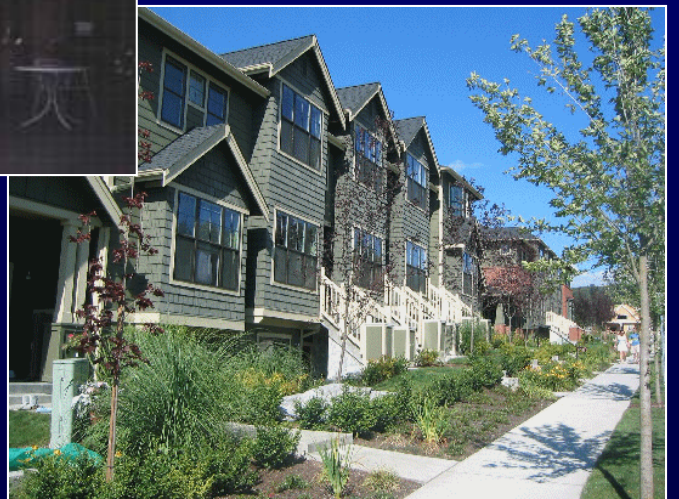
Town Center
Design Guidelines & Standards

MAKERS
architecture + urban design

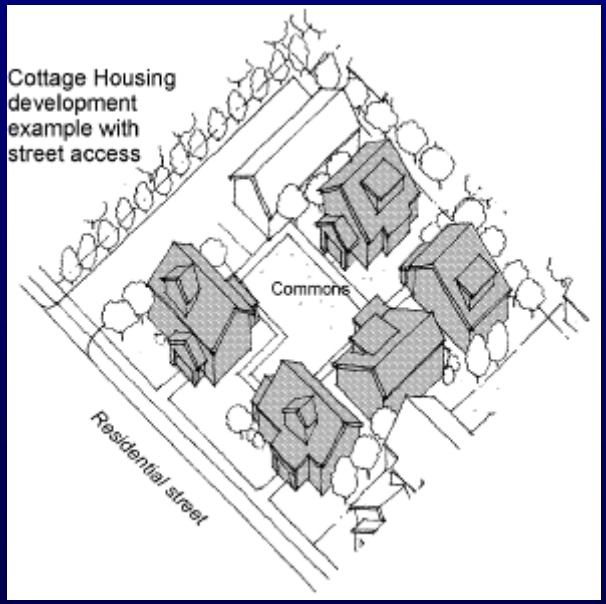
August 15, 2006
City Council/Planning Commission Presentation

Town Center Housing Types

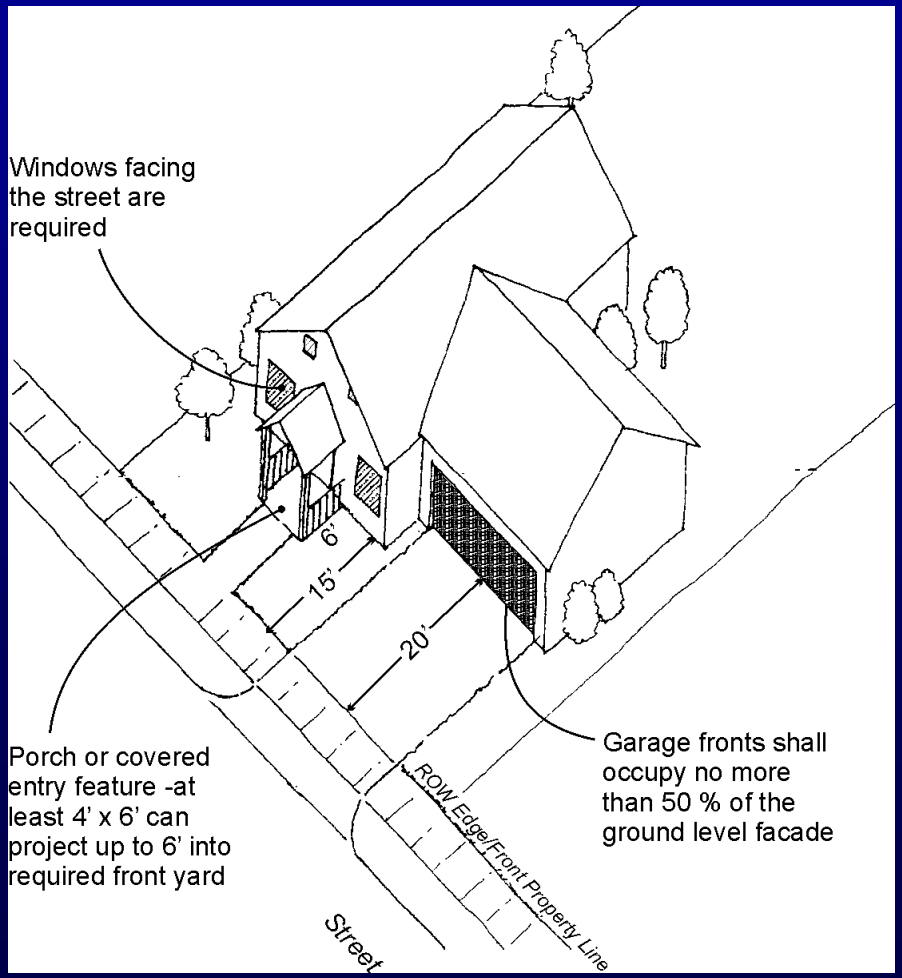
Housing Types: Require a mix of for large developments



Single Family Detached: Allow (including cottages) provided they account for no more than 50% of the property and……..

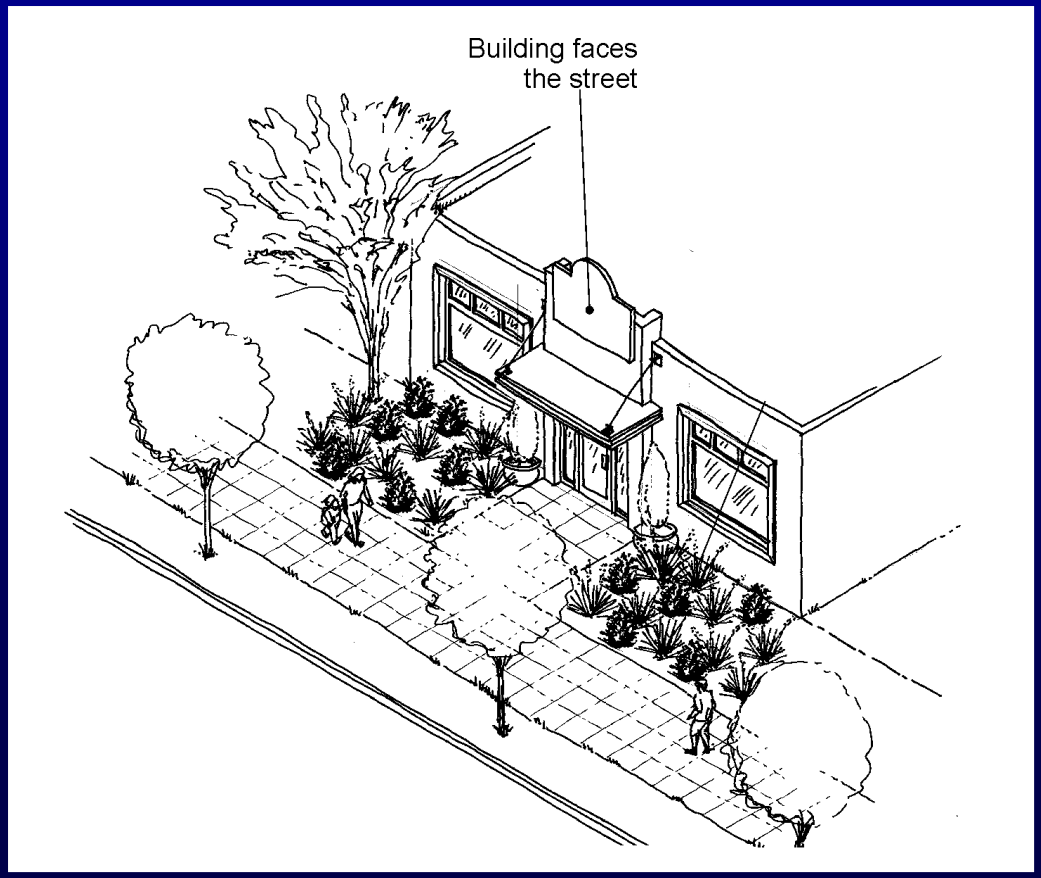


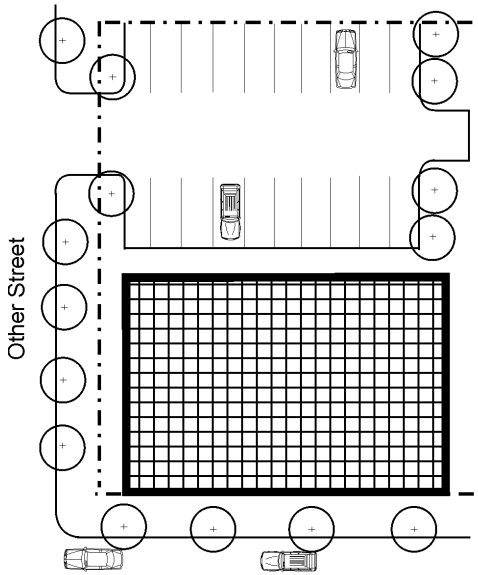
…..they meet some design standards



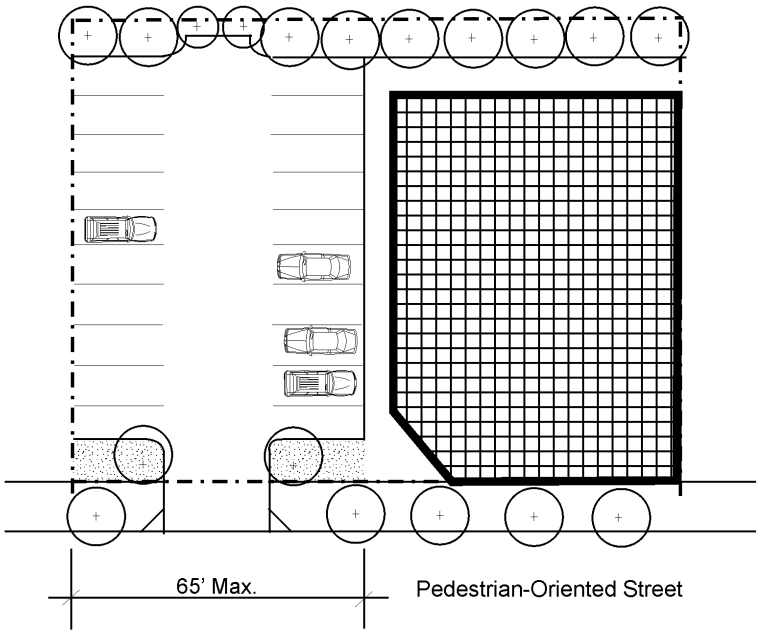
Site Planning

Building Orientation: Non-residential and mixed-use buildings shall be oriented towards the street.

