

**UNIVERSITY AVENUE SE / 29TH AVENUE SE
TRANSIT CORRIDOR
DESIGN GUIDELINES**



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CORNEJO CONSULTING
COMMUNITY PLANNING + DESIGN

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Photo courtesy of the Minneapolis Design Center Image Bank.
View of project area looking west down University Avenue.

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Introduction

Purpose

The University and 29th Avenues Design Guidelines have four primary functions:

- To guide developers or business owners wishing to propose expansions, renovations or new construction of buildings or parking within the project area;
- To assist citizens of the Prospect Park Neighborhood, City staff and City officials in reviewing development proposals; and
- To support transit ridership and patrons with adequate density, intensity and a high quality built environment.
- To encourage high quality development, including office, retail and life cycle housing for a range of income levels.

Application

In 2001, a historical survey of Prospect Park concluded that this neighborhood is historically significant for its social history, community planning and development, architecture, and association with distinctive

elements of city identity. The nomination of the proposed Prospect Park Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places is currently underway. This historic setting is acknowledged as context, and as a reference for urban form and design. New buildings and spaces should be sensitive to this setting while promoting new designs that complement, contrast and enrich the relationship between old and new.

The guidelines are intended to be applied to additions, major remodeling, redevelopment and new development within the University and 29th Avenues SE Transit Corridor area in the Prospect Park Neighborhood of Minneapolis. The guidelines are intended to provide detailed guidance to the development objectives described in the University Avenue SE / 29th Avenue SE Transit Corridor Development Objectives report, dated April 2005.

Underlying Zoning

The guidelines pertain to several zoning designations found within the project area: OR1, OR2, OR3, C1, C2, C3A, I1

While the guidelines are not part of the City of Minneapolis Zoning code, they are meant to suggest an additional level of detail regarding the design of sites and buildings within the transit corridor's zoning districts. Requirements for the specific zoning classifications can be obtained at the City's website:

www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/planning



Aerial view of project area.

Built Form Guidelines

Building Placement

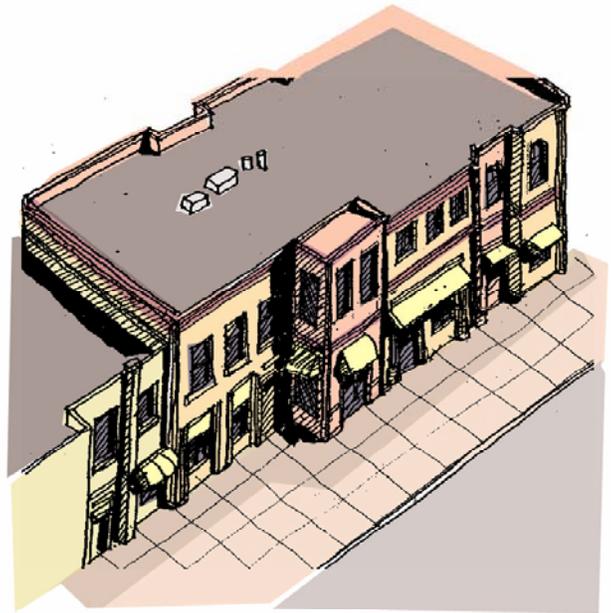
Objective: *To maintain and reinforce a consistent street edge and to focus attention on University Avenue, 4th Street SE, 29th and Malcolm Avenues.*

Buildings should have a well-defined front façade with primary entrances facing the street. Buildings should be aligned so that the dominant lines of their facades parallel the line of the street and create a well-defined street edge.

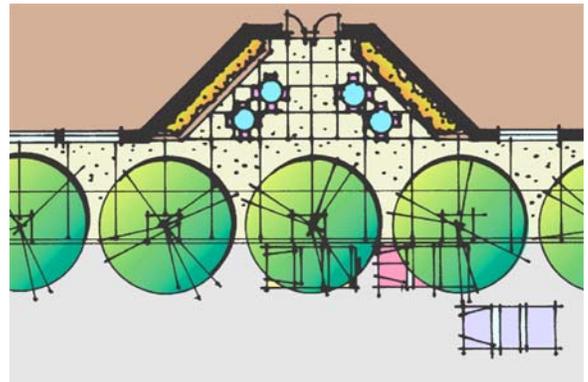
Buildings should meet the established building setback as defined in the zoning code for the area where they are located. In addition, portions of the façade should be set back an additional distance (5 to 8 feet) to emphasize entries, provide increased space for plantings or create areas for outdoor seating and gathering.

At intersections, buildings should “hold the corner” – that is, have street facades at or near the sidewalk on both streets.

