

SWARTZ CREEK

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# DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

For the City of Swartz Creek

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# I. INTRODUCTION

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The Design Guidelines for the Swartz Creek Downtown are intended to promote the City's set of expectations for building design. The design and construction of both new buildings and existing buildings should follow these standards to ensure that Downtown Swartz Creek encapsulates a vibrant, walkable charm while blending new buildings into the fabric of the existing character. The intent of these Design Guidelines is to support the strategic vision of the City of Swartz Creek Master Plan.

# DESIGN GUIDELINES OVERVIEW

## GENERAL PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

- Ensure new mixed-use development downtown is consistent with the vision of the City of Swartz Creek Master Plan
- Encourage physical improvements in a "traditional Main Street" design
- Provide building design and placement standards for the Downtown PUD zoning

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Promote an authentic, vibrant community
- Encourage a walkable, engaging street edge
- Preserve historic structures while promoting compatible infill
- Draw upon local design traditions
- Ensure quality building materials endure over time
- Improve and reinforce quality building design, upkeep, and renovation that draws visual appeal and interest
- Connect buildings to public space through building form and public space urban design standards

## APPLICABILITY OF DESIGN GUIDELINES



The Downtown PUD Overlay applies to the area designated at left.

Future expansion of the boundary may extend to transitions along Miller and Morrish Roads once the downtown core is redeveloped.

The Downtown Storefront Frontage (orange dotted line) applies to properties within the Downtown PUD Overlay fronting Miller Road. Other properties within the Downtown PUD Overlay may redevelop as storefronts but may also redevelop as attached residential frontages.

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## II. COMMERCIAL/MIXED-USE BUILDING DESIGN

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These commercial/mixed-use building guidelines particularly apply to the Downtown Storefront Frontage along Miller Road.

# FAÇADE COMPOSITION

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## DEFINITION

The façade is the portion of the building facing the street. **Façade Composition** is the way the face of the building is organized. A good façade composition is naturally pleasing to the eye and creates a welcoming, walkable pedestrian experience.

## OBJECTIVE

Create a comfortable and enticing street frontage. Employ strong hierarchy or organization of the building elements to shape a pleasing façade composition that resembles traditional "main street" scaling.



Elements of Façade Composition:

- A** Defined base
- B** Grid-like organization
- C** Defined middle and top
- D** Consistent scaling of windows and patterns compatible with neighboring buildings

Buildings fronting Miller Road in the Downtown Storefront Frontage area are required to be a minimum of two stories.



# FAÇADE COMPOSITION

## STRATEGIES

Apply some of these tips to achieve a balanced, welcoming façade:

- Align common elements along the street where a distinct alignment pattern already exists
- Retain the historic integrity of the façade
- Orient commercial building's active uses and entrances to the street, thus strengthening the street wall and ensuring a district character of active, pedestrian-oriented streets
- Break up building massing with elements such as projecting tray windows, projecting eaves and landscaping

## DEFINE THE TERM:

- **Building Massing** refers to the perception of the general form as well as the size and volume of a building.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Splitting the building into two even portions, base and top with no middle. This makes a building feel short, disproportionate and unwelcoming
- Long expanses of one material type, either vertically or horizontally
- Using too many different materials



TOP

MIDDLE

BASE

Expression lines create a vertical articulation of base, middle, and top of a façade



Buildings are organized into horizontally repeated modules to reflect traditional building and lot widths

# DESIGN THE BASE: GROUND FLOOR DESIGN

## OBJECTIVE

The building base - most typically the ground floor - should create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere through transparency, materials, and scale. Ground floor storefronts should be composed of a mix of glass and traditional high quality building materials. The ground floor design includes the street face of the building from the sidewalk to the level of the second floor. This includes storefronts and entrances, entrances to upper levels, awnings and canopies. Ground floor design considers materials, proportions, and placement of building elements.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Promote vertically proportioned windows in which the sills are not higher than 3-feet from the ground
2. Provide a high percentage of transparent glass on the ground floor to engage pedestrians along the sidewalk and provide window displays.
3. Use spandrel glass, shadow box, or window film only above the datum of the door height to conceal ceilings.
4. Clearly define the main entrance with a change in material or color, trim, canopy or awning, or a door yard recess.
5. Select materials that will withstand the elements and interaction over time.

## Large Buildings

6. Use a complimentary material for the building base to differentiate from the upper floors.
7. Pay special attention to corners where the building fronts two streets.

### RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

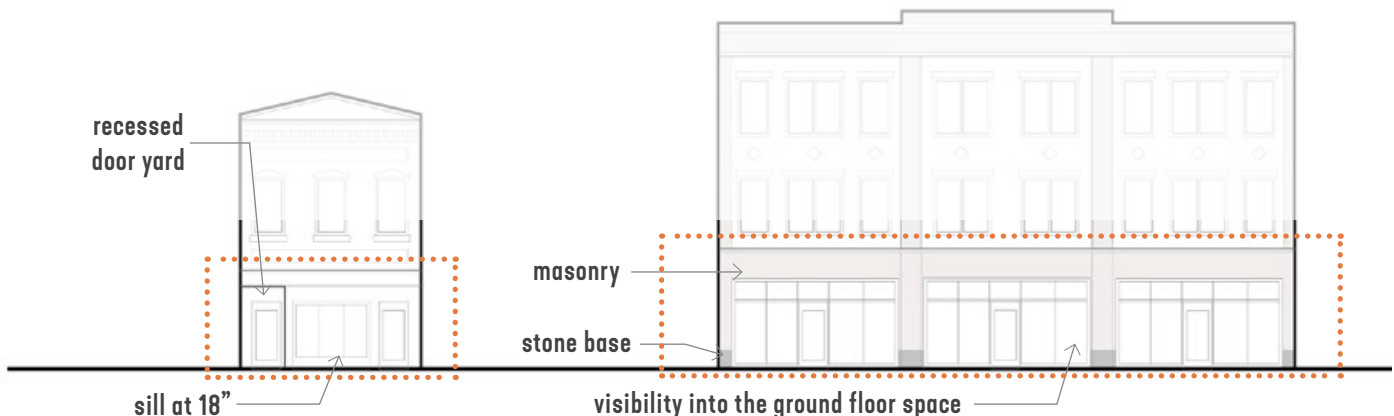
- Stone, brick, glass

### COMPLETE THE PALETTE

- Use contrasting materials to accent storefronts, bays, windows, and doors
- Ground floors shall consist of a minimum 70% windows and doors

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Do not try to screen interior seating by creating a higher sill. This creates awkward proportions and is unwelcoming to passers-by
- Avoid long blank walls without openings or architectural features
- Do not block vision into the ground floor with posters or display cases. A minimum of 80% of the window area shall allow view into the building for a depth of 12' minimum





# DESIGN THE BASE: GROUND FLOOR DESIGN



# DESIGN THE MIDDLE: UPPER FLOOR DESIGN

## OBJECTIVE

The upper floors of a building should have a consistency and regularity that contribute to a harmonic streetscape. From the street, one's eye is naturally drawn to the activated and transparent base of the building, and to the top where the cornice line crowns the building. The upper floors should be harmonious with the overall building and streetscape and act as a background against which life happens.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

1. Size and place windows consistently.
2. Use the same color mullions and framing on windows in the upper floors as in the ground floor.
3. Maintain a continuous rhythm of windows in bays, aligned with the building base.
4. Orient windows vertically.
5. Provide at least 25% windows of the upper story façade (50% preferred).
6. Group windows together to create larger contiguous openings.
7. Double hung or picture windows are preferred to casement.

