

# CUMMING DESIGN GUIDE



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**Planning & Development Consultants**

# **Cumming Design Guide**

**Establishing the appropriate character in the city by necessity requires attention to the aesthetics of development. It is in the public interest to direct and control the visual appearance of buildings, structures, and development in the city, to prevent patently offensive harm to the existing visual character of the city, and to safeguard the happiness, comfort, and general well-being of citizens.**

**This document is intended to guide architects and site designers in the design of buildings and site developments. This guide is adopted by the City Council and referred to in the city's design review permit process for use by the zoning administrator in considering applications for design approval. Even if not required to go through the regulatory design review process, the guidelines in this document should be consulted and followed on a voluntary basis.**

**November 2022**

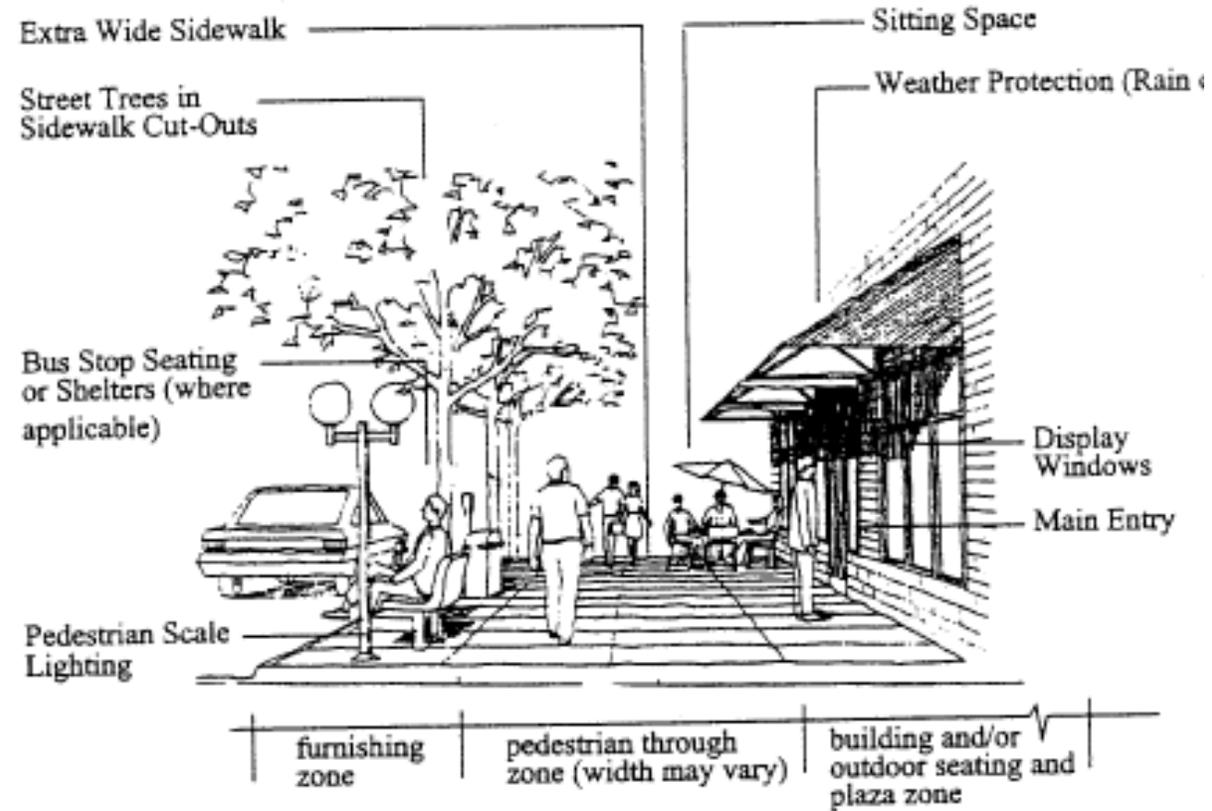
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# Central Business District Streetscapes



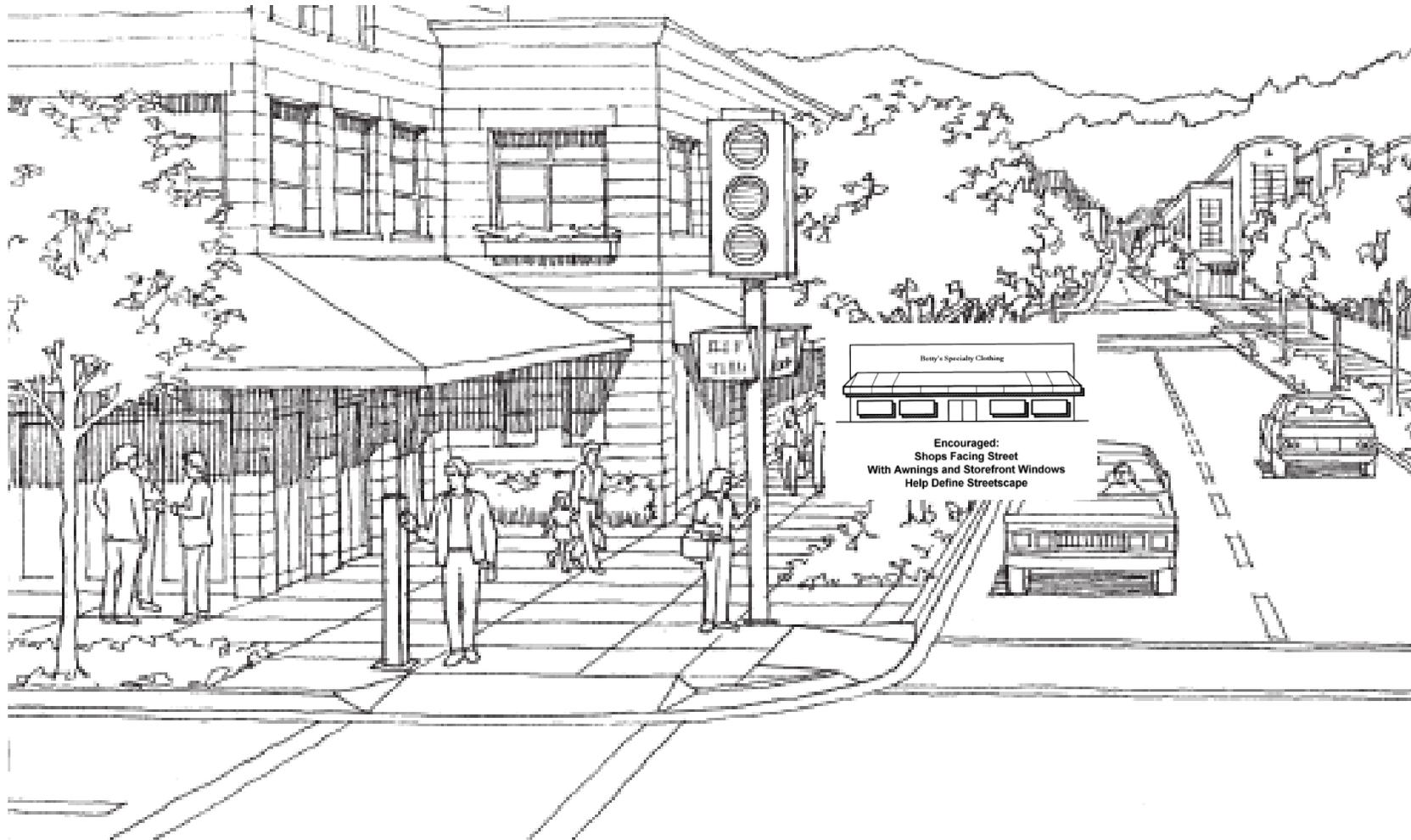
**The City installed major streetscape improvements in the central business district. These design features should be maintained and replicated elsewhere (East Main Street shown).**



**Oregon Transportation and Growth Management Program, 1999c.**

**Encouraged: An extra-wide sidewalk allows for the creation of a pedestrian zone with amenities, such as lighting and benches, which create an attractive streetscape.**

# Desirable Design Features



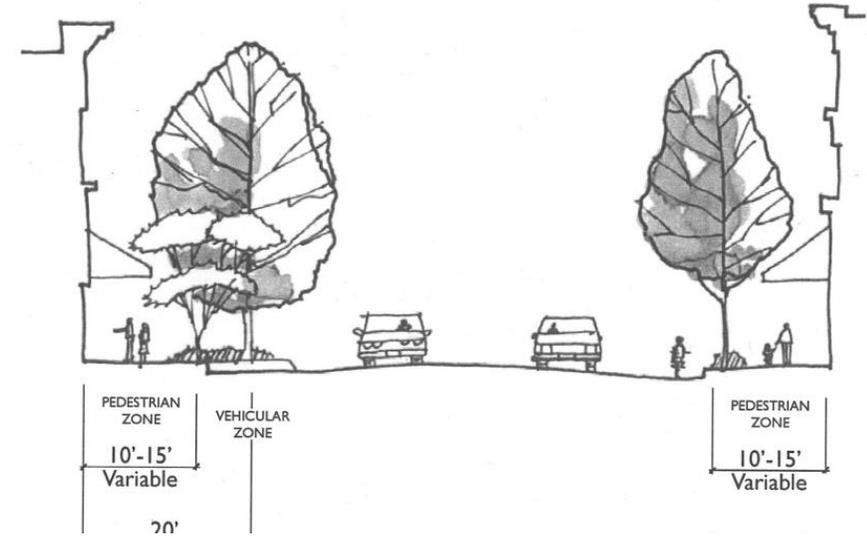
**Encouraged: wide sidewalks, generous utilization of awnings for weather protection, two-story building height; tree wells abutting sidewalks to provide shade.**

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation 2005

# Building Placement/Height



**Encouraged: Three-story and four-story buildings pushed up close to the road (Tribble Gap Road) help to frame the street and give the proper proportionality for pedestrian scale.**



