City of Durango
Commercial Use
Design Guidelines

December 2004

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Special Thanks
A special thank you to all the community members who participated in the workshops during the design guidelines process.

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines apply to all commercial uses within the City of Durango and specially designated commercial corridors within and adjacent to the city. Some of these are older areas where development patterns are established and the adjoining neighborhoods are a part of the design context. Others are newer locations where character is emerging and natural resources are a part of the scene. In each case, these corridors are important places where the character and functional qualities of the area can greatly enhance the community. These corridors also serve as key entry routes into the core of the city and set expectations for the quality of development downtown. For these reasons, the city seeks to assure that development in the commercial corridors will result in dynamic, attractive neighborhoods and also will reflect the overall goals for high-quality design for the city at large. It is in this spirit that these design guidelines are produced.

This section establishes the objectives of the design guidelines, links the guidelines to adopted city policies and provides an overview of their organization. In addition, the process for developing the guidelines is explained.

Background

The City of Durango wishes to protect its unique character, which is a combination of spectacular natural features, early building traditions and diverse cultural heritage. The community is fortunate to have a strong downtown with a rich architectural history that reflects the natural features of the region and allows for views to the surrounding mesas and slopes. These features provide direction for outlying commercial development, while it is understood that they will be adapted in different ways. The community wishes to respect the design traditions of the city core along the commercial corridors, while supporting the unique identity and character of the individual corridors.

In this document, a neighborhood is a collection of properties that may support a variety of uses, including residential, commercial and institutional.

Relationship to other goals & policies

These design guidelines are the outgrowth of existing community design goals and policies which are defined in other official documents. They demonstrate a consistent commitment to promoting livability and protecting design traditions of the region. The following policies help establish the basis for design guidelines:

City Code of Ordinances

The city guides the character of development through the Land Use and Development Code (LUDC), Chapter 27. Zoning categories and corresponding regulations establish standards for land development, including lot size, setbacks, parking standards and street design. In any case where there is a conflict between the development code and these guidelines, the development code shall take precedence over the guidelines.

The maps herein are representational. Questions as to whether certain commercial properties or uses are within the corridors shall be resolved by this statement: all commercial uses or properties within the city and its planning area are subject to these guidelines.

Durango Comprehensive Plan – 1997
The Comprehensive Plan provides a vision to manage growth and development in Durango. The plan also defines community goals, objectives, policies and strategies intended to meet the long-term vision for the city, such as promoting neighborhood compatibility, enhancing the aesthetic appeal of major road corridors and mitigating negative impacts of future growth.

Grandview Area Plan – Adopted January 2004
This plan provides a recent addition to the Comprehensive Plan and for the long-term development of the Grandview Area, located along Highway 160 between US 550 at Farmington Hill and State Highway 172. The plan identifies future land uses for the Grandview Area and includes a variety of proposed uses including residential, commercial, institutional and civic. The Grandview Area Plan also envisions a portion of the area to be developed as a traditional neighborhood development (TND) that includes the regional medical center, mixed use (retail, commercial and housing), parks, open space and schools. Planning within this corridor should be compatible with the entire vision for the area.

Durango US 550 Concept Plans - Colorado Department of Transportation – 2002
Due to traffic and pedestrian issues along US Highway 550, the Colorado Department of Transportation evaluated the corridor for short term improvements. This study area was defined as from US Highway160 to Animas View Drive, encompassing the Camino del Rio segment of US Highway 550. Problem areas were identified and remediation strategies prepared and prioritized. Future development along this corridor should consider both the impacts to identified problem areas and potential incorporation of remediation strategies.

The scope of the guidelines

These guidelines shall apply to all commercial uses within the city and any commercial improvements in the designated areas that require a city permit, typically a building or sign permit, or where the city and county have agreed they should apply. When improvements are proposed, then the city will consider the appropriateness of the project within the context of these guidelines. It must determine that a sufficient number of the guidelines have been adequately met.

In addition to other commercial areas and uses, these guidelines apply along the following commercial corridors:

- US Highway 550/US Highway160 S –
  from their merge point at Farmington Hill to the intersection of 550 and 160 S with 160 W and Camino del Rio
- Grandview/US Highway160 –
  from Farmington Hill east to Elmore's Corner at Highway 172
- US Highway 160 West –
  from the city limits to the intersection with Highway 550 and 160 South
- Highway 3/Sawmill Road –
  from the intersection with Highway 550/160 to Santa Rita Drive

- 8th Avenue & College Avenue -
  along 8th Avenue from the intersection of Santa Rita Drive to the intersection of College Avenue, then west on College to the alley east of 3rd Avenue
- North Main Avenue -
  from the bridge over the Animas River north of the Central Business District to the north city limits

It is the general intent that the review process should apply to areas abutting the highway where development could affect the character and function of the corridor. This generally is the full depth of a parcel; however, in some circumstances where the parcel is quite deep or bisected by a top of slope, a lesser limit is defined. In these cases the general development code standards or special guidelines that are adopted as a part of a development project shall apply to the remainder of the property.

How the guidelines were developed

The guidelines reflect a dialogue from citizens interested in the future of Durango who worked in coordination with City Planning staff, the consultant, boards and commissions in a series of public meetings, focus groups and Design Review Board work sessions. As part of the process, participants helped to identify the key features of the community that should be defined as a part of new development and then worked to articulate appropriate design principles that respond to these unique features of the community.

See the diagram on the following page for an illustration of the organizational structure of the design guidelines.

How the guidelines are organized.

The guidelines address four levels of design and corridor specific recommendations:

- **Level 1: Neighborhood Design**
  These focus on integrating individual projects with broader community development objectives, which seek to link properties together into a sense of "neighborhood." Even a commercial corridor is envisioned as functioning as a cohesive unit, and in this sense is to be considered a "neighborhood." It also defines the individual design objectives for each corridor.

- **Level 2: Site Design**
  These address the manner in which a building is placed on its site and in which site functions are organized. It includes guidelines for landscaping, parking and treatment of open space. Building setback requirements are also provided for each of the corridors.

- **Level 3: Building Design**
  These address the basic mass, scale and materials of buildings. They address only broad-scale topics and do not dictate architectural styles.

- **Level 4: Sign Design**
  These address the overall sign design and the relationship of sign size with site location and street speeds and the differentiation of sign types on a site.

- **Corridor Specific Design**
  These address the design principles specific to each corridor. They the design objectives, descriptions and street sections by area.

Organization of the Design Guidelines

The design policies, principles and guidelines outlined in the Commercial Corridor Guidelines are provided in four basic sections: The first section presents broad design objectives. The following three sections address neighborhoods (urban design), site design and building design respectively, while the last section addresses corridor specific principles.

This section presents key design objectives that apply to all projects designated for review within the Commercial Corridors and other commercial uses.

Key Design Goals and Objectives

This section presents guidelines that address how individual properties should be designed to create a sense of neighborhood.

LEVEL 1
Neighborhood Design

These guidelines address ways in which individual parcels should be planned to enhance appearance and function.

LEVEL 2
Site Design

These guidelines address basic elements of architectural design, such as mass and scale and materials.

LEVEL 3
Building Design

These guidelines address how individual signs should be designed , the coordination of sign types on a property and sign size limits.

LEVEL 4
Sign Design

These guidelines address issues specific to individual corridors.

LEVEL 5
Corridor Specific

Guideline format

Each guideline topic is presented in a "hierarchical" format.

- First, a policy statement is provided.
- Secondly, specific guidelines are provided that respond to the policy statement.
- Supplementary information which includes examples of how guideline compliance could be achieved is then provided in a series of "bullets."
- This text is usually supplemented with an illustration.

Note that all of these components constitute formal design policy and may be used in determining the appropriateness of a proposal.

In many cases, compliance with a guideline can be achieved by meeting one of the specific measures described in the "bullet" list. In a case where the specific bullets do not apply, the guideline statement itself shall, and if that also does not apply, then the policy statement shall be used. In this way, flexibility is provided within a consistent structure.

It is understood that there is a dynamic interaction among the guidelines and that, in some cases, one design guideline may not be met fully, in order to more fully meet a guideline of higher priority. In order to indicate those guidelines which are of highest priority, a plus symbol (+) is used at the end of certain guideline sentences.

Refer to the Land Use and Development Code (LUDC), Chapter 27 for further information regarding design policies and standards.

Note: The Commercial Use Design Guidelines are intended to address the primary commercial corridors within the City of Durango and its planning area (aka the Urbanizing Area). These include US 160/550, US 160/Grandview, Highway 3/Sawmill Road, US 160 West, North Main Avenue as well as 8th Avenue & College Avenue. While these designated corridors are a focus of this document, in general all commercial uses will be reviewed and approved as necessary using the design principles and policies as outlined in this document.

Definitions

These definitions shall apply to terms related to compliance in the text that follows:

Appropriate - In some cases, a stated action or design choice is defined as being "appropriate" in the text. In such cases, by choosing the design approach referred to as "appropriate," the reader will be in compliance with the guideline. However, in other cases, there may be a design that is not expressly mentioned in the text that also may be deemed "appropriate" by the city.

Consider - When the term "consider" is used, a design suggestion is offered to the reader as an example of one method of how the design guideline at hand could be met. Applicants may elect to follow the suggestion, but may also seek alternative means of meeting it. In other cases, the reader is instructed to evaluate the ability to take the course recommended in the context of the specific project.

Context - In many cases, the reader is instructed to relate to the context of the project area. The "context" relates to those properties and structures adjacent to, and within the same block, or adjacent to the proposed project.

Design traditions - These are the typical methods of building in Durango from the 1890s through the 1950s that helped to establish a sense of continuity in the city. These traditions include the ways of siting buildings and their typical scale, form and materials.

Flexible Measure - In some cases there is flexibility given to certain policies or guidelines. These flexible measures (FM) are slight increases or decreases in the requirements that are given at the Planning Director's discretion.

Guideline - A "guideline" is a requirement that must be addressed, in order to be in accordance with the intent of this document.

Historically significant - In general, an historically significant property is one that is at least 50 years old or older, associated with significant people or events or conveys a character of building and design found during the city's period of significance.

Human scale - A building that is designed with materials and details that are familiar in their dimensions and can be perceived in proportion to a person.

Imperative mood - Throughout this document, many of the guidelines are written in the imperative mood. The reader is often instructed to "provide" a special design element or to "respect" an existing feature. For example, one guideline states: "Use a consistent planting palette throughout a property." In such cases, the user shall comply. The imperative mood is used, in part, because this document is intended to serve an educational role as well as a regulatory one.

Inappropriate - Inappropriate means impermissible. When the term "inappropriate" is used, the relevant design approach shall not be allowed.

Major site development - A commercial, institutional or business use containing 20,000 or more square feet of floor area and multifamily residential uses containing 50 units or more.

Neighborhood - In this document, a neighborhood is a collection of properties that may support a variety of uses, including residential, commercial and institutional.

Pedestrian-friendly - Having features that provide interest to people walking. These include buildings of a human scale, with display windows and other decorative features, as well as landscaping along a walkway edge.

Planning Director's discretion - In some instances there may be a case where a project could be provided with special exemptions from the requirement listed herein as a means of providing incentives to encourage preferred development scenarios.

Preferred - In some cases, the reader is instructed that a certain design approach is "preferred." In such a case, the reader is encouraged to choose the design option at hand. However, other approaches may be considered.

Primary facade - The primary facade is the principal elevation of a building, usually facing a street or other public way. On a corner lot, the primary facade is the one with the most prominent entrance.

Shall - Where the term "shall" is used in a design guideline, compliance is required. For example, one guideline states: "The front of a primary structure shall be oriented to the street."

Should - The term "should" typically appears in a policy statement. If the term "should" appears in a design guideline, compliance is strongly encouraged, but is not required.

Standard - A "standard" is a requirements found in the City of Durango's Land Use and Development Code (LUDC).

Typology - A collection of design elements that are categorized by use. In this document, a set of street designs are organized in a streetscape typology.

Chapter 1
The Design Traditions of Durango

Community residents and visitors alike strongly value the character of Durango. They describe the ways in which the beauty of the natural setting establishes a backdrop for vital neighborhoods and streets with distinct identities. Many of these features are considered a part of the traditional character of the city that should be reflected in the commercial corridors. These design traditions are summarized in this section, and should be respected when planning improvements to properties.

What is the Traditional Design Character of Durango?

Durango's natural setting and dramatic views are its greatest assets. Sloping land forms, stands of trees and views to the mountains and river corridor are some of the most popular features. These contribute to a sense of living in a "special place." By providing physical links to trails as well as maintaining a visual connections, these features define Durango as a unique place.

Even within the city, people value places that provide a sense of connection, through extensive landscaping that reflects the native palette and with building designs that "fit into" the environment.

Durango conveys a small town atmosphere.

- Places remain accessible.
- People are friendly.
- The community has a diverse culture.
- One can easily see and experience the natural environment.

Highway 160 West, an entry point into Durango from the Mesa Verde area, is defined by natural vegetation and steep slopes.

The natural environment is ever-present.

The land itself is a key feature.

- The distinct topography, including mesas, mountains and knolls, is reflected in the neighborhoods and corridors of the city.
- Rock outcroppings provide a sense of connection with the land.
- The topography also defines certain neighborhood boundaries and view sheds.

The Animas River is a highlight along Highway 160/550, with the Animas River Trail allowing pedestrian and bike access adjacent to the river.

Open vistas enrich the setting.

- Views to the mountains and other scenic features abound. Views to the Animas River, mesas, mountains and the hogback are especially important.
- Nighttime skies are dark, providing views to the stars.

The Animas River is a highlight.

- The presence of the Animas River is a key feature. This is a particularly strong experience along key corridors and the Animas River Trail.

The climate enhances the quality of life.

- It encourages outdoor activities.
- It also influences landscape design.

The public realm is a unifying framework.

In some areas, the street design conveys a distinct character.

- Key corridors act as central spines in some neighborhoods.
- On-street parking narrows the perceived street width.
- Street furniture and decorative features provide accents.
- Relatively narrow street widths in older neighborhoods have a friendly scale.
- Sidewalks are often separated with street trees and planting strips.

Parks and open spaces provide focal points for neighborhoods.

- Santa Rita Park, Fassbinder Park and Viles Park are examples.
- Convenient access to open space, such as the Animas River Trail, is also valued.

Cultural resources enhance livability and act as landmarks for individual neighborhoods.

Examples are:

- Fort Lewis College
- Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad
- Durango Library
- Durango Arts Center
- Animas Museum

Fassbinder Park provides a focal point for the neighborhood and an amenity along the North Main corridor.

The older core of Durango is a model of a "livable" environment.

The core city itself, including the downtown and its close-in residential areas, offers a model for development. It has a distinct identity that is a combination of individual building designs but, because certain common elements are used, the result is a neighborhood that has a sense of unity. This balance between individual elements and "systems" that integrate the area is a key feature. Even though its specific design elements may not appear elsewhere in the city, certain fundamental characteristics exist that could provide inspiration for design approaches citywide without literally copying downtown.

The core area of Durango includes the following features, which should inspire development in the Commercial Corridors:

The core area provides a diversity of experiences.

- Its streets are active with people.
- It is a "mature city" with a sense of history.
- It offers a variety of experiences for visitors and residents.
- Its people are diverse. They are of different age, economic and ethnic groups. It is important to continue to offer opportunities for this mix of people.

Circulation systems are integrated.

- Sidewalks, crosswalks and other paths provide a continuous circulation system for pedestrians.
- Distances between buildings are walkable and hospitable.
- It is also bicycle friendly and few conflicts exist with pedestrians.
- Regional trails connect to the "finer-grained" pedestrian and bicycle systems within the area.
- The automobile shares priority for the streets with pedestrians.
- Parking is subordinate to other uses. It does not dominate the site.
- Pedestrian links exist between buildable areas and natural places.

Design is regionally inspired.

- Buildings stand close together; they are not separated by parking lots.
- Indigenous materials appear in buildings and landscape designs.
- In many cases, building and landscape designs are integrated and structures seem to grow from the earth.
- Local stone and brick establish a common materials palette.
- Similar building details are repeated frequently and reflect local skills.
- Traditional buildings are retained and reused, providing a sense of connection with the past.

In the core of Durango, buildings stand close together; they are not separated by parking lots.

Downtown buildings often include local materials that contribute to the character of the community. Local stone and brick establish a common materials palette.

The core of Durango offers a variety of experiences for visitors and residents.

Older neighborhoods are "pedestrian friendly."

- Buildings are of a human scale.
- Primary entrances are oriented to the sidewalk.
- Parking is subordinate to the overall street scene.
- Buildings have a "transparent" quality, with substantial amounts of windows facing the street.

In the core, buildings are oriented to pedestrian ways, not parking areas.

What does this profile of Durango's character mean?

Durango has a distinct character that enhances the quality of life here.

It is a combination of natural and man-made assets.

The valued features are ones that balance individual designs with common themes to result in a neighborhood identity.

This character can be defined with an objective set of terms.

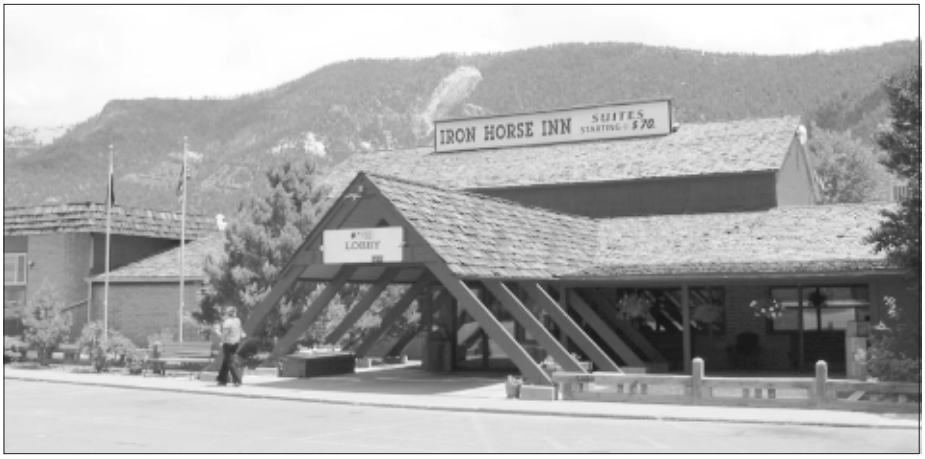
This includes basic neighborhood framework elements such as street designs, siting principles such as setback patterns, and building design including materials palettes.

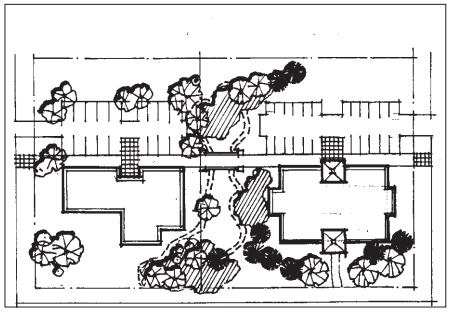
This description of the features that the community values can help everyone better understand the Durango context.

It should serve as a basis for design policies and investment strategies such that future development will build upon the community's own assets.

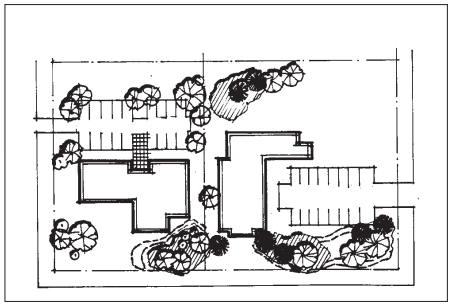
Chapter 2
Design Principles for All Commercial Properties

This chapter presents design principles that apply to all commercial uses in the City of Durango. It also provides the foundation for the design policies and guidelines that follow in subsequent chapters. This chapter also illustrates how a variety of the design guidelines can be combined to create "neighborhoods" that are attractive and function well. The one exception is that Downtown Durango is addressed in a separate set of guidelines. Some of these principles will apply primarily to commercial corridors and larger collections of commercial uses and may not be practical for smaller sites.





Encouraged: Natural resources areas are coordinated between adjacent properties.



Discouraged: Natural resource areas are not linked.

Commercial Design Principles

(These principles apply primarily to commercial corridors and larger parcels.)

Natural Features

Special assets of the natural environment should be highlighted in the commercial corridors.

- Views to natural features, including the mountains and ridge lines, should be respected.
- Distinctive land forms and rock formations should be incorporated in development when feasible.
- Existing trees should be protected and incorporated as assets in developments.
- "Soft" transitions in the landscape should occur between built neighborhoods and the forest edges. An abrupt change from the native forest to formal, exotic plantings should be avoided.
- Connections to public open space and natural features between properties and neighborhoods should be provided, particularly where it is identified in the City's general plan or other public planning documents.

The Civic Framework

Infrastructure improvements in the public realm should help to give a distinct identity to each corridor and support the design goals for the area.

- These may include the design of streetscapes, public buildings and parks.

Parks and open spaces should give identity to individual corridors.

- Public open spaces should abound throughout each corridor.
- Each new development also should provide adequate dedicated green space on site, to the extent feasible.

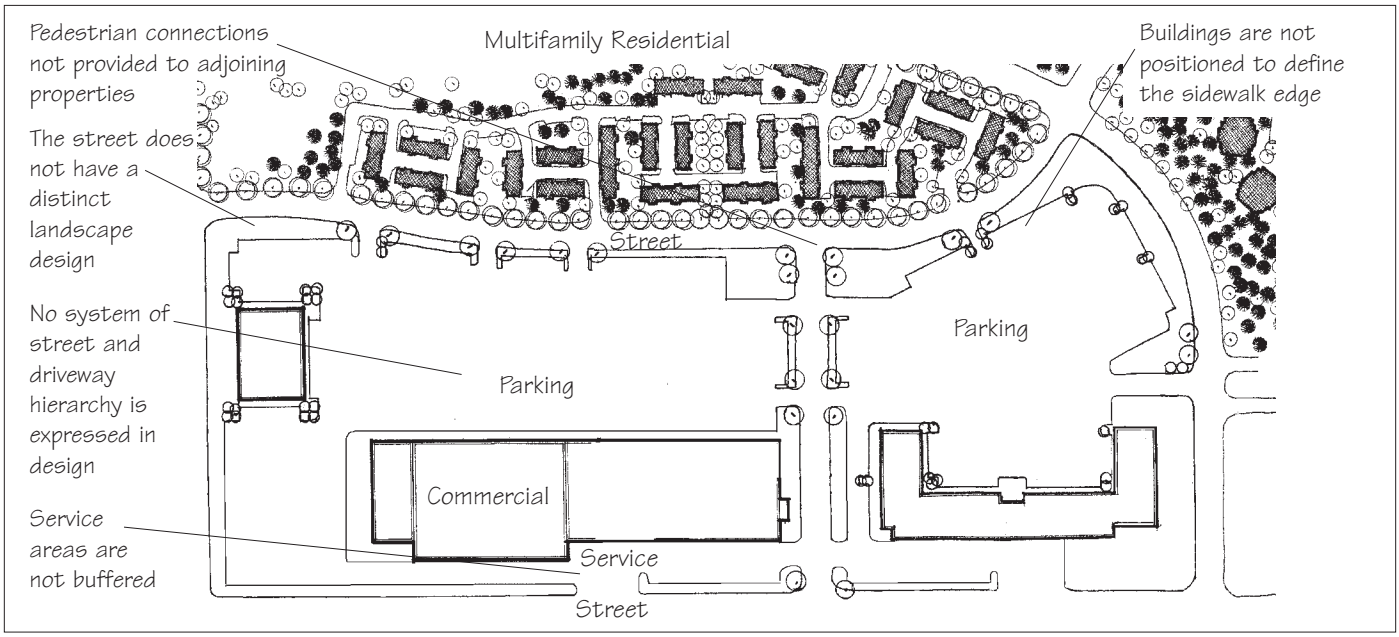
Pedestrian and bicycle circulation systems should be coordinated throughout the corridors.

