CITY OF ROHNERT PARK

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR COMMERCIAL, MIXED-USE AND MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS

Approved by City Council Resolution 2012-95 - August 14, 2012

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction **p.3**
- Applicability
- How to Use this Document
- City Character
- Design Principles

2. Site Design **p.9**
- Building Placement and Orientation
- Open Space
- Parking
- Landscaping
  - General Guidelines
  - Parking Landscaping
- Pedestrian Access/ Linkages
- Service/ Trash Enclosures
- Mechanical and Roof Mounted Equipment
- Lighting
- Site Furnishing
- Site Design Examples

3. Building Design **p.24**
- Building Massing
- Building Articulation
- Materials
- Roofs
- Windows
- Building Entries
- Garage Doors
- Building Color

4. Signage Guidelines **p.38**
- General Guidelines
- Wall Signs
- Awning Signs
- Window Signs
- Projecting Signs
- Suspended Signs
- Freestanding Signs

5. Storefront Guidelines **p.45**
- Gallery of Storefronts
- General Guidelines
- Common Storefront Elements
  - Entry
  - Display Windows
  - Transom and Clerestory Windows
  - Bulkhead
  - Awnings

6. Architectural Styles **p.53**
- Mediterranean
- Modern
- Regional Vernacular

7. Case Studies for Renovating Commercial Buildings **p.60**
- Case Study One
- Case Study Two

Glossary **p.65**

1. Introduction

As a young master planned city developed in the last 50 years Rohnert Park is a mostly built out, well defined city with a diverse mix of residential, commercial, and mixed-use building types and extensive recreational amenity. Striking landscapes within and around the city instill a casual, rural character cherished by residents. Integrating these different uses and characteristics in a cohesive way that allows more options for living, working, shopping and getting around has been a goal established by residents in the city's general plan. This shift to a more connected, walkable city has begun with the recent introduction of built and proposed mixed use centers and civic buildings that contribute to creating enjoyable public spaces. These guidelines that draw upon principles from within Rohnert Park and elsewhere will continue to realize these goals while maintaining and enhancing the characteristics that are important to residents.

The Rohnert Park Design Guidelines contain site and architectural recommendations for commercial, mixed-use, and multi-family districts. The intent of the document is to provide guidance to property and business owners, design professionals, and developers in the design of new buildings and renovations. The guidelines will be used by city staff to assist the review of these projects, creating high quality developments that reflect the character and goals of the city while facilitating a streamlined project approval.

The following districts are addressed in the Design Guidelines:

In-line commercial building with retail stores serve adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Commercial center at the Doubletree Hotel has a mix of retail and office uses.

CentreVille mixed-use development at State Farm Drive.

Commercial Districts

Rohnert Park is well served by multiple regional and neighborhood commercial districts with retail centers located along Highway 101 and street corridors.

- Neighborhood commercial districts (C-N) are distributed throughout the city and include smaller scale in-line retail uses such as stores, restaurants, cafes, offices and financial businesses located at major road intersections and serving several adjacent residential neighborhoods.

- Regional commercial districts (C-R) are located at major highway intersections to attract consumers from outside the city. This development type has large setbacks from the street with on-site parking and landscaping. Prominent locations include sites located near the US101 and Rohnert Park Expressway interchange. Regional commercial located west of 101 is characterized by big box retail centers including Target, Wal-mart, and Home Depot.

- Office commercial districts (C-O) are limited to two areas in the city at the intersection of Rohnert Park Expressway and State Farm Drive and adjacent to the University Village Specific plan area at the intersection of Rohnert Park Expressway and Snyder Lane. Office development is characterized by buildings sitting amongst substantial landscaping with parking surrounding the buildings.

Mixed-use Districts

- Mixed-use districts (M-U) have been designated as pedestrian oriented areas generated by combining compatible uses. The most recent example is located in the City Center off of Rohnert Park Expressway and consist of two and three story office ground floor with upper level residential units with little or no setbacks to create a well defined and active street wall with entries facing the sidewalk. Allowable uses for this district include a mix of public, office, residential and retail uses such as shops, financial, restaurants, business and personal services, and multi-family residences.
- Industrial/Office Overlay (I-L/O) is concentrated on the east and west side of US101 along Redwood Drive and Commerce Blvd and adjacent to Industrial (I-L) and Regional Commercial (C-R) districts. Development types are characterized by large building footprints with generous front setbacks and surface parking. This zoning district allows for office uses such as corporate headquarters and research and development facilities. Light industrial, a large number of service commercial uses and a small portion of retail uses such as restaurants are also present.

Multi-family-Residential High Density districts (R-H)

High density residential districts are distributed throughout the city with the largest concentration along the Copeland Creek Greenway and pockets adjacent to both single family neighborhoods and commercial districts. The older homes that make up the majority of the high density housing stock consist of two story attached units with covered and uncovered surface parking or enclosed garages. More recent three story stacked flats with surface parking have been constructed in areas zoned as regional commercial. Newer attached units are articulated with varying roof forms and balconies/ terraces in contrast to the simpler, two story volumes constructed earlier.

Two story attached multi-family housing.

In general high density housing is oriented toward the interior of the lot, with entries facing parking or green spaces. Large setbacks from the street with substantial landscaping provide a transition to nearby single family neighborhoods and commercial uses.

Applicability

These guidelines are applicable to commercial, mixed-use and multi-family buildings and should be used for new construction, additions, and renovations to existing structures throughout the city. Specific plan areas as identified in the General Plan contain guidelines independent of these guidelines. Other requirements noted by the general plan, municipal code, and building codes shall apply. The design guidelines for commercial, mixed-used and multi-family buildings replace any previously adopted city-wide design guidelines.

Guidelines apply to renovations to existing shopping centers.

Franchise or national branding buildings are encouraged to address these guidelines and should work with the planning department to come up with a design that meets their intent.

How to use this document

- Review the introduction.
- Drive around town to observe what contributes to the fabric of the city.
- Review site and building design guidelines.
- Review signage and storefront guidelines if applicable to your project.
- Review recommendations for architectural styles.
- Review zoning code.
- Set up a meeting with the Planning staff to discuss the project and review preliminary plans. Meeting at an early stage of the project is highly encouraged to identify potential conflicts or to provide clarifications before the design has been completed.

Mediterranean style neighborhood commercial shopping center.

CITY CHARACTER

City Character

Substantial open space within and around the city provides a casual, rural character to the community.

The buildings, places and landscapes that form the eclectic character of Rohnert Park reflect the city's stages of development from historic farmhouses to the recent construction of contemporary civic and mixed-use structures. The landscapes in and around Rohnert Park are as significant to the city's character as its buildings. Enabled by the city's clear boundaries dramatic vistas to the surrounding hills are a constant reminder of the region's natural beauty. Vernacular farm buildings at the perimeter of the city illustrate this intimate relationship with the surroundings with their informal building forms and use of natural and local materials that blend with the landscape. These buildings provide the oldest precedent for an architectural language that is sensitive to the city's natural context.

The development of the city in the 1960's spurred by the completion of Hwy 101 resulted in buildings and site planning that catered to the automobile, creating much of the mid century modern architecture that contributes to the city's character today. Displaying low, horizontal volumes with large windows and playful geometric forms this style is experiencing a revival as an inspiration for contemporary buildings. Several contemporary buildings inspired by the historic missions and Mediterranean architecture that characterize the region can also be found in the city. The city's examples, while not historic, display much of the qualities and attention to detail as those built elsewhere in the in the early part of the century and provide a good reference for their application in buildings today.

SOMA provides examples for modern designs in the city.

Combined the Vernacular, Mediterranean and Contemporary styles display an overall character for a rich architectural palette from which to draw inspiration from in new construction and renovations.

Community Expectations:

These guidelines have been drafted to support community expectations including:

- Encourage new development that supports the character of Rohnert Park.
- Maintain visual continuity along street frontages.
- Assist property owners in protecting investment by discouraging inappropriate adjacent developments.
- Encourage designs that relate to their context.
- Reinforce the natural character of the city through generous site landscaping.
- Improve transitions between commercial developments and adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Support designs that encourage pedestrian activity.
- Reinforce architectural themes in the city.
- Encourage sustainable designs.

Landscape plays an important role in all development types in Rohnert Park.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

The City of Rohnert Park encourages the incorporation of sustainable practices in the design and construction of new and renovated buildings. In addition to the California Green Building Standards Code (CALGreen) special attention should be given to the following areas:

Energy efficiency:

- Buildings should be designed and oriented to maximize the use of natural daylight as a primary source of illumination.
- Windows should be oriented to the North and South to maximize natural building heating and cooling whenever possible.
- Roof overhangs, sunshades, porches, and trellises may be used to minimize solar heat gain.

Materials and Indoor Air Quality:

- The use of renewal, recycled and/or salvaged materials is encouraged.
- Materials with low or zero volatile compounds that do not contribute to indoor air quality pollutants should be used.
- Operable windows should be used to provide natural air circulation.

Recycling:

- Non recycling waste should be minimized during construction.

Storm water management:

- Building and site design should incorporate systems for rainwater collection. The use of rain gardens, flow through planters, permeable paving materials, vegetated or grassy swales and similar treatment systems is encouraged.

Design Principles

The following design principles have been used as a starting point for the development of the architectural guidelines and should be consulted for general direction and suitability of designs within the different districts.

- **Improve pedestrian qualities of the districts.**
  Building massing and articulation should relate to the pedestrian. Adequate landscape and pedestrian paths should be used in parking lots to increase pedestrian comfort and to integrate the qualities of the surrounding natural landscape and scenic corridors within the city.

- **Improve the aesthetic qualities of buildings.**
  New buildings and improvements to existing buildings should be designed in keeping with the scale and character of Rohnert Park.

- **Use distinct architectural styles that enhance the character of the city.**
  Buildings that adhere to the characteristics of a particular style strengthen district character. All buildings should use a predominant style with a consistent design vocabulary.

- **Use high quality materials and details.**
  High quality materials are durable and long lasting, reducing maintenance and enhancing the city's character. Architectural detailing consistent with the building style should be used to add variety to building facades.

- **Minimize the visual impact of parking.**
  Parking should be treated to minimize its impact from the street and within developments.

- **Encourage high quality storefront designs.**
  Storefront designs should engage the pedestrian and attract attention to the business. Storefront elements such as signage, awnings and lighting should be used to create pleasant shopping environments.

- **Encourage consistent high quality signage.**
  Building signage should enhance the architecture and contribute to façade articulation.

- **Strengthen the relationship amongst neighborhoods, commercial and mixed use centers.**
  Linkages should be clear and encourage pedestrian circulation.

2. SITE DESIGN

Mixed-use building with little or no setbacks contribute to a walkable environment.

Retail corner building with parking in the back contributes to a vibrant pedestrian environment.

Multi-family building ground floor units should face the street or common open spaces.

Building Placement and Orientation

The placement of buildings on a site affects all aspects of an urban environment including walkability, traffic, and the overall quality of the public realm.

1. The natural topographic and major landscape features of a site should be incorporated into a development.

- Developments should minimize grading and the removal of trees.

2. All buildings should be sited to contribute to an active street wall and a vibrant pedestrian environment.

- For new developments buildings should be placed at the minimum street setback.
- Existing developments with large parking areas are strongly encouraged to infill new buildings such as with pad buildings and in-line retail facing the street.
- All buildings should have active facades with windows and entries facing the street. The back of buildings should not face public streets.

3. The placement of buildings should maintain a hierarchy over the layout of parking lots.

- Parking should be placed behind or to the side of buildings whenever possible. Avoid placing parking lots that interrupt building continuity along front property lines.
- Parking lots adjacent to public streets should have setbacks heavily landscaped. Setbacks treatments including large trees and pedestrian amenities such as trellises are encouraged.

4. Buildings should enhance the pedestrian environment at street corners.

- Buildings located to reinforce corner intersections are encouraged.
- Corner buildings should include pedestrian entries and/or windows at facades facing the street.

5. Multi-family buildings should be sited to encourage a sense of community.

- Buildings that face a courtyard or a green are encouraged.

6. On retail developments, pad buildings should be strategically placed to help improve the pedestrian qualities of parking dominated shopping centers.

- Buildings should be designed with importance given to all four facades.
- Pad buildings should be sited to compose a gateway to the center by flanking the main entry to the

Pad buildings should contribute to a gateway to the shopping center.

Common open spaces for shopping centers should be centrally located and easily accessible.

Trellises add to the comfort and ambiance of open spaces.

shopping center or mark the corner at an intersection.

- Pad buildings located at corner intersections should have sidewalks wrapping around the building at the corner.
- Buildings with a rectangular footprint should have the longer facade oriented towards the street.

7. Pad buildings should contribute to an active pedestrian environment.

- Pad buildings should emphasize pedestrian entries and have windows facing the street. When an entry is located to the side of the building a clearly defined pedestrian access with landscaping should be provided.
- Pedestrian amenities such as outdoor seating areas are encouraged.

8. Outdoor sales building frontages should provide pedestrian scaled elements.

- Clearly defined entries with pedestrian scaled elements such as trellisis and canopies are encouraged.

9. Outdoor sales buildings should be sited to be sensitive to nearby developments.

- Service and storage areas should be screened from nearby developments. A landscaped buffer should be provided to screen views from residential parcels.
- Potential sources of noise and lighting impact should be located to reduce its impact to nearby residential neighborhoods.

Open Space

Open spaces are usable outdoor areas such as courts, plazas and paseos that provide important gathering and rest areas for pedestrians. When well integrated into the activity of a development and designed with the proper amenities they benefit the businesses and residents while improving the overall vitality of the city.

1. Open spaces should be defined by buildings and located at hubs of pedestrian activity.

- Open spaces should be surrounded by or fronting onto active uses such as storefronts and building entries.
- Open spaces should not be bordered by surface parking areas on more than one side.

2. Open spaces should be usable and include pedestrian amenities.

- Sixty percent of the open space must be usable surface areas with treatments such as grass or paving.
- Seating and lighting should be incorporated into all open spaces. Varied seating options such as

benches with backs and seating walls or plinths may be used to accommodate different seating preferences.

- A central focal element such as a fountain, gazebo, an information or retail kiosk is recommended on plazas to unify and anchor the space.
- Furnishings and planters should be scaled to the size of the space and the surrounding public environment. All furnishings should be consistent in character and material.
- The use of decorative pavers such as stone, brick or colored concrete unit pavers are recommended to distinguish open spaces from adjacent sidewalks.

Open space with seating draws people into the space.

