North Berkeley BART Station Area Objective Design Standards (ODS)

ADOPTED DECEMBER 12, 2023 (Resolution No. 71,130-N.S.)

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Introduction and Policy Framework

Introduction

The Objective Design Standards (ODS) for the North Berkley BART Station Area establish detailed design standards for future transit-oriented development. The ODS build upon adopted zoning and reflect the goals and priorities identified in the City of Berkeley (City) and BART's Joint Vision and Priorities document, described below, and other adopted policies and regulations (described further below).

The ODS are based on a thorough analysis of the North Berkeley BART site, considering existing street sections, neighborhood conditions and building types. The analysis also considered City and BART requirements with respect to station operation, access and safety, based on what can be assessed at this time from the proposed development concept. Development of the ODS has included consideration of community input.

This document provides the site context and policy framework for the ODS followed by a description of the design intent and detailed technical standards and definitions.

Site Context

The North Berkeley BART station site is bounded by Sacramento, Delaware, Acton, and Virginia Streets. The site is divided by the Zone of Influence (ZOI) of the underground train box that runs diagonally through the site from the corner of Sacramento and Delaware Streets to Virginia and Acton Streets (Figure 1). The ZOI is an approximately 140-foot wide area that includes the underground station plus buffer areas on either side where buildings would require special foundations. The existing Traction Power Substation (TPSS) and required maintenance and staging area is located at the corner of Acton and Virginia Streets. The site slopes downward from Sacramento Street to Acton Street. The change in elevation is approximately 17 feet.

Figure 1. **Site Context**

Policy Framework

Several of the City and BART's adopted agreements, policies and regulations form the framework for the Objective Design Standards (ODS). The ODS reflect consideration of these documents, as well as State law, site planning and financial feasibility studies, and the extensive community engagement undertaken as part of the planning process to build transit-oriented development at the Ashby and North Berkeley BART sites. Key guidance is provided by:

- **June 2022 City and BART Memorandum of Agreement ("MOA").**[1] The MOA clarifies the processes that BART and the City will pursue to develop BART-owned property at the North Berkeley and Ashby BART station areas. The MOA establishes objectives and minimum requirements for the North Berkeley BART transit-oriented development (TOD) project, such as minimum affordability requirements, a minimum of 1000 bedrooms, and the requirement to prepare ODS. State laws, such as AB 2923 and the State Density Bonus Law, limit the City's discretionary authority over projects that meet specified development standards and affordability levels. In recognition of this and the City's substantial contribution of $53 million of the City's affordable housing funding towards affordable housing at both the North Berkeley and Ashby BART sites, the City and BART have agreed to the process defined in the MOA to develop, approve and enforce ODS adopted by the City Council. BART will enforce the ODS through its real estate agreements, provided the adopted ODS will not unduly restrict potential development.

- **City of Berkeley Zoning.** In June 2022, the City Council adopted a new zoning district for the North Berkeley and Ashby BART station areas – BMC Section 23.202.150 Residential – BART Mixed Use Zoning District (R-BMU) – and related amendments to the Berkeley Municipal Code.[2] The zoning includes development standards, open space requirements, parking requirements (for the mixed-use development), and permitted uses, as well as some limited requirements relating to shaping the volume and massing of future development. Greater detail related to building form was not included because it would be addressed during the subsequent process to prepare ODS for each station area. The R-BMU zoning district includes development standards that address the following:
    - Street-Facing Ground Floor Frontages
    - Open Space
    - Setbacks and Step-Backs
    - Frontage Improvements
    - Ground Floor Residential and Non-Residential Frontage
    - On-Site Pedestrian Access
    - Transparency
    - Building Entrances
    - Parking Design and Access

- **City and BART Joint Vision and Priorities for Transit-Oriented Development at the Ashby and North Berkeley BART Station ("JVP").**[3] In June 2022, the City and BART adopted the Joint Vision and Priorities for Transit-Oriented Development for Ashby and North Berkeley Stations (JVP). The JVP expresses the City and BART's shared, high-level expectations for future development. The JVP provides important guidance on the following topics: Affordable Housing,

[1] https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/UpdatedMOA%20North%20Berkeley-Ashby%20TOD%2005.16.23.pdf
[2] https://berkeley.municipal.codes/BMC/23.202.150
[3] (See Exhibit B)
https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/UpdatedMOA%20North%20Berkeley-Ashby%20TOD%2005.16.23.pdf

Public and Civic Space, Land Use, Building Form, and Station Access and Parking. The JVP includes aspirational statements as well as minimum requirements. Each topic includes an overall vision statement, followed by "shared priorities" for both station areas, and additional priorities specific to each station, where applicable.

- **2020 Pedestrian Plan, 2017 Berkeley Bicycle Plan**. The City's 2020 Pedestrian Plan and 2017 Bicycle Plan sets policy for streetscape design and character including preferred sidewalk widths.[4,5]
- **North Berkeley BART Station Access Plan.** As part of the development process, BART requires a station access plan to be prepared which evaluates current and projected access needs to the North Berkeley BART Station, assesses how the proposed TOD project will impact these needs, and proposes solutions to ensure safe and efficient access to the project area, including city streets.

Role of ODS

The goal of the ODS is to effectively balance and synthesize the JVP, zoning, the MOA, and community input into standards that will guide development. The ODS play a pivotal role in guaranteeing that the project design incorporates essential features and elements that are consistent with the JVP's identified goals and priorities, while balancing priorities to both "maximize the number of new homes" and "consider the scale and character of the surrounding built environment."[6]

[4] https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/adopted-plans/pedestrian-plan-2020
[5] https://berkeleyca.gov/your-government/our-work/adopted-plans/berkeley-bicycle-plan
[6] See JVP sections: Affordable Housing (Shared Priorities, A. Housing Priorities) and Building Form (Shared Priorities, B. Context).

Part I: ODS Intent and Objectives

The ODS are standards that address the public realm and building design, and include a definitions section that explains terms used in the standards. Part I details the specific policy guidance from the JVP, zoning, and other source documents that inform the ODS, while Part II includes detailed technical standards that ensure that the proposed development achieves the design objectives outlined in Part I.

Public Realm

Internal Connections

These standards address internal circulation and design of streetscapes surrounding the North Berkeley BART site. The primary focus is to provide ample and suitable pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular access to the site while ensuring a high-quality public realm and attractive streetscapes. The ODS describe internal street connections and the public circulation network by defining locations to enhance the station entrance and to effectively link key elements such as the Ohlone Greenway and other public or pedestrian facilities.

The ODS for Internal Connections address the following topics:

- **Mid-block Connections and Publicly Accessible Walkways** to break up the site into smaller blocks, and provide new connections to the station and lines of site between buildings.
- **Public Circulation Network** to provide a pedestrian connection between all buildings and amenities.

