Design Guidelines for Public Projects
The City of Spokane Design Guidelines for Skywalks were developed in collaboration with residents, community organizations, agency partners, and the City of Spokane.

The City of Spokane hired Urbsworks, an urban design firm out of Portland, to assist with Phase I of the project: initial research, workshops, and findings. City staff used the information presented by Urbsworks to complete Phase II: writing the guidelines and presenting them to the technical team, stakeholders, and the general public before bringing the guidelines to City Council for approval.

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Guideline vs. Standard
What is a Design Guideline?

Design Guidelines: A set of design parameters for development which apply within a design district, sub-district, or overlay zone.

The guidelines are adopted public statements of intent and are used to evaluate the acceptability of a project’s design. (Spokane Municipal Code 17A.020.040.L)

In practice, since design review is an advisory process only, the adopted Design Guidelines help guide conversations that Urban Design staff and the Design Review Board have with a design review applicant.

... Ensure that projects subject to design review under the Spokane Municipal Code are consistent with adopted design guidelines and help implement the City’s comprehensive plan. (Spokane Municipal Code 04.13.015.B)

The guidelines help ensure that these conversations, and the advice rendered, stays focused on the community’s set of aesthetic expectations for the public realm elements of a project or plan.

How is this different than a Design Standard?

Design Standard: an obligatory design requirement for any project.

These standards are not advisory, they must be followed—just like the requirements in the building code, fire code, or electrical code.

The design review process cannot waive compliance with these standards.

While Design Standards and Design Guidelines are similar in that they are both about a project’s design, they differ mostly in that the standards are mandatory obligations applied to that project while guidelines are a list of relevant subjects and examples, intended to improve the design of any project subject to design review.

The standards were adopted to ensure that all development in the city achieve a minimum quality of design.

The guidelines are used in order to improve the quality of design above bare minimums, for a select set of projects. Those projects have already been identified by the community for special consideration.

Design Guidelines for Public Projects

All public projects in the city are subject to design review. Here’s a brief list of these kinds of projects:

- All City of Spokane Projects (Parks, Bridges, Trails, City Buildings/Structures, Open Space)
- Spokane School District Buildings and Structures Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, Senior Highs, Administrative and Maintenance Buildings)
- Charter School Building and Structures » Public Colleges and Universities Buildings and Structures (SCC, SFCC, EWU, WSU, UW)
- Spokane Public Libraries
- Spokane Transit Authority Buildings and Structures
- County, State, and Federal Buildings and Structures

Figure 1.01
How to use this booklet

Guideline

A-1 360-degree Design

Projects should respond to a wide range of contextual elements found in the public realm and the site's relationships with adjacent buildings, and the proposed design should be shaped to consider the quality and functionality of the urban fabric.

Clarification

Locate and shape buildings and/or structures to maintain public views of important structures, plazas, and natural landscape features. Shape buildings and/or structures to respond to the setbacks, fenestration patterns, and important horizontal datum of adjacent structures. Design all visible façades with similar effort and consideration as the primary/first façades.

Key Points:

The Shadle Park Branch Library is an excellent example of respecting views to nearby landmarks (the Shadle Water Tower) integrates seamlessly into Shadle Park, and provides key connections to nearby destinations.

Related Design Criteria:

- B-3 Provide Content Sensitive Signage and Lighting
- B-6 Design for Personal Safety and Security
- C-1 Design Façades of Many Scales
- C-4 Enhance Alleyways
- D-1 Provide a High Quality Design for the Public Realm
- D-1 Create Functions in Bulk and Scale
- D-2 Design a Well-proportioned and Unified Building/Structure/Site
- D-3 Enhance the Skyline
- E-3 Minimize the Presence of Service Areas

Examples in Spokane

Aspirational Examples

This building in Edinburgh, Scotland offers an excellent perspective from any viewing angle.
Design Objective

Urban Design guidelines assist designers and developers in recognizing and respecting physical systems that extend beyond the site so projects can respond to regional, municipal, neighborhood, and district patterns in space and time. Any new intervention should extend, mend, connect, or enhance the context through all aspects of the project, big and small—from public amenities to site design to the street-path network serving all modes of transportation, natural systems (e.g., natural resources, stormwater flow, topography, land forms), or historic settlement patterns.

A-1 | 360-degree Design
A-2 | Provide a Sustainable Framework
A-3 | Accommodate the Multi-modal Transportation Network
A-4 | Design for Change
**A-1 360-degree Design**

Projects should respond to a wide range of contextual elements found in the public realm and the site’s relationships with adjacent buildings, and the proposed design should be shaped to consider the quality and functionality of the urban fabric.

Clarification:

Locate and shape buildings and/or structures to maintain public views of important structures, places, and natural landscape features. Shape buildings and/or structures to respond to the setbacks, fenestration patterns and important horizontal datums of adjacent structures. Design all visible façades with similar effort and consideration as the primary/front façades.

Key Points:

The Shadle Park Branch Library is an excellent example of respecting views to nearby landmarks (the Shadle Water Tower) integrates seamlessly into Shadle Park, and provides key connections to nearby destinations.

