

ARTICLE XXII. URBAN DESIGN

Sec. 55-921. Purpose of article.

This article shall be known as the urban design article. The urban design standards and guidelines in this article are intended to implement the urban design element of the city's comprehensive plan.

Sec. 55-922. Applicability of article.

(a) *Standards and guidelines.* The provisions in sections 55-924 through 55-936 of this article shall apply to all projects in the ACI districts and the MCC district, and in any MU district, CP district, NCE district and IG district, when adopted, and as specifically required by the provisions of those districts.

See Summary Table 55-938, that indicates which provisions in this article are applicable to which new or modified zoning districts.

(b) *Review procedures.* The review procedures in sections 55-937 and 55-938 of this article shall apply to all projects in the ACI districts and the MCC district, and in any MU district, CP district, NCE district and IG district, when adopted, and as specifically required by the provisions of those districts, and when otherwise specifically required by the provisions of this chapter.

Sec. 55-923. Conflict of provisions.

Where the provisions of this article conflict with the provisions of any other sections of this chapter, the provisions of this article shall control.

Sec. 55-924. Sidewalk areas.

All lots and sites fronting on public streets in the ACI-1, ACI-2 and ACI-3 districts, and internal main streets shall have a minimum sidewalk area of 10 feet in width, and a minimum landscaped area of 8 feet in width. All lots and sites fronting on internal streets shall have a minimum sidewalk area of 5 feet in width. The required minimum landscaped area within the sidewalk area shall be planted with shade trees of at least 2.0" caliper at intervals of not more than 40 feet on center. This sidewalk area requirement shall not apply to the ACI-4 district and major streets which have been configured as limited access highways. Where insufficient area exists within the public right-of-way to allow for the required sidewalk area, the required sidewalk area shall be located in an easement on the adjoining property.

Sec. 55-925. Build-to/set-back lines and zones.

(a) *General standard.* Buildings shall be placed on lots in relation to their frontages in a manner that encourages a consistent street wall and provides for a usable sidewalk area and a more attractive pedestrian environment.

(b) *Build-to/set-back lines in an MU district.* The location of the build-to/set-back line shall take into consideration:

- (1) Plazas and public places created by a grouping of buildings;
- (2) The street type, district or area of the city; and
- (3) The land uses to be accommodated.

A building façade facing any internal main street with diagonal on-street parking shall be placed at a build-to/set-back line located a minimum of 50 feet and a maximum of 55 feet from the centerline of the

street. A building façade facing any internal main street with parallel on-street parking shall be placed at a build-to/set-back line located a minimum of 39 feet and a maximum of 44 feet from the centerline of the street. A building façade facing any internal main street without on-street parking shall be placed at a build-to/set-back line located a minimum of 33 feet and a maximum of 38 feet from the centerline of such street or drive. When a drive-through window is located between a building façade and the street line of an internal street or internal access drive, the building façade shall be located a maximum of 60 feet from the centerline of the street. The required build-to/set-back line for projects proposed under these standards shall be reviewed by the planning director for appropriateness based on the location of the applicable MU district within the city to ensure that the location of any proposed building is in keeping with or improves the context of the existing area. When the required plaza or public place is not created on an internal main street, the build-to/set-back line shall be determined by the planning director.

See Figure 55-925(1) – Build-to/set-back lines and zones, located at the end of this urban design article.

(c) *Build-to/set-back lines and zones in the ACI-1, ACI-2 and ACI-3 districts.* Buildings in the ACI-1, ACI-2 and ACI-3 districts shall be located in relation to a baseline, as defined in Section 55-610(b). The build-to/setback zone shall be defined by the minimum and maximum range of distance as described below. Development shall also comply with the minimum sidewalk conditions in Section 55-924. The following build-to/set-back dimensions apply to the ACI-1, ACI-2 and ACI-3 districts, except for portions of any ACI district where the build-to/set-back standard may be adjusted to match the historic building line. (See Table 55-925, below, for specific applicability.)

(1) Build-to/set-back A: Building front adjacent to street

- a. Office/retail set-back from baseline: 0 feet minimum to 10 feet maximum. No parking or drive through lane will be permitted between the building and the sidewalk.
- b. Non-single-family residential set-back from baseline: 5 feet minimum to 15 feet maximum.
- c. Civic uses in ACI districts are subject to the build-to/set-back line standards for office/retail in this section, unless the civic use is part of an approved campus master plan.
- d. Canopies related to service stations/convenience food sales uses shall not be considered as buildings for purposes of meeting the build-to/set-back line requirements. The area under a canopy will be considered as parking for the purposes of determining required landscaping.
- e. When a project includes a plaza that is located between the street and the building front, the portion of the building associated with the plaza will be allowed to exceed the build-to/set-back zone standards in this section.
- f. Single family lots or parcels in ACI districts shall be subject to the regulations of the base zoning of the lot or parcel.

(2) Build-to/setback B: Building side adjacent to street.

- a. Office/retail set-back from baseline: 0 feet minimum to 10 feet maximum. No parking or drive through lane will be permitted between the building and the sidewalk.
- b. Non-single-family residential set-back from baseline: 5 feet minimum to 15 feet maximum.

- c. Civic uses in ACI districts are subject to the build-to/set-back line standards for office/retail in this section, unless the civic use is part of an approved campus master plan.
 - d. Fifteen (15) feet of landscaping is required between any parking or drive and the baseline.
 - e. Canopies related to service stations/convenience food sales uses shall not be considered as buildings for purposes of meeting the build-to/set-back line requirements. The area under a canopy will be considered as parking for the purposes of determining required landscaping.
 - f. When a project includes a plaza that is located between the street and the building front, the portion of the building associated with the plaza will be allowed to exceed the build-to/set-back zone standards in this section.
 - g. Single family lots or parcels in ACI districts shall be subject to the regulations of the base zoning of the lot or parcel.
- (3) Build-to/set-back C: Parking between building and street.
- a. Office/retail set-back from baseline: 45 feet minimum to 90 feet maximum.
 - b. Civic uses in ACI districts are subject to the build-to/set-back lines standards for office/retail in this section, unless the civic use is part of an approved campus master plan.
 - c. Fifteen (15) feet of landscaping is required between any parking, drive or structure and the baseline.
 - d. Canopies related to service stations/convenience food sales uses shall not be considered as buildings for purposes of meeting the build-to/set-back line requirements. The area under a canopy will be considered as parking for the purposes of determining required landscaping.
 - e. When a project includes a plaza that is located between the street and the building front, the portion of the building associated with the plaza will be allowed to exceed the build-to/set-back zone standards in this section.
 - f. Single family lots or parcels in ACI districts shall be subject to the regulations of the base zoning of the lot or parcel.
- (4) Build-to/set-back D: One building front adjacent to arterial street in combination with grouping of buildings away from street
- a. Office/retail set-back from baseline for building adjacent to arterial: 0 feet minimum to 10 feet maximum.
 - b. Non- single-family residential set-back from baseline for building adjacent to arterial: 5 feet minimum to 15 feet maximum.
 - c. Civic uses in ACI districts are subject to the build-to/set-back lines standards for office/retail in this section, unless the civic use is part of an approved campus master plan.

- d. Fifteen (15) feet of landscaping is required between any parking or drive and the baseline.
- e. Canopies related to service stations/convenience food sales uses shall not be considered as buildings for purposes of meeting the build-to/set-back line requirements. The area under a canopy will be considered as parking for the purposes of determining required landscaping.
- f. When a project includes a plaza that is located between the street and the building front, the portion of the building associated with the plaza will be allowed to exceed the build-to/set-back lines standards in this section.
- g. Single family lots or parcels in ACI districts shall be subject to the regulations of the base zoning of the lot or parcel.

See Figures 55-925(2) through (5) – Build-to/set-back lines and zones, located at the end of this urban design article.

(d) *Build-to/set-back zone in the ACI-4 district.*

Build-to/set-back E: No direct access to buildings and off-street parking from an arterial street; grouping of buildings on internal main street, internal street or internal access drive. Fifteen feet (15') of landscaping required between any parking, drive or structure and the property line. (See Table 55-925, below, for specific applicability.)

See Figure 55-925(6) – Build-to/set-back lines and zones, located at the end of this urban design article.

Table 55-925. Applicability Table – Sidewalks & Build-to/Set-back Situations

Sidewalk & Build-to/Set-back Situations					
ACI Districts	A	B	C	D	E
ACI-1	P	O	NP	NP	NP
ACI-2	P	O	O	NP	NP
ACI-3	P	P	A	A	NP
ACI-4					R

Key: R=Required; P=Preferred; A=Allowed; O=Optional*; NP=Not Permitted.

**Requires mandatory review by the Urban Design Review Board*

Sec. 55-926. Ground-level transparency.

The following ground-level transparency standards shall apply to all building facades located within 10 feet of a sidewalk adjacent to a public or internal main street (each a “sidewalk-adjacent façade”):

- (a) *Minimum transparent area.* At least 25 percent of the total wall area of the first 12 feet above grade of any sidewalk-adjacent façade shall consist of windows, glass doors or other transparent (clear or slightly tinted) building surfaces providing an unobstructed visual connection from the outside to the inside of the building. For large retail buildings, areas that project and recede from the wall shall be included in the calculation of total wall area.

(b) *Minimum zone of transparency.* A minimum zone of transparency shall be established on a sidewalk-adjacent façade between a height of 2 feet and 8 feet above grade on these facades. At least 50 percent of the minimum transparent area shall be located in the minimum zone of transparency.

(c) *Placement of windows.* The placement of windows in the ground level of the sidewalk-adjacent façade shall be part of a proportional system that extends to any upper portions of the façade.

(d) *Glass showcases permitted.* Glass showcases or cabinets at least 3 feet in depth may be used to fulfill the foregoing minimum transparent area standard of this section 55-926.

(e) *Facades on slopes.* Sidewalk-adjacent facades adjoining slopes greater than 5 percent shall not be required to place windows within the minimum zone of transparency.

(f) *Relocation of minimum zone of transparency.* The minimum zone of transparency may be relocated and/or its height reduced, if the applicant can demonstrate that the standard provided in this section 55-926 would have a significant adverse effect upon the operation of the building to which it would be applied. In such cases, architectural enhancements which add to the visual interest of the sidewalk-adjacent facade may be allowed, in the discretion of the planning director.

(g) *Reduction in percentage of transparency.* The percentage of transparency may be decreased for street adjacent facades of buildings in residential use in the discretion of the planning director.

(h) *Corner buildings.* For a building with two or more sidewalk-adjacent facades, the principal sidewalk-adjacent façade for that building shall be determined by the planning director, and the standards set forth in this section 55-926 shall apply to that façade only.

Sec. 55-927. Service area screening.

All service access areas and uses such as trash dumpsters, utility boxes, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment, shall be prohibited along the facades of structures facing the front lot line or shall be screened from view with a combination of berms, walls, fence enclosures, gates for access and landscaping in accordance with section 55-717. Trash dumpsters shall be screened by a masonry enclosure designed to match the building on the site.

Sec. 55-928. Green parking areas.

(a) *Purpose.* Green parking areas, as described in the urban design element of the city's *comprehensive* plan, are intended to help provide more shade for pedestrians and vehicles and improve the aesthetic appearance of parking areas, without negatively impacting parking area efficiency.

