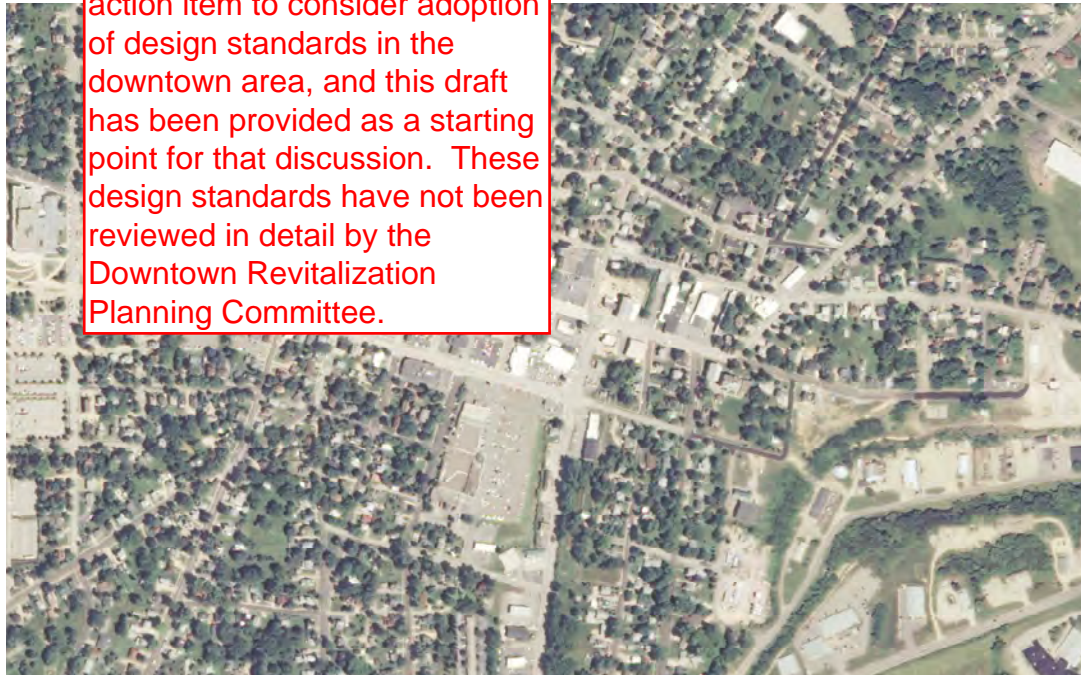


# PLATTEVILLE DOWNTOWN DESIGN STANDARDS

Created with assistance from  
MSA Professional Services, Inc.

*DRAFT* November 5, 2010

This is a sample document provided by MSA for discussion purposes. The Downtown Revitalization Plan includes an action item to consider adoption of design standards in the downtown area, and this draft has been provided as a starting point for that discussion. These design standards have not been reviewed in detail by the Downtown Revitalization Planning Committee.



SITE DESIGN  
BUILDING DESIGN  
CHECKLIST

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# Design District

## Intent

The Platteville Downtown Design District is intended to encompass commercial, multi-family residential, mixed use and civic properties in the downtown area. The District includes historic structures that should be preserved and non-historic structures and sites that are candidates for redevelopment. ***All building or site improvement activities normally requiring a permit must conform to the standards defined herein.***

## District Zones

The Design District is organized into three distinct zones: Downtown Area, Historic Main Street Area, and Transitional Area. The Design Standards will apply to all properties within the District, unless a standard specifically states “Downtown Area Only”, “Transitional Area Only”, or “Historic Main Street Area Only”. The map at right and descriptions below explain each of these zones:

### *Downtown Area*

Design character in this district varies widely, including, for example, two- and three-story brick buildings built right to the sidewalk, single-story commercial buildings set back behind parking, and single family bungalows with front porches. The intent of this zone is to establish a more uniform approach to site design that will reinforce an urban, pedestrian-friendly street environment, while continuing to allow for variety and flexibility in building design.

### *Historic Main Street Area*

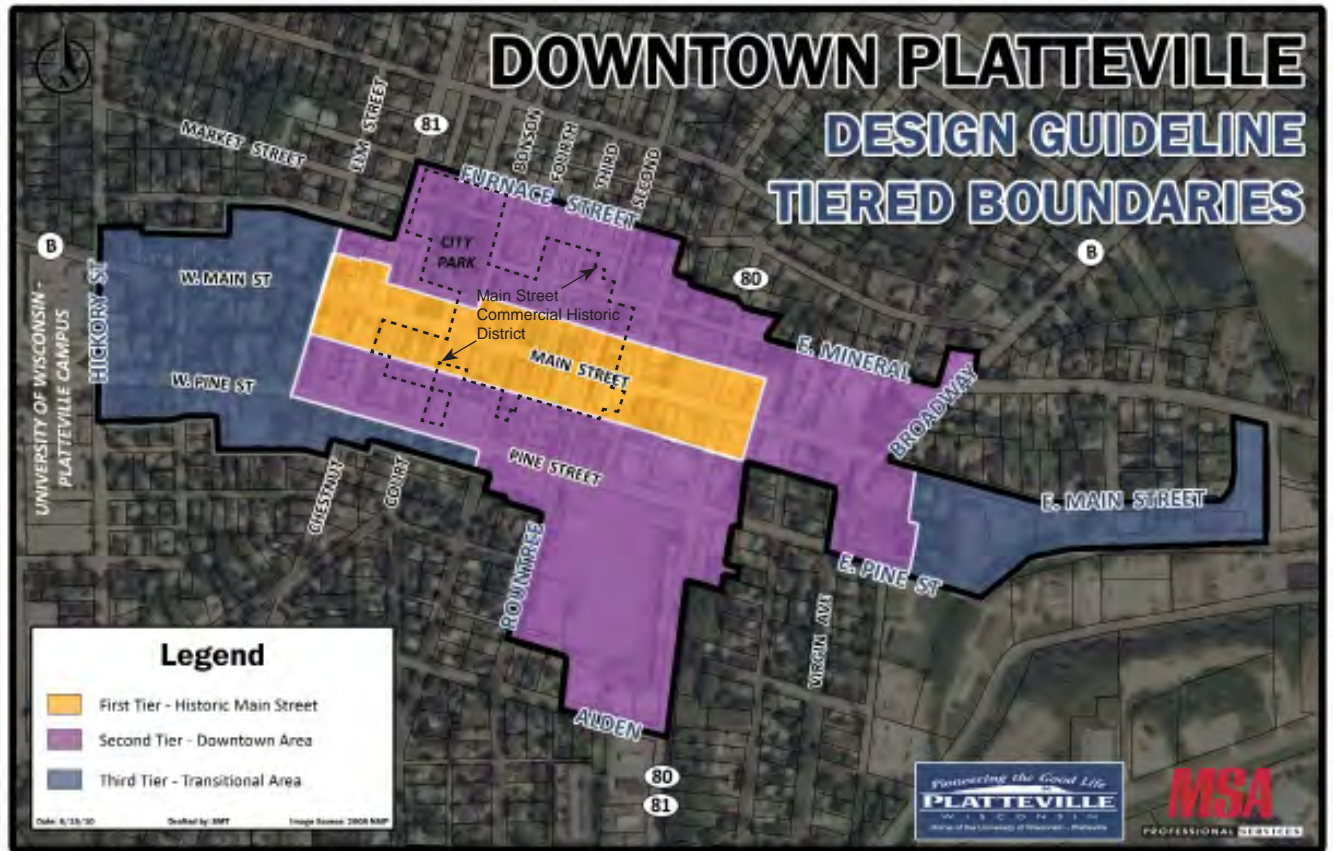
This zone is comprised of properties abutting Main Street between Elm Street and Water Street, including all four corners at Main and Water. This area features many of the properties officially part of the downtown historic district. The dominant design character is two- to three-story brick buildings built right to the street edge and featuring ground floor retail or service space behind large windows. Architectural styles are predominantly Federal, Italianate, and Romanesque. The intent of this zone is to ensure that new buildings reinforce and complement the historic downtown core. New development should be of similar scale to historic buildings and should utilize similar rhythms, though architectural style will not be regulated.

