

CHAPTER I

CITY OF CORONADO
COMMUNITY DESIGN ELEMENT

ADOPTED

November 11, 1986

REVISED

August 6, 1996
November 4, 2003

City of Coronado

Community Design Element

Foreword

This is a Permissive Element to the City of Coronado General Plan Policy Document. As a Permissive Element, there are no California State guidelines as to the Element's contents. The following general questions were considered in the formulation of this document:

- What characteristics of Coronado are perceived as part of the City's ambiance deserving of preservation?
- What can be done to preserve and enhance this Coronado ambiance?
- Should any aspects of Coronado's ambiance/design be modified (and if so, how)?

Much of this Element's contents are taken either verbatim or paraphrased from the following reports developed for the City of Coronado:

1. "Coronado Downtown Design Guidelines"
2. "Concept Plan for Downtown Coronado"
by Rob Wellington Quigley, AIA, Architect and
Jim Burns, Planning Consultant with Mel McGee
and Maryanne Chase in 1985
(and partly funded by "The Coordinating
Council");
3. "Glorietta Bay Master Plan"
by the firms POD, Inc., Moore, Ruble, Yudell, and Jim Burns
in 1982 (and funded by the California Coastal Conservancy).
4. Orange Avenue Corridor Specific Plan
by RBF Consulting and RRM Design Group

For the purpose of brevity, extensive portions of these documents have not been incorporated into this Element. Moreover, the new material in this Element, and the manner in which the material in this Element has been assembled and presented may not reflect the views of one or more of these consultants.

City of Coronado

Community Design Element

Table of Contents

	<u>Pages</u>
Foreword	II-i1
Table of Contents	II-i2
Introduction	II-i3
Design Goals	II-i4
Scale/Configuration/Continuity/Rhythm/Land Use	II-i4
- Commercial Design	II-i4
- Commercial Recreation Design	II-i5
- Hotel-Motel Design	II-i6
- Design of Public Facilities	II-i6
- Residential Design	II-i6
- Coronado Cays Design	II-i7
Public Walkways, Streetscape and Landscaping	II-i7
Parking	II-i8
Commercial Design Details	II-i9
Design Review	II-i9

Introduction

There is no universally agreed upon definition of the term "community design". Terms such as "urban design" and "civic design" are considered synonymous to "community design" by some writers, and to have distinctive meanings by others. For the purpose of this permissive General Plan Element, "community design" refers to both a process and the resulting product of that process. This term denotes both what is, and what could be; and it signifies the existence of community goals, evidenced by expressed policy statements and development design criteria.

Since Coronado is nearly totally developed, this Element does not address such basic concerns as the layout of the street system or public infrastructure, nor does it address such relevant issues as the location of major activity centers or the appropriate land uses for the various regions of Coronado. The scope of this document is much more limited; more of a "micro" analysis than a "macro" analysis. This document is about both the design of new buildings and spaces, and the renovation of existing buildings and spaces.

Coronado is a community with a very special environment, both natural and man-made. Just as the qualities of the natural environment must be carefully protected and kept from wrongful intrusions, so too must the qualities of the designed environment be respected so that the uniqueness of Coronado can flourish without inappropriate changes.

Design Goals

The Design Goals of the City of Coronado City Council are:

1. To maintain and enhance the "Bahama Cays" ambiance of the Coronado Cays development, and the "village" ambiance of the remainder of Coronado;
2. To maintain and enhance vibrant commercial districts that are in scale with the remainder of the community, and that facilitate and encourage pedestrian usage;
3. To facilitate enjoyment of Coronado's natural environment, while preserving that environment;
4. To encourage preservation of the City's historic and architecturally significant structures;
5. To assure that adequate emphasis is placed on community design/project design efforts in order to improve the quality of new development in the City; and
6. To provide developers, where appropriate, with adequate design criteria or guidelines, and feedback.

Scale/Configurations/Continuity/Rhythm/Land Use

It is vital that Coronado conserve and continue its present human-scale, pedestrian-oriented, intimately textured environment.

- Commercial Design -

It is vital that Coronado conserve and continue its present human-scale, pedestrian-oriented, intimately textured, environment. The scale of new buildings shall be generally consistent with existing buildings in the immediate area, and should remain one and two stories with a maximum building height of 32'.

The ultimate goal is to create a pedestrian environment that has vitality, and is safe and inviting. Therefore, ground floor commercial uses with attractive display windows, decorative bulkheads, entries, signs, awnings, outdoor dining and landscaping, should be encouraged.

