Section B  PEDESTRIAN EMPHASIS
BACKGROUND

Portland’s Central City contains a set of diverse environments. These diverse environments are connected and activated by a convenient and effective pedestrian system. The emphasis of the pedestrian system within the Central City as a primary means of transportation is critical to the development of vibrant streetscapes at the sidewalk level. The sitting and overall design of buildings, the articulation of sidewalk-level facades, and the use of a consistent palette of materials in the public right-of-way enhance pedestrian movement within and among different areas of the Central City. It is largely the continuity of the system, as well as the visual connections from one area to another, that binds different areas together and encourages pedestrian movement.

The sidewalk is the primary pedestrian zone in the public right-of-way. The sidewalk is used for a variety of functions, including walking, stopping, shopping, and talking. Sidewalks can be divided into four different zones (moving from the building to the curb): the building frontage zone, the movement zone, the street furniture zone, and the curb. The demarcation of these different zones through the application of different elements, patterns and/or materials helps to identify the different functions of the sidewalk. Private development primarily reinforces and enhances the pedestrian system through the design and articulation of the building frontage zone. Variations in facade planes and detailed openings are examples of articulation at the sidewalk-level of buildings.

The traditional 200-foot block structure and contrasting larger blocks provide variety for the pedestrian system. The provision of public pedestrian connections through superblocks and other large blocks maintains a consistent pedestrian system. Additionally, these larger blocks provide development with a special sidewalk-oriented character. Because the street frontages between intersections can be longer, there are more opportunities to face main entries, lobbies, large windows, and other pedestrian-oriented building elements to the sidewalk.
GUIDELINE

Maintain a convenient access route for pedestrian travel where a public right–of–way exists or has existed.

Develop and define the different zones of a sidewalk: building frontage zone, street furniture zone, movement zone, and curb.

Develop pedestrian access routes to supplement the public right–of–way system through superblocks or other large blocks.

This guideline may be accomplished by:

1. Defining and enhancing the different zones of the sidewalk. This is a view looking east on NE Broadway in the Lloyd District. Moving from the left side of the image to the right, the different zones are: building frontage zone, movement zone, street furniture zone, and curb. In addition, the on-street parking, bicycle lane, and motor vehicle lanes to the right of the curb are clearly identified, helping to distinguish the pedestrian environment from those areas intended to accommodate other uses.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

2. Providing a variety of experiences within the adjacent sidewalk space. This section of sidewalk, located on SW 6th in front of the Equitable Building, has incorporated furnishing elements that include planters, street trees, benches and a public fountain. These elements provide many different options for stopping, resting, or simply enjoying the sidewalk experience.

3. Articulating the building wall at the ground level. The image on the left shows the integration of large windows, canopies, and directional lighting in the building frontage zone of the Safeway grocery store in the Irvington neighborhood. The image on the right shows display windows at the Justice Center, that can function as small gallery spaces adjacent to the sidewalk.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

4. Designing buildings to encourage the use of the sidewalk. The Portland Steak and Chophouse at SW 3rd and Ash has good visual and physical connections to the sidewalk. Large window and door openings encourage the use of the sidewalk. The incorporation of sheltered spaces that do not obstruct the movement zone successfully add to the pedestrian network.

5. Incorporating pedestrian access routes through sites larger than the 200-by-200-foot block structure. This pedestrian pathway (aligned with SW 2nd Avenue) is part of the South Auditorium District’s network of pedestrian paths that connect the area with the downtown’s street grid.
B 2 PROTECT THE PEDESTRIAN

BACKGROUND

Successful right-of-way design must recognize the implications of mixing pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicles. The curb is the edge between the sidewalk and street that acts to separate the pedestrian environment from vehicular areas. Street furniture elements such as trees, streetlights, benches, and bollards within the street furniture zone create physical barriers between pedestrian and vehicular traffic. In addition, on-street parking provides an effective separation between the sidewalk area and vehicular movement. The placement and location of street furniture and on-street parking enhances building access points, stopping and viewing locations, and display windows.

The provision of exterior lighting for the building frontage zone of the sidewalk enhances pedestrians' perception of safety during the evening hours. Wall-mounted lighting fixtures in the frontage zone also contribute another layer of facade articulation at the sidewalk level of the building.

Building mechanical equipment that produces offensive odors, noise, and/or air movement, should be located so as not to negatively impact the pedestrian environment. These components include, but are not limited to, heating, ventilating, and air conditioning equipment (HVAC), and natural gas, electric or water meters. Building service areas for large vehicle access should also be located where they will not negatively impact the pedestrian environment. These areas include loading areas, recycling and trash dumpsters, and parking access locations. All of these necessary building components are most successfully incorporated in building and site designs when they are considered in the early stages of the design process.
GUIDELINE

Protect the pedestrian environment from vehicular movement.