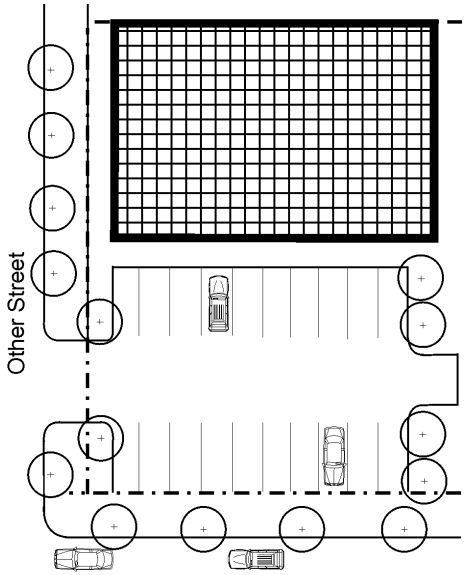




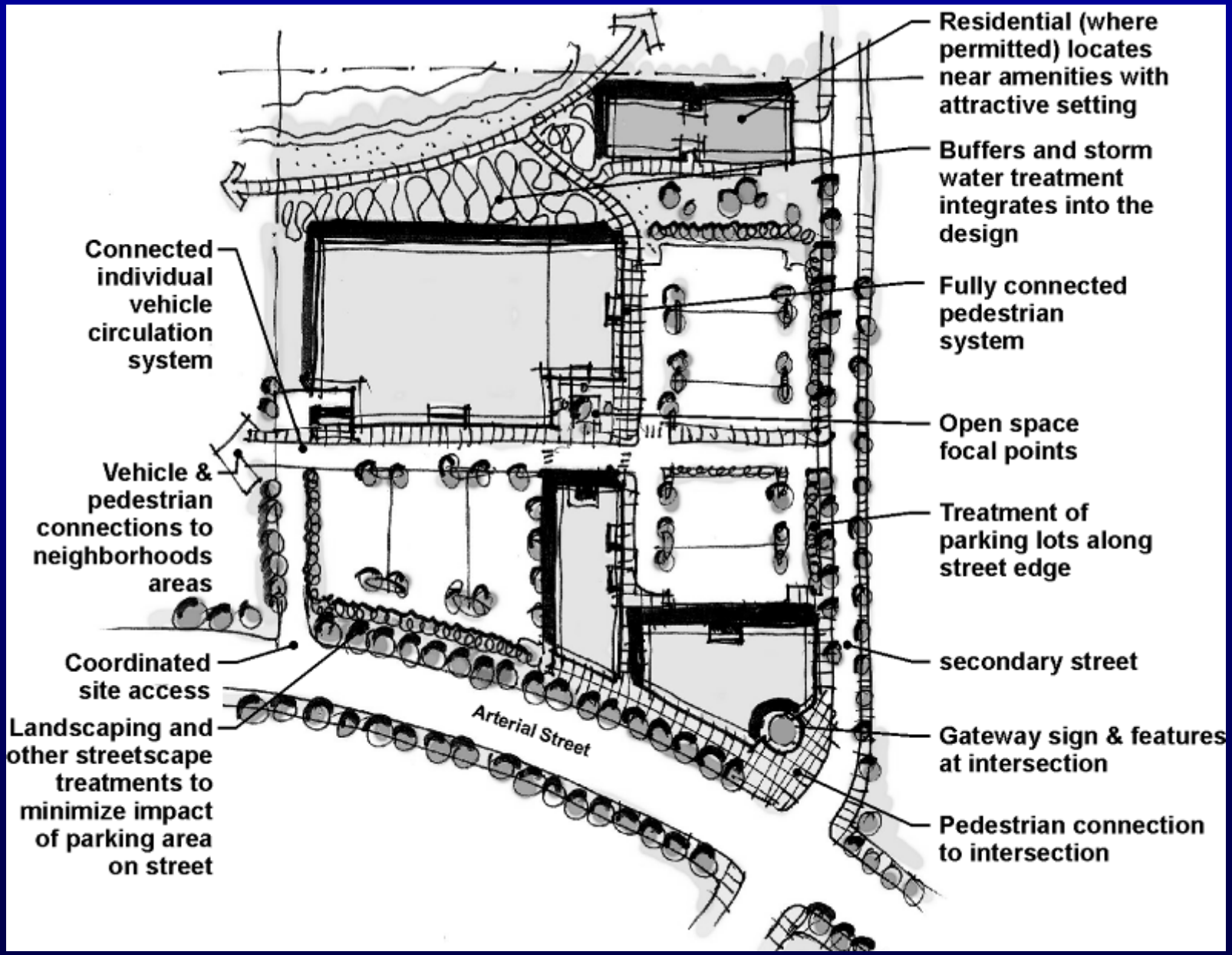
GOOD



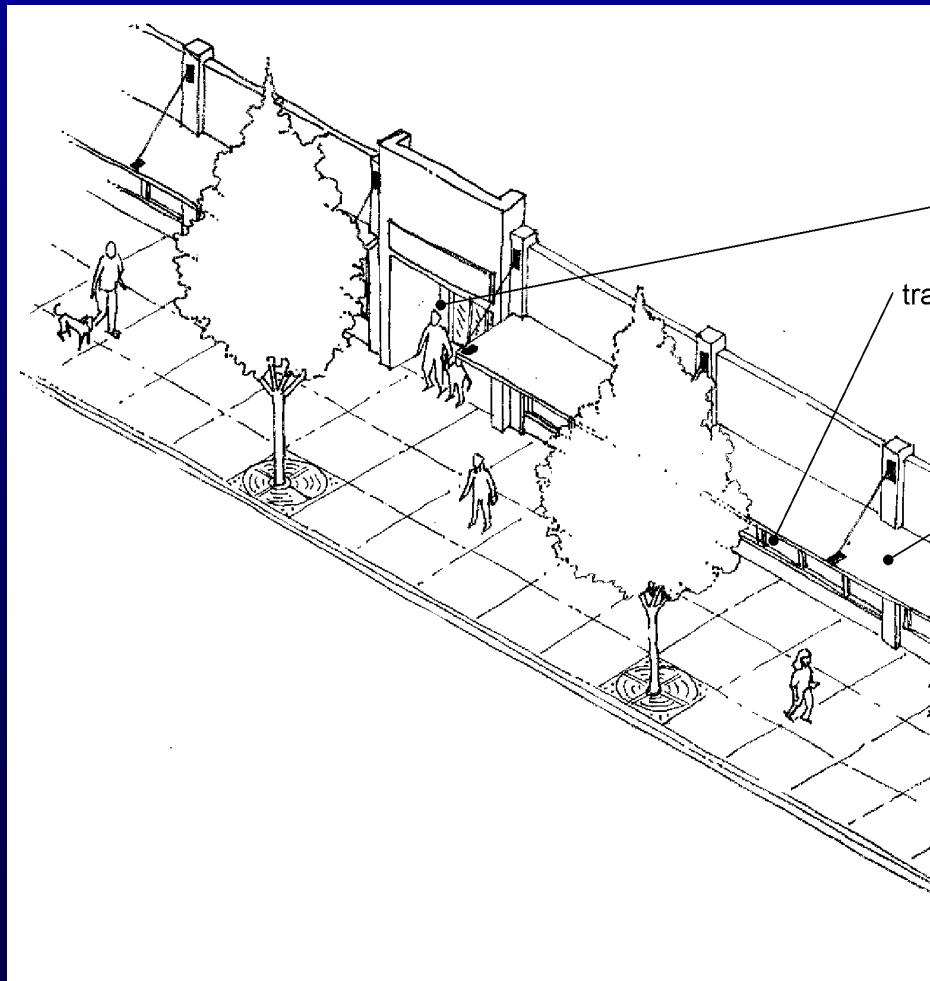
ACCEPTABLE



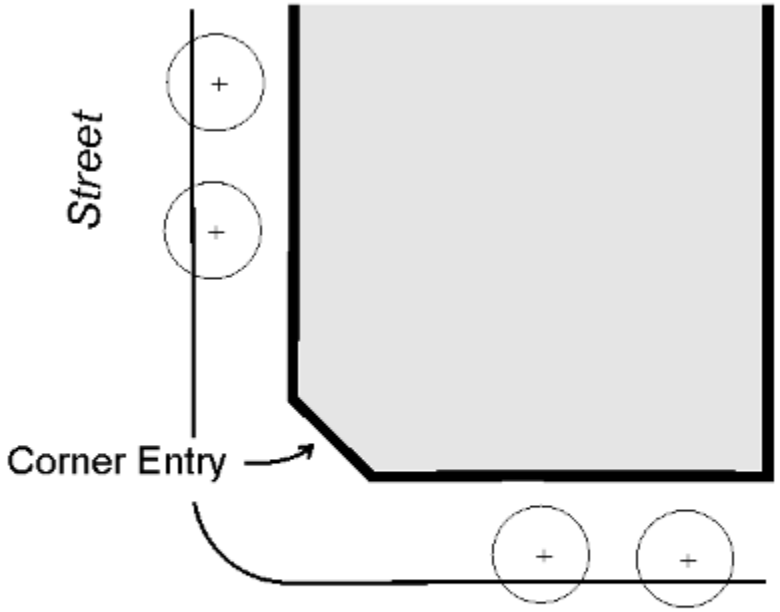
UNACCEPTABLE


Residential (where permitted) locates near amenities with attractive setting
Buffers and storm water treatment integrates into the design
Connected individual vehicle circulation system
Fully connected pedestrian system
Open space focal points
Vehicle & pedestrian connections to neighborhoods areas
Treatment of parking lots along street edge
secondary street
Coordinated site access
Arterial Street
Landscaping and other streetscape treatments to minimize impact of parking area on street
Gateway sign & features at intersection
Pedestrian connection to intersection

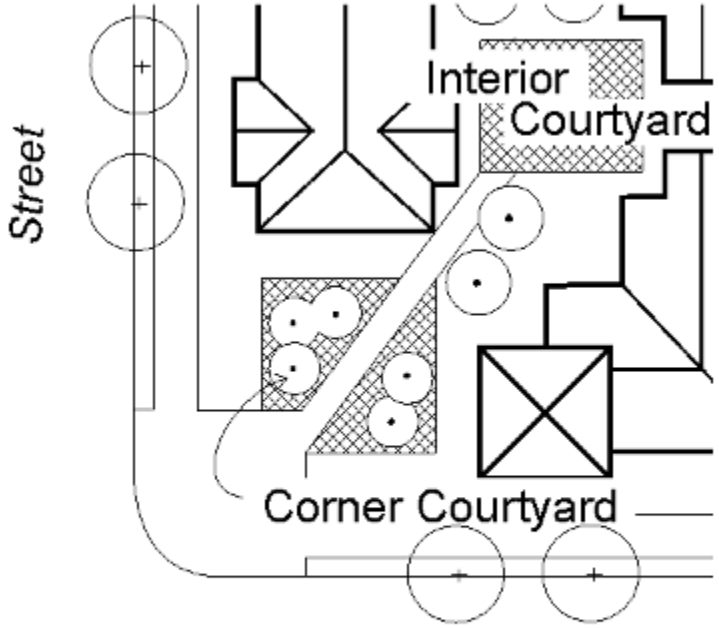
Building Orientation: Allow storefronts up to the sidewalk edge only when:



Street Corner Sites: Incorporate one or more of the following:



Building placed towards the street corner with entry

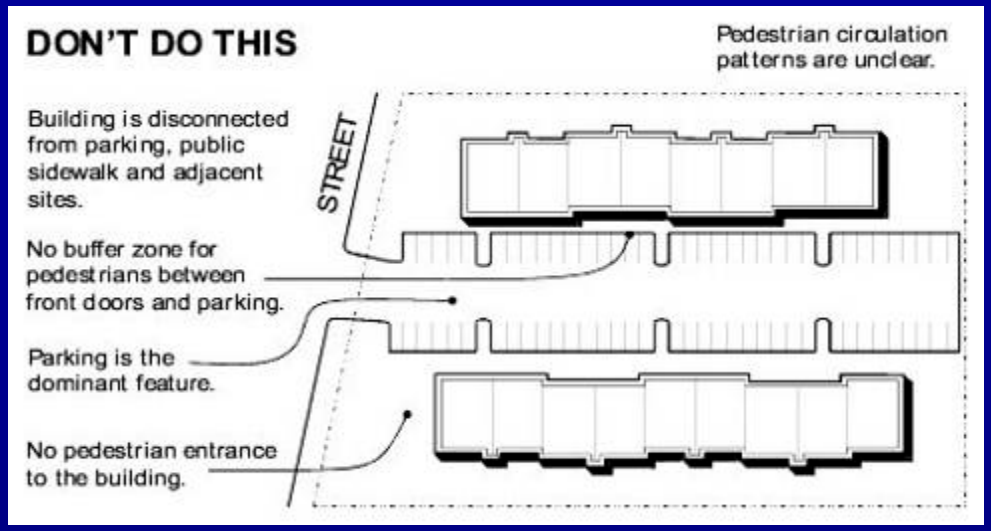


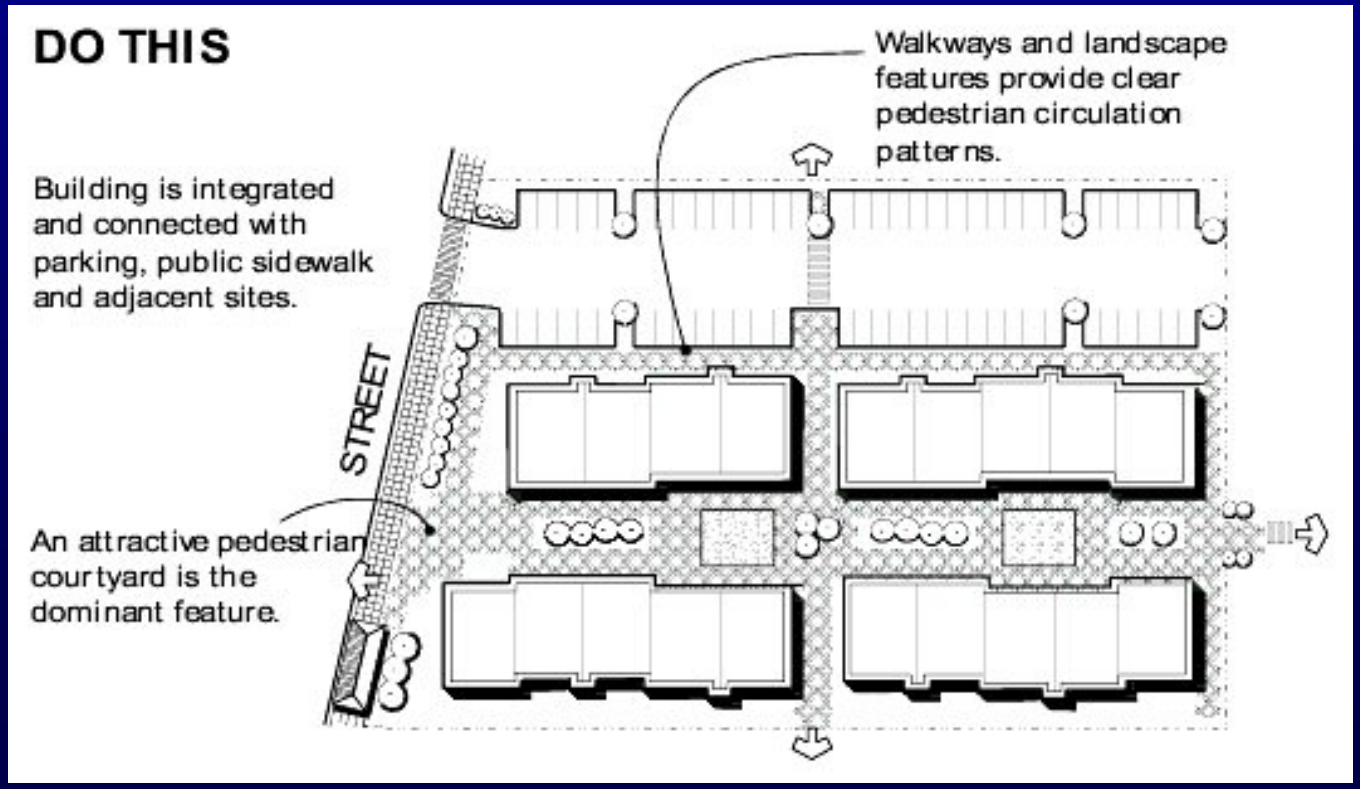
Pedestrian oriented space adjacent to the corner

Building Orientation: Residential: Developments shall be oriented towards streets and/or common open spaces and not parking lots.

- Entry location and design.
- Design for safety.
- Flexibility when fronting on Meridian and/or more than one road.

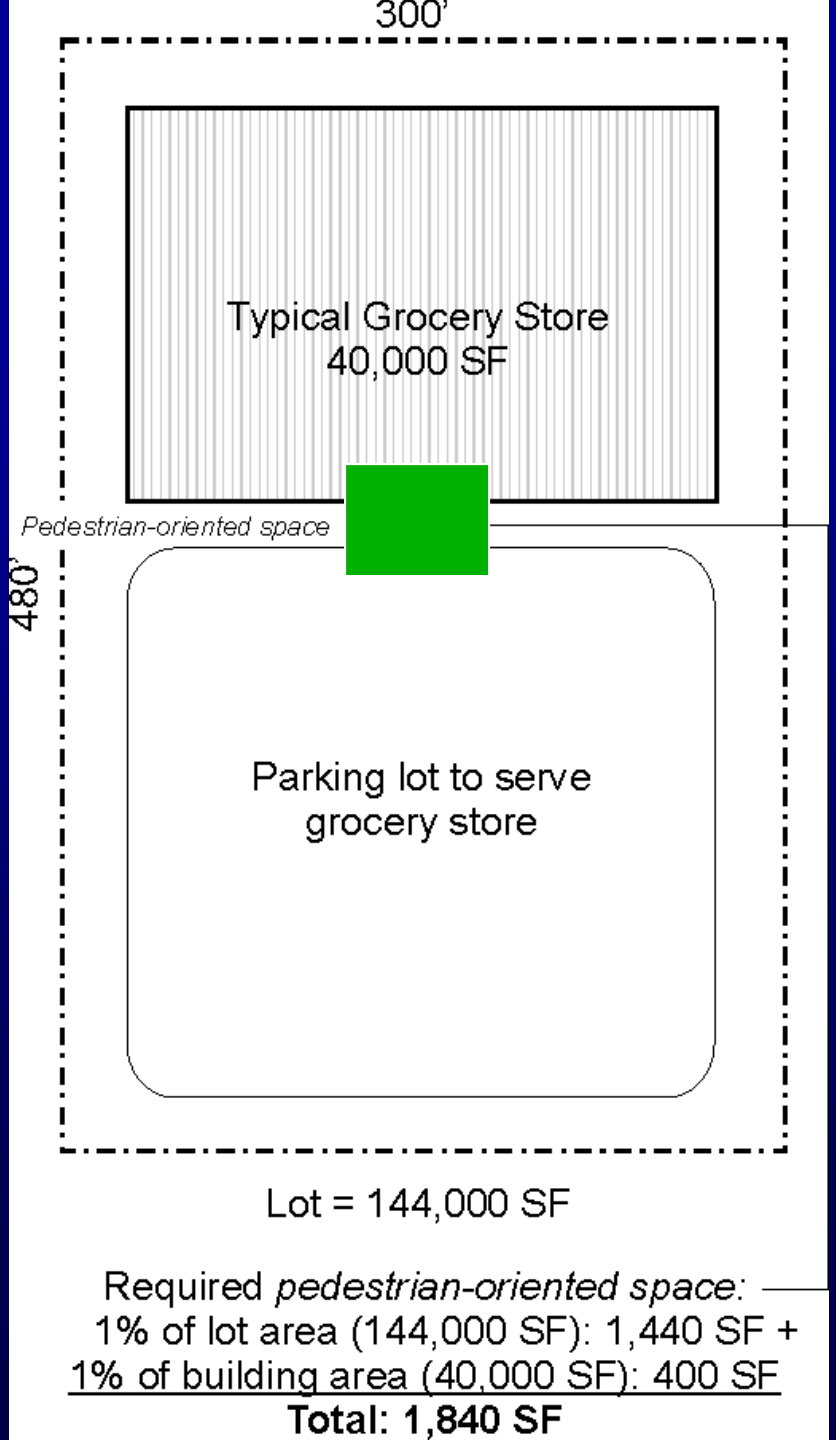

Balconies


DON'T DO THIS
Pedestrian circulation patterns are unclear.
Building is disconnected from parking, public sidewalk and adjacent sites.
STREET
No buffer zone for pedestrians between front doors and parking.
Parking is the dominant feature.
No pedestrian entrance to the building.

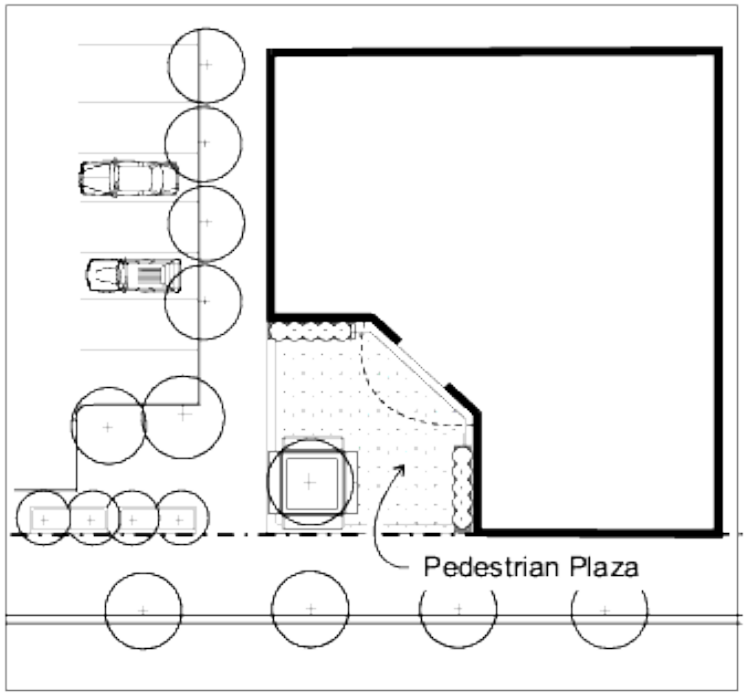

DO THIS
Walkways and landscape features provide clear pedestrian circulation patterns.
Building is integrated and connected with parking, public sidewalk and adjacent sites.
STREET
An attractive pedestrian courtyard is the dominant feature.

Plaza Space: Require some plaza/pedestrian space with all commercial uses. Specifically:

- At least 2% of building footprint plus 1% of applicable site (including parking area) must be designed as plaza/pedestrian space.