Key elements of JVP and/or zoning related to the ODS regarding internal connections:

- **Ohlone Greenway Connection.** The development should include a landscaped (as feasible given BART operational needs) protected bikeway that connects the disjointed ends of the Ohlone Greenway to each other and to BART, providing a primary access route and orientation of the development that enables a prioritized pedestrian and bicycle connection from approximately the southeast corner of the site to the northwest corner of the site and across the streets. (JVP: Public and Civic Space, Priorities for North Berkeley, A. Ohlone Greenway Connection).
- **Public Space Use.** Public space should provide opportunities for both active and passive public use, with strong connections to the station entrance, the Ohlone Greenway, or other public spaces and pedestrian facilities. (JVP: Public and Civic Space, Priorities for North Berkeley, B. Public Space Use)
- **Location and Orientation**. The development should locate and design new buildings to enhance public spaces while mitigating impacts on existing neighbors through site orientation, setbacks, lines of sight between buildings, landscape and topography. (JVP: Building Form, Shared Priorities, C. Location and Orientation).
- **Small Blocks.** The development should prioritize site designs with smaller blocks and building footprints instead of larger blocks. (JVP: Building Form, Shared Priorities, E. Small Blocks).
- **On-site Pedestrian Access: Internal Connections.** A system of publicly accessible pedestrian walkways (e.g. public sidewalks) shall connect all buildings on a site to each other, to on-site bicycle and automobile parking and drop-off areas, to any on-site open space areas or pedestrian amenities, and to the publicly accessible pedestrian circulation network. (BMC Section 23.202.150(F)(9)(a)).
- **On-site Pedestrian Access: To the Public Circulation Network.** A publicly accessible on-site walkway shall connect the building lobby entry or entries on each street or on-site pathway frontage to the public pedestrian circulation network. Connections to publicly accessible on-site

walkways provided at least every 300 feet along portions of the development site perimeter that are adjacent to public rights-of-way. (BMC Section 23.202.150(F)(9)(b)).

- **On-site Pedestrian Access: To Neighbors.** Publicly accessible pedestrian access shall be provided from residential and commercial building entrances and public space to adjoining residential and commercial areas. (BMC Section 23.202.150(F)(9)(c)).
- **On-site Pedestrian Access: To Transit.** Publicly accessible pedestrian connections from the public circulation network shall be provided to all transit stops and entrances including elevators outside the station. (BMC Section 23.202.150(F)(9)(d)).

Streetscape Design

The existing sidewalks along the perimeter streets of the North Berkeley BART station were designed for the existing use of the site as a surface parking lot. However, with the upcoming development of residential buildings, sidewalks shall be improved to provide adequate space and landscaping to accommodate the change of use. Improvements should create ample space and incorporate landscaping to better serve the needs of the community. The improved sidewalks will require a lot line adjustment to the new back-of-sidewalk.

The ODS for Sidewalk Design the following topics:

- **Minimum Total Width** to accommodate the needs of all users and landscaping.
- **Minimum Clear Path of Travel** to ensure comfort and safety of pedestrians.
- **Minimum Planting Area** to create a buffer between the street and walking path.
- **Street Trees** to provide shade, reduce heat island effect, mitigate the size and scale of new development, and ensure comfort of pedestrians.

Key elements of JVP and/or zoning related to the ODS regarding sidewalk design:

- **Street Design.** The design of surrounding streets should be considered as a strategy to accommodate public space needs, increase the tree canopy, and improve safety for pedestrians and bicycles. Explore the feasibility of reducing the width and number of traffic lanes in adjacent streets to their original (pre-BART) condition, aligning curbs with adjacent blocks in a manner that builds upon and is consistent with the City and BART's recent Complete Streets and roadway improvement projects in the area. Streets may retain their current width where there is some functional use for the extra space, such as bike lanes and cycle tracks that previously did not exist, and there may be bulb-outs at intersections. Perimeter sidewalks should consider generous pedestrian space and tree canopy. (JVP, Public Civic Space, Priorities for North Berkeley, C. Street Design)
- **Adjacent Streets.** Consider the role and design of adjacent streets – including Sacramento Street, Delaware Street, Virginia Street, and Acton Street – in multi-modal access planning for the North Berkeley Station. (JVP, Station Access, Priorities for North Berkeley, A. Adjacent Streets).
- **Frontage Improvements**. Any area between a building and the front property line, or any area between a building and on-site public space or the public circulation network, shall be improved as part of a wider sidewalk, outdoor seating area, outdoor dining area, yard area, landscaping, or other usable open space. (BMC Section 23.202.150(F)(8))
- **Preferred Width of Sidewalk Zones**. The 2020 Pedestrian Plan establishes preferred width of sidewalk zones. The surrounding streets fall into the following categories with the proposed redevelopment: Sacramento: Mixed-Use Boulevard, Total Sidewalk Width 16'-24'; Delaware: Neighborhood Connector, Total Sidewalk Width 13'-16'; Acton and Virginia: Total Sidewalk Width 10-14'. The City of Berkeley used this guideline along with consideration of the minimum project size (i.e., 1000 bedrooms) to determine sidewalk widths in the ODS (2020 Pedestrian Plan. Appendix B: Engineering & Design Guidance B-8: Preferred Width of Sidewalk Zones)

Building Setbacks

Building setbacks ensure smooth transition from public to private space, minimize building shadows on streets, create interesting street-facing frontages, and provide opportunities for landscaping.

The minimum and maximum dimensions for setbacks in the ODS are consistent with and required by the R-BMU zoning. The ODS regulates the type of projections that are allowed within the minimum setback area and defines a minimum percentage of landscaped area.

The ODS for Building Setbacks address the following topics:

- **Building Projections** to allow for limited building articulation within the setback area to create human-scaled design and visual interest.
- **Building Setback Landscaping** to create minimum areas for landscaping consistent with the neighborhood character.
- **Maximum Continuous Façade** to break up the massing and create smaller, human-scale facades.

