

INFORMATION FOR Design Review

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
**PLANNING
DIVISION**
121 5th Avenue N
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The City of Edmonds uses design review to promote development practices that enhance the environmental and aesthetic quality of the community as a whole. All development projects other than those associated with single-family development and duplexes in multifamily residential zones are subject to some form of design review – new construction, additions, exterior remodels, signs, landscaping, etc.

WHERE CAN I FIND APPLICABLE DESIGN STANDARDS AND PROCESSES?

Design guidance is found in both the City's Comprehensive Plan and the Edmonds Community Development Code (ECDC) and applies to general areas of the City or specific zoning districts. These documents and the others referenced below are available on the City's website at: www.edmondswa.gov/government/departments/development-services/planning-division.

1. General and district-specific urban design goals, policies, and objectives are found in the Community Culture and Urban Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan (pgs. 122 – 127).
2. ECDC Title 16 – Zone Districts. Some zoning districts have specific design standards, particularly the Residential Multifamily (Chapter 16.30), the Community Business – Edmonds Way (Chapter 16.50), the General Commercial (Chapter 16.60), and the Westgate Mixed-Use (Chapter 16.100) zones.
3. ECDC Chapters 20.10 – 20.13. These chapters include standards and processes used in design review.
 - a. Chapter 20.10 – Design Review
 - b. Chapter 20.11 – General Design Review
 - c. Chapter 20.12 – District-Based Design Review

- d. Chapter 20.13 – Landscaping Requirements

4. ECDC Title 22 – Design Standards. Specific design standards for the downtown business (BD) zones, the Westgate Mixed-Use District (WMU), and the Firdale Village (FVMU) zones.
5. Street Tree Plan. This portion of the Edmonds Streetscape Plan contains specific requirements for street tree installation in certain locations throughout the city.

Other sections of the Edmonds Community Development Code that will affect the design of a project include: ECDC Chapter 17.50, off-street parking standards; ECDC Title 18, Public Works Requirements (including stormwater, streets and sidewalks, parking lot construction, etc.); ECDC Title 23, Tree and Critical Area code; ECDC Title 24, the Shoreline Master Program.

ARE THERE DIFFERENT TYPES OF DESIGN REVIEW?

Yes. The type of design review depends on the location of the project within the City.

1. District-based design review applies for projects located in:
 - a. The Downtown Business zones (BD zones) located within the Downtown/Waterfront Activity Center.
 - b. The General Commercial (CG) zone located within the

Medical/Highway 99 Activity Center or the Highway 99 Corridor.

2. General design review applies to all other multifamily, business and commercial areas of Edmonds.

WHO DOES THE REVIEW?

Depending on the scope of the project, design review is done either by City staff or the Architectural Design Board (ADB). The ADB is composed of five design professionals and two lay citizens who review those projects where a threshold determination is required by the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA); except, the ADB is only required to review projects that include buildings exceeding 75 feet in height in the CG zone. The ADB meets the fourth Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m. in the Brackett Room, 3rd Floor, City Hall, 121 5th Ave. N. The meeting is hybrid and also available on Zoom.

All projects under the maximum height in CG and all those elsewhere in the City that do not require a SEPA determination are reviewed by city staff.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR GENERAL DESIGN APPROVAL?

The following findings must be made by staff or the ADB when using general design review:

- Criteria and Comprehensive Plan. The proposal is consistent with the criteria listed in ECDC 20.11.030 in accordance with the techniques and objectives contained in the Urban Design chapter of the Community Culture and Urban Design Element of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Zoning Ordinance. The proposal meets the bulk and use requirements of the zoning ordinance, or a variance or modification has been approved under the terms of this code for any duration.

Staff Review (Type I decision)

Most commonly, staff completes design review as part of the building permit application review. The required application materials identified on Page 5 are submitted with the building permit application and staff reviews the project for design compliance while verifying compliance with height, setbacks, parking and other zoning criteria. In a limited number of instances, a separate design review application may be required.

ADB Review (Type III-A decision)

Upon submittal, staff will review the application for completeness; the contact person for the project will receive a letter indicating whether the application is complete and/or identifying any additional items or information that is required. Once complete, the application is reviewed for compliance with city codes, and the proposal is scheduled for an ADB meeting agenda. One week before the meeting, a staff report with recommendations and suggested conditions is sent to the ADB and the project contact.

The ADB meeting is a public hearing with testimony taken from staff, the applicant, and interested citizens. Staff will present their report and the applicant then usually makes a presentation about the proposal. Citizens can comment on the proposal as well. After deliberation and consideration of the testimony presented, the Board will make a motion to approve the proposal, deny it, or approve the proposal with modifications or conditions.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR DISTRICT-BASED APPROVAL?

The following findings must be made by staff when using district-based design review:

Design Guidelines. The proposal meets the relevant district-specific design objectives contained in the Comprehensive Plan.

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Zoning Ordinance. The proposal meets the bulk and use requirements of the zoning ordinance, including the guidelines and standards contained in the relevant zoning chapter(s).

The following findings must be made by the ADB when using district-based design review:

Design Objectives. The proposal meets the relevant district-specific design objectives contained in the Comprehensive Plan.

Design Criteria. The proposal satisfies the specific checklist criteria identified by the ADB during Phase 1 of the public hearing (see ECDC 20.12.020).

Zoning Ordinance. The proposal meets the bulk and use requirements of the zoning ordinance, including the guidelines and standards contained in the relevant zoning chapter(s).

Staff Review (Type I decision)

As with general design review, staff usually completes district-based design review as part of the building permit application review. The required application materials identified on Page 5 are submitted with the building permit application and staff reviews the project for design compliance while verifying compliance with height, setbacks, parking and other zoning criteria. In a limited number of instances, a separate design review application may be required.

Staff Review (Type II-A decision)

For certain projects in the General Commercial (CG) zone, staff does the design review following public notification. If the project site is adjacent to or across the street from the RS zone and an application contains a building greater than 35 feet in height, then staff reviews the project and issues a Type II-A decision.