300'
Typical Grocery Store
40,000 SF
Pedestrian-oriented space
480'
Parking lot to serve
grocery store
Lot = 144,000 SF
Required *pedestrian-oriented space*:
1% of lot area (144,000 SF): 1,440 SF +
1% of building area (40,000 SF): 400 SF
Total: 1,840 SF

2,240 SF


Pedestrian Plaza
Street


MARKET

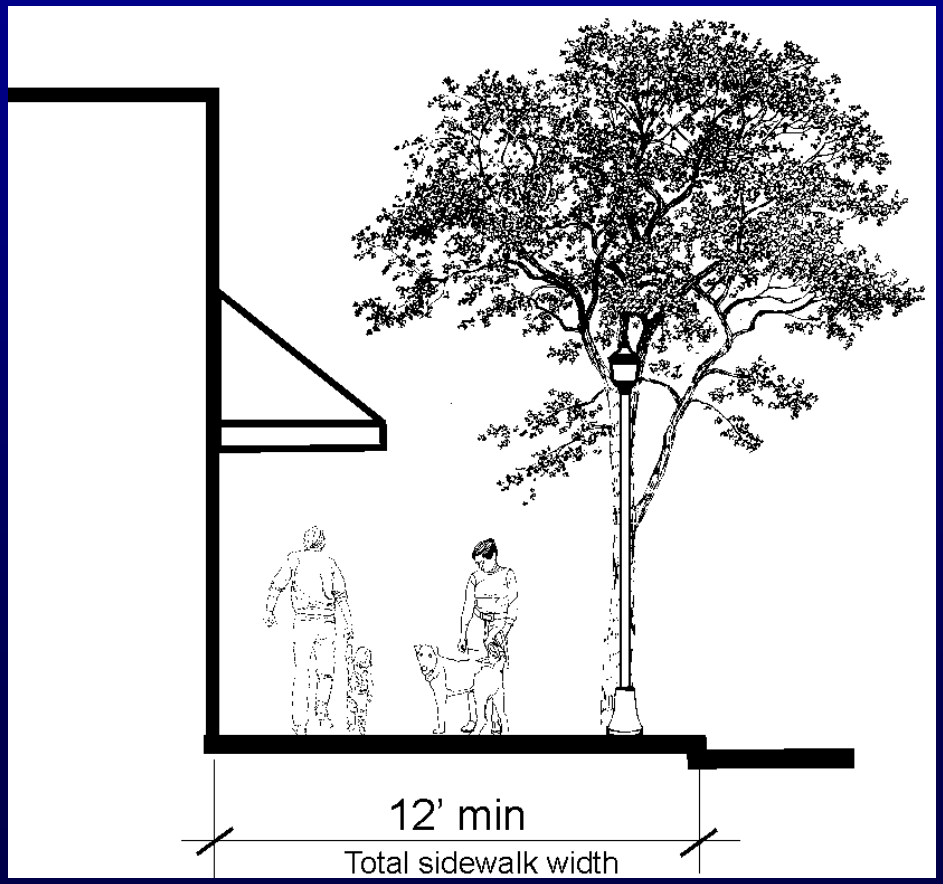

BLENZ COFFEE

Residential Open Space: Provide usable outdoor space for each multi-family unit (at least 400 square feet):

- Provide design standards for common areas
- Balconies may be used for up to 50% of requirement
- Natural areas and stormwater facilities may be counted for up to 50% provided they contribute as an amenity to residents

Pedestrian & Vehicular Access

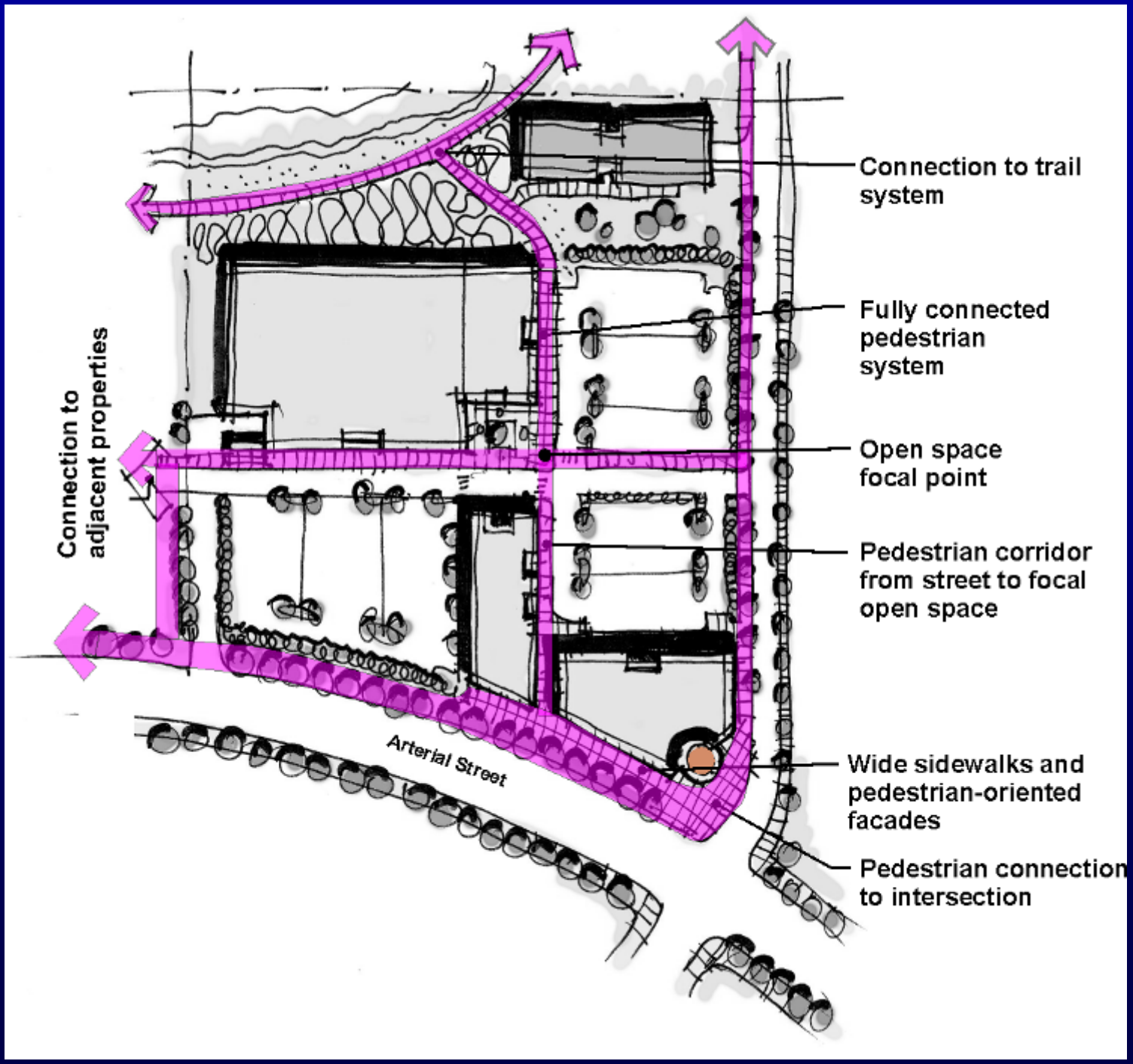
Pathways in front of off-street storefronts shall be designed to look and function like public sidewalks




KID'S COUNTRY

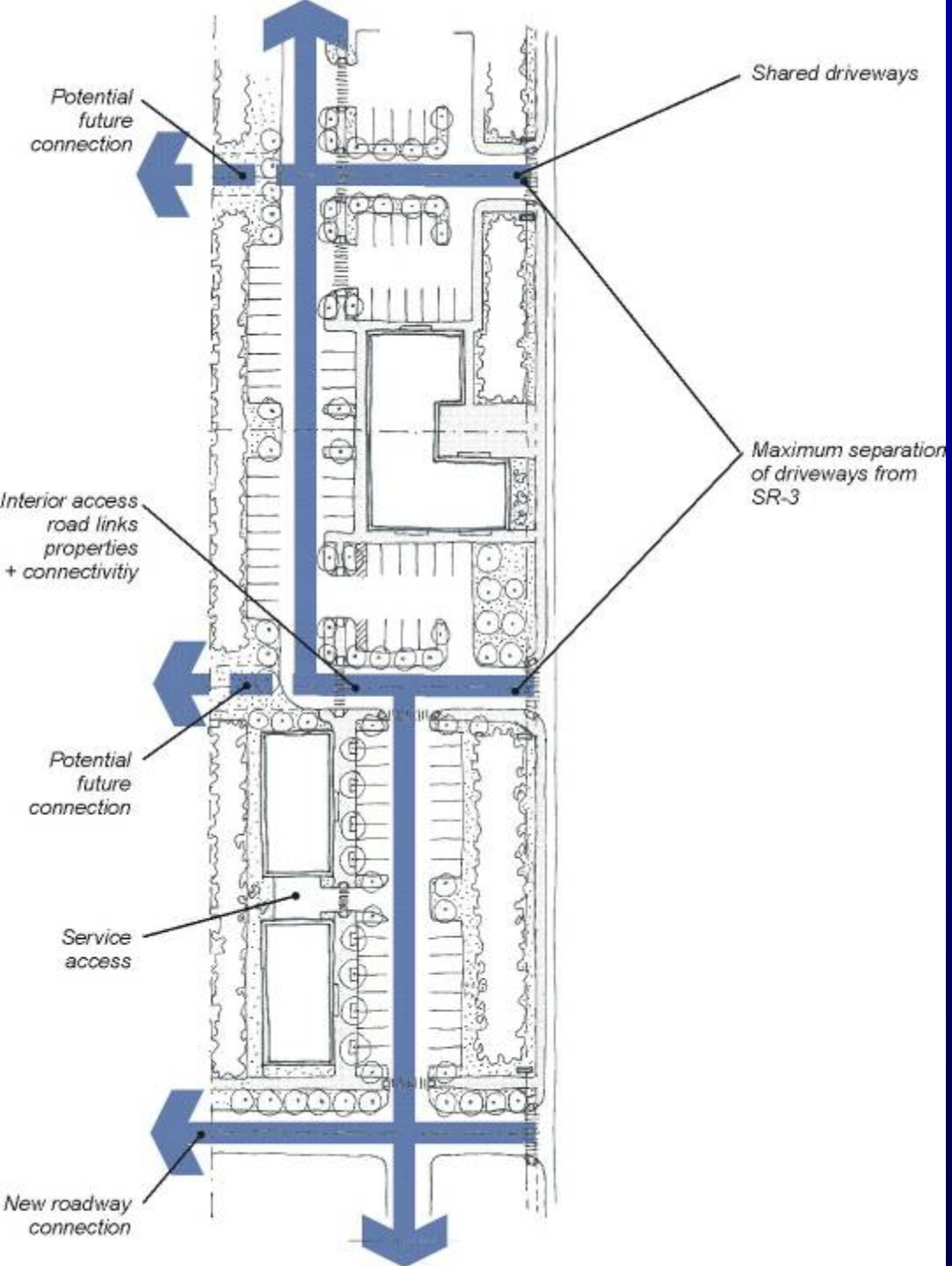
Pedestrian Connections: Developments shall provide a connected network of pathways.