Placement of the main level of residential buildings several feet above the elevation of the front sidewalk is encouraged to provide separation and security.



Place buildings with primary entrances facing the street.



Building entry recessed to provide area for outdoor seating.



Building that meets the corner with a covered cafe entrance.

Facades

Objective: *To employ visually legible building proportions that support the human scale, define the street edge and provide visual continuity.*

In general, buildings over two stories should have a well-defined base, middle and top. The base, or ground floor, should appear visually distinct from the upper stories, through the use of a change in building materials, window shape or size, an intermediate cornice line, an awning, arcade or portico, or similar techniques.

It should be recognized that buildings will be viewed from a variety of vantage points. Consequently the placement of doors, windows, balconies, changes in materials, or roof height, etc. should be designed to provide an attractive and harmonious design from the front, side rear and top.

Building tops should be articulated with discernable cornice lines, parapets and/or facias.



Buildings facades with recognizable layers: base, middle and top.



Building Width and Façade Articulation

Objective: *To add visual interest and variety by avoiding long, monotonous façades.*

New building façades should have a pedestrian scale aesthetic. This can be accomplished by establishing a layering of rhythmic patterns and architectural elements such as windows, columns, rooflines, building materials and colors.

“Flat” façades should be avoided; historic structures exhibit more of the desired play of light and shadow on a building; new development should create more of a visual impact in ways similar to that of historic structures.

The primary façade(s) (viewable by the public from streets and parking lots) of buildings of 36 feet or greater in width should be articulated into smaller increments through the following or similar techniques:

- Stepping back or extending forward a portion of the façade
- Use of different textures or contrasting, but compatible, materials
- Division into storefronts with separate display windows and entrances
- Arcades, awnings, window bays, balconies or similar ornamental features
- Variation in rooflines to reinforce the articulation of the primary façade.



Façades divided into smaller, human scale increments that also reflect the building's interior organization.



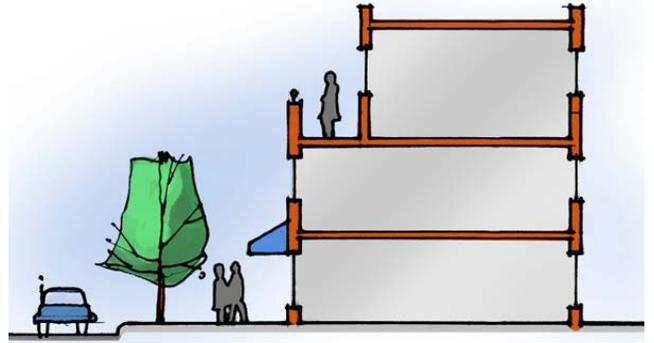
The use of awnings and porticos visually defines the ground floor.

Building Height

Objective: *To support transit with adequate density and intensity, create an increased sense of enclosure, diminish the perceived width of the street, and maximize opportunities for upper-story offices and housing.*

Multi-story buildings (greater than 2 stories) built to the maximum heights permitted by zoning are encouraged.

Portions of upper stories (above the second or third level) should be stepped back from the line of the front façade to provide areas for outdoor terraces, rooftop patios, etc.



Stepping upper stories back from front, the plane of the primary façade provides areas for outdoor balconies and rooftop gardens.



Roof Design

Objective: *To provide a visual terminus to the building, reduce monotony and reflect interior and exterior patterns of use or ownership.*

Buildings may be designed with pitched and/or flat roofs. Flat roofs should be defined with a discernable cornice line. Variations in roof type, height, and or distinct, separate roof segments should be considered as a means of creating greater visual interest, identifying changes in use, areas of ownership or reducing monotony.

Pitched roofs such as gable, hip, shed or mansard roofs should be clad with highly durable materials such as standing seam metal, slate, ceramic or fireproof composite tiles. Use of asphalt shingles is discouraged.



Examples (clockwise from upper left) mansard, shed, hip and flat roof types covered with highly durable materials.



Flat roofed building with varying roof heights.

Transparency: Window and Door Openings

Objective: *To reflect the character of the corridor's historic commercial heritage, enliven the streetscape and enhance security by providing views into and out of buildings.*

For nonresidential or mixed-use buildings:

Window and door openings should comprise at least 60 percent of the length and at least 30 percent of the area of the ground floor of the primary street façade.

A minimum of 20 percent of the ground level of side and rear facades not fronting a public street should consist of window and door openings meeting the above requirements.

A minimum of 20 percent of all sides of upper story facades should consist of window or balcony/door openings meeting the above requirements.

For residential buildings:

A minimum of 20 percent of primary (street-facing) facades and 15 percent of other facades including upper stories should consist of window and door openings, providing residents within the buildings a visual connection to activity on the sidewalk and street.



