

City of Ithaca

New York



DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

Adopted March 2018

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION



This document provides guidance for all new development and major renovation projects in Downtown. The guidelines are intended to promote high quality construction and exceptional urban design.

They will be used by the Planning Board, City staff, residents, developers, property owners, architects and others in the design review process. The document also serves as an educational tool to demonstrate Downtown design objectives and expectations.

This chapter addresses applicability, procedures and other background information that should be reviewed prior to beginning work on a project.

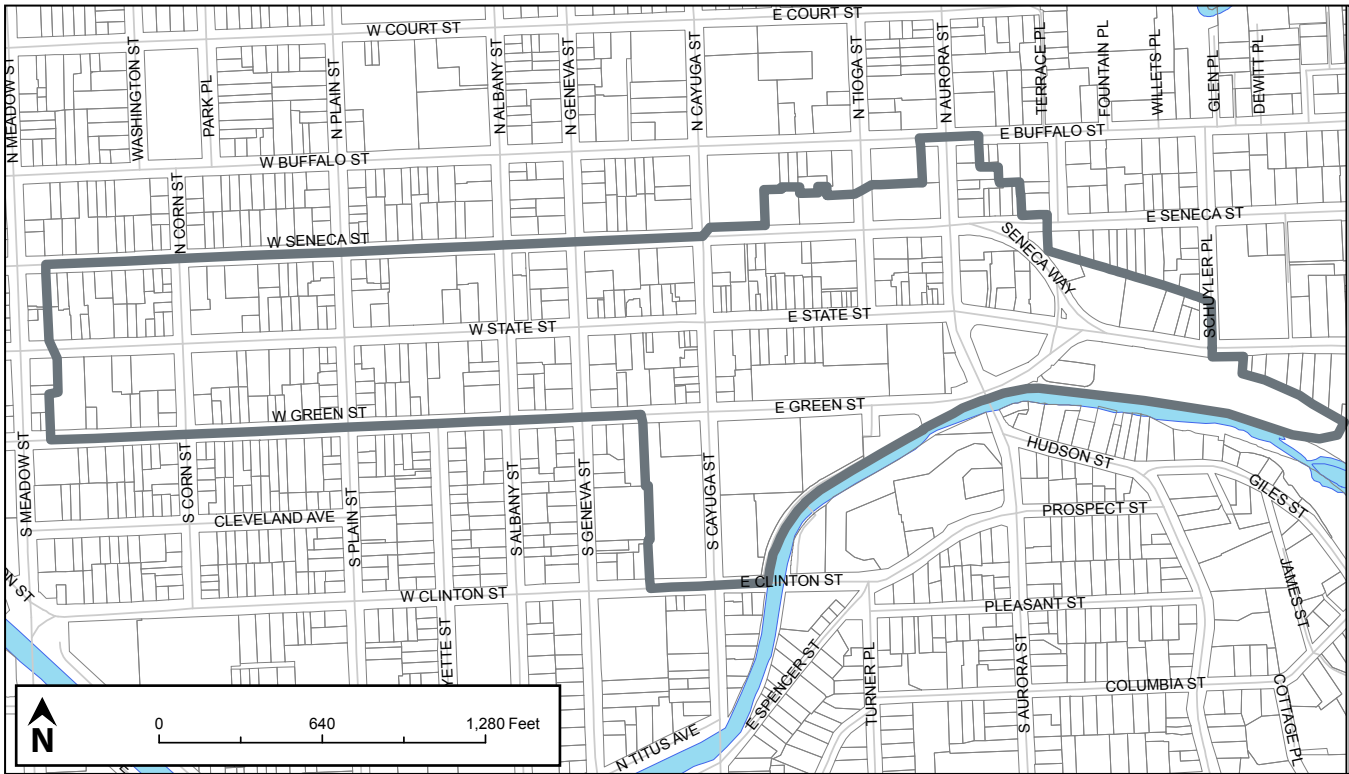
Benefits of Design Guidelines

Design guidelines help strengthen the character of the built environment and enhance property values by improving the quality of development and by making Downtown a more desirable place to live, work and play. Design guidelines help preserve a cohesive character and also help clarify the community's expectations for new development.

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FIGURE 1: Downtown Design Guidelines Area.



Applicability

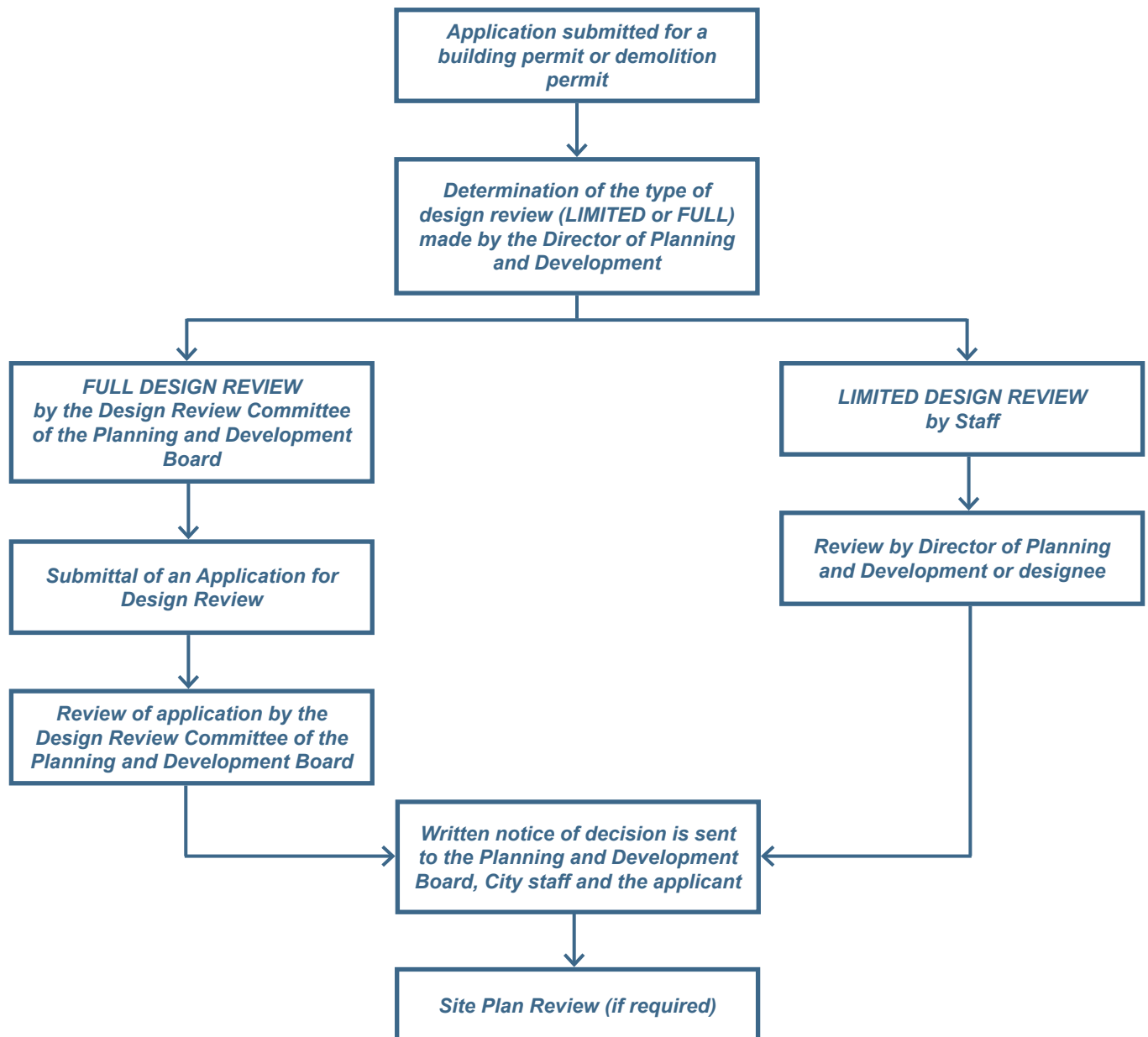
The principles and guidelines in this document apply to all proposals for new development and exterior alterations to existing buildings within the Downtown, which is referred to as the Downtown Design Guidelines Area throughout this document, the “Downtown Area” or “Downtown” for short. The Downtown Area is shown in Figure 1.

All locally designated historic properties are exempt from design review because they undergo a special approval process conducted by the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission (ILPC).

Design Review Process

The City of Ithaca Design Review Ordinance requires design review of projects zoned B-1b; B-2c; B-2d; and CBD. The intent is to promote desirable growth and promote excellence in architecture and urban design. The Design Review Committee of the Planning and Development Board is responsible for design review. The Committee will use this document to guide the design review process and make recommendations and requirements. In addition to design review, a project must be reviewed by the full Planning and Development Board to verify that it complies with the site plan review and environmental review requirements of the City Municipal Code. All recommendations from the design review process are non-binding unless they are made a condition of site plan approval or have been fully incorporated into the approved set of drawings. This review process is illustrated in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2: Design Review Process.



City of Ithaca Design Review Ordinance

The Design Review Ordinance can be found online at: <http://ecode360.com/15635421>

City of Ithaca Site Plan Review Ordinance

The Site Plan Review Ordinance can be found online at: <http://ecode360.com/8392621>

City of Ithaca Zoning Code

The City of Ithaca Zoning Code can be found online at:
<http://ecode360.com/8393835>

Priority and Secondary Guidelines

“Priority guidelines” (as illustrated later in this chapter in Figure 8), are indicated in blue text throughout this document. All projects must satisfy each of the priority guidelines, unless it is shown that a particular guideline is clearly irrelevant for the particular project (for example, a priority guideline that requires variation in the massing of upper floors is irrelevant for a single-story project).

All other guidelines are “secondary guidelines.” All secondary guidelines will still be used in the review process, but the Design Review Committee or Planning and Development Board may find that not all of them are relevant to a given project. Thus, the project must adequately meet the relevant secondary guidelines in this document to receive approval.

In this review process, the Design Review Committee and the Planning and Development Board will use all of the relevant design guidelines contained in this document, regardless of whether they are designated as priority or secondary. Additionally, the Planning Board can make the satisfaction of any design guideline required as a condition of site plan approval.

Relationship to the Zoning Code

The zoning districts in Downtown establish the basic parameters for development. Many parcels in Downtown are zoned CBD (CBD-60, CBD-85, CBD-100, CBD-120 or CBD-140). Standards are identical for all CBD zones, with the exception of maximum height limits. The remaining parcels in Downtown are zoned B-2d or B-4. These zoning designations have more restrictive height limitations than the CBD zones, differ in other area requirements and also allow different uses. In addition to regulating height and use, the zoning ordinance addresses minimum lot size, setbacks, parking requirements, lot coverage and more.

A single parcel with more than one zoning designation is referred to as “split zoned.” A small number of Downtown parcels are split zoned. This occurs in the following areas:

- Parcels on the south side of the Commons to maintain the traditional scale of buildings along the Commons.
- Parcels on the south side of West Seneca Street and north side of West Green Street to transition between commercial and residential uses.
- Parcels on the east side of the 100 block of N. Aurora Street and the north side of the 300 block of E. State Street to step down in height toward the Commons.

The primary difference between the guidelines in this document and zoning is that the latter is prescriptive. This means that compliance with zoning requirements can be measured and compliance or non-compliance determined with certainty. Conversely, the guidelines provide a more nuanced level of guidance that requires discretion and interpretation by staff and the Design Review Committee. They allow flexibility, meaning that a design approach that meets the intent of a guideline may be appropriate even though it is not explicitly identified in the document. The Design Review Committee and Planning and Development Board have discretion to determine how a particular guideline can be satisfied by each individual project. Discretion does not mean that the guideline is optional. While guidelines provide flexibility in how they are satisfied, their satisfaction may still be required. For example, the Design Review Committee of the Planning and Development Board may require a project to satisfy the guideline “orient a building to the public realm,” but there are multiple ways a project could satisfy this guideline, depending on the context of the site. The key topics addressed in the zoning ordinance and these guidelines are shown in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3: Zoning Ordinance vs. Guidelines.

PRESCRIPTIVE	DISCRETIONARY
Zoning Ordinance	Design Guidelines
Land Use	Building Orientation
Lot Size	Building Mass & Scale
Lot Coverage	Façade Character
Parking Requirements	Building Materials
Setbacks	Compatible Design
Building Height	Pedestrian Connections
	Service Area Location
	Fences & Walls
	Open Space
	Landscaping
	Sustainability
	Lighting
	Sign Design
	Transitions Between Zones

Plan Ithaca - City of Ithaca Comprehensive Plan

The Plan Ithaca Comprehensive Plan provides the basis of land use and development policy for the city. It can be found online at: <http://www.cityofithaca.org/165/City-Comprehensive-Plan>

Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission

More information on the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission and the Citywide historic preservation guidelines can be found online at: <http://ny-ithaca.civicplus.com/346/Ithaca-Landmarks-Preservation-Commission>

Relationship to Other Policy and Regulatory Elements

This section describes additional pertinent policy and regulatory documents.

Comprehensive Plan

Plan Ithaca, the City's Comprehensive Plan, presents a broad vision for community development and outlines policies to achieve it. Plan Ithaca provides land use recommendations and establishes goals for development. Specifically, it emphasizes the importance of "compact mixed-use development" for both livability and sustainability. The guidelines respond to this goal by focusing on urban character and design quality, particularly at the street level. As part of this goal, the comprehensive plan seeks to de-emphasize surface parking citywide.

Other key policies in the comprehensive plan seek to preserve and enhance neighborhood character, maintain a vibrant economy, pursue environmental sustainability in general and offer a high quality of life. These policies are reflected throughout the guidelines.

Historic Preservation

Downtown contains two locally designated historic districts (Downtown West and Clinton Block) and one district on the National Register of Historic Places (Ithaca Downtown Historic District). The Downtown Area also includes a portion of the East Hill Historic District, and is adjacent to the locally designated Dewitt and Henry St. John Historic Districts. Three locally designated landmarks exist in the boundaries of the Downtown Area (117 West State Street - the State Theatre, 123 South Cayuga Street - the former NY State Gas & Electric Building, and 115-117 North Cayuga Street - the Masonic Temple).

The Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission (ILPC) reviews development proposals and renovations on locally designated properties under a separate process using the Historic District and Landmark Design Guidelines. The Ithaca Downtown Historic District, however, is a National Register District and thus not subject to review under the Historic District and Landmark Design Guidelines. Downtown's historic districts and landmarks are shown in Figure 4.



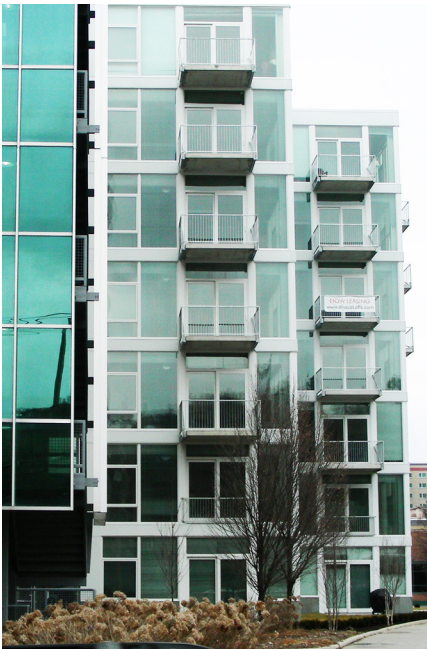
Description of the Downtown Design Guidelines Area

Downtown has remained the economic and cultural center of Ithaca since the city was first established. It is the core of Ithaca's commercial development and also includes residential development in a variety of forms. Within Downtown, characteristics vary within different "sub-areas" that reflect land use, building scale, architectural style and other factors. In the center of Downtown, traditional mixed-use buildings dominate, with retail on the ground floor and apartments or office space on upper floors. Central Downtown is a walkable environment, with pedestrian activity focused around the Commons. This area draws locals and tourists alike. Farther west, along West State, West Seneca and West Green Streets, a fine-grained mix of low-scale commercial buildings, multi-family apartment buildings and single-family houses predominate.



Downtown encompasses a unique mix of contemporary, mid-rise mixed-use buildings; smaller scale, single and multi-story traditional residential, commercial and mixed-use buildings; and a wide range of small and large single use, low-rise buildings built from the 1950's that are more auto-oriented. The mix of these building types changes dramatically from one part of Downtown to another and the guidelines recognize these differences. A key concept in the guidelines is that Downtown is comprised of a series of "Character Areas" based on physical characteristics, which are described in the next section.





Downtown Core

The Downtown Core is synonymous with Ithaca's historic commercial core. It includes the Commons and its immediate surroundings, such as Cayuga, Aurora, East Seneca and East Green Streets. Development patterns are of a traditional grid, with rectangularly shaped lots and buildings built to the edge of the sidewalk. Within this consistent framework a mix of building styles appears, including simple commercial vernacular structures and more ornate designs with Italianate influences. Building heights vary but most convey a consistent ground floor height at the street level with storefronts. Six Mile Creek also strongly influences the character of the Downtown Core along its southern edge.



Building heights vary but most maintain a consistent ground floor height at the street level.

Tuning Fork

The “Tuning Fork” is an area of land shaped by the convergence of East State Street, Seneca Way and East Green Street. The street configuration results in irregularly shaped parcels. Grade changes also impact this Character Area. These factors create opportunities and challenges for development. Buildings in the Tuning Fork are primarily commercial or mixed-use and vary in height. Existing buildings reflect the topography and the curvilinear block pattern in different ways, creating a more diverse development pattern. Because the Tuning Fork lies adjacent to two historic districts and includes a portion of one of these and is also a gateway to Downtown, it strongly influences the traditional character of the greater Downtown Area. Six Mile Creek serves as an influential natural feature in this area.





West State Street

The West State Street Character Area includes properties west of Geneva Street. Many different building types distinguish this area; these range from commercial vernacular with flat parapets to traditional residential styles with pitched roofs. West State Street also contains the Downtown West Historic District, which is valued for its fine-grained mix of traditional buildings. This character area is pedestrian-friendly, with street trees, wider sidewalks and some streetscape elements (including planters, lampposts and decorative paving). Many buildings are built at or near the sidewalk edge. Surface parking lots appear throughout the area. These parking lots create some gaps in the streetscape that reduce walkability.



Urban Design Concepts/Definitions

Several design-related concepts and terms are referenced in this document. This section defines these baseline ideas, which are critical to understanding the guidelines and their intent.

Project

A “project” refers to any building construction, site work, renovation or other activity on a property that is subject to review under these guidelines.

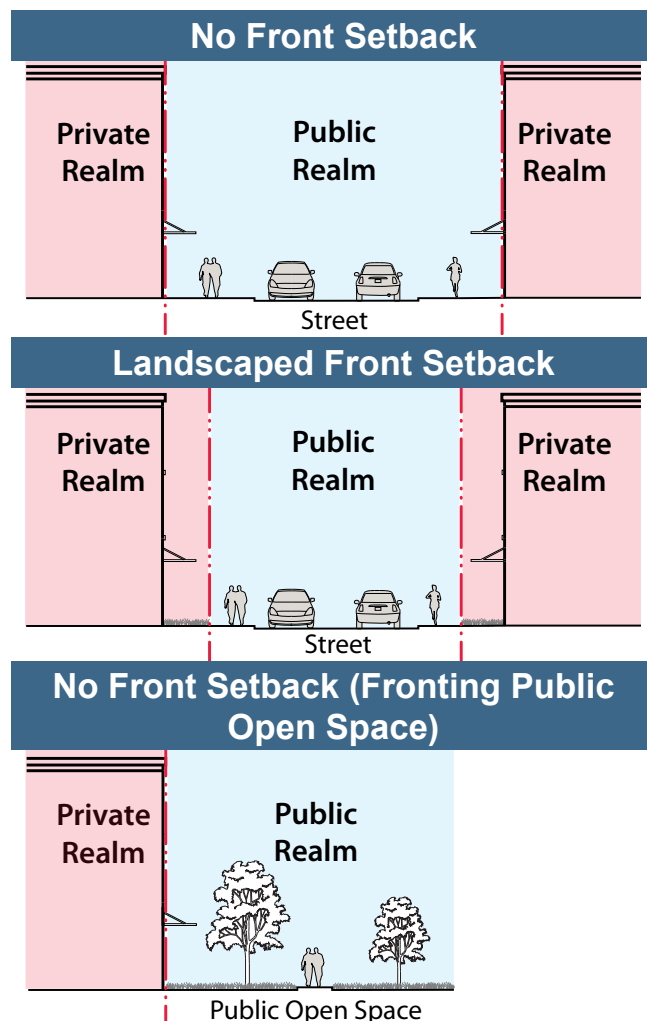
Public and Private Realm

The guidelines focus on the interface between private property and public areas. The term “public realm” refers to any public area, including a street, sidewalk, public plaza, park, promenade or other way that is accessible by the public at large. The “private realm” refers to any place on private property, including building edges, setback areas, plazas or other features. The interface between these elements largely determines one’s experience in an urban environment. Figure 6 diagrams the public and private realms under different conditions.



The guidelines focus strongly on the interface and relationship between private property and public areas.

FIGURE 6: Public Realm vs Private Realm.





Orientation describes how a building interacts with its surroundings.

Orientation

Orientation describes how a building or other site feature interacts with its surroundings. A building that is “oriented” toward the street means that its primary side faces the street and is prominent when viewed from the street.

Activation

Activation refers to how a site or building feature animates a surrounding space. For example, a retail storefront or outdoor dining area can activate a sidewalk due to the human activity it generates.