## Small Buildings

8. Space windows across the façade evenly or symmetrically.

## Large Buildings

9. Stick to a few different groupings of window sizes/types used strategically along the façade.
10. Group elements such as balconies to emphasize façade composition.

## THINGS TO AVOID

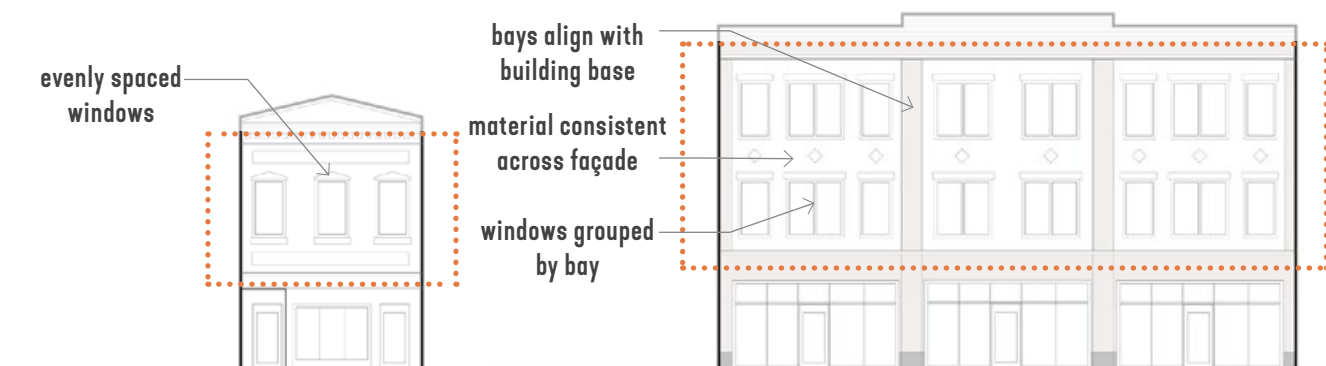
- Avoid continuous ribbon windows (windows that are horizontally cut across entire façades)
- Do not change the configuration, shape, or proportion of openings in existing façades
- Do not use heavily tinted, highly reflective, or otherwise incompatible glass finishes
- Limit the different size

## RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

- Stone, brick, or terra cotta
- Architectural Metal Panel
- Siding/stucco (accent materials & residential uses only)

## COMPLETE THE PALETTE

- Use contrasting materials as window head or sill, and architectural details
- Materials should be compatible in appearance from ground floor to cornice





# DESIGN THE BASE: UPPER FLOOR DESIGN



Upper floors are divided into a set of vertical bays through shifts in plane and accompanying material changes.



Repetition and order create a harmonious, balanced upper floor design on this building. Materials create accent and detail within a consistent palette.

# DESIGN THE TOP: CORNICES + PARAPETS

## OBJECTIVE

The cornice is a horizontal architectural elements that creates an intentional cap to a building as a decorative feature. The parapet is a short wall that extends above the roof serving a practical function to hide rooftop mechanical equipment. A cornice may cover the entire parapet, overlap its top or base, or encompass the entire top occupied floor of a building. Together, the cornice and parapet are the final factors defining building scale and proportion. As the building element most visible from a distance, the cornice sets the tone for a building.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

1. Use a cornice to capture vertical bays and architectural detail.
2. Maintain a consistent cornice across the length of the building.
3. The cornice should be proportional to the overall building massing, relative the scale of other openings and compositional elements, like the base.
4. Repeat similar elements from the base definition to the top definition, such as dentils, a frieze, or the same accent material.

## Small Buildings

5. Continue the primary building material through the top and use a band of accent material to make a distinct cornice.

## Large Buildings

6. Include the entire top occupied floor in the building top; use a change in materials to emphasize a change in composition of the building mass.

## THINGS TO AVOID

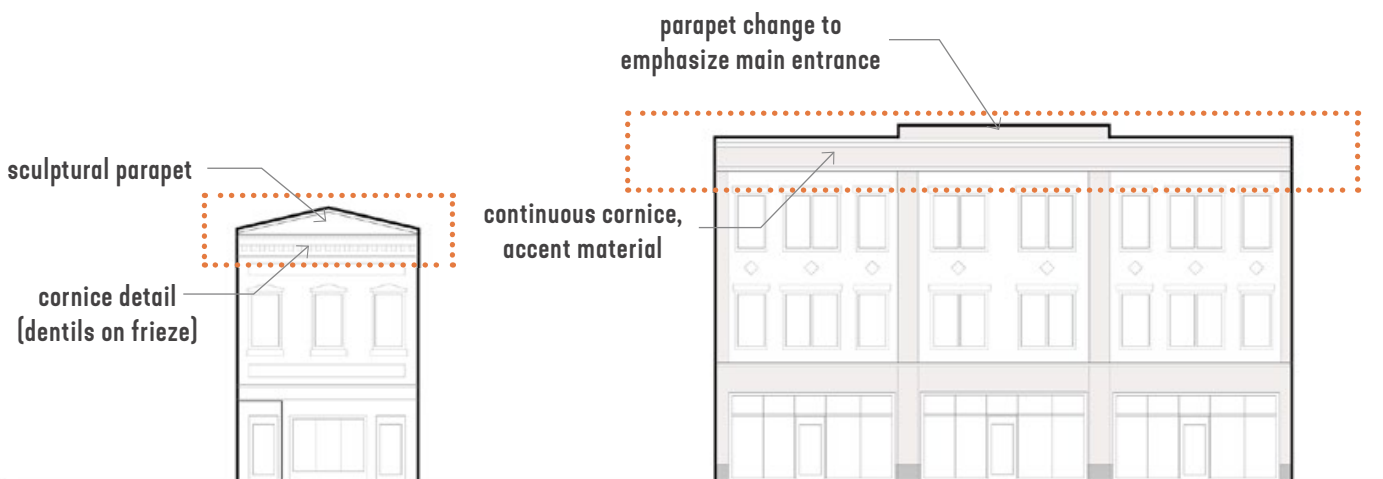
- Any change in parapet height should accompany a change in plan or accent the main entry
- Functional sheet metal flashing is not an acceptable substitute for a cornice

## RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

- Stone, brick, or terra cotta
- Architectural Metal Panel

## COMPLETE THE PALETTE

- Use an accent material for the entire building top, or as a distinctive band
- Materials should be compatible in appearance from ground floor to cornice





# DESIGN THE BASE: CORNICICES + PARAPETS



No matter how many stories a building is, a definitive cap at the top frames the façade.





# ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

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## DEFINITION

**Architectural Details** are features on the building that do not relate to its function, but contribute material texture and visual interest to buildings. They reflect the period when the building was constructed and connect an entire building to the human scale. Architectural details may also be referred to as *embellishment* or *ornament*.

## OBJECTIVE

Provide layers of visual interest at different distances near to the building. Relate the building to the human scale and historical context. Retain architectural details original to historical structures and introduce complimentary details in new construction.





# ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

## STRATEGIES

- Retain, rehabilitate, or restore detail elements on historical buildings such as cornices, window and door trim, columns, piers, and carved detail work.
- Use design features such as columns, moldings, and cornices to define façades into distinct building modules or bays.
- Repair deteriorated historic features and replace only those elements that cannot be repaired.
- Detail building façades with architectural features such as windows, awnings, cornice work, belly bands, edge detailing, foundation wall and corner casings or other decorative features typical of building fronts.
- Replacement elements should be comparable in size, shape, texture, and finish
- Provide preventive maintenance such as rust removal, caulking, and repainting.
- Design new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new, while still compatible.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Removing or radically changing architectural details that define the historic character of the building
- Failing to treat causes of deterioration
- Using a substitute material for replacement that does not convey the visual appearance of the architectural detail or is physically incompatible
- Adding new architectural details which are not present in the character of the building or are incompatible in size, scale, material or color
- Covering significant architectural features with awnings, canopies or marquees
- Backlighting or internally illuminating awnings
- Visible side and rear elevations should have a finished quality consistent with the other elevations of the building and be well screened where appropriate



Examples of Architectural Detail:

- Ⓐ Cornice
- Ⓑ Lintel
- Ⓒ Brick coursing articulation
- Ⓓ Pilasters
- Ⓔ Transom
- Ⓕ Sill/kickplate

# BUILDING MATERIALS

## OBJECTIVE

Exterior building material selection determines the durability and architectural language and compatibility of a building. Building materials reflect the quality of architecture designed to withstand time, and attract and inspire residents and visitors. Material selection also reflects the style of building and traditional methods of building that generate a unique sense of place to a downtown.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

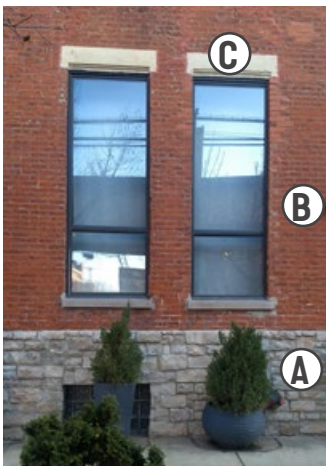
- Place materials that convey strength at the base of the building.
- Coordinate colors on the building wall, trim and moldings, cornice and parapet, signs, and primary entrance.
- Attention to detail and easily maintained, high-quality materials such as brick convey a message of good service and products.
- Use durable, high-quality building materials that have an appearance of permanence and substance, consistent with surrounding buildings. Brick, or stone is required, although other high-quality materials may

be considered by the Planning Commission.

- Design new building construction and renovations to have consistent massing and color with the desired scale and proportion of the business corridor or area.
- Use harmonious colors such as earth tones. Avoid bright tones except when used as accent tones.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Do not remove or cover an existing building façade with incompatible materials; restore the existing façade and celebrate historical character
- Avoid painting natural materials such as stone or brick
- Avoid low-quality or unfinished materials
- Do not sandblast or pressure wash without consulting a professional. These methods may damage a building in irreversible and expensive ways



Material Palette:

- Ⓐ Stone Base
- Ⓑ Brick
- Ⓒ Stone Lintel

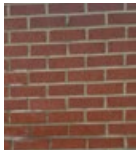
# BUILDING MATERIALS

Material	Building Type			
	Commercial, Mixed Use,		Multiple-Family Residential	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
<b>Masonry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Brick (natural, glazed)</li> <li>■ Stone (natural, synthetic)</li> <li>■ Terra Cotta</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X
<b>Concrete</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Cast-in-Place</li> <li>■ Precast</li> </ul>	X	X		
<b>Siding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Wood (natural, composite)</li> <li>■ Fiber Cement Board (e.g., Hardie Panel)</li> </ul>		X	X	X
<b>Stucco (upper floors only)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Traditional cementitious</li> <li>■ Synthetic EIFS</li> </ul>				X
<b>Architectural Metal Panel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Insulated metal panel</li> <li>■ Composite metal panel</li> </ul>		X		X

**Note:**

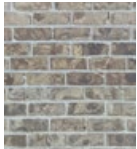
- Primary Materials must be used to compose a minimum of 75% of wall area of the building base and 50% of wall area for the upper floors.
- Secondary Materials are allowed to compose a maximum of 25% of wall area in the building base and 50% of wall area for the upper floors.

# BUILDING MATERIALS



## MASONRY

Masonry building materials include brick (natural, glazed, or painted), stone (natural and synthetic), and terra cotta. Masonry materials are preferred for their authenticity as traditional building materials and their durability.



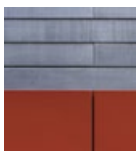
## SIDING

Siding is a common vernacular material in residential construction. Siding products include natural or composite wood, or cement fiber board such as Hardie Panel. Use of siding is not recommended outside of residential applications.



## STUCCO

Traditional stucco is a cement-based plaster for exterior application. Synthetic stucco and exterior insulation and finish system (EIFS) mimic the look of plaster with contemporary building products. Neither have the durability or quality for use beyond residential construction or in upper floor accents.



## ARCHITECTURAL METAL PANEL

Metal panel is a common contemporary building material. While popular, it does not have the natural texture, scale, and traditional authenticity of masonry materials and should be used as a secondary material.



synthetic stucco detail



metal

brick

## ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL, ACCENT & TRIM

Additional building materials may be a part of the palette for use in details, accent or trim. Wood and metal are traditionally found in storefronts within a masonry building. More contemporary materials such as glass fiber reinforced fiber cement or molded polyurethane may be used to create architectural details traditionally carved from wood or stone.



# MURALS

## OBJECTIVE

Murals in the downtown can create more vibrancy and interest for pedestrians and other users of the public right of-way. Incorporating public art into the built environment can transform common buildings and contribute to a unique sense of place. Public art helps to activate less intensely used areas and fosters care and investment in downtown.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

1. Involve local artists in the planning and implementation of murals in order to support and showcase the unique culture of Swartz Creek.
2. Limit murals to the sides of buildings in order to protect the cohesiveness of front building façades.
3. If the mural instillation is primarily for the purpose of advertising a particular brand or business and not in the common good and public interest, then it shall be treated as commercial signage and subject to the requirements of that section.
4. Murals should be maintained by the entity responsible for sponsoring the art. Public art should be maintained to consistently contribute to a vibrant downtown aesthetic.
5. Temporary murals are allowed.
6. Consider choosing a mural/artist that reflects the historic and cultural values of the community.



## THINGS TO AVOID

- Planning murals along façades with architectural features or fenestration that might disrupt the artwork



# SIGNS

## OBJECTIVE

Downtown **signs** should be scaled for the pedestrian and mounted on the building in the sign band area of the façade. Signs should relate to the architecture in material, shape, and color. All signs must meet the standards of the City of Swartz Creek Zoning and Sign Ordinances.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

1. The design and scale should complement the intended traditional "main street" character and pedestrian orientation envisioned for the downtown.
2. Restrict signage to the name of the business located on the site. Buildings with multiple tenants on secondary floors shall be limited to one sign per main floor tenant and one multi-tenant business directory listing.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Signs should not obstruct windows, views of the architectural details of the building, or pedestrian circulation
- Signs with flashing lights, digital displays, and other repetitive illumination. Electronic signs are only permitted as secondary signage to serve a message board function





# SIGNS

## BOARD SIGNS

Individual letters mounted to a board framed with a finished edge and mounted to a sign band area between the first and second floors above awnings.



## LETTER SIGNS

Individually mounted letters of metal, acrylic, or individually illuminated letters.



## PROJECTING SIGNS

Blade signs hung 90 degrees perpendicular to the façade from ornamental brackets.



