



BELLE PLAINE DESIGN COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING AND AGENDA
CITY HALL, 218 NORTH MERIDIAN STREET
PLEASE USE THE NORTH ENTRANCE

**MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2016
5:15 P.M.**

5:15
P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER. 1.1. Roll Call.
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.
 - 3.1. Regular Session Minutes of February 1, 2016.
4. BUSINESS.
 - 4.1. CBD Fence Standards Draft.
 - 4.2. Design Review Principles.
 - 4.3. Downtown Lighting.
5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS.
 - 5.1. Commissioner Comments.
 - 5.2. Upcoming Meeting.
 1. Next Regular Meeting, 5:15 PM, Monday, April 4, 2016.
6. ADJOURNMENT.

**BELLE PLAINE DESIGN COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 1, 2016**

1. CALL TO ORDER. 1.1. Roll Call.

The Belle Plaine Design Committee met in Regular Session on Monday, February 1, 2016 at City Hall, 218 North Meridian Street, Belle Plaine, Minnesota. Chair Rick Krant called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. with Commissioners Kathy Joerg, Greg Theissen, Laurie Behnke and Pat Krings present. Also present were Community Development Director Cynthia Smith Strack and Council Liaison Cary Coop.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA.

MOTION by Coop, second by Behnke, to approve the agenda as presented. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

1. Chair

2. Vice Chair

Chair Krant turned the gavel over to Vice Chair Behnke.

Vice Chair Behnke called for nominations for Chair.

MOTION by Krings, second by Joerg, to nominate Rick Krant as Chair, to close the nominations and cast a unanimous vote. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

Chair Krant presided for the remainder of the meeting and called for nominations for Vice Chair.

MOTION by Krings, second by Joerg, to nominate Laurie Behnke as Vice Chair, to close the nominations and cast a unanimous vote. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

3.1. Regular Session Minutes of January 4, 2016.

MOTION by Coop, second by Behnke, to approve the Regular Session Minutes of January 4, 2016 as presented. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

4. BUSINESS.

4.1. Fences in Downtown.

Community Development Director Smith Strack explained that at the November meeting the Design Committee began discussing fences within the Downtown. The Committee reviewed existing fences, the potential placement of new fences, and images conveying the concept of pedestrian friendly environments. At the January meeting, the Commissioners reviewed pictures of several different fence types in a 'thumbs up' vs. 'thumbs down' (appropriate for the Downtown) discussion. It was the consensus of the Commission to view the photos again and independently research fences what would be suitable in the Downtown.

The Commissioners viewed the photos and recommended the styles that appeared to be appropriate for the downtown business district. The overall recommendations for acceptable fence styles were those that were decorative, ornate wrought iron or cast aluminum, with an openness and only slight opacity. Vinyl styles were found to be acceptable, depending on opacity. The Commissioners were hesitant to

recommend treated and untreated wood fences. Due to the mixed uses in the downtown, such as vacant commercial lots; green space between buildings; and industrial, commercial and residential uses, it was determined that a distinction be made depending on use. It was also noted that street visibility may require a different style of fence than that of one along an alleyway. Based on the discussion, Community Development Director Smith Strack explained that she will prepare draft language that will take into account the different uses. This topic will be placed on next month's agenda.

4.2. Downtown Tree Lighting - Update.

Community Development Director Smith Strack provided an update on the downtown tree lighting project. Regarding contracted services for the maintenance of the lights, Community Development Director Smith Strack contacted three potential installers for cost estimates. One estimate received for \$1,500 from a group external to Belle Plaine. Gregory Electric noted their bucket truck is not tall enough to hang the lights. A third party declined the invitation. Community Development Director Smith Strack provided a quote from a second vendor (Display Sales) regarding display lights. She informed the Commissioners that a local business owner and resident shared information regarding a LED tree-mounted security lighting being introduced in Minnesota and she will research this product.

The Commissioners reviewed the information provided. Of concern was the on-going expense related to the replacement of bulbs and the Commissioners were amenable to explore a different style lighting. Commissioner Krant reported that his place of employment has installed canister-style LED lighting on their courtyard trees and will provide Community Development Director Smith Strack with contact information. The Commissioners were encouraged with the idea of installing a single LED light source, whether canopy or ground-mounted.

4.3. 2016 Goals.