(b) *Dimensions.* The dimensions of parking stalls in green parking areas shall comply with the standards set forth in section 55-740(b).

(c) *Pervious landscaping within parking lots.* All parking areas shall include landscaped areas equal to *not* less than 7 percent of the interior parking area (including drive aisles that do not provide access to a parking stall), arranged in one or any combination of the following ways:

- (1) Alternative 1 (alternating 10-foot strips). The preferred method for meeting this standard is to provide a pervious strip no less than 10 feet in width (including the "vehicle overhang" on both sides), extending the full length of alternating parking rows. This strip may be located below the level of the adjacent parking area, allowing drainage through curb breaks, or it may be located at top of curb level. The pervious strip shall be planted with low growing plant materials and over story trees as provided in section 55-928(f).

- (2) Alternative 2 (islands/peninsulas). As an alternative, the required landscaped areas may be provided through the use of interior islands or peninsulas distributed approximately evenly throughout the interior of the parking area and including one tree for every 350 square feet of landscaped area.
- (3) Alternative 3 (5-foot strips). As a further alternative, the required landscaped areas may be provided through the use of pervious strips of 5 feet in width (including the “vehicle overhang” on both sides), extending the full length of each parking row.

For parking areas on sites that are being redeveloped and for which the applicant can demonstrate that the number of parking spaces that could be constructed in compliance with the provisions of this section 55-928 would not comply with the number of parking spaces required by section 55-734 of the Code, the planning director may authorize a reduction of up to 10 percent in the required number of parking spaces. In the event that an applicant for a project involving redevelopment demonstrates that the application of the standards of this section 55-928(c) would result in the loss of parking spaces necessary to accommodate the uses proposed for the redevelopment site, the planning director may authorize a reduction of up to 1.5 percent in the required percentage of pervious landscaping.

(d) *Design requirements for parking reserved for the handicapped.* The requirements set forth in section 55-740(d) shall apply to green parking areas.

(e) *Perimeter landscaping.* The perimeter of all parking areas shall be surrounded by a landscaped area as required by section 55-740(f)(4). This landscaped area shall be in addition to the interior parking area landscaping requirement set forth in section 55-928(c). In addition, all parking area perimeters adjacent to arterial streets shall provide a continuous landscaped area to a minimum height of 3 feet and a minimum depth of 15 feet. Landscaped berms, hedge rows, shrubbery or any combination may be used to fulfill this requirement. Overstory trees shall also be required as described in section 55-718.

(f) *Landscaping standards.* Areas in green parking areas that are required to be landscaped, including the pervious strip beyond the front wheel car stops required by section 55-928(c) and the perimeter landscaping required by section 55-928(e), shall be planted with shade trees at intervals of not more than 35 feet on center, and with appropriate low-growing plant materials, selected according to the Standards for Urban Landscaping, adopted by the city council and on file with the planning director, to insure the long-term viability of the pervious surface.

(g) *Other applicable requirements.*

- (1) Generally. All other requirements in section 55-740 with regard to parking areas generally shall apply to green parking areas.
- (2) Exterior lighting. Exterior lighting in green parking areas shall comply with the requirements of chapter 44 of this Code.

See Figures 55-928(1) through (5) – Illustrations of Green Parking Areas, located at the end of this urban design article.

Sec. 55-929. Parking structures.

Parking garages shall utilize horizontal walls to screen sloping floors and vehicle bumpers that are visible from major streets. Exterior facing materials for parking structures shall be comparable to the facing materials of the principal building(s) on the same or adjoining sites. At least 50 percent of the length of the ground floor of all parking structures that are immediately adjacent to public sidewalks in the ACI-1 and ACI-2 districts, or in MU districts, and that are located in or directly adjacent to areas that consist primarily of retail storefronts, shall be occupied by retail uses that occupy at least 20% of the floor

area of the ground floor and have entrances onto those public sidewalks.

See Figures 55-929(1) and (2) – Illustrations of Conforming Parking Structures, located at the end of this urban design article

Sec. 55-930. Site and building access.

(a) *General.* Site and building access shall be located and designed in a manner that provides for pedestrian activity on the street frontage of buildings while minimizing the number of vehicular access points and reducing areas of vehicle-pedestrian conflict.

(b) *Site and building access in an MU district.* In an MU district, site and building access shall be subject to the following requirements:

- (1) In general, vehicular access points to an MU district from major streets shall not be located closer than 500 feet or further than 700 feet from the centerline of the nearest intersection of major streets.
- (2) Between 500 feet and 700 feet from intersections of major streets, a right-in/right-out access point and a street shall be required that connects to the nearest perpendicular street.
- (3) Between 1,000 feet and 1,400 feet from intersections of major streets, an intersection and street with all turning movements shall connect to the nearest perpendicular street.
- (4) All access to sites and lots greater than two and one-half acres in size at any intersection quadrant shall be shown on an approved internal street system plan.
- (5) Pedestrian access shall be provided from all public sidewalks to the site with convenient access to building entrances.
- (6) On-street parking shall be provided on streets other than major streets as established through the special use permit process.
- (7) The internal circulation system shall distribute traffic to minimize conflict at access points.

(c) *Site and building access in the ACI districts.* In the ACI districts, site and building access shall be subject to the following requirements:

- (1) Shared access. New development on parcels and lots in the ACI districts shall be limited to a maximum of two vehicular access points, provided that the second access point is shared with the adjacent property.
- (2) ACI-3 and ACI-4 districts.
 - a. Lots abutting an internal street shall be limited to one unshared access from any internal street system unless approved by the public works and planning departments.
 - b. New vehicular access points to major streets shall be prohibited unless approved by the public works department, the planning department and, if necessary, the Nebraska Department of Roads.
 - c. Building entrances shall be visible from the street and accessible from the adjacent sidewalk.

- (3) ACI-1 and ACI-2 districts. The requirements applicable in the ACI-3 and ACI-4 districts with regard to site and building access shall apply in the ACI-1 and ACI-2 districts. In addition, vehicular entrance and access points for projects in the ACI-1 and ACI-2 districts shall be contained within a single access driveway.

(d) *Site and building access in the MCC district.* New development on parcels and lots in the MCC district shall be limited to two vehicular access points. New vehicular access points for parcels or lots that have already been developed with two or more vehicular access points shall be discouraged.

Sec. 55-931. Neighborhood connectivity.

New streets shall be designed to and shall connect through to adjacent streets whenever physically possible.

Sec. 55-932. Location of utilities.

New service lines for utilities such as power and data communications lines shall be located underground. To the extent feasible, new distribution lines for utilities such as power and data communications lines shall be located in a utility corridor outside of the area between the curb and the sidewalk along each street frontage.

Sec. 55-933. Signs.

In addition to the provisions regarding signs set forth in this code, the following standards shall apply:

- (a) *Pole signs.* Pole signs, as defined by Section 55-822 of Article XVIII, are prohibited.
- (b) *Monument signs.* The maximum height of a monument sign shall be 12 feet, including any structural elements of the sign such as pillars or posts. All monument signs shall have a masonry base.
- (c) *Business center signs.* Business center monument signs may have a maximum height of 25 feet. This maximum height shall include any structural elements of the sign such as pillars or posts. Business center monument signs may provide for tenant advertising provided that no more than 60 percent of the sign area is used for such purposes, and no single tenant occupies more than 10 percent of the sign area. Business center signs are only allowed in business centers 10 acres or larger in size. One sign shall be allocated for each full-turn access to a business center (quarter and half-mile) up to a maximum of 3 signs. Business centers (10 acres or larger) that have no full turn access points will be allocated one business center sign. All business center signs shall have a masonry base.

Sec. 55-934. Retaining walls.

Retaining walls shall be subject to the following standards:

- (a) *Visible and invisible retaining walls.* For purposes of this section 55-934, any retaining wall shall be considered a visible retaining wall unless the retaining wall is:
- (1) Not visible from adjacent properties or public roadways,
 - (2) No higher than the adjacent building, and
 - (3) Located such that the adjacent property is uphill from the retaining wall.

A retaining wall that has all of the foregoing characteristics shall be considered an "invisible retaining wall" for the purposes of this section 55-934.

(b) *Maximum height and separation distance.* Visible retaining walls abutting sidewalks and/or property lines shall not be more than 5 feet high and the distance between visible retaining walls shall not be less than 10 feet. As an alternative, visible retaining walls may extend to a maximum of 10 feet in height provided that a minimum 1.5 to 1.0 depth-to-height ratio is maintained between the edge of the sidewalk and /or property line and the top of any retaining wall exceeding 5 feet in height. Visible retaining walls and slopes steeper than 3.0 to 1.0 located in the public right of way shall require the approval of the Omaha Public Works Department. Invisible retaining walls shall not be more than 10 feet high. The distance between invisible retaining walls shall not be less than 5 feet. The 10-foot and 5-foot intervals should be used for landscaping that will extend both upward and downward to soften the image of the walls.

(c) *Retaining walls in landscaped buffers.* When a retaining wall is located within a required landscaped buffer at a property boundary:

- (1) If the adjacent property is downhill from the retaining wall, the landscaped buffer shall be located between the retaining wall and the adjacent property, and
- (2) If the adjacent property is uphill from the retaining wall, the landscaped buffer shall be located between the back of the retaining wall and the adjacent property.

(d) *Retaining wall materials.* Retaining walls shall be constructed of masonry and compatible in color, texture, size and scale to the masonry materials used in the elevations of buildings on the same site.

(e) *Existing retaining walls.* An existing retaining wall located within a site shall not be subject to the provisions of this section unless new development or a redevelopment or reconstruction of the existing development on the site makes the retaining wall visible.

See Figures 55-934(1) through (3) – Illustrations of Retaining Wall Configurations, located at the end of this urban design article.

Sec. 55-935. Large retail building design guidelines.

(a) *Findings.* The city council finds that the creation of high quality building design in large retail buildings within the city is a major goal of the urban design element of the city's comprehensive plan, and further finds that the adoption of guidelines regarding the elevations of such buildings will help to achieve this goal.

(b) *Purpose.* The purpose of these guidelines is to improve the quality of building design of large retail buildings in the city and improve the city's image as defined by its built environment. While these guidelines attempt to set forth what is generally acceptable building design for large retail buildings, the city intends by these guidelines to encourage innovation and creativity in the design of such buildings.

(c) *Definitions.* For the purposes of the guidelines set forth in this section 55-935, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them:

Customer entrance: That part of a large retail building's exterior accommodating either access into or egress out of that building, or both access and egress, for customers of the retail establishment(s) located in the building.

Elevation: The complete façade located on any side of a building.

Large retail building: Any building used primarily for retail uses and having at least one elevation greater than 100 feet in length.

Visible elevation: Any elevation, including any elevation of less than 100 feet in length, of a large retail building which is visible from a public right of way adjacent to the property on which the building is located or from a parking lot within such property.