Related Design Criteria:

Design Guidelines: B-1: Provide Elements that Define the Place, B-2: Provide Context Sensitive Signage and Lighting, B-6: Enhance the Building and Site with Landscaping, C-1: Design Façades at Many Scales, C-2: Reinforce Primary Building Entries, C-3: Develop Pedestrian-oriented Spaces Along Street Frontages, C-4: Provide a High-Quality Design for the Public Realm, C-6: Enhance Alleyways, D-1: Create Transitions in Bulk and Scale, D-2: Design a Well-proportioned and Unified Building/Structure/Site, D-3: Maintain the Prevailing Street Edge, D-5: Enhance the Skyline, E-1: Maximize Pedestrian Access to the Building and Site, E-2: Minimize the Impact of Parking Facilities Along Street Frontages, E-3: Minimize the Presence of Service Areas.

Aspirational Examples

Examples in Spokane

This building in Edinburgh, Scotland offers an excellent perspective from any viewing angle.
A-2 Provide a Sustainable Framework

Design projects to incorporate sustainable design and energy efficiency principles. Incorporate the concepts of Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

Clarification:
Projects should be designed to meet the City’s environmental policies by enhancing the urban forest canopy - to reduce urban heat island effects and reduce stormwater runoff, and improve the utilization of renewable energy resources - like hydropower and solar power. Promote resilient development by choosing sustainable design and building practices whenever possible. Employ passive solar design in façade configurations, treatments and materials. Employ techniques and technologies to improve the ecological performance of the building, structure and site improvements.

Key Points:
The Spokane projects used for this guideline (see figures A.06-A.08) depict projects utilizing a comprehensive approach to sustainability, whether utilizing photovoltaic panels, stormwater infiltration areas, or rain gardens. The aspirational images (see figures A.04 and A.05) depict projects with a broader approach to sustainability (e.g. repurposing urban brownfields or reducing heat island effects).

Related Design Criteria:

Examples in Spokane

Aspirational Examples

Solar panels and rain gardens to capture surface runoff are great ways to conserve natural resources.

Lurie Garden in downtown Chicago’s Millennium Park is in fact a green roof over a parking garage. The ability to lower urban temperatures, capture rainwater, and the use of perennial plantings all make Lurie Garden an exceptional example of sustainability.

The Scottish Parliament Building in Edinburgh, Scotland was built on a brownfields site, incorporates public transit, and was built to require less heating and cooling than conventional structures.
A-3 Accommodate the Multi-modal Transportation Network

Design projects to create livable and memorable places within desirable environments where people want to spend time engaging in social, civic, and recreational activities.

Clarification:

‘Multi-modal’ includes all forms of transportation (walking, biking, transit riding, and driving) without exclusion. Projects that encourage connections with a variety of transit modes and enhance their immediate environment with amenities are highly encouraged. ‘Multi-modal’ includes all forms of transportation (walking, biking, transit riding, and driving) without exclusion.

Key Points:

The key elements for this guideline include the incorporation of accommodations for bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, and a variety of motorized vehicles. These accommodations place pedestrian movement first in importance.

Related Design Criteria:


Aspirational Examples

Examples in Spokane

Left: transit hub and pedestrian bridge make crucial connections to university areas.

Top right: Bike lane on Riverside Avenue offers connections between downtown and neighborhoods west of downtown.

Bottom right: Stops along the transportation line offer easy and safe access to buses.

Separate paths for all users, covered bike racks, and access to scooters at bus stops are all amenities that make using the transit network easier and more enjoyable.
A-4 Design for Change

Design projects to be flexible enough to respond to future changes in use, lifestyle, and demography.

Clarification:
This means designing for energy and resource efficiency; creating flexibility in the use of a property via generous ground floor height dimensions and a capacity to access the public realm at multiple points along the property’s frontage, encouraging new approaches to transportation, traffic management and parking through the way public spaces and service infrastructure are incorporated into a project’s design.

Key Points:
As public property ownership limits the ability to rely on market forces to fund redevelopment of projects, public agencies should incorporate the ability to reconfigure a project to accommodate a different future use at minimal public expense. For example, parking structures may need to be reconfigured into offices, dormitories may need to be converted to faculty offices, maintenance buildings may need to be converted to laboratories, etc. The basic structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing criteria for the most intense future use envisioned should be accommodated (though not necessarily installed) within the original building or structure.

Related Design Criteria:
Area of Influence: Public Realm

Design Objective

Public Amenity guidelines assist designers and developers in creating projects that enhance the public realm, including streetscapes and open spaces.

B-1 | Provide Elements that Define the Place
B-2 | Provide Context-Sensitive Signage and Lighting
B-3 | Design for Personal Security
B-4 | Universal Design
B-5 | Provide Inviting and Usable Open Space
B-6 | Enhance the Building and Site with Landscaping
Provide Elements that Define the Place

B-1

Provide special elements on the façades, within public open spaces, or on the sidewalk to create a distinct, attractive, and memorable ‘sense of place’ associated with the building/structure and site.

Clarification:

Renovations, restorations, and additions should respect nearby historic features. New buildings and/or structures in historic districts should strive to reflect the existing urban fabric and the predominate architectural features within the surrounding context.

Key Points:

The images for this guideline (see figures B.01-B.06) depict projects and structures that use unique sculptural elements (which introduce aspects of whimsy), repurpose locally-sourced building material with historic significance (basalt cobble, granite riverstone), or utilize contextual building forms. These elements are either derived from the surrounding context or introduce significant new imagery to define the place.

