

Main Street Overlay Illustrated Design Standards

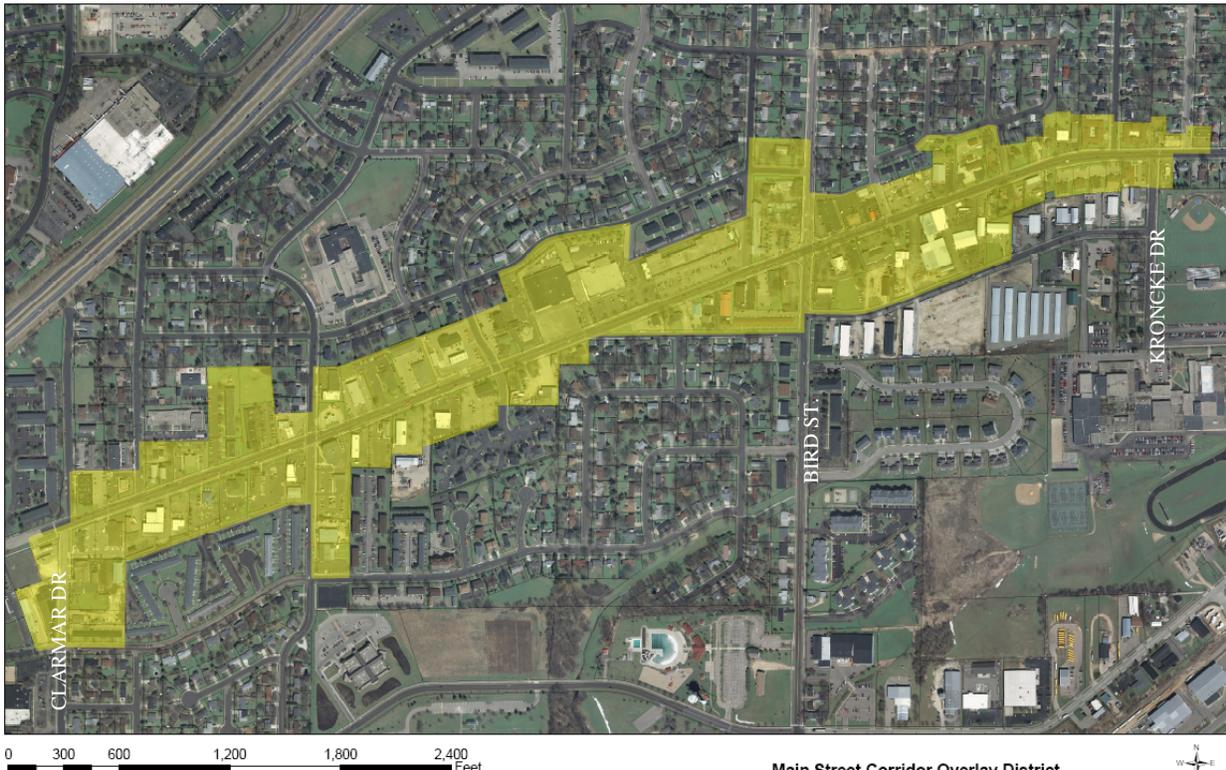
City of Sun Prairie

Pursuant to Section 17.16.200
City of Sun Prairie Municipal Code

The Main Street Overlay (MSO) zoning district was created to help encourage quality redevelopment and reinvestment along the City's W. Main Street commercial corridor. The MSO standards supersede the base zoning regulations contained within the zoning code for properties within the district, meaning that where regulations conflict, the requirements of the MSO shall apply. The illustrated design standards contained herein are intended to assist with the interpretation and understanding of the MSO standards. Please consult Section 17.16.200 of the Municipal Code to review the adopted ordinance in its entirety.

The MSO standards are intended to establish a minimum level of quality in site and building design for redevelopment and building additions along the corridor, while at the same time providing more flexibility and a reasonable approval timeframe for projects that substantially meet the minimum standards—a "reward" of sorts for working within the parameters of the standards. Projects that stray from the standards can still be considered, but more scrutiny through a public review process is required. The goal is to achieve the vision expressed within the City's West Main Street Corridor plan through incremental improvements that occur over time as individual properties are redeveloped or modified.

The MSO includes properties on both sides of W. Main Street from the Kroncke Drive vicinity west to approximately Clarmar Drive, as well as some properties that front on side streets leading off of Main Street. A map of the district is provided below, and the illustrated site and building design standards follow.



Main Street Corridor Overlay District
Draft - December 15, 2010

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Main Street Overlay: Overview

The purpose of the MSO district is to implement the vision expressed in the W. Main Street Corridor Plan as site redevelopment, building additions and other site alterations occur, so that over time the character of the area changes in a positive way. To help achieve this, and to encourage quality investment within the W. Main Street Corridor, a more streamlined process has been created with more flexibility in many areas that have proven to cause compliance issues in the past along the corridor, such as parking lot setback requirements and landscaping standards. At the same time, a higher bar has been set for minimum acceptable levels of building quality and site design. These changes were brought about as a result of feedback from recent community surveys and input received in recent years from elected officials and residents, alike.

