

photo by City of Bellingham

City of Bellingham

Design Guidelines

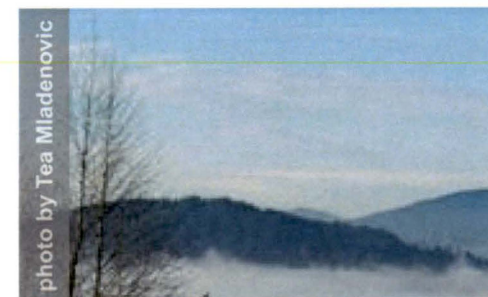
June 2022



Acknowledgements

We would like to honor and acknowledge that these are the ancestral, unceded homelands of the Coast Salish Peoples past and present.

We express our deepest respect and gratitude to our indigenous neighbors the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe.



City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development

Blake Lyon, Director (current)
Rick Sepler, Director (retired)
Darby Galligan, Senior Planner, Project Manager
Kathy Bell, Senior Planner
Lindsay Kershner, Planner II
Kurt Nabbefeld, Development Services Manager
Christopher Koch, Planner II
Emy Scherrer, Planner II
Kathryn Franks, Development Specialist II

City of Bellingham Public Works Department

Brent Baldwin, Development Services Manager
Chad Schulhauser, City Engineer

Prepared by Schemata Workshop

Grace Kim, Principal in Charge
Joann Ware, Project Manager
Emma Sutton
Jocelyn Beausire
Rosemarie Grégoire
Breanne Taylor

Steering Committee

Terry Brown, Architect, LEED-AP
Barry Dikeman, RAM Construction, Downtown Bellingham Partnership board director
Mike Estes, Planning Commission, downtown resident
Dave Falk, Architect, Historic Preservation Commission
Collin Fuller, Designer
Jan Hayes, Designer, Design Review Board
Molly Maguire, Landscape Architect
Neil McCarthy, Architect
John Moulten, Barkley Company
Garrett O'Brien, Planning Commission, Builder
JP Slagle, Engineer
Ali Taysi, Planning Commission, land use consultant
Michael Lilliquiest, Bellingham City Council, Fairhaven resident



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	4
HOW TO USE.....	5
GLOSSARY.....	6
SITE CATEGORY	
S1 Intent - Preserve and use natural systems and features.....	9
S2 Intent - Contribute to the community identity and architectural character of the surrounding area.....	11
S3 Intent - Organize the site to prioritize the public realm.....	13
PUBLIC REALM CATEGORY	
P1 Intent - Create an attractive, safe, lively, and inviting community-oriented pedestrian environment.....	15
P2 Intent - Provide visual interest to and from buildings.....	17
P3 Intent - Create a network of safe, convenient, and attractive off-street linkages for pedestrians.....	19
P4 Intent - Enhance the overall visual cohesiveness of the surrounding area.....	21
BUILDING DESIGN CATEGORY	
B1 Intent - Express a clear architectural design concept appropriate for the proposed structures and contextually compatible with the surrounding area.....	23
B2 Intent - Create high-quality, durable, and interesting buildings that have texture and depth.....	25
B3 Intent - Reduce the overall impact on the environment and human health during and after construction.....	27
APPENDIX A Urban Village Specific Design Character, Guidelines, and Maps	
APPENDIX B Historic Building Guidelines	



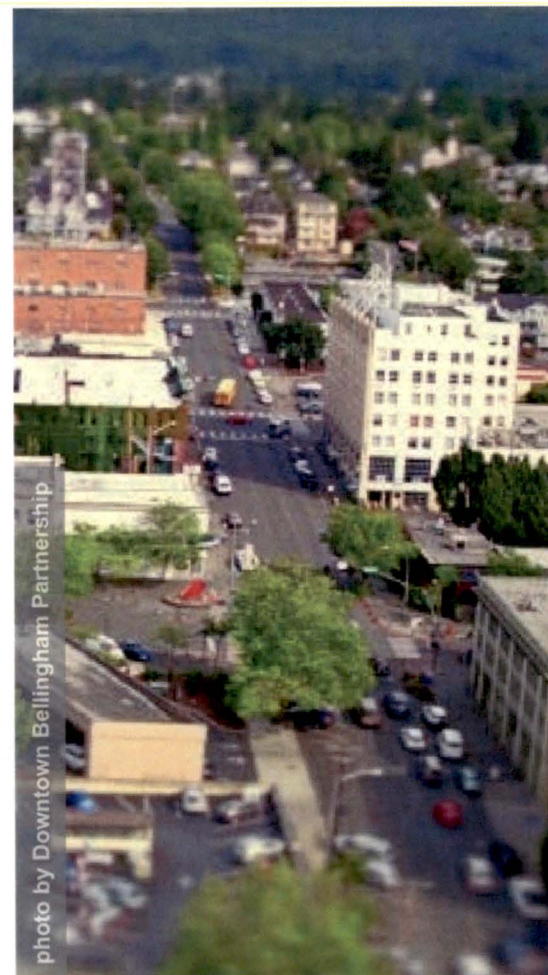
Introduction

PURPOSE | The purpose of the Bellingham Design Review Process is to shape the design of the built environment to enhance Bellingham's sense of place, reflect the community's values, and contribute to the vitality of the City.

The Bellingham Urban Village Design Guidelines establish a set of intents by which projects - including new construction, and additions or alterations to existing and historic buildings - are evaluated during the Design Review process. The Guidelines are a flexible tool for guiding property owners, developers, and design professionals through the design process, from project inception through completion. Historically significant buildings exist in most Bellingham urban villages, and Downtown and Fairhaven have National Register Historic Districts at their core. The Design Guidelines provide a basis for making decisions about the appropriate treatment of existing and historic buildings, the design of compatible new construction and the preservation of Bellingham's broader historic landscape.

The Bellingham Urban Village Design Guidelines form a framework to guide project teams in developing innovative design solutions for context-sensitive urban developments. It is a supplement to the specific land use standards of the Bellingham Municipal Code, Title 20 Land Use Development.

APPLICABILITY | The Bellingham Urban Village Design Guidelines apply to projects within the City's Urban Villages as defined in Bellingham Municipal Code 20.25. (see Appendix A for list of current urban villages and locations).





How to Use This Document

Category **Intent**

S2 Contribute to the massing identity + architectural character of the surrounding area

INTENT

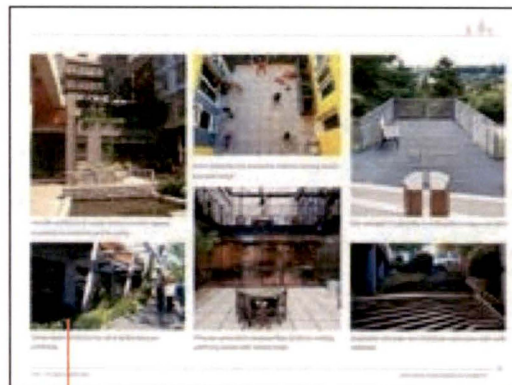
For new buildings in urban villages and surrounding residential areas:

- Design the building massing to respond to the urban context, including building height, setbacks, and building form.
- Identify and preserve local and existing building massing.
- Recognize and respond to existing building massing in the surrounding area.

For all other buildings:

- Use setbacks, building height, setbacks, and building form to respond to the urban context.
- When building massing is not consistent with the surrounding area, use setbacks, building height, setbacks, and building form to respond to the urban context.
- Use setbacks, building height, setbacks, and building form to respond to the urban context.

Guideline



Images

Category | This document is organized into three categories. Site, Public Realm, and Building Design. The Site category addresses the relationship between building massing and location to natural systems and the overall Urban Village. The Public Realm category addresses the relationship between buildings and adjacent sidewalks, streets, open spaces to support the public experience. The Building Design category addresses the overall architectural concept and materiality. Each category is represented by a letter and includes three or four intents.

Intent | Intents are desired outcomes for the project and surrounding Urban Village. Project teams are encouraged to work with City of Bellingham Planners to identify intents relevant to their project early in the design process. The statement of intent is located at the top of the page and is supported by an introductory paragraph, which gives the rationale for the intent. Each intent is followed by a series of guidelines.

Guideline | Guidelines are suggested approaches for a project to meet the intent. Not all guidelines will be relevant for every project. Projects teams may implement a combination of the guidelines and/or propose alternate approaches unique to the project that together meet the intent. Projects will be evaluated holistically.

Images | Images and diagrams provide visual examples of approaches for projects to meet the intent. Unless otherwise noted, all images are courtesy of Schemata Workshop.



Glossary

Abut | When two spaces share a border or are directly adjacent

Accessible | Space or feature meets universal design or ADA standards for ease of use; space that is publicly approachable or usable

Adaptive Plants | Species of plants originally native to other regions that have become acclimated and established in a new area without being harmful to existing native plants or wildlife, and are able to thrive without human intervention

Arcade | Covered passageway (often arched) usually at ground level and lined with retail spaces (on one or both sides)

Architectural Character | Defining attributes of a building or neighborhood style

Architectural Features | Details, elements, and components of a building's design

Architectural Design Concept | A clear idea, notion or intention that serves as the backbone of a design process

Articulation | Method of styling the joints of a design to reveal how the parts fit into the whole by emphasizing each part separately

Awning | Overhead covering (often fabric covering a metal frame) shielding entries and building openings

Building Elevation | The side or façade of a building

Building Features | *See architectural features*

Building Environment | Man-made structures and elements viewed collectively as an environment

Canopy | Overhead building projection at street level to shade or shelter from weather conditions. Often metal structure over which a fabric or metal covering is attached

Cladding | Exterior finish material that provides protection to the building envelope

Community Identity | The combination of architectural character, building styles, and intangible features of a neighborhood

CPTED Principles | Acronym stands for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. These are design principles that increase public safety and security

Cross-Ventilation | The circulation of fresh air through open windows, doors, or other openings – generally located on opposite sides of the space being ventilated

Datum Line | A horizontal line used as a point of reference in design

Facade | a building face, or side of building

Fenestration | The arrangement of windows and doors on the building



Glossary

Gateway Key Intersection | An intersection that defines the arrival to an Urban Village

Glazing | Glass windows

Historic Building | A building or structure that is significant in the history, architecture, or culture of the area

Human Scale | Proportioning of the environment for the physical and sensory capabilities of people

Loggia | A covered exterior gallery or corridor usually on an upper level, but sometimes at ground level. The outer wall is open and usually supported by a series of columns

Marquee | Horizontal building projection above street level to shade or shelter pedestrians from weather conditions. Rigid and non-retractable, may hold signage at street face or visible from sidewalk

Mid-Block Connections | A pedestrian pathway inside or between buildings connecting two sides of a city block

Modulation | Portions of building a facade that step back or project forward

Natural | Organically occurring; not human-made

Natural Features | Organic preexisting site elements and qualities

Natural Systems | Processes, environmental conditions, or organically occurring cycles that impact a potential site

Pedestrian Key Intersection | An intersection with high pedestrian activity and that should be designed/improved to be responsive to the needs of pedestrians

Pedestrian Realm | Public space designated for pedestrians, often the space between the curb and building frontage

Permeability | The ability to physically pass through a building façade, space, or material

Porosity | Permeability or the ability to let water pass through

Public Realm | Space which is open and accessible to the general public

Regionally Appropriate | Elements or materials well suited to the climate or local character of the site

Scale (Pedestrian/Neighborhood) | The relative size or extent of something

Social Environment | The combination of social and intangible elements viewed collectively as an environment

Solar Gain | The increase in temperature of a space that is caused by solar radiation

Surrounding Area | Areas that are nearby, around, or directly adjacent to a site, neighborhood

Terminus | The end of a street or path

Transom | High window located above a door or at top of wall



Glossary

View Terminus | The quality of grabbing a viewer's attention

Visual Interest | The end point of a view corridor

Wayfinding | Signage or other visual way of guiding people through the physical environment

Weather Protection | Overhead canopy, marquee, awning or other building overhang to protect pedestrians from weather

S1

Site 1

INTENT | Preserve and use natural systems and features



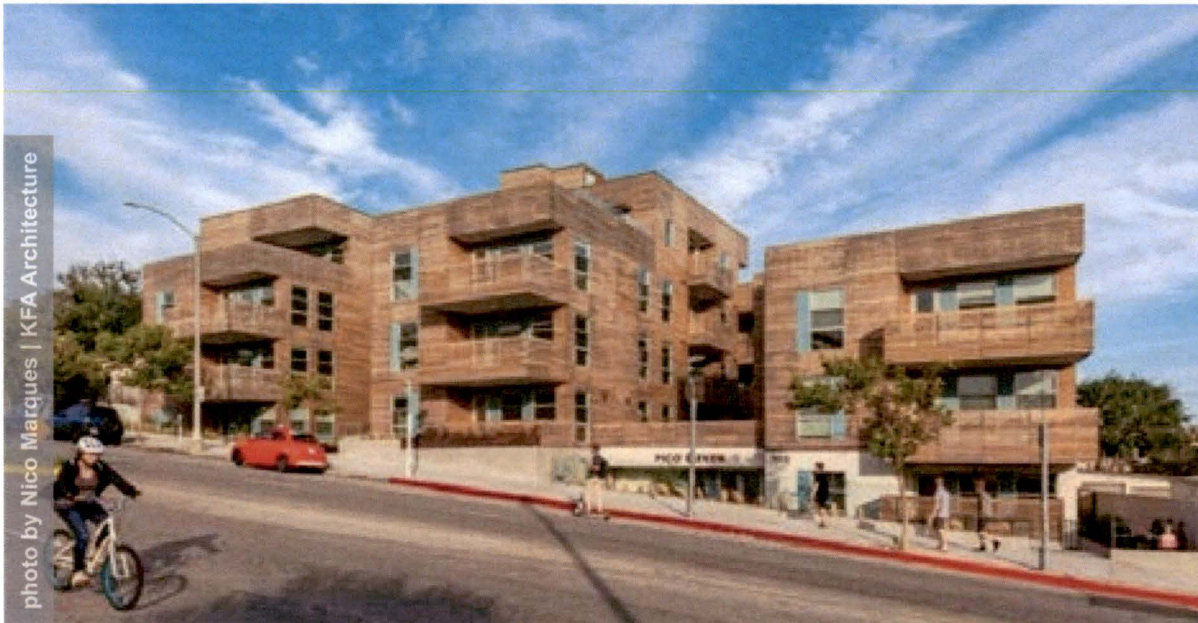
INTRODUCTION | Successful site planning is responsive to natural systems and features and uses native materials and landscaping. On urban sites which have seen prior development, many natural systems and features have been previously altered. Care should be taken to both consider the effect of natural systems and incorporate existing natural features where possible and practicable.

GUIDELINES

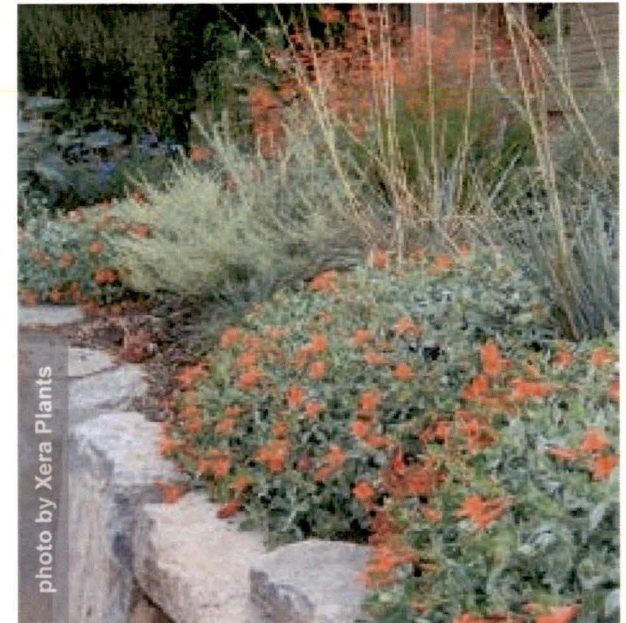
1. Organize the site to frame visual connections to surrounding landscape and natural features.
2. Organize the building and exterior spaces based on solar orientation, wind, and other natural systems.
3. Integrate natural and regionally appropriate materials.
4. Model new landscaping after native/adaptive habitats from the surrounding region. Plan for low maintenance, durability, and longevity.
5. Plan the site and mass of buildings to reinforce and celebrate existing natural features and systems.
6. Preserve and incorporate regionally appropriate vegetation for wildlife habitats.
7. Incorporate Green Stormwater Infrastructure as outlined in City Center Street Design Standards or other green infrastructure techniques.



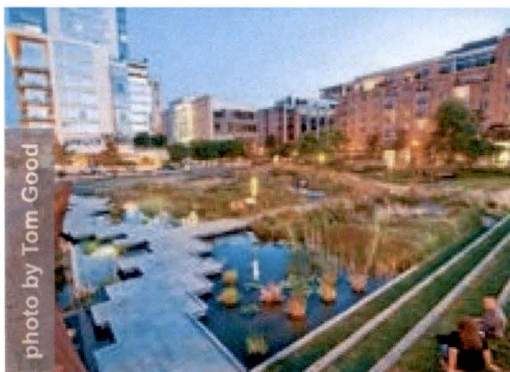
Orient exterior walkways and courtyards to the south.



Stagger building heights with slope.



Use local vegetation for climate appropriate landscaping.



Integrate natural systems into landscaping.



Use continuous horizontal bands and varying storefronts to accommodate slope.



Orient windows towards sunlight and views.

S2

Site 2

INTENT | Contribute to the community identity + architectural character of the surrounding area



INTRODUCTION | Proposed design development should be contextually responsive and should consider both the social and built environment. Community identity can be reflective of existing conditions (such as those found in a historic district or provided by natural features) and/or aspirational goals (such as those found in adopted Urban Village plans). Architectural character includes existing built environment features which the community wishes to reinforce.

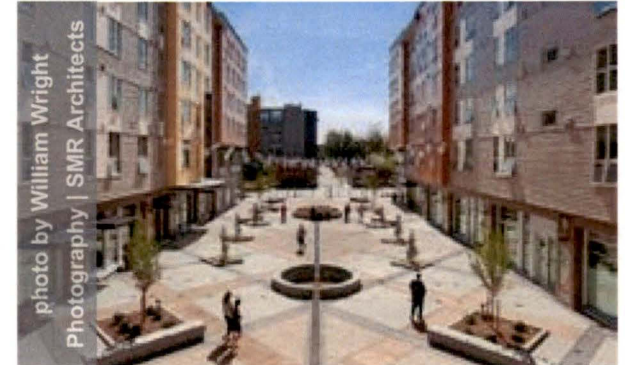
GUIDELINES

For new buildings in urban villages with existing character (see Appendix A):

1. Design the site to reinforce or improve existing building and open space patterns according to/in alignment with urban village plan goals.
2. Identify and reinforce scale and massing of existing buildings.
3. Recognize and reinforce existing neighborhood patterns such as ground floor uses, building materials, window proportions, building modulation and entryways.

For all other buildings:

4. For properties along zone transitions, consider access to sunlight for adjacent buildings when placing bulk and massing of building.
5. When including open spaces, consider augmenting or expanding on open spaces that already exist.
6. When the site has a unique situation, such as an unusual street intersection or dramatic topography, use these to inform the design.
7. Find a meaningful way to incorporate the specific history of the site and surrounding neighborhood and community into the design.
8. Per the Secretary of Interiors Standards for Historic Preservation, design new buildings and additions to be compatible with, but differentiated from, landmark buildings.



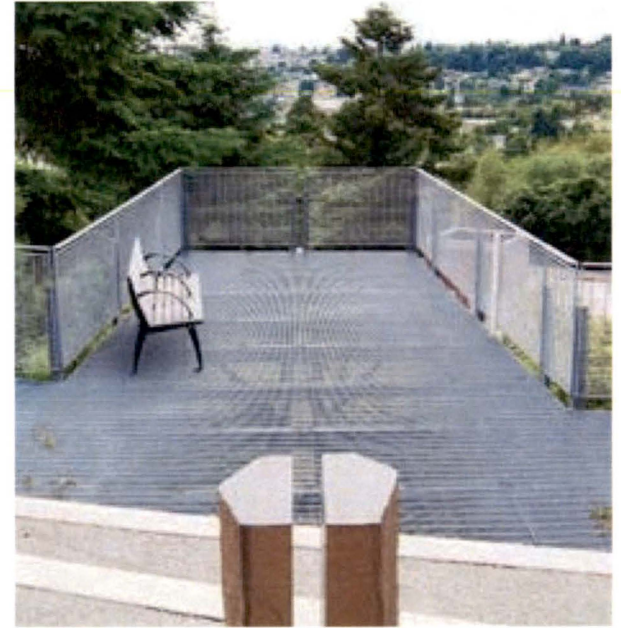
Orient courtyards toward existing plazas and open areas.



Use site conditions to create shared common spaces accessible to residents and the public.



