DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

CITY OF CHANHASSEN, MINNESOTA

JULY 10TH, 2024

CONTENTS

PROJECT PURPOSE

DESIGN, ACCESS, & CONNECTIVITY

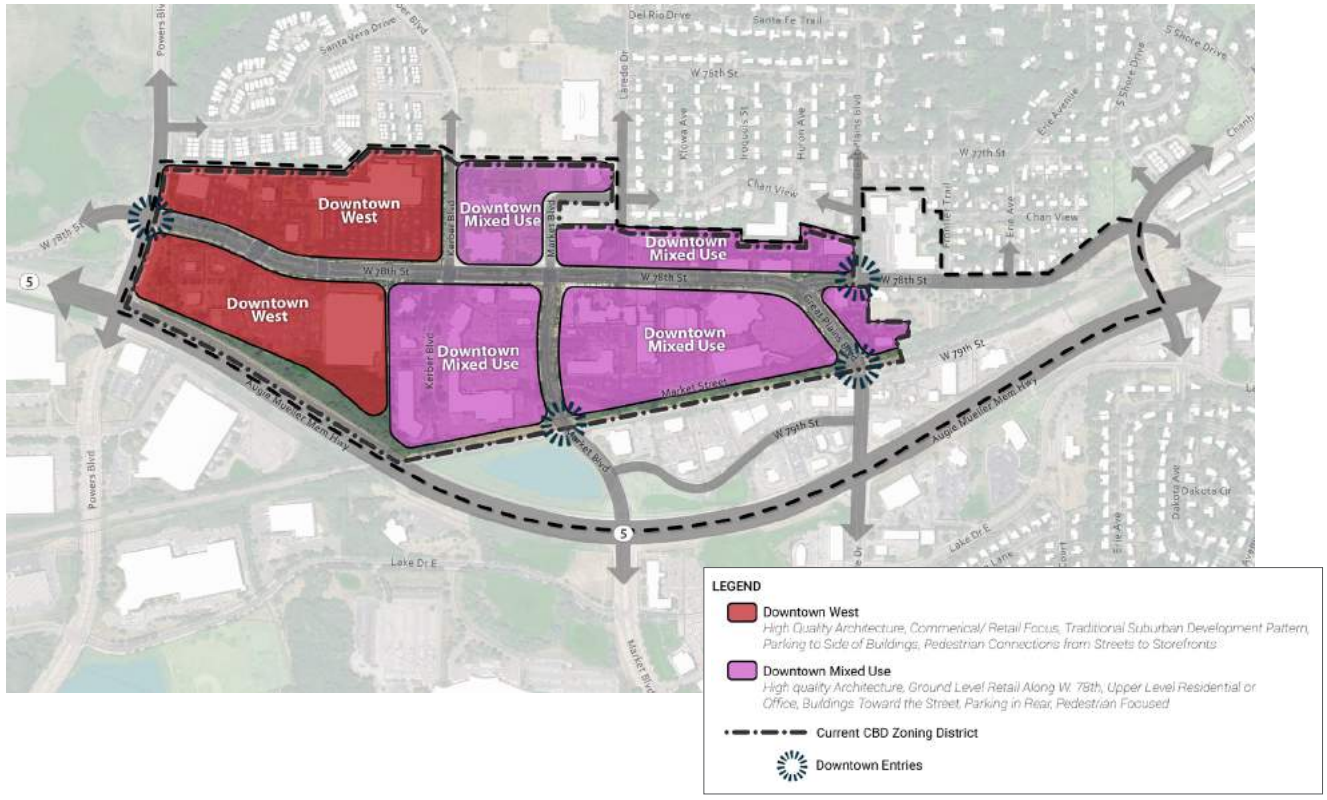
Develop Downtown Design Guidelines that encourage property owners and developers to design new development that achieves the community's aspirations and preferred downtown character

Leverage best practices from other cities for downtown, mixed use, and pedestrian-oriented design standards/guidelines

INTRODUCTION

WHAT ARE DESIGN GUIDELINES?

- Provide property owners and developers additional guidance in the form of community preferences and best practices, rather than requirements.
- Language of design guidelines is ***"should", "encourage", "prefer".***
- Focused on guiding development that creates a strong sense of place.
- Used alongside the required design standards in the zoning code.
- Property owners and developers should review these guidelines prior to submitting a development application and are expected to provide a narrative as part of their development proposal that identifies how the project achieves these guidelines.



SITE DESIGN

OVERVIEW

The site development guidelines articulate the desired development characteristics for private redevelopment projects within the downtown. The guidelines for the placement of parking, either surface or structured, trees/landscaping, site furnishings, lighting, utility and service/delivery/storage areas and on-site stormwater management. The guidelines are not intended to impose a particular style upon new development or construction in Downtown Chanhassen.