- Urban trails should link developments with adjoining neighborhoods.
- Public sidewalks and walkways should link primary destinations (parking areas and development) as well as with regional trails.

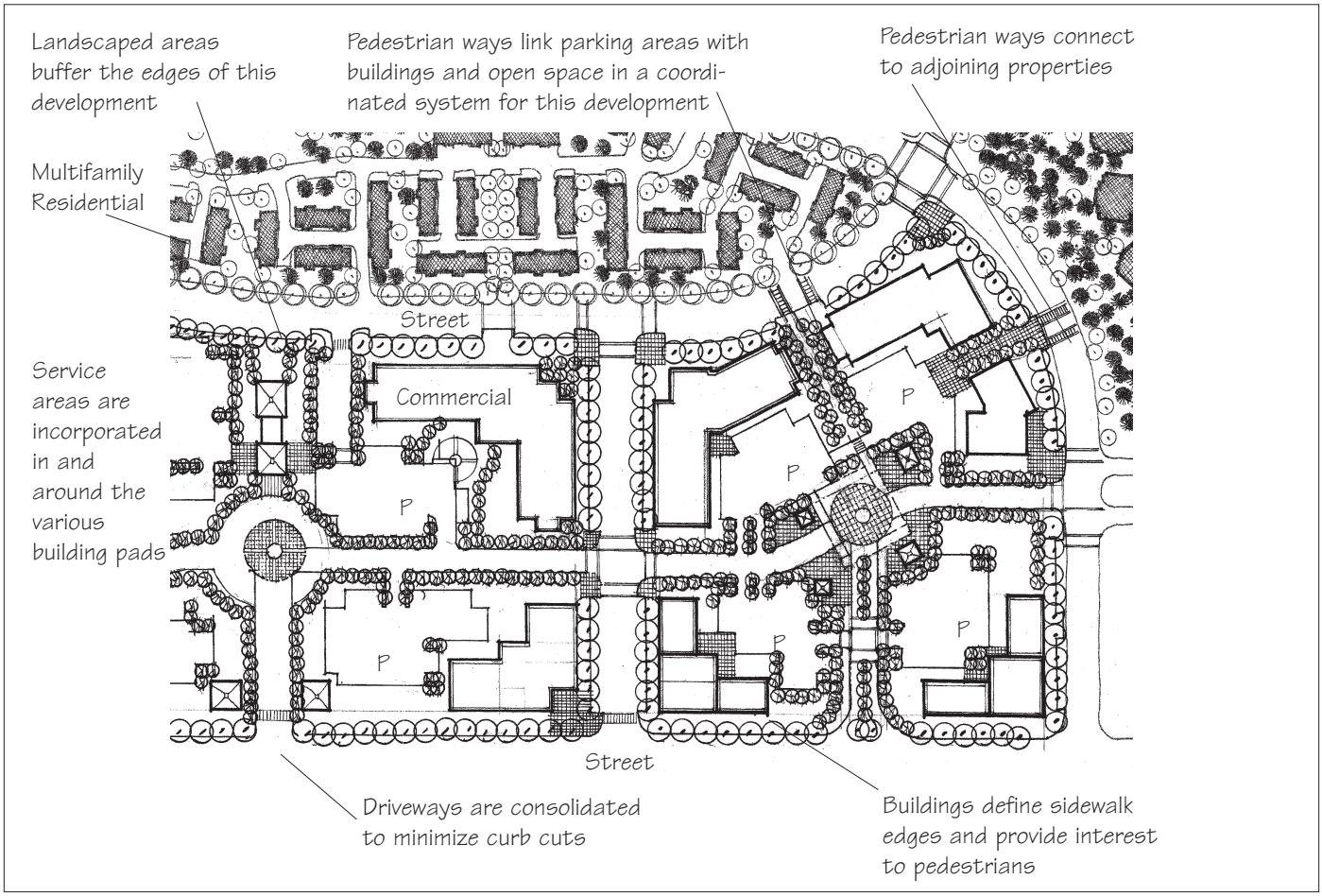
Each street should have a distinct landscape design that contributes to the overall character of a corridor.

- The type of street should be established in response to the broader community objectives for the character and function of each corridor.

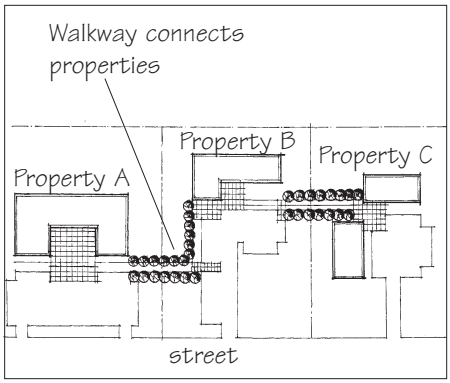
These two alternative site plans for a hypothetical site illustrate the design principles addressed in this chapter.



Scenario A, Discouraged: Design goals and principles not met in a commercial setting



Scenario B, Encouraged: Design goals and principles met in a commercial setting



Pedestrian routes should be planned to provide access from adjoining properties to buildings on the site.

Neighborhood development

Each project should contribute to a sense of a greater neighborhood.

- Each project should be considered as a part of the surrounding neighborhood, not an isolated development.
- Site and building designs should balance establishing a visual continuity for the city with individual design approaches.
- In general, buildings within a commercial corridor should have a similar orientation to the street and to other public spaces.
- Each project should provide a connection to pedestrian systems that are a part of the street organization.

Each project should help to create positive open spaces for public enjoyment and neighborhood use.

- For example, when open space is required for landscaping or resource conservation, consider opportunities to plan these areas such that they can be used, or at a least observed, by the public as assets.
- Parking lots should be subordinate to overall site design, when feasible.

Each project should seek opportunities to combine and share resources with neighboring projects.

- For example, open spaces reserved on individual sites should be positioned such that they combine (visually and perhaps functionally) with those of adjoining properties, when feasible.

Each project should help to create an integrated circulation system that links the property with adjoining uses.

- Connections to adjoining uses should help knit individual properties with others in the neighborhood.
- Pedestrian routes should be planned to provide access from adjoining properties to buildings on the site.
- Automobile circulation should be efficient, and conflicts with pedestrians should be minimized.

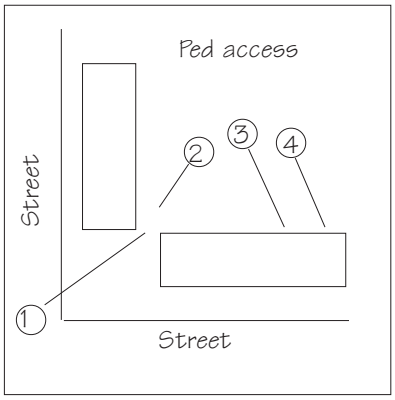
Building designs should reflect the traditions of Durango; however, they should be products of their own time, not imitative of designs in the downtown.

Traditional commercial buildings have these four features, which may be interpreted in new ways along the commercial corridors:

- Each building is “pedestrian-friendly.”
- Traditional materials of the region are emphasized.
- Building forms relate to the design traditions of the community.
- Basic building colors reflect Durango traditions.

Application of the guidelines in a strip commercial setting

In this case study, a row of small retail shops are organized in an L-shaped building that frames the corner of a commercial intersection. Parking is located to the interior of the site.



Reference Plan for images seen on this page.

Photo 1:
- *Masonry walls are appropriate materials.*
- *Display windows face the street and provide interest for pedestrians.*
- *A small plaza anchors the corner.*
- *A walkway through the building leads from the corner to parking in the rear.*

Photo 2:
- *A walkway leads from the street to parking in the rear.*

Photo 3:
- *Storefronts also face the interior parking court.*
- *Varied roof forms break up the building mass.*

Photo 4:
- *Landscaping softens the parking area.*

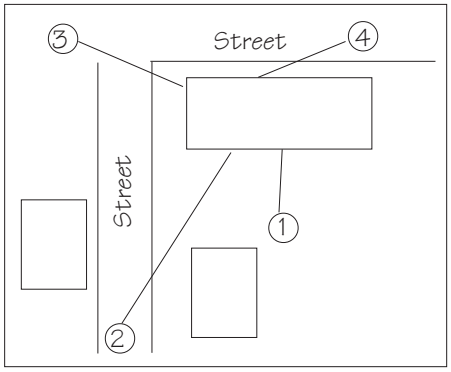
Application of the design goals in a "big box" commercial setting

The photographs on this page illustrate the application of the design guidelines in a big box setting.

Photo 1:
• A pedestrian walkway leads to the primary entrance of the building.
• The parapet line is varied to reduce building mass.

Photo 2:
• A "pad site" building is positioned at the sidewalk edge in front of the big box retail building.
• A one-story canopy shields display cases and reduces building scale.

Photo 3:
• Display cases provide interest to pedestrians along side and rear walls.
• Stucco surface is detailed to convey a sense of scale and provide interest.



Reference Plan for images seen on this page.

Photo 4:
• The "rear" of the building is designed to orient to uses across the street.
• A public entrance is also provided on this facade.

CHAPTER 3
NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN GUIDELINES

This chapter focuses on urban design concepts that connect individual properties and help knit them into the fabric of a neighborhood. They apply to all commercial uses and especially to properties in the Commercial Corridor Overlays. It is particularly important that these policies and guidelines be met in larger development projects where there are more opportunities to achieve the concepts that are expressed.

A. Open Spaces

Open space that can be enjoyed, both visually and functionally, should be provided in a project, when feasible. The open space of an individual parcel should be coordinated with that of adjoining properties as well, such that mutual benefits can be maximized.

Guidelines:

1. **Preserve open space in a development whenever feasible.**
   - Places that include mature stands of trees and distinctive land formations are examples of important open space to preserve.

2. **Enhance high quality open space when it exists in key locations.**
   - Where opportunities exist, reserve open space where it will abut that of adjacent properties to increase the visual impacts of these areas.
   - Coordinate open space with that of adjacent parcels such that they are visually associated and are interpreted as a larger area.
   - Also position open space to link access points with those of adjoining properties.

3. **Organize uses to maximize natural assets of the site.**
   - When a detention facility is to be provided, position it in open space and design it to be an amenity.
   - Locate service areas away from natural open space that is retained on the site.
   - Provide public access for open space, when feasible.

Places that include mature stands of trees and distinctive land formations are examples of important open space to preserve.

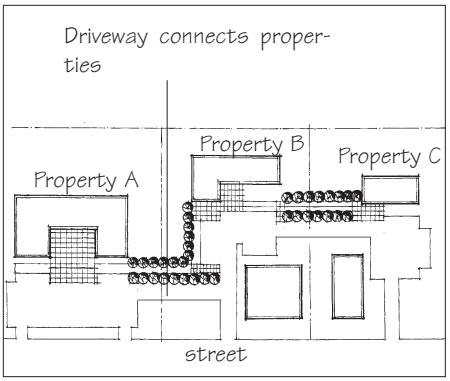
In this chapter:

It is understood that there is a dynamic interaction among the guidelines and that, in some cases, one design guideline may not be met fully, in order to more fully meet a guideline of higher priority. In order to indicate those guidelines which are of highest priority, a plus symbol (+) is used at the end of certain guideline sentences.

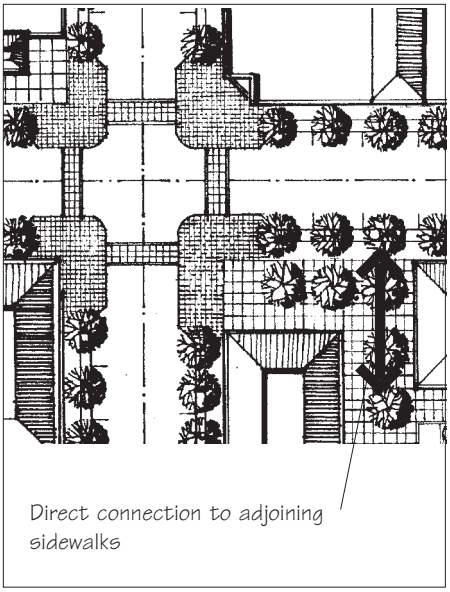
B. Auto Connections

Policy:

Connections to auto circulation systems on adjoining properties should be provided, when feasible, to permit convenient access and to reduce traffic on abutting public streets. The cumulative benefit of doing this will sometimes be contingent upon cooperation with adjoining property owners.



Appropriate: Pedestrian access routes linking abutting properties.



Appropriate: Pedestrian connections to public sidewalks are provided.

Guideline:

1. Provide direct automobile access to an abutting property, when feasible.

- Even where an adjoining parcel is presently undeveloped, reserve the opportunity to provide a connection in the future.
- A cross-property easement may be used to assure access.

C. Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections

Policy:

Convenient pedestrian and bicycle access should be provided among properties to achieve a sense of being an integrated neighborhood and to reduce dependence upon automobiles. Access to regional trail systems also should be provided.

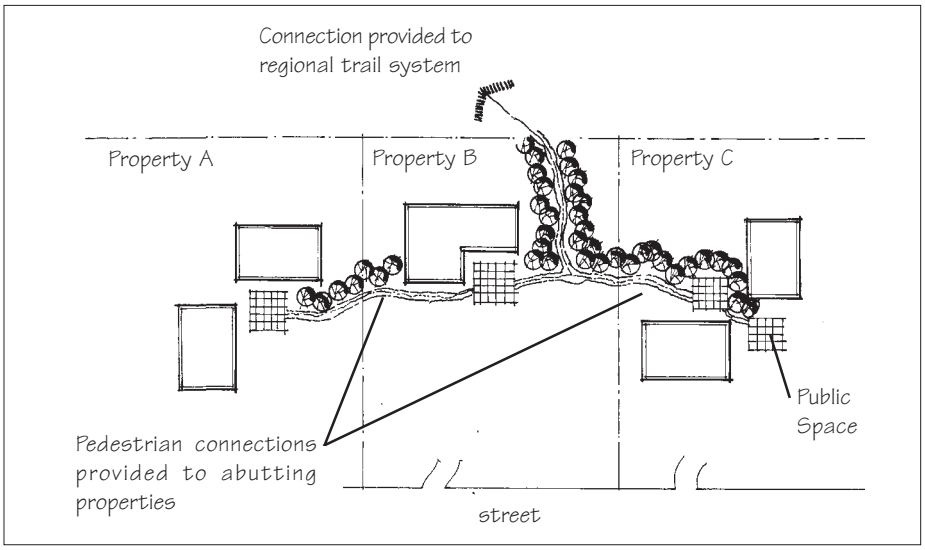
Guidelines:

1. Provide convenient connections to regional pedestrian and bikeway circulation systems.

- Provide a clearly defined, direct connection to adjoining public sidewalks.
- Also provide connections to regional trails when they abut a property or are in close proximity.

2. Provide convenient pedestrian and bikeway connections among abutting properties.

- Create an internal walkway that will link to those of adjacent properties.



Appropriate: Connections to pedestrian systems are provided.

Provide connections to regional trails when they abut a property or are in close proximity.

D. Public Transit Connections

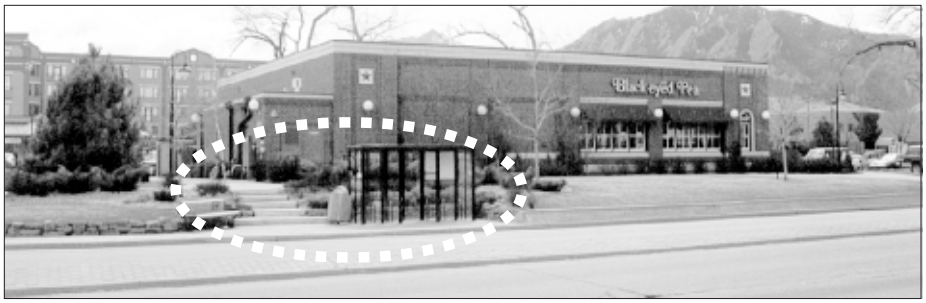
Policy:

Access to public transportation systems also should be convenient in order to promote their use. Even where transit service is not presently available, consideration should be given to potential routes that may benefit from well-positioned bus stops in the future.

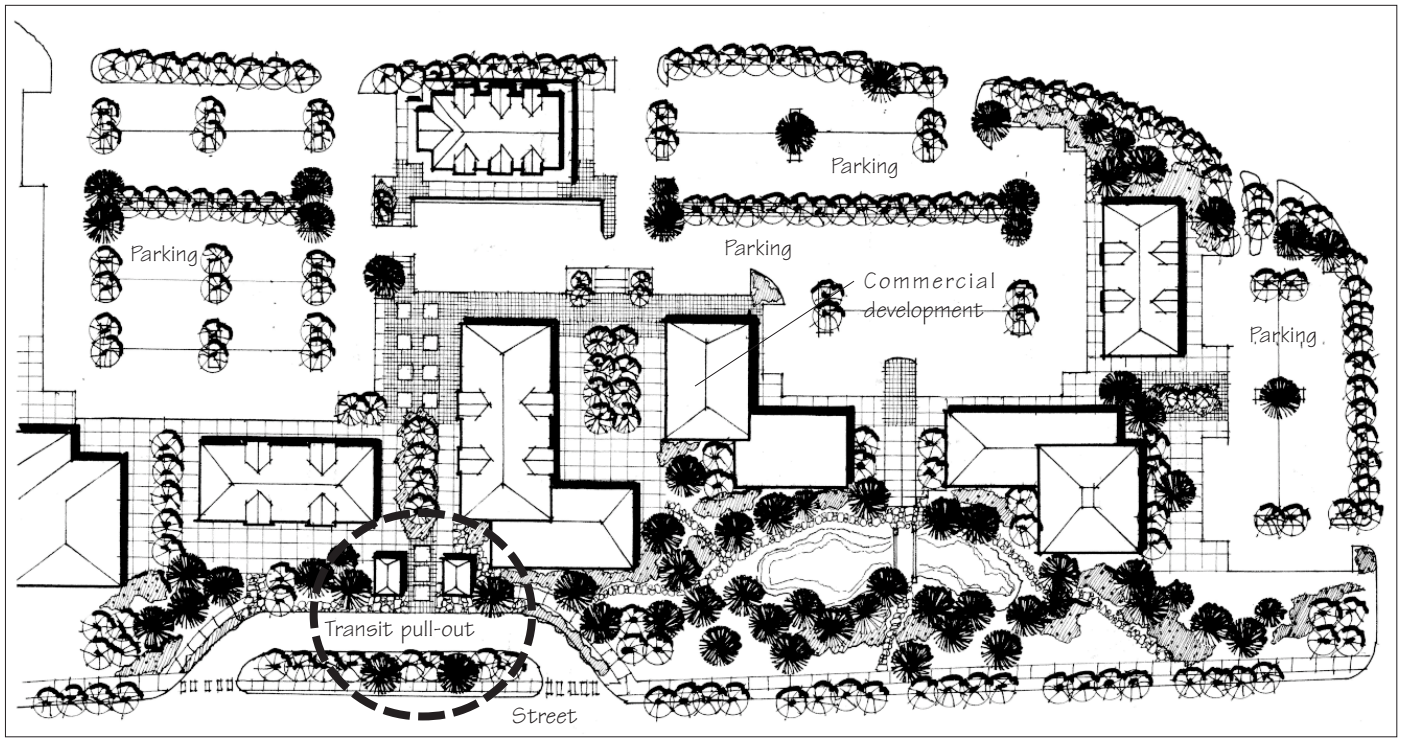
Guidelines:

1. **Provide a convenient walkway to an abutting public transit stop.**
   - This walkway should link the primary site functions to the transit stop.

2. **Provide space for a bus pull-out area when feasible.**
   - This may be appropriate where additional right of way is available.



Appropriate: Provide a convenient walkway to an abutting public transit stop.



Access to public transportation systems also should be convenient in order to promote their use.

E. Street Character

In addition to the design features described in this section, special streetscape elements may be selected when an area plan is developed. For example, a distinctive light standard may be chosen, along with a collection of benches and waste receptacles, much as was adopted for downtown.

Guideline:

1. The use of a coordinated set of street furnishings is encouraged.

CHAPTER 4
SITE DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section addresses the organization of uses on a site, the layout of pedestrian and automobile circulation, the development of open space, the orientation of buildings and landscape design. They apply to all commercial developments citywide. In many cases, design policies set forth here also relate to other regulations in the city's Land Use and Development Code. Where conflicts exist, these policies and guidelines take precedence, except where state or federal laws mandate certain standards.

A. Natural Features

Policy:
A significant natural feature on a property should be incorporated as an asset in a site plan. For example, major rock outcrops, flood plain, cliffs, and mature trees should be incorporated into the development, when feasible. In addition, when adjacent properties are developed, natural resources should serve as unifying elements.

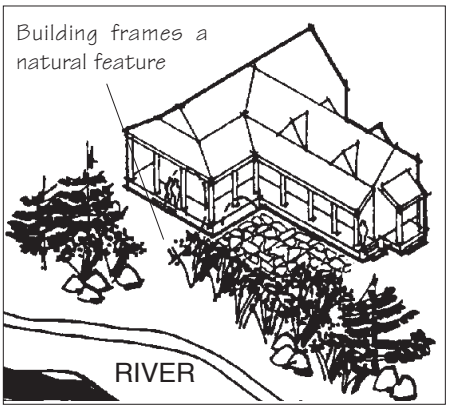
A significant natural feature on a property, such as mature trees, should be incorporated as an asset in a site plan.

Guidelines:

1. **Preserve and enhance existing significant natural resources that are shared in the area.**
   - Enhance existing vegetation and landscaping, particularly mature trees.
   - Preserve and/or enhance major drainage ways.
   - Note however, that a "noxious" tree which is inappropriate in Durango, need not be preserved.

2. **Minimize negative impacts on natural resources found on abutting properties.**
   - Minimize excavation that may be visible from adjacent properties.
   - Terrace cuts into landforms with retaining walls and plant materials, for example.

3. **A building shall be positioned to enhance significant natural features that exist on a site.**
   - Locate an entry plaza such that it provides a view to an existing rock outcropping.
   - Avoid destroying natural features to create a building site, when feasible.



