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Version 1.1 May 13, 2009

Call for Photographs

The City of Omaha Planning Department is seeking photographs to illustrate urban design principles and zoning provisions included in this document from local and regional sources. If you would like to submit photographs to this publication and receive firm or individual photo credit please send images to:

Jed Moulton
Manager of Urban Design
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1819 Farnam Street
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jmoulton@ci.omaha.ne.us
402-444-5208

Please include the following information:
-  Project name
-  Project location
-  Design firm(s)
-  Photograph credit
-  Urban design provision it illustrates

Contents are subject to revision without notice. Contact the Planning department to determine the most current version available.
Introduction

Background
The City of Omaha Master Plan Concept Element establishes as a general principle that “Omaha must be a community committed to promoting and maintaining a high quality of life for all its people”. Expanding upon the simple and clear vision which was authored by the citizens of Omaha and their representatives, the plan continues with additional vision statements (excerpts with emphasis added):

“Omahans need to take pride in the physical attractiveness of their city and work to eliminate visual blight and promote high quality design. Omaha’s urban form must be carefully designed to eliminate land use conflicts, reduce traffic congestion, encourage pedestrian movement and incorporate open space. The preservation of historic buildings and sites is important to Omahans as they work to preserve their cultural and ethnic heritage.”

“Omaha’s neighborhoods must be designed to supply a variety of affordable, quality homes along with a full range of services and amenities which make each neighborhood unique.”

“Omaha’s plans and regulations must accurately reflect the community’s desires, resulting in a clear direction for Omaha’s future and rapid approval of proposals which follow those plans.”

As part of this ongoing effort to implement the vision of master plan, subsequent Master Plan elements and sections propose numerous goals and objectives to help determine a course of action by decision makers:

- Create an attractive physical environment
- Ensure a cohesive and interrelated design of projects
- Emphasize people in the design of streetscapes
- Conserve existing stable neighborhoods
- Reduce sign redundancy and clutter
- Prevent negative changes to neighborhood character (slip-ins/con versions/spot zoning)
- Ensure a mix of necessary retail and personal services in all areas
- Reduce traffic congestion and cost by shifting from a “sparse hierarchy” to a more balanced transportation pattern with more emphasis on a “dense network” street system
- Preserve and protect unique natural and historic features which serve as a foundation for Omaha’s overall image

Additionally, the urban design section of the master plan acknowledges the challenges in creating coordinated public spaces and streetscapes as developments are often designed and constructed independently of each other and lack coordination. The architecture and site design section promotes the following concept:

“The City will ensure that areas of the city are cohesive in terms of appearance and function. The City will require that the proposed projects be considered within the context of their surroundings and that they be consistent with an overall design concept that considers the interrelationships of buildings, parking, open space, pedestrian movement and existing site features.”

The quality of the urban environment has been rated as one of the top three concerns by Omaha residents in a recent community survey. The urban environment is generally composed of public right of way (streets), private property and public open spaces (parks, plazas and squares). Approximately 28% of the land area of Omaha is dedicated to street environments and consequently becomes the primary way in which the city is experienced. The development trends within Omaha over the last several decades have exhibited traditional suburban development patterns which often created, vehicular dominated street environments that hindered pedestrian activity. The older parts of the city with more traditional patterns of development have occasionally become eroded by suburban style development that conflicts with the traditional context. Through the efforts of a community based initiative sponsored by, Omaha by Design and various city agencies the Urban Design Element of the master plan was created to address, among other things, the quality of design along certain significant and image forming streets of the city.

The purpose of the Omaha Zoning Code is to uphold and implement the tenants of the master plan and serve to guide public and private development towards creating and designing of the city that Omahans wish to create and retain. The recently adopted urban design article of the Omaha zoning code specifically addresses principles necessary for creating great streets. The regulation focus on balancing the needs of all users including pedestrians and vehicles, commercial and residential uses, children and adults. These well designed streetscapes will function like urban villages where one can walk freely and safely to enjoy a community environment involving commercial retail and office services, living, entertainment and public spaces. Following are the general principles for creating great streets, and consequently, creating great places for Omaha.
Urban Villages and Street Design

The urban design code for Omaha is guided by well established principles for understanding and creating great streets. While not all of these principles can be included on all streets, they serve as a general framework and vary according to the context and unique requirements of each area of the City.

