

Welcome to the Virtual Workshop!

- The meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m.
- We'll be doing some interactive activities this evening, so grab some scratch paper if you have some near you!
- *Mobile Device Tip:* You can “zoom” into your screen

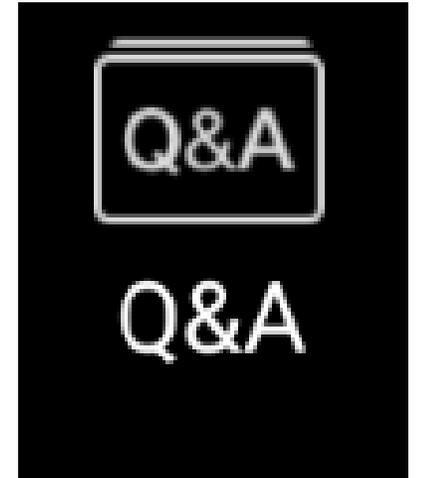


Need Technical Assistance?

Amanda Hernandez

Ask your question using the Q&A →

ahernandez@sanmarcostx.gov



City of San Marcos

Downtown Design Guidelines and Architectural Standards

Virtual Community Workshop

July 23, 2020



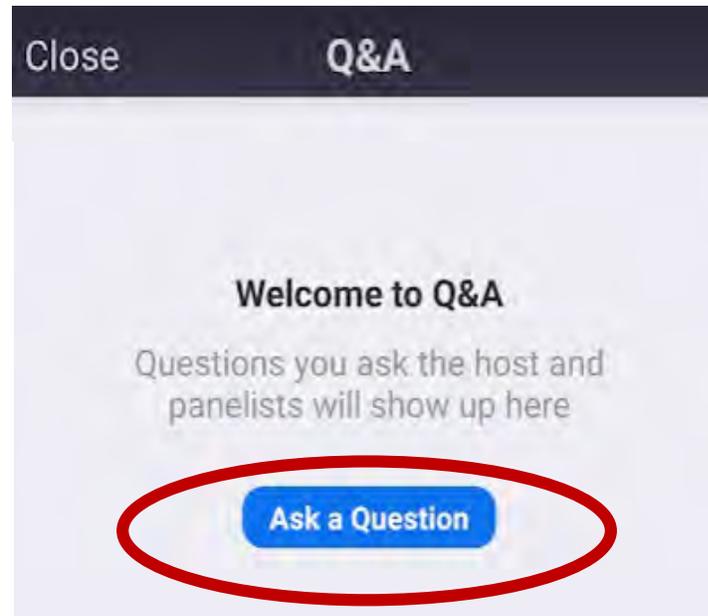
Using the Q&A Zoom Function

Ask a question to staff or for technical assistance

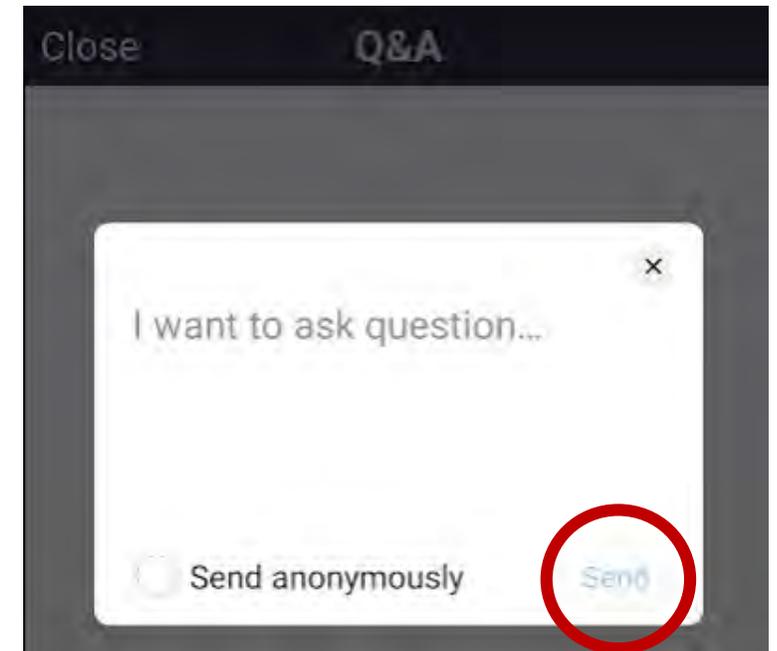
Step 1:



Step 2:



Step 3:



Let's Practice a Poll!

- You will see a **“Poll”** window pop up on your screen
- Answer **3 questions**
 - **Phone/iPad:** Click “Next”
 - **Computer:** Scroll Down
- Click **submit!**

Technical Assistance

Amanda Hernandez

Use the “Q&A” function

ahernandez@sanmarcostx.gov

Phone / iPad Example

The screenshot shows a mobile poll interface. At the top, there are two buttons: "Skip Poll" (in blue) and "Warm-up" (in grey). Below this is a question: "1. What type of device are you using to participate in this meeting?(Multiple choices)". There are three radio button options: "Computer/laptop", "Phone", and "iPad/tablet". The "Phone" option is selected, indicated by a white checkmark in a blue circle and a blue background highlight. A red oval is drawn around the "Phone" option. Below the options is an "Other" option. At the bottom right, there is a "1/3" indicator and a blue "Next" button, which is also circled in red.

Meeting Presenters



Andrea Villalobos
Senior Planner
City of San Marcos



Marcia Boyle
Associate Planner/Designer
Winter & Company



Noré Winter
Principal of Winter &
Company



Amanda Hernandez
Planning Manager
City of San Marcos
***Technical Assistance**

Meeting Objectives

1. Review the project background and scope
2. Present initial community feedback regarding design issues, successes and opportunities
3. Explain initial approach for key design topics and how to build from design traditions
4. Conduct a series of activities to collect feedback from participants about the future of downtown San Marcos
5. Explain next project steps and participation opportunities



Meeting Agenda

- Presentation (30 minutes)
- Activities (55 minutes)
 1. Visual Preferencing for Building Design in Downtown
 2. Considering Building Models in each Design Context
- Next steps (5 minutes)



Project Background

2012

Developed and adopted Downtown Design Guidelines and Architectural Standards

- **Purpose:** Regulate the architectural design of buildings
- **How were they used:** New construction, re-development, exterior remodels.
- **Focus areas:**
 - Context-sensitive design standards
 - Design guidelines for special cases
 - Revising signage standards for downtown

Appendix B: Examples of Design Principles Applied

The following photographs provide examples of improvements that illustrate how some of the design guidelines may apply in downtown San Marcos. Some specific design features are identified in the captions. Note that, in some cases, while a specific design feature is described as being an appropriate example, the overall building shown may not meet all of the city's other design standards and guidelines.



Vertical Expression:
• Vertical expression lines
Horizontal Expression:
• Cornice



Vertical Expression:
• Vertical expression lines
Horizontal Expression:
• Canopy



Vertical expression:
• Wall Offset
Horizontal expression:
• Horizontal expression line



• Stepped down and varied massing
Vertical Expression:
• Wall Offset

Design Contexts & the Historic Districts

Downtown Boundaries Map



**Downtown
Historic
District**

**Dunbar
Historic
District**

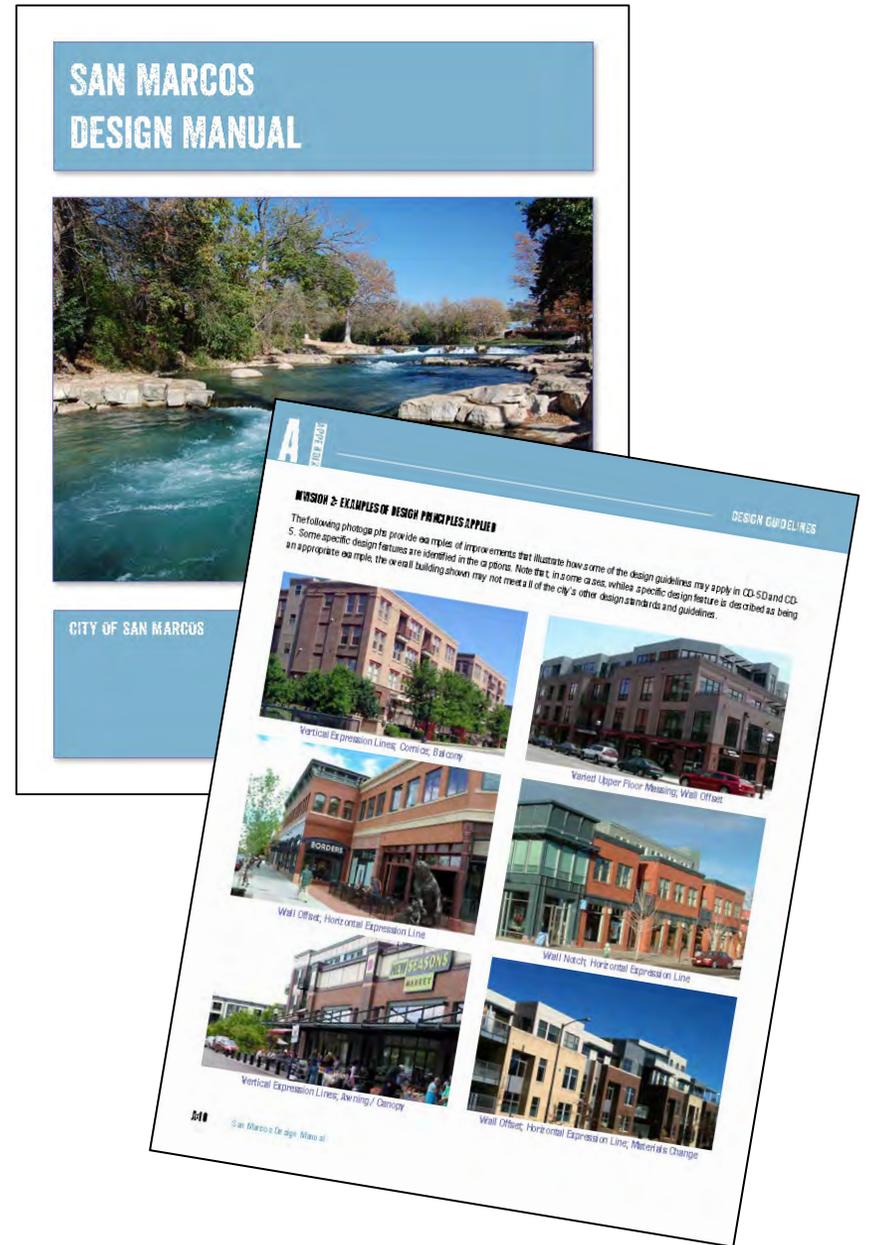


Project Background

2018

- Standards carried over into new development code, and Appendix A of Design Manual

Standards and guidelines are currently used when reviewing new development in the downtown area



Update to Design Guidelines and Standards

Focus of 2020 update *(as authorized by Council)*

- Include new standards to address design issues identified by the community
- Incorporate new graphics to clearly illustrate the standards and guidelines
- Tailor standards and guidelines to various contexts within downtown



Community Input To-Date



Focus Group Feedback

1. Historic Preservation Commission & Heritage Association
2. Main Street Advisory Board & Downtown Design Task Force
3. Downtown Association Board

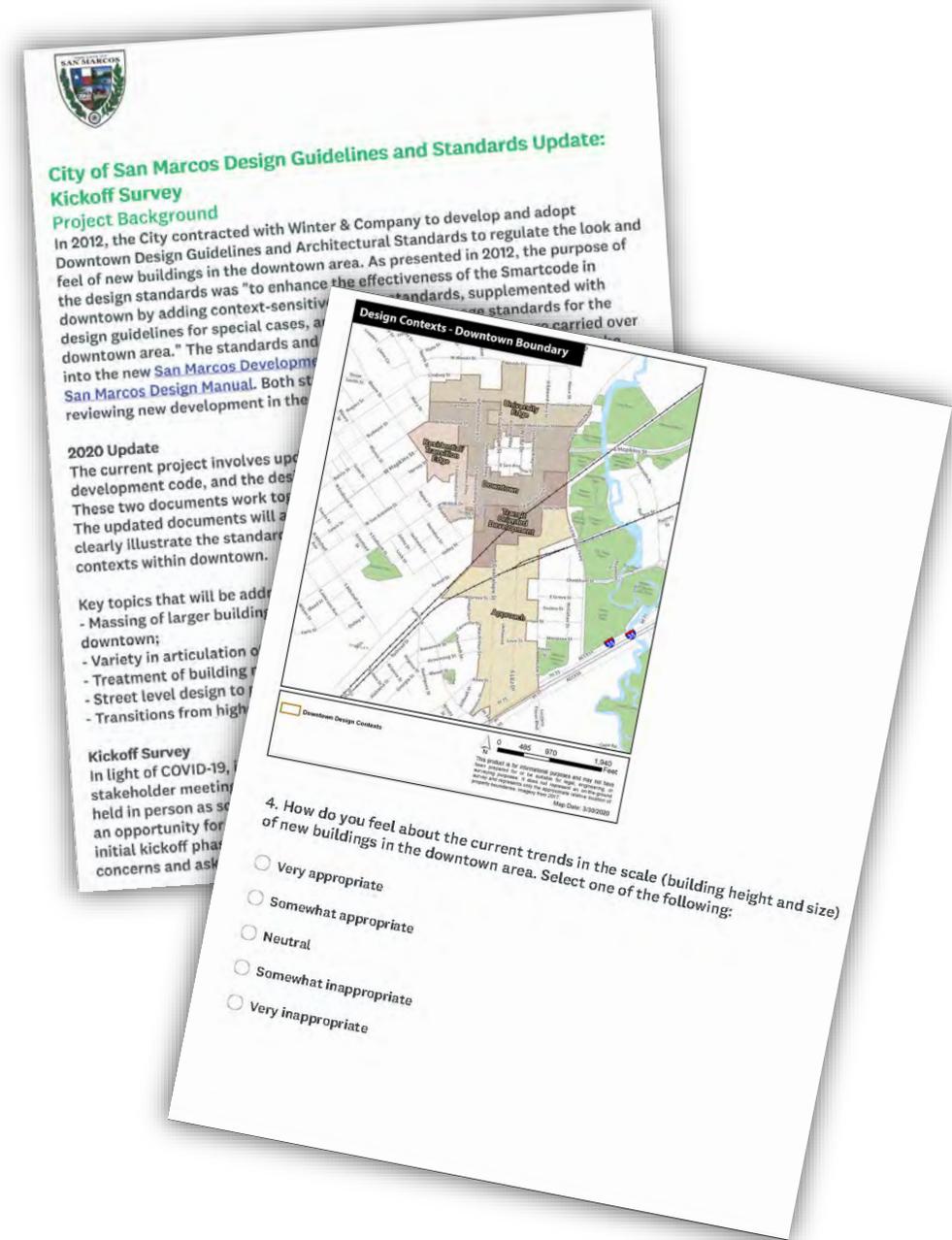


Big Ideas:

- Design excellence
- Sense of place
- Four-sided design
- Visual continuity
- Balancing old and new
- Responding to “context”

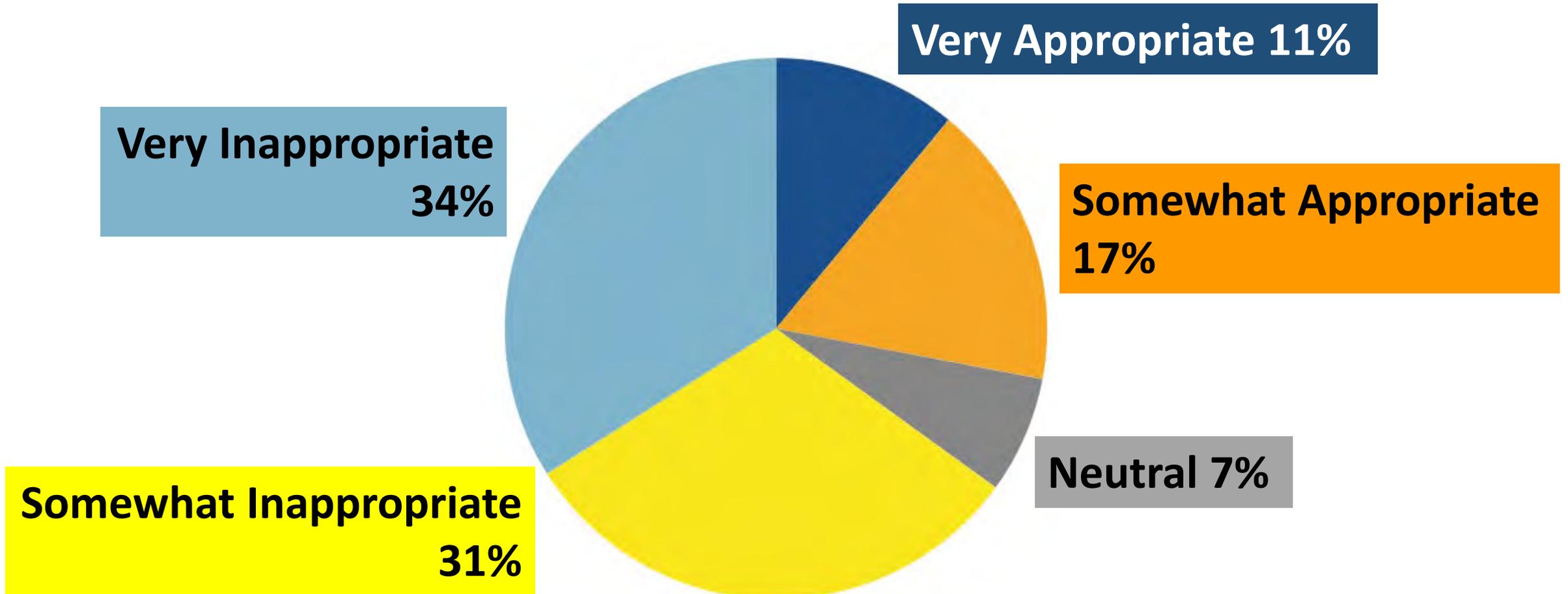
Online Survey Results

- SurveyMonkey
- Open for approximately one month
- English and Spanish
- 549 responses



Survey Response #4: Current Trends

Participants responded to: **How do you feel about the current trends in the scale of new buildings in the downtown area?**



Survey Response #5: Successful Projects

Participants responded to:
What recent development projects downtown have had successful designs?

Top 10 Responses	# of Responses
None/No	59
Cheatham Street Flats	21
The Local	14
Industry	11
Frost Bank Building Renovation	10
Old Justice Building Renovation (Guadalupe)	10
CM Allen Parkway / Riverfront Design	9
Aquabrew	7
Gumby's	6
The View	6



Survey Response #6: Design Issues

Top 10 Responses	# of Responses
Need a consistent design	88
New buildings are too tall	84
Scale / size (too large for downtown)	49
Disruption of views and skyline	30
Parking	28
Materials and color	28
Student apartments are an issue	26
Traffic impacts of new construction	14
Retaining and reusing historic buildings	10
Density is too high	9

Participants responded to:
What, if any, design issues related to building design do you see downtown?



July 25th Joint Planning Commission /City Council Workshop: **Big Ideas**

- **Historic character** of the square is key to San Marcos' downtown and unique character
- New development should be designed to be **compatible** with historic resources
- Design, including along alleys, should be **pedestrian-friendly**
- Guidance is needed in how to effectively and sensitively **transition** from downtown to adjacent residential areas, as well as how to transition to a sensitive edge in a design context



Summary of Input To-Date

Similar big ideas from focus groups, online survey and Planning and Zoning Commission/City Council meeting

- Visual **continuity** and designs that are compatible with one another
- Preserving and reusing historic buildings, and designing new buildings to be **compatible** with historic buildings
- Drawing on **design traditions** of historic buildings
- Maintaining the San Marcos **identity and character**
- Designing **transitions** for adjacent sites and to adjacent neighborhoods to be effective and sensitive



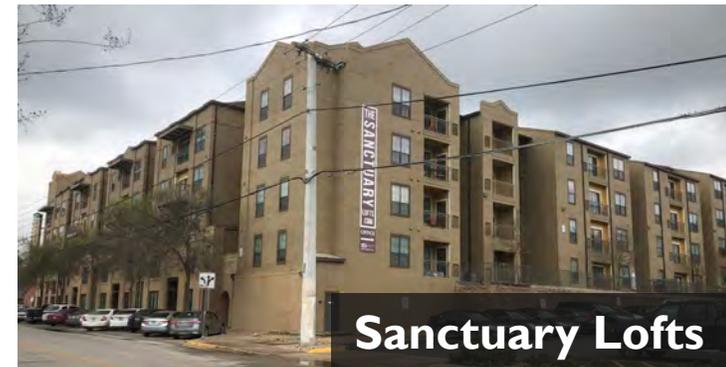
Design Topics



Update to Design Guidelines and Standards

Key topics to be addressed:

- **Massing** of larger buildings to promote compatibility with traditional downtown scale
- **Articulation** of facades
- Building **materials**
- **Street level design** that promotes a sense of place and activates the public realm
- **Transitions** from high density zones to sensitive edges



Update to Design Guidelines and Standards

Topics *outside* project scope:

- **Parking** – specifically appropriate parking ratios
- **Pedestrian and bicycle friendly design** in the public realm
- **Infrastructure improvements** including improvement sidewalks and streetscapes
- **Sustainable site and building design**, although they are related and can be mentioned in the updated design guidelines and standards



CM Allen Parkway

Design Traditions



Design Traditions of the Downtown Historic District

Traditional components of individual buildings

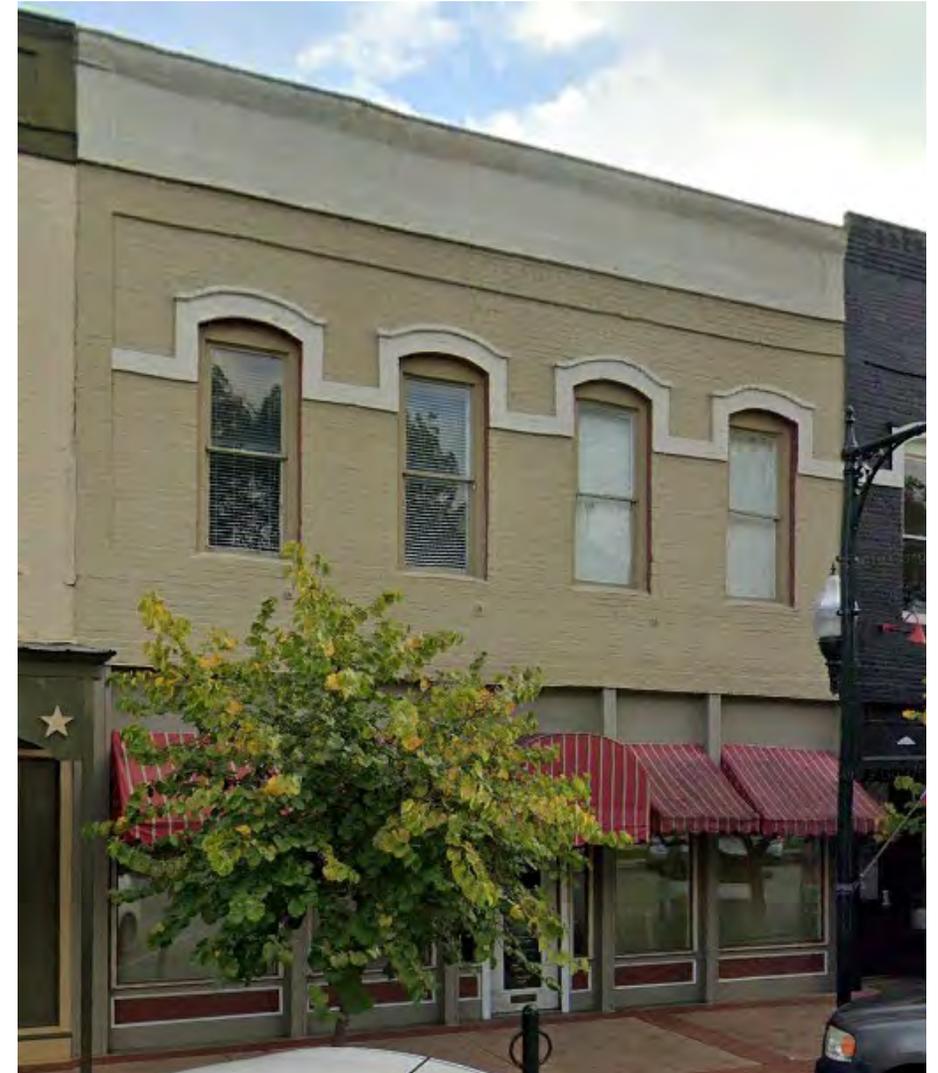
- Kickplate (bulkhead) supports display window
- Large display windows
- Mid-belt molding caps the transom
- Upper story windows are vertically proportioned



Design Traditions of the Downtown Historic District

Traditional components of individual buildings

- Window and door openings are inset, with frames that create shadow
- Awnings and canopies shelter the sidewalk
- Masonry materials (stone, brick and detailed stucco) create a sense of scale



Design Traditions of the Downtown Historic District

Elements of visual continuity shared among buildings:

- Similar first floor heights
- Cornices and moldings define floors and align along a block
- Predominance of detailed masonry materials with matte finishes



Design Traditions of the Downtown Historic District

Elements of visual continuity shared among buildings:

- Rhythm of upper story windows repeats across many storefronts
- Storefront widths fit within a narrow range and establish a rhythm along the block



Design Traditions

Building Modules
Ranging from 20'-25'

