City of Port Townsend

Development Services Department
250 Madison, Suite 3
Port Townsend, WA 98368
360-379-5095 Fax 360-344-4619

HISTORIC DESIGN GUIDELINES
For the
Uptown Commercial Sub-district

PURPOSE
These Design Guidelines are established for the following purposes:

1. To supplement land use regulations which encourage and promote public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Port Townsend.
2. To provide guidance to urban design decisions that will promote development of high environmental and visual quality throughout the City.
3. To assist applicants in the preparation of development applications.
4. To assist decision-making by the Historic Preservation Committee in the review of development applications.

INTRODUCTION
The design guidelines for the Uptown Commercial area of the Port Townsend Historic Overlay District are intended to be used as both an aid to appropriate design and not as a checklist for compliance. The purpose of the guidelines is to create awareness of the unique character of the Uptown Commercial Subdistrict during the design of new buildings or rehabilitation of existing ones. These guidelines identify the design elements deemed important in reviewing Uptown projects for appropriateness and are the basis for recommendations made by the City's Historic Preservation Committee (HPC).

GUIDELINES FOR:
Commercial development adjacent to residential zones.

1. Buildings shall be designed to ensure that building massing, height, and scale provide sensitive transition to adjoining residential neighborhoods. When abutting a residential zoning district, the project's landscaping plan must include provisions for vegetative screening between the project and the residential property.

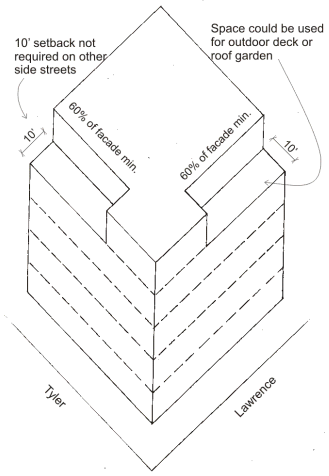
2. New developments whose bulk and scale may negatively impact adjacent residential areas shall mitigate the effect through careful site planning and architectural design. Possible mitigation techniques include, but are not limited to, the following:
   a. Locating open space and preserving existing vegetation on the site's edge to further separate the building from less intensive uses;
   b. Stepping down the massing of the building along the site's edge;
   c. Limiting the length of or articulating building facades to reflect adjacent residential patterns; and,

d. Creative use and ongoing maintenance of landscaping, such as berms, mounds, rockeries, living fences, and swales. The landscape plan shall include a greenbelt, at least an eight-foot-wide buffer to create a year-round visual screen of at least six feet in height. The buffer should be designed to avoid the appearance of a straight line or 'wall' of uniform plant material, and shall be wide enough to accommodate the planted species at maturation.

Building Height, Shadow & Privacy Impacts

1. 50-foot buildings will be allowed on Lawrence, Polk, Fillmore and Tyler Streets provided that at least 60 percent of building facades that are over 40 feet high are set back at least 10 feet.

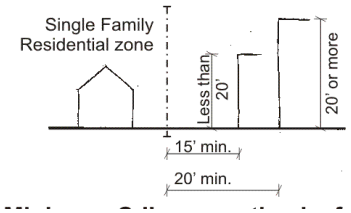
Figure 1. Façade setback over 40 feet



At least 60% of building facades over 40' along Lawrence and Tyler Streets must be set back from ROW at least 10'

2. a. Buildings 20 feet in height or greater that are located adjacent to single-family zoning districts shall be set back from the residential zone by no less than 20 feet.

Figure 2. C-III zone building setbacks from single-family zone (Table 17.02.030 PTMC requires a 10 foot rear setback when contiguous to a residential zone. This guideline would require an increased rear setback for new construction.



b. A setback at ground-level is not required from the single-family residential zoned property if the back façade is constructed of durable, low-maintenance material finish with no windows or doors (fire-rating per fire marshal), as approved through design review. Portions of any structure over 20 feet in height above grade must be set back at least 20 feet from the property line.

