

# CITY OF MOUNT VERNON DESIGN STANDARDS



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# INTRODUCTION, APPLICABILITY AND ORGANIZATION

Background

Overall Objectives

Development Subject to Design Standards

Using This Document

Processes, Allowed Deviations and Waivers

Administrative Design Review Process

## BACKGROUND

This document contains the City's Design Standards that apply to certain types of development and buildings. The City's first Design Standards were adopted in 2005 (with Ordinance 3237) and included requirements for Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), small lot residential developments, duplexes and multi-family buildings. The 2005 standards were adopted in concert with a number of other zoning regulations allowing greater density, smaller lots, and narrower roads. In essence, the City was willing to permit much denser development so long as the new development was attractive and well planned.

In 2018, City Council tasked Development Services staff with adopting design standards for the historic downtown and surrounding areas. With new standards for downtown being created, it made sense to audit and simultaneously make changes to the existing design standards. As such, this 2018 document incorporates updates and revisions to the existing design standards and adopts new standards for the historic downtown and surrounding areas.



*Overlooking the city of Mount Vernon and the Skagit River*

## OVERALL OBJECTIVES

There are a number of overall objectives these standards are intended to meet. For single-family, duplex, multi-family and PUD buildings and developments these include:

- Ensure housing design is based on a consistent, compatible, and aesthetic architecture.
- Ensure that new housing is designed with sensitivity to the site, as well as pedestrian scale, and reflects a strong residential character for the neighborhood and community.
- Ensure that new homes use building materials and architectural finishes in a manner that exemplifies quality, durability and encourages innovative and imaginative architecture.
- Supports and defines safe pedestrian, transit, bicycle and vehicular circulation.
- Maintain the scale, context and texture of existing neighborhoods.
- Encourage creative designs for sites and buildings.
- Allow for infill development that is sensitive to its context.

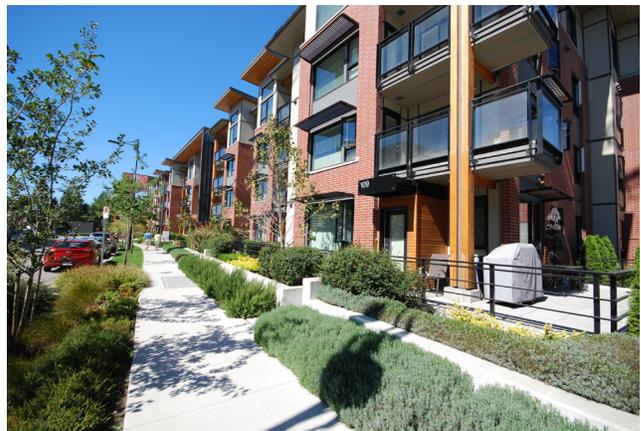
For development in the historic downtown and surrounding areas these objectives include:

- Superior site planning.
- Encouraging developments with amenities designed to strengthen a sense of community and promote community pride.
- Minimizing potential incompatibility with existing use.
- Protecting and enhancing community property values.
- To support the desired character of various neighborhoods, areas and zoning districts and promote an attractive visual environment.
- To implement and advance the City's planning efforts supporting the character and functionality of the City's zoning districts and subareas identified in the City's comprehensive plan, the historic south downtown, and South Kincaid Subarea.
- To preserve the aesthetic qualities that contribute to the city's small town character that attracts residents, businesses and customers.

In addition to the above objectives each design standard has its own intent listed at the beginning of each element.



*Compatible single-family development that builds on the existing architectural fabric*



*Creative designs for multi-family development that is sensitive to the context of the city*



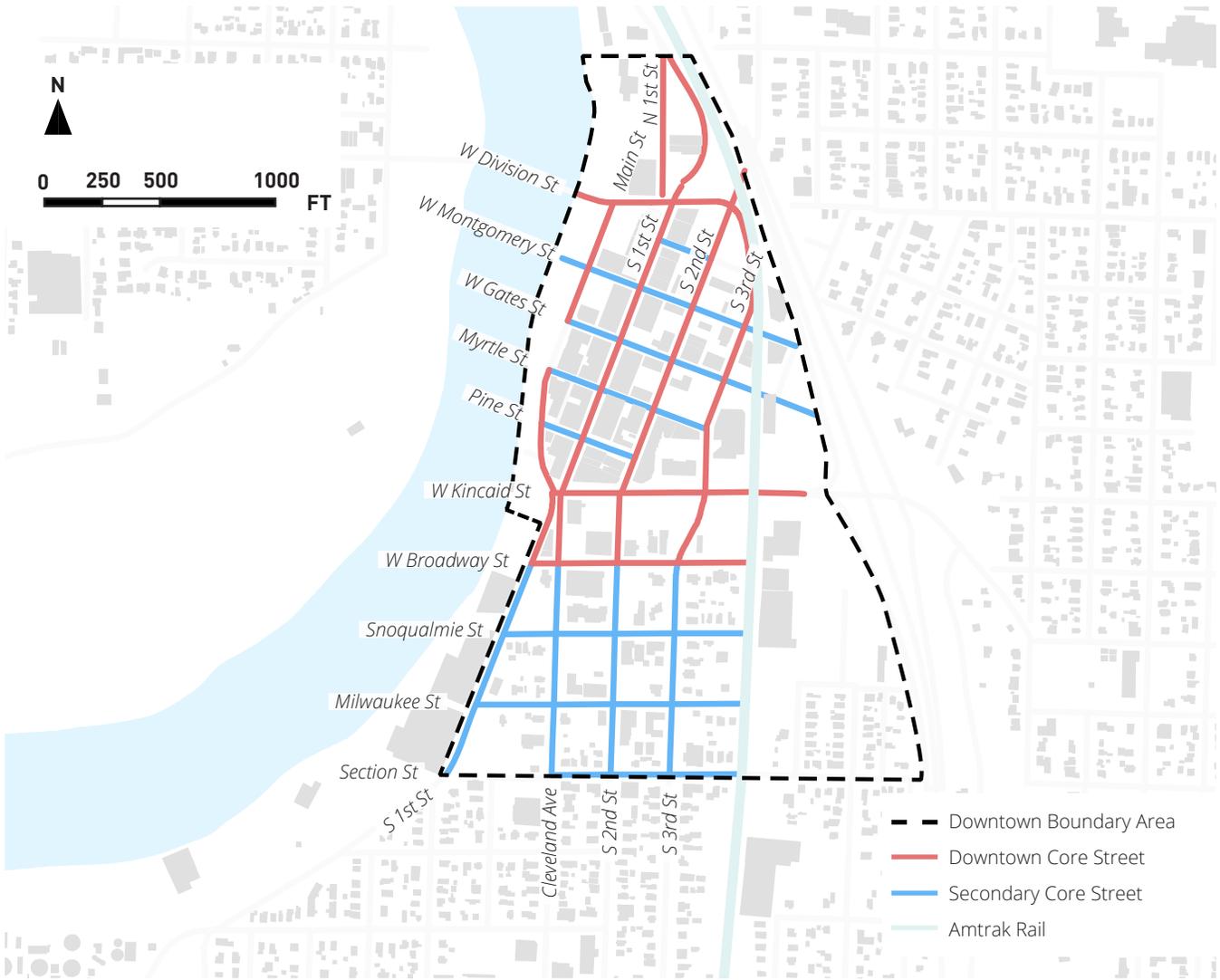
*Reinforce and enhance Downtown's pedestrian-oriented small town character*

# DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT TO DESIGN STANDARDS

The following types of buildings and development are required to comply with the City's Design Standards:

- Single-family development in subdivisions with average lot sizes 7,600 square feet (or smaller) or that are located in the historic downtown and surrounding areas (mapped in FIGURE 1), duplexes, and all PUDs are required to comply with the single-family, duplex, and PUD standards contained in "Section 1. Single-Family Standards" of this document.
- All multi-family development, regardless of where it is located, is required to comply with the multi-family standards contained in "Section 2. Multi-Family Standards" of this document.

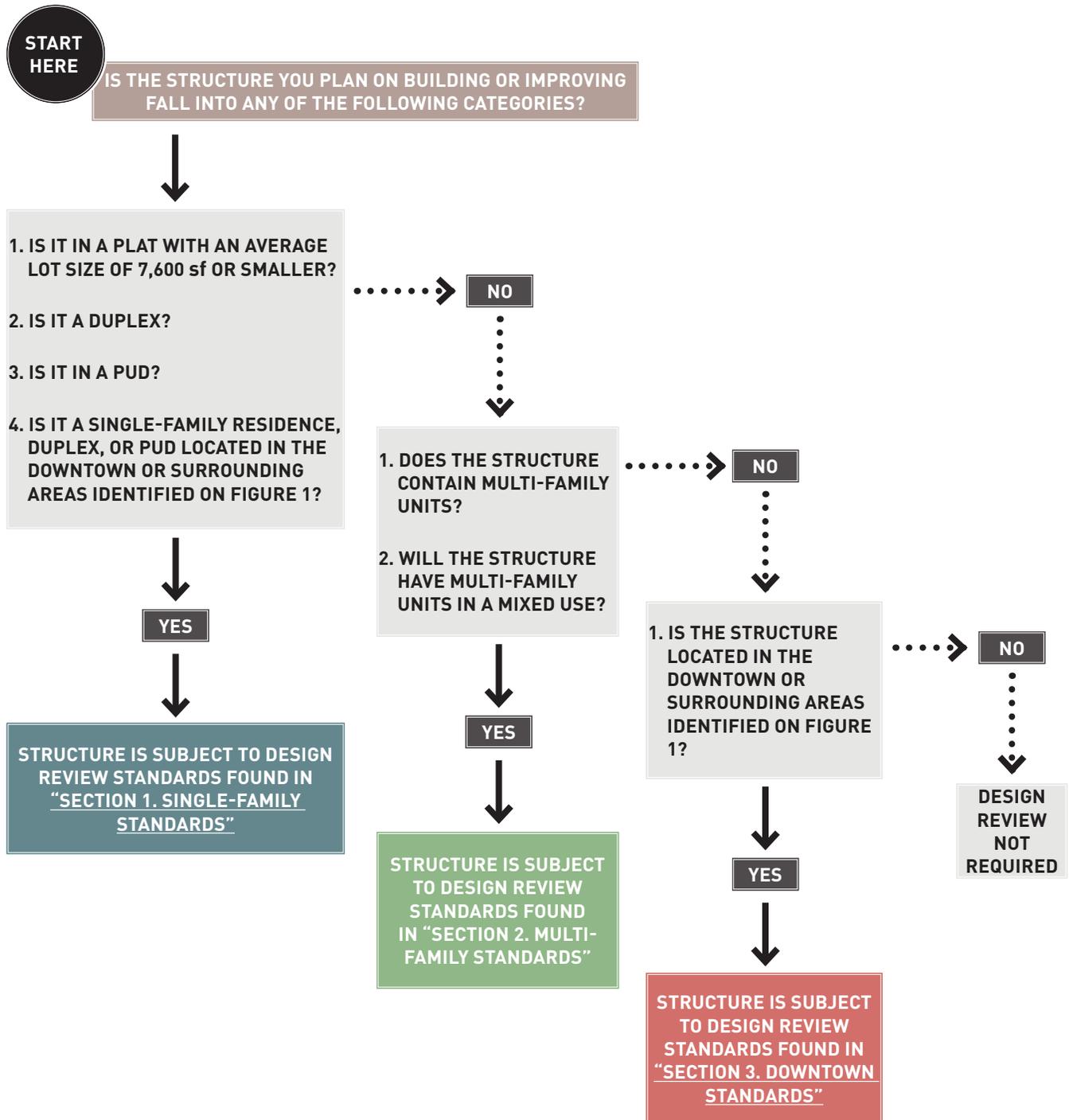
- All development within and near the City's historic downtown (mapped on FIGURE 1) are required to comply with the downtown standards contained in "Section 3. Downtown Standards" of this document. The downtown standards are further refined with certain standards that apply to buildings and property abutting Downtown Core or Secondary Core Streets. FIGURE 1 also identifies these Downtown and Secondary Core Streets.



**FIGURE 1.** Downtown and Surrounding Areas & Street Types Subject to Design Review

# USING THIS DOCUMENT

The flowchart below is provided to assist applicants in determining whether or not newly constructed buildings or development will be subject to design standards. Not addressed in FIGURE 2 are structures or developments originally subject to design review that wish to change an existing element or expand existing structures or facilities - see MVMC 17.70 for design review elements required in these situations.



**FIGURE 2.** Design Review Requirements Specific to Types of Development/Structures

# PROCESSES, ALLOWED DEVIATIONS AND WAIVERS

The Design Standards in this document are adopted by reference in Mount Vernon Municipal Code Chapter 17.70 as supplemental requirements. This is important to note because there are a number of fundamental development regulations contained in MVMC Chapters 17.70, 17.45, 14.05, and others that must be known and incorporated into site plans before the standards in this document are used. TABLE 1 is placed in this document to emphasize the interrelated aspects of the MVMC and these standards.

The type of review process a project will go through is determined by the type of development and its location. Most projects subject to design review are administratively approved as summarized in FIGURE 3. However, PUDs, large multi-family developments, and projects within the downtown and surrounding areas not classified as ordinary maintenance and repair are approved by the City's Hearing Examiner or the Design Review Committee.

Additional information on the design review process for projects not administratively approved can be found in MVMC Chapter 14.05, 17.69 and 17.70.

Many of the design review elements contain "Allowed Deviations". These deviations are provided when more flexibility may be needed to comply with that specific element. In circumstances where an applicant can demonstrate that an alternative design element: 1) meets the overall objectives of design review; 2) meets the intent of the element they are seeking to deviate from; and 3) their alternative design element incorporates features consistent with the standards a waiver can be approved by the underlying approval authority, i.e. if the Hearing Examiner is the overall approval authority for the development he/she must also approve requests for waivers.

	SFR, Duplex, and PUDs	Multi-family Structures	Development in Downtown and Surrounding Areas
<b>SETBACKS</b>	See MVMC 17.70.070(A)	See MVMC 17.70.070(A)	See zoning district in which the building is located
<b>LOT COVERAGE</b>	See MVMC 17.70.070(A)	See zoning district in which the building is located	See zoning district in which the building is located
<b>BUILDING HEIGHT</b>	See zoning district in which the building is located and final PUD documents, if applicable	See zoning district in which the building is located and final PUD documents, if applicable	See zoning district in which the building is located

**TABLE 1.** Development Regulation Cross-References

# ADMINISTRATIVE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

Below is an overview of the administrative design review process. Design review is also required for Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), some plats, large multi-family development, and development in the historic downtown and South Kincaid Subarea that are not administratively approved and would not follow the steps outlined in this figure.

## STEP1. INITIAL CONSULTATION & PRE-APPLICATION MEETING

Initial project feasibility should include contact with the City to determine if a pre-application meeting is required. If required, applicants complete a Pre-Application Meeting Request Form and submit it to the City with the materials requested on this form. At this meeting the city will inform the applicant of all applicable regulations, policies, and requirements including design review related requirements.



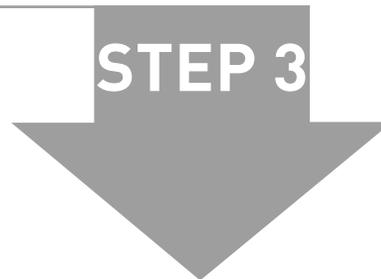
## STEP2. SUBMIT DESIGN REVIEW MATERIALS

At the pre-application meeting applicants receive detailed lists of permits, and their associated plans, reports, etc. that are required to be submitted. Applicants can choose to have their design standards materials approved (i.e. elevations, site plan, floor plans, etc.) either before, or concurrently with, permits required for their project.



## STEP3. DESIGN REVIEW

Once all of the materials necessary to complete design review are submitted (including fees) City staff routes these materials to our design review consultant for their review. Initial review and comments are generally provided to applicants within two (2) weeks from submittal; however, the time it takes to complete the design review process will depend on how complex a project is, how many corrections of plans are needed, and how quickly and completely applicants respond when staff asks for corrections to the plans and/or materials submitted.



## STEP4. DESIGN REVIEW DOCUMENT APPROVED

Once the design review materials are approved a copy of these items will be made part of the permit approvals for the underlying permits (usually a building permit). Once the development is complete, design review inspections are required to verify that all of the elements submitted for design review were constructed and/or installed consistent with the standards.



**FIGURE 3.** Administrative Design Review Process

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# SF-A: FRONT YARDS & HOME ENTRANCES

## **INTENT**

To provide distinction, transition and separation between buildings and the public pedestrian and vehicular systems where the front yards function as usable outdoor space and provide a clear, welcoming, and safe entry for pedestrians from the public sidewalk and streets to the single-family residences.

## **REQUIRED**

1. Primary building entries shall be clearly identifiable and visible from the street, with well-defined walkways from public pedestrian, vehicular systems, and driveways to residential entries.
2. When the front doorway doesn't face the street a clearly marked walkway shall connect the entry to the sidewalk.
3. Front yards shall include an entrance sequence between the public-way and the residence that includes at least two of the following elements:
  - A. Arbors not connected to the structure.
  - B. Low, continuous hedges lining a walkway.
  - C. Accent lighting lining the length of pedestrian walkways.
  - D. Path leading to the front door constructed of decorative pavers, colored or stamped concrete.



