

retail design MANUAL



Introduction and Intent

The City of Ferndale has established a series of City codes and programs in order to proactively address retail design, its benefits, and its impacts on the City and its residents. In order to provide applicants and citizens with a clear understanding of the desired outcomes that should result from such policies, this Retail Design Manual has been created.

The Retail Design Manual is intended as a guide, and includes illustrations and photographs of retail design elements that are included in the municipal code, based on the principle that “a picture is worth a thousand words.” This manual should not be used as a template for development: applicants are encouraged to expand on the themes in this document in order to create developments which respond to the applicants’ needs, and the unique sense of place in Ferndale. It should be noted that the regulations referred to in this document, and found in the Ferndale Municipal Code, are intended not only to address “large” retail development, but to establish guidelines and policies that will apply to all retail development. The codes in place are designed to encourage retail development of all kinds including large national retailers, but to restrict the “big box retail” structures popularized in the 1990’s.

The codes and policies are intended to reflect Ferndale – a small city of 10,800 residents, located between the mountains and the sea, and split by the Nooksack River. Residents of Ferndale are proud of their city’s pioneer roots, but familiar with urban designs found in Seattle and Vancouver. Residents have also witnessed tremendous growth in the region and are aware and supportive not only of development regulations and design guidelines, but cutting-edge architecture and retail design. The people and the City of Ferndale expect retail to reflect the community and to support the special sense of place within the city through unique, attractive, and coordinated development.

By creating this manual, the City acknowledges the most basic goals of retail development: to efficiently, effectively, and affordably sell goods and services to the public at large. However, this manual also reflects the City of Ferndale’s belief that form and function can be joined to create highly attractive, timeless commercial spaces.

Table of Contents

- I. Purpose of the Chapter
- II. Applicability
- III. Definitions
- IV. Landscaping
- V. Signs
- VI. Entrances
- VII. Building Setbacks and Buffers
- VIII. Parking Lot Design and Access
- IX. Smaller Retail Stores
- X. Lighting and Glare
- XI. Pedestrian Circulation
- XII. Outdoor Storage, Trash Collection, and Loading areas
- XIII. Central Features and Community Spaces
- XIV. Transportation Consistency Requirements
- XV. Vacant or Abandoned Properties
- XVI. Facades and Exterior Walls
- XVII. Entryways
- XVIII. Smaller Retail Stores
- XIX. Detail Features
- XX. Roofs
- XXI. Materials and Colors
- XXII. EAGLE

Purpose

The purpose of the guidelines and regulations contained in the Ferndale Municipal Code are as follows:

- A. To reduce the negative aesthetic, economic, traffic-related, and other impacts of retail structures and sites upon the community by breaking up the apparent mass and scale of building walls and parking areas.
- B. To ensure that retail development is compatible with its surroundings and reinforces Ferndale's character, historical heritage and tradition, and unique sense of place.
- C. To encourage a mixture of uses and sizes of structures and promote an integrated, village-like approach toward site development, building design, and the landscape.
- D. To encourage the development of a safe and comfortable pedestrian-scale environment that achieves variety, visual interest, and creative design to foster community pride, protect property values and the interests of citizens.

Procedures

In general, a pre-application meeting is encouraged early in the process, in order to provide the applicant with a broad understanding of the City's current process, timelines, and workload, as well as allowing a productive dialogue to begin. Some projects require a pre-application meeting, especially when they involve public hearings, the SEPA process, or compliance with EAGLE standards.

Although completed application materials are not required prior to application submittal, proponents are invited to provide conceptual drawings or other materials that demonstrate the proposal.

In addition to required application materials and the standard permitting process, at time of application submittal, the applicant is expected to provide:



- ♦ Completed City of Ferndale Development Checklist (EAGLE), including any supporting exhibits which can be used to establish compliance and appropriate assignment of points.



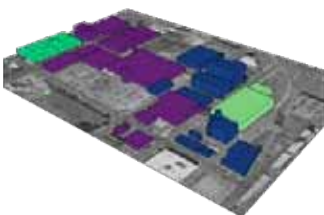
- ♦ Color elevations



- ♦ Materials sample board or exhibit

- ♦ Photographs, computer simulations, and three-dimensional computer models or animations (if required by staff)

- ♦ Additional technical studies, as required by the Zoning Administrator



For further details, please refer to Ferndale Municipal Code § 18.58.020.

Compliance with retail design guidelines and standards is mandatory for retail developments (or mixed-use developments that include retail) over 20,000 square feet, including establishments of less than 20,000 square feet located within larger shopping centers or developments. In addition, retail establishments of less than 20,000 square feet but which include elements typically associated with larger developments (facades greater than 100 feet in length, for example) must also comply with portions of the retail design standards. Proponents of projects that would not otherwise be required to comply with these code sections are invited to reflect the standards as well, unless located within the Urban Residential or City Center zones, or other areas with specific design standards.

Generally, “guidelines” are mandatory elements of the code that must be followed; “standards” are elements that may be evaluated on a project-specific basis. Applicants are invited to propose creative alternatives for staff consideration. Projects that must receive EAGLE certification will also be considered on a project-specific basis.



This page: Shopping districts in small cities changed dramatically in the 20th Century, as the traditional “Main Street” (top) gave way to suburban shopping centers, and later “super centers,” before re-adopting traditional, place-based designs (bottom).



Definitions

In order to properly enforce or administer a code, adequate definitions must be put in place to ensure compliance and a common understanding of the concepts being enforced. This section includes the definition in the code chapter as well as a photograph or illustration of the object.

Arcade means an area contiguous to a street or plaza that is open and unobstructed, and that is accessible to the public at all times. Arcades may include building columns, landscaping, statuary and fountains.



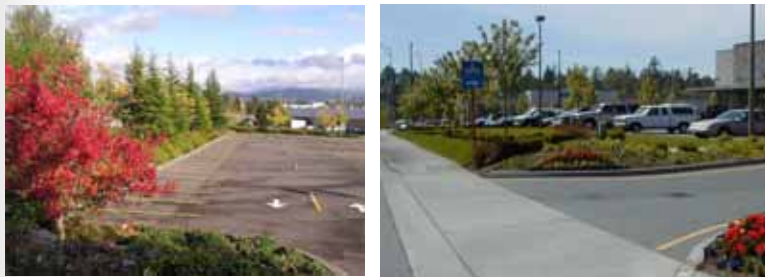
Articulate means to give emphasis to or distinctly identify a particular element. An articulate façade would be the emphasis of elements on the face of a wall including a change in setback, materials, roof pitch, or height. The examples below show a lack of articulation (left), and substantial articulation, using different roof lines, materials, and wall changes.



Berm means an earthen mound designed to provide visual interest on a site, screen undesirable views, reduce noise or provide a buffer from adjoining uses.



Buffer Zone means that intermediate or intervening space or area that serves to reduce or mitigate the interaction with adjacent properties or structures.



Buffer means an area provided to reduce the conflict between two different land use. Buffers are intended to mitigate undesired views, noise and glare – effectively providing greater privacy to neighboring land uses. Typical buffers consist of materials that serve this purpose and include, but are not limited to, plant materials, walls, fences and/or significant land area to separate the uses.

Building Mass means the building's expanse or bulk and is typically used in reference to structures of considerable size. _ No Picture _

Community Space means an area devoted to the public as an amenity. The space can include covered areas, drinking fountains, sitting benches, etc. It shall not include stored merchandise.



Dormer means a window set vertically in a gable projecting from a sloping roof.



Façade means the front of a building or any of its sides facing a public way or space, especially one distinguished by its architectural treatment.



Gable means a triangular wall section at the end of a pitched roof, bounded by the two roof slopes.



