

Phoenix Streetscape Conservation Guide



Acknowledgements

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Cover Image: Looking east on Palm Lane from 7th Street, ca. 1930. Courtesy of Mark Hughes.



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Purpose

The streetscape is a unifying and visually enhancing element for pedestrians and motorists in Phoenix. This manual provides guidelines for a coordinated and consistent streetscape treatment for historically significant streetscapes within the city. The Phoenix Streetscape Conservation Guide has been prepared as part of a coordinated effort among Valley Metro Rail, Inc. (METRO), the State Historic Preservation Office, and the City of Phoenix. The guide does not supersede officially adopted plans and policies or zoning ordinances established for the city but will assist in guiding the implementation of future plans. The guide deals only with the streetscape—the visible space fronting both sides of a roadway—and the elements contained therein.

Organization

This report organizes Phoenix streetscapes into four basic categories: rural, neighborhood, commercial, and boulevard. Using this typology, this guide is divided into four sections based on each type. Each section contains a brief history of the streetscape and an explanation of what characteristics need to be present to make it significant, a descriptive listing of the streetscape's essential characteristics, and recommended treatments.

History

Rural streetscapes exemplify the agricultural origins and early modern settlement patterns of the Salt River Valley. Once a ubiquitous feature throughout the valley, this streetscape type is typically found in outlying areas that still reflect the valley's agricultural origins. However, in some cases, urbanization has surrounded rural enclaves, placing the rural streetscape well within the boundaries of contemporary development.

Beginning in 1871, with the creation of Maricopa County, transportation corridors and irrigation delivery laterals primarily followed the public lands survey section and quarter section lines. Before development, this region was desert. Once laid out under the rules of the survey system, which divided the American West into one-mile-square sections to facilitate homesteading, and in conjunction with the advent of a large irrigation system, the desert was quickly converted to productive agricultural properties. The Arizona Canal facilitated this development, with land speculators taking advantage of federal settlement acts to create large farmsteads in the irrigated areas outside of the then-city limits. These properties appealed to outside investors and immigrants from the Midwest and California.

When the irrigation system became stabilized after construction of Roosevelt Dam in 1911, many of the large agricultural tracts were divided into smaller farming properties. The Farm-to-Market program of the 1920s paved the previously dirt and gravel roadways with a ribbon of concrete, adapting the streetscape to the twentieth century and the use of motorized vehicles.

In the 1950s and 1960s, urban annexation of previously unincorporated areas brought improvements in infrastructure, such as buried water and sewer lines, utility poles, street lights, traffic signs, sidewalks, wider streets, and asphalt pavement. These developments improved the quality of life for residents but proved detrimental to the integrity of the rural streetscape and led to the removal of trees and the piping of irrigation laterals and wasteways. Annexation and infrastructure improvements continued and, by the end of the twentieth century, the rural streetscape in Phoenix was quite rare.

Significant Rural Streetscapes

A significant rural streetscape retains a majority of the recognizable characteristics that establish its association with its rural past. Rural streetscape characteristics such as open irrigation ditches, narrow roadways, unpaved shoulders, mature trees, open fences, and agricultural land uses should remain. Changes in land use should not seriously alter the feeling and sense of the rural streetscape. Large-scale features such as viewsapes have a strong impact on the integrity of the setting and should be protected. Small-scale elements such

Courtesy of Library of Congress.



Southern Avenue ca. 1925

as gateposts, fences, and irrigation features also cumulatively contribute to the historic setting.

While original plantings enhance the integrity of the rural streetscape, their loss does not necessarily destroy it—provided they are replaced with similar species in scale, type, and visual effect. The ways that people fashioned the streetscape for functional and decorative purposes (fields, fences, orchards, windbreaks, etc.) can also contribute to a rural streetscape’s integrity, especially if they reflect traditional or historical practices.

A rural streetscape retaining its original street pattern, lot sizes, setbacks, housing and land use types, construction materials, and vegetation will be reminiscent of its original development. Additions and alterations that introduce visibly new land uses and erase the original feeling and setting can threaten the streetscape’s integrity. Rural streetscapes may be able to absorb new development and still maintain integrity if intrusions are concentrated in a few locations and cover a small percentage of the total area.