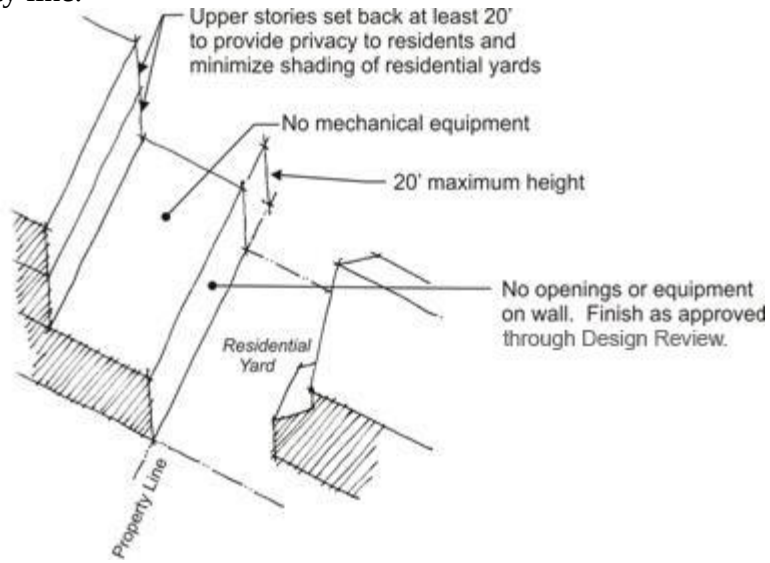


Figure 3. C-III zone setback, mechanical and exterior restrictions

3. Railings for all balconies facing single-family zoned properties should be solid (not see-through) in order to provide screening and to reduce visual contact between neighboring properties.

4. All exterior lighting, including that used to illustrate signs, shall be designed to reduce glare impacts to adjacent properties and public rights-of-way, to use energy efficiently, and to reduce nighttime "light pollution." Design measures to fulfill this requirement include, but are not limited to, pointing all exterior lighting downward and shielded from direct observation from the air, adjacent properties, and public rights-of-way. Lighting "spillover" to adjacent properties shall be minimized.

5. Building placement and design shall consider shadow impacts to adjacent properties and minimize these impacts where possible. For example, where building features are nonfunctional or decorative (parapets, unused attic space) such features should be reduced in scale where shadowing of adjacent properties will occur.

6. Development on Clay Street shall include dense landscape screening of parking and service areas along the right-of-way and require installation of street trees in accordance with adopted street development standards. The screening must obscure the parking and service areas from view from the public right-of-way and adjacent properties. The fence should be constructed of a durable material compatible with other fences in the district. Wood, concrete, and masonry are acceptable. Sheet metal, fiberglass, and sheet wood products are not acceptable.

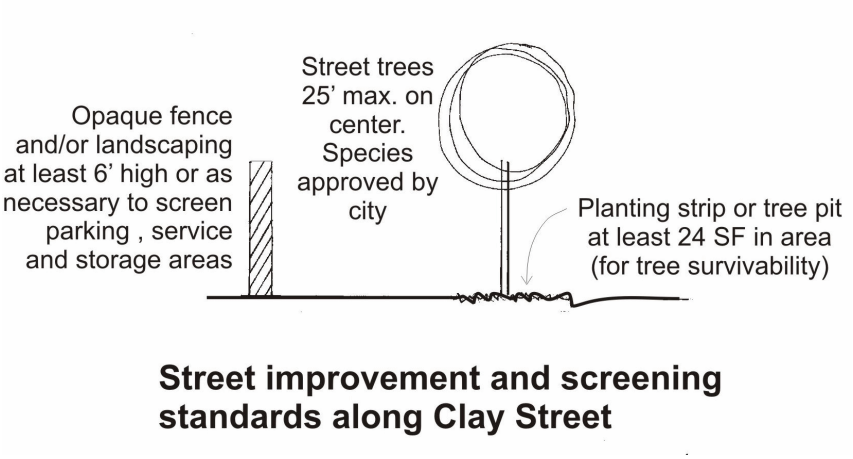


Figure 4. Clay Street screening standards

Architectural Design, Elements & Materials

1. To moderate the vertical scale of multi-story buildings, the design shall include techniques to clearly define the building's top, middle and bottom. The following techniques are suggested methods of achieving vertical articulation:
   a. Top: Sloped roofs, strong eave lines, cornice treatments, horizontal trellises or sunshades, etc.
   b. Middle: Windows, balconies, material changes, railings and similar treatments that unify the building design.
   c. Bottom: Pedestrian-oriented storefronts, pedestrian scale building details, awnings, and arcades.

Figure 5. Vertical Articulation

2. "Building elements" shall be included as part of building façade to "break up" the façade, not necessarily in a repetitive pattern, to reduce the perceived scale of larger buildings. "Building elements" shall consist of larger building pieces that affect the shape of the building envelope, and include balconies, porches, turrets, bay windows, entrances, overhangs, dormers, inset entrances, etc. "Building elements" are not the same as "building details" such as brackets, decorative elements, and wall lighting, etc.

3. New development should locate windows, skylights, open spaces and decks to take advantage of southern exposure. Buildings and canopies should be designed to utilize natural light and to reduce energy costs.