Definitions

Hardscape means manmade or constructed elements, permanently in place, that are part of the completed project.



Hip Roof means a roof having sloping ends and sides meeting at an inclined projecting angle.



Internal Walkway means a pedestrian walkway within a development, either enclosed or open to the elements, which allows visitors to travel between businesses and parking lots with minimal impact to vehicular traffic.

Outparcel means a separate lot or buildable area at the boundaries of a retail development, often adjacent to primary streets.



Parapet means a low, protective wall at the edge of a terrace, balcony, or roof, especially that part of an exterior wall, fire wall, or party wall that rises above the roof.



Portico means a porch having a roof supported by columns, often leading to the entrance of a building.



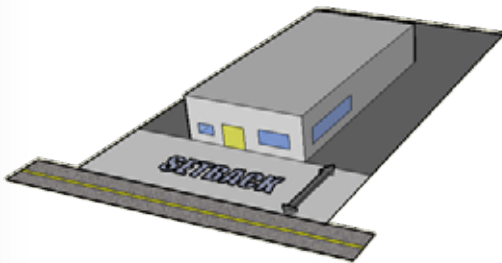
Public/ Private Right of Way means any public or private road or access easement intended to provide public access to any lot/ development, but excluding any service road or internal driving aisles (i.e., within parking lots).

Retail Establishment means any new single or multi-building/tenant development whose principal activity is the sale of new or used merchandise in an enclosed building, including entertainment, dining, related service industries, and associated warehousing or storage and is processed according to the requirements of this title, or the building permit process. Mixed-use developments such as those which include professional offices or residential units shall comply with this chapter if more than one quarter of PM peak hour trips generated by the development are retail in nature, as determined by the current ITE Trip Generation Manual.

Screen means a device used to block unwanted views. A screen should be constructed of opaque materials, the height of which will be effective in obstructing unwanted views.



Setback means a prescribed distance or an area between one element and another (i.e., a building and the road right-of-way).



Transparent/ Transparencies means a see-through partition or wall, generally consisting of glass, and can be in the form of windows, showcases, skylights, or doors.

Walkways mean a pedestrian connectivity and interconnectivity system to and through a development. Sidewalks are assumed to be made of impervious materials (bottom left). Pathways are assumed to be made of pervious materials (bottom right).



Landscape and buffering should contribute to visual quality and continuity within and between developments, provide screening and mitigation of potential conflicts between activity areas and site elements, enhance outdoor spaces, reduce erosion and stormwater runoff and mitigate air pollution.

Whenever possible, the landscaping for such developments should provide open spaces that preserve or take advantage of natural features such as the view, significant stands of timber, or waterways.



Landscaping shall complement the existing landscapes of different retail sites within a development and shall enhance the personal scale of a development by clearly defining pathways, entrance areas, plazas or public gathering spaces, parking areas, and access roadways.



Landscaping elements shall meet functional and visual purposes such as:

Defining Spaces: to the right, landscaping is used as a visual barrier between a sidewalk and a street, defining the retail arcade space as a pedestrian area.



Accommodating and Directing Circulation Patterns (left): pedestrian and vehicular control devices such as crosswalks, roundabouts, and other features can be used to implement primary landscaping features, and to define the sense of place of a development.

Managing Hardscape Impacts (right):

Landscaping features can be used not only as a pedestrian amenity or a buffer between uses, but to offset the impacts of impervious surfaces. In this example, a raingarden is used to store and treat storm water from the adjacent parking facility.



....attracting attention to building entrances and other focal point

Discouraged: This entrance has no vegetation or landscaping around it; pedestrians must cross a series of streets to reach their vehicle



Encouraged: This entrance provides pedestrian-scale landscaping and lighting. Although the area reserved for pedestrians is roughly equal to the example above, it gives the appearance of a cozier environment.

...enhance the personal scale

Landscaping shall complement the existing landscaping of different retail sites within a development and shall enhance the personal scale of a development by clearly defining pathways, entrance areas, plazas or public gathering spaces, parking areas, and access roadways.

Right: a mix of vegetation provides a pedestrian scale and reduces the apparent mass of large structures.



Left: creeping vines act as a subtle landscaping feature along a retail façade.

Right: a clearly defined pedestrian path network stretches from one end of a retail development to the other.





Signs

Guideline: Signage planning within a development should be well coordinated and constructed with colors and materials and architectural style that complement those used on the principal structures on the site. Directional signage within a development should have a uniform look and be distributed so as to not cause confusion or inhibit the safe travel of vehicles and pedestrians throughout the site.



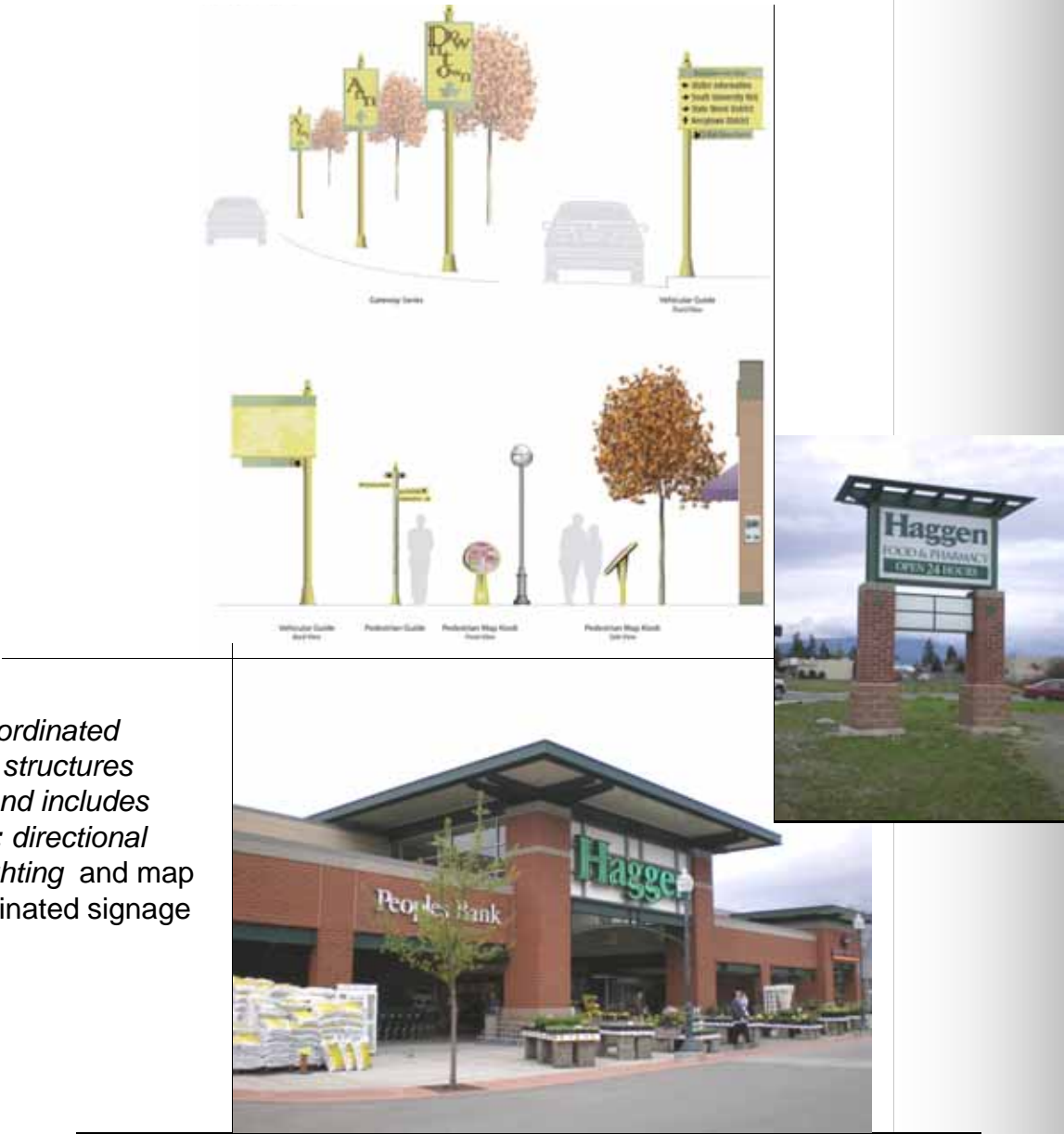
Above, Left and Below: Signage reflects the architectural style and materials within the development.



