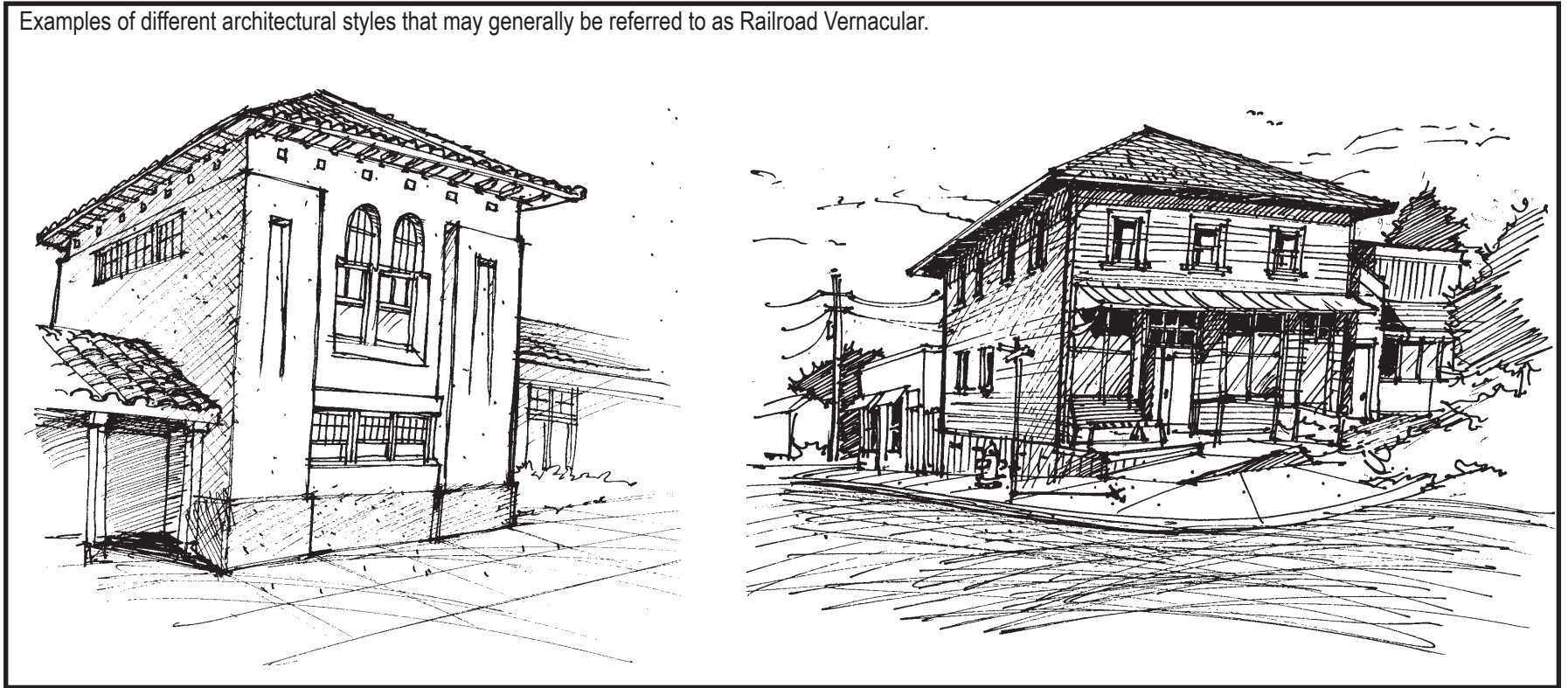


## Architectural Guidelines for the Railroad District

San Luis Obispo has adopted citywide architectural guidelines which apply to new buildings, significant remodels, site improvements, and public area improvements. The Railroad District Architectural Guidelines are to supplement the citywide architectural guidelines and are to be applied in a similar manner, except that they apply only to the Railroad District as shown in Figure 4. Within this area, new development, remodels and additions, site improvements, and publicly-funded projects should follow these guidelines. Property owners, developers, designers, City staff and advisory bodies, such as the Cultural Heritage Committee, Architectural Review Commission and the Planning Commission will use these guidelines to review development projects, consistent with Municipal Code Chapter 2.48.