A building shall be positioned to enhance natural features that exist on a site.

Cultural resources, which include properties of historic significance and potential archeological remains, may occur along the Commercial Corridors and should be preserved when feasible.

Views to natural features also should be maintained. Significant views may occur from major public open spaces, street intersections, bridges and roadway overlooks.

B. Views

Policy:

Views from the public way to natural features also should be maintained. Therefore, view opportunities should be identified for all major site developments. Significant views may occur from major public open spaces, street intersections, bridges and roadway overlooks.

Guideline:

1. Enhance views from the public way to scenic natural features and landmarks, when feasible. (+)

- Locate a building to maintain views as they are seen from the public way.
- Site buildings in relation to adjoining properties to frame a view as it may be observed from public rights-of-way. Avoid completely blocking such a view with a large building mass.

C. Cultural Resources

Policy:

Cultural resources, including prehistoric archaeological (below-ground) and/or above ground historical properties occur along the Commercial Corridors. These are community assets that should be addressed. Negative impacts on these resources should be avoided.

Guidelines:

1. Preserve historic buildings, when feasible.

- Designating significant buildings and structures as historic sites is encouraged.
- When feasible, preserve a historic building in place, through adaptive re-use incorporating it into a new development.
- When preservation is not feasible, document the building in photographs or drawings before altering, removing or demolishing it.

2. Leave archeological resources in place, when feasible.

- Consider avoiding potentially significant archeological resources when locating structures in a site plan.
- Avoid disturbing known archeological resources, if feasible.
- •. If archeological materials are discovered, consider evaluating and documenting them when conditions permit.

Note: There are Colorado state laws that address the treatment of pre-historic burials that are encountered in excavation.

D. Topography

Policy:

Site work should be planned to protect the assets of the existing topography.

Guidelines:

1. Minimize cut and fill on a site.

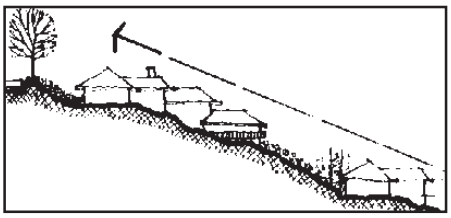
- Divide large grade changes into a series of benches and terraces, where feasible.

2. A road or driveway shall follow existing contours, when feasible.

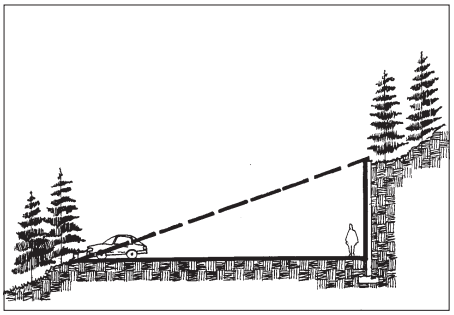
- Screen a road cut with a rock wall, plant materials or a building.

3. Design a building foundation to conform to existing topography rather than creating extensive cut and fill.

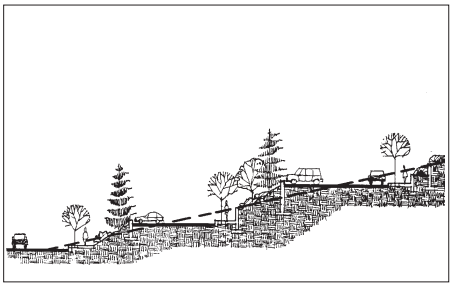
- Step the foundation of a building to follow site contours, when feasible.
- If stepping the foundation is not possible, disguise the cut with building placement and/or building walls, and provide a landscape buffer system at the top of cut.



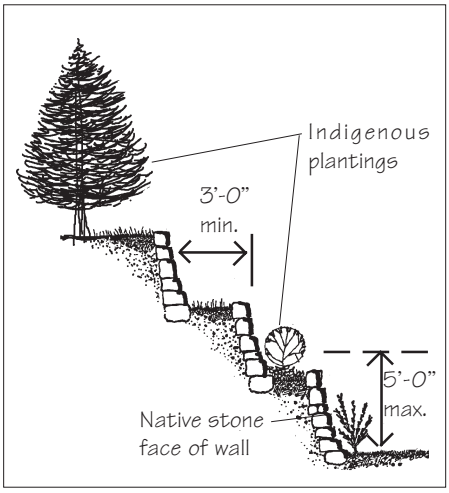
Design a building foundation to conform to the existing topography.



Inappropriate: excessive cut and tall retaining wall



Appropriate: Site is terraced, including parking areas, to reduce retaining wall heights.



A retaining wall shall blend with the natural features of the setting.

Appropriate: Use native rock in retaining walls and to stabilize cut faces.

4. Minimize the visual impacts of cut and fill on a site.

- Regrade the site as a stable, "natural" slope, when feasible.
- Terrace parking lots on steep slopes, following site contours.
- When creating site benches, using the sloped "transitional area" as a part of the required landscape or resource conservation area is appropriate.

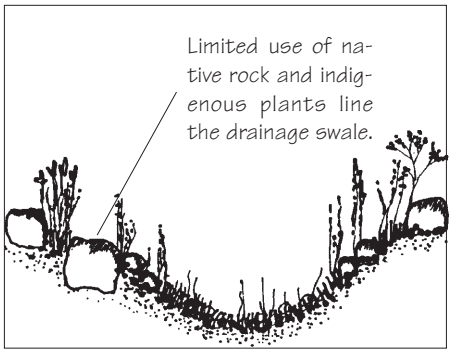
5. Where one must be used, a retaining wall shall blend with the natural features of the setting.

- Use native rock, or:
- Use other masonry that conveys a scale and texture similar to that of traditional rock walls. Split face block and scored and textured concrete are examples.
- Limit the height of a retaining wall to less than five (5) feet, when feasible.
- Where greater heights in a retaining wall must occur, use a series of terraced or stepped walls.
- The width of a retaining terrace should not be less than three (3) feet.
- The City Engineer, in consultation with the Design Review Board as necessary, may vary the retaining wall height and width requirements depending on site conditions.

E. Site Drainage

Policy:

Site drainage should be planned such that it minimizes negative impacts on natural site features. It also should be designed as an amenity that is incorporated into the overall landscape scheme. In general, smaller detention and drainage areas (less than 1,000 cubic feet) should be designed as natural landscape amenities. Larger ones should be designed for public use, when feasible.



Enhance significant natural drainage ways including flood plains and their tributaries in site design.

Guidelines:

1. Enhance significant natural drainage ways including flood plains and their tributaries in site design.

- Incorporate a natural drainage way as an amenity into the site plan.
- Avoid altering or obscuring natural drainage ways.
- Larger detention basins may be designed for active public uses.

2. Incorporate drainage systems as a part of the site amenities and landscape design.

- Develop a storm drain as an open, landscaped feature that is lined with native grasses and indigenous plants. This can be accomplished while also meeting technical engineering standards.
- Minimize the use of riprap and other devices that do not appear natural in character.

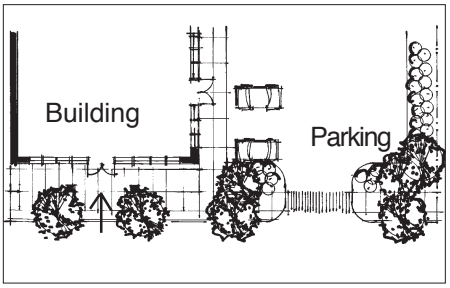
3. Where it is to be used, design a detention pond as a site amenity.

- Use landscape materials that convey the natural traditions of Durango, such as local stone, evergreens, and drought tolerant grasses.
- Include a detention area as part of the open space scheme for the site when feasible.
- When a basin cannot be designed as a site amenity, utilize an underground drainage system, when feasible.

4. Parking areas should be designed to minimize stormwater runoff.

- Use porous paving materials such as interlocking pavers or turf block that will optimize infiltration of storm water into soils.
- Use biofilters to maintain and convey shallow depths of runoff over vegetation.

Organize the public edges of a site to provide visual interest to pedestrians.



Locate a building entry at the sidewalk edge, when feasible. In some areas, the sidewalk is to be located near the street. In such cases, orienting entrances to the sidewalk is very important.

F. Building Placement

Policy:

Buildings should be sited to respect development patterns that are identified in the design goals for the area, such as the orientation of structures to the street and the alignment of building fronts.

Guidelines:

1. Where two or more buildings will be located in a major site development, arrange them in a cluster to define outdoor spaces.

- Define plazas and courtyards by clustering buildings.
- Clustering buildings to create active open spaces is appropriate.

2. Organize the public edges of a site to provide visual interest to pedestrians.

- Locate a building at the walkway edge and incorporate display windows or other architectural features to provide interest. *(See Building Design Guidelines.)*
- Another option is to provide a landscape feature along the walkway edge.
- If locating a building at the walkway edge is not feasible, use a planting strip, site wall or similar landscape feature to define the "building wall."

3. Locate a building entry at the sidewalk edge when feasible.

- This is especially important for commercial uses.
- Multifamily uses also should have some building entrances oriented to the street, but may be set back farther where a larger yard or landscaped area is planned.

4. A building shall be positioned to fit within the general setback patterns specified for the corridor.

- The setbacks described in the following chart shall apply.

5. Consider solar orientation and access when siting a building.

- Where feasible, the long axis of the building should be oriented east - west for maximum solar exposure and daylighting benefits.

FM Flexible Measure - A reduction to the required building front yard setback is permitted when buildings are clustered and/or building entrances are oriented to the street. Also see the chart on the following page for recommended setback guides.

Corridor	Setback	Conditions/Variations
Highway 550/160	Buildings should approach the corridor edge, with parking located to the rear, when feasible.	Where a frontage road exists, structures should align along the sidewalk.
Grandview/Highway 160	Buildings should be set back from the road edge to allow open views to natural features	
Highway 3/Sawmill Road	Buildings setbacks may vary as necessitated by site constraints, but should allow for views to be maintained	Buildings should respect the site topography.
Highway 160 West	Building should meet the corridor edge, with parking located to the rear, when feasible.	Where riparian way or other natural features meet road edge, setback should be modified to respect those features and, where feasible, should orient to those features.
North Main Avenue	The street edge should be pedestrian-friendly.	Structures in a predominately residential block should continue the residential setbacks with small front yards.
8th Avenue & College Avenue	Buildings should fall within the range of setbacks in the block. In many cases, residential structures have a small setback and commercial style structures meet the sidewalk edge.	

G. Outdoor Public Spaces

Policy:

The development of outdoor public spaces should be encouraged in order to enhance the site as a place for pedestrians. Buildings and other site functions should be planned to create outdoor spaces, and the development of public spaces that can be shared among properties is encouraged. This section applies to the design of outdoor spaces accessible by the public on major site developments.

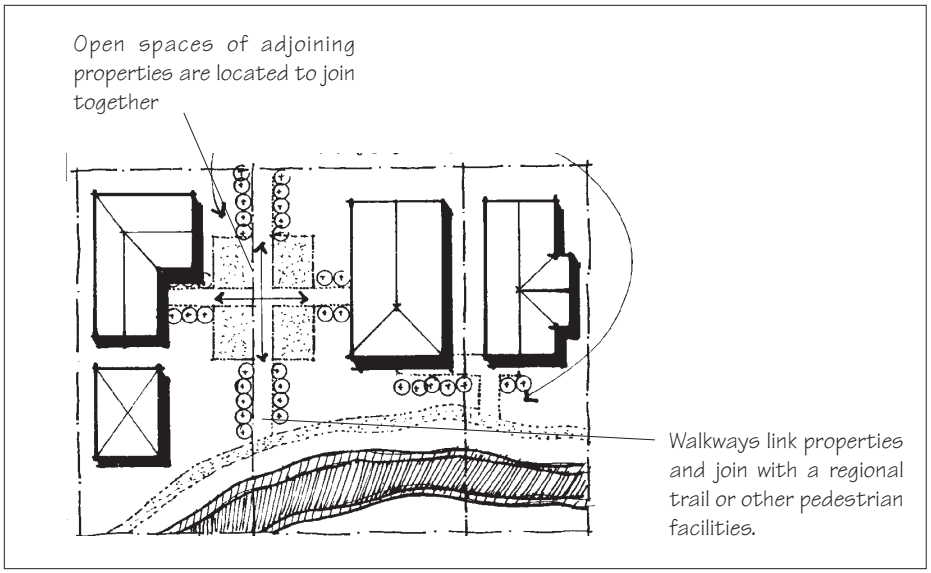
Guidelines:

1 Provide an outdoor public space on a major site or development when feasible.

- Appropriate public spaces include plazas, parks, covered arcades and weather-protected areas.

2. Develop a public space as a focal point for the site.

- Position a public space such that it can be shared by adjoining buildings, when feasible.
- Also, position open space on the site such that it may visually or physically connect with open space on adjacent properties.
- Integrate natural features into public open space, when feasible.
- Orient a public space to views of activities, architectural landmarks or natural features to provide visual interest.



Use a public open space to connect the entrances of two buildings on a site.

3. Connect a public open space with major building activities.

- Use a public open space to connect the entrances of two buildings on a site.
- See the guidelines for pedestrian systems in Section H: Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Systems on the following page.

4. Design an open space to encourage its use by the public.

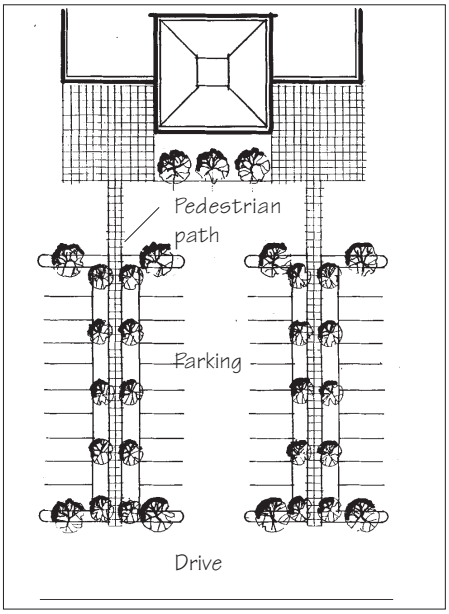
- Plan site drainage to lead runoff away from active use areas.
- Also orient open space to face south and west for solar heating, to extend its use throughout the year.

5. Provide outdoor seating that is usable for extended periods of the year.

- Where feasible, create a sense of enclosure for outdoor seating areas.
- Provide a concentration of streetscape furnishings, such as benches, landscaping, shelter and trash receptacles, when feasible.

Provide outdoor seating that is usable for extended periods of the year.

Appropriate: Pedestrian connection links site functions.



Appropriate: Define walkways through parking lots.

H. Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Systems

Policy:

Pedestrians and bicyclists should have safe, convenient access to the various functions of a site; therefore, a coordinated pedestrian and bicycle circulation system that fits the character of the site should be provided.

Guidelines:

1. Link the various functions and spaces on a site with pedestrian ways in a coordinated system.

- Provide convenient connections for pedestrians and bicyclists between buildings on an individual site.
- Also provide convenient connections from parking areas to buildings on the site.
- Provide access to outdoor plazas, courtyards and open space along these pedestrian routes as well.
- Provide conveniently located bike rack(s) based on the size and function of the site.

2. Position any streetside and internal walkways to encourage pedestrian use.

- Locate a walkway such that key destination points, such as building entries, are clearly visible.
- Site a path in an area that will remain visible from active public spaces.
- Separate a streetside sidewalk with a five foot wide parkway strip, when feasible.

3. Use hard surface materials for walkways to encourage use by pedestrians.

- Use materials that provide traction and facilitate general maintenance and snow removal.

4. Clearly define a key pedestrian gateway into a major site development with distinctive landscape elements.

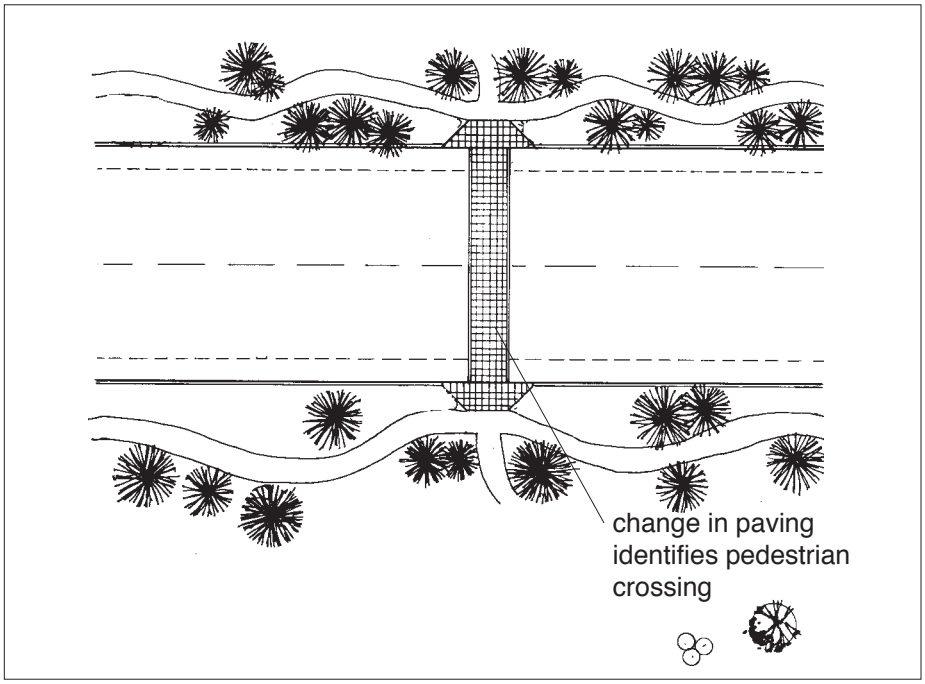
5. Enhance a key pedestrian way at a street or drive crossing.

- Use decorative or textured paving, signs and/or landscaping to identify the crossing point.

6. In major site developments, provide a clear, continuous, convenient pedestrian route through a parking lot to a building entrance.

- Define the sidewalk with landscaping, paving, and pedestrian-scaled lighting.

Use decorative or textured paving, signs and landscaping to identify the crossing point.



Appropriate: Identify pedestrian ways at street crossings, and separate streetside sidewalks from back of curb with a parkway.

I. Internal Automobile Circulation Systems

Policy:

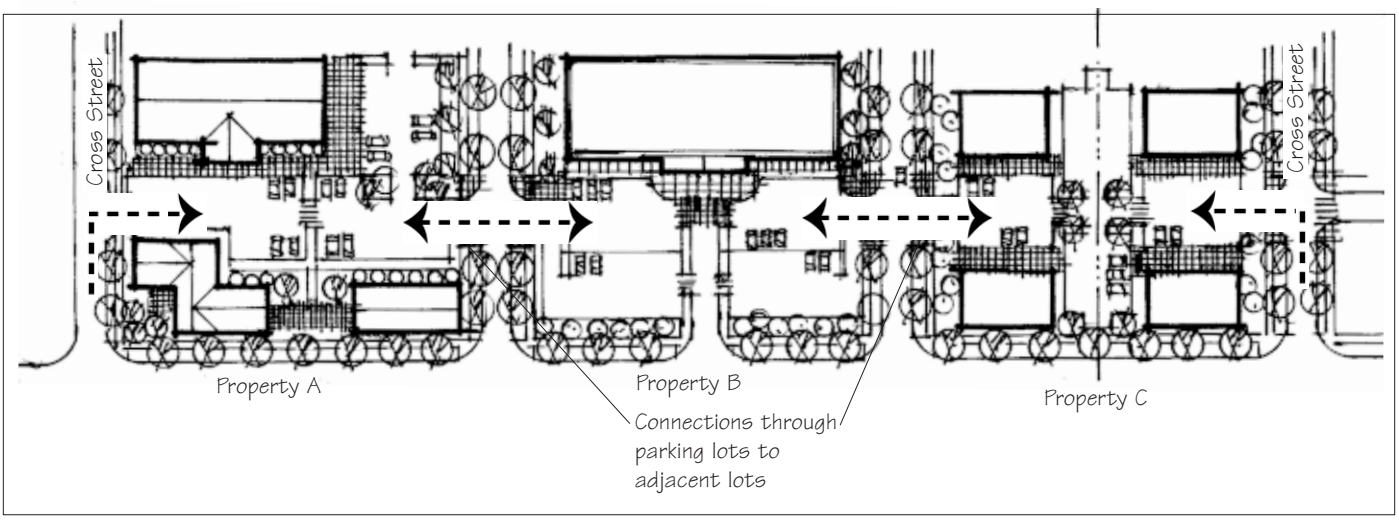
This section focuses on the design of streets and driveways *within* a major site development. Related guidelines addressing how these systems link to those on abutting properties appear in the Neighborhood Design chapter. Note that all site plans must provide circulation systems which meet the city's street engineering standards.

A continuous, safe, and convenient internal automobile circulation system should be provided. The hierarchy of differing levels of use should be clearly apparent in the roadway designs.

Guidelines:

1. **Within a development, convey the hierarchy of internal streets and driveways in the streetscape design.**
   - Streetscape design elements shall convey the level of use of the street. For example, major circulation routes should have a higher degree of landscape materials.
   - Those that are intended to attract intensive pedestrian use shall include decorative elements and furnishings that provide interest and a sense of human scale.

2. **Minimize the number of curb cuts onto a public street along a property edge.**
   - Share a driveway with an adjacent property, when feasible.
   - Use connections to secondary cross-streets, when feasible.



A continuous, safe, and convenient internal automobile circulation system should be provided. The hierarchy of differing levels of use should be clearly apparent in the roadway designs.

Policy:
Entry points for automobiles should be clearly defined on a site to facilitate safe and convenient operation.

Guideline:

3. Identify a key entry point into a major site development with special landscape design elements.

- Use accent paving and landscaping to highlight primary entry points into a site.
- Special signs that identify the entry point are also appropriate.

Policy:
Automobile circulation should be planned as an integrated system throughout a property.

Guidelines:

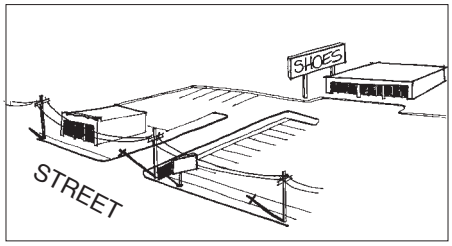
4. Provide a continuous circulation system within a property.

- Provide clear connections to external circulation systems.
- Link a road or driveway with the overall site circulation patterns of adjacent parcels, when feasible.

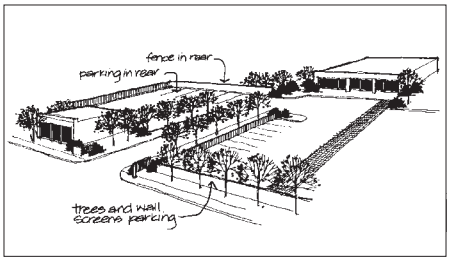
5. Minimize the width of internal roadways when feasible.