*Primary building entry clearly identifiable and connected to the sidewalk*



3A

*Arbor used as part of entrance sequence*



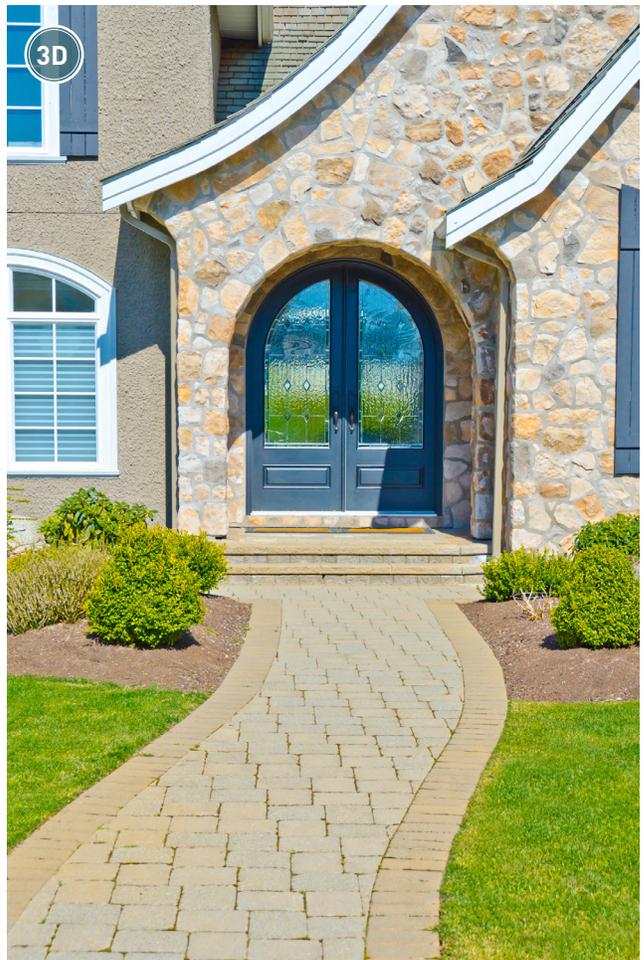
3C

*Accent lighting in landscape bed lighting the pedestrian way*



3B

*Low, continuous hedge and clearly identifiable entry*



3D

*Decorative pavers used for entrance sequence*

# SF-B: LANDSCAPING

## INTENT

To enhance the appearance of lots, provide shade, reduce noise and glare, increase privacy and protection from visual or physical intrusion, and to break up impervious surfaces.

## REQUIRED

1. The entire lot, including lawns, shall be landscaped prior to building occupancy. The minimum amount of landscaping required on all lots is outlined in TABLE 2.
  - A. Street trees, even when planted behind the sidewalk on a lot, cannot be counted as the deciduous trees required in TABLE 2.
  - B. Lawns can be established with seed, hydroseed, or turf; however, they shall be established prior to building occupancy.
2. Rear lots shall be landscaped, however decks, patios and other such features may be added in lieu of landscaping.
3. Landscape beds shall have no less than two inches of fine fir bark or other similar material such as decorative rock (other materials shall be individually pre-approved by the Development Services Department).
4. Landscaped areas in front and rear yards shall include a wide range of hardy, native, evergreen plant materials including perennials and flowering shrubs where and when available or feasible. A minimum 20 percent of plant material used shall provide seasonal color or interest.



*Fully landscaped rear yard*



*Fully landscaped front yard*



Landscaped rear yard that includes a patio and a range of evergreen plants with flowering shrubs



Successful example of landscaping at the front entry using a variety of evergreen and deciduous plant material that provides seasonal interest

	Lots 5,000 sf or smaller	Lots 5,001 sf to 7,000 sf	Lots 7,001 sf and greater
<b>2 inch minimum caliper deciduous trees</b>	1 located in front yard	1 planted in front yard	1 planted in front yard and 1 planted in the rear yard
<b>7 feet minimum evergreen tree</b>	N/A	1 planted in front or rear yard	1 planted in front or rear yard
<b>3 feet minimum ornamental tree</b>	1 planted in front yard	1 planted in front or rear yard	1 planted in front or rear yard
<b>2 gallon minimum shrubs (2)</b>	20	30	40
<b>1 gallon minimum ground cover</b>	10	15	20

**TABLE 2.** Minimum Landscaping Requirements for Different Lot Sizes (1)

(1) Duplex units shall double the number of plants required according to their lot size category in this table.

(2) 30% of the required shrubs can be replaced with ornamental grasses or perennials at a rate of 2, 1-gallon substitutions, per every 1 shrub it replaces. For example, if 20 shrubs were required an applicant could plant 14, 2-gallon shrubs, and a mix of 12, 1-gallon, ornamental grasses and other perennials instead.

# SF-C: DRIVEWAYS AND CURB CUTS

## **INTENT**

To maximize on-street parking with the placement of and combining curb cuts. Also to provide maximum lengths of sidewalk without curb cuts such that variations in grades are minimized for the benefit of pedestrians walking on these sidewalks.

## **REQUIRED**

- 1.** Driveways providing access onto public streets shall be spaced to minimize access points and to maximize the amount of on-street parking available. Site plans demonstrating the placement of homes, curb cuts and driveways shall be submitted demonstrating compliance with this element.
- 2.** Driveways shall be spaced such that a minimum of 20 feet is provided along the frontage of each lot outside of curb cuts and driveways.
- 3.** If alley access is available or is provided in the development, vehicle access shall be from the alley with no curb cuts.
- 4.** Driveways serving front-loaded three-car garages shall incorporate at least one of the following to break up the expanse of impervious surface. This standard does not apply to homes with garages accessed off of alleys.
  - A.** Landscape strips within the driveway (not abutting it).
  - B.** Use of decorative pavers for the entire driveway; or edge and create a pattern within the driveway with decorative pavers.
  - C.** Use of stamped/colored concrete for the entire driveway; or edge and create a pattern within the driveway with stamped/colored concrete.



Use of a landscape strip within a driveway and use of decorative pavers



Use of stamped and colored concrete within a driveway



Example organization of driveways to maximize on street parking and meet design standards

# SF-D: INDIVIDUAL OUTDOOR SPACES

## **INTENT**

To provide private, outdoor space distinct from common space that encourages use and reinforces a sense of ownership by residents.

## **REQUIRED**

1. Lots that choose to have front yard setbacks that are less than 15 feet shall be required to create private outdoor spaces in the rear yard. The private outdoor space shall be at least 10 percent of the lot area with minimum dimensions of 15 feet on all sides. For alley loaded lots this space shall abut the alley side of the home.
2. All lots shall be required to create private outdoor spaces that are screened with fencing and/or landscaping from undesirable elements such as utility boxes, outdoor storage areas, or other similar items.
3. Private outdoor spaces for all homes shall be created in rear yards with six foot tall decorative fencing installed along rear and side yards except for the following situations:
  - A. When a rear yard abuts an alley, fencing within five feet of the alley is limited to four feet in height except where the portion of the fence between four and six feet in height is at least 50 percent transparent, see page 17 for an illustration of this requirement.
  - B. See MVMC 17.99.010 for related fence standards.

## **ALLOWED DEVIATIONS**

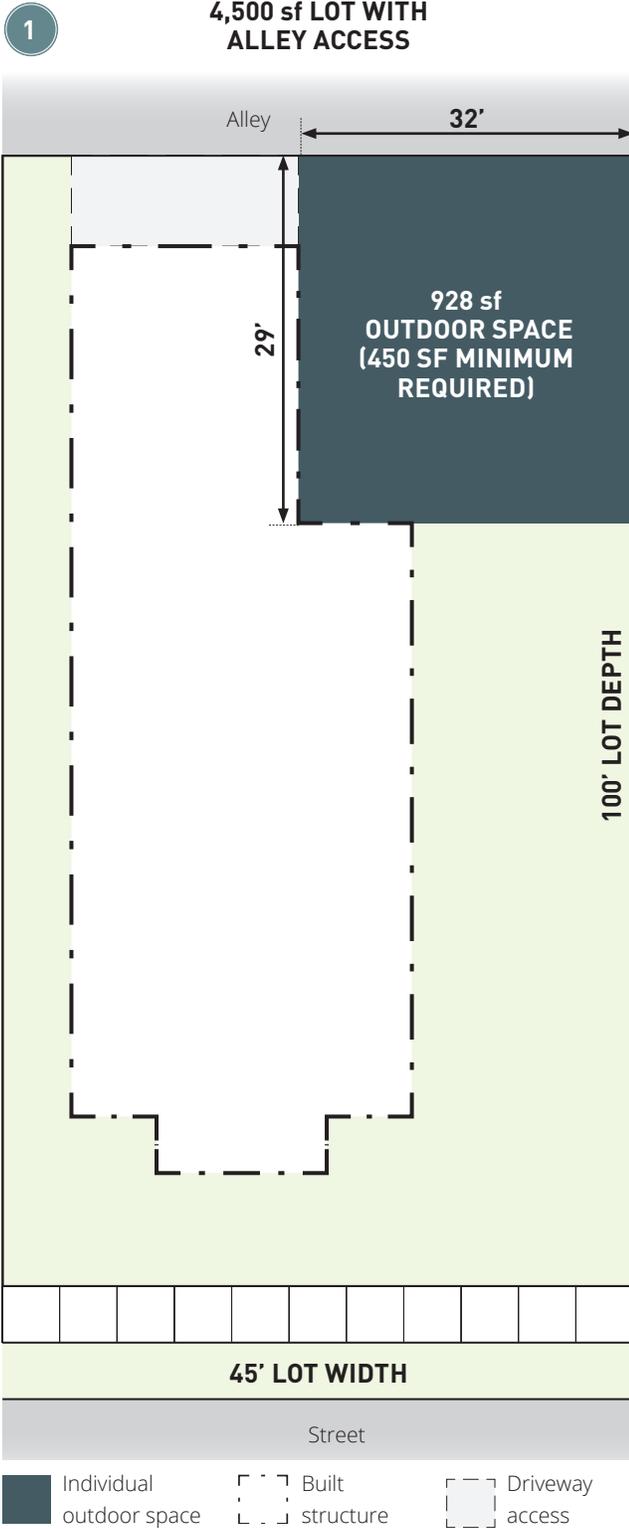
4. In lieu of decorative fencing walls and/or landscape hedges can be installed so long as the following conditions are complied with:
  - A. Landscape hedge material shall not count towards the minimum landscaping requirements outlined in TABLE 2 found under Item B, Landscaping.
  - B. A landscape architect, or other similarly qualified professional shall provide specifications for landscape hedges to ensure they provide the same privacy a fence would and that they can be maintained within their intended footprint with minimal homeowner maintenance.
  - C. Landscape hedges cannot be used in lieu of rear yard fencing when abutting an alley.



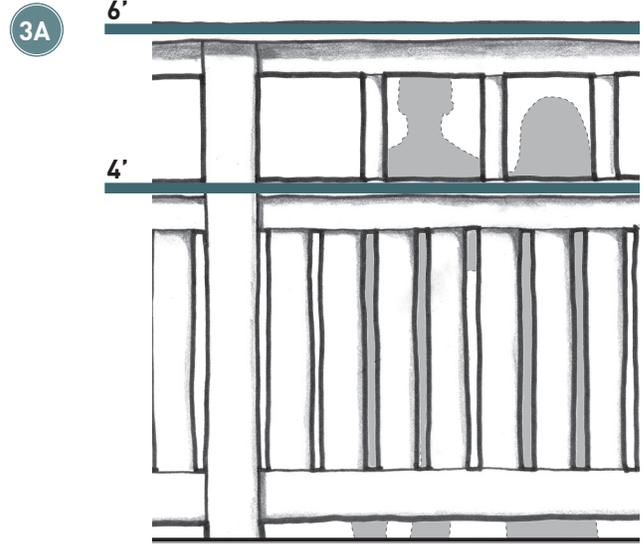
Example illustrating private outdoor space on an alley-loaded lot



Poorly designed example that does not meet the minimum outdoor space requirement



Example of how to meet open space requirements for single family dwellings with reduced front yard setback



For fences within five feet of an alley, that portion of the fence above four feet in height shall be at least 50 percent transparent.



Fence example along alley with landscaping in front



Combination of a wall and arborvitae installed in lieu of fencing

# SF-E: MODULATION OF EXTERIOR WALLS & VISUAL INTEREST

## INTENT

To provide visual residential and pedestrian character and variety along the streetscape.

## REQUIRED

1. Buildings shall include modulation along the building facades facing and visible from public rights-of-way and private access driveways and roads. This means that more than one building facade will require modulation on corner and through lots. Flat blank walls are not allowed.
2. Horizontal facades longer than 30 feet shall incorporate vertical modulation with a minimum depth of 18 inches. All of the following additional elements shall also be incorporated:
  - A. Distinctive roof forms such as gables, parapets, second roof, dormers, etc. with the minimum vertical dimension of the roofline modulation being two feet.
  - B. Distinctive wall forms that include recesses, offsets, installation of bay windows, etc.
  - C. Each of the smaller units shall incorporate changes in materials or patterns, and color differentiation.



*Facades articulated with distinctive roof forms, covered entry features, and individual structures mixing shed, gable, and curved roofs. Wall recesses and offsets, bay windows, and siding material change along with color changes also create visual interest and articulation*



Facade with distinctive roof forms, covered entry, wall recesses /offsets, and siding and material changes



Example with distinctive roof forms mixing gable and shed roofs and installation of bay window



Facade incorporating roof line changes, shed roof over window, and inset deck



Facade with roof line variety modulated entry, a bay window and material changes



Example using gable and shed roofs, shake on two gables, stone on entire front unit, and siding on garage

# SF-F: WINDOWS

## INTENT

To enhance the residential character and varied streetscape and building elevations.

## REQUIRED

1. Windows shall be provided on building facades facing public or private streets (excluding alleys) and are required to comprise no less than 15 percent of the building facade area (1).
2. Windows are required to have visually prominent trim that is a minimum of three-inches in width on all windows.
3. Windows are required to be an integral part of a siding system and must compliment elevation patterns to unify and enhance the building elevations.
4. At least two of the following accent elements shall be included on windows facing street(s) that are not alleys.

- A. Sun shading devices
- B. Shutters
- C. Planter boxes

- D. Trellis
- E. Significant accent trim in addition to the three inch trim that is already required
- F. Distinctive window shapes such as arched or multi-paned windows that contribute to the overall composition of the structure.
- G. Projecting window bays
- H. Dormer windows

## ALLOWED DEVIATIONS

5. Windows recessed by two inches or more are not required to install trim around the windows.



*Single family home with arbors over windows, distinctive windows shape, and three inch trim*

(1) Buildings on corner and through lots will be required to have windows comprising no less than 15% on each of the building facades facing public or private streets.



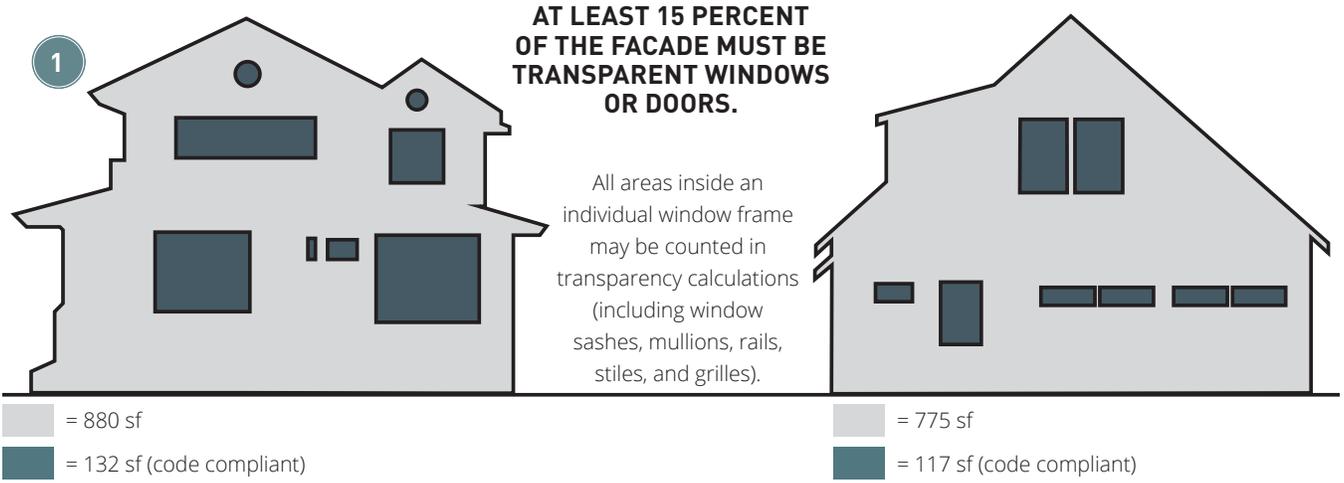
Multi-paned windows that are recessed two-inches that unify and enhance the elevation



Distinctive window shape, three inch trim, and planter box



Dormer window with shutters



Fifteen percent transparency calculation diagram

# SF-G: GARAGE FACADES

## INTENT

To ensure that garage doors do not dominate the street-facing building facades or overshadow pedestrian entryways.

## REQUIRED

1. All of the following elements are required to be installed on/near the face of the garage:
  - A. Windows shall be installed on the garage door.
  - B. Lighting shall be provided to illuminate the entire garage face.
  - C. Garage door face shall be decorative; a flat, blank door is not allowed.
  - D. Install trim that is a minimum of three inches around garage doors.
2. Garage facades shall incorporate at least two of the following design features (note that some design elements count as two design features):
  - A. Cantilever main structure over garage face (counts as two design features).
  - B. Extend roof line with decorative supports in front of garage face (counts as two design features).
  - C. Split two car garage into two single car garages (counts as two design features).
  - D. Arching garage doorway(s) (counts as two design features).
  - E. Install cladding such as cultured stone, brick, board and batten or other decorative material (approved by the Development Services Department) on the face, or part of the face, of the garage that is different than other parts of the structure. All cladding materials must not be installed such that it reinforces an applied or arbitrary planar nature. Cladding materials are required to occupy sufficient area to read as an integral part of the elevation.
  - F. Install corbels, outriggers, or knee braces (or other substantially similar structural enhancements) suggestive of a structural role at the peak and eave end of rake edges.
  - G. Install an trellis above the garage door.
  - H. Install decorative vents on all facade gables.

3. Garage doors facing access ways shall not exceed 40 percent of the length of the building facade.

## ALLOWED DEVIATIONS

4. Garages accessed by an alley (as defined in MVMC 16.16.250) that is not more than 20 feet in width are required to incorporate lighting to illuminate the entire garage face and three-inch minimum trim around garage doors in addition to at least one of the design features listed in Standard G.2.A-H above.