Non-residential building with 60 percent of façade featuring windows and doors at ground level; 30 percent at second story.



Traditional application of transparent, storefront type windows at ground level and transparent double-hung windows on second floor.



Residential building with 20 percent of façade featuring windows and doors at ground level; 15 percent at second story.

Transparency: Window and Door Openings, Continued

Windows and door openings should strive to meet the following requirements:

- Windows should be designed with punched and recessed openings, in order to create a strong rhythm of light and shadow.
- Window shape, size and patterns should emphasize the intended organization of the façade and the definition of the building.
- Mirrored, dark tinted, opaque or glass block should not be used on street-facing facades. Glass on street facing doors and windows should be clear or lightly tinted, allowing views into and out of the interior.
- Windows on all facades of buildings should meet the requirements of the Minnesota State Energy Code for energy efficiency.



Entries

Objective: *To establish the visual importance of the primary street entrance, and to ensure that entries contribute to the visual attractiveness of the building and are readily visible to visitors.*

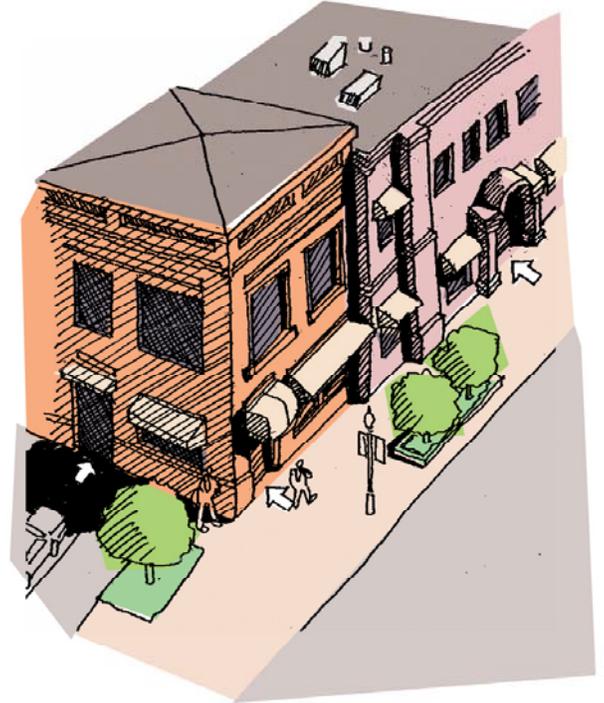
Nonresidential or Mixed-Use Buildings

Primary building entrances on all buildings should face the primary abutting public street or walkway, or linked to that street by a clearly defined and visible walkway or courtyard. Additional secondary entrances should be oriented to a secondary street or parking area. Residential entries should be separate and distinct from commercial entrances.

In the case of a corner building or a building abutting more than one street, the street with the higher classification should be considered primary. The main entrance should be placed at sidewalk grade.

Entries should be designed with one or more of the following:

- Canopy, portico, overhang, arcade or arch above the entrance
- Recesses or projections in the building facade surrounding the entrance
- Display windows surrounding the entrance
- Architectural detailing such as brick work or ornamental moldings
- Planting areas, pots or window boxes for seasonal landscaping



Primary entrances should be oriented to the primary street. Secondary entries should be provided from side and rear parking areas.



Clearly visible corner entrance with awning.

Entries, Continued

Residential Buildings

Primary building entrances on all buildings should face the primary abutting public street or walkway, or be linked to that street by a clearly defined and visible walkway or courtyard. Additional secondary entrances may be oriented to a secondary street or parking area.

Porches, steps, pent entryway roofs, roof overhangs, hooded front doors or similar architectural elements should be used to define the primary entrances to all residences. When the primary residential entrance is accessible by steps, a secondary at-grade entrance should be provided.



Separate entrance set at sidewalk grade for residential tower.



Distinct, separate entries for multi-family residential buildings provide individuality and reduce monotony

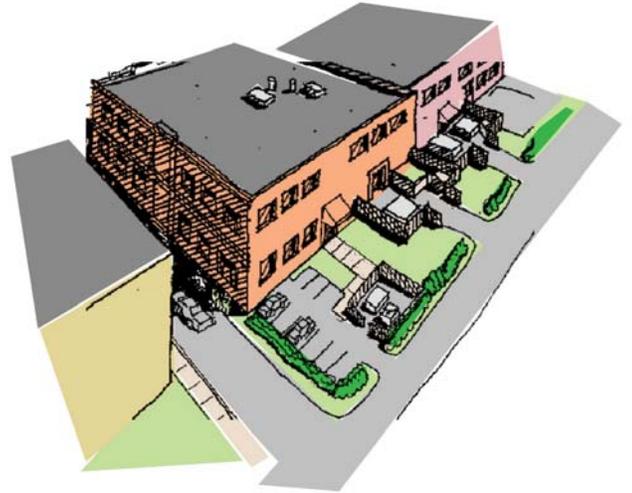
Rear Facades and Entries

Objective: *To improve the appearance of rear facades, orient customers parking or walking to the rear of buildings, and provide safe and convenient access to all building entries.*