**Street cross-section appropriate for the CBD. Buildings that are two stories in height will still frame most streets in the CBD. If a building is only one-story, it should still have a height equal to 1 and 1/2 or 2 stories (e.g., 20 to 25 feet).**

# Existing CBD Development



**Existing retail/commercial in the Central Business District. Positive features include brick construction and existence of awnings. Negative features include single-story construction, relatively narrow pedestrian space in front of the buildings, and wall signage that looks out of proportion with the building façade. Businesses could also make more use of awnings for street-facing windows.**

# Build-to Line for Infill Buildings

**In the central business district (and potentially elsewhere) there may be an established pattern of building placement close to the street. Where such pattern exists, any new buildings on “infill” development sites should observe the building line already established so as to maintain a consistent streetscape.**

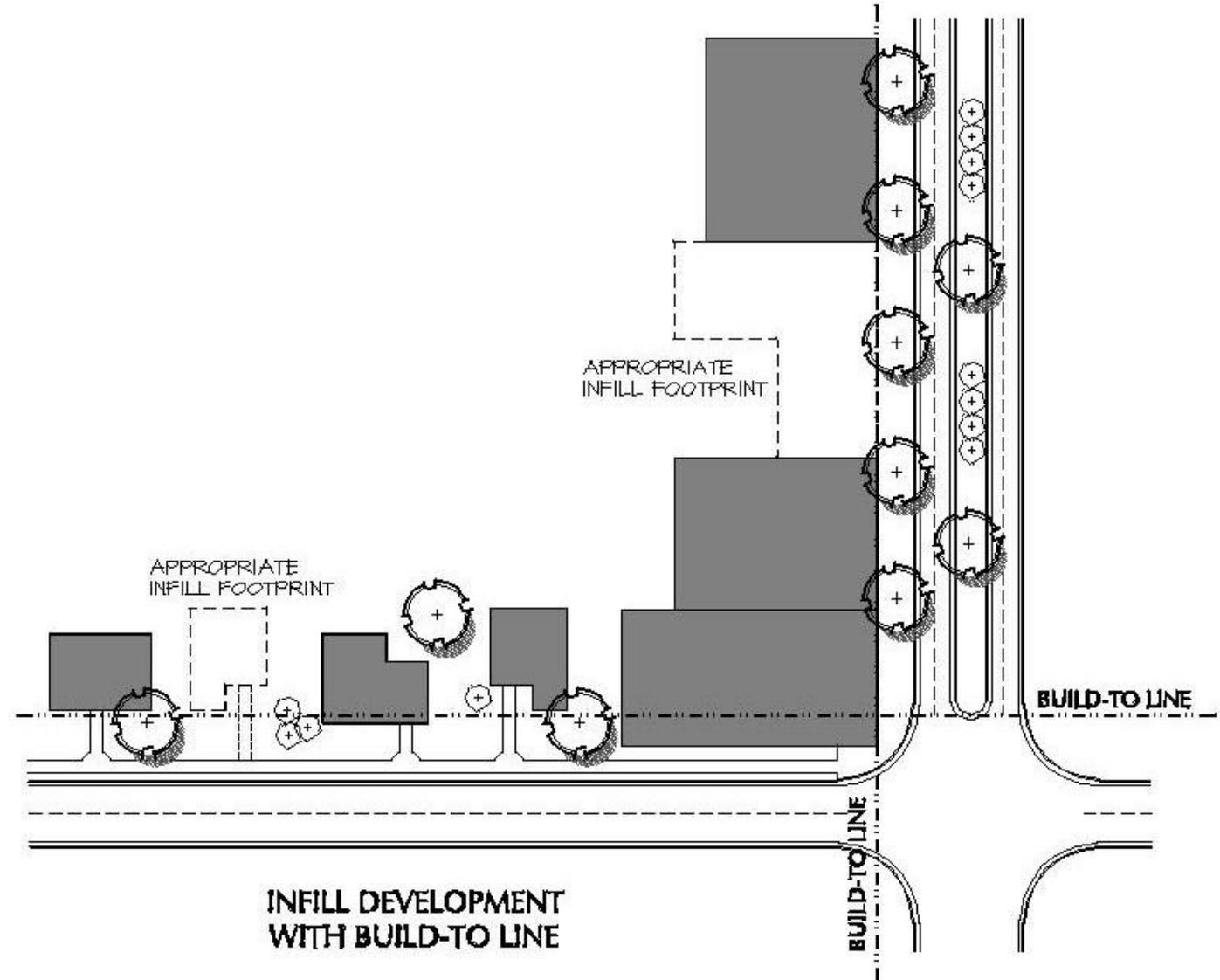


Image Credit: The Jaeger Co.

# Vertical Mixed Use

**Encouraged:** In the central business district, buildings that combine a non-residential use (typically commercial retail) at the ground floor with residential use on the second floor is a desirable practice. Residential use can also occupy a ground floor in a vertical mixed-use building, in addition to occupying an upper floor.

