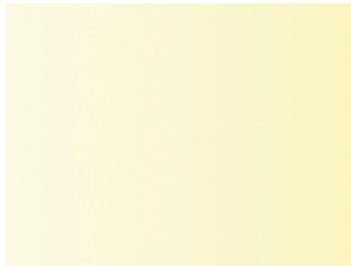




State College Borough Design Guide



Acknowledgements

A Note of Welcome and Thanks

Welcome! We are proud to announce that the State College Borough Design Guide has been updated for 2008! We've added fresh color photos to highlight features of some recent changes in town. We've developed recommendations and ideas for both established and emerging design challenges. And of course we've included plenty of reference to the time-honored elements that continue to create the identity of our home.

As citizens, developers, and planners, we hope you'll find this guide to be a helpful resource. Whether your focus is on the concept plan for your next project or the future of your neighborhood, the opportunities are vast and the possibilities exciting. Let's make this guide an ice breaker, a starting point, for the design conversations that will shape the tomorrow of our place.

As with the efforts involved in the building and rebuilding of our town, the work behind this guide has been substantial. Great creativity and dedicated energies were exhibited throughout the process. Many thanks are owed to present board members Zoe Bonafice, Kelleann Foster, and Lara Kauffman for their tireless efforts. I would also like to acknowledge past board contributors Ed Basgall, John Hiester, and Robert Keal, with special thanks to John for the gift of his artistic photos that kept us inspired throughout the process.

Finally, we could not have completed this work without the kind efforts of our diligent borough staff, Herman Slaybaugh, Debbie Lang, and Nicole Stern. Special thanks to Nicole for her superior design, formatting, and editing skills.

In regards to photo credits, all photos were taken by borough staff or design review board members unless otherwise noted.

And finally, thanks to you, the citizens and designers of our town. You all make State College what it is.

With neighborliness and gratitude,

Kevin Gombotz
2008 Design Review Board Chairperson

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Introduction: State College Borough Design Guidelines

This second edition of the State College Borough Design Guide intends to help build a place where people of all ages and incomes will want to visit and live. While this guide focuses on the more urban, downtown area of the Borough, its principles can apply to surrounding residential areas as well.

State College has grown in the 15 years since our first edition:

- The number of students at the Main Campus of Penn State University has grown 12%, to nearly 43,000.
- The Centre County work force has grown 20%, to 76,000 total workers.

In addition, census data show that from 1990 to 2000:

- The population of the 6 Centre Region municipalities grew 11%, to 70,600.
- The number of Centre Region housing units grew 18%, to 29,000 units.
- The number of people aged 60 or older grew 37%, to over 8100 individuals.

Fifteen years ago, State College sought to keep a small-town downtown. Today the Downtown Vision and Strategic Plan (adopted in 2003) sees downtown as a center for the arts and a tourist destination with exciting events both day and night. Good design can help create an attractive town that new and old residents will want to live in.

There are many shopping and dining opportunities in the area surrounding State College, but people come to the center of town for excitement. A vibrant downtown offers street life:

- People to watch
- Friends to greet
- Lively shop windows
- Cultural events
- Outdoor spots for picnic lunches
- Charming cafes for the well-earned break

A downtown is the natural heart of a community. The pedestrian friendly atmosphere of downtown encourages many local events throughout the year including:

- The Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts
- The Halloween parade
- The PSU Homecoming Parade
- First Night celebrations at the New Year
- The Last Cruise
- The Summer Concert Series
- America's Day for Kids
- Holiday Tree and its lighting ceremony
- First Thursdays
- The Fall Festival and Chili Cook Off
- And many other events

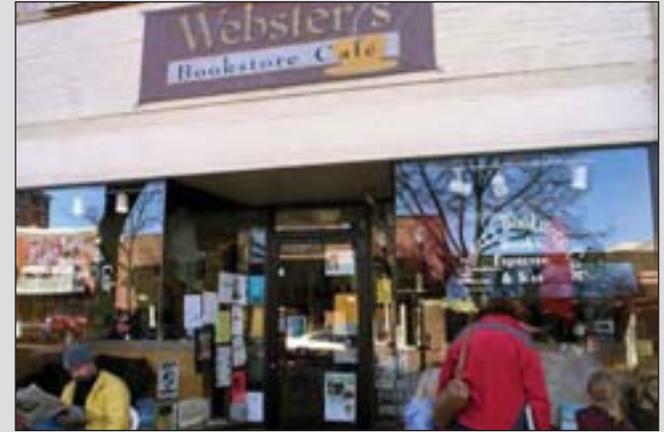
A well-designed downtown helps people meet each other, and keep in touch. It is a physical expression of a community's shared identity and civic pride.

A downtown can and should be beautiful. People will travel from far and wide to spend time in a beautiful environment. PSU President Graham Spanier has a goal of beautifying the campus in order to attract good students. This guide aims to extend this beauty beyond the borders of the university into the downtown.

Good design does not need to be expensive. More than costly materials, a well-designed space has:

- Good proportions
- Harmonious variety
- Charming views
- Living plants
- Spaces that fit the way that people want to use them

This Design Guide will identify and illustrate some of the elements of good design to build a town which provides pleasure and pride for years to come.





How To Use This Guide:

The State College Borough Design Guide provides a foundation for the Borough's Design Review program. It offers designers and developers ideas, background information, and details about how their work can meet the Borough's requirements while enhancing the community. This Guide also assists the citizen volunteers who serve on the Design Review Board and Borough staff in judging the merits of proposed projects in downtown State College.

To aid in understanding all the aspects of a design that are considered during Design Review, the Guide is divided into four sections:

1) Context and Community Setting:

A large part of design review relates to a project's context – this section directs designers and project reviewers to look closely at adjacent conditions in order to produce new buildings that enhance their surroundings.

2) Sidewalk and streetscape

The character of a neighborhood is often defined by the experience of traveling along its streets. This section points to the many components of the street setting to be considered in design.

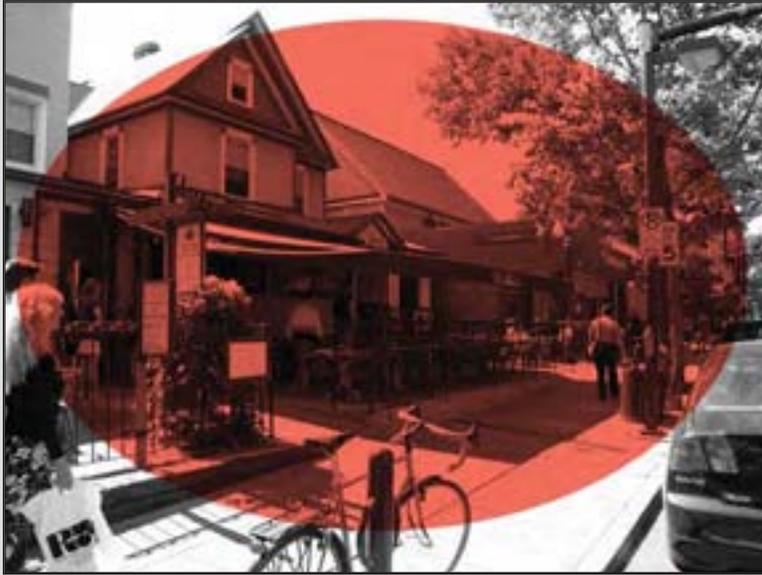
3) Transition between building and sidewalk/street

The design of the space between the building and the sidewalk is important in providing security or privacy and/or how it might encourage social interaction. This section provides an overview of the many aspects of design consideration for this area.

4) Building/ Facade

This section of the guide focuses on the important design consideration of organizing the many architectural elements of a building to create a unified whole.

Each design aspect discussed includes a purpose statement, an overview of techniques that will help achieve the purpose, and "Did you know?" facts and background information to aid in further understanding the issue.



1.0 Introduction: Community Context of Buildings

In the urban context, each building is part of a larger tapestry: there are varied uses, amenities, architectural styles, pedestrian activities, and community purposes within each neighborhood of our town. These neighborhoods flourish when individual buildings artfully serve their purpose while promoting the purposes of their neighbors. Exceptional design is intimately part of the tapestry of the surrounding community. To meet these holistic goals, early consideration should be made to the guidelines found in this chapter.

