The City of Kirkland

Design Guidelines

For Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts

Adopted by the City Council pursuant to
Kirkland Municipal Code Section 3.30.040.
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Attest:

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The Illustrations throughout this document are provided by *MAKERS*.

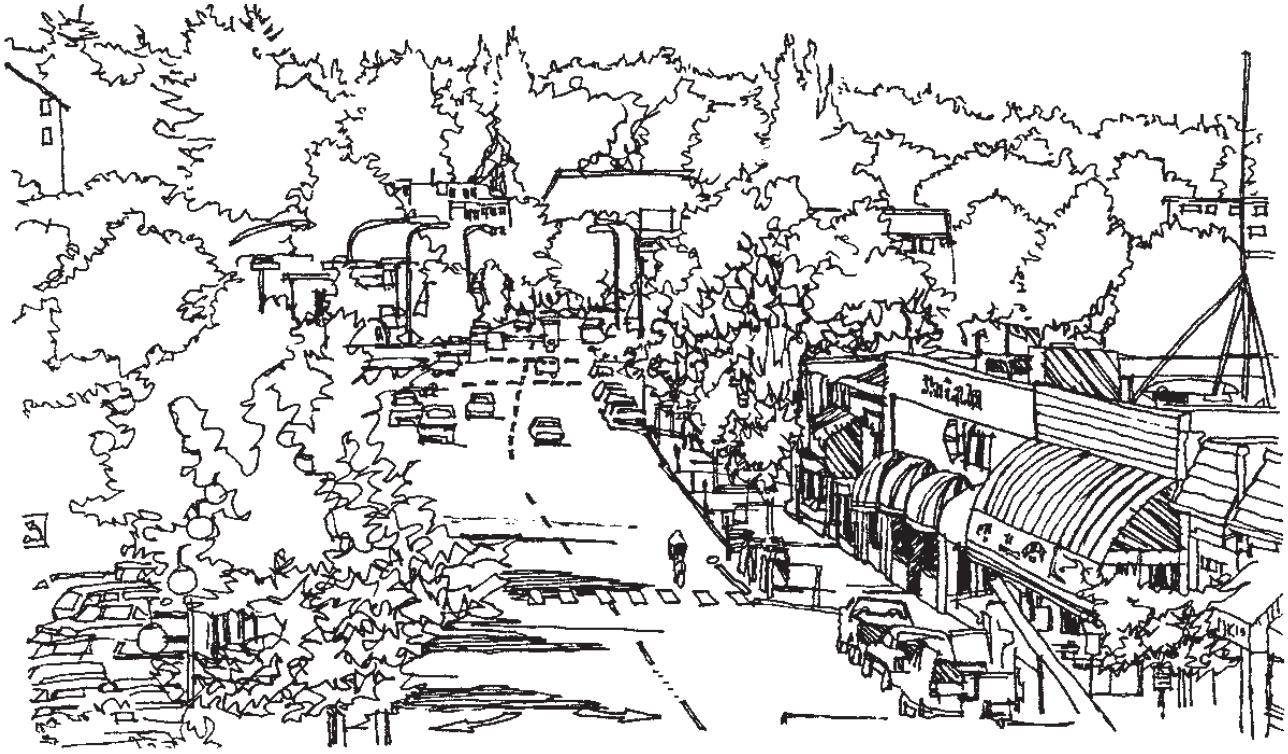
Introduction

This document sets forth a series of Design Guidelines, adopted by Section 3.30 of the Kirkland Municipal Code, that will be used by the City in the in the design review process. For Board Design Review (BDR), the Design Review Board will use these guidelines in association with the Design Regulations of the Kirkland Zoning Code. To the extent that the standards of the Design Guidelines or Design Regulations address the same issue but are not entirely consistent or contain different levels of specificity, the Design Review Board will determine which standard results in superior design. For Administrative Design Review (ADR), the Planning Official will use these guidelines when necessary to interpret the Design Regulations. They are also intended to assist project developers and their architects by providing graphic examples of the intent of the City's guidelines and regulations.

Most of the concepts presented in the Design Guidelines are applicable to any pedestrian-oriented business district.* "Special Considerations" have been added, such as for Downtown Kirkland, to illustrate how unique characteristics of that pedestrian-oriented business district relate to the Guideline.

The Design Guidelines do not set a particular style of architecture or design theme. Rather, they will establish a greater sense of quality, unity, and conformance with Kirkland's physical assets and civic role.

The Design Guidelines will work with improvements to streets and parks and the development of new public facilities to create a dynamic setting for civic activities and private development. It is important to note that these Guidelines are not intended to slow or restrict development, but rather to add consistency and predictability to the permit review process.



** The guidelines also apply to residential development in the Central Business District (CBD), the Juanita Business District (JBD), the North Rose Hill Business District, the Market Street Corridor (MSC), Totem Center, and Planned Area 5C (PLA5C); and to mixed use development throughout the City.*

Kirkland Design Guidelines

The drawing below illustrates many of the design Guidelines described in this appendix

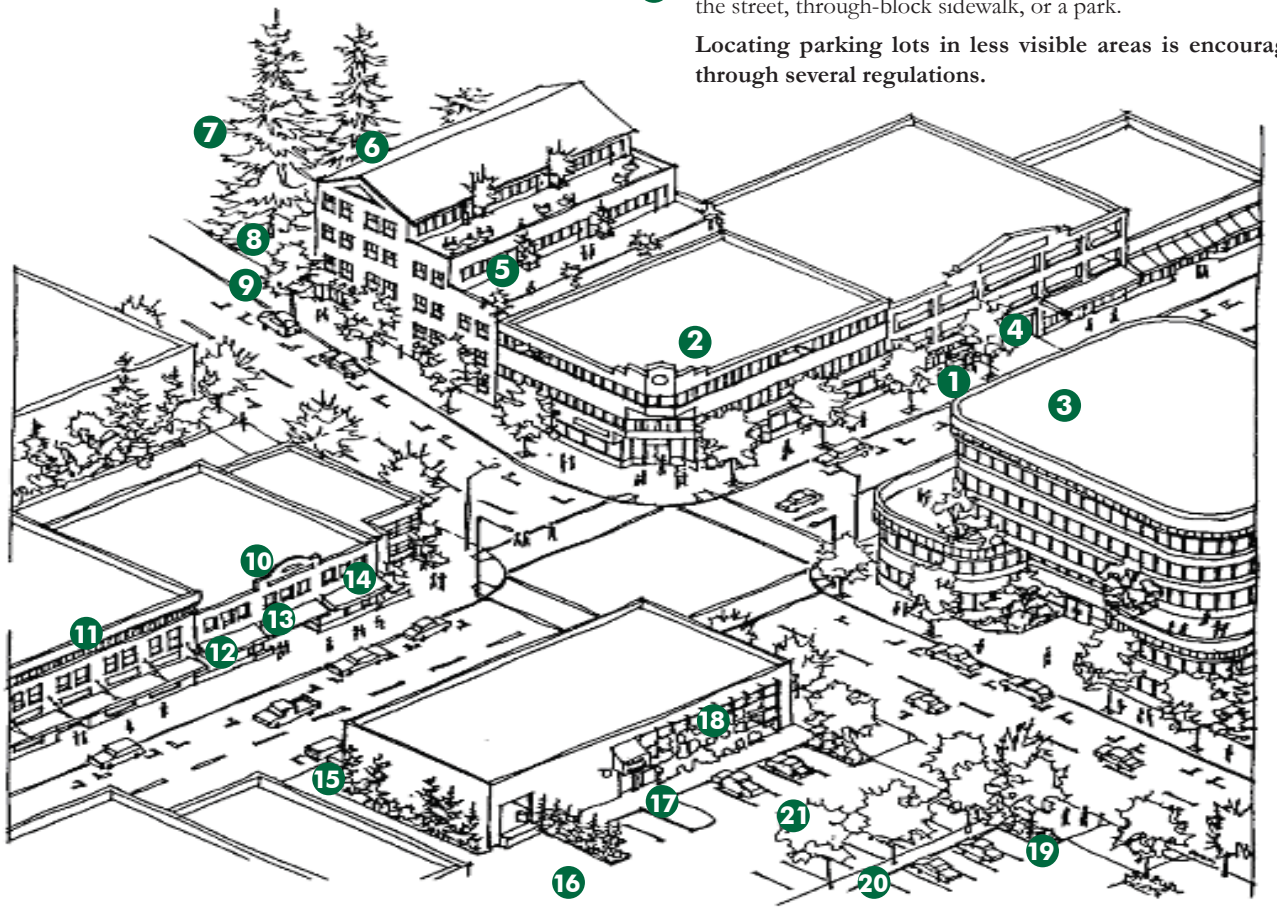
1. Pedestrian plazas and places for vendors encouraged through several regulations.
2. Buildings on corner lots may be required to incorporate an architectural or pedestrian-oriented feature at the corner. Many options are possible including plazas, artwork, turrets, curved corners, etc.

   Special architectural requirements placed on use of concrete block and metal siding.
3. "Architectural scale" requirements direct large buildings to fit more comfortably with neighboring development. This example employs building setbacks, decks, curved surfaces, and recessed entries to reduce appearance of building mass.
4. Parking garages on pedestrian-oriented streets or through-block sidewalks may incorporate pedestrian-oriented uses or pedestrian-oriented space into front facades.

   Street trees required along certain streets.
5. Human scale features such as balconies or decks, bay windows, covered entries, gable or hipped rooflines, multiple paned windows, or pedestrian-oriented space may be required.
6. More flexible method of measuring building height on slopes.
7. New policies regarding tree protection and enhancement of wooded slopes.Standards for size, quantity, quality, and maintenance of landscape plant materials are set by the Zoning Code.
8. Standards for size, quantity, quality, and maintenance of landscape plant materials are set by the Zoning Code.
9. Standards are set for pathway width, pavement, lighting, and site features on required major pathways and public properties.
10. A building cornerstone or plaque may be required.
11. Covering up existing masonry or details with synthetic materials is restricted.
12. Ground story facades of buildings on pedestrian-oriented streets or adjacent to parks may be required to feature display windows, artwork, or pedestrian-oriented space.
13. Pedestrian weather protection required on pedestrian-oriented streets.
14. Architectural detail elements such as decorative or special windows, doors, railings, grillwork, lighting, trellises, pavements, materials, or artwork to add visual interest may be required.

    Size of parking lots abutting pedestrian-oriented streets may be restricted.
15. Quantity and locations of driveways are regulated.
16. Visible service areas and loading docks must be screened.
17. Provision for pedestrian circulation is required in large parking lots.
18. Blank walls near streets or adjacent to through-block sidewalks must be treated with landscaping, artwork, or other treatment.
19. Screening of parking lots near streets is required.
20. Standards for curbs, signing, lighting, and equipment are set for parking lots.
21. Internal landscaping is required on large parking lots visible from the street, through-block sidewalk, or a park.

    Locating parking lots in less visible areas is encouraged through several regulations.



Purpose of the Design Guidelines for Downtown Kirkland

In 1989 the Kirkland City Council adopted Kirkland's Downtown Plan which set a vision for the downtown's future and outlined policies and public actions to make that vision a reality. One of the recommended actions is the adoption of a set of Downtown Design Guidelines to be used in reviewing all new development and major renovations in the downtown area. The goal of the Design Guidelines as stated in the plan is to

> *. . . balance the desired diversity of project architecture with the equally desired overall coherence of the downtown's visual and historic character. This is to be achieved by injecting into each projects' creative design process a recognition and respect of design guidelines and methods which incorporate new development into downtown's overall pattern.*

In addition, the guidelines are intended to further the following urban design goals stated in the plan:

- Promote a sense of community identity by emphasizing Kirkland's natural assets, maintaining its human scale, and encouraging activities that make downtown the cultural, civic, and commercial heart of the community.
- Maintain a high-quality environment by ensuring that new construction and site development meet high standards.
- Orient to the pedestrian by providing weather protection, amenities, human scale elements, and activities that attract people to downtown.
- Increase a sense of continuity and order by coordinating site orientation, building scale, and streetscape elements of new development to better fit with neighboring buildings.
- Incorporate parks and natural features by establishing an integrated network of trails, parks, and open spaces and maintaining existing trees and incorporating landscaping into new development.
- Allow for diversity and growth through flexible guidelines that are adaptable to a variety of conditions and do not restrict new development.

Purpose of the Design Guidelines for PLA5C

Planned Area 5C is part of the Moss Bay Neighborhood and is designated for high density residential and office uses. It is located just east of the Central Business District (CBD) and shares many of the CBD's characteristics, although retail uses are not allowed.

The adjacent steep hillside to the north of PLA5C is part of the 85th Street right-of-way and it limits potential view obstruction from the five to six story buildings which can be developed in PLA5C.

The following guidelines, which encourage wide sidewalks, do not apply to PLA5C since there are no "pedestrian oriented streets" or "major pedestrian sidewalks" designated in the Zoning Code for this area.

- Sidewalk Width: Movement Zone
- Sidewalk Width: Storefront Activity Zone

An additional guideline that does not apply is "Height Measurement on Hillsides."

Purpose of the Design Guidelines for Juanita Business District

The Juanita Business District Plan was adopted in 1990 by the City Council. It states that "the underlying goal of redevelopment in the business district is to create a neighborhood-scale, pedestrian district which takes advantage of the amenities offered by Juanita Bay."

As part of the Juanita Business District Plan, Design Regulations and Design Guidelines were established for new development and major renovations in the Business District (JBD). These guidelines and regulations are intended to further the following urban design features stated in the plan:

- Pedestrian pathways from the surrounding residential areas to and through the business district and on to Juanita Beach Park should be acquired and improved.
- View corridors to the lake should be explored through new development in the business district.
- Entry features, such as signs or sculpture, should be established in the locations shown in the Juanita Business District Plan.
- Coordinated streetscape improvements should be used throughout the business district, including street trees, street furniture, and other amenities, like flowers, banners, and signs.

