

REPORT TO GENERAL PLAN 2040 STEERING COMMITTEE

Subject: Discussion of Community Design Element Policy Audit

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Agenda Item 5.A addresses the 2040 General Plan Community Design Element. This Element addresses the physical form of the city, including its natural features and the built environment. The goal of the Community Design Element is to make San Rafael a more beautiful city. The Steering Committee is asked to review the attached “Policy Audit” and be prepared to comment on how existing policies and programs might be improved and updated as we look to year 2040.

REPORT

Background

The [Community Design Element](#) is an “optional” element of the General Plan, meaning it is not required by the California Government Code. San Rafael added this element to the General Plan in 2004, recognizing the importance of good design to the image of the city, as well as the desire to create and sustain attractive neighborhoods, business districts, and public space.

The Element is organized into two major sections:

- **“City Image”** addresses the features and qualities that give San Rafael its identity. These features includes hillsides and ridgelines, the Bay and Canal, transportation corridors, important views, and neighborhoods. Key gateways into the city are highlighted. This section also discusses the contribution of historic buildings to the City’s character.
- **“Design Quality”** is more specifically focused on architecture, and the use of design guidelines to encourage attractive construction that fits within the context of each neighborhood or business district. Different policies are provided for single family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, and industrial uses. This section also addresses maintenance and code enforcement. It also includes policies on the public realm, including landscaping, lighting, signage, and street furnishings (benches, etc.)

Policies and programs for two sections are presented under a single Community Design Goal, which is to preserve and strengthen the city’s best natural and built features to enhance San Rafael’s attractiveness and livability. The goal expresses that the element’s policies “guide the city’s built environment to create an appealing, functional, and safe city where people will want to live, work, and play.”

The Element also includes two maps. The first (Exhibit 17) shows major physical features of San Rafael, including hillsides, ridges, creeks, transportation corridors, important historical buildings, shoreline access points and gateways. The second (Exhibit 18) shows these same features within central San Rafael only.

A summary of the element's 21 policies is provided below:

- Policy 1 calls for reinforcing the city's image by recognizing its natural features, historic buildings, gateways, corridors, and neighborhoods. Programs address landscaping, signage, and gateways.
- Policies 2 and 3 are specifically focused on neighborhoods. The emphasis is on preserving and enhancing the qualities that make each neighborhood (or commercial area) unique. The implementing programs focus on design review and the development review process.
- Policy 4 addresses historic preservation. This topic is also covered in the Culture and Arts Element. Staff recommends strengthening the historic preservation policies in the General Plan and focusing them in the Community Design Element (rather than placing them in two elements).
- Policy 5 calls for preservation of views of specific features, including the Bay, wetlands, Mt. Tamalpais, hills and ridgelines, the Civic Center, the canal and its marinas, and St. Raphael's. The policy addresses views from public streets, paths and parks—not from private property.
- Policy 6 deals with the visual identity of the hills and the bay, providing the basis for the City's hillside overlay zone and wetland setbacks. Policy 7 provides similar language for Downtown and the Marin Civic Center.
- Policy 8 recommends distinctive gateways (entry points) into the city, creating a positive first impression of San Rafael to travelers.
- Policy 9 addresses the image and character of transportation corridors.
- Policies 10-13 deal with the design qualities of four specific land uses, respectively: commercial areas, multi-family residential uses, industrial uses, and single family residential uses. In each case, the focus is on ensuring that new development respects its context and is compatible with its surroundings. The industrial policy focuses on creating a visually comfortable and welcome appearance.
- Policy 14 addresses the importance of open space in new multi-family and mixed use development.
- Policy 15 focuses on the design review process, ensuring transparency and public involvement.
- Policy 16 addresses property maintenance, with programs addressing code enforcement.
- Policies 17-21 address various aspects of City-owned property (including streets), including street furnishings (17), landscaping (18), lighting (19), commercial signage (20), and parking lot landscaping (21).

