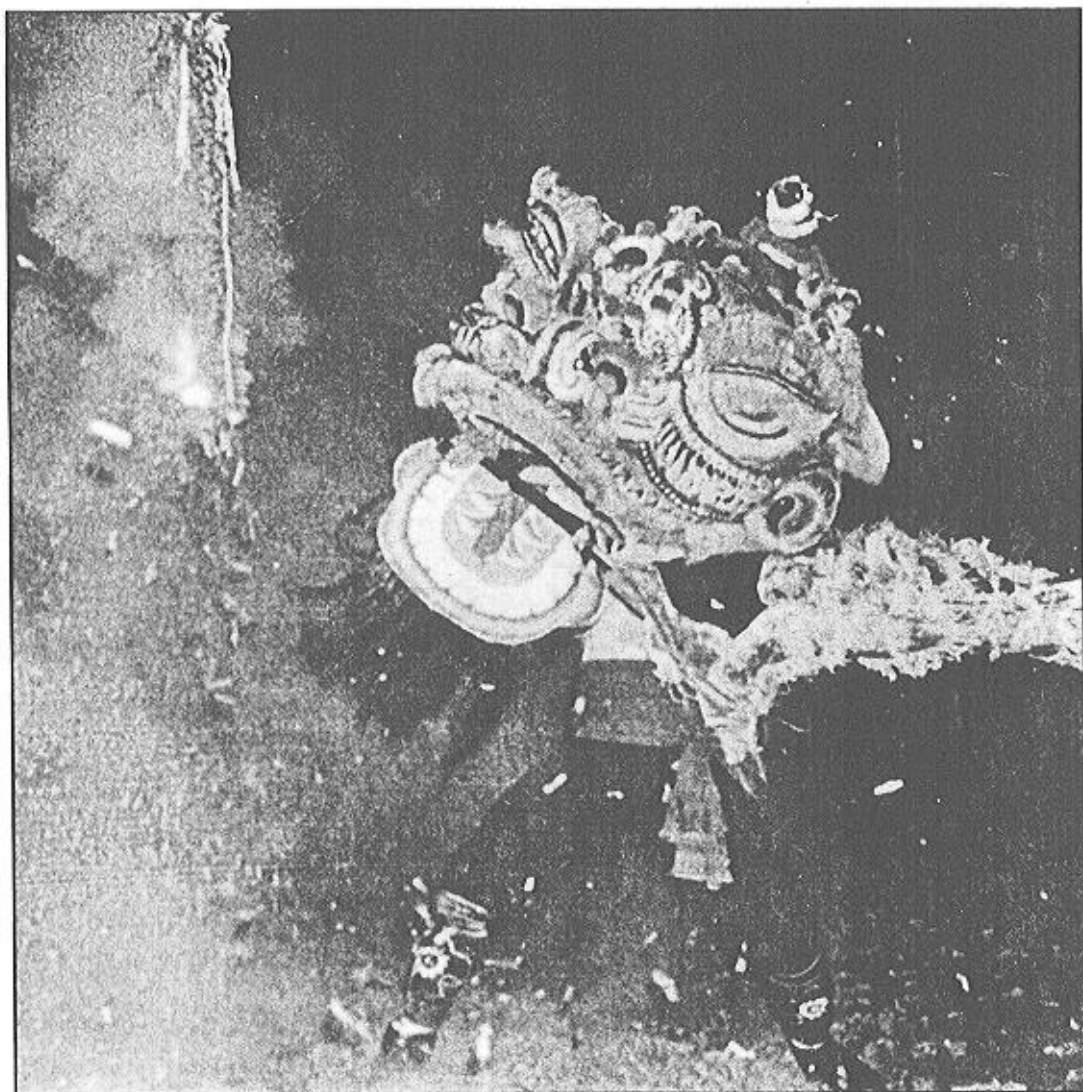


Special District Design Guidelines



Chinatown

**Department of Land Utilization
City and County of Honolulu
April 1991**

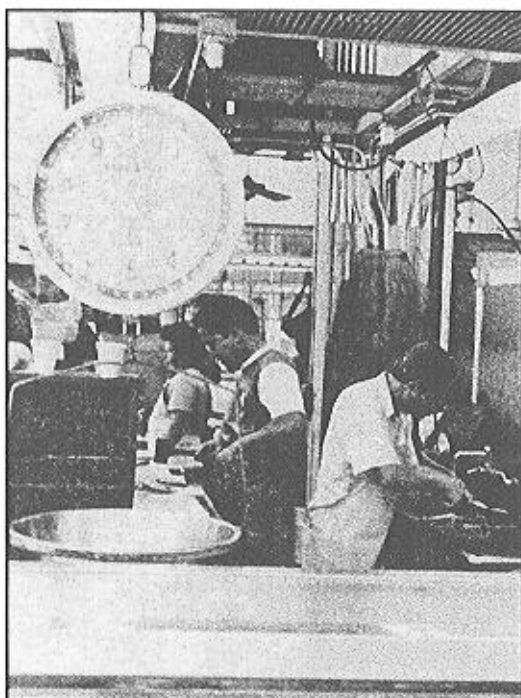


Honolulu Advertiser Photo

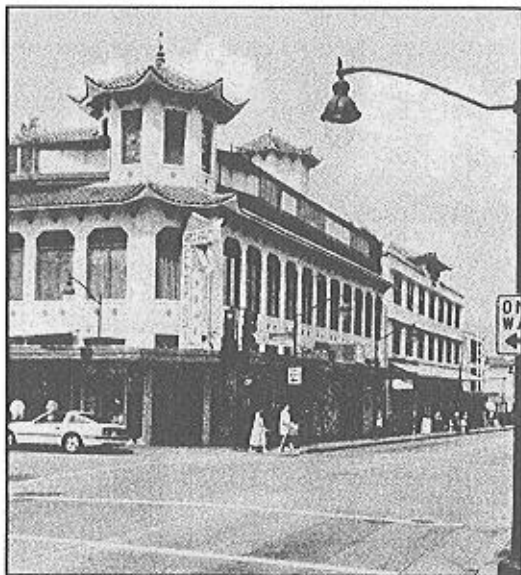
Chinese New Year Celebration

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Oahu Market



Wo Fat Building

Introduction



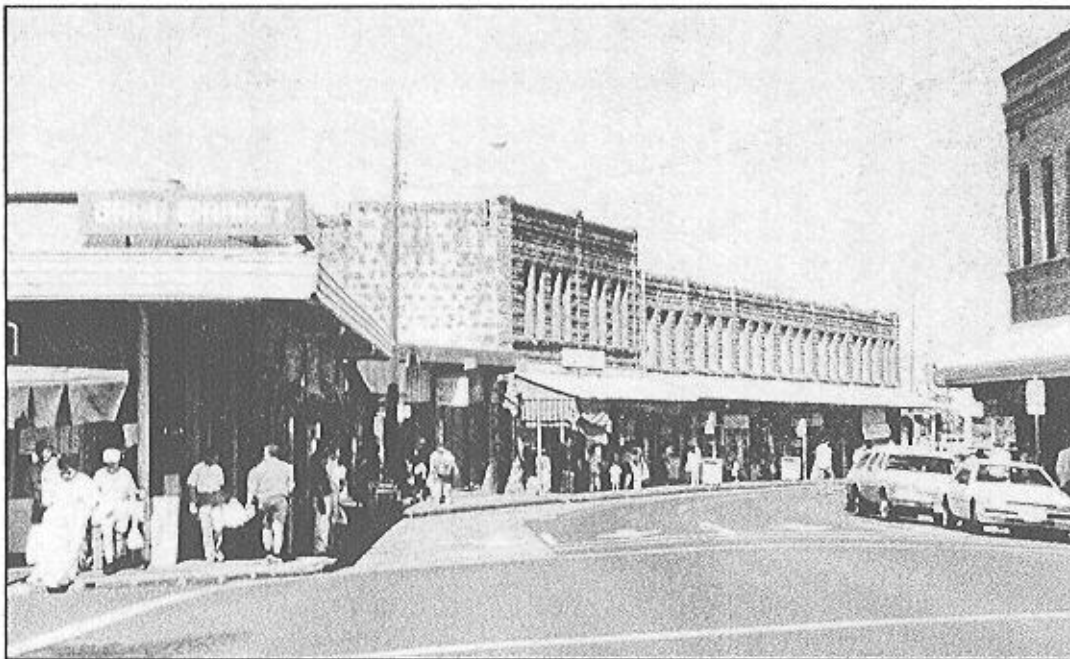
Chinatown still retains many buildings dating to the turn of the century or earlier. But the significance of Chinatown as a Special District is based not so much on the historic or architectural value of individual buildings, but the fabric of the District as represented by the groupings of older buildings, the appearance of the streetscape, and the ethnic character of the uses and activities.

Since the latter part of the 1970's, Chinatown has seen a resurgence of investment, resulting in the rehabilitation and renovation of historic buildings, small infill developments, and new mixed-use projects on the periphery of the District. These design guidelines serve to illustrate how development can be shaped to the context of the historic character of Chinatown.