# AWNINGS AND CANOPIES

## OBJECTIVE

**Awnings** and **Canopies** help define the street level for pedestrians, but most importantly provide shelter from the sun and rain for pedestrians and storefront window displays. They are intended to highlight entrances and windows and should generally line up with adjacent awnings and transom windows.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

1. Select 45-degree canvas awnings or horizontal canopies of glass, metal, or wood.
2. Size awnings to be visually contained within the framework of building elements or architectural details.
3. Retractable awnings are encouraged as an energy-efficient mechanism for managing light and air.
4. Replace shingled mansard-style awnings with straight-shed awnings.
5. Discourage areas for birds to linger.
6. Structural elements that support canopies shall be primed and painted, anodized, or powder-coated.

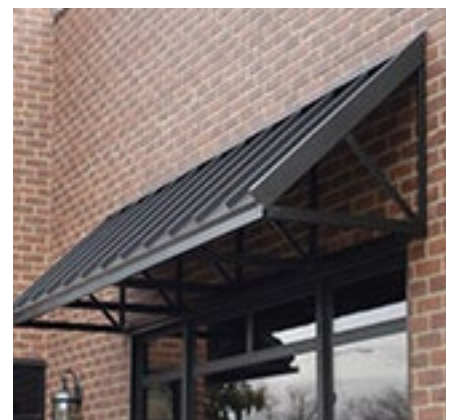
## THINGS TO AVOID

- Relying on the awning as primary signage
- Blocking too much of the window or sign band
- Odd shapes, bullnose, and bubble awnings are prohibited
- Post-supported canopies are not permitted
- Internal illumination is not permitted





# AWNINGS AND CANOPIES



# LIGHTING

## OBJECTIVE

Lighting is a prime consideration when creating a theme or “brand” for a district. It promotes activity, establishes a safe pedestrian environment and provides nighttime orientation.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

- Adequate lighting should be provided along roadways and within parking lots to ensure a safe environment.
- Lighting within commercial districts should be designed to minimize light spillage on adjacent residential areas.
- Install traditional lighting and traffic standards throughout the development to achieve design character consistency.
- Encourage decorative banners attached to streetlights to promote the district. Color selection and use should be consistent throughout and approved by the City.
- Light parking lots to ensure a safe environment. Lighting should be designed to minimize light spillage into adjacent residential areas.
- Design lighting levels to meet the minimum Illumination Engineering Society of North America lighting standards for commercial and residential area classifications, 3:1 average to minimum ratio with a maximum intensity of 10 foot candles.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Outlining windows or other features with LED rope lighting
- Back lit awnings
- Using lighting that moves, flashes, or makes noise
- Out of scale fixtures
- Aiming light into the eyes of pedestrians
- Halogen or other “cool” lighting





# LIGHTING



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### III. RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

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These residential building guidelines apply to areas in the Downtown PUD Overlay not included in the Downtown Storefront Frontage along Miller Road.

# INCREASING HOUSING CHOICES

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## OBJECTIVE

Careful consideration of design elements such as compatibility of architectural styles, desired density level, parking location and layout, treatment of the public realm, and relationship to the street will contribute to the success of the downtown. The quality of residential development will have a tremendous impact on the existing community and encourage further investment in neighborhoods. Single-family residential when mixed with urban housing types like townhouses and live/work units offer higher densities that attract commercial and retail uses. Living areas and the front door should be the dominant feature or point of emphasis on the street.

A key premise underpinning the downtown is the need to transition from an individual building project focus to neighborhood building focus, implying that individual developments should fit within, and at the same time enhance, their urban context. Development should be high quality, intermediate scale, and occur incrementally, allowing buildings and facilities to be integrated with, and contribute to, the surrounding community.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

- Construct a porch, stoop, or terrace at the front of all residential units to create a semi-private space that encourages interaction between neighbors.
- Provide landscaping, as described in the landscaping guidelines, to complement the building and present an attractive entrance for each residence.
- Install street trees and pedestrian light fixtures, as specified in landscaping and lighting sections of this document, at time of construction and maintain after occupation.
- Design of multiple family housing should be complementary to the scale and massing of a single-family home by using front porches, stoops and peaked rooflines.
- Proposed buildings should possess high quality design and building materials.
- Single-family residential, mixed with urban housing types like townhouses and live/work units offer higher densities that attract commercial and retail uses.

## GOAL

Residential architecture intended for the downtown should include a mix of traditional styles, consistent with the City's vision for the downtown and the site's context. Multiple family dwellings within the district rely on the continuity of well-defined architectural elements to establish strong street presence. However, each unit must be expressed so that the composition reads as the sum of the parts.

# MATERIALS AND DETAILS

## OBJECTIVE

Exterior building material selection determines the durability and architectural language and compatibility of a building. Building materials reflect the quality of architecture designed to withstand time, and attract and inspire residents and visitors. Material selection also reflects the style of building and traditional methods of building that generate a unique sense of place to a downtown.

## STRATEGIES

- Design new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new, while still compatible.
- Windows can have divided lights, but avoid snap-in grids.
- Articulation on side façades is encouraged.
- Because repetition is important to the composition of townhouses or flat type units, sufficient articulation of architectural elements on the primary façade of each unit is essential.
- Large windows on the front façade and the front door should be the dominant feature or point of emphasis on the street.
- See the materials chart on page 19.

## DEFINE THE TERM:

- **Articulation, horizontal.** The arrangement and proportion of façade materials and elements (windows, doors, columns, pilasters, and bays) into discreet bays.
- **Articulation, vertical.** A visual distinction between a buildings' base, middle, and top. A distinct and separated ground floor area is created through the use of a horizontal expression line, such as a string course, change in material or textures, awnings or canopies, or sign band between the first and second stories.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

- The use of materials should match the scale of the massing and the other architectural details. Fewer, high quality materials with a cohesive appearance are preferred over a large range of contrasting materials.
- Do not use vinyl siding as a primary building material. It may be used as a secondary or accent material.
- Limit exterior finish materials for the first floor on all sides of attached residential to primarily glass, brick (but not paneled brick), cut stone or cast stone.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Adding new architectural details which are not present in the character of the building or are incompatible in size, scale, material or color.
- Locating parking, garages, garage doors and dumpsters within street view.
- Placing models with similar architectural styles in a row on the same block.
- Do not paint natural materials such as stone or brick.
- Avoid low-quality or unfinished materials.

Material Palette:

- Ⓐ Stone Detail
- Ⓑ Brick
- Ⓒ Siding





# ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL BUILDING DESIGN

## OBJECTIVE

Attached residential buildings consist of structures that contain two or more dwelling units stacked or placed side by side with a shared or unit-level entry and access to the street. The buildings are appropriately scaled to blend with single-family neighborhoods or mixed-use/neighborhood commercial districts. Some higher density, live/work buildings may offer retail/commercial/office uses on the first floor.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

- Multi-units are typically 2-3 stories and may include garden level units where possible.
- Garages are usually attached and accessed from the back.
- Alley access or shared driveways are preferred.
- Encourage alignment of windows.
- Encourage private exterior space.
- Encourage balconies or large windows facing the street.
- Encourage slight variation in architectural details, material or color to differentiate units.





