



City of Ukiah

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Commercial Projects Within The Downtown Design District

Welcome to Downtown Ukiah...

Adopted on May 20, 1992, this Design Guide is the result of our efforts to assist you in developing and improving your property. We hope it helps you plan your exterior work within Ukiah's Downtown District.

This Guide is dedicated to meeting our community goals and assisting those involved with the development process in Ukiah's downtown. The Downtown Design District is illustrated on the map on page 7 and encompasses the historical commercial core of the City.

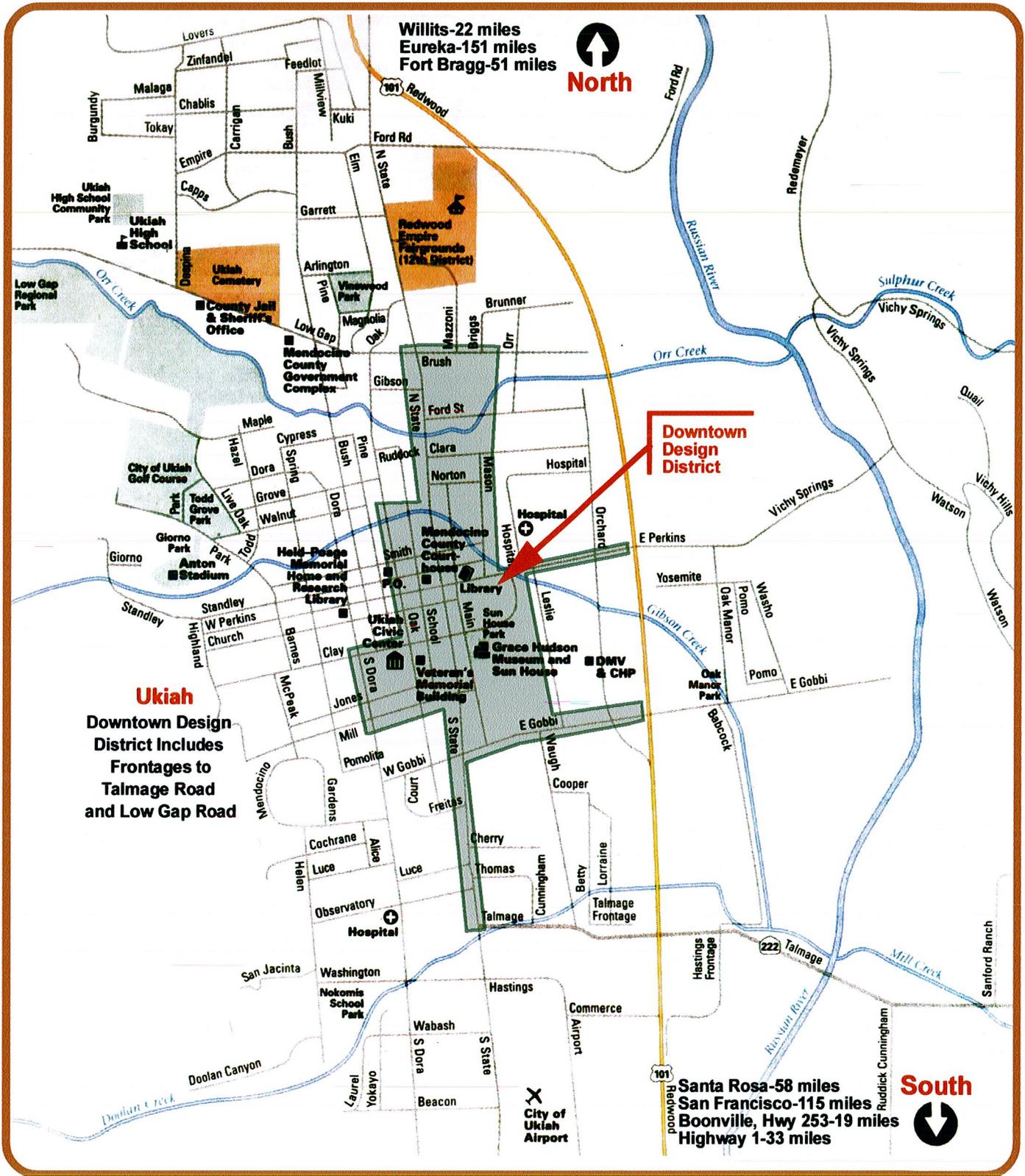
As a member of our community, you own a part of our city's heritage - its past charm, present vitality, and future direction. Our goal is to preserve this quality of life by:

- ✦ Promoting a healthy commercial environment that is attractive and convenient for residents and visitors.
- ✦ Enhancing the pedestrian shopping experience in the downtown.
- ✦ Promoting an attractive and visually unified downtown core with its own distinctive image.
- ✦ Upgrading and maintaining the overall character of our downtown.
- ✦ Building on the distinctive architectural and historic character currently existing in the downtown.
- ✦ Providing better coordination between the design character of new development and redevelopment of existing buildings.

The special standards set forth in this booklet will help protect those assets and fulfill the visions created for the Downtown Design District.

New buildings should attempt to be compatible with the character of the existing viewscape in terms of building height, massing, setbacks and design character. New development should contribute to the visual quality and cohesiveness of its setting, but need not imitate or mimic the details of adjacent development. Reconstruction, repairs, or alterations to existing structures should endeavor to preserve as much of the original character of the building as is possible. While this can be accomplished through the use of alternative materials, the use of original materials provided on the site is encouraged.

Downtown Ukiah Design District



Historical Overview

The arrival of A.T. Perkins in the Ukiah Valley in 1857, marked the beginning of the settlement of Ukiah as a town. The Perkins family purchased a log cabin and acreage from temporary settlers and started a blacksmithing business in downtown Ukiah at what is now the corner of Main and Perkins Streets. The town grew rapidly due to migrations from the depleting California Gold fields. Ukiah captured the coveted county seat designation in 1859, and by May 1, 1860, a City map had been filed at the Recorder's office.

The first buildings, both residential and commercial, were built along Main Street. However, by the 1860's, most businesses had moved up to State Street and into those blocks nearest the Courthouse. The primary building materials of the early periods were wood but a series of disastrous fires prompted use of more fireproof materials. The Ukiah Valley is rich in clay deposits and several brick kilns were started to accommodate the growing demand for local brick. Brick remained the primary material until the 1920's when the use of reinforced concrete emerged.

Early downtown colors, prior to 1910, were usually white, cream, mustard yellow, green or cinnabar. The majority of brick buildings remained in their natural color.

Multi-color painted exteriors were generally not used in the downtown at the time. In later years, building received a stucco finish with earth tones such as cream, beige, or putty predominately used. Trim colors were often red or dark brown. Black tile on bulkhead or under window space was very popular.

The new Courthouse, built in the late 1940's used a soft green tile on its lower half. This color was very popular and was used repeatedly on other buildings. The use of pink concrete block and rose-colored flagstone was also popular at this time.



"...downtown Ukiah has experienced numerous changing identities. These changes should be considered when initiating new development or rehabilitation. No specific historical period is targeted, however, integrated architectural designs with the heritage of a building and its environs are an ultimate goal of this program."

