

COMMERCIAL CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Pedestrian-Oriented/Commercial & Mixed-Use Projects

Objective 5: Include Open Space to Create Opportunities for Public Gathering



Los Angeles
Department
of City Planning

OBJECTIVE 5:

Include Open Space to Create Opportunities for Public Gathering

On-Site Landscaping

- 1 Retain mature and healthy vegetation and trees when developing a site, especially native species.
- 2 Design landscaping to be architecturally integrated with the building and suitable to the functions of the space while selecting plant materials that complement the architectural style, uses, and form of the building.
- 3 Design open areas to maintain a balance of landscaping and paved area.

RECOMMENDED



✓ Balanced ratio of landscaping to paved areas

NOT RECOMMENDED



⚠ Minimal landscaping added as an afterthought and does not contribute to architectural character of building

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- 4 Select drought tolerant, native landscaping to limit irrigation needs and conserve water. Mediterranean and local, climate-friendly plants may be used alongside native species.
- 5 Facilitate sustainable water use by using automated watering systems and drip irrigation to irrigate landscaped areas.
- 6 Facilitate **stormwater** capture, retention, and infiltration, and prevent **runoff** by using permeable or porous paving materials in lieu of concrete or asphalt. Collect, store, and reuse stormwater for landscape irrigation.

RECOMMENDED



Utilize drought tolerant plants that require minimal irrigation

On-Site Landscaping (cont.)

- 7 Provide canopy trees in planting areas in addition to street trees for shade and energy efficiency, especially on south and southwest facing façades.
- 8 Use landscape features to screen any portion of a parking level or podium that is above grade. Trees, shrubbery, planter boxes, climbing plants, vines, green walls, or berms can be used to soften views from the public right-of-way.

RECOMMENDED



A variety of shade trees are used on the south facade for passive cooling



Trees used for privacy and screening

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Open Space and Plazas

- 1 Incorporate shaded open space such as plazas, courtyards, pocket parks, and terraces in large scale commercial buildings. Design open areas to be easily accessible and comfortable for a substantial part of the year.
- 2 Orient open spaces to the sun and views. Create a sense of enclosure while maintaining safety, so that open spaces and plazas feel like outdoor rooms.
- 3 Connect open spaces to other activity areas where people gather to sit, eat, or watch other people.

RECOMMENDED



✓ Courtyard designed for accessibility and comfort, connecting passive areas such as the landscaped water features to active areas such as outdoor eating establishments



✓ Pocket park connects open space to areas where people sit, eat, or watch other people

Open Space and Plazas (cont.)

- 4 Locate sidewalk restaurants or outdoor dining areas on or adjacent to open spaces and pedestrian routes. Connect shops or office entrances directly to places where people gather or walk.
- 5 Landscape all open areas not used for buildings, driveways, parking, recreational facilities, or pedestrian amenities. Landscaping may include any practicable combination of shrubs, trees, ground cover, minimal lawns, planter boxes, flowers, or fountains that reduce dust and other pollutants and promote outdoor activities, especially for children and seniors.

RECOMMENDED



✓ Landscape available open areas

✓ Shops and outdoor dining areas adjacent to pedestrian flow

