



# PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION MEMORANDUM

Date: August 18, 2021

To: Planning Commissioners  
From: Christopher Wright, Associate Planner II  
Subject: Architectural Design Guidelines

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This study session is to familiarize the Planning Commission with the City's architectural design guidelines. Below are links to documents and videotaped presentations on the guidelines. The two videos linked in this report are approximately 2-hours in length. To inform the study session discussion, staff requests the Planning Commission to watch the videos and do a high-level review of the guidelines. Prior to the meeting, please forward questions and design topics the Commission wishes staff to address in a presentation.

## Overview of Design Guidelines

Design guidelines address architectural style, building form, scale, proportions, roofline orientation, and materials; site planning, grading and landscaping; streetscape, and other topics. Guidelines are used by decision makers and staff to evaluate projects that require the approval of a discretionary permit according to required findings in the Zoning Code. When a project does not require a discretionary permit, staff encourages applicants to incorporate design guidelines where practical proportional to the scope of a project; however, it is not required. The following documents containing design guidelines are applicable to projects dependent on the location.

- **City Design Guidelines** ([web link](#)). These guidelines apply to projects proposed outside Specific Plans. The City Design Guidelines apply to all development that requires discretionary review and contain specific guidelines for projects that require Spanish Colonial Revival (SCR) architecture. The Architectural Overlay (A-Overlay) requires major remodels and new development to have SCR architecture and pedestrian-oriented elements. There are two exceptions to this. First, there are two areas of El Camino Real in the Architectural Overlay district that require Spanish architecture but allow a true form of a style other than SCR, such as Mission, Monterey, or Mediterranean. The City Design Guidelines do not currently address these other architectural styles. Second, when a building is designated as historic, or eligible to be listed as historic, and has a distinctive architectural style other than Spanish, the General Plan and Architectural Overlay allows for that style of design to be preserved. An example of this is the Art-Deco building at 120 South El Camino Real. For a map of the A-Overlay, refer to Attachment 1.

- **Henry Lenny Architectural Guidelines** ([web link](#)). These guidelines provide graphic examples to clarify the application of SCR architecture when a project with Spanish architecture is proposed. The Henry Lenny Architectural Guidelines provide nuanced architectural detail and methods of best practice not outlined within the City Design Guidelines assisting staff and DRSC members during the review process.
- **Specific Plan design guidelines**. Projects proposed in Specific Plans are reviewed according to design guidelines in the Specific Plans, rather than the City's Design Guidelines. However, if a design guideline is not included in the Specific Plan for a design issue, the City Design Guidelines are used to evaluate a project proposal. For an example of Specific Plan guidelines, [please click this web link](#) to access guidelines for the Pier Bowl Specific Plan.

## Presentations

The following are two presentations given by Henry Lenny, Principal Architect and Designer of the Henry Lenny Design Studio. Henry Lenny has been a longtime member of Santa Barbara's Historic Landmarks Commission. He is a subject matter expert on Spanish architecture that the City has sought for advice in the design of City buildings, training, and preparing design guidelines.