GOALS

- ***Consider the broader context of the downtown*** when designing an individual redevelopment site. Thinking contextually about the bigger picture will aid in the transition of the overall downtown during earlier phases of redevelopment.
- ***Respect adjacent properties*** in order to design the appropriate landscaping, lighting levels, building entry points, and loading and delivery areas.
- Ensure site development patterns reflect a ***unified scale and character*** that create an identifiable downtown.
- Promote the development of a multi-modal downtown with buildings that define and enclose downtown streets and parks/open spaces, create streets with a ***"sense of place"***, reinforce the urban character of the downtown, and encourage pedestrian-oriented activity along the streets and sidewalks.
- Promote site development patterns that are ***oriented to downtown's public streets, parks and open spaces/plazas.***
- ***Encourage convenient, safe and attractive walk/bike connections*** from building entries and parking facilities to public sidewalk and trail systems, and bike parking/storage facilities.
- ***Managing stormwater effectively*** is critical to the ecological functions and public safety of the downtown. Well-designed stormwater management approaches can lead to water conservation, groundwater recharge, and reductions in the cost of the City's stormwater infrastructure and maintenance.
- ***Utilize structured parking to support the necessary densities for redevelopment*** structured parking must be utilized for mixed-use development. This likely means below grade parking for residential uses, or potential ramp structures lined with residential, commercial, or office uses. The city should pursue a district-wide approach to parking: Design structured parking with the potential to serve both public and private functions.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

PARKING

1. Single-use parking spaces should be minimized.
2. Public parking facilities should be easily accessible and identifiable. District signage should be utilized to identify public parking facilities, such as the Southwest Transit parking structure.
3. The presence of structured parking entrances should be minimized so that they do not dominate the street frontage of a building. Possible techniques include:
   - recessing the entry;
   - extending portions of the structure over the entrance;
   - using screening and landscaping;
   - using the smallest curb cut possible; and
   - creating a more dominant pedestrian entrance to the automobile entrance in terms of prominence on the streetscape.
4. Above-grade parking structures should fit with the character of surrounding buildings using complementary exterior wall materials, treatments, forms, articulation, fenestration, patterns, and colors. Even though these buildings store automobiles, they should appear to be part of a collection of neighboring buildings along the street.
5. Above-grade parking structures should contain, or be lined by, commercial/retail uses at street level along W 78th and Market Blvd. and by office or residential uses on upper stories.
6. If above-grade parking structures do not contain active uses at street level, landscaping and other screening devices are encouraged to buffer parking structures from pedestrian view.
7. Design parking facilities to minimize impacts of vehicle headlights on adjacent uses.
8. Surface parking lots should have enhanced landscaping, tree plantings, and a strong pedestrian connection to business and resident entries of buildings.

SITE DESIGN

TREES/LANDSCAPING

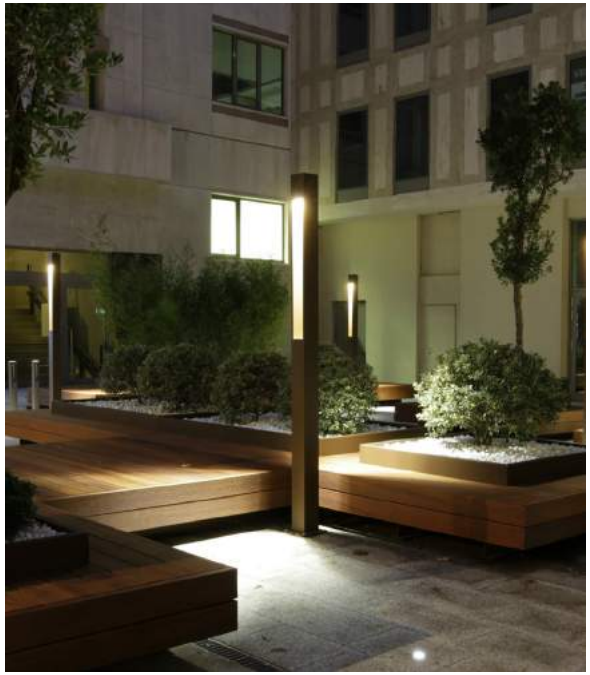
1. Maximize the ratio of planted surfaces to non-planted surfaces to reduce unnecessary hard surface cover wherever possible.
2. Encourage landscaped plazas, courtyards and gardens.
3. Native plant and tree species are encouraged to reduce maintenance and promote water conservation.
4. Encourage landscaping along exterior building walls to provide shade and cooling.

ON-SITE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

1. State of the art techniques should be considered for collecting, filtering, and treating stormwater runoff from development sites whenever feasible. When/where possible take a regional approach.
2. Design site irrigation facilities with water efficient systems.
3. Utilize native plant material to reduce water demand.
4. Incorporate porous pavers into hard surface areas to increase stormwater infiltration.
5. Encourage the use of green roofs to reduce the amount of stormwater runoff.
6. Promote the harvesting and reuse of stormwater for irrigation and grey water purposes.
7. Potential for additional underground storage.