Many of the older buildings in the Railroad District are generally described as “Railroad Vernacular” buildings. A variety of architectural styles fall under this category. Some of the more common architectural elements exemplifying this architectural style are illustrated in this document. These examples provide a “menu” of architectural elements which can be incorporated into new development projects in the Railroad District. New buildings need not include all of these elements, nor be designed to be a replica of a historic building. The Cultural Heritage Committee and Architectural Review Commission interpret the guidelines and will consider contemporary architectural styles which are consistent with these guidelines and which complement the District’s historic character.

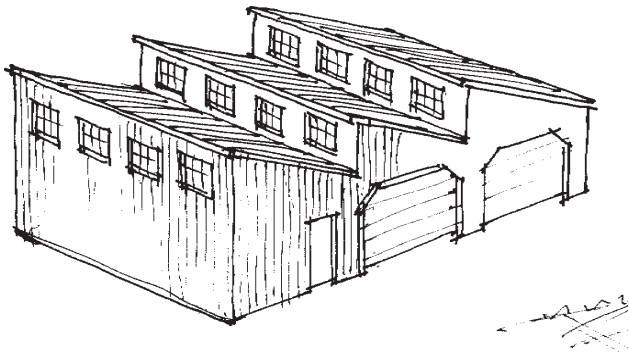
Examples of different architectural styles that may generally be referred to as Railroad Vernacular.



# architectural guidelines

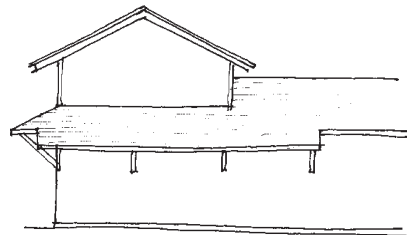
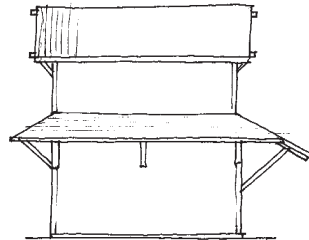
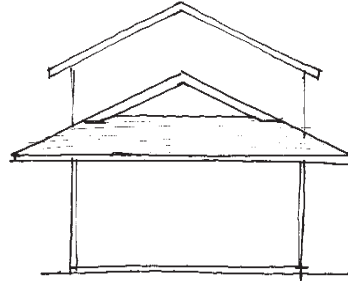
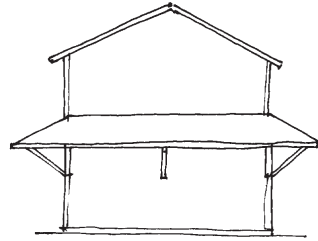
## Building Form, Massing, and Roof Lines

1. Simple, rectilinear building forms should predominate.
2. Lower building level (ground floor) massing should be horizontal with equal or lesser volume on upper levels.
3. Use medium-sloping roofs, generally 4:12 - 8:12 pitch.
4. False-front buildings with shed roofs and parapets may be used.
5. Gable, hip, and shed roof forms are typical, with some combinations and minor variations.
6. Deep roof overhangs are common, particularly for commercial buildings, at ground floor level.
7. Roof overhangs are typically supported with exposed, diagonal support braces or decorative brackets.
8. Simple gable, hipped, or Dutch hipped dormers can be used for light or ventilation.

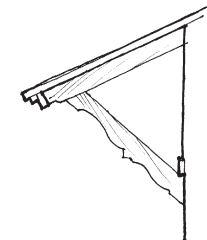
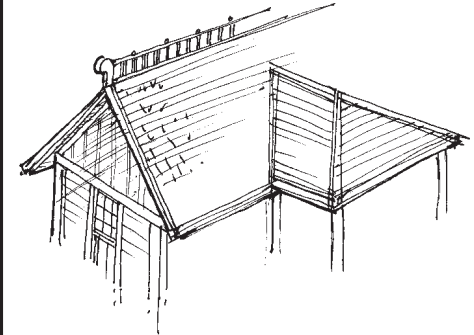
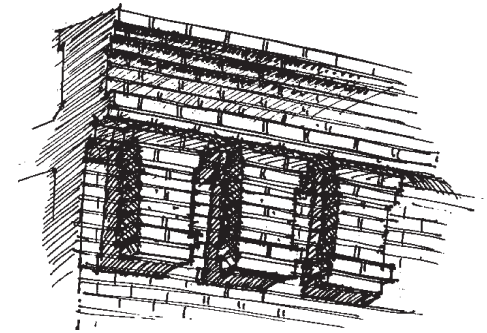
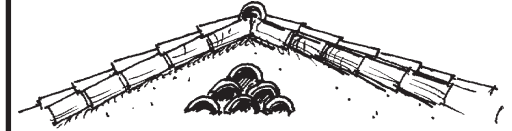