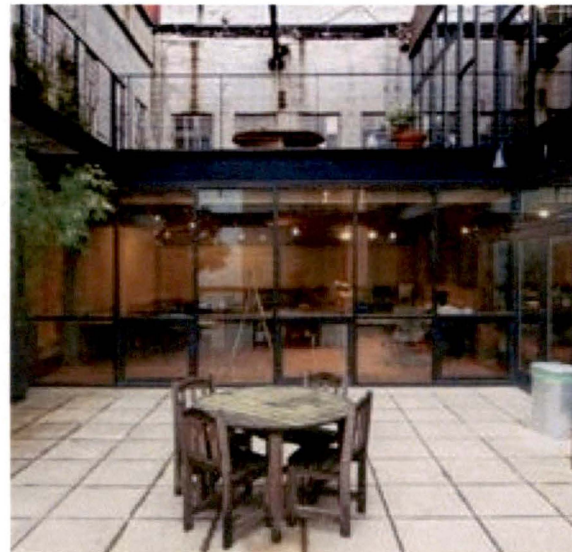
Orient balconies and courtyards towards existing plazas and open areas.



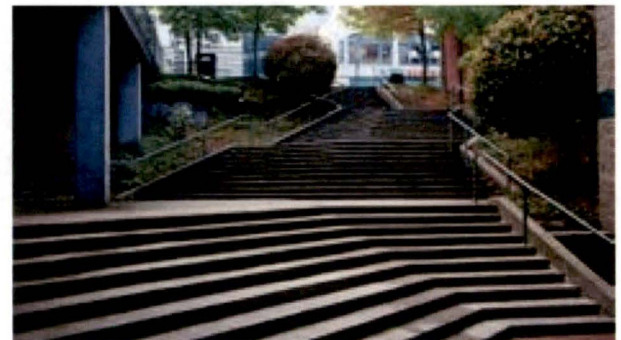
Use changes in materiality to emphasize a unique moment.



Create layers of privacy by using landscaping as screening.



Promote connections between floor levels by creating gathering spaces with shared views.



Emphasize throughways and mid-block connections with wide walkways.

S3

Site 3

INTENT | Organize the site to prioritize the public realm



INTRODUCTION | Strengthen the most desirable aspects of the surrounding area and design the proposed development in a way that supports the public realm. Building edges and open space should support and enhance the vibrancy of public life.

GUIDELINES

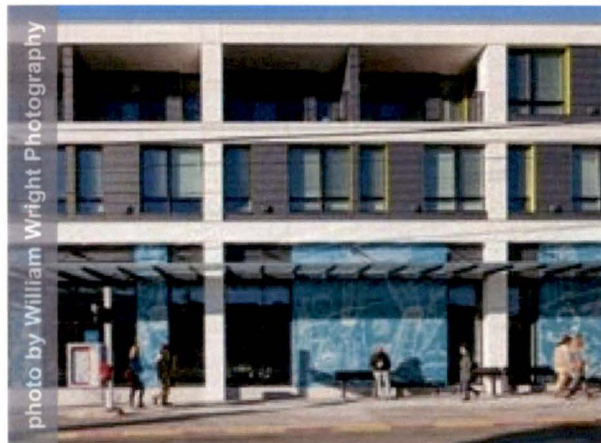
1. Make a strong physical connection with the adjacent street. Consider topography and streetscape form as well as function.
2. To accommodate an inviting and activated pedestrian environment of sidewalk cafes and other outdoor space, incorporate setbacks, loggia, arcades, or insets at ground level.
3. When private interior courtyards abut the street edge, architectural elements can be used to continue the urban street wall and delineate private space.
4. To support a vibrant pedestrian realm, entrances to retail and commercial uses should be prioritized along the main streets, and entrances to private uses such as residential entries should be located along quieter, less public, zones.
5. To provide visual interest for passersby, prioritize, differentiate, and activate ground floor spaces along the public realm.
6. Locate common spaces within the building to overlook the public realm.
7. Locate driveways, garbage collection, and utility spaces out of view from the pedestrian realm.
8. To promote visual connectivity and pedestrian sense of safety, locate features such as entries, windows, decks, and patios on the building elevations fronting the public realm.
9. Coordinate the location of building entries with adjacent circulation paths.



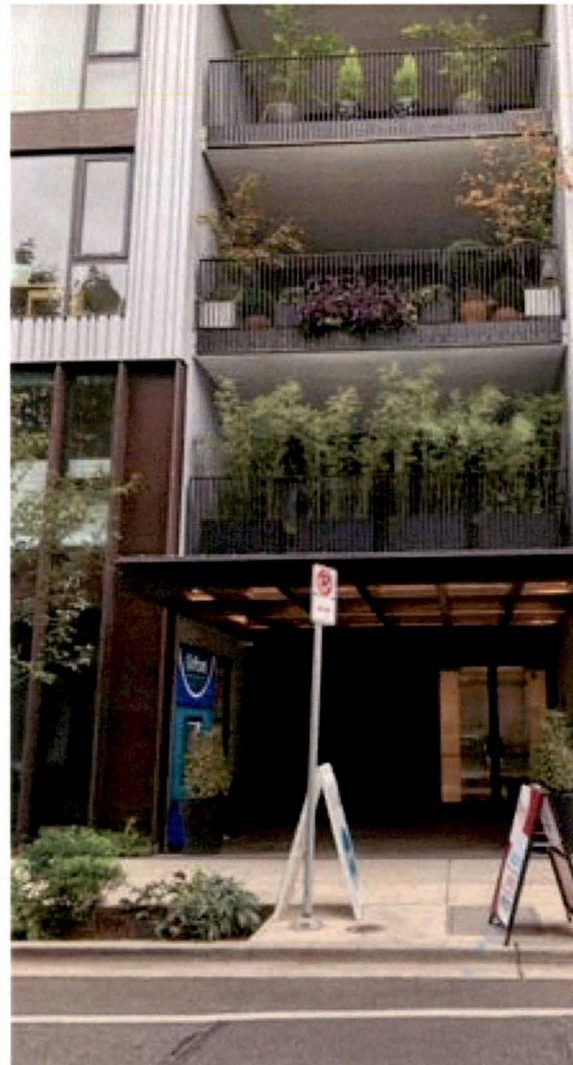
Create mid-block connections to provide more opportunities for public engagement.



Use vegetation to screen private spaces and activate otherwise blank walls.



Provide visual interest through transparent retail storefronts and art. Integrate transit stops into architecture.



Locate gathering spaces and balconies at building entrances and public facing facades.



Use landscaping to indicate private entries.



Use a variety of planter sizes and heights to integrate buildings into their sites.

P1

Public Realm 1

INTENT | Create an attractive, safe, lively, and inviting community-oriented pedestrian environment



INTRODUCTION | The public street should be a significant focus for site and building design as a true community space. When designed with care the public street becomes more than just a throughway – it becomes a destination. A key design consideration should be to create connectivity between ground-floor uses and the streetscape, with particular respect paid to differentiating between public and private spaces. Proposed street-level commercial spaces should invite and encourage the public to stop, browse, engage with the use, and linger.

GUIDELINES

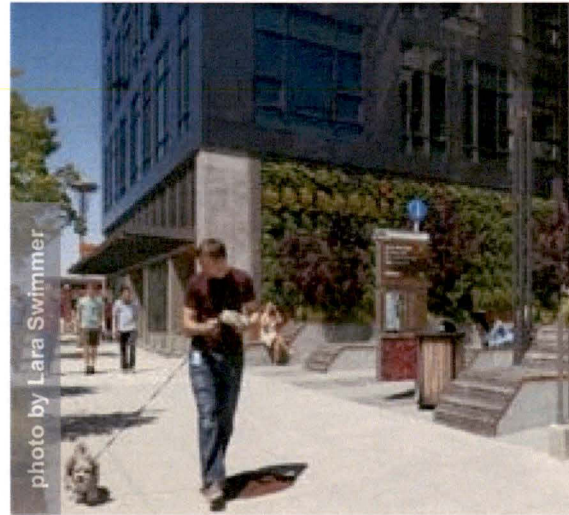
1. To encourage the development of a successful retail environment, vary the expression of the storefront and provide a change in rhythm to maintain pedestrian visual interest.
2. To create a predictable and comfortable place to walk and window shop, provide continuous weather protection.
3. To bring interior activity into the public realm, incorporate exterior program elements that support interior uses.
4. Use a combination of lighting, glazing and textures to provide visual depth and interest to the storefront.
5. Setback the building at ground level to create a more generous pedestrian zone. Create an inviting environment with seating, landscaping, and interesting textures and materials.
6. Locate building entries adjacent to public open space.
7. Locate signage at a visible height and near retail and commercial entries.
8. Provide opportunities for dynamic and visually appealing displays along retail or commercial windows. Consider low-reflective glazing to increase visibility of activity.
9. Create inviting seating areas near building entrances and open spaces.
10. Incorporate artwork at the pedestrian and neighborhood scale that reflects the history and character of the surrounding area.



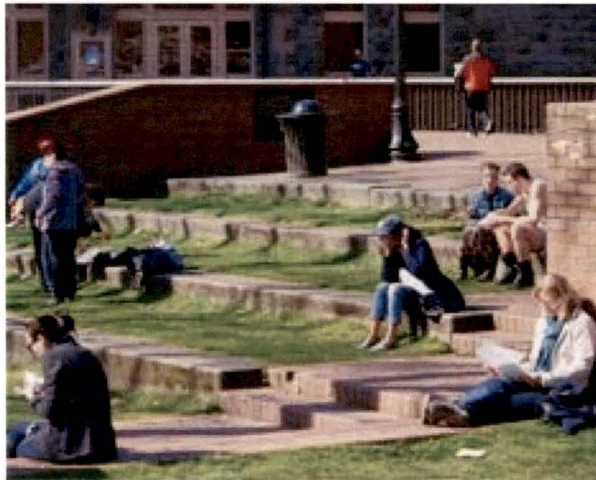
Dedicate ground level space to sidewalk activation and public seating.



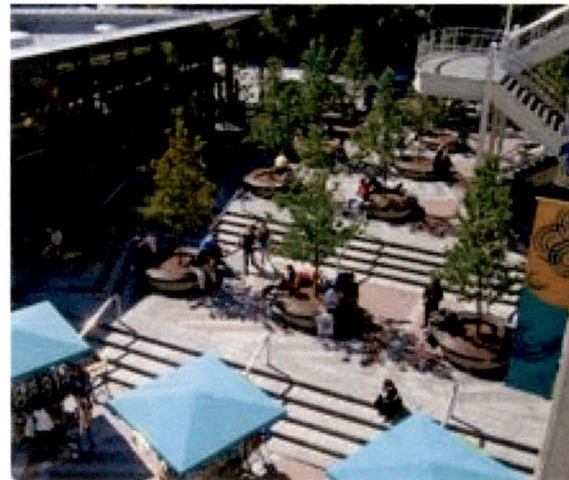
Use openings to create indoor/outdoor connections.



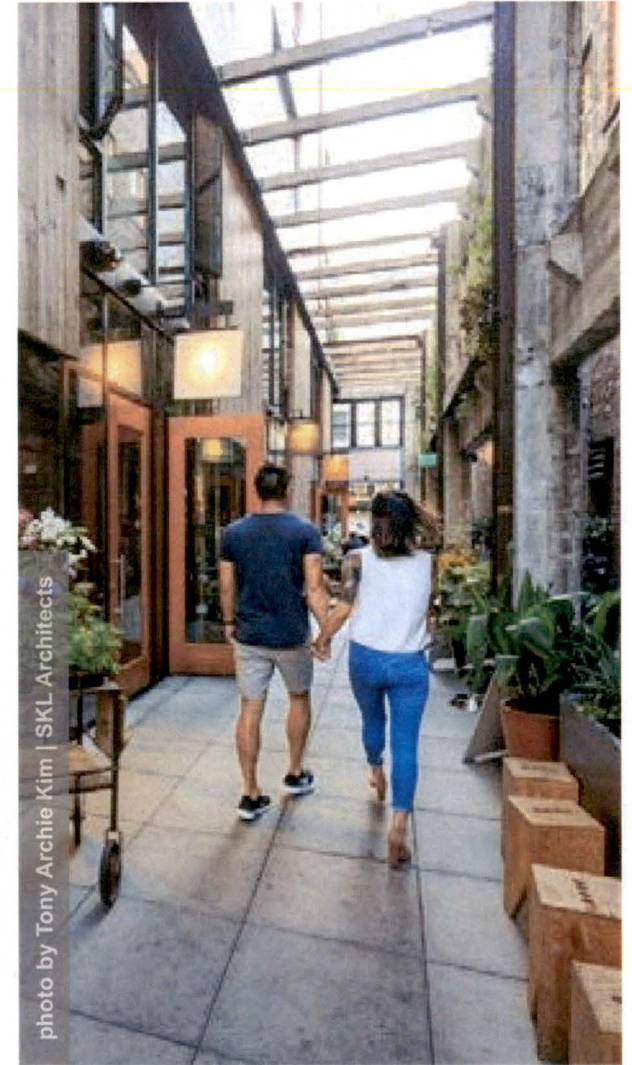
Include benches and other public programming.



Terrace green space to invite casual public gatherings.



Create safe spaces for pedestrians to engage with commercial and public amenities.



Consider human scale when creating commercial avenues.

P2

Public Realm 2

INTENT | Provide visual interest to and from buildings



INTRODUCTION | Buildings will be enjoyed from a variety of different perspectives and locations. Consider a variety of key vantage points and design visual interest cues appropriately scaled to each view. Small-scale detail creates interest at the pedestrian level, while large-scale detail and massing modulation provides interest at higher points or longer viewing distances.

GUIDELINES

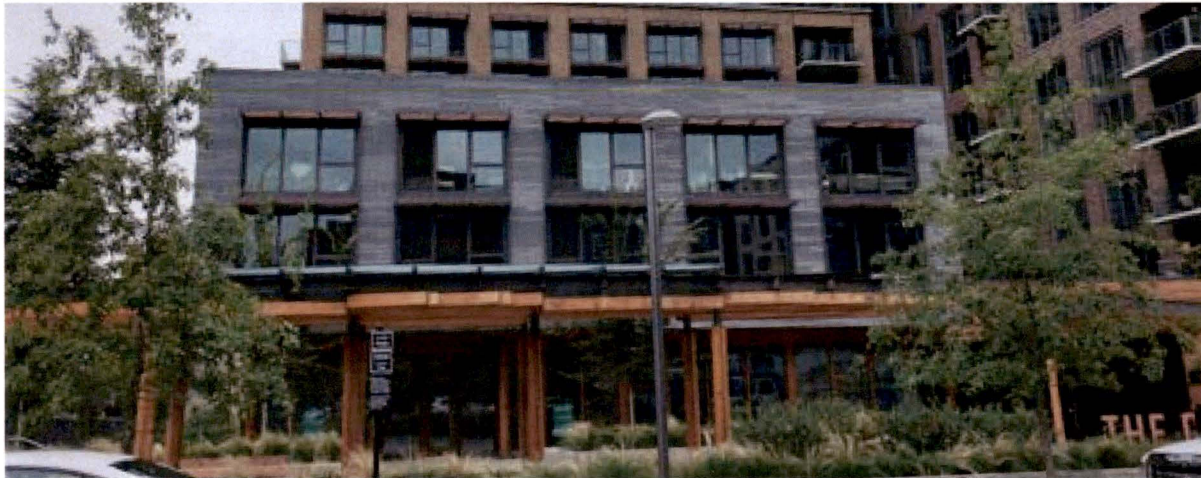
1. Differentiate the primary entrance with size, materials, insets, and/or lighting.
2. Highlight special architectural features with downlit lighting fixtures that are cohesive with the overall building design.
3. Create visual and tactile interest at the ground level of buildings by incorporating elements such as lighting, pedestrian-scale signs, container plants, or other vegetation.
4. Recognize that the first vertical 30 feet of the building is within the pedestrian field of vision, and carefully consider the materials and fenestration.
5. To frame views of the street and buildings beyond, incorporate arcades or loggia at the base of the building.
6. If large blank walls cannot be avoided, provide visual interest with artwork, landscaping, or architectural detailing.
7. Provide visual interest by incorporating a combination of color, texture, pattern, and transparency.
8. Provide visibility to activities by keeping glazing free of signs, shelving, obscuring film, or shades. If incorporating reflective or patterned glazing in the storefront, limit to areas outside of the pedestrian eye level.



Add articulation or art to largely blank facades.



Set buildings back from the property line to allow for more pedestrian level outdoor space.



Create gathering spaces along circulation routes to invite activation and integrate the building into the site.



Place planters along sidewalks to add color and delineate areas of use.



Place public seating along pedestrian boulevards by dedicating ample sidewalk space to gathering nodes.



Use plantings and other furnishings to add visual interest and privacy screening.

P3

Public Realm 3

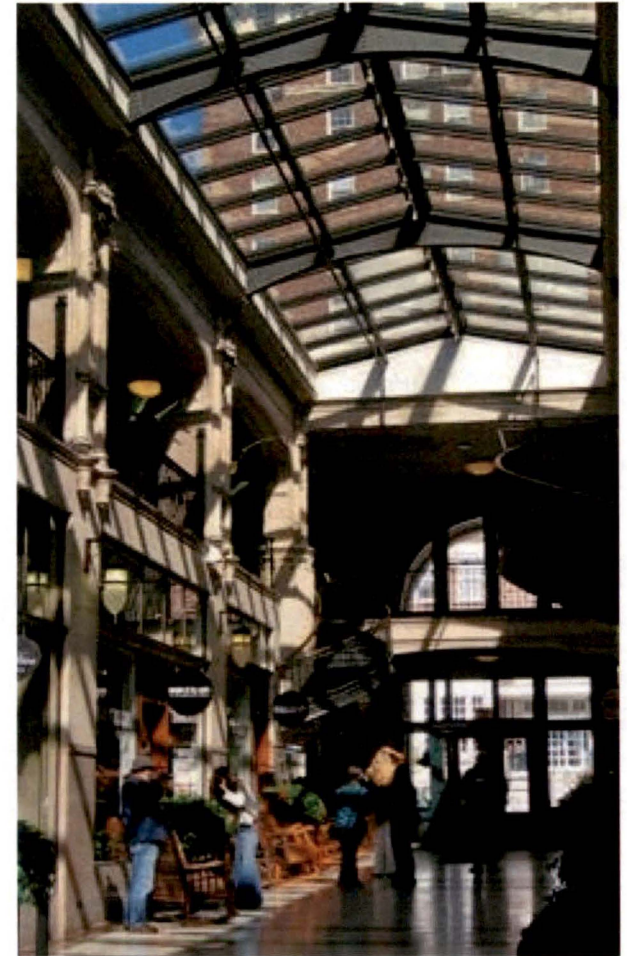
INTENT | Create a network of safe, convenient, and attractive off-street linkages for pedestrians



INTRODUCTION | Opportunities to provide pedestrian connections through a project site should be considered. Such linkages may reflect pre-development connections or facilitate neighborhood access to commercial areas or public uses such as schools. These linkages should be designed consistent with CPTED principles.

GUIDELINES

1. If there are on-site pedestrian walkways, provide a connection to the street.
2. Locate walkways in active areas visible from adjoining spaces.
3. Consider pedestrian access through the site to connect streets, alleys, and existing public spaces.
4. Consider active retail passageways to provide safe mid-block connections.
5. Identify and connect points of interest in the surrounding area. Use design elements such as signage, changes in paving material, and lighting to create a wayfinding system.
6. Provide weather protection for pedestrian comfort.
7. Consider how access, lighting, visual connections, and signage contribute to pedestrian safety.
8. Provide a physical separation between vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian pathways.
9. Provide visual connections to and through publicly accessible space to encourage use.
10. Consider a variety of scales of public open space.



Design atriums to create transition spaces that bridge indoor and outdoor activity.



Add overhead vegetation for seasonal shading.



Use circulation space as commercial frontage and introduce a range of materials and products to add visual interest.



Make plazas wide and flexible enough to accommodate markets and special events.



Engage a wide array of people by adding features at a range of scales and with a variety of intended uses.

P4

Public Realm 4

INTENT | Enhance the overall visual cohesiveness of the surrounding area



INTRODUCTION | Buildings exist within the context of the neighborhood fabric; they do not exist in isolation. The surrounding buildings are part of the site, and buildings should be site-specific. Buildings should enhance the surrounding area by continuing a commercial or residential street wall, referencing the detail and articulation of the ground floor, and upper story scale and patterning/modulation. Acknowledging that historic construction materials and installation techniques may be impractical for modern construction, new buildings should not aesthetically mimic or replicate historic buildings. Recognizing proposed buildings will become references for future development, care and attention should be paid to unprecedented architectural expressions.

GUIDELINES

1. Draw inspiration from, but do not replicate, surrounding buildings. Proportion, scale, modulation, repetition, window insets, and building materials are existing patterns to consider.
2. Reference horizontal elements from adjacent buildings and continue the datum lines, especially those visible to pedestrians.
3. Consider historic building patterns of lot width or modulation which might inform design.
4. For full city block development, provide richness and variety at the pedestrian level. Reduce the scale of development by incorporating open space, change of building modularity, materials, storefront expression, and different types of overhead protection.
5. Consider repeating elements, such as balconies, exterior shading, and bay windows, to add variety, depth, and rhythm to the façade.
6. Emphasize a corner site at a key neighborhood intersection with prominent architectural elements. See Appendix B for locations of key intersections.
7. Design a building at the terminus of a street or view corridor to visually highlight its prominent location.
8. If no preexisting buildings are consistent with the vision for the area, as described in the Urban Village Plan, consider how the proposed project will be referenced in future development.



