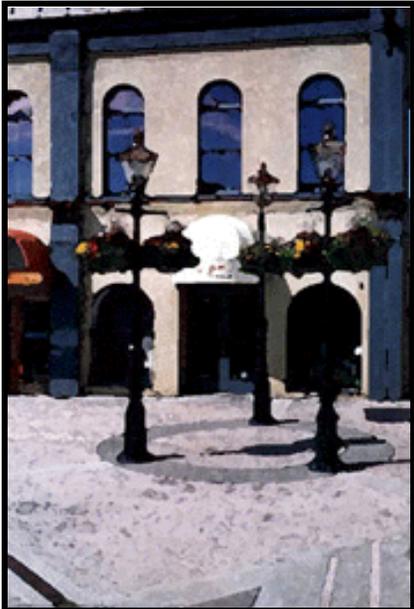
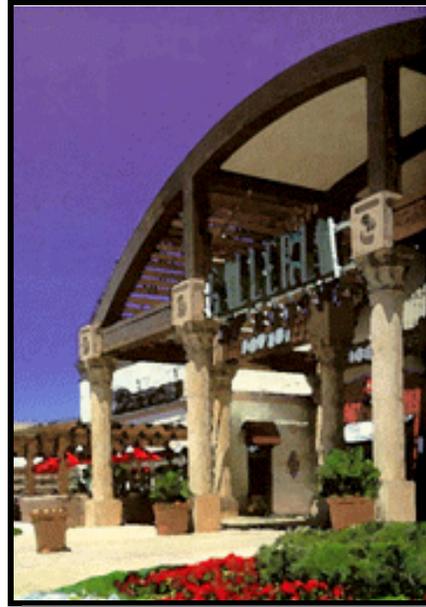


# City of Simi Valley Citywide Design Guidelines



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City of Simi Valley

# Citywide Design Guidelines

prepared for  
City of Simi Valley

by  
Urban Design Studio



A Division of Robert Bein, William Frost & Associates

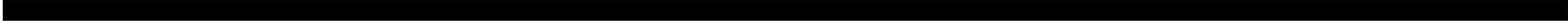
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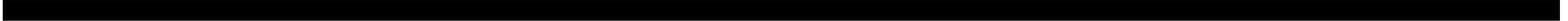
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## CHAPTER 1: User Guide to the Design Guidelines Manual

### A. Introduction & Background

#### 1. Purpose

The Design Guidelines are intended to promote a desired level of future development quality in Simi Valley that will:

- ▶ Contribute to a positive physical image and identity of non-residential development;
- ▶ Provide guidance for the orderly development of the City and promote high quality non-residential development;
- ▶ Supplement the contents of the Simi Valley Development Code on matters of design and aesthetics;
- ▶ Contribute to implementing the concepts and recommendations provided in the City's Vision 2020 report;
- ▶ Stimulate investment in and strengthen the economic vitality of non-residential areas within the City;
- ▶ Implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan;

- ▶ Maintain and protect the value of property; and
- ▶ Maintain a high quality of life without causing unnecessary public or private costs for development or unduly restricting private enterprise, initiative, or innovation in design.

The interpretation and implementation of the design guidelines should be based on the above points. Projects that are reviewed for compliance with the design guidelines should also meet the intent of the above points.

These guidelines acknowledge the prevailing architectural characters and development patterns within Simi Valley today. The guidelines, therefore, do not seek to impose an overriding style, a limited color palette, or an artificial theme. They do seek to assist in promoting the positive design characteristics existing throughout the City of Simi Valley today.

It is not the intent of the guidelines to eliminate design freedom or discourage innovative design. Its goal is to promote quality designs which have been carefully considered. It is intended to promote designs which have well integrated features rather than tacked on details. The design guidelines complement mandatory development standards by providing good examples of

appropriate design solutions and by providing design interpretations of the various mandatory regulations. The guidelines are, however, less quantitative than mandatory development standards and may be interpreted with some flexibility in the application to specific projects.

## 2. Applicability

The provisions of this section are applicable to non-residential development within the City of Simi Valley.

Any new building, additions, exterior alterations, or landscaping, and any modification to an approved landscaping plan or parking lot design should adhere to these Design Guidelines as applicable. It is important to note, however, that **these Design Guidelines do not affect existing buildings** which are not proposed for new construction, exterior alterations, landscaping, or changes in the parking lot layout.

## 3. Exemptions

When in compliance with all other City ordinances, the following projects are exempt from design review:

- a. Construction underground, which will not leave any significant, permanent artifact at or above grade level upon completion. Utility boxes, pipes, and poles shall be considered “significant permanent artifacts.”

- b. Routine maintenance of buildings, landscaping (including relatively minor replacement of plants other than trees), or grounds (including parking lots) which does not significantly alter the appearance or function of the building, landscaping, or grounds.
- c. Interior remodeling.
- d. Temporary uses and structures and signs as defined by the City of Simi Valley Development Code.
- e. Roof maintenance and repair. Roof reconstruction or use of different materials is subject to design review as determined by the Planning Director.

## 4. Organization

The design guidelines are organized in chapters according to major land use categories.

**Project proponents should review the entire set of design guidelines prior to beginning a project’s design.**

A brief description of each chapter is provided below:

### *Chapter 1 - Users Guide to the Design Guidelines Manual*

Contains an introduction and background to the design guidelines and how the design guidelines are used. In addition, Chapter 1 contains a glossary of terms.

*Chapter 2 - General Non-Residential Design Guidelines*

Contains general design guidelines that are common to commercial, industrial, and institutional development. Topics include site planning, parking and circulation, landscape/hardscape, architecture, public/quasi-public space, signs, commercial building/center rehabilitation, and public safety through design.

*Chapter 3 - Commercial Thoroughfare Buildings & Structures*

Addresses special design characteristics which are found in specialized development types (mini malls, one to three story office buildings, neighborhood centers, specialty retail centers, vehicle dealerships, service stations and car washes, auto repair service, hotel and motels, drive through and drive in businesses, big box retail, mixed use projects, and malls and regional centers). Not only are these guidelines intended to help improve overall design quality, but because they are project type specific, they will help emphasize the distinguishing characteristics of each non-residential commercial development type. Topics include description, site organization, building design, parking and circulation, landscaping, and special requirements.

*Chapter 4 - Business Park Design Guidelines*

Contains general design standards that are applicable to business park developments. Topics covered include site planning, parking and circulation, loading facilities, landscaping, and architecture.

## **B. How to Use the Design Guidelines**

### **1. General**

These guidelines are intended to be used to generally influence the design of development/redevelopment of non-residential land uses. The guidelines are organized and written to help achieve an envisioned design quality throughout the City of Simi Valley.

People judge a place by the quality of the physical spaces they see around them – in terms of function and attractiveness. The non-residential areas within the City of Simi Valley are not only places for commercial, governmental, and employment activities but also statements about the community. Many non-residential areas within the City have either been neglected, poorly designed, or are outdated. The role of design guidelines is to help new and old non-residential development become points of pride and identity for Simi Valley residents.

In part, *urban design* is the “art” of enhancing the vitality, meaning, and form of the public realm by ensuring quality, sensible design, and development. When focusing on non-residential land uses, urban design is but one of several facets that must be reviewed. The others include economic conditions, promotion and marketing of businesses, management, and maintenance. For purposes of this manual, design guidelines are presented which aim to foster an image and character desired by the community and supportive of the other factors pertaining to non-residential development.

These guidelines should be used as a starting point for the creative design process and should not be looked upon as the only solution for design. Owners of non-residential properties should strive to be creative and innovative, and should look beyond franchise or boilerplate architectural and landscape architectural design treatment. It is important, too, that non-residential property owners involve City staff, community groups, and affected merchants and business owners in the design process prior to making a significant investment in design.

### **2. Interpretation of Provisions**

To aid in the interpretation of these guidelines, a development applicant should understand the meaning of “*should*,” “*encouraged*,” and “*discouraged*”.

Guidelines which employ the word “*should*” are intended to express the City’s desire and expectation. An alternative measure may be considered, however, if it meets or exceeds the intent of the guideline.

Guidelines using the words “*encouraged*” or “*discouraged*” are meant to express a more or less desirable design solution.

#### **a. Qualitative Guidelines (non-numeric based guidelines)**

The majority of guidelines in this manual are qualitative. They provide, through descriptions and graphic illustrations, the manner in which design should be carried out in relationship to a given land use, building type, or spatial setting. By their nature,

qualitative guidelines allow for considerable flexibility and interpretation so long as the intent of the guidelines are upheld.

b. Quantitative Guidelines (numeric based guidelines)

Throughout this manual, some design guidelines are written with a specific numerical component to them. In some instances, design guidelines may include a certain measurement (e.g. sidewalk width). In other instances, a number may be included in a design guideline that specifies a preferred quantity (e.g. ratio of trees to parking spaces). Quantitative guidelines, while more specific in nature than qualitative, still provide flexibility in design. However, in most cases, the numbers specified are tied to a desired image or operational characteristic that enhances the quality of development.

### 3. Relationship to Design Review Process

The Design Guidelines will be utilized during the City's development review process to encourage the highest level of design quality. At the same time, provide the flexibility necessary to encourage creativity on the part of project designers in response to existing site conditions.

Applicants of new development or rehabilitation must follow a development review process in order to complete site and building improvements. Design review is one element of the overall process.

At the onset of any project, and prior to undertaking significant design efforts, applicants should meet with a staff member from the Department of Environmental Services. At this meeting, City staff can provide time and cost-saving information on permits, processing timelines, any discretionary approvals that are necessary for project approval, and City codes and ordinances that may affect or apply to a particular project. In addition, the meeting can be useful to better understand project specific design objectives.

## C. Glossary of Terms

### 1. Introduction

The following definitions have no implied desire or adverse desire tied to a particular design feature. Graphics are for definition purposes only and are not necessarily indicative of any endorsement or allowance by the City of Simi Valley.

### 2. Definitions

**Access** - The place or way by which pedestrians or vehicles have safe, adequate, and usable ingress and egress to a property or use.

**Accessory building or structure** - A detached building or structure not for human habitation which the building or structure is incidental to and a specific principal use or facility and located on the same lot.

**Addition** - Any construction which increases the size of a building, dwelling, or facility in terms of site coverage, height, length, width, or gross floor area, occurring after the completion of the original.

**Aesthetics** - The science and philosophy of beauty. If something is aesthetic, it has beauty or is artistic.

**Alley** - Any public or private thoroughfare not more than 30 feet wide for the use of pedestrians or vehicles.

**Alignment (Architectural)** - The visual alignment and subsequent placement of architectural elements such as windows, cornice elements, soffits, and awnings from one structure to adjacent structures in order to promote blockscape continuity.

**Alteration** - Any construction or physical change in the internal arrangement of rooms of the supporting members of a building or structure, or substantial change in the exterior appearance of any building or structure.

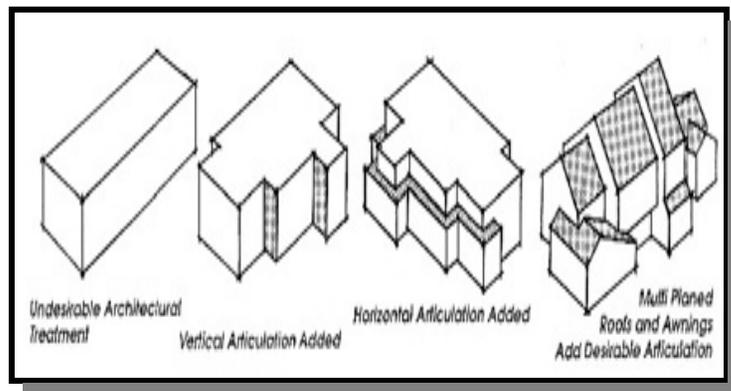
**Arcade (Architectural)** - An arched roof or covered passage way.



*"Arcade"*

**Arch** - A curved structure supporting its weight over an open space such as a door or window.

**Articulation** - Describes the degree or manner in which a building wall or roofline is made up of distinct parts or elements. A highly articulated wall will appear to be composed of a number of different planes, usually made distinct by their change in direction (projections and recesses) and/or changes in materials, colors or textures.

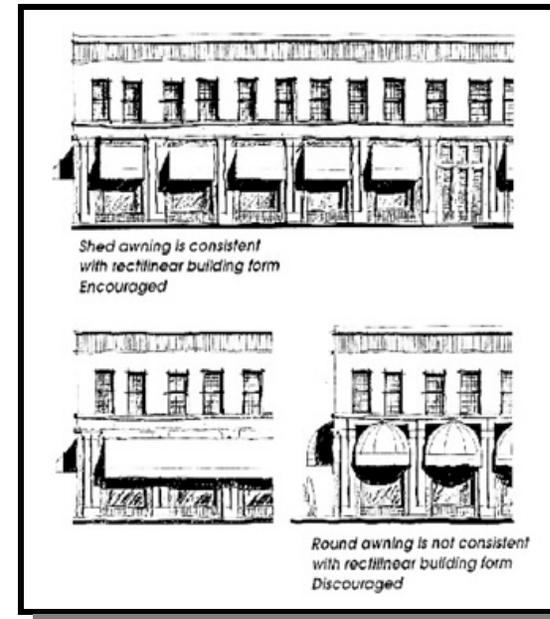


*Different types of articulations.*

**Artifact** - An object produced by workmanship or construction.

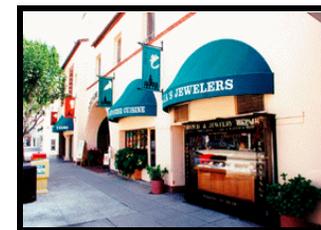
**Asymmetry** - Lack of symmetry. (See “Symmetry”)

**Awning** - A fixed cover, typically comprised of cloth over a metal frame, that is placed over windows or building openings as protection from the sun and rain.



*Examples of storefront awnings.*

**Awning sign** - A sign painted on, printed on, or attached flat against the surface of an awning.



*“Awning Sign”*

**Balcony** - A railed projecting platform found above ground level on a building.

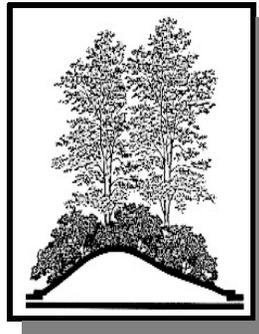
**Baluster** - The upright portion of the row of supports for a porch railing.

**Balustrade** - A series of balusters surmounted by a rail.

**Bay (Structural)** - A regularly repeated spatial element in a building defined by beams or ribs and their supports.

**Berm** - A mound or embankment of earth.

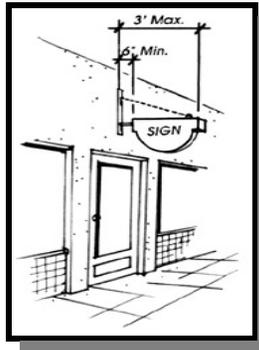
**Blade/bracket sign** - A small, pedestrian-oriented sign that projects perpendicular from a structure (bracket sign) or is hung beneath a canopy (blade sign).



“Berm”

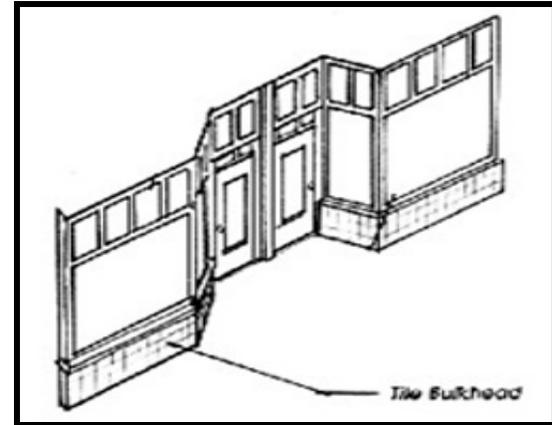
**Blockscape** - The aggregated facade wall composed of uninterrupted placement of individual urban oriented structures located side-by-side along an entire block as opposed to individual buildings located within the block.

**Breezeway** - A roofed passageway, open at two opposite ends, which connects two buildings.



“Blade Sign”

**Bulkhead** - The space located between the pavement/sidewalk and the bottom of a traditional storefront window.



“Bulkhead”

**Building frontage** - The building elevation that fronts a public street where customer access to the building is available.

**Bus or transit shelter** - A small structure that has a roof and usually two or three sides designed for the protection and convenience of waiting transit passengers.



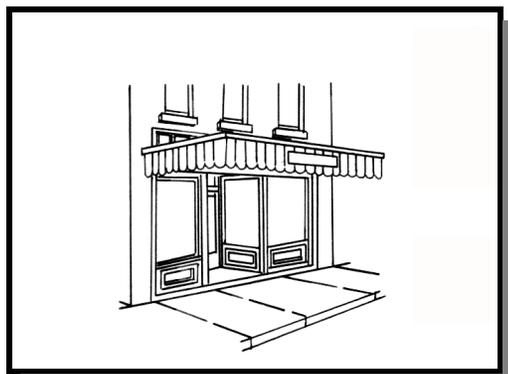
“Transit Shelter”

**Business frontage** - The portion of a building frontage occupied by a single tenant space having a public entrance within the building frontage. For businesses located on the interior of a building without building frontage, the building elevation providing customer access shall be considered the business frontage.

**Cabinet sign (can sign)** - A sign that contains all the text and/or logo symbols within a single enclosed cabinet and may or may not be illuminated.

**Caliper** - The diameter in inches of the tree trunk a specified distance above the base of the tree.

**Canopy** - A projection over a niche or doorway; often decorative or decorated.



“Canopy”

**Cantilever** - A projecting beam or other structure supported only at one end.

**Carport** - A permanent roofed structure, open on one or more sides, used or intended to be used for vehicle parking.

**Casement Window** - A window with hinges to the side and a vertical opening either on the side or in the center.

**Changeable copy sign** - A sign designed to allow changing of copy manually.

**Channel letters** - Three-dimensional individually cut letters or figures, illuminated or unilluminated, affixed directly to a structure.

**Civic event sign** - A temporary sign, other than a commercial sign, posted to advertise a civic event sponsored by a public agency, school, church, civic-fraternal organization, or similar noncommercial organization.



“Changeable Sign”

**Colonnade** - A row of columns supporting a roof structure.



“Colonnade”

**Color** - The aspect of things that is caused by differing qualities of the light reflected or emitted by them; usually used in terms of paint, dye, or ink that imparts color onto a surface.

**Column** - A vertical support, usually cylindrical, consisting of a base, shaft and capital, either monolithic or built-up of drums the full diameter of the shaft.

**Concave** - Curved inward.

**Convex** - Curved outward.

**Copy** - Words, letters, numbers, figures, designs, or other symbolic representations incorporated into a sign.

**Corbeling** - A projection from the face of a wall used to support a cornice or an arch.

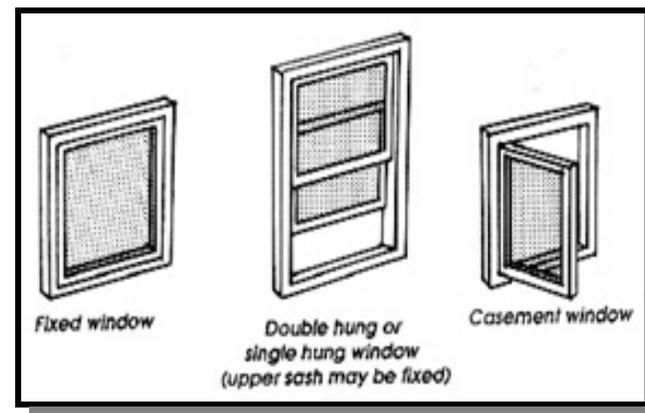
**Cornice** - The horizontal projection at the top of a wall; the top course or molding of a wall when it serves as a crowning member.

**Cupola** - A small, usually domed, structure surmounting a roof.

**Curb Cuts** - The elimination of a street curb to enable vehicles to cross sidewalks and enter driveways or parking lots.

**Curtain Wall** - A thin subordinate wall between two piers or other supporting members.

**Double Hung Window** - A window with an upper and low sash arranged so that each slides vertically past the other.



Example of window types

**Dripline** - The imaginary line surrounding a tree or shrub which is marked by where the rain would drip off the canopy of the tree. Or the outline cast by the shadow of a tree at high noon (when the sun is directly above the tree or shrub).

**Drystack** - The placement (or stacking) of stones, bricks, or other hardened masonry materials on top of one another without the use of mortar; also used to mean the placement (or stacking) of stones, bricks, or other hardened masonry materials on top of one another without the appearance that mortar was used.

**Eaves** - The lower edge of a sloping roof; that part of a roof of a building which projects beyond the wall.

**External illumination** - The lighting of an object from a light source located a distance from the object.

**Facade** - The exterior face of a building which is the architectural front, sometimes distinguished from other faces by elaboration of architectural or ornamental details.



“Facade”

**Fascia** - The outside horizontal board on a cornice.

**Fenestration** - The arrangement and design of windows in a building.

**Figurative sign** - A sign which employs the use of a three dimensional object to communicate the business product or services.



“Figurative Sign”

**Fixture** - A design element considered to be permanently established or fixed in its built or natural environment.

**Focal Point** - A building, object, or natural element in a streetscene that stands out and serves as a point of focus, catching and holding the viewer's attention.

**Footcandle** - Unit of illuminance, equal to one lumen per foot.

**Footing** - The lowermost part of the foundation wall.

**Foundation** - The base or substructure which supports a building.

**French Door** - A door with glass panes extending the full length.

**Frieze** - Any long and narrow, nearly horizontal, architectural member, especially one which has a chiefly decorative purpose.

**Ghost sign** - A painted wall sign which has purposely been made to look very old.

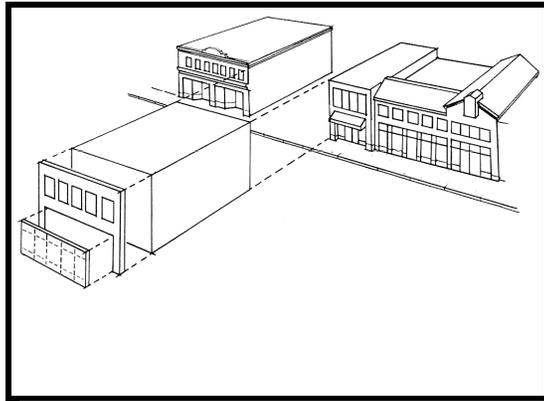
**Glare** - Excessive brightness.

**Glazed Brick** - A brick which has been glazed and fired on one side.

**Hardscape** - The use of hardened surfacing materials to create unique patterns of color, design, and texture in order to create visual interest; also used to mean those areas that have received such improvements.

**Hip Roof** - A roof with four uniformly pitched sides.

**In-fill** - A newly constructed building within an existing developed area.



*New in-fill should reflect the architectural rhythm and scale of adjacent buildings.*



*"Ghost Sign"*

**Internally illuminated sign** - A sign whose light source is located in the interior of the sign so that the rays go through the face of the sign, or light source which is attached to the face of the sign and is perceived as a design element of the sign.

**Keystone** - The central wedge-shaped stone of an arch that locks its parts together.

**Landscape** - To improve the appearance of a piece of ground by contouring and planting; also used to mean those areas that have received such improvements.

**Light trespass** - Extraneous light on adjacent property, typically produced by stray light from outdoor lighting systems.

**Lintel** - A horizontal support member that supports a load over an opening (as a window or door opening) usually made of wood, stone or steel; may be exposed or obscured by wall coverings.

**Loading space** - An area used exclusively for the loading and unloading of goods from a vehicle in connection with the use of the site on which such space is located.

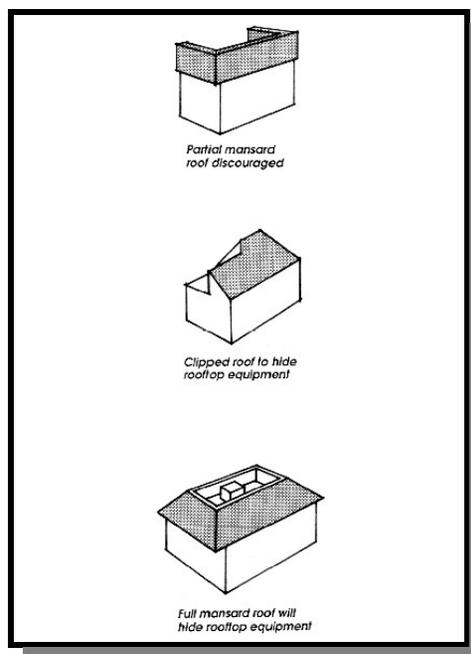
**Lot** - A parcel of land (in single or joint ownership) occupied or to be occupied by a main building and accessory buildings, or by a dwelling group and its accessory buildings, together with such open spaces and having its principal frontage on a street, road, highway or waterway.

**Lumen** - The rate of flow of light used to express the overall light output of a lamp.

**Mansard** - Traditionally, a roof with two slopes on each side, the lower slope being much steeper. In contemporary commercial development, the second portion of the roof is replaced with a flat roof or an equipment well. These are referred to as Mansard roofs but bear little resemblance to the original.

**Masonry** - Wall construction of such material as stone, brick, and adobe.

**Mass** - Mass describes three dimensional forms, the simplest of which are cubes, boxes (or "rectangular solids"), cylinders, pyramids and cones. Buildings are rarely one of these simple forms, but generally are composites of varying types of assets. This composition is generally described as the "massing" of forms in a building.



*Example of mansard roofs*

During the design process, massing is one of many aspects of form considered by an architect or designer and can be the result of both exterior and interior design concepts. Exterior massing can identify an entry, denote a stairway or simply create a desirable form. Interior spaces (or lack of mass) can be designed to create an intimate space or perhaps a monumental entry. Interior spaces create and affect exterior mass, and exterior mass can affect the interior space.

Mass and massing are inevitably affected by their opposite, open space. The lack of mass, or creation of perceived open space, can significantly affect the character of a building. Architects often call attention to a lack of mass, by defining the open space with low walls or railings.

Landscape architects also use massing in design such as in grouping of plants with different sizes and shapes. These areas are intended to be perceived as a whole rather than as individual trees or shrubs. Plant masses can be used to fill a space, define the boundary of an open area, or extend the perceived form of an architectural element.

**Molding** - An ornamental strip used to decorate a surface.

**Monolithic** - A single large flat surface (facade) without relief; a massive unyielding structure.

**Monument sign** - Permanent signs where the entire bottom of the sign is affixed to the ground, not to a building.



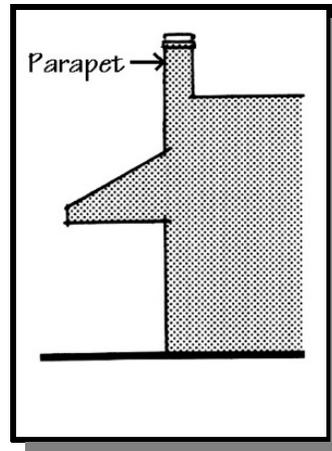
*"Monument Sign"*

**Mullions** - The divisional pieces in a multi-paned window.

**Neon sign** - Glass tube lighting in which a combination of gas and phosphors are used to create a colored light.

**Ornamentation** - Details added to a structure solely for decorative reasons (i.e. to add shape, texture, or color to an architectural composition).

**Parapet** - A low wall generally running around the perimeter of a flat roof.



*"Parapet"*

**Parkway** - The public area between the curbing and the sidewalk.

**Pattern** - The pattern of material can texture and can be used to add character, scale and balance to a building. The lines of the many types of brick bonds are examples of how material can be placed in a pattern to create texture. The natural texture of rough wood shingles exhibit texture by the nature of the material and by the pattern in which the shingles are placed.

**Pediment** - The low triangular gable following the roof slopes over the front and rear of a building; also used to crown features such as doors and windows.

**Permanent sign** - A sign constructed of durable materials and intended to exist for the duration of time that the use or occupant is located on the premises.

**Pier** - A stout column or pillar.

**Pilaster** - A column attached to a wall or pier.

**Pitch** - The slope of a roof expressed in terms of ratio of height to span.

**Plant-on** - The attachment of materials to a surface as an afterthought; usually implying that such instances do not appear integrated within the original context.

**Pole sign** - A sign mounted on a free-standing pole or other support so that the bottom edge of the sign face is six feet or more above finished grade.

**Pop-out** - Applied to exterior walls, pop-outs create shadow patterns and depths on the wall surfaces.

**Portico** - A porch or vestibule (lobby or passage between entrance and lobby) roofed and partly opened on at least one side.

**Primary building facade** - The particular facade of a building which faces the street to which the address of the building pertains.

**Projecting sign** - A sign that protrudes (see blade sign).

**Proportion** - Proportion deals with the ratio of dimension between elements. Proportion can describe height to height ratios, width to width ratios, width to height ratios, as well as ratios of massing. Landscaping can be used to establish a consistent rhythm along a streetscape which will disguise the lack of proportion in building size and placement.



*“Projecting Sign”*

**Pylon** - A monumental gateway.

**Rake** - A board, molding or eave along the sloping edge of a gable roof.

**Recess** - A hollow place, as in a wall.

**Reconstitution** - The piece-by-piece reassembly of a building. Reconstitution on the original site replaces buildings damaged by disasters such as war, earthquake or flood, where most of its parts remain; reconstitution at a new site is usually the result of changes in land use and redevelopment programs.

**Reconstruction** - The construction, on its original site or a replica of a building or facility which no longer exists, based upon archeological, historical, documentary and physical evidence. Both modern and traditional construction techniques may be used.

**Recycling, Adaptive reuse** - The reuse of older structures that would have otherwise been demolished, often involving extensive restoration or rehabilitation of the interior and/or exterior to accommodate the new use.

