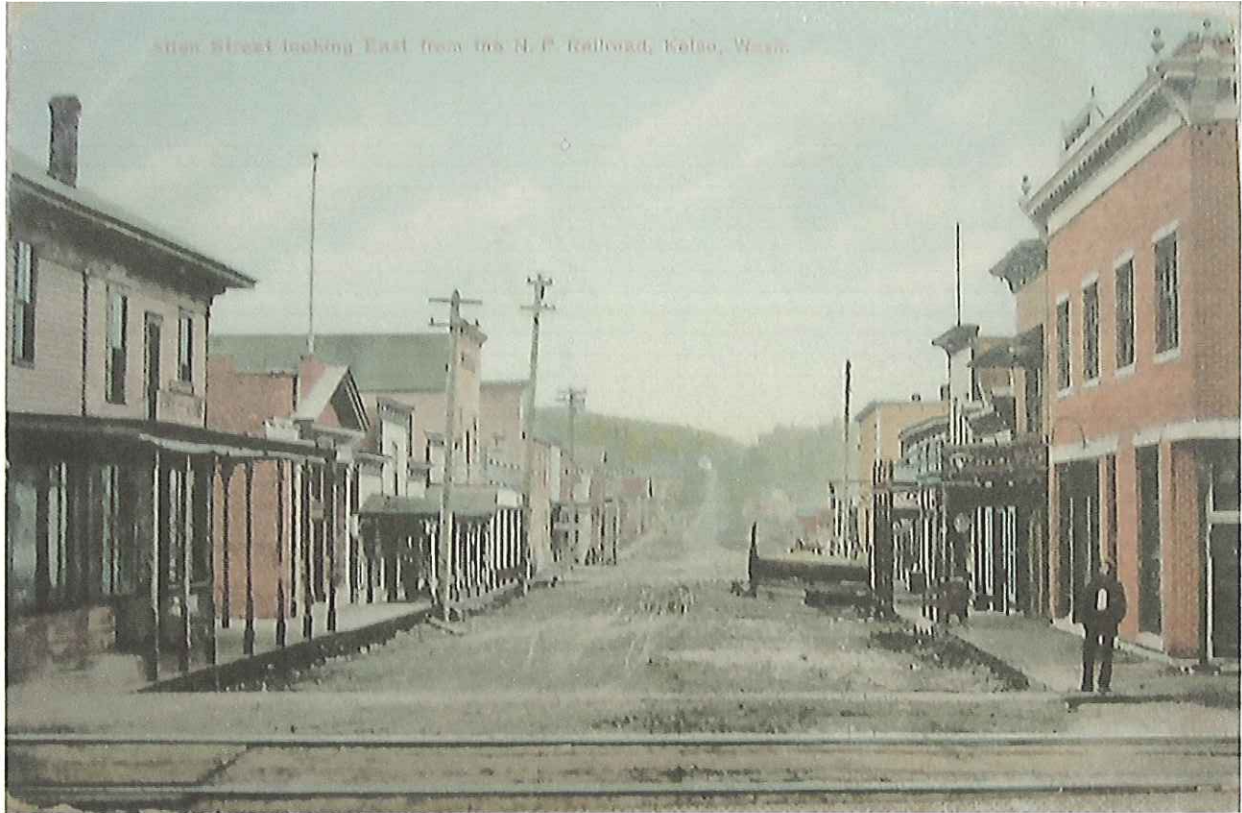


CITY OF KELSO



Historic Photograph of Allen Street circa 1900

DESIGN REVIEW HANDBOOK

Guidelines for Development
within the
Downtown Design Guidelines Overlay District



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Acknowledgements

The development and preparation of the Downtown Design Guidelines and this handbook is the result of the combined efforts of the citizens and public officials of the City of Kelso. Thanks are given to all members who participated in its development and eventual implementation.

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I. Purpose

Good building design contributes to the social and economic vitality of a community. The City of Kelso is committed to ensuring that new development (or significant redevelopment) in the downtown area is attractive, functional and of quality construction. The establishment of design guidelines and a design review process is an effective means of assuring that new development "fits" into a community.

The purpose of crafting design guidelines for the downtown is to describe ways in which new buildings within the downtown area can be made in a manner that is compatible with their surroundings. These guidelines illustrate ways to think about a proposed project's context and provide flexible examples in order to help a new project fit better in that context and enhance the area. Consistent with the goals of the City of Kelso's Comprehensive Plan, the purposes of the following guidelines are to protect and enhance the character and social and economic stability of the downtown area of the city; to improve the downtown area; and, to develop an overall design scheme for the downtown area.

For further information on these design guidelines and/or the design review process, please contact the City of Kelso Department of Community Development.

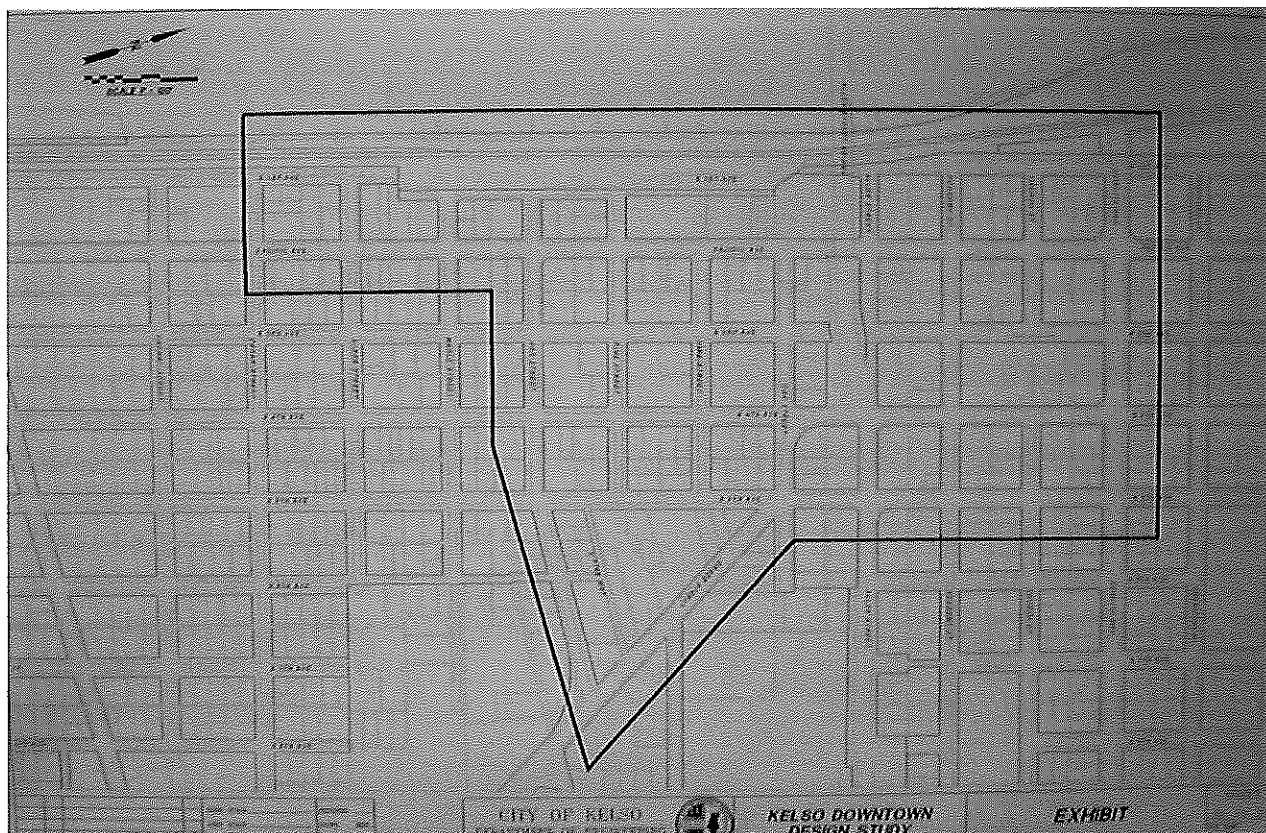
II. Introduction

Why Design Review?