4. The primary entrances of buildings shall be identified and highlighted through architectural details, lighting, and signage. The design of buildings shall enhance the relationship between buildings and streets by creating easily identifiable building entrances.
    a. Entrances shall be visible from the primary street frontage.
    b. Techniques that may be used to highlight primary building entrances include, but are not limited to, the following:
        i. Recessed entry;
        ii. Glazed door;
        iii. Roof line emphasis;
        iv. Windows above entry;
        v. Projecting sign above doorway, subject to sign code;
        vi. Canopy, marquee, or awning above entry;
        vii. Head molding or decorative lintel above doorway;
        viii. Contrasting, decorative finish materials;
        x. Street address posted prominently above or near the building entrance.

5. Roof design shall reduce the mass and scale of buildings, add visual interest and prevent reflective glare. Flat roofs shall have parapets to conceal the roof and mechanical equipment from ground level views. Sloping roofs shall have three or more roof planes.

6. When designing rooftops visible from hillsides, special attention shall be given to prevention of reflective glare and placement/design of mechanical equipment. Roof gardens or 'living roofs' may be considered and are encouraged.

7. Overhanging eaves are encouraged on sloped roofs.

8. Buildings shall be enhanced with appropriate details. Buildings shall include at least three of the following elements on their primary facades:
    a. Distinctive rooflines. Ornamental molding, entablature, frieze or other roofline device visible from the ground level are encouraged. If the roofline decoration is in the form of a linear molding or board, then the molding or board shall be at least 8 inches wide.
    b. Special treatment of windows and doors. This includes:
        i. Prominent or decorative molding / framing details around all ground floor windows and doors. If molding is used, then the molding should be consistent with the following: be wood framed (preferred); metal framed windows shall be powder-coated, darker colors are preferred; natural mill finished or clear anodized aluminum window frames are discouraged.
        ii. Ornamental or special glazing, or door designs located on facades facing streets or public parks or open spaces.
        iii. Display windows divided into a grid of multiple panes.
        iv. Smaller component windows reminiscent of traditional main street vernacular when adjacent to sidewalks or other pedestrian use areas.
    c. Recessed entry
    d. Ornamental paving and artwork near entry.

e. Landscaped trellises or other decorative element that incorporates landscaping near the building entry.
f. Pedestrian-scaled light fixtures with a diffuse visible light source such as a globe or "acorn" that is non-glaring.
g. Special building materials, including decorative masonry, shingle, brick, tile, stone, or other materials with decorative or textural qualities as approved through Design Review.
h. Hand-crafted or decorative pedestrian-oriented signage, such as hanging or window sign.
i. Other details that meet the objectives of enhancing buildings with appropriate details.

9. Building exteriors shall be constructed from high quality, durable materials. Preferred exterior building materials that reflect the city's desired traditional commercial design character are as follows:
    a. Brick.
    b. Narrow horizontal wood siding (generally 5 inches or less); wider siding will be considered where there is a historical precedent.
    c. Other materials subject to approval through Design Review.

10. The following materials are prohibited in visible locations unless an exception is granted by the Director based on the integration of the material into the overall design of the structure.
    a. Vinyl or plywood siding (including T-111 or similar plywood).
    b. Highly tinted or mirrored glass (except stained glass) as a major building element.
    c. Corrugated fiberglass.
    d. Chain link fencing (except for temporary purposes such as a construction site or as a gate for a refuse enclosure).
    e. Crushed colored rock or crushed tumbled glass.
    f. Non-corrugated and highly reflective sheet metal.
    g. Tilt-up concrete.

11. Special standards for concrete or concrete blocks [concrete masonry units (CMU) or "cinder blocks"]. When used for walls that are visible from a street, public park or open space, or pedestrian route, concrete or concrete block construction shall be limited to 30 percent of the façade area and architecturally treated in one or more of following ways:

    a. Use of textured surfaces such as split face or grooved.
    b. Use of other masonry types such as brick, glass block, or tile in conjunction with the concrete or concrete blocks.
    c. Use of decorative coursing to break up blank wall areas.
    d. Use matching colored mortar where color is an element of architectural treatment for any of the options above.

12. Special standards for metal siding. When used for walls that are visible from a street, public park or open space, or pedestrian route, buildings shall have visible corner moldings and trim and incorporate masonry, stone, or other durable permanent material near the ground level (first 2 feet above sidewalk or ground level). Facades wider than 40 feet that employ metal siding shall incorporate multiple colors / other siding materials to provide visual relief.

13. Special standards for Exterior Insulation and Finish System (EIFS) and other similar troweled finishes:
    a. Limited to no more than 30 percent of the façade area.
    b. Shall be trimmed in wood or masonry.
    c. Should be sheltered from extreme weather by roof overhangs or other methods.
    d. Shall incorporate masonry, stone, or other durable permanent material near the ground level (first 2 feet above sidewalk or ground level).