- 1.1 Wayfinding
- 1.2 Sun and Shade
- 1.3 Neighboring Structure Compatibility
- 1.4 Non-motorized Circulation
- 1.5 Green Design

1.1 Pedestrian Circulation and Wayfinding

Purpose:

The ability of a building's different users to move through space and find their destinations is critical for successful integration into the community. Whether the goal is convenience of coming and going, spontaneous attraction of patrons, or facilitation of people watching, careful site planning and appropriate building amenities will assure high quality circulation.

Techniques:

- Entrances to high traffic spaces should be placed in prominent locations visible from multiple directions.
- Surveying surrounding linkages can determine where building users will be coming from and going to (e.g. bus stops, parking garages, related services, bicycle racks).
- Circulation routes should be appropriately sized to handle peak flows and to follow the path of least resistance.
- Adequate setbacks facilitate cafés and lingering places while providing space for pass through circulation.
- When retail uses are intended, siting, sightlines, and hardspace elements can be utilized to draw patrons into or through the site. This is particularly important if retail and commercial uses are anticipated.
- People feel welcome only if they feel safe. Thus, paths should be: visible to possible observers; scaled to fit peak-time use so that pedestrians do not feel crowded; surfaced to provide secure footing; well-maintained; and free of obstacles

Examples



College Ave. and Allen St.

The corner room, an icon of State College, has a landmark presence that draws attention, gives a sense of arrival, and demarks the entrance while remaining lively and approachable.



Calder Way

The first courtyard suffers from poor access and visibility as there is no means of circulation 'through the site.' In the second case the courtyard is a connection between 2 important pedestrian corridors.

Examples



College Ave.

This retaining wall provides a resting place for bus patrons, keeping the sidewalk clear while creating a boundary to protect landscaping.



College Ave.

The large setback at this retail establishment is used to create a signature patio café while maintaining room for street traffic to curiously slip by.

Did You Know?:

- People generally prefer to take the shortest, straightest route to their destination. Paths should be placed where patrons want them to be, otherwise they will make their own unpaved ones.
- A knee-high barrier can encourage patrons to stay on the paved path. Dense shrubbery, a wall, a chain strung between posts, or a raised planting bed are a few examples of appropriate barriers. Most people would rather stay on the path than high-step over a barrier. To retain visibility for safety and navigation, a barrier should not exceed waist-height.
- The borough is committed to providing ample bike parking.
- Zoning regulations require a minimum of one walkway connection between the main entrance of any new building and the public sidewalk (Section 305.f).
- See related chapters in the Guide: 2.4 Street Furniture, 2.6 Bikeracks, 4.4 Windows and Glazing, and 3.7 Plazas, Courtyards, and Arcades.

1.2 Sun and Shade

Purpose:

Sunlight powerfully affects the desirability of spaces. When sunlight is lacking, a space can be cold, dark, and drab. Yet too much sun can be blinding, scalding, and distracting. The dynamic nature of light presents opportunities that vary from morning to afternoon and from winter to summer. A building design that is responsive to both sun and shade will improve the quality of life for its occupants and its neighbors.

Techniques:

- A shading study considers the orientation of a building and its neighbors to inventory both sun and shade. During concept planning, shading studies indicate how to best take advantage of daylight as well as considering the impact of a proposed building on neighboring buildings and spaces.
- Direct light warms common spaces. Indirect light is best for areas where reading and focused tasks occur.
- Windows in common spaces such as stairwells, lobbies, and elevators improve safety and visibility, creating a permeable and expansive experience for building visitors.
- Versatile streetscapes can create choices that are attractive in a host of weather conditions. For example, placing seatwalls and benches in areas of both sun and shade can create comfortable options for different seasons.

Examples



Fraser St. Garage on the corner of Fraser St. and Beaver Ave.

This parking garage has ample natural light in the stairwells, elevator, and lobbies, to cater to the well being of the downtown visitor.



The Central Pennsylvania Convention & Visitors Bureau,
Source: www.centralpacvb.org

Landscape features, such as this pergola, can provide visual relief to define pedestrian passages and lingering points, as well as providing shade from the sun.

Examples



Allenway Building, S. Allen St.

This lobby uses natural lighting to create a common area of 'green space' year round.



Heister St. and Cader Way

At this street side café garden, there are opportunities for customers to gather in both the sun and the shade.

Did You Know?:

- There are many techniques for reducing glare on display windows using shading devices, glazing, orientation of the window, as well as overall exterior and interior design of a window. (http://www.lrc.rpi.edu/programs/daylighting/dr_windows.asp)
- Daylight improves productivity, mood, and consumer buying. (<http://www.pge.com/pec/daylight/daylight.shtml>)

1.3 Neighboring Structure Compatibility

Purpose:

Every new or renovated building is set within a context of existing structures. Design for new buildings or renovations should be compatible with neighboring structures. Compatibility does not mean making structures identical in appearance, but rather drawing upon basic characteristics of neighboring buildings. Aspects such as placement on the site, size, massing, roof form, architectural details, and construction materials and colors can achieve this desired harmony. The goal is to enhance the streetscape appearance.

Techniques:

- Contemporary buildings can fit in well with older structures by ensuring that a few basic characteristics are similar in appearance. The key elements impacting compatibility are building height, roof form and pitch, massing and scale.
- Compatibility in height can be achieved by keeping the difference of the new building's height within one story of the predominant building heights on the street.
- Compatibility is promoted in regards to massing when the general composition of the building's form is similar to nearby buildings. For example, are the neighboring structures simple rectangular forms or are they more complex, articulated facades with projecting bays or towers?
- The use of similarly scaled defining features can aid in compatibility. This relates to building detailing and architectural features as well as how a building responds to pedestrians. For example, are there windows for passersby to engage in viewing?

Examples



New apartment building designed to be compatible in size and architectural detailing with historic homes on the same block.



The building height and setback, with a parking lot in front, is not compatible with the surrounding structures' size and setback.

West College Ave.,
Source: Prime Property Group, LP; Weber Murphy Fox

West College Ave.

Examples



West College Ave.

This new commercial building fits in well with the older buildings along the street due to its height, roof form, and window placement.



East Beaver Ave.

No windows at the street level make this building incompatible at the pedestrian scale.

Did You Know?:

- Complementary buildings along a street provide an environment that is more welcoming and less distracting and disorienting. According to the article “Enhancing Downtown’s Sense of Place” from Main Street News, September 1999, historical buildings within a downtown fabric can serve as a guide for the design of new buildings to help create a cohesive sense of place.
- Certain building features are detrimental to creating human scale and are inappropriate in a Borough like State College. Blank walls, flat or unarticulated entries, and smooth or panelized building materials should all be avoided. Instead, pedestrian-interest amenities, such as porches, awnings, planters/flowers, and seating should be included.
- See Chapter 4: Buildings and Facades and Section 4.7 Windows and Glazing.
- Land development plans are required to show proposed new buildings in the context of their surroundings (Section 305.a.22).

1.4 Green Design

Purpose:

Use of green building principles (such as LEED™) in State College development projects will:

- Enhance occupant well-being
- Reduce operating costs
- Increase building valuation
- Create competitive distinction
- Improve regional air and water quality
- Attract creative professionals

Techniques:

- Site Development is improved with attention to alternative transportation access, stormwater management, and open space preservation
- Water consumption can be reduced for increased water efficiency through efficient appliances and fixtures, rainwater catchment, and low-irrigation plantings.
- Energy consumption is lowered through enhanced insulation, addressing undesirable solar heat loads, high efficiency HVAC systems, and onsite solar electric or hotwater systems.
- Construction impact is minimized by using materials that are regional, reused, recycled, and rapidly renewable. The reuse of existing buildings is encouraged.
- Indoor environmental quality as well as occupant health and well-being is improved with low-emitting materials and finishes, thermal comfort, ventilation, daylight, and views.

Examples



Penn State Campus, Source: Robert Cameron

Green roofing, such as on this building in the borough, decreases the rate and volume of stormwater discharge while improving water quality.



Sources: www.savewaterus.com, www.portlandonline.com, www.inhabitat.com, www.smarthomepro.com

Dual flush toilets, waterless urinals, lowflow showerheads, and high efficiency washing machines can reduce water consumption 20-30%.

Examples



Source: Envinity

The solar hotwater and electric system on this house in State College decreases energy consumption.



Hayes Large Office, Beaver Ave.