Purpose of the Design Guidelines for the Market Street Corridor, including the Market Street Historic District

The City Council adopted the Market Street Corridor Plan in December of 2006 as part of the Market and Norkirk Neighborhood planning process. The new plan

was created for commercial and multifamily properties adjoining Market Street extending from the Central Business District at the south end to 19th Avenue at the north end. The plan includes a vision for the corridor of an attractive, economically healthy area that accommodates neighborhood oriented businesses, office uses and multifamily housing in a way that complements and protects the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

The historic 1890's buildings at the intersection of Market Street and 7th Avenue create a unique sense of place that represents the original town center of Kirkland. The plan establishes an historic district in this area that will reflect the City's past through both its old and new buildings and its streetscape. New development and renovation within this historic district should reflect the scale and design features of the existing historic resources in the district.

As part of the Market Street Corridor Plan, Design Regulations and Guidelines are established for new development and major renovations in the Market Street Corridor (MSC). These guidelines and regulations are intended to further the following design objectives that are stated in the plan:

- Encourage preservation of structures and locations that reflect Kirkland's heritage.
- Support a mix of higher intensity uses along the Market Street Corridor while minimizing impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Maintain and enhance the character of the historic intersection at 7th Avenue and Market Street.
- Provide streetscape, gateway and public art improvements that contribute to a sense of identity and enhanced visual quality.
- Provide transitions between low density residential uses within the neighborhoods and the commercial and multifamily residential uses along Market Street.

Except for the MSC2 zone, the following guidelines, which suggest wider sidewalks, do not apply since there are no "pedestrian oriented streets" or "major pedestrian sidewalks" designated in the Zoning Code for the Market Street Corridor.

- Sidewalk Width: Movement Zone
- Sidewalk Width: Storefront Activity Zone

Additional guidelines that do not apply to the Market Street Corridor include:

- Protection and Enhancement of Wooded Slopes
- Height Measurement on Hillsides
- Culverted Creeks

Purpose of the Design Guidelines for North Rose Hill Business District

The North Rose Hill Business District goals and policies were adopted in 2003 as part of the North Rose Hill Neighborhood Plan. Development in the North Rose Hill Business District (NRHBD) is to complement the Totem Lake neighborhood and encourage increased residential capacity to help meet housing needs. Commercial uses are to be limited to those that are compatible with the residential focus of the NRHBD.

As part of the NRH plan, design regulations and guidelines were established for new development and major renovations in the Business District (NRHBD). These guidelines and regulations are intended to further the following urban design goals and policies stated in the plan:

- Ensure that public improvements and private development contribute to neighborhood quality and identity in the Business District through:
  - *Establishment of building and site design standards.*
  - *Utilization of the design review process.*
  - *Location and sharing of parking lots .*
  - *Utilization of high quality materials, public art, bicycle and pedestrian amenities, directional signs on all arterials, and other measures for public buildings and public infrastructure, such as streets and parks.*
- Provide transitions between commercial and residential uses in the neighborhood.
- Provide streetscape improvements that contribute to a sense of neighborhood identity and enhanced visual quality.

Since the focus of the NRHBD is on increasing residential capacity while accommodating supportive commercial uses, rather than developing into a destination retail business district, the following guidelines do not apply to this business district.

- Sidewalk Width – Movement Zone
- Sidewalk Width – Curb Zone
- Sidewalk Width – The Storefront Activity Zone
- Pedestrian Coverings
- Pedestrian-Friendly Building Fronts
- Upper-Story Activities Overlooking the Street

In addition, the following do not apply:

- Protection and Enhancement of Wooded Slopes

- Height Measurement on Hillsides
- Views of Water
- Culverted Creeks

Purpose of the Design Guidelines for Totem Center

The Kirkland City Council adopted a new neighborhood plan for Totem Lake in early 2002. The vision set forth in the Plan for Totem Center is of a dense, compact community, with a mix of business, commercial and residential uses and a high level of transit and pedestrian activity.

The Plan establishes key overall design principles for Totem Center, as well as specific design objectives for the Totem Lake Mall (TL 2), Evergreen Hospital campus (TL 3), and the mixed-use area west of the campus (TL 1). Design objectives promoted in the plan for Totem Center include:

- Accommodate high density, transit-oriented development, consistent with the district's position in an Urban Center.
- Ensure that public and private development contribute to a lively and inviting character in Totem Center.
- Reinforce the character of Totem Center through public investments
- Produce buildings that exhibit high quality design, incorporate pedestrian features and amenities and display elements of both continuity and individuality
- Provide public spaces that are focal points for the community
- Provide visual and functional connections between adjacent developments through landscaping, public spaces and pedestrian connections.

Design considerations specific to the three subareas within the district include:

Mixed-Use Area (TL 1)

- Break up the mass of larger buildings through techniques such as towers over podiums, to create a varied building footprint and the perception of a smaller overall building mass.
- Incorporate features that create distinctive roof forms, to contribute to a skyline that is visually interesting throughout the district.
- Ensure appropriate transitions from lower density uses north of Totem Center through providing residentially scaled façades and centered building masses in development along NE 132nd Street.

Retail Center (TL 2)

The Totem Lake Neighborhood Plan direction for the TL2 area is to support its growth as a vibrant, intensive retail center for the Kirkland community and surrounding region. These guidlines are intended to promote the vision of this area as a "village-like" community gathering place, with high-quality urban and architectural design in redevelopment. To provide for flexibility and increased development potential, while ensuring coordinated development and design integrity over time, redevelopment should occur within the context of an overall site development or Master Plan for the entire property.

Evergreen Hospital Medical Center Campus (TL 3)

The Totem Lake Neighborhood Plan acknowledges the important role the hospital plays in the Kirkland community, and supports growth on the campus to strengthen this role. Design objectives stated in the Plan for the Evergreen Hospital campus are consistent with those expressed in the Master Plan approved for the site:

- Taller buildings should be located toward the center of the site and designed to minimize shadowing and transition impacts on residential areas.
- Public access to usable green spaces on the campus can help to offset the impacts of taller buildings on the site.
- Ensure campus edges are compatible with neighboring uses.
- Enhance and improve pedestrian access with the campus and to surrounding uses, particularly the transit center and to TL 2.

The approved Master Plan for the hospital campus includes additional, unique design guidelines that apply to institutional development in a campus environment:

- *Respond to Physical Environment*: New buildings should be attractive as well as functional additions to the campus.
- *Enhance the Skyline*: The upper portion of buildings should be designed to promote visual interest and variety on the skyline, except where building function dictates uninterrupted vertical mass.
- Avoid blank facades in buildings located on the perimeter of the campus.

- Use materials and forms that reinforce the visual coherence of the campus.
- Provide inviting and useable open space.
- Enhance the campus with landscaping.
- Guidelines for the transit center to be located on the hospital campus should be developed and incorporated with guidelines for the rest of the campus.

The following guidelines do not apply to Totem Center:

- Height Measurement on Hillsides
- Views of Water

Purpose of the Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Business Districts

The Comprehensive Plan establishes a hierarchy of commercial districts, with regional goods and services at the upper end and neighborhoods goods and services at the lower end.

Kirkland's Neighborhood Business Districts (BN, BNA, and MSC2) are important in providing neighborhood goods and services. Given the more localized draw for residents to meet their everyday needs, an emphasis on convenient and attractive pedestrian connections and vehicular access is important.

In addition, because these districts are surrounded by the residential land uses they serve, the design character and context of new development is critical to ensure that it integrates into the neighborhood.

The design guidelines are intended to further the following design objectives that are stated in the Plan:

- Establish development standards that promote attractive commercial areas and reflect the distinctive role of each area.
- Encourage and develop places and events throughout the community where people can gather and interact.
- Moss Bay neighborhood: Ensure that building design is compatible with the neighborhood in size, scale, and character.
- South Rose Hill neighborhood: Residential scale and design are critical to integrate these uses into the residential area.

The following guidelines do not apply to these districts:

- Protection and Enhancement of Wooded Slopes
- Height Measurement on Hillsides
- Culverted Creeks

Pedestrian-Oriented Elements

Introduction

Successful pedestrian-oriented business districts, as opposed to "commercial strips," depend upon making pedestrian circulation more convenient and attractive than vehicular circulation, because the retail strategy for such districts is to encourage the customer to visit often and for more than one purpose at a time. The desired shopping pattern is for the customer to park in a convenient location and walk to several different businesses or attractions. The guidelines in this section focus on creating a high-quality pedestrian environment, especially along *pedestrian-oriented streets*. *Pedestrian-oriented streets* are specific streets defined for each business district.

This section also deals with building elements that detract from pedestrian qualities. One such detraction is a large expanse of blank wall, which, when adjacent or near to neighboring properties or overlooking public areas, can be intrusive and create undesirable conditions for pedestrians and neighbors. Therefore, the guidelines direct new development to treat blank walls with landscaping, building modulation, or other elements to reduce the impact of blank walls on neighboring and public properties.

The guidelines dealing with the spatial and functional integration of sidewalk areas and building elements address several issues:

- Width of sidewalk to accommodate pedestrian flow, building entrances, and other sidewalk activities.
- Pedestrian weather protection.
- "Pedestrian-friendly" building fronts.
- Other building facade elements that improve pedestrian conditions along the sidewalk.
- Mitigation of blank walls and screening of service areas.

On the following pages are described urban design guidelines relating to pedestrian circulation and amenities. The guidelines outline the general issues and present design information, concepts, and solutions to address the issues. The guidelines serve as a conceptual foundation and support the regulations included in the Kirkland Zoning Code.

Sidewalk Width: Movement Zone

Issue

Pedestrian movement is a primary function of sidewalks. The sidewalk has three overlapping parts with different functions: the curb zone, the movement zone, and the storefront or activity zone.

A well-sized and uncluttered movement zone allows pedestrians to move at a comfortable pace. People can window-shop comfortably and enjoy a relaxed atmosphere without bumping into street signs, garbage cans, or other people.

Discussion

An adult person measures approximately 2' across the shoulders, but a pedestrian carrying grocery bags, pushing a baby carriage or bicycle, or walking a dog measures 3' across. A window-shopper will require a minimum of 2'-6" to 3' wide space to avoid being pushed or having their view obstructed.

The movement zone should be at least 10' to 12' wide so that two couples can comfortably pass one another. This same space also will allow one person to pass a couple while another person passes from the opposite direction. In business districts add 3' to the storefront activity zone for window-shopping.

The width of the sidewalk movement zone should consider the function of sidewalks, the level of pedestrian traffic, and the general age groups of the pedestrians (children and the elderly slow traffic on sidewalks that are too narrow).

Guideline

A sidewalk should support a variety and concentration of activity yet avoid overcrowding and congestion. The average sidewalk width should be between 10' and 18'. New buildings on pedestrian-oriented streets should be set back a sufficient distance to provide at least 10' of sidewalk. If outdoor dining, seating, vending, or displays are desired, an additional setback is necessary.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Most of the business core of Kirkland is already developed with fairly narrow sidewalks. New development should provide sidewalks at the recommended width. Providing wider sidewalks throughout downtown is a long-term endeavor.

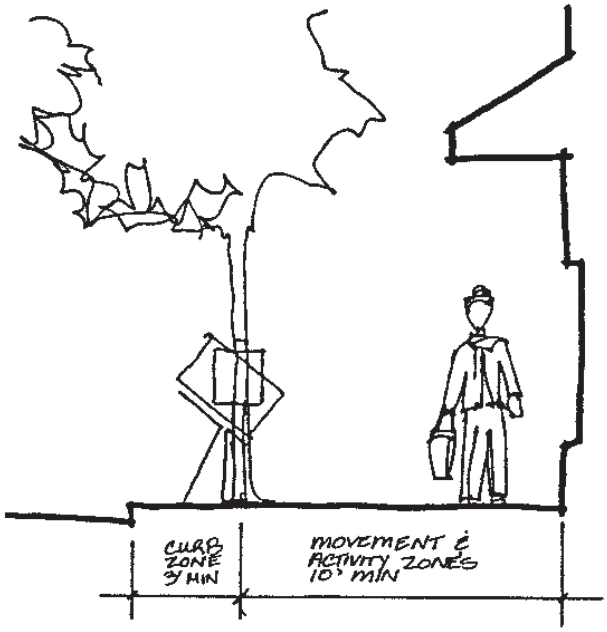
Special Consideration for Juanita Business District

A concentrated, organized, retail-oriented core with a unified pedestrian circulation network is a goal of the Juanita Business District. The pedestrian system will also serve to connect the perimeter of the district to the core.

Special Consideration for Totem Center

New development in TL2 should provide sidewalks at the recommended width, to contribute to the pedestrian-orientation of new development. Public gathering places, such as pedestrian-oriented plazas linked to the sidewalk, should be encouraged.

Sidewalk Width – Curb Zone



Issue

The curb zone contains parking meters, garbage cans, newspaper stands, street signs, light poles, mail boxes, phone booths, bus stops, and trees. The curb zone is also a buffer between vehicular traffic and pedestrians.

