C. Weather Protection

C-1 Locations and Coverage

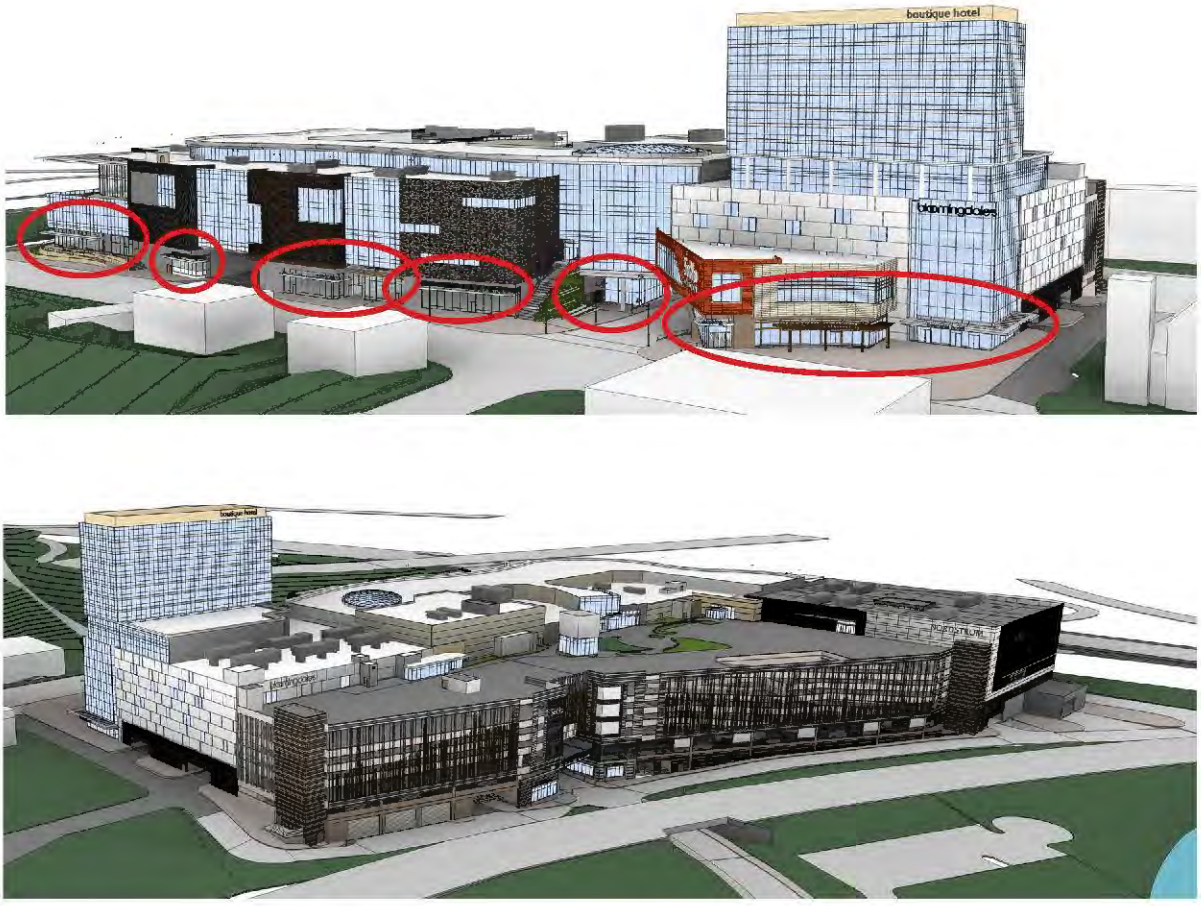
Criteria:

The Design Guidelines state, "Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the inclusion of overhead weather protection near major pedestrian activity areas. The Project features overhead weather protection along the West Avenue and particularly around the primary entries there. Overhead protection is also provided on portions of the east, north, and south sides of the Project.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, and G-815.



The Project is designed with a variety of weather protection methods for pedestrians providing for coverage along different portions of the Project.

C-2 Design Integration

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Integrate weather protection into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to any adjacent buildings in design, coverage, or other features."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the inclusion of overhead weather protection near major pedestrian activity areas. The Project features overhead weather protection along the West Avenue and particularly around the primary entries there. Overhead protection is also provided on portions of the east, north, and south sides of the Project.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, and G-815 (see previous C-1).

Document Reference: Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, and G-815 (see previous C-1).

C-3 People-Friendly Spaces

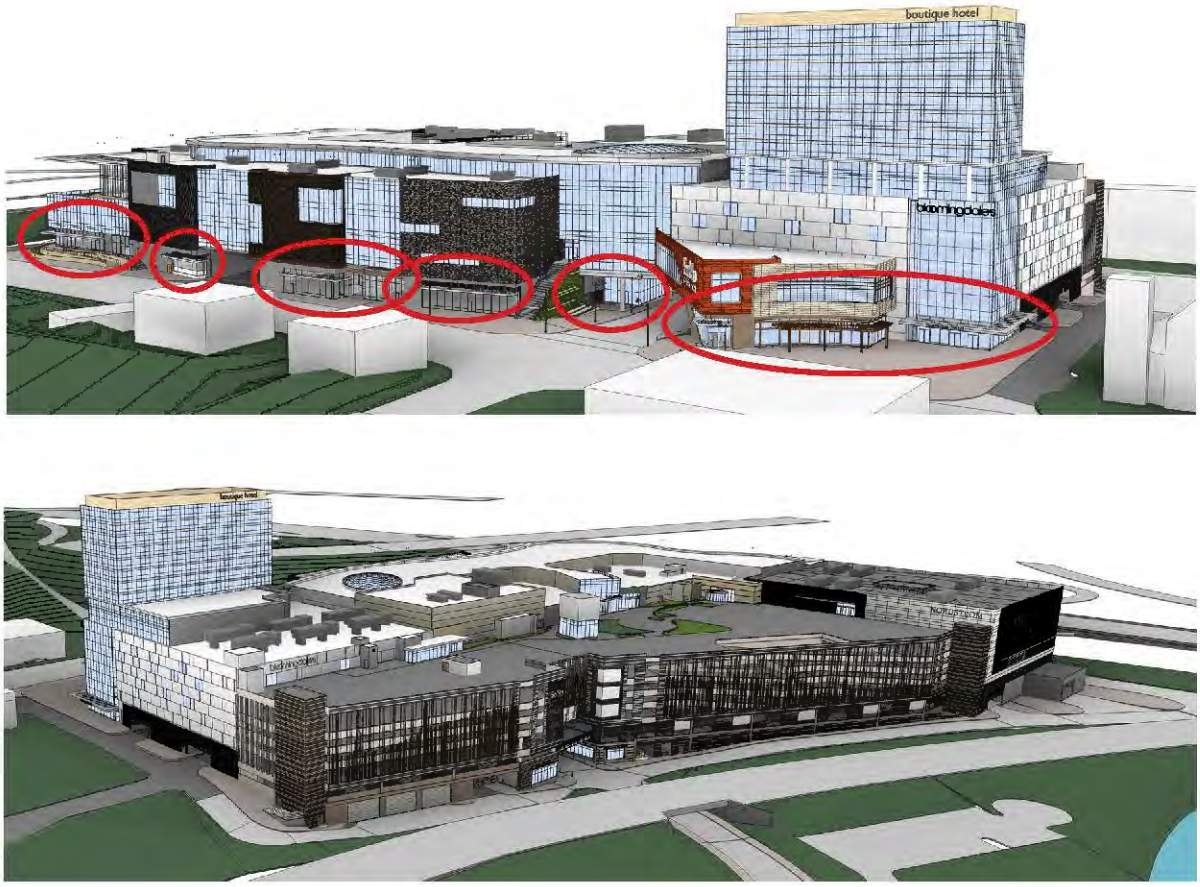
Criteria:

The Design Guidelines state, "Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building canopies by using human-scale architectural elements and a pattern of forms and/or textures at intervals along the façade. If transparent canopies are used, design to accommodate regular cleaning and maintenance."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project incorporates people-friendly spaces. The Project features overhead weather protection along the West Avenue and particularly around the primary entries there. Overhead protection is also provided on portions of the east, north, and south sides of the Project. The Project's prominent western edge along West Avenue, features three primary public plazas that feature extensive landscaping and programming to encourage lingering and socializing. The edges of the Project on all sides provide sidewalks and public space improvements, including street trees, landscape areas, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and outdoor dining.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, A-111 to A-133, G-808, G-809, and G-811 to G-816.



The Project is designed with people-friendly spaces below canopies that encourage lingering and socializing.

D. Wayfinding

D-1 Design as Wayfinding

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Use design features as a means of wayfinding whatever possible, and provide clear directional signage where needed."

Findings:
To be completed.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 and A-202, and G-805 to G-816.

The Project is designed with a prominent gateway that provides for a logical, and well-designed wayfinding. Wayfinding signage is also provided throughout the Project for both pedestrians and motorists.

PL3 Street Level Interaction

A. Entries

A-1 Design Objectives

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street. Scale and detail them to function well for their anticipated use and also to fit with the building of which they are a part, differentiating residential and commercial entries with design features and amenities specific to each." Retail entrances should include adequate space for several patrons to enter and exit simultaneously. Weather protection coverings are preferable for retail entries.

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project incorporates obvious, identifiable, and distinctive primary entries. The primary entries on the Project's western side are distinctive gateways and create an identity for the Project and the neighborhood. Weather protection is provided throughout the Project, primarily on the western side and retail entrances here also feature double door entrances increasing entry capacity.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet G-805 to G-809, and G-811 to G-813.

The Project is designed with a prominent gateway that provides for a logical, and well-designed entryway to the Project. Wayfinding signage is also provided throughout the Project for both pedestrians and motorists.

A-2 Ensemble of Elements

Criteria:
The entry should be designed as a collection of coordinated elements that included features overhead and on the ground, landscaping, lighting, and other features. A range of elements can be considered including overhead shelter such as canopies; transitional spaces such as courtyards, stairways, and pocket gardens; ground surface seating, paving and landscaping; and building surface/interface such as privacy screens, upward-operating shades on windows, signage, and lighting.

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project incorporates a range of elements in its entries. The primary entries on the Project's western side are distinctive gateways and create an identity for the Project and the neighborhood. Weather protection is provided throughout the Project, primarily on the western side and retail entrances here also feature double door entrances increasing entry capacity. Landscape features, public furniture for passive recreation, outdoor dining, and pedestrian-scaled lighting are some of the features incorporated into the design of the Project near its entries.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet G-808, G-809, G-811, and G-812.