The interior of this office building on Beaver Ave. uses rapidly renewable cork flooring, high efficiency lighting, low emissions paint, and recyclable carpeting.

Did You Know?:

- LEED™ accreditation is a way to create recognition for positive environmental actions
- LEED™ accreditation has a possible 69 points in the following categories:

Category	Available Points
Sustainable Sites	14
Water Efficiency	5
Energy and Atmosphere	17
Materials and Resources	13
Indoor Environmental Quality	15
Innovation in Design Process	5
Total:	69

- For more information on the requirements and credit opportunities of the LEED™ system, consult the LEEDv2.2 Overview at: <https://www.usgbc.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=1095>.
- In the Commercial Incentive District, additional building height and reduction in parking incentives may be received for incorporating green building principles. The incentives are on a sliding scale from a 10% reduction in required parking for a basic LEED™ certification to a 20% reduction in parking and an additional story for a Gold or better certification (Section 1855).



2.0 Introduction: Sidewalk and Streetscape

The sidewalk and the streetscape are public areas that unify the adjoining spaces. The way that the streetscape is presented can change the entire feel of a community. The overall character and attractiveness can create a sense of town and place just by incorporating unifying characteristics.

For instance:

- Street trees can be used to create an overhead plane or columnar rows that draw the eye into a location. They create a cooling effect and create shady pedestrian zones. They serve as edges and boundaries to define pedestrian spaces.
- Lighting can be used not only to illuminate the paths and town centers at night but also to create interest and uniformity in the daylight. Many interesting architectural fixtures and base poles can be used to add decoration to the streetscape.
- Paved areas can be integrated by using unique paving materials. By using natural stone, granite, or concrete and brick pavers, a sidewalk can become a work of art that will last for many generations.
- Seating can unify a space by placing benches or sitting walls in strategic locations to attract people into a common area and give those that need to rest a place to do so.
- Trash receptacles are important in the sidewalk areas to prevent littering and encourage a clean and inviting environment.

- 2.1 Paving
- 2.2 Lighting
- 2.3 Street Trees
- 2.4 Street Furniture
- 2.5 Utilities
- 2.6 Bikeracks

2.1 Paving

Purpose:

The purpose of addressing paving in this design guide is to encourage developers to consider alternate materials in their selection of paving material. Considering other choices of materials can add beauty and interest to the streetscape, entry plazas, and vehicular areas.

Techniques:

- Paving sets the foundation for and unifies all other streetscape elements. A well designed paving pattern can delineate circulation and separate spaces within the same plane to enhance pedestrian areas.
- Treatment of the groundplane through use of varied or uncommon paving materials can add visual richness to the environment through texture and color. Examples of options include flagstone, brick, pavers, granite, grass pavers, limestone or sandstone. These add a richness and texture that is far superior to concrete or asphalt and will last for generations.
- Using local materials not only contributes to a cohesive local character, but can also have lower environmental impact by saving resources used to transport materials long distances.

Examples



S. Pugh St.

A hotel entryway with contrasting concrete pavers adds color and interest to a driveway and pedestrian walkway.



Valparaiso, Chile

This cafe has incorporated mosaic signage into their entry paving to catch the attention of passersby.

Examples



Borough Building, S. Allen St.

The paving pattern at the Borough building helps to break up the vastness of the space while complimenting the architecture of the building.



College Ave.

Engraved pavers add warmth and interest to a space. This paving also plays into the identity of the Theater entrance.

Did You Know?:

- The use of dry laid pavers, rather than asphalt or concrete, can help to decrease surface runoff into the storm system. If they must be used, concrete and asphalt can both be made to be porous to reduce the runoff.
- Organizations have successfully used engraved pavers to assist in fundraising, which also results in a unique walkway for their location.
- Sidewalks and plazas are principal places of pedestrian movement and casual social interaction. The selection of paving materials can complement and enhance this function while also considering future maintenance needs.
- Paving materials that differ from basic materials (such as concrete and asphalt) make sidewalks look more distinctive (Main Street News, Issue 157, Abstract).
- The Borough's sidewalk ordinance allows public sidewalks to be paved with bricks or other decorative pavers upon permission from the Municipal Engineer. Chapter XVI. Section 603.c.

2.2 Lighting

Purpose:

Living in the northeast, illumination is an essential element during the short days of winter and the warm summer nights. Lighting is an important element to provide information and safety during the evening hours.

Techniques:

- Lighting is very important in design as not only an aesthetic feature, but also as a safety factor. Well designed lighting is essential in pedestrian zones and can guide visitors to downtown after daylight hours.
- The architectural quality of the fixtures has improved greatly over the last couple of decades. The developer has thousands of styles to choose from and should consult an expert in lighting design during the planning phase.
- There are also considerations in lighting that will reduce energy costs and help to minimize the impact on the environment.
- Light pathways encourages defined circulation patterns.
- Light pollution should be considered when choosing how to light a building and it is always best to have little or no glare.

Examples



Pattee Mall, Penn State Campus

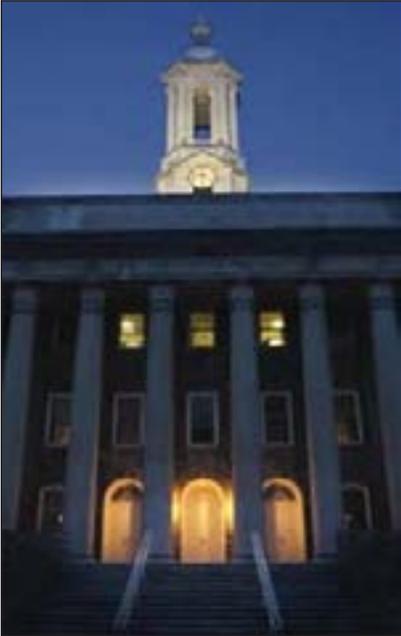
Historical or ornate lights add ambience



North Atherton Street, Source: Cliff Kanz

Neon lighting can be used to provide aesthetic appeal to a building at night as well as create a unique or signature look for a business.

Examples



Old Main, Penn State Campus

Soft lighting reduces glare and noise pollution as well as highlighting architectural features at night.



W, College Ave.

Lamposts can provide opportunities for community expression and seasonal displays.

Did You Know?:

- Light pollution is excess or obtrusive light created by humans. Among other effects, it disrupts ecosystems, can cause adverse health effects, obscures the stars for city dwellers, interferes with astronomical observatories, and wastes energy.
- The Borough's zoning ordinance regulates lighting on private property. Key elements regulated include fixture type, brightness, mounting height, and light trespass across property lines (Part K, Sections 2701 et. seq.).

2.3 Street Trees

Purpose:

Street trees are a critical design element of the streetscape environment. They provide shade, texture, color, scent, and environmental wellbeing. Without this urban forest, the street appears harsh and uninviting. Investing in trees during development can add economic benefit to the area for hundreds of years.

Techniques:

- Consulting the State College Borough Municipal Tree Plan is important when selecting specimens of trees. This plan includes habit, tolerance, and seasonal qualities.
- Appropriately sized trees should be chosen for the location setting.
- Trees should be placed to provide shade for parked cars and in pedestrian seating areas.
- Thought should be given to the surrounding trees and environment. It is best to incorporate species that compliment each other.
- During development projects, protect existing trees according to zoning laws in a method approved by the landscape architect for the project.

Examples



Ridge Ave.

This tree lined street in a residential neighborhood adds value to the homes and creates a sense of a beautiful community.



Waupelani Dr., Source: Alan Sam

Mature tree size should be considered in relation to adjacent utilities. The tree shown here was severely pruned to avoid the power lines.

Examples



Kentlands, Maryland

Trees provide welcome shade for both pedestrians and parked cars.



Source: PA Standards for Residential Site Development

Street trees can survive in an urban condition with proper attention to root zone treatment.

Did You Know?:

- The State College Borough Tree Commission was established in 1923 to encourage and protect the community's trees.
- The Tree commission reviews requests and makes suggestions for specimens.
- Trees between the sidewalk and street are cared for by the Borough.
- Trees planted around paving need a properly sized planting and rooting medium with protection from compaction. Surface treatment should protect people from tripping.
- State College has an annual Arbor Day celebration and since 1984, the borough has annually received the Tree City USA award.
- In a 2005 study by Kathleen Wolfe, residents surveyed in small cities rated the character of places with large trees 35% higher than atmospheres without trees. (<http://www.cfr.washington.edu/research.envmind/consumer.html>)
- See Section 3.3 Plantings.
- Borough zoning regulations require a street tree protection report to be included as part of all development plan submissions to ensure proper protection of street trees during construction of new buildings (Section 305.a.37).