Rear facades should be designed as an integral part of the overall building with similar materials and detail treatments. If parking is placed to the rear of a building, the building's rear façade should be welcoming in appearance. Awnings, landscaping and small wall signs identifying businesses are encouraged.

If customers, visitors and/or tenants park to the rear of the building, a well-defined and lighted rear entrance is strongly encouraged.

If no rear building entrance is provided, a signed and lighted walkway to the front or side building entrance should be provided.



Buildings with rear off-street parking and loading should provide windows, walkways and lighted entrances.



Well-designed commercial entrance serving customers using off-street parking behind building.



Rear entries located along a pedestrian greenway.

Parking Structures

Objective: *To ensure scale and form will achieve visual continuity with surrounding buildings while providing transit-supportive uses along the street edge.*

The design of parking structures within the corridor should comply with these design guidelines.

The ground floor façade abutting any street or walkway should be occupied by commercial or office uses.

Facades should be designed and architecturally detailed like other commercial buildings within the corridor. The structure's exterior should feature horizontal detailing to hide angled ramps within the structure's interior. Windows or other openings should be provided that echo those of surrounding buildings.

Top decks of parking structures visible from other properties should be designed with trellises and for landscaping sufficient to screen portions of the visible area.

Parking facilities within the corridor should incorporate CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) by utilization of both active and passive security design features, including but not limited to:

- Parking Layout – maximize horizontal floor area; avoid layouts that require parking on angled ramps
- Lighting - design that meets illuminance, uniformity and glare standards of the IESNA (Illuminating Engineering Society of North America)

- Natural Surveillance - openings in the façade on all sides of a structure and low landscape plantings placed away from the base of the structure
- Access control – transparent fencing and minimization of pedestrian and auto ingress/egress
- Emergency communication – panic buttons, emergency phones, intercoms, sound-activated surveillance systems, CCTV and security personnel



Parking garage with street front commercial uses

Building Materials

Objective: *To ensure that high-quality, durable and authentic building materials are used in all forms of building construction.*

Buildings should be constructed of durable, high-quality materials, such as:

- Brick
- Natural stone
- Manufactured stone
- Textured, patterned and/or integrally colored cast-in-place concrete
- Integrally colored, precast CMU (concrete masonry units), provided that surfaces are molded, serrated or treated to give wall surfaces a three-dimensional texture.
- Stucco or EFIS (exterior insulating finish system) above the ground line (+3 ft.)
- Architectural metal; decorative panels, structural elements and decorative support or trim members

Materials to avoid:

- Unadorned plain or painted concrete block
- Unarticulated or blank, tilt-up concrete panels
- Pre-fabricated metal building systems
- Glass curtain wall systems
- Aluminum, vinyl, fiberglass, asphalt or fiberboard siding



Brick and rock-face CMU



Copper siding and brick.



Brick and EFIS above.

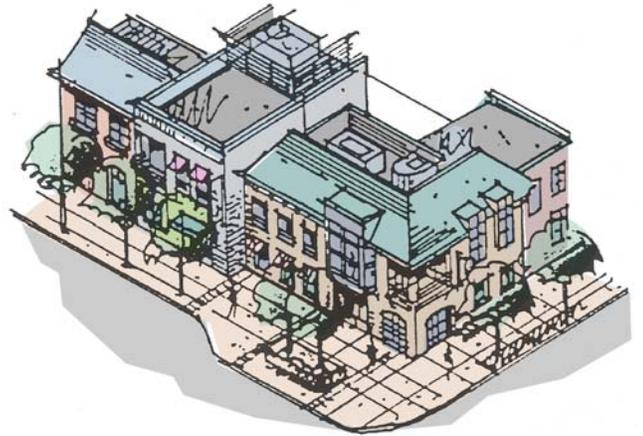
Rooftop Equipment

Objective: *To ensure that views of rooftop equipment from public streets or pedestrian ways are minimized.*