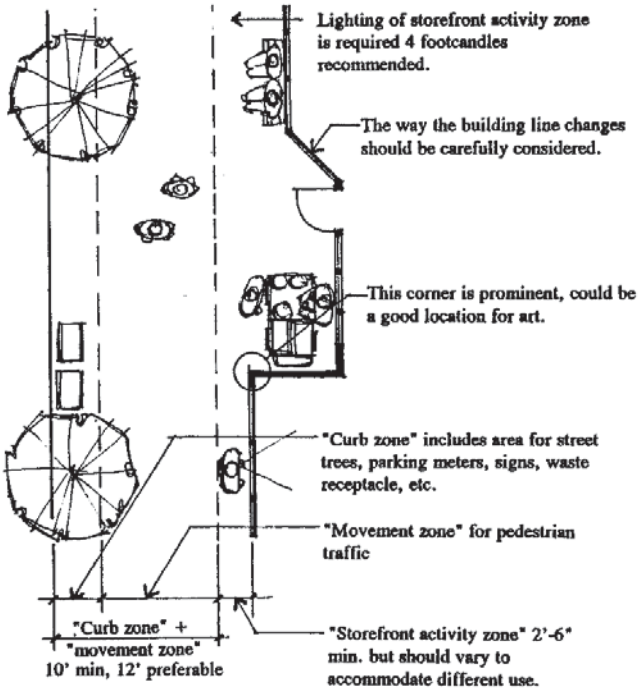
Discussion

The curb zone may be integrated into the sidewalk design in a number of ways.

- *A curb zone with parallel parking.* Getting in and out of parked cars requires 2'-6"; so the curb zone width should be between 4'-6" and 5'-6".
- *A curb zone without parallel parking.* Space is not needed to park cars; the curb zone width should be between 3' and 4'.
- *A curb zone with street furniture clustered in sidewalk bulbs along the street; parking is allotted in the pockets between the bulbs.* Clusters of street elements – benches, newspaper stands, covered bus stops – require a sidewalk width of about 8' to 12'.

The curb zone may be visually separated from the movement zone by changes in color or surface material. Street furniture and other elements may be grouped and unified by color and shape to give the street a less cluttered appearance.

The design of the curb zone and street elements provides an opportunity for Kirkland to develop a visual identity that differs from street to street yet is still characteristic of Kirkland.



Guidelines

Street elements – trees, parking meters, signs – should be organized in the curb zone to reduce congestion. During busy periods, pedestrians may use the curb zone for walking.

Where pedestrian traffic is the heaviest, sidewalk bulbs can be constructed to accommodate bike racks, waste receptacles, and newspaper racks. Corner bulbs also increase pedestrian visibility.

Sidewalk Width – The Storefront Activity Zone

Issue

The storefront activity zone is the most important area for improving pedestrian amenities because it offers protection, provides space for sidewalk activities, and is a transition from the public space of the sidewalk to the private space of the building.

Discussion

At least 10' of the sidewalk must be kept for pedestrian movement. In addition, there must be room for other activities that add life and interest to the street. Window shopping requires a minimum of 2'-6". Other activities require:

- Bench for sitting: 4' min.
- Vendor: 4' min. (6' preferable)
- Outdoor dining: 6' min. (one table)
- Outdoor displays: 4' min. (6' preferable)

The activity desired in the storefront activity zone can vary from property to property. This may result in a more animated sidewalk environment with protected alcoves and niches.

Guideline

New buildings should be set back a sufficient distance from the front property line a minimum of 10' to allow enough room for pedestrian movement. Wider setbacks should be considered to accommodate other sidewalk uses that would benefit their businesses and the pedestrian environment. Lighting and special paving of the storefront activity zone are also beneficial.

Pedestrian Coverings

Issue

Pedestrian coverings such as awnings and canopies offer shelter, provide spatial enclosure, and add design interest to a retail streetscape.

Discussion

The design of awnings and canopies should be coordinated with a number of factors:

The width of a canopy or awning depends on its function. A 3' to 4' canopy will provide rain cover for window-shopping. A 5' or greater canopy will provide cover for a street sale, and a 7' to 8' canopy will provide room for a window shopper and a passing couple.

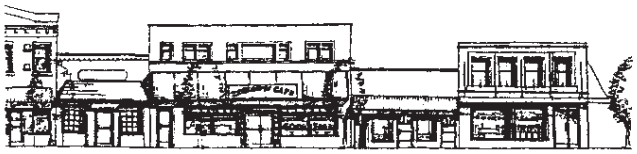
The width of the sidewalk should be considered when sizing the awning. Water spilling down the edges of awnings is unpleasant; thus the awning should be either extended or shortened if there is not room for two people to pass one another either under the awning or outside the awning.

The architecture of the building determines the appropriate placement and style of the canopy or awning. A canopy should be continuous in shape, design, and placement throughout a building.

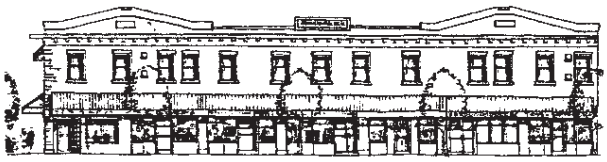
The overall style of a street should guide the choice of type, color, and size of coverings. The quality of light emanating from awnings or canopies should be controlled. The back-lit plastic awning typical of fast food chains is inappropriate on pedestrian streetscapes.

The crown of trees can be a canopy in its own right by defining space and providing shelter. Canopies and awnings should be appropriately dimensioned to allow for tree growth.

The street type. A rich variety of canopies and awnings is particularly desirable on pedestrian-oriented streets and less important on automobile-oriented streets.



Nonuniform Awnings and Facades (Recommended for Pedestrian Oriented Streets)



Guideline

Awnings or canopies should be required on facades facing pedestrian-oriented sidewalks. A variety of styles and colors should be encouraged on pedestrian-oriented streets, and a more continuous, uniform style encouraged for large developments on entry arterial streets.

"Pedestrian-Friendly" Building Fronts

Issue

Building setbacks were originally developed to promote "pedestrian-friendly" building fronts by providing light, air, and safety. But dull building facades and building setbacks that are either too wide or too narrow can destroy a pedestrian streetscape. A successful pedestrian business district must provide interesting, pedestrian-friendly building facades and sidewalk activities.

Discussion

Building fronts should have pedestrian-friendly features transparent or decorative windows, public entrances, murals, bulletin boards, display windows, seating, or street vendors that cover at least 75 percent of the ground-level storefront surface between 2' and 6' above the sidewalk.

Sitting areas for restaurant and merchandise displays should allow at least a 10' wide pavement strip for walking. Planters can define the sitting area and regulate pedestrian flow.

Blank walls severely detract from a pedestrian streetscape. To mitigate the negative effects of blank walls:

- Recess the wall with niches that invite people to stop, sit, and lean.
- Allow street vendors.
- Install trellises with climbing vines or plant materials.
- Provide a planting bed with plant material that screens at least 50 percent of the surface.
- Provide artwork on the surface.

Guideline

All building fronts should have pedestrian-friendly features as listed above.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland - Glazing

Building frontages along pedestrian-oriented streets in the Central Business District should be configured to have a 15' story height to ensure suitability for diverse retail tenants and enhance the pedestrian experience. Where these taller retail stories are required, special attention to storefront detailing is necessary to provide a visual connection between pedestrian and retail activity.

Guideline

Storefronts along pedestrian-oriented streets should be highly transparent with windows of clear vision glass beginning no higher than 2' above grade to at least 10' above grade. Windows should extend across, at a minimum, 75% of the façade length. Continuous window walls should be avoided by providing architectural building treatments, mullions, building modulation, entry doors, and/or columns at appropriate intervals.

Special Consideration For Non-Retail Lobbies In Central Business District 1A & 1B

Non-retail uses are generally not allowed along street frontage within Central Business District 1. However, in order to provide pedestrian access to office, hotel, or residential uses located off of the street frontage or above the retail, some allowance for lobbies is necessary.

Guideline

Lobbies for residential, hotel, and office uses may be allowed within the required retail storefront space provided that the street frontage of the lobby is limited relative to the property's overall retail frontage and that the storefront design of the lobby provides continuity to the retail character of the site and the overall street.

Special Consideration for Totem Center

Since pedestrians move slowly along the sidewalk, the street level of buildings must be interesting and varied. Since the potential exists for large tenants to locate within TL 2, efforts should be made to minimize the impacts of these uses along pedestrian-oriented streets and concourses. Along 120th Avenue NE, buildings should be designed to add vitality along the sidewalk, by providing multiple entrance points to shops, continuous weather protection, outdoor dining, transparency of windows and interactive window displays, entertainment and diverse architectural elements. Ground floor development in TL 2 should be set close to the sidewalk along pedestrian streets and concourses to orient to the pedestrian and provide an appropriately-scaled environment.

Special Consideration for Neighborhood Business Districts

Issue

To create a focal point for the community and engage pedestrians, buildings are encouraged to be oriented to pedestrian-oriented streets in these zones. However, commercial space that is above or below the grade of the sidewalk can compromise the desired pedestrian orientation.

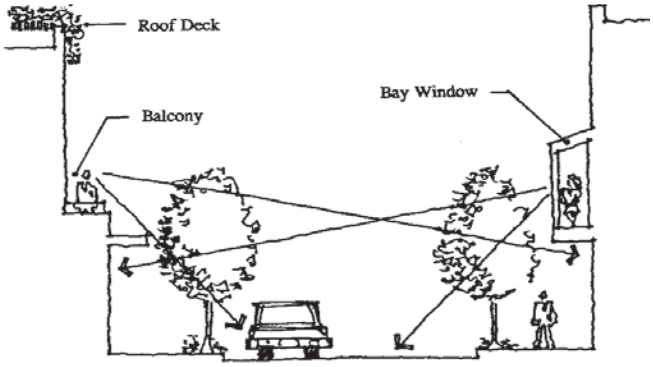
Guideline

Commercial space should generally be at grade with the adjoining sidewalk. Where this is not feasible, the building should be setback from the sidewalk far enough to allow a comfortable grade transition with generous pedestrian-oriented open space.

Upper-Story Activities Overlooking the Street

Issue

Upper-story architectural features such as balconies, roof decks, and bay windows improve the relation between the upper-story living and working units and the street. Upper-story activity provides additional security at night – people overlooking a street tend to "patrol" it – and give the street a more human, people-oriented quality.



Discussion

All buildings should have either an individual balcony or bay window for each dwelling unit or a collective roof deck that overlooks the street or both. This is especially important on the second and third floors where it is easier to establish connection with people on the street level.

Retail stores, offices, and studios liven second stories, particularly at night when second story activities are silhouetted.

Balconies should have direct access from an interior room and be at least 6' in depth so that two or three people can sit at a small table and have enough room to stretch their legs.

Plantings are encouraged on balconies and roof decks in order to bring more greenery into the City. Window seating at bay windows enables people to sit by a window and overlook the street.

Guideline

All buildings on pedestrian-oriented streets should be encouraged to have upper-story activities overlooking the street, as well as balconies and roof decks with direct access from living spaces. Planting trellises and architectural elements are encouraged in conjunction with decks and bay windows. Upper-story commercial activities are also encouraged.

Lighting from Buildings

Issue

Overpowering and uniform illumination creates glare and destroys the quality of night light. Well-placed lights will form individual pools of light and maintain sufficient lighting levels for security and safety purposes.

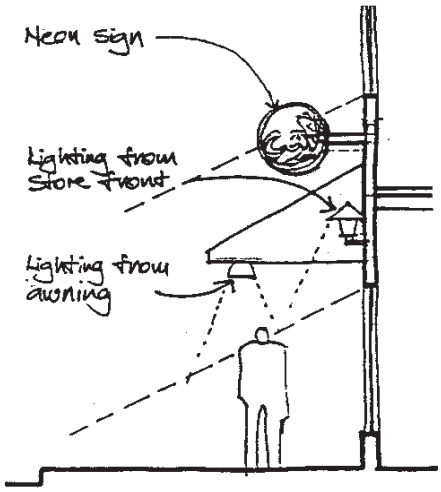
Discussion

All building entries should be lighted to protect occupants and provide an inviting area.

Building facades, awnings, and signs should not be lighted with overpowering and uniform lights. They should be lighted with low-level building-mounted lights and placed apart to form pools of light. Lighting from storefronts, canopies, or awnings is a very attractive and effective way to light sidewalks.

Recommended Minimum Light Level:

- Primary pedestrian walkway: 2 foot candle
- Secondary pedestrian walkway: 2 foot candle
- Parking lot: 1 foot candle



Guideline

All building entries should be well lit. Building facades in pedestrian areas should provide lighting to walkways and sidewalks through building-mounted lights, canopy- or awning-mounted lights, and display window lights. Encourage variety in the use of light fixtures to give visual variety from one building facade to the next. Back-lit or internally-lit translucent awnings should be prohibited.

Pedestrian-Oriented Plazas

Issue

Too often we see well-designed – but empty – plazas. There is no clear formula for designing a plaza, but a poorly designed plaza will not attract people.

Discussion

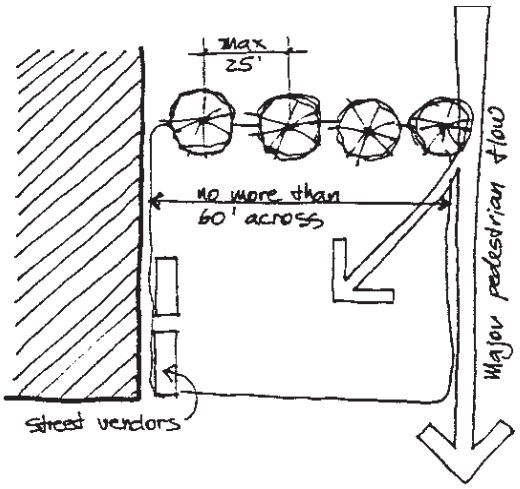
Plazas should be centrally located on major avenues, close to bus stops, or where there are strong pedestrian flows on neighboring sidewalks.