2.4 Street Furniture

Purpose:

Street furniture and outdoor seating should invite pedestrians to linger and provide a unified composition to make the place visually appealing. Street furniture can help create a desirable environment.

Techniques:

- Street furniture consists of an array of items; seating, trash receptacles, newspaper dispensers, parking meters, fountains, planters, sculpture, phone booths, mail boxes, clocks, bus shelters, and bollards.
- It is important to pay attention to the design of street furniture and how it will relate to the buildings and other items around it.
- Trash receptacles should be well thought out and placed near ATMs, pizza shops, and convenience stores to help keep the town clean.
- Seating can be a myriad of materials, from simple benches to limestone boulders, granite blocks, retaining walls, or fountain edges.

Examples



W. College Ave.

Simple outdoor seating encourages patrons to enjoy the streetscape.



Penn State Campus

Benches and a garbage can entice pedestrians to pack a lunch on a nice day.

Examples



Alley between E. College Ave. and Calder Way

A granite bench gives shoppers a place to rest out of the sun



Allen St.

Offices can encourage employees and the public to make use of entry plazas through the placement of tables and chairs.

Did You Know?:

- Street furniture itself has become as much a part of many nations' identities as dialects and national events, so much so that one can usually recognize the location by their design; famous examples of this include:
 - the red telephone boxes of Britain
 - the residential post boxes of the United States
 - the streetlamps and metro entrances of Paris
- See Section 3.6 Refuse and Recycling Receptacles.
- In the downtown business district, the Borough maintains curb-side trash receptacles. Additional placements are considered upon request. Inquiry is made through the Public Works Department.

2.5 Utilities

Purpose:

Utilities are a necessity of urban life and an essential element in development and construction. However, visible utility systems are often unsightly. Utility lines, poles, transformers, cables, and electric boxes mar the ambience of an otherwise pleasant, pedestrian-oriented environment.

Techniques:

- Whenever and wherever practical, newly installed utilities should be underground. Mechanical equipment or other utility hardware on the roof, ground, or buildings, should be screened from public view with materials harmonious with the building, or should be hidden from public ways.
- When hiding infrastructure is impossible, utilities may be transformed into a visual asset by creative means such as colorful paint, a mural, plantings, or fencing.
- The visual impact of utilities should always be carefully considered and treated for maximum visual appeal.

Examples



Calder Way

These utility poles are located in a back alley, keeping the front of buildings and the main street clear. This creates an unsightly alley however.



High St.

This fence and planting help to screen unsightly utilities

Examples



High St.

There is not much screening or buffering between this sub-station and the sidewalk.



S. Allen St.

This utility is screened using materials which match the seatwall and facade around it.

Did You Know?:

- Burying wires is less expensive if implemented during construction of a project. While the foundation is excavated, wires can be easily routed and buried before site work is completed.
- Under the Flexible Incentive Zoning option, incentive points can be earned for burying or otherwise hiding overhead utilities. Those points may be used to gain development bonuses (Section 1930).
- See Section 3.6 Refuse, Recycling, and Dumpsters.

2.6 Bikeracks

Purpose:

To promote the use of bicycles in our community, it is vital to have accessible and safe bicycle parking that meets the needs of cyclists and other users of the street. Bicycle use eases traffic congestion, relieves burden on parking resources, and improves the general health of our community.

Techniques:

- The rack style chosen should facilitate locking of the frame and at least one wheel. Unique and artful rack styles are encouraged.
- Racks should be easy to find and visible from the building entrance or destination they intend to serve.
- Racks must be sized according to the space available and the rack footprint with bikes attached.
- Capacity should be designed to meet anticipated demand. Space for future expansion should be allocated.
- The rack must be in an area not perceived to be subject to vandalism.
- Protection from the elements should be included whenever possible. This is particularly important for long-term storage racks (e.g. commuter and residential bike parking).

Examples



College Ave.

The proper rack style depends on the space available and the setting.



Stuckeman Family Building, Penn State Campus

This rack uses an existing overhang to protect bikes from the elements and is located within convenient proximity to the building entrance.

Examples



Beaver Ave.

This bike rack on beaver avenue is a good example of proper orientation: it can provide storage for up to 4 bikes while aligning them in a way that keeps the sidewalk and roadway clear.



Germany

Bike Racks can be sculptural elements to provide visual interest and uniqueness even when unoccupied. This German rack provides covered parking, makes efficient use of space, and is memorably enshrouded in a living sculpture.

Did You Know?:

- The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) has developed guidelines to specify appropriate rack styles and to lay out parking areas for success. <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/pdf/bikepark.pdf>
- It is important to re-evaluate your site's parking resources periodically as usership changes. Full racks and illegally parked bikes are tell tale signs that capacity requires an increases.
- Recommended types of racks (borough transportation commission put together a plan in spring 2006 that listed recommended types of racks <http://www.statecollegepa.us/index.asp?NID=664>)



3.0 Transition Area Between Building and Street

The treatment of the area between the building and street is key to the look and feel of a community. To create and maintain an engaging experience, it is necessary to visually and physically connect activities at the street-level of the building with the adjacent sidewalk and street. Downtown's hospitality is greatly enhanced when the transition space between buildings and the sidewalk "reach out" and "embrace" the pedestrian and street zones.

While a building's architectural design and site orientation are important, the site design must also include special attention for the space between the building and the public right-of-way (sidewalk/ street). This transition area should be designed to enhance both the building and the adjacent public realm. By designing the transition space to relate to the character and style of the building, as well as to the prevailing character of the surroundings, a site's development can help reflect and enhance the vitality of State College Borough. This is accomplished through providing a setting for lively interchange between passersby and the building, such as with seating and cafes; through details of physical elements, such as walls and landscaping; and through attention to unique features, such as public art.

- 3.1 Walls and Fences
- 3.2 Public Art
- 3.3 Plantings
- 3.4 Seating and Cafes
- 3.5 Screening and Planting for Parking Lots
- 3.6 Refuse, Recycling and Dumpsters
- 3.7 Plazas, Courtyards and Arcades

3.1 Walls and Fences

Purpose:

An appropriately designed fence can complement an area. A front fence or wall will preserve the friendly character of downtown State College if it encourages, rather than blocks, views to the site and if its materials relate to the adjacent building or landscape setting.

Techniques:

- Fences and walls help to define outdoor spaces and can help to clarify for the public the boundary of the transitional space between private property and public right-of-way.
- Front walls and fences will be more welcoming if people on the street or sidewalk can see the property. Therefore, a height of 42 inches or lower is preferable.
- To encourage an informal seating, a wall's height should be 15 inches to 2 feet in height.
- Walls and fences can make a positive visual impact for the community when the exposed framing faces the interior yard or property and not the public right-of-way (sidewalk or street). The best fences and walls are designed to be double-sided.
- Walls and fences should be installed so as to not disturb or damage existing vegetation.
- When walls or fences are used for privacy or screening, the fence should be higher and more solid in character. Large solid walls or fences should be supplemented with plantings to softened their appearance.
- Painting or staining pressure treated wood greatly enhances the appearance.

Examples



Café 210, W. College Ave.

This fence is a nice way to define the property and make sure the public knows where they are welcome.



Borough Building, S. Allen St.

These walls use the same materials as the building, vary in height due to the slope and also create planting areas.

Examples



Along Calder Way and E. Beaver Ave.

Walls and fences can help to define an entry, enclose a seating plaza, screen parking views or provide a bit of artistry to the scene.



Curtin Road, Penn State

The designer of this wall used surface breaks and rough texture on the ground plane to discourage skateboarding activities on the wall.

Did You Know?:

- When walls or fences are designed to be more open in style, they will mark the boundary and act as a means to limit physical access while still allowing the passerby some visual access of the property.
- If walls are lower in height, they may be used by skateboarders, which can damage the wall. To discourage this, the ground surface around the wall can be a rougher texture and/or the top of the wall can be designed to have breaks or bumps – skateboarders prefer long, flat surfaces. Adding small metal bumps to the top after wall is built should be avoided. Design the wall with potential misuse in mind.
- Location should keep in mind the need for maintenance and repairs without going onto the neighboring property.
- Unadorned or plain walls, such as pressure treated wood, unfaced concrete or regular concrete block, can look unfinished and uncared for. This gives visitors and neighbors a more negative impression of the area.
- Use of natural stone is more durable, sustainable, and reflects the context of the community.
- Zoning regulations govern fence and wall heights and setback (Section 502.f.8).

