



## **City of Snohomish Design Standards and Guidelines (outside the Historic District)**

**Adopted April 6, 2004**

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## *Introduction to Design Standards and Guidelines*

The purpose of these standards and guidelines is to produce development that meets a number of objectives. These include:

- Building on the rich heritage and character of Snohomish.
- Creating an environment that emphasizes buildings and landscaping, rather than parking and signs.
- Supporting pedestrian movement and the use of transit and bicycles.
- Maintaining the scale and texture of development.
- Encouraging creative designs for sites and buildings.
- Allowing for infill development that is sensitive to its context.
- Implementing the Comprehensive Plan.
- Protecting and enhancing the city's environment for living and working in manners that support and stimulate business and industry and also promote desirability of investment and occupancy in business and other properties.

The standards and guidelines in this document intend to promote orderly community growth which will both protect and enhance property values for the community as a whole. Inherent in these objectives is the expectation that well designed projects and economic development support the community's aesthetic values while creating an environment for living and working that stimulates business and industry to promote continued investment in our local economy.

In order to protect the existing environment of the City of Snohomish and to reduce potential impacts of new development and redevelopment, the use of low-impact development (LID) practices and techniques are both allowed and encouraged, provided appropriate conditions exist on a development site for the employment of such practices and techniques.

The provisions of this document shall apply to all development and redevelopment within the commercial, industrial, mixed use, business park, low-, medium-, and high-density residential, Planned Residential Development (PRD) and developments proposing small lots (7,200 sq ft or less), and public facility developments within the City of Snohomish and outside the Historic District, which has its own set of standards and review process. Each development / redevelopment project shall be evaluated with regard to how it achieves an overall design that meets the intent and directions of the Design Standards and Guidelines.

Each standard includes examples and illustrations of ways in which the intent of the standard can be achieved. The graphic examples are meant to be examples, and are not the only acceptable means towards accomplishing the intent of the standards. Applicants and project designers are encouraged to consider designs, styles and techniques not pictured in the examples that fulfill the intent of the design standard.

The standards in this document use the word "shall" while the guidelines use the word "should."

Regardless of which term is used, each standard and guideline must be addressed by an applicant. The City will expect to see how the design of a project has responded to each standard and guideline.

The "shall" statements, with such wording, indicate requirements and offer relatively little flexibility unless choices are provided within the statements themselves. All projects must include these elements as described.

However, the guidelines that use the word "should" are meant to be applied, but with flexibility. They indicate that the City is open to design features that are equal to, or better than, those stated - so long as the intent is satisfied. The applicant assumes the burden of proof to demonstrate how a proposed design meets the standards and guidelines and determination will be made by the City Planner.

## **Standards and Guidelines for All Development** (outside the Historic District)

## LOCATION OF PARKING

### **Intent**

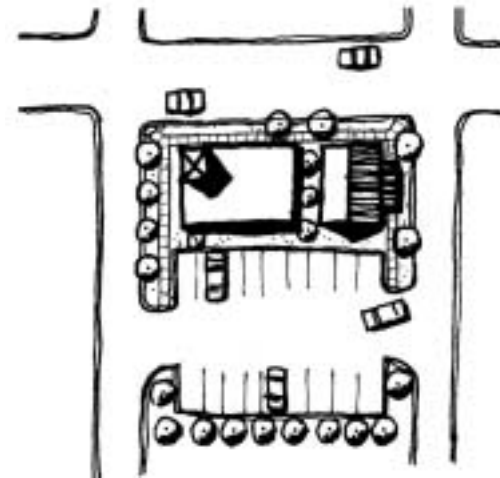
To maintain a contiguous, active pedestrian realm along street fronts by locating parking lots behind buildings. In situations where there is one building on a property, the intention of the guideline is to encourage the parking relating to that building to be located primarily behind the building. In situations where one or more larger primary buildings are located in the interior of a property and multiple satellite pads are located adjacent to the street frontages, the intent of these guidelines is to locate the satellite pads close to the street frontage in a manner which breaks up the appearance of the parking area bulk from the viewpoint of the adjacent street frontages. In those situations where buildings and the open space adjacent to them are located near the property frontage rather than being separated from the street frontage by parking areas, the need for common space near the interior of the property is considered less essential.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

1. Commercial parking lots should be located behind buildings when feasible. Where commercial parking lots are allowed to remain in front of or beside buildings, parking lots shall provide a 10 foot wide planting area between the parking lot and street right-of-way to include:
  - a year-round sight barrier,
  - evergreen shrubs,
  - evergreen ground cover,
  - shrub material maintained at a maximum height of 3 feet for visibility.
2. Where feasible in multi-family development, parking lots should be located behind buildings in new development or relocated behind buildings in redevelopment; though not directly adjacent to any street fronts. The front yard setbacks should be adjusted downward when the parking is placed to the rear of the units.

3. Access to multi-family parking lots located behind buildings should be provided from rear alleys, auto-courts, and/or other internal drives.



*Parking lot behind buildings*



*Walkway to rear multi-family parking lot*



*Sidelot parking with access from alley*

## PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING

(ALSO APPLICABLE TO LOT STORAGE, GAS STATION  
APRONS, AND DRIVE-THRUS)

### **Intent**

To reduce the visual impact of parking lots through landscaped areas and/or architectural features that compliment the overall design and character of development.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. The number of trees required in the internal planting areas in parking lots shall be dependant upon the location of the parking lot in relation to the building and public right-of-way:
  - where the parking lot is located between the building and the public right-of-way, one tree for every five spaces shall be provided (1:5).
  - where the parking lot is located to the side of the building and partially abuts the public right-of-way, one tree for every six spaces shall be provided (1:6).
  - where the parking lot is located behind building and is not visible from the public right-of-way, one tree for every seven spaces shall be provided (1:7).

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

2. Commercial parking lots are encouraged to meet stormwater drainage requirements by using Low Impact Development (LID) techniques wherever possible and practical.



## PARKING LOT SCREENING

(ALSO APPLICABLE TO LOT STORAGE, GAS STATION  
APRONS, AND DRIVE-THRUS)

(NOTE: Not applicable to car sales lots)

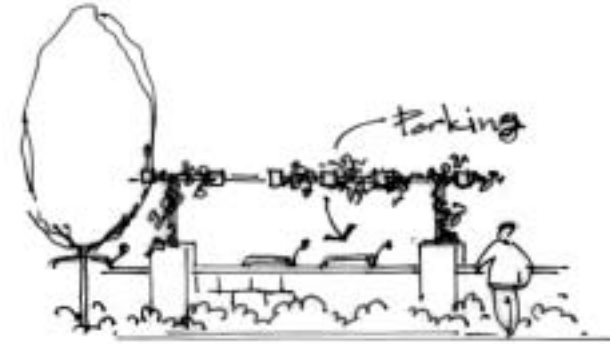
### Intent

To provide screening of parking in development visible from the public right-of-way, while providing visibility for surveillance.