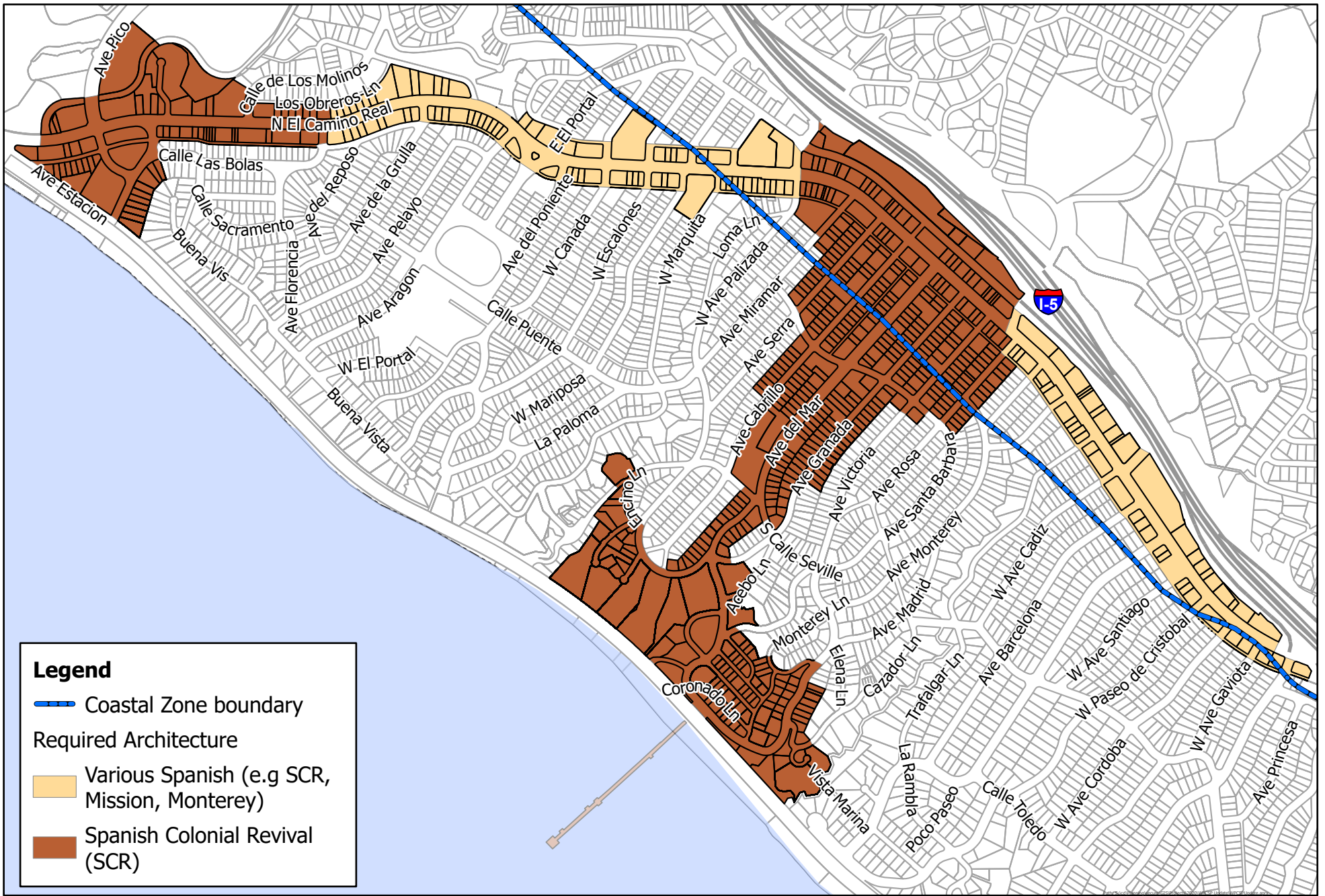
- **Principles Spanish Colonial Revival architecture** ([link to video](#)). In 2019, this Planning Commission study session was held on the history and principles of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. Presentation is approximately 2-hours in length.
- **Architectural Review Training** ([link to video](#)). Using examples of development projects, this presentation in 2021 was a training on best practices for reviewing projects for consistency with design guidelines, particularly projects with larger design issues. Presentation is approximately 1-hour in length, followed by one hour of discussion.

## Role of the Design Review Subcommittee

The Design Review Subcommittee's (DRSC) role is to use the design guidelines to advise applicants on how projects can best achieve consistency with policies that relate to various visual impact issues, such as site planning, architecture, landscaping, and the preservation of cultural and aesthetic resources. Zoning Section [17.12.025](#) identifies the types of development applications that are reviewed by the DRSC. In the review of projects, if there are questions on design guidelines, the Planning Commission is encouraged to contact staff as a resource.

## Attachments

1. Map of Architectural Overlay



# Architectural Overlay