Community Development Director Smith Strack reported the upcoming Meet and Greet with the members of City boards and commissions scheduled for Wednesday, March 9th at 6:00 p.m. Chair Krant volunteered to be the spokesperson for the purpose of presenting the activities of the Design Committee.

The budget process will begin in June and the Commissioners can determine at that time whether a budget for 2017 is necessary. The wayfinding plan and implementation can be reviewed at that time. She also recommended the Commissioners work on a mission statement. Regarding goals, Krings suggested a theme to establish an image for the overall community, such as what has been incorporated into the bridge design and carried through on the entrance monument. Chair Krant commented on the importance of "presenting" the City, especially to prospective developers and businesses. A book written by Wayzata, MN architects and commissioners providing important information related to design elements will be purchased and loaned to each of the Commissioners.

5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS.

5.1. Commissioner Comments.

There were no further Commissioner comments.

5.2. Upcoming Meeting.

- 1. Next Regular Meeting, 5:15 PM, Monday, March 7, 2016.**
- 2. Destination Belle Plaine, Meet and Greet, 6:00 PM, Wednesday, March 9, 2016.**

The Commissioners were reminded of the upcoming meetings as listed.

6. ADJOURNMENT.

MOTION by Behnke, second by Joerg, to adjourn at 6:14 p.m. ALL VOTED AYE. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Krings
Recording Secretary



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 7, 2016
TO: Design Committee Members
FROM: Cynthia Smith Strack, Community Development Director
RE: Item 4.1 Sample Standards/Approach: Fences in Downtown

REQUEST: Discussion: approach/draft standards for fences in Downtown.

GENERAL INFORMATION

As you know the Design Committee has been discussing the impact fences have on the fabric of the Downtown. At the previous meeting the Committee requested standards be drafted based on input from previous meetings.

Armed with previous input from the DC but prior to drafting language, I conducted a literature review to determine conventional approaches to treatment of fences in small town historic centers. The review revealed a few basis insights. First, most standards were contained in design manuals and not code language. Second, most standards were rooted in what fence styles were common when the original townsite was developed.

To those ends, please note the draft language contains a small code adjustment which references the design manual and design review by the DC for certain fences in the Downtown. The bulk of the draft language would be incorporated in the design manual. It is occasionally prescriptive but more often leaves room for interpretation based on individual instances.

In addition, I've reviewed BP histories produced by the Albrechts and have a few historic photos of fences I'll share with you at the meeting.

I'd like to review the draft language thoroughly and I have prepared a presentation for the meeting.

REQUEST

Review and input is kindly requested.

FENCES IN DOWNTOWN – SAMPLE LANGUAGE

Blue text to be inserted into City Code: Section 1107.02, Subd. 4 (Fences)

- Design Committee review is required for fences facing public streets, alleys, and sidewalks within the B-3 Central Business District. Fences shall respect design standards contained in the Belle Plaine Design Manual, as may be amended.

Following text to be inserted into Belle Plaine Design Manual (Downtown District or add new section)

1. Fences, walls, and gates serve aesthetic and functional roles and define the character of residential and commercial areas within Belle Plaine's Central Business District. In the B-3 Central Business District, proposals for new fences to enhance the site, improve security, or increase privacy are reviewed in terms of their siting and their design. The compatibility of proposed materials, height, configuration, scale, detail, and finish with other structures in the district shall be reviewed as is the proposed configuration for the specific site.
2. New fences and gates shall avoid compromising the authenticity of the Downtown and adjacent properties.
3. Fences and gates in front yards and street side yards (corner lots) shall be:
 - a) Of an open design such as picket;
 - b) Non-opaque meaning passersby can easily see through the fence and a visual connection between the sidewalk and area behind the fence can easily be maintained;
 - c) Composed of painted wood, traditional iron, or aluminum reminiscent of wrought or cast iron if pertaining to a residential use;
 - d) Composed of traditional iron or aluminum reminiscent of wrought or cast iron if pertaining to a non-residential use;
 - e) In horizontal alignment with existing fences and/or the sidewalk edge, unless the City finds a further setback contributes to the pedestrian experience and quality/character of the streetscape;
 - f) Harmonious with and reflective of the color palette employed in the immediate vicinity and the principal structure;
 - g) Designed with colors and elements which blend in with existing features as opposed to drawing attention to the fence or gate as a design element of the site;
 - h) Generally be of modest design detail similar to those historically found within the City as opposed to elaborate ornamental detailing; and,
 - i) Generally no greater than three and a half (3 ½) to four (4) feet in height.
4. The following are not permitted within the B-3 Central Business District:
 - a) Fences, gates, or walls composed of non-traditional iron, post and rail or split rail type, chicken wire, barbed wire, concertina wire, round tubing, and similar materials, and above-ground electric fences.
 - b) Chain link fences or privacy fences in front yards and street side yards of corner lots.
 - c) Retaining walls within the 100 block of Main Street, the 100 block of Church Street, the 100 block of Meridian Street South, or the 100 or 200 block of Meridian Street North.
5. Fences which are more opaque may be used to screen service areas, mechanical equipment, and dumpsters for commercial uses in the B-3 Central Business District. Said service areas, mechanical equipment, and dumpsters shall be located out of view from public streets and sidewalks.