## IV. SITE DESIGN

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# STREETSCAPE

## OBJECTIVE

Streetscape improvements enhance right of way and help establish neighborhood/corridor identity. These improvements should be coordinated, flexible and adaptive.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

1. **Street Trees** - Trees and plantings should be located within the Amenity Zone to buffer pedestrians from automotive use, and provide shade and a sense of scale. Street trees can be used to alert drivers of residential areas and to slow speeds. Street trees should be large canopy trees that frame the street.
2. Incorporate **flexible** and **adaptive** street furnishings within the Amenity Zone such as light fixtures and outdoor seating that support and facilitate pedestrian access to commercial and mixed-use corridors. **(See Street Furnishings)**
3. Provide distinct **character and identity** with continuous street edge. Curb-cuts for vehicular access should be avoided entirely on destination commercial blocks.
4. Select high quality, durable furnishings. Preferred materials are **metals, finish grade woods, and sturdy recycled materials.**
5. Consider the dooryard as an extension of the right-of-way, creating a transition using **solid surface pavement treatment like brick strips.**



Transitional brick material within the frontage zone

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Incorporating non-linear streetscape clusters that disrupt pedestrian activity within the Walking Zone
- Streetscape clutter, such as too many sandwich board signs or other furnishings which might obscure the pedestrian flow and visual continuity

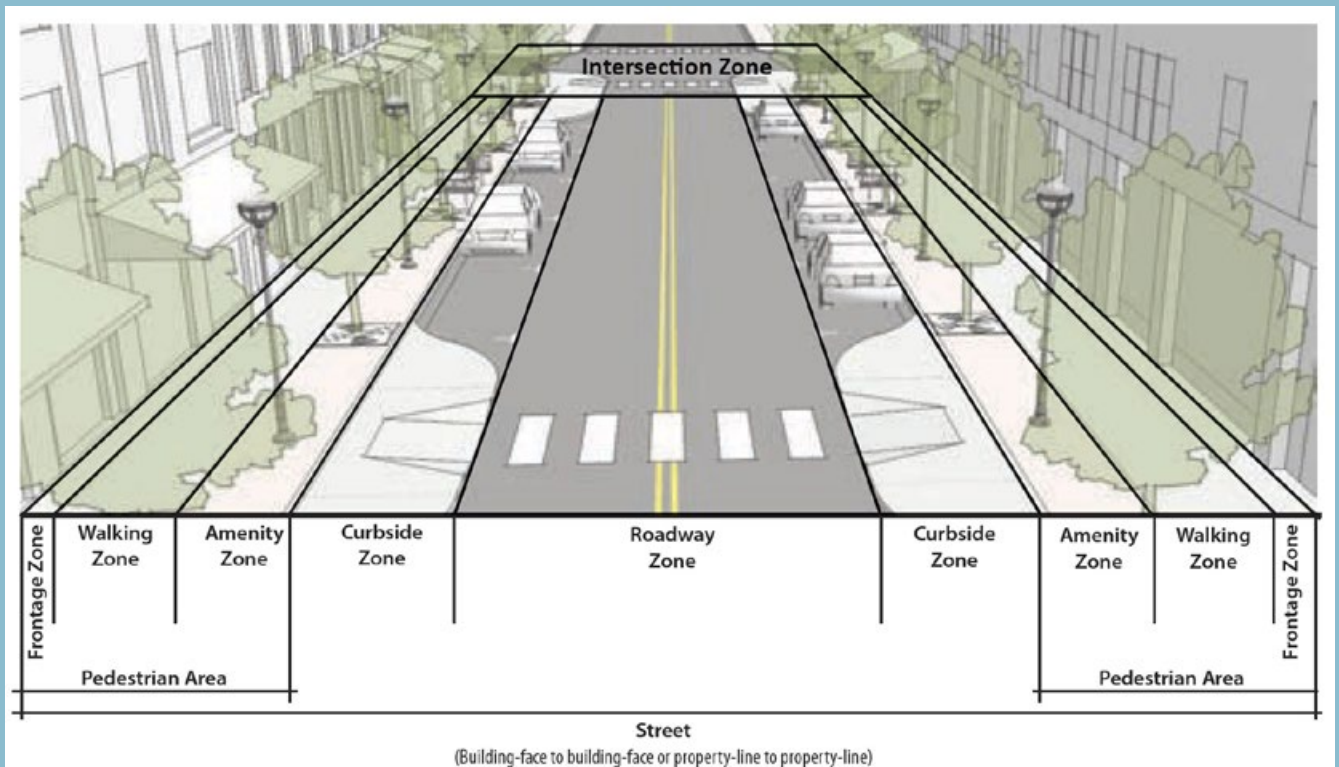
## DESIGN ELEMENT PRIORITIZATION

TYPICALLY REQUIRED DESIGN ELEMENTS
Sidewalks (minimum 6-8 foot Clear Walk Zone)
On-street parking (may convert some parking spaces to alternate uses, e.g. bike corrals or parklets)
Space for cafe dining and outdoor retail
Pedestrian scaled lighting
Street trees in tree pits or planters
Shared lanes or bicycle lanes
Short, frequent, well-marked crosswalks (with curb ramps)
TYPICALLY RECOMMENDED DESIGN ELEMENTS
Bicycle parking (racks or corrals)
Loading zones on street or on nearby streets
Frequent seating, benches, or seat-walls
Landscape planters that provide a pedestrian buffer
Bumpouts
Public art
Mid-block crossings
Wayfinding

# STREETSCAPE

## STREET ZONES

- **Roadway Zone:** Includes travel lanes for traffic including cars, transit, trucks, and bicycles.
- **Curbside Zone:** May include parking lanes, bumpouts, loading zones, and other uses adjacent to the curb.
- **The Pedestrian Area** extends from the curb to the face of the building and/or the edge of the right-of-way and encompasses the following three specific zones:
  - **Amenity Zone:** Between the curb and main sidewalk area, containing street furnishings, lighting, amenities, landscaping, and expanded pedestrian areas.
  - **Clear Walk Zone:** Primary through-travel zone for pedestrian foot traffic and where paved sidewalks are located.
  - **Frontage Zone:** Area between the sidewalk and building face. The frontage zone is typically a 2-foot clear zone immediately adjacent to buildings. Buildings in the Downtown Storefront Frontage along Miller road should be built no more than 10 feet from the right-of-way line.
- **Intersection Zone:** Area where streets intersection and location for crosswalks, traffic signals, and other controls.



# STREETSCAPE FURNISHINGS

## OBJECTIVE

Site furnishings such as benches, bike racks, tables and lighting should be included in the streetscape to further enhance the corridor and promote pedestrian activity. By providing places to stop, rest, wait for services, or discard trash, the pedestrian realm will remain clean and functionally available for all.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

- Receptacles, planters, benches, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other such amenities should be strategically placed throughout the district.
- Place site furnishings within the Amenity Zone or Frontage Zone
- Ideally, seating should be placed below street trees or other shading elements.
- A 3-foot minimum clear zone shall be provided to the sides and front of the seat to provide ADA accessibility and clearance for wheelchairs.
- Provide a mixture of seating types, where multiple street furnishings are used in close proximity, to accommodate different user needs. Include both backed and backless bench seating and seating both with and without armrests.
- Seating can be integrated into building façades or other site elements.
- Bicycle racks shall be finished in black or the same color as other site furnishings and should be provided near building entrances

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Non-enclosed receptacles that collect rain, snow and other precipitation
- Placing site furnishings within the pedestrian walkway, blocking major pedestrian movements, building entries, loading zones or other street functions.