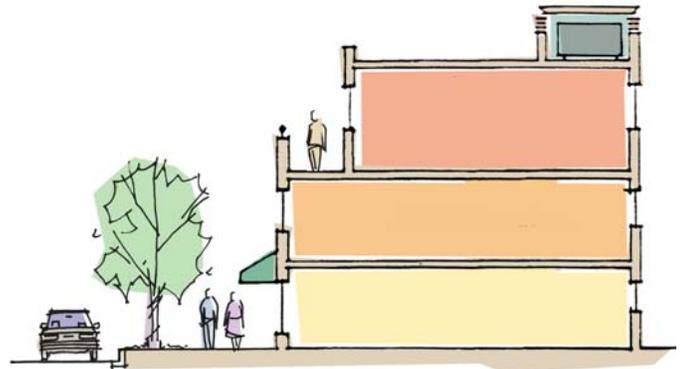
All rooftop equipment should be screened from view from adjacent streets, public rights-of-way and adjacent properties. Preferably, rooftop equipment should be screened by the building parapet, or should be located out of view from the ground.

If this is infeasible, the equipment should be grouped within a single enclosure. This structure should be set back a distance of 1½ times its height from any primary façade fronting a public street. Screens should be of durable, permanent materials (not including wood) that are compatible with the primary building materials.

Exterior mechanical equipment such as ductwork should not be located on primary building facades.



Screening of rooftop equipment with roof form.



Screening of rooftop equipment with enclosure.

Building Colors

Objective: *To ensure that building colors are aesthetically pleasing and compatible with their surroundings.*

Building colors should accent, blend with, or complement surroundings. Principal building colors should consist of subtle, neutral or muted colors with low reflectance (e.g., browns, grays, tans, dark or muted greens). “Warm-toned” colors are encouraged because of their year-round appeal. No more than two principal colors should be used on a façade or individual storefront. Bright or primary colors should be used only as accents.



Example of appropriate building colors

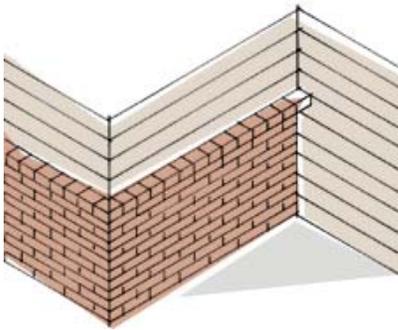


Inappropriate use of bright and primary colors as principal building colors.

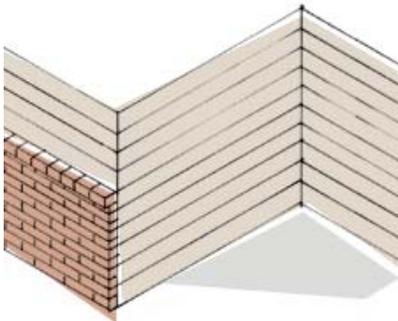
Architectural Detailing

Objective: *To encourage new building design that enlivens building facades and contributes to a rich textured, human-scaled environment.*

Architectural details such as ornamental cornices, arched windows and warm-toned brick with bands of contrasting color are encouraged in new construction. The contemporary adaptation of historic and vernacular residential, institutional and commercial styles found in Prospect Park and in Southeast Minneapolis is encouraged.



Terminate materials at an inside corner



Avoid termination of materials at an outside corner



Franchise Architecture

Objective: To encourage new building design that is supportive of the urban design goals of the City, and that responds to the corridor's transit-oriented development.

Franchise architecture (building design that is trademarked or identified with a particular chain or corporation and is generic in nature) is generally discouraged unless it employs a traditional storefront commercial style. Franchises or national chains should follow these guidelines to create context-sensitive buildings that are sustainable and reusable.



Typical franchise architecture.



Former gas station converted to a neighborhood café.



Individually designed free-standing franchise use.



Franchise use incorporated into existing building.

Awnings

Objective: To encourage the use of awnings as a way to shelter customers, transit patrons and other pedestrians; reduce glare and conserve energy, and provide additional accent color to building facades.

Where awnings are used, canvas or fabric awnings are preferable. If glass or metal awnings are employed, they should closely complement the building's architectural character and aesthetic.

Back lighted awnings and canopy signs should not be used.



Retaining Walls

Objective: To reflect the character of the corridor's architectural heritage and ensure high-quality, durable building materials are used in construction.

The design, materials, detailing and color of retaining walls should blend with building architecture and surroundings.

Retaining walls should be constructed of durable, high quality materials, such as:

- Poured-in-place concrete, faced with brick
- Natural Stone
- Textured, patterned and/or cast-in-place concrete
- Integrally colored, pre-cast CMU (concrete masonry units), provided that surfaces are molded, serrated or treated to give wall surfaces a three-dimensional texture.