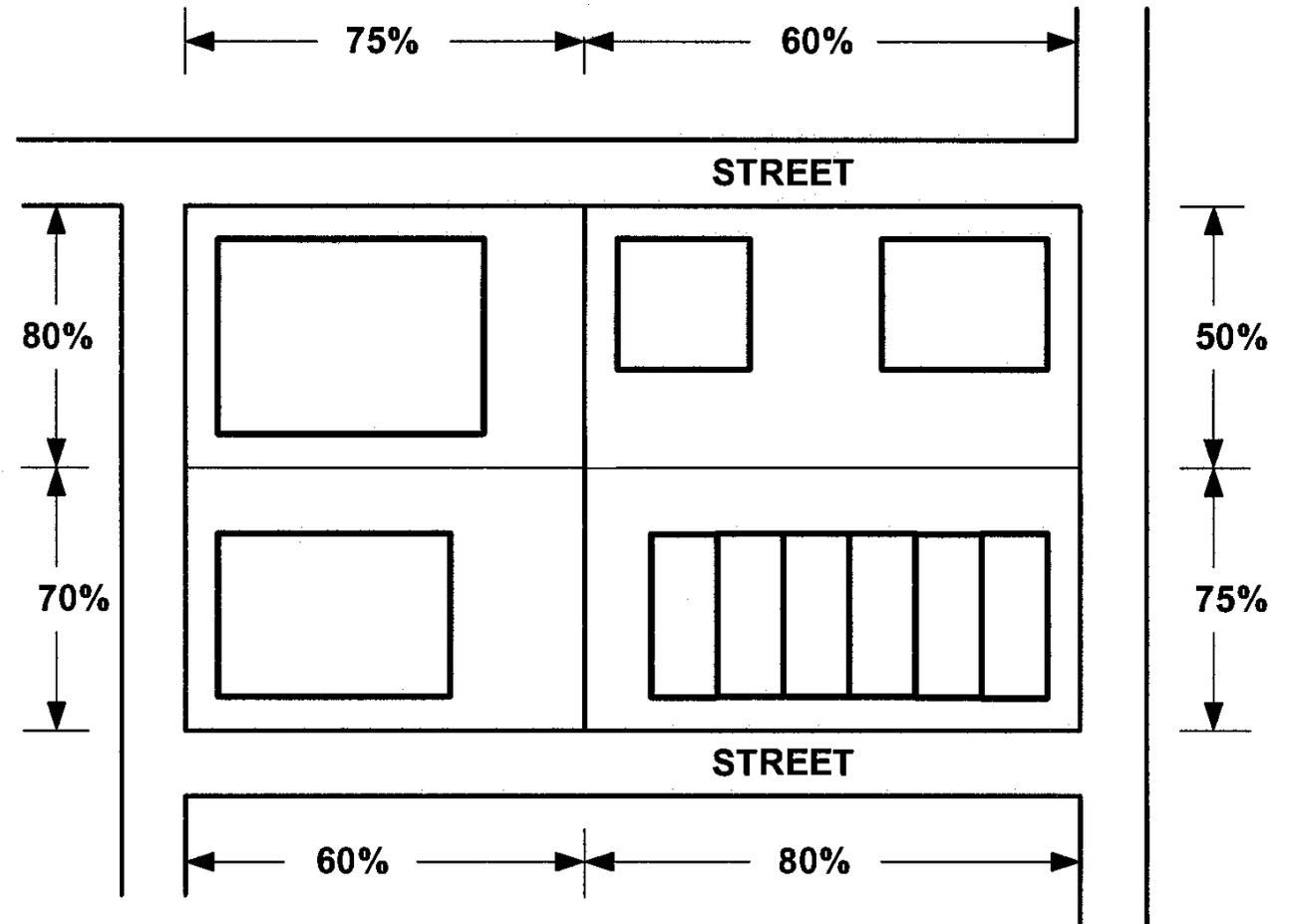


**Source: Oregon Transportation and Growth Management Program. Commercial and Mixed Use Development Code Handbook.**

# Minimum Building Frontage

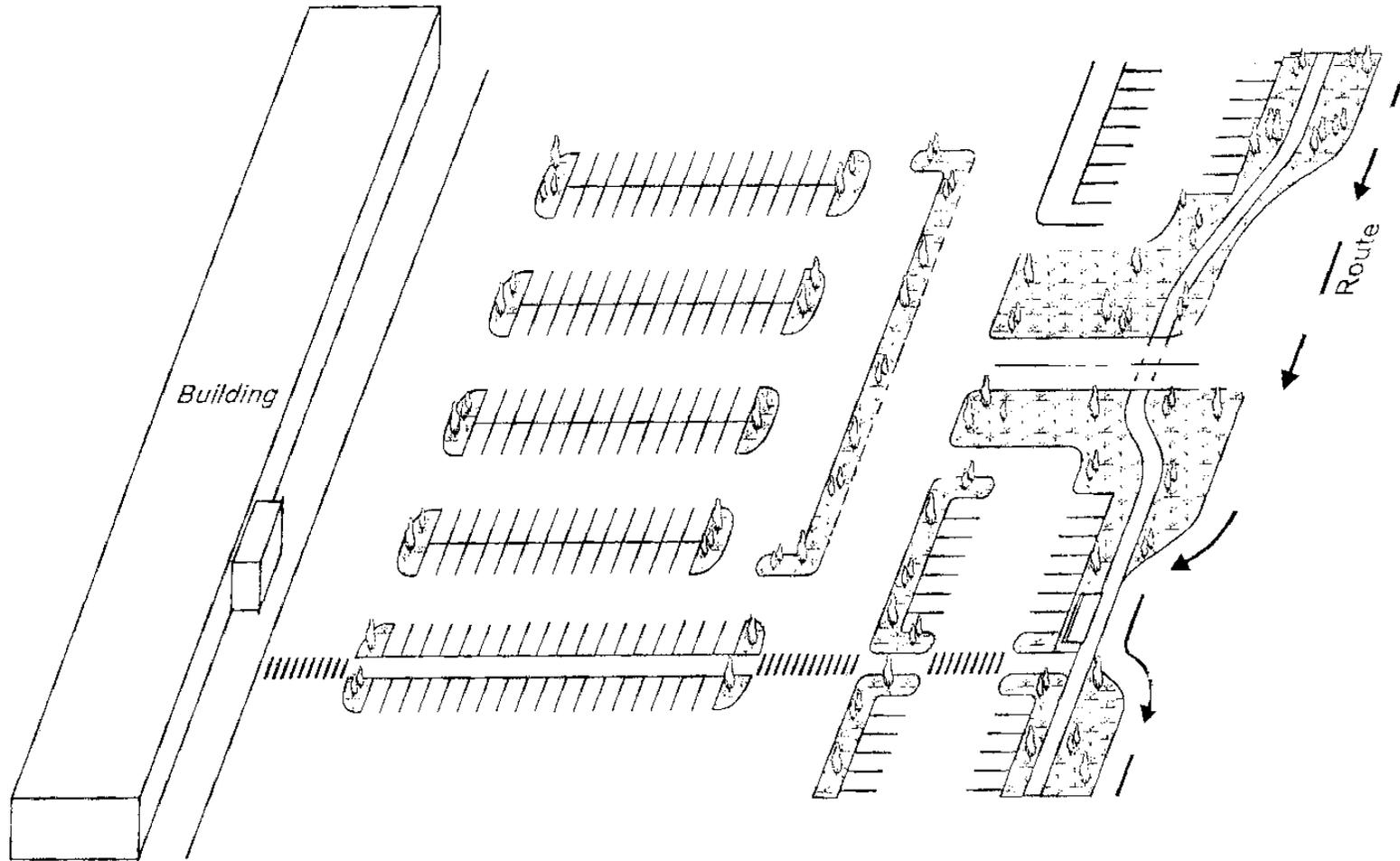
**In the central business district, buildings (usually storefronts) should extend at least 60%, and preferably 80% or more, of the total property frontage along the street (leaving room for vehicle and pedestrian access where warranted).**

**In suburban mixed use and planned unit developments with commercial areas, at least a 40% to 50% of the total property frontage along the street should be covered with storefront. Also, a substantial percentage of the building frontage provided should consist of storefront windows to add visual interest to the streetscape.**



Illustrative Building Frontages

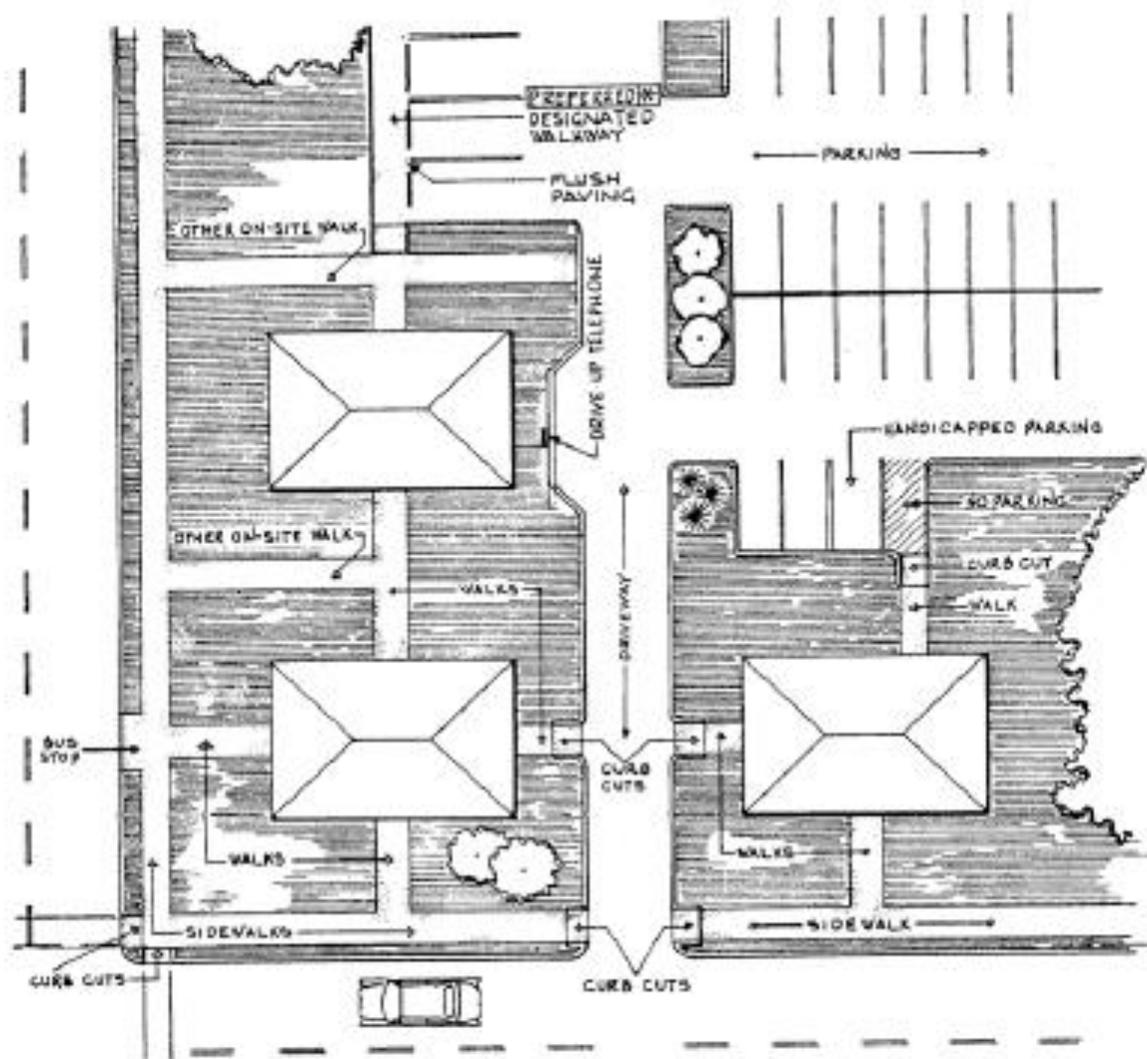
# Pedestrian Access



Source: Stover and Koepke 2002

**Encouraged: Direct pedestrian access from street to store front. Pedestrian access should also be provided to individual each establishment within the development. Pedestrian ways should be well defined, take as direct a path as possible, and they should be separated where practical from automobile access ways. Parking aisle dividers are appropriate locations for pedestrian access facilities.**