Plazas should be no more than 60' across and no more than 3' above or below the sidewalk. They must be handicapped accessible.

Plazas should have plenty of benches, steps, and ledges for seating. At least one linear foot of seating per 30 square feet of plaza area should be provided; seating should have a minimum depth of 16".

Locate the plaza in a sunny spot and encourage public art and other amenities. At least 50 percent of the total frontage of building walls facing a plaza should be occupied by retail uses, street vendors, or other pedestrian-oriented uses.

Provide plenty of planting beds for ground cover or shrubs. One tree should be required for every 200 square feet at a maximum spacing of 25' apart. Special precaution must be taken to prevent trees from blocking the sun.



Guideline

Successful pedestrian-oriented plazas are generally located in sunny areas along a well-traveled pedestrian route. Plazas must provide plenty of sitting areas and amenities and give people a sense of enclosure and safety.

Special Considerations for Totem Center

Public spaces, such as landscaped and/or furnished plazas and courtyards should be incorporated into the development, and be visible and accessible from either a public sidewalk or pedestrian connection. Primary pedestrian access points to retail development in TL 2 along 120th Avenue NE may be especially effective locations for public plazas.

Open spaces are especially important in TL 1, where the built environment may be dense. Well designed open spaces in front of and between buildings, visually linked with the open spaces of adjacent developments, will help to provide relief for the pedestrian.

Pedestrian Connections

Issue

The ability to walk directly into a commercial center from the public sidewalk or a bus stop is essential to both pedestrian and vehicular safety.

Discussion

Well defined, direct pedestrian connections from the building to the public sidewalk are not always available in commercial centers. The connection between the internal pedestrian system on the site and the public sidewalk is often interrupted by landscaping or an automobile driveway.

Properly located landscaping can be used along with special paving to help define pedestrian links through the site

Guideline

Commercial developments should have well defined, safe pedestrian walkways that minimize distances from the public sidewalk and transit facilities to the internal pedestrian system and building entrances.

Blank Walls

Issue

Blank walls create imposing and dull visual barriers. On the other hand, blank walls are ready "canvases" for art, murals, and landscaping.

Discussion

Blank walls on street fronts. Blank walls on retail frontage deaden the surrounding space and break the retail continuity of the block. Blank walls should be avoided on street front elevations. The adverse impact of a blank wall on the pedestrian streetscape can be mitigated through art, landscaping, street vendors, signs, kiosks, bus stops, or seating. Design guidelines in New York, San Francisco, and Bellevue recommend that ground floor retail with pedestrian-oriented displays be the primary uses in commercial districts. This approach is meant to restore and maintain vitality on the street via continuous rows of retail establishments.

Blank walls perpendicular to street fronts. In some cases fire walls require the intrusion of a flat, unadorned surface. These conditions merit landscaping or artistic treatment. Examples of such treatment include installing trellises for vines and plant material, providing landscaped planting beds that screen at least 50 percent of the wall, incorporating decorative tile or masonry, or providing artwork (mural, sculpture, relief) on the wall.

Guideline

Blank walls should be avoided near sidewalks, parks, and pedestrian areas. Where unavoidable, blank walls should be treated with landscaping, art, or other architectural treatments.

Public Improvements and Site Features

Introduction

Site features and pedestrian amenities such as lighting, benches, paving, waste receptacles, and other site elements are an important aspect of a pedestrian-oriented business district's character. If these features are design-coordinated and high quality, they can help to unify and upgrade the district's visual character. Development of a master plan for public spaces can provide a coordinated approach to their installation throughout the district.

The guidelines in this section apply primarily to elements associated with street right-of-ways, public parks, and required *major pedestrian pathways*. Although the standards do not apply to private property, except where a *major pedestrian pathway* is required, property owners are encouraged to utilize the standards in private development where they are appropriate. However, there may be cases where different site features, such as light fixtures and benches, should be selected to complement the architectural design of the individual site.

Pathway Width

Issue

Pathways must be sufficiently wide to handle projected pedestrian traffic. A pathway that is too narrow will have maintenance problems at its edges. A pathway that is too wide is unnecessarily costly and a poor use of space.

Discussion

A pedestrian path of 10' to 12' can accommodate groups of persons walking four abreast or two couples passing each other.

A path near a major park feature or special facility like a transit center should be at least 12' wide. An 8' path will accommodate pedestrian traffic of less than 1,000 persons per hour.

Empirical Comparison:

- Green Lake path = 8'
- Burke-Gilman Path = 8'
- Typical sidewalk = 8' to 14'

Guideline

Design all major pedestrian pathways to be at least 8' wide. Other pathways with less activity can be 6' wide.

Special Considerations for Juanita Business District

Through-site connections from street to street are a desirable pedestrian amenity in Land Use Area JBD-1.

The goal of these pedestrian connections will be to knit the individual developments into a more cohesive whole, providing convenient pedestrian mobility throughout even if the parcels are developed individually.

Special Consideration for North Rose Hill Business District

Buildings in the NRHBD will be setback at least ten feet from the sidewalk. Landscaping and entry features will be located within this setback yard. Therefore, the sidewalk can be somewhat narrower than on a pedestrian oriented street.

Special Considerations for Totem Center

Through-site connections from street to street, between the upper and lower portions of TL 2, and within TL 2 are needed to provide convenient pedestrian mobility, and to contribute to the village-like character desired for TL 2. Pedestrian connections to surrounding related uses, such as the hospital campus and transit center should also be provided.

Within TL 1, buildings should be set back at least ten feet from the sidewalk. Landscaping and entry features should be located within this setback yard, allowing the sidewalk to be somewhat narrower than on a pedestrian oriented street.

Pedestrian Paths and Amenities

Issues

Pedestrians require more detailed visual stimuli than do people in fast moving vehicles. Pedestrian paths should be safe, enjoyable, and interesting.

Discussion

Street furniture such as benches, planters, fountains, and sculptures enhance the visual experience and reduce apparent walking lengths. Planters, curbs, rails, and other raised surfaces can also be used for seating. Any height between 12" to 20" will do with 16" to 18" being the best. An appropriate seat width ranges from 6" to 24".

Unit paving such as stones, bricks, or tiles should be installed on small plazas and areas of special interest. Asphalt can be used on minor routes to reduce cost and maintenance.

For safety reasons, lighting should be planned along all pedestrian paths. Lighting can originate either from street lights or from building-mounted lights. Street trees and shrubs should be planted along all pedestrian walkways and used to screen parking lots. For safety and appearance purposes, trees and shrubs should be pruned regularly.

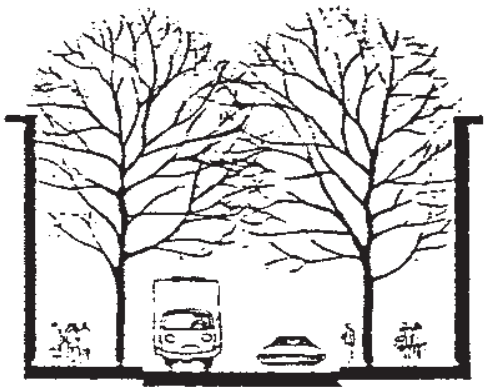
Street Trees

Issues

Streets are the conduits of life in a community. The repetition of trees bordering streets can unify a community's landscape. Trees add color, texture, and form to an otherwise harsh and discordant urban environment.

A strong street tree planting scheme can establish community identity and provide a respite from the weather and the built environment. Large, deciduous trees planted in rows on each side of the street can bring visual continuity to Kirkland – particularly on major entry arterials. Smaller trees should be planted in confined areas.

Street trees will not obscure businesses from the street if the appropriate trees are selected and maintained. Branches can frame ground floor businesses, allowing bus and truck movement while enhancing the pedestrian environment.



Trees should be of adequate size to create an immediate impact and have a good chance of survival. Species with invasive root systems or that are prone to disease, intolerant of pollution, or short-lived should be avoided.

Guideline

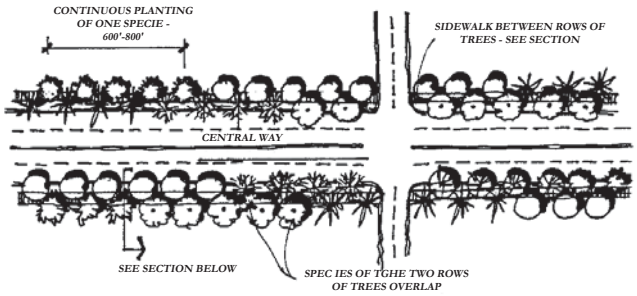
The City should prepare a comprehensive street tree planting plan recommending species and generalized locations.

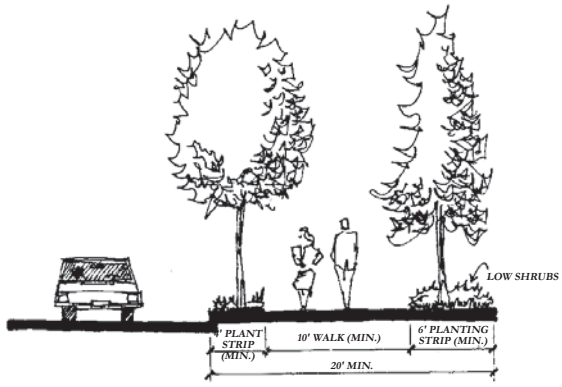
Special Considerations for Downtown Kirkland

A strong street tree planting scheme is especially important in downtown because of the variety of scale and architecture encouraged in private development. Major entries into Kirkland, especially along Central Way, Kirkland Avenue, Lake Street, and Market Street, should be unified by a strong street tree program.

Some preliminary ideas for a street tree planting plan are:

Central Way: Two rows of trees on each side could be planted (one row near the curb and one row in the required setback on the perimeter of parking lots as in Parkplace). The two rows could feature uniform plantings of species approximately 600' to 800' long. The species could change so that different combinations of species occur along Central Way. This would provide a continuous boulevard effect and incorporate the existing trees.





Proposal for a distinctive, double-row tree planting of street trees on Central Way.

Lake Street and other pedestrian-oriented streets with narrow sidewalks: Flowering pear trees might be a good option since they have tight narrow shapes, attractive flowers, and dark green foliage. Photinia standards might be another option since they are small and have bright red evergreen foliage.

Special Considerations for Juanita Business District

Street trees in the business district should be upgraded with varieties that will not block views of businesses or the lake.

Some preliminary ideas for a street tree planting plan are:

98th Avenue NE: Limb up existing maples and add flowering pear trees (flowers and good fall color) along the curb.

Juanita Drive: Choose street trees that will screen large buildings but still allow views to the lake (flowering pears for example).

97th Avenue NE/120th Place NE: Plant trees to screen parking lots and service entrances. Possibilities are zelkova (elm-like with good fall color) or flowering pears.

Special Considerations for the Market Street Corridor

A consistent street tree plan should be used to add character to the Corridor. The landscape strip on the east side of Market Street adds interest and provides a more secure pedestrian environment. Additional street trees should be considered on the west side of Market Street in order to provide a similar environment.

Special considerations for North Rose Hill Business District

Feature a diverse planting of street trees that take into account width of landscape strip, location of overhead utility lines, and maintenance requirements.

Some preliminary ideas for a street tree planting plan are:

NE 116th Street: Add street trees that will buffer the pedestrian corridor from traffic while providing some visual access to adjacent businesses. (Quercus rubra (red oak), Tilia cordata 'Greenspire' (littleleaf linden), Zelkova serrata 'Village Green' for example).

124th Avenue NE: Choose street trees that will buffer the pedestrian but still allow some visual access to adjoining businesses (Carpinus japonicus (Japanese hornbeam), Cercidiphyllum japonicum (Katsura), Fraxinus pennsylvanica 'Summit' (Summit ash)for example).

Slater Avenue NE: Add trees with flowers and good fall colors as a transition to the residential portion of the neighborhood (Malus sp. (flowering crab), Styrax japonicus (Japanese snowbell), Crataegus phaenopyrum (Washington hawthorn), Prunus padus 'Summer Glow' (bird cherry- red leaves) for example).

Special Considerations for Totem Center

Street trees within this area should be selected to achieve the varying objectives of the district. Some preliminary ideas for a street tree planting plan are:

Totem Lake Boulevard: South of NE 128th Street, trees should be planted that balance the goals of creating a "greenway" along the boulevard, providing a safe and inviting pedestrian experience and enabling visibility of the site's businesses to the freeway traveler. Smaller trees planted at frequent intervals anchored by larger, "boulevard" trees at primary site entrances would achieve these objectives. As an alternative or additional component, groupings of trees planted behind a meandering sidewalk may also be effective.

North of NE 128th Street to NE 132nd Street, plantings should be unified with those used along Totem Lake Boulevard to the south.

120th Avenue NE: South of NE 128th Street, choose street trees that will emphasize the pedestrian connec-

tion between the upper and lower mall, such as the use of larger trees at crossings and major points of entry. Choose spacing and varieties to create a plaza-like character to encourage pedestrian activity. Trees in planters and colorful flower beds will soften the area for pedestrians but allow visual access to adjoining businesses.
The tree planting plan used along NE 128th Street between Totem Lake Boulevard and 120th Avenue NE should be continued to the segment of 120th Avenue NE between NE 128th Street and NE 132nd Street, to provide a consistent identity throughout the district.

NE 132nd Street: Create a strong streetscape element, inviting to the pedestrian, with street trees proportionate to adjacent land uses.