*Example with a garage dominating the facade*



Two-car garage with individual doors, windows, lighting, and trim



Garage with shed roof over door with corbels, lighting in soffit, and decorative door face



Example with windows in the door, trim around the door, stone columns, and a canopy installed over garage door



Garage without any of the listed design features



Example of a generic, non-decorative gable vent that would not count as a decorative gable vent



Examples showing allowed decorative gable vents

# SF-H: STREETScape MODULATION AND CHARACTER

## **INTENT**

To provide modulation and character along streetscapes with varying roof types, building character, and placement of structures.

## **REQUIRED**

1. Abutting lots shall have front yard setbacks resulting in building facades that are at least four feet apart.
2. Front yard porches shall not line up with the porches of abutting structures.
3. Along street frontages roof types cannot repeat unless separated by three different types of roofs. Roof types shall be determined by the predominate axis and pitch of the roof form together with intersecting secondary roof forms.
4. Along street frontages building elevations and colors (including garage doors) cannot repeat unless separated by three substantially different types of building elevations.
5. Dominant facade modulation or fenestration shall not repeat unless separated by three different building types.



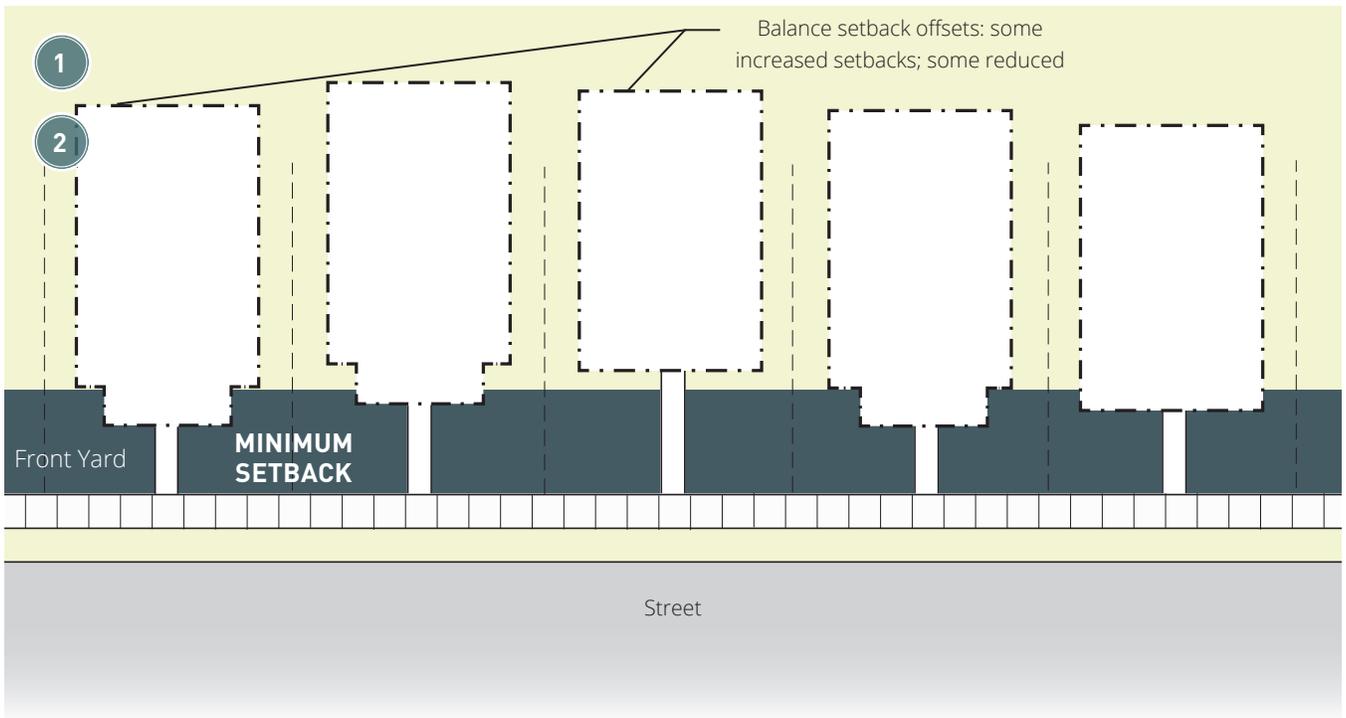
*Homes with a variety of setbacks, facade designs, building colors, and roof forms*



Homes with no setback variation are not allowed



Example showing no setback variation repetitive designs



Example illustrating homes with a variety of front setbacks

# SF-I: ACCESSORY SITE ELEMENTS

## **INTENT**

Street furniture, mailboxes, kiosks, lighting standards / fixtures and accessory elements located on private property, public ways and other public properties are designed as part of the architectural concept of the building, neighborhood and landscape design.

## **REQUIRED**

1. Mailboxes shall be clustered in convenient locations and shall be designed using architectural features such as peaked roofs over mailboxes.
2. Street lights shall be a maximum height of 13 feet.
3. "No parking" signage shall be no higher than three feet from the ground and shall be placed on decorative posts.



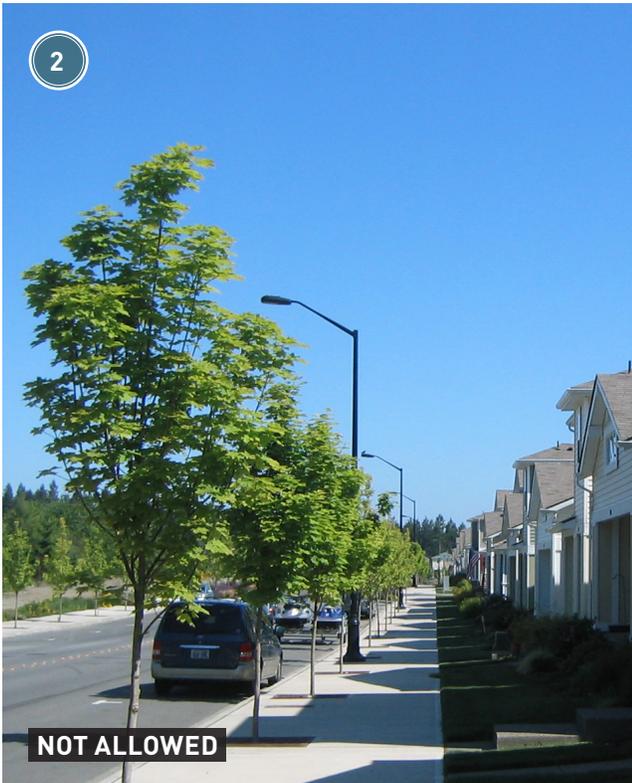
*Example of a successful accessory site element with grouped mailboxes in a roofed structure*



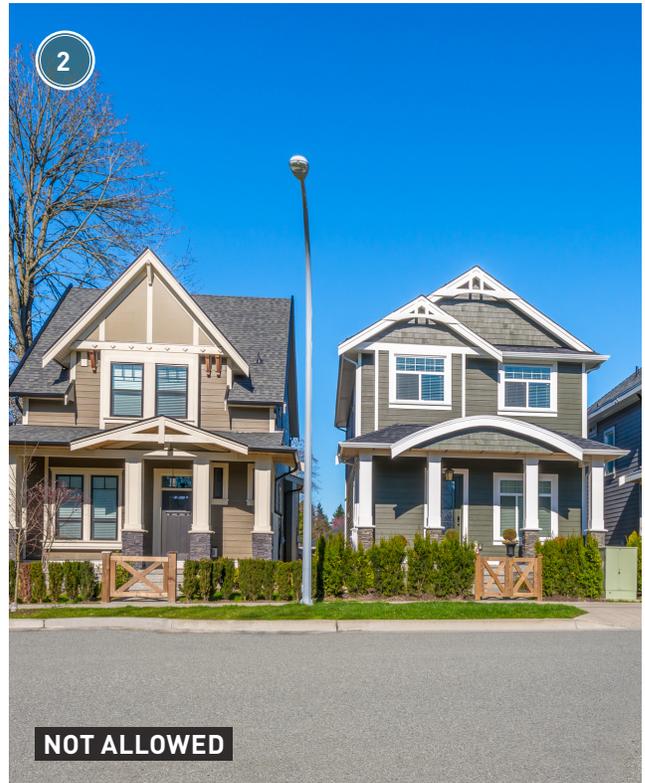
*Pedestrian-scale lamppost*



*"No-parking" signs shall not be higher than three feet*



*Street lights taller than 13 feet are not allowed*



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# SECTION 2. MULTI-FAMILY STANDARDS

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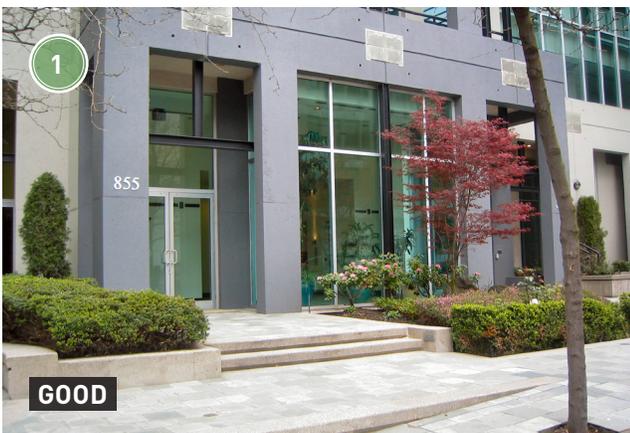
# MF-A: FRONT YARDS AND ENTRANCES

## INTENT

To provide transition and separation between proposed housing and the public pedestrian and vehicular systems where the front yard functions as usable outdoor space and provides a clear, welcoming, and safe arrival and entry for pedestrians from the sidewalk and streets to multi-family buildings.

## REQUIRED

1. When there are common entries, they shall be clearly identifiable and visible from the street with well-defined walkways from pedestrian routes to building entries. If the doorway doesn't face the street, a clearly marked walkway shall connect the entry to the sidewalk.
2. Front yards shall include an entrance sequence between the sidewalk and the building entrance including at least four of the following elements:
  - A. Arbors
  - B. Benches, seat walls, seat ledges or boulders large enough to sit on
  - C. Decorative pavers or stamped/colored concrete
  - D. Porches
  - E. Ornamental gate and fencing
  - F. Installation of outdoor art work
  - G. Other design elements that meet the intent of the standards
3. Buildings and the major pedestrian entry shall be oriented towards the primary pedestrian street or parking area. If buildings are in clusters they can be oriented toward a common open space with connections to and from building entries and the primary pedestrian street or parking area(s).



*Clearly identified building entry and marked walkway*



*Building entry clearly visible from street even without a marked walkway*



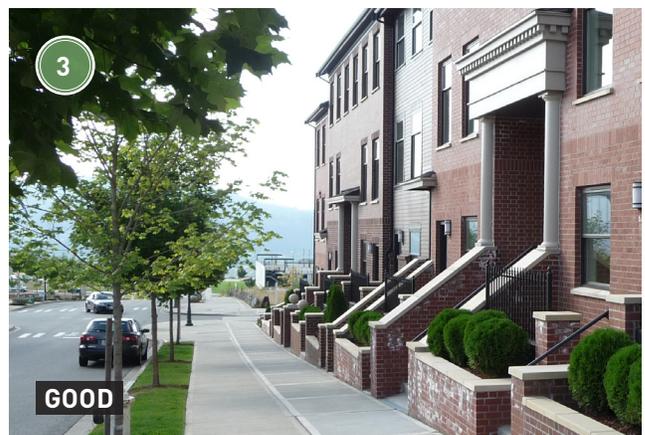
Walkway for building entry that does not face the street, is clearly marked with decorative pavers, and includes seating



Building entry from the sidewalk that meets the requirements of Standard A.2 is acceptable



Building entry that fails to meet any of Standard A.1-2 are not allowed



Major pedestrian entry to building oriented towards the primary pedestrian street

# MF-B: LANDSCAPING

## **INTENT**

To reduce the visual impact of impervious areas and large buildings through landscaping, screening, and architectural features that compliment the overall design and character of the development.

## **REQUIRED**

- 1.** Consistent with MVMC Chapter 17.93 (Landscaping) 20 percent of the gross site area shall be landscaped. Portions of a site that abut a public or private road are required to provide a 15 foot wide landscape strip along such road frontages. These landscape strips are required to be landscaped consistent with MVMC 17.93.020(D). Landscape screening may also be required, depending on the site zoning and zoning of abutting properties, see MVMC 17.93.040 for specific screening requirements. Reductions in the required landscaping setback will be allowed for covered entry features.
- 2.** A minimum of 40 percent of the total landscaped area shall be planted with trees, shrubs, and ground cover plants other than turf or lawn.
- 3.** The use of landscaping shall be used to enhance the site, building elevations, and to screen elements such as exposed foundations, adjacent commercial or industrial development, utility boxes, outdoor storage areas, and dumpsters. Fencing and other architectural features may be used in addition to or in lieu of some landscaping.
- 4.** The following requirements for trees within parking areas replaces the tree planting requirements found within MVMC 17.93.030(E):
  - A.** Where parking is located between the building and the public right-of-way, one tree for every four spaces shall be provided (1:4).
  - B.** Where parking is located to the side of the building and partially abuts the public right-of-way, one tree for every eight spaces shall be provided (1:8).
  - C.** Where parking is not visible from the public right-of-way, one tree for every ten spaces shall be provided (1:10).
- 5.** Site landscaping shall comply with the following minimum plant sizes:
  - A.** Deciduous Trees: two inch caliper
  - B.** Evergreen Trees: seven feet in height and full and bushy
  - C.** Shrubs: two gallon or equivalents
  - D.** Ground Covers: two gallon or equivalents
- 6.** The entire site, including lawns, private and public open spaces, shall be landscaped prior to building occupancy. Lawn areas can be established with seed, hydroseed, or turf; however, they shall be established prior to building occupancy.
- 7.** Landscape beds shall have no less than two inches of fine fir bark or other similar material such as decorative rock (other materials shall be individually pre-approved by the Development Services Department).



Landscape setback can be reduced to allow for a covered entry



Minimum 40 percent of the landscaped area should have trees, shrubs, and other ground cover



Entry walkways, decks, and porches are allowed and encouraged within the landscaped setback area



Building elevations and the site is enhanced by integrating the design with landscaped areas



Parking lot landscaping having a mix of trees, shrubs, and other landscape features is desired



Example of integrating trees into a multi-family parking lot

# MF-C: LOCATION OF PARKING

## INTENT

To maintain a contiguous, active pedestrian realm along street fronts by locating and screening parking lots to the side or behind buildings. The intent of these guidelines is to locate the parking areas away from the street frontage in a manner that screens and reduces the appearance of the parking areas from the viewpoint of the adjacent street frontages.

## REQUIRED

1. Parking areas shall be located behind or to the side of multi-family buildings.
2. Parking shall not be located adjacent to street frontages.
3. Curb cuts to access parking areas shall be limited to one per one hundred 150 feet of street frontage.

## ALLOWED DEVIATIONS

4. Deviations to allow limited number of guest parking spaces can be approved with appropriate landscape screening, fencing, or other elements.
5. Alternative parking lot locations will be considered where topographic or other physical site challenges create unique challenges to conforming to Standard C.1 above and/or where alternative designs can be used to take advantage of special site features or to take advantage of special site features or to help mitigate impacts on the surrounding properties.