The 1920's brought many changes to the downtown. With completion of the Redwood Highway, signage along State Street proliferated and extended from the buildings, and traditional Victorian facades were stripped to modernize Ukiah's storefronts. The desire of Ukiahans to capture the tourist trade resulted in the demolition of older homes and the large lots being converted into auto courts, restaurants, and gas stations along State Street.

The downtown character of Ukiah essentially remained the same until after World War II. With the arrival of large timber companies after the war, an era of prosperity throughout the greater valley began. The downtown received extensive and rapid modernizations. The 1872 Courthouse was torn down and many of the existing commercial buildings received metal-sheathing facades. Modern design and construction favored long, low single-story buildings, often built from concrete block. The decline in the downtown's economy did not occur until the construction of the 1965 freeway and proliferation of outlying shopping centers.

The personality and appearance of our downtown has been greatly influenced by these events. From the destruction of wood frame buildings by fire in the early 1890's, to modernization of the building facades in post WWII, downtown Ukiah has experienced numerous changing identities. These changes should be considered when initiating new development or rehabilitation. No specific historical period is targeted, however, integrated architectural designs with the heritage of a building and its environs are an ultimate goal of this program.

Approval Process

An important objective of the design review procedure is to better coordinate the processing of your development plans prior to obtaining your Building Permit. This includes streamlining the process to minimize the steps and hurdles in the path to completion of your project. The process outlined here is provided to inform you of how our design review system works from start to finish. We hope it will assist you in understanding what will occur when your project is proposed in the downtown.

At the back of this Guide you will find a checklist of general considerations. You will want to review the checklist once you have reviewed the Guide to determine the compatibility of your project with the downtown design goals.

Steps of the Approval Process

Step 1: Your first step will be to go to the Planning & Community Development Department in the Civic Center and request information to answer the following questions:

- a.] What do I need to apply for development?
- b.] Is my project appropriate for zoning regulations?
- c.] What is my approval process and how much time is involved?
- d.1 Is my project in the Downtown Design District? Are the Design Guidelines applicable to my project? What types of requirements are likely to be imposed?
- e.1 Do I need encroachment permits for outdoor activities in the public right of way?



The primary criteria for development in the Downtown Design District are as follows:

Avoid strong contrasts with adjacent buildings.

Represent high quality design and construction.

Provide functional design solutions.

Variety and distinctiveness are desirable, however, buildings which sacrifice the quality of the general area to make an individual statement are discouraged.

Architectural services are also offered.



Step 2: Upon completion of your application, submit the application to staff at the City of Ukiah, 300 Seminary Avenue.

a.1 If your project involves a site development permit or use permit, City staff will review your project and schedule a public hearing. The final decision will typically be made by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission depending on the project scope (refer to step 5a on page 5 of this Guide).

b.1 During project planning you should consult with professionals regarding building construction or renovation requirements. If your building is constructed after 1972, refer to the current Uniform Building Code for seismic requirements. For historic buildings constructed prior to 1972, you may refer to the State Historic Building Code or most recent adopted California building code series. You should verify whether unreinforced masonry walls are part of your building.

Preliminary Review with City Staff

Step 3a: This is an advisory review of your project with the Planning and Community Development Department Staff.

At this time, the Staff will have reviewed your plans with the necessary City Departments and utilities and will be discussing with you information regarding their requirements and recommendations. These Departments include City Electric, Engineering, Building, Public Works and Fire.

For historical renovations, photo-documentation of the chosen period in the building's development should be presented. This information can be obtained

at the Held-Poage Memorial Home and Library, 603 West Perkins Street, or by calling 462-6969. Property owners completing facade renovations are encouraged to review the building's historical background for restoration in accordance with the selected period of the building's development.

Design Review Board

Step 4a: The fourth step is to attend a Design Review Board meeting. This is the last step towards completion of your project design.

The Design Review Board is comprised of members of the community and is advisory to the decision-making body. They will review your project for compliance with the Design Guidelines and exchange concerns and comments with you. It may be advantageous to conduct this step earlier in the process.

New Development

Step 5a: Since your project is for new development and involves a site development permit or use permit, City staff and possibly other agencies will review your project. City staff will schedule a public hearing. The final decision will be made by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission depending on the project scope (refer to step 5c on page 5 of this Guide).

New development or substantial modifications to existing development require a more comprehensive review by City departments and public utilities. This helps ensure seismic, building, utility and other codes and standards will be adequate and incorporated into your project. This review will help you understand what your project requirements will be upon approval. You should be aware that substantial construction may trigger city seismic, fire sprinkler, sidewalk, accessibility, impact fee and other requirements.

Staff Review

Step 5b: At this stage Staff reviews the permit to insure compliance with the Downtown Design Guidelines, Ukiah General Plan and other adopted requirements. Staff also performs environmental review according to state and local laws.

Planning Commission

Step 5c: Your final step in the approval process is review by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission.

Public notice and a staff report will be provided in advance of the meeting. You should plan to attend the public hearing before the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission at the Ukiah Civic Center. Public comment is also provided at this time.

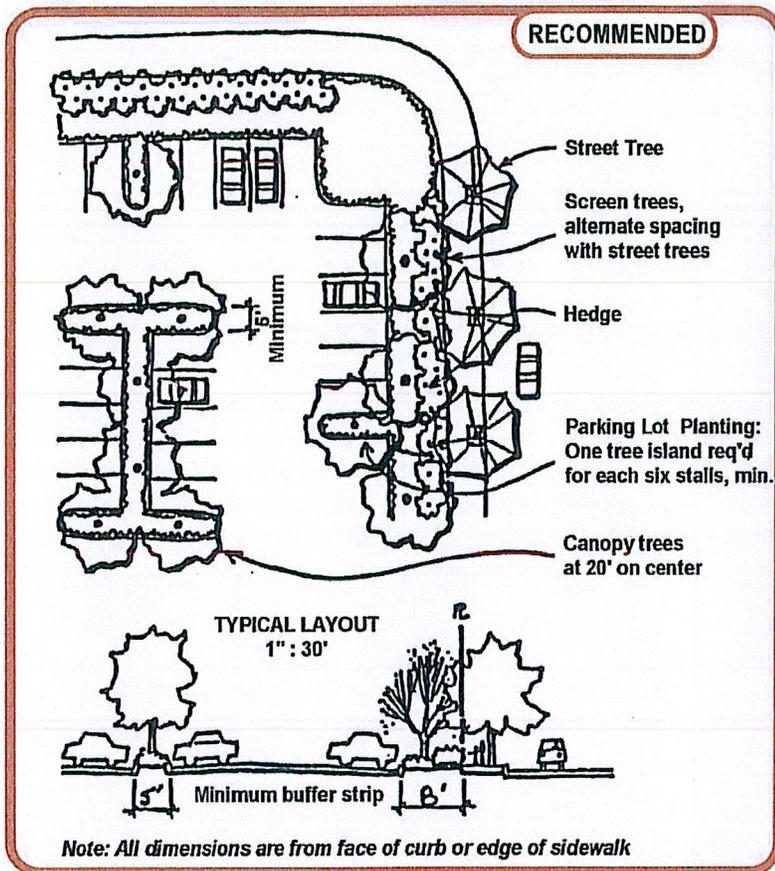
When the decision-making body approves your application, the discretionary review process is complete and you may apply for a building permit following the 10 day appeal period. You must comply with all conditions of approval.

