

Town Center (TC) And Urban Commercial (UC) Design Standards

Commercial and Mixed-Use Development
Standards



Queen Anne's
County
Maryland

**COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS
FOR THE TOWN CENTER (TC) DISTRICT AND
URBAN COMMERCIAL (UC) ZONING DISTRICT,**

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INTRODUCTION

Commercial and business development opportunities accompanied by the mix of land uses permitted in the Town Center (TC) and Urban Commercial (UC) districts can result in different types of land uses and land use intensities that are often adjacent or in close proximity to each other. Therefore, it is the intention that development will not fragment existing positive street patterns. Structures will complement existing buildings, community character, and uses by employing appropriate orientations or setbacks, and/or adequate screening. Successfully reinforcing a pattern of mixed use or mixed-intensity development in the TC and UC districts will require sensitivity to and mitigation of off-site impacts.

Development of retail shopping centers as well as individual commercial and business sites present opportunities that can benefit the community through improved visual appearance and better access and circulation, and promote economic vitality through improved sales and property values.

PURPOSE

The following standards apply to all development in the Town Center (TC) and Urban Commercial (UC) districts that require site plan approval. The Building Design Standards in Section IV, Landscaping and Screening in Section VI to include Mechanical/Utility Equipment Screening, Lighting in Section VII to include Awning Canopy Lighting, and Signage in Section IX also apply to any exterior modifications in the TC, and UC Districts requiring a building permit. These standards emphasize appropriate design linkages and context sensitivity in site planning and building design. These are not regulations, but supplement the design standards found in Chapter 18 of the County Code. Persons proposing projects in the TC and UC districts are advised to consult these standards and incorporate them in development plans.

I. SITE PLANNING

SITE AMENITIES

Site amenities and features such as outdoor plazas and public art offer attractive spaces for people to gather and shop and generally create an inviting image for both customers and employees. The use of such amenities can be particularly effective in drawing residents to the developed area. Site amenities provide areas for interaction, enhance the quality of development, and contribute to the character of the area.

1. Design Standards

Larger commercial projects (25,000 square feet of floor area or greater) shall contribute to the creation or enhancement of public spaces by incorporating two (2) or more site amenities. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Patio or plaza with seating area;
- b. Mini-parks, squares, or greens;
- c. Transportation amenities, including bus stops where appropriate;
- d. Customer walkways or pass-throughs containing window displays;
- e. Water feature;
- f. Clock tower;
- g. Public art;
- h. Any other well designed area and/or focal feature that enhances such development and serves as a gathering place.

II. SITE LAYOUT/DEVELOPMENT PATTERN (DEVELOPMENT SETBACK/ORIENTATION)

These Design Standards seek to create modestly scaled commercial structures grouped in clustered settings with pedestrian-oriented open spaces and plazas. The typical monolithic strip commercial retail center is inconsistent with these Design Standards.

SITE LAYOUT AND BUILDING ORIENTATION

The layout of principal buildings and accessory structures and parking areas along a street is an example of a repeated site pattern that creates a cohesive visual identity and attractive pedestrian street scene for an area. Creating a strongly defined street edge will improve an area's visual appeal. This principal applies to suburban as well as downtown locations.

The orientation of a building strongly influences a development site's focus of activity. A building oriented at least in part to an adjoining public street can create a strong presence in the public realm, and can contribute significantly to a pedestrian-friendly built environment. On the other hand, street frontage interrupted by long stretches of parking lot asphalt or other

"empty spaces" can detract from a positive pedestrian experience. These standards encourage the creation of a continuous, defined street edge, whether comprised of buildings, walls, or vegetation, in order to enhance the pedestrian experience, while in return allowing a developer to maximize the developable area of the parcel.

1. Design Standards

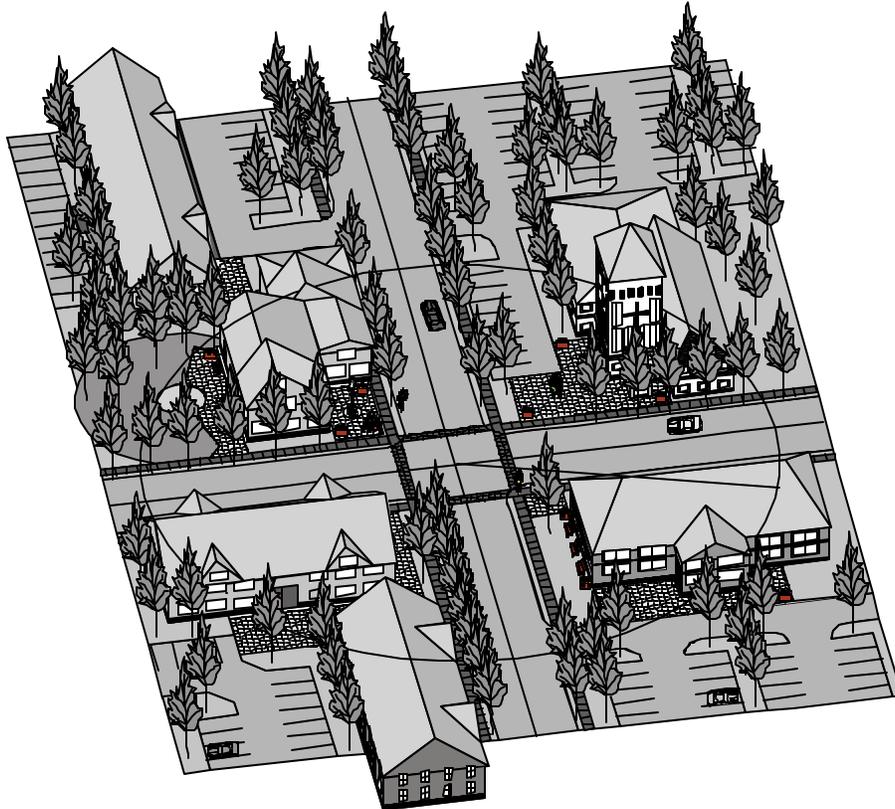
a. General Site Layout Along Major Street Frontages:

- (1) At least a minimum of thirty percent (30%) of a development site's street frontage(s) along major streets (arterials and major collector streets) shall be occupied by a building wall. Such building wall may be part of a principal building, pad site building, or accessory building. In the case of drive-through facilities, a site wall of a minimum three (3) feet in height, that reflects the building architecture may be used to meet the 30% target. However, in no event shall such wall block adequate vehicular sight distance at site entrances or street intersections.
- (2) The remaining frontage along major streets shall be occupied by a decorative architectural feature such as a wall placed on the setback line to screen the parking area, or substantial landscaping, landscaped entryway signage or features, and/or site amenities. However, in no event shall such feature block adequate vehicular sight distance at site entrances or street intersections.
- (3) Sight distance at intersections or entrances shall not be obstructed. Plans shall identify site distance easements at entrances and intersections wherein structures such as signs, walls, or decorative features will not be permitted. Landscaping within such sight distance easements shall consist of plant material that will not reach greater than three (3) feet in height at maturity.