LIGHTING

1. Use building lighting only for safe illumination of building entries, service areas, and pedestrian/vehicle movement areas.
2. Lighting at building entries, service areas, and pedestrian/vehicle movement areas should be limited to low wattage downcast or low cut-off fixtures that may remain on throughout the night.
3. Service area lighting should be confined within the service area boundaries and enclosure walls. No spill-over lighting should occur outside of the service or storage area. Lighting sources should not be visible from the street.
4. Accent lighting should be limited to indirect lighting of specific signage, architectural, and landscape features only; lighting should not exhibit or advertise the buildings itself. Unshielded bulbs or exposed neon lighting should not be used to accentuate building signage, architectural, and landscape features.
5. Consider how overhead string lighting and seasonal lighting can be incorporated to promote placemaking.



SITE FURNISHINGS

1. Locate site furnishings for ease of use by patrons. Site plans should identify locations with seating, trash receptacles, etc.
2. Site furnishings should be harmonious with the building architecture and compliment the public realm established by the streetscape.

SITE DESIGN

SERVICE, DELIVERY, AND STORAGE AREAS

1. Locate service, delivery, and storage areas so that views of them from adjacent properties, streets, open spaces, and pathways are minimized.
2. Where feasible, utilize landscape and architectural screening to minimize visual impacts of service, delivery, and storage areas.
3. Use signage to clearly identify service entrances to discourage the use of main building entries for service and delivery areas.

UTILITIES

1. As streets are reconstructed, existing above ground utilities should be relocated below ground within the public street rights-of-way whenever feasible.
2. Enhance the visual aesthetics of any above ground utility structures with landscaping, fencing, or other approved screening devices. Ensure access for maintenance.
3. Locate above ground utility structures away from major pedestrian and gathering areas, building entrances, windows, and stormwater drainage areas where feasible.

POTENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC ART

1. Existing and new spaces, such as parking lots, plazas, and parks, that allow artists and audiences to interact in a participatory, temporary and somewhat unstructured manner should be created within the downtown. Public art events could include festivals, street painting events, concerts, and markets.
2. The creation of signature public art works at gateway sites and other major destinations should be promoted to create visible landmarks.
3. Artists should be engaged in creating unique, customized public realm elements, such as seating, bike racks, wayfinding, tree grates, light fixtures, and transit facilities.
4. Pedestrian-friendly wayfinding should be created as an integral component of the public art initiative to encourage people to move from one area to another within the downtown.
5. Public-private partnerships should be leveraged to create public art that enhances public infrastructure and open spaces, and maximize synergy with developers, both public and private.
6. New technologies, such as Quick Response (QR) codes and geo-locational applications, should be embraced to allow audiences to access information about public art and other events going on in the downtown.

BUILDING DESIGN

OVERVIEW

The following guidelines provide direction on building character, placement of building entries, exterior building materials, awnings/canopies, signs, and sustainability. The guidelines are not intended to impose a particular style upon new development or construction in Downtown Chanhassen.

GOALS

- Encourage buildings that are human scaled, contribute to downtown's mix of uses, and create a high-quality pedestrian environment.
- New buildings should have an enduring architecture with cohesive features that enhance the unique character of the downtown district.
- Creative building design that allows a variety of architectural techniques in order to achieve a complementary mix of downtown buildings with individual styles.
- Promote the incorporation of green building strategies and sustainable design elements to reduce energy use and costs.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

BUILDING CHARACTER

1. Building design should emphasize a human scale at ground level, at entryways, and along street frontages through the creative use of windows, doors, columns, canopies, and awnings or other architectural elements.
2. Building facades should include thoughtful changes in building materials, parapet heights, fenestration, and other elements which create variety in the building façade but still contribute to a cohesive design.
3. Ground floors and lower floors should be designed to have more visual interest and detail than upper floors through elements such as large windows, inset doorways, terraces, vertical piers, landscape walls, art, and other design elements that reinforce a human scale.
4. Encourage the incorporation of functional balconies or upper level terraces in buildings along streets and open spaces to create interest and variety of the building façade as well as put more "eyes on the street".

BUILDING ENTRANCES

1. Entrances should be welcoming to passers-by being architecturally distinct from the rest of the building and serving as a focal point.
2. The use of awnings, recessed entries, porticos, front porches, verandas, and other similar features are encouraged to provide weather protection as well as visual interest to an entrance.
3. Entrances and lobbies should incorporate transparency and lighting to encourage visibility and create a welcoming connection to the street.
4. A majority of entrances on the primary frontage should be close to the same elevation of the sidewalk to provide ease of access to pedestrians.

BUILDING DESIGN

EXTERIOR BUILDING MATERIALS

1. Architectural innovation is encouraged through the use of both contemporary and traditional materials.
2. Changes in material should generally occur where the wall plane changes, between stories of a multi-story building, or where there is an architectural detail such as a belt course, cornice, parapet, or wall cap.
3. Primary building colors should be muted earth tones.
4. Accent colors should harmonize with, and complement, primary building colors. Use of color accents should be understated or reserved; garish use of color should be avoided.

AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

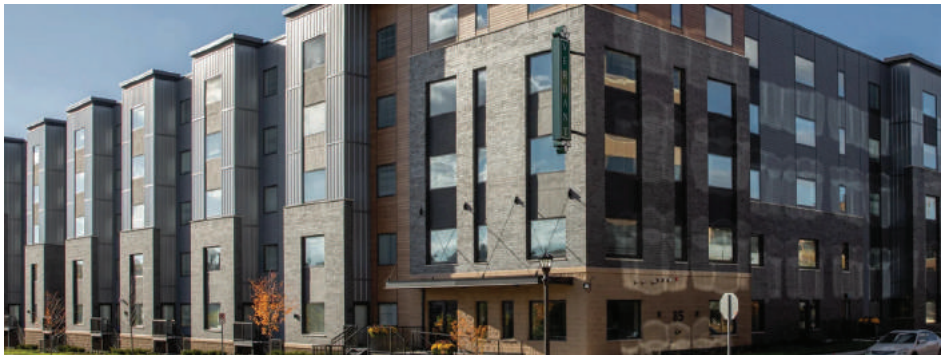
1. Awnings should project over individual window and door openings but should not extend between window and door openings.
2. Awnings should be mounted on the frame of a window or door opening rather than the wall surrounding the opening.
3. Retractable, open-ended shed awnings, with a front valance or panel but no side panels, are the preferred style. Shed awnings are more transparent, allow increased views into storefront windows, don't obscure building architectural features, and are visually lighter and simpler in appearance.
4. Awning signs should usually be located on the front valance, so that the signage is visible whether the awning is extended out or retracted against the building's façade.
5. Canvas, canvas blend, and acrylics that resemble canvas are appropriate materials for awnings and canopies; vinyl, metal, glass and shiny materials are generally not appropriate.

SIGNS

1. Signs should be placed to fit in with the building's overall architectural composition and not compete with its architectural features.
2. The scale of a sign should reflect the scale of the building's façade in terms of width and height, as well as the rhythms and sizes of window and door openings.
3. Sign materials should be compatible with the materials and character of the building façade.
4. Color tones between a sign's lettering/symbols and background should have sufficient contrast to make the sign clearly legible. Sign colors should complement those of the building's façade.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. Buildings should be designed to maximize the use of natural light to reduce overall energy consumption and reduce exposure to artificial lighting which can negatively impact human health.
2. Windows should be non-reflective, provide a high degree of light transmittance, and include operable windows to create opportunities for cross-ventilation and reduction of energy costs.
3. Sustainable features such as green roofs, electric vehicle charging stations, window shading devices, photovoltaic panels are encouraged to reduce the ecological footprint of the development.
4. Flat building roofs should be used for their green roof potential such as community gardens, solar panels, and rainwater harvesting equipment.



STREETS

OVERVIEW

An active street life is critical to successful downtowns. Providing a safe, comfortable, and a uniquely identifiable public realm connects people to the place, brings energy and life to the district and makes a memorable place. Pedestrian oriented streets set the tone for downtown redevelopment and character. The following design guidelines focus on the design of streets and the public realm in the Downtown Mixed Use and Downtown West character areas of downtown Chanhassen.

GOALS

CREATE A UNIFIED STREETSCAPE DESIGN THROUGHOUT THE DOWNTOWN

Landscaped medians and roadside buffers with accent lighting and seasonal lighting, street trees and plantings to provide shade and add to the pedestrian experience, streetscape lighting and banner poles as the defining the streetscape character and rhythm; integrated site furnishings and wayfinding/signage.

ENSURE UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Continuous, unobstructed sidewalks (ranging from 5'-8' in width); ADA curb ramps for all users at all intersections; accessible pedestrian crossing signals.

PROVIDE EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING

Improved boulevard and median plantings; coordinated utility locations with landscape plans to provide more potential tree planting and landscape planting locations. Promote a healthy, well-maintained urban forest canopy.

PROVIDE SPACES FOR PUBLIC LIFE

Safe, useable public seating for gathering; landscaping; reclaiming of excess street space for public use including expanded walkways, boulevards, or bump-out islands for pedestrian crossings; space for outdoor cafe and restaurant seating and merchant displays.

ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Safe, convenient pedestrian crossings; curb radii and curb bump-outs that slow traffic, shorten crossing distance, and enhance visibility; pedestrian countdown signals and other pedestrian priority signals.

DESIGN FOR ACTIVE STREETS AT ALL SEASONS

Comfortable environments to enhance the movement of people in the public realm throughout all streets in the downtown area.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

STREET NETWORK AND DESIGN

1. With redevelopment, break down the large existing "superblocks" of development in the downtown between W. 78th Street and the rail line by creating new street connections that reduce the block size, on both the east and west sides of Market Boulevard to create a more pedestrian and walkable district.
2. Build off the existing pattern of development and existing street network and access points along W. 78th Street and Market Boulevard to create a more intuitive and navigable grid pattern for the core of downtown.
3. Create a hierarchy of street types based on roadway design criteria, available right-of-way, and intended adjacent uses to create a multi-functional network of streets and to guide a range of adjacent development types for the district.
4. Recognize existing infrastructure investments and right-of-way corridors and build the new street network to maximize redevelopment potential and to create a new pattern and scale of development in the area.