**Consistent Range of
Building Modules**

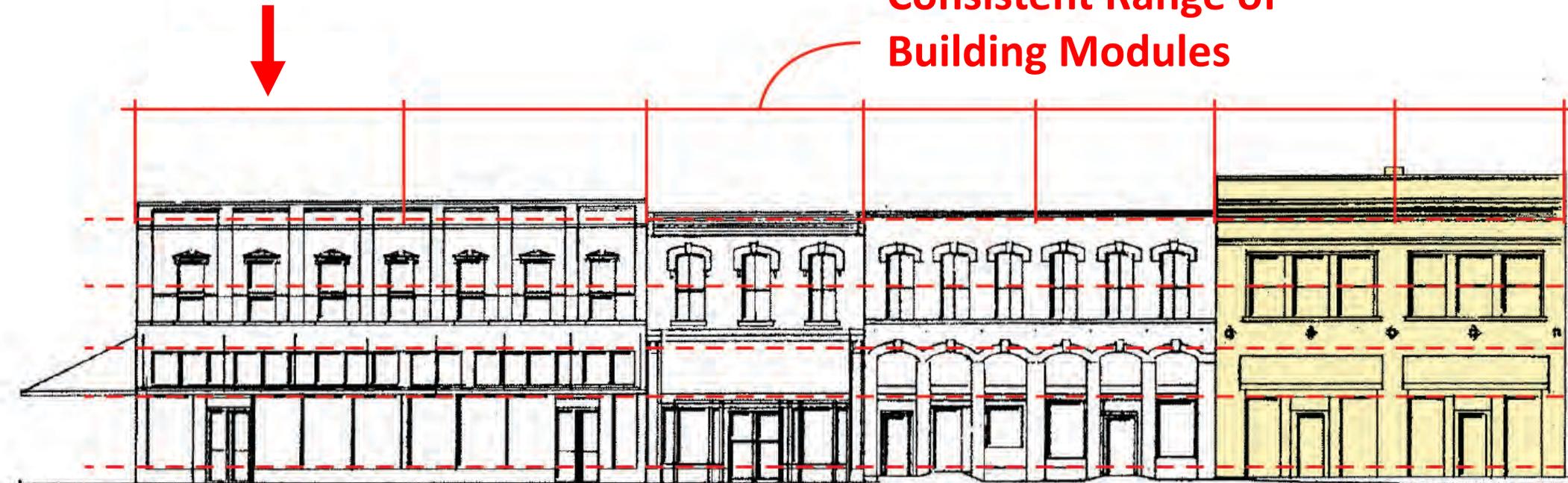
**Cornice Detail
Alignment**

**Window
Alignment**

**Transom & Awning
Alignment Range**

**Kickplate
Alignment**

 New Building



Design Traditions

Consistent Window Spacing

Sills on new building align with mid-course molding on Historic buildings



 New Building

Awning of new buildings aligns with arched transom on Historic building

Incorporating Design Tradition in New Buildings



(A) Transom windows

(B) Kickplate

(C) Recessed entry

(D) Evenly spaced upper-story windows

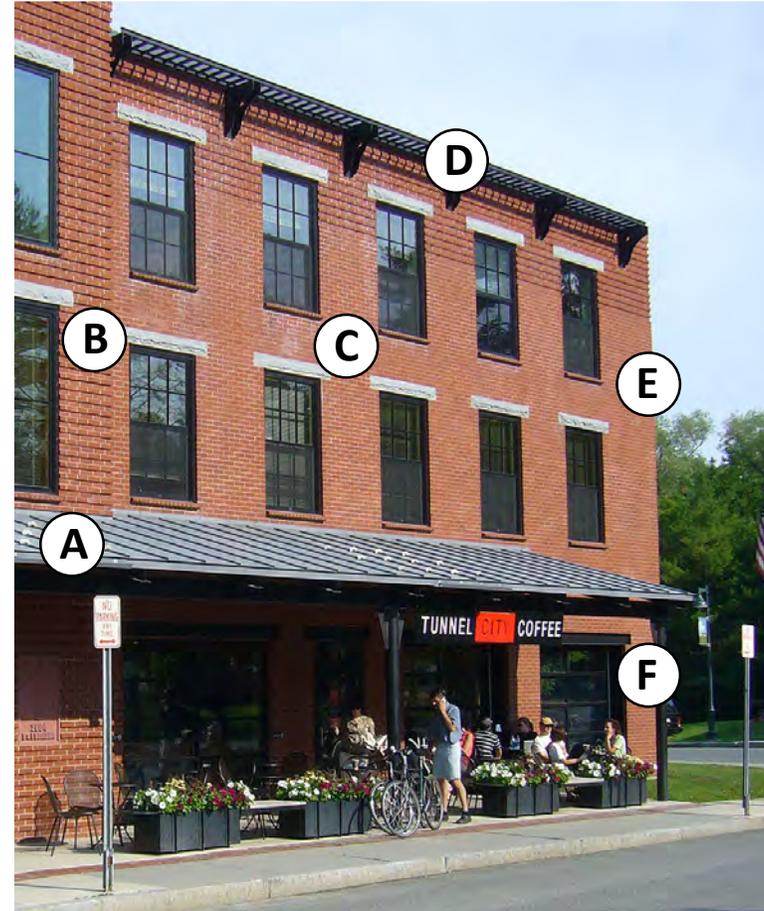
(E) Cornice

(F) Set back third story to respect historic building heights

Incorporating Design Tradition in New Buildings



- Ⓐ Defining first story
- Ⓑ Incorporating window headers
- Ⓒ Even window spacing on upper stories



- Ⓓ Contemporary cornice
- Ⓔ Appropriate building materials
- Ⓕ Contemporary storefront opening

Activity I: Visual Preferencing



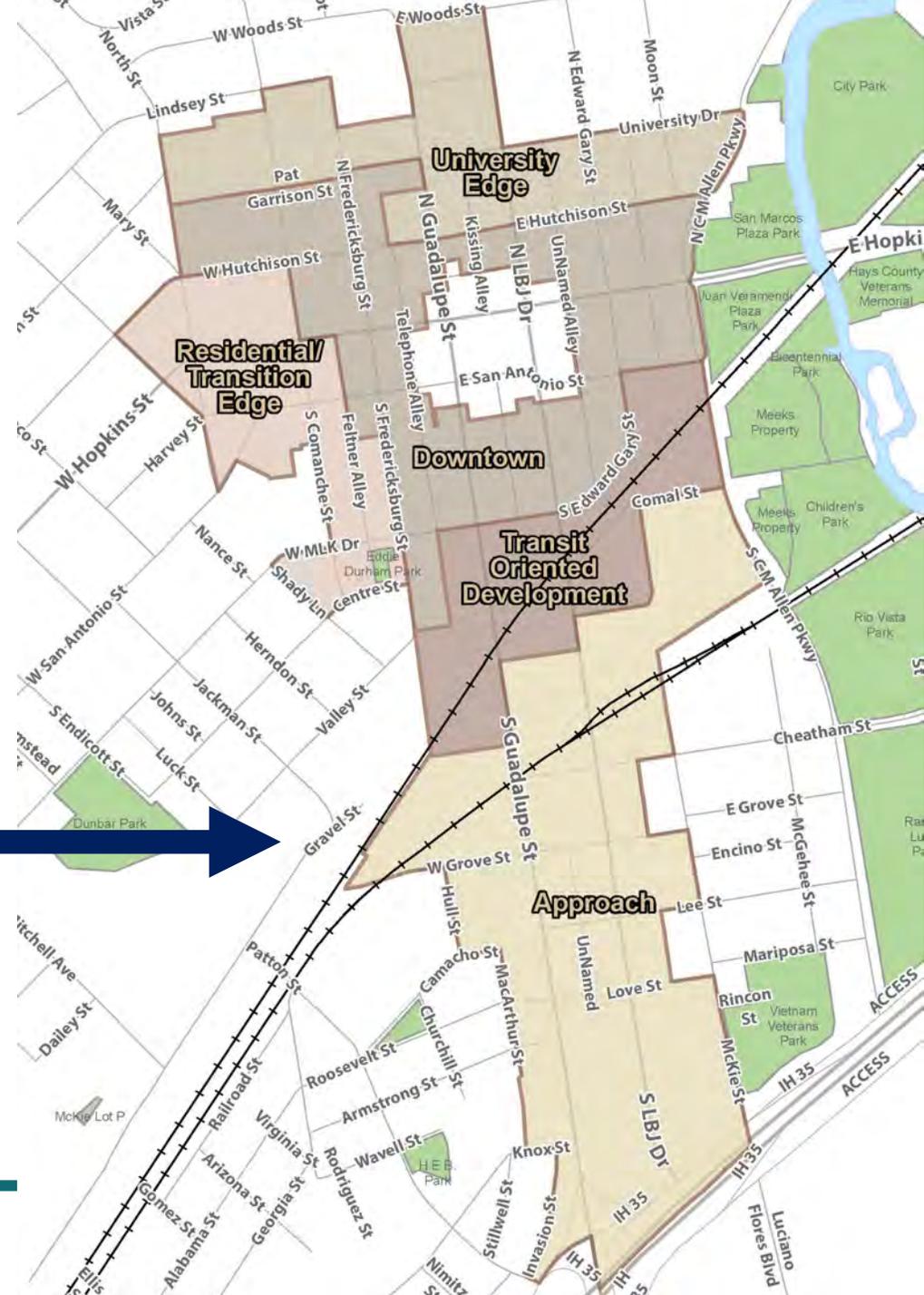
Visual Preference Polling

To do:

1. Consider the building type on each slide
2. Would this building be appropriate in downtown San Marcos?
3. Tell us by answering the poll!

“Downtown” refers to all 5 design contexts.

Tip: Grab your scratch paper!



Building Types

- Apartment
- Townhouse
- Mixed Use Shopfront



Apartment A1

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Apartment A2

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Apartment A3

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Polling Question



A1



A2



A3

Townhouse T1

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Townhouse T2

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Townhouse T3

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Polling Question



T1



T2



T3

Mixed Use - Large Scale MLI

Is this building appropriate in
downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Mixed Use – Large Scale ML2

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Mixed Use – Large Scale ML3

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Polling Question



MLI



ML2



ML3

Mixed Use - Medium Scale MMI

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Mixed Use – Medium Scale MM2

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Mixed Use – Medium Scale MM3

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Polling Question



MM1



MM2



MM3

Mixed Use - Small Scale MSI

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Mixed Use – Small Scale MS2

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Mixed Use – Small Scale MS3

Is this building appropriate in downtown San Marcos?

- A. Agree
- B. Somewhat agree
- C. Neutral
- D. Somewhat disagree
- E. Disagree



Polling Question



MS1



MS2



MS3

Introducing the Design Contexts



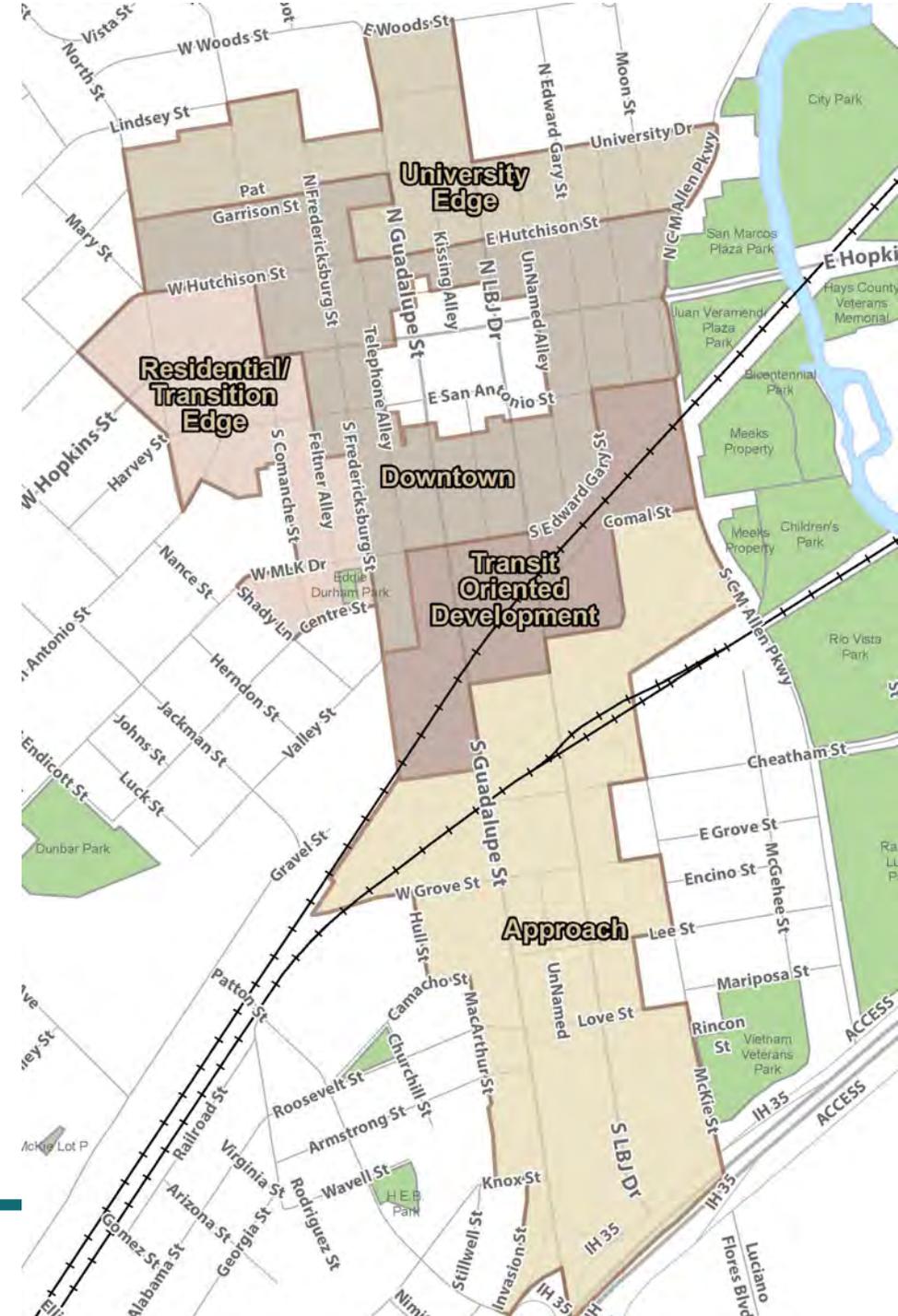
Online Vision Statements Survey

Let's now address the future vision of each design context specifically. Sensitive edges are also considered

To Do:

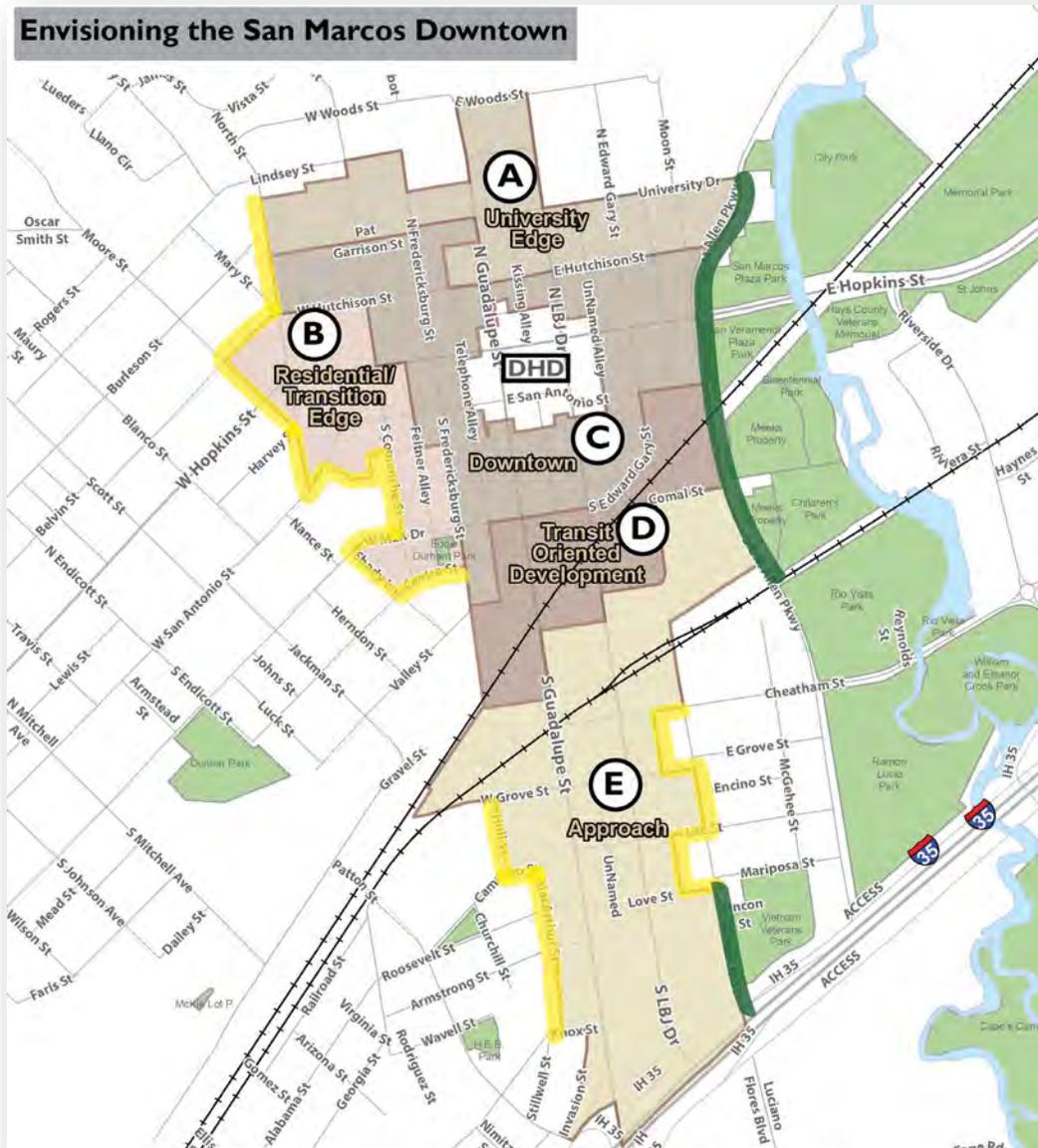
1. Consider the 5 draft vision statements
2. Did we get it right, or does it need revisions?
3. Tell us in the online post-meeting survey!

Tip: Grab your scratch paper!



Identifying Sensitive Edges

Envisioning the San Marcos Downtown

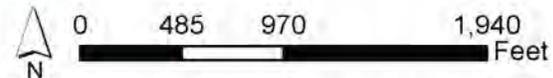


Design Context Vision Characteristics

- (A) University Edge Design Context**
 - Appropriate for higher intensity development, within limits of existing code requirements
- (B) Residential Transition/Edge Design Context**
 - A mix of uses, with building forms
 - Emphasis on traditional residential design, including sloping roof forms
 - Outdoor open spaces, reflecting traditional front yards, are promoted
- (C) Downtown Design Context**
 - An "urban" street edge predominates
 - Enhanced pedestrian environment with shade structures (awnings and canopies) and trees
 - Building designs draw upon traditions of the historic square in contemporary ways
- (D) Transit Oriented Development Design Context**
 - More intensive development oriented to future transit, especially in the eastern portion
 - Enhanced pedestrian environment with shade structures (awnings and canopies) and trees
- (E) Approach Design Context**
 - A mix of building forms and types, reflecting the eclectic nature of the area
 - Outdoor open spaces are promoted
 - Higher intensity development locates along the corridors (LBJ Dr. and Guadalupe)
 - Scale of development steps down within Sensitive Edge areas

Map Key

-  Downtown Design Context Boundaries
-  Sensitive Edge - Residential
-  Sensitive Edge - Parks & Open Space



This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries. Imagery from 2017.

Sensitive Edge Descriptions

Sensitive Edge - Residential

- Development within close proximity to abutting lower density residential areas should be lower in scale and more closely reflect traditional residential forms
- Other traditional design measures also apply, such as increased landscaping and setbacks

Sensitive Edge - Parks & Open Space

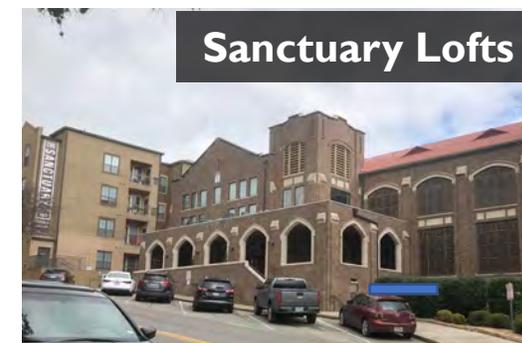
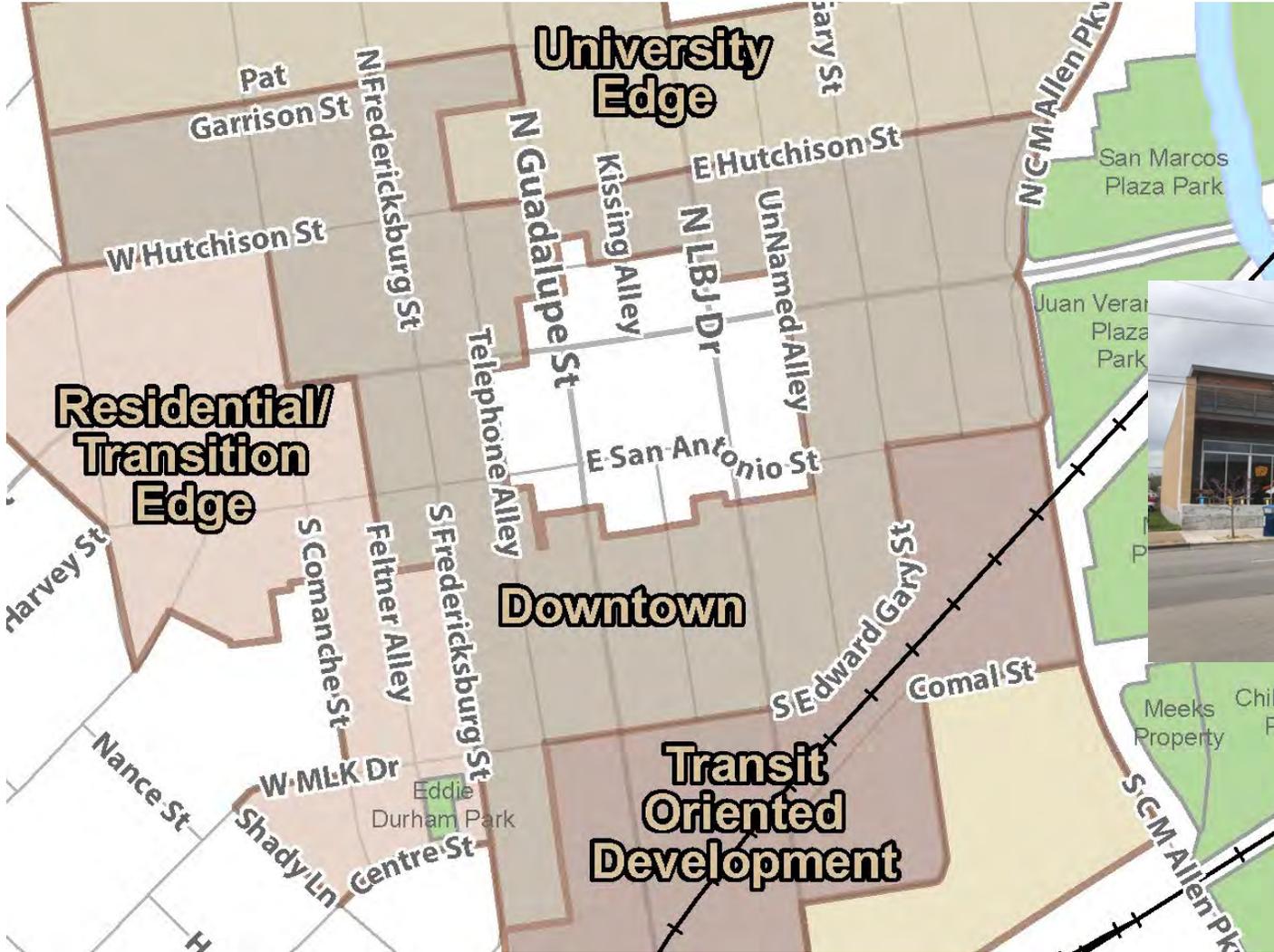
- Development steps down in scale facing open space
- Street frontages are designed to be active to encourage park use
- Views to open space are promoted

Downtown Historic District (DHD)

- Historic district regulations apply
- Design traditions serve as inspiration for development throughout downtown (CD-5D) district



Design Context: Downtown



Design Context: Downtown

Draft Downtown Vision Statement – Key Characteristics:

- **Scale:** Buildings express heights between two and three floors at the street edge. Upper floors are set back from the front.
- **Building massing:** Buildings vary in their massing, to express modules similar in form to those seen historically.
- **Street level character:** Building fronts convey active uses inside (including storefronts and offices) with a high degree of visibility.
- **Frontages and setbacks:** A high percentage of each building front aligns at the sidewalk edge, however with some variation in setbacks for active outdoor spaces.
- **Parking:** Parking is accessed from alleys and is concealed from the street, in tuck-under designs or structures.



Downtown Draft Vision Statement:

- “The Downtown frames the Courthouse Square historic district and draws closely upon its design traditions to establish a sense of visual continuity between the two areas. New buildings express a scale at the street frontage that appears similar to that of buildings in the historic district...”
- “... Variations in the articulation of building fronts and in overall massing reflect the scale of the historic district, with expression elements that define traditional building widths and building heights that step down to traditional heights for portions of larger buildings.”

Did we get it right?

Yes

No

Revisions?

Tell us in an online survey right after the meeting!



Design Context: University Edge



Vistas Apartments



Concho Commons



Louie's



Old Post Office



Design Context: University Edge

Draft University Edge Vision Statement – Key Characteristics:

- **Scale:** Larger buildings here can be compatible with the scale of the university
- **Building massing:** Buildings vary in their massing, to express modules similar in form to those seen historically
- **Street level character:** Building fronts are visually interesting with a combinations of storefronts, display cases, and wall art that provide a sense of scale and activity.
- **Frontages and setbacks:** A high percentage of each building front aligns at the sidewalk edge, however with some variation in setbacks for active outdoor spaces.
- **Parking:** Parking is accessed from alleys and is concealed from the street, in tuck-under designs or structures.



University Edge Draft Vision Statement

- “The University Edge context creates a pedestrian-friendly connection between campus and the Downtown Context. New buildings may be larger in scale here, in keeping with campus scale, while drawing upon downtown’s design traditions...”
- “...Of special note are key public views, both north to campus and south to the Courthouse Square. New development should preserve and enhance these views by varying building massing and creating outdoor spaces that permit views through to key landmarks.”

Did we get it right?