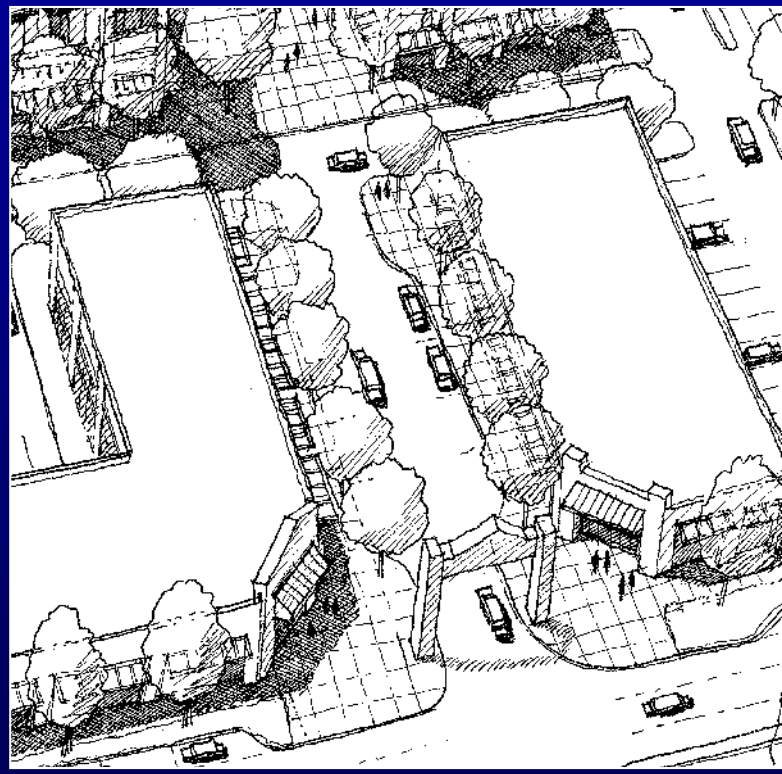
- Clear connection to street
- Connect all uses on-site
- Adequate pathway width and design
- Implement Edgewood trail plan, where applicable
- Connections to adjacent properties


Connection to trail system
Fully connected pedestrian system
Open space focal point
Pedestrian corridor from street to focal open space
Wide sidewalks and pedestrian-oriented facades
Pedestrian connection to intersection
Connection to adjacent properties
Arterial Street

Vehicular Connections: Provide a safe and convenient circulation network.

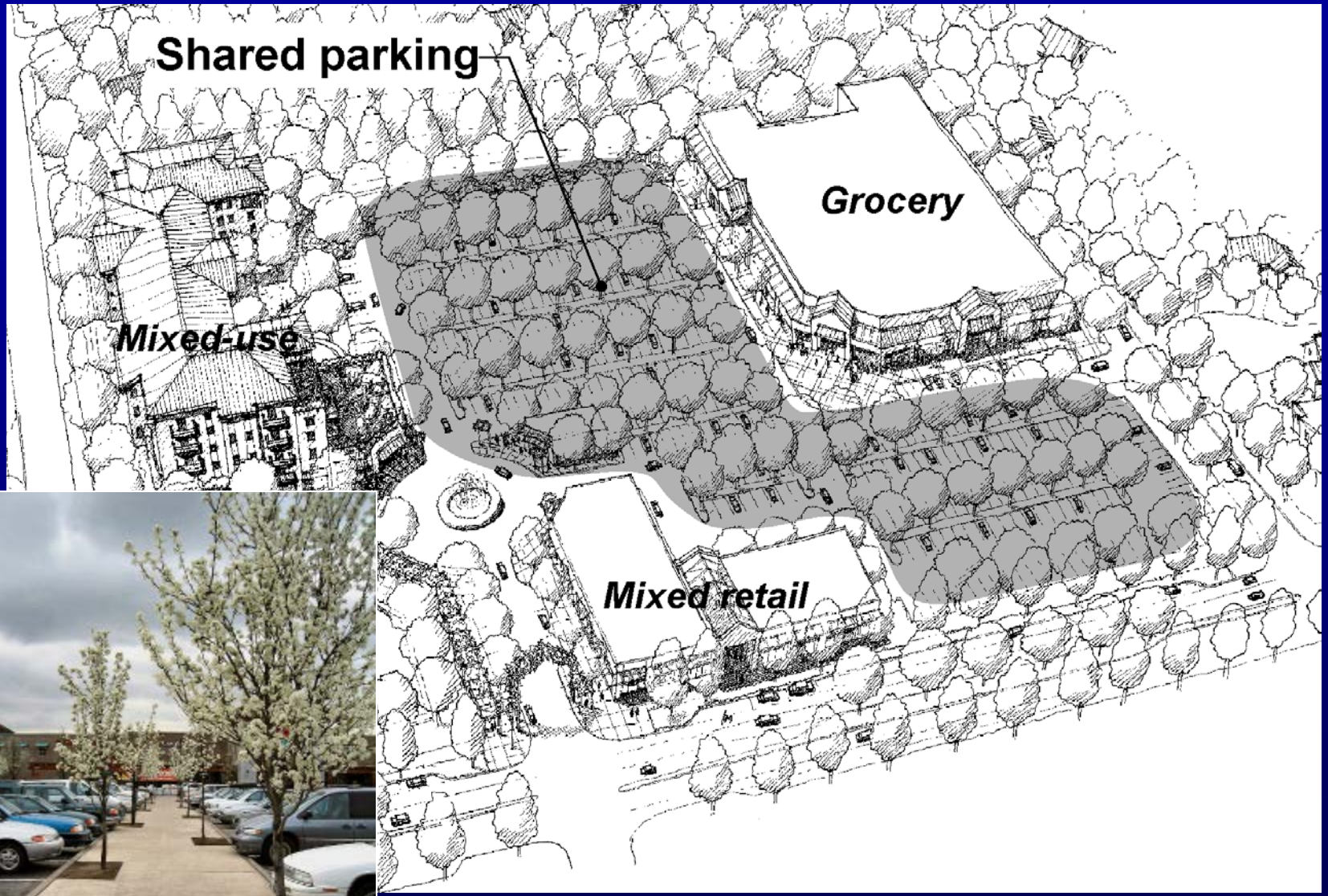
- Provide for existing/future connections to adjacent properties.
- Design internal roadways to look and function like public streets (planting strips with trees on both sides and walkways).
- Limit the number and width of driveways, particularly off Meridian.


Potential future connection
Shared driveways
Maximum separation of driveways from SR-3
Interior access road links properties + connectivitiy
Potential future connection
Service access
New roadway connection



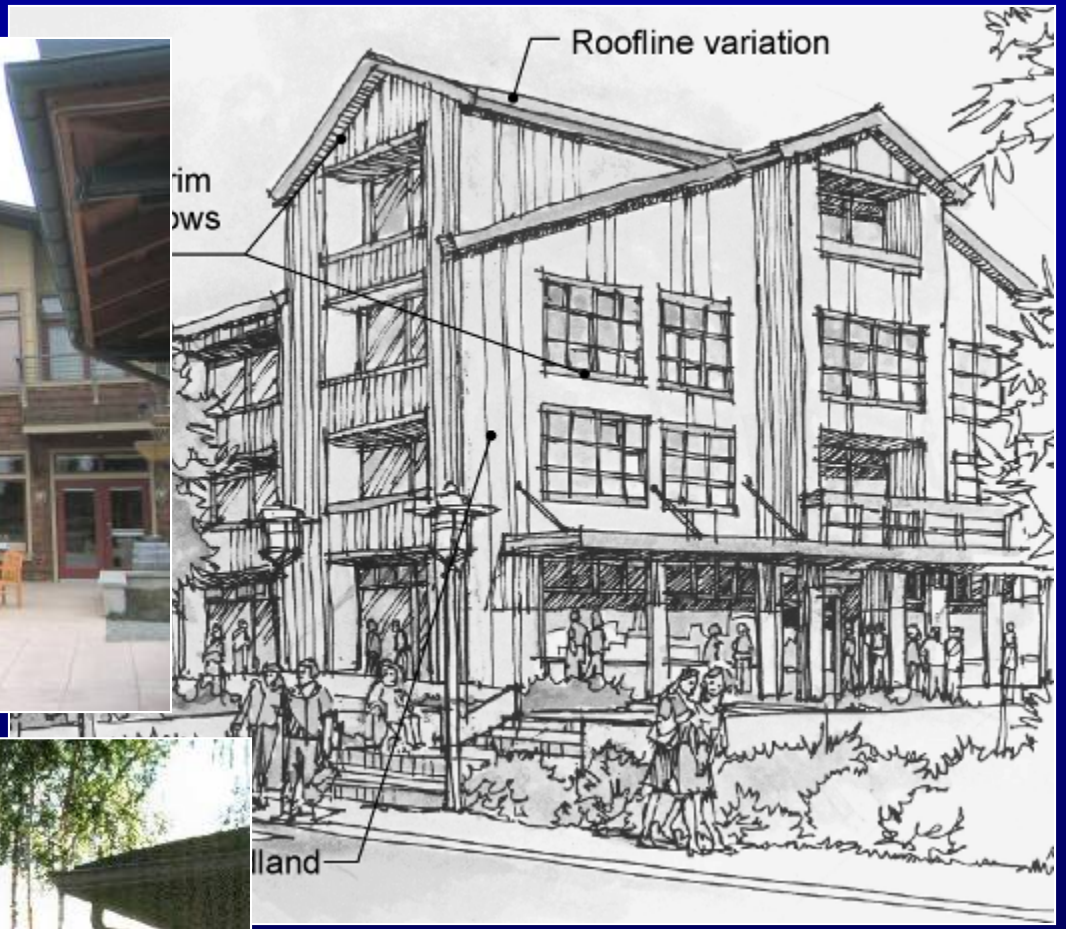
Parking Lots: Minimize the visual and environmental impact of surface parking areas by:

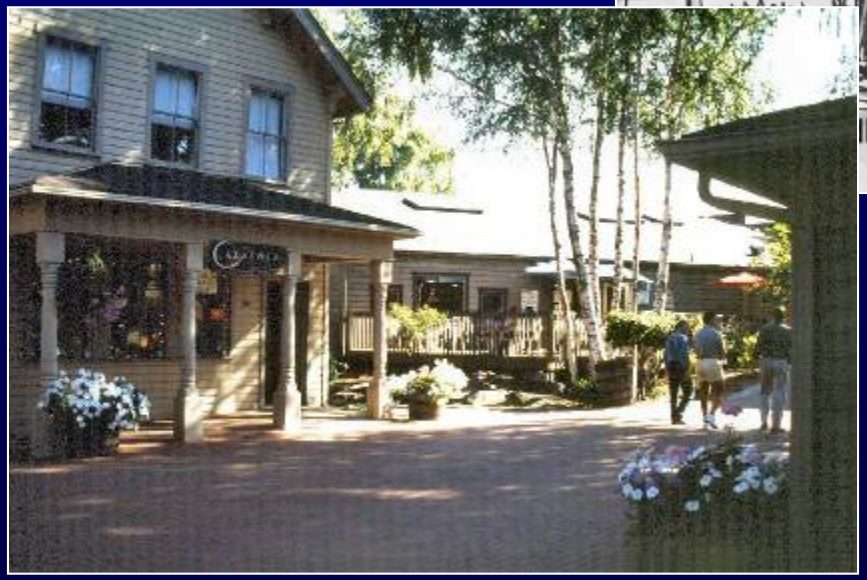
- Providing extensive landscaping/buffering
- Requiring lower level lighting
- Requiring pedestrian pathways through large parking areas
- Encouraging developments to break up large parking areas into smaller areas
- Promoting shared parking
- Encouraging “pervious” or “green” parking areas


Shared parking
Grocery
Mixed-use
Mixed retail

Building Design

Architectural character – based on building elements and form common to traditional Northwest rural and small town character elements.