Shed roofed buildings help increase light and ventilation in industrial buildings and contribute to the character of the District.

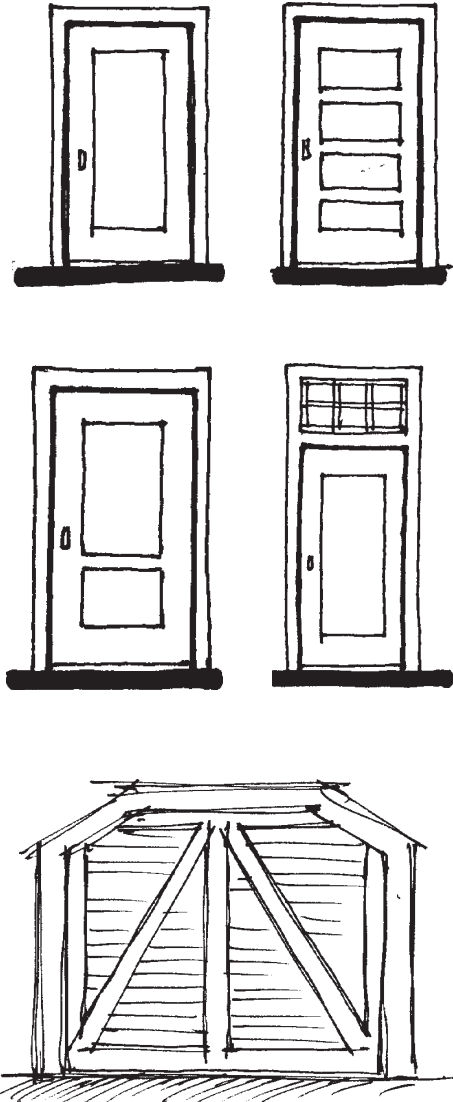
Simple, rectilinear building forms.



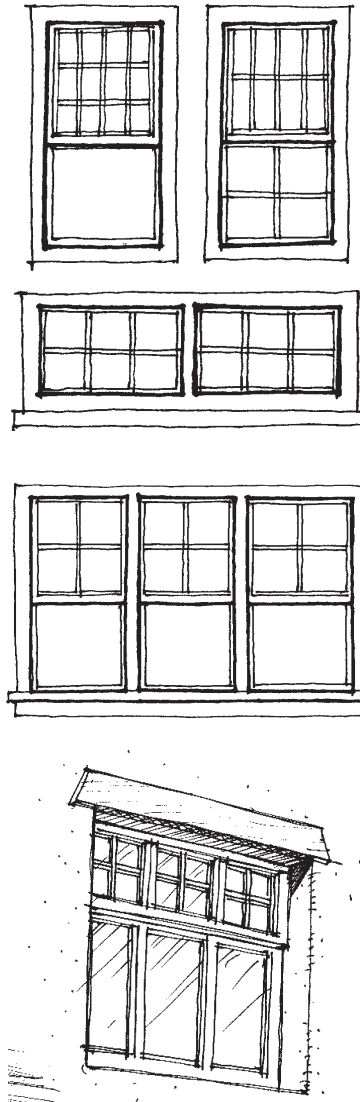
Roof lines and details.



Single and multi-panel doors emphasizing symmetry.