- (d) *Guidelines.* The following review criteria apply to large retail buildings:
- (1) **Screening of Rooftop Equipment.** Mechanical equipment above the surface of the roof, such as cooling towers, vent fans and vent stacks, should be screened by architectural elements such as a parapet extending upward from the perimeter wall or an architectural roof-top enclosure so that the equipment is not casually visible from adjacent public streets or from the parking lot for the building. In no case shall the parapet wall or roof top enclosure be required to exceed the height of the mechanical equipment.
 - (2) **Wall Materials.** All large retail buildings should incorporate as a primary element on the building exterior either natural or cast stone, brick, split face or textured concrete block (CMU), fascia glass or other similar materials. All visible elevations of the building should be consistent in design and use of materials. Other materials such as concrete panels, non-textured block, architectural metal panels and artificial stucco ("exterior insulation and finish system," or "EIFS") may be used in combination with and or complimentary with the above referenced materials. When EIFS is used, it generally should be placed a minimum of 8 feet above grade and be applied in an articulated fashion. The placement of EIFS may be varied so as to average a minimum of 8' above grade, but in no case shall it be placed closer than 3' above grade.
 - (3) **Proportion of Height to Length of Elevations.** Large retail buildings that are only one story and have walls longer than 100 feet should be designed so that the height of the wall, including the parapet, if there is one, averages not less than one tenth of the length of the wall. In the case of walls longer than 300 feet, this provision can be satisfied by providing architectural elements at the ends of the wall that meet the height criteria for the entire length of the wall, but the rest of the wall need not be taller than 30 feet.
 - (4) **Relating Large Retail Buildings to Sloping Sites.** Grading plans for projects including one or more large retail buildings should minimize the necessity for retaining walls and preserve the natural integrity of the site topography as much as possible. Parking lots should be designed to absorb changes of grade through gentle slopes and low retaining walls within the parking area, rather than accumulating all grade changes at the site perimeter. Where the height of a building elevation changes appreciably across a site, the design should take these circumstances into account.
 - (5) **Building Signs:** In addition to the building sign standards set forth at sections 55-821 through 55-847, the following review criteria shall apply to signs for large retail buildings and sites:
 - a. Signs on visible elevations should be limited to identification of the commercial business or businesses within the large retail building. Where signs are associated with the entrance to the commercial business the size of the sign should be in proportion to the entrance. Where the sign is placed away from the entrance or on a wall that does not have an entrance, the sign should be integrated with the design of the wall through such devices as placing the letters of the sign directly on the wall so that the wall can be seen through the lettering.
 - b. Where there are multiple retail establishments in the same large retail building, there should be a sign plan to ensure continuity of the identification signs of all the establishments in the building.

- (6) Proportion and Visibility of Entrances: Entrances in visible elevations of large retail buildings will be reviewed according to the following criteria.
- a. Entrances should be part of an architectural composition that is in scale with the entire visible elevation in which it is contained. Where there are many entrances to separate establishments, a continuous band of doors and windows along the entire visible elevation is a customary design approach. Where doors are not part of such a continuous band, the doors should be part of an entrance pavilion, projection, or comparable architectural element that incorporates the doors, and is in scale with the length and height of the whole elevation.
 - b. When there is a large retail building and other, smaller stores which are part of the same development, the smaller stores, with their separate entrances, could be placed in front of the large retail building, or along one of its sides, in order to mitigate the scale of the large building.
 - c. Where an entrance elevation is longer than 200 feet there should be more than one customer entrance, or customer entrances and exits should be separated, or some other device such as an arcade should be used to make the building seem as friendly and accessible as possible.
 - d. When the exterior wall of a large retail building is adjacent to the sidewalk of an abutting public or interior street, there should be a customer entrance immediately accessible from the street, which may be located at the corner of the building. When such a building is adjacent to more than one street, only one street entrance need be provided.
- (7) Proportion and Organization of Windows. The following guidelines apply to windows on visible elevations of large retail buildings:
- a. Windows should be in scale with the entire elevation of which they are a part.
 - b. Windows should be part of a design and proportional system that extends to the entire visible elevation. Examples of such a system would be uniform sill and window heights, or continuous horizontal or vertical bands of windows. Windows that appear as individual openings in a masonry wall should be placed in accordance with a proportional system that can be explained by a drawing, although the system need not be expressed in the wall itself.
 - c. Where a large retail building has an elevation with a customer entrance on a parking lot with a sidewalk on the parking lot side, or the sidewalk on an internal main street, the ground-level transparency standards of section 55-926(a) shall apply to that elevation.
 - d. At least 20 percent of the minimum transparent area shall be located in the minimum zone of transparency, as delineated in section 55-926(b).
 - e. The minimum transparent area as delineated in section 55-926(a) may be reduced by 20% when a large retail building utilizes an arcade in combination with features that add visual interest to the wall. The arcade must be designed as a recess within the primary wall plane. Arcade openings in the wall plane must have the proportion and general appearance of door and window openings.
- (8) Incorporating Canopies into the Design: Where weather protection is extended out over a sidewalk or traffic lane as a canopy at a building entrance, the canopy should be incorporated into the design of the entrance pavilion or otherwise incorporated into the architectural design of the building.

- (9) **Mitigating the Effect of Long Elevations.** Long walls between entrances and long walls without entrances should be kept in scale as much as possible. Arcades, colonnades, awnings and galleries are all useful devices for integrating entrances into the design of the elevation of a large retail building and keeping entire elevations in scale. Vertical and horizontal expression lines can also be used to keep the long elevations of large retail buildings in scale. Expression lines to be effective need to use a change of material or a vertical or horizontal off-set large enough to be perceived from a distance.
- (10) **Screening of Loading Docks and Service Operations.** Loading and service operations, including storage of waste materials, should not be visible to the public from streets or parking lots. An effective way to screen such elements is to locate them within the building perimeter, screened by doors. Doors to loading docks should not be open except when vehicles are actually entering or leaving the building. Landscaping is ordinarily not an effective screen, unless the landscaping materials are evergreen, sufficiently tall, densely planted, and properly maintained.
- (11) **Screening of Exterior Mechanical Equipment.** All mechanical equipment located outside a large building, such as transformers or condensers, should not be casually visible to the public from streets or parking lots. Such elements should be screened, to the extent allowed by the public utility, by locating them within a perimeter wall of comparable design and materials to the building's visible elevations and sufficiently high as to completely conceal the equipment. Landscaping used as a screen should utilize evergreens sufficiently tall, densely planted, and well maintained.

See Figures 55-935(1) and (2) – Large retail building design guidelines, located at the end of this urban design article.

Sec. 55-936. General building design guidelines.

All projects in the ACI districts and in any MU district other than large retail building projects shall be reviewed for appropriate building design character, including treatment of facades at entrances and corners, treatment of the base and top of the building, and selection of finish materials, as part of urban design site plan review pursuant to section 55-937 for projects in the ACI districts, or pursuant to special use permit review pursuant to section 55-938(b) for projects in an MU district, as follows:

- (a) **Facades.** Facades of buildings should be designed in three dimensions, and not as a façade that is seen from only one side. All facades visible from a public right of way or from access roads and parking lots within the site (each, a “visible façade”) are equally important and should be designed accordingly.
- (b) **Entrances.** The location of entrances should be legible and all public pedestrian entrances should be accessible from sidewalks that connect to the public sidewalk system.
- (c) **Bases of buildings.** The bases of all visible facades of the building should be designed to enable pedestrians to come close to the building. If parking occupies the ground level, it should be fully enclosed and the wall finishes should be comparable to those used in the inhabited portion of the building. Exterior mechanical equipment, such as a ventilator, should be located not less than 10 feet above the base of the building.
- (d) **Rooftops.** The top of the building façade should include a parapet of a height sufficient to screen all roof-top mechanical equipment from the view of pedestrians on public streets or on sidewalks within the same site. In addition all elevator penthouses, stair towers and other elements above the roof line that are visible from a distance should be enclosed by facades that are comparable in design and quality of materials to the facades of the building itself.

(e) *Wall materials.* Except in residential use only districts, all buildings should incorporate as a primary element on the building exterior either natural or cast stone, brick, fascia glass or other similar material. All visible elevations of any building should be consistent in design and use of materials. Other materials such as concrete panels, split-face concrete block, architectural metal panels and EIFS may be used in combination with and or complementary with the above-referenced materials. When EIFS is used, it should also be placed a minimum of 8 feet above grade and be applied in an articulated fashion. Concrete block may be used on non-visible rear elevations.

See Figure 55-936 – Summary Illustration for General Building Design Guidelines, located at the end of this urban design article.

Sec. 55-937. Urban design site plan approval.

(a) *Purpose.* The urban design site plan review procedure provides for administrative and compliance review of plans for all proposed projects in the ACI, CP, MCC, NCE and IG districts. The procedure provides for review and evaluation of urban design-related site development standards as set forth in the provisions for those districts and in this article.

(b) *Procedure.* Unless otherwise specifically noted in this section, the procedure for urban design site plan approval shall be the same as provided for site plan approval under section 55-882. However, the procedure under section 55-882 when used for urban design site plan review shall be modified as follows:

- (1) In addition to the application requirements set forth at section 55-882(d), an application for urban design site plan review shall include plans showing, in both two and three dimensions, the elevations of all building facades in sufficient detail to review compliance thereof with the applicable urban design standards.
- (2) An application for urban design site plan approval, or amendment of the same, shall be reviewed and acted upon by the planning director pursuant to section 55-882. The planning director may approve, approve with modifications, or deny a proposed urban design site plan or a proposed amendment to an urban design site plan.
- (3) Under section 55-882(g)(4), in addition to requiring the rearrangement of structures or uses within the site under section 55-882(g)(4), the planning director may also require modifications to proposed building façade elevations to comply with applicable urban design standards and guidelines.
- (4) During the planning director's review of a proposed urban design site plan or amendment of the same under this section, either the applicant or the planning director may request to have the urban design review board review and provide a recommendation on the application. Such a request shall be made in writing to the urban design review board, which writing shall identify the issues to be reviewed and recommended upon. Following a hearing on the matter, the urban design review board shall provide a recommendation on the application to the planning director. The planning director shall then act on the application, taking into consideration the recommendation of the urban design review board.
- (5) An applicant aggrieved by the decision of the planning director under this section may appeal to the planning board by filing a written appeal with the planning director within 30 days of the planning director's decision. The written appeal shall identify the specific grounds for appeal. Following a hearing on the matter, the planning board may affirm, reverse or modify the planning director's decision.

- (6) An applicant aggrieved by the decision of the planning board under this section may appeal to the city council by filing a written appeal with the city clerk within 30 days of the planning board's decision. The written appeal shall identify the specific grounds for appeal. Following a hearing on the matter, the city council may affirm, reverse or modify the planning board's decision.
- (7) In rendering decisions or recommendations under this section 55-937(b), the planning director, the urban design review board, the planning board and the city council shall make their determinations under section 55-882 utilizing the criteria set forth in Table 55-938.

Sec. 55-938. Criteria for urban design-related review and evaluation.

- (a) *Purpose.* The criteria for review and evaluation (See Table 55-938) are intended to fully implement the urban design article's standards and guidelines in cases of:
 - (1) Urban design site plan review. Urban design site plan review for all projects in the ACI, CP, NCE, IG and MCC districts, as required by the provisions of those districts.
 - (2) Special use permit review. For all projects in an MU district and for all special use permits required for commercial uses in areas zoned for industrial uses.
- (b) *Evaluation.* Applications for urban design site plan review and special use permit review in MU districts as well as special use permit review for commercial uses in areas zoned for industrial uses shall be reviewed in accordance with the relevant criteria and standards set forth in Table 55-938 unless the applicability of such criteria and standards is limited by the provisions of the relevant district sections.

