



REPORT TO LAW & LEGISLATION COMMITTEE City of Sacramento

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915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2671

STAFF REPORT
January 20, 2009

Honorable Members of the
Law and Legislation Committee

Title: Ordinance Amendments: Amending Section 17.96.020 Relating to Design Guidelines Applicable to the Central Business District Special Planning District and Establishing the Central Core Design Review District

Location/Council District: Central City (Districts 1, 3 and 4)

Recommendation: Approve and forward to the City Council for adoption: 1) an **Ordinance** Amending Section 17.96.020 of Title 17 of the Sacramento City Code (the Zoning Code) Relating to Design Guidelines Applicable to, the Central Business District Special Planning District; 2) an **Ordinance** Establishing the Central Core Design Review District and Amending the Boundaries of the Central City Design Review District; 3) a **Resolution** Adopting the Central City Urban Design Guidelines for the Central City and the Central Core Design Review District; and 4) a **Resolution** Determining the Central City Urban Design Guidelines Exempt from Review under the California Environmental Quality Act .

Contact: Gregory B. Taylor, AIA, Senior Urban Designer, (916) 808-5268; William Crouch, Urban Design Manager (916) 808-8013; David Kwong, Current Planning Manager (916) 808-2691.

Presenters: Gregory B. Taylor, AIA, Senior Urban Designer, (916) 808-5268; Luis Sanchez, AIA, Senior Architect, (916) 808-5268; William Crouch, AIA, NCARB, Urban Design Manager (916) 808-8013

Department: Development Services

Division: Current Planning

Organization No: 21001010

Description/Analysis

Issue: The existing Central Business District – Special Planning District (CBD-SPD) zoning requires design review for all development projects in the C-3 zone

and references the 1987 Architectural Design and Streetscape Guidelines. The City Council directed staff to update these documents and the Central City Urban Design Guidelines (CCUDG) addresses both building and streetscape design. The amendment to the CBD-SPD would replace reference to these 1987 documents with the new CCUDG. In addition, the CCUDG was prepared to evaluate a larger planning area than the existing CBD boundary in furtherance of the General Plan Update proposal to expand the downtown boundary. Establishment of the Central Core Design Review District (see Attachment 3) would set the boundaries for review of development projects in accordance with the Central City Urban Design Guidelines.

For ease of reference, the Central City Urban Design Guidelines binder has been supplemented to include sections for each specific portions of the Central City that are subject to design review. The first two sections address overall policies apply to the entire Central City. The following four sections contain the individual guidelines for each design review area in the Central City. The Central Core Design Guidelines, Section 3, Chapters 3 and 4 provide the public and private ream design guidelines for the new Central Core Design Review District. The remaining sections take existing design guidelines for all of the other design review areas, which includes the Railyards, River District (Richards Blvd), and the Central City (Neighborhoods) Design Review District, which includes the R Street and Alhambra corridors. This one reference document for the entire Central City would in the future be amended to add sections for Old Sacramento and Sutter's Landing, and would include the upcoming Docks Area Planned Unit Development Design Guidelines and future changes to the Richards Boulevard Area Plan when the River District Specific Plan is adopted.

The Central City Design Review District Map (see attachment 3, Exhibit 2) shows the proposed Central Core Design Review District boundaries, as well as the revised Central City (Neighborhood) Design Review District boundary and all of the other existing areas in the Central City with design review requirements. The supplemental sections in the CCUDG will include the existing design guidelines for the following areas of the Central City:

- Section 1 - Introduction
- Section 2 - Framework
- Section 3 - Central Core Design Guidelines
- Section 4: Central City Neighborhood Design Guidelines
 - R Street Corridor
 - Alhambra Corridor
- Section 5 - Sacramento Railyards Design Guidelines
- Section 6 - Richards Boulevard Area Plan (RBAP)

This will complete Part One of the study to update the downtown design guidelines and represents the cumulative effort of the City Council, City Commissions, Steering Committee members, community and focus groups, business and professional groups, involved citizens, the Consultant Team and staff.

Part Two, the Central Core Urban Design Plan, will continue to be developed by staff to include the strategy for changing the Central Core/Central Business District development standards in regards to building height zones, transitional height zones to the CBD edge, as well as potential "Urban Core Impact Fee" assessments based on Floor Area Ratios for CBD projects. Part Two will provide an urban design land use plan complementary to the design guidelines from the Central Core Design Guidelines. The Central City Urban Design Plan will incorporate a Programmatic EIR for Central Core development as part of a Development Strategy for the City's future growth in the Central Core area.