Purpose

Within the MSO, more emphasis is placed on site and building design rather than land use—a shift from the prior zoning regulations in place along the corridor. As a result, with only a few exceptions, the need for extensive review of a development proposal will be based not on the type of use being proposed, but rather on the extent to which the proposal meets the minimum design criteria established for the district. However, there are a limited number of uses that, due to their nature, either require a higher level of scrutiny of review through a conditional use permit process, or are prohibited from locating within the MSO altogether. Any proposed use permitted within the underlying zoning district regulations for a particular property is permitted within the MSO and shall follow the review process described below, with the exception of the following uses:

Use Restrictions

Uses allowed only by conditional use permit:

- Multi-family residential
- Tattoo or body piercing establishments
- Payday lenders
- Pawn shops
- Household pet boarding
- Permanent or temporary outdoor display and sales (see ordinance for specific limitations)

Prohibited uses:

- Sexually oriented land uses
- Outdoor maintenance service
- Outdoor storage
- Outdoor commercial entertainment
- Boarding house
- Parking lots as a principal use (excl. City lots)
- Commercial dog day-care or animal boarding

Review of proposed development projects within the MSO will be coordinated by the Planning Department. A pre-application meeting with the Planning staff is recommended to discuss the project and identify any compliance issues and the type of review that will be involved. Projects that substantially comply with the standards contained herein will be subject to a staff review through the special use permit (SUP) process. Such reviews could be completed in as little as two weeks. Projects that do not substantially comply with the standards can still be brought forth for consideration, but will be subject to public review through the conditional use permit (CUP) process, which involves a discretionary review by the Plan Commission and City Council. The CUP process includes a public hearing and typically takes 7 to 8 weeks to complete—possibly longer if issues and concerns arise that require more discussion.

Once an application for development is received by the Planning Department, a determination will be made as to which review category applies. If a CUP is needed, a public hearing will be scheduled and the applicant will be notified of the date and time of the hearing. Plans will be distributed to other City departments and agencies involved in the review process, and will be reviewed for compliance with the municipal code and City standards and policies. **It is important to note that the granting of an SUP or a CUP does not eliminate the need to obtain other required city, county, state or federal permits and approvals that may be applicable.** Examples include storm water and erosion control permits, building permits, sign permits, approvals from the Dane County Health Department, other federal or state licenses or permits applicable to regulated activities and uses, etc.

Review Process

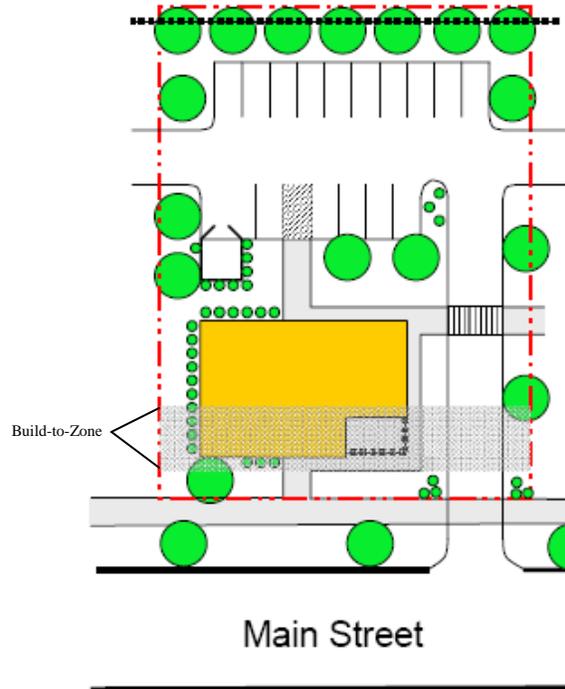
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Main Street Overlay: Site Design Standards

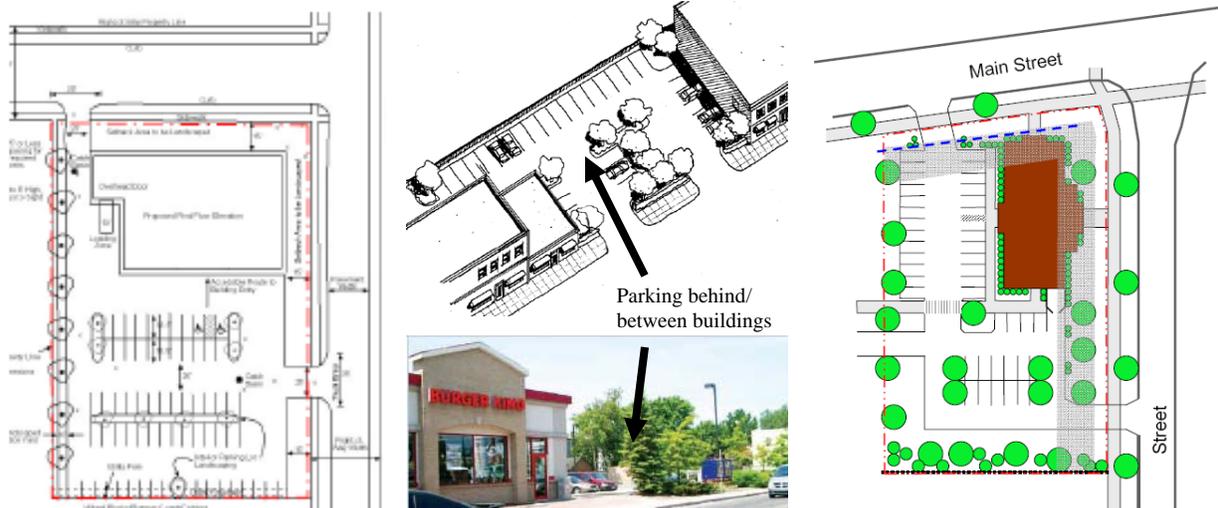
1. A “build-to” zone of five (5) to twenty (20) feet from the right of way along Main Street and all side streets intersecting with Main Street shall be met on each site to encourage buildings to have a strong visual presence along Main Street and at intersections. Greater setbacks may be required when the city engineer determines that more sight visibility at an intersection is necessary. In addition, one of the following parameters must be met:

- a. Buildings within the build-to-zone shall occupy at least one half (1/2) of the buildable width of the lot along Main Street. Required side yard setbacks and driveways, if any, may be excluded from the buildable width calculations; or
- b. At least one-third (1/3) of the land area within the build-to-zone along Main Street shall be occupied by buildings. Required side yard setbacks and driveways, if any, may be excluded from the build-to area calculations;
- c. Under either option, private outdoor cafes, seating patios, and similar features may be counted as building area for the purposes of this section, provided they abut a building or buildings on the site.



