



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** March 24, 2010

**TO:** Project Applicants for Design Review

**FROM:** Clare Hartman, Supervising Planner *Clare*

**SUBJECT:** Design Concept Narrative - Examples

On January 5, 2010, the City Council amended the Introduction Section of the City of *Santa Rosa Design Guidelines*, specifically Subsection C, to include new language regarding "Superior Design". The amendment includes a new table entitled Framework of Design Review (attached) which includes review criteria by which Superior Design may be measured.

As part of the Design Review application process for projects to be reviewed by the Design Review Board, applicants shall now prepare a Design Concept Narrative that responds to the Framework's review criteria. One example of a Design Concept Narrative has been provided (attached) for reference.

If an applicant or designer follows the Framework of Design Review, and the project is consistent with the *Design Guidelines*, the City will consider the resulting design to be "Superior" and the project will be granted Design Review approval.

## FRAMEWORK OF DESIGN REVIEW:

**All projects promote Superior Design by exhibiting thoughtful relationships in the following areas:**

**Site; Architecture; Landscaping; Placemaking / Livability; and Sustainability.**

**Project design is also consistent with the Design Guidelines.**

<b>GOAL:</b>	<b>REVIEW CRITERIA:</b>	<b>FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL:</b>
<i>Promote Superior Design through thoughtful response to the following:</i>	<i>What is the design concept and how does it relate to:</i>	<i>Design concept reflects thoughtful consideration and contextual response; promotes Superior Design</i>
<b>Site: Natural and Built Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design appropriate for its location and use</li> <li>- Natural features of the site</li> <li>- Connectivity to vehicular, transit, bicycle and pedestrian networks</li> <li>- Respect for historical neighborhood, where occurs</li> </ul>	Response to, integration and/or incorporation with the natural and built environments as an expression of the design concept.
<b>Architecture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Form; Massing</li> <li>- Originality and/or Innovation of building form</li> <li>- Materials; Details</li> <li>- Innovative use of real material</li> <li>- Identifiable and meaningful expression of the building's function</li> </ul>	Use of form, massing, materials and detailing as an expression of the design concept.
<b>Landscaping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integration of plant and tree materials with site conditions</li> <li>- Use of planting and landscape walls to create outdoor rooms</li> <li>- Retention and maximization of heritage trees on site</li> <li>- Design appropriate for the architecture and scale of the site</li> </ul>	Articulation and definition of spaces with appropriate landscape materials as an expression of the design concept.
<b>Placemaking / Livability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conveyance of a perception and preference for human spaces</li> <li>- Creation or reinforcement of focal points or nodes of activity.</li> <li>- Relationship and connectivity between human spaces</li> </ul>	Site plan, landscaping, building design and placement that creates, contributes and/or reinforces sense of place or establishes a suitable and dignified living environment as an expression of the design concept.
<b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Site Resources</li> <li>- Water Conservation</li> <li>- Energy Efficiency</li> <li>- Materials</li> <li>- Air Quality</li> </ul>	Promotes responsible and sustainable use of resources and/or promotes healthier lifestyles as an expression of the design concept.
<b>Overall Design Concept</b>	<b><i>Thoughtful, integrated design; also consistent with the Design Guidelines</i></b>	<b><i>Approval</i></b>

## ST. FRANCIS CENTRAL COAST HIGH SCHOOL

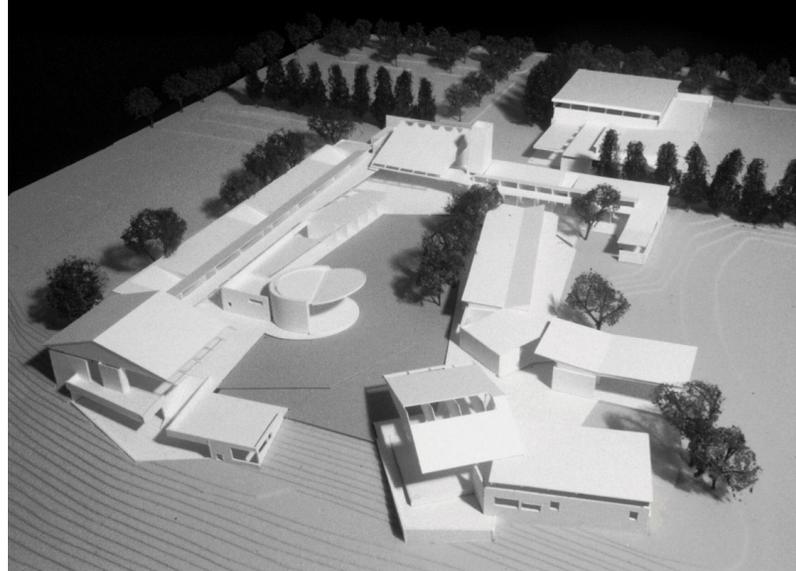
Watsonville, California

The master plan and phased design of this 15-acre campus includes an arts and science center, gymnasium, library, chapel, classrooms, playing fields and administrative facilities, with design that respects the site's archeological sensitivities and scenic surroundings.