### Standards

Required:

1. Parking lots that abut the public right-of-way shall be screened with one or a combination of the following treatments:
  - Low walls made of concrete, masonry, or other similar material and not exceeding a maximum height of 3 feet.
  - Raised planter walls planted with a minimum 80% evergreen shrubs not to exceed a total height of 3 feet, including planter wall and landscape planting.
  - Landscape plantings consisting of trees of which at least 80% are deciduous and shrubs and groundcover materials of which at least 80% are evergreen.
2. Walls, fencing, and architectural details shall compliment the materials used in adjacent architectural styles.
3. Screen walls or fences located across a street or adjacent to a residential designation shall include one or more of the following:
  - Arbor and/or trellis structure with climbing vines
  - Architectural detailing, contrasting materials, or other special interest
  - Art



3 foot wall with trellis feature between parking and sidewalk



Low wall and landscaping

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## PARKING LOT SCREENING

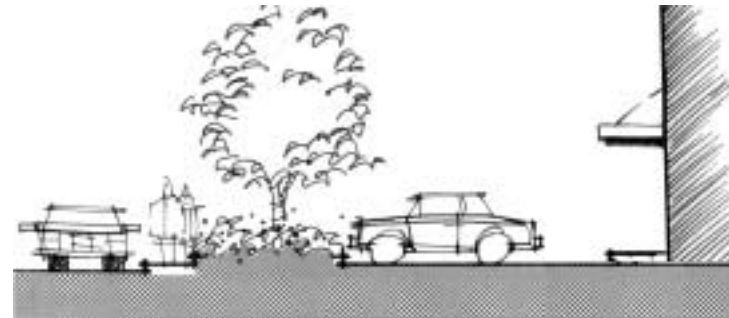
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(NOTE: Not applicable to car sales lots)

4. Walls and raised planters shall not exceed a maximum height of 3 feet, unless all of the following are provided:
  - screen treatment does not create a safety hazard.
  - portion of treatment that is above 3 feet in height is a minimum 75% transparent (i.e. see-through metal railing, trellis, or other similar treatment).
  - portion of wall/landscape treatment that is above 3 feet in height provides added visual interest, detail, and character suitable to the character of the development.
5. Where walls are provided, landscape planting areas shall be a minimum width of 5 feet and shall be located adjacent to the public right-of-way.
6. Fencing around parking lots shall be allowed if the following conditions are met:
  - All screen fencing should not exceed a maximum height of 6 feet, and any portion higher than 3 feet must be 75% transparent.
  - If an alternative fence material is used such as masonry, wrought iron, or wood etc., the fence must be 75% transparent and planting should consist of at least 30% coniferous trees and evergreen shrubs/groundcovers.
7. All plant material used for parking lot screening shall be managed and/or selected to provide clear views between 3 and 8 feet above the ground surface, for surveillance purposes.

Not allowed:

8. Chain link fencing without vinyl cladding, powder coating or similar coating over the galvanized metal coating shall not be permitted to be used to screen or enclose parking along a public sidewalk. In addition, the use of razor ribbon or barbed wire shall be prohibited.
9. Chain link fencing, with or without coating, shall not be used on any street frontage, adjacent to a public sidewalk or adjacent to a residential designation.



*Landscaped screening between parking lot and public right-of-way*

## PARKING LOT LIGHTING

(ALSO APPLICABLE TO LOT STORAGE, GAS STATION  
APRONS, AND DRIVE-THRUS)

### **Intent**

To maintain a safe and secure pedestrian environment through the use of adequate lighting.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Lighting used in parking lots shall not exceed a maximum of 30 feet in height. Pedestrian scale lighting shall be a maximum of 16 feet in height.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

2. The parking lot lighting should be appropriate to create adequate visibility at night and evenly distributed to increase security.
3. All lighting should be glare-free and shielded from the sky and adjacent residential properties and structures, either through exterior shields or through optics within the fixture.
4. Lighting levels and design should comply with the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America's *Recommended Practices and Design Guidelines*, latest edition.



*Shielded, pedestrian-scale lighting in parking lot (on left).*

## PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS THROUGH PARKING LOTS

(NOTE: Not applicable to Industrial Development)

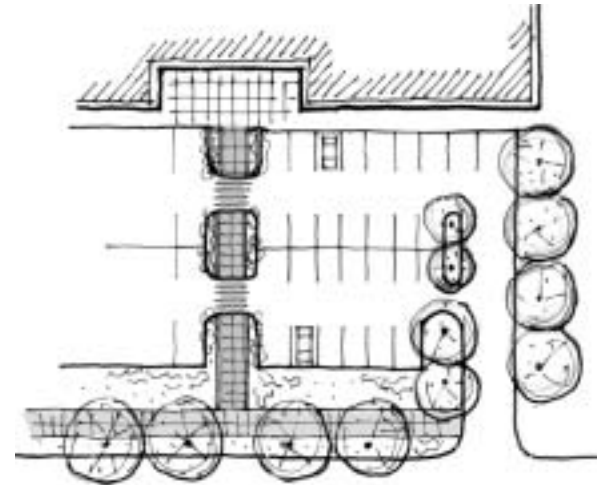
### **Intent**

To provide safe, convenient, and attractive walkways for pedestrians through parking lots.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. For parking lots that contain greater than 20 parking spaces, pedestrian connections shall be clearly defined in a combination of 2 or more of the following ways (except as walkways cross vehicular travel lanes):
  - a 6 inch vertical curb in combination with a raised walkway.
  - a trellis, special railing, bollards, and/or other architectural features to accent the walkway between parking bays.
  - special paving, such as concrete, or LID materials if appropriate, in an asphalt area.
  - a continuous landscape area minimum 3 feet wide on at least one side of the walkway (where walkways abut a public right-of-way and/or driving aisles, the landscape area shall be provided between the walkway and the public right-of-way or driving aisle).
2. ADA accessible connections shall be provided from ADA parking stalls to the main pedestrian walking routes and building entrances.
3. Pedestrian walkways within parking areas shall be a minimum 5 foot width of clear, unobstructed passage.
4. Pedestrian walkways shall provide a distinct linkage between a main entrance to the building and a concentration of vehicle parking spaces in order to encourage its use by pedestrians.



*Walkway linking building entrance and public sidewalk*



*Shaded walkway through parking lot*

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## PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS THROUGH PARKING LOTS

(NOTE: Not applicable to Industrial Development)

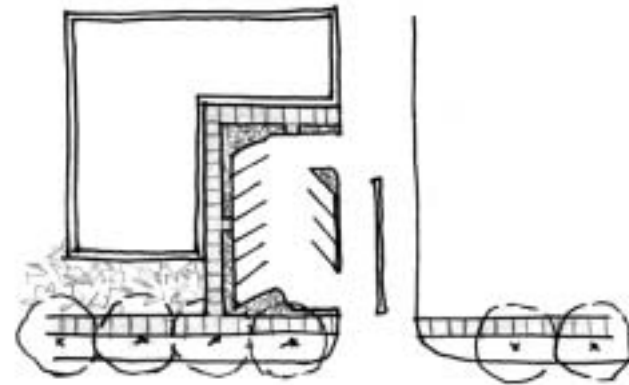
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5. When buildings are not located directly adjacent to the sidewalk, pedestrian walkways shall connect the public sidewalk in the right-of-way to the main building entrance in a clear and direct manner, regardless of the number of parking spaces.
6. Where transit stops occur in the public right-of-way, pedestrian walkways shall provide a direct and clear connection from the building's main entrance to the transit stop.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

7. Night lighting should be provided where stairs, curbs, ramps, abrupt changes in walk direction, and crossing vehicle lanes occur.



*Walkway connecting multi-tenant center to public sidewalk and adjacent to side parking lot*



*Landscaped walkway through big box retail parking lot*

## SIDEWALKS AND STREET TREES WITHIN PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

### *Intent*

To maintain a consistent street frontage and character for street right-of-ways.