3. Open space should be designed to draw people into the space and accommodate a variety of activities.

- Open space should be easily visible and accessible from the street or parking lot area. It should be linked to an overall network of spaces and be connected to adjacent public streets and sidewalks through walkways.
- Site elements such as tree lined walkways or the use of repetitive elements are recommended to attract people into the space.

Paseos located between buildings link the street to the rest of the development.

4. On multi-family buildings common open spaces shall be provided and be centrally located and easily accessible by all units.

- Common open spaces shall contain both landscaped and hardscape areas.

5. For commercial buildings, centrally located gathering spaces are encouraged.

- On renovated commercial buildings, the incorporation of an outdoor open space is encouraged.

6. Paseos should be welcoming and complement the design of buildings facing the paseo.

- Paseos should be a minimum of 10' in width between buildings.
- Paseos should be open to the sky and not have a solid roof enclosure. Trellis and arbor structures are appropriate enclosure treatments. Trellis structures should have a light, open character and compliment the building's architectural style.
- If gates are used to control access after hours they should be decorative and compliment the building architecture.

Shops oriented around a court.

7. Paseos should be designed to enrich the pedestrian experience as a vibrant open space.

- Paseos should include pedestrian elements such as trellises, arbors, awnings, benches, pedestrian lights or artwork.
- Paseos should be landscaped with either landscape strips or planters.

Thematic landscaping can enhance the building architecture.

Landscaping softens the edges of parking.

Rain gardens incorporated in parking landscaping.

8. Active uses and/or businesses should face on to the paseo to create a welcome and active pedestrian environment.

- Outdoor seating adjacent to businesses facing the paseo is recommended.
- Buildings with sides facing a paseo should have windows and/ or an entry onto the paseo.
- Where blank walls face a paseo a minimum 2 feet wide planting strip is recommended.

Landscaping

A. General Guidelines

1. Landscaping should enhance the building, screen unattractive areas, and create inviting spaces that contribute to a pleasant pedestrian environment.

- Landscaping should be used to visually soften and define building edges, paths and sidewalks. Plant material should not encroach over walkways, driveways or public right of ways.
- Landscaping should emphasize focal points such as building entries or to draw people into the development. Smaller scale elements such as planters and pots are encouraged.

2. All projects must be well landscaped.

- All setbacks and site areas not occupied by buildings, driveways, parking, sidewalks or open space areas should be well landscaped.
- Landscape areas should have 80% plant materials.
- Plant materials should include trees, shrubs and groundcover. Plant materials should be selected for their suitability to the region and aesthetic qualities. The use of native and drought tolerant plant types is encouraged.
- Trees should have be a minimum height of 10' when planted. One tree for every twenty to thirty linear feet of landscaped area is recommended. Accent trees should be of all one flowering variety.
- Shrubs and groundcover should be planted to provide full coverage within two years of planting.
- Plantings should be consistent throughout the development and relate to the adjacent street treatments.

3. Landscaping should be primarily drought tolerant.

- Irrigation should be through rain gardens as appropriate.
- Limited irrigation from recycled water should be used for certain species as needed. Recycled water should be used to water turf.

Drought tolerant landscaping in the parking lot effectively shields cars.

Trees in curbed planting wells visually divide the parking into smaller areas.

Trees, lower plantings and benches create an inviting pedestrian zone, well buffered from cars.

4. Landscaped setbacks for outdoor sales services such as auto, machinery and boat dealerships should complement adjacent street treatments.

- Landscaped treatments such as low or continuous hedges and ground covers are encouraged to minimize the visual impact of outdoor displays.
- Flowering plants and large species trees are encouraged at all setbacks.
- Permeable pavers and paving patterns are recommended treatments for exterior display parking areas.
- All surface areas not necessary for outdoor sales display or circulation should be landscaped.

B. Parking Lot Landscaping

Well landscaped parking lots soften the visual impact of large areas of asphalt and make them comfortable for pedestrians. At the street, a landscaped buffer contributes to the streetscape and street wall. Landscape at the building frontage flatters the architecture and conditions the space for pedestrian activity.

1. Parking lots should be well landscaped to reduce the impact of large asphalt areas.

- Landscaping should create an "orchard" appearance with shade trees and low plantings placed in a consistent and formal layout. Indigenous trees and plantings are recommended.
- Trees should not be clumped together leaving large areas without landscape.
- Trees placed 30' apart are desirable to create a continuos canopy.
- One primary shade tree with optional secondary and accent tree type should be used per development.

2. Surface parking should include trees in parking islands.

- Continuous in ground planters should be provided between facing parking spaces. Individual planters may be appropriate if space is limited on existing lots.
- Shade trees should be placed approximately every other facing parking space to achieve the required one tree per four spaces.
- Primary shade tree species should have broad canopies.

3. Well landscaped setbacks must be provided at all street frontages where parking lots are located.

- Landscaped setbacks must be well landscaped.
- Lower plantings should be combined with a taller shade tree to create a buffer and contribute to a street wall. Other elements such as low decorative metal fencing and pedestrian scaled lighting are recommended.

Linking development to greenbelt trails is encouraged.

Landscaped walkway connects building entry to parking areas and the street.

Colored concrete is used to accent walkway.

4. Where buildings face onto parking lots a landscape buffer should be provided at the back of curb.

- Landscaping should include shade trees and low ground cover plantings. Indigenous deciduous trees with a high transparent canopy should be used to maintain visibility to building signage.
- Landscape buffer may be continuous with interruptions for pedestrian access or be composed of a series of distinct in ground planters.
- A break in the tree spacing at entries and open spaces may be used to maintain signage visibility and allow views to major architectural features.

5. Parking lots for non residential uses shall have perimeter planting areas with a minimum ten feet width adjacent to a residential district and five feet adjacent to other districts.

- Landscaped buffers between uses should be substantially landscaped.
- A combination of lower plantings and shades trees should be used.

Pedestrian Access/ Linkages

The ability for pedestrians to walk throughout Rohnert Park allows for increased options for all while improving the quality of life for residents and overall vitality of the city.

1. Building complexes and developments should encourage pedestrian circulation from adjacent properties, surrounding public right of ways and greenbelt trails.

- Where applicable, developments should integrate pedestrian access from the buildings to adjacent greenbelt trails.

2. Direct walkways and/or pedestrian access should connect fronting streets, building entries and their parking lots.

- When buildings face parking lots, direct walkways should be used to connect the building entries to the back of sidewalk.
- When parking is located in the back of buildings two hundred feet in length or more, a pedestrian access such as paseo or a breezeway should be used to connect the fronting streets to the parking.

3. Direct walkways should be clearly identified.

- Direct walkways should be easily identified with treatments such as brick, colored paving or concrete. Walkways should be buffered with landscape from parking areas.

4. Pedestrian crossings should be provided at automobile entries and should include special treatments such as textured or colored paving and accented with landscaping.

- Low groundcovers or flowering plants should be provided at automobile entries.

Roof enclosure is consistent with the main building.

Service / Trash Enclosures

1. All service and trash enclosures should be integrated with the overall building design and have a screening treatment consistent with the design vocabulary of the building complex.

- Service enclosures should match or have a compatible wall finish material to that of the main building. Chain link or unfinished concrete block enclosures are not permitted.
- Service trash enclosures must have a roof structure. The enclosure may have a similar roof form to the building at a smaller scale.
- Attached enclosures should be integrated into the overall building massing composition and be treated as a secondary element.
- Detached enclosures should be consistent with the building design and should not be prominent design elements.
- Garbage enclosures shall have heavy gauge metal gates. Wood cladded metal doors are permitted.

Service enclosure should be located to be least visible from the public view.

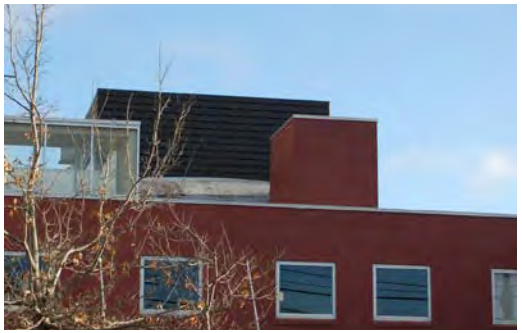
2. All service and trash enclosures should be located to minimize their visibility from the street or fronting parking area.

- Trash enclosures should completely screen trash containers from the public view.
- If service and/or trash enclosures are visible from public view, a well landscaped buffer should be provided at the perimeter of the enclosure. Landscaping should include a combination of shrubs and/or climbing evergreen vines.

Mechanical and Roof Mounted Equipment

1. All exterior mechanical equipment should be located to be least visible from the street and must be screened from public view including adjacent properties.

- Mechanical equipment to be screened includes but is not limited to heating and air conditioning units, water tanks, valves, back flow protection devices, solar and photovoltaic panels, and transformers.
- Mechanical equipment should be fully screened from the ground view with landscaping or walls that relate to the building's design.
- Mechanical equipment enclosures should be finished with similar or compatible materials to the building's wall cladding materials. Screening with exposed pressure treated wood, chain link fencing or unfinished concrete block is not permitted.



Roof mounted equipment screening is integrated with the building volumes.

Wall mounted sconces at arcade.

Pedestrian scaled lighting contributes to a welcoming sidewalk environment.

Signage with LED lighting.

2. All roof mounted mechanical equipment must be screened with an enclosure.

- Roof mounted enclosures should be designed to be integrated with the building massing and facade composition. Materials used should be finished to match or be compatible with the building's wall cladding materials.

2. All roof mounted equipment must be located to minimize its visual impact from the public right of way view.

- Roof equipment should be located behind parapet walls and/or recessed as far as possible from the front of the building. Locate plumbing vent pipes, and exhaust vents towards the rear or side of the building.
- Plumbing vents should be ganged together. On sloped roofs, plumbing vents should be placed on the rear facing roof slope.
- Where visible, roof mounted solar panels should be placed behind parapet walls or be integrated with the building roof forms.

3. The city encourages the use of alternative energy sources to reduce the overall carbon footprint in new and remodeled commercial, multi-family and mixed use structures.

- The use of solar panels is encouraged in roof top locations to maximize sunlight exposure.
- The use of solar panels may be integrated into parking lot carport structures to provide both shading for vehicles and energy production.
- Roof mounted solar equipment shall be exempted from full screening.

Lighting

Light quality and fixture selection plays an important role in creating safe, enjoyable nighttime environments. All developments should have a comprehensive lighting approach for the site and building facades.

1. On site and exterior building lighting should be compatible in quality and design.

- The size, material and style of exterior light fixtures should complement the building design.
- Colors and finishes of light fixtures should match that of site furnishings, metalwork, and accent or trim building colors.
- Warm white light is highly recommended. 3000 K is a desirable color temperature. Up to 4300 K for spread lighting may be appropriate. Low pressure sodium, standard mercury vapor, and cool white fluorescent light should not be used.
- LED light fixtures are highly encouraged.

Sconce lighting accents the building architecture.

Central fountain and seating creates a welcoming gathering space.

Metal ornamental bollards define sidewalk.

- Electrical lighting conduits should not be visible on exterior building facades.
- Fixtures with exposed compact fluorescent bulbs should be shielded from view. Frosted, and prismatic glass or acrylic globes should be used with compact fluorescent light fixtures.

2. Lighting should be used to emphasize pedestrian areas and to create a pleasant environment.

- Pedestrian oriented areas such as walkways, plazas, courts and paseos should be well illuminated to provide a clear view to and from these areas.
- Bollard mounted lighting is recommended for low level illumination of walkways and landscaped areas.
- Pole mounted lighting that relates to the pedestrian should be used. Pole mounted fixtures twelve to fifteen feet in height from grade to light source is recommended.
- Pole light fixtures above thirty feet in height should not be used.
- Accent uplighting on shade trees on walkways and open spaces is recommended.

3. Lighting should complement the building façade.

- Wall mounted sconce lighting is recommended for façade articulation. Wall mounted lighting should be used in a consistent pattern along the facade.
- Accent lighting on architectural features such as towers is recommended.

4. Glare must be avoided.

- Lighting fixtures should not cause glare or reflect into the upper stories of buildings, public streets or adjacent parcels.
- Light sources should be directed downward and shielded at lot lines. A refractive prismatic diffuser globe is recommended to direct light downward.

Site Furnishing

Site furnishing refers to all pedestrian scale furnishing used on public gathering spaces.

1. Site furnishing should be used on all public gathering spaces to promote various pedestrian uses.

- Pergolas, trellises, planters, drinking fountains, tables and seating, umbrellas, ornamental bollards, and bike racks are recommended site furnishings for public open spaces.
- The scale and massing of outdoor and sculptural structures should relate to the pedestrian and open space scale.

Designed bike rack by David Byrne, NYC.