The matrix that follows this staff report includes an Audit of the goals, policies, and programs in this Element. Column 1 of the Audit provides the verbatim language from the existing (2020) General Plan. Column 2 provides staff's evaluation of each goal, policy, and program. Column 3 is "blank" and provides space for each member of the General Plan 2040 Steering Committee to weigh in. Committee members may comment on either the policy itself or staff's commentary. We will compile all Committee comments as we rewrite and update the policies over the coming months. **Steering Committee member comments are due on August 30, 2019.**

STAFF OBSERVATIONS

The Community Design Element clearly expresses the importance of protecting San Rafael’s architectural heritage, natural setting, and defining features as the city evolves. Most of the content of the Element will be carried forward.

In the audit, Staff has made a number of recommendations to avoid redundancies and consolidate some of the policies and programs. At the same time, we have identified a few gaps and missing topics. Key recommendations are highlighted below:

1. A separate goal on historic preservation—accompanied by a more robust set of historic preservation policies—is recommended.
2. A separate goal on the “public realm” (e.g., City streetscapes, lighting, street trees, utilities, gateways, etc.) is recommended. Most of the policies are already in place, but they are scattered in different parts of the element (for instance, wayfinding signage is referenced at the beginning of the element while landscaping and lighting are at the end). A number of emerging design topics are not addressed—such as the conversion of parking spaces to “parklets” on Downtown streets or the interruption of Downtown sidewalks with outdoor dining areas.
3. The current organization results in some redundancies, as similar language on design objectives is repeated for each land use.
4. Some of the major design issues in the city—such as the desire for a more varied Downtown “skyline,” the appropriateness of contemporary architecture in various settings, view impacts of new development on private property, appropriate building mass and bulk, the impacts of second story additions, and scale compatibility between new and existing development—are not really addressed at all. Steering Committee guidance on these topics, including what should or should not be in the General Plan, is needed.
5. The concept of “place types” should be introduced to this element, providing a framework for different design prescriptions.

KEY QUESTIONS FOR COMMITTEE

Steering Committee discussion should focus on the following topics:

- Are there policies and programs in the existing Community Design Element you feel need to be revised?
- Are there new goals, policies or action programs that should be added?

ATTACHMENTS

The audit of policies in General Plan 2020 follows this page.