District Objectives

In order to preserve and enhance the historic character of Chinatown, the following objectives are stated in the City and County's zoning code, the Land Use Ordinance (LUO):

- A. Help promote the long-term economic viability of the Chinatown District as a unique community of retail, office and residential uses.
- B. Retain the low-rise urban form and character of the historic interior core of Chinatown while allowing for moderate redevelopment at the mauka and makai edges of the District.
- C. Retain and enhance pedestrian-oriented commercial uses and building design, particularly on the ground level.
- D. Preserve and restore, to the extent possible, buildings and sites of historic, cultural, and/or architectural significance, and encourage new development which is compatible with and complements these buildings and sites, primarily through building materials and finishes, architectural detailing, and provisions for pedestrian amenities, such as storefront windows and historic signage details.
- E. Improve traffic circulation with emphasis on pedestrian linkages within and connecting outside Chinatown.
- F. Retain makai view corridors as a visual means of maintaining the historic link between Chinatown and the harbor.



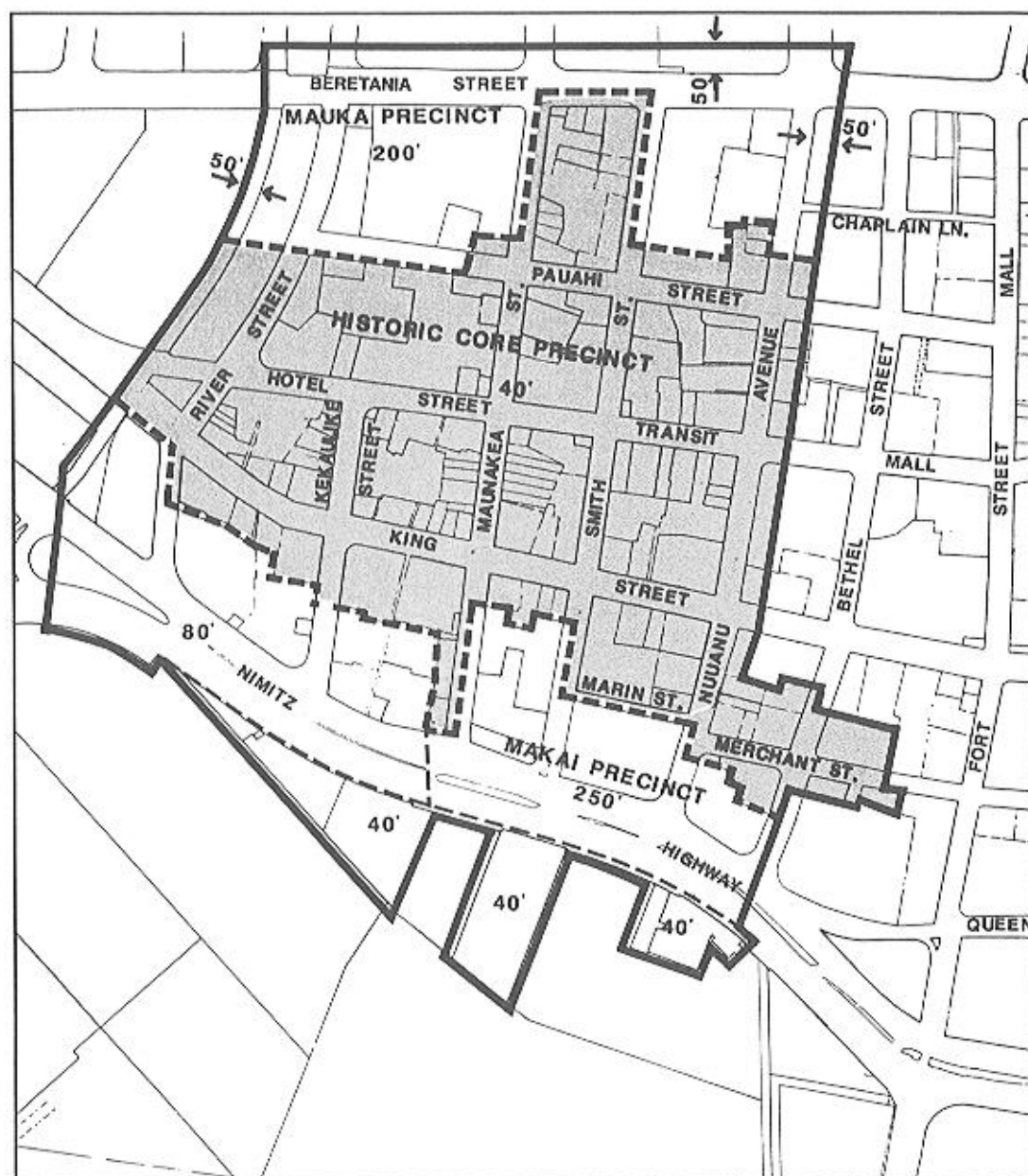
Oahu Market

Aerial Photo



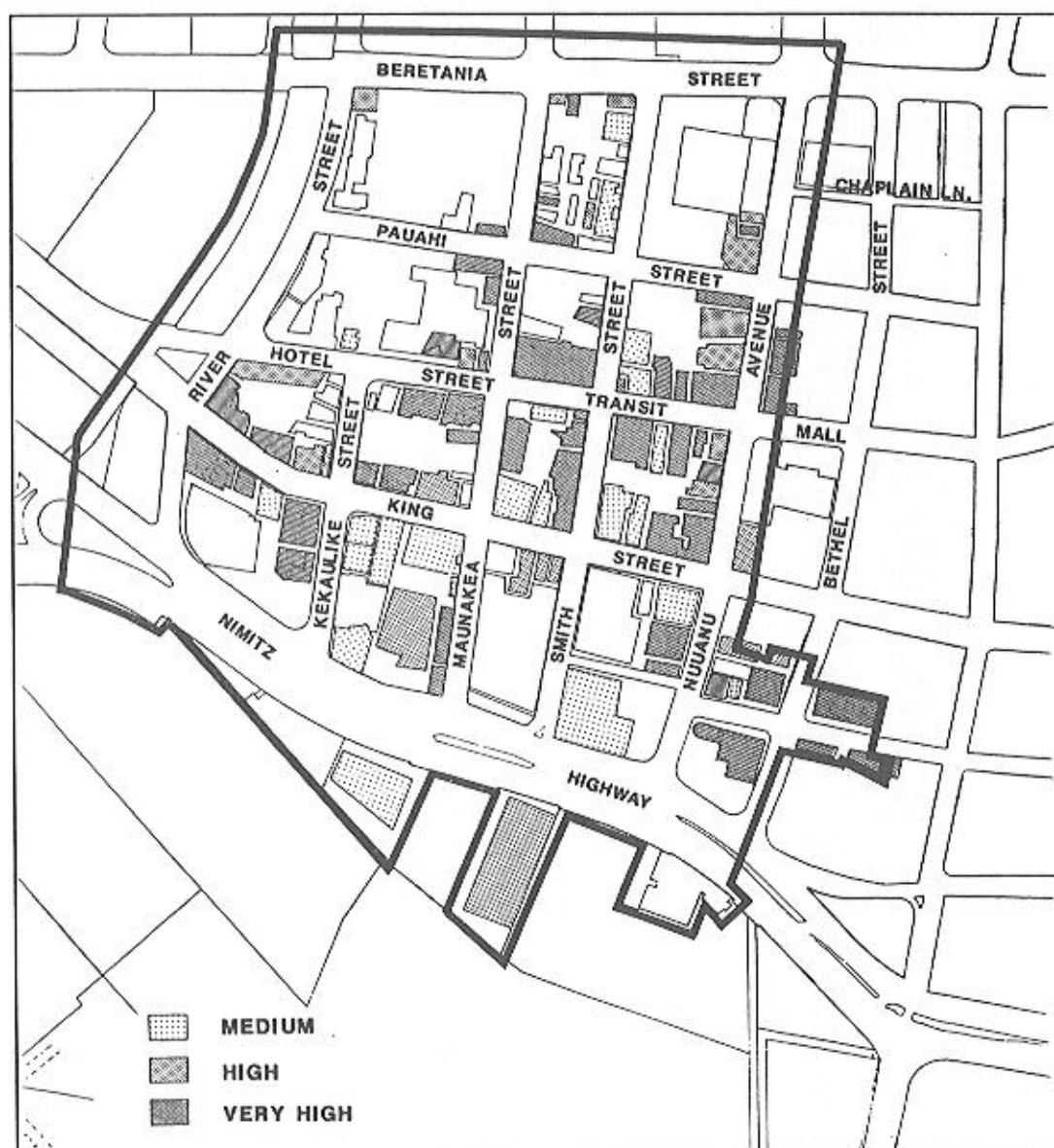
Chinatown Special District

District Map



The three precincts, Historic Core, Mauka and Makai, reflect the historic significance and degree to which new work should relate to the original character of Chinatown.