**Rehabilitation, Renovation** - The modification of or changes to an existing building in order to extend its useful life or utility through repairs or alterations, while preserving the features of the building that contribute to its architectural, cultural, or historical character.

**Relief** - Carving raised above a background plane, as in base relief.

**Remodeling** - Any change or alteration to a building which substantially alters its original state.

**Restoration** - The careful and meticulous return of a building to its appearance at a particular time period, usually on its original site, by removal of later work and/or replacement of missing earlier work.

**Return** - A surface turned back from a principal surface, such as the side of a pilaster or the jamb of a window or door opening.

**Reveal** - The vertical side section of a doorway or window frame.

**Rhythm (Horizontal, Vertical)** - The regular or harmonious recurrence of lines, shapes, forms, elements or colors, usually within a proportional system.



*Example of a building with “rhythm”.*

**Ridge** - The highest line of a roof where sloping planes intersect.

**Right-of-way** - A strip of land which has been established by reservation, dedication, prescription, condemnation, or other means and which is occupied by a road, walkway, railroad, utility distribution or transmission facility, or other similar use.

**Roofscape** - The collective image of rooflines and roof styles of adjacent buildings and structures as seen against the sky.

**Rustication** - A method of forming stonework with recessed joints and smooth or roughly textured block faces.

**Sash** - The framework into which window panes are set.

**Scale (Human)** - Scale is the measurement of the relationship of one object to another object. The scale of a building can be described in terms of its relationship to a human being. All components of a building also have a relationship to each other and to the building as a whole, which is the "scale" of the components. Generally, the scale of the building components also relate to the scale of the entire building.

The relationship of a building, or portions of a building, to a human being is called its relationship to "human scale." The spectrum of relationships to human scale ranges from intimate to monumental. Intimate usually refers to small spaces or detail which is very much in keeping with the human scale, usually areas around eight to ten feet in size. These spaces feel intimate because of the relationship of a human being to the space. The

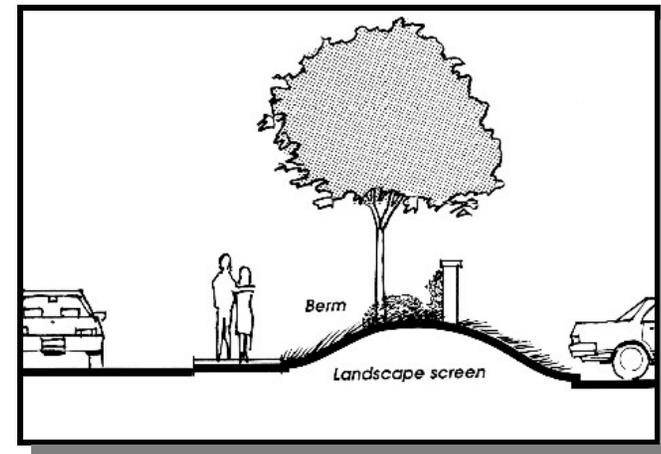
distance of eight to ten feet is about the limit of sensory perception of communication between people including voice inclination and facial expression. This distance is also about the limit of an up-stretched arm reach for human beings which is another measure of human scale. The components of a building with an intimate scale are often small and include details which break those components into smaller units.

At the other end of the spectrum, monumental scale is used to present a feeling of grandeur, security, timelessness, or spiritual well-being. Building types which commonly use the monumental scale to express these feelings are banks, churches, and civic buildings. The components of this scale also reflect this grandness, with oversized double door entries, 18 foot glass storefronts, or two-story columns.

Landscape or hardscape elements can also bring human scale to a large building by introducing features such as a tree canopy, leaf textures, and fragrance.

Plants can complement the scale of the architecture, as when large trees are used next to tall buildings, or small trees to accent a building component such as an entry.

**Screening** - A method of visually shielding or obscuring a structure, or portion of, by a fence, wall, berm, or similar structure.



*"Landscape screening"*

**Setback** - The minimum horizontal distance between the lot or property line and the nearest front, side or rear line of the building (as the case may be), including porches or any covered projection thereof, excluding steps.

**Shade** (as related to color) - The degree to which a color is mixed with black or otherwise darkened.

**Shake** - Split wood shingles.

**Shed roof** - A roof of only one slope (usually by extension)

**Siding** - The finish covering on the exterior of a frame building (with the exception of masonry). The term cladding is often used to describe any exterior wall covering, including masonry.

**Sign** - An object, device display or structure, or part thereof, situated outdoors or indoors, which is used to identify, display, or direct or attract attention to an object, person, institution, organization, business, product, service, event, or location by any means, including words, letters, figures, design symbols, fixtures, colors, illumination, or projected image.

**Sill** - The framing member that forms the lower side of an opening, such as a door sill. A window sill forms the lower, usually projecting, lip on the outside face of a window.

**Skyline** - The upper outline or silhouette of a building, buildings, or landscape as seen against the sky.

**Soffit** - The underside of a structure, such as the underside of a staircase, and archway, or a colonnade.

**Special event sign/banner** - A temporary sign or banner that is intended to inform the public of a unique happening, action, purpose, or occasion (i.e., grand opening or community event).

**Specimen tree** - A tree with a trunk diameter of three inches (3") as measured four and one-half feet (4.5 ') above the root crown of the tree (normally transported in a 48" box), which is

large enough to make an immediate, significant contribution to a landscape planting.

**Storage yard** - An open area adjacent to a principal service commercial or industrial use, intended for the keeping of equipment or materials incidental and necessary to the off-site conduct of such use.

**Storefront** - The traditional "main street" facade bounded by a structural pier on either side, the sidewalk on the bottom and the lower edge of the upper facade on top, typically dominated by retail display windows.

**Street wall** - The edges created by buildings and landscaping that enclose the street and create space.

**Stucco** - An exterior finish, usually textured, composed of portland cement, lime and sand, which are mixed with water.

**Surface materials** - Can be used to create a texture for a building; texture range from the roughness of stone or a ribbed metal screen, to the smoothness of marble or glass. Some materials, such as wood, may be either rough (such as wood shingles or re-sawn lumber) or smooth (such as clapboard siding).

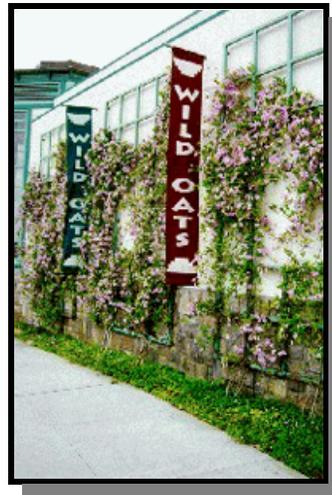
**Symmetry** - In architecture and landscape architecture, the balance of part by part which may be precise repetition, or repetition in counterpart, of one element of a building or landscape in relation to another.

**Temporary sign** - Any sign intended to be displayed for a limited period of time and capable of being viewed from any public right-of-way, parking area, or neighboring property.



*"Temporary Sign"*

**Texture** - Texture refers to variations in the exterior facade and may be described in terms of roughness of the surface material, the patterns inherent in the material, or the patterns in which the material is placed. Texture and lack of texture influence the mass, scale, and rhythm of a building. Texture also can add intimate scale to large buildings by the use of small detailed patterns, such as brick masonry.



*Photo of a trellis*

**Three-dimensional signs** - Signs that have a depth or relief on their surface greater than six inches.

**Tone** (as related to color) - A color or shade of color.

**Transom** - The horizontal division or cross-bar in a window, a window opening above a door.

**Trellis** - A lattice on which vines are often trained.

**Trim** - The decorative finish around a door or window; the architrave or decorative casing used around a door or window frame.

**Use** - The purpose for which the land or a building is arranged, designed, or intended to be used or for which it is or may be used.

**Wall sign** - A sign that is attached to or painted on the exterior wall of a structure with the display surface of the sign approximately parallel to the building wall.

**Window sign** - A sign posted, painted, placed, or affixed in or on a window exposed to public view. An interior sign that faces a window exposed to public view that is located within three feet of the window is considered a window sign for the purpose of calculating the total area of all window signs.



*"Window Sign"*

## CHAPTER 2: General Non-Residential Design Guidelines

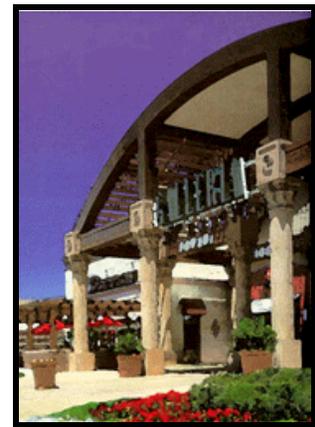
### A. Introduction

This chapter provides design guidelines that generally apply to all non-residential development. Addressed in this chapter are the following topics:

- ❖ Site planning;
- ❖ Parking and circulation;
- ❖ Landscape and hardscape;
- ❖ Architecture;
- ❖ Public/quasi-public space;
- ❖ Signs;
- ❖ Commercial building/center rehabilitation; and
- ❖ Public safety through design.

Chapters 3 and 4 in comparison, provide detailed design guidance for specific types of non-residential development that **build upon** the general design guidelines in this chapter.

The General Non-Residential Design Guidelines are intended to retain and encourage architectural variety, promote quality development, and address both new and existing development. They are built upon input from: the public who participated in a Visual Preference Survey; the City's General Plan; the Citywide Design Guidelines Ad Hoc Committee; and the recommendations provided in the report "Vision 2020: Seeds for the Future."

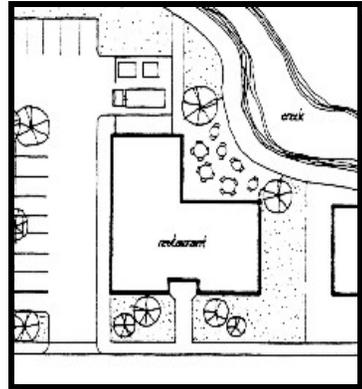


## B. Site Planning and Orientation Guidelines

Site planning refers to the arrangement and relationships of building, parking, pedestrian spaces, landscape, and other associated uses to one another.

### 1. Site Character/Compatibility

- a. Natural amenities such as views, mature trees, creeks, riparian corridors, and similar features unique to the site should be preserved and incorporated into non-residential development proposals.



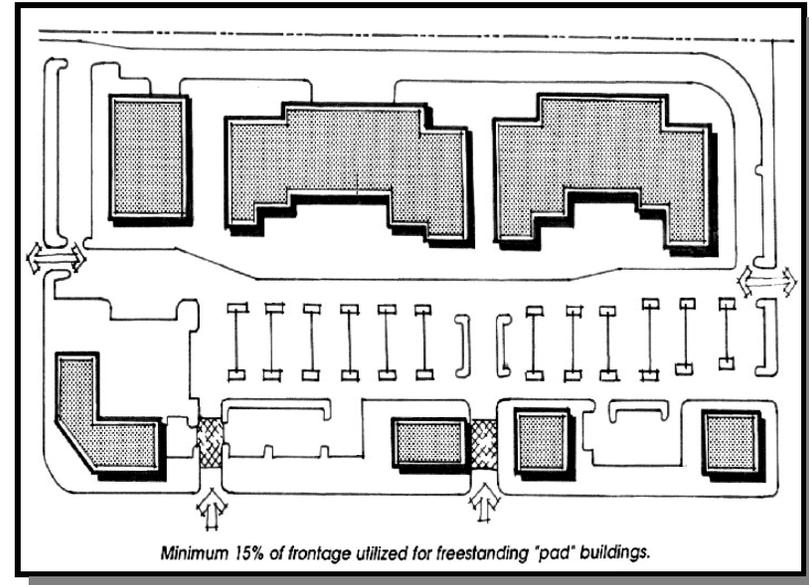
*Site plan incorporating natural amenities.*

- b. When the back of a building faces a natural or physical amenity, the subject elevation should be fully articulated.
- c. Frontage roads or drives should be provided adjacent to natural amenities, unless the commercial project is designed to provide direct pedestrian access to the amenity and the road or drive is not otherwise necessary.

- d. Development of sloped properties will generally follow the natural contours of the land. Terraced parking lots, stepped building pads, and larger setbacks should be used to preserve the general shape of natural landforms and to minimize grade differentials with adjacent streets and with adjoining properties.

### 2. Setbacks and “Build To” Lines

- a. The first floor of any new “exterior pad” site should be built directly at the front property line subject to the minimum required building setbacks per the City’s Development Code.



*Provide some buildings at street edge.*

- b. Building setbacks may include plazas, entry nooks, and outdoor café seating subject to the City's Development Code.



*Building setbacks should include outdoor café seating*

- c. Canopies, trellises and other accessory structures which are relatively open and do not restrict pedestrian or vehicular movement may project over the right-of-way subject to the City's Development Code.

### 3. Building Placement/Scale

#### General

- a. Buildings should be sited to create outdoor spaces which have a micro climate that responds to the localized weather condition. When the backs of a building faces a natural or planned amenities, the subject elevation should be fully articulated.



*Spaces between buildings should be useable spaces.*

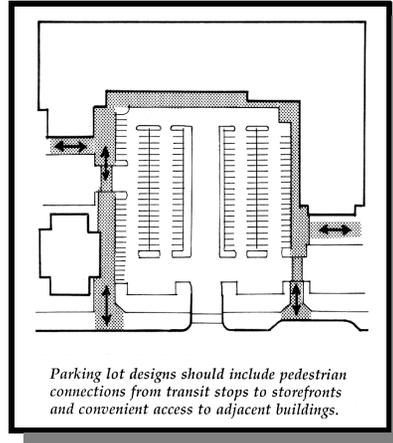
- b. On larger non-residential sites, such as shopping centers, a minimum 15% of the total property frontage should be occupied by buildings (see graphic on previous page). Such siting together with substantial landscape treatment, reinforces and strengthens the streetscape.



*Buildings should be sited to respond to localized climate.*

- c. Buildings should be sited and oriented close to the street with inviting and detailed elevations to strengthen the desired image for the area. Large blank walls adjacent to the street frontages are discouraged.
- d. The space between buildings should be used as "outdoor rooms" on the site. These spaces will need to have clear, useable shapes that are not simply leftover areas between buildings.
- e. "L" shaped shopping centers should be avoided. Shopping centers should incorporate either a clustered, village-oriented, or pedestrian-oriented Main Street site plan, or utilize external pads at the street edge for visual interest.

- f. Open space areas should be more useable by grouping them into larger, prominent landscape areas rather than equally distributing them into areas of low impact such as at building peripheries, minimal side yard setbacks, behind a structure, or to areas of little impact to the public's view.



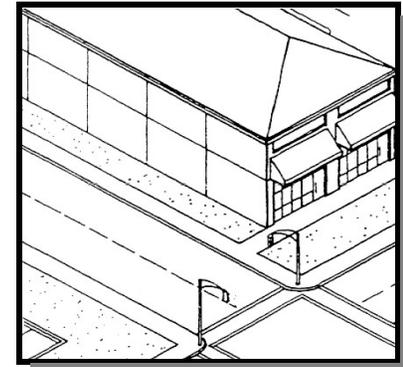
*Parking lot designs should include pedestrian connections from transit stops to storefronts and convenient access to adjacent buildings.*

- g. Buildings, in particular, those along transit routes, should have their entrances oriented toward bus stops for convenient access to the buildings by transit passengers.

### Street Orientation

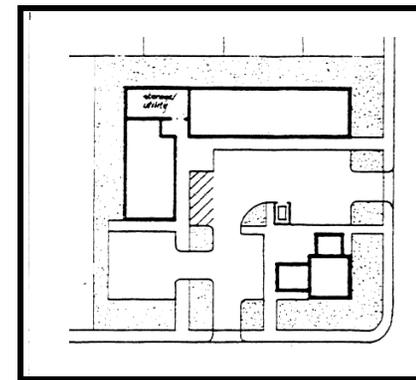
- a. Storefronts should orient to the major street frontage. While side or rear entries may be desirable, the predominant major building entry should be oriented toward the major street.
- b. The front building facade should be oriented parallel to the street.

- c. Buildings on corners should include storefront design features for at least 50% of the wall area on the side street elevation.
- d. Only active building elevations with public access, never blank-walls or loading areas, should face public streets.



*Blank walls should be minimized when adjacent to public streets.*

- e. Corner buildings should have a strong tie to the setback lines of each street. The primary mass of the building should not be placed at an angle to the corner. This does not preclude angled or sculpted building corners, or an open plaza at the corner.



*Building edges at front setback line*

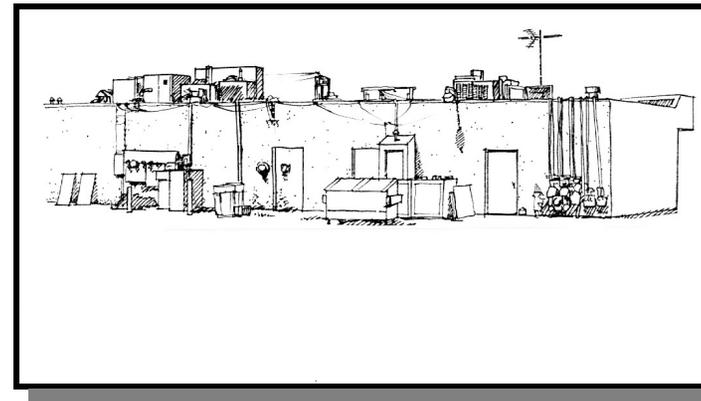
Relationship to Adjoining Properties

- a. Buildings should be sited and designed in a neutral fashion with respect to property boundaries. Care should be taken when addressing the interface between two or more properties.
- b. Multiple buildings in a single project should demonstrate a positive functional relationship with one another. Whenever possible, multiple buildings should be clustered to achieve a “village” scale.

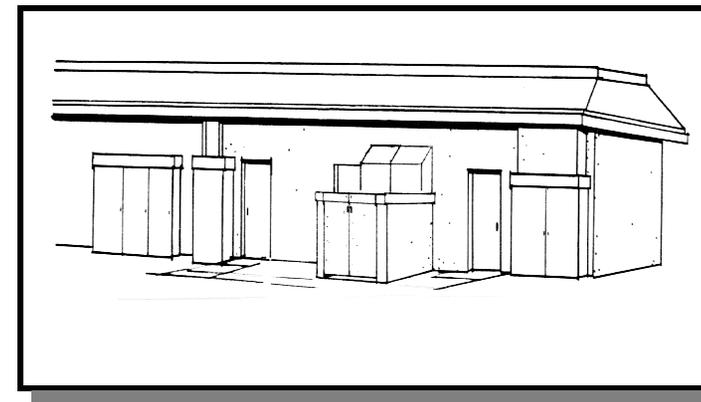
**4. Site Utilities and Service Areas**

- a. All utility equipment including, but not limited to, electric and gas meters, electrical panels, cable boxes, and junction boxes should be located in a utility room within the building.
- b. All utility lines from the service drop to the site should be underground.
- c. Utility equipment should not be visible from the street. Utility equipment including electrical transformers that cannot be adequately screened should be placed underground.
- d. Service Areas/Loading and storage activities should be concentrated and located where they will not create a nuisance for adjacent uses (especially residential uses).

- e. Where appropriate and feasible, “service areas” are encouraged over the dispersal of service facilities around the site. Service areas should include provisions for loading, trash/recycling bins, storage areas, utility cabinets, utility meters, transformers, etc.



*Inappropriate utility equipment screening*



*Appropriate utility equipment screening*

- f. Service areas, storage areas, and all areas for storage of maintenance equipment or vehicles, should be enclosed or completely screened from view from outside the service yard or area. Screening should include walls, buildings, gates, landscaping, berming, or combinations thereof.



*Appropriate area screening*

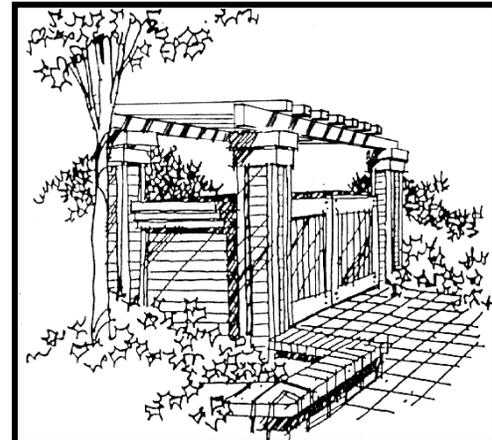
- g. Service areas should be located and designed for easy access by service vehicles and for convenient access by each tenant. They should also be located to minimize circulation conflicts with other site uses and should not create a nuisance for adjacent property owners.



*Appropriate trash enclosure design.*

- h. Service areas, by definition, preclude public circulation through them.

- i. The design of service area walls and similar accessory site elements should be compatible with the architecture of main building(s), and should use a similar palette of materials.
- j. All trash and garbage bins should be stored in an approved enclosure unless bins are stored in an approved service yard.
- k. Trash enclosures should be constructed with masonry walls and solid doors and should be architecturally compatible with the project. Wood trellises are acceptable. Vines should be planted to grow on walls to help deter graffiti.
- l. Trash enclosures should be located away from residential uses and should not create a nuisance for the adjacent property owners.



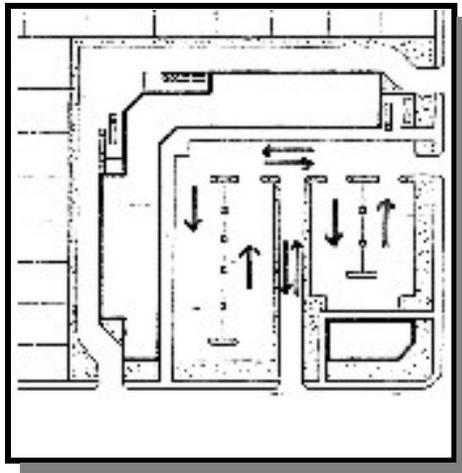
*All trash enclosures should be constructed architecturally compatible with the project.*

## C. Parking and Circulation Guidelines

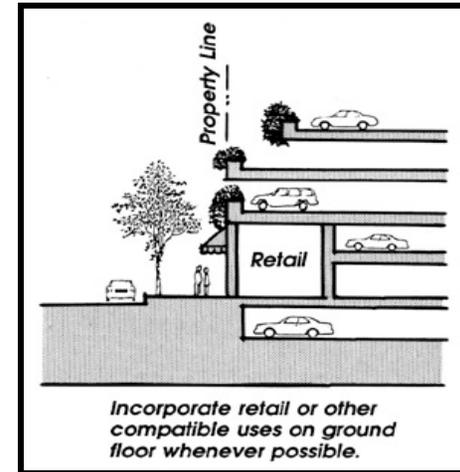
### 3. Parking Lot/Structure Design

#### General Considerations

- a. Parking space and aisle dimensions shall conform to the Simi Valley Development Code.
- b. Parking lots should be separated from buildings by raised walkway and landscape strip of at least 7 feet wide (e.g., 4 feet sidewalk/3 feet planter). Parking aisles or spaces should not directly abut the building.



*Appropriate on-site circulation hierarchy*



*Parking garage with retail uses*

- c. Aisle intersection and dead ends should be minimized.
- d. Parking garages should provide retail or other commercial uses at the sidewalk level whenever possible.
- e. Parking should not dominate the site in areas adjacent to any street. Parking should be concentrated in areas away from the street and behind front pad buildings when possible.
- f. Parking lots containing over 100 parking spaces should be designed with a clear hierarchy of circulation: major access drives with no parking; major circulation drives with little or no parking; and, parking aisles for direct access to parking spaces.

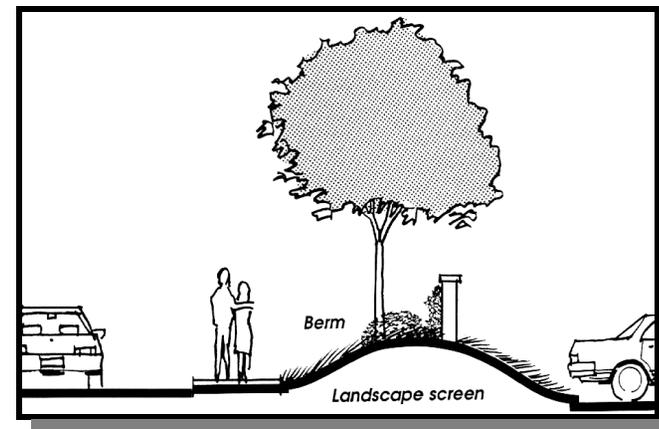
### Parking Orientation to Building

- a. Parking lots and any future parking structures should be located to the rear of buildings with direct pedestrian access to the building. Parking lots should not be located between a front property line and a building storefront. If parking needs to be in the front of the building, some of the parking should be located along the side and/or at the rear of the building.
- b. Parking lots should be designed and located contiguous to each other so that vehicles can travel from one private parking lot to the other (reciprocal access) without having to enter the street.
- c. Parking lots should not be located at street intersections.
- d. Private parking lots with street frontage should be attractively landscaped with a peripheral planting strip of trees and shrubs in order to continue the linear street frontage created by the existing flanking buildings and to screen parked vehicles. Low masonry garden walls (3 feet maximum height) at the setback line are also encouraged to screen parking from the street. NOTE: These walls should not interfere with public safety (i.e., auto ingress and egress visibility).
- e. Common reciprocal access driveways which provide vehicular access to adjacent parcels are strongly encouraged. Shared parking and circulation aisles coordinated between adjacent businesses and/or developments are also encouraged.

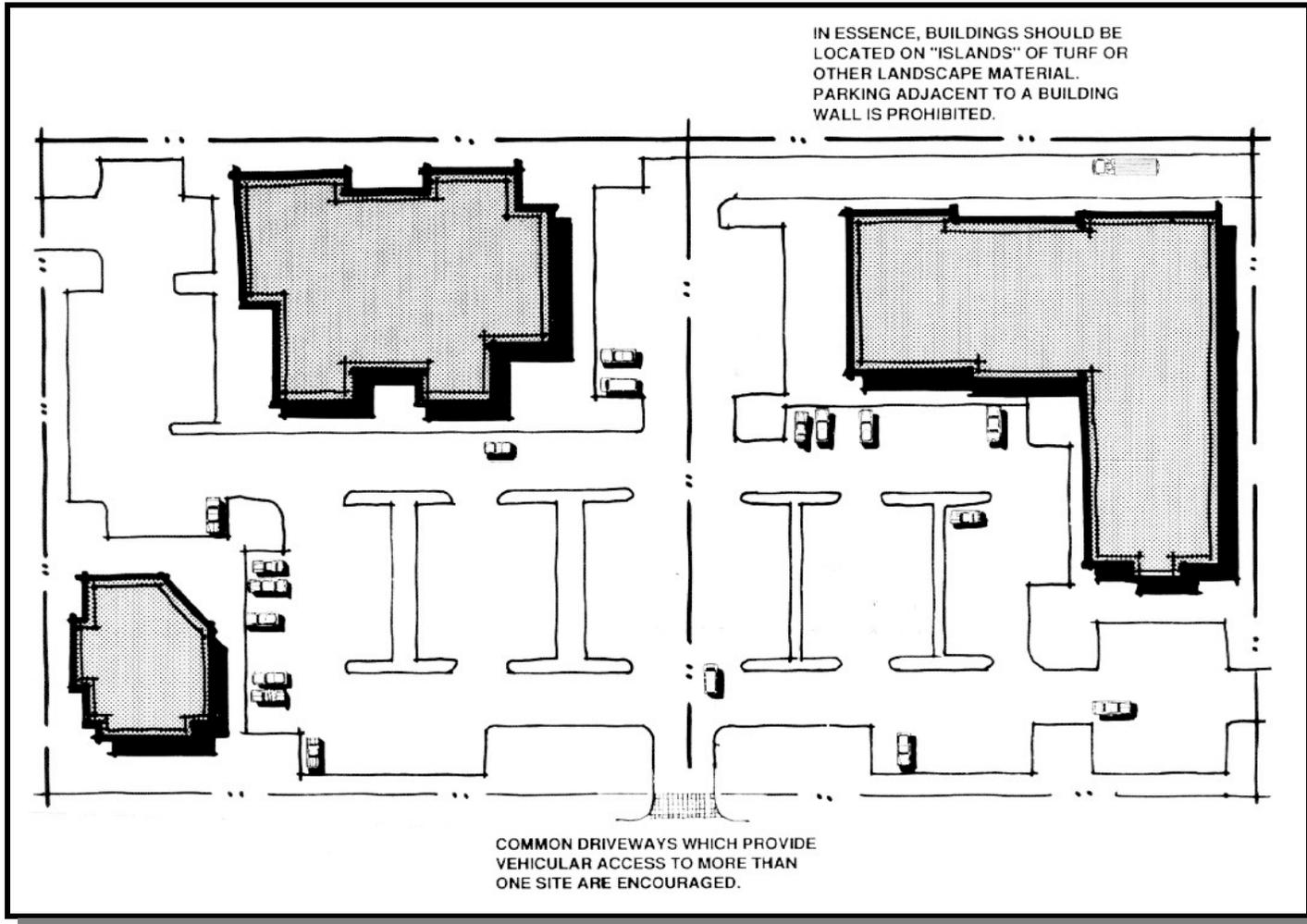
### Screening

All parking lots should incorporate screening at their street periphery. Parking lot screening shall be implemented utilizing at least one of the following alternatives:

- ▶ a minimum 36-inch landscaped earth berm;
- ▶ an opaque masonry wall which is a minimum of 36 inches high;
- ▶ a 30-36 inch evergreen hedge which creates a solid hedge;



*Example of extensive parking lot screening*



*Shared site access driveways is encouraged.*

- ▶ provide non-deciduous (evergreen) trees at 5 trees per 100 linear feet. Trees should be installed at 24-inch and 36-inch box container sizes; and



*Lower grade for parking lots.*

- ▶ lower the grade of the parking lot by 48-inches in relation to the adjacent public street.