Complement the surrounding buildings and open spaces.



photo by Tony Archie Kim | SKL Architects

Design facades that relate to and reinforce the proportion and materiality of surrounding buildings.



Highlight public spaces with architectural details.



photo by Timothy McDonald Onion Flats

Use textures, patterns, and elements from local buildings to inform facade design.

B1

Building Design 1

INTENT | Express a clear architectural design concept appropriate for the proposed structures and contextually compatible with the surrounding area



INTRODUCTION | A well-designed building positively contributes to its streetscape, supporting commercial and pedestrian activity at ground level and offering visual interest at upper levels. The composition and architectural detailing of building elevations has a major impact on the perceived scale of buildings and their interaction with the public realm. Building elevations should be well-resolved, with a size and proportion appropriate to the streetscape and an emphasis on human scale.

GUIDELINES

1. Using diagrams and visuals, create a clear concept for the building, supported by design choices.
2. Design architectural features that are an integral part of the building.
3. Develop the massing of the building to respect any retained historic elements.
4. Consider the proportion, rhythm, scale, and composition of all building facades.
5. Design fencing to be an integral part of the architectural concept, with consistent use of detailing, material, or color.
6. Incorporate features that create a visually distinct roof form.
7. Incorporate human-scaled details at ground level that emphasize the building base and pedestrian realm.
8. Match adjacent building ground floor to ceiling heights in historic districts.
9. Provide transom windows over marquees and canopies to maximize daylight into storefronts, where appropriate.
10. When working within a neighborhood with existing architectural character, continue fenestration rhythms and patterning from adjacent buildings.
11. Design storefronts for a variety of uses at the outset and anticipate adaptation over time.



Use a different materiality at the ground level to indicate a difference in privacy and programming.

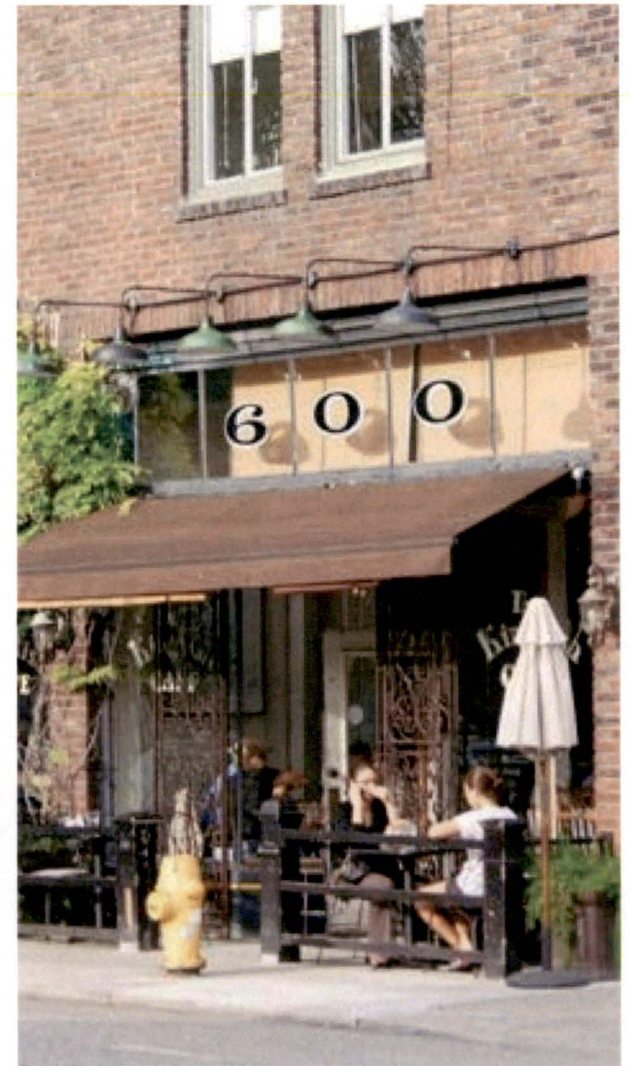
Building Design 1



Differentiate the roof plane and other parts of the building.



Respect existing historic building features, as well as the surrounding context.



Design storefronts to adapt to future changes.

B2

Building Design 2



INTENT | Create high quality, durable, and interesting buildings that have texture and depth

INTRODUCTION | High quality buildings should provide a balanced composition of architectural elements, textures, materials, and color selections that respond to the character of the local area. Use varied materials, details, and contrasting colors to highlight feature elements, delineate breaks or reduce the impact of other building elements.

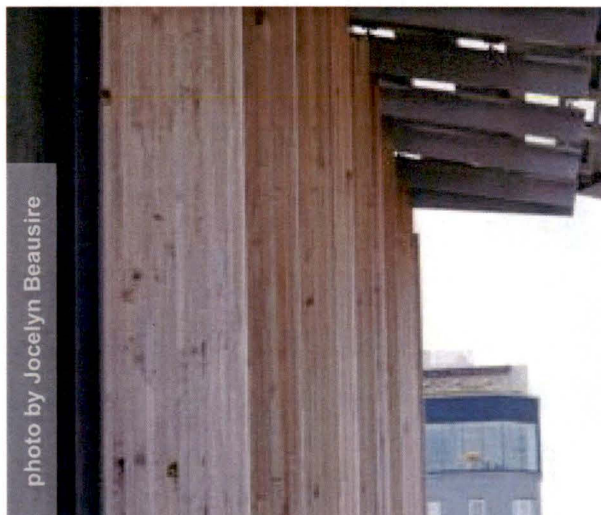
GUIDELINES

1. Create depth and shadow lines within the building façade.
2. Create porosity and permeability by incorporating operable storefronts.
3. Select high quality materials, particularly at street level, such as stone, brick, tile, concrete, metal, or transparent glass.
4. Use materials appropriate to the scale and use of building.
5. Reinforce the pedestrian scale with repeating vertical elements.
6. Thoughtfully detail joints, attachments, and patterns of exterior cladding materials to create human-scaled depth and texture.
7. Incorporate a varied and durable palette of landscape materials to provide year round interest.
8. Employ a variety of types of weather protection appropriate to the scale of the building.
9. If no preexisting buildings are consistent with the vision for the area, as described in the Urban Village Plan, consider how the proposed building will be referenced in future development.

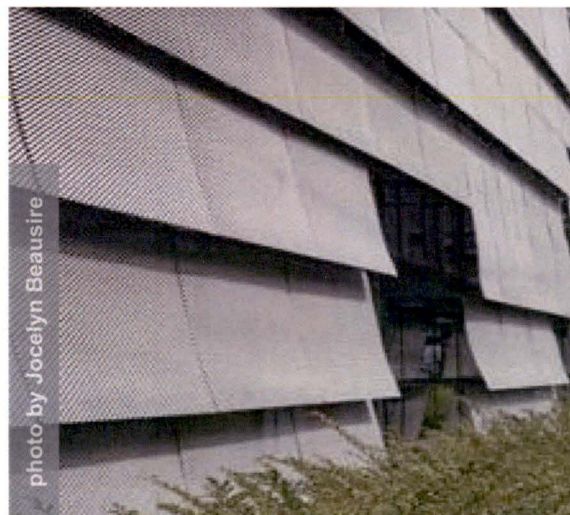


Engage the pedestrian realm with choice of materiality.

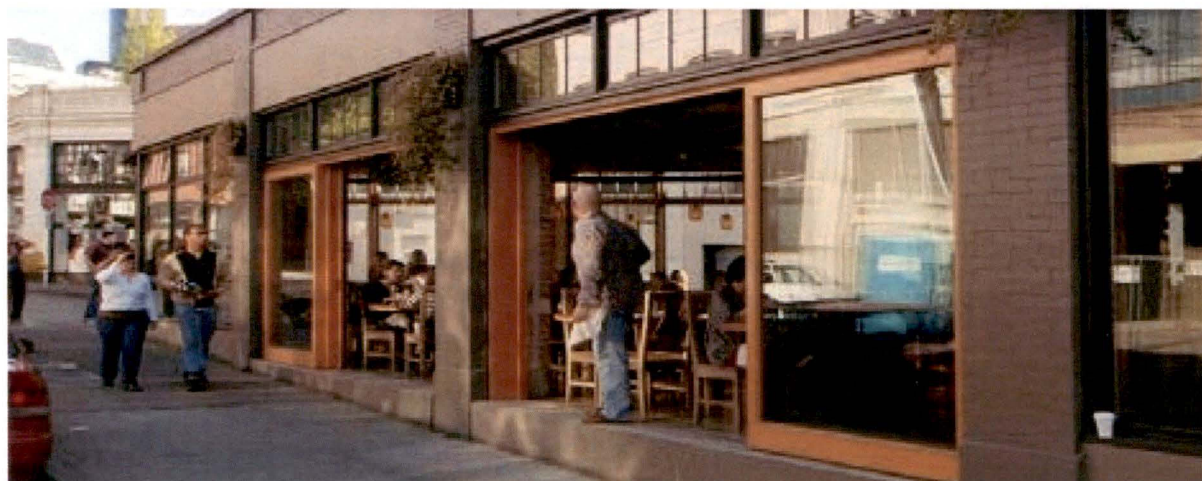
Building Design 2



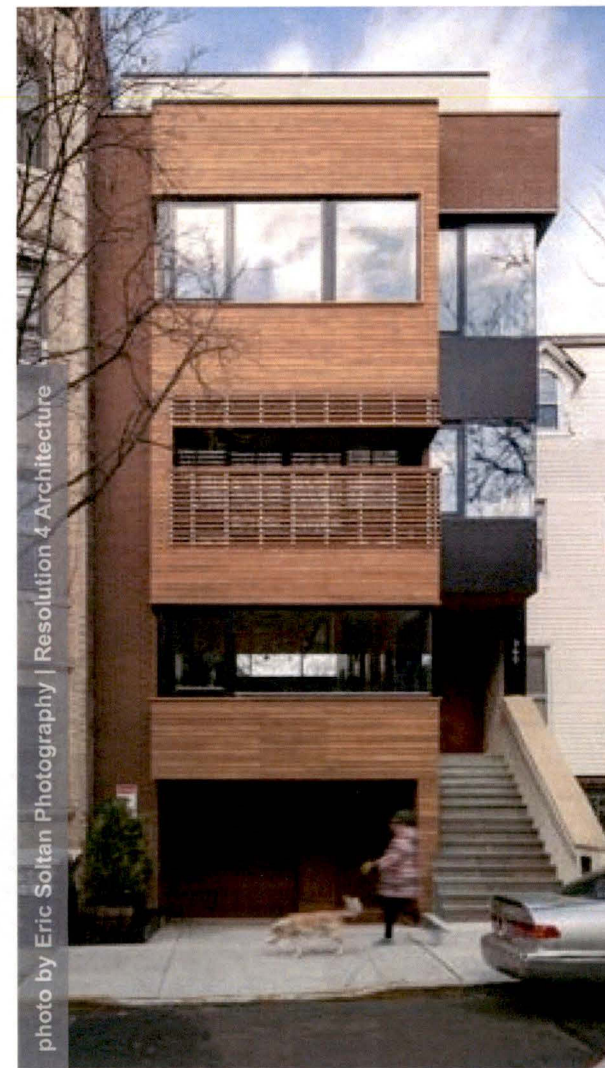
Use high quality materials on weather protection.



Use materials that create surface porosity on the facade.



Create opportunities for engagement with permeable, tactile pedestrian frontages.



Vary materiality according to building use and scale.

B3

Building Design 3

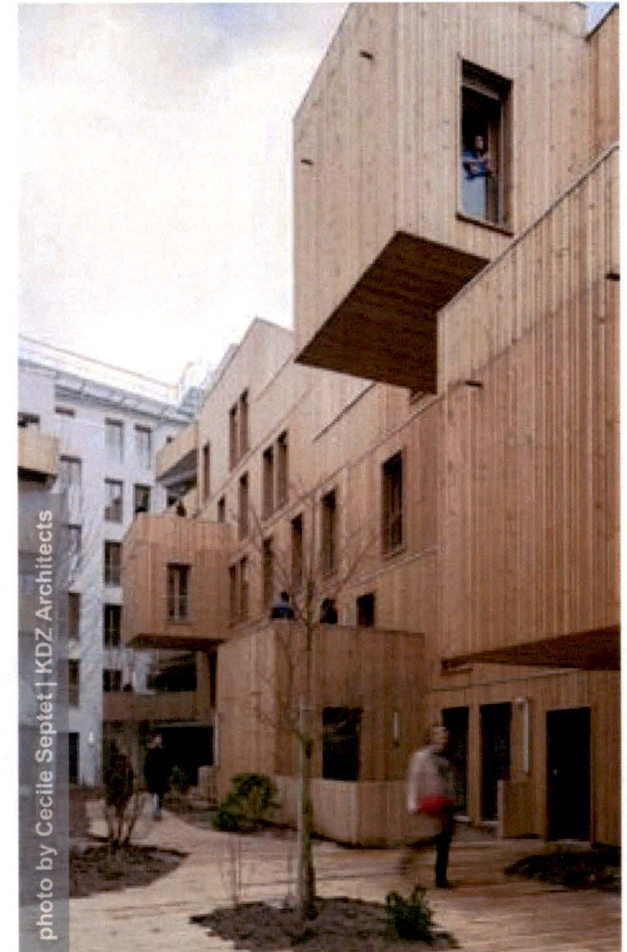
INTENT | Reduce the overall impact on the environment and human health during and after construction



INTRODUCTION | The growth and development of our community has a large impact on the natural environment. The design, construction, and operations of the buildings in which we live and work are responsible for the consumption and depletion of many natural resources. Design choices such as materials and building systems impact the health and wellness of the people who use the spaces. Building design also influences transportation habits and other choices that impact human behavior.

GUIDELINES

1. Reuse existing structures or salvage materials from existing structures on site.
2. Locate windows and shading to benefit from passive design strategies such as promoting solar gain during cool months and cross ventilation during warm months.
3. Create community oriented spaces to increase resident support and interaction.
4. Use materials and systems that are locally-sourced and appropriate for the climate of the Pacific Northwest.
5. Use long-lasting durable materials.
6. When possible, manage site stormwater by directing it into landscaping and other non-potable applications.
7. Take advantage of the natural topography to minimize impacts of grading activities on the environment and water quality.
8. Coordinate the location of entrances and walkways with bus stops and other transportation facilities as appropriate to encourage bus travel. Where appropriate, provide convenient and attractive amenities in the immediate vicinity of bus stops.



Create gathering nodes and community spaces with engaging, multi-dimensional facades.

Building Design 3

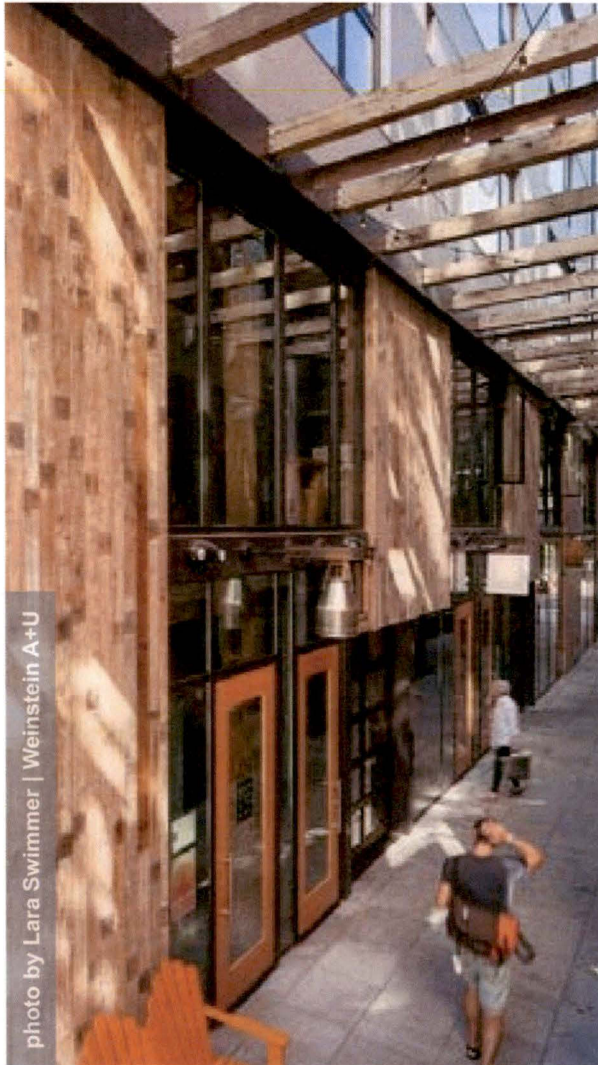


photo by Lara Swimmer | Weinstein A+U

Use existing salvaged materials from the site in new ways.



Make space for community gathering.



photo by Sally Painter Photography

Include deep recessed balconies on west face to provide solar shading.



Encourage biking with related amenities and storage.



Find ways to incorporate hydrology into landscaping, using runnels and site water features.



Appendix A | Urban Villages: Specific Design Character, Guidelines, and Maps

A1 Barkley Urban Village	ii
A2 Downtown District Urban Village	v
A3 Fairhaven Urban Village	viii
A4 Fountain District Urban Village	xiii
A5 Old Town Urban Village	xvi
A6 Samish Way Urban Village	xix
A7 Waterfront District Urban Village	xxii

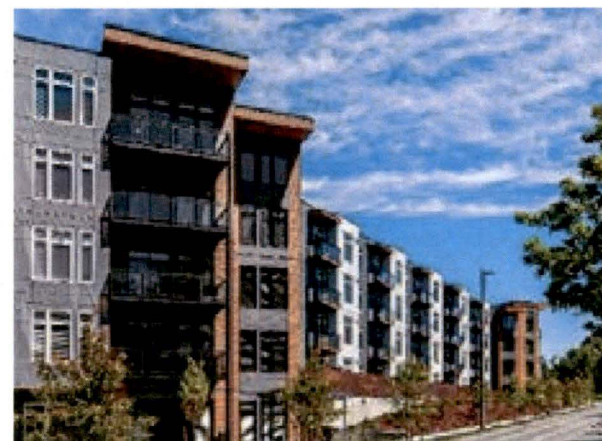
Photo Credits - Nick Cote or City of Bellingham unless noted otherwise



A1 Barkley Urban Village

INTRODUCTION | Barkley Urban Village is a roughly 255- acre area surrounding Barkley Boulevard, bounded to the south along E. Illinois St. west of Woburn Street and the Railroad Trail east of Woburn Street, to the north along E. Sunset Drive / Vining Street, to the west behind the Regal Imax Cinemas, and to the east by Sussex Drive. The boundaries are in large part determined by natural edges – greenbelt edges to the south against the Railroad trail and forested areas to the east against existing residential development. Preserved and enhanced wetlands will sit toward the south and east, against the Barkley Blvd. edge.

DESIGN CHARACTER SUMMARY | A largely greenfield site, the Barkley Urban Village is characterized by its significant open space, access to trails and greenbelts, and forested wetlands offering habitat for wildlife and recreational opportunities for residents, users and visitors. Barkley today is interspersed with vacant land and uncompleted streets, a large light industrial building, newer shopping, entertainment, dining and office venues, a growing residential population, and parcels of open space to be preserved for public benefit. Like the others, Barkley Village is envisioned as a community in which people can live, work, and play. It is designed to maintain important characteristics such as view corridors and vistas, natural features and small businesses while continuing to provide a diverse mix of quality housing and commercial opportunities.



The newest residential project, the Weatherby, integrates diverse architecture, sustainability through the largest solar array in the county, and a unique (woonerf) pedestrian friendly street.

A1

Barkley Urban Village



URBAN VILLAGE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Public Realm 1: Create an attractive, safe, lively, and inviting community-oriented pedestrian environment

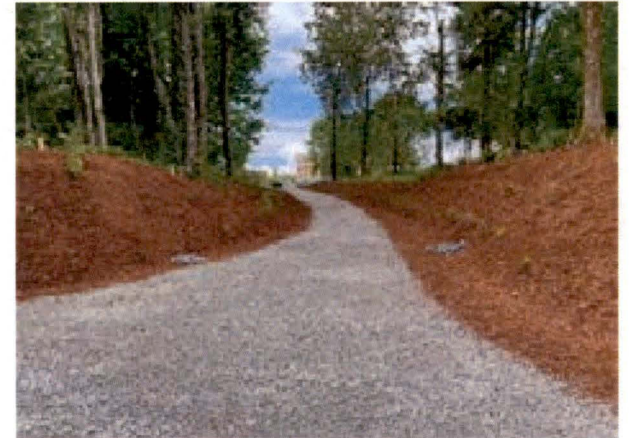
1. Develop abundant natural open space, parks and public art.

