



# ARCHITECTURAL OVERLAY DISTRICT GUIDELINES

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AND RIVERFRONT CENTER



ORDINANCE NO. 366-2022  
ADOPTED 1 MARCH 2022





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# CHAPTER 1 | Introduction



*The 2020 Comprehensive Plan recognizes the Central Business District (CBD) as the heart of the City of Star as well as one of the indicators for the economic vitality of the City. As the community grows, other retail centers may be established, but it is important for the community to remain focused on the central core and mixed-use developments with commercial on the lower floor and high density residential on upper floors for a vibrant Central Business District.*

*These districts are intended to support regional retail along with a downtown main street component that contains employment opportunities, and community gathering places consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's vision, goals and objectives.*

## RELEVANT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY GUIDANCE

*Goal 8.3 Encourage the development of a diverse community that provides a mix of land uses, housing types, and a variety of employment options, social and recreational opportunities, and where possible, an assortment of amenities within walking distance of residential development.*

### **Objectives:**

- E. *Work to create a vibrant Central Business District.*
- I. *Discourage development within the floodplain.*

### **8.5.3 Policies Related Mostly to the Urban Residential Planning Areas**

- D. *High Density residential uses should be located in close proximity to commercial centers located near highway corridors and on upper floors within the Central Business District land use area. High Density residential uses otherwise should not be dispersed throughout the community and should not be located along the Boise River.*
- F. *High Density residential design specifications may include increased setbacks for multi-story buildings and increased landscape buffers.*

### **8.5.5 Policies Related Mostly to the CBD Planning Areas**

- A. *The CBD zoning district should allow for a mix of commercial, office, institutional, and civic type uses with specific provisions for residential use in appropriate locations with compatible densities.*
- B. *High density residential is suitable within the CBD in*

## 1.1 VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### *1.1.1 City of Star Vision Statement*

The Comprehensive Plan identifies the following vision for Star:

*As development occurs the community wants to protect, preserve, and enhance open spaces, the Boise River, and the steep slope areas generally to the north. The community does not want Star to become a “Stack and Pack” metropolitan city but wants to strive to retain its small-town, family friendly, character while growing a strong commercial base and vibrant downtown.*

Also within the Comprehensive Plan, Star acknowledges that it will continue to grow as the Treasure Valley grows, but Star’s growth is to be a unique balance of environmentally sensitive urban and rural development. Urban development will be primarily directed to the Central Business District and Riverfront Center land use areas as well as along regionally significant transportation corridors. The city will work in cooperation with landowners and local agencies to plan for and preserve rural planning areas in which large lot residential and agricultural uses continue in appropriate locations. The city will balance development with environmental stewardship, especially along the Boise River and in the steep slope areas. These Architectural Overlay District Design Guidelines (Design Guidelines) will meet this vision through the implementation of the following Core Design Principles for all new, infill, and redevelopment with the Architectural Overlay District (AOD):

- » **Community Character.** Consider the natural topography and landscape, as well as the built form context in which buildings are being placed. Whether that includes views, vegetation or nearby existing buildings, each site should be thought of as an opportunity to enhance the character of the larger community through thoughtful and appropriate design.
- » **Balance.** Seek to balance uses to promote a pedestrian scale and walkability, in order to reduce the need for vehicle trips and to enhance sense of place and user experience.
- » **Placemaking.** Create a variety of spaces small, medium and large in size that offer opportunities for display of public art, education, history, icons, and focal points. Encourage spaces that allow people to spend quality time gathering and lingering.
- » **Pedestrian Activity.** Include provisions for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity as an alternative mode of transport to surrounding and nearby neighborhoods, recreational resources and existing trails and sidewalks. Pedestrian-oriented streets are to be an important component of the Riverfront Center.

### 1.1.2 Purpose

The purpose of these Design Guidelines document is to provide guidelines for design within the Central Business District (CBD) and Riverfront Center land use areas that Star has determined are most important to new, infill and redevelopment sites.

This document is intended to be used in combination with the City's Unified Development Code and Planned Development agreements to provide design professionals, property owners, developers, staff, and City officials with a cohesive framework of the City's expectations for planning, design, and review of development proposals. It is intended to allow flexibility for developers, property owners, tenants, and design professionals to develop their own response to any given challenge.

These Design Guidelines originate from the vision, goals and policies of the 2020 City of Star Comprehensive Plan, including the South of the River Subarea Plan, as they relate to the Architectural Overlay District, emphasizing enhancement of Stars' unique existing community character while infusing vibrant community gathering spaces. As such, the desired future vision for lands within the AOD is that of a mountain modern or modern rustic feel with an emphasis on stone, timber, brick, weathered wood, and mixed materials construction.

