

## Building Design – DRAFT

### Purpose

Building Design addresses producing buildings that are more durable and easily maintainable as well as enhancing building facades and entries. It is meant to improve pedestrian environments by increasing the distinctiveness and individuality of the Downtown Design Districts and add overall visual quality.

### Building Character

Intent: Reinforce a distinct building design character for each of Downtown’s character areas. Retain the diversity of design while creating more design continuity and compatibility between near-by building facades. Coordinate with street design measures to create attractive and functional streetscapes.

Topic	Applicability	Current Regulation	Proposed Change
Building character	Per character district	No such standard	Support building design characteristics of each character district, as described.

### Special Provisions for Buildings in the Historic District

See Separate Handout

### Architectural Composition, Massing, and Articulation

Intent: To add visual interest to buildings by employing façade articulation to reduce the perceived scale of large buildings, to encourage development compatible with architectural scale of buildings on the same block, to add visual interest from observable scales, to create a visually interesting skyline, and to create clear and welcoming building entries.

Topic	Applicability	Current Regulation	Proposed Change
<b>Façade articulation</b>	<b>Non-residential buildings</b>  Only required for A and B Pedestrian Oriented	Use a variety of projections into the right-of-way; add relief, detail and variation to roof lines; and incorporate pedestrian friendly	Incorporate at least 3 articulation elements at intervals no more than 50’.

	Streets & above grade parking garages. Not required in Art/Tech or Waterfront Districts.	building elements at intersections and alley entrances.	Specific "High Visibility Corners" are identified with special requirements.
<b>Façade articulation</b>	<b>Residential buildings and residential portions of mixed-use</b>  Not required in Art/Tech or Waterfront Districts.	(Multifamily:) use building modulation at least every 30'  (Other residential:) Building and roof modulation - no interval given.	Incorporate at least 3 articulation elements at intervals that relate to the location and size of individual units or no more than 40'.
<b>Maximum façade width</b>	<b>All developments</b>  Buildings in the Art/Tech District may be exempt.		Building facades wider than 120' must incorporate measures to break up mass and add visual interest.

<p><b>Streetscape, privacy and shading</b></p>	<p><b>All developments in the South Residential Neighborhood District</b></p>	<p>(Multifamily:) minimize any appearance of scale differences between project building(s) and existing neighborhood buildings by stepping the height of the building mass, and dividing large building facades into smaller segments.</p> <p>(Infill residential:) minimize the appearance of building scale differences between proposed dwelling unit(s) and existing neighborhood residential units. <b>On narrow lots (30 feet wide or less), the average height of the adjacent residences shall not be exceeded unless the apparent scale of the proposed building is reduced through modulation.</b></p> <p>Reflect the architectural character of the neighborhood (within 300' on the same street) through use of related building elements.</p>	<p>Apply various requirements to minimize shading and privacy impacts and enhance the streetscape, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 15' step back for stories 4 and above</li> <li>• Use of similar roof forms and pitch, window patterns &amp; proportions, façade materials, and other elements relating to surrounding neighborhood.</li> </ul> <p>Modulation required on certain blocks to protect views (see separate handout)</p>
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**Commented [AB1]:** This is in 18.175 which applies to SF, townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and ADU's. Depending on whether we decide 18.175 should apply in addition to the new 18.120 or whether 18.120 completely handles the SE neighborhood area, we may want to consider including this.

**Commented [AB2]:** Current standards say to reflect neighborhood character within 300' on same side of street – the proposal is more general “found on existing structures within the neighborhood.” Would planners prefer it be more general or 300' vicinity specific?

**Human Scale Building Elements and Details**

Intent: “Human scale” addresses the relationship between a building and the human body. Generally, buildings attain a good human scale when they feature elements or characteristics that are sized to fit human activities, such as doors, porches, and balconies.

Building elements refer to larger building features such as balconies, cornices, bay windows, and turrets. Details refer to smaller items such as lights, furniture, artwork, signs, and door and window moldings. Generally, building elements can be seen from 80' or more while details are perceived from a shorter distance.