The master plan synthesizes natural light, heat gain control and natural ventilation into a campus organization and tectonic expression that facilitates the educational mission of the Salesian Order.

Central to the Salesian concept of education is the idea that there is a transparency between teachers and students. The teachers “go with” the students as opposed to standing apart from them. This concept of transparency was made manifest in the site plan for the school both in the organization of the informal agora in which all program spaces are apparent, one to the other, and in the extensive use of literal transparency on the northern edges of all building components.

The educational agora is formed by heavy block walls to the south and west sides and almost complete transparency to the north and east sides. This tectonic merges the Salesian concept of transparency with a passive energy strategy appropriate for this site.



## PROJECT DESIGN NARRATIVE

Museum on the Square promotes superior design through the following areas ----

### An appropriate, imaginative treatment of the site

The project re-uses an existing five-story empty concrete building, and employs the building as a platform for five additional stories. The building is at a scale and height consistent with the intense use of the downtown core anticipated by the General Plan, and connects intimately with public transit, bicycle and vehicular networks. A previous parking lot on the south side of the building is re-used for commercial deliveries and residential parking. It is also readapted as an HVAC platform and a pedestrian link to the Transit Mall and public parking garage across the street. An automobile elevator for vehicular access to basement residential parking will be located in this lot, with residential parking accessing the site at the access tunnel through the building from Third Street.

### Thoughtful, integrated architecture

Concrete exterior walls on the north and south elevations of the existing building will be removed to admit light, provide natural ventilation and frame views. An elegant, transparent glass curtain wall on the north and south façades will sheath the concrete frame of the existing building. The weight and strength of the older building remains --- juxtaposed and integrated with lighter-weight, transparent exterior features, north and south. At street level, the north façade is pulled back and articulated to emphasize the building lobby and Sonoma County Museum entrance. This treatment widens the public travel way and softens the current abrupt presence of the building on Third Street, tying the building more closely to Courthouse Square. The place-making museum signage is integrated into the curtain wall as an architectural feature and not mere add-on element.

Five additional floors continue the objective of transparency and lightness. Forty-three residential units, both one- and two-bedroom, are arranged around a large sixth floor common, planted terrace that faces south at a height allowing views above the public garage nearby. Ned Kahn's "Wind Trellis" will crown the north façade. The east elevation --- which may ultimately be obscured by a tall building on the adjoining, under-developed site --- applies a metal sheathing and long vertical inset to the additional floors and existing roof parapet to avoid a "blank wall" appearance to an orientation that cannot be readily fenestrated.

### Careful implementation of landscaping elements

Together with the architecture, Third Street replanting, sidewalk reconstruction and architectural bollards will help enliven a streetscape that is currently dead in function, inadequate in dimension and devoid of attractive color. South planting and paving emphasizes the pedestrian connection to the Transit Mall and adjoining garage. Site fencing of perforated metal echoes the clean transparency of the building architecture and will be further humanized with fence planting. The elevated terrace will be planted and shaded for usability. The terrace size, at some 5,000 s.f., makes this element a key design feature organizing the upper floors and creating maximum opportunities for light and ventilation.

### Attention to place making/ livability

Throughout the project, human-scale design is emphasized, ranging from the Third Street arcade and revived sidewalk/street interface to the pedestrian connection on the south end. The long lobby unites the south and north building functions. The elevated terrace, the fence transparency and planting promotes active street-level uses and exhibit a particular attention to how public, visitors, tenants and commercial occupants will use and enjoy the spaces.

### Sustainability

Expected to achieve LEED Gold standard, Museum on the Square is an example of successful sustainability. More than two thirds of project square footage represents adaptive reuse. Only a stair tower and related structure has been removed.

See the separate section, "Sustainability," for further comment and a LEED checklist.

### The Overall Design Concept

Integrating adaptive reuse with new construction, a blast-proof concrete structure with a harsh street interface will become a light and transparent participant in downtown activity. Active street-level uses including the museum and restaurant spaces along with residential floors will activate this building beyond business hours. The four office floors provide attractive urban lease spaces of a size rarely available in downtown. They have already attracted high profile creative tenants. Museum on the Square is a thoughtful and integrated design consistent with City policies and attaining the standard of superior design. It will have a deep and needed impact on the aesthetic and economic development of the city core.