

# Potomac Communities Design Guidelines



January 2014

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**January, 2014**

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# Section 1: Introduction

Purpose

Design Principles

# Purpose

The following design guidelines are to be used as tools to convey ideas, design approaches, and practices that should be applied in the design and development of projects in the Route 1 Corridor of Prince William County. A goal of the guidelines is to assist property owners, developers and designers in the creation of project proposals. While Prince William County's Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Design and Construction Standards Manual (DCSM) set density and land use development parameters and minimum levels of design compliance across the county, they do not fully reflect the aspirations for the Route 1 Corridor. In particular, **the following guidelines create a baseline of minimum expectations for both new development and modifications to existing land uses in the Route 1 Corridor.**

The design guidelines are intended to focus the Urban Design aspects of the overall vision for the Potomac (Route 1) Communities as expressed in the Potomac Communities Revitalization Plan:

*“The Potomac Communities is an alliance of individuals, neighborhoods, businesses, community organizations, and state and local government maximizing every opportunity afforded them – rich historical ambiance, increasing diversity, a strong military presence, unparalleled waterfront and natural assets, excellent transportation access, and varied, numerous civic assets – so that their community will evolve into a premier residential, business, and visitor location on the Potomac River.”*

The design guidelines also respond to the plan's action strategy calling to “develop Potomac Community Design Guidelines to influence the quality of development throughout the area” (Potomac Communities Revitalization Plan DES-6), but are intended to support the intent/goals/policies and work in concert with the other action strategies laid out in the plan. The overarching objective of this framework is to manage change and growth in the Route 1 Corridor and to guide development and design decision making towards a creating a **VIBRANT** and **SUSTAINABLE** urban environment along Route 1, ensuring that the impacts of growth are positive and create benefits for the local community, economy and the environment. The result should be that the Potomac Communities Corridor is a **PLACE** that people want to go **TO**, not just through.

Additionally, the Prince William County (PWC) Comprehensive Plan (2008) Long Range Land Use vision promotes distinct centers of commerce and centers of community. The vision establishes the Triangle area within the Route 1 Corridor as a **center of community** where residents can live, shop, dine, recreate, and congregate. A center for community also encourages higher density developments than surrounding residential uses. Although access to the center is typically achieved via automobile, centers for community should be served by transit and should emphasize internal pedestrian walkability and connections.

The PWC Comprehensive Plan highlights North Woodbridge within the Potomac Communities as a **center for commerce**, a planned urban center that serves as a focal point for the entire county. Centers of commerce offer a variety of activities with regional draw that allows people to work, shop, dine, live, and enjoy entertainment. A **center for commerce** should have a variety of transportation modes and access options integrated into the place. Design of the developments should emphasize pedestrian walkability and a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.

North Woodbridge has also been identified as one of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Regional Activity Centers. The Regional Activity Centers and Clusters have been developed by the MWCOG's as a tool to help guide land use and transportation planning decisions. In general, local and regional planning and policy goals recommend working to increase either the amount of employment or housing in the Centers and Clusters.

# Design Principles

The following principles present goals which the guidelines are intended to support. They will guide the development of the urban design framework towards a structure that can best direct growth and change in the stakeholders' best interest. These principles were developed based on the intent/goals/policies and action strategies laid out in the Potomac Communities Revitalization Plan (2008), which establishes a framework for how urban design can support the other action strategies and help achieve the plan's overarching goals.

These principles support the PWC Comprehensive Plan's goals of establishing North Woodbridge as a center of commerce and Triangle as a **center of community**. Furthermore, they support the aspirations of the MWCOG Regional Activity Center designation for North Woodbridge and are also a reflection of the ten smart growth principles as listed in the Long Range Land Use Plan.

For each principle a series of sub-principles have been articulated. These provide the link between the broader design goals and guidelines that will be developed in the next phase of the project by defining the specific objectives which the design guidelines will aim to achieve.

## 1. Capitalize on the Potomac Communities Corridor's existing assets

- Ensure new development connects to existing destinations including parks.
- Create better branding, signage and wayfinding for existing destinations including parks, wildlife refuges, schools and transit stations.

## 2. Create a sense of place and identity for individual neighborhoods and business centers

- Maintain or enhance the individual character of existing neighborhoods along the corridor.
- Ensure a coherent and memorable aesthetic for buildings and streetscapes within individual neighborhoods and centers.
- Establish clear and identifiable "gateways" to neighborhoods along the corridor.



### 3. Enhance the visual quality and return the human scale to the Route 1 Corridor

- Minimize building setbacks where feasible.
- Minimize the area of land devoted to parking and reduce parking where possible (e.g., through shared parking).
- Where buildings are setback from the roadway, provide landscaping, and where the setbacks include parking, ensure that the parking is interspersed with landscaping and pedestrian pathways.
- Encourage parking in the rear of buildings rather than directly on Route 1.
- Maintain a comfortable landscaped buffer or tree pit between the sidewalk/shared use path and Route 1.
- Place utilities underground where feasible.
- Consolidate and minimize the overall number of roadway signs.
- Use pedestrian-scale, rather than highway-scale, signage and lighting, particularly on perpendicular and parallel streets.

### 4. Create active mixed use places

- Encourage / enable mixed use development to foster a variety of activity throughout the day through the use of the Potomac Communities Land Use Classification, particularly Urban Mixed Use (UMU) and Village Mixed Use (VMU).
- Encourage relatively higher density development, through the use of the Potomac Communities Land Use Classification.
- Cluster development to create active nodes and multi-use destinations.
- Capitalize or establish North Woodbridge as a **center for commerce** and Triangle as a **center of community**.

## 5. Create a walkable and welcoming pedestrian and cycling environment

- Create pedestrian connections among and through existing and new development and destinations that get people to where they want to go and makes the trip as desirable as the destination.
- Create sidewalks, paths and trails that are comfortable and safe throughout the day and year by providing sufficient width and amenities and context-sensitive design.
- Co-locate jobs and housing to enable and encourage more people to walk and bike.
- Establish safe, accessible and visible east-west pedestrian connections across Route 1, particularly at existing destinations and new development.
- Include transit stops in new development to enable people to walk more.

## 6. Ensure that communities are sustainable and resilient

- Incorporate stormwater best management practices and Low Impact Development practices in site designs for new development and infill in order to enhance groundwater and surface water quality, maximize the infiltration of water on site and minimize runoff into surrounding streams, wetlands, and the Potomac River.
- Use landscaped buffers to achieve stormwater management and low impact development goals as well as enhance the human experience.
- Ensure that infill and retrofits, as well as new development, use the best available technology to achieve efficient and sustainable energy use.
- Plan and design new development to account for future climate realities including sea level rise and more frequent storm events.

## **Section 2: Summary of Opportunity Areas**

Opportunity Areas

North Woodbridge

Mid-Corridor

Triangle

# Opportunity Areas

The Route 1 Corridor in Prince William County is comprised of three distinct opportunity areas to attain the purpose and principles of the guidelines. These areas as shown in Figure 1 include:

- North Woodbridge
- Mid-Corridor
- Triangle

Specific guidelines are presented for each opportunity area to reflect existing conditions and potential development patterns.