Signs

The style, size, color, and building material of all signs on the site shall be coordinated, including signs for any outparcel development, on-site directional signs, and signs to be located on the face of any structure. Colors and materials shall be in keeping with the colors used on the primary structure(s).

A coordinated signage plan, allowing variation from the requirements of the City of Ferndale sign regulations (Chapter [18.80](#) FMC) can be approved for retail establishment sites involving two or more individual retail buildings, or for sites involving multiple tenants. The Zoning Administrator is authorized to allow for such variation so long as no maximum height requirements or total sign area for the site (as clarified in Chapter [18.80](#) FMC) is exceeded.



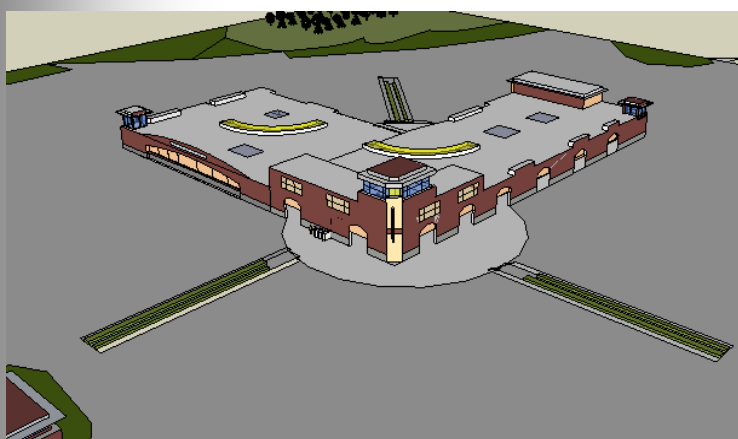
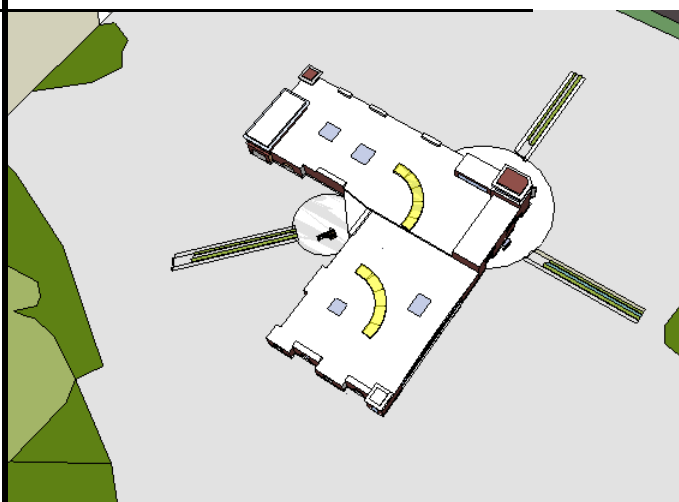
This Page: signage is coordinated between the sign and the structures within the development, and includes similar materials. **Above:** directional signage, banner signs, lighting and map kiosks also follow a coordinated signage plan.



Entrances

Guideline: Retail buildings 20,000 square feet or greater should feature multiple entrances to help reduce walking distances from cars, facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access from public sidewalks, and provide convenience. Multiple entrances should be used to mitigate the effect of the unbroken walls and neglected areas that often characterize building facades that face bordering land uses. Retail buildings should feature entrances that are coordinated with pedestrian networking and public connectivity to and through the entire site.

This Page: structure features at least one entrance along every façade, minimizing the appearance of neglected walls, and providing easy access to parking. Note vehicle free zones in front of primary entrances.



Entrances

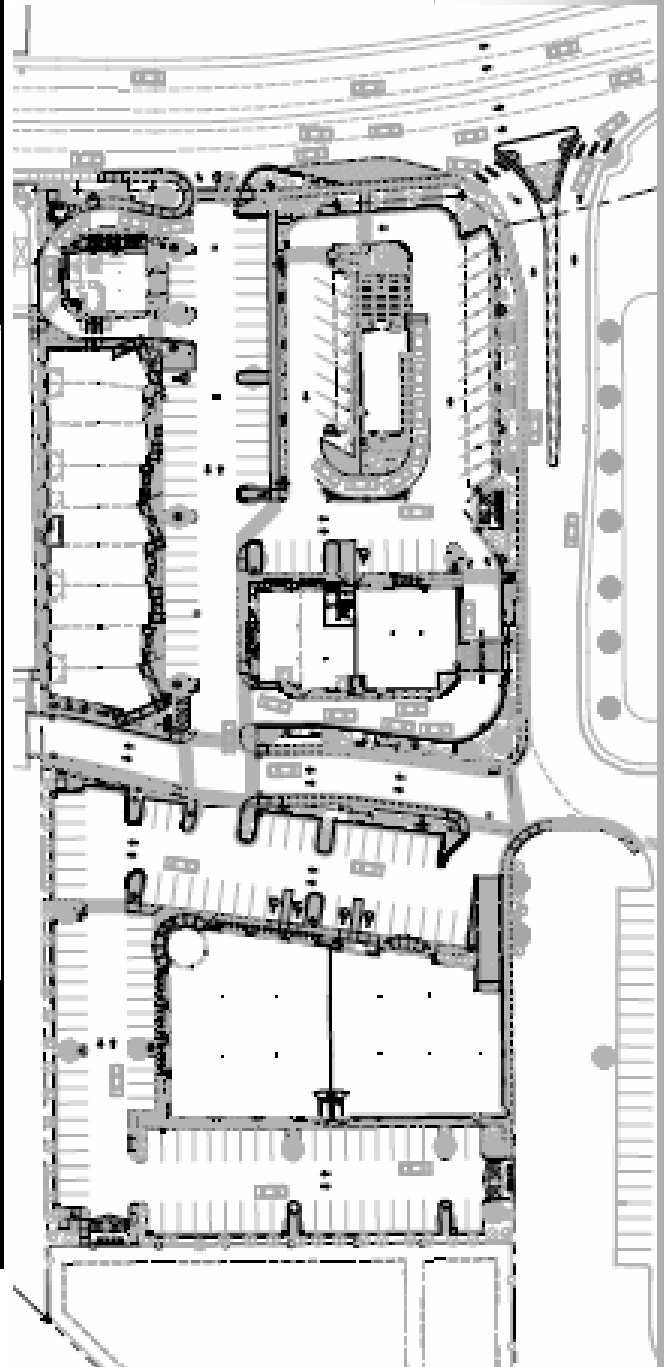
Standards: All sides of a principal building that directly face an abutting public or private right-of-way shall feature at least one customer entrance. Where a principal building 20,000 square feet or greater directly faces more than two abutting public or private rights-of-way, this requirement shall apply to a minimum of two sides of the building, including the side of the building facing the primary street, and another side of the building facing a secondary street.

Where additional stores will be located in the principal building, each such store shall have at least one exterior customer entrance, which shall conform to the above requirements.