Mobility – How We Get Around
Great urban streets are generally designed for accommodating many types of uses and ways in which we move about (mobility). The individual or pedestrian is the central organizing element of all modes of transportation. Removing conflicts between modes of transportation and pedestrians allows for safe and enjoyable environments where one can spend time and take part in the community. Walking is generally encouraged and the roadside provides access to services and destinations.

The following chart organizes types of mobility, forms and locations of congregations and whether they are contributing features to pedestrian streetscape. The greater the numeric difference between the levels of intensity represents the degree of potential conflict. Streetscape design should minimize conflict between different types of mobility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hierarchy of Mobility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intensity Level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Pedestrian</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Bicycle</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Mass Transit</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Motorized Vehicles</td>
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<td>5 Truck Freight</td>
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</table>
Compatibility – traffic speeds and compatibility with urban streetscapes
For urban streetscapes to function properly a hospitable pedestrian environment should be provided and protected from the proximity of through-route vehicle traffic. Slower vehicle speed does not necessarily produce less vehicle capacity for the street. Some delay in travel time will easily be offset by increased retail power and more commercial viability, improved safety, better trip quality and more equitable access by all users. By calming traffic the street will be more likely to attract housing, pedestrians and businesses and which will further stimulate the creation of active, destination oriented streets.

Park-Once-and-Walk – an urban experience
Suburban environments designed primarily for vehicle mobility require numerous and extensive parking options (vehicle storage). In these areas buildings are created for single uses separated by parking and or streets. Pedestrian access (walking) is oftentimes impractical or unenjoyable due to inhospitable environments and the distance between businesses. Often, one will need to drive between destinations and park multiple times. An urban streetscape is different. It is understood to be a destination or district within which multiple businesses and or services occur such as the Old Market District of downtown. These walkable pedestrian environments require that automobiles be stored remotely, in structures or lots and almost always provide for street parking along the curbside. Parking is typically within a three block walking radius from structure or lot to the retail district. Parking structures are usually wrapped with retail spaces or have them integrated within the ground floor adjacent to the sidewalk. Providing a park-once-and-walk environment allows people the opportunity to enjoy an active urban environment while walking towards their destination.

Public Spaces Continually Occupied
Public places are for all to enjoy and signify our commitment to our community. They come in many forms and are significant character-defining elements of the street or district. The town square, typical to most small towns, can become an active place of community celebration and festivals. Plazas and pocket parks are great places for meeting with friends, enjoying lunch or simple taking time to enjoy a beautifully landscaped area. Wide sidewalks with adequate landscaping also provide for great public places. Keeping public spaces safe, clean and well maintained ensures that they will be used often and throughout the day and evening.

Street Walls
The arrangement of buildings in relation to the street is a critical component in making streets become places. Buildings adjacent to streets create enclosure and provide defining limits to an area within which the street space occurs. This element of enclosure is known as a street-wall. In this respect the street is defined by its perceived limits. The street wall organizes pedestrian movement and activity along the roadside through the common public space of the sidewalk. Without a clearly defined edge, the street lacks
cohesiveness, become ambiguous and the sidewalk may lose its relevance as the path of travel. Subsequently, the street and roadside must be carefully designed to provide for the concentration of pedestrian activity.

**Form Before Use**
Buildings that provide for a mixture of uses contribute to the necessary density of urban villages. Modern sub-urban development typically identifies independent uses first and then seeks to provide a building with independent access and parking for that use. Urban streets are created differently and are more dynamic. Urban buildings with multiple stories are first positioned within the context of the streetscape and then uses inhabit the building in a logical manner depending on their needs. Typically, the arrangement is retail and commercial at the ground floor with office, residential or other uses above. In this way uses can change over time however the urban form remains constant and enduring. The mixing of uses also provides a built-in customer base for retail and creates places that are occupied through the day and in the evening providing constant activity in public places.

**A Mixture of Commercial Uses Within Walking Distance**
Pedestrian oriented streetscapes provide access to a mixture of commercial, retail and personal service needs. They usually attract a mixture of local, regional and national tenants. Often the district business organizations of these districts brand, market, and manage retail space collectively. A clear wayfinding system is an important component to any pedestrian oriented district. These retail communities are designed to serve both a pedestrian walk-up and vehicular customers and enjoy a devoted customer base.