The Project provides a prominent gateway over North Water Street that is clearly integrated into the design of the Project overall.

B. Residential Edges

B-1 Security and Privacy

Criteria:
Not applicable.

B-2 Ground Level Residential

Criteria:
Not applicable.

B-3 Buildings with Live/Work Uses

Criteria:
Not applicable.

B-4 Interaction

Criteria:
Not applicable.

C. Retail Edges

C-1 Porous Edge

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project incorporates greater transparency at the ground level to provide a visual connection between the exterior and interior. The West Avenue side features numerous retail and restaurants at ground level with significant transparency. The eastern and northern sides of the Project feature less transparency at the ground level.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, A-111 to A-113, G-808, G-809, and G-811 to G-816.

The ground floor of the Project is designed to be active and transparent to passersby. Pedestrians and motorists would engage the Project through its ample transparent glazing, entrances, and active ground floor uses.

C-2 Visibility

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. In some conditions, consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project incorporates greater transparency at the ground level to provide a visual connection between the exterior and interior. The West Avenue side features numerous retail and restaurants at ground level with significant transparency. The eastern and northern sides of the Project feature less transparency at the ground level.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, A-111 to A-113, G-808, G-809, and G-811 to G-816.

The Project provides large sections of transparent fenestration that maximize views into the interiors for both pedestrians and motorists.

C-3 Ancillary Activities

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Allow space for activities such as sidewalk vending, seating, and restaurant dining to occur. Consider setting structures back from the street or incorporating space in the Project design into which retail uses can extend."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project has incorporated design elements to create a strong public realm and greater sense of place for the area. The Project's prominent western edge along West Avenue, features three primary public plazas that feature extensive landscaping and programming to encourage lingering and socializing. The edges of the Project on all sides provide sidewalks and public space improvements, including street trees, landscape areas, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and outdoor dining.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-111 to A-113, G-808, G-809, G-811 to G-816, and L1.01 to L1.03.

The Project provides numerous public, open spaces that provide space for a range of passive and active activities and uses.

D. Streets

D-1 Streets

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Design pedestrian-friendly streetscapes by providing pedestrian-oriented amenities and enhancements that encourage urban engagement by employing: Arcades, awnings, and other architectural features to provide a human scale and offer protection from rain and the summer heat. Pedestrian plazas and green space that offer interesting public places for people to enjoy the street experience. These spaces should incorporate water features, sculptures, public art, or other architectural focal points.

Public art, benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and other amenities enhance the quality of the pedestrian experience. Walkways and sidewalks, paved in materials with a tactile quality, to differentiate the pedestrian space from the auto realm. Pedestrian-oriented street lighting to increase the sense of safety and reduce the impact of light pollution. Trees and other landscaping visually to enhance the space as well as provide shade and a cooler microclimate. Native species should be encouraged."

Findings:
To be completed.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet L1.00 to L1.02, and L4.00a.

The Project proposes to improve the streets for pedestrians with crosswalks, bollards, crossing lights, pedestrian-scaled street lighting, and ramped crosswalks with tactile mats.

PL4 Active Transportation

A. Entry Locations and Relationships

A-1 Serving all Modes of Travel

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Provide safe and convenient access points for all modes of travel."

Findings:
The Project complies with the Guideline in the URP.

Pedestrian access is provided for along all primary pedestrian routes. For those approaching the Project along West Avenue from the south or using the crosswalks at Reed Street, there is direct access into street-level stores and a cluster of escalators, stairs and elevators to the mall that are prominent features of the design. For those approaching the Project along West Avenue from the north, there is direct access into street level stores and a direct connection to a stair and elevators leading to the upper level of the retail. The hotel will have a direct street-level entrance along the West Avenue sidewalk.

For pedestrians approaching the Project along North Water Street from the east, sidewalks and crosswalks are provided on both sides of North Water Street leading to several elevator and stairway entrances into the mall. Sidewalk entrances will be provided for the street-level uses along North Water Street.

For pedestrians approaching the Project from Crescent Street, a shared path with bicyclists can be used to proceed along the north side of the Project to reach West Avenue and the access points along it.

Bicycle access will be supported along the shared path noted above, and along the North and South Service Drives. The Project will provide 20 street-level bicycle racks and dedicated bicycle parking areas within the interior of the parking garage. Signage associated with these facilities has not yet been submitted, but will be reviewed and confirmed in conjunction with the wayfinding and signage program for the Project.

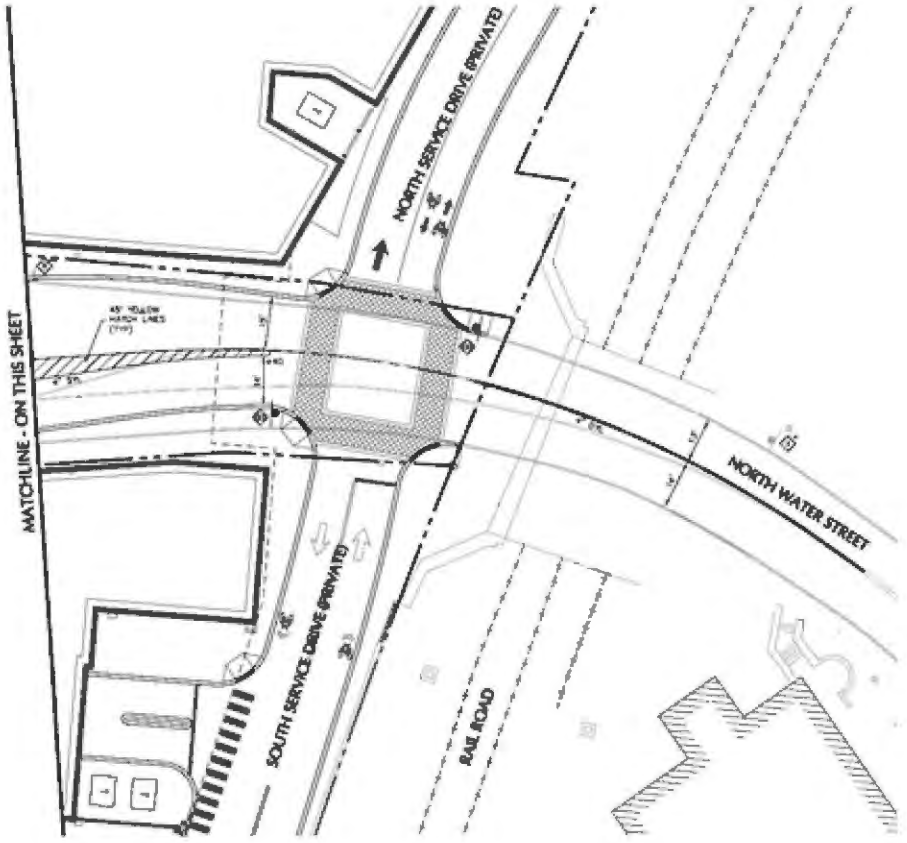
The primary major vehicular access to the site is on West Avenue between North Water Street and I-95. This Site Drive, providing both ingress and egress to the parking garage, is planned to be controlled by a traffic signal. Left and right turns into the site from West Avenue will be provided and a right turn out-only movement from the Site Drive to West Avenue.

Vehicle site access will also be provided on North Water Street to the parking garage. Access to the northerly parking garage is to be controlled by a traffic signal. Access to the southerly parking garage is for North Water Street eastbound site traffic only via a slip ramp up to the parking garage level. The northerly and southerly parking garages are interconnected within the garages.

Vehicle access to the southerly parking garage for the hotel component will be provided on Pine Street Extension on the north side of the street. Site drives on Pine Street Extension will be controlled by STOP signs.

Patrons of bus or shuttle services can access the Project along the pedestrian paths and entrances described above.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet L1.00, Sheet A-111 to A-120, and K0401 to K0402.



The Project is designed with elements for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

A-2 Connections to all Modes

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Site the primary entry in a location that logically relates to building uses and clearly connects all major points of access."

Findings:
The Project Complies with this Guideline.

The Project provides a clear architectural expression of a primary entry to the Project where North Water Street intersects West Avenue. This part of the Project is designed to provide a highly visible and easily identifiable gateway into the Project. The design includes a distinctively shaped extension of the building with a visible escalator connecting a ground level plaza and the lower level of the mall. This element will have large signage identifying the SoNo Collection on its façade, facing the approaches and traffic along I-95 and Route 7 and those approaching the Project along West Avenue or Reed Street. The design provides a transparent atrium spanning North Water Street creating a gateway over the street, which also serves as a significant vehicle entrance to parking.

As a practical matter, the Project provides numerous points on entry and multiple modes of transportation and access. Most of the patrons of the Mall and hotel will arrive by car. However, pedestrian access at ground level will be an important component of those accessing the site. All of the principal points of entry provide clear architectural expressions and accommodate links for pedestrian and vehicular access. These entrance features include:

- Vehicle and pedestrian entry/passageway along West Avenue – The design provides a prominent vehicle entrance spanned by window-wall elements and accompanied by a pedestrian access path connecting the sidewalk to the parking garage, past the storefronts along West Avenue.
- Hotel entry – The design provides for a street-level hotel lobby visible from West Avenue at the corner of the Pine Street Extension. The lobby opens to the vehicle pick-up and drop-off alcove adjacent to the Pine Street Extension and leads directly to parking for patrons and valet service.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-111 to A-115, and G-812.

The Project's primary entrance is located in a logical place that provides a logical connection for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

B. Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

B-1 Early Planning

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Consider existing and future bicycle traffic to and through the site early in the process so that access and connections are integrated into the Project along with other modes of travel."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

It is our understanding that GGP started the planning for bicycle access throughout the site early in the planning process with initial discussion with the Norwalk Bike/Walk Task Force, a review of the 2012 Norwalk Connectivity Plan and Norwalk DPW to determine best approach to providing the appropriate on site infrastructure.

Document Reference:
The results of the early planning are reflected in the *Final Site Plan Submission,* April 8, 2016, Sheets CS10 and CS102 (Site Plans); L1.00 (Hardscape Key Plan).

B-2 Bike Facilities

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Facilities such as bike racks and storage, and bike share stations should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline, subject to confirmation of the location, convenience, security and safety of interior bike storage rooms in the final design documents.

Based on a review of the Site Plan and as explained by GGP, bicycle facilities have been located throughout the site with consideration to convenience. Various exterior bicycle racks have been located adjacent to points of entry into the mall.

Also according to GGP, specific bike storage rooms will be located on the plans during final construction drawings phase once the location of mechanical, plumbing and other necessary infrastructure has been finalized.