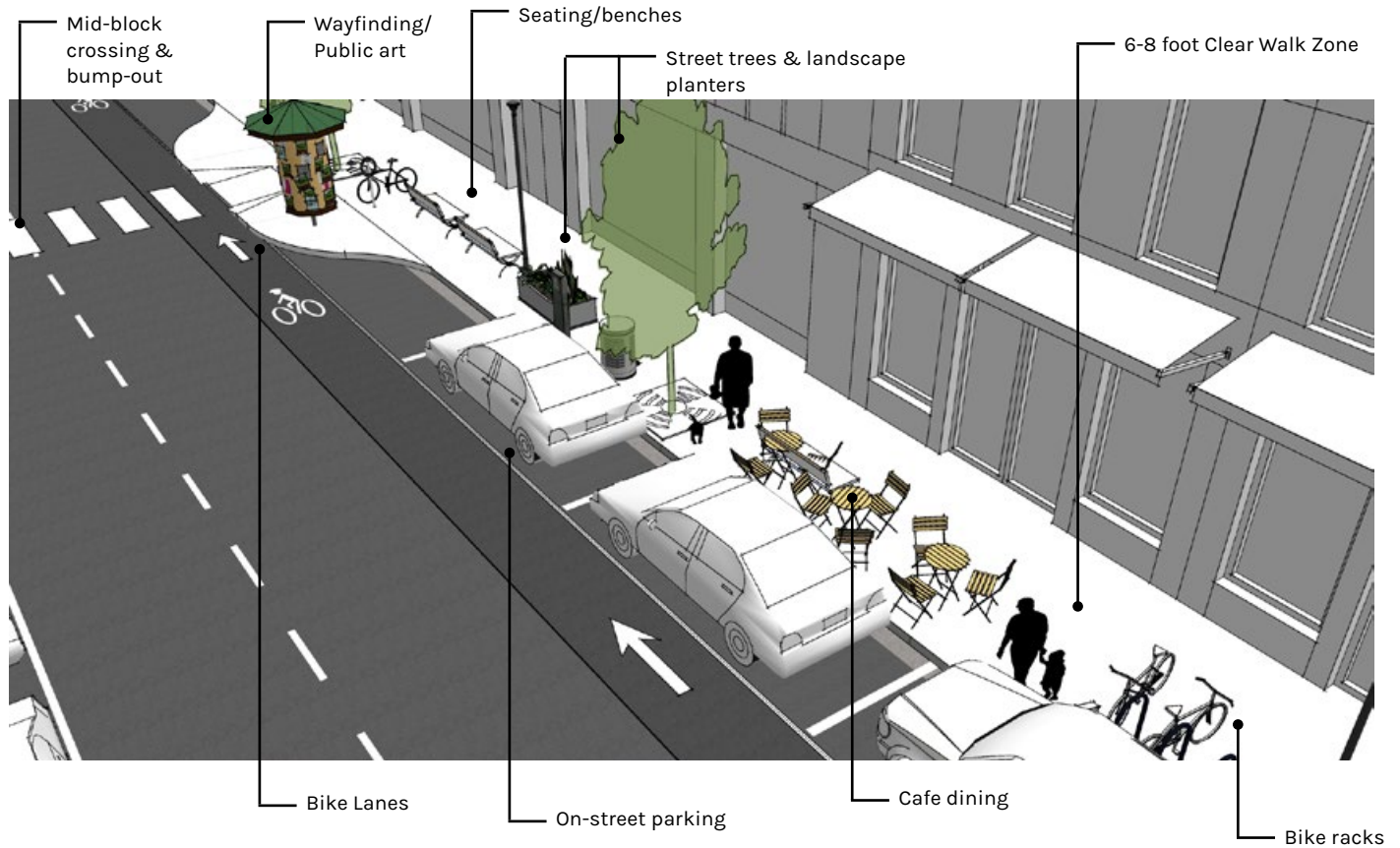


Potential streetscape furnishings



# STREETSCAPE FURNISHINGS

## AMENITY ZONE ELEMENTS



Bike racks, placemaking kiosks and wayfinding signs within the Amenity Zone.



Bike racks and street trees within the Amenity Zone, buffering the pedestrian from the roadway

# PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

## OBJECTIVE

Neighborhoods benefit from integrated pedestrian circulation systems that conveniently and safely link residents to businesses, public gathering places and other key destination points. Additionally, it is important to ensure appropriate connections are made to adjacent sidewalks, pathway systems and to nearby destinations in other districts. In commercial areas, a new sidewalk will comfortably connect retail frontage and should provide extra seating and public space.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

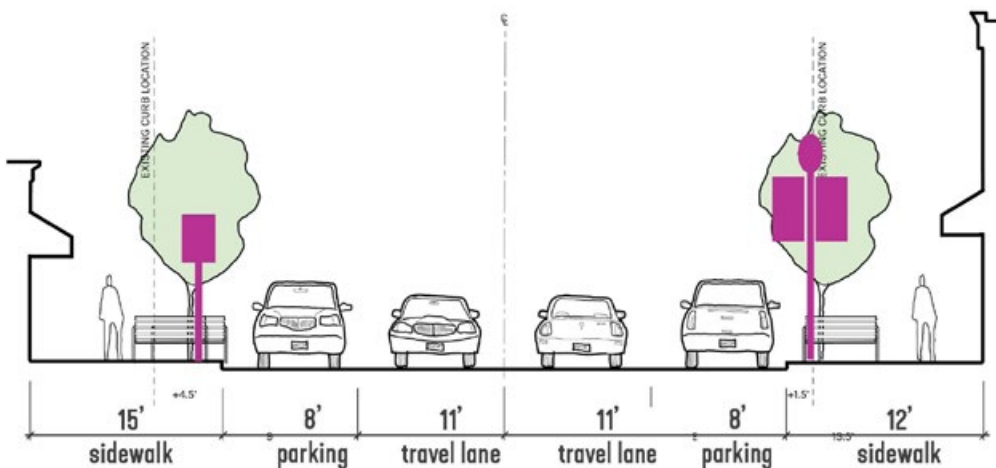
1. Ensure all bicycle parking facilities are highly visible to intended users. The bicycle parking facilities shall not encroach on any area within the public right of way intended for use by pedestrians, nor shall they encroach on any emergency access areas.
2. Provide for walkways in residential settings to be a minimum five feet wide.
3. Provide sidewalks along all street frontage. Sidewalks should be located in the right-of-way, unless there are space constraints.
4. Provide sidewalks on both sides of the street in each new residential development to provide access for alternative modes of transportation throughout the neighborhood.

5. Clearly mark and illuminate crosswalks to promote safety. Crosswalks in commercial and retail areas may have a change in surface material such as brick paving or stamped concrete.
6. Encourage minimum 15 feet between curb to existing and proposed storefronts where feasible, to allow for a five foot amenity zone including landscaping, signage and lighting.
7. Encourage additional space for outdoor café or sidewalk sale displays to help add activity and color to the consumer experience.
8. Define pedestrian routes both visually and physically where they cross vehicular drive aisles. Provide curb cuts in locations where sidewalks cross a road or driveway.

9. Encourage installation of accent paving at special locations throughout the district. Pavers, exposed aggregate, or other special paving will distinguish unique character uses within districts.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Closing front doors and relying on rear entries off parking lots
- Locating parking lot paving directly adjacent to the building
- Failing to provide adequate space for snow removal



Typical Streetscape Section



# PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION



Amenity seating located within the Frontage Zone



Amenity seating located within the Frontage Zone



Streetscape furnishings located within the Amenity Zone & the Frontage Zone, allowing the Walking Zone to be free



Frontage Zone      Walking Zone      Amenity Zone

# SIDEWALK CAFES AND PATIOS

## OBJECTIVE

Outdoor dining helps create vibrancy within the downtown streetscape. An outdoor dining area or sidewalk café is comprised of removable sets of tables and chairs typically shaded by umbrellas or canopies for patrons to eat and drink.