Materials to avoid:

- Unadorned plain or painted concrete block
- Wood timbers



Brick cladding over concrete structural wall.



Natural limestone dry-stacked wall.



Textured, colored cmu wall systems.

Site Development Guidelines

Parking Lot Design

Objective: *To ensure parking lots are well-designed and constructed, utilizing civil engineering and landscape architecture “best practices”, including adherence to the principals of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), i.e. territoriality, natural surveillance, activity support and access control.*

Parking lots should be designed to promote efficient traffic patterns, minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians and to proactively reduce the opportunity for crime.

Entrances and exits should be oriented to capitalize on safety and security. Encourage users to adopt “ownership” of the parking areas by defining pedestrian paths through landscaping (see “Landscaping and Screening, Parking Areas”), changing paving treatments, curbing, crosswalks, striping and signage.

Paving treatments should incorporate durable, long lasting materials. The use of pervious materials such as pervious concrete or paving stones is encouraged to minimize stormwater runoff.

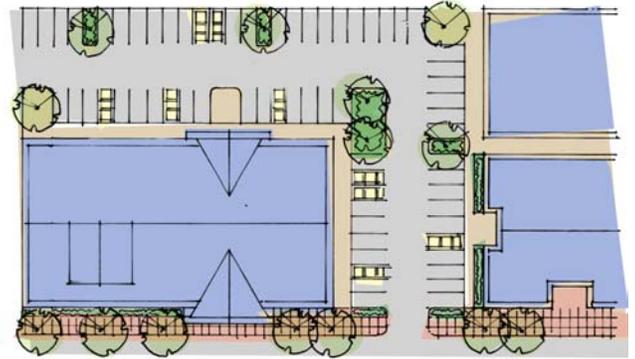
Light the parking lot evenly and adequately to ensure visibility at night for pedestrian and vehicle safety and to reduce opportunities for vehicle break-ins.

Provide sightlines from the street and adjacent buildings.

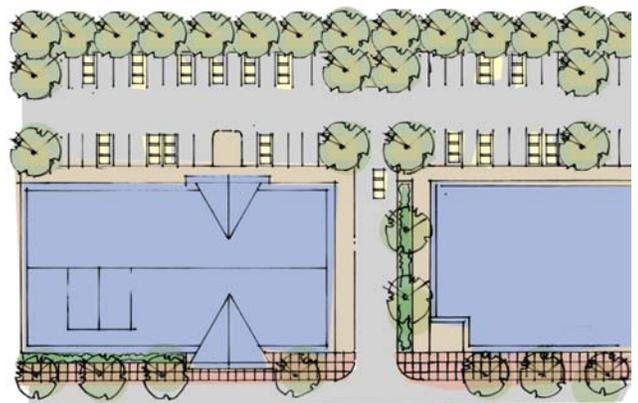
Parking lots should be broken up into smaller areas located at the side and to the rear of buildings whenever possible. When parking is located adjacent to a roadway, a

landscaped buffer should be provided (see “Landscaping and Screening, Parking Areas”).

Lots should be designed to incorporate intermediate planting beds to break up large areas of impervious surface.



Parking located to the side/rear of building.



Parking located at the rear of building.



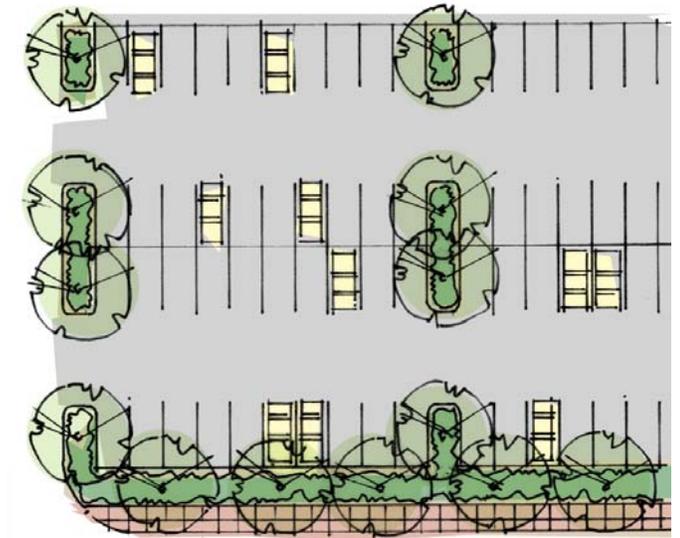
Pervious surfacing at street and parking area