A site should animate a surrounding space.

Interest

“Interest” describes a person’s experience in an urban environment. Site and building features such as a wall with entries, landscape features, art, windows, display areas and other elements enhance pedestrian interest. A blank, featureless wall diminishes pedestrian interest.

Human Scale

“Human scale” is used to describe how a person perceives a building element or a group of building elements in relation to themselves. A person relates better to building features that are of a size and scale similar to that of a human. By contrast, a blank wall that spans multiple stories does not properly exhibit human scale. The same wall can express human scale by demarcating floors and adding appropriately sized windows and doors. A building needn’t be “small” to express human scale; a building can accomplish human scale by providing articulation, detail and design elements that break larger-scale masses into smaller visual proportions that are easily relatable for a pedestrian.



A building may express human scale by demarcating floors and adding appropriately sized windows and doors.

Compatibility

Compatibility describes two ideas in the guidelines. Internal compatibility refers to how different elements of a single project relate to one another. A building’s materials could be either compatible or incompatible with each other. External compatibility refers to how a single project relates to its context. A building may be compatible or incompatible with neighboring properties based on its scale in relation to adjacent buildings.



A building may be compatible with neighboring properties based on its scale in relation to adjacent buildings.

Traditional

The term “traditional” refers to the early character of an area’s development that continues to be visible. A traditional material is one that was used on one or more of the original buildings in an area. For example, brick and true stucco are traditional materials in Downtown. Building dimensions, architectural patterns and building placement may also be described as traditional. For example, buildings facing the Commons exhibit a range of traditional building widths.

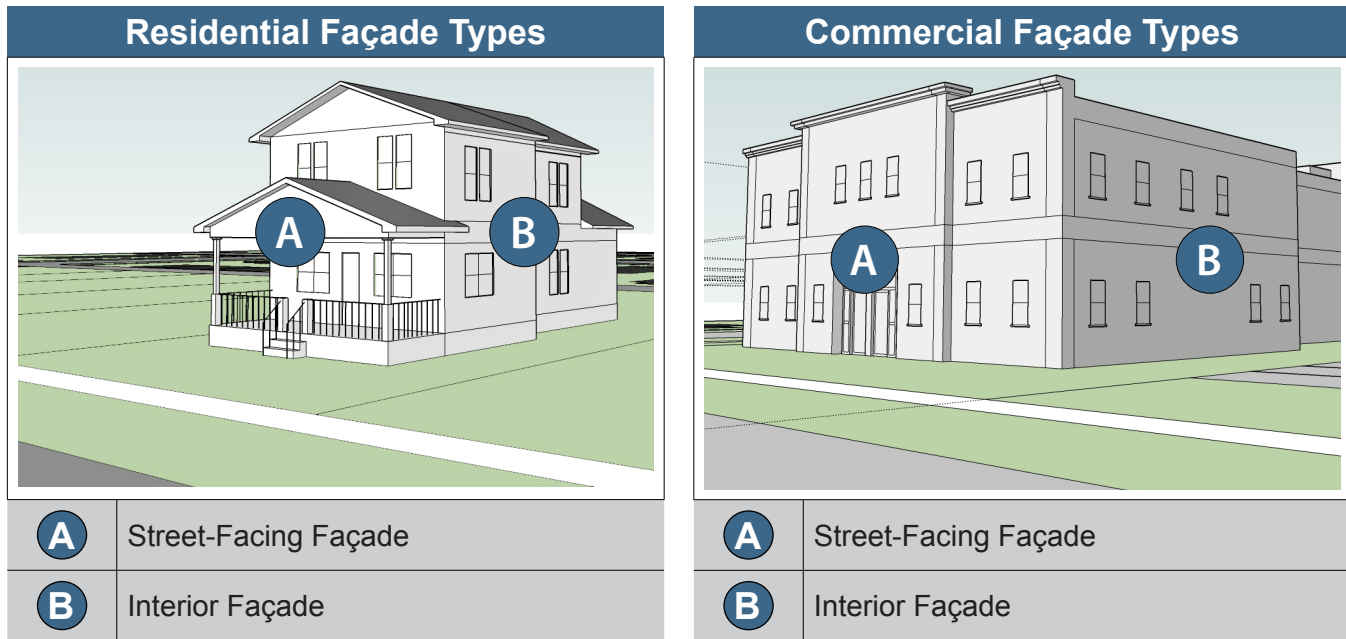
Façade

Façade refers to an external wall or face of a building, including those that are street-facing and those that are not street-facing.



“Traditional” refers to the early character of an area’s development.

FIGURE 7: Façade Types



Façade Types

While the primary focus of the design guidelines is the street-facing elements of a building, all sides of a structure must be considered. The emphasis on design varies based on the relationship of a façade to the public street. This document refers to “street-facing façades” and “interior façades.” A street-facing façade is any side of a building that faces the street. In some cases, a single building may have multiple street-facing façades. An interior façade faces an internal side or rear property line. An interior façade may or may not include a functional entry depending on the circumstance. Figure 7 illustrates the façade types that should be considered.

Rhythm

Rhythm refers to a distinct visual pattern created by the repetition and uniform arrangement of similar design elements, including: doors, windows and architectural details on buildings. Rhythm also exists on a greater scale in compositions of multiple buildings (for example, along a block face). Building size and scale, lot size, building setbacks and spacing create this rhythm between multiple buildings.

Standard Design Guidelines Format

To facilitate ease-of-use, the design guidelines in this document use a standard format. This includes: topic headings, intent statements, numbered design guidelines, additional information about appropriate strategies and illustrations or diagrams. Figure 8 uses a sample design guideline page from Chapter 4 to illustrate each key element.

FIGURE 8: Standard Design Guidelines Format


Key to the Sample Design Guideline Format	
A	The design topic is indicated with a heading followed by an intent statement.
B	The design guidelines describe an intent or desired outcome, with supplementary information listed in bullets below. Priority Guidelines are indicated in blue text.
C	Sidebars are sometimes included to provide additional background information or cross-references to other documents or policies.
D	Photographs and diagrams are provided to illustrate design guideline principles. Sometimes a ✓ is used to indicate that the example is appropriate. Captions help explain the intent of the photo and tie it to the guideline text.


C

D

City of Ithaca Zoning Code

The City of Ithaca Zoning Code includes basic standards for building form, including height and setbacks:
<http://ecode360.com/8393835>





Design the primary entrance to a building to be clearly identifiable.

A

B

Building Entries

Building entrances provide a key visual connection between the public and private realm. A door should be easily recognizable and should provide a strong visual and physical connection to the public realm. Building entries should be spaced to provide visual continuity along a street and read similarly to traditional buildings in an area.

BD.1. Design the primary entrance to a building to be clearly identifiable.

- Use an architectural element(s) to highlight an entrance. Potential treatments include:
 - » Canopy
 - » Arcade
 - » Portico
 - » Stoop
 - » Building recess
 - » Awning
 - » Moldings

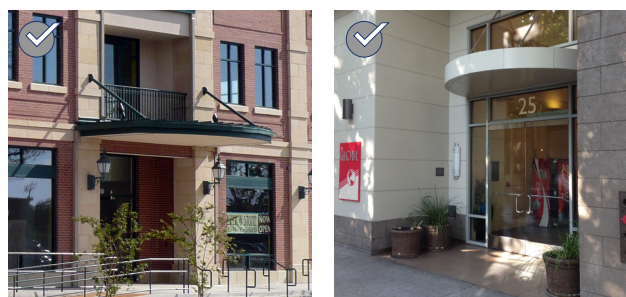
BD.2. Use an authentic, functional entry on a street-facing façade.

BD.3. Size and proportion an entry element to be in the range of heights and widths of nearby traditional entries.

- Size a door to be easily readable and recognizable, but to not be overly large.
- Use a vertically oriented door that is in keeping with traditional door patterns in the area.

BD.4. Maintain a regular rhythm of entries along a street.

- Use a common door height on a ground floor and on a visible upper floor.
- Provide space between entries on a building to be generally consistent with spacing on nearby traditional buildings.



Provide a sheltering element such as a canopy, awning, arcade or portico to signify the primary entrance to a building.

Which Chapters Apply to My Project?

This chart indicates which chapters are relevant to different types of work in the Downtown Area. For some smaller projects, all relevant design guidelines may be found in one chapter (i.e., a project to expand and re-landscape a parking area may be subject only to the guidelines in Chapter 3). For larger projects, several chapters may apply (i.e., a new mixed-use or commercial project in the Downtown Area may be subject to Chapters 1-6).

	Which Chapters Apply to My Project?					
	Ch.1 Introduction	Ch.2 Guiding Principles	Ch.3 Site Design	Ch.4 Building Design	Ch. 5 Signs	Ch.6 Guidelines Specific to Character Areas
New Construction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Building Addition	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Landscaping/ Site Work	✓	✓	✓			✓
Signage	✓	✓			✓	

Document Organization and Format

The information in this document appears in this sequence:

Document Organization

Following the introduction, the design guidelines are organized into six separate chapters by design topic, as summarized below.



Chapter 1 Introduction

The introduction summarizes the purpose and policy foundation of the guidelines. It also describes the organization and format and the design review process.



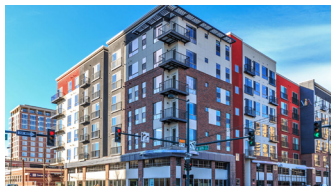
Chapter 2 Guiding Principles

This chapter provides overarching design principles for all development in the Downtown Area to serve as a framework for the design guidelines that follow.



Chapter 3 Site Design

This chapter provides general site guidelines applicable to all new construction in the Downtown Area. It covers issues of site design, including street character and landscaping, building placement, connectivity, open space, parking, etc.



Chapter 4 Building Design

This chapter provides design guidelines for the visual and functional character of buildings throughout the Downtown Area. Topics include building scale, architectural character, materials and ground floor design.



Chapter 5 Signs

This chapter provides guidelines for signs, including type, location and lighting.



Chapter 6 Guidelines Specific to Character Areas

This chapter provides additional guidance for new development in the specific character areas in the Downtown Area (Downtown Core, Tuning Fork and West State Street). These guidelines supplement the guidelines in Chapters 3-5 to provide additional nuanced, context-based guidance for each area.

CHAPTER 2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES



The guidelines and the review process through which they are administered seek to maintain Downtown as a cohesive and livable place with an attractive and pedestrian-oriented environment. They promote maintenance of Downtown’s traditional character while encouraging architectural creativity and contemporary design. The following guiding principles provide a foundation for the design guidelines. Each project should be consistent with the Guiding Principles.

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Design for Sustainability	28



All development in Downtown should achieve excellence in design. Thoughtful designs should provide a sense of character and a positive pedestrian-oriented experience. For example, this building utilizes high quality materials and provides ground floor amenities that improve the pedestrian experience.



Designing a building to convey human scale is critical to creating an appealing public realm. Each project should express a human scale through the organization, scaling and composition of its architectural elements. For example, this building breaks massing into separate modules with upper floor stepbacks, changes in material and more.

Achieve Excellence in Design

All development in Downtown should achieve excellence in design. This includes using high quality materials and construction methods, and paying attention to the intent of the guidelines. The bar for design in Downtown should be set high. Thoughtful designs should establish a distinctive sense of character and provide a positive pedestrian-oriented experience.

Express Human Scale

People relate best to a building when it includes elements that are at a scale they can easily perceive. Designing a building to convey human scale is critical to creating an appealing public realm. Each project should express a human scale through the organization, scaling and composition of its architectural elements.

Design for Compatibility and Respond to Context

Downtown has a rich and eclectic mix of traditional buildings that embody the character of Ithaca. Numerous historic buildings frame the Commons and provide a sense of heritage and culture. Other areas with traditional and historic development in the Tuning Fork and along West State Street create a distinct character. Buildings that are highly valued contribute to a cohesive quality through their materials, scale and massing, organization of functions and other features. New infill development should respect the design traditions of Downtown by drawing on these qualities.



New infill development should respect the design traditions of Downtown. For example, the above building draws on the traditional materials and façade widths Downtown.

Encourage Creativity

The guidelines establish expectations for compatible development, while also encouraging creativity in design. Downtown has a wide mix of building types and architectural styles. This variety should be embraced and new projects that exhibit architectural creativity are encouraged. New infill and renovation projects should draw design inspiration from older, traditional buildings in creative new ways.

Acknowledge Constraints

Downtown presents a variety of constraints to development. Unpredictable bedrock depths, fragmented parcel ownership and flood risks are examples. The guidelines seek to improve urban design without significantly impacting project costs. Objectives must be balanced with a realistic sense of development costs and other constraints. The guidelines provide flexible options in meeting design objectives.

Activate the Public Realm

Downtown should continue to be a walkable environment. Each project should contribute to the public realm by enhancing pedestrian interest and comfort. Each building should connect visually and physically to public streets and spaces. This is particularly important at the ground level.



New infill and renovation projects should draw design inspiration from older, traditional buildings in creative new ways.



Each project should contribute to the public realm by enhancing pedestrian interest and comfort. An outdoor dining space provides pedestrian interest and activates the public realm in this photo.



Downtown presents a variety of constraints to development. The guidelines provide flexible options in meeting design objectives, including the reuse of an existing building. The above building is an innovative adaptive reuse project that re-purposed an industrial structure.



Downtown properties should establish an interconnected circulation system for all modes.

Maximize Connectivity

Downtown properties should help establish an interconnected circulation system for all modes. Interruptions to public sidewalks and vehicle-pedestrian conflicts should be avoided. Clear and direct connections within a development site and between a development site and public areas are critically important.

Design for Sustainability

Ithaca has prioritized sustainability through policy and practice. Site and building design will be important in achieving these objectives. A project should reduce energy consumption, conserve resources and minimize environmental impacts to help move Ithaca toward a sustainable future.



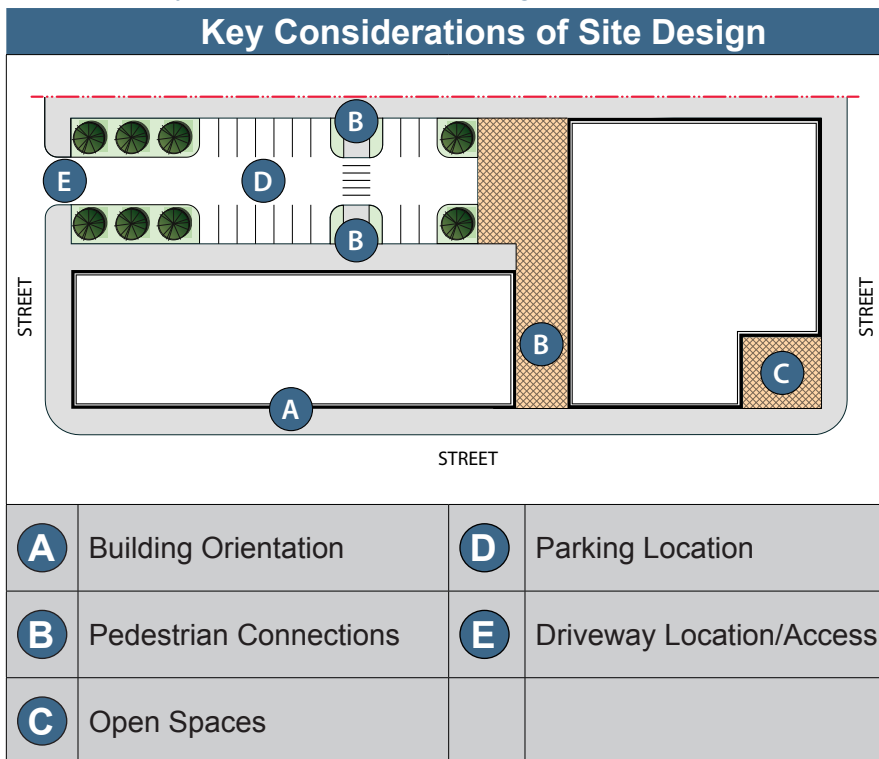
A project should reduce energy consumption, conserve resources and minimize environmental impacts to help move Ithaca toward a sustainable future.

CHAPTER 3 SITE DESIGN



Site design refers to the arrangement and placement of buildings and site features and the relationship of these elements to public areas and neighboring properties. This chapter provides site design guidance for all projects in Downtown. It shall be used in conjunction with the Character Area-specific guidelines in Chapter 6. Figure 9 illustrates key site design considerations on a simple site plan diagram.

FIGURE 9: Key Considerations of Site Design.



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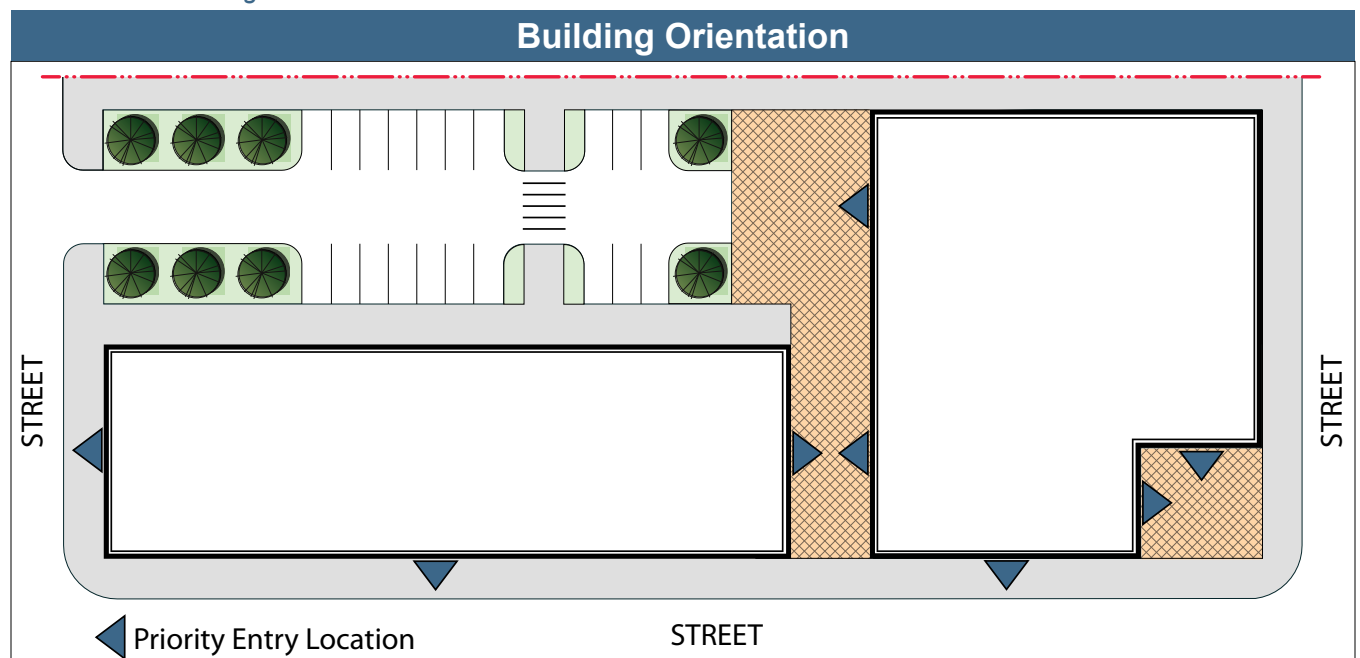
Building Orientation

Building orientation refers to how elements and functions of a building wall relate to their surroundings. Buildings should be sited to establish a strong visual and physical connection to the public realm. A building's primary entrance should face the street in order to create an engaging and pedestrian-friendly streetscape.

SD.1. Orient a building to the public realm.

- Orient a building's primary functional entry to face a street. Orienting a primary entrance to a public plaza or other prominent public space is also appropriate. (See Figure 10).
- If a building fronts two or more prominent public spaces or streets, orient to as many of them as is feasible.
- If a property is located along Six Mile Creek, orient an entry toward this natural feature.
- Consider providing an outdoor space, such as a balcony, patio, or rooftop terrace that allows views to the Creek. (See Figure 11).

FIGURE 10: Building Orientation.



Orient a building's primary functional entry to face a street. Orienting a primary entry to a public plaza or other prominent public space is also acceptable.