Table 55-938 Summary of Criteria for Review and Evaluation Under Urban Design Article

Criteria	Urban Design Site Plan Review					Special Review	Permit
	ACI	CP1	NCE	IG	MCC	MU	Large Retail Building in Industrial
Sidewalk areas (§ 55-924)	●	●	⊙			●	
Build-to/Set-back lines and zones (§55-925)	●	●	⊙			●	
Ground-level transparency (§ 55-926)	●	●	⊙			●	
Service area screening (§ 55-927)	●	●	⊙		●	●	
Green parking areas (§ 55-928)	●	●	⊙		●	●	
Parking structures (§ 55-929)	●	●	⊙		●	●	
Site and building access (§ 55-930)	●	●	⊙		●	●	
Neighborhood connectivity (§ 55-931)	●	●	⊙			●	

1 Standards and guidelines for each CP district shall be found in the CP zoning plan.

Location of utilities (§ 55-932)	●	●	⊙	●	●	●	
Signs (§ 55-933)	●	●	⊙	●	●	●	
Retaining walls (§ 55-934)	●	●	⊙		●	●	
Large retail building design guidelines (§ 55-935)	●	●	●		●	●	●
General building design guidelines (§ 55-936)	●	●	●		●	●	
Tower locations; min/max. façade heights (§ 55-634(a))		●					
Important buildings (§ 55-634(b))		●					
Building design/architectural guidelines (§ 55-634(c))		●					
Significant vistas (§ 55-634(d))		●					
Public spaces (§ 55-634(e))		●					
Mixing of uses (§ 55-564(c))						●	
Circulation systems (§ 55-564(d))						●	
Plazas, public places and buildings (§ 55-564(e))						●	
Green corners (§ 55-564(f))						●	
Stormwater detention areas (§ 55-564(g))						●	
Required open space (§ 55-564(h))						●	

NOTE: Review table with **Figure 55-938 – Base Diagram Illustration of Urban Design Elements Consistent with the Standards and Guidelines of the Urban Design Article**, located at the end of this urban design article.

Legend: ● – Applicable., ⊙ – NCE district provisions may address these elements of urban design.

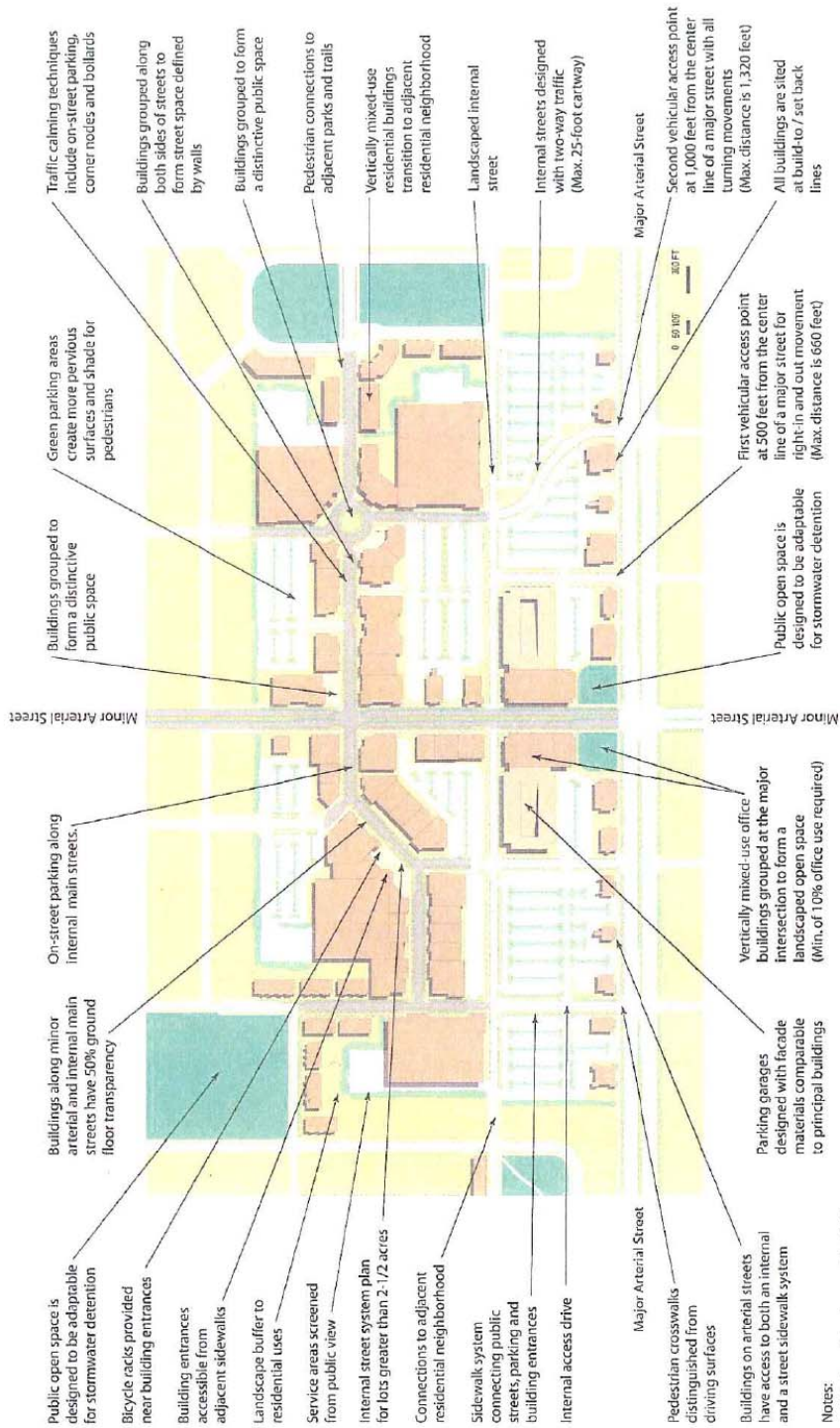


Figure 55-938

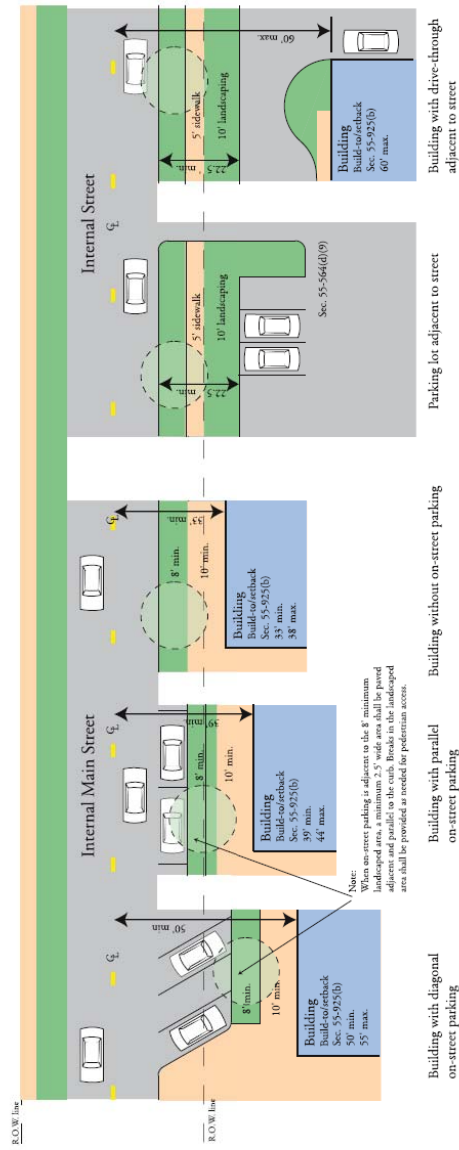


Figure 55-925 (1)

A
Building Front Adjacent to Arterial Street

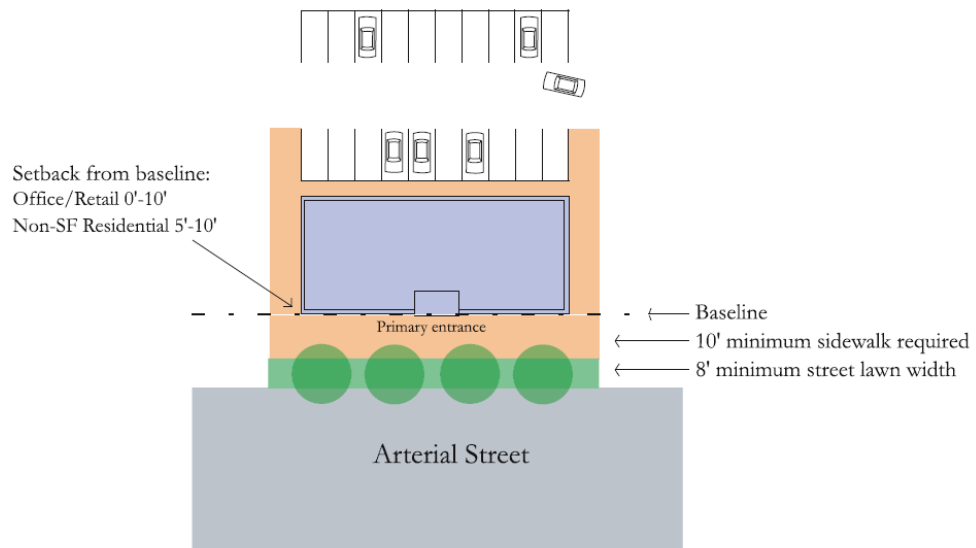


Figure 55-925 (2)

