Development Guidelines

July 26, 2016

These guidelines have been developed by the Town of Valleyview to help landowners and businesses plan for development that supports the community's vision of a small traditional town with a beautiful, walkable grid network of streets and a modern, thriving business community that is an attractive destination for visitors and workers. They include three types of guidelines:

- Downtown Commercial Design Guidelines:
these aim to encourage design that communicates the traditional commercial and civic heart of the community, and enhances the character, pedestrian orientation and vitality of downtown and as an important community focal point.

- Highway Commercial Design Guidelines:
these aim to encourage beautification of commercial lands on the highway, so that they have more landscape, retain unique local features, better define edges of parking lots, and maintain windows into the surrounding rural and forested landscape.

- Subdivision Guidelines:
these aim to offer applicants guidance on the most important decisions made in developing a subdivision proposal, so that proposals create as much value for them and for the community as possible. These guidelines will help applicants create a site plan that is in alignment with the Town's Municipal Development Plan.

TOWN OF VALLEYVIEW
PORTAL TO THE PEACE

MODUS
from insight to impact

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Town of Valleyview
Downtown Commercial Design Guidelines

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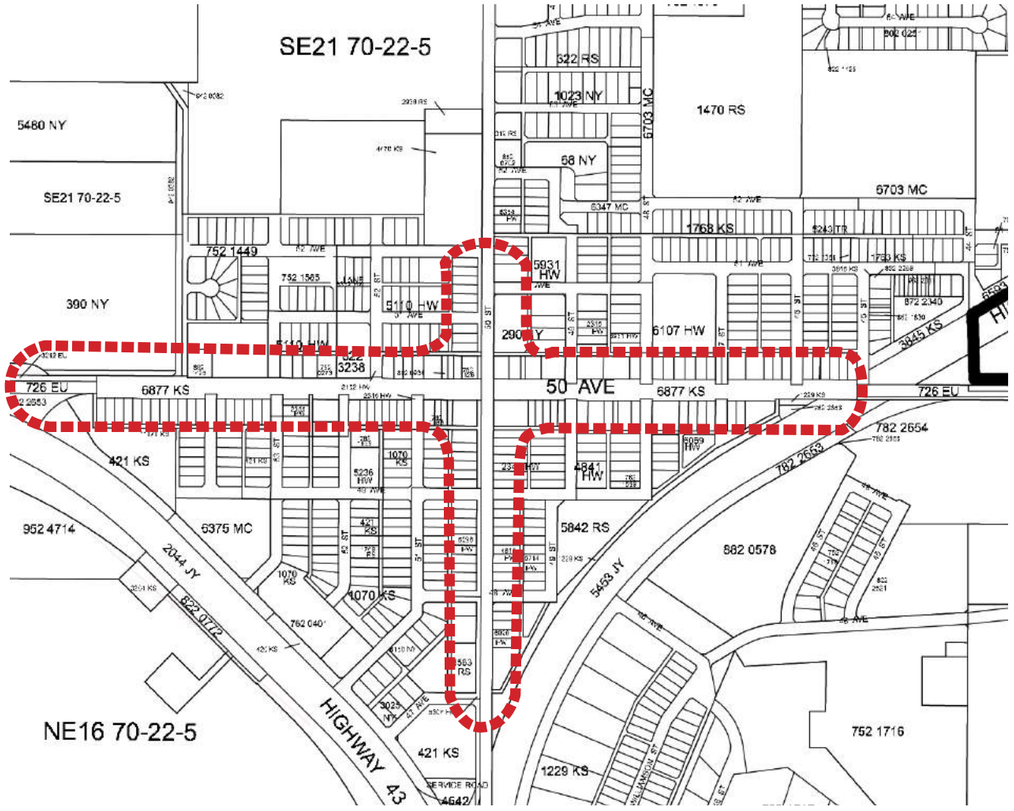
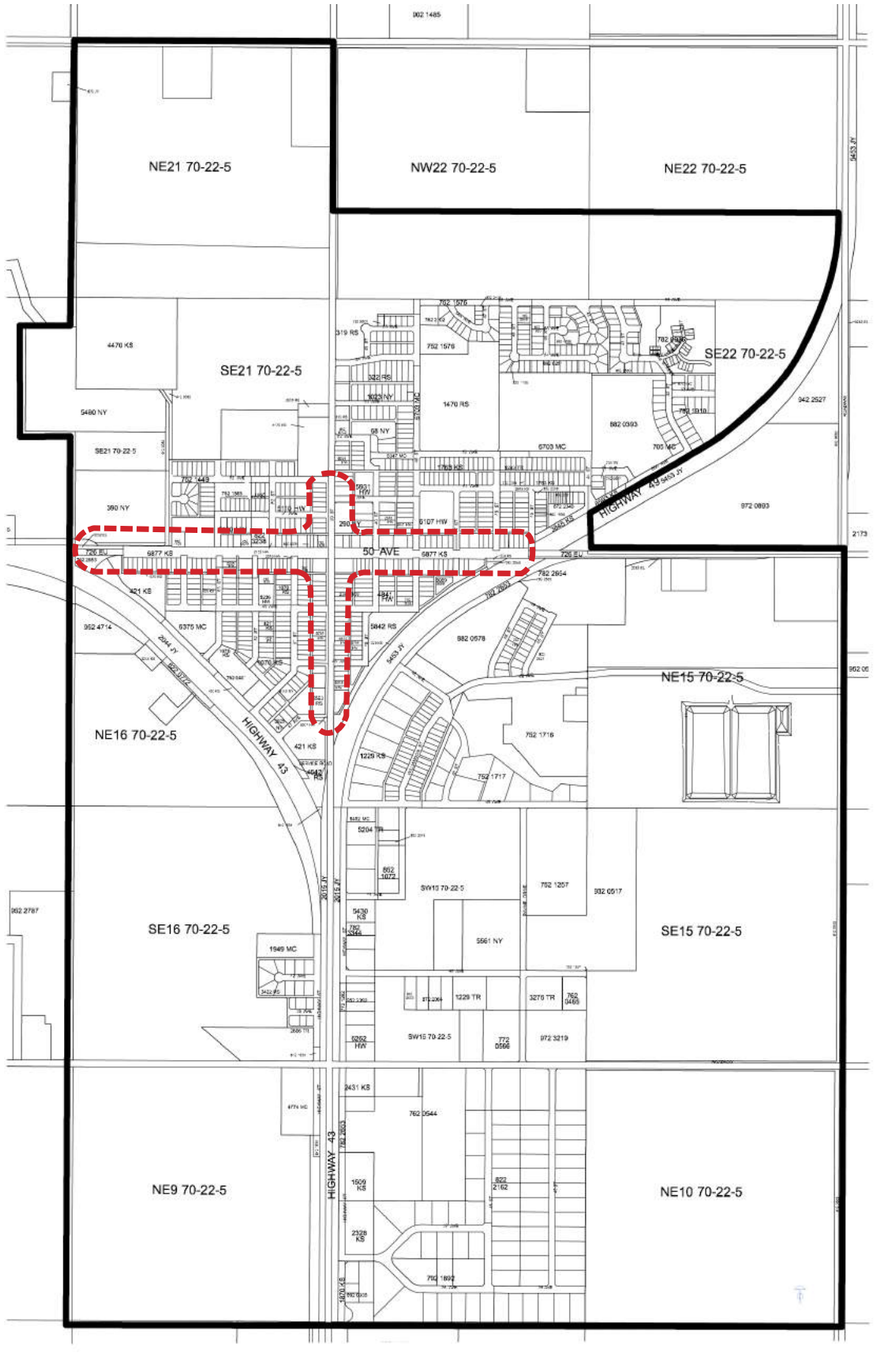
Area where the Downtown Commercial Guidelines apply



Downtown Guidelines Area Boundary

Town Boundary



FACADE GUIDELINES

Intent and Overview

The intent of the facade guidelines is to encourage facade design that emphasizes the downtown as the traditional commercial and civic heart of the community , and enhances the character, pedestrian orientation and vitality of this important community focal point.