Landscaping and Screening

Parking Areas

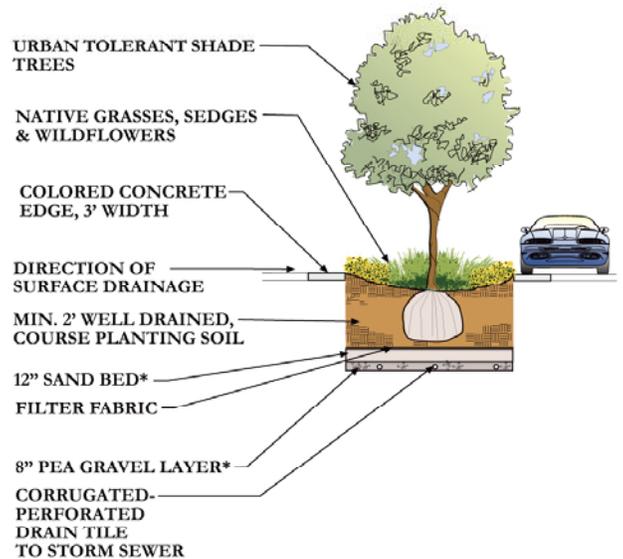
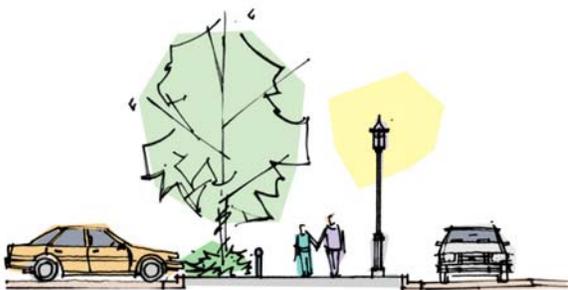
Parking bays in excess of 10 spaces in length should be divided by intermediate landscape islands. Landscape islands should provide at least one parking stall width of landscape area for planting trees and groundcovers.

A landscape buffer strip of sufficient width should be provided between all parking areas and the sidewalk or street. The buffer strip should consist of shade trees, low shrubs or perennial flowers and a decorative fence. If a solid wall or dense hedge is used, it should be no less than three feet and no more than four feet in height to allow views into and out of parking areas.



Example of adequate parking lot landscaping

8' landscape planting buffer provides effective screening of parking areas from walks and streets



** All Dimensions are approximate, final design shall be based on design storm event and existing subsurface soil characteristics*

Raingarden detail for parking areas

Landscaping and Screening, Continued

Minimum Landscape Requirements:

- All construction projects should include landscaping; restore all disturbed ground surfaces with suitable permanent vegetation to prevent erosion and enhance visual character.
- Include overstory and understory plantings such as shade trees, coniferous trees, shrubs and perennial grasses and flowers.
- The use of window boxes, hanging flower baskets, vines and other seasonal landscaping is encouraged. Window boxes, hanging baskets and planters should be used around entries, while vines should be used to cover blank walls or other surfaces.



Private Pathways and Streetscape

Objective: *To provide pedestrian facilities that support multi-modal transit while strengthening the sense of place within the University Avenue and 29th Avenue corridor.*

All walkways within the corridor should be designed and constructed in strict adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Continuous sidewalks should be provided along all street frontages. Lighted sidewalks should extend between rear or side parking areas and building entrances.

Public sidewalks and boulevard areas along the corridor should be enhanced with decorative pavement treatments, ornamental street lighting, streetscape furnishings, abundant landscaping and public art as part of the design and implementation of the Central Corridor transit project.

The street grid should be maintained and extended wherever possible. Where the street grid is interrupted by steep slopes or other topographic variations, walkways or stairways should be built to maintain pedestrian continuity.

Commercial developments should strive to provide bicycle parking spaces in a convenient, visible, preferably sheltered location.



Covered walkway connects rear parking area to primary entrance



Seating area adjacent to walkway



Public Art

Objective: *To strengthen community and cultural identity within the transit corridor while enhancing the streetscape.*

Public art in the forms of sculpture, murals, artist-designed street furnishings, etc. should be integrated into the design of new transit facilities, public streetscape improvements and outdoor environments associated with new public or private redevelopment projects.



Site Lighting

Objective: *To ensure quality lighting design through glare reduction, minimum overspill and the use of fixtures that promote the existing character of the Prospect Park Neighborhood.*

Exterior light fixtures should be selected and located to minimize glare and negative effects upon the night character of the Prospect Park Neighborhood. Lighting of structures should be minimized to reduce ambient light pollution from above and below.

Lighting fixtures style should be compatible with the architecture of nearby buildings. Lights attached to buildings should be screened by the building's architectural features to eliminate glare from adjacent properties.



