



Admiral

residential urban village

Design Guidelines

Effective May 29, 2002



City of Seattle
Department of Design,
Construction & Land Use

Design Review: *Admiral Residential Urban Village* *Design Guidelines*

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Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

I. Design Review in Seattle's Neighborhoods

What is Design Review?

Design Review provides a forum for citizens and developers to work toward achieving a better urban environment through attention given to fundamental design principles. Design Review is intended to affect how new development can contribute positively to Seattle's neighborhoods. Design guidelines offer a flexible tool—an alternative to prescriptive zoning requirements—that will allow new development to respond better to the distinctive character of its surroundings.

Design Review has three principal objectives:

1. to encourage better design and site planning to enhance the character of the city and ensure that new development fits sensitively into neighborhoods;
2. to provide flexibility in the application of development standards; and
3. to improve communication and participation among developers, neighbors and the City early in the design and siting of new development.

Design Review is a component of a Master Use Permit (MUP) application, along with other components, such as environmental review (SEPA), variances, etc., administered by the Department of Design, Construction and Land Use (DCLU). Like these other components, Design Review applications involve public notice and opportunity for comment. Unlike other components, projects subject to Design Review are brought before the Design Review Board for its recommendations or to staff through Administrative Design Review. The final decision on

Design Review is made by the DCLU Director, together with the decisions on any other MUP components. This decision is appealable to the Hearing Examiner.

What are Neighborhood-Specific Design Guidelines?

Design Review uses both the Citywide Guidelines and guidelines that are specific to individual neighborhoods. Once adopted by the City Council, neighborhood-specific design guidelines augment the Citywide Guidelines. Together they are the basis for project review within the neighborhood.

The guidelines for the Admiral Residential Urban Village augment the existing Citywide Design Guidelines.

The Admiral Residential Urban Village neighborhood design guidelines reveal the character of the Admiral neighborhood as known to its residents and businesses. The guidelines help to reinforce existing character and protect the qualities that a neighborhood values most in the face of change. Thus, a neighborhood's guidelines, in conjunction with the Citywide Design Guidelines, can increase overall awareness of good design and involvement in the design review process.

More About Design Review

More information about Design Review can be found in the Citywide Design Guidelines and in the Seattle Municipal Code (SMC 23.41). Information includes:

- Projects Subject to Design Review
- How Design Guidelines are Applied
- Who Serves on the Design Review Board
- Development Standards Departures

II. Admiral Neighborhood Context and Priority Design Issues

The Admiral Neighborhood consists primarily of single-family houses and some multi-family buildings in proximity to the business district. The Admiral Residential Urban Village 1998 Plan calls for a continuation of this development pattern, envisioning a graceful accommodation of a diverse mix of businesses and residences. In keeping with this, new developments are expected to build upon desirable elements of the area's existing character, and the Admiral Design Guidelines include the following key objectives:

- Identification of elements of the Admiral Residential Urban Village's existing character that should be referred to in new development proposals;
- Connections between key places that should be maintained and enhanced;
- Zone edge conditions between residential and mixed-use/commercial structures that call for a sensitive transition in height, bulk and scale; and
- Provision of public spaces that accommodate pedestrian activity and encourage interaction.

Variation in the intensity of development and types of uses exists within the Admiral neighborhood. For the purposes of these design guidelines, the Admiral Residential Urban Village – the boundaries of which define the applicability of the Admiral neighborhood design guidelines – is composed of four sub-areas:

- Parcels in the Core Commercial Area; **(CCA)**
- Parcels Abutting Single Family Zoning; **(PASF)**
- Parcels that are both in the Commercial Core Area and Abut Single Family Zoning; **(PASF in CCA)**
- All other Non-Single Family Parcels. **(Non SF)**

The applicability and importance of these design guidelines have been prioritized for each of the sub-areas listed above. The table on the right margin of each page corresponds with the design guidelines and includes columns for the four sub-areas. A checkmark denotes a 'high priority' for that particular guideline in the respective sub-area. However, guidelines that are not identified as a high priority must still be addressed.

The Core Commercial Area is anticipated to receive the largest amount of new development in the neighborhood. Occupying both sides of the street on California Avenue SW from SW Walker St. to SW Stevens St. and Admiral Way SW from 40th Ave. SW. to 45th Ave. SW, the area is zoned primarily NC2-40', interrupted with small Lowrise zones on Admiral Way SW from 40th to 42nd and 44th to 45th Avenues SW (see Figure 1). The current architectural context is characterized by a relatively small scale of buildings ranging from one- to three-stories, with a few larger, neighborhood-serving structures. The business district works well as a 'town center', with a mix of uses (grocery stores, community center, school, movie theater, churches and playground) provided in a compact area, all within walking distance of each other and the immediate surrounding residential area. This provides an excellent framework to be strengthened and enhanced by new development.