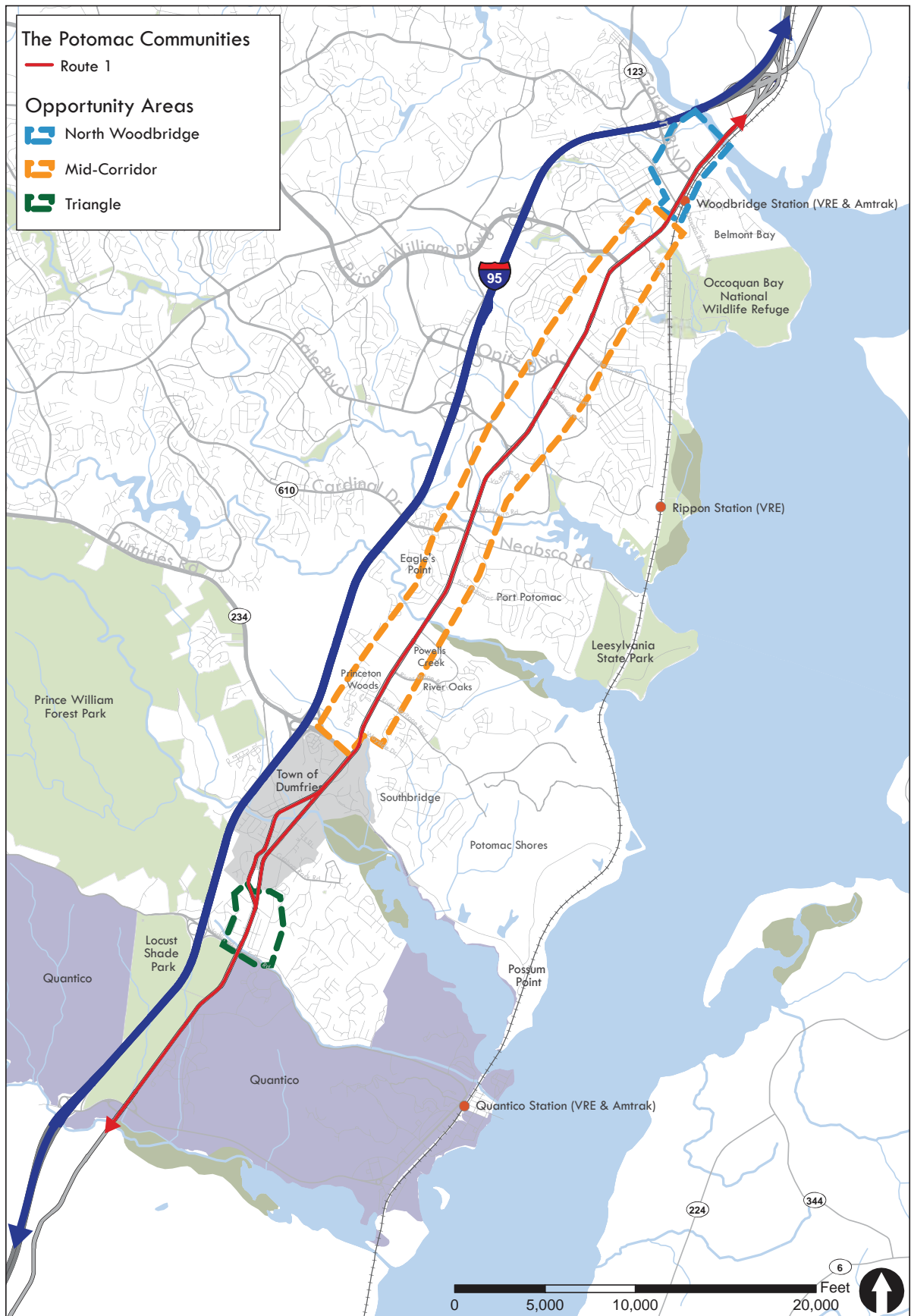
The general urban design guidelines, presented in Section 3, apply to all three opportunity areas identified along the Route 1 Corridor, unless indicated otherwise. The specific guideline(s) that only apply to one or two of the opportunity areas are labeled as follows:

**NW** - for North Woodbridge

**MC** - for Mid-Corridor

**TR** - for Triangle

Figure 1- Opportunity Areas



# North Woodbridge

## Existing Conditions

The North Woodbridge area is comprised mostly of large lots and aggregatable parcels. With many vacant and under utilized lots, the area has a high susceptibility to change. The existing zoning is largely B-1, General Business with the exception of the industrial zoned concrete plant in the northeast of the area.

As shown on Figure 2, this area will be significantly affected by Route 1 widening and the Gordon Boulevard flyover projects.

### Key:

- **Large lots**
- **B-1**

## Development Guidelines

- The minimum floor to area ratio (FAR) should be 2.5.
- Buildings should be multi-story. A minimum of six stories is desired for residential (non-mixed use) structures.
- Buildings on key streets (“main streets”) should have active ground floor uses and office or residential above.
- No block faces should be longer than 600’; block faces that are no longer than 400’ are desirable for areas with high pedestrian presence.
- Internal streets should maximize number of intersections to provide internal route choice.
- Internal streets should follow grid system to maximum extent feasible.
- Development should be oriented towards a network of existing and/or new internal main streets and Occoquan Road in order to establish the feel of an urban neighborhood.
- Roads, such as Route 1, Gordon Boulevard and Horner Road (south of Gordon Boulevard), that primarily function to serve regional traffic, should not be the primary orientation (or front door) for development.
- Buildings, particularly those fronting Route 1, should have a strong architectural identity in order to create a “gateway” for Prince William County and the Potomac Communities to/from the North.

Figure 2- North Woodbridge Opportunity Area



# Mid-Corridor

## Existing Conditions

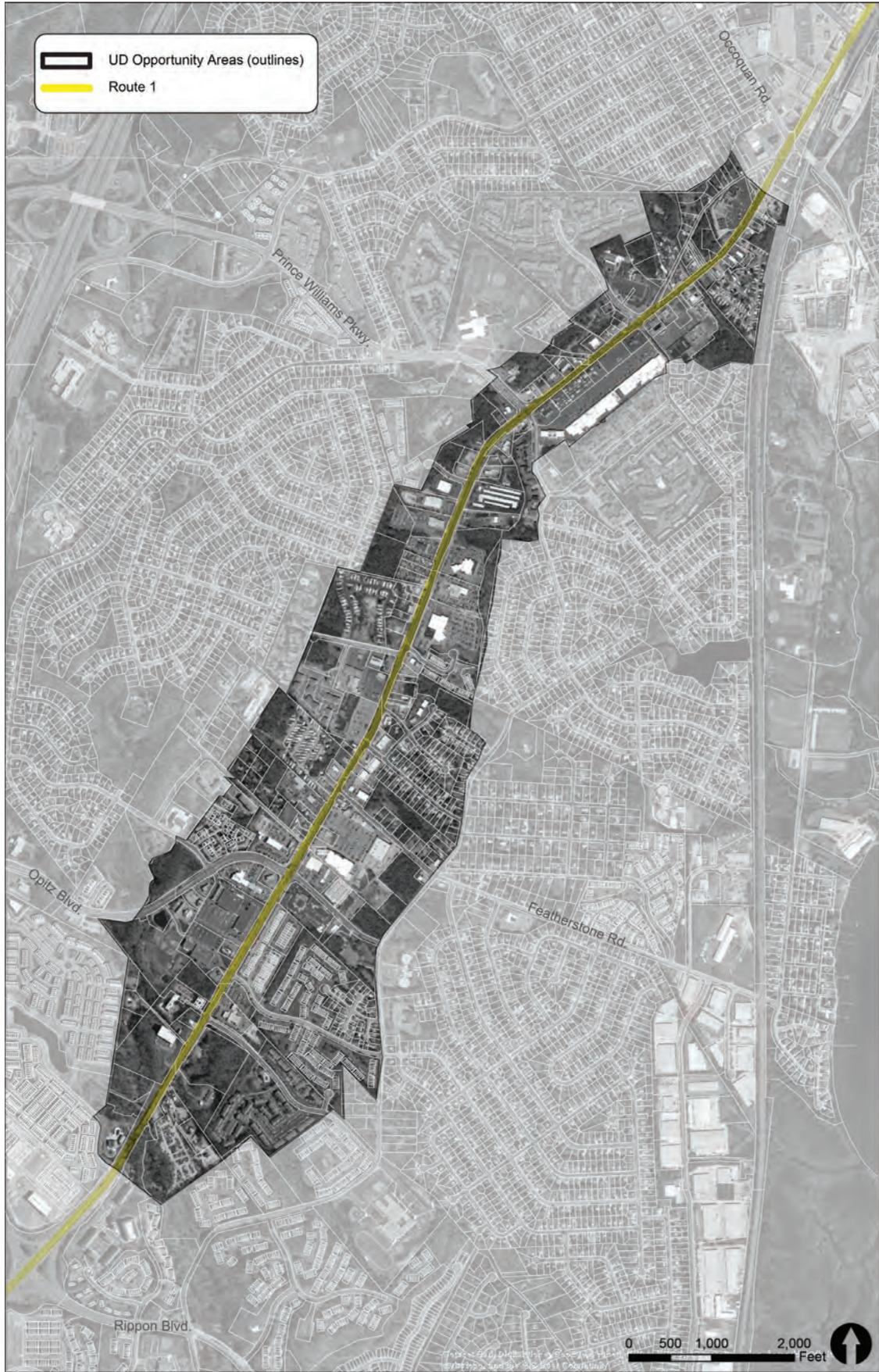
The Mid-Corridor is comprised of an assorted array of land use activities on a broad variety of lot sizes. Typically, development is oriented towards Route 1 with the exception of some new residential communities. While a grid street system is desirable in some circumstances it will be difficult to aggregate the necessary parcels to do so. As a result, Route 1 will remain the front door for many new land uses. The area has a low to high susceptibility to change and the existing zoning is predominantly B-1 along Route 1.

## Development Guidelines

- The minimum floor to area ratio (FAR) should be 1.0.
- Buildings should be multi-story. Three stories or more is desired.
- Buildings on key streets (“main streets”) should have active ground floor uses and office or residential above.
- No new block faces should be longer than 600’; block faces that are no longer than 400’ are desirable for areas with high pedestrian presence.
- Internal streets should maximize number of intersections to provide internal route choice.
- Internal streets should establish a grid system to maximum extent feasible and encourage movement between parcels. Uses that do not desire connections to adjacent parcels should establish a service road across their rear to permit inter-parcel movement.
- Any existing grid street system should be reinforced with additional street connections by future development.
- Development should be oriented towards a network of existing and/or new internal main streets in order to establish the feel of an urban neighborhood.



Figure 3- Mid-Corridor Opportunity Area



# Triangle

## Existing Conditions

The Triangle area is comprised of a number of small, aggregatable parcels. Its current development east of Route 1 follows a grid pattern. The area is anchored by key parcels fronting on Route 1 at Joplin and Fuller Roads. The area is predominantly underutilized for commercial and mixed uses and has a high susceptibility to change. The existing zoning is B-1 along Route 1 and R-4 for the surrounding area.

