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Updates and addenda to the Street Design Manual will be posted on the Street Design Manual website at www.nyc.gov/streetdesignmanual
Readers may register on the website to receive updates by email.
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I am very pleased to present the second edition of the New York City Street Design Manual, the city’s comprehensive resource for street design standards, guidelines, and policies. It draws from a wide range of resources and experience to present a coherent set of choices for street design. These comprise everything from ubiquitous features, such as standard sidewalk concrete and street lights, to newer design elements like pedestrian safety islands, bus bulbs, and protected bicycle lanes.

The design and context of our streets inform our behavior: wide roadways with little economic and social activity encourage speeding, while wide sidewalks with active retail and other points of interest attract pedestrians. Even small changes to a street’s design can have large impacts for the people using them.

DOT’s primary goal is safer streets. In recent years, the agency has re-engineered hundreds of intersections and corridors to better mediate the interactions of pedestrians, motor vehicles, and cyclists, and worked throughout the city to improve safety performance with street designs that emphasize visibility and predictability. As a result, the past five years have been the safest in city traffic history.

DOT believes that safer streets are also more attractive and has found that good public-realm design leads to beneficial economic impacts. In Brooklyn’s DUMBO district, where DOT and the local business community installed a plaza in 2007, tax receipts show that retail sales in stores adjacent to the space increased 172% over the following three years, more than the growth seen in other parts of the same area. We see similar findings across the city.

The Manual’s first edition has been a tremendous success, with rapid integration into the city’s DNA. City agencies and private developers now work from a common, comprehensive playbook. A standard reference text for DOT staff, the Manual has been incorporated into the agency’s internal design-review processes and is required reading for all design and engineering consultants. The Manual is also cited in the Mayor’s recent Executive Order encouraging active design strategies for streets and buildings.

The Manual is a living document. We updated the first edition a year after its publication, and this second edition reflects further evolving practices and aspirations. Future editions will continue to document the changes that come as the city keeps turning its goals into best practices. They will also promote still more innovations to make our streets safer, smarter, and stronger as local economic and social assets.

Janette Sadik-Khan
Commissioner
This second edition of the Street Design Manual includes updates and new content, based on feedback from users and comprehensive inter- and intra-agency review. Highlights include:

- New Process chapter describes how street projects are planned, designed, and implemented
- New Landscape chapter includes expanded content on stormwater-capturing infrastructure, plantings in the public right-of-way, and information on the planning, design, and implementation of landscape projects
- Reorganized Lighting chapter provides updated pole and fixture options
- Expanded Furniture chapter
- Expanded and updated introductions to all the previously existing chapters, mostly to clarify process issues

Since the publication of the first edition of the Manual in 2009, New York City has eliminated some treatments, tested new ones, and incorporated still more into its toolbox. Key additions and changes include the construction of RAISED CROSSWALKS (2.3.4); the development of a standard detail for PERMEABLE INTERLOCKING CONCRETE PAVERS (3.1.12) for use adjacent to public schools; the selection of a STANDARD LED FIXTURE (4.2.2) and of TEARDROP and SHIELDED TEARDROP LED FIXTURES (4.2.5); the design and deployment of BIKE SHARE STATIONS (5.4) and the WALKNYC WAYFINDING SYSTEM (5.11); and the completion of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) RIGHT-OF-WAY BIOSWALE (6.6.1a) detail.

The following agencies participated in the creation of the Manual’s second edition: the Departments of Design and Construction (DDC), City Planning (DCP), Parks and Recreation (DPR), and Buildings (DOB), as well as DEP, the Economic Development Corporation (EDC), the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), the Public Design Commission (PDC), and the Mayor’s Office.
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