Admiral Residential Urban Village Design Guidelines

Projects requiring design review will be evaluated for consistency with the Neighborhood Design Guidelines in this handbook as well as the Citywide Design Guidelines.

Note: The guidelines are numbered to correspond to the Citywide Design Guidelines (A-1, A-2, etc). A gap in the numerical sequence means there are no neighborhood design guidelines for that particular Citywide Guideline.

A. SITE PLANNING

A-1 Responding to Site Characteristics

The siting of buildings should respond to specific conditions and opportunities such as non-rectangular lots, location on prominent intersections, unusual topography, significant vegetation and views or other natural features.

Solar Orientation

Preserving solar exposure in Single Family zones is an important design consideration. Compose the structure’s massing to enhance solar exposure for the project, minimize shadow impacts on adjacent structures, and enhance solar exposure for public spaces.

Existing Vegetation

Site buildings to preserve and respect existing vegetation of exceptional quality, as defined by its species, size, and/or neighborhood significance (i.e. how it creates a sense of place). Such vegetation should be retained unless a reasonable use of the property (comparable to the allowable floor area permitted by the zone’s development standards) is compromised.

A-2 Streetscape Compatibility

The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

A-3 Entrances Visible from the Street

Entries should be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.

A-4 Human Activity

New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.

	Parcels in the Core Commercial Area	Parcels Abutting Single Family Zoning	Parcels both in the CCA and Abut SF Zoning	All Other Non-SF Parcels
Solar Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Existing Vegetation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Streetscape Compatibility	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Entrances Visible from the Street	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Human Activity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	



Good site planning and solar setbacks

A-1: Where appropriate, consider using significant building setbacks and modulation to increase solar exposure to the site, and to preserve solar exposure to the surrounding area.



Good Pedestrian Shopping Commercial Retail Design

A-2: Desirable pattern and scale of commercial storefronts.



Well-designed Pedestrian Entrance to Store

A-3: A receptive and identifiable pedestrian entry.



Commercial Pedestrian Friendly Landmark Design Elements

A-4: Activity that 'spills out' from the business to the sidewalk is encouraged.

A-5 Respect for Adjacent Sites

Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings. Consider the following methods:

- Reduce the number of windows and decks on proposed buildings that overlook neighboring residences.
- Step back upper floors or increase side and rear setbacks to pull windows farther away from neighboring residences.
- Stagger windows to not align with adjacent windows and minimize the impact of windows in living spaces that may infringe on the privacy of adjacent residents.

A-6 Transition Between Residence and Street

For residential projects, the space between the building and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and encourage social interaction among residents and neighbors.

- Consider setting residential projects, or the residential portion of a mixed-use project, back from the street.