Side or rear walls that face walkways may include false windows and door openings defined by frames, sills and lintels, or similarly proportioned modulations of the wall, only when actual doors and windows are not feasible because of the nature of the use of the building, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.



Encouraged: the site plan to the right includes many of the design requirements for entrances: structures have multiple entryways and exits, individual businesses each have an entryway, structures are modulated on all sides. **Discouraged:** the site plan above features large buildings with entrances on the front elevation only, necessitating a large expanse of parking.





Building Setbacks and Buffers

Guideline: Appropriate setback and buffer provisions shall apply to retail establishments to mitigate the impacts associated with the proximity and unattractive view of blank walls, loading areas, storage areas, HVAC units, garbage receptacles, and other such features. The use of setbacks and other buffers and screening techniques can mitigate to some extent the visual impacts of these retail uses to adjacent land uses.



Left: a blank wall along a public right of way creates empty space along the sidewalk. The retail development has turned its back on the street.

Below: a commercial establishment features numerous windows on a pedestrian scale, presenting a friendly , welcoming appearance.



Building Setbacks and Buffers

Guideline: Appropriate setback and buffer provisions shall apply to retail establishments to mitigate the impacts associated with the proximity and unattractive view of blank walls, loading areas, storage areas, HVAC units, garbage receptacles, and other such features. The use of setbacks and other buffers and screening techniques can mitigate to some extent the visual impacts of these retail uses to adjacent land uses.



Left: a blank wall along a public right of way creates empty space along the sidewalk. The retail development has turned its back on the street.

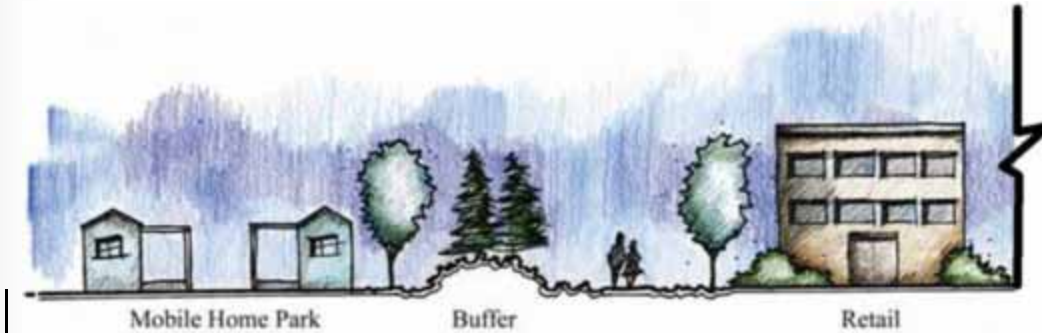
Below: Landscaping is used to offset the visual impacts of a large blank wall. Note that the building design incorporates false windows and color changes along the façade to further break up the apparent mass of the building.



Building Setbacks and Buffers

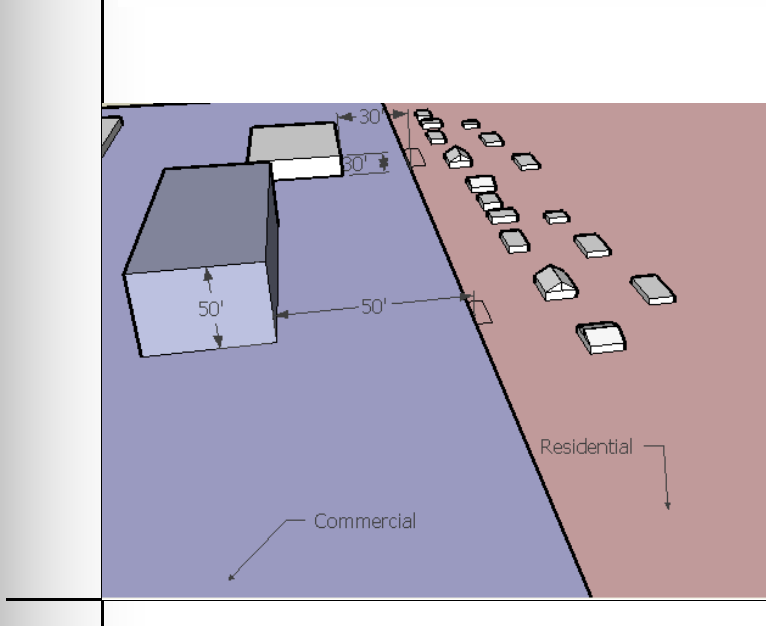
2. STANDARDS

- a. Setbacks shall accommodate the landscaping requirements found in the City of Ferndale landscaping standards.
- b. Where adjacent to residentially zoned or used sites, setbacks from interior property lines shall be equivalent to the greatest height of the building facade adjacent to said interior property line. Property lines along private drives and common property lines of commercial properties with integrated parking and access shall be exempt from this setback requirement.
- c. In such cases, where adjacent to residential sites, not less than 50 percent of the required setback width shall be a buffer, landscaped per the City of Ferndale landscape standards (Chapter [18.74](#) FMC).



Above: Residential properties are separated from retail development by a landscaped buffer, trees, and a trail system.

Left: Setbacks from residential properties are equivalent to the height of commercial buildings.



Parking Lot Design and Access



Guideline: Off-street parking for commercial buildings should be designed to minimize visual impact. Parking areas should provide safe, convenient, and efficient access for vehicles and pedestrians. They should be distributed around large buildings in order to shorten the distance to other buildings and public sidewalks and to reduce the overall scale of the paved surface. If buildings are located closer to streets, the scale of the complex is reduced, pedestrian traffic is encouraged, and architectural details take on added importance. Outparcel development is highly encouraged to reduce the visibility of parking areas from public and private streets. To the greatest extent practicable, parking areas should be consolidated into multi-story parking areas or parking garages that are within the footprint of the structure.



Note that parking garage has been integrated into site design

Standards: No more than 50 percent of the off-street parking area for the entire property shall be located between the front facade within the front yard of the principal building(s) and the primary abutting street unless the principal building(s) and/or parking lots are screened from view by outlot development (such as restaurants) and additional tree plantings and/or berms.

- Large surface parking lots shall be visually and functionally segmented into several smaller lots.
- Rest stations which include covered seating, garbage receptacle, and at least two canopy trees shall be provided at least every two hundred feet along pedestrian paths within parking lots.



Left: a covered bench and garbage receptacle placed within large parking lots allows customers the ability to rest between the store entrance and their vehicle. **Bottom Left:** Large parking lots can be segmented by landscaping and walkways, reducing their apparent mass.

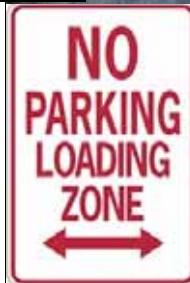


Above: Parking lots must be setback from the street and buffered by landscaping in order to minimize the appearance of large parking areas.

Parking lot design standards within the City of Ferndale are not intended to ignore the basic functions of a parking lot. Instead, the standards have been written to encourage thoughtful design, well-planned landscaping elements and pedestrian-scale amenities, while providing for transportation alternatives as well.

