

**COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LA PLATA
Amended Ordinance No. 11-12**

Introduced By: Councilman Joseph W. Norris
Date Introduced: June 21, 2011
Amendments Adopted: August 23, 2011
Date Adopted: August 23, 2011
Date Effective: September 9, 2011

1 **An Amended Ordinance concerning**

2
3 **Amendments to the Town of La Plata Central Business District**
4 **Community Design Guidelines and to the Town of La Plata Commercial**
5 **Highway District Community Design Guidelines**
6

7 **FOR** the purpose of amending the Town of La Plata Central Business District Community
8 Design Guidelines and the Town of La Plata Commercial Highway District Community
9 Design Guidelines; and all matters relating to said guidelines.

10
11 * * * * *

12
13 **WHEREAS**, beginning in September of 2007, the Town of La Plata Design Review
14 Board began studying the Town of La Plata Central Business District Community Design
15 Guidelines and the Town of La Plata Commercial Highway District Community Design
16 Guidelines, and working to develop amendments to both sets of the Design Guidelines; and
17

18 **WHEREAS**, the Design Review Board has completed their study of both sets of the
19 Design Guidelines and presented their recommended amendments to the Town Council; and
20

21 **WHEREAS**, the Town Council has determined that it is in the public interest that the
22 Town of La Plata Central Business District Design Guidelines and the Town of La Plata
23 Commercial Highway District Community Design Guidelines be amended.
24

25 **NOW THEREFORE:**
26

27 **SECTION 1: BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF**
28 **LA PLATA** that the Town of La Plata Central Business District Community Design Guidelines
29 and the Town of La Plata Commercial Highway District Community Design Guidelines, a copy
30 of each of which is attached to this Ordinance, are hereby adopted as amended. These guidelines
31 shall be known as the "Town of La Plata Central Business District and Central Business
32 Transition District Community Design Guidelines, August, 2011" and the "Town of La Plata
33 Commercial Highway District Community Design Guidelines, August, 2011".
34

35 SECTION 2: AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that this Ordinance shall become
36 effective at the expiration of fifteen (15) calendar days after its approval by the Council.
37

ADOPTED this 23 day of August, 2011

SEAL:

COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LA PLATA



Roy G. Hale

Roy G. Hale, Mayor

R. Wayne Winkler

R. Wayne Winkler, Councilman

C. Keith Back

C. Keith Back, Councilman

Paretta D. Mudd

Paretta D. Mudd, Councilwoman

ATTEST:

Danielle Mandley

Danielle Mandley, Town Clerk

Date: 8/23/11

Joseph W. Norris

Joseph W. Norris, Councilman

EXPLANATION:

CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW
((Double Parenthesis)) indicate matter deleted from existing law.
* * * indicates existing law not depicted in bill and not being altered by
bill
Underlining indicates amendments to bill.
~~Strike Out~~ indicates matter stricken from bill by amendment or deleted
from the law by amendment.

Amendment No. 1 to Ordinance No. 11-12

Line 21, strike "~~WHEREAS, on _____, 2011, the Town Council held a public hearing on the amendments to the Town of La Plata Central Business District and Central Business Transition District Community Design Guidelines and to the Town of La Plata Commercial Highway District Community Design Guidelines; and~~"

Amendment No. 2 to Ordinance No. 11-12

Line 37, insert "August", immediately following "Guidelines,"

Amendment No. 3 to Ordinance No. 11-12

Line 38, insert "August", immediately following "Guidelines,"

Town of La Plata

Central Business and Central Business Transition District Community Design Guidelines



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About This Document

This document presents the Town of La Plata Community Design Guidelines as prepared and approved by the Town Council, the Vision Implementation Team and the Design Review Board. It is an outgrowth of the Vision Plan for Greater La Plata, dated March 10, 2000, and The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata, dated March 15, 2001, and reflects the principles and goals of those two plans as a means of achieving a vision for the long-term future of La Plata.

This document is organized into three parts:

Part I, **Introduction**, provides a brief overview of the design review process.

Part II, **Community Design Guidelines**, outlines the intent and guidelines for each category under consideration in the design review process, with supporting illustrations and photographs.

Part III, **Appendix**, contains a glossary to clarify the meaning of certain design terms plus a bibliography.

The La Plata municipal government has enjoyed a long history of effective planning, and this document is intended to support the existing policies adopted by the Town Council. In addition to the Vision Plan, the Community Design Guidelines fulfill the goals, objectives, principles and standards of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan and all relevant chapters of the Town Code.

Statement of Purpose

The Vision Plan for Greater La Plata outlines the future for the Town and the greater La Plata area in broad terms. Based on extensive input from key stakeholders within the community, the Vision Plan describes the collective needs and aspirations of its citizens. The Vision Plan was followed by The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata, which lays out in greater detail the implementation strategy for both short- and long-term improvements, which would result in a cohesive urban design for the Town of La Plata.

Building upon the historic features and character of the Town, the implementation plan emphasizes the need for shaping a livable, walkable and vibrant downtown. The plan gives special attention to opportunities for creating new street connections in and around downtown to enhance mobility; rebuilding streetscapes and sidewalks to enhance pedestrian convenience and comfort; creating site development opportunities for new office, retail and residential development; and providing adequate parking throughout the downtown.

The purpose of the design review process is to foster the development of high quality and innovative designs, which support the collective vision for the Town. The design guidelines are intended to aid property owners, developers and designers in understanding the Town's urban design expectations. The design review process brings people together to ensure that these expectations can be met for all proposed development within the Town.

These design guidelines apply only to new development, redevelopment and/or additions to existing buildings within the Central Business District (C-B) and Central Business Transition District (CBT). The principles and goals for design review should be applied to all planning and design for development, redevelopment, and/or additions to existing buildings within the area included in the Vision Plan.

Areas subject to design review within the Central Business and Central Business Transition Districts are identified on zoning maps by "CB" and by "CBT." Additional information on the design review process is available from the Town of La Plata, 305 Queen Anne Street, PO Box 2268, La Plata, MD 20646, (301) 934-8421, or on the Town's website at www.townoflaplata.org

Design Review in La Plata

The design review process is an important tool in the implementation of the Town's urban design goals. The Town requires design review for all areas and individual buildings within the Central Business, Central Business Transition, and the Commercial Highway Districts.

Design review is conducted by the Design Review Board, a panel of citizens appointed by the Town Council. All members serve as volunteers and represent specific interest and expertise in planning, design and development.

Design review considers many aspects of a given proposal, including siting of buildings, building size, shape and materials, location of parking, landscaping and signage. Design review ensures that new development, as well as alterations to existing buildings, maintain and enhance the integrity and quality of the Town. The review process encourages flexibility, while striving to ensure the aesthetic and functional compatibility of new development with the desired character and economic and social vitality that is articulated in the Vision Plan. During the design review process, a proposal is evaluated against the design guidelines, along with consideration of other development regulations that may influence the proposed project, including compliance with the International Building Code, Maryland State Fire Code, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. In the event of inconsistency or conflict with other development regulations, the stricter of the two requirements shall take precedence.

The review process may vary with the type, size, and location of the proposed project. Proposals are initially reviewed by Town staff and forwarded to the Design Review Board. The process generally takes two to six weeks, depending on the calendar and the complexity of the proposed project. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Design Review Board Staff Representative early in the planning and design of

a proposed project when concept plans for site and building development are being prepared. In addition, applicants are encouraged to notify owners of nearby properties and solicit input from individuals, organizations, and neighborhood associations, as appropriate.

Prior to applying for a building permit, an applicant seeking design review for a property within the Central Business District or Central Business Transition District must complete the following steps:

1. Complete and submit the Application for Design Review with supporting materials
2. Present the proposed project to the Design Review Board for review and evaluation
3. Receive approval from the Design Review Board
4. Present the proposed project to the Planning Commission for review and approval, if required

Refer to the Design Review Application for meeting dates, deadlines, plus a list and number of required supporting materials. The application is available on the Town's website.

Applicants will present their projects to the Design Review Board for review and interactive discussion of all relevant issues. Following project presentations, the Design Review Board will evaluate projects and render decisions for approval, approval with conditions, or disapproval. Applicants may receive final decisions on the day of the design review. Projects approved with conditions must be resubmitted to staff for review and recommendation to the Design Review Board. An additional meeting with the Design Review Board may be required for final review and approval.

Decisions of the Design Review Board may be appealed to the Town Board of Appeals in accordance with Town Code.

Goals for Community Design Review

The goals for design review are intended to preserve the Town's heritage, enhance its livability, and improve its design quality. La Plata's development history has been different from that of many other Southern Maryland towns. Its beginnings are not clearly rooted in the Colonial, Federal, or Georgian periods of architectural style. Rather, La Plata emerged as a town in the late 19th century as a railroad center in the midst of an agrarian economy. As such, its early architectural character was "typical of that popular in newly founded small western towns between the Civil War and the turn of the 20th century" (Wearmouth, 1988, 2001). In the Central Business District, this meant a preponderance of one-, two- and two-and-a-half story detached frame structures, many with gable ends facing the street.

Today, many new buildings, new additions, renovations and other alterations have left the Central Business District with an architectural style and character that is poorly defined and frequently lacks the quality of design and construction that typified the Town in its earlier days.

This lack of cohesive identity was compounded by the devastation of the Central Business District by the tornado of April 28, 2002. However, the redevelopment of the downtown that will occur as a result of the tornado provides a unique opportunity to rebuild according to the principles of the Vision Plan, encouraging urban design excellence throughout the public spaces and private properties that make up the heart of La Plata. The work of the Washington Architectural Foundation and the resulting report from the Emergency Urban Planning Charrettes illustrate many of the ideas and principles that can be incorporated into the rebuilding of La Plata.

The Vision Implementation Team expressed the preference that new development be based on the style of the late 19th and early 20th century examples that typify La Plata's historical development. These examples are recognized as the core for developing a pattern of identity upon which future development can be based. However, it is important to note that diversity and variety of building types have also characterized La Plata's historical development. Thus, a strong commitment to quality in urban design— a building's location, size, shape and relationship to its surroundings today—and a well-designed public streetscape should be more important than strict adherence to, or replication of, any single architectural style from the past.

The objectives for Design Review include the following:

1. To encourage better design and site planning that will enhance the character of the Town and ensure that new development and redevelopment fulfill the goals of the Vision Plan.
2. To provide flexibility in the application of design guidelines.
3. To improve communication and participation among developers, neighbors and the Town early in the design and siting of new development and redevelopment.

Using Design Guidelines in the Design Review Process

The following Design Guidelines lay out the criteria that should be met as part of the design review process. They inform property owners, developers, and the community as to what issues will be addressed during the design review process. The guidelines state broader concepts than typical development standards in order to provide flexibility to designers and property owners to encourage designs that are innovative but appropriate to their locations. Applicants should be prepared to explain how their design meets or satisfies each applicable guideline.

During the design review process, the Design Review Board must determine how the proposal meets each of the applicable design guidelines. Proposals that meet all applicable guidelines will be approved; proposals that do not meet the applicable guidelines will not be approved.

The Design Review Board may add conditions to their approval of a project or may ask an applicant to revise the design to address specific deficiencies in order to be approved.

Waiver of Individual Design Guidelines

The Town recognizes that some of the guidelines may not be applicable in all cases, depending on the size or nature of a proposed project. In some cases, individual guidelines may be waived during the design review process. For example, an applicable guideline may be waived when the proposed design better meets the goals of design review than would mere compliance.

If a waiver is considered, applicants should explain how the goals are better met in the proposed design. Allowing the waiver of one or more guidelines during the design review process reflects the Town's concern that the design guidelines not become a rigid set of requirements that stifle innovation or increase design and construction costs prohibitively.

Framework of the Guidelines

The Town of La Plata Community Design Guidelines implement the urban design principles contained in the Vision Plan for Greater La Plata and The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata. The Design Guidelines recognize and encourage the participation of private property owners and public servants in a collaborative and cooperative urban design partnership, which is essential to the realization of the intentions embodied in the Vision Plan.

Based on the Vision Plan, the Design Guidelines contain five key sections:

- Section A. Site Planning
- Section B. Building Design
- Section C. The Streetscape
- Section D. Amenities for the Public
- Section E. Vehicular Access & Parking

Using the Guidelines

Design guidelines are qualitative statements that address the desired character of a development or project. Rather than being quantitative requirements, the guidelines are intended to provide flexibility for property owners and their design professionals in achieving the goals of the Vision Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and other key planning and development requirements.

Each design guideline has a title, a statement of intent, and guideline language, accompanied by diagrams and photographs which illustrate each guideline. The guideline language is adopted by ordinance and represents the approval criteria against which the Design Review Board will evaluate a project and render a decision. The examples shown should not be considered as the only possible design solutions. The captions and examples are not adopted and can be easily updated as new projects are built.

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- A1 Buildings Along the Street
- A2 Corner Buildings
- A3 Sidewalk Activities
- A4 Lighting
- A5 Screening
- A6 Unifying Elements

Section B: Building Design

- B1 Transition Between Commercial and Residential Uses
- B2 Neighborhood Context Façade Treatment
- B3 Prominent Entrances
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- C1 Pedestrian Interaction
- C2 Human Scale
- C3 Active Building Façades
- C4 Weather Protection
- C5 Site Furnishings

Section D: Amenities for the Public

- D1 Open Space
- D2 Landscaping
- D3 Sense of Place
- D4 Signage
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Section E: Vehicular Access & Parking

- E1 Curb Cut Impacts
- E2 Parking Lot Design
- E3 Integrating Parking Structures
- E4 Pedestrian Connections
- E5 Drive-through Lanes

A1 Buildings Along the Street

Intent:

To ensure that new development contributes to the character and liveliness of the public right-of-way and pedestrian space as the primary unifying elements of the Downtown.

Guideline:

1. Emphasize the sense of enclosure of street space, created by buildings, which defines the pedestrian space as an active, comfortable and safe place where people can stop and visit without conflicting with other areas.
2. Align new buildings adjacent to existing buildings to match the façade of the building which is closest to the street.
3. Design buildings to maximize the amount of frontage along the public right-of-way.
4. Utilize front setback areas to create small public plazas and landscaped areas for sitting, gathering and other outdoor activities.
5. Design and locate parking areas to minimize the separation of buildings from the street, as well as from each other (building-to-building) along the street.



A2 Corner Buildings

Intent:

To use distinctive buildings to create defined and active intersections that stimulate pedestrian interest, comfort and use throughout the downtown.

Guideline:

1. Use design elements such as varying building heights, large ground level windows, awnings and canopies, signs and visually prominent pedestrian entrances to highlight corner buildings. (See B3: Façade Treatment/Prominent Entrances.)
2. Locate sidewalk-level retail stores and businesses at building corners to connect areas of activity from one street to the next.



A3 Sidewalk Activities

Intent:

To ensure that there is a minimum clear, unobstructed walking route along sidewalks.

Guideline:

1. Promote or encourage temporary sidewalk sales activities in areas of sufficient width to accommodate special activities as well as smooth pedestrian flow; providing a minimum of 5' paved surface, free of obstructions.
2. Locate outdoor restaurant seating, planters, signs and other activities to leave a 5' minimum clear pathway free of obstructions.
3. Construct sidewalks to allow comfortable side-by-side walking, providing a minimum of 5' of paved surface.