FENCES IN DOWNTOWN – SAMPLE LANGUAGE

6. Chain Link:

- a) Chain link fences are not appropriate for front yards or side yards that face streets.
- b) Chain link fences may be acceptable in rear yards or side yards where not visible from the street.
- c) The painting of visible sections of chain link fences in dark green, dark brown, or black colors is encouraged.
- d) The screening of chain link fences with hedge, ivy, or other vining cover is encouraged.

7. Privacy fencing:

- a) Privacy fencing is not allowed in a front yard or a side yard facing a public street.
- b) Privacy fencing may be appropriate for interior side and rear yards not facing a public street.
- c) Privacy fencing consisting of vertical uprights are considered appropriate choices.
- d) Privacy fencing materials and color should work in harmony with and be reflective of adjacent structures.
- e) Privacy fencing materials considered appropriate choices are wood, vinyl, and composite.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 7, 2016
TO: Design Committee Members
FROM: Cynthia Smith Strack, Community Development Director
RE: Item 4.2 Design Review Principles Cheat Sheets

REQUEST: Discussion: design review principles.

GENERAL INFORMATION

You will each soon be receiving a copy of a book entitled "The Language of Design". The book was created by two west metro area architects who served decades on various design and planning boards. The book's thesis holds city leaders must know and use architectural design principles to adequately direct, express, and evaluate proposed structures. The book primarily addresses commercial buildings and the lasting impact they have on sense of place.

While you await receipt of your copy of the book I've developed a 'cheat sheet' for your reference. I intend the 'cheat sheet' to be used as you consider substantial new building and/or substantial additions or remodels prior to and at meetings. The cheat sheet is to provide a quick frame of reference for your review.

The Authors also present evidence for a sensible design review process. In reviewing the Belle Plaine Design Manual and code language I note neither a specific application nor review process is specified. To those ends I've developed guidance for architects I intend to include in a formal application form. The guidelines and application form would be distributed at initial project meetings early in the process. I recommend our formal review address each of the guidelines, even if just in passing.

I'm hoping the cheat sheet and design guidelines will assist us in further developing our design review skills.

I'll plan on walking through the guidelines with you at the meeting.

REQUEST

Review and input is kindly requested.

DESIGN COMMITTEE DESIGN REVIEW PRINCIPLES

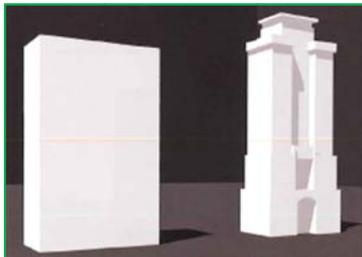


REGIONALISM: Geographic influence on architecture. How do people typically build here? Not about mindlessly repeating or cartooning the past but climate, natural resources, and geography should influence architecture. We live in upper Midwest not desert southwest or tropical oasis.



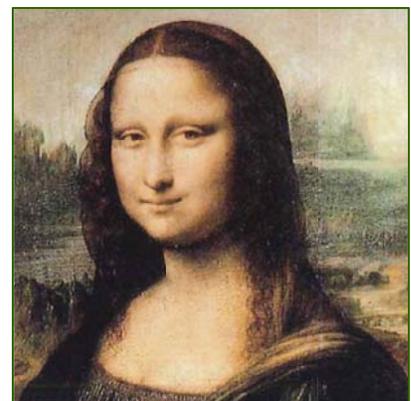
CONTEXT: Look beyond the building site and take in the larger picture from adjacent buildings, pedestrian access, roads, regional issues, and environmental effects to building sustainability and how the building will age over time.