Specifically, the guidelines identify a range of practical facade design elements, features and details to create richness, variation and visual interest, encourage pedestrian activity and welcome users.

These guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive, but rather to encourage innovative creative and practical design responses for individual development projects and facade improvements.

Large shop front windows, weather protection and a range of simple facade features and details create an attractive and welcoming streetscape environment

Key Elements and Approaches

Many street frontage design elements help to create an interesting and welcoming streetscape. These include building materials, special ground floor design treatments, façade modulation, corner treatments, façade elements such as window treatments, building entries, and other architectural details. All of these help define the public realm as a welcoming place.

Key facade elements and approaches that can be used to enhance the pedestrian environment include:

- **Definition**: locate building facades at the sidewalk edge/property line. Do not locate off-street surface parking between the front of the building and the public sidewalk.
- **Transparency**: incorporate large areas of glazing (windows) to create visual interest and enable views into and out of businesses. A minimum 75% glazing requirement on the ground floor is desired.
- **Vitality:** Incorporate frequent entrances along the street
- **Comfort:** Incorporate functional weather protection into facades that corresponds to the placement of doors and windows.
- **Human Scale:** incorporate architectural features, details, and materials that are of human proportion and clearly oriented for pedestrian activity. A building has good human scale if its details, elements, and materials create visual interest and allow people to feel comfortable using and approaching it.
- **Substance:** Incorporate substantive, natural materials to avoid a thin veneer look

Examples of architectural features include:

- Decorative roof-lines and cornices
- Shop-front windows and building entryways
- Awnings, canopies and overhangs
- Building articulation to accentuate building edges, corners, and entryways

Examples of architectural details include:

- Treatment of masonry (ceramic tile, paving stones, brick patterns, etc.)
- Treatment of siding (for example, the use of score lines, textures, and different materials or patterning to distinguish between different floors)
- Use of vertical elements such as columns, piers and pilasters
- Ornamental or integrated artwork
- Integrated architectural lighting
- Detailed grilles and railings
- Substantial trim details and moldings
- Trellises and arbors

GENERAL FACADE GUIDELINES

Incorporate functional weather protection that matches to the placement of doors and windows

Use vertical elements to distinguish between individual businesses and buildings

Accentuate windows and doors with substantial trim details (eg. molding and sills)

Clearly distinguish the roof-line from the walls of buildings with a cornice, overhang or decorative motif

Incorporate large window areas on the ground floor to create visual interest and enable views in and out of shops and businesses

Include frequent entrances along the street

Use substantial natural materials, such as masonry, tile or stone banding at the base of the facade

Use pedestrian scale signage and lighting

Break up windows into smaller panels

Windows and Doors

Ground floor facade (shop-front) windows should be broken up into vertical proportions using small panes of glass, and separated from adjacent windows using moldings and jambs but grouped together to form large areas of glazing.

The use of figured or frosted glass or tinted glazing is *discouraged* for windows facing the street except for compatible use of stained glass, or where figured or frosted glass comprises a small proportion (maximum 20%) of the glazing, located above pedestrian eye level.

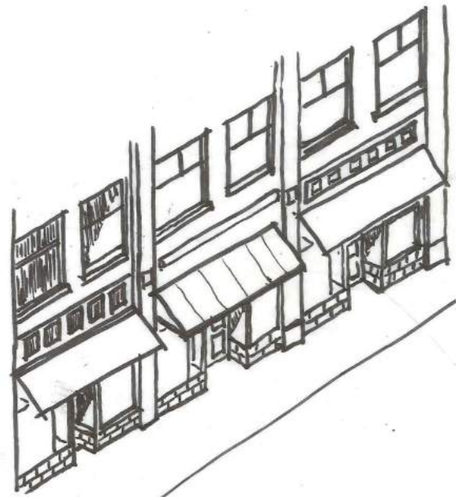
Upper storey windows should also be vertically proportioned and include substantial trim and molding details and be separated by adjacent windows by a strong vertical element.

Punched windows with vertical proportions create variation and texture in the façade.

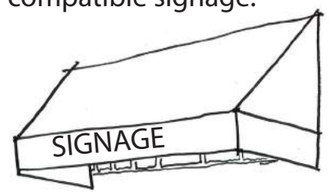
Awnings and Canopies

An *awning* is a light, detachable structure of fabric, sheet metal or other flexible material supported from the building by a frame (fixed or retractable) to offer shelter from sun, rain and snow.

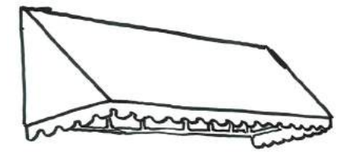
A *canopy* is a rigid structure extending out from the building face and supported entirely from the building.

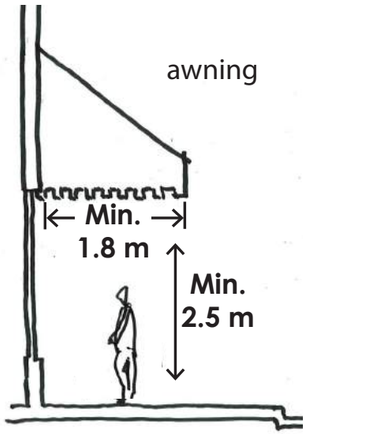


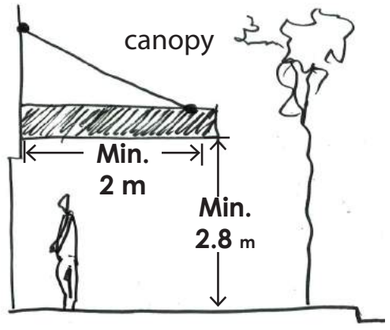
4-point awning with compatible signage.



3-point awning with valance.







Features and Details

A range of features and details can be incorporated into the facade to create variation and visual interest along the street.

Materials

In general, natural building materials are encouraged for facades to avoid a "thin veneer" look and feel, which can be incorporated in a more traditional or compatible modern treatment. Suggested materials include:

- Natural wood materials, including:
  - » Milled and unmilled timbers
  - » Window and door trim
  - » Siding
  - » Signage
- Brick masonry
- Glazed tile
- Stone
- Concrete, painted
- Flat profile "slate" concrete tiles
- Glass and wood for window assemblies
- Pre-finished metal, non-corrugated type, emphasizing either vertical or horizontal arrangements *but not both*
- Limited amounts of stucco
- cement fiber board panels (not siding)

Vinyl siding, swirl type stucco, and vinyl for window frames are *discouraged*.

Discourage large homogenous treatments of any one material and vertical expanses.