### Lighting

- a. Parking lot lighting facilities should be located, with hoods provided and adjusted, so as to preclude the direct glare of the lights from shining directly onto adjoining property or streets. Outdoor lighting should be energy efficient, such as high-pressure sodium, and should be oriented and shielded to prevent direct illumination above the horizontal plane passing through the luminaire. High-mounted, widely spaced pole fixtures that illuminate large areas and are directed at building walls from a single source are not appropriate.
- b. The color of the parking lot lighting poles and bases (both same color) should be either black, white, brown, bronze or midnight blue. Loud distracting colors of poles such as yellow, pink and orange are prohibited.

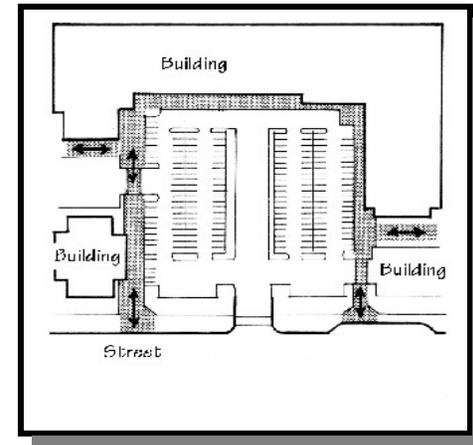
## 2. Site Access/Egress

### General

- a. Developments which are required to provide over 100 parking stalls and are located on an arterial or larger road designation should coordinate access/egress points with median openings and existing driveways on the opposite side of the roadway. Final locations are subject to review and approval of the City Engineer.
- b. On new developments which are required to provide over 200 parking stalls and are located on an arterial or larger street category, should provide deceleration lanes adjacent to their major entry per standards established by the City.

- c. All driveway radii are subject to City Standards.

- d. Provide access from side streets. Whenever possible, locate access drives on non-residential side streets to maintain efficient traffic flow on major roadways.

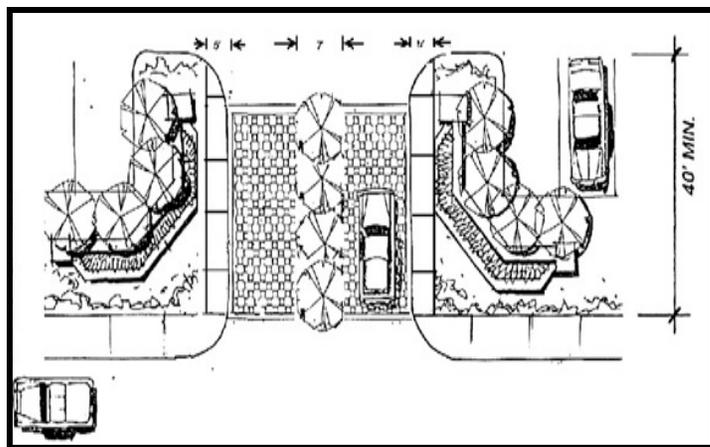


*Provide pedestrian connection to the street.*

## Chapter 2: General Non-Residential Design Guidelines

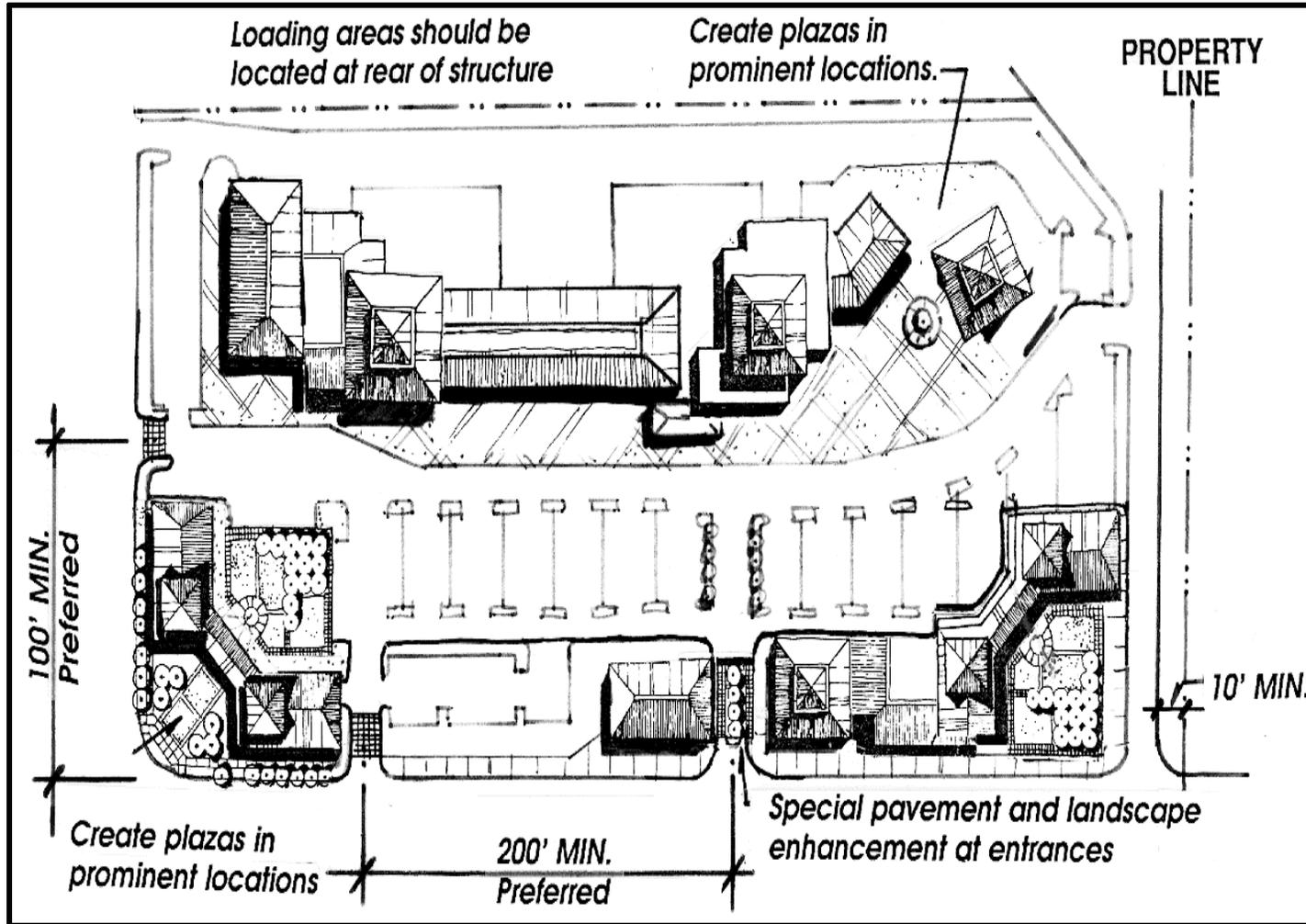
### Project Entry Design

- a. A clear and well designed entry into the project site should be created using walls, signage, paving, and planting to visually link the site entry to the building(s).
- b. In large parking lots with over 100 parking stalls, a main entry drive should extend from the public street to the front cross aisle and should:
  - ▶ include a minimum 7-foot wide landscaped center median from the public street to the first bisecting parking aisle;



*Enhance project entries with landscaping median, walkways, and special paving for visual impact.*

- ▶ include a minimum 4-foot wide sidewalk from the street to the front cross aisle on at least one side;
  - ▶ include two 7-foot wide landscaped parkways flanking both of its sides; and
  - ▶ not have any parking stalls along it.
- c. Provide deep entry drives. The first aisle juncture that intersects the main entry drive should be placed at least 40-feet back from the property line or public street right-of-way to provide adequate queuing distance off the street. Final locations and depths are subject to review and approval of the City Engineer.
  - d. Provide adequate spacing between neighboring commercial, industrial, or multi-family entry drives. Entry drives should be located a minimum of 200-feet apart (300 feet along arterial streets) and on centerline and at least 100-feet from any street intersection property line to driveway centerline. Also, access drives should be located a minimum of 20-feet from side property lines unless a shared drive is provided.



Driveway spacing standards

Pedestrian Access

- a. For projects over 50,000 square feet of building area., drop-off points (i.e., wider aisles) should be located near major building entries and plaza areas
- b. Separate cars and pedestrians. Parking areas should be designed so that pedestrians walk parallel to moving cars in parking aisles. The need for the pedestrian to cross parking aisles should be minimized. Landscape islands walkways should be used to connect parking and building entries.

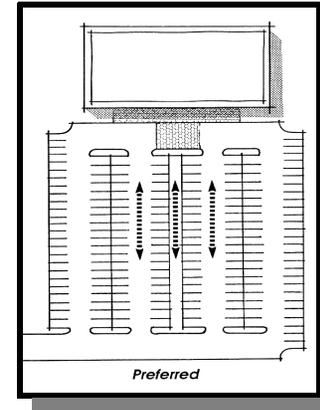
- c. Clearly defined pedestrian access should be provided from transit/bus stops to primary building entrances. In large projects with over 100 parking stalls, pedestrian walkways should be provided through parking areas.



*Pedestrian sidewalk within parking lot*

- d. The project design is required to be in compliance with all existing accessibility laws.
- e. All projects should demonstrate connection of the onsite pedestrian circulation system to the offsite public sidewalk.

- f. In large parking lots with over 100 parking stalls, a separate pedestrian walkway should be provided from the public sidewalk to the onsite walkways. At a minimum this main entry sidewalk should:



*Preferred parking design*

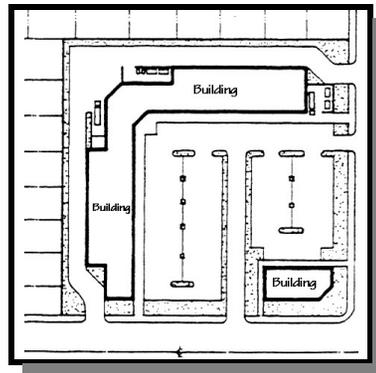
- ▶ be located on one side of the main entry drive aisle;
  - ▶ be a minimum of 4-feet wide at all points including locations where signs, poles, fire hydrants, etc., are placed in the walkway;
  - ▶ be raised and protected from the drive aisle by a 6-inch high curb; and
  - ▶ be constructed of concrete or interlocking paving stone systems.
- g. Asphalt sidewalks are discouraged.
  - h. Emphasis on pedestrian crossings of driveways and major circulation aisles should be accentuated at building entries by extending the sidewalk out into the parking aisle/lane.
  - i. Pedestrian linkages to nearby neighborhoods and other commercial properties should be provided when feasible.

### 3. Inter- and Intra-Site Circulation

Common reciprocal access driveways which provide vehicular access to adjacent parcels are strongly encouraged. Shared parking and circulation aisles coordinated between adjacent businesses and/or developments are also encouraged.

### 4. Loading & Delivery

- a. Consider areas for loading. Loading facilities should not be located at the front of buildings where it is difficult to adequately screen them from view. Such facilities are more appropriate at the rear of the site.
- b. When commercial buildings back residential properties, loading and delivery should be planned to occur at the side of the building away from residences.
- c. Loading spaces adjacent to residential properties are strongly discouraged. A loading space, however, may be located adjacent to parking areas for a multi-family project when another location is not feasible.



*Loading docks located to limit service activities adjacent residential properties*

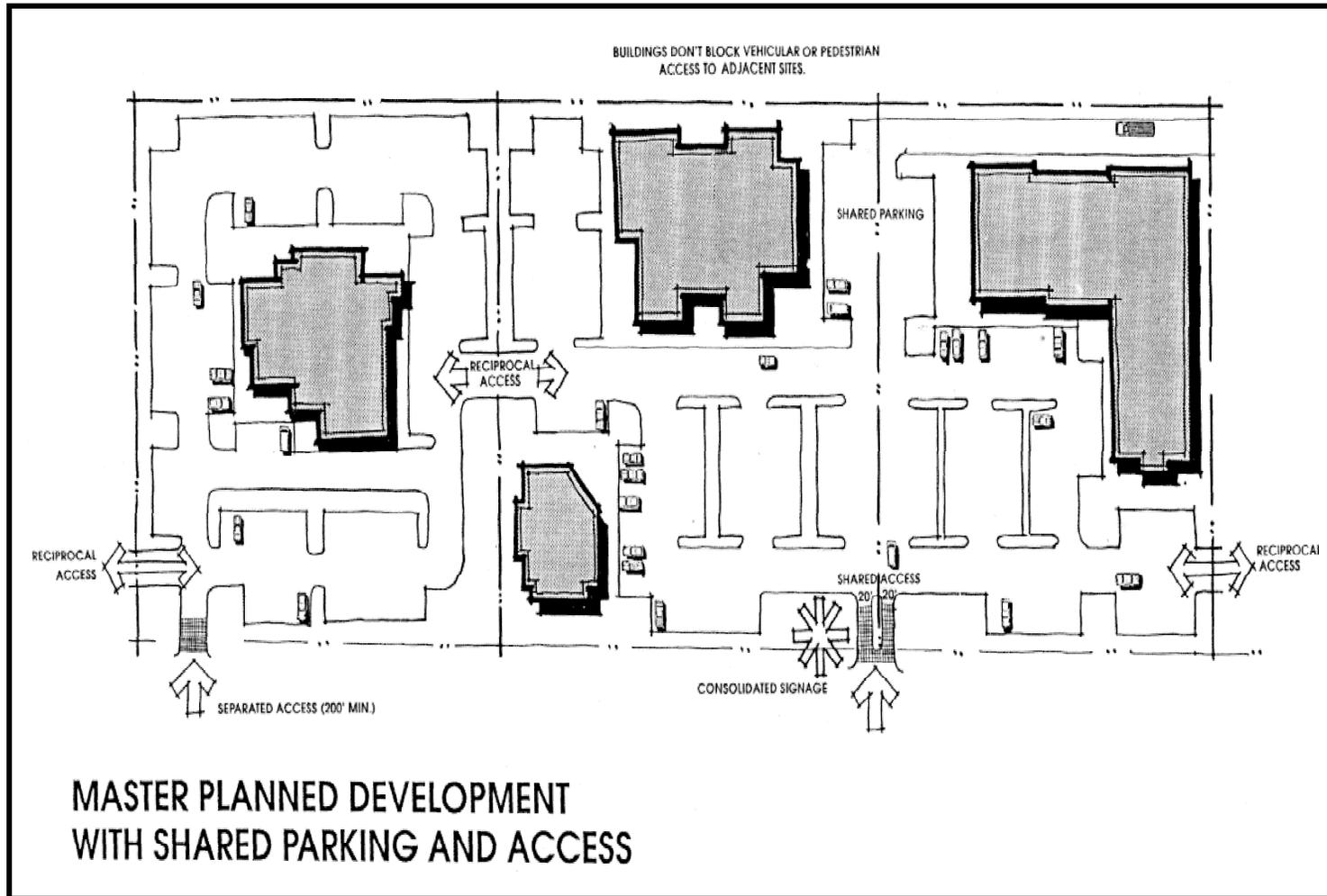
- d. Loading docks should not be located within 100 feet (50 feet if fully enclosed within a building) of residential structures or private rear yards.
- e. A loading space should be provided for each freestanding restaurant as defined in the Development Code.
- f. Loading area activities should not be visible from a public street. Screening should be complete and should match the design of the building. In Office Commercial Zone (refer to Development Code), an off street loading space may be treated as an unscreened automobile parking space if the loading space consist of a paved 11-foot by 35-foot loading area with no other service facilities provided.

### 5. Bus Turnouts

Clear pedestrian connections should be provided between bus shelters, public sidewalks, and adjacent non-residential developments.



*Provide pedestrian connection to public sidewalks.*



*Common reciprocal access driveways*

## D. Landscape/Hardscape Guidelines

### 1. Standard Design Concepts

The following design concepts should be utilized in all project design:

- ▶ specimen trees used in groupings and rows at major focal points such as project entries.
- ▶ use of flowering vines on walls and arbors.
- ▶ use of planting to create shadow and patterns against walls.

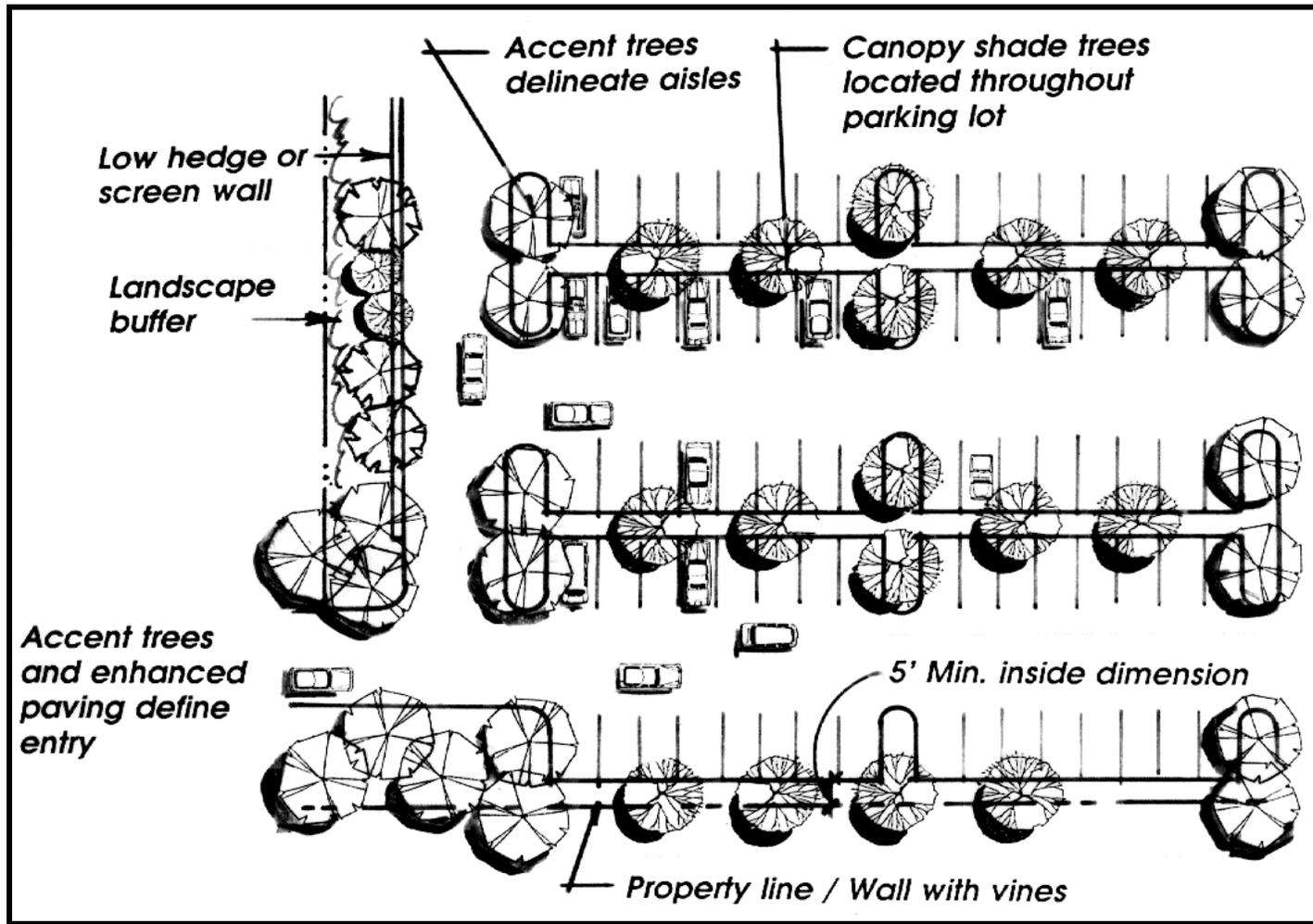
### 1. Plant Material Sizes, Location and Lists

- a. It is desirable to make new development look “established” as quickly as possible. Planting new trees that are older and better developed is viewed as superior to planting small underdeveloped saplings.
- b. A mixture of 24-inch, 36-inch and 48-inch box trees (15-gallon size on slopes), 5 and 15 gallon size shrubs, and ground cover should be used per the City’s landscape plan guidelines.
- c. Trees should be placed as follows:
  - ▶ No closer than 5 feet between center of trees or large shrubs, water meter or gas meter and sewer laterals;

- ▶ A minimum of 10-feet between center of trees or large shrubs and point of intersection of the edge of driveways;
- ▶ A minimum of 10-feet between center of trees or large shrubs to utility poles and 15 feet to light poles;
- ▶ A minimum of 8-feet between center of trees or large shrubs and fire hydrants and/or fire department sprinkler and standpipe connections; and
- ▶ Careful tree selection should be given when planting under overhead lines or over underground utilities to minimize interference with the installation or maintenance of any public utilities.



*Provide trees and shrubs at edge of sidewalks*



*Illustration of standard design concept*

### 3. Pots & Planters

#### Location of Pots

Planters and pots should be located where pedestrian flow will not be obstructed. Consider placing pots in locations where deep building recesses exist, where access is discouraged, to provide definition to spaces, and adjacent to blank walls to add interest to architectural monotony.

#### Planter Widths and Sizes

- a. Planters should be simple in form; round and square types are recommended.
- b. Planters should be durable and have natural earth tones that compliment the adjacent architecture.
- c. Materials should consist of cast stone, masonry, or stucco materials.
- d. Planters should be at least three (3) feet in diameter.



*Pots should be located where pedestrian flow will not be obstructed.*



*"Planters"*

- e. Where planters are called for, group sizes in clusters to enrich streetscapes and plazas.

#### Tree Grates

- a. In fully paved areas where tree planting is needed, tree grates should be used. A distinctive shape that combines a circle and square should be used, where possible, with the square end adjacent to paving edges or curbs.
- b. Narrow openings should radiate from the center. Tree openings should be expandable to allow for tree growth. Grates sizes should be a minimum of four feet in diameter.

#### 4. Parking Lot Landscaping

a. In large parking lots with over 200 parking spaces, the following landscape/design standards should be incorporated:

- ▶ Provide continuous landscape planting strips between every row of parking. This strip should be a minimum of 8-feet in width.

- ▶ Large planting islands should be created at the ends of parking rows. They should be planted with shade trees, low shrubs and groundcover. A 12-inch wide concrete paving strip should be placed along the curb perimeter of the landscaped islands.



*Parking lot landscaping should highlight pedestrian pathways and major drive aisles.*



*Provide intermediate planting islands in parking lots.*

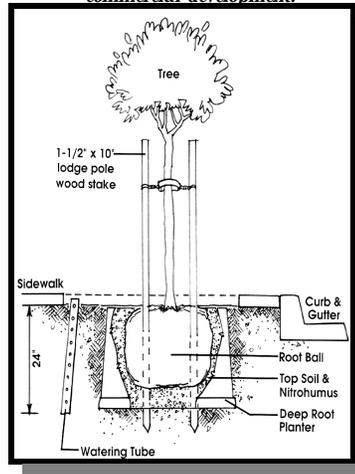
- b. Parking lots should include landscaping that accents the importance of driveways from the street, frames the major circulation aisles, and highlights pedestrian pathways. Driveways should have visual cues for drivers such as distinctive landscaping or directional signs.
- c. Landscaped areas should be provided between buildings and parking areas.
- d. When tree plantings for median/islands in parking lots are provided, the minimum planting area should 5 feet by 9 feet.

## 5. Freeway Landscape Buffer

- a. An average 30-foot landscape buffer should be provided adjacent to any freeway right-of-way.
- b. Parking or structures may be provided within the landscaping buffer area, as long as the 30-foot average buffer is maintained.
- c. In order to maintain the rural atmosphere of the freeway, adjacent commercial development walls or fences should not be within 15-feet of the freeway right-of-way.
- d. Earth berming should be incorporated into the freeway landscape buffer. The berm slopes shall be gentle slopes of less than 3:1. Height of berms should not exceed 6-feet.



*A combination of materials may be utilized along the freeway to buffer commercial development.*



*Deep root irrigation*

## 6. Irrigation (including drought tolerant landscapes)

- a. Permanent landscape irrigation should be provided for all landscape material.
- b. The landscape irrigation system should be designed to promote water conservation including preventing run-off and overspray to the greatest degree possible.
- c. Deep root irrigation should be encouraged for all trees but especially in areas with paving beneath the crown.

## 7. Revegetation and Erosion Control

- a. All slopes to be constructed at a gradient steeper than 6 horizontal to one vertical (6:1) and with a vertical height of three feet or greater should be revegetated.
- b. Consistent with reasonable physical stability, slope faces should be left rough in texture.
- c. All manufactured slopes steeper than 3:1 should be revegetated within 30 days of completion of grading or temporarily covered with straw mulch, jute netting, or other geotextile material capable of controlling erosion until revegetation can occur.
- d. Revegetation on all slopes, including hydroseeded areas, should include permanent irrigation systems.

- e. Temporary revegetation without irrigation should be considered under all the following set of conditions:
  - ▶ Permanent revegetation plans should be approved prior to issuance of any subsequent building permits;
  - ▶ The slope is not contiguous to public streets, parks, or the greenbelt park, and;
  - ▶ The slope gradient is 3:1 or less and the slope height is 10-feet or less.
- f. All slopes should be covered with herbaceous or prostrate shrubby ground covers. Mulches, jute netting or any combination thereof should also be applied.
- g. All plant materials should be appropriate to the site conditions, water conservation and appropriately spaced to control soil erosion. Turf type grasses are not recommended.
- h. Trees, shrubs, and ground covers should be planted in undulating massings and groupings to reduce the constricted character of manufactured slopes.
- i. All irrigation systems should be automatic.
- j. All piping should be buried and installed parallel to slope contours.

- k. Depending on slope heights, separate circuits should be required for top, toe, and/or middle of the slopes.

## 8. Screening and Access

### Walls and Fences

Walls and fences are generally used for security purposes and to screen areas from public view. If they are not required for a specific purpose, they should not be utilized. Walls provide hiding places for intruders and surfaces for graffiti. The intent is to keep walls as low as possible while performing their screening and security functions.

- a. Keep walls low - Walls and fences should be kept as low as possible while performing their screening and security functions.
- b. Materials and colors - Walls viewed from the street or parking lots should be designed to blend with the site's architecture through the use of similar materials and colors.



*Appropriate wall fence security fencing alternative*

- c. Landscape walls - Landscaping should be used in combination with walls to soften the otherwise blank surfaces. Vines planted on walls is strongly encouraged to hide flat wall surfaces and to help reduce graffiti.
- d. Security fencing - When security fencing is required, it should be a combination of solid walls with pillars and offsets, or short solid wall segments and segments with simple wrought iron grill work.
- e. Offset long walls - Walls should be offset every 50 feet and architecturally designed to reduce monotony. Landscape pockets along the wall should be provided at regular intervals.

### Gates

- a. Gates should be used for security purposes and to screen areas from public use. If they are not required for a specific purpose, they should not be utilized.
- b. Gates viewed from the street or parking lots should be designed to blend with the site's architecture through the use of similar materials and colors.

### Bollards

Although designers are always coming up with new uses for bollards, they are incorporated below for their standard function of separating pedestrians from vehicle traffic areas and for lighting sidewalk surfaces.



*"Bollards"*

- a. The bollards should be designed to match the architecture through use of similar materials and colors.
- b. The use of huge "super bollards" is discouraged. Bollards should not exceed 36" in height nor 10" in diameter.



*Bollards should be of similar architectural style of the primary building.*

**9. Paving Materials and Surfaces (non-parking areas)**

- a. Paving materials should be used for aesthetic and safety purposes. Paving materials warn motorists that they are entering or passing through a pedestrian area.
- b. Paving materials are often used at driveway entries and pedestrian crosswalks. The design, materials, and colors used for paving is subject to City approval.



*Paving materials should be aesthetically pleasing.*



*Special paving is encouraged.*



*Example of using special paving materials.*

## E. Architectural Guidelines

### 1. Architectural Imagery

The choice of a good quality architectural style in Simi Valley is meant to fulfill three specific objectives. The first objective is the establishment of a sense of place. This sense of place can be best accomplished by choosing a particular architectural style within which all commercial structures will be designed. It is the intent that this architectural style to create a particular character and a sense of consistency throughout the local district. The style should reflect the most predominant style found within the community. This consistency is not meant to be constrictive, but rather offer diversity within stated parameters and it is not meant to create a situation where all the buildings tend to look the same.

The second objective is to respond to the geographical location and climate of the area. Due to the warm, semi-arid nature of Simi Valley, the architectural style should consist of low maintenance materials. The selected style should be able to respond to the need to create shaded areas in a manner which does not produce forced or inappropriate architectural forms and shapes.

The third objective is to set Simi Valley apart from its neighboring communities and to create unique districts within the City itself. There is no specific architectural style which best fulfills these objectives. Rather, the architectural style

chosen for a project should achieve these objectives and be of good quality design.