## Development Guidelines

- The minimum floor to area ratio (FAR) should be 0.5.
- Buildings should be multi-story. A minimum of two stories is desired.
- Buildings on key streets (“main streets”) should have active ground floor uses and office or residential above.
- No block faces should be longer than 600’; block faces that are no longer than 400’ are desirable for areas with high pedestrian presence.
- Internal streets should maximize number of intersections to provide internal route choice.
- Internal streets should follow grid system to maximum extent feasible.
- Development should be oriented towards a network of existing and/or new internal main streets in order to establish the feel of an urban neighborhood.
- Route 1’s primary function is to serve regional traffic and should not be the primary orientation (or front door) for development.
- Buildings, particularly those fronting Route 1, should have a strong architectural identity in order to create a “gateway” for Prince William County and the Potomac Communities.

Figure 4- Triangle Opportunity Area



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## **Section 3: General Design Guidelines**

Buildings

Site Design

Landscape, Streetscape, Public Space

Signage and Wayfinding

# Buildings

## Character

1. Buildings should be designed to provide human scale, interest, and variety while maintaining an overall sense of relationship with adjoining or nearby buildings and the surrounding neighborhood.
  - 1.1. Encourage a combination of architectural elements that lend the building a human scale. Examples include arcades, balconies, bay windows, roof decks, trellises, landscaping, awnings, cornices, friezes, art concepts, and courtyards.
  - 1.2. Incorporate tighter, more frequent rhythm of spacing of columns, bays or other vertical articulation, subdividing the building façade into smaller, more human scaled elements.
  - 1.3. Incorporate fenestration techniques that indicate the scale of the building (e.g., size, location, and number of windows in an urban setting create a sense of interest that relies on a subtle mixture of correct ratios, proportions, and patterns).
2. Buildings should possess an architectural character that respects traditional design principles, such as:
  - 2.1. Variation in the building form such as recessed or projecting bays or other architectural elements.
  - 2.2. Expression of architectural or structural modulations and details. Encourage vertical modulation on multi-story buildings to add variety and to make large buildings appear to be an aggregation of smaller buildings. Encourage a variety of horizontal modulation techniques to reduce the architectural scale of the building and add visual interest.
  - 2.3. Avoidance of repetitive modulation techniques, which may not be effective when viewed from distance.
  - 2.4. Diversity of window size, shape or patterns that relate to interior functions.
  - 2.5. Emphasis of building entries through projecting or recessed forms, detail, color or materials.
  - 2.6. Variations of material, modulation techniques, expressed joints and details, surface relief, color, and texture to scale.

**Building character refers to the overall architectural style, look and feel of the building.**

**Human scale refers to the degree to which the size, texture, and articulation of physical elements match the size and proportions of the human body and correspond to the speed at which humans walk.**

**Horizontal modulation is the horizontal articulation or division of an imposing building façade through setbacks, awnings, balconies, roof decks, eaves, and banding of contrasting materials.**



Human scale is a term generally used to indicate a building's size relative to a person, but the actual size of a building or room is often not as important as its perceived size



Use of fenestration techniques that help indicate the scale of the building



Use of vertical and horizontal modulations in buildings

# Buildings

## Character cont.

3. All buildings should be designed specifically for the context and character of the corridor and the neighborhood in which they are located.
  - 3.1. Individual buildings should contribute to the overall character and imageability of the street and neighborhood in which they are located.
  - 3.2. Iconic building design is encouraged at identified gateway and landmark locations.
  - 3.3. Art integrated into building façades or forms, and/or specially designed architectural ornament is encouraged.
4. Corner buildings at primary project entrances or high traffic internal nodes, whether free-standing or developed as part of a block, should be designed to visually accentuate the vehicular and pedestrian experience. These elements should be designed to support the overall architectural character and theme of the development and are not intended to be developed as signage or to promote retail brand architectural elements that are retail tenant specific.
5. Buildings for different uses should utilize different architectural techniques to highlight their function, while maintaining visual interest within the context of surrounding character of the built environment.
  - 5.1. A variety of techniques should be used for multi-tenant retail buildings to emphasize individual storefronts.
  - 5.2. Buildings for residential uses should provide horizontal modulations based on individual unit size. Larger residential buildings will require greater horizontal modulation techniques to provide appropriate architectural scale.
  - 5.3. Mixed-used buildings should be designed to express the individual uses internal to the building. For example, the architectural façade should clearly define the retail portion of the building through architectural embellishments such as awnings. If the upper floors are residential, they should be defined through differences in architectural features and color.
  - 5.4. Office buildings should apply design techniques to break up long continuous walls. A combination of horizontal building modulation, change in fenestration, and/or change in building materials should be used to accomplish this.

**Design to the context and character of the existing built and natural environment does not mean that new buildings must look like existing buildings, but rather that new buildings should be creative and within a visually comfortable and familiar environment, responding to, but not necessarily mimicking, their surroundings.**





Iconic building and corner treatment



Use of horizontal modulation to emphasize size of units in residential buildings



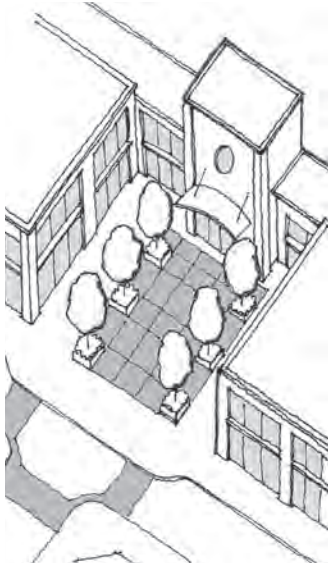
Definition of retail portion of a mixed-use building through use of architectural embellishments such as awnings

# Buildings

## Form

1. At prominent intersections, new development should create occasional special building forms that terminate views, create a unique roofline, and aid in wayfinding of landmarks.
2. Building form should emphasize important components of a building, such as an entry, or a special internal space.
3. Building form should take advantage of site conditions to maximize energy efficiency and take advantage of local microclimate conditions.
  - 3.1. Lower building heights or upper level step backs are encouraged on the south or east side of the street or public open space in order to provide greater sun penetration to the ground level.
4. Taller buildings adjacent to lower buildings should establish scale relationships with lower, neighboring buildings through methods such as: compatible horizontal alignment of architectural features and fenestration, and height and form transitions from one building to another.
5. Employ 360-degree architecture. Building form should employ a uniform level of quality on all sides of the building.

**Building form refers to the massing or height, volume, and general shape of a building, including setbacks.**



Building forms that terminate views



360-degree architecture providing equal consideration of all sides of building(s)



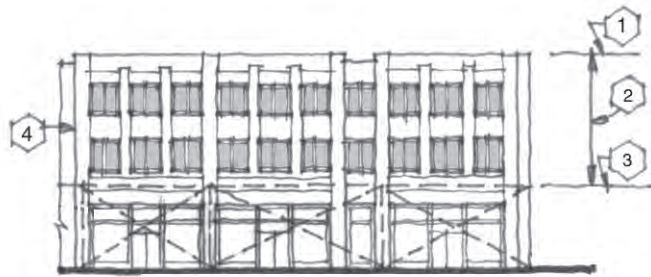
Example of upper-level step backs

# Buildings

## Façade

1. Multi-story buildings should generally have three vertical divisions: bases, middles, and tops (**NW**, **MC**; applicable to a lesser degree to **TR**).
  - 1.1. Each base should be composed of the first floor or first two floors of the building and should be designed to give the appearance of greater height than any floor of the middle.
  - 1.2. The design of the middle should be distinguishable from the base and top.
  - 1.3. The top of buildings above four stories may have a cap set back above the lower stories, which is distinctive in shape and smaller than the previous floor.
2. Building design should create varied roof parapet and cornice lines in order to create interesting and human scale rooflines (Note: this applies to all roofline types).
  - 2.1. The design of roofscape elements of buildings over three stories should relate directly to the building walls.
3. Building façades should be designed to provide human scale, detail, and articulation to avoid large areas (i.e., no more than 30 percent) of undifferentiated or blank façades. Typical techniques include:
  - 3.1. Articulation of the building base should be scaled appropriately to the pedestrian (e.g., every 25').
  - 3.2. Avoid blank walls near sidewalks, major internal walkways, parks, and pedestrian areas.
  - 3.3. Provide architectural techniques, including horizontal modulation and different building materials and/or color, that add visual interest at a pedestrian scale.
  - 3.4. Install trellises with climbing vines or other plant materials to cover the surface of the wall. For long walls, a trellis or trellises should be combined with other design treatments to avoid monotony.
  - 3.5. Provide artwork on the wall surface.
  - 3.6. Other treatments may be proposed that meet the intent of the guidelines.