b. Site Layout and Building Orientation at Major Intersections. Major intersections of commercial activity need special attention so that all four (4) corners are linked and function as a whole, and so that a sense of place and "arrival" is maintained or created. Developments located at the intersection of two major streets shall comply with the following standards:

- (1) Primary parking areas and drive-through facilities shall not be located within a 150-foot radius measured from the intersection of the centerlines of the two (2) thoroughfare streets.
- (2) Development located within a 150-foot radius from the intersection of the centerlines of the two thoroughfare streets shall include two or more focal point features which are visible from the intersection streets such as:
 - a. A distinctive design that does not represent standard franchise architecture;

- b. A taller architectural feature or appendage (e.g., a clock tower, spire, or interesting roof form);
- c. Public art or sculpture;
- d. Fountains or other water feature;
- e. Public plazas or other open space; or
- f. Landscape feature.



Development located within a 150-foot radius from the intersection of the centerlines shall include two or more focal point features visible from the intersection

- c. Additions to Strip Retail Centers.
 - (1) To the maximum extent practicable, additions of leasable square footage to strip commercial centers should avoid extending the linear pattern or line created by an existing strip building(s).
 - (2) Additions of leasable square footage or structures should be arranged to help frame and define the fronting streets and the walking and shopping areas along those streets.
- d. Orientation of Entry Facades. Entry facades shall orient towards the primary street (rather than Route 50/301 or highway) or the active pedestrian zone within the site to create an inviting image and consistent front and street edge definition.

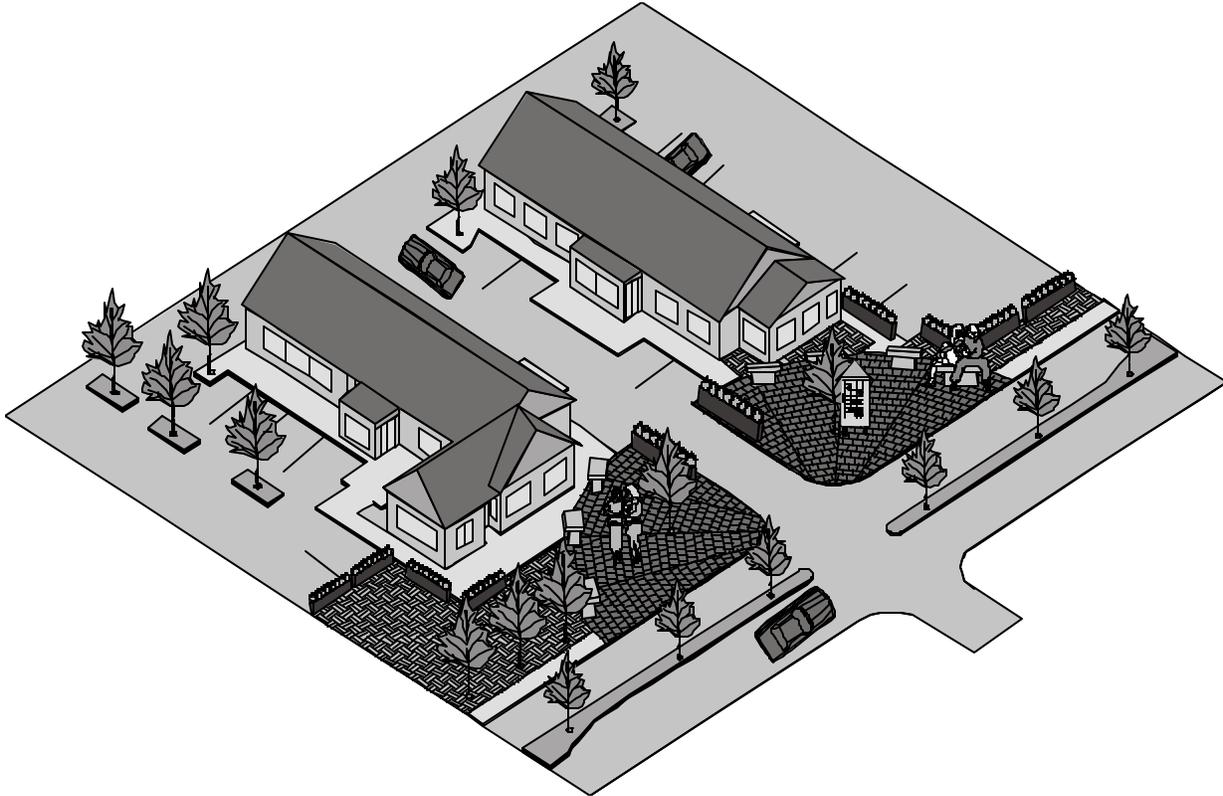
MULTIPLE-BUILDING DEVELOPMENTS/PAD SITES

The siting and design of smaller retail stores, or “pads,” can create an inviting appearance in a larger, multiple-building development by reducing a project’s scale and expanding the range of activities and businesses found within a single development. Adding pad sites to a commercial center can help to improve the development's visual interest by framing entries and placing storefront spaces closer to the street to create a more active street scene.

1. Design Standards

- a. The siting and orientation of these smaller stores shall create spaces that relate to both the primary buildings and the street frontage and shall be architecturally compatible with the primary or anchor buildings of the development.
- b. Location of Pad Sites. Pad site buildings shall be sited along the edge of entry drives or between a large parking lot and the street to help define the streetscape and lessen the visual impact of the parking lot from the street.
- c. Building Orientation On Pad Sites.
 - (1) Any side of a pad site building that directly faces a public street shall contain a combination of at least two (2) of the following:
 - a. customer entrance;
 - b. windows;
 - c. trellises;
 - d. awnings;
 - e. areas of glass block;
 - f. arcades;
 - g. pergolas; or
 - h. planters.
 - (2) Customer entrances shall be emphasized through incorporation of a building recess, projection, canopy, or similar design element.
 - (3) To the maximum extent practicable, spaces between adjacent pad site buildings shall be improved to provide small pockets (preferably heavily landscaped) of customer parking, pedestrian connections, small scale project amenities, or focal points. Examples include, without limitation:
 - a. A landscaped pedestrian way linking customer entrances between two or more pad site buildings;
 - b. A public seating or outdoor eating area;

- c. An area landscaped with live plant materials emphasizing 4-season colors, textures, and varieties; or
- d. Sculptures or fountains.