A4 Lighting

Intent:

To ensure that site lighting contributes to the character and promotes the activities of the downtown. To provide a sense of security, assuring safe and comfortable walking along streets and through parking areas.

Guideline:

1. Use exterior lighting to highlight the building's architecture and open spaces.
2. Integrate exterior lighting and its structural components with the building's overall design. Illuminate walkways adjacent to street crosswalks and other areas of pedestrian/vehicular interaction.
3. Illuminate walkways adjacent to street crosswalks and other areas of pedestrian/vehicular interaction.
4. Provide adequate illumination to provide a sense of security in walking to parking areas.
5. Limit the height of lighting fixtures to 24 ft. for parking areas and 12-14 ft. for pedestrian walkways.
6. Avoid disruptive lighting that spills over onto adjacent properties and into nighttime skies.
7. Coordinate lighting fixtures on private property with public right-of-way lighting standards in the streetscape.
8. Recessed lighting fixtures should be used under canopies so the element is not visible.



A5 Screening

Intent:

To reduce the adverse visual impact of service, loading and trash storage areas.

Guideline:

1. Locate service areas for trash collection, loading docks, propane/oil tanks, and mechanical equipment away from the street front to the rear of buildings. Locate propane tanks underground, where feasible.
2. Locate the opening to the service area away from the sidewalk.
3. Screen from view all service, loading and trash collection areas by a combination of permanent walls, fencing and/or planting.
4. Coordinate the design and materials of all enclosures with the architectural design of the primary structure.
5. Eliminate the use of chain link fencing, barbed wire and razor ribbon.



A6 Unifying Elements

Intent:

To link existing buildings and open spaces with new development throughout the downtown.

Guideline:

1. Integrate existing unifying elements, e.g. curving brick walls, and/or develop new features to help unify and connect individual buildings and different areas.
2. Use the street as a unifying element through the use of special pavers, bollards, and outdoor spaces.
3. Link areas of downtown with similar elements, e.g. fencing design, outdoor lighting, awnings.
4. Coordinate private property elements such as lighting and furniture with elements of the public streetscape.



B1 Transition Between Commercial and Residential Uses

Intent:

To ensure compatibility and distinction between the more intensive uses in the downtown and the lower intensity uses of adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Guideline:

1. Design multi-story commercial buildings to include lower roof heights for portions that are close to single family residential neighborhoods with lower roof heights.
2. Include additional architectural treatments such as windows, prominent doorways and canopies on any side of a building visible from the ground level of an adjacent single family neighborhood.
3. Include residential uses above ground level commercial uses wherever feasible.
4. Screen all service areas in accordance with the recommendations under Section A5, "Screening."



B2 Neighborhood Context

Intent:

To ensure that infill and redevelopment are compatible with the context of adjacent or nearby buildings.

Guideline:

1. Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable features such as details and materials existing in the surrounding building context.
2. Arrange the building size, shape and materials in response to one or more of the following, if present:
 - A. Neighboring buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions.
 - B. A surrounding district or buildings of similar or consistent material or style.
 - C. An adjacent or nearby landmark, institution or noteworthy building.
3. New development may incorporate architectural elements that reinforce the historic character of existing buildings, including but not limited to
 - A. materials
 - B. window proportions
 - C. cornice or canopy lines
 - D. roof treatment
 - E. colors
4. No single architectural style is required. Reliance on or use of standardized “corporate” or “franchise” style is strongly discouraged.



B3 Façade Treatment: Prominent Entrances

Intent:

To promote pedestrian comfort, safety and orientation through building entrances that are inviting, logical, easily identifiable and accessible, and clearly visible from streets and sidewalks.

Guideline:

1. Orient buildings to present the primary façade toward the street frontage with the highest pedestrian activity, with the principal entrance in full view.
2. Distinguish the principal entry to the building through the use of special treatments which may include, but are not limited to, any of the following:
 - A. ornamentation
 - B. recessed entrance
 - C. protruding entrance
 - D. canopy or awning
3. Design entries and associated open spaces to avoid the creation of isolated areas and to maintain lines of sight into and out of the building and adjacent spaces.



B4 Façade Treatment: Façade Transparency**Intent:**

To enliven the streetscape through visual and physical connections between activities inside and outside the building.

Guideline:

1. Articulate the street level façade to provide an engaging pedestrian experience through open arcades and shop fronts, multiple building entries, merchandising display windows, and windows that encourage pedestrians to peer into the building interior.
2. Include windows with clear glass allowing views into the interior on all ground floor facades that are visible from and fronting on an abutting street.
3. On commercial building facades that are visible from a major arterial or pedestrian street provide windows on the ground floor that allow views into the interior.
4. Design buildings for flexibility to accommodate changes in use over time and minimize renovation costs.



B5 Façade Treatment: Blank Walls**Intent:**

To provide active, attractive walls facing adjacent streets, sidewalks and residential neighborhoods.

Guideline:

1. Walls, or portions of walls, which have few entries or windows should receive special design treatment to increase pedestrian safety, comfort and interest.
2. Special treatments may include any of the following:
 - A. limited lengths of blank walls
 - B. Accent courses of a different color or texture
 - C. landscaped areas or raised planting beds
 - D. small setbacks, indentations, or projections to create rhythm
 - E. different textures, colors or materials to break up the surface
 - F. canopies, awnings, trellises
 - G. artwork, either freestanding or as murals
 - H. seating ledges or perches
 - I. special lighting



B6 The Alley or Rear Façade

Intent:

To increase pedestrian safety, comfort and interest throughout the downtown.

Guideline:

1. Enhance the facades and surfaces in and adjacent to alleys and parking areas to create access that is visible, safe, and welcoming for drivers and pedestrians.
2. Enliven and enhance entrances to alleys and parking areas by extending storefront detailing around the corner into the alleyway.
3. Install well-designed and highly visible signage that indicates parking availability (on building facades adjacent to access drives.)
4. Install effective lighting to enhance visibility and safety for pedestrians and drivers alike.
5. Screen all service areas in accordance with Section A5: Screening.



B7 Massing

Intent:

To create well-proportioned buildings with a coherent architectural concept that exhibits forms and features that reflect the functions contained within the building.

Guideline:

1. Reduce the apparent bulk of a building by providing a clearly delineated “base,” “middle,” and “top.”
2. Provide variety and interest in the design of the building façade through the use of rhythm, pattern and proportion as part of a coherent whole.
3. Include a variety of roof heights and forms to articulate different areas and uses.
4. Integrate the different building and design elements including, but not limited to construction materials, roofs, entrances, as well as minor details, to achieve a coherent composition.



B8 Roof Form

Intent:

To ensure that roof lines present a distinct profile and appearance for the building and enhance the character of the downtown.

Guideline:

1. Integrate roof function, shape, surface materials, and colors with the building's overall design.
2. On gabled roofs, provide a minimum slope of 6:12 and a maximum slope of 12:12, especially to highlight major entrances.
3. On flat or shed-roofed buildings, incorporate projecting cornices to create a prominent edge when viewed against the sky.
4. Articulate long, uninterrupted expanses of roof with special treatments such as dormers and turned gables.



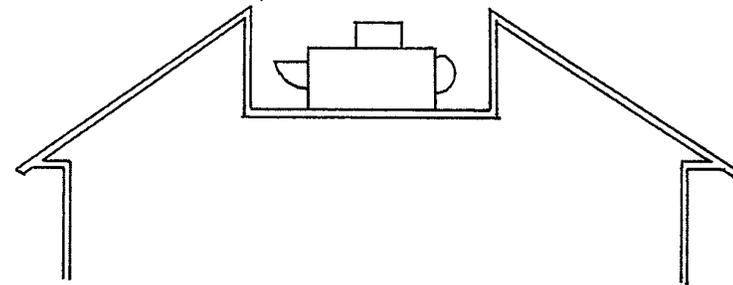
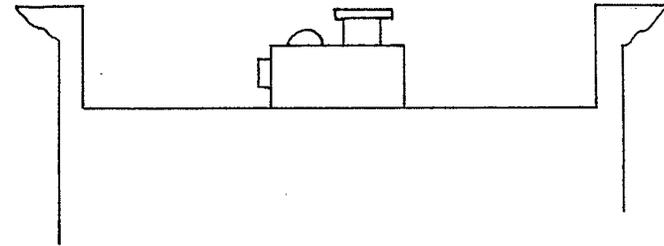
B9 Screening Rooftop Equipment

Intent:

To screen views of rooftop mechanical and communications equipment from the ground level of nearby streets and residential areas.

Guideline:

1. Screen mechanical and transmission equipment with extended parapet walls or other permanent roof forms that are integrated with the architecture of the building.
2. Painting mechanical equipment, erecting rooftop fences and attaching mansard-style roofs are not acceptable methods of screening.
3. Cell phone transmission equipment should be integrated into the design of the roofs.
4. Roof access ladder should be located inside the building or painted to match the façade.



City of Spokane Plan Commission

Rooftop screening for mechanical equipment should be incorporated as part of the overall building design. Top: Raised parapet screen. Bottom: Recessed well on pitched roof.

B10 Building Materials

Intent:

To encourage the use of high-quality, permanent and compatible materials that will upgrade the visual image of the downtown.

Guideline:

1. Utilize high quality, durable materials that reflect the Town's traditional main street character including, but not limited to brick, wood, and cast stone.
2. Limit the use of concrete block to side and rear walls which are not visible from the street and areas of public use. Treat concrete block in one or more of the following ways:
 - a. Textured surface such as split face or grooved.
 - b. Use of other masonry types such as brick or tile.
 - c. Use of decorative coursing or color.
3. Avoid highly tinted or mirrored glass as a major building element.
4. Use the natural color of materials such as brick, stone, and stained or painted wood. Reserve bright colors for trim or accents.
5. Consider the color of neighboring buildings when selecting colors for repainting or remodeling existing structures and for new structures.



C1 Pedestrian Interaction

Intent:

To create street level spaces and activities that are safe, comfortable, welcoming and open to the general public.

Guideline:

1. Provide spaces for street level uses that enhance main pedestrian links between areas and reinforce connections between retail and other business activities.
2. Promote use of the street front for friendly interaction through entrances, arcades, open space, seating areas, and product displays.
3. Recess portions of a building back from the sidewalk to create spaces for pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining.
4. Develop pocket parks that incorporate amenities such as drinking fountains and sitting areas for patrons and the general public.



C2 Human Scale

Intent:

To ensure that building facades are composed of elements scaled to promote pedestrian comfort, safety and orientation.

Guideline:

1. Design architectural features, window patterns and material compositions to refer to the scale of human activities that take place both within and outside the building.
2. Incorporate building modulations and articulated structural bays to establish a human-scale framework.
3. Incorporate transparent windows at the street level to provide interest and activity along the sidewalk and, at night, to provide an inviting source of secondary lighting.



C3 Active Building Facades

Intent:

To ensure that building facades directly reinforce pedestrian activity at the sidewalk.

Guidelines:

1. Develop visual and physical connections into buildings' active interior spaces from adjacent sidewalks.
2. Use architectural elements such as atriums, grand entries and large ground-level windows to reveal important interior spaces and activities.
3. Integrate building setbacks with adjacent sidewalks to increase the space for potential public use.



C4 Weather Protection

Intent:

To ensure pedestrian comfort and safety along major pedestrian routes.

Guideline:

1. Develop integrated weather protection systems at the sidewalk level of buildings to mitigate the effects of heat, bright sun, rain, and wind, on pedestrians.
2. Incorporate overhead weather protection to help define the pedestrian space and reduce scale of large buildings.
3. Incorporate recessed lighting beneath canopies and awnings to create intimacy and promote a sense of security.



C5 Site Furnishings

Intent:

To create a more pedestrian friendly street through the use of site furnishings along the street and in open spaces available to the public.

Guidelines:

1. Include site furnishings such as benches, tables, bike racks and trash receptacles at building entrances, plazas, pocket parks and other open spaces.
2. Design or select site furnishings as an integral part of the architectural design of the primary structure(s).
3. Coordinate the selection of location, style and materials for site furnishings with the recommendations of the State Neighborhood Conservation Streetscape Project.



D1 Open Space

Intent:

To develop public open spaces that promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents and visitors.

Guideline:

1. Incorporate public open space in site planning in response to the unique conditions of the site or project.
2. Where a commercial or mixed-use building is set back from the sidewalk, pedestrian enhancements or special features such as furniture, sitting walls, decorative lighting and artwork, should be considered along the street frontage.
3. Develop pocket parks for the enjoyment of workers, residents and visitors.



D2 Landscaping

Intent:

To enhance the building, site and streetscape with generous landscaping, including special paving, planters, trellises, and site furniture, as well as living plant material.

Guideline:

1. Emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting.
2. Include special features such as courtyards or fountains.
3. Soften the building by screening blank walls, adding terracing, retaining walls, etc.
4. Incorporate a planter guard or low planter wall as part of the architecture or site design.
5. Select plants hardy in zone 7 for year-round interest, low maintenance and low water demand, utilizing species native to the area wherever possible.
6. Coordinate private property landscaping with public right-of-way trees and other plantings.
7. Incorporate Low Impact Development stormwater management techniques and practices in landscaped areas wherever possible.
8. Maintain all landscaping, buffering and screening in a healthy condition at all times. Dead or diseased plants should be removed and replaced.



D3 Sense of Place

Intent:

To create a distinct, attractive and memorable “sense of place” associated with buildings and the Downtown.

Guideline:

1. Provide special unifying elements such as logos, symbols or characters on the facades, within public open spaces, or on the sidewalk to create a special identity and/or focal points for the downtown.
2. Enliven intersections by treating the corner of the building or sidewalk area with public art and other elements that promote interaction and reinforce or create a distinctive character for the surrounding area.
3. Incorporate one or more of the following, as appropriate:
 - A. public art
 - B. street furniture such as seating kiosks, newspaper boxes
 - C. Distinctive landscaping
 - D. Kiosks
 - E. Public seating areas, especially near open spaces, bus stops, vending areas.
4. Emphasize the creation or promotion of themes.



D4 Signage

Intent:

To design signage appropriate to the scale and character of the building and the downtown, which meets the needs of both pedestrians and persons in vehicles. See Town Code Chapter 191, Article VII. Signs for a complete description of the sign permit process and regulations.

Guideline:

1. Design signage to accomplish the following:
 - A. Facilitate rapid orientation and wayfinding.
 - B. Add interest to the streetscape.
 - C. Reduce visual clutter.
 - D. Unify the project and the Downtown as a whole.
 - E. Enhance the appearance and safety of the downtown area.
 - F. Help define a “sense of place”.
 - G. Announce events and business activities.
2. Orient signs primarily to pedestrians through the use of projecting signs, window signs, logo signs, wall signs over entrances, sandwich board signs, and/or ground signs.
3. Design signs to fit the architectural character, proportions, design details and colors of the primary structure.
4. Use spotlights and indirect lighting to reduce excessive glare and visual domination of the streetscape.
5. Follow all current Town Code zoning requirements governing sign size and number.



D5 Personal Safety & Security

Intent:

To design buildings and sites to promote a feeling of personal safety and security.