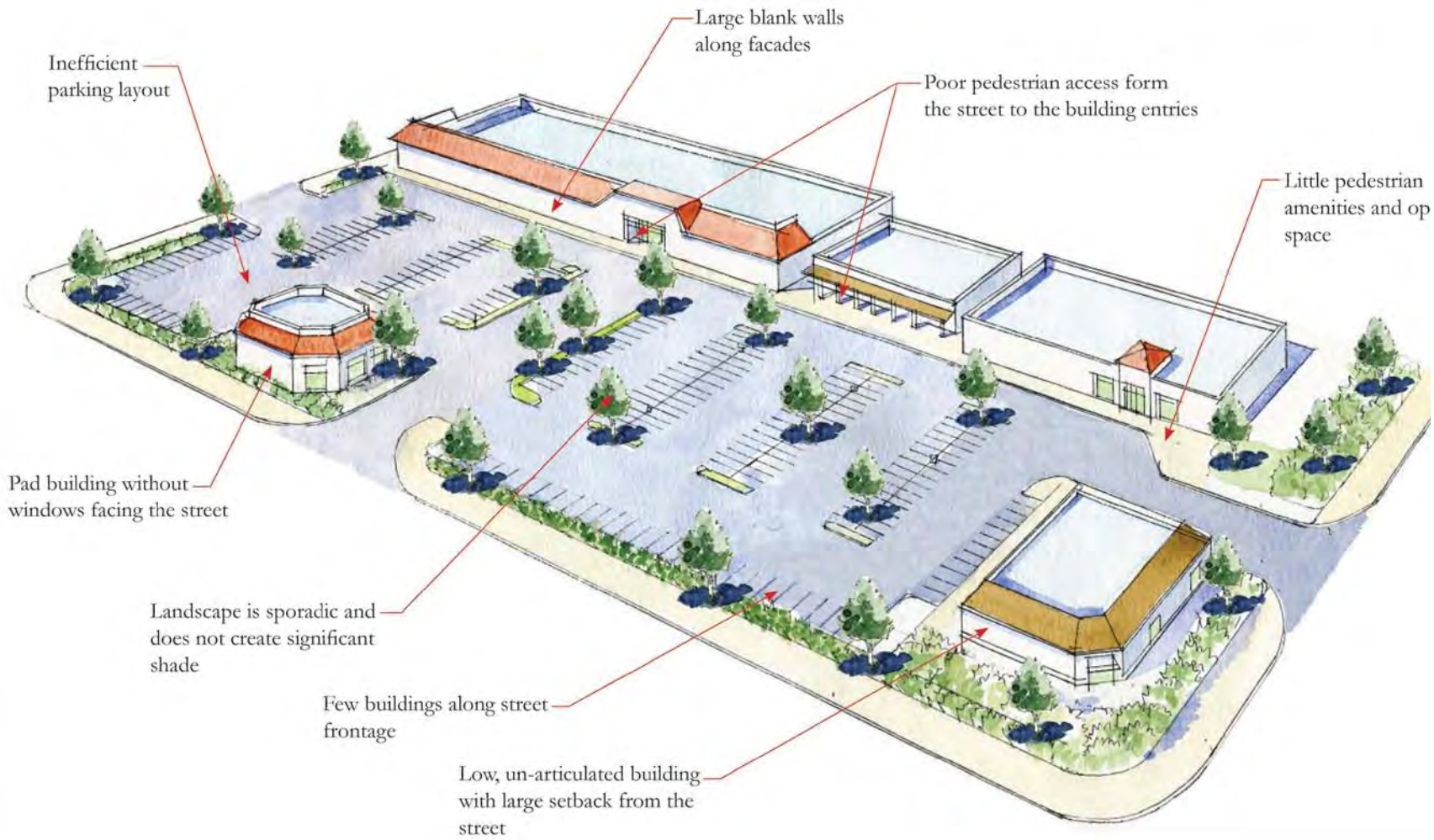
2. Site furnishings should create a family of objects that are consistent in design, materials and colors.

- The selection of furnishings should be coordinated with the building. All furnishings should be consistent in design, material and color.
- Materials used should be durable and high quality. Painted steel, cast iron, cast aluminum and integrally colored cast concrete are recommended.
- Concrete surfaces should be treated with anti-graffiti coatings.
- Metal surfaces should be powdercoated or factory painted with a gloss finish.
- Recycled materials may be used if the finish and visual quality matches other site furnishing materials' quality and finish.
- Bike racks should be located in a visible area within close proximity to business entries. Bike racks should be located clear of the primary pedestrian flow.
- Bike racks may be treated as public art. Figurative, recognizable forms are recommended.

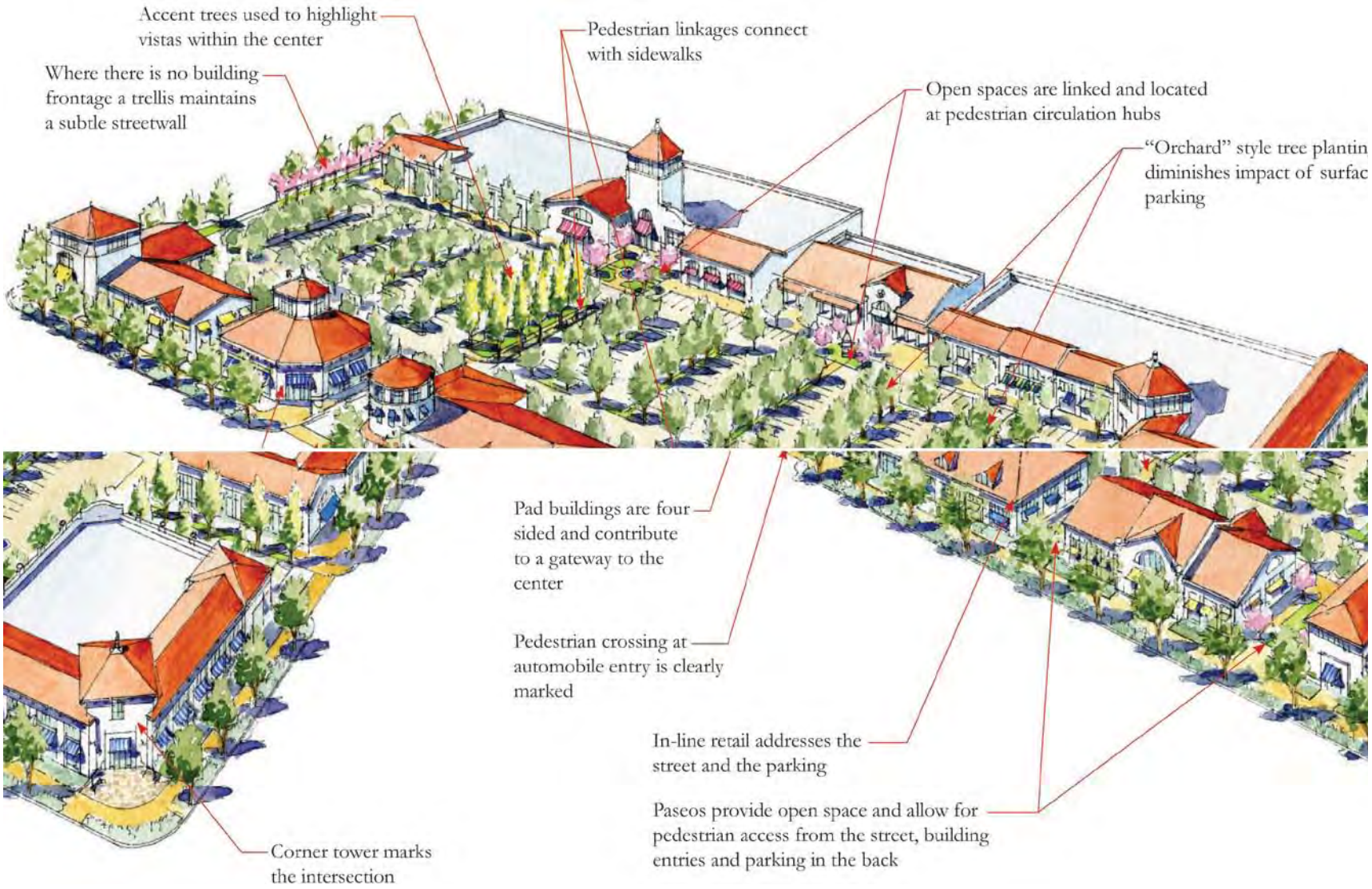
Site design examples

The following site design examples illustrate the application of site design guidelines to three hypothetical project types including: regional commercial shopping center renovation, in-line commercial with parking at the rear and at the street frontage and a mixed-use building.

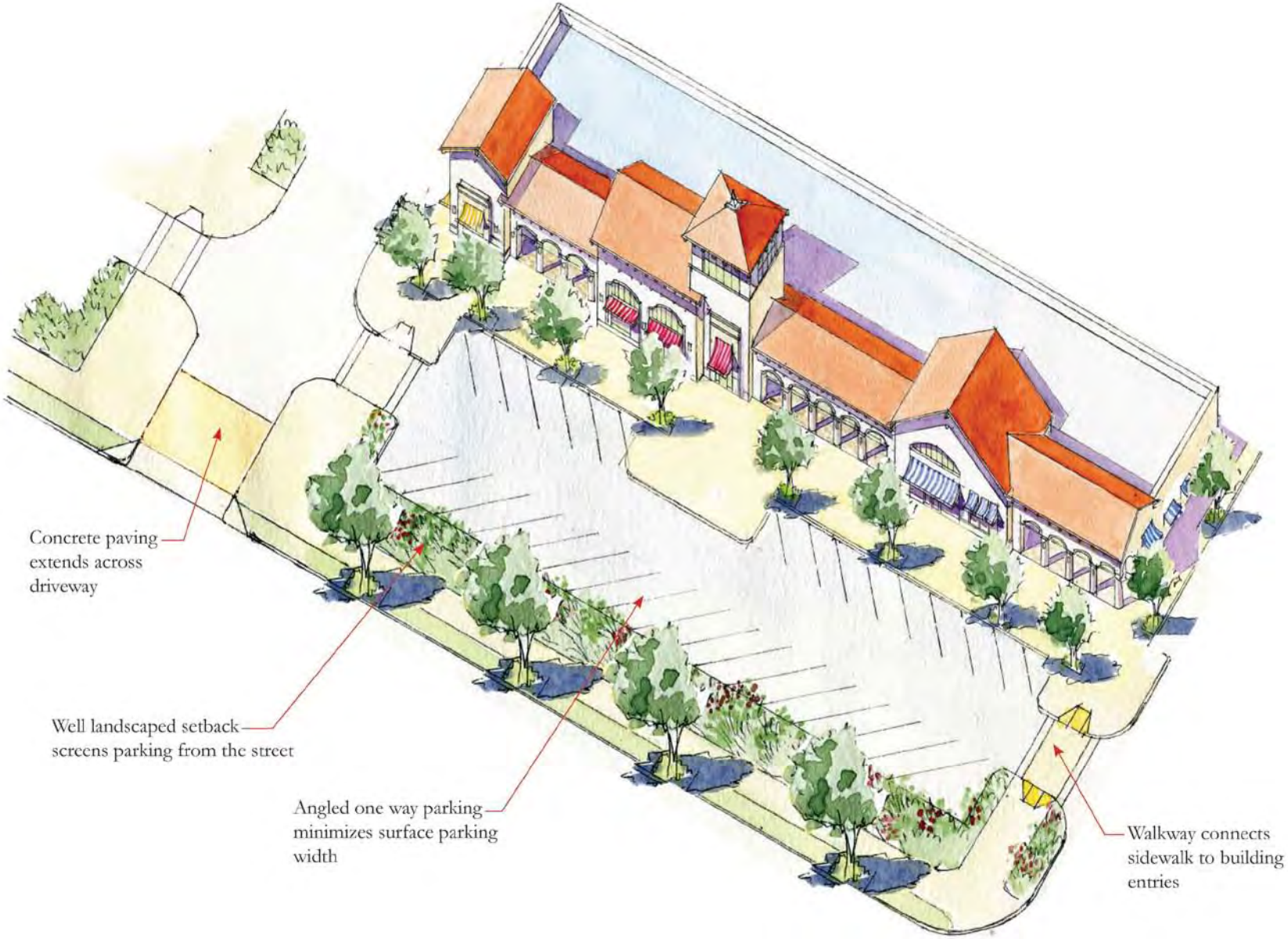
Regional Commercial: Shopping center-before



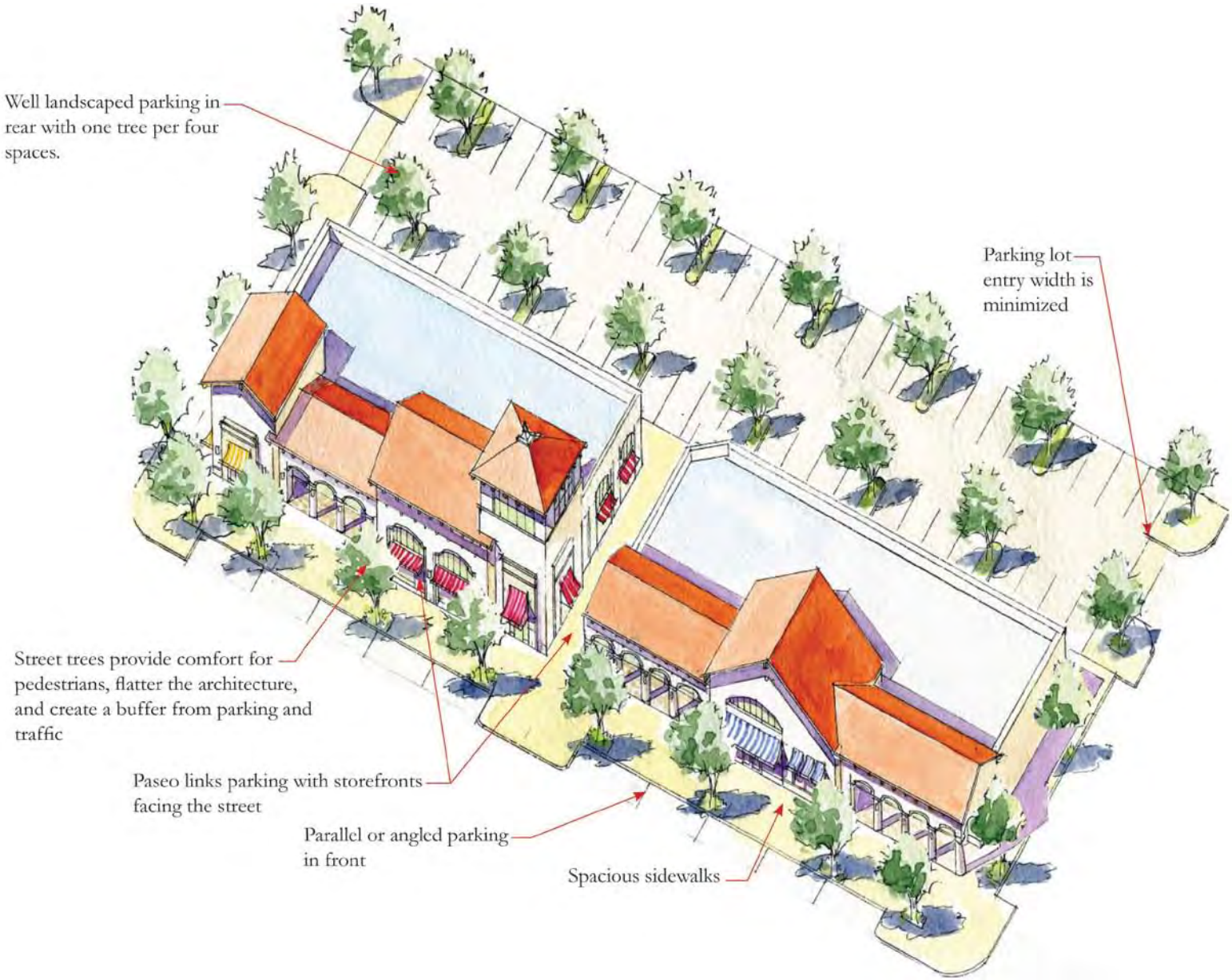
Regional Commercial: Shopping center-after



Neighborhood Commercial: In-line commercial building with parking in front



Neighborhood Commercial: In-line commercial building with parking in the rear



Mixed-Use Building: Townhouses with corner retail

3. BUILDING DESIGN

Pad buildings in shopping centers should be well designed to enhance the street.