Public Improvements and Site Features

Issue and Discussion

The quality and character of public improvements and site features such as street and park lights, benches, planters, waste receptacles, pavement materials, and public signs are critical components of a city's image. Standards for public improvements and site features, along with a master plan for public spaces, will assist in the development of a coordinated streetscape that will unify the variety of private development. Successful standards help assure high quality, low maintenance site features, and simplify the purchase and replacement of features for parks and public works departments.

Since public improvement standards have long-term implications for the community, relevant City departments must be involved in their development to make sure all concerns are met. Standards should permit some flexibility and address technical issues such as cost, availability, handicapped accessibility, and durability.

Guideline

The Department of Planning and Community Development, along with other City departments, should develop a set of public improvement and site feature standards for use in pedestrian-oriented business districts. The standards can be the same or unique for each district. A master plan for public spaces within a district should be adopted to coordinate placement of the features and otherwise carry out the Comprehensive Plan.

The City of Kirkland should work with interested groups to design a public sign system for gateways, pathways, information kiosks, etc., with a signature color palette and identifying logo.

Special Considerations for the Market Street Corridor

An historic style of street light should be used to reflect the nature of the 1890's buildings in the historic district at 7th Avenue and Market Street. These lights may also be used along other stretches of the corridor, particularly in the area between the Historic District and the Central Business District.

Entry Gateway Features

Issue

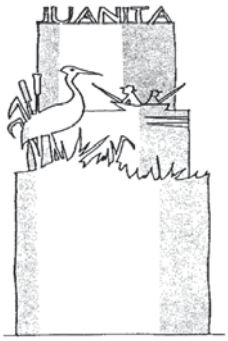
The Comprehensive Plan calls for gateway features at the key entry points into neighborhoods and business districts. Entry points differ in topography, available space, and surrounding visual character; nevertheless, gateway features should be reinforced by a unified design theme. Gateway features can be different in size or configuration, yet still incorporate similar materials, landscaping, graphics, and design elements.

Discussion

The gateway features should frame and enhance views. Large sign bridges or flashing graphics would dominate the view and are inappropriate. Consistent elements that could be incorporated at all entry points might include:

- Distinctive landscaping such as floral displays or blue-green colored evergreen foliage.
- Multicolored masonry, perhaps forming a screen or wall on which an entry sign is placed.
- A distinctive light such as a column of glass block or cluster of globes.

- A unifying device such as the district's logo. In Downtown Kirkland, for example, a triangular sail logo could be a metal weather vane or an actual fabric sail on a steel armature.
- A repetitive element such as a series of closely spaced sails or lights.
- A trellis incorporating landscaping. A trellis or arbor is adaptable to space constraints.
- Similar artwork such as a different animal or bird sculpture at each entry.



Guideline

Construct entry gateway features at locations noted in the Comprehensive Plan. Gateways may be constructed in conjunction with commercial development. Emphasis should be placed on framing the view into the district.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

The transit center is another "gateway" experience. The center should be a focal feature that provides comfort and amenities for transit users. Some form of shelter with a strong architectural identity should be pursued.

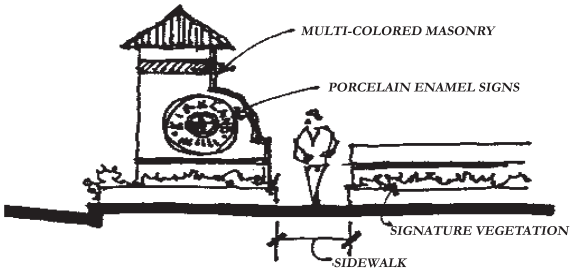
Special Consideration for Juanita Business District

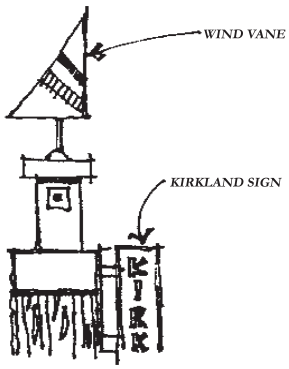
The entry features should be "identity-giving elements" that reflect the business district and Juanita Bay. If successful they can become an identifying symbol or logo for the district and an attraction in themselves.

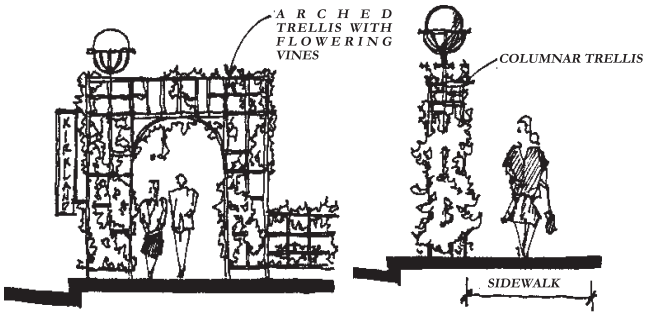
Special Consideration for North Rose Hill Business District

Use public art and private efforts to establish gateway features that strengthen the character and identity of the neighborhood. Use landscaping, signs, structures or other features that identify the neighborhood.

At the southwest corner of NE 116th Street and 124th Avenue NE a neighborhood gateway feature such as open space or plaza with signage should be integrated with a pedestrian connection linking Slater and NE 116th Street. In the alternative, a corner land mark consisting of a combination of open space and architectural building design features should be provided to identify the business district.







Special Considerations for Totem Center

The Transit Center on the hospital campus should be a "landmark" feature for both the Totem Center district and the hospital campus, providing a focal point for residents, employees and visitors. A combination of signs and symbols linking the transit center to the pedestrian connection along NE 128th Street, the flyer stop and the Park and Ride should be provided. Design of the transit center should be compatible with campus development yet be clearly identifiable as a facility serving the general public.

A prominent entry to the district exists at the intersection of NE 128th Street and Totem Lake Boulevard, where vehicles and pedestrians arrive from the crossing over I-405. Entry features provided in this area should contribute to the identity associated with the Totem Center district.

Public art and private efforts can be used to establish gateway features to strengthen the character and identity of Totem Center and the neighborhood. At the northern entry to Totem Center at 120th Avenue NE and NE 132nd Street, a neighborhood entry sign or other identifying neighborhood feature should be provided. Another important entry point identified in the neighborhood plan is along Totem Lake Boulevard, just east of 120th Avenue NE. A feature providing a sense of entry into the Totem Center district at this location would be appropriate.

Public Art

Issue

Art begins with the perceptions and expressive talents of individual artists. "Public art" applies that expression to the public realm either by its location in a public setting or by its emphasis on subjects relevant to the larger community. Public art contributes to the unique character, history, and sense of place of a community.

Discussion

Public art is more than merely urban decoration; it can play an integral role in civic revitalization. Public art can make us more aware of our surroundings; reinforce the design character of our streets, parks, and buildings; commemorate special events; and serve as a catalyst for public activity and civic pride. At its best, art opens our eyes to new perceptions and helps us understand who we are and what is special about our community.

Public art is generally most effective when it is integrated with larger civic improvement efforts. Opportunities for art can be identified earlier and funding can be used more effectively. For example, emblems, lighting, pavement decorations, and decorative pedestrian furniture can be incorporated as part of a street improvement project at little cost to the total project such as in Seattle's Third Avenue transit corridor, Port Angeles's Maritime Flags, and Portland's Transit Mall.

The involvement of an artist in the design of a park, fountain, street lighting, or signs can add a special quality that has more impact than if the artwork and the functional element were decorated separately. The famous art nouveau detailing on Paris's metro stations is a good example.

Guideline

Kirkland should continue its tradition of encouraging public art pieces.

Parking Lot Location and Design

Introduction

In pedestrian-oriented business districts, improperly located and poorly designed parking lots can destroy the ambiance and qualities that attract people to the district in the first place. This section contains guidelines to direct development of parking facilities. The number of required stalls is specified in the Kirkland Zoning Code. The guidelines in this section deal with:

- Parking lot location – Parking in front of buildings is discouraged, and combined lots that serve more than one business or use are encouraged.
- Parking lot entrances – The number of entries is addressed.
- Parking lot circulation and pedestrian access – Clear internal vehicular and pedestrian circulation is required, especially in large parking lots.
- Parking garages – Parking garages provide convenient, less intrusive parking. Yet, garages can themselves be intrusive since they are often large monolithic structures with little refinement, interest, or activity. The guidelines for parking garages are intended to make them fit into the scale and character of pedestrian-oriented districts.
- Parking Lot Landscaping – Parking lot landscaping should be more extensive if the lot has to be in a location that is visible from a street or public park than if the lot is located at the rear of the site hidden away from streets and neighboring properties. This provision is made to encourage parking lot development in less visible locations.

On the following pages, urban design guidelines are presented that outline design information, concepts, and solutions associated with parking lot development. They serve as a conceptual basis for the regulations in the Zoning Code.

Parking Locations and Entrances

Issue

Parking lots can detract from the pedestrian and visual character of a commercial area. The adverse impacts of parking lots can be mitigated through sensitive design, location, and configuration.

Discussion

The ingress and egress of vehicles in parking lots disrupts pedestrian movement and through traffic – especially near intersections. Moreover, busy streets are a safety hazard. Parking lots that are accessed by a single curb cut reduce potential conflict and use land more efficiently. Also, combining the parking lots of individual stores into a large parking network makes it easier for patrons to find convenient parking stalls.

Parking lots should be encouraged in rear or side yards. The parking lot at Wendy's restaurant on Central Way is an example of this configuration.

The City of Seattle limits parking lot access on pedestrian-oriented streets such as Broadway on Capitol Hill.

Guideline

Minimize the number of driveways by restricting curb cuts and by encouraging property and business owners to combine parking lot entrances and coordinate parking areas. Encourage side and rear yard parking areas by restricting parking in front yards. Require extensive screening where there is front yard parking.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Parking lot location and design is critical on busy entry streets such as Market Street, Central Way, Lake Street, Kirkland Avenue, and in the congested core area where pedestrian activities are emphasized. The *Downtown Plan* calls for limiting the number of vehicle curb cuts.

Special Consideration for Juanita Business District and North Rose Hill Business District

Shared accesses and reciprocal vehicular easements should be established in order to reduce the number of curb cuts. The Juanita Business District Plan also encourages shared parking/service areas in Land Use Area JBD-1. This is particularly critical in TL 2, where buildings should front on 120th Avenue NE to foster the desired pedestrian-oriented environment.

Special Consideration for Totem Center

Throughout Totem Center, parking areas located between the street and the building should be discouraged. This is particularly critical in TL 2, where buildings should front on 120th Avenue NE to foster the desired pedestrian-oriented environment.

Circulation Within Parking Lots

Issue

Large parking lots can be confusing unless vehicle and pedestrian circulation patterns are well organized and marked. Parking lots should be combined to reduce driveways and improve circulation.

Discussion

Vehicle Circulation. Parking lots should have few dead-end parking lanes and provide drive-through configurations. The APA *Aesthetics of Parking* publication recommends channelized queuing space at the entrances and exits to parking lots to prevent cars from waiting in the street.

Pedestrian Circulation. Good pedestrian circulation is critical. A clear path from the sidewalk to the building entrance should be required for all sites, even through parking lots in front yards. For sites with large parking lots, clear pedestrian circulation routes within the lot from stalls to the building entrances should be provided. In addition, a raised concrete pavement should also be provided in front of the entrance as a loading or waiting area so the entrance will not be blocked by parked vehicles. Finally, pedestrian access between parking lots on adjacent properties should be provided.

Guideline

Parking lot design should be clear and well organized. Space should be provided for pedestrians to walk safely in all parking lots.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Because land is limited in Downtown Kirkland, efficient and compact parking lot configurations are a top priority. Parking lots in the periphery of the core area that accommodate about 100 vehicles (approximately 3/4 to 1 acre) should be articulated with landscaped berms.

Parking Lot Landscaping

Issue

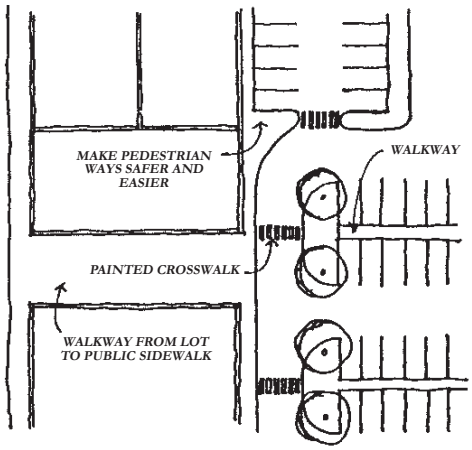
Parking lots are typically unsightly, require vast quantities of space, break the links between buildings, and destroy the continuity of streetfronts. If possible, parking lots should be located at the rear of buildings. When this is not possible, landscaping can be used to break up and screen parking lots.

Discussion

Parking lots can be concealed by a structural screen wall or through the use of plant materials. Plant materials can create dense, hedge-like screens, separating lots from adjacent uses or public right-of-ways. Perimeter plantings must provide an adequate screen. A screen wall constructed in a similar style as adjacent development may be used in lieu of perimeter landscaping.

Trees along the edges of and within parking lots can effectively soften an otherwise barren and hostile space. Interior plantings can be consolidated to provide islands of greenery or be planted at regular intervals. Use of drought-tolerant plants can improve the likelihood that the landscaping will survive and look good.

Landscaping guidelines should be flexible and allow creative screening methods (e.g., clustering trees, berming, mixing structures, and trees). Less landscaping should be required if the lot is hidden from view.



Guideline

Parking lots must be integrated with the fabric of the community by creatively using landscaping to reduce their visual impact.

Special Considerations for the Market Street Corridor

Screening and landscaping should be required where parking is adjacent to single family residential uses in order to reduce impacts on the adjoining homes.