ADB Review (Type III-A decision)

The district-based review by the ADB involves a two-phase process developed in order to obtain public and design professional input prior to the expense incurred by a developer in preparation of detailed design. In general, the process is as follows:

1. **Public Hearing (Phase 1).** The applicant submits a preliminary conceptual design to the City. Staff schedules the first phase of the ADB hearing within 30 days of the application being found to be "complete." During Phase 1 of the public hearing, the ADB makes factual findings regarding the particular characteristics of the property and establishes a prioritized design guideline checklist based upon these facts, the provisions of the City's design guidelines, and elements of the Comprehensive Plan and the Edmonds Community Development Code. Following establishment of the design guideline checklist, the public hearing is continued to a date-certain (as requested by the applicant), not to exceed 120 days from the Phase 1 date.
2. **Continued public hearing (Public Hearing, Phase 2).** The purpose of the continuance is to allow the applicant time to further refine or redesign the initial conceptual design to address the input of the public and the ADB by complying with the prioritized design guideline checklist criteria. When refinement or redesign is complete, it is resubmitted for final review; the review of this design is the subject of Phase 2 of the public hearing. This design must be submitted within 180 days of the Phase 1 meeting, or the two-step process must begin again as a new application.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR DESIGN REVIEW?

Depending on whether design review is by staff or the ADB, submit those materials identified on the "Design Review Application Checklist" (Page 5). Include those "Plan Elements" applicable to the type of application that are listed on Pages 6 – 7. All required application materials must be submitted through the MyBuildingPermit portal.

The "Design Review Application Checklist" is intended to summarize all the information needed to allow the City to make a well-informed decision on an application. Additional materials may supplement the required application materials if they help to demonstrate a project's compliance with the applicable regulations. Some examples include: photographs of the site and surrounding area, architectural renderings, perspective drawings, or dimensional models, building material samples, etc. Please be aware that all application materials are public information and all exhibits submitted with a project become the property of the City and will not be returned.

AFTER DESIGN REVIEW...

Appeals

Design review decisions may be appealed to Snohomish County superior court within 21 days of the issuance of the decision.

Prior to Construction

In those instances where design review is performed as a stand-alone review (not with a building permit application), building permits must be obtained from the Building Division prior to any construction. The building permit submittal must substantially agree with the approved design or the project may be subject

to additional design review by the appropriate reviewing body or returned to the applicant for revision.

Improvements

As a result of your application, you may be required to make improvements, such as sidewalks, curbs, street trees or utilities undergrounding within the rights-of-way abutting your property. Refer to Title 18 of the Edmonds Community Development Code and/or consult with the City Engineering Division to determine if this is the case.

Expiration of Approval

Design approval is valid for eighteen (18) months from the date of approval. The approval shall expire and be null and void unless a building permit is applied for within that time. The permit holder may file a written extension request with the Planning Division prior to the approval's expiration, which may be granted by the City if circumstances warrant.

Augmented Design Review and Optional Vesting

Design review application and approval does not vest a project to the development regulations and fees in effect at the time of application or approval. At the option of the applicant, an augmented design review application to vest rights under the provisions of ECDC 19.00.030 may be submitted at the same time as the design review application. The application is processed like standard design review but vesting rights are determined under the provisions of ECDC 19.00.030.

Design Review Application Checklist

| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | APPLICATION ITEM | ADB REVIEW | STAFF REVIEW |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. CRITICAL AREA DETERMINATION. Do a Permit Record search through the City's website to see if there is a determination for the subject site current within the past five years. If not, apply for an initial or updated determination through the MBP portal. | REQUIRED | REQUIRED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. APPLICATION. Through the MBP portal. | REQUIRED | REQUIRED (only if design review is proposed before and separate from the building permit application) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. COVER LETTER. Describe how the proposal satisfies the applicable requirements and standards of the Comprehensive Plan and Edmonds Community Development Code. | REQUIRED | REQUIRED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. FEE. According to the current fee schedule. | REQUIRED | REQUIRED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST (Handout P71). For projects in CG zone, also Planned Action Checklist. | REQUIRED | MAY BE REQUIRED Check with Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. PROJECT PLANS. Plan Elements listed on pages 6 & 7 are required for new development proposals – smaller projects may not require submittal of all Plan Elements listed. Contact Planning Division for specific requirements. | REQUIRED (SEE PAGE 6 FOR GENERAL, PAGE 7 FOR DISTRICT-BASED) | REQUIRED (SEE PAGE 6) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. PRELIMINARY CIVIL IMPROVEMENT PLANS | REQUIRED | REQUIRED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. PRELIMINARY STORMWATER REPORT | REQUIRED | REQUIRED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS (Handout E82) | MAY BE REQUIRED Check with Engineering | MAY BE REQUIRED Check with Engineering |

REQUIREMENTS FOR Design Review

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. LETTER FROM TRASH HAULER. Provide confirmation from the applicable trash hauler that the location and dimensions of the enclosure and/or staging area is acceptable. (See Handout E37) | REQUIRED | REQUIRED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. ARBORIST REPORT. See ECDC 23.10.060. | MAY BE REQUIRED Check with Planning | MAY BE REQUIRED Check with Planning |

| PLAN ELEMENTS FOR ALL STAFF AND ADB GENERAL REVIEW | |
|---|--|
| VICINITY PLAN | |
| | Showing all significant physical structures and critical areas within a 200 foot radius of the site including, but not limited to, surrounding building outlines, streets, driveways, sidewalks, bus stops, and land use. Use of aerial photos and photos of project surroundings is encouraged. |
| VOLUME MODEL | |
| | Photo simulations that depict the volume of the proposed structure(s) in relation to the surrounding environment. |
| SITE PLAN | |
| | Showing topography (minimum 2-foot intervals), general location of building(s), areas devoted to parking, streets and access, loading areas, mechanical equipment, trash/recycling location, and open space. Include preliminary height calculations, structural lot coverage, setback compliance, and parking compliance. |
| LANDSCAPE PLAN | |
| | Showing locations of planting areas identifying landscape types, including general plant species and characteristics, street trees, and the like. See ECDC 20.13. |
| FLOOR PLANS | |
| | Garage, floor and roof layouts. |
| BUILDING ELEVATIONS | |
| | Building elevations for all building faces illustrating building massing and openings, materials and colors, roof forms, and mechanical equipment. |
| LIGHTING PLAN | |
| | Photometric study of exterior lighting, including a lighting schedule with manufacturer, model number, type of lamp and wattage. Rendering of nighttime building appearance. |

