LIVERMORE
CALIFORNIA

Design Guidelines

Commercial

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Chapter 5: Commercial

This chapter contains the standards and guidelines for development in commercial districts. Applicants should discuss specific zoning code requirements with the Community Development Department. Please refer to the Livermore Planning and Zoning Code and the City of Livermore Standard Details, Standard Specifications and the Development Plan check and procedures manual.

Chapter Sections

A. Goals
B. Site Planning
C. Building Design
D. Landscape Design
E. Signs
F. Lighting

A. Goals

The following goals set forth the basic urban design intent implicit in the design guidelines formulated for the city's commercial areas:

1. To enhance the overall character of the city's commercial development.

2. To provide integration between the design character of neighborhood commercial development and surrounding development.

3. To promote a healthy commercial environment that is attractive and convenient for residents and visitors.

4. To enhance the pedestrian shopping environment in all commercial developments.

B. Site Planning

The standards and guidelines in this section are to assist in the appropriate siting of buildings in commercial areas of the City. These standards and guidelines are intended to promote a superior appearance for commercial development and an appropriate level of screening for all of the building's supporting elements, such as parking, utilities and service areas and to provide for an attractive pedestrian friendly environment.

1. Building Siting and Orientation

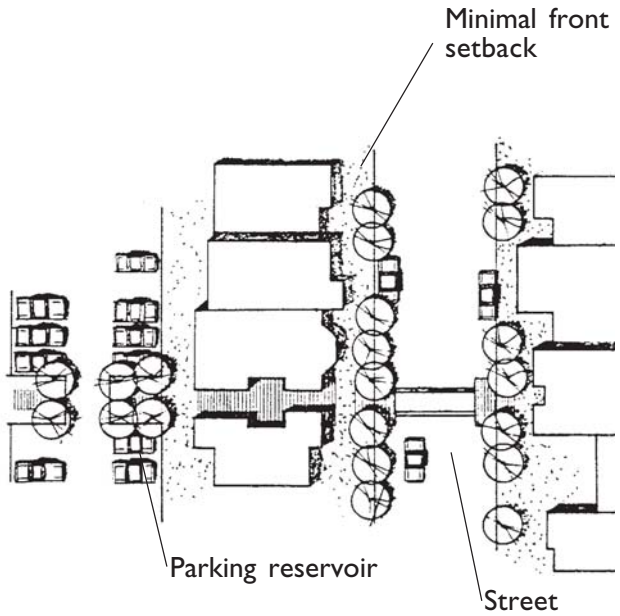
Intent: To create new development that is unique and specific to Livermore and respects and enhances the existing environmental, geographic and topographic conditions.

1.1 Location and Orientation

STANDARDS

1.1.1 Buildings shall be sited to reinforce the public street network by incorporating active façades, with windows, doors and other architectural elements giving interest to the building wall along the sidewalk and providing views into and out of the building.

1.1.2 Loading and service entrances shall not intrude upon the public view, nor interfere with pedestrian and vehicular flows within the project.



GUIDELINES

1.1.3 Buildings should be located as close as possible to the front setback line or immediately behind a public or semi-private space, such as an outdoor seating area for a restaurant.

1.1.4 Building entrances should be located facing the street.

1.1.5 Façades with entrance doors and windows fronting upon the primary street are encouraged.

1.1.6 Setbacks for new development should respect the character of the existing street edge. In neighborhood and community commercial centers, setbacks should also reflect the surrounding development and not create gaps or voids in the rhythm of the street's architectural edge due to excessive setbacks.

Building and outdoor seating area combine to define the edge of sidewalk.

1.2 Building Mass

Guideline

1.2.1 In neighborhood and community commercial centers the development of a complex of buildings is preferable to a single large structure. The varied massing provides visual interest and human scale. The spaces created between the various buildings provide opportunities for pedestrian plazas, courtyards, and other outdoor gathering areas. Pedestrian spaces should be part of a well planned circulation system to avoid the creation of unused spaces.

Development with desirable complexity in building mass.

1.3 Corner Sites

STANDARD

1.3.1 Where buildings are located at major or gateway intersections, front important community spaces or anchor unique corners where sites create acute or obtuse angles, a prominent architectural corner treatment of the building mass is required.

GUIDELINES

1.3.2 The street corners of corner sites should be developed with buildings, public plazas or landscaped areas.

a) Near the corner, the building should either be sited on the property lines or set back to provide a public open space which provides direct access to the building or frames an open space between buildings.

b) Attractively landscaped areas may also be permitted where siting of a building's public open space at a corner is not feasible.

1.3.3 Surface parking should not be provided at the corners of corner sites. Parking should be provided behind the building.

1.3.4 Buildings located on corners should include special design features and architectural features, which help to anchor the intersection.

Taller building mass enhances the corner of a prominent location.

1.3.5 An articulation of the building mass should be provided at corner sites.
1.3.6 Additional corner treatments may include a rounded or angled facet on the corner, location of the building entrance at the corner and/or an embedded corner tower.

Street corner designed with public plaza.

1.4 Prominent Visual Features

Guideline

1.4.1 Significant site features, such as trees, arroyos and views of surrounding mountains, should be considered as prime design determinants in planning new commercial centers.


Existing redwood trees were incorporated into parking access alignment.

2. Neighborhood Context

Intent: To ensure that new projects augment the character and design of existing development.

2.1 Location

GUIDELINE

2.1.1 The location of site uses should be coordinated with adjoining properties to avoid creating nuisances such as noise, light intrusion, invasion of privacy and traffic, particularly when development is adjacent to sensitive uses such as residential development.

2.2 Compatibility

GUIDELINES

2.2.1 Commercial development should be compatible with surrounding land uses from both a functional and aesthetic standpoint.

2.2.2 Buildings should be compatible with the height, massing, setback, and design character of surrounding uses. New development should contribute to the visual quality and cohesiveness of its setting but need not imitate or mimic adjacent development.

Massing and detailing reflect the surrounding small scaled neighborhood.

2.3 Adjacent Views

Guideline

2.3.1 Commercial development should not create unattractive views from neighboring uses by orienting blank building walls towards neighbors. Any visible building walls should incorporate architectural elements to create visual interest.

2.4 Frontages

Standard

2.4.1 All visible frontages shall be detailed with architectural elements.

2.5 Coordination with Adjacent Properties

Guideline

2.5.1 Owners of adjoining commercial properties are strongly encouraged to develop shared facilities such as driveways, parking areas, pedestrian plazas and walkways.

Street frontages with rich architectural detailing.

3. Pedestrian Orientation

Intent: To provide development features that facilitate greater pedestrian amenities and activity in commercial areas.

3.1 Pedestrian Spaces

Standards

3.1.1 All commercial areas shall emphasize pedestrian orientation by creating attractive pedestrian spaces which utilize such features as plazas, interior walkways, ornamental gates, trellises, lighting, plant materials, seating and fountains.

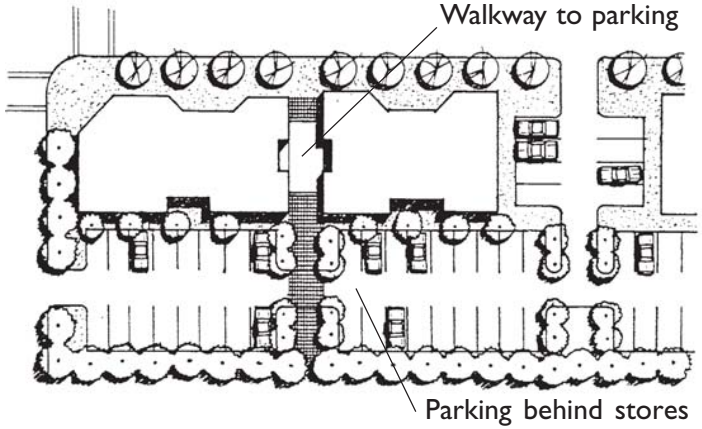
Commercial pedestrian area attractively landscaped with benches and trees.

3.1.2 Outdoor pedestrian spaces shall be landscaped and include appropriate street furniture and other elements to facilitate pedestrian activity.