**Chapter 2: General Non-Residential Design Guidelines**

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The design elements that establish high quality architectural style include the following:

- ▶ *simple, multi-planed pitched roofs*
- ▶ *open rafters/tails with large overhangs*
- ▶ *the appearance of “thick” walls*
- ▶ *courtyards, arcades, intimate spaces*
- ▶ *tile details*
- ▶ *deep-set window and door openings*
- ▶ *offset wall planes*
- ▶ *fountains and other unique details*
- ▶ *building masses with the incorporation of one and two story architecture*
- ▶ *sequencing of enclosed space/arches*

The elements that detract from architectural quality include the following:

- ▶ *truncated or non-existent roof overhangs*
- ▶ *flat roofs without decorative parapets*
- ▶ *plastic tiles*
- ▶ *highly reflective tiles*
- ▶ *roof tiles of primary color (green, orange, blue, etc.)*
- ▶ *exposed pipe columns*
- ▶ *typical franchise*
- ▶ *reflective material on windows on the ground floor*
- ▶ *the appearance of thin walls*
- ▶ *plastic awnings*

Materials that contribute to good quality architecture are:

- ▶ *stucco, smooth, sand or light lace finish*
- ▶ *wood, as an exposed structural material*
- ▶ *clay or concrete roof tiles*
- ▶ *native fieldstone*
- ▶ *wood window casements*
- ▶ *wood, as an accent material*
- ▶ *brick, as an accent material*
- ▶ *wrought iron*
- ▶ *tile, as an accent material*
- ▶ *slumpstone garden walls*

Materials that detract from quality architecture are:

- ▶ *metal or aluminum siding/roofing*
- ▶ *wood shingle on walls*
- ▶ *plywood siding*
- ▶ *plastic tile*
- ▶ *pipe railings*
- ▶ *metal/concrete stairs*
- ▶ *slump block (for building walls)*
- ▶ *unmilled, bare aluminum window frames*

## 2. Color

- a. Color is intended to act as a primary theme conveying element. In general, earthtone wall colors should be predominate including off-white, cream, or light pastels while avoiding the strong pink and salmon hues.
- b. Wood should be light brown stain or kept natural for a grey weathered look.
- c. Accent colors may be used to impart a festive quality to the buildings especially in commercial areas. Accent colors are frequently brilliant shades of blue, ochre, red, deep blue-green, and yellow. The accent colors would typically be used around doors and for window articulation.

## 3. Roofs

- a. Slopes of roof should be shallow and should range between 4:12 and 6:12. Steeply-pitched roofs greater than 6:12 are discouraged, except on architectural elements and towers. (Pitches may be steeper on architectural elements and towers.)
- b. Gabled, hipped, and shed roofs are encouraged when appropriate to the style of building.
- c. Continuous mansard roofs, large expanses of flat roofs, and false mansard roofs are discouraged.
- d. Long, unbroken, horizontal roof lines are discouraged.

## 4. Architectural Elements

### Windows

Windows are typically rectangular but may include other shapes. The appearance of the window is an important characteristic of good architectural design. Attention should be paid to materials, placement, depth of recess, and ornamentation, such as window grilles.

### Doors and Loading Doors

Doors, like windows, are typically rectangular. The treatment of doors and doorways influences the perceived architectural quality of commercial buildings and the businesses within.

### Exterior Lighting (Spacing and Location)

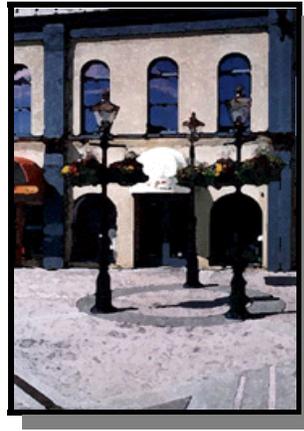
Lighting is part of the architectural vocabulary and as such can be utilized to help create and dramatize the nighttime image of a structure, plaza, or garden, thereby extending the hours of their use. Each light fixture must also be attractive to look at during the day when the pole base and light fixture add another dimension to the urban scene. The overall size and scale of the particular fixtures are also an important consideration.

On each project site, all lighting fixtures should be from the same family of fixtures with respect to design, materials, color, and color of light. Lighting sources should be shielded, diffused, or indirect to avoid glare to pedestrians and motorist. To minimize

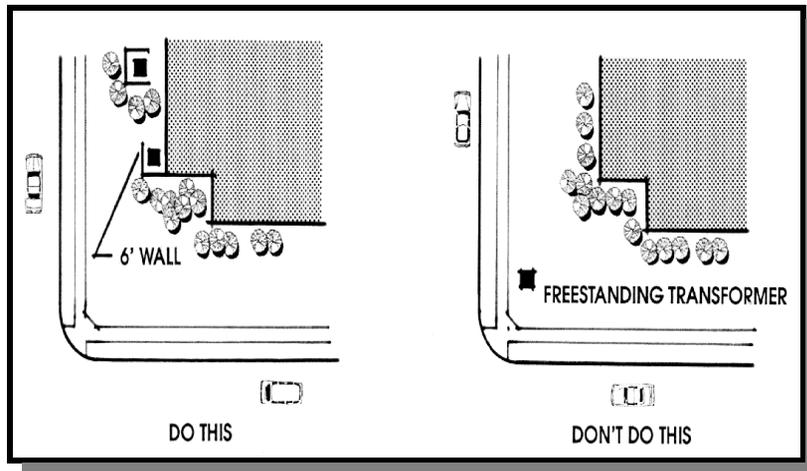
the total number of freestanding light standards, wall mounted lights should be utilized to the greatest extent possible.

### Exterior Stairs

Simple, clean, boldly-projecting stairways that complement the architectural massing and form of the buildings are encouraged. Stairways should be designed and constructed to be an integral part of the architecture of the building.



*Lighting should be similar to the architectural style of the primary building.*



*Screen front yard transformers.*

### Equipment and Utility Covers

- a. Transformers should never be the dominant element of the front landscape area. When transformers are unavoidable in the front setback area, they should be placed underground or completely screened by walls and/or thick landscaping, and should not obstruct views of tenant spaces, monument signs, and/or driveways.
- b. All mechanical equipment such as compressors, air conditioners, antennas, pumps, heating and ventilating equipment, emergency generators, chillers, elevator penthouses, water tanks, stand pipes, solar collectors, satellite dishes and communications equipment, and any other type of mechanical equipment for the building should be concealed from view of public streets, neighboring properties, and nearby higher buildings.
- c. Mechanical equipment should not be located on the roof of a structure unless the equipment can be hidden by building elements that are designed for that purpose as an integral part of the building design.
- d. Mechanical equipment should be located and operated in a manner that does not subject adjacent occupants and activities to noise that is disturbing by virtue of its volume or nature.

Security Hardware

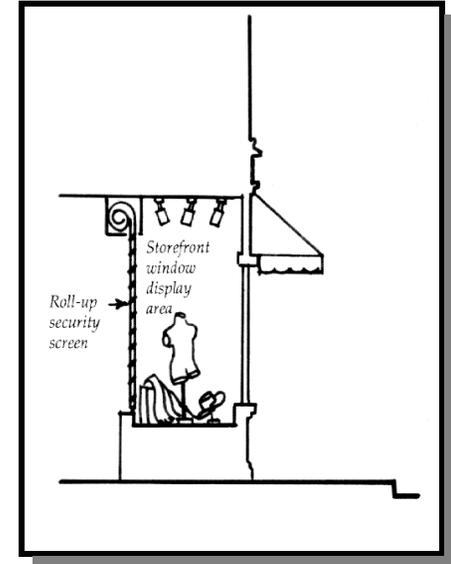
- a. If security grilles are necessary, they should be placed inside the building behind the window display area or architecturally interesting.
- b. As a security device, lighting should be adequate but not overly bright. All building entrances should be well lighted. The lighting should be designed so that the lighting is an attractive element in its own right, acting as a public amenity.
- c. The rear entry door should be wood/metal and glass similar to the front door. Special security glass (i.e. wire imbedded) is allowed.
- d. Storefront security may be enhanced through the utilization of shatter resistant laminated vigil pane security glass (or glass-clad polycarbonate windows).
- e. Any utilization of interior scissors grilles should be concealed from public view when not in use by retracting the grilles into casings which are in proportion and scale with the building's architecture. However, although they are allowed, the use of interior scissors grilles is strongly discouraged since they communicate a message of high crime and cannot be



*Example of preferred security hardware*

integrated visually into the overall design of a building or storefront.

- f. Exterior lights that are a part of streetscape improvements should provide adequate lighting levels. However, in the case of a deep threshold to a building, a light applied to the ceiling of this area is strongly recommended to illuminate building entrances.



*Roll-up interior security screen*

- g. Lighting should be designed to satisfy both functional and decorative needs. Storefront lighting should complement the architectural style of the building while providing illumination of building facades and entrances.
- h. All security lighting should be designed as part of an overall lighting plan rather than as single stand alone elements.



*Incorporate architectural lighting onto building facades.*

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- i. Any window signage should be placed to provide a clear and unobstructed view of the interior of the business establishment from the sidewalk (and in any case is not permitted to exceed 25% of the window area).
  - j. Safety behind buildings should be ensured through use of: 1) adequate security lighting for parking areas and pedestrian ways; 2) limited access (walls, fences, gates, shrubs); 3) signage; 4) introduction of activities (e.g., rear entrances for commercial activities) that increase surveillance; 5) surveillance through windows or with cameras; and 6) ongoing maintenance of storage areas and alleys.
- 5. Appropriate and Inappropriate Building Materials**
- a. Traditional materials used in various styles of architecture are simple and straightforward; plaster, clay tile, masonry, metal wrought iron, and wood. Stucco does not have to be the predominant material used to cover the walls of the buildings. The stucco if utilized, should be smooth with a gentle hand-applied texture with smooth, rounded corners (bullnose).
  - b. Wood should be used on posts, beams, handrails, spindles, balcony floors on cantilever balconies, window grilles, vents, windows, shutters, and doors.
  - c. Wrought iron is appropriate for handrails, window grills, gates, lighting fixtures, signs, and door and shutter hardware.
  - d. Ceramic tile can be used on the exterior for door and window surrounds, wainscots on walls, wall fountains, and stair risers.
  - e. Encouraged Materials:
    - ▶ *stucco, smooth, sand or light lace finish*
    - ▶ *wood*
    - ▶ *clay or concrete roof tiles*
    - ▶ *native fieldstone*
    - ▶ *wood window casements*
    - ▶ *wood, as an accent material*
    - ▶ *brick*
    - ▶ *wrought iron*
    - ▶ *tile, as an accent material*
    - ▶ *decorative metal*
    - ▶ *split face concrete block*
  - f. Discouraged Materials:
    - ▶ *reflective or opaque glass*
    - ▶ *plastic tile*
    - ▶ *pipe railings*
    - ▶ *metal/concrete stairs*
    - ▶ *metal buildings*
    - ▶ *unmilled, bare aluminum window frames*

## 6. Color

Color is intended to act as a primary theme conveying element. In general, wall colors should be predominately off-white, cream, or light pastels while natural for a grey weathered look.

Permitted wall colors should be soft, subdued, versus primarily colors. Franchise colors should be adjusted to be more “village” subdued colors versus primary, bright or brilliant colors.

Exterior color is a complex and sensitive subject in design guidelines. Color choice has a particularly personal dimension; it is an expression of the building owner, and the businesses located within the building. If some basic color guidelines are kept in mind, color can add to the richness and variety of non-residential development in Simi Valley.

### a. General

There are several general guidelines that can be broadly applied; bear in mind that there are always exceptions to such generalizations:

- ▶ Use more subtle colors on larger and plainer buildings;
- ▶ Use more colors and more intense colors on small buildings or those with elaborate detailing;

- ▶ Relate paint colors to natural colors found on the building;
- ▶ Relate paint colors to existing elements found on the building such as signs or awnings;
- ▶ Encourage contrasting colors which accent architectural details;
- ▶ Encourage colors which accent entrances;
- ▶ Avoid the most intense hues of a color;
- ▶ Avoid using more than one vivid color per building;
- ▶ Avoid using colors that are disharmonious with colors found on adjacent buildings; and
- ▶ Avoid using typical “franchise” primary colors such as red, yellow, blue, green and purple.

### b. Influence of Climate

Because the amount of sun can change the appearance of a paint color, paint chips (i.e. color samples) should be checked on both sunny and cloudy or foggy days. Painting a small section of the building in the chosen colors prior to making a final color selection is the best way to check the effect of the colors on the building.

c. Building Orientation

The orientation of a building (north, east, south, west) affects the appearance of colors. Colors on south and west facades appear warmer than if placed on north or east sides.

d. Color Palette

In general, no more than three colors should be used on any given facade, including “natural” colors such as unpainted brick or stone. These three colors can be referred to as the base color, major trim color, and minor trim color. The base color is the color of the basic facade wall plane. This color may be the natural color of masonry or the primary paint color. The base color should relate harmoniously with the base colors on contiguous buildings and should “fit” within the basic colors of the block. The choice of the base color is of primary importance. Generally, light base colors will visually project and lessen the importance of the building mass by emphasizing detailed work. Darker base colors tend to visually recede and emphasize the trim.

The major trim color is used on the construction and decorative elements which serve to define the facade. This color should be used on both the storefront and the upper facade to tie the facade together as a whole. Elements which define the facade include upper and lower cornices, decorative window caps and sills, and storefront columns. When the base color is natural brick, the major trim color

should be related to the brick color. When the base color is painted, the trim color should complement the base color.

The minor trim color is used primarily as an accent to highlight the architectural details of the facade. Elements such as window frames and sash, doors, and other trim elements within the facade openings can be emphasized by the minor trim color. If there are only a few minor trim elements, all the trim should be painted one color in order to strengthen the overall visual impact. If the minor trim is painted a third color, it should strengthen the color scheme already established by the base color and the major trim colors. In most cases, when two colors are used on trim, the minor trim color should be a darker shade of the major trim color.

e. Contrast

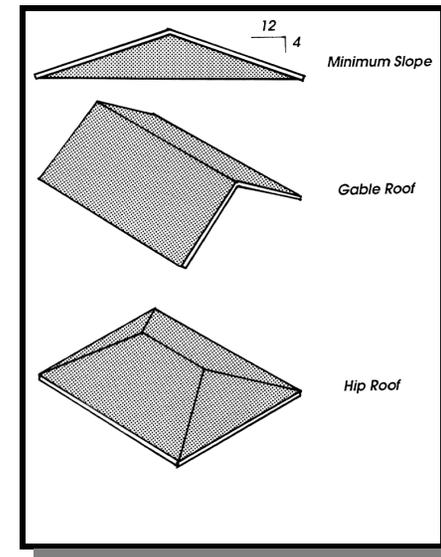
Color or color contrast can draw attention to desirable key features of a building such as an entry, and mask or diminish the importance of other features, such as a service area. In general, contrast (light against dark or dark against light) will draw attention, and should be used to highlight the most important elements of buildings.

f. Natural Materials

Finish material with “natural” colors such as brick, stone, copper, etc., should be used where practicable.

## 7. Roofs and Rooftop Equipment

- a. A 4:12 - 6:12 roof pitch is appropriate for all main roof surfaces.
- b. Roof pitch for attached arcades or colonnades should be a minimum 2:12. Roof types should be limited to low pitched gable roofs, with the occasional use of a hip roof or shed roof as an accent at the end of a building. With the extensive use of stucco and prevailing weather conditions, large roof overhangs are strongly encouraged.
- c. Roof materials should be comprised of the standard barrel tiles or concrete tile. Roof color can vary, however, blue, yellow, green or orange which are indicative of certain “franchise architectural” solutions are strongly discouraged.
- d. All flashings, vents, pipes, and sheet metal should be colored to match the adjoining roof or wall materials. Solar panels are to be flush with the roof slope and screened from view.
- e. Roof forms and masses should be approximately detailed, consistent with the overall architectural character and scale of the building.
- f. Exposed structural elements (beams, trusses, frames, rafters, etc.) are encouraged to reflect and authenticate certain styles of architecture.
- g. Roof materials and colors are important aspects of the overall building design. Materials and colors should be consistent with the desired architectural building character.
- h. Where flat roofs are visible, the inside of roof parapet walls should be painted the same color as the exterior of said parapet.
- i. Standing seam metal roofs are generally discouraged. However, if it can be shown that it is integral to the architectural style and “fits”, it may be allowed.



*Example of roof types.*

j. Encouraged:

- ▶ *gable and hip roofs*
- ▶ *shed roofs*
- ▶ *combining one and two story roof elements*
- ▶ *creating articulation in ridgeline plane*
- ▶ *varying plate heights and ridge heights*
- ▶ *flat roofs with prominent parapets or cornices*

k. Discouraged:

- ▶ *flat roofs without prominent parapets or cornices*
- ▶ *gambrel roofs*
- ▶ *mansard roofs*
- ▶ *A-frame type roofs*

## 8. Storefront Design

Although the storefront is only one of the architectural features of the facade, it is the most important visual element.

### Storefront Composition

a. Entries/Doorways

The main entry to a building, leading to a lobby, stair or central corridor, should be emphasized at the street to announce a point of arrival in one or more of the following ways:

- ▶ flanked columns, decorative fixtures or other details;
- ▶ recessed within a larger arched or cased decorative opening;
- ▶ covered by means of a portico (formal porch) projecting from or set into the building face; and
- ▶ punctuated by means of a change in roofline, a tower, or a break in the surface of the subject wall.

Buildings situated at the corner of a public street should provide a prominent corner entrance.

Commercial storefront entries are typically recessed and/or sheltered by a covered arcade structure, canopy, or awning. This provides more area for display space, a sheltered transition area to the interior of the store, and emphasizes the entrance. Recessed entries should be retained and are strongly encouraged in new storefront construction. Overly deep entries (over 5-feet) should be avoided.

b. Awnings and Canopies

Where the facade is divided into distinct structural bays (sections defined by vertical architectural elements, such as masonry piers), awnings should be placed within the vertical elements rather than overlapping them. The awning design should respond to the scale, proportion and rhythm created

by these structural bay elements and "nestle" into the space created by the structural bay.

Awnings are encouraged and should have a single color or two-color stripes. Lettering and trim utilizing other colors is permitted, but will be considered as sign area.



*Awnings should have a single color or two-color stripes.*

- ▶ Aluminum awnings or "brow" canopies generally detract from the character of the building and are discouraged.
- ▶ Awnings provide the opportunity for color and visual relief as well as protecting shop windows from intense direct sunlight.
- ▶ The most functional awnings are "retractable," having a frame and support structure with the ability to be adjusted up or down depending upon lighting conditions. Where awnings are used, it is recommended that they be of retractable design.
- ▶ When there are several businesses in one building, awnings of the same color should be used with simple signs on the valance flap (not to exceed 8 inches) and (6

letters) that may vary in type style and color to differentiate the individuals businesses within the building.

- ▶ Awnings should be of a durable, commercial grade fabric, canvas or similar material having a matte finish. Awning frames and supports should be of painted or coated metal or other noncorroding material. Glossy or shiny plastic or similar awning material is not recommended. Translucent or "backlit" awnings which allow light to pass through them are strongly discouraged.
- ▶ Awnings should only be used over windows and doors.

#### Storefront Accessories and Details

##### a. Grillwork/Metalwork and Other Details

There are a number of details, often thought of as mundane, which may be incorporated into the design to add a degree of visual richness and interest while meeting functional needs. Such details include the following items:

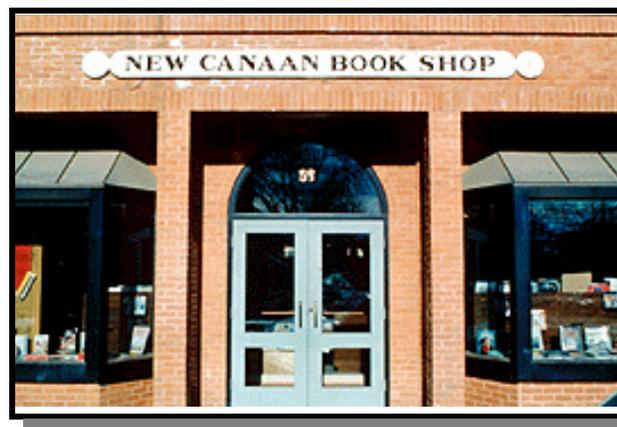
- ▶ Light fixtures, wall mounted or hung with decorative metal brackets;
- ▶ Metal grillework, at vent openings or as decorative features at windows, doorways or gates;

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- ▶ Decorative scuppers, catches and down-spouts, preferably of copper;
- ▶ Balconies, rails, finials, corbels, plaques, etc;
- ▶ Flag or banner pole brackets.;
- ▶ Fire sprinkler stand pipe enclosures and hose bib covers, preferably of brass; and
- ▶ Security devices.

**b. Door and Window Design**

- ▶ Doors can be accentuated with simple details such as a handsome brass door pull, brass kickplate or an attractive painted sign.
- ▶ Doors to retail shops should contain a high percentage of glass in order to view the retail contents and the people inside.
- ▶ Use of clear glass (at least 88% light transmission) on the first floor is recommended.



*Example of a well designed contemporary storefront door/window*

- ▶ When windows are added or changed, it is important that the new design be sympathetic to and compatible with the fenestration of surrounding structures. Introducing or changing the location or size of windows or other openings that alter the architectural rhythm or character of the original building is discouraged.
- ▶ Storefront windows should be as large as possible and no closer than 18" from the ground (bulkhead height). By limiting the bulkhead height, the visibility to the storefront displays and retail interior is maximized. Maximum bulkhead heights for new construction should be 36".

## F. Public/Quasi-Public Space Guidelines

### 1. General

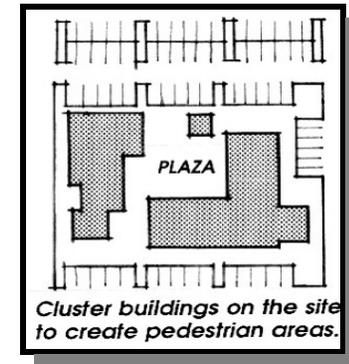
#### Monuments/Gateway Markers

A critical element in establishing a sense of place and identity is defining a strategy or entry into a non-residential use, such as a commercial center or business park. A hierarchy of gateways should be designed to dramatically announce that the visitor is entering a special place. Gateways should range in form and scale from an archway element to directional signage on a light pole to a monument sign surrounded by unique landscaping and lighting.

#### Plazas and Courtyards

- a. Plazas should be incorporated into commercial/office developments whenever possible.
- b. Retail shops, restaurants, offices or other activity-generating uses should be located at the edges of plazas; blank walls should be minimized adjacent to such pedestrian spaces.
- c. Plazas should be designed with unimpeded line-of-sight to and from the public sidewalk; and physical access should be provided from the public sidewalk to plazas.

- d. Entries to the plaza, and storefront entries within the plaza, should be designed and lighted so they do not create hiding places.
- e. Visual features, such as public art or a fountain, should be incorporated in plazas to attract pedestrians.
- f. Shade trees or other elements providing relief from the sun should be incorporated within plazas, in a manner that does not impair pedestrian movement.



*Cluster buildings on the site to create pedestrian plazas.*

- g. A majority of the gross area of the plaza should have access to sunlight for the duration of daylight hours. A mix of direct sunlight and shade should be provided. No more than 30 percent of a plaza should be covered with a roof. Canopies, awnings, cantilevered overhangs, or balconies may project over the ground floor but should not prohibit the penetration of sunlight to the ground floor.

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- h. At least 10 percent of the plaza's surface should be landscaped. Landscaping for the plazas should provide special interest through plant materials with integral interest such as special foliage color, seasonal changes in plant habit, scent, or floral display.
- i. Paving and furniture used in private plazas should complement streetscape elements used in the public right-of-way, whenever appropriate.
- j. Plazas should provide at least one sitting place for each 100 square feet of plaza in addition to any permitted outdoor dining.
- k. Plazas, including all entrances and exits, should be fully illuminated ½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise to facilitate natural surveillance opportunities and to discourage illegitimate activities. Lighting should be designed to help define, order and further develop the design concept of the space in a manner that appears welcoming to pedestrians.
- l. Signage or other mechanisms should identify that the plaza is available for public use during business hours.
- m. Security gates and security fencing should not be used in plazas.

Entry courtyards

- a. Courtyards, where used, should include a focal element of sculpture and/or water, simple plantings and simple sitting niches with a view of the goings-on within the space.
- b. Courtyard trees should be drought tolerant and be planted in simple geometric symmetries.
- c. Courtyards should be designed to provide both visibility and separation from the street, parking areas, or drive aisles.



*Courtyards should include trees and simple plantings.*

### Public Art

Art associated with nonresidential buildings is encouraged that invites participation and interaction, adds local meaning, interprets the community by revealing its culture or history, and/or captures or reinforces the unique character of a place is encouraged.

- a. The setting of public art should be considered in its design; likewise, the impact of physical space and nearby structures on public art should be considered.
- b. Freestanding pieces of art or sculpture should be placed to avoid locations where it would compete with a storefront or obstruct a pedestrian path, create a traffic hazard or compete with another piece of art or sculpture.



*"Public Art"*



*Monumental public art*

- c. Art should be deployed in concert with other features, such as a plaza or architectural features that acknowledge and respond to the presence of the art and make the art an integral part of site development rather than a stand-alone object.
- d. The selection and placement of the art should be part of the design process, rather than being left to the last minute as an after-thought. By thinking of the location placement and kind of art early on, this art has the chance to inform and influence the character of the overall development.



*Integrate public art into the design process.*

### Bus Stops

- a. Bus stops should be integrated into the setting through design of benches, lighting and landscaping, to create a sense that the bus stop “belongs to” the surrounding neighborhood.
- b. Bus shelters shall be coordinated through the Transit Division of the Community Services Department.



*Integrate bus shelters into the setting.*

### **2. Site Amenities**

Site amenities form elements of commonality which help to establish an identity of an area and provide comfort and interest to its users. The more common the element the richer and more identifiable the character becomes. Individual site amenities within a non-residential setting should have common features, such as color, material, and design to provide a cohesive environment.

#### Seating

Seating is an important amenity to be provided throughout the non-residential areas. Benches are appropriate within parks and plazas in intimate settings or where flexibility in the location of the seating is desired.



*Example of a wooden bench*

- a. Seating in the public right-of-way should be incorporated into the design of the other streetscape furnishings.
- b. Wood benches should use smoothly finished, exterior grade members.

- c. Benches should range from four to eight feet in width. Intermediate arms are recommended for longer benches.
- d. Seating should be provided in plazas. Where applicable, plaza users should be provided with a choice between active (i.e. watching goings-on) and passive (i.e. private) seating.
- e. Benches should not be used for any type of advertising purposes.



*Example of a wrought iron bench*

### Lighting

- a. Lighting should be designed as an integral part of the overall site and building design. It should contribute to and help define the character and the spaces by the building and its site

development. The design should have a conscious purpose of helping to strengthen the constituent elements of the design through means such as highlighting areas of the site that are more important or by picking out areas of the site that have a different character from the rest of the site. Lighting should complement architectural elements, changes in material of the ground plane and landscaping. The intensity, color placement of the light and the placement and design of the light fixtures should be part of this effort.

- b. Lighting should be used to provide illumination for the security and safety of on-site areas such as entrances, exits, parking, loading, pathways, and working areas.
- c. Lighting should be provided for the pedestrian in order to create a sense of welcoming on the public sidewalk, that the pedestrian is literally being accompanied by light. Providing a greater number of softer light sources is strongly encouraged over having only a few very bright lights.



*Storefront lighting adds to a sense of safety.*

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- d. The design of light fixtures and their structural support should be architecturally compatible with main buildings on-site. Illuminators should be integrated within the architectural design for the buildings.
- e. As a security device, lighting should be adequate but not overly bright. All building entrances should be well lighted. The lighting should be designed so that the lighting is an attractive element in its own right, acting as a public amenity.
- f. The following lighting fixtures and lamps are considered inappropriate in Simi Valley commercial areas and are discouraged:
  - ▶ Low pressure sodium lights (yellow tint)
  - ▶ Fluorescent light tubes that are exposed without filtering lenses
  - ▶ Fluorescent lamp without non-color corrected in bulbs (color correction may also be accomplished by color correcting lens)

Fountains and Water Features

- a. Visual features, such as public art or a fountain, should be incorporated in plazas to attract pedestrians.
- b. Fountains and other water features should be designed to be enjoyed by all persons.
- c. Where a large number of children may be present, the installation of pop-jet fountains or other shallow water features should be considered.



*Children playing at a pop-jet fountain*

Trash Receptacles, Bicycle and Newspaper Racks

- a. For non-residential developments, trash receptacles should enhance and have design features to match the other recommended features. Receptacles should be properly anchored. To avoid overflow, receptacles should be sized at a minimum 30 gallon capacity. Side or top opening may be specified.

- b. Bicycle racks that are durable and visually subdued should be selected. Based on their performance, “loop racks” and “ribbon bars” are recommended, and should be sized according to parking requirements.



*“Bicycle Rack”*

- c. Newspaper racks should be placed around major pedestrian gathering areas. The design should consolidate all vending boxes into one rack. Rack construction should use either masonry elements or use a metal frame that compliments other site furnishings in the area, or the architecture of adjacent buildings. The rack should be attractive on all sides and properly anchored.

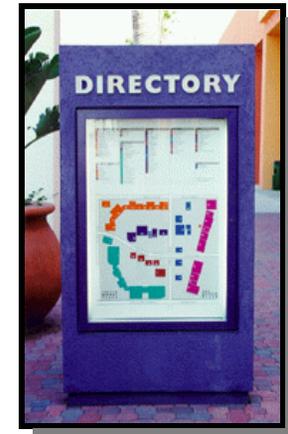


*An example of a newspaper rack that is attractive on all sides.*

### On-Site Directional and Information Signs

On-site directional and information signs are intended to help visitors find their ultimate destination within larger commercial centers or business parks. It is important that the placement of these on-site signs be obvious and legible. All signs are subject to the City’s Sign Ordinance.