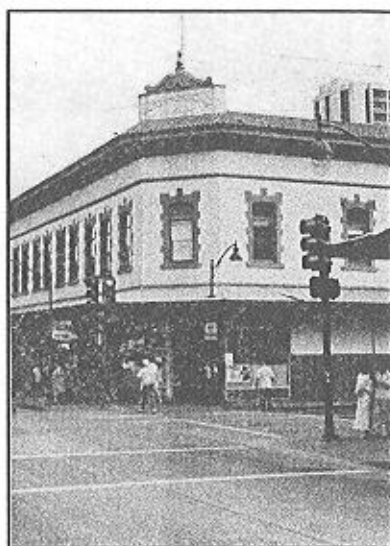
Building Survey



The Building Survey Map indicates the value of preserving buildings in Chinatown, relative to the historic and architectural character of the district. Buildings with **high** or **very high** preservation value contribute strongly to the positive image of the District and should be retained, if structurally sound. If a building is not shown, it is either a new building or considered to have **low** value to the Chinatown Special District. See Appendix for building preservation values by tax map key.



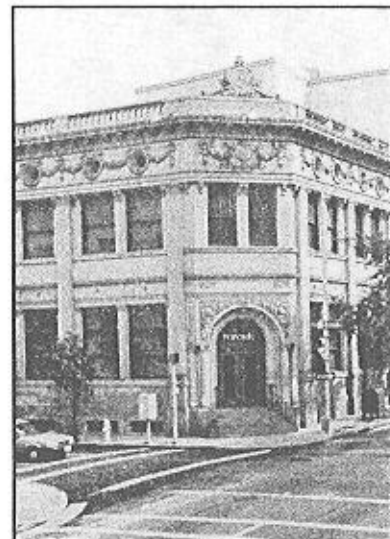
Old Encore Saloon Building



J.P. Morgan Building



Schnack Building



Old Yokohama Bank Building

Photographs of four buildings with **very high** preservation value.

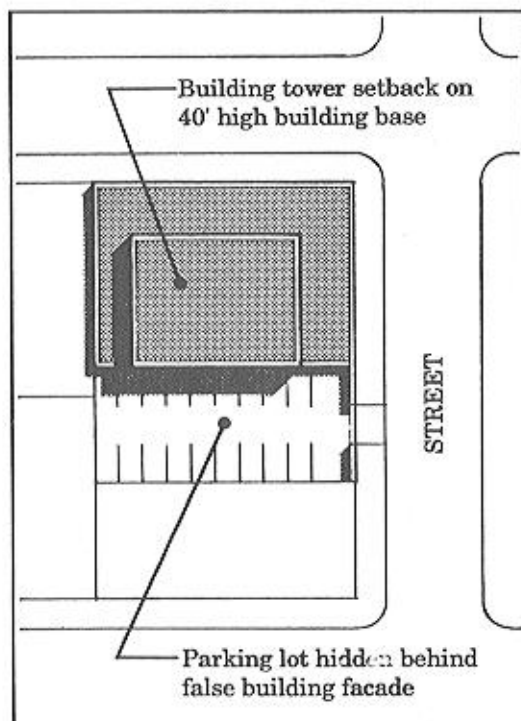
Site Planning -- Mauka/Makai Precinct

New buildings in the Mauka and Makai Precincts should be stepped back in height above the 40-foot elevation to maintain and reinforce the typical streetscape of two- and three-story building heights of the older, architecturally significant buildings in the District.

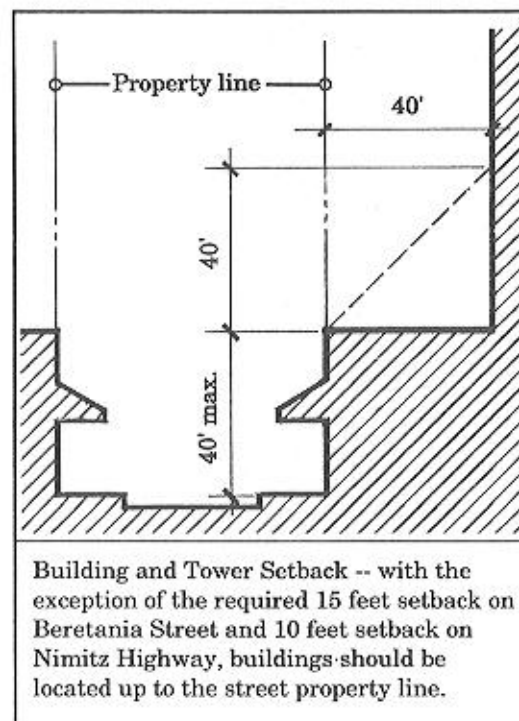
The visual impact of mid- and high-rise structures should not dominate pedestrian views along streets.

The elevations of building towers should avoid blank facades and be articulated to give scale to the building.

On-grade parking exposed to the street is discouraged. On-grade parking should be placed behind commercial storefronts or false facades in order to preserve the continuity of the streetscape. Likewise, trash enclosures should be screened and/or located at the rear of buildings.



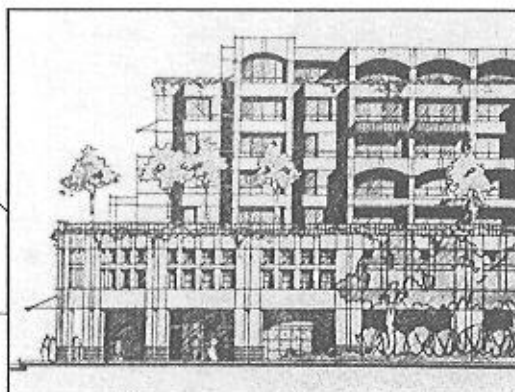
Site Plan



Section

Upper parking levels concealed behind false commercial facade.

Ground level parking located within the interior, with commercial uses along the street frontage.



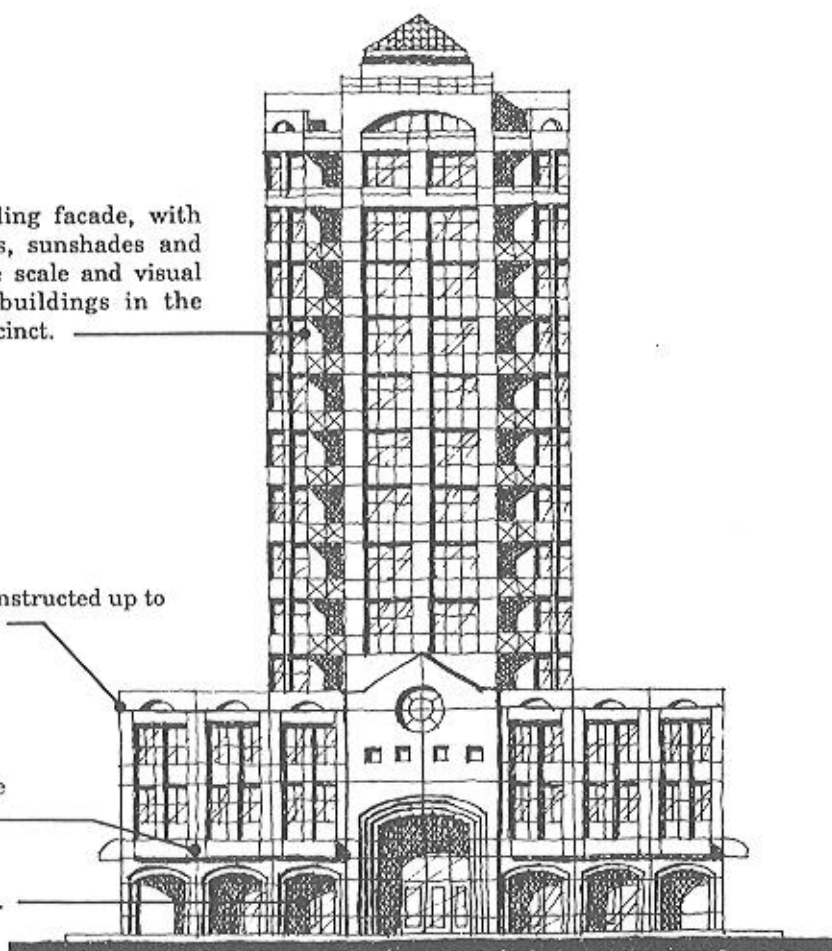
City's River/Nimitz Project

Articulated building facade, with recessed windows, sunshades and lanais, to provide scale and visual relationship to buildings in the Historic Core Precinct.

Base structure constructed up to the property line.

Canopy above the first floor.

Ground level commercial uses.