Should the decision-making body disapprove your application, you may resubmit a modified application or appeal the decision to the Ukiah City Council within 10 days of the decision.

Zoning Administrator meetings are scheduled as needed. Planning Commission meetings are scheduled the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. Your project will be scheduled as soon as the review process including environmental review and staff review are conducted. The entire process may take from about 2 to 6 months depending on your application completeness and complexity and the type of environmental document required.

Site Planning

Buffer Strip & Parking Lot Planning



Site Features

Significant site features such as existing trees, lot size and shape, and relationship to surrounding development should be a compelling consideration in determining site design.

Parking

Site design should emphasize the aesthetic screening and shading of parking and be clearly designated by directional signs. Whenever possible, parking areas should be dispersed into smaller components to avoid massing and emphasize landscaping. Parking area walkways should be constructed with safe and well marked materials.

Pedestrian Orientation

All developments should emphasize pedestrian orientation by creating attractive, friendly pedestrian spaces. Outdoor space should be well landscaped and include appropriate furniture and other elements of interest such as sculpture, displays and kiosks.

Compatibility

Development should attempt to be compatible with surrounding land uses from both functional and aesthetic standpoints. The location of businesses

should be coordinated with adjoining properties to avoid inconsistency in use. For example, professional offices would be more appropriate adjacent to residential neighborhoods than high volume retail or restaurant uses. Street level businesses should be oriented to retail, restaurant and personal services. Professional offices are discouraged as storefronts, but should be encouraged as back offices or second stories

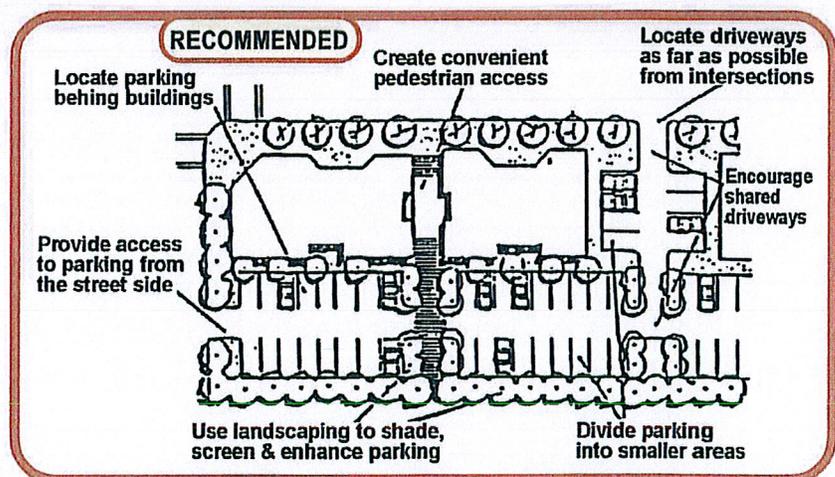
Development should not create unattractive views for neighbors or traffic corridors. All exposed elevations should maintain consistent architectural character. Service areas, trash enclosures, utility meters, and mechanical and electrical equipment should be screened from view by solid walls constructed with materials similar to the building. Screening of these areas should be integrated into the overall building and landscape design.

Coordination With Adjacent Properties

Property owners are encouraged to develop shared facilities such as driveways, parking areas, pedestrian plazas and walkways to maximize usable areas and create unique design opportunities.

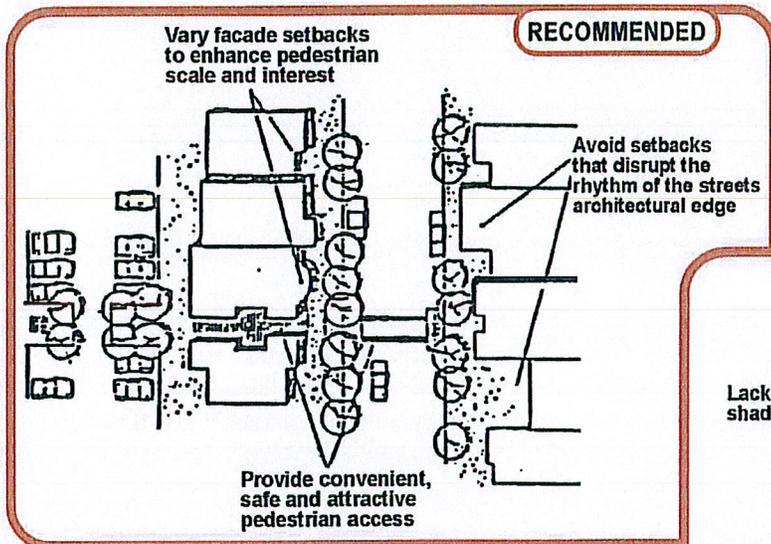
Setbacks

Setbacks for new development should consider the character of existing adjacent frontages. In the downtown core, minimal setbacks have created a strong architectural presence and



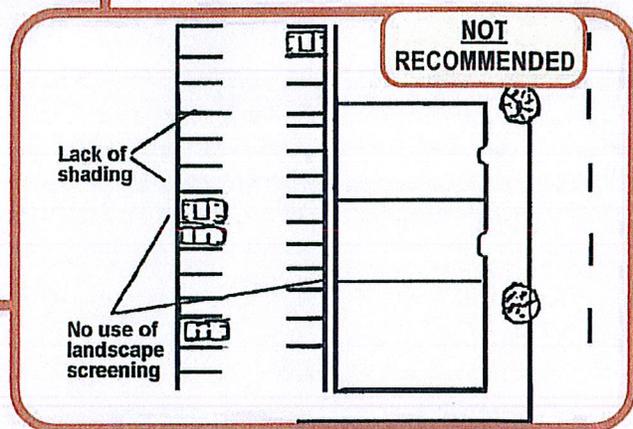
Site Planning (Cont.)

more intimate visual scale along storefronts. With that in mind, deeper setbacks are encouraged only in order to allow for sidewalk widening or the creation of special pedestrian areas such as entryways, courtyards, outdoor cafes, shopping arcades and other features intended to enhance the pedestrian environment.



Maintenance

A commitment to regular maintenance of the landscaping and building facade ensures continued high property values and creates a desirable downtown environment.



Building Materials

Since the late nineteenth century, the primary building material in Ukiah's downtown core has been masonry. The early buildings in the downtown core were constructed of locally fired brick, while those built after World War II were of concrete block. Many of these buildings have since been resurfaced with either paneling or stucco for either aesthetic or structural reasons, or both. Exposed concrete block should not be used on any wall visible to neighbors or pedestrians. If concrete block is used on visible exterior walls, creative design and surface texturing will be required. Concrete block used on walls not visible to the public; i.e., firewall construction, may be left untreated. Care should be taken when renovating brick surfaces so damage to the bricks does not result from renovation efforts. If it is necessary to replace original brick surfaces, new material should match the color and size of the original brick and mortar. Bonding pattern and size of joints should also match the original sections. Totally new building construction should select exterior finish materials that are compatible in quality, color, texture, finish, and dimension to the surrounding properties.