Stepped volumes and towers are characteristic of a Mediterranean style.

Arcades with sloped roofs and exposed structure are highly encouraged.

Building Massing

Building massing addresses the overall form and scale of buildings including the composition of volumes and roof forms. The composition of building massing has a great impact on the shaping of an inviting pedestrian environment. In addition to the overall massing guidelines this section illustrates massing and articulation for three building types including commercial, mixed-use and multi-family developments.

1. Building massing should reinforce the informal character of existing architectural styles that relate well to the surrounding natural landscape and are sensitive to Rohnert Park's urban context.

- Large scale buildings or complexes should be broken down into a series of appropriately scaled volumes that relate to its context. Buildings should express a regular rhythm in massing, such as recesses and projections.
- Asymmetric building compositions are encouraged to break up long facades.
- Bulky or monolithic volumes that contrast with the context should not be used.

2. Massing elements such arcades and towers contribute to a rich building composition.

2.1 Arcades: are located over a walkway composed of a succession of openings and columns covered with a roof structure or by upper stories. Arcades should be designed as inviting outdoor pedestrian spaces. In Rohnert Park arcades are ideal for providing shelter to pedestrians and work well with commercial storefront facades.

a. Arcades should be designed with a high level of detail and be consistent with the architectural style of the building.

- Arcades should be a minimum of ten feet depth between building face and inner edge of column.
- Arcade roof eaves should be treated as visible features. Exposed shaped rafter tails are preferred.
- The arcade soffit or ceiling should be finished. Exposed finished wood joist or tongue and groove planks are recommended ceiling treatments.

b. Arcades should enhance the pedestrian experience.

- Arcades should not obstruct the views into display windows. When storefronts are located within an arcade they should comprise a minimum of 70% of the ground floor openings. Arcades with blank wall facades are discouraged.
- The building's window and door openings should be coordinated with the arcade openings. Window shapes should generally match the shape of the arcade openings.

Arcade at shopping center has a ceiling treatment and suspended lighting.

A prominent tower breaks up a long volume and anchors the composition.

Retail building corner tower has upper wall treatment including windows and signage.

- Arcades may include a landscaped buffer at the back of curb. A minimum of 5' of sidewalk should be maintained between the outer column edge and the landscape buffer.
- If merchandise is displayed inside the arcade, the type of merchandise should enhance the pedestrian experience. Maintenance tools and/or shopping carts should not be stored in arcades facing a public street.

c. Architectural lighting should be used to emphasize the arcade.
Decorative ceiling mounted pendant light fixtures and/or column and wall mounted sconces should be used for the arcade's nighttime illumination.

2.2 Towers: Towers are volumes that extend above the adjacent roof line by twenty five percent or more of the primary building height. The incorporation of towers is encouraged to add interest to the skyline and break up long facades.

a. Towers should be used to break up long facades.

- One tower is recommended on commercial buildings up to two hundred fifty feet in length placed asymmetrically in the façade.
- Towers should be placed strategically to emphasize prominent gateways, intersections or near important public spaces.

b. Towers should have simple massing that corresponds to the style and scale of the building.

- Multi-faced towers such as octagonal or chamfered are appropriate for Mediterranean style buildings. Over-stylized and over-designed towers are discouraged.
- Projects with more than one tower should have a consistent design vocabulary and be complementary to each other.

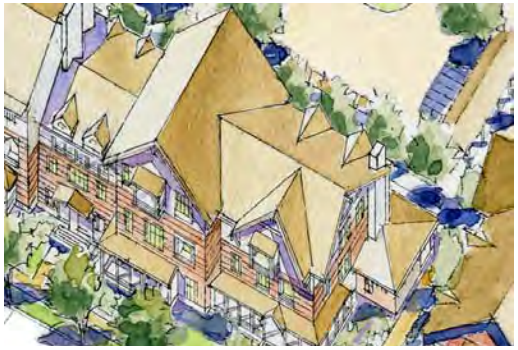
c. The tower roof type should complement the building's roof forms and contribute to an interesting skyline.

- Towers with flat roofs or parapets are permitted only on modern buildings. Large overhangs with exposed rafters or brackets are recommended for traditional style buildings.
- On commercial buildings, towers must include an upper wall treatment other than signage such as windows or open metalwork below the roof line.

Building Articulation

Building articulation refers to the use of repetitive architectural horizontal or vertical elements on building facades such as a consistent pattern of windows, entries and projections.

- **Base or ground floor treatment:** The base treatment includes architectural elements that relate to the pedestrian scale and are used for horizontal articulation at the ground floor. Ground floor articulation can be achieved with display windows, doors, awnings, canopies, arcades or a change in building material.
- **Upper stories treatment:** For buildings two stories and higher, the upper stories should be clearly different from the ground floor treatment and articulated with a consistent pattern of windows, projections and/or balconies.
- **Roofscape treatment:** The roofscape treatment should be well integrated with the building's overall composition and contribute to an attractive skyline. Roofscape articulation may include varying roof forms such as pitched roofs, roof overhangs and parapets.



Porches, balconies and dormers create a varied and interesting facade.

1. Façade articulation should be achieved by using architectural elements that complement the character of the building.

- Façade articulation elements should be selected according to the design theme associated with the architectural style of the building. Details from varying styles should not be used.
- Architectural elements should be proportioned to the building. Oversized and under scaled architectural detailing should not be used.
- Solid balcony walls are discouraged. Spacing between railings should provide a minimum 30% transparency.

2. Commercial one story buildings should be highly articulated and have a roofscape treatment.

- Articulation should include a consistent storefront bay repetition. Façade elements such as arcades, awnings or canopies should be used.
- Roofscape treatment may include a shaped parapet or roof overhang.

3. Mixed-use buildings should have a clearly defined ground floor, upper stories, and roofscape treatment.

- Ground floor articulation for commercial uses should include entry doors and display windows, accented with awnings or canopies.
- Upper stories treatment should include a consistent pattern of windows. Projecting elements such as balconies and trellises are encouraged.
- Roofscape treatment may include a parapet wall or roof overhangs with exposed brackets or rafter tails.

4. Multi-family buildings should have a clearly defined ground floor treatment, upper stories and roofscape treatment.

- Ground floor articulation should include a pattern of entries with porches or stoops and windows.
- Upper story treatment should include a pattern of windows and projecting elements such as balconies and trellises that add shadow and create façade interest.
- Roofscape treatment should include varying roof forms.

5. Façade articulation treatment should be consistent throughout the building.

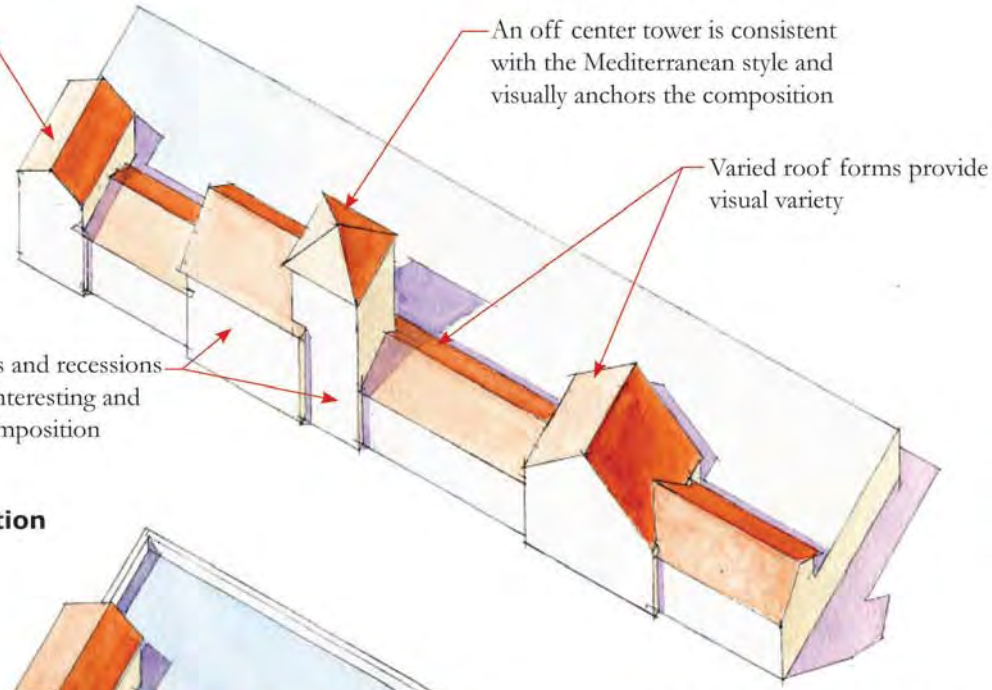
- Continuity in design, materials, and details should be maintained on all elevations.
- The spacing of elements such as windows, doors, awnings, and balconies should have a consistent rhythm.
- Blank walls facing a public street and visible from the sidewalk shall be avoided.

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

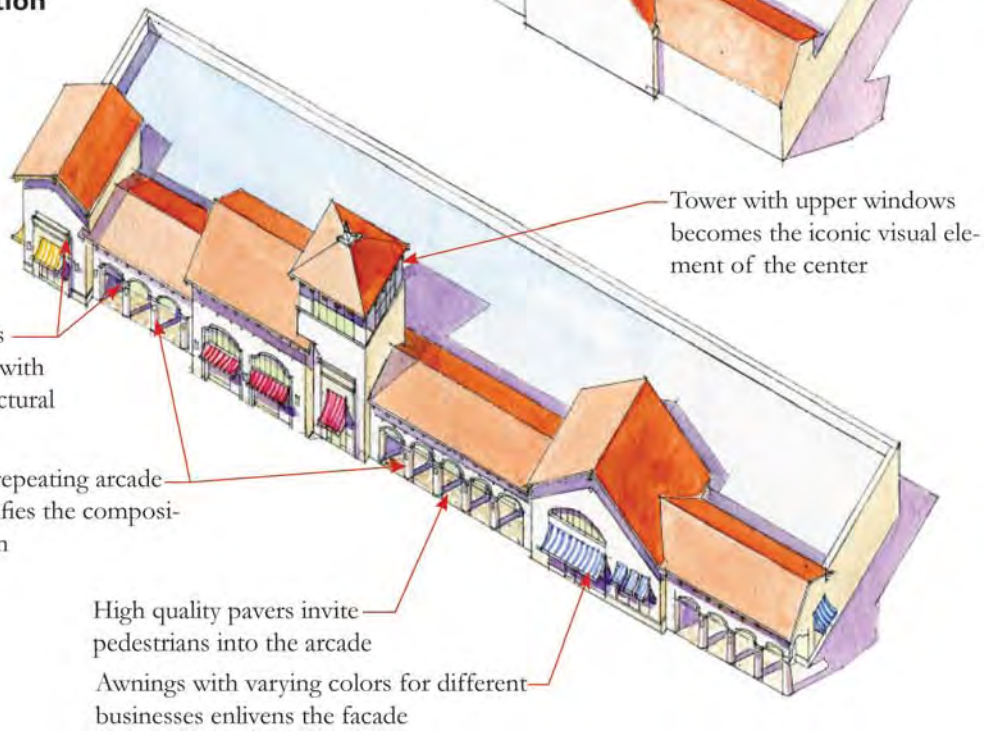
Commercial buildings include retail buildings such as inline neighborhood retail, regional shopping centers, office, professional office, and flex space buildings. In Rohnert Park these buildings are generally one story structures set back from the street with parking in front.

Commercial buildings should have a repeating facade treatment broken up with unique volumes, towers and varying roof forms. An interplay of projections and recessions on the building massing should be used to create a varied and interesting sidewalk experience. Smaller shops may be grouped to create larger volumes with a maximum of three storefronts treated in the same manner without interruptions.