Policy Considerations: The Central City Urban Design Guidelines is being considered in conjunction with General Plan Update and is consistent with the City's Strategic Plan, three-year goal, to achieve sustainability and livability in the City of Sacramento.

Environmental Considerations: Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, administrative activities do not constitute a project and are therefore exempt from environmental review. The Central City Urban Design Guidelines and implementing ordinances are exempt from environmental review under CEQA Section 15061(b) (3), because the design guidelines do not change existing development standards in the CBD zone.

Sustainability Considerations: The Central City Urban Design Guidelines are in conformance with the City adopted Sustainability Master Plan and complement the City's General Plan.

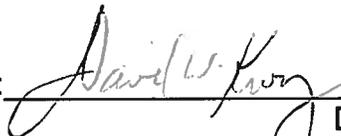
Rationale for Recommendation: Staff requests the Law and Legislation Committee make a recommendation of approval to City Council to amend Chapter 17.96, the Central Business District – Special Planning District. This ordinance was reviewed by the Planning Commission, which recommended its adoption on January 8, 2009, and the Commission previously reviewed and commented on the Central City Urban Design Guidelines.

Staff also requests the Law and Legislation Committee make a recommendation of approval to City Council for an Ordinance, pursuant to section 17.132.160 of Title 17 of the Sacramento City Code (the Zoning Code) creating the Central Core Design Review District and amending the boundaries of the Central City Design Review District. This ordinance was initiated by the Design Commission and the Commission is scheduled to make a formal recommendation for establishment of the Central Core Design Review District and adoption of Central City Urban Design Guidelines at its January 21, 2009 meeting.

These ordinances are in furtherance of the adoption of the Central City Urban Design Guidelines and staff recommends that the Law and Legislation Committee also make a recommendation to the City Council to adopt these new design guidelines.

Financial Considerations: There are no financial impacts associated with either the ordinance amending Chapter 17.96, the Central Business District – Special Planning District, or the creation of an Ordinance establishing the Central Core Design Review District and amending the boundaries of the Central City Design Review District pursuant to section 17.132.160 of Title 17 of the Sacramento City Code (the Zoning Code)

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD): Not Applicable

Respectfully Submitted by: 
David Kwong
Planning Manager

Approved by: 
William Thomas
Development Services Director

Recommendation Approved:

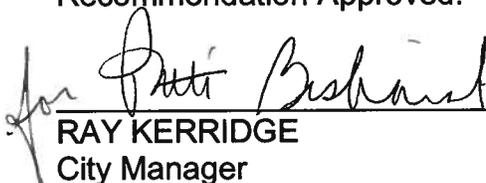

RAY KERRIDGE
City Manager

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Attachment 1

ORDINANCE NO. 2009- _____

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

AMENDING SECTION 17.96.020 OF TITLE 17 OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY CODE (THE ZONING CODE) RELATING TO DESIGN GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT SPECIAL PLANNING DISTRICT

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

Section 1. Section 17.96.020 of Title 17 of the Sacramento City Code (the Zoning Code) is amended to read as follows:

17.96.020 Urban design, architectural design and streetscape design guidelines—Procedure.

The CBD-SPD (C-3) zone design guidelines consisting of the 1987 Central Business District Framework Plan (urban design plan) and the 2009 Central City Core Design Guidelines regarding architectural design and streetscape design guidelines, are adopted for the CBD-SPD zone. The planning commission, Sacramento housing and redevelopment commission, design commission, preservation commission, the design director, the preservation director, and the city and Sacramento housing and redevelopment agency staffs, shall use the aforementioned guidelines in the evaluation of development projects within the CBD-SPD (C-3) zone. The design commission, preservation commission, planning commission and city council shall have the authority to waive individual guideline provisions for specific projects. These waivers may occur where it is found on the basis of substantial evidence that such waiver is necessary or appropriate to accomplish the policies for downtown design more than would strict application of the guidelines. The city planning commission may amend the urban design guidelines plan where such amendment will aid in the accomplishment of the policies for downtown design.

Attachment 2

ORDINANCE NO. 2009- _____

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

**AMENDING SECTION 17.96.020 OF TITLE 17 OF THE SACRAMENTO CITY
CODE (THE ZONING CODE) RELATING TO DESIGN GUIDELINES
APPLICABLE TO THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
SPECIAL PLANNING DISTRICT**

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Attachment 3

ORDINANCE NO. 2009 - _____

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

**ESTABLISHING THE CENTRAL CORE DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT AND
AMENDING THE BOUNDARIES OF THE
CENTRAL CITY DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:

Section 1. The Central Core Design Review District is hereby established pursuant to section 17.132.160 of Title 17 of the Sacramento City Code (the Zoning Code). The boundaries of the Central Core Design Review District includes the Central Business District Special Planning District and the area from H and I Streets to G Street on the north, the area between 16th and 17th Streets on the east and the area between N Street and Q Street on the south as depicted in Exhibit 1, which exhibit is attached and incorporated herein by this reference. The design guidelines applicable to the Central Core Design Review District are set out in the Central City Urban Design Guidelines, to be adopted by resolution concurrently with the adoption of this ordinance, and as they may be amended from time to time.

