - Use articulation in form including changes in wall planes, upper-story building stepbacks and/or projecting or recessed elements;
   - Incorporate architectural elements and details such as adding notches, grouping windows, adding loggias and dormers, varying cornices and rooflines; and
   - Vary materials and colors to enhance key components of a building's façade (i.e., window trims, entries, projecting elements, etc.).

7. Encourage open spaces, walkways and alleys to break up building mass, allow access through developments and create visual breaks.

8. Encourage a minimum first floor height of 14' in the area identified in Figure 5.1 - Ground Floor Height Guideline Area, to distinguish that area as the retail core of Downtown.

Transition from higher-density to lower-density development by designing different building sizes and varying building mass so it is compatible with the surroundings.

Group buildings to shape distinct and memorable open spaces such as courtyards, pasos, plazas, squares and greens.

Orient doorways and windows to create a strong relationship with the street and engage the pedestrian environment.
8. Encourage larger developments that group retail, hotel, multi-unit residential and/or office buildings to shape distinct and memorable open space(s), that are accessible to the public. Other clearly-defined spaces for large green areas are recommended including courtyards, paseos and plazas. Special building forms (i.e., towers) and site improvements (i.e., fountains or sculpture) should be incorporated to help organize and accent spaces by framing entrances, terminating views and highlighting central focal points.

9. Break up long horizontal roof lines on buildings with flat or low-pitched roofs by incorporating architectural elements such as parapets, varying cornices and roof lines.

10. Roof lines should be broken at intervals no greater than 50-feet long by changes in height or roof form.

Utilize special architectural features such as gables, turrets, towers and loggias to accent buildings at major street corners, at the terminus of a street corridor, at gateway locations and at other highly-visible building locations.

Encourage vertical building articulation and break up building mass with variation in color or material, open spaces, walkways and alleys to allow access through developments and to create visual breaks.
C. BUILDING HEIGHTS AND STEPBACKS
While the height limits allowed in the center of Downtown range from 60- to 75-feet, many existing buildings (particularly buildings with historic character) have façades of a smaller scale. New buildings and building additions should reinforce the historic pattern with heights, setbacks and upper-level stepbacks oriented to the many existing two- and three-story buildings.

Building Heights and Stepbacks Guidelines:
1. Retain pedestrian scale with design strategies such as upper-story stepbacks.
2. Activate upper-story stepback areas with balconies or roof gardens.
3. Give consideration to the potential shading impacts on surroundings. Heights, massing and site plans should respond to potential shading issues, minimizing shading impacts where they would be undesirable or maximizing shading where it is desired.

Ensure that a building's height, mass and scale do not overwhelm the pedestrian experience on the street. Utilize design strategies such as upper floor stepbacks and façade articulation to ensure a comfortable pedestrian scale.
**D. BUILDING SETBACKS**

Setbacks and overall building form should maintain the human scale of the city center, with emphasis on creating an active street edge. The character of the setback area should respond to the surrounding context, whether it be on First Street or a quiet street on the edge of Downtown.

**Building Setbacks Guidelines:**

1. Utilize building setbacks and arcaded spaces as an extension of the sidewalk to provide adequate space for pedestrian movement and activity. This space can be used for outdoor seating, street furniture, landscaping and public art that can enliven the streetscape.

2. Utilize front setbacks and side yard spacing, in the Transition districts, that are similar to the pattern of the surrounding neighborhood.

3. Incorporate landscaping that provides screening and includes additional trees that are consistent with the streetscape. Landscaping should be planned and scaled to complement the existing adjacent landscaping and building forms.

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*Utilize building setbacks and arcaded spaces to provide adequate space for pedestrian movement as well as outdoor café seating, street furniture, landscaping and public art.*

*Design setbacks for pedestrian use. Consider installing seating and tables, public art and decorative plantings.*

*In the Transition districts (see Chapter 4 – Land Use and Zoning Districts), utilize similar front setbacks and side yard spacing to complement neighboring properties. Incorporate landscaping to provide screening and introduce tree canopies.*
E. BUILDING FAÇADE ARTICULATION

The design of building façades is important for maintaining the existing scale and character of buildings in the city center. Downtown Napa has many examples of finely detailed building façades that create a rich character and human scale. New infill development should reinforce this character with attention to design details and the articulation of the building façades.

Building Façade Articulation Guidelines:
1. Maintain the existing scale and character of Downtown buildings by referencing the relatively narrow increments of development established by the original 30- to 60-foot lot frontages. Buildings with longer frontages should have vertical architectural features such as columns or piers to reflect the historic structural bay spacing.
2. Enliven the façade and provide human scale with generous reveals such as inset doorways and windows, as well as projecting elements such as entrance porches, porticoes, canopies, awnings and trellises.
3. Incorporate design details that have purpose rather than being applied or strictly decorative.
4. Avoid large uninterrupted expanses of wall surfaces.
5. Along commercial frontages, entries to shops or lobbies should be a maximum of 50’ apart from one another.
Complement the existing scale and character of buildings in Downtown by ensuring that longer frontages have vertical architectural features such as columns or piers that reflect the historic structural bay spacing.

Relate ground floor retail to Downtown’s traditional storefronts by using large display windows, kickplates, and clerestory and transom windows.

Encourage rear and side façades that are visible from the public realm to exhibit sophisticated levels of design and materials.

5. Include the elements on commercial façades that make up a complete storefront including doors, display windows, bulkheads, signage areas and awnings. Entrances should be recessed from the façade, creating a small alcove. This should apply to both new and rehabilitated buildings.

6. Utilize architectural elements such as cornices, lintels, sills, balconies, awnings, porches and stoops to enhance building façades. Frame south- and southwest-facing windows with protruding vertical or horizontal shading devices such as lintels, sills and awnings to provide adequate protection from glare.

7. Include a level of architectural detailing and quality of materials that complement historic buildings. New buildings need not mimic a "historic" architectural style, and should avoid imitation that results in caricatures.

8. Design display windows to enliven the street and provide pedestrian views into the interior of the storefront.

9. Encourage rear and side façades that are visible from the public realm that exhibit sophisticated levels of design and materials. Rear façades may look like the back of a building but still be pleasant and inviting. Side and rear facades shall have the same level of trim and finish as the front façade.
10. Maximize transparent windows on all sides of buildings, specifically for ground-floor retail and office uses, and do not obstruct views into the space. For residential uses, design balconies with transparent or semi-transparent railings to enhance natural lighting and maximize “eyes on the street.”

11. Encourage retail street frontage to have floor to ceiling windows.

12. Include on upper stories expressive design features such as balconies and bay windows.

13. Reflect the transition in use, scale and height for new projects adjacent to residential neighborhoods, with design elements such as porches, roof slope and architectural features.

14. Ensure that the river-facing sides of buildings are attractive and comparable in level of design attention to the front façades.

Integrate expressive design features at upper levels, such as balconies and windows, giving mixed-use buildings a rhythm and residential scale.

For new projects located adjacent to residential neighborhoods, reflect the transition in use and scale with design elements such as porches, roof slope and architectural features.

Ensure that the river-facing sides of buildings are attractive and comparable in level of design attention to the front façades.