Suggestion: If you are cleaning any masonry surfaces, methods or materials that you might consider are gentle detergents, appropriate chemicals used per the manufacturer's recommendations, and high water pressure cleaning using correct pressure so as not to destroy brick surface or mortar joints. Sandblasting is not recommended because it defaces or causes severe damage to the brick and stone and accelerates erosion by allowing water to enter the pores.

Color

The Downtown Design Review Board does not approve or disapprove specific colors. However, exterior colors should relate to natural building materials and/or be compatible without being identical to surrounding properties. The use of more than one vivid color per building is discouraged. Color selection for the purpose of individual statement at the sacrifice of the compatibility of the surrounding area is discouraged. Multiple store fronts with a common facade or appearance should strive to coordinate colors during renovation efforts.

Suggestion: If you are having difficulty in selecting colors, the best approach may be to drive or walk through the district looking at other buildings and noting color combinations you prefer. You will notice, too, that it is important for colors to blend with the neighborhood. Very dark colors, too many colors on one building, or stained surfaces are very obvious and often do not harmonize with surrounding buildings. Remember that the colors you select will have an impact on your entire block. A good rule of thumb is: One (1) primary color for the body of the building; one (1) secondary color for major trim and/or cornice work; and one (1) or two (2) colors for minor trim. Your design review board is available to assist you in selecting compatible and harmonious color combinations upon request.

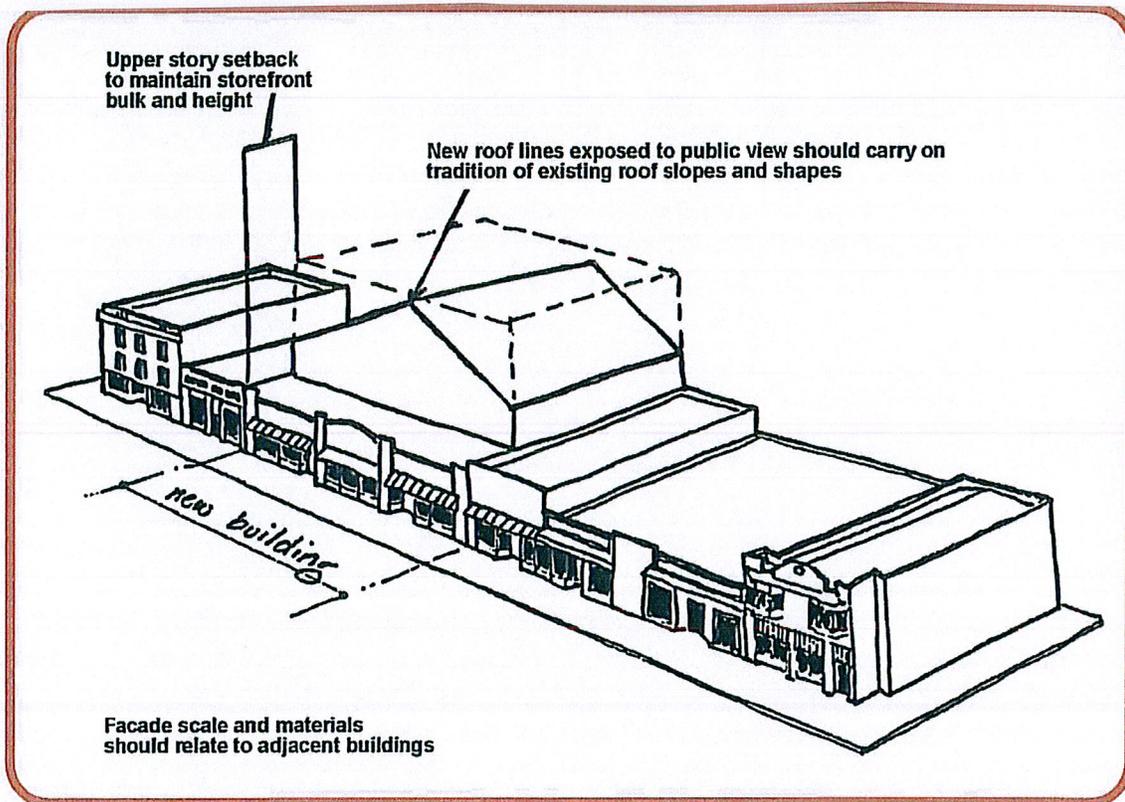
Roofs, Facades & Store Front Openings

Roofs & Rooflines

The form, color, and texture of the roof should be considered an integral part of the building design. Rooflines, materials, and colors of adjacent development should be considered.

Ukiah's downtown core is comprised mainly of traditional relatively flat roofs hidden by the extension of the front wall plane or parapet. Consideration of historical roof forms and decorations is encouraged, particularly if the roof is exposed to public view. Diversity in parapet shapes will add interest to the building or rhythm of existing storefronts.

Suggestion: *When installing a new roof that will be exposed to public view, choose a neutral color that will be adaptable to future color changes on the building. Screening for roof-mounted apparatus will be required.*



Facades & Store Front Openings

Facades

Property owners that are contemplating facade improvements are highly encouraged to review the building's historical background so that the restoration may reflect a selected period of the building's development conducive with Ukiah's Facade Redevelopment Program. Building facades should be varied and articulated to add visual variety and distinctiveness, and be designed to human scale. Long, straight facades without openings or changes in whole planes should be avoided. Articulation will add three dimensional interest to the building.

Elements typically used to articulate a building's facade include cornice lines, parapets, eaves, awnings, windows, balconies, entry insets and signs. Building entries should be accented with strong architectural definition. Facades without a strong sense of entry should be avoided. Projecting elements such as awnings, trellises and overhangs are effective in adding three dimensional interest to facades and enhancing the sense of entry into the building. Such elements can also improve the pedestrian environment by providing protection from adverse weather conditions. Awnings can be a very effective and inexpensive method of providing storefront dimension, with the added benefit of area for signage. Awning material should be cloth or similar material. Metal awnings are actively discouraged.

Facades & Store Front Opening

BEFORE Lack of architectural elements create a monotonous facade



Example site that is lacking architectural elements...

AFTER

If stucco is to remain, the use of medium & light color areas will help to break up the mass of the facade

If brick is under the stucco and the stucco is not for structural stability of the brick the building's appearance would be greatly enhanced by exposing the brick



Store names on awning valances

Awnings on separate store fronts within a single building should be the same color

Signs may be painted on the windows

Alternative architectural elements...

Example site that is stripped of architectural detail...

Older building that has been stripped of architectural detail



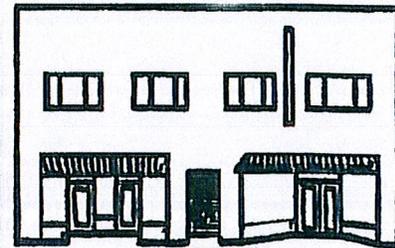
Corbelled cornice

Double hung windows

Brick veneer

Awnings of same size and color with main signage on awning valance

Logo painted on glass



BEFORE

First Alternative

AFTER

Second Alternative



Painted bands of light and dark accent colors can be used to define building as lost detailing once did

Awnings over 2nd floor windows

Window planter boxes

Signage band with individual signs

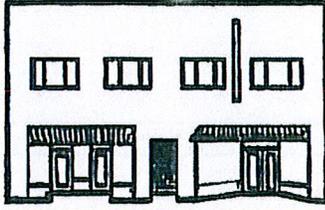
Planter boxes

AFTER

Facades & Store Front Openings (Cont.)