BIKE FACILITIES

1. Provide a multi-use pathway along the north side of West 78th Street through the downtown to connect the downtown to Lake Ann Park and trails to the west and the existing pedestrian bridge over Highway 5 on the east side of downtown.
2. Locate bike racks throughout the district to encourage and facilitate biking as a means of transportation. Bike racks should be placed in groups at convenient, safe, and within well-lit paved areas in the build to zone or public right of way. Bike racks should also be provided in parking garages.
3. Promote development of free bike maintenance stations that provide amenities, such as a tire pump, tire air gauge, tire levers, tools, etc., along major bike routes and at the Civic Campus and SW Transit Station.
4. Provide bike parking/storage facilities at the Civic Campus and SW Transit Station.

STREETS

SIDEWALKS

1. Provide continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street within each street type.
2. Align sidewalks with one another and connect them to key civic and commercial destinations in the downtown and to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
3. Provide an expanded pedestrian zone to accommodate anticipated pedestrian traffic levels and allow for street furnishings, lighting, plantings, and outdoor restaurant seating on Primary Downtown Roadways.
4. Provide curb bump-outs at street intersections, wherever feasible, to shorten crosswalk distances, calm traffic, provide areas for street furnishings/landscaping, and delineate limits of on-street parking.
5. Provide clearly marked walk/bike crossings at all Primary Roadway intersections with reflective paint, special paving materials, light signal and/or signage alerting motorists to the walk/bike crossings.
6. Utilize pedestrian-activated countdown crossing lights at key signalized intersections.

INTERSECTION CROSSINGS

1. Minimize the number of vehicle curb cuts on through sidewalks.
2. Provide frequent pedestrian connections throughout the downtown via walks, trails, and pedestrian or shared use streets.
3. Provide curb bump-outs at street intersections, wherever feasible, to shorten crosswalk distances, calm traffic, provide areas for street furnishings/landscaping, and to delineate the limits of on-street parking.
4. Provide clearly marked walk/bike crossings at all street intersections with reflective paint, special paving materials, light signal and/or signage alerting motorists to the walk/bike crossing.
5. Utilize pedestrian-activated countdown crossing lights at key signalized intersections.

LANDSCAPING

1. Where medians exist, maintain the medians with landscape plantings and trees with accent lighting and seasonal holiday lighting.
2. Plant street trees at regular intervals appropriate to the root structure and canopy of the tree species chosen. Encouraged to provide a street tree every 20-30 feet.
3. Install similar mix of street tree species and spacing on both sides of the street within a given block.
4. Plant native tree and plant species to reduce maintenance (reduced irrigation, salt tolerance, etc.), and reduce the urban heat island effect.
5. Plant low-maintenance/drought-tolerant plants and trees to reduce irrigation needs; consider allowing exceptions for higher-maintenance materials in areas with high pedestrian traffic and community gathering spaces.
6. Consider trees and plant materials that minimize visual obstruction of business signage facing the street.
7. Consider planters with annual flowering plants to create a welcoming pedestrian environment and contribute to the unique identity of downtown Chanhassen.
8. Prohibit plant materials, fencing, or landscape improvements greater than 18 inches in height within sight lines of any street intersection or driveway.
9. Prohibit artificial plant materials.

STREETS

FURNISHINGS

1. Place street furnishings (benches and seating, trash/recycling receptacles, bollards, bike racks, wayfinding kiosks or signage, etc.) at building entry areas, plazas, near intersections, and along the primary roadways in downtown.
2. Utilize a consistent design palette (style, materials, and color) of street furnishings that are visually interesting and reflect the character of the downtown Chanhassen, tie to the Civic Campus design, and provide a strong sense of community identity.
3. Provide street furnishings that enhance the comfort, accessibility, safety, and functionality of the streetscape.
4. Utilize street furnishings that are made of durable materials, easily maintained/repaired, and are locally available, when feasible.
5. Install street light poles that accommodate banners and holiday decorations that will improve the visual character and identity of the street.

LIGHTING

1. Design streetscape lighting to accommodate vehicular traffic but also a comfortable and safe light level for pedestrians.
2. Utilize a similar family of fixtures for the lighting design of all public streets within the district. Variation of pole height, mounting height, and accessories to be dictated by streetscape type and overall lighting level needs.

