

# **CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE**

## **HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Dan Helix, Chair**  
**Ron Leone, Committee Member**

**5:30 p.m., Monday, October 26, 2015**

**Building D, Permit Center Room**  
**1950 Parkside Drive, Concord**

### **ROLL CALL**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

1. **DISCUSSION** – of Todos Santos Design Guidelines. Report by Joan Ryan, Senior Planner.
2. **ADJOURNMENT**

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**REPORT TO COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON  
HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT****TO HONORABLE COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

DATE: October 26, 2015

**SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF TODOS SANTOS DESIGN GUIDELINES****Report in Brief**

On September 26, 2015, the Housing and Economic Development Committee met to initiate a discussion regarding the incorporation of early California architecture into the downtown. The Downtown Concord Specific Plan currently includes a chapter on Design Guidelines to provide guidance to potential property owners, developers, the City's Design Review Board and staff to evaluate the architectural design for new development or exterior building remodel projects in the downtown. Based on the direction provided at the last meeting, the Committee is interested in moving forward with the preparation of more defined guidelines. This meeting takes the next step in discussing the work plan to move this effort forward.

**Background**

The City Council unanimously adopted the Downtown Concord Specific Plan (Specific Plan) on June 25, 2014, which includes a chapter on Design Guidelines that focuses on urban form, massing and character, ground floor treatment, relating facades to the public realm, vehicular access and building design including parking, servicing and private open space. However, the current guidelines are general in nature and are not overly prescriptive.

On September 28, the Housing and Economic Development Committee received a staff report that discussed the idea of creating more specific architectural guidelines or policies to facilitate architecture reflective of California's history within the Downtown Specific Plan area. The staff report shared the background of the Downtown Specific Plan, a summary of the Plan's design guidelines, the purpose of the Plan's implementation strategy to further explore the early California theme, and a power point presentation summarizing a brief history of early California architecture. The architectural influences have been combined over time, resulting in a variety and melding of architectural styles within California. These influences have included Spanish Revival, Monterey Colonial, Victorian, and Mission Revival architectural styles, and all of these styles have representations within Downtown Concord and the North Todos Santos zoning district.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Design Review Board and Planning Commission were invited to the meeting, as well as downtown property owners and developers. Approximately 15 interested persons attended the meeting, and many provided public comment.

The Committee discussed the downtown area as a jewel where they would like to see the past reflected. Developers and property owner comments were generally supportive of the idea of new development incorporating an early California theme. However, they also provided input stating their need for design flexibility and a desire for variety to provide attractive curb appeal and address the needs and desires of current and prospective tenants. They emphasized the need for cost sensitivity, and stated they

would like the City to provide incentives and requested the need for a clear process for review of projects. They also suggested that new architectural requirements to incorporate the early California architectural themes could be more focused in the central area surrounding Todos Santos Plaza, with less emphasis away from that central area. There was support to create a more focused Todos Santos district that centers on the Plaza and neighboring streets.

The Committee provided direction to staff as follows:

- 1) the need to establish boundaries where the development would be subject to new design guidelines, with the immediate area surrounding Todos Santos Plaza and its main street corridors as the central focus, including a hierarchy of guidelines for the inner vs. outer core;
- 2) the need for flexibility in implementation of design guidelines, respecting a variety of styles, and clarifying the process for review;
- 3) the need to respect cost considerations, and seeking some type of incentive program;
- 4) the need for sketches as well as photos in the development of the design standards, to encourage design creativity; and
- 5) the desire to create a transit corridor between BART and Todos Santos Plaza to improve traffic connectivity, with a tram or similar facility.

### **Discussion**

The following outline of a work program for the preparation of the Todos Santos Design Guidelines (specific to the downtown) has been prepared for discussion with the Committee to provide guidance based on the comments provided at the September 28 Council Committee meeting.

