



# **Yolo County**

**COMMERCIAL**

# **Design Guidelines**

**YOLO COUNTY DESIGN GUIDELINES**

# YOLO COUNTY: Commercial Design Guidelines

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. APPLICABILITY**

The design guidelines in this section apply to uses allowed in the Neighborhood Commercial (C-1), Community Commercial (C-2), General Commercial (C-3), and Highway Service Commercial (C-H) zone districts within the unincorporated area of Yolo County. Examples of the types of uses the guidelines are intended to apply to include, but are not limited to:

- Retail/Mercantile
- Hotels
- Business, Professional, and Medical Offices
- Restaurants and Food Services
- Personal Services
- Grocery Stores
- Movie Theatres
- Big Box Retail

These guidelines are advisory and are intended to augment, but not conflict with, applicable zoning regulations and General Plan policies. In some cases, the guidelines support policies in the Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan that may require specific design features. Where appropriate, the applicable General Plan Policy will be cited. Applicants are advised to consult with Yolo County Environmental Health and the local fire district to ensure project design does not conflict with any applicable standards or emergency requirements.

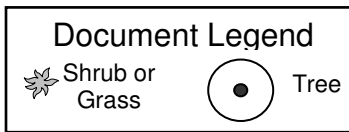
## **B. ORGANIZATION**

This document separates commercial design into two main categories: site design and building design. Subtopics are addressed within each of these categories. Each subtopic begins with a guiding design principle and is supported by specific design guidelines. Visuals are provided for clarification and illustration. A short section on how to incorporate commercial specific sustainable building practices is provided at the end of this document.

## **C. CREATIVE DESIGN**

The graphics, examples, and illustrations provided in this document are conceptual and intended to inspire design professionals and promote quality design. In order to provide visually appealing commercial projects in Yolo County, which allow for a variety of uses and create economic vitality, innovative design concepts are encouraged. Design elements should compliment and enhance surrounding development in terms of scale, mass, detailing, and building patterns. New development should respond to the traditional development and architectural patterns of the region.

Though these guidelines are advisory, they reflect a strong commitment by the county to create commercial projects that are attractive and people-friendly, and that add to the communities in which they locate. They are the standard to which projects will be evaluated. We recognize that for many projects not all of these guidelines can be met, whether due to parcel size or configuration, interference with the efficient use of the site for its intended purpose, cost constraints, etc. In such cases, County staff is available to discuss these constraints with project proponents as early in the design process as possible. In this way, the spirit and intent of these guidelines can be met while guaranteeing the most effective use of private and public resources during design, review and approval, construction, and subsequent operations.



## **II. SITE DESIGN AND RELATION TO SURROUNDING AREAS**

### **A. GENERAL SITE DESIGN**

**1. ORIENTATION AND PLACEMENT OF BUILT ELEMENTS:** Orient buildings, parking areas, and commercial accessory areas to provide for connectivity, a pleasant pedestrian environment, and a functional use of land that promotes pedestrian activity and economic vitality. Supports the following General Plan Policies:

Community Character Policies CC-2.4, CC-2.5, CC-2.7, and CC-2.8 emphasize the need for retail, service and employment opportunities to locate within a downtown and/or neighborhood center in order to support commercial uses, create pedestrian travel, and provide for a diversity of retail uses.

Community Character Policy CC 4.23: *Except for approved plazas, seating areas and entry nooks, buildings in downtown areas shall have zero front setbacks and on-site parking shall be to the rear of the lot.*

Economic Development Policy ED-3.1: *Create a vibrant mix of residential development, retail and other commercial services, employment opportunities, governmental services, restaurants, entertainment and cultural/recreational opportunities in downtowns.*

Economic Development Policy ED-3.6: *Encourage the development of retail establishments that will reduce resident spending outside the county for retail purchases, services and entertainment.*

Health and Safety Policy HS-8.1: *Require community design that provides opportunities for safe, healthy, and easily accessible community interaction.*

#### a. COORDINATION AND ACCESS

**C.G.1: Coordination with Adjoining Parcels:** Coordinate site design with neighboring parcels to increase the overall connectivity of the area. This includes shared parking and circulation systems; shared bicycle, pedestrian and vehicle access points; and shared trash collection, recycling, and delivery areas. (Figs. 3 & 5)

**C.G.2: Pedestrian Access:** Shopping center design should encourage walking by providing landscaping, walkways, and pedestrian access points that do not exist for cars. (Figs. 1 & 4)

**C.G.3: On-Site Access:** Orient new buildings to promote pedestrian access between neighboring businesses and retain attractive grounds and/or outdoor spaces. (Figs. 4 & 5)

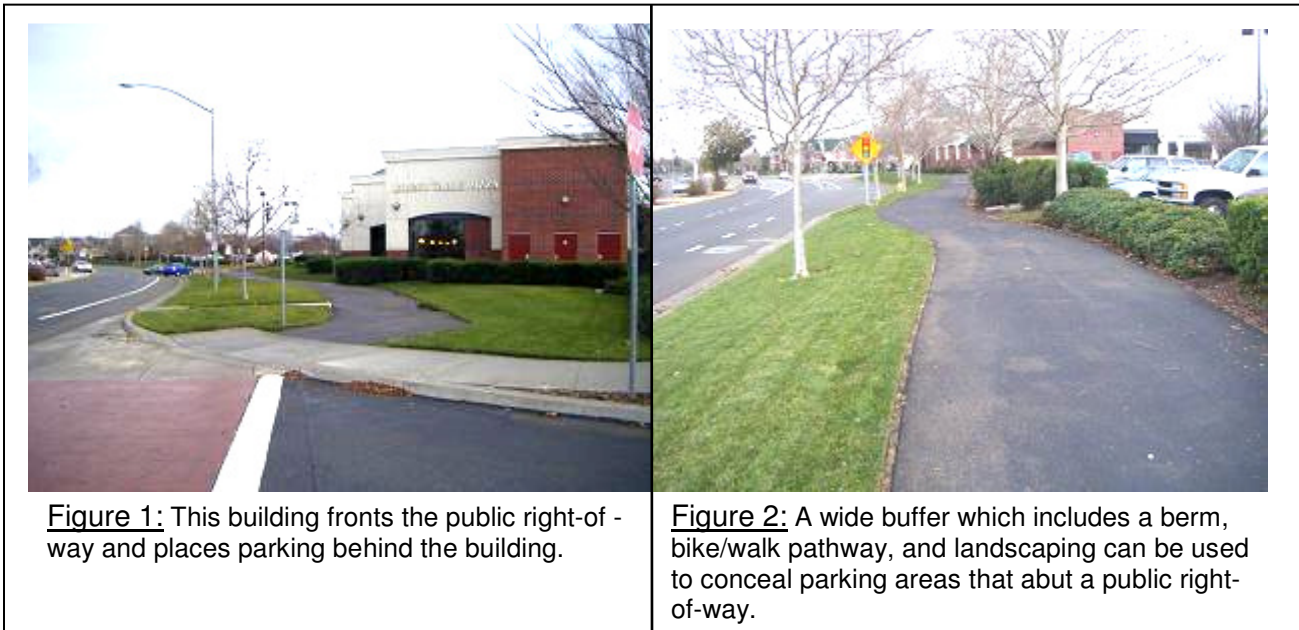
#### b. BUILDING PLACEMENT

**C.G.4: Building Placement:** Align buildings to the public right-of-way to provide a storefront character to the street. Primary entrances should face the street, with clearly defined pedestrian zones that will enhance the vibrancy of the commercial area, facilitate access to other buildings, slow traffic down, and alleviate views of large expanses of paved parking areas. (Figs. 1 & 5).