Related Design Criteria:


Examples in Spokane

Left: A fountain on the Gonzaga campus uses three types of local stone.
Top Right: Whimsical statues at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture give the site a distinct sense of place.
Bottom Right: One of the original Olmstead-era restrooms in Cannon Park.
**B-2 Provide Context Sensitive Signage and Lighting**

Design signage appropriate for the scale and character of the project and immediate neighborhood.

**Clarification:**

All signs should be oriented to pedestrians and/or persons in vehicles on streets within the immediate neighborhood. Provide appropriate levels of lighting on the building façade, on the underside of overhead weather protection, on and around street furniture, in merchandising display windows, in landscaped areas, and on signage.

**Key Points:**

The images for this guideline (see figures B.07-B.12) depict both signage and lighting that respond to the demands of the surrounding public realm - whether these demands are historic or novel in nature. An image often utilized for public projects are various depictions of the historic bridges in Spokane.

**Related Design Criteria:**

Design for Personal Safety and Security

Promote a sense of security for people during nighttime hours. Design the building/structure and site to promote the feeling of personal safety and security in the immediate area.

Clarification
Implement appropriate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principals, with a heightened focus on increasing eyes-on-the-street to improve passive security.

Key Points:
The four elements of CPTED are natural surveillance, access control, territorial reinforcement, and space management. The images for this guideline (see figures B.13-B.18) depict projects that demonstrate all four elements of CPTED.

Related Design Criteria:

Aspirational Examples

Examples in Spokane

Left: fencing on the university district bridge prevents users from falling.

Top right: multiple street crossing safety features at Wilson Elementary School make sure students are as safe as possible.

Bottom right: a downtown Spokane plaza is brightly lit from overhead as well as at the entrance to the building.
Universal Design

The Public Realm should be barrier-free, ergonomic, and accessible by all people regardless of physical ability or level of impairment.

Clarification

Projects shall be safe and accessible and contribute to a better public realm for people of all ages, genders, and abilities, especially the most vulnerable - children, seniors, and people with disabilities.

Key Points:

The primary entrance to Liberty Park Branch Library (see figure B.22) incorporates a gradual, stair- and ramp-free access to accommodate patrons with limited mobility.

Related Design Criteria:

B-5 Provide Inviting and Usable Open Space

Design public open spaces to promote a visually pleasing, healthy, safe, and active environment for workers, residents, and visitors.

Clarification:
Views and solar access from the principal area of the open space should be emphasized.

Key Points:
The images for this guideline (see figures B.24-B.28) depict generous and well-appointed open spaces that are easily accessible and inviting.

Related Design Criteria:
Design Guidelines: B-1: Provide Elements that Define the Place, B-3: Design for Personal Safety and Security, B-6: Enhance the Building and Site with Landscaping, C-2: Reinforce Primary Building Entries, C-3: Develop Pedestrian-oriented Spaces Along Street Frontages, C-4: Provide a High-Quality Design for the Public Realm, C-5: Provide Appropriate Weather Protection, C-6: Enhance Alleyways, D-3: Maintain the Prevailing Street Edge, E-1: Maximize Pedestrian Access to the Building and Site, E-2: Minimize the Impact of Parking Facilities Along Street Frontages

Examples in Spokane

The shoreline of Lake Geneva in Vevey, Switzerland separates vehicular traffic from pedestrian spaces with a series of linear raised planter beds.

Figure B.24
The Promenade Plantée in Paris is a 2.9 mile long park and walkway created from a defunct elevated rail line. Shops and businesses occupy the space beneath the park.

The Promenade Plantée in Paris is a 2.9 mile long park and walkway created from a defunct elevated rail line. Shops and businesses occupy the space beneath the park.

The shoreline of Lake Geneva in Vevey, Switzerland separates vehicular traffic from pedestrian spaces with a series of linear raised planter beds.

Figure B.25

Top left: the park by Brickwest Brewing is a fun place to sit and relax.

Bottom left: the Catalyst building provides seating and beautiful landscaping for patrons of the building and those waiting for their bus in the nearby transit hub.

Top right: The amphitheater at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture provides a shaded, sheltered, quiet and comfortable outdoor space for the public.
Enhance the Building and Site with Landscaping

Enhance the building/structure and site with generous landscaping which includes special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material. The use of native and naturalized plants helps to ensure the landscape survives through harsh weather, while also providing the space with a connection to the regional landscape.

Clarification:
This guideline encourages the inclusion of elements such as special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, and site furniture, as well as living plant material. The use of native and naturalized plants helps to ensure the landscape survives through harsh weather, while also providing the space with a connection to the regional landscape.

Key Points:
The images for this guideline (see figures B.29- B.33) depict landscaping installations that significantly enhance the adjacent buildings and structures.

Related Design Criteria:

Aspirational Examples

Examples in Spokane

Top: the landscaping at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture
Bottom left: foundational plantings at Salk Middle School
Bottom right: landscaping at the Masonic Temple on Garland Ave.
Area of Influence: Public Realm

Design Objective

Pedestrian Environment guidelines assist designers and developers in creating skywalks that define the pedestrian environment.

The intent of the guidelines is to promote a safe and healthy environment where the pedestrian is the priority.

While there is a need for automobile, bicycle and transit in Spokane, in all cases the most important consideration is the ease of pedestrian movement.

Where intersections with other transportation modes occur, the pedestrian’s comfort, safety and best interests must not be compromised.

The pedestrian should be unimpeded and relatively comfortable in all seasons and hours of the day, in all areas of Spokane.