- Streets and drives must meet the minimum standards defined in the city's engineering standards. However, within these standards, a range of street widths is available. When feasible, a narrower street section should be selected.

Entry points for automobiles should be clearly defined on a site to facilitate safe and convenient operation.



Inappropriate: Exposed parking without landscaping



Appropriate: Buffer parking areas with landscaping.

Screen parking areas from view of public ways and designated view corridors with landscaping.

J. Parking Lots

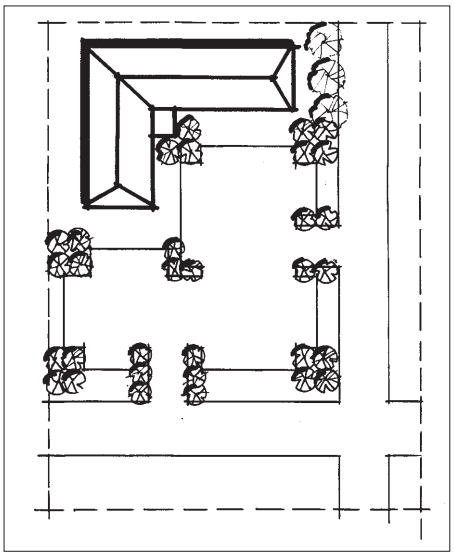
Policy:

The visual impacts of parking areas should be minimized and large expanses of parking areas should be avoided. Parking areas should be adequately landscaped. Using on-street and shared parking arrangements should be considered to accommodate some parking needs as well. In addition, using alternative modes of transportation is encouraged in order to reduce the number of cars that must be parked on site.

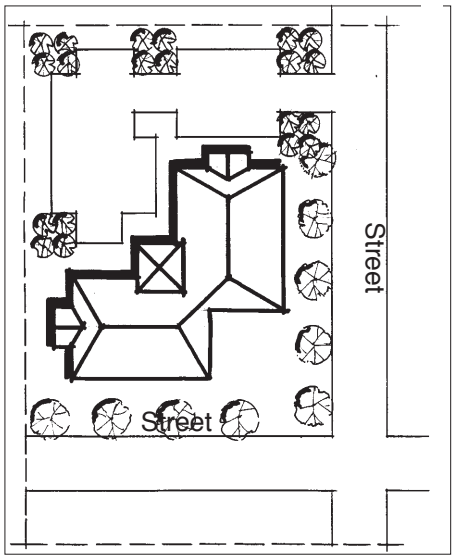
Guidelines:

1. **In all developments, minimize the number of cars parked on site. For major site developments, parking supply shall not exceed the minimum requirements by more than 5%, unless provided in structured parking.**

2. **In order to reduce the number of cars parked, use alternative methods of meeting parking demand.**
   - Share parking spaces with complementary uses that have different peak periods of parking demand.
   - Facilitate access to the site by alternative modes of transportation, including walking, bicycle and public transit.
   - Develop structured parking that may also incorporate other uses.
   - Shared structure and surface parking is appropriate for large commercial projects exceeding 100,000 square feet of floor area.
   - Meet some needs with on-street parking along property frontage.



Avoid: Locating parking in front, especially at a corner site



Recommended: Locating a building at the corner, with parking behind

FM Flexible Measure - An increase of building height 10 feet above the district maximum (over 60 feet by Conditional Use Permit only) is permitted when parking is located under the structure.

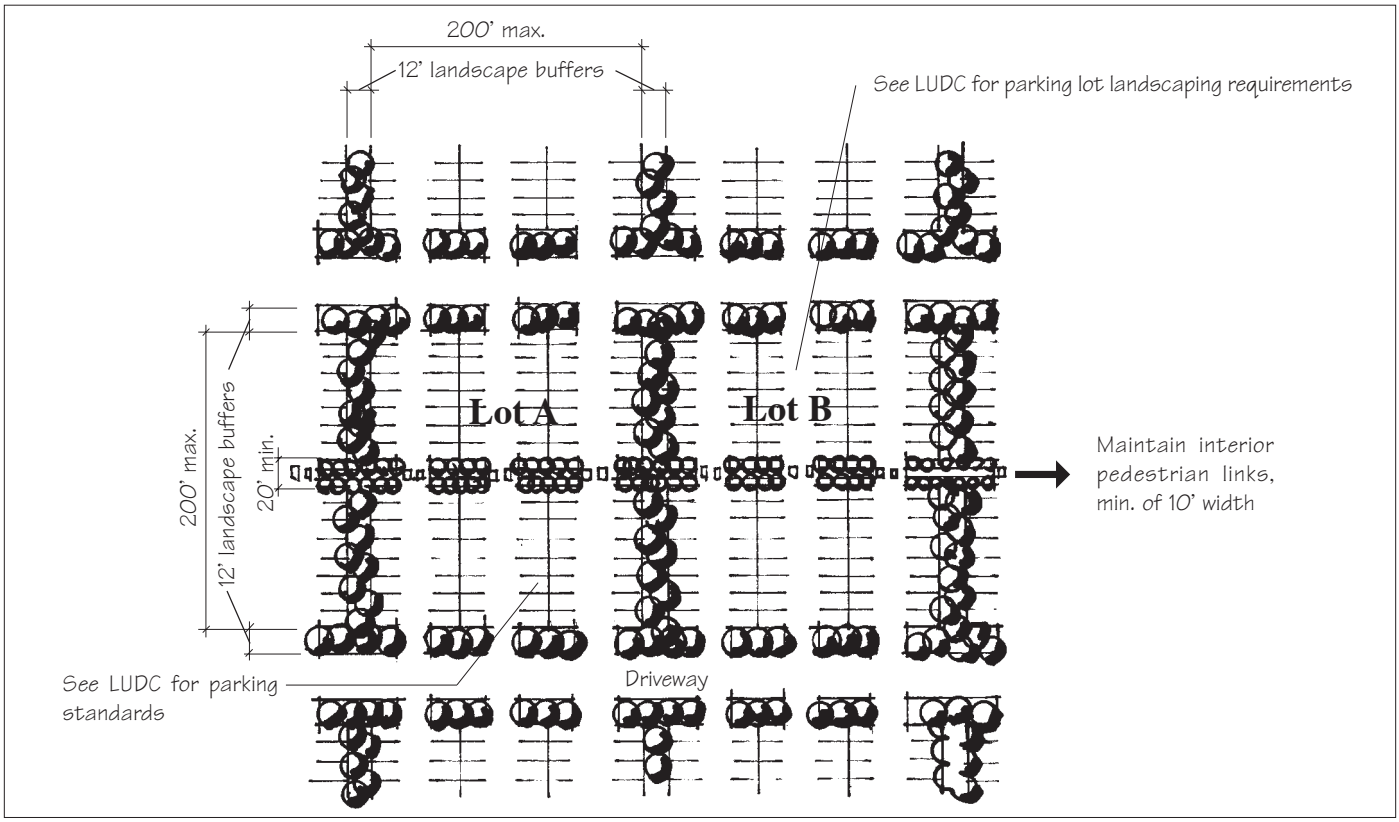
FM Flexible Measure - A 10% reduction of required off-street parking spaces is permitted when alternative modes of transportation features are provided. Providing features (i.e., transit access, trail connections) that encourage use by alternative modes of transportation is considered as a justification for reducing minimum parking space requirements in some cases.

These flexible measures can be approved at the Planning Director's discretion.

Minimize the negative visual impacts of cars parked on site.

Policy:

A parking lot should be designed so it will provide efficient vehicular circulation and safe pedestrian circulation within the site, while minimizing the visual impacts of cars.



Divide a large parking area into a series of smaller lots to reduce the visual impacts. Landscape buffers that separate parking lots should be 20' minimum width with a sidewalk and 12' minimum width without a sidewalk.

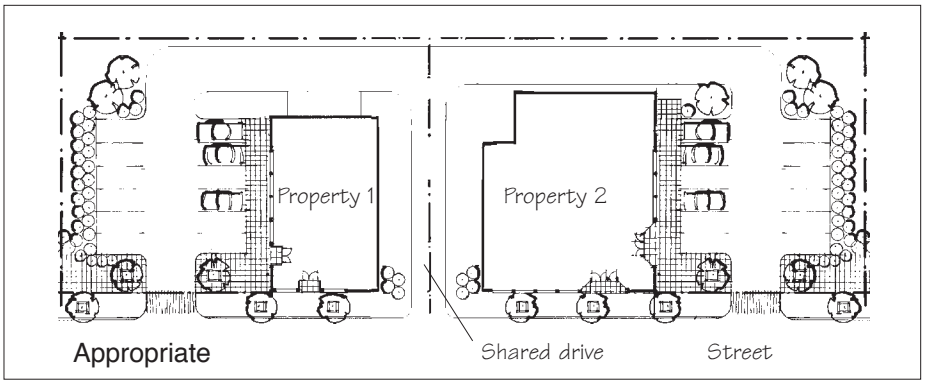
Guidelines:

3. Minimize the negative visual impacts of cars parked on site. A single parking area shall not exceed one acre in size. If the total parking area of a project exceeds one acre, it shall be divided into a series of separate lots, and it should be adequately landscaped.

- Screen parking areas from view of public ways with landscaping (i.e., berm, low decorative wall, evergreen hedge) a minimum of 3' in height.
- Divide parking areas into smaller lots with planted buffers between them to minimize the perceived scale of the total field of stalls.
- Locating all or most of a parking lot to the side or behind a building, rather than in front, is encouraged because it will reduce the visual impact of the parking lot as seen from the street.

4. Connect parking areas with convenient service ways between lots.

- Avoid parallel road conditions, in which two abutting properties have separate, redundant service roads.
- Provide cross-property easements to share driveways and reduce the need for additional curb cuts, when feasible.



Provide cross-property easements to share driveways and reduce the need for additional curb cuts, when feasible.

K. Site Lighting

Site lighting should be designed to facilitate safe and convenient circulation of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Policy:

Standards for outdoor lighting are provided in the Land Use and Development Code. Dark sky principles should be considered in all site lighting plans. This section addresses some of the qualitative aspects of lighting design that should also be addressed.

Site lighting should be designed to facilitate safe and convenient circulation of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. Light levels should be sufficient for safety. However, light spill onto adjacent properties and into the night sky should be minimized. The light level at the property line is a key design consideration. This is affected by the number of fixtures, their mounting height, and the lumens emitted per fixture.

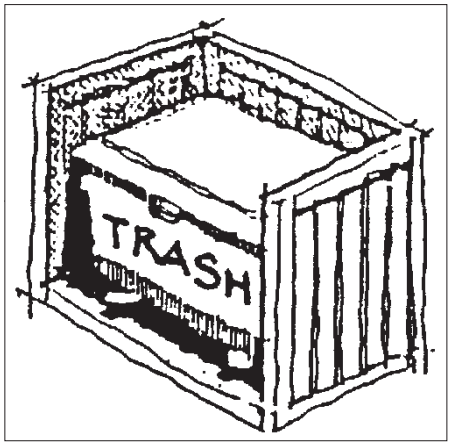
Note: All site lighting shall be in compliance with the city's Outdoor Lighting Ordinance.

Guidelines:

1. **Use differences in lighting design to express varying site functions.**
   - Define road crossings and entry points with accent lighting.

2. **Minimize the level of lighting across parking areas.**
   - Focus higher light levels at key crossing points and intersections, rather than uniformly across a lot.
   - In other parts of the lot, provide a lower level of lighting, while also meeting safety needs.

3. **Provide lighting for pedestrian ways that is appropriately scaled to walking.**
   - Mount lights for pedestrian ways on short poles or consider using light posts (bollards).



Screen service areas with walls or plantings.

L. Utilities and Service Areas

Policy:
Service areas, utilities, and transmission boxes should be visually unobtrusive and should be integrated with the design of the site and the building.

Guidelines:

1. **Orient service entrances, waste disposal areas and other similar uses toward service lanes and away from major streets.**
   - Also, position utility boxes such that their visual impacts will be minimized.

2. **Screen service entrances and utility service boxes (electric, gas, cable, telephone, etc.) with walls or plantings.**
   - A structure, berm, or landscape buffer may be used.
   - When it is visible from a public way, a service area screen structure should be in character with the building and site it serves.
   - Orient the door to a trash enclosure to face away from the street, when feasible.

3. **Position service areas to minimize conflicts with other abutting uses.**
   - Minimize noise impacts by locating sources of offensive sounds away from other uses.
   - Locate areas for outdoor storage, truck parking, trash collection or compaction loading, or other such uses so as not to be visible from abutting streets.
   - Use an alley system to locate service areas, when feasible.

Orient the door to a trash enclosure to face away from the street, when feasible. This enclosure is located within a parking lot and is oriented away from the street face.

M. Landscape Design

Policy:

Note that these guidelines supplement the prescriptive standards of the city that define the minimum amounts of land area to be landscaped and of plant units to be used. They address the character and quality of the landscape design.

In general, plant materials that are indigenous or well-acclimated and non-invasive, should be used. In established neighborhoods, traditional planting palettes also should be respected.

In general, plant materials that are indigenous or well-acclimated and non-invasive, should be used. In established neighborhoods, traditional planting palettes also should be respected.

Guidelines:

1. **Include existing vegetation as a part of a landscape design scheme where appropriate.**

2. **Where new plant materials are to be used, employ indigenous species into the plant palette.**
   - Drought-tolerant plant species, native to the region and suitable to the climate in Durango should be used.
   - Reserve the use of high maintenance plants, if necessary, for small accent areas in the landscape.

Policy:

The landscape design within a site should help to establish a sense of visual continuity.

Guidelines:

1. **Use a coordinated landscape palette to establish a sense of visual continuity in the landscape design of a site.**
   - Use a consistent plant palette throughout the property.
   - Consider the landscape design as it relates to lighting structures, paving materials, planting, public signs and street furniture.
   - Also, consider how the design of streetscape furnishings can relate to those in the public way that abut the property.

2. **The landscape design should use elements to help provide interest to pedestrians.**
   - Using decorative paving materials to define plazas and walkways is encouraged.
   - Using concentrations of decorative planting to identity primary building entries is also encouraged.

3. **Using paving materials that minimize storm water runoff is encouraged.**
   - Porous paving materials, including interlocking pavers, can permit percolation into local soils, which is preferred.

CHAPTER 5
BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section provides policies and guidelines for the design of commercial use buildings as well as any development in the Commercial Corridors. In general, they focus on promoting buildings that will be compatible in scale and appear to "fit" in the community by using materials and forms that are a part of Durango's design traditions. As such, they address only broad-scale topics and do not dictate specific architectural styles or building details.

Objectives for building design:

The following are key objectives for building design:

- A building should reflect regional traditions in terms of scale, forms and materials.
- A building should appear to be in balance with the natural setting of Durango.
- At the same time, diversity in design expressions should be encouraged, when it is also compatible with the overall design traditions of the community.
- A building should convey a human scale.
- A building design should incorporate energy efficient and environmentally responsible building practices.

The following guidelines for building design are based on these objectives. Note that the character of building design varies with the context. For example, structures located in areas where traditional residential character is predominant will be substantially different from those in a large retail complex.

Appropriate: Design the main entrance of a mixed use building to be clearly identifiable.

A. Building and Topography.

Policy:
A building should respect the natural topography of the site.

Guideline:

1. **Step a building foundation to follow the slope of the site when feasible.**
   - In general, an exposed foundation should not exceed 3 feet in height.

B. Primary Building Entrance

Policy:
The primary entrance of a structure should orient to a street, major sidewalk, pedestrian way, plaza, courtyard or other public space.

Guidelines:

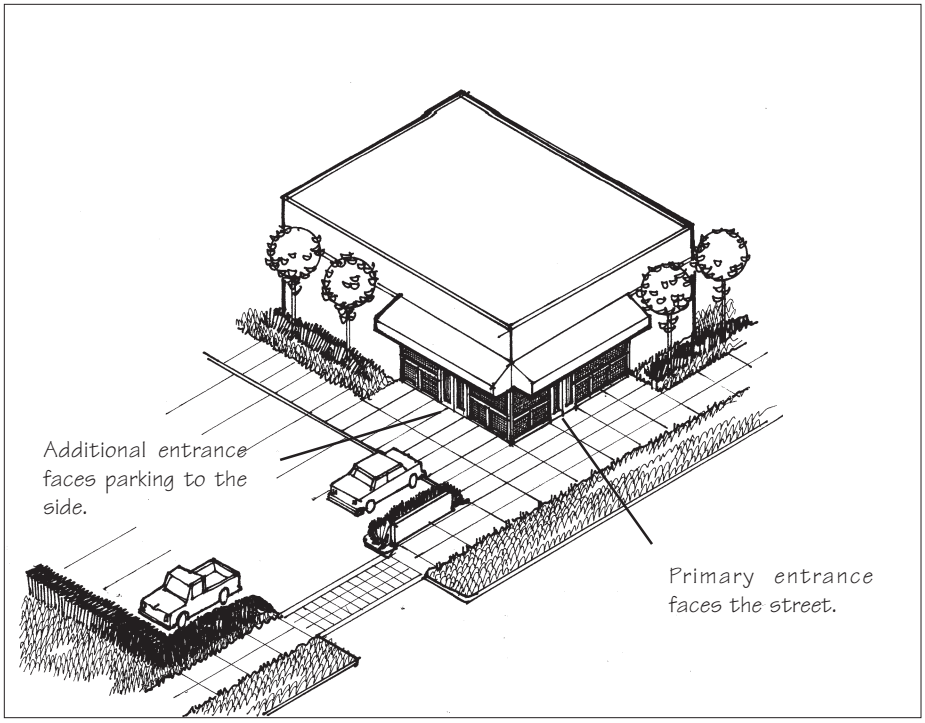
1. **Design the main entrance to be clearly identifiable.**
   - Provide a sheltering element such as a canopy, awning, arcade, or portico to signify the primary entrance to a building.
   - Where more than one user shares a structure each individual entrance should be identified.

Appropriate: Design the main entrance to be clearly identifiable from the street and parking areas.

2. Orient the primary entrance of a building to face a street, plaza or pedestrian way, when feasible.

- Focusing an entrance toward a parking lot without also addressing the street is inappropriate.
- Consider using a "double-fronted" design where the entrance to parking and to the street is required. That is, provide a door to the street and another to the parking lot.

Appropriate: Combining two pad uses in an L-shape form helps to create an outdoor open space and break up the mass of the building.



Appropriate: Use a "double-fronted" design where an entrance to parking is needed in addition to a primary entrance that faces the street.

C. Street Level Interest

Policy:

When a building is located close to a street or walkway, it should be designed to provide interest to pedestrians. For example, commercial buildings with storefronts are of interest to passersby, while porches, courtyards and decorative wall surfaces add interest to multifamily housing designs. These feature encourage pedestrian activity and should be used whenever feasible.

The overall mass of a building should appear to be in scale with buildings seen traditionally. This will help new structures fit with the Durango context. At the same time, newer structures may be larger than those seen before; they should simply be articulated in their form and materials such that they convey portions that are similar to those seen traditionally.

Guideline:

1 . Develop the street level of a building to provide visual interest to pedestrians.

- Provide visual interest with:
  A display window providing views to activities in the building, display cases for exhibits, a decorative wall surface, building articulation or landscaping.
- A large expanse of blank wall is inappropriate on a facade that faces a public way or a major pedestrian route.

Appropriate: Develop the street level to provide visual interest to pedestrians. In the photo at the right, display windows and architectural details provide interest to those approaching from a parking area, located "behind" this building. Below, the street edge of the same building also offers access from the street and provides interest to pedestrians.

D. Building Mass and Scale

Policy:

A building should appear to have a "human scale." In general, this can be accomplished by using familiar forms and elements that can be interpreted in human dimensions.

Guidelines:

In order to reduce building scale, each major building project shall provide at least two of the following:

1. Express facade components in ways that will help to establish a human scale.

- Exterior wall treatments that establish rhythms and patterns of windows, columns, and other architectural features are encouraged.
- Using windows and doors that are similar in scale to those seen traditionally also can help establish a human scale.

2. The primary entrance to a building shall have a human scale.

- Provide a one-story element at the building entrance to help establish a sense of scale.

3. Express the position of each floor in the external skin design of a building to establish a human scale.

- Use belt courses or other horizontal trim bands of contrasting color and materials to define floor lines.
- Articulate structural elements, or change materials as a method of defining floors.

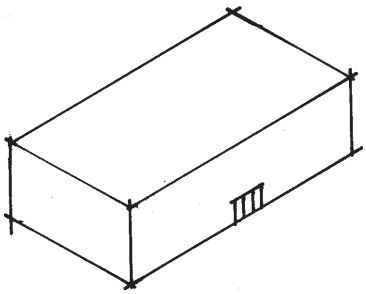
4. Use building materials that help establish a human scale.

- For example, use brick in a standard module to express a human scale.
- Avoid using large surfaces of panelized products or featureless materials.
- A large surface of stucco or similar material that lacks articulation or detailing should be avoided.

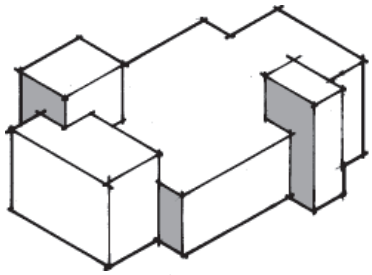
Appropriate: Using window shapes that help to establish a sense of human scale.

Appropriate: Express the position of each floor level to convey a human scale and also provide a one-story element at the building entrance to help establish a human scale.

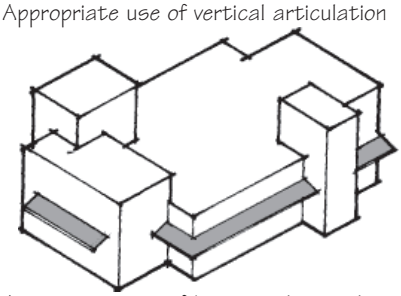
Appropriate: Some building materials (e.g., standard-sized brick) help to establish a sense of human scale.



Inappropriate architectural treatment

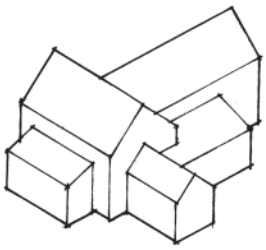


Appropriate use of vertical articulation



Appropriate use of horizontal articulation

Break large buildings into modules to reduce perceived scale.



Appropriate: A variation in roof heights add architectural articulation

Appropriate: Varied building forms

5. Divide a building into modules that express dimensions of structures seen traditionally.

- In general, a primary facade plane should not exceed 100 feet in length.
- If a building exceeds this dimension, provide a jog in the facade to divide it into subordinate elements that will be less than 100 feet in length each (the jog should be a minimum of 20% of the facade plane height).

6. All buildings shall employ at least two of the following techniques:

- Change material or color with each building module to reduce the perceived mass, or:
- Change the height of a wall plane or building module. The change in height shall be at least 20% of the vertical height, or:
- Change roof form to help express the different modules of the building mass, or:
- Change the arrangement of windows and other facade articulation features, such as columns or strapwork, that divide large wall planes into smaller components.