To the extent possible, spaces between pad site buildings shall incorporate landscaped pedestrian ways, public seating areas, landscaped area, sculptures or fountains.

d. Pad Site Building Design.

- (1) All four (4) walls of a pad site building shall incorporate the same facade and building design as those on the primary commercial building(s) in the development or center, including:
 - a. Roofline or roof materials;
 - b. Facade colors;
 - c. Pedestrian entry locations and entryway architecture/design;
 - d. Amounts of glazing on facades visible from public streets; and
 - e. Other distinctive architectural features.
- (2) Pad site buildings shall incorporate exterior building materials from the material used on the palette of the primary commercial building(s).
- (3) Significant departures from "off-the-shelf" standardized franchise building design may be required to meet the above standards.

RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDING DEVELOPMENT: OPERATIONAL COMPATIBILITY

Commercial development adjacent to or in relatively close proximity to residential uses has to relate well to surrounding development. Such development needs to respect adjacent residential uses and surrounding neighborhoods by ensuring intensive operations, such as loading areas, do not adversely impact neighbors.

1. Design Standards

- a. The Planning Commission may impose conditions upon the approval of development applications to ensure that projects will be compatible with existing neighborhoods and uses, including, but not limited to, conditions on the following:
 - (1) Location on a site of activities that generate potential adverse impacts on adjacent uses such as noise and glare;
 - (2) Placement of trash receptacles;
 - (3) Location of delivery and loading zones; and
 - (4) Hours of Operation.

VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

Vehicular Access and Circulation - Internal vehicle circulation shall provide a clear visual path to provide safe, convenient and efficient vehicular access within and between developments. Circulation patterns shall be designed to limit points of access from major thoroughfares and minimize the impacts of non-residential traffic on adjacent residential properties.

1. Design Standards

- a. Primary Vehicle Access-Large Commercial Centers. (25,000 square feet of gross floor area or greater)
 - (1) Primary access to large commercial centers should be from the major collector street system provided the site has access. In order to maximize the efficiency of the street network, major traffic generators should be located so that their primary access is from a major collector or commercial access road.
 - (2) Large commercial centers should be located at the intersection of major streets so that access is available for both east/west and north/south traffic. Primary access points should be located so that commercial traffic is separated from the residential street system and a sufficient (at least 100 feet or greater depending on sight distance) distance from the intersection to provide turning lanes.

- b. Primary Vehicle Entrances. The number and location of vehicle entrances to a commercial development shall be consistent with the existing or anticipated design of adjacent streets.
 - (1) The number of entry driveways on a collector street shall be minimized in order to reduce the number of conflicting points and facilitate traffic flow.
 - (2) When compliance with the standards is precluded due to the location of driveways on adjoining properties, attempts should be made to obtain alternative access where feasible, including joint access driveways, shared parking with adjacent landowners, access easements to adjoining properties, or access to intersecting streets.

- c. Internal Vehicle Circulation.
 - (1) Internal vehicle circulation patterns shall provide a clear and direct path to the principal customer entrance of the primary building, to outlying pad sites, and to each parking area.
 - (2) Main drive aisles shall be continuous and connect to the main entrance to the development site.
 - (3) Internal intersections must have adequate sight lines, design geometrics, and/or traffic controls to minimize accident potential.
 - (4) In large commercial centers, (25,000 square feet of floor area or greater) a clear system of main circulation drives (containing few or no parking spaces that directly access the main drives) shall be established to carry the highest volumes of traffic within the site.
 - a. To the maximum extent feasible, the intersection of two main circulation drives should be designed as a “T” intersection, rather than a four-legged intersection, to minimize vehicular conflicts.
 - (5) In small commercial centers (less than 25,000 square feet), where traffic volumes are lower and, consequently, pedestrian-vehicular and vehicular-vehicular conflicts are less likely, more flexibility is available in the location and design of internal drives.
 - a. Because of the lower traffic volumes, the length of the entry drive aisle can be shorter.
 - b. The use of four-legged intersections internal to the site can be utilized more extensively.
 - c. Depending on the size of the shopping center and the number and location of access points, fewer restrictions may be placed on the extent to which traffic entering the site is directed to the drive aisles along the building facades.

d. On-Site Truck Traffic/Loading and Circulation.

- (1) Every shopping center is required to provide loading and delivery facilities separate from customer parking and pedestrian areas. Loading and delivery facilities are to be oriented towards the rear of the site. If there are multiple street frontages the loading and delivery facilities shall not be oriented towards the primary or main local streets, and be screened with walls or landscaping from all streets and adjacent properties.
- (2) Due to their greater size and lower maneuverability, truck circulation paths should be designed with larger curve radii and more maneuvering room than the minimum requirements.
- (3) Internal circulation patterns shall be designed to create maximum separation between automobile and truck traffic to minimize accidents and congestion.

e. Vehicle Connections with Adjacent Properties.

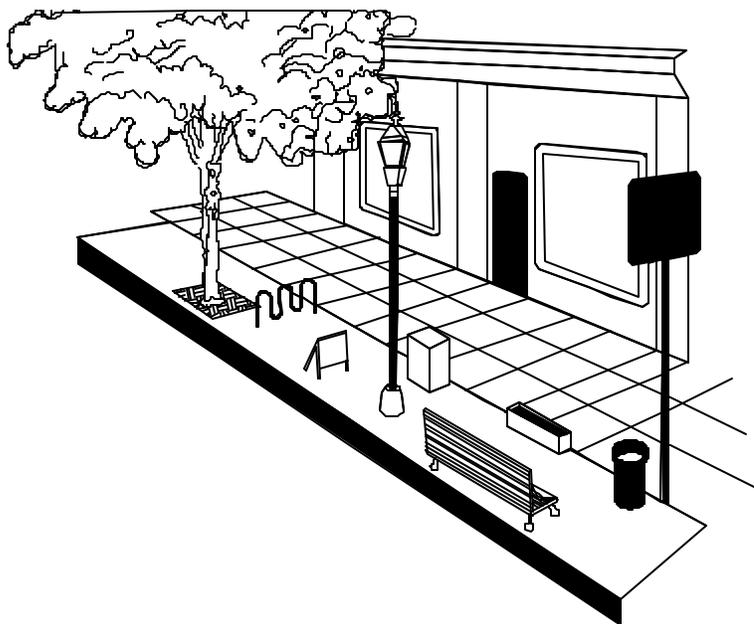
- (1) Connecting parking lots are encouraged to allow customers and residents to drive to shops within the corridor without entering public roads and interrupting traffic and pedestrian flows. Individual curb cuts are to be reduced.
- (2) Adjacent Non-Residential Uses:
 - a. Connections to adjacent non-residential parcel(s) shall be provided by siting access points that connect to the adjacent parcel(s).
 - b. To the maximum extent feasible, common or shared service and delivery access should be provided between adjacent parcels and/or buildings.
- (3) Emergency Access: All commercial developments must comply with the currently adopted building code provisions regarding emergency vehicle access and fire lanes.

PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

By creating a safe, continuous network of walkways within and between developments, pedestrians feel more inclined to safely walk or window shop (rather than drive) between stores. By developing a pedestrian network that offers clear circulation paths from the parking areas to the store entries, a friendlier, more inviting pedestrian environment will be created. Walkways are to provide an inviting and convenient option for pedestrian movement within a development and promote direct pedestrian and bicycle access to neighboring residential, non-residential, and public uses.

1. Design Standards. A detailed pedestrian circulation plan that is ADA compliant must be submitted with all-development applications that shows compliance with the following standards:
 - a. Roadside sidewalks shall be provided with any development.
 - b. Pedestrian Connections. An on-site system of pedestrian walkways shall be designed to provide direct access and connections to and between the following:
 - (1) The primary entrance or entrances to each commercial building, including pad site buildings;
 - (2) Any sidewalks or walkways on adjacent properties that extend to the boundaries shared with the commercial development;
 - (3) Any public sidewalk system along perimeter streets adjacent to the commercial development;
 - (4) To the maximum extent practicable and appropriate, adjacent land uses and developments, including but not limited to adjacent residential developments, retail shopping centers, office buildings, or restaurants;
 - (5) To the maximum extent practicable and appropriate, any adjacent public park, greenway, or other public or civic use including but not limited to schools, places of worship, public recreational facilities, or government offices.
 - (6) All parking areas that serve such primary building; and
 - (7) Site amenities or gathering places.
 - c. Pedestrian Connections to Perimeter Public Sidewalks. Connections between the on-site (internal) pedestrian walkway network and any public sidewalk system located along adjacent perimeter streets shall be provided at regular intervals along the perimeter street as appropriate to provide easy access from the public sidewalk to the interior walkway network.
 - d. Minimum Walkway Width. All on-site pedestrian walkways and sidewalks shall be a minimum of five (5) feet wide; except that walkways adjacent to a parking area, where the front or rear of parked cars may overhang the walkway shall be a minimum seven (7) feet wide.
 - e. Walkways Along Buildings.
 - (1) Walkways Along Primary Buildings: Continuous pedestrian walkways no less than eight (8) feet wide shall be provided along the full length of a primary building along any facade featuring a customer entrance and along any facade abutting customer parking areas.

- (2) Walkways Along Pad Site Buildings: Continuous pedestrian walkways no less than five (5) feet wide shall be provided along the full length of a pad site building along any facade featuring a customer entrance and along any facade abutting customer parking areas, except where the front or rear of parked cars may overhang the walkway the walkway shall be a minimum seven (7) feet wide.



Sidewalk width shall provide adequate space for a clear zone and street furniture.

- (3) Walkways Through Vehicle Areas in Large Commercial Centers: At each point that the on-site pedestrian walkway system crosses a parking lot or internal street or driveway, the walkway or crosswalk shall be clearly marked through the use of a change in paving materials distinguished by their color, texture, or height.

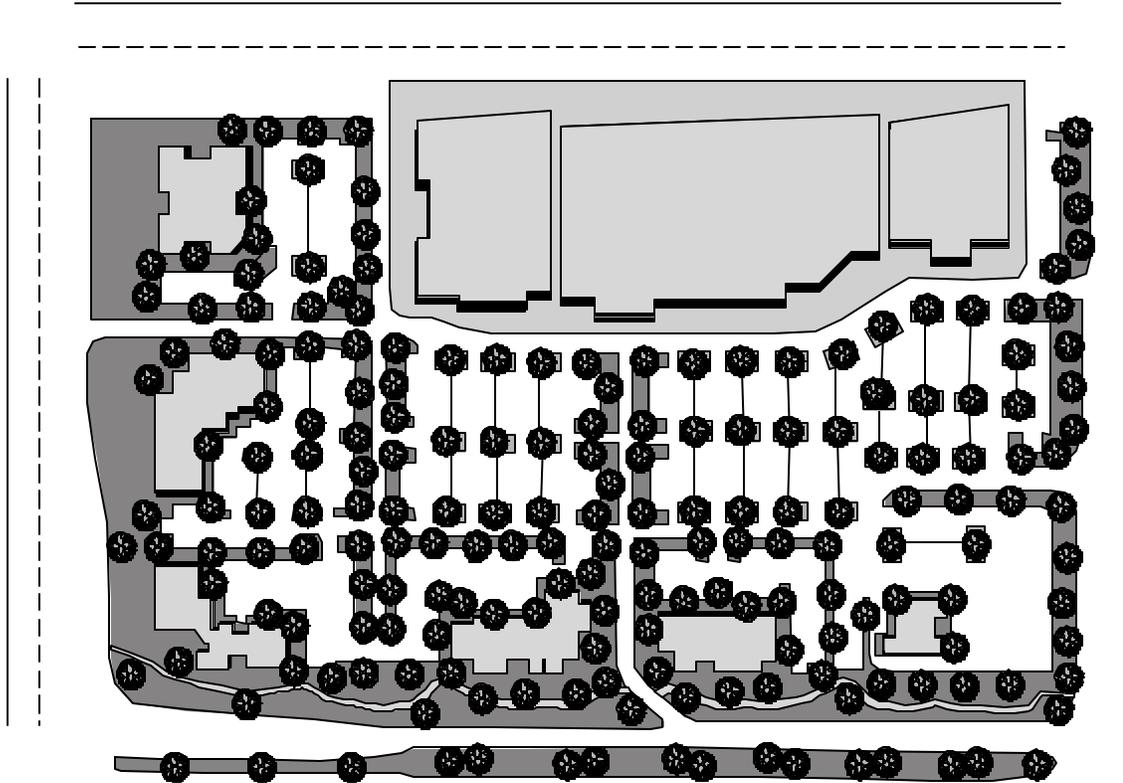
III. PARKING

PARKING AMOUNT AND TYPE

Given the potential for infill/redevelopment projects to develop on smaller or more constrained sites, providing options for shared parking, both on and offstreet is important. While commercial developments needs to have adequate parking for customers and employees, excessive amounts of asphalt is to be avoided since it will detract from a pedestrian environment and may limit appropriate development density.