Section 2. The boundaries of the Central City Design Review District are hereby amended to exclude all areas within the boundaries of the Central Core Design Review District, as depicted in Exhibit 2, which exhibit is attached and incorporated herein by this reference. The design guidelines applicable to the Central City Design Review District are the existing Sacramento Central City (Neighborhood) Design Guidelines and as they may be amended from time to time.

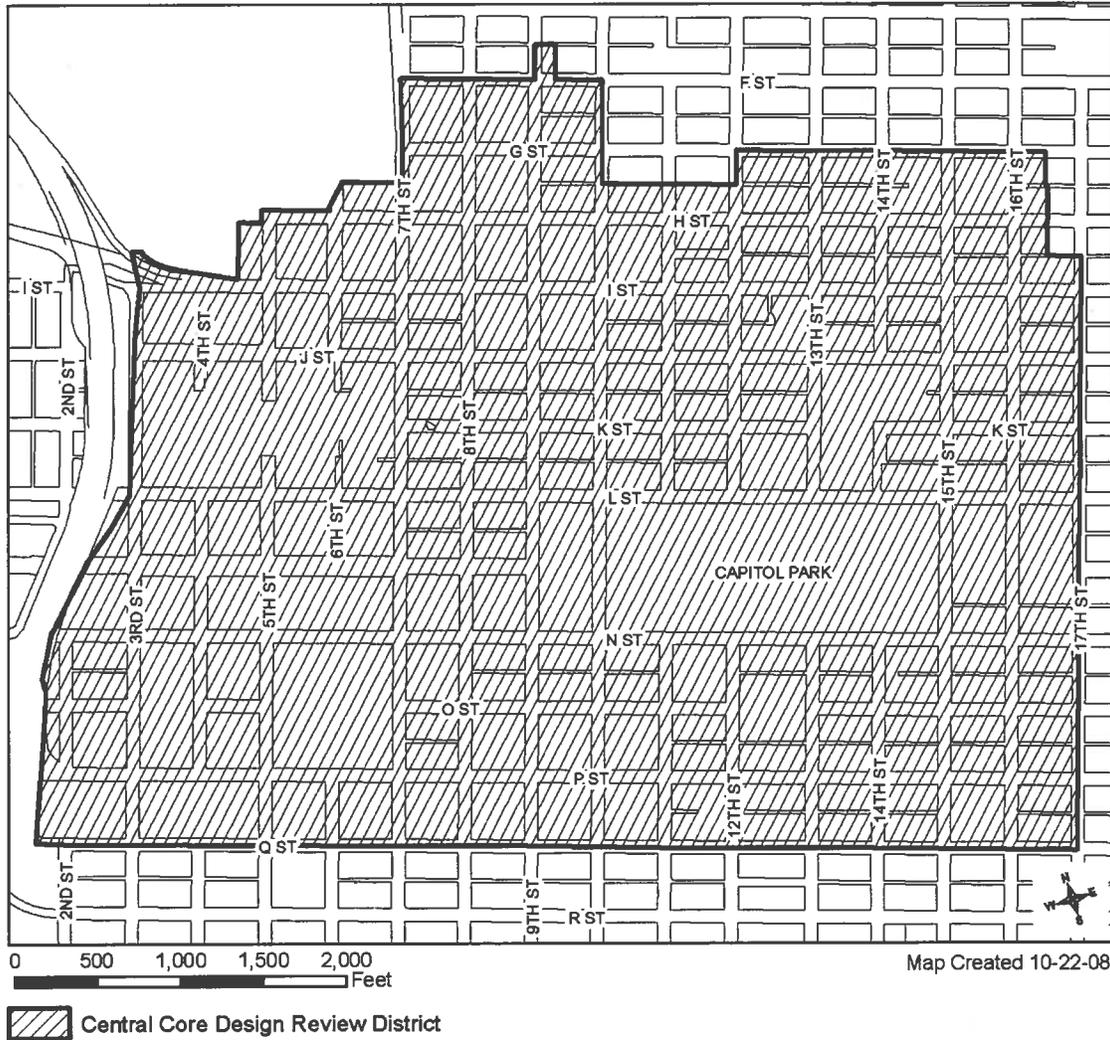
Section 3. For reference purposes only, the boundaries of the Railyards Design Review District and the Richards Boulevard, Alhambra Corridor and R Street Corridor Special Planning Districts, all of which are located within the Central City and all of which are subject to design review, are also depicted in Exhibit 2.