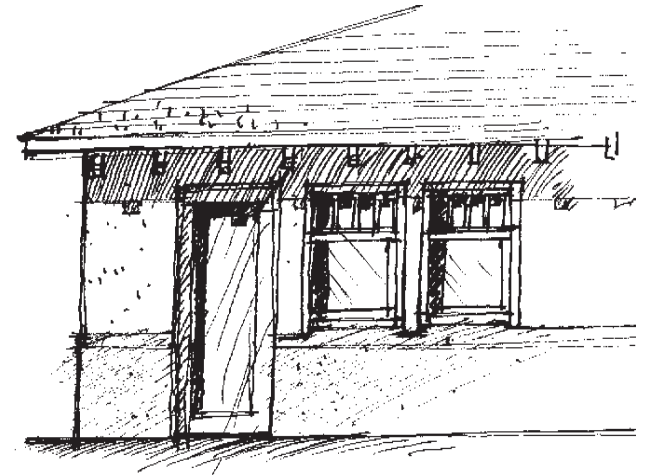


Various windows, single and grouped, with divided lites.



## Doors and Windows

1. Doors and windows should emphasize symmetry and be vertically oriented.
2. Doors should typically be single or multi-panel, occasionally with glazing and transom windows above doors.
3. Windows are typically fixed, or double hung, often with divided lites.
4. Windows are often grouped in multiples of two or three, side by side.
5. Horizontal windows may be used with divided lites and may be grouped.
6. Doors and windows should generally have wood or plaster trim.
7. Windows in plaster buildings may be arched and recessed, sometimes with wood trim.



This rendering shows many of the elements which contribute to the Railroad Vernacular style, including eaves with exposed rafters, a single panel door, and recessed windows with divided lites.

# architectural guidelines

## Surface Treatment and Colors

### Wood Buildings

1. Horizontal and vertical shiplap, “V-rustic” siding, or board and batten siding are common.
2. Shingles are often used as infill siding for gable ends or above doors and windows, away from people contact areas.
3. Wood trim is commonly used to create decorative patterns.
4. Siding may change direction in the same plane to provide variety in surface pattern and texture.
5. Horizontal trim may be used to separate board patterns or to create a wainscot effect.
6. Emphasize lighter earthtones such as tan and ochre, with contrasting trim and roof colors. Accent colors are generally low chroma and relatively neutral colors.
7. Common roof materials include composition shingle, rolled asphalt roofing, built-up roofing, low profile corrugated metal, and barrel tile. Barrel tile is occasionally used to accent ridges on composition shingle roofs.
8. If chimneys are used, they are generally of brick with simple ornamentation at the cap.
9. Foundations are commonly emphasized with brick, stone, or plaster wainscot.

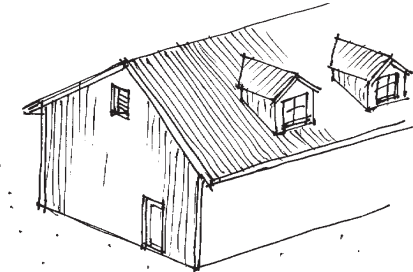
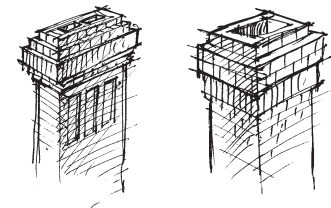
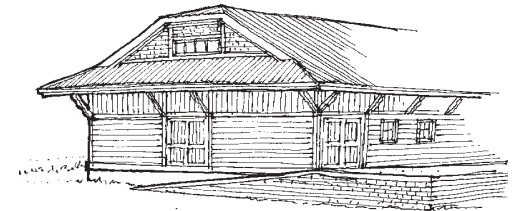
### Plaster/Masonry Buildings

1. Brick is commonly used as an exterior building material.
2. Plaster should have a smooth, hand-finished appearance. Stucco or heavily-troweled finishes should be avoided.
3. Plaster buildings are usually white or off-white with accent plaster colors at wainscot or in accent areas. Accent colors should be pastel or low chroma.
4. Plaster building wainscots at lower walls may be flush and painted simply, or dimensional.
5. Roof material is generally barrel tile, or sometimes “diamond pattern” or similar decorative composition shingle roofing with accent tiles. Built-up roofing is also common.

### Auxiliary Buildings

1. Auxiliary buildings may be sided with the same material as adjacent principle buildings on the same lot; or if solitary, wood or unpainted corrugated metal panel siding is common.
2. Roofs should generally consist of composition shingles or corrugated metal panels.

Wood or corrugated metal panel siding, or plaster are common surfaces. Stucco should be avoided.