3.2 Public Art

Purpose:

Public art is a gift to the community. It gives pleasure to residents and customers; it honors the sharing of public spaces. The murals on Garner St. and Calder Way remind us of local history. The Nittany Lion Shrine gives Penn State alumni a symbol of shared identity.

Techniques:

- Artwork in a prominent spot can be a landmark that helps people find their way, or a gathering point for groups.
- Art can soften or humanize an intimidating environment, such as especially tall or visually severe buildings.
- Artworks can be useful: they can provide shelter, a place to sit, or a chance to cool off.
- Storefronts, window displays, signs, or mascot images can become works of art.

Examples



Beaver Ave. at Pugh St.

Art helps us to enjoy life in the present moment.



Penn State Campus

People love to interact with a work of art such as this sculpture.

Examples



Pugh St.

Public art pieces can create a sense of discovery and excitement when placed along pedestrian paths.



Penn State Campus

Some art simply reminds viewers to enjoy being alive.

Did You Know?:

- Artworks can be created to suit any scale of public setting, from the smallest nook to the largest plaza.
- Art does not need to be expensive to be beautiful. Works can be crafted to suit a wide range of budgets.
- Most public art in State College has been purchased with private funds.
- The Borough's Commercial Incentive District (CID) zoning ordinance offers incentives for creating plazas and other public space at ground-floor level. Such spaces are ideal spots for public art.

3.3 Plantings

Purpose:

A key component of the outdoor environment of State College Borough is the presence of vegetation. The variety, life, and interest that plants provide contribute greatly to the goal of enlivening the places between our buildings and the street. The softness, movement, and seasonal changes of plantings provide a welcome contrast to the firmness and solidity of walls and pavement. With proper consideration, planting designs can enhance the immediate environment for the users, be they a passerby or someone who sits to rest for awhile.

Techniques:

- Effective planting designs respond to or relate directly to the adjacent buildings and architectural features. For example, plants can be located to filter views from windows, but they should avoid blocking those views. A façade's feature can be reinforced by carrying it into the landscape via a plant grouping that corresponds to the architectural element. These urban planting designs are more appropriate in a downtown setting than typical "foundation plantings", which simply soften the juncture between building and site.
- When devising a planting design and selecting the plants, a strong idea about the purpose or intended use should be considered. Examples of such design goals include enhancing the entrance, demarking a seating area, creating a comfortable pedestrian scale, screening a view, creating a focal point, and providing dappled shade for a courtyard.
- A plant material's foliage texture, flower and berry color, and bark patterns are key design considerations. The interrelationship of a plant's characteristics to a building's color and texture are important.

Examples



Centennial Walkway, between E. College Ave & Calder Way

A combination of shrubs and small trees help to make this alley-walkway comfortable for pedestrians.



Palmer Art Museum, Penn State

A variety of tree trunk bark and foliage textures create interest.

Examples



Private residence, Patton Twp.

Colorful berries and bark can provide winter interest.



Schlow Centre Region Library, S. Allen St.

Street trees planted in larger planting “trenches” will live longer due to more room for roots.

Did You Know?:

- Including plant selections that provide variety throughout all seasons, such as incorporating plants with berries or colored stems for winter interest, creates interesting spaces.
- Future maintenance issues and a plant’s future growth habit and mature size are key considerations when designing spaces. It is recommended that a professional landscape architect or arborist be consulted regarding appropriate plant selections.
- In a survey of small town residents, shoppers indicated that they prefer retail areas with trees, even willing to pay up to 9% more in these planted atmospheres. (Wolf, K. L. 2005. Trees In the Small City Retail Business District: Comparing Resident and Visitor Perceptions. Journal of Forestry, 103, 8, 390-395. <http://www.cfr.washington.edu/research.envmind/consumer.html>)
- See Section 2.3 Street Trees.

3.4 Public and Cafe Seating

Purpose:

Outdoor seating enlivens an environment. In semi-private settings, such as a front porch or a café, seating provides a gentle transition between public and private spaces. In public settings, seating invites people to linger.

Techniques:

- Public seating should:
 - Provide a pleasant climate: shade in summer, sun in winter, shelter from strong winds, and a buffer from traffic
 - Offer something to look at: street life, a companion, a good view, or a work of art.
 - Be placed where people like to sit: near food sellers, at bus stops, within green spaces, or next to building entrances.
- Outdoor café seating can:
 - Extend the service capacity of a restaurant
 - Increase the attractiveness and safety of adjacent public spaces and invigorate urban street life
 - Encourage patrons to use the site as a gathering spot
 - Use awnings to shade summer patrons and heat lamps to lengthen the season for outdoor dining

Examples



W. College Ave. at Allen St.

Students enjoy the passing show while waiting for a bus.



Heister St.

Moveable fencing provides flexibility in cafe size.

Examples



Calder Way

Outdoor seating can serve as public art (or vice versa).



Penn State Campus

Shading provided by the trees makes for a comfortable cafe setting.

Did You Know?:

- Semi-private or public seating increases the number of eyes and ears attuned to public life. Thus, it encourages everyone within view to feel a bit safer.
- In the Borough's downtown commercial district, tables and chairs serving outdoor cafes may be located within required set-back areas on a seasonal basis provided adequate space along the public sidewalk is maintained (Section 502.f.8.j).

3.5 Screening and Planting for Parking Lots

Purpose:

While travel by automobile and the need to store those vehicles is prevalent in contemporary life, the presence of parked cars need not dominate the scene. For safety and economic vitality reasons, parking needs to be visible and accessible, however that can be accomplished while softening the impact of that view. The use of vegetation and architectural elements can assist in this goal

Techniques:

- The interior of parking lots can be made more aesthetically pleasing and safer through the use of landscape strips. These function to break-up unsafe diagonal movements through parking lots. They can also serve as locations for parking lot landscaping, pole lights, and stormwater facilities. Linear planting strips are encouraged rather than numerous small one-tree islands as that arrangement is better for long-term tree health and is easier for parking lot maintenance, such as snow removal.
- The best ways to achieve screening from public view are one of the below, alone or in combination, at a minimum 3-foot height:
 - Shrubs and trees closely spaced
 - Walls that match or complement the building materials
 - Fencing that provides minimum 50% visibility reduction
- The selection of larger canopy trees is desired as the shade they provide will help to diminish the pavement's "heat island effect" and their canopy's leaves (the wetted leaf surface) assist in stormwater management by slowing the rate of release.
- If the parking lot will be lit at night, lighting that is sized appropriate to the scale and purpose of the parking lot should be chosen. (See also Chapter 2 section on "Lighting.")

Examples



Doylestown, PA

A landscape strip in a small parking lot where the trees and vegetation are flourishing.



Recreation Building, Penn State

Parking lot view screened by a wall the compliments the brick detailing in the adjacent building.

Examples



Stuckeman Family Building, Penn State

Landscape strip used as a bioswale to cleanse the first-flush of stormwater runoff.



Philadelphia, PA (photo credit: Center City District)

Generous plantings provide a pleasing screen of the parking lot view.

Did You Know?:

- A mature deciduous tree in full leaf can store 50 to 100 gallons of water during large rainstorms. This is then slowly released, thereby reducing runoff volume and delaying onset of peak flows. (Northeast community tree guide, 2007, USDA, http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/documents/psw_gtr202/psw_gtr202.pdf.)
- Trees can thrive and live a long life if they are planted in structural soil - a combination of topsoil, gravel and tackifier - that helps eliminate compaction of the roots.
- The use of bioswale islands can help cleanse, absorb and retain some of the stormwater runoff from parking lots. This can be very beneficial. If bioswales are to be used for infiltration of the stormwater, careful study of underlying geology is paramount.
- See Section 3.3 Plantings for benefits of street trees and planting in retail areas.
- The Borough's zoning ordinance mandates that the perimeter of newly installed parking areas, except those serving 1- and 2-family homes, be screened using landscaping, berming, fencing, or some combination therein (Section 2404.i).
- The interior areas separating parking bays must be planted with ground cover and shade trees (Section 2404.i).