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
GOAL 7	A BEAUTIFUL CITY It is the goal of the City of San Rafael to have its best natural and built features preserved and strengthened to enhance the attractiveness and livability of the City. <i>Community design policies guide the City's built environment to create an appealing, functional and safe City where people will want to live, work and play. Our well-designed city will be attractive and interesting, and will meet the living, economic and social needs of the community. Within the Community Design Element the valuable qualities of the natural and built environment are identified, and the policies suggest methods to preserve and enhance those qualities.</i>	Goal is appropriate as is and may be carried forward. This goal focuses on San Rafael's overall visual quality and sense of place. Suggest adding a separate goal on historic preservation, which will be covered in this Element. May also want to consider a third goal specifically focused on the public realm, including public art, streetscape, lighting, landscaping, wayfinding signage, streets and rights of way, etc.	
Policy CD-1	City Image Reinforce the City's positive and distinctive image by recognizing the natural features of the City, protecting historic resources, and by strengthening the positive qualities of the City's focal points, gateways, corridors and neighborhoods.	Language is fine, but in some respects this policy is so broad and all-encompassing that it almost restates the goal. Perhaps delete and rely on the goal to communicate this point, with additional policies on these specific aspects of design.	
Program CD-1a	Gateway Enhancements. <i>Fund gateway enhancements.</i>	<i>Oversimplified? Perhaps elaborate a bit more on this. A plan or gateway enhancements should precede the funding. Suggest moving this to Policy CD-8 (and possibly under a new goal about the design of public space).</i>	
CD-1b	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Deleted in 2016</i>	
Program CD-1c	Way-Finding Signage. <i>Prepare and implement an attractive citywide way-finding sign program to direct people to the City's cultural resources, public facilities, parks and other important destinations.</i>	<i>Update to reflect completion of the Downtown (Parking and) Wayfinding Study, the need for additional guidance on wayfinding elsewhere in the city, and the work that has already been done to improve wayfinding and graphics standards.</i>	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
Program CD-1d	Landscape Improvement. <i>Recognize that landscaping is a critical design component. Encourage maximum use of available landscape area to create visual interest and foster sense of the natural environment in new and existing developments. Encourage the use of a variety of site appropriate plant materials.</i>	<i>As stated, this is more of a policy than a program. It should be merged with CD-18, which also covers landscaping. Identify new programs needed to carry out this policy (replacement of water-intensive landscaping with drought-tolerant landscaping, etc.).</i>	
Policy CD-2	Neighborhood Identity Recognize and promote the unique character and integrity of the city's residential neighborhoods and Downtown. Strengthen the "hometown" image of San Rafael by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the urban, historic, and pedestrian character of the Downtown; • Preserving and enhancing the scale and landscaped character of the City's residential neighborhoods; • Improving the appearance and function of commercial areas; and • Allowing limited commercial uses in residential neighborhoods that serve local residents and create neighborhood-gathering places. 	This is more about citywide identity than neighborhood identity, which is covered by CD-3. However, the policy direction is still valid. Minor editing could strengthen this policy – identify the key visual features that give the city its identity (Bay, canal, hills, ridgelines, views, tree cover, low scale, etc.) and protect these features as development takes place.	
Policy CD-3	Neighborhoods Recognize, preserve and enhance the positive qualities that give neighborhoods their unique identities, while also allowing flexibility for innovative design. Develop programs to encourage and respect the context and scale of existing neighborhoods.	Carry forward but differentiate more clearly from CD-2. The policy is still important, in that it acknowledges the need to balance the preservation of neighborhood character with innovation and flexibility in architecture and design.	
Program CD-3a	Design Review Process. <i>Consider ways to perform limited design review for major ground floor additions and renovations to assure compatibility with surroundings.</i>	<i>Intent is unclear—is it to add new requirements or streamline existing requirements? Based on CD-3, it seems like the actions would be to: (1) Document the design qualities of SR</i>	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
		<i>neighborhoods; (2) Implement projects (gateways, signage, etc.) to reinforce neighborhood identity. Programs related to design review fall under Policies CD-10 and CD-11, which should be cross-referenced here.</i>	
Program CD-3b	Development Standards. <i>Reexamine residential development standards to address building size, setbacks, height, location of parking, landscaping and design impact.</i>	<i>Clarify the intent of “reexamining” the standards—might instead say periodically revisit the standards to respond to construction trends, new building materials, neighborhood input, vehicle design, housing needs, etc.</i>	
Program CD-3c	Revisions to Design Guidelines. <i>Consider revisions to residential design guidelines to further identify design elements and unique neighborhood qualities.</i>	<i>Combine with CD-3b. X-ref design guidelines policies / programs under CD-11 instead of placing them here.</i>	
Policy CD-4	Historic Resources Protect San Rafael’s positive and distinctive image by recognizing, preserving and enhancing the City’s historic resources.	<i>Suggest elevating this to a Goal, with a more robust set of preservation policies. Combine the preservation policies in Culture and Arts with those in Community Design so they are all in one place.</i>	