Because the documents do not specifically describe the number, size, location or other attributes of the interior bike storage, we recommend the following:

1. **Bicycle storage accommodations** - The proponents should provide documentation of the proposed interior bicycle storage room with descriptions of the operational plan for their use. The proponents should provide associated signage plans for wayfinding and identification, and demonstrate that the locations are convenient.

Document Reference: To be included
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016 L1.00 (Hardscape Key Plan).

B-3 Bike Connections

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the Project. Design bicycling access points so that they relate to the street grid and include information about connections to existing trails and infrastructure where possible. Also consider signage, kiosks, building lobbies, and bicycle parking areas, where provided, as opportunities to share bicycling information."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline, subject to additional information regarding signage. For bicycle connectivity to and through the site, the Site Plan shows bicycle lanes along the Service Roads, as well as a bicycle path along the north edge of the site connecting West Avenue to Crescent Street. These bicycle paths extend a bicycle connection to Crescent Street. The traffic demands and dimensions along north the West Avenue and North Water Street have precluded the provision of bicycle lanes along this part of the street network.

1. **Bicycle signage and information opportunities** - The proponents should provide documentation regarding any proposed bicycle route mapping or other information associated with bicycle facilities and use as part of its signage plan submittals.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheets CS10 and CS102 (Site Plans); L1.00 (Hardscape Key Plan).

C. Planning Ahead for Transit

C-1 Influence on Project Design

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Identify how a transit stop (planned or built) adjacent to or near the site may influence project design, provide opportunities for placemaking, and/or suggest logical locations for building entries, retail uses, open space, or landscaping. Take advantage of the presence of transit patrons to support retail uses in the building."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

Existing transit stops are located on West Avenue adjacent to the site at the southeast quadrant of the West Avenue/ North Water Street intersection and northwest quadrant of the West Avenue/Reed Street intersection. These bus stops will be maintained. In addition, it is our understanding that a new bus shelter location is proposed at the southeast location adjacent to the plaza. The Project provides broad public sidewalks and plaza space lined with shops to activate the area near the bus stops and provide a sense of amenity and place. The shops and restaurants will have the opportunity to attract transit patrons as they wait for buses, or as a stop along the way to their next destination.

Document Reference:
Meetings with the proponent's representatives, *Final Site Plan Submission,* April 8, 2016, Sheets CS10 and CS102 (Site Plans); L1.00 (Hardscape Key Plan).

C-2 On-Site Transit Stops

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "If a transit stop is located on-site, design project related pedestrian improvements and amenities so that they complement (or at least do not conflict with) any amenities provided for transit riders. Consider the proximity of transit queuing and waiting areas to other pedestrian gathering spaces, aiming for enough room to accommodate all users. Similarly, keep lines of sight to approaching buses open and make it clear through location and design whether project-related pedestrian lighting, weather protection, and/or seating is intended to be shared by transit users."

Findings:
This Guideline is not applicable to the Project. There are no on-site transit stops. Transit stops are located along public streets. As a result, the criteria for the design of on-site transit stops are not relevant.

Document Reference:
Not applicable

C-3 Transit Connections

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Where no transit stops are on or adjacent to the site, identify where the nearest transit stops and pedestrian routes are and include design features and connections within the Project design as appropriate."

Findings:
The Project complies with the Guideline.

There is direct and convenient access from the mall and plaza area to the existing/future northbound transit stop at the southeast quadrant of the West Avenue/North Water Street intersection. Also, improved pedestrian crosswalks are planned to connect to the southbound transit stop on the west side of West Avenue at Reed Street.

Relative to pedestrians, the Project will provide on-site pedestrian areas extending out to the public right-of-way. It will also provide crosswalks and pedestrian phases in traffic signal operations at adjacent intersections, including along West Avenue, North Water Street and Pine Street Extension adjacent to the site.

Additionally, GGP stated that they will actively incorporate technology and forms of social media to inform the Project patrons about real time mass transit transportation options and arrival status. It is intended that this information would be digitally available online accessible through GGP's Project website, as well as through digital LED reader(s) that would be appropriately placed at limited but strategic locations within the center.

At this time, the Site Plan does not show improved pedestrian sidewalks/pedestrian areas beyond the site frontage.

Document Reference: To be included
Meetings with the proponent's representatives, *Final Site Plan Submission,* April 8, 2016, Sheets CS10 and CS102 (Site Plans); L1.00 (Hardscape Key Plan).

DC1 Project Uses and Activities

A. Arrangement of Interior Uses

A-1 Visibility

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Where feasible, locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as entries or along the street front."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

AAs a primarily retail complex, the Project offers substantial store frontage at ground level along the West Avenue edges to the greatest degree practical in the context of multi-level, mixed-use complex. Approximately 75 percent of the total building frontage along West Avenue is composed of retail stores opening directly onto the street. The first level of the mall is one story above the street level along West Avenue. This large interior space is accessed through a combination of escalators, monumental exterior stairway and elevators at multiple points along West Avenue. The hotel lobby is directly adjacent to the sidewalks along both West Avenue and the Pine Street extension. Two tenant spaces open directly onto North Water Street, as do two banks of stairs and elevators to the upper mall levels.

The parking for the Project is constrained to below-grade levels and portions of the site furthest away from West Avenue. However, direct access to parking is provided from all three public ways, resulting in an appropriate relationship between the interior and exterior of the Project.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-111, A-113, G-809, and L4.00a.

Public spaces in the Project are located in visible locations throughout the Project area. The Project is designed with a diverse scale of public spaces that encourage both active and passive uses.

A-2 Gathering Places

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces by considering the following: a) a location at the crossroads of high levels of pedestrian traffic; b) proximity to nearby or project-related shops and services; and c) amenities that complement the building design and offer safety and security when used outside normal business hours."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

Because of its fundamental interior organization as a shopping malls with large and extensive interior courts, the Project's basic organization and operations are entirely aligned with this Guideline. The Public Realm Plan provided by the proponent provides additional detail concerning the programming and use of both interior and exterior gathering places. Because the entire complex will have security staffing, the interior and exterior spaces will benefit from the monitoring of activities outside of business hours.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet A-115, A-117, A-118, L4.00a, and G-809.
SoNo Collection Design Peer Review, Public Realm, March 31, 2016.

A-3 Flexibility

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Where feasibly, build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

The design of shopping malls is inherently flexible, so that the facility can adapt to changing market conditions. The entire mall layout meets standard requirements for typical anchor and in-line tenancies, so that different businesses and uses can be inserted over time.

The design of the hotel is based on proto-typical standards for floor layouts and room sizes. Although the operator has not been chosen, the design is adaptable to many flagship hoteliers, and could be easily adapted to a different hotel chain over time.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheets A-111 to A-120, and G-809.

A-4 Views and Connections

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Where feasible, locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses, particularly activities along sidewalks, parks, or other public spaces."

Findings and Recommendations:
The Project complies with this Guideline, subject to confirmation of the layout and elevations.

The Project has been designed to provide several significant connections between the interior and exterior to create views and visual connections. There are three principal design components where this occurs:

- **Roof Garden** – As noted elsewhere, this provides a direct viewing and activity connection between the interior and exterior.
- **Northwest corner** – The northwest corner includes an upper level Sculpture Court opening out to a perimeter roof garden.
- **Southwest Plaza and atrium** – The Project includes a transparent atrium above North Water Street which is linked by an escalator to the exterior Southwest Plaza.
- **Window wall segments** – The exterior façade includes segments of window walls that express the sense of transparency or translucency between the interior and exterior. In many cases, the window wall is adjacent to supply and exist corridors, and in some cases abuts lease spaces that are not likely to require or employ exterior visibility. The proponent has provided supplemental information to confirm their intention that various architectural techniques such as lighting, the choice of materials, treatment of interior surfaces and spaces and display windows can be used to provide the sense of architectural connection between the interior and exterior.

Based on the review of the submitted documents, the following recommendations are provided:

1. **Transparency and translucency** - Those portions of the exterior facades that are rendered to appear as transparent or translucent window wall panels should be designed so that there is visible or apparent depth to the space behind the fenestration panels, and have interior lighting that expresses the dimensional depth. This includes panels that appear to serve as display windows in the renderings provided in the submittals. The location of display windows may vary, but the overall proportion and general correspondence to the illustrated design should be maintained.
2. **Correlation and confirmation of final design, northwest corner** – The final design drawings should resolve the plans and elevations of the northwest corner of the Project so that they are consistent.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet A-111, A-120, G-806, G-807, and G-811.
Supplemental submittals by the proponent describing exterior window wall treatments.

Many portions of the upper levels of the Project are designed to take advantage of the site's expansive views. The hotel building would have views of the water and panoramic views of the surrounding neighborhood.

B. Vehicular Access and Circulation

B-1 Access and Location Design

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Choose location for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers by: a) using existing alleys for access or, where alley access is not feasible, choosing a location for street access that is the least visually dominant and/or which offers opportunity for shared driveway use; b) where driveways and curb cuts are unavoidable, minimize the number and width as much as possible; and/or c) employing a multi-sensory approach to areas of potential vehicle pedestrian conflict such as garage exits/entrances. Design features may include contrasting or textured pavement, warning lights and sounds, and similar safety devices."

Findings and Recommendations:
The Project complies with this Guideline, subject to clarification regarding the intentions for pedestrian access along and near the north side Mall Loading Area and other recommendations.

The primary major vehicular access to the site is on West Avenue between North Water Street and I-95. This site drive, providing both ingress and egress to the parking garage, is planned to be controlled by a traffic signal. Left and right turn lanes into the site from West Avenue and a right turn out-only movement from the Site Drive to West Avenue will be provided.

Vehicle site access will also be provided on North Water Street to the parking garage. Full access to the northerly parking garage is to be controlled by a traffic signal. Access to the southerly parking garage is for North Water Street eastbound in-bound site traffic- only via a slip ramp up to the parking garage level. The northerly and southerly parking garages are interconnected within the garages.

Vehicle access to the hotel component will be provided on Pine Street Extension on the north side of the street. Site drives on Pine Street Extension will be controlled by STOP signs.

These site drives and their locations are important in providing adequate traffic flow into and out of the site. The number of lanes provided at each of the Site Drives are the number of lanes required based on the Traffic Impact Study Report dated January 8, 2016 prepared by Langan for GGP and to minimize vehicle backups onto the City street system. Also, the site drives and off-site roadway improvements have been integrated into the overall on-site pedestrian and bicycle facilities and users.

In addition, truck docks/delivery operations and access are via the Service Roads, resulting in minimum visual impact in the area. Retail-oriented entering trucks for the Mall will use North Water Street to enter and Crescent Street to exit the truck dock areas. All entering and exiting trucks for the hotel will use Pine Street Extension to access its loading docks.