**Façade refers to the architectural articulation of the building as it faces the street or other exterior realm.**



Typical components of a building façade

- 1 TOP OF PARAPET, CORNICE, EAVE OR FACADE
- 2 UPPER FLOOR FACADE HEIGHT
- 3 FIN FL. OF 2nd FLOOR OF THE OCCUPANCY ABOVE THE GROUND FLOOR TENANT
- 4 FACE OF WALL OR SIGNIFICANT BREAK IN THE FACADE



Example of treatments to distinguish base, middle, and top of building



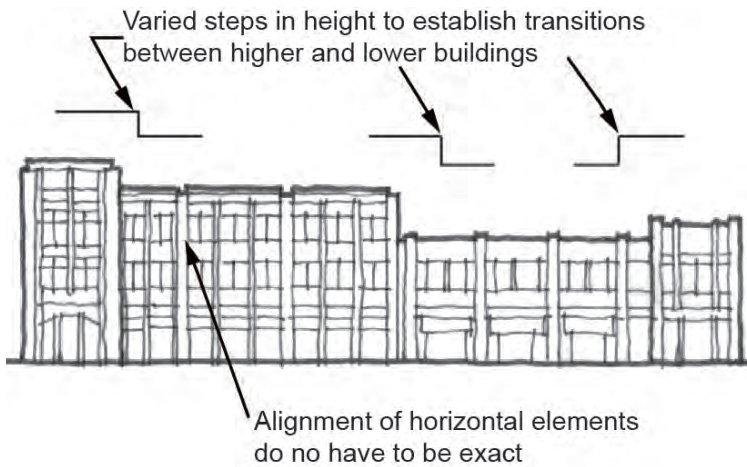
Vertical articulation of buildings

# Buildings

## Façade cont.

4. Building façade(s) oriented to the street or public space should provide architectural variety and scale. This can be achieved through the use of such elements as: expressions of building structure; patterns of window, door or other openings that provide surface variation through change of plane, change in color; change in texture; change in material module or pattern; art or ornament integral with the building.
  - 4.1. Primary building façades should provide vertical expression of architectural or structural bays through a change in plane that create interest through the interplay of light and shadow. Change in plane should be at a minimum of 18 inches in width for single story structures and a minimum of 24 inches in width for all structures exceeding two stories.
  - 4.2. Distinctive corner, entry treatments and other architectural features designed to interact with contextual features may be designed differently than the base, middle, and top of the building. This difference would allow the addition of vertical emphasis at significant architectural points along the building façade.
  - 4.3. The architectural treatment of the building top should be designed to create a sense of distinctly completing the dominant architectural theme of the middle of the building. This architectural completion may be accomplished by such strategies as: change in the window rhythm, change in apparent floor height, setback, use of other materials, or a combination of these elements. (NW, MC; applicable to a lesser degree to TR)

**Changes in plane can be accomplished through the use of recessed windows, recessed entries and doors, projecting sills, recessed or projecting balconies, projecting pilasters (relief columns), columns, bays, projecting cornices, roofs, reveals, projecting ribs and/or offsets in the building façades.**



Varied steps in height



Primary façade that provide change in plane that create interest through the interplay of light and shadow



Example façade of an one-story building that includes vertical and horizontal modulation

# Buildings

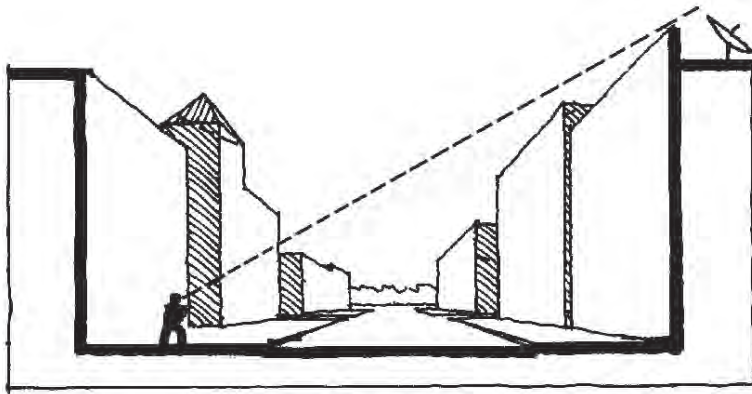
## Rooftop Design

1. Rooftop design should retain integrity of architecturally designed building tops and help create interesting and varied skylines.
2. Encourage a variety of roofline modulation techniques (e.g., hipped or gabled rooflines and modulated flat rooflines). As a general rule, the larger the building or unbroken roofline, the bigger the modulation should be.
3. In mixed-use development, if residential uses are located near mechanical equipment, care should be taken to mitigate the impacts of noise and odors.
4. All roof-mounted mechanical and electrical equipment, communication antennae or dishes should be enclosed, screened, organized, designed, and/or located as part of the architectural expression and should not be visible from the public right-of-way. Any equipment should be covered or screened to its full height.
  - 4.1. Antennae that extend over five feet above the roof line are encouraged to have screening techniques applied such as color and material to minimize visibility.

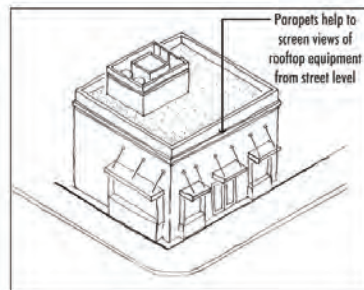
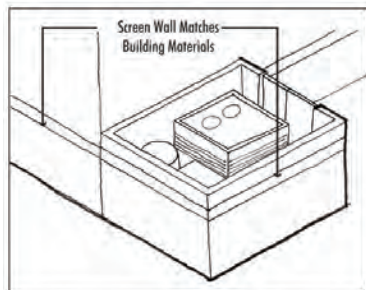




Variations in rooftop design help create interesting skylines



Rooftop mechanical devices should be screened from view from the street or public sidewalk



Screening of rooftop mechanical equipment

# Buildings

## Transparency

1. The façade of the building base (ground level of the building) should provide a high level of transparency. Transparency refers to the degree to which people can view activities inside the buildings, retail goods for sale, or display lighted windows related to these activities. Physical elements that influence transparency include walls, windows, doors, fences, landscaping and openings into midblock spaces.
  - 1.1. Where functionally appropriate, the ground floor, street-facing façade should be made of transparent materials. Generally, buildings at grade should have anywhere from 70-90 percent glazing to include doors/windows. People are reluctant to walk due to the lack of transparency in places with 10 percent or less glazing.
  - 1.2. When transparency is not functionally appropriate, other means should be used to provide activity along the street-facing façade such as public art; architectural ornament or detailing; or material, texture, or color patterns.
  - 1.3. For non-retail glazing, reflective glass should be used sparingly, if at all, to reduce glare, reduce the opacity or blankness of the façade. Coated or tinted glass may be considered to reduce heat gain, particularly on west and south façades. In no case should highly reflective glass be used.
  - 1.4. Glass without coatings or tints should be used for all retail glazing.
  - 1.5. The base should have a greater level of transparency than the middle or top along the buildings primary façade. (NW, MC; applicable to a lesser degree to TR)
  - 1.6. Windows or glazing on upper levels should be sufficiently transparent to provide an awareness of internal activities when viewed from the street or public spaces.



Building that exhibits a high degree of transparency



Base should have greater level of transparency than the middle or top



Upper level transparency should vary from transparency in base and middle

# Buildings

## Sense of Enclosure

Streets that foster social interaction, walking, and a strong sense of identity exhibit a strong sense of enclosure for users. Generally, the two façades or walls facing a street define the space. When the walls are too low in relation to the street width (i.e., low height to width ratio), too much of the sky will be in the field of vision, falling short in creating a sense of enclosure. For example, a height to width ratio of 1:4 typically means that a pedestrian view will contain about three times more of the open sky than the street wall or built environment, which works against the objective of creating a sense of enclosure in the public space.

In general, a height to width ratio of 1:2 to 1:2.5 provides the minimum desirable balance between views of the wall and the sky, helping to create an improved sense of enclosure of the public space. When the height of the street walls equal the width of the street (i.e., a ratio of 1:1), the view of the sky is well-framed by the built environment, creating a strong sense of enclosure. When the wall heights exceed the street width, pedestrians will not be able to see the top of the surrounding building without looking up. Ratios lower than 1:1 may significantly limit the amount of sun light that can reach the street and may create a sense that the street is too enclosed.