- a. Directories should be provided near the vehicular and pedestrian entrances of multi-tenant business parks and commercial centers to assist visitors in orienting themselves. Directories should be easily readable during day and night.
- b. Contrast is important for the effectiveness of on-site directional and informational signs. A substantial contrast should be provided between the color and material of the background and the letters or symbols to make the sign easier to read in both day and night. Light letters on a dark background are most legible.



*“Directory Sign”*

Kiosks and Bulletin Boards

- a. Kiosks may serve as information booths and/or shelter for small vendors. Kiosks should be consistent with surrounding buildings and other streetscape furniture.
- b. Bulletin boards can serve as valuable communication tools to inform people of events and activities. They should be located to optimize their effectiveness, while minimizing their potential for distracting motorists or interfering with visual observation.



*“Kiosk”*

## G. Signs

### 1. Introduction

In many American communities, the visual distinction between differing commercial areas has become blurred. Sign manufacturers and designers have encouraged many businesses to adopt large scale signs. These signs are designed to attract the attention of motorists driving past. However, pedestrian oriented commercial areas were designed to accommodate shoppers strolling along sidewalks and motorists driving at slower speeds.

Concern for size alone does not ensure an attractive sign. Other considerations such as location, lettering style, color, and illumination are also very important in designing an attractive, functional sign. The guidelines that follow address these issues, and others, and are intended not to regulate content of the signs, but to help business owners put up quality signs that add to and support the image and vitality of Simi Valley.

The applicant is reminded that all signs shall conform to the City's Sign Ordinance.

### 2. General Guidelines

The following general design guidelines should be considered prior to developing signs for any project.

#### Color

- a. Color is one of the most important aspects of visual communication. It can be used to catch the eye or to communicate ideas or feelings.
- b. Too many colors used simultaneously can confuse and negate the message of a sign. Even the most carefully planned sign may look unattractive due to poor color selection.
- c. Contrast is an important influence on the legibility of signs. Light letters on a dark background or dark letters on a light background are most legible.



*Lack of contrasting colors is not encouraged.*



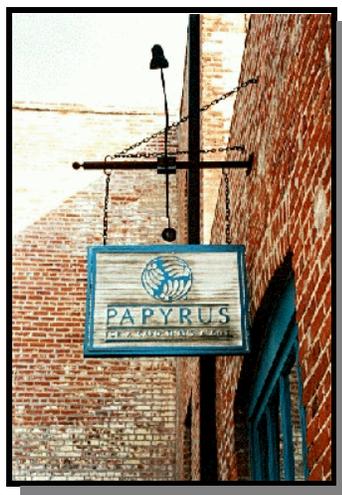
*Signs should compliment the colors of the primary structure.*

- d. The total number of colors used in any one sign should be limited. Small accents of several colors may make a sign unique and attractive, but the competition of large areas of many different colors decreases readability.
- e. Colors or color combinations that interfere with legibility of the sign copy or that interfere with viewer identification of other signs should be avoided. Bright day-glo (fluorescent) colors should be avoided as they are distracting and do not usually blend well with other background colors.
- f. Sign colors should complement the colors used on the structures and the project as a whole.

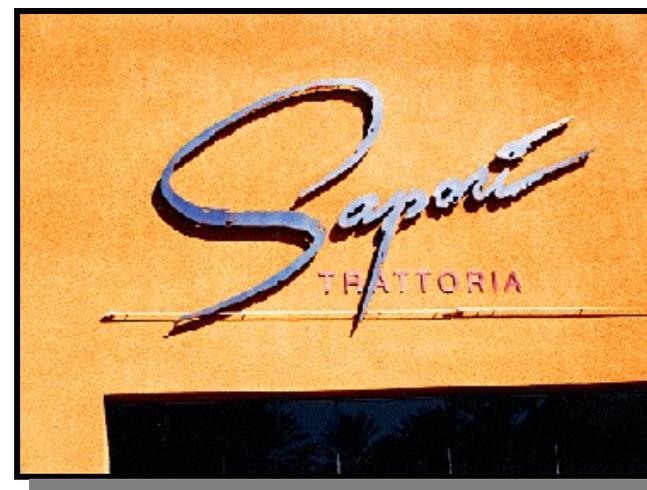
- ▶ High density pre-formed foam or similar material. New materials may be very appropriate if properly designed in a manner consistent with these guidelines, and painted or otherwise finished to compliment the architecture.
  - ▶ Custom neon tubing, in the form of graphics or lettering, may be incorporated into several of the above permitted sign types.
- b. Sign materials should be compatible with the design of the face of the facade where they are placed.

Materials

- a. The following materials are recommended for signs:
- ▶ Wood (carved, sandblasted, etched, and properly sealed, primed and painted, or stained).
  - ▶ Metal (formed, etched, cast, engraved, and properly primed and painted or factory-coated to protect against corrosion).



*Sign made of wood*



*Sign made of metal*

- c. The selected materials should contribute to the legibility of the sign. For example, glossy finishes are often difficult to read because of glare and reflections.
- d. Internally illuminated plastic-faced cabinet signs are discouraged.



*Internally illuminated plastic-faced cabinet sign*

- e. Paper and cloth signs are not suitable for exterior use (except on awnings) because they deteriorate quickly. Paper and cloth signs are appropriate for interior temporary use only. The use of signs on paper or cloth should be the result of careful thinking about readability and the image of the business.

- f. Individually-mounted internally illuminated channel letter signs are appropriate. Reverse channel letter signs are preferred.

#### Sign Legibility (scale and letter size)

- a. An effective sign should do more than attract attention, it should communicate its message. Usually, this is a question of the readability of words and phrases. The most significant influence on legibility is lettering.
- b. Faddish or bizarre typefaces should be avoided if they are difficult to read. These typefaces may be in vogue and look good today, but soon may go out of style. The image conveyed by the sign may quickly become that of a dated and unfashionable business.

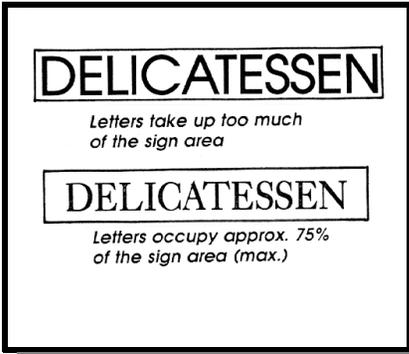


*A sign with a bizarre typeface is difficult to read.*

- c. A brief message should be used whenever possible. The fewer the words, the more effective the sign. A sign with a brief, succinct message is easier to read and looks more attractive. Evaluate each word. If the word does not contribute directly to the basic message of the sign, it detracts from it and probably should be deleted.

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d. The number of lettering styles should be limited in order to increase legibility. A general rule to follow is to limit the number of different letter types to no more than two for small signs and three for larger signs.



Letters should not occupy more than 75% of sign panel area.



Utilize symbols or logos whenever appropriate

e. Letters and words should not be spaced too close together. Crowding of letters, words, or lines will make any sign more difficult to read. Conversely, over-spacing these elements causes the viewer to read each item individually, again obscuring the message. As a general rule, letters should not occupy more than 75% of sign panel area.

f. Hard-to-read, overly intricate typefaces and symbols should be avoided. Typefaces and symbols that are difficult to read reduce the sign's ability to communicate.

g. Symbols and logos should be used in place of words whenever appropriate. Pictographic images will usually register more quickly in the viewer's mind than a written message.

Sign Illumination

The way in which a sign is to be illuminated should be considered carefully. Like color, illumination has considerable value for visual communication.

First, consider if the sign needs to be lighted at all. Lights in the window display may be sufficient to identify the business. This is particularly true if good window graphics are used. Often, nearby street lights provide ample illumination of a sign after dark.

a. If the sign can be illuminated by an indirect source of light, this is usually the best arrangement because the sign will appear to be better integrated with the building's architecture. Light fixtures supported in front of the structure



"Internal Sign Illumination"

cast light on the sign and generally a portion of the face of the structure as well. Indirect lighting emphasizes the continuity of the structure's surface and signs become an integral part of the facade.

- b. Whenever indirect lighting fixtures are used (fluorescent or incandescent), care should be taken to properly shield the light source to prevent glare from spilling over into residential areas and any public right-of-way. Signs should be lighted only to the minimum level required for nighttime readability.
- c. Back-lighted solid letters (reverse channel), are preferred to internally illuminated panletter signs. Signs consisting of opaque individually cut letters mounted directly on a structure can often use a distinctive element of the structure's facade as a backdrop, thereby providing a better integration of the sign with the structure.

### Placement

- a. Place wall signs to establish facade rhythm, scale, and proportion where facade rhythm doesn't exist. On buildings that have a monolithic or plain facade, signs can establish or continue appropriate design rhythm, scale, and proportion.
- b. Signs should be placed consistent with the proportions and scale of the elements within the structure's facade. A particular sign may fit well on a plain wall area, but might

overpower the finer scale and proportion of a lower storefront. A sign which is appropriate near an entry may look tiny and out of place above the ground level.

- c. A wall sign should be located where architectural features or details suggest a location, size, or shape for the sign. The best location for a wall sign is generally a band or blank area between the first and second floors of a building.
- d. New signs should be placed consistent with sign locations on adjacent buildings. This can establish visual continuity among storefronts.

### 3. Projecting Signs Guidelines



*"Projecting Sign"*

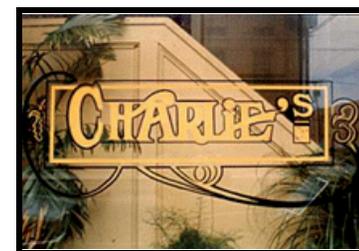
- a. The number of projecting signs per business should be limited to one. The distance between projecting signs shall be at least 50 feet for maximum visibility.
- b. The sign should be hung at a 90° angle from the face of the building. It should be pinned at least 6 inches away from the wall for best visibility but should not project beyond a vertical plane set 2 feet inside the curb line.

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- c. On a multi-storied building, the sign should be suspended between the bottom of the second story window sills and the top of the doors or windows of the first story. On a one-story building, the top of the sign should be suspended in line with the lowest point of the roof.
- d. The bottom of the sign should maintain at least a 10-foot pedestrian clearance from the sidewalk level.
- e. All signs which project over a public right-of-way may require a City encroachment permit.
- f. Decorative iron and wood brackets that support projecting signs are encouraged.
- g. The lines of the brackets should harmonize with the shape of the sign. The most important feature of a bracket should be its ability to hold up the sign.
- h. To avoid damaging brick and stonework, brackets should be designed so that they can be bolted into masonry joints when possible.

**4. Window Signs Guidelines**

- a. Window signs (permanent or temporary) should not cover more than 25% of the area of each window.



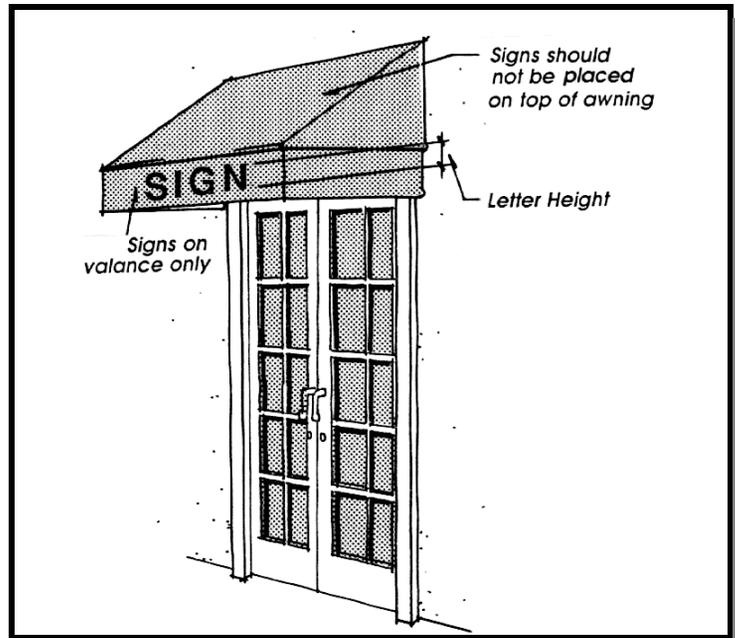
*"Window sign"*

- b. Window signs should be limited to individual letters placed on the interior surface of the window and intended to be viewed from outside. White or gold leaf paint are the recommended colors. Glass-mounted graphic logos may be applied by silk screening or pre-spaced vinyl die-cut forms.
- c. The text or sign copy of a window sign should be limited to the business name, and brief messages identifying the type of product or service (e.g., "maternity wear" or "attorney") or pertinent information (e.g., "reservations required").

**5. Awning Signs Guidelines**

- a. The text should be located only on the fabric valance flap of the awning. Letter color should be compatible with the awning and the building color scheme.

- b. Text copy should be limited to the name of the business only.
- c. When initially installed, awnings should be provided with removable valances and end panels to accommodate future changes in sign copy. Painting cloth awnings in order to change sign copy is strongly discouraged, as this will decrease the fire resistant/retardant properties of the treated canvas.



*Sign should not be placed on top or shed portion of the awning*

- d. The shape, design, and color of fabric awnings should be carefully designed to coordinate with, and not dominate, the architectural style of the building. Where other fabric awnings are used on the building, the design and color of the sign awnings and all other awnings should be coordinated.

## 6. Figurative Signs Guidelines



Signs which advertise the occupant business through the use of graphic or crafted symbols, such as shoes, keys, glasses, or books, are encouraged. Figurative signs may be incorporated into any of the allowable sign types identified above.



*"Figurative sign"*

## 7. Freestanding Monument Signs Guidelines

All freestanding signs should be monument type (on the ground). Pole signs are strongly discouraged.

- ▶ A portion of the sign area of a freestanding monument sign should be dedicated to identification of the center. Multi -store developments should display the range of store addresses for that development on their sign.
- ▶ Freestanding monument signs should be placed perpendicular to the street.
- ▶ Freestanding monument signs should be placed so that vehicular sight distances at entry driveways are not negatively affected.
- ▶ Location of any freestanding monument sign should be setback from the public right-of-way a minimum of 5-feet, and should comply with all City site distance requirements.
- ▶ Solid architectural sign bases and sides are highly desirable. Each sign should incorporate a base which is a minimum of 12-inches high. The material should match an architectural element of the commercial development it serves.

- ▶ Each monument sign should be surrounded by a landscape planter which extends a minimum of 2-feet in all directions beyond the base of the sign.



*Desired monument sign*

## H. Commercial Building/Shopping Center Rehabilitation

Renovating or remodeling 1950's and 1960's commercial shopping centers provides an excellent means of maintaining and reinforcing the character/image desired in Simi Valley. Renovation and expansion not only increases property values in the area but also serves as an inspiration to other property owners and designers to make similar efforts.

When an existing shopping center is to be renovated or added to, care should be taken to complete the work in a manner that respects the general guidelines contained in this manual. The following design guidelines are to be implemented where appropriate and whenever a structure or shopping center is to be renovated or expanded.

In addition, restoration and remodeling of all commercial structures of historic significance in the City of Simi Valley should follow *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, published by the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service.

No single development type will have more impact on the aesthetic character of Simi Valley than the existing shopping center. With the community in a nearly "built-out" stage, renovations to existing commercial properties, and in particular, shopping centers play a key role in what Simi Valley's sense of

place will be in the next 10 to 20 years. This is an important portion of the guidelines, however, it should be noted that the guidelines in the General Non-Residential Section will be most valuable in defining appropriate design solutions.



*Before picture of an old shopping center.*



*After picture of the same shopping center.*

Note:

- ▶ New facade
- ▶ Landscaping
- ▶ Signs
- ▶ Decorative lighting

## 1. Site Plan Renovation

Site planning refers to the arrangement and relationship of various elements found on the site. In other words, how buildings, parking, pedestrian spaces, loading areas, and landscape areas relate to each other as well as to adjacent streets and land uses.

Frequently during the renovation of an aging commercial shopping center, the goal of the applicant/developer is to inject a new image or “look” to the existing architecture. However, it is just as important for improvement to be made to the site plan whenever possible. The following guidelines should be applied to the site plan.

### a. Modify the entry drive and parking lot.

- ▶ Give more definition to the entry drive through employment of:
  - accent paving at entries
  - new asphalt/concrete entry drive paving
  - trees lining the entry drive
  - new lights lining the entry drive
  - low garden walls at front and flanking entry drive
- ▶ Assure compliance of landscape with the provision for landscaping contained in the Development Code and these guidelines.

### b. Strengthen the site plan’s relation to the street.

- ▶ Consider adding small pad structures along the front setback line where underutilized parking is currently located. Corner locations should be considered first.
- ▶ Connect the older portions of the shopping center to the street through pedestrian connections enhanced by accent paving, landscape, and architectural canopies or colonnades.
- ▶ Consider reducing or closing multiple entry driveways in favor of a new centrally located entry drive. Add entries on non-residential side streets whenever possible.
- ▶ Consider widening the sidewalk areas in front of storefronts to allow placement of pedestrian enhancements.
- ▶ Restripe the parking lot for better vehicular circulation.
- ▶ Consider removal and relocation of trees to provide better sight lines into the site while maintaining a well shaded parking area.

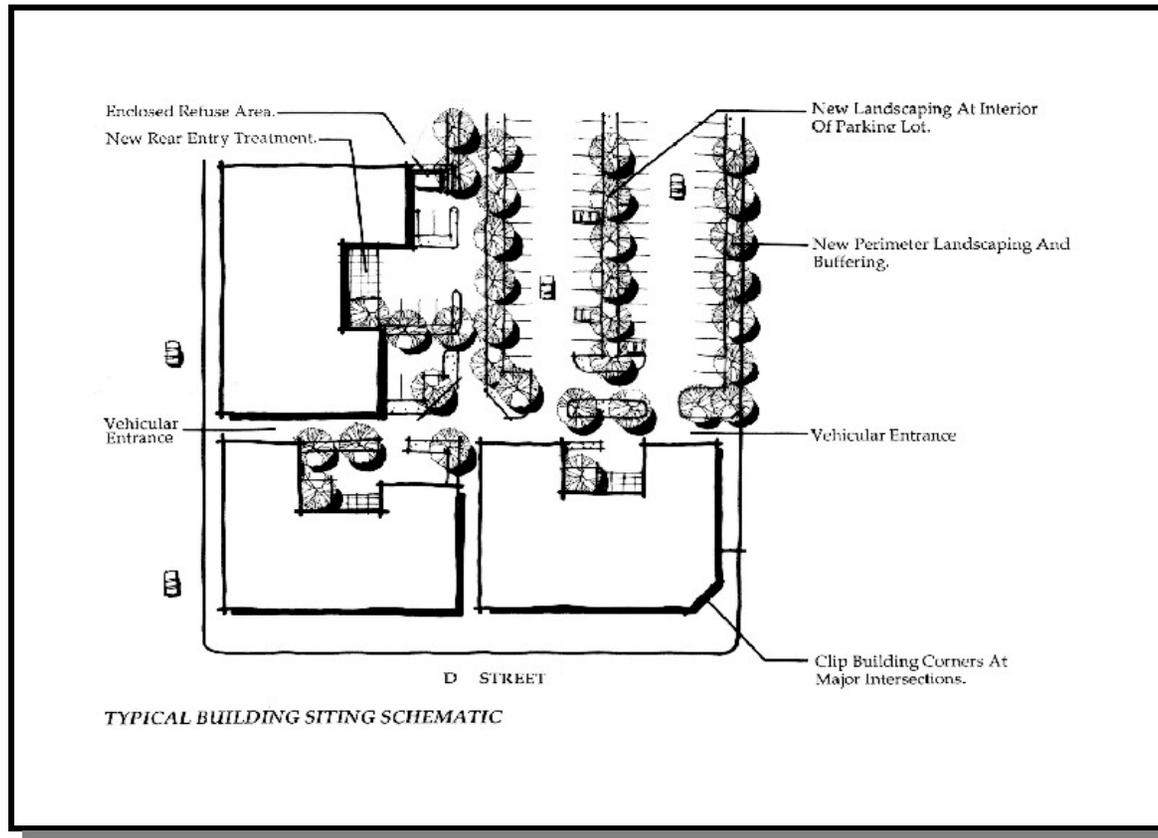
## 2. Architectural Renovations

Many commercial shopping centers in Simi Valley will undergo architectural transformation in the next twenty years, in order to remain viable. The goal in shopping center renovations is to inject a fresh, new or contemporary look to the exterior “skins” of the building. Shopping centers which do not “modernize” their appearance lose strong anchor tenants. These tenants are replaced with lower retail and service uses.

- a. Building should be designed to be viewed from all sides.
- b. Large shopping centers should incorporate changes in vertical and horizontal planes to break up a big box monolithic appearance.
- c. Large centers should employ arcades and trellises to diminish the impact of a building’s mass while providing an inviting areas for customers.
- d. Articulated storefronts, rather than blank walls, should face onto pedestrian spaces. Smaller lease spaces should be placed in front of larger ones to reduce the area of large blank walls.
- e. Each building should have a definable base (wainscot/bulkhead), roofline (or parapet cap detail), and entry.
- f. Long building facades should incorporate vertical elements creating a rhythm of bays generally between 20 and 30 feet wide. These bays can be designed as multiple facades on a single structure giving the appearance of several smaller buildings.
- g. When the major portion of the shopping center is located back from the street, smaller, free-standing structures (i.e. flower market, restaurant, hot dog stand...) can be used to provide a street front presence and provide some buffer to the parking.
- h. Adjacent buildings should be compatible in height and scale, yet it is best if buildings side-by-side vary slightly in height.
- i. “Corporate architecture” and generic redesigns are not recommended. The redesign of each project should address the project area goal to create more of a pedestrian scale atmosphere, emphasizing human scale, and giving the entire center a certain look or theme.
- j. Slopes of pitched roofs should be shallow and should range between 3:12 and 6:12. Pitches may be steeper on architectural elements and towers.
- k. Steeply-pitched roofs greater than 6:12 are discouraged, except on architectural elements and towers.

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- l. Gabled, hipped, and shed roofs are encouraged when appropriate to the style of the building.
- m. Continuous mansard roofs and false mansard roofs are discouraged.
- n. Long, unbroken, horizontal roof lines are discouraged.
- o. Smaller lease spaces should be placed in front of larger ones to reduce the area of large blank walls.



*Add entries on non-residential side streets whenever possible.*



 ROBERT BEN, WILLIAM FROST & ASSOCIATES

*Shopping Center Before and After*

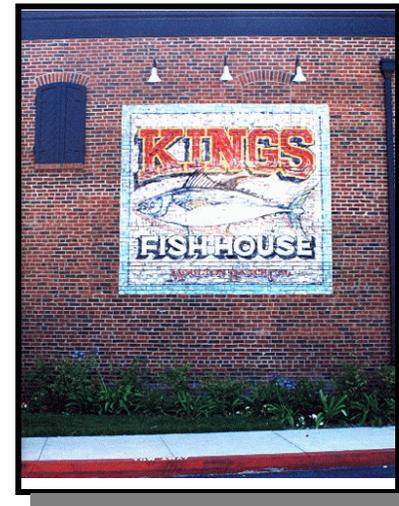
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### 3. Sign Replacement

Signs play a major role in defining or redefining a shopping centers' identification, theme, quality, and success. During the 50's, 60's and even the 70's, most shopping centers used very large pole signs and unrelated tenant signage. Today's highest quality shopping environments realize that well designed sign programs work better than louder, brighter, or bigger signs.

- a. Remove internally illuminated "can" type pole signs and replace them with high quality monument signs that employ indirect lighting. As an integral part of a monument sign structure, internally illuminated can signs which employ solid or opaque "field" or background with illuminated lettering only may be considered.
- b. Monument signs should incorporate complimentary colors, materials, and lettering fonts with the material found throughout the shopping center renovation.
- c. Desirable wall sign types for individual tenant include:
  - ▶ reverse channel letter signs
  - ▶ channel letter signs
- d. Undesirable sign types in shopping centers include:
  - ▶ internally illuminated can sign with translucent plastic panels

- ▶ illuminated awnings
  - ▶ roof signs
- e. Temporary window signs should be grouped to minimize blocking views into the stores.
  - f. Signs may be painted directly on the building wall only if the font style and color reflects a period of sign which was historically painted on.
  - g. Update and modernize the Sign Program.
    - ▶ remove all illegal, non-conforming and poorly designed signs
    - ▶ remove internally illuminated "Can" type signs and replace them with individually cut channel letter signs or other appropriate designed signs



*Sign painted directly on the surface of the wall*

- ▶ place new signs on tenant buildings in a consistently uniform area upon the facades to promote rhythm, and a “planned look”
- ▶ update the shopping centers’ identification or front ground sign, while reducing the number of tenants displayed upon it.



*“Wall Sign”*

## I. Public Safety Through Design

### 1. Introduction

#### Good Design versus “Fortressing”

Fear, crime, and the perception of crime are powerful conditions that can motivate both our most rational and irrational approaches to design. When we perceive conditions in our urban environments that generate fear within us or cause us concern, our natural tendency is to minimize the likelihood of experiencing those conditions again. Many of us react by integrating defensive measures into the built environment – in other words, adopting a fortress approach to design. Often, what seems as an obvious response to a problem, actually becomes a detrimental design feature to the community at-large. When we fortress through design, we immediately convey a message – whether true or not – that the area is unsafe or there is something to fear. Alternatively, good design, combined with good maintenance, allows for urban environments and development that balances security with livability.

## 2. Design Principles

### Building-Site Relationship

- a. Efforts should be made to avoid blank walls facing the streets, sidewalks, and parking lots.
- b. The use of a “buffer” (i.e. fence or landscaping) should be utilized to separate incompatible uses. Fencing the rear of the property to separate the incompatible uses is encouraged.
- c. Cluster compatible uses and distance incompatible uses to avoid conflict and increase casual observation.
- d. Locate parking lots used at night near streets so they are easily observable by police patrols, motorists and pedestrians.



*Excessive use of wrought iron.*

### Pedestrian and Vehicular Spaces

- a. Lighting should be installed using the correct level of light to guide pedestrians along non-residential areas. The use of high intensity security lamps that produce excessive glare or dark shadow are discouraged.
  - b. Lighting should be sufficient for the sidewalk as well as the street. Lighting is to be limited to pedestrian scale lighting fixtures to provide good levels of lighting.
  - c. Pedestrian pathways should be wide enough (minimum of four (4) feet) to allow people to pass freely. Light poles and landscaping should be located so they don't obstruct pedestrian pathways. Additionally, bus stops, bicycle racks, newspaper stands, trash receptacles, and kiosks should be designed and located so they also do not block pedestrian pathways.
  - d. Provide clearly marked pedestrian pathways from vehicular spaces to preserve and encourage pedestrian use.
- b. Landscaping should be located and maintained to screen "in-between and transitional areas". Landscaping can serve as good screening devices, however, it should not be placed where it completely obstructs the line-of-sight from the street to places of activity, such as play areas for small children.

### Retrofits and Rehabilitation

During construction and renovation, large unobstructive windows and doors which permit casual observation of alleys and streets are encouraged.

### Sightlines and Visual Obstructions

- a. Windows and doors on the front facade should create lines-of-sight between non-residential buildings, the sidewalk and the street to provide opportunities for pedestrian to see and be seen.
- b. Pathways to the front and back doors of non-residential uses should be clearly defined and lighted.

### In-Between and Transition Areas

- a. Where there are "in-between and transitional areas" such as school yards or empty lots, lighting is strongly encouraged and fencing is to be used with careful design discretion so as not to create a fortress-like image.

## **3. Site Planning Checklist**

The following questions are intended to be considered in the site planning and design process of new development, as related to public safety and crime:

**Chapter 2: General Non-Residential Design Guidelines**

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- a. What are the types and characteristics of adjacent or nearby uses?
- b. Is the development intended to serve as a buffer, barrier or transitional use between different existing buildings/uses? And, what design features and configurations can optimize compatibility with those uses?
- c. Who are the intended users of the development and how can the site be designed to encourage desirable use while discouraging illegitimate activities?
- d. How do the internal activities of the building relate to one another and to external activities? And, what building design elements influence the activities?
- e. Where are the off-site pedestrian/bicycle and vehicular circulation systems in relation to the development, and how can the proposed structure best relate to the circulation areas?
- f. How can the on-site circulation areas (entrances, exits, loading areas, refuse collection/service zones, parking lots, plazas, paseos, sidewalks, etc.) best provide safe environments while facilitating the intended use of the structures? And, how can the relationship between the building(s) and the circulation system elements be enhanced to promote safety?
- g. Can window placement, lighting, parking areas, signs, landscaping, waiting areas, plazas, sidewalk-oriented uses, etc. be designed to maximize natural surveillance?
- h. What design treatments can be introduced to make certain features less susceptible to criminal activity or less likely to permit illegitimate activity (e.g. doors, windows, alleys, loading areas, refuse enclosures, fences, gates, etc.)?
- i. How can landscaping be incorporated and maintained to facilitate natural surveillance (i.e. sight lines and visual clearance areas)?
- j. What opportunities exist to use landscape materials to communicate territoriality and to control access?

