

Streetscape Design Definitions

Architectural theme:

Typically a “theme” integrates all aspects of the piece into one coherent whole; i.e., Sisters, Oregon “Western theme”, Leavenworth, Washington “Bavarian Village” theme, Kruse Way/Meadows Road, Lake Oswego “uniformity in form and materials”, East End Lake Oswego “Oswego Style,” variations of Arts and Crafts Style, “gables, steep pitches,” etc. In a “theme” everything emanates from this focus on a particular element and expresses it. Lake Grove Village Plan calls for an “eclectic mix” of architecture and has chosen 5 to 7 different “styles” of architecture that are acceptable. The styles are very different one to another. The “eclectic mix” expresses the “uniqueness” of the Boones Ferry Road length. The colors, textures, forms, masses, materials are all different.

The goal of accommodating an “eclectic mix of architecture theme” is to provide the “appropriate setting” for the chosen “style” of architecture in a manner that achieves some “continuity” in the Urban Design of the Lake Grove Village Center. The urban design elements should provide the “place setting” to accommodate the differing “architectural styles,” yet provide a cohesive pedestrian environment. A recent example is the Bank of the West Building at Madrona and the remodeled Lake Grove Shopping Center. One is an Arts and Crafts style (bank) and the other a Modern style, but the similar new “streetscape” elements provide a “setting” that accommodates these two very different styles.

Urban design:

Urban Design is an interdisciplinary subject using elements of many built environment professions including:

- Urban Planning
- Landscape Architecture
- Architecture
- Civil Engineering

and is concerned with the arrangement, appearance and function of our suburbs, towns, and cities.

There are many “scales” of urban design from:

Macro scale – Urban Structure and Form, Planning, Zoning, Transportation, Height and Massing and Infrastructure networks.

Micro scale – Street furniture and lighting, public art, details and materials, facades and interface.

Landscape architecture:

A useful definition for this project is this discipline provides the vision and technical expertise to develop the outdoor elements. Landscape design generally involves the incorporation of plants and the necessary environment for them to thrive in. The design may also purpose these living plants to enhance public open space, provide aesthetically pleasing form and color, provide bio remediation in stormwater treatment facilities, and more. Landscape architects also design the hardscape environment that are usually present in an outdoor environment which includes walks, plazas, walls, outdoor structures, stairs, ramps, fountains, etc. Landscape architects work with other disciplines and governmental agencies to integrate this work with buildings, roads, natural environments and other features. Landscape architecture is a very wide discipline and practitioners generally focus on a few aspects during their career.

Streetscape:

A broad term to mean everything that makes up the scene on a street. The typical elements include the road, buildings, sidewalks, street trees, street lights, benches, trash receptacles, and adjoining open spaces. Special elements include public art, drinking fountains, water fountains, outdoor seating, etc. Collectively, these elements create an outdoor environment for people to be in whether traveling from one destination to the next or lingering at a place that has an inviting quality. As result of the movement towards sustainable environments, vegetated stormwater treatment facilities have been incorporated into the streetscape to manage runoff from impervious surfaces.

Greenstreet:

Seattle describes a greenstreet as a public right-of-way that incorporates design and operational treatments to give priority to pedestrian circulation and open space over other transportation uses. The purpose is to enhance/expand public open space while reinforcing desired land use and transportation patterns. Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services focuses on the environmental aspect of mitigating stormwater runoff through creating vegetated stormwater treatment areas that can become a major theme of a streetscape. This topic is closely related to 'complete streets'.

Complete Street:

Smart Growth America's definition of a complete street focuses on sustainable means of transportation to minimize environmental impacts while creating streets that are safe for everyone regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. Complete streets usually include improvements that benefit pedestrians, bicyclists, and mass-transit while minimizing the focus on single occupancy vehicles. The complete street concept also embraces the greenstreet principles of incorporating methods of mitigating stormwater runoff.

Great Street:

(I haven't found much of a published definition of a 'great street', but there is an article at <http://www.citylab.com/design/2012/09/defining-great-street/3181/> which influences the following) A great street has defining elements that make it stand out from others. It may be the scale of the street, natural elements like mature large canopy trees, lively and successful commerce, and more. They may be narrow or expansive in scale. They may be designed for several transportation modes or they may be pedestrian only streets. They probably have a successful business community if it is a street in a commercial district. Maybe the most distinguishing factor is it's a street that attracts people to come and linger. It's a place where human interaction happens, where friends get together, where conversations happen.

Stormwater Treatment:

In the last century, stormwater runoff was conveyed away from the point it falls from the sky to a natural water body or a treatment plant. In urban areas, the method of conveyance is usually an underground network of pipe fed by catch basins at low points in the street. In the past few decades, a new strategy has been employed to mitigate stormwater runoff. Vegetated swales and larger rain gardens have been integrated on streets, parking lots and other locations where there is a significant amount of impervious surface. A significant component of this strategy is to eliminate underground pipe where you could convey runoff on the surface to reduce installation and future maintenance costs. Other strategies include reducing/eliminating impervious surfaces where possible and planting large canopy trees. This is closely associated with LID, see the following definition.

LID:

This is an acronym for Low Impact Development regarding stormwater management and is generally associated with vegetated stormwater treatment/management facilities. The EPA defines LID's as "an approach to land development (or re-development) that works with nature to manage stormwater as close to its source as possible. LID employs principles such as preserving and recreating natural landscape features, minimizing effective imperviousness to create functional and appealing site drainage that treat stormwater as a resource rather than a waste product. There are many practices that have been used to adhere to these principles such as bioretention facilities, rain gardens, vegetated rooftops, rain barrels, and permeable pavements. By implementing LID principles and practices, water can be managed in a way that reduces the impact of built areas and promotes the natural movement of water within an ecosystem or watershed". The take away is a lot of small interventions reduce our dependency on municipal systems and infrastructure. Stormwater is considered a resource and managing it this way promotes a healthy watershed.