### *Standards*

Required:

1. Unless otherwise required or where larger plaza areas are provided, sidewalk paving material shall be consistent with street frontage improvements of adjacent developments. The use of LID materials are encouraged, if appropriate to site conditions.
2. Street trees within the public right-of-way shall be located in tree grates or continuous planted area (minimum 4 feet wide unless planting area interrupts required walking width for sidewalk) between the walking route of the sidewalk and the curb edge.
3. If a street has uniform planting of street trees, or a distinctive species, the new street trees shall match the planting pattern.
4. Where tree grates are used, they shall be ADA accessible and of a similar size and material as tree grates found in adjacent developments to maintain a similar overall streetscape appearance.

### *Guidelines*

Encouraged:

5. Where street trees are planted between the walking route of the sidewalk and curb edge, root barriers, root channels, and/or structural soils should be utilized to protect the sidewalk from possible, future root damage.



*Uniform street trees along planting strip*



## CURB CUT SPACING AND CONSOLIDATED DRIVEWAYS

(NOTE: Not applicable to Industrial Development)

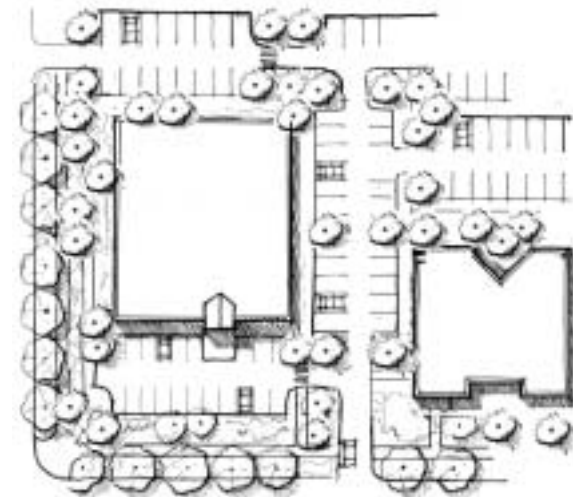
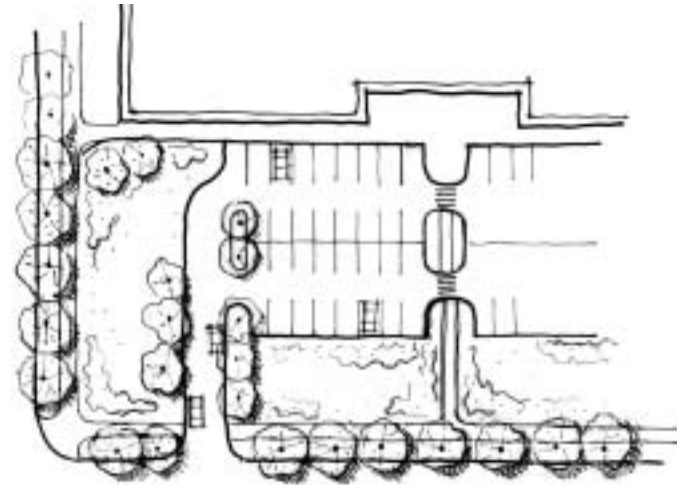
### **Intent**

To enhance pedestrian safety by consolidating driveways, while providing for adequate vehicular and service access.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Minimize obstructions to pedestrian movement and the number of vehicular turning movements; expansions, redevelopments, or changes of use shall be evaluated for number, location, size, and by consolidation of vehicle access points.
2. Closely spaced adjacent driveways in the same development shall be combined for combined joint access, unless the City Engineer finds consolidation is impractical or will cause a hazard.



## SCREENING OF TRASH AND SERVICE AREAS

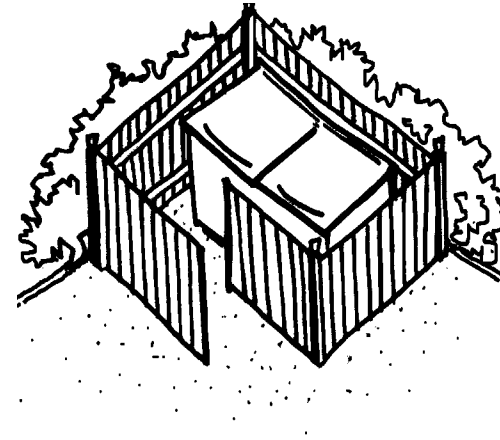
### *Intent*

To reduce the impact of service, loading and trash storage areas.

### *Standards*

Required:

1. All service, loading and trash collection areas shall be screened by a combination of masonry, wood, or vinyl walls and planting areas.
2. Loading and service areas shall not face any residential district, unless no other location is possible.



*Dumpsters screened by walls and planting strip along sidewalk*



*Loading area screened by fence and landscaping*

## PROMINENT ENTRANCE

(NOTE: Not applicable to Industrial Development)

### **Intent**

To ensure that building entrances are welcoming and easily identifiable from streets and sidewalks.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Visual prominence - the principal entry to the building shall be marked by at least one element from each of the following groups:

#### Group A

- a) recess
- b) overhang
- c) canopy
- d) portico
- e) porch

#### Group B

- a) clerestory
- b) glass window(s) flanking door
- c) ornamental lighting fixtures
- d) large entry door(s)

#### Group C

- a) stone, masonry or tile paving in entry
- b) ornamental building name or address
- c) pots or planters with flowers
- d) seating

2. Weather protection - some form of weather protection shall be provided. This can be combined with the method used to achieve visual prominence.



(NOTE: Not applicable to Industrial Development)

## MASSING

### Intent

To reduce the apparent bulk of multi-story buildings and single-story buildings 15' or more in height, and maintain town scale by providing a sense of "base," "middle," and "top."

### Standards

Required:

1. Buildings shall have a distinct "base" at the ground level, using articulation and materials such as stone, masonry, or decorative concrete. Distinction may also occur through the following:
  - a) windows
  - b) architectural details
  - c) canopies
  - d) bays
  - e) overhangs
  - f) masonry strips and cornice lines
2. The "top" of the building shall emphasize a distinct profile or outline with elements such as a projecting parapet, cornice, upper level stepback, or pitched roofline.

### Guidelines

Encouraged:

3. The "middle" of the building may be made distinct by change in material or color, windows, balconies, stepbacks, and signage.



## GROUND LEVEL DETAILS

(NOTE: Not applicable to Industrial Development)

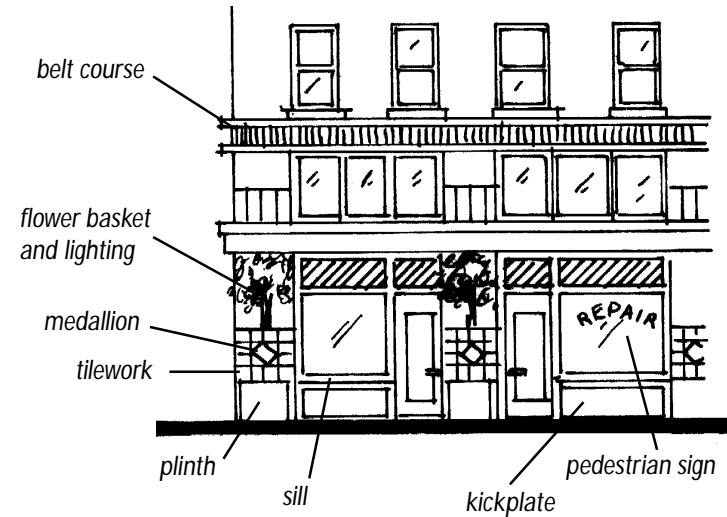
### Intent

To reinforce the character of the streetscape by encouraging the greatest amount of visual interest along the ground level of buildings facing pedestrian streets.