PARKING LOCATION AND LAYOUT

The typical suburban commercial development pattern of placing large amounts of parking between the fronts of buildings and the adjacent street and between buildings contributes to a bleak and formless arrival experience and a detached relationship between the building and the street. Locating parking along the side and rear of buildings can help reduce the impression of a "sea of parking" while providing convenient automobile and pedestrian access.



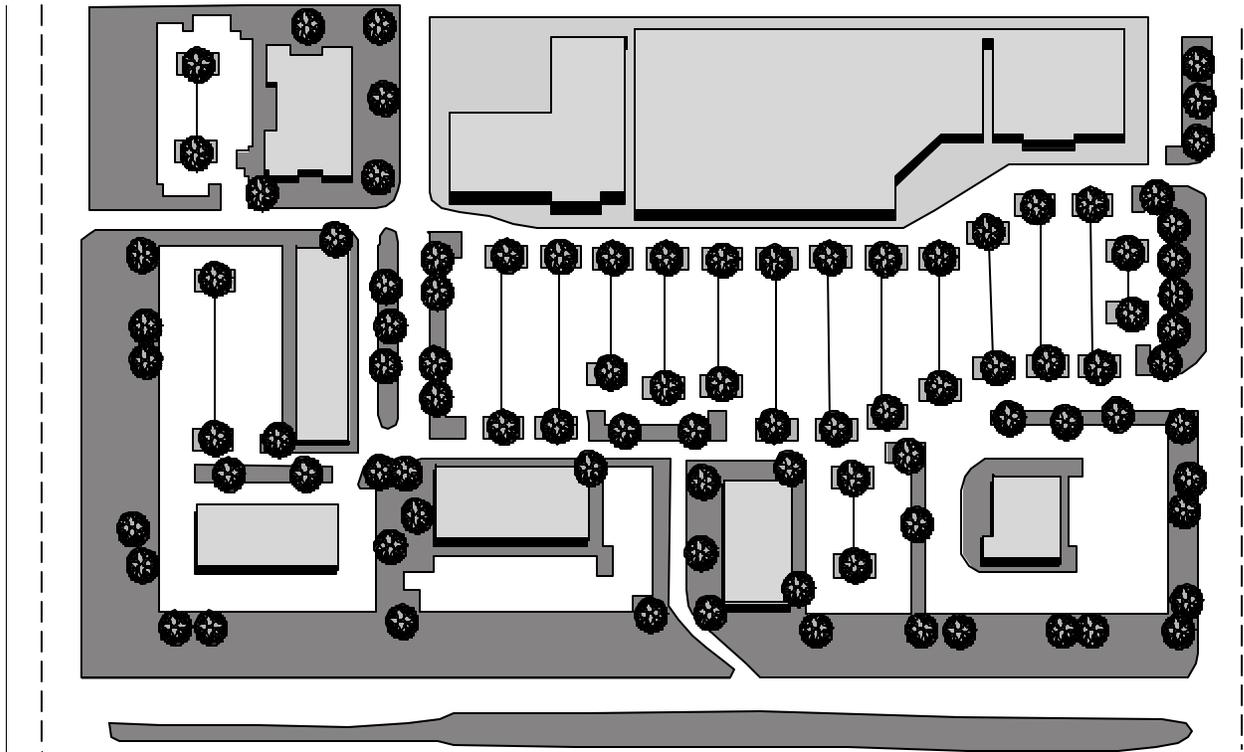
Discouraged

1. Design Standards

a. Parking Location.

- (1) Parking should be to the side and rear of buildings with allowances for shared and off-site parking to the rear of buildings such that a minimum of thirty percent (30%) of the off-street surface parking spaces provided for all uses contained in the development's primary building should be located other than between the front facade of the primary building and the primary abutting street (e.g., to the rear or side of the primary building(s)).
- (2) Connecting rear parking lots shall be encouraged to allow customers and residents to drive to shops within the corridor without entering public roads and interrupting traffic and pedestrian flows. Individual curb cuts shall be reduced.

- (3) Alternative provisions may be considered when the commercial development abuts an existing residential neighborhood.
- b. **Parking Orientation.** To the maximum extent feasible, parking shall be oriented to minimize visual and noise impacts on adjacent residential properties.
- c. **Parking Blocks.** In order to reduce the scale of large surface parking areas, the total amount of surface parking provided shall be broken up into parking blocks containing no more than 40 spaces for large commercial centers (greater and 25,000 square feet of gross floor area) and no more than 26 spaces for all other commercial development:
- (1) Parking blocks shall be separated from each other by landscaping, access drives or public streets, pedestrian walkways, or buildings.
 - (2) Each parking block shall have consistent design angles for all parking within the block.
 - (3) Parking blocks shall be oriented to buildings to allow pedestrian movement down and not across rows (typically with parking drive aisles perpendicular to customer entrances).
 - (4) Through access shall be provided within and between parking blocks.



Preferred
Clear building entry, parking broken into blocks, buildings from the street edge, bermed landscape setback with path.

IV. BUILDING DESIGN

New building construction is to be designed and built to blend with historical Eastern Shore architectural forms (interpretations of colonial and Victorian) in terms of formal characteristics such as shape, height, massing, roof shapes and door and window proportions. For commercial and non-residential building, significant departures from “off-the-shelf” standardized franchise building design may be required to meet these standards.

These building design standards apply to all development, and major rehabilitation projects as well as minor rehabilitation of large commercial centers or mixed use centers.

BUILDING HEIGHT/SCALE/MASSING/FORM

Building design that creates or adds to the visual interest of a streetscape and a pedestrian scale is an essential element. Building height, scale, and massing can be used to emphasize important corners, designate points of entry, and create a visible roofline silhouette. The primary mass of structures is to be designed to include secondary projections that reduce the apparent scale, creates visual interest, and promotes compatibility with adjacent uses. Building design for infill, redevelopment, and renovation projects shall be compatible with adjacent development.