Roofline variation



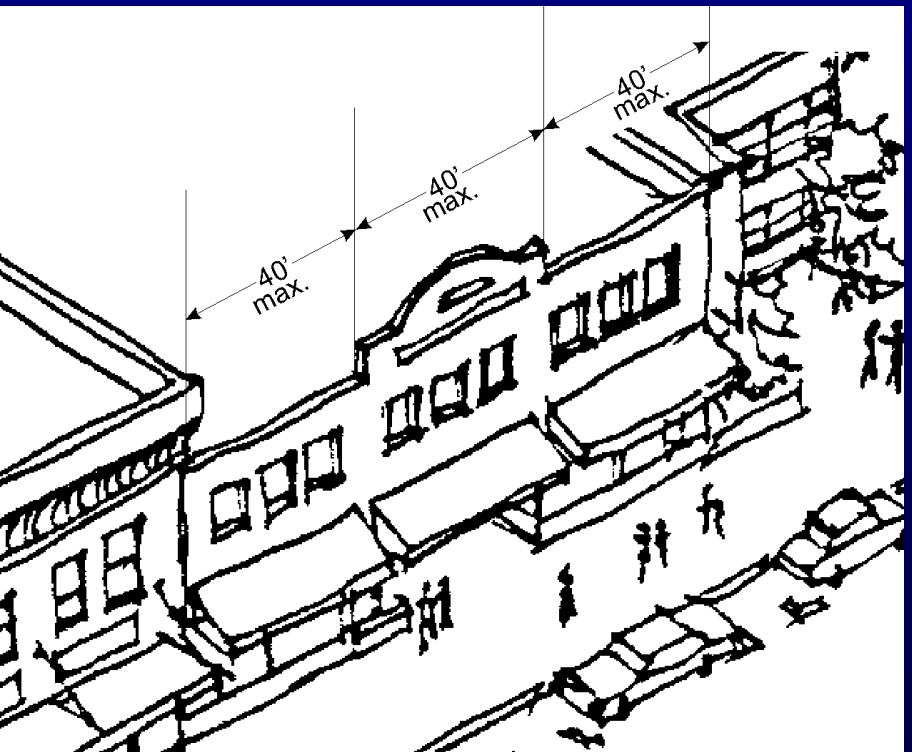
Not traditional Northwest Rural and Small Town….

Large or multiple building developments should employ a variety of colors, building materials, building heights, and architectural treatments.

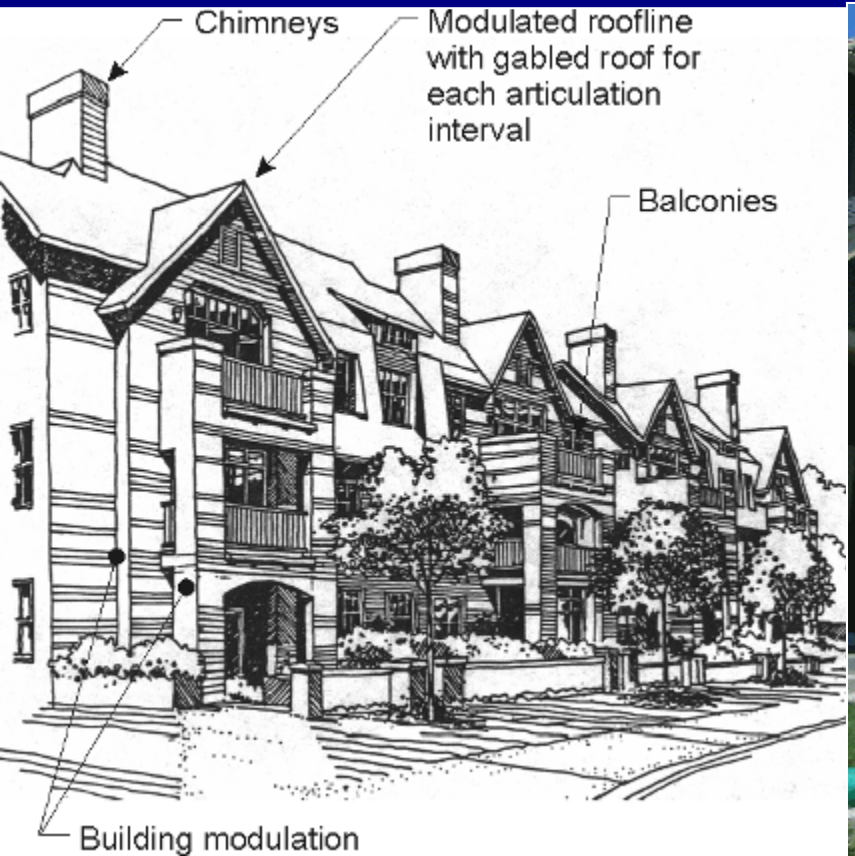
Monotonous buildings not allowed…..

Corporate Architecture *(that is difficult to adapt to other uses)* is prohibited.

Modulation/Articulation: The facades of all non-residential buildings visible from the street must include modulation and/or articulation features every 40-60 feet or less.



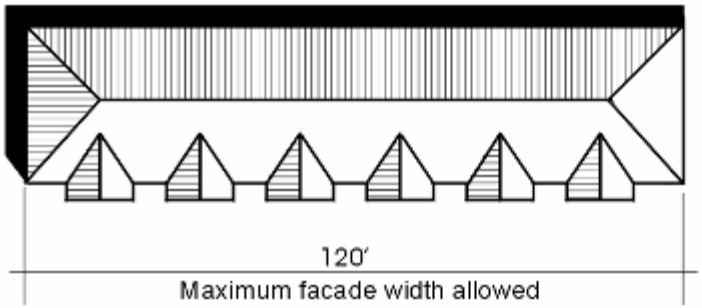
Modulation/Articulation: Residential buildings shall include modulation and/or articulation features at least every 30 feet.



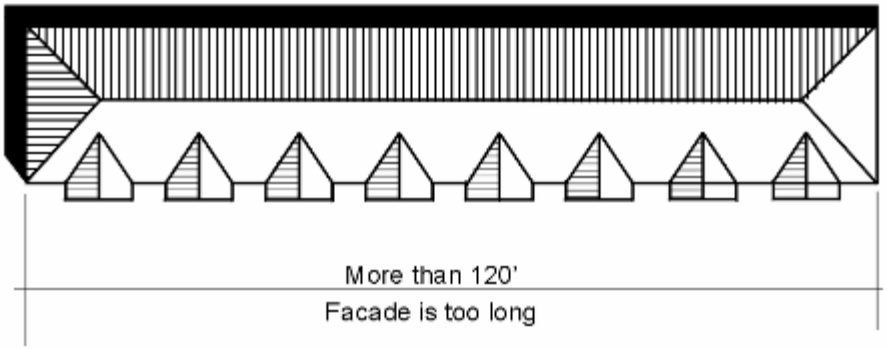
Maximum Building Width: Limit the width of buildings facing a street, pathway, publicly accessible open space, or adjacent property to **120 feet**.

However, provide an opportunity for departures provided the applicant can demonstrate how the design meets the intent of the standards.

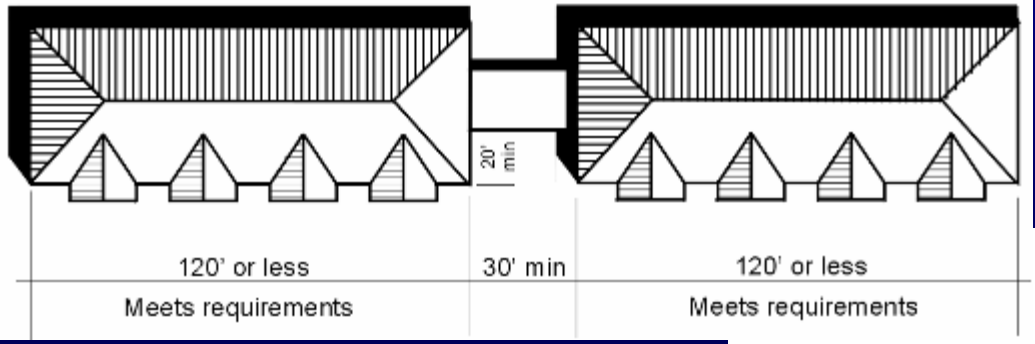
MEETS REQUIREMENT



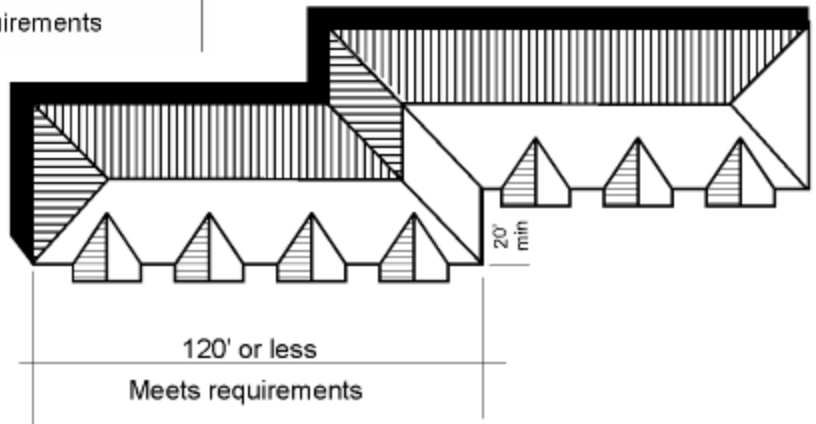
DOES NOT MEET REQUIREMENT



MEETS REQUIREMENT



MEETS REQUIREMENT




Needlepointer
39

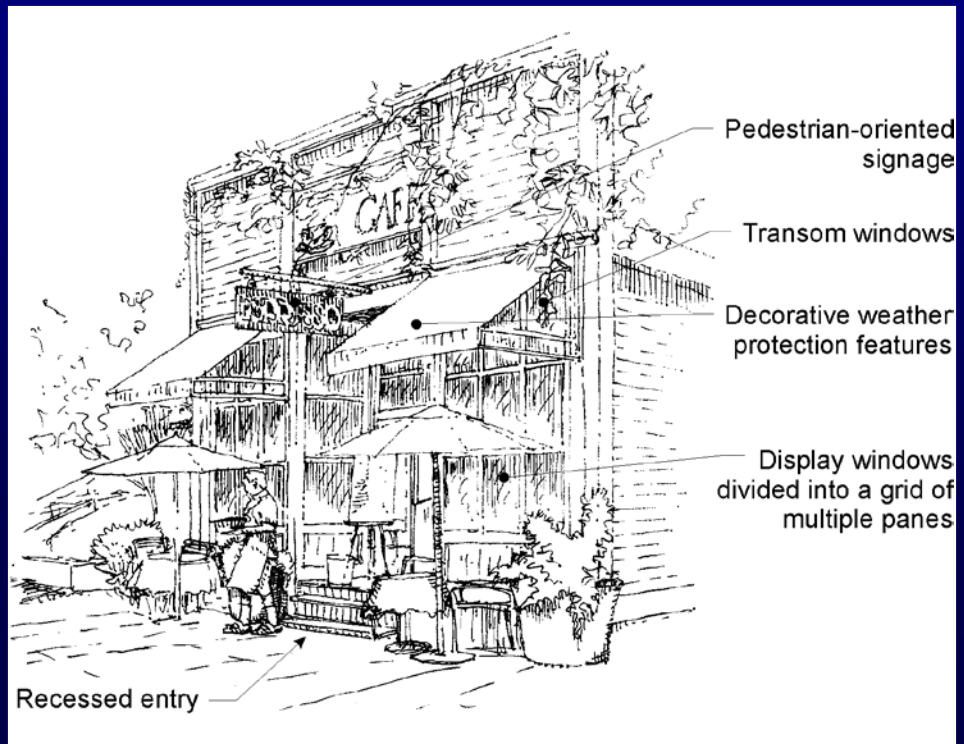

MERCER

Pitched roof forms shall be used, to the extent possible, on all buildings. However, provide an opportunity for departures provided the applicant can demonstrate how the design meets the intent of the standards.