### Standards

Required:

1. Ground-floor, street-facing façades of commercial and mixed use buildings shall incorporate at least five of the following elements:
  - a) Lighting or hanging baskets supported by ornamental brackets
  - b) Medallions
  - c) Belt courses
  - d) Plinths for columns
  - e) Kickplate for storefront window
  - f) Projecting sills
  - g) Tilework
  - h) Pedestrian scale sign(s) or sign(s) painted on windows
  - i) Planter box
  - j) An element not listed here that meets the intent.
2. Building façades not facing a street shall incorporate at least three of the above mentioned items.



## SCREENING BLANK WALLS

### **Intent**

To ensure that buildings do not display blank, unattractive walls to the abutting street or public areas.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Walls fifty or more feet in length facing streets or visible from residential areas where windows are not provided shall have architectural treatment. At least four of the following elements shall be incorporated into any ground floor, street-facing façade:
  - a) masonry (but not flat concrete block)
  - b) concrete or masonry plinth at the base of the wall
  - c) belt courses of a different texture and color
  - d) projecting cornice
  - e) projecting metal canopy
  - f) decorative tilework
  - g) trellis containing planting
  - h) medallions
  - i) change of paint color
  - i) opaque or translucent glass
  - j) artwork
  - k) vertical articulation
  - l) lighting fixtures
  - m) recesses
  - n) an architectural element not listed above, as approved, that meets the intent.



## RECOGNIZING HISTORICAL CONTEXT

(NOTE: Not applicable to Industrial Development)

### **Intent**

To promote building design that is sensitive to the overall character of Snohomish.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

1. New development should incorporate architectural elements that reinforce the established character of Snohomish. The following elements constitute potential existing features that could be reflected in new buildings:
  - materials
  - window proportions
  - cornice or canopy lines
  - roof treatment
  - colors
2. When rehabilitating existing, historic buildings, property owners are encouraged to follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)).
  - if original details and ornamentation are intact, they should be retained and preserved.
  - if original details are presently covered, they should be exposed and/or repaired.
  - if original details are missing, missing parts should be replaced to match the original in appearance. Remaining pieces or old photos should be used as a guide.  
(See also the "Snohomish Historic District Design Standards")
3. If a proposed building is not adjacent to other buildings having a desirable architectural character, it may be necessary to look at contextual elements found elsewhere within the area.



New building in an historic area

## INTEGRATION WITH SITE AND BUILDING DESIGN

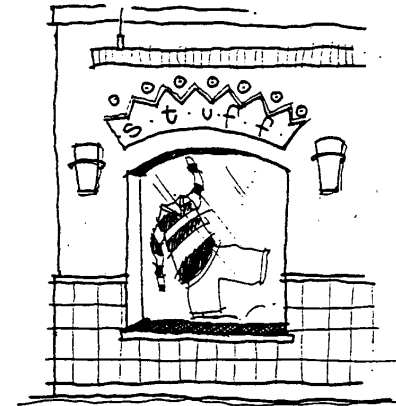
### *Intent*

To ensure that signage is part of the overall design approach to a project and not an additive element or afterthought.

### *Standards*

Required:

1. The design of buildings and sites shall identify locations and maximum sizes for future signs. Multi-tenant buildings and those which could be multi-tenant buildings must submit a sign program depicting the method of sign area allowances. Revisions in the sign program may be submitted for City approval by the management of a building. A part of each sign permit request shall be an explanation of how the sign complies with the sign program which shall include the building management approval of the proposed sign. As tenants install signs, it is expected that such signs shall be in conformance with an overall sign program that allows for advertising which fits with the architectural character, proportions, and details of the development.
2. Signs shall not project above the roof, parapet, or exterior wall.



*Sign as part of building design*



(NOTE: Not applicable to Industrial Development)

## CREATIVITY / CRAFT AND ARTISTRY

### *Intent*

To encourage interesting, creative and unique approaches to the design of signs.

### *Standards*

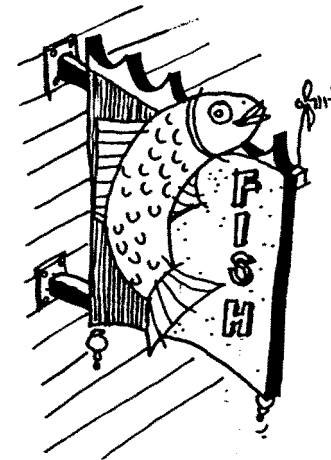
Not Allowed:

1. Internally illuminated signs with changeable letters and numbers (with the exception of gas price signs at service stations) and portable trailer signs with changeable text panels shall not be allowed.
2. The use of neon tubing to outline a roof or building shall not be allowed.
3. Digital electronic signs of any kind shall not be allowed.

### *Guidelines*

Encouraged:

4. Signs should be highly graphic in form, expressive and individualized.
5. Signs should convey the product or service offered by the business in a bold, graphic form.
6. Projecting signs, supported by ornamental brackets and oriented to pedestrians are strongly encouraged.
7. Neon may be used in an artful way in signs.



**Additional Standards for  
Commercial Districts**  
(outside the Historic District)

## CONNECTIONS TO ADJACENT DEVELOPMENT

(NOTE: Not applicable to Industrial development.)

### **Intent**

To create a network of safe, convenient, and attractive internal linkages for pedestrians between retail and mixed use developments.

### **Standards:**

Not allowed:

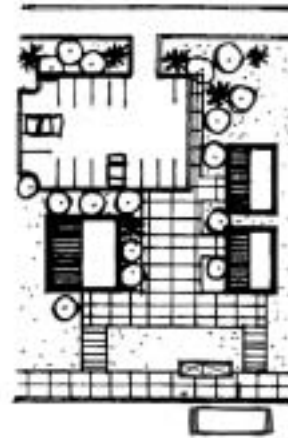
1. Chain link fence of any type or coating may not be used to separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic or to define pedestrian walkways.

### **Guidelines:**

Encouraged:

2. Pedestrian connections should be clearly defined in a combination of 2 or more of the following ways:
  - a 6 inch vertical curb in combination with a raised walkway.
  - a trellis, special railing, bollards, and/or other architectural features to accent the walkway at key points.
  - a continuous landscape area minimum 3 feet wide on at least one side of the walkway, except as walkways cross vehicular travel lanes (where walkways abut a public right-of-way and/or driving aisles, the landscape area shall be provided between the walkway and the public right-of-way or driving aisle).
3. Pedestrian connections should be reinforced with pedestrian scale lighting, bollard lighting, accent lighting or a combination thereof to aid in pedestrians way-finding.
4. Pedestrian walkways should include clear sight lines to building entrances and should not be less than 4 feet wide.

5. Where landscape areas are provided, plant material should consist of a mixture of evergreen and deciduous trees and shrubs. A minimum 20% of plant varieties should provide year-round color, texture and/or other special interest. Shrubs should be maintained at a maximum 3 foot height for visibility. Ground covers should be evergreen varieties.



*Special paving across driving aisle*

## COMMON SPACE

### **Intent**

To ensure that the commercial and mixed use developments of Snohomish have a variety of places that are accessible, comfortable and appealing to the public. The property owner retains control and ownership of the space.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Each development having 20,000 sf or more of lot area or 10,000 sf or more of building area shall provide at least one common space according to the following formula:

$$1\% \text{ of the lot area} + 1\% \text{ of the building area} = \text{Minimum Amount of Common Space}$$

The requirement for Common Space will be waived in the instance where a development locates its parking area behind the building and locates the building as close as is practical to the public sidewalk and street frontage.