Massing



Articulation

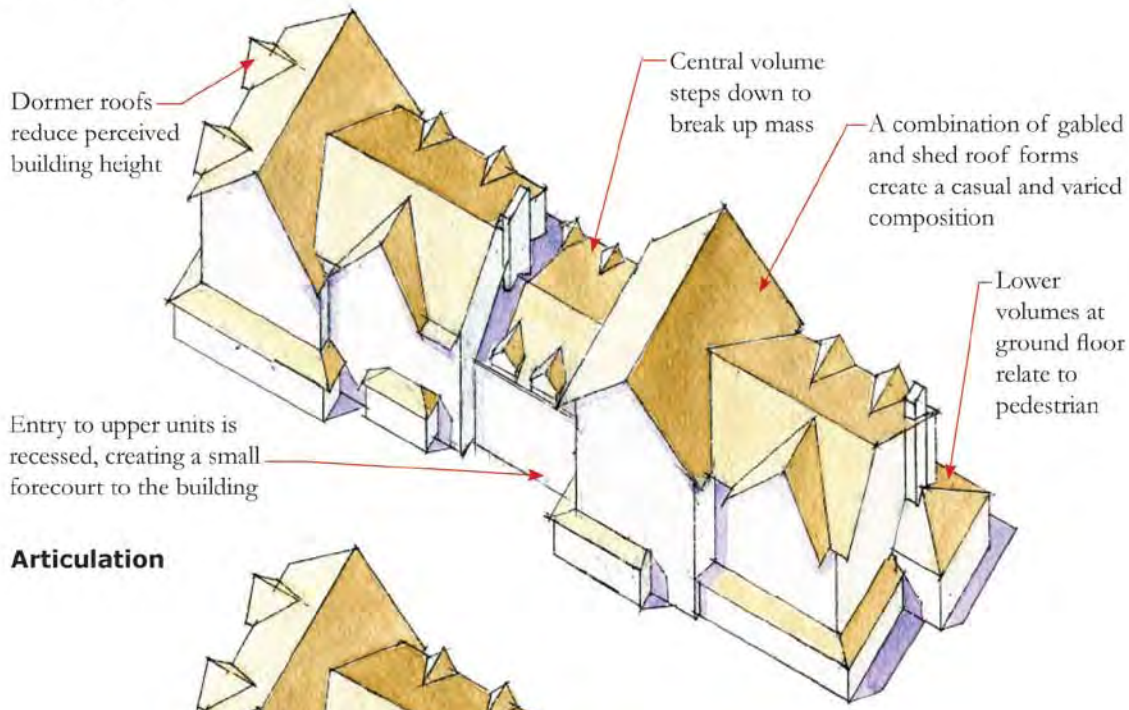


MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS

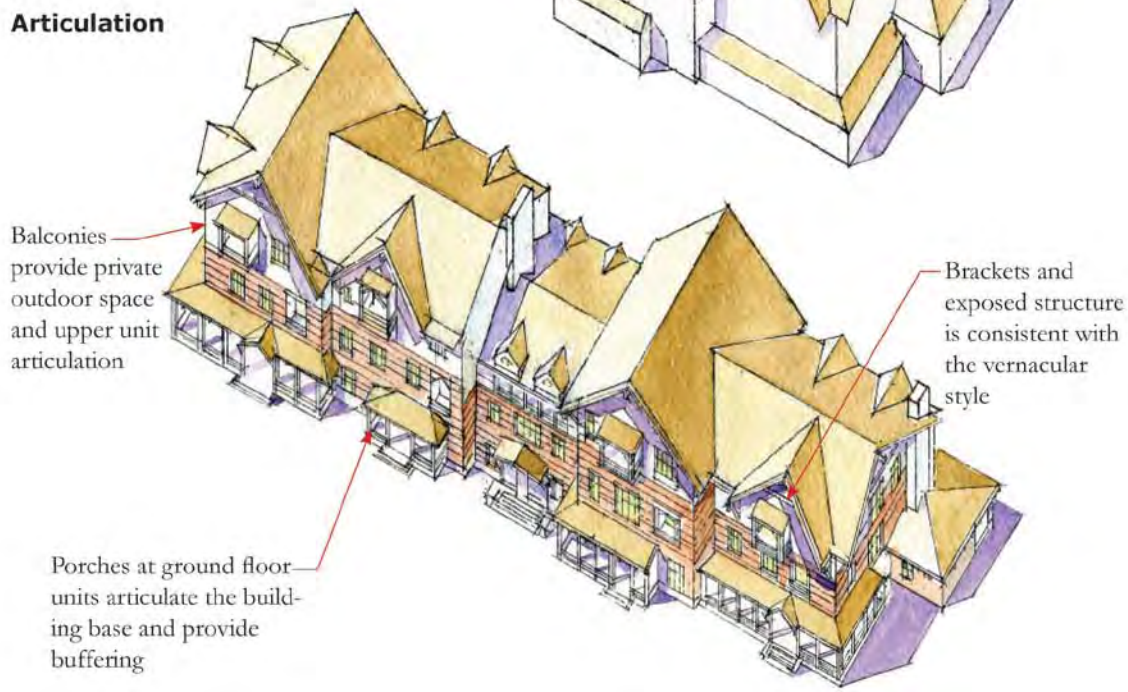
Multi-Family housing includes stacked flats, stacked townhouses or any combination of the two with off street parking. In Rohnert Park this building type is often found in close proximity to single family residential neighborhoods and their design should be sensitive to the scale and character of this context. Stepbacks and recesses on the building massing should be used to break down the building volumes to fit within the smaller residential scale of the context.

Multi-family buildings should be designed to emphasize individual units. Front setbacks within the same buildings should be varied with no more than two attached units with the same wall and roof lines. Architectural features such as distinctive roof forms and volumes, balconies or terraces and variation in building heights, colors and materials are encouraged to express the individual units on the façade. When possible, units should include individual private outdoor spaces. Ground floor units should have entries accessed from and raised from the street. Common entries to upper floor units should be accessed from the street with a secondary rear entry from service or parking areas.

Massing



Articulation

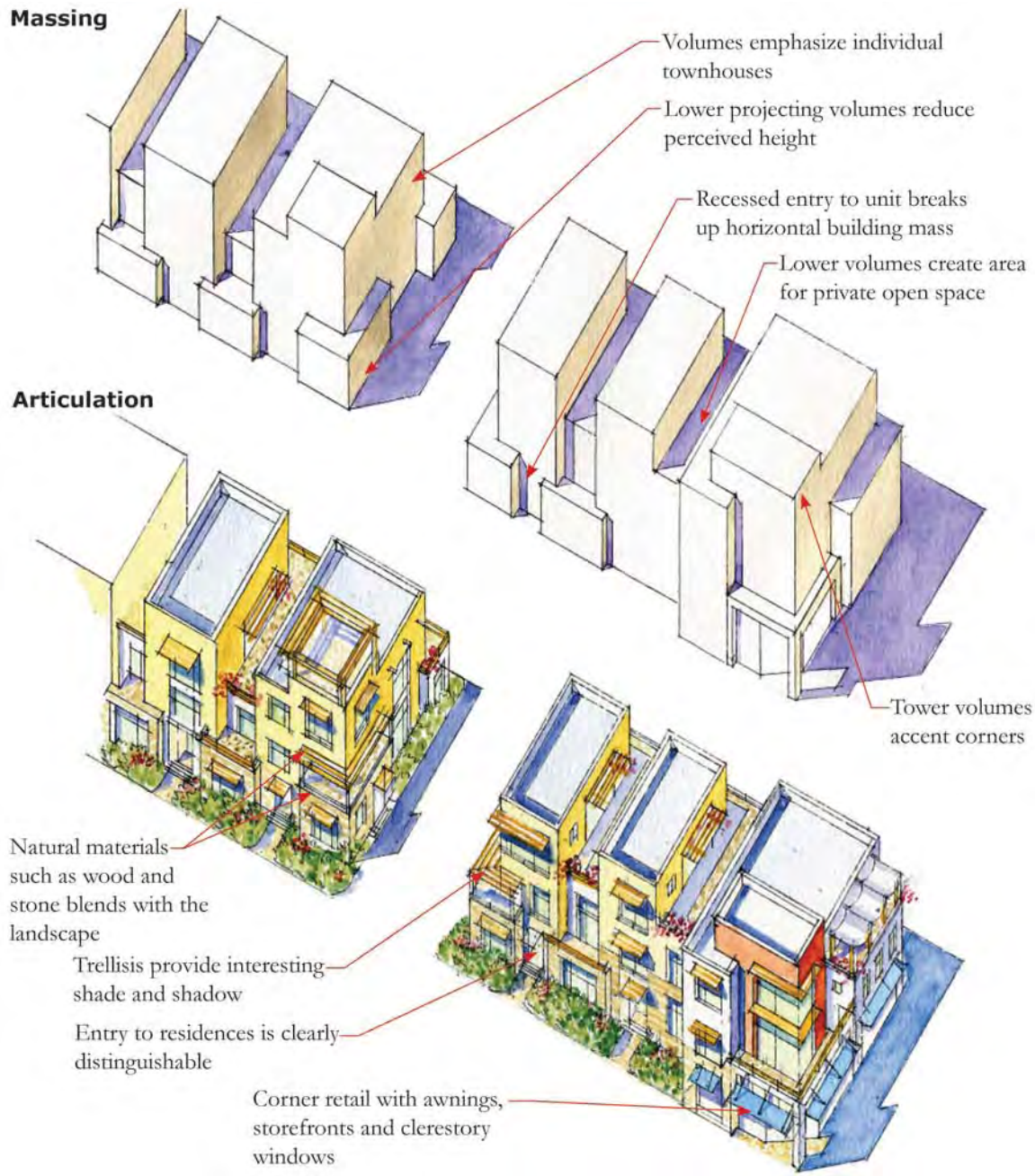


MIXED-USE BUILDINGS

Mixed-use buildings refer to structures with ground floor retail shops or offices and residential units above. In Rohnert Park these buildings currently range from two to three stories. Buildings up to four stories are permitted to create and support vibrant, walkable neighborhoods.

Entries to the upper units should be clearly marked, accessed from the street and have a distinctive appearance relative to the ground floor retail design. Entries should incorporate design elements such as a recessed entry or lobby, an awning or canopy, a shaped clerestory window above the entry door, plantings, lighting or a framed doorway.

Upper level units should convey individual unit identity while maintaining visual interest from the sidewalk. The use of façade articulation elements such as trellises, balconies or terraces are encouraged to achieve a distinctive character. Windows on upper units may be smaller but relate to the ground floor windows, creating a contrast of openings. A different cladding material may also be used for the upper floors for added visual interest and distinction between uses.



Stucco walls with terra cotta roofs are appropriate for Mediterranean style buildings.

A combination of materials and textures adds a richness and liveliness to this modern facade.

Materials

The use of building materials that reinforce the relationship with the surrounding landscape and existing architectural precedents in Rohnert Park are encouraged.

1. Facade cladding materials should be high quality and durable.

- Natural materials such as stone, wood and brick are highly encouraged. Synthetic cladding materials such as vinyl should be avoided.
- Faux and recycled materials should closely resemble the natural material being emulated.
- Plain or painted concrete block and tilt up concrete panels should not be used.

2. Facade materials should be consistent throughout the building.

- Exterior cladding and finish materials should wrap around all facades.
- Transitions between different materials may be made at changes in wall surfaces such as building projections or recesses. When a material change occurs on the same surfaces a trim should be used to transition between materials.

3. The amount of cladding materials used on building façades should be limited.

- A maximum of two wall cladding materials is recommended for one story buildings. Three wall cladding materials may be used on up to four story buildings.
- Accent materials should be used in combination with cladding materials. Accent materials may be used to emphasize architectural details such as trim, awnings or canopies.

4. Building materials may be used to accent the buildings massing.

- A different building material may be used to accent building projections or recesses.

5. In multi-story buildings, cladding materials that are perceived to be lighter such as wood and metal siding should be used above heavier materials such as stone or brick.

- In multi story buildings with different cladding materials the heaviest material should be reserved for the ground floor level.
- A lighter cladding material may be used to accent the upper floor of a four story building.

The following materials are recommended for use on building facades:

Brick at the ground floor adds nice contrast to the smooth stucco above.

Brick: Brick and thin brick are high quality natural clay materials appropriate as a primary or secondary cladding material. It is a suitable for a variety of styles from traditional to contemporary and fits in with a variety of contexts.

- Thin brick should be mortared to conceal the thickness of the veneer. Thin brick corner pieces should be used at window recesses and building corners to give the appearance of full brick. Bullnose pieces should be used at window sills and at the transition between brick and an adjacent cladding material, capital or trim details.
- Brick patterns are recommended to create visual interest on the façade or to emphasize vertical elements such as pilasters.
- Brick may be used as a secondary cladding for the full height of the ground floor level material on a multi-floor building.
- Variegated brick color palettes are recommended to achieve visual variety.
- Brick may be used as an accent material such as on storefront bulkheads. Cast stone may be used as an accent material with brick.

Stucco is appropriate as a primary building material.

Stucco: Stucco is a Portland cement based cladding that may be sprayed or hand applied. Stucco may be used as a primary or secondary material. Stucco should not be used as an accent material.

- A smooth texture is recommended for Mediterranean style buildings. Highly textured stucco is discouraged for all styles.
- The placement of expansion joints should be integrated into the façade composition. Clear anodized aluminum channels may be used on modern designs as a façade design element.

Timber construction with wood siding is appropriate for Rohnert Park.

Wood: Wood is a natural high quality material that may be used as a cladding and accent material. Wood cladding includes tongue and groove boards, lap siding, board and batten, and shingles.

- Wood shingles, and board and batten are appropriate for multi-family buildings and should not be used on commercial and mixed-use buildings.
- Wood may be used as an accent material on door and building trims.
- Rough sawn wood or plywood and pressure treated wood should not be left exposed.
- Board and batten should be of a smooth texture to avoid a rough unfinished appearance.

Fiber cement: Fiber cement is a durable primary building material typically used as a substitute for wood siding composed of sand, cement and cellulose fiber. Fiber cement includes lap siding, shingles and

Pre cast concrete with stone cladding creates a refined storefront.

Terra-cotta tiles are an attractive, low maintenance cladding material for ground floors.

Ceramic tile at storefront bulkhead.

boards. Fiber cement siding is appropriate for multi-family buildings and should not be used on commercial and mixed-use buildings.

- Smooth finishes are recommended. Highly textured surfaces should be avoided.

Stone: Stone is a natural material that may be used as a secondary or accent material. Stone may be used on one story commercial buildings and on the ground floor of mixed-use and multi-family buildings.

- Stone indigenous to the region is recommended.
- Stone veneers should be mortared to conceal the thickness of the veneer. Stone corner pieces should be used at window recesses and building corners to give the appearance of full stone.

Cast stone/ concrete: Cast stone/concrete is cast off site with a high level of precision made of integral colored concrete or stone aggregates. Cast stone/concrete is recommended as an accent material for copings, trims, bulkheads and ornamental details for commercial, mixed-use and multi-family buildings.

- Cast stone/concrete may be used as an accent material at the transition between cladding materials such as brick and stucco, and stone and stucco.
- Grout colors should be coordinated with the casting color to avoid a contrasting pattern.
- The placement of joints between castings should be integrated into the façade composition.

Terra-cotta: Terra-cotta tiles or ornament are an unglazed fired clay product that can take on a variety of colors and forms. Plain terra-cotta wall tiles are an appropriate ground floor mixed-use or commercial building material.

- Wall tiles should be smooth and uniform with a matte, non glossy appearance.
- Ornamental products can be used sparingly to provide decorative relief to the façade.

Ceramic tiles: Ceramic tiles are a fired clay based product that may be used as a decorative accent material or for bulkheads.

- Decorative ornamental tiles should be used sparingly on Mediterranean buildings to frame entries, accent architectural features or as a repetitive feature in a field of solid colored tiles.
- Grout colors should be coordinated with the ceramic tile color to avoid a contrasting pattern.

Multi-family building with gable roofs.

Metal cladding: Metal cladding may be used as a primary or secondary material in some occasions where agricultural themes or a contemporary style is desired. Metal cladding may be appropriate for mixed-use, commercial, and multi-family building types with modern designs.

Roofs

1. All roof forms should complement the massing and articulation of the building.

- For multi-family buildings, roofs should be varied and incorporate gabled and/or hipped roofs. Additional elements such as dormers are encouraged to break up large gables. Shed roofs should be used only as a secondary elements to the main roof building volumes.

Hipped roofs with eave overhangs.

2. Sloped roofs such as gabled and hipped roofs are encouraged.

- Hipped and gabled roofs with slopes of 4 in 12 or more are recommended.
- Sloped roof overhangs should be a minimum of one foot. Large roof overhangs are preferred to provide building articulation and create shadows.
- Eave overhangs should be treated as a visible façade feature. Eave overhangs may be open using exposed rafters or "boxed" using a soffit and fascia. Open eave overhangs should have simple or shaped rafters terminated with a fascia or gutter. Flush eaves terminated with a trim are permitted only on modern style buildings.