**C.G.5: Passive Solar:** When feasible, orient buildings in a manner that utilizes passive solar energy to reduce heating and cooling loads.

**C.G.6: Unsightly Uses:** Locate loading and storage areas on the side or rear of the site when the project abuts a public right-of-way. (Figs. 5 & 13)

**C.G.7: Drive-Through Facilities:** Drive-through facilities should not face a public right-of-way.



### c. PARKING AREAS

**C.G.8: Parking Entrances:** Parking lot location should be clearly indicated to motorists with clearly defined entrances through the use of distinctive landscaping, signage or other prominent features. Such features shall not block line-of-sight for vehicles entering or leaving the site.

**C.G.9: Parking Lots:** Screen parking lots from view of the public right-of-way and orient to the rear or center of the development. (Figs. 1, 3 & 5)

**C.G.10: Parking Buffers:** Provide a visual buffer that includes features such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, landscaping, and/or berms where parking abuts a public right-of-way. Landscape screening for surface parking areas is strongly recommended. (Fig. 2)

### d. TRASH ENCLOSURES

**C.G.11: Collection Areas:** Locate outdoor storage, trash collection and loading areas away from public access areas without interference of circulation routes. (Figs. 5 & 13)

**C.G.12: Recycled Materials:** Trash collection enclosures should include adequate space for recycled materials containers. (Figs. 5 & 23)

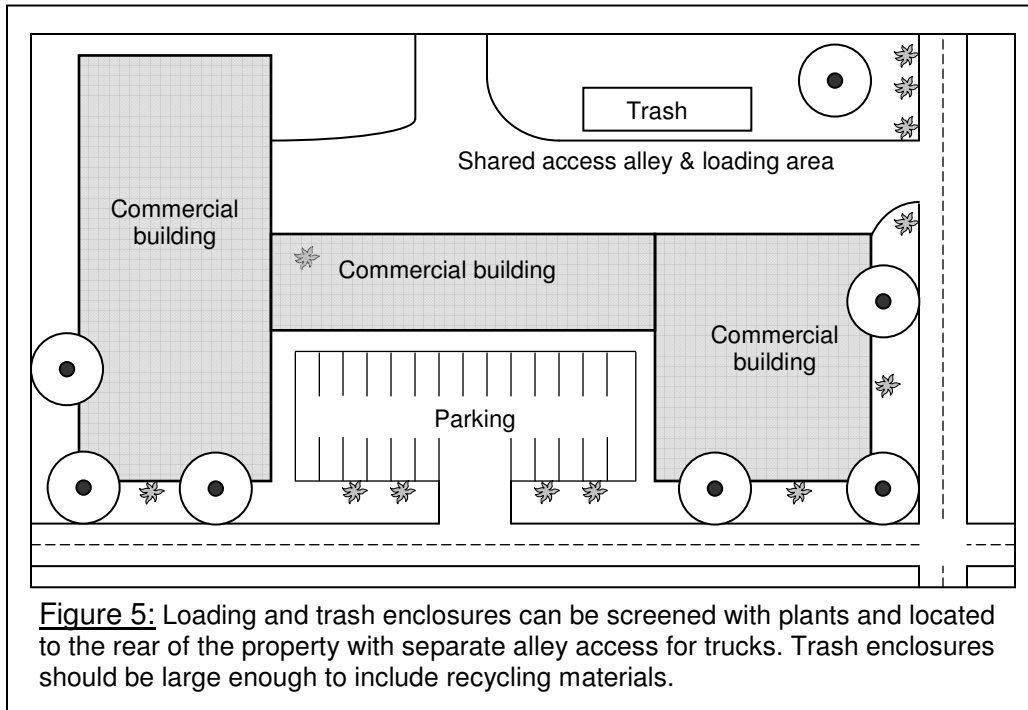
**C.G.13: Enclosure Access:** Trash and recycling enclosures should be adequately sized and concealed, and located in an area that is convenient for tenant and employee access. The enclosures should not block parking spaces, or interfere with parking lot circulation and emergency access. (Figs. 5, 13 & 23)



**Figure 3:** This parking lot is located behind the shopping center in Figure 4. The pedestrian crossing pavement is lighter and of a different texture than the asphalt.



**Figure 4:** The pathway leading from this shopping center extends to a heavily trafficked street with additional commercial businesses. The path makes it easier for shoppers to walk to nearby businesses. The pathway is made of pervious material, allowing water to reabsorb into the water table.



**Figure 5:** Loading and trash enclosures can be screened with plants and located to the rear of the property with separate alley access for trucks. Trash enclosures should be large enough to include recycling materials.

**2. EXTERIOR SCALE:** Exterior areas should be scaled in such a way as to invite pedestrian traffic. Use of public amenities shall not interfere with access to fire department connections. Supports the following General Plan policies:

**Community Character Policy CC-4.15:** *Reflect a human scale in architecture that is sensitive, compatible and distinctive to both the site and the community.*

Community Character Policy CC-4.24: Usable public open spaces shall be included in new private commercial development, such as plazas, interior courtyards connected by pathways and outdoor seating areas.

Community Character Policy CC-4.25: Incorporate art into the public open spaces of both public and private developments.

**C.G.14: Vibrant Outdoor Areas:** Outdoor features such as plazas, courtyards, fountains, outdoor vendors, public art displays, and restaurants with outdoor seating are encouraged in order to draw people to the area. (Figs. 6, 7, 8, & 9)

**C.G.15: Gathering Places:** Use of street furniture and pedestrian scaled building elements are encouraged to provide informal gathering places for socializing, resting, and enjoying the community's commercial areas. (Figs. 7, 8, 9 & 10)

**C.G.16: Windows:** Stores should have large windows that allow a full view into the store to provide a more open and inviting feel. Windows should cover 40-75% of the wall fronting the predominant public view. (Fig. 10)

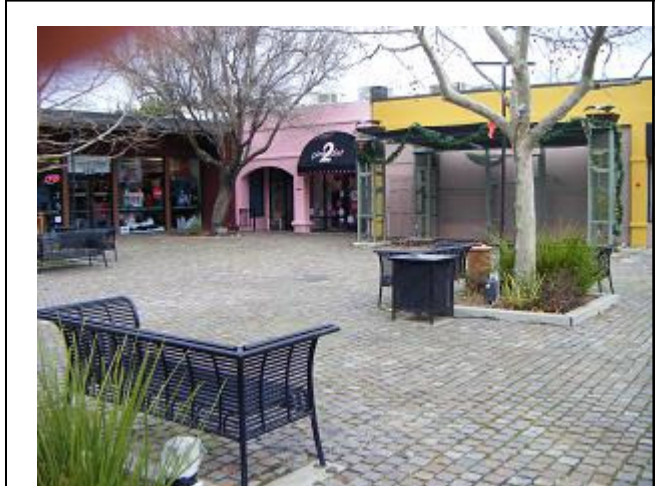
**C.G.17: Central Areas:** Design large shopping areas or complexes to draw pedestrians to the center by using design elements such as large pathways or courtyards leading to the center, with view corridors allowing people to see inner shops. (Fig. 6)



Figure 6: The fountain at the end of the corridor makes it inviting for people to enter the area.