Public Realm 3: Create a network of safe, convenient, and attractive off-street linkages for pedestrians.

1. Increase walkability with enhanced pedestrian corridors and trails.

Building Design 3: Reduce the overall impact on the environment and human health during and after construction.

1. Adopt environmentally responsible practices, incorporating innovation and sustainability in building design, construction and operations.
2. Integrate thoughtful quality architecture, landscape design, food cultivation and opportunities to connect with nature.



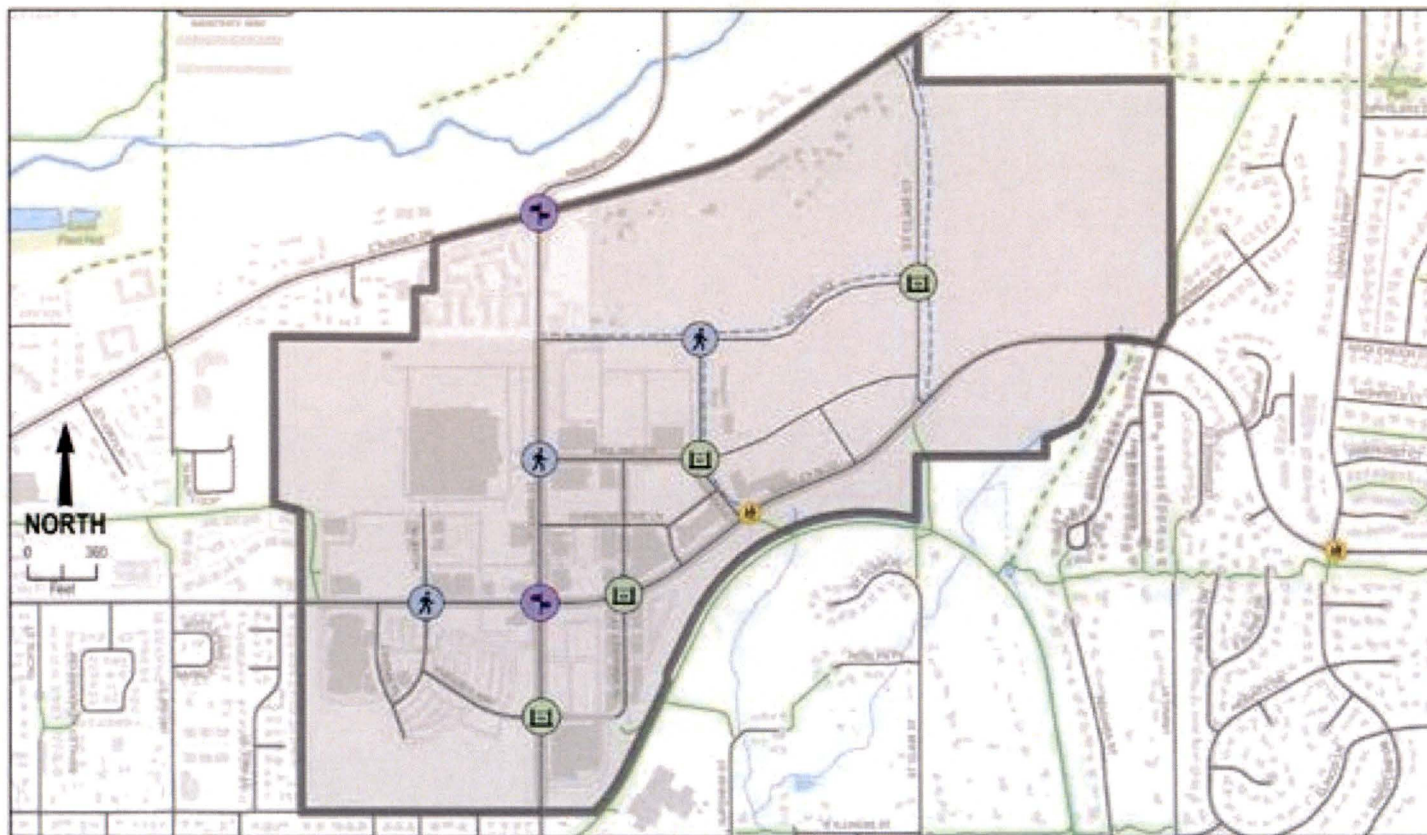
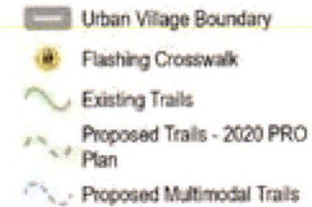
A new connector trail from Barkley Blvd to the Railroad Trail

A1 Barkley Urban Village Map



Key Intersections: Barkley Urban Village

INTERSECTION TYPES





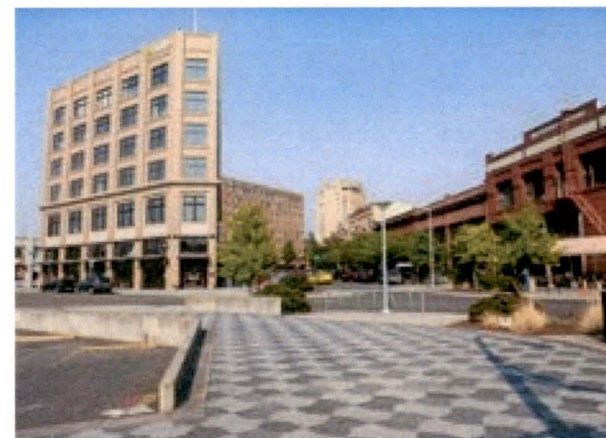
A2 Downtown District Urban Village

INTRODUCTION | Spanning 249 acres, Downtown Bellingham is the commercial, employment, civic and entertainment center for Whatcom County. Downtown has experienced building booms, retail exodus, and with concerted effort and support from the City has evolved into a multi-use neighborhood in the 21st century. The Downtown District provides jobs, housing, entertainment and services for a diverse and growing population and includes the Arts District and National Historic District which draw visitors and support tourism.

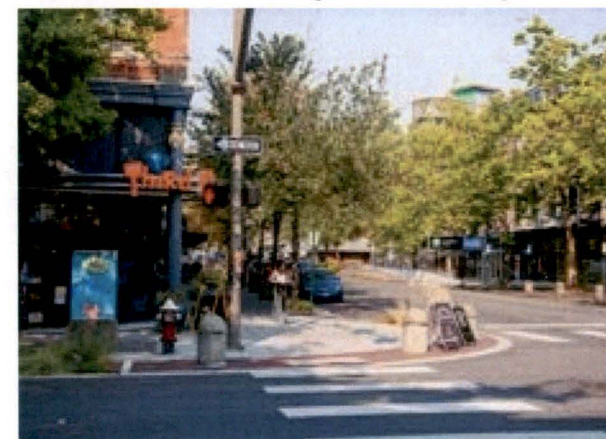
DESIGN CHARACTER SUMMARY | Historic buildings make up a key part of Downtown's character, although overall the Downtown District is an eclectic collection of new and old buildings. The Downtown land use areas are further defined as Commercial Core, Commercial Transition, Industrial Transition, and Residential Transition-1 and Residential Transition-2. Further descriptions of these areas can be found in the Downtown Plan.

DOWNTOWN SUBAREA PLAN | [link](#)

~~**CITY CENTER SUBAREA PLAN**~~ | [link](#)



The intersection of Holly, Bay and Prospect Streets is a key area in the Arts District, as well as the Downtown National Historic District and greater urban village



The corner of W. Holly and Commercial Streets, with the historic Red Front Building in the foreground

A2

Downtown District Urban Village



URBAN VILLAGE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Site 1: Preserve and use natural systems and features.

1. Orient buildings adjacent to Whatcom Creek to promote activity and interaction along the creek. Provide visual interest to building elevations along the creek.

Public Realm 1: Create an attractive, safe, lively, and inviting community-oriented pedestrian environment

1. Maintain a clear definition of the street edge. Traditionally, the edge of the sidewalk was clearly defined as a “street wall,” which helps define the street as an urban space.

Public Realm 2: Provide visual interest to and from buildings

1. Along identified Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets, provide opportunities for visual or interactive links between businesses and pedestrians.
2. Provide features that are visually interesting and human scale, such as storefront windows, display cases, art and landscaping.

Public Realm 4: Enhance the overall visual cohesiveness of the surrounding area

1. Preserve the period of significance of historic buildings. Preservation of Bellingham’s heritage is important to its sense of community and its economic development.

A2 Downtown District Urban Village Map



Key Intersections: Downtown District Urban Village

INTERSECTION TYPES









Gateway/District
Entrance

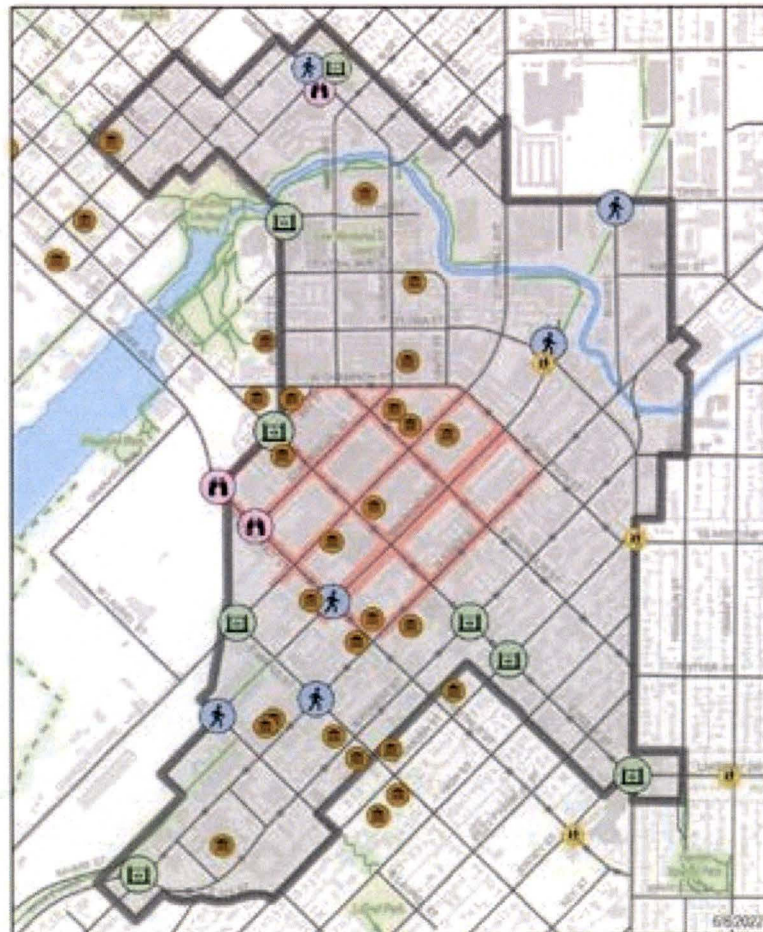
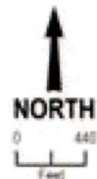


Terminal View



Pedestrian
Connection

-  Urban Village Boundary
-  Historic Register Sites
-  Flashing Crosswalk
-  Existing Trails
-  Proposed Trails - 2020 PRO Plan
-  Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets (Ground Floor Commercial Use Required)



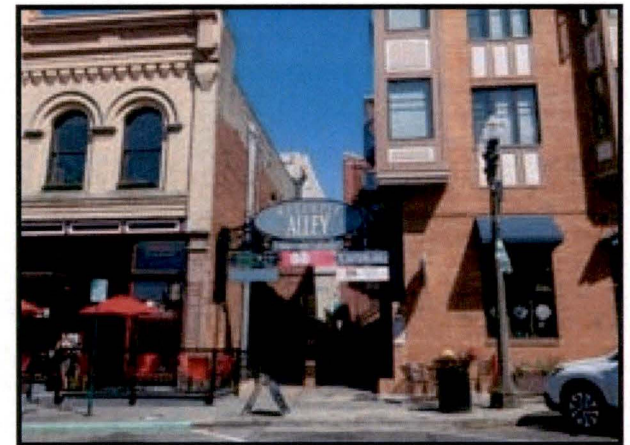
A3 Fairhaven Urban Village



INTRODUCTION | Generally located in the southside of Bellingham on the southwest base of the South Hill neighborhood, west of the Happy Valley neighborhood, north of the Edgemoor neighborhood and borders Bellingham Bay to the west. Fairhaven contains some of Bellingham’s most historic structures and represents early commercial development with a high degree of maritime influence. The Fairhaven Urban Village includes the Fairhaven Historic District, a town site first platted in 1883 which encompasses an area of three and a quarter blocks and contains the village’s best preserved buildings. The Fairhaven Design Review District is divided into four individual Design Review Areas (DRAs), Historic District DRA, Historic Influence DRA, Industrial Influence DRA, Maritime Influence DRA.

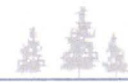
Fairhaven National Historic District (FNHD, 1977)– The historically significant buildings in this area were built between 1888 and 1929, and since that time have provided a mix of retail and other commercial services to the surrounding residential areas. Collectively, buildings in the Fairhaven National Historic District are valued by the community for their architectural character, the history they convey, and as catalysts of economic development activity.

The Historic District’s period of significance spans Fairhaven’s early building booms and includes 15 buildings dating from 1888 to the First World War. Two additional buildings were constructed after the primary historic period.



“Mackenzie Alley” located on 11th Street between the historic Nelson Block to the left and contemporary H. Dale Young Building to the right. (Alley programmed for pedestrian access to internal shops and restaurants)

A3 Fairhaven Urban Village



DESIGN CHARACTER SUMMARY | Historic District DRA - The buildings in the Historic District share a common architectural language. Most are built of brick and other masonry materials. Built in a variety of styles, an overall compatibility is expressed through common features typical to traditional storefronts such as cornices, recessed window and door openings, and vertically proportioned windows. Primary facades were generally designed in a vertical orientation, with an articulated base and a parapet cap, all of which are proportional to the design of the building.

Historic Influence DRA – Area surrounding the FNHD. This area is characterized by buildings constructed between the 1950’s to the 1980’s.

Industrial Influence DRA – East of the railroad. In the early 20th century, commercial and industrial buildings lined both sides of Harris and McKenzie Avenues. Most of these buildings have been demolished. Emphasize pedestrian-friendly design along Harris Avenue.

SUBAREA PLAN | [link](#)



Village Books Building (1200 11th Street) located on the corner of 11th Street and Mill Ave, looking south on 11th Street.

A3 Fairhaven Urban Village



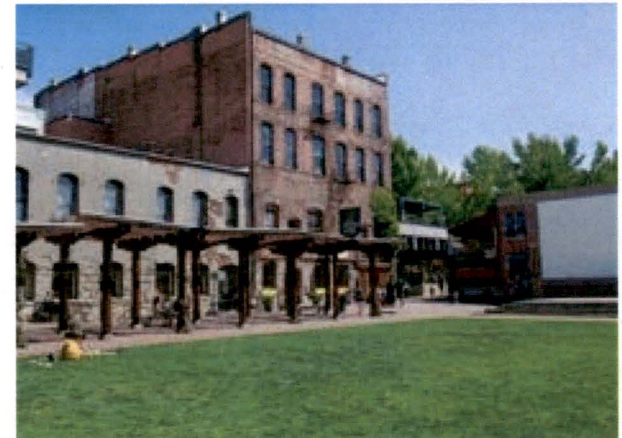
URBAN VILLAGE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Site 2: Contribute to the community identity and architectural character of the surrounding area.

1. Use parapets, cornices, transoms, and/or awnings to relate to the historic commercial building features of the neighborhood and create a human sense of scale.
2. Maintain the traditional storefront proportions as experienced at street level by designing the commercial ground floor to appear taller than upper floors. A historic storefront of 14' to 16' high is typical in Fairhaven.

Public Realm 3: Create a network of safe, convenient, and attractive off-street linkages for pedestrians

1. Provide pedestrian connections from the street to the ferry, boat launch, and other public areas along the waterfront.
2. Parking lot lights should generally be no more than 18' in height, and lower for pedestrian walkways.



Fairhaven Village Green public space, located on the corner of 10th Street and Mill Ave.



Fairhaven Gardens Building (1134 Finnegan Way), located on the corner of 11th Street and Mill Ave (first floor commercial, second floor residential), view looking northeast.

A3 Fairhaven Urban Village



Building 1: Express a clear architectural design concept appropriate for the proposed structures and contextually compatible with the surrounding area.

1. On a commercial building, set the primary entry door back an adequate amount from the front facade to establish a distinct threshold for pedestrians. Four feet is a typical recess.
2. New construction outside of the HD DRA may draw from a broader range of architectural styles. References to a more residential or contemporary style may be appropriate.
3. New interpretations of traditional building styles that express contemporary architectural trends are encouraged.
4. To maintain the distinction between new and old buildings, new construction that imitates or mimics historic features is discouraged.

5. Decorative elements and projecting or setback "articulations" should appear subordinate to the facade.
6. In the II and MI DRAs, draw upon traditional industrial forms and incorporate sloped roofs, canopies and loading docks. A mix of roof forms is appropriate, including sloped roofs.

Building 2: Create high quality, durable, and interesting buildings that have texture and depth.

1. Contribute to the visual continuity of the area by using building materials traditionally used in Fairhaven, primarily brick, wood, and stone, or alternative materials with similar scale, proportion, texture and finish.
2. More diversity is allowed in the II and MI DRAs, where industrial-type materials are appropriate. Wood and metal were traditionally used for window, door and storefront surrounds and are encouraged in new construction.



Fairhaven Towers Building (1215 12th St, newly completed first floor commercial, second floor residential), located on the prominent corner of 12th Street and Harris Street. View looking northeast.

A3 Fairhaven Urban Village Map

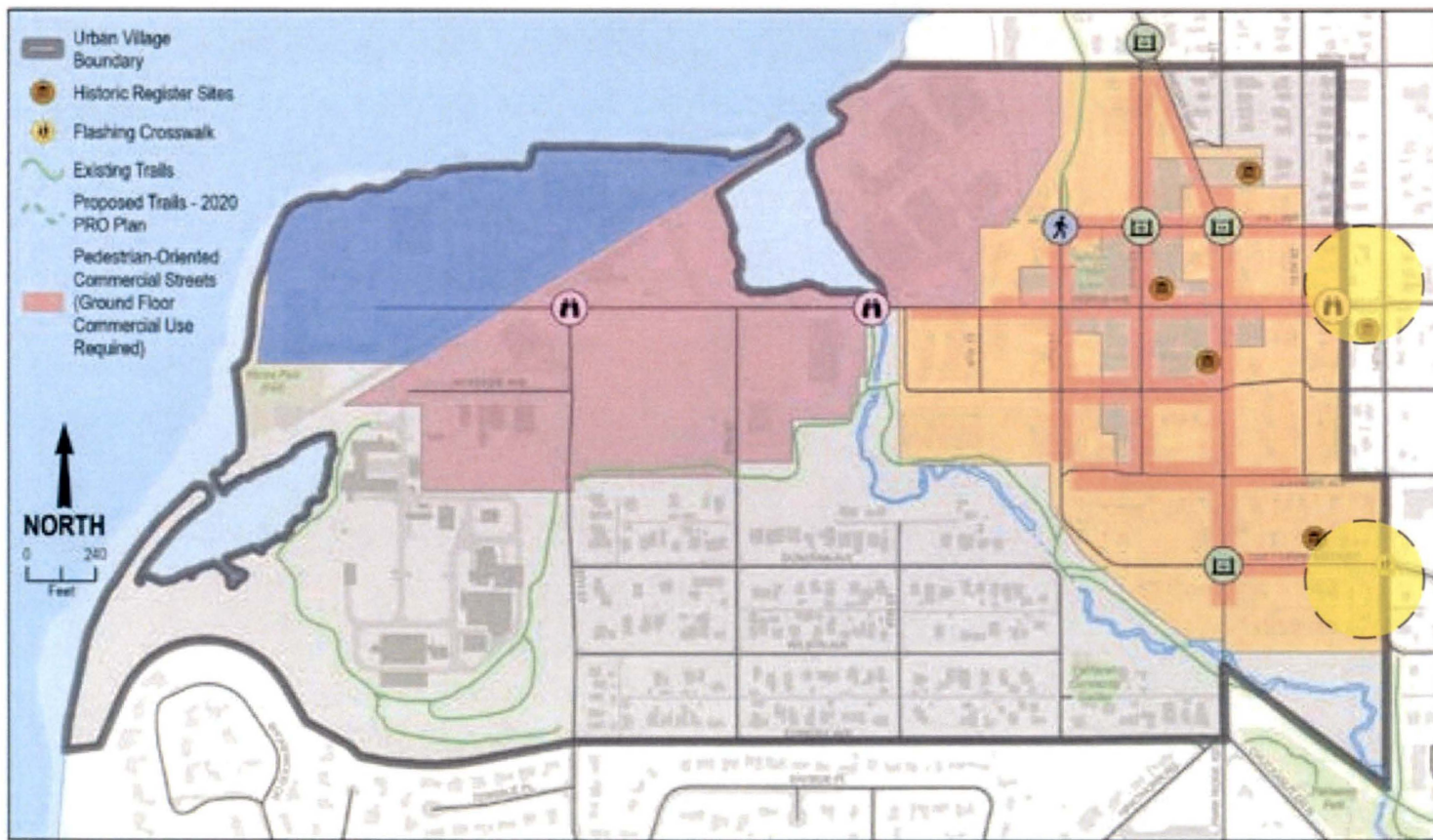


Key Intersections: Fairhaven Urban Village

INTERSECTION TYPES



Fairhaven Design Review Districts



A4 Fountain District Urban Village



INTRODUCTION | The Fountain District is a 90-acre area centered around the commercial core of Meridian Street and includes portions of the Columbia, Cornwall Park and Lettered Streets neighborhoods. The Fountain District evolved at the junction of the City’s most historically gracious boulevard, Broadway Avenue, and its most travelled route north, the “Guide Meridian.” A freshwater fountain under a shady tree at the base of Meridian and Broadway was deeded to the City in perpetuity to provide water for animals and livestock coming and going from Bellingham out into the county and on to Canada. This “watering hole” remains today as a designed fountain and has become a landmark of the district.