### 1.1.3 Applicability

These Design Guidelines will apply to the AOD, as identified in the map below, except to the extent that an element of a Site improvement Plan for which vested property rights are approved on property in such areas conflict with these Design Guidelines. In this case, the conflicting elements of a Site improvement Plan with vested rights will supersede and control over these Design Guidelines, as determined by the City. Application of the Design Guidelines will vary with the nature and scope of each individual project. This is not a "one size fits all" document.

*mixed-use buildings with commercial or office type uses on the first floor and high density residential on upper floors*

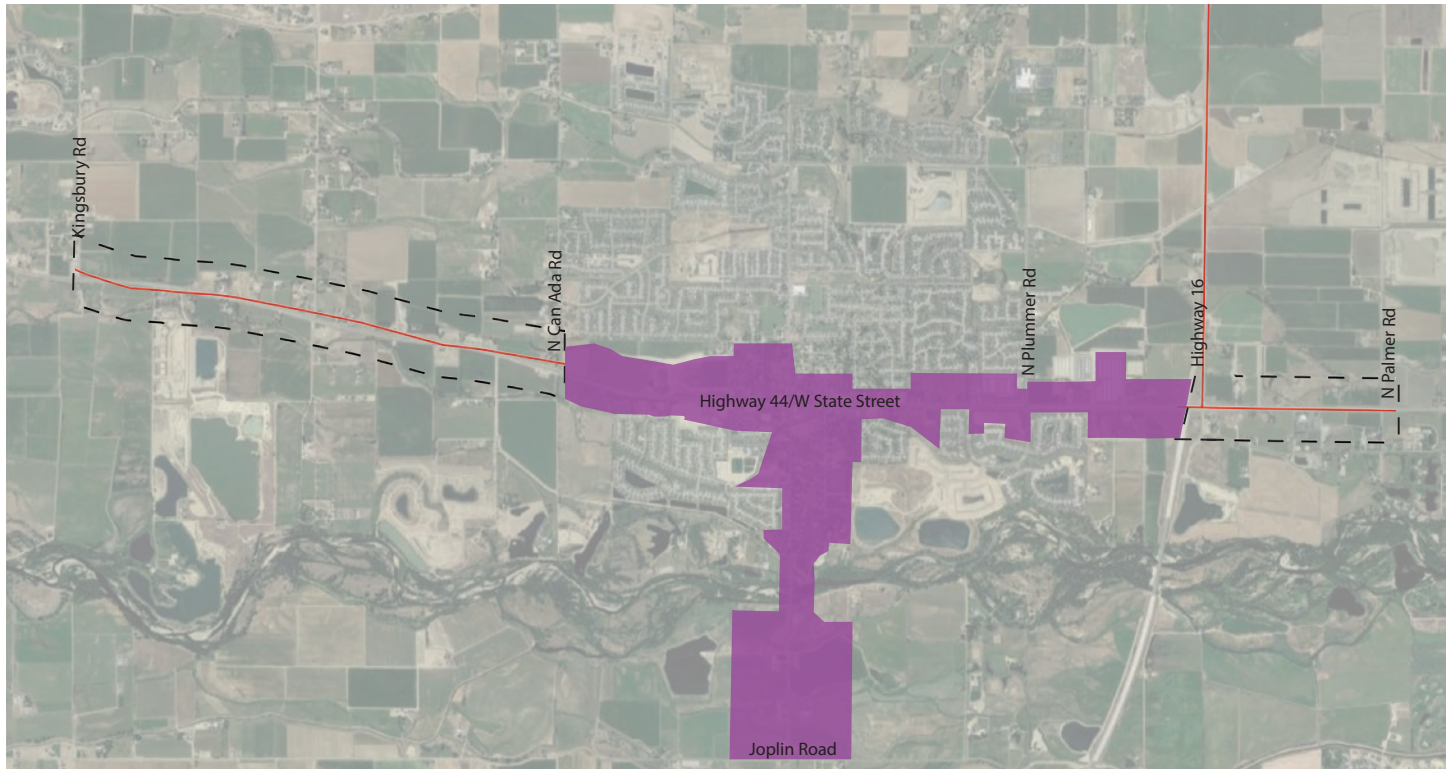
- C. *Implement, review, and update the 2011 Star Downtown Revitalization Plan for development strategies within the plan intended to stimulate development within the CBD.*
- D. *The "floodway" lands abutting the CBD land use designation, all as shown in the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, should continue to be developed as park space supporting activities integral to the economic and "Live, Work, Play" ambiance planned for the CBD.*
- E. *Main city service facilities should be located in the CBD and should all be south of State Highway 44 clustered into a "City Services Campus". That includes the City Hall, Library, Post Office, Emergency Services, Department of Motor Vehicles, and other related facilities.*