### *Transitional Area*

This zone incorporates transitional areas east and west of the Downtown Area. The intent of these areas is to preserve the existing residential character by requiring pitched roofs and deeper setbacks from the street.

# design districts

## Design Districts



# Terms

## Applicability

The Downtown Design Standards apply to all parcels in the Downtown Design Standards District, but they DO NOT compel unplanned modifications. Property owners or leaseholders that modify property must ensure that such modifications conform to these standards.

It is not the intent of these standards to require alterations beyond the scope of a proposed change, meaning that, for example, window replacements will not automatically trigger structural changes or awning changes.

## Standards Vs. Recommendations

Required standards are located in the box at the bottom of each page. These standards **will be** enforced unless a waiver is granted. Each section of this manual also includes design “Recommendations”. Property owners/ leaseholders should consider these recommendations and the City may encourage conformance to the recommendations, but they **will not** be enforced as part of the City Zoning Ordinance.

## Waivers

Applicants that do not believe they can or should follow a standard must negotiate with the Plan Commission for a waiver of that requirement. Waivers are granted by the Plan Commission on a case-by-case basis and are decided based on the applicant’s ability to demonstrate one or more of the following conditions:

- A) the required design feature cannot be met on the site
- B) the requirement would create undue hardship for the applicant as compared to other properties in the district
- C) the intent of the standards can be successfully met with an alternative design

## Review Process

Applicants should review this Handbook at the beginning of the design process. The following items must be submitted for review:

- Design Standards Checklist (see last pages of Handbook)
- Illustrations, Diagrams, Samples, and Spec Sheets

City staff completes an initial review and the City Planner is authorized to approve those applications that both meet the standards and require no additional permit approval by the City. Applications determined by staff to NOT meet the standards, that require a site plan, and/or that require additional zoning or building permit approval will be forwarded to the Plan Commission for their review with any applicable staff notes. The applicant will be informed of the outcome of this initial review within five (5) business days of submittal and may decide at that time to withdraw or revise the submittal or to proceed to Plan Commission review.

Submissions must be made 45 days before a Plan Commission meeting. Applicants that wish to appeal the decision of Plan Commission may do so to the City Council. Requests for appeal should be made to the City Administrator.



<b>Awning sign</b>	a sign attached to or made part of an awning, canopy, or marquee, including any sign hanging from underneath the awning, canopy, or marquee
<b>Directly Illuminated sign</b>	a sign designed to give artificial light directly through a transparent or translucent material from a source of light originating within or upon such sign
<b>Billboard sign</b> <i>(off-premise advertising sign)</i>	a sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, or entertainment conducted, sold, or offered elsewhere than upon the premises where the sign is displayed
<b>Clear glass</b>	glass that is not frosted, tinted or obscured in any way, allowing a clear view to the interior of the building
<b>CMU, smooth-faced</b>	a concrete masonry unit, commonly referred to as concrete block, having a smooth exterior finish
<b>CMU, split-faced</b>	a concrete masonry unit with a textured exterior finish
<b>Electronic Message Unit Sign</b>	a sign on which the message may be changed by an electronic process, including such messages as copy, art, graphics, time, date, temperature, weather or information concerning civic and charitable events or the advertising of products or services available on the premises
<b>EIFS (Exterior Insulation Finishing System)</b>	a building product that provides exterior walls with a finished surface, insulation and waterproofing in an integrated composite system
<b>Freestanding sign</b>	a unit of illumination produced on a surface, all points of which are one (1) foot from a uniform point source on one (1) candle
<b>Footcandle</b>	a building entrance that is unlocked during business hours and is designated for public use
<b>Functional public entrance</b>	a self-supporting sign resting on or supported by means of poles, standards, or any other type of base on the ground, the sole purpose of which is to support the sign.
<b>Free-standing sign</b>	a sign which is supported by structures or supports in or upon the ground and independent of support from any building
<b>Full-cutoff light fixture</b>	a light fixture that does no allow light to escape above 90 degrees from vertical
<b>Ground floor facade</b>	the ground floor portion of the building exterior facing a public street (for measurement purposes, the ground floor facade includes the entire width the building and the first ten (10) feet above grade)

# Terms

**Landscape Buffer**

a landscaped green area consisting of a mix of shrubs, ornamental trees and/or overstory trees, along with berming and other variegations in topography, sufficient to provide an adequate screen and buffer

**Lintel**

the horizontal beam spanning an opening in an exterior wall

**Monument sign**

a type of free-standing sign whose bottom edge is located within one (1) foot of a ground-mounted pedestal

**Parking lot**

any parking area that has five (5) or more stalls

**Parking stall**

the area designated for a single vehicle to park

**Projecting sign**

a sign extending more than twelve (12) inches, but no more than five (5) feet from the face of a wall or building.