C-1 | Reinforce Primary Building Entries

C-2 | Develop Pedestrian-Oriented Spaces Along Street Frontages

C-3 | Provide High Quality Walkable Design for the Public Realm

C-4 | Design Façades at Many Scales

C-5 | Provide Appropriate Weather Protection

C-6 | Enhance Alleyways
C-1 Design Façades at Many Scales

Design architectural features, fenestration patterns, and material compositions that refer to the human activities contained within or surrounding the building/structure.

Clarification:

Building or structure façades should be composed of elements scaled to promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation. A building’s or structure’s façade should create and reinforce a “human scale” not only at the street level, but also as viewed from farther away.

Key Points:

The images for this guideline (see figures C.01-C.04) depict projects that introduce human-scale elements along front facades while providing articulation along all facades to moderate the bulk and massing of the building or structure.

Related Design Criteria:


Examples in Spokane

The Banker’s Life Fieldhouse in Indianapolis, Indiana provides architectural elements at the street, vehicular, and skyline scales.

Below: this building in Hamburg, Germany does an excellent job of providing pedestrian scaled architectural elements as well as larger-scaled elements further up the façade.

The façade modulation and differing textures of Salk Middle School provide great variation in scale.

The Masonic Temple on Garland stylistically has many house-scale elements, while the two-story outdoor seating area gives even more pedestrian scale.
C-2 Reinforce Primary Building Entries

Design primary building or structure entries to promote pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation.

Clarification:
This guideline refers to the incorporation of hierarchical components to improve the legibility of the public realm by emphasizing the primary entrance to a building or open space. Such components may include wayfinding signage, unique architectural features, overhead weather protection, unique landscape features, and key lighting.

Key Points:
The images for this guideline (see images C.05-C.09) depict projects that utilize a wide variety of architectural and landscape features to emphasize the building's primary entrance. This includes view corridors, landscape allees, sculptural forms, and unique canopies.

Related Design Criteria:

Examples in Spokane

Top left: the Liberty Park Branch Library uses color to announce the entrance to the building.
Bottom left: the Catalyst building uses a projecting canopy as an entrance reinforcement.
Right: a long promenade in line with the entrance to this university building creates a dramatic statement.

Aspirational Examples

The ornate canopy of the Samaritaine department store in Paris, France tells shoppers where to enter the building.
The entrance to this building in Frankfurt, Germany uses an art installation to direct patrons to the front door.
C-3 Develop Pedestrian-oriented Spaces Along Street Frontages

Designs should create human-scale spaces in response to how people engage with their surroundings, by prioritizing active street frontages, clear paths of pedestrian travel, legible wayfinding, and enhanced connectivity.

Clarification:
This guideline promotes healthy living, increases economic activity at the street level, enables social interaction, creates equitable and accessible public spaces, and improves public safety by putting eyes and feet on the street. Consideration should be given to the proper composition of the sidewalk. This includes the building shy zone, flexible retail space (e.g., outdoor sales, al fresco dining), pedestrian travelway, furniture zone (which would accommodate the landscape buffer and street trees, street furnishings, street lighting), and the curb zone.

Key Points:
A key component of a pedestrian-oriented space is the provision of all-weather physical comfort. This can be achieved through the strategic placement and selection of street trees, overhead weather protection, and the provision of hardscaped and softscaped surfaces to accommodate a variety of social activities.

Related Design Criteria:
C-4 Provide High Quality Walkable Design for the Public Realm

Create a high-quality public realm that supports the culture of walking and non-motorized transportation.

Clarification:

Design the site and building or structure so that pedestrian access is convenient and the environment is comfortable, memorable, and attractive. Use materials at street level that create a sense of permanence, are well-maintained, and bring life and warmth to the Public Realm. Streets, alleys, trails, and public spaces work together to provide opportunities for civic, cultural, economic, and social activities. This guideline would also apply to open space located within the public realm.

Key Points:

Provide accommodations for casual walking, ample opportunities for seating, design elements that would moderate the effects of adverse weather, integrate landscape features, and provide appropriate lighting.

Related Design Criteria:

C-5 Provide Appropriate Weather Protection

Provide a continuous, well-lit weather protection to improve pedestrian comfort and safety along pedestrian routes.

Clarification:

Such protection should address wind, sun, and precipitation throughout the year. This may be achieved through the use of overhead weather protection (marquees, awnings, arcades, etc.), generous inclusion of an urban forest canopy, heated sidewalks to avoid ice build-up, windbreaks (walls or landscape materials), etc.

Key Points:

The examples provided (see figures C.23-C.25) depict many ways of introducing appropriate weather protection.

Related Design Criteria:


Examples in Spokane

Left: an arcade on the Gonzaga campus.
Top right: the second floor of this building projects out over the main entrance and provides weather protection.
Bottom right: the Catalyst building’s arcade

Overhead structures provide cover from rain and snow and shade on sunny days. Consider also wind protection through windbreaks or buffer plantings.
Enhance Alleyways

To increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and interest, where proposed develop the alleyway in response to the unique conditions of the site or project.

Clarification:
Where alleys are adjacent to the site, develop the alleyway to respond to the unique conditions of the site or project. Consider uses that work synergistically with frontage sidewalks and more public spaces - alley improvements should not supplant or interfere with building frontages and primary entrances. Improvements should not interfere with the utilitarian functions of the alleyway.