Guideline:

1. Consider the following to help promote safety for the residents, workers, shoppers, and visitors:
 - A. Provide adequate lighting at a pedestrian or human scale.
 - B. Retain clear lines of sight into and out of entries and open spaces.
 - C. Use landscaping that maintains or enhances visibility.
 - D. Design parking areas to allow easy surveillance by maintaining clear lines of sight for those who park there, for pedestrians passing by and for occupants of nearby buildings.
 - E. Install clear directional signage.
 - F. Encourage “eyes on the street” through the placement of windows and street level activities.



E1 Curb Cut Impacts

Intent:

To minimize adverse impacts of curb cuts on 1) the safety and comfort of pedestrians, 2) opportunities for landscaping and street trees, 3) on-street parking, and 4) other uses that promote pedestrian interaction. See Town Code Chapters 170, 173 and 191.

Guideline:

1. Encourage access to parking areas by way of alleys or consolidated entry drives.
2. Minimize the number of curb cuts and locate them away from street intersections.
3. Minimize the width of the curb cut, driveway, and/or garage opening.
4. Locate and size curb cuts to facilitate smooth entrance onto and exit from thoroughfares.
5. Share driveways with adjacent property owners and parking lots.
6. Provide specialty paving where driveways cross the sidewalk.
7. Locate driveways to be visually less dominant.



E2 Parking Lot Design

Intent:

To provide safe, convenient access to and within parking lots without diminishing the quality of pedestrian walking or the visual quality of pedestrian walking or the visual quality of surrounding areas.

Guideline:

1. Limit the number of curb cut entrances and exits through shared access with adjoining property owners.
2. Minimize the amount of street frontage occupied by parking and driveways by locating parking lots to the side and rear of buildings.
3. Design parking wheel stop placement to respect pedestrian walkways and circulation paths.
4. Screen parking lots that are visible from the street through the use of planting beds, hedges, berms, fences and/or low walls.
5. Break up large paved areas with interior landscaping, including a variety of shade trees, shrubs, groundcovers and perennials for seasonal interest.
6. Incorporate landscaped bioretention areas, permeable paving materials, and other Low Impact Development practices wherever possible to reduce stormwater runoff.



E3 Integrating Parking Structures

Intent:

To minimize the visual and functional impacts of parking structures by integrating parking facilities with surrounding development.

Guideline:

1. Minimize the visibility of parking structures and vehicle entrances as seen from the surrounding streets through the use of topography, landscaping and decorative screens, trellises or grilles.
2. Visually integrate freestanding parking structures with adjacent buildings and streetscape.
3. Design the parking portion of a building to be architecturally compatible with the rest of the building and streetscape.
4. Incorporate pedestrian-oriented uses such as retail businesses at street level to reduce the visual impact of parking structures.
5. Arrange parking circulation and traffic flows to minimize the impact on safety and pedestrian comforts.



E4 Pedestrian Connections

Intent:

To create a network of safe, comfortable and attractive linkages for pedestrians.

Guideline:

1. Within parking lots containing more than 30 spaces, provide clearly defined pedestrian connections between the public right-of-way and building entrance, and between parking lots and building entrances.
2. Design pedestrian connections to be at least five feet wide and unobstructed by signs and utility poles.
3. Clearly define pedestrian connections by any of the following:
 - A. 6 inch vertical curb
 - B. Textured paving, including across vehicular lanes
 - C. A continuous landscaped area on at least one side of the walkway
4. Provide appropriate smooth surfaces and ramps for wheeled vehicles such as strollers, wheelchairs, and handcarts.



E5 Drive-through Lanes

Intent:

To ensure that the streetscape environment is lively, walkable and not overwhelmed by the presence of automobiles.

Guideline:

1. Discourage drive-in windows for all businesses within the downtown.
2. Locate access and stacking lanes serving drive-through businesses at the sides and rear of the building.
3. Minimize the number of curb cuts by coordinating drive-through circulation with parking circulation.



Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Alignment: The arrangement of objects, particularly buildings or building elements, in a straight line; frequently used to describe the relationship of buildings to a sidewalk, street edge or “build-to” line.

Amenity: Aesthetic or other feature of a development that increase its marketability or usability to the public.

Animated Sign: Any sign that uses movement or change of lighting to depict action or create a special effect or scene.

Architectural Features: Prominent or significant parts or elements of a building or structure.

Architectural Scale: The perceived height and bulk of a building relative to that of neighboring buildings, the street and the human body.

Articulation: The manner in which portions of a building form are expressed (materials, color, texture, pattern, modulation, etc.) and come together to define the structure.

Artwork: A device, element or feature whose primary purpose is to express, enhance or illustrate aesthetic quality, feeling, physical entity, ideal, local condition, historical or mythical happening, or cultural or social value. Examples of artwork include sculpture, bas-relief sculpture, mural, or unique specially crafted lighting, furniture, pavement, landscaping, or architectural treatment that is indented primarily, but not necessarily exclusively, for aesthetic purposes. Signs are not considered artwork.

Axonometric Drawing: Orthogonal projection using a 45-degree from horizontal and vertical to create a three-dimensional drawing of a structure with three surfaces showing and with horizontal and vertical distances drawn to scale, but diagonal and curved lines distorted.

Awning: Any non-rigid material, such as fabric or flexible plastic, that extends from the exterior wall of a building and is supported by or attached to a frame.

Balcony: An outdoor space built as an aboveground platform projecting from the wall of a building and enclosed by a parapet or railing.

Banner: Any sign of lightweight fabric or similar material that is permanently mounted to a pole or a building and enclosed by a parapet or railing.

Accent Course (also string course or horizontal course): A projecting horizontal band on the exterior of a building frequently marking the separation between floors or levels.

Bioretention: A water quality practice that utilizes landscaping and soils to treat urban stormwater runoff by collecting it in shallow depressions before filtering through a fabricated planting soil media.

Blank Walls: Walls subject to “blank wall” requirements meet the following criteria:

1. Any wall or portion of a wall that has a surface area of 400 square feet having a width of at least 10 feet without a window, door, or building modulation as defined below or other architectural feature.
2. Any ground level wall surface or section of a wall over 4 feet in height at ground level that is longer than 15 feet as measured horizontally without having a ground level window or door lying wholly or in part within the 15 foot section.

Block Face: The row of front facades, facing the street, for the length of one block.

Bollard: A thick post that may be used as a barrier to block the passage of vehicles and that may include lighting as an integrated component.

Buffer: A combination of physical space and vertical elements, such as plants, berms, fences, or walls, the purpose of which is to separate and screen incompatible land uses from each other.

Bufferyard: One of several specific combinations of minimum buildings setbacks, landscaped yards widths, and plant material requirements set forth for buffering incompatible land uses.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Building Marker: Any sign indicating the name of a building and date and incidental information about its construction, which is cut into a masonry surface or made of bronze or other permanent material.

Building Sign: Any sign attached to any part of a building, as contrasted to a freestanding sign.

Campus pattern: Distinctive, large parcel development featuring clustered buildings, unified landscaping, signage and compatibility of use.

Canopy: A structure constructed of rigid materials, including but not limited to, metal, wood, concrete, plastic or glass, which is attached to and supported by a building, or which is free-standing and supported by columns, poles or braces extended to the ground. Unlike a marquee, a canopy generally has very limited vertical surface area; and unlike an awning, a canopy is generally supported by vertical elements rising from the ground.

Canopy Sign: Any sign that is a part of or attached to an awning, canopy, or other fabric, plastic, or structural protective cover over a door, entrance, window, or outdoor service area. A marquee is not a canopy.

Changeable Copy Sign: A sign or portion thereof with characters, letters, or illustrations that can be changed or rearranged without altering the face or the surface of the sign. A sign on which the copy changes more than eight times per day shall be considered an animated sign.

Circulation: The movement or flow of people and/or vehicles from place to place.

Coherent: Orderly and logical, particularly with regard to the architectural relationships of a building to its individual parts, its site and context, and any other important elements.

Commercial Message: Any sign wording, logo, or other representation that, directly or indirectly, names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service, or other commercial activity.

Compatibility: The size and character of a building element relative to other elements around it. For example, the size and proportion of windows in a building façade are usually related to one another, the spaces between them, and the scale of surrounding buildings.

Context: The characteristics of the buildings, streetscape, and landscape that support or surround a given building, site, or area such as predominance of period architecture or materials, wide sidewalks, continuous overhead weather protection, or consistent street trees.

Cornice: A molded and projecting horizontal feature that crowns a façade.

Course/Coursing: A continuous layer of building material, such as brick or tile, on a wall or roof of a building.

Courtyard: A landscaped space enclosed on a least three sides by a single structure.

Curb Cut: An area of street curb which is depressed to allow vehicular access to a driveway or parking lot.

Deciduous: A plant with foliage that is shed annually.

Deck: A roofless outdoor space built as an aboveground platform projecting from the wall of a building and connected by structural supports at grade or by the building structure.

Design Principle: A guiding concept as part of the overall project design development that reflects desirable characteristics of the urban environment, or responds to specific site/vicinity opportunities or constraints.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Durable and permanent building materials: Materials and construction methods of sufficient strength to last through years of wear and tear, inclement weather and multiple renovations, which ultimately contribute to an atmosphere of quality and continuity.

Evergreen: A plant with foliage that persists and remains green year-round.

Façade: Any portion of an exterior elevation of a building extending from the finish grade of the building to the top of the parapet wall or eaves, for the entire width of the building elevation.

Fenestration: The arrangement and design of windows and other openings on a building's façade.

Flag: Any fabric, banner, or bunting containing distinctive colors, patterns, or symbols, used as a symbol of a government, political subdivision, or other entity.

Freestanding Sign: Any sign supported by structures or supports that are placed on, or anchored in, the ground and that are independent from any building or other structure.

Frontage: The length of a property line along a street.

Gable: The upper, triangular portion of a façade, usually flanked by sloping roofs.

Gambrel Roof: A ridged roof having two slopes on each side, the lower slope having the steeper pitch. (See below.)

Gateway: A principal or ceremonial point of entrance into a district or neighborhood.

Grid: Two or more intersecting sets of regularly spaced parallel lines that generate a pattern of regularly spaced parts, such as a street grid.

Grocery Store: A retail establishment primarily selling food, as well as other convenience and household goods, which occupies a space of not less than four thousand square feet and not more than twenty-five thousand square feet.

Ground Mounted, or Monument Signs: Freestanding signs that generally have the entire bottom in contact with or in close proximity to the ground.

Highway Corridor: Anything that can be seen from, or has an impact on, the roadway. This encompasses the spatial features that lie between the edge of the right-of-way, the facades of buildings, and extending to a building's perimeter, rear yard areas, and beyond.

Human Scale: The perceived size of a building relative to a human being. A building is considered to have "good human scale" if there is an expression of human activity or use that indicates the building's size. For example, traditionally sized doors, windows, and balconies are elements that respond to the size of the human body, so these elements in a building indicate a building's overall size.

Incidental Sign: A sign, generally informational, that has a purpose secondary to the use of the zone lot on which it is located, such as "no parking," "entrance," "loading only," "telephone," and other similar directives.

Infill: The development of vacant, abandoned, passes over or underutilized land within built-up areas of existing communities, where infrastructure is already in place.

Infrastructure: The basic installations and facilities on which the continuance and growth of a community depend, such as roads, schools, transportation, communication, water and sewer systems.

Isometric Drawing: Similar to axonometric drawing but using 30 and 60 degree angles to project horizontal lines of a structure.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Large Retail Establishment: A retail establishment, or any combination of retail establishments in a single building, occupying more than twenty-five thousand gross square feet of floor area.

Lintel: A horizontal beam over an opening in a wall, either structural or decorative, such as often seen capping windows and door openings.

Logo/logo sign: A symbol or letter representing an entire word or words, e.g. the golden-arched “M” for McDonald’s.

Lot: Any piece or parcel of land or a portion of a subdivision, the boundaries of which have been established by some legal instrument of record, that is recognized and intended as a unit for the purpose of transfer of ownership.

Low Impact Development: An approach to stormwater management that combines hydrologically functional site design with pollution prevention measures to reduce the impacts of development on hydrology and water quality. Typically, stormwater is managed in small, cost-effective landscape features located on each lot rather than being conveyed and managed in large, costly pond facilities located at the bottom of drainage areas.

Mansard: A roof having two slopes on all four sides, with the lower slope almost vertical, and the upper almost horizontal.

Marquee: A shelter projecting over an entrance, frequently ornamental and of metal with or without glazing.

Marquee Sign: Any sign attached to, in any manner, or made a part of a marquee.

Massing: The three-dimensional bulk of a structure: height, width, and depth.

Modulation: A stepping back or projecting forward of sections of a structure’s façade within specified intervals of building width and depth, as a means of breaking up a structure’s apparent bulk.

Open Space: Land and/or water area with its surface open to the sky and predominantly undeveloped, which is set aside to serve the purposes of providing active or passive recreational opportunities, conserving valuable natural resources, and structuring urban development and form.

Ornamental Tree: A deciduous tree planted primarily for its ornamental value, or for screening. May be any size at maturity, but will tend to be smaller than a shade tree.

Parapet: A low, protective wall or railing along the edge of a roof, balcony, or similar structure.

Pattern: Objects arranged in a formal or regular manner where the arrangement is reproducible through building size and scale, architectural elements, materials, etc.

Pedestrian Orientation: The characteristics of an area where the location and access to buildings, types of uses permitted on the street level, and storefront design are based on the needs of persons on foot.

Pedestrian-Oriented Space: An area located outside of the public right-of-way, between the building and a street or along a pedestrian path, which promotes visual and pedestrian access onto the site and provides amenities and landscaping to enhance the public’s use of the space for passive activities such as resting, reading, picnicking, etc.

Pedestrian-Oriented Street: The designation of a street where pedestrians are given priority in the design and planned use of the street and where motorized vehicles are given secondary consideration if there is a conflict of use.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Pediment: A wide, low-pitched gable found in classical style buildings either at the top of facades or over window and door openings.

Pennant: Any lightweight plastic, fabric, or other material, whether or not containing a message of any kind, suspended from a rope, wire, or string, usually in series, designed to move in the wind.

Permanent Sign: A durable sign permanently mounted and anchored in the ground or on a wall.

Pervious Paving Materials: Paving materials such as open concrete block pavers, grasscrete, and some types of asphalt which allow rainfall to infiltrate the ground below.

Portable Sign: Any wheeled, trailered, or otherwise movable sign.

Porte-cochere: A roof or shelter for vehicles over a driveway outside an entrance doorway, sheltering those getting in or out of a vehicle.

Presentation Drawings: Drawings prepared to communicate the design character of the structure, usually prepared in color and including realistic representations of the building in its context, showing colors of building surfaces, shadows cast and people and landscaping. Three-dimensional sketches and projected or computer drawings may be included along with two dimensional floor plans, elevations and building section drawings.

Principal Building: The building in which is conducted the principal use of the zone lot on which it is located.

Projecting Sign: Any sign affixed to a building or wall in such a manner that its leading edge extends more than six inches beyond the surface of such building or wall.

Proportion: The balanced relationship of parts of a building, landscape, and structures to each other and to the whole.