## Architectural Details

1. Commercial buildings generally have simple detailing with little decoration or ornamentation.
2. Some carved shapes are used for rafter tiles, brackets, roof eave bracing, and roof gutters.
3. More elaborate ornamentation is common on masonry buildings, including parapet details, towers or decorative cornices or quoins.
4. Finials and decorative wood work is sometimes used at roof ridges.
5. Plaster corners are typically rounded.
6. Connection details, particularly for large structures, are visually emphasized, sometimes with timber connectors, bolts, brackets or other similar hardware.
7. Linear raised decks or platforms common with structures with raised floors.
8. Exterior-mounted mechanical equipment, including HVAC units, fire suppression equipment, and antennas should be architecturally

Elaborate ornamentation is common on masonry buildings. The City will consider exceptions to the Sign Regulations to encourage historic sign designs.



screened.

## Signs and Awnings

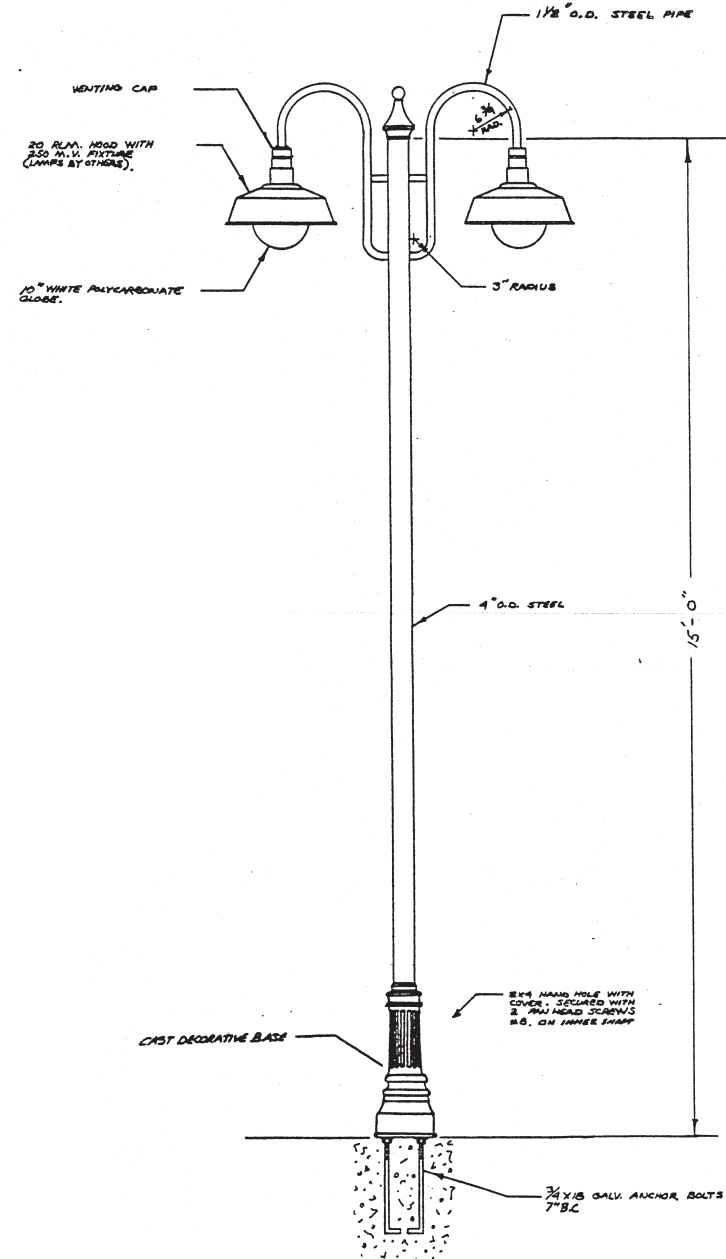
1. Signage should generally be non-illuminated. Spot lighting should be used where lighting is needed.
2. Signs should either be monument type, or painted or applied individual letters directly on building walls.
3. The City will consider exceptions to Sign Regulations to encourage historic sign designs and placement.
4. Signs within the Railroad right-of-way should be simple, clearly legible, and reflect historical railroad graphic standards and colors.