**Figure 7:** This fountain and seating area create an inviting feel. The shade structure, vines, and umbrellas provide protection from sun and rain.



**Figure 8:** Street furniture in this plaza provides a place for people to eat or relax.



**Figure 9:** The water feature and outdoor seating area provide a comfortable place for shoppers to relax and a space for casual social interaction.





**Figure 10:** Large windows on this storefront provide an open and inviting feel. Pedestrian scaled design elements, such as planters and canopies, make the building pedestrian friendly.

**3. PATHS OF TRAVEL AND ACCESS:** Provide safe, efficient, and inviting paths of travel and access for all forms of transportation, including pedestrians and emergency vehicles. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Circulation Policy CI-2.4: *The comfort, convenience, and safety of bicyclists and pedestrians are as important as, and should be balanced to the greatest feasible extent with, those same values for drivers.*

Circulation Policy CI-3.8 encourages development that is compact, so as to promote the efficient use of existing transportation facilities.

Circulation Policy CI-3.15 provides for greater street connectivity and efficient movement of all transportation modes.

Circulation Policy CI-3.18: *Ensure adequate access for emergency vehicles.*

Circulation Policy CI-5.5: *Integrate bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities into new developments.*

Circulation Policy CI-5.16: *Construct and maintain bikeways and sidewalks in a manner that minimizes conflicts between bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists.*

#### a. NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

**C.G.18: Pedestrian Pathways:** Cluster commercial buildings along pedestrian paths to encourage foot traffic between businesses. The pedestrian paths should be safe and inviting with clearly defined crosswalks. (Figs. 4, 6 & 10)

**C.G.19: Pathway Width:** Pathways should be a minimum of 5 feet wide with additional landscaped space on one or more sides to allow for easy passage. (Figs. 1, 2 & 4)

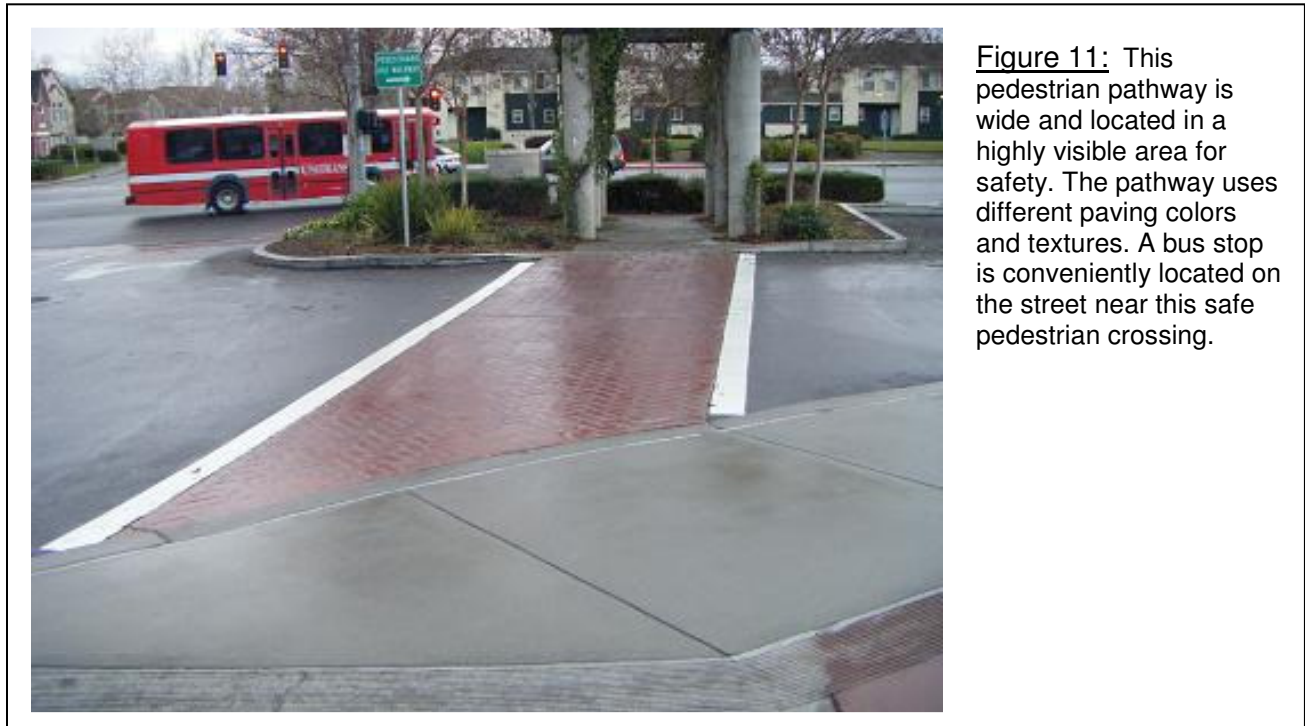
**C.G.20: Visibility:** Locate pathways in highly visible areas of the site to enhance safety and accessibility. (Figs. 3 & 4)

**C.G.21: Paving Treatments:** Sidewalks with special paving treatments such as pavers or stamped, colored concrete are encouraged to invite pedestrian activity. (Figs. 3 & 11)

**C.G.22: Transit Access:** When a transit stop exists in close proximity to a new commercial building or development, provide a safe walkway from the transit stop to the place of business. (Fig. 11)

**C.G.23: Vehicle to Building Access:** Pedestrians should be able to walk a direct route from their vehicle to a commercial establishment without traversing the parking lot. (Fig. 5)

**C.G.24: ADA Access:** Locate the primary building entrance for ADA access within proximity to ADA accessible parking and the sidewalk.