Redevelopment: 1. Construction in previously developed areas which may include the demolition of existing structures and building new structures, or the substantial renovation of existing structures, often changing form and function. 2. The re-use of previously used, non-agricultural land. Redevelopment projects tend to be larger and more complex than infill projects.

Residential Sign: Any sign located in a district zoned for residential uses that contains no commercial message except advertising for goods or services legally offered on the premises where the sign is located, of offering such service at such location conforms with all requirements of the zoning ordinance.

Retail Establishment: An establishment in which sixty percent or more of the gross floor area is devoted to the sale or rental of goods or merchandise to the general public for personal or household consumption or to services incidental to the sale or rental of such goods or merchandise.

Reveal: Usually a line, scoring or joint in a wall or siding that exposes its depth and breaks up its mass.

Rhythm: Reference to the regular or harmonious recurrence of lines, shapes, forms or colors, incorporating the concept of repetition as a device to organize forms and spaces in architecture.

Roof Sign: Any sign erected and constructed wholly on and over the roof of a building, supported by the roof structure, and extending vertically above the highest portion of the roof.

Roof Sign, Integral: Any sign erected or constructed as an integral or essentially integral part of a normal roof structure of any design, such that no part of the sign extends vertically above the highest portion of the roof and such that no part of the sign is separated from the rest of the roof by a space of more than six inches.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Scale: The spatial relationship among structures along a street or block front, including height, bulk and yard relationships. The proportional relationship of the size of parts to one another and to the human figure.

Scale, Human: Used to describe the quality of a building that includes structural or architectural components of size and proportion that relate to the human form and/or that exhibits through its structural or architectural components the human functions contained within.

Screen/Screening: The treatment created with landscaping and/or structures to visually conceal an area or on-site utilitarian use that is considered unattractive.

Sense of Enclosure: A consistent series of building facades that create a defined street wall that focuses attention on the street's pedestrian activities. Successful enclosure creates an urban space for residents, shoppers, and workers. (Portland OR, Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines)

Sense of Place: The combined whole of distinctive natural and manmade features, as well as social and cultural traditions, that create an identifiable and definable character for an area. The term may be applied at any scale, from small pocket parks or neighborhoods to a region.

Setback: The required or actual placement of a building a specified distance away from a road, property line, or other structure.

Shade Tree: A deciduous (or rarely, an evergreen) tree planted primarily for its crown of foliage or overhead canopy.

Shrub: A woody plant, smaller than a tree, which consists of a number of small stems from the ground or small branches near the ground.

Sign: Any device, fixture, placard, or structure that uses any color, form, graphic, illumination, symbol, or writing to advertise, announce the purpose of, or identify the purpose of a person or entity, or to communicate information of any kind to the public.

Signage: Used to describe signs displayed and perceived collectively (as in a community) which are frequently coordinated through size, placement and graphic design.

Sight Visibility Triangle: The corner area of an intersection which is kept clear of vertical obstructions such as signage, fencing and landscaping in order to maintain clear lines of sight while making turns.

Site Plan: A detailed plan showing the proposed placement of structures, parking areas, open space, landscaping, and other development features, on a parcel of land.

Specimen Tree: A particularly impressive or unusual example of a species that due to its size, shape, age, or any other trait epitomizes the character of the species.

Street: A strip of land or way subject to vehicular traffic (as well as pedestrian traffic) that provides direct or indirect access to property, including, but not limited to, alleys, avenues, boulevards, courts, drives, highways, lanes, places, roads, terraces, trails, or other thoroughfares.

Streetscape: The visual character of a street as determined by elements such as structures, access, greenery, open space, view, etc. The scene as may be observed along a public street composed of natural and man-made components, including buildings, paving, planting, street furniture and miscellaneous structures.

Street Tree: A tree planted in close proximity to a street in order to provide canopy over the street, to give the street a sense of spatial definition and human scale, to provide shade, and soften the street environment.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Supermarket: A retail establishment primarily selling food, as well as other convenience and household goods, which occupies a space greater than twenty-five thousand square feet.

Suspended Sign: A sign that is suspended from the underside of a horizontal plane surface and is supported by such a surface.

Temporary Sign: Any sign that is used only temporarily and is not permanently mounted.

Transparency: A street level development standard that defines a requirement for clear or lightly tinted glass on the façade along an adjacent sidewalk or other walkway.

Tree: A large, woody plant having one or several self-supporting stems or trunks and numerous branches. May be classified as deciduous or evergreen.

Types of Signs: Ground-mounted or monument signs; pole signs; wall signs; roof signs; permanent signs; temporary; changeable copy (marquee) signs; awning and canopy signs; projecting signs; suspended signs; billboards; window and door signs; parked or abandoned vehicle signs; inflatable signs; roof signs; painted façade signs; inflatable signs, tethered balloons and blimps, beacons, flags or pennants.

Urban Boulevard: A multi-lane arterial street characterized by curb, gutter and sidewalks, on U.S. 301, particularly between MD 225/Hawthorne Road and Charles Street (MD 6). Travel lanes in each direction are separated by a wide median. Dual function as automobile and pedestrian circulation route.

Urban Form: The spatial arrangement of a particular environment, as defined by the connectivity of built mass and form, the natural environment, and the movement of person, goods and information within.

Vernacular: A building or complex of buildings that relate to, or are characteristic of a period, place or group; especially relating to or being the common building style of a period or place.

Wall Sign: Any sign attached parallel to, but within six inches of a wall, painted on the wall surface of, or erected and confined within the limits of an outside wall of any building or structure, which is supported by such wall or building, and which displays only on sign surface.

Window Sign: Any sign, picture, symbol, or combination thereof, designed to communicate information about an activity, business, commodity, event, sale, or service, that is placed inside a window or upon the window panes or glass and is visible from the exterior of the window.

Woodlands, Existing: Existing trees and shrubs of a number, size and type that approximately accomplish the same function as new plantings.

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Town of La Plata

Commercial Highway District Community Design Guidelines



Welcoming you since 1888

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About This Document

This document presents the Town of La Plata Community Design Guidelines as prepared and approved by the Town Council, the Vision Implementation Team and the Design Review Board. It is an outgrowth of the Vision Plan for Greater La Plata, dated March 10, 2000, and The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata, dated March 15, 2001, and reflects the principles and goals of those two plans as a means of achieving a vision for the long-term future of La Plata.

This document is organized into three parts:

Part I, **Introduction**, provides a brief overview of the design review process.

Part II, **Community Design Guidelines**, outlines the intent and guidelines for each category under consideration in the design review process, with supporting illustrations and photographs.

Part III, **Appendix**, contains a glossary to clarify the meaning of certain design terms plus a bibliography.

The La Plata municipal government has enjoyed a long history of effective planning, and this document is intended to support the existing policies adopted by the Town Council. In addition to the Vision Plan, the Community Design Guidelines fulfill the goals, objectives, principles and standards of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan and all relevant chapters of the Town Code.

Statement of Purpose

The Vision Plan for Greater La Plata outlines the future for the Town and the greater La Plata area in broad terms. Based on extensive input from key stakeholders within the community, the Vision Plan describes the collective needs and aspirations of its citizens. The Vision Plan was followed by The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata, which lays out in greater detail the implementation strategy for both short- and long-term improvements, which would result in a cohesive urban design for the Town of La Plata.

Building upon the historic features and character of the Town, the implementation plan emphasizes the need for shaping a livable, walkable and vibrant downtown. In addition, the Vision Plan includes specific recommendations for the commercial areas and the highway corridor that work to integrate these areas with the Town center. Special attention is given to upgrading the appearance of the Rte 301 corridor, creating a tree-lined urban boulevard united by signage, landscaping and new development in a “campus” pattern. This highway corridor serves as an important gateway and approach to the Town from both the north and the south.

The purpose of the design review process is to foster the development of high quality and innovative designs, which support the collective vision for the Town. The design guidelines are intended to aid property owners, developers and designers in understanding the Town’s urban design expectations. The design review process brings people together to ensure that these expectations can be met for all proposed development within the Town.

These design guidelines apply only to new development, redevelopment and/or additions to existing buildings within the Commercial Highway District (C-H). The principles and goals for design review should be applied to all planning and design for development, redevelopment, and/or additions to existing buildings within the area included in the Vision Plan.

Areas subject to design review within the Commercial Highway District are identified on zoning maps by “C-H.” Additional information on the design review process is available from the Town of La Plata, 305 Queen Anne Street, PO Box 2268, La Plata, MD 20646, (301) 934-8421, or on the Town’s website at www.townoflaplata.org.

Design Review in La Plata

The design review process is an important tool in the implementation of the Town's urban design goals. The Town requires design review for all areas and individual buildings within the Central Business, Central Business Transition, and the Commercial Highway Districts.

Design review is conducted by the Design Review Board, a panel of citizens appointed by the Town Council. All members serve as volunteers and represent specific interest and expertise in planning, design and development.

Design review considers many aspects of a given proposal, including siting of buildings, building size, shape and materials, location of parking, landscaping and signage. Design review ensures that new development, as well as alterations to existing buildings, maintain and enhance the integrity and quality of the Town. The review process encourages flexibility, while striving to ensure the aesthetic and functional compatibility of new development with the desired character and economic and social vitality that is articulated in the Vision Plan. During the design review process, a proposal is evaluated against the design guidelines, along with consideration of other development regulations that may influence the proposed project, including compliance with the International Building Code, Maryland State Fire Code, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. In the event of inconsistency or conflict with other development regulations, the stricter of the two requirements shall take precedence.

The review process may vary with the type, size, and location of the proposed project. Proposals are initially reviewed by Town staff and forwarded to the Design Review Board. The process generally takes two to six weeks, depending on the calendar and the complexity of the proposed project. Applicants are encouraged to contact the Design Review Board Staff Representative early in the planning and design of

a proposed project when concept plans for site and building development are being prepared. In addition, applicants are encouraged to notify owners of nearby properties and solicit input from individuals, organizations, and neighborhood associations, as appropriate.

Prior to applying for a building permit, an applicant seeking design review for a property within the Commercial Highway District must complete the following steps:

1. Complete and submit the Application for Design Review with supporting materials
2. Present the proposed project to the Design Review Board for review and evaluation
3. Receive approval from the Design Review Board
4. Present the proposed project to the Planning Commission for review and approval, if required

Refer to the Design Review application for meeting dates and deadlines, plus a list and number of required supporting materials. The application is available on the Town's website.

Applicants will present their projects to the Design Review Board for review and interactive discussion of all relevant issues. Following project presentations, the Design Review Board will evaluate projects and render decisions for approval, approval with conditions, or disapproval. Applicants may receive final decisions on the day of the design review. Projects approved with conditions must be resubmitted to staff for review and recommendation to the Design Review Board. An additional meeting with the Design Review Board may be required for final review and approval.

Decisions of the Design Review Board may be appealed to the Town Board of Appeals in accordance with the Town Code.

Goals for Community Design Review

The goals for design review are intended to preserve the Town’s heritage, enhance its livability, and improve its design quality. La Plata’s development history has been different from that of many other Southern Maryland towns. Its beginnings are not clearly rooted in the Colonial, Federal, or Georgian periods of architectural style. Rather, La Plata emerged as a town in the late 19th century as a railroad center in the midst of an agrarian economy. As such, its early architectural character was “typical of that popular in newly founded small western towns between the Civil War and the turn of the 20th century” (Wearmouth, 1988, 2001). In the Central Business District, this meant a preponderance of one-, two- and two-and-a-half story detached frame structures, many with gable ends facing the street.

In the Commercial Highway corridor, architectural style and patterns of development have been even more eclectic and poorly organized, resulting in a visual hodge-podge of building materials, signs, and parking lots. Although within the Town limits, there is very little sense of connection between the commercial highway corridor and the historic Town Center.

In addition, many new buildings, new additions and renovations, and other alterations have left the Commercial Highway District with an architectural style and character that is poorly defined and frequently lacks the quality of design and construction that typified the Town in its earlier days.

This lack of cohesive identity was compounded by the devastation of the Commercial Highway District by the tornado of April 28, 2002. However, the redevelopment of the downtown that will occur as a result of the tornado provides a unique opportunity to rebuild according to the principles of the Vision Plan, encouraging urban design excellence throughout the public spaces and private properties that make up the

Town of La Plata. The work of the Washington Architectural Foundation and the resulting report from the Emergency Urban Planning Charrettes illustrate many of the ideas and principles that can be incorporated into the rebuilding of La Plata.

The Vision Implementation Team expressed the preference that new development be based on the style of the late 19th and early 20th century examples that typify La Plata’s historical development. These examples are recognized as the core for developing a pattern of identity upon which future development can be based. However, it is important to note that diversity and variety of building types have also characterized La Plata’s historical development. Thus, a strong commitment to quality in urban design— a building’s location, size, shape and relationship to its surroundings today—and a well-designed public streetscape should be more important than strict adherence to, or replication of, any single architectural style from the past.

The objectives for Design Review include the following:

1. To encourage better design and site planning that will enhance the character of the Town and ensure that new development and redevelopment fulfill the goals of the Vision Plan.
2. To provide flexibility in the application of design guidelines.
3. To improve communication and participation among developers, neighbors and the Town early in the design and siting of new development and redevelopment.

Using Design Guidelines in the Design Review Process

The following Design Guidelines lay out the criteria that should be met as part of the design review process. They inform property owners, developers, and the community as to what issues will be addressed during the design review process. The guidelines state broader concepts than typical development standards in order to provide flexibility to designers and property owners to encourage designs that are innovative but appropriate to their locations. Applicants should be prepared to explain how their design meets or satisfies each applicable guideline.

During the design review process, the Design Review Board must determine how the proposal meets each of the applicable design guidelines. Proposals that meet all applicable guidelines will be approved; proposals that do not meet the applicable guidelines will not be approved.

The Design Review Board may add conditions to their approval of a project or may ask an applicant to revise the design to address specific deficiencies in order to be approved.

Waiver of Individual Design Guidelines

The Town recognizes that some of the guidelines may not be applicable in all cases, depending on the size or nature of a proposed project. In some cases, individual guidelines may be waived during the design review process. For example, an applicable guideline may be waived when the proposed design better meets the goals of design review than would mere compliance.

If a waiver is considered, applicants should explain how the goals are better met in the proposed design. Allowing the waiver of one or more guidelines during the design review process reflects the Town's concern that the design guidelines not become a rigid set of requirements that stifle innovation or increase design and construction costs prohibitively.

Framework of the Guidelines

The Town of La Plata Community Design Guidelines implement the urban design principles contained in the Vision Plan for Greater La Plata and The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata. The Design Guidelines recognize and encourage the participation of private property owners and public servants in a collaborative and cooperative urban design partnership, which is essential to the realization of the intentions embodied in the Vision Plan.

Based on the Vision Plan, the Design Guidelines contain six key sections:

- Section A. Site Planning
- Section B. Building Design
- Section C. The Streetscape
- Section D. Amenities for the Public
- Section E. Vehicular Access & Parking
- Section F. Signage

Using the Guidelines

Design guidelines are qualitative statements that address the desired character of a development or project. Rather than being quantitative requirements, the guidelines are intended to provide flexibility for property owners and their design professionals in achieving the goals of the Vision Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and other key planning and development requirements.