Conflicts with pedestrians have been limited and the Project has provisions for safe and attractive pedestrian environments associated with the following elements:

- **Vehicle access along West Avenue** – The Project provides a broad sidewalk and crosswalk linking both sides of vehicle driveway with markings, and accessible transitions. There is an accessible pedestrian walkway along one side of the vehicle exit lanes, providing safe, separated pedestrian access into the parking garage for pedestrians.
- **Vehicle access into and across North Water Street** – The Project provides sidewalks and textured crosswalks along all edges of North Water Street and across the vehicle entrances into the parking garage. The Project includes separate stairs and elevator entrances for pedestrians accessing the parking garages along these sidewalks. At the North Water Street "slip ramp", the Project provides handrail barriers to prevent jaywalking, provides visibility of pedestrians from approaching vehicles, and provides a protective bollard for pedestrians at a key location.
- **Vehicle entrance at the hotel** – The Project includes continuous sidewalks and crosswalks across the vehicle access points along Pine Street Extension.
- **Loading dock and parking access points, North and South Service Drives** – The design includes continuous marked crosswalks along the face of the loading dock and access points, connecting to accessible sidewalks.
- **Mall Loading Dock along the north side of the Project** – The plans indicate pedestrian access along sidewalks leading to the truck loading dock area in the north side of the Project. A walkway leads to the dock area, but there is no accessibility ramp. The proponents should indicate whether they intend to provide an accessible route, or provide a barrier for public access along this walkway if it is a restricted area of the Project. Also, pedestrians are likely to make use of the adjacent bicycle path on the north side of the access drive. Providing crosswalk markings across the intersection with the North Service Drive should be considered.

Based on the plans and information provided to date, we provide the following recommendations:

1. **Crosswalk treatments** - The proponent has indicated in meetings that special paving and crosswalk treatments will be provided for crosswalks in key locations, including those along West Avenue and along and across North Water Street. The drawings do not indicate the material, method or extent of this treatment. The design documentation should be submitted for review and approval.
2. **Widened crosswalk at North Water Street** - The crosswalk across North Water Street at West Avenue will serve pedestrians moving between two broad plazas; the crosswalk should be significantly widened to provide a larger, marked pedestrian zone that better matches likely pedestrian movements, without interfering with vehicle movements and stop bars. This will enhance safety across this intersection. The design documentation should be submitted for review and approval.
3. **Clarifications regarding pedestrian access, restrictions and accessibility along the north side of the Project** - The proponent should provide clarifying information to establish its intentions associated with pedestrian access near the loading docks and provide revised documentation if it intends to support publicly accessible pedestrian routes in this location.

Document Reference:
Traffic Impact Study Report dated January 8, 2016 prepared by Langan Engineering. Design drawings Sheets CS101 and CS102, A-112 and A-1113, and G-811.

The Project is strategically located within the South Norwalk community and a short walking distance of many. The Project is also located next to the highway provide ease of access for motorists from many surrounding communities.

B-2 Facilities for Alternative Transportation

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Locate any facilities for alternative transportation such as shared vehicles, carpooling and charging stations for electric vehicles in prominent locations that are convenient and readily accessible to expected users.

Findings and Recommendations:
The Project will comply with this Guideline, subject to confirmation of final design documents.

According to GGP, EV charging stations will be located within the parking structure at a preferred location to promote alternate fuel transportation; and that these alternative fuel station locations will be determined by working with a specific vendor and located within the parking structure at preferred locations. According to GGP, discussions are underway with vendors but no vender has been selected.

As a result, we have provided the following recommendation:

1. EV charging station information - The proponent should provide final design and operational information regarding the potential provision of charging stations and their location.

Document Reference:
Meetings with the proponent's representatives.

C. Parking and Service Uses

C-1 Below Grade Parking

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Locate parking below grade to the maximum extent site conditions make feasible. Visible at grade parking not in a garage structure is not allowed, minimize to the extent feasible parking entrance or egress away from the front façade of any structure."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

The Project provides parking levels below grade. As described by the proponent, further excavation to provide below grade parking is not feasible at this site. As a result, the balance of the parking is located on within levels that are screened or concealed behind other uses or façade treatments. As described in relation to other Guidelines, the entrances along the front façade is constrained to one location along West Avenue. This location is necessitated by the need to provide feasible and manageable circulation flows to and from the Project and along West Avenue.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-202, A-205, A-301, A-302, and G-806.

The Project has designed the parking garage with an interesting façade design that masks the parking structure behind it. The façade design follows the color schemes in the Project's buildings.

C-2 Visual Impacts

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Reduce the visual impacts of parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as feasible. There should be no direct visibility of structured parking."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

The majority of the structured parking is concealed behind the retail uses and retail mall from most vantage points. To screen the parking from views from the east, the proponents have provided a series of architectural treatments consisting of spandrel panels, vertical aluminum fins, and a framework of panels. This system provides visual interest and will vary in its appearance from different viewpoints, providing a dynamic and distinctive quality consistent with the purposes of the Guideline.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-202, A-205, A-301, A-302, and G-806 (see previous C-1).

DC2 Architectural Concept

A. Massing

A-1 Site Characteristics and Massing

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space. In addition, use the specific site characteristics to influence where and how building massing is arranged as they can accentuate mass and height."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

The architectural design of the Project is composed of massed building elements that are tailored to the circumstances of the site. It accomplishes a successful transition between the communication of an appropriately large scale and gateway characteristics as it is viewed from the I-95 and Route 7. From a distance, there will be prominent features from key perspectives, including the mass of the anchor tenant nearest the highway (Nordstrom's) and the special upper level feature of the glazed sculpture garden. The massing of the entrance feature connecting the mall to the Southwest Plaza is visible from a distance and from key approaches from the north, south and east. The mass of the hotel will rise above the lower base of the retail mall, providing a visible landmark and nighttime beacon visible appropriately from a distance.

However, the architectural expression has thoughtfully integrated the appearance of secondary masses that break down the apparent scale of the entire composition and relate it to the typical dimensions associated with traditional commercial structures that are part of Norwalk's urban heritage and context. The Project uses changes in materials, setbacks, projections and façade features to distinguish differentiated masses ("boxes") to compose most of the base of the building complex. In two locations, the solid masses of the "boxes" are separated by glazed courts that visually connect the interior of the mall to the exterior, providing a visual link to the interior scale.

The Project employs architectural screening on the face of the parking structures to substantial modify and diminish the sense of scale that would otherwise be associated with the unadorned appearance of stacked trays and ramps of the parking.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-304, and G-805 to G-811.

The Project has designed with distinct façades that interact with each other naturally. Color palettes, tones, and materials are chosen to match surrounding building materials and colors and to match within the Project.

A-2 Reducing Perceived Mass

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects. Consider creating recesses or indentations in the building envelope; adding balconies, porches, canopies or other elements; and/or architecturally highlighting building entries."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

As noted in the previous commentary, the Project employs the device of articulating multiple volumes clustered around a central mall core that is made visible from the exterior. The masses of the retail mall are lifted up above the ground level to provide a varied, transparent base of shops and entrances directly associated with the scale of the public realm. The massing of the hotel includes setbacks at the level where it rises above the retail mall base, so that it appears as a mass perched on top of the lower structure rather than a continuous tower which would be dissimilar to the Norwalk context.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, and G-805 to G-816.

The Project has designed the parking garage with an interesting façade design that masks the parking structure behind it. The façade design follows the color schemes in the Project's buildings and attempts to avoid large blank walls wherever possible.

B. Architectural and Façade Composition

B-1 Façade Composition

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Design all building façades- including alleys and visible roofs- considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all façades visible from sensitive public view are attractive and well-proportioned through the placement and detailing of all elements, including bays, fenestration, and materials, and patterns created by their arrangement. On sites that abut an alley, design the alley façade and its connection to the street carefully. At a minimum, consider wrapping the treatment of the street-facing façade around the alley corner of the building."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

The architecture of the entire Project provides clear, unifying elements and relationships, even though there are different masses and uses. The façade design uses the device of window wall systems with common proportions and materials in between the expressed masses. It uses the same type of window wall system and as elements to animate the facades of spaces which cannot provide traditional windows into the retail interiors because of the nature of the uses and tenancies. These window-like elements will include a range of display windows, transparent and translucent openings which will use lighting and interior design to provide a sense of depth and variety that is an important part of the composition.

The Project design includes innovative use of aluminum panels and fins to transform the elevations of the parking structure into an interesting and dynamic architectural element. This element has an integral graphic pattern that establishes as intermediate pattern and complexity that are needed to transform the eastern facades from the utilitarian structure that it screens.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205 and G-805 and G-816.

The Project has designed with distinct façades that interact with each other naturally. Color palettes, tones, and materials are chosen to match surrounding building materials and colors and to match within the Project.

B-2 Blank Walls

Criteria:

The Design Guidelines state, "Avoid large blank walls along façades visible from sensitive public view wherever feasible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage façades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians. These may include: a) newsstands, ticket booths, and flower shops; b) green walls, landscaped areas or raised planters; c) wall setbacks or other indentations; d) display windows, trellises or other secondary elements; e) art as appropriate to area zoning and uses; and/or f) terraces and landscaping where retaining walls above eye level are unavoidable."

Findings:

The Project has located the interior uses and provided innovative architecture to limit the amount and impact that would be associated with blank walls. The Project provides active uses and storefronts along the majority of West Avenue and at the corners of North Water Street and the intersection of the Pine Street Extension with West Avenue. Where the building interiors need to be composed of parking levels, service areas or solid wall of retail stores, the architecture includes a variety of signage, window wall features, textures surfaces and louvered metal panels to create a sense of variety and continuity.

Document Reference:

Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, and G-805 to G-816 (see previous A-2).

C. Secondary Architectural Features

C-1 Visual Depth and Interest

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Add depth to façades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. When appropriate, add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas). Detailing may include features such as distinctive door and window hardware, projecting window sills, ornamental tile or metal, and other high-quality surface materials and finishes."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project has incorporated architectural elements to reduce the building scale to more appropriately respond to the scale of the surrounding context whilst introducing a high degree of visibility into the interior of the Project so that we would promote a more integrated user experience.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, and G-805 and G816.