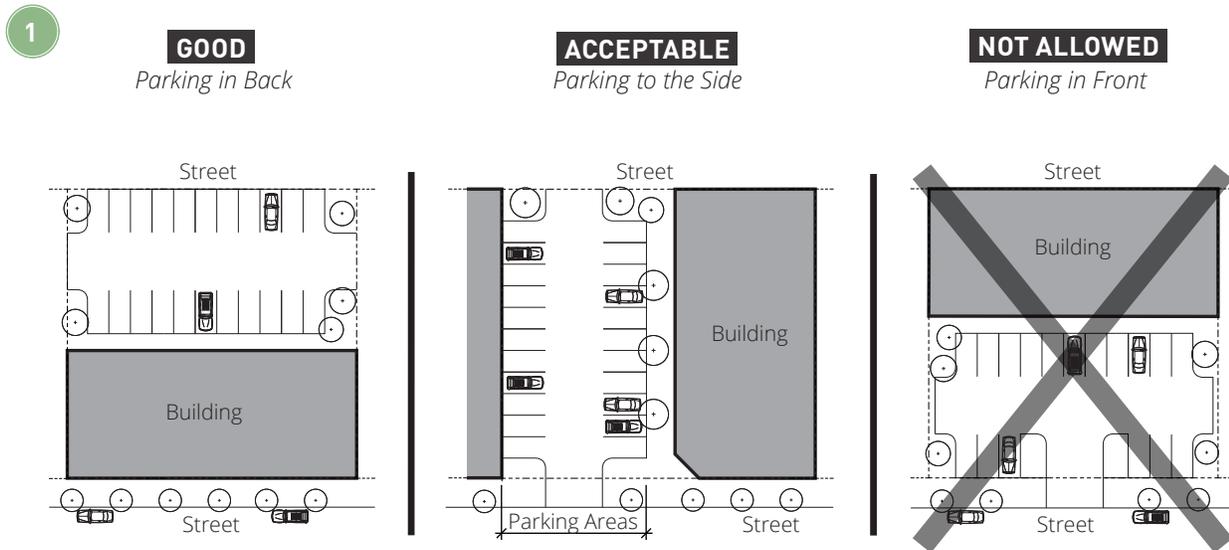
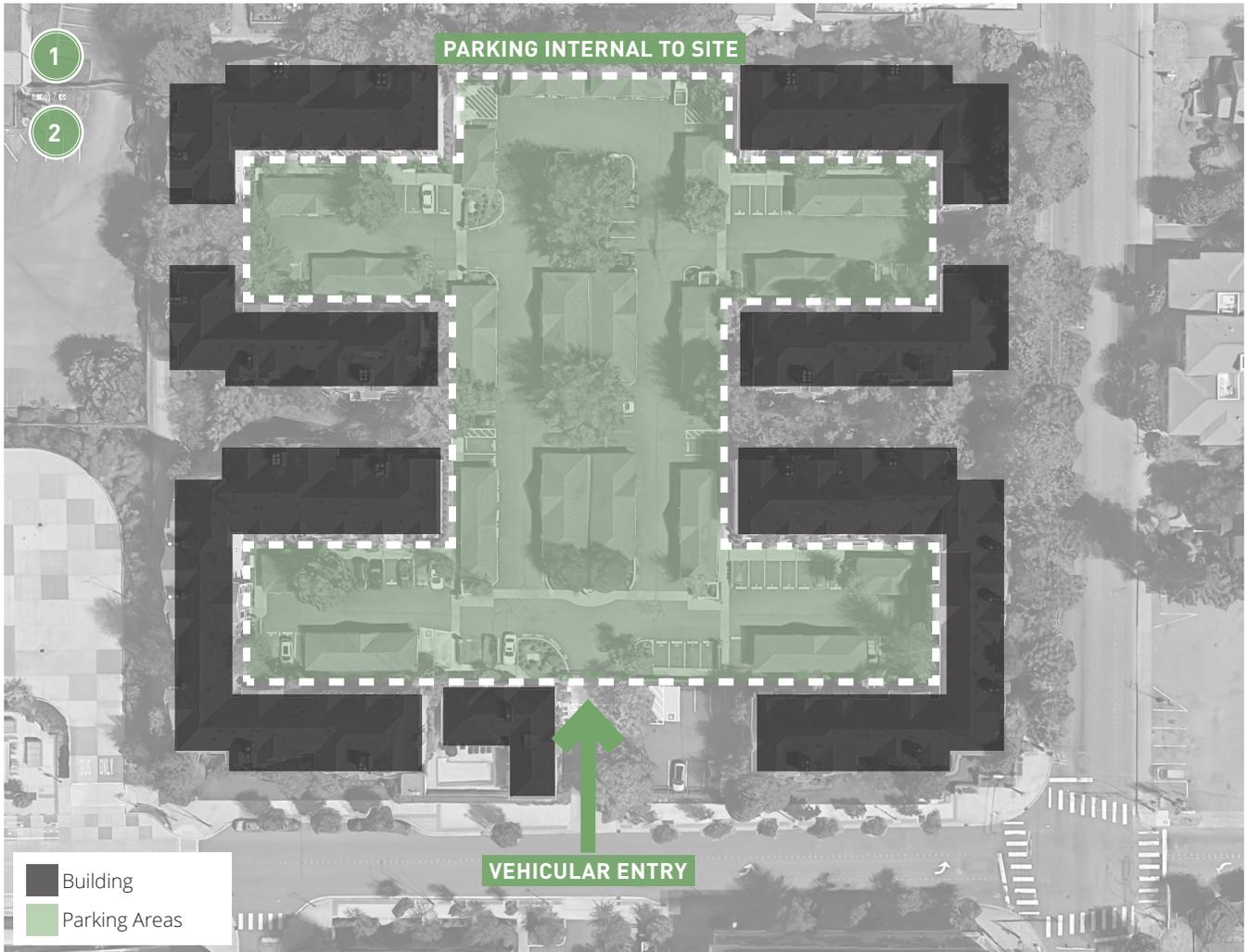
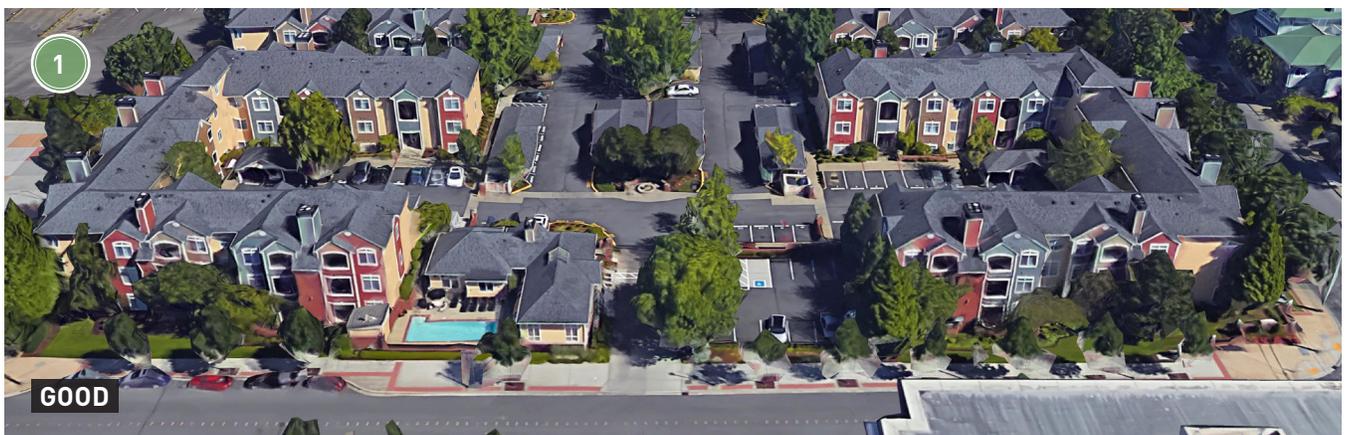


FIGURE 4. Parking Location Standards



*Desired example of parking areas located internal to the site and away from the streets*



*Parking areas located internal to site*

# MF-D: PRIVATE OUTDOOR SPACES

## **INTENT**

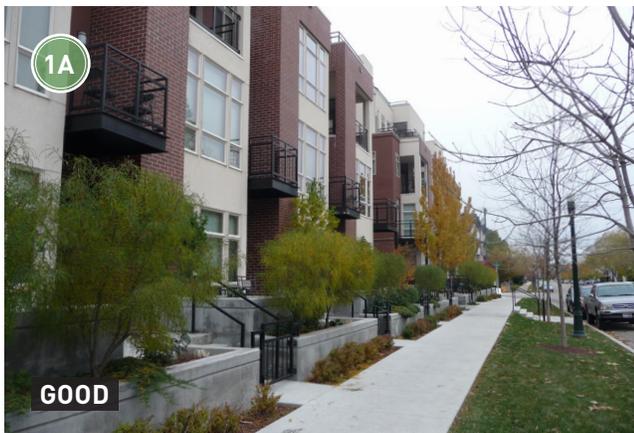
To provide private outdoor space for residents to use separate from common open spaces.

## **REQUIRED**

1. A minimum of 40 square feet of attached private open space shall be provided for each multi-family unit. This space shall:
  - A. Consist of decks, balconies, patios, landings, yards, terraces, verandas, or other similar features.
  - B. Be physically connected to each unit.
  - C. Have no dimension less than six feet.
2. These spaces shall be visually screened to the extent possible from each other and delineated from the street. Shielding may consist of walls, fences, berms, hedges, trellises, arbors and landscaping.

## **ALLOWED DEVIATIONS**

3. In situations where attached private open space cannot be provided for some units within a structure an additional 80 square feet (per unit that does not have attached private open space) will be added to the per unit common open space requirement contained within the “MF-E: Common Open Spaces & Usable Recreation Areas” on page 38.



*Example with stoop/patios and balconies*



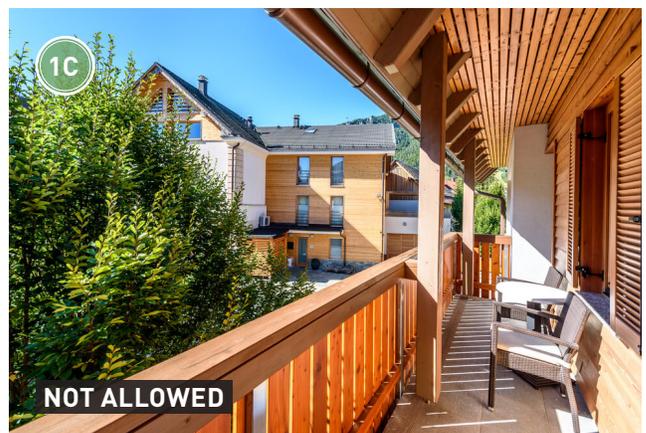
*Townhouses with private front yards*



Private balconies with private screens



Ground floor patio and balcony



Balcony not meeting minimum dimension requirement of six feet will not count as outdoor space

# MF-E: COMMON OPEN SPACES & USABLE RECREATION AREAS

## **INTENT**

To provide a friendly pedestrian environment through the creation of a variety of well-integrated, usable and interesting open space(s) within developments with multi-family housing.

## **REQUIRED**

- 1.** A minimum of 100 square feet of on-site open space accessible to all residents shall be created per dwelling unit. This open space shall be provided as follows:
  - A.** Shared outdoor open space(s) can satisfy 100 percent of this requirement so long as the open space area(s) meet all of the following criteria:
    - I.** No dimension of the space(s) are less than 15 feet.
    - II.** The space(s) shall be accessible from the multi-family units and shall be centrally located.
    - III.** The space(s) shall include paths, seating, lighting, and enhanced landscaping, i.e. delineated landscape beds with trees, shrubs and ground cover installed to create an attractive site amenity.
    - IV.** The space(s) shall include no less than two of the following: play structure (jungle gym), exercise equipment, sport court, gazebo, decorative pavers, outdoor grilling/dining area, raised beds for resident vegetable gardens, or other substantially similar type of element
    - V.** The space shall be delineated from streets, parking lots, ground level windows, dumpsters, and other similar elements with fencing and landscaping
  - B.** A maximum of 25 percent of the required common open space(s) requirement can be satisfied with the construction of an indoor recreation area so long as this area meets all of the following criteria:
    - I.** Must be located in a highly visible area such as a lobby or near a building entrance.
    - II.** Must be designed for and include equipment for a variety of recreational uses.
    - III.** Must be ADA accessible.
    - IV.** Must be accessible to all residents.
  - C.** A maximum of 40 percent of the required common open space(s) requirement can be satisfied with roof decks on the top of building(s) so long as all of the following criteria are met:
    - I.** Seating areas and landscaping must be installed.
    - II.** Area must include no less than two of the following amenities:
      - a.** Barbecues
      - b.** Fireplaces
      - c.** Pergolas or arbors
      - d.** Recreational spaces
    - III.** Area must be ADA accessible.
    - IV.** Area must be accessible to all residents.
- 2.** Pedestrian walkways and public open spaces shall be connected and accessible to the residents. A site plan showing how all residents will be able to access the public open space areas shall be required.
- 3.** Landscape accent features, such as trellises, arbors, hanging baskets, site furniture, and container planting are required within open spaces, along pedestrian circulation routes and to define building and/or residential entrances.
- 4.** Critical areas and their associated buffers regulated under MVMC Chapter 15.40 shall not be allowed to count towards common open space requirements.



Shared outdoor open space with paths, water feature, and landscape beds



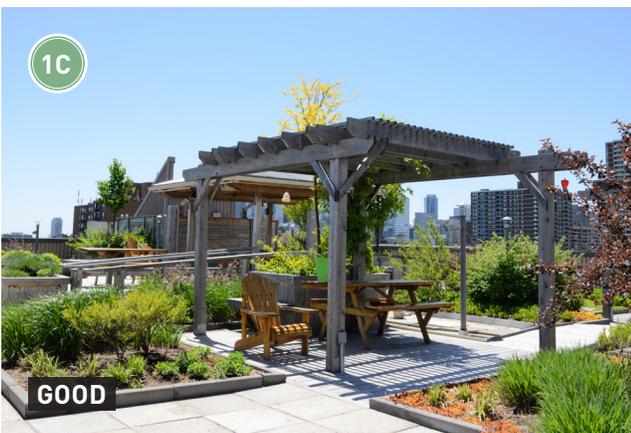
Shared outdoor open space with grilling/dining area, seating, and landscaping



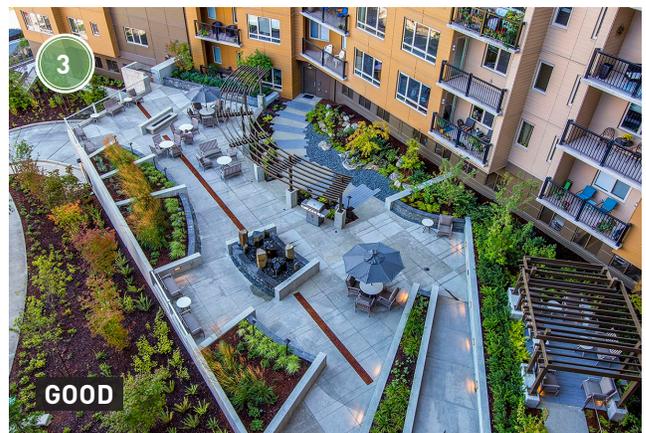
Centrally located common open space with grilling/dining area, decorative pavers, and perimeter landscaping



Shared indoor recreation area with exterior building access and equipment for a variety of activities that meets Standard E.1.B



Shared roof deck with seating, landscaping, and a pergola can be used to meet the requirements of Standard E.1.C



Shared outdoor common space with landscape accent features including trellises, site furniture, and circulation routes

# MF-F: WINDOWS

## **INTENT**

To maintain residential character with varied streetscapes and building elevations.

## **REQUIRED**

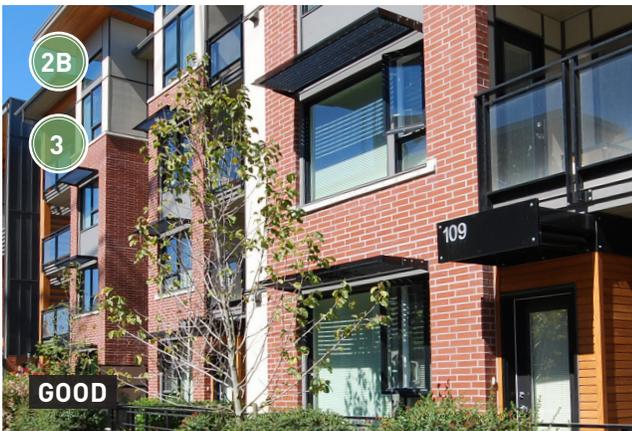
- 1.** Windows shall be provided on building facades facing public and private streets (excluding alleys) and are required to comprise no less than 15 percent of the building facade area.
- 2.** Windows are required to:
  - A.** Have visually prominent trim that is a minimum of three inches in width on all windows; or,
  - B.** Be recessed a minimum of two inches from the facade.
  - C.** Be fully integrated into a cladding system, demonstrated to be part of the overall composition.
  - D.** Have other details that generate depth or shadow lines bold enough to be read from the street.
  - E.** Have a combination of items (A) to (D) from above.
- 3.** At least one of the following elements shall be included on 50 percent of the windows visible from public or private streets, open space areas, parking areas, or pedestrian ways:
  - A.** Sun shading devices.
  - B.** Shutters.
  - C.** Planter boxes.
  - D.** Arbors.
  - E.** Bay windows.
  - F.** Significant accent trim in addition to the three inch trim that is already required.
  - G.** Distinctive window shapes such as arched or multi-paned windows.
  - H.** Juliet balconies.



Windows with three inch trim in combination with sun shading elements, and bay windows



Windows with no trim, recession, or accent elements



Recessed windows with sun shading and sills



Recessed windows with planter boxes



Juliet balconies and recessed windows using a mixture of patterns and sizes



Windows having minimal trim and no accent elements

# MF-G: FACADE MODULATION

## INTENT

To provide differentiation to large residential structures, to break up the massing of buildings, to add visual interest and compatibility to surrounding areas, and to provide pedestrian character along the streetscape.

## REQUIRED

1. Portions of all buildings visible from a public or private street, open space area, parking area, or pedestrian way are required to incorporate vertical modulation as follows:
  - A. Stepping back or extending vertical elements of a building in maximum 30 foot intervals. The minimum modulation depth shall be 18 inches and each modulation shall be at least eight feet in width.
  - B. Townhouse buildings are required to comply with the modulation requirements; however, the modulation intervals shall be no wider than the width of the individual units.
2. In addition to the required building modulation standards outlined above, all building facades greater than 120 feet in width shall be required to demonstrate larger vertical modulation to break up the massing of such large buildings.
3. Rooflines. Roof lines of all facades visible from a public or private street, open space area, parking area, or pedestrian way shall comply with the following:
  - A. Roof forms shall be changed at a maximum of every 30 feet (measured horizontally) and shall be provided at different heights. The minimum vertical dimension of the roof line modulation shall be two feet. The roof form changes shall be distinctive and can be accomplished with different roof types, dormers, gables, etc.
  - B. Roof mounted mechanical equipment located on the exterior of the roof shall be located within wells or pockets to preserve the visible rooflines. The mechanical well floor will not be subject to the slope requirement. However, in no event shall such roof mounted equipment project above the buildings roof line as viewed from the ground or from adjacent properties.

## ALLOWED DEVIATIONS

4. Facade designs may deviate from the modulation and roofline provisions in Standards G.1-3.a above provided they include massing and articulation treatments that successfully reduce the perceived scale of the building and add visual interest. Consideration in determining whether such treatments meet these objectives within each building's unique context:
  - A. Width of the facade: The larger the facade, the more substantial articulation/ modulation features need to be.
  - B. The type of articulation treatment: Consider how effective it is in successfully reducing the perceived scale of the building and add visual interest.
  - C. Structures located in Downtown and Surrounding Areas mapped in FIGURE 1 on page 4 can have vertical modulation and roof forms complying with "DT-B: Building Massing, Articulation & Human Scale" on page 56.