Each design guideline has a title, a statement of intent, and guideline language, accompanied by diagrams and photographs which illustrate each concept. The guideline language is adopted by ordinance and represents the approval criteria against which the Design Review Board will evaluate a project and render a decision. The examples shown should not be considered as the only possible design solutions. The captions and examples are not adopted and can be easily updated as new projects are built.

- Section A: Site Planning
- A1 Building Location and Orientation
 - A2 Parking Lot Orientation
 - A3 Open Space and Central Features
 - A4 Pedestrian Flow
 - A5 Landscaping
 - A6 Landscaped Buffer Yard
 - A7 Lighting
 - A8 Screening
 - A9 Stormwater Management

- Section B: Building Design
- B1 Surrounding Context
 - B2 Transition Between Commercial and Residential Uses
 - B3 Massing
 - B4 Corner Buildings
 - B5 Multiple Entrances
 - B6 Prominent Entrances
 - B7 Façade Transparency
 - B8 Blank Walls
 - B9 Rear Facades
 - B10 Roof Form
 - B11 Screening Rooftop Equipment
 - B12 Building Materials
 - B13 Fences and Walls

- Section C: The Streetscape
- C1 Pedestrian Interaction
 - C2 Human Scale
 - C3 Active Building Façades
 - C4 Weather Protection
 - C5 Site Furnishings

- Section D: Amenities for the Public
- D1 Sense of Place
 - D2 Unifying Elements
 - D3 Sidewalk Activities
 - D4 Personal Safety & Security
 - D5 Public Transportation

- Section E: Vehicular Access & Parking
- E1 Curb Cut Impacts
 - E2 Parking Lot Design
 - E3 Parking Lot Landscaping
 - E4 Pedestrian Connections
 - E5 Drive-through Lanes

- Section F: Signage
- F1 General Guidelines
 - F2 Design
 - F3 Illumination

Appendix

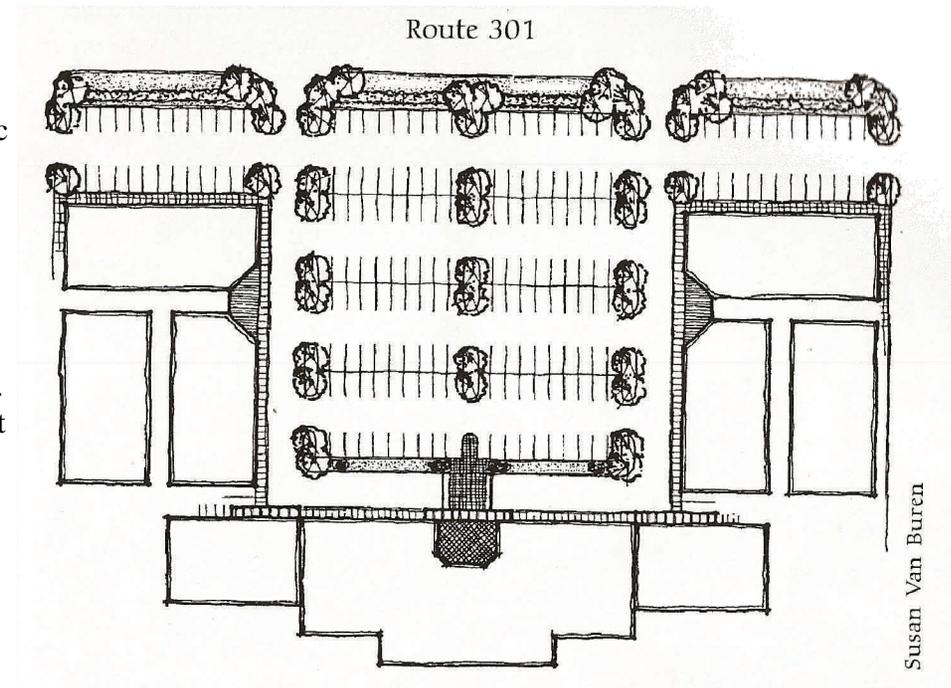
A1 Buildings Along the Street

Intent:

To shape the community identity through the organized relationship of buildings to the roadway corridor and to each other.

Guideline:

1. Align new buildings adjacent to existing buildings to match the façade of the building which is closet to the street.
2. Orient buildings to optimize the amount of frontage along the public right-of-way.
3. Design larger developments so that buildings are clustered in a campus pattern, facing internal access drives and creating strong street edges. The front of the building should face the center of the campus.
4. Where large parking areas exist in front of commercial developments, develop additional buildings along the road frontage.
5. Locate multi-story buildings with noteworthy architectural design at prominent sites, such as the termination of vistas and on high points, to serve as landmarks.



Buildings arranged in a “campus” pattern around off-street parking.

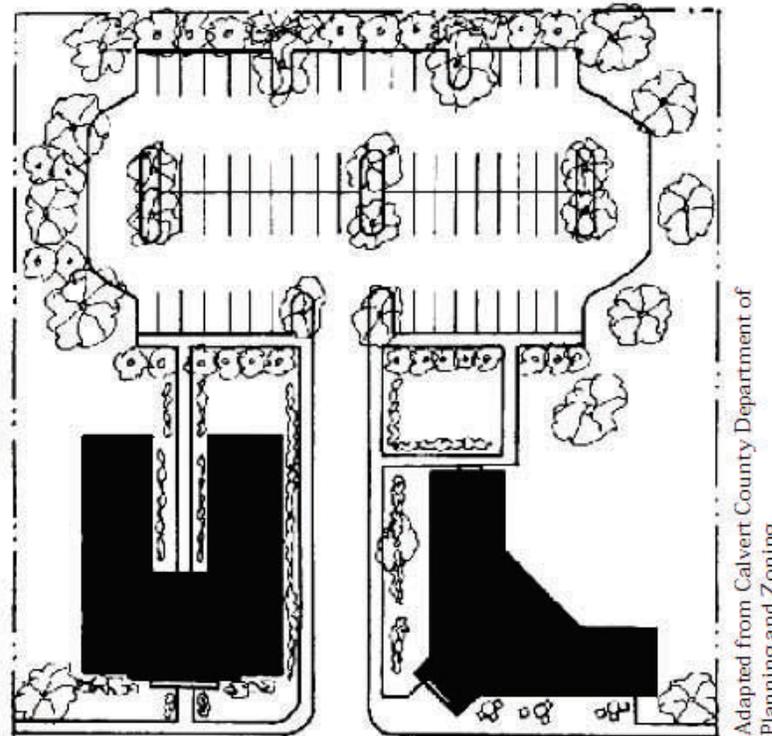
A2 Parking Lot Orientation

Intent:

To provide safe, convenient and efficient pedestrian access to commercial buildings.

Guideline:

1. Design and locate parking areas to minimize the separation of buildings from the roadway, as well as from each other (building-to-building) along the corridor.
2. Encourage the placement of parking in the rear and at the sides of commercial buildings, with provision made for convenient and well-defined access from parking areas to the building(s) being served.



Buildings are located close to the street creating a strong street “edge”, with parking located behind the building.

A3 Open Space and Central Features

Intent:

To develop public open spaces as central features that promote a visually pleasing, safe, and active environment for workers, residents and visitors.

Guideline:

1. Provide attractive and inviting pedestrian-scale features, spaces and amenities as part of the design of buildings and developments.
2. Incorporate public open spaces such as squares, plazas and courtyards into site plans in response to the unique conditions of the site or project.
3. Where a commercial or mixed-use building is set back from a walkway, pedestrian enhancements or special features such as furniture, sitting walls, decorative lighting and artwork, should be considered.



The patio and fountain at Centennial Street in La Plata provides an attractive focal point as well as a pleasant seating area for pedestrians along the street.

A4 Pedestrian Flow

Intent:

To create opportunities for connections between the Commercial Highway District and adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Guideline:

1. Provide internal pedestrian walkways from the public sidewalk or right-of-way to the principal customer entrance of all major buildings on a site.
2. Connect focal points of pedestrian activity such as transit stops, street crossings, and building and store entrances.
3. Define pedestrian ways by special design features such as towers, arcades, porticos, pedestrian light fixtures, bollards, planter walls, and other architectural elements that define circulation ways and outdoor spaces.
4. Provide sidewalks, no less than 5' in width, along the full length of the building façade featuring a customer entrance.
5. Distinguish pedestrian walkways from driving surfaces through the use of durable, low maintenance surface materials such as pavers, bricks, or scored concrete to enhance pedestrian safety and comfort.
6. Provide a system of internal pedestrian circulation that connects at all reasonable points to the surrounding neighborhood and adjacent businesses.



A5 Landscaping

Intent:

To enhance the building, site and highway corridor with generous landscaping, including special paving, planters, trellises, and site furniture, as well as living plant material.

Guideline:

1. Emphasize entries with special planting in conjunction with decorative paving and/or lighting.
2. Incorporate strong landscaping elements, including mature trees, to enhance the place but not detract from retail site lines.
3. Include special features such as courtyards or fountains.
4. Soften the building by screening blank walls, adding terracing or sitting walls, or other landscape features.
5. Incorporate a planter guard or low planter wall as part of the architecture or site design.
6. Select plants Hardy in Zone 7 for year-round interest, low maintenance and low water demand, utilizing species native to the area wherever possible.
7. Coordinate private property landscaping with public right-of-way trees and other plantings.
8. Incorporate Low impact Development stormwater management techniques and practices in landscaped areas wherever possible.



Below: The storm water management feature is incorporated into the landscaping features and is executed in an appealing way.



A6 Landscaped Buffer Yard

Intent:

To identify and distinguish the Commercial Highway District as an important gateway to the Town and path to the historic Town Center, framed by an avenue of trees and shrubs.

To develop a clustered “campus” pattern that includes extensive landscaping to enclose paces, fragment large areas of parking, and provide seasonal interest and color.

Guideline:

1. Provide a landscaped buffer yard between the edge of the public right-of-way and the building setback.
2. Plantings for the landscaped buffer yard should include a combination of canopy trees, understory trees, evergreen trees, shrubs, and groundcovers, as well as annual and perennial flowers for seasonal interest. Intensity of plantings may decrease as the depth of the buffer yard increases.
3. Berms may be included as part of the landscape design to provide additional buffering between the roadway and adjacent parking lots. Fences may not be used in the landscaped buffer.
4. The landscaped buffer yard may not include any paved area except access drives, pedestrian sidewalks or trails that cross the buffer yard.
5. Maintain the landscaped buffer yard free from encroachment by any use, structure, or feature not a part of the landscape design.
6. Seed all buffer yard areas in accordance with the permanent stabilization and seeding notes of the Charles County Soil Conservation District



Aerial View



Ground View

The landscaped buffer yard along route 301 and the Rosewick Shopping center include plantings with seasonal interest and a combination of trees.

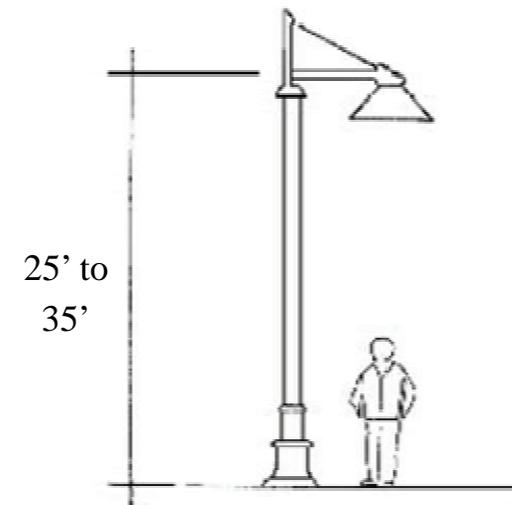
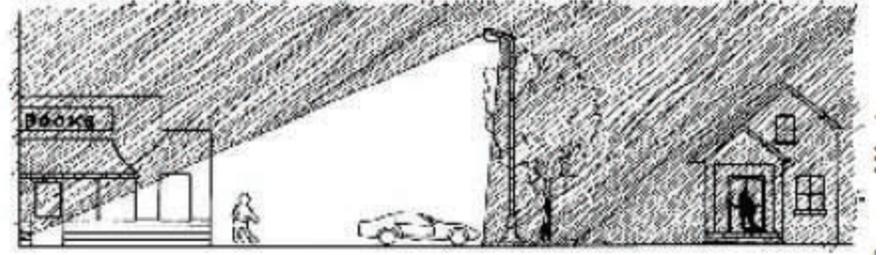
A7 Lighting

Intent:

To provide a sense of security, assuring safe and comfortable walking along streets and through parking areas. To ensure that site lighting contributes to the character and promotes the activities of the businesses in the highway corridor.

Guideline:

1. Provide adequate illumination to provide a sense of security in walking to parking areas and buildings.
2. Illuminate walkways adjacent to crosswalks and other areas of pedestrian/vehicular interaction.
3. Use exterior lighting to highlight the building's architecture and open spaces.
4. Utilize energy-efficient decorative lighting styles and fixtures as part of the overall site design. Lighting should be consistent in style, design, size and color throughout the development and surrounding area.
5. Integrate exterior lighting and its structural components with the building's overall design.
6. Limit the pole height of lighting fixtures in commercial shopping centers and office parks to 35 feet, but no more than 25 feet when located adjacent to residential development. Limit the pole height of lighting fixtures for individual business to 25 feet.
7. Maintain parking lot light poles and fixtures of the same style, height, color, and intensity of lighting throughout the development area. Varying styles of fixtures may be included if it is demonstrated that the styles contribute to an overall theme for the area.
8. Avoid disruptive lighting that spills over onto adjacent properties and into nighttime skies.
9. Coordinate lighting fixtures on private property with public right-of-way lighting standards in the streetscape.





Above: The dumpster enclosure is made of permanent materials that match the materials used on the building.

Below: A screen wall that matches the building to the right completely conceals a service entry and dumpster.



A8 Screening

Intent:

To reduce the adverse visual impact of service, loading and trash storage areas.

Guideline:

1. Locate service areas for trash collection, loading docks, propane/oil tanks, and mechanical equipment away from the street front to the rear of buildings.
2. Locate the opening to the service area away from the sidewalk.
3. Screen from view all service, loading and trash collection areas by a combination of permanent walls, fencing and/or planting.
4. Define non-enclosed areas for storage and sale of seasonal inventory with permanent walls and/or fences that are coordinated with the design, materials and colors of the building.
5. Coordinate the design and materials of all enclosures with the architectural design of the primary structure.
6. Eliminate the use of chain link fencing, barbed wire and razor ribbon.

A9 Stormwater Management

Intent:

To encourage developers and property owners to design natural stormwater management systems, such as wet ponds, and integrate them as amenity features of the development.

Guideline:

1. Encourage the use of storm water facilities as landscaped features of new development.
2. Design storm water detention areas to create high quality focal points or entrance features.
3. Minimize the amount of impervious surfaces in new development through the use of appropriate surfaces in new development through the use of appropriate low maintenance techniques, and the removal of paved areas in existing developments, where applicable, to minimize runoff.
4. Incorporate Low Impact Development storm water management techniques and practices in landscaped areas wherever possible.
5. Discourage the use of dry ponds and chain link fences.
6. Maintain all storm water facilities free of trash and debris in accordance with a maintenance plan.