# Pedestrian Access



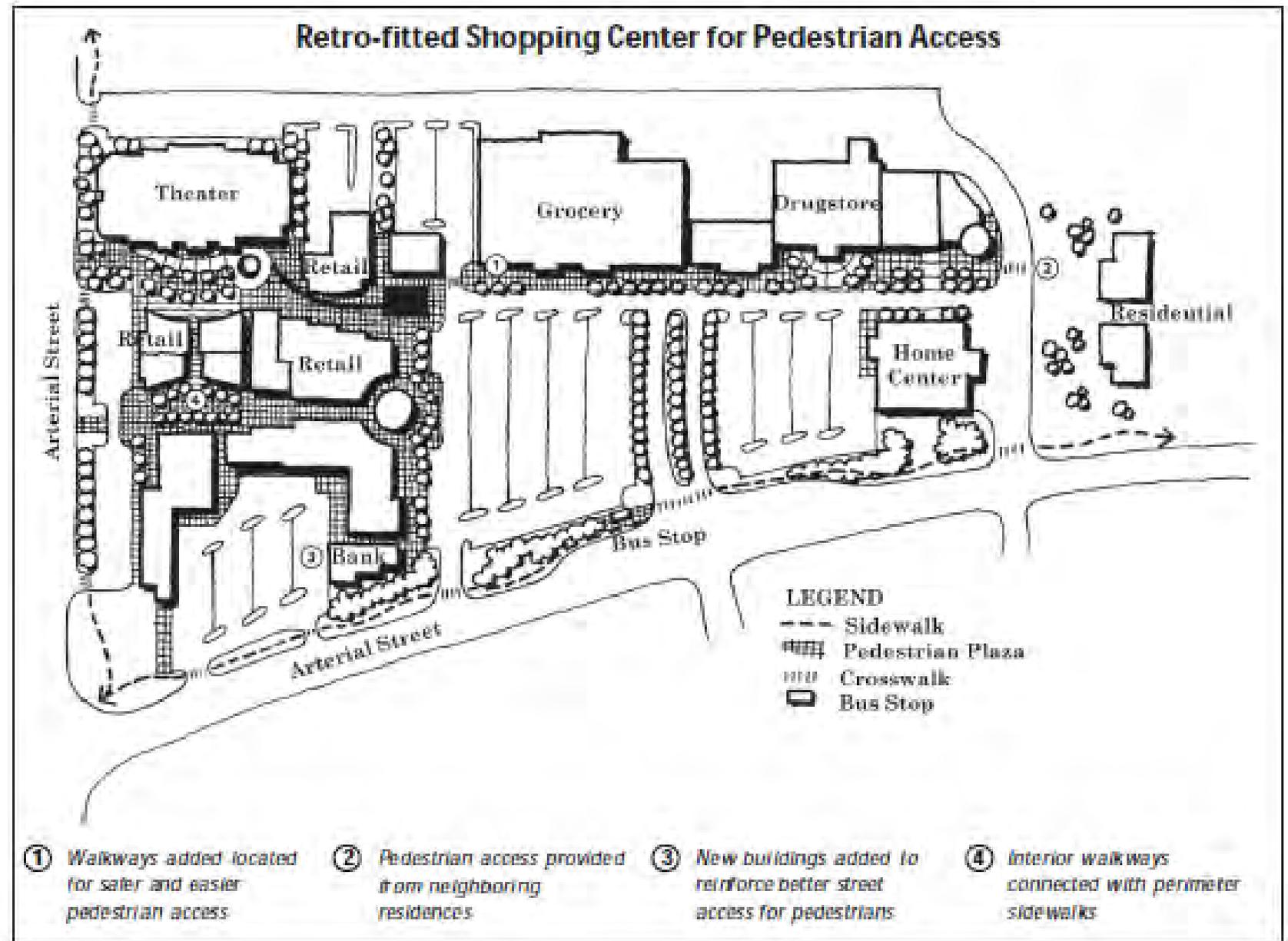
Source: DeChiara and Koppelman 1984



**Left: Buildings need to be connected with sidewalks interior and exterior to the site. Right: Discouraged: No sidewalk in front of grocery store; also, the striped crosswalk leads to an inaccessible planting island. Ingles Shopping Center, Canton Road (SR 20).**

# Pedestrian Access

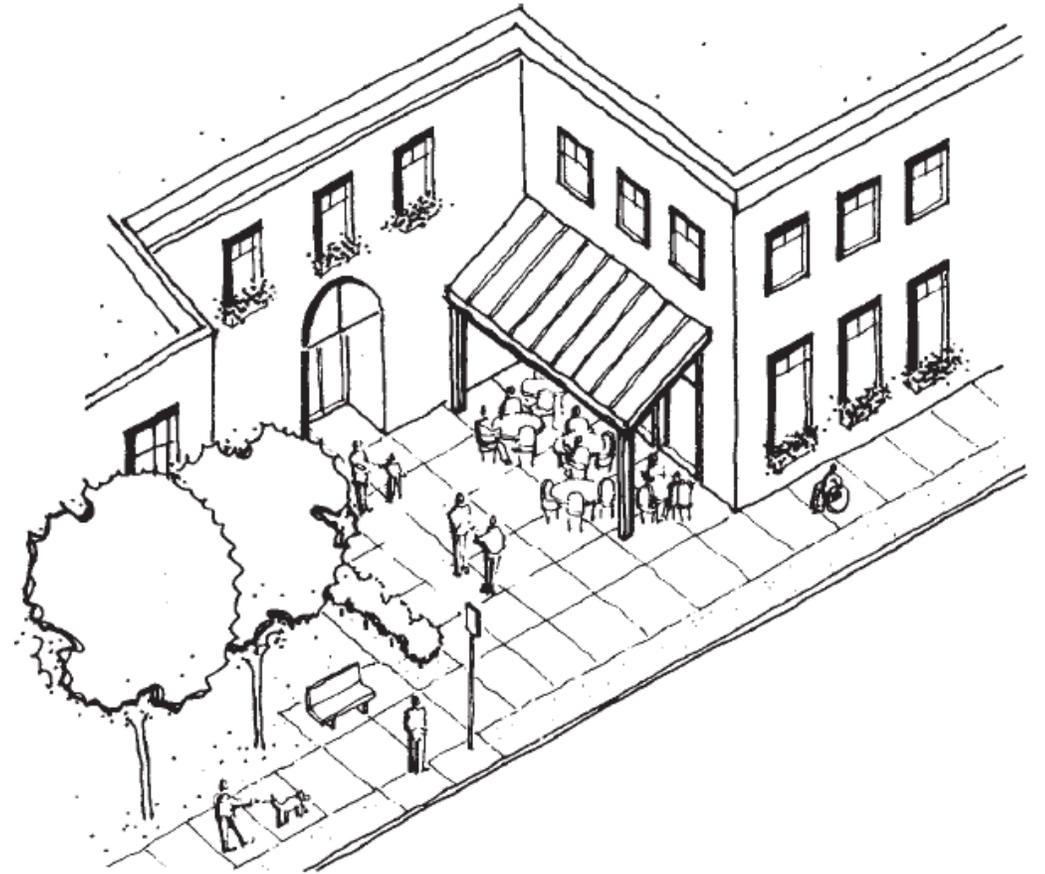
**Encouraged:** When a suburban shopping center is redeveloped, it should incorporate pedestrian access in the form of connections from abutting residential areas, plazas alongside new retail buildings, and wider sidewalks and walkways adjacent to the front of existing buildings.



Source: Georgia Department of Transportation 2005

# Incorporate Pedestrian Plazas

Pedestrian Plaza

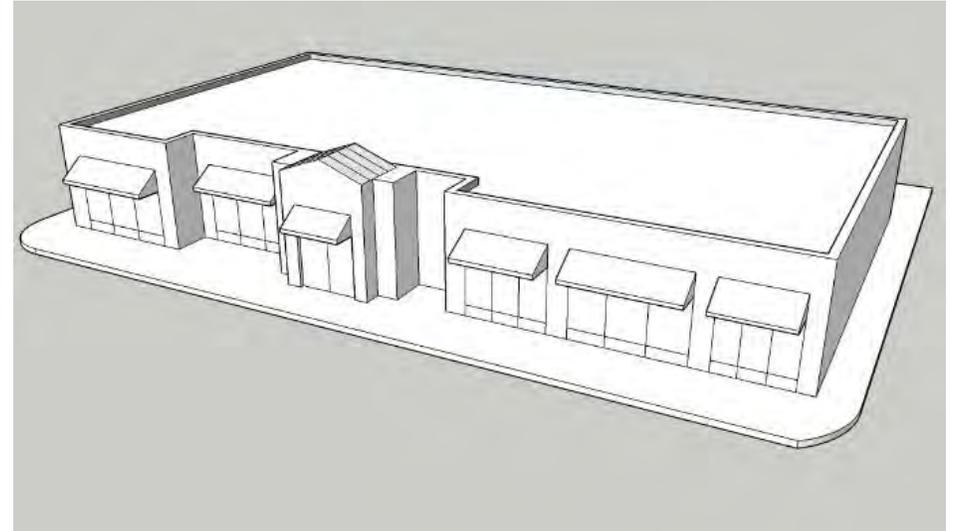


Source: Georgia Department of Transportation 2005

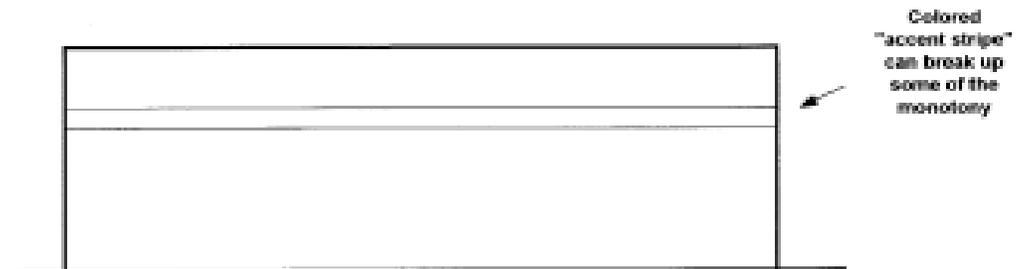
# Avoid Monotonous Building Walls



**Discouraged:** A plain side wall of an industrial building that adds nothing to the streetscape. Smooth-faced concrete walls without any treatment are also discouraged (Veterans Memorial Blvd.). Blank walls may be opportunities for public art or other creative streetscape enhancements.



**Encouraged:** For building walls facing a street, modulate them with recesses and projections.



**Encouraged:** Add a colored accent strip to large blank building walls when articulation of the building wall is not feasible.

# Avoid Monotonous Building Walls



**Encouraged:** This Dollar Tree Store has the base of the building painted a different color and an accent stripe to further break up an otherwise monotonous building wall. Notice also that the building wall is slightly articulated with vertical extensions to break up the linear expanse (U.S. Hwy 129, Jefferson).



