Urban Design Guidelines

The Urban Design Guidelines contained in this section offer direction for the eventual redevelopment of the Core Area of the Master Plan. The diagrams on the following pages illustrate the critical elements such as land use, building height, setbacks and parking that should be followed by the incremental redevelopment that will eventually transform the corridor from an underused strip commercial/industrial corridor to a vital mixed-use core that services the community.

The Master Plan defined South Military Highway into three distinct areas. Criteria for the specific areas include the development frameworks of streets, blocks, open space, view corridors, setbacks, building heights, and parking.

Site Specific Design Guidelines

The Site Specific Design Guidelines define the development framework for each initiative area. Guidelines outlined for each area include the following:

1. Land Use The permitted uses for the buildings in the plan are defined. A mix of uses throughout the corridor is key to continuing growth along South Military Highway.

2. Framework of Streets and Open Space The streets and open space framework provides for the pedestrian, the bicyclist, and the automobile.

3. Development Blocks The limits of development of buildings are defined. The edges of development blocks, outside of which no building may be placed.

4. Building Setbacks Front setbacks define the character of the street and the semi-public space between buildings.
Land Use

The South Military Highway Corridor Study vision for the Core is a mix of commercial and residential uses that establishes a community center to South Military Highway. Residential apartments or condominiums are permitted upper floor uses in the mixed-use buildings. All buildings are served by on-street parking and shared parking behind the buildings. Additionally, a mix of residential types is proposed as a transition from the core to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
Development Blocks

New streets and alleys are proposed to establish a regular block pattern with multiple public access points to South Military Highway. The organized development block pattern reduces curb cuts along South Military Highway thereby enhancing the pedestrian experience.
Parking

A variety of parking options are available. On-street parallel parking is extremely important for the proposed retail uses. Two parking streets are proposed to fulfill this need. Parking lots are required to be placed at the rear of the development blocks. All parking lots are required to be screened from the street with either buildings or landscaping, and shared parking lots should be accessed by side streets and alleys.
Setbacks

South Military Highway in the Core is designed to be of an urban character, and all buildings are required to have the front elevation facing the street. Buildings are placed within the prescribed setbacks to provide spacious sidewalks and a pedestrian friendly commercial core. Some flexibility is permitted to create visual variety, add flexibility in sidewalk widths and facade elements, and to accommodate the light industrial uses along the corridor. In the Core, 85% of the linear footage of the setback zones should be occupied by building. Gaps in the setback zones should be composed as gardens, courts, plazas, or public paths to shared parking lots.
Building Heights

Development heights range from two to six stories to address the scale of South Military Highway. The building heights are set to encourage upper floor uses above retail such as professional offices and apartments or condos. The scales of the buildings are such to address the dimensions of South Military Highway. The massing of the mixed-use buildings in the region have a tall ground floor with vertical proportions with an upper cornice expression. All roof top equipment should be concealed from the eye of the pedestrian.
Focal Points and Views

The most important focal point for the corridor is the intersection of South Military Highway and George Washington Highway. This intersection is the geographic and social center of the corridor. The intersection of South Military Highway and Canal Drive is also an important gateway for the mix-use core. Special attention should be made in the design of the corners of buildings that have been identified as focal points.
Parks and Open Space

Two new parks are proposed in the plan to mark the Core at the intersection of South Military Highway and George Washington Highway. A planted boulevard along South Military Highway and new street scape will provide shade for pedestrians and bicyclists. Additional public parks are proposed to provide opportunities for new public open space along the corridor.