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| PLAN ELEMENTS FOR ADB DISTRICT-BASED REVIEW | |
|--|--|
| Public Hearing – Phase 1 | |
| VICINITY PLAN | |
| | Showing all significant physical structures and critical areas within a 200 foot radius of the site including, but not limited to, surrounding building outlines, streets, driveways, sidewalks, bus stops, and land use. Use of aerial photos and photos of project surroundings is encouraged. |
| VOLUME MODEL | |
| | Photo simulations that depict the volume of the proposed structure(s) in relation to the surrounding environment. |
| SITE PLAN | |
| | Showing topography (minimum 2-foot intervals), general location of building(s), areas devoted to parking, streets and access, loading areas, mechanical equipment, trash/recycling enclosure and staging, and proposed open space. Include preliminary height calculations, structural lot coverage, setback compliance, and parking compliance. |
| LANDSCAPE PLAN | |
| | Showing locations of planting areas identifying landscape types, including general plant species and characteristics, street trees, and the like. See ECDC 20.13. |
| FLOOR PLANS | |
| | Garage, floor and roof layouts. |
| BUILDING ELEVATIONS | |
| | Building elevations for all building faces illustrating building massing and openings, materials and colors, roof forms, and mechanical equipment. |
| Public Hearing – Phase 2 | |
| RESPONSE TO ADB CHECKLIST ITEMS | |
| | An annotated cover letter demonstrating how the project complies with the specific design guideline checklist criteria identified by the ADB in Phase 1. |
| SITE PLAN, LANDSCAPE PLAN, FLOOR PLANS, BUILDING ELEVATIONS | |
| | Revised as necessary from Phase 1. |
| LIGHTING PLAN | |
| | Photometric study of exterior lighting, including a lighting schedule with manufacturer, model number, type of lamp and wattage. Rendering of nighttime building appearance. |

Note: This information should not be used as a substitute for City codes and regulations. The Edmonds Community Development Code (ECDC) may be viewed at www.edmondswa.gov. The applicant is responsible for ensuring compliance with the fees and regulations that are applicable at the time of submittal. If you have a specific question about a certain aspect of your project, please contact the Planning Division at 121 Fifth Avenue North, (425) 771-0220. Please note that other local, state, and/or federal permits or approvals may be required.

Applying the Design Guidelines

When designing projects and issuing permits for new developments, applicants and City staff will rely on these guidelines to help define specific design conditions that will be required for project approval. As these design guidelines get applied to particular development projects, some important things to remember are:

1. Each project is unique and will pose unique design issues. Even two similar proposals on the same block may face different design considerations. With some projects, trying to follow all of the guidelines could produce irreconcilable conflicts in the design. With most projects, reviewers will find some guidelines more important than others, and the guidelines that are most important on one project might not be important at all on the next one. The design review process will help designers and reviewers to determine which guidelines are most important in the context of each project so that they may put the most effort into accomplishing the intent of those guidelines.
2. Project must be reviewed in the context of their zoning and the zoning of their surroundings. The use of design guidelines is not intended to change the zoning designations of land where projects are proposed; it is intended to demonstrate methods of treating the appearance of new projects to help them fit their neighborhoods and to provide the Code flexibility necessary to accomplish that. Where the surrounding neighborhood exhibits a lower development intensity than is current zoning allow, the lower-intensity character should not force a proponent to significantly reduce the allowable size of the new building.
3. Many of the guidelines suggest using the existing context to determine appropriate solutions for the project under consideration. In some areas, the existing context is not well defined, or may be undesirable. In such cases, the new project should be recognized as a pioneer with the opportunity to establish a pattern or identity from which future development can take its cues. In light of number 2 above, the site's zoning should be considered an indicator of the desired direction for the area and the project.
4. Each guideline includes examples and illustrations of ways in which that guidelines can be achieved. The examples are just that – examples. They are not the only acceptable solution. Designers and reviewers should consider designs, styles and techniques not described in the examples but that fulfill the guideline.
5. The checklist which follows the guidelines (Checklist) is a tool for determining whether or not a particular guideline applies to a site, so that the guidelines may be more easily prioritized. The checklist is neither a regulatory device, nor a substitute for evaluating a sites conditions, or to summarize the language of examples found in the guidelines themselves.

Considering the Site

Edmond's Land Use Code sets specific, prescriptive rules that are applied uniformly for each land use zone throughout the city. There is little room in the Code's development standards to account for unique site conditions or neighborhood contexts. A project architect can read the Code requirements and theoretically design a building without ever visiting the site.

However, to produce good compatible design, it is critical that the project's design team examine the site and its surrounding, identify the key design features and determine how the proposed project can address the guidelines' objectives. Because they rely on the project's context to help shape the project, the guidelines encourage an active viewing of the site and its surroundings.

For a proposal located on a street with a consistent and distinctive architectural character, the architectural elements of the building may be key to helping the building fit the neighborhood. On other sites with few attractive neighboring buildings, the placement of open space and treatment of pedestrian areas may be the most important concerns. The applicant and the project reviewers should consider the following questions and similar ones related to context when looking at the site:

- What are the key aspects of the streetscape? (The street's layout and visual character)
- Are there opportunities to encourage human activity and neighborhood interaction, while promoting residents' privacy and physical security?
- How can vehicle access have the least effect on the pedestrian environment and on the visual quality of the site?
- Are there any special site planning opportunities resulting from the site's configuration, natural features, topography etc.?
- What are the most important contextual concerns for pedestrians? How could the sidewalk environment be improved?
- Does the street have characteristic landscape features, plant materials, that could be incorporated into the design?
- Are there any special landscaping opportunities such as steep topography, significant trees, greenbelt, natural area, park or boulevard that should be addressed in the design?
- Do neighboring buildings have distinctive architectural style, site configuration, architectural concept?

Design Guidelines Checklist

This checklist is intended as a summary of the issues addressed by the guidelines. It is not meant to be a regulatory device or a substitute for the language and examples found in the guidelines themselves. Rather, it is a tool for assisting the determination about which guidelines are the most applicable on a particular site.