3.2 Pedestrian Connections

STANDARDS

3.2.1 Attractive well marked pedestrian links between parking and buildings shall be provided. The connections shall be clearly marked to provide safe access across traffic lanes and landscaped areas. Such walkways shall utilize decorative paving at key locations.



3.2.2 All commercial buildings shall be publicly accessible via a path or walkway from a public sidewalk.

3.2.3 Parking area design shall include provisions for pedestrian access from parking areas to building entrances.

Landscaped shade structure provides attractive pedestrian circulation area.

Landscaped pedestrian walkway from sidewalk to building entrance.

Guidelines

3.2.4 Where walkways cross on-site driveways, special design features should be used to increase safety for the pedestrian. Potential design features include elevated crosswalks (raised to the level of the sidewalk), textured pavement, curb extension to narrow the travel lane or low-level lighting, such as a bollard light.

3.2.5 Pedestrian connections should also be provided between buildings and adjoining commercial sites.

3.2.6 Walkways should be shaded and landscaped.

3.2.7 Trellises are encouraged in parking areas to provide an attractive design element, which identifies the pedestrian walkway and provides additional shade.

3.2.8 Large commercial development should include at least one separated pedestrian pathway through the parking area to the main entrance. Pathway should be landscaped and provide elements such as shade trees, trellises, or other shade structures.

3.2.9 Paths with durable, all-weather surfaces should be located across medians and other landscaped areas, as necessary to provide convenient pedestrian routes and reduce wear on landscaped areas.

3.2.10 Primary circulation paths should avoid excessive steps or level changes in order to reduce potential tripping hazards and facilitate circulation for all potential users.

Pedestrian traffic lane crossing with textured paving material.

Tree-lined, elevated pedestrian path separates parking bays.

3.3 Materials

GUIDELINE

3.3.1 Main pedestrian walkways to and from buildings and parking areas should utilize materials with a flat, even surface, which do not create a tripping hazard.

4. Parking

Intent: To minimize the impact of large areas of surface parking on the aesthetic character desired for quality commercial development in Livermore.

4.1 Location

GUIDELINES

4.1.1 Parking should be located to the sides and rear of the building. For larger commercial centers, limited parking may be provided between the building and the street.

4.1.2 Site plans should provide bicycle racks that are located close to the buildings and do not impede pedestrian or auto circulation. Whenever possible, bicycle areas should be covered and located in areas which are clearly visible to site users in order to avoid security problems.

4.2 Distribution

GUIDELINE

4.2.1 All outdoor parking areas should be divided into smaller units to decrease visual impacts associated with large expanses of pavement and vehicles, and to facilitate safe and efficient pedestrian movement between parking and commercial establishments.

4.3 Screening

STANDARD

4.3.1 Surface parking areas facing a public street shall be buffered by berming or landscaping.

GUIDELINE

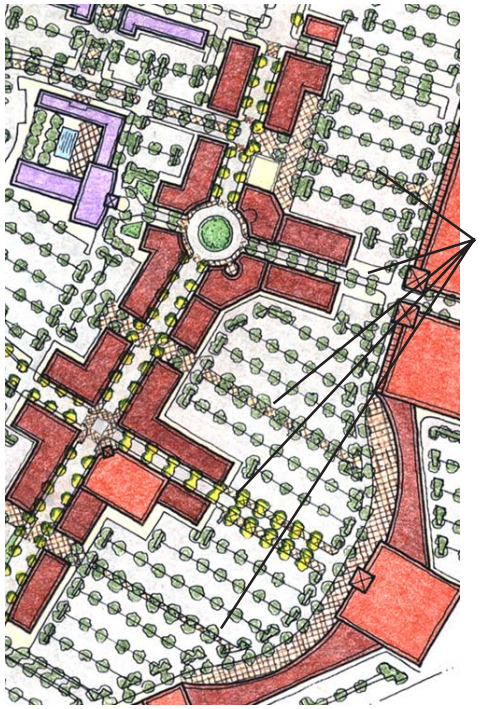
4.3.2 For security purposes, openings should be incorporated into the landscape design to provide clear views into the site.

4.4 Access Drives

STANDARDS

4.4.1 Access driveways shall be sufficient in number to provide safe and efficient movement of traffic to and from a site.

4.4.2 Main entries into sites shall be enhanced with decorative paving.



Landscaped pedestrian paths connect large format retail to "Main Street" retail and break large parking fields into smaller pieces.

4.5 Internal Circulation

GUIDELINES

4.5.1 On-site pathways which are separated from vehicular traffic should be provided for pedestrians and bicyclists and should provide connections between building entries and public sidewalks.

4.5.2 Large commercial development should include at least one separated pedestrian pathway through the parking area to the main entrance.

4.5.3 Pedestrian walkways and spaces should include elements such as special paving materials, raised curbs, trellis structures, landscaping, pedestrian-scaled lighting, seating and trash receptacles.

4.5.4 Paths with durable, all-weather surfaces should be located on medians and other landscaped areas to provide convenient pedestrian routes and reduce wear on landscaped areas.

4.5.5 Primary circulation paths should avoid excessive steps or level changes in order to reduce potential tripping hazards and facilitate circulation for all potential users, including strollers and wheelchairs.

4.5.6 Parking areas should provide bicycle racks that are located close to the buildings and do not impede pedestrian or auto circulation. Whenever possible, bicycle areas should be covered and located in areas which are clearly visible to site users in order to avoid security problems.

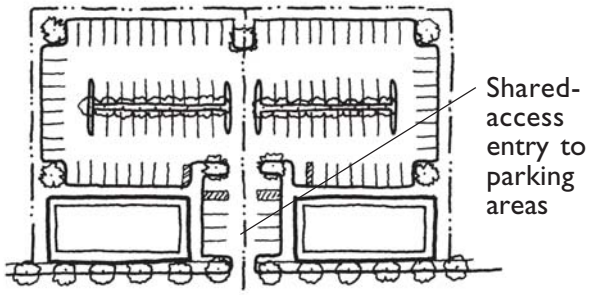
GUIDELINES

4.4.3 Shared parking areas and access driveways for contiguous development are encouraged in order to minimize the number of curb cuts and thus limiting possible conflicts between pedestrians and automobiles and between vehicles entering and leaving the parking area and normal street traffic.

4.4.4 Whenever possible, access should be provided from side streets to limit the number of driveways along the main thoroughfares.

4.4.5 Access on corner lot driveways should be located as far as possible from intersections.

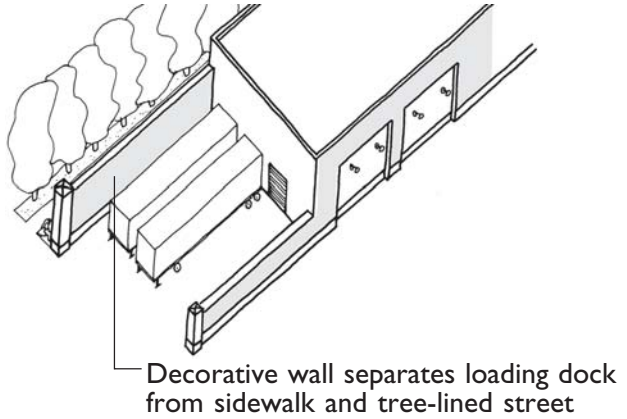
4.4.6 Within the site, access drives should provide sufficient length to permit vehicle stacking during hours of peak use without impacting circulation within the parking lot or on the fronting public street.



5. Service Areas, Refuse Areas and Backflow Preventors

Intent: To minimize the impact of service areas and site-related infrastructure on the aesthetic character desired for quality development in Livermore's commercial areas.

All required screening of service areas, refuse areas and backflow preventors shall be included on plans submitted for design review.



5.1 Service Areas

Guidelines

5.1.1 Lighting of outdoor service, loading and storage areas should be the minimum necessary for security purposes and should be designed and directed so as not to create glare or lighting impacts at the street or on surrounding properties.