1. Design Standards

- a. **Compatibility With Surrounding Development.** New development, infill and redevelopment projects in areas with an established character shall be compatible with or complement the established proportions and building mass of adjacent developments and/or developments in the vicinity.
- b. **Transition To Adjacent Residential Uses.** Where buildings are adjacent to residential uses, building massing is to be designed to create a transition from the edges of a commercial center inward. To achieve this effect, smaller and lower building mass are to be located near edges of the center where adjacent buildings are smaller or residential in scale.
- c. **Building Facades.** Structures shall have finished architectural façade treatment and detail on all elevations that are visible from public ways or adjoining properties.
 - (1) The building facade shall incorporate wall plane projections or recesses that break-up the overall wall into smaller, appropriately scaled sections. Facades greater than 100 feet in length shall incorporate recesses and projections along at least 20 percent of the length of the façade. For larger buildings, windows, awnings and arcades shall total at least 60 percent of the façade length visible from a public street.(Refer also to the below section on “Architectural Detail: Facades, Entrances, Roofs, Awnings – 2.b.”)
 - (2) Each building facade shall have a repeating pattern that includes instances of either:
 - (a) color change ;

- (b) texture changes;
 - (c) material module change; or
 - (d) expression of an architectural or structural bay through a change in plane, such as an offset, reveal, or projecting rib.
- (3) The above standards may be modified by the Planning Commission if the applicant can demonstrate an alternative building design that significantly articulates a wall plane.
- d. Multi-Story Buildings - Base and Top Treatments. The following standards apply to buildings greater than two stories:
- (1) The composition of the building shall present a clearly recognizable base, middle, and top, or a clearly defined alternative building composition.
 - (2) A recognizable "base" may consist of, but is not limited to:
 - a. Thicker walls, ledges, or sills;
 - b. Integrally textured materials such as stone or other masonry;
 - c. Integrally colored and patterned materials such as smooth finished stone or tile;
 - d. Lighter or darker colored materials, mullions, or panels; or
 - e. Planters.
 - (3) A recognizable "top" may consist of, but is not limited to:
 - a. Cornice treatments, other than just colored "stripes" or "bands," with integrally textured materials such as stone or other masonry or differently colored materials;
 - b. Sloping roof with overhangs and brackets; or
 - c. Stepped parapets.
- e. Consistency of Style. The design of the building shall provide a distinctive quality, consistent, architectural character and style, that avoids monotonous and featureless building massing and design.

ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL: FACADES, ENTRANCES, ROOFS, AWNINGS

Doors, storefront windows, and awnings are examples of building features that add to the character of the streetscape and contribute to the pedestrian-oriented character of places. These elements will both improve the visual interest of development projects and add to the visually unified appearance of the community.

1. Design Standards

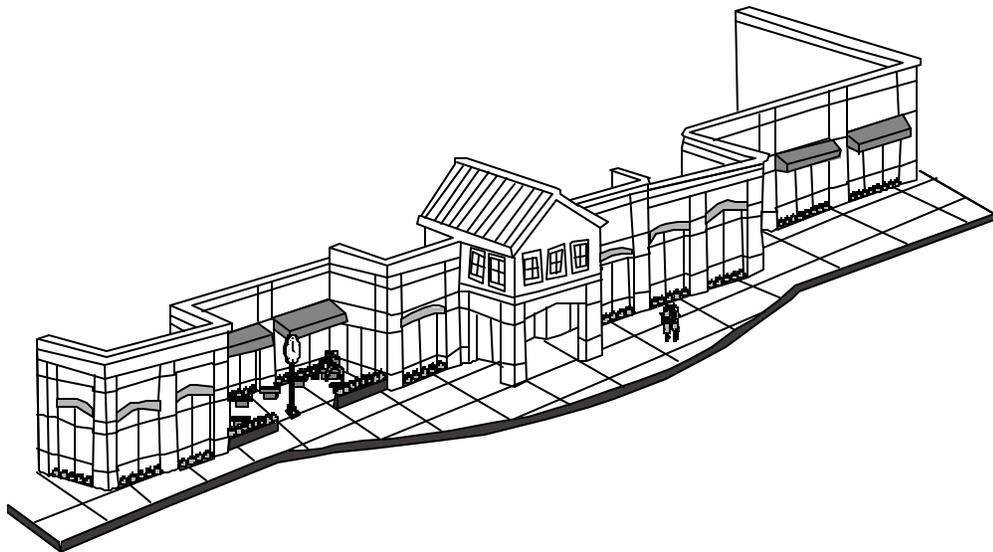
- a. Architectural Compatibility with Surrounding Areas. New development, infill, redevelopment and renovation projects in areas with an established character shall be compatible with or complement the established architectural character of the area in terms consistency of rooflines, roof materials and roof colors; similar window and door patterns, and similar decorative elements.
- b. Building Facades. Facades that face public streets, adjacent development, or connecting pedestrian frontage shall be subdivided and proportioned using features such as windows, entrances, arcades, arbors, and awnings along no less than sixty percent (60%) of the facade. A minimum of ten percent (10%) of the entire such facade area shall be composed of transparent materials, unless the Planning Commission finds that such transparency would be inconsistent with the operational requirements of the building. At least one-half of this amount shall be provided so that the lowest edge of the transparent material is no higher than 4 feet above the street level.
- c. Customer Entrances. Building facades facing a primary access street shall have clearly defined, highly visible customer entrances that include features as the following:
 - (1) Canopies or porticos,
 - (2) Overhangs, recesses/projections,
 - (3) Arcades,
 - (4) Raised corniced parapets over the door,
 - (5) Distinctive roof forms,
 - (6) Arches, outdoor patios,
 - (7) Display windows,
 - (8) Integral planters or wing walls that incorporate landscaped areas and/or places for sitting.
- d. Roofs.

Pitched roofs and gables are encouraged. Where pitched roofs are not practical from an engineering basis, false gables and mansards can achieve a similar appearance. Flat roofs with exposed mechanical fixtures are prohibited.

For structures that are 25,000 square feet or greater, variations in rooflines are required to reduce scale and add visual interest. Such roofs shall have at least two of the following features: overhanging eaves, sloped roofs and three or more roof planes.

To the maximum extent practicable, where buildings are adjacent to residential uses, rooflines should be of a similar height or stepped down to a similar height to enhance the compatibility with nearby residential areas. In addition, roofs shall include features such as the following:

- (1) Parapets concealing flat roofs and rooftop equipment such as HVAC units from public view are appropriate. Parapets shall feature three dimensional cornice treatment and should be the primary means of screening roof top equipment;
- (2) Overhanging eaves, extending no less than three (3) feet past the supporting walls;
- (3) Sloping roofs that do not exceed the average height of the supporting walls;
- (4) Three (3) or more roof slope planes.



e. Downspouts. All downspouts shall be concealed from view.

f. Awnings.

- (1) Awnings shall be no longer than a single storefront.
- (2) Fabric awnings are encouraged; canvas awnings with a matte finish are preferred. Awnings with high gloss finish are discouraged. Illuminated, plastic awnings are prohibited.

- (3) Rigid frame awnings shall stop at the top section and shall not be included in the valance.
- (4) Awning colors shall be compatible with the overall color scheme of the facade from which it projects. Solid colors or subtle striped patterns are preferred.
- (5) Awnings for rectangular openings shall be simple, shed shapes. Semicircular shapes should not be used for arches.