B
Building Side Adjacent to Arterial Street

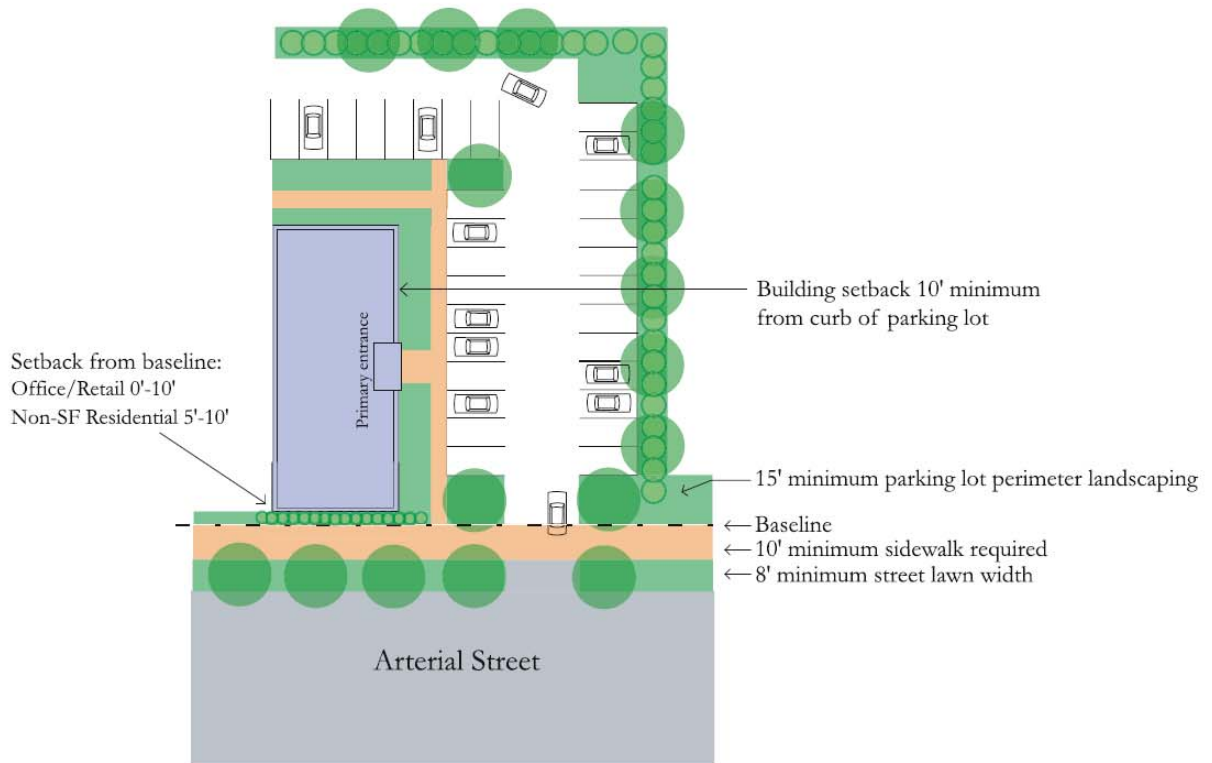


Figure 55-925 (3)

C
Parking Between Building and Arterial Street

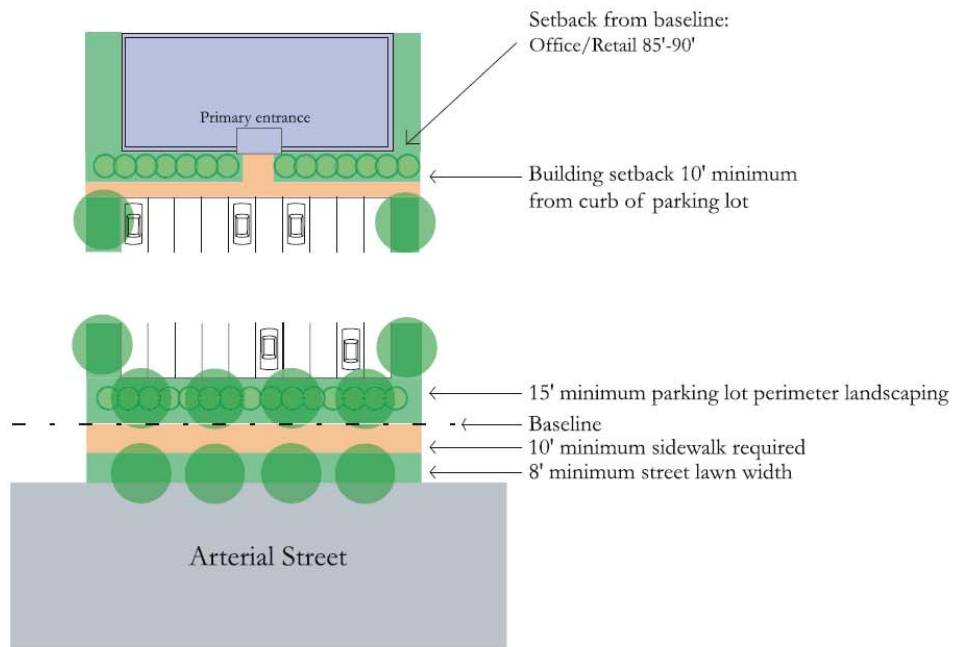


Figure 55-925 (4)

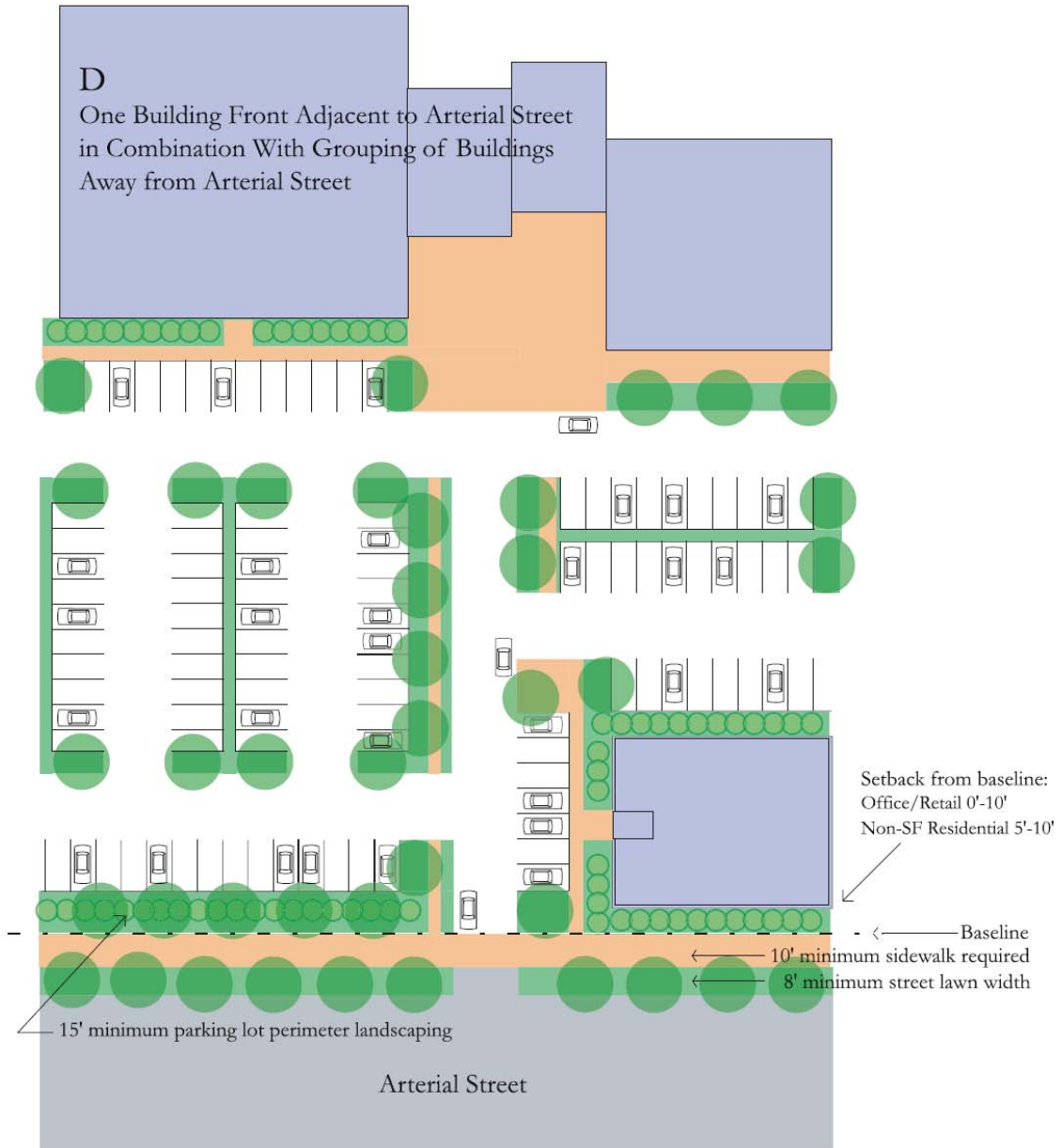


Figure 55-925 (5)

E

No Direct Access to Buildings and Off-Street Parking From Arterial Street;
Grouping of Buildings on Internal Main Street, Internal Street or Internal
Access Drive