Appropriate: A stepped parapet varies the roof line and helps reduce the mass of a building.

Appropriate: change materials with each building module to reduce the overall perceived mass.

E. Roof form

Policy:

The primary roof form of a structure should help reduce the perceived scale of the building. For that reason, sloping roofs should be used in most contexts. These also will help the building fit into the mountain backdrop.

Guidelines:

1. **Using sloping roof forms to reduce the perceived scale of a building is encouraged.**
   - Varying roof forms is encouraged
   - Providing variety in ridge line height is encouraged

2. **All roof forms shall have no less than two of the following features:**
   - A flat roof with parapet
   - A cornice or molding to define the top of a parapet
   - Overhanging eaves
   - Sloping roofs with a minimum pitch of 4:12
   - Multiple roof planes

Appropriate: Using sloping roof forms to reduce the perceived scale of a building is encouraged.

Appropriate: Varied roof forms reduce building scale.

Appropriate: Using sloping roof forms to reduce the perceived scale of a building.

Appropriate: Sloping roof forms and varying ridge heights help to reduce the perceived scale of a building.

Masonry, including brick, stone and rusticated masonry block, is appropriate.

Traditional materials, including brick and stone, are encouraged.

F. Building materials

Policy:

Materials that reduce the perceived mass of a building and appear to blend with the natural setting should be used.

Guideline:

1. **Use indigenous and traditional building materials for primary wall surfaces. A minimum of 75% of the surface area of a wall (excluding glass) that is visible from a public way shall be composed of the following:**
   - Modular masonry and materials, including brick, stone and rough finish masonry block, are preferred.
   - Other new materials that convey a human scale and have a matte finish are also appropriate.
   - Stucco, when it is tinted earth tone in color and detailed to express visual interest and convey a sense of human scale, is also appropriate. For example, use reveals or scoring lines to create panels to establish a rhythm and texture along a wall, or provide moldings and frame openings that establish shadow lines and visual relief.
   - Painted or stained wood in a lap or shingle pattern may be used.
   - Other materials may also be acceptable upon review and approval by the Design Review Board.
   - Using these materials on other wall surfaces, including secondary ones, is also encouraged.

Stucco, when it is a tinted earth tone color and detailed to express visual interest and convey a sense of human scale, is also appropriate.

2. Materials that are highly reflective or that do not convey a human scale are inappropriate as primary building materials.

- Large expanses of high gloss, shiny metal panels and mirror glass panels, for example, are inappropriate as primary materials.

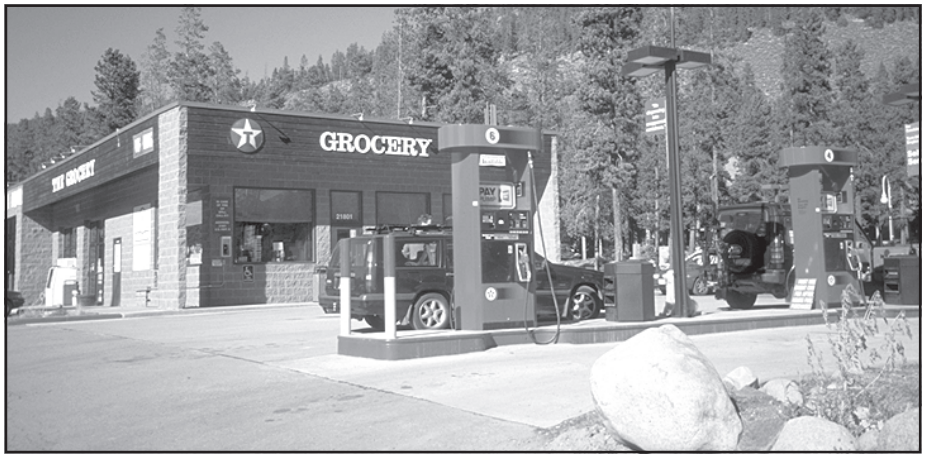
G. Service Canopies

Policy:

A gas station service area should appear as an subordinate element in the site design.

1. Minimize the visual impacts of a service area canopy.

- Use a low profile section for the canopy itself, or use forms such as gabled roofs, that relate to buildings in the area.
- Screen lights under the canopy.
- Use a muted color on the perimeter of the canopy.
- Break up the mass of the canopy area by stepping the form or by dividing it into a set of smaller individual canopies.



Appropriate: Minimize the visual impacts of service areas. In this case, no canopy is used.

H. Color

Policy:
Building finish colors should help a structure blend with the natural setting and reduce its perceived scale.

Guideline:

1. Use muted colors and earth tones.

- This applies to roof materials as well.
- Bright colors are appropriate only for accents.
- A minimum of 75% of the exterior walls seen from a public way should have muted colors and earth tones.

Chapter 6
Sign Design Guidelines

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance in the design and evaluation of signage throughout Durango's commercial corridors. It is the goal of the city to improve the quality of existing signage and to assure that signage responds to and enhances the local architecture and community character. An effective code seeks to eliminate sign clutter from public environments, while allowing for and fostering commerce and creative expression. These corridors are each unique and require individual evaluation for appropriate signage. Important factors to consider when designing appropriate signage for a property are the relationship of sign size to the site location and street speeds, the types and numbers of signs provided on site and the differentiation of sign types; street sign, building face, or interior of site. This chapter provides a matrix of dimensional standards for signs by both sign type and corridor location; these standards relate to the corridor speed and sign purpose. The use of corporate logos and franchise design as advertisement, as well as the use of murals or artwork as advertisement, are also important concerns for commercial uses.

Note that the city's sign code in Section 10-3 of the Land Use and Development Code establishes certain limits on signs, including the amount of sign area that may be used. This chapter provides supplementary guidance about the character and placement of signs that is appropriate downtown. Therefore, the guidelines apply in addition to the standards set forth in the sign code. Where there is conflict between the two, the more restrictive shall apply. In addition other regulations, such as the CDOT sign regulations, shall apply where applicable.

A freestanding sign may be used in areas where the primary use is set back from the street edge.

A master sign program sets forth design and procedures for signs within a set boundary, generally on one property. The use of a master sign program is encouraged and can provide for additional sign footage, particularly at the interior of a site. See also LUDC Sec. 10-3-7 (b) for further information.

Design a sign to be coordinated with the overall character of the property.

Position a sign to be a part of the overall building composition

Policy:
Design a sign to be coordinated with the overall character of the property.

A sign typically serves two functions: first, to attract attention, and second to convey information, essentially identifying the business or services offered within. If it is well designed, the building front alone can serve the attention-getting function, allowing the sign to be focused on conveying information in a well-conceived manner. All new signs should be developed with the overall context of the building and of the area in mind.

1. Consider the building front as part of an overall sign program.
- Coordinate a sign within the overall facade composition and with other signs on the property.
- A sign should be in proportion to the building, such that it does not dominate the appearance.

2. Develop a master sign plan for the entire property; this should be used to guide individual sign design decisions.
- This is especially important where some parcels include multiple businesses, sometimes even in more than one building.
- A master sign plan should specify the location, number and size of all signs on the property. The materials, methods of illumination and graphics standards should also be defined.

3. Position a sign to be a part of the overall building composition.
- Locate a sign on a building such that it will emphasize design elements of the facade itself.
- Mount a sign to fit within existing architectural features. Use the shape of the sign to help reinforce the horizontal lines of moldings and transoms seen along the street.

4. Preserve an historic painted sign where it exists, when feasible.

Policy:
A sign should be of a type appropriate for the commercial corridor where it is located.

The placement or location of a sign is perhaps the most critical factor in maintaining the order and integrity of the commercial complex. Consistent placement of signs according to building type, size, location and even building materials creates a visual pattern that the driver, or in some cases pedestrian, can easily interpret and utilize to the mutual benefit of merchants, tourists and customers.

A monument or pole mounted sign may be considered.

The following sign types may be considered:

5. Monument sign
- A freestanding sign may be used in areas where the primary use is set back from the street edge.
- A freestanding sign may be used in the front yard of a residence with a commercial use.
- Pole mounted signs are discouraged.

A flush-mounted wall sign may be considered.

6. Flush-mounted wall sign
- When applicable, place a wall sign such that it aligns with others on the building and within the commercial complex.

7. Window sign
- A window sign may be considered in addition.
- It may be painted on the glass or hung just inside a window.
- A window sign should cover no more than approximately twenty-five percent (25%) of the total window area.

8. Hanging sign, which projects from the building front, particularly on a more pedestrian-oriented corridor such as 8th & College or North Main
- A small hanging sign is easier for a pedestrian to read than other sign types and is encouraged.
- A small hanging sign should be located near the business entrance, just above the door or to the side of it.
- A hanging sign should be mounted perpendicular with the building facade.

Awning and canopy signs may be considered, where appropriate.

Where several businesses share a building, coordinate the signs.

- A hanging sign should provide clearance between the sidewalk surface and the bottom of the sign.

9. Awning and canopy signs may be considered, where appropriate.

- These are most appropriate in areas with high pedestrian use, such as within a commercial complex or along a more pedestrian-oriented corridor.
- An awning or canopy sign should not exceed the size of the awning or canopy surface to which it is applied.
- Consider mounting a sign centered on top of a building canopy where a flush-mounted sign would obscure architectural details.

10. An awning compatible in material and construction to the style of the building is encouraged

- Operable awning are encouraged on historic buildings.
- Use colors and materials that are compatible with the overall color scheme of the facade and compatible with the adjacent buildings.

11. A directory sign may be considered.

- Where several businesses share a building, coordinate the signs. Align several smaller signs, or group them into a single panel as a directory.
- Use similar forms or backgrounds for the signs to tie them together visually and make them easier to read.
- The manner in which a directory sign is mounted to a building, either flush to or projecting from a wall, will determine the maximum allowable sign area.

Policy:
A sign should be in character with the material, color and detail of a building.

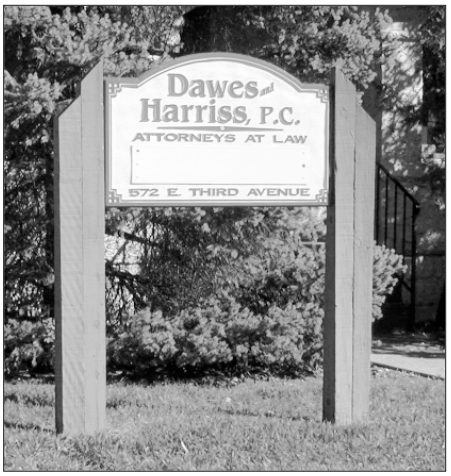
12. Signs that are out of character with the corridor context and that would alter the character of the corridor are inappropriate.
- Animated signs, except time and temperature, are prohibited.
- Any sign that visually overpowers the building or obscures significant views or architectural features is inappropriate.

13. Sign materials should be compatible with that of the building facade.
- Highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read are inappropriate.
- A painted sign on a blank side or rear wall may be considered.

14. A simple sign design is more legible.
- Typefaces that are in keeping with those seen in the corridor are encouraged. Select letter styles and sizes that will be compatible with the building front and the character of the business being advertised.

15. Where applicable, a sign should not obscure or compete with architectural details of an historic building facade.
- This is especially important for a building with historic significance.
- A sign should be designed to integrate with the architectural features of a building, not distract attention from them.

16. Where a corporate logo or color scheme is incorporated into building design it shall be recognized as a sign.
- This is often seen in canopies, roof material and, in some cases, building style or design.
- The portion of the building that will be recognized as part of a corporate design, and therefore a sign, shall be determined at the discretion of the Design Review Board.



A simple sign design is preferred.

Neon and other tubular illumination may be considered. However, use neon in limited amounts so it does not become visually obtrusive.

Note: All sign illumination shall be in compliance with the city's Dark Skies Ordinance.

Policy:
Sign illumination should be shielded to minimize glare, and should not overpower the site or street edge.

17. Indirect lighting is preferred for a sign.
- Light should be directed at the sign from an external, shielded lamp.
- A warm light, similar to daylight, is appropriate.
- Light should not shine directly in the eyes of drivers or pedestrians.

18. If internal illumination is used, it should be designed to be subordinate to the overall building composition.
- Internal illumination of an entire sign panel is discouraged. If internal illumination is used, a system that backlights sign text only is preferred.
- Neon and other tubular illumination may be considered. However, use neon in limited amounts so it does not become visually obtrusive.
- Internal illumination of an awning is inappropriate, however lights may be concealed in the underside of a canopy.

Policy:
Sign content should be designed to be visually interesting and clearly legible.

19. Using a symbol for a sign is encouraged.
- A symbol sign adds interest to the corridor, can be read quickly and is remembered better than written words.

20. Use colors for the sign that are compatible with those of the building front and building materials.
- Bright colors are inappropriate as the background color for signs, although bright colors may be used as accents on signs.

21. Select letter styles and sizes that will be compatible with the building front, and are easy to read from an automobile.
- Avoid hard-to-read or overly intricate typeface styles.

A symbol sign adds interest to the corridor, can be read quickly and is remembered better than written words.

Select letter styles and sizes that are easy to read from an automobile.

Policy:
Sign size should be in proportion to the property, acknowledge corridor speed and number of travel lanes, and be in a scale appropriate to the corridor in general.

22. The following chart provides size limits for the three different sign levels that are recommended along the corridors:

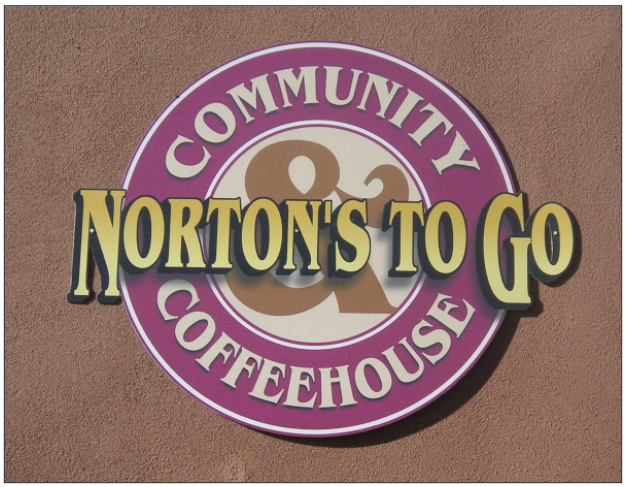
Corridor/ Sign Level	Level 1 - Seen from the Street	Level 2 - On site wall mounted	Level 3 - On site, business entry	Maximum Total Sign Area
Highway 550/160 Speeds 35 - 55	Maximum Square Footage: 150 s.f. (2 75 s.f. signs)**	Maximum Square Footage: 25 s.f.	Maximum Square Footage: 6 s.f./ sign	200 s.f.
Grandview/160 Speeds 45 - 55	Maximum Square Footage: 150 s.f. (2 75 s.f. signs)**	Maximum Square Footage: 25 s.f.	Maximum Square Footage: 6 s.f./ sign	200 s.f.
Highway 3/ Sawmill Road Speeds 35 - 50	Maximum Square Footage: 80 s.f. (2 40 s.f. signs)**	Maximum Square Footage: 25 s.f.	Maximum Square Footage: 6 s.f./ sign	150 s.f.
Highway 160 West Speeds 35 - 50	Maximum Square Footage: 80 s.f. (2 40 s.f. signs)**	Maximum Square Footage: 25 s.f.	Maximum Square Footage: 6 s.f./ sign	150 s.f.
North Main Avenue Speed limit 35	Maximum Square Footage: 60 s.f. (2 30 s.f. signs)**	Maximum Square Footage: 20 s.f.	Maximum Square Footage: 6 s.f./ sign	100 s.f.
8th & College Avenue Speed limit 25 - 35	Maximum Square Footage: 60 s.f. (2 30 s.f. signs)**	Maximum Square Footage: 20 s.f.	Maximum Square Footage: 6 s.f./ sign	100 s.f.
Camino del Rio Speed limit 35	Maximum Square Footage: 70 s.f. (2 35 s.f. signs)**	Maximum Square Footage: 20 s.f.	Maximum Square Footage: 6 s.f./ sign	100 s.f.

** Height limits and other regulations and requirements shall follow existing code.*

*** All faces of a sign shall contribute to the maximum allowed square footage of Level 1 signs.*

**** Through a master sign program the Design Review Board may approve an increase of total sign area that is appropriate for the use under consideration. This increase in sign area is intended primarily for areas with multiple users in one structure. The additional square footage would help provide additional identification for Level 2 signage; however, a directory type sign at Level 1 would be considered as well. The Design Review Board would have to determine that all other relevant guidelines have been met before additional allowed sign square footage would be approved.*

Level 1 signage is oriented to the highway or roadway and is intended to be read from passing cars.

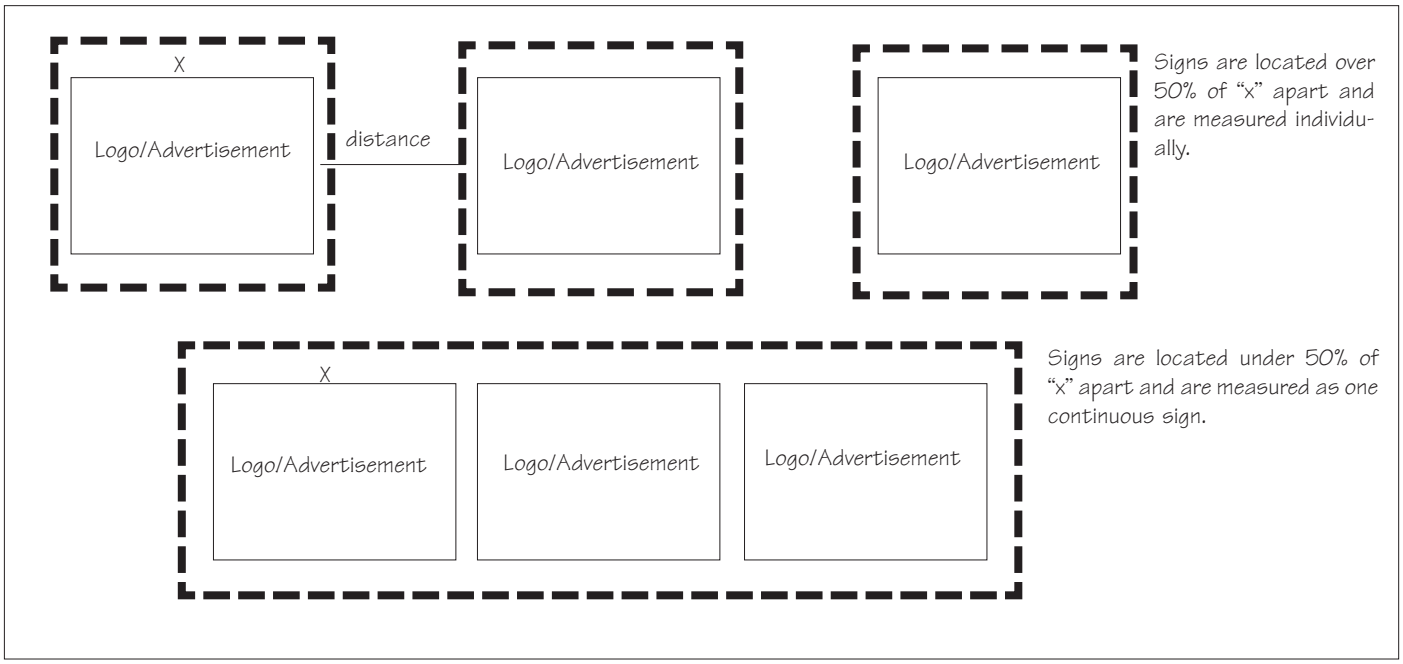


Level 2 signage is typically wall mounted and seen only from one side.

Level 3 signage is oriented to the pedestrian and generally helps direct a customer to an entrance or section or announces specialties and specific items.

23. Sign area should be calculated by enclosing all of the parts of the sign face in the simplest geometric form that is possible.

- For a sign with an irregular shape, a simple geometric boundary is drawn around the form.
- If, however, two or more elements project in a manner in which they effectively define a larger area, then the enclosing form shall extend to include that space.
- In cases where there are multiple signs in close proximity, the signs shall be considered as one continuous sign if the distance between the individual signs is less than 50% of the height or width (depending on orientation) of the individual signs. See illustration below.



When the distance between multiple signs is less than 50% of the sign width or height (depending on sign orientation) the signs are considered to read as one continuous sign and shall be measured as such. In cases where individual signs are set over 50% of the width or height apart, they shall be measured as separate signs.

Policy:
While murals are permitted along commercial corridors, it is generally discouraged that the mural should be used as advertising.

24. In cases where a sign is in close proximity to a mural relating to the business, or where the business name is incorporated into a decorative mural, that mural shall be considered a sign.

- Murals relating to the business that do not incorporate advertising shall not be considered as a sign.

Murals relating to the business that do not incorporate advertising shall not be considered as a sign.

CHAPTER 7
CORRIDOR SPECIFIC DESIGN GUIDELINES

This chapter provides guidelines for individual commercial corridor overlays. They apply in addition to the guidelines in the preceding sections and they provide more detailed guidance that relates to specific design objectives for each corridor. The material for each corridor is organized in the same three categories of design that are employed for the general guidelines. That is, guidelines that address neighborhood-related topics are presented first, then those for site design and finally those for building design. In some cases, no additional guidance is provided in one of these categories, in which case those general guidelines in that category apply only.

In this chapter:
Highway 160/550
Grandview/Highway 160
Highway 3/Sawmill Road
Highway 160 West
North Main Avenue
8th & College Avenues

Highway 160/550 Corridor:

The Highway 550/160 is an important commercial corridor with significant retail and industrial development. It is generally defined as beginning at the intersection of Highways 550 and 160 at Farmington Hill and continuing to the intersection of 550/160 with 160 West and Camino del Rio. (See map on following page.) The corridor has a green landscaped edge with frontage roads in some areas. The Animas River runs along the corridor, in some areas to the west and the east by the Durango Mall.

Note - The maps contained in this chapter are for reference purposes only. Contact the City of Durango Planning Department for specific questions relating to the designated commercial corridor boundaries.

Historically, in 1776, the Dominguez/Escalante crossing occurred in this area at the base of the purple cliffs which grace the area. The La Platas and the Animas River Trail can be seen from the highway; opportunities to access the trail exist in various points such as Santa Rita Park, which was recently renamed to recognize the Hispanic community that flourished where the park is now. East of Santa Rita Park remnants of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad segments are used by hikers and fishermen, in addition, there are trail connections to Sale Barn Canyon and Big Canyon trail systems. Structures vary in their designs along the route, but most fit into the landscape.

The city seeks to enhance the visual character of the street and to improve the walking environment for pedestrians, to the greatest extent possible, while mitigating negative effects of automobiles. Recent new developments and potential future investments along the corridor provide opportunities to improve the character of the street edge and establish a stronger identity for the corridor at large. Key principles for the Highway 550/160 Corridor are to establish a sense of visual continuity for the area while acknowledging the variety of design responses that may exist on individual sites, to enhance the pedestrian experience along the road edge and the interior of the property, to protect scenic vistas, to provide connections to the Animas River and to reduce the impacts of cars.