Large shop-front windows broken up using substantial trim and moulding treatments

A mixture of wood, tile and stucco in Smithers, BC makes for a practical, attractive and unique facade design

A range of masonry and stone materials can contribute to an attractive facade

Painted or stained wood siding provides warmth and brightness

SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING GUIDELINES

Intent and Overview

A signage and lighting program for any commercial development should be designed as a totality, with signs, lighting, and weather protection architecturally integrated from the outset.
Integrated building lighting can make a positive contribution to the sense of safety and security pedestrians experience in the downtown through a combination of street, sidewalk, and architectural lighting. Business signage can contribute to the overall quality and identity of the downtown.

Blade sign suspended from canopy

Signage

i. Provide attractive signage on commercial buildings that clearly identifies uses and shops.

ii. Scale signs to the pedestrian rather than the motorist.

iii. Provide visible signage identifying the building address at all entrances.

iv. Limit signage in number, location, and size to reduce visual clutter and make individual signs easier to see.

v. Representational and iconic signs (for example, signs that reference Valleyview's history) are encouraged to supplement conventional text-based signs to help establish the special character of the downtown.

vi. A single external sign band may be applied to each façade at the first storey, and should not exceed 1.0 m in height along any length.

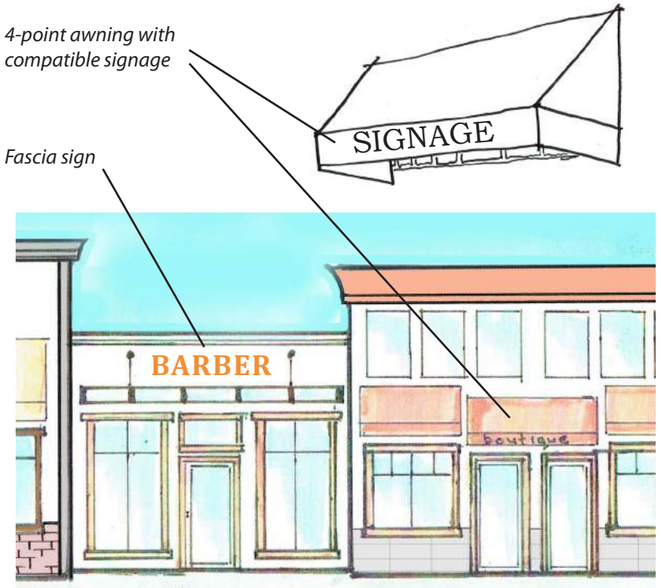
vii. Signage should be externally lit. Signage within shop front glazing may be backlit, but should not exceed 0.5 m in height and 2 m in length.

viii. Flush-mounted signs and blade signs hanging from awnings and canopies are preferred to create pedestrian scale.

ix. A minimum clearance of 2.3 metres should be maintained for signs projecting over the sidewalk or other public space.

x. The following are preferred or acceptable types of signage in the downtown:

- Projecting two-dimensional or blade signs suspended from canopies and awnings (fitting within a 92 cm X 153 cm (36" x 60") horizontal rectangle)
- Flush-mounted fascia signs



Facia and 4 point awning signs

Mounted individual cut-out/silhouette letter signs

- Externally lit signs
- Small vertical banners and signs. Individual letters should not exceed 45 cm (18″) in any dimension.
- Individual cut-out or silhouette letter signs mounted on storefronts. Individual letters should not exceed 45 cm (18″) in any dimension.

xi. The following types of signage are strongly discouraged and should be avoided:

- Signs that are printed onto awnings (see below)
- Outdoor acrylic ight box signs (see below)
- Pylon (stand alone) signs
- Rooftop signs

Signs as awnings - as opposed to letttering - are strongly discouraged

Internally lit plastic box signs are strongly discouraged

4-point awing signs

Blade signs

Flush-mounted fascia sign and 4-point awing signs

Lighting

i. Illuminate building façades and features by providing architectural lighting on the face of buildings.

ii. Light paths and entry areas sufficiently to ensure pedestrian comfort and security.

iii. Provide pedestrian-scaled lighting with high-quality design detail above sidewalks for night time visibility.

iv. Full-spectrum white light or incandescent sources are preferred in public areas.

v. Ensure lighting is sensitive to nearby residential uses. Avoid visible, glaring light sources by using down-lights or up-lights with cut-off shields.

vi. Gooseneck lights and sconces applied to fascias underneath weather protection elements are the preferred types of storefront lighting.

vii. Incorporate valence lighting into canopies and uplighting to illuminate pathways.

viii. Use of LED lighting for storefronts and street trees is encouraged.

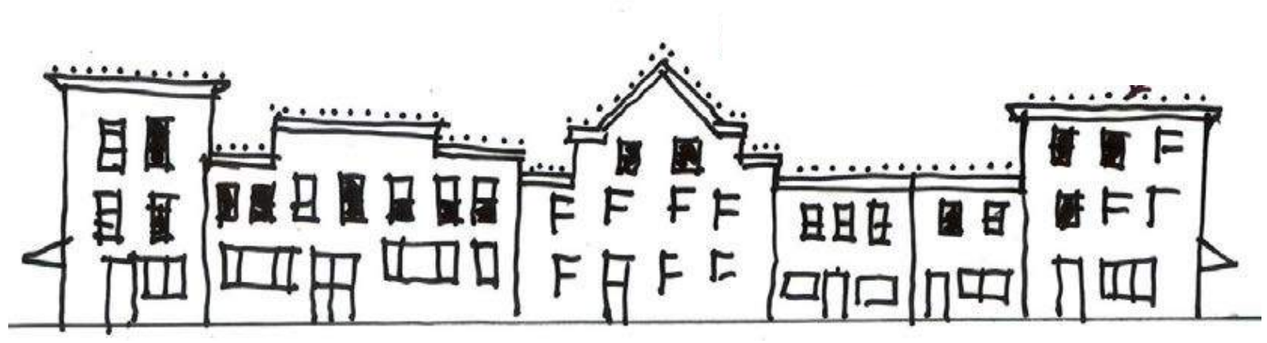
ix. Avoid the use of exterior fluorescent light sources.

x. Incorporate architectural glare-free lighting into the canopy soffit that has either a low-level light source or one not directly visible to pedestrians. Fluorescent tube lights are not permitted for this use.

Gooseneck lighting

Externally lit, individual cut letter sign

Gooseneck lighting under canopies



LED Lights along the roofline

FRONTAGE IMPROVEMENT GUIDELINES

Intent & Overview

Building frontage design can positively impact the overall experience of the downtown area through a combination of improvement and access strategies. Landscaping, direct access to buildings and discouragement of undesirable uses and elements will help create definition for the frontage, which will in turn add activity and vitality to the town centre.

The location of new buildings in relation to the property line and sidewalk plays a major role in creating conditions that enhance the downtown experience.

The intent of the frontage improvement guidelines is to provide some design strategies for buildings that are set back significantly from the fronting sidewalk and/or have large expanses of blank walls.