Design review is intended to be a forum by which the city, a developer and the public can work cooperatively toward achieving a better community through the use of simple design principles. Those principles are presented in the design guidelines that follow. Design review is the process by which new development can contribute positively to neighborhoods by presenting a design that reinforces the positive design elements of that neighborhood. The following guidelines present a window to a past era when building design was an art form and carries those values forward to a modern expression of urban form which is pedestrian and vehicle friendly and which will enhance the appearance of the downtown area. These guidelines identify the positive design elements of turn of the century western commercial buildings and encourage their incorporation into new buildings. They are not an attempt to recreate the past as a theme park, but to identify those positive elements that can be incorporated in a modern building using modern materials yielding a building that is a visual asset to the community and a financial asset to the developer.

Where is Design Review Applicable in Kelso?

The boundaries of the downtown design guidelines overlay district are shown below. The official downtown design guidelines map is located in the office of the Director of Community Development (Director), and copies are available to the public.



When is Design Review Required?

Within the overlay district, no city permit or approval for the construction of any new building or the substantial alteration of the exterior appearance of any structure in the downtown design guidelines overlay district shall be issued unless a *certificate of review* has been issued by the Director. The *substantial alteration* of the exterior appearance of an existing structure includes the alteration, addition to or modification of a primary and or secondary façade of the subject structure, which fundamentally alters the façade by more than sixty (60) percent of the façade area. Minor alterations, emergency repairs, ordinary maintenance and repairs, interior remodeling or decorations are exempt from this requirement. There are no other exceptions to the requirement for a certificate of review.

Design review works best as a cooperative interactive process. Preapplication consultations with community development staff are encouraged; to assist developers and property owners in identifying the important design related issues and potential solutions, and to facilitate timely review. Potential applicants should contact the Community Development Department as early as possible during their design phase and arrange for a meeting to discuss these design guidelines and the review process.

What is the Design Review Process?

An application for design review should be submitted to the City of Kelso at the Community Development Department. A copy of the required application form is located at the end of this handbook. The application shall include a site plan showing the location of the building or buildings, parking, exterior lighting, signs and landscaping; exterior elevations of the front and side, along with a description of the type and finished color of exterior siding,

windows and roofing to be used; detailed drawings or architectural features, signs and trim; "as is" photographs of the subject building (if a substantial alteration), façades of adjacent development, general streetscape character and territorial or other views from the site, if any; a zoning envelope study which includes a perspective drawing; and, a description of the proponent's objectives with regard to site development. All diagrams must be drawn to scale. Additional information may be requested by the Director of Community Development prior to the issuance of a decision.

The Director may refer the application to the Board of Adjustment and Appeals (Board) for consideration and opinion. The Board may set the application for a public hearing. At the termination of the hearing the Board will issue a recommendation to the Director as to whether the proposal is consistent with the guidelines.

The Director will complete the review within 60 days of receipt of a design review application. In the event the Director fails to issue a certificate of review within such period, a certificate of review will be deemed to have been issued without decision as if the Director had so acted. The Director's decision shall be based on the extent to which the proposed project meets downtown design guidelines and in consideration of public comments and/or the Board's recommendation on the proposed project. The applicant shall be notified in writing of the Director's final action and the Director will issue a Certificate of Review within ten working days of the date on which the final action was taken.

Projects subject to the downtown design guidelines must meet all codes and regulatory requirements applicable to the subject site. Within the downtown design guidelines overlay district, the decision of the Director is binding on the applicant and compliance with such decision is mandatory.

III. Overview of Design Guidelines

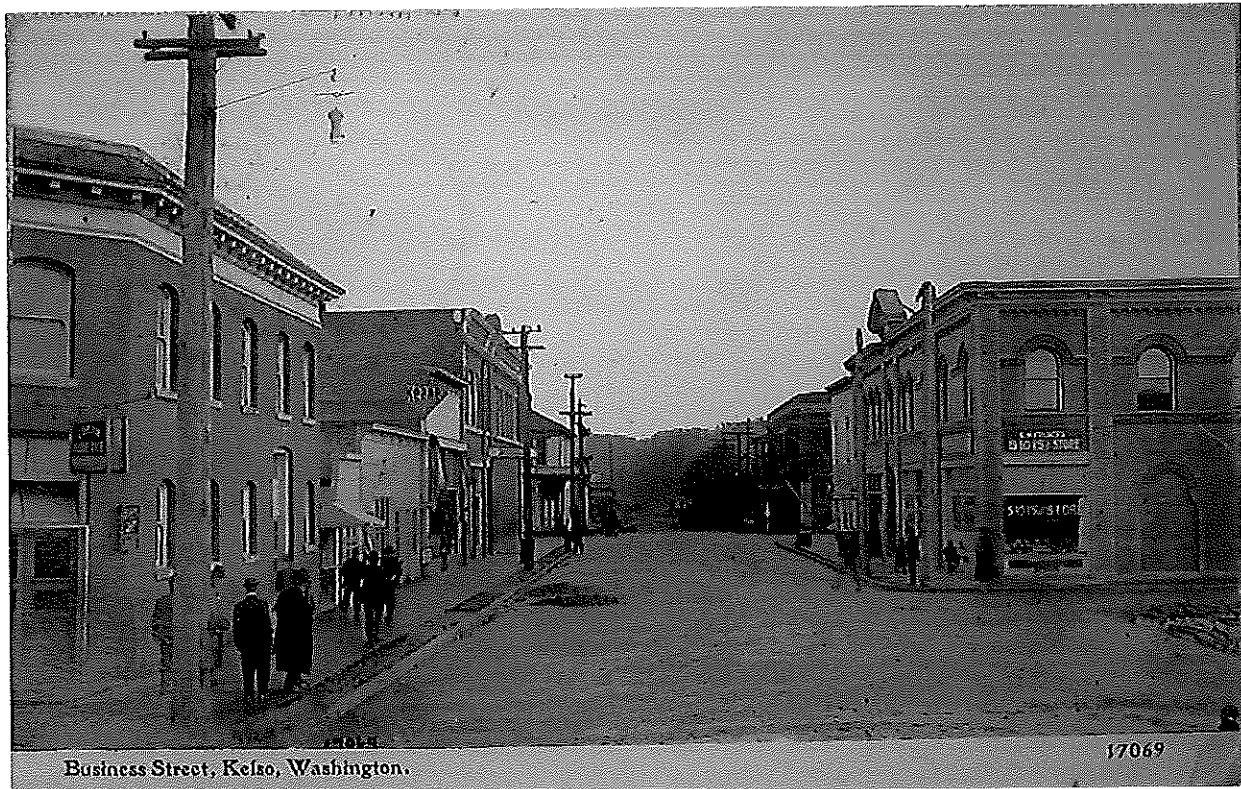
The following design guidelines have been developed to fully implement the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and to direct designers and reviewers to look closely at local conditions and produce new buildings that enhance rather than detract from their surroundings. The intentions of the design review process are to create good streetscapes and an economically viable area that people are drawn to; protect important symbols; and, ensure that new development fits in. Each of the following guideline is given equal weight. No one guideline is more important than any other. However, each building and each building site is distinct and not all of the guidelines will be applicable to every project. The applicability of the individual guidelines will be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on the proposal, neighboring buildings and the overall character of the block. The Director determines the measure and the intent of these guidelines. As noted previously, this is a cooperative process. Preapplication meetings with city staff are the best way to determine which guidelines are applicable and important given a specific locale.