The Stormwater Management Pond uses a wood fence and shrubberies to “soften” the look of the pond and make it seem more of a high quality focal point.

B1 Surrounding Context

Intent:

To ensure that infill and new development is compatible with the context of adjacent or nearby buildings and neighborhoods.

Guideline:

1. Develop an architectural concept and compose the major building elements to reinforce desirable features such as details and materials existing in the surrounding building context.
2. For freestanding buildings or pad sites in shopping centers the architecture and signage should reflect the style and materials of the shopping center in which the building or site is located.
3. Arrange the building size, shape and materials in response to one or more of the following, if present:
 - A. Neighboring buildings that have employed distinctive and effective massing compositions.
 - B. A surrounding district or buildings of similar or consistent material or style.
 - C. An adjacent or nearby landmark, institution or noteworthy building.



This bank's architecture incorporates elements of design present in the surrounding shopping center.

B2 Transition Between Commercial and Residential Uses**Intent:**

To ensure compatibility and distinction between the more intensive uses of the Commercial Highway corridor and the lower intensity uses of adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Guideline:

1. Design multi-story commercial buildings to include lower roof heights for portions that are close to single family residential neighborhoods with lower roof heights.
2. Include additional architectural treatments such as windows, prominent doorways and canopies on any side of a building visible from the ground level of an adjacent single family neighborhood.
3. Include office use above ground level retail uses wherever feasible.
4. Screen all service areas in accordance with the recommendations under Section A8, "Screening."



The clinic building incorporates features which are compatible with the adjacent townhomes including the building materials, the roof height and style, and the front porch.

B3 Massing

Intent:

To create well-proportioned buildings with a coherent architectural concept that exhibits forms and features that reflect the functions contained within the building.

Guideline:

1. Wherever possible, encourage the construction of buildings that are two or more stories in height.
2. Incorporate smaller retail and office spaces into large buildings and shopping centers to create a more inciting appearance and expand the range of activities.
3. Reduce the apparent bulk of a building by providing a clearly delineated “base,” “middle,” and “top.”
4. Provide variety and interest in the design of the building façade through the use of rhythm, pattern and proportion as part of a coherent whole.
5. Include a variety of roof heights and forms to articulate different areas and uses.
6. Surround big box retail buildings with “sleeves” of retail and service uses to minimize blank walls and dead spaces.
7. Customize shop fronts to promote diverse and distinct business activities.
8. Integrate the different building and design elements including, but not limited to construction materials, roofs, entrances, as well as minor details, to achieve a coherent composition.



The above photo of the Rosewick Shopping Center in La Plata demonstrates how using variety on form, color and design creates visual rhythm and interest. Individual stores are articulated by architectural features.

B4 Corner Buildings

Intent:

To use distinctive buildings to create defined and active intersections and focal points that stimulate human interest, comfort and use throughout the highway corridor.

Guideline:

1. Use design elements such as varying building heights, large ground level windows, awnings and canopies, signs and visually prominent pedestrian entrances to highlight corner buildings. (See B6: Prominent Entrances.)
2. Locate sidewalk-level retail stores and businesses at building corners to connect areas of activity within the highway corridor.



Two buildings located on corner lots with angled entrances oriented to two street fronts.

B5 Multiple Entrances

Intent:

Multiple building entrances reduce walking distances from cars, facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access from public sidewalks, and provide convenient, easy access to individual stores.

Guideline:

1. Orient large retail buildings to feature at least one customer entrance on each side facing an abutting public street or major parking area.
2. Design large buildings to create the appearance of multiple entrances and storefronts at a more pedestrian scale.
3. Utilize multiple entrances to mitigate the effect of unbroken walls and unattractive areas that face bordering land uses.



Within this planned shopping center pedestrian comfort has been incorporated into the design. Each business has an individual entrance onto a wide covered walkway that spans the entire frontage of the multi-tenant building.

B6 Prominent Entrances

Intent:

To promote pedestrian comfort, safety and orientation through building entrances that are inciting, logical, easily identifiable and accessible, and clearly visible from streets, parking lots and sidewalks.

Guideline:

1. Orient buildings to present the primary façade toward the frontage with the highest pedestrian activity, with the principal entrance in full view.
2. Distinguish the principal entry to the building through the use of special treatments which may include, but are not limited to, any of the following:
 - A. Ornamentation
 - B. Recessed entrance
 - C. Protruding entrance
 - D. Canopy or awning
3. Where additional stores are located within a principal building, consider at least one exterior customer entrance distinguished by an of the above special treatments.
4. Design entries and associated open spaces to avoid the creation of isolated areas and to maintain lines of sight into and out of the building and adjacent spaces.



It is easy to spot a well –lit and welcoming entrance.

B7 Façade Transparency

Intent:

To enliven the pedestrian environment through visual and physical connections between activities inside and outside the building.

Guideline:

1. Articulate the sidewalk level façade to provide an engaging pedestrian experience through open arcades and shop fronts, multiple building entries, merchandising display windows, and windows that encourage pedestrians to peer into the building interior.
2. Include windows with clear glass allowing views into the interior on all ground floor facades that are visible from and fronting on an abutting street or major parking area.
3. On commercial building facades that are visible from a major arterial or pedestrian street provide windows on the ground floor that allow views into the interior.
4. Design buildings for flexibility to accommodate changes in use over time and minimize future renovation costs.



Ground to floor windows let passers-by see what is happening within the building, during day and night time hours of operation.



B8 Blank Walls

Intent:

To provide active, attractive walls facing adjacent streets, parking areas, sidewalk and residential neighborhoods.

Guideline:

1. Walls, or portions of walls, which have few entries or windows should receive special design treatment to increase pedestrian safety, comfort and visual interest.
2. Special treatments may include any of the following:
 - A. Limited lengths of blank walls
 - B. Accent courses of a different color or texture
 - C. Landscaped areas or raised planting beds
 - D. Small setbacks, indentations, or projections to create rhythm
 - E. Different textures, colors or materials to break up the surface
 - F. Canopies, awnings, trellises
 - G. Artwork, either freestanding or as murals
 - H. Seating ledges or perches
 - I. Special lighting



Above: Accent courses in contrasting color and orientation as well as columns liven up this long brick wall.



Left: Multiple colors, textures, indentations and massing add interest to this front façade of a local big-box retailer.

B9 Rear Facades**Intent:**

To reduce the impact of unattractive views of blank walls, loading and storage areas, mechanical units and trash collection.

Guideline:

1. Where a rear building façade faces an adjacent residential use, provide an earthen berm, no less than 6 feet in height, containing a mix of evergreen shrubs, trees and groundcovers.
2. Enhance the facades and surfaces adjacent to rear parking areas to create access ways that are visible, safe, and welcoming for drivers and pedestrians.
3. Enliven and enhance entrances to parking areas by extending storefront detailing around the corner to side walls.
4. Install effective lighting to enhance visibility and safety for pedestrians and drivers alike. Refer to Section A7: Lighting.
5. Screen all service areas in accordance with Section A8: Screening.



With the use of lighting fixtures, window canopies, and imitation windows as well as landscaping and clear walkways, this service entrance and loading zone is attractive and efficient.

B10 Roof Form

Intent:

To ensure that roof lines present a distinct profile and appearance for the building and enhance the character of the highway corridor.

Guidelines:

1. Incorporate variations in roof lines to add interest to, and reduce the massive scale of, large commercial buildings.
2. Complement the character of adjoining neighborhoods through similar roof features and shapes.
3. Integrate roof function, shape, surface materials, and colors with the building's overall design.
4. On gabled roofs, provide a minimum slope of 6:12 and a maximum slope of 12:12, especially to highlight major entrances.
5. On flat or shed-roofed buildings, incorporate projecting cornices or other architectural features to create a prominent edge.
6. Articulate long, interrupted expanses of roof with special treatments such as dormers and turned gables.



B11 Screening Rooftop Equipment

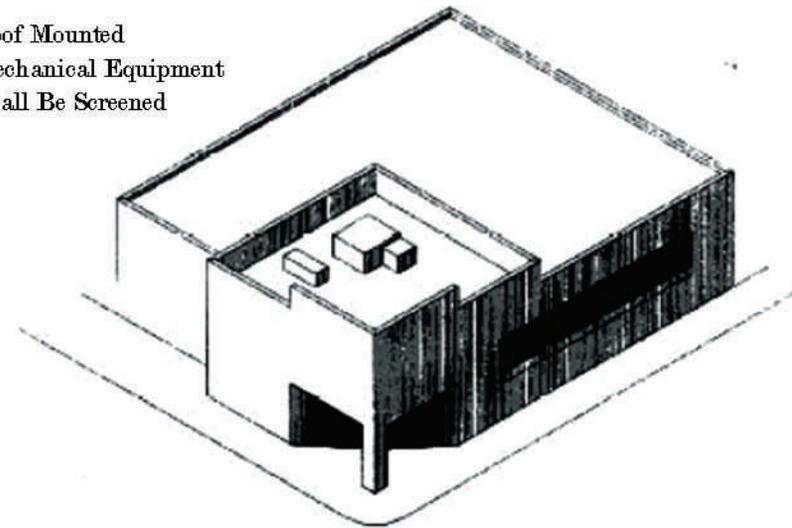
Intent:

To screen views of rooftop mechanical and communications equipment from the ground level of nearby streets and residential areas.

Guideline:

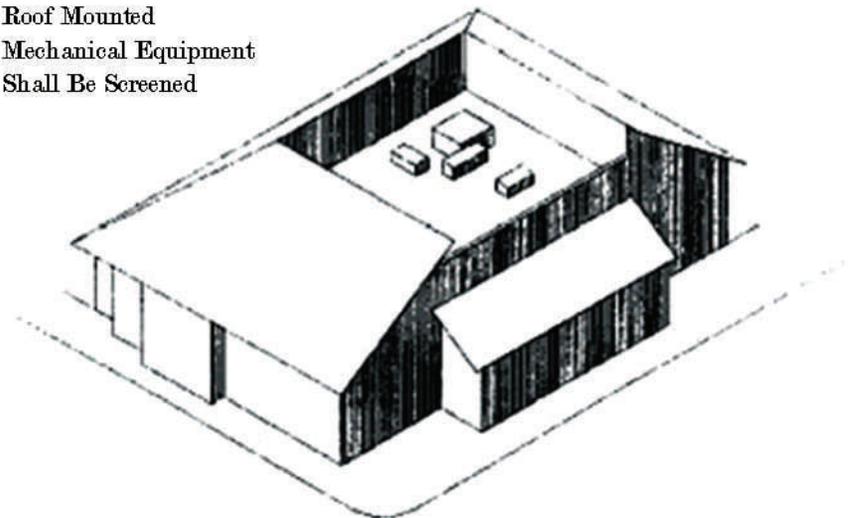
1. Screen mechanical and transmission equipment with extended parapet walls or other permanent roof forms that are integrated with the architecture of the building.
2. Painting mechanical equipment, erecting rooftop fences and attaching mansard-style roofs are not acceptable methods of screening.
3. Roof Access ladder should be located inside the building or painted to match the façade.

Roof Mounted
Mechanical Equipment
Shall Be Screened



Pierce County, Washington

Roof Mounted
Mechanical Equipment
Shall Be Screened



B12 Building Materials

Intent:

To encourage the use of high quality, permanent and compatible materials that will upgrade the visual image of the highway corridor.

Guidelines:

1. Utilize high quality, durable materials that reflect the Town's traditional main street character including, but not limited to brick, wood, wood appearance (vinyl, aluminum and concrete) siding, shingles, stucco, stone and cast stone.
2. Limit the use of concrete block to side and rear walls which are not visible from the street and areas of public use. Use of painted block is discouraged. Treat concrete block in one or more of the following ways:
 - A. Textured surface such as split face or grooved
 - B. Use of other masonry types such as brick or tile
 - C. Use of decorative coursing or color
3. Avoid highly tinted or mirrored glass as a major building element.
4. Use the natural color of materials such as brick, stone, and stained or painted woods. Reserve bright colors for trim or accents.
5. Consider the color of neighboring buildings when selecting colors for repainting or remodeling existing structures and for new structures.



B13 Fences and Walls

Intent:

To create attractive, permanent site features that contribute to the character and visual quality of the highway corridor.

Guideline:

1. Coordinate the design of free-standing fences and walls to reflect the design, materials and colors of the principal building being served.
2. All fences and walls should present the finished non-structural face outward.
3. Locate fences and walls at intersections to maintain clear sight lines within the sight visibility triangle.
4. Chain link fencing is not permitted in front yard areas adjacent to any major public right-of-way. Discourage the use of chain link fencing in all others areas on the site.
5. Electrified, barbed wire, and razor ribbon fences are not permitted within the Commercial Highway District.



This wall edging a walkway on Centennial Street elegantly defines the pedestrian realm by repeating design elements from the adjacent buildings.

C1 Pedestrian Interaction

Intent:

To create sidewalk level spaces and activities that are safe, comfortable, welcoming and open to the general public.

Guideline:

1. Provide spaces for sidewalk level uses that enhance main pedestrian links between areas and reinforce connections between retail and business activities.
2. Promote use of the street front for friendly interaction through entrances, arcades, open spaces, seating areas, and product displays.
3. Recess portions of a building back from the sidewalk to create spaces for pedestrian-oriented activities such as vending, resting, sitting, or dining.
4. Develop pocket parks and public spaces that incorporate amenities such as drinking fountains and sitting areas for patrons and the general public.



This small pavilion serves multiple purposes on the site. It shelters shoppers waiting for a VanGo shuttle and store employees enjoying a work break. Permanent seating and conveniently located trash receptacles add comfort and style

C2 Human Scale

Intent:

To ensure that building facades are composed of elements scaled to promote pedestrian comfort, safety and orientation.

Guideline:

1. Design architectural features, window patterns and material compositions to refer to the scale of human activities that take place both within and outside the building.
2. Incorporate building modulations and articulated structural bays to establish a human-scale framework.
3. Incorporate transparent windows at the sidewalk level to provide interest and activity along the sidewalk and provide an inviting source of secondary lighting at night.



This small outdoor dining area incorporates several features which make it appealing to the public—shade, security, site furniture, adequate lighting and color.

C3 Active Building Facades

Intent:

To ensure that building facades directly reinforce pedestrian activity at the sidewalk.

Guideline:

1. Develop visual and physical connections into a buildings' active interior spaces from adjacent sidewalks.
2. Use architectural elements such as atriums, grand entries and large ground-level windows to reveal important interior spaces and activities.
3. Integrate building setbacks with adjacent sidewalks to increase the space for potential public use.



This building catches the eye by employing color, texture, pattern and views of activity.

C4 Weather Protection

Intent:

To ensure pedestrian comfort and safety along major pedestrian walkways.

Guideline:

1. Develop integrated weather protection systems at the sidewalk level of buildings to mitigate the effects of heat, bright sun, rain, and wind on pedestrians.
2. Incorporate overhead weather protection to help define the pedestrian space and reduce the scale of large buildings.
3. Incorporate lighting beneath canopies and awnings to create intimacy and promote a sense of security.
4. Design awnings and canopies as part of the overall architectural concept.