### 8.5.6 Policies Related Mostly to the Commercial Planning Areas

- A. *Assist in the provision of coordinated, efficient, and cost-effective public facilities and utility services, carefully managing both residential and non-residential development and design, and proactively reinforcing downtown Star's role as the urban core while protecting existing property rights.*
- B. *Encourage commercial facilities to locate on transportation corridors.*
- C. *Locate neighborhood services within walking distance to residential development.*
- D. *Discourage the development of strip commercial areas.*



Images contained in these Design Guidelines are intended to depict specific design elements, such as building massing or roof forms, and are not intended to reflect the City's preferred design vision. These Design Guidelines define a minimum standard that development should exceed through superior and unique design characteristics that will benefit the community at large.

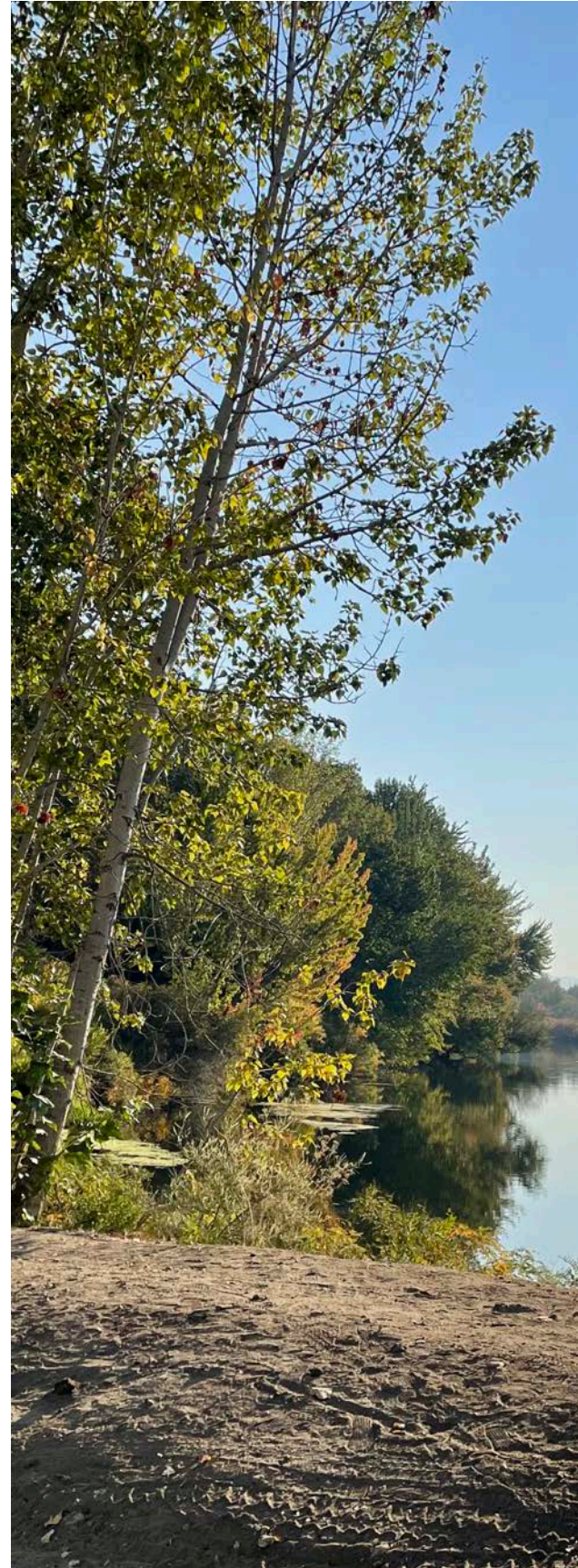




### 1.1.4 *Amendment Procedures*

The City Council and Planning & Zoning Commission may review and adopt amendments to these Design Guidelines between updates to ensure that the document continues to address current issues and provides clear and realistic direction for development of the mixed-use areas. A major update to these Design Guidelines should be prepared at least every five years or as directed by the Planning & Zoning Commission and/or City Council to ensure harmonious and coordinated development of Star. There are two basic forms of possible amendment to the Design Guidelines:

- » Administrative Amendments: Minor changes or revisions to the text that reflect updated information or grammatical corrections, but do not alter the intent of the guidelines, can be processed by City Staff and are not subject to the public hearing process.
- » Major Amendments: Major Amendments shall be processed in accordance with Unified Development Code text amendments. They include changes to the language and text of these Design Guidelines that revise the overall intent of any of the specific guidelines. Major Amendments provide an opportunity to reconfirm the vision and direction of the Design Guidelines as directed by the Planning & Zoning Commission, City Council, or staff.
- » The appropriateness of an amendment shall be determined in accordance with the following criteria:
  - » Is the request consistent with the purpose, vision and guiding principles of the guidelines? Explain.
  - » Will the amendment request interfere with the design and/or densities of the neighboring and adjacent developments? Explain.
  - » Will the amendment request interfere with, prevent, or support the provision of any of the areas' existing or planned community services or facilities? Explain.









## CHAPTER 2 | Site Design

*The Comprehensive Plan details the desired future character of commercial development within the City of Star. Specifically, the Comprehensive Plan states that new developments should use appropriate building scale and buildings should not dominate the site. New buildings should be located so they are compatible with the siting and massing of existing adjacent buildings and site development and considerations should include setbacks, building heights, parking, arrangements and building shape, and massing.*

*Building entries should be located so they are easily identifiable from site entries and provide secondary entrances that are easily accessible and convenient to parking and delivery areas. In siting, orienting and developing new buildings and facilities, focus should be placed on protecting and enhancing existing views and view corridors.*

## 2.1 BUILDING PLACEMENT AND ORIENTATION

**2.1.1 Unified Design.** Think of the site as a landscape with buildings rather than buildings with landscaping. Site planning should take into consideration the existing landscape, and slope of the subject site as well as off-site building elevations and design to create a unified project with a sense of identifiable place.

**2.1.2 Community Gathering Spaces.** Cluster buildings to create pedestrian-oriented spaces for gathering.

**2.1.3 Pedestrian Connectivity.** Maximize pedestrian connectivity by providing pedestrian easements along building frontages where appropriate to provide a walkable network between building entries, public spaces, and adjacent buildings or developments.

**2.1.4 Building Orientation.** Provide at least one primary building entrance per elevation that faces a public right of way. Other entrances may face the interior of the site.

- » In the case of corner lots the building owner may select which street the main entrance faces.
- » On corner lots, incorporate rounded or angled building corners or setback the building at the corner and include a public gathering space to maintain a clear view along streets at intersections.

**2.1.5 Setbacks.** Include a front building setback from the property line along a public right of way of a minimum of zero feet (0') to a maximum of twenty feet (20'). Front and street side setbacks are intended for landscaping and pedestrian amenities and the city encourages joint efforts between adjoining property owners. Suggested amenities in the setback could include:

- » Public art,
- » Landscape treatment,
- » Seating,
- » Landscaping in movable planters,
- » Plazas and outdoor dining,
- » Streetscape extensions,
- » Decorative paving, and
- » Bike racks.

**2.1.6 Building Frontage.** In the Riverfront Center/Main Street area, include a minimum of 75% of the building facade as paved sidewalk or plaza space intended to increase walkability and pedestrian activity. Landscaping may be provided in planters to accent and define spaces.

**2.1.7 Mix of Uses.** The primary intent of the AOD is to create an urban environment with a variety of uses mixed both vertically (within the same multi-story building) and/or horizontally (within the same parcel)



**Figure 1.** Building massing and site amenities example



## 2.2 PARKING

**2.2.1 Off-Street Parking.** Locate off-street parking behind buildings as they relate to public right of ways. If the parcel is developed as a parking lot, provide a minimum thirty-foot (30') wide landscape buffer between the parking lot and public right of way. This landscape buffer may include a detached public sidewalk if required.

**2.2.2 Stormwater Management.** Integrate Low Impact Development (LID) features for stormwater management. The term LID refers to systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes that result in the treatment, infiltration or use of stormwater in order to protect water quality.

**2.2.3 Green Infrastructure.** Consider incorporating green infrastructure where feasible. Ideas include providing covered parking that provides shade while generating solar energy or electric car charging stations.

**2.2.4 Pavement Design.** Alternative pavement designs are encouraged to provide appropriate aesthetics and function to support multiple uses.

## 2.3 PUBLIC SPACES

**2.3.1 Site Amenities.** Incorporate decorative paving (i.e., colored, stamped or exposed aggregate concrete, pavers, or brick) to differentiate all accent areas and public gathering spaces, including patios, outdoor seating areas, plazas and walkways between buildings, from the primary pedestrian sidewalks. Public sidewalks are excluded.