5.1.2 Service areas, garbage receptacles, utility meters and mechanical and electrical equipment should be screened from public view and located for convenient access by service vehicles.

5.1.3 Screening of these areas should be integrated into the overall building and landscape design.

5.1.4 On-site space for stacking vehicles waiting to load or unload should be provided as necessary.

5.2 Refuse Areas

In addition to the Design Standards and Guidelines provided below, applicants should refer to the City of Livermore Standards and Guidelines for Solid Waste and Recycling Container Enclosures, available at the Community Development Department.

Standards

5.2.1 Trash enclosures shall be of sufficient size to house the number and size of trash bins and containers needed to accommodate the waste generated by the building user, including trash, cardboard, cans and bottles, food waste, green waste and other recyclables, as required by the City's Solid Waste Ordinance and Livermore Planning and Zoning Code requirements.

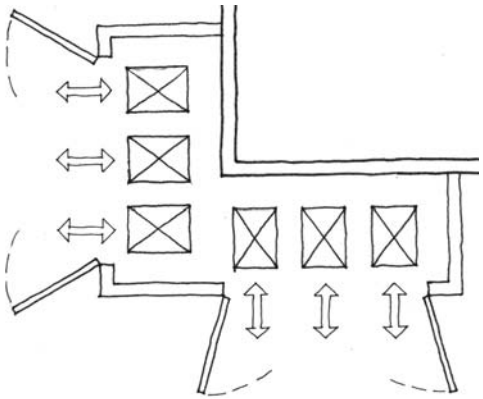
5.2.2 Trash bins shall be located within a trash enclosure at all times.

Trash enclosure of high-quality, durable materials.

5.2.3 Trash enclosures shall be integrated into the site plan to minimize enclosure visibility and accommodate truck access.
5.2.4 Trash enclosures shall be constructed of durable materials and the color, texture, and architectural detailing shall be consistent with the overall site and building design.

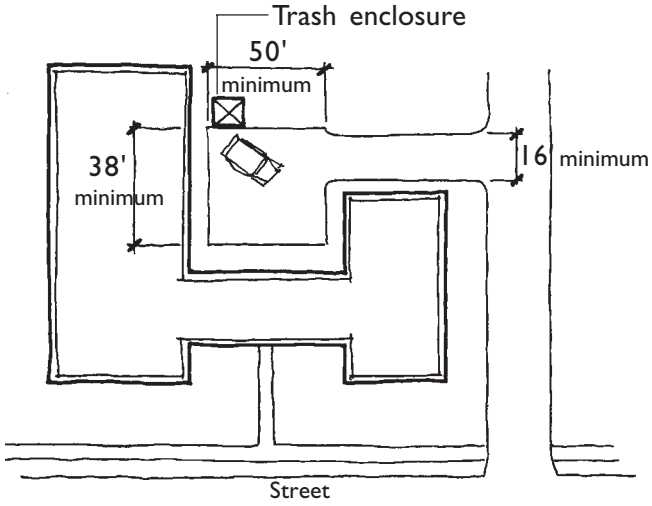
Guidelines

5.2.5 Trash enclosures should be located away from public view.
5.2.6 Landscaping should be provided around trash enclosures to soften views wherever feasible.
5.2.7 Trash enclosures should be located away from adjacent parcels to minimize noise and odor impacts typically associated with garbage collection and storage.
5.2.8 Screening of the trash enclosure should be integrated into the overall site and building design. Screening should be constructed of durable materials. All structural screening should be supplemented with landscaping.
5.2.9 Roofs of enclosures should be designed to complement the project buildings' roof style and colors.
5.2.10 A building wall may be used as one side of a trash enclosure.
5.2.11 Enclosures should be located and designed to facilitate users' convenience. Person doorways should be provided in addition to the gate opening.
5.2.12 Where trash compactors are used, they should be screened from public view within a trash enclosure or within the building volume.
5.2.13 Where trash compactors will be utilized, the trash enclosure should be enlarged to accommodate the space for required trash bins as well as the trash compactor. Trash compactors may not displace space required for trash bins.
5.2.14 Trash compactors should not block access to standard trash bins or interfere with standard trash enclosure operation.



Trash enclosure lay-out where bins may be removed independently.

5.2.15 Trash enclosures should be designed so that each bin can be removed and replaced without requiring the removal of other bins, to avoid stacking and to maximize access.
5.2.16 Enclosure gate opening should extend the width of the enclosure with no single gate opening less than nine feet in width. The dimension of opened gates should allow adequate clearance of approximately 18 inches clear on either side of bins for mechanized truck access or manual maneuvering of bins.
5.2.17 A smaller number of larger gate openings should be designed, instead of more numerous small gate openings.
5.2.18 Heavy duty doors should be used. The use of wheels under the doors to increase the durability of gate hinges should be considered.
5.2.19 A concrete pad inside enclosures should be included to prevent damage to ground surfaces from filled containers. The pad should extend 10 feet in front of gates.
5.2.20 If security lighting is needed, a minimum one foot-candle at ground level should be designed, integrated into the site design, shielded and located as low to the ground as possible.
5.2.21 Enclosure doors should face an approach drive aisle where possible.
5.2.22 Driveways or travel aisles leading to trash enclosures should be a minimum of 16 feet in width with a 50-foot deep approach.
5.2.23 In trash collection loading areas, the minimum overhead vertical clearance should be 22 feet to accommodate loading operations.
5.2.24 Where no through-route exists for trash removal trucks, the turn-around area should be a minimum of 38 feet square in front of the enclosure.
5.2.25 Trash collection should be designed to allow access from a side street, alleyway or parking area, to avoid collection trucks needing to maneuver in busy roadways.



5.2.26 Where new food uses will be permitted, trash enclosure design should include large wash areas and larger capacity oil-water separators so additional future food tenants can be accommodated in the center while complying with County Health Department requirements.

5.3 Utilities and Backflow Preventors

Standards

5.3.1 Utility cabinets and meters shall be contained within the building or otherwise fully screened.

5.3.2 Backflow prevention devices shall be fully screened from public view through the use of landscaping, berms, low walls or other screening techniques.

5.3.3 All required design elements shall be shown as part of the site plan submittal.

Guidelines

5.3.4 Mechanical equipment, trash and recycling bins and meters should be provided with architectural enclosures or fencing, sited in unobtrusive locations and screened by landscaping. Colors and finishes of mechanical enclosures and equipment should be coordinated with colors and finishes of streetlights, fencing and other painted metal surfaces to be used on site, or with the associated building's material and color scheme.

5.3.5 Developers are strongly encouraged to utilize less obstrusive, alternative designs for backflow prevention devices. Backflow devices should be located inside the building where possible.

5.3.6 Backflow device components should be painted to match the adjacent landscaping.

C. Building Design

The standards and guidelines in this section give design guidance for the architectural components of commercial buildings.

1. Massing

Intent: To ensure that buildings, particularly large structures, are designed with elements that relate to a human scale and are appropriately proportioned.

1.1 Scale

GUIDELINES

1.1.1 Large building volume should be broken into a number of smaller components to decrease its apparent mass and volume, and thus reduce its visual impact.

1.1.2 Reducing the visual impact of mass can be accomplished by creating building insets or projections, stepping back upper floors and varying the height of the roofline.

1.1.3 Changes in vertical mass should be used in an architecturally appropriate way to add interest and reduce the appearance of building height and bulk.

a) Buildings should have a base that relates to the human scale.

b) The appearance of mass should be broken up through the use of changes in material and color.

c) Moldings or cornices should be provided to accentuate various floors or levels.

1.1.4 Buildings should have a clearly defined base, middle and top.

1.1.5 The base of a building should be defined by appropriately contrasting material or color.

1.1.6 A building should appear heavier at the base than at the top so that it appears to be firmly grounded and not top heavy.

Variation in building mass reduces appearance of height and bulk.

Upper floor setback and varied roof massing break down large building volume.

1.2 Horizontal Massing

STANDARD

1.2.1 Buildings shall be architecturally subdivided into horizontal increments at both the ground floor and at upper stories.