Typical Conditions - Existing

Buildings that are located close or at the front property line create a seamless and safe pedestrian experience

Outdoor storage and fences diminish the experience of the downtown

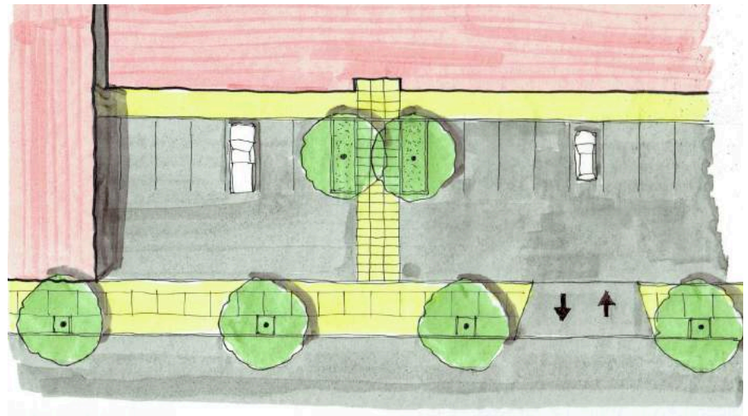
Fences create barriers and diminish the experience of the downtown

Guidelines

- Buildings should be located at the front of the property at, or near, the sidewalk edge. Off-street surface parking should not be located between the front of the building and the public sidewalk.
- Where off-street surface parking located in front of the building cannot be avoided, a direct pedestrian connection from the public sidewalk to the building should be created and maintained.

Existing Condition - Off-Street Surface Parking

Off-street surface parking areas between sidewalk and buildings rupture pedestrian connections

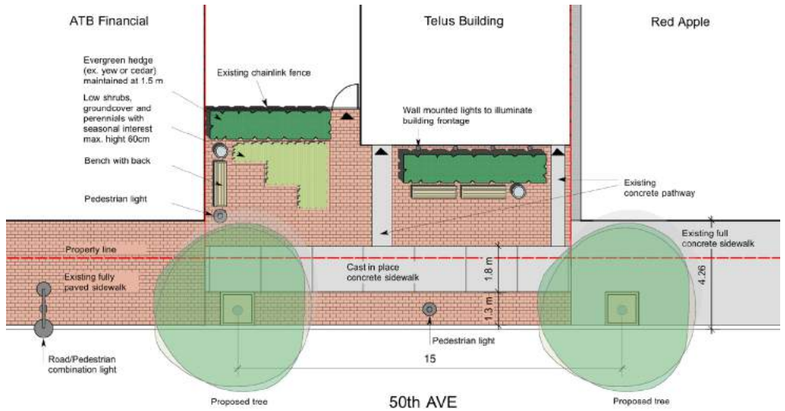


Create and maintain direct pedestrian access between sidewalk and building entrance

Facade and frontage improvements

Existing Condition - Building Set Back

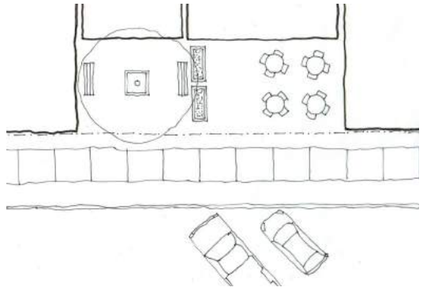
Buildings that are set back from the front property line create gaps and a less safe street experience



Proposal for an outdoor sitting area on 50th Avenue

Proposal for an outdoor sitting area on 50th Avenue

Benches and planters invite to dwell

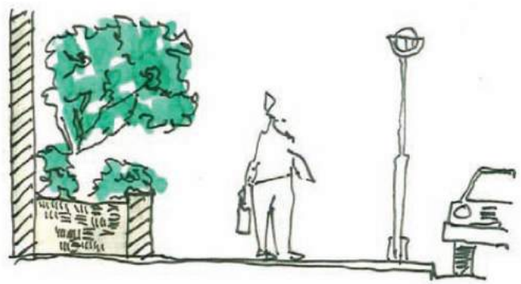


A small outdoor patio does not need much space

Lighting, trellis and climbing plants decorate blank walls

Guidelines

- Where buildings are set back from the front of the property line:
  - » Use landscaping to create small outdoor dwelling spaces or 'pocket parks'
  - » Where possible, provide outdoor patios in relation to building use
  - » At a minimum incorporate decorative planters, benches and trees where less space is available to activate sidewalk areas
- Mitigate or break down large expanses of blank building walls by incorporating trellis structures, murals and public art



When blank walls are unavoidable, they should be screened with planting or treated with special materials

Vacant Lots, Temporary Uses

A summer patio and lighting can activate night time uses of empty lots

Make use of the gap: a decorative transparent steel fence and public art create interest and animate the walls of this outdoor patio between buildings

Fence Design Examples

Low wood fence

Green metal fence

Vinyl fence

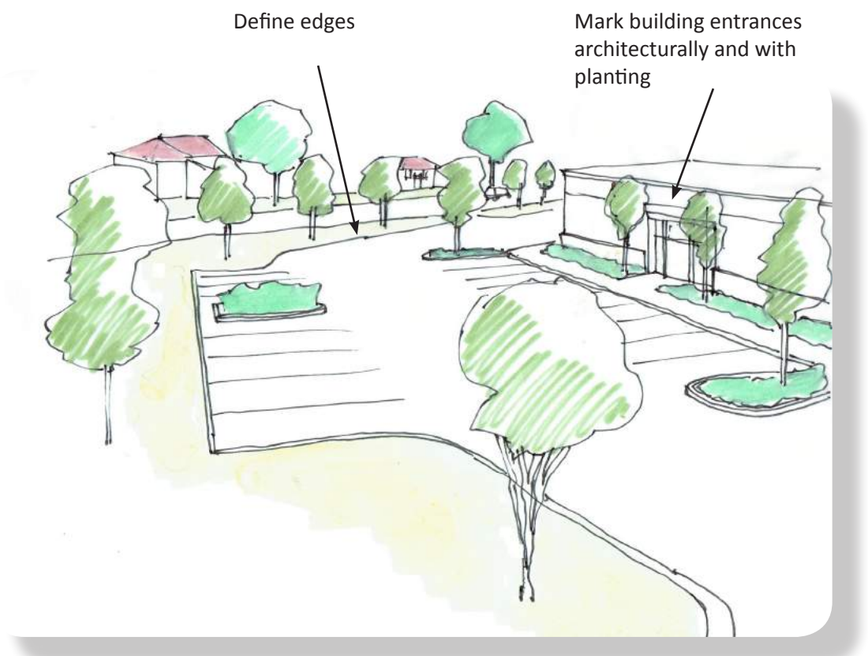
Guidelines

- Where fences cannot be avoided, use transparent and decorative fences that maintain sight-lines between the sidewalk and main building entrance. Steel, aluminum, wood or vinyl are possible materials.
- Chain link, barbed wire or razor wire fences are strongly discouraged.
- Fence heights of 4'0" should not be exceeded at the building frontage. 6'0" is permissible at the back and along the sides of properties.
- Keep vacant lots clean, clear and grassed, and consider temporary seasonal uses (e.g. outdoor patio, sitting area).

Black steel fence

Galvanized commercial metal fence

Town of Valleyview
Highway Commercial Design Guidelines



Purpose and Intent

Highway commercial areas are by necessity oriented towards motorists, and are therefore characterized by parking areas in front of buildings, frontage roads, blank walls and very large signs. While these elements are necessary for highway commercial types of development, they can be designed in such a way as to create some visual interest and identity along the Highway. For example, the unique "retro" signage along the highway 43 corridor is a positive attribute which should be preserved and used as a template for future Highway Commercial Developments. The Highway Commercial zones will be visible from both highways 43 and 49, thus creating a first impression for visitors arriving in the Town of Valleyview. They will also be visible from the town itself, in particular from higher ground in the north-eastern areas of town.