Key elements of JVP and/or zoning related to building setbacks:

- **Street Design.** The design of surrounding streets should be considered as a strategy to accommodate public space needs, increase the tree canopy, and improve safety for pedestrians and bicycles. Explore the feasibility of reducing the width and number of traffic lanes in adjacent streets to their original (pre-BART) condition, aligning curbs with adjacent blocks in a manner that builds upon and is consistent with the City and BART's recent Complete Streets and roadway improvement projects in the area. Streets may retain their current width where there is some functional use for the extra space, such as bike lanes and cycle tracks that previously did not exist, and there may be bulb-outs at intersections. Perimeter sidewalks should consider generous pedestrian space and tree canopy. (JVP: Public Civic Space, Priorities for North Berkeley, C. Street Design)
- **Context.** Building design should consider the scale and character of the surrounding built environment. (JVP: Building Form, Priorities for North Berkeley, B. Context)
- **Location and Orientation**. Locate and design new buildings to enhance public spaces while mitigating impacts on existing neighbors through site orientation, setbacks, lines of sight between buildings, landscape and topography. (JVP: Building Form, Priorities for North Berkeley, C. Location and Orientation)
- **Front Setbacks.** Setbacks are not required at Sacramento Street. Setbacks along all other frontages along public rights-of-way and internal publicly-accessible pathways shall range from five feet (minimum) to 15 feet (maximum) for at least 50 percent of any building's linear street frontage, including all frontages within 50 lineal feet of an intersecting corner. (BMC Section 23.202.150(F)(4))

Building Design

Building Height

Priorities in the JVP emphasize incorporating variations in building height and design at both stations. The primary objective is to ensure that the development adheres to good urban design principles by creating variations in volume, while taking into account the surrounding residential neighborhoods. To achieve this, the ODS will step down building heights along the perimeter of the site and narrower street, thereby ensuring new development blends with the existing scale of the neighborhood. In line with this approach, the JVP proposes concentrating higher density, larger building forms, and increased height near strategic locations such as the Ohlone Greenway and the center of the site, as well as along Sacramento Street. The ODS provide standards that are consistent with the R-BMU zoning district maximum height of 7 stories/80 feet.

Future development on the site may be eligible to utilize provisions of the State Density Bonus Law for increases in density and/or concessions and/or waivers of development standards (such as height) that would otherwise physically preclude the construction of the development. Thus, the ODS provide alternative standards for a building of up to 8 stories, or 85 feet in the event a developer successfully obtains a waiver of the 7-story/80 feet R-BMU maximum height limit via the Density Bonus Law. In the event that a developer obtains a waiver of the 7-story/80 feet R-BMU maximum height limit pursuant to the Density Bonus Law, the ODS contemplates a building of up to 8 stories/85 feet in the interior of the site and along a portion of Sacramento Street, along with a lower building height and massing along the Virginia and Acton Street frontages and at specific corners where Sacramento Street intersects with Virginia and Delaware Streets.

The ODS for Building Height addresses the following topic:

- **Maximum building heights**- to allow buildings to step down along the street edge, minimize shade, and create volumetric variation in massing.

Key elements of JVP and/or zoning related to the ODS about building height:

- **Height Variation.** AB 2923 does not permit the City's zoning controls to restrict building height below seven stories on the station sites. The City and BART will support variations in building height and form at both stations. It is anticipated that some buildings and some portions of buildings will be shorter than the maximum height in keeping with good urban design practice. (JVP: Building Form, Shared Priority, A. Height Variation)
- **Massing and Height Focus.** Focus density, larger building forms and height towards the Ohlone Greenway and the center of the site, as well as towards Sacramento Street. (JVP: Building Form, Priorities for North Berkeley, A. Massing and Height Focus)
- **Massing Breaks and Step-downs.** Provide massing breaks, step-downs in height, and frequent pedestrian building entrances along Delaware Street, Acton Street, and Virginia Street, with building forms and frontages that create a residential character and scale. (JVP: Building Form, Priorities for North Berkeley, B. Massing Breaks and Step-Downs)
- **Maximum building height:** 80 feet/seven stories (BMC Section 23.202.150(F)).

Building Massing and Articulation

The JVP includes guidance for the project to prioritize smaller blocks and building footprints to reflect the scale and character of the surrounding built environment. To realize the design guidance in the JVP, the ODS will have the effect of limiting the overall size and scale of the building and the perceived mass through upper floor step backs, maximum façade lengths, and major breaks within the constraints of the

City's MOA with BART. The ODS seek to ensure that the project maintains a human scale, creating a pleasant walking environment while ensuring interesting design.

The ODS for Building Massing and Articulation address the following topics:

- **Minimum Upper Floor Step Backs** to create a human-scale streetscape and to minimize impact of large buildings on the neighborhood.
- **Maximum Primary Facade Length** to provide regular breaks in building forms and encourage smaller blocks.
- **Major Breaks** to break up the massing and create smaller, human-scale facades.
- **Minor Breaks/Modulations** to create a residential rhythm and pattern to building facades to respond to the neighborhood context and character.

Key elements of JVP and/or zoning related to the ODS about building massing and articulation:

- **Context.** Building design should consider the scale and character of the surrounding built environment. (JVP: Building Form, Shared Priority B. Context)
- **Small Blocks.** Prioritize site designs with smaller blocks and building footprints instead of larger blocks. (JVP: Building Form, Shared Priorities, E. Small Blocks)
- **Architectural Variety.** Design buildings to provide visual interest with variation in height, scale, massing, rooflines, materials, and architectural elements. (JVP: Building Form, Shared Priority F. Architectural Variety)
- **Building Scale.** Provide regular breaks in building forms, as well as both horizontal and vertical detail to respond to the existing neighborhood context and character, particularly at the edges of the site. Provide adequate perimeter space for pedestrian volume and tree canopy/vegetation. (JVP: Building Form, Shared Priority F. Architectural Variety)
- **Massing and Height Focus.** Focus density, larger building forms and height towards the Ohlone Greenway and the center of the site, as well as towards Sacramento Street. (JVP: Building Form, Priorities for North Berkeley, A. Massing and Height Focus)
- **Massing Breaks and Step-downs.** Provide massing breaks, step-downs in height, and frequent pedestrian building entrances along Delaware Street, Acton Street, and Virginia Street, with building forms and frontages that create a residential character and scale. (JVP: Building Form, Priorities for North Berkeley, B. Massing Breaks and Step-Downs)
- **Front Upper-Story Step Backs.** Any street-facing building frontage above four stories in height that is not within 100 linear feet of Sacramento Street shall step back from the property line for portions of the building above four stories. (BMC Section 23.202.150(F)(5))

Design Elements

The JVP includes guidance for projects to provide visual interest with variation in architectural elements and materials. The ODS will define standards that encourage the use of high-quality materials, finishes, and detailing that create visual interest and enhance the neighborhood's overall aesthetic.

The ODS for Design Elements address the following topics:

- **Window** to create clean geometries and shadow lines.
- **Materials** to ensure high-quality materials and harmony of styles.