3. Flat roofs should vary in height and use caps, shaped parapets, barrel tiles or a cornice treatment to create an interesting skyline.

- Parapets should be a minimum of 3' in height.

Modern building with butterfly roof and large overhangs.

4. Mansard roofs are discouraged. If maintained on existing buildings, mansard roofs should be interrupted at the building corners and within long sections by towers or other prominent volumes.

5. Roof drainage elements should have consistent materials and be integrated into the overall building façade composition.

- For commercial and mixed-use buildings, downspouts should be concealed within walls whenever possible.
- For multi-family buildings, downspouts should be integrated into the design of the facade. Half round gutters and round downspouts are recommended and appropriate for all architectural styles.

Windows

Selecting windows that are appropriate in style and material, of good quality and properly installed is one of the most important elements in creating well designed buildings. Windows should be given a high priority in building design as one of the most visible elements from the public realm.

Deeply recessed windows create a dramatic effect and cast shadows on the facade.

1. All windows should be designed to correspond to the architectural style of the building.

- For traditional buildings, wood or fiber cement window surrounds should be used. Stucco window surrounds are discouraged.
- For Modern or Mediterranean style buildings, window surrounds may be omitted.

2. All window frames should be recessed from the building facade.

- Window frames should be recessed a minimum of 2 ½ inches measured from the window glass to the face of the exterior wall.
- Exterior window surround dimensions do not count towards the required recess dimension.

3. When divided window lites are used it may include true divided or simulated divided lites.

- Simulated divided lites shall use spacers between the window panes. Muntins shall be used on the exterior and interior surface of the glass and shall project a minimum of 3/8" from the glass surface.
- Sandwich muntin windows located between two panes of glass to simulate divided lites are not permitted. Roll on muntins are not permitted.

4. Window materials and type should maintain a consistent design vocabulary and quality throughout the building.

- On multistory buildings, upper floor and storefront windows may vary in material and type. Windows on the upper stories should be smaller than the ground floor windows.
- Window frames should have a min. of 1 ½" width. The use of thin aluminum frame windows is discouraged.

Expansive windows create a welcoming facade.

5. Street facing windows should maintain transparency and visibility.

- Painted window glass panes and reflective glass is not permitted.
- Window glass should be clear. If tinted glass is used light tinted glass is preferred. Opaque glass or the use of white opaque films is not permitted.

6. Window frames should be colored to complement the building façade color scheme.

- Clear anodized aluminum frame windows are permitted only on Modern style buildings.
- If vinyl framed windows are used, putty or tan colors are recommended.

Building Entries

An entry portico creates a welcoming, sheltered entrance.

Recessed residential entries provide privacy and shelter from the elements.

1. The main building entry must be located at the primary street façade and be designed to be consistent with the building's use.

- Mixed-use buildings must have an entry to the upper story uses that is clearly distinguishable from that of the ground floor retail entrances.
- Multi-family building entries should convey a residential character. The scale of entries to more than one unit should be more prominent and grander than entries to individual units.

2. Building entries should be easy to identify and be accentuated with architectural features that contribute to the pedestrian realm.

- For commercial and mixed-use buildings, building entries may include canopies, awnings or overhanging roofs. Entry doors should include transom or sidelight windows.
- For multi-family buildings, a transition zone should be provided from the public area to the private entry. Overhanging roofs, raised stoops, porches, or vestibules are recommended treatments.
- Recessed entries may include special paving materials, ornamental ceiling or soffit treatments, and ceiling or wall mounted decorative light fixtures.

3. Entry doors should complement the building.

- Style and materials should match or complement the building's windows and doors.

4. Entry door types should be selected to correspond to the building's use. For example residential type doors are not permitted on commercial buildings.

- Wood, aluminum, and fiberglass doors are preferred.
- Vinyl doors are not permitted.
- Frameless glass doors should be used only with Modern style buildings.

5. Door glazing should be provided to create an inviting entry.

- Solid doors should be avoided.
- Transparent glass should be used for all entry doors. Reflective glass is not permitted.
- Residential entry doors should have a minimum 20 % glazing door area.
- Commercial entry doors should have a minimum 50% glazing door area. Doors with one large vertical glass panel and wide stile and rails are preferred.

Garage Doors

Tuck under parking accessed from a rear alley.

This alley accesses tuck under parking while upper balconies help enliven the space.

Natural copper colored roofs help identify the City Hall as a civic building.

1. Garage doors should be located and be designed to minimize their visual prominence from public streets.

- Garage doors should be located so that they are not readily visible from public streets and accessed through alleys.
- Garage doors should not be a prominent element on facades. The size of garage doors should be reduced to minimize its surface area on elevations.
- For residential buildings, an eight foot single garage door is recommended. If a double car door width is used, it should not exceed sixteen feet in width.

2. The finish, material and style of garage doors should be compatible with the main building to create a coherent design composition.

- Wood, steel, metal clad, aluminum frame and fiberglass garage doors are encouraged.
- Smooth finish surfaces are preferred.
- Heavily textured garage doors that simulated wood grain should not be used.
- Colors should be selected to provide less contrast with the building surfaces. White tones are discouraged.

3. The exterior design of garage doors should be treated to reduce its visual impact.

- Garage doors with a minimum of ten percent of glass surface is recommended.
- Garage doors should be recessed a min. of 5 ½ inches.
- Surface paneling is recommended to scale back the visible size of garage doors. Surface paneling should be kept simple. Deep raised panels are discouraged.
- Architectural elements such as balconies may be incorporated above garage doors to add visual interest to the façade.

Building Color

1. Building colors should be selected to complement the architectural style and be compatible with adjacent buildings.

- Colors should relate to the architectural style. For example, white, off –white and earth tones such as ochre and terra-cotta are appropriate for Mediterranean style buildings.

Warm, earth toned colors blend well with the landscape.

2. Building colors should use a combination of two to three colors and an accent color. A main building color should be used on primary building surfaces such as walls.

- Subdued color shades are recommended.
- Avoid bright primary colors.
- Fluorescent colors are not permitted.
- Antique, faux finishes and textured paints are not permitted.
- On large scale buildings, up to three colors may be used.
- Varied building colors on main volumes may be used to emphasize the building massing.

3. Accent colors should complement the main building color. Accent colors may be used for trim or to emphasize architectural details.

- Darker colors are recommended for recessed elements such as windows and door sashes.
- Lighter colors are recommended for projecting elements such as window trim and rafter tails.

4. Materials that are not intended to be painted should be maintained.

- Natural or integrally colored building materials such as stone, brick, terracotta, tile and high quality metals such as copper should be kept unpainted to reveal its inherent finish, texture and color.

PROHIBITED SIGNAGE TYPES

- Signs with attracting devices such as balloons, banners, beacons, blinking or traveling lights, pennants, streamers or similar devices.
- Moving signs
- Internally illuminated cabinet signs except where a dark, opaque background is used with light translucent lettering.
- Off-site and billboard signs.
- Portable signs such as "A" frame signs.
- Roof mounted signs installed above a roof or on top of the parapet of a building.
- Plastic, paper or cloth signs placed on or over windows or hanging from any building surfaces. Temporary signs must meet the requirements of the City's sign ordinance.
- Any other signs not permitted by the City's sign ordinance.

4. Signage Guidelines

Signs are necessary components to the function of various building types and of particular importance to commercial buildings. The visual quality of signs plays a significant role in the business image and influences the perception of the building and its surroundings.

In addition to these guidelines applicants should refer to chapter 17.27 of the zoning ordinance-title 17 of the Rohnert Park Municipal Code which contains standards for all signs.

General Guidelines

1. Buildings should have a comprehensive sign design approach that complements the facade.

- Sign clutter should be minimized on all facades.
- All sign types used on a building should maintain a consistent design approach in style, materials and quality and be well proportioned with the scale of the building.
- Signs shall not cover architectural façade elements such as windows, entries, doors or architectural details.

2. Building signs should convey simple messages.

- Signs should be limited to individual letters or letters with a graphic. Excessive wording and graphics is not permitted.

3. Signs should use simple geometrical shapes.

- The use of simple shapes allows integrating the sign into the building's composition. Simple geometric shapes such as squares, rectangles and circles are easy to view, and convey a clear message.

4. All signs should be constructed with high quality materials that complement the building design on which it is mounted.

- The selection of sign materials should complement the building style and materials. Wood signs relate well to buildings with stucco or wood siding and metal signs go well with buildings with stucco or metal cladding.
- High quality wall signs such as wood and metal are recommended. Plastic and synthetic panel materials are not permitted.
- For individual letters mounted on a wall surface laser cut acrylic or metal letters are preferred.

A consistent signage program can be successful in branding a center.

Wall mounted exterior lit signage.

Vivid colors attract attention during the day and exterior spot lighting provides nighttime visibility.

5. Signage message and graphics should be limited.

- Signage may include a logo or graphics to visually anchor a sign. The size of the lettering and graphics should be designed in keeping with the proportions and size of the sign area.
- If both graphics and lettering are used the design should express balance. The size of the letters should generally be 2/3 or half the height of the graphics.
- Signs should be limited to two font types. Slender type lettering styles are preferred over block styles. A larger font that represents the name of the business may be used in combination with a smaller size font.
- Signage lettering should not exceed 12 inches in height for lower case letters and 18 inches for capital letters. For wall signs, buildings that are setback from the front property lines may have larger letters. Letter size may be increased by 2 inches in height for every foot of setback.
- Avoid large empty blank areas on wall or projecting panel signs. Generally the graphics and/or lettering should cover 2/3 of the panel height. A minimum of 2" border should be used around the perimeter of the entire sign.

6. Architectural signage lighting should accent the sign and complement the building.

- Externally illuminated signage lighting is recommended. High quality sign lighting such as spot or gooseneck lighting should be used.
- Sign lighting should be selected to complement the character and style of the building.
- Flood light fixtures and exposed bulbs are not permitted.

Wall signs

Wall signs consist of a panel or individual letters mounted parallel to the face of the building wall surface. This sign type is the most common form of advertisement for a business. Wall signs direct and attract attention from passing pedestrians and automobiles to the business.

1. Wall signs should be placed to complement the architecture of the building.

- Place wall signs on designated signage areas or areas that complement the building's façade composition. Sample locations include above transom windows, fascia band above the storefronts, plain wall areas or parapet walls.
- Signs should be located within the area of the business such as directly above the storefront windows/door or to emphasize the entry or an architectural feature such as a tower.

2. Wall signs should not cover architectural features of the building.

- Wall signs that cover windows and/or architectural features and details are not permitted.

Wall mounted signage with gooseneck lighting.

Halo lit signage is highly recommended.

Individual letters mounted away from the wall create interesting shadows.

- Wall signs located above parapet walls or edge of roof are not permitted.
- If a building does not have sufficient space for a wall sign, other types of signs such as awning or projecting signs should be used.

3. Wall signs should be scaled in proportion to the overall façade.

- The largest wall sign should not overwhelm the building façade on which the sign is mounted or painted.

4. Wall signs should be concise and simple.

- The amount of information should be limited to the name and/ or logo of the business. Use custom logos and lettering that represents the individual business.

5. The design and shape of the wall sign should relate to the building's design.

- Sign shapes should use simple geometrical shapes such as rectangles, circles or a combination of shapes depending on the available surface area to be mounted. Rectangular shaped wall signs work well with most buildings.
- Select colors that complement the building façade colors.

6. Wall signs should use high quality durable materials that relate to the building.

- Metal or dibond panels are recommended. Individual letters may be applied to a panel or mounted directly over the wall. Letters that are painted or carved onto the surface panel and professionally painted signs may be used.
- Channel letters may be used only if internally illuminated or backlit. Backlit channel letters that provide a halo effect are preferred. Wall mounted box/cabinet signs are not permitted.
- Panels should appear to have a thickness of ½ inch minimum.
- All panel edges should be finished, sealed and painted to match the background color of the sign. If wood panels are used, the edges should be treated or covered to prevent weather deterioration of the sign.
- Panels should be mounted with a minimum distance of one inch away from the building face.

7. Sign lighting should accent the sign and complement the building.

- Externally illuminated spot lighting with shielded bulbs are preferred.
- All electrical conduits and sign lighting raceways should be concealed.

Awning signs

This business uses a combination of sign types to identify the restaurant.

Awning signs are comprised of lettering and/or graphics applied to the face of the sloped surface or valance of an awning. Awning signs are often useful when there is limited wall space on facades for wall signs or when a building has multiple tenants. This sign type works well when viewed from the automobile or when facing the building. Awning signs are often used in combination with a wall, projecting or window sign.

1. Awning signs should identify the individual business.

- Locate signs on awnings over the business display windows and/or entry.
- Center the sign and /or logo on the awning surface.
- Signs should be located on only one surface, either the face of the sloped surface or front valance of the awning.

Awning valances provide good opportunities for attractive signage.

2. Awning signs should be concise and clear.

- The amount of information should be limited to the name, logo, and type of the business.
- Business name and logo should be placed on the face of the sloped surface only. Business name and business type may be located on the valance.
- On the sloped awning surface, the maximum size of logos should be limited to two square feet. The size of the text should be limited to 12" height. One line of lettering is preferred. Two lines of lettering may be used if a larger font that represents the name of the business is used in combination with a smaller size font.
- On the valance, the height of letters should be limited to 80% of the valance height. Recommended valance height with signage lettering is 8 to 10 inches.
- The sign width on the sloped face and valance should be limited to 85% the awning width.

Window signs

Window signage should maintain transparency.

Window signs are applied to the inside glass surface of display or transom windows and are commonly referred as window decals. Window signs also include suspended signs behind windows. This sign type works well to draw attention to storefront windows from the passing pedestrian and are often used in combination with wall and awning signs.

1. Window signs should have a design theme that represents the business.

- Use custom logos and lettering that represent the business. The font and color should be carefully selected to add to the logo design.
- The placement of the window sign should express a composition. Window signs that are centered on the glass surface are preferred.

Visual cues to the shop's products incorporated into the window signage.

A simple, colorful sign motif.

Multi-tenant building with business logos placed within a repeating metal projecting sign.

2. Window sign areas should be limited and concise.

- Window signs should not obstruct the views into the display windows.
- Window signs must be limited to 20% of each glass area.
- Limit the amount of text to the name, type of business and business hours.
- Building numbers applied to glass areas at glazed entry doors or transom windows above the door are encouraged.
- Lettering size should not exceed ten inches not including capital letters.