SCALE AND MASSING: Scale is how the building relates to other buildings and how it relates to humans. Massing is about the bulk of the building. Encourage human-scale design in downtown. As a rule, favor reduced bulk and mass of buildings. As a rule, encourage scale/mass that is compatible with existing adjacent development.



HIERARCHY: Visual order. Consider elements of the design that dominate versus elements that are supportive or recessive. Consider how great the difference between dominant and recessive is – do certain aspects of the design scream 'look here'. Subtlety is preferential to brutal hierarchy this is often at odds with retail design (e.g. front door and signs dominate).

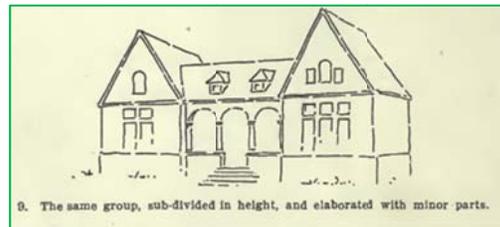
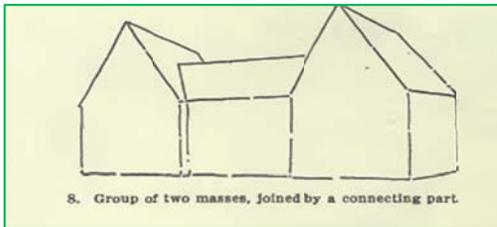
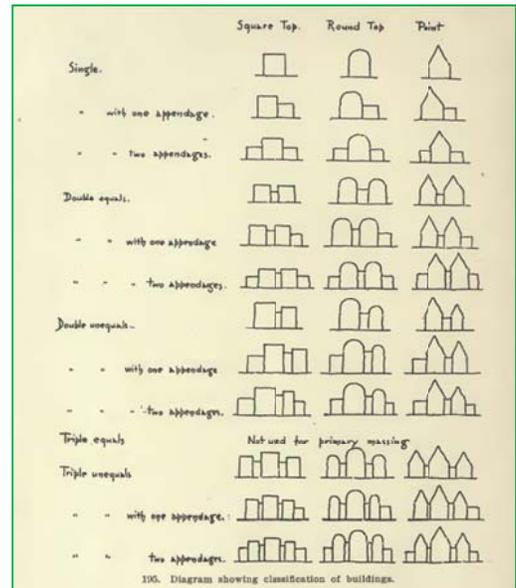
In "Mona Lisa" her smile is reinforced by all design elements.



DESIGN COMMITTEE DESIGN REVIEW PRINCIPLES

COMPOSITION: How building shaped and formed. For simplicity we'll divide into three concepts as follows. Proportion and symmetry are important.

1. First, the main mass consists of necessary parts of the whole, without these the building would be incomplete. Main masses are shapes – circular, square, rectangular. Three dimensions of main mass are: unity (individual units), grouping (linking of individual units), and appendages (what's attached to the main mass).
2. Second, subordinate parts - which are building parts that can be removed without destroying completeness of main mass. Dormers, gables, turrets, towers, bays, belfries, pinnacles, etc.
3. Third, details or minor parts (openings and solids) – doors, windows, columns, arches, etc. If grouped symmetry is important. Consider both vertical groupings (number and size of openings/solids) and horizontal subdivision (foundation, stories, roof).



COLOR: dark colors absorb light and light colors reflect it. Dark colors blend in, light colors draw attention. Bad bright design is worse than bad dark design.



GUIDANCE TO ARCHITECTS DISTRIBUTED AT PROJECT INITIATION, REVIEWED AT INITIAL DESIGN COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROJECT

1. REGIONALISM:

The Design Committee expects architecture (a) will be regionally appropriate, (b) will make sense for Minnesota's climate, (c) will be considerate of available local and sustainable materials; and (d) will respect local history.

- Tell us how historic building materials traditionally used in the Belle Plaine area influenced the design (brick, wood, stone) and how significant or historic building types in Belle Plaine should and did influence the design.

2. CONTEXT:

The Design Committee expects the architect will look beyond the building site and take in the larger picture, including: adjacent buildings, pedestrian access, roads, regional issues, and environmental effects to building sustainability and how the building will age over time.