Build-to Zone

2. Parking shall be located behind buildings and along side buildings, and shall not be located closer to Main Street than the front façade of the principal structure on a lot, except as provided in Site Design Standard 3 (c).



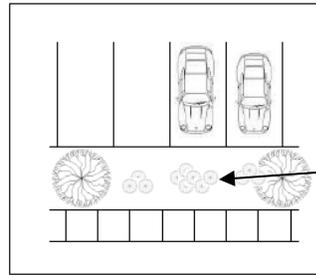
Parking Location

Main Street Overlay: Site Design Standards

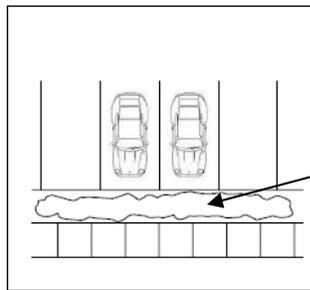
Parking Lot Landscaping—Street Edge

3. Parking lots shall be buffered along the street edge/sidewalk with a landscaped edge that meets one of the following criteria:

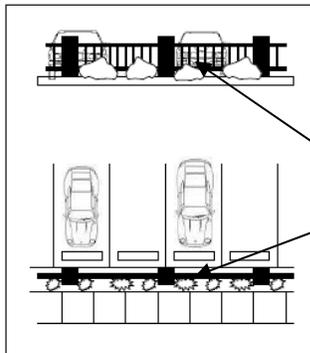
- a. A landscaped area of at least ten (10) feet in width containing a minimum of 0.50 plant unit* per one hundred (100) feet of lot frontage;
- b. A landscaped area of at least five (5) feet in width containing a continuous hedge of twenty-four (24) to thirty-two (32) inches in height or a minimum of 1.00 plant unit* per one hundred (100) feet of lot frontage; or
- c. A landscaped area of less than five (5) feet in width, or of any width if the parking area is to be located closer to the street than the principal building on the lot, if a decorative masonry wall or a combination decorative metal fence with shrubs is provided between the parking lot and the sidewalk. In no case shall said decorative wall or fence be located closer than two (2) feet from the public sidewalk. If the decorative metal fence with landscaping option is implemented, adequate impervious area must be provided for the landscape plantings. A landscaped area of less than 5 feet in width is not recommended due to issues related to maintenance, snow removal and limited growing area for landscaping, and should only be used when other options are not practical.



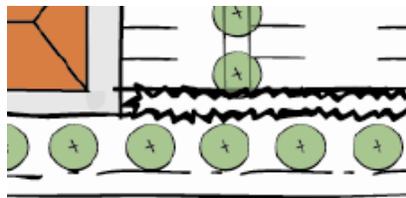
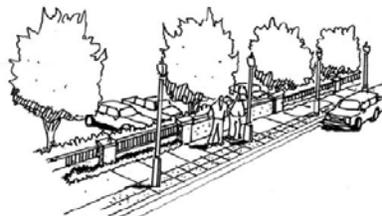
Option a: 10 foot parking lot setback and a minimum level of landscaping.



Option b: Less than 10 foot but greater than 5 foot parking lot setback and a continuous hedge or an increased level of landscaping.



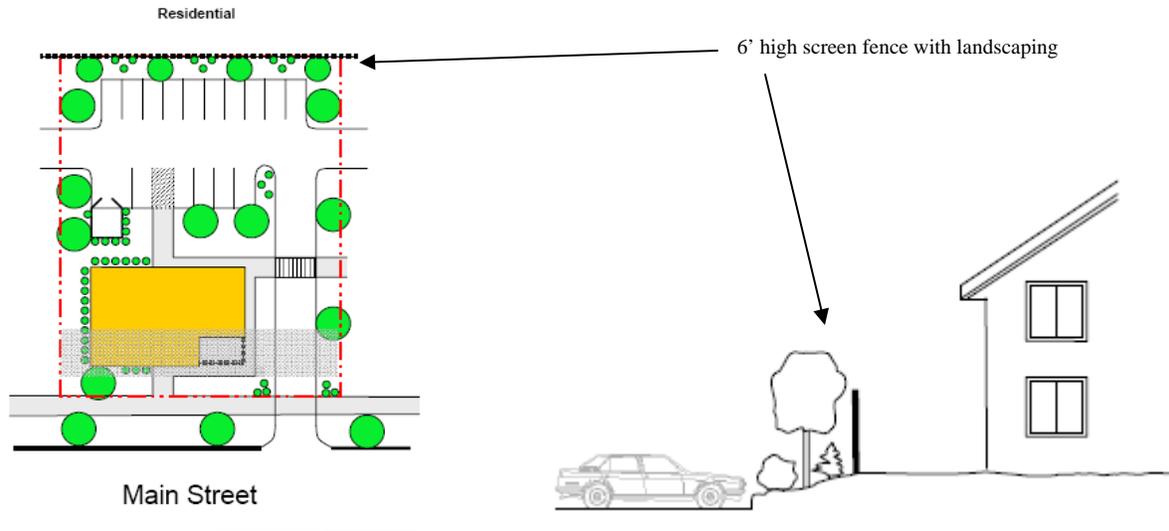
Option c: Less than 5 foot parking lot setback and a decorative masonry wall or combination decorative metal fence with shrubs. Examples of such features are provided below.