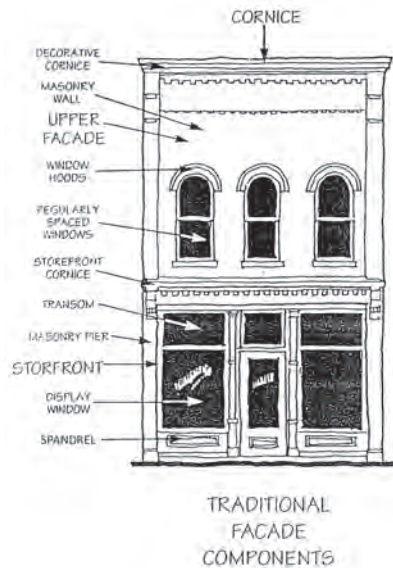
**ROW (Right-of-way)**

land reserved for public use, including streets and sidewalks

**Spandrel**

decorative wall panel that fills the space between a storefront window and the foundation below (*see traditional facade components*)

**Traditional Facade Components**



**Transom**

a horizontal window above another window or door usually spanning the entire front facade (*see traditional facade components*)

**Wall Sign**

a sign attached to, erected on or painted on the wall of a building or structure and projecting not more than twelve (12) inches from such wall

**Window sign**

a type of sign mounted inside a building, either on the face of a window, or within two (2) feet of the window, so that the sign can be viewed through a window by the persons outside the building.

# Site/Landscape Plan

**Intent**

To ensure adequate design and review of site-related characteristics.

**Examples**

This plan shows pedestrian pathways, vehicular parking/circulation, and landscaping



**Standards**

1. A site plan **shall** be submitted showing all of the important features planned for the site, including, as applicable:

- Trash & Recycling Container Placement
- Pedestrian Pathways
- Vehicular Parking & Circulation
- Landscaping and Lighting (*see Standard #2*)
- Stormwater Management Features

2. A landscape plan **shall** be submitted which includes details of all proposed landscaping, buffering, and screening. The plans **shall** show the location and dimension of all existing and proposed structures, parking, drives, rights-of-way, and any permanent features, and all other information required by the zoning administrator, plan commission, or the common council, including but not limited to the following:

- A plant list and coverage chart showing the location, quantity, size (at time of planting and at maturity), spacing, and the scientific and common names of all landscape material used, AND
- Size of existing trees, AND
- Location and percent of slope of all proposed berms using one foot contours, AND
- Detailed sections showing elevations of all proposed architectural features, such as walls, lighting or water features.



# Street Relationship

## Intent

To encourage streetscape enhancements that blend the public and private realms, enhancing the pedestrian experience.

## Examples

Left:  
*portion of the building is set back from the street, allowing extra room for a larger pedestrian zone*

Right:  
*building on a corner with a public entrance on to the primary street*



## Recommendations

- When appropriate within this standard, the siting of adjacent buildings should be considered when choosing the setback - a uniform setback is desirable to establish a more consistent “street wall” in the downtown area.
- Disabled access should be seamlessly incorporated into the building and site design. Facilities should be designed to provide inviting access to all users.

## Standards

1. **Historic Main Street Area Only**, primary structures **shall** be built to the front property line, unless a setback allows for a larger pedestrian zone. The following requirements **shall** be met to allow for a building setback:

- The space created **shall** provide an outdoor seating area, a hardscape plaza, or similar pedestrian space, AND
- The portion of the building set back **shall** be within five (5) feet of the public right-of-way, AND
- Twenty-five (25) percent, or minimum of ten (10) feet, of the building width **shall** establish a hard edge at the public right-of-way.

2. **Downtown Area Only**, primary structures **shall** be set back from any street no more than ten (10) feet. On corner lots this means the building **shall** be built at the corner. On sites with three or more public street frontages the building should be built to the corner with the most traffic.

3. **Transition Area Only**, primary structures **shall** be set back from any street at least twenty-five (25) feet, or the average setback of adjacent parcels (if less than 25 feet), but nor more than thirty (30) feet. Open porches, stairs, and entrance canopies may encroach into this setback to within fifteen (15) feet of the property line.

4. A minimum of one functional building entrance **shall** be provided along the building facade facing the street. Buildings that face multiple streets **shall** provide an entrance facing the more prominent of the two streets.

5. Each project **shall** include the installation of sidewalk within the public right-of-way along the frontage of the property at the expense of the developer/property owner.

**Intent**

To promote effective and attractive exterior lighting that does not produce glare or light pollution.

**Examples**

Top Images:  
*examples of full cutoff fixtures that minimize glare and light pollution*

Lower Left:  
*shielded light fixture*

Lower Middle:  
*prohibited non-cutoff light fixture*

Lower Right:  
*prohibited light directed to the sky*



**Recommendations**

- Exterior lighting should be designed to complement the character of the building.
- Parking lots and pedestrian walkways should be illuminated uniformly and to the minimum level necessary to ensure safety. A greater number of lower-watt lights may be necessary to achieve this guideline.
- Exterior lighting should be energy efficient and should render colors as accurately as possible (i.e. white light rather than green or yellow light). Preferred light types include: LED, fluorescent, and high-pressure sodium.

**Standards**

1. Spec sheets **shall** be submitted with the Design Standards Checklist for each exterior light fixture to be used.
2. Light design and installations **shall** emphasize low-level, uniform lighting to avoid abrupt changes from bright lights to darkness. Design limits and intensity requirements may be placed on large establishments as a condition of a Conditional Use Permit.
3. All exterior building and parking light fixtures **shall** be full cutoff. Lights directed towards the sky are **prohibited**.
4. Parcels abutting or across the street from residential or park uses **shall not** have light spillage in excess of 0.5 footcandles as measured horizontally, five (5) feet above the ground level at the property line of the affected parcel line.
5. Parking and security lighting poles shall not be taller than the maximum allowable building height allowed in the underlying zoning district for the property, or 35 feet, whichever is less. For properties in or abutting a residential zoning district, the maximum allowable height shall be 25 feet.

# Parking

## Intent

To provide parking lots that are safe for drivers and pedestrians, while mitigating the visual and environmental impacts.