1.3 Storefronts

GUIDELINE

1.3.1 Larger commercial developments should break up storefronts through the use of various materials and colors.

Individual tenants operate from separate bays of the same building.

1.4 Multiple-Tenant Spaces

STANDARD

1.4.1 Where multiple-tenant spaces are incorporated into a building, individual tenant spaces shall be located within the horizontal increments. This can be achieved with the following:

- Placing a column, pier or pilaster between building bays.
- Applying vertical slot or recess between building bays.
- Providing variation in plane along the building wall.
- Varying the building wall by recessing the storefront entrance or creating a niche for landscaping or a pedestrian area.

2. Façade

Intent: To ensure that all visible building façades are articulated to add visual interest, distinctiveness and human scale.

2.1 Articulation

STANDARDS

2.1.1 Main building entries shall be accented with strong architectural definition.

2.1.2 Buildings shall have a clearly defined base and roof edge so that the façade has a distinct base, middle and top at a scale that relates to an individual person.

GUIDELINES

2.1.3 Building façades should be varied and articulated to add visual variety, distinctiveness and human scale. Elements that are recommended to articulate a building's façade include:

- Design details for the top of a building, including cornice lines, parapets, eaves, brackets, fenestration and other detailing.
- Design details for the body, or middle, of the building including windows, awnings, trellises, canopies, pilasters, columns, decorative lighting, alcoves, balconies and window boxes.
- Design details for the base of a building, including recessed entry areas, covered outdoor areas, alcoves and wainscoting of a contrasting material or color.

2.1.4 Façades without openings should be avoided.

2.1.5 Articulation should add three dimensional interest to the façade and not rely on "false" detailing.

Canopies and recessed window bays help define the top and base of the building.

Pedestrian arcade and seating areas are integrated into the design of the building.

2.1.6 All detailing of the building façades should be integral to the architectural design and not tacked onto the surface. Detailing should be horizontally or vertically integrated or aligned.

2.1.7 Projecting elements such as awnings, trellises, and overhangs are effective means of integrating the architectural edge with the adjoining pedestrian areas, adding three-dimensional interest to the façades and enhancing the sense of entry into the building.

2.2 Entrances

STANDARD

2.2.1 Doors at storefronts shall include views into the tenant spaces.

GUIDELINES

2.2.2 Entries to ground floor retail areas should occur from main streets and should incorporate one or more of the following treatments:

a) A taller mass above, such as a modest tower or within a volume that protrudes from the rest of the building surface.

b) Special architectural elements, such as columns, overhanging roofs, awnings and ornamental light fixtures.

c) A recessed entry or recessed bay in the façade to create transitional spaces between the street and buildings. Recommended treatments include special paving materials such as ceramic tile; ornamental ceiling treatments, such as coffering; decorative light fixtures; and attractive decorative door pulls, escutcheons, hinges and other hardware.

Upper floor entrance marked by greater building mass.

d) A projecting awning or canopy, designed as a canvas or fabric awning, or as a permanent architectural canopy utilizing materials from the primary building.
e) A change in roofline or major break in the surface of the subject wall.
f) Provide shelter from weather and shade through use of awnings or sheltered bays.

2.2.3 Entrances to upper-story uses should incorporate one or more of the following treatments:
a) Located in the center of the façade between storefronts, as part of a symmetrical composition.
b) Accented by architectural elements such as clerestory windows, sidelights and ornamental light fixtures.
c) Indicated by a recessed entrance, vestibule or lobby. Doorways should be recessed for privacy, but should be clearly expressed through awnings, high quality materials or other architectural treatments.

2.3 Doors

GUIDELINES

2.3.1 Doors at storefronts with windows should match the materials, design and character of the display window framing. High quality materials such as crafted wood, stainless steel, bronze and other ornamental metals are recommended.
2.3.2 Detailing such as carved woodwork, stonework or applied ornament should be used to create noticeable detail for pedestrians and drivers. Doors may be flanked by columns, decorative fixtures or other details.

High quality, well detailed retail door.

2.4 Windows

STANDARD

2.4.1 All windows on a building shall be related in design.

GUIDELINES

2.4.2 Buildings should include vertically proportioned façade openings with windows that have a greater height than width (an appropriate vertical/horizontal ratio ranges from 1.5:1 to 2:1). Where glazed horizontal openings are used, they should generally be divided with multiple groups of vertical windows. Exceptions may be appropriate where horizontal windows are consistent with the architectural style of the building.

2.4.3 Windows on the upper floors should be smaller in size than storefront windows on the first floor and should encompass a smaller proportion of façade surface area.

2.4.4 Upper story windows should be detailed with architectural elements, such as projecting sills, molded surrounds and/or lintels.

2.4.5 Deeply tinted glass or applied films should be avoided.

2.4.6 Windows should maintain consistency in shape and location across the façade and be coordinated with façades of adjacent buildings. Unifying patterns should include a common window header line or sill line and/or aligned vertical centerlines of windows and doors. The overall effect should create a harmonious pattern across the street wall.

2.4.7 Storefront, transom, display windows or doors should encompass 50% minimum of the front of a building façade length. No false fronts or windows should be included.

Harmonious window pattern throughout street frontages.

2.4.8 Commercial clerestory and transom windows are recommended to provide a continuous horizontal band or row of windows across the upper portion of the storefront.

2.4.9 Decorative treatments on windows or balconies are recommended if consistent with the building style.

2.4.10 Shaped frames and sills, detailed with architectural elements such as projecting sills, molded surrounds or lintels, should be used to enhance openings and add additional relief.

2.4.11 Window frames should be substantial, not flush against the walls. Plaster reveals and wainscoting should be used to create the appearance of deep-set doors and windows. Window reveals should be a minimum of 4 inches.

Upper floor windows should be smaller than storefront windows on the ground floor.

2.4.12 Large expanses of glass should not be used, except at storefront windows. Windows should be subdivided and separated by mullions. Snap-in muntins should not be used.
2.4.13 Clear glass is recommended. If tinted glazing is used, light tints and green, grey or blue hues are recommended. Deeply tinted glass is not permitted.
2.4.14 Mirrored glass is strongly discouraged for retail uses, but may be used when used as an architectural element.
2.4.15 Non-reflective films, coatings, low emissivity glass and external and internal shade devices should be used for heat and glare control and to increase energy efficiency.
2.4.16 To add privacy and aesthetic variety to glass, fritted glass, spandrel glass and other decorative treatments are recommended.

Harmonious façade design using different yet related windows.

2.5 Awnings

GUIDELINES

2.5.1 While the use of awnings is encouraged, such use should be coordinated to avoid a visually cluttered streetscape.

2.5.2 The type of awning used and its form, materials and color should be consistent with the design character of the building to which it is attached.

2.5.3 The height of all awnings above the sidewalk should be consistent, with a minimum clearance of eight feet provided between the bottom of the valence and the sidewalk.

2.5.4 Awnings should be located between rather than across significant vertical features that indicate the integral composition of the façade.

2.5.5 Canopies over building entries should be incorporated into the design of the building, including colors and material detailing.

2.5.6 Awnings on multi-tenant buildings should be the same color and style.

2.5.7 Awning design should be consistent with character and design of building.

2.5.8 The awning material should be compatible with the overall design and character of building. The use of fabric awnings is encouraged. The use of vinyl and plastic awnings is discouraged.

2.5.9 If used, lighting for awnings should be from fixtures located above the building designed and placed to enhance the appearance of the building

2.7.10 Awning color(s) should be compatible with the overall building color scheme.

2.7.11 Awnings should be monochromatic.

Different awning types along street frontage are unified with consistent height.

2.6 Materials

Guidelines

2.6.1 A variety of building materials and combinations of materials should be utilized within an architectural theme.

2.6.2 The number of different materials used on the exterior of a structure should be limited to an appropriate and varied palette of materials.

2.6.3 Genuine materials should be utilized rather than simulated materials. Where simulated materials are used, they should be used in keeping with the character and properties of the material being simulated.

2.6.4 Materials should be harmonious with adjacent buildings.

2.6.5 Use of accent materials, such as metal or wood, should be used on all façades of the building, not just the front of the building.