First Alternative

Older building that has been stripped of architectural detail



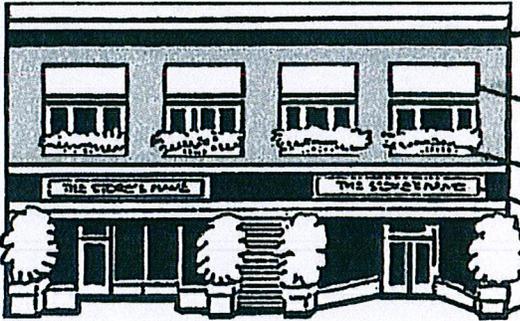
BEFORE



- Corbelled cornice
- Double hung windows
- Brick veneer
- Awnings of same size and color with main signage on awning valance
- Logo painted on glass

AFTER

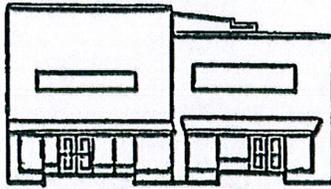
Second Alternative



- Painted bands of light and dark accent colors can be used to define building as lost detailing once did
- Awnings over 2nd floor windows
- Window planter boxes
- Signage band with individual signs
- Planter boxes

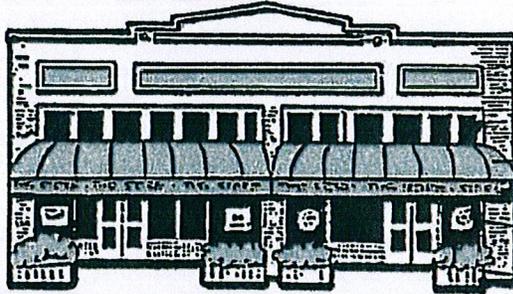
AFTER

Single Building That Has Been Artificially Treated As Two



BEFORE

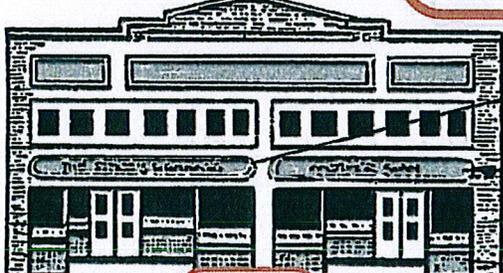
First Alternative



- Original Building Exposed After Removal of Metal Siding
- Backlit Awnings
- Main Signage on Awning Valance
- Logo Painted on Glass
- Planter Boxes

AFTER

Second Alternative



- Multiple Wall Signs Should Be The Same Size And Shape
- Hanging Signs Should Be Located in the Center of the Building to Avoid Visibility Problems Caused by Awnings And Signs on Adjacent Buildings
- New Bulkhead Treatment

AFTER

Facades & Store Front Openings (Cont.)

WINDOW OPENINGS

The display window is the link between the pedestrian environment outside and the business activity inside. Window space along a commercial building's frontage should be designed to provide a maximum amount of retail exposure with entryway insets to help break up the building's volume into smaller components and reduce apparent mass, while increasing visual interest.

When renovating a residential structure or converting it to commercial use, care should be taken to preserve the residential characteristics of the building's original architecture.

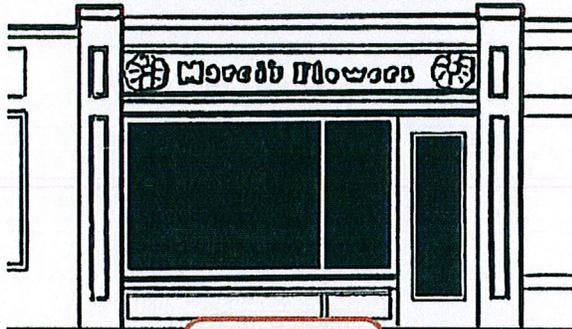
Basic Commercial Facade



RECOMMENDED

SUGGESTION: Corner properties may want to place primary entryways at the corner of the building to reinforce the street intersection as a focus of pedestrian activity.

Wide Pedestrian Level Windows Provide Retail Exposure for Shoppers



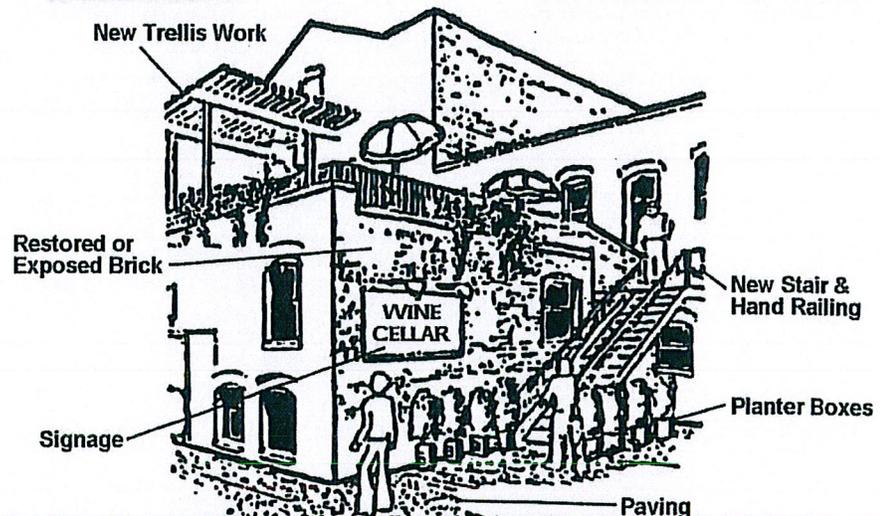
RECOMMENDED

REAR ENTRIES

It is important for rear and side entrances to be equally as attractive as the front. The design of each of the building's elevations should be coordinated so that complimentary design and treatment is used on all elevations visible to the public.