**Large evergreen trees can be used to partially screen large, blank building walls (Veterans Memorial Blvd. shown).**

# Avoid Monotonous Building Walls



**Encouraged: On the right side of the photo, differential color in the outline of a bricked-up manufacturing plant window generates interest for an otherwise blank building wall.**

**This climate-controlled self-storage facility on SR 20 (Buford/Sugar Hill area) is mostly brick (encouraged) but also incorporates glass (encouraged). The roofline is varied with a cornice (encouraged) and a curved lower cornice provides additional visual interest. The monument sign is appropriately sized (i.e., area and height) (encouraged).**

# Modulation of Building Walls



**Another climate-controlled self storage facility (GA 20 east of Cumming). The roofline is varied in height, and the building makes use of windows and building projections to break up the monotony of the large building wall (encouraged). Still, some additional articulation such as the addition of a cornice or awnings at ground level would add further interest to the building.**

# **Building Wall Modulation Guideline**

**Building façades with lengths of 200 feet or more should exhibit modulation by extending or stepping back a portion of the façade.**

**Recesses and projections should be used along front building façades to break up long expanses of wall planes.**

**Façade modulation also can be achieved by:**

- (1) providing bay windows or repeating window patterns at regular intervals;**
- (2) providing a porch, patio, deck, or covered entry to portions of the façade at ground level or by adding balconies on buildings with two or more stories;**
- (3) changing the roofline by alternating dormers or using stepped roofs, gables, or other roof elements; and**
- (4) changing materials with the change in building plane.**

# Building Material Finishes



**This building utilizes a combination of stone veneer and stucco. Generous use of stone veneer at the base of a building is desirable and encouraged. However, the height of the stone veneer appears out of proportion and should probably have extended no taller than the upper edge of the windows. The gabled roof and second-story windows are desirable. Parking comes too close to the building entrances, probably due to shallow lot depth (Atlanta Road).**

# **Building Material Finishes**

- 1. On all building facades, exterior building materials should not include smooth-faced concrete block, tilt-up concrete panels, or prefabricated panels. Such materials may be used for construction but should be veneered or covered with recommended exterior building materials. This guideline may be waived for rear elevations that are determined to be not visible from: any street and any adjoining residential or residentially zoned property.**
- 2. Unless the front of the building is constructed entirely of brick, brick veneer, stone, or stone veneer, building design should include a minimum two-foot-high contrasting base, constructed of brick or stone, or finished with brick veneer or stone veneer extending along the entire front of buildings and the sides of buildings at least ten feet.**
- 3. Brick, or brick veneer, and stone, or stone veneer, are preferred building material finishes. Engineered wood siding, such as Masonite, or fiber cement siding such as HardiePlank, are preferred over the use of natural wood cladding.**
- 4. Glass should be a predominant material on facades in pedestrian retail districts.**

# **Building Characteristics and Material Finishes**

**1. When more than one principal building exists on the site, or when there are accessory buildings or structures on site along with a principal building, the multiple buildings on the same site should be designed to create a cohesive visual relationship between the buildings. This will normally mean a sharing of common architectural features such as pitched roofs, common use of exterior building material finishes, similar building height, and similar width when more than one building fronts a given street.**

**2. Buildings that are located on outparcels of a shopping center or other multi-tenant commercial development should be constructed with building material finishes complementing the principal building or common development with which they are associated.**

# **Building Colors**

- 1. Colors can be classified as the “base” color (used on the majority of the building surface), “trim” color (used on the window trim, fascia, balustrades, and posts), and “accent” color (used on signs, awnings, and doors).**
- 2. The base color should consist of more subdued earth tones or brick shades.**
- 3. Trim colors should have contrasting lighter or darker shade than the base color.**
- 4. If natural brick is used, it should not be painted.**
- 5. Façade colors should be low reflectance, subtle, neutral, or earth tone colors.**
- 6. High-intensity colors, metallic colors, black, or fluorescent colors should not be used.**
- 7. Building trim and accent areas may feature brighter colors.**

# Building Material Finishes, etc.



**This building combines several materials, including stucco, wood, metal and generous glass windows on the façade. Although a one-story building, it has the appearance of a two-story building (encouraged). The building at its top incorporates a cornice, and there is variation in the façade height to add visual interest (encouraged). The metal awning could have been extended further toward the street for more weather protection. The black metal fence is an attractive finish (encouraged), and the exterior lighting is also appropriate. Missing: pedestrian connection between the street sidewalk and the building entrance. Architecturally, this is a more modern appearance that may not fit in well with surroundings (Canton Rd.).**

# Building Material Finishes



**Stucco/EIFS and brick, and awnings that do not provide weather protection. The awnings and roofline (curved resembling the signature “golden arches” incorporate franchise characteristics (Atlanta Rd. just south of Cumming city limits).**



**Best Practice: All brick construction, utilizing two varieties of brick. Metal awnings are attractive and add weather protection. Goose neck lighting on façade adds visual interest (Old Milton Parkway, Alpharetta).**

# Building Material Finishes



**Side view of a Dairy Queen in Jefferson, GA. The building utilizes a wide variety of finishes, including stone veneer, metal, stucco or EIFS, and tile. It is not uncommon for fast-foot restaurants to incorporate some metal on the building facades. The building also incorporates a wide variety of colors (not necessarily recommended). The side elevation lacks a cornice, and rooftop HVAC equipment is visible but should have been screened with a parapet wall.**

# Screen Rooftop Mechanical Equipment



**Parapet wall screens rooftop mechanical equipment from street view (encouraged) (Old Milton Pkwy., Alpharetta).**



**Truist (formerly BB&T) Bank Building in Cumming also incorporates a roof design that screens rooftop mechanical equipment from street view (encouraged).**

# Building Material Finishes

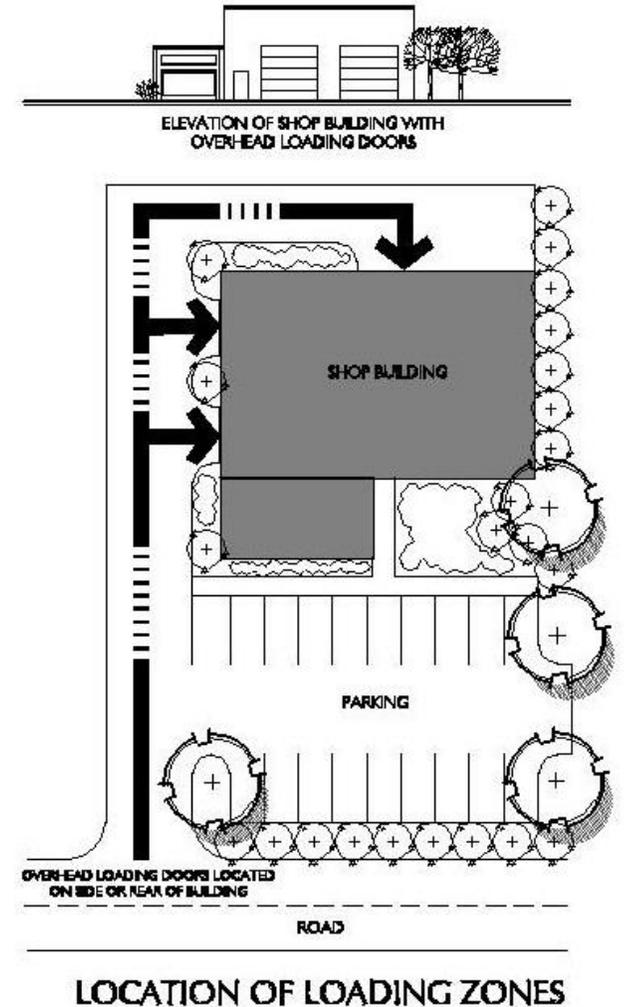


**A combination of brick with a metal mansard roof. A number of buildings in the city have metal mansard roofs, partially because they provide ample space for wall signage. A different design with a roofline that has a cornice is preferable to the use of metal mansard roofs. Pedestrian lighting encouraged. Larger windows on the side building wall facing the street are encouraged (West Main St.).**

# Building Material Finishes



**Discouraged:** Auto service bays should not face the street and should face the side or rear if building placement options allow. Stone veneer is utilized at the base but except for the office portion is obscured. Instead of a mansard-type roof for the office, which extends too low, the office portion of the building could have been constructed to match the height of the rest of the building and completely faced with stone veneer for an improved aesthetic (Canton Highway/SR 20).



# Building Material Finishes



**Although this medical office building is finished with only one type of material (EIFS or stucco), it presents a very attractive appearance because of the fenestration (use of windows) and the heavily pronounced building cornice (Lanier 400 Pkwy.)**



**Another example of a medical office building that utilizes mostly brick (encouraged) with appropriate use of windows. The sign is generally in character with the building (Tribble Gap Rd.)**

# Building Characteristics



**Encouraged: Inclusion of cornices; varied shapes for the roofline;, storefront awnings in proportion with one another but also with some variation; windows comprising a large percentage of the storefront; wall signage in proportion to building façade; appropriate exterior lighting, including pedestrian standard along street (Market Place Blvd.).**

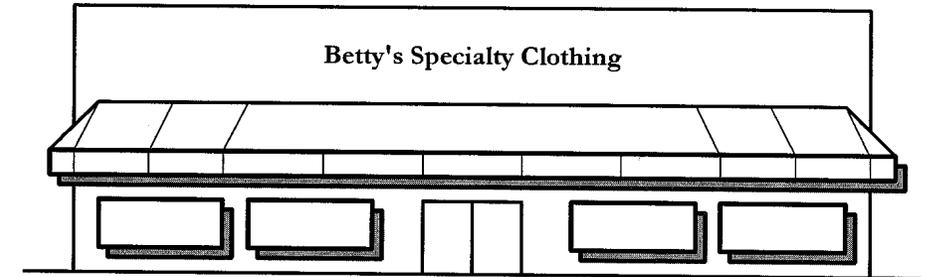
# Awnings



**Two different approaches to building awnings: AT&T utilizes a shed design with color (encouraged), while Verizon utilizes a flat, suspended awning (acceptable). The color of the shed awning is more noticeable and does not show suspension supports that are visible with the Verizon building. Street trees soften the appearance of the built environment (encouraged) (Market Place Blvd.).**

# Guidelines: Awnings

- 1. Awnings or canopies are recommended above doors and windows on building facades fronting or parallel to a public street. Generous use of awnings is also particularly encouraged along first floors of buildings to provide architectural interest and protection from weather.**
- 2. Where awnings are used, they should be designed to coordinate with the design of the building and any other awnings along the same building façade.**
- 3. Shed awnings are preferred over “bubble” or curved awning designs.**
- 4. Awnings with a single, solid color are preferred over striped or multi-color awnings.**
- 5. Awnings should be constructed with a durable frame covered by a canvas or fabric material. Aluminum and other metal canopies are acceptable in most instances, particularly when integrated into shopping center designs, but they should not be internally illuminated.**



**Encouraged:  
Shops Facing Street  
With Awnings and Storefront Windows  
Help Define Streetscape**

# Building Characteristics



**Although they do not serve a function (since it is attic/ roof space), gabled dormers (faux) add some visual interest and are acceptable. Wider columns would provide a stronger street presence. Low-lying monument sign encouraged (Canton Rd.).**

# Building Characteristics



**Another example of use of faux dormers (acceptable). The building entrances are defined with columns with gabled roofs (encouraged). The use of two gables, one over the other (see far right) may be excessive and creates a busy appearance (Atlanta Road).**

# Building Characteristics



**A vertical color change, a slight color change horizontally, and a slight front building wall offset provide for some minimal differentiation of the façade of this Comfort Inn hotel. However, these are not enough to offset the overall monotonous appearance. Ground floor awnings and building cornices are two design additions, among others, that might add visual interest (Ronald Reagan Blvd.).**

# Building Characteristics



Overall, this barbeque restaurant provides for an interesting appearance with color, use of awnings, old West-style mansard (rooftop) sign and outside seating including freestanding steer. However, the billboard and overhead power poles and lines overpower the positives. In addition, a more permanent solution should be sought to defining the outdoor seating area, other than exposed concrete blocks to support the landscape timbers (Atlanta Highway).