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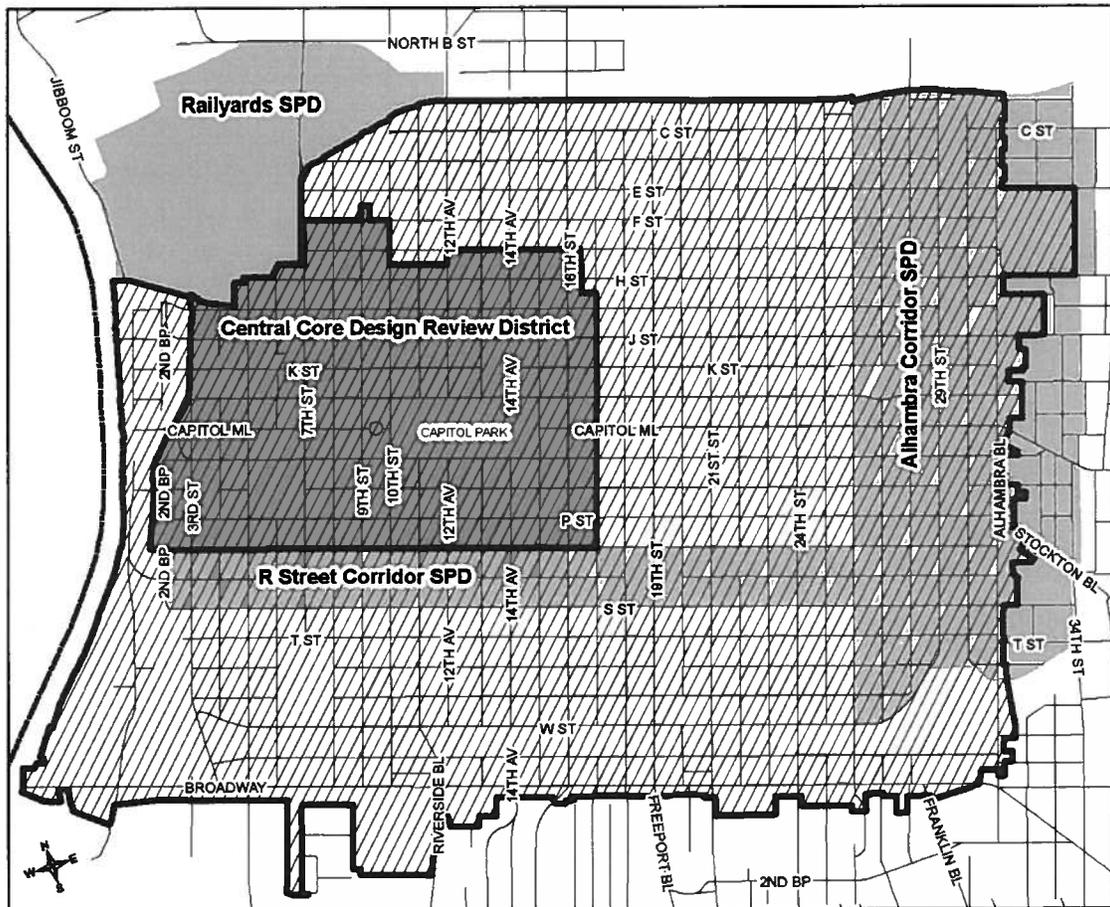
Exhibit 1 - Central Core Boundary Map

Exhibit 2 - Central City Boundary Map

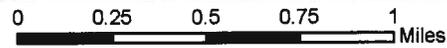
**(M05-084) Central City Urban Design Guidelines:
Central Core Design Review District**



(M05-084) Central City Urban Design Guidelines



Map Created 1-7-09



-  City Boundary
-  Central City Design Review District (Neighborhood Design Guidelines)
-  Central Core Design Review District
-  Special Planning Districts

RESOLUTION NO. 2009- ____

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

**ADOPTING THE CENTRAL CITY URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES
FOR THE CENTRAL CITY AND CENTRAL CORE DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT (M05-
084)**