RECOMMENDED

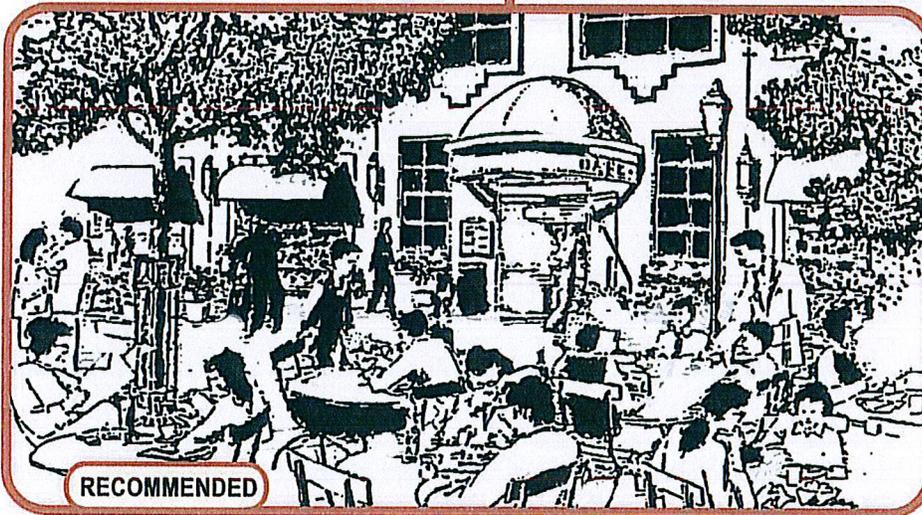
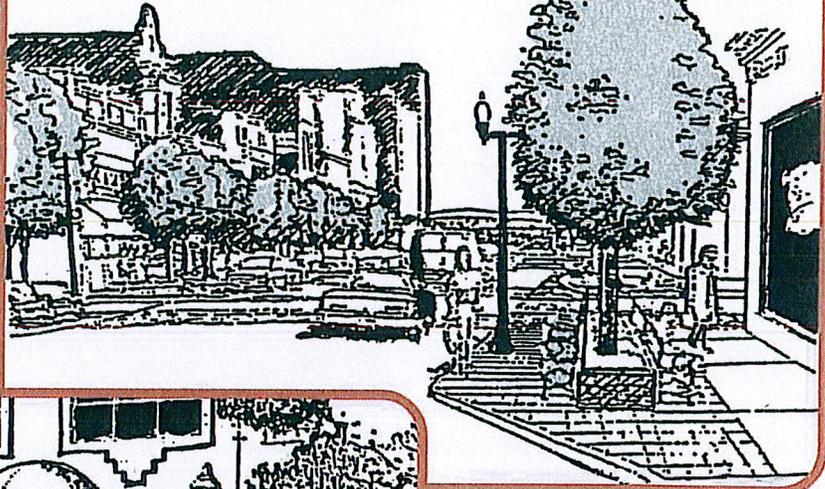
REAR ENTRY TREATMENT



Signs

"...elements which contribute to the quality of a pedestrian area if well designed."

RECOMMENDED



"...encourage gathering..."

Signs

The primary purpose of signs should be to identify the business or businesses located with a specific site. The design of a sign should be simple and easy to read. Signs with messages limited to the business name and logo are most effective.

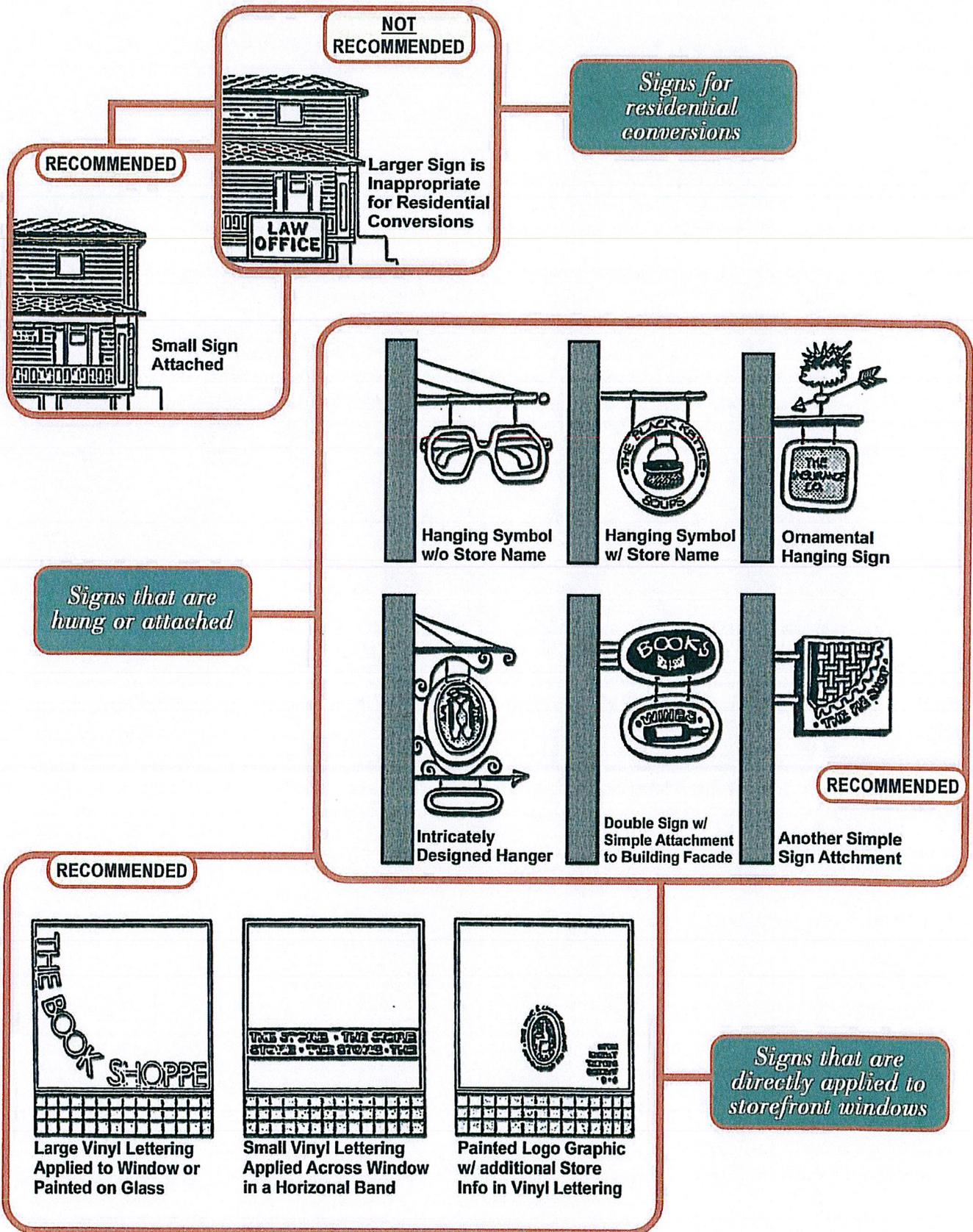
Sign Design

Sign design should conform to the architectural character of the building in terms of historic period, style, location, size, configuration, materials and colors. Awning surfaces are appropriate for sign placement and building owners are encouraged to utilize these areas for signage. Signs attached to a building should be designed to be integral with the building and not obscure or conceal architectural elements. Signing which does not relate to the building architecture is discouraged.

To reduce the visual competition between signs, sign area should be limited to the minimum amount necessary to identify the business. Maximum standards for total sign area are provided in the City of Ukiah Sign Code. Large signs are discouraged and should be broken up into multiple low-impact signs.

Sandwich board signs shall conform to the requirements of the Ukiah Municipal Code, and shall be tastefully designed with subdued colors, minimal sign copy, and a creative appearance.

The types of signs permitted are set forth in the City of Ukiah Sign Code; however, all signs constructed in the downtown must be approved by the Design Review Board. You have several options for the placement of signs. The most appropriate will depend upon your building.



Signs (Cont.)

The following are sign types that will be considered for commercial buildings by the Design Review Board.

- ❖ Signs can be painted on a band above windows on stuccoed commercial buildings.
- ❖ Painted window signs can be used.
- ❖ Narrow and flat signs can be hung from stationary canopies.
- ❖ Flat signs can be attached to building fronts. These should be flush-mounted.
- ❖ Projecting signs that are limited in size can be attached to building fronts.
- ❖ Detached, freestanding signs are not allowed for structures located directly on the sidewalk line.
- ❖ Exposed tube neon signs are appropriate if integrated into the building's design.
- ❖ Signs permanently attached or intended to be part of an awning.