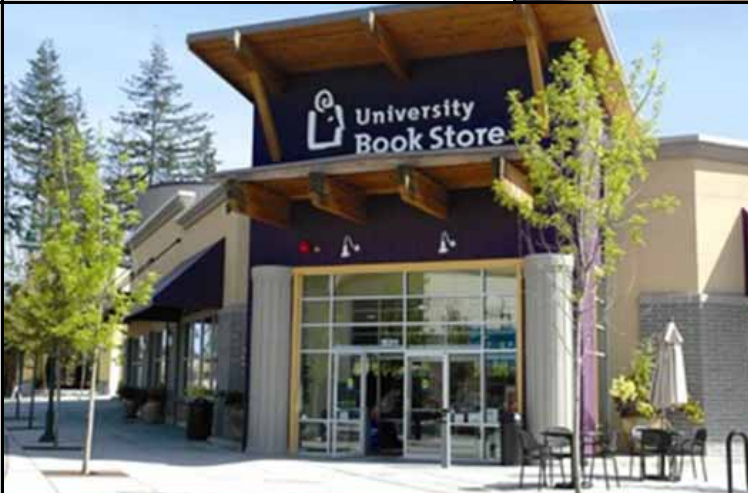


Parking lots should incorporate a variety of design components in addition to basic landscaping and partitioning, including bicycle storage and lanes, coordinated directional signage, loading zones, restrictions on idling, and drive through stacking lanes that do not obstruct travel ways.





Guideline: Although this section may be applied to individual small retail and food stores, it also applies to large developments with numerous small retailers. Smaller retail stores give a center a “friendlier” appearance by creating variety, breaking up large expanses, and exhibiting the variety of the site’s opportunities. Smaller stores within a development should be located along street frontages and at corners of public streets and private access drives wherever feasible to create a “village” look and break up parking areas to create a visual interest of the overall building arrangement. The standards presented in this section are directed toward those situations where additional, smaller stores, with separate, exterior customer entrances are located either in the principal buildings or on the development site.



Above: Numerous businesses provide variety along the primary road frontage. **Left:** a pedestrian-scale store with outdoor seating has been established at a corner location. **Bottom:** many developments provide vehicle-free zones and pedestrian amenities such as “village greens.”



All retail, regardless of size, shall comply with the standards of the code. However, the City may consider flexibility in the code in the case of commercial developments such as community shopping centers or retail centers over 20,000 square feet in size that are typically focused around a major large tenant or “anchor” store, and supported by smaller “ancillary” retail shops and services located in multiple building configurations. Generally, smaller retail stores must comply with the following:

- Smaller retail tenants are in close proximity to the major anchors within a short walk of their entrances.
- A portion of these smaller retail shops or services shall be located fronting onto the major arterial as separate building “pads” or footprints where the setback from the major street frontage is reduced.
- The developments shall be located near major access drives to the shopping center.
- Anchor tenants are sited to have a side adjacent to the street with windows or display cases.
- Such smaller buildings shall be incorporated into the overall site design to provide for visual consistency and a sense of place within the development.



Above: Smaller stores may be incorporated into large buildings, provided that they include outside entrances, display windows, and pedestrian connectivity **Above right:** Well-lit pedestrian corridors increase foot traffic between businesses **Right:** Retail businesses have reduced setbacks from the street and reflect the overall site design of the development.



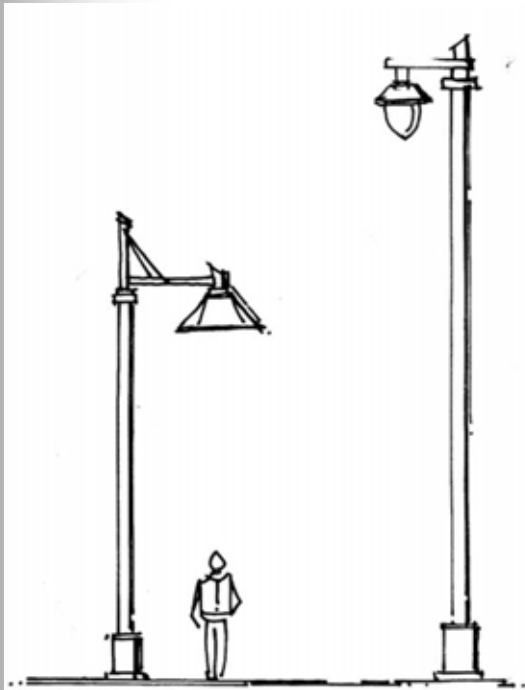
Lighting and Glare



Guideline: Minimum and maximum lighting standards should assure that retail centers provide safe vehicular and pedestrian access, while minimizing excessive or “spill-over” lighting and its negative off-site impacts. The extensive use of neon lighting is strongly discouraged. Lighting should be capped or otherwise directed, wherever feasible, so as to minimize light entering into the sky.

Retail lighting is used to provide safe access and to emphasize architectural elements of structures and the associated landscaping.

Left and Bottom: Lighting should reflect the scale of the site and the pedestrian element, and should be capped to avoid casting light onto adjacent properties or the night sky.



Standards: Illuminated signage and exterior building lighting shall be compatible with the architecture of the project and shall not detract from the visibility of surrounding buildings.

- b. Landscape and architectural lighting shall be used to illuminate building facades, building entrances, and feature or courtyard spaces.
- c. Night lighting must be provided for all pedestrian walkways and where stairs, curbs, ramps, and crosswalks occur.
- d. All exterior lighting fixtures in parking areas and driveways shall utilize cutoff shields or other appropriate measures to conceal the light source from adjoining uses and rights-of-way.
- e. Other lights shall be designed to avoid spill-over glare beyond the site boundaries.
- f. For those parking lots that are adjacent to residentially zoned land, the maximum height of light posts shall not exceed 18 feet.
- g. Lighting reduction and energy-efficient timer systems shall be required after normal business hours except for lighting that is mandated for general safety and security.



Clockwise from Top: in-ground lighting and solar-powered lighting is used to create a pedestrian friendly walkway at night, coordinated façade lighting highlights architectural elements of buildings, decorative exterior lights provide a flourish to the structure.

Pedestrian Circulation



Guideline: Comprehensive pedestrian walkway systems should provide user-friendly access from the parking area to the primary building, between businesses, and adjacent sites in such a manner that pedestrians using walkways are required to traverse the vehicular parking aisle to the minimum extent possible. Pedestrian walkways should be coordinated within the development and the City's Parks, Recreation and Trails Plan.



Standards:

- a. A well-marked, continuous and protected path network, a minimum of five feet wide, must connect the principal entrance(s) of all buildings to:
 - i. Street crossings, public sidewalks, and transit stops.
 - ii. Other buildings on the site.
 - iii. Central features and community spaces.
 - iv. Pedestrian walkways of adjacent sites.
 - v. On-site parking areas.
- b. The applicant shall eliminate vehicle travel directly in front of the primary entrance, so as to establish a “vehicle free zone” between the parking lot and the primary structure(s). This zone shall be protected with bollards or other devices which may be removed in emergencies.
- c. Large developments over 50,000 square feet shall include walkways at least eight feet wide



Walkways shall feature adjoining landscaped areas that include trees, shrubs, benches, flower beds, ground covers, or other such materials for no less than 50 percent of their length.

Pedestrian walkways shall provide weather protection features such as awnings or arcades within 30 feet of all customer entrances, constructed parallel to the facade of the building, and having a width at least double that of the doorways over which they are located.



Top: Front entry into a local shopping center has no awnings, resulting in a dramatic, but unfriendly appearance. Note the front plaza surrounded in white stone, which is inaccessible from the outside. Upper right: A walkway with adjoining landscaping and trees demonstrates compliance with Ferndale Standards.

Right: near-continuous awnings reflect a comprehensive design and provide cover during inclement weather. Bottom: a similar comprehensive awning design on a retail development. Note extensive landscaping throughout.



To the maximum extent feasible, pedestrians and vehicles shall be separated through provisions of a walkway. Where complete separation of pedestrians and vehicles is not feasible, hazards shall be minimized by providing the following types of features:

- i. Change in paving surface materials such as low maintenance pavers, bricks, stamped asphalt, or scored concrete.
- ii. The use of landscaping, bollards, lighting and other means to clearly delineate pedestrian areas.
- iii. The use of signs clearly identifying pedestrian crossing areas.