Program CD-4a	Historic Resources Information. <i>Help residents understand and enjoy their City’s heritage by providing information about historic resources.</i>	<i>Reframe as a policy about public education/ awareness of San Rafael history, followed by appropriate programs.</i>	
Program CD-4b	Adaptive Reuse. <i>Consider revisions to design guidelines and to zoning regulations to provide development incentives for appropriate adaptive reuse. Since the 2004 adoption of the San Rafael General Plan 2020, some of the commercial and light industrial/office zoning districts have been amended to expand the types of allowable uses, some with reduced permit review.</i>	<i>Second sentence does not tie well to first sentence. Suggest creating a policy that more generally supports the adaptive reuse of older buildings. Implementing programs should include use of the historic building code, Mills Act, and other incentives to historic preservation.</i>	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
Program CD-4c	Sign Ordinance. <i>Revise sign ordinance to allow appropriate signage and plaques identifying historic structures.</i>	<i>Delete. Plaques are already allowed.. Replace with an action to encourage the use of plaques to identify historic sites.</i>	
Program CD-4d	Design Guidelines. <i>As part of the Community Design programs to prepare design guidelines, include guidance to assist property owners of historic properties in defining appropriate changes and alterations and to illustrate outstanding examples of how new developments can fit into an historic neighborhood.</i>	<i>Awkwardly worded. Replace with: "Include guidelines for historic preservation in the City's design guidelines, including successful examples of adaptive reuse."</i>	
Policy CD-5	Views Respect and enhance to the greatest extent possible, views of the Bay and its islands, Bay wetlands, St. Raphael's church bell tower, Canalfront, marinas, Mt. Tamalpais, Marin Civic Center and hills and ridgelines from public streets, parks and publicly accessible pathways.	Carry forward. Has this language caused problems in the past, either because it includes too much or too little? Note that this only applies to views from "public streets, parks, and publicly accessible pathways"---what about views from private property?	
Program CD-5a	Views. <i>Improve access to and enhance views of the Canalfront. Implement the Canalfront Conceptual Design Plan.</i>	<i>Change: "Implement recommendations from the Canalfront Conceptual Design Plan to improve access and views of the Canal from San Rafael neighborhoods"</i>	
Policy CD-6	Hillsides and Bay Protect the visual identity of the hillsides and Bay by controlling development within hillside areas, providing setbacks from the Bay, and providing public access along the Bay edge.	"controlling development" is a bit misleading. Replace with "by adopting special development standards and guidelines for hillside areas, and enforcing BCDC-required setbacks and public access requirements along the Bay, etc."	
Program CD-6a	Hillside Design Guidelines. <i>Continue to implement hillside design guidelines through the design review process. Update the guidelines as needed.</i>	<i>Carry forward as is.</i>	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
Program CD-6b	Wetland Setbacks. Continue to implement the wetland setbacks addressed in Policy CON-4 and in the zoning ordinance.	Update policy number and carry forward. Also reference creek setbacks.	
Program CD-6c	Public Access Opportunities. Continue to evaluate public access opportunities through the development review process.	Suggest deleting and instead cross-referencing policies in the Open Space and Cons Element about shoreline access.	
Policy CD-7	Downtown and Marin Civic Center Build upon the character of these areas by controlling land uses to clearly distinguish their boundaries; by recognizing Mission San Rafael Arcangel and St. Raphael Church, Marin Civic Center, and other buildings that help define the City's character, and requiring that these and other architectural characteristics and land uses that give these areas their identity are strengthened.	Downtown and Marin Civic Center are very different places, with very different functions and futures. Treat the Civic Center with a separate policy, focused on preserving the significant visual and architectural aspects of the complex and its buildings.	
Policy CD-8	Gateways Provide and maintain distinctive gateways to identify City entryways.	Carry forward, but edit for clarity. Note—Gateway Program 1a should be moved here.	
Program CD-8a	Gateways. Evaluate each of the gateways defined on the design element maps to determine what natural, architectural, signage or landscape treatments should further establish these locations as identifiable gateways within the City, and implement the desired improvements as part of the City's Capital Improvement program.	Simplify and carry forward. Add public art to list of considerations. Exhibit 18, move gateway arrow from W Francisco to Anderson.	
Policy CD-9	Transportation Corridors To improve the function and appearance of corridors, recognize those shown on Exhibits 17 and 18 and define each corridor's contribution to the City based upon its land use and transportation function and how it is experienced by the public.	Simplify: "Improve the function and appearance of the corridors shown on Exhibits 17 and 18 and recognize their role in shaping the city's character."	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
Program CD-9a	Corridor Design Guidelines. <i>Develop specific design guidelines for each corridor that address building massing, articulation of building facades, detailing, lighting, landscaping, street trees and other desired infrastructure and characteristics. Include appropriate zoning code provisions.</i>	<i>This is too ambitious as written, given the level of effort required to do specific guidelines for all 20 or so corridors mapped on Exhibits 17/18. Guidelines may be needed on 2nd and 3rd, but not on streets like Miller Creek, Wolfe Grade, etc. Suggest simplifying—guidelines for 2-3 types of corridors based on context.</i>	
Program CD-9b	Right-of-Way Landscaping. <i>Encourage Caltrans to install and maintain landscaping along its right-of-ways.</i>	<i>Carry forward.</i>	