The rhythm of the street as provided by 20-30 ft. wide structures and storefronts must be preserved. Larger expanses of facade should be broken up to conform to this

rhythm. A good example is the way the columns of the Spreckels Building divide that long, curved facade into narrower bays that reflect the predominate pedestrian-scaled rhythm of Coronado.

To respect the village-like scale, a variety of building configurations and rooflines is essential, so that lengthy ranks of similar buildings do not occur. The variety within a basic unity that exists in several existing block-fronts should serve as the guide. The scale of details and applied decoration should both enliven facades and break down building sizes to human scales and perceptions.

New and reconverted or converted buildings must respect and follow the line of Orange Avenue, and not set up opposing geometries.

The objective is to achieve a continuity of the good qualities that already exist in Coronado and not try replacing them with alien trends and inappropriate fad designs.

- Commercial Recreation Design -

These areas of commercial activity blend public recreation and civic uses with-tourist and/or water oriented commercial uses. Located adjoining picturesque bayfronts on San Diego Unified Port District or City lands, special care must be taken to integrate development here into its natural environment and visual setting. Development should maintain view corridors and public access to and along the bay.

In meeting the basic objectives of shoreline protection, increased public access, and aesthetic enhancement, the Glorietta Bay Master Plan proceeds from the concept that the Glorietta Bay shoreline should be a single continuous chain of open spaces and places encircling the Bay, each linked together visually and physically by a shoreline promenade.

Development should maintain a primarily one and two-story appearance, exceeding this height only for accent in only a few, small areas with perhaps public art, peaked roofs, flags or similar ornamentation. Architectural design imagery will receive inspiration from the Victorian legacy of the Hotel del Coronado Boathouse and the vanished Tent City along the strand. The landscape will be complementary, with palms, figs, flowering trees, plants, and vines.

- Hotel-Motel Design -

One of the three Hotel-Motel areas within Coronado terminates the City's main Central Commercial region, is dominated by the Hotel del Coronado, and is in close proximity to the Glorietta Bay Commercial Recreation district. Development in this area should respect the historic nature, style and scale of the existing Hotel del Coronado structures. Care should be taken when development occurs on or adjoining the Hotel del Coronado to maintain adequate public access to and along the ocean, and to provide adequate view corridors. This district should permit those commercial, spa and conference uses that are necessary to resort hotel land use. Development in the remaining Hotel-Motel areas should be in accordance with the conceptual plans approved by the City for the Loews Coronado Bay Resort and Le Meridien San Diego at Coronado.

- Design of Public Facilities -

Public facilities should be designed to be compatible with and sensitive to its natural and built environment, visual setting and its intended function. The village scale and ambiance of the community should be maintained where possible. The aesthetics of each project should be scrutinized by the Coronado Design Review Commission.

- Residential Design -

Coronado is noteworthy for the planned nature of the community with its broad streets, spacious front yards, vehicle access from alleys (and therefore fewer driveways and curb cuts on the streets), and generally low building profiles. The richness of architectural styles in Coronado is attributable to both the community's age and the piecemeal nature of the development experienced by the City. Certainly the street trees and landscaping which flourish in this climate contribute to the City's ambiance.

The basis of the aesthetic value of Coronado residential districts are their historic structures, variety and visual appeal. However, massive, box-like exceptions that tend to detract from this visual appeal do exist (particularly in multiple family construction) that appear out of scale with their neighborhoods. Such construction may be lessened in the future through height, setback, structural coverage, floor area and facade restrictions. Moreover, encouraging the undergrounding of utilities when redevelopment occurs, and the regulation of unsightly communication devices such as satellite dishes or various types of antennas could contribute to maintaining and enriching the community's aesthetic wealth. Construction of multiple family dwellings, or the modification of such projects or of historic structures, due to their significance to their surrounding neighborhoods, should undergo aesthetic review by the City.

- Coronado Cays Design -

The unique Bahama "Cays" atmosphere of this planned community should be maintained in accordance with the project's Specific Plan. This community's homeowner's association should retain design review authority over all residential construction as now authorized by the Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions of the Coronado Cays.