## CHAPTER 3: Commercial Thoroughfare Buildings & Structures

### A. Mini Malls

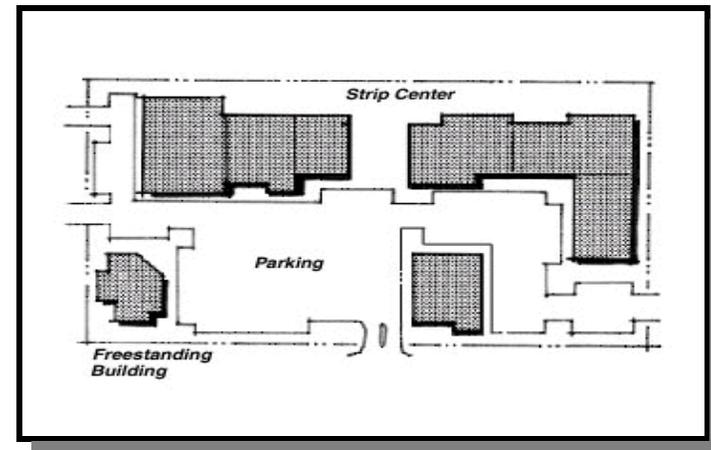
#### 1. Description

The Mini Mall is composed of a series of commercial tenants of varying sizes and types, in a rectangular, single story structure, usually with setbacks on all four sides. The building typically faces the street and is oriented to the parking lots which occurs between it and the street. This development pattern is the essence of the Mini Mall and within it can be found examples of several other commercial development types. This section will apply to ordinary small to medium commercial development, under five (5) acres.

Even where the typical Mini Mall site plan pattern is well established in Simi Valley, these standards dictate a certain amount of building placement at the front setback line in order to better define the street, to enliven it, and to visually break up the monotonous bands of parking next to the street.

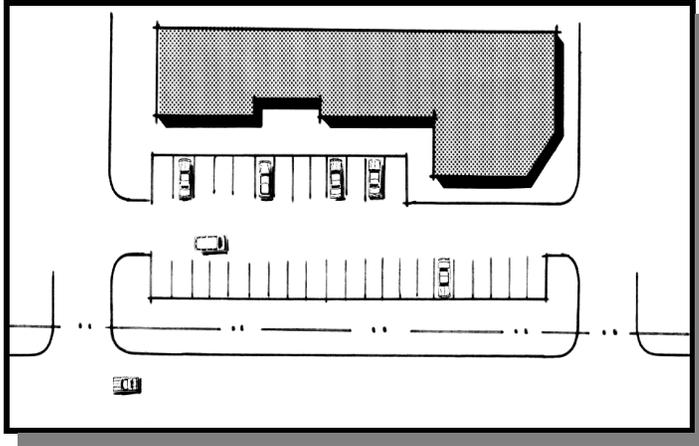
#### 2. Site Organization

- a. A portion of the primary building should be built to the front setback line along streets. When these buildings become 'double frontage' (direct relationship to street on one side, parking lot on the other) they should be carefully designed to assure that both sides are active and functional. In no instances should a building wall that fronts a street be blank or of bland architectural treatment.



*Mini Mall Site Layout*

- b. Parking should be distributed along the front, sides, and rears of the buildings and should be minimized between building and the street.



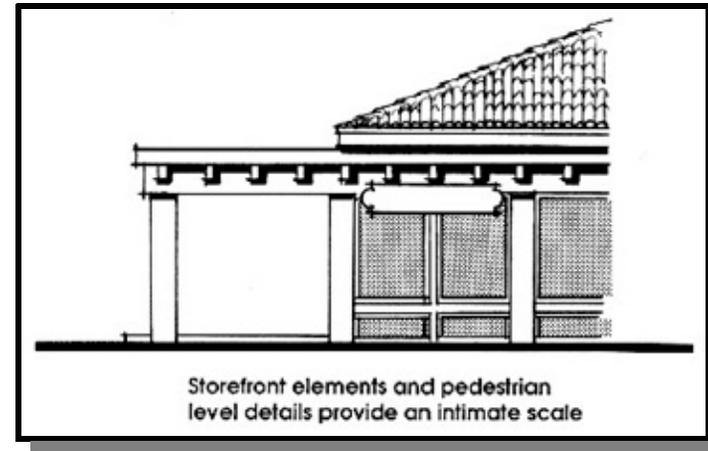
*Do not place all parking in front of building*

- c. Corner lots should be developed with at least a 15% portion of the building placed at the front setback lines on the corner.
- d. Parking lots should be integrated with adjacent commercial use where improved circulation can be achieved or excessive driveway cuts avoided via shared access.

### 3. Building Design

Because Mini Malls typically are smaller in size, they tend to put little emphasis on quality of design. In order to improve the quality of such designs, the following building design standards are established.

- a. Full (pitched) roof is encouraged.
- b. A raised pedestrian/walkway arcade should be provided immediately adjacent to the storefront. Parking spaces may not directly abut the storefront. The walkway/arcade should be a minimum of 8-feet wide.



*Provide a covered walkway adjacent to the storefront.*

## B. One to Three Story Office Buildings

### 1. Description

While office buildings are found in many commercial corridors in Simi Valley, they have functional characteristics which result in physical forms different from other commercial development:

- ▶ intensity of use is lower while building scale is greater;
- ▶ buildings are typically 'live' on all four sides;
- ▶ office activities are not limited to the first floor;
- ▶ building perimeters have fewer entries;
- ▶ no display windows and thus creating more opportunity for landscaping; and
- ▶ occupation of office buildings is more predictable.

Because their use patterns differ significantly from retail commercial, office buildings have more opportunity to be physically sited toward the street with parking behind. This arrangement is strongly encouraged even where the pattern is not an established one.

Office buildings are considered appropriate for most commercial sites if care is taken to avoid negative impacts on adjacent residences. Single story office buildings are most appropriate

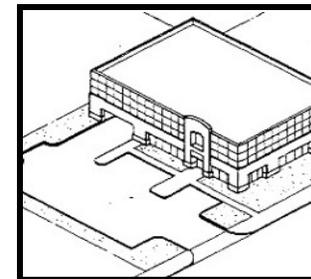
adjacent to residential uses while buildings taller than one story should either be set back from residential uses or should step back each upper story away from residential uses. Office buildings should never be oriented toward the private open spaces of residences.



*Office Building*

### 1. Site Organization

- a. Office buildings should be placed at the minimum required front setback. Buildings may be placed further behind the front setback, but no parking should be permitted to occur between the front of the building and the street.



*Provide surface parking at side of office building*

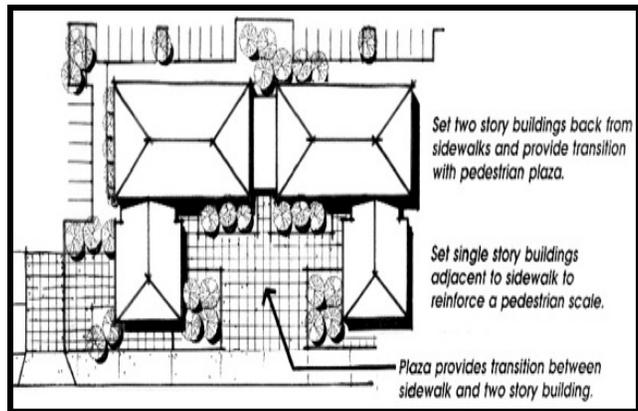
- b. Surface parking should be located at the rear of the site or at the side of the building.

- c. Second and third floors should be added with the requirement of an additional foot of setback for each additional foot in height.



*Photo of an office showing step back*

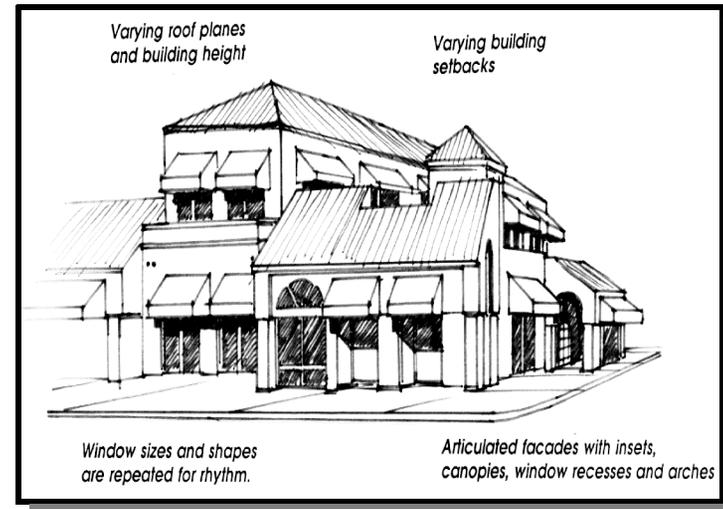
- d. Office buildings should have the primary entry from the public street with secondary entries from any on-site pedestrian paths or parking areas.



*Consider designing plazas or courtyards at primary entry*

### 3. Building Design

- a. Large or long unadorned wall planes should be avoided. As a general standard, building surfaces over two stories high or 50-feet in length will need to be relieved with a change of vertical and horizontal wall plane that provides strong shadow and visual interest.



*Appropriate office architecture for Simi Valley*

- b. Clear glass (88% light transmission) should be used for ground floor windows.
- c. Building entries should be protected from inclement weather and should afford a 'sense of entry' for the structure.

## C. Neighborhood Centers

### 1. Description

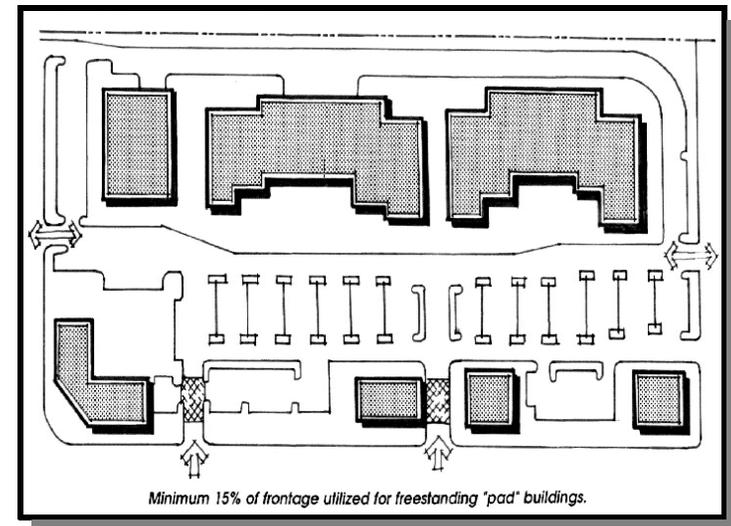
Neighborhood Centers are typified by the grocery store/drug store anchor with a series of smaller shops. They may also have one or more freestanding building sites. Because they are usually located in or next to residential areas, the major design problem related to neighborhood centers is the interface between the center's service activities and adjacent residences. Proximity of loading and storage to residences should be avoided. This section applies to centers having a gross square footage of under 300,000 square feet.



*Example of a Neighborhood Center*

### 2. Site Organization

- All buildings on the same site should demonstrate a strong spatial and functional relationship to each other.
- Multiple buildings in a single project should demonstrate a variety in size and mass.
- Portions of primary buildings and free standing 'satellite' buildings should be located at the street setback lines.
- Parking should be provided within convenient walking distances of all tenants.

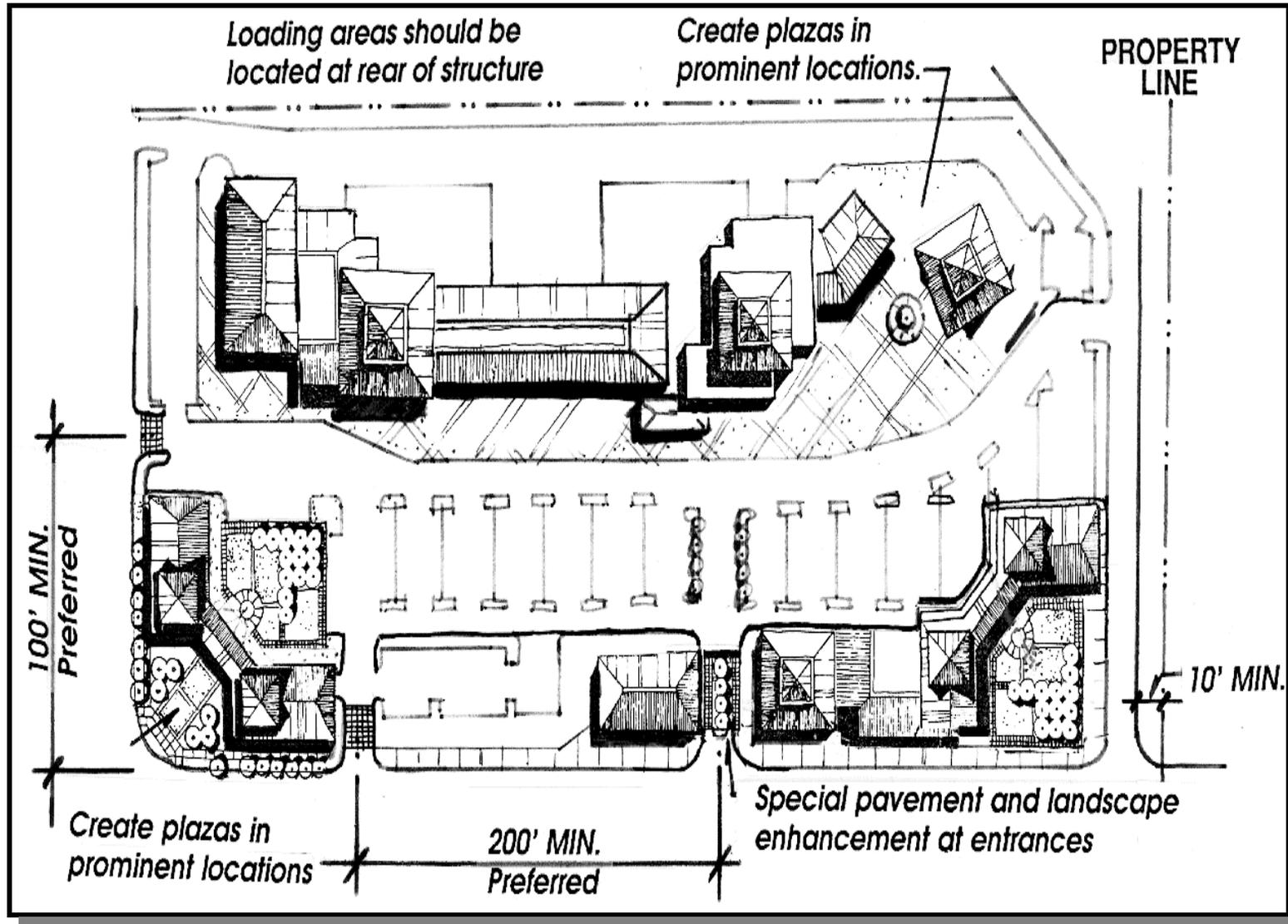


*Appropriate neighborhood center site design*

- e. In areas where the shopping center adjoins smaller neighborhoods, the apparent or perceived scale of the shopping center should also be small. This can be achieved in a number of ways. For example:
- ▶ keeping buildings as small as possible, particularly in height;
  - ▶ reducing scale through building articulation and ornamentation;
  - ▶ avoiding large flat walls and large scale design elements; and
  - ▶ distributing the project floor area among a complex of smaller buildings.



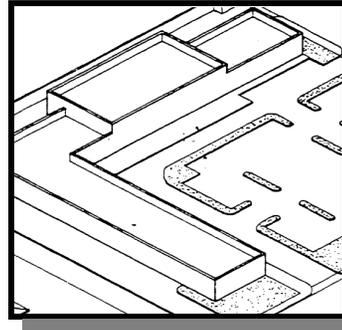
*Example of a neighborhood center with exterior treatment*



*Spread parking amongst Center tenants.*

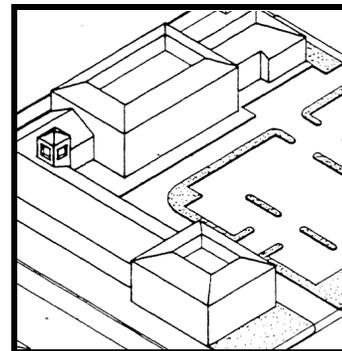
### 3. Building Design

- a. An ‘extruded’ appearance should be avoided in the design of long linear buildings. Where long buildings are unavoidable, their linearity should be mitigated by changes in the building height, wall plane, and spatial volumes and by varied use of window areas, arcades, materials, and roof elements.



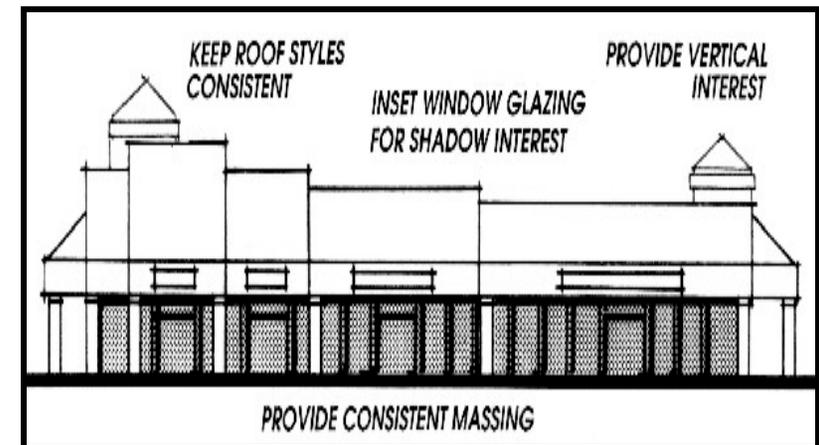
*Avoid extruded appearance.*

- b. Portions of commercial buildings adjacent to and visible from residential properties should always be stylistically consistent with the more public portions of the commercial building. In addition, these building faces should be reduced as far as possible toward residential scale by reducing wall height, articulating wall and roof planes, generating strong shadows, and/or by employing architectural decoration and sloped roofs.



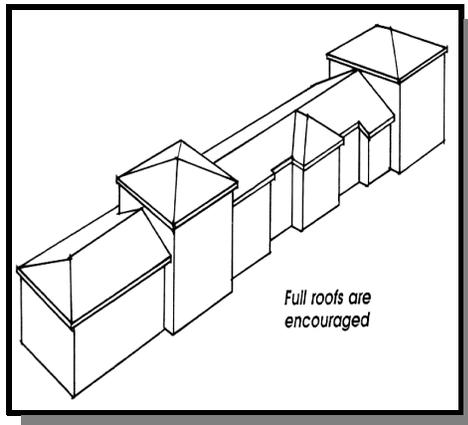
*Changes in height, wall plane and volume mitigate the linearity of overly long buildings and provide a heightened sense of excitement for shoppers.*

- c. Retail shops should be provided with clear glass display windows.
- d. Building elements, such as large blank building walls, loading areas, etc., which disrupt the continuity of shops and business along major pedestrian corridors should be avoided.
- e. Tower elements or other vertical architectural features on “ends” of shopping center (which do not exceed twice the height of the one story building they are attached to) should be incorporated.

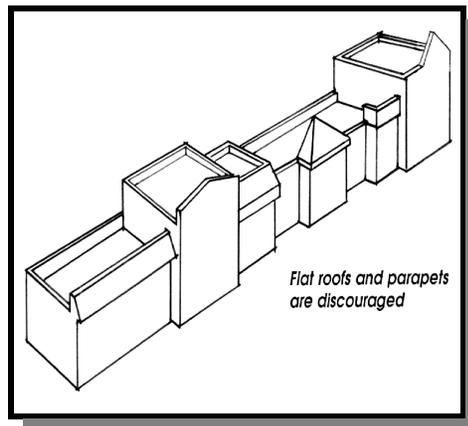


*Towers provide vertical interest on otherwise horizontal structures.*

- f. Flat roofs, mansards, and veneer parapets are strongly discouraged in favor of full roof treatments.



*Full roofs are encouraged.*



*Flat roofs are discouraged.*

## D. Specialty Retail Centers

### 1. Description

Specialty Retail Centers are unanchored retail centers that provide specialty goods and/or services that are generally unavailable in the surrounding area. The market for a Specialty Center is as large as a regional center, a 10- to 15-mile radius, and is geared to users of upscale goods and services.

The Specialty Retail Center functions as recreation for many shoppers. Shoppers at these centers are less inclined to visit only one shop, and tend to spend time browsing through several shops. Specialty Retail Centers typically rely for their appeal on particularly attractive, and often thematic architecture, landscaping, and ornamentation, as well as unusual goods and services.

### 2. Site Organization

- a. The sites should be organized to encourage relaxed pedestrian circulation throughout it. Walkways should be attractive and varied and embellished with landscaping, ornamental lighting fixtures, furniture, trellises, and/or other decorative features.
- b. Multiple buildings in a single project should employ variety in size and mass. A transition from low buildings at the site perimeter to larger and taller structures on the interior of the site is generally encouraged.

- c. Landscape intensity should be significantly greater for specialty shopping centers, and should typically include substantial amounts of plantings around buildings, walkways, and plazas.

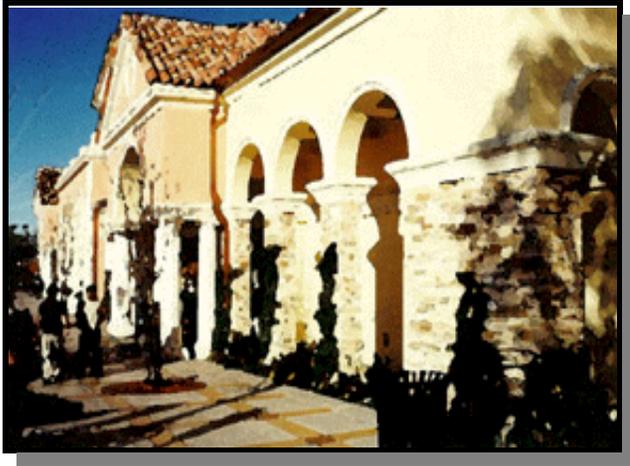


*Specialty Retail Center*

### 3. Building Design

- a. Building design should express a single strong architectural theme with substantial and consistent architectural detailing, except that individual shop fronts may exhibit different but compatible themes.
- b. All other site features, including landscaping, outdoor furniture, and site fixtures are required to conform to the architectural theme.

- c. Full roof treatments are encouraged.
- d. Shops are strongly encouraged to front on deep, attractive arcades.



*The use of arcades add visual interest.*

## E. Vehicle Dealerships

### 1. Description

Vehicle Dealerships are establishments which specialize in the sale of one or more lines of new automobiles (including used vehicles) and in the servicing of that line or lines. Dealerships are regional in nature and can have a market radius well in excess of 20 or 30 miles.



*Example of a vehicle display*

The major portion of a Vehicle Dealership site is typically used for outdoor storage and display of vehicles and a relatively minor portion is used for structures and customer parking. By their nature, Vehicle Dealerships tend to be poor neighbors for residential uses and this relationship should be avoided. If possible, fully screened from view of and buffered from residential uses.

### 2. Site Organization

- a. The showroom should be oriented toward the major public street or streets.
- b. Outdoor vehicle displays oriented to a public street should occur only on permanent at-grade display areas or low-rise platforms (4-feet maximum) that are architecturally compatible with the project.
- c. Provisions will need to be made onsite for the off-street unloading of vehicles from carriers. Circulation, access points, buildings, storage areas, and landscaping should all be located to make unloading of vehicle carriers on residential streets or near residential properties a futile, if not impossible, activity. Vehicle unloading on non-residential streets may occur in the right-of-way only if special turn-outs are provided.
- d. All storage areas should be screened from view from the public street and any adjacent residential area. No storage except new car storage may occur adjacent to a residential area.
  - 1) Low intensity activities, such as surface new car storage, may be located adjacent to any residential street or residential properties, when properly screened. In no instances should chain-link fencing be an element of this screening.

- 2) Screened storage areas should be provided for damaged vehicles awaiting repairs and for any vehicles requiring longer term storage while awaiting repair.
- e. No potentially noisy activity, such as vehicle repair, cleaning or testing, should be located near or oriented toward residential properties.
- f. Customer parking should be provided for the sales, service, and parts areas.
- g. Sufficient space should be provided for service drop-offs to prevent stacking on to a public street.



*Customer parking should be provided for all areas.*

### **3. Building Design**

- a. Buildings should be stylistically consistent on all sides, carefully detailed, and architecturally related to each other.
- b. Service uses should be wholly contained within a building of solid (e.g. masonry) construction. All vehicle access to the individual service bays will need to be from within the building itself with no more than two or three exterior vehicle doors may be provided for access to the building. The access points to the service building may not be visible from or face toward a public street or any adjacent residential properties.

### **4. Special Requirements**

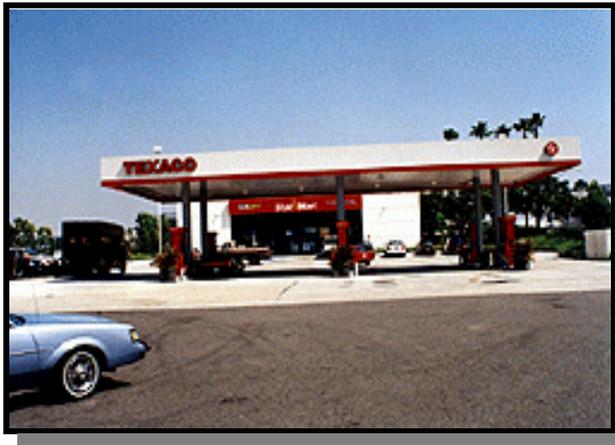
- a. Public address systems, unless the dealership is within an auto mall, should never be used in outdoor areas. Beepers and/or personal pagers can be used if it necessary to contact employees outdoors.
- b. Provisions should be made for a vehicle washing area. In such instances, the wash rack should be located such that it is not visible or audible from any public street or residential area. Wash areas should be designed so as to comply with City ordinance governing stormwater/urban runoff management and discharge controls.
- c. Storage areas for used parts should be provided. Trash areas will need to allow for disposal of junk parts as well as packing from parts shipments.

- d. Provisions should be made for the storage of used oil and lubricants pending recycling.
- e. Outside storage should be confined to the rear of the principal structure(s) per City Development Code. All storage areas should be screened from public view from any adjoining properties and from the public right-of-way by appropriately designed walls, fencing and landscaping.
- f. All compressors should be located in the interior of the site to minimize any impacts on adjacent properties.
- g. Landscaping should be provided along all display perimeters but should be maintained at a low level (less than 32 inches in height). Other landscaped areas should be designed to compensate for the absence of vertical landscape bulk along display perimeters. Building perimeters should be heavily landscaped and parking lots should contain significantly more landscaping than is required for retail commercial parking lots.

## F. Service Stations and Car Washes

### 1. Description

Service Stations and Car Washes are intensive uses that are characterized by large areas of paving which permit vehicles to maneuver freely. They have the potential to create significant adverse impacts for adjoining streets and properties. Service Stations, in particular, have historically enjoyed several points of access from adjacent streets to maximize maneuvering flexibility for vehicles. When weighed against the safety risk inherent in multiple driveways onto Simi Valley's streets and the negative environmental and visual impacts of large areas of asphalt, fully flexible circulation clearly can no longer be accommodated. Driveway cuts need to be limited, circulation needs to be channeled, and paved areas reduced.



*Example of a discouraged service station*

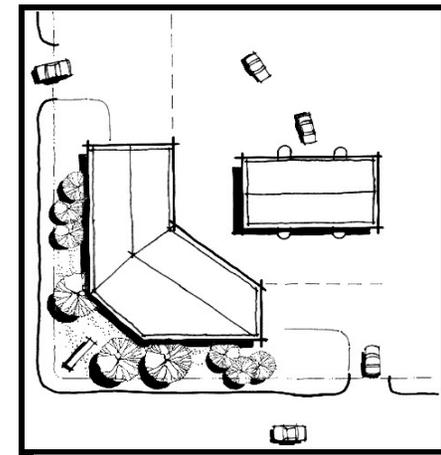
Although reduced in area, substantial paving can still be expected and should be compensated for by perimeter landscaping. Service Stations that provide auto repairs are also subject to the criteria in the design guidelines for Auto Repair and Service.

### 2. Site Organization

- a. Structures on the site should be spatially related; buildings should be organized into a simple cluster.
- b. The site should be designed to accommodate all legitimate, anticipated circulation patterns, but those patterns should be defined by reduced areas of paving and well-placed landscaping. Driveway cuts should be limited to two per street, unless otherwise allowed by the City Engineer for a valid circulation reason.



*Provide appropriate landscaping along perimeters.*



*Reverse orientation service stations are encouraged.*

- c. Service bays should not face residential properties or the public street.
- d. Reverse orientation services stations are strongly encouraged.

### 3. Building Design

- a. All structures on the site (including kiosks, car wash buildings, gas pump columns, etc.) should be architecturally consistent.
- b. All building elevations facing public streets, whether such elevations function as the front, side, or rear of the building should be architecturally detailed to avoid the appearance of the “back of the building”; buildings should contribute to a positive presence to the street scene.



*Appropriate architecture for a service station.*

- c. Building materials should have the appearance of substance and permanency; lightweight metal or other temporary appearing structures are discouraged.
- d. The roof of the pump canopy should have a shallow pitch. Flat roof pump canopies or mansard roof applications are strongly discouraged.

### 4. Special Requirements

- a. Car wash facilities should include appropriate noise control measures to reduce machinery and blower noise levels to General Plan standards.
- b. Areas should be provided on self service station sites to allow patrons to service their vehicles with water and air. These facilities will need to be located where they do not obstruct the circulation patterns of the site.
- c. Automatic car wash sites should be carefully located to avoid obstructing legitimate circulation and to prevent becoming a nuisance to adjacent properties.
- d. Each pump island should include stacking for at least two vehicles (40-feet) onsite, on at least one end of the pump island.
- e. Truck circulation patterns and positions for tank filling should not conflict with critical customer circulation patterns or cause a potential for stacking overflow onto a street.