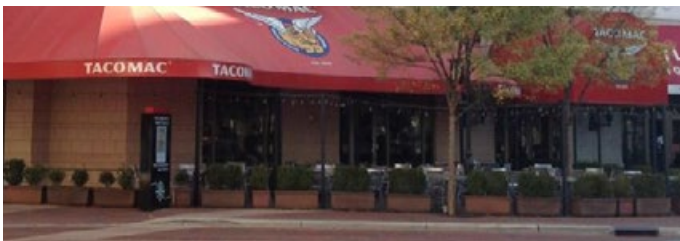
## TIPS TO FOLLOW

1. Maintain a clear 5-6 foot sidewalk for pedestrians.
2. Maintain a clear path between the building entrance and the sidewalk, locating seating amenities within the amenity zone or dooryard.
3. Ensure shading devices, such as retractable awnings and umbrellas do not project into the clear sidewalk area (minimum 8-foot clearance height).
4. Location should be clear of fire hydrants, designated loading zones and on-street ADA parking.
5. Use hanging bulb lights to create a sense of atmosphere to illuminate patio areas on private property.

6. Maintain a clean café area with daily cleanings.
7. Outdoor heaters may be used within occupied areas provided they are free standing, do not generate noise, and do not require cables, wires, or other hookups to cross the clear Walking Zone.
8. For cafe dining uses serving alcohol, a rigid fence enclosure with at least two horizontal stringers along the entire run shall be used to define the edges of the occupied zone.
9. Select high quality, durable furnishings. Preferred materials are metals, finish grade woods, and sturdy recycled materials.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Stacking tables and chairs during colder seasons
- Permanently attaching chairs and tables to pavement in the right-of-way
- Attaching or bolting fencing to pavement surfaces, landscape planters, buildings, or other street fixtures, so that they can not be easily removed for maintenance or colder seasons





# SIDEWALK CAFES AND PATIOS



Sidewalk patios within the Amenity & curbside zone

Amenity  
Zone

Sidewalk  
5-6 ft

Frontage  
Zone



# LANDSCAPING

## OBJECTIVE

Landscape design enhances the social, environmental, economic, and aesthetic quality of a site. Green space and vegetation, particularly street trees, increase property values, reduce urban temperature, and enhance the pedestrian experience. These areas should be designed to enhance and establish neighborhood identity and invite pedestrian activity.

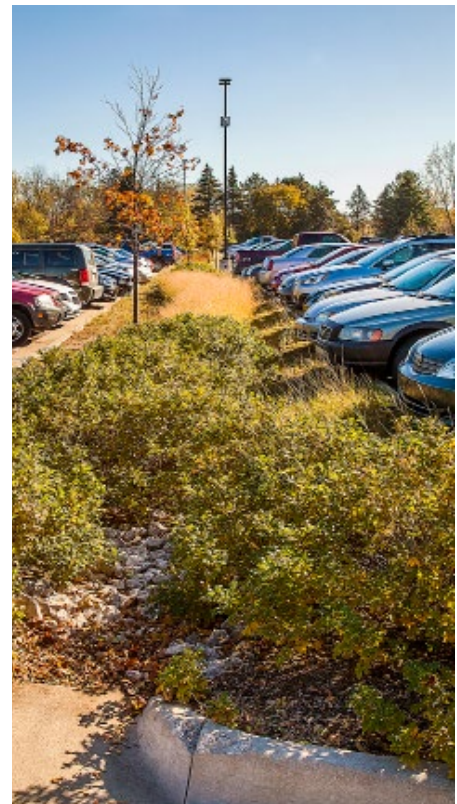
## TIPS TO FOLLOW

1. Preserve and maintain existing mature trees whenever possible.
2. Ensure new trees are provided adequately sized tree pits or planters. Ensure location does not create an obstacle for pedestrians.
3. For street trees and landscape beds use hardy, salt-tolerant native and adapted plant varieties.
4. Landscape planters occur primarily within the Amenity Zone between the sidewalk and the curb. Where buildings are setback from the sidewalk, landscape planters are also appropriate in the Frontage Zone, and can be incorporated into building façades.
5. Coordinate landscaping with adjacent streets surrounding the corridor in order to be consistent

- with the adjacent neighborhood character.
6. Integrate landscaping with stormwater management systems.
7. Rain gardens and bioswales should be considered along sidewalks and parking lots. (See “*Low-Impact Design*”)
8. Encourage the installation of decorative hanging baskets and seasonal planters. Landscaping should not interfere with pedestrian circulation.
9. Provide landscaping to complement residential buildings and present an attractive entrance for each residence.
10. Plan for temporary irrigation or manual watering of new street trees for 2 years after planting.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Using plants species that are not native to the region’s climate
- Failing to have a maintenance plan for landscaping such as regular weeding and watering
- Failing to maintain at least 1 inch of mulch cover over exposed planting soils



# LANDSCAPING

## LOW-IMPACT DESIGN

**Low Impact Design** is a method of naturally treating stormwater runoff.

- Rain Gardens and Bioswales should be considered along sidewalks, parking lots, and rear service drives.
- Plant species should be salt tolerant, provide aesthetic benefits and be low maintenance.
- Sidewalks should be designed to direct runoff into stormwater areas, and maintenance agreements should be included as part of any installation.
- Porous pavement may be considered instead of impervious applications (i.e. asphalt or concrete) in parking areas or rear service drives. To function properly, porous pavement requires adequate subsurface soil conditions, overflow connection to a storm sewer or other final discharge location and routine vacuum maintenance. Porous pavement should not be installed in areas where there is a potential for soil contamination.
- Permeable pavers can be used wherever feasible to mitigate stormwater runoff. The change in pattern and material can also delineate the spaces between vehicle-only space and vehicle/pedestrian shared space between buildings and street curb.



Stormwater areas and porous pavers



Porous Pavers



Rain Garden Parking Lot Island



# PARKING LOT DESIGN

## OBJECTIVE

Management of parking is essential to creating a district that meets the needs of businesses without dominating the visual character of the corridor. Instead, parking should be designed in consideration of all the other design principles, especially reducing conflicts to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Parking should be provided in a convenient location, preferably located behind buildings. Side parking should be available where provision of all the parking in the rear is not practical. Visual impact of parking should be improved with landscape and design elements.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

### 1. Reduce the visual impact of surface parking. (See **Parking Lot Screening**).

- Locate a parking area on the rear end of a site to reduce curb cuts along the main pedestrian pathway.
- Reduce light pollution impacts on surrounding neighborhoods from overly or improperly lit parking areas.
- Use materials like vehicular grade concrete, pavers, brick, etc., to allow the surface parking to compliment the overall neighborhood composition. Materials like permeable pavers have the added benefit of aiding smart stormwater management.

### 2. Design a parking lot to allow convenient pedestrian access.

- Canopy trees, understory trees, and maintainable shrubs shall be used in islands and landscaped aisles to visually subdivide parking lots, to demarcate internal corridors which guide vehicles and pedestrians, to create a vertical dimension, to reduce the scale of the parking area, and to limit the heat island effect.
- Incorporate courtyards or plazas to provide pedestrian amenities & gathering spaces.
- Provide pedestrian access and wayfinding through buildings and blocks to access parking in rear of building.

- Install pedestrian signals and/or mid-block crossings where the distance between signals creates less safe crossing conditions; consider the impacts on traffic flow at access points as well.