BUILDING MATERIALS AND COLORS

The exterior materials and colors used in a building's design create impressions of not only the individual building, but of the image of the overall community. New development, infill, redevelopment and renovation shall use high-quality materials and colors that are compatible with residential areas and reflect the historic character of established commercial areas.

1. Design Standards

- a. Applicants shall submit a color palette and building materials board as part of their development plan application.
- b. Building Materials.
 - (1) All buildings shall be constructed or clad with materials that are durable, economically maintained, and of a quality that will retain their appearance over time, including but not limited to natural or synthetic stone; brick; stucco; integrally colored, textured, or glazed concrete masonry units; high-quality prestressed concrete systems; water-managed Exterior Insulation Finish Systems (EIFS); or glass.
 - (2) Natural wood or wood paneling should not be used as a principal exterior wall material. Durable synthetic materials with the appearance of wood should be used.

- (3) Exterior building materials shall not include the following:
 - a. Smooth-faced gray or stained concrete block, painted concrete block, tilt-up concrete panels;
 - b. Field-painted or pre-finished standard corrugated metal siding;
 - c. Standard single or double tee concrete systems; or
 - d. Barrier-type EIFS.
- (4) In selecting exterior building materials, consideration shall be given to the appropriateness of the materials to the scale of building proposed.

c. Building Color.

- (1) Color schemes are to be selected to tie building elements together, relate separate (freestanding) buildings within the same development together, and be used to enhance the architectural form of a building.
- (2) All building projections, including, but not limited to, chimneys, flues, vents, gutters, and downspouts, shall match or complement in color the permanent color of the surface from which they project.
- (3) Facade colors must be low reflecting, subtle, and neutral. Intense, bright, black, or fluorescent colors are prohibited.

V. WOODLANDS

Disturbance of woodlands for any development activity must be in compliance with Section 18:1-66 (Woodlands) of Chapter 18 of the County Code.

VI. LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING

PLANT MATERIALS

Landscaping is a visible indicator of quality development and must be an integral part of every commercial project, and not merely located in leftover portions of the site. Landscaping is intended to visually tie the entire development together, define major entryways and circulation (both vehicular and pedestrian) and parking patterns, and, where appropriate, help buffer less intensive adjacent land uses.

1. Design Standards

- a. Site landscaping shall include plants similar in form and scale to existing vegetation in the neighborhood or area.

- b. Each area required to be landscaped shall include trees, shrubs, ground cover, and sod. Areas not covered in live plant material shall be covered by woody mulch, other organic or inorganic mulch, or other natural materials other than exposed gravel and aggregate rock.

SITE PERIMETER LANDSCAPING ABUTTING STREET EDGES

The consistent use of plantings along street edges provides a visual cohesion along streets and helps buffer automobile traffic. The intent of these standards is to provide an attractive, shaded environment along street edges that gives visual relief from continuous hard street edges, focuses views for both pedestrians and motorists, and increases the sense of neighborhood scale and character.

PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING

Parking lot landscaping shall be used to minimize the expansive appearance of parking lots, provide shaded parking areas, and mitigate negative acoustic and visual impact of motor vehicles.

1. Design Standards

a. Interior Parking Lot Landscaping.

(1) The interior of all parking lots containing ten (10) or more spaces shall be landscaped according to the interior parking lot landscaping standards, as prescribed below. Each parking block shall be considered an individual parking lot for the purposes of these interior parking lot landscaping requirements. These requirements for interior parking area landscaping are in addition to the requirements set forth below for perimeter parking area landscaping.

- a. Parking spaces in a parking lot shall extend no more than ten (10) parking spaces without an intervening interior landscaped island no less than 6 feet in width and 18 feet in length, or at least the length of the adjacent parking space. Landscaped islands shall be planted with a minimum of one tree accompanied by shrubs, live ground cover, or sod.
- b. Lighting for parking lots may be contained within an interior parking lot landscaped area provided the landscaped area is a minimum of 200 square feet in area and provided the landscaping and trees, at maturity and as maintained, shall not obstruct the illumination path.
- c. All parking lot islands shall be landscaped with organic material. Rock is not an appropriate material.

- d. Multi-family developments and non-residential parking lots shall contain at least the minimum amount of plant units required by Section 18:1-72 (Landscaping standards for parking lots) of Chapter 18 of the County Code.
- b. Perimeter Parking Area Landscaping.
- (1) Parking lot edges shall be buffered from public rights-of-way, public open space, and adjacent properties.
 - (2) A buffer yard and/or street buffer shall be established along the perimeter of all parking areas according to the height and material standards as set forth in Article XI, Section 18:1-76 (Table of required buffer yards and street buffers) of Chapter 18 of the County Code.

SERVICE AREA SCREENING

Service, loading, and dumpster areas create visual and noise impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. These impacts shall be mitigated by appropriately orienting and visually screening service areas, including trash receptacles, from public rights-of-way and adjacent uses.

1. Design Standards

- a. To the maximum extent feasible, areas for outdoor storage, truck parking, trash collection or compaction, loading, or other such service areas shall not be visible from abutting streets and shall be oriented toward on-site service corridors.
- b. No areas for outdoor storage, trash collection or compaction, loading, or other such uses shall be located within twenty (20) feet of any public street, public sidewalk, or internal pedestrian walkway.
- c. Loading docks, truck parking, outdoor storage, trash collection, trash compaction, and other service functions shall be incorporated into the overall design of the building and landscaping so that the visual and acoustic impacts of these functions are fully contained and out of view from adjacent properties and public streets. Screening materials shall be the same as, or of equal quality to, the materials used for the primary building and landscaping and shall be higher than the feature being screened.
- d. Non-enclosed areas for the storage and sale of seasonal inventory shall be permanently defined and screened with landscaping, walls and/or fences. Materials, colors, and design of screening walls and/or fences, and of any covering for such area, shall be compatible with those used as predominant materials and colors on the primary building(s).

MECHANICAL/UTILITY EQUIPMENT SCREENING

Mechanical and utility equipment detracts from the character of an area. Steps shall be taken to mitigate the negative visual and acoustic impacts of mechanical and utility equipment systems on surrounding development.

1. Design Standards

- a. Mechanical/utility screening shall be an integral part of the building structure and architecture and not give the appearance of being "tacked on" to the exterior surfaces.
- b. All mechanical equipment and utilities shall be screened.
- c. Parapets should be the primary means of screening roof top mechanical/utility equipment. Parapets shall feature three dimensional cornice treatment. Also refer to the section on "Roofs" under Architectural Detail in these Design Standards.