A. Site Planning

| | N/A | Lower Priority | Higher Priority |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Reinforce existing site characteristics | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Reinforce existing streetscape characteristics | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Entry clearly identifiable from the street | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Encourage human activity on street | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Minimize intrusion into privacy on adjacent sites | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Use space between building and sidewalk to provide security, privacy and interaction (residential projects) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Maximize open space opportunity on site (residential projects) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Minimize parking and auto impacts on pedestrians and adjoining property | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Discourage parking in street front | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Orient building to corner and parking away from corner on public street fronts (corner lots) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

B. Bulk and Scale

| | N/A | Lower Priority | Higher Priority |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. provide sensitive transitions to nearby, less-intensive zones | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

C. Architectural Elements and Materials

| | N/A | Lower Priority | Higher Priority |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Complement positive existing character and/or respond to nearby historic structures | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Unified architectural concept | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Use human scale and human activity | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Use durable, attractive and well-detailed finish materials | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Minimize garage entrances | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

D. Pedestrian Environment

| | N/A | Lower Priority | Higher Priority |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Provide convenient, attractive and protected pedestrian entry | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Avoid blank walls | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Minimize height of retaining walls | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Minimize visual and physical intrusion of parking lots on pedestrian areas | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Minimize visual impact of parking structures | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Screen dumpsters, utility and service areas | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Consider personal safety | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

E. Landscaping

| | N/A | Lower Priority | Higher Priority |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Reinforce existing landscape character of neighborhood | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Landscape to enhance the building or site | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Landscape to take advantage of special site conditions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

A-1: Responding to Site Characteristics

The siting of buildings should respond to specific site conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and other natural features.



Explanations and Examples

Site characteristics to consider in project design include:

1) Topography

- Reflect, rather than obscure, natural topography. For instance, buildings should be designed to "step up" hillsides to accommodate significant changes in elevation.
- Where neighboring buildings have responded to similar topographic conditions in their sites in a consistent and positive way, consider similar treatment for the new structure.
- Designing the building in relation to topography may help to reduce the visibility of parking garages.

2) Environmental constraints

- Site buildings to avoid or lessen the impact of development on environmentally critical areas such as steep slopes, wetlands and stream corridors.

3) Solar orientation

- The design of a structure and its massing on the site can enhance solar exposure for the project and minimize shadow impacts on adjacent structures and public areas.

4) Existing vegetation

- Careful siting of buildings can enable significant or important trees or other vegetation to be preserved.

5) Existing structures on the site

- Where a new structure shares a site with an existing structure or is a major addition to an existing structure, designing the new structure to be compatible with the original structure will help it fit in.

A-2: Streetscape Compatibility

The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

Explanation and Examples

The character of a neighborhood is often defined by the experience of traveling along its streets. We often perceive streets within neighborhoods as individual spaces or "rooms." How buildings face and are set back from the street determine the character and proportion of this room.



A-3: Entrances Visible from the Street

Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

Explanation and Examples

Entries that are visible from the street make a project more approachable and create a sense of association among neighbors.



A-4: Human Activity

New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.

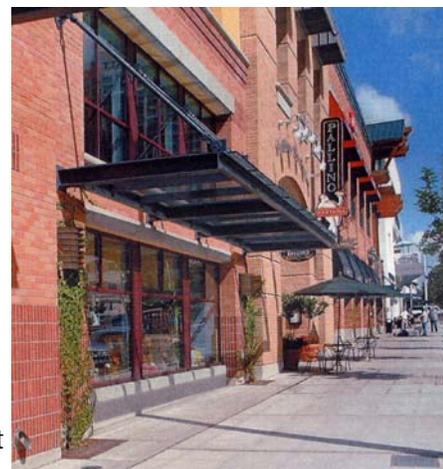
Explanation and Examples

Livelier street edges make for safer streets. Ground floor shops and market spaces providing services needed by residents can attract market activity to the street and increase safety through informal surveillance. Entrances, porches, awnings, balconies, decks, seating and other elements can promote use of the street front and provide places for neighborly interaction. Siting decisions should consider the importance of these features in a particular context and allow for their incorporation.



Also, architectural elements and details can add to the interest and excitement of buildings and spaces. Elements from the following list should be incorporated into all projects. Projects in pedestrian oriented areas of the City should include an even greater number of these details due to the scale of the buildings and the proximity of the people that will experience them.

- Lighting or hanging baskets supported by ornamental brackets
- Belt courses
- Plinths for columns
- Kickplate for storefront window
- Projecting sills
- Tilework
- Transom or clerestory windows
- Planter box
- Variations in applied ornament, materials, colors or trim.
- An element not listed here, as approved, that meets the intent.



In pedestrian oriented areas, ground floor commercial space is encouraged to be at grade with the sidewalk. If the entrance can not be located at the grade of the sidewalk, special care must be taken to ensure that there is both a visual and physical connection between the pedestrian way and the entrance that enhances the pedestrian orientation of the building.

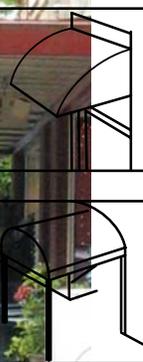
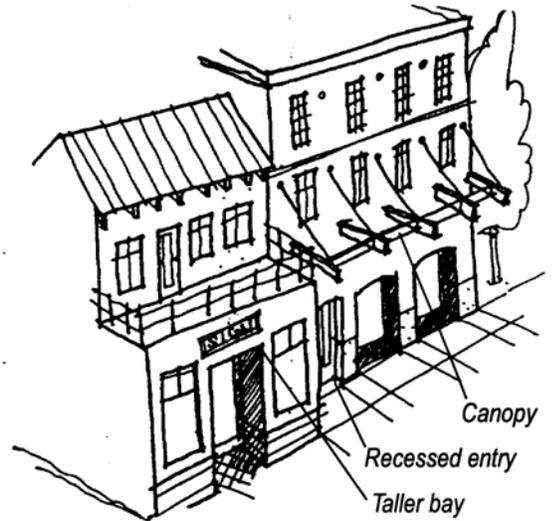
The ground level façades of buildings that are oriented to street fronts in the CW, BC, BN, and BP zones shall have transparent windows to engage the public. To qualify as transparent, windows shall not be mirrored or darkly tinted glass, or prohibit visibility between the street and interior. Where transparency is not provided, the façade shall comply with the guidelines under the section 'Treating Blank Walls'.

In the Downtown Commercial Core

The ground level façades of buildings that are oriented to streets should have a substantial amount of transparent windows, especially in the retail core. A primary function of the pedestrian oriented retail core is to allow for the visual interaction between the walking public and the goods and services businesses located on the first floor are providing.

To qualify as transparent, windows shall not be mirrored or darkly tinted glass, or prohibit visibility between the street and interior. Where transparency is not provided, the façade shall comply with the guidelines under the section 'Treating Blank Walls'. Buildings that are entirely residential do not have a specific transparency requirement. However, all-residential buildings shall be treated as if they have blank walls facing the street and must comply with the guidelines under the section 'Treating Blank Walls'. That portion of Ground level spaces that opens up to the sidewalk through means of sliding or roll up doors shall be considered to comply with any transparency requirements regardless of the amount of glass in the opening.