**2.3.2 Public Art.** If public art is used, it should be integrated into the overall design of a project.

**2.3.3 Fencing.** Fencing used to delineate outdoor seating or extended outdoor space of a building for the express use of that building, can be a maximum of forty-two inches (42") tall and be comprised of materials complementary of the architecture.



Festival and market areas



Public art and music



Amphitheater

### PARKING BEHIND BUILDINGS

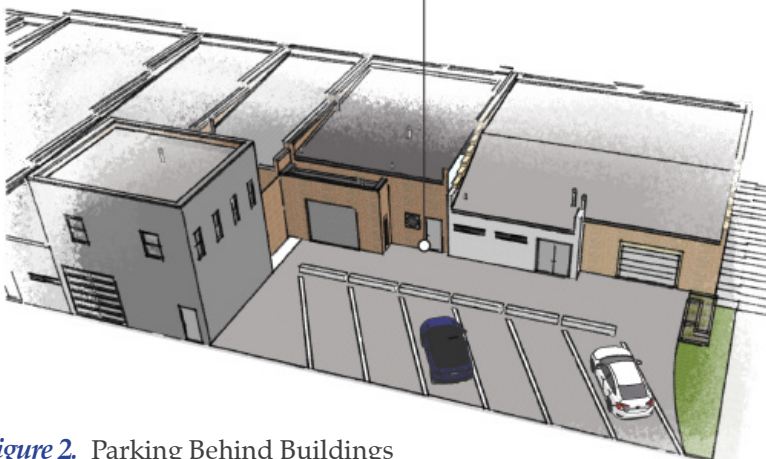


Figure 2. Parking Behind Buildings

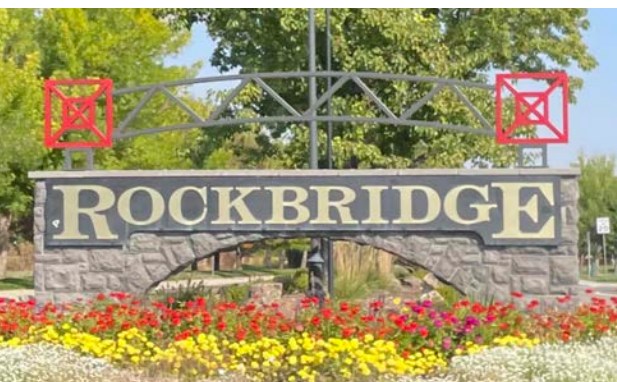




Themed lighting



Stylized projecting signage



Stylized monument signage

## 2.4 LIGHTING

**2.4.1 Lighting Requirement.** All lighting must meet the requirements of the Unified Development Code and other City Ordinances, unless otherwise approved through a Planned Development.

**2.4.2 Light Pollution.** Incorporate full cut-off fixtures (no light above ninety degrees) to minimize light pollution. The use of energy efficient fixtures, incorporating Light Emitting Diode lamps (LED), is encouraged. Dark sky compliance is encouraged per the international Dark-Sky Association.

**2.4.3 Light Design.** Lighting fixtures and illumination should complement a structure and be of similar design and character as the project's building components.

## 2.5 SIGNAGE

**2.5.1 Signage Requirements.** All signage must meet the requirements of the Unified Development Code and other City Ordinances, unless otherwise approved through a Planned Development.

**2.5.2 Signage Hierarchy.** The size, location and design of signage should relate to the location and character of the building per the following:

- » Monument signage is intended to be placed along major roadways with the purpose of identifying the entry to a development and/or the commercial tenants housed within a specific development area.
- » Primary building-mounted signage is intended to direct vehicular traffic to specific establishments.
- » Secondary building-mounted signage, such as projecting signs, are intended to be smaller in stature and provide direction to the pedestrian realm.
- » Signage Materials. Utilize high quality, designed materials that will withstand the elements and complement the architecture of the building in addition to meeting the overall character of materials spelled out elsewhere in these Design Guidelines.

**2.5.3 Pole Signs.** Pole signs are discouraged whenever possible.



Banner signage and wayfinding



## 2.6 STREETScape DESIGN

**2.6.1 Pervious Areas.** Encourage the use of pavers, pervious paving and strategically placed planting areas to reduce the amount of impervious area and associated stormwater runoff on a site.

**2.6.2 Stormwater Capture.** Wherever possible, use stormwater capture, conveyance and storage as an opportunity to provide additional design value by making it an integrated and visible component of the landscape.

**2.6.3 Tree Grates.** Any tree located within a concrete area will need to be planted in tree grates and tree wells. Root barriers are recommended to limit future sidewalk damage from tree roots.