IV. Design Guidelines

A. Civic Spaces

A-1 Streetscape

Streets shall be designed to function as public open spaces bordered by buildings, in addition to facilitating traffic movement. Buildings shall be designed to enhance the pedestrian experience through the use of such features as building articulation (i.e., variations in building materials, surface texture, windows, doors, porches and other façade features), landscaping, lighting and signage without encumbering the efficient movement and parking of vehicles. Where feasible, a project applicant should consider relocating overhead utilities underground.



Streets provide pathways for vehicles and pedestrians to get from home to work and home again, to shop and to recreational areas. Buildings adjacent to the street frame the streetscape and define its use, whether commercial or residential. Buildings along commercial streets shall enhance the pedestrian streetscape by being designed with interesting façades and providing overhead weather protection. Additionally, the streetscape shall be designed for the safe passage of vehicles and with areas for on-street parking so that people can exit their vehicles and become part of the pedestrian activity along the street.

A-2 Street Intersections

Development at street intersections shall enhance intersections in ways that extend beyond functional needs through the location of building entries and the incorporation of building details, street lighting, landscaping and signage, which respect and conform to the character of existing structures at the intersection.



Street intersections regulate the flow of traffic. More importantly they can serve as a gateway or frame the subsequent block and provide a sense of place. They are also the obvious point in any set of directions. Benches and landscape areas as seen above and below provide a sense of respite at intersections and allow people the time to orient and determine their next course.



B. Buildings

B-1 Building Location

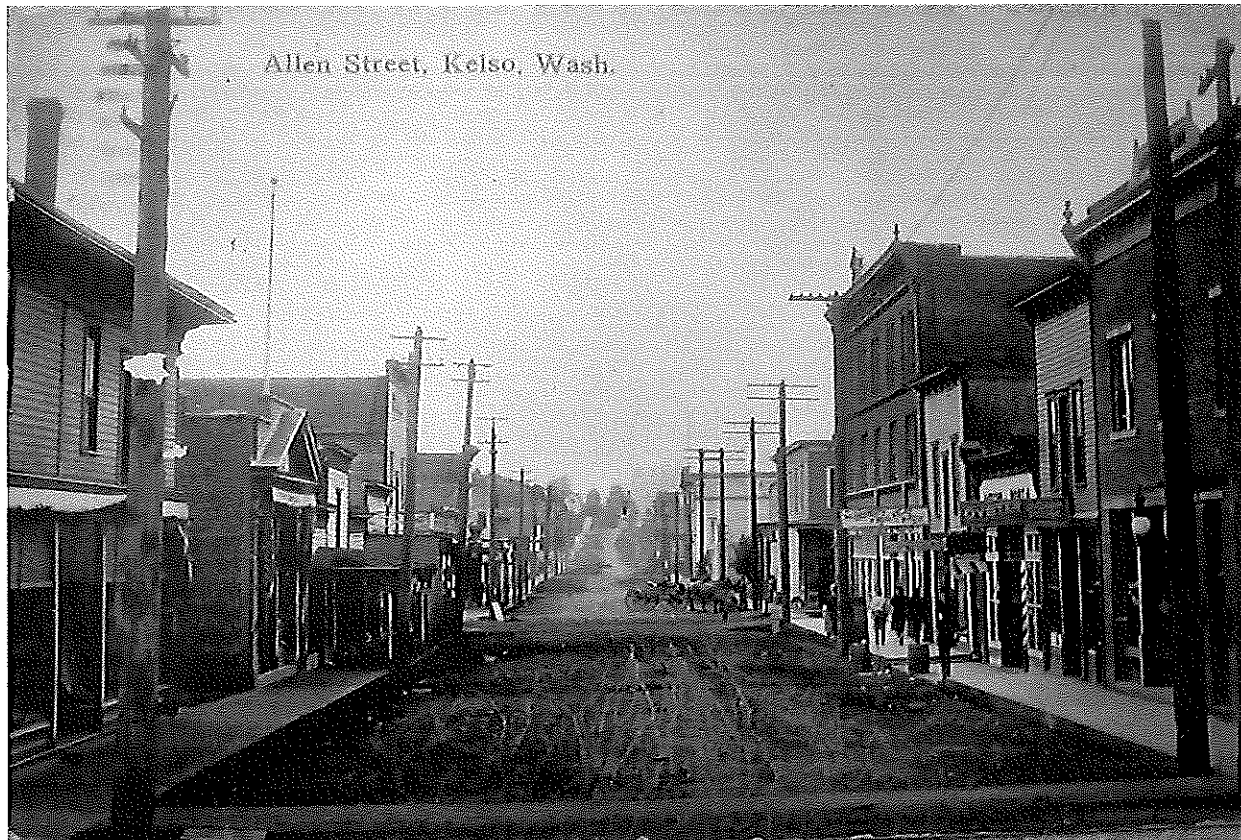
New construction shall preserve and continue the traditional block development pattern of the city by creating buildings that follow in scale and proportion the traditional modularity of existing block faces with buildings constructed to street property lines and main access from the street. New development and redevelopment shall be designed with the same scale and proportions as would be found within the traditional block pattern with buildings constructed to the property line and main pedestrian access from the street.



Turn of the century western commercial buildings are generally built out to the edge of the sidewalk. This facilitates the movement of people along the streetscape and also encourages people to stop and look at the materials in window displays. New buildings should mirror this pattern and be located adjacent to the sidewalk if possible to help define the streetscape and prevent voids along the block.

B-2 Building Design

New structures built between or among existing structures shall reflect the principles of design of the surrounding buildings in proportion, composition and detail. New buildings shall be designed to reflect turn of the century (1900) western commercial structures. To accomplish these goals, building designs shall adhere to the following: proportions of the façade shall be similar to those of historic turn of the century buildings; existing cornice lines shall be continued; storefronts shall be aligned; and, windows, storefronts and other openings shall be in the same proportions as those of adjacent buildings both on upper and ground floor levels. In circumstances where there are no appropriate structures to establish a context, buildings shall incorporate the design elements found in turn of the century western commercial buildings.



The better examples of downtown commercial buildings in the City of Kelso are from the turn of the century. New buildings should continue the rhythm of the older historical commercial buildings in proportion and character of architectural elements.

Turn of the century western commercial buildings include the following design elements:

- Tripartite design; *i.e.*, the building has a distinct base, middle and top, as in the above picture;
- Buildings are generally capped with a strong cornice line; and,
- Detailing on the buildings is a central element to the overall design.

B-3 Building Details

Designs that incorporate artificial or synthetic decorative detail to replicate historic precedent are discouraged, while designs that utilize traditional materials and craftsmanship to create the same quality and detail as historic buildings are encouraged.