#### **Boundary Designations for the Todos Santos Design Guidelines**

Direction for a hierarchy of guidelines distinguishing between an “inner” vs. “outer” core requires clear boundary designations. Staff believes the core focus should be upon those buildings located immediately around Todos Santos Plaza. However, it could be argued that an expansion of that “inner core,” would benefit the City by including properties west along the Salvio Street corridor, as reflected on Attachment 1. Expansion of the “inner core” along Salvio Street is justified in that Salvio Street was historically Concord’s main street. This would serve to link Todos Santos Plaza with one of the oldest buildings in Concord, the Salvio Pacheco Adobe House, located on the northwest corner of Salvio and Adobe Street. Attachment 2 reflects the City’s historical downtown buildings. The area surrounding the Salvio Pacheco Adobe House including Clay Alley was highlighted within the Specific Plan as a special opportunity area to create a different and smaller scale retail/outdoor dining environment. Development of this area could provide a linkage over time between the downtown core and Park and Shop.

Outside of the “inner core”, the “outer core” has been defined on Attachment 1, generally by Port Chicago Highway and the BART tracks on the east, the downtown BART station on the south, up to Park and Shop on the west, and just north of Pacheco Street on the north. The “outer” core thus, does not take in the entire downtown Specific Plan boundary, which includes substantial acreage, but instead, includes key areas where staff believes development will likely happen in the near to mid-term.

Enhanced and More Defined Guidelines

As discussed at the September 28 meeting, California's early architecture can be viewed as a mixture of architectural influences that have combined over time, evolving based on a variety and melding of architectural styles. These influences have included Spanish Revival, Monterey Colonial, Victorian, and Mission Revival architectural styles. During the last Committee meeting, an emphasis was placed on maintaining flexibility while retaining the City's historical past. Below is a draft outline for the proposed Todos Santos Design Guidelines, based on the input provided at the September 28 meeting.

***Todos Santos Design Guidelines***

*Purpose: To create guidelines that support authenticity, flexibility and retain Concord's historical context.*

- I. Introduction and Background
- II. California Architecture: A brief history
- III. Approach
  - Designation of Todos Santos district (Inner vs. Outer Core)
  - Character Defining Features of the District
  - Hierarchy of Guidelines
    - o Inner Core
    - o Outer Core
- IV. Compatibility Guidelines
  - Building Massing
  - Height and Setbacks
  - Presentation to the Public Realm
- V. Architectural Design Elements
- VI. Thresholds
  - New Buildings
  - Remodels and Renovations
- VII. Timing and Process
  - Design Review Board

The focus of the guidelines will be to provide guidance to potential property owners, developers, the City's Design Review Board and staff on acceptable architectural designs for projects in the Todos Santos District as outlined in Attachment 1. The guidelines will describe the desired urban form and massing, setbacks and ground floor treatment, as well as provide further clarity and examples/tools to assist developers and architects in the design of their projects to quickly navigate the design review process. The intent is that the guidelines would provide flexibility, while at the same time providing further clarity as to the architectural themes that resonate with Concord's historical context. Staff intends to promote authenticity in design character so that design buildings do not appear cartoonish in nature, but instead reflect the rich and diverse architecture from California's history.

Thresholds

Staff proposes that all new buildings within the designated boundary would be subject to the Todos Santos Design Guidelines. In addition, building expansions of greater than 50 square feet would be subject to the Guidelines. Renovations and rehabilitations with a project valuation of \$10,000 or greater would also be subject to the Design Guidelines.

Corridors Streetscape Project

On January 13, 2015, the City accepted a \$250,000 Priority Development Area planning grant from the Contra Costa Transportation Authority for the Downtown Corridors Plan. ARUP was retained as the consultant on the project to further evolve the concept of the “Green Streets Framework” that conceptualized a rectangular frame that would provide enhanced multi-modal circulation between four key locations in Concord’s downtown, with the corners represented by the Downtown BART Station, Todos Santos Plaza, the Park and Shop Shopping Center and Ellis Lake Park. The Corridors Streetscape Project is also intended to prepare design development drawings for a complete streets project to enhance three critical street corridors that comprise the “frame” including Grant Street, Salvio Street and Oak Street to better connect residents living and working in the downtown to transit, housing, retail, and jobs.

