

COMMERCIAL DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES CHANGE IN USE OF COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES

INTRODUCTION

Commercial Design Standards adopted by the City of Springdale on April 28, 2006 provided a procedure for the use and development of commercial areas in an orderly manner by both private and public interests in the City of Springdale with special consideration given to the appearance of the community as a result of such development. It was recognized that the appearance of property has a direct bearing on the economic value of such property and adjacent and surrounding properties and that the appearance of a single property affects not only surrounding property, but the cumulative affect is to either to enhance or diminish the aesthetics of the entire City, and consequently the values of property within the City.

The Commercial Design Standards provided a procedure by which commercial property development within the City can be reviewed and modified in order to enhance the aesthetic beauty of the City, and consequently, the economic value of property and general welfare of the citizens. The standards apply to all new commercial construction requiring large scale and/or non large scale plan; major rehabilitation; and, the addition or alterations to a building or site totaling fifty percent or more of the gross square footage of the existing buildings or site.

The application of the standards to a change in use unit designation of an existing commercial structure or structures on a tract or parcel of land that existed at the time of approval of the standards presented the need for a different approach depending on the location of the structures involved. Commercial uses in the downtown area and along major highways would require different approaches and standards.

A change in use unit designation of existing structure or structures on a tract or parcel of land that exists at the time approval of this chapter will be determined by the most current business license of record in the City Clerk's Office. If a business license has not been acquired for the tract or parcel it will be assumed to be a change in use and must meet the design standard.

A. PURPOSE

The design standards contained in this chapter are intended to implement the City's vision for commercial development as set forth in the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The standards serve the following basic purposes: to promote quality development by establishing standards for the development of attractive commercial areas to integrate with adjacent areas and uses when a change in use occurs through the use of landscaping and screening, and to enhance security and public safety.

1. Quality Development. A quality development is one that is functional and pleasant for the area in which it is located and the general public as well. Such a development starts with an investment in quality materials that will not rapidly fade or deteriorate and which will contribute to an attractive streetscape by providing buildings with architectural detailing, entries that

present themselves with an air of pride, and landscaping that adds color, texture and beauty to the area.

2. Enhanced Security. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a concept that integrates planning principles such as easy surveillance of common areas and walkways, into the design of commercial development to lessen the likelihood of crime within the development. It ties building design as a crime prevention strategy. It is intended to reduce the opportunity for criminal behavior, reduce the incidence and fear of crime, reduce calls for police service, and improves the quality of life. It includes five (5) principles:

- a. Territoriality – space within the commercial development and along the edges should be well-defined and delineated to create a sense of ownership, such that intruders and strangers stand out. This may be accomplished through the use of pavement treatments, landscaping, art, signage, screening, fencing, and similar techniques.
- b. Natural surveillance – create an environment where it is possible for people engaged in their normal behavior to observe the spaces around them. Maximize a space's visibility through thoughtful design of building orientation, window placement, entrances and exits, landscaping of trees and shrubs, and other physical obstruction. Utilize nighttime illumination of parking lots, walkways, entrances, stairwells, and related areas that promote an environment in which natural surveillance is possible.
- c. Access control – plan and implement access control to restrict criminal intrusion, especially in areas where criminal activity cannot be easily observed. Access control may include, but is not limited to, use of fences, walls, landscaping, and lighting to prevent or discourage access to or from dark or unmonitored areas. In addition, sidewalks, pavement, lighting, and landscaping areas should be used to guide the public to and form primary development entrances and exits.
- d. Activity support – create activity support by placing new or existing activities in an area so that individuals engaged in a particular activity becomes part of the natural surveillance of other areas.
- e. Maintenance – maintain buildings, landscaping, lighting fixtures, and other features to facilitate the principles of CPTED, territorial reinforcement, natural surveillance, and access control.

B. Application

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all commercial area throughout the City when a change in use unit designation of an existing structure or structures on a tract or parcel of land that exists at the time approval of this chapter occurs. Change in use designation will be determined by the most current business license of record in the City Clerk's Office. If a business license has not been acquired for the tract or parcel it will be assumed to be a change in use and must meet the design standard.