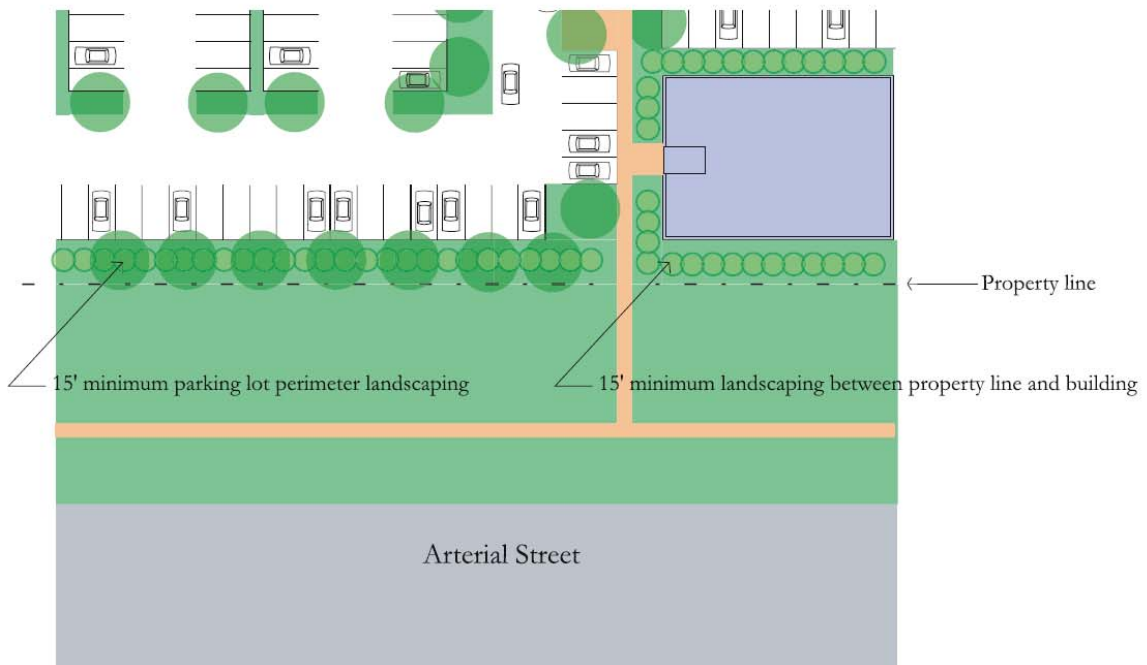
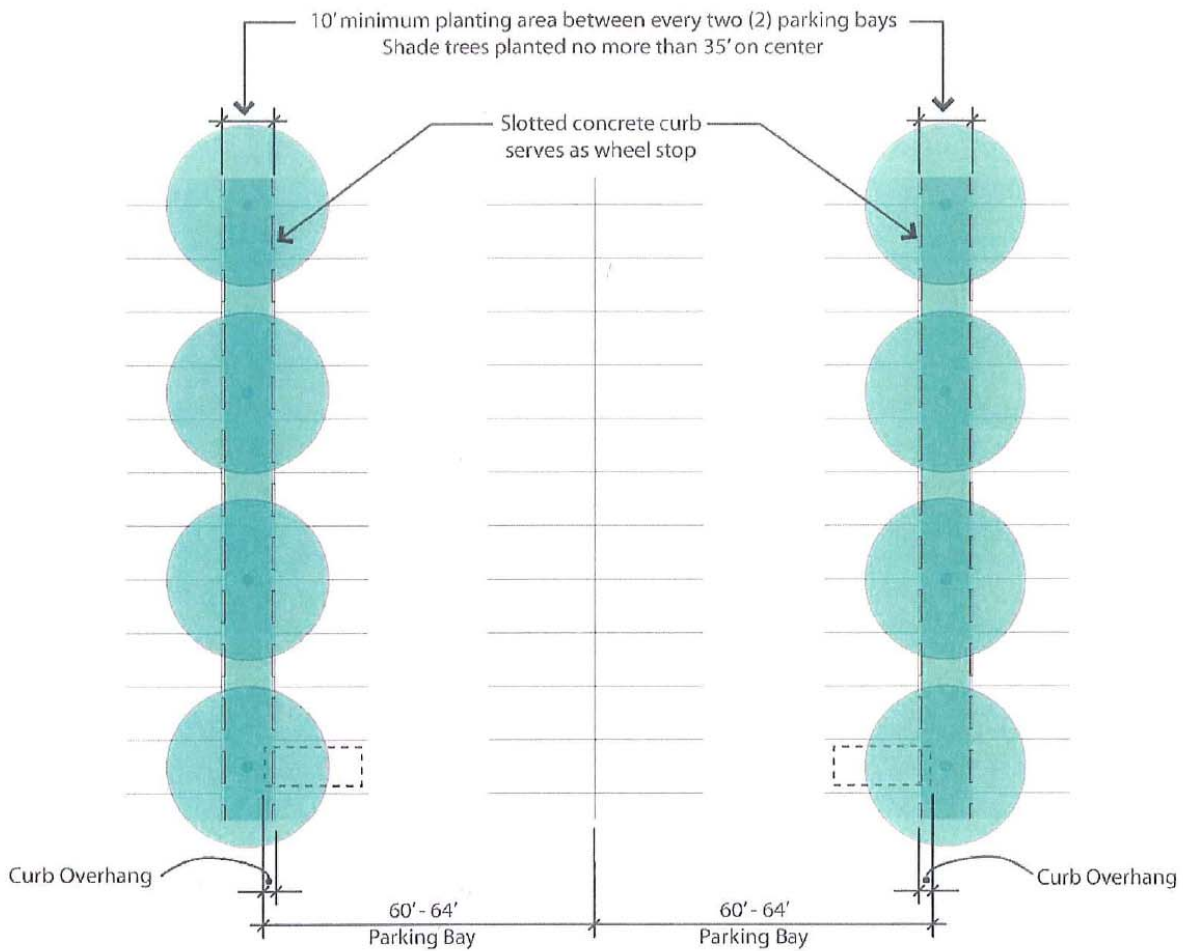
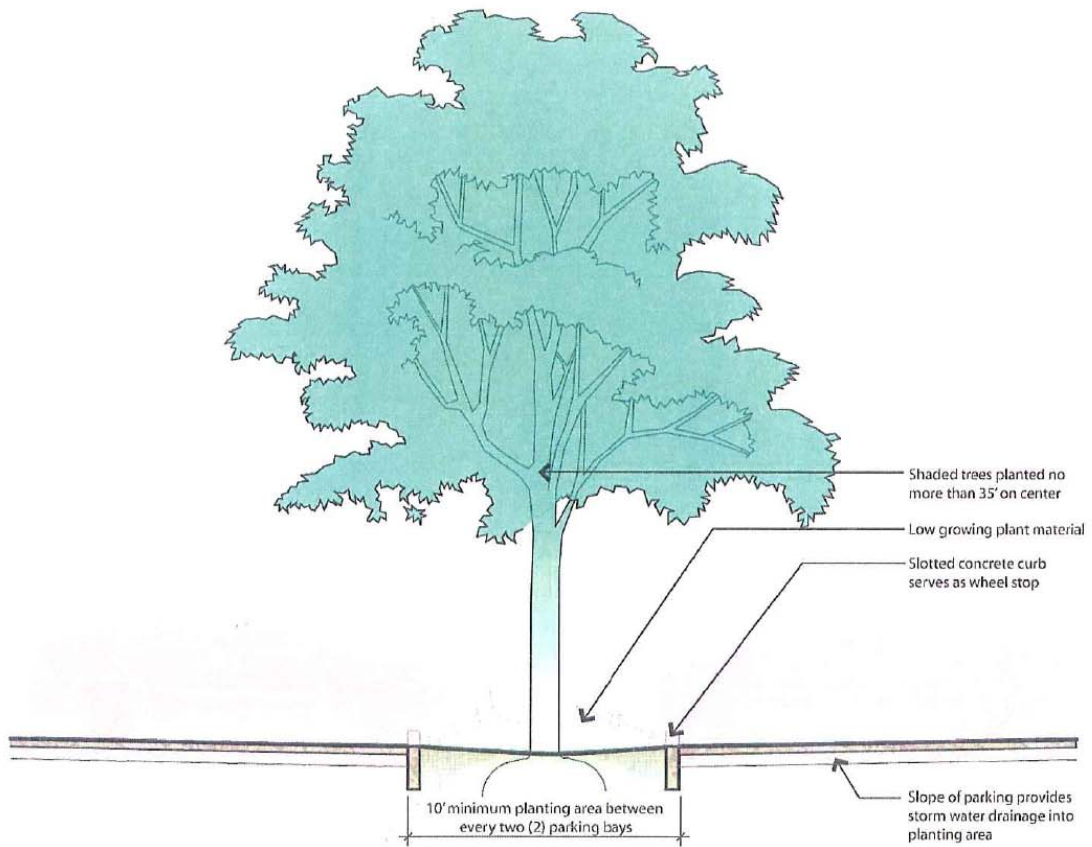


Figure 55-925 (6)



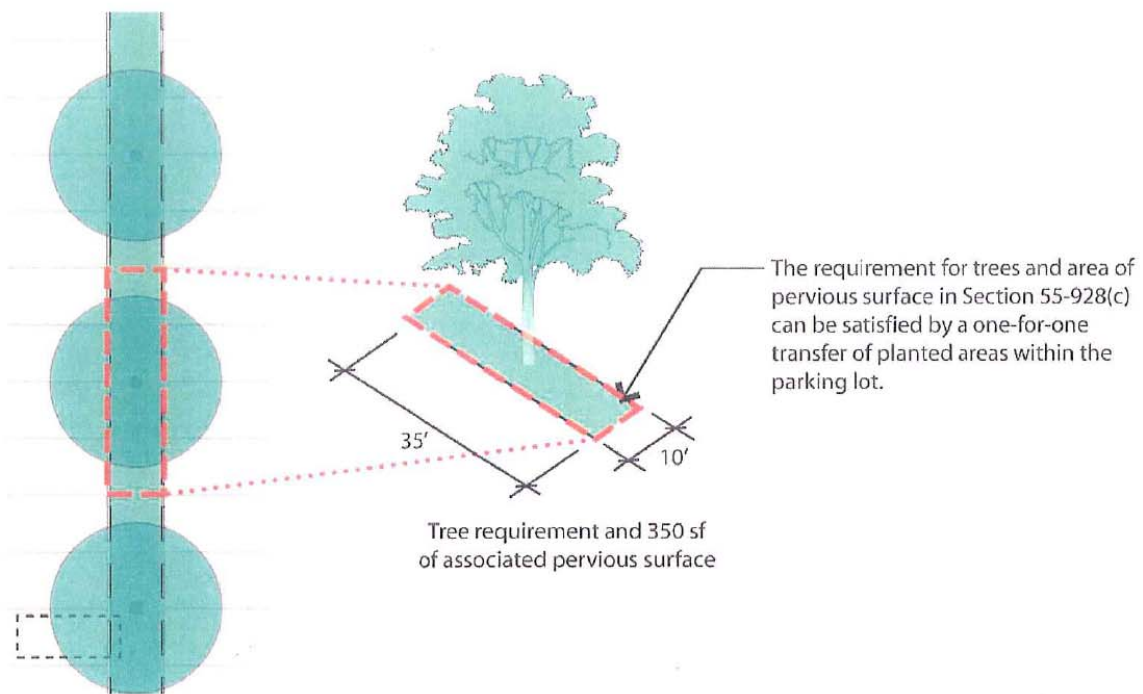
Green Parking Lot – Alternative 1

Figure 55-928(1)



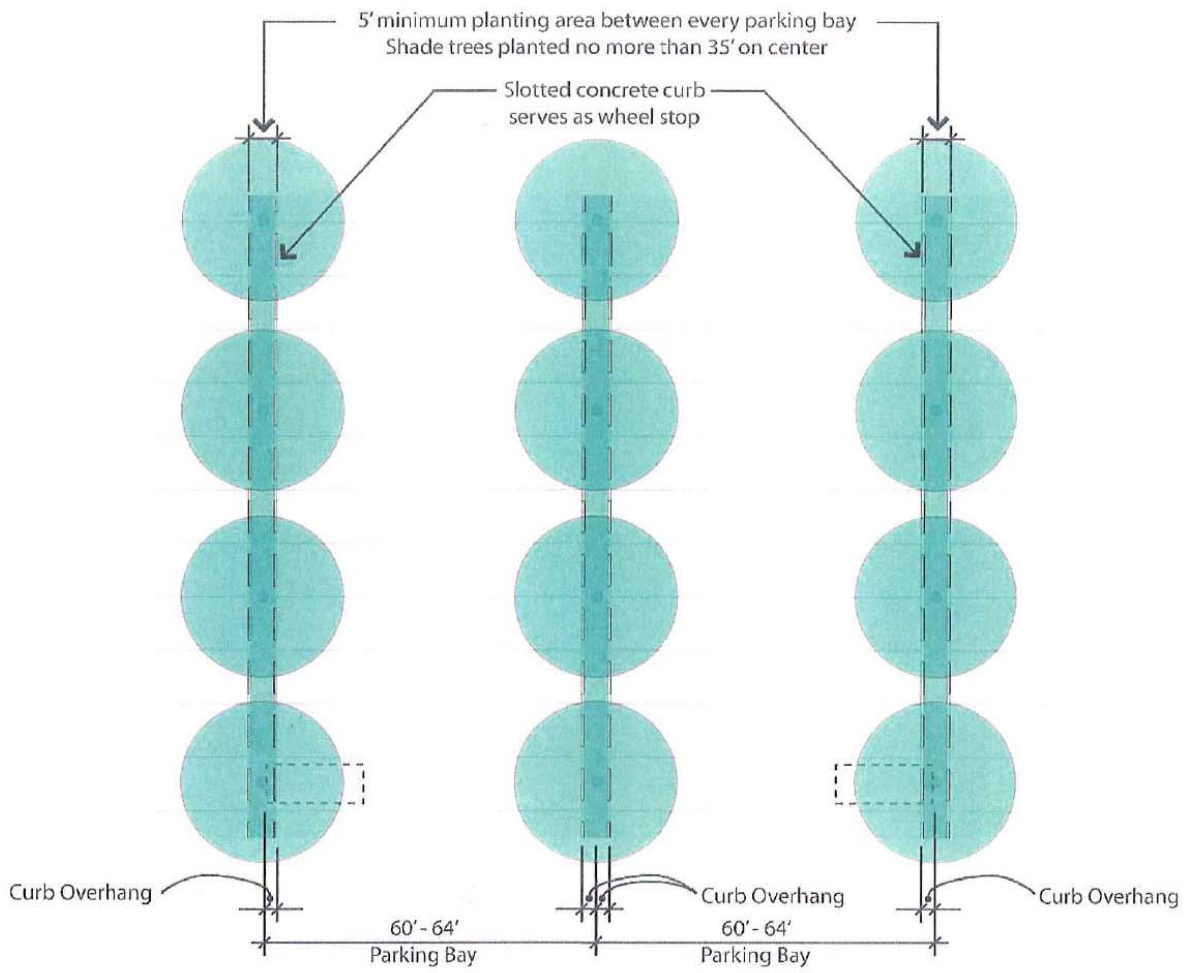
Planting Area Section – Alternative 1

Figure 55-928(2)