Above: pedestrians must cross a roadway via a small crosswalk in order to enter a shopping center. **Above right:** bollards identify a vehicle-free zone in front of the Mall of Georgia.

Below: texture changes, bollards, and crosswalk designs all help to identify pedestrian areas while reflecting the architecture of the development.



Outdoor Storage, Trash Collection, and Loading Areas



Guideline: Loading areas and outdoor storage areas exert visual and noise impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and should be designed so that delivery and loading operations do not disturb adjoining neighborhoods. These areas, when visible and audible from adjoining properties and/or public streets, should be screened, recessed or enclosed. When such areas are insulated, the enclosures should conform to those used by the predominant materials and colors on the building. While screens and recesses can effectively mitigate these impacts, the selection of inappropriate screening materials can exacerbate the problem. Appropriate locations for loading and outdoor storage areas include areas between buildings, where more than one building is located on a site and such buildings are not more than 40 feet apart, or on those sides of buildings that do not have customer entrances.



This page: outdoor storage, trash collection, and loading areas are elements of retail design that should be anticipated prior to construction, rather than incorporated into the project as an afterthought. Above: an annual “liquidation” sale spills into a parking lot. Above Right: a seasonal plant sale obstructs the entry and sidewalk of a hardware store. Right: a garden center successfully integrates outdoor storage and retail space into the overall site design

Standards: Areas for outdoor storage, truck parking, trash collection or compaction, loading, or other such uses shall not be visible from public or private rights-of-way.

- ♦ No areas for outdoor storage, trash collection or compaction, loading, or other such uses shall be located within 20 feet of any public or private street, public sidewalk, or internal pedestrian way.
- ♦ Loading docks, truck parking, outdoor storage, utility meters, HVAC equipment, trash dumpsters, trash compaction, and other service functions shall be incorporated into the overall design of the building and the landscaping so that the visual and acoustic impacts of these functions are fully contained and out of view from adjacent properties and public streets, and no attention is attracted to the functions by the use of screening materials that are different from or inferior to the principal materials of the building and landscape.



Clockwise from top: A loading dock is screened by landscaping and walls; Trash collection facilities are placed within attractive enclosures and are separated from the primary parking areas; a screened and gated loading area, which also includes trash collection facilities; an unscreened loading area visible from the street.



- ♦ Mechanical or HVAC equipment shall not be installed at ground level along any portion of a building facing a public or internal street unless such location is necessitated by the nature and design of the building it serves. A solid fence or wall and native plants shall screen such equipment.
- ♦ Non-enclosed areas for the storage and sale of seasonal inventory shall be permanently defined and screened with walls and/or fences. Materials, colors, and designs of screening walls and/or fences and the cover shall conform to those used as predominant materials and colors of the building. If such areas are to be covered, then the covering shall conform to those used as predominant materials and colors on the buildings. Such areas shall also be landscaped in accordance with Chapter [18.74](#) FMC.



Top: Ground floor HVAC units are discouraged. If such units are necessary, they must be incorporated into the general site design and effectively screened. **Above right:** an example of screened HVAC units. **Lower right:** non-enclosed storage and sales of merchandise. Such areas should be anticipated and incorporated into the overall site design. **Bottom:** HVAC units, trash collection, and outdoor storage shall be screened from adjacent land uses.



Central Features and Community Spaces



Guideline: Buildings should offer attractive and inviting pedestrian scale features, spaces and amenities. Entrances and parking lots should be configured to be functional and inviting with walkways conveniently tied to logical destinations. Bus stops and drop-off/pick-up points should be considered as integral parts of the configuration. Pedestrian ways should be anchored by special design features such as towers, arcades, porticos, pedestrian light fixtures, bollards, planter walls, and other architectural elements that define circulation ways and outdoor spaces. The features and spaces should enhance the building and the center as integral parts of the community fabric.

The number of and scale of amenities that must be provided will depend on the size of the development. The following is a list of potential amenities, however the applicant is invited to propose alternatives:

- i. Patio/seating area, including parking lot way-stations
- ii. Pedestrian plaza with seating and a covered structure
- iii. Transportation center,
- iv. Window shopping walkways,
- v. Outdoor play area,
- vi. Kiosk area,
- vii. Water feature,
- viii. Clock tower,
- ix. Steeple,
- x. Public safety lighting
- xi. Public art
- xii. Public drinking fountain



Pedestrian amenities add character and emphasize the human scale in retail developments: a clock tower serves as an entry into a development, window shopping is encouraged in a lifestyle center, and a playground allows children to let off steam.

Transportation Consistency Requirements



Guideline: Retail development will be evaluated based on its expected impact on the existing transportation system, and will be required to mitigate for those impacts through the construction of new improvements, in lieu payment of improvements, payment of traffic fees, or all of the above.

Standards: Pursuant to the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), the City's Comprehensive Plan, and other applicable regulations, the development shall provide appropriate road, curb, gutter, walkway, and signaling both on-site and off-site as necessary to accommodate traffic increase caused by the development.

- ♦ Areas shall be provided or designed to accommodate the WTA bus service program, where applicable. Such areas shall be connected to the main pedestrian walkway network.



Before and after photographs of road improvements showing the construction of a right-hand turn lane, bicycle lane, curb, gutter and sidewalk. Depending on the intensity of proposed uses, traffic mitigation shall be completed prior to occupancy.

Vacant and Abandoned Properties



Guideline: Structures or developments that have ceased operation shall not become a blight on the landscape. The property owner shall proactively address abandonment of large retail developments.

Standards: Vacant or abandoned properties, including, but not limited to, buildings, stormwater, parking, and landscaping, shall be maintained for the safety of the community, the local environment, and the visual impacts to the surrounding properties. Maintenance includes watering, trimming and pruning landscaping, promptly repairing damage, and prompt removal of graffiti.

Signage on such properties shall be changed, if at all, in a visually attractive manner. Any covering of glass surfaces shall be done in such a way as to blend in with the rest of the building and in a visually attractive manner. Chain-link fencing to exclude trespass shall be permitted for not more than 120 days, after which it shall be removed or replaced with visually attractive fencing.



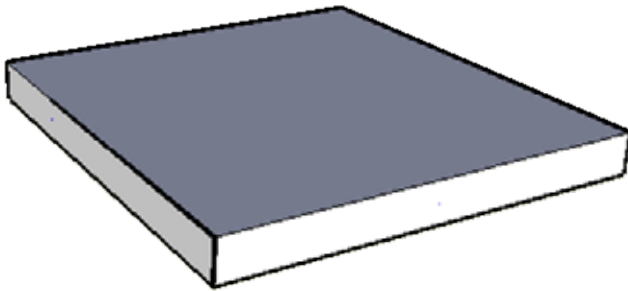
Maintenance and upkeep of abandoned properties is required within the City of Ferndale. The owners of such properties are required to maintain landscaping, repair damage, and repair graffiti. In addition, the property owners and/or tenants are required to remove signage, label scars, and other distinguishing characteristics of the building, under penalty of law.