1. Building façades should contribute to the creation of a sense of enclosure on the adjacent sidewalk, plaza or other public real.
  - 1.1. Enclosure should be fostered by façade elements and articulation including lamps, awnings and canopies, etc.
  - 1.2. Continuous edges/street walls should be used to help create a strong sense of enclosure.
  - 1.3. The building height to street width (façade to façade) ratio should be at least 1:1.
  - 1.4. Public places should be enclosed on three sides with a proportional height to area ratio.
  - 1.5. Alternatively, similar sense of enclosure can be attained through the use of large street trees. The trees should be located 25 feet on center to ensure a continuous canopy.  
(MC, TR)

**Sense of enclosure is the degree of which streets and other public spaces are visually defined by buildings, walls, trees and other elements.**



Bringing building forward to the public right-of-way line helps activate streets and creates a strong sense of enclosure



Building height to street width ratio of at least 1:1



Public plaza enclosed on three side with proportional height to area ratio

# Buildings

## Exterior Materials

1. Buildings should use materials and colors that possess and convey a sense of quality and attention to detail, and are compatible with materials of adjacent buildings and the surrounding built and natural environment.
2. Development should use lasting materials that weather well, need little maintenance, and resist vandalism.
3. All façades space (not including windows, doors and their framing systems), should be composed of highly durable materials (e.g., brick, stone, cast stone, specially treated concrete masonry units, terra-cotta, and/or glass). Building materials should maintain a uniform level of quality on all sides of the building.
4. Materials and/or detailing at retail frontages should distinguish between the structural parts of a building (columns, walls and beams), and the infill parts of a building (wall panels, frames, windows and doors). Infill materials should have a non-structural appearance.
5. In no instance should exterior insulation and finish systems (EIFS), corrugated or channeled metal, pre-engineered or exposed metal wall systems, unfinished concrete block, or simulated masonry be used as primary materials on a façade.

**Exterior materials are what the shell of building is made.**



Building materials and colors should be compatible with materials of surrounding built and natural environment



Lasting materials that weather well, need little maintenance, and resist vandalism



High-quality materials should be used to distinguish between structural and infill parts of a building

# Buildings

## Entry

1. Primary building entrances should be oriented toward streets, parks or pedestrian plazas. In general, ground floor uses with exterior exposure should each have an individual public entry directly located on a public sidewalk along a street, or on a sidewalk or plaza leading directly to a street.
2. Weather protection should be provided along the primary entrance of all businesses, residential units, and other buildings.
  - 2.1. Covering treatments include covered porches, overhangs, awnings, canopies, marquees, recessed entries, or other similar features.
3. Pedestrian entries to buildings should promote security on a street or public open space through frequent points of access and sources of activity.
4. Building entrances should be highly visible and clearly articulated in the building architecture.
  - 4.1. Each multi-story building should have one clearly identifiable front door that addresses the street. In addition to this front door, a building facing multiple streets should include a highly visible entrance along each block face.
  - 4.2. Primary building entries should be oversized, and generally break the storefront/ground floor façade pattern, particularly for commercial and mixed-use buildings.
  - 4.3. Detailed and elaborate entries should be used as another way to create street level interest and architectural variety.
  - 4.4. Major building entries should be emphasized through such design devices as changes in plane, differentiation in material and/or color, greater level of detail, enhanced lighting, ornament, art, and/or building graphics.
5. Each block face in a development should have multiple entries.
  - 5.1. Mixed-use buildings with residential units should provide at least one separate entrance to access the residential units.
  - 5.2. All secondary building entries should be well lit and directly connected to the street
6. For individual residential units or town homes, the building entrance should express a sense of activity and place, as well as a semi-private nature of the space adjacent to the entrance through the architectural articulation of the entrance, the use of setbacks, the creation of a stoop or porch, or other treatment.

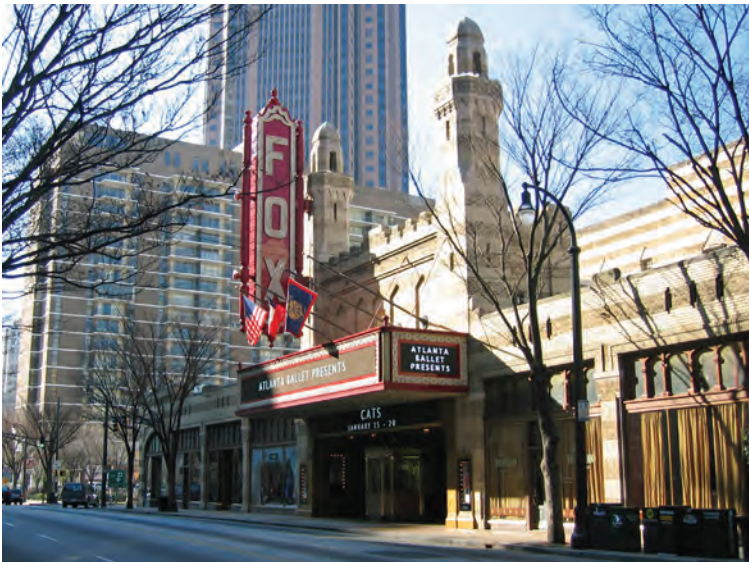
**As a general rule, the more traffic an entry is expected to accommodate, the larger the covered area for pedestrians should be at the entry.**

**Covered entries invite pedestrian activity. For example, a 5'x5' covered area allows two adults to talk sheltered from unfavorable weather conditions. A 3' to 4' wide canopy will provide cover area for those window-shopping, a 5' wide or greater canopy will provide shelter for a street vendors, and a 7' to 8' wide canopy will provide room for both window shoppers and other pedestrians.**





Detailed and elaborate building entry



Primary building entry oriented towards street



Emphasis on building entry visible from parking area

# Buildings

## Parking Structures

(applicable to a lesser degree to **TR**)

1. The exterior of parking structures should be wrapped with mixed-use space in order to minimize the visual impact of parking on the pedestrian experience and the street environment, and to increase pedestrian activity and interest along the street by locating active uses at the street level of parking garages.
2. Garage façades visible from public streets and open spaces should be compatible in character and quality with adjoining buildings.
  - 2.1. The façade of a parking structure facing a street should exhibit the same high level of quality in design, detailing, and materials as is provided in the adjoining buildings.
3. Parking structures should create visually interesting façades that provide human scale and detail while avoiding large areas of undifferentiated or blank façades.
4. Street-oriented façades should conceal or effectively reduce the impact of parked cars and light sources from the exterior view for the full height of the structure.
5. Multi-story parking structures (three levels or more) with façades facing public streets should provide commercial, live-work, residential and/or institutional space for not less than 50% of the garage's ground level street facing frontage, or the design and structure of the ground floor street frontage should be able to accommodate in the future one of the above listed uses. (**NW**, **MC**)
6. Sloping ramps should not be visible within the street façade of any parking structure.



Opening of parking structures should be vertically and horizontally aligned with surrounding structures



Ground level retail use wrap and compatible façade on upper stories of parking structure



Garage façades create visually interesting façades compatible in character and quality with adjoining buildings, while concealing the impact of parked cars

# Buildings

## Lighting

1. Building lighting should accentuate important architectural components of the building, such as entries, towers or roof elements, or repetitive columns or bays, and include decorative lighting.
2. Building lighting should provide indirect or direct lighting for adjoining sidewalks and open spaces.
  - 2.1. Building façades in pedestrian areas should provide lighting to walkways and sidewalks through building mounted lights, canopy- or awning-mounted lights, and display window lights.
3. Primary building entries should be externally lit to promote a more secure environment at the door, emphasize the primary point of entry into the building, and provide sufficient lighting for efficient access into the building.
4. Steps and/or ramps at or leading to a primary building entry should be illuminated sufficiently for safe access.
5. Entry lighting should complement the building's architecture. Standard security lighting such as wallpacks should not be allowed.

**A variety in the use of building-mounted light fixtures to give visual variety from one façade to the next is encouraged.**



Lighting accentuating architectural features of the building



Building lighting providing indirect lighting for pedestrian areas

# Site Design and Access

## Building Orientation

1. The front façades and main entries of buildings should be oriented toward streets and plazas. When multiple streets are available, orientation should be towards the street with the highest potential pedestrian volumes and lowest vehicular traffic speeds.
2. Buildings should be sited to create active outdoor spaces where possible, such as plazas or seating where appropriate.
3. Building orientation should provide views of adjoining publicly accessible streets and open spaces in order to provide passive viewing for safety.
4. Buildings façades should define the street or public open space to which they are oriented and create a sense of enclosure.
5. Buildings should be located to promote sun and sky exposure to public streets and plazas and take advantage of local microclimatic conditions.
6. Buildings should use the full width of the lot for the primary structure and/or active outdoor space.
7. Buildings should line a street at the public right-of-way line or build-to line to the greatest extent possible. Exceptions include entry-plazas, forecourts, and side yard parking strips.
8. Property owners should have the option to create a new perpendicular street/access drive to achieve adequate building orientation objectives.
9. All buildings located at or near street corner should incorporate special architectural elements that add visual interest and provide a sense of human proportion and scale. This could include a raised roofline, corner balconies, bay windows, special awning or canopy design, and/or distinctive use of building materials.

**The organization and scale of buildings on any site is typically the most important site design standard. The placement and orientation of a building generally dictates all other functional use design such as vehicular circulation, parking, pedestrian design, and to a large extent, the physical environment of the streetscape.**

**Street corners can be an excellent location for plazas, particularly where adjacent storefronts and building entries are provided.**



Façades and entries oriented towards the street



Façades and entries oriented towards plaza



Creation of new perpendicular street/access drive to achieve adequate building orientation objectives

# Site Design and Access

## Vehicular Access

1. Uninterrupted pedestrian-ways should be maximized in order to improve walkability.
2. Access points, including alleys, and driveways should be located to promote the safe and efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists.
3. The number and width of driveways and curb cuts should be minimized to reduce the overall impact of vehicular access across sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities.
4. Driveways and ramps should be perpendicular or generally perpendicular to the street.
5. Block frontages should have as few curb cuts as possible.
6. Sharing of driveways between adjacent lots or among clustered buildings or developments is strongly encouraged.
7. Access for service vehicles should be provided via alleys or rear parking areas.