C-2 Dual Purpose Elements

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose- adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other Project functions. Examples include shading devices and windows that add rhythm and depth as well as contribute toward energy efficiency and/or savings or canopies that provide street-level scale and detail while also offering weather protection. Where these elements are prominent design features, the quality of the materials is critical."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

The Project plans and illustrations include a number of elements that can serve dual purposes. These include a variety of canopies and marquees that have been illustrated along the ground levels to provide weather and shade protection while enhancing the architecture and scale of the base of the Project along the street edge. The façade illustrations include large scale signage and graphic elements that help add interest and variety to large-scale facades at key points. As noted in other recommendations in this report, the final design of the signage and tenant storefronts is not yet completed, and the subsequent review of these elements will serve to confirm the compliance of the Project with this criteria.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, and G-813.

The primary entrance of the Project is designed with multiple purposes. It is designed as wayfinding, a landscaping feature, a public space, a pedestrian mobility point, and a vehicular entryway.

C-3 Fit with Neighboring Buildings

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

The Project employs several measures to create an appropriate relationship with the neighboring buildings. We should note that the URP anticipates the addition of larger buildings than are typical of the surrounding context, in keeping with the economic and urban design goals for these gateway parcels. The Project design provides several specific strategies to relate buildings in the area. The setback of the massing and creation of a forecourt at the Southwest Plaza provides a respectful space and scale transition between the mass of the retail mall and the historic church across the Pine Street extension. The articulation of the buildings as visually distinct buildings helps to create scale transitions to the other existing buildings in the Reed Putnam district. The architectural screening of the parking structure further benefits the relationship with residential and mixed-use buildings between this site and the Norwalk River.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-204, and G-805.

The Project responds to neighboring buildings in height, scale, and massing.

D. Scale and Texture

D-1 Human Scale

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building façades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept. Pay special attention to the first thirty (30) feet of the building in order to maximize opportunities to engage the pedestrian and enable an active and vibrant street front."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

The Project supports a human scale in those locations where people will interact with the building interiors. Along West Avenue, the composition emphasizes a distinct band of storefronts with canopies and signage that provide a single-story continuity adjacent to the sidewalks. Similar storefront scale elements are provided at the east end of North Water Street to bring human scale architectural elements and interior uses in direct contact with pedestrian realm created along the sidewalks. The Project includes a significant array of landscape and streetscape features to provide comfortable places and textures at pedestrian levels. Importantly, the Project provides direct views into the populated activity areas in the interior of the mall, with two major courts connecting to the exterior of the Project in highly visible locations. Finally, key entrance elements provide human scale clues connecting the interior of the mall to the exterior, including the escalator enclosure and the monumental stair that lead from the plazas on West Avenue up to the lower mall levels.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-111, A-120, G-806, G-807, G-811, G-814, and G-816.

The Project is designed with human scale features such as active, ground floor uses, lobbies, and interior spaces and outdoor sidewalk connections.

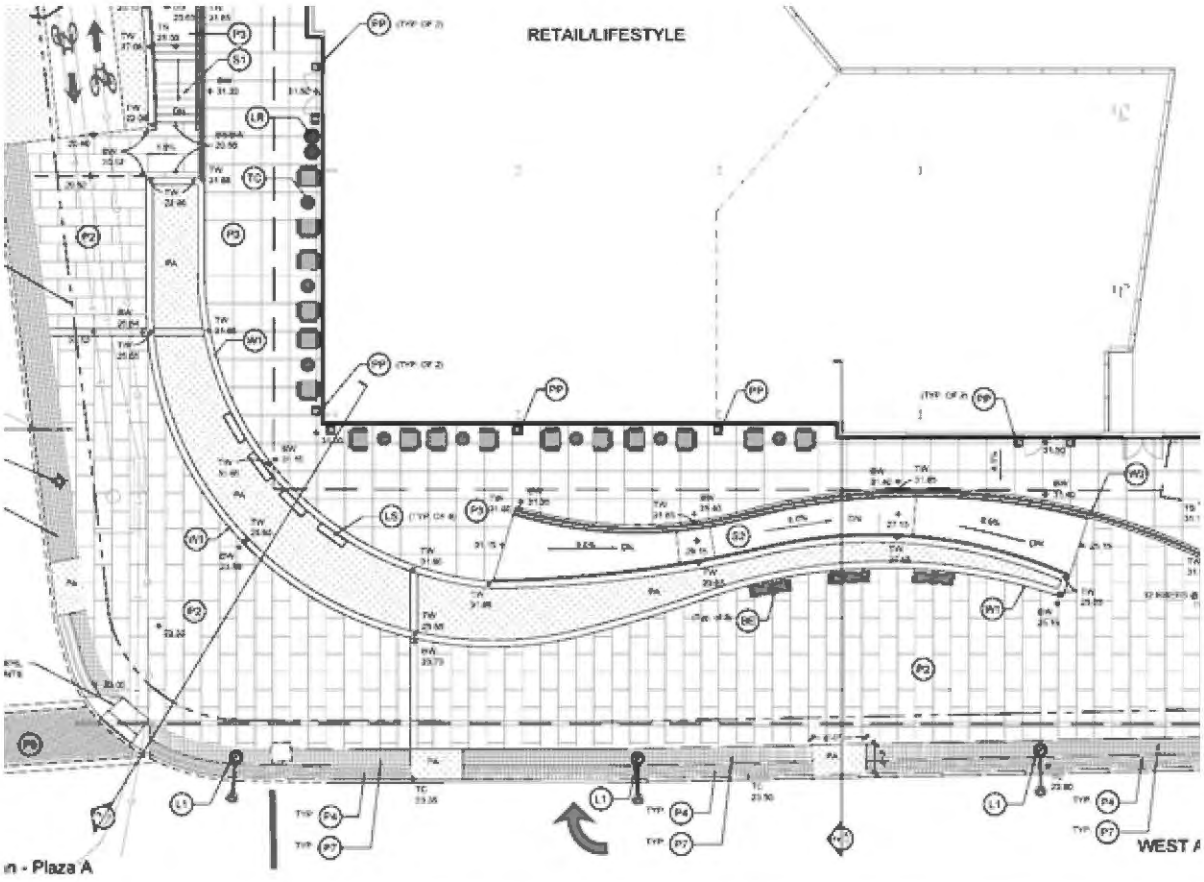
D-2 Texture

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials to strive for a fine-grained scale, or "texture," particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

Texture is provided through the exterior materials and landscaping that are provided for the Project. As described in the review of the guidelines associated with materials, the Project employs panelized systems of unit terracotta, brick, and textured concrete to provide different textures that will contrast with the glazing and the metal panels. Louvered panels and metal fins are used to create complex textures around the parking structure and building walls that cannot be penetrated by windows in some locations.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet L1.01 to L1.05, L3.01, L3.02, L4.00a, and L5.01.



Pedestrian-scaled public spaces are designed with numerous active and passive uses in mind including sitting, eating, walking, and socializing.

E. Form and Function

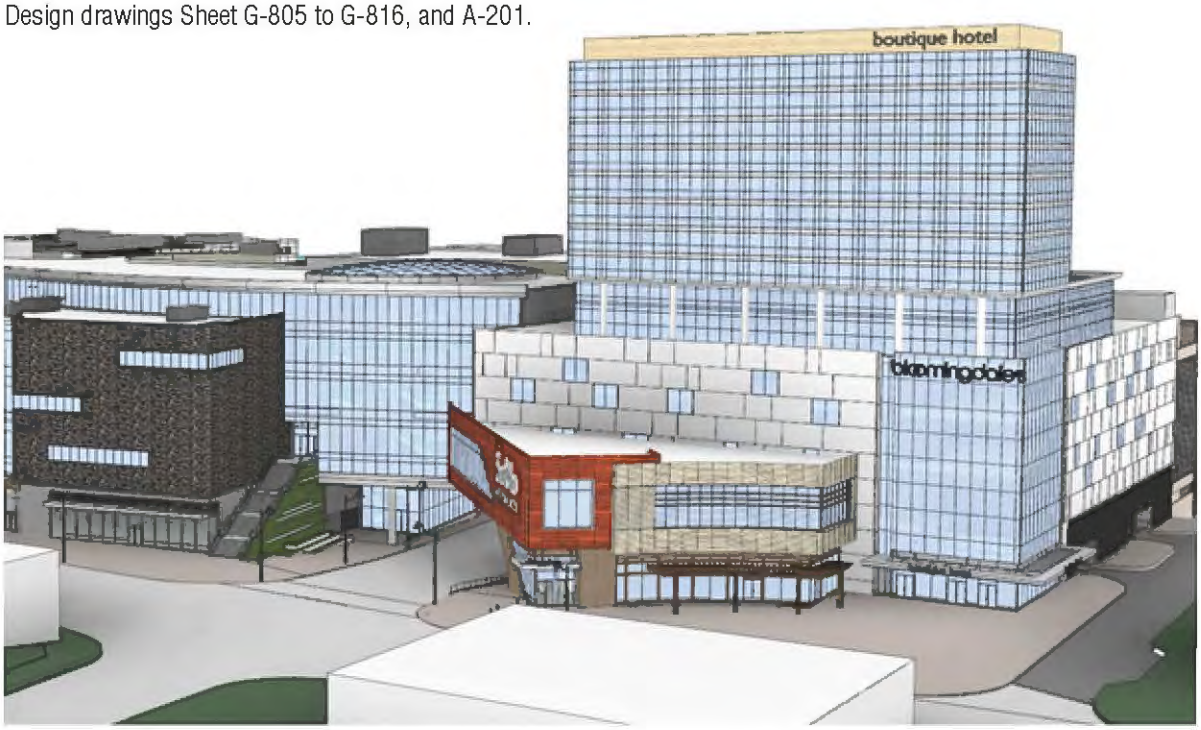
E-1 Legibility and Flexibility

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Strive for a balance between building legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, to the extent reasonable, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline.

As a tenanted complex, the Project provides inherent flexibility which is associated with legibility of the complex. While the design emphasizes the shared entrance areas and the massing signals the major entrances. The storefronts, signage and design of tenanted spaces can be modified over time so that the complex is highly adaptable to changing economic conditions.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet G-805 to G-816, and A-201.



The building's function are understandable from the exterior, but flexible for other uses.

DC3 Open Space Concept

A. Building Open Space Relationship

A-1 Interior/Exterior Fit

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Develop and open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development."

Findings and Recommendation:
The Project complies with this Guideline, subject to redesign of the interface of the public and private open space edge along West Avenue.