Key Points:
Incorporate public art, lighting, specimen landscaping, and furniture that minimize encroachment within the alley space (e.g., murals, festoon lighting, potted plants, and mobile furniture).

Related Design Criteria:

Examples in Spokane

Figure C.26
Beautiful overhead protection, decorative lighting, and alley-oriented businesses all contribute to the liveliness of urban alleys.

Figure C.27
This alley in the university district provides access for service vehicles, and the starkness of the concrete is hidden by extensive vines.

Figure C.28

Figure C.29

Figure C.30

Figure C.31
Design Objective

Architectural Expression guidelines assist designers and developers in creating skywalks that relate to the neighborhood context and promote quality development that reinforces the individuality, spirit, and values of Spokane. The guidelines are intended to promote architectural design that is complementary to Spokane’s heritage and character. The following objectives and guidelines for Spokane primarily address the exterior of skywalks and their relationship to architectural and urban design.

Area of Influence: Building, Structure, & Site

48 | 49

D-1 | Create Transitions in Bulk and Scale
D-2 | Design a Well-Proportioned and Unified Building/Structure/Site
D-3 | Maintain the Prevailing Street Edge
D-4 | Design with a Legible Parti
D-5 | Enhance the Skyline

Design Guidelines for Public Projects
D-1 Create Transitions in Bulk and Scale

A building or structure’s form should provide a transition in height, bulk, and scale of the overall development from neighboring or nearby areas with less intensive development.

Clarification:

This guideline refers to typical transitions found in the Spokane area, which are often demonstrated with building stepbacks, articulations of building planes and materials, and variable roof heights.

Key Points:

The images depicting Spokane examples (see figures D.04 and D.05) utilize a variety of interventions (transit shelter as arcade and highly articulated building façade) to effectively transition from buildings of significant bulk to the more human-scale public realm and adjacent architectural context.

Related Design Criteria:

Design Guidelines: A-1: Provide a 360-degree Design; B-6: Enhance the Building and Site with Landscaping; C-1: Design Façades at Many Scales; C-2: Reinforce Primary Building Entries; C-3: Develop Pedestrian-oriented Spaces Along Street Frontages; C-4: Provide a High-Quality Design for the Public Realm; D-2: Design a Well-proportioned and Unified Building/Structure/Site; D-3: Maintain the Prevailing Street Edge; D-5: Enhance the Skyline.
D-2 Design a Well-proportioned and Unified Building/Structure/Site

Compose the massing and organize the publicly accessible interior and exterior spaces to create a well-proportioned building/structure that exhibits a coherent conformance with the original parti.

Clarification:

Design the architectural elements and finish details to create a unified building/structure, so that all components appear integral to the whole.

Key Points:

The Gonzaga University’s School of Law building (see figure D.09) uses its own strong architectural language to establish a unified composition, whereas the Liberty Park Branch Library (see figures D.10 and D.11) adopts a spatial language from the surrounding park to build a unified composition. Both buildings are well-proportioned and approach composition from different perspectives.

Related Design Criteria:

Design Guidelines: A-1: Provide a 360-degree Design, B-6: Enhance the Building and Site with Landscaping, C-1: Design Façades at Many Scales, C-2: Reinforce Primary Building Entries, D-1: Create Transitions in Bulk and Scale, D-3: Maintain the Prevailing Street Edge, D-4: Design with a Legible Parti, D-5: Enhance the Skyline

Aspirational Examples

Examples in Spokane

These two buildings show the ability to achieve a well proportioned structure through very different means.

This terraced hedge in Chicago softens the hardscape and brings balance to the space.
D-3 Maintain the Prevailing Street Edge

Design new buildings/structures to help define and maintain the street edge.

Clarification:

Building/structure and site frontages should have active and direct engagement to the street to support pedestrian-oriented activity. Street edges help define public space and promote a continuity of urban fabric along with supporting a pedestrian-oriented experience.

Key Points:

The scale and harmony of architectural expressions along a block are key features that contribute to a public realm’s ability to support vibrant pedestrian activity. Street edges are the “walls” that define the public room of every well-composed streetscape.

Related Design Criteria:


Examples in Spokane

At the far end of the prevailing street edge concept, these European streets have an undeniable street edge to which all the buildings align.

The facade of Wilson Elementary School precisely aligns to the facade of the homes down the street.
D-4 Design with a Legible Parti

A good design has a central organizing thought or decision guiding the overall concept. This influencing precept can be depicted as a simple diagram and explanatory statement typically referred to as a parti.

Clarification:

Since the design of a site, public realm, and building/structure should have an organizational concept experienced through scale, proportion, enclosure, and compositional clarity. This part should not be modified during the design evolution of a project, but should serve as a guide to resolve design issues throughout the maturation of the project.

Key Points:

The images for this guideline (see figures D.16-D.21) depict projects whose organizational logic is well-expressed and was consistent throughout the various projects’ design evolution.

Related Design Criteria:

Design Guidelines: A-4: Design for Change, B-1: Provide Elements that Define the Place, B-6: Enhance the Building and Site with Landscaping, D-2: Design a Well-proportioned and Unified Building/Structure/Site, D-5: Enhance the Skyline

Aspirational Examples

Examples in Spokane

Top and bottom left: The Hive in East Central Spokane was designed around the industrial and auto centered businesses in the area, and used materials reminiscent of industry. The signage mirrors the mid-century vibe of nearby businesses as well.

Right: A Place of Truths Plaza in downtown Spokane is infused with art and elements celebrating the tribal history and sacred connection to Spokane River.