C. Exemptions

From and after the effective date of this chapter the provisions herein shall apply to all pending commercial business license applications, large scale development plans and non-large scale development plans upon which no final decision has been made; provided, however, that where a public hearing has been held by the planning commission, such pending large scale development plan shall be processed in accordance with the law existing on the date of the public hearing and approval was granted.

D. Review Process

These Commercial Design Standards And Guidelines--Change in Use of Commercial Structures shall be applied in the normal review processes for commercial building permit, business license application, large scale and/or non-large scale developments.

E. Variances and Modifications Allowed

The Planning Commission may approve variances to depart from the literal requirements of this chapter, where strict enforcement of said requirements would cause undue hardship due to circumstances unique to the individual property under consideration, and the granting of such variance is demonstrated to be within the spirit and intent of the provisions of this chapter, the Planning Commission may grant requests for variances of any requirements of this chapter according to the following guidelines:

1. The planning commission may modify such requirements to the extent deemed just and proper so as to relieve such difficulty or hardship, provided that such relief may be granted without detriment to the public interest.
2. When the applicant can show that his or her property was acquired in good faith and where by reason the strict application of such provisions would prohibit or unreasonably restrict the use of the property, and the planning commission is satisfied that the granting of a variance would alleviate a demonstratable hardship, as distinguished from a special privilege or convenience sought by the applicant, such variance may be

granted; provided that all variances shall be in harmony with the intended purpose of this chapter.

3. Appeal from decision. Any party aggrieved by the decision of the planning commission in granting or denying a variance may appeal the decision to the city council within thirty (30) days of the planning commission's decision by giving notice thereof to the city clerk.

DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR CHANGE IN USE

Article I – AESTHETIC CHARACTER

A. FAÇADES AND EXTERIOR WALLS

1. INTENT – Façades should be articulated to reduce the massive scale and the uniform, impersonal appearance of large retail buildings and provide visual interest that will be consistent with the city's identity, character, and scale. The intent is to encourage a more human scale that identifies with the community, resulting in greater likelihood of reuse of the structure by subsequent tenants.
2. GUIDELINE LARGE COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES – Structure with façade over one hundred (100) feet in linear length shall incorporate wall projections or recesses a minimum of three (3) foot depth and a minimum of twenty (20) contiguous feet within each one hundred (100) feet of façade length and shall extend over twenty (20) percent of the façade. Developments shall use animating features such as arcades; displace windows, entry areas, or awning along at least sixty (60) percent of the façade.

B. DETAIL FEATURES

1. INTENT – Buildings should have architectural features and patterns that provide visual interests, at the scale of the pedestrian, and reduce massive aesthetic effects. The elements in the following standard should be integral parts of the building fabric, and not superficially applied trim or graphics, or paint.
2. GUIDELINE – Building façades shall include a repeating pattern that shall include no less than three (3) of the elements listed below. At least one of these elements shall repeat horizontally. All elements shall repeat at intervals of no more than thirty (30) feet, either horizontally or vertically.
 - Color change
 - Texture change
 - Material module change
 - Expressions of architectural or structural bay through a change in plane no less than twelve (12) inches in width, such as an offset, reveal, or projecting rib.

C. MATERIALS AND COLORS

1. INTENT – Exterior building materials and colors comprise a significant part of the visual impact of a building. The exteriors that face or are visible from a public street should be aesthetically pleasing and compatible with materials and colors used in adjoining areas.

2. GUIDELINE
 - a. Predominant exteriors that face or are visible from a public street shall be of high quality building materials. Existing exteriors that are not of suitable material but are in sound condition may remain in place with approval by the Planning Commission. Suitable material includes, without limitation:
 - Brick
 - Native/natural stone
 - Synthetic Stone
 - Concrete masonry units—standard smooth face units with integral color
 - Synthetic stucco/EIFS
 - Architectural precast concrete
 - Decorative face concrete masonry units, such as split-face, scored, fluted, ground face, burnished, etc.
 - Glass
 - Wood – natural or composite

 - b. Façade colors, building trim and accent areas shall be low reflectance, subtle, neutral, or earth tone colors. The use of high intensity colors, metallic colors, black or fluorescent colors is prohibited.