Key elements of JVP and/or zoning related to the ODS about building massing and articulation:

- **Architectural Variety.** Design buildings to provide visual interest with variation in height, scale, massing, rooflines, materials, and architectural elements. (JVP: Building Form, Shared Priority F. Architectural Variety)
- **Required Openings.** Ground-level exterior walls facing and within 20 feet of a front lot line or publicly accessible pathway or Public Open Space shall run in a continuous plane for no more than 30 feet without a window, door, or other similar building opening. (BMC Section 23.202.150(F)(10))

Part II: Development Standards and Definitions

Definitions

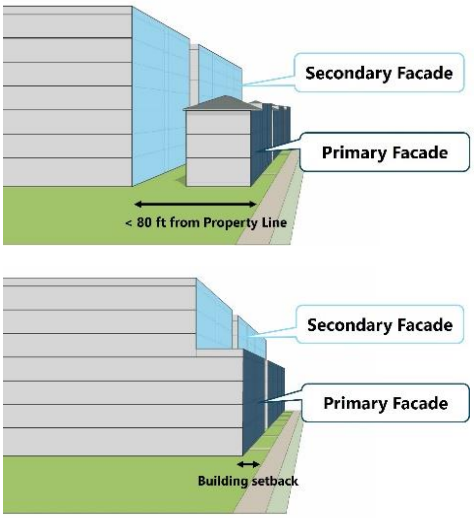
Continuous Building Facade Length
The length of a facade as measured from either the corner of a building to the opposite corner of the building, a change in angle of the facade that is greater than 35 degrees, or a major break with a minimum width and depth of 20 feet. If building facades are curved, length of facade as measured to tangent parallel to interior corridor.

Facade Plane
Portion of a facade located between a corner of a building to either the opposite corner of the building or a major break.

Primary Facade
Portions of a building directly fronting a street, publicly accessible open space or internal pathway, typically located within the minimum and maximum building setback.

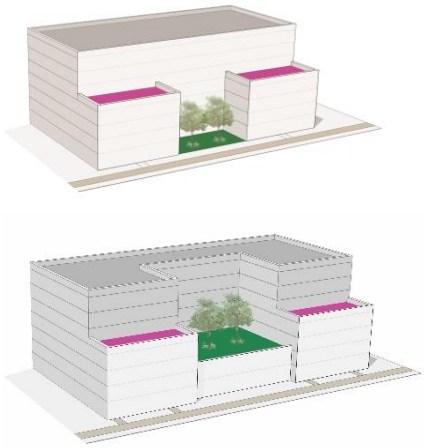
Secondary Facade: Portions of the building facing a street or internal pathway that is within 80 feet of the property line or internal pathway. The secondary facade may be separate from or part of the same building as the primary facade. The secondary facade is typically located behind the primary facade through a deeper building setback, upper floor step back, and/or major break.

Figure 2. **Primary and Secondary Facades**



Frontage Court Buildings
A building where part of the secondary facade is set back at a deeper dimension than the primary facade to create a frontage court building entry or open space. Frontage courts may be a combination of both ground level and podium courtyards.

Figure 3. **Frontage Court Buildings**



Major Break
A massing break or facade modulation that is wide and deep enough that it divides up the facade of a building to create the sense of multiple separate building masses. Minimum dimensions for a major break are provided in the design standards.

Minor Breaks/Modulations
Horizontal changes to the facade plane that provide articulation to the building facade. Minor Breaks/Modulations typically occur to distinguish a residential rhythm and pattern to a building facade with modulations spaced to the width of a room, unit, or group of units. Minor breaks and modulations may be recesses or projections like bay windows.

1 Public Realm

1.1 Public Circulation Network

1.1.1 Ohlone Greenway Connection

1. A multi-use publicly accessible pathway shall connect from the corner of Delaware and Sacramento Streets through the site to either Virginia or Acton Streets to complete the Ohlone Greenway.
2. The multi-use pathway shall be a minimum of 14 feet wide.

1.1.2 Mid-block Connections and Publicly Accessible Walkways

1. A minimum of one publicly accessible on-site walkway shall be located at least every 300 feet along each public right-of-way.
2. Mid-block Connection. A minimum of one Mid-block connection shall be made from each public street frontage that connects to the station.
    a. Mid-block connections shall have a minimum building-to-building width of 40 feet.
    b. Mid-block connections may have one bridge over the pathway meeting the minimum standard in 1.1.4.2 Internal Connection Design.
    c. Stoops, balconies, planters, trellises, and other non-habitable architectural features may project within the minimum building-to-building dimension. The total of the upper floor projections shall not exceed more than 25% of the facade plane at the minimum building-to-building dimension or back-of-walk if an internal street.
    d. Mid-block connections shall be open during all hours of active BART transit service.
    e. Mid-block connections shall include a minimum of one publicly-accessible pedestrian walkway with a minimum of eight feet in width. Location of the walkway within the Mid-block Connection may vary.
    f. Mid-block connections shall include a minimum of one tree per 25 linear feet.
    g. Mid-block connections with private vehicle access shall have a minimum of one tree per 30 linear feet of sidewalk where technically feasible and allowed by code. (The area directly above the BART train box is exempt).
    h. At least one Mid-block connection shall have direct vehicle access to station entrance. This connection shall include publicly accessible sidewalks and vehicle access to drop-off areas for BART riders and shall meet all of BART and City requirements outlined in the North Berkeley BART Station Access Plan.

1.1.3 Frontage Specific Standards

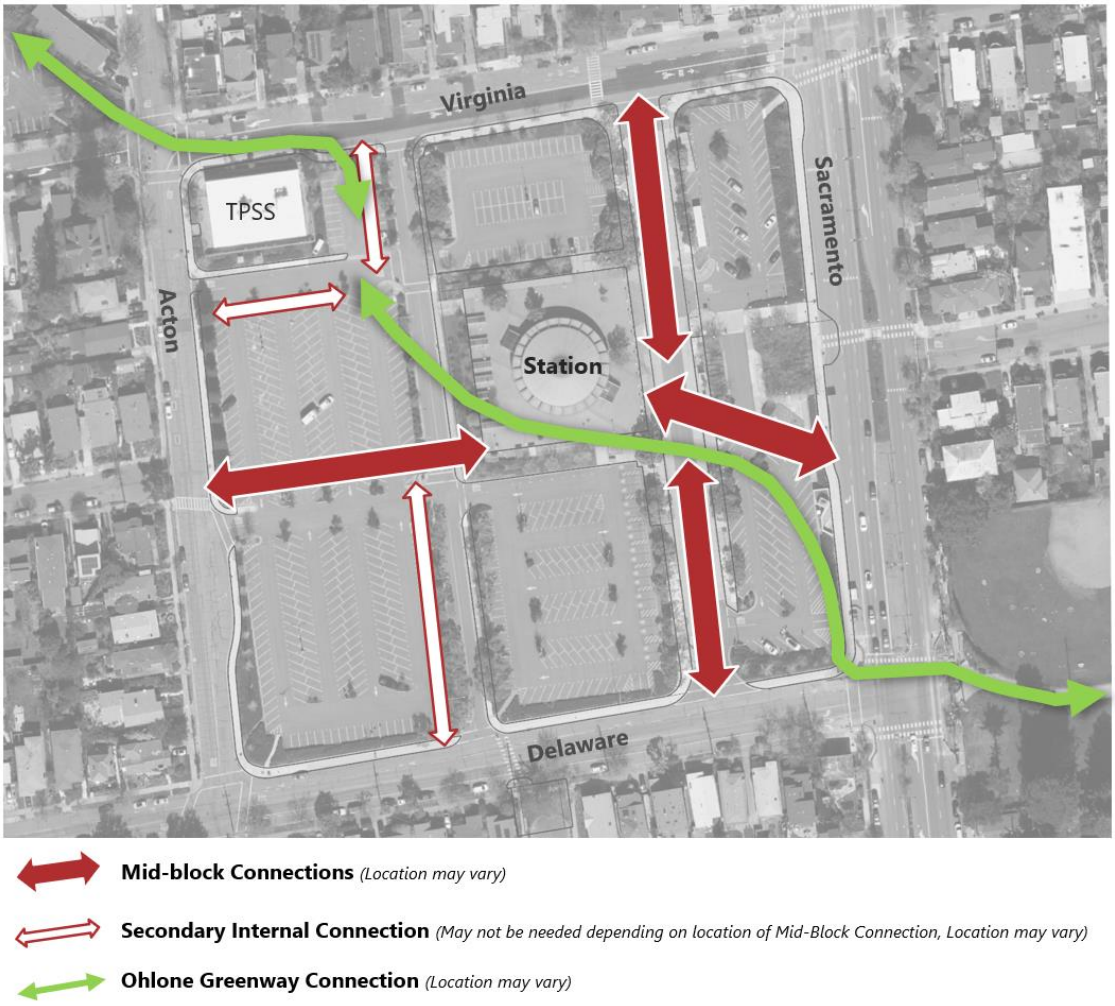
1. From Sacramento Street. A Mid-block connection in the form of a plaza and multi-use pathway shall be located within the Zone of Influence (ZOI) connecting from Sacramento Street to the station.
2. From Acton Street. A Mid-block connection shall be located such that one edge of the pathway is within 50 feet of the centerline of the adjacent Francisco Street right-of-way that connects through the development to the station area.