2.6.6 Consistent architectural materials should be used throughout the site to establish an integrated design theme.

A harmonious color and material palette provides strong architectural quality.

2.7 Color

STANDARDS

2.7.1 Exterior building colors shall not become signs for the building or tenant.

2.7.2 Avoid monotony among colors throughout the project site.

GUIDELINES

2.7.3 Exterior building colors should be compatible with surrounding buildings.

2.7.4 Generally, building colors should not be garish.

2.7.5 Primary colors and other bright colors can be used as accents to enliven the architecture, but should be used sparingly. Use accent colors to enhance visual interest.

2.7.6 Color should be used to enhance architectural elements.

Subtle overall exterior building color with different color enhancing roof line.

3. Roof

Intent: To ensure the form, color and texture of the roof is designed as an integral part of the overall building design.

3.1 Form

STANDARD

3.1.1 The form, color and texture of the roof shall be an integral component of the building design.

Shaped parapet with edge definition reflects overall building design.

Guidelines

3.1.2 Roofs should be compatible with the design character of the building.

3.1.3 The roof shape should reflect the configuration of the building's mass and volume, and should be consistent in its character from all vantage points.

3.1.4 Sloping roof forms are encouraged.

3.2 Roof Lines

Standard

3.2.1 All buildings shall provide cornice or parapet detailing in order to delineate a strong roofline along the primary façades.

Guideline

3.2.2 Cornices and horizontal bands of genuine materials such as wood trim rather than foam trim are encouraged.

3.3 Detailing

Guidelines

3.3.1 False fronts, applied mansard forms and other artificial rooflines should be avoided.

3.3.2 Roofs should be proportionate to building mass and incorporate cornices, eaves and overhangs.

3.3.3 Flat or shallow pitched roofs should be ornamented with shaped parapets or cornice treatments by using an architecturally profiled cornice and/or expressed parapet cap to terminate the top of the parapet wall.

Roof designs with shaped parapets reflect building volumes.

3.4 Materials

GUIDELINES

3.4.1 Reflective roofing materials should not be used on visible roof surfaces.

3.4.2 Quality materials should be used with a color and texture that complement the building architecture.

3.4.2 Flat or shallow pitched roofs should be ornamented with shaped parapets or cornice treatments, either by:

a) Using an architecturally profiled cornice and/or expressed parapet cap to terminate the top of the parapet wall, or

b) Providing a formed (compound folded) overhanging edge termination with sheet metal parapet caps or coping and a heavy gage sheet metal thickness selected to avoid oilcanning distortion. Single layer, flush sheet metal parapet caps should not be used.

Flat roof with overhang.

3.5 Rooftop Equipment

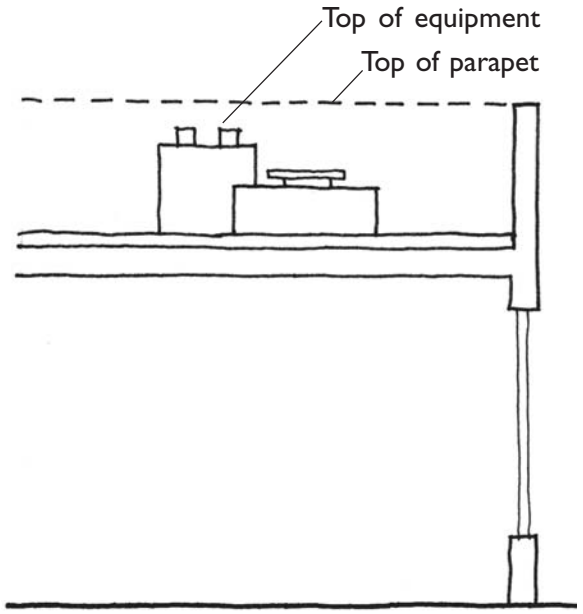
STANDARDS

3.5.1 All roof-mounted mechanical, electrical and external communication equipment, such as satellite dishes and microwave towers, shall be screened from public view and architecturally integrated into the building design.

3.5.2 Plans submitted for design review shall indicate how rooftop equipment will be screened.

GUIDELINE

3.5.3 All such equipment, including vents and ducts, should be integrated into the roof design and, where possible, consolidated to a minimal number of locations.



4. Architectural Detailing

Intent: To ensure that buildings with large façades incorporate design elements and details that relate to the scale of the human form.

4.1 Scale

STANDARD

4.1.1 Design details that can be used to create building elements that break larger floorplate buildings into smaller-scaled components include:

- Enhanced entry elements or entry plazas
- Atriums and interior courts
- Upper floor setbacks
- Dynamic building and roof forms
- Cornices, parapets and eaves
- Awnings, balconies, trellises
- Distinctive window patterns
- Accent lighting
- Landscaping components

4.2 Pedestrian Elements

GUIDELINE

4.2.1 Design elements that create pedestrian interest, such as doors, windows, trellises, benches or other similar elements, should be included at least every 40 to 60 feet along a building façade.

D. *Landscape Design*

The standards and guidelines in this section give design guidance for the landscaping components of projects in the commercial areas of the City. All landscaping shall comply with the water efficiency requirements of the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

1. Coverage

Intent: To provide adequate landscaping materials that enhance the appearance of development projects.

1.1 Minimum Standards

STANDARD

1.1.1 Altogether, the landscaping required in the front, side, and rear yard setbacks and in the parking areas represents the minimum acceptable landscape coverage for commercial sites.

GUIDELINE

1.1.2 Developers are strongly encouraged to provide more than the minimum standard, particularly in publicly viewed areas, in order to create a more attractive environment for employees and the general public.

Landscaping softens hard building contours.

2. Function

Intent: To provide adequate pedestrian amenities and attractive environments between public streets and commercial development.

2.1 Function

GUIDELINE

2.1.1 Landscaping should be used to provide an attractive setting for development; soften hard building contours; shade walkways, parking areas and other large

expanses of pavement; buffer and merge various uses; mitigate building height; and screen unsightly uses.

3. Layout

Intent: To incorporate appropriate landscape materials that provide an aesthetically pleasing transition between the building and adjacent sidewalks or pedestrian paths.

3.1 General

GUIDELINES

3.1.1 Planting plans for building setbacks should include a hierarchy of plantings in terms of size and types of plant materials that mark the transition between the horizontal ground plane at the sidewalk or parking area and the tall, vertical façades of buildings.

3.1.2 Landscaping close to the sidewalk should provide shade on the sidewalk, while also allowing views into the site. Denser plant material should be located closer to the building.

3.1.3 Landscaping should enhance the built environment and contribute to the spatial organization of the site.

Landscaping near sidewalk provides shade but also views into the site.

3.2 Street Frontage

STANDARDS

3.2.1 Street trees shall be included along all street frontages of commercial development.

3.2.2 Street trees shall be a minimum 24-inch box size and should be selected from a list of City-approved trees. All street trees shall be deep rooted trees, that are well adapted to urban conditions.

Guidelines

3.2.3 Trees should be planted a minimum of 3 feet behind the curb and should be trimmed to a minimum of 6 feet above the root crown.

3.2.4 The selected trees should be broad branching, with a mature canopy spread of 40 feet and a high canopy to allow visibility of buildings.