# Gasoline Canopies



**None of these gasoline canopies has canopy supports that are faced with brick or stone (recommended practice). Underlighting should be recessed into the canopy to avoid light spillage (recommended practice). Flat, as opposed to gabled, canopies are encouraged because they block out less scenery.**

# Building Material Finishes - Industrial



**Tilt-up concrete panels on front and metal siding on the side elevation (discouraged)**



**Tilt-up concrete panels with stone veneer water table (2-3' base) (better) (all photos of Castleberry Industrial Blvd.)**



**Stucco/EIFS with stone veneer and building cornice (recommended)**



**All brick construction (best practice)**

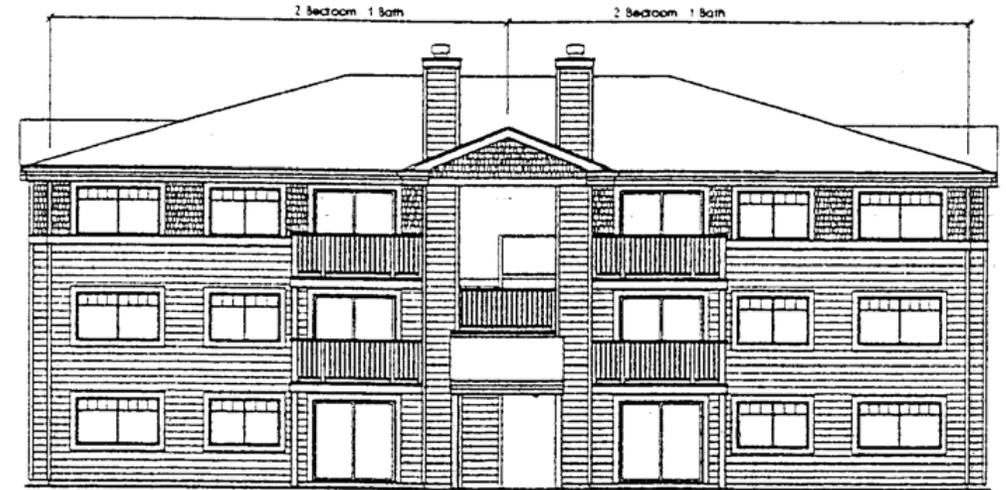
# Building Additions

- 1. Additions to buildings should not use materials or incorporate elements that change the architectural character of the building.**
- 2. The height or width of any building addition should not exceed the height or width of the existing building.**
- 3. Building additions should have the same massing, scale and architectural features as the existing building elements.**
- 4. Additions should not alter the orientation of the existing building.**
- 5. The size and scale of building additions should be smaller than the main building and should not obscure the view of the main building or its architectural features.**
- 6. The roof form and pitch of new additions should be similar to the roof form of the existing building.**

# Building Characteristics (Residential)



**Pitched roofs, gabled front entrances supported by columns, shutters for windows, and balconies all make for a positive appearance of this apartment complex (Nancy Lane).**



**Elevation view of an apartment building with columns to emphasize the building entrance and with inclusion of balconies for the units.**

# Multi-family Residential Guidelines

- 1. Brick (masonry) and stone convey permanence and are preferred primary and accent building materials for multi-family dwellings. Brick veneer is acceptable. Natural stone veneer is acceptable. Artificial stone veneer may be utilized.**
- 2. No less than 30% of multi-family residential building facades, excluding windows and doors, should be comprised of brick (masonry), stone, brick veneer and/or natural stone veneer.**
- 3. Engineered wood, such as Masonite, and fiber cement siding, including but not limited to “HardiePlank,” are acceptable as a siding material but should normally be applied horizontally.**
- 4. Stucco and exterior insulating and finish system (EIFS) should not be used as a primary siding material. Use of stucco or EIFS should be justified based upon the design intent of the building and limited to accent applications above the pedestrian level (approximately 10 feet above ground).**
- 5. All dwelling units above the first-floor, particularly when above retail or other nonresidential uses (i.e., in vertical mixed-use buildings), should have an exterior area (balcony) along all or at least a part of the width of the unit.**

# Exterior Lighting

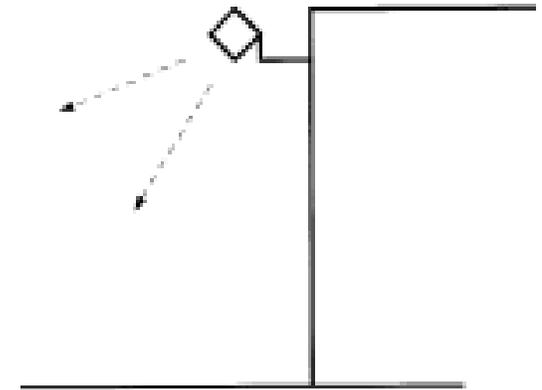


**Discouraged:** While the type of exterior lighting fixture is appropriate, it is placed in the midst of asphalt where it can be easily run into by a vehicle. The light pole incorporates a concrete base, affording some protection, but such light poles are better located within curbed, landscaped parking lot islands (Canton Road) (SR 20).

# Exterior Lighting



**Discouraged: This type of exterior light is discouraged because it is not a full cut-off fixture and therefore can cast excessive light in unintended places and produce glare (Lanier 400 Pkwy).**



**Discouraged: Directional flood light attached to building.**

# Exterior Lighting

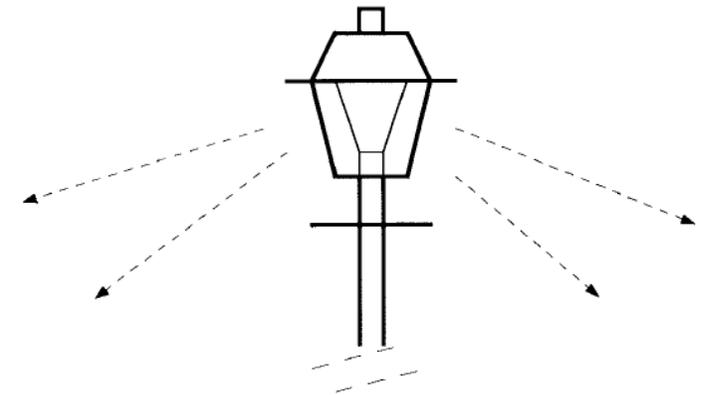


**Encouraged:** This parking lot has full cut-off fixtures which prevent light from going above 90 degrees (see also image right). Height of fixtures is appropriate (25 feet maximum) and their location within landscape strips is also appropriate. Also, pedestrian-scale lighting is incorporated along the sidewalk fronting the property (Market Place Blvd.).



**Full Cutoff Fixtures**

Source: Beiswenger 2012. “



**Encouraged:** Post-top and other decorative lighting fixtures at a pedestrian scale

# **Additional Exterior Lighting Guidelines**

- 1. Light fixtures that provide canopy underlighting should be recessed into the canopy.**
- 2. Yard lights should be oriented downward; uplighting is strongly discouraged. Externally illuminated signs should be lighted by a white, steady stationary light of reasonable intensity shielded and directed solely at the sign, so as not to cause glare or spill light into the road right-of-way or up into the sky.**
- 3. Roof top lighting is strongly discouraged.**
- 4. The use of excessive night-time security lighting is discouraged. Other security measures should instead be considered.**
- 5. The use of laser source light for outdoor advertising or entertainment is discouraged if not prohibited by city codes.**
- 6. Internally illuminated awnings are strongly discouraged.**

# **Architectural Lighting (Buildings)**

- 1. Well-designed and distinctive lighting of building facades is one of the best ways to attract attention and make a favorable impression with a minimal investment. Building façade lighting can help enhance the intrinsic charm, beauty, and utility of any given setting. Architectural lighting may include outlining, floodlighting, spotlighting, or any applicable combination of these techniques.**
- 2. The discrete lighting of a few key architectural features or details is preferred over uniform floodlighting of the entire building façade. Focal points can also be established through careful floodlighting of major buildings, with the lighting of secondary buildings keyed in turn to these focal points.**
- 3. Highly polished surfaces such as glass, marble, glazed tile, glazed brick, porcelain enamel, and various metals can reflect the image of the light source. Designers should avoid lighting these reflective surfaces directly. Glass buildings usually cannot be externally lighted for nighttime viewing.**

# Fencing



**Discouraged: Chain-link fencing with barbed-wire top strands are strongly discouraged, especially abutting a public right of way. Top strands of barbed wire should only be used where it can be justified on the basis of site security, and even then, use should be limited to rear and side yards if possible. When chain link fencing is used, it should be vinyl coated with a black or green color (Veterans Memorial Blvd.).**

# Fencing



**The use of black wind screen mesh is acceptable when additional opacity is desirable to screen the contents stored on the interior of the lot. For screening purposes, such wind screen mesh is preferred over the use of metal or vinyl slats interwoven into the chain link fence. Even when this mesh is utilized, the chain link fence should still be vinyl coated rather than a galvanized finish. As already noted, barbed wire top strands are generally discouraged (Atlanta Road).**

# Fencing



**Encouraged:** Both of these images show black aluminum or wrought iron fencing on top of a stacked stone wall. These features contribute to an attractive streetscape (Veterans Memorial Blvd.; Atlanta Road).