# architectural guidelines

## Site and Public Area Improvements

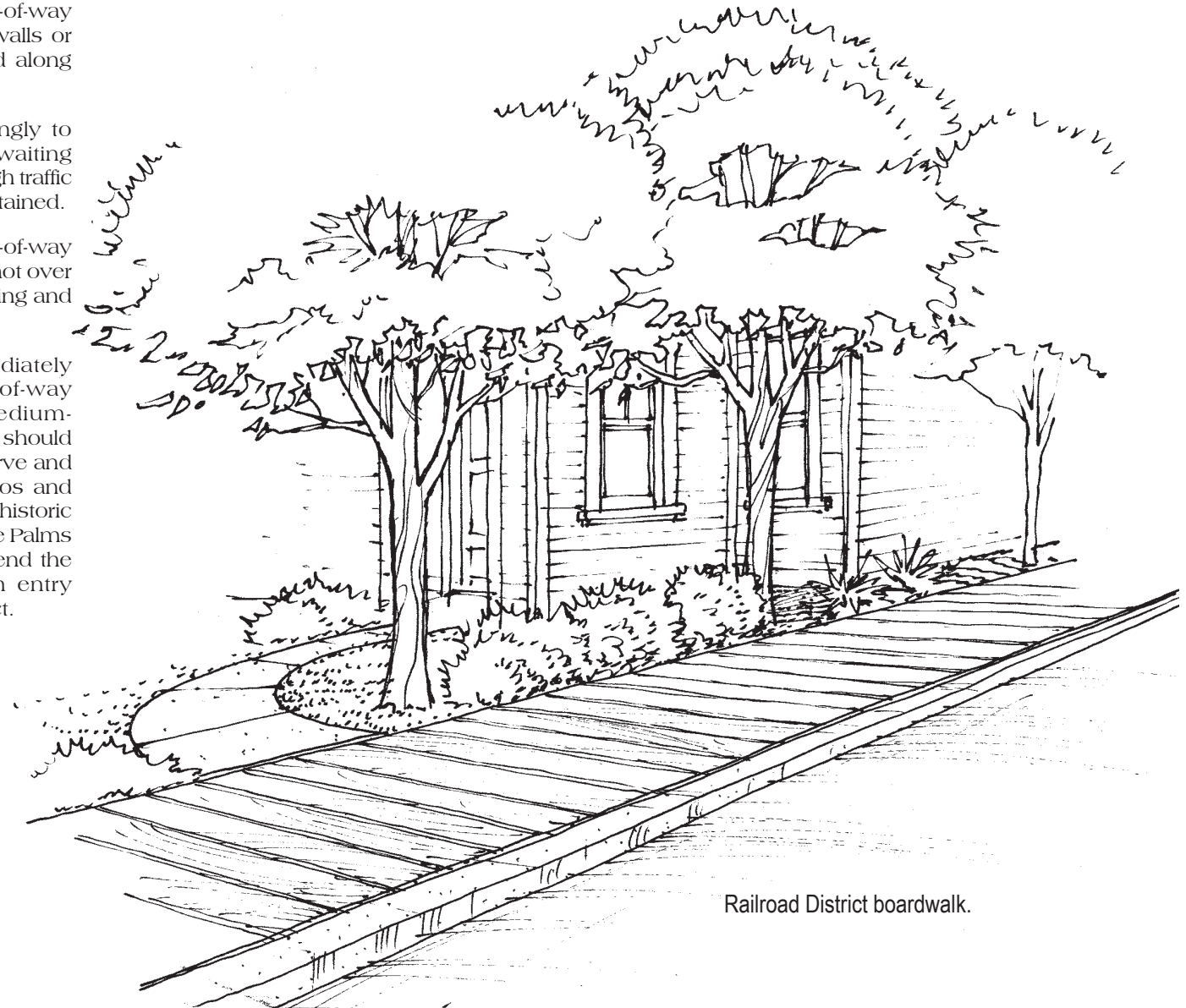
1. Site improvements, such as seating areas, bollards, stairs, ramps and walkways should be designed to complement the railroad architectural character. Public improvements such as, but not limited to, traffic controls, street lights, signs, benches and trash containers should be designed in a historic character similar to styles prevalent in the Railroad District before 1950, and they shall be approved by the Architectural Review Commission before the final design is completed.
2. Lighting in the depot area should closely resemble the design of the railroad era downlights used in the passenger platform area. All lighting should be shielded to prevent glare onto adjacent properties.
3. Pole lights, bollards, information signs, trees and other vertical landscape features should be used to create repetitive, linear, rhythmic elements along the railroad corridor to complement the District's historic character.
4. In the passenger depot and other high traffic areas, an open-style, decorative fencing and/or rails should be used. In non-traffic areas abutting the railroad right-of-way, storage areas, construction yards and similar uses should be visually screened from the railroad right-of-way. Appropriate fencing materials include vinyl-clad chainlink, steel picket, wrought iron and other similar, low-maintenance open fences which discourage graffiti. Combination wood and metal rails may also be appropriate. Solid, plain masonry and concrete walls; and residential-style wood fencing should generally be avoided or accompanied by climbing vines to discourage graffiti.
5. Security fencing, such as barbed or concertina wire, should be minimized where visible from the railroad yard or a public way. The Architectural Review Commission may approve the use of security fencing when such materials are visually compatible with their surroundings and used sparingly.
6. Public sidewalks along portions of Osos, Santa Barbara, Church, Emily, High, and Roundhouse streets within the Railroad District should be a City-approved wood boardwalk design.
7. Decorative paving using patterns or integral color is encouraged in specific areas to define or clarify circulation or activity areas.
8. Pedestrian bridges, underpasses and other transportation- or rail-related structures should use historic materials and design elements. Possible elements include: metal and heavy timber structural supports with exposed connectors; local stone or brick foundations or bases; and use of spur track, railroad ties or other railroad equipment and materials.