Awnings used to define the pedestrian corridor and provide weather protection.

C5 Site Furnishings**Intent:**

To create a more pedestrian friendly street through the use of site furnishings along the buildings and walkways and in open spaces available to the public.

Guideline:

1. Include site furnishings such as benches, tables, bike racks and trash receptacles at building entrances, plazas, pocket parks and other open spaces.
2. Design or select site furnishings as an integral part of the architectural design of the primary structure(s).
3. Coordinate the selection of location, style and materials for site furnishings with the recommendations of the La Plata Streetscape Project.



Use of site furnishings encourages pedestrians to pause and enjoy these pocket garden areas.

D1 Sense of Place

Intent:

To create a distinct, attractive and memorable “sense of place” associated with the community, and a safe and energized environment.

Guideline:

1. Provide special unifying elements within public open spaces, or on the roadsides to create a special identity and/or focal point for the highway corridor.
2. Enliven intersections by treating corners and gateways with special landscaping, public art and other elements that promote interaction and reinforce or create a distinctive character for the surrounding area.
3. Incorporate one or more of the following, as appropriate, into new development:
 - A. Public art
 - B. Street furniture such as seating, kiosks, newspaper boxes
 - C. Distinctive landscaping
 - D. Kiosks
 - E. Public seating areas, especially near open spaces, bus stops, vending areas
4. Emphasize the creation or promotion of themes.
5. Use compelling, informative, and consistent signage to tell the story of the place.



Seasonal decorations, thematic signage and vintage light fixtures add a unique

D2 Unifying Elements

Intent:

To link new development with existing development along the highway corridor and within the downtown.

Guideline:

1. Integrate existing unifying elements, e.g. curving brick walls, and/or develop new features to help unify and connect individual buildings and different areas.
2. Use the highway corridor street as a unifying element through the use of extensive landscaping, focal points, and special treatments at gateways and intersections.
3. Link areas of the highway corridor with similar elements, e.g. building materials, fencing design, outdoor lighting, awnings.
4. Coordinate private property elements such as landscaping, lighting and furniture with elements of the public streetscape.



On Centennial Street, the repetition of building materials, accent features, signs and light fixtures create a cohesive whole.

Site Furnishings such as matching benches and trash bins can unify a development

D3 Sidewalk Activities

Intent:

To ensure that there is a minimum clear, unobstructed walking route along sidewalks.

Guideline:

1. Temporary sidewalk sales activities are allowed and encouraged in areas of sufficient width to accommodate special activities as well as smooth pedestrian flow.
2. Locate outdoor restaurant seating, planters, signs and other activities to leave a 5' minimum clear pathway free of obstructions.
3. Construct sidewalks to allow comfortable side-by-side walking, providing a minimum of 5' of paved surface.



Room for an outdoor dining area was incorporated into both of these business' sidewalk and entrances.

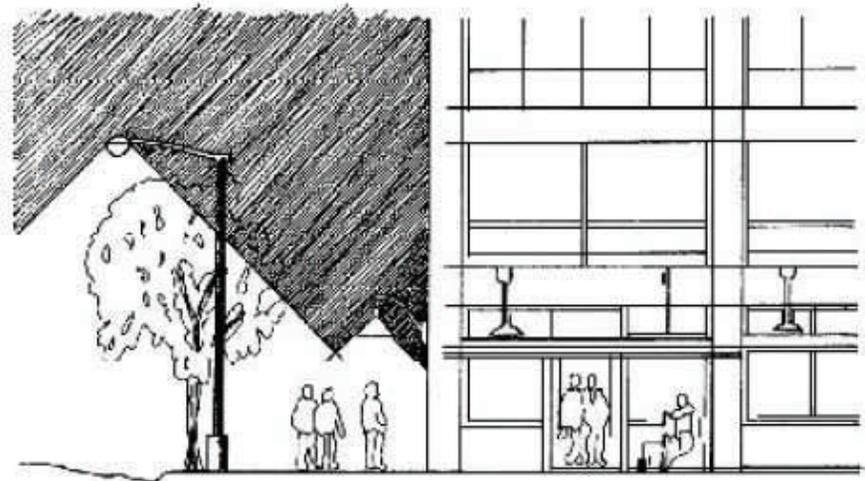
D4 Personal Safety & Security

Intent:

To design buildings and sites to promote a feeling of personal safety and security.

Guideline:

1. Consider the following to help promote safety for the residents, workers, shoppers, and visitors:
 - A. provide adequate lighting at a pedestrian or human scale
 - B. retain clear lines of sight into and out of entries and open spaces
 - C. use landscaping that maintains or enhances visibility
 - D. design parking areas to allow easy surveillance by maintaining clean lines of sight for those who park there, for pedestrians passing by and for occupants of nearby buildings.
 - E. install clear directional signage
 - F. encourage “eyes on the street” through the placement of windows and street level activities



D5 Public Transportation**Intent:**

To encourage the use of ridesharing, public transit, and other mass transportation options through the design of comfortable, safe, and conveniently located facilities.

Guidelines:

1. Encourage, through community design, the orientation of development to ridesharing, transit, bus, or other mass transportation.
2. Encourage transit-oriented developments that coordinate transportation services with basic community services such as dry cleaners, food shopping and daycare facilities.
3. Provide shelters and route information at bus stops and park-and-ride lots, where appropriate.



A shelter at the local mass transit commuter lot provides a safe and well-lit spot to check the community notice board while waiting for a bus or carpool.

E1 Curb Cut Impacts

Intent:

To minimize adverse impacts of curb cuts on 1) the safety and comfort of pedestrians and drivers, 2) opportunities for landscaping and street trees, and 3) other uses that promote an attractive and visually cohesive corridor.

Guidelines:

1. Encourage access to parking areas by way of shared and consolidated entry drives at mutual property lines.
2. Minimize the number of curb cuts and locate them away from street intersections.
3. Minimize the width of the curb cut, driveway, and/or garage opening.
4. Locate and size curb cuts to facilitate smooth entrance onto and exit from thoroughfares.
5. Share driveways with adjacent property owners and parking lots.
6. Provide specialty paving where driveways cross the sidewalk.
7. Locate driveway on side streets to be visually less dominant and obtrusive on the highway corridor.



Curb Cuts have been limited in this planned shopping center, and multiple businesses share a single prominent entrance.

E2 Parking Lot Design

Intent:

To provide safe, convenient access to and within sites without diminishing the quality of pedestrian walking or the visual quality of surrounding areas.

Guidelines:

1. Limit the number of curb cut entrances and exits through shared access with adjoining property owners.
2. Create interparcel connections to permit vehicular movement between adjacent commercial properties.
3. Minimize the amount of street frontage occupied by parking and driveways by locating parking lots to the side and rear of buildings to the greatest extent possible.

4. Design parking wheel stop placement to respect pedestrian walkways and circulation paths.
5. Within the interior of the parking lot, use landscaping to delineate vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns.
6. Utilize clear and legible signs, colored and textured paving materials, raised areas, and other techniques to direct the flow of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic within the lot.
7. Pave all off-street vehicular use areas with asphalt or concrete. The use of pervious pavement materials is encouraged, where appropriate.
8. Provide bicycle parking racks in close proximity to building entrances, as need demands.
9. Provide handicap accessible parking close to building entrances.



Customer parking has been clustered behind the building on this bank site. Inter parcel connections with the adjacent store and joint use of the entry from route 301 have also been accommodated.

E3 Parking Lot Landscaping

Intent:

To protect and improve the appearance of the Commercial Highway District by reducing the visual impact of large areas of parking.
 To provide adequate shade to reduce the amount of reflected heat and glare, and improve the pedestrian environment.
 To channelize and define logical areas for pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

Guidelines:

1. Provide interior planting for any parking lot which is 7,000 square feet or larger and in accordance with the following sliding scale for larger parcels:

<u>Total Area of Lot Area</u>	Percentage of the total area Of lot which must be <u>Interior Planting</u>
7,000 — 49,999 s.f.	5%
50,000 — 149,999 s.f.	8%
150,000 s.f. or larger	10%

2. Break up large paved areas with interior landscaping, including a variety of shade trees, shrubs, groundcovers and perennials for seasonal interest. Options may include the following:
 - A. Provide a continuous landscape strip between every four rows of parking. This should be a minimum of eight feet in width to accommodate a low hedge and shade trees.
 - B. Create large planting islands (over 600 square feet) to be located throughout the lot and planted with shade trees, low shrubs, and/or ground cover.
 - C. Provide planting islands (a minimum of nine feet wide) between every 10 to 15 spaces to avoid long rows of parked cars. Each of these planting islands should provide at least one shade tree having a clear trunk height of at least six feet.
3. Screen parking lots that are visible from adjacent streets through a combination of planting beds, hedges, berms, and/or low walls in accordance with section A6: Landscaped Buffer Yards.
4. Incorporate landscaped bioretention areas, permeable paving materials, and other Low Impact Development practices wherever possible to reduce storm water runoff.



Attractively planted landscape islands minimize the reflected heat and storm water runoff from parking lots.

E4 Pedestrian Connections

Intent:

To create a network of safe, comfortable and attractive walkways for pedestrians.

Guidelines:

1. Within parking lots containing more than 30 spaces, provide clearly defined pedestrian connections between the public right-of-way and building entrances, and between parking lots and building entrances.
2. Design pedestrian connections to be at least five feet wide and unobstructed by signs and utility poles.
3. Clearly define pedestrian connections by any of the following means:
 - A. 6 inch vertical curb
 - B. Textured paving, including across vehicular lanes
 - C. A continuous landscaped area on at least one side of the walkway
4. Provide appropriate smooth surfaces and ramps for wheeled vehicles such as strollers, wheelchairs, and handcarts.



This walkway provides a safe conduit for pedestrians from the street to the store entrances with light fixtures, plantings, and benches.

E5 Drive-through Lanes

Intent:

To ensure that the streetscape environment is lively, walkable and not overwhelmed by the presence of automobiles.

Guidelines:

1. Locate access and stacking lanes serving drive-through businesses at the side or rear of buildings.
2. Minimize the number of curb cuts by coordinating drive-through circulation with parking circulation.
3. Provide safe and clear paths for people crossing drive-through lanes.



This site includes crosswalks for pedestrians crossing the drive-through lane and the drive-through service window is located at the rear/side of the building.

F1 General Guidelines

Intent:

To create, maintain and enhance a distinct, organized and unified sense of place along the U.S. 301 commercial highway corridor. To design signage that is appropriate to the scale and character of the built environment and the Commercial Highway District. To minimize any adverse effect of signs on nearby public and private property.

Guidelines:

1. Design signage to accomplish the following:
 - A. Facilitate rapid orientation and wayfinding
 - B. Reduce visual clutter
 - C. Enhance the appearance and safety of the commercial highway corridor.
 - D. Help define a “campus pattern” sense of development for the commercial highway corridor with a preference for ground-mounted or monument type signs where practicable.
 - E. Unify adjacent buildings and the streetscape into a cohesive whole.
2. Utilize ground-mounted or monument signs located at the main entrance from the right-of-way to identify businesses and locations.
3. Design signs that are compatible with the primary structure with regard to architectural character, proportion, design details and colors.
4. Refer to the Town Code for a list of prohibited signs. Discourage use of permanent pole signs.



This monument sign incorporates the same building materials used on the restaurant building facades.

F2 Design

Intent:

To create an attractive and unified streetscape that maintains and enhances the visual character of the roadway as a gateway to the La Plata community.

Guidelines:

1. Design ground-mounted, monument and wall-mounted signs to be in scale with the adjacent buildings and land uses in terms of height, width and surface area, and to avoid excess visual clutter.
2. Use shared-use or joint signs to reduce sign clutter on projects with 2 or more tenants.
3. Display the name of the business in text as the primary image, as well as the address numerals of the property, at a size which is clearly visible from the public right-of-way. Additional text, graphics, or images are considered secondary.
4. Limit the number of colors on signs to three, including black and white (trademarked logos excepted).
5. Integrate landscaping features with the design and placement of ground-mounted monument signs.
6. Place signs only on the lot to which they refer, located so that the view of pedestrians, cyclists or motorists at intersections, driveways, or along sidewalks, is not obscured.
7. Signs with flashing, animated, pulsating, rotating, or other moving components that may distract road users are not allowed.



Both site and building signage take cues from the design of the primary structure.



F3 Illumination

Intent:

To reduce the adverse visual effects of excessive lighting along the highway corridor.

Guidelines:

1. Illuminate signs by one of the following means:
 - A. A white, steady, stationary light of reasonable intensity, directed solely at the sign, and prevented from beaming directly onto adjacent properties or rights of way.
 - B. The background of all signs must be opaque. Illuminated borders are not permitted.
2. Shade, shield or direct illumination as not to interfere with safety or visibility or project onto any adjacent properties.
3. Screen ground-mounted illumination source from view with evergreen shrubs or site grading.
4. Illumination, colors or techniques should not result in more colors, patterns or textures than are permitted under normal sunlight conditions.
5. Blinking, flashing, pulsating or fluttering lights, or devices which change light intensity, brightness of color or similar illusions, are not permitted.



Both internal and external illumination of signage can be used effectively without adverse visual affects on adjacent properties and roadways.



Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Alignment: The arrangement of objects, particularly buildings or building elements, in a straight line; frequently used to describe the relationship of buildings to a sidewalk, street edge or “build-to” line.

Amenity: Aesthetic or other feature of a development that increase its marketability or usability to the public.

Animated Sign: Any sign that uses movement or change of lighting to depict action or create a special effect or scene.

Architectural Features: Prominent or significant parts or elements of a building or structure.

Architectural Scale: The perceived height and bulk of a building relative to that of neighboring buildings, the street and the human body.

Articulation: The manner in which portions of a building form are expressed (materials, color, texture, pattern, modulation, etc.) and come together to define the structure.

Artwork: A device, element or feature whose primary purpose is to express, enhance or illustrate aesthetic quality, feeling, physical entity, ideal, local condition, historical or mythical happening, or cultural or social value. Examples of artwork include sculpture, bas-relief sculpture, mural, or unique specially crafted lighting, furniture, pavement, landscaping, or architectural treatment that is indented primarily, but not necessarily exclusively, for aesthetic purposes. Signs are not considered artwork.

Axonometric Drawing: Orthogonal projection using a 45-degree from horizontal and vertical to create a three-dimensional drawing of a structure with three surfaces showing and with horizontal and vertical distances drawn to scale, but diagonal and curved lines distorted.

Awning: Any non-rigid material, such as fabric or flexible plastic, that extends from the exterior wall of a building and is supported by or attached to a frame.

Balcony: An outdoor space built as an aboveground platform projecting from the wall of a building and enclosed by a parapet or railing.

Banner: Any sign of lightweight fabric or similar material that is permanently mounted to a pole or a building and enclosed by a parapet or railing.

Accent Course (also string course or horizontal course): A projecting horizontal band on the exterior of a building frequently marking the separation between floors or levels.

Bioretention: A water quality practice that utilizes landscaping and soils to treat urban stormwater runoff by collecting it in shallow depressions before filtering through a fabricated planting soil media.

