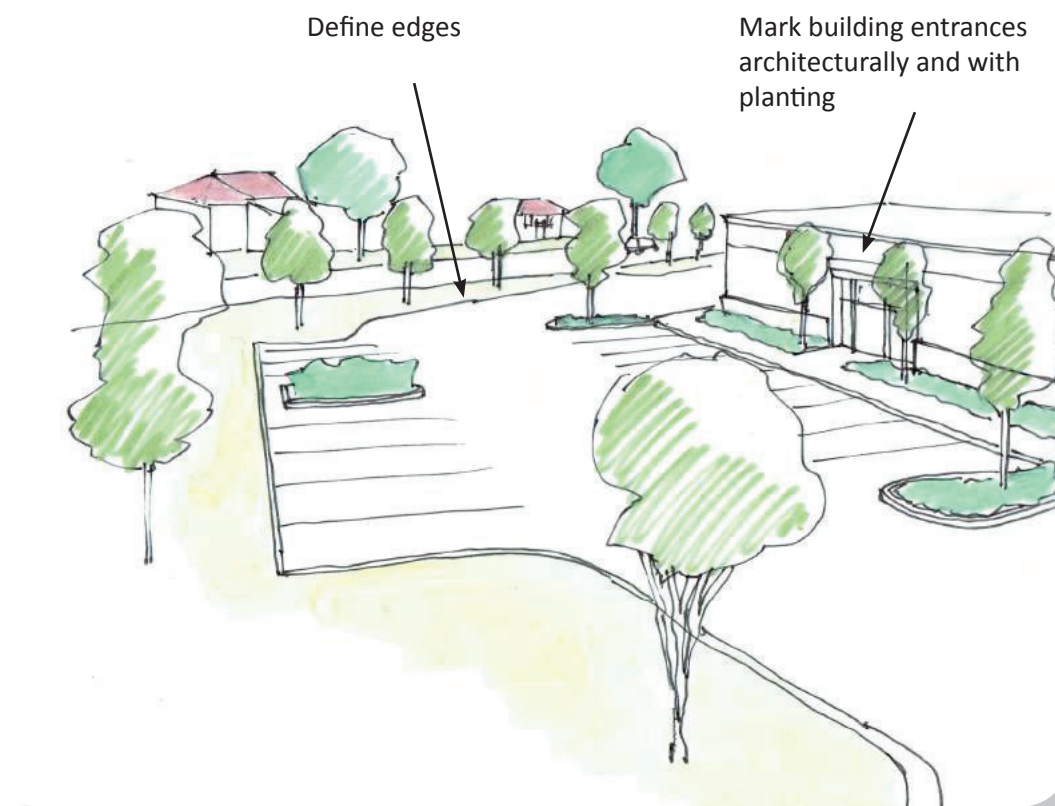


Town of Valleyview Highway Commercial Design Guidelines



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



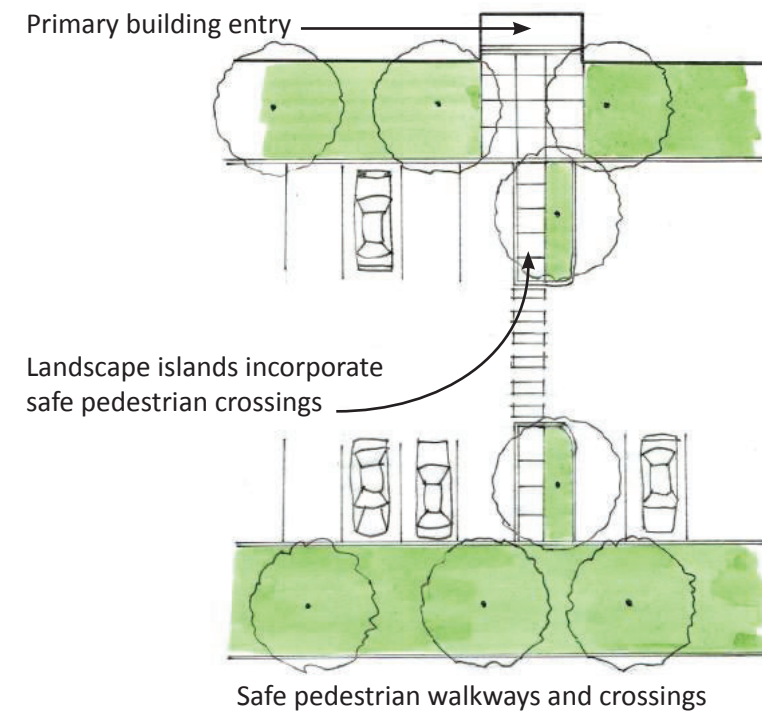
Landscaping defines and clarifies highway commercial developments

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:

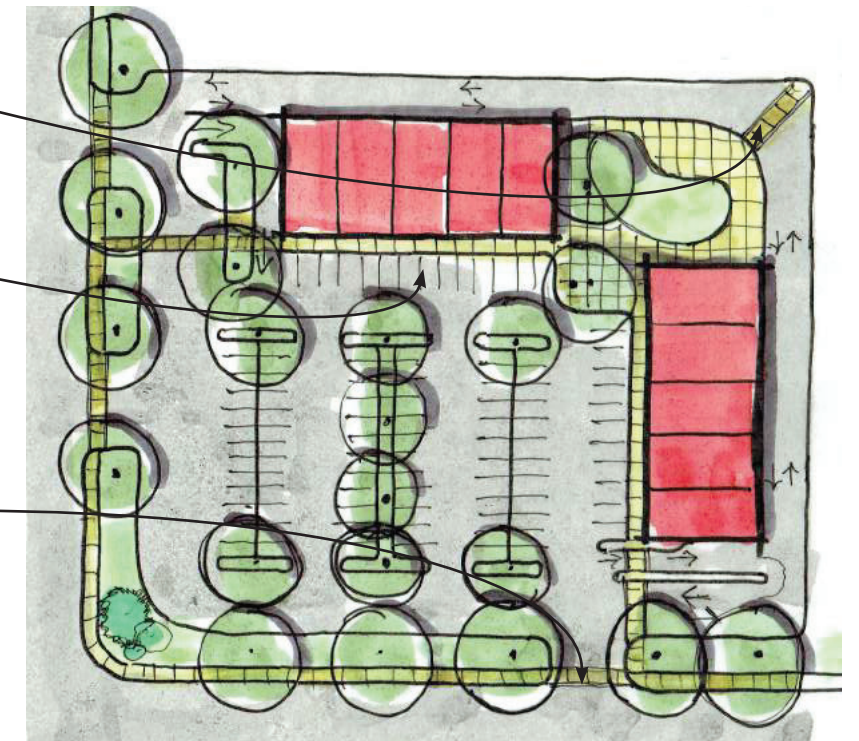
- Use of landscaped islands & perimeter planting
- Dedicated pedestrian walkways
- Clear definition of parking lot entry & exit
- Clear definition of building entrances



Pedestrian connection to adjacent development

Incorporate sidewalk path within and to connect with adjacent developments

Mark entrances with large canopy (8m) deciduous trees



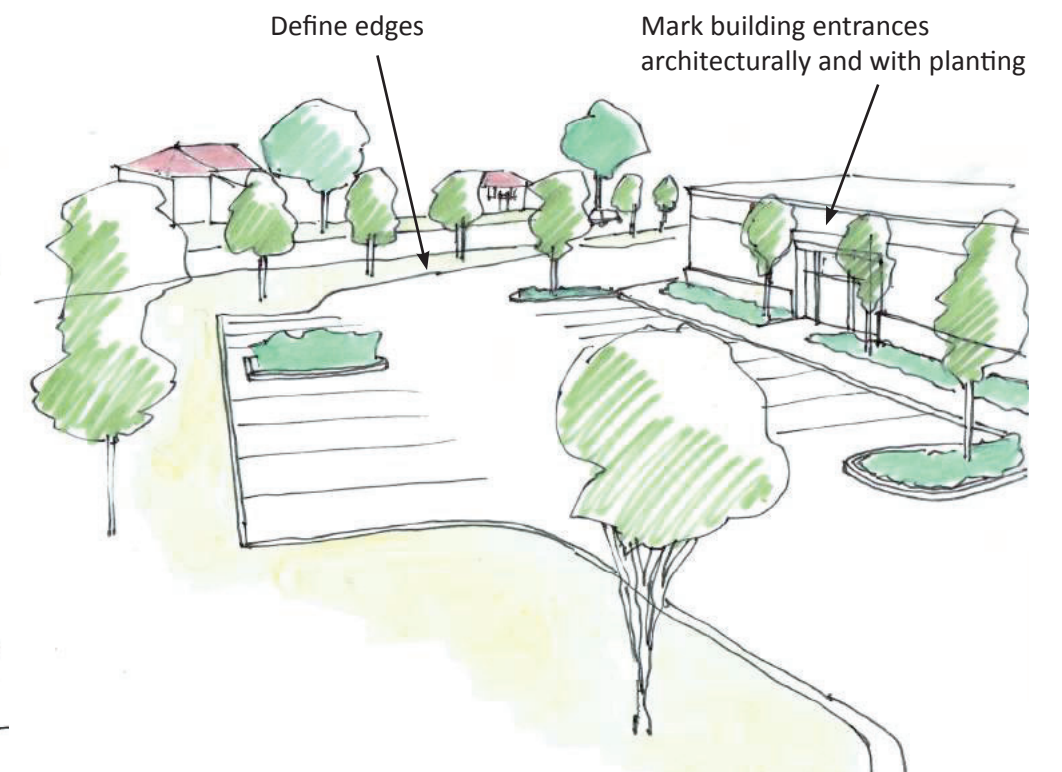
Break-up parking lots with landscaped islands/street trees