**2.6.4 Pedestrian Lighting.** Provide pedestrian lighting along all pathways not illuminated by street and/or site lighting.

**2.6.5 Site Furnishings.** Provide site furnishings for all pedestrian gathering areas and/or plaza areas. Furnishings may include flagpoles, benches, seating/tables, planters, bike racks, drinking fountains, waste receptacles and other similar amenities.



Integrated seat walls in the public realm



Integrated xeriscape and native landscaping



Thematic sitting areas blended with landscape



Planters, seating, and lighting along pedestrian walkways



Outdoor dining







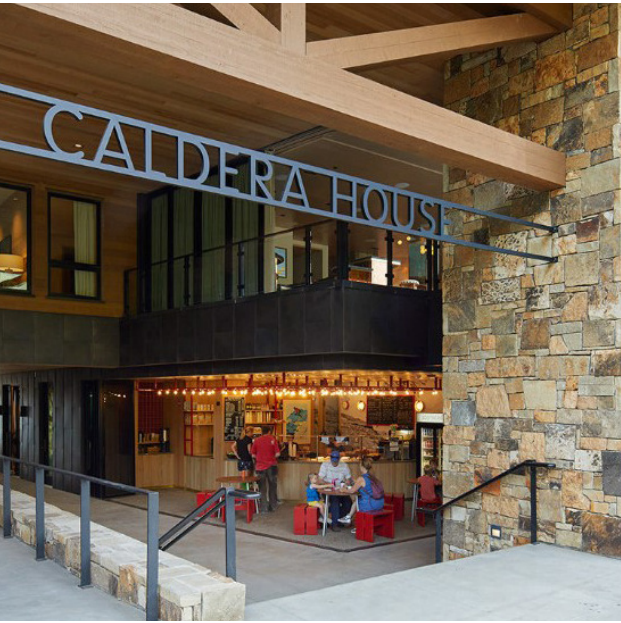
## CHAPTER 3 | Architectural Design

*As noted in the Comprehensive Plan in the Community Design Element, the overall size and shape of a new development can have a huge impact on the surrounding neighborhood and on how a development is perceived by the community. The height of a new building is extremely important—too high and it can overwhelm neighbors; too low and it can create a gap in the physical “fabric” of a neighborhood. The overall scale and massing of a new building should also try to match that of the surrounding neighborhood. The overall form of a new building should incorporate as much variety as possible and avoid large expanses of flat wall or roof.*

*Creating a building whose size and shape generally complement the size and shape of surrounding buildings will go a long way toward making a new development acceptable to its neighbors.*

*New development should consider providing as much visual and architectural interest as possible while maintaining a hierarchy of scale and a unified overall form. Developments should also consider breaking a large building into smaller units or clusters and providing variations in height, color, setback, materials, texture, trim, and roof shape.*





Stone and timber



Mixed stone, metal, and wood



Weathered wood

### 3.1 BUILDING MATERIALS AND COLORS

**3.1.1 Building Materials.** Utilize non-reflective, durable materials that reflect the mountain-modern architectural style to meet the following:

- » Primarily comprised of stone, and timber, with wood siding (both horizontal and vertical), brick, stucco, concrete, and limited use of metal.
- » Limit use of concrete masonry units or block CMUs to no more than twenty inches (20") of any building facade.
- » Metal siding may be used to accent other materials such as stone and wood to no more than ten percent (10%) of any building facade.
- » Tilt-up walls and plain, smooth concrete are prohibited.
- » Metal as a window framing support or mounting material is acceptable so long as it is painted, stained, anodized or vinyl clad in approved colors.

**3.1.2 Building Colors.** Incorporate predominantly neutral earth tones representing the region, including browns, black, grays, muted greens, rusts, etc., and represent a complementary palette.

- » White may be used as an accent color only.
- » Bold, contrasting accent colors may be used to highlight elements such as doors, signs, entries, etc., but shall not comprise more than five percent (5%) of the overall color palette.
- » Flat or low gloss finishes are required.



Modern rustic



## 3.2 BUILDING ARTICULATION

**3.2.1 Facade Relief.** To avoid monotonous buildings facades with no visual interest and break up the building mass provide horizontal and vertical variety along building facades longer than fifty feet (50') in length. For example, this could include:

- » Indentations or bump outs of at least two feet (2') that provide shadow on the building wall,
- » Varying materials at strategic points along the facade such as building entries or breaks in plane, or
- » Varying building height and roof treatment along the facade.