**Variety of Housing Choices Integrated Together**
Urban villages are places that offer a wide variety of housing types and choices appealing to a diverse socio-economic population. The mixing of building and housing types is fundamental to creating a dynamic environment for all to enjoy. Development is well designed, compact with close attention provided to the public realm. Some examples of housing choices include lofts, live/work, apartments and condominiums, courtyard housing, duplex/triplex/quadruplex, row houses, single family detached houses and garage apartments.
Attractive Landscaping
Streetscapes are outdoor places where landscaping becomes an integral component to the overall character and quality of the space. The biological nature of landscaping is unique to these outdoor places and requires proper design considerations. Street trees offer shade for outdoor areas and shrubs and plants can act as visual screens and buffers. The proper installation, care and long term maintenance are crucial for the survival and appearance of landscape materials.

Historic Preservation
Urban environments are enduring and therefore survive through time to become valued historically. Many communities in Omaha have strong connections to their historical streets and neighborhoods. Great streets preserve unique characteristics such as brick-lined pavement, pedestrian lighting and architecture. It is important that new development be designed to conserve and or enhance the historic character of existing urban districts.

Safety and Maintenance
Since urban streets encourage use throughout the day and evening, proper care should be given to issues of safety and maintenance of the environment. Streetlights encourage activity well beyond daylight hours. Glare and light pollution should be prevented with proper attention given to luminaries and cut-off fixtures for signs and lighting. Traffic lights and crosswalk signals enable multiple users to share the street. Curbs, painted bike lanes and different surface textures allow pedestrians and vehicles to move together safely and conveniently. The streetscape should be well maintained including street surface, landscaping and streetlights. These public spaces should feel clean, well cared for and inviting.

High Quality Transit
Urban villages are well suited for successful mass transit because of their compact mixing of uses. High residential density within walking distance from transit stops contributes to the overall success of the district. Transit should be attractive, clean, well maintained and traveling at proper speeds to avoid pedestrian conflicts.
Understanding Omaha’s Urban Design Code

Background
In August 2007, the Omaha City Council unanimously approved the adoption of urban design regulations for the City of Omaha. These regulations address critical physical characteristics of development that previously were unregulated which in some cases may lead to the reduction in quality for the built environment. Implementation of these regulations is accomplished by gradually adding overlay zoning to existing areas of the City that have been identified in the urban design element of the City’s Master Plan as candidates for becoming significant, “image forming” corridors for Omaha. These measures will ultimately stabilize important areas and help to improve the overall quality of development for Omaha.

The Urban Design regulations are implemented by creating different overlay zoning districts. This allows for flexibility of use and adaptability to various existing contexts. The overlay zoning is added to the existing base zoning and does not replace existing zoning regulations. These overlay districts are described Chapter 55 – Zoning, of the Omaha Municipal Code.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Urban Design Districts</th>
<th>Code Section</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Areas of Civic Importance Districts (ACI)</td>
<td>Sec. § 55-609</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civic Place Districts (CP)</td>
<td>Sec. § 55-627</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Conservation/Enhancement Districts (NCE)</td>
<td>Sec. § 55-601</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial Gateway Districts (IG)</td>
<td>Sec. § 55-664</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Commercial Corridor Districts (MCC)</td>
<td>Sec. § 55-681</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed-Use Areas (MU)</td>
<td>Sec. § 55-561</td>
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</table>

The Urban Design regulations are described in Chapter 55 – Zoning, of the Omaha Municipal Code under Article 22 – Urban design. Applicability of the different provisions to the different Urban Design overlay districts is described in the applicability chart.

Urban Design Zoning – FAQ’s

Q: Will the UD zoning overlay require me to change anything about my existing property?
A: No. It can remain exactly as it is.

Q: When do the new zoning regulations affect a property?
A: The new regulations only apply at the time of new development and or when new construction occurs. If only part of the building or site is reconstructed, the new regulations apply to only that part. Currently, if a building were to be destroyed, it would be required to be rebuilt to the existing code. After the ACI zoning overlay is applied the same policy will be in place.

Q: Will the zoning overlay change the uses allowed on a property.
A: In most cases all uses allowed in the base zoning still apply. NCE districts may affect the allowed uses for a property. Check the specific NCE plan for the specific area of a site.