1.1.4 Internal Connection Design

The R-BMU zoning regulations require specified types of on-site pedestrian access (BMC 23.202.150(F)(9)). Additional publicly accessible on-site walkways may be needed depending on the location of a proposed project's Mid-block connections. These internal connections may occur through buildings if they meet the standards below:

1. Publicly Accessible Pedestrian Pathway
    a. Pathway shall have a minimum width of eight feet.
2. Bridges over Internal Connections
    a. Building-to-building dimension of pathway is a minimum 30 feet in width. Walkway width shall have a minimum eight feet clear path of travel dimension.
    b. Minimum floor-to-bridge ceiling height is greater than 20 feet; a bridge may be located within the floor-to-ceiling space if the bridge has a maximum width of 10 feet.
    c. Maximum depth of building/bridge projecting over the path is 40 feet.
    d. Internal connection may change grade and go over a parking podium that is a maximum 15 feet above grade at sidewalk connection if the full connection length is ADA accessible.
3. Internal Connection through Public Parking Structure
    a. A direct connection through the parking area.
    b. Pathway and entrance shall have a minimum width of six feet.
    c. Floor-to-ceiling height minimum of nine feet.
    d. Floor markings shall identify the full length of internal connection.

Figure 4. **Public Circulation Network.**



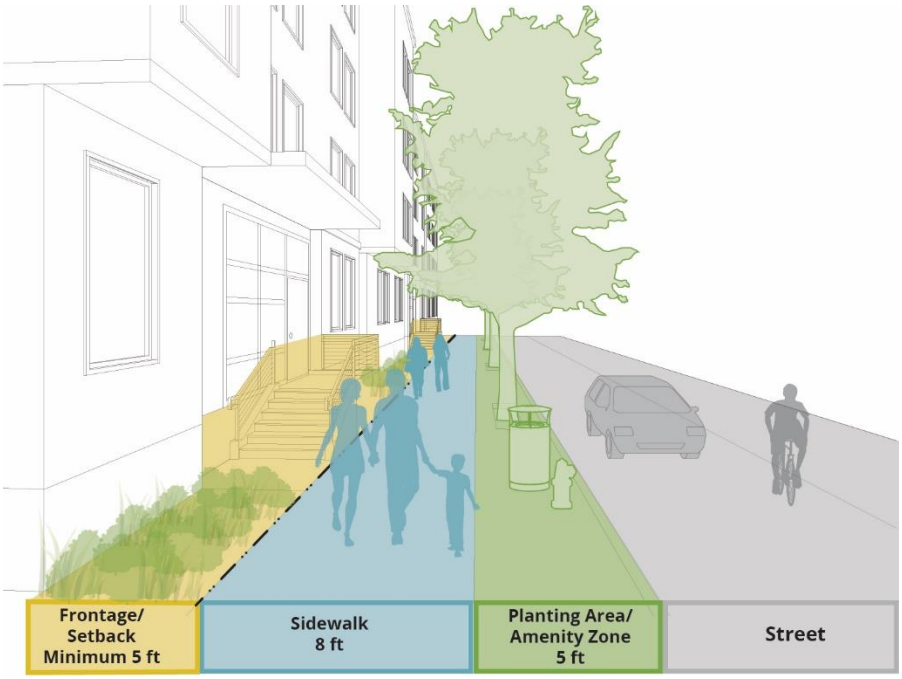
1.2 Streetscape Design

1.2.1 Sidewalk Width

1. Sacramento Street
    a. Minimum Total Sidewalk Width
        i. 19 feet north of Francisco Street or maximum potential sidewalk width while maintaining a 35 feet curb-to-curb dimension from sidewalk to median.[7]
        ii. 13 feet in other locations except where existing structures such as the BART elevator prevent minimum width.[8]
    b. Minimum Clear Path of Travel
        i. Eight feet clear and five feet clear along curb adjacent to casual carpool which is located on Sacramento Street north of Francisco Street crosswalk.
2. Delaware, Virginia, and Acton Streets
    a. Minimum Total Sidewalk Width: 13 feet
    b. Minimum Clear Path of Travel: 8 feet
    c. Minimum Planting/Amenity Zone: 5 feet

3. Exception: If the above is incompatible with the North Berkeley BART Access Plan, the Director of Public Works or their designee may allow modifications to the exact dimensions noted above as necessary for the sole purpose of ensuring access.

Figure 5. Typical Sidewalk Design (Delaware, Acton, Virginia)



[7] Exact geometry to be determined in BART's Station Access Plan.
[8] To be studied further as part of BART's Station Access Plan.