#### b. MOTORIZED VEHICLES

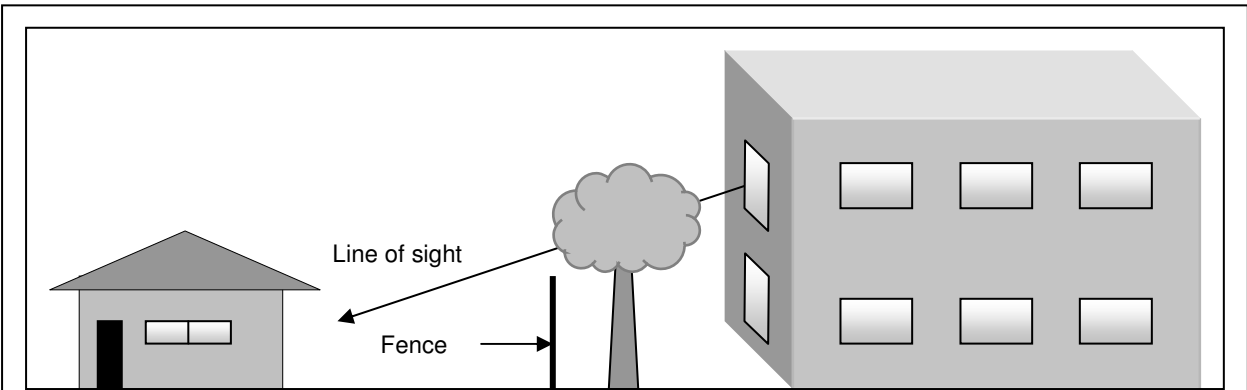
**C.G.25: Driveway Location:** Coordinate driveways with existing or planned median openings and locate at a reasonable distance from intersections in accordance with County Improvement Standards. (Fig. 5)

**C.G.26: Shared Driveways:** Limit the number of driveways, entrances, and exits and share with neighboring properties when possible. (Fig. 5)

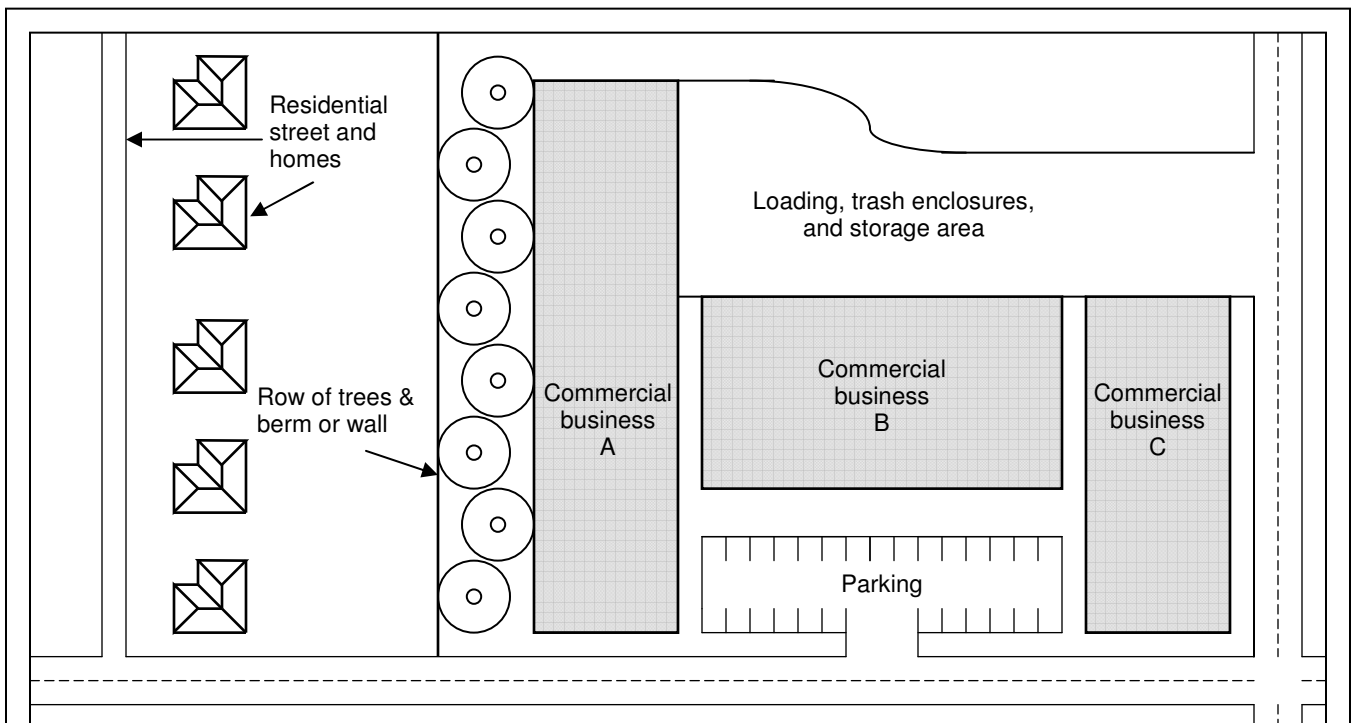
**4. COMPATIBILITY WITH RESIDENTIAL ZONES:** Commercial areas that border residential areas should include design elements that mitigate for any potential nuisance the commercial area may impose on the residential area. Access to all fire department connections shall be ensured. Supports Community Character Policy CC-4.29: Provide appropriate buffers or barriers between incompatible residential and non-residential uses. The last-built use shall be responsible for design and construction (and/or other related costs) of the buffer/barrier.

**C.G.27: Buffers:** Utilize landscaping, berms, and building orientation to buffer commercial areas from residential areas. (Figs. 12 & 13)

**C.G.28: Collection Areas:** Locate loading areas, driveways, trash enclosures, and storage areas as far as possible from existing residences. (Fig. 13)



**Figure 12:** An evergreen tree can shield the line of sight from a second story window of a commercial building to a neighboring residence when a fence is not tall enough to provide coverage.



**Figure 13:** Loading, trash enclosures, and storage areas should be shared between businesses and located away from residential areas. Berms or walls, as well as a row of trees between commercial and residential areas, provide buffering opportunities.

**5. PRESERVATION OF NATURAL LANDSCAPE FEATURES:** Preserve and restore existing site amenities such as wetlands, waterways, plant and animal habitats, and culturally significant

landscapes, when feasible, in order to maintain a healthy ecosystem. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Community Character Policy CC-1.5: *Significant site features, such as trees, water courses, rock outcroppings, historic structures and scenic views shall be used to guide site planning and design in new development. Where possible, these features shall become focal points of the development.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.1: *Consider and maintain the ecological function of landscapes, connecting features, watersheds, and wildlife movement corridors.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.3 encourages the preservation and enhancement of those biological communities that contribute to the county's rich biodiversity.