BERNIE'S
BAGELS


MERCER

Building Details: All buildings shall be enhanced with appropriate details. Specifically, storefronts shall include 3+ elements from a list and residential buildings must include 2+ elements from a list.

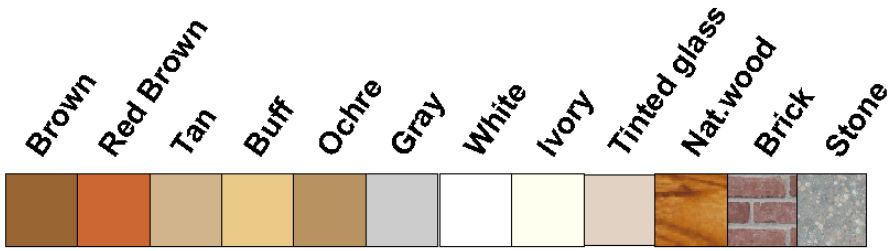


Building Materials: Limitation s to Stucco/Drivit/EIFS, concrete block, and metal siding.

Building Colors: Bright/florescent colors shall be strictly limited to accent colors only (less than 10% of façade).

Acceptable Building Colors

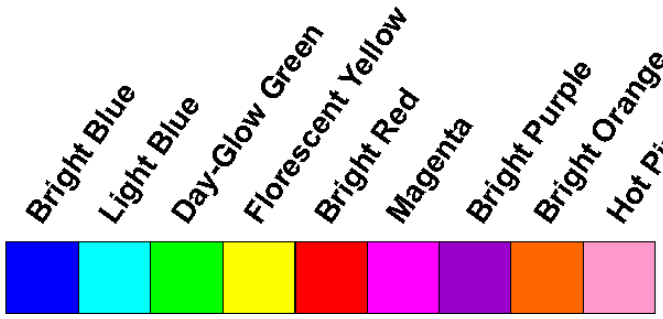
Earth tones:



Dark saturated colors:

Prohibited Building Colors

Bright colors:

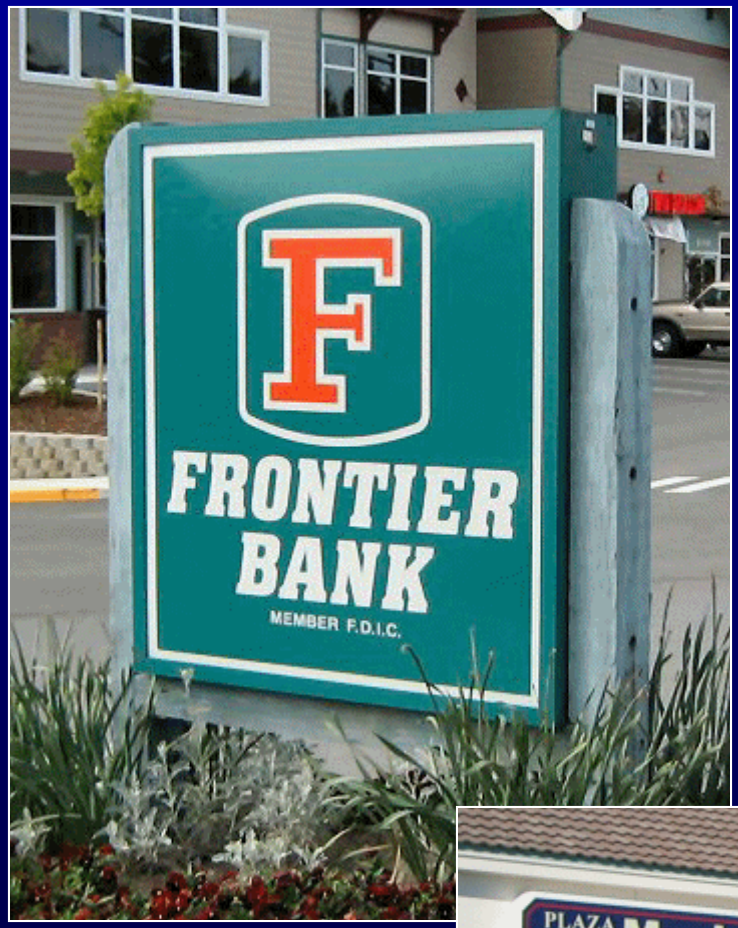



PUMPS & GRINDS
CONSIGNMENT & COFFEE
ESPRESSO
ROAD JAVA
OPEN

Signs shall be centered with architectural elements of building facades (not covering windows or other …..)

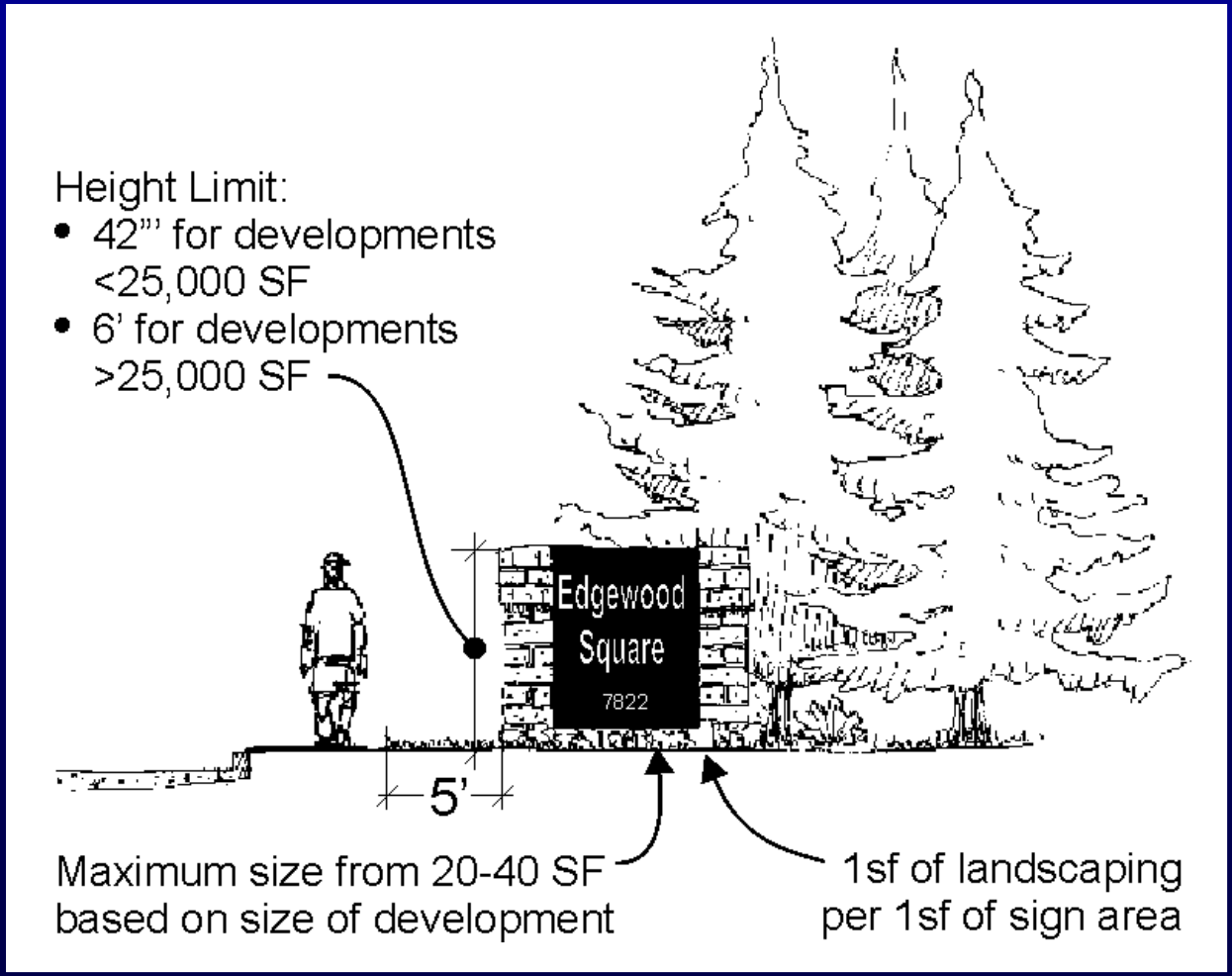
Sign Lighting

Prohibited Sign Lighting



Freestanding Signs:

Limit the size and number of signs



Supplemental Landscaping Standards

- Preserve and incorporate existing sensitive/unique natural features (wetlands, tall stands of trees, rock outcroppings, etc.) as a positive feature of the development, to the extent possible.
- Use native and drought tolerant plant species that are appropriate to the Pacific Northwest.
- Lawn areas should be used sparingly except for recreational activities.
- Use a mixture of ground cover, shrubs, and trees that provides seasonal interest.

Additional Considerations

August 15, 2006
City Council/Planning Commission Presentation

Building Heights & Density

What Housing Types and their associated design features are desirable/ acceptable/ unacceptable?

SINGLE FAMILY – SMALL LOT

Single family dwelling unit on a lot 5,000 SF or less

TYPICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Location:
- Neighborhood infill or new development
- Anywhere single family detached housing is allowed/considered

Target Demographic:
- Full range

Construction Features:
- Wood-frame

Site Area: Less than 5,000 SF

Density: 9-20 du/acre

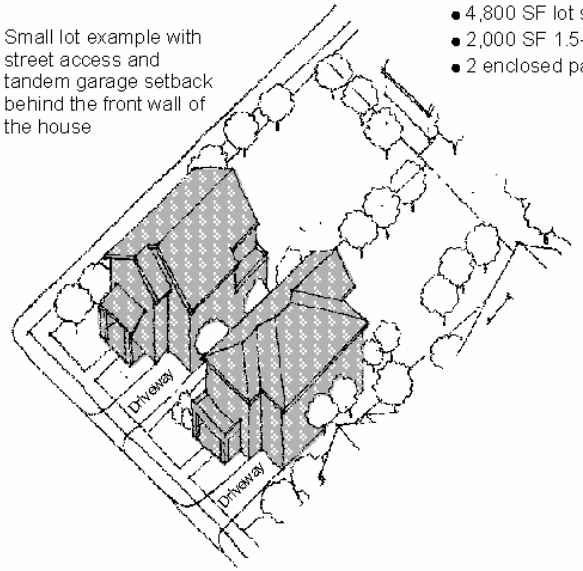
Unit Size: 1,200-2,250 SF (2- to 4-bed)

Benefits:
- Denser alternative to large-lot single family developments
- Ability to fit into existing neighborhoods on a variety of sites
- Smaller lot size makes them more affordable

Drawbacks/Challenges:
- Requires special attention to building design to ensure privacy and minimize visual impacts of vehicular access

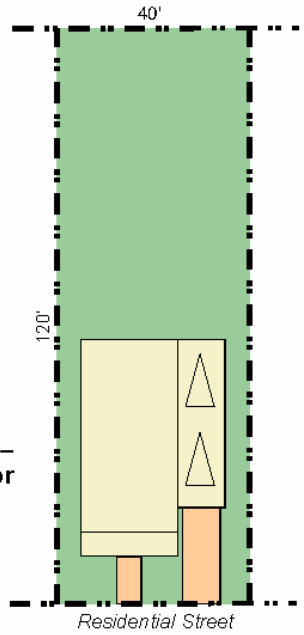
Small Lot single family houses

Small lot example with street access and tandem garage setback behind the front wall of the house



Aerial View

Single Family – Small Lot Example (below and below left):
- 4,800 SF lot size
- 2,000 SF 1.5-story house
- 2 enclosed parking spaces