Key objectives for the 550/160 Corridor include establishing a sense of visual continuity for the area, while acknowledging the variety of design responses that may exist on individual sites, protecting scenic vistas and reducing the impacts of cars.

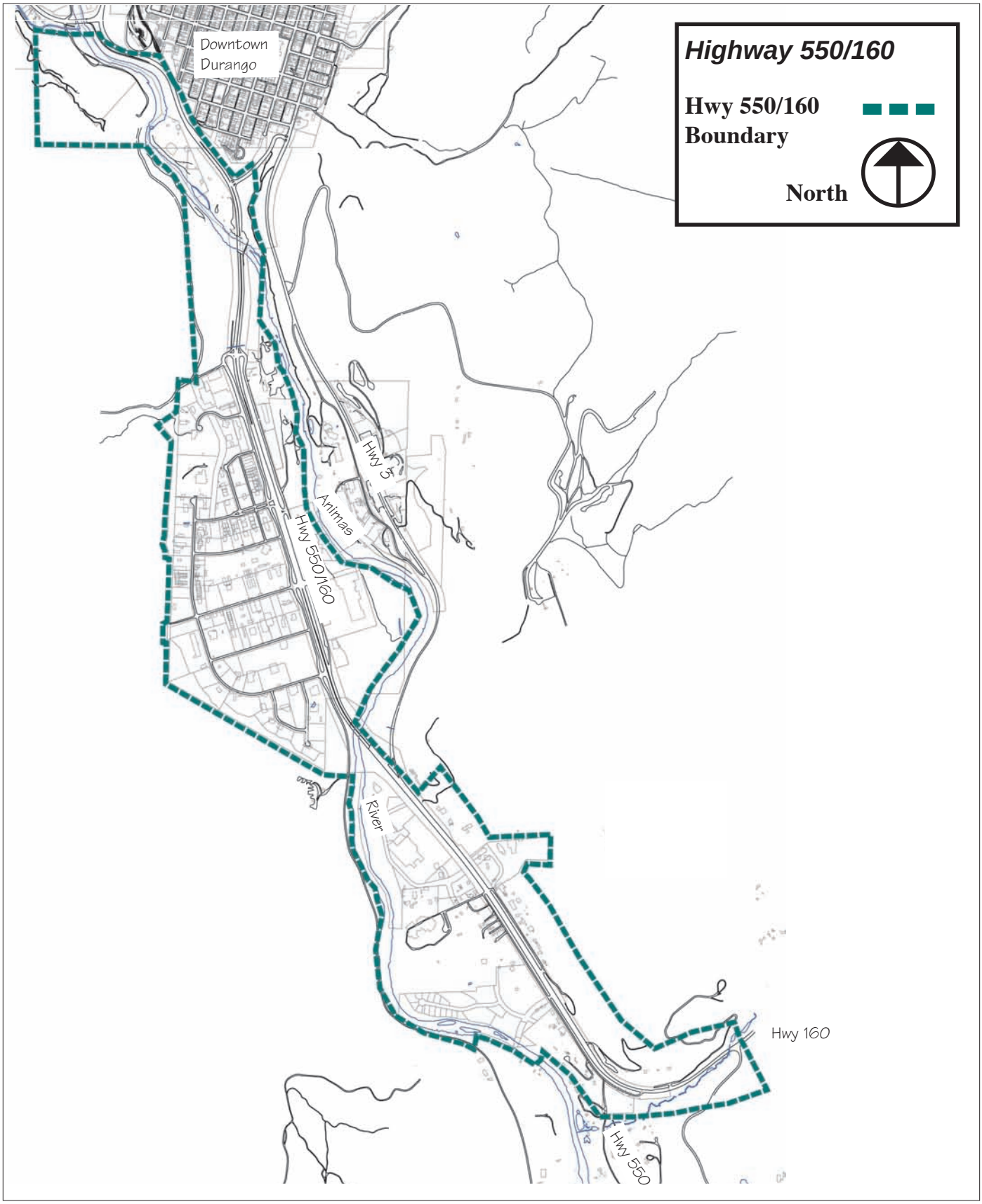
The 550/160 Corridor vision seeks to incorporate many of the features of existing strip commercial areas, while mitigating negative effects of automobiles, to enhance the visual character of the street and to improve the walking environment for pedestrians, to the greatest extent possible.

Continuity of pedestrian systems shall be stressed and connections should be provided to adjoining properties and the Animas River Trail, when feasible.

Goals:

1. To establish a consistent landscaped edge along the highway that is "urban" in character while incorporating indigenous plant materials.
2. To minimize visual impacts of cars by creating a buffer between the highway and site developments.
3. To encourage buildings that blend with natural landscapes and landforms.
4. To preserve viewsheds to mountain ranges, mesas and the Animas River.

Highway 160/550 is a main commercial corridor with significant amounts of retail and industrial development.



The Highway 550/160 Corridor is generally defined as beginning at the intersection of 550 and 160 at Farmington Hill and continuing to the intersection of 550/160 with 160 West and Camino del Rio.

Design Objectives:

- Create a green or landscaped edge.
- Promote continuity in a landscape palette to give corridor identity.
- Encourage buildings that fit into the landscape.
- Maintain long vistas to the mountains.
- Facilitate pedestrian circulation internally and between properties. (Less pedestrian activity is anticipated along the road edge.)
- Maintain focus on pedestrian enhancements within properties.
- Provide connections to regional trails and the Animas River.

Guidelines for the Highway 160/550 Commercial Corridor:

H1.1 Providing a median in the center of the highway, when feasible, should be considered.

- While providing a raised median may not be consistent with current highway department standards, it is a long-term goal for the city, and overall circulation planning should take its potential development into consideration.
- Such a median should reflect the natural landscape palette of this area.

H1.2 Provide continuity of pedestrian systems among properties and to regional trail systems. (+)

- Link adjoining properties with walkways that are clearly identified.
- Provide a connection to the Animas River trail when feasible. (+)

H1.3 The sidewalk shall be separated from the curb with a landscape strip. (+)

- The position of the sidewalk may vary, depending upon specific site conditions.

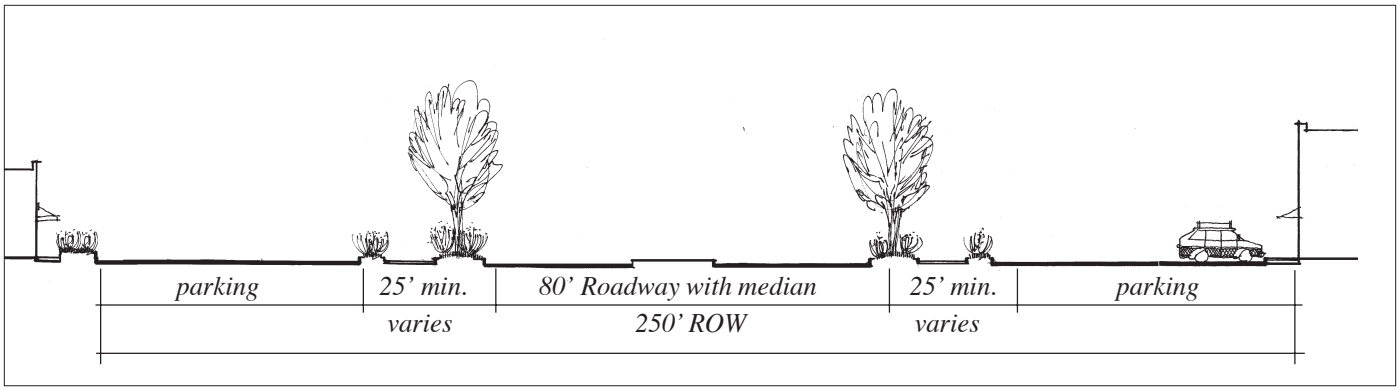
H1.4 Parking may be located in front of buildings, but automobile access points from the highway shall be limited in number to minimize crossing conflicts for pedestrians. (+)

- As an alternative to direct highway access, provide curb cuts along cross streets.
- Also share curb cuts with adjacent properties when feasible. (+)

H1.5 Position a building entrance close to the edge of a frontage road or secondary street, when feasible.

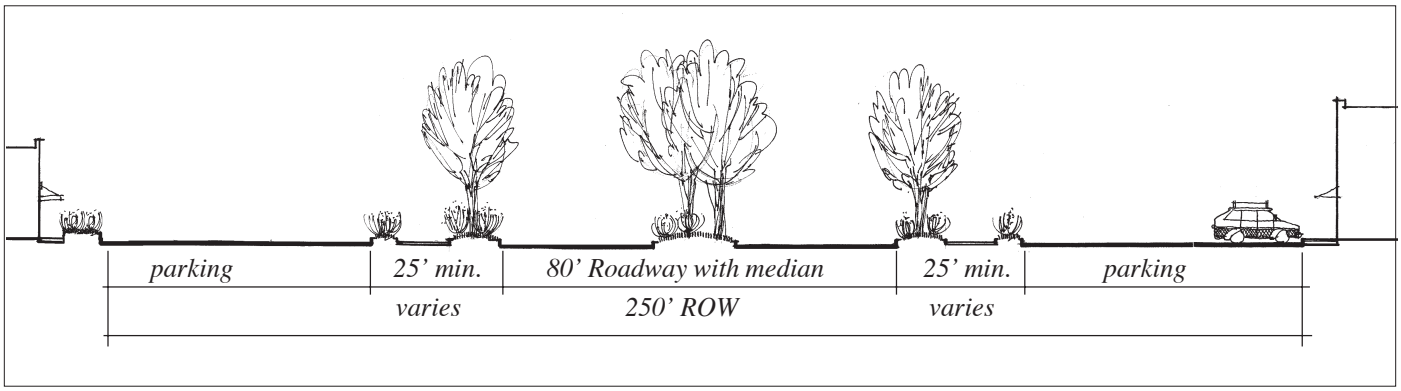
- Sufficient sidewalk width and landscape buffer area should be provided as per City Engineering sidewalk standards and the City LUDC landscape requirements.
- Include features in the building wall that will provide interest to pedestrians. This may include windows, display cases, murals and wall art.
- An exception is when a group of buildings is to be clustered to create a plaza or courtyard for use by pedestrians.

160/550 Corridor – Potential Section with Paved Median



The current standard for the Highway 160/550 Corridor has a paved median. Planting strips are placed at the curb, to buffer sidewalks from vehicles. Parking is typically located in front of buildings. A second planted buffer strip screens cars from the public sidewalk.

160/550 Corridor – Preferred Median Treatment Option



The preferred option for the Highway 160/550 Corridor has four travel lanes, two in each direction, with landscaped median and shoulders. A sidewalk is set behind the landscaped shoulder. While this may not be consistent with current state highway standards, it is a long-term goal for the city.

Note: CDOT specifically allows only low shrubs at or near intersections in the defined "clear zone" area. For other areas that may allow street trees, CDOT current design specifications only allow for up to six inch maximum caliper tree size. If street trees exceed this standard, as current policy, CDOT will remove the trees based on safety concerns.

For many years, the Grandview/Highway 160 Commercial Corridor has offered dramatic views of mountains and valleys and a sense of connection to the natural setting when entering Durango.

Views to the surrounding mountain ranges and native vegetation predominate the driving experience along the corridor.

Grandview/Highway 160 Corridor

The Grandview/Highway 160 Corridor runs from the intersection of Highway 160 and Highway 172, also known as Elmore's Corner, west to Farmington Hill at the intersection of 550 and 160. (See map on following page.) A mix of uses including residential, commercial and industrial, are found along the route. Most of the buildings are low in scale and fit into the natural landscape. The road itself has one travel lane westbound and two travel lanes eastbound, with informal breakdown lanes on either side. There are few side roads or major access points and traffic is generally high speed. Remnant segments of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad route are visible along the north side of the corridor.

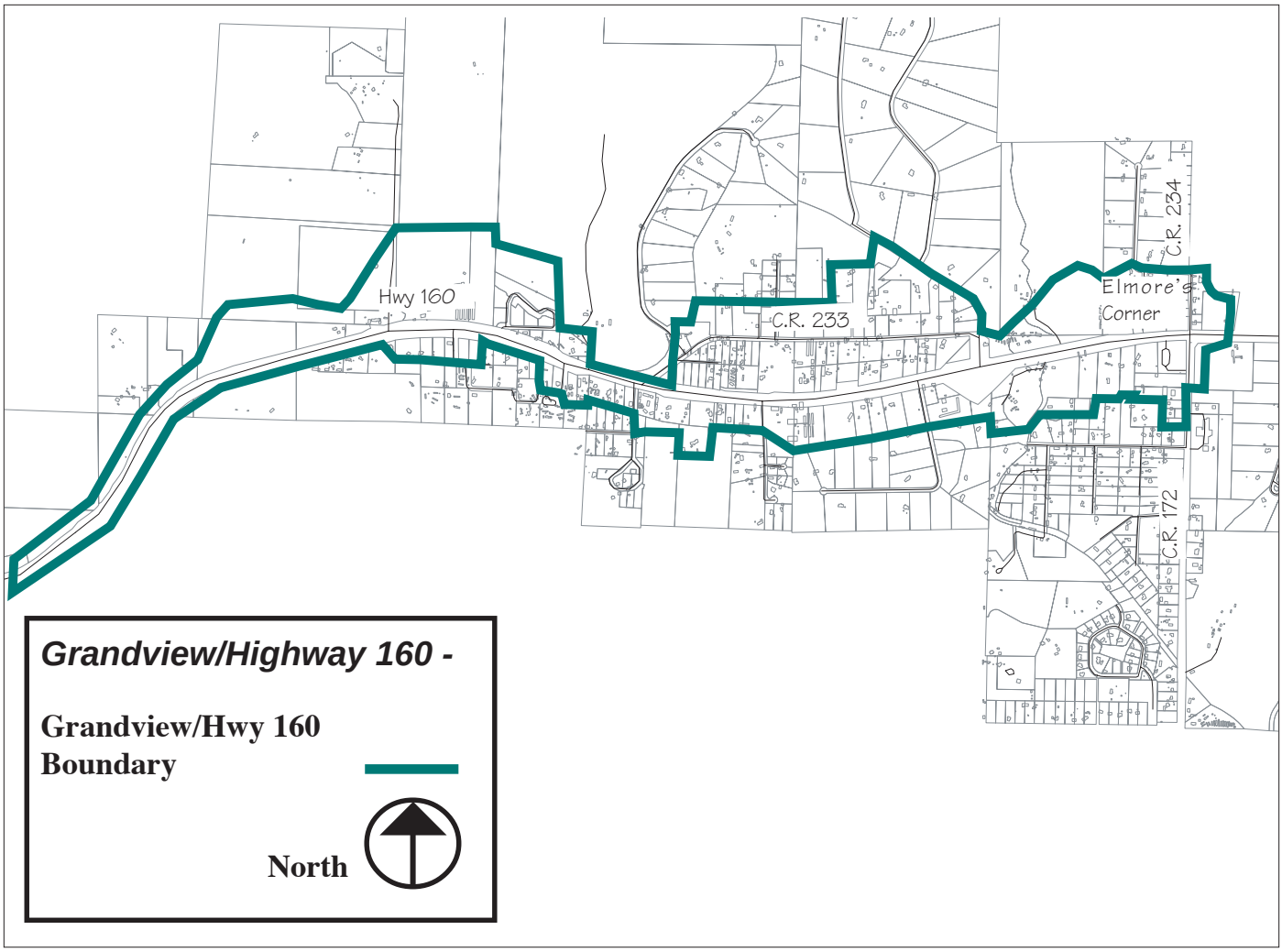
For many years, the Grandview/Highway 160 Commercial Corridor has offered dramatic views of mountains and valleys and a sense of connection to the natural setting when entering Durango. This experience is to be preserved. Broad vistas are particularly noteworthy as a traditional feature that should be maintained. Therefore, the Grandview/Highway 160 Commercial Corridor should accommodate development, while minimizing negative effects of automobiles and service areas. The highway should have a consistent visual character that retains a sense of the rural setting, while also providing an improved environment for pedestrians, to the greatest extent possible.

The actual highway cross section in the Grandview area is anticipated to be similar to that in the Highway 160/550 Corridor. However, frontage roads, which would parallel the highway itself, are planned for some portions and their treatment is an important consideration. This provides opportunities to have a substantial landscape buffer and to create some areas with sidewalks for pedestrians. To the extent feasible, parking and service areas that abut them should have landscaped edges, to encourage use by pedestrians.

Buildings in this area also should blend with the natural setting to the extent feasible. This may include minimizing cuts into hillsides, positioning structures such that their massing does not disrupt ridge lines, and using colors and materials that are similar to those seen in the surrounding countryside.

Goals:

1. To retain a sense of the rural character of the area, while accommodating appropriate development along the highway corridor.
2. To reflect the traditional landscape by incorporating indigenous plant materials.
3. To convey a visual connection with the core of Durango, while also encouraging creative new designs of high quality construction.



The Grandview/160 Corridor runs from the intersection of 160 and Highway 172, also known as Elmore's Corner, west to Farmington Hill at the intersection of 550 and 160. These guidelines apply to development along the highway itself, as well as along parallel and/ or frontage roads.

The road itself has one travel lane westbound and two travel lanes eastbound, with informal breakdown lanes on either side.

Design Objectives:

- Retain a sense of the rural setting by promoting a landscaped edge of indigenous plant materials.
- Establish a sense of landscape continuity by using native vegetation that is consistent throughout the corridor.
- Limit curb cuts to emphasize the landscaped edge of the road.
- Provide secondary access ways to properties that face the highway from cross streets and adjacent services roads.
- Encourage pedestrian and bicycle movement among properties by providing an attractive edge to cross streets and service roads.
- Fit buildings into the natural landscape to minimize impacts on views to mountains and fields in the distance.

Guidelines for the Grandview/Highway 160 Commercial Corridor:

G.1 A coordinated landscape design shall be used along the street edge to establish a single identity for the area and to buffer the view of cars in parking areas. (+)

- Use plant materials that are similar to those on adjacent properties to provide a sense of continuity in landscape design.
- Use indigenous plant materials predominantly.

G.2 Provide continuity of pedestrian systems among properties and to regional trail systems. (+)

- Link adjoining properties with walkways that are clearly identified.
- Provide a connection to the Animas River trail when feasible.

G.3 Sidewalks shall be separated from the curb with landscape strips. (+)

- The position of the sidewalk may vary, depending upon specific site conditions.

G.4 Providing a median in the center of the highway, when feasible, should be considered.

- While providing a median may not be consistent with current highway department standards, it is a long-term goal for the city, and overall circulation planning should take its potential development into consideration.
- Such a median should reflect the natural landscape palette of this area.

G.5 A building may be set back from the road but the main entrance shall face the street. (+)

- An exception is when a group of buildings is to be clustered to create a plaza or courtyard for use by pedestrians.

G.6 Parking may be located in front of buildings, but automobile access points from the highway shall be limited in number to minimize crossing conflicts for pedestrians. (+)

- As an alternative to direct highway access, provide curb cuts along cross streets.
- Also share curb cuts with adjacent properties when feasible.

G.7 Position a building front close to the edge of a frontage road or secondary street, when feasible.

- Sufficient sidewalk width and landscape buffer area should be provided as per the City Engineering sidewalk standards and the City LUDC landscape standards.
- Include features in the building wall that will provide interest to pedestrians. This may include windows, display cases, murals and wall art.

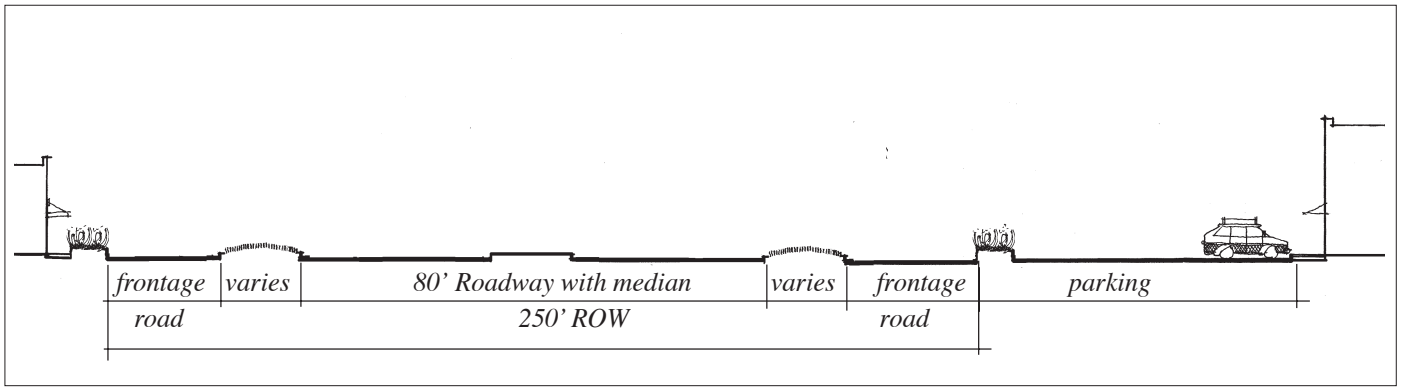
G.8 Minimize cut and fill for building foundations.

- Design a building to fit within existing topography when feasible.
- Use a stepped foundation, or divide a development into a set of smaller buildings that step with the slope of the site.

G.9 A building should blend with the natural setting, to the extent feasible.

- Use masonry that incorporates colors seen in the natural landscape as a predominant building material.
- Step a building foundation to conform with site contours.
- Use colors that blend with the natural setting as well.

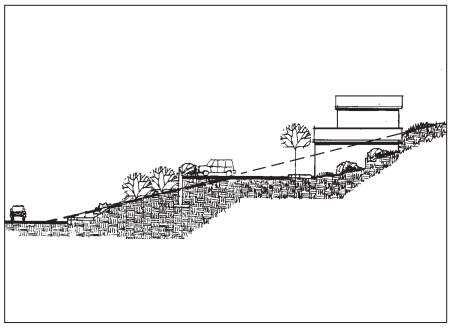
Grandview/Highway 160 Corridor



The actual highway cross section in the Grandview area is anticipated to be similar to that in the Highway 160/550 Corridor. However, frontage roads, which would parallel the highway itself, are planned for some portions. This will provide opportunities to have a substantial landscape buffer and to create some areas with sidewalks. Treatment of the edges of these frontage roads is an important consideration. To the extent feasible, parking and service areas that abut the frontage roads should have a landscaped edge with sidewalks, to encourage use by pedestrians.

Highway 3/Sawmill Road Commercial Corridor

Highway 3 links Highway 550/160 with 8th Avenue. The corridor rises above Highway 550/160, running to the east and approximately parallel to the highway. Sawmill Road is a short spur parallel to Highway 3. The road is located to the west of the highway and provides access to a variety of mixed uses including light industrial, commercial and residential. There is limited development along the Highway 3 corridor, due in part to steep rock slopes, natural features and other site constraints. Most of the uses along Highway 3 are industrial, as well as a few clusters of restaurant and retail establishments. Long vistas to the Animas River, Perins Peak and the Hogback can be seen when driving along this corridor.