RECOMMENDED

AWNINGS

Slanted Awning

Box Awning

Curved Awning

BANNERS

Temporary

Permanent

RECOMMENDED

Suggestion: Multiple tenant buildings should consider developing a sign program that minimizes the visual conflict and competition between tenants, yet insures adequate identification for each. Signing can be very creative and enhancing if applied as an art form. When you consider the type of sign for you business, you may wish to choose a sign easily adaptable to accommodate changes in tenants.

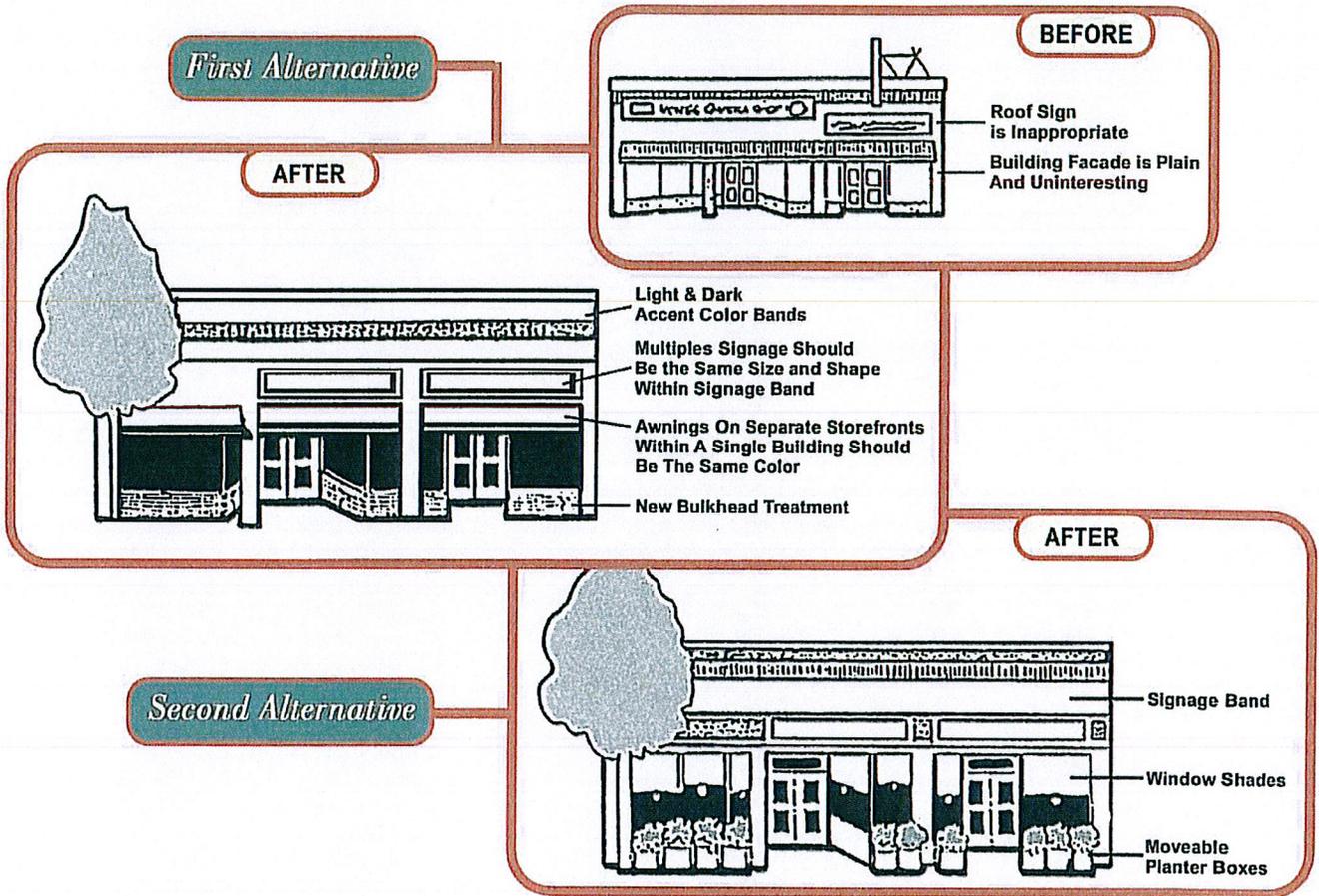
RECOMMENDED

WALL SIGNS

Carved Signs
With Raised or
Applied Letters

Painted
Signs

Street & Site Furnishings

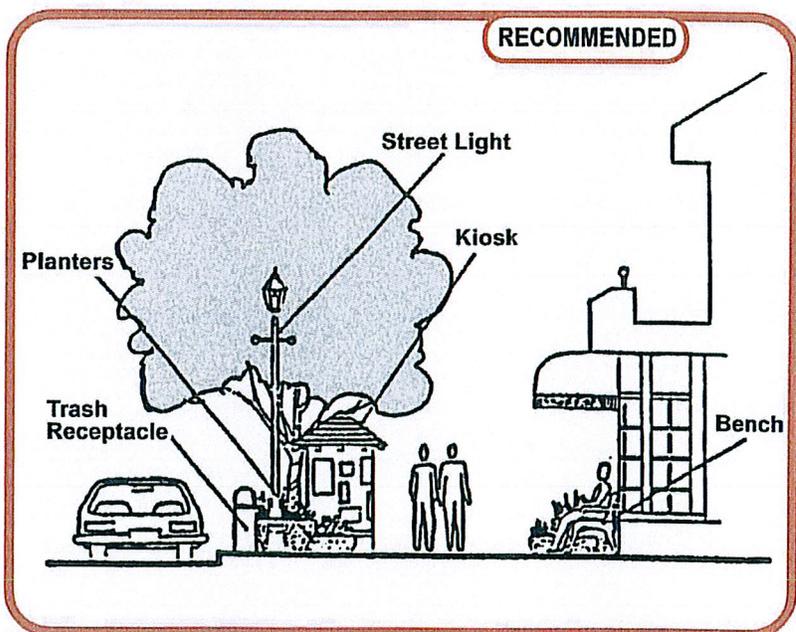


Street & Site Furnishings

Site and street furnishings should be incorporated into outdoor spaces to encourage pedestrian traffic in commercial areas. Benches, seating, walls, trash receptacles, pay phones, newspaper racks and kiosks are all elements which contribute to the quality of a pedestrian area if well designed. Design should be carefully integrated into the overall architectural quality of the area.

Lighting in pedestrian sites should be low or ground level and accented to the site design, providing adequate security while minimizing overhead glare and obtrusiveness.

Benches and other furniture should be configured and designed to encourage gathering.