Yes

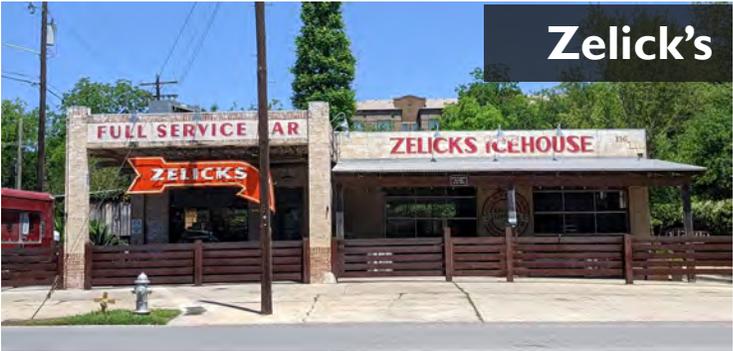
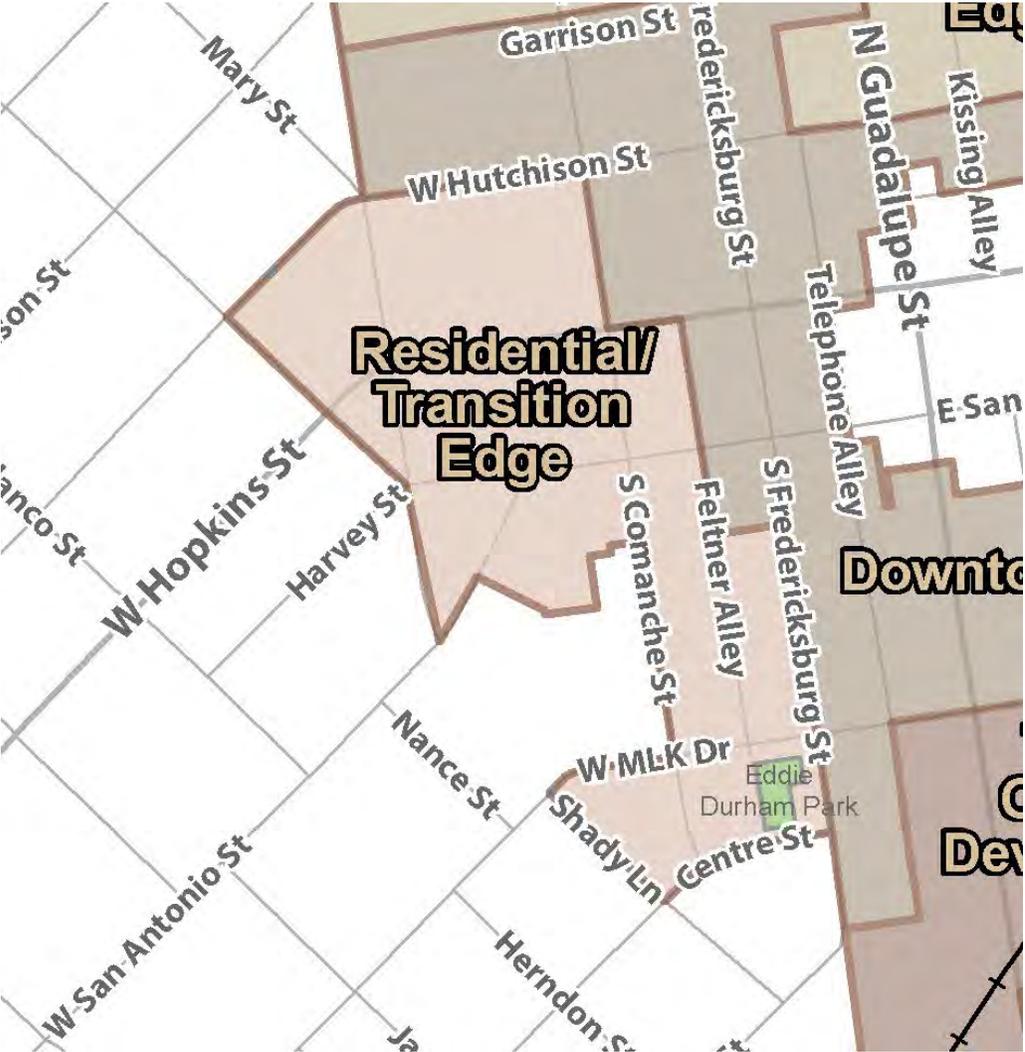
No

Revisions?

Tell us in an online survey right after the meeting!



Design Context: Residential/Transition Edge



Design Context: Residential/Transition Edge

Draft Residential/Transition Edge Vision Statement – Key Characteristics:

- **Scale:** Buildings express heights between two and three floors at the street edge. Upper floors are set back from the front.
- **Building massing:** Buildings vary in their massing, to express traditional residential forms and smaller commercial buildings.
- **Street level character:** Building fronts convey active uses inside (including storefronts and offices) with a high degree of visibility. Others have porches and courtyards that connect to the street.
- **Frontages and setbacks:** Setbacks vary, with some buildings close to the street, while others are set back with lawns and courtyards in front.
- **Parking:** Parking is located in the rear or in tuck-under designs.



Residential/Transition Edge Draft Vision Statement

- “The Residential/Transition Edge Context houses a mix of uses, including retail, offices and townhomes, in designs that create a transition from the more intensive development of the Downtown Core to the lower density residential neighborhoods that lie to the west...”
- “...Buildings draw upon both traditional residential and commercial types in their forms, materials and relationship to the street. Some are built close to the street edge while others are set back with front lawns. Along the sensitive edges of abutting residential districts, buildings are designed to minimize negative impacts, with reduced height, increased setbacks and landscaping.”

Did we get it right?

Yes

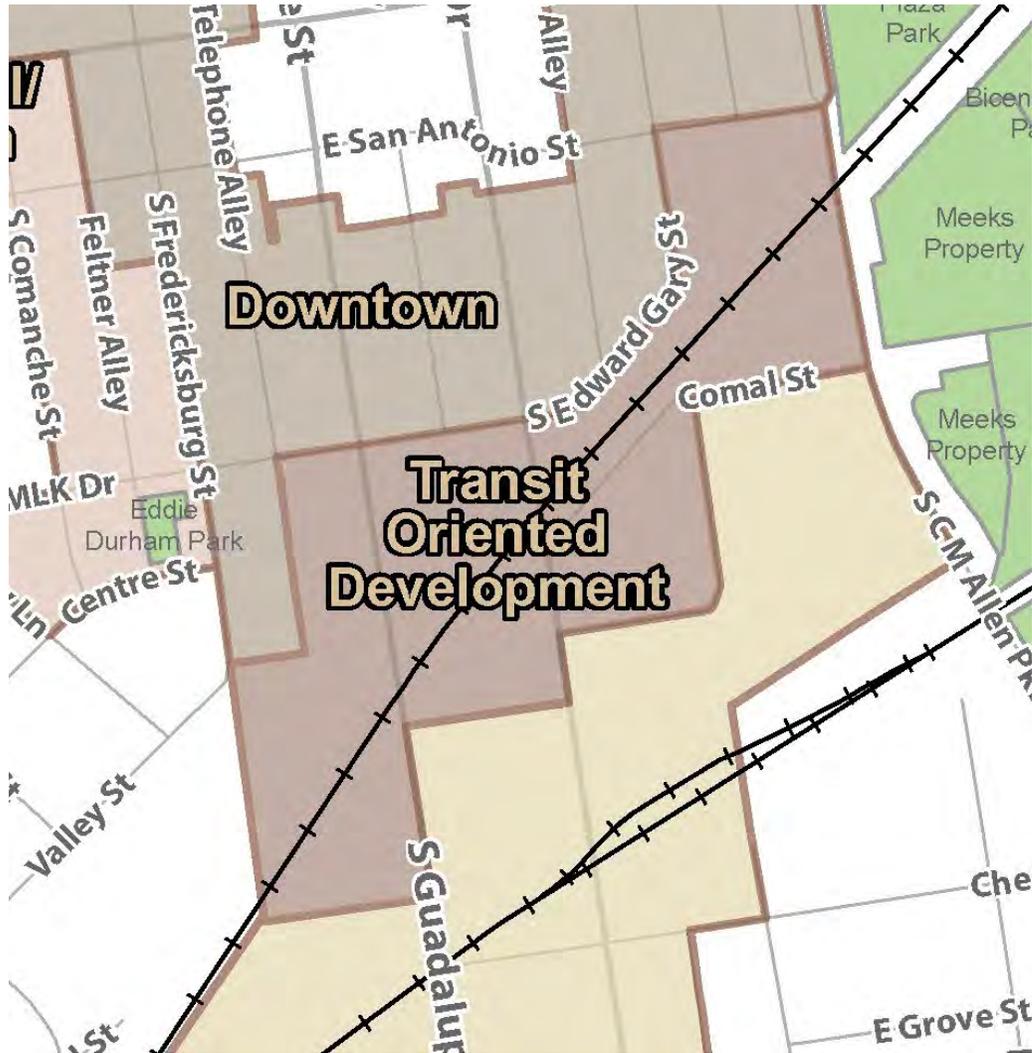
No

Revisions?

Tell us in an online survey right after the meeting!



Design Context: Transit Oriented Development



Design Context: Transit Oriented Development

Draft Transit Oriented Development Vision Statement – Key Characteristics:

- **Scale:** Buildings express heights between two and three floors at the street edge. Upper floors are set back from the front.
- **Building massing:** Buildings vary in their massing to express modules similar in form to those seen historically.
- **Street level character:** Building fronts convey active uses inside (including storefronts and offices) with a high degree of visibility. Others have plazas and courtyards that connect to the street.
- **Frontages and setbacks:** Setbacks vary, with some buildings close to the street, while others are set back with lawns and courtyards in front.
- **Parking:** Parking is located in the rear or in tuck-under designs.



Transit Oriented Development Draft Vision Statement

- “The TOD context accommodates a mix of uses, with an emphasis upon housing that focuses on potential transit access. Higher intensity development can be compatible with this context, while still drawing upon downtown’s design traditions, but in more abstract ways than in the core...”
- “...The eastern portion can accommodate more intensive development. Throughout the area, projects should have a strong pedestrian orientation. The street front character is especially important here to encourage pedestrian activity.”

Did we get it right?

Yes

No

Revisions?

Tell us in an online survey right after the meeting!



Design Context: Approach

LBJ Apartments



Cheatham Street Flats



Advanced Auto Parts



Design Context: Approach

Draft Approach Vision Statement – Key Characteristics:

- **Scale:** Buildings express heights between two and three floors at the street edge. Upper floors are set back from the front.
- **Building massing:** Buildings vary in their massing, to express traditional residential forms and smaller commercial buildings.
- **Street level character:** Building fronts convey active uses inside (including storefronts and offices) with a high degree of visibility. Others have plazas and courtyards that connect to the street.
- **Frontages and setbacks:** Setbacks vary, with some buildings set close to the street, while others are set back with lawns and courtyards in front.
- **Parking:** Parking is located in the rear or in tuck-under designs.



Approach Draft Vision Statement

- “The Downtown Approach context is the corridor between the highway and Downtown, providing an entry procession into the heart of Downtown. Development focuses along Guadalupe and LBJ Streets with a mix of commercial and residential uses. Design should convey a preview of the character of downtown while also drawing upon the distinct features of this area.”
- “...New, larger development is scaled to be compatible with older established buildings that remain. The context is framed with lower density residential districts along the eastern and western edges. In these areas, projects are design to provide compatible transitions to these neighborhoods with reduced massing, increased setbacks and landscaping.”

Did we get it right?

Yes

No

Revisions?

Tell us in an online survey right after the meeting!



Activity 2: Considering Building models in each Design Context



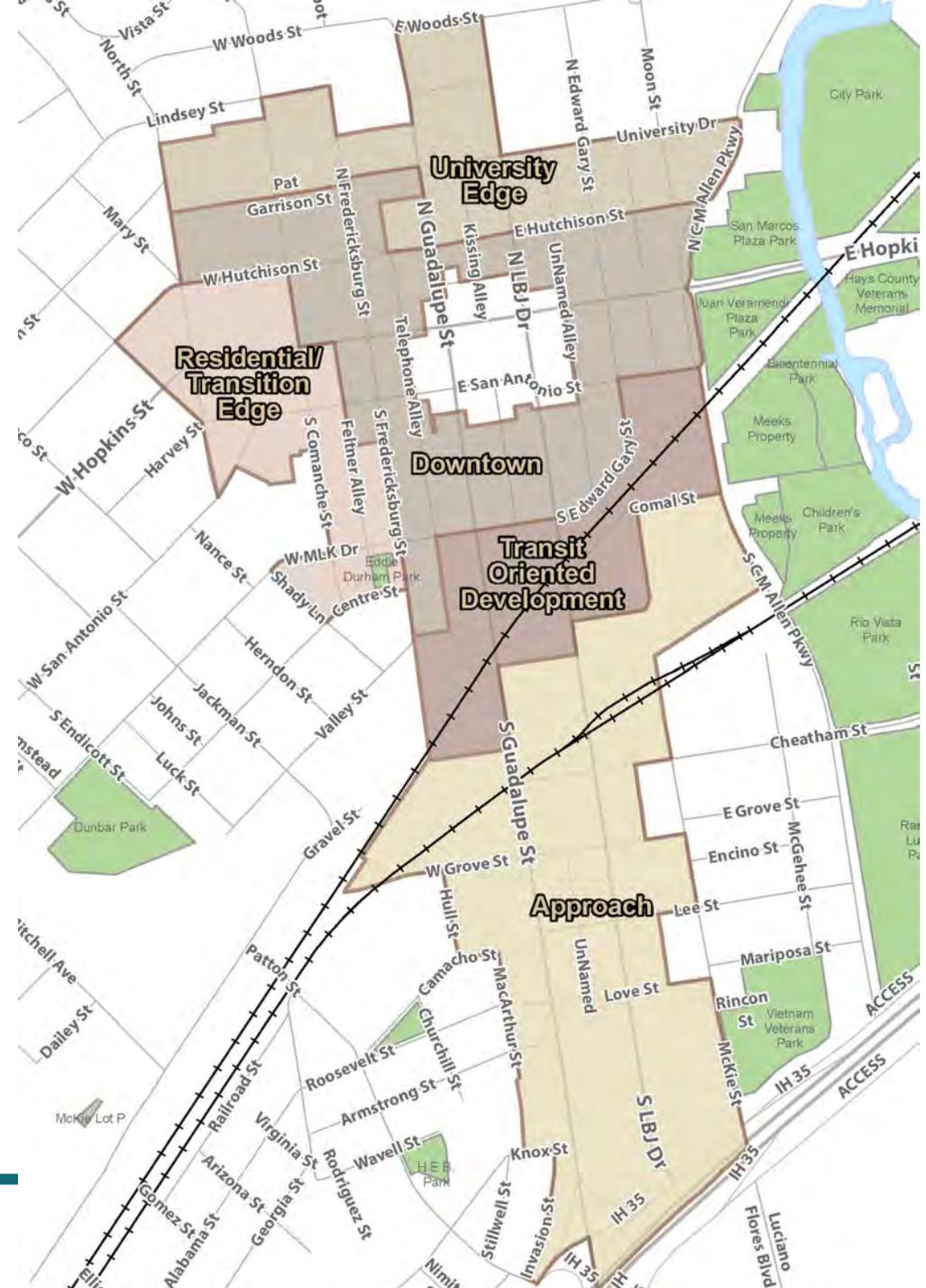
Building Models Polling

This set of questions presents a series of models by building type

To do:

1. Consider the model on each slide
2. In which design context would this model be appropriate?
3. Tell us by answering the poll!