## G. Auto Repair Service

### 1. Description

Auto Repair and Service Facilities are generally considered industrial uses but are included in these guidelines because they are sometimes found in mixed use projects or commercial planned developments. They can be problematic uses characterized by noise, large numbers of parked vehicles, traffic, and the presence of and potential mishandling of large amounts of petroleum products, oils, acids and other hazardous materials. While these facilities rarely make good residential neighbors, they are necessary to urban life and can fit agreeably into many other settings if care is taken to mitigate negative characteristics. A major problem with older Repair and Service Facilities is inadequate storage for vehicles being serviced, resulting in cars, etc. being parked on the street, on sidewalks, on landscaping, and on neighboring properties.

### 2. Site Organization

- a. Vehicle repair and service activities should be wholly contained within a building of durable construction.
- b. Sufficient space should be provided for customers to drop off their vehicles onsite and to avoid stacking overflow on to the public street.

- c. The interior of work bays should not be visible from a public street or any adjacent residential buildings or designated open space, nor should building openings face residential property if the openings are likely to allow the passage of noise.



*Sufficient space should be provided for customer parking*



*"Auto Repair Service"*

- d. Driveway cuts should be limited to the minimum number necessary to enter and exit the site, typically one or two each with a maximum width of 28 feet.

### 3. Building Design

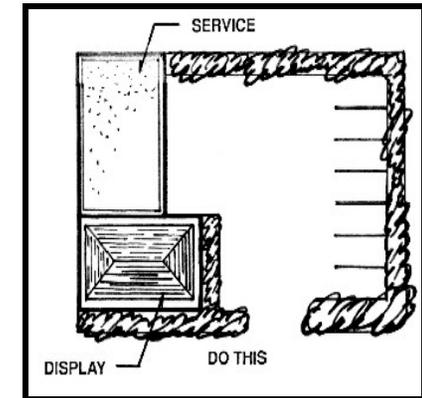
- a. Building materials should have the appearance of substance and permanency; lightweight metal or other temporary appearing structures are not permitted.
- b. Building design should be clean and simple, stylistically consistent, and related to surrounding buildings through use of similar scale, materials, colors, and/or detailing.

### 4. Special Requirements

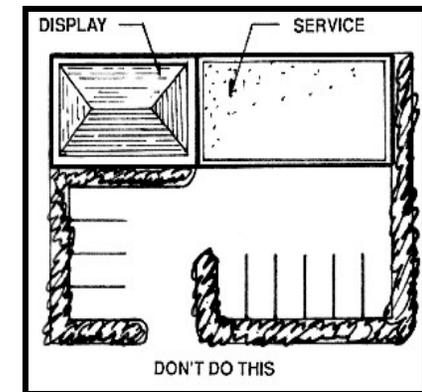
- a. Landscaping is required in all street front setback areas, along the building base, adjacent to customer entrances to buildings, and along property lines visible from offsite or from customer access areas.
- b. No dismantling of wrecked cars is allowed on the site, and no outdoor storage is allowed.
- c. Public (outdoor) address systems are prohibited. Beepers and/or personal pagers should be used in outdoor areas if it is necessary to contact employees outdoors.

### 5. Screening

- a. Trash areas should be designed to accommodate disposal of junk parts as well as packing from parts shipments.
- b. Provisions should be made for the storage of used oil and lubricants pending recycling.
- c. All compressors should be located within buildings to minimize any impacts on adjacent properties.



*Appropriate site design.*



*Inappropriate site design.*

## H. Hotels and Motels

### 1. Description

Hotels and Motels are quasi-residential uses and should be designed and sited to minimize the effect of noise from freeways and roadways. Although they are quasi-residential, the scale of, and activities associated with Hotels and Motels often make them problematic neighbors for adjacent residential properties. If a residential interface cannot be avoided, it should be carefully designed to mitigate any potential adverse impacts on existing or future adjacent residents. Because Hotel and Motel architecture is often thematic, presenting a strong temptation to over design the building front and to neglect the other sides, it is important to remember that all sides of a building should be stylistically consistent.

### 2. Site Organization

- a. The primary presence along the major street frontage should be the building and driveway approach, not the parking lot.
- b. Only a few (no more than 5) short term parking spaces should be provided near the office for check-ins.
- c. Delivery and loading areas should not be located where visible from residential uses.

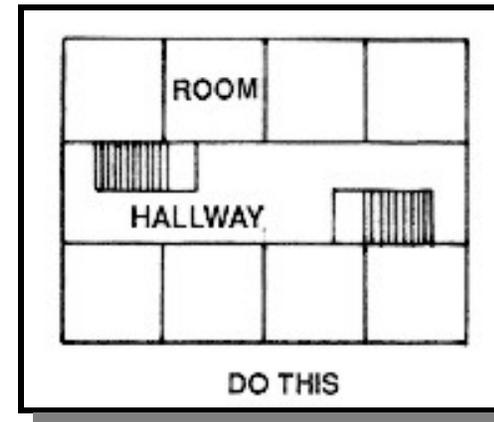


*Example of a well designed Motel*

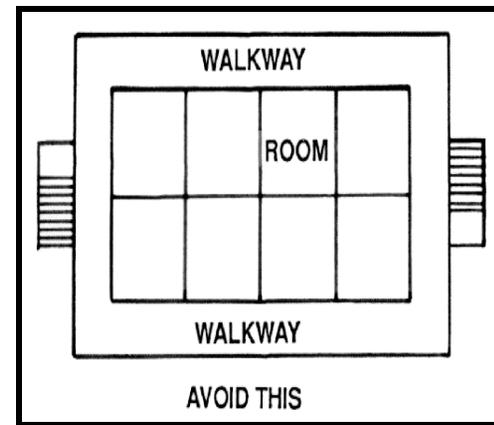
- d. Mechanical equipment of all types, including swimming pool equipment, should be located to assure that it can not be heard or seen at any residential property line.
- e. Recreational facilities such as swimming pools should be located where guests can use them in some privacy; they should not be exposed to public streets to function as advertising.
- f. Avoid locating driveway, garage ramps or loading and service areas where they interfere with the flow of pedestrian movement or impact the privacy of guest rooms.
- g. Utilize parking lots and other open spaces on the site to help buffer the hotel/motel from any adjacent incompatible uses.

### 3. Building Design

- a. Noise attenuation techniques should be included in the design of buildings near major noise generators, such as major streets or the freeway. Techniques may include: double paned glass, earthberms, thick tree groves over 30-feet in depth, or lowering the grade of the subject building below the roadway elevation. Solid masonry walls over 5-feet high are discouraged.
- b. The scale of buildings should be related to the surrounding development patterns. Walkway, stairway, and balcony railings and other similar details should be visually substantial (handrails with a thickness exceeding 2 ½" and balusters over 2" thick) and stylistically consistent with the basic building design.
- c. Central air conditioning units should be used.
- d. Exterior corridors on multi-level buildings are strongly discouraged and should not be located adjacent to residential uses.
- e. For structures over three (3) stories, guest rooms should be accessible from hallways within the hotel. Avoid room entrances directly adjacent to parking lots or exterior walkways.



*Preferred*



*Discouraged*

## I. Drive-Through and Drive-In Businesses

### 1. Description

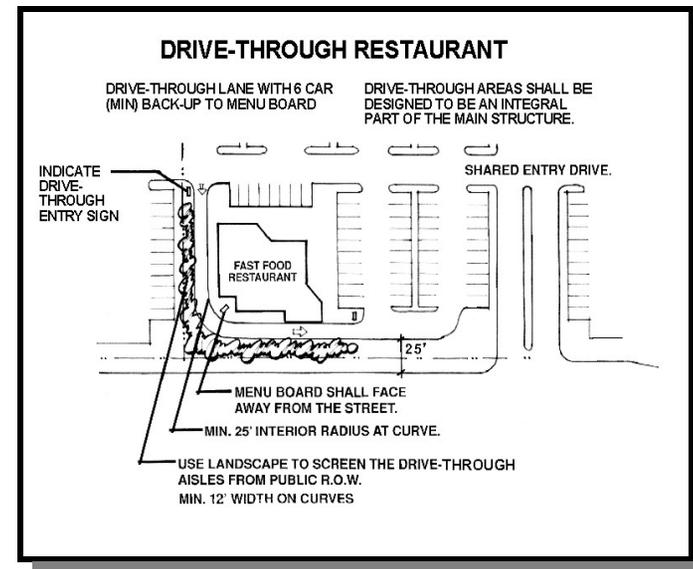
Drive-through restaurants and banks with drive-up tellers have become a common element along commercial corridors in Simi Valley. The major design issues related to these types of establishments are site plans that promote efficient and well organized vehicular access and on-site circulation, while adequately buffering adjacent uses.



*Drive-Through Business*

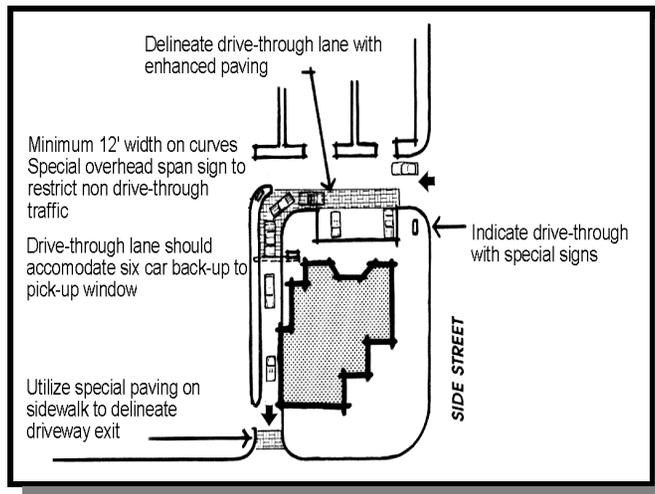
### 2. Site Organization

- a. The primary presence along the major street frontage should be the building, not parking lots.
- b. Drive-through aisles should provide adequate on-site queuing distance to accommodate 6 cars (150-feet) before stopping point (e.g. pick up window, teller window, automatic teller machine). No portion of the queuing aisle should serve double duty as a parking aisle.
- c. Drive-through aisles should have minimum 25- foot interior radius for any curve.



*Drive-Through business standards*

- d. Drive-through aisles should be screened from the view of street frontage and adjacent parking areas.
- e. Pedestrian walkways should not intersect the drive-through drive-aisle, but where they cannot be avoided, they should have minimum 15-foot clear visibility, and they should be emphasized by enriched paving.
- f. Whenever physically possible, the main structure should be sited so as to maximize the distance for vehicle queuing while screening the drive-through operations located on the back side of the structure.
- g. Menu board speakers should be located so as to protect adjoining residential areas from excessive noise.



*Drive-Through business standards.*

### 3. Building Design

- a. All building elevations facing public streets, whether such elevations function as the front, side, or rear of the building should be architecturally detailed to avoid the appearance of the 'back of the building'; buildings should contribute a positive presence to the street scene.
- b. Buildings should incorporate a full roof with built-in roof top equipment wells hidden through wood/metal trellis work.
- c. Buildings should incorporate a portico over the drive-through window.



*Appropriate architecture for a Drive-Through business.*

## J. Big Box Retail

### 1. Description

Big box retail outlets are typically housed in large single story structures more reminiscent of warehousing versus retail. Due to their positive economic impact on communities, they are becoming more prolific along local freeways and at major intersections. Due to their discount pricing structures, their expected market area is typically over 15 miles.



*Big Box Retail*

The primary design issues related to big box retail is the need to successfully accommodate large parking areas and to provide architectural interest to an otherwise plain, unadorned “big box” structure.

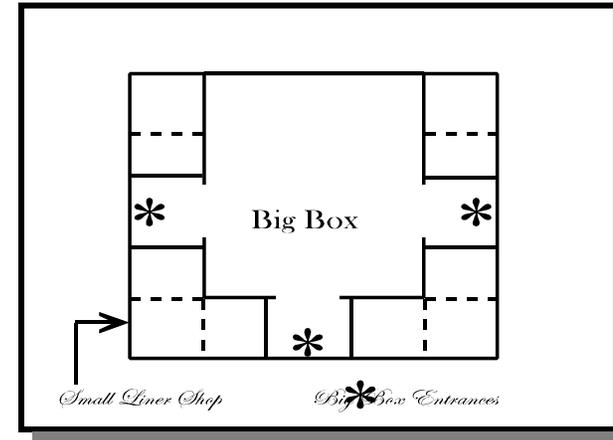
### 2. Site Organization

- a. Parking lots for big box retail should not occur entirely in front of the building. In order to reduce the impact of the large quantity of parking, at least one-fifth of the parking should occur at the sides or rear of the structure.
- b. The base of the big box building should be completely surrounded on all four sides by landscaping or enhanced pedestrian pathways.
- c. The major entry aisle should be aligned with the building entry of the most prominent onsite building.

### 3. Building Design

- a. The big box building should contain an identifiable base. Where the building meets the sidewalk, and extending 2 or more feet up the building face, is the opportunity to establish an architectural base. This base may be as simple as a change in surface texture, or a projection or break in the wall color or material. A substantial base may incorporate all of the above.
- b. The base material should be highly resistant to damage, defacing and general wear and tear. Stucco may not be utilized as a base material. Precast decorative concrete, stone masonry, brick and commercial grade ceramic tile are examples of acceptable base material.

- c. A variety of roof types are encouraged. Distinct and interesting parapet tops on these predominantly flat roofed structures are encouraged. A substantial cornice should be used at the top of a parapet wall or roof curb, providing a distinctive cap to the building facade. Unadorned parapet tops are discouraged.
- d. Building wall articulation is required on the big box. Exterior wall treatments such as arcades, porticos, insets, colonnades, lower shed roof structures, and wing walls can be used to successfully mitigate the appearance of the typical box-like appearance of the 'big box'.
- e. Encourage big box buildings to be designed with liner shops to create a more human scale setting.



*Plan view of a Big Box with liner shops.*



*Typical box-like appearance is discouraged.*



*Building with exterior wall treatment, such as arcades, porticos, and colonnades*

## K. Mixed Use Projects

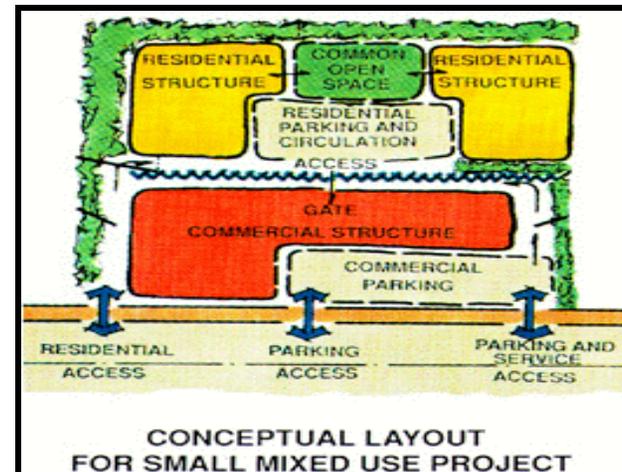
### 1. Description

For the purpose of these guidelines, multiple or mixed use projects are defined as developments which combine both commercial/office and residential uses or structures on a single lot, or as components of a single development. The uses may be combined either vertically within the same structure, or spread horizontally on the site in different areas and structures.

The primary design issue related to mixed use projects is the need to successfully balance the requirements of residential uses, such as the need for privacy and security, with the needs of commercial uses for access, visibility, parking, loading, and possibly extended hours of operation. There are two basic types of mixed use project. The first type is vertical mixed use which is typified by residential over commercial uses in the same building. The other is where the residential uses and the commercial uses are on the same site, but in separate buildings. This is called horizontal mixed use.



*Vertical Mixed Use Project*



*Horizontal Mixed Use Layout*

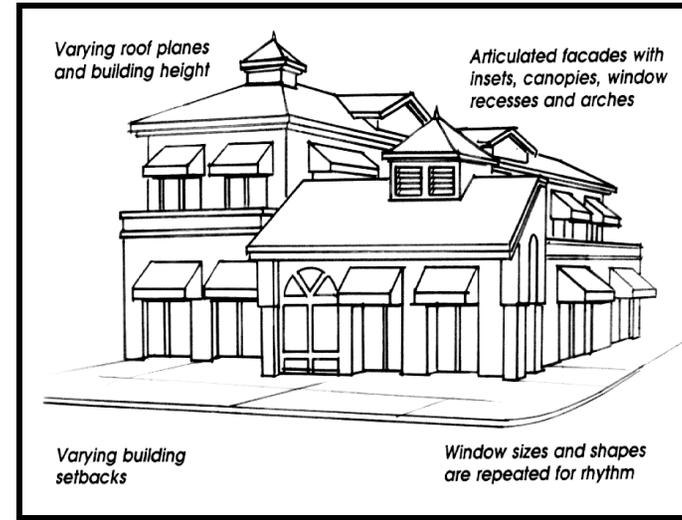
## 2. Site Organization

- a. Separate site access drive and parking facilities should be provided for residential uses and commercial uses.
- b. If enclosed parking is provided for the entire complex, separate levels should be provided for residential and commercial uses with separate building entrances.
- c. Site access drives should incorporate distinctive architectural elements and landscape features which help to differentiate access to commercial parking areas from residential areas. Security gates should be considered for access to residential uses and residential parking areas, as well as to securing commercial parking areas when businesses are closed.
- d. When a mixed use project is designed as separate structures on a lot with the commercial uses along the street and residential uses at the rear, a decorative masonry wall with decorative security gates should separate the uses.
- e. Loading areas and refuse storage facilities should be located as far as possible from residential units and should be completely screened from view from adjacent residential portions of the project. The location and design of trash enclosures should account for potential nuisances from odors.
- f. Parking lot lighting and security lighting for the commercial uses should be appropriately shielded so as not to spill over into the residential area. High mounted, widely-spaced pole fixtures that illuminate large areas and are directed at building walls from a single source are not appropriate. Residential units should also be shielded from illuminated commercial signing.
- g. Open space intended for use by “residents only” may not be accessible from commercial areas. Open space and courtyards in commercial areas may be accessible to residential occupants and visitors.
- h. When residential and commercial uses are provided in the same structure, separate entrances should be provided for each use.

## 3. Building Design

- a. The architectural style and use of materials should be consistent throughout the entire mixed use project. Differences in materials and/or architectural details should only occur on a structure where the intent is to differentiate between the residential scale and character of the structure and the commercial scale and character.
- b. The design of storefronts should be consistent with the design guidelines for commercial development.

- c. Projects three stories or less in height should incorporate full roofs on at least 50% of the roof area.
- d. Structures with heights greater than three stories should set back upper portions of the structure a minimum of 10 feet for each additional two stories.
- e. All roof mounted equipment is required to be screened. Special consideration should be given to the location and screening of noise generating equipment such as refrigeration units, air conditioning, and exhaust fans. Noise reducing screens and insulation may be required where such equipment has the potential to impact residential uses.



*Set back upper residential floors for additional privacy.*



*Design upper floors with a residential look.*

## L. Malls and Regional Centers

### 1. Description

Malls and Regional Centers are two distinct types of commercial centers but are treated together here because they are regional-serving and share many other development characteristics. This section applies to Malls and Centers having at least 300,000 gross square feet.



*Anchor Tenant*

A Mall is a shopping center turned inward, with all of its shops contained within a single building or a close cluster of buildings. Access to the shops is from one or more interior pedestrian 'streets' which may or may not be enclosed under a roof. A Mall depends upon the pedestrian activity generated within it and not

upon parking immediately available to each shop. Typically, Mall buildings are centered on a site and are surrounded by large parking areas.

A Regional Center is a shopping center with two or more anchor tenants and has an expected market area radius of 10 to 15 miles. Large Regional Centers, particularly when they are Malls, present a difficult architectural problem since their exterior walls are often the 'backs' of the shops and sometimes the 'backs' of 2 or 3 levels of shops.

### 2. Site Planning and Organization

- a. A series of buildings having varied sizes and volumes is strongly preferred over a single massive structure. A transition from low buildings on street frontages and other edges of the site to larger and taller structures on the interior of the properties is encouraged.
- b. Satellite buildings should be located to the front or side setback.

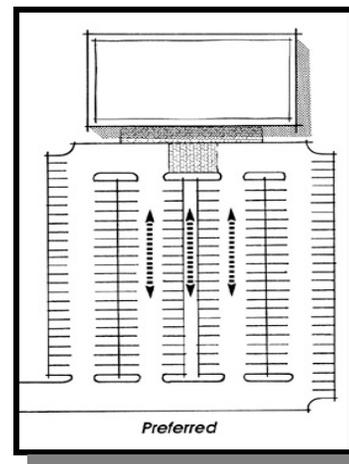


*Provide low buildings on street frontages.*

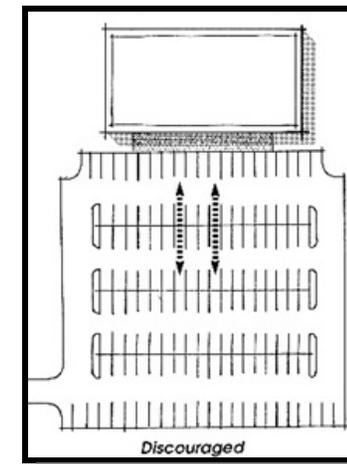
- c. Service areas are a special problem since these center types often don't have a 'back'. Services and service areas typically must be located along the building perimeter or within the building and should be totally screened from street, residential, and major internal driveways view by walls, berms, and landscaping which are totally integrated with the project architectural design, landscape scheme, and circulation pattern.
- d. All sides of principal buildings within a regional center or mall that directly face an abutting public street should include at least one customer entrance that is accessible during business hours.

### 3. Vehicular Parking and Circulation Guidelines

- a. Parking and circulation areas should provide safe, convenient, and efficient access. These areas should be distributed around regional centers and malls in order to reduce the scale and amount of paved surface and to shorten the distance to sidewalks and entries.
- b. No more than 50% of off-street parking should be located between the front facade of the principal building(s) and the primary abutting street.
- c. Regional centers and malls should include very clear circulation hierarchies with carefully planned major driveway routes that are clearly delineated by significant landscape areas free from adjacent parking.



*Encouraged circulation design*



*Discouraged circulation design*

### 5. Pedestrian Circulation Guidelines

- a. Sidewalks, separated by a landscaped parkway, should be provided along all public streets that abut regional centers and malls. Sidewalks should be a minimum 8 feet in width.



*Parking lot pedestrian walkway defined by landscaping*

- b. Continuous internal pedestrian circulation should be provided from the public sidewalk or right-of-way to the entrances of all principal buildings within regional centers and malls.



*Walkways should include trees, shrubs, and ground covers.*

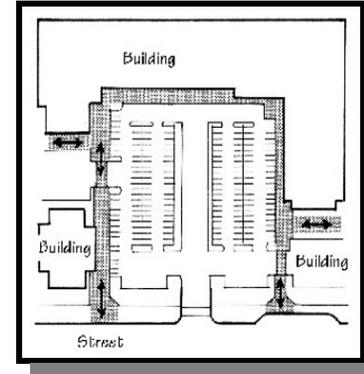
- c. All walkways comprising internal pedestrian circulation systems should be distinguished from vehicular circulation surfaces through the use of durable, low maintenance surface materials such as pavers, bricks, or scored concrete to enhance pedestrian safety and comfort, as well as aesthetics.

- d. Walkways comprising internal pedestrian circulation systems should be a minimum 8 feet in width and should connect focal points of pedestrian activity such as, but not limited to, transit stops, street crossing, building and store entry points, and plazas. Weather protection features for walkways, such as awnings or arcades, should be provided within 30 feet of all customer entrances in regional centers or malls.

- e. All walkways should feature adjoining landscaped areas that include trees, shrubs, flower beds, ground covers, and other vegetative materials for no less than 50% of the walkway length.

- f. Sidewalks should be provided along the full length of any building facade featuring a customer entrance and along any building facade abutting public parking areas.

- g. Pedestrian walkways should be provided in parking lots. The walkways should be embellished and defined by landscaping, trees, lighting, special paving materials, and/or trellises.



*Pedestrian walkways should connect to focal points of activity.*

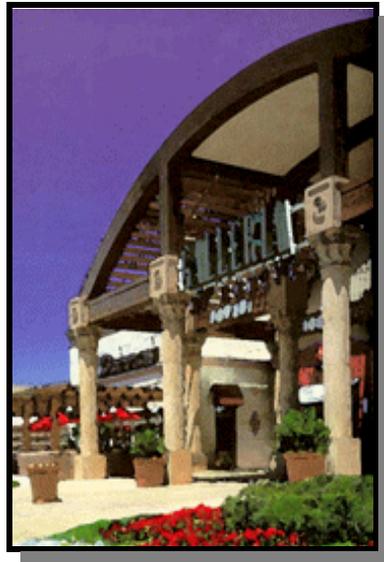


*Walkway connecting public right-of-way to building entrance*

## 5. Building Design Guidelines

### General

a. When single large structures are unavoidable, their scale should be mitigated by breaking up building volumes, articulating walls, varying heights, using ornamentation, etc.



*Visible building entrance*

b. Since mall/regional buildings are typically visible from every side, they require full, careful, and consistent architectural treatment on all sides.

c. In order to enliven the exterior facades of mall buildings, a minimum of 15% of wall exterior with shops and restaurants at the building perimeter should face outward.

d. Principal buildings of regional centers and malls should feature multiple entrances to reduce walking distances from cars, facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access from public sidewalks, and provide convenience where certain entrances offer access to individual stores or identified departments of a store.

e. There should be at least one visually important, perhaps ceremonial, building entrance visible from adjacent public streets and from each parking lot.

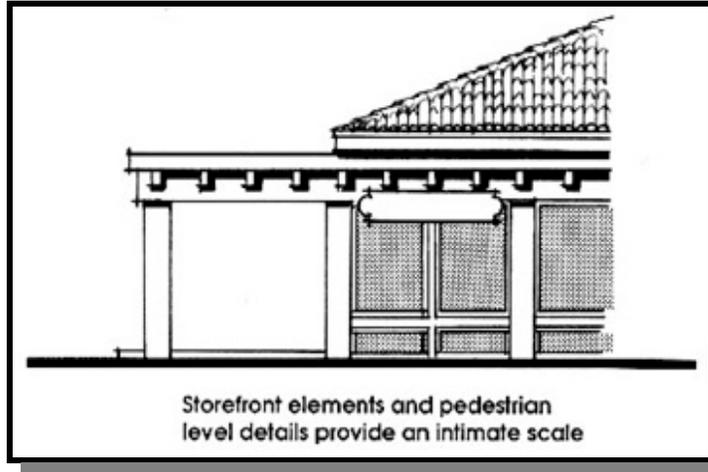
f. Tenant facades within enclosed malls are not subject to City design review.

### Massing

Facades should be articulated to reduce the massive scale and the uniform, impersonal appearances of large retail buildings. Facades should be designed to result in visual interest that is consistent with the community's identity and character, and that creates a human scale with which Simi Valley residents can relate.



*Facades should be articulated to minimize massive scale.*

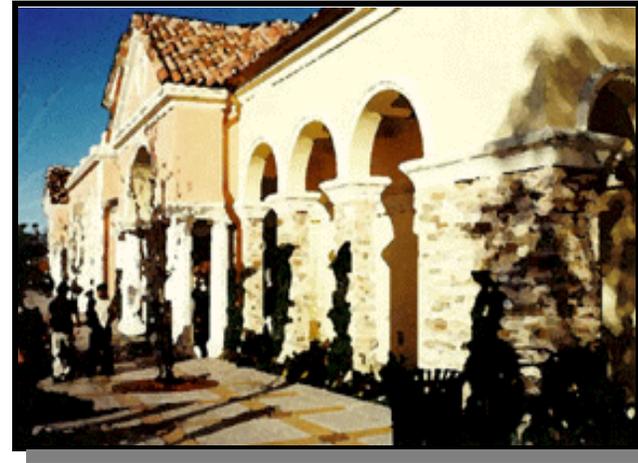


*Arcades minimize large scale retail buildings.*

### Building Architecture

- a. All building facades greater than 100 feet in horizontal length should incorporate wall plane projections or recesses having a depth of at least 3% of the length of the facade and extending at least 20% of the length of the facade. No uninterrupted length of any facade should exceed 100 feet horizontal length.
- b. All ground floor facades that face public streets should have arcades, display windows, entry areas, awnings, or other such features along no less than 60% of their horizontal length.

- c. The following guidelines should be applied to separately owned stores within principal buildings of malls or regional centers, with separate exterior customer entrances and which occupy less than 25,000 square feet of gross floor area:
  - 1) All ground floor facades should be transparent between the height of three feet and eight feet above walkway grade for no less than 75% of the horizontal length of the building facade of such stores; and,



*Ground floor facades should have architectural features.*

- 2) Windows should be recessed and should include visually prominent sills, shutters, or other such forms of framing.

