

Reader's Note:

This is a draft version of revised "Initial Design Standards & Guidelines for Centers & Corridors" Attachment A of SMC 17C.122.060

Pictures have been removed from this draft version for ease of text editing. This working copy will be used to address proposed changes to this document.

Underline means new text. Strikethrough means existing text proposed to be deleted. The yellow highlights are for convenience of the reader.

When complete, these changes will be added to the original document including photos.

If you have questions, please contact Tirrell Black, 625-6185 or tblack@spokanecity.org

DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

For CENTERS AND CORRIDORS

Introduction:

GUIDELINES APPLICATION

These ~~Initial~~ Design Standards and Guidelines for Centers and Corridors are applied within the CC1, CC2, and the optional CC3 zoning categories found on the Official City of Spokane Zoning Map. All projects must address the pertinent standards and guidelines. A determination of consistency with the standards and guidelines ~~will~~ **shall** be made by the Planning Director following an administrative design review process **unless the applicant seeks a recommendation from the Design Review Board. If the Design Review Board issues a recommendation, that recommendation will be forwarded to the Director.**

Some of the guidelines contained in this document use the word “shall” while others use the word “should”.

Regardless of which term is used, each guideline must be addressed by an applicant. The City will expect to see how the design of a project has responded to every one of the guidelines.

The “shall” statements, with such wording, are absolutely mandatory and offer relatively little flexibility unless choices are provided within the statement itself. All projects must include these elements as described.

However, guidelines that use the word “should” are meant to be applied, but with some flexibility. They indicate that the City is open to design features that are equal to, or better than, that stated - so long as the intent is satisfied.

The applicant assumes the burden of proof to demonstrate how a proposed design meets this test and determination will be made by the Director. **In those instances designated with the “Requirement (R)”, an applicant may seek relief through consultation with the Design Review Board following Chapter 17G.040.**

Finally, it should be noted that there are other codes and ordinances that govern development in centers and corridors, such as the Building Code and Public Works Standards. **The most restrictive code shall apply.**

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BUILDINGS ALONG STREET

Requirement (R)

INTENT:

To ensure that at least some part of the development of a site contributes to the liveliness of sidewalks.

GUIDELINES:

1. New development ~~should~~ shall not have only parking between buildings and the street and at least 30% of the frontage of the site shall consist of building facades. In shopping centers, buildings shall be placed along the sidewalk so that at least 15% of the frontage of the site consists of building façades.
2. Buildings placed along sidewalks shall have windows and doors facing the street (see “Façade Transparency” and Prominent Entrances) and shall incorporate other architectural features (see “Ground Level Details” and “Treatment of Blank Walls”).

Deviation from this guideline must meet the intent of this section and requires a recommendation of approval by the Design Review Board.

BUILDINGS ALONG INTERSECTION CORNERS

Requirement (R)

INTENT: To utilize building placement and massing along intersection corners to create an environment that frames the public realm and creates an urban street edge and contributes to the liveliness of sidewalks.

Guidelines:

1. Buildings shall hold the street corner although setbacks that accommodate plazas, seating areas, landscaping, clear view triangles (for traffic safety) and prominent entrances are acceptable.
2. When there is more than one intersection corner on the site, the building shall be oriented to the corner with the highest category street. For example the intersection of a principal arterial and a principal arterial would be preferred over the intersection of a principal arterial and a minor arterial.

Deviation from this guideline must meet the intent of this section and requires a recommendation of approval by the Design Review Board.

SIDEWALK ENCROACHMENTS

INTENT:

To ensure that there is a minimum clear, unobstructed walking route along sidewalks.

GUIDELINES:

Temporary sidewalk encroachments are allowed. Café seating, planters, ramps, stairs, and sandwich board signs which are located on the sidewalk shall be located in such a manner as to leave a pathway at least **4 6** feet wide that is free of obstructions.

LIGHTING

INTENT: To ensure that site lighting contributes to the character of the site and does not disturb adjacent development.

GUIDELINES:

1. Lighting shall be provided within parking lots and along pedestrian walkways.
2. Lighting fixtures shall be limited to heights of 24 ft. for parking lots and 16 ft. for pedestrian walkways.
3. All lighting shall be shielded from producing off-site glare, either through exterior shields or through optical design inside the fixture, so that the direction of light is downward.

SCREENING AND NOISE CONTROL OF SERVICE AREAS

INTENT:

To reduce the impact of service, loading and trash storage areas.

GUIDELINES:

1. All service, loading and trash collection areas shall be screened by a combination of decorative walls of either masonry, wood, or vinyl, with planting that meets L2 requirements in SMC 17C.200.
2. Loading and service areas should not face or be adjacent to any residential district, unless no other location is possible.
3. Trash storage areas shall be setback a minimum of 15 feet from street property line.