## Examples

Left:  
*shared parking with a clearly  
identified crosswalk*

Middle:  
*landscape buffer between  
parking and the sidewalk*

Right:  
*missing landscape buffer*



## Recommendations

- Shared parking lots are strongly encouraged to allow direct vehicular circulation between adjacent parcels. This can be accomplished through the use of access easements and driveways connecting parking lots.
- Bike racks, designed to allow a U-shaped lock that secures the frame to the rack, are encouraged. It is suggested that each structure should have a minimum of two (2) bicycle parking spaces.
- Whenever possible, parking areas should be designed so that the parking is separated into smaller delineated groupings of spaces. Such groups should be separated by landscaping and/or design components of the proposed building.

## Standards

1. New off-street parking in front of the building is **prohibited**. Side yard parking **shall not** be more than sixty-four (64) feet wide (necessary space needed for two rows of parking with a drive aisle).
2. Parking stalls and drive aisles **shall** be separated from the public right-of-way and adjacent property lines by a planted landscape buffer. The depth of this buffer **shall** be five (5) feet or equal to the building setback, whichever is greater.
3. Walkways **shall** be provided to connect the building entrance(s) to the public sidewalk. Walkways that cross parking areas or a drive aisle **shall** be clearly identified, either with different paving materials (such as brick/colored concrete) or with painted crosswalk striping.
4. All parking areas of five (5) or more vehicles **shall** be paved and graded according to a drainage plan designed and installed in accordance with accepted engineering practice, which may include catch basins, sumps, and underground storm sewers. All drainage plans **shall** be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer.
5. The exterior storage of boats, campers, and other materials or products not associated with the permitted use of the premises on which they are located is **prohibited**.

# Landscaping - General

## Intent

To improve the appearance and ecological function of sites, especially off-street parking areas.

## Examples

Left:  
*a three-foot high  
buffer along the public  
sidewalk*

Right Images:  
*alternative screen  
between parking areas  
and the public sidewalk*



## Recommendations

- Yard areas not used for off-street parking are encouraged to be attractively landscaped (trees, shrubs, plants or grass lawns), screening parking and service areas from adjacent properties so as not to impair the values of the adjacent properties.
- Decorative fences, walls, and/or landscaped edges are strongly encouraged in order to screen parking areas from the street and views from adjacent properties.
- Indigenous plants with low water and pesticide needs are strongly encouraged (work with local nurseries in developing the landscaping plan).

## Standards

1. Plantings and low fences located between parking areas and public right-of-way **shall not** obscure vision between three (3) and eight (8) feet above ground for pedestrian safety. Trees and bushes that would naturally obscure this zone at maturity **shall not** be used.
2. Where the development adjoins a residential property, at a minimum, a ten (10) foot landscaped buffer (*with plantings*) **shall** be placed between parking areas, loading areas, refuse collection areas and/or outside storage areas and the residential lot line. The width of the buffer may be reduced to five (5) feet if a berm, solid fence, or wall that is six (6) feet tall is provided within this buffer area.

# Landscaping - Points

**Schedule 1**

Point Schedule for Landscape Elements		
Landscape Element	Minimum Plant Size (installed)	Points
Canopy Trees	2 1/2" diameter min. caliper	50
Canopy Trees	Under 2 1/2" diameter caliper	30
Evergreen Trees	4 feet and larger	30
Low Ornamental Trees	5 feet and BB stock	20
Tall Shrubs	36 and taller	15
Medium Shrubs	24 to 36	10
Low Shrubs	12 to 24	5

- If the applicant can demonstrate that these landscape elements will contribute to the overall landscape objectives (and are shown on the submitted landscape plan), the applicant may request points for decorative fences, earth berms, ground covers and existing vegetation. See Existing Tree schedule above for landscape credits.

Existing Trees	Number of Trees Credited (2 1/2" caliper)
36" or greater	8 trees
18-35"	6 trees
12-17"	4 trees
6-11"	2 trees
Less than 6"	1 tree

## Standards

1. **Downtown Area and Transitional Area Only**, one (1) canopy tree **shall** be planted on the property for every hundred (100) feet of linear street frontage. Additional landscaping **shall** be placed on the property using the following point system and table (*see above*):

- Ten (10) points for every one thousand (1,000) square feet of enclosed ground floor building area, up to twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet, and five (5) points per one thousand (1,000) square feet of additional building area, AND
- Five (5) points per parking space, up to fifty (50) spaces, and two-and-a-half (2.5) points per any additional spaces (*excluding any spaces utilizing "turf-based" surface materials, such as Geoblock or Grasspave*), AND
- Twenty (20) points for each ten (10) feet of perimeter around an outside storage area, parking areas for semi-trailers and refuse enclosures.

2. All landscaping **shall** be completed within twelve (12) months of the issuance of an occupancy permit or final inspection, in accordance with the approved landscaping plan.



# storm **Storm Water**

## Intent

To reduce the negative ecological impacts created by impervious surfaces, especially parking lots (heat gain, stormwater runoff volume and contaminants).

## Examples

Upper Pictures:  
examples of rain gardens  
and bioretention areas  
within or near parking lots



Lower Left Images:  
examples of permeable  
surfaces: porous concrete  
(top) and paving blocks  
(lower)



Lower Right:  
example of a green roof



## Recommendations

- Where possible, use rain gardens and bioretention basins to mitigate run-off and filter pollutants.
- Where large paved areas, such as parking lots, are required, it is recommended that permeable surfaces, pervious asphalt, pervious concrete, or special paving blocks are considered.
- Green roofs are encouraged.

## Standards

1. On-site storm water management systems **shall** meet the of City's Construction Site Erosion Control Ordinance (*Chapter 46*) and Wisconsin Statutes Chapter NR 151 (1 acre or greater land disturbance). Maintenance of any storm water detention or conveyance features area **shall** be at the developer (*and/or owner*) expense and time, unless dedicated to, and accepted by, the City.

# Storage & Service Areas

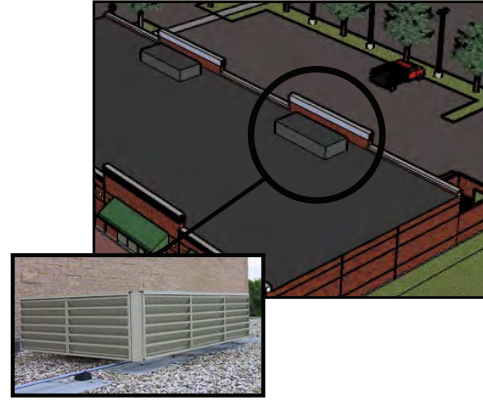
## Intent

To improve the appearance of the downtown area.