Q: Will the zoning overlay restrict development on a property more so than the base zoning.
A: All properties in Omaha are currently subject to site development regulations such as required front, side and rear yard setbacks. In some cases the new Urban Design code promotes placing the building closer to the street and providing a wider sidewalk and landscape area between the building and the street to encourage an active pedestrian environment. In some cases this means the property may yield more build-able area and be less restrictive than the current codes. In some cases, however, it may be more restrictive when promoting a wider landscape buffer between parking lots and streets than the current base zoning.

Q: Are all parcels within the district affected by the overlay zoning?
A: No. Single family and low density residential uses on parcels within the district are exempt from the overlay regulations. Also, parcels with civic uses such as schools, universities or religious facilities may be exempt from certain requirements providing they have an approved campus master plan.

Q: Where can I access the actual zoning code sections listed above?
A: The Omaha Municipal Code is available for online viewing at www.municode.com. Go to the Online Library, select Nebraska and then Omaha. Look for Chapter 55 – Zoning and then Article 22 – Urban Design.
## URBAN DESIGN ARTICLE APPLICABILITY CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Design Article Provision</th>
<th>Areas of Civic Importance</th>
<th>Special Review</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>ACI-1</td>
<td>ACI-2</td>
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<td>Sidewalk Areas (§ 55-924)</td>
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<td>Neighborhood connectivity (§ 55-931)</td>
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<td>Location of utilities (§ 55-932)</td>
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<td>Signs (§ 55-933)</td>
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<td>Retaining walls (§ 55-934)</td>
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<td>Large retail building design guidelines (§ 55-935)</td>
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<td>General building design guidelines (§ 55-936)</td>
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<td>Tower locations: min/max façade heights (§ 55-634(a))</td>
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<td>Important buildings (§ 55-634(b))</td>
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<td>Building design/architectural guidelines (§ 55-634(c))</td>
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<td>Significant vistas (§ 55-634(d))</td>
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<td>Public spaces (§ 55-634(e))</td>
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<td>Mixing of uses (§ 55-664(c))</td>
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<td>Circulation systems (§ 55-664(d))</td>
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<td>Plazas, public places and buildings (§ 55-664(c))</td>
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<td>Green corners (§ 55-664(f))</td>
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<td>Stormwater detention areas (§ 55-664(g))</td>
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<td>Required open space (§ 55-664(h))</td>
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Legend:  ● = Applicable;  ◆ = NCE district provisions may modify these elements of urban design;  abcde = Build-to/set-back options
The Urban Design Handbook

Who Should Use This Guide
This handbook is intended serve as a guide for concerned citizens, developers, architects, engineers, other design professionals, city staff and the general public regarding the founding principles and intent of the the urban design regulations for Omaha.

Urban Design Review Board
The Urban Design Review Board (UDRB) is a seven-member board who provide recommendations to the Planning Director on issues related to urban design site plan reviews. The board meets upon request of the Planning Director and/or applicant to review and clarify urban design site plan review findings. This board meets generally on the third Thursday of each month. In some cases the true compliance with an urban design provision requires a judgment decision and or interpretation of the ordinance. For example when calling for certain “similar” quality of materials or when elements are deemed “visible”, “friendly”, “in scale with” etc… or for other matters of interpretation in complex situations projects may be referred to the Urban Design Review Board.

This illustrated handbook will also be used a guide for review and interpretation by the Urban Design Review Board. To learn more about the Urban Design Review Board visit the Omaha Planning Department web site at:

http://www.ci.omaha.ne.us/planning

Illustrated Reference Sections
In the following section each Urban Design provision has been illustrated with examples organized into two categories; “appropriate” or “inappropriate”. In general terms the “appropriate” illustrations fulfill the intentions of the code or are close in character while the “inappropriate” illustrations do not. Not all “appropriate” photographs in this handbook depict the exact metric of the regulations; they intended to clarify the intent of the provisions.

The urban design zoning regulations are minimum standards of which the urban design principle they serve are deemed to provide contribution to the streetscape. Development proposals may exceed these minimums but shall not provide less than these requirements.
The Roadside Environment:
The area between the street curb and the building or property line is referred to as the roadside environment. It is a complex and dynamic component of any streetscape. Together, the three urban design provisions of Sidewalks, Build-to/set-back Lines and Transparency serve to create an enhanced pedestrian oriented roadside environment.