The proponent has prepared a specific Public Realm Plan for the Project that documents the positive relationships between the interior and exterior spaces to create visual benefits and programmatic amenities that are available to those that visit and use the site and the buildings. Relevant examples illustrating the conformance of the Project with this Guideline includes:

- **Southwest Plaza** – The Project provides a large outdoor plaza with appropriate hardscape elements and landscape treatments to support a range of passive and actively programmed use of the space. This plaza is the forecourt for the primary architectural entrance into the upper mall levels and for the future hotel.
- **Northwest Plaza and Sculpture Garden** – The Project provides a generous, terraced ground level open space and interior sculpture garden at the northwest corner of the site. The pairing of exterior and interior open space will provide an inviting and visually interesting composition that indicates the relationship between public realm spaces at a gateway location along West Avenue.
- **Green Wall/Entrance Stairway** – The Project will employ a "green wall" with plantings enhancing the vertical surfaces of a monumental stair that will link the West Avenue streetscape to the transparent interior atrium that is part of the mall's interior network of courtyards and public realm spaces.
- **West Avenue Streetscape** – The West Avenue streetscape includes a variety of terraces, plantings, seasonal outdoor siting areas which line the active ground level uses. We have noted, however, that the streetscape materials and design along West Avenue effectively extend the design and alignment of the pedestrian entrances across the entire sidewalk, extending to the curb. It would be more appropriate to terminate this "doormat" expression associated with the mall along a continuous band of public sidewalk that extends the public character of the Norwalk West Avenue Streetscape along the face of the development property, so that the public "brand" of Norwalk associated with its district-wide streetscape is not interrupted.
- **Roof Garden** – The Project includes a roof garden accessed from the upper level of the interior mall, providing views and landscaped amenities adjacent to the interior, publicly accessible corridors.

The following recommendation is provided to enhance the relationship between the open space and buildings on the site:

1. Streetscape and building relationship – The streetscape should not extend the architectural expression of pedestrian entrances to the curb line, but should respect the transition to public sidewalk and the continuity of the Norwalk streetscape along the West Avenue edge.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet A-111, A-120, G-806, G-807, and G-811.

The Project's interior uses are visible from the exterior. The Project's ground floor retail and restaurant uses are understandable from the exterior based on its façade, fenestration and use activity.

B. Open Space and Use and Activities

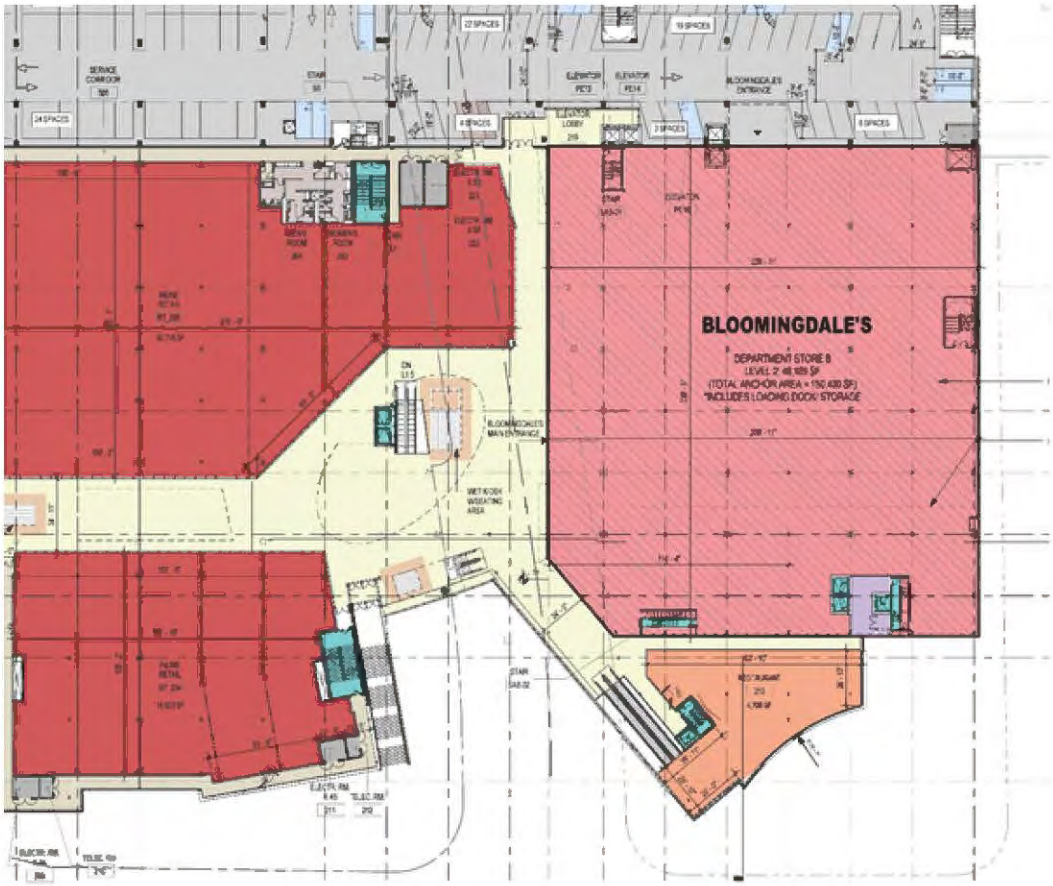
B-1 Meeting User Needs

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project design incorporates open spaces that is functional and usable. The Project's prominent western edge along West Avenue, features three primary public plazas that feature extensive landscaping and programming to encourage lingering and socializing. The edges of the Project on all sides provide sidewalks and public space improvements, including street trees, landscape areas, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and outdoor dining. The public spaces are designed to accommodate a range of passive and active uses for patrons of the ground floor retail or for passersby. The spaces incorporate a variety of seating, lighting and sidewalk designs to create a dynamic open space network.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet L1.01 to L1.04, L4.00a, and A-115.



The Project uses match the user needs.

B-2 Matching Uses to Conditions

Criteria:

The Design Guidelines state, "Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities. For example, where feasible, place outdoor seating and gathering areas where there is sunny exposure and shelter from wind. Building flexibility into the design in order to accommodate changes as needed; e.g. a south-facing courtyard that is ideal in spring may become too hot in summer, necessitating a shift of outdoor furniture to a shadier location for the season."

Findings:

The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project design incorporates open spaces that consider weather and seasons. Plans and statements provided by the proponent indicate the building is designed to take advantage of solar orientation while minimizing public exposure to undesirable winter elements. The building is designed to allow natural light to illuminate the interior, particularly on the Project's western and northwestern façades.

Plans and statements provided by the proponent indicate the Project incorporates space for year-round activity. The Project features a range of open spaces and public areas that include outdoor dining, seating, and a public fountain for warmer months, and an interior winter garden for colder months. Overhead weather protection is also provided for periods of rain and/or snow. Landscaping is provided throughout the Project and features plants that bloom and peak during different periods of the year. This plant variety creates a dynamic landscape setting that improves the public open spaces.

Document Reference:

Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet L1.01 to L1.04, L4.00a, and G-806.

The Project has an extensive landscaping plan that extends to all edges of the Project.

B-3 Connections to Other Open Space

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Site and design project-related open spaces should connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate. Look for opportunities to support uses and activities on adjacent properties and/or the sidewalk."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project design incorporates the surrounding public realm. The Project features three primary public plazas along West Avenue. As a primary gateway in South Norwalk, West Avenue features prominently into the area's urban design. The spaces incorporate a variety of seating, lighting and sidewalk designs to create a dynamic open space network and strengthen the characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood. The public plazas along West Avenue feature extensive landscaping and programming to encourage lingering and socializing. The edges of the Project on all sides provide sidewalks and public space improvements, including street trees, landscape areas, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and outdoor dining.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet A-201, G-806, G-808, G-809, and L4.00a.

B-4 Multi-Family Open Space

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "In cases of residential buildings, design common and private open spaces for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction. Some examples include areas for gardening, children's play (covered and uncovered), barbeques, resident meetings, and crafts or hobbies."

Findings:
Not applicable.

C. Design

C-1 Reinforce Existing Open Space

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Reinforce existing character and patterns of street tree planting, buffers or treatment of topographic changes."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project design reinforces the existing character street tree planting character. Street trees are proposed along the northern, western, and southern perimeters of the Project. This creates a continuous street tree coverage along these blocks. Landscaping is provided throughout the Project and features plants that bloom and peak during different periods of the year. This plant variety creates a dynamic landscape setting that improves the public open spaces.

Document Reference:
Design drawings Sheet L4.00a and L5.00.

The Project provides a landscaped connection to nearby Oyster Shell Park.

C-2 Amenities and Features

Criteria:

The Design Guidelines state, "Create attractive outdoor spaces well-suite to the uses envisioned for the Project. Use a combination of hardscape and plantings to shape these spaces and to screen less attractive areas as needed. Consider use of a variety of features, such as planters, green roofs and decks, groves of trees, and vertical green trellises along with more traditional foundation plantings, street trees, and seasonal displays."

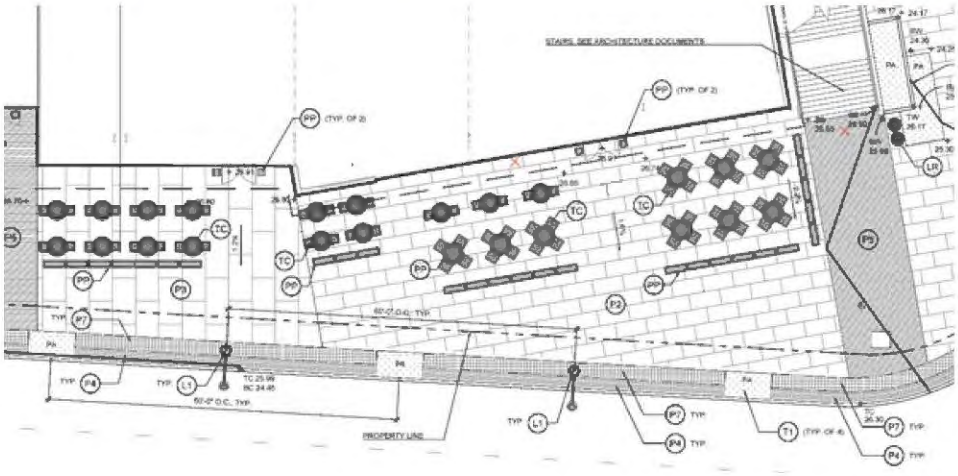
Findings:

The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project design provides a variety of outdoor spaces with a variety of landscaping techniques. Street trees are proposed along the northern, western, and southern perimeters of the Project. Landscaping is provided throughout the Project and features plants that bloom and peak during different periods of the year. This plant variety creates a dynamic landscape setting that improves the public open spaces. Planters and smaller landscaped features are proposed along portions of the West Avenue side. The northern side of the Project features a more robust landscape plan that better mirrors the landscape adjacent to Interstate 95. The southern side of the Project features a landscape strip alongside Pine Street with street trees.