1.2.2 Street Trees + Planting Area/Amenity Zone

1. Pattern. Trees shall be planted with a minimum of one tree per 25 linear feet of sidewalk length. Exceptions may be made in locations where existing infrastructure, utilities, or BART tunnel prohibit planting of trees.
2. Location. Trees shall be evenly spaced between the curb and sidewalk or evenly spaced within the width of a planting strip. Trees shall be planted so that at maturity the trunk is at least three feet from the face of curb where loading occurs and at least five feet from face of curb where casual carpool is located on Sacramento Street north of Francisco Street crosswalk.
3. Ground Plane.
    a. Sacramento Street. Trees shall be provided in planters a minimum three feet wide and a minimum six feet long located 18 inches from face of curb and minimum of five feet from face of curb where casual carpool is located on Sacramento Street north of Francisco Street crosswalk.
    b. Delaware Street. Trees shall be provided in a continuous planter with a minimum of four and a half feet width. Areas between trees shall be landscaped.
    c. Acton and Virginia Streets. Trees shall be provided in planters a minimum of three and a half feet wide and a minimum of six feet long, located 18 inches from the face of curb. A minimum four feet wide pathway between planters shall be required for every loading/parking space. Where loading/parking areas are not adjacent to the curb, trees shall be provided in a continuous planter that is a minimum four and a half feet wide and areas between trees shall be landscaped.
4. Subsurface.
    a. A minimum of 120 cubic feet of well aerated soil per inch of trunk diameter at maturity shall be located within six feet of each tree.
    b. Continuous structure soil with a minimum width of four feet shall connect all consecutive street trees.

5. Exception: If the above is incompatible with the North Berkeley BART Access Plan, the Director of Public Works or their designee may allow modifications to the exact dimensions noted above as necessary for the sole purpose of ensuring access.

1.3 Building Setbacks

Front building setbacks are set in the R-BMU zoning. The following standards regulate projections and landscaping in the minimum setback area.

1.3.1 Building Setbacks

1. Building setbacks are not required for internal streets.
2. Ground floor residential units shall have 3 feet minimum front setback for all frontages where no building setback is required in the R-BMU zoning.

1.3.2 Building Projections in Required Building Setback

1. Stoops, porches, uncovered decks, landings, and stairs less than three feet in height may project within the setback area.
2. Building features including eaves, cornices, canopies, awnings, and other weather protection features like sun-shades features may project a maximum of two-and-a-half feet into a required minimum setback.
3. On Virginia Street, Delaware Street and Acton Street, habitable building features such as bay windows or balconies may project within the 5 feet minimum setback for a maximum of 3 feet, total projections shall not exceed 25% of the facade length of the building wall to which it is attached.

1.3.3 Building Projections in the Right-of-Way.

Buildings fronting Sacramento Street may project into the public right-of-way a maximum of 3 feet. Total projections shall not exceed 25% of the facade length of the building wall to which it is attached. Projections over the right-of-way require a Minor Encroachment Permit from the Department of Public Works.

1.3.4 Building Projections over internal lot line conditions.

Building projections including balconies and bay windows are allowed across the lot line up to three feet in depth and may not exceed 30% facade area for the length of building wall to which they are attached.

1.3.5 Building Setback Landscaping.

A minimum of 60% of the first five feet of building setback area as measured from the property line shall be landscaped. A minimum of 40% of the remaining building setback area shall be landscaped. The area used for mid-block breaks, internal pathways and vehicle entries shall be excluded from this calculation.

2 Building Design

Building massing and height shall meet all the standards below as well as those specified in the R-BMU zoning district (*See* BMC Section 23.202.150).

2.1 Building Height

2.1.1 Maximum Building Height

Maximum building height is consistent with R-BMU zoning at seven-stories/80 feet, except in areas where upper floor step backs are required as noted below in Section 2.2.1 and Table 1.

2.2 Building Massing and Articulation

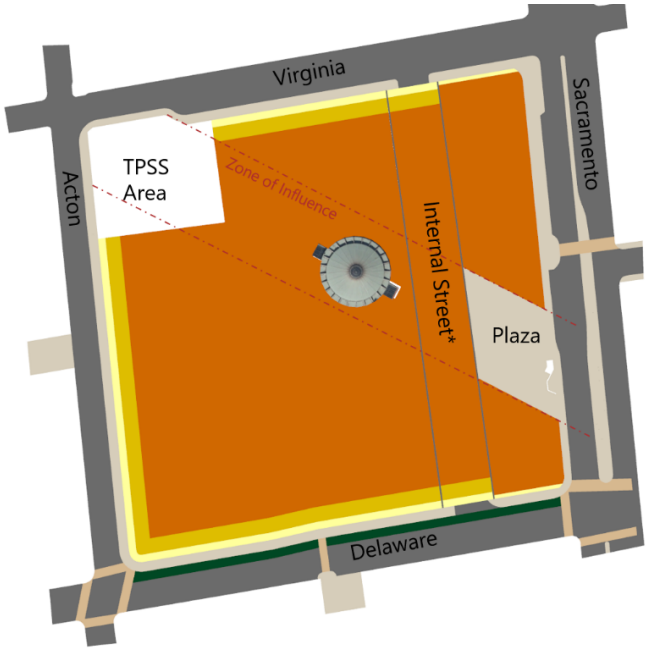
2.2.1 Upper Floor Step Backs

Table 2 sets upper floor step back requirements for specific building frontages. Requirements for building setbacks (Section 1.3 above) and building massing (Table 1 below) are illustrated in a plan diagram in Figure 6.

2.2.2 Maximum Facade Length

Table 1 sets maximum facade lengths for primary building facades for specific building frontages.

Figure 6. Building Height and Upper Floor Step Backs Diagram



**Location/geometry of Internal Street subject to change*

Building Setback Area: Varies

4-Story Upper Floor Step Back Area: 25-30 feet; see Table 1

7-Story/80 feet Area

Table 1. Building Massing

Building Massing					
	Sacramento Street	**Delaware Street**	**Acton Street**	**Virginia Street**	**Primary Internal Street and Publicly Accessible Pathways**
Minimum upper floor step backs above 4th floor *(measured from property line)*	n/a	25 feet 20 feet for frontage court buildings if frontage court depth is a minimum 50 feet *	30 feet 20 feet for frontage court buildings if frontage court depth is a minimum 50 feet	30 feet, first 100 feet of building façade length from Sacramento façade exempt**	none required
Maximum primary facade length:	250 feet	250 feet	250 feet	250 feet	270 ft for internal street 300 ft for pathways

Notes:

**On Delaware Street: For any street-facing building frontage located between the Internal Street and Sacramento Street, buildings 6 stories or less are not required to have an upper floor step back. For any street-fronting building frontage that is not within 100 linear feet of Sacramento Street, buildings 7 stories or greater shall have an upper floor step back above the 4th floor with a minimum depth of 10 feet from property line.*

***On Virginia Street: For any street-facing building frontage located between the Internal Street and Sacramento Street, buildings 6 stories or less are not required to have an upper floor step back. For any street-fronting building frontage that is not within 100 linear feet of Sacramento Street, buildings 7 stories or greater shall have an upper floor step back above the 4th floor with a minimum depth of 10 feet from property line.*

2.2.3 Major Breaks.

Required for continuous building facade lengths greater than 200 feet in length. Alternatively, continuous building facades greater than 200 feet in length may meet the Ornamental Facade Alternative standard - see Section 2.2.5 below).