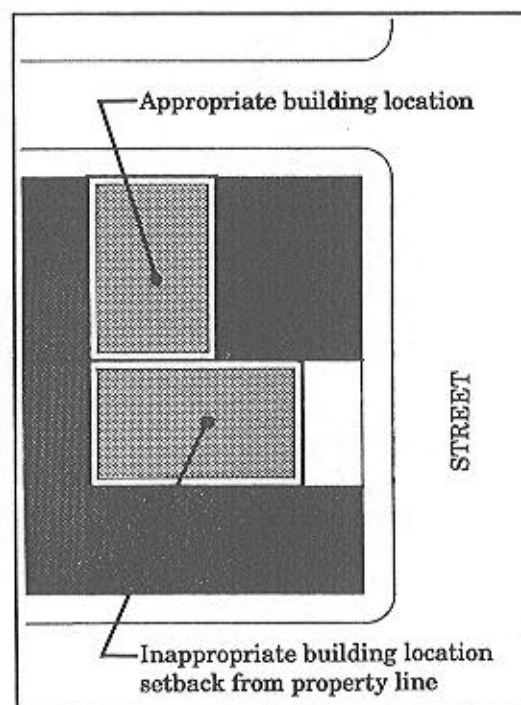


Design Elements of Building Facades

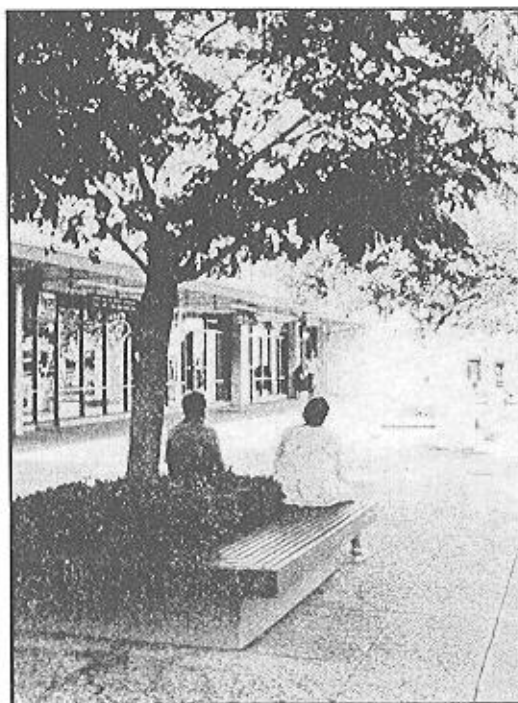
Site Planning -- Historic Core Precinct

The alignment of buildings at the sidewalk should be maintained in order to reinforce the street edge. Building setbacks at the ground level are inappropriate because the facade continuity and characteristic sidewalk conditions would be interrupted. The site plan to the right and the photographs below, show examples of appropriate and inappropriate building lines.

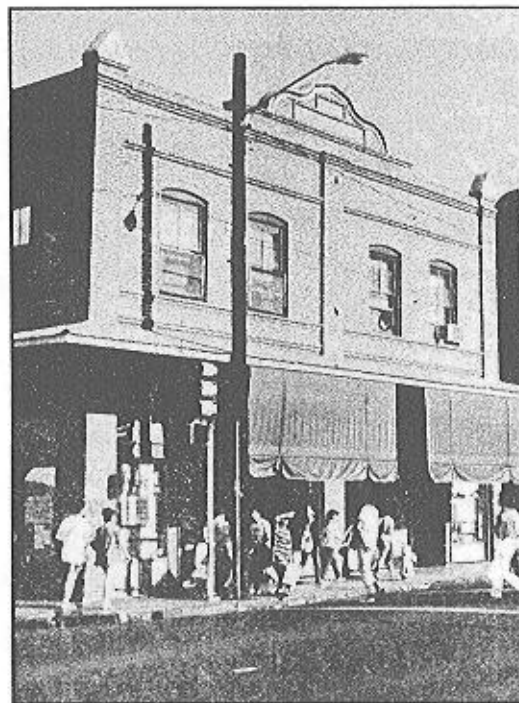
Inappropriate building setback weakens



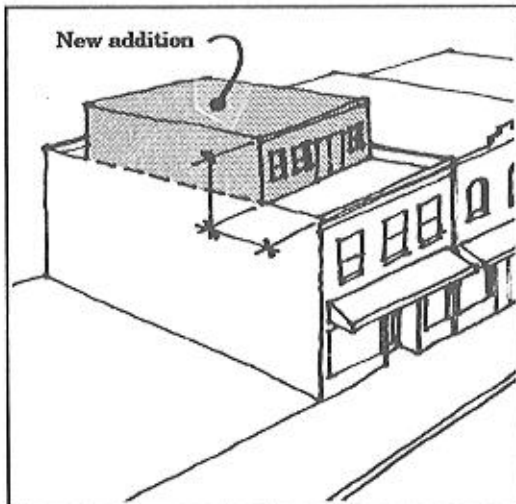
Site Planning



*street image and interrupts the characteristics of the Chinatown streetscape.
Buildings aligned with property line*



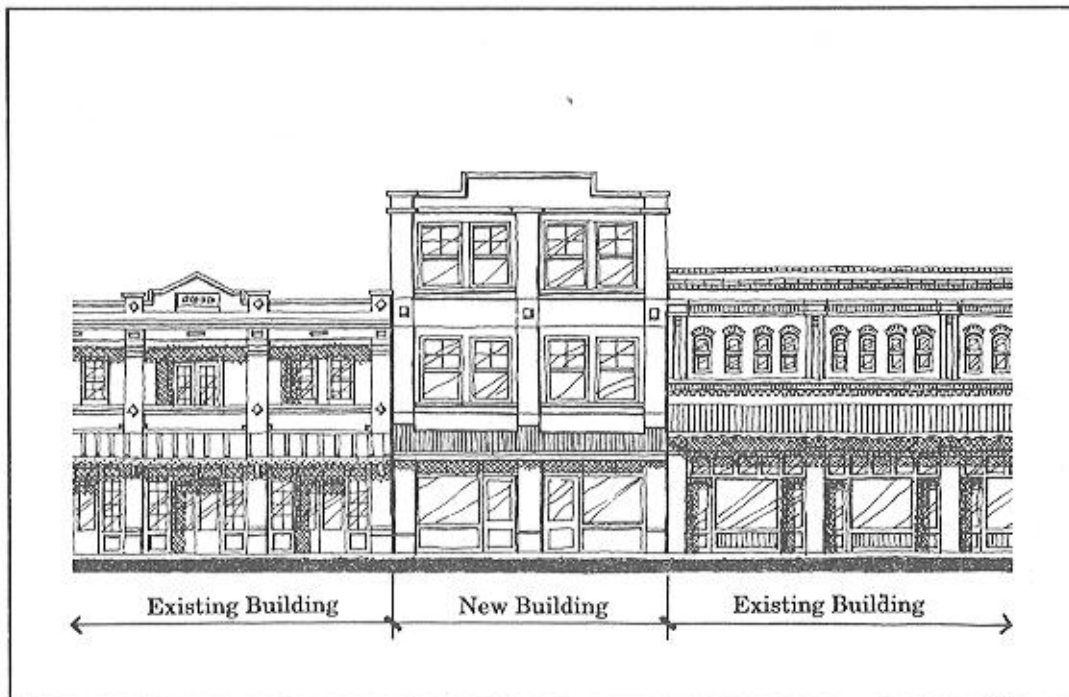
define strong street character and pedestrian activity.



Additional floors to existing buildings

When floors are added to existing buildings, new additions should be sited so that the perceived scale of the original buildings as seen by pedestrians, are not altered. Additions should be placed to the rear or set back from the street facade to minimize visual impact.

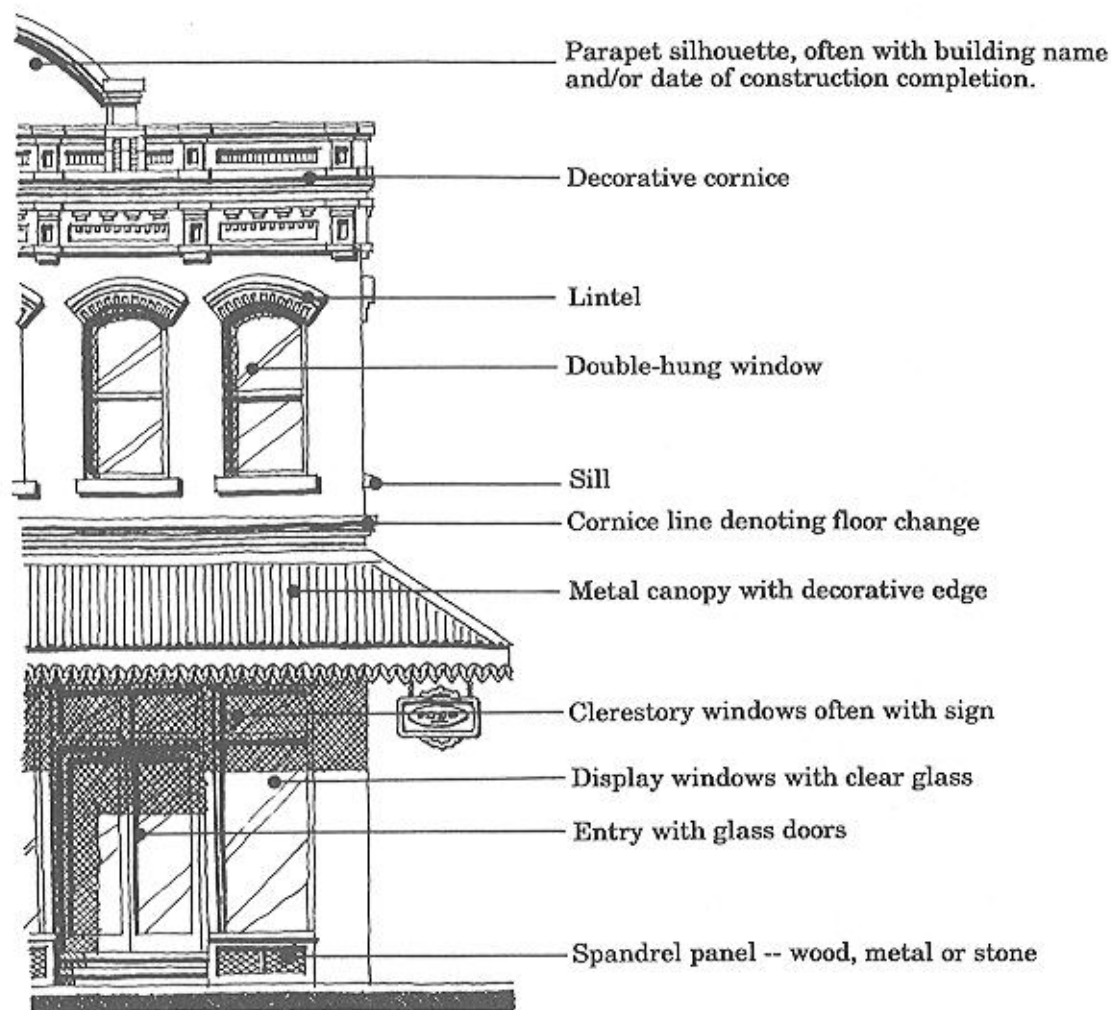
When sited adjacent to architecturally or historically significant buildings, new building facades should be no more than one story higher than the adjacent older buildings.