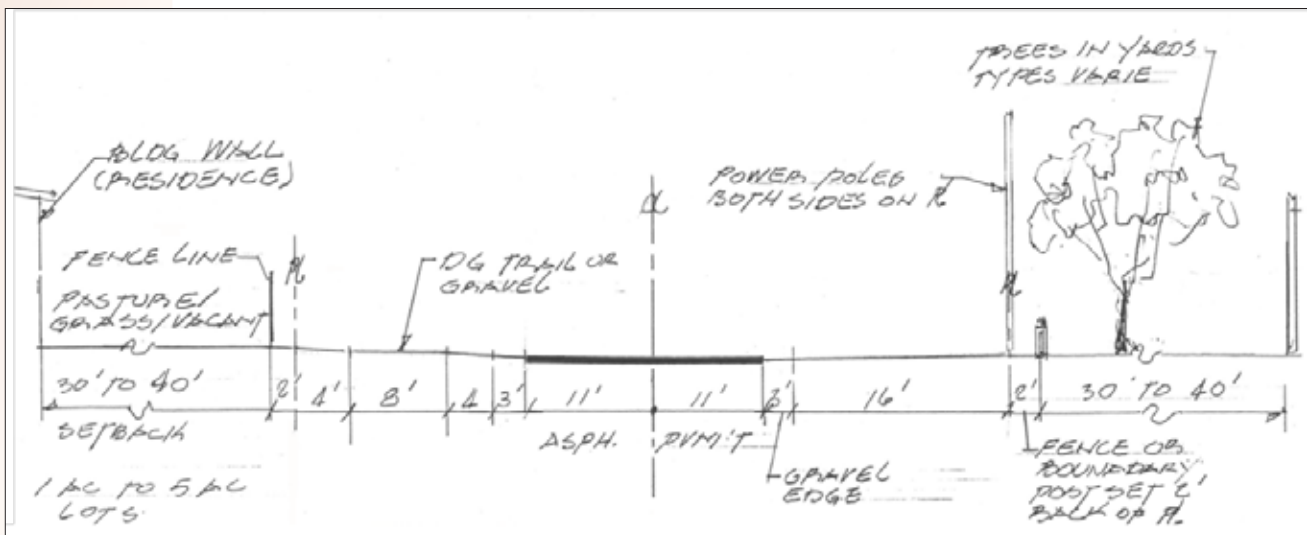
Characteristics

Spatial Organization

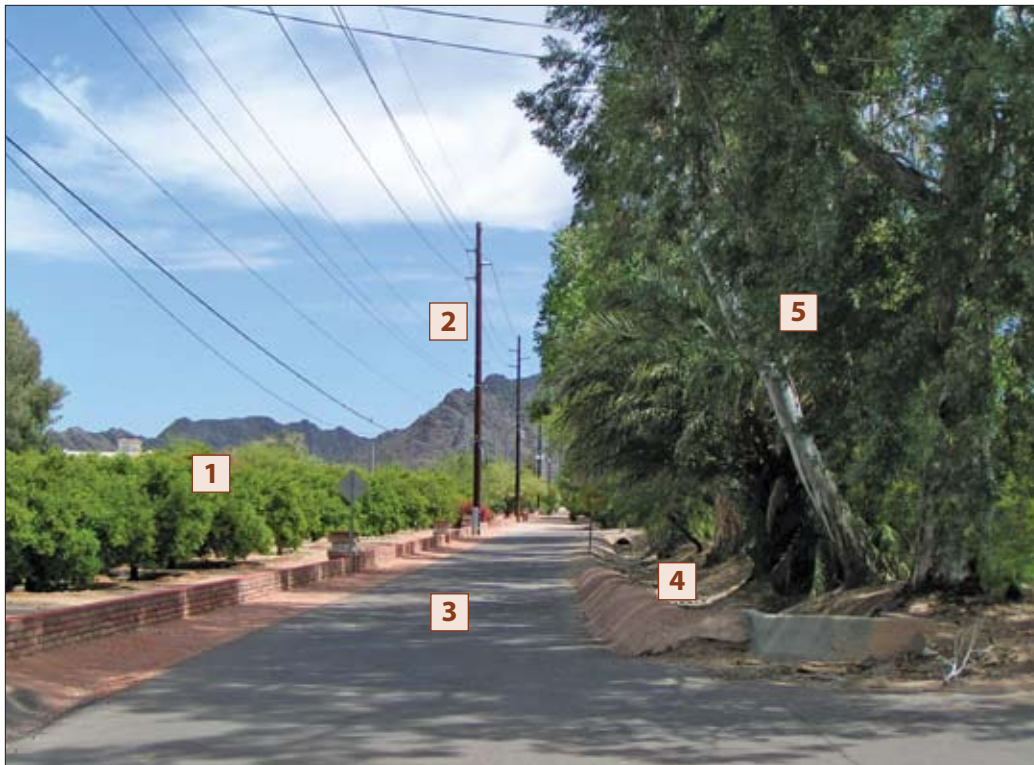
- informally designed streetscape extending one-eighth mile or more in length
- an established rhythm with utility poles, landscaping, trees, windbreaks, and/or fence posts
- generally straight, narrow roadways with wide, unpaved shoulders following survey or property lines
- varied and larger than usual residential lots or agricultural tracts, generally one or more acres
- varied and deep building setbacks, from twenty-five to seventy-five feet or more
- multiuse trails parallel to roadway (in some cases)
- irrigation delivery systems, linear windbreaks, or fences parallel or perpendicular to roadway (in some cases)

Setting and Environment

- informal, varied landscaping
- very low density development, generally zoned at one dwelling per acre
- single family residential functions in support of agriculture



South Mountain Avenue between 8th and 15th avenues



- 1 AGRICULTURAL LAND USE
- 2 UTILITY POLE
- 3 NARROW ROADWAY
- 4 IRRIGATION DITCH
- 5 WINDBREAK

21st Street at Bethany Home Road

Setting and Environment (continued)

- some agricultural properties without residential buildings
- narrow roadways with wide, unpaved shoulders and no curbs or gutters
- open fencing if fencing is present
- utility poles (typical)
- viewshed includes agricultural fields, open sky, or mountains (in some cases)
- few modern intrusions such as contemporary suburban and retail development

Boundary Demarcations

- streets and intersections
- property lines
- open irrigation or drainage ditches along streets or between lots
- windbreaks, fence lines, and utility lines

Circulation

- typically narrow, two-lane, minor arterial streets following grid street pattern or irrigation canal or lateral
- typically no sidewalk, curb, or engineered drainage features such as gutters
- right-of-way travel improvements limited to paved roadways with dirt or gravel shoulders used by pedestrians and sometimes equestrians

Buildings, Structures, and Objects

- varied building placements set back from street
- low-scale building blocks
- sometimes open irrigation and drainage ditches
- telephone and electrical utility poles
- stop signs and few traffic signals
- absent or limited street lighting
- driveways, mailboxes, and ornamental driveway features

- AGRICULTURAL LAND USE **1**
- OPEN FENCING **2**
- DIRT SHOULDER **3**
- IRRIGATION LATERAL **4**



Vineyard Road east of 24th Street

Buildings, Structures, and Objects (continued)

- sometimes open-style fencing if fencing is present
- absence of curbs, gutters, and sidewalks

Clusters

- agricultural buildings

Vegetation and Materials

- fields, orchards, and pastures
- trees planted for canal or ditch stabilization and erosion control
- dirt, gravel, or asphalt roadways and driveways
- dirt or gravel shoulders
- concrete-lined and unlined open irrigation laterals
- wood or metal post-and-rail, barbed wire, and welded mesh fencing
- wooden utility poles

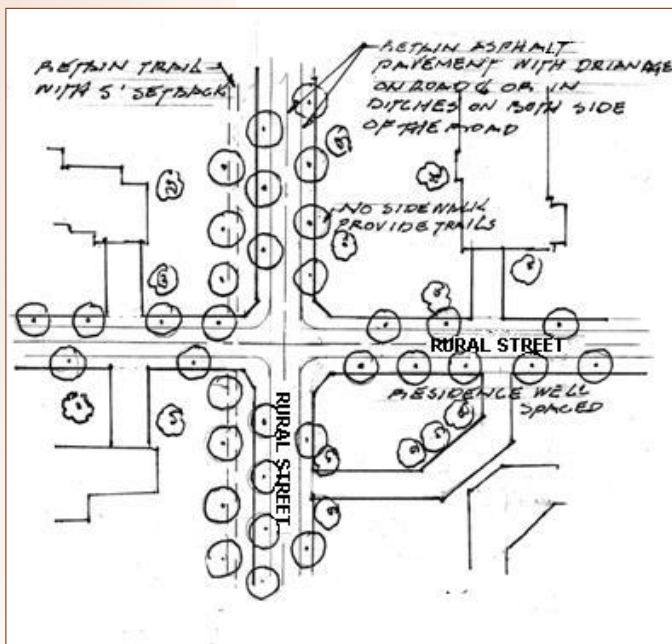


- 1 MATURE TREES
- 2 UTILITY POLE
- 3 IRRIGATION LATERAL
- 4 DIRT SHOULDER

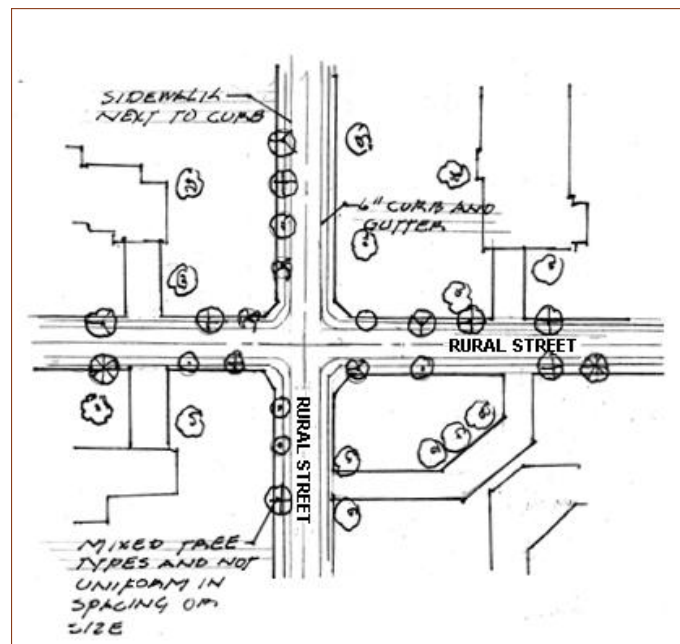
Dobbins Road west of 21st Avenue

Treatment Recommendations

- maintain narrow roadway widths
- avoid installation of sidewalk, curbs, and gutters
- use ribbon curb where curbs are required
- minimize driveway cuts and new intersections
- design multiuse paths to be minimal, set back from pavement edge five or more feet (ten feet preferred), and constructed with dirt or gravel
- maintain open irrigation ditches
- retain rural feeling and existing topography adjacent to street when introducing retention basins or storm drain systems
- maintain mature vegetation
- add new vegetation to match existing vegetation palette and pattern
- maintain deep building setbacks
- ensure lot sizes conform to prevailing historic pattern
- use new fencing that is open
- preserve and maintain viewsheds and focal points
- avoid higher density land uses such as apartments and condominiums
- cluster new development away from public streetscape to minimize impact to rural character



Recommended



Not recommended

- maintain streetscape edge with lower density and lower height buildings closest to the street
- use nonornamental street lighting that is mounted to existing utility poles, and low in height and brightness
- ensure new utilities adhere to traditional pattern



- 1 MATURE TREES
- 2 UTILITY POLE
- 3 MULTIUSE PATH
- 4 OPEN FENCES

Recommended



- 1 NEW PARKING ADDED ADJACENT TO STREET
- 2 NEW SIDEWALK, CURB, AND GUTTER
- 3 ORIGINAL ROADWAY SURFACE EXTENDED

Not recommended

History

The neighborhood streetscape in Phoenix evolved over time. Individual neighborhoods, through their unique characteristics, embody various phases in the chronology of Phoenix's community planning and development. In some instances, the neighborhood streetscape may also possess high artistic values.