3. Sign should use high quality materials and installation methods.

- Painted, gold leaf and vinyl window graphics applied directly to the inside surface of the glass is recommended.
- Neon signs, wood or metal panels suspended behind the window glass may be used.
- Paper or plastic signs are not permitted.
- Window signs of commercial products are not permitted.

Projecting signs

Projecting signs are flat two sided panel signs mounted with brackets perpendicular to the face of the building. Projecting signs often include a logo and/or text that represent the identity of individual businesses. This sign type contributes to the façade articulation and works well with passing pedestrians and automobiles.

1. Projecting signs should use high quality, durable materials.

- Metal panels are recommended. Panels may include painted letters and graphics, individual metal or laser cut acrylic letters or high resolution digitally printed graphics with laminate. Fabric is not permitted.
- All panel edges should be finished, sealed and painted. Top and bottom brackets or a metal frame around the panel may be used to cover the sign edges.
- Brackets may include metal round or square bars with capped ends. Ornamental bracket designs should relate to the character and style of the building.
- When used in conjunction with other sign types, projecting signs should use a design similar to other building signs such as wall signs.

2. The location of projecting signs should complement the building facade.

- Projecting signs should be placed at ground floor level storefronts at columns, pilasters or adjacent wall surfaces. Projecting signs should not be placed over architectural details such as moldings or trim.

Exterior illuminated projecting sign.

Arcade with suspended signs.

Suspended sign works well for arcades or large recesses.

- The mounting height should not exceed the ceiling height of the first floor or fourteen feet whichever is less. Projecting signs shall not extend above the parapet, eave or roof line.
- Projecting signs should be located within the storefront area of the business that is being advertised.

3. The size and area of the projecting signs shall be limited.

- One projecting sign per business is recommended.
- Simple geometric shapes such as a square, rectangle or circle are preferred.
- The shape of the sign should be scaled to be proportioned to the building's height. Vertically proportioned projecting signs work well with tall ground floors. Horizontal and square proportioned projecting signs are appropriate for most buildings.
- Projecting signs must have an eight foot clear dimension between the bottom of the sign and the finished grade below.
- Signs should project a maximum of 36 inches over a public right of way or easement. Projection to include a six inch gap between the face of the building and the edge of the sign.

Suspended signs

Suspended signs are flat single or two sided panel signs that are suspended under awnings, arcades, roof eaves or similar building projections. These signs work well to attract attention from passing pedestrians.

1. Suspended signs should use high quality durable materials.

- Metal panels are recommended. Panels may include painted letters and graphics, individual metal or laser cut acrylic letters or high resolution digitally printed graphics with laminate. Fabric is not permitted.
- When used in conjunction with other sign types, suspended signs should use a design similar to other building signs such as wall and projecting signs.

2. All suspended signs should have a consistent design theme and size.

- One suspended sign per business is recommended.
- When more than one suspended sign is used per development they should use a similar size, shape, material and finish.
- Suspended signs must have an eight foot clear dimension between the bottom of the sign and the finished grade below.
- If multiple suspended signs are used, all signs should be mounted at similar heights.

Freestanding signs

Freestanding signs are also referred to as monument signs that are mounted on the ground and located within a landscaped area. This sign type is used to assist motorists in locating a business and may be composed of individual letters, a logo or a sign panel with a base, poles or columns. Freestanding signs should be used only when the building is separated from the street by fronting parking lots or large landscaped setbacks.

Freestanding sign has a level of refinement that matches the development.

Freestanding sign should be surrounded by landscape while maintaining visibility.

Freestanding sign for a multi-family community.

1. Freestanding signs should have a treatment compatible with the building's sign and architectural style.

- Elements of the business sign such as font type, color and logo should be incorporated in the design of the freestanding sign graphics.
- The design of the panel and columns should include details that complement the style of the building.

2. Signs should have limited information and size.

- The amount of information should be limited to the name, logo, and address of the businesses.
- Freestanding signs shall not exceed eight feet in height. Freestanding signs should be scaled to not obstruct traffic and pedestrian sight lines.
- The sign letters should not exceed 12 inches in height.

3. Freestanding signs should use high quality durable materials.

- Concrete, stone, stucco or metal may be used. Sign letters may be mounted individually or inscribed on the panel surface. Metal or laser cut acrylic letters may be used. All surfaces should be matte or have a non reflective finish.
- When sign graphics and/or letters are mounted over a surface avoid overcrowding the letters in the sign panel.

4. Signage lighting should be used to accent the sign.

- Externally illuminated signs are preferred.
- Spot lighting with shielded bulbs either mounted from the top of the sign or from the ground below should be used. Exposed bulbs are not permitted.
- Light fixtures should be integrated within the landscape lighting treatment.

5. A landscaped buffer should be used to flatter the sign.

- A perimeter planting with a min. 1'-6 inches in width should be used to soften the visual impact of the sign. Plant materials may include shrubs, ground covers, perennials and annuals.
- Plantings should be selected to be consistent with the landscape treatment of the development.

5. Storefront Guidelines

Gallery of Storefronts

General Guidelines

Storefronts are defined as the first level of a mixed use building or the first 15' in height of a single story retail building. They are composed of entries, display windows, transom or clerestory windows, bulkheads, signage and awnings.

The design of the storefront represents the type and quality of the business. Large, transparent glass surfaces on the commercial facade are a significant element which creates a visual openness into the business that is inviting to pedestrians.

Furnishings such as planters and tables invite customers into a business.

Vegetation accents the storefront.

Large, transparent storefront windows are inviting to pedestrians.

1. The design of storefronts should be in keeping with the overall architectural style of the building.

- Storefront designs should be consistent in composition, materials, detailing and craftsmanship with the architectural style of the building.
- For existing buildings storefront changes should be equal or higher in quality to the building's original elements including materials, detailing and craftsmanship.

2. Storefronts should create a welcoming experience for pedestrians.

- Storefronts should include pedestrian amenities such as large display windows, awnings or arcades.
- For multi-tenant buildings, the storefront design facade must be consistent. Individual businesses should be demarcated by subtle differences such as signage and awning color.

3. Storefronts should be designed with a clearly defined module.

- Storefronts should fit within a well defined module that creates a consistent pattern on the building façade.
- Storefront modules that are approximately twenty feet wide are recommended. Larger businesses should use multiple modules.
- Storefronts (including display windows, transom and bulkheads) should be recessed a minimum of 2 1/2 inches from the building face.

4. Storefronts should have a high level of transparency.

- The window and door glazing area should be a minimum of 55 percent of the storefront area.
- For existing buildings, reducing the proportion of glazing surfaces to solid wall surfaces is not permitted.
- Window areas shall not be painted or covered with opaque glass, other opaque materials or excessive signage.

STOREFRONTS

The drawing illustrates typical elements that make up a storefront facade including a well defined entry, display windows, clerestory window, bulkhead, signage and awning. These elements should be used on retail buildings to create an engaging and attractive pedestrian scaled environment.

The storefront module is composed of a well defined surface area bordered by walls, columns or piers. This module includes the entry, display windows, bulkhead and in some cases transom or clerestory windows. A store may be made up of a single or multiple modules depending on its length.

For existing structures, storefront elements such as awnings, signage, bulkhead treatment, and furnishings may be applied without major impact to the building. For larger renovations other elements may be added such as clerestory and large storefront window openings.

Storefront entry with transom windows above.

Aluminum storefront entry door matches the storefront material.

Retail buildings with arcades should have large display windows.

Common storefront elements:

Entry:

Entries include single or double doors with glass panels that indicate the primary entrance to the business.

1. Storefronts should have a distinctive entry.

- Entries should be clearly marked on the facade and may be recessed or aligned with the storefront display windows.
- Recessed entries should include treatments for the floor and ceiling recess areas. High quality paving materials such stone, stained concrete or brick should be used to differentiate the entry from the sidewalk.

2. Doors should contribute to creating an inviting entry.

- Commercial entry doors should include a large vertical pane of clear glass and a transom window. Transom windows above doors with 1'-6" to 2'-6" in height are recommended.
- Doors with wide frames (stiles and rails) are preferred. Frameless doors are recommended only for modern buildings.
- Sidelight windows may be used to emphasize an entry door.

3. Door materials should match the storefront material.

- Entry doors may be wood, steel or anodized aluminum depending on the storefront material used on the façade.
- An exception is that wood doors may be used with aluminum storefront windows. If wood storefront windows are used wood doors must be used.

Display windows:

Display windows are large window areas which provide maximum visibility into the business and serve to display merchandise.

1. Display window sizes and proportions should complement the building.

- Display windows may be a single pane or be composed of a large window area divided by mullions.
- Horizontally or vertically proportioned display windows work well for most buildings. Avoid tall narrow or square proportions.
- On large window areas, window mullions should be equally spaced along the facade. Groups of three windows are preferred. Long uninterrupted window areas divided by mullions are discouraged.

Tall display windows anchor the corner volume.

Display windows are consistent with the shape of the arcade opening.

Transom windows accent storefront entry.

- Whenever possible, the top of the display windows should be aligned with the top of the entry door transom window.

2. Display windows should provide transparency into the business.

- Clear glass should be used for all display windows. Tinted or mirrored glass is not permitted.
- Use awnings or arcades for sun control. If privacy is desired on businesses such as restaurants or bars, curtains or blinds should be used.
- Items advertised in display windows should not block the view into the business. Clutter should be avoided.

3. Display windows should include high quality materials and details.

- Display window frames may be made of wood or aluminum. Commercial grade windows must be used.
- Storefront windows may be fixed, sliders, casement, or folding. Slider, casement and folding windows are recommended for restaurants and cafes.
- Storefront display windows with divided lites should be framed in wood. Windows with divided lites are appropriate for restaurants and Mediterranean style buildings.
- If display windows are recessed, window sills should be compatible or match the bulkhead materials. Wood sills should be used with wood windows.
- Butt glass corners are recommended on display windows that wrap corners at recessed entries.
- The color of the storefront frame should be coordinated with the overall facade color scheme. For aluminum windows, dark bronzed or other colored aluminum framed windows are preferred. Clear anodized should be used only on modern style buildings.
- Frameless display windows are permitted only for modern style buildings.

Transom and clerestory windows:

Transom and clerestory windows are located above display windows and doors and are often used to accent the storefront and increase illumination into the business. Transom windows are visually connected to the display windows and should expand the full length of the storefront window area. Clerestory windows refer to any high windows that are visually separated from the storefront display windows and entry and are continuous along the full length of the storefront window area.

1. Transom or clerestory windows should be used to accent and give hierarchy to the storefront.

- Transom windows may include a horizontal mullion or a framed band finished with a trim that

The integration of doors, storefront windows and transom windows provides a striking storefront.

Glass tile bulkhead gives a fresh, modern look.

Ceramic tile bulkheads provide the opportunity for rich, saturated colors.

separates a window from the display window or door below. If a horizontal mullion is used it should have a min. thickness 1 1/2 inches and a max. of 5 ½ inches. Transom windows should be clearly distinguishable from the display window below.

- Clerestory windows may be located six to twelve inches above the storefront display windows and should be finished with a material that complements the storefront such as a wood trim.
- Transom and clerestory windows may be fixed or operable to provide cross ventilation while maintaining privacy.
- Storefronts that are recessed at an arcade are not required to include a transom window above the display windows. Transom windows are encouraged on storefronts with arcades.
- Transom windows may include divided lites. Muntins should have a narrow profile. Frames with 1" thick or less are recommended.

2. Transom windows should maintain transparency.

- Clear, lightly tinted or stained glass may be used.
- Transom windows should not be covered with sign board panels.

Bulkhead:

Bulkheads are ornamental bases used to highlight the display window. Bulkheads are composed of a solid wall finished with a high quality material such as tile, wood paneling or stone veneer.

1. All storefronts should include bulkheads.

- Bulkheads should be made of a solid material. Extending the storefront frame and glass from the display windows to include the bulkhead is not appropriate.
- The height of bulkheads for retail businesses should be a minimum of 1'-0 and a maximum of 2'-0". For markets, restaurants and cafes bulkheads may be 3'-0" in height.

2. Bulkheads should be finished with high quality durable materials that are compatible with the materials used on the building façade.

- Finish materials should be smooth. Rough textures or rustic looks are discouraged. Acceptable materials include glazed ceramic tile, wood paneling, brick, marble or other polished stones. Stucco, bathroom tiles, wood shingles, fake stone, corrugated metals should not be used for bulkheads.
- Recessed metal panels on the storefront frame should not be used on bulkheads.

Awnings between the storefront and transom windows provide storefront hierarchy and shading.

Awnings help scale the building to the pedestrian.

Awnings with free hanging valance and shaped edge.

Awnings:

Awnings are used as a major commercial façade element that provides protection from the sun or rain, articulates the façade and enhances the pedestrian experience.

1. Awnings should be used to articulate the building and give hierarchy to the storefront.

- Awnings are recommended to articulate the ground floor façade and should be placed on storefront bays and entries.
- Awnings should not be used on storefronts with arcades.
- For buildings with multiple storefronts, awnings should be used to unify the building's storefront façade. Awnings should be consistent in material and slope. Colors may be different for individual businesses.
- On storefront modules with transom or clerestory windows awnings should be placed above storefront windows and below transom or clerestory windows.
- For existing buildings without transom windows, awnings may be placed on solid wall areas above the display windows and below the sign areas to increase the perceived retail floor height.

2. Awnings should be placed to contribute to the pedestrian scale.

- Awnings should be reserved for the ground floor of commercial storefronts and should relate to the pedestrian.
- Awnings should not be placed high on building facades which does not contribute to creating a welcoming pedestrian scale.

3. Correlate the awning placement to the storefront opening.

- Awnings should correlate to the storefront opening, window or entry width. Separate awnings must be used on each of the storefront openings instead of extending the awning continuously along the building's frontage, covering individual storefront modules.
- Awnings should not be placed over architectural details such as pilasters, ornament, trim, or moldings.

4. Awning shapes should relate to the shape of the opening and the building's architecture.

- Slanted awning shapes work well with most buildings. Concave and boxed awning shapes should not be used. Dome awnings are recommended only for arched windows or doors.
- For buildings with multiple storefronts, the same awning shape, slope and projection should be used consistently along the building's façade.
- Oversized awnings that overwhelm the façade should not be used.

Awnings are used to accent corner tower.