Driveway across sidewalk identified by material change



Access for service vehicles provided via alleys or rear parking areas



Service lane should be treated with equal consideration as front of building

# Site Design and Access

## Parking

1. Buildings should be located to minimize the visual impact of parked vehicles within lots and structures.
2. Parking lot location should minimize the impact of (1) parked vehicles along active commercial, mixed use, and/or residential frontages; (2) the visual impact of parked vehicles; and (3) vehicle noise and headlights from within parking areas onto adjacent residential neighborhoods.
  - 2.1. Surface parking areas should be located at the side or rear of buildings fronting active street corridors. In no instance should more than one single-loaded row of parking should be placed in the front of the building.
  - 2.2. Parking lots and structures should be sited internally to the block so that parking lots or structure street frontages are avoided. If internal siting is not feasible, then the parking lot or structure should be oriented so that the shortest dimension fronts the street.
  - 2.3. A landscaped buffer or architectural screening should be provided between parking lots or structures and residential buildings.
  - 2.4. Parking structures with exposed street frontage should not be oriented toward residential uses.
3. Surface parking lots should provide tree-lined and/or landscaped pedestrian facilities of sufficient frequency and quality to allow for safe and comfortable navigation to and from vehicles to adjacent buildings.
  - 3.1. One walkway should be provided for every three parking aisles.
  - 3.2. Pedestrian access routes through parking areas should also be separated from vehicular parking and travel lanes by use of contrasting paving material which may be raised above the vehicular pavement and by landscaping.



On-street parallel parking



On-street diagonal parking

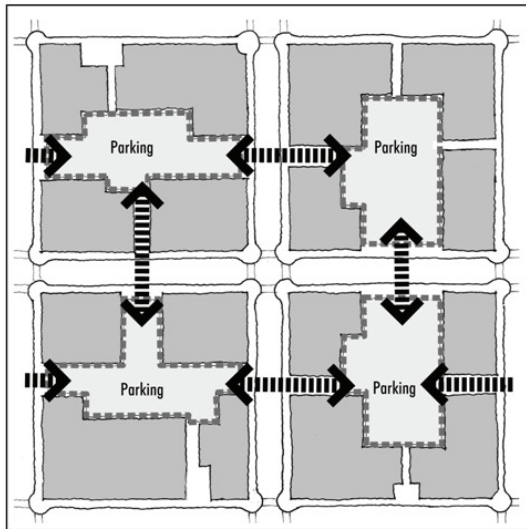


Surface parking areas located at rear of buildings fronting active street corridors

# Site Design and Access

## Parking cont.

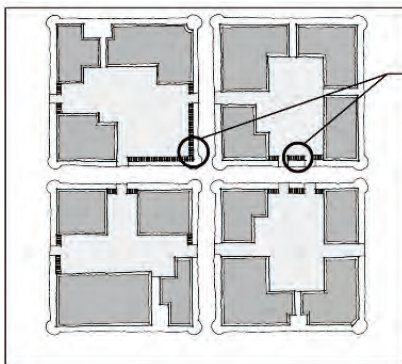
4. Landscaped medians should be limited to break large parking lots into smaller pods, with a maximum of 100 spaces in any one pod.
5. Parking lots design should utilize green infrastructure and low impact development techniques to the extent possible to reduce surface water runoff and the heat island effect.
  - 5.1. Canopy trees should be provided throughout the lot at regular intervals. The rate of tree provision per surface area of surface parking should exceed the minimum requirement set by the DCSM.
  - 5.2. Vegetated, pervious surfaces that allow for the infiltration of water should be provided at regular intervals throughout the lot and the lot should be graded such that water flows to these locations. The rate of provision of pervious area per area of impervious surface parking area should exceed the minimum set by the DCSM.
  - 5.3. Design should create meaningful open spaces not just grass strips and/or stormwater facilities.
6. The scale and overall amount of surface parking should be minimized.
  - 6.1. Parking should be shared between adjacent lots or among clustered buildings or developments wherever possible.
  - 6.2. Developers should pursue options such as shared parking, satellite parking for big shopping days, transit-oriented development, and other strategies that would allow for reductions in overall parking spaces.



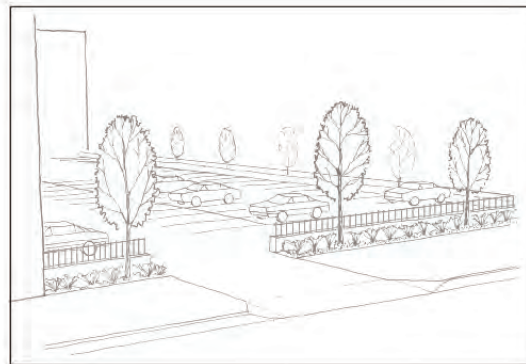
Parking shared between adjacent lots or clustered developments



Walkway design to access parking facilities



TYPICAL PARKING LOT SCREEN LOCATIONS



Parking lot screen

# Landscape, Streetscape, Public Space

## Plazas, Parks, and Open Space

1. Quality publicly accessible places to rest, meet, and gather for residents and employees should be provided as a part of the planned development.
2. Public open space should front onto or be connected to public streets with entrances that are clear, legible, and accessible.
  - 2.1. Public open spaces and plazas should be located on major internal circulation routes, close to bus stops or strong pedestrian flows on neighboring sidewalks.
  - 2.2. Public open spaces and plazas should be no more than three feet above or below the adjacent sidewalk or internal pathway to enhance visibility and accessibility.
3. Transitional zones along building edges should be used to allow for outdoor eating areas and a planted buffer.
4. Building organization and placement should be designed to create internal pedestrian courtyards, green spaces, plazas or other functional gathering spaces. For large sites, development should be configured to create a focal plaza or plazas.
  - 4.1. Open spaces should be designed to support the pedestrian environment.
  - 4.2. Storefronts, street vendors, or other pedestrian-oriented uses, to the extent possible, should front on at least three sides around the perimeter of the plaza.
  - 4.3. Design should incorporate plenty of permanent and/or movable seating areas using benches, steps, and ledges.
5. All open spaces accessible to the general public should be open a minimum of 12 hours per day.
6. Private open space may be fenced with wrought iron, masonry, or comparable decorative fencing and/or controlled for security.
7. All public and private open space not used for recreation should be attractively landscaped with three-level planting and hard surfaces.
  - 7.1. Landscaping elements that add color and seasonal interest should be used. This can include trees, shrubs planting beds, potted plants, trellises, and hanging plants.
8. The solar orientation and the wind patterns in the design of the open space and choice of landscaping should be considered.

**Open spaces suitable for passive recreational activities such as informal play, reading, and sitting in the sun or shade.**

**Seating areas should be provided with views of amenities, landscaping elements, or people watching.**



Public space suitable for passive recreation by multiple user groups



Open space accessible to the general public



Three-level planting (ground cover, shrub, and trees)

# Landscape, Streetscape, Public Space

## Hardscape

1. Hardscape design, including surface parking lots, should provide a quality of paving materials and patterns consistent with the quality of the surrounding architecture and open spaces and provide safe and accessible paving conditions for all persons.
2. Hardscape design should create interest and variation within paved surfaces that includes but is not limited to public art, coloring, or materials.
3. Special paving should be carefully chosen for structural capability and durability in the Northern Virginia climate. Uncolored concrete, colored concrete, brick, hydraulically-pressed concrete unit pavers or stone is recommended.
4. Special paving patterns and materials should be used to emphasize important building entries, provide interest and variation, and differentiate between sidewalks, plazas, medians, driveways, parking access, and crosswalks.
5. Sidewalks should be separated or buffered from vehicle travel lanes by street/pedestrian lights and street trees in grates or in a tree lawn.





Variety in sidewalk paving materials



Hardscape consistent with quality of surrounding architecture and open spaces



Special paving material and pattern used for sidewalk and crosswalk paving

# Landscape, Streetscape, Public Space

## Trees and Other Plant Materials

1. Planting should create a strong identity for each street and use quality plant materials that are located, sized, and provided in quantities sufficient to emphasize important streets (e.g., Route 1 and key parallel and perpendicular streets).
2. Planting and plant materials should be appropriate to the site context and conditions.
  - 2.1. Plant material should be tolerant of urban conditions.
  - 2.2. Plant materials should be selected that are appropriate to and tolerant of site-specific drainage and microclimate conditions including but not limited to salt exposure, drought, standing water, poorly drained or excessively drained soils, heavy sun or heavy shade.
  - 2.3. Native plant materials should be used if possible.
3. To the maximum extent feasible, topsoil that is removed during construction activity should be conserved for later use on areas requiring revegetation and landscaping.
4. Street trees are an integral part of the streetscape; conditions should be created that allow them to thrive.
  - 4.1. Large tree pits or landscaped buffer (curbside planting strip) that allow for a broader canopy trees are preferred over typical street trees. Ornamental trees should not be used in a street right-of-way.
  - 4.2. Tree grates or curbside planting strips should be used in paved areas to prevent excessive soil compaction. Curbside planting strips should be a minimum of 6 feet in width, measured from the back of curb to the edge of the sidewalk and street trees should be centered within the planting strip.
  - 4.3. Street trees in tree grates should be at least 2 feet 6 inches from the face of the curb. Tree grates should be at least 24 sq. ft. with openings no more than 1/4 inch to 3/8 inch in width and should be designed to allow for tree trunk growth.
  - 4.4. Drought tolerant turf or low, continuous ground covers should be used as the primary ground cover for continuous tree lawns.
  - 4.5. Street trees should align parallel and perpendicularly across the street with each other whenever possible.