1. All Major Breaks.
    a. A major break shall be a continuous break in the facade from the ground through the roof plane except where noted below.
    b. If two major breaks are provided on a facade, a minimum of one major break shall extend to the ground plane. Other required major breaks shall extend to the first floor.
    c. Major breaks shall be located a minimum 25 feet from the facade edge or corner of the building.
    d. Weather protection and sunshades up to three feet in depth may project into major breaks.
2. For Primary Facades facing public streets.
    a. For portions of a building greater than 200 feet in length, a minimum of one major break with a minimum width and depth of eight feet and minimum plan area of 100 square feet.
    b. For buildings five stories or more, and greater than 200 feet in length, a minimum of one major break with a minimum width and depth of 18 feet or two major breaks with a minimum width and depth of seven feet and minimum plan area of 70 square feet.

   c. Facades immediately adjacent to a property line may reduce the depth of the major break to a minimum of two feet for the first floor. Planters up to four feet in height are allowed where a major break meets the ground.

3. For Primary Facades facing Publicly Accessible Walkways and Publicly Accessible Open Spaces.

   For portions of a building greater than 200 feet in length, a minimum of one major break with a minimum width and depth of 10 feet and minimum plan area of 120 square feet, or two major breaks with a minimum width and depth of seven feet and minimum plan area of 60 square feet.

2.2.4 Minor Breaks/Modulations

Vertical Rhythm and Pattern: Facade planes on Primary or Secondary Facades exceeding 60 feet in length shall express a vertical rhythm and pattern that reflects the size and scale of a residential unit and/or individual rooms and spaces through meeting the following standards (alternatively, continuous building facades greater than 60 feet in length may meet the Ornamental Facade Alternative standard - see Section 2.2.5 below).:

1. A vertical recess or projection of the building massing shall occur at an average minimum of one per 40 feet of linear facade length with no facade length greater than 50 feet in width without a minor break/modulation.
2. The vertical recess or projection of the building massing shall have a minimum depth of two feet.
3. The vertical recess or projection shall occur for a minimum 60% of the facade height measured from the average ground plane to the top of structure for the specific facade plane of the minor break/modulation.
4. The minimum width of a recess shall be two feet and not exceed 30 feet in width. Recesses shall extend through the roof plane.
5. The minimum width of a projection shall be four feet, and maximum width shall not exceed 15 feet.
6. Change in plane may be a combination of recesses and projections that meet the standards above.
7. A building base up to three stories in height with a non-residential ground floor that does not exceed 150 feet in length is exempt from meeting the standards above. Portions of the building above the base shall meet the standards, percentages shall be calculated only using the facade area above the building base.

Figure 7. **Major Breaks**

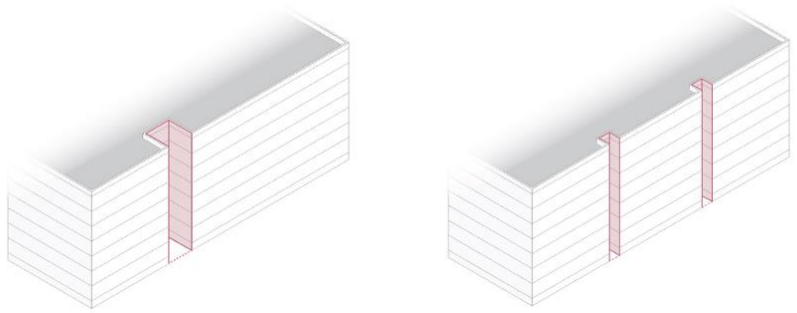
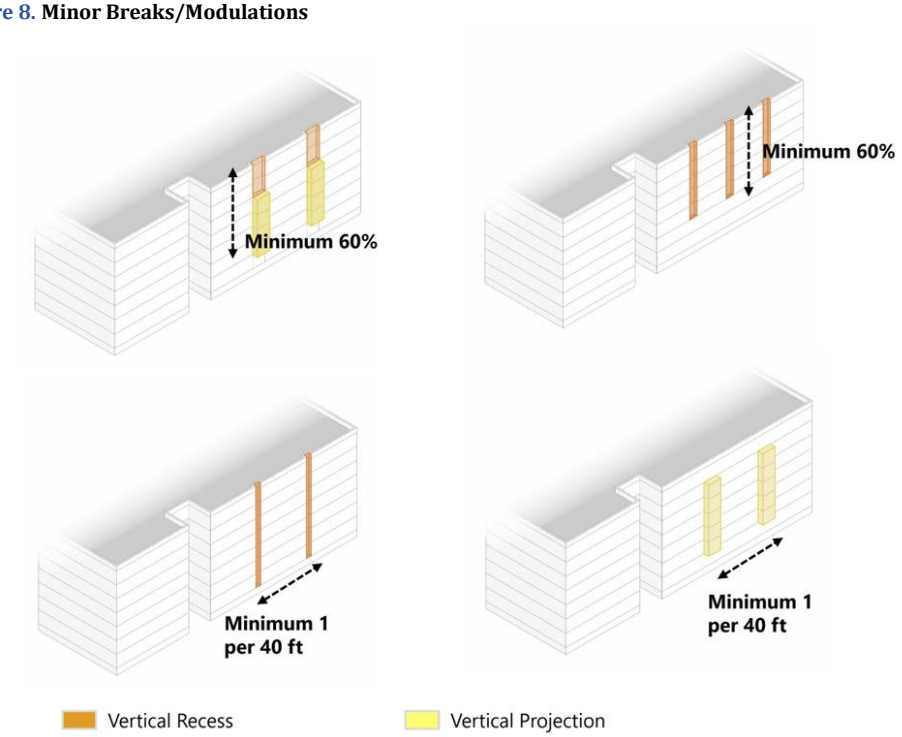


Figure 8. **Minor Breaks/Modulations**



2.2.5 Ornamental Facade Alternative

In lieu of meeting the major or minor break requirements (Sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4) ornamentation must be provided such that it covers 5% of the area of a building facade. Ornamentation is defined as any exterior articulation such as projections, recesses, columns, banding, fins, decorative molding, trim, artistic inlays or reliefs, cornices, or sculptures with a minimum depth of 8"; or decorative tile or murals. Ornamentation must deviate in color and/or material from the wall material behind it or be constructed from brick, stone, ceramics, metal, wood, tile, or fiber-cement board. Ornamentation shall not include built-up stucco trim or molding (also known as "plant-ons").