Special Consideration for Juanita Business District, North Rose Hill Business District and Totem Center

Screening and landscaping should be required where parking is adjacent to sidewalks in order to improve visual qualities and reduce clutter.

Within TL 2, the provision of landscaping to soften the impacts of cars and pavement is important. Clusters of trees rather than single trees may be more effective in certain portions of the mall's parking areas. Visibility of the mall from the freeway should be considered when evaluating the locations and types of landscaping to be used.

Parking Garages

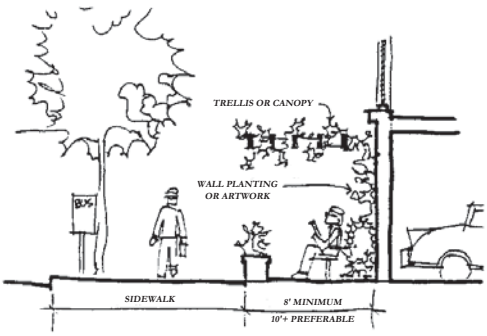
Issue

Parking garages are some of the most unattractive buildings built during the past several decades. Most new parking structures are designed with little or no attention to screening or treatment of the facades.

Discussion

There are several ways to mitigate the visual impacts of parking garages in the urban environment. A garage in a pedestrian area can contain a pedestrian-oriented retail use in the ground floor area of the garage adjacent to the street. Cafes, newsstands, or other small shops can fit well within the typical parking garage, requiring the space equivalent to only one 20' bay of parking.

Also, parking garages can be set back to provide space for a small landscaped plaza with a seating area. Moreover, the wall of the garage behind the plaza can be used as a canvas for landscaping or artwork. Also, the plaza could be covered with a glass canopy or trellis. The plaza should face south to receive sunlight. A plaza of this type is ideal for bus stops or street vendors.



In non-pedestrian areas, dense landscaping around the perimeter of parking garages can help screen their bulk. Strict standards for minimum landscaping around garages should be developed.

Guideline

The intrusive qualities of parking garages must be mitigated. In pedestrian areas, ground-level retail uses or appropriate pedestrian spaces should be required. Also, extensive landscaping should be required near residential areas and in highvisibility locations. On hillsides and near residential areas the stepping back or terracing of upper stories should be considered to reduce scale.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Garages built on Downtown Kirkland's perimeter slopes, near residential areas, or near the waterfront can fit less obtrusively into the landscape when terraced. Treatment of the facade of the parking structure can be just as effective in mitigating the visual impacts of parking garages as pedestrian-oriented businesses, plazas, or landscaped setbacks at the ground level.

Special Consideration for Totem Center

The development densities planned for Totem Center may result in the need for large parking structures to support them. Careful design of the structures will be important to retain a visually attractive environment.

The location of parking structures along pedestrian-oriented streets or pedestrian pathways should be discouraged. Where parking structures cannot be located underground and must be provided on the ground floor, an intervening use is desirable to retain the visual interest along the street. If parking areas are located in a separate structure from the primary use, the structure must be set back from the street, and screened with substantial landscaping.

Within TL 2, if it is not possible or practical to locate parking structures behind a building or underground, structured parking should be developed, oriented and screened to complement adjacent buildings, reduce automobile/pedestrian conflicts, and support the pedestrian environment. Artwork, display windows, trellises and/or dense vegetation are examples of screening devices that may be successful in balancing the scale of the structure with the pedestrian environment.

Scale

Introduction

When architects talk about a building's "scale," they generally mean the perceived size of the building relative to an individual person or its surroundings. The term "human scale" is used to indicate a building's size relative to a person, but the actual size of a building or room is often not as important as its perceived size. Architects use a variety of design techniques to give a space or structure the desired effect; whether it be to make a room either more intimate or spacious, or a building either more or less imposing. Frank Lloyd Wright, for example, used wide overhangs and horizontal rooflines to make his prairie-style houses appear lower and longer, better fitting into the flat, midwestern landscape. Unless the objective is to produce a grandiose or imposing building, architects generally try to give a building a "good human scale," meaning that the building is of a size and proportion that feels comfortable. For most commercial buildings, the objective is to attract customers and visitors by designing comfortable, inviting buildings.

Generally, people feel more comfortable in a space where they can clearly understand the size of the building by visual clues or proportions. For example, because we know from experience the size of typical doors, windows, railings, etc., using traditionally-sized elements such as these provides a sense of a building's size. Greek temples that feature columns, but not conventional doors, windows, or other elements, do not give a sense of human scale (although the Greeks subtly modified the properties and siting of their temples to achieve the desired scale). The guidelines in this section describe a variety of techniques to give a comfortable human scale by providing building elements that help individuals relate to the building.

"Architectural scale" means the size of a building relative to the buildings or elements around it. When the buildings in a neighborhood are about the same size and proportion, we say they are "in scale." It is important that buildings have generally the same architectural scale so that a few buildings do not overpower the others. The exception to this rule is an important civic or cultural building that has a prominent role in the community. For example, nobody accuses a beautiful cathedral in a medieval European town of being "out of scale." Because the Comprehensive Plan encourages a variety of different uses and building heights, such as in Downtown Kirkland, the buildings' sizes will vary widely. To achieve a more harmonious relationship between the buildings and a more consistent character, design techniques should be used to break the volume of large buildings down into smaller units. Several guidelines in this section are directed toward achieving a consistent scale within districts.

The following guidelines illustrate some design techniques to give buildings a "sense of scale." The regulations in the Zoning Code related to scale require that project architects address the issues of human and architectural scale while providing a wide range of options to do so.

Fenestration Patterns

Issue

The size, location, and number of windows in an urban setting creates a sense of interest that relies on a subtle mixture of correct ratios, proportions, and patterns. Excess window glazing on a storefront provides little visual contrast; blank walls are dull and monotonous. The correct window-to-wall ratio and a mix of fenestration patterns can create an enjoyable and cohesive urban character on both pedestrian- and automobile-oriented streets.

Many local contemporary buildings have "ribbon windows" (continuous horizontal bands of glass) or "window walls" (glass over the entire surface). Although effective in many settings, these window types do little to indicate the scale of the building and do not necessarily complement the architecture of small-scaled buildings. Breaking large expanses or strips of glass with mullions or other devices can help to give the building a more identifiable scale.

Discussion

According to an old architectural cliché, windows are a building's eyes. We look to windows for visual clues as to the size and function of the building. If the window areas are divided into units that we associate with small-scale commercial buildings, then we will be better able to judge the building's size relative to our own bodies. Breaking window areas into units of about 35 square feet or less with each window unit separated by a visible mullion or other element at least 6 inches wide would accomplish this goal. Another successful approach is multiple-paned windows with visible mullions separating several smaller panes of glass. But on the ground floor where transparency is vital to pedestrian qualities, this device may be counterproductive.

Patterns of fenestration should vary depending on whether the street is pedestrian- or automobile-oriented. A window pattern that is interesting from a car may be monotonous to a slow-moving pedestrian; likewise, a window pattern that is interesting to a pedestrian may seem chaotic from a fast-moving car. Thus, pedestrian-oriented fenestration should allow for more complex arrangements and irregularity while automobile-oriented fenestration should have more gradual changes in pattern and larger and more simple window types.

An optimum design goal would allow for varied treatment of window detailing with unifying features such as 18" to 24" sills, vertical modulation in structure, varied setbacks in elevation, and more highly ornamented upper-story windows. Excessive use of ribbon windows throughout a building does not engage the eye and should be avoided.

Guideline

Varied window treatments should be encouraged. Ground floor uses should have large windows that showcase storefront displays to increase pedestrian interest. Architectural detailing at all window jambs, sills, and heads should be emphasized.

Special Considerations for the Market Street Corridor

Window treatment in the historic district should reflect the trim detailing, size, proportions, location and number of windows in the existing historic buildings in the district.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Breaking larger window areas into smaller units to achieve a more intimate scale is most important in Design Districts 1, 2, 4, 8, and the southwest portion of 3 where new buildings should fit with older structures that have traditional-styled windows.Architectural Elements Decks, Bay Windows, Arcades, Porches.

Architectural Elements: Decks, Bay Windows, Arcades, Porches

Issue

Special elements in a building facade create a distinct character in an urban context. A bay window suggests housing, while an arcade suggests a public walkway with retail frontage. Each element must be designed for an appropriate urban setting and for public or private use. A building should incorporate special features that enhance its character and surroundings. Such features give a building a better defined "human scale."

Discussion

Requirements for specific architectural features should be avoided and variety encouraged. Building designs should incorporate one or more of the following architectural elements: arcade, balcony, bay window, roof deck, trellis, landscaping, awning, cornice, frieze, art concept, or courtyard. Insistence on design control should take a back seat to encouraging the use of such elements.

Guideline

Architectural building elements such as arcades, balconies, bay windows, roof decks, trellises, landscaping, awnings, cornices, friezes, art concepts, and courtyards should be encouraged.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Pedestrian features should be differentiated from vehicular features; thus fenestration detailing, cornices, friezes, and smaller art concepts should be concentrated in Design Districts 1 and 2, while landscaping and larger architectural features should be concentrated in Design Districts 3, 5, 7, and 8.

Special Consideration for Totem Center

Balconies provide private open space, and help to minimize the vertical mass of structures. Residential building facades visible from streets and public spaces should provide balconies of a sufficient depth to appear integrated with the building and not "tacked on".

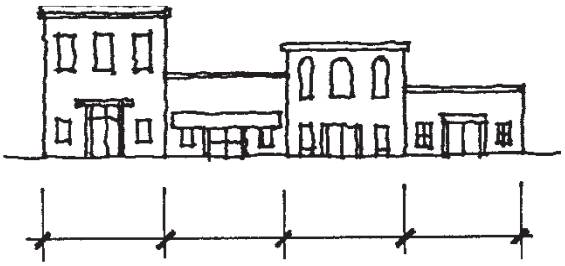
Building Modulation – Vertical

Issue

Vertical building modulation is the vertical articulation or division of an imposing building facade through architectural features, setbacks, or varying rooflines. Vertical modulation adds variety and visual relief to long stretches of development on the streetscape. By altering an elevation vertically, a large building will appear to be more of an aggregation of smaller buildings. Vertical modulation is well-suited for residential development and sites with steep topography.

Discussion

Urban design guidelines should address vertical modulation in order to eliminate monotonous facades. Vertical modulation may take the form of balcony setbacks, varied rooflines, bay windows, protruding structures, or vertical circulation elements – the technique used must be integral to the architecture.



Vertical modulation in urban setting

Vertical modulation is important primarily in neighborhoods where topography demands a stepping down of structures. The vertical modulation of a large development project in a residential area can make the project appear to be more in scale with the existing neighborhood. Long facades can be vertically modulated to better conform to the layout and development pattern of single-family houses. The vertical modulation of buildings on steep slopes also provides terraced development rather than one single building block, thereby better reflecting the existing terrain.

Guideline

Vertical building modulation should be used to add variety and to make large buildings appear to be an aggregation of smaller buildings.

This building uses both horizontal and vertical modulation to add interest and reduce its visual bulk.

Special Considerations for Totem Center

Since greater heights are allowed in TL 1 than elsewhere in the city, the impacts of increased height are a concern. Impacts associated with taller buildings are generally ones of reduced open space and privacy, shadowing and loss of light.

Massing of development in slimmer but taller towers rather than in shorter, wider buildings presents an opportunity to create open space between existing buildings, particularly when buildings step back from property lines and neighboring structures. For new buildings to fit in to the existing setting, a balance between higher and lower structures should be maintained.

To preserve openness between structures, separation between towers, both on a development site and between adjacent properties, should be provided. The specific separation should be determined based on height, relation and orientation to other tall structures, configuration of building mass and solar access to public spaces.

Taller buildings or "towers" in TL 1 should have relatively compact floor plates. The use of towers above a two-three story podium creates a varied building footprint and the perception of a smaller overall building mass. When the building's mass is instead concentrated in lower buildings with larger floor plates, greater emphasis should be placed on open space and plazas to provide relief at the pedestrian level.

Design treatments used in the upper portion of a building can promote visual interest and variety in the Totem Center skyline. Treatments that sculpt the facades of a building, provide for variety in materials, texture, pattern or color, or provide a specific architectural rooftop element can contribute to the creation of a varied skyline.

Special Considerations for Neighborhood Business Districts

Issue

Because these districts are typically integrated into residential areas, the design should reflect the scale of the neighborhood by avoiding long façades without visual relief.

Guideline

Façades over 120 feet in length should incorporate vertical definition including substantial modulation of the exterior wall carried through all floors above the ground floor combined with changes in color and material.

Building Modulation – Horizontal

Issue

Horizontal building modulation is the horizontal articulation or division of larger building façades. The lower portion of a multi-story building should incorporate pedestrian-scale elements and a strong base. The top of the building should incorporate distinctive roof treatments. Elevations that are modulated with horizontal elements appear less massive than those with sheer, flat surfaces. Horizontal modulation is well suited to downtown areas and automobile-oriented streetscapes where the development of tall building masses is more likely.

Discussion

A lively urban character uses a variety of architectural forms and materials that together create an integrated pattern of development with recurring architectural features. Horizontal awnings, balconies, and roof features should be incorporated into new development provided that their appearance varies through the use of color, materials, size, and location.

Horizontal modulation elements: canopy, brick banding, and window details.

Guideline

Horizontal building modulation may be used to reduce the perceived mass of a building and to provide continuity at the ground level of large building complexes. Building design should incorporate strong pedestrian-oriented elements at the ground level and distinctive roof treatments.