Awnings are encouraged along pedestrian street fronts. They may be structural (permanently attached to and part of the building) or non-structural (attached to the building using a metal or other framework). To enhance the visibility of business signage retractable awnings are encouraged and should be open-sided. Front valances are permitted and signage is allowed on valances, but not on valance returns. Marquee, box, or convex awning shapes are not permitted. Awnings should be located within the building elements that frame storefronts, and should not conceal important architectural details. Awnings should also be hung just below a clerestory or "transom" window, if it exists. Awnings on a multiple-storefront building should be consistent in character, scale and position, but need not be identical. Non-structural awnings should be constructed using canvas or fire-resistant acrylic materials. Shiny, high-gloss materials are not appropriate; therefore, vinyl or plastic awning materials are not permitted. Structural Awnings



should be designed to incorporate natural light. Artificial lighting should only be used at night.

Signage should be designed to integrate with the building and street front. Combinations of sign types are encouraged which result in a coordinated design while minimizing the size of individual signs. Blade or projecting signs which include decorative frames, brackets or other design elements are encouraged. This type of detail is consistent with the design elements mentioned above that enhance the interest of the area. Use graphics or symbols to reduce the need to have large expanses of lettering. Signage in the “Arts Center Corridor” defined in the Comprehensive Plan is required to include decorative sign frames or brackets in its design.

Instead of broadly lighting the face of the sign, signage should be indirectly lit, or backlit to only display lettering and symbols or graphic design. Signage should be given special consideration when it is consistent with or contributes to the historic character of sites on the National Register or the Edmonds Register of Historic Places



A-5: Respect for Adjacent Sites

Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.

Explanation and Examples

One consideration is the views from upper stories of new buildings into adjacent houses or yards, especially in less intensive zones. This problem can be addressed in several ways.

- Reduce the number of windows and decks on the proposed building overlooking the neighbors.
- Step back the upper floors or increase the side or rear setback so that window areas are farther from the property line.
- Take advantage of site design which might reduce impacts, for example by using adjacent ground floor area for an entry court.
- Minimize windows to living spaces which might infringe on the privacy of adjacent residents, but consider comfort of residents in the new building.
- Stagger windows to not align with adjacent windows.



A-6: Transition Between Residence and Street

For residential projects, the space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.

Explanation and Examples

The transition between a residential building and the street varies with the depth of the front setback and the relative elevation of the building to the street.



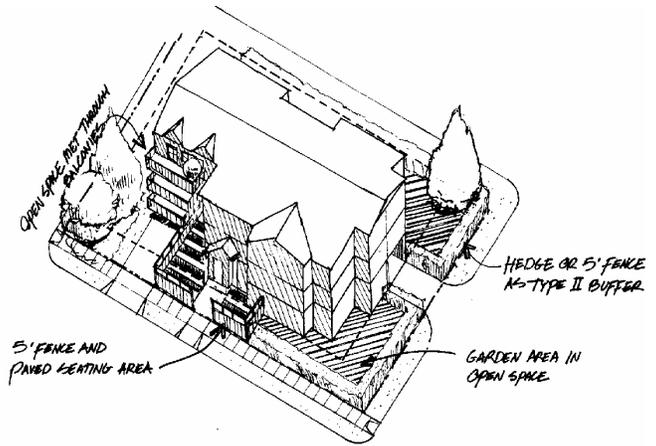
A-7: Residential Open Space

Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space.

Examples and Explanations

Residential buildings are encouraged to consider these site planning elements:

- Courtyards which organize architectural elements, while providing a common garden or other uses.
- Entry enhancement such as landscaping along a common pathway.



A-8: Parking and Vehicle Access

Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and pedestrian safety.

Explanation and Examples

Techniques used to minimize the impacts of driveways and parking lots include:

- Locate surface parking at rear or side lots.
- Break large parking lots into smaller ones.
- Minimize number and width of driveways and curb cuts.
- Share driveways with adjacent property owners.
- Locate parking in lower level or less visible portions of site.
- Locate driveways so they are visually less dominant.



Access should be provided in the following order of priority:

- i) If there is an alley, vehicular access should use the alley. Where feasible, the exit route should use the alley.

- ii) For corner parcels, access should be off the secondary street rather than the primary street.
- iii) Share the driveway with an adjacent property. This can be a driveway with two-way traffic.
- iv) A driveway serving a single project is the least preferred option.

Drive-through facilities such as, but not limited to, banks, cleaners, fast food, drug stores, espresso stands, etc., should comply with the following:

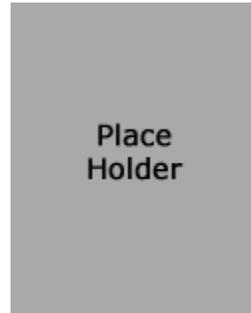
- i) Drive-through windows and stacking lanes shall not be located along the facades of the building that face a street.
- ii) Drive-through speakers shall not be audible off-site.
- iii) The entrance and exit from the drive-through shall be internal to the site, not a separate entrance and/or exit to or from the street.

A-9: Location of Parking on Commercial Street Fronts

Parking on a commercial street front should be minimized and where possible should be located behind a building.

Explanation and Examples

Parking located along a commercial street front where pedestrian traffic is desirable lessens the attractiveness of the area to pedestrians and compromises the safety of pedestrians along the street.



A-10: Corner Lots

Building on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

Explanation and Examples

Corner lots offer unique opportunities because of their visibility and access from two streets.



B-1: Bulk, and Scale Compatibility

Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.



Explanation and Examples

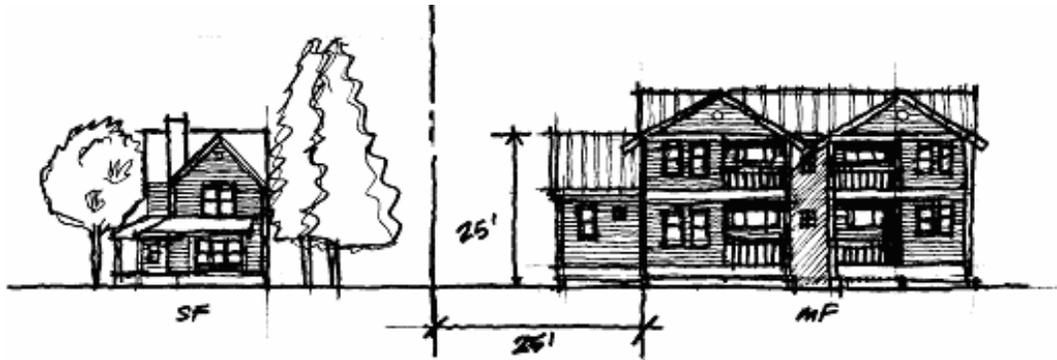
For projects undergoing Design Review, the analysis and mitigation of bulk and scale impacts will be accomplished through the Design Review process. Careful siting and design treatment based on the technique described in this and other design guidelines will help to mitigate some bulk and scale impacts; in other cases, actual reduction in the bulk and scale of a project may be necessary to adequately mitigate impacts. Design Review should not result in significant reductions in a project's actual bulk and scale.