3.6 Refuse and Recycling Receptacles

Purpose:

The generation of “waste” is a fact of life - however, how it is handled can make a big difference in the appearance and sustainability of a community. The placement of recycling and waste receptacles should be considered in tandem with all other components of site design. The recycling containers for the public should be prominent and the larger refuse and recycling collection containers should be screened from public view.

Techniques:

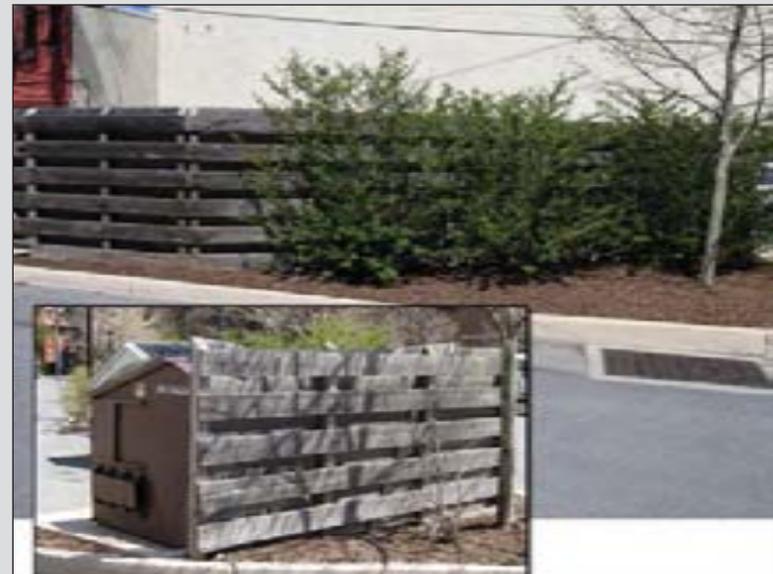
- Waste and recycling containers for everyday use by the public or a building’s users should be located in convenient locations, such as near doors or seating.
- Larger waste receptacles, such as dumpsters, must be screened from public view via one or a combination of methods:
 - Plantings that provide total screening at the time of installation
 - Walls that match or complement the building materials
 - Fencing that reduces visibility of the receptacles
- Businesses can co-locate and share refuse and recycling receptacles.

Examples



Visual Arts Building, Penn State

Brick that matches the adjacent building, as well as metal doors, provide screening on all sides for these dumpsters.



Borough Bldg., alley behind S. Allen St.

This dumpster is screened on three sides by a wood fence and plantings.

Examples



W. College Ave.

Here a trash can and a recycling can are located adjacent to each other.



Calder Alley

Although these dumpsters are screened from the adjacent street by a brick wall, which compliments the building, they are still very visible from all other directions.

Did You Know?:

- People are more likely to recycle if the recycling containers are prominent and co-located with waste receptacles.
- Well integrated dumpster screening can enhance the quality of a neighborhood.
- For businesses, refuse and recycling receptacle sizes can be minimized by a contract with the Borough for refuse and recycling collection as frequently as required.
- Borough zoning regulations require bulk refuse receptacles to be screened from view on all sides, except the side used for access. Fences, landscaping, or a combination may be used (Section 2404.m).

3.7 Plazas, Courtyards, and Arcades

Purpose:

Plazas, courtyards, and arcades are well-defined spaces that can provide outdoor seating, a place for people to meet and gather and enhancement of a building's entry if placed near the front door. Outdoor spaces along the street frontage provide welcome variety to the spatial setting of the streetscape.

Techniques:

- Plaza, courtyard, and arcade spaces should be part of the early conceptual designs for a site and building to ensure that these important outdoor spaces are located to meet the design intention. Considerations include:
 - Solar exposure
 - Views into and off the site
 - Probable and desired pedestrian circulation
 - Size based on intended use
- Larger spaces are better used for gather and seating, whereas smaller spaces might work well to draw attention to the entrance, guide circulation and provide a more pleasing building entry space.
- If located on a site at a street corner, these spaces can be designed to add variety to the streetscape setting and soften the corner.
- These spaces can be purely aesthetic in their purpose, however the design must be well crafted for this to succeed.
- If the space it designed to be more private in nature, it must still be laid out with security in mind.
- It is often desirable to have a focal element, such as a sculpture, feature plant, or special paving.

Examples



Centennial Walkway, between E. College Ave & Calder Way

This alley was redesigned as a linear courtyard for pedestrian passage and gathering, but it also provides emergency access.



Schlow Centre Region Library

This arcade provides a covered sidewalk and entry as well as seating.

Examples



Glenland Building, corner E. Beaver and Pugh

This small courtyard allows all users inside the building a nice view out and it also enhances the building's entrance.



Willard Plaza, Pollock Rd, Penn State

This entrance was redesigned to provide comfortable seating and a gathering place as well as an aesthetically pleasing entry to the building.

Did You Know?:

- Proper visibility and physical access into and out of a courtyard or plaza space is important to keep people from feeling trapped or insecure.
- To avoid disused and seemingly abandoned outdoor spaces, they should be located where people will be able to make use of them; where people would like to sit, gather, pass-through, etc.
- Arcades can be simple passageways, but they can also be designed to serve as covered seating and/or covered entrances to shops and cafes.
- Plazas and courtyards adjacent to the street frontage make ideal places for café seating and possibly food vendor carts. (See Section 3.4)
- The design of these outdoor spaces might also be a good location for bike racks. A secure place to park bikes, as well as covered bike racks, are appreciated by cyclists. (See Section 2.6)
- Larger spaces can be designed for occasional community events, such as craft fairs or bake sales.
- Visual interest provided along the street frontage enhances human interest and creates more dynamic street life. Courtyards, plazas and arcades, if designed properly, can contribute to this streetscape enhancement.
- Zoning regulations applicable in the Commercial Incentive district provide development bonuses for increasing building set back at street level. These areas of increased setback are ideal places for plazas and courtyards (Section 1855).



4.0 Building and Facades

Architectural elements help a building harmonize with its neighbors, as well as give it individual ‘personality’. Historic neighborhoods derive some of their charm from well-balanced variations of a particular building style. In a highly developed area like the State College Borough, existing buildings of older styles surround most new construction sites. With creative modern design, the new building can become a novel variation upon the surrounding theme; it can complement older neighbors without copying them. For more information on visual harmony among new and older buildings, please refer to Section 1.3: Neighboring Structure Compatibility.

- 4.1 Mass, Architectural Style, and Scale
- 4.2 Facade Articulation
- 4.3 Building Materials, Finishes, and Accent Lighting
- 4.4 Windows and Other Glazing
- 4.5 Vehicular Access
- 4.6 Signage

4.1 Mass, Architectural Style, and Scale

Purpose:

The size of a new building might be determined by the site or by the market demand for that use. Regardless, the building design's style and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. That concept should also be in keeping with the architectural characteristics of surrounding buildings, especially historic structures. Attention to these issues can help new buildings be more compatible with their neighbors and enhance our comfortable downtown setting.

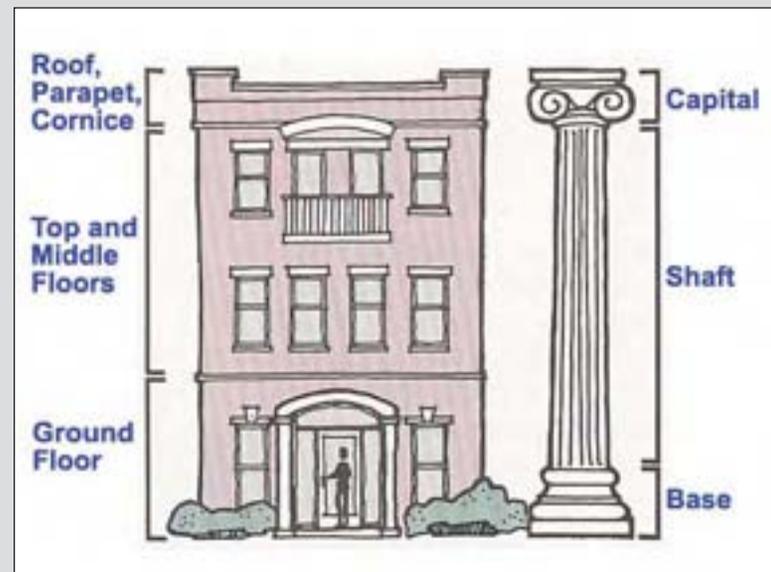
Techniques:

- A key aspect of building size and mass is its degree of “human scale,” which refers to way its design is visually divided into components that people can relate to. A building has a good human scale if its details, elements, and materials allow people to feel comfortable using and approaching it.
- Buildings can promote a better sense of scale by expressing a basic three-part organization to the building: 1) the ground floor, 2) the middle floor(s), 3) the roof, parapet, or cornice.
- A building's mass refers to its shape and composition of forms. As the size of a building increases, the complexity of its massing should also increase to provide suitable visual interest and maintain human comfort.
- Factors to consider when looking at scale and massing issues:
 - Building design should respond to lot size, lot shape, and the lot's orientation along the street (corner, mid-block, etc.)
 - Type and amount of separation between lots (e.g. separation by property line only, by an alley or street, or by other physical features such as grade changes).