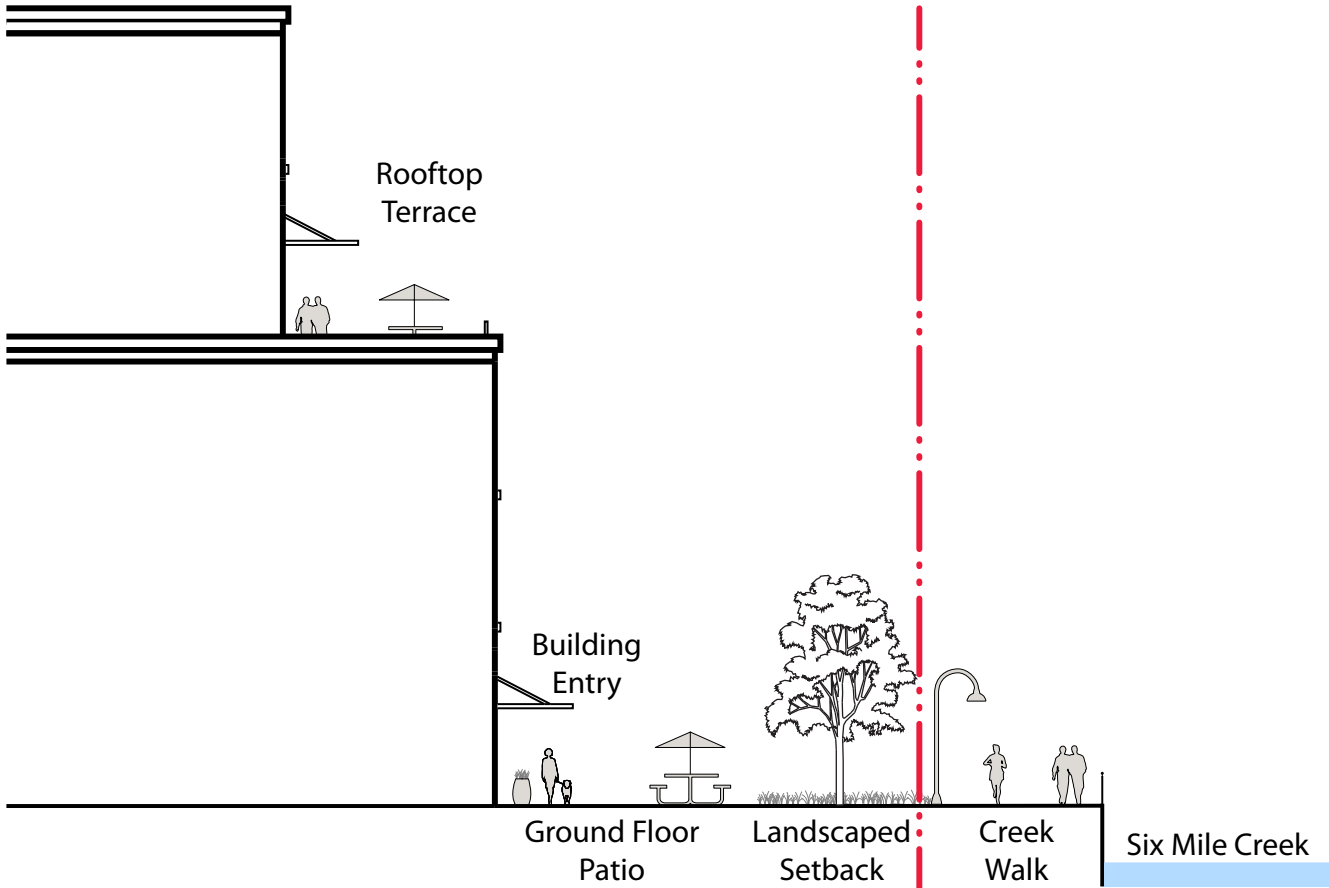


Orient a building to face a public street or space.



If a building fronts two or more prominent public spaces or streets, orient to as many of them as feasible.

FIGURE 11: Creek Front Design.



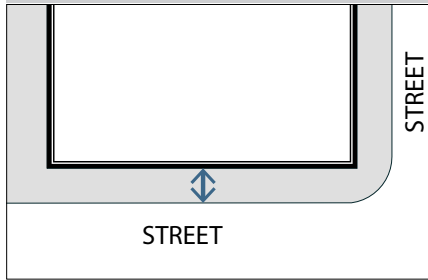
If a property is located along Six Mile Creek, orient an entry toward this feature. Consider providing an outdoor space, such as a balcony, patio, or rooftop terrace that allows views to the Creek.



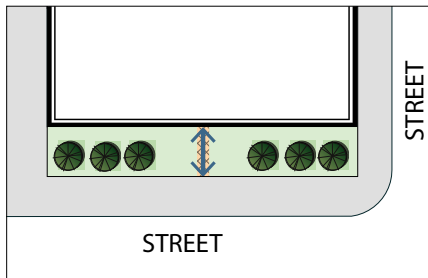
A rooftop terrace could offer an amenity to residents or employees.

External Pedestrian Connectivity

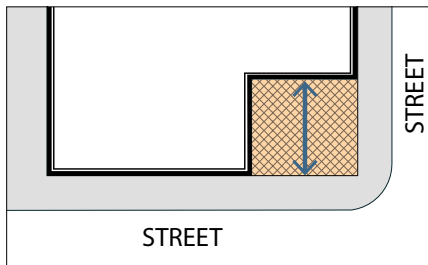
Appropriate options include:



A door that opens directly to a public space.



A walkway that connects a building to a public space through a setback area.



A plaza, outdoor seating area or patio that connects a building to a public space.

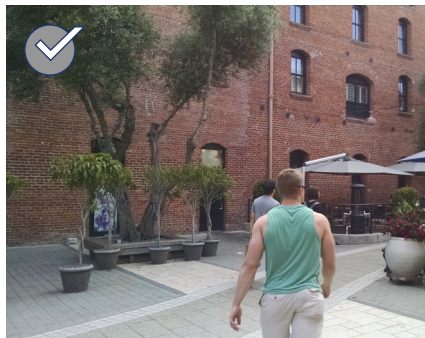
External Pedestrian Connectivity

Excellent pedestrian access should be provided between the public realm to a site and building. A strong physical and visual relationship between these elements enhances walkability.

SD.2. Provide a physical pedestrian connection between a site and the public realm. Appropriate options include:

- A door that opens directly to a public space.
- A walkway that connects a building to a public space through a setback area.
- A plaza, outdoor seating area or patio that connects a building to a public space.

SD.3. When a property is adjacent to a public open space (such as the Creek Walk), connect the site to the open space.



Provide a physical connection between a site and the public realm.

Internal Pedestrian Connectivity

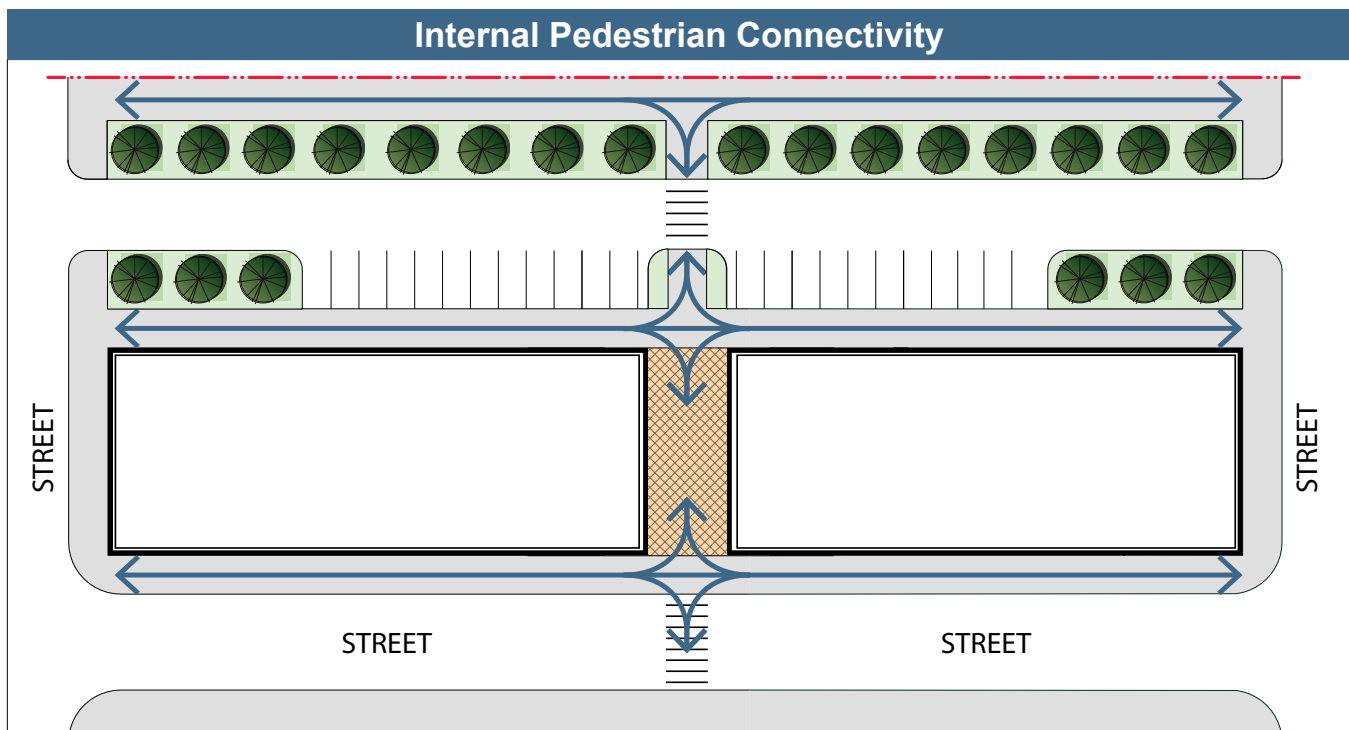
An internal pedestrian circulation system should connect each site with the public realm.

SD.4. Establish an internal walkway system that connects key areas, such as building entries, parking areas and open spaces.

- Use landscaping, special paving and distinct lighting to accentuate and clarify a site's circulation system.
- Consider directing an internal walkway through a plaza, courtyard or other outdoor feature.
- Size an internal walkway of an adequate width to allow safe pedestrian access.
- Design an internal walkway to be ADA accessible.
- Integrate an internal walkway system with the public pedestrian circulation system.



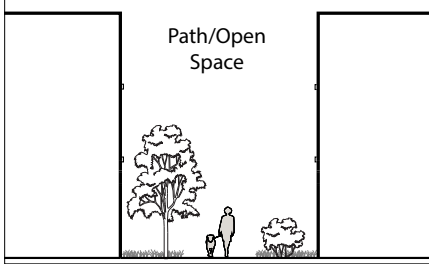
Establish an internal walkway system that connects key site features, such as building entries, parking areas and open spaces.



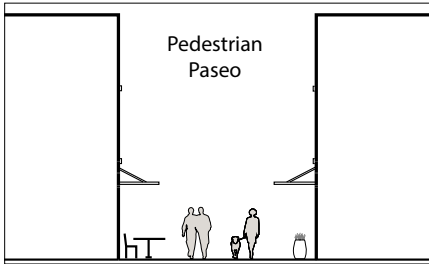
Integrate an internal walkway system with the public pedestrian circulation system.

Through-Block Connectivity

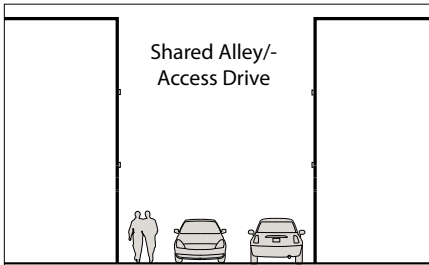
Methods include:



A path connecting two streets through a block.



A pedestrian paseo integrated with an open space or retail amenity that connects through a block.



An alley that is designed to be shared by pedestrians and automobiles.

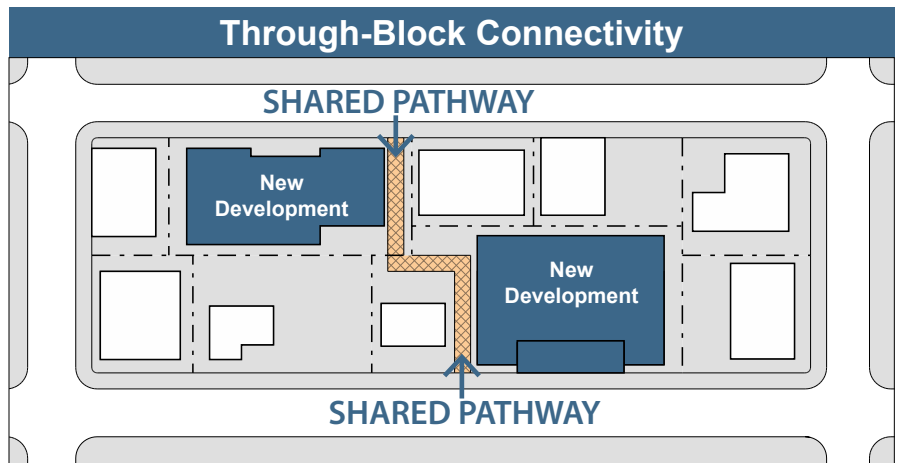
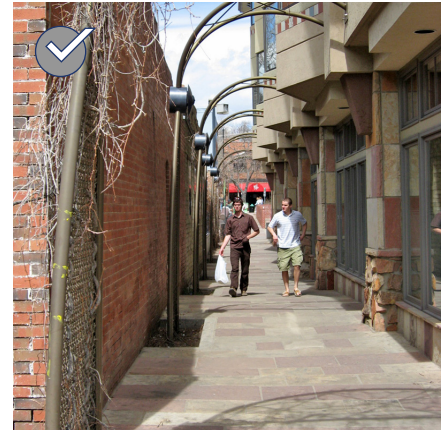
Through-Block Connectivity

Long blocks (such as the blocks south of W. Seneca Street and north of W. Green Street) can create barriers to pedestrian access. Projects are encouraged to provide a pedestrian connection through a long block where possible to increase area-wide pedestrian connectivity.

SD.5. Provide public pedestrian access through a block.

Methods include:

- A simple path connecting two streets through a block.
- A pedestrian paseo integrated with an open space or retail amenity that connects through a block.
- An alley that is designed to be shared by pedestrians and automobiles.



Provide a pedestrian pathway integrated with an open space or retail amenity that connects through a block where feasible. This may require coordination with neighboring property owners.

Open Space

Courtyards, street-adjacent plazas, linear outdoor dining areas and other open spaces provide places for customers and tenants to gather and engage in activities. When located adjacent to a public space, these features can activate and enhance the pedestrian experience. A project should incorporate open space into a site design where feasible.

SD.6. Incorporate an open space into a site design where feasible.

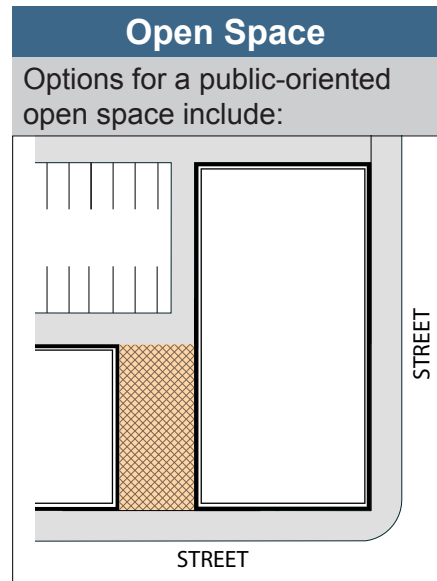
- Consider placing an open space so that it is visually and physically connected to a public space.
- Link an open space to internal site features and the public realm.
- Size an open space to be adequate for its function.
- Enclose an open space by framing it with building edges, landscaping or other site elements.
- Site an open space to maximize sun exposure.
- Program an open space with site features or activities that will keep it lively and occupied.



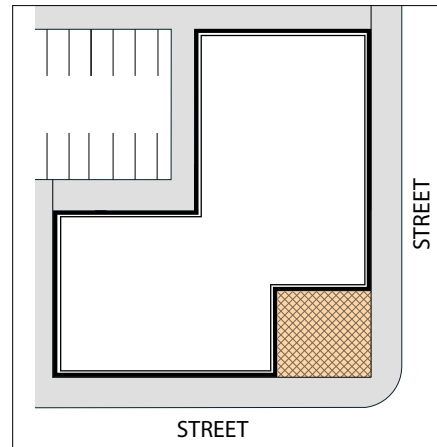
Orient an open space to be visually and physically connected to the public street and sidewalk.



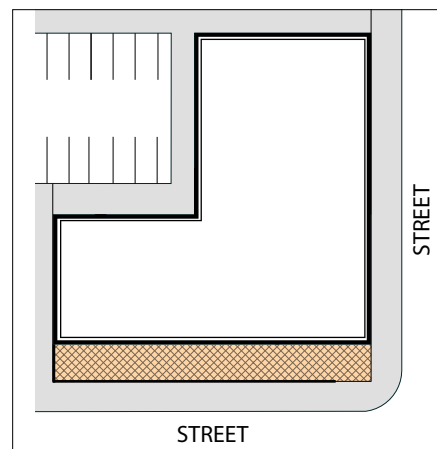
Enclose an open space by framing it with building edges, landscaping or other site elements.



A courtyard between buildings, integrated with the public sidewalk.



A corner plaza adjacent to the public sidewalk and street.



A linear outdoor dining or seating area.



If surface parking is located adjacent to a street, buffer or screen it.

Surface Parking

Building walls “frame” the spaces they abut. With careful design, a building can provide enclosure to a public space in a manner that enhances pedestrian comfort. Conversely, a surface parking area adjacent to a street or public space can create a void in the built street edge that decreases pedestrian comfort. Where a surface parking area is provided, its visual impact on the public realm should be minimized.

SD.7. Ideally, locate a surface parking area to the interior of a site, away from the public street.

- Set back a surface parking area away from a property line that is adjacent to a street. If feasible, a minimum setback of 20 feet is ideal.

SD.8. If surface parking is nevertheless located adjacent to a street, buffer or screen it. Use one or more of these methods:

- Landscaping
- Site walls
- Decorative fencing
- Public art
- Other methods that meet the intent of this guideline

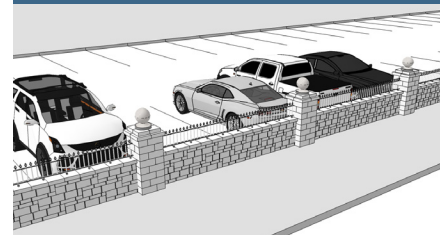
Surface Parking Screening

Options include:

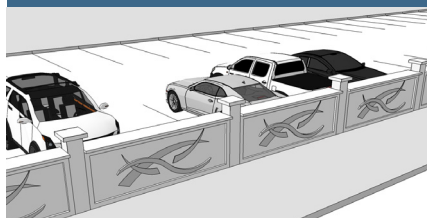
Landscaping



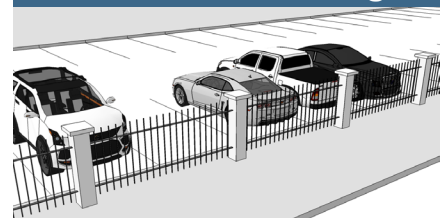
Site Wall



Public Art



Decorative Fencing



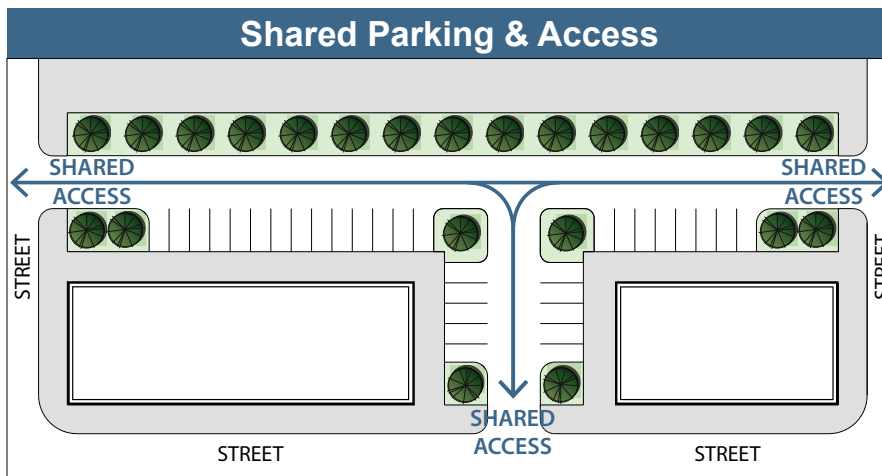
Driveways and Access

Automobile access is often critical to the functionality of a site. However, it should be unobtrusive. Driveways should be designed to promote safety and minimize pedestrian-vehicle conflicts.

SD.9. Minimize the number of vehicular access points to a site.

- Encourage shared, consolidated access between adjacent properties.

SD.10. Minimize the width of a driveway where it crosses a pedestrian way.





Service Areas

Service areas, such as trash receptacle and loading areas, can negatively impact the streetscape and pedestrian experience when visible. These features should not be visible from the street, and should be integrated and coordinated with site and building features.

SD.11. Locate a service area so that it is not visible from the public street.

- Locate a service area to the interior of a site, and away from the public street wherever possible. Screen it from view with a solid wall, opaque fence or landscaping.



Fences & Walls

Fences and walls are often used to enclose a private outdoor space. Retaining walls are used to address site topography. Fences and walls should be carefully coordinated with the overall site design of a property. Visible fence and wall materials should be compatible with materials used throughout a site and on a building. Fence and wall guidelines are most critical for areas of a site that are visible from the public realm.

SD.12. Coordinate a fence or wall with an overall site design concept.

- Create fence or wall openings as needed to integrate an internal circulation system.



Screen a service area from view with a solid wall, opaque fence or landscaping.

SD.13. Use a fence or wall material that is compatible with other building and site materials.

- Coordinate a fence material with a primary or secondary material on a primary building.
- Use a consistent material(s) and pattern for a publicly visible fence or wall.



Concrete walls, including retaining walls, should provide visual interest.

SD.14. Concrete walls, including retaining walls, should provide visual interest. Appropriate methods include:

- Scoring (or otherwise texturing)
- Staining
- Terracing
- Landscape screening (with vines, or other vegetation)
- Other methods that meet the intent of this guideline

Landscape Design

Landscaping can enhance a project by providing visual interest, tying together key site features, providing shade, screening unattractive site features from public view and providing buffers between properties. It also can help soften an urban environment. Landscaping should be used to visually enhance a public space.

SD.15. Preserve existing trees wherever possible.

- Incorporate an existing tree into the site design.
- Highlight an existing tree as a design element.
- Plant or preserve additional trees to increase canopy and accommodate new planting areas with sufficient underground infrastructure for the tree roots.