 - c. Predominant exterior building materials as well as accents should not include the following:
 - Smooth-faced concrete block
 - Tilt-up concrete panels
 - Pre-fabricated steel panels

F. ENTRYWAYS

1. INTENT – Entryway design elements and variation should give orientation and aesthetically pleasing character to the building. The standards identify desirable entryway design features.
2. GUIDELINE – Each principal building on a site shall have clearly defined, highly visible customer entrances featuring no less than three (3) of the following:
 - Canopies or porticos
 - Overhangs
 - Recesses/projections
 - Arcades

- Raised corniced parapets over the door
- Peaked roof forms
- Arches
- Outdoor patios
- Display windows
- Architectural details such as tile work and moldings which are integrated into the building structure and design
- Integral planters or wing walls that incorporate landscaped areas and/or places for sitting

ARTICLE II – SITE DESIGN AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

A. ENTRANCES

1. INTENT – retail buildings should feature multiple entrances. Multiple building entrances reduce walking distance from cars, facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access from public sidewalks, and provide convenience where certain entrances offer access to individual stores, or identified departments in a store. Multiple entrances also mitigate the effect of the unbroken walls and neglected areas that often characterize building façades that face bordering land uses.
2. GUIDELINE – All sides of a principal building that directly faces an abutting public right-of-way shall feature at least one customer entrances. Where a principal building directly faces more than two abutting public rights-of-way, this requirement shall apply only to two sides of the building, including the side of the building facing the primary street, and another side of the building facing a secondary street. When additional stores will be located in the principal building, each store shall have at least one exterior customer entrances.

B. PARKING LOT ORIENTATION

1. INTENT – Parking areas for change in use shall be brought up to the established standard for the use unit designation and provide safe, convenient, and efficient access for vehicles and pedestrians. They should be distributed around large buildings in order to shorten the distance to other buildings and public sidewalks and to reduce the overall sale of the paved surfaces.
2. GUIDELINE – No more than sixty (60) percent of the off-street parking area for the entire property shall be located between the front façade within the front yard of the principal building(s) and the primary abutting street unless the principal building(s) and/or parking lots are screen from view by outlot development (such as restaurants) and additional tree plantings and/or berms.

C. Back and Sides

1. INTENT – The rear or sides of buildings often present an unattractive view of blank walls, loading areas, storage areas, HVAC units, trash receptacles, and

other such features. Architectural and landscaping features should mitigate these impacts.

2. **GUIDELINE** –Where the façade faces adjacent residential uses or areas designated on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan as residential use a screening fences no less than six (6) feet in height, containing at a minimum, a double row of evergreen or deciduous trees planted at intervals of fifteen (15) feet on center. All additional landscape requirements of Chapter 56 shall apply.

D. Outdoor Storage, Trash Collection, and Loading Areas

1. **INTENT** – Loading areas and outdoor storage areas exert visual and noise impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. These areas, when visible from adjoining properties and/or public streets, should be screened, recessed or enclosed.
2. **GUIDELINE**
 - a. Areas for outdoor storage, truck parking, trash collection or compaction, loading, or other such uses shall not be visible from public right-of-way.
 - b. No areas for outdoor storage, trash collection or compaction, loading or other such uses shall be located within twenty (20) feet of any public street, public sidewalk, or internal pedestrian way.
 - c. Loading docks, truck parking, outdoor storage, utility meters, HVAC equipment, trash dumpsters, trash compaction, and other service functions shall be incorporated into the overall design of the building and the landscaping so that the visual and acoustic impacts of these functions are fully contained and out of view from adjacent property and public streets, and no attention is attached to the functions by the use of screening materials that are different from or inferior to the principal materials of the building and landscape.
 - d. Non-enclosed areas for the storage and sale of seasonal inventory shall be permanently defined and screened with walls and/or fences. Materials, colors, and design of screening walls and/or fences and the cover shall conform to those used as predominant materials and colors of the building. If such areas are to be covered, then the covering shall conform to those used as predominant materials and colors on the building.
 - e. Temporary sales/displays, such as Christmas trees, landscape materials, etc. locations shall be identified on the large scale development plan and time/duration of such sales/displays shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning Director.