## Examples

Left Images:  
examples of screened service areas - wooden fence with landscaping (lower) and a brick wall with landscaping (upper)

Right:  
a building facade screening rooftop mechanical from ground view.



## Recommendations

- Screening should be compatible with building architecture and other site features.
- Shared garbage and recycling facilities are encouraged, where practical, as a means to meet screening requirements and preserve access needs.
- Rear yard loading and staging areas is strongly encouraged.

## Standards

1. All electrical and air conditioning structures, including towers and air handling units, regardless of location and whether on the roof or otherwise, **shall** be concealed by landscaping, parapet/screening walls, or by decorative screening materials which form an integral part of the design (*excluding electrical service boxes*).
2. Placement of service boxes **shall** be located away from pedestrian zones. Preferred locations are in the side yard or in the rear yard within twenty (20) feet of the building plane.
3. Loading and staging areas **shall not** be in the front yard. Any loading areas visible from the street, or facing a residential property, **shall** be screened with landscaping and/or wall not less than six (6) feet in height and constructed of the same materials as the principal structure (or other suitable material as determined by the Zoning Administrator).
4. Outdoor storage of products, materials, or equipment is **prohibited** in the front yard. Short-term display items or items that are available for purchase by the consumer are exempt from this standard.
5. All outdoor refuse collection areas **shall** be visually screened from public streets and adjacent property by a complete opaque screen, fence, or wall.
6. All on-site utilities, including but not limited to electrical, telephone, and cable, **shall** be installed as underground facilities. This **shall** apply to utilities running from the utility easement or street right of way to structures and to utilities supplying service between structures.

**Intent**

To establish and maintain a consistent street wall that provides visual interest and human scale.

**Examples**



Images:  
buildings with varying  
heights ranging from  
two to four stories.

**Recommendations**

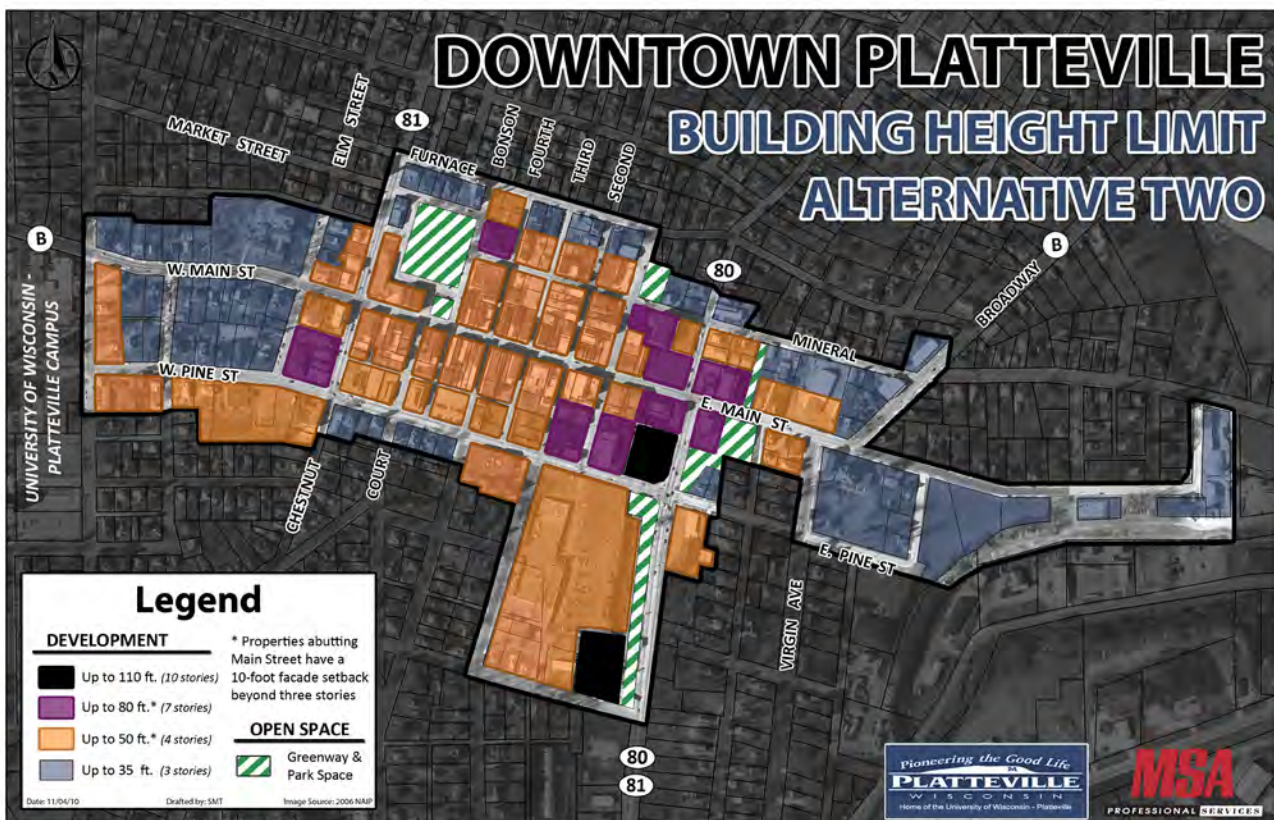
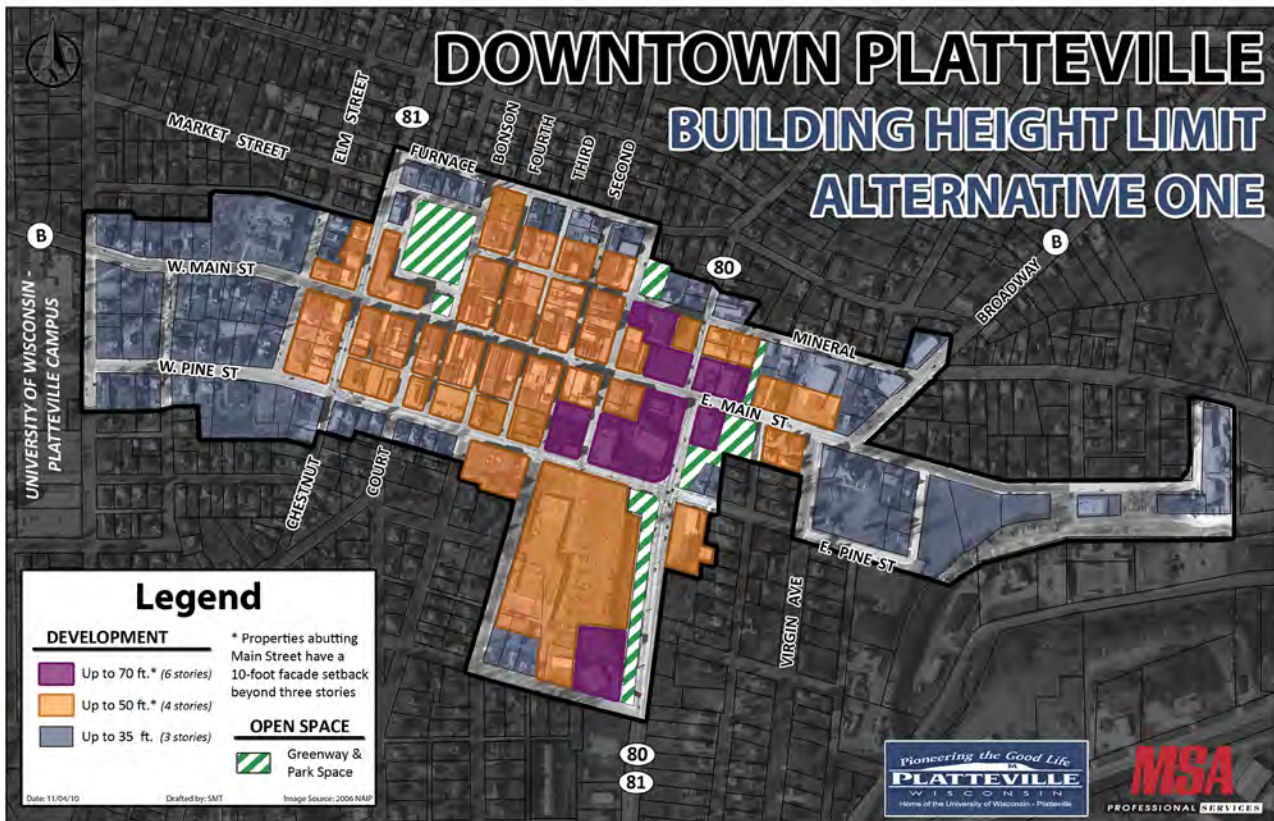
- A full two story building is strongly encouraged, wherever feasible (required in the historic area).