Staff believes it is important that the Corridors Streetscape Project should be closely coordinated with the Todos Santos Design Guidelines. The Corridors Project scope of work includes looking at existing conditions, opportunities and constraints within the public right-of-way for the three corridors and developing conceptual designs for streetscape and intersection along the three corridors. Design guidelines for lighting and street furniture, storm water facilities, provisions for pop-up/temporary commercial uses and accessibility will also be prepared and should be completed by July 2016. The first public meeting is planned for November 2 at 6 p.m. at Salvio Pacheco Plaza, Suite V (2151 Salvio Street).

Timeline and Process

Staff proposes to prepare the Todos Santos Design Guidelines in-house with existing staff within the Planning Division and anticipates a timeline of approximately 9 months. The timeline would allow for public outreach to obtain feedback regarding staff’s progress and coordination with the Design Review Board and Ad-Hoc Committee at appropriate milestones, prior to review and adoption by the City Council. The project would be initiated in November 2015 and would continue on a parallel track with the Corridors Project, such that the two projects can be coordinated.

Program Incentives

The City previously had a Downtown Facade Improvement Grant Program that was funded through Redevelopment Funds. The program provided the impetus for a variety of downtown facade improvements by providing funding of up to 2/3 of the approved project costs, with a maximum grant amount of \$50,000. This program (grant funding and money for administration) as well as other activities of the Concord Redevelopment Agency were eliminated in 2012 when the State of California dissolved redevelopment agencies statewide. Re-establishing a similar program will be a challenge without a dedicated funding source. Staff is not aware of a Federal or State grant program to support local façade improvements.

**Next Steps**

Staff is looking for input and guidance from the Committee as to the general approach for moving forward. These include:

- 1) Designating a boundary for the Todos Santos Design Guidelines and defining the inner vs. outer core
- 2) Providing input on the draft outline for the Design Guidelines document
- 3) Indicating agreement on proposed thresholds for the Design Guidelines (new buildings and renovations/remodels)
- 4) Confirming proposed process

**Public Contact**

The agenda item was posted. Developers with an interest in the downtown have been notified.