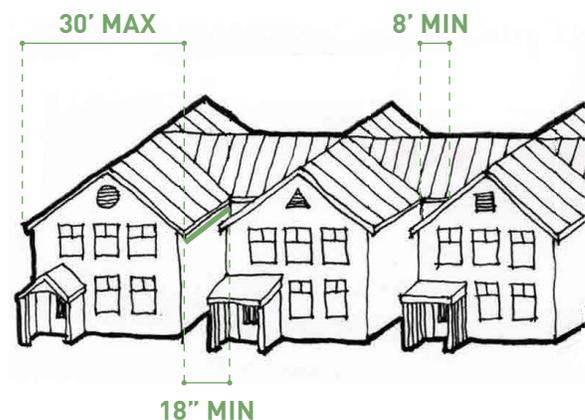


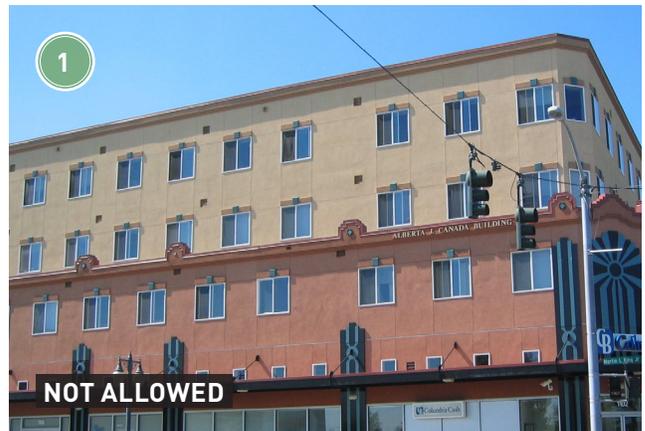
Illustration of Standard 1.A



*The facade is articulated with vertical building modulation tied to changes in the roofline*



*Facade modulation tied to changes in roofline; flat roof here has parape that provides character*



*Flat facade without vertical modulation*



*Changes in entry design and roofline*



*Building with continuous roofline*

# MF-H: ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

## **INTENT**

To provide differentiation to large residential structures, to break up the massing of buildings, to add visual interest and compatibility to surrounding areas, and to provide pedestrian character along the streetscape.

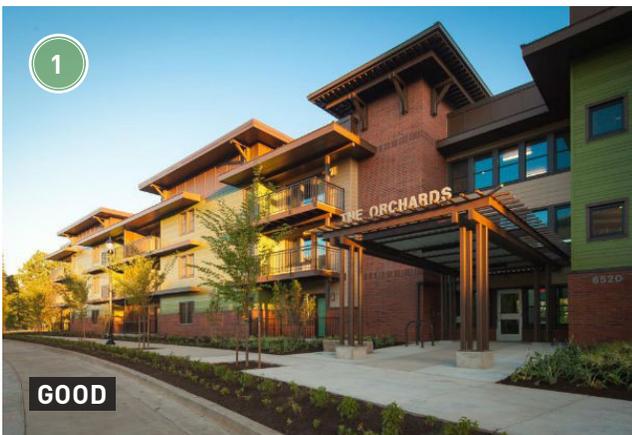
## **REQUIRED**

- 1. Architectural Details:** Structures shall be required to incorporate all of the following architectural details:
  - A.** Window shapes and patterns demonstrated to be part of the overall composition.
  - B.** Use of different materials, patterns, and/or colors to distinguish modulations, and to emphasize scales and details. Material and color changes shall occur at intersecting planes.
  - C.** The primary building entrance(s) shall be clearly defined and separated architectural feature(s) of the building.
  - D.** All openings shall be articulated or appropriately trimmed.
  - E.** The proportion, type, material, and shape of windows and doors shall complement the architectural style of the building.
- 2.** Facades with similar, repetitive elements shall be separated to add variety. The separation intervals will be design dependent. An example of how a townhouse building could separate design elements has been illustrated on page 45.
- 3.** Special attention shall be paid to visible stairways. They shall be designed to be an integral part of the overall architecture of the building.
- 4.** When multiple structures with similar floor plans or shapes are repeated in a project, the horizontal and vertical modulation, rooflines, and architectural details required within this element shall be changed on each building to add variety.
- 5.** When garage doors are visible from a public or private street, open space area, parking area, or pedestrian way they are required to comply with the "SF-G: Garage Facades" on page 22 required for small lots, duplexes, and PUD developments.



- 1
- 2

Townhouse building with distinctive entries, roofline details, windows, integrated staircase and material changes that meet the requirements of Standard H.1



- 1

**GOOD**

Building with distinctive entry, roofline details, windows and material changes



- 1

**NOT ALLOWED**

Facades with little or no architectural details; stairs and elevated external walkways dominate the visual character of this building

# MF-I: LIGHTING

## **INTENT**

To maintain a safe and secure pedestrian environment through the use of adequate lighting.

## **REQUIRED**

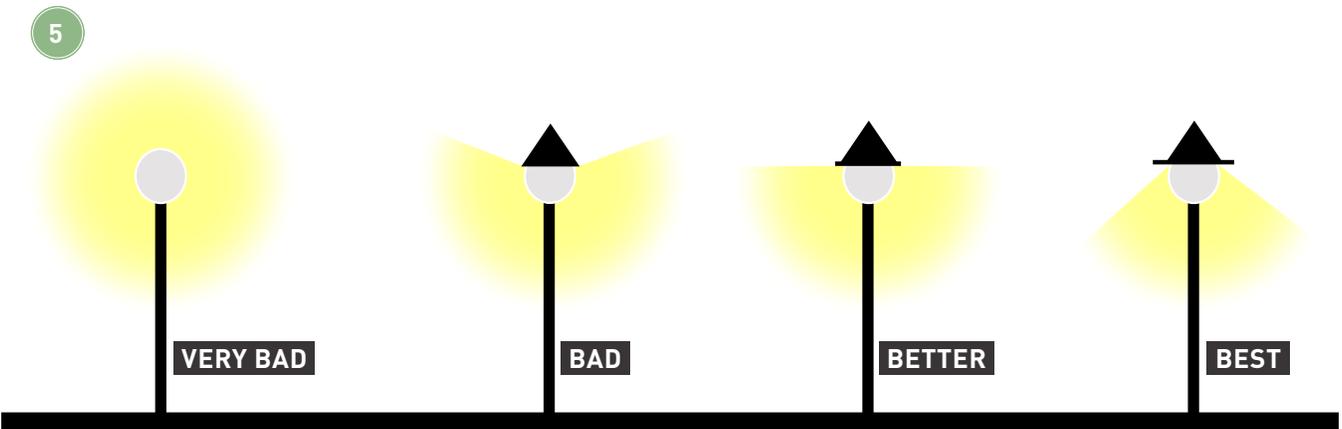
- 1.** Lighting shall be installed to provide security, personal safety, and to highlight building/site entrances and other important community features.
- 2.** A photometric analysis and plan shall be submitted demonstrating lighting of required areas, light levels, shielding, and light impacts to abutting properties.
- 3.** Lighting used in parking lots shall not exceed a maximum of 16 feet in height. Pedestrian scale lighting located in areas other than parking lots shall be a maximum of 13 feet in height.
- 4.** Parking lot lighting shall be appropriate to create adequate visibility at night and evenly distributed to increase security.
- 5.** All lighting shall be glare-free and shielded from the sky and adjacent residential properties and structures, either through exterior shields or through optics within the fixture.
- 6.** Lighting levels and design should comply with the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America's Recommended Practices and Design Guidelines, latest edition.
- 7.** Pedestrian scale lighting shall be provided to create a condition of personal security which shall include yard lighting, lighting of common open spaces and trails, parking lot lighting, and perimeter security lighting.



Site lighting should be installed for safety and personal security



Example of pedestrian-scale lighting that is appropriate perimeter security and also shielded



Appropriate light shielding

# MF-J: SCREENING OF TRASH & SERVICE AREAS

## **INTENT**

To reduce the visual and noise impacts attributable to trash and service areas.

## **REQUIRED**

- 1.** All trash collection areas (dumpsters, compactors, and recycling areas), electrical panels, and mechanical equipment areas shall be located and designed to minimize negative visual impacts on the streetscape, building residents, and adjacent properties. Specifically:
  - A.** A structural enclosure made of masonry, composite wood, or other similar decay-resistant material shall be constructed to completely screen trash and recycling enclosures.
  - B.** Landscaping and other elements such as trellises or arbors shall be installed as part of the enclosure.
  - C.** Enclosures shall incorporate architectural features similar to the multi-family building it serves.
- 2.** Utility meters, electrical conduit, and other similar elements shall be located and designed to minimize negative visual impacts on the streetscape, building residents, and adjacent properties. Project designers are encouraged to coordinate with their service providers early in the design process to determine the best approach for meeting this requirement. If such elements are mounted in locations visible from the street, pathways, shared open space, or shared vehicular areas, they must be screened with vegetation and/or integrated into the building's architecture.



*A masonry trash service area enclosure with similar color and materials as the building*



*Landscaping and arbors used to screen and conceal trash service area*



*Utilities screened with decorative grillwork*



*Unscreened trash service area*



*Utilities screened with landscaping*



*Unscreened utilities*

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# SECTION 3. DOWNTOWN STANDARDS

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The Standards contained in this Section apply to all properties located in the Historic Downtown and surrounding areas shown on FIGURE 1 on page 4 of this document. However, these standards are further refined with some that apply only to buildings and property abutting Downtown Core or Secondary Core Streets that are also identified in FIGURE 1.

# DT-A: GROUND FLOOR TREATMENT

## INTENT

The intent of these standards is to increase pedestrian activity in the downtown by maintaining and creating attractive, activated ground floors.

## REQUIRED

All non-residential uses shall be required to comply with the following standards:

1. Ground floors accessed from Downtown Core and Secondary Core Streets are required to have a minimum 12 foot floor to ceiling height.
2. The design features described below shall be placed at a building's primary ground floor entrance. The primary entrance of a building is designed for access by pedestrians and abuts a sidewalk. The primary entrance is required to have all of the following:
  - A. Entrances off of Downtown Core Streets shall have transparent windows and/or doors that occupy at least 60 percent of the facade area between 2.5 feet to 12 feet above abutting grade.
  - B. Entrances off of Secondary Core Streets shall have transparent windows and/or doors that occupy at least 40 percent of the facade area between 2.5 feet to eight feet above abutting grade
  - C. Entrances off of streets not classified as Downtown or Secondary Core shall have transparent windows and/or doors occupying at least 20 percent of the facade area between 2.5 feet to eight feet above abutting grade

1

2

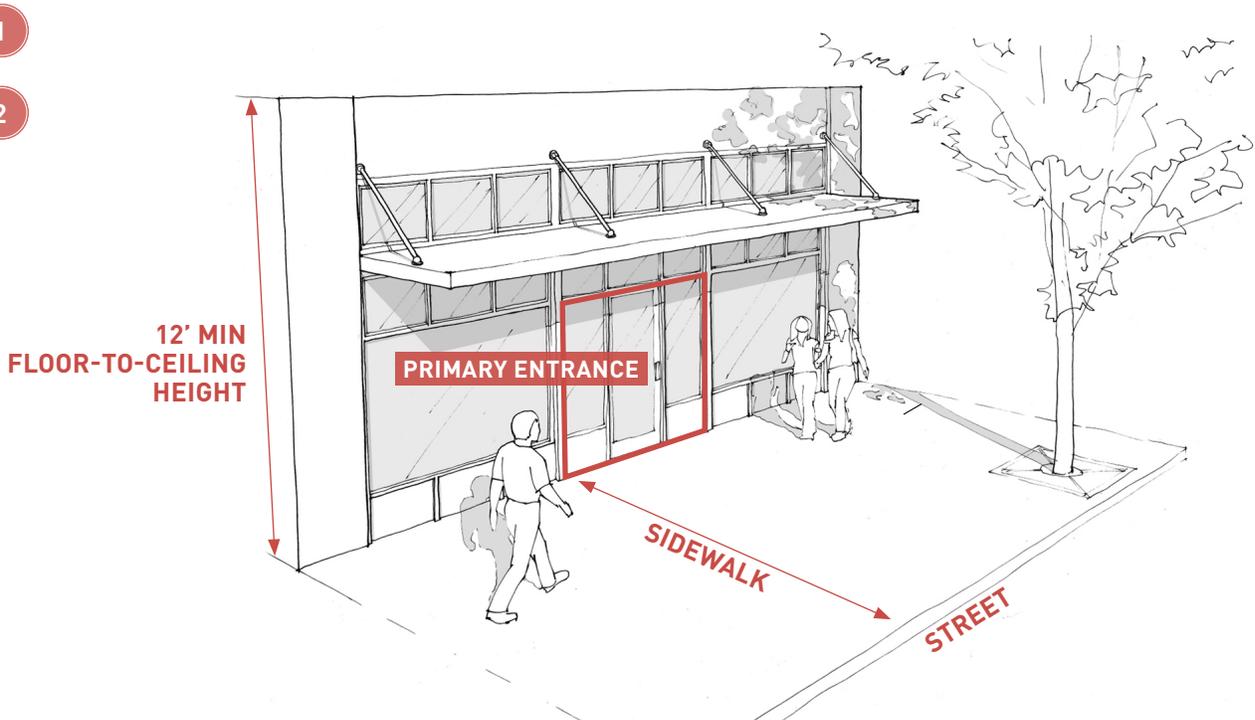
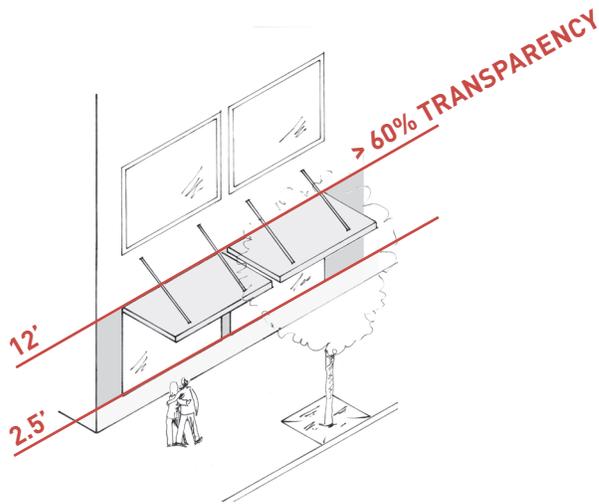


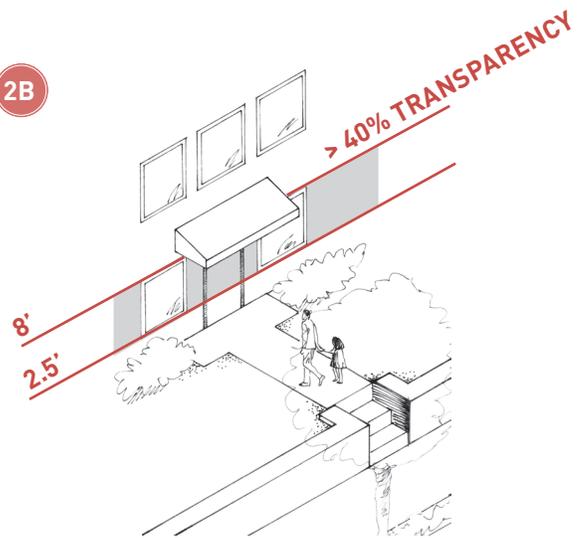
Illustration showing the primary entrance of a storefront abuts a sidewalk that can be easily accessed by pedestrians

2A



Transparency standards for Downtown Core streets

2B



Transparency standards for Secondary Core streets



Storefront facade meeting 60 percent transparency requirement of Standard A.2

## DT-A: GROUND FLOOR TREATMENT (CONT.)

### REQUIRED (CONT.)

- D.** Weather protection standards.
    - I.** Requirements for all buildings fronting on a Downtown Core Street and all other storefront facades (any other building facade within Downtown that abuts the sidewalk):
      - a.** Weather protection shall abut no less than 75 percent of the primary street facade facing Downtown Core Streets.
      - b.** Weather protection shall project at least five feet from the building facade, except where nearby elements such as street trees or light poles require them to be narrower as determined by a licensed arborist.
      - c.** On buildings with clerestory windows, the awning shall be placed at the transom between storefront windows and clerestory windows.
    - II.** Requirements for non-storefront facades on Secondary Core streets: Weather protection projecting at least three feet from the building facade is required over all primary building, business, and residential entries.
    - III.** Additional design standards for all weather protection features:
      - a.** Weather protection shall be constructed of steel and glass, fabric, or other materials of a permanent nature. Vinyl or plastic awnings are not allowed.
      - b.** Weather protection shall have a matte finish. Glossy finishes are not allowed.
      - c.** Weather protection shall not be internally lit.
  - E.** Entry doors to ground-floor spaces shall be largely transparent, with at least half of their area being clear glazing.
  - F.** A building's primary entrance shall be located in the principal facade of the structure, and shall be oriented toward the street. The primary entrance must be readily apparent as a prominent architectural component.
- 3.** Windows at street level shall permit visibility into the business, and visibility shall not be significantly



*Steel and glass awnings provide weather protection and solar access*



*Fabric canopies can also be used as a form for weather protection*

obscured by translucent treatment, etching, signage, window darkening film, or other means. The intent of transparency requirements is to encourage pedestrians to focus on the products or services offered within the space. See the photos and text below that clarify this design standard.

### ALLOWED DEVIATIONS

- 4.** The requirement for entry doors to have at least half of their area being clear glazing can be deviated from so long as the total storefront transparency standards are complied with and the entry door has been intentionally designed to incorporate other design features.