**Standards**

1. **Historic Main Street Area Only**, new buildings **shall** be at least two stories tall. In the **Downtown and Transitional Areas**, buildings **shall** be at least eighteen (18) feet tall, measured to the top of the cornice or the midpoint between the eave and the peak on a pitched or mansard roof.
2. Building heights **shall not** exceed the threshold listed on the Height Limitation Map on page 10 (currently there are two alternatives presented on the next page with current zoning limits on page 11 for reference).
3. Building facades over sixty (60) feet in length and facing a street **shall** have a minimum of twenty (20) percent of the facade vary in overall height, with such difference being four (4) feet or more measured eave to eave or parapet to parapet.
4. A detailed elevation of each exposed building facade and any neighboring buildings **shall** be submitted with the Design Standards Checklist.

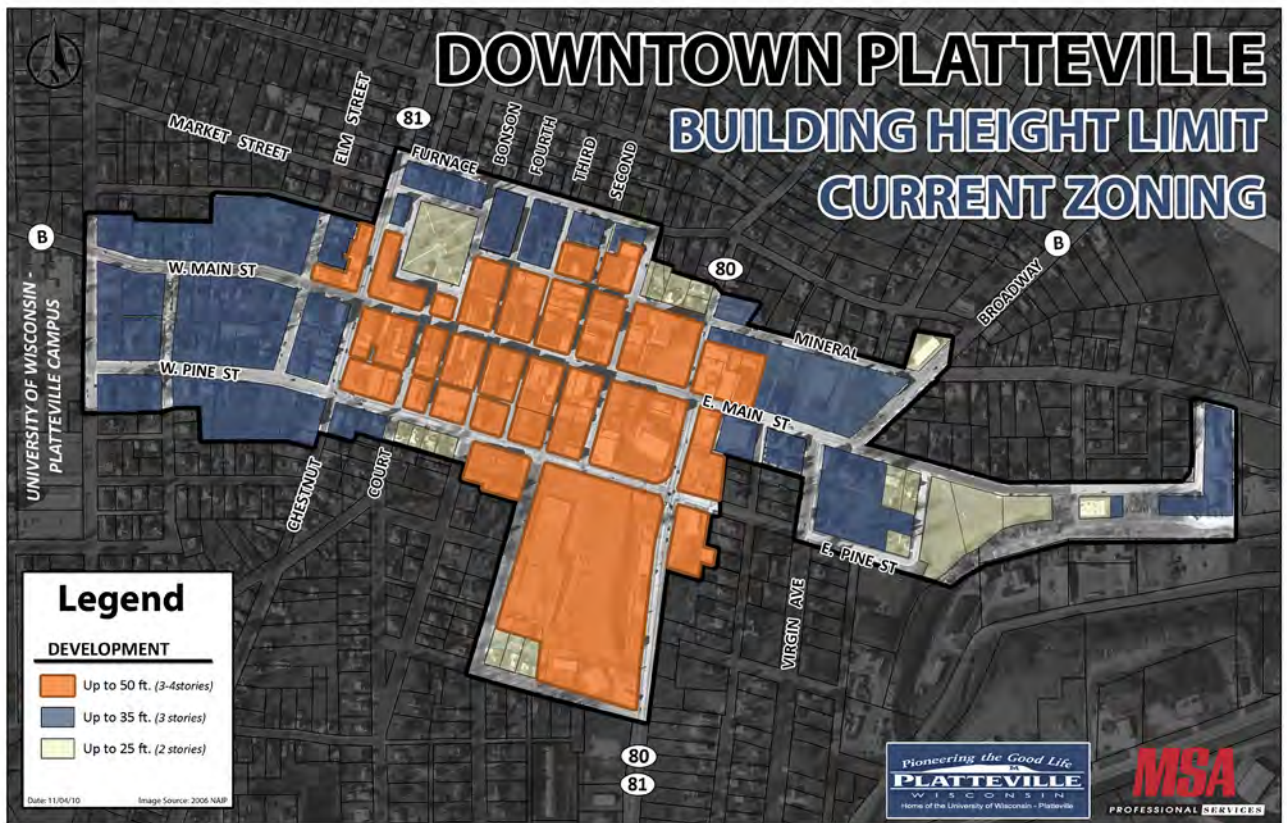


# Height





# Height





# Scale & Articulation

## Intent

To establish and maintain a consistent street wall that provides visual interest and human scale.