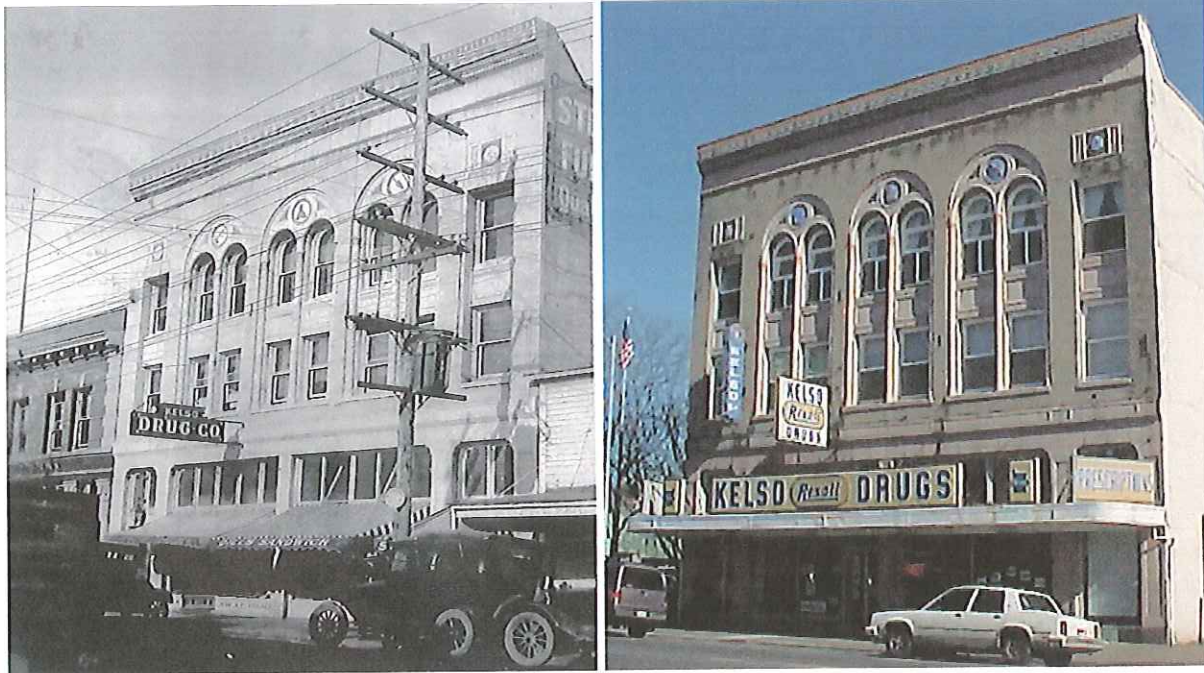
Building details should relate to the materials of the turn of the century western commercial buildings. For example, building detailing with concrete masonry unit (CMU) block relate well to the look and feel of traditional brick detailing found in older buildings.



C. Architectural Elements & Materials

C-1 Architectural Concept and Consistency

Building design elements, details and massing shall create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings shall exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure shall be clearly distinguished from its façade walls.



The many architectural elements of a building should be organized into a unified whole, so that details and features can be seen to relate to the structure and not appear as add-ons. Buildings should also derive their form from their function. Buildings, which present few or no clues through their design as to what purpose they serve, are often awkward architectural neighbors.

Architectural features may include the following:

- Building modulation or articulation;
- Bay windows;
- Rooflines, particularly a strong cornice line to cap the building;
- Building entrances; or,
- Building base.

Architectural details may include the following:

- Treatment of masonry;
- Treatment of siding;
- Articulation of columns;
- Architectural lighting;
- Detailed grilles and railings; or,
- Special trim details and moldings.

C-2 Human Scale

The design of new buildings shall incorporate architectural features, elements and details to achieve a good human scale.



The term "human scale" generally refers to the use of human proportioned architectural features and site design elements clearly oriented to human activity.

A building has a good human scale if its details, elements and materials allow people to feel comfortable using and approaching it. The façade should not feel imposing when passing by. The above one story brick façade is a good example of a façade that has a human scale; it is sized so that it does not overwhelm the sidewalk and there are windows and overhead weather protection. Features that give a building human scale also encourage human activity.

Following are examples of building elements that may be used to achieve better human scale:

- Pedestrian weather protection in the form of canopies, awnings, arcades, marquees or other elements which are wide enough to protect at least one person;
- Covered entrances;
- Upper story setbacks;
- Pedestrian lighting;
- Multi-pane windows, glazed with transparent, not reflective glass;
- Bay windows extending out from the building face that reflect an internal space such as a room or an alcove; or,
- Individual windows in upper stories that are approximately the size and proportion of a traditional window and are separated from adjacent windows by a vertical element.

C-3 Exterior Finish Materials

Building exteriors shall be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.



The selection and use of exterior materials is a key ingredient in determining how a building will look. Some materials, by their nature, can give a sense of permanence or can provide texture or scale that helps new buildings integrate into the context of the block or recall the desired era.

Materials typical to the City of Kelso and turn of the century western commercial buildings:

- Brick;
- Stone or other masonry materials;
- Wood siding; and
- Stucco.

Many other exterior building materials may be appropriate as long as the materials are appropriately detailed and finished. Modern materials such as concrete masonry unit (CMU) blocks, steel and glass marquees, and Hardiplank or Hardishingle, which recall and relate to the design of turn of the century western commercial buildings, are also appropriate. Materials shall be incorporated to take into consideration the climate and compatibility with nearby structures.

C-4 Blank Walls

Buildings shall avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable, they shall receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.



A wall may be considered "large" if it has a blank surface substantially greater in size than similar walls of neighboring buildings. Blank walls provide opportunities for defacement with graffiti. Typically, a wall greater than 25-feet in width with no window or other architectural elements will be considered a blank wall.

The following are some examples of techniques for treating blank walls:

- Install a vertical trellis in front of the wall with climbing vines or plant materials.
- Set the wall back and provide a landscaped or raised planter bed in front of the wall, which includes materials that could grow to obscure or screen the wall's surface.
- Provide art, e.g. a mosaic, mural, decorative masonry pattern, sculpture, or relief, over a substantial portion of the blank wall surface.
- Employ different textures, colors, materials, or modulation or columns to break up the surface of the wall.
- Provide special lighting, a canopy, awning, horizontal trellis or other pedestrian oriented features that break up the size of the blank wall's surface and add visual interest.

D. Parking & Access

D-1 Building Entrances

Entries shall be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.



Entrances that are visible from the street make a project more approachable and create a sense of association among neighbors.

The following are some examples of techniques used to enhance the visibility of entrances:

- Differentiate the canopy or marquee over the building entrance from the canopy or other overhead weather protection along the street.
- Frame the entrance with unique but complimentary architectural details.
- Provide clear entries off streets, not just from parking lots.
- Clear paths using building and landscape elements can enhance building entries that are not on the street. A corner entrance element such as a trellis or pergola can serve as a gateway into the complex even though the actual building is not at the corner.

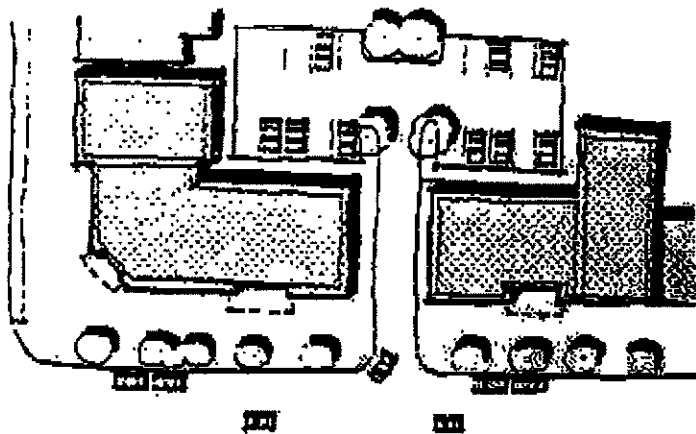
D-2 Parking and Vehicle Access

Siting shall minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and pedestrian safety. Parking on a commercial street front shall be minimized and where possible shall be located behind or under a building.

Parking located along a commercial street front between the building and the sidewalk, where pedestrian traffic is desirable, lessens the attractiveness of the area to pedestrians and compromises the safety of pedestrians along the street. This should not be confused with on-street parking which is common on turn of the century commercial streets. On-street parking does not have the negative impact on the sidewalk that driveways do.

The following are some examples of techniques used to minimize the impacts of driveways and parking lots:

- Locate surface parking at the rear or side of a lot.
- Break large parking lots into smaller ones.
- Minimize the number and width of driveways and curbcuts.
- Share driveways with adjacent property owners.
- Locate the driveway so that it is visually less dominant.
- Locate the parking behind the building.