The broad intent of these guidelines is to encourage that commercial lands on the edge of the highway have a landscaped character that retains unique local features, provides clarity and definition while maintaining windows into the surrounding rural and forested landscape.

Specifically, the guidelines provide a range of measures that can be used to create edges between properties and provide visual interest and safety for pedestrians. Landscaping also offers context for a building and enhances its relationship with the surroundings. It can also mitigate any undesirable visual impacts between residential and commercial developments.

Key Design Elements and Approaches

A range of landscape design approaches can help create commercial developments that are more welcoming and practical for all users. These include design interventions for parking lots, road edges, spaces between developments, large blank building walls, entrances and signage. All of these help provide a commercial landscape that is welcoming, safe and part of the surrounding landscape.

Key Design Elements and Approaches include:

- **Definition:** Mark entrances to buildings architecturally, and with the help of landscaping. Use landscaping and signs to make entrances and exits to parking lots very clear. Demarcate the edges of a property.

- **Safety:** Break up large parking lots with landscaped islands that include trees, shrubs and ground cover. Create dedicated pedestrian walkways.

- **Mitigation:** Screen blank walls with the help of landscaping, such as planting beds or trellises and/or break them up using architectural facade elements. Create planted edges that act as visual buffers between residential and commercial properties

- **Preservation:** Preserve views through commercial zones into the wider landscape. Maintain older unique business signs that feature a "retro" look. Where possible, create new signage that is inspired by these vintage designs.

Examples of Landscape Architectural Elements include:

- Groups of trees
- Lines of trees
- Landscaped islands with plants of various heights
- Sidewalks
- Trellises and Arches

Highway commercial areas are visible from higher ground in town

Unique "retro" signs are part of the auto oriented character

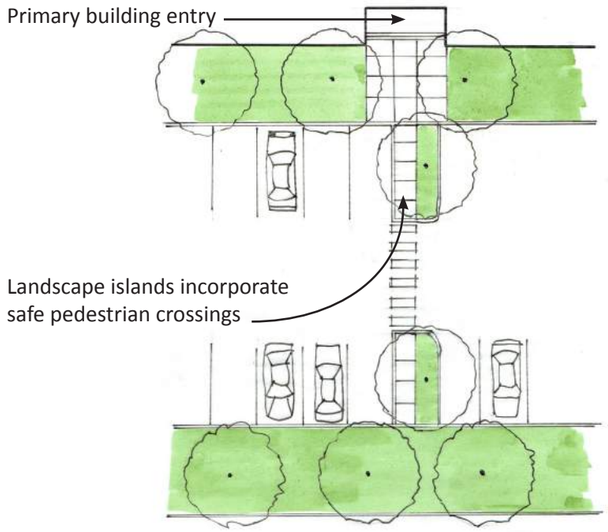
Landscaping defines and clarifies highway commercial developments

Parking Lot Design Elements

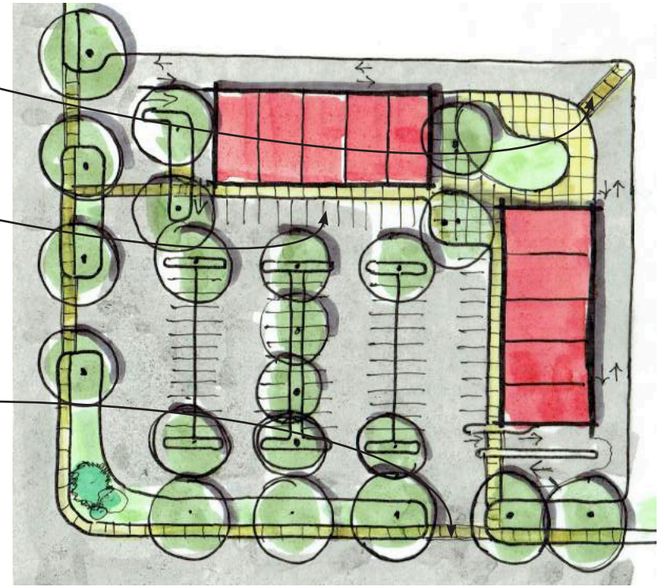
Large parking lots should be broken up through the use of landscaping to reduce the amount of paved surface and to create safe and legible environments. Strive to connect adjacent developments using sidewalks and paths. Small plazas and picnic areas can be added to create amenity space where appropriate.

Key measures are:

- Use of landscaped islands & perimeter planting
- Dedicated pedestrian walkways
- Clear definition of parking lot entry & exit
- Clear definition of building entrances



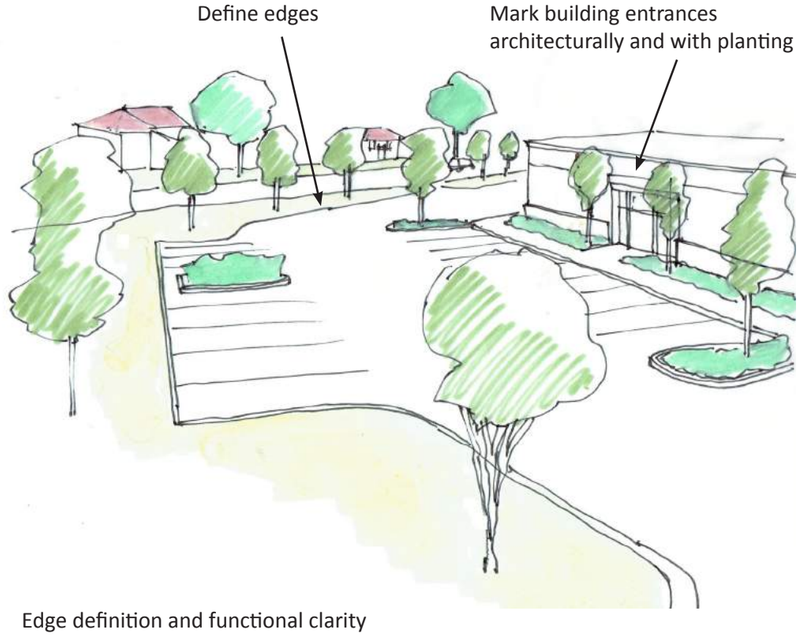
Safe pedestrian walkways and crossings



Break-up parking lots with landscaped islands/street trees


Dedicated pedestrian walkway in parking lot

Create dedicated pedestrian walkways between parking rows



Edge definition and functional clarity

Mitigation Approaches

Several approaches can help mitigate the visual impact of commercial activity and parking lots on adjacent residential areas.