*Note that one "plant unit" equals 30 landscape points. Landscape points are awarded as follows: Canopy tree—10 points; understory tree—5 points; shrub—1 point; perennials—encouraged but no landscape point value.

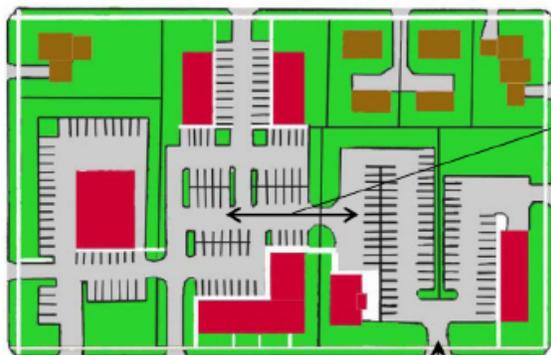
Main Street Overlay: Site Design Standards

4. When located adjacent to a residentially zoned property, a minimum five (5) foot landscaped area that includes a six (6) foot high screening fence and 1.0 plant unit* per 100 feet shall be required along said property line. An alternative buffer may be negotiated with the adjacent landowner if an alternative to the six (6) foot high fence is desired.



*Note that one “plant unit” equals 30 landscape points. Landscape points are awarded as follows: Canopy tree—10 points; understory tree—5 points; shrub—1 point; perennials—encouraged but no landscape point value.

5. Site design and layout shall occur in a manner that allows cross access between sites to occur over time, unless site conditions such as topography make such connections impractical. Ideally, cross access would be established at the time of redevelopment or site modifications provided that the adjacent landowner is willing to participate. At a minimum, easement agreements shall be recorded for the benefit of the City and adjacent properties to allow cross access to be accommodated in the future. Cross access easements should be located a sufficient distance from Main Street so as to not cause turning conflicts that could impact traffic flow on Main Street or at a drive entrance, and should be designed to discourage cut-through traffic while still allowing mid-block circulation. The easement shall specify that the owner of the subject property shall share in the cost of the cross access drive when it is installed in the future. Said easement agreements may include provisions for the property owner to request review of the proposed cross access drive by the Plan Commission and City Council at the time the connection is to occur, to allow consideration of concerns related to shared parking, the nature of the adjacent use, or other factors prior to the installation of the cross access drive.



Cross access within blocks can help to increase access to area businesses and alleviate unnecessary turning movements on Main Street, thereby preserving traffic capacity and flow and lessening the need for future measures such as driveway closures and the installation of street medians.

Care should be taken to avoid creating convenient cut-through routes that can have negative impacts on businesses. Cross access drives should generally be offset to avoid such direct routes.

In some cases, it may be wise to not provide such connections where adjacent uses conflict or where potential for cut-through traffic is high. This determination will be made by the Zoning Administrator.

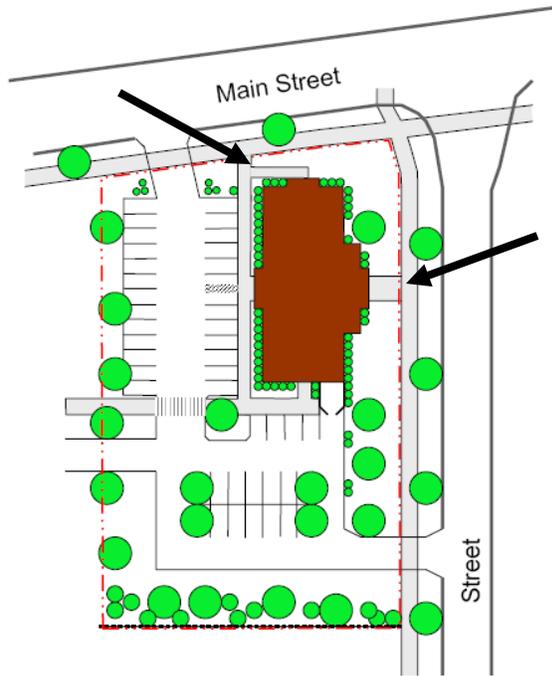
Residential Buffer

Cross Access

Main Street Overlay: Site Design Standards

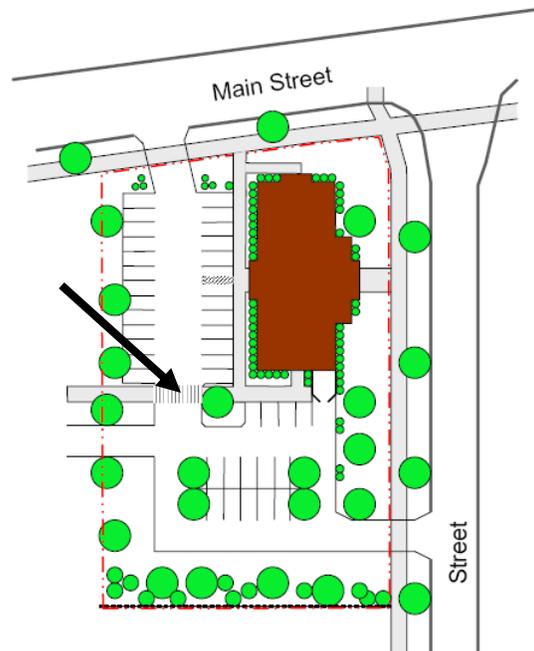
Pedestrian Connections

6. Pedestrian connections from building entries to the street sidewalks along Main Street and side streets shall be provided.