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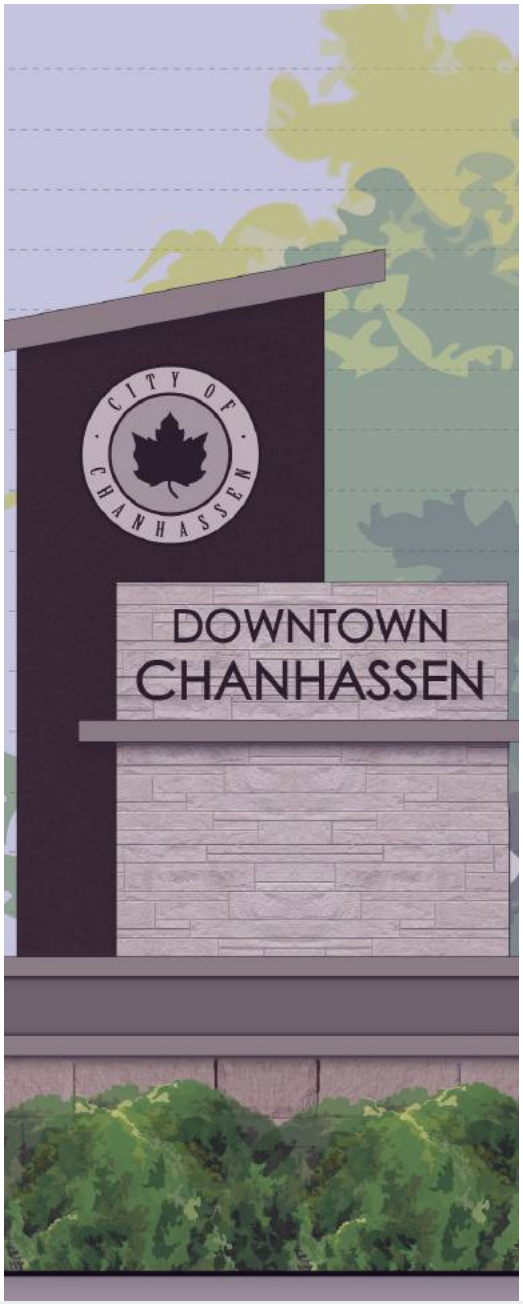
WAYFINDING