3.2.5 Utilize the City's street tree list when choosing street frontage trees.

3.3 Setbacks

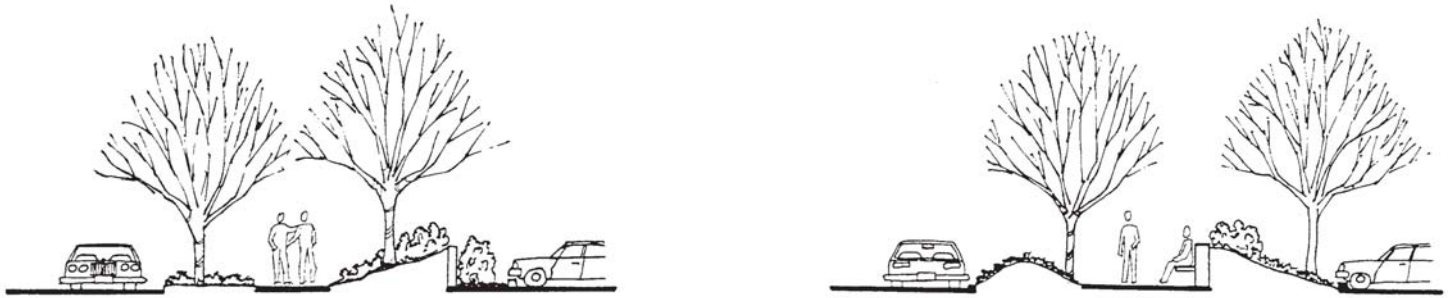
Standard

3.3.1 Parking areas adjacent to street frontages shall have a minimum 10-foot landscaped setback between the sidewalk and the on-site parking spaces.

3.4 Parking Buffer

Standard

3.4.1 Surface parking areas facing a public street shall be buffered by berming or landscaping.



Combinations of berms, landscaping and low walls help screen parking areas from public views.

Guideline

3.4.2 For security purposes, openings should be incorporated into the landscape design to provide clear views into the site.

3.5 Focal Elements

Guideline

3.5.1 The use of trees for purposes of creating focal elements, including tree clusters, is encouraged. Such a design element would augment rather than replace required street tree planting.

3.6 Swales

Standard

3.6.1 Drainage swales that are incorporated into landscape designs shall conform to the Water Resources Division's standards and guidelines for swales.

Guidelines

3.6.2 Swales are strongly recommended to reduce water quality impacts associated with site runoff.

3.6.3 Longitudinal slope of swales should be between 1% and 5%. Proposed swales with a slope of less than 1% will not be approved unless adequate underdrains are provided to prevent ponding. Swales of greater than 3% may be required to install check dams to reduce velocity through swale.

3.6.4 Side slopes should not exceed 3:1 horizontal:vertical.

3.6.5 Swale bottom must be graded flat to improve pollutant removal. Swale bottom should ideally be at least 4 to 6 feet wide, with a minimum of 2 feet.

3.4.6 Provide at least 1200 square feet of usable swale area per acre of impervious surface.

Drainage swales for parking lot run-off reduce negative impact on overall water quality.

4. Materials

Intent: To ensure that the landscaping materials are of an appropriate age and size that enables the materials to be fully functioning site amenities.

4.1 Plant Selection

STANDARD

4.1.1 Street trees and other plant materials within the public right of way shall be consistent with adopted City plans and regulations.

GUIDELINES

4.1.2 Plant and landscape materials should be selected and sited to reflect both ornamental and functional characteristics. Full-canopy shade trees, greenery and brightly colored flowering materials all add to the overall favorable impression of Livermore.

4.1.3 A well coordinated palette of plant species should be selected for general landscaping purposes, such as parking lots and setback areas.

4.1.4 Plant species should be generally hardy and not require extensive maintenance.

4.1.5 Species which are native or well-adapted to the climatic conditions in Livermore are preferable, since those will generally require less water and maintenance.

4.1.6 Both seasonal and year-round flowering shrubs and trees should be used where they can be most appreciated – adjacent to walks and recreational areas, or as a frame for building entrances and stairs.

4.1.7 Evergreen shrubs and trees should be used for screening along rear property lines, around trash/recycling areas and mechanical equipment and to obscure grillwork and fencing associated with subsurface parking garages.

Landscaping with native, drought-tolerant plants.

4.1.8 In general, deciduous trees with open branching structures are recommended to ensure visibility to retail establishments.

4.1.9 Loose materials such as gravel, wood chips and bark that are frequently used for groundcovers in residential settings should not be used in commercial developments. Instead, groundcover should consist predominantly of plant materials.

4.2 Plant Size and Scale

STANDARD

4.2.1 The following minimum sizes for plant materials are required at the time of installation:

a) At a minimum, 20% of the trees shall have a 24-inch box container size or larger.

b) The remaining trees shall have a 15-gallon minimum container size and a one-inch caliper size at chest height.

c) Unless otherwise approved by the Design Review Committee, shrubs not used as ground cover shall have a five-gallon minimum container size, a minimum height of 18 inches and a minimum spread of 18 to 24 inches.

GUIDELINES

4.2.2 Plant material should be sized and spaced such that lush and mature appearance will be attained within two years of planting.

4.2.3 Larger, more mature plant materials should be used in areas of particular importance, such as entries, to achieve an immediate effect.

4.2.4 Ground cover should be spaced to provide complete coverage within one year of planting (i.e. 12 inches on center maximum for plants taken from flats; 18 to 24 inches on center for material from one-gallon containers).
4.2.5 The scale and nature of landscape materials should be appropriate to the site and structure.
4.2.6 Large structures and large open sites should be complemented with large scale material (i.e. plants, rocks, timbers, walls, fences, etc.).
4.2.7 Mature sizes of plant materials need to be considered when selecting plant species.
4.2.8 Root barriers should be provided within 5 feet of a sidewalk or wall.

4.3 Irrigation

STANDARDS
4.3.1 All landscaped areas shall have automatic irrigation systems installed to ensure that plant materials survive. It is particularly important in commercial development that irrigation systems are designed so as not to overspray public walks, paved areas, buildings and fences. Drip irrigation systems are preferred.
4.3.2 Landscape plans shall demonstrate compliance with the City's Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.

4.4 Maintenance

STANDARD
4.4.1 Landscaped areas, including trees and other planting as well as paving, walls and fences shall be regularly maintained.

5. Plazas and Open Space

Intent: To ensure that outdoor areas for employees and commercial patrons are aesthetically pleasing and promote greater activity in commercial areas.

5.1 Plazas and Protected Seating Areas

STANDARDS

5.1.1 Publicly-accessible plazas and open spaces are encouraged to be provided as part of commercial projects.

5.1.2 Plazas and open spaces shall be landscaped and incorporate high quality paving materials, such as bricks, stone, concrete or tile.

5.1.3 Outdoor pedestrian spaces shall include appropriate outdoor furniture, such as seating, walls, trash receptacles, bike racks and other elements.

Outdoor seating area coordinated with development's overall scheme.

GUIDELINES

5.1.3 Paving, planting and other landscape materials should be coordinated with the design of the building, lighting and site.

5.1.4 Pedestrian amenities, such as plazas, courtyards and other open spaces should be provided for spaces between buildings.

5.1.5 When adjacent to street, outdoor areas should be buffered with architectural features and planting.

5.1.6 When adjacent to a major street a fountain providing a pleasant background noise should be considered.

Public outdoor seating in a pleasant setting.

5.1.5 Where practical, outdoor areas should be visible from public streets or trail networks and accessible from the building as well as the street or potential network.

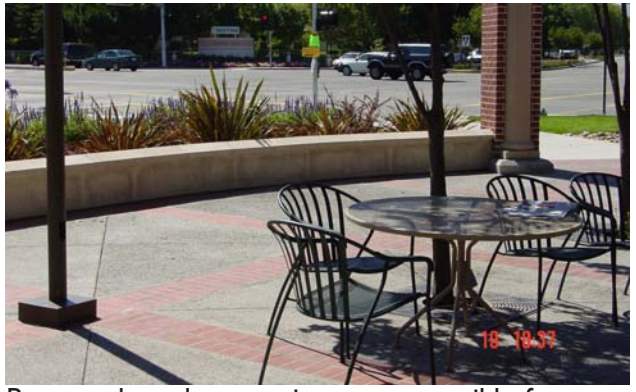
5.1.6 Outdoor furniture should be coordinated with the theme of the building.

5.1.7 Pay phones and newspaper racks should be incorporated where appropriate.

5.1.8 Ample landscaping with fountains and well-shaded seating areas are highly encouraged, as is the use of varied paving materials.

5.1.9 Plant materials should be of a drought-tolerant species where appropriate and provide variety, while being consistent with the architectural design of the building.

Publicly accessible outdoor seating area with furniture that is coordinated with architectural design.



Protected outdoor seating area accessible from public street.