Chicago’s “Cloud Gate” and Hard Rock Cafe along with the Pompidou Museum and plaza in Paris all give off clear messages as to their design concepts.
Enhance the Skyline

Design the upper portions of buildings to create visual interest and variety in the City, Neighborhood, and/or District skyline.

Clarification:
Respect noteworthy structures within the vicinity of a project site, in order to respond and contribute to the skyline of the surrounding built context.

In this guideline, the term “skyline” is scalar in nature. That is, the larger city has a specific skyline defined by its tallest structures. Neighborhoods, districts, and blocks also have unique skylines defined by their taller structures (which may not correspond with the tallest buildings in the surrounding city).

Key Points:
While the images for this guideline (see figures D.22-D.26) depict skylines at a city scale (i.e., of downtown cores), skylines that may influence any particular project may be found at various scales depending on the area of influence of the project site (e.g., blocks, districts, neighborhoods, cities, or regions).

Related Design Criteria:
Area of Influence: Building, Structure, & Site

Design Objective

Access and Visual Impact guidelines assist designers and developers in creating skywalks that minimize adverse environmental impacts.

E-1 | Maximize Pedestrian Access to the Building and Site

E-2 | Minimize the Impact of Parking Facilities Along Street Frontages

E-3 | Minimize the Presence of Service Areas

E-4 | Design Sustainable Parking
E-1 Maximize Pedestrian Access to the Building and Site

Minimize adverse impacts of curb cuts and drive-aisles on the safety and comfort of pedestrians.

Clarification:

This guideline refers to potential impediments to the free flow of pedestrians onto a site from the public realm. Vehicle turn lanes, curb cuts, service areas, and blank walls can all dissuade pedestrians from being able to comfortably approach, or cross adjacent to, buildings and sites.

Key Points:

The images of Spokane projects (see figures E.04 and E.05) depict conditions where pedestrian access to a site or building is prioritized above vehicular access. The aspirational examples (see figures E.01-E.03) also depict a variety of spaces with generous details that emphasize pedestrian access.

Related Design Criteria:

Minimize the visual impact of parking by designing parking facilities into the building/structure, e.g. below ground, behind veneer non-parking uses, or above the ground floor.

Clarification:
Incorporate contextual architectural treatments or suitable landscaping to enhance the safety and comfort of people using the facility as well as passersby.

Key Points:
The Department of Environmental Quality’s surface parking lot (see figure E.10) is screened from the street with enhanced landscaping. Gonzaga University’s Hamilton Street parking garage (see figure E.09) is screened from the street by the introduction of a veneer of institutional space (campus office space and bookstore). In both cases, the visual presence of a higher concentration of parked vehicles adjacent to the street is either eliminated or mitigated.

Related Design Criteria:
Minimize the Presence of Service Areas

Screen service areas and mechanical equipment from the view of passersby.

Clarification:
Locate service areas for dumpsters, recycling facilities, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from street frontages where possible. Minimize adverse smells, sounds, views, and physical contact by keeping such service areas away from the public realm.

Key Points:
The Liberty Park Branch Library (see figure E.15) utilizes an aesthetic screen/enclosure to visually shield the HVAC and other machinery. The material used for this enclosure is identical to the exterior finish material used for the main building.

Related Design Criteria:
Design Guidelines: A-1: Provide a 360-degree Design, B-1: Provide Elements that Define the Place, B-6: Enhance the Building and Site with Landscaping, C-3: Develop Pedestrian-oriented Spaces Along Street Frontages, C-4: Provide a High-Quality Design for the Public Realm, C-6: Enhance Alleyways, E-1: Maximize Pedestrian Access to the Building and Site

While an enclosure or screen are common ways to hide service areas and mechanical equipment, planting trees and shrubs in front of those areas can be just as effective.

Commissioning a local artist to paint a brick enclosure is a fantastic way to bring character to a space.

Top left and top right: A tall concrete service area accessed by large delivery trucks is tucked behind the spruce tree.

Bottom right: Service area is cleverly disguised behind an enclosure made of the same material as the main building.
**E-4 Design Sustainable Parking**

Design places for parking that mitigate automobile and impervious surface impacts to air, temperature, and water; and improve the City’s visual and environmental quality.

**Clarification:**

This design guideline refers to all parking facilities (structures and surface lots). Consideration should be given to on-site stormwater infiltration/retention (e.g., permeable pavement), surface treatments that moderate heat island effects, and provide opportunities for energy conservation/generation (e.g., photovoltaic panels, electric vehicle charging stations).

**Key Points:**

The parking lot for The Hive on Sprague Avenue (see figure E.19) uses rain gardens and electric vehicle charging stations as sustainable features.

**Related Design Criteria:**

**Glossary of Terms**

**Action Approving Authority:** Any City official that may initiate the design review process, accept final recommendations, or render final determinations regarding design review. Actions Approving Authorities at the City include the Hearing Examiner, the Planning Director, or the City Engineer. While not considered an action approving authority, the Plan Commission may request the Design Review Board's review and recommendations of any urban design portions of plans or codes under its consideration.

**Active Street Edge:** In addition to the four horizontal elements of sidewalks (see Sidewalk Zones), there are three distinct vertical zones on the ground floor façades of buildings adjacent to sidewalks. These are (see figure below):

1. **Bulkhead/Kickplate Zone**
   - The portion of the ground floor closest to the ground plane. Typically this zone ranges from 1- to 2-feet in height. This portion is often opaque and more resilient to impact.