Crosswalks

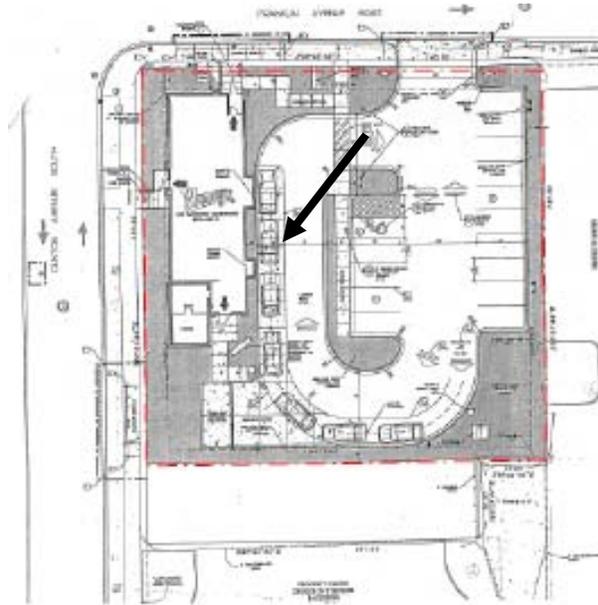
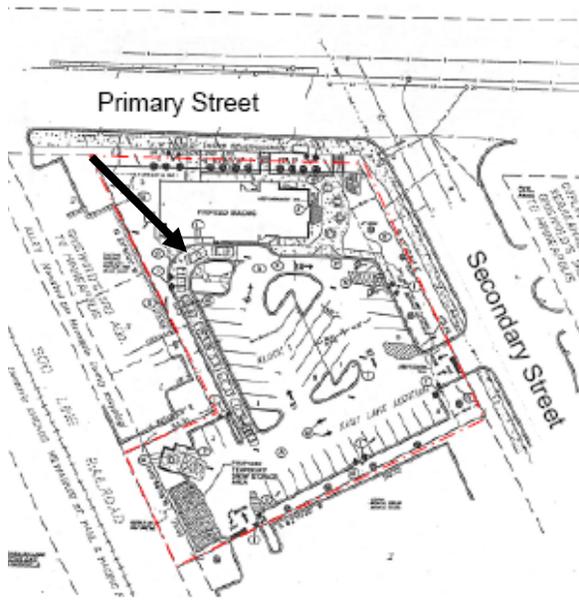
7. Pedestrian crosswalks shall be provided across drive-thru lanes and other main internal drives to provide safe access for pedestrians between parking areas and building entries.



Main Street Overlay: Site Design Standards

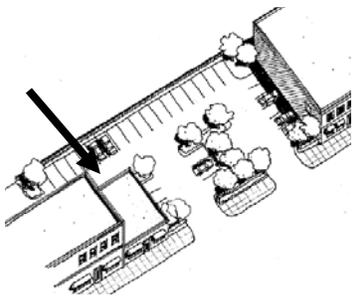
8. Drive thru lanes shall not be located between the building and a street right of way unless approved as a conditional use.. Screening of drive-thru lanes to address headlights shining into street traffic lanes or nearby residential properties shall be provided. Menu boards, ATMs and vehicle idling areas shall be located a sufficient distance away from property lines so as not to be a nuisance to adjacent residential properties, and shall meet the noise standards contained in 17.36.090 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Examples of creatively arranged site plans that locate drive-thru lanes away from the primary street frontage—allowing the buildings to front the street.

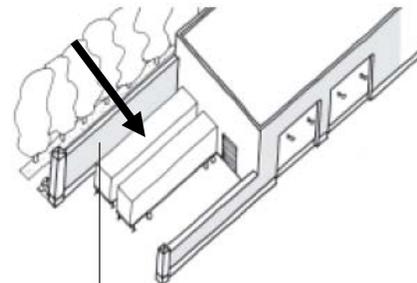


Drive-Thru Lanes

9. Loading and delivery areas shall be provided on-site, and shall not be located between the principal building and the street. Loading docks shall be screened with landscaping or a decorative wall when visible from a public right of way or adjacent properties.



Place loading areas, if needed, at the rear of the site and screen them from view from the street and adjacent homes.

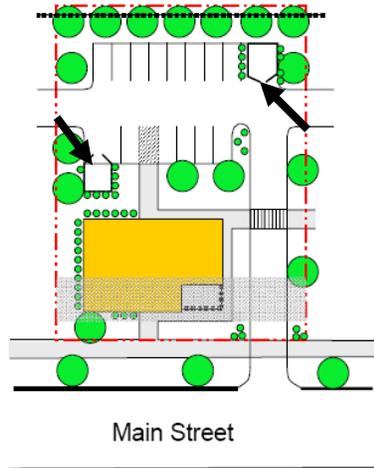


Loading

Main Street Overlay: Site Design Standards

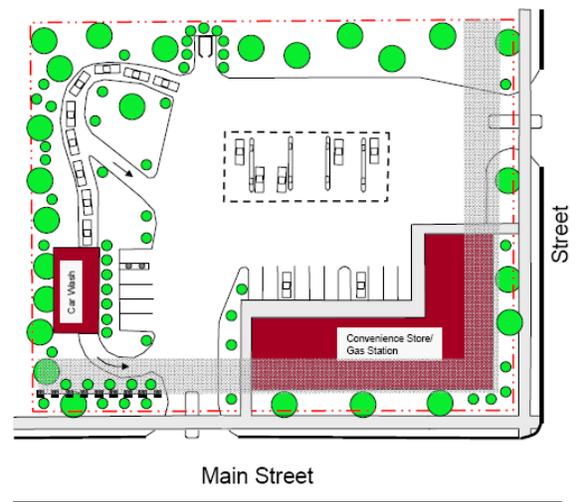
Refuse

10. Refuse collection areas shall be located toward the rear of the site to the extent practical, and shall be enclosed with a six (6) foot high enclosure constructed of decorative materials that are similar to or compatible with the materials used on the principal structure on the site. When attached to or located within the principal building, they shall be designed so as to appear to be an integrated component of the building. A portion of the required landscaping for the site per chapter 17.32 of the Zoning Ordinance shall be provided in areas adjacent to the enclosure.