14. Exterior siding consisting of wood, brick, and/or other materials with "natural" textures is encouraged, as are the use of recycled and "ecologically friendly" materials.

15. Exterior building materials shall be of similar type (e.g., wood or masonry) on all sides of a building, except that embellishments and details proposed for the street side frontage(s) of the building need not be carried through on other sides.

Landscaping.

1. Parking, storage areas and service areas, and other intrusive features as identified during Design Review must be screened from view of the public right-of-way using sight obscuring fencing, walls and/or landscaping as illustrated. Alternative means of screening may be considered provided it meets the intent of providing a full visual screen.

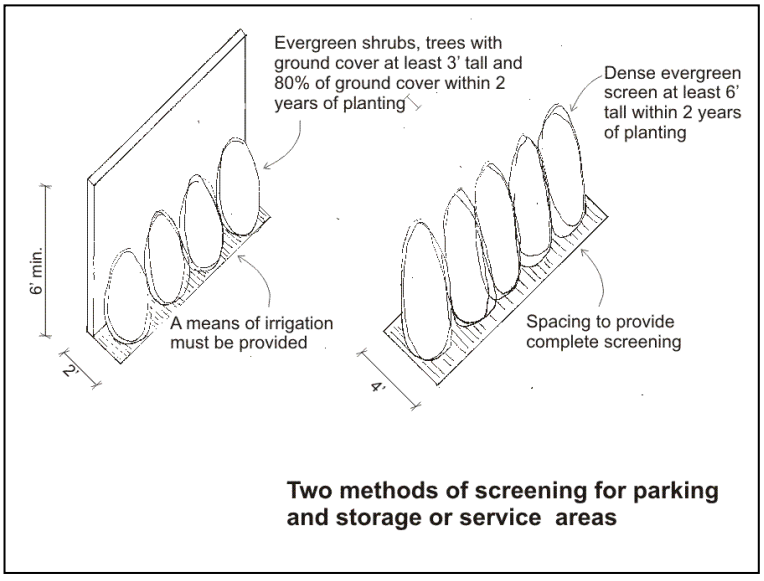


Figure 6. Landscape screening

Lighting

1. All exterior lighting, including illuminated signs, shall be pointed downward and shielded from direct observation from the air, adjacent properties, and public rights-of way. Lighting "spillover" to adjacent properties shall be minimized. Lamps shall use recessed or flat lenses. Light fixtures, shall be "full cutoff" fixtures as defined by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America.
    a.. Alternative. If use of fixtures which do not meet the "full cutoff" definition are proposed, other fixtures may be used if it found that no significant light pollution or trespass will result and if the maximum initial lumens generated by each fixture does not exceed 1,500 lumens in total (approximately equivalent to an 18-watt compact fluorescent or 100-watt incandescent bulb).

2. Lighting in exterior canopies shall be recessed so that the lens does not drop below the level of the canopy.

3. Exterior light poles shall not exceed a height of 17 feet above grade, including the base.

4. When lighting is used for security, the use of motion sensors and/or timers is required.

5. Exterior lighting shall be limited to nighttime business hours only. Lighting shall be located near the activity needing illumination. Walkways, entrances, and parking areas may be lit during nighttime business hours, but such lighting shall be the minimum necessary for safety. Lighting in parking lots should be of uniform intensity, since the eye cannot easily adapt to areas of darkness and brightness in proximity to one another.

6. Buildings shall not be outlined with neon or other lighting, except seasonal lighting.

7. If, once installed, lighting is found to be performing in violation of these standards, the city may require the business owner to take corrective action to bring the lighting into compliance.

8. Lighting shall be maintained to meet these standards at all times.

9. Nighttime lighting of the American flag is exempt from the provisions of this chapter, except that such lighting shall not provide direct glare to neighboring properties or traffic.

Figure 7. Wall-mounted lights.

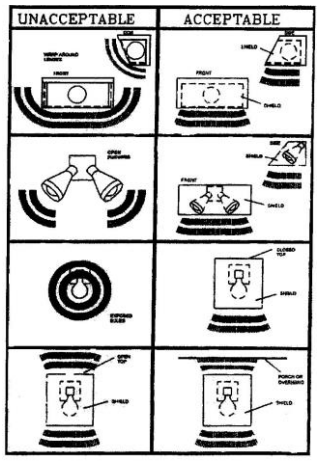


Figure 8. Freestanding outdoor lighting fixtures.