Standards: Single-purpose structures over 50,000 square feet shall be designed for adaptive reuse as follows:

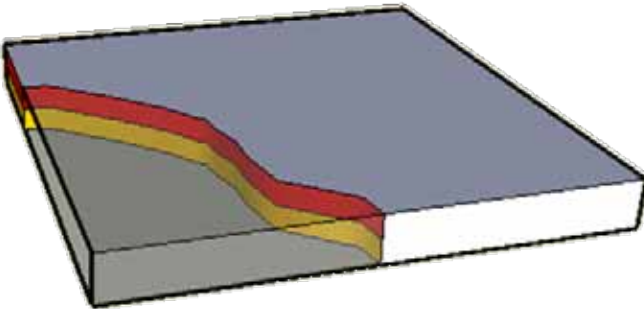
- i. Structures with interior wall heights over 22 feet must be engineered to structurally support second floors within the existing shell.
- ii. Structure must be engineered to support windows covering not less than 30 % of all facades.
- iii. Structure must be engineered to support skylights on not less than 10% of the roof.
- iv. Structures with a depth of greater than 200 feet must include rear entrances and adjacent infrastructure improvements to support subsequent reuse of all areas of the building.

A



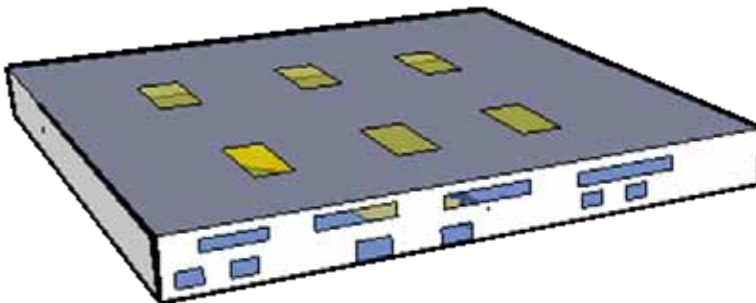
A: A single-use retail establishment over 50,000 square feet must be engineered to:

B



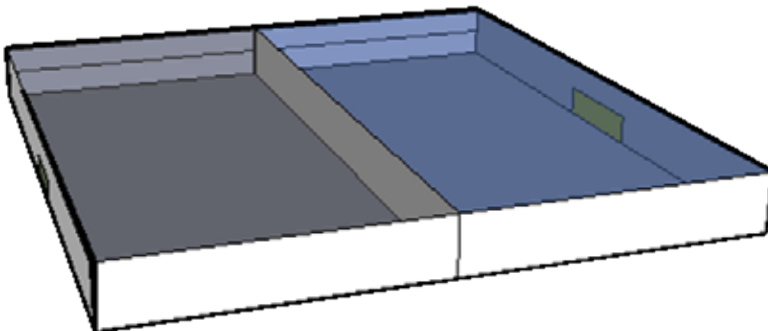
B: Support two floors within the existing shell;

C



C: Support windows along no less than 30% of the façade, and skylights on not less than 10% of the roof;

D



D: Be partitioned, and include rear entrances and adjacent infrastructure improvements.

In addition to engineering the structure for subsequent re-use, the developer shall provide the City with reuse plans which promote the reuse of the site for multiple users, showing multiple entryways, interior partitioning, segregation of parking lots, and any other items necessary for the reuse of the structure. This plan shall be reviewed prior to occupancy.

If the developer is unable or unwilling to comply with the items discussed above, the developer shall post a “demolition bond” (or assignment of savings) based on 150% of the estimated cost to demolish the structure **prior to occupancy**. The City shall have the option of utilizing the bond if the building is vacant for a period of more than two years.



Left: an example of a re-use and redevelopment plan, below: if redevelopment plans are not submitted to the City, a demolition bond will be required, providing the City with the ability to demolish structures that have been abandoned for over two years. **Bottom:** the interior of an abandoned mall.



Part III: Buildings

Facades and Exterior Walls



Guideline: Facades should be articulated to reduce the massive scale and the uniform, impersonal appearances of retail buildings that are subject to this chapter, and provide visual interest that will be consistent with the community's identity, character, and scale. The intent is to encourage a more human scale that residents of Ferndale will be able to identify with their community. The resulting scale will ensure a greater likelihood of reuse of structures by subsequent tenants. Facades, exterior walls and entryways shall provide consistent architectural treatment. Where practical, vertical construction is encouraged for retail and mixed-use developments.

Right: An articulated façade. Note color and material changes. The structures also follow the curve of the adjacent roadway.
Bottom: Articulation of facades does not require a repeating design. In this photograph, a single structure is designed in such a manner that provides the impression of several buildings.



- ♦ Regardless of building size, all facades greater than 100 feet in length, measured horizontally and visible from public or private streets, pedestrian walkways, public parking lots, or other areas which, in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator are now or are likely to be accessed by the public, shall incorporate wall plane projections or recesses having a depth of at least three percent of the length of the facade and extending at least 20 percent of the length of the facade. No uninterrupted length of any visible facade shall exceed 100 horizontal feet.
- ♦ Facades that face public streets shall have a variety of arcades, display windows, entry areas, or awnings along no less than 60 percent of their horizontal length, unless the structural integrity of the building is at stake.
- ♦ All sides of the building shall include materials and design characteristics consistent with those on the front. Use of inferior or lesser quality materials for side or rear facades shall be prohibited.
- ♦ All building facades, visible to residentially zoned properties and/or public streets, shall comply with the City of Ferndale landscaping standards (Chapter [18.74](#) FMC).



The structures shown in the photographs at the top of this page do not have sufficiently articulated walls and facades: the buildings are monochromatic and not visually appealing. The structures at the bottom of the page are articulated, both horizontally and vertically, and utilize changes in materials, colors, windows, and wall planes.



Guideline: Entryway design elements and variations should give orientation and aesthetically pleasing character to the building. The standards identify desirable entryway design features.

Standards: Entryways for each principal building on a site shall utilize consistent architectural treatment with facades and exterior walls. Each principal building on a site shall have clearly defined, highly visible customer entrances featuring no less than three of the following:

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



Entryways must not only incorporate design elements such as canopies, arches, projections, and overhangs; they must also reflect the architectural design of the building. **Clockwise from top:** a dramatic front entry reflects the design of the building and the corporate identity; upper right: a front entryway which includes architectural elements, but is not incorporated into the design of the building. Lower left: a subdued entryway that reflects the overall structural style.

Smaller Retail Stores



Guidelines: The presence of smaller retail stores gives a center a “friendlier” appearance by creating variety, breaking up large expanses, and exhibiting the variety of the site’s opportunities. Windows and window displays of such stores should be used to contribute to the visual interest of exterior facades. The standards presented in this section are directed toward those situations where additional, smaller stores, with separate, exterior customer entrances are located in the principal buildings or development site.

- ♦ Smaller retail stores less than 20,000 square feet and located within a regional center complex as a separate building pad should incorporate into their design structural enhancements similar to the principal structure. This would provide visual consistency and a greater sense of place within the center.



Top: “Outlots” within shopping centers may feature retail establishments generally associated with large box retail. The impacts of these retailers may be mitigated by adopting characteristics of “small retail,” while reflecting the overall site and architectural design. **Upper right:** a series of small retail stores are integrated together to form a retail streetscape reminiscent of traditional downtowns. **Right:** small retail stores include display windows and reflect a similar architecture style. Bottom right: franchise stores alter traditional building styles to complement the design themes of the retail center.



Standards: Where principal buildings contain additional, separate stores, which occupy less than 20,000 square feet of gross floor area, with separate, exterior customer entrances:

- ♦ The street level facade of such stores shall be transparent between the height of three feet and seven feet above the grade of the walkway for no less than 60 percent of the horizontal length of the building facade for each such store.
- ♦ Windows shall include visually prominent sills, shutters, recessed windows, or other forms of framing and shall not contain reflective glass.



Left: a traditional mall or big box development may include smaller retail stores within a primary building, but limits the entry and exit points to and from those facilities. **Bottom right:** The City of Ferndale allows small stores within a primary structure, but requires that each store have separate entrances, and that the façade of the primary building include display windows or similar design characteristics. **Bottom left:** display windows and complementary colors provide a pedestrian scale



Detail Features



Guidelines: Buildings should have architectural features and patterns that provide visual interest, at the scale of the pedestrian, reduce massive visual effects, and recognize local character.