Retractable awning



Vinyl or plastic awnings are not permitted



Weather protection example for Secondary Core Streets



Classic storefront design with generous transparency and distinctive canopies



Desirable storefront example with transparent windows



Advertisements that obscure storefront transparency are not permitted

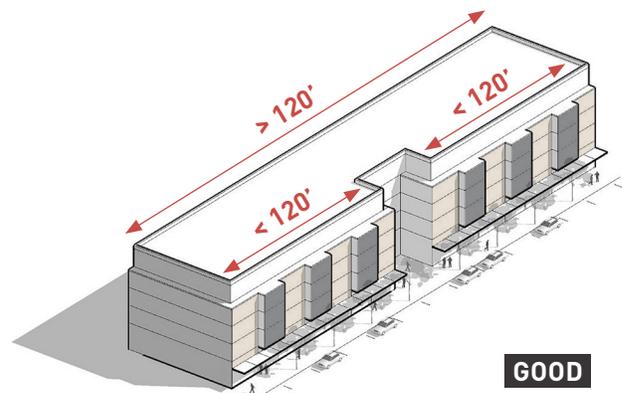
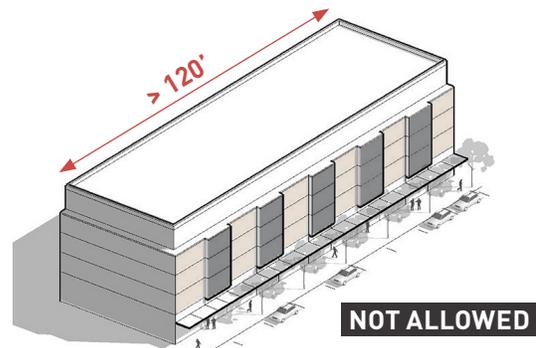
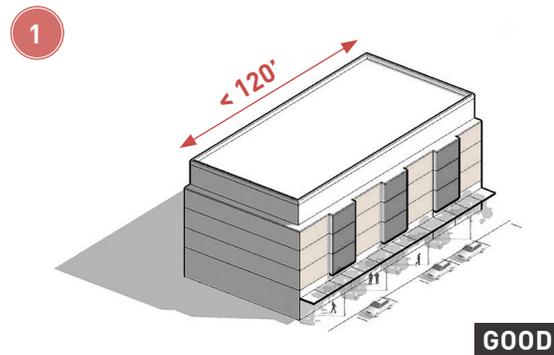
# DT-B: BUILDING MASSING, ARTICULATION & HUMAN SCALE

## INTENT

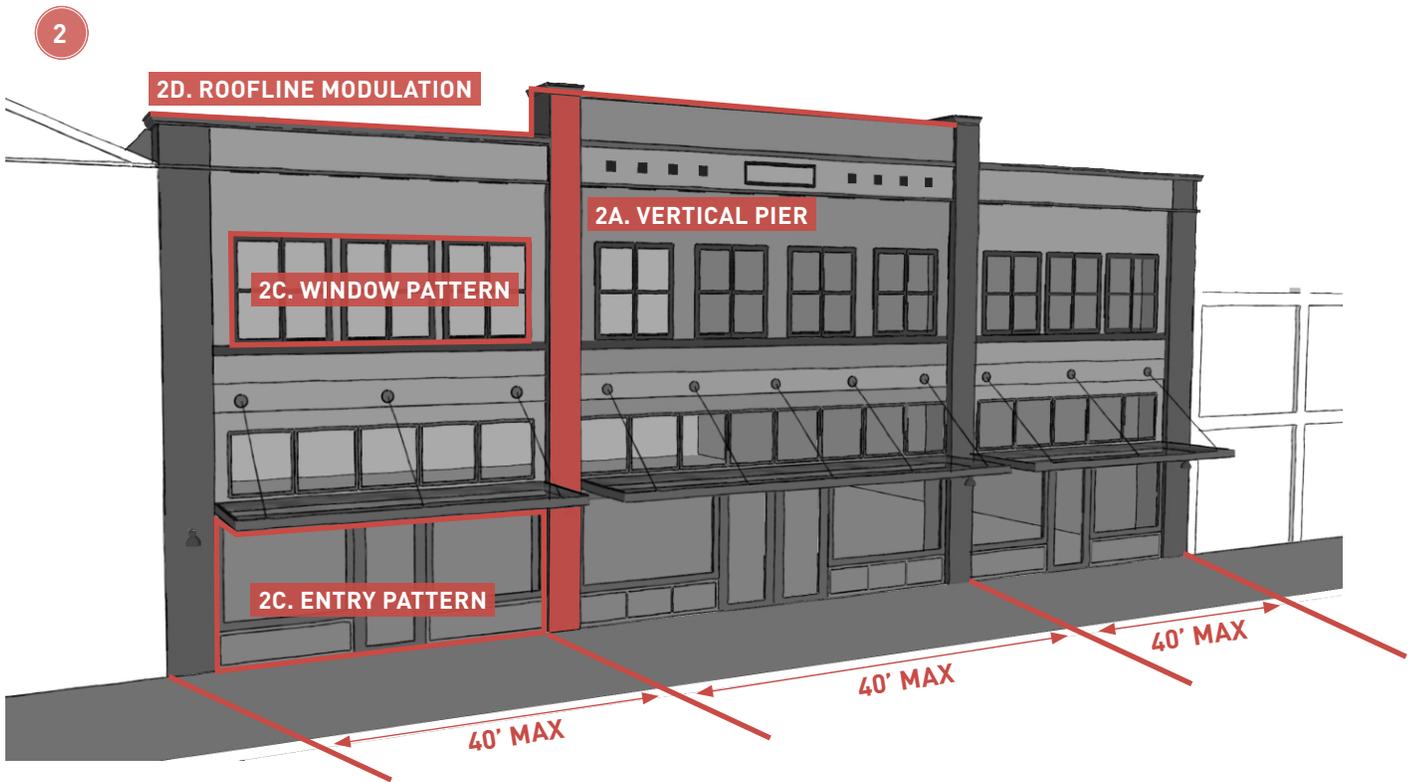
- To require facade articulation that reduces the perceived scale of large buildings and adds visual interest from the public realm.
- To create or maintain structures with human-scaled elements that improve the pedestrian environment.

## REQUIRED

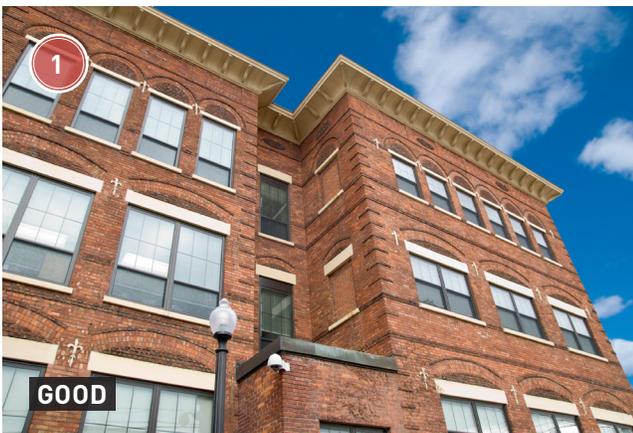
1. The maximum width of any continuous non-residential or mixed-use building facade facing a street shall be 120 feet without substantial vertical modulation and vertical definition that complies with the following:
  - A. Vertical modulation shall be no less than five feet deep and ten feet wide. For multi-story buildings the modulation must extend through more than one-half of the building height.
  - B. Vertical definition must be achieved by incorporating at least three of the articulation elements listed below within Standard B.2.
2. The maximum width of any continuous non-residential or mixed-use building facade shall be 40 feet without the use of at least three of the following articulation elements used to differentiate articulated units of the building:
  - A. Vertical piers or columns.
  - B. Change in building materials separated by trim, joints, or other features to provide an appropriate articulation transition.
  - C. Window fenestration patterns and/or entries
  - D. Roof line modulation or articulation
  - E. Other design techniques that reinforce a human-scaled pattern that is compatible with the building's surrounding context.



*The maximum width of a continuous facade without any vertical modulation should not exceed 120 feet*



Facade articulation example/elements within the 40-foot maximum intervals



Building meets Standard B.1.A using substantial vertical modulation



Wide facade that has no vertical modulation

# DT-B: BUILDING MASSING, ARTICULATION & HUMAN SCALE (CONT.)

## **REQUIRED (CONT.)**

3. Windows exclusive of storefronts that can be viewed from Downtown and Secondary Core Streets shall comply with the following standards:
  - A. Windows shall have a vertical proportion of approximately 2:1 height to width. Ganged double-hung style windows are an exception.
  - B. All windows must be surrounded by trim, molding, sills, or other architectural features or patterns that emphasize building fenestration.
  - C. All windows must recess or project at least three inches from the facade.
4. All building facades on Downtown and Secondary Core Streets shall be composed of three sections to include a base, middle and top, i.e. tripartite design.
5. All building facades on Downtown and Secondary Core Streets shall have roofs that incorporate three dimensional architectural material at the upper edge of facades or soffit overhangs. Roofs shall also include:
  - A. Decorative roof lines, including: cornices, frieze or other roof line elements visible from the ground.

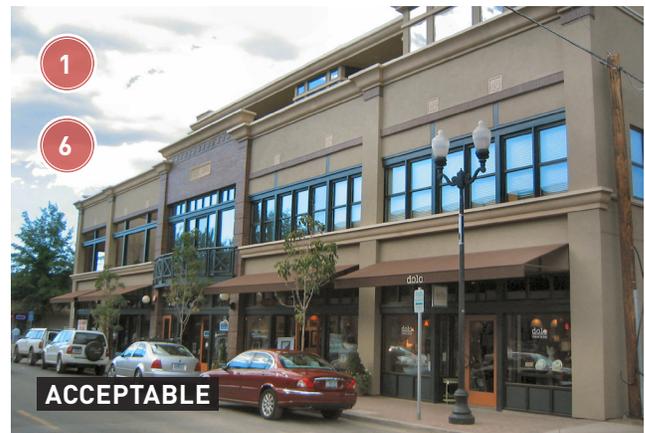
6. Rooflines of all buildings fronting on Downtown Core Streets, and Secondary Core Streets north of Kincaid Street shall be flat, with parapets and/or cornices except where an applicant demonstrates that the architecture of the original building supports sloped roof design.

## **ALLOWED DEVIATION**

7. Alternatives to the maximum facade width provisions set forth in Standard B.1 above will be considered provided the design treatment effectively reduces the perceived scale of the building and adds visual interest. Criteria:
  - A. Width of the facade: The larger the facade, the more substantial articulation/ modulation features need to be.
  - B. The type of articulation treatment: Consider how effective it is in meeting the purpose given the building's context.

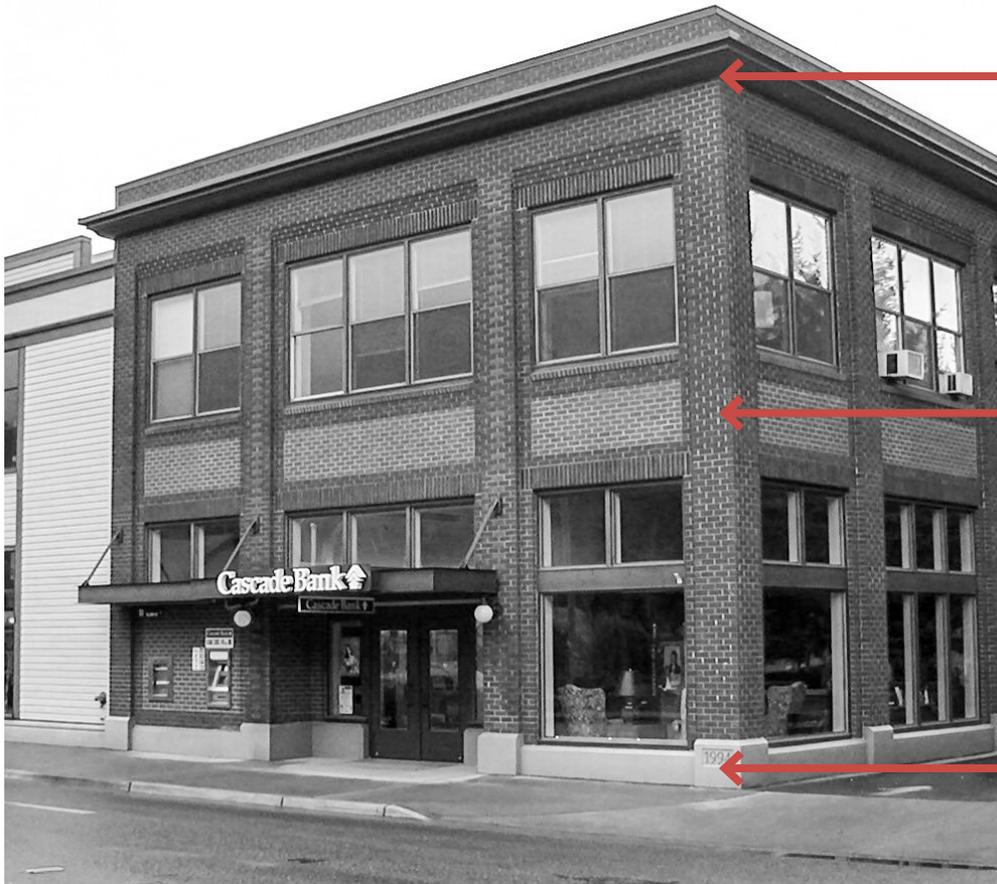


*Residential building that meets all the requirements of Standard B.3*



*A good maximum facade width deviation example (Note the change in material, fenestration and roofline in middle articulation)*

4



**DISTINCTIVE ROOFLINE**

**ARTICULATION AND FENESTRATION PATTERNS**

**DISTINCTIVE GROUND FLOOR DESIGN**

All buildings on Downtown Core and Secondary Core streets should have a tripartite design with top, middle, and base elements

5



**GOOD**

Decorated roofline visible from the street level

5



**NOT ALLOWED**

Building lacks a decorative roofline

# DT-C: BUILDING FACADES & DETAILS

## INTENT

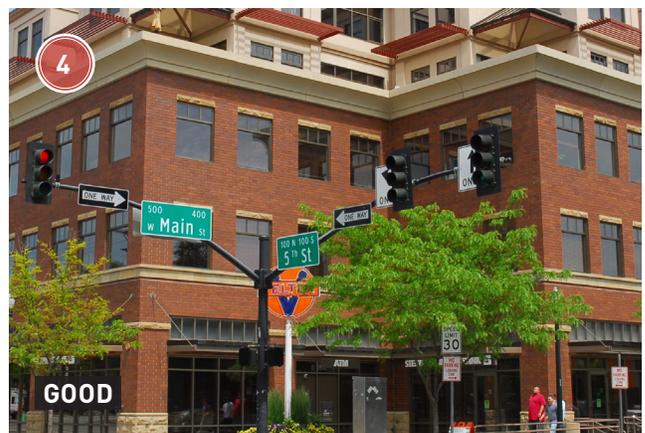
The intent of these standards is to create and/or maintain a harmonious visual identity within the downtown district and surrounding areas with consistent exterior materials, architectural detailing, colors, and facade articulation.

## REQUIRED

1. Existing brick or cast stone masonry facades abutting Downtown Core Streets shall not be covered, obscured, painted or in any way altered from their original condition, with the exception of finishes intended to repair, protect and seal the facade.
2. Facades abutting Downtown Core Streets shall be (or shall reflect the characteristics of) stone, cast stone, terra cotta, or brick consistent with materials historically used in the downtown area. Wood and glass doors are allowed and wood trim is permitted in moderation.
3. Building facades abutting Downtown Core Streets shall have muted, subdued colors used for large areas and backgrounds to unify the composition. One or two brighter colors can be used for trim, accent, or to highlight details.
  - A. Consideration of the color scheme and how it will coordinate with adjacent building facades and the block in which the building is located is required.
  - B. Abutting facades with the same color shall be avoided.
- C. To streamline projects subject to design review, the City has pre-approved a number of paint colors that applicants can choose from contained in the accompanying "Appendix A. Pre-Approved Colors for Downtown and Surrounding Areas" on page 75. No additional review of exterior colors is required when the pre-approved paint colors are used, so long as the chosen colors coordinate with and are not the same colors as adjacent building facades.
4. When possible, applied facade materials shall be extended around building corners and extensions, or used only in recessed bays to avoid a "pasted-on" appearance.
5. Flat blank walls are not permitted. Blank walls are defined as a wall or portion of a wall with a surface area of at least 400 square feet having both a length and a width of at least ten feet without a window, door, building modulation at least six-inches in depth or other architectural feature.