2. **Storefront/Window Zone**
   - The portion of the ground floor with the greatest level of transparency, the purpose of which is to establish a visual connection between the activities within the building and those on the sidewalk.

3. **Transom/Ceiling Zone**
   - The portion of the ground floor accommodating transitional elements from the ground floor to the upper floors. Exterior elements often include marquees, awnings, transom windows, signage, and cornices.

**Area of Influence:** As every building and site rests within a variety of contexts, each design guideline category is provided with the relative scale in which potentially influencing factors may be found or wherein they may be expressed. These are, from largest to most local: Region, City, Neighborhood, District, Public Realm, Site, and Building/Structure.

**Civic Use:** Within the context of the Spokane Municipal Code, and the range of uses typically referred to as civic in nature, a Civic Use is an enclosed/conditioned space that can accommodate a range of public functions operating under the auspices of a government body. Such uses may include offices, public schools or colleges, public health clinics or hospitals, community centers, libraries, museums, fire houses, police stations, and courts of law.

**Contextual:** An attribute of a context area (similar to an Area of Influence), a project or design element that is contextual is one that responds to social, cultural, or historic stimuli that may influencing a site, structure, or building. A good example of contextual design is one that seamlessly weaves into an existing neighborhood or street.

**De minimis Change:** Any change to a project’s design after the conclusion of design review that would have a negligible effect on the final recommendations provided to the City’s action approving authority. See **Substantial Change.**

**Design Departure:** While the design review process cannot waive compliance with a design standard, a design departure can grant the approval of an alternative means of complying with a standard. The alternative design must comply with the decision criteria for design departures listed in the Unified Development Code (Spokane Municipal Code 17A.020.040.L).

**Design Guideline:** A set of design parameters for developments which apply to projects that would trigger design review. These parameters may be unique to a design district, sub-district, overlay zone, or to specific project types. The guidelines, as design criteria, are adopted public statements of intent and are used to evaluate the acceptability of a project’s design (Spokane Municipal Code 17A.020.040.L). Design guidelines help ensure that the design review process will result in advice and recommendations rendered which stay focused on the community’s set of aesthetic expectations for the projects being reviewed.

**Design Standard:** A set of design parameters for developments which apply to all projects within a specific land use category. These parameters are written into every zoning category of the Unified Development Code and compliance is obligatory.

**Façade:** The exterior wall of a building. While often associated with the front (or face) of a building, façades are typically those portions of a building’s exterior that can be viewed from a public way or street.

**Fenestration:** The arrangement and design of penetrations in the exterior wall of a building, typically exterior windows and doorways. The term may encompass the pattern of open-air passageways through a building or the design of a building’s arcade.

**Green:** See **Sustainable**

**Living in Place:** Related to Aging in Place, Living in Place refers to the design of a district, street, site, or building that is intentionally composed to be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability. Unlike Aging in Place, Living in Place is not restricted to only accommodating the needs of people as they age.
Glossary of Terms (continued)

**Parti**: A good design has a central organizing thought or decision guiding the overall concept. This influencing precept can be depicted as a simple diagram and explanatory statement, typically referred to as a parti. As the design of a site, public realm, and building should have a comprehensive concept experienced through scale, proportion, enclosure, and compositional clarity this coordinating precept can be expressed in the parti’s diagram and statement. A parti is derived prior to the development of a project’s plan, section, or elevation diagrams.

**Plinth**: In urban design a plinth is defined as a projecting masonry coursing that forms a platform for a building. Such a course is typically knee-high, though taller plinths may be used to add monumentality to landmark buildings.

**Public Realm**: Those parts of the urban fabric that are held in common, either by physical occupation or visual association. This includes, but is not limited to plazas, squares, parks, vistas, streets, public frontages, private frontages, civic buildings, and certain spaces in commercial developments like the common areas of malls and hotels. There is an ethical and civic connotation to the term that transcends the mere physical, legal, or utilitarian. On a street, the public realm is the entire space formed by the adjacent buildings/structures and site improvements.

**Resilient**: See Sustainable

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**Sidewalk Zones**

The various portions of a public sidewalk with discrete functions. These are (see figure, below):

1. **Frontage Zone**
   - The section of the sidewalk that functions as an extension of the building, whether through entryways and doors or sidewalk cafes and sandwich boards. The frontage zone consists of both the facade of the building fronting the street and the space immediately adjacent to the building.

2. **Clear Path Zone**
   - The pedestrian clear path defined by the primary, dedicated, and accessible pathway that runs parallel to the street. The clear path ensures that pedestrians have a safe and adequate place to walk and should be 5-feet wide in residential settings and 7- to 12-feet wide in downtown or commercial areas with heavy pedestrian volumes.

3. **Street Furniture Zone**
   - The section of the sidewalk between the curb and the clear path, in which street furniture and amenities such as lighting, benches, newspaper kiosks, transit facilities, utility poles, tree pits, and cycle parking are provided. The street furniture zone may also contain green infrastructure elements such as rain gardens, trees, or flow-through planters.