Bulk and scale mitigation may be required in two general circumstances:

1. Projects on or near the edge of a less intensive zone. A substantial incompatibility in scale may result from different development standards in the two zones and may be compounded by physical factors such as large development sites, slopes or lot orientation.
2. Projects proposed on sites with unusual physical characteristics such as large lot size, or unusual shape, or topography where buildings may appear substantially greater in bulk and scale than that generally anticipated for the area.

Factors to consider in analyzing potential bulk and scale impacts include:

- distance from the edge of a less intensive zone
- differences in development standards between abutting zones (allowable building width, lot coverage, etc.)
- effect of site size and shape
- bulk and scale relationships resulting from lot orientation (e.g. back lot line to back lot line vs. back lot line to side lot line)
- type and amount of separation between lots in the different zones (e.g. separation by only a property line, by an alley or street, or by other physical features such as grade changes).



In some cases, careful siting and design treatment may be sufficient to achieve reasonable transition and mitigation of bulk and scale impacts. Some techniques for achieving compatibility are as follows:

- use of architectural style, details (such as roof lines or fenestration), color or materials that derive from the less intensive zone. (See also Guideline C-1: Architectural Context.)
- creative use of landscaping or other screening
- location of features on-site to facilitate transition, such as locating required open space on the zone edge so the building is farther from the lower intensity zone.
- treating topographic conditions in ways that minimize impacts on neighboring development, such as by using a rockery rather than a retaining wall to give a more human scale to a project, or stepping a project down a hillside.
- in a mixed-use project, siting the more compatible use near the zone edge.

In some cases, reductions in the actual bulk and scale of the proposed structure may be necessary in order to mitigate adverse impacts and achieve an acceptable level of compatibility. Some techniques which can be used in these cases include:

- articulating the building's facades vertically or horizontally in intervals that conform to existing structures or platting pattern.
- increasing building setbacks from the zone edge at ground level
- reducing the bulk of the building's upper floors
- limiting the length of, or otherwise modifying, facades
- reducing the height of the structure
- reducing the number or size of accessory structures.

C-1: Architectural Context

New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.

Explanation and Examples

Paying attention to architectural characteristics of surrounding buildings, especially historic buildings, can help new buildings be more compatible with their neighbors, especially if a consistent pattern is already established by similar:



- building articulation
- building scale and proportion
- or complementary architectural style
- or complementary roof forms
- building details and fenestration patterns
- or complementary materials

Even where there is no consistent architectural pattern, building design and massing can be used to complement certain physical conditions of existing development.

In some cases, the existing context is not so well-defined, or may be undesirable. In such cases, a new project can become a pioneer with the opportunity to establish a pattern or identity from which future development can take its cues.

In most cases, especially in the downtown commercial area, Buildings shall convey a visually distinct 'base' and 'top'. A 'base' can be emphasized by a different masonry pattern, more architectural detail, visible 'plinth' above which the wall rises, storefront, canopies, or a combination. The top edge is highlighted by a prominent cornice, projecting parapet or other architectural element that creates a shadow line.

Architectural Features

Below are several methods that can help integrate new buildings into the surrounding architectural context, using compatible:

- architectural features
- fenestration patterns, and
- building proportions.

Building Articulation

Below are several methods in which buildings may be articulated to create intervals which reflect and promote compatibility with their surroundings:

- modulating the facade by stepping back or extending forward a portion of the facade
- repeating the window patterns at an interval that equals the articulation interval
- providing a porch, patio, deck or covered entry for each interval
- providing a balcony or bay window for each interval
- changing the roofline by alternating dormers, stepped roofs, gables or other roof elements to reinforce the modulation or articulation interval
- changing the materials with a change in the building plane
- providing a lighting fixture, trellis, tree or other landscape feature with each interval

C-2: Architectural Concept and Consistency

Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept.

Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building.

In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.

Explanation and Examples

This guideline focuses on the important design consideration of organizing the many

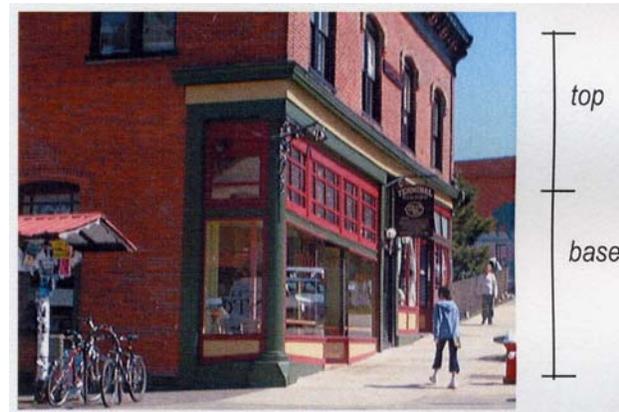
architectural elements of a building into a unified whole, so that details and features can be seen to relate to the structure and not appear as add-ons.

The other objective of this guideline is to promote buildings whose form is derived from its function. Buildings which present few or no clues through their design as to what purpose they serve are often awkward architectural neighbors. For example, use of expansive blank walls, extensive use of metal or glass siding, or extremely large or small windows in a residential project may create architectural confusion or disharmony with its neighbors. Conversely, commercial buildings which overly mimic residential styles might be considered inappropriate in some commercial neighborhoods.



Often times, from an architectural design perspective buildings will convey a visually distinct 'base' and 'top'. A 'base' can be emphasized by a different masonry pattern, more architectural detail, visible 'plinth' above which the wall rises, storefront, canopies, or a combination. The top edge is highlighted by a prominent cornice, projecting parapet or other architectural element that creates a shadow line. Other architectural features included in the design of a building may include any number of the following:

- building modulation or articulation
- bay windows
- corner accent, such as a turret
- garden or courtyard elements (such as a fountain or gazebo)
- rooflines
- building entries
- building base



Architectural details may include some of the following:

- treatment of masonry (such as ceramic tile inlay, paving stones, or alternating brick patterns)
- treatment of siding (such as wood siding combined with shingles to differentiate floors)
- articulation of columns
- sculpture or art work
- architectural lighting
- detailed grilles and railings
- special trim details and moldings
- a trellis or arbor



C-3: Human Scale

The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements and details to achieve a good human scale.