When Phoenix was first laid out in 1870, there were no zoning ordinances. Residences were located adjacent to wholesale, retail, and light industrial establishments, which provided a short commute between home and work. As transportation modes improved, residents became more mobile and lived farther away from where they worked and shopped. Early land speculators, and later developers and homebuilders, created "additions" and suburbs, which the city eventually annexed. Some of these neighborhoods retain historic characteristics that were influenced by their location, technology, and the principles and concepts of the Parks, City Beautiful, and Garden City movements. Federal guidelines also influenced some of the neighborhoods.

The Parks Movement began nationally in the mid-1800s, decades before Phoenix existed. However, ideas from this movement affected the city's early appearance. In the late 1870s, tree planting along city streets was quite common, with the preferred species being the native cottonwood. Later, the cottonwood trees were removed and replaced with ash, olive, pine, and the ubiquitous palm.

The Garden City Movement was an early twentieth century approach to urban design in which the urban area was a planned, self-contained community, with carefully balanced residential, agricultural, and industrial areas, surrounded by a greenbelt. While no community in Phoenix evolved in precisely such a manner, early subdivisions such as the Neahr Addition, Orangewood, and Ingleside contained such Garden City elements as large, multiacre lots, tree-lined streets, and large personal gardens and orchards. Decades later, federal programs promoted partial agricultural self-sufficiency in large-lot subdivisions such as the Phoenix Homesteads.

The City Beautiful Movement was a contemporary of the Garden City Movement, but was a more comprehensive approach to urban design, unifying architecture, community planning, and landscape design. With the exception of a few island and linear parks on early twentieth century subdivisions, the City Beautiful Movement had little influence in Phoenix until the 1920s. By then, Phoenix had evolved from an agricultural town to a professional, retail, and government center.

While in some cities the City Beautiful Movement was evident in the grandeur of great public buildings, in Phoenix it influenced the coordination of



Courtesy of Mark Hughes.

Looking east on Palm Lane from 7th Street, ca. 1930

transportation systems and residential development, and improvements in the design of neighborhoods, such as tree-lined streets, installed utilities, and neighborhood parks. Some streets were widened and others converted to one-way thoroughfares to facilitate transportation in and out of the city core. In the suburbs, while most subdivisions were laid out in a rectilinear fashion, a few neighborhoods developed with curvilinear streets and deed restrictions on the type of structures that could be erected on the lots.

Beginning in the 1930s, Federal Housing Administration (FHA) guidelines further supported the aesthetic of the neighborhood street. FHA offered federal mortgage insurance to developers and builders and long-term, low-interest loans to potential homebuyers, but only in suburbs that met approved standards. These standards included regulations for the installation of utilities; street widths and improvements; the sizes of blocks, lots, and setbacks; and sometimes the style of residential architecture and the placement of street trees.

During the Depression and through World War II, there was comparatively little residential development in Phoenix. After the war, a building boom was spurred by the availability of federal loans and mortgage guarantees that stimulated a mass influx of people drawn by the weather and the city's economic potential. The Phoenix population grew from 65,414 in 1940 to 106,818 in 1950 to 439,170 in 1960. The city grew geographically as well, from 9.6 square miles in 1940 to 29 square miles in 1950 to 187.4 square miles in 1960.

The city's annexation program took in desert, farms, ranches, and established suburbs such as Arcadia and Maryvale. Each annexation brought in neighborhoods with their own particular spatial organization. Neighborhood streetscapes are characterized by their style and form of landscaping, setbacks, densities, and uniform lot sizes and shapes, which cumulatively create a sense of place.

Significant Neighborhood Streetscapes

A significant neighborhood streetscape must have a cohesive, original design and retain multiple recognizable characteristics resulting from its period of development, such as the arrangement of streets, division of blocks into lots, types of landscape, and methods of construction. The neighborhood streetscape is affected by changes in lot sizes, building setbacks, roadways,



Campbell Avenue east of 7th Avenue



Hazelwood Street at 40th Street

vegetation and landscaping, and alterations to, or additions of, sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. Small-scale changes such as the introduction of street furniture and individual plantings may not detract from the character of the streetscape. However, large-scale alterations—such as changes in land use, substantial increases in the mass of neighborhood homes, or modifications to the spatial relationship between house and street—may threaten the integrity of the streetscape design.

Design integrity requires that neighborhood streetscape elements exhibit the artistry and craftsmanship of their builders and that vegetation historically planted for decorative and aesthetic purposes be maintained in an appropriate fashion and replaced in kind when damaged or destroyed. This is especially important with character-defining trees. New vegetation is acceptable if it is supplementing, rather than supplanting or competing with, the original rhythm of streetscape plantings. Supplemental plantings, such as shade trees, should be smaller in size, scale, and visual effect relative to original character defining streetscape trees, such as a row of palms. The neighborhood streetscape should remain reminiscent of its original development.