2.2.6 Exposed Parking Structures

1. All exposed parking structures shall be fully screened.
    a. Exterior facing walls of parking structures shall be articulated with artwork, ornamentation (as defined in Section 2.2.5), and/or a landscaping/planting wall at minimum intervals of three feet. The articulation shall occupy a minimum depth of 18 inches.
    b. Parking structures extending above the ground floor and not located behind an upper floor step back shall have a minimum of one large canopy tree per 25 linear feet of exposed structure. Trees shall be located within 30 feet of facade of exposed structure. A mature tree shall be planted with a minimum crown height of 25 feet. Volume of soil shall be adequate to support a full growth tree height greater than 60% of the exposed parking structure height.
2. Lighting
    a. No light fixtures within the parking structure shall be directly visible from any point of the exterior of the building.
    b. Screening or exterior facade of parking structure shall not have exterior building lighting above the first floor.
    c. Lighting for signage shall be shielded and directed down. Signage shall not be located above 20 feet from grade.

2.3 Design Elements

2.3.1 Windows

Windows shall meet one of the following requirements:

1. Windows shall be punched with a minimum recess of two inches from the facade or shall be framed with a minimum projection of 4 inches from the facade. Built-up stucco trim or molding (also known as "plant-ons") are prohibited.

2. Windows that are flat or flush with the facade are prohibited unless applied to a recessed portion of the building facade with a minimum four inches in depth. Vertical window edges shall be directly adjacent to recess.

Figure 9. Windows Within a Recess and Framed Windows

2.3.2 Materials

Each facade shall include the following materials:

1. No single material shall cover more than 80% of the cumulative facade area of a building (excluding windows, doors, garage doors, and building trim).
2. Brick, stone, ceramics, metals, wood, fiber-cement panels, or other composite panel systems may exceed the 80% maximum in 2.3.2(1).

2.4 Alternative Massing and Building Height

A future developer of the North Berkeley BART station site might obtain waivers of the R-BMU zoning maximum height limit of 7 stories/80 feet pursuant to the State Density Bonus Law if the developer shows that the R-BMU's maximum height limit would physically preclude the construction of the development. In the event a building(s) with eight stories is allowed pursuant to the State Density Bonus law, the alternative massing and building height guidelines described below and shown in Figure 10 shall apply.

2.4.1 Height and Massing Along Acton, Virginia and Delaware Streets

Acton Street:

- Three-story/35 feet within 45 feet from the property line
- Six-story/65 feet within 45 to 80 feet from the property line

Virginia Street (west of the Internal Street shown in Figure 10):

- Three-story/35 feet within 45 feet from the property line

Delaware Street:

- Four-story/45 feet within 25 to 30 feet from the property line
- Seven-story/80 feet within 25 to 30 feet from property line

Height and Massing Interior to the Site or Along Specified Sections of Sacramento Street

Figure 10 illustrates alternative standards for buildings, applicable in the event that the Density Bonus law permits an 8-story building, as follows:

- 8 stories/85 feet along a portion of the site fronting Sacramento Street and within the interior of the site
- 6 stories/65 feet between Sacramento Street and internal street (location and geometry of internal street subject to change based on project design), and in the first 100 feet south of Virginia Street and between Delaware Street and the Zone of Influence.

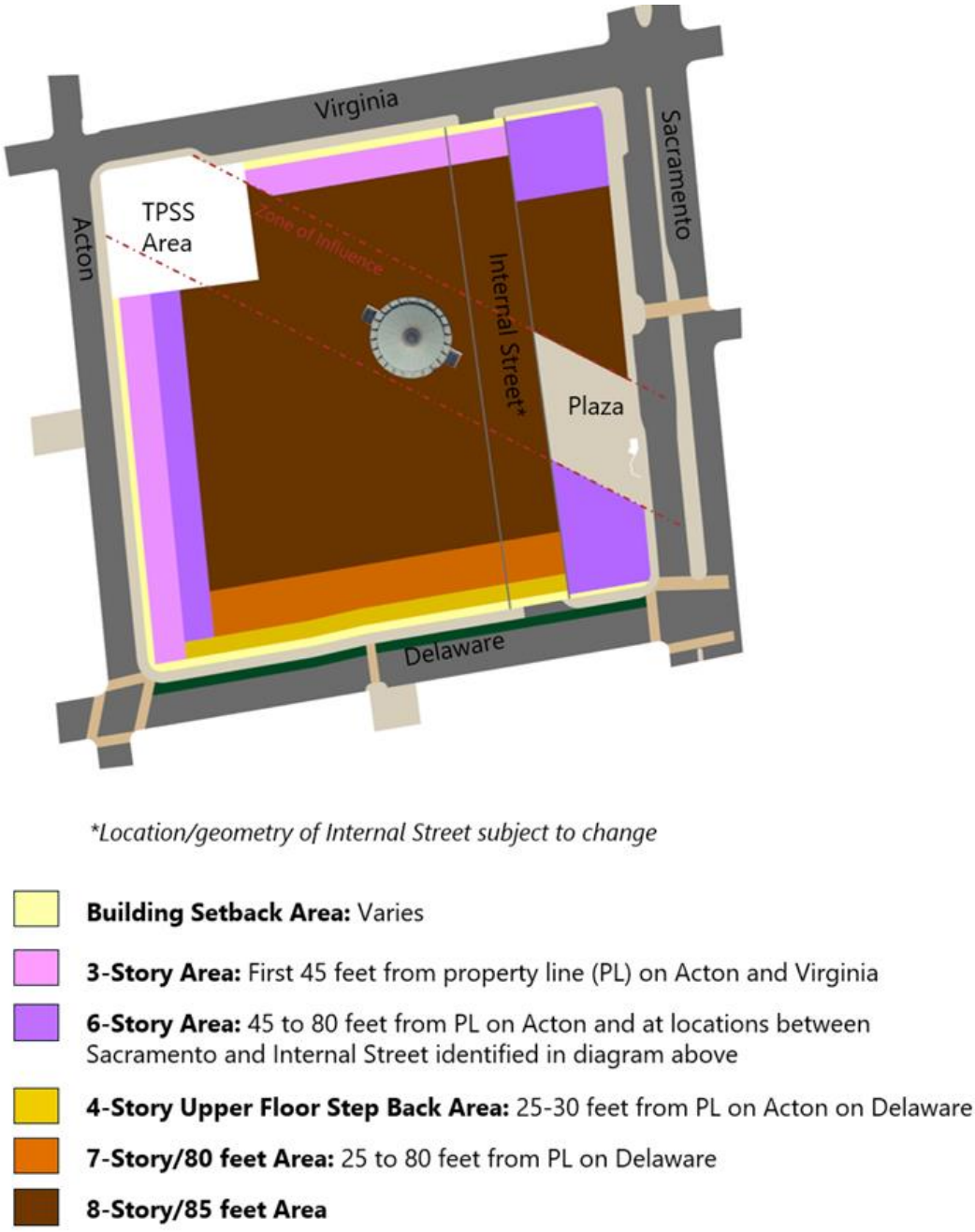



Figure 10. Building Height and Massing (State Density Bonus Scenario with 8-story buildings)