Explanation and Examples

The term "human scale" generally refers to the use of human-proportioned architectural features and site design elements clearly oriented to human activity.

A building has a good human scale if its details, elements and materials allow people to feel comfortable using and approaching it. Features that give a building human scale also encourage human activity.

The following are some of the building elements that may be used to achieve better human scale:

- pedestrian-oriented open space such as a courtyard, garden, patio, or other unified landscaped areas
- bay windows extending out from the building face that reflect an internal space such as a room or alcove
- individual windows in upper stories that
 - are approximately the size and proportion of a traditional window
 - include a trim or molding that appears substantial from the sidewalk
 - are separated from adjacent windows by a vertical element
- windows grouped together to form larger areas of glazing can have a human scale if individual window units are separated by moldings or jambs
- windows with small multiple panes of glass
- window patterns, building articulation and other treatments that help to identify individual residential units in a multi-family building
- upper story setbacks
- a porch or covered entry
- pedestrian weather protection in the form of canopies, awnings, arcades or other elements wide enough to protect at least one person
- visible chimneys



C-4: Exterior Finish Materials

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.

Explanation and Examples

The selection and use of exterior materials is a key ingredient in determining how a building will look. Some materials, by their nature, can give a sense of permanence or can provide texture or scale that helps new buildings fit better in their surroundings.

Materials typical to the northwest include:



- clear or painted wood siding
- shingles
- brick
- stone
- ceramic and terra-cotta tile

Many other exterior building materials may be appropriate in multifamily and commercial neighborhoods as long as the materials are appropriately detailed and finished, for instance, to take account of the northwest's climate or be compatible with nearby structures. Some materials, such as mirrored glass, may be more difficult to integrate into residential or neighborhood commercial settings.

D-1: Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrance

Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.



Explanation and Examples

If a building is set back from the sidewalk, the space between the building and public right-of-way may be conducive to pedestrian or resident activity. In business districts where pedestrian activity is desired, the primary function of any open space between commercial buildings and the sidewalk is to provide visual and physical access into the building and perhaps also to provide a space for additional outdoor activities such as vending, resting, sitting or dining. Street fronts can also feature art work, street furniture and landscaping that invite customers or enhance the building's setting.

Where a commercial or mixed-use building is set back from the sidewalk a sufficient distance, pedestrian enhancements should be considered in the resulting street front.

Examples of desirable features to include:

- visual and pedestrian access (including barrier-free access) into the site from the public sidewalk
- walking surfaces of attractive pavers
- pedestrian-scaled site lighting
- areas for vendors in commercial areas
- landscaping that screens undesirable elements or that enhances the space and architecture
- signage which identifies uses and shops clearly but which is scaled to the pedestrian
- site furniture, artwork or amenities such as fountains, benches, pergolas, kiosks, etc.

Examples of features to avoid are:

- asphalt or gravel pavement
- adjacent unscreened parking lots
- adjacent chain-link fences
- adjacent blank walls without appropriate screening

The following treatment of entrances can provide emphasis and interest:

- special detailing or architectural features such as ornamental glazing, railings and balustrades, awnings, canopies, decorative pavement, decorative lighting, seats, architectural molding, planter boxes, trellises, artwork signs, or other elements near the doorway.
- visible signage identifying building address
- Higher bay(s)
- Recessed entry (recessed at least 3 feet)
- Forecourt

D-2: Blank Walls – See pages 8-9 from guidelines blank walls

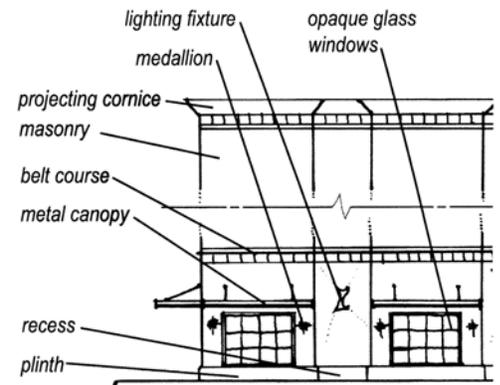
Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.

Explanation and Examples

A wall may be considered "large" if it has a blank surface substantially greater in size than similar walls of neighboring buildings.

The following examples are possible methods for treating blank walls:

- installing vertical trellis in front of the wall with climbing vines or plants materials
- setting the wall back and providing a landscaped or raised planter bed in front of the wall, including plant materials that could grow to obscure or screen the wall's surface
- providing art (mosaic, mural, decorative masonry pattern, sculpture, relief, etc.) over a substantial portion of the blank wall surface
- employing small setbacks, indentations, or other means of breaking up the wall's surface
- providing special lighting, a canopy, horizontal trellis or other pedestrian-oriented features that break up the size of the blank wall's surface and add visual interest
- An architectural element not listed above, as approved, that meets the intent



Blank walls shall be treated with architectural elements to provide visual interest.

D-3: Retaining Walls

Retaining walls near a public sidewalk that extend higher than eye level should be avoided where possible. Where higher retaining walls are unavoidable, they should be designed to reduce their impact on pedestrian comfort and to increase the visual interest along the streetscapes.



Explanation and Examples

The following are examples of methods to treat retaining walls:

- any of the techniques or features listed under blank walls above
- terracing and landscaping the retaining walls
- substituting a stone wall, rockery, modular masonry, or special material
- locating hanging plant materials below or above the wall

D-4: Design of Parking Lots Near Sidewalks

Parking lots near sidewalks should provide adequate security and lighting, avoid encroachment of vehicles onto the sidewalk, and minimize the visual clutter of parking lot signs and equipment.



Explanation and Examples

The following examples illustrate some considerations to address in highly visible parking lots:

Treatment of parking area perimeter

- the edges of parking lots pavement adjacent to landscaped areas and other pavement can be unsightly and difficult to maintain. Providing a curb at the perimeter of parking areas can alleviate these problems.

Security lighting

- provide the appropriate levels of lighting to create adequate visibility at night. Evenly distributed lighting increases security, and glare-free lighting reduces impacts on nearby property.