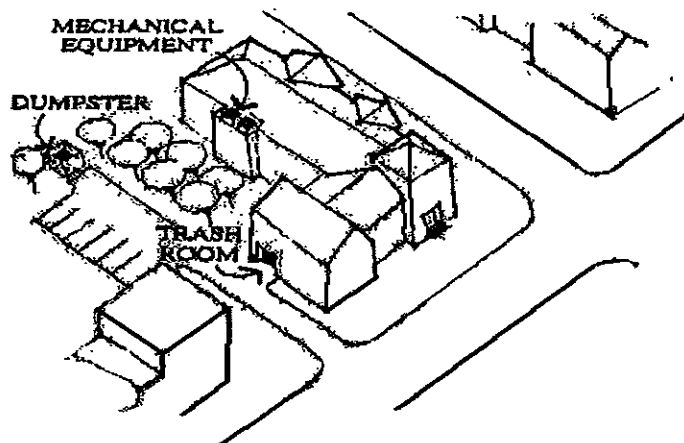
D-3 Screening Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas

Building sites shall locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they shall be situated and screened from view and shall not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.

Unsightly service elements such as dumpsters and utility service meters, e.g. gas, water and electric, can detract from the compatibility of new projects and create hazards for pedestrians and autos.

The following examples illustrate considerations to address in locating and screening service areas and utilities:

- Plan the feature in a less visible location on the site
- Screen it to be less visible – utility meters can be located behind a screen wall so that it is not visible from the building entrance.
- Use durable materials that complement the building.
- Incorporate landscaping to make the screen more effective.
- Locate the opening to the area away from the sidewalk.



Appendix A

Implementing Ordinance

Design Guidelines

Building Design

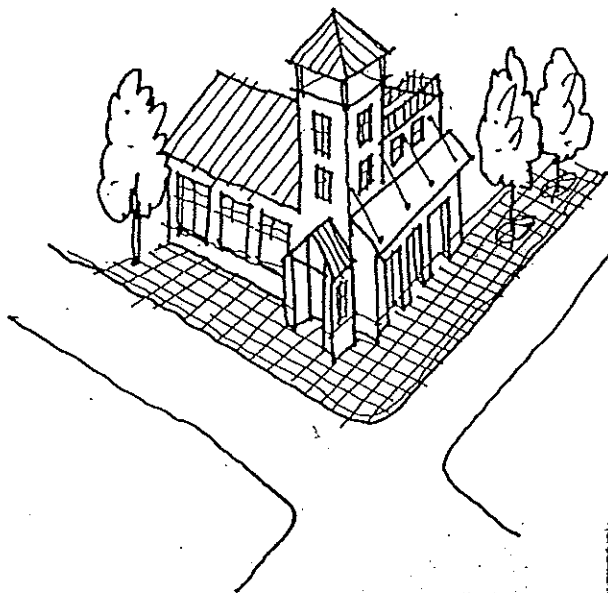
Landmark Structures

Intent:

To have buildings contribute to this gateway location.

Guideline:

New or renovated buildings that abut the intersection of _____ should incorporate distinctive architectural elements to create a "gateway" effect at this key location. Elements can include very distinctive roof forms such as cupolas or dome or cone shapes, visually expressive facades, dramatic lighting, whimsical details, artwork, showcase windows, prominent masonry banding, etc. The intended effect is to eventually have all four corners occupied by buildings that are landmarks.



Building Design

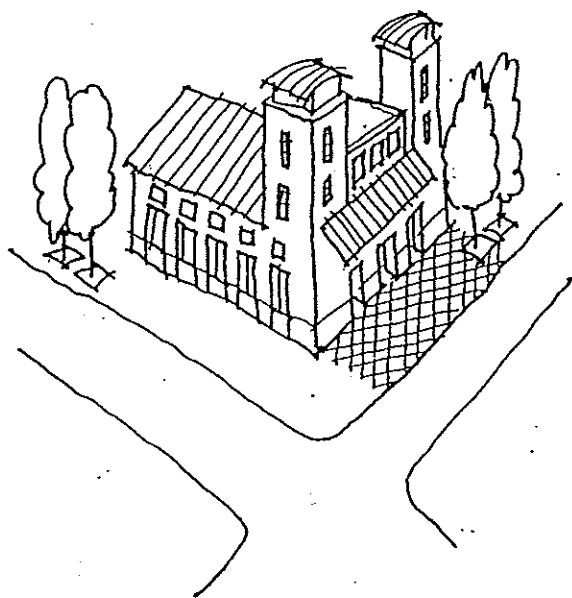
Marking Important Intersections

Intent:

To create reference points at several key locations.

Guideline:

Structures located at the intersections of _____ with _____ and _____ Avenue are encouraged to be visually prominent. This could be achieved by incorporating elements such as distinctive roof forms, building shapes that are unusual in geometry, and public plazas.



Building Design

Overall Form

Intent:

To create visual continuity among buildings having potentially different styles.

Guideline:

Buildings should utilize elements such as massing, materials, windows, canopies, and pitched or terraced roof forms to create both a visually distinct "base" as well as a "cap."



Building Design

Small Scale Building Increments

Intent:

To create an environment that is visually interesting and which offers physical elements scaled to human proportions.

Guideline:

The facades of buildings along _____ and _____ should be divided into relatively small units, such as narrow storefronts, bays, and separated roof forms. Large, long uninterrupted walls are not desired. Blank, windowless walls are not allowed.



Building Design

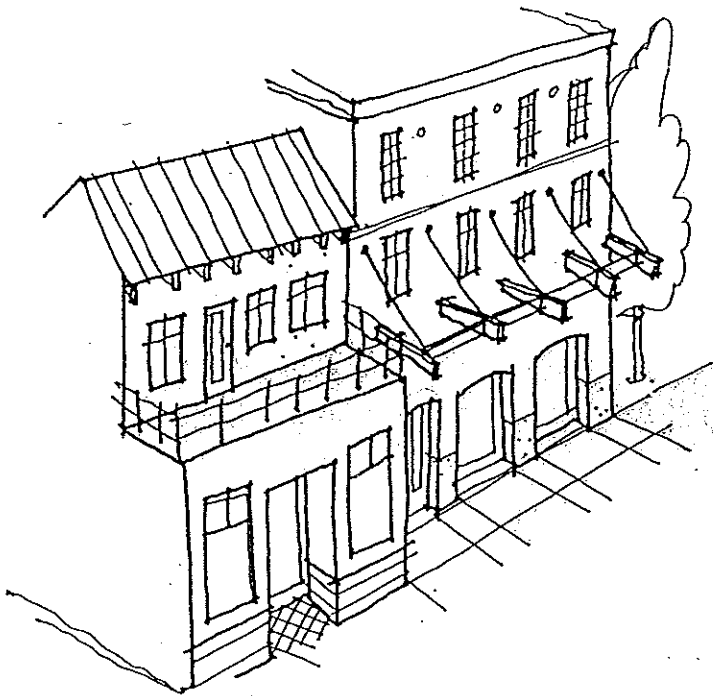
Entrances

Intent:

To make it apparent from the street where major entrances to buildings are located.

Guideline:

Principal entrances to buildings should be visually prominent and located within close proximity to the public sidewalk. Entrances should incorporate elements such as setbacks, recesses, balconies, porches, arches, trellises, or other architectural devices.



Building Design

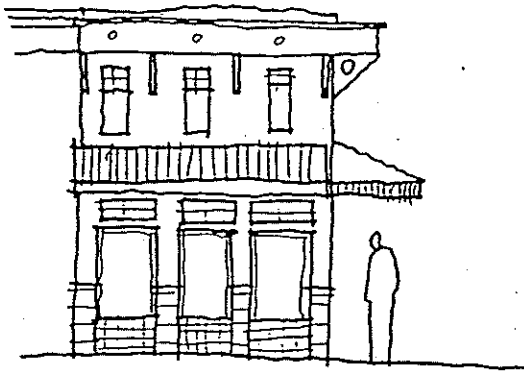
Street Walls

Intent:

To have buildings visually and functionally interact with the public sidewalks.

Guideline:

Facades of new or renovated buildings that abut the sidewalk should abut the back of the sidewalk (some of which may be on private property in order to provide the width of sidewalk indicated elsewhere in these guidelines). Parking shall not be located in front of buildings. Canopies or awnings over the sidewalk are encouraged.