Trees and landscaping creating a strong sense of identity.



Planting appropriate to the site context and conditions



Low impact development (LID) curbside planting strips creating a buffer between the roadway and the sidewalk

# Landscape, Streetscape, Public Space

## Street Furniture and Sidewalk Amenities

1. Ample comfortable seating that encourages lingering and social interaction should be provided on active streets and in all public spaces.
  - 1.1. Seating should be durable, comfortable, attractive, securely anchored, and easy to maintain. Seating surfaces should be 16 to 18 inches high with a minimum depth of 16 inches for seats without backs and 14 inches for seats with backs.
  - 1.2. Where bus stops occur within landscaped buffer (curbside planting strip), a minimum of one 6-foot long bench should be placed on a concrete pad. Where a bus stop occurs on a wide attached sidewalk, a 6 foot long bench should be provided within the sidewalk's amenity zone.
2. Seating, trash receptacles, and other amenities should be located to be accessible and convenient to active uses, but not interfere with pedestrian movement along sidewalks and through plazas or other open space.
  - 2.1. Newspaper racks and trash receptacles should be located at areas where high pedestrian activity is anticipated.
  - 2.2. Newspaper boxes should be clustered together and screened by specially designed railings. They should be located adjacent to pedestrian activity, but not so as to obstruct drivers' views at intersections, or car overhang/door swings at the curb.
3. Trash receptacles should relate in appearance and color to other street furniture. They should be firmly attached to paving to avoid vandalism. Covered tops and sealed bottoms should be included to keep the contents dry and out of sight at all times.
4. Bicycle parking facilities such as bike racks should be placed near entrances or gathering places, but out of pedestrian and bicycle traffic areas where they may create tripping or other safety hazards. If possible, locate racks where parked bicycles are visible from the inside of adjacent buildings.



Durable and comfortable seating



Amenities that encourage social interaction



Bicycle parking facilities placed near entrances or gathering places

# Landscape, Streetscape, Public Space

## Lighting

1. Lighting should provide a safe and secure environment for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.
2. Lighting should create an identity for the development and/or special streets.
3. Lighting should enhance the quality of streets in the commercial core through the design of the light poles, bases, fixtures, and attachments.
4. Street and/or pedestrian light poles should be aligned with and centered between street trees.
5. Where the light source is directly visible, the luminaries should be designed to incorporate elements to reduce glare, such as translucent, internal refracting surfaces to direct light down and away from adjoining private property; lower height poles; lower wattage or pole location.



Lighting directed down and away from adjoining private property



Pedestrian lighting that enhances quality of street through design



Lighting that creates an identity

# Landscape, Streetscape, Public Space

## Public Art

1. Public art should engage the community and express community identity. Developers are encouraged to integrate public art.
2. Art should create experiences for the sense and opportunities for surprise, wonder, interest, contemplation, reflection, humor, interaction, and play.
3. Art should provide shade structures at appropriate locations, particularly on the north side of the street.
4. Commissioned works should exhibit superior craftsmanship and design, and be fabricated of durable, low maintenance materials using proven technologies. A range of signature pieces should include integrated urban design elements, architectural detailing, and interactive features.
5. Art should be sited to create areas of emphasis within the urban fabric while supporting the social function of each space.
6. Selected artworks should include interactive elements allowing residents and visitors to walk through, play, sit on, and otherwise physically interact with the finished work.
7. Artwork, where appropriate, should be integrated into infrastructure and site furnishings (i.e., hardscape/landscape elements, building façades, tree gates, wayfinding devices, seating, etc.).
8. All plaza areas should include public art.
9. Artwork should be designed and sited to correlate with surrounding activity patterns.





Artwork exhibiting superior craftsmanship and design, creating experience for humor and play



Artwork integrated into infrastructure and site furnishing



Public art as focal point of plaza area

# Signage

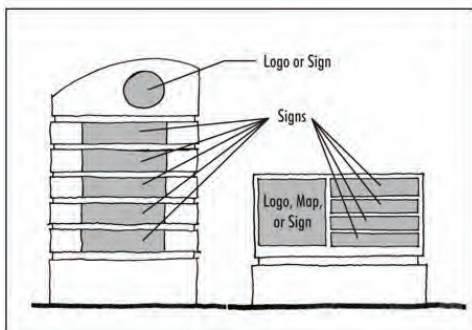
1. Signs should be located, sized, and designed for single or multiple uses so as to eliminate conflicts, predict the impact and effects of the signs on adjoining properties, avoid clutter, and achieve the desired character of their application.
2. The size of signs should be related to the location and speed of movement of a pedestrian viewing the sign.
3. Signs should not be located within the residential portion of the façade of any mixed use building (except on ground floor entry).
4. Window, awning, and projecting signs should not be allowed above ground floor.
5. Wall signs:
  - 5.1. Should not be located at the top of building's façade if the façade is higher than two stories. (NW, MC)
  - 5.2. Signs located on the side wall of a building that faces a side property line, alley, or parking area (including a side property line along a street) should not be lighted above the ground floor.
6. Projecting signs:
  - 6.1. Each use by right should be limited to one projecting sign for each of the use's street frontage.
  - 6.2. All projecting sign structures on a building should be located at the same height as the other sign structures.
  - 6.3. Should be located above or below non-signed awnings, but not in line with the awnings.
7. Window signs should not be larger than 10 percent of each window or door area.
8. Awning signs:
  - 8.1. Should not extend beyond a building's or storefront's individual bays.
  - 8.2. Should be located primarily on the awning valence that faces the street, not on a valence that is generally perpendicular to the street.
9. Free-standing signs:
  - 9.1. Only one monument or street frontage sign should be allowed per building.
  - 9.2. Should have no more than one sign cabinet or backing panel.



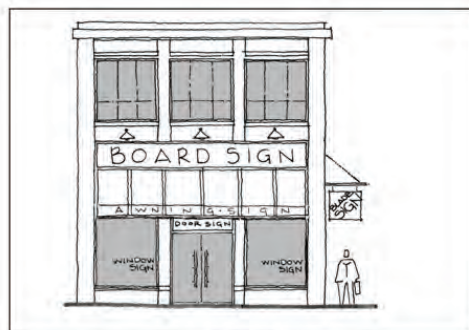
Wall sign



Projecting sign



MONUMENT SIGNAGE



BUILDING SIGNAGE

Signage examples

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# **Section 4: Design Guidelines for Franchise Developments**

Buildings

Access and Entries

Public Space

Automobile Sales/Service Developments

Franchise developments include large scale retails, drive-through, drive-up or drive-in establishments, gas stations and convenience stores, and/or other chain commercial developments. These guidelines apply specifically to franchise developments, in addition to the general design guidelines presented under Sections 2 and 3.

## Buildings

1. Alternative designs to standardized franchise or corporate architecture, and bright or highly contrasting color schemes are encouraged.
  - 1.1. New buildings should be designed to be compatible and sensitive to surrounding context and should take into account the planned context.
  - 1.2. On sites where no build form context exists, new proposals should establish a high quality public realm.
  - 1.3. Prototypical and/or prefabricated buildings should be avoided. Instead unique building types and expressions should be developed to address individual site conditions and these design guidelines.
2. A building's height relative to the street width should be sufficient (i.e., minimum 1:1 ratio) to define the street edge and corner on a corner site.
3. Two-story buildings should be provided where necessary to be compatible with planned context.
4. No multi-story building should have blank walls facing any public street, neighborhood or other internal commercial areas that can be viewed by the public.
5. Typical strip shopping centers and/or big-box retail uses should employ a variety of building setbacks, elevations, roof treatments, façade articulations, door and window openings, and other structural and decorative elements to reduce apparent building size and scale.
  - 5.1. A minimum of 20 percent of all combined façades of the building should employ actual façade protrusions or recesses.
  - 5.2. A minimum 20 percent of all of the combined linear roof eave or parapet lines should employ difference in height.

**The building, through its massing and articulation should seek to animate the street, direct pedestrians, terminate view corridors, frame views, enclose space, provide visual relief and create or extend the street wall.**



Use of alternative designs to standardized franchise or corporate architecture or color scheme



Commercial building design using features to be compatible with surrounding context



Provision of two-story commercial buildings that are compatible with the local context.