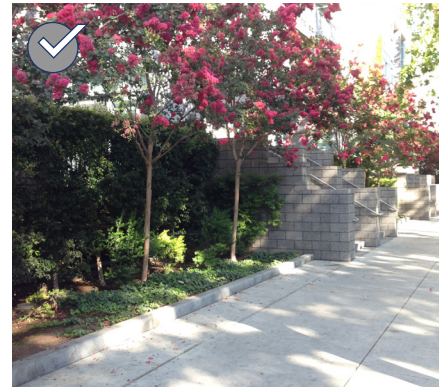
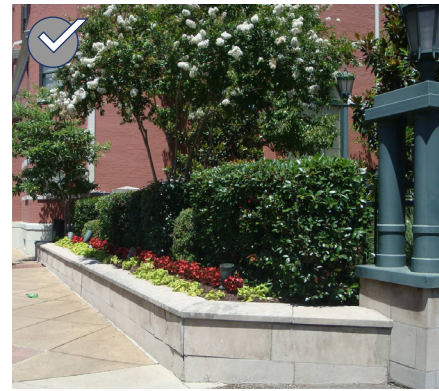
SD.16. Use a coordinated landscape palette to establish a sense of visual continuity within a site.

- Use a consistent palette throughout the property. Variation is encouraged, but landscaping elements should be thoughtfully organized.

SD.17. Use landscaping to highlight a building entry, walkway or other feature.

SD.18. Use landscaping to screen a sensitive edge, such as an abutting residential property or natural feature.

SD.19. If a property is located along Six Mile Creek, provide a landscape buffer area between a building and the Creek Walk.



Use a coordinated landscape palette to establish a sense of visual continuity in the design of a site.

Plant and Tree Selection

Plants and trees that are proven successful in Ithaca's climate should be selected to reduce the need for maintenance and replacement.

SD.20. Minimize irrigation.

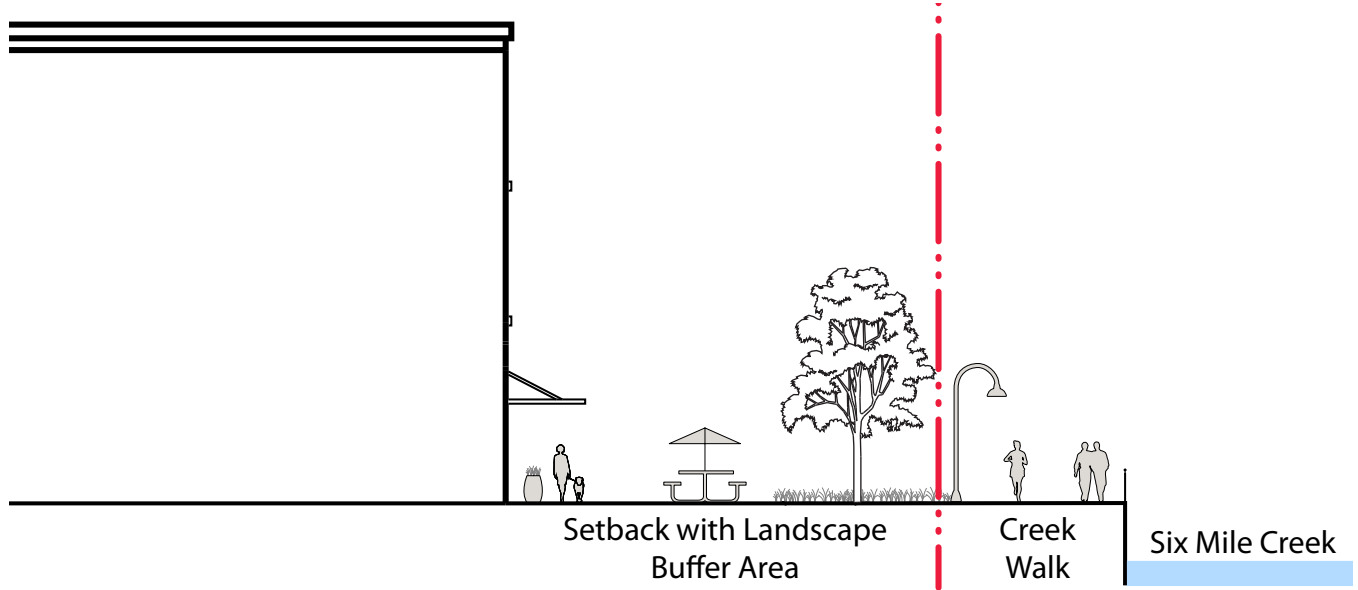
SD.21. Use native tree and plant species that thrive in Ithaca's climate.

- Use drought and cold weather tolerant species.
- Use tree species that are able to survive in an urban setting.



Use landscaping to highlight a building entry or walkway.

Landscape Design along Six Mile Creek



If a property is located along Six Mile Creek, provide a landscape buffer area between a building and the Creek Walk.

Sustainable Site Design

Sustainability is a critical community objective in Ithaca and is prioritized in many City policy documents. Each site design should contribute to a sustainable future for Ithaca. Incorporate sustainability features to reduce energy consumption and stormwater runoff.

SD.22. Integrate low impact development (LID) features to minimize impacts to the municipal stormwater system and area watersheds.

- Include a stormwater management feature, such as a bioretention area or rain garden, as a site amenity or landscape feature.
- Use permeable surfaces and paving systems that allow water infiltration.
- Use generous site landscaping to absorb site runoff.
- Collect and use rainwater for irrigation.

SD.23. Use landscaping to reduce the need for heating and cooling.

- Use trees and landscaping to create shade in warm months and sun exposure in cool months.

SD.24. Choose a material that reduces energy consumption.

- Use a local, recycled material where possible.
- Use a light colored surface material that reflects heat.
- Consider incorporating an energy-generating feature on a site. This may include a wind turbine, solar panels, solar powered lighting or other similar feature.

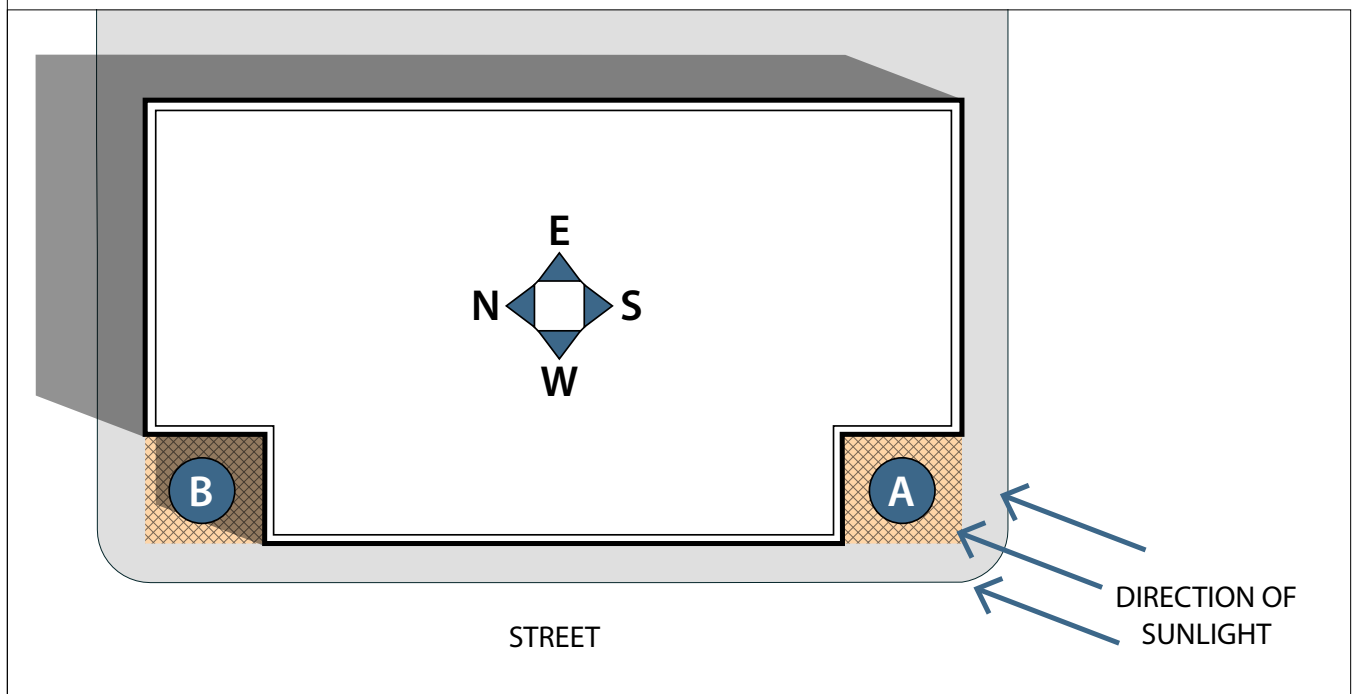


Use permeable surfaces and paving systems that allow water infiltration.



Include a stormwater management feature, such as a bioretention area or rain garden.

Maximizing Solar Exposure



The location of plaza A is preferred over the location of plaza B because plaza A receives greater solar exposure, particularly in winter months when the sun is low in the sky.

Winter City Design

The impacts of Ithaca's climate on site design should be considered. Snow removal and snow storage are important considerations when making decisions about site circulation, parking, landscaping, etc. Buildings should be sited to maximize sun exposure and to help shelter open spaces and pedestrian areas from prevailing winter winds.

- SD.25. Design a site to promote efficient snow removal and adequate space for snow storage.**
- SD.26. Site a building or open space to maximize sun exposure and utilize passive solar design.**
- SD.27. Site a building to shelter open spaces and pedestrian areas from prevailing winter winds.**

Freestanding Site Features

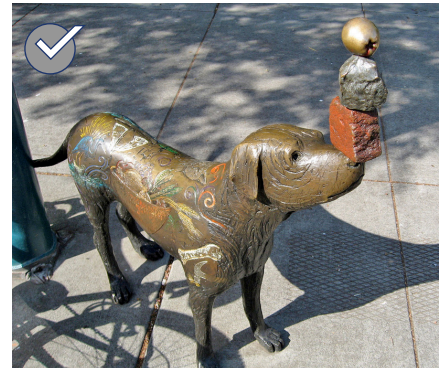
Freestanding site features include benches, sculptures, planters and other similar elements. They are functional design components and also can enhance a project aesthetically. They can provide pedestrian interest, complement open spaces and animate outdoor places.

SD.28. Provide a freestanding feature to enhance a site or the public realm. Potential features include:

- Benches
- Tables
- Planters
- Public Art
- Kiosks
- Bike Racks

SD.29. Integrate a freestanding feature within the overall design of a site.

- Locate a feature so that it does not impede pedestrian circulation or vehicular access.
- Locate a feature to take advantage of an active area on a site, such as within an open space, along a walkway or near a building entry.
- Use materials with consistency and coordinate them with other site and building features.



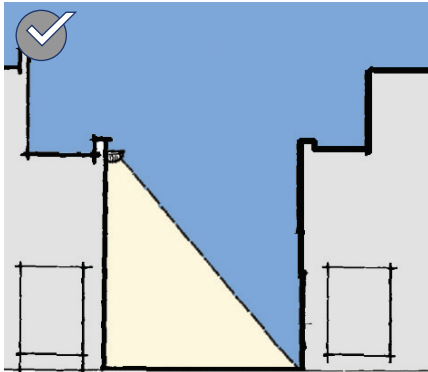
Strategically locate site furnishings and public art to enhance the public realm or an open space.



Integrate a freestanding site feature within the overall design of a site.



Scale site lighting to reflect its purpose.



Design lighting to minimize light spill onto adjacent properties and the sky.

Site Lighting

Site lighting is important for safety and can be used to enhance a design. Lighting should be carefully designed and placed to minimize unnecessary light pollution.

SD.30. Scale site lighting to reflect its purpose.

- Use a small-scale fixture with down-lighting or light bollards to illuminate a pedestrian walkway.
- Use medium scale (15 to 18 feet in height, roughly) overhead lighting for a common outdoor space, building entry, parking area or internal driveway.

SD.31. Minimize light spill onto adjacent properties and toward the sky.

- Use a fixture(s) that provides even lighting for a plaza, courtyard or patio area.
- Shield site lighting to avoid off-site glare.
- Orient fixtures toward the ground.

SD.32. Integrate a lighting fixture with the design of the overall building and site.

- Use a style that is compatible with a building and site design. For example, use a contemporary fixture for a contemporary building.
- Choose a material that is compatible with materials used on the building and throughout a site.

Working with Topography

Some projects occur on sites with significant topography and grade change. A site design should work with existing topography wherever possible rather than creating a flat site. This is a sustainable practice and helps to retain terrain that contributes positively to Downtown’s character. A regrading effort should not negatively impact the public realm. These guidelines are particularly important for projects in the Tuning Fork Character Area.

SD.33. Design a site to integrate with and take advantage of existing topography.

- Incorporate a topographic feature as an open space or landscape amenity where feasible.
- Where on-site parking is provided, consider taking advantage of site topography to provide subterranean or partially subterranean parking.
- “Terrace” a building into a hillside to minimize site disturbance and create private outdoor spaces and site features.
- Step the first floor of a building along a sloped street to maintain a constant street presence.
- Where a taller cut or change in grade is necessary, use a series of landscaped terraces or stepped walls.

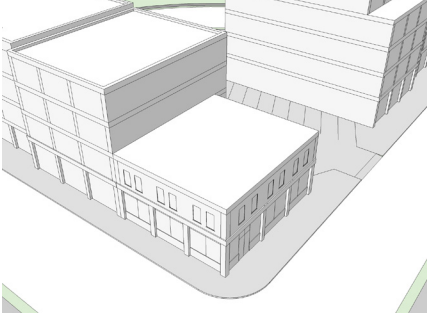


Design a site to integrate with and take advantage of existing topography.



Step the first floor of a building along a sloped street to maintain a constant street presence.

Existing Building



Rooftop Addition



Consider providing a rooftop addition instead of demolishing the existing building.



Design a façade on a rooftop addition to be compatible with, but not replicate, the original structure.



Seek opportunities to adaptively reuse an existing building.

Adaptive Reuse and Incorporating Existing Buildings

Downtown’s character is strongly influenced by the variety of commercial, mixed use and residential buildings. Redevelopment is anticipated and encouraged in Downtown, but it should be balanced with conservation of current buildings. This involves reusing existing buildings and sometimes integrating them into new development projects. Reusing a building avoids the use of energy and resources required to produce new construction materials, significantly reducing environmental impacts. New development should explore opportunities to integrate an existing building or buildings into a site design. These practices are particularly relevant in locally and nationally designated historic districts and in the West State Street Character Area, where an eclectic mix of buildings is a key feature. For locally designated historic buildings or buildings within a locally designated historic district, please also refer to the City of Ithaca Historic District and Landmark Design Guidelines.

SD.34. Encourage reuse of an existing building instead of developing a new building, especially within or adjacent to local or national historic districts and in the West State Street character area.

- Consider a use that activates and enhances a public space.
- When conducting an adaptive reuse project, consider redesigning a parking or other paved area between a building and the street as an active outdoor use, such as a plaza, outdoor seating area, display area or similar space.
- Establish increased landscaping in an existing parking area where the number of parking spaces can be reduced.

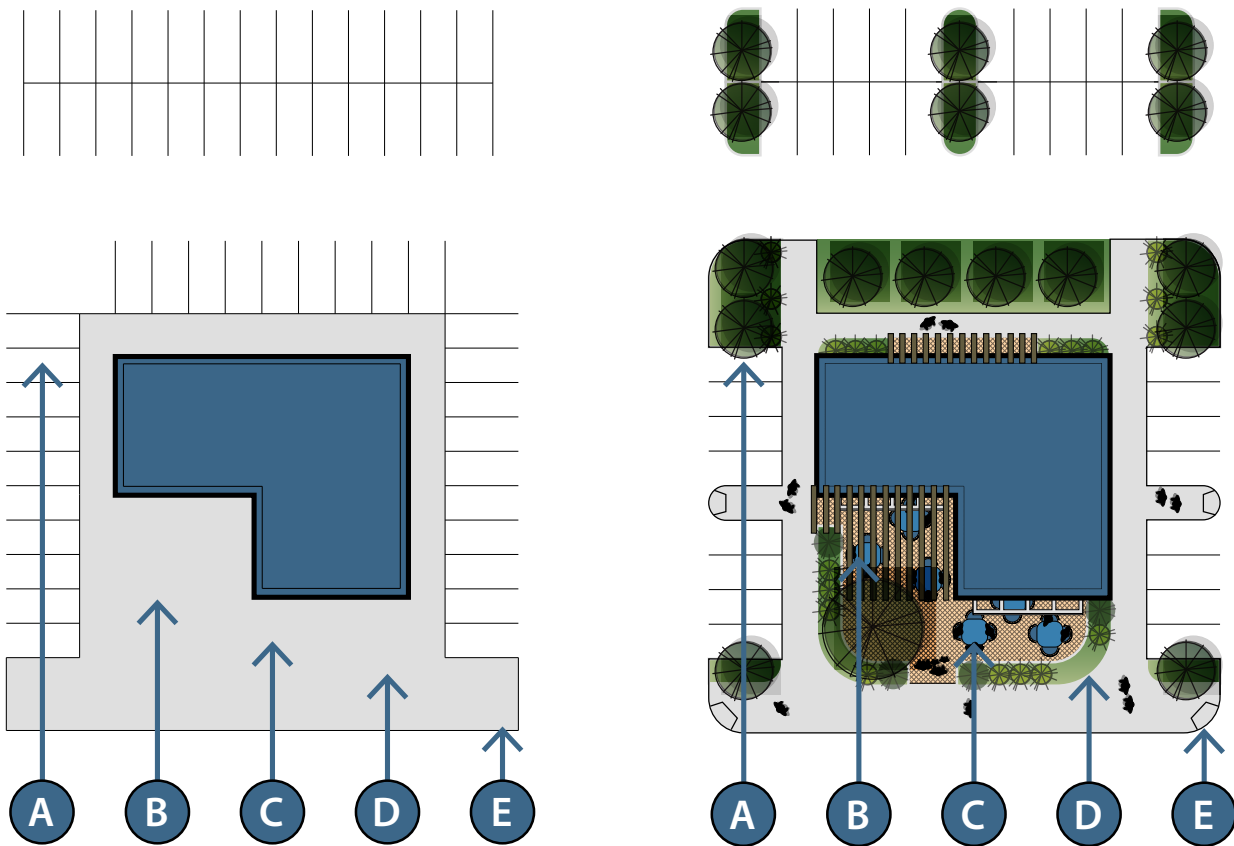
SD.35. Consider providing a rooftop addition instead of demolishing the existing building. Additional care should be taken when the building has historic significance.

- Design a rooftop addition to be subordinate to the original building.
- Provide transition in scale between the rooftop addition and an adjacent traditional building.
- Set back the walls of the rooftop addition from those of the original structure.
- Use a different material on the rooftop addition to differentiate it from the original building.
- Design a façade on a rooftop addition to be compatible with, but not replicate, the original structure.