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.9: *Protect riparian corridors to maintain and balance wildlife values.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.10: *Encourage the restoration of native habitat.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.11: *Ensure that open space buffers are provided between sensitive habitat and planned development.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.22: *Prohibit development within a minimum of 100 feet from the top of banks for all lakes, perennial ponds, rivers, creeks, sloughs, and perennial streams. The setback will allow for fire and flood protection, a natural riparian corridor (or wetland vegetation), a planned recreational trail where applicable, and vegetated landscape for storm water to pass through before it enters the water body. Exceptions to this action include irrigation pumps, roads and bridges, levees, docks, boat ramps, and similar uses.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.31: *Protect and enhance streams, channels, seasonal and permanent marshland, wetlands, sloughs, riparian habitat and vernal pools in land planning and community design.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-4.1: *Identify and safeguard important cultural resources.*

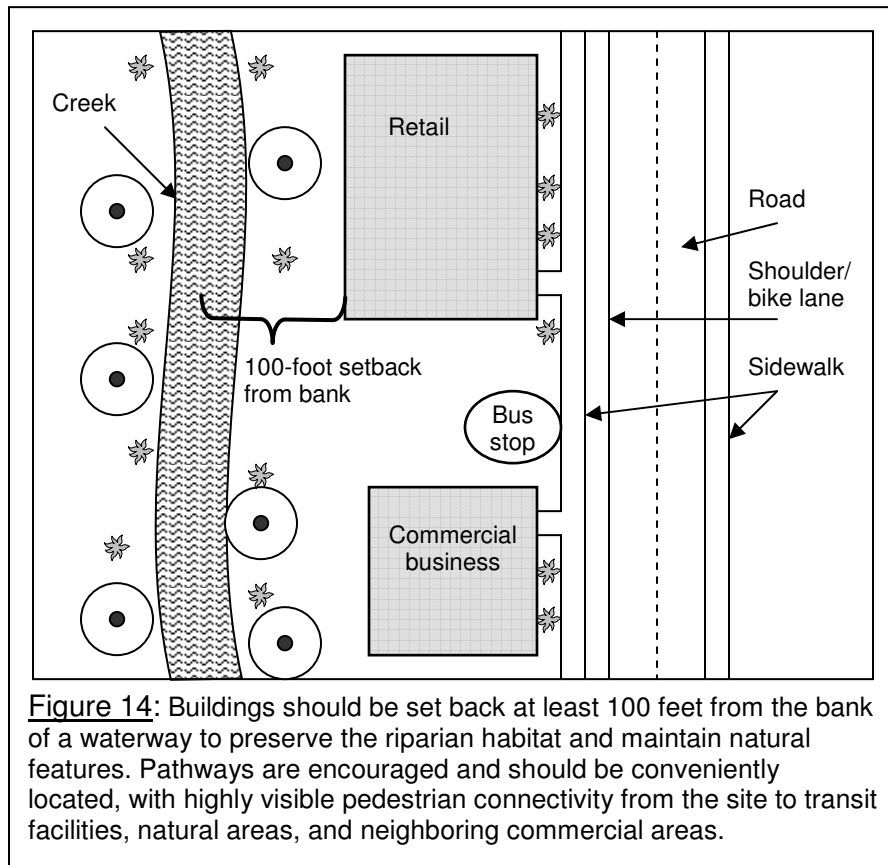
**C.G.29: Habitat Preservation:** Preserve significant areas of habitat and native vegetation in order to maintain the local ecosystem. (Fig. 14)

**C.G.30: Character Preservation:** Preserve culturally significant landscapes, such as scenic view sheds and landscapes of historical significance, in order to maintain the local character of the area. (Fig. 14)

**C.G.31: Site Amenity Preservation:** Use natural site amenities such as pathways, views, mature trees, riparian corridors, and parks to enhance the design of new projects. (Fig. 14)

**C.G.32: Riparian Preservation:** Site design and orientation should maintain, preserve, and when possible, restore any riparian vegetation and corridor areas. Maintain riparian corridors as open space features in any new commercial development. (Fig. 14)

**C.G.33: Access to Natural Areas:** The design and orientation of parcels should encourage the use of natural areas. (Fig. 14)



## **B. PARKING**

**1. LOT ORIENTATION:** Design parking lots so that nearby parking, and safe pedestrian and vehicular circulation, is provided in an efficient manner. Pedestrians should be able to move safely from their vehicles to the building. Access to all fire department connections shall be ensured.

**C.G.34: Location:** Locate off-street parking behind frontage buildings whenever possible. Parking in front of existing buildings is discouraged. (Fig. 3)

**C.G.35: Lot Sharing:** Owners of adjoining properties should share parking facilities to reduce the amount of land consumed by parking lots. (Figs. 3, 5 & 13)

**C.G.36: Traffic Dispersal:** Parking lots should have more than one entrance and be designed in a manner that disperses automotive traffic throughout the site.

**C.G.37: Circulation:** Parking lot circulation routes and parking areas should be distinct, with circulation routes having direct access to parking aisles and parking aisles having direct access to parking spaces. (Fig. 3)

**C.G.38: Pedestrian Access:** Design parking areas to accommodate safe pedestrian access between buildings, between public right-of-ways and building entrances, and between parking lots and building entrances. Pedestrian pathways can be defined by use of distinctive paving colors or patterns, or textured paving that is different from vehicle drive aisles. (Figs. 3 & 11)

**C.G.39: Visual Obstructions:** Strategically place large structures, such as drive up ATM buildings and wide pillars or trellises, so they do not impair the driver's line of sight within a parking lot or at connections to the street.

**C.G.40: Driveway Landscaping:** Parking lot entrances/exits should have low landscaping on both sides to provide a clear line of sight. (Fig. 15)



**Figure 15:** This parking lot entrance has low landscaping on both sides in order to maintain a clear line of sight. The sign is set back so that it does not obstruct visibility.

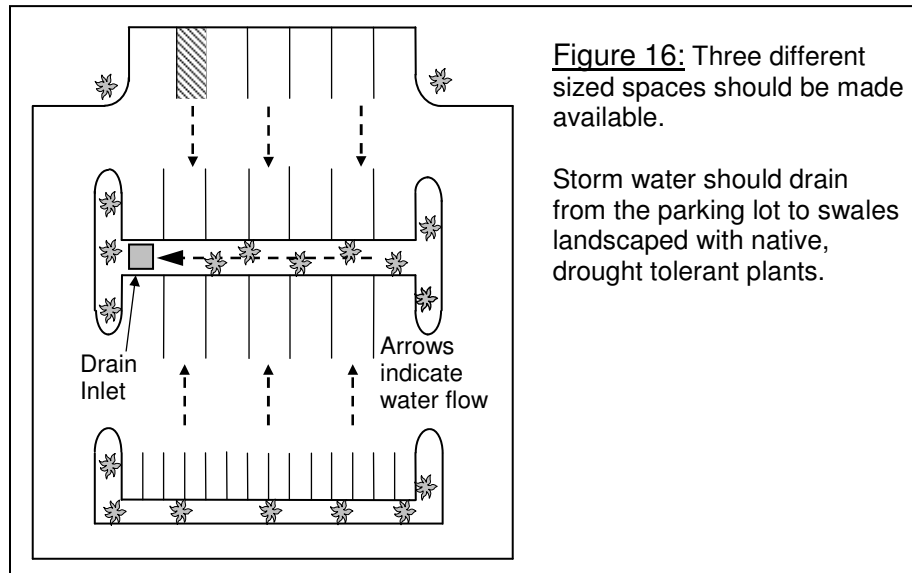
**2. PARKING SPACES:** Provide an adequate number of parking spaces that are clearly labeled and reasonably sized, according to individual uses and vehicle parking demand.

**C.G.41: Shared Parking Spaces:** Consider shared parking (parking spaces used by different users at different times of the day) to avoid an excess of parking spaces.