DESIGN CHARACTER SUMMARY | Meridian Street contains an eclectic mix of local businesses, many housed in one- and two-story buildings. Architectural styles range from traditional historic commercial buildings, single family houses adaptively reused for businesses and shops, and more contemporary construction from the early- to mid-20th century up to the present day. As a major arterial, Meridian has historically served auto-oriented uses resulting in sidewalk-facing parking lots, gas stations, supermarket and drive-through banking and food services. Since implementation of the Urban Village plan, larger multi-use development has caused the removal of single-family houses adapted for commercial uses.

Toward the east, the Elm Street corridor presents a more residential atmosphere and is lined with well-kept historic homes, some of which contribute to the Eldridge National Historic District and have been adapted for use as professional offices and businesses. Quiet residential areas lie immediately to the east and west, consisting of mostly single-family houses.

Underlying development character policies strive to preserve neighborhood character through adaptive use of existing and historic buildings; guide development to create a more comfortable and appropriately-scaled pedestrian environment; uphold quality design and materials standards for new development; and to improve the interface between commercial and residential areas.

SUBAREA PLAN | [link](#)



A4 Fountain District Urban Village

URBAN VILLAGE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Site 1: Organize the site to prioritize the public realm

- 1. On Meridian Street, new buildings are strongly encouraged to set back a minimum of two feet from the front property line to allow for a wider sidewalk and the planting of street trees.

Site 3: Organize the site to prioritize the public realm

- 1. Curb cuts on streets should be consolidated whenever possible.

Building 1: Express a clear architectural design concept appropriate for the proposed structures and contextually compatible with the surrounding area.

- 1. Whenever possible, retain the character of the district by adapting and sensitively adding on to existing historic buildings.

Building 1: Express a clear architectural design concept appropriate for the proposed structures and contextually compatible with the surrounding area.

The following are guidelines for additions and modifications to existing structures originally built for single-family residential use.

- 1. On Meridian Street, additions designed for the front of existing buildings are encouraged to set back a minimum of two feet from the front property line to allow for a wider sidewalk and the planting of street trees.
- 2. For commercial uses, landscaping should be integral with the site design and provide privacy for neighbors.
- 3. Fencing, especially when seen from the street, should be designed to integrate with the architecture of the building and add visual interest in its detail, materials or color.



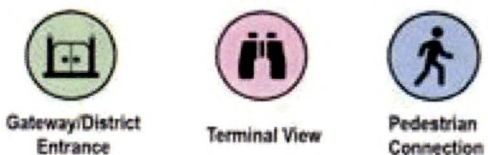
"Fountain Plaza" public space, located at the intersection of Meridian, Broadway and Monroe which acts as the southern entrance to the district.

A4 Fountain District Urban Village Map

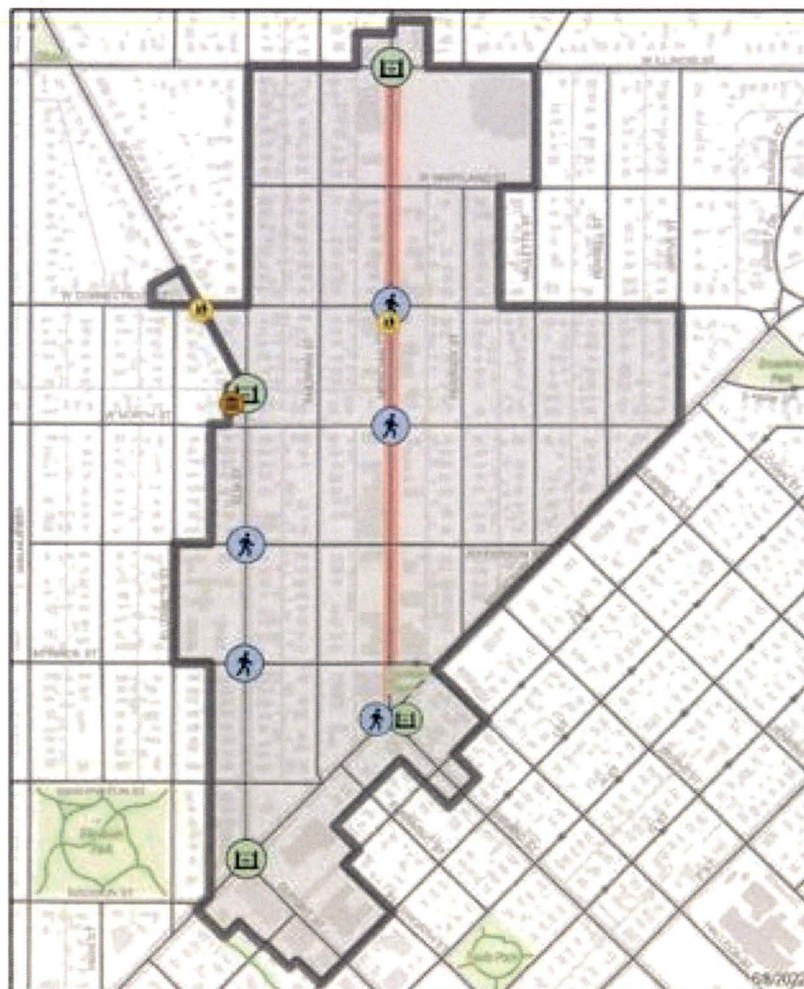


Key Intersections: Fountain District Urban Village

INTERSECTION TYPES



- Urban Village Boundary
- Historic Register Sites
- Flashing Crosswalk
- Existing Trails
- Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets (Ground Floor Commercial Use Required)



A5 Old Town Urban Village



INTRODUCTION | Old Town is bordered by Bellingham's downtown to the south, the Lettered Streets and Columbia neighborhoods to the east and north, and the waterfront and Bellingham Bay to the west. The boundaries are for the most part determined by natural edges - edges between land and water and between uplands and lowlands. The district largely fits within a half bowl landform that rises from the course of Whatcom Creek on all but the west side, where it is open to Bellingham Bay. Whatcom Creek has for centuries been the most attractive area for human presence on Bellingham Bay. Consequently, Old Town has a rich archaeological history in the city.

DESIGN CHARACTER SUMMARY | Today, the topographical contrast continues to create important views and visual perspectives, particularly in regard to the landmark Old City Hall building. Old Town today is interspersed with vacant land, large footprint industrial structures, parcels of public open space and a relatively low residential population. Little in the way of new uses, quality new construction or targeted adaptive reuse and preservation has occurred in Old Town compared to other areas in Bellingham. The Old Town area is envisioned as a community in which people can live, work, and play. It is designed to maintain important characteristics such as view corridors and vistas, natural features, historic resources, small businesses and yet provide for additional housing and business opportunities.

SUBAREA PLAN | [link](#)



View of Whatcom Creek which borders Maritime Heritage Park, looking northeast. Just southwest of here Whatcom Creek meets Bellingham Bay.

A5 Old Town Urban Village



URBAN VILLAGE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Site 2: Contribute to the community identity and architectural character of the surrounding area.

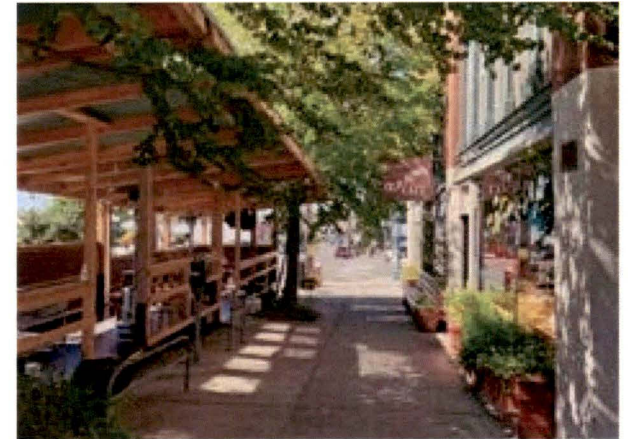
1. Incorporate pedestrian-friendly interfaces within redevelopment properties along the Old Village Trail with features such as an entries and windows.

Building 2: Create high quality, durable, and interesting buildings that have texture and depth.

1. Merge modern materials of the present with traditional building forms from the past to reference the historic Old Town.

Site 3: Organize the site to prioritize the public realm.

1. Create an active edge along Old Village Trail, Maritime Heritage Park and public plazas by incorporating access, activity areas and interesting design features into new and redeveloped buildings.
2. Along Holly Street, consider building setbacks to accommodate outdoor spaces, street trees, and wider sidewalks.



Looking west on corner of W Holly Street and W Champion Street with Oakland Block (401 W Champion St) to the right.



Key Intersections: Old Town Urban Village

INTERSECTION TYPES







Gateway/District
Entrance

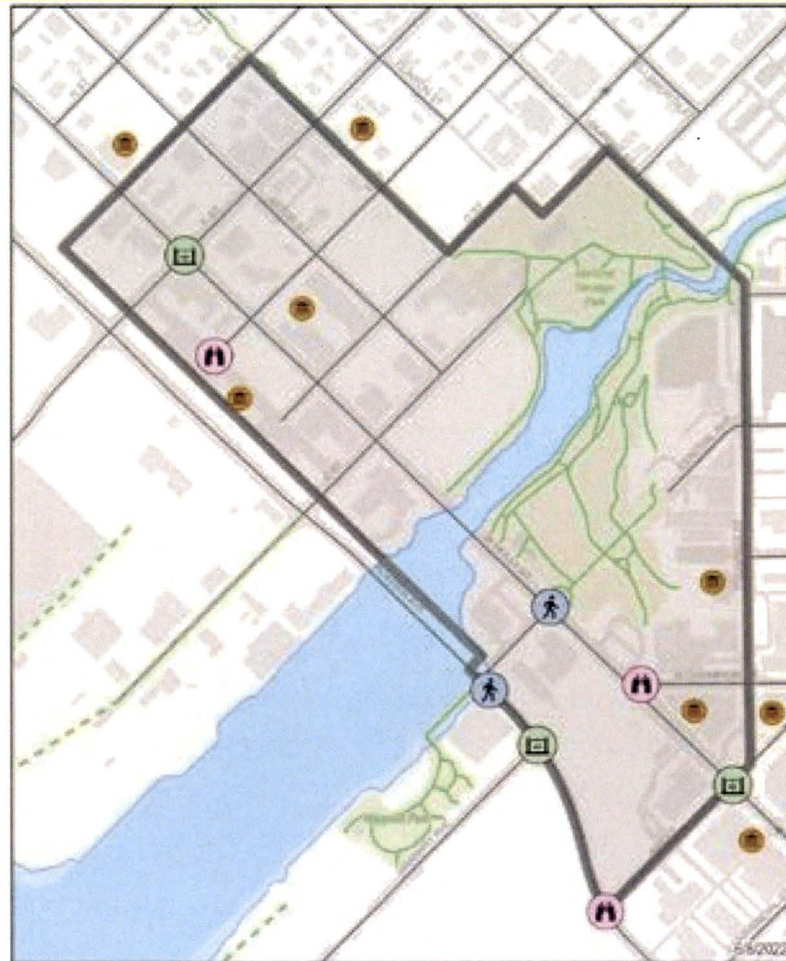


Terminal View



Pedestrian
Connection

-  Urban Village Boundary
-  Historic Register Sites
-  Existing Trails
-  Proposed Trails - 2020 PRO Plan





A6 Samish Way Urban Village

INTRODUCTION | Samish Way Urban Village lies between the wooded backdrop of Sehome Hill Arboretum and the busy I-5 corridor and is a major connector to Western Washington University and Downtown Bellingham. Samish Way was originally part of Highway 99, which ran along the West Coast from Mexico to Canada, and has grown into a busy 4-lane arterial and forms the main commercial corridor of the Village. During the 1950s, motels, gas stations and other auto-oriented businesses developed along the corridor, augmented by the historic and quiet residential neighborhoods of Sehome and

DESIGN CHARACTER SUMMARY | A major goal for the village is to foster a core retail area along Samish Way between Abbott and Otis Streets. Tall buildings at the heart of the Village are envisioned (6-7 stories), stepping down to commercial and residential transition areas. Incorporation of augmented landscaping, pedestrian amenities and bicycle and transit infrastructure are also a goal for all projects, with the objective of creating a more compact street grid. Increased access management along Samish Way is also a major goal.

SUBAREA PLAN | [link](#)



Intersection of N Samish Way and Otis Street, looking southwest on the Samish Commons (1000 Otis St, newly completed affordable housing complex)

A6 Samish Way Urban Village



URBAN VILLAGE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Site 1: Preserve and use natural systems and features.

1. Encourage incorporation of smaller evergreens and other native vegetation found in the Sehome Hill Arboretum to strengthen the connection and help integrate this open space amenity with the urban village.

Public Realm 1: Create an attractive, safe, lively, and inviting community-oriented pedestrian environment.

1. Curb cuts on streets should be consolidated whenever possible.
2. Provide covered bus shelters and other amenities at bus stops and orient development towards transit stops to create a comfortable and interesting environment for pedestrians and transit riders and promote transit use.
3. Design ground floor residential uses along Samish Way to allow for future retrofit to commercial use.

Building 3: Reduce the overall impact on the environment and human health during and after construction.

1. Implement Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) noise mitigating measures in buildings adjacent to I-5 to buffer traffic noise.



Key Intersections: Samish Way Urban Village

INTERSECTION TYPES



Gateway/District
Entrance



Terminal View




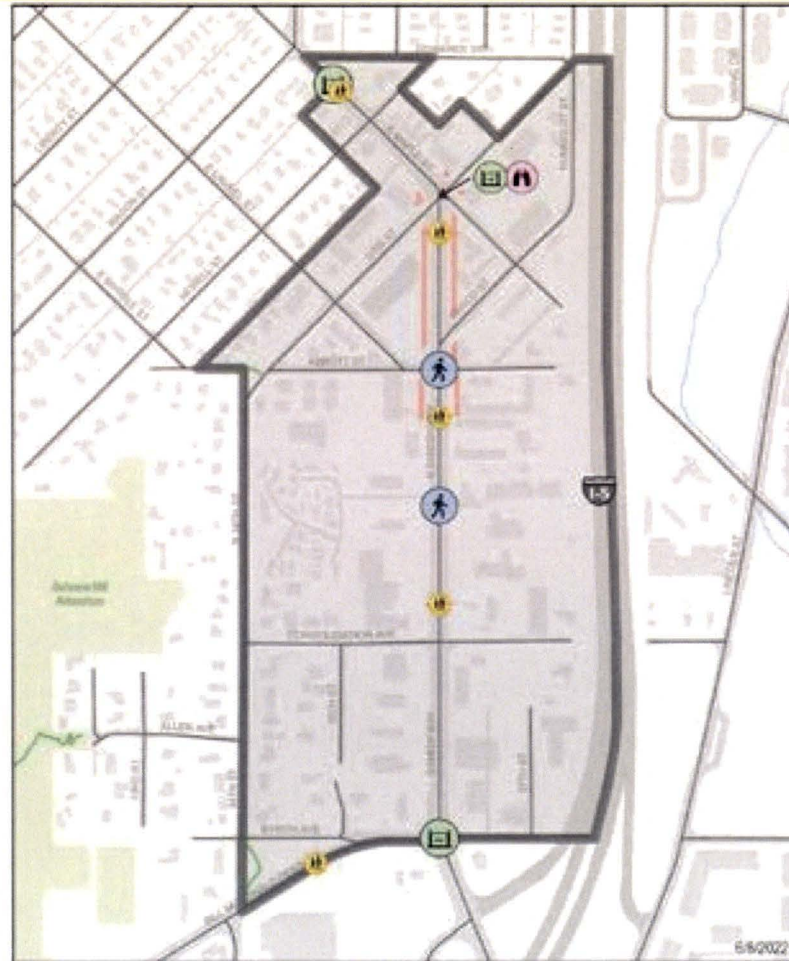
Pedestrian
Connection

 Urban Village Boundary

 Flashing Crosswalk

 Existing Trails

 Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial
Streets (Ground Floor Commercial
Use Required)



A7 Waterfront District Urban Village



INTRODUCTION | The Waterfront District is defined within the boundaries of the Whatcom Waterway, Roeder Avenue / Chestnut Street, and Cornwall Avenue. Whatcom Waterway and Bellingham Bay creates the southwestern boundary of the district.

The Waterfront District is intended to implement the community vision for the Central Waterfront by converting a large, under-utilized brownfield industrial site into a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood that improves waterfront access and promotes a healthy and dynamic waterfront economy. By emphasizing outdoor recreation, cultural heritage, and environmental restoration, the Waterfront District is an urban village where people will ultimately live, work, shop, study and spend their leisure time, without relying solely on vehicular transportation.

DESIGN CHARACTER SUMMARY | The Waterfront District is divided into five separate planning areas. The vision for the waterfront includes a unique “sense of place” at different waterfront locations, and implementation of sustainable practices in all development reinforces the environmental remediation and connection to the water. Active interface with the abutting shoreline as well as public spaces are emphasized. Development standards relating to building height, setbacks, and design are proposed to preserve key view corridors to and from adjacent neighborhoods, limit building mass adjacent to parks and rights-of-way and encourage sustainable design features and amenities to support pedestrian-oriented commercial activity and public gathering space at ground level.

SUBAREA PLAN | [link](#)



Granary Ave entrance to Waypoint Park with the Granary Building (1211 Granary Ave) to the right.

A7 Waterfront Distric Urban Village



URBAN VILLAGE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

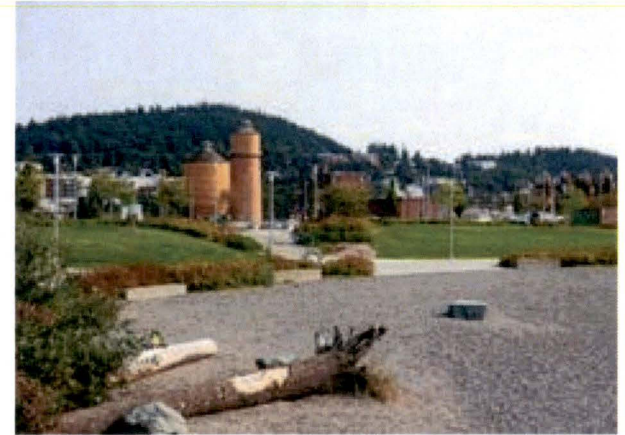
Site 1: Preserve and use natural systems and features.

1. Preserve and integrate views along the connection from downtown to the interior of the site, tile tanks, digester, islands, and Olympic Mountains.

Site 3: Organize the site to prioritize the public realm.

1. Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate to each other, and their functions are mutually supportive.
 - Ensure that buildings which directly front on parks and trails interact with facility users.
 - Activate parks and trails with a variety of uses that provide a continuity of experience with focused notes of activity and destinations that are linked together.
 - Provide interpretive opportunities that incorporate the cultural, historical, economic and environmental history of the site and community into the design of the park.

- Minimize conflicts with vehicular traffic.
 - Consider the localized effect of sun angles, shading and wind on proposed park facilities and spaces.
2. Site and design open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.
 3. Support uses and activities on adjacent properties and/or the sidewalk



View of Sehome Hill in background and industrial relics of the former Georgia Pacific mill site

A7

Waterfront District Urban Village



URBAN VILLAGE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Public Realm 1: Create an attractive, safe, lively, and inviting community-oriented pedestrian environment

1. Within mixed-use commercial and residential areas, define pedestrian-scale blocks and building pads by developing a network of bicycle routes, pedestrian connections, and interior roads with a block size similar to or smaller than the existing blocks in Downtown and Fairhaven.

Public Realm 2: Provide visual interest to and from buildings.

1. Provide visually evident variety when a development includes three or more buildings.
2. Design building roof tops and mechanical equipment with consideration for appearance from the adjacent bluff. Control glare with screening, vegetation, and use of materials.