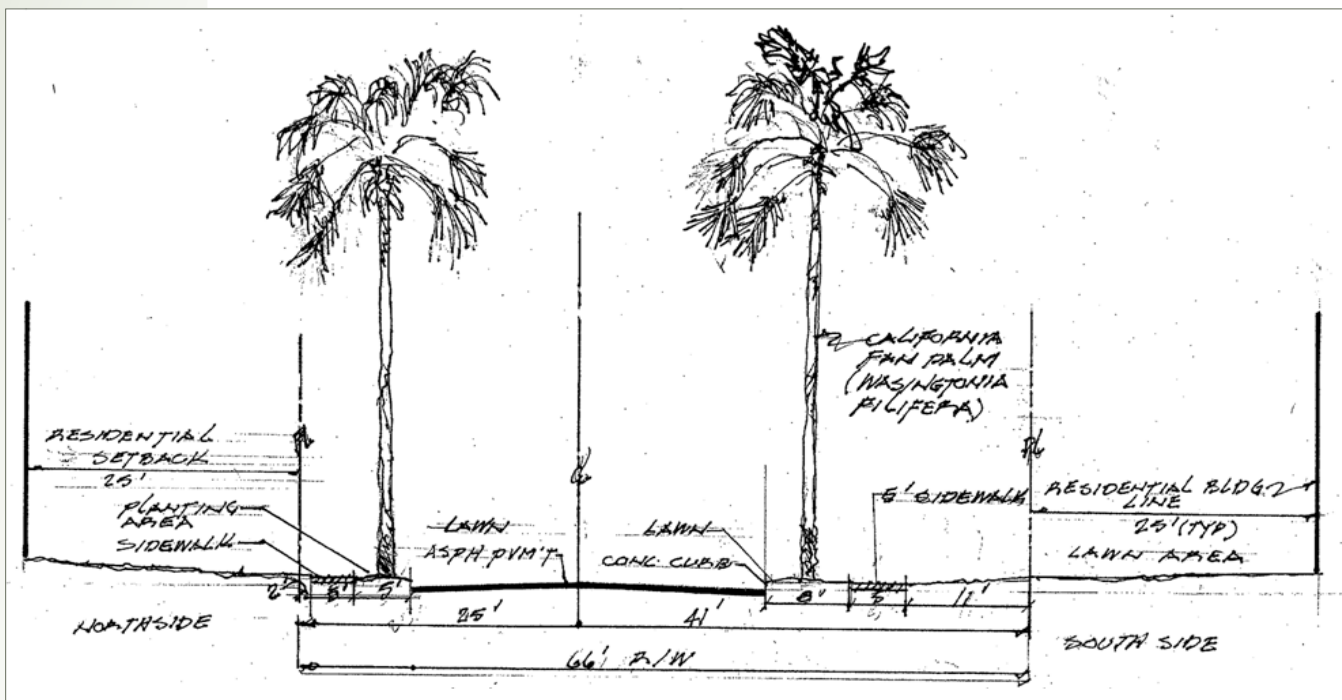
Characteristics

Spatial Organization

- a formal planned rhythm or layout with a consistent combination of residential streetscape elements influenced by historic origins
- consistent landscape palette in right-of-way varies based on its original design
- roadway widths generally from twenty feet (local street) to thirty-five feet (collector street)
- streetscape length of one block or more
- uniform pattern of twenty-five- to fifty-foot or more front building setbacks
- open space typical in front setback
- rhythm established with uniform presence or absence of pattern of tree plantings, planting strips, street lights, curbs, and driveways

Setting and Environment

- predominantly residential land use with small-scale commercial on periphery and within older areas



Portland Street between 3rd and 5th avenues



- 1 DEFINING TREES
- 2 PLANTING STRIPS
- 3 PEDESTRIAN-SCALE LIGHTING
- 4 NARROW RECTANGULAR DRIVEWAY CUTS
- 5 HIGH VERTICAL CONCRETE CURB AND GUTTER

Portland Street east of 5th Avenue

Setting and Environment (continued)

- consistent patterns of massing, size, scale, and setback of residential buildings
- typical density range of two to twelve units per acre
- character influences range from urban to suburban to rural to desert, depending on original design intent
- few front yard fences or low, open-style fences that are representative of original, or early to neighborhood

Boundary Demarcations

- lot lines
- sidewalks, curbs, and gutters
- hedges
- ground irrigation berms
- streets, intersections, and blocks

Circulation

- two-lane roadway, generally on rectilinear axis, although can be curvilinear or include original cul-de-sacs
- pedestrian paths vary from shared roadway, attached sidewalks, or detached sidewalks

- CURVILINEAR ROADWAY 1
- ATTACHED SIDEWALK WITH ROLLED CURB AND GUTTER 2
- VERDANT LANDSCAPE 3
- UNIFORM BUILDING SETBACK 4



24th Place and Avalon Drive

Buildings, Structures, and Objects

- generally single family homes with some multifamily and retail structures in older areas
- absence of sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and driveways or consistent pattern and design of such features
- irrigation ditches, turnouts, and driveway bridges in more rural designed neighborhoods
- telephone and electrical utility poles consistently placed, absent, or in alleys
- subdivision monuments, mail boxes, and street lights consistent
- fire hydrants, grates, and storm drains
- street and traffic signs
- driveway cuts with similar materials, shapes, and patterns, such as narrow concrete, rectangular, or flared



- 1 DEFINING TREES
- 2 ABSENCE OF SIDEWALKS
- 3 CURVILINEAR STREET
- 4 ROLLED CURB AND GUTTER
- 5 HISTORIC METAL STREETLIGHTS

9th Avenue at Palmcroft Drive

Clusters

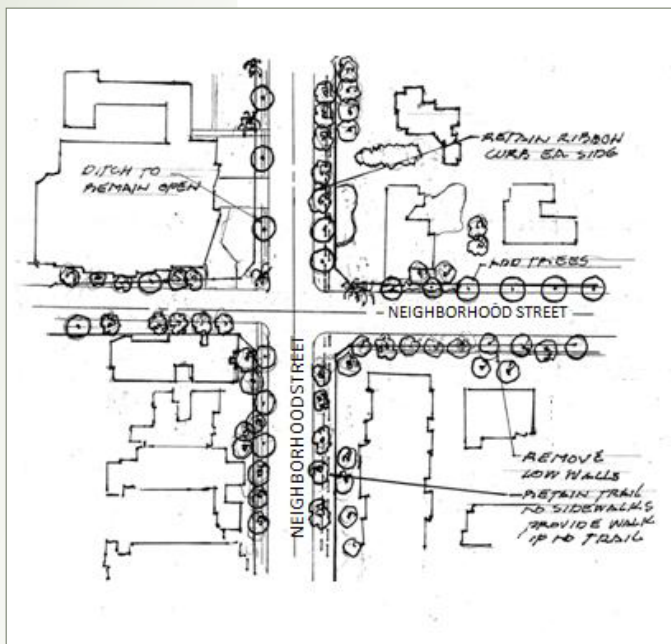
- period housing styles
- multifamily residential and small street front retail sometimes found within neighborhoods

Vegetation and Materials

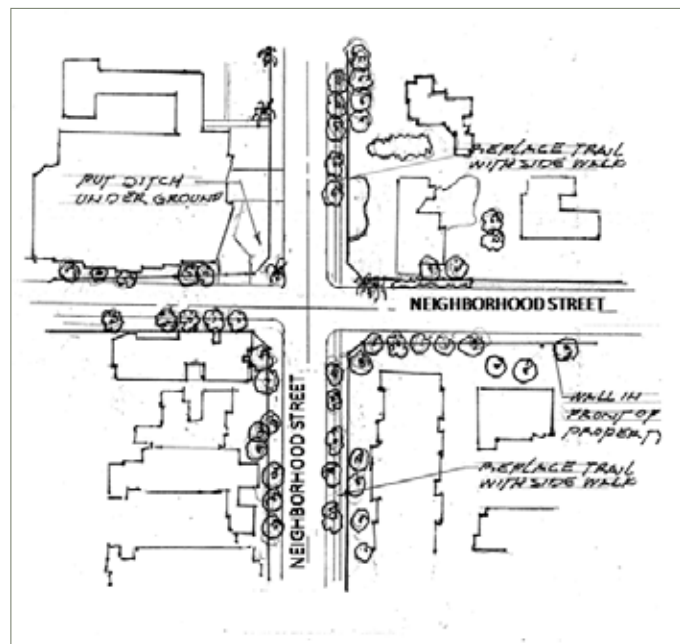
- consistent pattern of trees, shrubs, and turf in planting strips and adjacent to roadways
- roadway pavement is asphalt or concrete
- roadway edges may have consistent pattern of dirt or turf shoulder; squared-off, rolled, or ribbon curb; planting strips; and/or concrete sidewalks
- consistent presence or absence of utility and light poles

Treatment Recommendations

- maintain characteristic neighborhood configuration and design including roadway, curb, gutter, and sidewalk patterns
- keep driveway spacing and width at nine to twelve feet or compatible with historic width and rhythm on the street
- keep front setbacks and street-facing side building setbacks consistent with historic pattern and design
- maintain building and landscape types and densities consistent with neighborhood patterns
- minimize use of fencing in front yard open space; use open design less than three feet in height if needed, installed close to house rather than on property line near (maximize green space near street)
- maintain characteristic landscape palette and streetscape materials
- avoid new or expanded cul-de-sacs when not originally present
- avoid introduction of xeriscape in older neighborhoods characterized by verdant landscapes
- avoid recessed retention basins or humped yards and follow historic pattern of retention and drainage, such as flood irrigation, perimeter berms, curbs, gutters, and storm drainage system
- avoid removal of historic streetscape features when introducing traffic calming features



Recommended



Not recommended

Neighborhood Streetscape

- ensure new utilities adhere to traditional pattern
- avoid flared curbs at corners; use criss-cross pattern in areas with no flared curb or shifted sidewalk