BACKGROUND

- A. The Central City Urban Design Guidelines (“Urban Design Guidelines”), was developed to replace the existing Central Business District Architectural Guidelines and Streetscape Guidelines that were adopted in 1987. The next phase of this effort, preparation of the Central City Urban Design Plan, is intended to replace the 1987 Central Business District Framework Plan.
- B. A citizens advisory committee comprised of representatives from Central City community, business, development and design professional organizations, and including representatives from other city departments, assisted the city’s design review staff and the consultant in development of the Urban Design Guidelines. The draft Urban Design Guidelines were submitted to the Planning, Design and Preservation Commissions and the City Council for review and comment between October and November 2007. Formal public hearings were held to review the Urban Design Guidelines, accept public comments and to recommend approval of ordinances to implement the guidelines by the Planning Commission on _____ and by the Design Commission on _____.
- C. The Urban Design Guidelines contain architectural and streetscape design standards to be applied to projects located within that portion of the Central City referred to as the Central Business District Special Planning District, which is zoned as C-3. In addition, the first two sections of the Urban Design Guidelines set the policy and framework for design review applicable to the entire Central City area.
- D. The new 2030 General Plan significantly expands the boundaries of the Central Business District land use designation. Under a separate action, the Central Core Design Review District is being established and that district’s boundaries encompass the Central Business District Special Planning District and additional areas to reflect the planned near term expansion of urban development in the City’s downtown area.
- E. The Urban Design Guidelines provide design guidance for private and public

projects within the Central Core Design Review District in a manner that will allow for increased densities and taller buildings while preserving and enhancing the qualities that would contribute to a vibrant, economically robust and pedestrian- and transit- friendly downtown.

- F. The Central City Urban Design Guidelines include the following sections: Introduction and Urban Design Framework, which sets out the vision for the physical form and character of the Central City, and section three establish the design standards for the Central Core area; Public Realm for streets, sidewalks, parks and other public spaces; and Private Realm for the placement and design of buildings and parking lots.
- G. The Urban Design Guidelines are intended to provide clear guidance to design professionals and property owners, while at the same time allowing for alternative design plans to accomplish the vision for future development in the Central City, with emphasis in the Central Core area.
- H. The Urban Design Guidelines include both design principles and guidelines that distinguish between mandatory and advisory provisions that will be used by city staff and the Design Commission, Preservation Commission and Planning Commission in determining the appropriateness of any proposed building or structure, or the alteration of an existing building or structure located within the Central Core Design Review District.
- I. The Urban Design Guidelines are consistent with the Central City Community Plan and the General Plan.
- J. On January 21, 2009 the Design Commission conducted a public hearing for which notice was given pursuant Sacramento City Code Section 17.132.60 and forwarded to the City Council a recommendation to approve the Central City Urban Design Guidelines for application within the Central Core Design Review District.
- K. On _____ 2009, the City Council conducted a public hearing, for which notice was given pursuant Sacramento City Code Section 17.132.60, and received and considered evidence concerning adoption of the Central City Urban Design Guidelines.

BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Based on the verbal and documentary evidence received at the hearing held on _____, 2009, the City Council hereby adopts the Central City Urban Design Guidelines attached as Exhibit A for application within the Central Core Design Review District. The first two sections, Introduction and Framework, apply to the entire Central City. If a certain type of development project within the Central Core Design Review

District is not referenced in the Central City Urban Design Guidelines, in that event the Central City (Neighborhoods) Design Guidelines shall apply.

RESOLUTION NO. 2009-____

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

**DETERMINING THE CENTRAL CITY URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES
EXEMPT FROM REVIEW UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
ACT (M05-084)**

BACKGROUND

A. On January 21, 2009 the Design Commission conducted a public hearing for which notice was given pursuant Sacramento City Code Section 17.132.60 and forwarded to the City Council a recommendation to approve the Central City Urban Design Guidelines for application within the Central City and the Central Core Design Review District.

B. On _____ 2009, the City Council conducted a public hearing, for which notice was given pursuant Sacramento City Code Section 17.132.60, and received and considered evidence concerning adoption of the Central City Urban Design Guidelines for application within the Central City and the Central Core Design Review District.

**BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. Based on the determination and recommendation of the City's Environmental Planning Services Manager and the oral and documentary evidence received at the hearing on the Project, the City Council finds that adoption of the Central City Urban Design Guidelines and its implementing ordinances is exempt from environmental review under Section 15601(b)(3) of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines as follows:

Adoption of urban design guidelines and establishment of design review districts is an administrative activity and the Central City Urban Design Guidelines does not change the existing development standards in the Central Business District Special Planning District and C-3 zone.