Policy CD-10	Nonresidential Design Guidelines Recognize, preserve and enhance the design elements that contribute to the economic vitality of commercial areas. Develop design guidelines to ensure that new nonresidential and mixed-use development fits within and improves the immediate neighborhood and the community as a whole.	First sentence is key. Move second sentence to an implementation program. Policy should focus on the elements of good design (see titles of Programs (a) and (b)—visual compatibility, sensitivity to context, attention to detail, sustainability, functionality, etc.). We should aim to create places of lasting value, that enhance the identity of the city and its neighborhoods. Implementation programs should focus on using Design Guidelines to achieve this policy. Also, this applies to residential and non-residential both. Potentially combine and provide direction for different types of places rather than different land uses.	
Program CD-10a	Visual Compatibility. <i>Ensure that new structures are visually compatible with the neighborhood and encourage neighborhood gathering places. Guidelines may address screening of service functions, materials and detailing, screening of roof equipment, lighting, landscaping, outdoor café seating and pedestrian amenities.</i>	<i>First sentence is part of policy. Second sentence gets carried forward but combined with 10b.</i>	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
Program CD-10b	Compatibility of Patterns. Adopt design guidelines to ensure compatibility of nonresidential building patterns. Guidelines may address setback patterns, parking and driveway patterns, building scale, height and building setbacks, transition between commercial and residential districts, signage and landscaping.	<i>Second sentence applies to all development, not just non-residential.</i>	
Program CD-10c	Successful Design Portfolio. Establish a portfolio of desirable projects illustrating successful design.	<i>Carry forward. Post portfolio on website.</i>	
Policy CD-11	Multifamily Design Guidelines Recognize, preserve and enhance the design elements that ensure multifamily housing is visually and functionally compatible with other buildings in the neighborhood. Develop design guidelines to ensure that new development fits within and improves the character defining elements of neighborhoods.	Simplify: Ensure that multifamily housing is visually and functionally compatible with nearby buildings and includes design features that reflect the character-defining elements of the surrounding neighborhood. (Address design guidelines in programs)	
Program CD-11a	Compatibility of Building Patterns. Adopt design guidelines to ensure compatibility of neighborhood building patterns. Guidelines should address setback patterns, parking and driveway patterns, building scale, transitions between land use districts, height and building setbacks, as well as entries, roof design, roof equipment, windows, architectural style, materials and detailing, lighting and landscaping.	<i>Repeats CD-10b. Suggest reorganizing this section so Programs 10b and 11a are combined. However, we should retain distinct design policies for single family residential neighborhoods, employment districts, corridors, downtown, etc.</i> <i>Need to add program on SB 35 compliance and "objective" guidelines.</i>	
Policy CD-12	Industrial Areas Recognize the economic importance of industrial areas to the community. Require building and landscape improvements to create a visually comfortable and welcome appearance of the	Tie first sentence to design; emphasize that the intent is to create industrial areas that look good and enhance the city's character while supporting the success of the businesses and recognizing their operational needs.	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
	streetscape along roadways in industrial areas adjacent to residential neighborhoods.		
Program CD-12a	Landscaping. Adopt design guidelines to address and modify zoning code landscape requirements to ensure compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods.	<i>Suggest deleting this and instead referring to use of MMWD's landscape guidelines and Fire Safe landscape guidelines (and reconciling conflicts between fire safety and water conservation objectives)</i>	
Program CD-12b	Sidewalk and Street Trees. Install or improve sidewalks and street trees in existing industrial areas as redevelopment occurs, through the development review process.	<i>Delete reference to redevelopment. The City may also include CIP dollars for street trees, and can apply for urban forestry grants.</i>	
Program CD-12c	Unlawful Storage. Use code enforcement to eliminate unlawful storage and to assure property maintenance	<i>OK to carry forward but this is more about community standards than design. Move to CD-16?</i>	
Policy CD-13	Single-Family Residential Design Guidelines Recognize, preserve and enhance the design elements that contribute to the livability of neighborhoods and their visual appearance. Recognize that each neighborhood is unique, and that design review must consider the distinct characteristics of individual neighborhoods. Develop design guidelines to ensure that new development fits within and improves the character-defining elements of neighborhoods.	First two sentences repeat CD-2 and CD-3. Suggest replacing this with a policy focused on conserving the defining qualities of single family neighborhoods while also adapting and evolving to meet current and future needs (such as ADUs, compatible infill housing, etc.). The key is that "new development fits within and improves the character-defining elements of neighborhoods" (last sentence).	
Policy CD-14	Recreational Areas In multifamily development, require private outdoor areas and on-site common spaces for low and medium densities. In high density and mixed-use development, private and/or common outdoor spaces are encouraged. Common spaces may include recreation facilities, gathering spaces, and site amenities such as picnicking and play areas.	Suggest editing this policy. Usable outdoor open space is already required in all development on residentially zoned land (including high density) and should also be required for mixed use projects. The amount per unit may be less in higher density and mixed use projects. This should be clarified.	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