# Buildings cont.

6. All commercial buildings should reflect the actual floors within the building through use of window locations, façade breaks, façade setbacks, balconies, etc.
7. The parapet wall section of the façade may not be used to convey identity of a particular commercial branded business through corporate color, materials, or logo identification.
8. Make walls along the street face visible from the street; use with windows, doors, and other forms of transparent building materials to maximize views in and out of the building and the relationship between interior and exterior.
9. Commercial storefront façades should only have up to 25 percent of any frontage in ground to ceiling tempered glass windows. The balance of storefront windows should be recessed a minimum of two inches from the façade wall face and provide a visually prominent sill made of cast stone, brick, or some other durable permanent material.
10. Where possible, stand alone buildings and/or structures should be avoided and building and drive-through facility should be incorporated into larger, multi-use buildings.
  - 10.1. Structures including weather protection devices, canopy, carwash, and cashier's booth on the site should be designed with consistent materials, architectural details, and design elements as the main structure to ensure a cohesive project.
11. The length of the building at the front lot line or setback line (at both streets on a corner lot) should be maximized.
12. Materials and methods of construction that incorporate high exterior quality and relate to their surrounding context should be provided.
13. Buildings and/or developments located at street corners should provide some structural element or strong design element to anchor the corner. This may be accomplished by using a building, wall, or strong landscaping features.
14. Uses that support the street should be located along the public sidewalk (such as restaurant seating or offices).





Commercial buildings reflecting actual floors within the building use



Commercial development maximizing length of building up to the property line



Use of structural element to anchor the corner for a commercial development

# Access and Entries

1. Customer building entryways should be clearly defined and highly visible.
2. All doors should be recessed in the façade elevation to provide an identifiable entry point for each customer entry.
3. The main entrance door should be located directly off the public sidewalk within easy access of transit stops.
4. At corner location, the main entrance door should be located at the corner or on the higher pedestrian volume street.
5. Incorporate a customer building entryway on all sides of the building that directly face or abut a public street or public parking area.
6. Change in grade (slope) greater than four percent between the public sidewalk and adjacent uses should be avoided. This will maintain direct pedestrian access to the building and site and not detract from visual access between the building interior or site's pedestrian amenities and public realm.
7. Drive-through facilities should employ the following to achieve a high quality public realm:
  - 7.1. Locate buildings at street edge.
  - 7.2. Locate main entrances at the street with a direct route from the public sidewalk.
  - 7.3. Separate vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
  - 7.4. Locate stacking lanes, driveways, parking utilities, and services away from the street (non-street side of building).
  - 7.5. Do not locate stacking lanes or driveways between the building and the street.
  - 7.6. Multiple windows servicing a single stacking lane (e.g., order window, payment window, pick-up window) should be considered to promote reduced idling.
  - 7.7. Drive-through elements (food ordering and pick-up areas, menu boards, etc.) and other structures (e.g., canopies should be integrated into the building and site designs, rather than having them appear to be “stuck-on” the building or placed as unrelated stand-alone elements.
8. Curb cuts should be minimized to allow for uninterrupted, safe, and inviting pedestrian access to multiple store fronts.
9. The service entry, trash enclosure, and drive-through should be screened from street-view.

**Incorporating features, such as canopies or porticos, overhangs, projections, arcades, peaked roof forms, arches, outdoor patios, display windows, and/or other distinct architectural details, into the design should help define and improve visibility of entryways.**



Entries to commercial buildings should be clearly defined



Integration of drive-through elements into the building and site design

# Public Space

1. A central area or feature, such as a patio/seating area, pedestrian plaza with benches, outdoor playground, water feature, and/or other such deliberately designated area or focal point should be provided. All such areas should be designed with materials compatible with the building and remainder of the site.
2. Outdoor seating areas, play areas and equipment, and perimeter fencing should be compatible and integrated with the main building architecture.
3. Pedestrian safety, amenity, and circulation.
  - 3.1. To ensure pedestrian safety and comfort, sites with drive-through facilities should be organized so that it is not necessary for pedestrians to cross stacking lanes, driveways, or parking when accessing the site from adjacent streets.
  - 3.2. The design of the site, building, and landscape should provide barrier-free accessibility from the public sidewalk to the building interior.
4. Paved areas, such as stacking lanes should be minimized. Water-permeable surfaces and soft landscaped areas should be maximized to contribute to the appearance and environmental sustainability of the site and its larger context by increasing water penetration into the water table, reducing pollution of local water features and runoff demand on local infrastructure.



Provision of functional outdoor area as focal point of the development



Outdoor area and provided amenities should be compatible and be integrated into the main building's architecture



Site design providing barrier free access to the commercial development from the public space or pedestrian circulation area

# Automobile Sale/Service Developments

1. Landscaped islands with trees should be used in outdoor vehicle display areas to provide both shade and visual relief.
2. Landscaped medians should be limited to break large parking lots into smaller pods, with a maximum of 100 spaces in any one pod.
3. As presented in Section 3 (under guideline 2.1 of Site Design and Access: Parking), parking should be located at the side or rear of buildings fronting active street corridors.
4. Indoor showroom/office space should be located at the front of the site to enhance the appearance from public streets.
5. The building and site should be designed such that vehicles under repair are kept either inside a building or in an area which is screened from views from the public street and adjacent properties.
6. All service areas and service bays should be screened so they are not visible from the street.
7. For perimeter fencing, security fencing, or gateways, use attractive materials that are compatible with the design and materials shall be used. Razor wire or electric fencing should not be used and chain link fencing is strongly discouraged.



Landscaping providing visual relief in outdoor areas



Showrooms located at the front of the site to enhance appearance from public streets



Building designed to screen service and repair areas from the street

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## **Section 5: Glossary of Terms**

**360-degree architecture:** building design that gives equal consideration to all sides of building.

**Articulation:** (architecture) the method of styling, commonly, the exterior façade of the building. Typically, it refers to the façade detail and architectural elements, which creates human scale patterns or rhythm, and adds visual interest, depth, and character along the street wall. These elements contribute to the walking experience and help maintain the pedestrian's interest.

**Awning signs:** attached or printed on a canopy protects people from the sun and the elements.

**Block face:** length of one block.

**Cap:** (architecture) the top element in a division or structure.

**Context-sensitive design:** designs the incorporate solutions that are compatible or respect the context of the surrounding build and natural environments.

**Cornice:** typically a horizontal decorative element or molding that projects along the top of a building wall or other structural elements.

**Curb cut:** a cut in the curb associated with a driveway to provide access for vehicles into a parking area, alley, or loading zone.



Vertical articulation of buildings



Cornice

**Eaves:** describes the edge of the roof that typically extends beyond the building wall as protection from precipitation.

**Façade:** is one of the exterior sides of the building, typically representing the front building wall and incorporated architectural features.

**Free-standing signs:** typically self supportive by a post or posts mounted into the ground.

**Frontage:** length of the property or building measured alongside the road that the property or building fronts.

**Human scale:** the degree to which the size, texture, and articulation of physical elements match the size and proportions of the human body and correspond to the speed at which humans walk.

**Gateway:** a distinctive element which marks the entrance of a district.

**Iconic:** (architecture) a building that expresses unique or inspiring design that help establish a distinctive identity of place.

**Imageability:** the quality of a physical object, which gives an observer a strong, vivid image; a city or a place with high imageability would contain very distinct parts, and would be instantly recognized by people.

**Joint:** (architecture) the junction of two or more members of a building or structure's framing.



Eaves



Sample free-standing sign

**Landmark:** readily identifiable objects or locations which serve as reference points for a location.

**Median:** the portion of the roadway which separates opposing traffic streams, preferably designated with curb, gutter, and trees.

**Modulation (vertical/horizontal):** use of step backs, projections, and other architectural elements on sections of the building façade as a way to break up potentially monotonous street walls.

**Parapet:** a portion or continuation of the building wall or of another architectural that extends above the edge of the roof, terrace, balcony, or other structure.

**Projecting signs:** typically attached to a building and cantilever horizontally over the sidewalk.

**Public art:** art located in the public realm such as in a plaza or as a part of the streetscape

**Public right-of-way:** the composite public area dedicated exclusively to circulation-both physical and social-including the roadway and pedestrian area.

**Roofline:** the profile and/or outline created by the architectural elements of the roof.

**Roofscape:** a scene or view of roofs, especially when considered in terms of its aesthetic or architectural appeal.



Median



Parapet

**Street furniture:** elements typically located in the public right-of-way for use by pedestrians such as benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks.

**Streetscape:** the entire system of streets, sidewalks, landscaping, street furniture, and open spaces, by which people circulate through and experience the corridor.

**Tree grate:** a metal covering for a tree pit in the sidewalk.

**Tree lawns (planting strips):** landscaped strip between the back of curb and sidewalk in which street trees may be located.

**Trellis:** generally, a frame supporting a lattice structure that is used as a screen that can also be used for vines or plants can grow on.

**Wall signs:** typically flat signs fixed to a building façade.

**Window signs:** typically silk screened, back-painted, metal-leafed, or sandblasted onto a glass window.

**Wayfinding:** a system of directional public signs that helps lead pedestrians and vehicles to destinations.



Tree lawns or planting strips



Trellis



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