Topic	Applicability	Current Regulation	Proposed Change
<b>Human scaled building elements</b>	<b>All developments</b>	For commercial buildings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide at least two pedestrian amenities in places where people typically gather</li> <li>• Use design elements to maintain a human scale at the street</li> <li>• Provide relief, detail and variation to roof lines.</li> </ul>	Incorporate human scaled building elements (e.g. upper story balconies or decks, bay windows or other window treatments, porches or covered entries, roofline modulation, etc.)  Incorporate at least 4 elements for buildings on A and B Pedestrian Oriented Streets; buildings facing Capitol Way, a water body or public park; and buildings in the Core, Waterfront, and South Residential Neighborhood District.  Other buildings must use at least 2.
<b>Building orientation and entry features</b>	<b>All developments</b>	Provide a clearly defined building or courtyard entry from the primary street	All buildings must have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A primary building entrance facing the street or courtyard (unless situated immediately on the shoreline)</li> <li>• weather protection at least 6' wide and 5' deep</li> <li>• Light for visibility and security.</li> </ul> Building entries within Core, North Capitol, South Capitol, Waterfront, and Entertainment districts must also be enhanced with 2 façade details.
<b>Façade details</b>	<b>Non-residential and mixed-use</b>	(Commercial buildings:) add interest and variety to building facades by using projections into the right-of-way	One detail from each: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Window and entry treatments</li> <li>• Building façade details</li> <li>• Decorative or textural enhancement</li> </ul>

Commented [BS3]: Says from a above, but that is human scaled elements. Facades are in section c below.

Commented [AB4R3]: John, is this a typo meaning "c"?

<b>Window design</b>	<b>All developments</b>  Except for in the Art/Tech District	(Commercial:) Windows shall provide relief, detail, and variation to building facades and shall be in harmony with the character of the structure  (Infill residential:) Provide relief, detail, and visual rhythm on the facade with well-proportioned windows.  Well- proportioned windows that are not located where residents from one unit may look directly into another unit.	Buildings must employ techniques to add quality and interest. Includes upper floors.
<b>High visibility street corners</b>	<b>Specially designated corners</b>	(Commercial:) Create pedestrian friendly building elements at intersections and alley entrances.	High Visibility Street Corners shall locate a building or structure within 15' of the street corner or configured with a corner plaza and include special design features approved by the City.
<b>Design character</b>	<b>For all developments</b>	(Commercial:) Buildings shall have a consistent visual identity from all sides visible to the general public (except, building walls adjacent to downtown alleys)	Building elements and details must be consistent with the building's architectural style and character.  Do not use single family residential details in large buildings.

Commented [AB5]: Do we need this in the proposal?

### Pedestrian Oriented Facades and Weather Protection

Intent: Provide consistently interesting pedestrian environment, encourage walking, strengthen retail activities in the Downtown, allow pedestrians to view the inside activities of businesses, and increase safety.

Commented [AB6]: Here I have included the current requirements for pedestrian oriented facades and weather protection (referencing only the Commercial, Downtown Commercial and Multifamily standards but not the Pedestrian overlay standards.) In other words, these standards currently apply to more than just A and B streets. Now that we are only requiring these elements on A and B streets, we seem to be reducing the areas where transparent windows, primary building entrances and weather protection are required.