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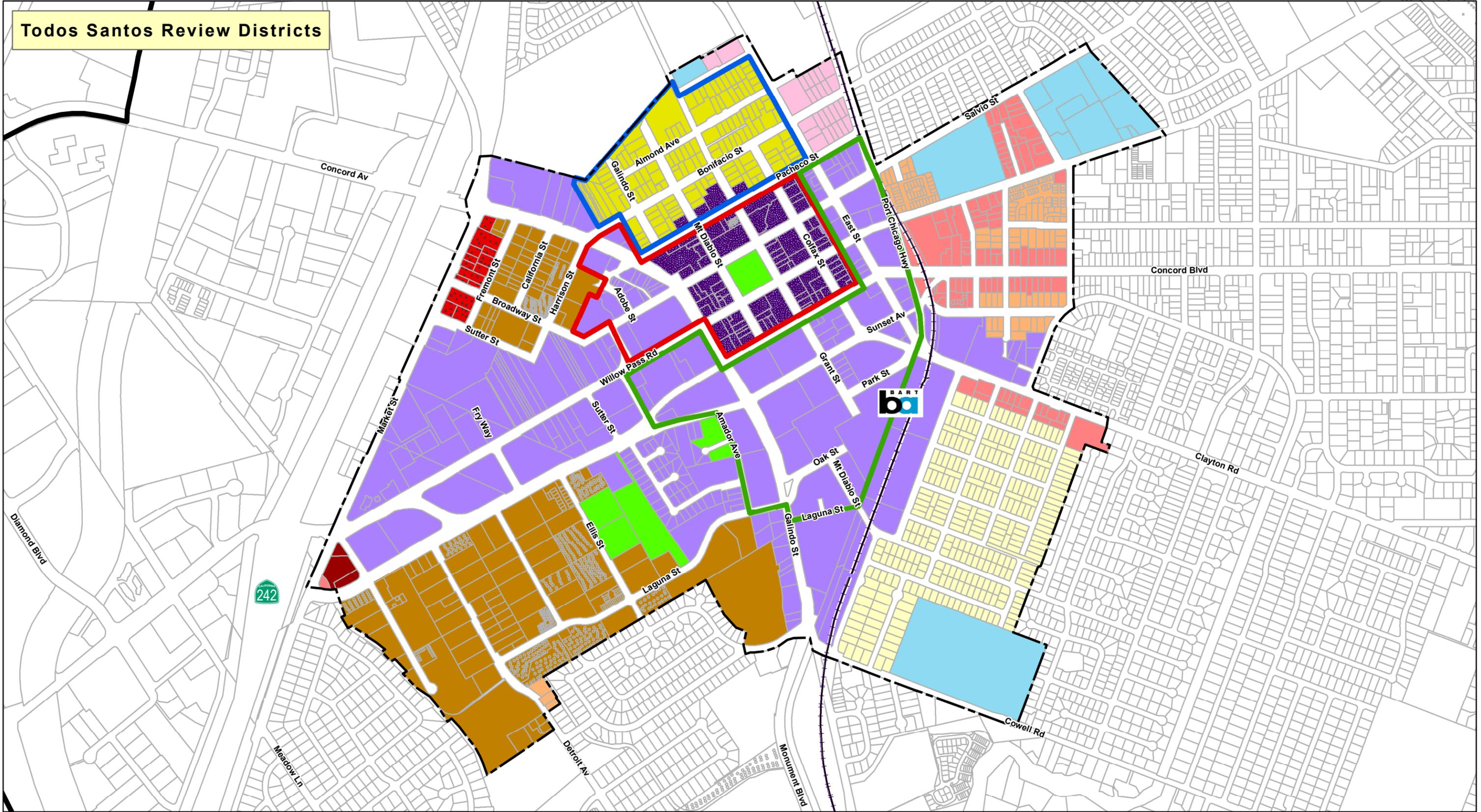
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- Attachment 1 – Boundary designation map for Todos Santo Design Guidelines  
Attachment 2 – Concord Historical Structures, map and listing

**Todos Santos Review Districts**



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**Legend**

- Priority Development Area
- City Limit
- BART Station

**Todos Santos Review Districts**

- Inner Core
- Outer Core
- North Todos Santos

**General Plan 2030 Land Use**

- Low Density Residential (LDR)
- Medium Density Residential (MDR)
- High Density Residential (HDR)
- North Todos Santos (NTS)
- Community Office (CO)
- Commercial Mixed Use (CMU)
- Regional Commerical (RC)
- Service Commerical (SC)
- Downtown Pedestrian (DTPD)
- Downtown Mixed Use (DTMU)
- Public/Quasi-Public (PQP)
- Parks and Recreation (P)



# Designated Historical Sites and Structures

1. Mt Diablo High School
2. Maltby Mansion
3. Kelly House
4. Webb-Soto House
5. Nunez House
6. Bolla House
7. Alves House
8. Neustaedter House
9. Bibber House
10. 1930s Apartment House (Rosal Apartments)
11. Elworthy-Keller
12. Ginochio-Accinelli House
13. Elworthy House
14. Barnett House
15. Maltby-McKinnon House
16. Concord Elementary School
17. Gieselhart House
18. Salvio Pacheco Adobe
19. Old Fire House
20. Perry House
21. Foscett-Elworthy Bldg
22. Todos Santos Plaza
23. County Fire House
24. Eddy House
25. Ivey House
26. Masonic Hall
27. Francisco Galindo Home
28. Keller House

29. BEEBE HOUSE