Develop integrated identification, sign, and sidewalk-oriented night-lighting systems that offer safety, interest, and diversity to the pedestrian.

Incorporate building equipment, mechanical exhaust routing systems, and/or service areas in a manner that does not detract from the pedestrian environment.

This guideline may be accomplished by:

1. Emphasizing the protected pedestrian area. This image shows a protected pedestrian and light rail-only section of SW Yamhill Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues. This area is distinguished from the typical right-of-way design through the use of traditional bollards, densely planted street trees, and a special brick paving pattern.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

2. Taking advantage of on-street parking. Parked cars, such as these along NW 23rd Avenue, are very effective at separating pedestrians from vehicular traffic, as well as maintaining a human scale within the right-of-way.

3. Building on an area’s historic approach to the sidewalk and/or right-of-way. There are several examples of buildings like these that front onto E Burnside between the Grand / Martin Luther King Jr. corridor and Sandy Boulevard. The integrated covered arcades along the sidewalk protect the pedestrian from Burnside’s high volume, high speed traffic, as well as from inclement weather.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

4. Incorporating an integrated sign and lighting system into the building’s overall design. This series of signs is a part of the design concept at the Liberty Centre that provides human scale and continuity to the pedestrian environment.

5. Integrating mechanical equipment into the overall building design when they are not at the roof or penthouse levels of the building. This image shows HVAC equipment at the Paramount Hotel that has been screened approximately one and one-half stories above the sidewalk. The screen for the equipment has been developed from elements related to the overall design concept.
B 3 BRIDGE PEDESTRIAN OBSTACLES

BACKGROUND

An effective and convenient pedestrian network requires connectivity and ease of movement. Fragmented pathway systems, wide streets, high traffic volumes or speeds, and changes in grade create obstacles to pedestrian movement. Design solutions that connect or bridge these different obstacles enhance the pedestrian environment.

Street designs that include pedestrian-crossing aids such as refuge islands, curb extensions, or mid-block crossings help to bridge obstacles such as wide streets with high traffic volumes or speeds. Refuge islands provide safe stopping places in the vehicular right-of-way that allow the crossing of traffic lanes in two discrete movements. Curb extensions help to reduce traffic speeds and shorten crossing distances by physically narrowing the distance between curbs. Mid-block crossings along large blocks increase the number of pedestrian crossing opportunities. All of these examples work to enhance the pedestrian’s perception of safety, and act as parts of a recognizable and consistent sidewalk system.

GUIDELINE

Bridge across barriers and obstacles to pedestrian movement by connecting the pedestrian system with innovative, well-marked crossings and consistent sidewalk designs.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

1. Physically connecting separate areas. This pedestrian and bicycle bridge is part of the Yards at Union Station housing complex in the River District. It spans from Union Station itself to the housing complex over the railyards providing an easy connection to the northern end of the transit mall on 5th and 6th Avenues.

2. Providing safe, easy pedestrian access through large development sites. The image on the left shows a pedestrian and bicycle pathway in the Lloyd District that connects the Sullivan’s Gulch community to activities at the Lloyd Center. The image on the right shows an accessway through part of the Yards at Union Station housing complex.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

3. Creating speed tables to minimize curb cuts and ramps. Speed tables are effectively large speed bumps that maintain the level of the adjacent sidewalk at identified pedestrian crossings. This speed table at the Liberty Centre in the Lloyd District is also marked by two bollards. They reverse the typical situation in which a pedestrian must enter the zone of moving vehicles to cross the street--instead, cars rise to the sidewalk level to pass through.

4. Incorporating pedestrian refuge islands. This refuge island in the South Auditorium District is located in the median of SW Harrison and provides shorter crossing distances across four lanes of vehicle movement.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

5. Sharing parking access locations. The Hamilton West apartment building, on the left, and the Peter Paulson Apartments, in the background, share this parking access location on SW Columbia and another one on SW 12th Avenue. Sharing these locations helps to reduce the amount of curb cuts in the sidewalk, which in turn reduces opportunities for pedestrian / motor vehicle conflicts.

6. Enhancing pedestrian crossings over freeways. Freeways and highways are significant barriers to pedestrian movement. Developing connections that provide safe, convenient pedestrian passage across these obstacles is important for a successful network. This wide sidewalk is part of the Yamhill overpass between the West End and Goose Hollow over the Interstate 405 Freeway.
B 4 PROVIDE STOPPING AND VIEWING PLACES

BACKGROUND

In urban environments, “people-watching” is a common activity. Generally, this activity occurs in settings where others are sitting or walking, rather than in secluded locations. People-watching, socializing, and eating are restful and pleasurable activities for pedestrians. The provision of stopping and viewing places adjacent to buildings makes these activities possible.