New building facades should relate to existing facades.

Architectural Character

Facade Treatment



Elements of a traditional storefront

The design treatment given to entries, windows and other building elements in the rehabilitation of existing buildings and the construction of new buildings should be compatible with the period architecture found in the Historic Core Precinct. Building scale, proportions, character and arrangement of elements should respect the classic compositions of the period, such as centered doorways and symmetrical placement of openings. Specific building features such as ground level storefronts, materials, canopies, doors, windows and cornices, and parapets are detailed in the following sections.

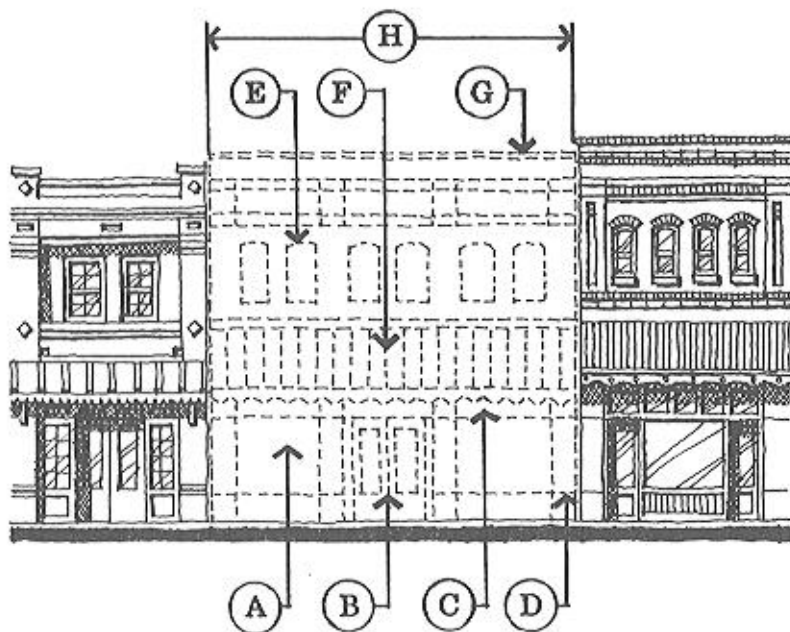
New structures can achieve facade continuity with existing structures by relating to horizontal lines, dimensions and spacing of openings. The proportions and rhythm of upper level openings and the division of ground floor elements of existing buildings should be continued in new buildings.



Maunakea Market Place

Traditional facade components should be incorporated into new designs:

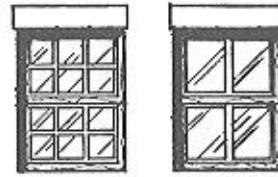
- A. Large window areas on the first floor
- B. Recessed entrance
- C. Clerestory windows
- D. Kickplates to match height of adjacent kickplates
- E. Smaller, vertical windows on the upper floors
- F. Canopy with embellished edge treatment
- G. Articulated building cornice lines and coping
- H. Building width or sections, typical of buildings width found on the block



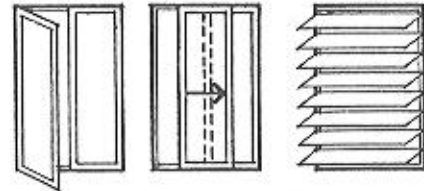
Windows

Wood double-hung windows are typical of traditional structures and are encouraged on second and third story street facades, particularly in the Historic Core Precinct. In lieu of wood windows, double-hung metal windows are appropriate within the mauka and makai precincts.

Windows should be recessed for shadow and retain the vertical proportions and repetition typical of existing period structures.



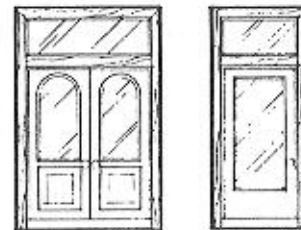
APPROPRIATE



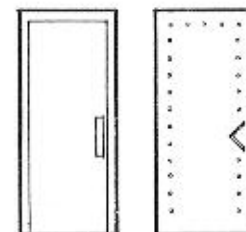
INAPPROPRIATE

Doors

Wood doors with glazed panels and edge trim are characteristic of the District. Aluminum storefronts, all glass doors and metal roll-up doors are discouraged.



APPROPRIATE

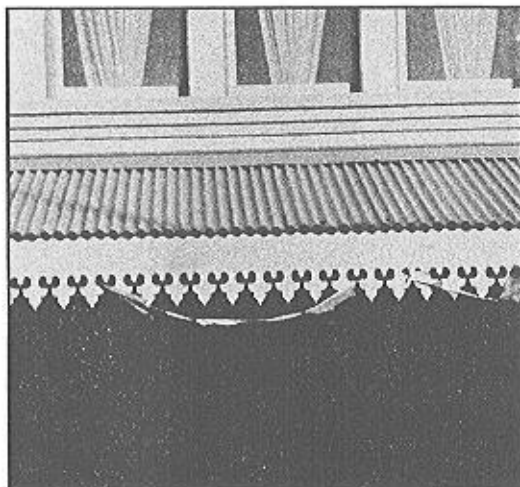
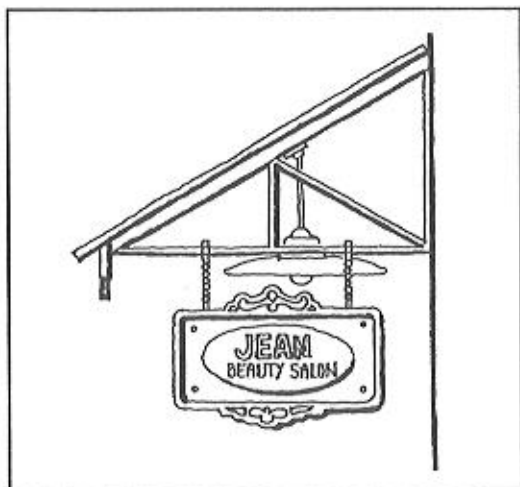


INAPPROPRIATE

Canopies

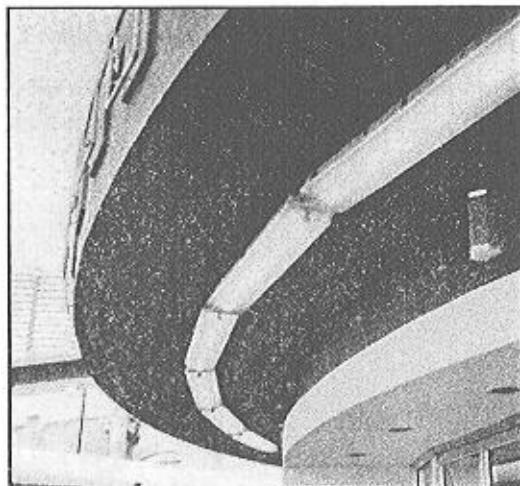
Canopies are encouraged as part of the overall design concept of building street elevations. Canopies should be constructed with appropriate materials and designed with embellished edge treatment, delicate structural support and lighting similar to existing period canopies.

Canopies with filigree detailing on wood facades are encouraged in the Historic Core Precinct.



APPROPRIATE

Canopy with decorative edges and structural support with appropriate period lighting fixture and sign.

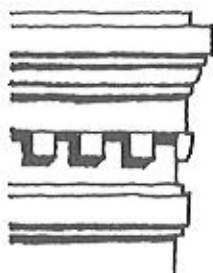


INAPPROPRIATE

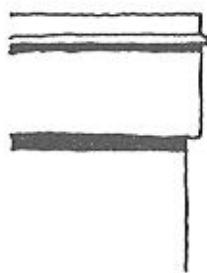
Canopy with heavy metal support and inappropriate fluorescent lighting and illuminated box sign.