Program CD-14a	<i>On-Site Recreational Areas.</i> Continue requirements for on-site recreational areas as specified in the zoning ordinance.	Carry forward.	
Policy CD-15	<p>Participation in Project Review</p> <p>Provide for public involvement in the review of new development, renovations, and public projects with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design guidelines and other information relevant to the project as described in the Community Design Element that would be used by residents, designers, project developers, City staff, and City decision makers; • Distribution of the procedures of the development process that include the following: submittal information, timelines for public review, and public notice requirements; • Standardized thresholds that state when design review of projects is required (e.g. residential conversions, second-story additions); and • Effective public participation in the review process. 	<p>Carry forward and streamline as follows:</p> <p>Provide for public involvement in the design of new construction, renovations, and public projects through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easily accessible and clearly written design guidelines and design review procedures • Clear, consistently applied thresholds for when design review is required • Effective noticing of design review hearings, comment timelines, and project review opportunities 	
Program CD-15a	<i>Notification and Information about Development Projects.</i> Continue to enhance San Rafael’s public notification and neighborhood meeting process to encourage early participation in the review of projects. Create succinct and understandable written handouts to guide property owners, designers, residents and business owners through the City submittal, review and approval processes. Continue notifying neighborhood and homeowner associations about proposed projects in nearby nonresidential areas. Evaluate the adequacy of notification procedures and enhance as needed. For example, consider requiring notification of non-	<i>Most of this is still applicable and can be carried forward, but it could be condensed. The text should address any desired updates to the City’s existing design guidelines, and any specific deficiencies in the current review process that should be addressed (for example, the sequence of DRB and Planning Commission review, which was previously noted as a constraint by our developer panel).</i>	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
	<i>owner occupants and requiring large on-site visible notice of projects under review.</i>		
Program CD-15b	Thresholds for Design Review. <i>Since 2004, some thresholds have been adjusted for projects. Reevaluate thresholds for design review to ensure sufficient public involvement in the evaluation of design review permits.</i>	<i>Delete first sentence. Change to “Periodically reevaluate thresholds...” The goal is not only to ensure sufficient public involvement, but also to reduce unnecessary obstacles and expenses for property owners.</i>	
Policy CD-16	Property Maintenance Provide incentives and enforcement to achieve desirable property maintenance.	OK to carry forward (change to “desirable levels of property maintenance”)	
Program CD-16a	Code Enforcement. <i>Continue code enforcement efforts for trash and litter removal and other maintenance issues in all types of property.</i>	<i>Add illegal dumping.</i>	
Program CD-16b	Educational Materials. <i>Continue to provide programs and educational materials to inform property owners about property maintenance requirements in accordance with zoning regulations and design guidelines.</i>	<i>Not just zoning and design, but also health, sanitation, and safety standards.</i>	
Program CD-16c	Loan Program. <i>Encourage lower income property owners to use the Housing Authority’s loan program.</i>	<i>Restructure to emphasize that this is about the availability of public funds to help low income households maintain their properties.</i>	
Policy CD-17	Street Furnishings Encourage appropriate benches, trash containers, street lighting, public art, and other street furnishings. Select styles compatible with individual neighborhoods and the Downtown to strengthen their identities.	Make this more compelling so that it acknowledges the importance of street furniture and landscaping to enhancing community character and creating a more beautiful city.	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
Program CD-17a	Street Furnishings. Provide street furnishings that are consistent with applicable design style. Work with neighbors and businesses to fund program.	<i>“consistent with applicable design style” is vague. Consider alternate language.</i>	
Policy CD-18	Landscaping Recognize the unique contribution provided by landscaping and make it a significant component of all site design.	Carry forward.	
Program CD-18a	Zoning Regulations for Landscaping. Evaluate and amend as necessary, the Zoning Ordinance’s landscaping provisions to promote development with a strongly landscaped character. The intent is that individual neighborhood character be developed and maintained, architecture be softened by plant materials where appropriate, conflicting uses be buffered, parking areas be screened, comfortable outdoor living and walking spaces be created, air pollution be mitigated, and developments be made water efficient through the use of a variety of site-appropriate plant material.	<i>Carry forward. Some of this language might be better incorporated in the policy itself than in the program (the “intent” statement).</i>	
Policy CD-19	Lighting Allow adequate site lighting for safety purposes while controlling excessive light spillover and glare.	Carry forward. Cross-reference new “dark sky” policy in Conservation Element.	
Program CD-19a	Site Lighting. Through the design review process, evaluate site lighting for safety and glare on proposed projects.	<i>Rephrase to include potential impacts on nearby sites.</i>	
Program CD-19b	Lighting Plan. Require new development and projects making significant parking lot improvements or proposing new lighting to prepare a lighting plan consistent with the Design Guidelines for review by City planning staff.	<i>OK to carry forward but confirm that the design guidelines provide sufficient direction on lighting.</i>	