FENCING AND WALLS

While fences and walls are sometimes necessary to buffer uses, they can create visual barriers. Fencing and walls shall be provided that complement the design of the overall development and surrounding properties.

1. Design Standards

- a. Fences and Walls.
 - (1) General: Privacy fences and walls are allowed only in side and rear setbacks. Decorative fences (such as picket or split rail) and hedges may be used in front setbacks if they are enclosing a parking area that abuts a public street, or a defined dining area, or public gathering space.
 - (2) Materials: Walls and fences are to be constructed of high quality materials, such as decorative blocks, brick, stone, treated wood, and ornamental metal. Chain link fencing is prohibited.
 - (3) Breaks for Connections: Breaks in the length of a perimeter fence should be made to provide for required pedestrian connections to the perimeter of a site or to adjacent development, such as perimeter sidewalks and public trails.
 - (4) Maximum Length: The maximum length of continuous, unbroken, and uninterrupted privacy fence or wall plane shall be no more than fifty (50) feet. Breaks be provided through the use of columns, landscaping pockets, transparent sections, and/or a change to different materials.
 - (5) In no event shall a fence, wall, or hedge obstruct vehicular sight distance at intersections, site entrances, or on-site drive aisles.

VII. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AREAS

Stormwater management areas shall be incorporated into the landscaping of the site and shall have the appearance of a landscape amenity rather than a fenced utility area.

VIII. LIGHTING

These standards are intended to eliminate the adverse impacts of light through spillover; provide attractive lighting fixtures and layout patterns that contribute to unified exterior lighting design of nonresidential developments; and provide exterior lighting that promotes safe vehicular and pedestrian access to and within a development, while minimizing impacts on adjacent properties.

1. Design Standards

- a. Applicants shall submit a unified lighting plan with final plan applications for all commercial new redevelopment, infill, redevelopment and renovation projects subject to these lighting standards. A point-by-point calculation to show compliance with the lighting standards is required. The calculations shall be measured at grade for lighting levels within the development site. A cut sheet of proposed fixtures, including a candlepower distribution curve, shall also be submitted. A vertical plan footcandle calculation shall be submitted for property lines abutting residential properties.
- b. Compatibility with Surrounding Area. The lighting plan shall consist of recognizable, distinctive designs and fixtures that are compatible with or complement surrounding neighborhoods.

2. Lighting for Security.

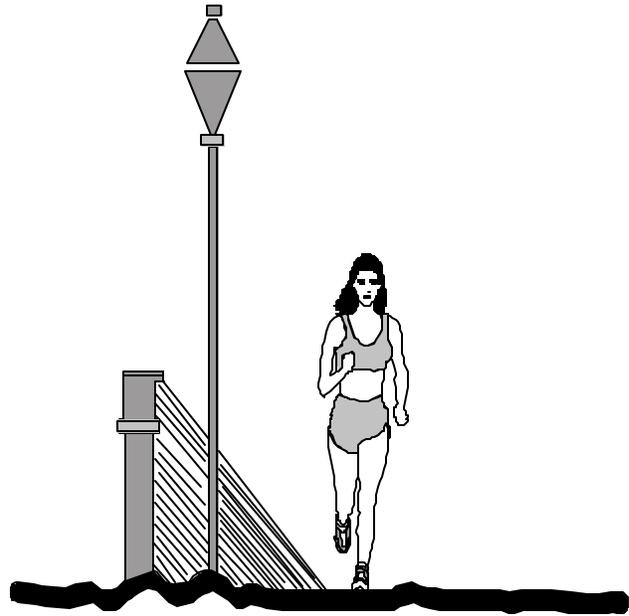
- a. Accent lighting on buildings is encouraged as a security feature.
- b. Interior and exterior lighting shall allow for surveillance and avoid isolated areas.
- c. Security lighting shall be fully shielded and use a decorative fixture.

3. Design of Fixtures/Prevention of Spillover Glare. Light fixtures shall use cutoff lenses or hoods to prevent glare and light spill off the project site onto adjacent properties, buildings, and roadways.

4. Color of Light Source. Lighting fixtures shall be color-correct types such as halogen or metal halide to ensure true-color at night and ensure visual comfort for pedestrians.

5. Lighting for Pedestrian Areas

- a. Pedestrian Walkway Lighting. Pedestrian-level, bollard lighting, ground mounted lighting, or other low, glare-controlled fixtures mounted on building or landscape walls shall be used to light pedestrian walkways.
- b. Lighting Height. Light pole, building-mounted, or tree-mounted lighting structures shall be no more than 20 feet high. Bollard-type lighting shall be no more than 4 feet high.
- c. Illumination Levels. Pedestrian areas and driveways shall be illuminated to a minimum average of 1 footcandle, with a uniform maximum to minimum ratio of 1:5.



6. Parking Lot Lighting Standards

- a. Luminaire Fixture Height. The height for luminaire fixtures shall not exceed thirty-three (33) feet as measured to the top of the fixture from grade.
- b. Average Maintained Footcandles.
 - (1) The maximum average maintained footcandles for all parking lot lighting shall be 3 footcandles; the minimum average maintained footcandles should be 1 footcandle. For the purpose of this standard, the average maintained footcandle shall be calculated at 0.8 of initial footcandles.
 - (2) The maximum maintained vertical footcandle at an adjoining residential property line shall be 0.5 footcandles, measured at 5 feet above grade.
- c. Uniformity Ratios. Luminaire fixtures shall be arranged in order to provide uniform illumination throughout the parking lot of not more than a 6:1 ratio of average to minimum illumination, and not more than 20:1 ratio of maximum to minimum illumination.

7. Awning Canopy Lighting

- a. Average Maintained Footcandles. The maximum average maintained footcandles under a canopy shall be 35 footcandles.

- b. Fixtures. Acceptable fixtures and methods of illuminate include:
 - (1) Recessed fixtures incorporating a lens cover that is either recessed or flush with the bottom surface (ceiling) of the canopy.
 - (2) Indirect lighting where light is beamed upward and then reflected down from the underside of the canopy. Such fixtures shall be shielded such that direct illumination is focused exclusively on the underside of the canopy

IX. SIGNAGE

Signage must be scaled appropriately to appeal to both pedestrians walking on the adjacent sidewalks and to vehicles driving at reduced speeds. The following sign standards are intended to create aesthetically pleasing and cohesive signage.

- 1. Design Standards
 - a. All signs shall comply with the signage requirements set forth in Chapter 18 of the County Code.
 - b. On all street frontages, signage material shall be integrated into the overall design of the building.
 - c. Signs shall be located to complement the architectural features of a building such as above the building entrance, storefront opening, or other similar feature.
- 2. Any existing nonconforming billboards shall be removed as a condition of development approval.