Fueling Canopies

11. Fueling areas and canopies associated with convenience stores/gas stations shall not be located between the principal building and the street, but rather behind or along side the building. On corner lots, the principal building shall be located at the corner, with the fueling area along Main Street or the side street, and located no closer to the street than the principal structure. Fueling areas shall be treated as parking lots for the purpose of required screening, and shall meet the standards contained in Site Design Standards 2 through 4.



Main Street Overlay: Site Design Standards

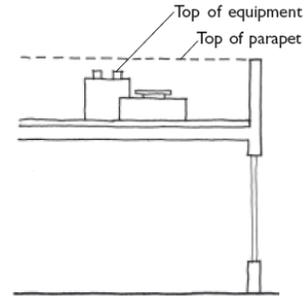
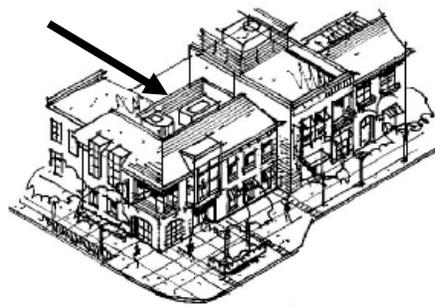
12. Outdoor mechanical equipment and meters shall be placed so as not to be highly visible from the adjacent street(s), and shall be screened with landscaping or a decorative wall that is compatible with the architecture of the principal building. Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be screened with parapets or other decorative feature that is compatible with the architecture of the building.



Does not meet standard.



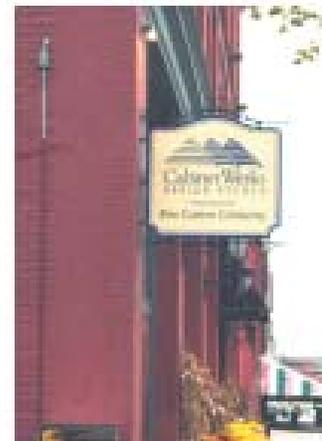
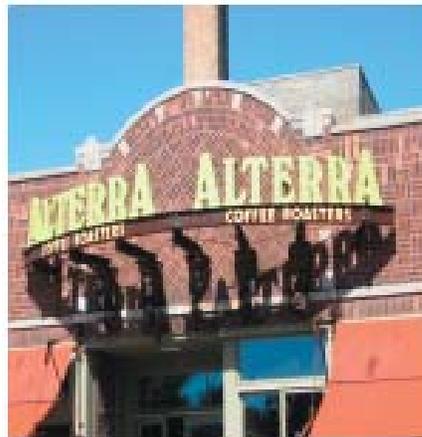
Meets standard



Mechanicals

13. In addition to signs permitted per Chapter 17.40, businesses located within the MSO shall be permitted to install one projecting sign per storefront, provided:

- a. Each projecting sign shall meet the size and height standards contained in Section 17.40.080(B) (2) and 17.40.080(B)(4), and the placement standards contained in Section 17.40.030(D)(2) of the Zoning Ordinance;
- b. Projecting signs shall only be allowed within the build-to zone.



Signage

14. Outdoor vending machines are permitted only as accessory uses on properties whose principal use is a commercial use. Vending machines do not require a zoning permit, but may need an electric permit or other approvals. Vending machines must abut an exterior wall of a building containing a commercial use, and shall be placed in an area that provides safe pedestrian access that is clear from vehicle circulation drives and parking areas.

Vending

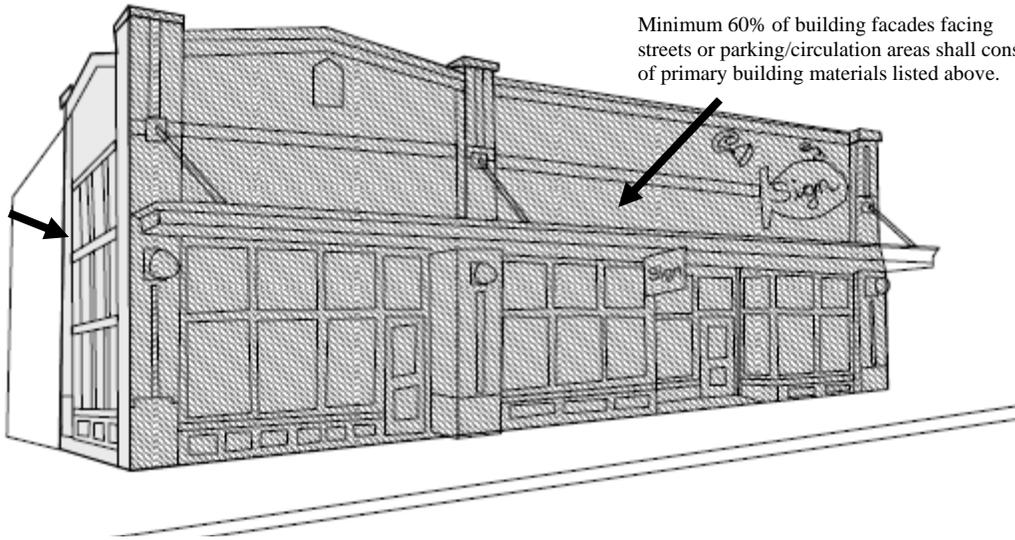
Main Street Overlay: **Building Design Standards**

Materials

1. Primary building materials shall consist of high quality, long lasting materials such as brick, stone, stained or finished decorative concrete block, wood, or fiber cement materials. At least 60% of the surface area of building façades facing public streets or customer parking and circulation areas, excluding window openings and customer entrance doorways and associated trim, shall consist of the above building materials, with the remainder consisting of acceptable accent materials per Building Design Standard 2. Street façade treatments shall continue along side elevations to at least the first logical transition point or building offset as appropriate based on building architecture.