COMMUNITY DESIGN POLICY AUDIT

Reference	Statement	Staff Comments	Comments from Committee Members
Policy CD-20	Commercial Signage Provide sign regulations and guidelines that allow adequate visual identification necessary for successful commercial uses, while also taking into consideration the visual impact along any given roadway.	Good. But not just commercial—add guidance on City wayfinding signage, neighborhood entries, gateway signage, etc.	
Program CD-20a	<i>Sign Ordinance. Update the Sign Ordinance and, when developing regulations, take into account the cumulative effects of possible signage along a roadway or corridor.</i>	<i>Update based on current status.</i>	
Policy CD-21	Parking Lot Landscaping Provide parking lot landscaping to control heat build-up from pavement, reduce air pollution, provide shade cover for vehicles and soften the appearance of the parking lot. Emphasize the use of trees and limit the height of shrub plantings so as to avoid creating security problems.	Still relevant—carry forward.	
Program CD-21a	<i>Parking Lot Landscaping Requirements. Update parking lot landscape requirements to increase the screening of parking lots from the street and nearby properties. Requirements would address appropriate size and location of landscaping, necessary screening consistent with security considerations, tree protection measures, and appropriate percent of shade coverage required of parking lot trees. Include maintenance requirements in all approvals.</i>	<i>This was done. Suggest replacing 21a with a new program to continue implementing parking lot landscaping guidelines and requirements.</i>	
Program CD-21b	<i>Parking Lot Landscape Enforcement. Require that newly installed parking lot landscaping be maintained and replaced as needed. Assure that landscaping is thriving prior to expiration of the required 2-year maintenance bond.</i>	<i>OK to carry forward.</i>	