Public Realm 3: Organize the site to prioritize the public realm

1. In areas where development site abut the bluff, locate any parking below street grade, with building entrances at street level.

Public Realm 4: Enhance the overall visual cohesiveness of the surrounding area

1. Preserve water views from public streets and designated view points within adjacent neighborhoods and establish visual connection with downtown.

Building 2: Create high quality, durable, and interesting buildings that have texture and depth

1. When a development includes multiple buildings, use a range of forms, building footprints, or elevations to create visually evident variety.

Building 3: Reduce the overall impact on the environment and human health during and after construction.

1. Site residential units closer to quieter and less traveled roadways, planned parks, and green spaces.
2. Implement acoustic strategies to reduce outdoor noise transmission and improve the acoustic quality of interior spaces. See Waterfront Subarea Plan for additional information.
3. Use landscaping, park design, and stormwater biotreatment facilities, such as bioswales, and use of native and/or drought tolerant plants which will not require permanent irrigation systems and will support clean stormwater goals.
4. Include space for community gardens to allow residents to grow produce and flowers.

A7 Waterfront District Urban Village Map



Key Intersections: Waterfront District Urban Village

INTERSECTION TYPES



Gateway/District Entrance




Terminal View




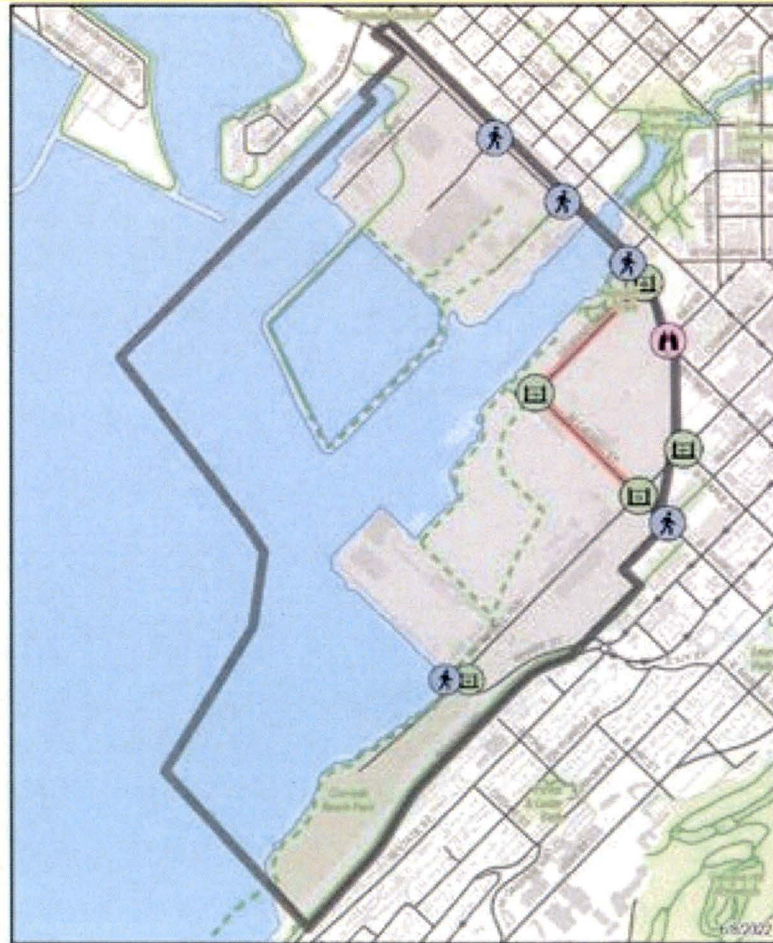
Pedestrian Connection

 Urban Village Boundary

 Existing Trails

 Proposed Trails - 2020 PRO Plan

 Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Streets (Ground Floor Commercial Use Required)





DRAFT 9-6-2022

APPENDIX B | HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Why Preserve Old Buildings?	1
Purpose	2
Applicability	3
Historic Preservation Background	4
Local Research Resources	6
Preservation Principles	7
Urban Village Historic Buildings & Districts	8

HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Character Defining Features	12
Design of Alterations	12
Historic Commercial Buildings	13
Additions to Historic Commercial Buildings	19
Historic Residential Buildings	23
Additions to Historic Residential Buildings	26
Glossary	28



INTRODUCTION

Why Preserve Old Buildings?

Most of Bellingham's urban villages contain historic buildings and districts that provide a tangible link to the past and express diverse architectural styles and episodes in the city's history[1]. The City of Bellingham encourages property owners to preserve and rehabilitate their historic buildings and has created the Historic Design Guidelines ("*Guidelines*") to help provide direction and predictability in the permitting process.

Collectively, historic buildings create an interesting setting for pedestrians. Historic districts are attractive to businesses, residents, shoppers and tourists, and contribute to an area's commercial vitality.

History is dynamic, and historic preservation is not about freezing a building in time. It is about making thoughtful and informed decisions regarding changes to existing buildings – their materials, window and door openings and configurations and height -- and whether to repair, replace, replicate or reinterpret damaged or lost features.

The goal of the *Guidelines* is to help property owners make informed decisions regarding their historic buildings, and as feasible retain their authenticity and architectural features. Even buildings that have been altered over time may have historic value, and with thoughtful planning may be restored to their original character.

[1]Barkley Urban Village was initiated in the 1990s by a private developer and as of 2022 had no historic buildings.



HISTORIC BUILDINGS:

- Provide a link to the past and help tell the story of a place;
- Invigorate the economy by creating a distinctive market image;
- Support heritage tourism strategies
- Reduce waste in landfills; and
- Can be quickly and/or incrementally made available for occupancy



PURPOSE

Of the Historic Building Guidelines

The City of Bellingham encourages property owners to take steps to preserve and rehabilitate their buildings and has created these Historic Design Guidelines (“*Guidelines*”) to provide direction and predictability.

The *Guidelines* establish a baseline for historic preservation and design and help guide the preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of and additions to historic buildings in Bellingham’s urban villages.

The goal of the *Guidelines* is to help property owners make informed decisions and as feasible retain their authenticity and architectural features of their historic buildings.

Proposals are reviewed for compliance, to the greatest extent feasible, with the intent of applicable guidelines. The City offers financial incentives, as well as flexibility in land use and building code compliance, for eligible projects that meet the intent of the Guidelines.

Early Consultation

Property owners, developers, and builders are strongly encouraged to enlist the assistance of qualified design and planning professionals, including architects and preservation consultants, for the best possible outcome.

Early consultation with Planning and Community Development Department staff is recommended for any project involving a historic building. Call, email, or visit the Permit Center and ask to meet with a Historic Preservation Planner.

Email: planning@cob.org
Place: Permit Center, First Floor City Hall, 210 Lottie Street.
Phone: (360) 778-8300
TTY: 711 (Washington State Relay)

PRESERVATION INCENTIVES

Your historic building may be eligible for:

Financial Savings

Special Tax Valuation

Federal Tax Credits

Alternative Land Uses

Adaptive Use Permit

Building Code Flexibility

International Existing Building Code

Owners of the Elks Building at 1414 Cornwall Avenue in Downtown Bellingham received a 10-year reduction in their property tax through the Special Tax Valuation program.



APPENDIX B | HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

APPLICABILITY

For the purposes of these *Guidelines*, historic buildings are defined as those:

- Listed in the Bellingham Local Historic Register, Washington State Heritage Register and/or the **National Register of Historic Places**; or
- Potentially eligible to be listed in the Local, State and/or National Historic Registers*; or
- Listed or potentially eligible to be listed as a contributing building in a Local, State or National Historic District.

**Generally, a property must be at least 50 years old and retain architectural features expressive of its period of historic significance to be considered eligible for historic designation. In some cases, buildings and structures less than 50 years old may be considered historic.*

Contact the **City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Department (PCDD)** to determine if your building is considered historic, and if your project will require a Certificate of Alteration. Technical assistance is available and applicants are encouraged to review the *Guidelines* and contact staff early in their project to ensure an efficient and streamlined review process.

NOTE: Changes to properties listed in the Bellingham Local Historic Register or as a contributing property to a Local Historic District may require a **Certificate of Alteration** under **Bellingham Municipal Code (BMC) 17.90.060**.

AND: The *Guidelines* apply to exterior modifications. Except in some cases for buildings listed in the Bellingham Local Historic Register, interior changes do not require design review.



Photo courtesy of the National Parks Service.

The Montague and McHugh Building at 114 W. Magnolia in the Downtown Urban Village is listed in the Local, State and National Historic Registers. Local listing requires that some alterations may be subject to design review under **Bellingham Municipal Code (BMC) 17.90.060**.





HISTORIC PRESERVATION BACKGROUND

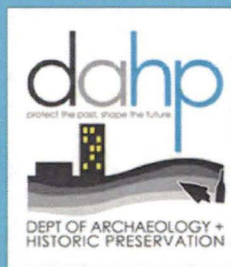
Federal

Background policies and legislation at the federal level began with the **1966 Historic Preservation Act**. This created the **National Register of Historic Places**, the list of **National Historic Landmarks** and the **State Historic Preservation Offices**. The National Park Service oversees these programs. The Secretary of the Interior's **Standards for the Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings** were developed by the National Park Service to be applied to rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility. The Standards are neither technical nor prescriptive but instead meant to promote responsible preservation practices that would help protect the nation's irreplaceable cultural resources. The Standards serve as the philosophical foundation for these Historic Design Guidelines.



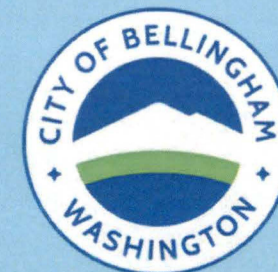
State

The **Washington State Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation (DAHP)** provides information and technical assistance for the state's historic buildings and the archaeology, including how to nominate properties to the State and National Register of Historic Places; offering funding to local governments; technical assistance on preservation of buildings, sites, districts and objects; and many other services.


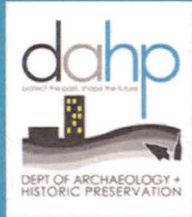



Local

The City of Bellingham has supported the preservation of its historic and cultural resources since 1986 when it adopted the Landmark Preservation Ordinance to recognize and protect its historic landmarks. Today, the ordinance has been updated, and **Chapter 17.90 Historic Preservation Ordinance** further provides for the identification, evaluation, designation, and protection of designated historic resources within the boundaries of the City of Bellingham. The City also offers incentive for the preservation and rehabilitation of eligible historic properties through a property tax incentive (Special Tax Valuation), the allowance of adaptive uses, and flexibility in the building code.





	Applies To	Designated By	Regulatory?	Incentives
 <p>National Register of Historic Places</p>	Buildings Structures Objects Sites Districts	National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior The Keeper of the National Register	NO - Honorary Designation - No protections from demolition - Federal funding may trigger Section 106 for listed and eligible properties - Demolition triggers SEPA for listed and <i>eligible</i> properties *Including National Register Historic Districts	YES - Federal Tax Credits for Income Producing Properties - State Special Valuation Tax Relief - Improves eligibility for Federal & State grant funds - Property values may increase - Adaptive Use - permitting leniency
 <p>WA State Register of Historic Places</p>	Buildings Structures Objects Sites Districts	WA State Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) Washington State Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	NO - Honorary Designation - No protections from demolition - Demolition triggers SEPA for listed and <i>eligible</i> properties	YES - Improves eligibility for State and Local grant funds - Property values may increase
 <p>Local Register of Historic Places</p>	Buildings Structures Objects Sites Districts	City of Bellingham Historic Preservation Commission	YES - Listing places a restrictive covenant on a property, requiring a Certificate of Alteration for some alterations (BMC 17.90.090) - Deterrent to demolition	YES - Special Valuation Tax Relief - Adaptive Use - permitting leniency - Offers protection for perpetuity

APPENDIX B | HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

LOCAL RESEARCH RESOURCES

Historic photographs, plans and articles are an essential source of information for a historic building project.

Historic research materials and assistance are available at the following:

Whatcom Museum Photo Archives

Center for Pacific Northwest Studies

Bellingham Public Library

Northwest Regional Branch of the Washington State Archives

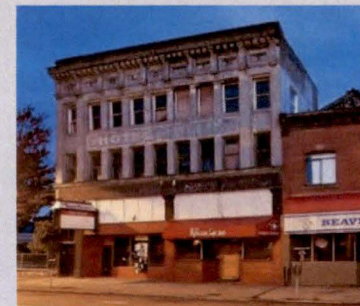
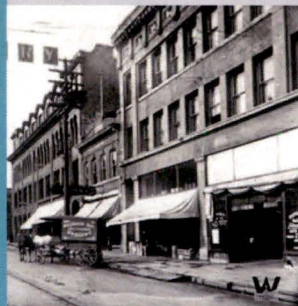
For additional guidance on specific topics, refer to the National Park Service's series of **Preservation Briefs**. To learn more about the visual character of your building refer to **Preservation Brief #17: Architectural Character—Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving their Character.**



Originally built as Fire Station #1, the Syre Center houses the **Whatcom Museum Photo Archives** at 201 Prospect St. is open to the public and has photographs, articles, building plans, and other information instrumental for planning a rehabilitation project.

Photographs from the past helped inform the rehabilitation of the Dahlquist Building storefront at 1311 N. State Street. Often the ground floor of a building is made available for use before the upper stories can be rehabilitated, as is the case with this important downtown building.

Photos from left to right: early storefront with original cloth retractable awnings; changes made mid-20th century to the two storefronts; and the rehabilitated storefronts in 2022. The upper floors of the building await rehabilitation and a new use. The rehabilitation was incremental, with one storefront being repurposed at a time, using combination of treatments. Elements that remained of the original design were preserved and restored, and new elements were adapted to be compatible with the old. (Photo courtesy Whatcom Museum, City of Bellingham, Graham Baba Architects)



APPENDIX B | HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

PRESERVATION PRINCIPLES

The Guidelines provide a basis for making decisions about the appropriate treatments of historic buildings and are philosophically based on the Secretary of the *Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. The Standards embody two **basic principles**:

1. Minimize disturbance to historic building materials, and
2. To the greatest extent possible, maintain and protect a building's distinguishing character defining features

Historic Building Treatments

Depending on the condition and remaining features of a historic building, one or more of the following treatments may be appropriate:

Preservation focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time.

Rehabilitation acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.

Restoration depicts a property at a particular period of time in its history, while removing evidence of other periods.

Reconstruction re-creates vanished or non-surviving portions of a property.

Treatment goals:

- Preserve rather than replace features that remain in good condition.
- For those features that are deteriorated, repair is preferred over replacement.
- When replacement is necessary, it should be done in a manner similar to what existed historically.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

ADAPTIVE USE

The best use for a historic building is that for which it was designed. Because this is not always possible, determining a new use that is compatible with the existing layout and structure of the building, and does not adversely affect its historic integrity and character is important. Every effort should be made to provide a new use that will require minimal alteration to the building and its site.



Originally built as the Exchange Building, 1248-60 N. State Street was repurposed twice in its lifetime - as the Henry Hotel in 1923, then again as the YMCA in 1942.



In the late 1990s the "modernized" façade was removed and the building was restored to its original appearance.



The Elks Building (above) provided an internal lift to meet ADA requirements. (RMC Architects photo.)

ACCESSIBILITY

As applicable, historic property owners should comply to the fullest extent possible with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions, while also preserving the integrity of the character-defining features of their buildings and sites. Design alterations to improve access for persons with disabilities while minimizing adverse effects on historic character and materials.



HISTORIC BUILDINGS & DISTRICTS IN URBAN VILLAGES

The Old Town, Samish Way, Fountain and Waterfront Urban Villages have significant historic buildings that provide each district with a distinctive image.

Some of these buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Washington State Heritage Register, and / or the Bellingham Local Historic Register, and many others that are not listed are eligible for one or all of these designations.

Whether part of a historic district or not, historic buildings in urban villages add character and help tell the story of how Bellingham developed and grew over time.



Samish Way Urban Village

Boomer's Drive Inn on Samish Way has operated as a restaurant since it was built, and while no longer providing car-hop service it has retained the and is expressive of the auto-oriented architecture of Old Highway 99.



Fountain District Urban Village

The Fountain Animal Hospital, built in 1940 in the Art Moderne style, has become a landmark on Meridian Street.



Old Town Urban Village

Old Town Urban Village. The Burlington Northern Passenger Depot is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Waterfront Urban Village

The Granary Building on Roeder Avenue awaited adaptive reuse for decades and is now an anchor building in the Waterfront District. (Photo courtesy bellingshamdowntownwaterfront.com)



A NOTE ON HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Both Fairhaven and Downtown have designated National Register Historic Districts at their core, and a portion of the Eldridge National Register District is located in the Fountain District along Elm Street. The goals of the City, the Fairhaven Association and the Downtown Bellingham Partnership is to encourage owners of historic properties to preserve their buildings so as to maintain and enhance the quality of these districts.

The Department of the Interior National Park Service defines National Historic Districts as possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.”

The National Register designation provides no protection for buildings but does offer a basis of information that clarifies the significance of buildings on an individual and collective basis. Additionally, contributing buildings in a National Historic District may be eligible for tax savings, as well as land use and building code flexibility.

Visit the City of Bellingham's Historic Buildings Interactive Map to see if your building is listed on the Local, State or National Register, or located in a National Historic District.

*NOTE: In 2022 no Local Historic Districts are listed in Bellingham. BMC 17.90.050 provides a mechanism for listing districts to the Local Historic Register.



Fairhaven National Historic District was designated in 1977.



The Downtown Bellingham National Historic District was designated in 2012.

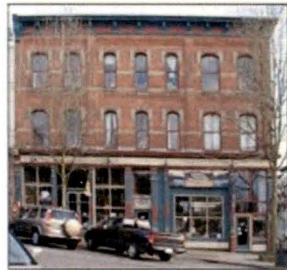
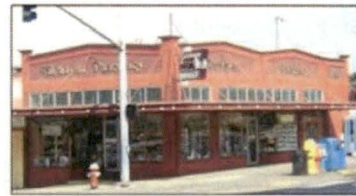


Fairhaven Historic District

Boundaries for the Historic District DRA are identical to those of the Fairhaven National Historic District. Historic "contributing" buildings are numbered on the map at left, with corresponding images for reference. Street addresses and built dates are taken from the National Register district nomination.



10. Dos Palms and Fairhaven Pharmacy, 1111 and 1115 Harris (1920)



11. Morgan Block, 1000 - 02 Harris (1890)



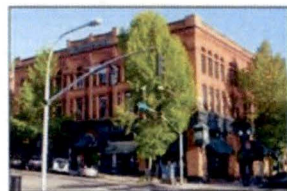
12. Old Post Office, 1304 - 09 11th (built c. 1890, but reconstructed in late 20th century)



13. Nelson Block, 1100 - 02 Harris (1900)



14. Chuckard Motors, 1112 - 14 Harris, 1300 12th (1919)



15. Mason Block, 1200 - 09 Harris (1890)



16. Waldron Block, 1308 - 14 12th (1890)



17. Grad Building, 1410 11th (1890)



1. Kuhnhan Club, 1121 11th, 1120 Finnegan Way (1900)



2. Carnegie Library, 1103 12th (1900)



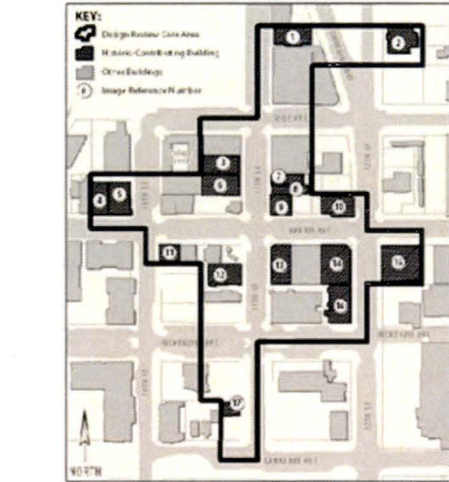
3. Fairhaven Cash Grocery, 1204 - 05 11th (built c. 1893, renovated & 2nd story added late 20th century)



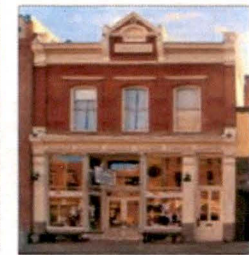
4. Eban Bay Hotel, 909 - 11 Harris (c. 1900 - 1903)



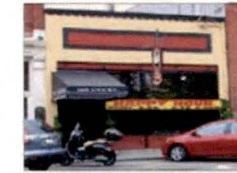
6. Scherwin Block, 913 - 15 Harris (1903)



5. Knights of Pythias Bldg, 1206 - 10 11th (1891)



8. Minahan Building, 1208 11th (1900)



7. E.M. Day Building, 1211 11th (c. 1905)

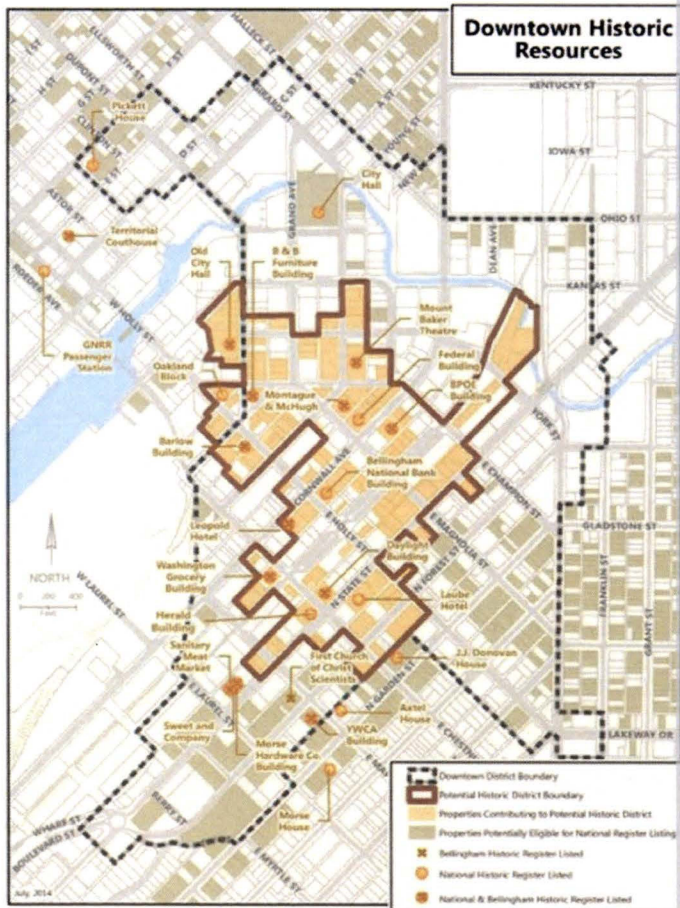


9. Terminal Building, 1101 - 03 Harris (c. 1890 - 1892)

Detail of Fairhaven National Historic District Design Review Area, showing contributing buildings and those individually listed on the National, State and/or Local Registers.