New development should step back into the hillside and provide landscaping at the road edge to minimize visual intrusion of the development.

This corridor is primarily an automotive zone, with limited pedestrian use. Buildable sites abutting the highway itself also are few. This means that, to some extent, the "rustic" character that exists will continue. Where development does occur, it should be configured to respect views and be set back from the road edge.

Building sites are minimal; where they appear, they should respect the views and be set back from the road edge and maintain important view corridors.

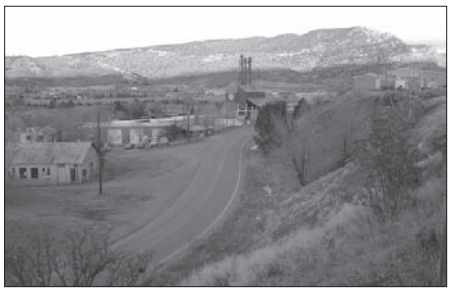
One of the major concerns along the Highway 3/Sawmill Road Corridor is the treatment of sloped areas along the road edge. There may be opportunity to develop some sites through extensive site engineering that would impact the natural topography. This may include cuts in the hillside at the road edge, or constructing long drives or access roads to building sites higher up. Any cuts made for new access roads or site terracing should be minimal and should respect the natural land forms. New development should step back into the hillside and landscaping should be provided at the road edge to minimize visual impacts.

Long vistas to the Animas River, Perins Peak and the La Perin Hogback can be seen when driving along this corridor.

While pedestrian activity along the road is likely to remain limited, there are opportunities to encourage pedestrian circulation along regional trails. Therefore, providing access to these trails, and promoting pedestrian connections between properties, should be incorporated into site improvements, when feasible.

Goals:

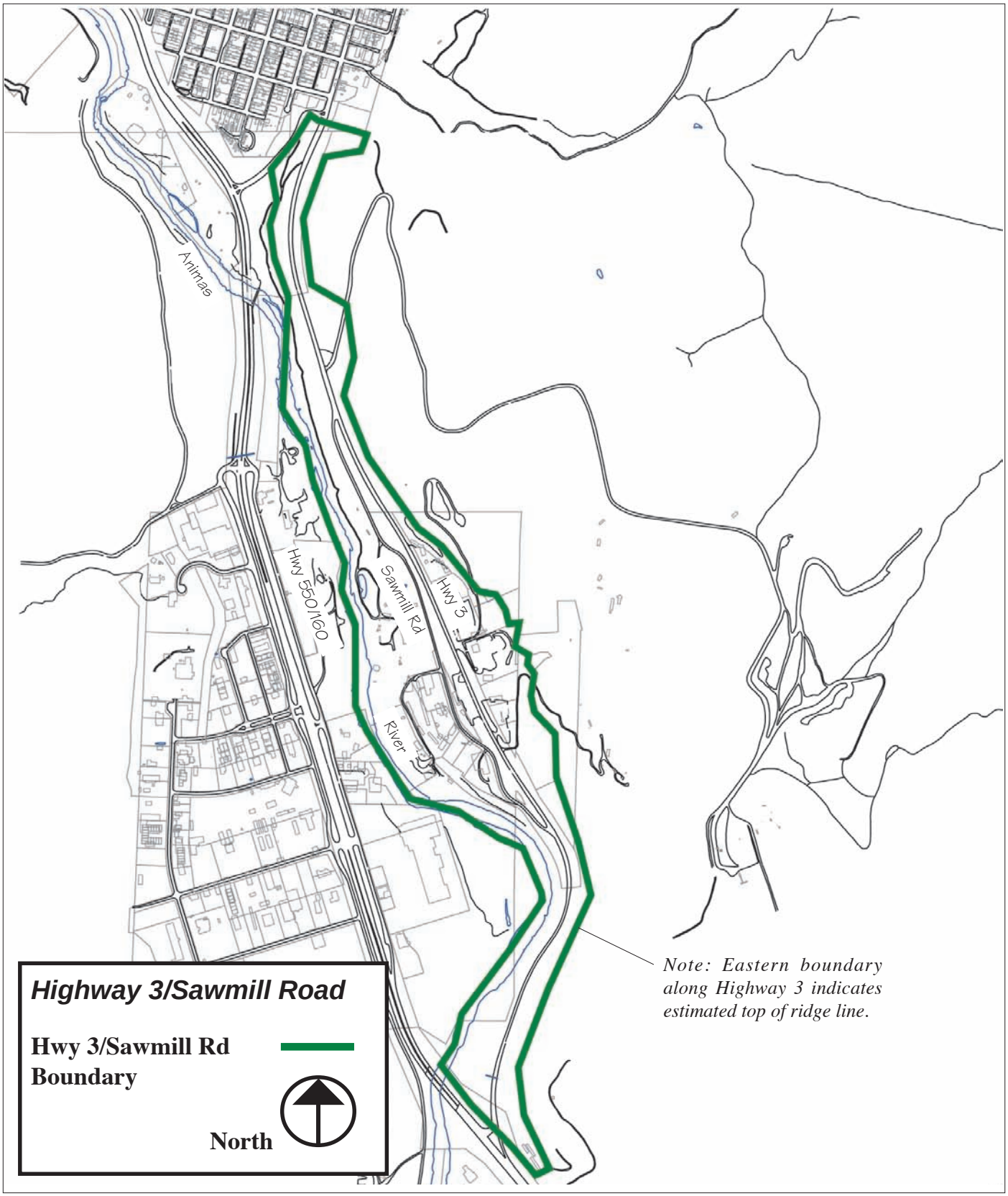
1. Integrate new development with existing light industrial and commercial uses, promote compatible building designs, create landscape buffers between the highway and new development or redevelopment.
2. To minimize the potential impacts of roads and drainways.
3. To retain important viewsheds to the mountains, ridges and Animas River corridor.



Sawmill Road is a short spur parallel to Highway 3. The road is located to the west of the highway and provides access to a variety of mixed uses including light industrial, commercial and residential.

Design Objectives:

- Locate building to maintain and enhance views to the Animas River, Perins Peak and the Hogback



Highway 3 links Highway 550/160 and 8th Avenue. The corridor rises above 550/160, running to the east and approximately parallel to the highway.

- Accommodate development along the road edge which will fit with the natural landscape
- Establish a landscaped edge along the highway that uses indigenous plant materials

Guidelines for the Highway 3/Sawmill Road Commercial Corridor:

H3.1 The street edge shall be primarily "natural" in character.

- Limit disturbance to the rock formations and tree stands that exist along sections of the road. (+)

H3.2 Most buildings shall be set back in the trees. (+)

H3.3 Parking areas shall be screened from the road, to the extent feasible.

- Where parking is located in front of the building, it shall not dominate the street edge. A landscape buffer shall be provided.(+)

H3.4 Topographic features shall be respected.

- When a property abuts a hillside, any new building should be set back into the slope, when feasible.
- When a mature stand of trees exists on site, it should be retained, to the extent feasible.

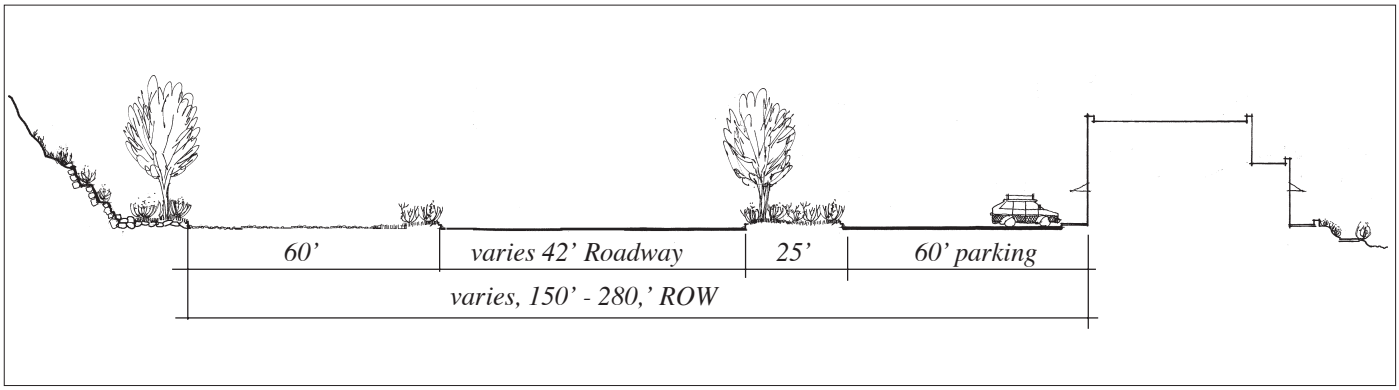
H3.5 Sites located within the viewshed along 160/550 shall provide screening for mechanical and utility equipment that would be visible from Highway 3.

H3.6 The street section shall be relatively narrow, in keeping with a rural road character. (+)

- See the Highway 3/Sawmill Road Street Section.

H3.7 A landscape buffer shall be provided and it shall consist primarily of native plant materials. (+)

Highway 3/Sawmill Road Corridor



The Highway 3/Sawmill Road Corridor should have a landscaped edge that incorporates indigenous plant materials that reinforce the perception of the natural landscape. To the extent feasible, parking and service areas should have landscaped edge with sidewalks, to encourage use by pedestrians.

Highway 160 West Commercial Corridor

A main access route between Durango and Mesa Verde, the Highway 160 West Commercial Corridor, runs from the intersection of Highway 160/550 and Camino del Rio to County Road 141, also known as Wild Cat Canyon Road. Highway 160 West, like the Grandview/160 Area and Highway 3/Sawmill Road, is dominated by its natural features and native vegetation. The topography along 160 West contributes to the unique visual experience along the highway. The landform rises above the highway on both sides, providing an enclosed view corridor, with significant natural vegetation enhancing the slopes. In addition, Lightner Creek runs along the corridor, crossing between the north and south sides.

Structures are tucked into the hillside and set back from the road edge. This trend should continue; however, a mix of building site plans should be used.

There are a number of varied uses along the corridor including industrial, commercial, lodging and residential. These buildings are generally set back against the hillsides and respect the natural features. There are rural remnants, including brick homes from the brickyard in the area and sawmills. The roadway has two travel lanes in each direction as well as a center turn lane. There are sections of Highway 160 West with numerous curb cuts and the main access point to the Durango Tech Center is located on the north side of the highway. Historically this corridor was home to the Rio Grande Southern Railroad, which connected Durango-Mancos-Dolores-Rico-Ridgeway and to the railroad linking the Boston Coal Mine and Town of Perin located on Perin's Peak.

Some sites are configured so as to necessitate buildings that orient to the street edge to define the pedestrian zone.

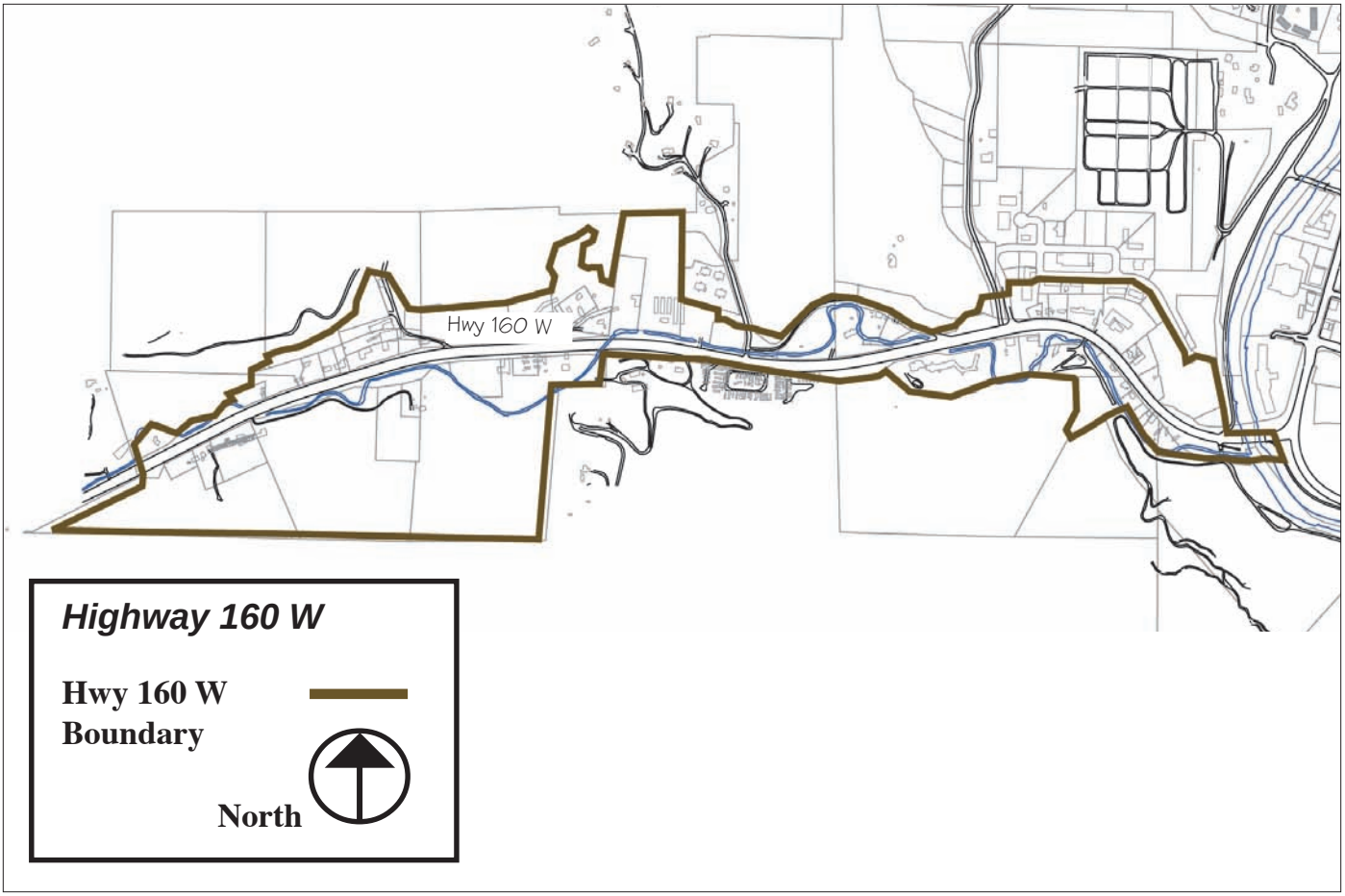
Presently the Highway 160 West Commercial Corridor retains a sense of connection with the natural setting. The vision for the Highway 160 West Corridor draws upon a sense of "enclosed views" to surrounding hillsides, Lightner Creek, and the native landscape to maintain that experience.

Mature trees buffer some development sites from the highway and, in some cases, the creek meanders close to the road, also serving as a buffer. Some structures are tucked into the hillside and set back from the road edge, which minimizes their visual impacts on the natural character. This trend should continue; however, a mix of building site plans is anticipated because of the varying site constraints. Some parcels are configured such that buildings could be positioned close to the street edge with landscaped sidewalks in front to define a pedestrian-oriented zone. On-site parking may be located to the side and behind these structures. These buildings could, in essence, be "double fronted" in that they would orient both to the street and to parking lots. In some cases, they also could overlook the creek, which should be encouraged.

At present, pedestrian ways connecting properties are only intermittent; where they do exist, sidewalks are attached to the road edge, with no buffer from traffic. Detached sidewalks, with a landscape buffer, should be established to the extent feasible, such that they would link the corridor with the downtown core.

Goals:

1. To accommodate appropriate development that blends with the natural setting
2. To retain a natural landscape edge along the highway
3. To incorporate the river and rock formations as assets in development
4. To provide for a safe, pedestrian friendly environment.



Highway 160 West Commercial Corridor runs from the intersection of Highway 160/550 and Camino del Rio to County Road 141, also known as Wild Cat Canyon Road.

Design Objectives:

- Topography is respected.
- Natural resources, including bluffs, rock formations and the river, remain prominent.
- Buildings are tucked into the hillsides.
- Overall, the rural character is maintained.

The topography along 160 West contributes to the unique visual experience along the highway. The landform rises above the highway on both sides, providing an enclosed view corridor, with significant natural vegetation enhancing the slopes.

Guidelines for the Highway 160 West Corridor:

HW.1 The street edge shall be primarily "natural" in character, with native trees and related plantings. (+)

- Existing trees should be preserved, when feasible; new trees should be planted that are of indigenous species.

HW.2 A detached sidewalk shall be provided on at least one side of the road.

- It should have an informal, meandering plan and be located along the waterway, where feasible.
- It should be screened from the roadway with trees and other landscaping, where feasible.

HW.3 Topographic features shall be respected and landscape buffer area as per the City Engineer sidewalk standards and the City LUDC landscape standards.

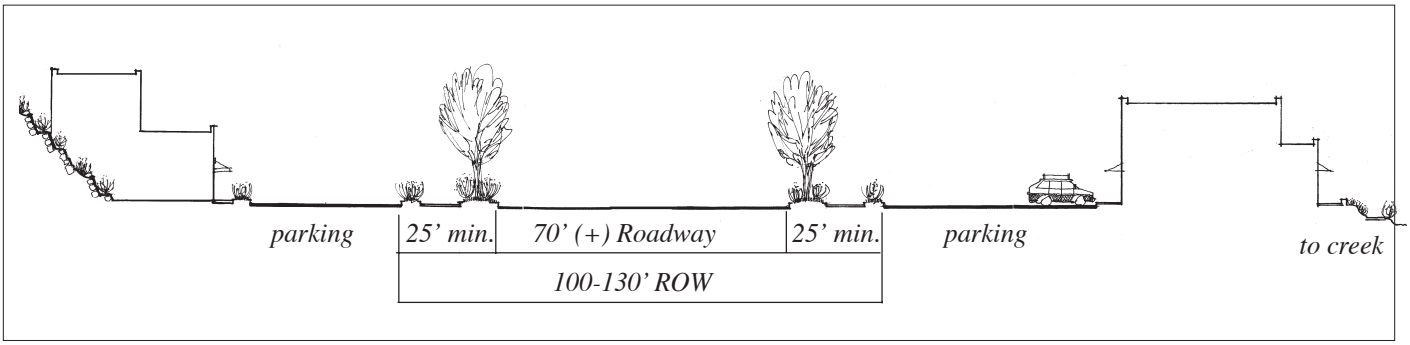
- When a property abuts a hillside, any new building should be set back into the slope, when feasible.
- When the creek abuts the property, a building also should orient to it when feasible. (+)
- When a mature stand of trees exists on site, it should be retained, to the extent feasible.
- See the 160 West Type A Street Section.

HW.4 Parking areas shall be screened from the road, to the extent feasible.

- On a flat, exposed site, consider locating the building at the sidewalk edge and providing parking behind the structure and landscape buffer area as per the city Engineering sidewalk standards and the city LUDC landscape standards. (+) (See the Highway 160 West Type B Street Section.)
- Where parking must be located in front of the building, it shall not dominate the street edge. A landscape buffer shall be provided.(+)

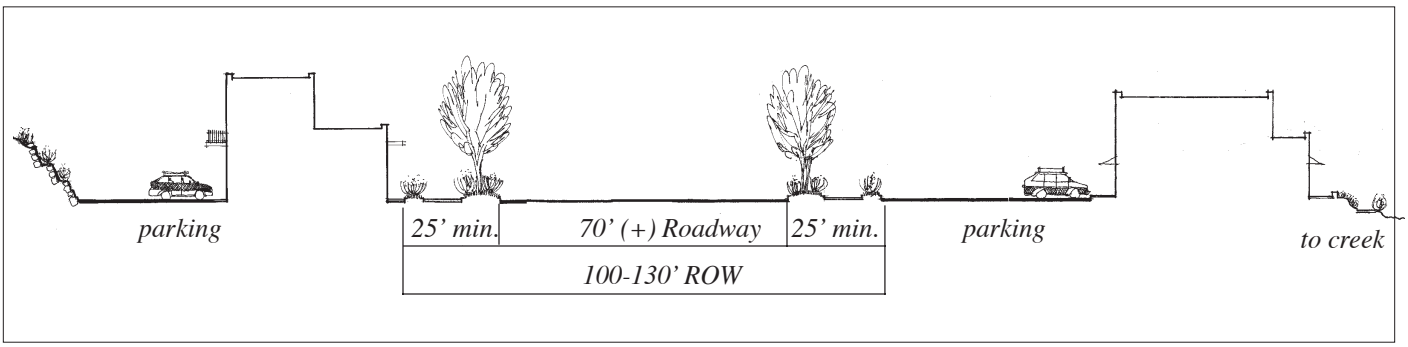
HW.5 When a landscape buffer is provided, it shall consist primarily of native plant materials. (+)

160 West Corridor Type -A



Along the 160 West Corridor most buildings shall be set back into the hillside or mature trees. Where applicable, these buildings should orient to Lightner Creek, as seen to the right.

160 West Corridor Type -B



In some applications along 160 West, the building should come to the street edge and parking should be provided behind the structure. (See the building to the left in the illustrative.) Where applicable, structures should orient to Lightner Creek as seen in the building to the right.

North Main Avenue Commercial Corridor

An area of residential character is found along the North Main Avenue Corridor near the downtown core.

The North Main Avenue Commercial Corridor extends from the bridge at 15th Street at its southern limit out past Animas View Drive to the north city limit. The corridor includes both North Main Avenue and Animas View Drive. A mix of uses can be found along North Main, from civic facilities, such as the Durango High School, Recreation Center and Fairgrounds, to commercial, lodging and limited residential. The density of development is higher closer to the downtown core and is reduced as the road leads north. Sidewalks exist along much of the roadway with two travel lanes in each direction and a center turn lane.

This corridor, along with the 8th Avenue and College Avenue Corridor, has more pedestrian activity than most other areas. Residential neighborhoods are adjacent to significant portions of North Main, and a number of historic residential structures along the road have been adapted to commercial uses. Close to the downtown core there are more formally landscaped edges and buildings that meet the sidewalk, while further out, there is a more naturally vegetated edge and wider setbacks.

Buildings shall have forms relating to single family residential structures, such as gabled roofs.

Animas View Drive is accessed from North Main Avenue north of 37th Street and continues north to County Road 203. This corridor is located east of North Main Avenue and parallels the Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad Line providing access to a mix of single and multi-family residential uses, mobile home parks and both light and heavy commercial uses.

Residential buildings usually sit back from the street edge, with a lawn in front and primary entrances face the street. Residential structures that have been adapted to restaurant, office and retail uses are mixed with more recent commercial infill throughout the corridor.

Older motels generally have a block of rooms that are oriented with the narrow end facing the street and the doors to the units facing into the interior of the lot. In some cases, there is also a row of rooms at the rear of the lot. Sometimes, a separate building houses management offices and central services. These sometimes sit closer to the road. These motels generally include some green space near the street edge. Some sites have outdoor seating areas in the front, which is encouraged.