Stopping and viewing places should be developed so that the seating opportunities do not conflict with the movement zone of the sidewalk. Seating opportunities do not necessarily have to take the form of actual benches; they might be integrated as widened windowsills, the edges of landscape planters, or wide steps. Integrated seating for pedestrians should be oriented to the active edge of the site, the main entry of the building, at a nearby public open space, or at the corner. Buildings that incorporate ground-level commercial spaces can create successful outdoor seating or stopping places near takeout food establishments and sidewalk food vendors by developing recessed windows or small alcoves in the building’s facade.

Other elements such as water features, large display windows, specially designed street furniture, special landscaping, and public art enhance stopping and viewing places and add texture to the pedestrian environment.

GUIDELINE

Provide safe, comfortable places where people can stop, view, socialize, and rest.

Ensure that these places do not conflict with other sidewalk uses.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

1. Incorporating seating opportunities in the design of planters and/or low walls. These built-in benches at the Central Library are facing transit-oriented SW Yamhill Street.

2. Providing different seating options facing public gathering places. The amphitheater-like seating at Pioneer Courthouse Square is a favorite location for downtown office workers, shoppers, and tourists.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

3. Incorporating plants and small trees adjacent to the seating. These benches at PacWest Center have planters designed into their construction.

4. Developing sheltered seating opportunities. These planters with integrated benches are located in New China / Japantown at One Pacific Square. The seating opportunities are set back from the sidewalk and are sheltered from the weather by the building’s overhang.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

5. Incorporating display windows to enhance stopping and/or viewing places. While it is preferable to incorporate ground-floor windows that offer views into active-use spaces, display windows such as these at the 1001 SW Fifth Avenue Building along 6th Avenue provide opportunities for pedestrians to view graphic advertisements and interpretive exhibits.

6. Incorporating ground floor windows adjacent to stopping and viewing places. Large windows facing stopping and viewing places provide a sense of security for those using the seating opportunities. The ground level of this parking garage at SW Madison and 1st Avenue is used by a printing business that has large windows facing the low wall and sidewalk.
B 5 MAKE PLAZAS, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE SUCCESSFUL

BACKGROUND

Plazas, parks, and open spaces are crucial amenities of the Central City. These open spaces provide visual and physical relief from the built environment. Public open spaces, including parks and plazas, can accommodate a variety of uses that range from contemplative pursuits to structured athletic activities. The orientation and articulation of adjacent building elements, public art, water fountains, and landscape elements can emphasize and enhance the different uses and characters of adjacent open spaces.

When new development proposals are located adjacent to dedicated public spaces, height, bulk, and shadow regulations protect the public spaces from excessive shadow during anticipated high use periods. These mechanisms are intended to ensure that new construction and/or additions to existing buildings will not negatively impact access to sunlight for public open spaces.

“Pocket parks” are small-scale, locally-oriented open spaces that provide nearby residents or workers with opportunities to relax and socialize. Publicly or privately developed pocket parks augment the pedestrian system of the Central City and balance the formal treatment of the downtown park system.

Pocket parks are typically framed by buildings on at least two sides and are not separated from development by a right-of-way. Pocket parks located in residential communities should include play spaces for children, as well as amenities for adults. Pocket parks, developed as part of a commercial proposal, should provide amenities such as seating, picnic tables, water features, and weather protection.
GUIDELINE

Orient building elements such as main entries, lobbies, windows, and balconies to face public parks, plazas, and open spaces.

Where provided, integrate water features and/or public art to enhance the public open space.

Develop locally-oriented pocket parks that incorporate amenities for nearby patrons.

This guideline may be accomplished by:

1. Orienting incorporated open spaces to receive sunlight. The plaza at the Liberty Centre in the Lloyd District is positioned to face the south for the highest amount of sunlight. One of the building’s main entrances also directly faces the plaza, giving the open space an anchoring focal point. The provision of access to sunlight, as well as the integration of focal points that orient pedestrians, is critical for the success of public open spaces.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

2. Orienting main entries to face dedicated public parks. The Federal Courthouse (upper image) and Keller Auditorium have developed arcades that formally face the parks across SW 3rd Avenue. Main building entries that face public parks strengthen adjacent parks by providing focal points and character.

3. Developing incorporated open spaces adjacent to buildings that can accommodate a variety of programmed functions. This music recital is being held in the outdoor courtyard of One World Center near the intersection of SW Salmon Street and 1st Avenue.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

4. Developing open spaces that provide different functions at different times of the week. The upper image shows the Skidmore Market area during its weekly use as a surface parking lot. The lower image shows the same area on the weekend, filled with the kiosks and active uses of the Skidmore Market.

5. Creatively taking advantage of “leftover” open spaces. Both the Saturday Market and the Burnside Skatepark are successful utilizations of areas under the Burnside Bridge that were not originally intended for public use. What these areas lack in location desirability they make up for with the provision of year-round weather protection.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

6. Developing locally-oriented pocket parks. This park at the Oregon Square office complex in the Lloyd District provides workers from the different buildings with opportunities to rest and relax.