E. PEDESTRIAN FLOWS

1. **INTENT** – Pedestrian accessibility opens auto-oriented developments to the neighborhood, thereby reducing traffic impacts and enabling the development to project a friendlier, more inviting image. This section sets forth standards for public sidewalks and internal pedestrian circulation systems that can provide

user-friendly pedestrian access as well as pedestrian safety, shelter, and convenience within the project area.

2. GUIDELINE

- a. Sidewalks at least five (5) feet in widths shall be provided along all sides of the lot that abut a public right-of-way, excluding interstates.
- b. Sidewalks, no less than five (5) feet in width, shall be provided along the full length of the building along any façade featuring a customer entrance, and along any façade abutting public parking areas. Such sidewalk shall be located at least six (6) feet from the façade of the building to provide planting beds for foundation landscaping, except where features such as arcades or entryways are part of the façade. If a sidewalk exists adjacent to the building that is not an extension of the paved parking area and it is in satisfactory condition, permanent planting areas may be placed along the sidewalk to cover at least an area equal to the amount of sidewalk to be removed to avoid removal of sidewalk. If the sidewalk is merely an extension of the paved surface to the building façade or the sidewalk is not in satisfactory condition the pavement and/or sidewalk will be required to be removed and foundation landscaping provided.

F. Landscaping

1. Intent – landscaping is a visible indicator of quality development and must be an integral part of every commercial project, and not merely located in leftover portions of the site. Landscaping is intended to visually tie the entire development together, define major entryways and vehicular and pedestrian circulation and parking patterns, and where appropriate help buffer less intensive adjacent land uses. Requirements for landscaping are outlined in Chapter 56 for street frontage, interior and perimeter areas, and parking areas. Each area required to be landscaped shall be covered in live material. Live material includes trees, shrubs, ground cover, and sod. Areas not covered in live material may be covered by woody mulch, other organic or inorganic mulch, rock mulch, or other natural materials other than exposed gravel and aggregate rock. Incorporate plant species found throughout the region and as identified in Chapter 56 of the Code of Ordinances into the planting plan, and visually soften paved areas and buildings. Use and repeat plant material throughout the development to visually tie the commercial center together.
2. Parking Lot Landscaping – if additional parking is required due to the change in use the requirements for landscaping as outlined in Chapter 56 of the Code of Ordinances shall be addressed for all new parking areas and for the entire parking area if the existing parking area contains 50 spaces to minimize the expansive appearance of parking lots, provide shaded parking areas, and mitigate any negative acoustic impacts of motor vehicles.

3. Perimeter Parking Area Landscaping – provides an attractive, shaded environment along street edges that gives visual relief from continuous hard street edges, provides a visual cohesion along streets, helps buffer automobile traffic, focuses views forth both pedestrians and motorists, and increases the sense of neighborhood scale and character and shall meet the requirements for landscaping as outlined in Chapter 56 of the Code of Ordinances.

G. Screening

1. Trash containers, trash compactors, and recycling bins shall be screened from public view on all four sides with a solid fence, wall, or gate constructed of cedar, redwood, masonry or other compatible building material, and shall be appropriately landscaped.
2. Exterior ground-mounted or building-mounted equipment including, but not limited to, mechanical equipment, utilities and banks of meters, shall be screened from public view with landscaping or with an architectural treatment compatible with the building architecture.
3. All building or additions thereto in commercial districts shall provide a solid screen fence or wall not less than six (6) feet in height along all rear and side property lines which are common to property zoned for residential purposes, except that such screening shall not extend in front of the building line or adjacent dwellings. Such screening shall be required where similar screening exists on the abutting residential property.
4. Fencing And Walls – while fences and walls are often necessary to buffer uses, they can create a visually-monotonous streetscape. These standards provide fencing and walls that visually-appealing, complement the design of the overall development and surrounding properties, and provide visual interest to pedestrians and motorists. When a commercial development includes a fence or wall, the following guidelines and standards apply:
 - a. The maximum height of a fence or wall shall be eight feet (8').
 - b. Walls and fences shall be constructed of high quality materials, such as decorative blocks, brick, stone, cypress, cedar, redwood and wrought iron.
 - c. Breaks in the length of a fence shall be made to provide for required pedestrian connections to the perimeter of a site or to adjacent development.
 - d. The maximum length of continuous, unbroken, and uninterrupted fence or wall place shall be fifty feet (50'). Breaks shall be provided through the use of columns, landscaping pockets, transparent sections, and/or a change to different materials.
 - e. Use of landscaping beyond the minimum required in these standards is strongly encouraged to soften the visual impact of fences and walls.