# Fencing



**Discouraged:**  
**Fencing should be kept out of public rights of ways. This fence runs all the way to the street curb. When a fence runs perpendicular to a right of way, a good rule is to terminate it 15 feet or more from the right of way. As noted, galvanized chain-link fencing is highly discouraged. Vinyl coating should be used (Lanier 400 Pkwy.)**

# **Fencing and Wall Guidelines**

- 1. The design of fences and walls should be compatible with the architecture of the main building(s) and should use similar materials.**
- 2. All walls or fences fifty feet in length or longer, and four feet in height or taller, should be designed to minimize visual monotony through changes in plane, height, material or material texture or significant landscape massing.**
- 3. Material preferences for fencing and walls include native stone, natural wood fencing, and painted wood fencing.**
- 4. Chain link fencing is discouraged but where utilized should be vinyl coated.**
- 5. All garbage dumpsters and other similar areas devoted to the storage of waste materials and grease or oil containers should be screened on three (3) sides of said dumpster or area with a minimum eight (8) foot high solid opaque wooden fence, or a wall constructed of materials substantially similar in appearance to the building on site. In addition, said dumpster areas should be gated on the fourth side with a material that provides opaque screening.**

# Dumpster Screening: Recommended Practice



**This dumpster is enclosed on three sides with a solid decorative block wall, approximately eight feet high, that matches the primary building on the site. Solid wooden doors allow for the complete enclosure of the receptacle area. The dumpster area is kept free from debris (Northmeadow Office Park, Roswell).**

# Screening of Outdoor Storage/Display

**The outside storage or display of vehicles, equipment, and merchandise to be rented, leased, or sold, should be visible along no more than 30 percent of the frontage of the property abutting a highway or street, excluding approved driveway entrances and exits. Screening may be accomplished by using a natural vegetative buffer; a building; an earthen berm; a 100 percent opaque, solid wooden fence or wall; or a combination of these screening methods. The use of low-lying landscaping that does not screen the display areas from the public view right-of-way does not comply with this guideline.**



**Discouraged: Unscreened product storage or product display exceeding 30 percent of the property frontage (Market Place Blvd.).**

# Landscaping



**Encouraged: Dense shrubbery forms a continuous landscape strip along the street frontage. An attractive wall is used to add further interest and positive aesthetic impact (Veterans Memorial Blvd.).**



**Limit ground cover use to relatively inaccessible areas such as slopes (Market Pl. Blvd.).**

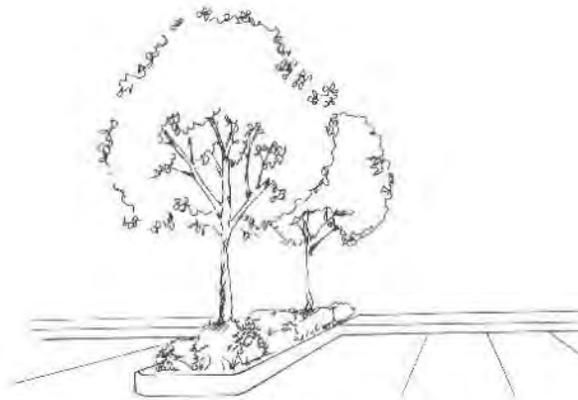
# Landscaping



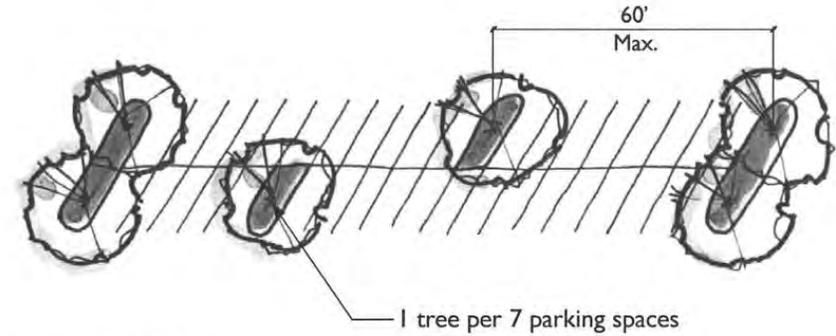
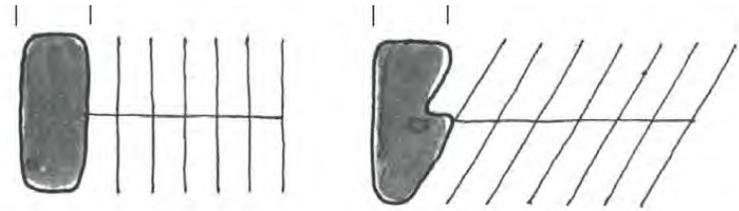
**Encouraged: Plant an evergreen hedge when a parking lot abuts the street to partially screen the streetside view of auto parking (Veterans Memorial Blvd.).**

# Parking Lot Landscaping

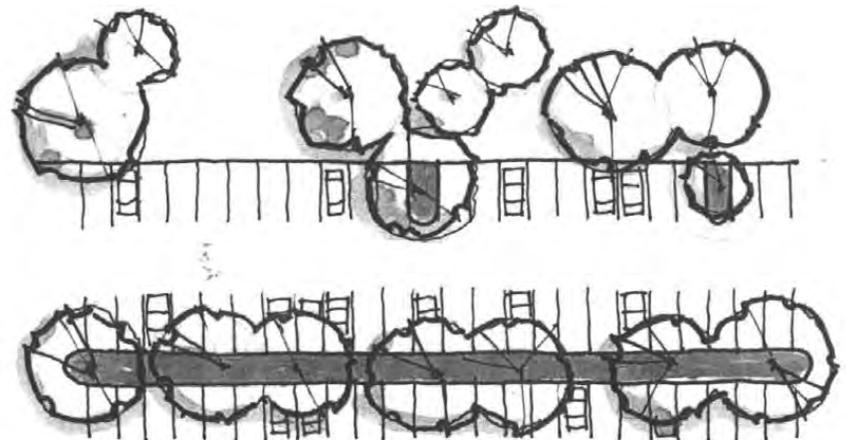
**Generous planting of trees provides for a cooler micro-climate. Illustrative well-landscaped parking lot (Old Milton Pkwy., Alpharetta)**