- Tell us how traffic affected the design – noise, car lights, access, pollution, congestion.
- Tell us if/how topography and/or water influences the site and design; tell us how those factors are accommodated in the design.
- Identify what positive features/clues you are borrowing from neighboring buildings and why those are important. Tell us what, if any, surrounding features can be ignored and why.
- Tell us about any significant views from the site and how the design acknowledges those views. Identify whether or not the proposed building is blocking views from other buildings.

3. SCALE & MASS:

The Design Committee expects the architect will consider the physical relationship of the proposed structure(s) to pedestrians and nearby buildings. The Design Committee expects the architect will consider how the proposed building scale compares with the surrounding buildings (higher, longer, shorter). The Design Committee expects architects proposing scales substantially different from surrounding buildings will employ strategies to reduce the impact (color, massing, composition). The Design Committee expects architects designing isolated object buildings (big box, high rise, etc) will employ massing strategies (carving) to affect scale at the pedestrian level and the distant view.

- Illustrate visually how/ why you think the design scale and mass works with respect to adjacent buildings, pedestrians at the street level, and the distant panoramic view.

4. COMPOSITION:

The Design Committee expects the architect will thoughtfully consider arrangement of surfaces and shapes. The Design Committee expects sensible and clear, confident composition of the building's base, middle, and top. The Design Committee values simplicity and common sense in building elements (columns, arches, canopies, roof forms, dormers, banding, striping, brick patterns, windows, awnings, balconies, etc). Alignment of elements should be logical (not random) and proportionally correct.

- If the building is abstract, tell us why you decided the building should be abstract. Tell us why you chose the forms and materials (description and number).
- If the building is symmetrical tell us how your design ensures it doesn't appear too rigid or massive.

GUIDANCE TO ARCHITECTS DISTRIBUTED AT PROJECT INITIATION, REVIEWED AT INITIAL DESIGN COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROJECT

5. HIERARCHY:

The Design Committee expects the architect will purposefully place appropriate visual emphasis on specific building elements. The Design Committee expects the architect will consider what elements are intended to dominate and why. The Design Committee expects main entries to be carefully designed. The Design Committee expects sign sizing to be appropriate. The Design Committee expects large blank surfaces to recede rather than dominate the design.

- Tell us why/how you chose which elements dominate the design and why they are appropriate.
- Tell us how you arrived at sign sizing and why you feel it's appropriate and not too small or too dominant.

6. COLOR:

The Design Committee expects colors will be carefully chosen based on regional characteristics, how colors affect adjacent buildings, Belle Plaine's historic building palettes, and the fact dark colors recede and bright colors dominate. The Design Committee highly values classic or traditional color palettes to trendy palettes. The Design Committee expects the paint scheme will compliment and not confuse the design.

- Tell us why you chose your palette of colors.
- Consideration of using bright colors as accents versus dominating the design is expected. If the color palette is aggressive or multi colored tell us why that is appropriate.

7. TRANSFORMATION:

The Design Committee expects the architect will consider the building's next life including how well the building will adapt to changing tenants, how durable building materials will be, and if it is a 'brand' building what impact the brand design will have on its intended lifespan.

- Tell us what measures you have taken to ensure the building will be sustainable and timeless in occupancy.

8. SIMPLICITY:

The Design Committee highly values clear, confident, and calm design. The Design Committee highly discourages multiple shapes and forms resulting in a chaotic visual presentation. The Design Committee discourages random decorations and faux elements.

- Tell us about the idea or concept behind your design; tell us how the architecture reinforces this concept or idea.
- If you have employed random decorations or faux elements tell us why the building will suffer without these features.
- If you have employed multiple shapes or forms explain how you have provided clarity in the complexity and discourage visual chaos.



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 7, 2016
TO: Design Committee Members
FROM: Cynthia Smith Strack, Community Development Director
RE: Item 4.3 Downtown Ambiance Lighting

REQUEST: Discussion: Downtown Lighting.

GENERAL INFORMATION

At the previous meeting we discussed alternatives to mini-lights in tree canopies in the Downtown. Chairperson Krant noted he would determine who designed landscape lighting at his place of work.

I've followed up with the group which designed and install lights at Auburn Homes, Accentual Lighting in Jordan. A representative from Accentual has agreed to talk with us about lighting in the Downtown. At this time the rep may attend either our March or April meeting. I am awaiting confirmation.

For background I've put together a few images of different approaches to lighting urban areas and some information I found interesting regarding ambient outdoor lighting.

REQUEST

For information and discussion.