6. Fences and Walls

Intent: To ensure that fencing contributes to the overall design of commercial buildings and development.

6.1 Fence and Wall Design

STANDARD

6.1.1 All screening shall be designed as an integral part of the overall building design.

GUIDELINES

6.1.2 Screening fences and walls are not recommended between commercial buildings and the street along primary and secondary street frontages. Screening fences and walls are permitted on internal side and rear property lines.

6.1.3 Screening fences located to the sides and rear of properties should be visually compatible with adjacent ornamental fence designs and adjacent building architecture. Related colors, a cap or top articulation and related post spacing should be used to enhance compatibility.

6.1.4 Adjacent to residential properties, screening fences should maintain a character and scale appropriate to residential neighborhoods; more detailed fencing types with heightened design detailing and additional ornamentation are recommended.

6.1.5 Fences around plazas and outdoor areas should be semi-transparent and architecturally compatible with the building and should be no more than 3 feet tall.

Unobtrusive fence design contributes to overall building and site design.

6.2 Height

GUIDELINE

6.2.1 Overall height of screening fences and walls should not exceed six feet in height.

Maximum height for screening fences should be 6 feet.

6.3 Articulation

GUIDELINES

6.3.1 The length of screening fences and walls adjacent to public rights of way should be minimized to the maximum extent feasible.

6.3.2 Design elements should be used to break up long expanses of uninterrupted walls, both horizontally and vertically. Walls over three feet in height should include design elements such as textured concrete block, interlocking "diamond" blocks, formed concrete with reveals or similar materials. Landscape materials should also be used to provide surface relief.

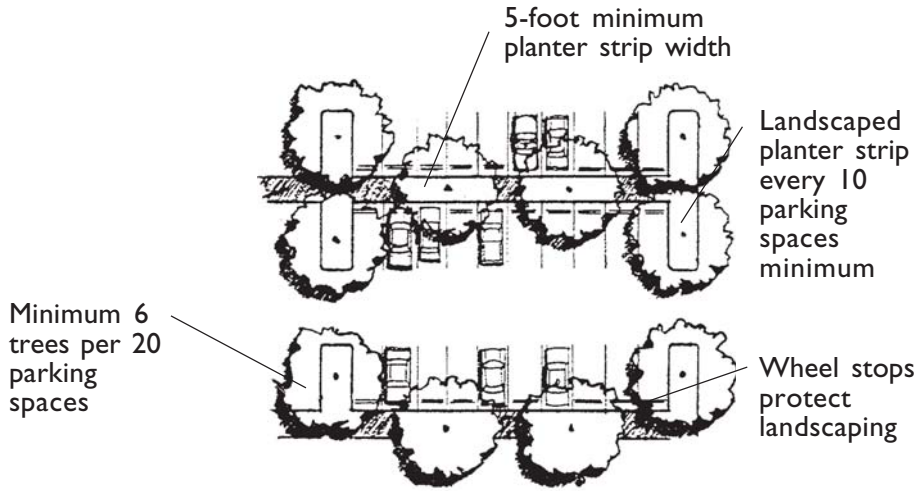
7. Parking Area Landscaping

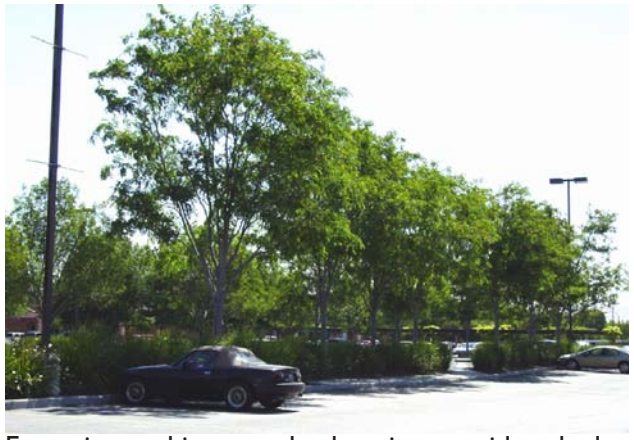
Intent: In a warm summer climate such as Livermore's, shading is extremely important to reduce glare and heat buildup as well as to provide an attractive, functional, comfortable environment.

STANDARDS

7.1.1 All parking areas shall provide interior landscaping for shade and aesthetic enhancement.

7.1.2 Parking lots shall be landscaped with broad branching shade trees at a minimum ratio of three trees per 10 parking spaces for single loaded stalls, six trees per 20 parking spaces for double loaded stalls and one tree for every three parking spaces for smaller parking bays.





Extensive parking area landscaping provides shade and enhances esthetic quality.

Planter area of a minimum 5-feet width.

7.1.3 Curbed planter areas shall be provided at the end of each parking aisle to protect parked vehicles from the turning movements of other vehicles.

Guidelines

7.1.4 Views of parking areas from public streets should be buffered by landscaping, earth berms or some combination of the two in order to reduce the visual impact of large parking areas.

7.1.5 For security reasons, openings should be incorporated into the landscaping in order to permit clear views into the site.

7.1.6 No more than ten parking spaces should be located in a row without an intervening landscaped planter strip. The intervening planter strip should be the full depth and width of the adjacent parking spaces.

7.1.7 Planter areas should provide a 5-foot minimum width of clear planting space. Eight feet is recommended.

7.1.8 Wheel stops should be used adjacent to tree wells and planter areas to protect landscaping from car overhangs. In place of wheel stops, the planter curb may be used for car overhangs, provided the 5-foot minimum clear planting area is maintained.

7.1.9 Drainage into swale areas is encouraged and may be accommodated through design elements such as flush curbs, perforated curbs and tree offsets.

7.1.10 Plant material in and adjacent to swales should delineate the transition between the swale area and the surrounding landscape.

7.1.11 Sidewalks, parking areas and other infrastructure should be protected through the use of root barriers, engineered soils or similar techniques.

Landscaped planter strip with disabled access ramp is the width of a parking space.

8. Undeveloped Areas

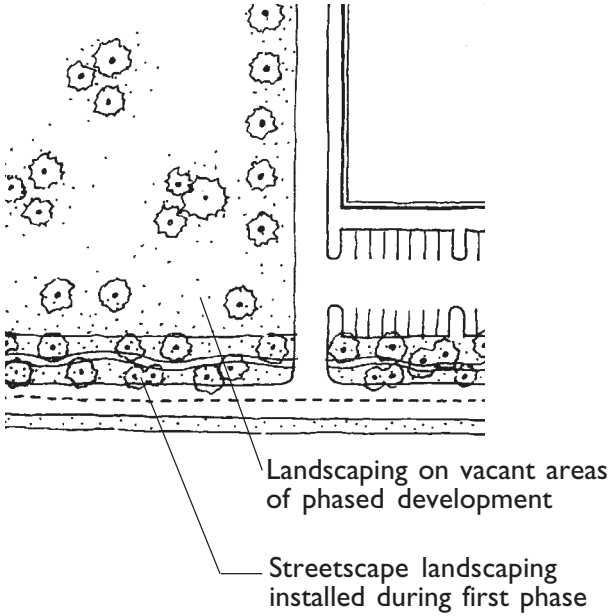
Intent: To ensure that vacant parcels do not detract from the overall goal of attractive and visually distinctive industrial development areas.

STANDARDS

8.1.1 All undeveloped portions of each occupied parcel shall be maintained as landscaped area.

8.1.2 For phased developments, landscaping shall be installed along the entire street frontage during the first phase.

8.1.3 Undeveloped areas shall be maintained and irrigated and shall not be used for any kind of storage.



E. Signs

This section provides standards and guidelines for all signs in the commercial areas of the City. All signs shall conform to standards specified in the City of Livermore Planning and Zoning Code.

1. Function

Intent: To ensure that signs in commercial areas enhances the built environment and do not contribute to visual clutter.

1.1 Purpose

STANDARD

1.1.1 Primary purpose of signs is to identify the business or businesses located at a specific site.

GUIDELINES

1.1.2 Signs should not be used as advertisements.

1.1.3 The design of a sign should be simple and easy to read.

1.1.4 The sign's message should be limited to the business name and/or the logo of the business occupying the site.

Coordinated sign design.