7. Creating pocket parks that provide amenities for both children and adults alike. Pettygrove Park, in the South Auditorium District, offers a series of grassy mounds that are popular playspaces for children. The park also provides ample seating opportunities for adults that work in nearby office buildings.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

8. Developing urban pocket parks where there are buildings directly abutting on at least two sides. Adjacent buildings provide a good sense of enclosure for the park and offer special opportunities to activate the outdoor space. Pocket parks can be as intimate as this small space for outdoor dining near NW 1st and Couch.

9. Developing pocket parks to take advantage of adjacent residential buildings. The Village at Lovejoy Fountain apartment complex directly abuts the park at Lovejoy Fountain. The apartments, in the background, are partially screened by large trees from the fountain, yet offer many window and balcony openings facing the open space that provide an indirect level of security to the park area.
B 6 DEVELOP WEATHER PROTECTION

BACKGROUND

The design of buildings and their relationships to the sidewalk environment are critical factors in the development of an active and vital pedestrian environment. This relationship is enhanced when the effects of environmental factors such as rain, wind, glare, shadow, reflection, and sunlight on pedestrian movement are engaged in the design process. Developing buildings with sidewalk-level facades that balance the different aspects of these environmental factors strengthens the pedestrian environment.

The size and placement of building elements such as awnings, arcades, trellises, recessed windows or entries, and landscaping contribute to the successful engagement of environmental factors at the sidewalk-level of a building. In addition, at higher building elevations, the incorporation of exterior sun-shading components that respond to different facade orientations can significantly reduce a building’s overall energy costs. The successful integration of these and other building elements with the building’s design concept provides weather protection for the pedestrian, enhances the character of the building, and adds to the overall diversity of Central City development.

GUIDELINE

Develop integrated weather protection systems at the sidewalk-level of buildings to mitigate the effects of rain, wind, glare, shadow, reflection, and sunlight on the pedestrian environment.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

1. Incorporating comprehensive weather protection. This section of canopy is only part of the entire system that has been designed into the overall concept of Union Station. This canopy not only provides complete rain protection at the main entrance to the building, but it also creates deep shade in the summer and has incorporated hanging flower baskets.

2. Providing weather protection at and near building access points. This trellis at the Starbucks coffee shop on Pioneer Courthouse Square acts as a transition from the outdoors into the building, and vice versa. On the eastern side of the building (inset images) the trellis provides an excellent framework for the growth of vines. The vines provide different types of weather protection depending on the season; the upper image was taken in the summer, while the lower image was captured in the winter.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

3. Incorporating multifunctional weather protection. These two examples of different awning systems (at the South Park Restaurant on the left, and at Pioneer Place on the right) provide weather protection for the different seasons.

4. Creating a framework for future shading. This trellis at the Courtyard Marriot Hotel in the Lloyd District can serve as the structure for a system of vines and/or hanging plants.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

6. Orienting accessory outdoor areas to take advantage of the sun. One Financial Center at SW 2nd and Morrison offers workers in the building with a break location that is oriented to the southeast.

7. Incorporating shading devices at upper building elevations. These sunshades at the Port of Portland reduce unwanted glare for the building’s workers, while lowering the building’s energy costs.

8. Incorporating creative screening techniques. The western edge of Lovejoy Fountain in the South Auditorium District has a unique enclosure with a roof screen that has been built up by layering pieces of wood (inset image). The roof of the enclosure provides obvious weather protection, while the screen serves to mitigate excessive amounts of sun and glare.
B 7 INTEGRATE BARRIER-FREE DESIGN

BACKGROUND

The pedestrian system is successful only when all people are able to move from one place to another with ease. In the past, the design of pedestrian paths, street crossings, grade changes, building entries, and public spaces for the safe, pleasant, and efficient use by everyone was not considered. Today, barrier-free design is addressed with specific building code regulations.

Barrier-free design is most successfully incorporated when it is addressed in the early stages of the design process. This ensures that the different elements that facilitate movement for all people, such as elevators, lifts, and ramps are well-integrated into the new development’s overall design concept. Rehabilitation or adaptive reuse proposals present unique challenges to designers and provide opportunities to distinguish the new interventions from the original structure.

GUIDELINE

Integrate access systems for all people with the building’s overall design concept.
This guideline may be accomplished by:

1. Incorporating accessibility into building renovations or adaptive reuse projects. This ramp is part of a remodel of the Fifth Avenue Building at SW 4th and Columbia that includes a fitness center. The ramp has been integrated into the fitness center’s overall design concept.

2. Integrating access at main building entries. This ramp at the Central Library’s main entry on SW 10th Avenue has been designed and detailed to reflect the institutional character of the library’s architecture.