Site Lighting, Continued

Parking lot illumination should consist of a combination of commercial grade parking lot and pedestrian style fixtures. Pedestrian fixtures should be used for lighting internal parking lot walkways. Parking lot fixtures should be employed to illuminate parking bays and drive aisles.

Parking lot illumination should achieve levels to provide safety while minimizing overlighting and excessive spillover of ambient light onto adjacent properties. Cutoff fixtures should be located below the mature height of trees in parking lot islands. This will prevent ambient “glow” or light pollution from adjacent properties. Evenly distributed illumination should be provided at a minimum of two footcandles and a maximum of four footcandles.

Appropriate light sources:

- Incandescent
- Halogen
- High pressure sodium
- “Warm” metal halide

Inappropriate light sources:

- Fluorescent
- Neon
- Colored
- Low-pressure sodium
- Mercury vapor

Appropriate light fixture types:

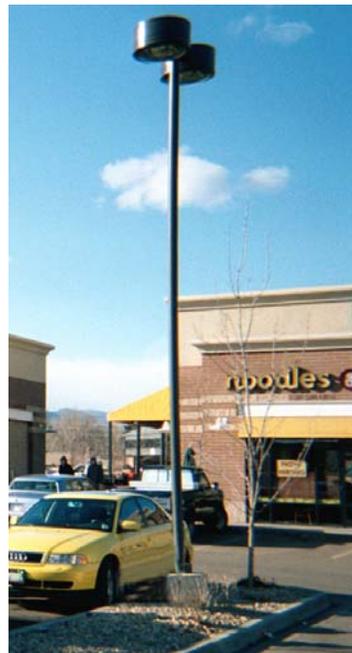
- Pole mounted
- Recessed
- Shield spotlighting

Inappropriate Light Fixture Types:

- Internally lit awnings
- Blinking or Flashing



Example of appropriate sign lighting



Example of appropriate style of parking lot lighting.

Glossary

Arcade: A roofed passageway, usually with shops on one or both sides.

Articulation: The detailing or ornamentation of architectural elements on the exterior of a building.

Cornice: Any projecting ornamental molding along the top of a building or wall.

Eaves: The underpart of a sloping roof overhanging a wall.

Franchise Architecture: Building design that is trademarked or identified with a particular chain or corporation and is generic in nature.

Neighboring Buildings: Buildings located adjacent to or across from a principal building. Neighboring buildings may be located on same lot as principal building or on adjacent properties.

New Building: In addition to actual new buildings, the term “new building” shall include any expansion of an existing building that equals or exceeds 50 percent of the original building’s floor area and shall also include buildings that are the subject of any material and comprehensive renovation.

Pitched Roofs:

Gable: A pitched roof with a central ridgeline and vertical wall ends.

Steep Pitch: Gable roof with pitch greater than 8/12.

Med. Pitch: Gable roof with pitch greater than 4/12.

Low Pitch: Gable roof with pitch greater than 1/12.

Flat: Roof with no pitch

Hipped: A pitched roof with sloped instead of vertical ends.

Mansard: A pitched roof having a double slope, the lower pitch being longer and steeper than the upper.

Pent Roof: a sloped roof that protrudes from a building façade, separating the stories of a building.

Shed: A pitched roof of one plane having only one slope. Pitch is higher on one side than the other.

Primary Building: The main building located on a site.

Primary Entrance: The main public entrance to a building.

Primary Façade: The façade fronting a public street. In the case of corner buildings, the primary façade fronts the highest classification of street.

Sign Types:

Awning, Canopy or Marquee Sign: A sign that is permanently or semi-permanently affixed to an awning, canopy, marquee or other similar device.

Freestanding Sign: A self-supporting sign affixed to a freestanding frame structure not attached to a building.

Monument or Ground Sign: A sign not supported by exposed posts or poles which is architecturally designed and located directly at grade, and where the base width dimension is 50% or more of the greatest width of the sign.

Projecting Sign: Any sign that projects more than twelve inches from the front edge of a roof structure and/or building façade.

Pylon Sign: A sign supported by a column-type structure that is set firmly in or below ground surface and finished in a material consistent with the sign.

Roof Sign: A sign erected upon or against a sloping roof, but not extending above or beyond the roofline.

Wall Sign: A single-faced sign attached to or painted on an exterior wall of a building, parallel to the building wall, and which does not project more than twelve inches from the plane of the building.

Window Sign: A sign that is placed inside a window or upon the windowpanes or glass and is visible from the exterior of the window. This does not include merchandise or window displays.

Streetscape: The public right of way, from building face to building face, occupied by the street, boulevard, sidewalk and pedestrian amenities such as lighting, benches, bike racks, etc.