2. Such common space shall be visible and accessible from a public sidewalk and should be contiguous and concentrated in one or two locations rather than scattered in small, unusable portions. It is preferred that such space be in close proximity to the main entrance of the building to take advantage of the flows of pedestrians, but other locations may be considered if they are visible and accessible to the public.

3. Such common space shall be provided in one or more of the following forms, as defined in this document:
  - a) Plaza
  - b) Green
  - c) Courtyard
  - d) Forecourt
  - e) Sitting Area
  - f) Widened Sidewalk
  - g) Rain Garden Stormwater Treatment Area
  - h) Art or Water Feature
4. The amount of area devoted to satisfying this requirement may be deducted from the amount of space otherwise devoted to parking lot landscaping.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

5. Developments with less than 20,000 sf of lot area are also encouraged to provide common space.

#### *Examples:*

*20,000 sf lot with a 10,000 sf building.  
Minimum amount of common space would be 300 sf.*

*20,000 sf lot, with a 20,000 sf building (multi-story building).  
Minimum amount of common space would be 400 sf.*

*20,000 sf lot with a 40,000 sf building (multi-story building).  
Minimum amount of common space would be 600 sf.*

*120,000 sf site, with a 40,000 sf building.  
Minimum amount of common space would be 1600 sf.*

## PLAZAS, COURTYARDS, AND SEATING AREAS

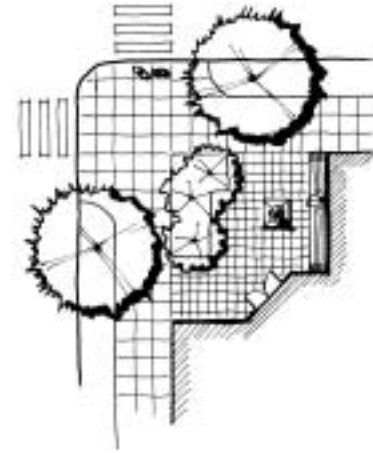
### *Intent*

To reinforce the pedestrian nature of Snohomish by providing usable public open space.

### *Standards*

Required:

1. Where provided, pedestrian spaces shall be visible and accessible to the public.
2. Plazas, courtyards and other pedestrian spaces shall include at least three of the following:
  - special interest planting with a wide range of plant materials including perennials and flowering shrubs. A minimum 65% of plant material used shall provide seasonal flower and/or foliage color.
  - pedestrian scale, bollard, or other accent lighting
  - special paving, such as colored/stained concrete, brick or other unit paver. The use of LID materials, if appropriate to the site conditions, is encouraged.
  - public art with a valuation of at least one-half of 1% of the total construction cost
  - seating, such as benches, tables, or low seating walls
  - water feature



## SITE FURNISHINGS

### **Intent**

To create a more pedestrian friendly street frontage through the use of permanent site furnishings at main pedestrian walkways, building entrances and other pedestrian areas.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Permanent site furnishings, such as benches, tables and other pedestrian amenities shall be made of durable, weather-resistant and vandal-resistant materials.
2. Permanent site furnishings shall be consistent with the overall character and appearance of the development.

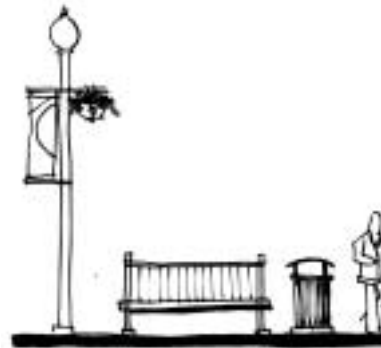
Not allowed:

3. Site furnishings shall not block pedestrian access to main walkways, open space areas and/or building entrances.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

4. Permanent site furnishings, such as benches, tables, bike racks and other pedestrian amenities are encouraged to be provided at main pedestrian walkways, building entrances, plazas, open space and other pedestrian areas.



## ORIENTATION TO STREET

### **Intent**

To ensure that buildings add to the liveliness of streets and the overall community character.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Buildings, along with trees and landscaping shall be predominant, rather than parking lots and free-standing signs.
2. Pedestrian access to the building shall be visually and functionally clear and should offer a convenient alternative to walking through driveway entrances and exits.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

3. People traveling along arterial streets should be able to see storefronts, windows, merchandise, and other aspects of business activity.



## SETBACKS

### *Intent*

To ensure the visibility of retail businesses and establish active, lively uses within close proximity to the sidewalk.

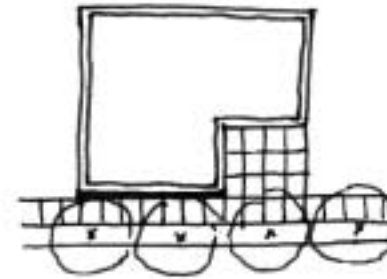
### *Guidelines*

Encouraged:

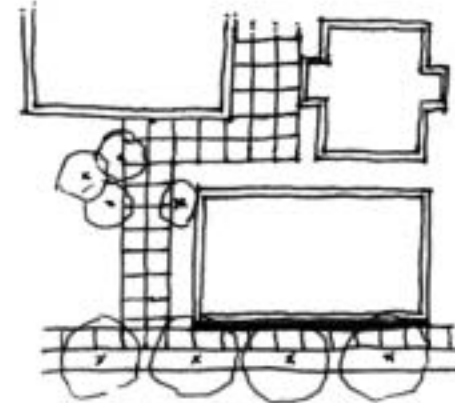
1. Commercial buildings should be set as close as possible to the sidewalk.
2. Portions of buildings should be set as close as possible to the sidewalk or property line, which can be accomplished in various ways. For instance, major portions of single buildings should abut the sidewalk. In multi-building developments, one or more buildings should be set to the sidewalk.
3. The requirement for Common Space will be waived in the instance where a development locates its parking area behind the building and locates the building as close as is practical to the public sidewalk and street frontage.



*Setback with seating*



*Single building*



*Multi-building development*

## WEATHER PROTECTION

### **Intent**

To provide weather protection for pedestrians.

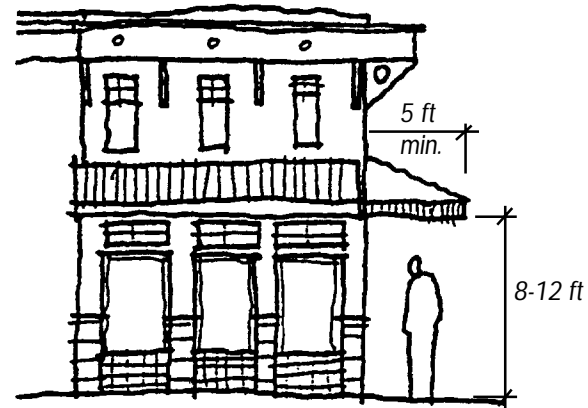
### **Standards**

Required:

1. Where buildings are adjacent to a public sidewalk, canopies or awnings shall be provided. The minimum depth of any canopy or awning shall be 5 ft unless limited by the building code. The vertical dimension between the underside of a canopy or awning and the sidewalk shall be at least 8 ft and no more than 12 ft.
2. Weather protection can be combined with the method used to achieve visual prominence at entrances.

Not allowed:

3. Internal illumination (under-lighting) of awnings shall not be allowed unless the awning material is opaque. However, pedestrian-scale lighting and other down-lighting is allowed beneath awnings.