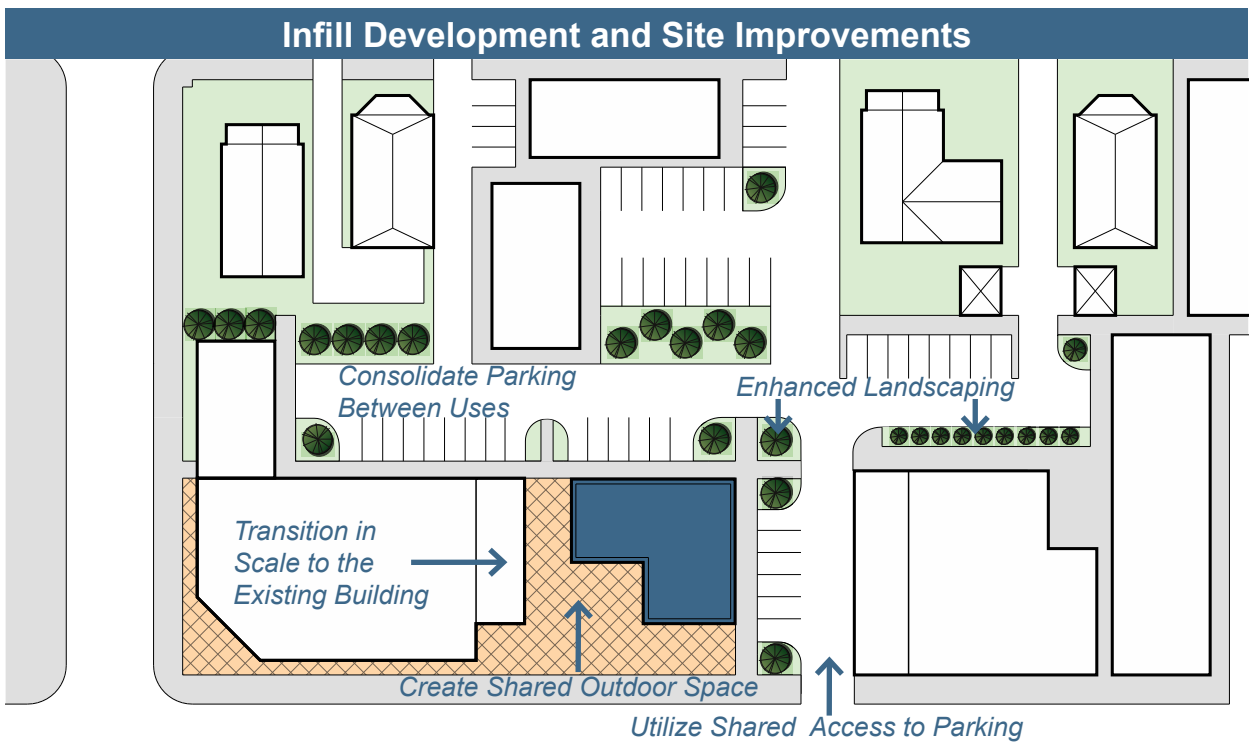
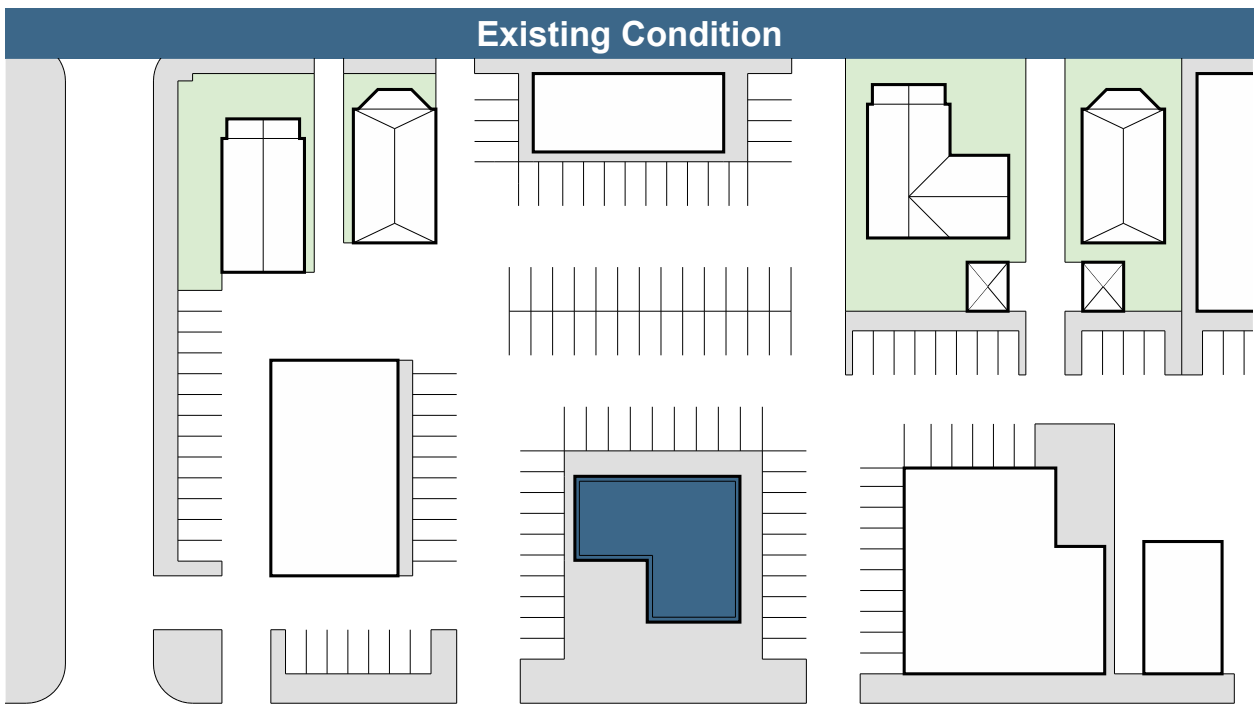
SD.36. Consider integrating an existing building into a new development project rather than demolishing it.

- Create a shared outdoor space between the two buildings.
- Transition in scale downward toward the existing building when the new development is taller.
- Integrate pedestrian site circulation between the two buildings.
- Consolidate and share parking between the two buildings, and potentially with other uses nearby.
- Create shared vehicular access between the two buildings, and potentially others nearby.

Adaptive Reuse of an Existing Building

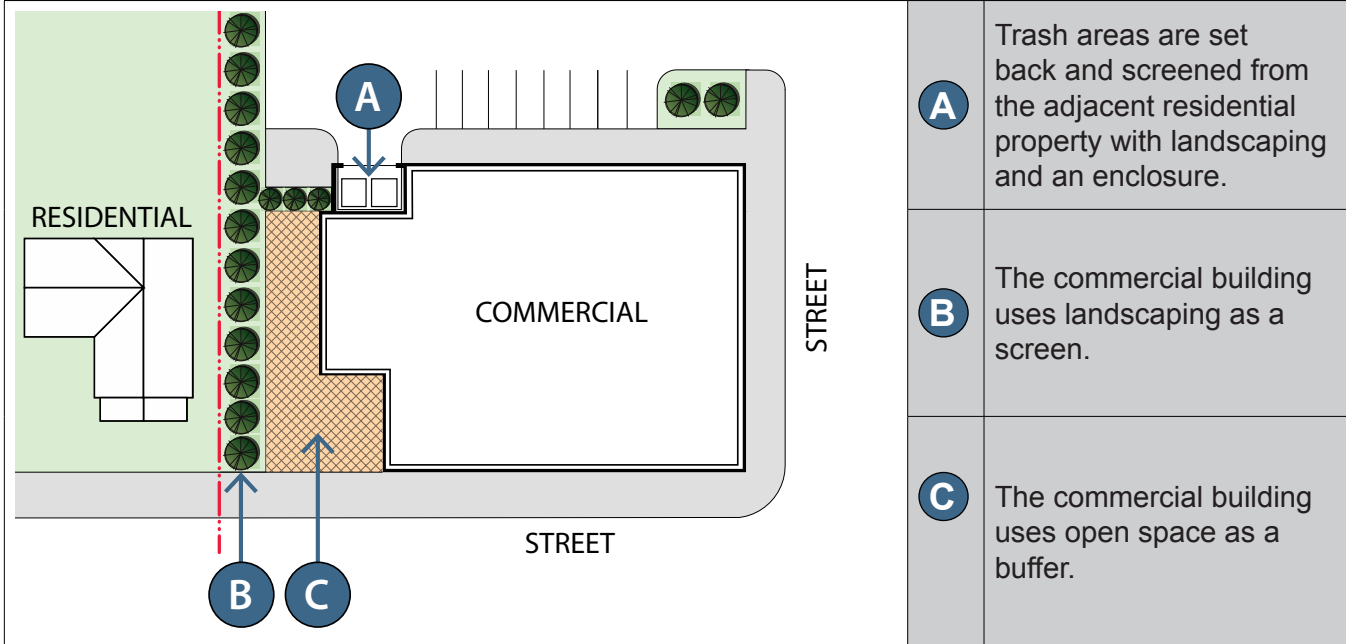


A	Surface parking lots receive landscaping enhancements to improve aesthetics.
B	Under-utilized space is activated and updated with a contemporary architectural element (pergola) that provides additional seasonal flexible-use space.
C	Paved area becomes an outdoor patio and dining area.
D	New landscaping buffers the patio area from the street, and provides pedestrian interest to passersby.
E	New accessibility improvements enhance pedestrian and ADA access.



This diagram shows how a new infill project could work within the existing site without demolishing the original building. The new structure could step down in scale to transition smoothly to the original building. Parking consolidation between uses would allow for site enhancements.

Sensitive Site Design



Sensitive Site Design Transitions

Site design features should be used to reduce conflicts between adjacent properties. For example, there is potential conflict when a commercial property is adjacent to a residential property. Where a potential conflict occurs, the impacts of a commercial activity should be mitigated. Sensitive transitions are also important along the edge of Six Mile Creek and its Creek Walk. A building should be placed to sensitively transition to this natural feature.

SD.37. Minimize negative impacts of a commercial operation on an adjacent residential property.

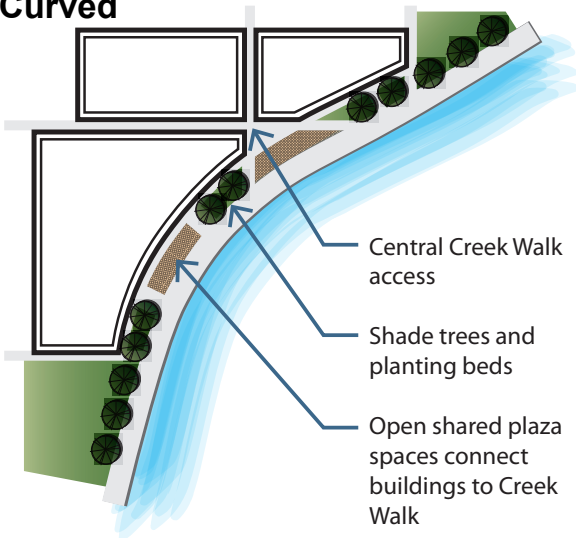
- Locate a commercial activity that generates noise, odor or other similar impacts away from a shared lot line with a residential property, or in a different location altogether.
- Where a commercial use is adjacent to a residential use, buffer or screen the commercial activities. This could include a buffer area with landscaping and amenities such as an exercise area, picnic area or pedestrian walkway.

SD.38. If a property is located along a curved portion of Six Mile Creek, place a building edge(s) to respond to the Creek’s curvilinear shape. Appropriate placements include:

- Curved
- Angled
- Rectilinear
- Stepped

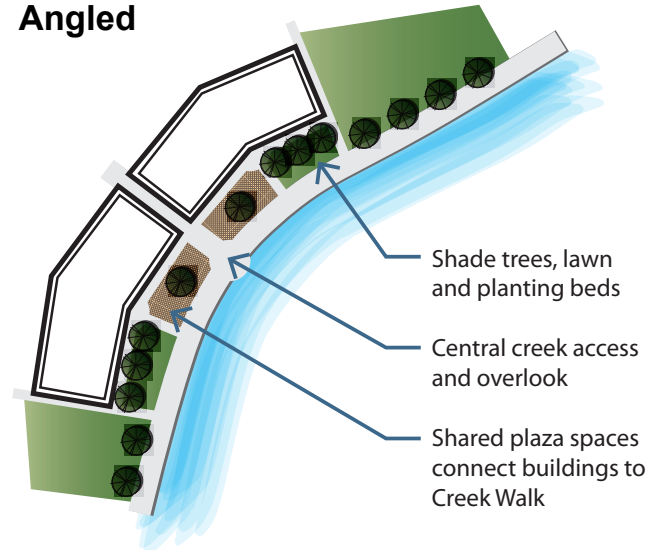
Building Placement Adjacent to Six Mile Creek

Curved



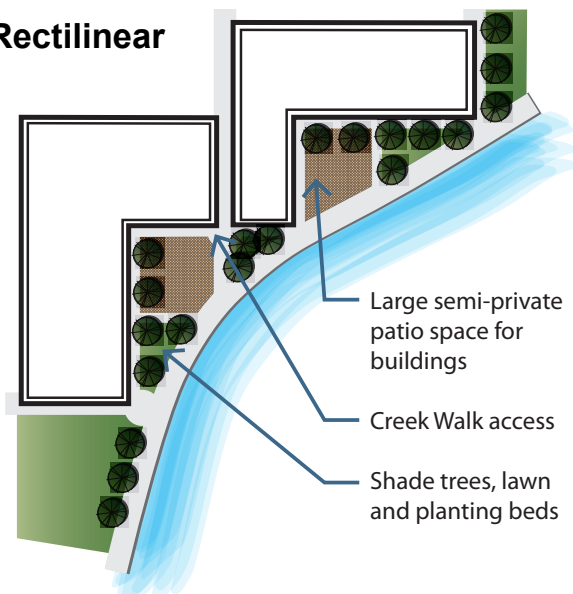
These buildings match the curvature of the creek and activate the Creek Walk with plaza spaces and pedestrian access.

Angled



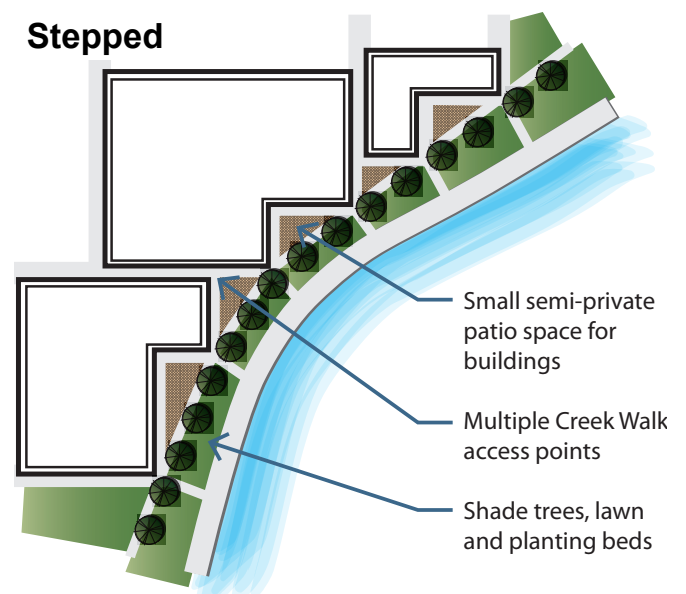
Angled buildings frame the Creek and provide plaza space and a centralized creek access.

Rectilinear



Rectilinear buildings are placed along the Creek so that they provide triangular plazas and open space along the Creek Walk.

Stepped



A series of buildings provides a “stepped” edge to the Creek. Open space along the Creek Walk is broken up and distributed more evenly along the edge of the site.

CHAPTER 4 BUILDING DESIGN



A building's design and the arrangement of its features can strongly impact the public realm. Each building should incorporate "human scale" components to break it up into smaller, perceivable elements that are closer in size to a typical person, adding to pedestrian comfort and increasing walkability. As noted in Chapter 1, a building needn't be "small" to express human scale; a building can accomplish human scale by providing articulation, detail and design elements that break larger-scale masses into smaller visual proportions. A building design should accentuate key building elements and provide visual interest at interfaces to the public realm. Buildings should be designed to sensitively "fit in" to an existing neighborhood by using compatible materials, or drawing on the basic characteristics of nearby buildings and neighborhoods.

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City of Ithaca Zoning Code

The City of Ithaca Zoning Code includes basic standards for building form, including height and setbacks:
<http://ecode360.com/8393835>



Design the primary entrance to a building to be clearly identifiable.

Building Entries

Building entrances provide a key visual connection between the public and private realm. A door should be easily recognizable and should provide a strong visual and physical connection to the public realm. Building entries should be spaced to provide visual continuity along a street and read similarly to traditional buildings in an area.

BD.1. Design the primary entrance to a building to be clearly identifiable.

- Use an architectural element(s) to highlight an entrance. Potential treatments include:
 - » Canopy
 - » Arcade
 - » Portico
 - » Stoop
 - » Building recess
 - » Awning
 - » Moldings

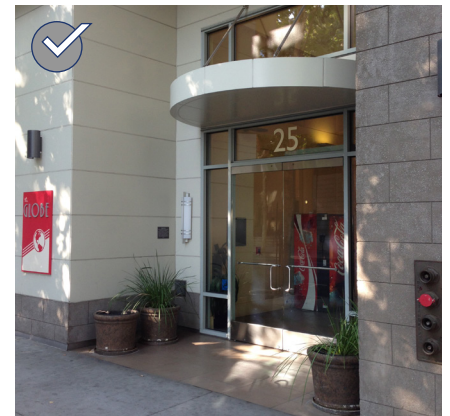
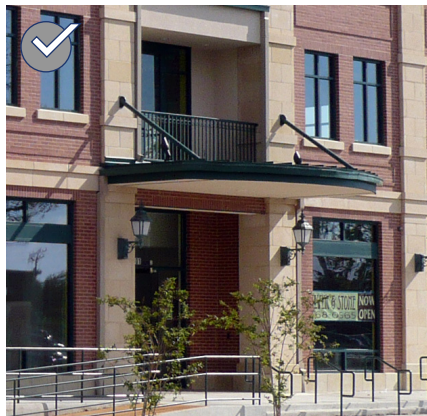
BD.2. Use an authentic, functional entry on a street-facing façade.

BD.3. Size and proportion an entry element to be in the range of heights and widths of nearby traditional entries.

- Size a door to be easily readable and recognizable, but to not be overly large.
- Use a vertically oriented door that is in keeping with traditional door patterns in the area.

BD.4. Maintain a regular rhythm of entries along a street.

- Use a common door height on a ground floor and on a visible upper floor.
- Provide space between entries on a building to be generally consistent with spacing on nearby traditional buildings.



Provide a sheltering element such as a canopy, awning, arcade or portico to signify the primary entrance to a building.

Windows

Windows are a key design element for Downtown buildings. Their design and arrangement should express a human scale, create visual continuity with context and provide visual interest to the public realm.

BD.5. Locate and space windows to express a traditional rhythm and create visual continuity. This is particularly relevant in the Downtown Core and Tuning Fork Character Areas.

- Provide consistent horizontal spacing between windows on a floor.
- Vertically align windows on upper floors.
- Provide a common head height for windows on a single floor. Minor deviations may be appropriate for an accent, but vertical alignment and horizontal spacing should remain consistent.
- If a glazed wall is utilized, use spandrels, moldings, awnings or sills to provide vertical and horizontal expression.

BD.6. Place a window opening to correspond to an actual interior space.

BD.7. Size and proportion a window to be in the range of heights and widths of nearby traditional windows.

- Size a window to be easily recognizable, but to not be overly large.
- Use a vertically oriented window on an upper floor that is consistent with traditional window proportions in the area.

BD.8. Design a window to create depth and shadow on a façade. This is particularly relevant in the Downtown Core and Tuning Fork Character Areas.

- Design a window to appear to be “punched” into a masonry wall.
- Do not use a window that appears pasted onto a façade.

Roofs

Roofs contribute to a building’s character. Roofs should be integrated with overall design of a building and be compatible with surrounding context.

BD.9. Design a roof to be architecturally consistent with the overall architectural design and detailing of the structure in terms of the form and material.

BD.10. Design a roof to be compatible in massing and form to traditional buildings in the surrounding context.

- Where a variety of roof forms is prevalent in an area, allow flexibility.



Design a window to create depth and shadow on a façade. This is particularly relevant in the Downtown Core and Tuning Fork Character Areas.



Design a roof to be architecturally consistent with the overall architectural design and detailing of the structure.



Materials

A wide variety of materials are used Downtown, including traditional and contemporary. This diversity should be encouraged. Materials and their composition strongly impact the perception of a building or site. They should be used to convey human scale and provide visual interest to the public realm. Materials should also be proven durable in Ithaca's climate to prevent deterioration over time. Figure 12 shows appropriate materials for each Character Area.



BD.11. Use materials to convey a sense of human scale and visual interest.

- Add visual interest through texture, finish and detailing.
- Use changes in material to add visual interest and express a human scale.
- Use an accent material to highlight an important feature like an entry or window.
- Use materials to create contrast and shadow.
- Use a limited number of materials so that a façade does not appear overly busy or confusing.
- Visually “flat” or panelized materials (such as synthetic stucco or EIFS) that result in monotonous, featureless surfaces are not appropriate on any street-facing façade. Limited applications of synthetic stucco or another visually flat material may be appropriate on an interior façade as a wall panel or as an accent, but should be complemented with a material rich in texture or with a dynamic finish.



BD.12. Use a material that is compatible with the surrounding context. This is particularly important in the Downtown Core and the Tuning Fork.

- Use a traditional material or an alternative material that is similar in appearance to a traditional material.

BD.13. Use a high quality material that is proven durable.

- Use a material that is proven durable in Ithaca's climate.
- Use a ground level material that can withstand on-going contact with the public and retain its quality.

Use a high quality material that is proven durable.

FIGURE 12: Materials

Appropriate Cladding Materials For Each Character Area

The following table indicates cladding materials that are appropriate as primary (P), secondary (S) materials or those that are not allowed (-) in each of the Character Areas. Secondary materials cannot exceed 25% of the surface area of any one building façade. These guidelines apply to the primary and secondary materials that are integral to the wall of a building. They do not limit use for accents or accessories such as storefronts, awnings or canopies. This list is not all encompassing; other materials may be appropriate if they satisfy the intent of these guidelines.

		Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
Cladding	Wood Clapboard	-	-	P/S
	Wood Shingle	-	-	P/S
	Cementitious Clapboard	-	-	P/S
	Cementitious Shingle	-	-	P/S
	Brick	P/S	P/S	P/S
	Stone	P/S	P/S	P/S
	Cementitious Panel	P/S	P/S	-
	Synthetic Stucco (EIFS)	S*	S*	-
	True Stucco	P/S	P/S	P/S
	Pre-Finished Metal Panel	P/S	P/S	-
	Glass Curtain Wall	P/S	P/S	-
	Architectural Metal	S	S	P/S
		*Interior façades only	*Interior façades only	

Appropriate Building Materials For Each Character Area

This table indicates which building materials are appropriate (A) or inappropriate (-) in each of the Character Areas. This list is not all encompassing; other materials may be appropriate if they satisfy the intent of these guidelines.

		Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
Trim	Wood	A	A	A
	Cementitious Trim Board	A	A	A
	Cellular PVC Trim Board (AZEK)	A	A	A
	Stone	A	A	A
	Brick	A	A	A
	Pre-Finished Metal Panel	A	-	-

Doors		Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
	Wood	A	A	A
	Fiberglass	A	A	A
	Steel Doors	*	*	-
	Extruded Glass and Aluminum	**	-	-
	Solid Glass	**	-	-
	*Interior façades only **When part of a storefront only	*Interior façades only		





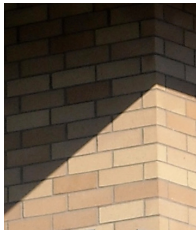


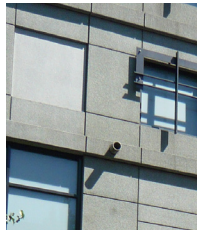


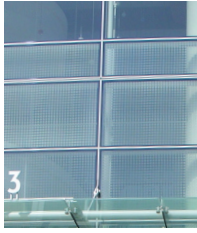

Windows		Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
	Wood Frame	A	A	A
	Clad Wood Frame	A	A	A
	Fiberglass Frame	A	A	A
	Extruded Aluminum	A	-	-
	Steel Frame	A	A	A
	Clear Glass	A	A	A
Specialty Windows	A	A	A	




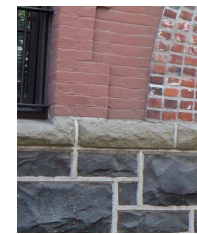


Roofs		Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
	Asphalt Shingle	-	-	A
	Clay Tile	A	A	A
	Slate	A	A	A
	Metal Shingle	A	A	A
	Panelized, Standing Seam Metal Roofing	A	A	-
	Traditional Standing Seam Metal	A	A	A
	Single-Ply or Asphalt Rolled Roofing	*	*	*
	*Flat roofs only	*Flat roofs only	*Flat roofs only	






Stoops/Porches		Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
	Stone, Natural or Cast	A	A	A
	Brick	A	A	A
	Concrete	A	A	A
	Powder-Coated Steel or Aluminum	A	A	A
	Painted Metal	A	A	A
	Wood	-	-	A
	Cementitious Shingle	-	A	A
	Wood Composite (Trex)	-	A	A
	Cellular PVC Trim Board (AZEK)	-	A	A
	True Stucco	-	A	A
	Wood Shingle	-	A	A





Fencing		Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
	Wood	A	A	A
	Iron	A	A	A
	Steel	A	A	A
Powder-Coated Aluminum	A	A	A	





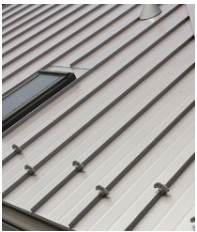


Retaining Walls		Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
	Natural Stone	A	A	A
	Split-Face CMU	A	A	A
Textured/Scored Concrete	A	A	A	








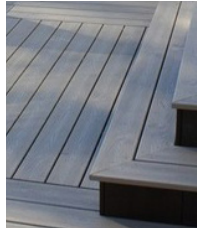



Cladding	Wood Clapboard	Wood Shingle	Cementitious Clapboard	Cementitious Shingle	Brick
					
	Stone	Cementitious Panel	Synthetic Stucco	True Stucco	Pre-Finished Metal Panel
					
Glass Curtain Wall	Architectural Metal				
					




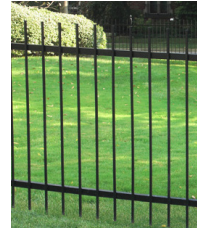
Trim	Wood	Cementitious Trim Board	Cellular PVC Trim Board (AZEK)	Stone	Brick
					
	Pre-Finished Metal Panel				
					

Doors	Wood	Fiberglass	Steel Doors	Extruded Glass and Aluminum	Solid Glass
					

Windows	Wood Frame	Clad Wood Frame	Fiberglass Frame	Extruded Aluminum	Steel Frame
					
	Clear Glass	Specialty Windows			
					

Roofs	Asphalt Shingle	Clay Tile	Slate	Metal Shingle	Panelized Standing Seam Metal
					
	Traditional Standing Seam Metal	Single-Ply or Asphalt Rolled Roofing			
					

Porches	Stone, Natural, or Cast	Brick	Concrete	Powder Coated Steel or Aluminum	Painted Metal
					
	Wood	Cementitious Shingle	Wood Composite (Trex)	Cellular PVC Trim Board (AZEK)	True Stucco
					
	Wood Shingle				
					

Fences	Wood	Iron	Steel	Powder-Coated Aluminum	
					

Retaining Walls	Natural Stone	Split-Face CMU	Textured/Scored Concrete		
					

Accessory Structures

Accessory structures are desired for many properties. An accessory structure should be subordinate to a primary structure and its visibility from a public space should be minimized. A visible accessory structure should be compatible with a primary structure.

BD.14. Design an accessory structure to be subordinate to a primary structure.

- Locate an accessory structure to the rear of a primary structure.
- Where possible, locate an accessory structure so that its view from the street is blocked by the primary structure.
- Size an accessory structure to be at a lower scale and size as compared to the primary structure.

BD.15. If an accessory structure is partially or fully visible from the public street, design it to be compatible with the primary structure.

BD.16. Use detailing and materials that are coordinated with the primary structure.

Building Equipment

Utility service boxes, telecommunication devices, cables, conduits, vents, chillers and fans are among the equipment that is often attached to a building. This equipment draws away from the structure itself and can adversely affect the quality of the pedestrian experience. Buildings should minimize the visual impact of mechanical and other building equipment on the public realm, including the Creek Walk.

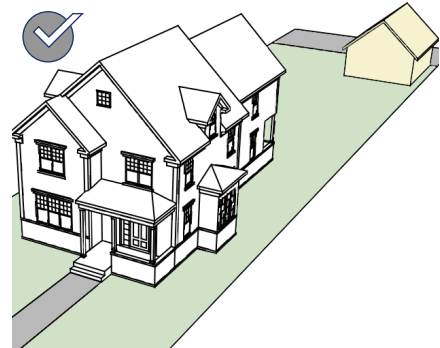
BD.17. Minimize the visual impact of building equipment and equipment affixed to a building.

- Locate a utility connection or service box to the sides or rear of a building and not on a street-facing façade.
- Screen equipment with an architectural screen wall, fencing and/or a landscape element.
- Integrate a visible window air conditioning unit into the design of a building. Screen a window air conditioning unit that is visible from the public realm with an architectural feature where possible.
- Locate mechanical equipment on a rooftop in a location that is out of view from the street; otherwise screen it or integrate it architecturally with the overall building design.

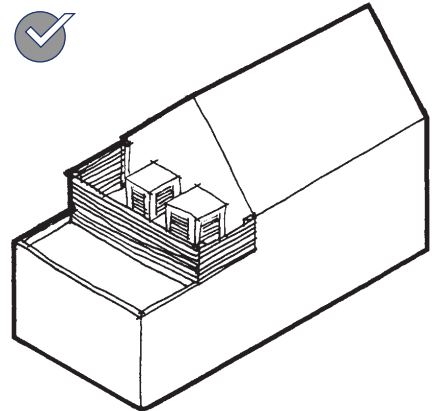
BD.18. Utilities should be moved underground, if possible, in coordination with the City.

City of Ithaca Zoning Code

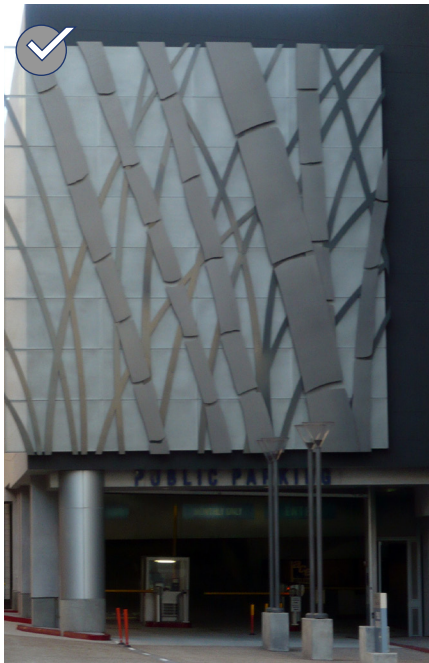
See the City of Ithaca Zoning Code for provisions relating to accessory structures:
<http://ecode360.com/8393835>



Design an accessory structure to be subordinate to the primary structure.



Minimize the visual impact of building equipment and equipment affixed to a building.



On upper floors, minimize the visibility of parked cars and prevent a monotonous appearance on a parking garage wall.

Parking Garages

Parking garages can consolidate parking, thereby decreasing the need for large surface parking areas. Their design at the street level and upper levels should minimize the visibility of parked cars. For ground floor design on a parking garage, refer to “Street Level Interest” on page 65.

BD.19. On upper floors, minimize the visibility of parked cars and prevent a monotonous appearance on a parking garage wall.

- Use an architectural screen, special architectural feature, landscaping or another method to screen vehicles.

BD.20. Place a screening feature to fit within the overall architectural design of the parking garage.

- Wrapping the parking garage with an active use is the ideal screening alternative.

Parking Garage Screening

Appropriate methods include:



Wrap with an active use (preferred screening method)



A landscaping screen



An architectural screen

Sustainable Building Design

Sustainability is a critical objective for Ithaca and the city's buildings will play a critical role in achieving it. Buildings should be designed to maximize energy efficiency. Designs should also address seasonal changes in natural lighting and ventilation conditions. Buildings in Downtown should incorporate sustainable design features wherever possible, with an understanding that sustainability objectives must be balanced with those of placemaking and urban design.

BD.21. Consider including a building design feature that conserves energy.

- Utilize external shading (landscape and/or integrated into the building) to keep out summer sun and let in winter sun.
- Design a building to take advantage of energy-saving and energy-generating opportunities.
- Design windows to maximize light into interior spaces.
- Use exterior shading devices, such as overhangs, to manage solar gain in summer months and welcome solar access in winter months.
- Incorporate a renewable energy device, including a solar collector or wind turbine.
- Utilize highly efficient internal equipment (e.g. lighting, plug loads) and controls.
- Use air- or ground-source (geothermal) heat pump systems for space heating and cooling, air-source heat pumps hot water, and non-natural gas-fired boilers.
- Use energy and water-efficient appliances and fixtures.

BD.22. When redeveloping a site, salvage or reuse site and building materials where possible.

- Incorporate a functional existing building into a redevelopment project in order to minimize waste and greenhouse gas emissions associated with demolition.

BD.23. Include a feature or amenity that encourages walking or biking as an alternative to driving.

- Include bicycle storage facilities, covered bicycle parking, employee showers and other bicycle-friendly amenities in a building or on-site.
- Include excellent pedestrian facilities that are well connected to the external pedestrian circulation system.

BD.24. If a parking area is essential, provide one that supports fuel-efficient and electronic vehicles.

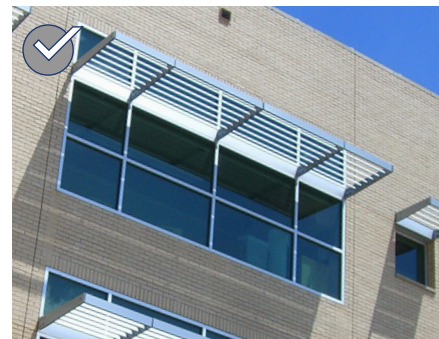
- Provide compact parking spaces.
- Provide one or more electronic vehicle (EV) charging stations.

LEED Building Certification

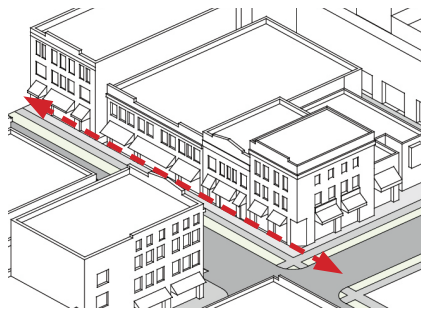
For more information on sustainable building design, see LEED Building Certification:
<http://www.usgbc.org/leed>



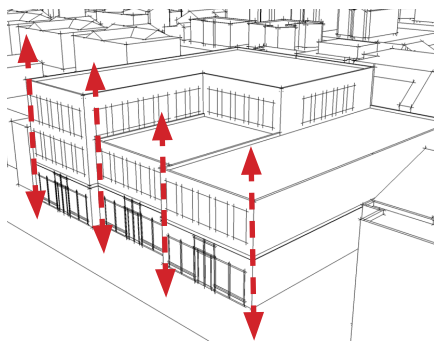
Incorporate a renewable energy device.



Consider including a building design feature that conserves energy, such as a window pergola/sun shading device.



Maintain the traditional pattern of building orientation and setbacks on a given block.



Design a building and its elements to maintain compatibility with the scale and elements on nearby traditional buildings.

Compatible Building Design

Buildings should be compatibly scaled and draw on Downtown’s architectural traditions, yet also allow new, creative designs. This will create visual continuity along the street and a cohesive transition from building to building. This guideline is particularly relevant in the Downtown Core and Tuning Fork Character Areas.

BD.25. Design a building and its elements to be compatible with the scale and elements on nearby traditional buildings.

- Articulate a building mass to include vertical and horizontal elements that are similar to those elements on nearby traditional buildings.
- Express the floors of a building in a way that is compatible with the floor expression of traditional buildings on a block



Express the floors of a building in a way that is compatible with the floor expression of other traditional buildings on the block.



Articulate a building mass to include vertical and horizontal elements that relate to the proportions of nearby traditional buildings.

Street Level Interest

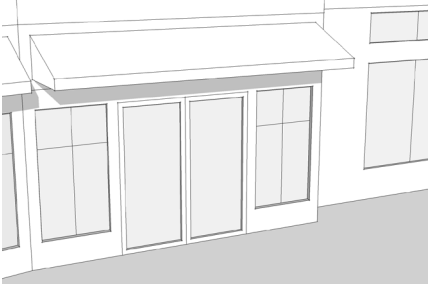
A building's ground floor strongly impacts the pedestrian experience on an adjacent public space, like a sidewalk or public plaza.

Architectural elements must be combined to establish interest for pedestrians. A blank or featureless ground floor can diminish interest. This applies to both standard buildings and parking garages. Options for creating street level interest are shown below.

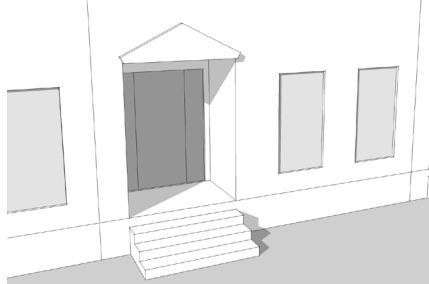
BD.26. Design a ground floor to engage the public realm and provide visual interest for pedestrians.

- Preferred architectural elements include:
 - » Functional entries
 - » Windows
 - » Display windows
- If a preferred architectural element is not feasible, appropriate alternatives include:
 - » Decorative wall surfaces
 - » Landscaping
 - » Wall art
- Apply these guidelines to a parking garage that occurs at the street level. As stated on page 62, the ideal solution is

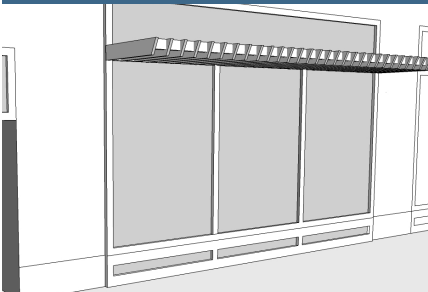
**Functional Entry
(Storefront)**



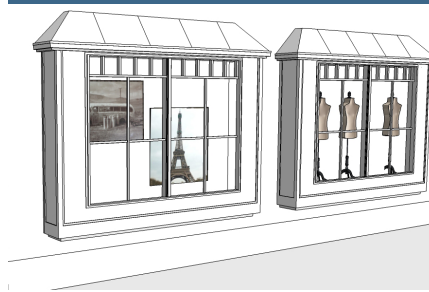
**Functional Entry
(Residential)**



Windows



Display Windows



wrapping the garage with active uses.

Building Articulation

Building articulation includes vertical or horizontal changes in materials, color, wall plane or other elements that reduce real and perceived building scale. All Downtown buildings should incorporate articulation methods. For the purposes of these guidelines, building articulation methods include two categories:

- **Façade Articulation.** Façade articulation methods reduce perceived building mass. They break down a building into human scale components and express a sense of horizontal and vertical scale. However, these methods do not significantly affect the overall square footage of a floor or building. All Downtown buildings should incorporate façade articulation methods.
- **Massing Variation.** Massing variation methods reduce actual building mass and scale. They modulate a building floor or wall in a manner that creates a physical relief in an architectural form. Variations may affect enclosed square footage on a floor and building.

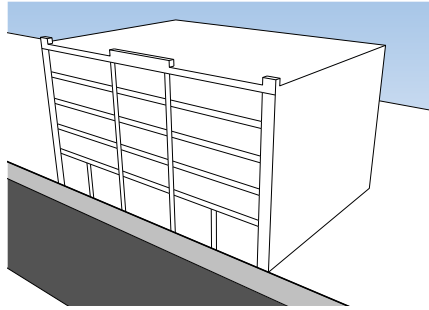
Building Articulation methods are illustrated in Figure 13.

FIGURE 13: Building Articulation Methods (Part 1)

Façade Articulation Methods

A1 Accent Lines

Accent lines include vertical and horizontal expression lines on a building wall. An accent line often projects slightly from the face of a building wall.

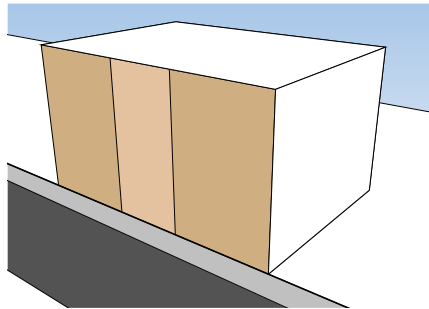


Examples include:

- Moldings
- Sills
- Cornices
- Canopies
- Spandrels

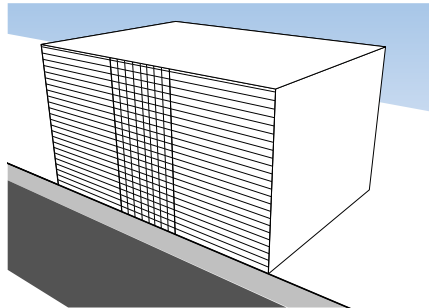
A2 Color Changes

Color changes include significant vertical or horizontal changes (15'-30' min) in color on a building wall.



A3 Material Changes

Material changes include significant vertical or horizontal changes (15'-30' min) in material on a building wall.



A4 Minor Wall Offsets

A minor wall offset is a vertical expression line created by notching a building wall for its full height. Minor wall offsets are typically 5 feet or less.

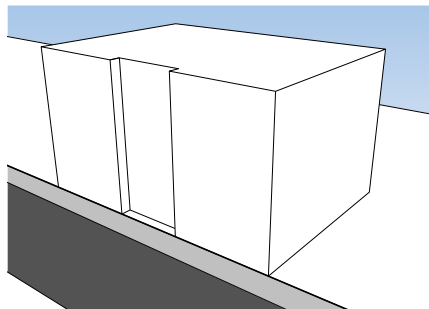
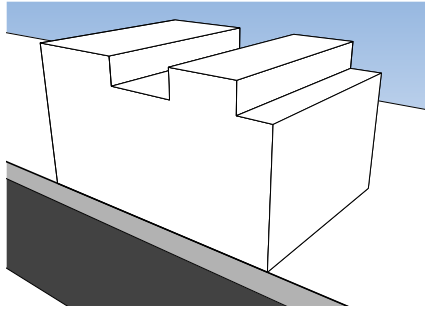


FIGURE 13: Building Articulation Methods (Part 2)

Massing Variation Methods

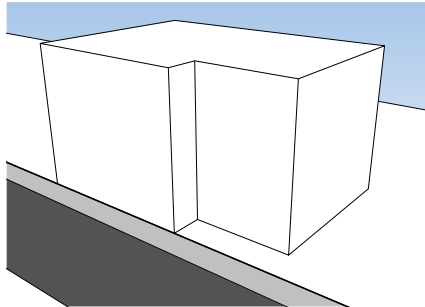
A5 Height Variation

A height variation is an actual reduction in the vertical height of a building of at least one floor. (Note that it is not the intent of this variation method to require multiple elevators.)



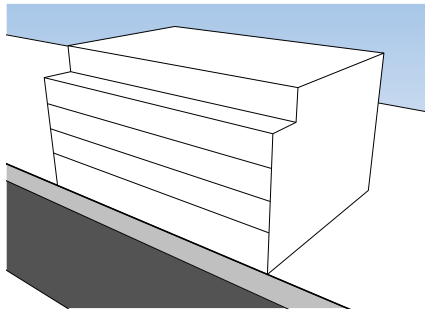
A6 Increased Setbacks

An increased setback is similar to a minor wall offset, but with a larger dimension. It is established by providing a larger setback on a portion of a wall for its full height.



A7 Upper Floor Stepback

An upper floor stepback is similar to an increased setback, but it only occurs on an upper floor(s). It is created by setting back an upper story building wall relative to those on a lower story. A setback of 8-12 feet in depth is suggested.



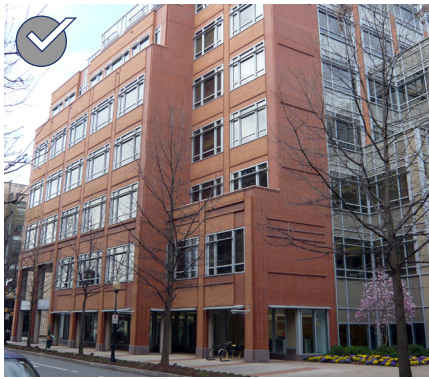
Combining Building Articulation Methods

A single building articulation method is typically insufficient to achieve a desired design outcome or promote architectural creativity and interest. Combining multiple methods into a single building is highly encouraged. As shown in Figure 14, a building often includes some or all of the building articulation methods identified previously in Figure 13.