## Examples

Top right: *prohibited horizontally proportioned building*

Lower right: *desired vertically proportioned buildings fitting downtown character.*

Lower left: *an example of a horizontal expression line.*



## Recommendations

- All new buildings are encouraged to utilize details or changes in materials to create a discernible base, middle and top.
- New buildings should incorporate horizontal expression lines from existing buildings within the same block whenever practical.

## Standards

1. The building **shall** establish vertical proportions for the street facade, and for the elements within that facade (windows, doors, structural expressions, etc).
2. Any building with a total width equal to or greater than its height **shall** utilize two (2) or more of the following techniques at no more than thirty (30) foot intervals:
  - Expression of architectural or structural bays
  - Variations in material and/or color
  - Variations in the building plane (no less than two (2) feet in width)
  - Vertical-proportioned windows
3. **Historic Main Street Area Only**, new buildings **shall** utilize a horizontal expression line that projects at least two (2) inches from the building facade to articulate the transition between the first floor and upper floors.

# Street-Level & Secondary Facades

## Intent

To reinforce the existing character of downtown area, and to enliven and activate the public streets.

## Examples

Left Photos:  
*secondary facades continue the design features of the primary facade*

Top Right:  
*demonstration of base, middle and top on an existing downtown building*

Lower Right:  
*large windows provide significant visibility into the building*



## Recommendations

- The base of the building should include elements that relate to the human scale. These should include doors, windows, texture, projections, awnings, ornamentation, etc.
- Downtown buildings should activate the street by providing significant visibility through the street-level facade to activities or displays within the building.
- All building faces should use design features (i.e. window proportions, expression of the structural bays, etc.) similar to the primary front facade.

## Standards

1. **Downtown Area and Historic Main Street Area Only**, a discernible “base” **shall** be established. The base **shall** be at least two (2) feet in height, but may include the entire first floor.
2. Any secondary facade facing a public street (corner buildings) **shall** utilize the same material palette and design features as the primary front facade.
3. **Downtown Area and Historic Main Street Area Only**, street-level facades that face public streets **shall** have display windows, entry areas, awnings, arcades (*a series of outdoor spaces located under a roof or overhang and supported by columns or arches*), or other such features along no less than fifty (50) percent of their horizontal length.

# Windows & Doors

## Intent

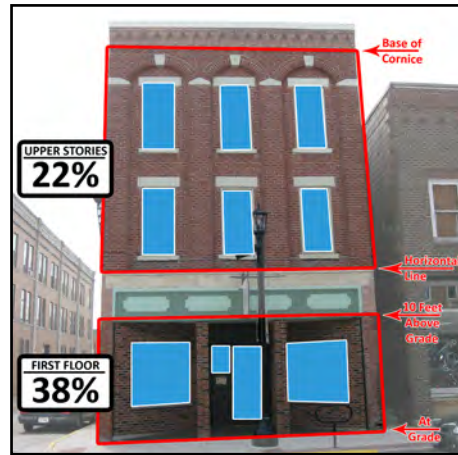
To enliven and activate the street, and to reinforce the existing building character within the downtown area.

## Examples

Left:  
existing building that meets the minimum 35% clear glass on the first floor and maximum 25% on the upper floors

Top Right:  
a clearly defined and highly visible entryway

Lower Right:  
non-vehicular garage door allowable, except in the historic area



## Recommendations

- Buildings should activate the street by providing significant visibility through the street-level facade to activities/displays within the building.
- The use of reflective or dark-tinted glass is discouraged, especially at the ground level.
- Street-facing garage doors are strongly discouraged (*prohibited in historic area*)

## Standards

1. **Downtown Area and Historic Main Street Area Only**, building facades facing a public street **shall** be comprised of at least thirty-five (35) percent clear glass on the street-level floor (*up to ten (10) feet above grade*). A minimum of two (2) feet **shall** be maintained between the glass and any interior dividers to allow for product display. **Transitional Area Only**, building facades facing the public street **shall** be comprised of at least fifteen (15) percent clear glass.
2. **Historic Main Street Area Only**, upper-story sections of the building facade(s) facing or visible from a public street **shall not** exceed fifty (50) percent glass (measured from the horizontal expression line to the lower edge of the cornice).
3. **Historic Main Street Area Only**, street-facing garage doors are **prohibited** on Main Street. **Downtown and Transitional Areas Only**, street-facing garage doors **shall** be set back from the primary facade by at least four (4) feet, and shall not comprise more than 25% of the total length of the building's street facade.
4. Public building entryways **shall** be clearly defined and highly visible on the building's exterior design. Two (2) or more of the following design features **shall** be incorporated into all public building entryways:
  - canopies or porticos, overhangs, projections, arcades, display windows, and distinct architectural details
5. A diagram illustrating the percentage transparent glass on each street-facing facade **shall** be submitted with the Design Standards Checklist.

# Roofline & Cornice

## Intent

To reinforce the existing character of downtown area, and to provide variety and visual interest.

## Examples

Left Images:  
alternative roof systems  
that are allowable in  
parts of downtown,  
depending on their  
location (Standard #1)

Top Right:  
roofline is parallel to the  
street, which does not  
meet Standard #2

Bottom Right:  
a low-slope roof, which  
does not meet the 5:12  
slope requirement  
(Standard #3)



**MANSARD  
ROOF W/  
DORMERS**



**PITCHED  
ROOF  
W/ PARAPET**



**PITCHED  
ROOF  
W/ GABLE**



**FLAT ROOF  
W/ CORNICE**



## Recommendations

- Unique and decorative cornice designs are encouraged to generate character and building identity.

## Standards

1. **Historic Main Street Area Only**, a flat roof system **shall** be used (*pitched roofs are prohibited*). **Downtown Area Only**, a flat or mansard roof system **shall** be used; a pitched roof system may be approved if appropriate to the site and style of the building. **Transitional Area Only**, mansard or pitched roof system **shall** be used with preference to a pitched roof system.
2. A positive visual termination at the top of the building **shall** be established, using either a pitched roof with gable(s) facing the street or a flat roof with a defined cornice (*depending on what type of roof is allowable under Standard #1*).
3. If used, a pitched roof **shall** have a slope no less than 5:12.
4. An accurately-measured elevation drawing that illustrates the full rooflines of the proposed buildings and any neighboring buildings **shall** be submitted with the Design Standards Checklist.