5. Awnings should use high quality materials.

- Canvas fabric awnings and factory painted galvanized sheet metal are preferred. Vinyl and shiny fabrics should not be used. Fabric awning metal frames should be painted.
- Awnings with rigid materials such as metal and glass are appropriate for modern style buildings. If metal is used, smooth surfaces are recommended. Avoid any visible seams.
- Canvas awnings with a slope of 4:12 should have a valance with six inches minimum and eleven inches height max. Valance may be rigid or hanging.

6. Awnings should accent the building's façade.

- Select colors that complement the building's color scheme.
- Brighter awning colors may be used to accent the business.
- Vertical stripe patterns may be used to add interest to the façade.
- Use metal colors such as bronze or nickel for metal awnings.

6. Architectural Styles

The architectural style guidelines address key elements for each of the recommended architectural styles with a precedent in Rohnert Park including Mediterranean, Modern and Vernacular. All share common elements such as an informal character with asymmetrical facades, large overhangs and an expression of structure and use of natural materials that blends well with the landscape and character of the city. By drawing upon existing building styles for new developments and renovations the overall character of the city can be strengthened in a distinctive manner.

MEDITERRANEAN

MEDITERRANEAN

Mediterranean style architecture in the Sonoma region and throughout California was inspired by the Spanish Missions built in the late 18th century. The style become a popular development type with the building boom of the 1920s and was well suited to the mild California climate and lifestyle with its outdoor spaces and casual aesthetic.

In Rohnert Park the Mediterranean inspired examples were built in recent decades and continues to be a common architectural expression in new construction. Examples range from shopping centers to residential with the northeastern area of the city anchored by the Doubletree Hotel with the highest concentration of buildings. The style is characterized by stucco walls, recessed punched openings, arcades and terra-cotta barrel tile roofs.

1. Building forms should be informal with asymmetrical compositions.

- Building massing includes a combination of simple volumes with varying heights and roofs forms.
- Building elements such as arcades, trellises, balconies, and deeply recessed window and door openings should be used for building articulation.

2. Materials should convey solidity.

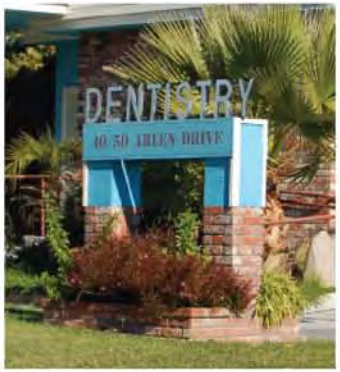
- Exterior walls should be stuccoed. Hand trowelled finishes are recommended.
- Accent materials including ornamental ceramic tiles and cast stone may be used on door surrounds and base treatments.

3. Roof forms should be varied.

- Roofs should have low pitched slopes not to exceed 4:12. Appropriate roof types include gable (front and side gable), hipped, or shed roofs.
- Roof tiles should be terra-cotta. Variegated colors are recommended. Simulated concrete tiles should not be used.

4. Windows should accentuate the facade composition.

- Facade articulation may include symmetrical or asymmetrical window arrangements.
- Windows should be vertically proportioned and may have evenly divided lites.
- Window types may include single hung, double hung and casement. Wood windows, or fiberglass windows that visually match wood or steel frame sash dimensions are appropriate. Sliders and aluminum framed windows should not be used.
- Storefront display windows should be wood or be composed of narrow profile metal frames. Wood display windows may include divided lites. Bulkhead base treatment may include ornamental Spanish ceramic tiles.



MODERN

MODERN

In the middle of the 20th century modern architecture become popular throughout the country. The style utilized new construction materials and methods to create buildings that stood in contrast to the previous period revival styles. Elements such as flat roofs, large windows and expressive geometric forms introduced a distinct architectural form that conveyed the optimism of the era.

As a young City developed in the 1960's Rohnert Park's first predominant commercial style was of the mid century modern style, characterized by low, horizontal volumes with large windows and overhangs. Many of these buildings remain today and contribute to the character of the city . Modern architecture continues to be a prominent building style in Rohnert Park with a variety of civic, mixed use and commercial building examples. Buildings that accentuate the mild California climate with elements that integrate indoor and outdoor spaces such as trellises, balconies, and other shading devices are encouraged.

1. Building massing should be inspired by traditional forms.

- Building forms should relate to its context and the building precedents of the region. Volumes should be simple, symmetrically or asymmetrically organized and may vary in heights. Repetitive modules alternating with projections and recesses may be used.
- Buildings should incorporate facade elements that enrich the quality of the public environment such as arcades, porches, trellises, balconies, awnings, and sunshades.
- Inspiration from green building design principles that respond to the climate such as shading devices, use of overhangs, and addressing sun orientation is encouraged.

2. Materials should add visual interest.

- A variety of materials and textures may be used to achieve visual interest. Exterior wall cladding materials may include metal siding, fiber cement siding, stone or terra-cotta cladding, wood siding, stucco or concrete.
- The use of natural materials is encouraged. Materials should accentuate natural colors and textures.

3. Roof forms should correspond to the building forms.

- Roofs may be sloped, flat, single or multilevel. Multilevel roofs should be stepped in accordance with building volumes composition.
- Sloped roofs may be standing seam or asphalt shingles. Large overhangs are preferred.

4. Window placement and articulation should contribute to creating an interesting facade.

- Large window openings are preferred. Window articulation may be achieved by using a combination of individual or grouped windows to form vertically proportioned multistory windows.
- Window types may be awning, casement, slider or single hung. Metal framed, fiberglass or wood framed windows are appropriate.

REGIONAL VERNACULAR

REGIONAL VERNACULAR

Vernacular refers to a building style that is indigenous to a region. These structures were typically not designed by architects but rather built using construction methods passed down through generations and built with locally available materials that suited the building use and the climate.

In Sonoma County farming structures were the earliest predominant building form and they continue to be part of the region's character. These buildings are made of lightweight materials such as wood siding and galvanized metal that were readily available in the past. Large overhangs and exposed brackets characterize the informal style that sits casually in the landscape. Although most of the original farming structures no longer exist in Rohnert Park their influence can be seen in several structures throughout the City.

1. Building forms should have simple massing and an informal character.

- Buildings are often composed of simple volumes with rectangular, L shape plans or attached wings. Massing combinations of horizontally proportioned volumes with accent vertical volumes are appropriate.
- Wood trellises, sunshades, porches with wooden posts, and brackets should be used for facade articulation. Porches should be used to create a consistent rhythm on the facade.

2. Materials should be perceived as light weight.

- Smooth finish wood or fiber cement lap siding with 6 to 11 inches exposure, board and batten and metal sidings are appropriate wall cladding materials.

3. Simple roof forms should be used to differentiate building volumes.

- Front gable, side gable, hip and shed roofs are recommended. Dormers may be used to break up large roof forms.
- Roof slopes with 4 in 12 to 12 in 12 are appropriate.
- Roof eaves should have large overhangs with simple unadorned eaves. 1'-6" to 3'-0" overhangs are recommended.
- Eaves should be 'open' using exposed rafters. Exposed soffits at eaves should be finished with smooth plywood or tongue and groove boards.
- Composition shingle with brown tones or aluminum standing seam roofs should be used.

4. Windows should have vertical proportions.

- Windows are typically single or double hung and casement with vertical proportions.
- Windows may be multi-pane.

7. Case Studies for Renovating Commercial Buildings

The large amount of retail developed in Rohnert Park in past decades has left many shopping centers in need of updating to maintain there visual appeal, performance and to continue the city's ongoing goal of creating more pedestrian friendly environments. As shopping patterns have changed to create more walkable, enjoyable environments new and rehabilitated centers have improved with better articulated buildings with higher quality materials and welcoming open spaces.

The building improvement approaches in this section illustrate two conceptual case studies on how to apply the design guidelines to commercial renovation projects within the city. These case studies are intended to depict improvements to conditions typical of older retail buildings that are applicable to many shopping centers and stores throughout the city. Case study one addresses long, unarticulated mansard roofs and case study two deals with vague architectural styles that are common and contribute to the dated appearance of some centers. The conceptual design recommendations represent welcoming pedestrian and visual elements that work with the buildings' basic configuration.

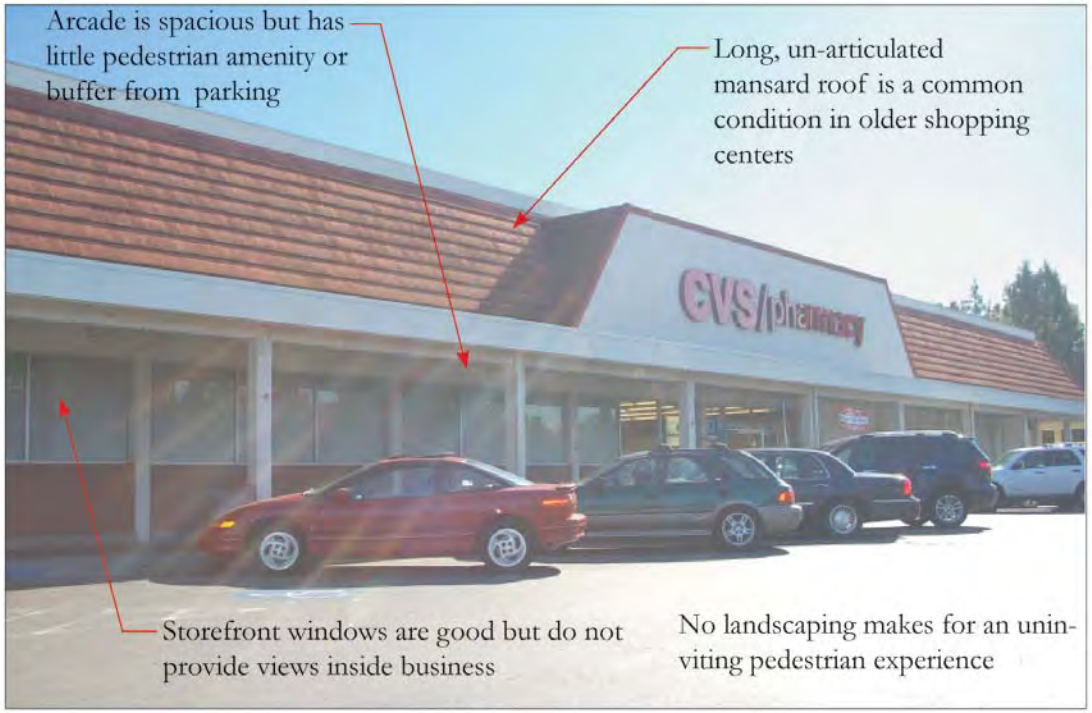
All of the improvements illustrated here are regulated in the guidelines and should be consulted before considering approaches for renovations.

Case Study One

This case study depicts conceptual improvements to the CVS/ Pharmacy building in the Safeway Shopping Center at Commerce Blvd and Rohnert Park Expressway. While the Safeway has undergone recent improvements to its façade with better articulated volumes the CVS building stands in contrast with a long, unarticulated mansard roof and little pedestrian amenity.

Positive existing elements such as a spacious arcade with facing storefront windows provide a basis for the improvements. Heavy timber arcade columns and exposed structure are consistent with a vernacular style that will be elaborated on in the renovation..

Existing view



Recommendations

- A prominent, well articulated tower located at the existing building entry. The tower is integrated with the arcade and works well from both an automotive scale, highly visible from Commerce Blvd as well as pedestrians. Upper windows with timber brackets create an iconic, high quality statement for the business and the center. The shaft of the tower is maintained for business signage shown with high quality exterior lit letters.
- An improved arcade and storefront includes brackets added to columns, exposed rafter tails, enlarged and transparent storefront windows, and a new tile bulkhead.
- New standing seam metal roof with a decreased slope furthers the vernacular theme.
- Site and landscape improvements include low planting and trees between the arcade and parking and an entry plaza with seating, landscaping and lighting.

Building with Proposed Recommendations

Case Study Two

This example illustrates hypothetical improvements to the Burlington Coat Factory Store in the Shopping Center anchored by Target and the Movie Theater at Rohnert Park Expressway and Redwood Drive. Here the existing architecture has of a vague, post-modern expression that was common in the 1980s.

By working with the building's general massing and materials a new, more timeless façade is proposed that is consistent with a Mediterranean style. Elements such as the arcade and entry volume are in particular need of additional detail and pedestrian amenity to update the appearance and make it a welcoming entry to the business.

Existing view

Recommendations

- Transforming the entry volume into a broad gabled roof form that anchors the building composition.
- Terra-cotta roof tiles replace metal roofing to reinforce the Mediterranean style and give the building more presence and texture.
- New Tuscan Columns clad the existing, unarticulated columns and are added between columns to create more vertically proportioned openings.
- Faux storefront windows with displays or merchandise advertising are added on the blank wall at the arcade.
- Landscape is added as a buffer between the arcade and the parking.

Building with Proposed Recommendations

Glossary

Architectural style: a collection of related architectural details and elements used to describe a building.
Building articulation: The use of repetitive architectural elements in building facades such as windows, doors, awnings and balconies.
Building placement: The location or siting of a building on a site.
Building massing: The general form, shape and scale of a building.
Breezeway: An open passageway within a building that connects the front and back of a building.
Cladding material: Material applied to the exterior wall of a building to provide a layer of weather protection and for aesthetic purposes.
Dormer: A roofed building volume that projects from the sloped roof surface of a main building.
Gable: Triangular portion of a wall defined by the roof slope and located at front or sides of a building.
Gable roof: a roof with a gable at one or both ends.
Hipped roof: a roof with four sides that slopes down to the eaves on all four corners of a building.
Muntin or mullion: Vertical and/or horizontal members separating panes of glass in windows or doors.
Paseos: a path between buildings that connects building front with parking.
Parapet: Exterior wall that continues above the line of the roof surface with a coping at the top.
Pilaster: A slightly projecting column applied to a wall.
Roof eaves: Edge of roof that projects beyond the exterior wall.
Side Gable: A roof with two sloping planes and a ridgeline that runs parallel to the front of the building.
Simulated divided lites: Applied muntins over the window glass to simulate a true divided lite window.
Shaped parapet: A parapet wall that has a profile or varying wall heights.
Shed Roof: A roof that has one sloping plane.
Soffit: The exposed undersurface of an exterior overhanging section of a roof eave.
True divided lites: A window sash with muntins that separate the glass panes.
Valance: Vertical section of an awning that extends below the sloped awning surface.
Vernacular: Building style that was built by a region's early inhabitants that uses local materials.