Cornices and Parapets

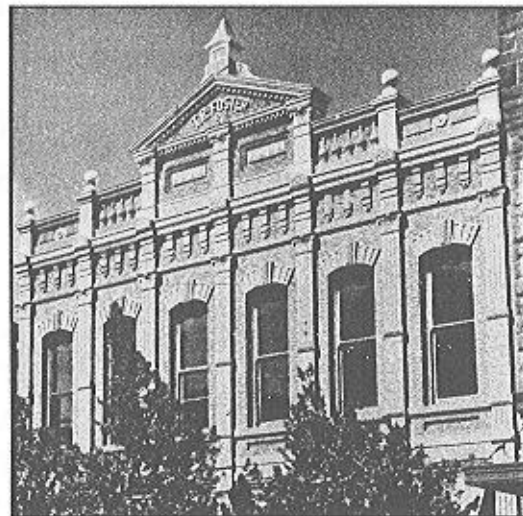
Decorative cornices and parapets were typically applied to period buildings in Chinatown and are encouraged on new construction. Outside the Historic Core Precinct, cornices and parapets need not have a high degree of decoration. Textured finishes, horizontal bands and proportions should be compatible with traditional decorative treatment.



Decorative cornice appropriate in the Historic Core Precinct.



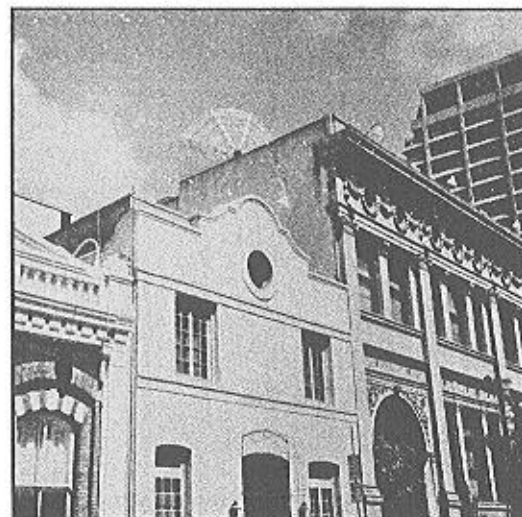
Simpler cornice acceptable in the Mauka and Makai Precincts.



T.R. Foster Building

Rooftop Equipment

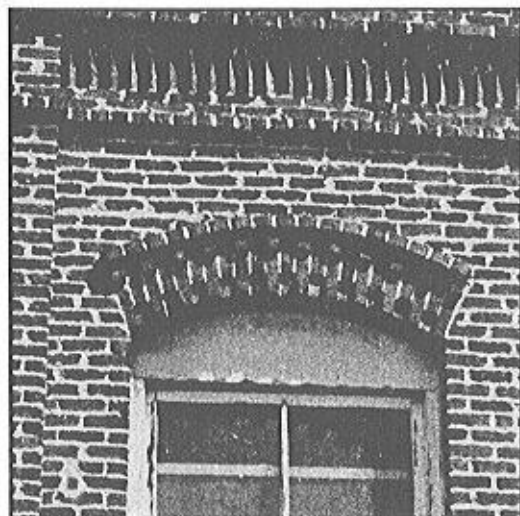
Large rooftop equipment, such as dish antennas and HVAC systems, should be screened from street views. It may be necessary to do view studies to evaluate the potential visual impacts of such equipment.



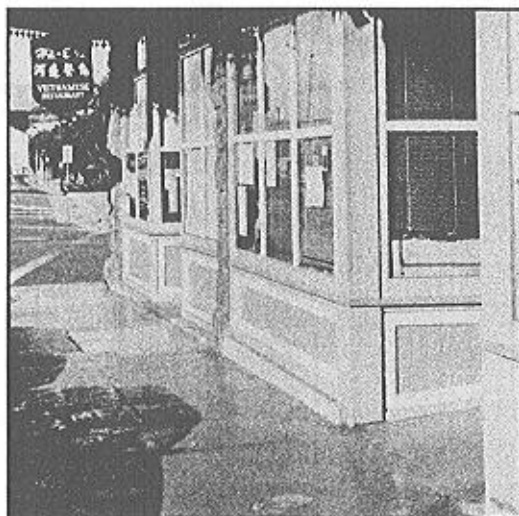
Visible dish antenna detracts from the historic character of the district.

Materials

Building finishes should be of traditional materials found on period buildings such as wood, brick, stone, plaster and concrete. Brick, stone and plaster are particularly appropriate. Reflective or opaque glass and glass films are not desirable, since they create a non-transparent appearance which detracts and reduces the visual interest of building facades and are not in keeping with the character of the area. Ground floor windows should be clear glass.



Brick Detail



Wood Kick Plate Detail

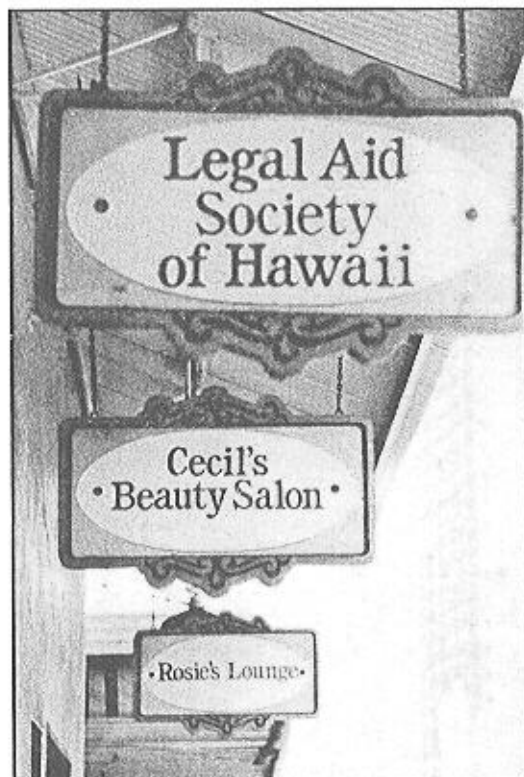
Color

Colors should be selected to harmonize with existing buildings and perpetuate the traditional colors found in Chinatown. Major decorative elements, such as cornices, window trim, and other non-masonry building elements may be painted in accent colors to highlight their importance. Generally, miscellaneous elements, such as gutters, downspouts and vents should be painted a color that will blend into the background surface color.

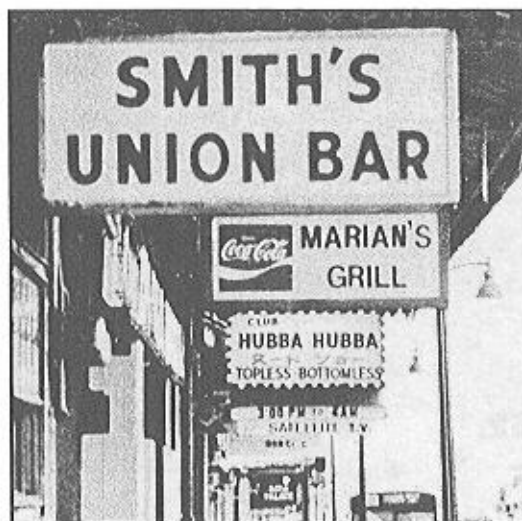
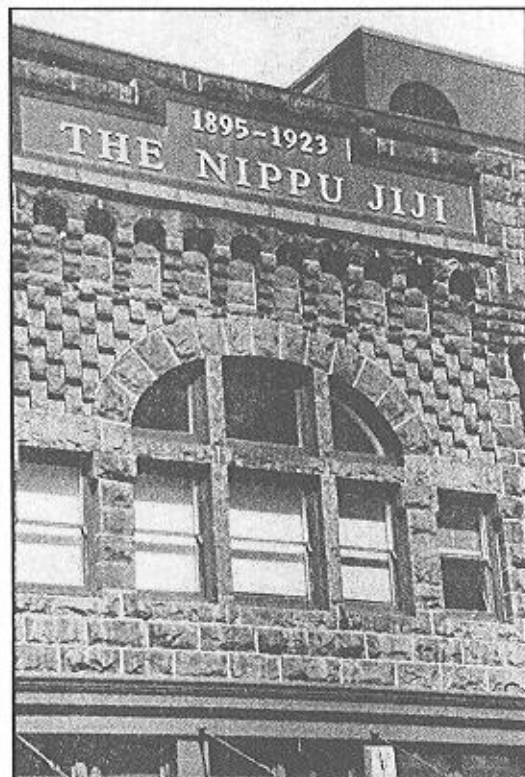
Brick and stone should be left in their natural color and not be painted. Metal and wood trim pieces should be painted colors which are compatible with the adjacent, natural colors of masonry materials. Reflective or iridescent colors should not be used.

Signs

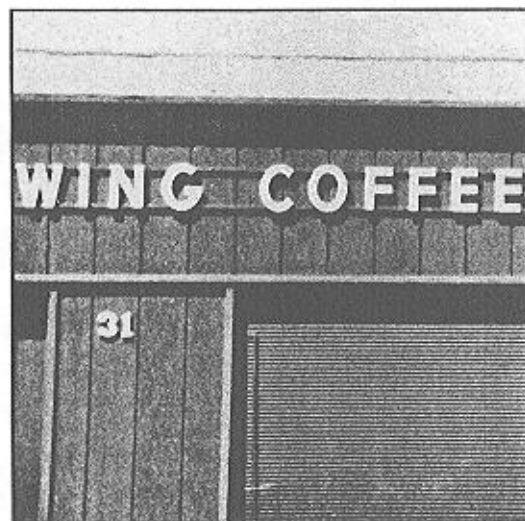
Signs should relate to the district's historic character. The shape, material and lettering of signs should be limited to types used from around the turn of the century to the 1940's. Serif-style lettering is encouraged. Lighting should be detached from and directed to the signs. Self-illuminated signs, except for period-style neon signs, are prohibited.