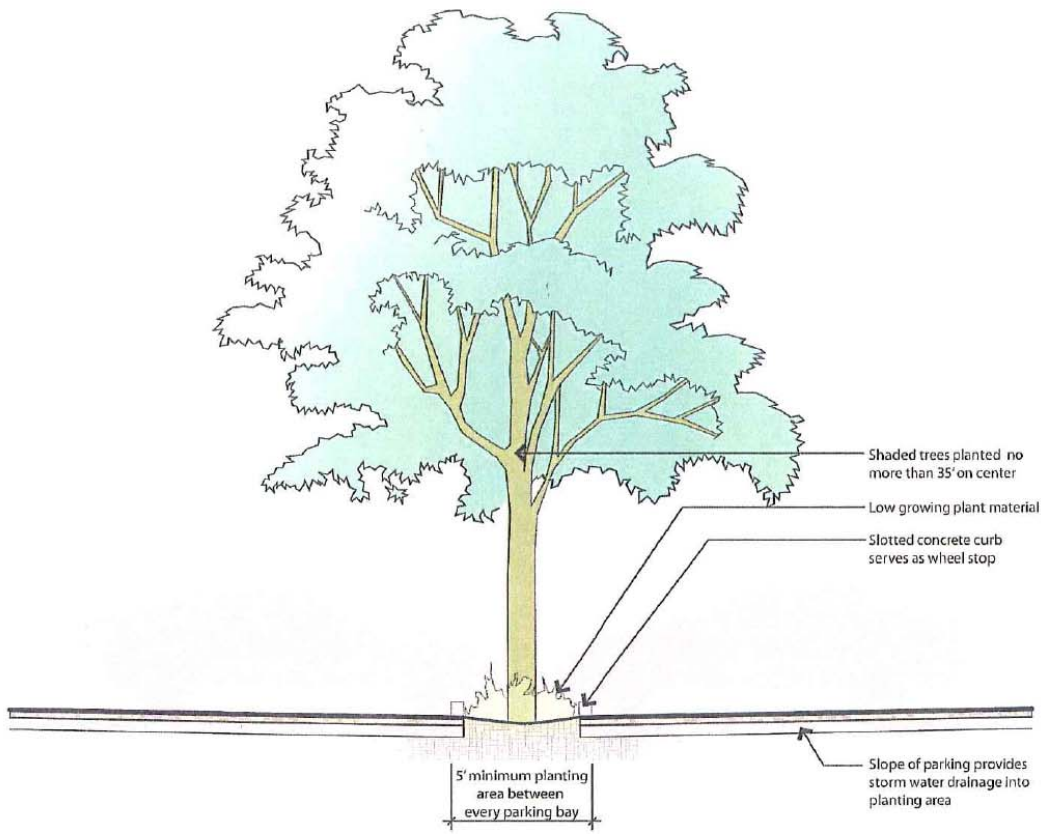
Green Parking Lot – Alternative 2

Figure 55-928(3)



Green Parking Lot – Alternative 3

Figure 55-928(4)



Planting Area Section – Alternative 3

Figure 55-928(5)

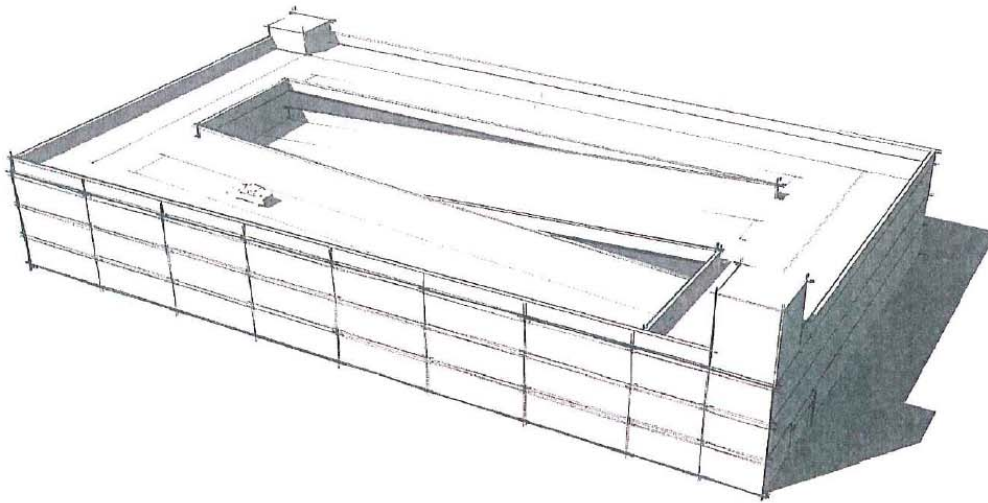


Illustration of Conforming Parking Structures

Figure 55-929(1)

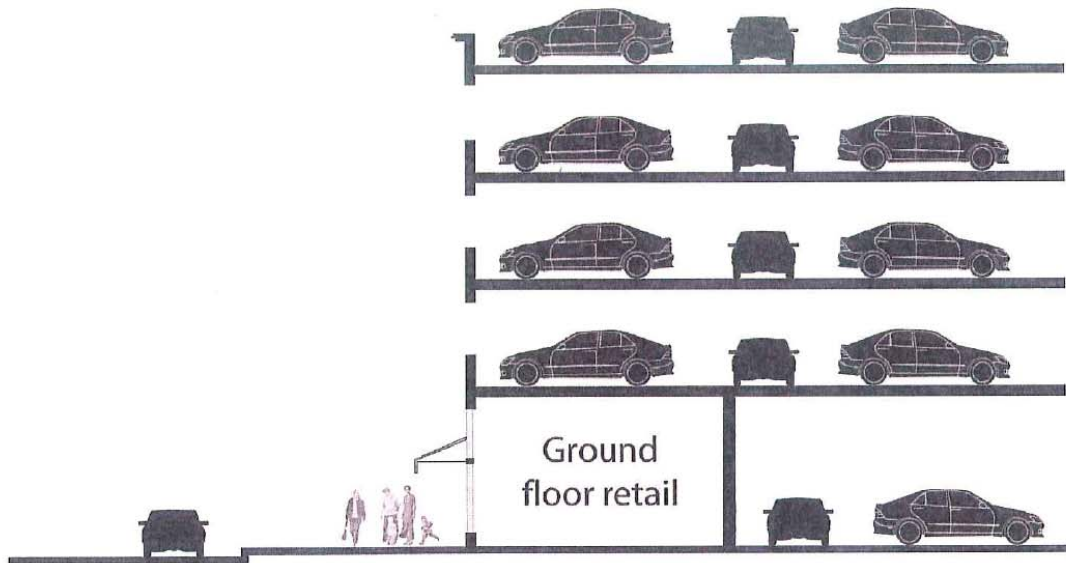
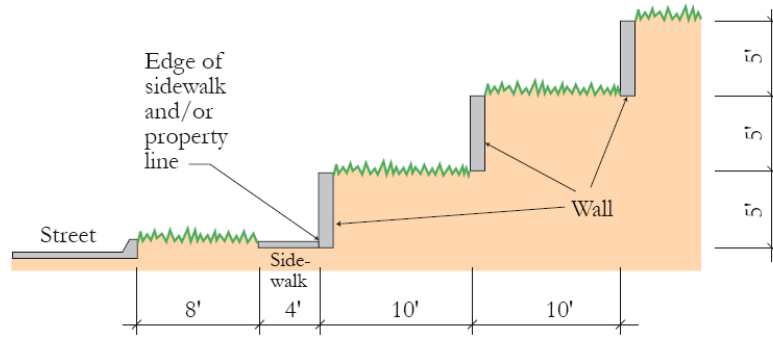
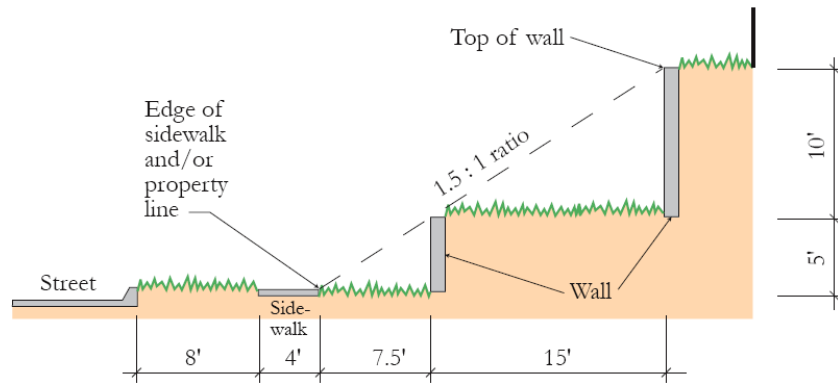


Illustration of Conforming Parking Structures

Figure 55-929(2)