Plan View – Ground Floor

COTTAGE HOUSING

Small detached houses clustered around a common open space

TYPICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Location:
- Neighborhood infill
- Anywhere single family detached housing is allowed/considered

Target Demographic:
- Singles
- Couples and young families
- Seniors and empty nesters

Construction Features:
- Wood-frame

Site Area: 10,000 SF and up

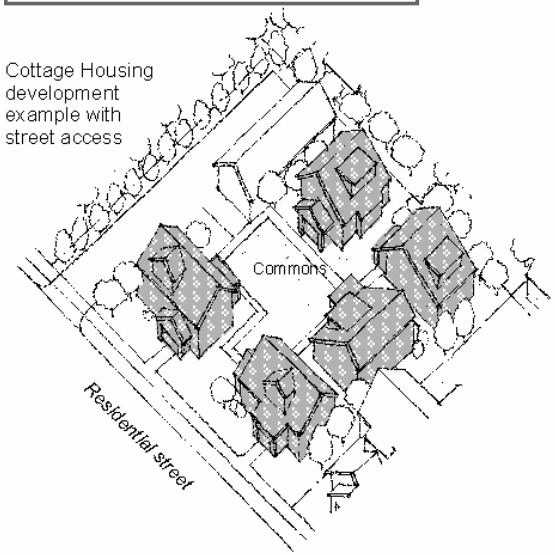
Density: 10-35 du/acre

Unit Size: 600-1,200 SF (1- to 2-bed)

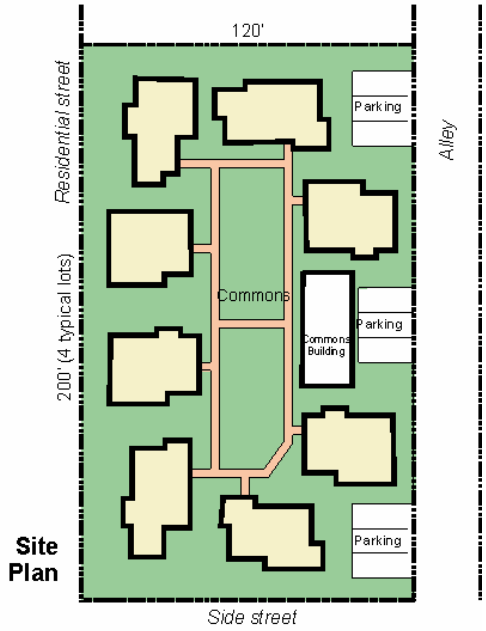
Benefits:
- Increases density without the bulk of large buildings
- Creates a sense of community through clustering and shared open space
- Small building scale works well with traditional single family neighborhoods

Drawbacks/Challenges:
- Concept is new to Bellingham – community acceptance and high development risk
- Relatively high construction costs require development to occur in single family areas (land costs are usually to high in multifamily-zoned areas) to work

Cottage Housing Example (below):
- 24,000 SF lot size
- 8 units
- private and shared parking
- courtyard-style common open space



Cottage Housing development example with street access



Site Plan

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TOWNHOUSE

Single family dwelling units attached on one or more sides

TYPICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Location:
- Neighborhood infill or new development
- Areas close to urban amenities & services

Target Demographic:
- Singles seeking home ownership
- Couples and young families
- Seniors and empty nesters

Construction Features:
- Wood-frame over private garage

Site Area: 4,000 SF and up (3-unit infill)

Density: 15-40 du/acre

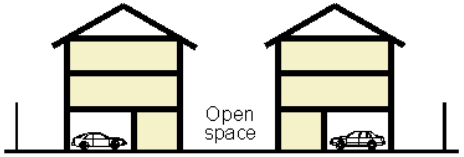
Unit Size: 1,200-2,000 SF (2- to 3-bed)

Benefits:
- Denser alternative to single family detached
- Ability to fit into existing neighborhoods on a variety of sites
- Opportunity for first-time home buyers
- Hides parking

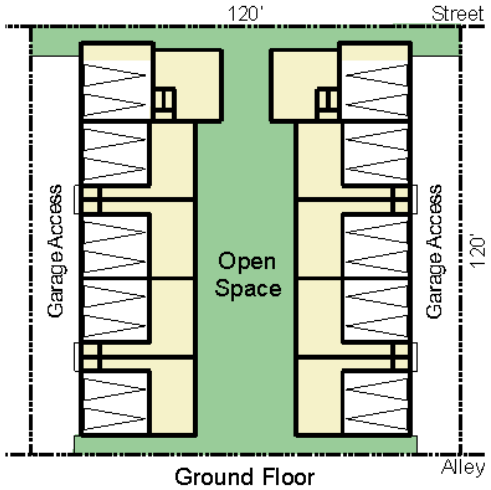
Drawbacks/Challenges:
- Relatively new housing type for Bellingham
- Neighborhood acceptance of use/density

2-story townhomes designed to look like detached units from the street

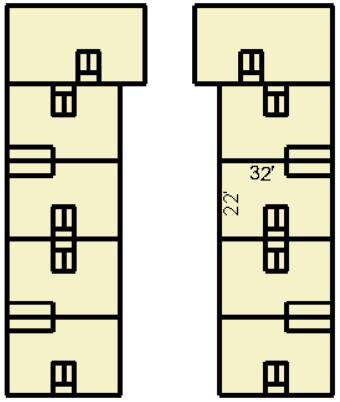
Townhouse Example (below and below left):
- 14,400 SF lot size
- 1,800 SF dwelling units
- 3 floors
- 10 units
- 2 private parking spaces/unit



Section



Ground Floor



Upper Floors

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WALK-UP APARTMENTS

3-story apartment building with surface parking

TYPICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Location:
- Areas close to urban amenities & services

Target Demographic:
- Full range

Construction Features:
- Wood-frame with surface parking

Site Area: 10,000 SF and up

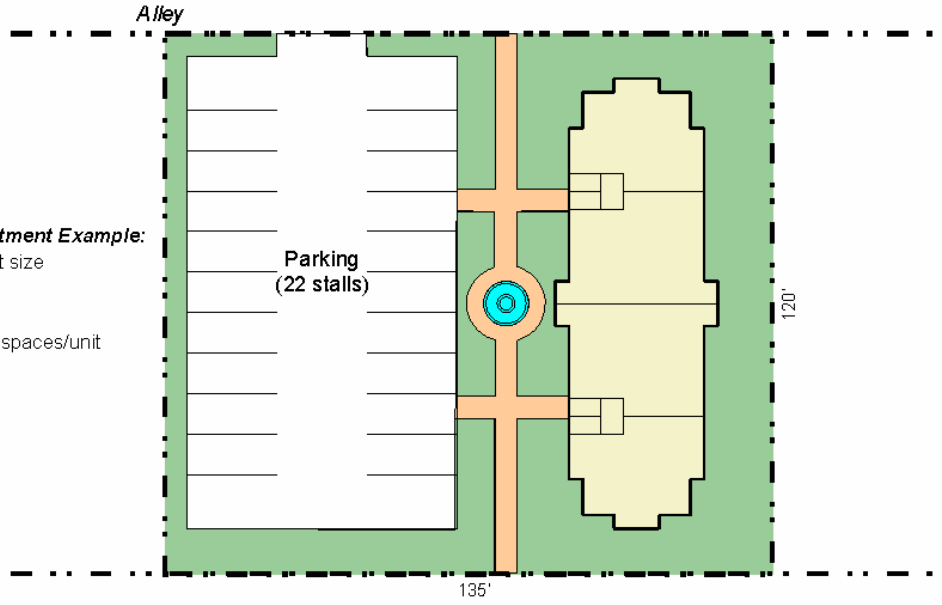
Density: 20-50 du/acre

Unit Size: 600-1,200 SF (studio to 2-bed)

Benefits:
- Reduces pressure for sprawl by increasing density
- Low construction costs and local industry familiarity with housing type make them easy to build and affordable

Drawbacks/Challenges:
- Surface parking takes up precious land and impacts visual environment
- Design standards and guidelines are critical in improving the quality of development

Walk-up apartment example with 3 floors (surface parking to the left of the photo)



Walk-up Apartment Example:
- 16,200 SF lot size
- 3 floors
- 12 units
- 1.83 parking spaces/unit

Plan View – Ground Floor

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LOWRISE (3-over-1)

3 floors of residential over retail/office or parking

TYPICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Location:
- Areas close to urban amenities & services

Target Demographic:
- Full range

Construction Features:
- Wood-frame, with or without a concrete base

Site Area: 6,000 SF and up

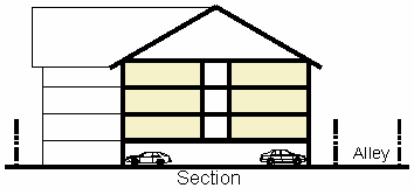
Density: 30-70 du/acre

Unit Size: 600-1,200 SF (studio to 2-bed)

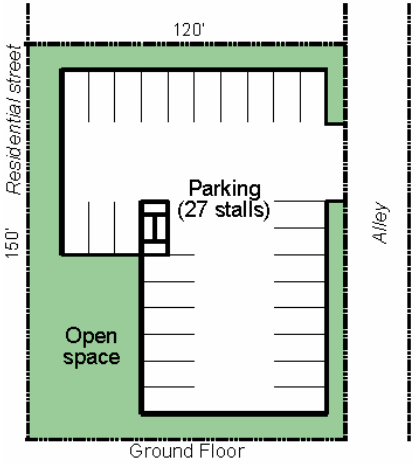
Benefits:
- Reduces pressure for sprawl by increasing density
- Increases pedestrian activity and vitality of immediate area
- Enables alternate forms of transportation
- Construction costs are lower than for a residential tower
- Height and bulk are generally compatible with neighborhoods
- Increased opportunities for open space due to little or no surface parking

Drawbacks/Challenges:
- Requires more density and/or height than most areas currently allow
- Structured parking leads to higher rents than typical walk-up apartments
- Neighborhood acceptance of use/density

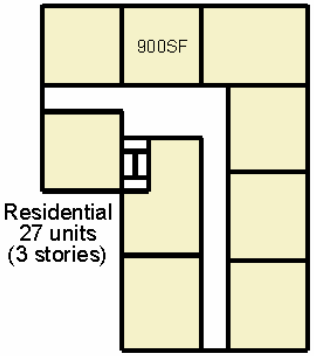
Lowrise example with 3 floors over 1 level of parking



Section



Ground Floor



Upper Floors

Lowrise Example (left and above):
- 18,000 SF lot size
- 4 floors (3 residential over 1 parking)
- 27 units
- 1 parking space/unit

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Factors other than “maximum dwelling units/acre that limit density:

- Height limit.
- Market factors.
- Parking requirements.
- Site planning standards.
- Open space and environmental rules.
- Circulation requirements (pedestrian & vehicular).
- Building design standards.
- Landscaping and buffering requirements.

Considerations for Height Limits:

While community seems very sensitive to height, participants seemed to have a greater tolerance for height where it is hidden – stepped back off streets and away from property lines – thus:

- Use a base height limit for all areas within Town Center
- Consider an increase in height limit for every 60 feet into the interior of the property *(somewhat of a wedding cake approach for each property)*

Considerations for Height Limits:

Consider what building heights are needed to provide structured parking?

- Townhouses typically contain private garages under or alongside units – most are now 3-stories.
- 3-story limits make it hard to do other types of housing featuring structured parking.
- A 4-story limit would allow “3 over 1” construction (lowrise housing) – which is a common is a common housing type
- Greater height limits might make underground parking viable – provided the market can support the high rents needed to make it viable.