Canopies providing weather protection

*Note: This standard does not apply to purely residential buildings.*

## ROOFLINE EXPRESSION

### **Intent**

To ensure that rooflines present a distinct profile and appearance for the building and express the neighborhood character.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Commercial buildings shall include extended parapets and projecting cornices to create a prominent edge when viewed against the sky. Sloping roof elements are allowed but not required.



*Variation in roofline*



*Big box retail with distinct roofline*

## CONCEALING ROOFTOP EQUIPMENT

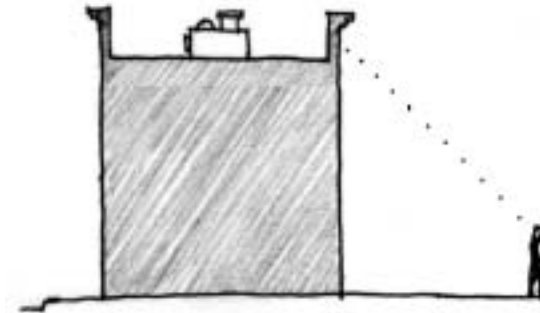
### *Intent*

To screen view of rooftop mechanical and communications equipment where visible from the street level.

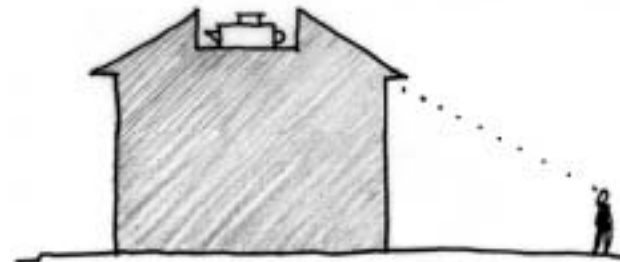
### *Standards*

Required:

1. Mechanical equipment shall be screened by extended parapet walls or other roof forms that are integrated with the architecture of the building.
2. Painting equipment, erecting fences, and using mansard-type roofs are not acceptable methods of screening.
3. Communication equipment shall be blended in with the design of the roofs, rather than being merely attached to the roof-deck.



*Raised parapet*



*Recessed well surrounded by pitched roof*

## EXPRESSION AT ENTRANCES TO LARGE DEVELOPMENTS

### ***Intent***

To provide a reference point at the end of a block of façades or to mark intersections or entrances to developments larger than 5 acres, by providing visual interest at their entrance to the street.

### ***Guidelines***

Encouraged:

1. Developments at intersections should emphasize this unique aspect with two or more of the following methods:
  - a) placement of the primary entry
  - b) articulation
  - c) towers
  - d) plazas
  - e) distinctive roof forms
  - f) other architectural features
  - g) landscaping

## DRIVE-THRU BUSINESSES

### **Intent**

To reduce the impact of car-oriented drive-thru businesses on pedestrian activity.

### **Standards**

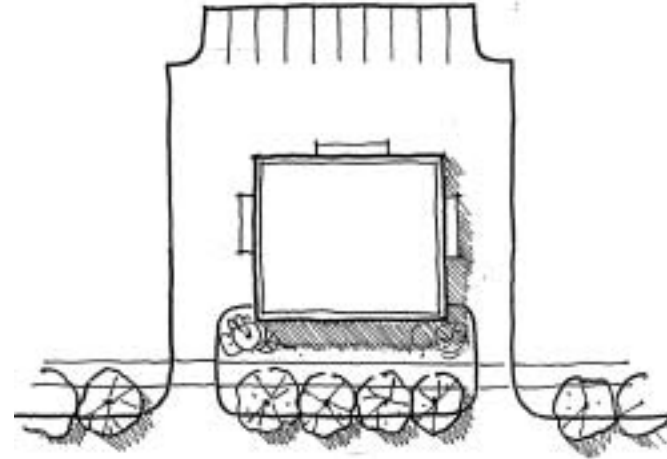
Required:

1. When the drive-thru window or stacking space/lane is located on the street side of a building, screening shall be required between the driving lane/drive-thru window and the street.

### **Guidelines**

Discouraged:

2. Drive-thru windows should not be allowed between the building and the street.



*Drive-thru windows and car lanes located on the sides and rear of building.*

**Additional Standards for  
Multi-Family Development**  
(outside the Historic District)

## FRONT YARDS / ENTRANCES

### **Intent**

To provide separation between buildings and the public pedestrian realm where the front yard functions as usable outdoor space and provides a clear, welcoming, and safe entry for pedestrians from the sidewalk into the building.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. When there are common entries, they shall be clearly identifiable and visible from the street, with well-defined walkways from pedestrian routes to building entries.
2. Four or more of the following elements shall be used to highlight the main entrance to multi-family buildings:
  - Open space, plaza, or courtyard.
  - Special paving. The use of LID materials, if appropriate to the site conditions, is encouraged.
  - Ornamental gate and/or fence.
  - Seating.
  - Water features.
  - Planter boxes or pots.
  - Functional, accent lighting.
  - Art work near the entry.
  - Porches.
3. Front yards shall include an entrance sequence between the sidewalk and the building including elements such as trellises, site furnishings, low hedges, landscaped borders, and special paving.
4. Pedestrian scale lighting shall be provided to create a condition of personal security.



*Screened mechanical equipment*



*Pathway lighting*

*(continued to next page)*

## FRONT YARDS / ENTRANCES

(continued)

5. Primary building entries shall face the street. If the doorway doesn't face the street, a clearly marked walkway shall connect the entry to the sidewalk.
6. Landscaping shall screen undesirable elements such as views to adjacent commercial or industrial development, utility boxes, outdoor storage areas, and dumpsters.
7. Signage identifying building address shall be visible from the street and public pedestrian walkway.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

8. All landscape areas should include a wide range of plant materials including perennials and flowering shrubs. A minimum 40% of plant material used shall provide seasonal color or interest.
9. Landscape planting should consider the use of native shrubs and groundcovers.
10. Accent lighting should be used to highlight special focal points, building/site entrances, public art and special landscape features.



## COMMON SPACES / USABLE RECREATION AREAS

### *Intent*

To provide a friendly pedestrian environment through the creation of a variety of usable and interesting open space(s) within multi-family developments greater than 10 dwelling units.

### *Standards*

Required:

1. Multi-family projects shall be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, well-integrated open space.
2. Where provided, pedestrian spaces shall be visible and accessible to the residents.
3. Common outdoor spaces shall provide at least four of the following amenities to accommodate a variety of ages and activities. Amenities include:
  - Site furnishings (benches, tables, bike racks)
  - Picnic areas
  - Patios or courtyards
  - Gardens
  - Open lawn with trees
  - Play field
  - Special interest landscape
  - Pedestrian scale, bollard, or other accent lighting
  - Special paving, such as colored or stained concrete, stone, brick or other unit pavers
  - Public art
  - Water feature(s)
  - Sports courts such as tennis, basketball, or volleyball
  - The use of LID materials, if appropriate to the site conditions, is encouraged.