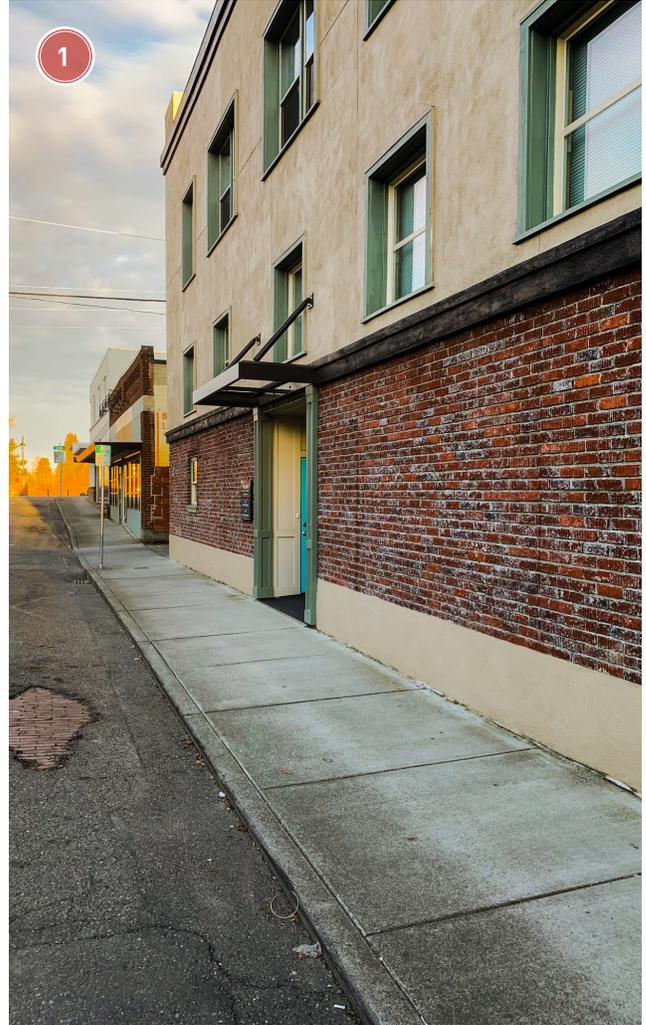
*Building employs material articulation, and detailing compatible with Mount Vernon's Downtown*



*Example of facade materials and design extending around corners*



Example showing brick and cast stone masonry facades with a door fitting into the facade

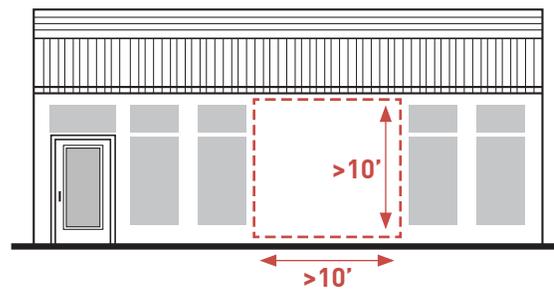


Example of a historic brick building in downtown Mount Vernon



Example of a blank wall that has been treated to provide visual interest

5



Areas of more than 400 sf and exceeding ten feet in length and width without an architectural feature is termed a blank wall

## DT-C: BUILDING FACADES & DETAILS (CONT.)

### REQUIRED (CONT.)

- 6. Prohibited Materials.** The following materials shall not be used as indicated within each element:
  - A.** On buildings abutting Downtown Core Streets metal siding, corrugated fiberglass, mirror or metallized reflective glass, plywood, Masonite, chip board siding, exterior insulated finish system (EIFS), vinyl, and cinder-block (CMU) shall not be used.
  - B.** Stucco and cement board panels or siding may be used only above ground floors on buildings abutting Downtown Core Streets.
  - C.** Chain link fencing shall not be installed anywhere in the Downtown and Surrounding Areas mapped in "FIGURE 1. Downtown and Surrounding Areas & Street Types Subject to Design Review" on page 4. However, during construction chain link fences may be used on a temporary basis.
  - D.** On a building abutting Downtown Core and Secondary Core Streets, field stone (natural or faux), exposed aggregate, and faux masonry are prohibited.
  - E.** Vinyl siding is prohibited in the Downtown and Surrounding Areas mapped in "FIGURE 1. Downtown and Surrounding Areas & Street Types Subject to Design Review" on page 4.
- 7.** All buildings fronting on Downtown Core and Secondary Core Streets shall incorporate at least two of the following elements into their ground floor facades:
  - A.** Transom windows
  - B.** Recessed entry
  - C.** Decorative door
  - D.** Decorative, building-mounted light fixtures
  - E.** Bay windows
  - F.** Decorative use of materials, e.g. mosaic tiles, wrought iron, corbels, or outlooks
  - G.** Other detail elements that add visual interest to the facade

- 8.** Lighting shall be used to emphasize the building and landscaping, and to provide visibility and general security. All lighting shall be incandescent or LED and is required to comply with the following:
  - A.** All exterior lighting (building and landscape) shall be integrated with the building design, create a sense of safety, and encourage pedestrian activity after dark.
  - B.** Use adequate lighting along sidewalks and alleys to provide well-lit pedestrian walkways.
  - C.** Exterior lighting shall be shielded to reduce glare and eliminate light being cast into the night sky.
  - D.** Flashing or strobe type lighting is prohibited.
  - E.** Alleys shall be illuminated for safety, vehicle and pedestrian use.

### ALLOWED DEVIATIONS

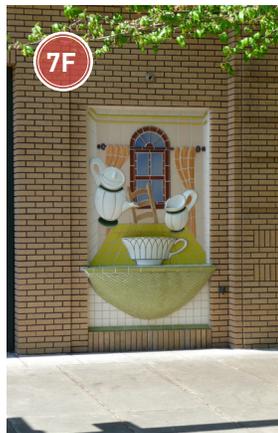
- 9.** The materials listed as prohibited may be allowed, in limited circumstances, when an applicant can demonstrate through articulation and detailing that the intent of this element can be met.



*Reflective or mirrored glass on a storefront are not permitted*



Example showing ground floor facades with recessed entrance and transom windows



Use of decorative doors and materials such as mosaic tiles enhance the overall outlook of the building facade



Example of an entrance with decorative building-mounted light fixtures and recessed entry



Example of lighting integrated into the building design and landscape



Well-lit pedestrian sidewalk around a building

# DT-D: BUILDING LOCATION & SITE PLANNING

## INTENT

To have building frontages that contribute to the visual character of the street and enhance the pedestrian environment.

## REQUIRED

1. Buildings on Downtown Core Streets shall be placed on the street edge lot lines with parking located to the side or behind buildings.
2. Pedestrian friendly building elements shall be incorporated at intersections, street corners, buildings with two street frontages, and alley entrances by incorporating features such as inset corners, plazas, decorative landscaped areas, cropped building corners, and display windows.
3. Decorative treatments within the sidewalk, including special paving patterns and building entryway tiling shall be preserved or replicated.
4. The use of alleys for services and public-oriented activities shall be required and maintained.
5. Surface parking lots abutting the street shall be screened with a landscaping buffer that is no less than five feet in depth and has smaller street trees planted on 15 foot centers, or 30 feet depending on type of tree, with shrubs between the street trees to fill out the planter area. A low concrete wall, elevated planter, or other similar feature shall be installed in conjunction with the planter strip to screen the parking area visible from public streets.

## ALLOWED DEVIATIONS

6. Corner and through lots and developments fronting on more than one street can be allowed to have parking located on the side or behind buildings when other feasible alternatives do not exist.

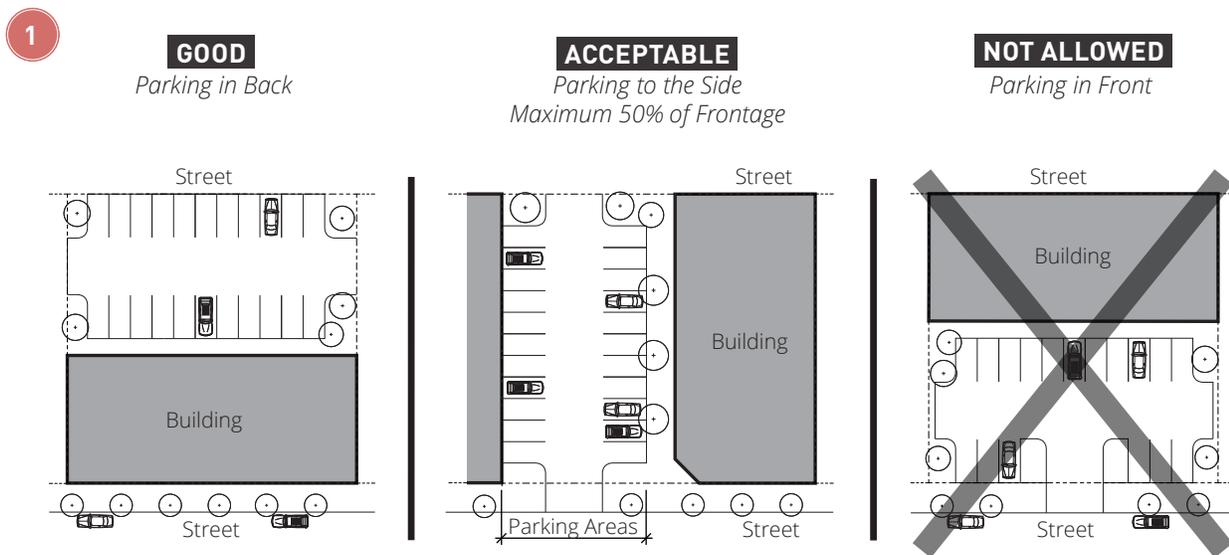


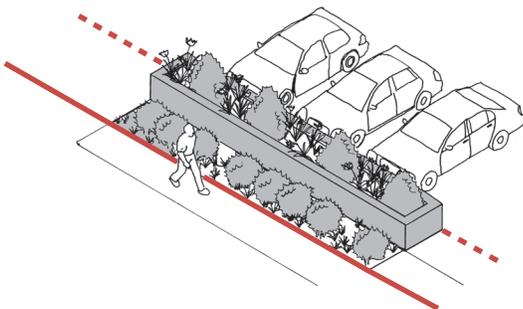
FIGURE 5. Parking Location Standards

2



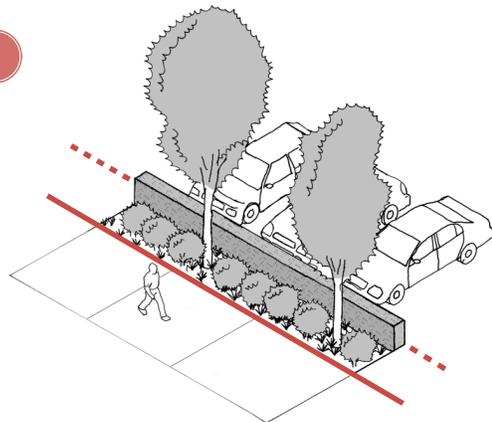
Corner building example with inset plaza

5



Screening of parking lot with elevated concrete planters in conjunction with a planter strip

5



Screening of parking lot with a planting strip and a low concrete wall

# DT-E: RESIDENTIAL USES & SURROUNDING AREAS

## **INTENT**

To provide privacy and ensure residential uses in the downtown and surrounding areas are compatible with and integrated into the surrounding urban context.

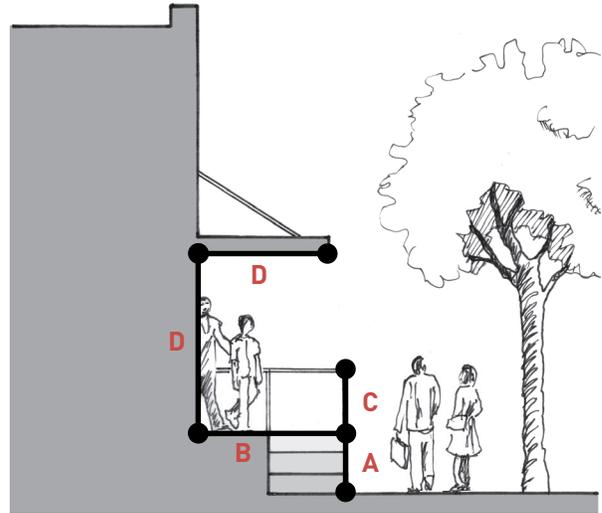
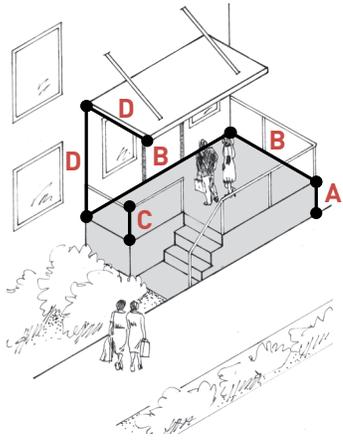
## **REQUIRED**

1. Single-family, duplex, and PUDs within the downtown and surrounding areas identified on FIGURE 1 on page 4 shall comply with the Design Standards contained within "Section 1. Single-Family Standards".
2. Multi-family uses, i.e. apartments, town homes, and stacked flats within the downtown and surrounding areas identified on FIGURE 1 on page 4 shall comply within "Section 2. Multi-Family Standards" and the following standards, where applicable, contained in "Section 3. Downtown Standards":
  - A. DT-B3 and B4
  - B. DT-C
  - C. DT-D
  - D. DT-F
3. Mixed-use buildings within the downtown and surrounding areas identified on FIGURE 1 on page 4 shall comply with all applicable standards in "Section 3. Downtown Standards" herein. Also, the residential portions of the their buildings shall comply with the standards in "Section 2. Multi-Family Standards". If and where there's a conflict between the Multi-Family and Downtown Standards, the Downtown Standards herein apply.
4. Ground floor residential uses that take access off of Downtown Core Streets shall have stoops incorporated into the front facade complying with the following:
  - A. The platform shall be a minimum of three feet above grade
  - B. The platform shall be a minimum of six feet deep and six feet wide
  - C. Railing around the platform shall be a maximum of 42 inches in height and shall be designed such that it is at least 50 percent transparent
  - D. Weather protection over the platform shall be required that is a minimum of three feet deep placed a maximum of 15 feet above the platform
5. Ground floor residential uses that take access off of Secondary Core Streets shall incorporate stoops complying with the standards in element #4 (a) to (d) above

## **ALLOWED DEVIATIONS**

6. Deviations to Standards E.4 and E.5 can be allowed when applicants construct/install the following:
  - A. An entrance sequence delineating the area between the sidewalk and the front door containing decorative pavers, landscaping and other features to provide privacy for these units by making sure that pedestrians are not looking directly into living spaces.

4



Example of private entrance to ground floor residential units that meet the requirements of Standard E.4

5



Private stoop example

5



Example of entrance sequence with common access separated from sidewalk with weather protection over the platform

## DT-F: SIGNAGE

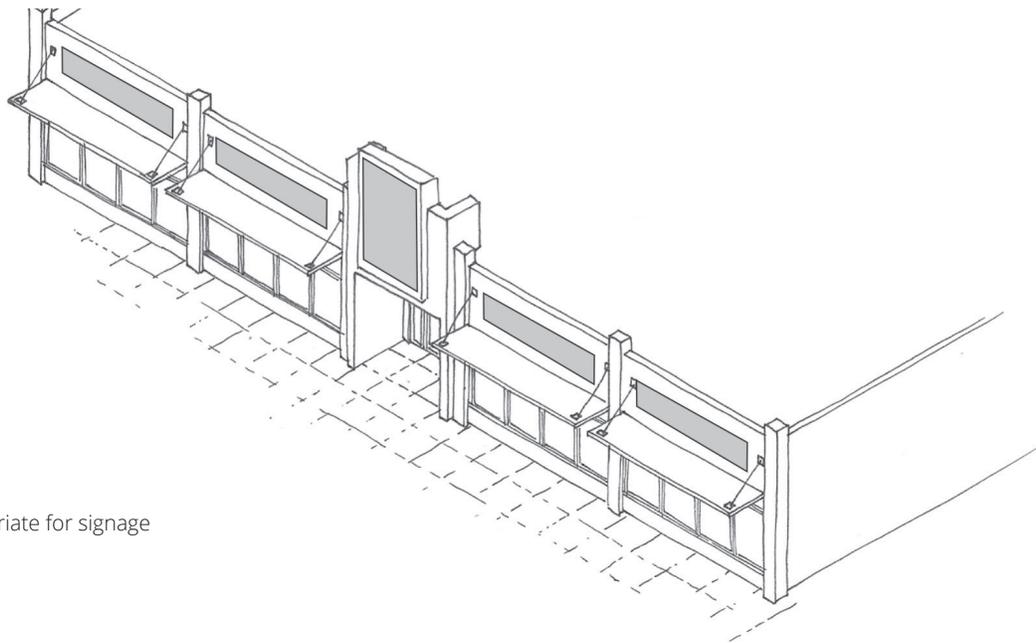
### INTENT

To ensure that signs reflect the character and unique nature of the business, do not hide, damage, or obstruct the architectural elements of the building, and be oriented toward and promote the historical pedestrian environment.

### REQUIRED

1. Signs must be used in a way that compliments the building and historical conditions in material, style, and color.
2. Wall signs shall be required to comply with a standard limiting them to two-thirds the dimension of the articulation interval of the facade they are placed on. Wall signs shall also be centered and proportional to the building facade.
3. Signs shall primarily be located on flat panels of the facade, painted directly on the store front windows, upper story windows, on awnings, or mounted to bars perpendicular to the building.
4. Signs may not cover or obscure architectural features of a building, including windows, cornices, or columns.
5. **Sign Materials.** Painted signs in storefront windows and single-faced, flat-surfaced, painted wood signs are all allowed and are preferred signage. Vinyl letters are allowed. Extruded aluminum or plastics are not allowed.
6. Signage visible on ground-floor windows shall not exceed 30 percent of the total window area per tenant.
  - A. Signage shall not be installed on any storefront window in the portion of the window between four to six feet above the sidewalk on buildings abutting Downtown Core Streets.