Building Design

Ground Floor Transparency

Intent:

To provide visual connections between activities inside and outside buildings.

Guideline:

The ground floors of buildings that face sidewalks or pedestrian pathways should have generous amounts of clear glass that allows people to see into the building.



Building Design

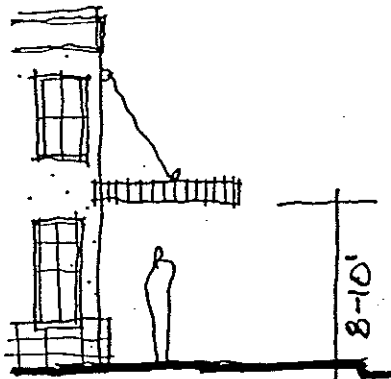
Weather Protection

Intent:

To allow pedestrians some protection from rainfall as they use the town center.

Guideline:

Weather protection features such as canopies and awnings should be provided along the street and sidewalks. The minimum width of such elements is 4 feet. Minimum height is 8 feet, maximum height is 10'.



Building Design

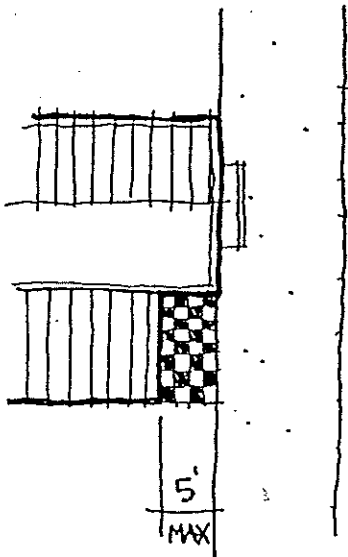
Set-To Lines for Commercial Uses

Intent:

To establish a close relationship between activities within buildings and activities in the public right of way.

Guideline:

Commercial building facades on _____ and _____ should abut the back of the sidewalk, or be within 5 feet of it. The exception would be locations where the City has identified the need to have a public space or a wider sidewalk.



Building Design

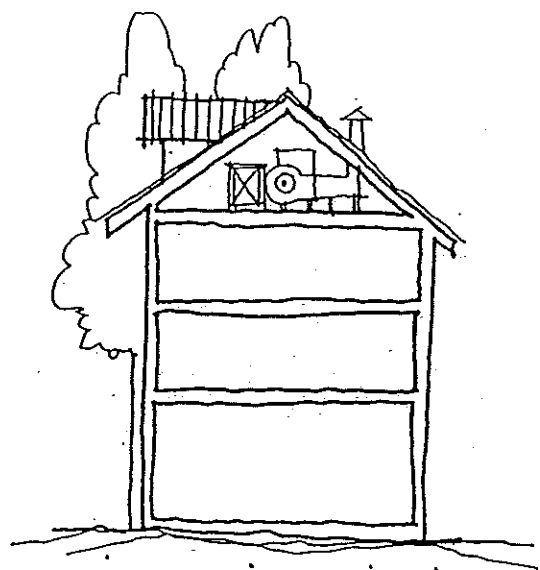
Conceal Mechanical Equipment

Intent:

To ensure that larger pieces of mechanical equipment are visually unobtrusive.

Guideline:

Rooftop mechanical equipment should be concealed by and integrated within the roof form of a building. Simply surrounding it with a parapet wall is not sufficient.



Site Design

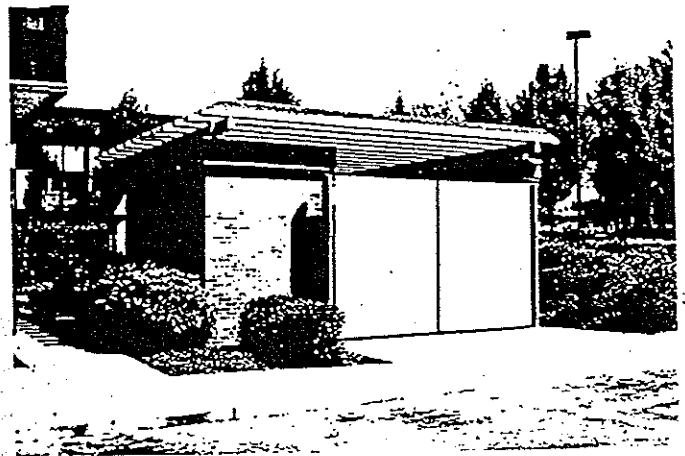
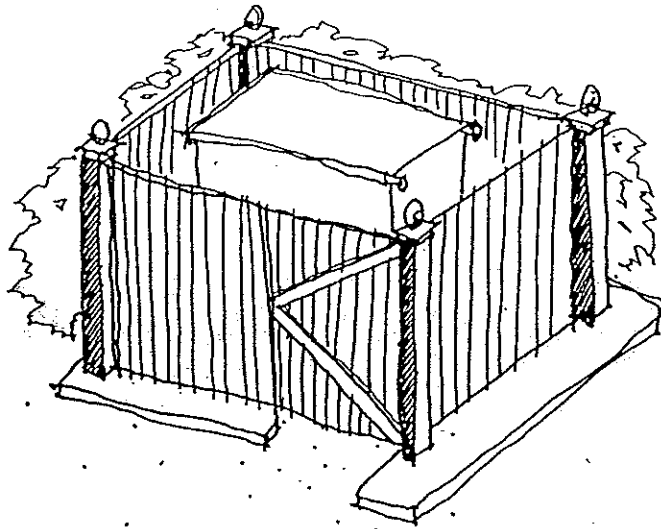
Screen Service Areas

Intent:

To conceal loading, trash, and storage areas from view.

Guideline:

Trash containers should be enclosed on all sides with solid walls and gates. Loading docks, outdoor storage and staging areas should be screened with fencing and vegetation, such as evergreen hedges. Chain link fencing is not acceptable.



Building Design

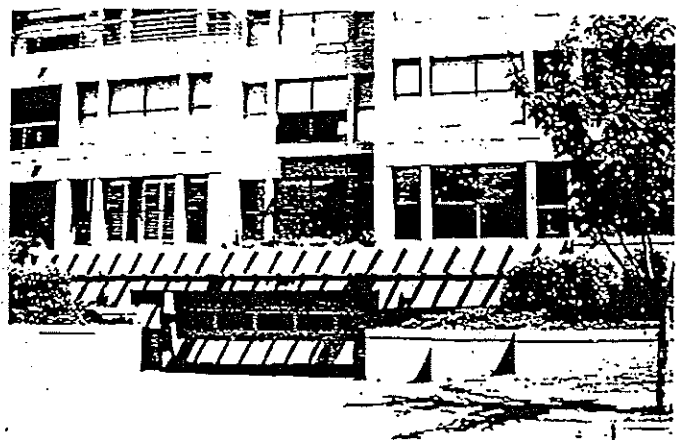
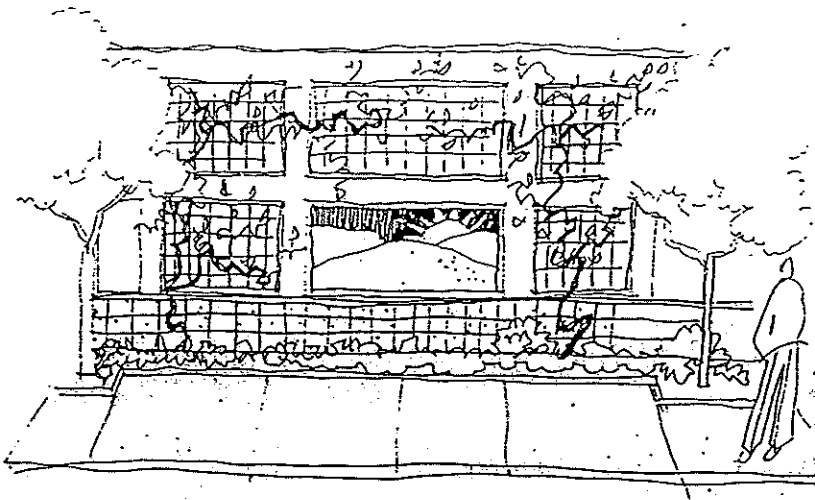
Structured Parking

Intent:

To diminish the visual impact of parking as viewed from streets.