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

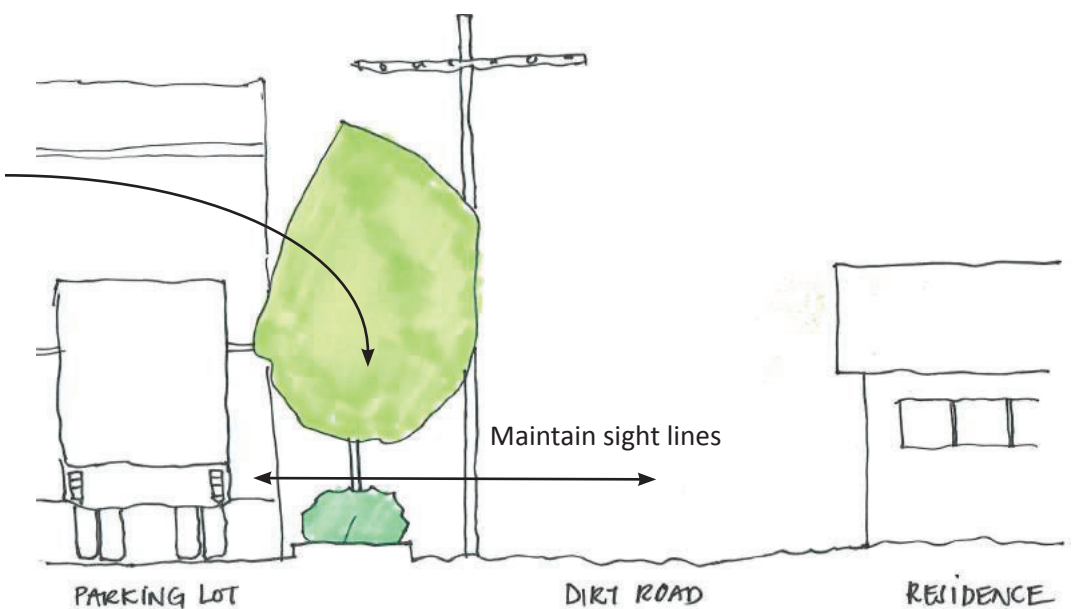
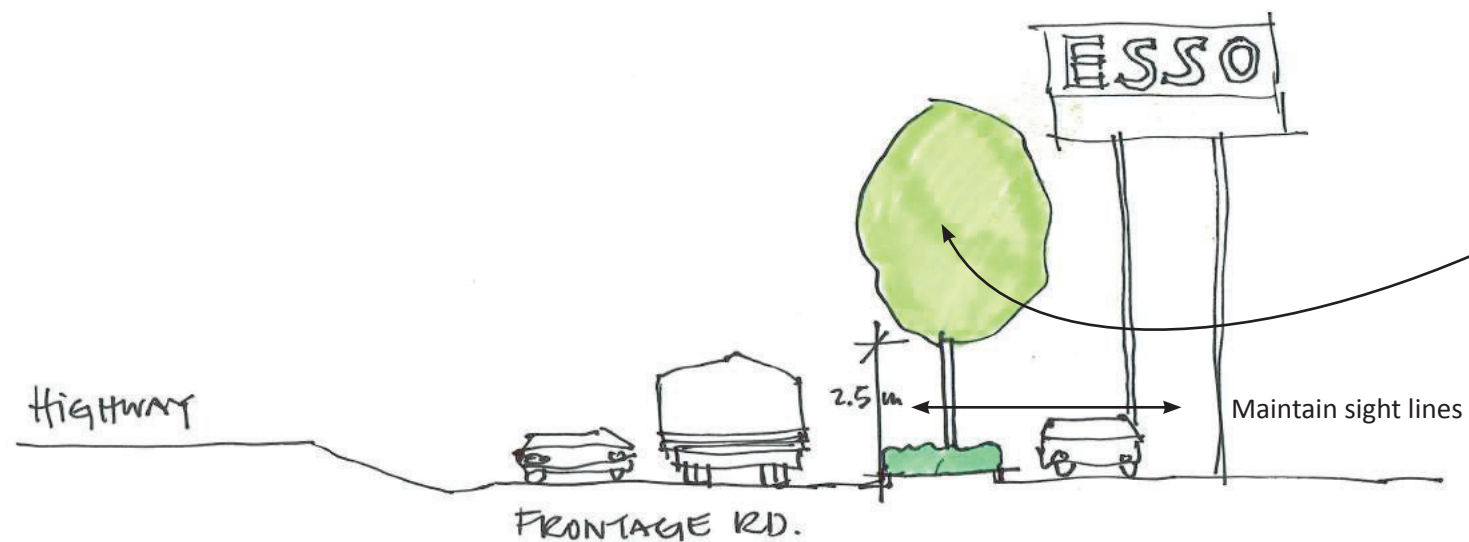


Here a perimeter row of poplars acts as visual buffer



Planted buffers screen views from residential areas

Planted edges define property lines



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