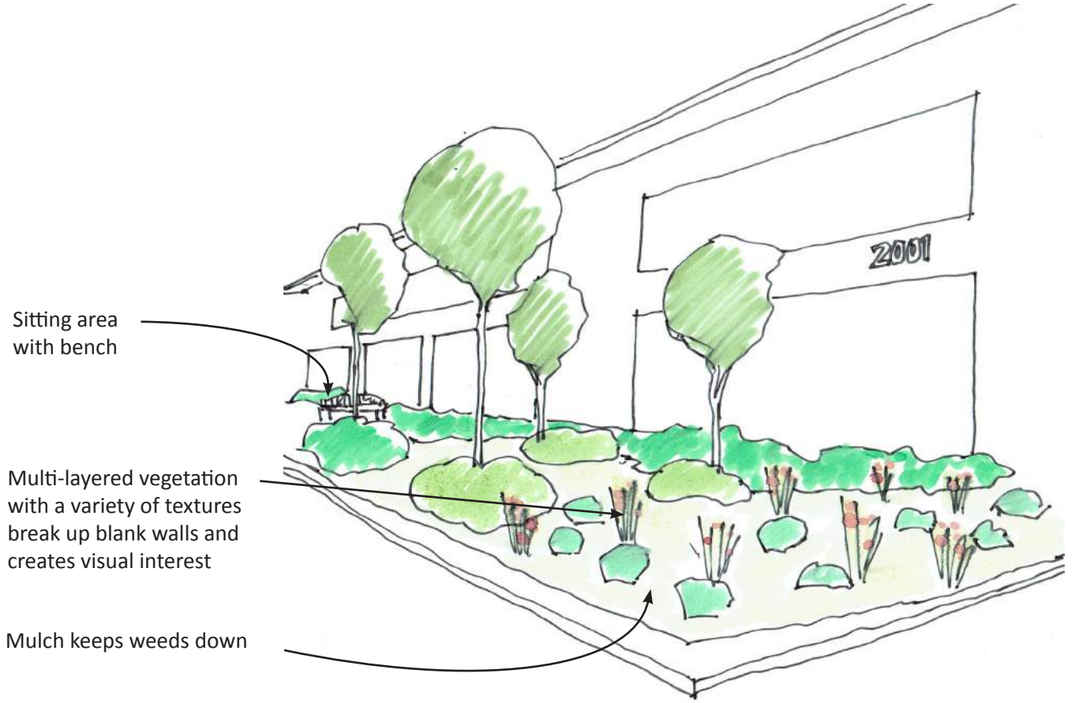
Commercial buildings with large areas of blank walls can be better integrated through the use of landscaped elements such as planting beds and trellises.

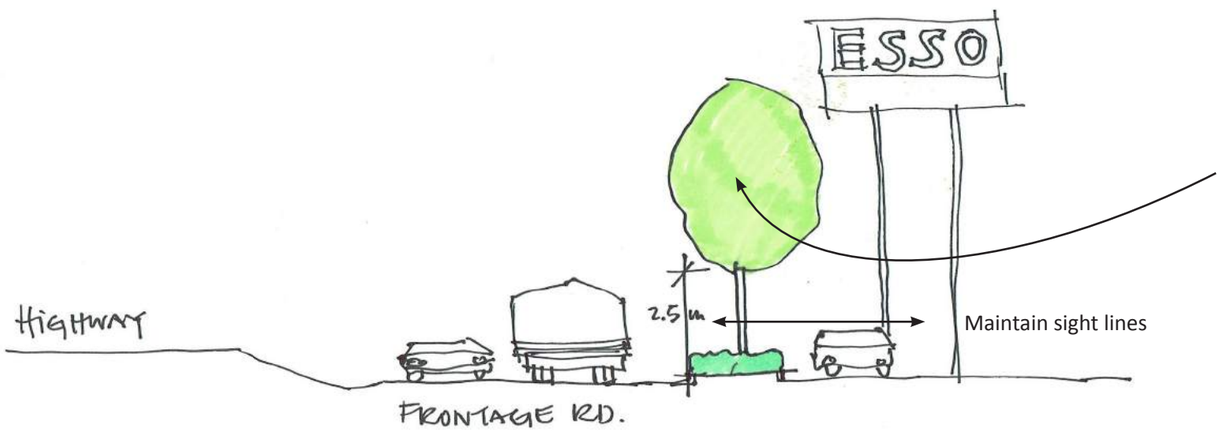
Key Design Elements include:

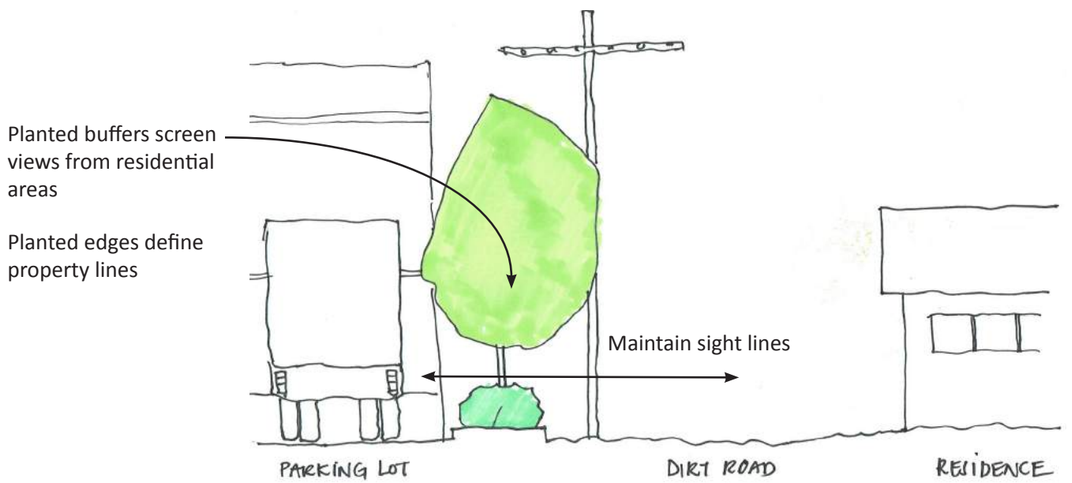
- Planted buffers with multi-layered vegetation (trees, shrubs, ground cover) and seasonal interest
- Planting beds, trees or planted trellises in front of blank walls
- Groups or rows of trees along the perimeter of properties
- And, where appropriate from a visual and grading point of view, planted berms.

Plants frame buildings and provide seasonal interest

Here a perimeter row of poplars acts as visual buffer







Stormwater and Block Heater Elements

Landscaped swales can help manage stormwater directly on site. They also help break down large parking lots and enhance biodiversity and visual interest. Swales that are adjacent to drive aisles can act as snow storage areas during the winter months. This way, the snow finds itself in the right place to be absorbed at spring thaw.

Block engine heater plug-ins should be treated like a design element such as a bollard or electrical charging station. They can be installed along a dedicated pedestrian walkway or within a landscaped strip or island.

A central landscaped swale absorbs rainwater and adds visual interest

Plug-ins for block engine heaters can be treated like charging stations...