Downtown Historic District



Map of the Downtown Bellingham National Historic District within the Downtown Urban Village boundary, showing contributing buildings and those listed individually on the National, State and/or Local Registers.



The Cascade Laundry Building, 203 - 207 Prospect Street in Downtown Bellingham was adapted to house a performance space, artist studio, a cidery and restaurant. As a contributing building to the Downtown National Historic District the owner was able to reduce their property taxes for 10 years through the **Special Tax Valuation** program. Photo at right shows the original design of the building (photo courtesy Whatcom Museum Photo Archives).

Site ID: 120	Address: 207 Prospect St.	Historic Name: Bellingham Bay Furniture Co. Warehouse, Cascade Laundry
Classification: Historic, Contributing	Builder: Unknown	Style: Spanish - Mediterranean
Built: 1923	Architect: Unknown	

Description: 207 Prospect Street was built in 1923 (according to a *Bellingham Herald* article) in the Spanish – Mediterranean style. The two-story reinforced concrete building features a rectangular plan and has a flat roof with parapet. The concrete walls are clad in corrugated metal and brick veneer. The original plan and parapet are intact. There are slight changes to the original cladding and moderate alterations to the original street-level windows. The storefront received a midcentury remodel, with aluminum framed doors and display windows.

Cultural: Constructed in 1923, the building at 205 and 207 Prospect was originally a warehouse for the B. B. [Bellingham Bay] Furniture Company. The building permit was recorded in the *Bellingham Herald*, August 29, 1923, p. 10: "One [permit] was issued to the B. B. Furniture Company for a two-story block at 209-211 Prospect Street that will cost \$15,000. It will be chiefly for display and storage purposes." B. B. Furniture's store during that time was the Hamilton Building ("Flatiron Building"), built in 1907, at 1313 Bay Street. When that building burned on April 28, 1924, the then new warehouse on Prospect served as the furniture company's "Temporary Office and Salesroom" while the Hamilton Building's interior was being completely rebuilt. Cascade Laundry, Inc. became the tenant in 1930 and continued to occupy the building up until 2007.

Buildings that are "contributing" to the Downtown Bellingham National Register District may be eligible for property tax reductions. [Click here to view the Downtown Bellingham National Register Nomination for specific building information.](#)



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Guidelines for the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation and additions to historic buildings are explored in the following pages.

Character Defining Features

Character refers to all those visual aspects and physical features that comprise a building's appearance. Character-defining features include the overall shape of the building, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details, interior spaces and features, as well as the various aspects of its site and environment.

Character-defining features collectively provide interest, a human scale and add detail to the streetscape. Whenever possible, preserve a building's architectural character-defining features.

Visit the [Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation](#) for more information on character defining features.

INTENT: Historic buildings in urban villages and National Historic Districts retain features that contribute to the story of the place.

Guideline:

- Preserve character-defining features that are intact.
- Don't remove or damage character-defining features.
- Preserve intact features with appropriate maintenance techniques.
- When disassembly of a historic element is necessary, carefully identify how it will be stored during your rehabilitation project. Store them in a safe place until they are re-installed.

Guideline: Repair features that are damaged.

- Use methods that will not harm the historic materials.
- Repair work is preferred over replacement.

Guideline: Replace features that are missing or beyond repair.

- Reconstruct only portions that are damaged beyond repair.



The raised metal letters in the cornice work of the Dahlquist Building, 1311 N. State Street, add character to the building.

- Reconstruct the original element, based on adequate evidence, if possible. This is the strongly preferred option.

Design of Alterations

Buildings may undergo alterations over time. New alterations often occur when original material is missing and new interpretations of traditional elements become necessary.

INTENT: Plan alterations to preserve the building's integrity.

Guideline: Design an alteration to be compatible with the historic character of the property.

- Avoid alterations that would hinder the ability to interpret the historic significance of the original building.
- Alterations that seek to imply an earlier period than that of the building are inappropriate.

Guideline: Avoid alterations that damage historic features.

- For example, mounting a sign panel in a manner that causes decorative moldings to be damaged would be inappropriate.



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Storefronts

The Guidelines focus primarily on what is thought of as the “traditional” historic commercial building, constructed between the mid-19th and early 20th centuries. This form appears in the Downtown and Fairhaven National Historic Districts, and throughout Bellingham. While distinct in many ways, these buildings share a common architectural language. Most are built of brick and other masonry materials. Designed in a variety of styles, an overall compatibility is expressed through common features, as shown in the diagram at right.

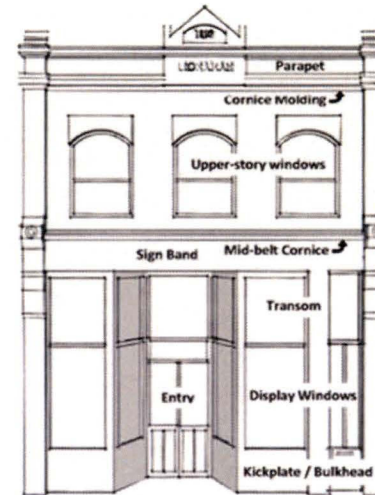
Depending on the placement on a block, a building may have two primary storefront façades with distinguishing features, and more than one primary entrance. Greater flexibility in the treatment of a rear facade may be appropriate if it does not have significant architectural features.

INTENT: The primary façade on a historic commercial building is a crucial feature that should be preserved, restored and/or rehabilitated. Repairing or reconstructing missing features is a key goal.

Guideline: A rehabilitation project should preserve these character-defining elements of a historic commercial building:

- **Display windows:** The main portion of glass on the storefront, where goods and services are displayed.
- **Transom or Sign Band:** The upper portion of the display, separated from the main display window by a frame.
- **Kickplate or Bulkhead:** Found beneath the display window. Sometimes called a bulkhead panel.
- **Original Entry:** Usually set back from the sidewalk in a protected recess.
- **Upper-story Windows:** Windows located on the second story area. These usually have a vertical orientation and appear to be less transparent as the large expanse of glass in the storefront below.

- **Cornice Molding:** A decorative band at the top of the building. A **mid-belt cornice** may sometimes be found separating some floors (e.g., a storefront from the upper story windows).
- **Parapet:** a low protective wall along the edge of a roof, bridge, or balcony



MAJOR COMPONENTS OF A TYPICAL “TRADITIONAL” HISTORIC COMMERCIAL BUILDING FAÇADE.

Major character-defining features and components of a typical “traditional” historic commercial building façade.

Guideline: If a storefront is intact, preserve, restore and/or repair architectural features.

- Do not alter a storefront opening’s size and shape.
- If intact, preserve the storefront glass. If not intact, replace in-kind -- do not use reflective, opaque or tinted glass.
- Repair historic storefront elements by reinforcing historic materials. Use in-kind materials such as masonry and wood when replacement is necessary.

Guideline: If a storefront has been altered and information is available, consider restoring the original design.

- Use historic photographs, articles and building plans to determine a storefront’s original design.



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Consider exposing historic storefront elements that have been covered in past “modernization” episodes. (BARLOW)
- In some cases, an original storefront may have been altered early in the history of the building and taken on significance. It may be appropriate to preserve such changes. (PICKFORD)
- If replacement with a traditional material is not possible, use a compatible substitute that is similar in scale, finish and character, and has proven durability in the local climate.

Guideline: If the original façade has been altered and information is not available, a simplified interpretation may be appropriate.

- The new design should convey the character of a historic storefront, relating to the size and transparent character of the display window, recessed entryway, cornice, etc.
- The storefront should be designed to provide interest to pedestrians but should not create a false sense of history.

Doors and Entryways

The repetition of recessed entries along the street creates a rhythm of shadows, establishes a sense of scale, creates visual interest and helps identify business entrances.

INTENT: Doors and entryways are important features that help convey a building’s historic character. Whenever possible these elements should be preserved.

Guideline: Where they exist, maintain the original proportions, appearance, size and shape of a primary exterior door and recessed entry. Restore those that have been altered.

- Preserve the decorative and functional features of a primary entrance, which may include the door, door frame, threshold, glass panes, paneling, hardware, detailing, transoms and flanking sidelights.
- Repair a damaged historic door to restore its original appearance.

- When a new door is needed it should be in character with the building -- especially on primary facades. If a door must be replaced, use materials and design similar to that of the original, or use a door of the same building style.
- If a door size must be altered, maintain the original opening size and position. This is especially important for primary entry doors.
- Maintain original glass size in display windows, doors and recessed entries and avoid altering their shape. If these elements have been altered, restore them if historic information is available.

Guideline: Avoid creating entries that are flush with the sidewalk.

- Where entries were originally designed to be flush, maintain them in their original position, as feasible within code requirements (door width, swing and construction).

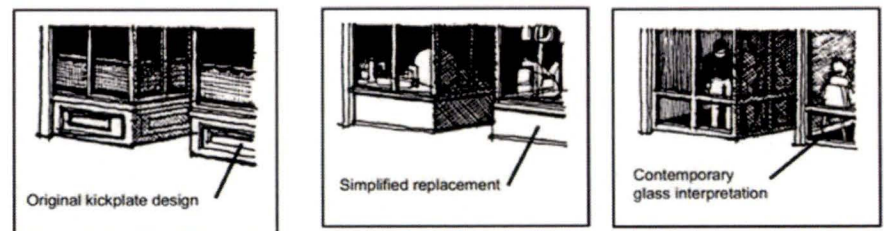
Kickplates and Bulkheads

INTENT: Designed as a decorative panel located below the display window, a kickplate (or “bulkhead”) adds interest and detail to the façade and should be preserved.

Guideline: Expose and restore an original kickplate that has been covered with another material.

Guideline: If the original kickplate is missing and no information of its historic appearance exists, develop a compatible replacement design.

- Wood or masonry is an appropriate material for a replacement on most styles. Alternative materials may be considered as appropriate.



Retain the kickplate / bulkhead as a decorative panel. If the original is missing, develop a sympathetic replacement design.



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Consider exposing historic storefront elements that have been covered in past “modernization” episodes. (BARLOW)
- In some cases, an original storefront may have been altered early in the history of the building and taken on significance. It may be appropriate to preserve such changes. (PICKFORD)
- If replacement with a traditional material is not possible, use a compatible substitute that is similar in scale, finish and character, and has proven durability in the local climate.

Guideline: If the original façade has been altered and information is not available, a simplified interpretation may be appropriate.

- The new design should convey the character of a historic storefront, relating to the size and transparent character of the display window, recessed entryway, cornice, etc.
- The storefront should be designed to provide interest to pedestrians but should not create a false sense of history.

Doors and Entryways

The repetition of recessed entries along the street creates a rhythm of shadows, establishes a sense of scale, creates visual interest and helps identify business entrances.

INTENT: Doors and entryways are important features that help convey a building's historic character. Whenever possible these elements should be preserved.

Guideline: Where they exist, maintain the original proportions, appearance, size and shape of a primary exterior door and recessed entry. Restore those that have been altered.

- Preserve the decorative and functional features of a primary entrance, which may include the door, door frame, threshold, glass panes, paneling, hardware, detailing, transoms and flanking sidelights.
- Repair a damaged historic door to restore its original appearance.

- When a new door is needed it should be in character with the building -- especially on primary facades. If a door must be replaced, use materials and design similar to that of the original, or use a door of the same building style.
- If a door size must be altered, maintain the original opening size and position. This is especially important for primary entry doors.
- Maintain original glass size in display windows, doors and recessed entries and avoid altering their shape. If these elements have been altered, restore them if historic information is available.

Guideline: Avoid creating entries that are flush with the sidewalk.

- Where entries were originally designed to be flush, maintain them in their original position, as feasible within code requirements (door width, swing and construction).

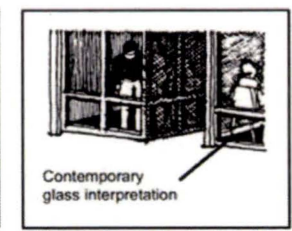
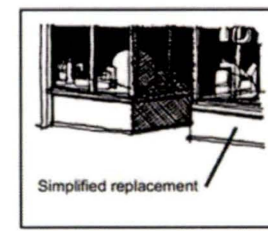
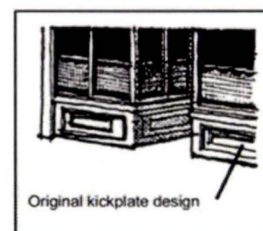
Kickplates and Bulkheads

INTENT: Designed as a decorative panel located below the display window, a kickplate (or “bulkhead”) adds interest and detail to the façade and should be preserved.

Guideline: Expose and restore an original kickplate that has been covered with another material.

Guideline: If the original kickplate is missing and no information of its historic appearance exists, develop a compatible replacement design.

- Wood or masonry is an appropriate material for a replacement on most styles. Alternative materials may be considered as appropriate.



Retain the kickplate / bulkhead as a decorative panel. If the original is missing, develop a sympathetic replacement design.



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Windows

INTENT: Upper-story windows are one of a historic commercial building's most important character-defining features and should be preserved.

Guideline: Preserve the position, size, number and arrangement of original windows in a building wall. Do not enclose an original window opening or create a new opening on a primary facade.

- Upper story windows were often designed with a vertical emphasis. Their proportions contribute to the character of a commercial building façade and should not be blocked down or altered in size.
- Consider re-opening windows that are currently blocked.
- Repair rather than replace frames, sashes and decorative features of a building's original windows. Preserve the character of divided light pattern of historic windows.

Guideline: If original windows are missing, replace with those that are the same size, shape, appearance, and materials of the original.

- Convey the character of traditional sash divisions in a replacement window by matching the profile of the sash and its components to that of the original. If the original window was double-hung, use a similar replacement, or one that appears as such.
- Match the number and position of glass panes.
- Muntins that divide a window into smaller panes should be either genuine or simulated divided lights, with a depth and shadow line similar to the original. Snap-on "grills" are not appropriate.

Guideline: On primary facades, use the same material as the original windows.

- A substitute material may be used if the components are similar to the original in dimension, profile and finish.

- Vinyl and unfinished metals are inappropriate replacement materials for traditional historic wood windows. Aluminum-clad windows may be appropriate.

Guideline: New glazing should be clear, to convey the visual appearance of historic glazing.

- Transparent low-e type glass may be used, but metallic and reflective finishes should not.

Guideline: If historic windows were previously replaced with 1950's - 1980's aluminum or vinyl windows, it is appropriate to replace these with higher quality, more energy efficient units more in character with the building's original windows.



Covered for decades, the owner of the historic Cottage Hotel at 201 E. Chestnut Street removed 1950s "modernizing" materials and replaced upper-story windows with energy efficient models that referenced the originals. (Top photo Whatcom Museum Photo Archives.)

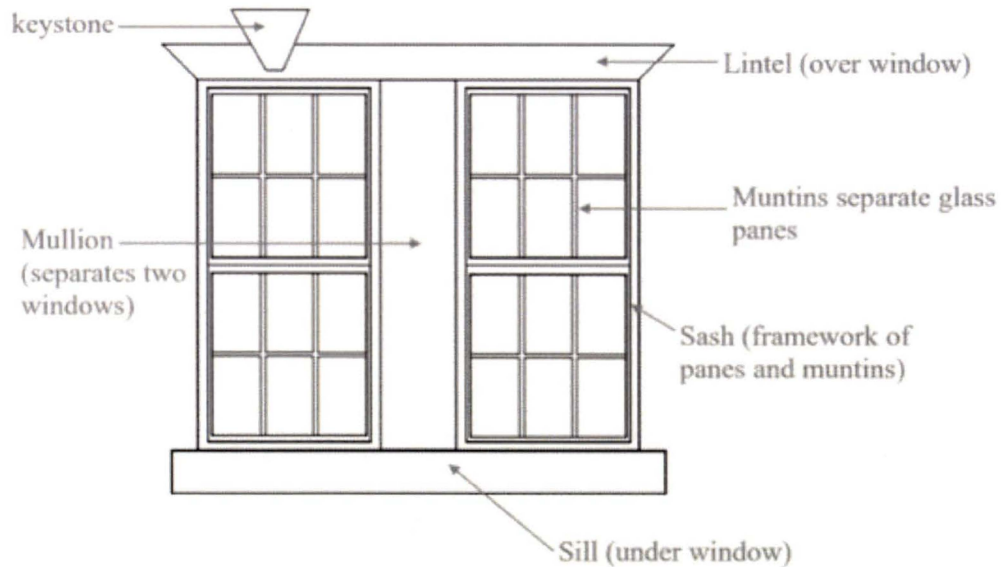




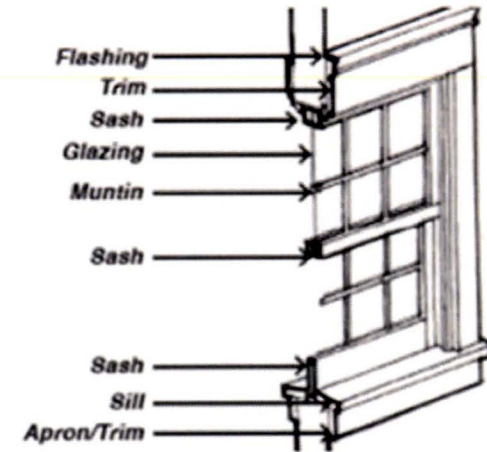
HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Windows are an important character-defining feature in the façade of a historic building.

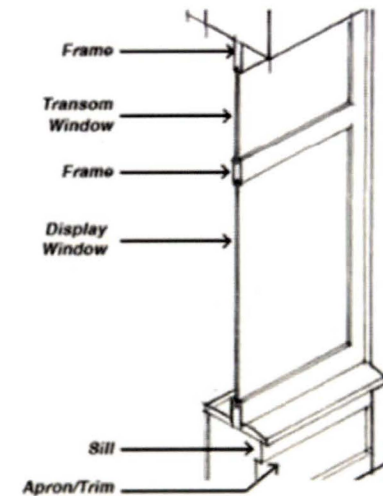
Whenever possible, restore rather than replace original historic windows. If they must be replaced, replace “in-kind.”



Anatomy of a double hung sash window and exterior surround details, typical in upper-story floors of many traditional historic commercial buildings.



Elements of a typical double hung sash window, above.



Typical storefront commercial display window.



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Transoms

INTENT: The transom, a window consisting of a horizontally oriented glass band above the ground floor display window or entrance, is an important feature of the overall proportion of a historic storefront. Whenever possible a transom should be preserved or restored in its original configuration.

Guideline: Retain the original shape of the transom glass in an historic storefront. Bands of transom windows should not be removed or enclosed.

Guideline: If the original transom glass is missing, installing new glass is preferred.

- If a transom must be blocked for use as a sign panel, retain the original proportions and configuration so it might be restored in the future

Cornices and Parapets

INTENT: Most historic commercial buildings were designed with a cornice, and often a parapet that caps the façade and provides upper-story interest. These elements should be preserved.

Guideline: If remaining, preserve or restore a building's cornice and parapet.

Guideline: If a cornice or parapet is missing, consider reconstruction if historic design information is available.

- Match replacement elements to those of the original, especially in overall size and profile.
- Appropriate materials may include stone, brick and stamped metal, wood or a durable synthetic. Fiberglass may also be appropriate.