Document Reference:

Design drawings Sheet L1.01 to L1.04, L4.00a, and G-809.



The Project is designed with a diverse scale of public spaces that encourage both active and passive uses.

C-3 Support Natural Areas

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Create an open space design that connects to natural areas that may exist off-site."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project design provides pedestrian connections to adjacent areas. The Project provides one connection to adjacent Oyster Shell Park, but provides limited landscaping in this connection. The northern side of the Project features a more robust landscape plan that better mirrors the landscape adjacent to Interstate 95. The southern side of the Project features a landscape strip alongside Pine Street with street trees that match the urban context to the south.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet A-201, G-806 to G-807, G-808, and L4.00a.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes

A. Building Materials

A-1 Exterior Finish Materials

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged. Use of materials such as masonry, precast, terracotta, natural stone and metal panel is encouraged."

Findings and Recommendations:
The Project complies with the Guideline, subject to confirmation of final materials samples and specifications, completion of designs for special features associated with tenancies with exterior storefronts and the hotel, and completion of the signage design.

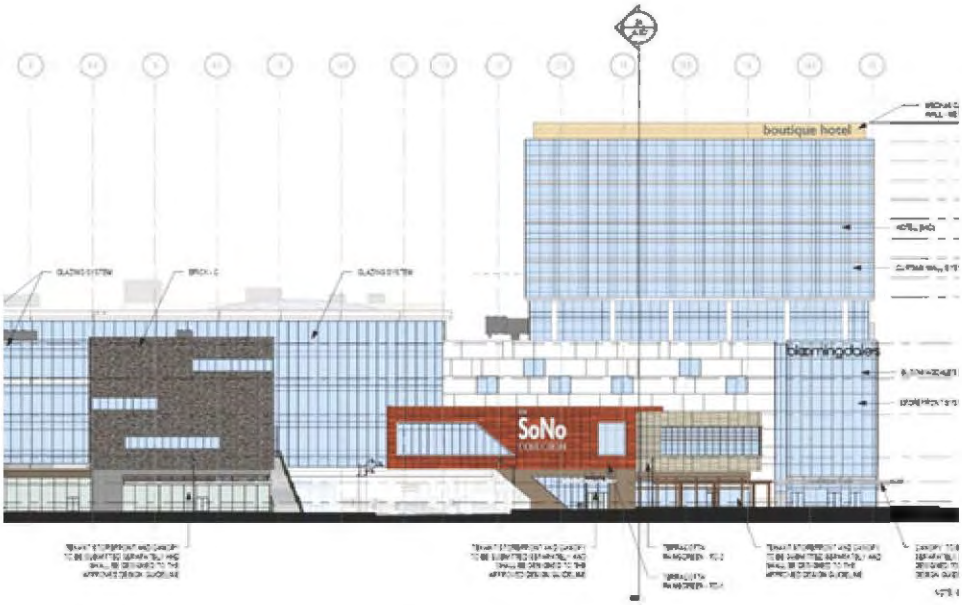
The Project exteriors are composed with a variety of building materials.The majority of the surfaces are composed of decorative precast concrete, window wall, storefront assemblies, and veneer panels. Veneer panels will employ terracotta tile, brick, metal, fiberglass-reinforced concrete and textured precast concrete. Special assemblies and materials are used to create architectural features. These include the use of painted aluminum fins and frames as a parking structure screen. Louvered metal wall assemblies are also used in several places to create texture and conceal parking or concrete walls. Natural stone has been portrayed for use as part of the "green wall" along the monumental stairway adjacent to North Water Street.

The Project takes into account the appearance of materials that will be viewed close-up. The Project is designed to have glazed storefront assemblies along most of the West Avenue facades at ground level; some storefront assemblies will occur along both sides of North Water Street. Although the specific design of these components will not be submitted until tenants are identified, the overall benefit will be to provide a varied and interesting edge along pedetrian areas.

The following recommendations address the need for subsequent information to confirm various aspects of the finish materials in later phases of design and construction.

1. Additional material information - The proponent should provide samples or material specifications for the facade materials to allow confirmation of the quality standards relative to this Guideline.
2. Final design of tenant exteriors - Final design materials for tenant storefronts and canopies and the hotel exterior should be submitted for approval when the designs have been appropriately advanced.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Design drawings Sheet A-201 to A-205, and G-808.
Supplemental information provided by RTKL, *90% CD Set,* April 29, 2016.



The Project provides a range of material types.

A-2 Climate Appropriateness

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in the northeast climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions. Highly visible features, such as balconies, grilles and railings, should be especially attractive, well-crafted and easy to maintain. Pay particular attention to the harsh conditions that are associated with the sites' close proximity to the Norwalk River and Long Island Sound."

Findings and Recommendations:
The Project complies with the Guidelines, **subject to confirmation of final materials samples and specifications for vulnerable locations, completion of designs for special features associated with tenancies, and completion of the signage design.**

The overall choices of exterior materials and methods for assembling them appear to be consistent with similar buildings that are adapted to the northeast environment. The buildings use exterior wall systems with materials that are not subject to rapid deterioration or discoloration due to the climate. However, as noted in the findings and recommendations, submittal of samples or specifications will allow confirmation of the specific materials inended. We note that certain assemblies and designs elements will be particularly susceptible to damage or deterioration due to exposure, including the aluminum screening system on the garage, the exposed surfaces of the projecting roof above the Sculpture Garden at the northeast corner, and trellises or canopies. In addition, custom-designed display signage like that depicted in large panels on the facades are subject to significant environmental exposure.

Many of the particularly prominent features will be associated with tenancy designs at the ground level, and cannot be completed until the tenant designs have been advanced. Similarly, the materials and assemblies used for special exterior signs will need to be evaluated once the designs are completed. As a result, the following recommendations are provided:

1. Additional material and assembly information - The proponent should provide samples or material specifications for exposed features consisting of architectural screening of the parking garage, projecting roofs at the northeast corner, and trellises to allow confirmation of the quality standards relative to this Guideline.
2. Tenant and signage design - Final design materials for tenant canopies and large format and featured signage that requires custom assembly should be submitted for review upon finalization of the design.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet A-201 to A-205, and G-808.

Supplemental information provided by RTKL, *90% CD Set,* April 29, 2016.

B. Signage

B-1 Scale and Character

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the Project and its uses and environs. Signage should be compatible in character, scale, and locations while still allowing businesses to present a unique identity."

Findings:
The signage plans and designs have not been completed. They will be submitted and reviewed at a later date. We have noted that various renderings and elevations depict large format signs with graphics that become part of the overall facade composition and architectural expression. As such, they can positively contribute to the sense of scale, use, orientation and articulation of building forms. For these atypical signage types, the submitted information should include the assemblies, materials and any lighting or operating characteristics that will be visible to allow consideration of their conformance with this Guideline.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet A-203 and A204; G805 to G808, G811 and G814.

B-2 Coordinate with Project Design

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the Project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context."

Findings:
The signage plan has not yet been completed and submitted. As a result, the findings and recommendations associated with this guideline will be assembled and reported as a separate document.

Document Reference:
Not applicable.

C. Lighting

C-1 Functions

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art."

Findings:
The Project complies with this Guideline, subject to submittal and confirmation of final lighting designs associated with ground level tenancies.

The Project uses an array of lighting fixtures and design approaches to create a well-lit and attractive pedestrian environment, in keeping with the URP. In terms of safety, the photometric analysis provided in the submittals indicate typical lighting levels associated with urban streets along West Avenue based on the exterior light layout planned for the Project. The final lighting levels will be higher due to the ambient lighting that will be associated with the substantial quantity of storefronts along West Avenue. As a result, the overall lighting levels are expected to be consistent with highly visible, populated, well-lit commercial districts.

The analyis also indicates very high levels of lighting along North Water Street as it passes under the mall and parking structures. The lighting system is designed to provide both down-lighting and indirect lighting sources that will avoid glare, but will create a very well lit space sidewalks and for maneuvering vehicles and pedestrian crossings.

The lighting fixtures include innovative applications below handrais to light stairways, lighted bollards, and LED strip lighting that can be used in coves to create bands of reflected light.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet LT-001, LT-002, G-811, G-813, and G-816.

The Project is designed with appropriate lighting for pedestrians and vehicles. Landscape features include accent lighting that complements the street lamps and building lighting on the sidewalk.

C-2 Avoiding Glare

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution."

Findings and Recommendation:
The Project complies this Guideline, subject to confirmation of the lighting type to be employed within the parking structure.

The lighting fixtures submitted by the proponent and the applications illustrated in the drawings are consistent with low off-site glare and associated light pollution. The photometrics provided for the upper level of the parking lot and for the street level indicated the advantages of high -cut-off fixtures. The fixtures for parking areas and loading areas direct light downwards and the luminaires are shielded from unintended viewpoints off site.

The Project will provide a significant amount of ambient and indirect off-site lighting due to the transparency of the storefronts and the enclosed courtyards and atrium that will be visible from the street and adjacent areas.

Light from within the parking structure will be visible from Oyster Shell Park. The provision of architectural screeening along the facades of the structure will diminish the amount of light that will be projected towards the park. The proponent will need to provide additional information or clarification regarding the lighting fixture that will be used for this portion of the Project to confirm that it has high-cut off characteristics, lenses or other features to limit off-site glare. The following recommendation concerns this aspect of the Project:

1. Parking structure lighting - The proponent should provide additional information to clarify the lighting fixture type and layout characteristics for the interior of the parking garage to demonstrate that there will be limited glare and off-site lighting impacts.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet LT-001 and LT-002.

D. Trees, Landscape and Hardscape Materials

D-1 Choice of Plant Materials

Criteria:
The Design Guidelines state, "Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials. Choose plants that will emphasize or accent the design, create enduring green spaces, and be appropriate to particular locations taking into account solar access, soil conditions, and adjacent patterns of use. Select landscaping that will thrive under urban conditions."

Findings:
The Project is compliant with this Design Guideline.

Plans and statements provided by the proponent indicate the Project incorporates a robust landscaping plan that emphasize the Project design and outdoor public spaces. Landscaping is provided throughout the Project and features plants that bloom and peak during different periods of the year. This plant variety creates a dynamic landscape setting that improves the public open spaces.

Plans provided by the proponent indicate the Project design provides a variety of outdoor spaces with a variety of landscaping techniques. Street trees are proposed along the northern, western, and southern perimeters of the Project. Planters and smaller landscaped features are proposed along portions of the West Avenue side. The northern side of the Project features a more robust landscape plan that better mirrors the landscape adjacent to Interstate 95. The southern side of the Project features a landscape strip alongside Pine Street with street trees.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheet L5.01.