A stormwater swale adjacent to the parking lot drive aisle doubles as snow storage area in the winter

...and become part of a landscaped island

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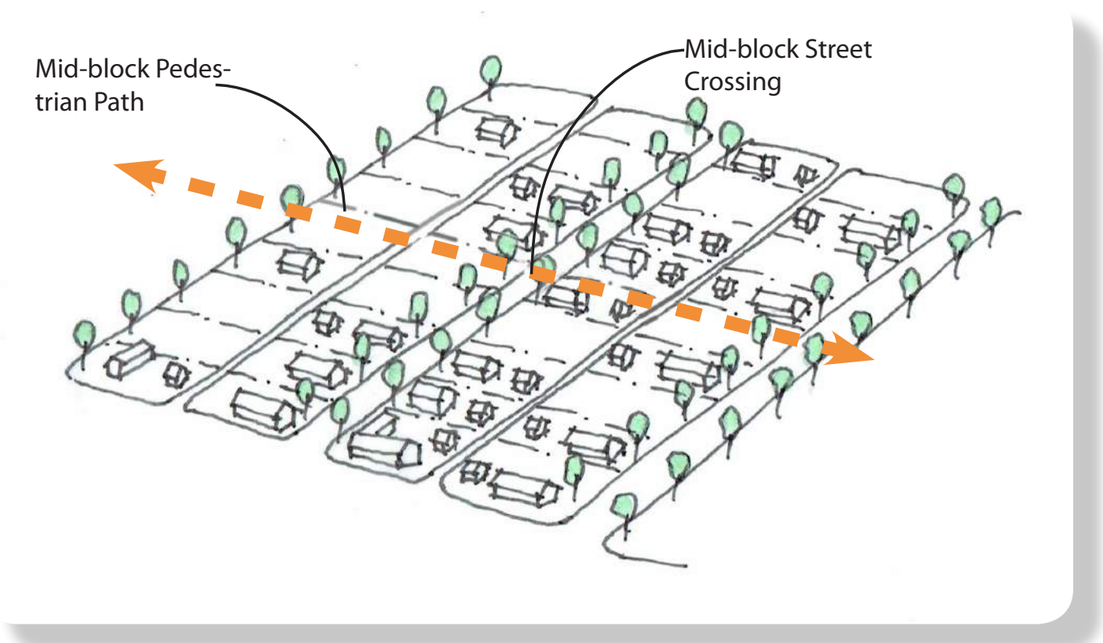
Town of Valleyview
Subdivision Guidelines



SUBDIVISION GUIDELINES

These guidelines apply to all subdivision applications.

Intent and Overview

Subdivision refers to the process of dividing one parcel of land into two or more smaller parcels. It often involves locating reserve lands, rights of way for roads, easements for utilities and other infrastructure, and similar legal designations of land. The changes made to the pattern of land ownership and control at time of subdivision may be significant, affecting many aspects of a community, including health outcomes, energy use, character, local environmental impacts, financial viability, ease of access, and more.

Subdivisions come in many shapes and sizes, from division of a large residential lot on an established street into two smaller ones, to a complex plan for a quarter section.

The intent of this document is to offer applicants guidance on the most important decisions made in developing a subdivision proposal, so that proposals create as much value for them and for the Town as possible. These guidelines will help applicants create a site plan that is in alignment with the implementation chapter of the Town's Municipal Development Plan.

Guidelines

Planning for subdivision should consider how to implement the guidelines within the subdivision, and/or how to contribute to their implementation in the subdivision's vicinity.

Guideline 1: Identify and Plan for Valuable Site Assets

Site analysis - Identify key site features, which may include:

- historic sites or buildings,
- significant topography,
- water courses,
- mature trees or tree canopy,
- environmentally sensitive areas,
- hazardous lands, and
- valuable agricultural lands.

Planning - Protect valuable areas and plan around constraints to maximize the value to anticipated occupants of the land:

- link assets into a network of green and/or cultural spaces,
- provide access to assets where access will not create risks for sensitive habitat, and
- avoid any other constraints where possible.

Example: A site plan that preserves existing mature trees and watercourses

Lots in subdivisions that are planned around "their use of the natural landscape as the basis for overall design... carry a price premium, are less expensive to build, and sell... in about half the time as lots in conventional subdivisions"

-Mohamed, The Economics of Conservation Subdivisions: Price Premiums, Improvement Costs, and Absorption Rates.

Guideline 2: Create Connections

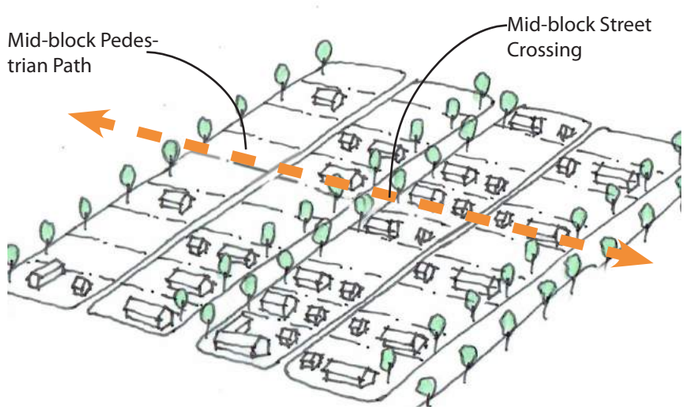
Site analysis: Identify important current and planned connection points between the site and neighbouring areas. These include roads, trails, watercourses and wetlands, and civil infrastructure alignments.

External connections: Aim to connect seamlessly with the surrounding road and trail network, providing links from them to destinations within the site, and anticipate likely future connections where there is currently no network.

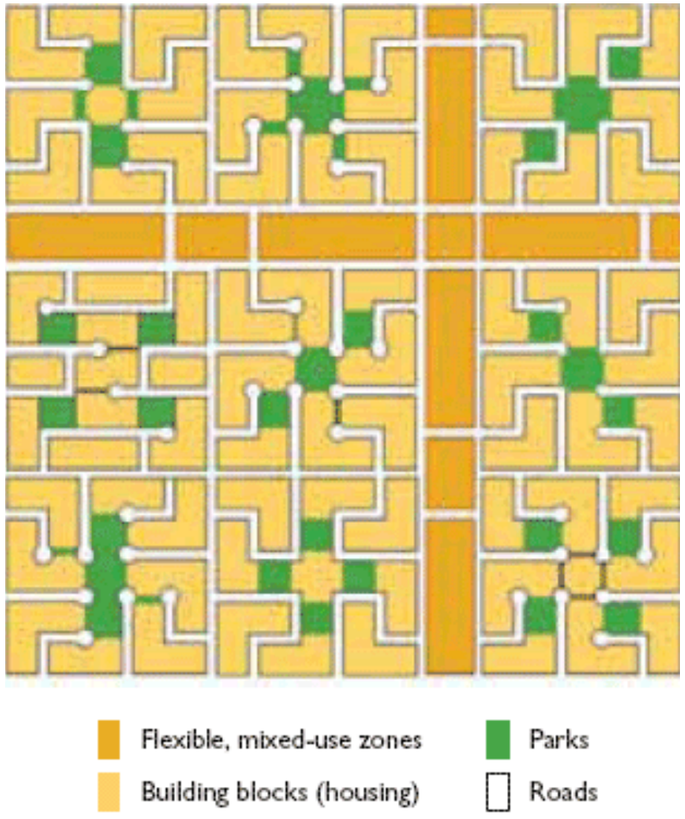
Internal connectivity: Within the site, create an interconnected grid of roads and trails, providing easy access for occupants.

- The street grid should define blocks no larger than 90 m x 150 m except for industrial subdivisions; in industrial subdivisions, blocks should not be larger than 120 m x 200 m as a general rule.
- For larger blocks, safe, attractive pedestrian connections should be provided across the block using an easement or right of way, with matching mid-block street crossings.
- The network need not be rectilinear and should respond to topography and the pattern of valuable green spaces as well as the location of external links.

LONG blocks provide mid-block pedestrian connections



Between them, Guidelines 1 and 2 should create a coordinated network of roads, trails, and green spaces within the site and extending from it into the rest of the town. This concept is shown in the Fused Grid Street Pattern Model below.