Guideline: Addition of a new cornice, parapet or building name where none originally existed is not recommended.



Although obscured with a sign band, the storefront transom windows of the Knights of Pythias building remain intact and could be uncovered and restored in the future.



Although portions of the Knights of Pythias building's ornate parapet are missing, the building still presents a powerful presence in the Fairhaven National Historic District. What remains has been preserved and provides a reference to the original design. (Photo at right courtesy Whatcom Museum Photo Archives.)



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Facade Materials

INTENT: Historic exterior building materials provide a sense of scale, texture and character to the streetscape, as well as conveying the work of skilled craftspeople. These qualities should be preserved and/or restored.

Guideline: Brick, stone and wood were the main building materials and should be restored, repaired or replaced in-kind.

- Do not cover or obscure original façade materials.
- If the original material has been covered, expose it if feasible.
- Do not paint natural colored masonry. However, if masonry was painted historically, it may be appropriate to repaint.

Guideline: If material replacement is necessary, use materials similar to those used historically.

- Masonry, either brick or stone, and wood were the primary wall material for most buildings in this region.
- Wood and metal were used for window, door and storefront surrounds.
- Substitute materials may be used if they closely match the original in appearance, finish and profile.

Guideline: Protect historic material surfaces. Don't use harsh cleaning methods that damage the finish of historic materials.

Guideline: Protect masonry from water deterioration. See [***Preservation Brief #1 for more information***](#).

- Provide proper drainage so water does not stand on flat surfaces or accumulate in decorative features. Provide a means to drain water away from foundations.
- Use a sealant, or clear coat, to protect masonry only when necessary. A sealant will prevent proper breathing and cause moisture to be trapped inside the masonry.



If feasible, remove added material and restore the original façade.

If the original façade materials exist, restore rather than covering with new material.

The owner of the 1892 Barlow Building at 211 W Holly St. removed the 1960s "modernizing" materials and restored the original façade.





HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Additions to Historic Commercial Buildings

An exterior addition to a historic building should be considered only after determining that a new use cannot be accommodated by altering non-significant interior spaces.

Designing the Location of an Addition [2]

INTENT: Additions are often made over time to historic commercial buildings, as uses change or more space is needed. In planning a new addition, the goal is to minimize loss of a building's historic character and significant features. Opportunities for addition placement may be limited. There are two types of additions: ground level additions, which involve expanding a structure's footprint, and roof additions.

Guideline: Locate ground level additions to the rear or side of a building where they create the least impact to historic character.

Guideline: Design a roof addition to be simple in character and set back from the front plane of a building.

Guideline: Design additions to be compatible with the original building and not detract from the original material, character or scale.

- The addition's materials, window size and placement, and alignment of architectural elements should align, relate, and be compatible with those of the existing structure.

Guideline: An addition should appear subordinate to the main structure, and should be similar in mass and form, yet be distinguishable from the original building.

[2] Refer to [*NPS Preservation Brief #14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns*](#) for more information about the location of additions.

- Design an addition so that the character of the original building can still be interpreted.



The YMCA was able to expand by purchasing the adjacent one-story building and create a climbing wall by setting-back the roof top addition.

Guideline: Design an addition so the historic character of the original building can still be interpreted.

- A new addition that creates an appearance inconsistent with the historic character of the building is inappropriate. For example, an addition that is more ornate than the original building would be out of character.
- An addition that seeks to imply an earlier period than that of the building is also inappropriate as it creates a false sense of history.

Guideline: An addition should be subtly distinguishable from the historic building.



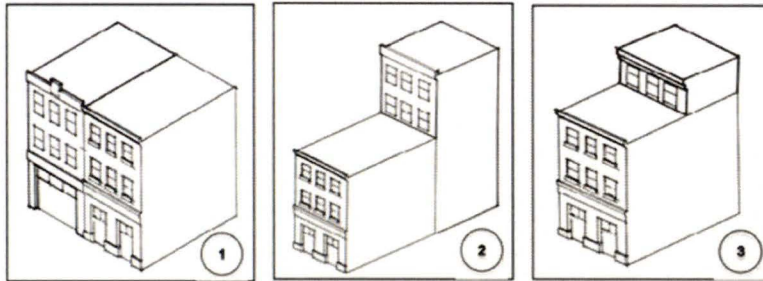
HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

- An addition should be made distinguishable from the historic building, even in subtle ways, so that the character of the original can be interpreted.

Guideline: An addition made to the side of a building should maintain the alignment of storefront elements, moldings, cornices and upper story windows of the existing building.

Guideline: An addition made to the roof of a building should maintain the historic building's street presence as related to its height, mass and character.

- A roof addition should be set back from a primary, character-defining facade, to preserve the perception of the historic scale of the building.



The three images above illustrate how additions can be made to existing buildings. The first shows an addition placed to the side of an original three-story building, the second shows the addition placed to the rear, and the third shows a roof addition that has been set back from the front of the building.

Addition of Handrails and Balconies

INTENT: The addition of handrails may be necessary to address accessibility and life / safety issues but should not detract from the character of the original building.

Guideline: A new railing or an addition to an existing railing should be simple in design. Simple metal work and wood are appropriate for new railings.

- A railing should appear as mostly transparent, with equal or lower ratios of solid-to-void of baluster-to-opening.

Guideline: If a taller railing than the original is required by building code, add a railing above the original to achieve a greater overall height without changing the appearance of the original.

- Design the new railing to be visually subordinate to (thinner and less detailed than) the original.

INTENT: The addition of balconies can increase use options and long-term viability for historic commercial buildings.

Guideline: Design a balcony addition to be in character with the original building, yet simple in design.

- The balcony should appear mostly transparent. Achieve solid-to-void ratios with balusters and rails.
- Simple metal work with a dark matte finish is most appropriate on commercial buildings.
- Heavy timber and plastics are inappropriate materials, as are glass and plexiglass.

Guideline: Mount a balcony to accentuate character-defining features. Where possible, locate a balcony within existing openings. Balcony supports should align with existing building elements.



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Awnings and Canopies

INTENT: Awnings promote sidewalk activity and protect pedestrians from the weather. Both operable and fixed metal type awnings are appropriate, but regardless of type, an awning's design should relate to the building's architecture, and not obscure character defining features.

Guideline: Design an awning or canopy to be in scale with the building and streetscape.

Guideline: Mount an awning or canopy to accentuate character- defining features. Locate so as to fit into existing building openings.

Guideline: Awnings should not overwhelm the façade and should be a subordinate feature.

Guideline: Appropriate supporting mechanisms for metal awnings include wall-mounted brackets and chains consistent with the style of the building.

Guideline: Operable awnings are an energy efficient mechanism for managing interior light and air and are encouraged.

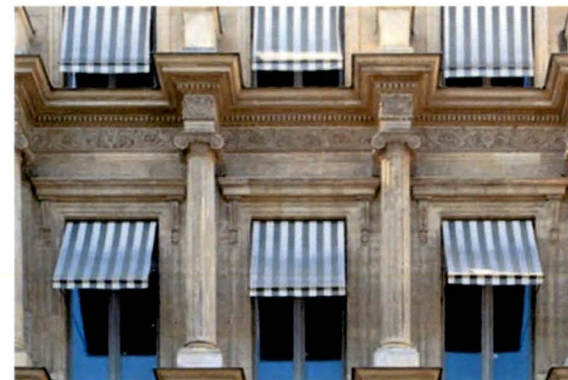
Guideline: Internal illumination of an awning is inappropriate, but light fixtures that shed light down onto walkways and features below the awning are encouraged.



The Herald Building at 1146 N. State Street was added to provide pedestrian cover while still allowing light to penetrate to the building.



The Flatiron Building at 1311-1319 Bay Street.



Recommended - mount an awning or canopy to accentuate a building's character-defining features. Photo courtesy of [*Professional Tips & Tricks To Simplify Anchoring An Awning*](#) (ecanopy.com)



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Building Lighting

The character and level of lighting used on a building deserves special attention. Traditionally, exterior lights were simple in character and were used to highlight signs, entrances, and ground floor details. Most fixtures had incandescent lamps that cast a color similar to daylight, were relatively low intensity and were shielded with simple shades.

INTENT: The overall effect of modest and focused building light should be continued. Lighting design should enhance the historic character of the street as seen at night. Lighting should not overwhelm it and should facilitate safety and security.

Guideline: Design lighting to accent architectural details, building entries, signs and to illuminate sidewalks.

Use lighting as it was used historically in the area:

- a. Shielded lighting is preferred.
- b. Lighting should not dominate a facade or the street.
- c. Washing the entire facade with light in some cases may be appropriate.

INTENT: Use building lighting to accent entrances and architectural details, and to illuminate sidewalks and signs.

Guideline: Minimize the visual impacts of architectural lighting. Use shielded and focused light sources to prevent glare. Provide shielded and focused light sources that direct light downward.

Guideline: Use lighting fixtures that are appropriate to the building and its surroundings in terms of style, scale and intensity of illumination.

Guideline: Up-lighting should only be used where an architectural detail, such as an extended cornice or sill, will block the lighting.

Guideline: When installing architectural lighting on a historic building, documentation of historic lighting should be used as a basis for the new design. If no evidence exists, use a simplified design that relates to the building style.

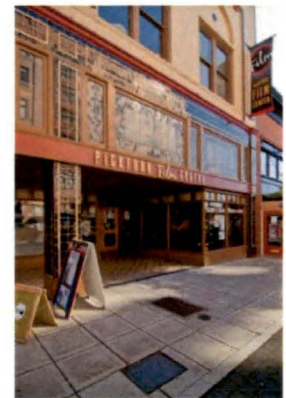
Guideline: Building lighting should be installed to minimize damage to a building's original material and should be reversible.

Guideline: Attach new lighting fixtures to mortar, rather than drilling through bricks on historic buildings.

Existing Historic Additions

INTENT: Some early additions may have taken on historic significance of their own. Conversely, it may be appropriate to modify or remove more recent additions that detract from the historic character of a building.

Guideline: Additions over 50 years old that are similar in character to the original building's materials, finishes, and design, and that may reflect the workmanship of a master should be preserved.



The building which now houses The Pickford at 1318 Bay St. originally housed "The Racket" was updated in the 1920s and has since taken on significance.



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Historic Residential Buildings

Urban villages have historic residential buildings within their boundaries, some located in commercial zones and/or within National Historic Districts. The age, style, material and forms may vary, but preservation goals are similar. This section provides guidance for the rehabilitation and additions to these residential forms.

Form and Facade

INTENT: Residential forms and facades add interest and help tell the story of how an area developed over time. It is a goal to preserve the character defining features of these historic residential buildings.

Guideline: Preserve the character-defining architectural elements of a residential building. Elements may include:

- **Porches**, which create depth and interest to a building. Typically, these are a one-story covered, unenclosed or enclosed entry element. A porch floor commonly matches the height of the first floor and is supported by columns and has a baluster.
- **Doors**, both primary entrance and secondary, provide character to a historic residential building. Doors are often made of wood, sometimes with partial glazing.
- **Windows** are a major contributor to the character of a historic residential building. Depending on the style and period constructed, windows may be double-hung, casement, sliding, awning, fixed, or glass block – or a combination of these. Divided lights were common on pre-modern buildings.
- **Trim details**, often in wood that covers transition between building elements. This is sometimes a decorative molding.
- **Eaves**, the portion of the roof that overhangs the vertical walls.
- **Exposed rafters**, the structural component at eaves, common in the Craftsman style.

- **Dormer**, a window that projects vertically from the roof or wall and is subordinate to the primary roof.
- **Attic window or vent**, an opening in a gable end.



There are several turn-of-the 20th century historic homes that contribute to the Downtown National Historic District, such as this Queen Anne style home at 214 N Commercial Street which has been preserved and adaptively used as offices. (Left, Assessor Photo).



The Gilbert Flats (aka Avalon Apartments) are a good example of an historic apartment building. Well preserved over the years, it is a contributing building in the Downtown National Historic District.



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Doors and Windows

INTENT: Preserve original window and door openings, components, and materials.

Guideline: Refer to “Windows” section of Historic Commercial Buildings.

Roofs

INTENT: The character of a historic roof should be preserved, including its form and materials. The shadows created by roof overhangs contribute to the perception of a building’s scale, and to its architectural character.

Guideline: Do not alter the angle or pitch of a historic roof. Maintain the line and orientation of the roof as seen from the street.

Guideline: Preserve the original eave depth of a roof. Do not cut back roof rafters and soffits or in other ways alter the traditional roof overhang.

Guideline: Preserve original roof materials and decorative elements such as crests, chimneys, roof detailing, gutters and downspouts.

Guideline: New roofing materials should convey a scale and texture similar to those used traditionally. Roof replacement material shall be compatible with the architectural style of the structure.

Guideline: Composition shingle roofing can be appropriate replacements for wood shingles and should have a color similar to the original. Shingles that contain embedded photovoltaic systems are also appropriate in dark colors. Specialty materials such as tiles should be replaced with a matching material.

Guideline: Do not add features to a roof, such as a “widow’s walk” (an ornate railing around the roof ridge) where there is no evidence that one existed.

Guideline: Minimize the visual impacts of skylights and other rooftop devices.

Guideline: A skylight that is flush with the roof plane may be considered where it remains visually subordinate. Skylights be located below the ridge line and not interrupt the plane of the original roof.

Guideline: Locate electronic data transmission and receiving devices where they are not visible from the right-of-way.



Historic photo of the Kulshan Club, in its original location on 12th Street in Fairhaven. Built in the Craftsman style as a men’s club, the building was moved from its original location and converted to apartments and remains a contributing building in the Fairhaven National Historic District. (Photo courtesy Whatcom Museum Photo Archives).

Porches

INTENT: A porch is one of the most important character-defining elements of a façade. It provides visual interest and influences perceived scale and should be preserved.

Guideline: When replacement of a porch is necessary, it should be similar in character, design, scale and materials to those seen traditionally.

Guideline: Preserve a porch in its original condition and form, and as possible, maintain the existing location, shape, details and posts of the porch.



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Guideline: Repair rather than replace deteriorated elements of a porch. Replace missing or deteriorated decorative elements to match existing elements; e.g., match the original proportions and spacing of balusters and porch posts.

Guideline: The size of a porch should relate to the overall scale of the primary structure to which it is attached.

Guideline: If possible, base the replacement design on the original design. Where no evidence of the original exists, design a new porch to be similar in character to those found on comparable buildings.

Guideline: A new porch should use materials similar to those seen historically. Alternative materials for porch decking may be considered when similar to the original.

Guideline: Unless reconstructing a porch from historic documentation, it is not necessary to replicate the details of the original porch or a design copied from a similar style house. It is important that new details be compatible (similar form, scale and materials) for the design of the porch and the style of the house.

Guideline: If a porch has been altered, consider restoring it back to its original design. If the original design of the porch is unknown, base the design of the restoration on other traditional porches on buildings of a similar architectural style.

Guideline: If a porch must be enclosed, do so in a way that maintains an appearance of openness.

- Use transparent materials (such as glass) and place them behind the balusters and balustrade to preserve the visual character of the porch. Enclosing a porch with opaque materials is discouraged.



Some historic homes on Elm Street in the Fountain District Urban Village have been converted to offices, are contributing buildings to the Eldridge National Historic District.



Residential homes converted to commercial purposes adds character to the Fountain District on Meridian Street. As possible, it is recommended that these forms be preserved.



HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Additions to Historic Residential Buildings

INTENT: Locate additions to minimize the impact to existing buildings.

Guideline: If existing buildings are to be joined by a mutual addition, the distinction between the two original buildings shall be retained.

Guideline: Additions should be set back from the front facades of buildings that are to be joined.

INTENT: Augment the architectural character of the original building when designing additions, upper stories, dormers, and other modifications.

Guideline: A new addition should relate to the design, materials, ornamental detail, and follow the roof shapes and slopes of the existing building.

Guideline: Window and door proportions (including the design of sash and frames), floor heights, roof shapes and pitches, and other elements of the addition's exterior shall relate to those of the existing building. Windows shall be of similar type, materials, pane pattern and quality as those in the existing building.

Guideline: Whenever possible, retain existing siding and features of buildings when making improvements and adaptations.

Guideline: A change of materials, colors or textures on different elements is encouraged to provide further articulation and additional variety and character.

Guideline: A change of materials, colors or textures on different elements is encouraged to provide further articulation and additional variety and character.

Guideline: The primary entrance should face the public street.

INTENT: Additions to historic residential buildings should be compatible with the primary structure and not detract from the building's original character.

Guideline: Design an addition to relate to the mass and scale of the original structure.

Guideline: An addition should be simple in design to prevent it from visually competing with the primary facade. For a larger addition, break up the mass of the addition into smaller modules that relate to the historic house. To keep the size of a higher mass as small as possible, use a lower plate height.

Guideline: Place an addition at the rear or side of a building or set it back from the front to minimize visual impacts and allow the original proportions and character to remain prominent.

Guideline: Design a new roof of an addition to be similar to the slope and design details of the original structure.

Guideline: When constructing a rooftop addition, keep the mass and scale subordinate to the primary building.



Four examples showing recommended locations for additions (addition shown as shaded). Each example compliments and is subordinate to the original building.



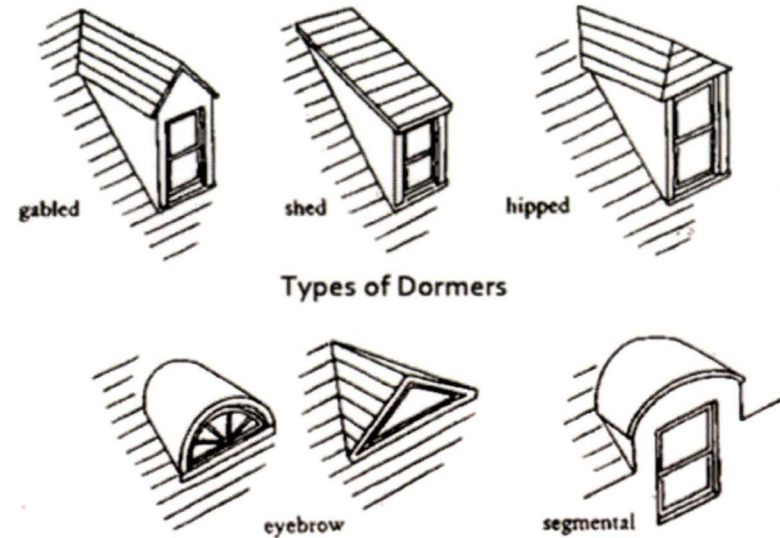
HISTORIC BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Dormers

INTENT: Rooftop dormers are typically added to increase the amount of headroom in an upper floor, adding usable square footage that may improve the use of a building.

Guideline: Traditionally, dormers were designed as visually subordinate elements to the overall roof mass, in scale with the historic structure.

- Locate the dormer below the ridge line of the primary roof structure.
- Relate character of the dormer to the primary roof in form, pitch, and materials.
- The number and size of dormers should not visually overwhelm the scale of the primary structure.



Types of dormers. Knopf, Virginia McAlester et al., *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013



GLOSSARY

1. **Historic Building:** For the purposes of these guidelines, a “historic” building is generally over 50 years old (some buildings under 50 years old may be considered historic) and retains its original architectural features, regardless of their physical condition. A historic building is considered “eligible” for listing in the Local, State, and/or National Historic Registers if it retains integrity if it retains integrity of its original design and architectural features. In some cases, a building that has been altered or has deteriorated physical condition can be restored to the extent that it would be considered eligible.

2. **Historic Significance:** Historic significance is the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or cultural of a community, State, or the nation. Significance is achieved in several ways: association with events, activities or patterns; association with important persons; through distinctive physical characteristics of design, construction, or form; or through its potential to yield important information about history or prehistory.

3. **National Register of Historic Places:** The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the nation's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and/or culture. National Register properties have significance to the history of their community, state, or the nation. The National Park Service administers the NRHP.

4. **Washington Heritage Register:** The Washington Heritage Register (WHR) is an official listing of historically significant sites and properties found throughout the state. Maintained by the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation, the WHR includes districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that have been identified and documented as being significant in local or state history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and/or culture.

5. **Bellingham Register of Historic Places:** The Bellingham Register of Historic Places (BRHP) identifies buildings, objects, sites, and districts that reflect special elements of Bellingham's architectural, cultural, archeological,

aesthetic, and historical heritage. Financial incentives and building code and land use relief are a few of the benefits offered to buildings listed on the BRHP. These properties are officially protected under City ordinance. For changes to BRHP-listed properties, a Certificate of Alteration is required, with review under BMC 17.90.060.

6. **Contributing Building:** A “contributing building” is one that is determined to be historically significant within a historic district.

7. **Non-contributing Building:** A “non-contributing building” is one that has been determined to not be historically significant within a historic district.

9. **“Compatible” Design:** Buildings from different eras and styles are considered to be compatible when they share the same underlying principles of space, structure, features, composition, proportion, ornament, and character as neighboring buildings. If these principles are consistent buildings will be compatible, regardless of style.