A-7 Residential Open Space

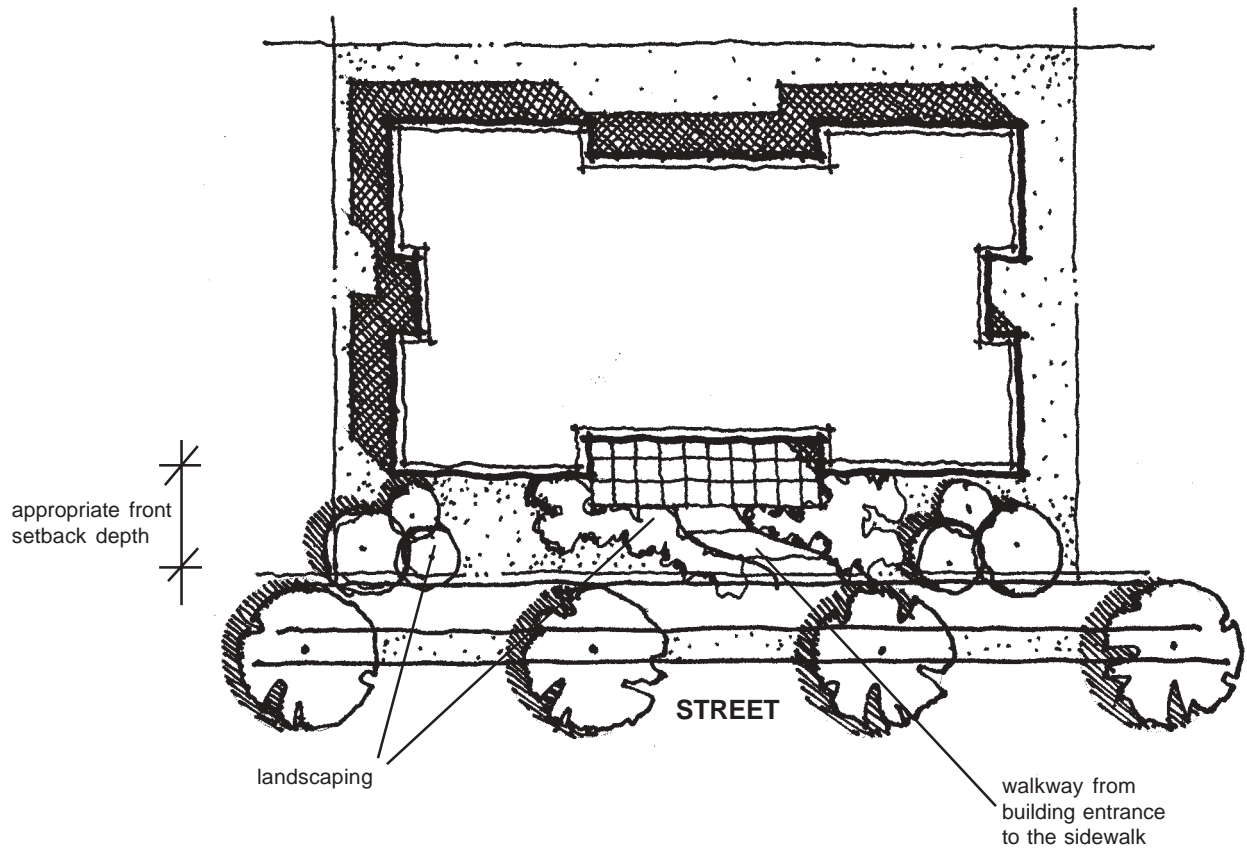
Residential projects should be sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated open space:

- Consider the types of residents the project will likely attract, and design open spaces that meet the needs of all residents - both for communal and private enjoyment.
- Site outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight as much as possible.

	Parcels in the Core Commercial Area	Parcels Abutting Single Family Zoning	Parcels both in the CCA and Abut SF Zoning	All Other Non-SF Parcels
Reduce the number of windows and decks on proposed buildings that overlook neighboring residences.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
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Stagger windows to not align with adjacent windows and minimize the impact of windows in living spaces that may infringe on the privacy of adjacent residents.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consider setting residential projects, or the residential portion of a mixed-use project, back from the street.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Consider the types of residents the project will likely attract, and design open spaces that meet the needs of all residents - both for communal and private enjoyment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Site outdoor spaces to take advantage of sunlight as much as possible.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



A-6: An appropriate setback for a multifamily building from the sidewalk.



A-8 Parking and Vehicle Access

Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and pedestrian safety.





















- Locate surface parking and access to parking at rear of lot. If this is not possible, locate parking in lower level or less visible portion of the site.
- Reduce the scale of larger parking lots to give the perception of smaller ones.
- Minimize the number and width of driveways and curb cuts.

A-9 Location of Parking on Commercial Street Fronts

Parking on a commercial street front should be minimized and where possible should be located behind a building.

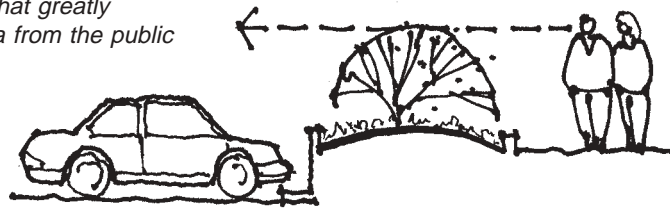
A-10 Corner Lots

Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.

	Parcels in the Core Commercial Area	Parcels Abutting Single Family Zoning	Parcels both in the CCA and Abut SF Zoning	All Other Non-SF Parcels
				
				
				
				
				



A-8: When locating surface parking near sidewalks and other pedestrian areas is unavoidable, consider methods and treatments that greatly obscure views into the parking area from the public realm.
