APPROPRIATE

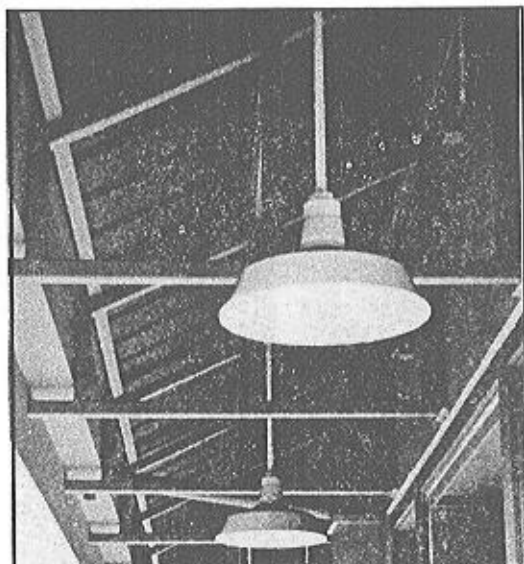


INAPPROPRIATE



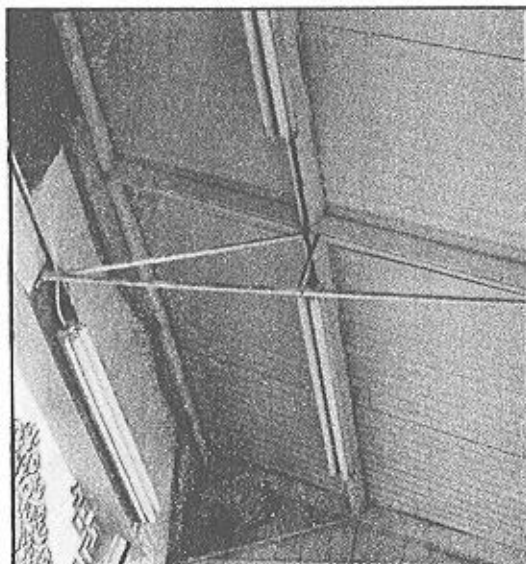
Lighting

Lighting should be generally subdued so as not to detract from the building. Lighting fixtures should be similar in style and detail to period fixtures. Incandescent light fixtures are encouraged. High intensity light sources, such as sodium and fluorescent lamps as shown in the bottom photo, are discouraged.



APPROPRIATE

Pendant fixture similar in style to period fixtures.

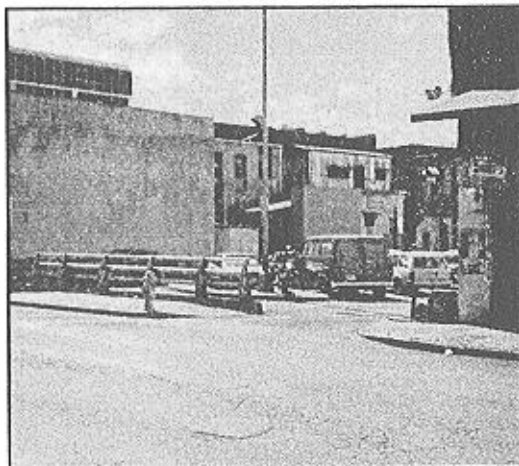


INAPPROPRIATE

Fluorescent light strips are not in keeping with period fixtures.

Parking

Parking and loading areas should be located on the interior of lots or screened with a false building front to avoid breaking up the continuity of the street. Where parking garages are necessary, pedestrian/retail uses should be provided along the street. Open parking lots along the street discourage pedestrian activity and weakens the street-scape character.

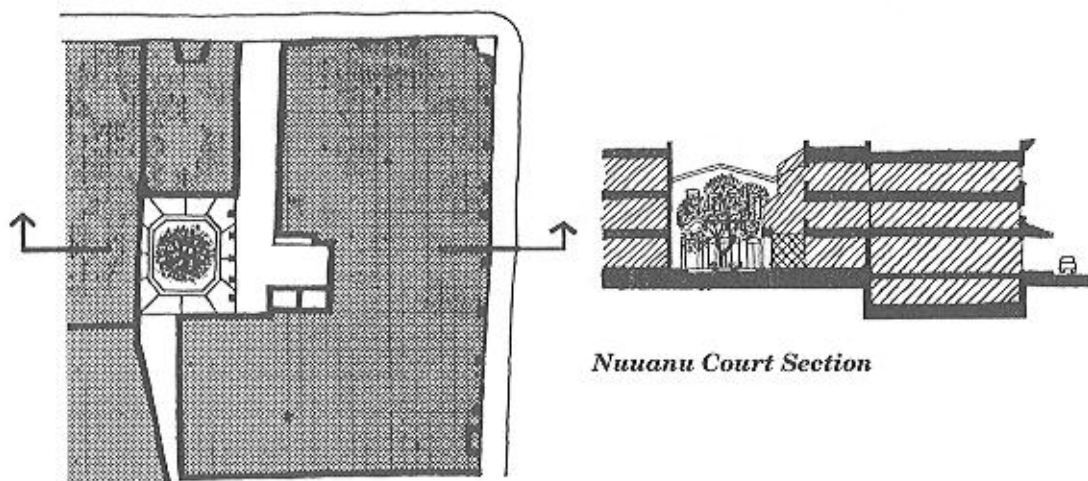


Inappropriate location of parking lot along street.

Courtyards

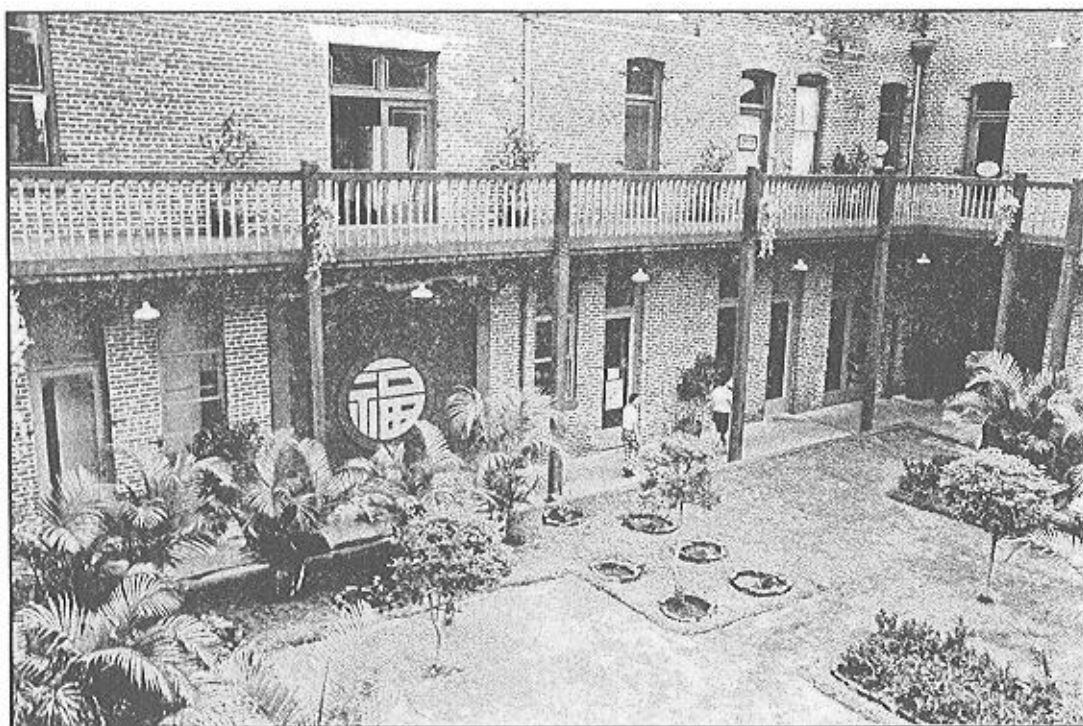
Interior courtyards were traditionally used in Chinatown to provide light, air and service to interior commercial and residential spaces. Typical examples of such courtyards are found in the Mendonca Building, Nuuanu Court and Winston Hale.

Landscaped interior courtyards are encouraged to create activity centers, intimate pedestrian open spaces and visual enjoyment.