*(continued to next page)*

## COMMON SPACES / USABLE RECREATION AREAS

(continued)

Not allowed:

4. Rocks, pebbles, sand, and similar non-living materials may not be used as ground cover substitutes, but may be used as accent features provided such features do not exceed a maximum 5% of the total landscape area.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

5. Location of outdoor spaces should take advantage of sunlight.
6. Outdoor seating opportunities such as benches, seat walls, ledges, perches, boulders, artwork, etc. should be provided near building entries, along walkways, and other pedestrian routes outside of parking areas.
7. Garden elements, such as trellises, arbors, hanging baskets, site furniture, and container planting are encouraged within open spaces, along pedestrian circulation routes and to define building and/or residential entrances.
8. A minimum of 40% of the landscaped area should be planted with plants other than turf or lawn.
9. Perennials and/or annuals are encouraged to provide special interest and highlight pedestrian areas such as building and/or site entrances, public open space, plazas and major pedestrian connections.



## INDIVIDUAL OUTDOOR SPACES

### **Intent**

To provide outdoor space that encourages a sense of ownership by residents.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Outdoor spaces such as yards, decks, terraces, and patios shall be visually shielded from each other and delineated from the street. Shielding may consist of walls, fences, berms, hedges, and landscaping.
2. Outdoor spaces used to meet these standards shall not be located within required landscape buffer areas.
3. Outdoor spaces shall not be located adjacent to dumpster enclosures, loading/service areas, or other incompatible uses.



### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

4. Walls and fences used to define outdoor spaces should be a minimum of 42" high and with 75% visually permeable elements, such as open rails, ironwork, or trellis treatment to encourage interaction between neighbors.
5. Where landscape areas are provided, plant materials should be a mixture of deciduous and evergreen varieties. A minimum 20% of plant varieties shall provide interesting color, texture, aroma, and/or other special interest.
6. Planting areas should consider the use of natives where and when feasible.



## ROOF PITCH (MINIMUM / MAXIMUM)

### *Intent*

To maintain the residential scale and character of neighborhoods and to reduce visual bulk.

### *Standards*

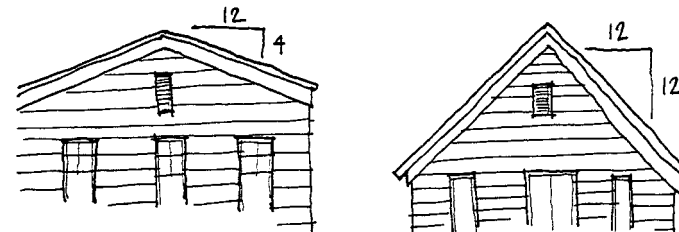
Required:

1. Structures shall incorporate pitched roof forms having slopes between 4:12 and 12:12.
2. Roof mounted mechanical equipment located on the exterior of the roof may be located within wells or pockets to preserve the visible rooflines. The mechanical well floor would not be subject to the slope requirement. However, in no event shall such roof mounted equipment project above the building's roof line.

### *Guidelines*

Encouraged:

3. Gables facing the street are encouraged.
4. Dormers should be used to break up long lengths of roof.



## WINDOWS

### **Intent**

To maintain a lively and active street face.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Windows shall be provided in façades facing streets, comprising at least 20% of the façade area.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

2. Windows should have visually prominent trim, at least 3" in width.
3. Other decorative window features are encouraged, such as:
  - a) arched window
  - b) mullions
  - c) awnings
  - d) flower box
4. A variety of window sizes and shapes that contribute to overall composition are also encouraged.



## ARTICULATION OF WALLS

### **Intent**

To provide visual variety along the street façade.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Buildings shall include articulation along the façades facing and visible from public rights-of-way. Flat blank walls are discouraged.
2. Horizontal façades longer than 30 ft shall be articulated into smaller units, reminiscent of the residential scale. At least two of the following methods shall be included:
  - a) distinctive roof forms
  - b) changes in materials
  - c) window patterns
  - d) color differentiation
  - e) recesses / offsets



## **BACKSIDES OF BUILDINGS**

### ***Intent***

To ensure that all sides of a building have visual interest.

### ***Standards***

Required:

1. Any side of the building visible from a street, public open space or alley shall be given architectural treatment using two or more of the following:
  - a) visible rooflines
  - b) windows
  - c) secondary entrances
  - d) balconies
  - e) architectural details mentioned under "Ground Level Details"
  - f) awnings



*Backside of multi-family development*

**Standards for  
Planned Residential Development (PRD) /  
Small Lot Development  
(outside the Historic District)**

## FRONT YARDS / ENTRANCES

### **Intent**

To provide separation between buildings and the public pedestrian realm where the front yard functions as usable outdoor space and provides a clear, welcoming, and safe entry for pedestrians from the sidewalk into the building.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Primary building entries shall be clearly identifiable and visible from the street, with well-defined walkways from pedestrian routes to building entries.
2. Landscaping shall screen undesirable elements such as views to adjacent commercial or industrial development, utility boxes, outdoor storage areas, and dumpsters.
3. Primary building entries shall face the street. If the doorway doesn't face the street, a clearly marked and well maintained walkway shall connect the entry to the sidewalk.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

4. Front yards should include an entrance sequence between the sidewalk and the building including elements such as, trellises, site furnishings, low hedges, landscaped borders, and special paving.
5. All landscape areas should include a wide range of plant materials including perennials and flowering shrubs. A minimum 40% of plant material used shall provide seasonal color or interest.
6. Accent lighting should be used to highlight special focal points, building/site entrances, public art and special landscape features.

7. Signage identifying building address should be visible from the street and public pedestrian walkway.



## INDIVIDUAL OUTDOOR SPACES

### **Intent**

To provide private, outdoor space as distinct from common spaces that encourages a sense of ownership by residents.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Outdoor spaces such as yards, decks, terraces, and patios shall be delineated from common space. Delineation may consist of walls, fences, berms, hedges, and landscaping.
2. Outdoor spaces used to meet these standards shall not be located within required landscape buffer areas.
3. Outdoor spaces shall not be located adjacent to dumpster enclosures, loading/service areas, or other incompatible uses.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

4. Walls, hedges, and fences used to define outdoor private spaces should be a minimum of 4 feet high and with 75% visually permeable elements, such as open rails, ironwork, or trellis treatment to encourage interaction between neighbors.
5. Where landscape areas are provided, plant materials shall be a mixture of deciduous and evergreen varieties. A minimum 20% of plant varieties shall provide year-round color, texture and/or other special interest.



## House Size in Relation to Lot Size

### **Intent**

To ensure that single family development with small lot sizes are not overbuilt.

### **Standards**

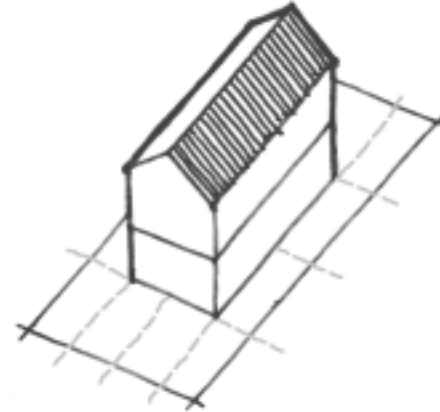
Required:

1. For PRDs with houses on individual lots, no structure shall exceed a Floor Area Ratio of .5

Floor Area Ratio is calculated by dividing the number of square feet within a building by the lot area.

The following are exempted from floor area calculations:

- Porches and decks open to the air.
- Basements, the height of which is at least 50% below grade.



Example of FAR .5

## ROOF PITCH (MINIMUM / MAXIMUM)

### Intent

To maintain the residential scale and character of neighborhoods.