Some earlier commercial buildings have storefronts oriented to the street, with parking located in front. Many of these rely on direct pull-in parking, which would not be appropriate to construct in a new development today.

For many of these property types, parking remains subordinate, as seen from the street edge. Exceptions are some of the mid-twentieth century commercial buildings, where parking is located in front and no screening exists; this is inappropriate for new development.

These guidelines anticipate a new sidewalk width to be a minimum of eight feet, as well as a landscape buffer area in some cases. Guidelines addressing alignment at the sidewalk edge are intended to apply in that condition.

Close to the downtown core there are more formally landscaped edges and buildings that meet the sidewalk, while further out, there is a more naturally vegetated edge and wider setbacks.

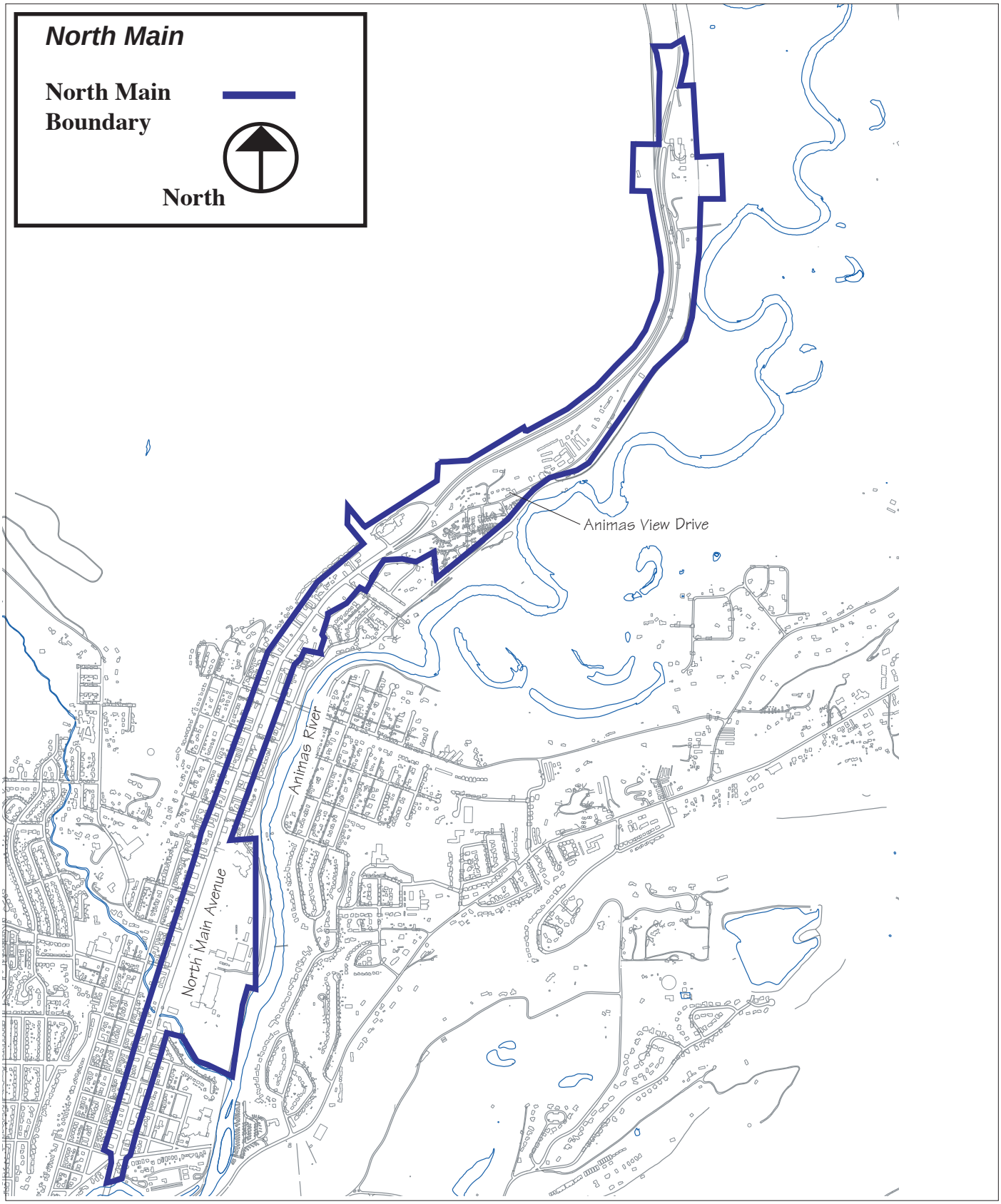
In general, the visual impacts of parking should be minimized, as seen from the street. There are three options for positioning buildings and parking on a lot that are appropriate:

1. Residential traditions:
   Where a building is set back from the street, the space in front should be similar to a yard in character.
2. Main Street storefront traditions:
   Where a commercial building with a storefront is located at the sidewalk edge, then parking should be located to the side or rear of the structure.
3. Buffered strip commercial:
   Where a building must be set back from the street and it is necessary to locate the parking in front, then the parking area should be screened with a landscape buffer.

When considering how to locate parking and buildings on a site, both the residential character of the area and the surrounding historic neighborhoods should be considered.

Goals:

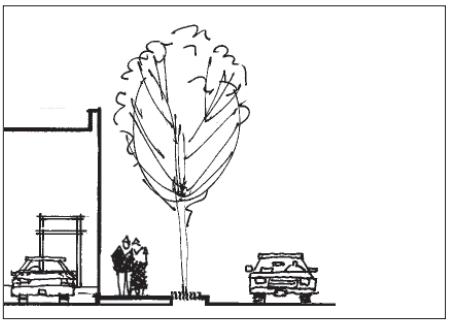
1. To enhance the street edge for use by pedestrians.
2. To establish more of an "urban" character, with buildings close to the street and formal landscaping, where space permits.
3. To enhance visibility by reducing the visual impacts of signs and parking areas.



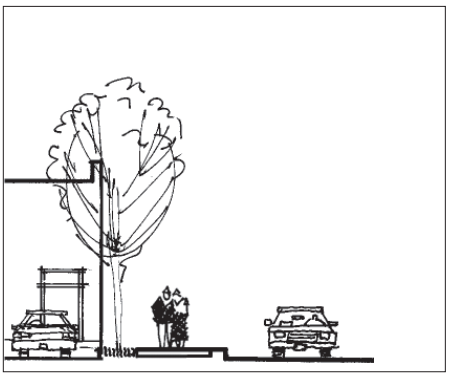
The North Main Avenue Commercial Corridor spans between the bridge at 15th Street out past Animas View Drive.

Some sites have outdoor seating areas in the front setback; this is encouraged.

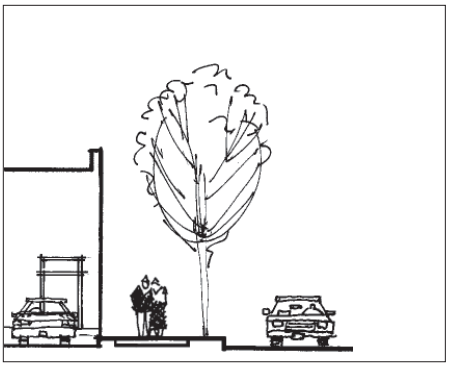
North Main Sidewalk Sections:



A. Planting strip as buffer (preferred)

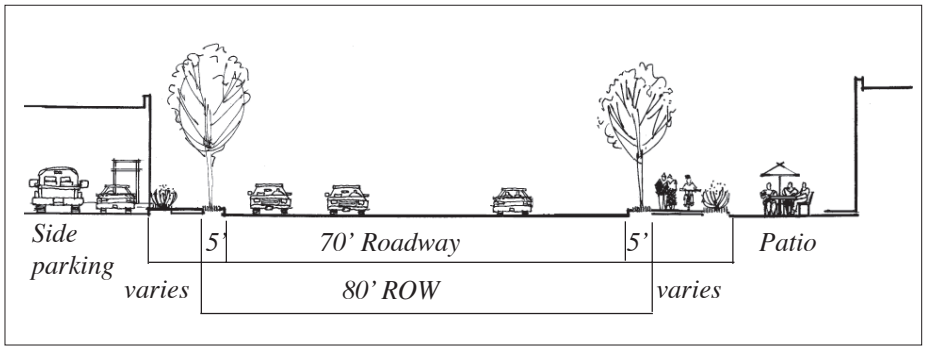


B. Planting strip on inside of sidewalk (works best where on-street parking serves as a buffer)



C. Trees in sidewalk with grates (where depth is limited by existing development)

North Main Avenue -Type A-Residential Context



Along the North Main Avenue Corridor there are four travel lanes – two in each direction, a center turn lane and a dedicated right turn lane in some areas. Currently there is an attached sidewalk. This sketch illustrates a detached sidewalk and buildings coming to the street edge or having a small front setback. Parking is provided to the side or rear of the lot.

Design Objectives for North Main Avenue Commercial Corridor:

- Pedestrian activity is enhanced and active outdoor spaces are used.
- Sensitive transitions to adjacent neighborhoods occur.
- Traditional structures are reused, when feasible.
- A mix occurs of landscaping at the street edge and of buildings at the sidewalk.
- Parking areas are subordinate.
- A mix of uses occurs.
- New buildings reflect regional design traditions.

Guidelines for the North Main Avenue Commercial Corridor:

NM.1 A sidewalk shall be provided.

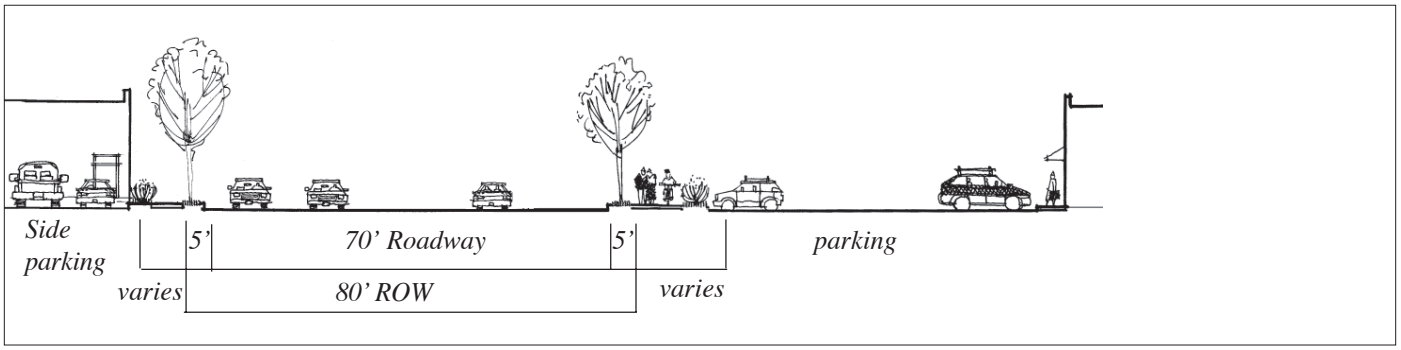
- The sidewalk shall be one of three options; A, B, or C at left: (+)
- In some cases, space for a landscaped strip and sidewalk will not be available within the right-of-way only, and it may be necessary to locate the sidewalk within the property.
- The sidewalk may meander around existing landscape features, such as mature trees.
- The sidewalk shall be eight feet (8') unless otherwise approved by the City Engineer.

NM.2 The street edge of a property should be "pedestrian-friendly."

- Providing a front yard area, with landscaping and active outdoor uses, is an appropriate option.
- Locating a storefront at the sidewalk edge also is an appropriate option.
- If parking must be located along the sidewalk edge, it shall have a landscape buffer.

NM.3 Streetscape elements shall be coordinated with adjoining areas. (+)

North Main Avenue -Type B-Mixed Commercial



This sketch of the Mixed Commercial section of the North Main Avenue Corridor illustrates a detached sidewalk and buildings coming to the street edge or being set back from the street. In cases where parking is provided to the front of the lot, buffering shall be provided.

NM.4 Where a yard is provided, it shall reflect the landscape traditions of residences in the area.

- If a fence is used, it should be relatively "transparent," and low in scale, to permit views into the property.
- Plant materials that are similar to those used in residential yards are preferred.

Where on-site parking meets the sidewalk edge, it should be screened from the pedestrian right-of-way.

Recently this area has experienced increasing commercial development and adaptive reuse of residential structures for professional offices or service businesses.

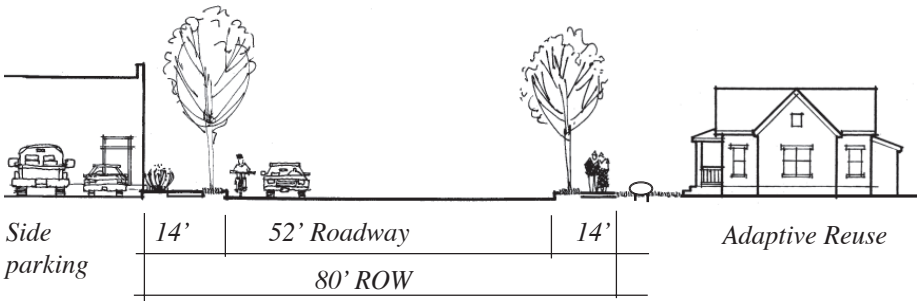
The goal is to maintain residential characteristics, such as front lawns. In areas that are more commercial in character, the goal is to provide adequate screening for parking and to enhance the pedestrian environment where it is less developed.

8th & College Avenues Commercial Corridor

Located just east of downtown and the 3rd Avenue historic district, the 8th & College Avenues Corridor runs north on 8th Avenue from Santa Rita Drive to the intersection with College Avenue where it runs west along College until the alley before 3rd Avenue. Historically, the corridor was part of a residential neighborhood. Commercial and automobile oriented developments occurred later when the corridor became the part the State Highway route into town. This area has high pedestrian activity and is surrounded by residential neighborhoods. Many of the historically residential structures on 8th and College Avenues have been adapted to commercial uses, while others still serve housing needs. The residential structures guide the character of the area, which is predominated by a separated sidewalk and mature landscape elements. This character does vary where historic and modern corner commercial establishments meet the sidewalk edge, particularly along 8th Avenue by Santa Rita Drive.

The 8th and College Avenues Corridor originally developed as predominantly residential in character, with a few local commercial enterprises mixed in, in keeping with a "corner store" tradition. During that time, it retained a sense of pedestrian orientation and offered a relatively inviting walking experience. In the late twentieth century, this area experienced increasing commercial development and adaptive reuse of residential structures for professional offices or service businesses. This trend continues, and it has resulted in the erosion of the street edge as a place for pedestrians. Reinforcing the traditional pedestrian-orientation is an objective.

8th & College Corridor Residential Areas



In the residential context portions of the 8th and College Corridor, buildings should either meet the street edge or have a setback with a small front yard.

As with the North Main Avenue Corridor, there are three approaches to development that may be considered:

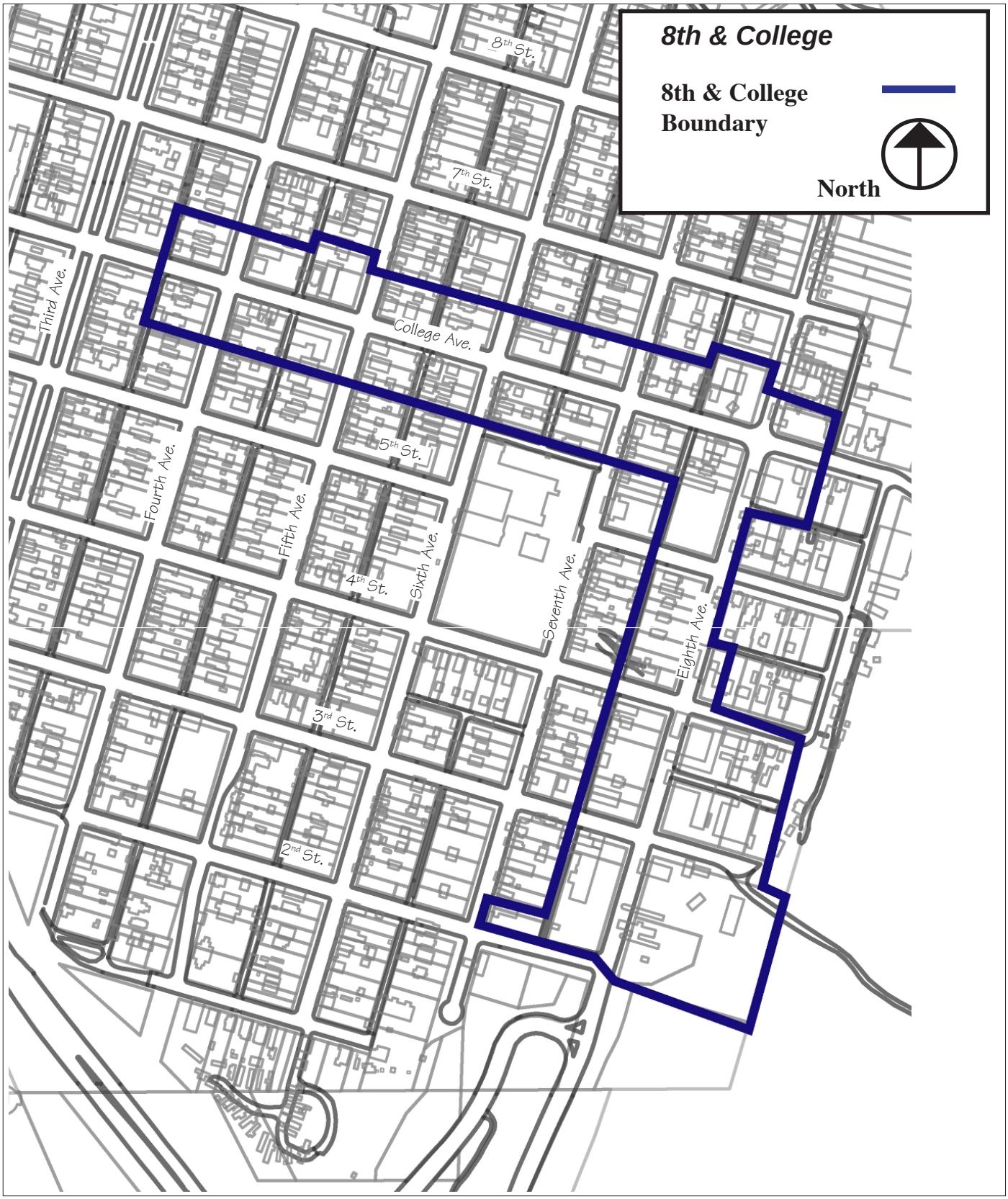
1. Residential traditions:
   Where a building is set back from the street, the space in front should be similar to a yard in character.
2. Main Street storefront traditions:
   Where a commercial building with a storefront is located at the sidewalk edge, then parking should be located to the side or rear of the structure.
3. Buffered strip commercial:
   Where a building must be set back from the street and it is necessary to locate the parking in front, then the parking area should be screened with a landscape buffer.

Historically there have been a mix of uses along this corridor, ranging from institutional facilities, such as Templo Calvario, to commercial and auto services with a large number of residences.

Buildings also should be designed to serve as compatible transitions between the commercial corridor and the surrounding neighborhoods. As such, they should be scaled to the pedestrian. To the extent feasible, existing residential structures should be maintained and adapted to new uses and existing parking areas that are exposed should be improved with landscaping to buffer their edges.

Goals:

1. To maintain the residential character of the neighborhood.
2. To enhance street edge for use by pedestrians and reducing the impact and visibility of parking areas.
3. To strengthen the connection to between the downtown and the neighborhood.



Located just east of downtown and the 3rd Avenue historic district, the 8th & College Avenue Corridor runs north on 8th Avenue from Santa Rita Drive to the intersection with College Avenue where it runs west along College until the alley before 3rd Avenue.

Design Objectives:

- Older buildings are maintained, where feasible.
- Adaptive reuse occurs.
- A pedestrian-friendly environment exists.
- Sensitive transitions into adjacent neighborhoods occurs.

If parking is provided in the front of the property it will be adequately separated and screened from the pedestrian way.

Guidelines for the 8th & College Avenues Commercial Corridor:

C.1 The street edge of a property should be "pedestrian-friendly."

- Providing a front yard area, with landscaping and active outdoor uses, is an appropriate option. The front yard may accommodate such uses as outdoor dining areas. (+)
- Locating a storefront at the sidewalk edge also is an appropriate option.
- If parking must be located along the sidewalk edge, it shall have a landscape buffer.
- The primary building entrance shall face the street. (+)

C.2 The visual impacts of parking, as seen from the street, should be minimized.

- Parking shall be located to the side, in the rear, or in the interior of the block, when feasible. (+)
- A reduction in parking requirements may be granted in order to provide sufficient room for a landscape buffer.
- A maximum of 10% reduction may be approved by the Planning Director.

C.3 A fence design should be in character with the overall landscape design.

- In public use areas where a fence may be used, an open, picket or rail design is preferred, to permit views into the property.
- Solid fences should be reserved for use where service areas must be screened or privacy is required.

C.4 A new building shall appear to be in scale with residential structures seen traditionally. (+)

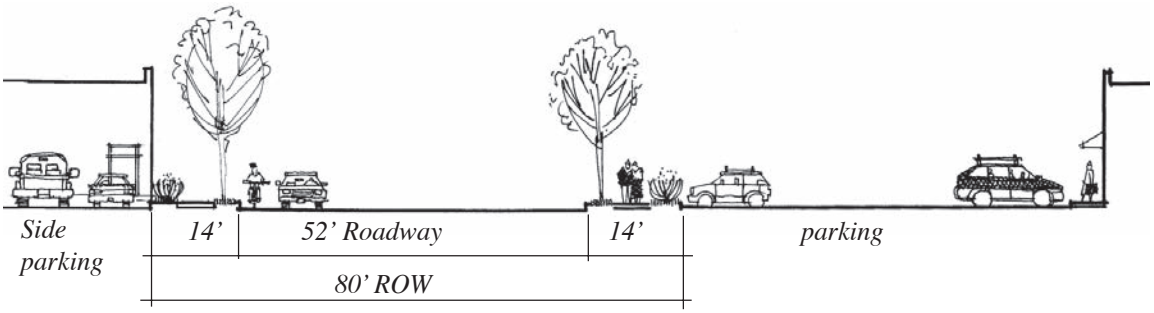
- If a building would be larger than traditional houses, then it should be divided into subordinate modules that reflect this scale.
- Facade lengths should be similar to those of houses seen traditionally in the area.

C.5 Sloping roof forms are preferred. (+)

- A gable or hip roof is preferred for the predominant building mass.

C.6 Preserve historic building, to the extent feasible.

8th & College Corridor Commercial Areas



In areas of the 8th and College Corridor that are more commercial in context, buildings may be set back from the sidewalk edge with buffered parking at the front of the lot.