### 3. Porous pavement with connections to storm water sewers may be considered in parking areas. These materials also delineate between vehicle-only space and vehicle/pedestrian shared spaces.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Locating surface parking directly in front of primary pedestrian entries
- Locating surface parking lots directly in front of buildings
- Providing an unnecessary amount of access points with no street edge buffer
- Using bumper blocks instead of curbs
- Gravel as a paving material



Islands, street trees and pedestrian walkways make parking lots more walkable

# PARKING LOT DESIGN

## PARKING LOT SCREENING

Minimize the view of parked cars from a public right-of-way utilizing a buffer of trees, shrubs or a low wall constructed from materials compatible with the site like masonry or brick knee walls

1. Masonry or brick knee walls with limestone caps can be used to screen parking lots where higher density uses abut lower intensity uses (e.g. commercial parking lots abutting residential uses)
  - Recommended height for knee walls is 24-36"
2. Wall design can provide variation by including modular wall openings for pedestrian access
3. In some medium density uses that abut lower density uses, wrought iron fence and/or a dense hedgerow can be used in place of a wall.
4. Strategic planting, as described in the landscaping section of this document, should be provided in addition to the noted screening.

For more information on Smart Stormwater Management, see the **Low-Impact Design** section under **Landscaping**



Brick or wrought iron knee walls or a hedgerow minimize the view of parked cars



Brick knee wall example section



Wrought iron fence example section

# WAYFINDING

## OBJECTIVE

Directional signage provides a convenient path to reach destinations for both motorists and pedestrians. Informational signage provides local area maps and other local information. Wayfinding systems enable travelers to navigate downtown independent of mobile devices or physical maps. The information wayfinding signs provide increases visitor level of comfort and confidence in visiting and traveling around downtown.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

### 1. Vehicle-oriented wayfinding

is used on key corridors of entry into the Downtown District to guide motorists from surrounding highways or other access points and combined with signage in the downtown to lead the driver to their destination

- Vehicle-oriented wayfinding shall be retro-reflective with larger lettering to increase legibility at night

### 2. Pedestrian-oriented wayfinding

is generally concentrated within the commercial areas of downtown, leading to commercial districts, key landmarks and cultural destinations

- On-street maps give pedestrians an opportunity to orient themselves and discover other destinations in downtown
- Pedestrian-oriented wayfinding shall be mounted at pedestrian eye level

3. Signs should feature clean lines and simple styling
4. Signs shall be clear and concise with limited text in order to be quickly read
5. Name plates should be interchangeable to permit updating and modification as needed
6. Install wayfinding signs in the Amenity Zone of the sidewalk

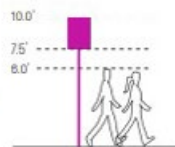
## THINGS TO AVOID

- Placing wayfinding signs in obstruction of street and traffic signs
- Neglecting to update wayfinding signage
- Placing wayfinding signs in obstruction of the pedestrian Walk Zone
- Installing signage above infrastructure access points



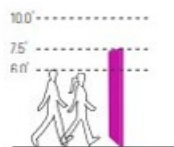
### BANNERS

Banners establish a brand identity for downtown and introduce a color scheme for signage throughout the district. Banners draw visitors to the downtown core. Mounted high on street lights, banners are visible from the car. Additionally, pedestrian-oriented signage can be paired on the sidewalk side



### 3 "D" SIGNS

Three "D" signs display information on Destination, Direction, and Distance. These offer information at a scale legible to anyone moving under 25 mph.



### INFO KIOSK

The info kiosk can be a traditional static map and information board, or a digital/electronic interactive station. The main audience is pedestrians. Dense in information, these may occur in less frequent intervals. An app might pair with an interactive kiosk.



# NEIGHBORHOOD MANNERS

## OBJECTIVE

Provide a transition between commercial development and adjacent residential neighborhoods that minimizes commercial impacts.

## TIPS TO FOLLOW

### 1. Service Areas, Utilities & Mechanical Equipment.

- Enclose and screen any service area, utilities, or mechanical service equipment that are accessory to the building.
- Provide fully shielded, downward-directed lighting for service areas.
- Consider integrating a service area, utility or mechanical equipment into the rear design of a building.
- Screen rooftop equipment from public view
- Locate storage areas within the building floor plan and meet the side and rear setback standards for a principal structure

### 2. Neighborhood Transitions: Designing a project to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.

- Avoid orienting the rear of the building or rear blank walls towards an adjacent residential neighborhood or street.
- Provide a buffer between residential areas and any commercial activity in order to minimize negative impacts noise/odor impacts.
- Provide proper dumpster enclosures and ensure trash is not left outside the dumpster.
- Avoid outdoor storage

### 3. Create connectivity between land uses, providing pedestrian, bike and vehicular connections to adjacent residential neighborhoods.



## THINGS TO AVOID

- Locating service areas at the front of the building, visible from the public right-of-way
- Placing porous pavement in areas where no overflow connections exists or where there is a potential for soil contamination
- Obstructing walkways with temporary display of merchandise



# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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**Amenity Zone.** Area between the sidewalk and the curb. Commonly the location for street trees, light poles, road signs, and other street furnishings.

**Articulation, horizontal.** The arrangement and proportion of façade materials and elements (windows, doors, columns, pilasters, and bays) into discreet bays.

**Articulation, vertical.** A visual distinction between a building's base, middle, and top. A distinct and separated ground floor area is created through the use of a horizontal expression line, such as a string course, change in material or textures, awnings or canopies, or sign band between the first and second stories.

**Awning.** A roof-like covering cantilevered, projected or suspended from a building, usually of canvas, metal, or similar material and often adjustable, placed over the sidewalk, windows, or doors to provide protection from sun and rain. It is distinguished from a canopy because it is not permanent, nor a structural portion or architectural feature of the building and does not support substantial weight.

**Canopy.** A bracketed or suspended cover projecting from the building over the sidewalk, or a roof-like covering placed over the sidewalk, windows, or doors, to provide protection from sun and rain and, unlike an awning, it is a permanent, durable, structural portion of the building as opposed to a light covering of canvas, metal or other similar material.

**Clear Walk Zone.** A clear, consistent, paved area dedicated to pedestrian movement.

**EIFS.** Exterior Insulation and Finish System. A synthetic alternative to stucco.

**Elevation.** The exterior face of a building.

**Expression line.** A line prescribed at a certain level of a building for the major part of the width of a façade, expressed by a variation in material or by a limited projection on such as a molding, balcony or canopy.

**Façade.** The building elevation built along the build-to line on the Primary Frontage.

**Fenestration.** Openings in the building wall, including windows, doors and open areas. When measuring fenestration, framing elements (such as muntins) with a dimension less than 1 inch are considered part of the opening.

**Frontage Zone.** Area between the sidewalk and the end of the public right-of-way.

**Ground Floor.** The first story of a building with an entrance at street level.

**Mullion.** A bar or post that separates two window units.

**Pilaster.** A column embedded into the wall.

**Sprandrel Glass.** The area of glass panels that conceals structural building components such as columns, floors, HVAC systems, electrical wiring, plumbing, etc.

**Storefront.** A frontage type appropriate for the ground floor of commercial / retail buildings. Storefronts provide large windows with transparent views into the building interior.

**Street edge.** The edge of the built form that establishes the envelope of the street.

**Synthetic.** Man-made or not natural.

**Transom window.** A window pane located above a door or main window, oriented horizontally.

**Upper stories.** Any story above the ground floor.