**Chapter 3: Commercial Thoroughfare buildings & structures**

d. All building facades should include a repeating pattern, at intervals of no more than 30 feet horizontally or vertically, of some combination of the following elements:

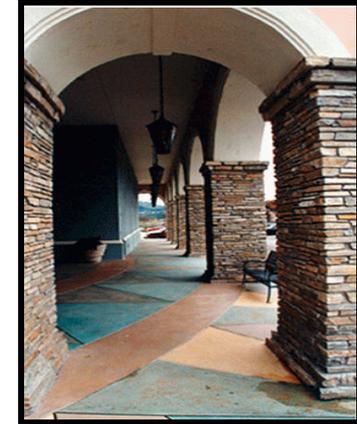
- ▶ Color change
- ▶ Texture change
- ▶ Material module change
- ▶ Expression of architectural or structural bay through a change in plane no less than 12 inches in width, such as an offset, reveal, or projecting rib.

e. Entryway design elements and variations should give orientation and aesthetically pleasing character to regional centers and malls. Each principal building within a regional center or mall should have highly visible customer entrances featuring no less than 3 of the following elements:

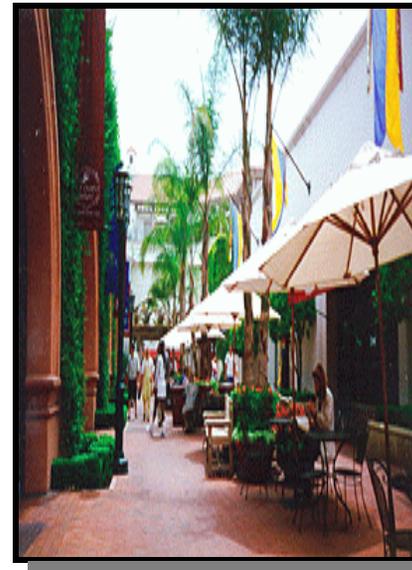
- ▶ canopies or porticos;
- ▶ overhangs;
- ▶ recesses/projections;
- ▶ arcades;
- ▶ raised corniced parapets over the door;
- ▶ peaked roof forms;
- ▶ arches;
- ▶ outdoor patios;
- ▶ display windows;
- ▶ architectural details such as tile work and moldings which are integrated into the building structure and design; and
- ▶ integral planters or long walls that incorporate landscaped areas and/or places for sitting.



*"Recess entry"*



*"Arcade"*



*"Outdoor patio"*



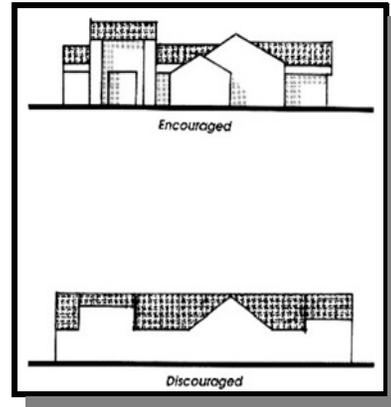
*"Planters"*



*Provide overhangs at entryways.*

Roofs

a. Variations in roof lines should be used to add interest to, and reduce the massive scale of, malls and regional centers. In all instances, roof features should complement the character of adjoining neighborhoods and uses.



*Variation in roof lines is encouraged.*

2. Roofs of malls and regional centers should be designed to integrate a minimum of 2 of the following elements or another feature designed to reduce the bulk and mass of the overall structure:

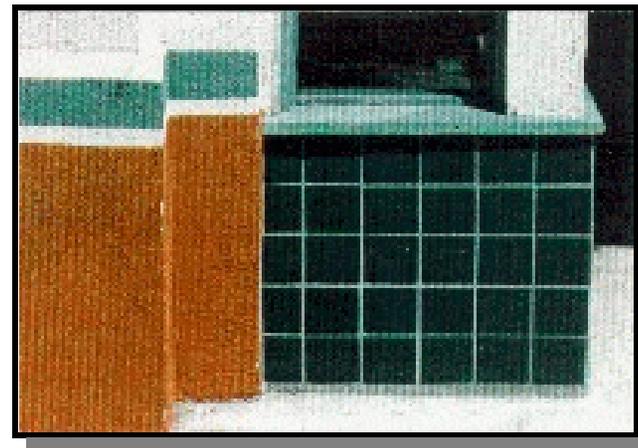
- 1) Full parapets concealing flat roofs and rooftop equipment from public view, and including a three-dimensional cornice treatment;
- 2) Overhanging eaves, extending no less than 5 feet past the supporting walls; and/or,
- 3) Sloping roofs with an average slope of 1:3, vertical to horizontal run.

Materials

a. Exterior building materials and colors comprise a significant part of the visual impact of a building; therefore, they should be aesthetically pleasing and compatible with materials and colors used in adjoining neighborhoods.

b. Predominant exterior building materials are strongly encouraged to be of high quality, including:

- ▶ brick
- ▶ sandstone
- ▶ river rock
- ▶ other native stone
- ▶ tinted, textured, concrete masonry units
- ▶ split-faced block



*Building trim may feature bold colors.*

**Chapter 3: Commercial Thoroughfare buildings & structures**

- c. Facade colors should be low reflectance, subtle, neutral or earth tone colors. The use of high intensity colors, metallic colors, black, red, orange, or fluorescent colors is strongly discouraged.
- d. Building trim and accent areas may feature brighter colors, including primary colors, but neon tubing should not be used.
- e. Predominant exterior building materials should not include the following:
  - ▶ smooth-faced concrete block
  - ▶ unfinished tilt-up concrete panels
  - ▶ pre-fabricated steel panels

- ▶ clock tower
- ▶ live performance area
- ▶ or other amenity approved by the Planning Commission
- b. All community and public amenities should have direct access to the public sidewalk network.

Special Requirements

- a. Regional centers and malls should contribute to the establishment or enhancement of community and public spaces by providing at least two of the following:
  - ▶ patio/seating area
  - ▶ pedestrian plaza with benches
  - ▶ transportation center
  - ▶ window shopping walkway
  - ▶ outdoor playground area
  - ▶ kiosk area
  - ▶ water feature



*Patio/seating area*



*Fountain*



*Window shopping walkway*



*Outdoor dining*



*Water feature*

## CHAPTER 4: Business Park Design Guidelines

### A. Introduction

The following Design Guidelines seek to assure high quality development in Industrial and Business Park zones. The following Guidelines seek to:

- ▶ Achieve well-planned, quality designed industrial development;
- ▶ Ensure compatibility between new industrial development and existing community character; and

The primary emphasis of these standards is site planning. Due to the utilitarian nature of these structures, architectural design standards are minimal.



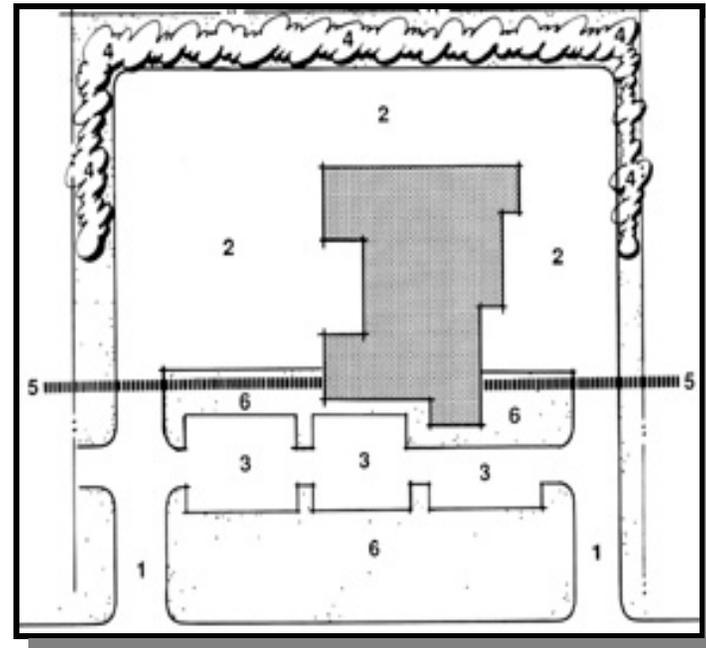
*Photo of a desirable Industrial building*

**B. Site Planning Guidelines****1. General Site Planning Guidelines**

Due to the larger sites developed in the industrial zones, building architecture is considered secondary to an appropriately site planned industrial project. These guidelines are developed to protect adjoining uses from excessive noise, odor, objectionable views, and unrestricted vehicular circulation.

- a. The main elements of sound industrial site design as illustrated on the graphic on this page include:
  - ▶ controlled site access (1)
  - ▶ service areas located at the sides and rear of buildings (2)
  - ▶ convenient public access and visitor parking (3)
  - ▶ screening of storage, work areas, and mechanical equipment (4)
  - ▶ storage and service area screen walls (5)
  - ▶ emphasis on the main building entry and landscaping (6)
  
- b. A variety of building and parking setbacks should be provided in order to avoid long monotonous building facades and to create diversity.

- c. Buildings should be located on 'turf-islands', where the office portion of the building does not directly abut paved parking areas. A 6-foot or larger landscape strip should be provided between parking areas and the office (front) portion of a structure, including a 6-inch curb and 6-inch concrete mow strip.



*Appropriate Industrial Site Layout Prototype*

## 2. Building Location

- a. A development should be located and designed to carefully fit into the surrounding environment and to not dominate the existing character of the area.
- b. Auxiliary structures associated with industrial buildings or complexes such as trash enclosures, phone booths, vending machines, and storage areas should be compatible with and integrated into the overall design of a business park.

## 3. Site Access



*Monument Sign*

- a. Business parks should be marked by entry features such as a monument, special paving, or landscaping.
- b. The entry to each development area should be clearly visible to motorists.

## 4. Views and Screening

- a. Buildings should be located to minimize alteration of the natural topography and tree removal.
- b. Landscape screening and restoration should be used to minimize the visual impact of new development.
- c. Buildings should not detract from the scenic and visual quality of the community, and should not impair views from major public roads, trails, or vehicular turnouts.
- d. In scenic areas and areas dominated by landscaping, buildings should incorporate natural materials and otherwise should blend into the natural topography.



*Landscaping should be used to minimize visual impact.*

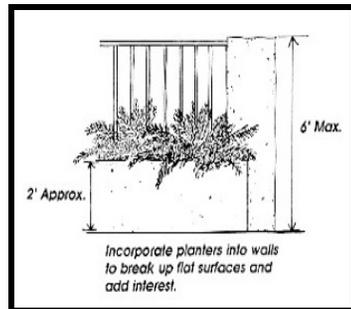
## 5. Screen Wall Guidelines

- a. If walls are not required for a specific screening or security purpose they should not be utilized. Walls provide hiding places for intruders and surfaces for graffiti. The intent is to keep walls as low as possible while performing their screening and security functions.



*Landscaping along security walls is encouraged.*

- b. Walls should be designed to blend with the site's architecture. Landscaping can be used in combination with walls. Creativity in design is encouraged.

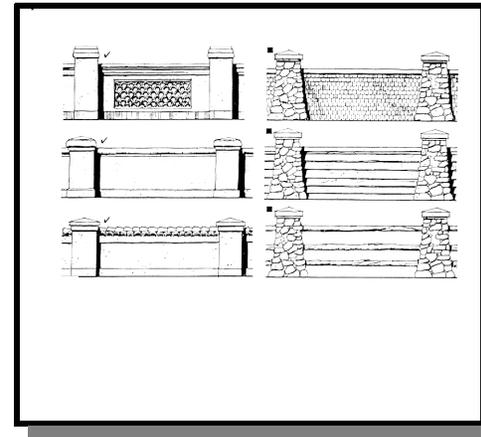


*Make security fencing attractive.*

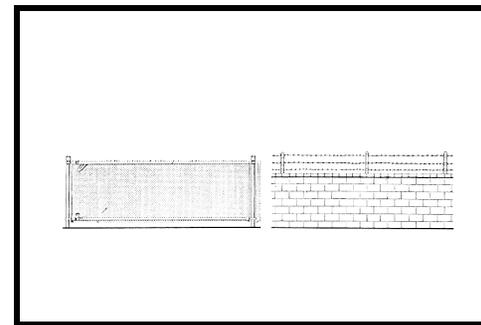
- c. When security fencing is required it should be a combination of solid pillars, or short solid wall segments and wrought iron grille work.

- d. Long expanses of fence or wall surfaces should be offset and architecturally designed to prevent monotony. Landscape pockets (12-feet wide by 3-feet deep) should be provided at

70-foot minimum intervals along the wall. It is strongly encouraged that wall articulation be done as aesthetically as possible. Also, include vines on wall surfaces to break up flat surfaces.



*Appropriate styles of fencing*



*Inappropriate styles of fencing*

## **6. Natural Features.**

Business Parks should demonstrate an effort to retain significant existing natural features characteristic of the surrounding setting. Where possible, existing vegetation, waterways, drainage courses, views, rock outcroppings, and other natural features should be protected, preserved, and integrated into the development plan where feasible.

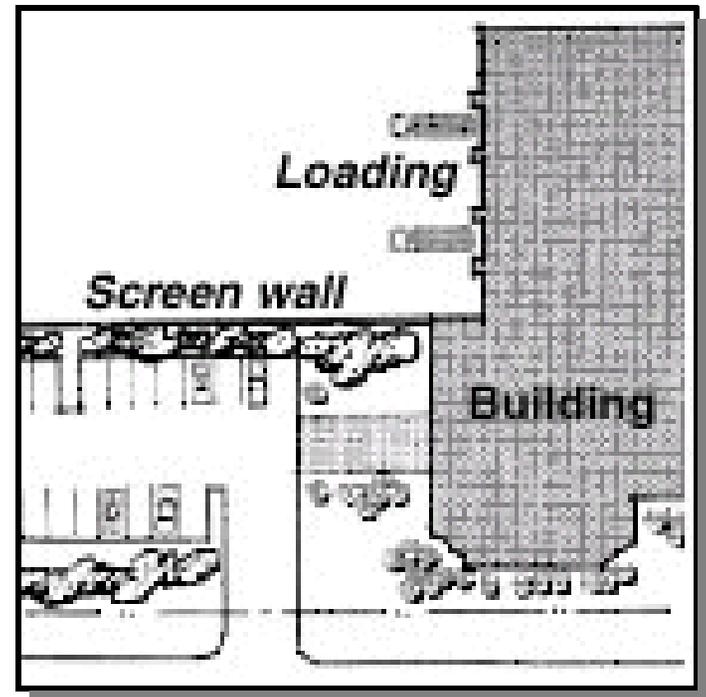
- a. All areas that are not paved or not covered by buildings should be retained in existing vegetation or landscaped.
- b. Natural features should be removed only when necessary to construct buildings and access roads.
- c. Altered areas should be restored and revegetated to replicate the natural conditions prior to construction.
- d. Mass grading that results in padded building sites separated by steep, geometric slope embankments should be avoided. Grading of sites should result in slope and contours which replicate preconstruction site conditions.

### C. Parking and Circulation Guidelines

Business Parks need to take greater care in the design of their onsite circulation system, since they may need to deal with visitors, employees and significant truck loading and unloading.

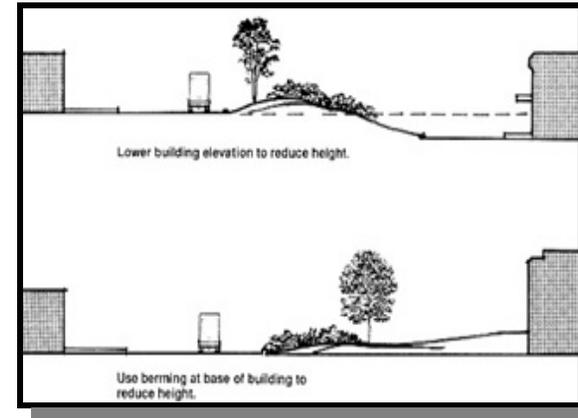
Parking lots and loading facilities will need to be designed with each other in mind while not dominating the industrial site.

- a. Parking lots and cars should not be the dominant visual elements of the site. Large expansive paved areas located between the street and the building should be avoided in favor of smaller multiple lots separated by landscaping and buildings.
- b. Site access and internal circulation will be designed in a straight forward manner which emphasizes safety and efficiency. The circulation system should be designed to reduce conflicts between vehicular and pedestrian traffic, provide adequate maneuvering and stacking areas, and consideration for emergency vehicle access.
- c. Entrances and exits to and from parking and loading facilities should be provided in compliance with the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and should be clearly marked with appropriate directional signage and pavement markings.
- d. A vehicle entering the parking facility should not be required to enter a street to move from one location to any other location within the parking facility or premises.
- e. Parking lots adjacent to and visible from public street should be screened from view through the use of rolling earth berms, low screen walls, changes in elevation, landscaping or combinations thereof.



*Alternative Site Layout for a more prominent office building*

- f. Pedestrian walkways should be provided so employees and visitors have a safe and convenient route between buildings and building entrances and parking areas.
- g. Where appropriate, pedestrian access should be provided between transit stops and buildings. Transit shelters should be provided.
- h. Pedestrian walkways should be accessible, safe, visually attractive, and well-defined by decorative pavement, landscaping, low walls, and low-level lighting.
- i. Pedestrian access should be made to adjoining areas where the potential for interaction with the activities or services within these areas is likely.



*Use berming or grade differentials to screen parking lots.*



*Provide clearly paved pedestrian walkways within parking lots.*

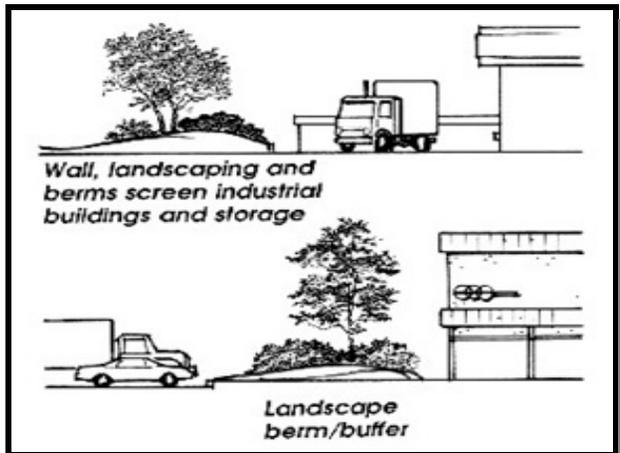


*Pedestrian walkways should be visually attractive.*

**D. Loading Facility Guidelines**

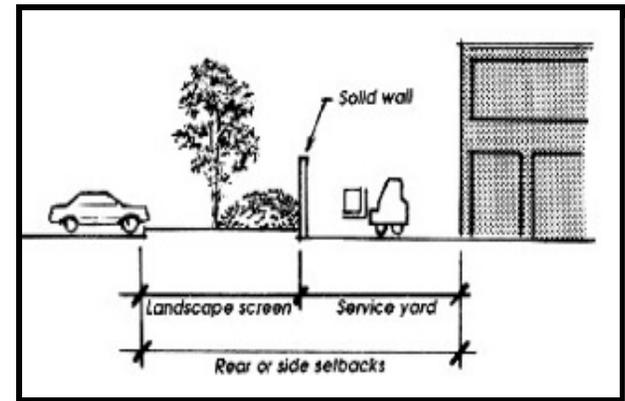
Loading facilities need to be sited with care on the industrial site. Whenever possible, these facilities need to be hidden from public view.

- a. Loading should be confined to portions of the site least visible to public view.
- b. Screening of loading facilities should be accomplished by a combination of elements including solid masonry walls, berms, and landscaping.



*Screen all loading facilities*

- c. The method of screening should be architecturally integrated with the adjacent building in terms of materials, colors, shape, and size. Where individual equipment is provided, a continuous screen wrapping completely around the equipment is required.



*Masonry walls can be utilized to screen loading areas.*

## **E. Landscaping, Lighting, and Fencing Guidelines**

### **1. Landscaping**

- a. For industrial uses, landscaping should be used to define areas such as entrances to buildings and parking lots, define the edges of various land uses, provide transition between neighboring properties (buffering), and provide screening for outdoor storage, loading and equipment areas.
- b. Landscaping needs to be in scale with adjacent buildings and be of an appropriate size at maturity to accomplish its intended purpose.

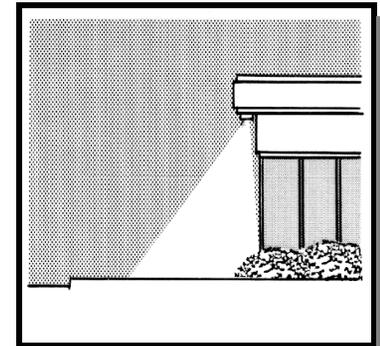


*Landscaping should be in scale with the building*

- c. Use of vines on walls is encouraged in industrial areas because such walls often tend to be large and blank and opportunities for graffiti will be reduced.
- d. Landscaping around the entire base of the building is required to soften the edge between the parking lot and building. This must be accented at entrances to provide focus.
- e. Use changes in building elevation or berming at the edge of the building in conjunction with landscaping to reduce structure mass and height along street facades.
- f. Landscaping should be protected from vehicular and pedestrian encroachment by raised planting surfaces, depressed walks, or the use of curbs.

### **2. Lighting**

- a. Large areas should be illuminated in such a way as to minimize the visual impact and amount of spillover light onto surrounding residents. High-mounted, widely-spaced pole fixtures that illuminate large areas and are directed at building walls from a single source are not appropriate.



*Confine light spread to within the site boundaries.*

- b. The design of lighting fixtures and their structural support should be of a scale and architectural design which is compatible with on-site buildings. If possible, a light standard theme should be provided throughout the business park.
- c. The visibility of light sources, such as light bulbs, should be minimized.
- d. If industrial activities and operations occur during the night, low-level lighting should be provided at driveway entrances.
- e. Building wall wash lighting is encouraged. Multiple luminaire are preferred over a single high intensity light.
- d. Gates should be provided in walls or fences to allow emergency access.
- e. Perimeter walls and fences topped with barbed wire or razor wire are strongly discouraged.
- f. High solid walls and fences along public streets can have a negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood and their use should be minimized.

### 3. Fencing

- a. Walls and fences should be designed with architectural treatment or a decorative appearance on both sides, and should be solidly constructed of attractive and quality materials such as masonry, native stone, detailed wrought iron, brick, or decorative block.
- b. Walls and fences should be designed in such a manner as to create an attractive appearance to the street and to complement the architecture of the industrial park.
- c. Walls and fences with a lesser quality of finish and detail may be acceptable if they are continuously screened by landscaping.



*High solid walls along public streets are discouraged.*

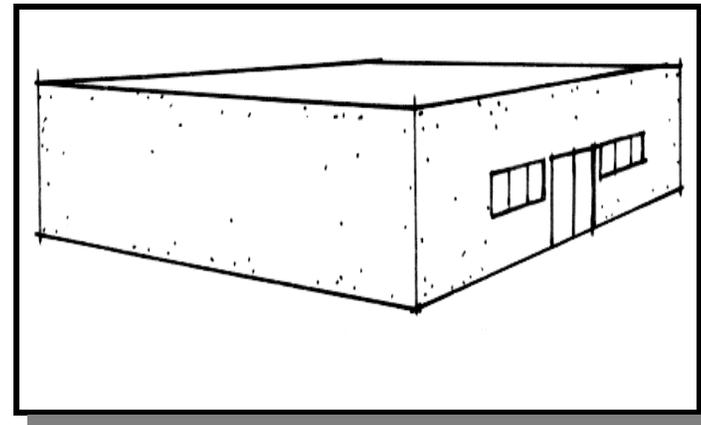
## F. Architectural Guidelines

Unlike the commercial design guidelines, the guidelines for industrial development seek not to impose strict scale and articulation guidelines, but to promote quality development which will be an asset to the City of Simi Valley. These standards will assist the developer in understanding the City's concept of "quality" design relative to industrial projects.

### 1. General

- a. Each business park should have a distinct architectural concept that is consistent in theme but rich in subtle variation. Buildings within the same industrial park should be designed to lend a clear, unified, and easily identifiable image. Methods to achieve this include using similar architectural styles and materials, complementary roof forms, signage, colors, and decorative pavement.
- b. The architectural qualities and design elements for industrial buildings that are most actively sought are:
  - ▶ variety of building indentations and architectural details;
  - ▶ building entry accentuation;
  - ▶ screening of equipment and storage areas; and

- ▶ landscaping to soften building exteriors and buffer between uses.
- c. The elements that are strongly discouraged include:
  - ▶ large blank, flat surfaces;
  - ▶ exposed, untreated concrete block walls (except split face);
  - ▶ unscreened loading doors facing the street;
  - ▶ exposed roof drains; and
  - ▶ simple box like structures with little or no architectural features



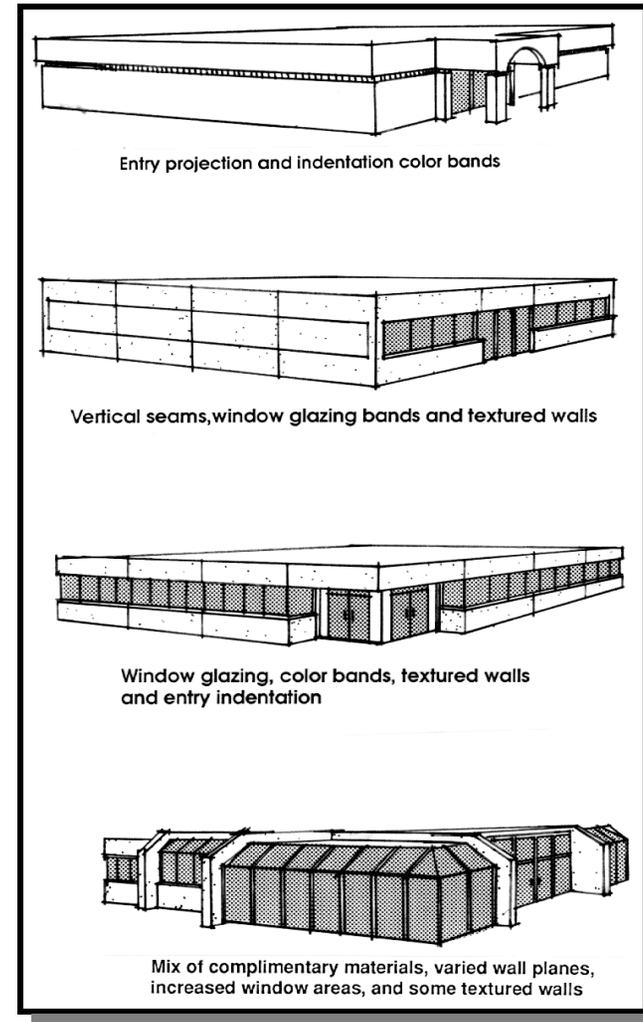
*Plain box-like structures are unacceptable.*

## 2. Height and Mass

- a. Height and mass of buildings should be limited where it is necessary to achieve a development that is unobtrusive, protects existing views, and is visually compatible with the surrounding area.
- b. The design of industrial buildings should consider the visual and physical relationship to adjacent uses. A structure which dominates its environment either by its relative size or by its activity and function is discouraged.
- c. Differences in building scale are acceptable provided the differences are not detrimental to the character or environment of surrounding areas.
- d. Varying building heights and setbacks to define different functions such as offices and warehousing are encouraged.

## 3. Building

- a. Employ variety in building forms to create visual character and interest.
- b. Avoid long (over 100') unbroken building facades. Facades with varied front setbacks are strongly encouraged.
- c. Alteration of colors and materials should be used to produce diversity and visual interest.



*Industrial buildings should include architectural features.*

- d. Entries to industrial buildings should portray a quality office appearance while being architecturally related to the overall building composition.
- e. Entrances to individual buildings should be readily identifiable to visitors.
- f. Warehouses should avoid blank front and side wall elevations on street frontages through the use of building indentations and architectural details.

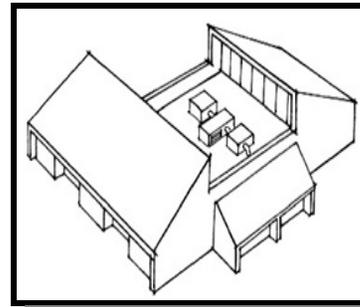


*Structures should have diversity and visual interest.*

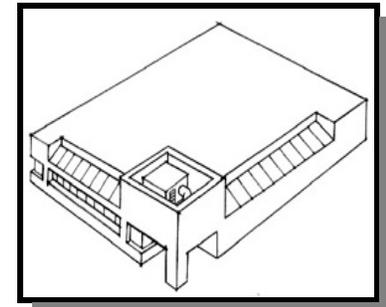
#### 4. Roofs

- a. Roof drains and roof-top equipment are required to be screened from view by architectural features integrated with the design of the structure.
- b. Roofs should be included as an element of the architectural theme of industrial buildings. Rooflines of industrial buildings should include variations to avoid long, continuous planes.

- c. Brightly-colored and highly reflective roof surfaces, including unpainted galvanized metal roofing and illuminated roofing are strongly discouraged.



*Exteriors should appear as architecturally conventional and employ a variety of forms.*



*Screening rooftop equipment is required.*

#### 5. Materials/Color

- a. Use various wall material, i.e. metal, masonry, concrete texturing, cement or plaster to produce effects of texture and relief that provide architectural interest.
- b. Avoid materials with high maintenance such as stained wood, clapboard, or shingles.

- c. Use wall materials such as concrete, stone, cement block, or metal that will withstand abuse by vandals or accidental damage from machinery. False facades and other simulated materials and ornamentation are discouraged.
- d. All metal buildings must be designed to have an exterior appearance of conventionally built structures. Exterior surfaces must include either stucco, plaster, glass, stone, brick, or decorative masonry. Stock, “off-the-shelf” metal buildings are highly discouraged as primary structures.
- e. Metal buildings should employ a variety of building forms, shapes, colors, materials and other architectural treatments to add visual interest and variety to the building. Such treatments should emphasize the primary entrance to the building.



*Metal products for walls and roofs provide long term performance.*

- f. All exterior surfaces of metal buildings which have the potential of being contacted by vehicles or machinery should be protected by the use of landscaped areas, raised concrete curbs, and traffic barriers.



*Example of a metal building*

- g. Blending of compatible colors in a single facade or composition is a good way to add interest and variety while reducing building scale and breaking up plain walls.
- h. Light, neutral colors should be used on industrial buildings to help reduce their perceived size. Contrasting trim and horizontal color bands can help break up the vertical monotony of tall flat walls. Their use is strongly encouraged.