**At least one parking lot landscape tree island should be provided for each 7 to 10 parking spaces**



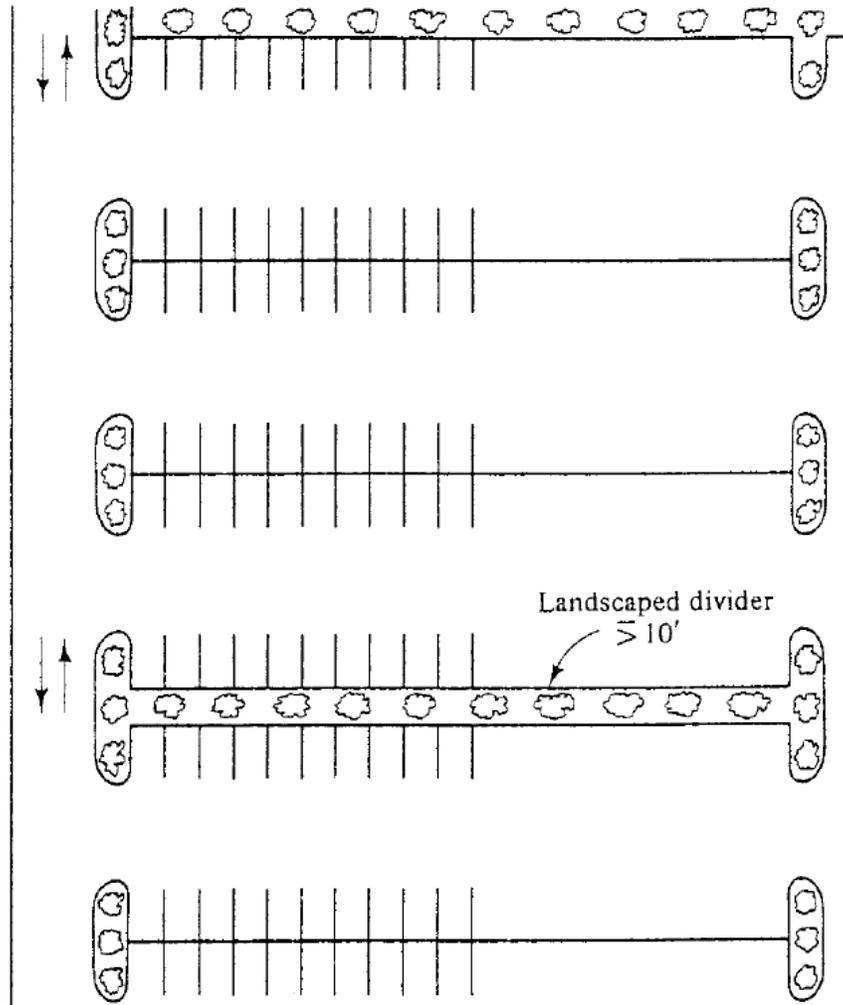
NATURAL ARRANGEMENT



UNIFORM ARRANGEMENT

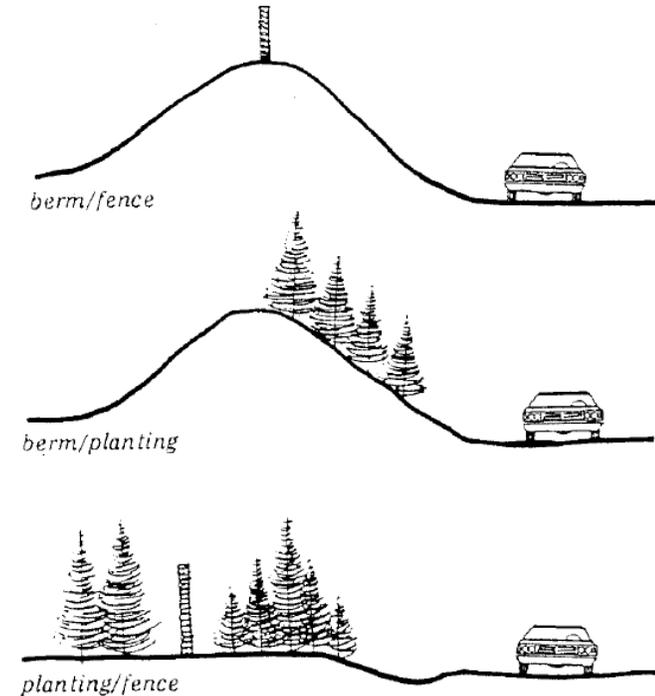
# Landscape Divider

**Encouraged:**  
When there are more than three rows of parking places, a curbed and planted divider is recommended to soften the parking lot's impervious surface and to prevent vehicles from cutting across the parking lot.



Source: Stover and Koepke 1988.

# Berms

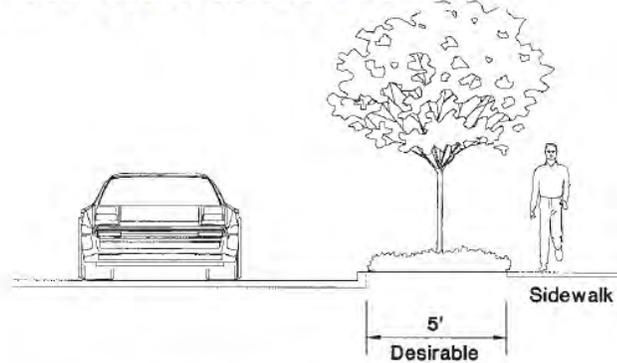


Source; DeChiara and Koppelman 1984

**Acceptable/Encouraged:** Berms are effective as screening and separating incompatible uses from one another or screening objectional views from streets.

# Streetside Planting

## Planting Buffer Between Sidewalk and Street

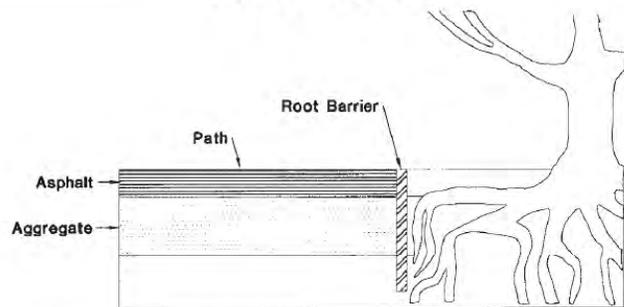


Note: Trees in vehicular clear zone should have a diameter of not more than 4" measured 2" above ground.

Landscape Strip (Backside Of Curb To Edge Of Sidewalk)

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation 2005

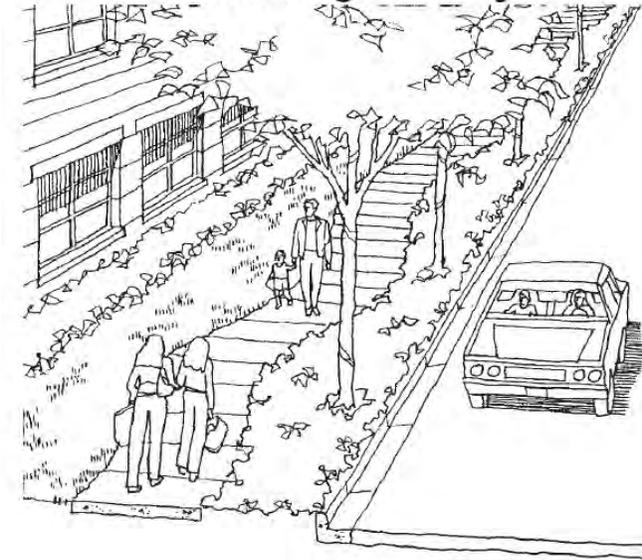
## Root Barrier



Source: Adapted from Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

**Grassy landscape strips or low-lying shrubs between the edge of street pavement and sidewalk are desirable. However, if trees are planted in the strip, the width needs to be at least 5 feet wide, preferably wider, and root barriers may be needed to protect the sidewalk from buckling due to street tree root growth. A meandering walkway can be utilized to provide sufficient planting width and add visual interest to the streetscape.**

## Meandering Walkway



Source: Georgia Department of Transportation 2005

# Streetside Planting: Best Practice



**One can hardly see it in this image, due to shade, but to the right is a sidewalk. This image represents best practices for suburban streetscapes, because the trees, now mature, provide ample shade, and because the sidewalk is set back far from the travel lane of the road. Also, at the far inner edge of the sidewalk, an evergreen screen hedge separates the sidewalk from the adjacent parking lot (Old Milton Parkway, Alpharetta).**

# Enhancement Opportunity



**A commercial site like this is prime for redevelopment. Any redevelopment project should incorporate frontage and side yard landscape strips, a much-narrowed curb cut, and replacement of the pole sign with a monument sign. If the building is not replaced, the metal mansard at least should be replaced with another alternative building modification (Dahlonega Road).**

# Screen Roadside Utility Boxes



**These roadside utility boxes should be screened with landscape plantings (Market Pl. Blvd).**

**Service bays should not face the street if another building placement option is feasible.**

**Discouraged: Billboards; and billboard with supports that takes a 90-degree turn.**

# Signage: Subdivision Entrance Monument



**Recommended Practice:**  
**An all-brick subdivision identification monument that is relatively low to the ground (6 to 8 feet in height) with columns, landscaping and pedestrian scale lighting. Driveways have pedestrian crosswalks marked (encouraged) (Veterans Memorial Blvd.)**

# Signage: Project Entrance Monuments



**Best Practice: Low-lying (less than 6 feet height) entrance monument surrounded by landscaping (Dahlonega Street).**



**Encouraged: Choice of materials complement building material finishes, and details at top of monument resemble a cornice of a building, thus providing different planes that create interest (Tribble Gap Road).**

# Signage: Shopping Center Freestanding Monument



All-brick monument signs for shopping centers and commercial sites are particularly **encouraged**. However, this one is taller than necessary and creates a high wall that blocks out visibility (**discouraged**) (a 10' to 15' reduction in height is preferred). The changeable copy portion of the sign is larger than desirable and out of proportion with the rest of the sign (**discouraged**). The insertable panels for individual businesses, underneath the changeable copy face, exhibit different colors, contrasting letter fonts and irregular spacing that present a highly inconsistent appearance (**discouraged**). Landscaping that grows to a height of more than a few feet is a poor choice adjacent to monument signs (**discouraged**). Low-lying vegetation and seasonal color (flowers) are preferred (Canton Road).

# Signage



**Discouraged: Roof signs and portable signs. The portable sign is a relic of the 1960s and 1970s and should be phased out as a precondition of any additional development on the site. If changeable copy is desired, it should be incorporated into a monument sign and should not exceed 50 percent of the sign face (Lanier 400 Pkwy).**



**Technically, this sign is usually defined as a roof sign (discouraged) because it extends above the building wall. Because of the building design, there is no suitable position to place a wall sign. Building facades should be designed with placement of wall signage in mind (encouraged) (Canton Road).**

# Signage



**Visual interest created by gabled, corniced cap. Panel signage is more or less consistent in appearance (encouraged). Height exceeds 20 feet (discouraged) (Atlanta Road).**



**Shopping centers should have covenants applicable to wall signage requiring that the signage for each suite or leasable space complies with area and letter font standards so they will be proportional to the storefront width. Some of the wall signs in this shopping center are larger than others, thus establishing a lack of coherence (discouraged). Different colors are acceptable (Market Place Blvd).**

# Signage: Window and Wall (Commercial)



**Excessive window signage: The windows of this storefront are virtually covered up with advertising (discouraged). Wall signage is not proportional to the storefront (smaller and narrower than would otherwise be appropriate) (Dahlonga Street).**

# Signage



**Discouraged: Flying the American Flag should follow published federal protocols rather than being abused as an advertising device. These flags cannot be raised and lowered, or flown at half staff.**



**Discouraged: Freestanding pole signs for permanent businesses. The lettering of the wall sign is disproportional to the height of the mansard (Canton Road).**

# **Signage: Additional Guidelines**

- 1. Temporary signs should be made of metal, plastic, laminated cardboard, or some other durable and waterproof material. No sign should be made of paper.**
- 2. Principal ground and multi-tenant ground signs should be monument signs. A monument sign is a sign where the structural part of the sign below the sign face encompasses an area at least forty (40) percent of the area of the sign face but no more than 1.5 times the area of the sign face, and which is composed of brick, stone, or other approved material.**
- 3. Hand-made signs should not be authorized. Unprofessionally fabricated signs are strongly discouraged. Hand lettering of sign copy is not recommended except for sandwich board signs.**
- 4. Signs should typically be square or rectangular; provided, however, individual signs may be circular or some other shape, or shaped like a particular object (e.g., a sign in the shape of a shoe for a shoe store).**

# Selected Citations and References

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**DeChiara, Joseph, and Lee E. Koppelman. 1984. *Time Saver Standards for Site Planning*. New York: McGraw-Hill.**

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