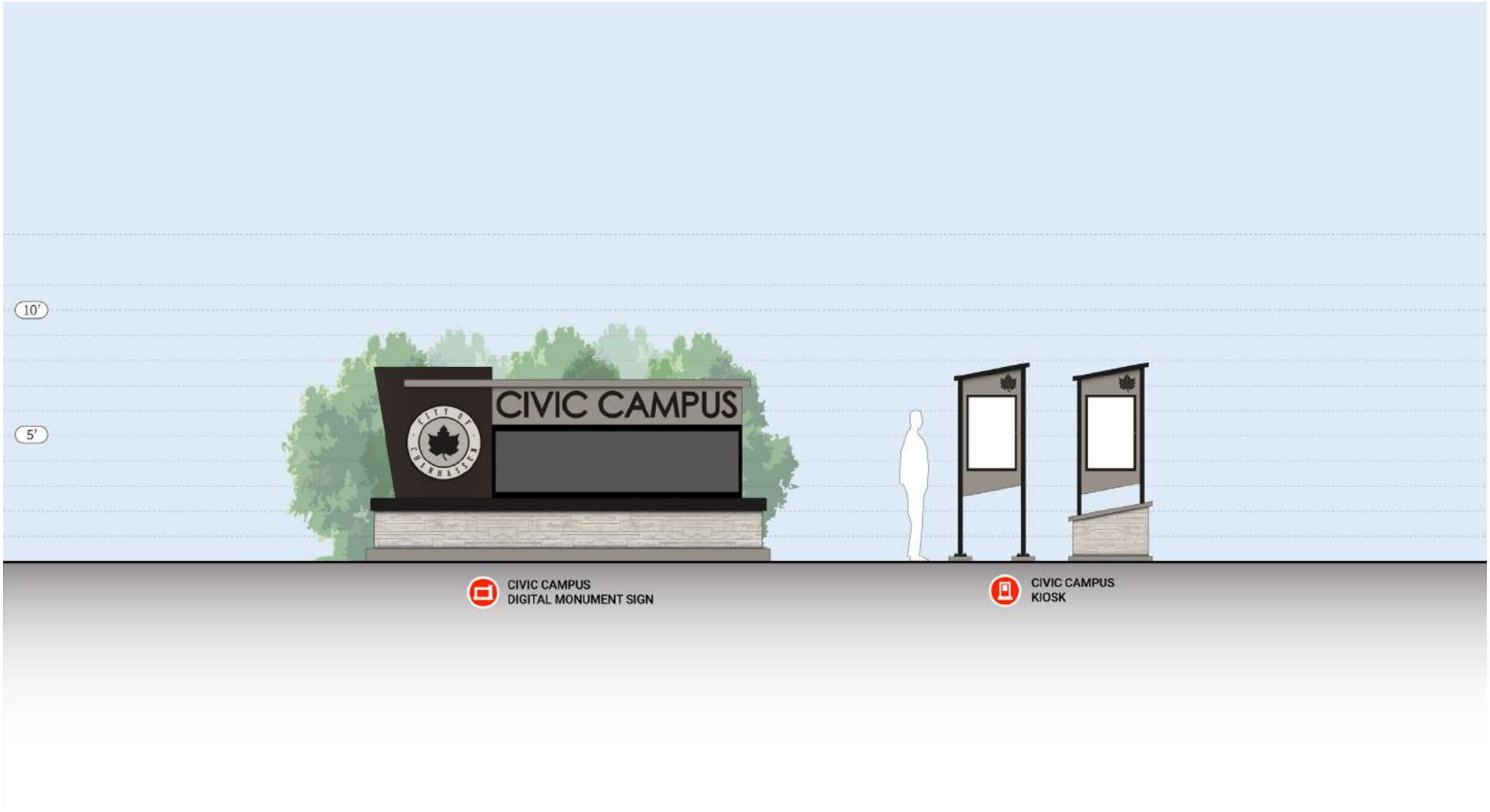


OVERVIEW

Signage helps announce and celebrate the downtown district and wayfinding helps patrons and visitors navigate the downtown to key civic destinations like the Library, License Center and Post Office. The following represents the desired look and aesthetic for broader wayfinding throughout the downtown. Signage varies in scale from highway-oriented signage located along Highway 5, to gateway monuments, and wayfinding signs that could be located within the boulevard or post mounted throughout the downtown. The signage aesthetics is derived from the Civic Campus architecture and site design and provides continuity throughout the downtown district.