Encroachment of cars onto the sidewalk

- without wheel stops or a low wall, parked cars can hang over sidewalks. One technique to protect landscaped and pedestrian areas from encroachment by parked cars is to provide a wide wheel stop about two feet from the sidewalk. Another technique is to widen a sidewalk or planting bed basically “building in” a wheel stop into the sidewalk or planting bed. This is more durable than wheel stops, does not catch debris and reduces tripping hazards.

Signs and equipment

- reduce sign clutter by painting markings on the pavement or by consolidating signs. Provide storage that is out of view from the sidewalk and adjacent properties for moveable or temporary equipment like sawhorses or barrels.

Screening of parking

- screening of parking areas need not be uniform along the property frontage. Variety in the type and relative amount of screening may be appropriate.
- screen walls constructed of durable, attractive materials need not extend above waist level. Screen walls across a street or adjacent to a residential zone could also include landscaping or a trellis or grillwork with climbing vines.
- screening can be designed to provide clear visibility into parking areas to promote personal safety.

D-5: Visual Impacts of Parking Structures

The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.



Explanation and Examples

The following examples illustrate various methods of improving the appearance of at-grade parking structures:

- incorporating pedestrian-oriented uses at street level can reduce the visual impact of parking structures in commercial areas. Sometimes a depth of only 10 feet along the front of the building is enough to provide space for newsstands, ticket booths, flower shops and other viable uses.
- setting the parking structure back from the sidewalk and installing dense landscaping
- incorporating any of the blank wall treatments listed in Guideline D-2
- visually integrating the parking structure with adjacent buildings
- continuing a frieze, cornice, canopy, overhang, trellis or other devices at the top of the parking level
- incorporating into the parking structure a well-lit pedestrian walkway, stairway or ramp from the sidewalk to the upper level of the building
- setting back a portion of the parking structure to allow for the retention of an existing significant tree
- using a portion of the top of the parking level as an outdoor deck, patio or garden with a rail, bench or other guard device around the perimeter

D-6: Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas

Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.



Explanation and Examples

Unightly service elements can detract from the compatibility of new projects and create hazards for pedestrians and autos.

The following examples illustrate considerations to address in locating and screening service areas and utilities:

- plan the feature in a less visible location on the site
- screen it to be less visible. For example, a utility meter can be located behind a screen wall so that it is not visible from the building entrance.
- use durable materials that complement the building
- incorporate landscaping to make the screen more effective
- locate the opening to the area away from the sidewalk.

- incorporate roof wells, utility rooms or other features to accommodate utility and mechanical equipment needs.

D-7: Personal Safety and Security

Project design should consider opportunities for enhancing personal safety and security in the environment under review.

Explanation and Examples

Project design should be reviewed for its contribution to enhancing the real and perceived feeling of personal safety and security within the environment under review. To do this, the question needs to be answered: do the design elements detract from or do they reinforce feelings of security of the residents, workers, shoppers and visitors who enter the area?

Techniques that can help promote safety include the following:

- providing adequate lighting
- retaining clear lines of site
- use of semi-transparent security screening, rather than opaque walls, where appropriate
- avoiding blank, windowless walls that attract graffiti and that do not permit residents or workers to observe the street
- use of landscaping that maintains visibility, such as short shrubs and pruning trees, so there are no branches below head height
- creative use of ornamental grille as fencing or over ground floor windows in some locations
- absence of structures that provide hiding places for criminal activity
- design of parking areas to allow natural surveillance by maintaining clear lines of sight both for those who park there and for occupants of nearby buildings
- clear directional signage
- encouraging "eyes on the street" through placement of windows, balconies and street-level uses
- ensuring natural surveillance of children's play areas.



E-1: Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites

Where possible, and where there is not another overriding concern, landscaping should reinforce the character of neighboring properties and abutting streetscape.

Explanation and Examples

Several ways to reinforce the landscape design character of the local neighborhood are listed below:

- Street Trees
If a street has a uniform planting of street trees, or a distinctive species, plant street trees that match the planting pattern or species.



- **Similar Plant Materials**
When many lots on a block feature similar landscape materials, emphasis on these materials will help a new project fit into the local context.
- **Similar construction materials, textures, colors or elements**
Extending a low brick wall, using paving similar to a neighbor's or employing similar stairway construction are ways to achieve design continuity.

E-2: Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site

Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, approach, screen walls, planters, site furniture and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.



Examples

Landscape enhancements of the site may include some of the approaches or features listed below:

- Soften the form of the building by screening blank walls, terracing retaining walls, etc.
- Increase privacy and security through screening and/or shading.
- Provide a framework such as a trellis or arbor for plants to grow on.
- Incorporate a planter guard or low planter wall as part of the architecture.
- Distinctively landscape open areas created by building modulation.
- Incorporate upper story planter boxes or roof planters.
- Include a special feature such as a courtyard, fountain or pool.
- Emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting.
- Screen a building from view by its neighbors, or an existing use from the new building.

E-3: Landscape Design to Address Special Site Conditions

The landscape design should take advantage of special on-site conditions such as high-bank front yards, steep slopes, view corridors, or existing significant trees and off-site conditions such as greenbelts, ravines, natural areas, and boulevards.



Explanation and Examples

The following conditions may merit special attention. The examples suggest some ways to address the issue.

High Bank Front Yard

Where the building's ground floor is elevated above a sidewalk pedestrian's eye level, landscaping can help make the transition between grades. Several techniques are listed below.

- rockeries with floral displays, live ground cover or shrubs.
- terraces with floral displays, ground covers or shrubs.
- low retaining walls with raised planting strips.
- stone or brick masonry walls with vines or shrubs.

Barrier-free Access

Where wheelchair ramps must be provided on a street front, the ramp structure

might include a planting strip on the sidewalk side of the elevated portions of the ramp.

Steep Topography

Special plantings or erosion control measures may be necessary to prevent site destabilization or to enhance the visual qualities of the site in connection with a neighborhood improvement program.

Boulevards

Incorporate landscaping which reflects and reinforces .

Greenbelt or Other Natural Setting

- Minimize the removal of significant trees.
- Replace trees that were removed with new trees.
- Emphasize naturalizing or native landscape materials.
- Retain natural greenbelt vegetation that contributes to greenbelt preservation.
- Select colors that are more appropriate to the natural setting.

On-site Vegetation

- Retain significant vegetation where possible.
- Use new plantings similar to vegetation removed during construction, when that vegetation as distinctive.