

# BASIC COMMERCIAL DESIGN CRITERIA

["Requirement" excerpts from **Olympia Municipal Code Chapter 18.110** relevant to 'mixed use and commercial along streets' proposal.]

**18.110.020 Frontage:** Buildings must abut at least fifty percent (50%) of the street frontage. Gaps in frontage between buildings on a single project may not exceed eighty (80) feet in length.

**18.110.030 Connections:** Provide driveway and sidewalk connections to and through the development to adjoining streets, bus stops, designated urban trails, and properties, where access exists or reasonable connections are possible. If a parking lot lies between the building entry and an adjacent public street, a pedestrian walkway at least six (6) feet wide shall be provided between them. In all other cases, on-site sidewalks shall have a passable width of at least four (4) feet. All crossings of vehicular travel lanes shall be clearly marked.

**18.110.040 Fences and walls:** 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.

**18.110.050 Pedestrian amenities:** Provide pedestrian amenities in places where people typically gather, including but not limited to, transit stops, building entrances, or street corners. These spaces must include seating, landscaping, and at least two of the following: 1. Patterned materials on walkways; 2. Shelters; 3. Trash receptacles; 4. Drinking fountains; 5. Pedestrian lighting, light bollards, or alley lighting; 6. Fountains, sculptures, mobiles, kiosks, or banners; 7. Street trees, flower boxes, or container landscaping in alleys; 8. Street vendor stations where appropriate; or, 9. Bike racks.

**18.110.060 View preservation:** In order to protect the existing outstanding scenic views which significant numbers of the general public have from public rights-of-way, applicants for development must consider the impact their proposal will have on views of Mt. Rainier, the Olympic Mountains, Budd Inlet, the Black Hills, the Capitol Building, and Capitol Lake or its surrounding hillsides. All development must reserve a reasonable portion of such territorial and immediate views of these features for significant numbers of people from public rights-of-way, and shall provide lookouts, viewpoints, or view corridors so that visual access to existing outstanding scenic vistas is maintained. (Refer to the Scenic Vista overlay zoning maps available at the Community Planning and Development Department.)

**18.110.070 Building location and design:** 1. Place commercial buildings on the street edge and locate parking on the side or behind the building. Parking lots shall not be located on corners. Exceptions may be made: a. Where an alternative building location would provide as good or better pedestrian access .... 2. Entrances to buildings shall be clearly articulated and obvious from the street. 3. Commercial and public buildings over three (3) stories must have a clearly defined base at street level that is no more than two stories high.

**18.110.080 Maintaining human scale:** Use design elements to maintain a human scale at the street. Projects requiring a conditional use permit in a residential zone must incorporate elements that relate to existing buildings in the neighborhood.

**18.110.090 Street walls:** Use a high proportion of clear or lightly tinted glass at the street level for displays or to reveal services available where appropriate. This glass shall cover or comprise at least sixty (60) percent of the building face between two (2) and eight (8) feet in elevation above the sidewalk. If glass is not possible, at least one (1) of the following, or an equivalent, shall be substituted for glazing on the building walls fronting on a street, sidewalk, or other pedestrian walkway visible to pedestrians. The following guidelines are listed in order of preference. Wall segments without such treatments should not exceed thirty (30) feet in length:

**18.110.100 Windows:** Windows shall provide relief, detail, and variation to building facades and shall be in harmony with the character of the structure.

**18.110.110 Projections into the right-of-way:** In order to create a positive visual experience for the pedestrian moving along the street, add interest and variety to building facades by using projections into the right-of-way.

**18.110.120 Roofs:** Provide relief, detail and variation to roof lines.

**18.110.130 Corners:** Create pedestrian friendly building elements at intersections and alley entrances.

**18.110.140 Consistency:** Buildings shall have a consistent visual identity from all sides visible to the general public; except, building walls adjacent to alleys in the downtown design district.

**18.110.150 Colors and materials:** Use building materials with texture and pattern (such as brick) on exterior building walls and large surfaces. Reserve brightly saturated colors for trim or accents.

**18.110.160 Lighting:** Use lighting to emphasize the building and landscaping, and to provide visibility and general security. Lighting shall not shine off-site or into adjacent buildings.

**18.110.170 Parking structures:** Vehicle entries to garages shall be recessed at least six (6) feet from the street facade plane. At least sixty (60) percent of the street facade between two (2) and eight (8) feet above the sidewalk, shall have at least one (1) of the treatments listed below.

**18.110.180 Plant selection:** Select plants that are compatible with planting conditions and existing landscaping. Plant trees that at their mature, natural size will be well-suited to the planting location. Avoid use of invasive species adjacent to critical areas. Do not plant noxious weeds, as defined by the Thurston County Noxious Weed Control Program (lists are on file with Thurston County or the City's Community Planning & Development Department).

**18.110.190 Screening site services:** Show the location of all mechanical equipment and utility vaults on both site and landscape plans early in the design process. Provide visual screening so that mechanical equipment and utility vaults are not visible from adjacent public rights-of-way, or adjacent dwelling units. Screen roof-top mechanical and communications equipment on all sides. (See Section [18.36.060\(I\)](#), Screening - Trash and Open Storage.)

**18.110.200 Screening blank walls:** Use a variety of landscape materials along lengthy expanses of blank walls or fences.