2. Architectural Context and Placement

Intent: To ensure that signs are an integral component of the design of a project.

2.1 Context

Standard

2.1.1 Bands, trim or building color, which are used to establish a corporate identity and do not relate to the architectural style or other colors of the building shall be considered a sign and will be regulated as such.

Guidelines

2.1.2 Sign design should conform to and be in harmony with the architectural character of the building.

2.1.3 Signs attached to a building should be designed as integral components of the building and not obscure or conceal architectural elements.

2.1.4 Standardized or corporate signs, which do not conform to the color or architectural detailing of the building, should be avoided.

Symmetrically located, architecturally integrated wall sign.

2.2 Placement

Standard

2.2.1 Signs shall not be permitted on top of any roof, and no sign attached to a wall or eave shall project above the eave line of the building.

Guideline

2.2.2 Signs should generally be symmetrically located within a defined architectural space.

3. Sign Design

Intent: To ensure that signs are designed and constructed to make a positive contribution to the overall character of the commercial project.

3.1 General Design

Standards

3.1.1 Where internally illuminated lighting is used, only individual letter signs shall be permitted.

3.1.2 No "can" (box type) signs with a translucent plastic sign panel front with applied or painted lettering shall be permitted except for tenant logos.

3.1.3 Can signs with opaque faces and push through lettering shall only be permitted where the sign ties into the architecture of the building.

3.1.4 Exposed raceways shall not be used.

Guidelines

3.1.4 Sign design should be appropriate to the business establishment, building architecture and area in which it is located.

3.1.5 Exposed neon signs are strongly discouraged.

Back-lit letters appear in silhouette on building façade.

Externally illuminated individual letter sign ties into architecture.

3.2 Wall or Window Signs

STANDARDS

3.2.1 Painted signs and letters shall present a neat and aligned appearance. The services of a skilled professional sign painter are strongly recommended.

3.2.2 Externally illuminated or halo lit signs are encouraged and where used shall have an opaque face.

3.2.3 Window signs shall not be placed in a manner which obscures primary views into and out from the storefront.

GUIDELINES

3.2.4 Where individual letters are used, letters should be three dimensional, created by raised letter forms mounted to the building façade or sign panel, or by incised openings cut-out from the sign panel.

3.2.5 For signs identifying hours of operation, menus, newspaper reviews and other customer information, it is recommended that these be framed, board-mounted or plastic laminated for a finished appearance.

Window sign.

3.3 Projecting Signs

GUIDELINES

3.3.1 Structural supports for projecting signs should be designed so that their visual appearance is minimized, and/or coordinated with the overall architecture and color scheme of the building. They should not appear to be "tacked on" without regard for the alignments, proportions, colors and forms of their adjacent buildings and signs.

3.3.2 Sign fonts should be selected to provide both visual clarity and artistic expression.

Projecting sign.

3.4 Awning and Canopy-Mounted Signs

Standards

3.4.1 Any signing on awnings shall be painted directly onto the awning material.

3.4.2 Awning signs shall be restricted to the lower one-third of the awning and the awning valence.

Guidelines

3.4.1 Awnings. Lettering and graphics on awnings may occur on the sloped front, sides or fascia of the awning.

3.4.2 Canopies. Individual three-dimensional letters are recommended. Individual letters may be mounted within the vertical fascia of the canopy or attached to the canopy above the fascia.

3.4.3 Under Awning Signs. Signs made of high quality materials may be utilized.

Individual three dimensional letter sign mounted on awning structure.

3.5 Freestanding Signs

Guidelines

3.5.1 All freestanding signs should be designed to relate to the architecture of the building or development they serve.

3.5.2 Exterior materials, finishes and colors should be the same or similar to those of the building or structures on site. High quality, durable materials should be used as these elements will receive a higher degree of interface with the public than most building components.

3.6 Multiple-Tenant Complexes

STANDARD

3.6.1 Multiple-tenant buildings and complexes shall develop a Master Sign Program to minimize the potential visual conflicts and competition among tenant signs, while ensuring adequate identification for each tenant.

GUIDELINES

3.6.2 Free-standing signs may include the names of major tenants.

3.6.3 Free-standing signs used to identify such complexes should include the name and address of the complex.

Multi-tenant building sign restricting sign size but not lettering for each individual tenant.

F. Lighting

This section contains the standards and guidelines for exterior lighting in the commercial areas of the City.

1. Lighting Design and Illumination

Intent: To ensure that the design of fixtures and the light provided contributes to the character of development and does not impact adjacent development. As well as to ensure that lighting enhances architecture and landscape design.

1.1 Design

STANDARDS

1.1.1 Exterior lighting shall be designed as an integral part of the building and landscape design.

1.1.2 Site plans and architectural plans shall include the location of fixtures, their design and the nature and level of the illumination they will provide.

1.1.3 Illumination levels shall be provided to address security concerns, especially for parking lots, pedestrian paths, outdoor gathering spaces, at building entries and any other pedestrian accessible areas.

GUIDELINES

1.1.4 Decorative lighting fixtures, such as gooseneck lighting, are strongly encouraged.

1.1.5 Lighting should generally be designed to include cut-offs to minimize the negative effects of lighting of the sky.

Exterior lighting enhances architectural design.

1.2 Lighting Height

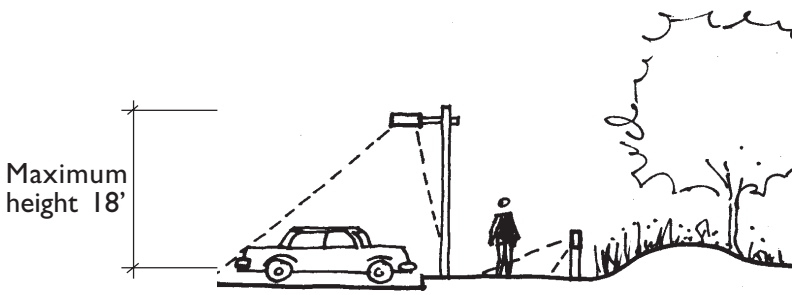
STANDARD

1.2.1 The height of luminaries shall be in scale with the building and site design and in no case shall they exceed 18 feet in height from grade.

GUIDELINES

1.2.2 Lighting sources should be kept as low to the ground as possible while ensuring safe and functional levels of illumination.

1.2.3 Area lighting should be directed downward or employ control features so as to avoid light being directed offsite as well as to avoid lighting of the night sky.



Lighting directed downward.

Downward directed lighting.

1.3 Area of Illumination

STANDARD

1.3.1 The light source for externally illuminated signs must be positioned so that light does not shine directly on adjoining properties or cause glare or shine in the eyes of motorists or pedestrians.

GUIDELINES

1.3.2 Lighting should be located so as to minimize the impact of lighting upon adjacent buildings and properties, especially residential uses.

1.3.3 In general, the location of lighting should respond to the anticipated use and not exceed the amount of illumination required by users.

1.3.4 Illumination over an entire area or use of overly bright lighting is strongly discouraged.

1.3.5 Lighting for pedestrian safety should illuminate changes in grade, path intersections and other areas along paths which, if left unlit, would cause the user to feel insecure. Recommended minimum levels of illumination along pedestrian paths between destinations is 0.5 foot-candles. At pedestrian destination points such as entryways, plazas and courtyards, lighting levels should typically achieve illumination of 1 foot-candle.

1.3.6 The placement of light standards, whether for street lights or garden lights, should not interfere with pedestrian movement.

Lighting with cut-off shield.

1.4 Parking Area Illumination

Guidelines

1.4.1 Illumination should be concentrated along the pedestrian paths leading to parking areas and in the specific areas where cars are parked.

1.4.2 Illumination should achieve a lighting level of 1 foot-candle on the parking lot surface.

Bollard lighting for pedestrian path.

1.5 Prohibited Lights

Standard

1.5.1 No outdoor lights shall be permitted that blink, flash or change intensity.