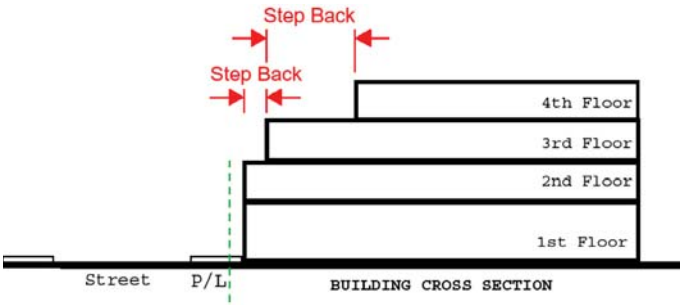
Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Large-scale developments, particularly east of the core area, should stress continuity in streetscape on the lower two floors. Setback facades and varied forms should be used above the second stories.

Special Consideration for Building Massing in Central Business District 1 (CBD 1A & 1B) - Upper Story Step Backs

Issue

Taller buildings can negatively affect human scale at the street level and should be mitigated. Upper story step backs provide a way to reduce building massing for larger structures. An upper story building step back is the horizontal distance between a building façade and the building façade of the floor below.



By reducing mass at upper stories, visual focus is oriented towards the building base and the pedestrian experience. In addition, greater solar access may be provided at the street level due to the wider angle which results from the recessed upper stories

Marina Heights

Upper story step backs are appropriate in areas where taller buildings are allowed and imposing building facades at the sidewalk are intended to be avoided.

Discussion

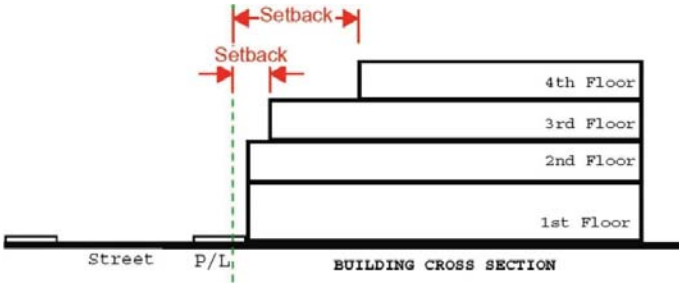
Design guidelines should address upper story step backs to improve the pedestrian experience and maintain human scale. When viewed from across the street, upper story step backs generally reduce perceived building massing and provide additional sunlight at the ground level. When viewed from the sidewalk immediately adjacent to the building, upper story step backs reduce the view of the upper stories and help maintain pedestrian scale by preventing large buildings from looming over the sidewalk.

Since the benefits of upper story step backs are primarily experienced from the public realm in front of buildings, the step backs should be located within a zone along the front property line.

Overly regimented building forms along front facades should be avoided to prevent undesirable building design. The arrangement of building step backs should create varied and attractive buildings consistent with the principles discussed in previous sections.

Upper story step backs also allow for additional eyes on the street in the form of decks and/or balconies. Upper story activities help improve the relationship of the building to the streetscape. Landscaping should also be incorporated at the upper stories to help soften building forms.

In order to quantify upper story step backs, measurement should be taken from the property line. Setback is the term used to describe the distance of a structure from the property line. By measuring from the pre-existing property line, setbacks provide for consistency in measurement and will account for projects where additional right-of-way is proposed or required along the property frontage for wider sidewalks and/or additional public open space.

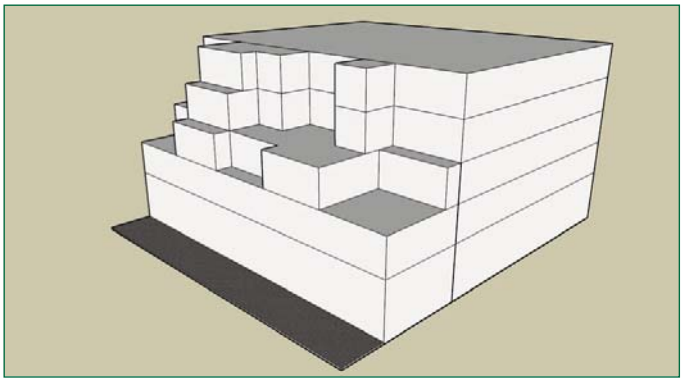


The required upper story setback should be allowed to be reduced if an equal amount of beneficial public open space is provided at the street level. A certain amount of building cantilevering over sidewalks may also be allowed if the pedestrian environment is not adversely affected.

The Kirkland Zoning Code establishes the requirements for upper story setbacks and provisions for allowing reductions to the required upper story setbacks in exchange for open space at the street level. The following guidelines are intended to provide the Design Review Board the tools to create varied and attractive buildings.

Guidelines - Upper Story Setbacks

- ***Buildings above the second story (or third story where applicable in the Downtown Plan) should utilize upper story step backs to create receding building forms as building height increases, allow for additional solar access, and maintain human scale at the street level.***
- ***The final arrangement of building mass should be placed in context with existing and/or planned improvements, solar access, important street corners, and orientation with the public realm.***
- ***A rigid stair step or "wedding cake" approach to upper story step backs is not appropriate.***
- ***Decks and/or balconies should be designed so that they do not significantly increase the apparent mass of the building within the required upper story setback area.***



Varied step back approach

- ***In addition to applying setbacks to upper stories, building facades should be well modulated to avoid blank walls and provide architectural interest.***
- ***Along pedestrian oriented streets, upper story building facades should be stepped back to provide enough space for decks, balconies and other activities overlooking the street***
- ***Landscaping on upper story terraces should be included where appropriate to soften building forms and provide visual interest.***
- ***Continuous two or three story street walls should be avoided by incorporating vertical and horizontal modulations into the building form.***
- ***Limited areas of vertical three, four, or five story walls can be used to create vertical punctuation at key facades. Special attention to maintain an activated streetscape is important in these areas.***
- ***For properties on Park Lane which front multiple streets and upper story setbacks are proposed to be averaged, concentration of upper story building mass along Park Lane should be avoided.***

Guideline - Open Space at Street Level

Reductions to required upper story setbacks may be appropriate where an equal amount of beneficial public open space is created at the street level consistent with the following principles:

- ***Public open space should be open to the sky except where overhead weather protection is provided (e.g. canopies and awnings).***
- ***The space should appear and function as public space rather than private space.***
- ***A combination of lighting, paving, landscaping and seating should be utilized to enhance the pedestrian experience within the public open space.***
- ***Public open space should be activated with adjacent shops, outdoor dining, art, water features, and/or landscaping while still allowing enough room for pedestrian flow.***
- ***Where substantial open space "trade-offs" are proposed, site context should be the primary factor in the placement of the public open space (e.g. important corners, solar access.)***

Guideline - Building Cantilevering Over Sidewalks

Buildings may be allowed to cantilever over sidewalks if a sidewalk dedication and/or easement is required consistent with following guidelines:

- ***The total length of cantilevered portions of a building should be no more than 1/3rd of the entire length of the building façade. The cantilevered portions of a building should be spread out and not consolidated in a single area on the building façade.***
- ***Unobstructed pedestrian flow should be maintained through the subject property to adjoining sidewalks.***
- ***Space under the building cantilever should appear and function as part of the public realm.***
- ***The sense of enclosure is minimized.***

Special Considerations for Neighborhood Business Districts

Issue

Where buildings are close to the street in these neighborhood areas, vertical building massing can negatively affect human scale at the street level. Upper story step backs provide a way to reduce building massing. An upper story building step back is the horizontal distance between a building façade and the building façade of the floor below.

Guideline

Above the ground floor, buildings should utilize upper story step backs to create receding building forms as building height increases. Rather than a rigid stair step approach, varied step back depths and heights should be used to create well modulated façades and usable decks and balconies overlooking the street.

Issue

Within the South Rose Hill Neighborhood Plan, additional mitigation of scale impacts is called for.

Guideline

Building height, bulk, modulation, and roofline design should reflect the scale and character of adjoining single-family development.

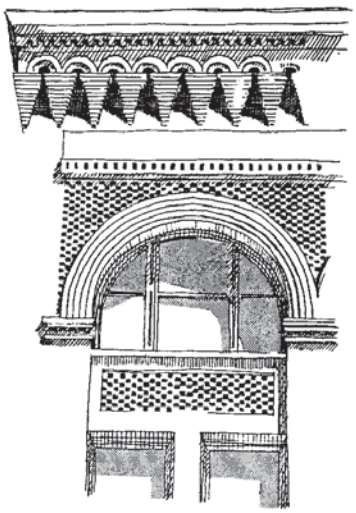
Building Material Color and Detail

Introduction

Many historic cities and towns owe much of their charm to a limited palette of building materials. One thinks of how the white clapboard houses of a New England village or the tile-roofed structures of an Italian hill town provide a more unified, consistent visual character. Today, there is a wide spectrum of building materials available, and modern towns such as Kirkland feature a variety of materials and colors. Architects have demonstrated that materials often considered unattractive, such as cinderblocks or metal siding, can be successfully used in attractive, high-quality buildings.

When buildings are seen from a distance, the most noticeable qualities are the overall form and color. If we take the typical building in Kirkland to be 100' wide and 35' tall, then we must be at least 200' away from the building for it to fit within our cone of vision so that we can perceive its overall shape. At that distance, windows, doors, and other major features are clearly visible.

However, as we approach the building and get within 60' to 80' from the building (approximately the distance across a typical downtown street), we notice not so much the building's overall form as its individual elements. When we get still closer, the most important aspects of a building are its design details, texture of materials, quality of its finishes, and small, decorative elements. In a pedestrian-oriented business district, it is essential that buildings and their contents be attractive up close.



Therefore, these design guidelines are intended to allow a variety of materials and colors, but direct the use of certain materials so that their application does not significantly detract from design consistency or quality. Most of the regulations in the Zoning Code deal with the application of specific materials such as metal siding and cinderblocks so that their potentially negative characteristics are minimized. In addition, the guidelines include guidelines and regulations that require all buildings to incorporate design details and small-scale elements into their facades.

Ornament and Applied Art

Issue

Ornament and applied art add quality, visual interest, and a sense of human scale to the built environment. It is necessary to understand the place and appropriateness of ornament in order to maintain a cohesive and integrated urban setting.

Discussion

Ornament and applied art can be used to emphasize the edges and transition between public and private space, and between walls to ground, roof to sky, and architectural features to adjacent elements. Ornament may consist of raised surfaces, painted surfaces, ornamental or textured banding, changing of materials, or lighting. Therefore, buildings should incorporate art features that emphasize architectural elements and connections. Ornament should also maintain a cohesive relationship to its setting, emphasizing its connection to the surrounding space.

Guideline

Ornament and applied art should be integrated with the structures and the site environment and not haphazardly applied. Significant architectural features should not be hidden, nor should the urban context be overshadowed. Emphasis should be placed on highlighting building features such as doors, windows, eaves, and on materials such as wood siding and ornamental masonry. Ornament may take the form of traditional or contemporary elements. Original artwork or hand-crafted details should be considered in special areas.

Special Considerations for the Market Street Corridor

Emphasis on building features such as doors, windows, cornice treatment, bricks and ornamental masonry should be taken into consideration when designing new or remodeled buildings in the historic district. These features should be in keeping with the building materials, colors and details of the existing historic buildings.

Color

Issue

Color bolsters a sense of place and community identity (e.g., white New England villages, adobe-colored New Mexico towns, limestone Cotswold villages). Kirkland should consider emphasizing the existing color scheme and developing a unified design identity.

Discussion

A variety of colors should be used in Kirkland. By no means should design be limited by overly-restrictive guidelines dictating color use. Based on Kirkland's existing color scheme, the following general guidelines can prevent garish, incongruous colors from being inappropriately applied or juxtaposed to more subdued earth tones and colors.

- Where appropriate, use the natural colors of materials such as brick, stone, tile, and stained wood (painted wood is acceptable).
- Use only high-quality coatings for concrete.
- Emphasize earth tones or subdued colors such as barn red and blue-gray for building walls and large surfaces.
- Reserve bright colors for trim or accents.
- Emphasize dark, saturated colors for awnings, and avoid garish and light colors that show dirt.
- Avoid highly-tinted or mirrored glass (except stained-glass windows).
- Consider the color of neighboring buildings when selecting colors for new buildings.

Guideline

Color schemes should adhere to the guidelines enumerated above. The use of a range of colors compatible within a coordinated color scheme should be encouraged.

Street Corners

Issue

Street corners provide special opportunities for visual punctuation and an enhanced pedestrian environment. Buildings on corner sites should incorporate architectural design elements that create visual interest for the pedestrian and provide a sense of human proportion and scale.

Discussion

Corners are crossroads and provide places of heightened pedestrian activity. Rob Krier notes that: "The corner of a building is one of the most important zones and is mainly concerned with the mediation of two facades." Corners may be accentuated by towers and corner building entrances.

Guideline

Buildings should be designed to architecturally enhance building corners.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Special attention should be paid to both the design and detailing of new buildings on corner sites in the pedestrian oriented design districts. Existing buildings could incorporate some of these elements (human-scale and visual punctuation) through the use of such elements as awnings and well-designed signs at the corner.

Downtown Kirkland has several "T" intersections, and the building located at the terminus of the street view corridor presents a high-visibility opportunity for special architectural treatment.

The corner of Central Way and Third Street marks a prominent gateway to the core area as well as the Downtown Transit Center and deserves special design emphasis.

Signs

Issues

Kirkland's Zoning Code regulates signs throughout the city in order to create a high-quality urban environment. Automobile-oriented signs typically found on commercial strips can be overpowering and obtrusive. Pedestrian signs are smaller and closer to viewers; thus, creative, well-crafted signs are more cost effective than large signs mounted high on poles.