Guideline:

Any level of parking contained within or under a structure that is visible from a public street shall fully screen the parking with either another use, a facade that incorporates artwork, or trees and other vegetation.



Site Design

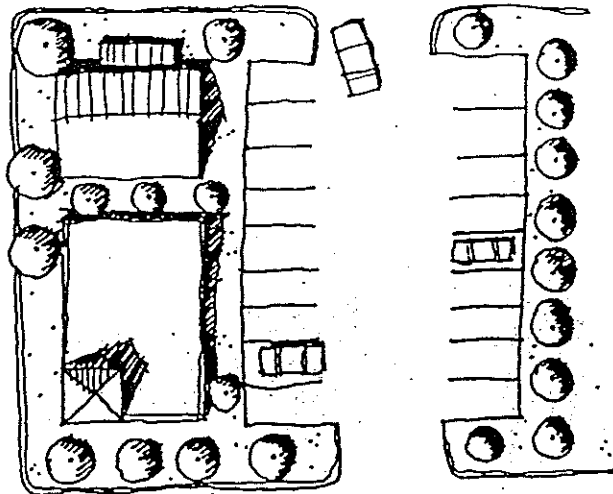
Parking Lot Location

Intent:

To have parking lots be as visually unobtrusive as possible.

Guideline:

Parking lots should not front upon intersections. Parking lots should be located behind or to the side of buildings.



Site Design

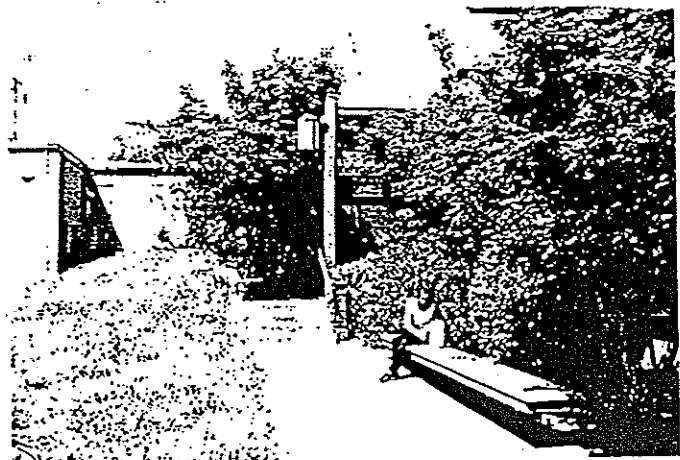
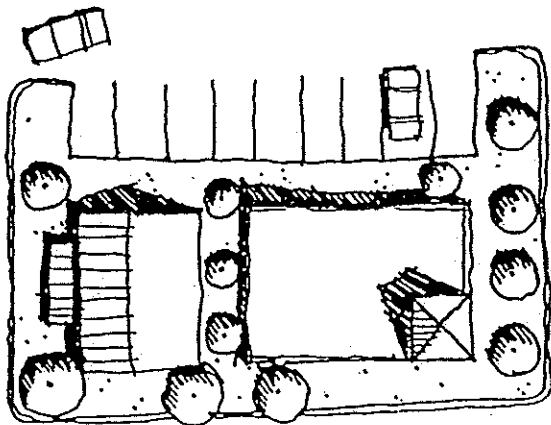
Pedestrian Connections

Intent:

To create a network of safe, comfortable and attractive linkages for people on foot.

Guideline:

New development and redevelopment should include pedestrian walkways, raised and/or separated from traffic lanes, that offer access from the public sidewalk to the main entrance to the building. (Locating a building entrance directly on the sidewalk satisfies this guideline.) In addition, connections to adjoining properties should be provided. Furthermore, within parking lots, there should be pedestrian walkways that allow people to traverse the lot without being forced to use vehicular aisles.



Site Design

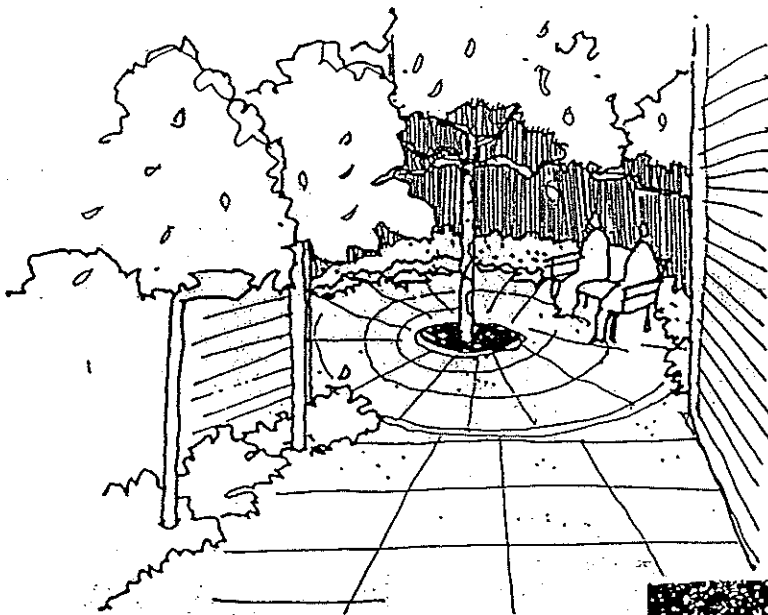
Outdoor Open Spaces and Amenities

Intent:

To establish, over time, a variety of open spaces within the town center.

Guideline:

New development and redevelopment should provide facilities near or visible from the sidewalk for outdoor public use. Examples of such facilities include seating areas, courtyards, and small plaza spaces. Generally, the larger the development, the greater the number and size of such spaces. Furthermore, it is desirable to locate these spaces where they can receive sun and where they can easily be connected to adjacent concentrations of land use.



Site Design

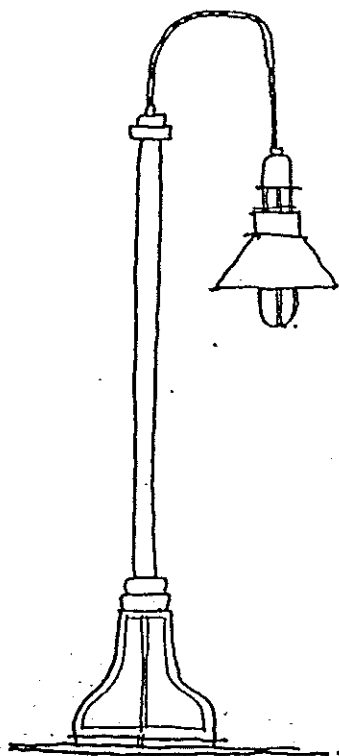
Shielded Lighting

Intent:

To ensure that the source of lighting for parking, service and loading areas is not visible from neighboring development.

Guideline:

Freestanding light fixtures should not exceed 14' in height. All exterior lighting fixtures should incorporate cutoff shields to prevent spillover.



Site Design

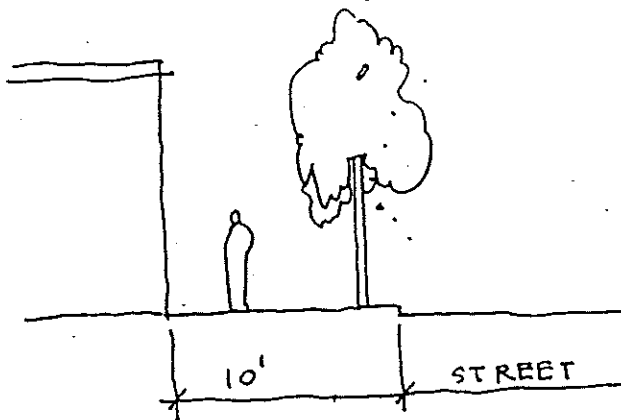
Sidewalks and Street Trees

Intent:

To use sidewalks and street trees as a strong element of continuity throughout the core.