2



Facade area appropriate for signage

*Wall mounted signs should not exceed 2/3rd area of the facade on which they are placed on*

3

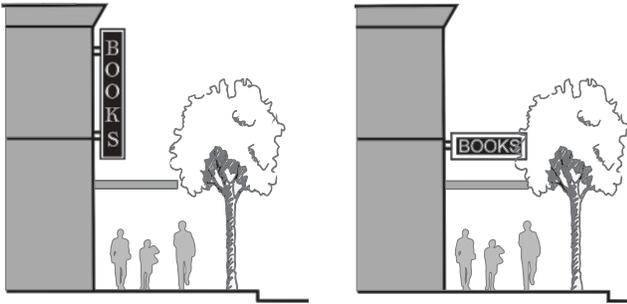


Illustration showing horizontal and vertically-oriented projecting signs that are mounted to the building

5



**GOOD**

Signs can be directly painted on windows

3



**GOOD**

Wall-mounted signs mounted on perpendicular bars projecting out of a building

5

6



**ACCEPTABLE**

Variety of window signs that also meet the overall 30 percent limit

5

6



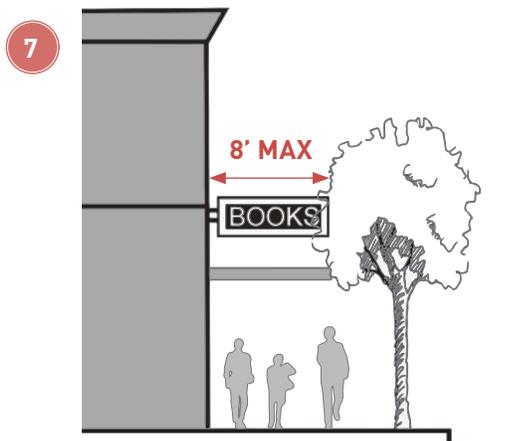
**NOT ALLOWED**

Sign exceeding 30 percent of total window area are not desired

## DT-F: SIGNAGE (CONT.)

### REQUIRED (CONT.)

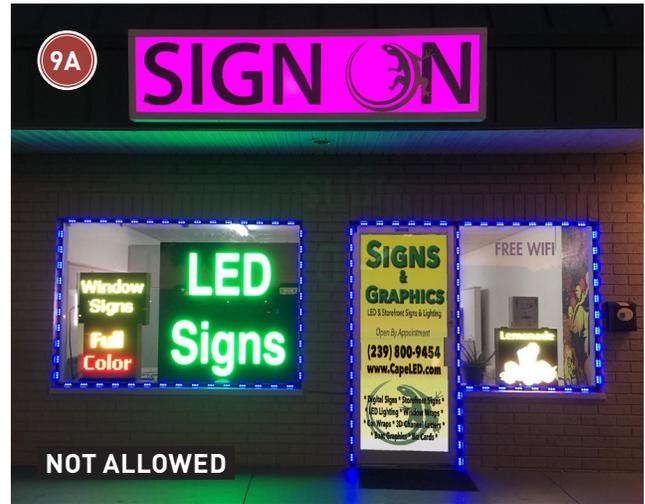
- 7. Bonus Blade Signs.** Blade signs (double-faced projecting signs hanging or projected perpendicular to the building) are encouraged. Blade signs shall not count towards the maximum sign allowance per MVMC Chapter 17.87 so long as they comply with all of the following:
- A.** They shall be consistent in design with District goals of historical compatibility and sensitivity.
  - B.** No more than one blade sign shall be allowed for every 40 feet of building frontage on a public road (excluding alleys).
  - C.** Blade signs cannot be placed closer than 15 feet from each other when installed on similar horizontal planes.
  - D.** Each blade sign shall not exceed eight square feet in size.
  - E.** Horizontally-oriented blade signs shall not extend more than eight-feet from the face of a building; and vertically-oriented blade signs shall not extend more than three feet from the face of a building.
  - F.** Structural supports for hanging signs shall be of a dark or subdued color.
- 8.** Signage shall not be allowed to project over the roof line of any structures.
- 9. Sign Lighting.** Sign lighting shall be subdued in brightness and use LED source, or a source that replicates the warmth and color quality of incandescent lighting.
- A.** Internally illuminated cabinet signs are not permitted.
  - B.** Signs that flash, blink, vary in intensity, revolve, or are otherwise in motion or appear to be in motion are not permitted.
- 10.** Awning, canopy, and marquee signs shall comply with the following as applicable:
- A.** Awning signs shall be painted or screened directly onto the fabric.
  - B.** Awning signs shall be painted or screened directly onto the fabric.
  - C.** Awning and canopy signs shall consist of no more than two colors.
  - D.** Canopy signs shall be individual, channel-cut characters of metal, wood, or composite and shall be mounted on the top of the canopy at the front edge.
- 11. Custom Neon Signs.** Letter style, color, intensity and overall impact of the neon sign shall be evaluated for compatibility with the other signs and buildings in the District. Neon signs shall be designed to reflect the unique nature of the use within. Non-custom neon signs are not permitted.
- 12. Electronic message center (EMC) signs** are not allowed. EMCs are signs capable of displaying words, symbols, figures or images that can be electronically changed by remote or automatic method.



Bonus Blade Signs should be compatible with the area but should not create a congested signage along a street



Sign lighting that replicates warmth of incandescent lighting



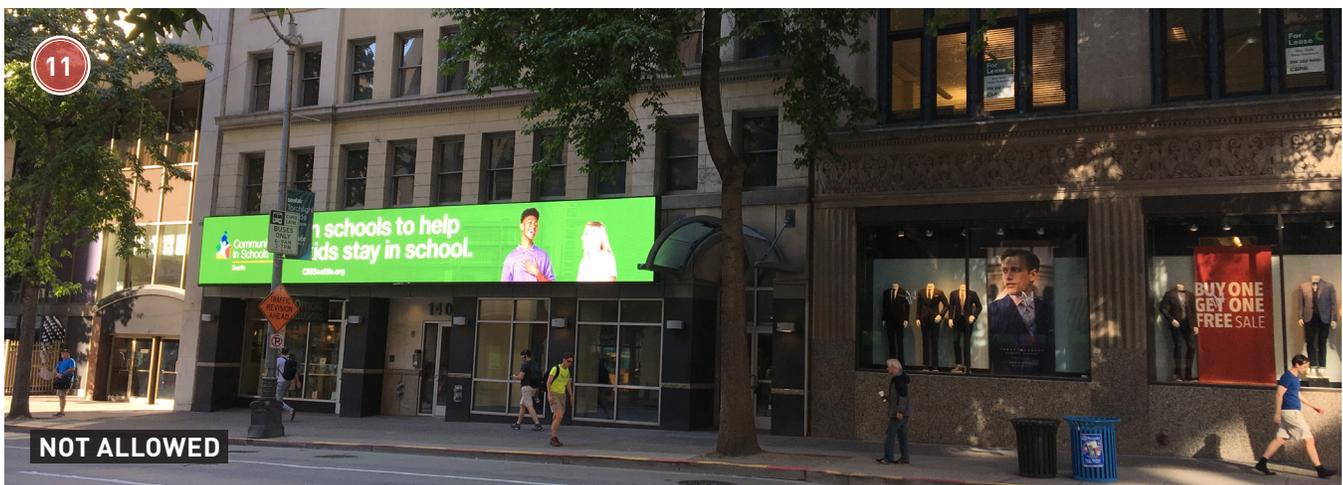
Internal cabinet signs are not permitted



Customized neon signs for an art material shop



Customized signs that are hung internally



Electronic Message Center (EMC) signs that can be electronically changed are not permitted

## DT-G: OUTDOOR UTILITIES, FACILITIES & RELATED ITEMS

### **INTENT**

To ensure careful placement of required site elements such as mechanical equipment, utility vaults, rooftop mechanical and communication equipment to minimize their visual impacts.

### **REQUIRED**

1. All mechanical equipment, utility meters and vaults, rooftop mechanical and communication equipment shall be screened from pedestrian view at streets.
2. Newly constructed buildings shall have dumpsters located within the dripline of the buildings and shall be enclosed within a structure approved by City's sanitation department.



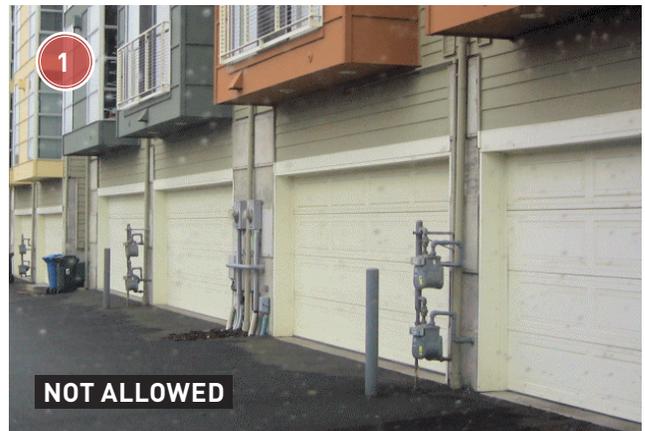
*Rooftop screening such that equipment is not visible from street*



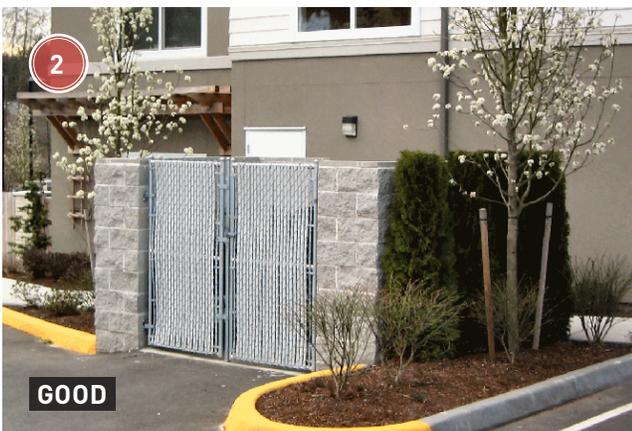
*HVAC units that are not screened*



*Example showing screening of utility equipment at ground level screened with landscape*



*Example showing utility equipment that are not screened*



*Example of dumpsters screened with landscape, masonry wall and self-closing doors for access*



*Example of dumpsters that are not screened*

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# APPENDIX A. PRE-APPROVED COLORS FOR DOWNTOWN AND SURROUNDING AREAS

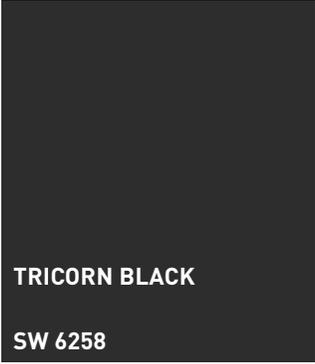
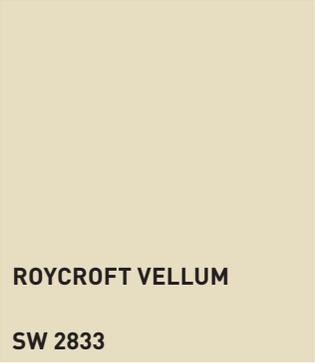
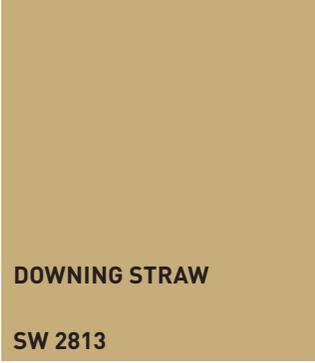
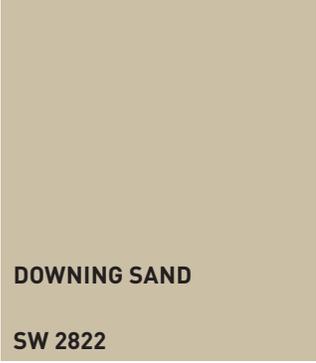
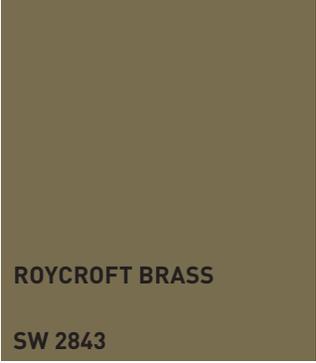
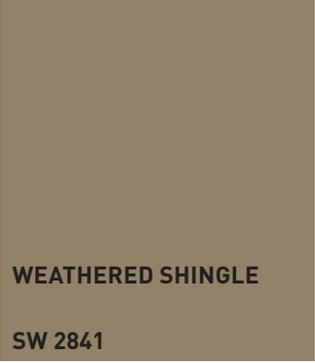
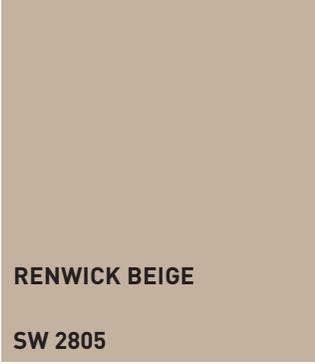
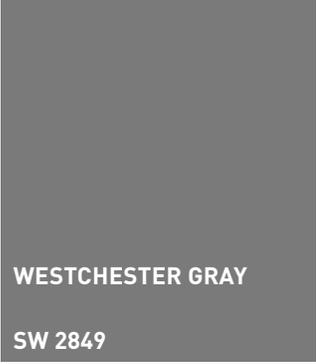
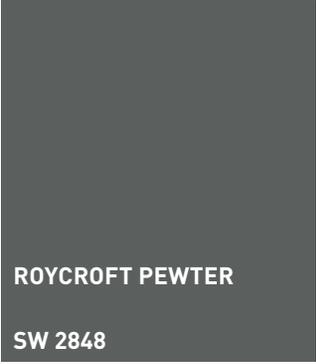


PRE-APPROVED COLORS FOR THE **BODY OF BUILDINGS** LOCATED IN THE HISTORIC DOWNTOWN AND SURROUNDING AREAS

<p><b>COLONIAL REVIVAL STONE</b></p> <p>SW 2827</p>	<p><b>DOWNING SAND</b></p> <p>SW 2822</p>	<p><b>ROYCROFT VELLUM</b></p> <p>SW 2833</p>	<p><b>MORRIS ROOM GREY</b></p> <p>SW 0037</p>
<p><b>WHITE FLOUR</b></p> <p>SW 7102</p>	<p><b>CLASSICAL WHITE</b></p> <p>SW 2829</p>	<p><b>BIRDSEYE MAPLE</b></p> <p>SW 2834</p>	<p><b>DOWNING STRAW</b></p> <p>SW 2813</p>
<p><b>DOWNING SLATE</b></p> <p>SW 2819</p>	<p><b>SAGE</b></p> <p>SW 2860</p>	<p><b>DOWNING STONE</b></p> <p>SW 2821</p>	<p><b>ROYCROFT MIST GRAY</b></p> <p>SW 2844</p>
<p><b>CHELSEA GRAY</b></p> <p>SW 2850</p>			

*The colors listed in this Appendix are the Sherwin Williams brand. This in no way means that the City requires applicants to purchase Sherwin Williams paint. The Sherwin Williams paint ID number is provided to allow applicants to match the colors represented to other paint brands.*

PRE-APPROVED COLORS FOR THE **TRIM OF BUILDINGS** LOCATED IN THE HISTORIC DOWNTOWN AND SURROUNDING AREAS

 <p><b>TRICORN BLACK</b> SW 6258</p>	 <p><b>PURE WHITE</b> SW 7005</p>	 <p><b>CLASSIC WHITE BUFF</b> SW 0050</p>	 <p><b>ROYCROFT VELLUM</b> SW 2833</p>
 <p><b>DOWNING STRAW</b> SW 2813</p>	 <p><b>DOWNING SAND</b> SW 2822</p>	 <p><b>ROYCROFT BRASS</b> SW 2843</p>	 <p><b>WEATHERED SHINGLE</b> SW 2841</p>
 <p><b>RENWICK BEIGE</b> SW 2805</p>	 <p><b>WESTCHESTER GRAY</b> SW 2849</p>	 <p><b>ROYCROFT PEWTER</b> SW 2848</p>	

*The colors listed in this Appendix are the Sherwin Williams brand. This in no way means that the City requires applicants to purchase Sherwin Williams paint. The Sherwin Williams paint ID number is provided to allow applicants to match the colors represented to other paint brands.*

PRE-APPROVED COLORS USED AS **ACCENTS ON BUILDINGS** LOCATED IN THE HISTORIC DOWNTOWN AND SURROUNDING AREAS



*The colors listed in this Appendix are the Sherwin Williams brand. This in no way means that the City requires applicants to purchase Sherwin Williams paint. The Sherwin Williams paint ID number is provided to allow applicants to match the colors represented to other paint brands.*

# APPENDIX B. MOUNT VERNON DOWNTOWN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS BY HKP ARCHITECTS



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# APPENDIX C. DEFINITIONS



## ARBOR

An arbor is a freestanding design element generally intended for plants and vines to grow on. The image on the right is of an arbor.



## ARTICULATION

The use of materials, color, texture, pattern, modulation, etc to distinguish a structure.

The building in the picture on the right demonstrates articulation with the storefront windows, the brick and wood molding, and the slight variations of depth to differentiate parts of the building.



## AWNING

Is a fabric structure mounted on a framework usually made of metal used to provide shelter from sun and rain.

The photo on the right shows an awning.



## CANOPY

A flat structure usually made of metal and/or glass that cantilevers out from a building facade to provide shelter from sun and rain.

The picture to the right shows a canopy.



## CORBEL

(also called outriggers and knee braces)

An architectural feature that projects from a vertical surface and supports weight.

The picture to the right shows corbels at the peak of both roof gables.



## CORNICE

Horizontal decorative molding located just below a roof, at the top of a window, ceiling or exterior wall.

The picture to the right show rooftop cornices.



## **FACADE**

Any vertical, exterior face or wall of a building, usually where the front entrance exists.

## **GLAZING**

Another word for glass or other transparent materials used in windows.

The picture to the right shows a pattern of glazing on a building.



## **HUMAN SCALE**

The size, proportions, and components of a structure that relate to people because they are the size and shape for the average person to use or benefit from.

## **MODULATION**

A stepping back or projecting forward of sections of a structure's façade with specific intervals of building width and depth, used to break up a structure's apparent bulk.

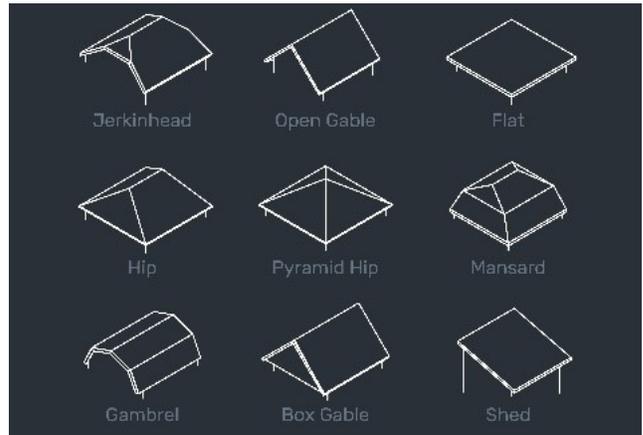
The building pictured to the right has elements of both vertical and horizontal modulation.



## ROOF & ROOF FORMS

Many different types of roofs are discussed in this document.

To the right is an illustration of the most common roof types.



## TRANSOM

A window or multi-paned window opening above a door or another window usually capping the storefront level of a building.

The picture to the right shows a transom window above the recessed doors.



## TRELLIS

A trellis is a design element that is attached or supported by an abutting structure.

In the picture to the right a trellis is shown over the garage door.



## WEATHER PROTECTION

Weather protection used in the context of the Design Standards is referring to awnings, canopies, or marquees.

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