**C.G.42: Defined Parking:** Clearly paint stripe parking areas to show the planned circulation and parking pattern.

**C.G.43: Parking Space Sizes:** Provide at least three different sized parking spaces to accommodate a variety of automobile sizes and driver needs. These spaces should provide for

compact, traditional size, and ADA van access. Parking space sizes shall comply with Article 25 of the Yolo County Code. (Fig. 16)



**3. DELIVERY AND LOADING AREAS:** Design adequately sized and safe delivery areas with efficiency. Ensure access to all fire department connections.

**C.G.44: Truck Maneuvering:** There should be adequate maneuvering space for delivery trucks. Deliveries should not encroach on parking spaces or any public right-of-way. (Figs. 5 & 13)

**C.G.45: Loading Areas:** Loading areas should maintain clear access without interfering with pedestrian and vehicular circulation. (Figs. 5 & 13)

**C.G.46: Shared Loading Areas:** Two or more businesses should utilize common loading areas to reduce excessive paving. (Figs. 5 & 13)

**4. SHADE AND LANDSCAPING IN PARKING LOTS:** Use shade trees and attractive landscaping in parking lots for the dual purpose of reducing “heat island effect” and providing a visually appealing and pleasant environment. Landscaping should not obscure or interfere with any fire hydrants or fire department connections. Consult with Yolo County Environmental Health if landscaping within a leach field area. See Appendix A *General Landscaping Design Guidelines and Plant Selection Grid* for information regarding plant species. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Community Character Policy CC-4.8: *Require measures to minimize “heat islands” by requiring light-colored and reflective roofing materials and paint; “green” roofs; light colored roads and parking lots; extensive numbers of shade trees in parking lots; and shade trees and/or overhangs on the south and west sides of new or renovated buildings.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-7.5: *Require all new parking lots to significantly increase shading to relieve the potential for “heat islands.”*

**C.G.47: Minimize Heat:** Landscape parking lots with shade trees or other shading devices in order to cool large expanses of paved area. Incorporate the use of lighter colored paving materials, when feasible.

**C.G.48: Shade Trees:** Landscape parking lots so that within 10 years, 50% of the total parking area will be shaded. Evenly space and disperse parking lot trees over the entire parking area, and install an irrigation system that is designed for efficient water usage. Each parking lot tree should have a curbed tree well of sufficient depth and overhang distance to prevent tree damage from vehicle bumpers.

**C.G.49: Landscaped Islands:** Landscaped islands should create separate “pods” of parking that provide breaks in the paved area. (Fig. 16)

**5. SURFACE RUNOFF:** Site design should mitigate for potentially adverse environmental effects of storm water runoff by minimizing impermeable surfaces and allowing groundwater recharge where feasible. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Public Facilities and Services Policy PF-2.1: *Improve storm water runoff quality and reduce impacts to groundwater and surface water resources.*

Public Facilities and Services Policy PF-2.4: *Encourage sustainable practices for storm water management that provide for groundwater recharge and/or improve the quality of runoff through biological filtering and environmental restoration.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-5.17: *Require new development to be designed such that nitrates, lawn chemicals, oil, and other pollutants of concern do not impair groundwater quality.*

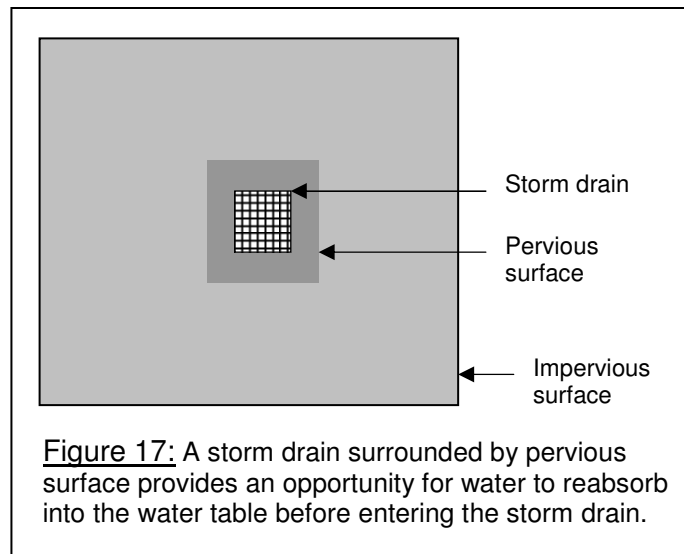
**C.G.50: Parking Lot Swales:** Utilize swales and planters to capture storm water runoff in strategic locations of the parking lot and other paved areas for re-absorption into the ground. (Fig. 16)

**C.G.51: Pervious Materials:** Construct parking lots, walkways, and other paved areas with pervious materials, to the maximum extent possible, to allow for storm water infiltration. Pervious materials should only be considered where unpolluted storm water is disposed. Pervious materials or ground disposal may not be suitable for commercial facilities where pollutants might impact groundwater. (Figs. 4, 8 & 17)

**C.G.52: Pervious Surfaces:** If pervious surfaces are used, load bearing capacity must meet the heaviest anticipated use, including emergency vehicles.

**C.G.53: Roof Runoff:** Drain roof runoff from buildings to a swale, or retain and use for landscape irrigation, where feasible.





## **C. LANDSCAPING**

**1. SCREENING:** Use landscape screening to hide unsightly areas without blocking the line of sight for drivers. Landscaping should not obstruct or interfere with any fire hydrants or fire department connections. Consult with Yolo County Environmental Health if landscaping within a leach field area. See Appendix A for information regarding plant species. Supports Community Character Policy CC-1.8: *Screen visually obtrusive activities and facilities such as infrastructure and utility facilities, storage yards, outdoor parking and display areas, along highways, freeways, roads and trails.*

**C.G.54: Areas to Screen:** Screen and enclose outdoor storage, trash collection and delivery areas so they are out of public view. (Fig. 23)

**C.G.55: Plants for Screening:** Use landscape features such as vines or hedges to hide unsightly areas.

**C.G.56: Line of Sight:** Screening shall maintain the line of sight for drivers entering, leaving, or driving through the site.