Signs should be an integral part of a building's facade. The location, architectural style, and mounting of signs should conform with a building's architecture and not cover up or conflict with its prominent architectural features. A sign's design and mounting should be appropriate for the setting.

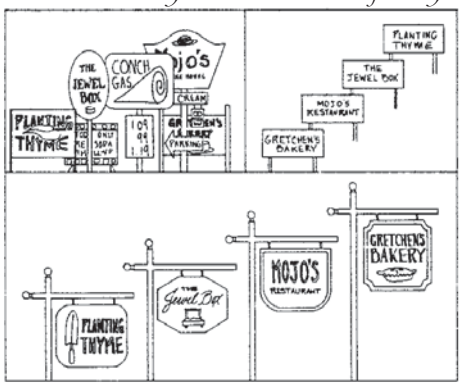
Discussion

Pedestrian-oriented signs are most effective when located within 15' of the ground plane. Three-inch-high letters can be read at 120' and 6" letters read at 300'. Large lettering is not necessary. The signs should be aligned to people on sidewalks and not automobile drivers. "Blade" signs or single signs hanging below canopies or small signs located on canopies or awnings are effective.

Signs with quality graphics and a high level of craftsmanship are important in attracting customers. Sculpted signs and signs that incorporate artwork add interest. Signs with front lighting and down lighting (but not internal lighting) are recommended. Neon signs are appropriate when integrated with the building's architecture.

Generic, internally-lit "can" signs that are meant to be set anywhere are not appropriate. Ground-mounted signs should feature a substantial base and be integrated with the landscaping and other site features. Mounting supports should reflect the materials and design character of the building or site elements or both.

Too much variety *Too much uniformity*



Though unified by common design elements, signs can still express the individual character of businesses.

Guidelines

- **All signs should be building-mounted or below 12' in height if ground mounted. Maximum height is measured from the top of the sign to the ground plane.**
- **No off-premises commercial signs, except public directional signs, should be permitted. No billboards should be permitted.**
- **Signs for individual parking stalls should be discouraged. If necessary, they should not be higher than necessary to be seen above bumpers. Parking lot signs should be limited to one sign per entrance and should not extend more than 12' above the ground.**
- **Neon signs, sculptural signs, and signs incorporating artwork are encouraged.**
- **Signs that are integrated with a building's architecture are encouraged.**
- **Shingle signs and blade signs hung from canopies or from building facades are encouraged.**
- **Traditional signs such as barber poles are encouraged.**

Special Considerations for Downtown Kirkland

- The Downtown Plan's mandate for high-quality development should also be reflected in sign design.
- No internally lit plastic-faced or can signs should be permitted.
- All signs in the downtown should be pedestrian-oriented. Master-planned sites such as Parkplace may also include signs oriented to automobile traffic for the whole complex.

Special Considerations for Totem Center

- Signs within the TL2 should be coordinated through a sign package for the entire property.

Special Considerations for the Market Street Corridor

Electrical signs are not allowed along the Market Street Corridor. Signs within the historic district should reflect the historic nature of the buildings in the area.

Natural Features

Introduction

General

An important aspect of a pedestrian-oriented business district is its physical setting. Natural features of a place are key to residents' and visitors' perception. This section lays out guidelines which serve to merge the design of structures and places with the natural environment. It discusses concepts behind new landscaping as well as the maintenance and protection of existing natural features.

Special Considerations for Downtown Kirkland

A primary goal stated in the Downtown Plan's Vision Statement is to "clarify Downtown's natural physical setting." Besides its excellent waterfront, Downtown Kirkland's most important natural feature is its bowl-shaped topography which provides views down from the heights and views from the downtown of the wooded hillsides surrounding the district. The valley topography also helps to define the downtown's edges and facilitates the transition from largely commercial activities in the valley floor to the mostly residential areas in the uplands. Although Peter Kirk Park is a man-made open space, it too provides a naturalizing function.

Special Considerations for Juanita Business District

The underlying goal of redevelopment in the business district is to create a neighborhood-scale, pedestrian district which takes advantage of the amenities offered by Juanita Bay.

Special Considerations for Totem Center

An important goal in the Totem Lake Neighborhood Plan is to establish a "greenway" extending in an east/west direction across the neighborhood. Portions of the greenway follow Totem Lake Boulevard, along the western boundary of TL 2. Properties abutting the designated greenbelt should be landscaped with materials that complement the natural areas of the greenway where possible.

Visual Quality of Landscapes

Issue

The relationship between landscaping and architecture is symbiotic; plant materials add to a building's richness, while the building points to the architectural qualities of the landscaping.

Discussion

Foliage can soften the hard edges and improve the visual quality of the urban environment. Landscaping treatment in the urban environment can be categorized as a *pedestrian/auto, pedestrian*, or *building landscape*.

The Pedestrian/Auto Landscape applies to where the pedestrian and auto are in close proximity. Raised planting strips can be used to protect the pedestrian from high-speed and high-volume traffic. Street trees help create a hospitable environment for both the pedestrian and the driver by reducing scale, providing shade and seasonal variety, and mitigating noise impacts.

The Pedestrian Landscape offers variety at the ground level through the use of shrubs, ground cover, and trees. Pedestrian circulation, complete with entry and resting points, should be emphasized. If used effectively, plant materials can give the pedestrian visual cues for moving through the urban environment. Plant materials that provide variety in texture, color, fragrance, and shape are especially desirable.

The Building Landscape. Landscaping around urban buildings – particularly buildings with blank walls – can reduce scale and add diversity through pattern, color, and form.

Examples of how landscaping is used to soften and enhance the visual quality of the urban environment include:

- Dense screening of parking lots;
- Tall cylindrical trees to mark an entry;

- Continuous street tree plantings to protect pedestrians;
- Several clusters of dense trees along long building facades;
- Cluster plantings at focal points;
- Parking with trees and shrubs planted internally as well as on the perimeter.

Guidelines

The placement and amount of landscaping for new and existing development should be mandated through design standards. Special consideration should be given to the purpose and context of the proposed landscaping. The pedestrian/auto landscape requires strong plantings of a structural nature to act as buffers or screens.

The pedestrian landscape should emphasize the subtle characteristics of the plant materials. The building landscape should use landscaping that complements the building's favorable qualities and screens its faults.

Special Consideration for North Rose Hill Business District

A dense landscape buffer should be utilized to provide a transition separating commercial uses from adjoining single family or multi-family residential uses.

Special Consideration for Totem Center

Within TL 1, special landscaping elements such as gateways, arches, fountains and sculptures should be incorporated, in order to create a lively streetscape and provide visual interest along the street edge. Where possible, existing mature landscaping should be retained and incorporated into new development to soften the impact of increased site coverage and preserve the green character of the area.

Protection and Enhancement of Wooded Slopes

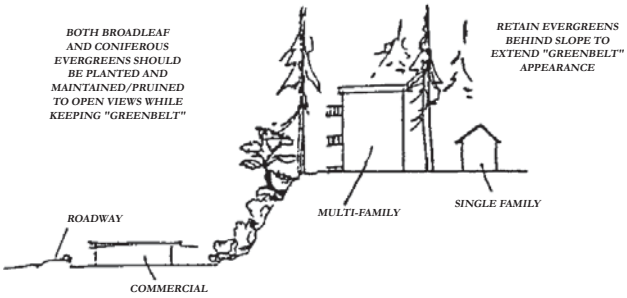
Issue

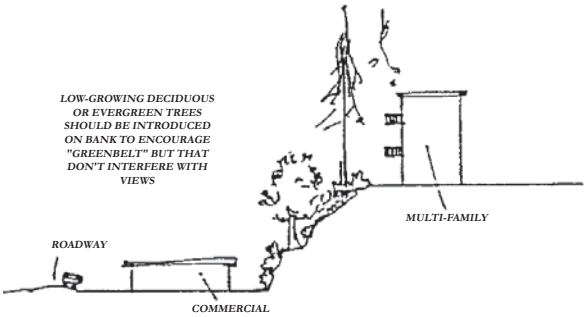
Topography provides opportunities for natural screening that maintains views.

Discussion

New plantings on wooded slopes should be selected for their slender, open growth pattern. Limbing-up and thinning-out branches should also be allowed to maintain views while keeping the character of the wooded hillsides. Weed species should be removed and replaced with appropriate native species. Wooded slopes can:

- Reduce visual impacts of the urban environment.
- Separate uses by providing a transition zone.
- Mitigate urban noise and air pollution for upland uses.
- Provide wildlife habitat.





Guidelines

Vegetation on slopes should be preserved and maintained as a buffer using native vegetation wherever possible.

New multifamily and single-family residential developments on slopes should be required to retain about 30 percent of the site in wooded open space and inventoried significant trees. Tree removal or enhancement can be determined by the use and site design.

Property owners of lowlands should be sensitive to upland uses and enhance hillsides to maintain existing views. Deciduous trees should be restricted to small varieties; coniferous evergreens should be thinned-out or limbed-up to allow for views from adjoining properties.

In developments above view slopes, coniferous evergreens should be incorporated into the site back from the slope to give continuity with the wooded slope. The back sides of commercial lots at the base of hillsides should be planted to screen upland properties from unsightly views of rooftops.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Using and enhancing existing wooded slopes is especially important to Kirkland's natural setting. The hillsides surrounding Downtown Kirkland can provide a "ring of green." As vegetation ascends the slope it provides a "greenbelt" effect. The proper maintenance or enhancement of such slopes need not disrupt view corridors of upland properties.

Special Consideration for Juanita Business District

The views of wooded hillsides surrounding the Juanita Business District are a local asset that can be used to upgrade the area's visual impact.

Height Measurement on Hillsides

Issue

Maintaining views and enhancing natural land forms is important to the design character of Kirkland. The scale relationships of built forms to their terrain should minimize visual barriers to views and lessen the impact on surrounding neighborhoods. In order to promote responsible design, building height restrictions should permit a development envelope that conforms to the terrain. Terracing, the stepping down of horizontal elements, is an effective way to develop hillsides and maintain views.

Discussion

The visual character of a landscape should be reflected in the buildings. Buildings that do not conform to steep inclines detract from the natural features of the site and should be avoided. In contrast, buildings that use the terrain as an opportunity for variation in the built form easily fit into their setting without disruption. Terracing a building to roughly parallel the slope of a site will create a building envelope that follows the contour of its property. Terraced roof decks, modulated roofs, and sloped roofs can carry out this objective.

Terraced buildings reflect the hillside topography ringing Kirkland's Downtown.

Guideline

The top of the building should roughly follow the slope of the existing terrain.

Views of Water

Issue

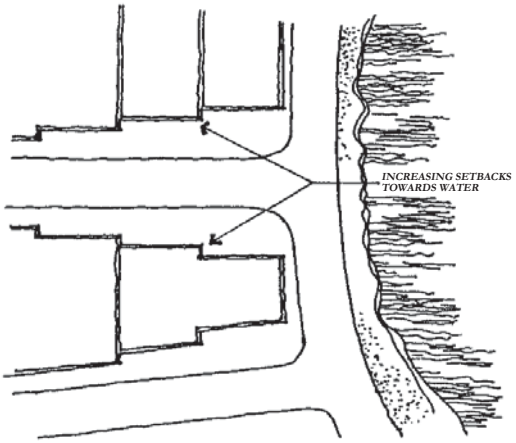
Views of Lake Washington give Kirkland its sense of place within the regional context. The waterfront remains an exceptional resource that should be better linked to nearby districts. A water view is a recurring reminder of the direction, function, and origin of Kirkland.

Discussion

Views may be considered in three ways. The *distant panorama* may be seen from one-quarter to more than one mile away. Development has eliminated most of Kirkland's panoramic views; remaining views should be protected. *View corridors* are places where an avenue between buildings creates a slotted visual path allowing a glimpse of the water beyond. *Proximity views* are those adjacent to and within one block away from the waterfront; they extend the waterfront's character. Each type of view is critical to Kirkland's urban design character.

View corridors and panoramic views from higher ground can be protected by height restrictions and limitations on rooftop clutter. Existing structures in some areas block views of the Lake. With renovation of existing structures, opening up of views should be encouraged. New development should respect the existing view corridors.

Proximity views require much larger fields of vision, therefore, development should remain a comfortable distance from the shore and be set back along view corridors. This will allow views of the water to widen from increasingly closer distances and will eliminate an abrupt change between development and shoreline.



Guideline

Existing views should be maintained. This can be accomplished by widening setbacks as development approaches the water. Buildings should step down hillsides. Buildings and rooftop appurtenances should be placed perpendicular to the water in order to safeguard views.

Special Consideration for Juanita Business District

View corridors to the Lake should be explored through new development in the business district. Existing residential views and view opportunities through Juanita Beach Park and down public streets should be preserved.

Culverted Creeks

Issue

Often stream beds fall victim to progress and their stream banks are reduced to a drain pipe. One way to further the objective of clarifying the natural physical setting is to reopen stream beds wherever possible.

Guideline

Opportunities should be sought to restore portions of culverted creeks to their natural state.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

A former stream bed, now enclosed in culverts, flows through the center of downtown from 6th Street, through Peter Kirk Park, just south of Central Way and into Marina Park. A restored stream bed could be incorporated in the parks and other public sites, and possibly on private property.

Special Considerations for Totem Center

One channel of the Totem Lake tributary extends along I-405, west of Totem Lake Boulevard in a culvert to Totem Lake. If it is feasible, restoration of this stream bed could be incorporated into the "greenway" design developed for this segment of Totem Lake Boulevard. Another tributary of Juanita Creek runs across the northwest section of Totem Center, with portions in a culvert and other portions remaining in an open stream bed. Redevelopment of these properties could include restoration of the culverted portions of the stream as an amenity provided on site.