ANCILLARY SITE ELEMENTS

STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR
ALL CENTERS AND CORRIDORS

INTENT:

To make site elements compatible with each other.

GUIDELINES:

Site furnishings, such as fences, walls, refuse enclosures, light fixtures, carports and storage units, shall be designed to be integrated with the architectural design of the primary structure(s).

CURB CUT LIMITATIONS

INTENT:

To provide safe, convenient vehicular access without diminishing pedestrian safety.

GUIDELINES:

1. A curb cut for a nonresidential use should not exceed 30 feet for combined entry/exits. Driveway width where the sidewalk crosses the driveway should not exceed 24 feet in width.
2. The sidewalk pattern shall carry across the driveway.
3. Adjacent developments should share driveways, to the greatest extent possible.
4. Vehicular access should be designated so that traffic is not directed through an abutting residential zone.

PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS IN PARKING LOTS

INTENT:

To create a network of safe and attractive linkages for pedestrians.

GUIDELINES:

1. Within parking lots containing more than 30 stalls, clearly defined pedestrian connections should be provided:

- Between a **all** public right-of-way and building entrances
- Between parking lots and building entrances

Pedestrian connections can be counted toward the amount of required landscaping.

2. Pedestrian connections shall not be less than 5 feet wide.

3. Pedestrian connections shall be clearly defined by at least two of the following:

- 6 inch vertical curb.
- Textured paving, including across vehicular lanes.
- A continuous landscape area at a minimum of 3 feet wide on at least one side of the walkway.

4. When there is a transit stop adjacent to the site, a pedestrian connection between the transit stops and building entrances, especially the prominent entrances, should be provided.

5. Pedestrian connections should maximize directness of travel between pedestrian origin and destination.

DRIVE-THROUGH LANES

INTENT:

To ensure that the streetscape environment is lively and not overwhelmed by the presence of automobiles.

GUIDELINES:

Any lanes serving drive-through businesses shall not be located between the building and any adjacent street.

TRANSITION BETWEEN COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Requirement (R)

INTENT:

To ensure compatibility between the more intensive uses in centers and corridors and lower intensity uses of adjacent residential zones by incorporating design elements that soften transitions and protect light and privacy for adjacent residents.

GUIDELINES:

Code provisions require lower heights for portions of buildings that are close to single family residential zones. In addition, any side of the building visible from the ground level of an adjacent single family residential zone shall be given architectural treatment using ~~two~~ three or more of the following:

- a. architectural details mentioned under “Ground Level Details”
- b. pitched roof form
- c. windows
- d. balconies
- e. if building is on the Spokane Register of Historic Places, the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for rehabilitation historic design guidelines shall apply.

Deviation from using three of these architectural treatments must meet the intent of this section and requires a recommendation of approval by the Design Review Board.

TREATMENT OF BLANK WALLS

INTENT:

To ensure that buildings do not display blank, unattractive walls to the adjacent street or residential areas.

GUIDELINES:

Walls or portions of walls where windows are not provided shall have architectural treatment wherever they face adjacent streets or adjacent residential areas (see guidelines for Façade Transparency). At least four of the following elements shall be incorporated into these walls

- a. masonry (but not flat concrete block)
- b. concrete or masonry plinth at the base of the wall
- c. belt courses of a different texture and color
- d. outward projecting cornice
- e. projecting metal canopy
- f. decorative tilework
- g. trellis containing planting
- h. medallions
- i. opaque or translucent glass
- j. artwork
- k. vertical articulation
- l. lighting fixtures
- m. Vertical landscape wall or "green wall"
- n. Display windows
- o. Signage as identified in "Pedestrian Oriented Signs"
- ⌘. p. an architectural element not listed above, as approved, that meets the intent.

PROMINENT ENTRANCES

Requirement (R)

INTENT:

To ensure that main building entrances are easily identifiable, clearly visible and accessible from streets and sidewalks in order to encourage pedestrian activity and enliven the street.

GUIDELINES:

1. The principal entry to a store / building shall face the street and/or intersection corner and be marked by

(a) ornamentation special or unique architectural detailing around the door opening, and

(b) at least one of the following:

- Recessed entrance (recessed at least 3 ft.)
- Protruding entrance (protruding at least 3 ft.)
- Canopy (extending at least 5 ft.)
- Portico (extending at least 5 ft.)
- Overhang (extending at least 5 ft.)

2. When possible, the entrance should be considered as a collection of elements:

- Overhead: canopy, porches, building extensions
- Transitional: stoops, courtyards, stairways, ramps, portals, pocket gardens, deck
- Ground Surface: Seating walls, special paving, landscaping, trees, lighting

Deviation from this guideline must meet the intent of this section and requires a recommendation of approval by the Design Review Board

FAÇADE TRANSPARENCY

INTENT:

To provide visual connection between activities inside and outside the building.