### Standards

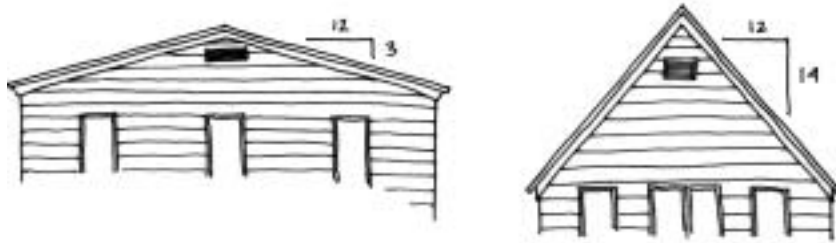
Required:

1. Structures shall incorporate pitched roof forms having slopes between 3:12 and 14:12 (not applicable to porches and dormers).

### Guidelines

Encouraged:

2. Gables facing the street are encouraged.
3. Dormers should be used to break up long lengths of roof.



## WINDOWS

### **Intent**

To maintain a lively and active street face.

### **Standards**

Required:

1. Windows shall be provided in façades facing streets, comprising at least 20% of the façade area.

### **Guidelines**

Encouraged:

2. Windows should have visually prominent trim, at least 3" in width.
3. Other decorative window features are encouraged, such as:
  - a) arched window
  - b) mullions
  - c) awnings
  - d) flower box
4. A variety of window sizes and shapes that contribute to overall composition are also encouraged.



## **ARTICULATION OF WALLS**

### ***Intent***

To provide visual variety along the street façade.

### ***Standards***

Required:

1. Buildings shall include articulation along the façades facing and visible from public rights-of-way. Flat blank walls are discouraged.
2. Horizontal façades longer than 30 ft shall be articulated into smaller units, reminiscent of the residential scale. At least two of the following methods shall be included:
  - a) distinctive roof forms
  - b) changes in materials
  - c) window patterns
  - d) color differentiation
  - e) recesses / offsets



## LOCATION OF GARAGES

### Intent

To ensure that garage doors do not dominate street-facing façades or overshadow pedestrian entryways.

### Standards

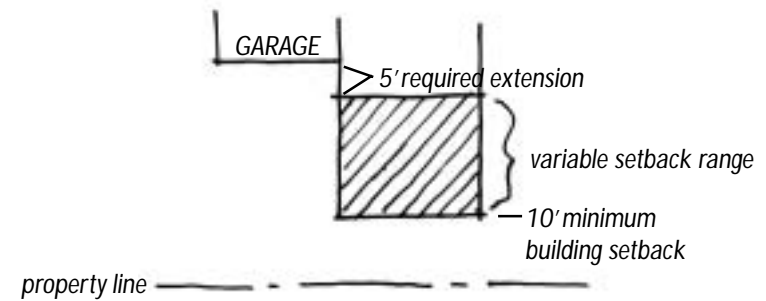
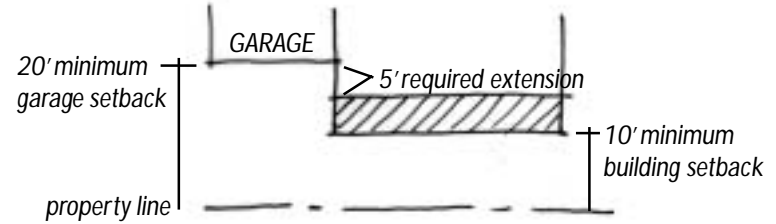
Required:

1. When garage doors are facing the street, they shall be set back at least 20 feet from the property line or sidewalk.
2. Building setbacks from the front lot line shall be a minimum of 10 feet.
3. Building floor area shall extend at least 5 feet closer to the front lot line than the face of the garage doors.
4. Where alleys exist, access to garages shall be off the alley.

### Guidelines

Encouraged:

5. When feasible, garages are to be located in rear.



Front-facing garages set back from street



Side garage accessed from shared driveway

## ***Review of Public Development Projects***

The design review of Public Development Projects including City Hall, Police, Parks, Public Works facilities, Fire District projects and School District projects as well as any other public facility development that is subject to City of Snohomish permit authority will be subject to the same Design Standards and Guidelines as any other development. Although the standards used for the review will be the same, the review of the project will be before the City Design Review Board.

**Art or Water Feature** - An historical, symbolic, or abstract sculpture or other form that may also incorporate water, which adds dimension to a public space.

**Artful** - A one-of-a-kind design that reflects the skills and talent of an artist, graphic designer, or other design professional.

**Belt course** - A horizontal band of masonry across the exterior of a building that stands out visually.

**Bollard** - A short post generally used in a series to define an area or block access by vehicles.

**Clerestory** - A continuous band of windows located just below the ceiling of a generally tall and important space.

**Cornice** - The molded and projecting horizontal piece at the crown of a building.

**Courtyard** - An open space enclosed partly or wholly by a building.

**Façade** - The front of a building, or any face that is given special architectural treatment.

**Forecourt** - An open court in front of a building.

**Green** - An open grassy space between buildings.

**Historic Building** - Constructed prior to 1920.

**Low Impact Development (LID)** - LID techniques, such as

- 1) Pervious paving, including but not limited to permeable concrete or unit pavers, porous asphalt, "grasscrete," and ecoblock;
- 2) Bioretention swales, cells or rain gardens;
- 3) Amending disturbed or compacted soils with compost to an increased depth (min. 12" depth) and adding composted mulch as top dressing; and
- 4) Rainwater cisterns, with use of rainwater to irrigate landscaping.

Use of LID techniques shall be guided by engineering analyses that include an in-depth site analysis using hydrology models, including infiltrative capacity of underlying soils, distance to groundwater, slope, natural drainage patterns, and other drainage, environmental, and public health considerations.

**Mixed Use** - Any development that contains at least two different land use categories (e.g. residential and retail). Furthermore, to qualify as mixed use, each separate use category must constitute at least \_\_\_% of the total floor area of the development.

**Mullion** - A slender vertical member that forms a division between units of a window, door, or screen or is used decoratively.

**Parapet** - Low wall along the edge of a roof.

**Plaza** - An open area usually located near urban buildings and often featuring walkways, trees and shrubs, places to sit, and sometimes shops.

**Plinth** - Base wall piece, such as a square block or base course.

**Portico** - Colonnaded porch entrance or covered walkway supported by evenly-spaced columns.

**Public Space** - Any of a variety of spaces that are accessible and usable by the general public, such as a plaza, green, courtyard, forecourt, sitting area, widened sidewalk, stormwater rain garden, and art or water feature.

**Site Furnishings, Permanent** - Seating, benches, trash receptacles, bollards, planters, drinking fountains, low-scale lighting and other such non-movable, year-round elements oriented to pedestrians. Tables and chairs that are moved in and out of establishments at night are not considered permanent site furnishings.

**Sitting Area** - An open area filled with low walls, benches, and/or tables and chairs.

**Small Lot Development** - Development that is not necessarily part of a Planned Residential Development, but where the lot sizes are less than 7,200 square feet in area.

**Stormwater Rain Garden** - Landscape areas that are designed as stormwater management facilities. These landscaped areas are made up of a specialized mix of plants that can tolerate seasonal wet and dry conditions, and soils that can rapidly absorb and store runoff. These facilities utilize complex relationships between plants and soils to filter pollutants, reduce runoff volume and rate of discharge, and promote groundwater recharge through infiltration. These areas are constructed with a specialized soil and plant mix that is attractive and has low maintenance requirements. Because of their flexibility in size, shape, and appearance, they can be installed on almost any type of land use, in a variety of conditions.

**“Vision” glass** - Architectural term for clear glass.

**Widened Sidewalk** - Space created adjacent to the public sidewalk in which pedestrians may easily linger.