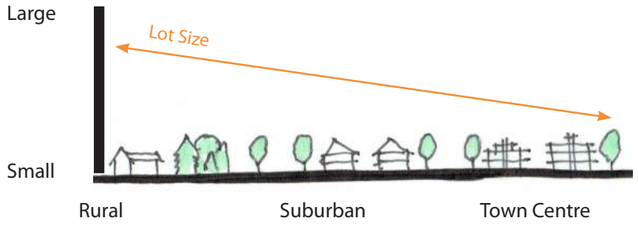
The Fused Grid layout "...uses a continuous grid of roads for district and regional connectivity and a discontinuous grid of streets for neighbourhood safety. The latter (neighbourhood) grid is supplemented by footpaths that connect all streets, turning a neighbourhood into a fully connected pedestrian realm"

-CMHC http://www.cmhc.ca/en/inpr/su/sucopl/fugr/index.cfm.

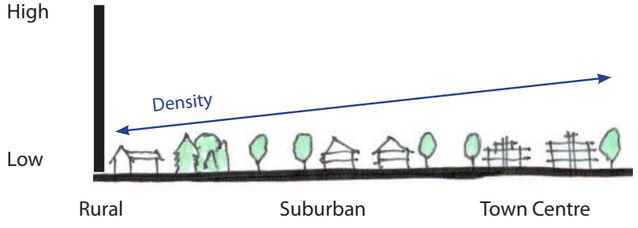
Guideline 3: Respond to Nearby Land Use Patterns

Generally, locate smaller lots and areas planned for higher densities and taller buildings closer to the centre of Town and closer to nearby amenities. In locating areas planned for higher densities and taller buildings, make sure that they are compatible with existing neighbouring development. On very large sites, an option may be to cluster sites planned for taller and/or higher density development in order to create a walkable centre of activity.

lot size and proximity to town centre



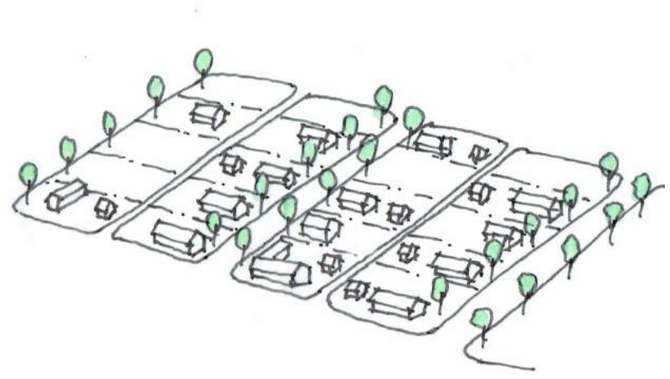
Density and proximity to town centre



Guideline 4: Keep Streets Relatively Narrow and Provide Lane Access

Lanes are important to pedestrian comfort and safety, offer flexibility for infrastructure location, provide parking and loading access, and create more flexibility so that the use of the land can evolve over time as needs dictate. To maintain efficient land use, a combination of narrower road rights of way and lanes is preferred for most situations.

Residential blocks with lanes

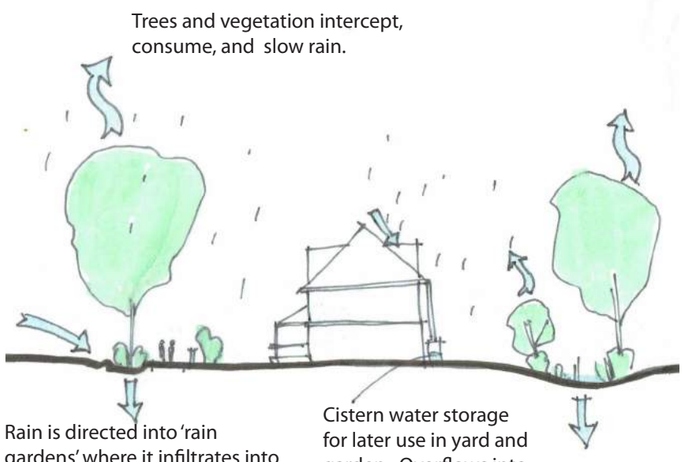


Guideline 5: Consider Life Cycle Costs and Environmental Impacts of Infrastructure

Minimize the life cycle costs of infrastructure, and adopt materials and approaches that minimize local environmental impacts.

"Low-impact development" (LID) or "green infrastructure" approaches for stormwater management aim to mimic pre-development hydrology and manage pollutants, maintaining the health of local creeks and lakes. Techniques suited to cold-weather climates are well-established. These typically are located in and/or linked to a green space network, and can be designed to be amenities.

Example: A home and street designed for LID



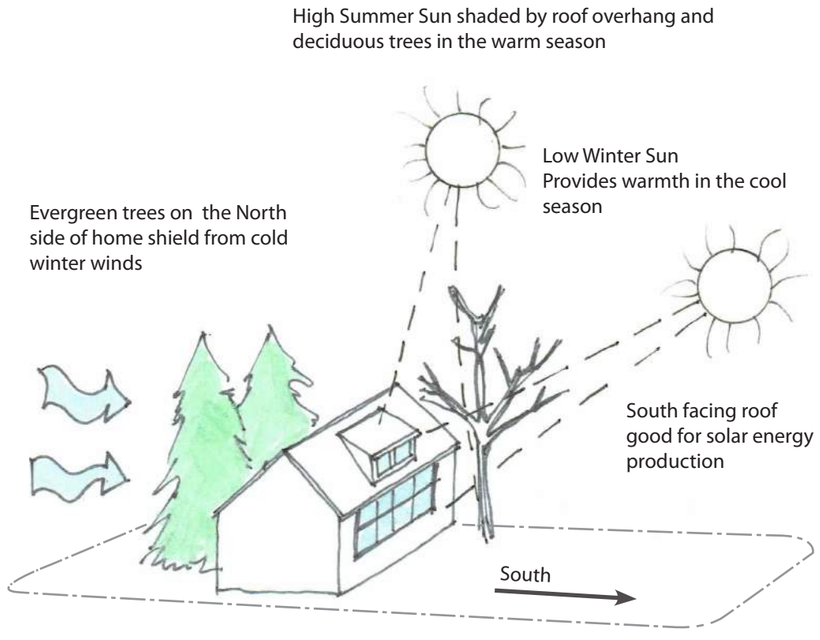
"The integration of green infrastructure into our built environment is a viable solution for maintaining the ecological health of watersheds."

-Marsh, Landscape Planning Environmental Applications.

Guideline 6: Lay Out Blocks and Parcels for Solar Orientation

The orientation of a building to the sun can make a big difference in the energy it uses for heating and cooling. The orientation of blocks and parcels has a big influence on building orientation, so considering solar orientation of buildings when laying out blocks is important to enable building owners to minimize energy costs through passive building design. Generally, aiming for East-West orientation of the long edge of the building is best for passive solar design. Allow flexibility in building orientation within each lot to optimize access to sun.

A Residential Lot oriented to allow for Passive Building Design



References

Marsh, William. 2005. Landscape Planning Environmental Applications. Fourth Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. P. 165-166.

Mohamed, Raymond. 2006. The Economics of Conservation Subdivisions: Price Premiums, Improvement Costs, and Absorption Rates. Urban Affairs Review 41: 376-399.

Image sources
CMHC Fused Grid, http://www.cmhc.ca/en/inpr/su/sucopl/fugr/index.cfm

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