- 1 SIDEWALK
- 2 ROW OF PALMS
- 3 PLANTING STRIP

Recommended



- 1 ORIGINAL SIDEWALK ALIGNMENT
- 2 NEW SIDEWALK
- 3 PALMS MISSING FROM PLANTING STRIP

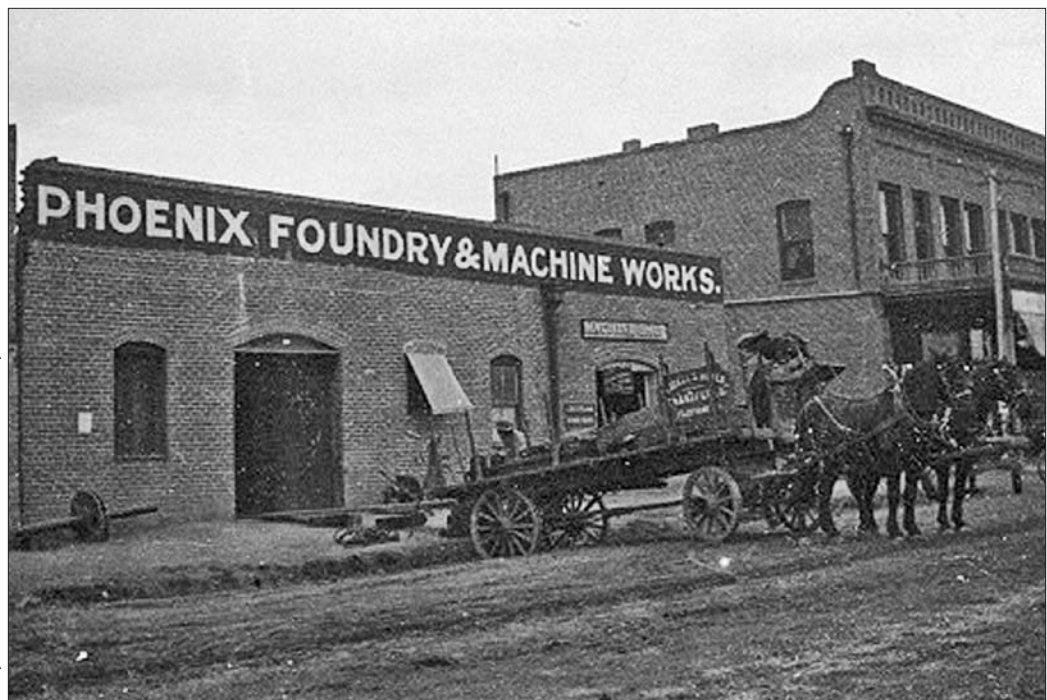
Not recommended

History

The commercial streetscape represents the commercial evolution of Phoenix and is most clearly represented by three subtypes based on land use: Urban Core, located in downtown Phoenix with retail, offices, and hospitality establishments as well as some government, entertainment, religious, and educational institutions; Warehouse/Industrial, located near the railroad tracks; and Retail Strip, found throughout the city, typically on arterial streets outside of Urban Core.

In 1870, when the Phoenix townsite was platted, there was no formal city planning, just an intent to have most businesses located on lots facing either the court house square (on Washington and Jefferson streets and 1st and 2nd avenues) or the town plaza (on Washington and Jefferson streets and 1st and 2nd streets). However, most establishments decided to locate along Washington Street, which was considered the city's main east-west thoroughfare.

As the city grew, the commercial district expanded north and south to Jefferson, Madison, Adams, and Monroe streets, and as far east and west as 3rd Street and 7th Avenue, respectively. When the railroad arrived, stations were located on the southern edge of the townsite and wholesale and retail



Courtesy of the Phoenix Museum of History.

Warehouse/Industrial – Phoenix Foundry & Machine Works, 7th Avenue and Buchanan Street, ca. 1910



Courtesy of Mark Hughes.

Urban Core – Central Avenue at Van Buren Street, ca. 1930

warehouses gravitated closer to the tracks. As the railroad expanded, light and heavy industries developed adjacent to the tracks extending east, west, and northwest of the southern industrial district.

The trolley system allowed for residential expansion outside of the city core, with land speculators creating subdivisions along the line. The automobile brought greater mobility and retail strips developed along major and minor arterial streets. Central Avenue became the new commercial axis. The federal highway system created a market for hospitality establishments along the highways through Phoenix, such as Van Buren Street-Grand Avenue (US 60/70) and 17th Avenue-Buckeye Road (US 80).

In the 1950s, new, large retail malls such as Park Central and Uptown Plaza attracted retail businesses away from the downtown area. With the exception of industrial operations, commercial properties are now spread around the city, with retail and hospitality establishments located typically on major arterial streets near intersections. Warehouses and manufacturing plants are generally located near the railroad tracks or in industrial parks oriented to state highways and freeways.

Significant Commercial Streetscapes

Significant commercial streetscapes must possess identifiable characteristics that reflect the streetscape's origin and purpose. While all commercial streetscapes share common features, such as consistent building patterns and land uses, three subtypes are identifiable by their unique characteristics: Urban Core Commercial Streetscapes have features that are more pedestrian oriented, such as building-to-lot sidewalks, awnings and overhangs, and pedestrian-scale lighting; Retail Strip Commercial Streetscapes often have driveways, building setbacks that allow for off-street parking, and landscape features such as trees, hedges, fences, or walls separating the parking lot from the street; and Warehouse/Industrial Commercial Streetscapes have features that are more vehicle and railroad oriented, such as raised loading docks, multiple frontages, and signage painted on the building.

A strong sense of the commercial streetscape's original setting is maintained by the retention of built resources and the proximity of buildings to the street. While properties adjacent to the street, such as warehouses and office buildings, may have a different use now than when they were used historically, it is important that there be minimal changes to distinctive features,



Retail Strip – McDowell Road at 16th Street



Warehouse/Industrial – Lincoln Street at 9th Avenue

construction materials, streetscape design, and spatial relationships. Distinctive features are exhibited in the ways that people fashioned the streetscape for functional and decorative purposes such as curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. The presence of particular construction materials are important indicators of style and construction methods and provide cohesive character to the commercial streetscape. The design of the streetscape includes the arrangement of the street, the division of blocks into lots, and the arrangement of buildings on lots.

A commercial streetscape retaining its original street pattern, block sizes, setbacks, land use types, and construction materials will be reminiscent of its original development. Additions and alterations that introduce new land uses, change distinctive features, and erase historic principles of design threaten its integrity. Its integrity is affected by the removal of buildings, changes in block sizes, setbacks, roadways, and alterations to, or additions of, sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. Small-scale changes, such as the advent of street furniture, may not detract from the character of the streetscape, but should conform to the original character of the streetscape. However, large-scale changes, such as superblocking (merging blocks to create larger blocks) or modifications to the spatial relationship between buildings and street, may threaten the integrity of the design.