Standards: Building facades shall include a repeating pattern that shall include no less than three of the elements listed below. At least one of these elements shall repeat horizontally. Each selected element shall repeat at intervals of no more than 30 feet, either horizontally or vertically.

- i. Color change.
- ii. Texture change.
- iii. Material module change.
- iv. Wall plane change, where the expression of architectural or structural bay is created through a change in plane no less than one foot in width, such as an offset, reveal, or projecting rib.



Clockwise from upper left: a retail building features a series of projections and material changes (note: the structure shown in this photograph has been remodeled from its original design); a grocery store utilizes wall plane projections and material changes to create a desired effect; an entryway is the only articulation on a large mall structure; a continuous awning and projecting ribs run the length of a retail building, diminishing the massive visual effect of the structure.



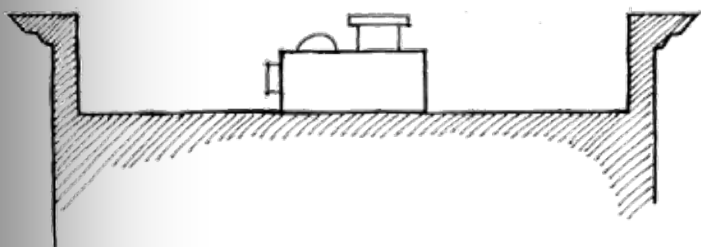
Roofs



Guidelines: Variations in rooflines should be used to add interest to, and reduce the massive scale of, large buildings. Roof features should complement the character of adjoining neighborhoods.

Standards: Rooflines shall be varied with a change in height every 100 linear feet in the building length.

- ♦ Parapets, mansard roofs, gable roofs, hip roofs, or dormers shall be used to conceal flat roofs and roof top equipment (such as HVAC units) from public view out to the site perimeter. Alternating lengths and designs may be acceptable.
- ♦ The average height of parapets shall not exceed 15 percent of the height of the supporting wall, nor at any point exceed one-third of the height of the supporting wall. At least one of these elements shall repeat horizontally. Each selected element shall repeat at intervals of no more than 30 feet, either horizontally or vertically:
 - i. Color change.
 - ii. Texture change.
 - iii. Material module change.
 - iv. Wall plane change, where the expression of architectural or structural bay is created through a change in plane no less than one foot in width, such as an offset, reveal, or projecting rib.



Clockwise from upper left: a retail building features a series of projections and material changes (note: the structure shown in this photograph has been remodeled from its original design); a grocery store utilizes wall plane projections and material changes to create a desired effect; an entryway is the only articulation on a large mall structure; a continuous awning and projecting ribs run the length of a retail building, diminishing the massive visual effect of the structure.

Materials and Colors



Guideline: Exterior building materials and colors comprise a significant part of the visual impact of a building. Therefore, they should be aesthetically pleasing and compatible with materials and colors used in adjoining properties.

Predominant exterior building materials shall be constructed with high-quality materials such as:

- i. Brick masonry.
- ii. Wood, large timbers.
- iii. Sandstone.
- iv. River rock and other native stone.
- v. Tinted, textured, concrete masonry units.
- vi. Transparency elements such as windows, showcases, skylights, display windows.
- vii. Other similar high-quality building material.



Clockwise from upper left: A retail development includes a variety of high-quality exterior building materials, such as textured concrete, brick masonry, and numerous windows. Note that the high quality materials extend to the sidewalk as well; a national fast food chain incorporates sandstone into the building façade; the Mall of America in Minnesota features several large parking garages that dominate the landscape and have minimal aesthetic value; a local shopping district blends historic building styles and materials with modern design.

The facades of retail structures are one of the most visible aspects of any development. While the City acknowledges that the architectural design of some national retailers represents an extension of their brand identity, at times that corporate image does not reflect the scale or image of the community. These design standards are intended to seek a common vision, and may at times require both parties to accept change.



Clockwise from upper left: Smooth-faced tilt-up concrete structures are discouraged for retail development; a Wal*Mart proposed in Austin, Texas demonstrates the potential for preferred building materials; the use of texture and modulation dramatically improves the appearance of facades (bottom left).



Front facades or facades visible from public or private streets or residentially zoned properties shall not include the following as the primary building material:

- i. Smooth-faced concrete block.
- ii. Smooth-faced tilt-up concrete panels.
- iii. Prefabricated steel panels.
- iv. Highly reflective materials that produce glare are not permitted.



From top: smooth-faced concrete panels are prohibited as the primary building material for retail facades visible from the street or residential property; prefabricated steel panels have become widely used to provide affordable accents to retail developments. However, such material cannot be used as the primary building material; Developments with significant window space must mitigate sun glare, either through subtle window tinting or by providing additional shade, such as through the use of awnings.



Facade colors shall be of low reflectance, subtle, neutral colors, and blend well with the environment and not cause abrupt changes. The use of high intensity colors, metallic colors, black or fluorescent colors on the primary facade or wall is prohibited.

Building trim and accent areas, not to exceed 15 percent of any single building facade, may feature brighter colors, including primary colors, but neon tubing or the use of other high-intensity lighting is prohibited.

Window glass shall not be heavily tinted in a manner that reduces the visual link between indoors and outdoors.



Left: although the City of Ferndale encourages creative architectural designs and styles, primary building colors must be subtle. Bold *accent* colors may be considered. **Below:** neon tubing and other high intensity lighting is prohibited.



EAGLE AND TRANSPORTATION CONCURRENCY



In addition to the previous retail design standards, the City of Ferndale has adopted a unique tool for reviewing and approving significant retail structures and developments. The program, nicknamed “EAGLE,” results in retail developments that are well-rounded and reflect Ferndale’s sense of place and community. EAGLE is designed to permit the applicant to select from nearly one hundred indicators of quality development when designing their proposal.

The indicators are split into five broad categories: Energy Efficiency, Advanced Technologies, Greater Good, Low Impact, and Economic Development. Each indicator has been assigned a maximum number of potential points, depending on the scope and quality of the proposed development. As the size of a potential development increases, the number of points required for approval also increases. Certain incentives, such as priority review, shall also be provided by the City for projects that meet or exceed EAGLE standards.

Energy Efficiency	 <p>Energy Efficient Lightbulbs</p>	 <p>Water Conservation</p>
Advanced Technologies	 <p>Natural Lighting</p>	 <p>Green Power</p>
Greater Good	 <p>Community Partnerships</p>	 <p>Community Events</p>
Low Impact	 <p>Wetland Mitigation</p>	 <p>Recycled Materials</p>
Economic Development	 <p>Local Materials</p>	 <p>Link with Downtown</p>

In addition to the variety of indicators included in the EAGLE program, applicants may propose new indicators for their specific project. The City may also provide flexibility within the EAGLE program, in order to reflect site-specific and project-specific opportunities.

Unlike other energy efficient, low impact certification programs, EAGLE is designed to identify solutions that fit the project and the surrounding community. “Point chasing,” wherein the applicant seeks to achieve points without realistic benefit to the project or the community, is minimized, and the applicant and the City work together to develop a strategy that is agreeable to both parties.

In addition to retail design standards and EAGLE, the City has implemented a transportation concurrency ordinance, which requires that retail developments identify and mitigate transportation impacts that will be generated by the project. Retail developments over 75,000 square feet must complete appropriate mitigation measures prior to occupancy; smaller developments are provided additional time.



This page: EAGLE rewards innovative design and allows developments to identify unique project-specific measures (left); transportation concurrency will require that development identify and mitigate impacts to the City’s transportation system.