FIGURE 14: Combining Building Articulation Methods

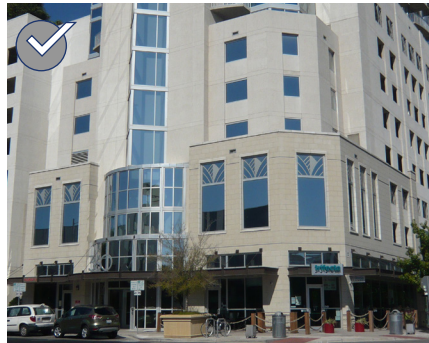


- A1 Accent Lines
- A2 Color Changes
- A3 Material Changes
- A4 Minor Wall Offsets
- A5 Height Variation
- A6 Increased Setbacks
- A7 Upper Floor Stepbacks



The following pages provide specific recommendations for combining building articulation methods. Suggested methods vary based on the specific design issue to be addressed and the dimensions and circumstances of a project. Recommendations are provided for the following objectives:

- Maintaining compatibility with traditional scale at the street
- Addressing a sensitive edge (a property zoned for low-scale residential, historic building, creek)
- Maintaining a public view corridor
- Providing solar access
- Creating outdoor space



BD.27. Use a combination of “façade articulation” and “massing variation” methods as shown in Figure 13 and as specified in more detail in items A.-E. on pages 71-75 to reduce the perceived and/or actual mass and scale of a building.



Use a combination of “façade articulation” and “massing variation” methods to reduce the perceived and/or actual mass and scale of a building.

A. Maintaining Compatibility with Traditional Scale at the Street

Intent: Maintaining compatibility with traditional building widths and heights along a public street.

Width

Long Walls: Combine at least (3) three of the following:

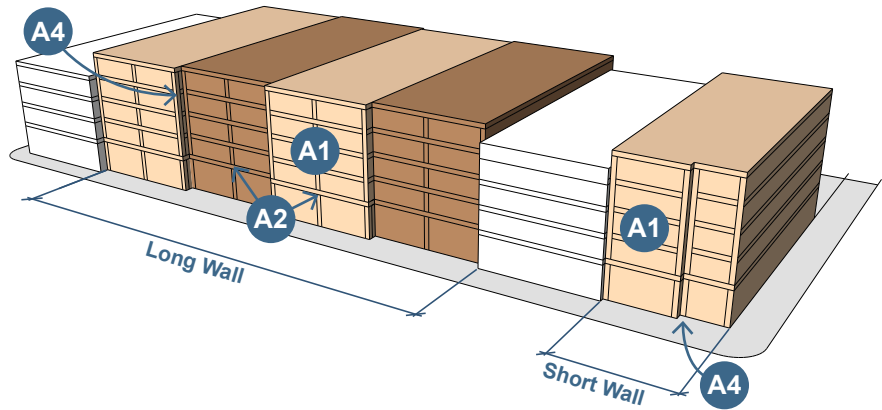
- A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6

The example building shows A1. Accent Lines, A2. Color Changes, and A4. Minor Wall Offset.

Short Walls: Combine at least (2) two of the following:

- A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6

The example building shows A1. Accent Lines and A4. Minor Wall Offset.



	Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
Long Wall =	Greater than or equal to 40 ft.	Greater than or equal to 60 ft.	Greater than or equal to 60 ft.
Short Wall =	Less than 40 ft.	Less than 60 ft.	Less than 60 ft.

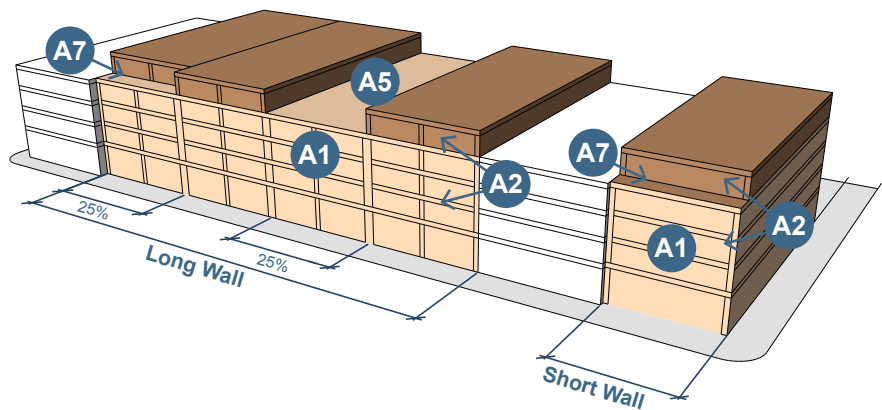
*Criteria for determining a Long Wall and Short Wall are shown in the table.

Height

Long Walls: Combine at least (3) three of the following:

- A1, A2, A3, A5, A7
(Use A5 or A7 for at least 50% of the wall length)

The example building uses A1. Accent Lines, A2. Change in Color, A5. Height Variation and A7. Upper Floor Stepback.



	Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
Long Wall =	Greater than or equal to 40 ft.	Greater than or equal to 60 ft.	NA
Short Wall =	Less than 40 ft.	Less than 60 ft.	NA

Short Walls: Combine at least (2) two of the following:

- A1, A2, A3, A5, A7

The example building uses A1. Accent Lines and A2. Changes in Color and A7. Upper Floor Stepback.

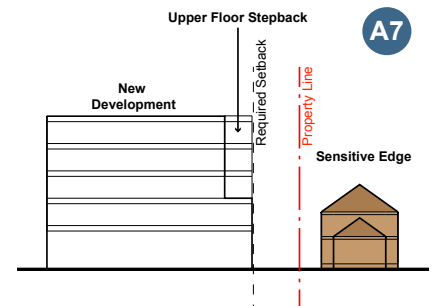
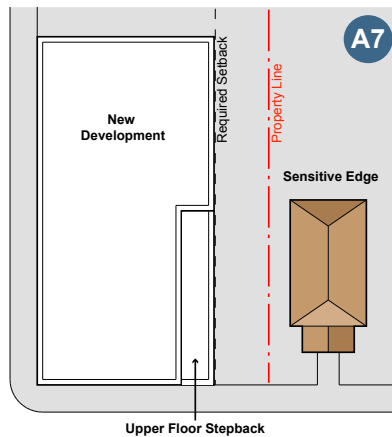
*Criteria for determining a Long Wall and Short Wall are shown in the table. Not applicable in the West State Street Character Area.

- A1** Accent Lines
- A2** Color Changes
- A3** Material Changes
- A4** Minor Wall Offsets
- A5** Height Variation
- A6** Increased Setbacks
- A7** Upper Floor Stepbacks

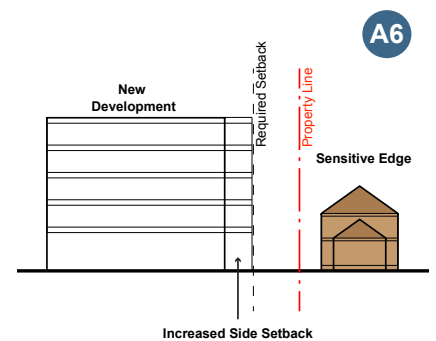
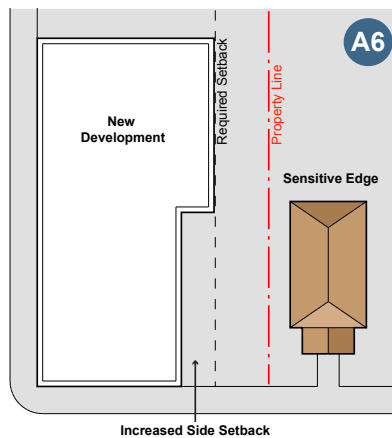
B. Addressing a Sensitive Edge Condition

Intent: To provide a transition in scale to prevent a looming wall and minimize the negative visual effects of a larger building on an adjacent historic resource or a low-scale residentially-zoned property. The intent is also to respond to the building placement patterns of a historic property or district. Sensitive edge conditions include low-scale residentially-zoned properties, historic properties and the Creek Walk. Use one or more of the following options when a potentially incompatible building is proposed adjacent to a sensitive edge condition.

Upper Floor Stepback: Provide an upper floor stepback (A7) along a side lot line that is a sensitive edge. This option is particularly effective when the sensitive edge is a low-scale residentially-zoned property.



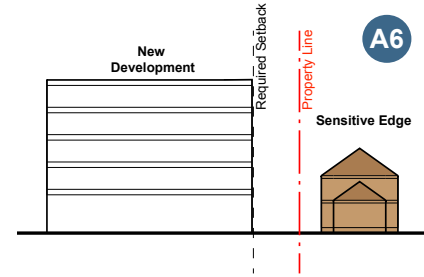
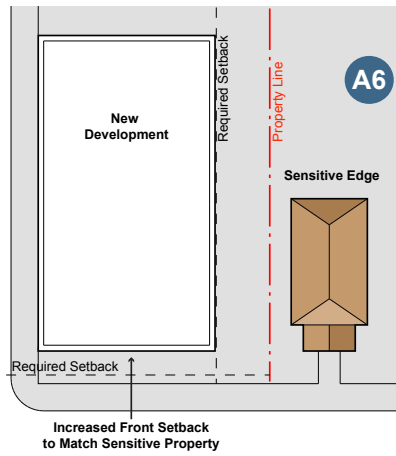
Increased Side Setback: Provide an increased side setback (A6) along a side lot line that is a sensitive edge. This option is effective when the sensitive edge is a low-scale residentially-zoned property and when it is a historic resource.



- A1 Accent Lines
- A2 Color Changes
- A3 Material Changes
- A4 Minor Wall Offsets
- A5 Height Variation
- A6 Increased Setbacks
- A7 Upper Floor Stepbacks

Increased Front Setback:

Provide an increased front setback (A6) along the front lot line to match the front setback of the adjacent property on the sensitive edge. This option is particularly effective when the sensitive edge is a historic resource and maintaining compatibility with the traditional building placement is the focus.

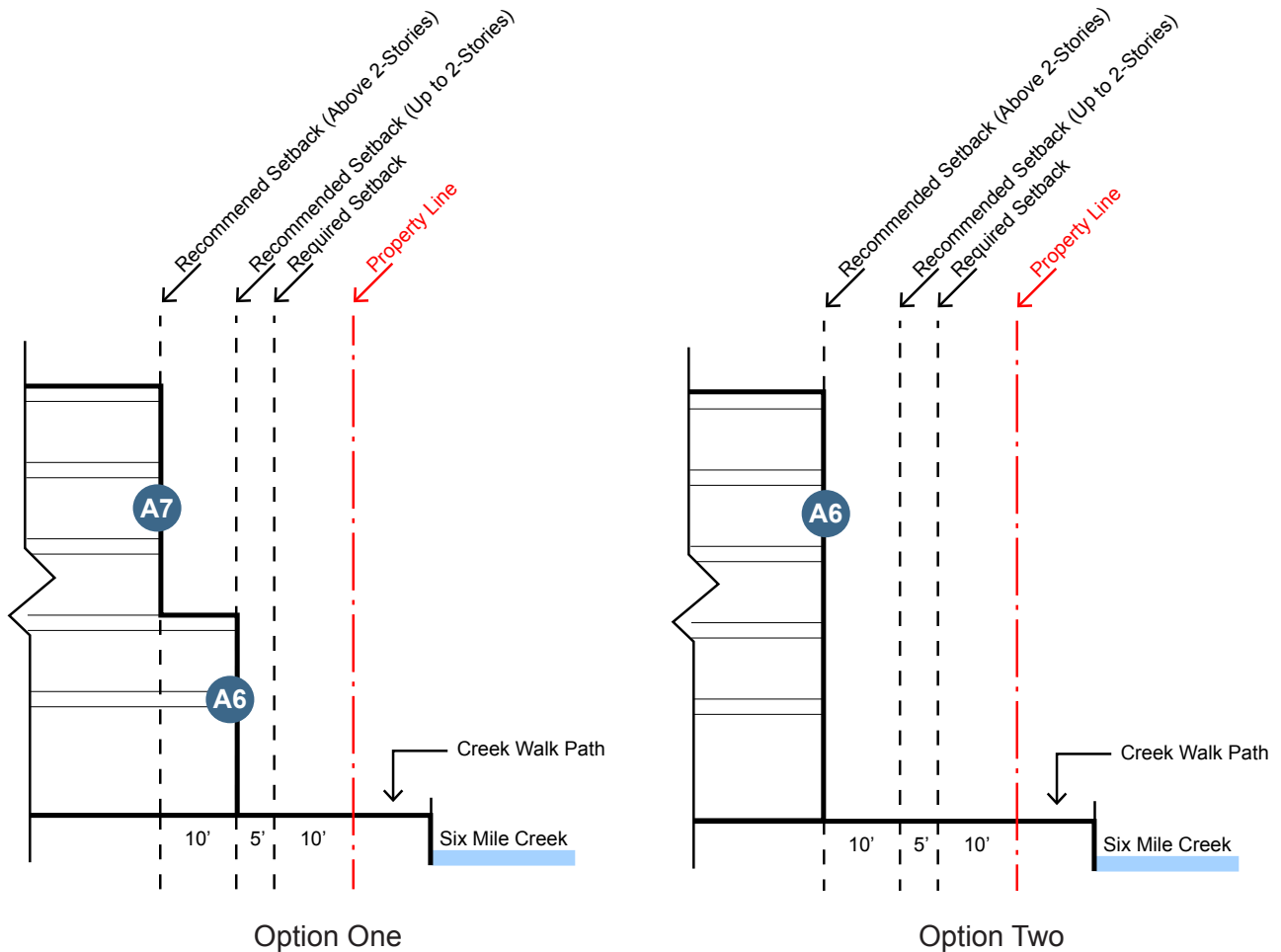


- A1 Accent Lines
- A2 Color Changes
- A3 Material Changes
- A4 Minor Wall Offsets
- A5 Height Variation
- A6 Increased Setbacks
- A7 Upper Floor Stepbacks

C. Creek Walk

If a building is located next to the Creek Walk, articulate the building wall that is adjacent to it. Use one of the following treatments:

- Option One: The building should provide an increased setback (A6) of at least 5 feet from the required setback line for the first two stories, and an increased stepback (A7) of at least 10 additional feet for any portion above two stories.
- Option Two: Buildings over 2 stories can be completely setback (A6) fifteen feet from the required setback line.



- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| • A1 Accent Lines | • A5 Height Variation |
| • A2 Color Changes | • A6 Increased Setbacks |
| • A3 Material Changes | • A7 Upper Floor Stepbacks |
| • A4 Minor Wall Offsets | |

D. Maintaining Public Views/Increasing Solar Access

Intent: Maintain or create views down a public street, to the sky or to a natural feature. Maximize sunlight to the public realm or a private outdoor space, either at the street level or on an upper level.

Long Walls: Use one or more of the following on at least 50% of a wall:

- A5, A6, A7

Short Walls: Use one or more of the following if feasible:

- A5, A6, A7

**Criteria for determining a Long Wall and Short Wall are shown in the table.*

	Downtown Core	Tuning Fork	West State Street
Long Wall =	Greater than or equal to 40 ft.	Greater than or equal to 60 ft.	NA
Short Wall =	Less than 40 ft.	Less than 60 ft.	NA

E. Creating Outdoor Space

Intent: Create an opportunity for private outdoor space for tenants, customers or other building users on a ground floor, upper floor or rooftop.

At the Ground Level: Use A6.

On an Upper Floor or Rooftop: Use A5 or A7.

- A1** Accent Lines
- A2** Color Changes
- A3** Material Changes
- A4** Minor Wall Offsets
- A5** Height Variation
- A6** Increased Setbacks
- A7** Upper Floor Stepbacks

Interior Façade Articulation

An interior façade refers to a side or rear wall that does not face a prominent public space, like a street or public plaza. Priority conditions include:

- Any façade visible to the public.
- Where an interior façade is set back from an interior lot line.
- A façade facing a parking area or internal circulation component or alley.

BD.28. Use minimal articulation methods to express human scale on an interior façade that is not visible to the public; additional articulation there is encouraged but not required.

CHAPTER 5 SIGN DESIGN



Signs are important to businesses in Downtown. Their design should balance functional requirements with objectives for character, design and compatibility. Orderly sign location and design can make fewer and smaller signs more effective. The design guidelines promote the use of signs which are aesthetically pleasing, of appropriate scale, and integrated with surrounding buildings in order to meet the community’s desire for quality development. All signs throughout the city are subject to the regulations in the Sign Ordinance of the City of Ithaca, which provides the definitions and legal framework for a comprehensive and balanced system of signage.

In this Chapter:

General Sign Design Guidelines	78
Guidelines for Specific Sign Types	80

The Sign Ordinance of the City of Ithaca

The Sign Ordinance of the City of Ithaca includes basic parameters for signs, including maximum area, quantity and other topics.

<http://ecode360.com/8392479>



Design and locate a sign to be subordinate to a site and primary building.

General Sign Design Guidelines

Signs should contribute to a cohesive character of the Downtown Area. All signage should also be compatible with the materials, colors and details of the building. Its content should be visually interesting and clearly legible. Illumination sources should be shielded to minimize glare and light pollution. A sign should remain subordinate to a primary building.

S.1. Design a sign to be compatible with the primary building.

- Use materials, colors and details that are compatible with those used for the building.

S.2. Design and locate a sign to be subordinate to a site and primary building.

- Design a sign to be simple in character.
- Design the content of a sign to be clearly legible. Traditional block and curvilinear styles that are easy to read are preferred.
- Limit the number of colors used on a sign. In general, no more than three colors should be used, although accent colors and additional colors for illustrations may be considered.
- Locate and design a sign to emphasize rather than overshadow building features.

Lighting

S.3. Shield a sign illumination source to minimize glare and light pollution.

- Use a compatible shielded light source to illuminate a sign.
- Direct lighting towards a sign from an external, shielded lamp.
- Do not overpower the building or street edge with sign lighting.
- If halo lighting is used to accentuate a sign or building, locate the light source so that it is not visible.
- If internal illumination is used, design it to be subordinate to the overall building composition.
- If internal illumination is used, use a system that only backlights the individual characters of sign text.
- Avoid internal illumination of an entire sign panel.

Materials

S.4. Use a sign material that is compatible with the architectural character and materials of the building.

S.5. Use permanent, durable materials for a sign that reflect the Downtown context.



Use a permanent, durable material.

Guidelines for Specific Sign Types

The table below includes additional guidelines applicable to specific sign types. They shall be used in concert with the general signage guidelines above. The definitions included below are established in the City of Ithaca Sign Ordinance.

Wall Signs		
	<p>A sign fastened, painted or otherwise erected on the wall of a building so that the wall becomes the sign's supporting structure and wholly or partially forms its background.</p>	<p>S.6. Locate and design a wall sign to promote design compatibility among buildings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place a wall sign to align with other signs on nearby buildings. Design a wall sign to minimize the depth of a sign panel or letters. Design a wall sign to fit within, rather than forward of, the fascia or other architectural details of a building.
Window Signs		
	<p>A permanent sign affixed to a window surface or in front of or behind a window in such a manner that the window acts as its frame or background.</p>	<p>S.7. Design a window sign to preserve transparency at the sidewalk edge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a minimal amount of opaque material on a window sign. Scale a window sign so that it only covers a modest amount of a glass window panel.
Projecting Signs		
	<p>Any sign that projects from the exterior of any building.</p>	<p>S.8. Locate and design a projecting sign to relate to building entries and convey visual interest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate a small blade sign near the business entrance, just above the door. Mount a larger blade sign higher on the building, centered on the façade or positioned at the corner. Design a bracket for a projecting sign to complement the sign composition.

Awning Signs



A sign that is painted, printed, or stenciled onto the surface of an awning.

- S.9. Design printing on an awning to be subordinate to the awning.**
- Scale the printing on an awning sign to only cover a modest amount of the awning material.
 - Use a color that contrasts well with the color of the awning.

Monument Signs



A sign or signs mounted, painted on or fastened to a freestanding wall, pier or other sign structure, of which any horizontal dimension of a structural member exceeds 18 inches between two feet and eight feet above grade level.

- S.10. Locate a monument sign to integrate with a site design.**
- Ensure that a monument sign does not encroach on or interrupt a prominent site feature or internal walkway.
- S.11. Scale a monument sign to be of a size and height that expresses human scale.**
- Use a low profile monument sign that is easily readable, but does not block views to a building.