Guideline:

New development and redevelopment along _____ and _____ should provide an expansion of the existing sidewalk width to 10-feet. Street trees should also be provided. The minimum caliper should be 2 1/2" and the maximum spacing should be 30.'



Signs

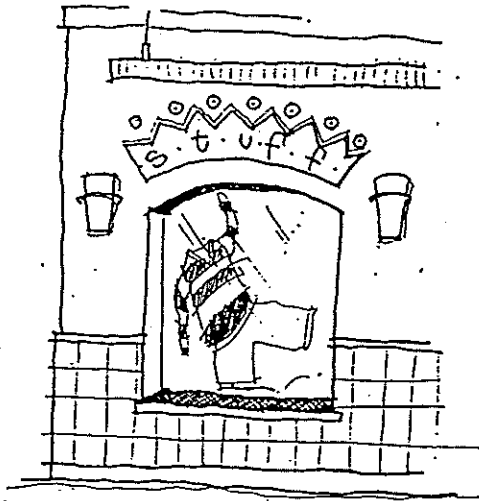
Building-mounted Signs

Intent:

To have building facades be the principal location for announcing goods and services.

Guidelines:

Signs shall be located on the facades of buildings. (Freestanding pole-mounted or monument signs are not allowed.)



Signs

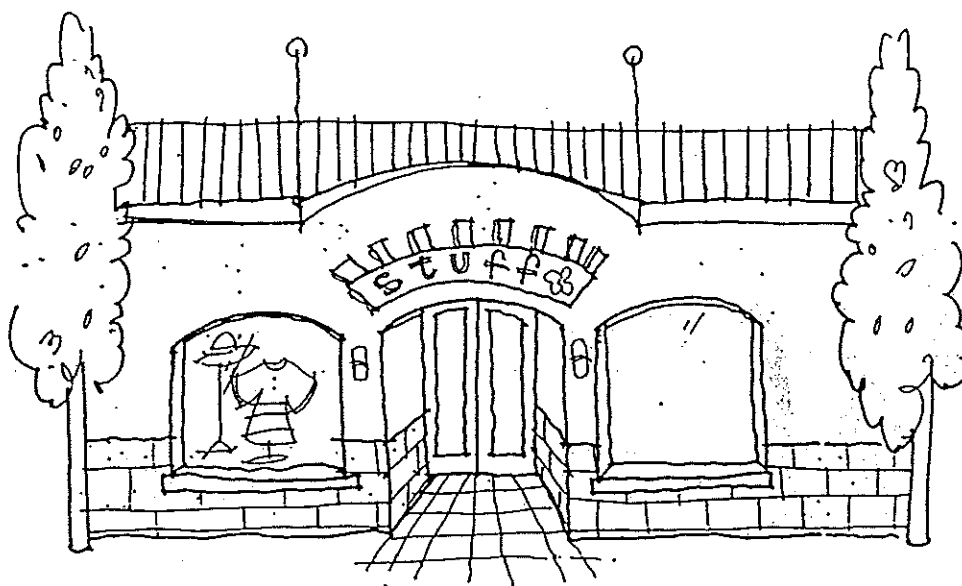
Integration

Intent:

To ensure that signage is a part of the overall design approach to a project and not an afterthought.

Guideline:

The design of signs should be integrated with the architecture and site design of a project.



Signs

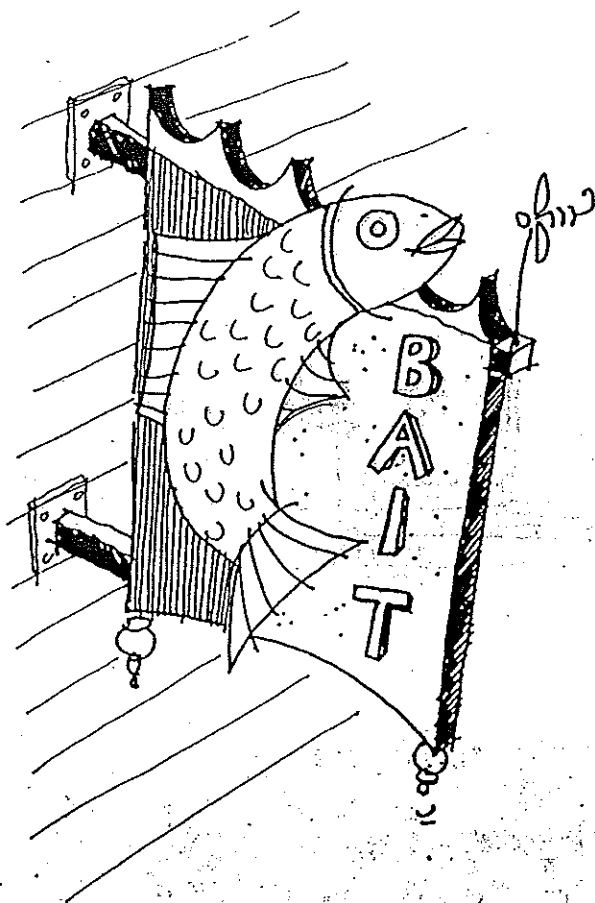
Creativity

Intent:

To encourage interesting and even unusual approaches to graphic design.

Guideline:

Signs should be expressive and even whimsical, exhibiting a graphic design approach to form and lighting. Standard, back-lighted, metal frame and plastic panel signs are discouraged.



Signs

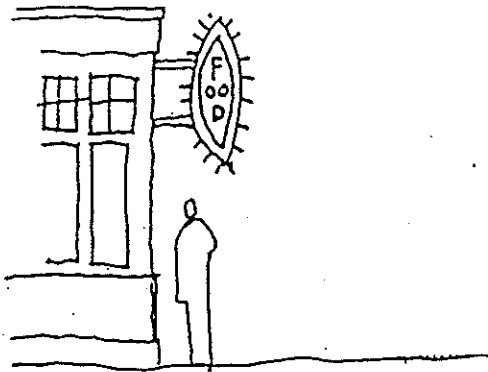
Building-mounted Signs

Intent:

To have building facades be the principal location for announcing goods and services.

Guideline:

Signs should be located on the facades of buildings. (Freestanding pole-mounted or monument signs are not allowed.)



Signs

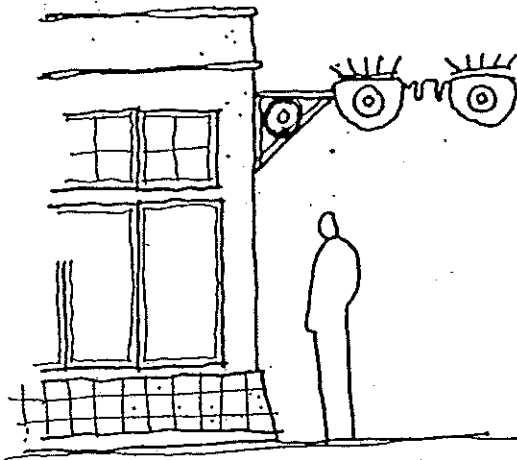
Overhanging Signs

Intent:

To encourage signs oriented to pedestrians.

Guideline:

Signs that overhang the sidewalk and that are scaled to pedestrians are encouraged.



Signs

Awning Signs

Intent:

To produce a visual effect that emphasizes buildings and vegetation, not advertising.

Guideline:

Signs painted on awnings are allowed, but awnings should not be internally illuminated.