Sidewalks: The roadside extends from curb to the building face or property line and is characterized by four zones; the curb zone, the utility/furnishing zone, the travel zone and the building zone. The curb zone is typically a 2-3 foot area allowing for movement parallel to the curb for access to parking meters and street parking. The utility/furnishing zone is an 8-10 foot section allowing for a variety of street activities and infrastructure including but not limited to street trees and landscaping, seating, bike parking, and public art. The travel zone may vary in width dependent on location and should range in width between 5-10 feet. The travel zone should provide clear, unobstructed movement meeting the requirements for ADA. The building zone is a 2-3 foot area along the face of adjacent buildings. Since people typically do not walk directly next to buildings, walls or edges this area allows for people to stop or browse retail. In some cases this area may become much wider to allow for sidewalk seating and or dining. Roadside may vary in width and accommodations and should be designed according to their context, the intended use and in conjunction with urban design regulations and guidelines.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPROPRIATE</th>
<th>INAPPROPRIATE</th>
<th>Sidewalk Areas</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Appropriate Sidewalk" /></td>
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*Images credit: [www.sitophocus.com]*
### Sidewalk areas

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<td><img src="image7" alt="Appropriate Sidewalk" /></td>
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### Build-to/Set-backs Lines

Reference for Section 55-925

**Build-to/Set-back Lines:** The arrangement of buildings in relation to the street is a critical component in making streets become places. Buildings facades adjacent to sidewalks help to create a sense of enclosure by acting as a wall for the street. The street-wall organizes pedestrian movement and activity along the roadside through the common public space of the sidewalk. Without a clearly defined edge the street lacks cohesiveness, becomes ambiguous and the sidewalk tends lose it’s relevance as the path of travel. Subsequently, the street and roadside must be carefully designed to provide for the concentration of pedestrian activity within the road side environment.

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**URBAN DESIGN HANDBOOK**

City of Omaha Planning Department

Page 16
**Ground-level Transparency**
Reference for Section 55-926

*Transparency:* When a building is adjacent to the sidewalk it should provide for a visual connection between the sidewalk and the first floor. This connection is necessary to link the interior functions of buildings with the sidewalk environment. Uses such as retail sales, restaurants, general services, offices and entertainment are well suited for linking to the sidewalk areas. Transparency cannot always be accommodated due to operating characteristics of some businesses but it is an urban design element which is strongly encouraged. Long expanses of blank walls are not allowed in certain areas and will be discouraged within the district.
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**Ground-level Transparency**

Continued
Service Area Screening
Reference for Section 55-924

Utility Access:
Access to utilitarian components of the streetscape such as utility equipment, loading docks and parking lots is necessary function within the urban infrastructure. The street environment should not be considered a conduit for these utilitarian elements but as public places designed for pedestrian oriented activity. Care should be used in designing locations and appearance of utility elements and their access should not preside over the pedestrian environment.

Screening: Utility equipment such as dumpsters, loading docks, HVAC equipment may obstruct and or diminish the appearance of streetscapes unless carefully designed. Service areas and utility equipment should be designed to be in remote locations and or screened from public view. Screen walls should be a quality of materials similar to building adjacent approved building materials.
Location of Utilities
Reference for Section 55-932

Location of Utilities: Overhead services such as utility poles, transformers and connections should be underground when possible. Often these utilities are installed and maintained by different agencies over an extended period of time and can result in a disorganized and cluttered appearance.
Vehicular Site Access: Curb cuts for access to parking lots should be limited in quantity and size to reduce the number of times vehicles cross sidewalks. Access to parking lots should use alleys or adjacent parking lots when available.
Green Parking Areas:
Parking lots are important components of the urban infrastructure. However, these facilities often place vehicles and pedestrians in direct conflict with one another and do not necessarily contribute to the appearance of the streetscape. Parking lots are typically large expanses of paved areas. Providing perimeter and interior landscaping helps to improve their overall appearance and can also help to mitigate excessive storm water run-off from the site. Green Parking lots establish minimums for parking lot landscaping and also provides for the opportunity to utilize storm water mitigation concepts within these facilities. Landscaping is typically required at the time of construction and is required to be maintained permanently.