GUIDELINES:

1. In residential, commercial or mixed-use, a A minimum of 15% of any ground floor façade* that is visible from and fronting on any abutting street shall be comprised of windows with clear, “vision” glass allowing views into the interior.
2. A minimum of 30% of any ground floor commercial or mixed-use building façade* that is visible from, fronting on, and located within 60 feet of an arterial or pedestrian street shall be comprised of windows with clear, “vision” glass allowing views into the interior. Display windows may be used to meet half of this requirement.
3. A minimum of 50% of any ground floor commercial or mixed-use building façade* that is visible from and located within 20 feet of an arterial or pedestrian street shall be comprised of windows with clear, “vision” glass allowing views into the interior. Display windows may be used to meet half of this requirement.

*façade within 2 feet and 10 feet above the level of the adjacent sidewalk, walkway or ground level.

MATERIALS

Intent:

To incorporate quality materials and architectural elements in the building design to support pedestrian oriented development.

Guidelines:

- 1. Subject to the façade transparency requirements of these design standards and guidelines, street level exterior facades* that face public streets or sidewalks should be clad in durable materials compatible with an urban context, including materials such as stone, tile, metal, masonry, concrete, manufactured cement products, and/or glass.**
- 2. Exterior Insulating Finish Systems (EFIS) and lapped siding products and generally do not comply with the intent of the City's design standards and guidelines and are not allowed on ground floor exterior walls that face public streets or sidewalks.**
- 3. On street frontages, exit corridors, garage openings, loading docks and all recesses the design profession should provide a finished appearance to the street with street level exterior finishes fully wrapping into the openings.**

***façade within 2 feet and 10 feet above the level of the adjacent sidewalk, walkway or ground level.**

MASSING Requirement (R)

INTENT: To reduce the apparent bulk of the buildings ~~by providing a sense of “base” and “top”.~~ and provide buildings that frame and define the street and contributes to the quality of the public realm and pedestrian experience.

GUIDELINES:

1. Buildings ~~should~~ shall have a distinct “base” at the ground level, using articulation and high-quality materials ~~such as stone, masonry, or decorative concrete as noted in the Materials section.~~
2. The “top” of the building ~~should~~ shall be treated with a distinct ~~outline with elements such as a projecting parapet, outward projecting cornice, or projection.~~ outline that adds variation through varying heights, steps, or depths. See “Roof Form” for additional requirements.
3. New structures shall incorporate vertical and horizontal modulations to develop distinctive architectural volumes, break monotonous volumes, and create fine-grain character in scale with adjacent neighborhood character.

Deviation from these guidelines must meet the intent of this section and be recommended by the Design Review Board.

ROOF FORM Requirement (R)**INTENT:**

To ensure that roof lines present a distinct profile and appearance for the building and expresses the neighborhood character.

GUIDELINES:

Buildings shall incorporate one of the following roof forms:

- pitched roofs with a minimum slope of 4:12 and maximum slope of 12:12, especially to highlight major entrances.
- **Outward** projecting cornices to create a prominent edge when viewed against the sky.

- **Flat roofs are to be used in reference to surrounding context, reinforce the architectural character of the street and be modulated to establish human scale interaction.**

Parapets without vertical or horizontal modulation in any 30 foot span shall have an outward projecting cornice of 6 inches minimum.

Stepped parapets of varying heights (2 feet or 0.1x the wall height), cornice or other architectural projection articulated through varying heights and depths.

Deviation from these guidelines must meet the intent of this section and be approved by the Design Review Board.

HISTORIC CONTEXT CONSIDERATIONS

INTENT:

To ensure that infill and rehabilitation, when it is adjacent to existing buildings having historic architectural character, is compatible with the historic context within the neighborhood.

GUIDELINES:

1. New development should incorporate historic architectural elements that reinforce the established character of a center or corridor **but still remain a product of their own time**.

The following elements constitute potential existing features that could be reflected in new buildings:

- materials
- window proportions
- cornice or canopy lines
- roof treatment
- colors

2. When rehabilitating existing historic buildings, property owners are encouraged to follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.

- if original details and ornamentation are intact, they should be retained and preserved.
- if original details are presently covered, they should be exposed or repaired.
- if original details are missing, missing parts should be replaced to match the original in appearance. Remaining pieces or old photos should be used as a guide.

3. If a proposed building is not adjacent to other buildings having a desirable architectural character, it may be necessary to look at contextual elements found elsewhere within the area.

SCREENING OF ROOFTOP EQUIPMENT

INTENT:

To screen view of rooftop mechanical and communications equipment from the ground level of nearby streets and residential areas.