**3.2.2 Primary Facades.** Facades facing a public right away, drive aisle, or pedestrian space (such as public sidewalk, plaza or seating area) are encouraged to include at least four of the following features:

- » Contrasting material wainscot
- » Decorative feature lighting
- » Roof style changes
- » Accents, such as a tower of greater than a five-foot (5') height from other roof surfaces
- » Consistent pan-channel type lettering for all signage on the building facades
- » Angled or recessed door entries
- » Clerestory windows
- » Balconies on upper stories
- » Awnings not including signage
- » Columns, posts, or other features to define separate storefronts
- » Structural entryway accent



Varying building height and roof treatments



Preferred building and roof articulation

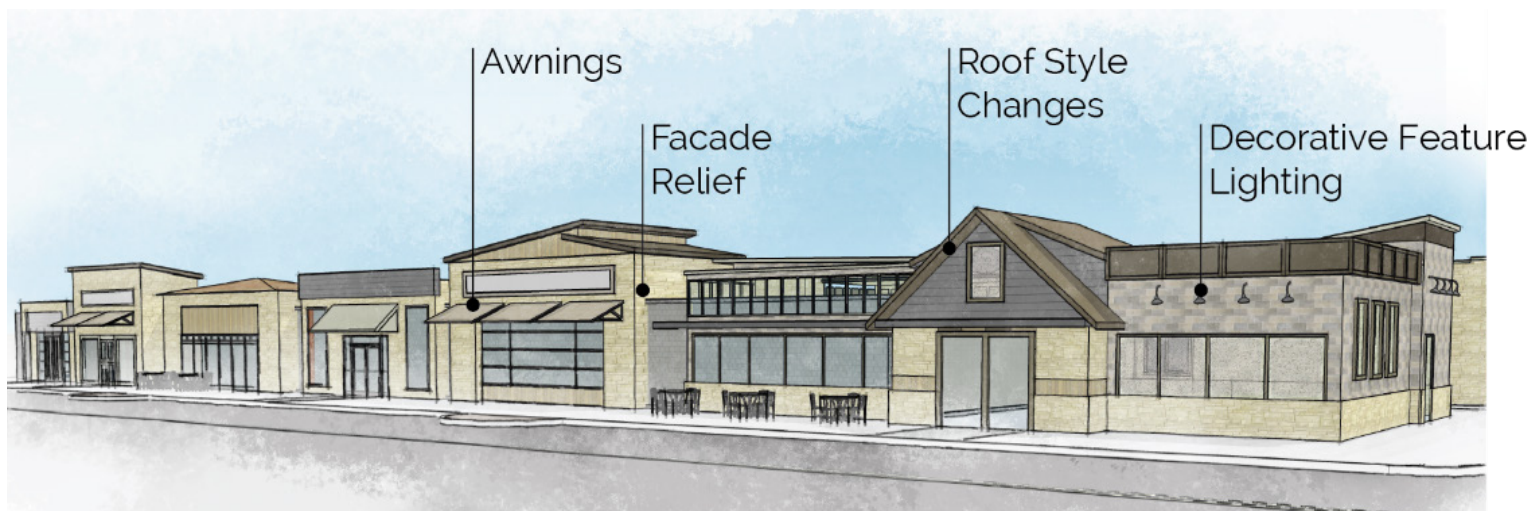


Figure 3. Preferred Building and Roof Articulation Examples



### 3.3 BUILDING FORM

**3.3.1 Street Facades.** Incorporate commercial uses on the street facing, ground level of new buildings which accommodate pedestrian-friendly elements as described herein.

**3.3.2 Pedestrian Connections.** Orient buildings such that the building's street facing, ground level facades are constructed to abut or connect to a public sidewalk or plaza.

**3.3.3 Inclusion of Storefronts.** Include a "storefront" on the street facing, ground level consisting of a minimum of thirty percent (30%) to fifty percent (50%) glass.

- » Mirrored glazing is not allowed.
- » Tinted or solar absorption glazing may be used.

**3.3.4 Building Entries.** Ensure building entrances are identifiable and directly accessible from public sidewalks via on site pedestrian walkways. (Drive aisles and other vehicular accesses shall not be considered pedestrian walkways.)



Angled building entry providing public space



Inclusion of ground level storefronts



Figure 4. Preferred pedestrian scale facade and building form





360-degree architecture



Base, middle, and top

**3.3.5 Building Base, Middle, Top.** Apply traditional base, middle, and top organization of all buildings where:

- » The base is scaled and articulated to emphasize the pedestrian zone.
- » The middle of the building typically responds to the function of the building through fenestrations and design expressions.
- » The top of the building completes the form. This may be achieved by a varied or more detailed glazing composition, additional depth at the glazing, a change in plane, introduction of a different, complementary building color or a well-executed cornice. This concept also applies to single story and modern style buildings that articulate in a more vertical nature.