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<th>APPROPRIATE</th>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Appropriate Green Parking Area" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Inappropriate Green Parking Area" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Appropriate Green Parking Area" /></td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Inappropriate Green Parking Area" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Appropriate Green Parking Area" /></td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Inappropriate Green Parking Area" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reference for Section 55-928
Green Parking Areas

Continued
Parking Structures: Parking structures are an efficient means to increase parking density and capacity within urban areas. Parking structure design should be compatible to the surrounding context. Requirements for exterior building materials, height and scale of building elevations help to create this compatibility. When a parking structure is adjacent to a pedestrian oriented streetscape, provisions should be made to include retail in a portion of the ground floor. This helps to maintain the quality and character of the roadside environment and mitigate large expanses of blank walls.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>APPROPRIATE</strong></th>
<th><strong>INAPPROPRIATE</strong></th>
<th><strong>Neighborhood Connectivity</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Images currently not available</td>
<td>Images currently not available</td>
<td>Neighborhood Connectivity: Maintaining street connectivity in urban areas is necessary to allow for the free movement of all forms of mobility. Commercial areas should be easily accessed from neighborhoods without requiring unnecessary or circuitous travel. In older parts of town where a street network is established every effort should be made to keep the grid intact. Vacating streets or alleys is discouraged and working to create new or maintain existing connections is required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Signs**

Regulating the type, quantity, height and location of signs is an important part of urban design requirements. Excessive amounts of signage and or poorly located signs can lead to unsightly appearances, increased competition and an aggressive advertising environment. Streetscapes are public places where signage should be informational and limited to business identification only. Business may promote special offers or additional information on the interior of the building.

Smaller, lower and more discrete signs that are attached to the ground or a building is required in urban design areas.
Signs
Continued
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPROPRIATE</th>
<th>INAPPROPRIATE</th>
<th>Retaining Walls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Appropriate Retaining Wall](image1) | ![Inappropriate Retaining Wall](image2) | **Retaining Walls**  
Reference for Section 55-924  

*Retaining Walls:*  
Large expanses of tall, undifferentiated wall areas next to sidewalks or adjacent properties are discouraged. Certain methods of landscaping and or limiting rise and run of walls is recommended to limit the effect of large retaining walls. Walls that are screened from view or behind buildings do not have special requirements.
Building Design Guidelines:

Development characteristics which are well suited for certain contexts may not be suitable for others. Some chain store retailers have prototype designs that work well in low density, auto oriented, sub-urban environments. When these standard designs are introduced into more established urban areas they can cause a significant degree of conflict. This conflict usually results in the erosion of density, pedestrian scale and many of the other urban principles stated elsewhere in this guide. For this reason, development in urban design areas should be required to provide designs suitable to the existing or emerging context of the neighborhood.

The building design guidelines address the physical characteristics of development sometimes called the “form” of the development. The urban design regulations do not restrict certain retailers or class of retailers but address compatibility of development within urban areas.

Providing requirements for general characteristics of building design in addition to other urban design provisions will help to assure better quality and compatibility within urban design districts.

Following is a general outline of building design requirements with an assortment of designs from chain retailers.
**Build-to/Set-back Lines and Zones:** Requires buildings to be located in relationship to sidewalks or plazas.

**Transparency:** Buildings should provide a visual connection from active pedestrian places such as sidewalks.

**Facades:** Buildings should have continuity of design on all sides. Sides and backs of buildings should be designed in addition to the front.

**Base of Buildings:** Exterior walls along pedestrian areas should be designed for with pedestrians in mind.

**Wall Materials:** Exterior walls are required to be made from high quality, durable building materials.
**Building Design Guidelines Continued**

- **Proportion of Long Elevations:** Limits are placed on long undifferentiated facades.

- **Relating Large Buildings to Sloping Sites:** Preserves the existing topography of the landscape.

- **Building Signs:** Limits are created for quantity, type, size and location of building signs.

- **Proportion and Visibility of Entrances:** To be accessible from pedestrian walkways and street sidewalks.

- **Organization of Windows:** To be designed in proportion to the building elevation.

- **Utility Screening:** Requires rooftop equipment, loading and service entrances, exterior site equipment, etc…
Plazas and Public Spaces

General Reference

Plazas and Public Spaces

Plazas and public spaces are not specifically required by the urban design zoning, however, certain provisions are included which allow plazas to occur. A public plaza may satisfy build-to/set-backs when required in certain urban design districts providing they meet the following definition:

**Plaza:** An open outdoor area intended primarily for pedestrian activity which often includes landscaping, trees, walkways, places to sit and sometimes shopping. Plazas should be made available to the general public, provide access from sidewalks and be visible from adjacent streets.
Plazas and Public Spaces
General Reference