# Projections

## Intent

To reinforce the existing character.

## Examples

Left Images: mounted awnings below the horizontal expression line with lighting from above provides for a more attractive building facade, and lighting from above cuts down on sky glow (light pollution).

Top Right: diagram illustrating the minimum requirements for awning placement

Lower Right: Canopies do not relate to the existing character of the downtown area



## Recommendations

- Use of ground floor awnings is strongly encouraged.
- Fabric or soft vinyl awnings are preferred.
- Awning colors should relate to and complement the primary colors of the building facade.
- Canopies (flat projections from the building facade) are discouraged.
- Upper floor projections into the minimum building setback are allowed, including balconies, bay windows, and awnings.

## Standards

1. Awnings **shall** be at least three (3) feet in depth and the underside of the projection shall be at least eight (8) feet above the sidewalk.
2. Awnings using wood or shingle components are **prohibited**.
3. Awnings may be lit from above, and/or may feature lighting beneath to illuminate the sidewalk; however, glowing awnings (backlit, light shows through the material) are **prohibited**.
4. Awnings **shall** be mounted below the horizontal expression line that defines the ground floor.
5. **Downtown Area and Historic Main Street Area Only**, upper floor projections **shall not** extend more five (5) feet into the public right-of-way. **Transitional Area Only**, follow the City's Zoning Ordinance (*Chapter 21*).



**Intent**

To promote effective and attractive signage that complements the building’s architectural character and reflects the pedestrian scale of the district.

**Examples**

Top Images:  
preferred signage  
(window, awning, wall,  
and projecting)

Lower Left:  
appropriate signage  
(monument & neon-  
interior usage)

Lower Right:  
prohibited signage  
(directly illuminated,  
freestanding, neon,  
and roof)



Window Sign



Wall Sign



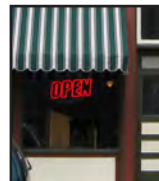
Projecting Sign



Awning Sign



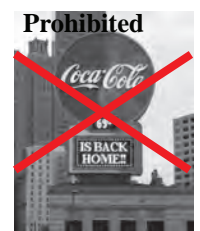
Monument Sign



Neon (interior  
usage) Sign



Directly Illuminated,  
Freestanding Sign



Neon Roof Sign

**Recommendations**

- Preferred sign types include: building mounted facing the street, window, projecting and awning.
- Signage should be integrated with the architectural concept of the development in scale, detailing, use of color and materials, and placement. Creative, detailed, artistic and unique signage is encouraged.

**Standards**

1. All signs **shall** conform to the design and maintenance requirements of the City’s Sign Ordinance (*Section 22.11*) and a sign permit must be acquired.
2. **Prohibited** sign types include: roof-mounted, directly illuminated, freestanding, neon (excludes interior usage), and billboard signs.
3. If used, freestanding signs (*excluding fraternity/sorority signs*) **shall** utilize monument-style design, and shall extend no higher than six (6) feet above the mean street grade.
4. Any exterior lights **shall** be mounted above the sign and directed downwards. This standard applies to all signs, including freestanding monument signs.

# Materials & Colors

## Intent

To reinforce the existing character, and to provide for variety and visual interest.

## Examples

Top Images:  
*preferred materials*  
(kiln-fired brick, stucco,  
terra cotta, wood siding,  
and fiber cement siding)

Lower Images:  
*permitted building*  
*materials* (vinyl siding  
and cultured stone)



## Recommendations

- Muted tones are preferred for the primary facade color. Use of bright colors as a secondary color to highlight expression lines or details is acceptable and encouraged.
- Preferred exterior finish materials include kiln-fired brick, decorative masonry block, stucco, stone, terra cotta, wood siding and details, and fiber cement siding.
- Discouraged exterior finish materials include unfaced concrete block, structural concrete, prefabricated metal siding, and EIFS (Exterior Insulation and Finish System). EIFS is strongly discouraged as a principle facade material, especially at ground level where susceptible to damage.

## Standards

1. Day-glo or fluorescent colors are **prohibited**.
2. If used, vinyl siding **shall** be at least 0.044" in thickness. **Downtown Area and Historic Main Street Area Only**, vinyl siding is **prohibited** on the primary front facade.
3. **Prohibited** building materials include gravel aggregate materials, stone or cultured stone in a random ashlar pattern, rough-sawn wood siding, polished stone, and panelized products.
4. All exposed sides of the building **shall** use similar or complementary materials and colors as used on the front facade.
5. Surface coverings on flat or low-slope roofs that are visible from a public street **shall** be of material that is non-reflective and non-glare. Heavy duty contoured shingles, shakes, and standing seam metal roofing materials are acceptable for pitched roofs.
6. A picture and a sample of each exterior material and a facade illustration that indicates colors and materials **shall** be submitted with the Design Checklist.

# Multi-Family Housing

## Intent

To insure that multi-family development is compatible with surrounding land uses, contribute to the unique character and aesthetics of downtown Platteville.

## Examples

Images of well designed apartment buildings. All have vertical proportions, brickwork, and variation in the building plane.

The lower left illustrates a well designed setback area that relates primarily to the transitional area.

The lower right has a garage door setback within the main building facade.



## Recommendations

- Use of offsets, balconies, projections, window reveals, or similar elements to preclude large expanses of uninterrupted building facades is strongly encouraged (see Scale & Articulation Standard #3)

## Standards

1. Each building entry **shall** be visible from the street, from a parking area, or from a window of a unit within the building, and **shall** be designed in a manner that is safe and inviting (not dark or hidden).
2. Entrance doors that provide access to common areas in the building **shall** be locked to prevent uninvited access to the general public.
3. A minimum of twenty-five (25) percent of the total net exterior wall area of a building's street facade, excluding gables, windows, doors and related trim, **shall** be brick, stone, or decorative masonry block.
4. A minimum five (5) foot wide planter area **shall** separate and visually screen parking from living area windows. The planter area **shall** include a mix of ground cover and shrubbery.
5. Internal walkways **shall** be separated a minimum of five (5) feet from dwellings, measured from the walkway edge closest to any dwelling unit. The walkways **shall** be at least four (4) feet wide and **shall** have a surface of concrete, asphalt, or masonry pavers.