Façade materials shall continue along side elevations to a logical transition point.



Minimum 60% of building façades facing streets or parking/circulation areas shall consist of primary building materials listed above.

Accent Materials

2. Accent materials may consist of any materials listed above in Building Design Standard 1 as acceptable primary materials, as well as glass, decorative metal finishes, decorative composite materials, stucco or acceptable stucco-like products, and similar products that are deemed acceptable by the zoning administrator.



Main Street Overlay: **Building Design Standards**

3. Pitched roofs and eaves shall be finished in a traditional manner, with asphalt shingles, other decorative shingles, or standing seam metal roof materials, and eaves and soffits of typical materials and dimensions. Integrated metal roof and soffit systems that contain features such as excessively high fascia profiles shall not be allowed. Alternative designs and materials may be considered on a case-by-case basis.



These examples meet the standard—traditional approaches with typical eave, soffit and fascia treatments.



These examples **DO NOT** meet the standard. Integrated metal roof and soffit systems and excessively high fascia profiles dominate the appearance of the buildings and portray a low-quality image.



Pitched Roofs

4. Flat roofs shall be finished with a decorative cornice along street facades. Parapets shall be provided as needed to augment the architecture of the building and effectively screen rooftop mechanical equipment from view from the street and surrounding properties at ground level, although other rooftop screening methods may also be acceptable.



These examples meet the standard. Varied rooflines and decorative cornice details add to the visual interest of the buildings and “finish” the architecture along the roofline.



These examples **DO NOT** meet the standard. The lack of cornice details and roofline variations detract from the appearance of the building.



Flat Roofs

Main Street Overlay: Building Design Standards

Windows

5. A minimum percentage of the first-floor building wall facing Main Street, measured between two (2) and eight (8) feet above the finished grade of the site, shall consist of transparent glass that provides visual access into the interior space of the building to a depth of at least four (4) feet.

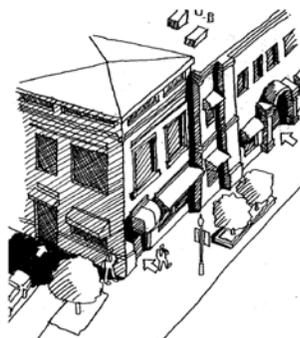
- a. For most commercial and institutional uses, the minimum area of transparent glass shall be 50% (fifty percent);
- b. For clinics, medical or dental offices, or other uses where customer privacy is necessary, the minimum area of transparent glass shall be 30% (thirty percent);
- c. For buildings with residential units on the ground level, the minimum area of transparent glass shall be 30% (thirty percent).
- d. Alternative architectural solutions that continue the rhythm of windows established on the building may be included in lieu of up to 50% of the transparent glass requirement, if deemed acceptable by the Zoning Administrator.



Entrances

6. At least one customer entrance, with appropriate architectural emphasis, shall be provided on the Main Street side of the building. As an alternative, an entrance on a side façade that is located within fifteen (15) feet of the Main Street façade may be used to satisfy this requirement if architectural projections such as a decorative canopy, a projecting vestibule, or other architectural element is provided in association with the entry.

Customer entrances along or in close proximity to Main Street will be important in establishing an attractive streetscape, even though parking will be predominantly located at the rear or side of buildings.

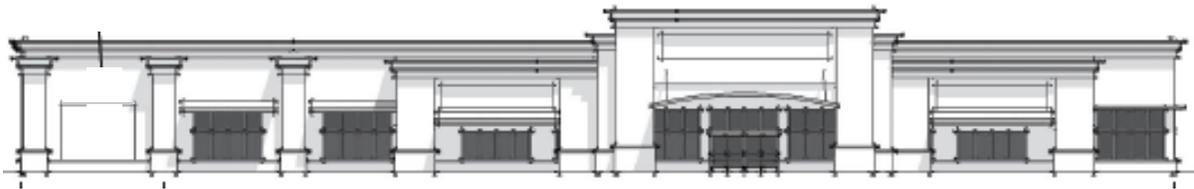


Example of a side entry facing a parking lot that is also in close proximity to the street.

Main Street Overlay: **Building Design Standards**

7. Street facing façades greater than fifty (50) feet in length shall contain variations in vertical elevation at the roofline and shall incorporate either of the following measures to provide variety and visual interest along the street side of the building:

- a. Wall plane projections or recesses along the façade, with offsets in each instance of six (6) inches or greater, creating building bays of no more than 32 feet in width; or
- b. Architectural treatments that reflect a regular storefront rhythm along the façade of the building of no more than 32 feet in width.



Above and right: Roofline variations, façade plane offsets, and architectural articulation to reflect a storefront rhythm along the building façade help to add visual interest.

Below: Long uninterrupted building façades **DO NOT** meet the standard.



8. New buildings shall incorporate a building base of at least two (2) feet in height that consists of durable materials such as stone, brick or decorative concrete block, as well as architectural articulation along the eave or roofline, on all building façades.