Nuuanu Court Section

Nuuanu Court Floor Plan



Courtyard within the restored Mendonca Block

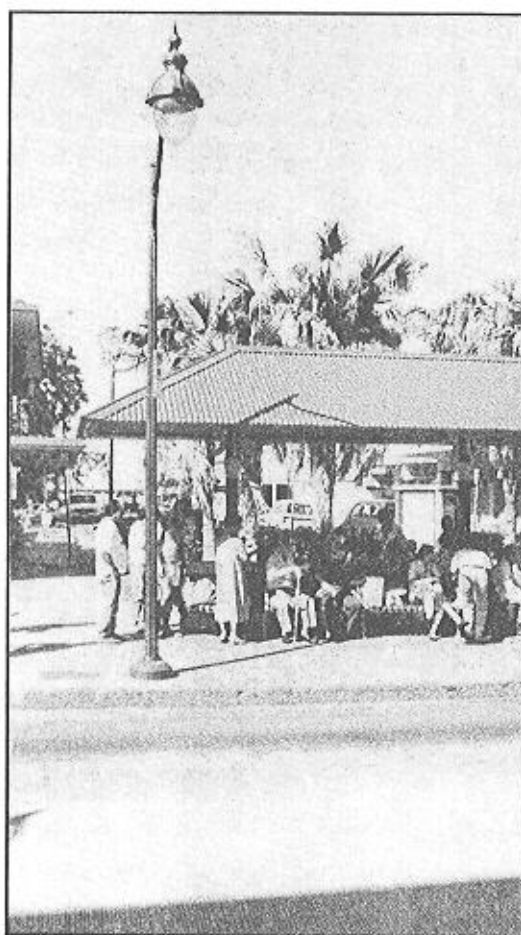
Photo by Hill and Knowlton Communications - Pacific Inc.

Public Improvements

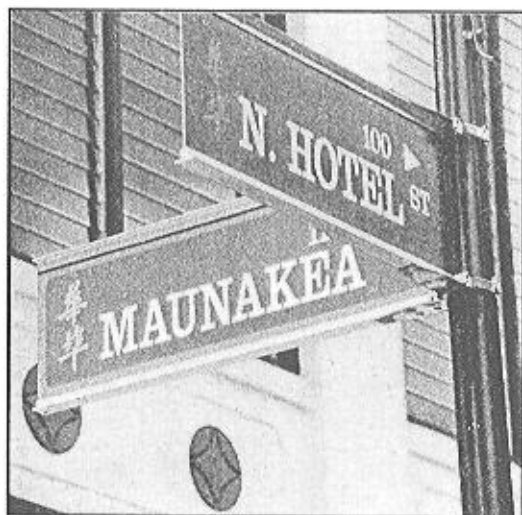
The City and County of Honolulu has made a number of capital improvements in Chinatown in recent years. An example is the transformation of Hotel Street into a transit mall, with period light fixtures and a period bus shelter, and new street signs with special colors, serif lettering and gold Chinese characters to identify Chinatown. These light fixtures and bus shelter design should be used throughout the district, especially in the Historic Core Precinct.

Improvements, such as sidewalk repaving, should match the finish, texture and color of the sidewalk on the Hotel Street Transit Mall. Existing ballast block curbing should be retained wherever possible to maintain the character of the street.

Street furniture, such as benches and rubbish receptacles, should enhance the historic character of Chinatown. Use of wrought iron street furniture is especially appropriate.



Hotel-Kekaulike Bus Shelter



Special Street Signs

Appendix

The building values are compiled from the following sources:

- 1) **Chinatown Historic Preservation Plan**, 1974, by Aotani & Hartwell Associates, Inc., prepared for the City and County of Honolulu.
- 2) **Chinatown Revitalization Plan**, July 1981 by Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co., prepared for the City & County of Honolulu.
- 3) **Department of Land Utilization** -- Design Advisory Committee, noted by asterisk (*)

Buildings which do not appear on this list are either new or considered to have low value to the district.

| Tax Map Key | Building Name | Building Value |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1-7-01: 2 | Pier 13 & 14 | High* |
| 1-7-02: 2 | Fisher Hawaii Building | High* |
| 1-7-02: 3 | State of Hawaii (shops) | Medium* |
| 1-7-02: 4 | Fireboat Firestation | Medium |
| 1-7-02: 8 | Goodwill Industries | High* |
| 1-7-02: 9,45 | D. Dam /N. Tam | High* |
| 1-7-02: 11 | M. Kawahara & T. Sato | Very high |
| 1-7-02: 13 | C. Q. Yee Hop (stone) | High* |
| 1-7-02: 16 | Nimitz & Kekaulike | Medium |
| 1-7-02: 17, 18 | King & Kekaulike | High* |
| 1-7-02: 19, 21 | Fish Market | Medium* |
| 1-7-02: 23 | Bank of Hawaii | Medium* |
| 1-7-02: 24 | Dentist | Medium* |
| 1-7-02: 25 | J. H. Schnack | Very high |
| 1-7-02: 26 | Holau Market | Very high* |
| 1-7-02: 28 | McCandless | Very high* |
| 1-7-02: 29 | Musashiya | Very high |
| 1-7-02: 34 | Oahu Market | Very high* |
| 1-7-02: 35 | T. R. Foster/Spaghetti-2 Bldg. | Very high |
| 1-7-02: 39 | One North King | Medium |
| 1-7-02: 40 | Nippu Jiji | Very high |
| 1-7-02: 45 | Oka | High* |
| 1-7-03: 1 | Hocking Hotel | Very high* |
| 1-7-03: 2 | United Chinese Society | Medium |
| 1-7-03: 4, 97 | Swing Club | Very high* |
| 1-7-03: 5 | 29-31 Hotel Street | Medium* |

| Tax Map Key | Building Name | Building Value |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1-7-03: 6 | Nuuanu Shops | Very high* |
| 1-7-03: 7 | Gallery | High* |
| 1-7-03: 8 | McCandless Property | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 9 | Kim Chow | High |
| 1-7-03: 10 | Hawaii National Bank | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 11 | Lum Yip Kee | Medium |
| 1-7-03: 12 | Lee & Young | Medium* |
| 1-7-03: 15 | Bath Palace | Medium* |
| 1-7-03: 15 | Mendonca (makai) | Very high* |
| 1-7-03: 16 | Mendonca (small, corner) | Very high* |
| 1-7-03: 18, 90, 92 | D & B's Lunch | High* |
| 1-7-03: 19 | Uptown Jewelers | Very high* |
| 1-7-03: 25 | Lum Yip Kee 1936 | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 26 | Wo Fat | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 28 | Arita Store | High* |
| 1-7-03: 28 | Kekaulike Building | High* |
| 1-7-03: 29, 66 | Lee Building | Very high* |
| 1-7-03: 30, 31 72-74 | N. King & River Streets | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 32 | Wong Building | High* |
| 1-7-03: 33 | LDCST BenevSoc | Medium* |
| 1-7-03: 37 | Siu Building | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 42 | Wong | Medium* |
| 1-7-03: 45 | Komeya Apartments | Medium |
| 1-7-03: 48 | Sumida Building 1926 | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 49 | Lum Yip Kee 1920 | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 50 | Lee Building | High |
| 1-7-03: 51 | Mendonca | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 52 | Ket On Society | Medium |
| 1-7-03: 55 | Barber shop | Medium |
| 1-7-03: 56 | Encore Saloon Building | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 57 | 24 Hotel Street (Mel's) | Very high* |
| 1-7-03: 58 | Risque | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 59 | Kuo Min Tang | Medium* |
| 1-7-03: 59 | Young Market | Medium* |
| 1-7-03: 60 | Mini Garden | High* |
| 1-7-03: 62 | Love's Bakery | High |
| 1-7-03: 63 | McCandless Block | Very high* |
| 1-7-03: 64 | Lai Fong | High* |

| Tax Map Key | Building Name | Building Value |
|--------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 1-7-03: 66, 29 | United Press, Ltd. | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 75 | L. Ah Leong | Very high* |
| 1-7-03: 76 | Cindy's Leis | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 81 | | High |
| 1-7-03: 83 | Club Hubba Hubba | Very high |
| 1-7-03: 84-89 | Chung Chong Yuen | Very high |
| 1-7-03:96 | Colusa Building (part of Maunakea Marketplace) | Very high |
| 1-7-03:98 | 1128 Smith Street | Very high |
| 1-7-04: 1 | Four Seas Chop Suey | High* |
| 1-7-04: 8 | Bo San Ton | High |
| 1-7-04: 9 | Oweco World Travel | Very high* |
| 1-7-04: 11 | Yanin Ltd. Building | Very high* |
| 1-7-04: 13 | Tsung Tsin Association | Very high |
| 1-7-04: 16 | Old Jailhouse (stone bldg.) | High |
| 1-7-04: 18 | Hai On Tong | High |
| 1-7-04: 19 | 79 N. Beretania Street | Very high* |
| 1-7-04: 21, 22 | OK Restaurant (2 sections) | High*/Medium* |
| 1-7-04: 25 | Golden Harvest | Medium* |
| 1-7-04: 28 | Minatoya Sukiyaki | Very high* |
| 1-7-04: 36 | Fong Building | High |
| 2-1-2: 12 | Kamehameha V Building | Very high* |
| 2-1-2: 19 | Bishop Bank Building | Very high* |
| 2-1-2: 20 | Melcher Building | Very high* |
| 2-1-2: 24 | Old Honolulu Police Station | Very high* |
| 2-1-2: 32 | The Friend | High |
| 2-1-2: 33 | Honolulu Publishing Co. | Very high* |
| 2-1-2: 34 | | High* |
| 2-1-2: 35 | Royal Saloon | Very High* |
| 2-1-2: 36 | Wing Wo Tai | High* |
| 2-1-2: 42 | King's Court/ First Federal | High* |
| 2-1-3:16 | McLean Block | Very high* |
| 2-1-3: 17 | Perry Block 1888 | Very high* |
| 2-1-3: 18 | Pantheon Bar | Very high* |