**C.G.57: Neighboring Residential Screening:** Screen windows that allow a direct line of sight into neighboring residential areas with appropriate plants or building materials to ensure the privacy of the neighboring areas. (Figs. 12 & 13)

**C.G.58: Drive-Through Facilities:** Screen stacking areas for vehicles in drive-through facilities from public view.

**2. INTEGRATION WITH AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE SURROUNDING AREA:** Design new landscaping in a way that uses water efficiently while providing aesthetic and environmental benefits. Supports the following General Plan policies:

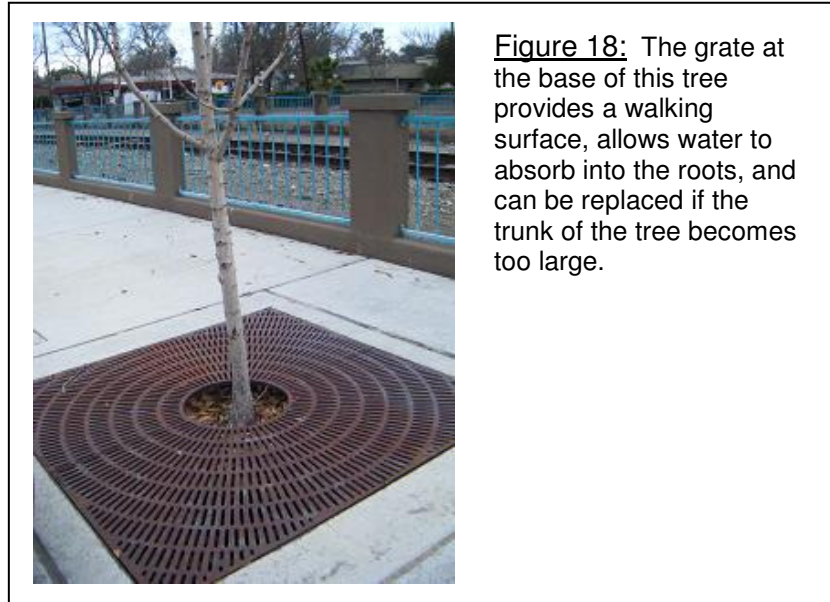
Community Character Policy CC-4.32: *Emphasize the use of regionally native drought-tolerant plants for landscaping where appropriate.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-1.22: *Emphasize the use of native grasses, shrubs and trees as the primary focus of landscaping within resource parks and other open spaces.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.16: *Existing native vegetation shall be conserved where possible and integrated into new development if appropriate.*

**C.G.59: Trees:** Retain existing large trees and plant new drought tolerant, native trees to improve air quality, provide shade, and create buffers. See Appendix A for information regarding native and drought tolerant plant species. (Fig. 14)

**C.G.60: Tree Grates:** Trees that are planted within pedestrian areas should have replaceable grates around the base of the tree to provide a walking surface and room for the tree to grow. (Fig. 18)



## **D. OUTDOOR AND ACCESSORY SPACES**

**1. SHOPPERS, PEDESTRIANS AND EMPLOYEES:** Provide pleasant outdoor areas for shoppers, pedestrians and employees through the integration of creative design elements, without limiting emergency access. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Community Character Policy CC-4.15: *Reflect a human scale in architecture that is sensitive, compatible and distinctive to both the site and the community.*

Community Character Policy CC-4.24: *Usable public open spaces shall be included in new private commercial development, such as plazas, interior courtyards connected by pathways and outdoor seating areas.*

**C.G.61: Shade:** Natural tree canopies or awnings should adequately cover outdoor seating areas and walkways to protect people from sun and rain. (Figs. 7 & 20)

**C.G.62: Vibrant Outdoor Areas:** Vibrant and welcoming outdoor areas should feature art, street furniture, and landscaping that compliment a building's setting. Place these elements along the sidewalk to provide a place for casual social interaction. (Figs. 7, 8, 9 & 19)

**C.G.63: Seating:** Provide multiple seating opportunities throughout commercial areas and shopping centers. (Figs. 7, 8, 9, 19 & 20)

**C.G.64: Outdoor Eating Areas:** Locate attractive and inviting outdoor eating areas near restaurants and coffee shops. (Figs. 8, 9, 19 & 20)

**C.G.65: Amenity Access:** Outdoor areas such as plazas and courtyards should be adjacent to sidewalks that lead to other close amenities, such as stores, restaurants, or natural areas to promote pedestrian activity. (Fig. 4)



**2. SAFETY:** Create defensible spaces for pedestrian safety. Supports Community Character Policy CC-4.14: Enhance public safety through implementation of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies. These include designing the placement of activities and physical features, such as buildings, entrances and exits, corridors, fences, pavement, signs, lighting and landscaping, in such a way as to clearly define public and private space, maximize visibility, control access and circulation and foster positive social interaction.

**C.G.66: Avoid Seclusion:** Avoid creating secluded areas that cannot easily be observed from the parking lot, road, or other accessible locations.

**C.G.67: Line of Sight:** Arrange buildings, plants, and design elements in a way that allows for a clear line of sight down all walkways. (Figs. 7, 8, 11 & 20)

**C.G.68: ATM Visibility:** Locate ATMs in highly visible and well-lit locations.



**Figure 20:** The vines covering this walkway protect customers from sun and rain, but the area is still highly visible to the street and the parking lot for safety. Outdoor seating is available adjacent to the lawn.

## **E. SIGNAGE**

For specific information on signage and sign regulations, refer to the County's Sign Ordinance in the County Code (Section 8-2.2406).

**1. AESTHETIC CHARACTER OF COMMERCIAL SIGNS:** Use attractive signage to enhance architectural design and entice visitors to a commercial center.

**C.G.69: Placement:** Place signs so they emphasize the design elements of a building's façade.

**C.G.70: Design:** Use signs that compliment the building style, convey the character of the business, and are easy to read.

**C.G.71: Walkway Clearance:** Signs that extend over walkways should maintain an 8' clearance.

**C.G.72: Window Coverage:** Window signs should cover no more than 10% of the window space.

**C.G.73: Prohibited Signs:** Refer to County Code Section 8-2.2406 for sign regulations.

Signs that are prohibited include:

- general advertising signs along freeways
- abandoned signs
- signs illuminated with neon
- signs with strobe or flashing lights
- signs that move or make noise
- roof signs
- signs that may mislead or confuse pedestrian or vehicular traffic
- signs on a natural feature such as a rock or tree
- portable signs

## **F. LIGHTING**

**1. ORIENTATION AND BRIGHTNESS:** Areas should be well lit without affecting neighboring lots.

**C.G.74: Safety:** Provide lighting in all public spaces, including parking areas, entries, gathering spaces and walkways. This lighting should enhance safety of movement for cars and pedestrians.

**C.G.75: Color Rendition:** Lighting type should allow good color rendition for adequate visual recognition.

**C.G.76: Light Pollution:** All building and site lighting should be hooded, equipped with appropriate shields, and directed to the intended area of illumination to minimize off-site light spillage onto adjacent roadways, neighboring parcels, and the night sky.

**C.G.77: Placement:** Outdoor light fixtures should be low intensity and placed as low as possible to provide adequate light and coverage, but never higher than twenty feet (20').

## **III. BUILDING DESIGN**

### **A. BUILDING MASS AND SCALE**

**1. MASS:** Building height, width and depth create visual building mass. Design building mass to provide a distinctive edge to the streetscape and compliment the existing architectural pattern of the area.

**C.G.78: Visual Reduction of Mass:** Manage building mass by using one or more methods, including landscape features that soften edges or create interesting lines; recessing a second floor over the first floor; using horizontal or vertical offsets in wall surfaces; varying facades on long expanses of building; strategic placement of large potted plants; and/or articulating design details or awnings around doors and windows. (Figs. 21 & 22)

**C.G.79: Rooftop Equipment:** Conceal rooftop equipment by using compatible architectural features of the primary structure. (Fig. 22)

**C.G.80: Recess Large Businesses:** Slightly recess anchor businesses, such as large grocery stores, big box stores, and movie theatres, from the street. Place smaller stores along the street to break up large expanses of wall and provide a pedestrian friendly environment.