SIGN FAMILY

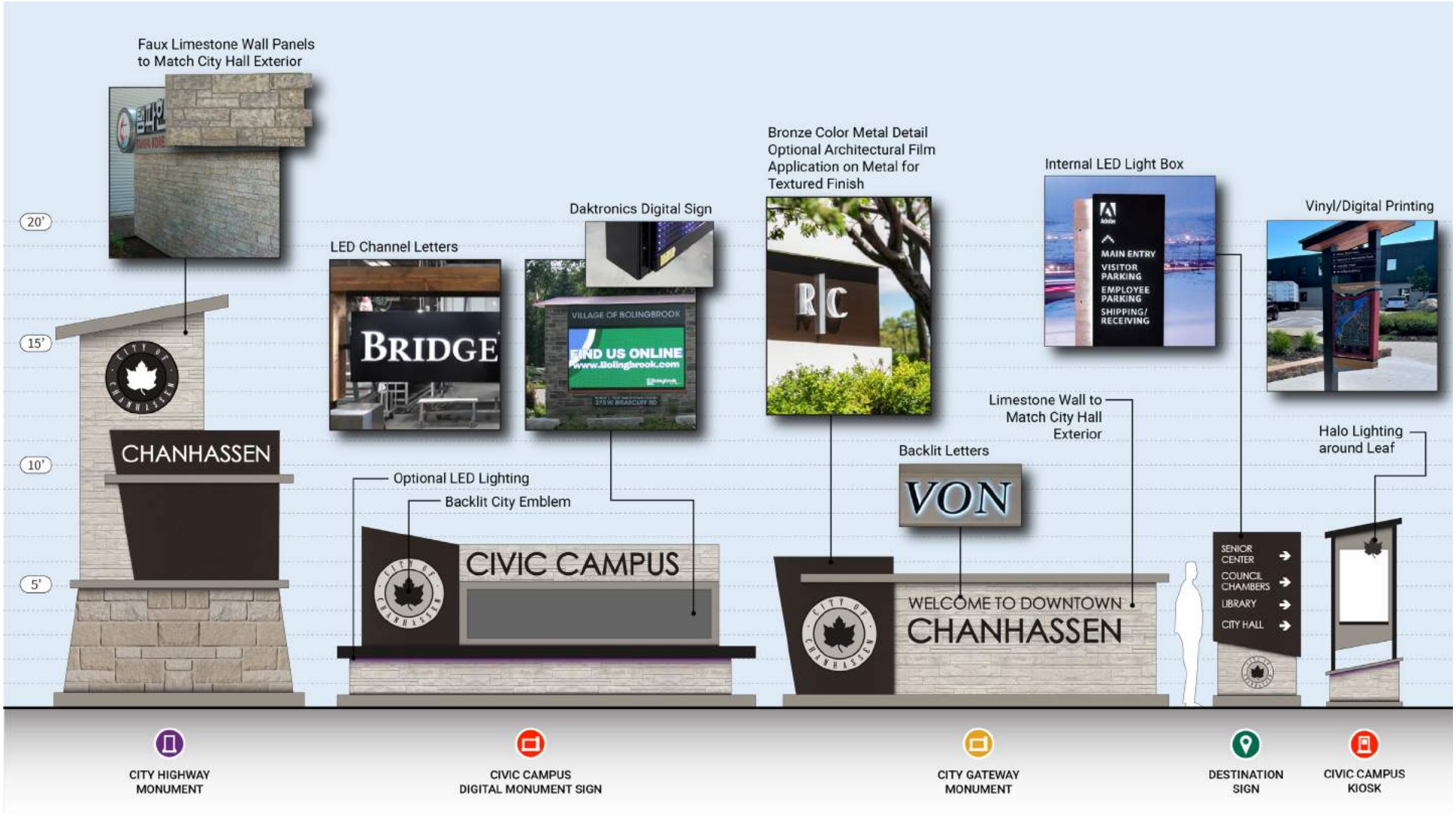
CIVIC CAMPUS SIGNS



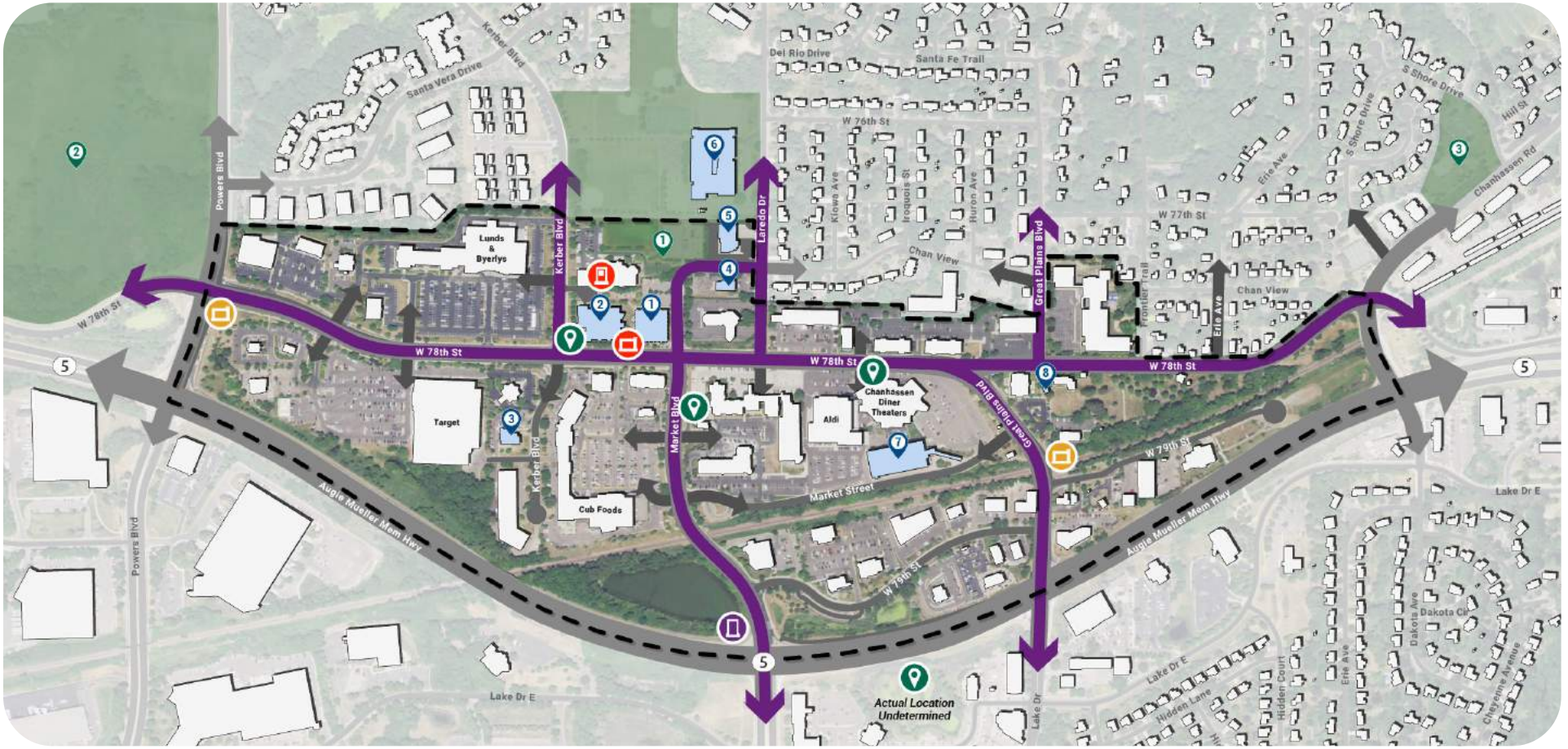
WAYFINDING

SIGN MATERIALITY

The following represent ts the intended materiality for the wayfinding signs in downtown.



POTENTIAL SIGN LOCATIONS



LEGEND

Sign Type

- City Highway Monument
- City Gateway Monument
- Destination Sign
- Civic Campus Digital Display Monument
- Civic Campus Kiosk

Destination Type: Park

1. Civic Campus Park
2. Lake Ann Park
3. South Lotus Lake Park

Destination Type: Civic / Institutional

1. Future City Hall & Senior Center
2. Chanhassen Library
3. Carver County Service Center DMV
4. Post Office
5. Fire Station
6. Elementary School
7. Southwest Transit
8. Chanhassen History Center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