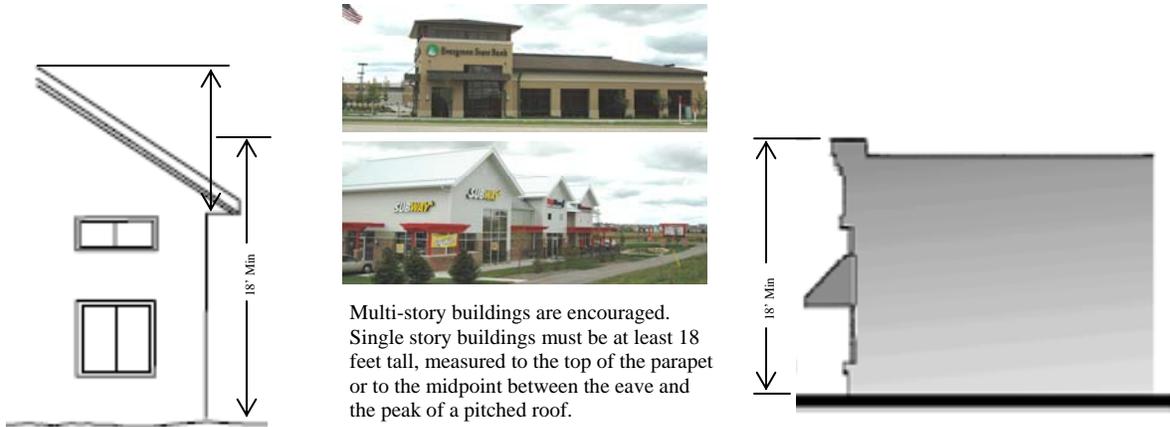
Facades

Bldg Base & Top

Main Street Overlay: **Building Design Standards**

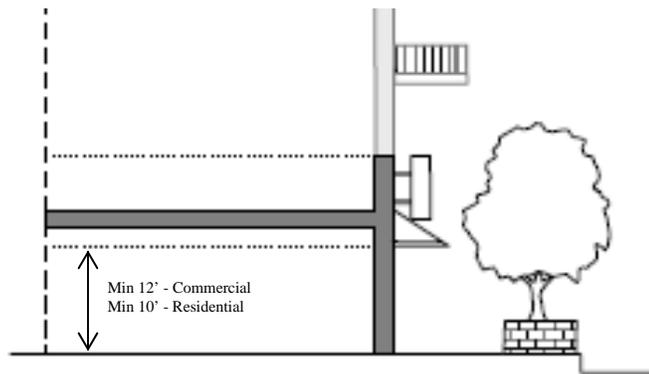
Building Height

9. The minimum height of one-story buildings shall be eighteen (18) feet as measured from the sidewalk elevation to the top of the cornice or parapet on a flat roof building, or to the midpoint between the eave line and peak on a pitched roof.



Ceiling Height

10. The minimum ground floor height of commercial and office spaces shall be 12 feet as measured from the finished floor to the finished ceiling, and 10 feet for ground floor residential uses in order to accommodate future conversion or adaptation for non-residential use.



Building Colors

11. Building colors shall be limited to earth tones and muted accents that complement the primary materials of the building. Corporate colors and bright accents shall be limited to signs that fall within the wall sign parameters of the zoning ordinance.



Left: These examples meet the standard, with appropriate building colors and corporate or franchise colors limited to allowable sign areas on the buildings.

Right: These examples **DO NOT** meet the standard. Bright corporate colors dominate the building facades, resulting in the building essentially becoming a sign and obscuring the architecture of the building.



Main Street Overlay: Alternative Compliance

Applicants that choose to apply for a conditional use permit due to non-compliance with the site and/or building design standards must follow the Alternative Compliance provisions of the MSO. The alternative compliance process involves identifying the site or building design standards that are proposed for waiver or modification, and proposing mitigating measures to offset the requested modifications. Although not limited to these items, the ordinance provides a list of acceptable offsetting features to help provide direction for the review of such requests, as follows:

- a. The use of a garden wall or decorative fencing, in combination with higher than required levels of landscaping at the parking lot edge along Main Street, may be used to offset parking lot design and location or building placement standards.
- b. Attractively designed and articulated vertical elements that act as focal points may be incorporated into the building architecture to offset building design or building placement standards.
- c. A higher percentage of street side windows along Main Street that provide visual access into the interior of the building may be provided to offset building design standards.
- d. The incorporation of privately maintained “public” space along Main Street or a side street, such as a seating area, plaza, or unique landscape area, may be provided to offset any of the building or site design standards. Such features shall be designed in such a manner as to provide adequate visibility of all areas from the primary building on the property as well as the street and sidewalk. The designation of such spaces by easement for use by the public as a future transit stop may also be considered as an offsetting feature. Provisions to ensure that such areas are well maintained in the future, such as a performance agreement that provides for the City to step in and maintain the area in the event the property owner fails to do so, and pass maintenance costs plus administrative fees on to the property owner, may be required.
- e. Decorative paving of on-site pedestrian walkways, parking lot cross walks, or other paved areas on the site may be used to offset any of the building or site design standards.
- f. Additional storm water management provided on-site or underground, where deemed appropriate and of particular benefit by the city engineer to address known storm water issues, may be provided to offset any of the building or site design standards.
- g. The provision of public art or a monument located such that it can be viewed from Main Street or the sidewalk along Main Street may be used to offset any of the building or site design standards.
- h. The incorporation of green site and building technologies, such as pervious pavement options, green roofs, solar or geothermal systems, etc., may be proposed to offset any of the building or site design standards.

Other potential offsetting features may be proposed for consideration and shall be reviewed under the criteria established by the ordinance. The criteria focus on the benefit of the offsetting feature or features to the public, the perceived improvement to the appearance of the site, whether the project provides something unique or of special interest to the Main Street corridor, and whether or not the benefits offered by the offsetting feature outweigh any potential negative effects that may result from the proposed waiver or modification of the standards. Please consult Section 17.16.200 (F)(2) of the municipal code for a full listing of the review criteria.