Characteristics

Spatial Organization

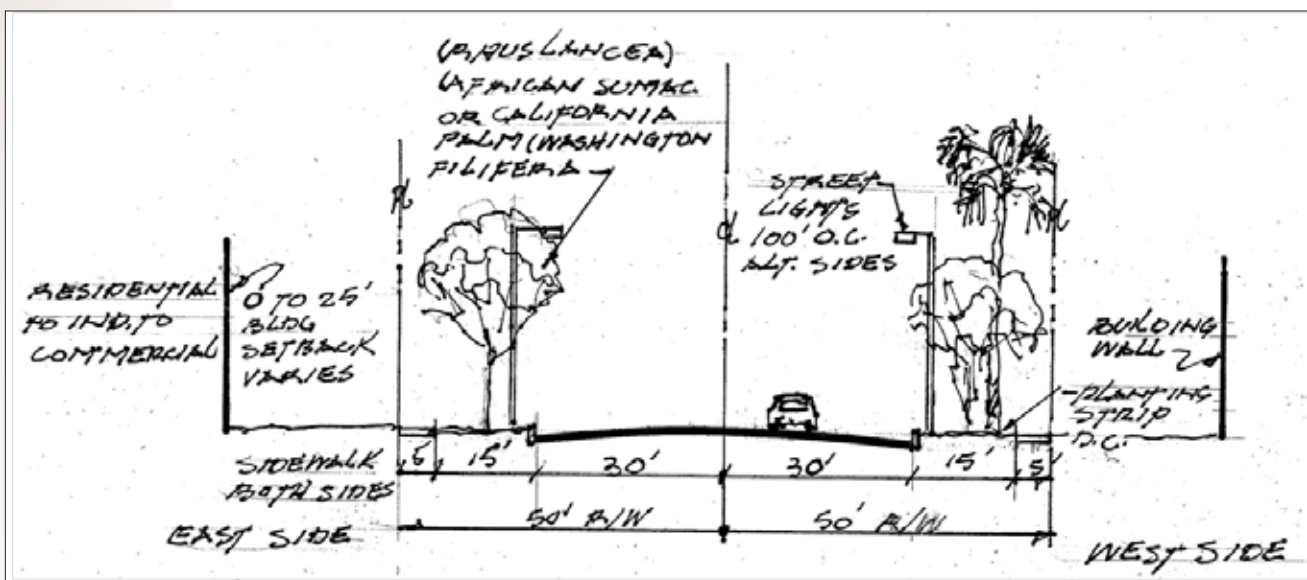
- consistent pattern of building orientation relative to street
- street layout follows grid, except for Grand Avenue
- lot sizes typically fifty feet wide and 125 to 150 feet deep, although some lots are consolidated to create larger buildings
- consistent rhythm of block, lot, and building sizes (widths, depths, and heights)
- consistent pattern of building types and uses

Urban Core

- zero lot line setbacks common
- multi-story buildings often with shade structures over the sidewalk, sidewalk seating areas, and a rhythm of articulated and demarcated entries
- roadway width typically forty-five to sixty-five feet
- parking on street or in parking garage
- buildings contiguous

Retail Strip

- buildings sometimes set back from sidewalks
- lower-scale buildings relative to wide street



Retail Strip – Grand Avenue between 7th and 15th avenues



- 1 PROJECTING SIGNS
- 2 MODERN MOTORIST-SCALE LIGHTING
- 3 TREES IN PLANTING STRIP
- 4 ZERO LOT SETBACK
- 5 CONCRETE SIDEWALKS, CURBS, AND GUTTERS

Retail Strip – Grand Avenue at 10th Avenue

Retail Strip (continued)

- buildings often spaced apart to accommodate on-site parking lots
- often deeper lots; no alleys
- narrow planting strips between parking lots and sidewalk
- parking lot or fences and walls around parking
- buildings often have shade structures over the sidewalk, sidewalk seating areas, and a rhythm of articulated and demarcated entries
- roadway width typically fifty-five feet
- projecting signage
- parking on street or in parking lot
- fences and walls around parking sometimes seen

Warehouse/Industrial

- zero lot line setbacks common or small (sometimes unpaved) setbacks to accommodate loading area
- buildings often have separate office entrance and delivery areas
- buildings adjacent to or fronting railroad tracks, with power poles, smoke stacks, and other industrial elements
- roadway width typically fifty feet with wide travel lanes
- no projecting signage—typically painted on front or side of building

Warehouse/Industrial (continued)

- parking on street—automobiles near office portion of buildings, trucks near delivery areas
- lack of curbs and sidewalks in loading areas
- devoid of awnings, shade structures, and pedestrian accommodations

Setting and Environment

Urban Core

- settings include hospitality, professional, retail, and multifamily residential intermingled

Retail Strip

- retail setting

Warehouse /Industrial

- industrial setting
- streetscape may include railroad tracks

Boundary Demarcations

- streets, intersections, and blocks

Urban Core

- lot lines
- building façades
- alleys
- sidewalks, curbs, and gutter

Retail Strip

- sidewalks, curbs, and gutter
- narrow planting strips between parking lots and sidewalk
- parking lot or fences and walls around parking

Warehouse /Industrial

- lot lines
- building façades
- alleys

Circulation

- linear roadways
- uniform sidewalk type, pattern, configuration, and width



- 1 UTILITY POLE
- 2 TRUCK LOADING BAYS
- 3 RAILROAD PLATFORM
- 4 TRAIN TRACKS
- 5 ZERO BUILDING SETBACKS
- 6 LIMITED TRAVEL LANES

Warehouse/Industrial – 2nd Street at the railroad tracks

Urban Core

- wide sidewalk extending from building edge to curb
- more pedestrian oriented
- parking generally parallel and metered or on-site (garage or carport)

Retail Strip

- on-street parallel parking and/or on-site parking lot

Warehouse/Industrial

- more vehicle oriented for trains, trucks, and cars
- parking generally not structured, striped, or metered

Buildings, Structures, and Objects

- uniform or consistent sidewalk type, pattern, configuration, and width

Urban Core

- Buildings may have awnings and overhangs and small-scale elements such as street furniture (bike racks, bus stops, benches, and parking meters) and signage
- driveways may enter garages
- sidewalk typically extends from building edge to curb
- pedestrian scale signage, typically projecting or on awnings or windows

Retail Strip

- driveways may enter parking lots
- utility poles
- signage is typically at a more vehicular scale, projecting or mounted on building or on monument at front property boundary

Warehouse /Industrial

- typically curb-less loading areas, stairs, and raised truck or rail level loading docks
- buildings typically have little ornamentation and are without awnings
- multiple building frontages with different requirements for treatment: main frontage on the street with an office entry; frontage on side street(s) with railroad or truck loading docks; and frontage on alley, which can be unpaved and accommodate loading docks
- properties may have curb cuts to move trucks and equipment in and out of building
- utility poles
- signage at vehicular scale, typically painted on buildings

Clusters

- buildings and uses of similar type and function often found together

Urban Core

- retail street frontage common



Urban Core – Van Buren Street at 5th Street

Retail Strip

- retail street frontage often located near intersections

Warehouse/Industrial

- often located adjacent to or near railroad tracks

Vegetation and Materials

- asphalt or concrete roadways

Urban Core

- little to no landscaping, but when present, definitive pattern of planting types and locations
- concrete sidewalks, curbs, and gutters

Retail Strip

- concrete sidewalks, curbs, and gutters
- asphalt parking lots

Warehouse/Industrial

- little to no landscaping, but when present, definitive pattern of planting types and locations
- concrete entry steps and loading docks
- sometimes concrete sidewalks, curbs, and gutters