CHAPTER 6 GUIDELINES SPECIFIC TO CHARACTER AREAS

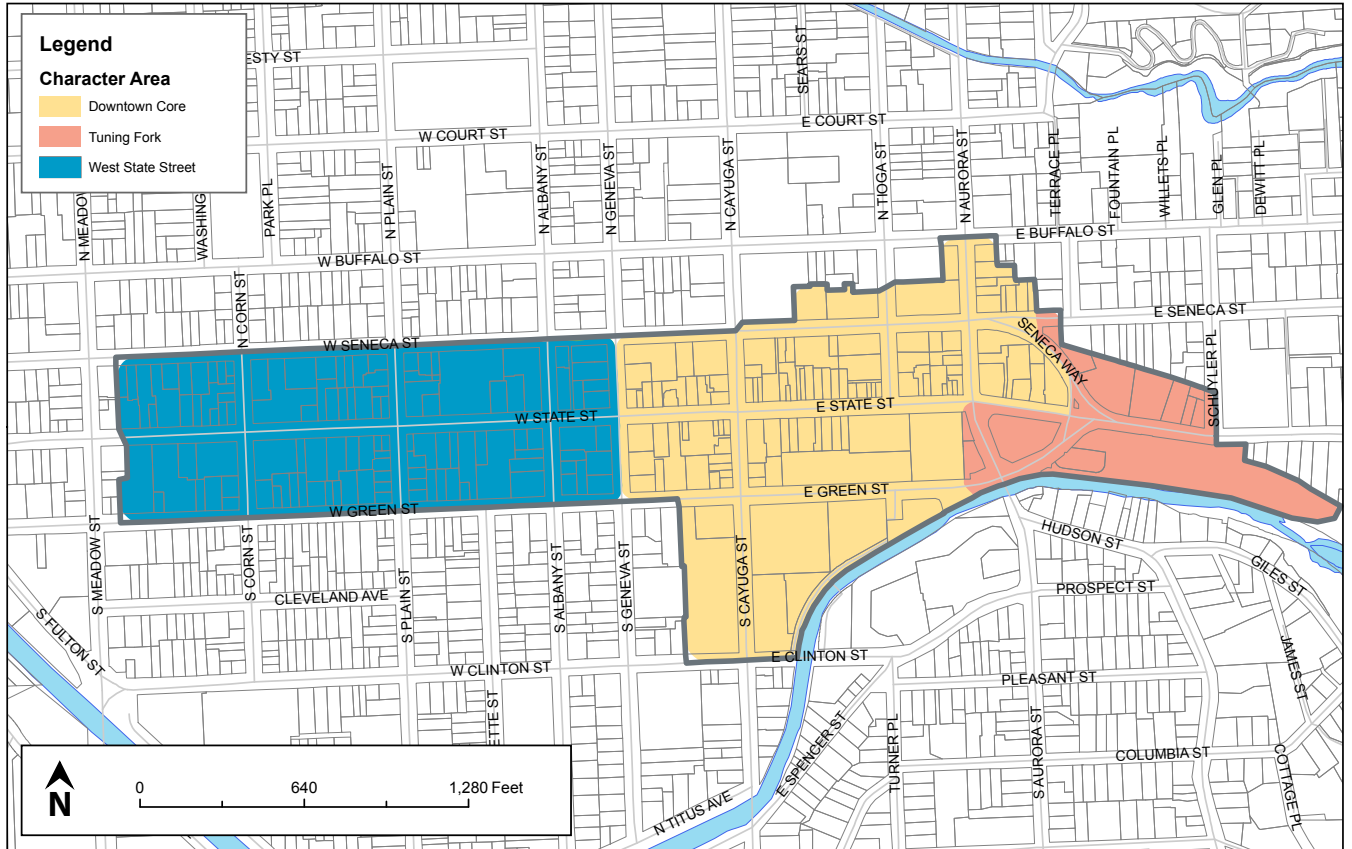


This chapter provides special guidelines for each of the three Character Areas defined in Chapter 1. It discusses areas of emphasis for specific topic areas. The guidelines and content shall be used in addition to the general guidelines provided in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. Downtown Character Areas are shown in Figure 15.

In this Chapter:

Tuning Fork	85
Downtown Core	88
West State Street	90

FIGURE 15: Downtown Character Areas.



Tuning Fork

The “Tuning Fork” is an area of land shaped by the convergence of East State Street, Seneca Way, and East Green Street. The street configuration results in irregularly shaped parcels. Grade changes also impact this Character Area. These factors create both opportunities and challenges for development. Buildings in the Tuning Fork are primarily commercial or mixed-use and vary in height. Existing buildings in the Tuning Fork respond to topography and the curvilinear block pattern differently, creating a varied pattern of buildings. Six Mile Creek serves as an influential natural feature in this area.

Building Orientation and Placement

The Tuning Fork serves as a major gateway into Downtown from the east and its blocks are irregularly shaped due to transportation projects undertaken during 1950’s urban renewal. The streets in the Tuning Fork are Green Street, State Street, Seneca Way and Aurora Street. Buildings in the Tuning Fork should orient toward these streets to provide a visual connection to the public realm and activate it. To respond to the area’s function as a gateway, buildings should locate special architectural features or outdoor spaces in prominent locations. Building edges should be established along the streets to create a sense of enclosure to the street and pedestrian space.

TF.1. Place a building to establish a strong and consistent built edge along the street in order to frame that street.

- Place buildings relatively close to the back of a sidewalk edge in the Tuning Fork.
- Setbacks of zero to five (0-5) feet are appropriate for all street-facing façades.
- An additional setback area may be appropriate to provide an expanded sidewalk, entry plaza, landscaped area or other outdoor feature provided that it is still designed to establish a street edge through materials or other features.



Buildings in the Tuning Fork respond to topography and the curvilinear blocks differently, creating a varied pattern of buildings.



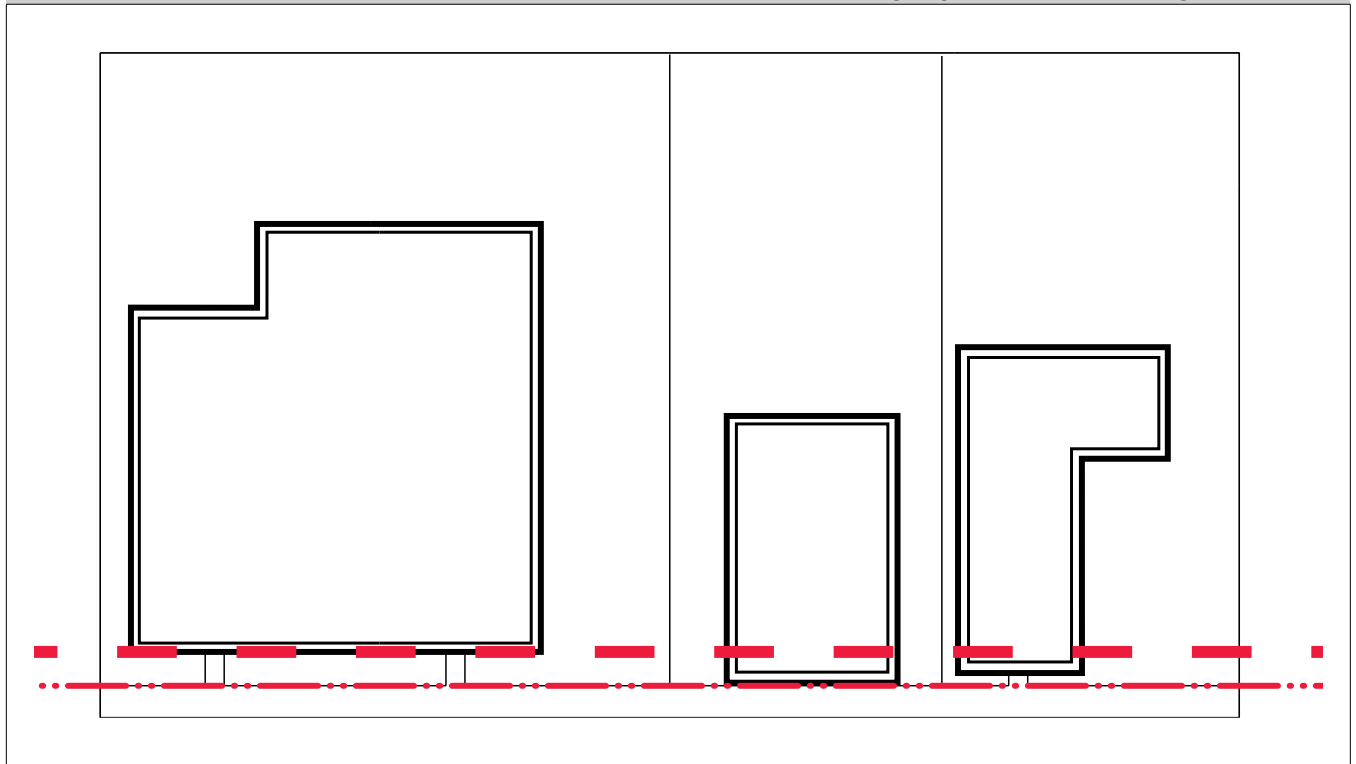
The Tuning Fork serves as a major gateway to Downtown from the east.



Buildings in the Tuning Fork are primarily commercial or mixed-use and vary in height.

Building Placement in the Tuning Fork

Setbacks of zero to five (0-5) feet are appropriate for all street-facing façades in the Tuning Fork.

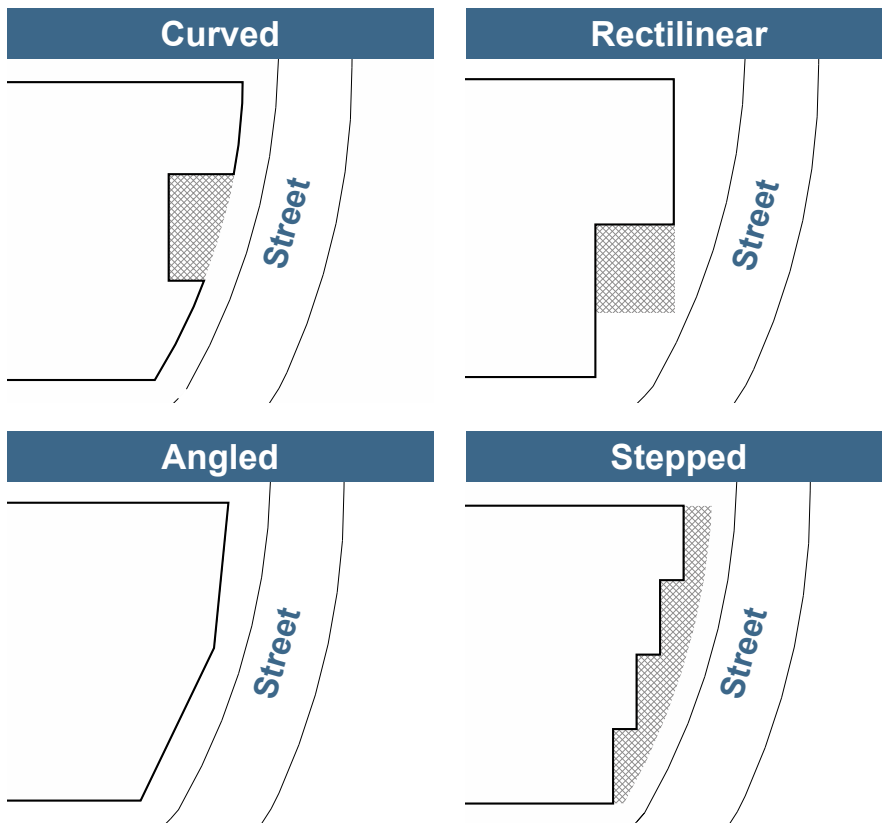


Building Placement for Curvilinear Parcels

Curvilinear blocks and parcels are prevalent in the Tuning Fork. It can be challenging to place a building parallel with the property line in this condition. Buildings fronting a curvilinear street should frame the public realm, but more flexibility in placement is appropriate.

TF.2. Place a building with a curvilinear frontage to create a sense of enclosure to the street. Appropriate methods include the following:

- Curved
- Angled
- Rectilinear
- Stepped





Development patterns are of a rectilinear grid, with rectangular-shaped lots and buildings built to the edge of the sidewalk.

Downtown Core

The Downtown Core is synonymous with Ithaca’s historic commercial core. It includes the Commons and its immediate surroundings, including Cayuga Street, Aurora Street, East Seneca Street and East Green Street. Development patterns are of a rectilinear grid, with rectangular-shaped lots and buildings built to the edge of the sidewalk. Within this consistent framework of buildings is a mix of building styles, including simple commercial vernacular and more ornate designs with Italianate influences. Building heights vary but most convey a consistent ground floor height at the street level with consistent storefronts. The Downtown Core is strongly influenced by the presence of Six Mile Creek.

Building Orientation and Placement

The Downtown Core is the “heart” of the Character Area and includes a critical open space in the Commons. Streets in the Downtown Core include State Street (including the Commons), Aurora Street, Cayuga Street, Seneca Street and Green Street. Buildings should orient toward the streets in order to activate the street and provide a visual connection to the public realm. Building edges should also be established as close to a property line along a street as possible in order to create a sense of enclosure to the street and pedestrian space, and to respond to the typical, limited setback patterns in Downtown.

DC.1. Place a building to establish a strong and consistent built edge along the street in order to frame that street.

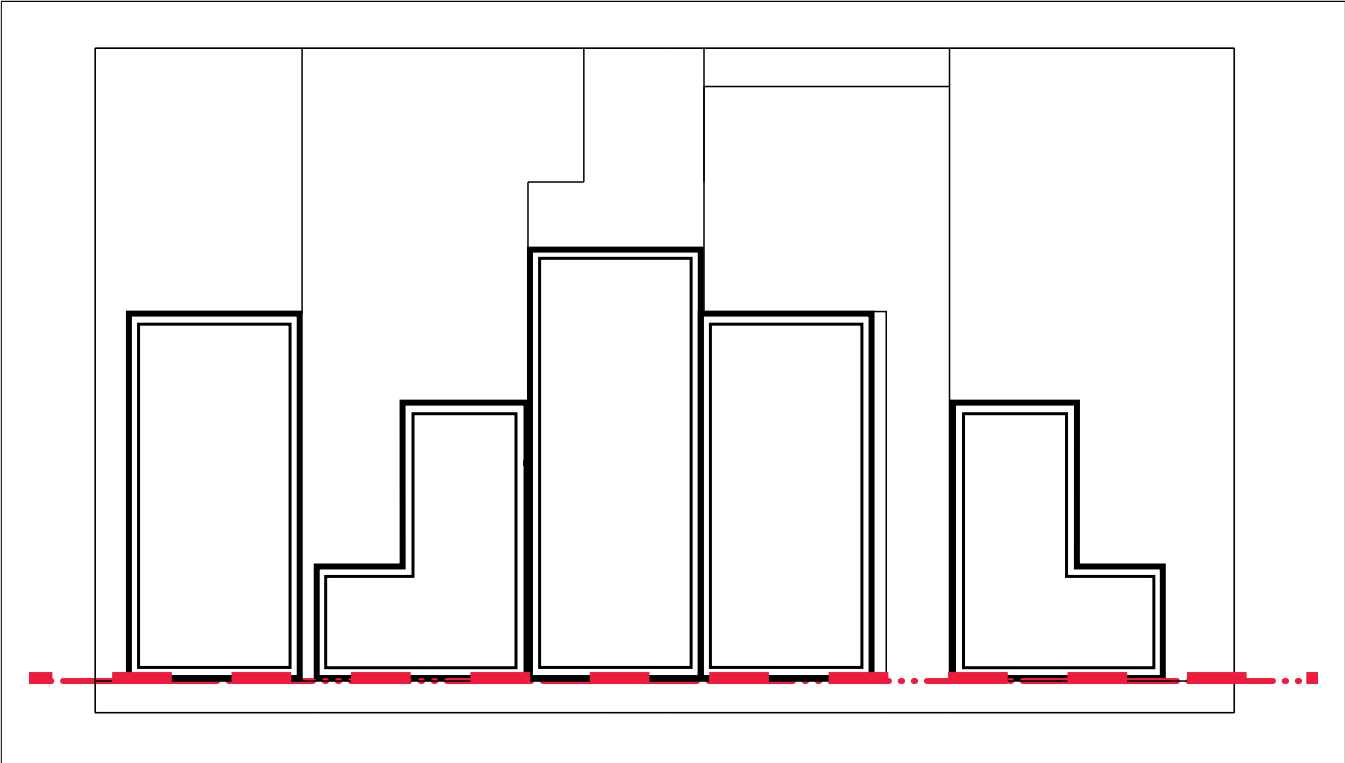
- Place buildings as close to the back of a sidewalk edge as possible.
- An additional setback area may be appropriate to provide an expanded sidewalk, an entry plaza, landscaped area or other outdoor feature provided that it is still designed to establish a street edge through materials or other features.



Place a building to establish a strong and consistent built edge along a street in order to frame that street.

Building Placement in the Downtown Core

Buildings in the Downtown Core should be placed as close to the back of the sidewalk edge as possible.

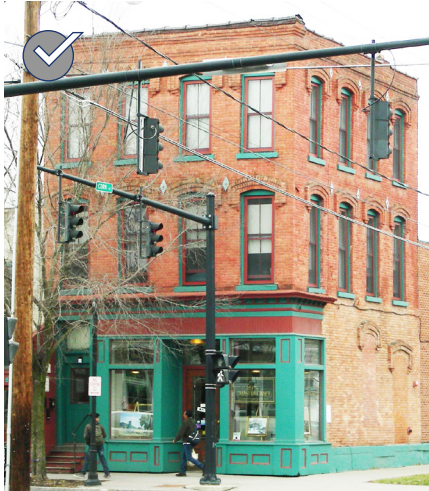


Building heights vary but most convey a consistent ground floor height at the street level.



West State Street

The West State Street Character Area includes properties west of Geneva Street. It is a distinctive area with many different building types, ranging from commercial vernacular with flat parapets to traditional residential styles with pitched roofs. This character area is pedestrian-friendly, with street trees, wider sidewalks and brick paving along State Street. Surface parking lots are common and many undeveloped areas are paved. Although these parking lots create some gaps in the streetscape that reduce walkability, many buildings are built at or near the sidewalk edge.



Setbacks of zero to fifteen (0-15) feet are appropriate for all street-facing façades.

Building Orientation and Placement

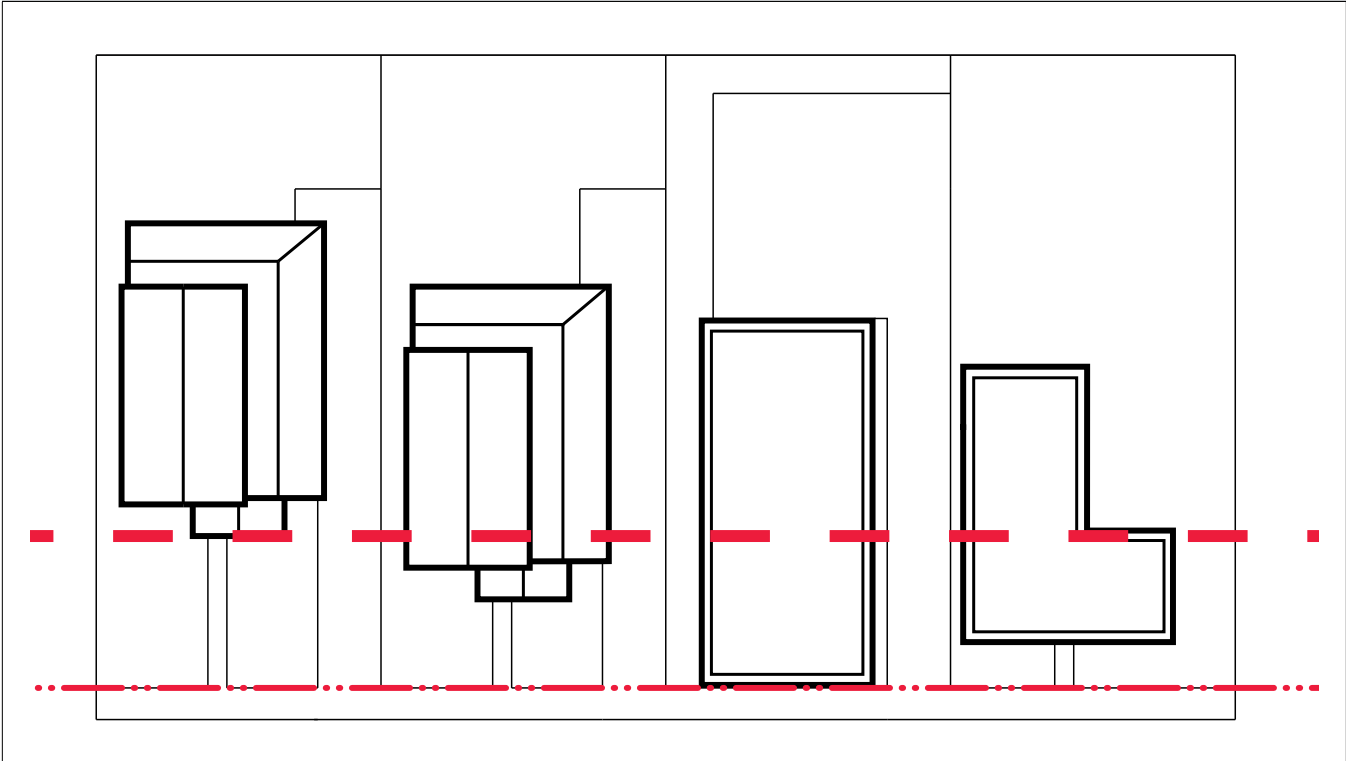
Buildings on West State Street exhibit a wide variety of forms, orientation, placement and coverage. The eclectic mix of buildings helps give the area its unique character. Buildings should orient toward State Street, Green Street or Seneca Street. If a property does not contain frontage on these streets, a building should orient towards Geneva Street, Albany Street, Plain Street or Corn Street. Front setbacks range on West State Street. Some buildings are placed at the back of the sidewalk while others are set back between zero and fifteen (0-15) feet from the street. Buildings should be placed relatively close to the street line, but some flexibility is appropriate.

WSS.1. Provide a consistent built edge along a street in order to frame that street, but allow some flexibility in the specific location.

- Setbacks of zero to fifteen (0-15) feet are appropriate for all street-facing façades (or as required by zoning).
- An additional setback area may be appropriate to provide an expanded sidewalk, an entry plaza, landscaped area or other outdoor feature provided that it is still designed to establish a street edge through materials or other features.

Building Placement on West State Street

Setbacks of zero to fifteen (0-15) feet are appropriate for all street-facing façades on West State Street.



Architectural creativity, adaptive reuse and variety is encouraged on West State Street.