Examples



This building's size and mass are well designed to include a complexity of forms that make it visually interesting.



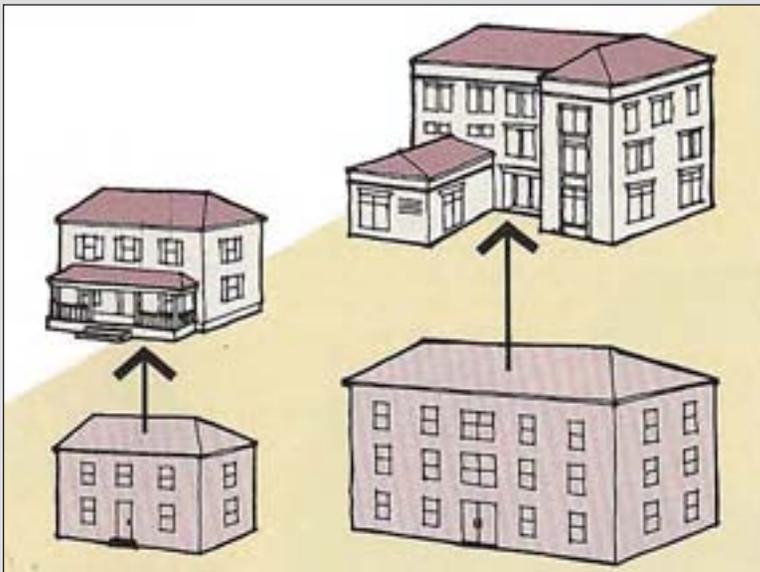
The visual interest is generated when buildings express a three-part organization similar to the design of a column.

Examples



S. Allen Street and W. College Ave.

Detailing and materials at the ground level promote a more “human scale” – shown are windows, stone, brick, and metal.



Modified from: Leesburg VA, H-2 Corridor Design Guidelines

To achieve visual interest, as building size increases, design detailing and complexity of massing should increase too.

Did You Know?:

- If the existing context is not so well defined, or is undesirable, a well-designed, new project can become a pioneer with the opportunity to establish a pattern or identity from which future development can take its cues.
- Architectural features that hinder human scale and should be avoided include:
 - Flat or unarticulated entries
 - Blank walls and flat or continuous curtain walls
 - Smooth or panelized building materials
 - Lack of pedestrian amenities
- State College has grown and developed since the late 1800s. The borough is fortunate to have examples of many different architectural styles. A good reference regarding the various styles is the Centre County Historic Society’s “Centre County Architecture, A Guide to Styles.” (<http://centrecountyhistory.org/preservation/ccarch.html>)
- Due to the pedestrian nature of downtown, building exteriors should be constructed of durable materials that are attractive when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.
- In the Commercial Incentive District, building facades facing streets are required to be staggered or offset in order to break the plane by forming recesses, projections, and other displacement (Section 1853).
- In the Commercial incentive District, bland walls void of architectural detail are prohibited. Ground floors are required to have an architectural treatment that distinguishes it from floors directly above (Section 1853).

4.2 Façade Elements

Purpose:

Architectural features of the façade can make a building a more pleasant environment for living and working, enhancing both beauty and ease of use. They can help users to locate a building entrance, or offer outdoor shelter from the weather. Façade design also helps a contemporary building to complement its older neighbors, for individual elements can evoke a style without copying it.

Techniques:

- A building set at the sidewalk can enhance its curb appeal with an entrance alcove. The alcove is an undercut from the mass of the building. It should be sized to allow for: door clearance, sidewalk signs, window displays, and perhaps space for a patron to shelter from the weather without blocking the door.
- A porch also creates a transition space between the private interior and the public world, providing outdoor shelter. If it is more than 3 steps above street level, it should have a railing.
- A balcony or terrace serves as a porch for upper floors of a building. In upscale housing, it can substitute for yard space.
- A canopy or awning provides the shelter of a roof, yet encourages foot traffic underneath. It is less formal and less expensive than a roof. It invites passersby to linger at a café or other outdoor public seating. An awning can both accent and shade a display window.
- Columns can support a roof, define an outdoor area or pathway, emphasize a building entrance, or visually break up a large and imposing façade.
- A building with a sloping roof can use dormers to expand useful space and enhance natural lighting on the topmost floor. Dormers also provide visual interest at the roofline.

Examples



Allen St.

Entrance alcoves offer shelter from sun and rain. They can increase the area available for merchandise display.



Penn State Campus

Facade columns help emphasize the building's entry.

Examples



Heister St. at College Ave.

Sign boards and unique lighting give this façade a special look.



Penn State Campus

Ornamental elements can enliven a façade.

Did You Know?:

- Entrance alcoves can be styled to suit and promote the character of a business, strengthening both its attractiveness and its marketing message. A window-lined alcove expands street-side display space.
- Porches can make a neighborhood feel more safe and friendly. They provide a sheltered and semi-private spot where residents can observe street life. Street watchers of a benevolent spirit can discourage public misbehavior simply by being present to witness it.
- Street corners are common areas for informal interaction. Buildings at corners can use façade details and architectural forms to reinforce the street corner and enhance the street level environment at these key pedestrian areas.
- Pennsylvania's Main Streets program has awarded the Downtown Improvement District (DID) a multi-year grant to match funds for façade improvements, including signs. Contact the DID for further information.

4.3 Building Materials, Finishes, and Accent Lighting

Purpose:

A wide variety of surface materials can beautify a building façade. The play of colors, textures, relief and lighting help a building harmonize with neighbors, or stand out among them.

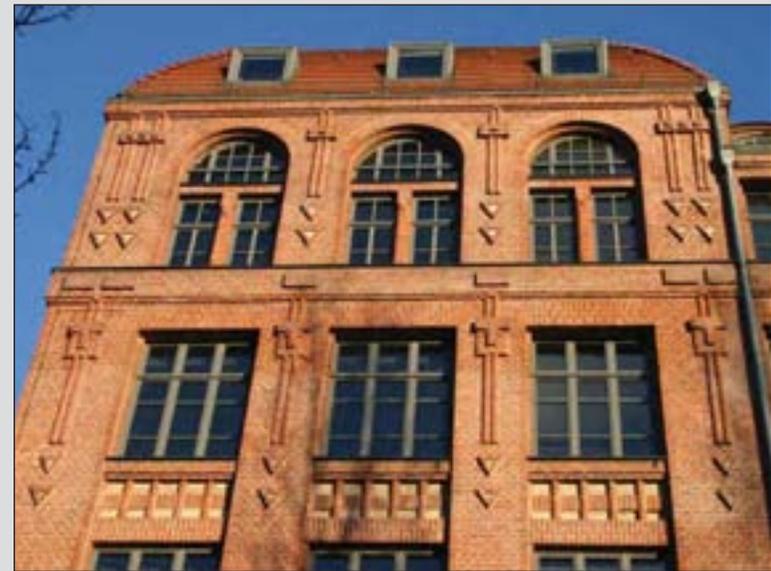
Techniques:

- A brick façade is enlivened with variation in brick patterns. A relatively small amount of patterning can break up a large wall, emphasize proportions, and highlight entrances or windows.
- Sheet metals can provide a wide range of colors and textures.
- Stone can provide contrast and accent to a brick or dryvit façade. Manufactured stone is a good lower-cost substitute.
- Relief patterns create interest in preformed concrete. A single well-designed pattern can repeat across a façade to great effect.
- Glass adds shimmer and excitement, but façades that consist mostly of glass require extra design attention to avoid monotony.
- Dryvit can be fashioned into relief, as well as textured and colored, but should be embellished to provide visual interest.
- Mosaic can have an intense impact, even if used in small amounts.
- Lighting fixtures of various shapes, styles, and colors add interest to a façade. At night, patterns of light on a façade have a dramatic effect

Examples



Just a few of the myriad possible patterns for brick, including combination with manufactured stone.