**3.3.6 360-Degree Architecture.** As previously stated, blank walls are not desired, therefore all sides of a building are encouraged to incorporate some architectural features complementary to the overall building design and primary building facade. Buildings may have primary and secondary facades that are treated differently with similar complementary materials and colors. Primary facades will be held to a higher standard. Ways to achieve variety on the secondary facades are:

- » Provide a variety in building materials and colors
- » Provide windows
- » Provide faux windows for back of house operations
- » Provide landscaping to further mitigate the blank wall effect



Figure 5. Building Base, Middle, Top.

### 3.4 ROOF TOPS AND ROOF FORMS

**3.4.1 Roof Design.** The design of the roof form and its components such as roof material, color, trim, and lighting should be an integral part of the architecture and include pitched roofs and shed roofs indicative of the mountain-modern architectural style.

**3.4.2 Roof Variation.** Vary the parapet height on flat roofs by a minimum of two feet in vertical elevation change for every thirty feet (30') to fifty feet (50') of linear facade.

**3.4.3 Roof Materials.** Earth tones should be used to compliment the architectural style of the building.

**3.4.4 Roof-Mounted Elements.** Screen or paint all vents and roof top mechanical equipment so as to match the color of the roof.



Varied roof height

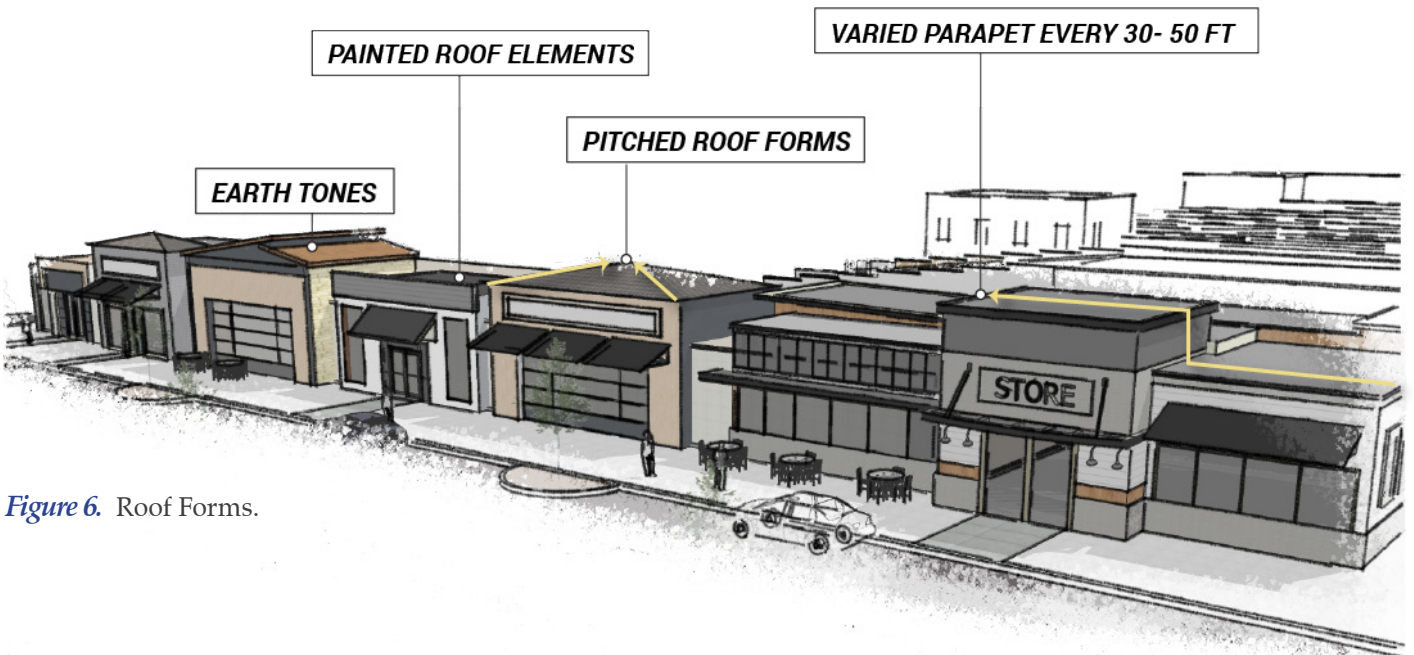


Figure 6. Roof Forms.



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