Blank Walls: Walls subject to “blank wall” requirements meet the following criteria:

1. Any wall or portion of a wall that has a surface area of 400 square feet having a width of at least 10 feet without a window, door, or building modulation as defined below or other architectural feature.
2. Any ground level wall surface or section of a wall over 4 feet in height at ground level that is longer than 15 feet as measured horizontally without having a ground level window or door lying wholly or in part within the 15 foot section.

Block Face: The row of front facades, facing the street, for the length of one block.

Bollard: A thick post that may be used as a barrier to block the passage of vehicles and that may include lighting as an integrated component.

Buffer: A combination of physical space and vertical elements, such as plants, berms, fences, or walls, the purpose of which is to separate and screen incompatible land uses from each other.

Bufferyard: One of several specific combinations of minimum buildings setbacks, landscaped yards widths, and plant material requirements set forth for buffering incompatible land uses.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Building Marker: Any sign indicating the name of a building and date and incidental information about its construction, which is cut into a masonry surface or made of bronze or other permanent material.

Building Sign: Any sign attached to any part of a building, as contrasted to a freestanding sign.

Campus pattern: Distinctive, large parcel development featuring clustered buildings, unified landscaping, signage and compatibility of use.

Canopy: A structure constructed of rigid materials, including but not limited to, metal, wood, concrete, plastic or glass, which is attached to and supported by a building, or which is free-standing and supported by columns, poles or braces extended to the ground. Unlike a marquee, a canopy generally has very limited vertical surface area; and unlike an awning, a canopy is generally supported by vertical elements rising from the ground.

Canopy Sign: Any sign that is a part of or attached to an awning, canopy, or other fabric, plastic, or structural protective cover over a door, entrance, window, or outdoor service area. A marquee is not a canopy.

Changeable Copy Sign: A sign or portion thereof with characters, letters, or illustrations that can be changed or rearranged without altering the face or the surface of the sign. A sign on which the copy changes more than eight times per day shall be considered an animated sign.

Circulation: The movement or flow of people and/or vehicles from place to place.

Coherent: Orderly and logical, particularly with regard to the architectural relationships of a building to its individual parts, its site and context, and any other important elements.

Commercial Message: Any sign wording, logo, or other representation that, directly or indirectly, names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service, or other commercial activity.

Compatibility: The size and character of a building element relative to other elements around it. For example, the size and proportion of windows in a building façade are usually related to one another, the spaces between them, and the scale of surrounding buildings.

Context: The characteristics of the buildings, streetscape, and landscape that support or surround a given building, site, or area such as predominance of period architecture or materials, wide sidewalks, continuous overhead weather protection, or consistent street trees.

Cornice: A molded and projecting horizontal feature that crowns a façade.

Course/Coursing: A continuous layer of building material, such as brick or tile, on a wall or roof of a building.

Courtyard: A landscaped space enclosed on a least three sides by a single structure.

Curb Cut: An area of street curb which is depressed to allow vehicular access to a driveway or parking lot.

Deciduous: A plant with foliage that is shed annually.

Deck: A roofless outdoor space built as an aboveground platform projecting from the wall of a building and connected by structural supports at grade or by the building structure.

Design Principle: A guiding concept as part of the overall project design development that reflects desirable characteristics of the urban environment, or responds to specific site/vicinity opportunities or constraints.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Durable and permanent building materials: Materials and construction methods of sufficient strength to last through years of wear and tear, inclement weather and multiple renovations, which ultimately contribute to an atmosphere of quality and continuity.

Evergreen: A plant with foliage that persists and remains green year-round.

Façade: Any portion of an exterior elevation of a building extending from the finish grade of the building to the top of the parapet wall or eaves, for the entire width of the building elevation.

Fenestration: The arrangement and design of windows and other openings on a building's façade.

Flag: Any fabric, banner, or bunting containing distinctive colors, patterns, or symbols, used as a symbol of a government, political subdivision, or other entity.

Freestanding Sign: Any sign supported by structures or supports that are placed on, or anchored in, the ground and that are independent from any building or other structure.

Frontage: The length of a property line along a street.

Gable: The upper, triangular portion of a façade, usually flanked by sloping roofs.

Gambrel Roof: A ridged roof having two slopes on each side, the lower slope having the steeper pitch. (See below.)

Gateway: A principal or ceremonial point of entrance into a district or neighborhood.

Grid: Two or more intersecting sets of regularly spaced parallel lines that generate a pattern of regularly spaced parts, such as a street grid.

Grocery Store: A retail establishment primarily selling food, as well as other convenience and household goods, which occupies a space of not less than four thousand square feet and not more than twenty-five thousand square feet.

Ground Mounted, or Monument Signs: Freestanding signs that generally have the entire bottom in contact with or in close proximity to the ground.

Highway Corridor: Anything that can be seen from, or has an impact on, the roadway. This encompasses the spatial features that lie between the edge of the right-of-way, the facades of buildings, and extending to a building's perimeter, rear yard areas, and beyond.

Human Scale: The perceived size of a building relative to a human being. A building is considered to have "good human scale" if there is an expression of human activity or use that indicates the building's size. For example, traditionally sized doors, windows, and balconies are elements that respond to the size of the human body, so these elements in a building indicate a building's overall size.

Incidental Sign: A sign, generally informational, that has a purpose secondary to the use of the zone lot on which it is located, such as "no parking," "entrance," "loading only," "telephone," and other similar directives.

Infill: The development of vacant, abandoned, passes over or underutilized land within built-up areas of existing communities, where infrastructure is already in place.

Infrastructure: The basic installations and facilities on which the continuance and growth of a community depend, such as roads, schools, transportation, communication, water and sewer systems.

Isometric Drawing: Similar to axonometric drawing but using 30 and 60 degree angles to project horizontal lines of a structure.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Large Retail Establishment: A retail establishment, or any combination of retail establishments in a single building, occupying more than twenty-five thousand gross square feet of floor area.

Lintel: A horizontal beam over an opening in a wall, either structural or decorative, such as often seen capping windows and door openings.

Logo/logo sign: A symbol or letter representing an entire word or words, e.g. the golden-arched “M” for McDonald’s.

Lot: Any piece or parcel of land or a portion of a subdivision, the boundaries of which have been established by some legal instrument of record, that is recognized and intended as a unit for the purpose of transfer of ownership.

Low Impact Development: An approach to stormwater management that combines hydrologically functional site design with pollution prevention measures to reduce the impacts of development on hydrology and water quality. Typically, stormwater is managed in small, cost-effective landscape features located on each lot rather than being conveyed and managed in large, costly pond facilities located at the bottom of drainage areas.

Mansard: A roof having two slopes on all four sides, with the lower slope almost vertical, and the upper almost horizontal.

Marquee: A shelter projecting over an entrance, frequently ornamental and of metal with or without glazing.

Marquee Sign: Any sign attached to, in any manner, or made a part of a marquee.

Massing: The three-dimensional bulk of a structure: height, width, and depth.

Modulation: A stepping back or projecting forward of sections of a structure’s façade within specified intervals of building width and depth, as a means of breaking up a structure’s apparent bulk.

Open Space: Land and/or water area with its surface open to the sky and predominantly undeveloped, which is set aside to serve the purposes of providing active or passive recreational opportunities, conserving valuable natural resources, and structuring urban development and form.

Ornamental Tree: A deciduous tree planted primarily for its ornamental value, or for screening. May be any size at maturity, but will tend to be smaller than a shade tree.

Parapet: A low, protective wall or railing along the edge of a roof, balcony, or similar structure.

Pattern: Objects arranged in a formal or regular manner where the arrangement is reproducible through building size and scale, architectural elements, materials, etc.

Pedestrian Orientation: The characteristics of an area where the location and access to buildings, types of uses permitted on the street level, and storefront design are based on the needs of persons on foot.

Pedestrian-Oriented Space: An area located outside of the public right-of-way, between the building and a street or along a pedestrian path, which promotes visual and pedestrian access onto the site and provides amenities and landscaping to enhance the public’s use of the space for passive activities such as resting, reading, picnicking, etc.

Pedestrian-Oriented Street: The designation of a street where pedestrians are given priority in the design and planned use of the street and where motorized vehicles are given secondary consideration if there is a conflict of use.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Pediment: A wide, low-pitched gable found in classical style buildings either at the top of facades or over window and door openings.

Pennant: Any lightweight plastic, fabric, or other material, whether or not containing a message of any kind, suspended from a rope, wire, or string, usually in series, designed to move in the wind.

Permanent Sign: A durable sign permanently mounted and anchored in the ground or on a wall.

Pervious Paving Materials: Paving materials such as open concrete block pavers, grasscrete, and some types of asphalt which allow rainfall to infiltrate the ground below.

Portable Sign: Any wheeled, trailered, or otherwise movable sign.

Porte-cochere: A roof or shelter for vehicles over a driveway outside an entrance doorway, sheltering those getting in or out of a vehicle.

Presentation Drawings: Drawings prepared to communicate the design character of the structure, usually prepared in color and including realistic representations of the building in its context, showing colors of building surfaces, shadows cast and people and landscaping. Three-dimensional sketches and projected or computer drawings may be included along with two dimensional floor plans, elevations and building section drawings.

Principal Building: The building in which is conducted the principal use of the zone lot on which it is located.

Projecting Sign: Any sign affixed to a building or wall in such a manner that its leading edge extends more than six inches beyond the surface of such building or wall.

Proportion: The balanced relationship of parts of a building, landscape, and structures to each other and to the whole.

Redevelopment: 1. Construction in previously developed areas which may include the demolition of existing structures and building new structures, or the substantial renovation of existing structures, often changing form and function. 2. The re-use of previously used, non-agricultural land. Redevelopment projects tend to be larger and more complex than infill projects.

Residential Sign: Any sign located in a district zoned for residential uses that contains no commercial message except advertising for goods or services legally offered on the premises where the sign is located, of offering such service at such location conforms with all requirements of the zoning ordinance.

Retail Establishment: An establishment in which sixty percent or more of the gross floor area is devoted to the sale or rental of goods or merchandise to the general public for personal or household consumption or to services incidental to the sale or rental of such goods or merchandise.

Reveal: Usually a line, scoring or joint in a wall or siding that exposes its depth and breaks up its mass.

Rhythm: Reference to the regular or harmonious recurrence of lines, shapes, forms or colors, incorporating the concept of repetition as a device to organize forms and spaces in architecture.

Roof Sign: Any sign erected and constructed wholly on and over the roof of a building, supported by the roof structure, and extending vertically above the highest portion of the roof.

Roof Sign, Integral: Any sign erected or constructed as an integral or essentially integral part of a normal roof structure of any design, such that no part of the sign extends vertically above the highest portion of the roof and such that no part of the sign is separated from the rest of the roof by a space of more than six inches.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Scale: The spatial relationship among structures along a street or block front, including height, bulk and yard relationships. The proportional relationship of the size of parts to one another and to the human figure.

Scale, Human: Used to describe the quality of a building that includes structural or architectural components of size and proportion that relate to the human form and/or that exhibits through its structural or architectural components the human functions contained within.

Screen/Screening: The treatment created with landscaping and/or structures to visually conceal an area or on-site utilitarian use that is considered unattractive.

Sense of Enclosure: A consistent series of building facades that create a defined street wall that focuses attention on the street's pedestrian activities. Successful enclosure creates an urban space for residents, shoppers, and workers. (Portland OR, Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines)

Sense of Place: The combined whole of distinctive natural and manmade features, as well as social and cultural traditions, that create an identifiable and definable character for an area. The term may be applied at any scale, from small pocket parks or neighborhoods to a region.

Setback: The required or actual placement of a building a specified distance away from a road, property line, or other structure.

Shade Tree: A deciduous (or rarely, an evergreen) tree planted primarily for its crown of foliage or overhead canopy.

Shrub: A woody plant, smaller than a tree, which consists of a number of small stems from the ground or small branches near the ground.

Sign: Any device, fixture, placard, or structure that uses any color, form, graphic, illumination, symbol, or writing to advertise, announce the purpose of, or identify the purpose of a person or entity, or to communicate information of any kind to the public.

Signage: Used to describe signs displayed and perceived collectively (as in a community) which are frequently coordinated through size, placement and graphic design.

Sight Visibility Triangle: The corner area of an intersection which is kept clear of vertical obstructions such as signage, fencing and landscaping in order to maintain clear lines of sight while making turns.

Site Plan: A detailed plan showing the proposed placement of structures, parking areas, open space, landscaping, and other development features, on a parcel of land.

Specimen Tree: A particularly impressive or unusual example of a species that due to its size, shape, age, or any other trait epitomizes the character of the species.

Street: A strip of land or way subject to vehicular traffic (as well as pedestrian traffic) that provides direct or indirect access to property, including, but not limited to, alleys, avenues, boulevards, courts, drives, highways, lanes, places, roads, terraces, trails, or other thoroughfares.

Streetscape: The visual character of a street as determined by elements such as structures, access, greenery, open space, view, etc. The scene as may be observed along a public street composed of natural and man-made components, including buildings, paving, planting, street furniture and miscellaneous structures.

Street Tree: A tree planted in close proximity to a street in order to provide canopy over the street, to give the street a sense of spatial definition and human scale, to provide shade, and soften the street environment.

Design Review: A Selected Glossary

Supermarket: A retail establishment primarily selling food, as well as other convenience and household goods, which occupies a space greater than twenty-five thousand square feet.

Suspended Sign: A sign that is suspended from the underside of a horizontal plane surface and is supported by such a surface.

Temporary Sign: Any sign that is used only temporarily and is not permanently mounted.

Transparency: A street level development standard that defines a requirement for clear or lightly tinted glass on the façade along an adjacent sidewalk or other walkway.

Tree: A large, woody plant having one or several self-supporting stems or trunks and numerous branches. May be classified as deciduous or evergreen.

Types of Signs: Ground-mounted or monument signs; pole signs; wall signs; roof signs; permanent signs; temporary; changeable copy (marquee) signs; awning and canopy signs; projecting signs; suspended signs; billboards; window and door signs; parked or abandoned vehicle signs; inflatable signs; roof signs; painted façade signs; inflatable signs, tethered balloons and blimps, beacons, flags or pennants.

Urban Boulevard: A multi-lane arterial street characterized by curb, gutter and sidewalks, on U.S. 301, particularly between MD 225/Hawthorne Road and Charles Street (MD 6). Travel lanes in each direction are separated by a wide median. Dual function as automobile and pedestrian circulation route.

Urban Form: The spatial arrangement of a particular environment, as defined by the connectivity of built mass and form, the natural environment, and the movement of person, goods and information within.

Vernacular: A building or complex of buildings that relate to, or are characteristic of a period, place or group; especially relating to or being the common building style of a period or place.

Wall Sign: Any sign attached parallel to, but within six inches of a wall, painted on the wall surface of, or erected and confined within the limits of an outside wall of any building or structure, which is supported by such wall or building, and which displays only on sign surface.

Window Sign: Any sign, picture, symbol, or combination thereof, designed to communicate information about an activity, business, commodity, event, sale, or service, that is placed inside a window or upon the window panes or glass and is visible from the exterior of the window.

Woodlands, Existing: Existing trees and shrubs of a number, size and type that approximately accomplish the same function as new plantings.

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