Public Walkways, Streetscape and Landscaping

Coronado's downtown pedestrian walkways are the principal places where people can see one another and share their special environment. The community has paving guidelines, specifications, and a plan available. The downtown's pedestrian walkways should be safe attractive and inviting for pedestrians. Street trees in profusion, public and private plantings and planter boxes, improved seating and other street furniture, such as waste receptacles, public signing and bicycle parking facilities would make the public environment equal the quality of the private environment sought by this Element. Private street furniture needs improvement as well, in particular the dismaying variety of newspaper and periodical vending machines. Another walkway improvement that should occur is burying the unsightly electrical transformers and panel boxes that sprout at a number of very visible locations.

While Coronado possesses a public landscape that would be beyond the aspirations of many U.S. towns, increased planting along the public accessways is desirable. For instance, the median along Orange Avenue could receive more generous landscaping, specifically flowering plants at the block ends and at bases of trees. Moreover, the Orange Avenue median could have provision for sitting and other activities made possible there in order to increase its public use.

Every opportunity must be taken to liberate potentials for landscaping and open space in downtown. These include the use of open spaces between and behind buildings as courtyards and patios, passageways and alleyways as landscaped pedestrian ways, and - in the public domain - a great improved sidewalk and street environment. Architects and landscape architects, and their clients should look for every opportunity to utilize creatively the outdoors and open spaces of their buildings, including upper levels that might boast outdoor decks and terraces for eating, drinking, reading and relaxing. Owners and architects are encouraged to create off- the- sidewalk and upper floor open spaces by indenting facades in the first floor and creating setbacks above. Owners should contribute to the streetscape with plantings in front of their buildings and businesses.

Finally, at several nodes or potential focal points in downtown, there is the potential for developing places where people can gather formally on celebratory occasions and informally in daily life. These could be brought up to their full potential usefulness for people's use through landscaping, street furniture, lighting fountains parklike landscaping, etc. One such focus could be the area where Orange Avenue, Tenth Avenue, Isabella Place, and Park Place all come together. A study should be made of the closing of "C" Avenue to auto traffic between 10th Street and Orange Avenue to either make a pedestrian-oriented place with cafes, kiosks-shops, etc., or to utilize the freed land (either separately or in conjunction with neighboring property owners) for construction of a public parking structure.

Parking

The provision of adequate parking in an unobtrusive manner is much neglected but highly significant design factor. In order to maximize landscaping, on street parking, commercial frontage and pedestrian safety, on site parking should be accessed when possible from the alleys or secondary streets, and commercial or multiple dwelling parking should not be permitted to back out over sidewalks. Required parking should not be permitted in residential front yard setbacks.

Parking areas should be discouraged that reduce the pedestrian interest of commercial streets by interrupting the block's commercial façade through either separating the building from its neighbor(s) or by recessing the building behind a sterile barrier of asphalt. Commercial development should be encouraged to provide required parking at the rear or beneath the project. When feasible, underground parking should be permitted to expand out under public right-of-way. Drive-in automobile oriented uses should be discouraged from locating on Orange Avenue. At least fifteen percent of all ground level commercial parking lots should be landscaped (to include the first five feet near the most visible frontage of the lot). Beams, trellises and the planting of large trees or bushes should be encouraged in parking lot landscaping design to conceal the lot. Parking structures combined with other uses (such as shops and stores) on the portions facing sidewalks should be encouraged by reducing the parking lot landscaping requirement to three percent in such cases.

Effort should be made to minimize the amount of City land area utilized for commercial parking. Combined City/private parking facilities should be considered. New commercial development should be encouraged to provide more parking than required by the Coronado Municipal Code, and to make available the remainder to either nearby existing commercial establishments that lack sufficient parking or to the City for public parking.

Utilization of public right-of-way should be closely analyzed to determine whether obsolete driveways or loading zones in the commercial area might be returned to parking uses, or whether public right-of-way or the striping of public right-of-way could be reconfigured in a manner to generate additional public parking.

Commercial Design Details

Basic to this Element and its design guidelines is the explicit requirement for every designer or sponsor of new or renovated structures to base their designs on what exists in Coronado, to utilize this community's rich visual and sensory resources in designing for its environment over time. Designs without regard to the Coronado context will be unlikely to find acceptance in the City.

Detailed design criteria are presented for the Commercial Zone of Coronado in the Orange Avenue Corridor Specific Plan. The Glorietta Bay portion of the City's Commercial Recreation area is addressed by the "Glorietta Bay Master Plan," which is also acknowledged in the Foreword. (A new Glorietta Bay Master Plan is under development.)

Design Review

Aesthetic review of projects is performed for the City by the Coronado Environmental Design Review Commission. The Commission has review authority over various types of public, commercial and residential projects.