Design Considerations: Lighting is an Art

Lighting is an art. Opinions regarding a lighting design are as subjective as those of art critics. A lighting design is not successful unless it meets the needs and expectations of your client, and fits the community in which it's located. Information gathering is the first and most essential step in every successful project.

- **Determine who is paying the bill and how you make them happy.**
 - » What is the primary objective—Beauty? Image? Security?
 - » Who is the audience? How and from where will they view the space?
 - » How will the space be used? How will people interact within it?
 - » What is the most important feature or critical focus?
- **Visit the space at night to determine ambient light levels.**
 - » Study the light sources currently used in the space.
- **What types of objects are being illuminated?**
 - » Study their color, texture, and reflectance.
- **What plant materials are being used?**
 - » Study their size, texture, density, shape, and color.
- **Determine if there are areas or features that shouldn't be illuminated.**
- **Visit the community and study neighboring projects and property.**
 - » What lighting ordinances or energy codes apply?

Since lighting is an art, understanding how the human eye and brain work will help you predict how the finished product will be perceived.

- **It doesn't take much light to make a big difference outdoors at night.**
- **Moonlight from a full moon on a clear night is only 0.01 foot-candle.**
- **Vision and visibility change as light levels diminish.**
 - » Warm (red/yellow) colors disappear at lower levels.
 - » Eyes are more sensitive to cool colors at extremely low levels.
- **Contrast and Uniformity Ratios are critical.**
 - » Eyes are attracted to the brightest object in the field of view.
 - » Eyes adapt more slowly from high to low levels than vice versa.
 - » Dark colors absorb light and require higher illuminance to be as visible as light colors.
 - » Light colors reflect more light and are brighter than dark colors receiving equal illuminance.
- **The effect should be seen, not the source. Eliminate obtrusive light.**
 - » Glare can be distracting or painful, ruining desired effects.
 - » Don't cause light trespass. No light should leave the property.

Below Left

ALV fixtures with MR16 lamps and 30° shields accent a carved wooden sculpture.

Below

Roof mounted bullet downlights with MH lamps highlight the sculpture, while ground mounted bullets accent the trees.





Downlighting Tips & Techniques

Creating Spectacular "Moonlight" Effects with Greenlee Bullets & Low Voltage Accent Lights

Fully adjustable bullet fixtures and well-shielded low voltage accent lights are the preferred luminaires for downlighting.

- **Place fixtures as high as possible in the tree.**
 - » Generally 10' higher than anyone is willing to climb.
- **Light levels decrease exponentially with distance.**
 - » High fixture placement results in lower light levels on the ground, but provides broad coverage because the beam has time to spread.
 - » Luminaires placed lower in the canopy cover smaller areas, but produce higher light levels on the ground.
- **Regardless of mounting height.**
 - » Aiming down through leaves and branches produces more shadow patterns and lowers light levels.
 - » Aiming through openings in leaves and branches increases light levels and produces fewer shadows.
 - » Luminaires placed near the center of the canopy produce softer shadows and lower light levels (light passes through more foliage).
 - » Luminaires placed near the edge of the tree's canopy create higher light levels and fewer shadows (light passes through less foliage).

Top Left

Shielded bullet downlights create shadows and soft illumination on a deck and steps, enhancing both beauty and safety.

Top Right

Bullet uplights and downlights with MV lamps define the entrance.

Opposite Page

High CRI metal halide lamps in shielded downlights enhance food, clothing, and faces, while MV uplights accent foliage.



Three MV downlights add depth and texture with shadows.

Locating Uplights to Illuminate Trees

- **Enhance the effect of uplights by:**
 - » Using two or more fixtures to bring out texture.
 - » Placing luminaires behind trees to add depth to the space.
 - » Using uplights in combination with downlights on large trees.
- **Avoid unattractive hot spots on trunks and branches by:**
 - » Locating luminaires one-third to one-half the distance between the trunk and canopy edge.
 - » Never placing luminaires directly under large branches.
 - » Aiming uplights toward the top of the tree, not at the trunk.

Caution: Never cut or disturb the root ball of a newly planted tree.



Left
RDB-175-MH-SPF luminaires produce vibrant patterns that evoke feelings of excitement and motion.

Right
101 Series well lights with 175-watt MV lamps illuminate pine trees.

Below
Metal halide uplights are used to accent the trunks of mature trees and enhance their foliage.