H. Lighting

1. **Intent** – eliminate adverse impacts of light through spillover; provide attractive lighting fixtures and layout patterns that contribute to unified exterior lighting design; and provide exterior lighting that promotes safe vehicular and pedestrian access to and within a development, while minimizing impacts on adjacent properties especially residential areas.
2. **Design Guidelines and Standards**
 - a. **Plan Required** – for a change in use of a commercial structure a unified lighting plan must be submitted subject to these lighting standards. A point-by-point calculation to show compliance with the lighting standards. The calculations shall be measured at grade for lighting levels within the development site. A cut sheet of proposed fixtures, including a candlepower distribution curve, shall also be submitted. A vertical plan footcandle calculation shall be submitted for property lines abutting residential properties.
 - b. **General Lighting Standards**
 - i. **Pedestrian Walkway Lighting** – pedestrian-level, bollard light, ground-mounted lighting, or other low, glare-controlled fixtures mounted on building or landscape walls shall be used to light pedestrian walkways.
 - ii. **Light Height** – bollard-type lighting shall be no more than four feet (4') high. See subsection below for lighting standards specific to parking areas.
 - iii. **Lighting for Security** – accent lighting on buildings is encouraged as a security feature and interior and exterior lighting shall be uniform to allow for surveillance and avoid isolated areas.
 - iv. **Illumination Levels** – pedestrian areas shall be illuminated to a minimum of one (1) footcandle.
 - v. **Design of Fixtures/Prevention of Spillover Glare**—light fixtures shall use cutoff lenses or hoods to prevent glare and light spill off the project site onto adjacent properties, buildings, and roadways.
 - vi. **Color of Light Source** – lighting fixtures should be color-correct types such as halogen or metal halide to ensure true-color at night and ensure visual comfort for pedestrians.
 - c. **Parking Lot Lighting**
 - vii. **Luminaire Fixture Height** – the mounting height for luminaire fixtures shall not exceed thirty-five feet (35') as measured to the top of the fixture from grade.
 - viii. **Average Maintained Footcandles:**
 - (a) The maximum average maintained footcandles for all parking lot lighting shall be three (3) footcandles; the minimum average maintained footcandles shall be one (1) footcandle. For the purpose of this standard, the average maintained footcandle shall be calculated at 0.8 of initial footcandles.

- (b) The maximum maintained vertical footcandle at any adjoining residential property line shall be 0.5 footcandles, measured at five feet (5') above grade.
- ix. Uniformity Ratios – luminaire fixtures shall be arranged in order to provide uniform illumination throughout the parking lot of not more than a 6:1 ratio of average to minimum illumination, and not more than 20:1 ratio of maximum to minimum illumination.
- d. Canopy Lighting
 - x. Average Maintained Footcandles – the maximum average maintained footcandles under a canopy shall be 35 footcandles. Areas outside the canopy shall be regulated by the standards above.
 - xi. Fixtures – acceptable fixtures and methods of illumination include:
 - (a) Recessed fixtures incorporating a lens cover that is either recessed or flush with the bottom surface (ceiling) of the canopy.
 - (b) Indirect lighting where light is beamed upward and then reflected down from the underside of the canopy. Such fixtures shall be shielded such that direct illumination is focused exclusively on the underside of the canopy.
- e. Strobe Lighting shall be prohibited in any areas that create a distraction or safety concern for the motoring public.

I. Signage

1. **Intent** – signage must be scaled appropriately to appeal to both pedestrians walking on the adjacent sidewalks and to vehicles driving at reduced speeds. The following sign guidelines and standards are intended to create aesthetically pleasing and cohesive sign standards.
2. **Design Guidelines and Standards**
 - a. All commercial developments shall comply with the signage requirements set forth in Chapter 98 of Code of Ordinances.
 - b. On all street frontages, signage material shall be integrated into the overall design of the building.
 - c. Signs shall be located to complement the architectural features of a building such as above the building entrance, storefront opening, or other similar feature.