Pedestrian Circulation & Lighting

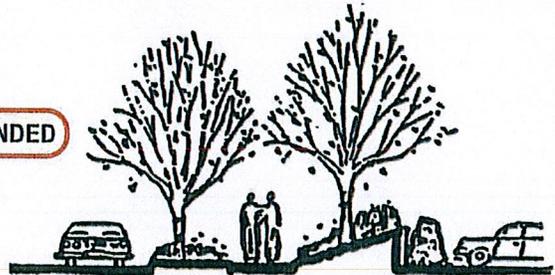
Pedestrian Circulation

Parking area design should include provisions for pedestrian access from parking areas to building entrances. Walkways within parking areas should be clearly marked. They should also feature special design characteristics such as raised and/or textured surfaces, low-level lighting, directional signing and should be bordered by landscaped areas, berms, or low walls to provide adequate security and not impede pedestrian and automobile traffic.

Bicycle parking is encouraged and should be provided closest to buildings to provide adequate security and not impede pedestrian and automobile traffic.

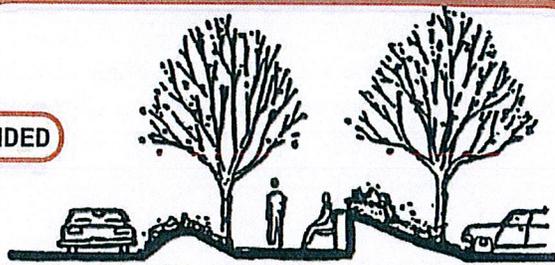
Large, unbroken expanses of paving should be avoided.

RECOMMENDED

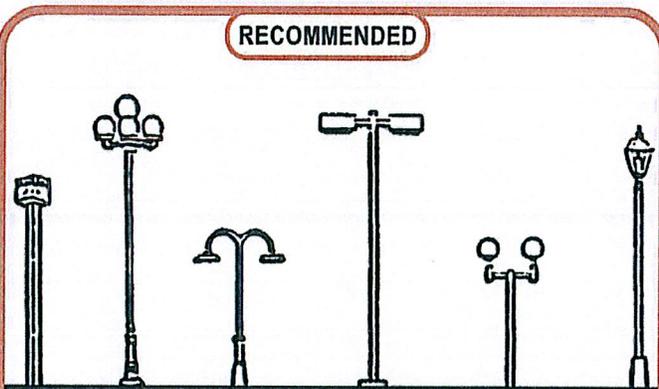


Pedestrian Access to Parking Areas Should Be Designed for Safety and Convenience

RECOMMENDED



RECOMMENDED



Select Lighting Whose Character is Consistent with Image of Area to be Illuminated

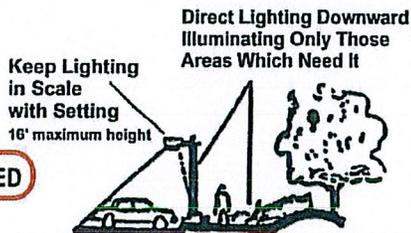
Lighting Design

Exterior lighting should be considered as an integral part of the architectural and landscape design. Site plans and architectural elevations should include location, design and nature of illumination of lighting fixtures.

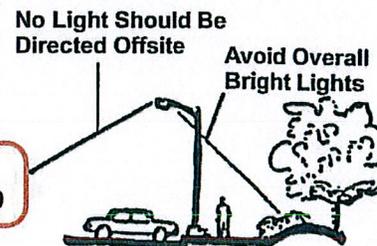
Lighting should be located in a manner that minimizes its impact on adjacent properties. The placement of light standards should not interfere with pedestrian movement. Fixture styles should compliment the architectural treatment of the site or neighborhood.

Suggestion: In parking areas, illumination levels generally need to be somewhat higher for security purposes; however, illumination should be at ground level wherever possible.

RECOMMENDED



NOT RECOMMENDED



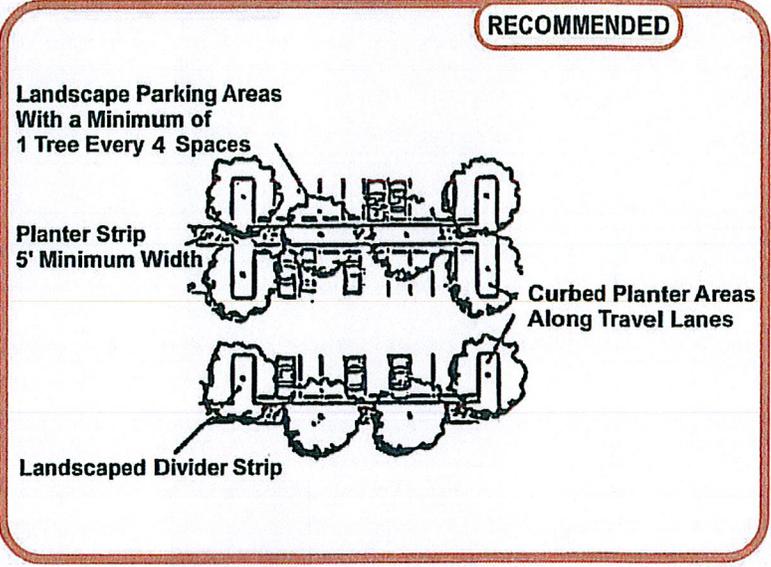
Landscape Design

Plant Species

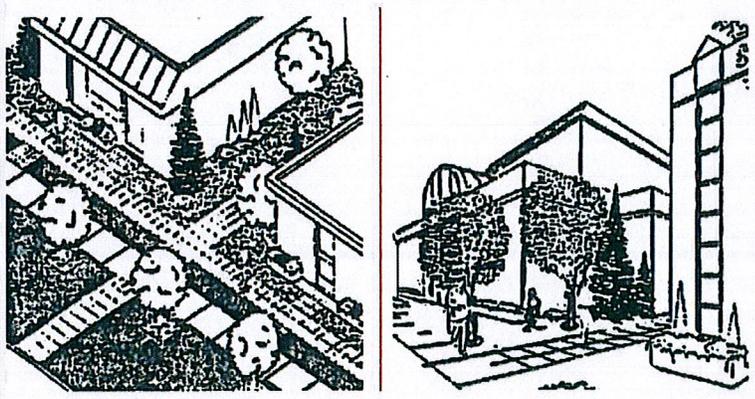
Species which are well adapted to the climatic conditions in Ukiah are preferred. Plan species selected for landscaping in permanent plantings should be generally hardy and not require extensive maintenance. Color spots and annual plantings area encouraged.

The scale and nature of landscape materials should be appropriate to the site and structures. Large structures and open sites should be complemented by large scale landscaping.

Plant material should be sized and spaced so that a mature appearance will be attained within a reasonable period of time.



Landscaping Should Accent the Building Design and Dimensions But Should not Block Pedestrian Access or Visual Corridor



RECOMMENDED

As a rule of thumb, twenty percent (20%) of the parking lots should be completed in landscaping. Parking areas should space planter areas and trees at least every four stalls. Trees on the south and west sides should be primarily deciduous. Groundcover should consist predominantly of plant materials that are compatible with the trees planted on the site.

Parking Lot Landscaping

All landscaped areas shall have automatic irrigation systems installed to insure plant care and maintenance. Overspray of walkways, parking areas, and pedestrian rest areas must be avoided.

Other Landscaping

Window box plantings and plantings suspended from overhead projections are encouraged to add color and variety to landscaping.

Suggestion: Landscaping should be used to clarify and complement the building site and should enhance the Environment. Choose a plant selection with mature sizes in mind. High maintenance and replacement costs can be avoided by proper initial plant selection.