Topic	Applicability	Current Regulation	Proposed Change
<b>Transparent window areas</b>	<b>Developments on A and B streets</b>	(Commercial:) Glass shall cover or comprise at least 60% of the building face between 2-8' in elevation above the sidewalk. If glass is not possible, at least 1 of the listed equivalencies shall be substituted for glazing on the building walls fronting on a street, sidewalk, or other pedestrian walkway visible to pedestrians. Wall segments without such treatments should not exceed thirty (30) feet in length.	Window areas or window displays should cover at least 75% of the ground floor façade between 2-8' above the sidewalk.  Windows should not look into service or storage areas.  Special purpose buildings such as theaters that do not sell merchandise may propose an alternate solution
<b>Primary Building Entry</b>	<b>Developments on A and B streets</b>	(Commercial and Residential:) Orient the primary building entrance and active uses to the street.	Primary building entrance shall face the street.
<b>Weather protection</b>	<b>Developments on A and B streets</b>	(Commercial:) Provide awnings, canopies, and marquees on buildings that abut the sidewalk. Awnings should cover the pedestrian clear zone (the 42" of sidewalk immediately adjacent to the building).	A canopy, awning, or other cover from the rain is required. Should be at least 5' wide over at least 65% of the front façade and be located between 8-15' above grade.
<b>Ground floor height</b>	<b>Developments on A and B streets</b>		Shall be at least 15' to provide space that can be adaptable for a variety of uses.  The City may waive this requirement for special conditions such as the provision of a mezzanine.

Commented [AB7]: Wonder why that exception was in there? Should we consider it?

### Materials and Colors

Intent: Encourage the use of durable, high quality, and urban building materials that minimize maintenance costs and provide visual interest, promote the use of distinctive mix of materials that articulates facades and lends a sense of depth and richness, and place highest priority on the first two to three building floors.

Topic	Applicability	Current Regulation	Proposed Change
<b>Quality building materials and building color</b>	<b>All developments</b>	Use enduring building materials with a high level of visual and constructed quality. Reserve brightly saturated colors for trim or accents; Maintain the character of the existing downtown buildings by using similar enduring materials such as stone, brick, and stucco. EIFS not preferred	Same underlying premise, with more detail about district specific materials requirements and specific material limitations.  At a minimum, stone masonry or architectural concrete shall be used on first floors for non-residential or mixed use buildings.

### Blank Wall Treatments

Intent: Add interest to local streetscapes by ensuring large expanses of uniform walls visible from a public roadway or park do not detract from the appearance or pedestrian environment.

Topic	Applicability	Current Regulation	Proposed Change
<b>Blank wall Treatments</b>	<b>All developments</b>	Minimize the use of fences that inhibit pedestrian movement or separate the project from the neighborhood and adjoining streets. Front yards shall be visually open to the street. Where fencing is necessary, maintain a human scale along the street by providing pedestrian connections through use of gates or openings at frequent intervals.	Blank walls are prohibited facing a public street, pedestrian-oriented space, common usable open space, or pedestrian pathway unless treated with one of the following methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display windows at least 16” deep to allow for changeable displays</li> <li>• Landscape planting bed at least 5’ wide or raised planter bed at least 2’ high and 3’</li> </ul>

		<p><b>(Commercial:)</b> Use a variety of landscape materials along lengthy expanses of blank walls or fences.</p>	<p>wide in front of the wall with planting materials sufficient to obscure or screen at least 60% of the wall's surface within 3 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A vertical trellis in front of the wall with climbing vines or plant materials</li> <li>• A mural that is not a sign</li> <li>• Special detailing that adds visual interest at a pedestrian scale.</li> <li>• Other methods may be approved by the City</li> </ul> <p>Some exceptions provided</p>
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### Parking Garage Design

Intent: To minimize negative visual impacts of parking garages.

Topic	Applicability	Current Regulation	Proposed Change
<b>Parking garages</b>	<b>All</b>	Vehicle entries to garages shall be recessed at least 6' from the street facade plane. At least 60% of the street facade between 2-8' above the sidewalk shall have at least 1 of the listed treatments.	<p>Must be designed to obscure the view of parked cars on the ground level. Where the garage wall is within 10' of the sidewalk edge, the grade level façade shall incorporate a combination of artwork, grillwork, special building material, or treatment.</p> <p>Upper-level parking garages must use articulation treatments to break up the massing of the garage and add visual interest.</p> <p>Small setbacks with terraced landscaping elements can be effective in softening the appearance of a parking garage.</p>