Warschauer Platz and Stratauer Allee 3, Berlin, Germany

A small amount of relief can humanize a façade.

Examples



W. College Ave.

These decorative light fixtures add interest to the building façade.



Stuckeman Family Building, Penn State Campus

Sheet metals can create versatile shapes not possible with other materials.

Did You Know?:

- Downtown buildings, especially at street level, should be surfaced with durable, fire-resistant materials that promote an urban feel.
- With any finish, long-term maintenance is necessary for continued aesthetic appeal.
- Dryvit is relatively lightweight. It can reduce structural costs compared to other finishes, especially in a tall building. However, it is not as durable as some other materials and should not be used on the ground floor.
- Glass once entailed higher costs for building climate control. Today new types of engineered glass, coatings and structures, all increase its insulating capacity while diminishing internal solar heat gain (a.k.a. the 'greenhouse effect'). See Section 4.4 for more information on windows and glazing.
- Mosaic can withstand outdoor use, given appropriate materials and construction techniques.
- Building façade lighting (brightness & fixture type) is regulated by the zoning ordinance (Section 2706.f).

4.4 Windows and Glazing

Purpose:

Windows are a key element that form a bridge between a building's interior and life in the neighborhood outside. Artfully designed windows are responsive to prospective uses, create desirable spaces for building occupants as well as stimulating and attracting the passerby.

Techniques:

- Street level windows, when occurring at a frequent interval, generate interest in a building.
- Display spaces should be designed to accommodate frequent changes and multiple configurations.
- Street side windows should be portals to visually interesting, active spaces. Office, retail, and commercial windows alike should afford dynamic views of human activity, keeping interesting products, processes, and patrons within eyeshot of the curious passerby.

Examples



Beaver Ave.

Passerbys can't help but get a taste of the color, light, and action inside the generous windows of this busy downtown restaurant.



Beaver Ave.

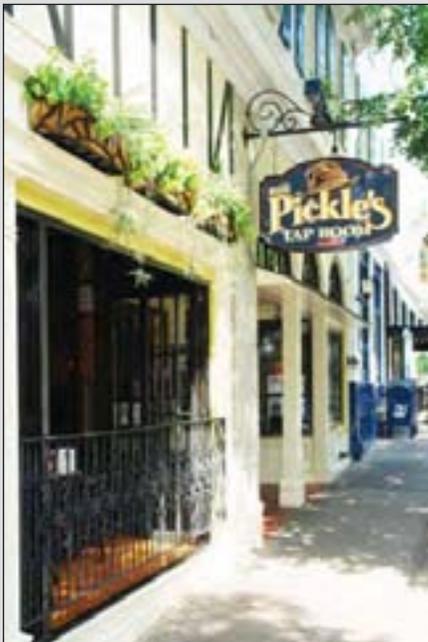
This establishment has blocked its windows with the backside of display cases, missing the potential for customers to glimpse the merchandise and activity inside.

Examples



Allen St.

Display windows preview the experience inside for potential customer. Distinct changes should occur often to grab your customer.



Allen St., Source: Murphy/Carpenter

Window side seating at this café create streetscape interest at this pub year round, including in fair weather when operable windows create a lively café atmosphere.

Did You Know?:

- There are many techniques for reducing glare on display windows. See Section 1.3 Sun and Shade.
- The article “Every Business Has a Billboard” from Main Street News, April 2004, finds that pedestrians pass window displays in about eight seconds; motorists pass in only one second. The article suggests that businesses capitalize on their window displays through the use of cleanliness, visibility, color, themes, and frequent change.
- In the Commercial Incentive district and in the pedestrian-oriented use portion of the Commercial District, at least 50% of any ground floor exterior wall facing a street must be devoted to windows (Section 1850.b and Section 1802.g).

4.5 Vehicular Access

Purpose:

How the use of cars is incorporated into the design of buildings has an important influence on the character of downtown. Due to rising land values, new construction often includes vehicle storage as parking decks or garages. There are also instances where the building's upper floors "bridge over" the site's vehicular access, thereby gaining floor area while still enabling access to the rear of a site. The goal is to reduce the visual impact of vehicular access and enhance safety for other drivers and for pedestrians on the sidewalk.

Techniques:

- The presence and appearance of a garage entrance should be minimized so that it does not dominate the street frontage of a building. Considerations include:
 - Locating the entry on the side of the facade where it will draw less attention than if it is centered
 - Recessing the portion of the facade where the entry is located to help conceal it
 - Extending portions of the structure over the garage entry to help conceal it
- Compared to the pedestrian entrance, the garage entrance should be subordinated in terms of visual impact, prominence on the streetscape, location, and design emphasis. Often, the relative importance of the garage entrance can be reduced by enhancing the pedestrian entrance.
- Site plans should balance the need to provide adequate vehicular access with the need to eliminate unnecessary driveway entrances.
- Building drop-offs and turnarounds should be designed with the safety of shared users, such as pedestrians, in mind.

Examples



Allenway Building, S. Allen St.

Garage entry is minimized through framing a second story exterior terrace/entry, and is set back to allow visibility of pedestrians upon exit.



S. Pugh St.

A canopy roof extends out to form a covered drop-off and turn around space.

Examples



Midtown Square, West Foster Ave.

Upper stories of this building create a “bridge” over the vehicle access to rear parking.



Marion Place, East Nittany Ave.

This garage entry is located on a side street and not centered on the façade.

Did You Know?:

- Placing an exit several feet back from the sidewalk will ensure the driver has good visibility of pedestrians as they move toward the street.
- Sidewalks should take priority over driveways as drivers are legally required to yield to pedestrians on sidewalks. The driveway should ramp up to sidewalk level at the curb; the sidewalk should not ramp down to meet the driveway
- If the building's primary function is as a public parking garage, where users may be unfamiliar with the entry location, the garage may be designed to be a more prominent part of the façade.
- Drive-through windows can incorporate an architectural covering consistent with the design theme of the building, which will add comfort for users and reduce the overall building mass appearance.
- Safety is enhanced when a garage entry is located so there is adequate queuing space and line-of-sight available on the access street.
- Related sections of this guide include Section 2.2 Lighting and Section 4.6 Signage.

4.6 Signage

Purpose:

The outdoor sign is a business' signature. It should convey the unique personality of a business, as efficiently as possible. A good sign helps people to find the business, and also entices them to enter.

Techniques:

- No more than six words should be used per sign. A sign with too much information confuses the viewer. If the text can be divided into major and minor parts, its meaning can be clarified by using two different sizes of writing. Sticking to one style of lettering will make the text easier to read quickly. The sign should be easy to read from a passing car.
- An image can convey both the type of a business and its personality. The use of distinctive colors, shapes, or materials helps a sign stand out among the visual clutter of the urban environment.
- Sign placement should maximize visibility, but not cover important architectural elements of surrounding buildings.
- Well maintained signage shows off the status of a business while a damaged or faded sign suggests that a business is in trouble.

Examples



Heister St., Allen St., and E. College Ave.

Signage can be integrated with window displays and entrances to form a strong frontage identity.



Berlin, Germany

Mosaic art can create unique and attractive signage.

Examples



Fraser St. at College Ave.

A powerful image or even a three dimensional sculptural feature says more than words.



Beaver Ave., Allen St.

Color, shape, material, and lighting can be used to give unique character to signage and reflect store character.

Did You Know?:

- Pennsylvania's Main Streets program has awarded the Downtown Improvement District (DID) a multi-year grant to match funds for façade improvements, including signs. Contact the DID for further information.
- The Borough's sign ordinance regulates the number and size of signs permitted per premise. This ordinance also requires a license to be obtained before erecting any exterior sign or signs on or behind windows that are visible from the street or sidewalk.
- Sandwich-board signs are required to be licensed.
- Lights illuminating signs, awnings, and canopies are regulated by the Borough's lighting ordinances (Section 2706.g).