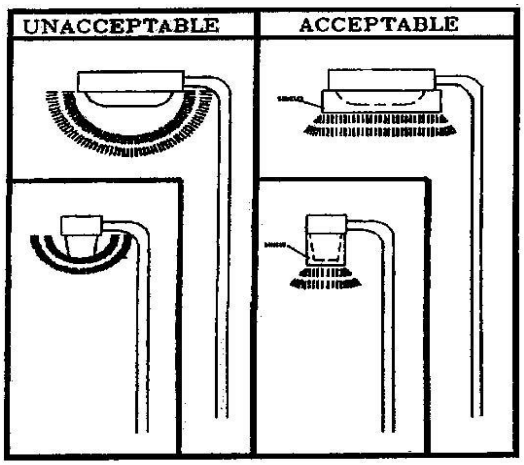


Figure 9. Accent lighting

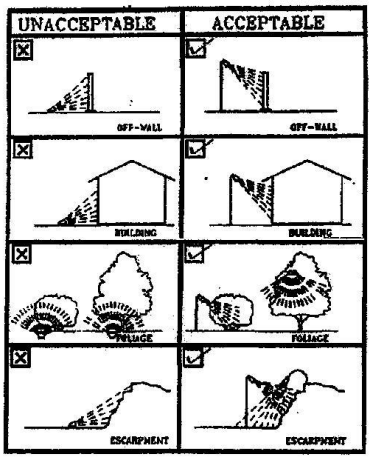
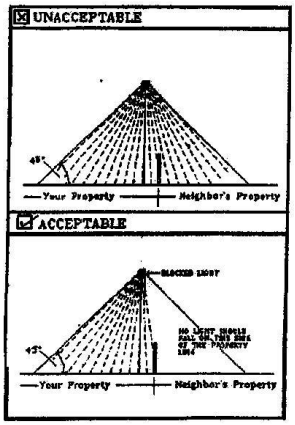


Figure 10. Outdoor light fixtures – cut off at property line



Pedestrian Environment.

1. Buildings on Lawrence Street shall provide generous amounts of windows to create ground floors with a "transparent" quality in order to provide visual interest.

2. Windows shall cover at least 50 percent of the facade area (as measured from grade to eight feet above grade) facing the primary street and also the secondary street on corner lots. The standard shall be applied to each individual street facade. Windows are also encouraged on upper floors.

3. Windows shall not consist of reflective glass.

4. Windows should begin at least 12 inches above grade rather than continue down to grade level.

5. Building facades with less transparency may be permitted, provided the project features an exceptionally attractive pedestrian element, such as a special entry with plaza, marquee, or other element is approved through Design Review.

Figure 11. This building's transom windows, display windows, recessed entry and decorative door add visual interest at a pedestrian scale.

Protection from Elements – Lawrence Street.

1. Blank walls are not allowed on front facades facing Lawrence Street.

2. Buildings on Lawrence Street should provide weather protection at least 5 feet wide along at least 75 percent of the building's front façade along Lawrence Street.

3. Wider weather protection features are encouraged to provide for outdoor seating areas.

4. The weather protection may be in the form of awnings, marquees, canopies, or building overhangs. Gaps in the covering are allowed to provide for visual variety in the façade through the use of architectural features and/or landscaping components.

Mechanical Equipment and Service Areas

1. Mechanical equipment, loading areas, trash, and recycling containers shall be located and/or screened to minimize their visibility from public view from adjacent rights-of-way. Where practicable, refuse and storage containers should be located within a structure and moved out of the building to provide access for trash removal.

2. Refuse and storage containers shall be screened with built and/or landscaped confinements.

3. Where possible, refuse and storage areas should be located to the rear or side of the property and away from adjacent streets and residential property. If location to the rear and side is not possible, screening shall be required.

4. Service and loading areas should be located to the rear or sides of buildings away from adjacent streets, but shall be designed for convenient use.

5. Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be concealed from view by a roof form integrated with the overall architecture of the building, either by locating the equipment within the structure or concealing it from ground level view behind a parapet.

6. Views of rooftop equipment from nearby hillsides shall be minimized.

7. Noise producing mechanical equipment such as fans, heat pumps, etc., should be located and/or shielded so that noise reaching the adjacent properties and the public right-of-way is minimized.

Parking

1. The applicant must demonstrate that this standard is achieved by providing equipment specifications and/or calculations of noise impacts.

2. Parking access from Lawrence Street is not allowed if there is another alternative.

3. All parking lots immediately adjacent to residential properties shall be screened from view with sight obscuring combination of fence, wall and/or landscaping. Alternative means of screening may be approved provided they meet the intent of providing a full visual screen.