**Figure 26: Railroad District pedestrian lighting, typical**



## Landscape Design

1. Planting areas should be provided: 1) in or adjacent to outdoor public use areas; 2) along the railroad right-of-way to screen storage yards, solid walls or fences, or unsightly views; and along public street parkways.
2. Planting should be used sparingly to define pedestrian use areas, waiting areas, and other high visibility/high traffic areas that can be regularly maintained.
3. Planting within the railroad right-of-way should be low-profile, generally not over 12-15 feet tall, to provide screening and color.
4. Tree planting within or immediately adjacent to the railroad right-of-way should emphasize open, medium-height canopy trees; and trees should be selected and placed to preserve and frame scenic vistas of the Morros and surrounding hillsides. Within the historic Railroad Yard, Canary Island Date Palms or equal should be used to extend the Southern Pacific theme as an entry statement for the Railroad District.



Railroad District boardwalk.

# architectural guidelines

## Residential Buildings

1. New residential buildings should generally maintain the prevailing spacing, scale, setbacks and character of older houses and apartments along Osos, Santa Barbara, and Church streets.
2. New houses and apartments should generally reflect the District's predominant architectural styles, which include, but are not limited to California Bungalow, Spanish Revival, Italianate, and Victorian. New development should include architectural features common to the particular architectural style.
3. Raised foundations, covered front porches, and recessed front entries are common residential architectural features.
4. Architectural detailing at roof gable ends, roof eaves, windows, doors, railings, foundations, and chimneys should be emphasized, and be used consistently on all building elevations.
5. Site features such as exterior lighting, paving, walls, fences, railings and landscaping should be selected for ease of maintenance and for compatibility with traditional designs and materials.
6. Utility areas, trash enclosures, and uncovered parking spaces (except in driveways) should generally be screened with landscaping and/or low walls or fencing.

## Remodels and Additions

1. Remodels and additions should be sensitive to the building's original character and to the character of adjacent buildings. Roof pitch, building form and materials, windows and doors, and architectural detailing should, where possible, match existing building features and be compatible with the scale, spacing, setbacks and massing of adjacent buildings within the Railroad Historic District.
2. Building colors and materials should complement the building's historic character. When remodeling designated historic structures, materials and details should be used honestly such as wood sash windows to replace existing wood windows. Simulated or veneer products should generally be avoided.
3. When remodeling or adding on to designated historic structures, property owners and designers are encouraged to follow the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

**Figure 27: Residential Remodel and Addition**



Above: This rendering shows the potential for remodelling and expanding residential structures while maintaining the architectural character of the Railroad District. Below: A photograph of the structure.