Urban Core – McDowell Street at 16th Street

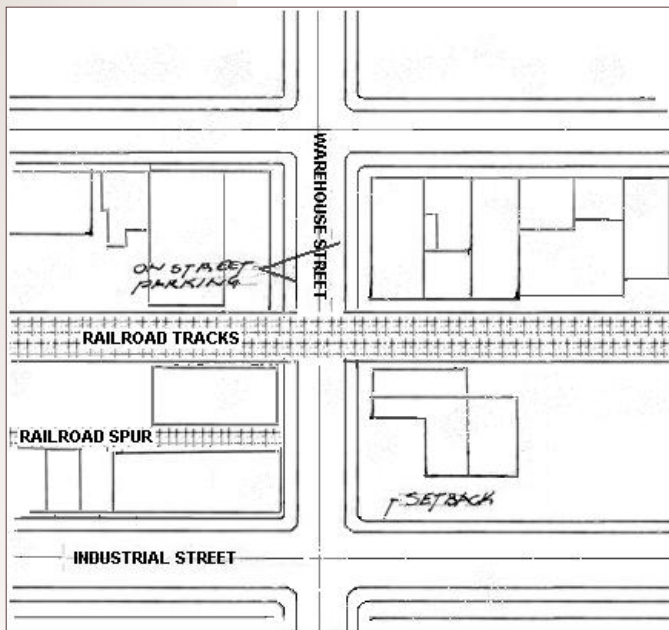
Treatment Recommendations

General

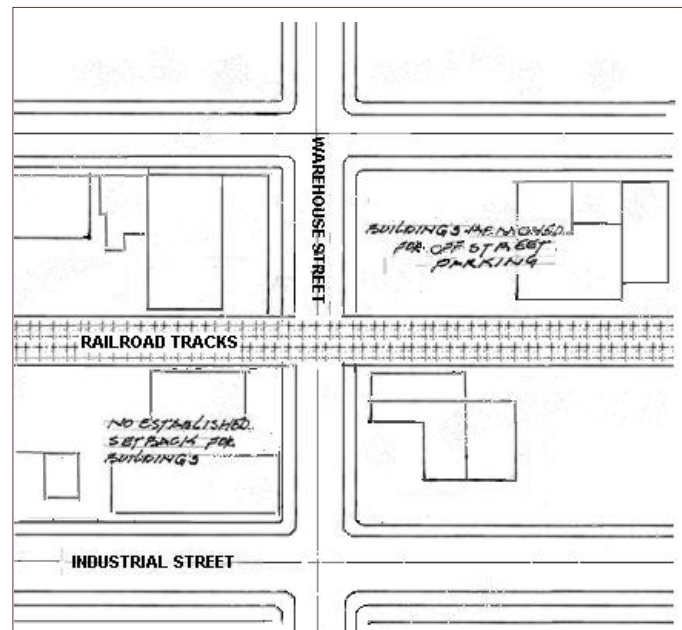
- retain prevailing rhythm of block
- maintain simple sidewalk, curb, and gutter materials and avoid introduction of new ornamental designs
- ensure light rail tracks and stations do not encroach beyond the curb line; use minimal station designs, particularly in tightly developed commercial areas
- add trees as accents at grade, in planters, or in curb extensions that do not block building or pedestrian walking areas
- maintain existing on-street parking
- keep street lighting in background, functional, unobtrusive, and not overly done; use lighting that is thematic for different areas, pedestrian in scale, and compatible with area character
- use permanent shade structures, such as awnings, that are functional and consistent in design
- ensure new utilities adhere to traditional pattern

Urban Core

- retain open alleys and avoid superblocking (merging city blocks to create larger blocks)



Warehouse/Industrial – Recommended



Warehouse/Industrial – Not recommended

Commercial Streetscape



- 1 THEMATIC LIGHTING
- 2 ON-STREET PARKING
- 3 CURB EXTENSIONS
- 4 CONSISTENT BUILDING SETBACKS

Urban Core – Recommended



- 1 MISMATCHED LIGHTING
- 2 TREES BLOCKING BUILDING

Urban Core – Not recommended

Urban Core (continued)

- maintain zero building setbacks
- maintain contiguous row of multi-story buildings
- use curb extensions if design is minimal and does not eliminate on-street parking
- avoid parking lots adjacent to sidewalk edge
- small planting strips acceptable

Retail Strip

- use curb extensions if design is minimal and does not eliminate on-street parking
- planting strips are acceptable
- maintain spacing between buildings
- avoid new construction that alters spacing pattern and new multi-story construction that is out of character with low-scale retail

Warehouse/Industrial

- retain open alleys and avoid superblocking (merging city blocks to create larger blocks)
- maintain zero, or near zero, setbacks
- avoid removal of warehouses
- avoid over-beautifying—such as adding large awnings, fancy lights, or brick pavers
- retain or add concrete sidewalks where needed
- avoid adding front additions within building setbacks
- avoid removal of historic railroad features to retain context for associated buildings
- introduction of rolled curbs acceptable when no curbs currently present

Commercial Streetscape



- 1 WALL AROUND PARKING LOT
- 2 CONSISTENT PATTERN OF ORIENTATION RELATIVE TO STREET
- 3 PLANTING STRIP

Retail Strip – Recommended



- 1 INCONSISTENT PATTERN OF BUILDING ORIENTATION
- 2 LARGE-SCALE BUILDING OUT OF RHYTHM WITH BLOCK

Retail Strip – Not recommended

History

A boulevard, by definition, is a wide, multilane street with an above-average quality of landscaping and scenery and that sometimes has a median. The earliest effort at creating a boulevard streetscape in the Phoenix area was the intended layout of Central Avenue north of McDowell Road in 1895 by a group of land speculators and developers led by William J. Murphy and John W. Evans. However, not all of the property owners along the avenue were disposed to planting ash trees along what was then a private road. This plan to create a wide, tree-lined avenue connecting the city to the developers' subdivisions to the north failed. Prior to Murphy and Evans' endeavor, an 1885 act of the Territorial Legislature enabled the city to annex adjacent subdivisions and use tax funds to line the streets with trees. While palms are ever-present in many Phoenix neighborhoods, the trees provide a skyline effect when used to line broad avenues such as Washington and Jefferson streets and Central Avenue.

The area between the city core and the State Capital Complex is known as the Government Mall, and Washington and Jefferson streets provide a tree-lined ingress and egress between downtown Phoenix and state government offices. Washington Street also provides a focal point to the capitol dome. Between McDowell Road and Encanto Boulevard, developer Dwight B. Heard and his partners planted palms along Central Avenue. Other developers followed suit and, over time, additional palms were planted, albeit sporadically, extending the Central Avenue boulevard streetscape north to Camelback Road. This streetscape offers as viewpoints the Phoenix Mountains to the north and the city's downtown skyscrapers and the South Mountains to the south.

South of the city core, from Lincoln Street to Interstate 17, the city lined both sides of Central Avenue with palms as part of a mid-century city beautification effort. This newer boulevard offers as viewpoints the city's downtown skyscrapers to the north and the South Mountains to the south.

Significant Boulevard Streetscapes

Very few streets in Phoenix possess the elements required to be considered a boulevard, hence boulevards are significant, as well as exceptional. A boulevard streetscape will have a recognizable street pattern and rhythm that is very uniform and visually dominant with vertical elements such as trees and street light fixtures creating a clear definition of width and height. These characteristics must be retained because they contribute to the identity of the streetscape and its representation as a significant and distinguishable entity.

Courtesy of Mark Hughes.



Central Avenue north of McDowell Road, ca. 1930

The integrity of the boulevard streetscape is affected by changes to the street grade, building setbacks, and alterations or additions to sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and dominant vegetation. A strong sense of the boulevard setting is maintained by the retention of built resources and plantings. Streetscape integrity requires that vegetation historically planted for decorative and aesthetic purposes be maintained in an appropriate fashion and replaced in kind when damaged or destroyed. Additions and alterations that erase historic principles of design threaten its integrity. Adjacent land uses contribute to the continuity of the street pattern but are not as significant to defining the boulevard streetscape as is the streetscape design itself.