GUIDELINES:

1. Mechanical equipment shall be screened by extended parapet walls or other roof forms that are integrated with the architecture of the building.
2. Painting equipment, erecting fences, and using mansard-type roofs are not acceptable methods of screening.
3. Cell phone transmission equipment should utilize stealth design when located on rooftops ~~be blended in with the design of the roofs, rather than being merely attached to the roof-deck..~~

LOCATION OF PARKING LOTS

INTENT:

To maintain a contiguous, active pedestrian street front along designated Pedestrian Streets by locating parking lots behind buildings.

GUIDELINES:

1. Parking lots shall not be located between a building and a Pedestrian Street.

CURB CUTS

INTENT:

To maintain a continuous uninterrupted sidewalk by minimizing driveway access.

GUIDELINES:

1. Curb cuts within an ownership should be spaced at no less than 125 feet apart along a principal or minor arterial, and no more than 100 feet apart along a collector arterial.
2. Curb cuts shall not be located along a designated Pedestrian Street.
3. Access to parking should be from the alley, or from a side street if access from the alley is not possible. Access to parking shall not be from a Pedestrian Street unless no other means of access is possible.

STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

INTENT:

To create a more pedestrian friendly street through the use of site furnishings along designated Pedestrian Streets.

GUIDELINES:

1. Publicly-usable site furnishings such as benches, tables, bike racks and other pedestrian amenities shall be provided at building entrances, plazas, open spaces, and/or other pedestrian areas for all buildings larger than 10,000 sf. Buildings less than this size are encouraged to include such amenities. Specific types of site furnishings shall be approved by the City.

STREET - FACING ENTRANCES

INTENT:

To ensure that building entrances directly reinforce pedestrian activity on the Pedestrian Street sidewalks.

GUIDELINES:

The primary entrance to the building shall be visible from and fronting on a Pedestrian Street.

MAXIMUM SETBACK

INTENT:

To create a lively, pedestrian friendly sidewalk environment.

GUIDELINES:

Along Pedestrian Streets, buildings shall be set up to the back of the required sidewalk (see Setbacks section of Land Use Code for Centers and Corridors), except for a setback up to 10 ft. for the purpose of providing a publicly accessible “plaza”, “courtyard” or recessed entrance.

GROUND LEVEL DETAILS

INTENT:

To ensure that buildings along any Pedestrian Street display the greatest amount of visual interest and reinforce the character of the streetscape.

GUIDELINES:

Façades of commercial, residential and mixed-use buildings that face Pedestrian Streets shall be designed to be pedestrian-

friendly through the inclusion of at least three of the following elements:

- a. kickplates for storefront windows
- b. projecting sills
- c. pedestrian scale signs
- d. canopies
- e. plinths
- f. containers for seasonal planting
- g. tilework
- h. medallions
- i. rolling doors or windows

† j... if building is on the Spokane Register of Historic Places, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation historic design guidelines shall apply.

PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED SIGNS

INTENT:

To ensure that signs are interactive with people on foot.

GUIDELINES:

1. Signs shall be oriented to pedestrians, rather than people in vehicles. The following are types of signs that are oriented to pedestrians:
 - projecting signs (blade signs)
 - window signs (painted on glass or hung behind glass)
 - logo signs (symbols, shapes)
 - wall signs over entrance
 - sandwich board signs
 - ground signs
2. Pole signs shall not be permitted.

INTEGRATION WITH ARCHITECTURE

INTENT:

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

GUIDELINES:

1. The design of buildings and sites shall identify locations and sizes for future signs. As tenants install signs, such signs shall be in conformance with an overall sign program that allows for advertising which fits with the architectural character, proportions, and details of the development. The sign program shall indicate location, size, and general design.
2. Signs shall not project above the roof, parapet, or exterior wall.

CREATIVE GRAPHIC DESIGN

INTENT:

To encourage interesting, creative and unique approaches to the design of signs.

GUIDELINES:

1. Signs should be highly graphic in form, expressive and individualized.
2. Signs should convey the product or service offered by the business in a bold, graphic form.
3. Projecting signs supported by ornamental brackets and oriented to pedestrians are strongly encouraged.
4. If projecting signs or wall signs incorporate one-of-a-kind graphic elements, the size otherwise allowed by **SMC 11.17 17C.240, Signs Code**, may be increased by 20%, so long as the sign is oriented to pedestrians.

UNIQUE LANDMARK SIGNS

INTENT:

To respond to the unique character of the neighborhood and business.

GUIDELINES:

1. Retain existing historic signs and landmark structures that feature the character of the area.
2. New landmark signs should correspond to the location, setting and type of businesses and shall be approved by the Planning Director.

GROUND SIGNS

INTENT:

To ensure that signs are not principally oriented to automobile traffic.

GUIDELINES:

1. Pole signs shall be prohibited. All freestanding signs shall be ground signs no higher than 5 feet total.
2. The base of any ground sign shall be planted with shrubs and seasonal flowers.