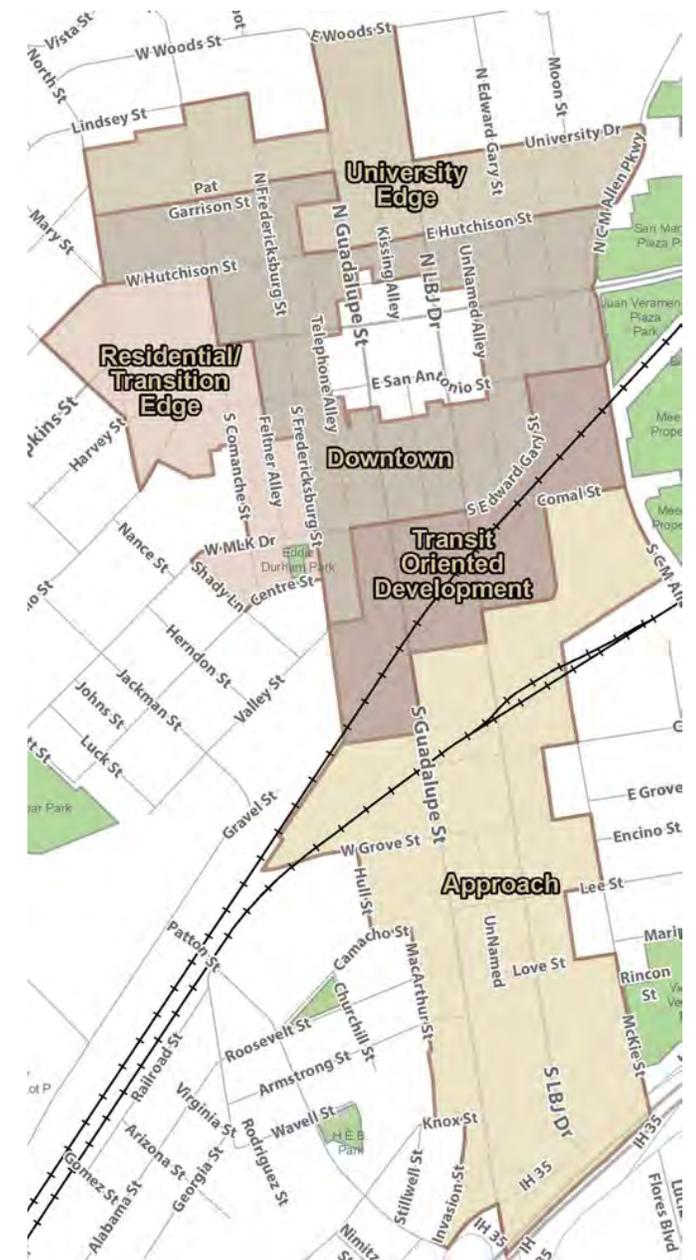
Tip: Grab your scratch paper!



Apartment A2

Key features:

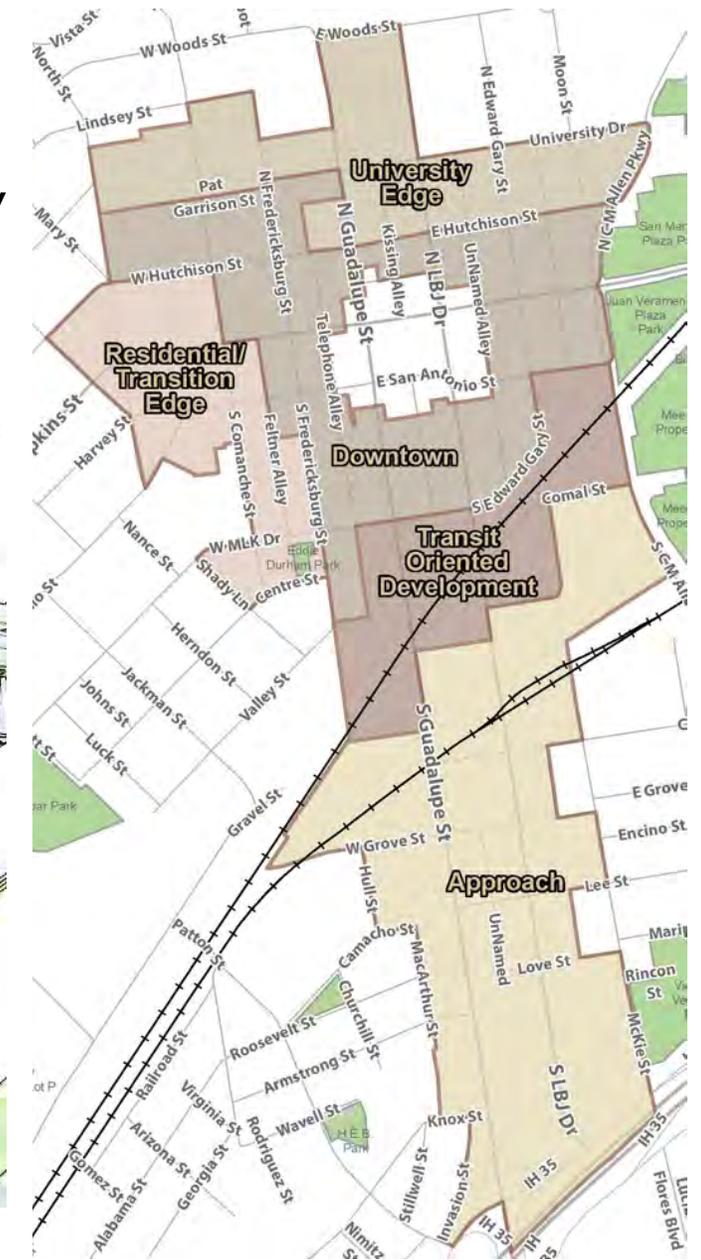
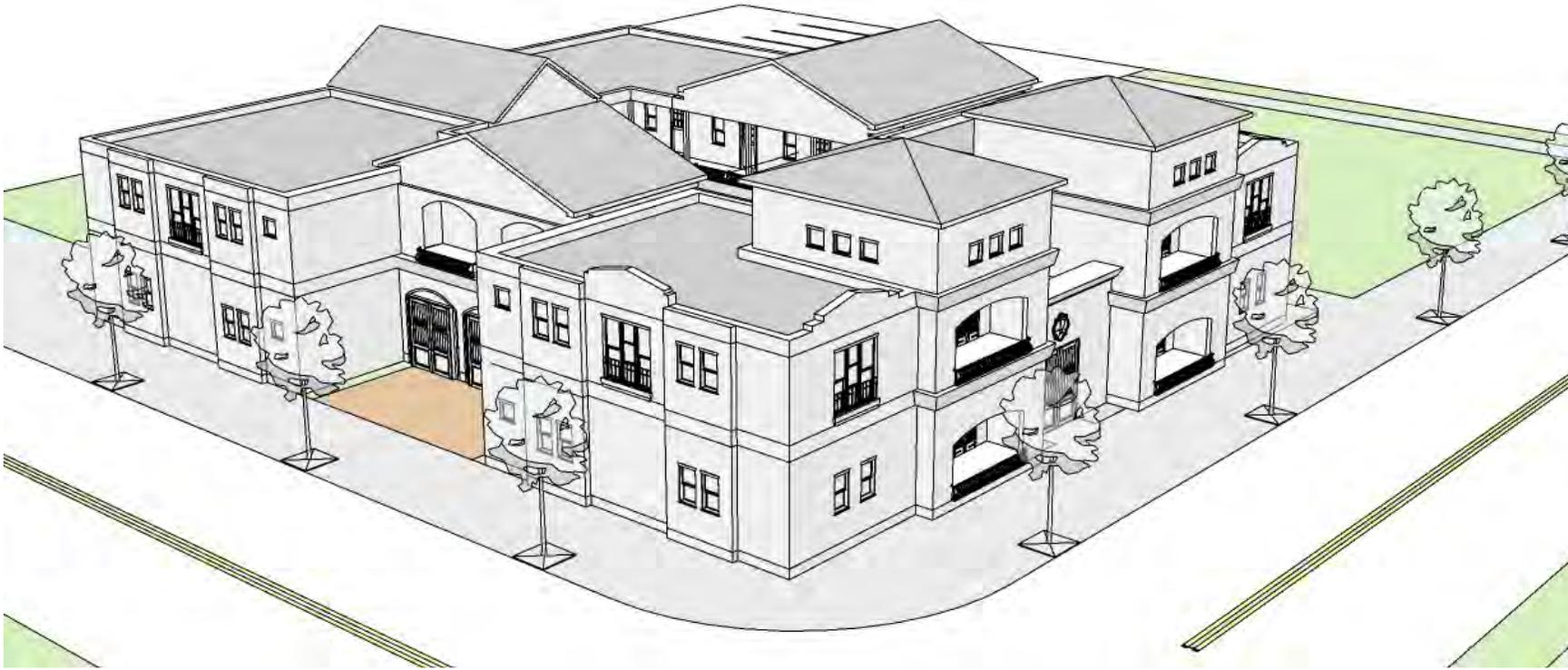
- 2-stories with a partial 3rd story
- Flat and sloped roofs
- No front setback



Apartment A3

Key features:

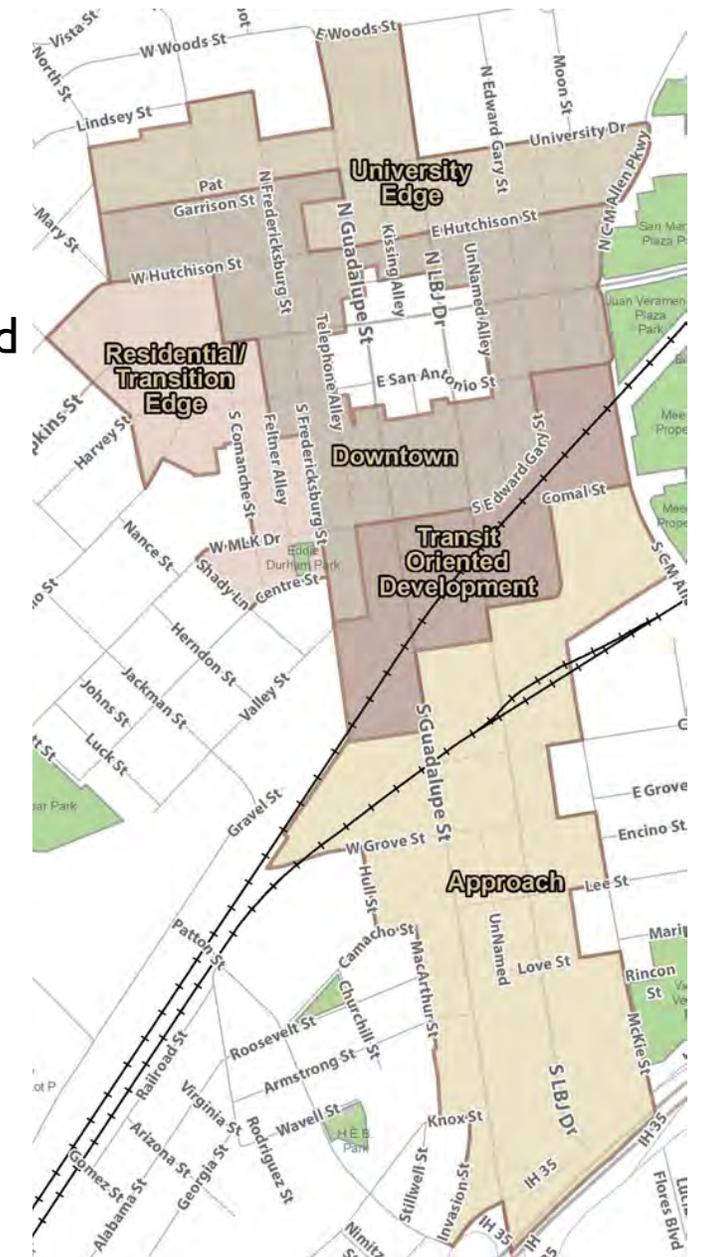
- 2-stories with a partial 3rd story
- Flat and sloped roofs
- No front setback, but a plaza is incorporated near the entrance



Apartment A4

Key features:

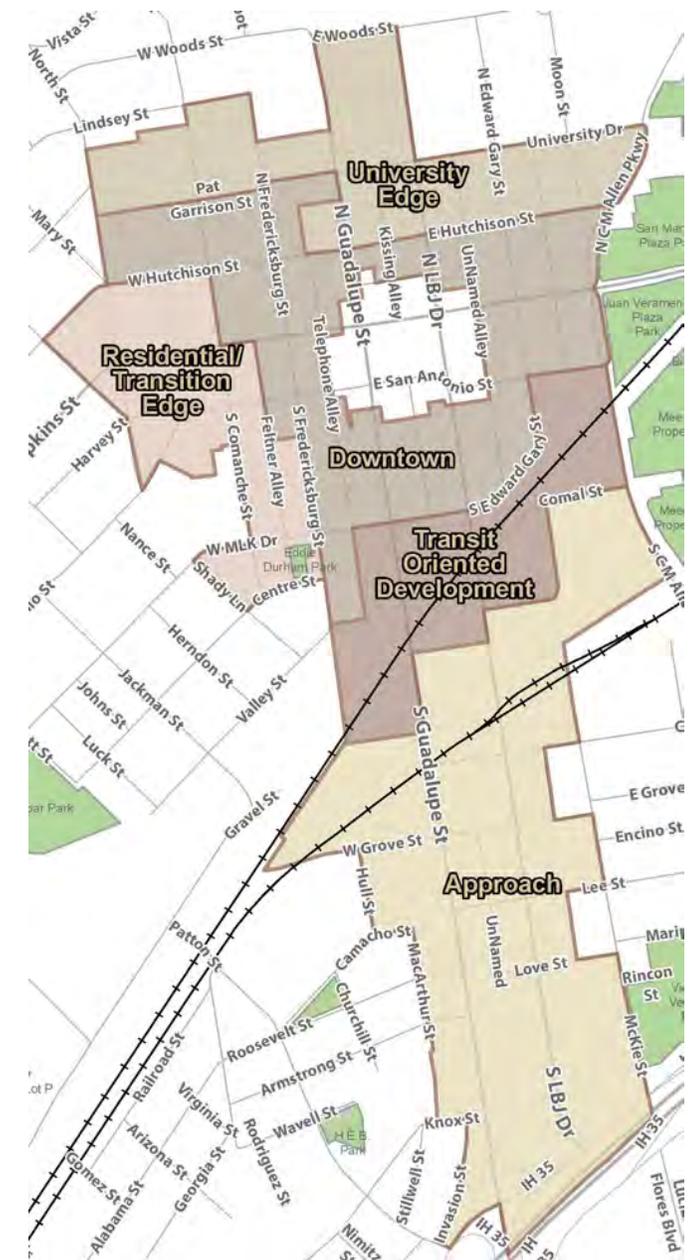
- 3 stories
- Primarily sloped roofs
- Front setback with landscaped area



Apartment A5

Key features:

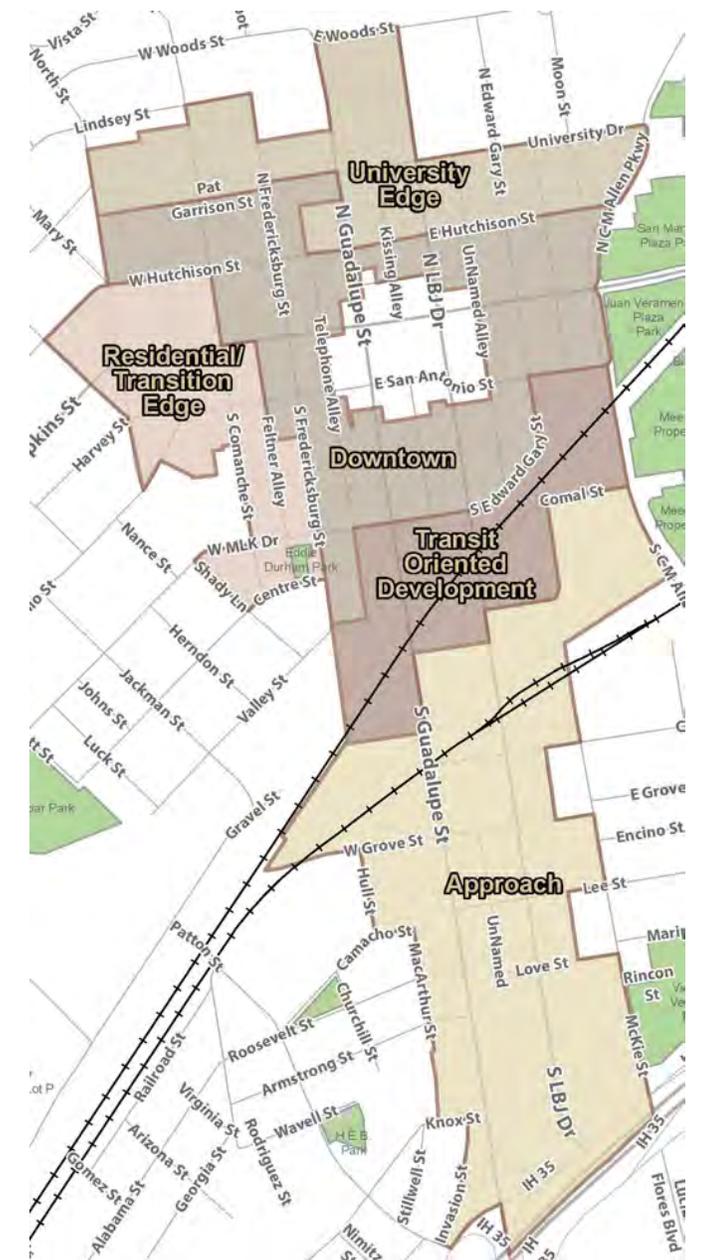
- 4 stories
- Primarily flat roof
- Small front setback with landscaped area



Apartment A6

Key features:

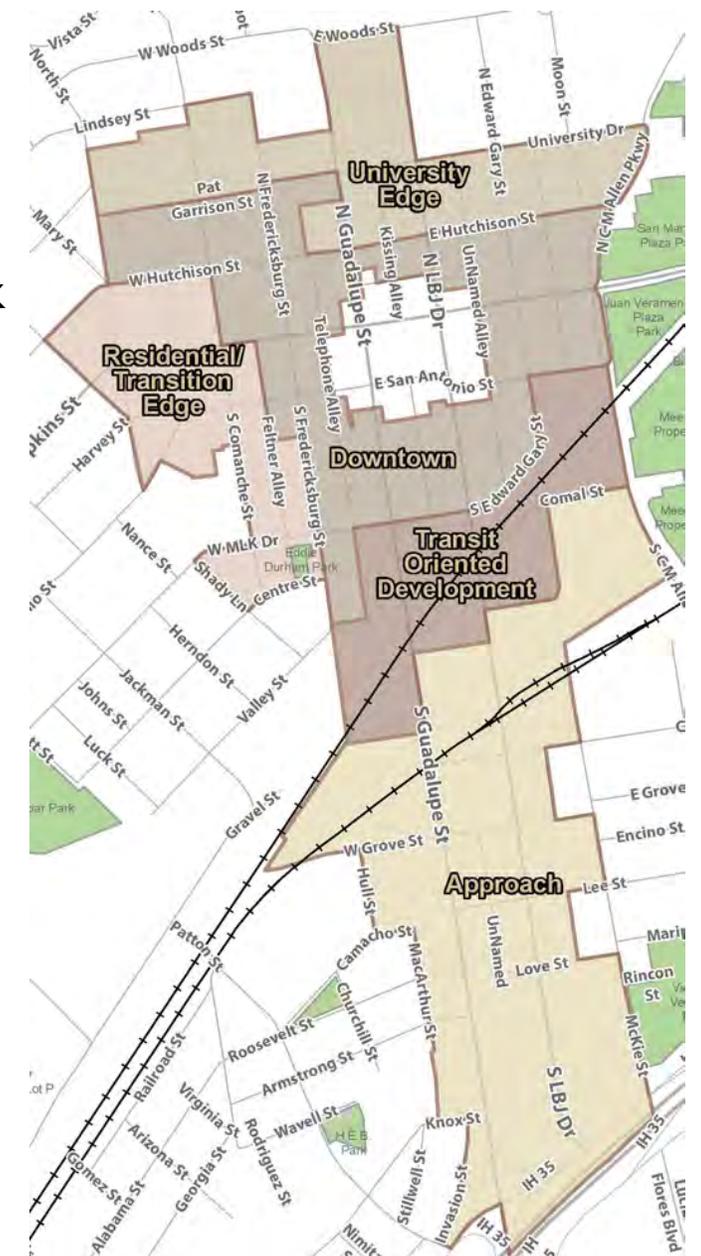
- 4 stories
- Primarily flat roof
- No front setback



Townhouse T1

Key features:

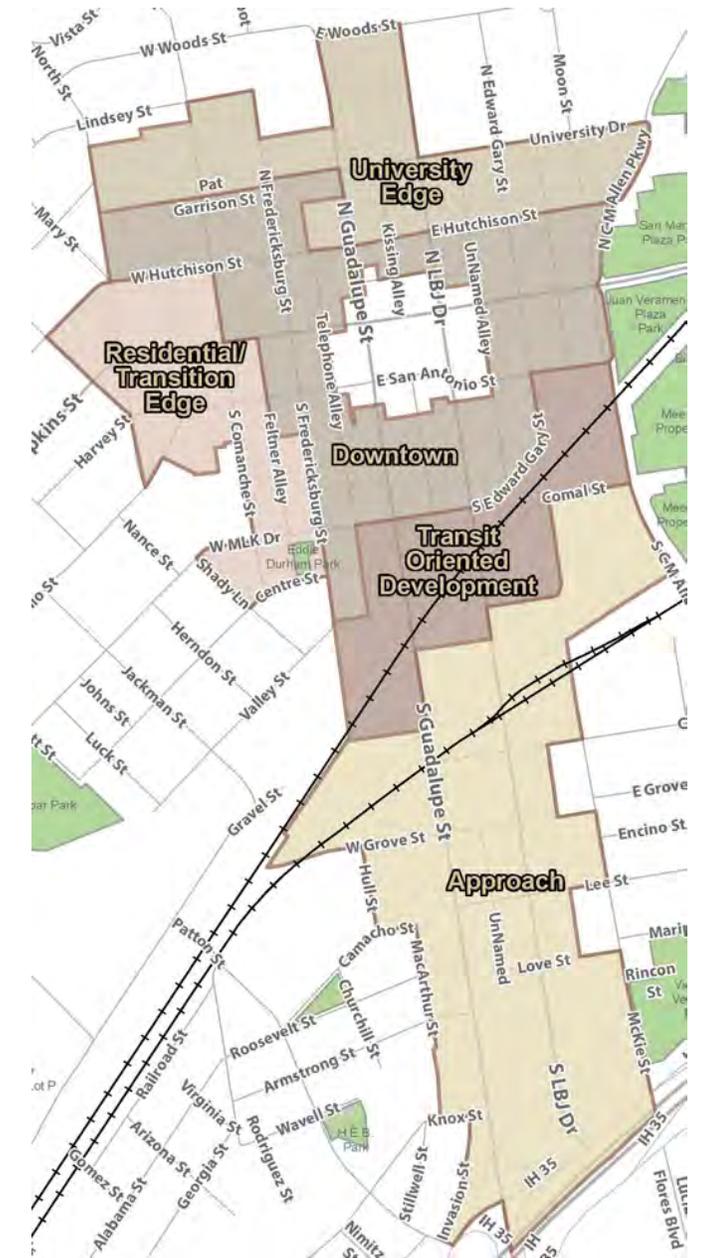
- 3 stories
- Flat roof
- Landscaped, front setback
- Small front stoop



Townhouse T2

Key features:

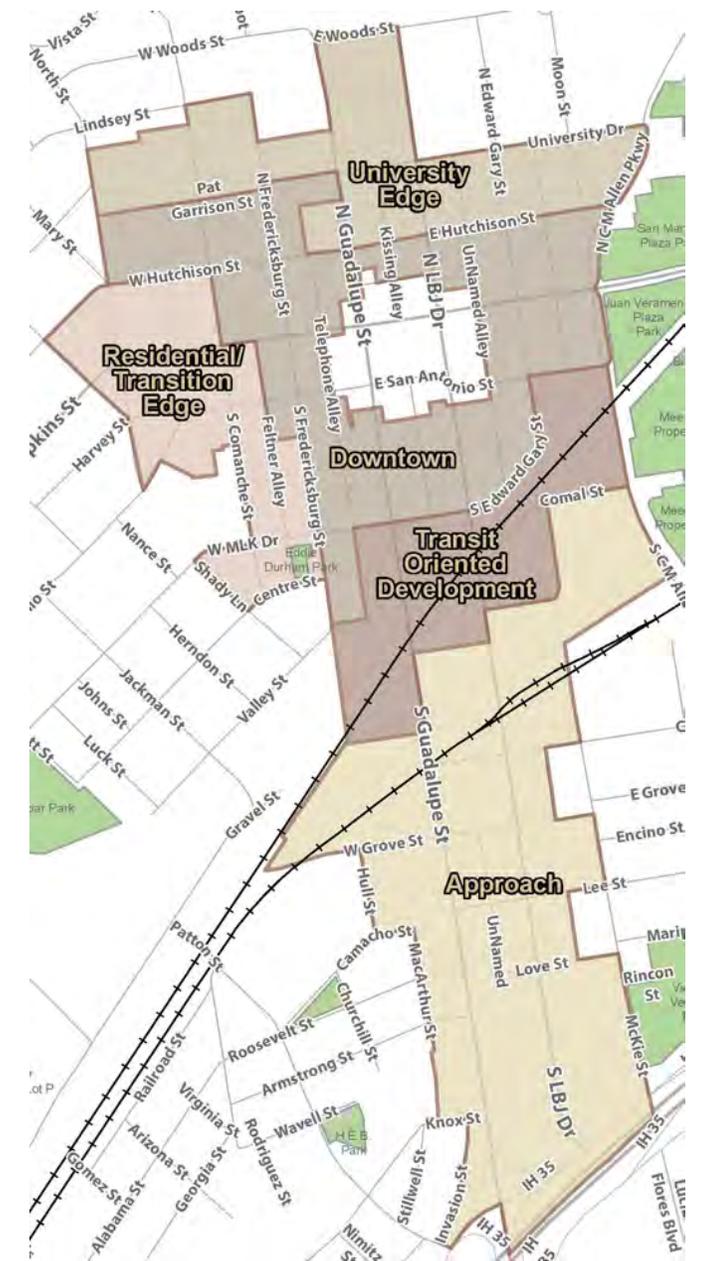
- 2 stories
- Sloped roofs
- Landscaped, front yards
- Front porches