Characteristics

Spatial Organization

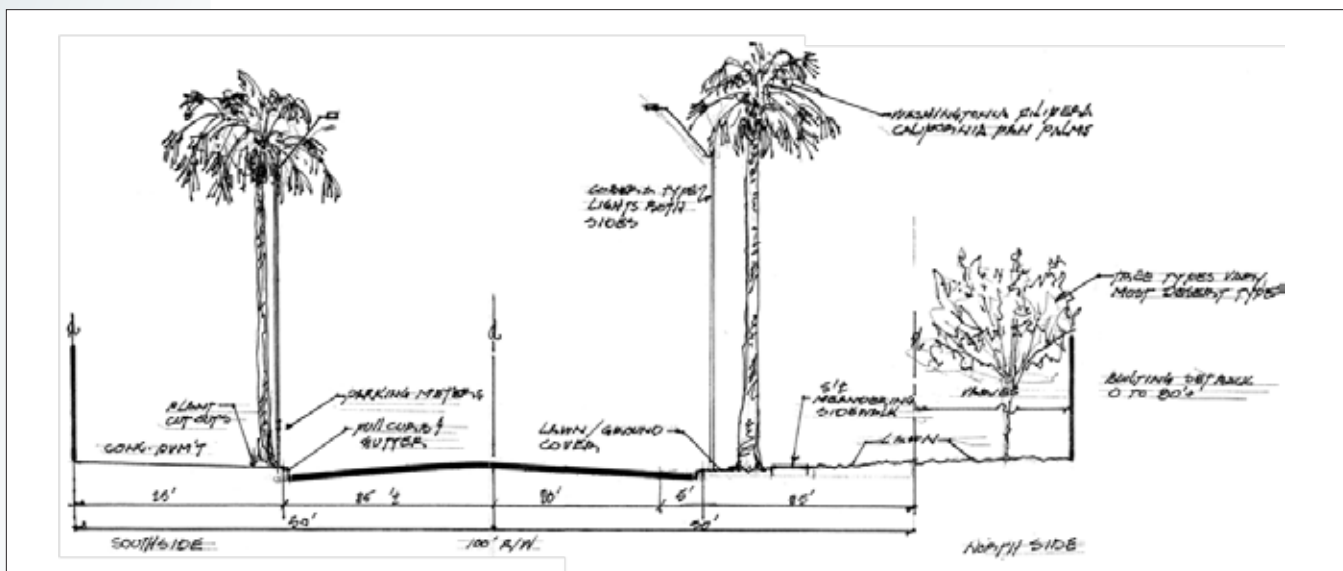
- long (one-half mile or more), straight, wide urban street with planned continuous landscape features such as a line of spaced tree plantings, median strip of trees, etc.
- varied building setbacks from zero to fifty feet or more
- often median or street-side planting area is very broad and can be geometric in shape

Setting and Environment

- formal design often featuring a focal point or viewscape
- automobile-dominated travel environment
- adjacent land uses may contribute to a continuity of the street pattern
- utilities typically absent or obscured

Boundary Demarcations

- rows of plantings adjacent to roadway or sidewalk
- intersections and blocks
- streets
- sidewalks
- visual focal points



Washington Street from 7th to 15th avenues

Circulation

- usually a straight, wide, multilane, urban street
- detached sidewalks typical



- 1 VIEWSCAPE
- 2 DEFINING TREES
- 3 DETACHED SIDEWALK

Central Avenue at Hadley Street



- 1 FOCAL POINT
- 2 DEFINING TREES
- 3 DETACHED SIDEWALK
- 3 SECOND ROW OF TREES

Washington Street at 7th Avenue



- 1 VIEWSCAPE
- 2 DEFINING TREES
- 3 CONCRETE SIDEWALKS, CURBS, AND GUTTERS
- 4 MOTORIST-SCALE LIGHTING

Central Avenue at Mohave Street

Buildings, Structures, Objects

- detached sidewalks separated from roadways by planting strip
- sometimes median planting strips
- vertical curbs
- gutters and below grade drainage features
- small-scale elements such as light fixtures and bus stop furniture
- motorist-scale lighting (typical)

Clusters

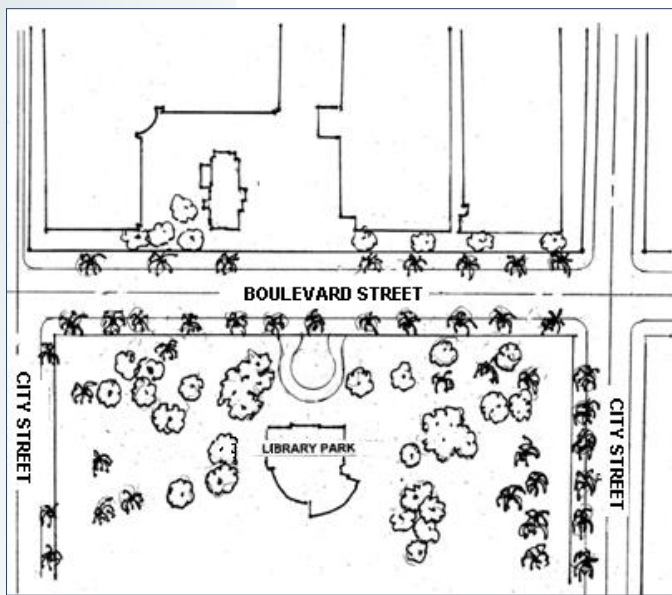
- buildings of similar use, both public and private

Vegetation and Materials

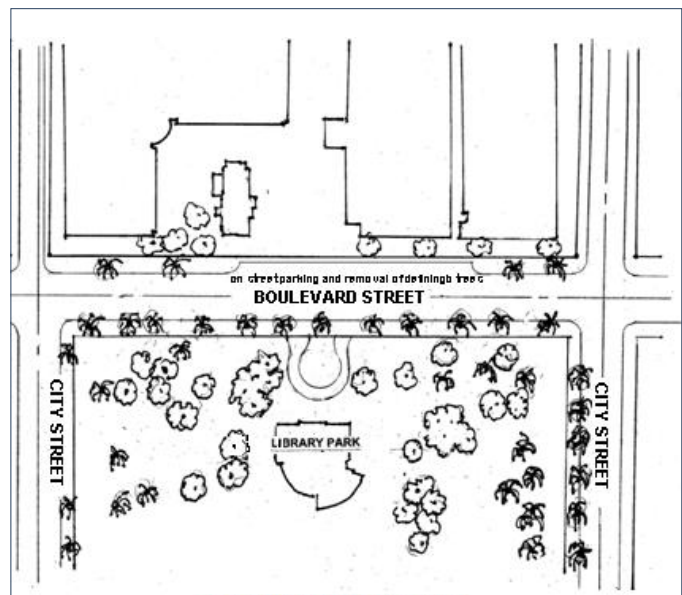
- planned continuous landscape features with strong repetitive plantings in median and/or adjacent to roadway
- sometimes two rows of trees, with taller defining vegetation at street edge
- typically concrete sidewalks, curbs, and gutters
- asphalt roadways

Treatment Recommendations

- maintain parkway landscape rhythm with established vertical elements such as trees and light fixtures for extended length to facilitate the visual framing
- minimize disruption of existing landscape rhythm established by plantings, curbs, light fixtures, and other features
- ensure newly introduced elements do not interfere with important viewsheds
- maintain vertical curbs and detached sidewalks
- maintain curbside planters or planting strips to provide vertical plant material beds and establish a visible frame
- replace missing trees with similar size of same species
- introduce supplemental shade trees that conform to overall rhythm of streetscape and do not visually dominate other important landscape features
- maintain varied building setbacks and heights
- discourage on-street parking to maintain efficient street circulation
- add medians to scale down large buildings, provided the medians are not detrimental to the focal point or viewscape



Recommended



Not recommended

Boulevard Streetscape

- introduce light rail carefully to minimize disruption to landscape and viewsheds
- extend length of the boulevard to improve effective impact, continuity, and style



- 1 DEFINING TREES
- 2 DETACHED SIDEWALK
- 3 MOTORIST-SCALE LIGHTING

Recommended



- 1 DEFINING TREES REPLACED WITH DIFFERENT SPECIES
- 2 PALMS REMOVED
- 3 DETACHED SIDEWALK MOVED FARTHER BACK
- 4 ON-STREET PARKING ADDED

Not recommended