4. **Buffer Zone**
   - The space immediately next to the sidewalk that may consist of a variety of different elements. These include curb extensions, parklets, stormwater management features, parking, cycle racks, cycle share stations, and curb-side cycle tracks.
Substantial Change: Any change to a project’s design after the conclusion of design review that may take a project out of compliance with the final recommendations provided to the City’s action approving authority. A substantial change to a project’s design would typically result in further design review, remanding the project back to either urban design staff or the full Design Review Board to determine if additional, or revised, recommendations are warranted.

Superior in Design Quality: A determination that an alternative means of complying with the intent of a design standard would result in a greater compliance with the set of applicable design guidelines than what would be potential achieved by complying with the requirements (R) or presumptions (P) written in the design standard’s implementation section.

Sustainable: An attribute or action that does not completely use up or destroy a resource. A design element that is sustainable is one that can last for a long time or can be easily repaired using local and readily available materials and techniques. A design element may also facilitate an occupant or user lifestyle involving sustainable methods. Typically, sustainable efforts focus on reducing, reusing, and recycling of valuable and limited resources.

Thoroughfare: An all-encompassing term used to describe a public way whose principal function is to convey goods and people. This includes pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, drivers, and heavy freight operators. The elements of thoroughfares include sidewalks (frontage zone, pedestrian through zone, furnishing/landscaping zone, curb zone), the flexible area (on-street parking, bicycling lanes), and the vehicle realm (travel lanes, transit lanes, turning lanes, boulevard landscaping). A term often used instead of street, as the latter can be limited in perception as a conveyance for motorized vehicles.

Urban Fabric: The physical aspect of urbanism. This term emphasizes building forms, streets, open space, streetscapes, and frontages, while excluding without prejudice ecological, functional, economic, and sociocultural aspects.

Visitability: A design solution for residential uses that eliminates major accessibility barriers. Visitability design includes the following three elements: 1) at least one zero-step entrance on an accessible route leading from a driveway or street sidewalk, 2) all interior doors being wide enough to allow a wheelchair to pass through, and 3) at least one toilet (half bath) on the main floor. A distinct advantage of incorporating these elements in a residential unit is that it will allow an easier conversion of a portion of the main floor into a non-residential use. A term related to Living in Place.
Figure B.08: Stormwater collection swale at The Hive, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure A.09: Bike Lane, Seattle DOT- courtesy of Flickr
Figure A.10: Bicycle shelter and storage, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
Figure A.11: Scooters-for-rent and bike racks near a bus stop, courtesy of Sharalike license: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode
Figure A.12: University District Gateway Bridge, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure A.13: Riverside Avenue Looking West from Monroe Street, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure A.14: Raised bus platform in University District- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure A.15: Tanner Springs Park, Portland, Oregon- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure A.16: Viaduc Plantee, Paris, France- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure A.17: Carnegie Library, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure A.18: A Place of Truths Plaza, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure A.19: Dryfly Distillery (Formerly the Spokane Review print floor) Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
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Figure B.02: Mural in subway network, Munich Germany- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure B.03: Aqua building, Chicago, Illinois- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
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Figure B.05: Whimsical statues outside the Museum of Arts and Culture, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure B.06: One of the original restroom structures in Corbin Park from Olmstead Brothers park plan for Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure B.07: Starbucks sign in Leavenworth, Washington- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
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Figure B.12: Unique signage for the Monroe Street Hydroelectric Development, Downtown Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
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Figure B.15: Welt-Lit German street at night- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
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Figure B.17: Crosswalk near Wilson Elementary, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure B.18: Bank of America at night, downtown Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure B.19: The New Mexico Museum of Art- courtesy of Sandy Sorlier via Center for Applied Transect Studies
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Figure B.24: Viaduc Plantee, Paris, France- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure B.25: Waterfront Park Landscape Beds, Vevay, Switzerland- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure B.26: BrickWest Plaza, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure B.27: The Catalyst Building, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure B.28: Amphitheater at the Spokane Museum of Arts and Culture- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
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Figure B.32: Landscaping in front of the Spokane Museum of Arts and Culture- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure B.33: Landscaping in front of the Masonic Temple on Garland Ave, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
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Figure C.08: The Catalyst Building, University District, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
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Figure C.11: Water feature and landscaping, Chartres, France- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure C.12: Large concrete planters in Chicago, Illinois- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure C.13: Desmet Street on the Gonzaga University campus, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure C.14: Comfortable sidewalk in hospital district, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
Figure C.15: A pedestrian plaza in Portland, Oregon- courtesy of Taylor Berberich- COS Staff
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Figure D.01: Building with glass façade in Frankfurt, Germany- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
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Figure D.03: A news broadcast building in Chicago, Illinois- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
Figure D.04: The bus stop outside Lewis and Clark High School, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
Figure D.05: A building in the Hospital District, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
Figure D.06: Sculpture inside Kings Cross Train Station, London, England- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
Figure D.07: A building designed by Frank Gehry in Newcastle, England- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
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Figure D.11: Liberty Park Library, view from the park, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
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Figure D.17: Cloud Gate Sculpture, Chicago, Illinois- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
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Figure E.01: Amphitheater in downtown Portland, Oregon- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
Figure E.02: Pedestrian street in Portland, Oregon- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
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Figure E.05: Pedestrian accommodations at the Shadle Library, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
Figure E.06: Parking garage hidden behind retail- courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
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Figure E.08: Nieuwegein parking garage courtesy of Wikimedia Commons
Figure E.09: Parking garage on Gonzaga University campus, Spokane- courtesy of Taylor Berberich, COS Staff
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