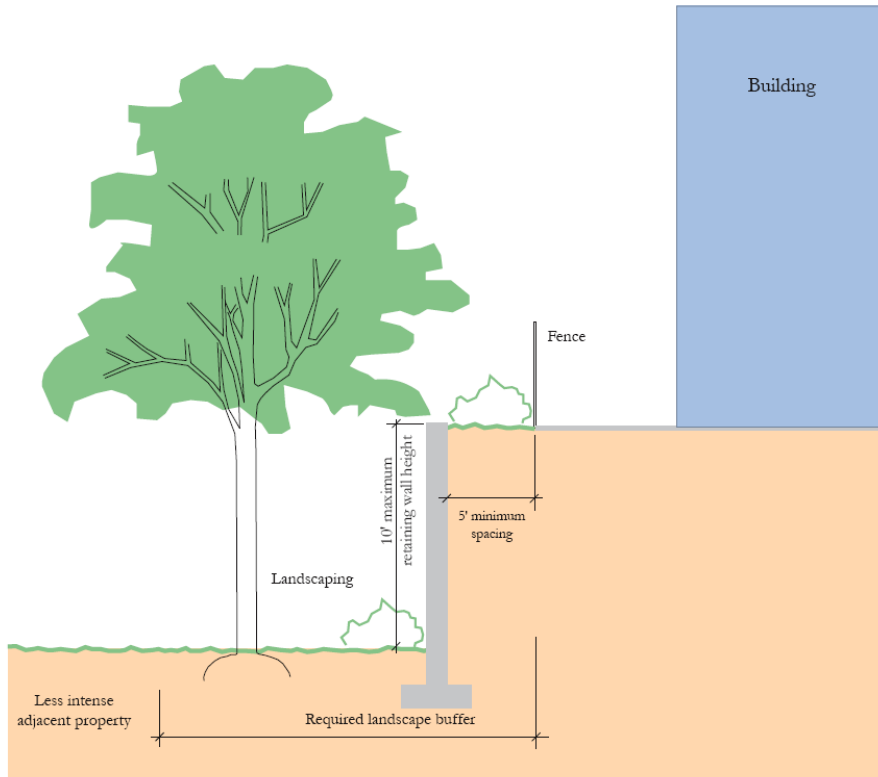
Allowed



Allowed

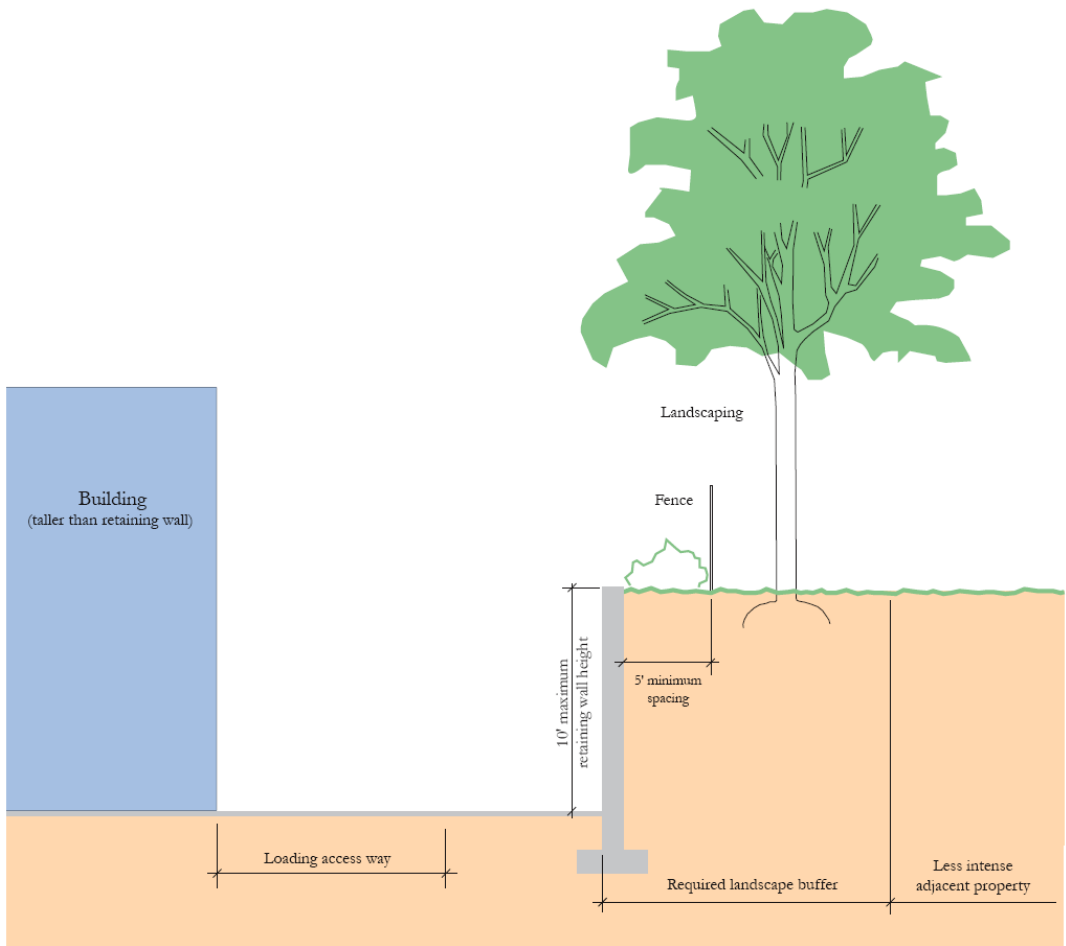
Retaining Wall Configurations

Figure 55-934 (1)



10-Foot Retaining Wall
Commercial Building on the Up-Hill Side

Figure 55-934 (2)



10-Foot Invisible Retaining Wall
 Commercial Building on the Down-Hill Side

Figure 55-934 (3)

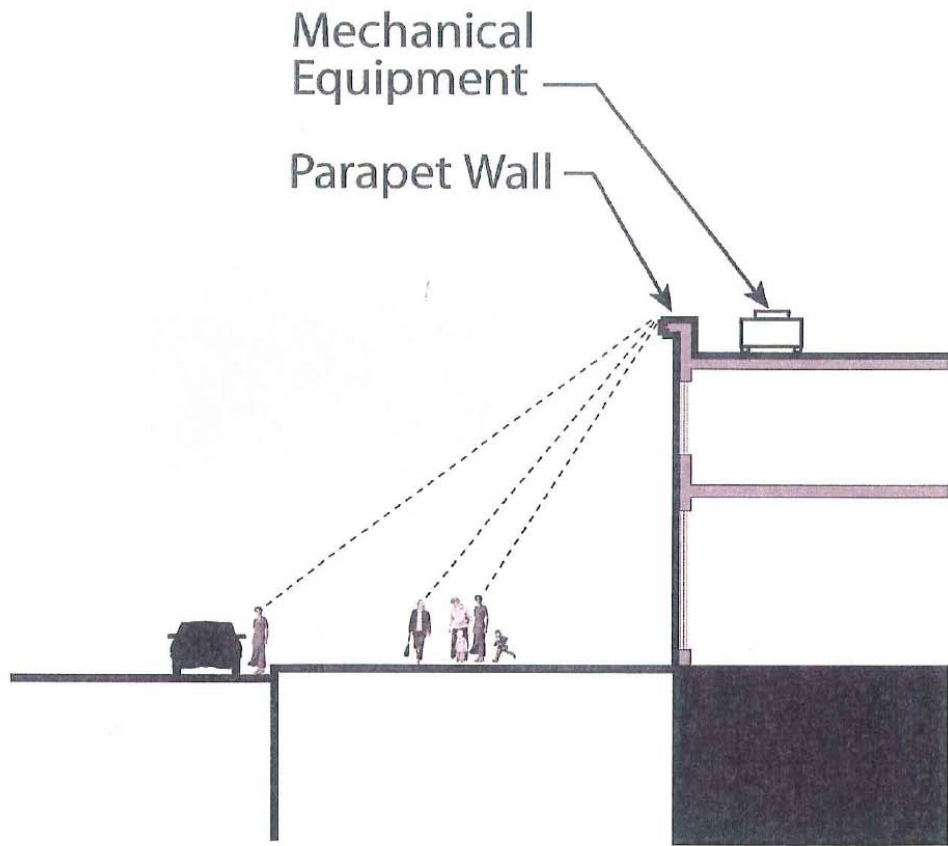


Illustration of Rooftop Mechanical Equipment Screening with Parapet Wall

Figure 55-935(1)

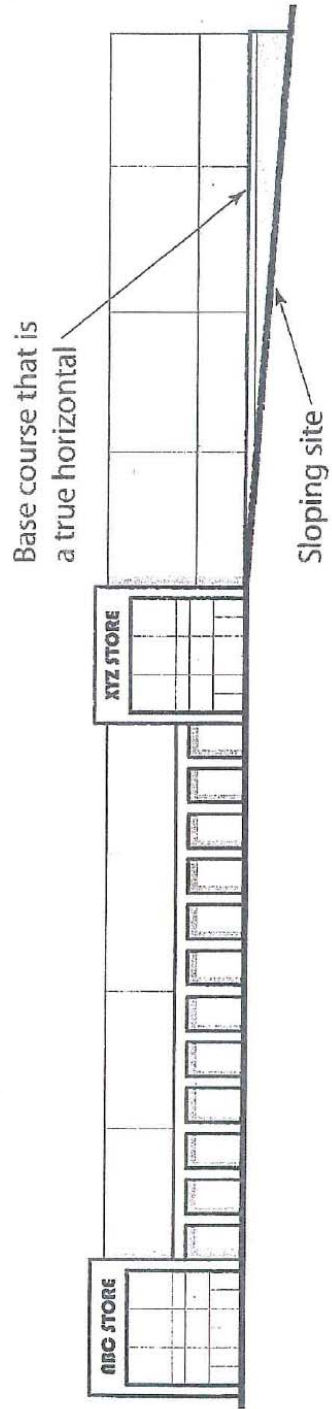
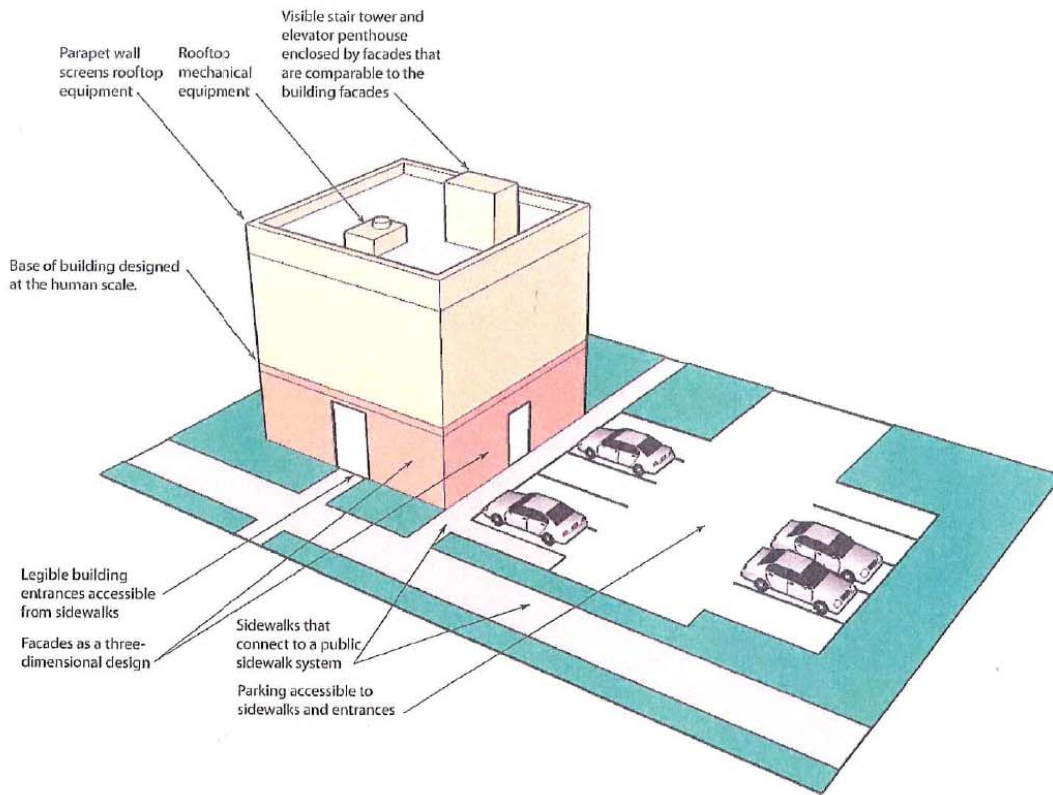


Illustration of Sloping Site Design Guideline

Figure 55-935(2)



Summary Illustration for General Building Guidelines

Figure 55-936