**C.G.81: Articulation of Blank Walls:** Vary blank walls along the length of the building. Articulation methods may include a change in texture, color, or material; public art displays; landscaped planters; fountains; offsets; window and entry placement; or other varied design details.

**C.G.82: Landscaping:** When large blank walls are unavoidable they should be softened with landscaping features such as planters, vines and trellises.

**2. SCALE:** The proportion of a new building's features should be relative to the surrounding buildings' features to create balance.

**C.G.83: Size:** The scale of new buildings should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. (Fig. 21)

**C.G.84: Varied Facades:** Articulate and vary exterior facades to reduce the scale and uniformity of large commercial buildings such as grocery stores and big box retailers. The use of eaves, columns, pilasters, cornices, windows and window coverings, canopies, fascia and roofs should be proportionate with the primary building. (Fig. 22)

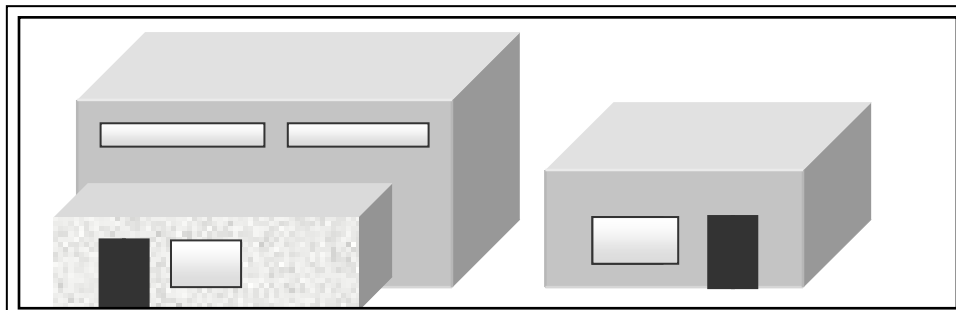


Figure 21: Varying the façade visually reduces the new, larger building's size.

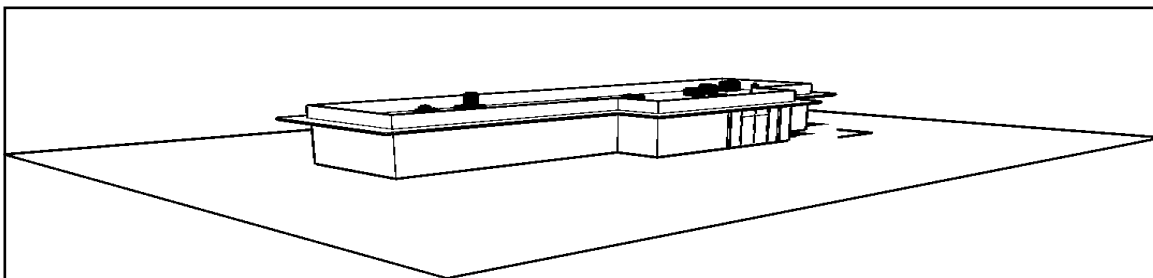


Figure 22: This building emphasizes use of architectural features such as an articulated façade, prominent front doors, concealed roof equipment, and an overhang that runs the perimeter of the building.

## **B. ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES**

**1. BUILDING DESIGN, MATERIALS, AND FINISHES:** The design, materials and finishes of the building's façade, entryway and roofline should create visual appeal at the pedestrian scale. Supports Community Character Policy CC-4.27: *Downtown architecture shall have a pedestrian scale, with varied and articulated facades. Entries must be oriented to the sidewalk. Front facades shall include numerous windows and covered arcades.*

**C.G.85: Pedestrian Scaled Design Features:** Incorporate pedestrian scaled design features to encourage pedestrian activity in new commercial projects. Such design features may include display windows at the sidewalk edge; awning shade features, canopies or trellises at the storefront; accentuated or recessed entries; outdoor dining areas; landscaping, shade trees, or benches. (Figs. 7, 8 & 9)

**C.G.86: Character and Shading:** Architectural features such as overhangs, projections, reveals, awnings, canopies, trellises, and covered pedestrian walkways are encouraged to add character and provide shading. (Figs. 10, 20, 21, & 22)

**C.G.87: Entryways:** Orient entryways towards the predominant public view, and clearly define with accent colors or other architectural features such as canopies, overhangs, recesses, arches, tile work, or molding. (Figs. 10 & 22)

**C.G.88: Variation:** Vary materials, finishes, and colors to create contrast and accent architectural features. (Fig. 21)

**C.G.89: Exterior Materials:** Building materials and finishes should be durable, easy to maintain and able to withstand local climate changes. Recommended exterior materials include masonry, plaster, stucco, textured block, and brick.

**C.G.90: Discouraged Materials:** Plasticized materials and high gloss finishes are discouraged.

**C.G.91: Colors:** Large areas of bright, intense colors are discouraged. Use brighter accent colors for trim, windows, doors, and key architectural elements.

**C.G.92: Logos:** Colors or logos identified with an individual company should not be incorporated as a primary architectural feature, but may be used as an accent feature to enhance the overall architectural theme.

**C.G.93: Rooflines:** Use variations in rooflines on larger buildings and integrate roof designs with the architectural design of the development. Roof elements such as parapet caps, projecting cornices, and corner details can be used to define a roof. (Fig. 22)

**2. CONSISTENCY OF DESIGN:** Building forms should respond to the natural environment or other existing developments so they enhance and enliven the character of the community or region.

**C.G.94: Outbuildings:** Outbuildings, such as storage areas and trash enclosures, should be architecturally compatible with the primary building (same type of materials and colors). (Fig. 23)

**C.G.95: Service Station Islands:** Architecturally integrate service station islands so that design character is compatible with the main building.

**C.G.96: Overall Compatibility:** Design and articulate commercial buildings to improve the streetscape, enhance existing neighboring businesses, and improve overall economic vitality of the general area.



**Figure 23:** This trash collection and recycling enclosure uses similar building materials and colors to blend in with the primary buildings.

## **IV. SUSTAINABILITY**

Design commercial buildings in ways that promote energy efficiency and conservation of resources. Appendix B *Sustainability Design Guidelines* has information on sustainability and green building practices that relate to all built projects. In addition to the general measures listed in Appendix B, Commercial buildings should:

- Be designed in a way that utilizes passive solar heating and cooling in order to reduce energy cost and consumption. This is especially important for large commercial buildings such as big box retailers and grocery stores due to their size.
- Possess a light colored roof to reflect a large percentage of solar radiation in order to reduce HVAC loads and energy consumption.
- Use ceiling mounted fans to reduce heat stratification and provide air movement.
- Use low-flow plumbing fixtures, energy efficient fixtures, systems and appliances, wherever feasible.
- Utilize natural sunlight through skylights and energy efficient light fixtures to reduce energy consumption due to lighting.