The Project features a wide range of street trees, ornamental trees, shrubs, and groundcovers.

DC5 Public Realm

1 Defined

Criteria:
The URP Design Guideline for the Public Realm consists of the following overall criteria, "The design and development of the public realm on the site will be reflective of the area's history, complimentary of its natural environment and informative of the urban context in which the Project is being built. Space deemed to be public realm sill serve as means by which the public engages with the Project and their community in a manner that is independent of commerce."

Findings and Recommendations:
The Project complies with the requirements for the Public Realm contained in the URP, subject to design refinements associated with the interface between the City streetscape and the Project streetscape along West Avenue.

The public realm components conform to the special definitions and principles contained in the URP. The Project's public realm components are subject to separate and similar standards under the terms of the LDA. However, the URP uses a broader definition of "public realm" that is employed in the LDA. For example, applicability of the URP guidelines is not associated with any defined, limited area as in the LDA. The URP provides design guidance for "… all public places and building elements that are physically and/or visually accessible to the public, regardless of who actually owns the space".

The proponent has submitted a complete Public Realm Plan in keeping with the associated requirements in the LDA. The Cecil Group/Harriman previously provided an opinion to the Norwalk Redevelopment Agency that the Project complies with the particular public realm standards associated with the LDA. All of the elements in the Public Realm Plan also meet the guidelines in the URP.

The Public Realm Plan consists of over 88,000 square feet of both interior and exterior space for public access and as visual amenities, an area that is substantially more than the minimum required. The Public Realm Plan incorporates 10 components, including:

- **Street level spaces** – Three plazas along the northwest, central and southwest edges of the Project and enhanced crosswalk and streetscaping at the intersections of North Water Street with West Avenue and the South Service Drive.
- **First mall level, interior spaces** – Three courts within the interior of the retail mall.
- **Second mall level, sculpture court** – A sculpture garden at the northwest corner of the Project
- **Third mall level, rooftop garden** – An exterior garden and open space will occupy a portion of the top parking level, adjacent to the retail mall.

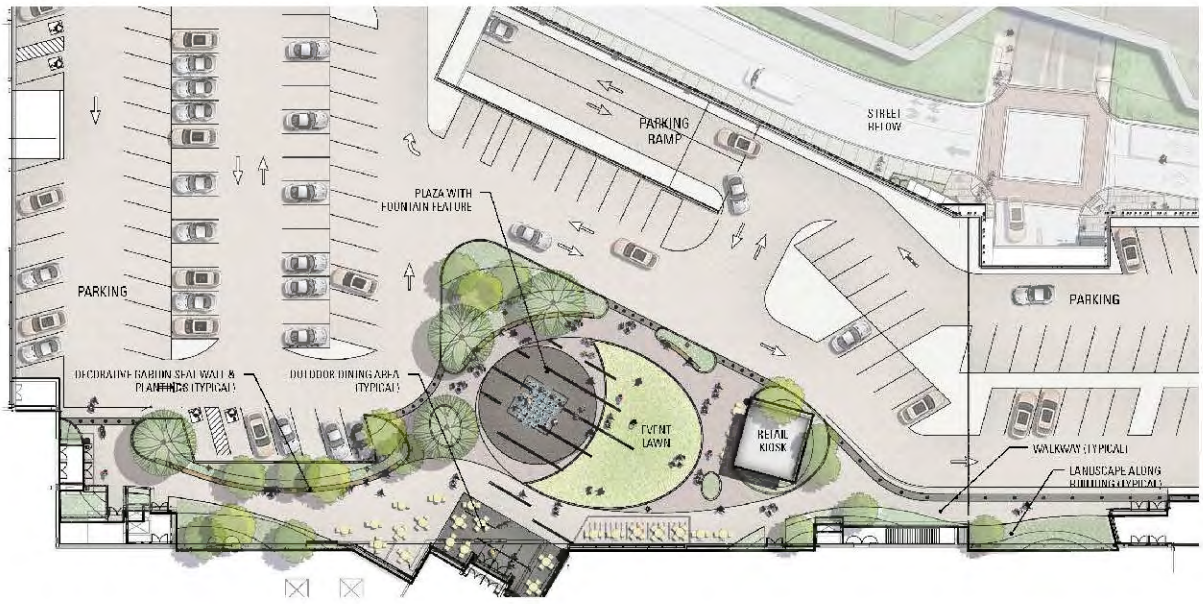
Other elements of the Project that are subject to the design criteria of the URP include:

- **Mall interior public spaces and vertical access from public ways** – In addition to the courts within the interior of the mall, the connecting pedestrian corridors serve as interior, pedestrian links that are intended to invite visitors to the mall, regardless of whether they are shopping at any specific, individual commercial tenants during their visit.
- **Perimeter sidewalks and bike path** – Sidewalks along the southern and eastern edges of the Project provide an important pedestrian connection along the perimeters, and a bikeway/shared pedestrian link along the north side of the Project share that link.
- **Pedestrian environment below air rights development along North Water Street** – In addition to the plazas and crosswalks at the ends of North Water Street, the public realm of the URP includes the sidewalks and space created below the development where it spans across North Water Street.

The design of all URP public realm elements conforms to the detailed criteria contained within Design Guideline DC5, as follows:

- **Historical Context** – The Project respects and enhances the setting for the adjacent historic church on West Avenue by providing a broad plaza as a forecourt, opening and preserving view corridors to its neighbor.
- **Local Context** – The proponents have intended to directly include and celebrate the Norwalk urban context and community in the interior design and graphic theming and operational goals for portions of the public realm as part in its CMSP presentations. This has particularly included theming for the interior courts and in the connection and directions to and from the riverfront along North Water Street. The proponent has deferred submittal of it signage plan; these elements should be addressed as part of that submittal.
- **Diversity** – As a commercial center catering to a diverse population, the SoNo Collection will provide destinations and activated spaces for the public as an integral aspect of its design character. This includes access to shops, uses and amenities through public realm spaces that will appeal to all ages, abilities and cultures.
- **Flexibility** – The Project provides for seasonal and thematic changes and variations in the use of the interior and exterior public realm plazas and courts, including the ability to provide special plantings, and seasonal seating and dining areas directly adjacent to the public realm adapted to the tenancies.
- **Adaptability** – The Project provides permanent components that will create an attractive public realm, regardless of the season or time of day. The mall and courts will be well lit, interior spaces available during inclement weather and nighttime when the mall is in operation. The exterior spaces include plantings, terraces and pavement features to create a visually interesting foreground to the buildings, regardless of the level of exterior activity, season or time of day.
- **Design for the Community** – The public realm plan provides many significant locations for informal interactions among residents and community visitors to the site that are separated from vehicle conflicts, including the three exterior plazas along West Avenue and the entire interior mall network of courts, corridors and spaces.
- **Involve the Community** – The Project's public realm has been a topic of public presentations and discussion with many stages of the preceding design process. This has included consideration and discussion with public input associated with the preceding CMSP reviews which established the overall character of the public realm to meet community goals.
- I**nclusive Design** – The Project provides many direct connections between the plazas and interior mall to the sidewalks and paths that link the site to the Reed Putnam Urban Renewal Area, the SoNo district and the links that extend to the north below I-95.

- **Cultural Considerations** – The Project's Public Realm Plan specifically includes reference to the proponent's intention to include cultural facilities and events. The Sculpture Garden at the northwest corner of the mall will provide artistic displays, and the courts and plazas are intended to host cultural events as illustrated in that Plan.
- **Legibility** – The Project provides accentuated landscape, streetscape and architectural components to clearly mark the paths and places available to the public. This includes enhanced sidewalks on both sides of North Water Street, along the West Avenue edge and a complete perimeter sidewalk network along the exterior perimeter of the Project with crosswalk markings at intersections and vehicle entrances. We have noted, however, that the Project's streetscape expression along West Avenue extends the character of the commercial architecture across the public right-of-way to the edge of the curb. Legibility will be enhanced if the streetscape treatments are limited by a band of public sidewalk along the street edge, in keeping with the civic context and design pattern for SoNo's other sidewalks.
- **Access for All** – The public realm spaces will all be publicly accessible and will need to meet all applicable local, state and federal regulatory requirements to be barrier free.
- **Local Identity** – The design of the Project and its setting will create a landmark place at a major gateway and transition point from the regional scale to the local scale of Norwalk. The orientation of the Project reinforces the urban framework of Norwalk and the importance of West Avenue as the corridor that links the growing mixed-use districts along this historic spine.
- **Design Excellence and Innovation** – The Project includes many innovative public realm components in keeping with the contemporary design context. These include a roof-top garden, a "green" wall feature along the primary entrance, a link to Norwalk's growing bicycle network, imaginative architectural design of the screening elements along the east façade facing the highway and Oyster Shell Park, innovative LED lighting systems.
- **The "Wow" Factor** – The Project expressed the fundamental alliance between a vital interesting public realm and commercial uses that must "brand" and attract the patronage to a shared experience. Placed in the context of the landscape and architecture trends both nationally and internationally, the public realm will be at the leading edge of the design arts.



The following recommendations addresses the items noted in the findings relative to this Guideline:

1. **Interpretive signage and graphics** - The proponent will be subsequently preparing and submitting a signage program for review. The signage plan should address how interior or exterior spaces provide links to Norwalk's historic and contemporary context in keeping with the proponent's illustrations and statements in the CMSP review and approval process, and in the Public Realm Plan.

2. **Limitations or conditions on public use of privately-owned spaces** – The proponent should provide for review and approval the specific limitations of conditions on public use of the public realm spaces under its control, completing their intent that is contained within the previously submitted Public Realm Plan.

We also note that the proponents and the City should collaborate and pursue the opportunity to improve the landscape qualities along the I-95 southbound off-ramp and northbound on ramp which is adjacent to the site. This recommendation depends on the cooperation and agreement by the abutting landowner, the Connecticut Department of Transportation. Consistent with earlier reviews and recommendations prepared for the CMSP approval phase, there would be a shared public realm benefit to creating a more attractive gateway to the City and to the Project, including adding buffering of views into the loading dock areas along the north side of the Project.

3. **Public realm and private branding** – As noted in another segment of this review, the "branded" character of the mall-related streetscape should not extend to the curb edge along West Avenue, but should be revised to retain a civic border composed of a public sidewalk.

Document Reference:
Final Site Plan Submission, April 8, 2016, Sheets G805 to G808, G811 to G816; L1.00 to L5.00.
Public Realm Plan, March 31, 2016.

The Project features a diverse set of public spaces.