Townhouse T3

Key features:

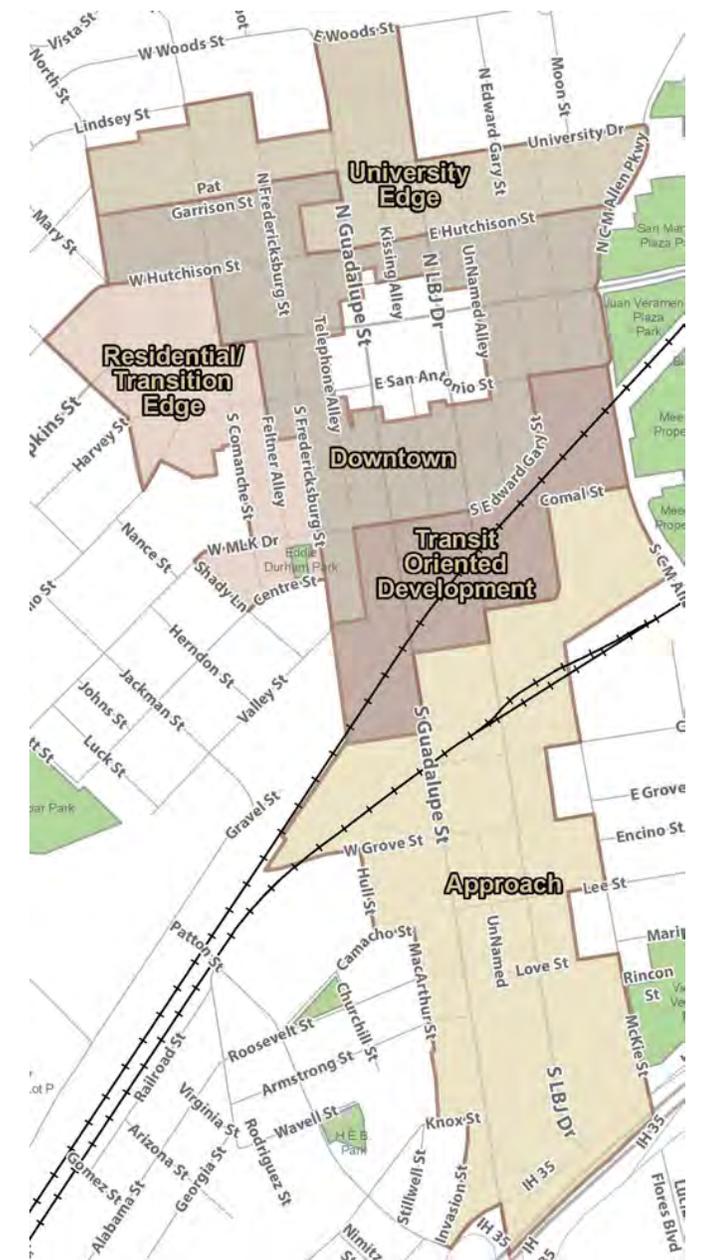
- 3 stories
- Flat roof
- No setback
- Small front patios



Mixed Use M2

Key features:

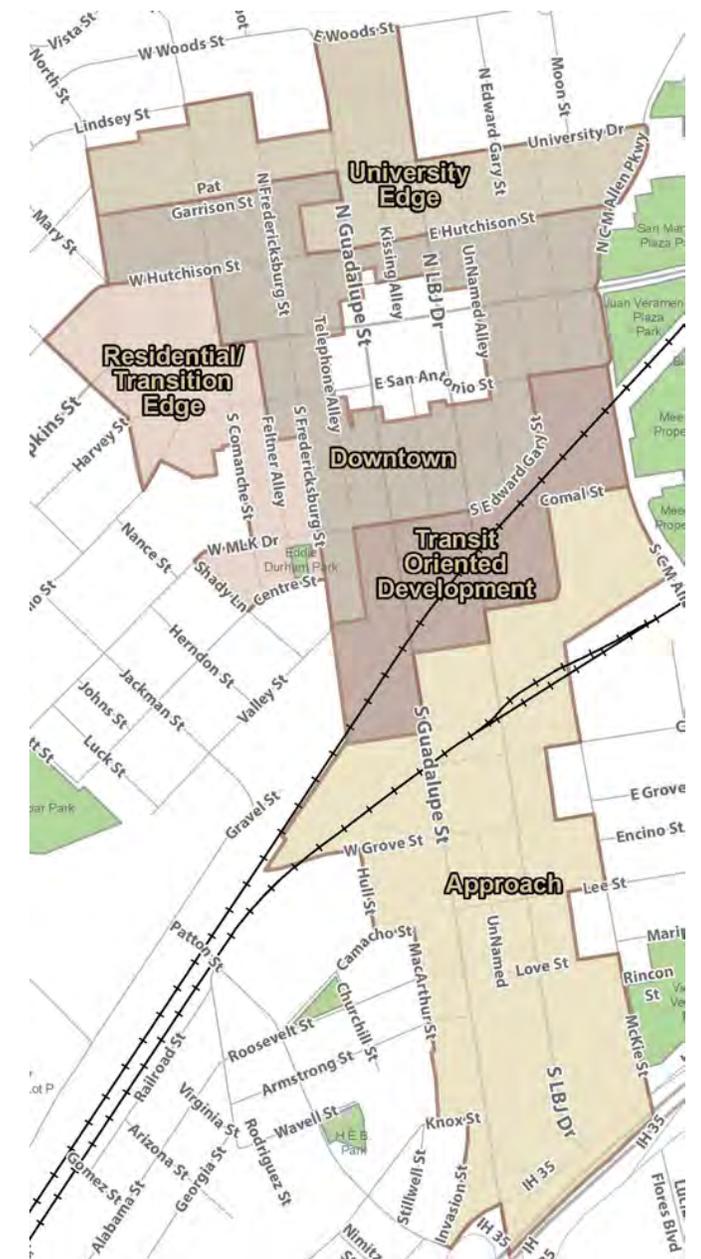
- 4 stories
- No 2nd floor stepback, instead, a second floor inset
- Flat roof
- Awnings provide some shade for pedestrians



Mixed Use MU3

Key features:

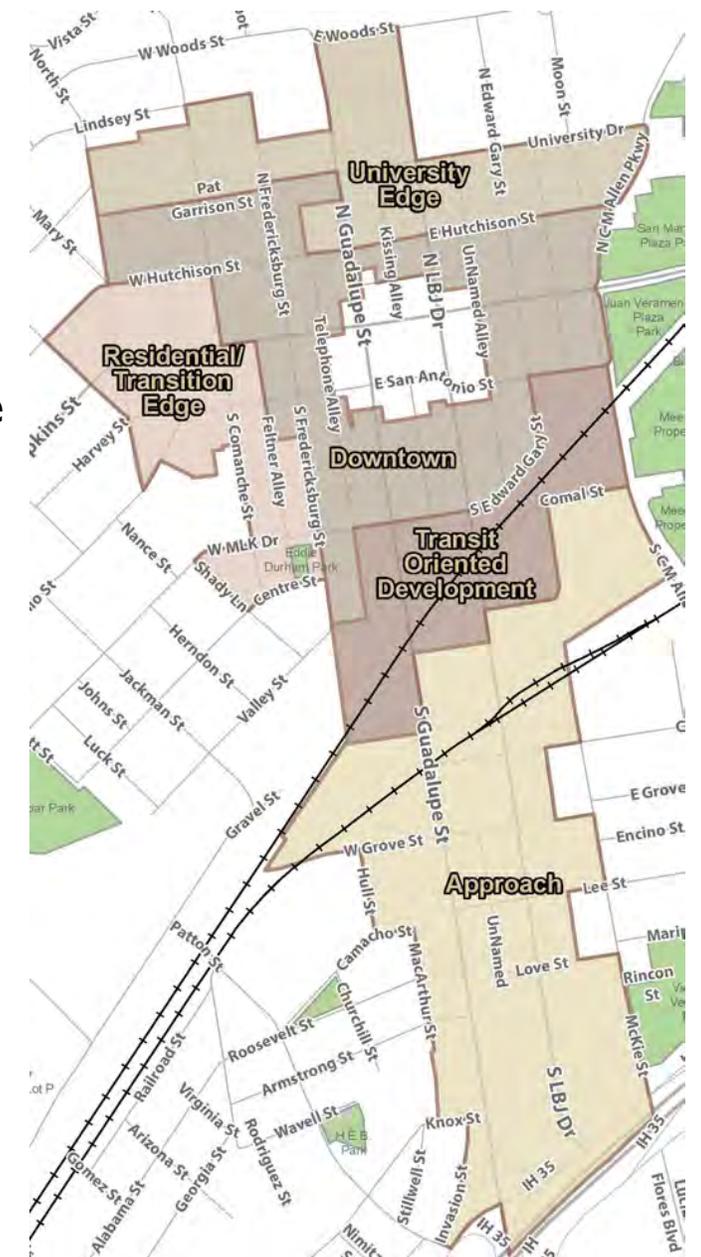
- 5 stories
- 3 story portion in front
- Flat roof
- Small plaza



Mixed Use MU8

Key features:

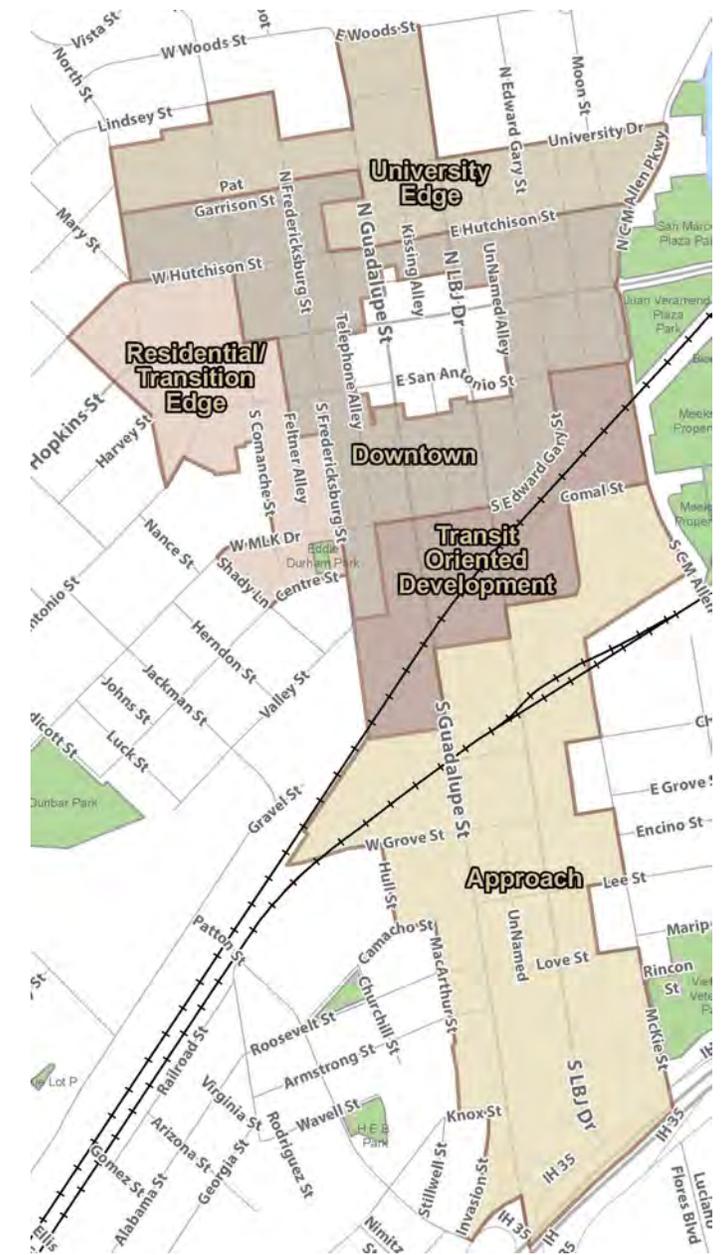
- 3 stories
- 2nd story step back
- Flat roof
- Canopy to provide shade to pedestrians



Mixed Use MU9

Key features:

- 3 stories
- Partial 3rd story stepback
- Flat roof
- Canopy to provide shade to pedestrians



Next Steps

- Upcoming deliverables
 - **August:** Outline for changes to the design standards and guidelines
 - **Fall 2020:** Draft I of changes to design standards and guidelines



Comments? Questions?
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Check your inbox for the post-meeting survey!