B. HEIGHT, BULK and SCALE

B-1 Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility

Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to nearby, less-intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

Where appropriate, consider using the following methods to provide a sensitive transition to less intensive zones:

- Provide a sensitive transition to less intensive zones by reducing the appearance of bulk by setting back upper floors using methods described on page 25 of the Citywide Design Guidelines.
- Use architectural styles and details (such as roof lines or fenestration), color or materials derivative from surrounding, less intensive structures.
- Locate features such as required open space on the zone edge to create further separation and buffering from the lower intensive zone.
- Articulate the building facades vertically or horizontally in intervals that conform to the existing structures or platting pattern in the vicinity.

	Parcels in the Core Commercial Area	Parcels Abutting Single Family Zoning	Parcels both in the CCA and Abut SF Zoning	All Other Non-SF Parcels
				
				
				
				

C. ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS AND MATERIALS

C-1 Architectural Context

There is an established scale within the Admiral Residential Urban Village, characterized by one- to three-story structures. The following are noteworthy Admiral residential and commercial buildings, from which new developments can take architectural cues:

Residential:



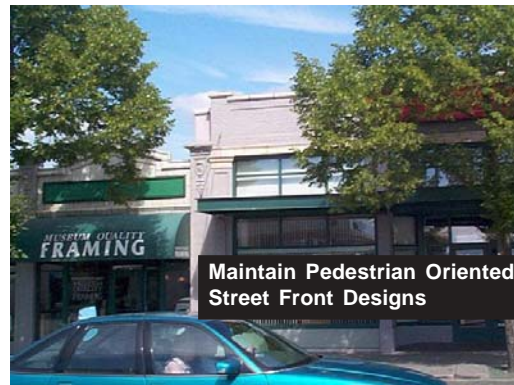
decorative cornice

varied parapet and cornice

residential fenestration with sash windows and sills

traditional building entry: a canopy and architectural details around the door call attention to the building's primary entrance

Commercial:



transom

street-level display windows

base course

Maintain Pedestrian Oriented Street Front Designs

D. PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

D-1 Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances

Convenient and attractive access to the building’s entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.

- Provide visual and pedestrian access (including barrier-free access) into the site from the public sidewalk.
- Provide landscaping that screens undesirable elements, such as surface parking lots and dumpsters, or that enhances the space and architecture. Design screening to provide clear visibility into parking areas to promote personal safety.
- Provide visible signage identifying building addresses at the entrance(s) as a functional and aesthetic consideration.

D-2 Blank Walls

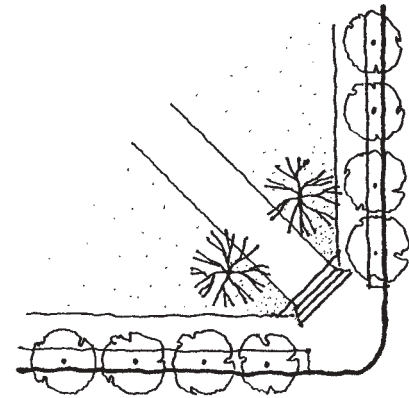
Buildings should avoid large blank walls facing the street, especially near sidewalks. Where blank walls are unavoidable, they should receive design treatment to increase pedestrian comfort and interest.

- Employ small setbacks, indentations or other means of breaking up the wall surface into human-scaled intervals.

D-3 Retaining Walls

Retaining walls near a public sidewalk that extends higher than eye level should be avoided where possible. Where high retaining walls are unavoidable, they should be designed to reduce their impact on pedestrian comfort and to increase the visual interest along the streetscape. A textured surface or inlaid material is encouraged, especially when the wall is near a public sidewalk.

	Parcels in the Core Commercial Area	Parcels Abutting Single Family Zoning	Parcels both in the CCA and Abut SF Zoning	All Other Non-SF Parcels
Provide visual and pedestrian access (including barrier-free access) into the site from the public sidewalk.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Provide landscaping that screens undesirable elements, such as surface parking lots and dumpsters, or that enhances the space and architecture. Design screening to provide clear visibility into parking areas to promote personal safety.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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D-1: Landscaping and surface treatments help to highlight a primary entry.



D-2: An effective treatment of a blank wall.



D-1: As an iconic neighborhood building, the theater exhibits several - albeit embellished - pedestrian-friendly elements. The open, visually engaging entrance from the sidewalk promotes activity in the heart of the Admiral business district.



D-1: Example of pedestrian access into and through the site from the public sidewalk. This is a particularly important consideration for large development sites.

D-5 Visual Impacts of Parking Structures

The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.

- Visually integrate the parking structure with adjacent buildings.
- Where feasible, consider setting back a portion of the parking structure to allow for the retention of an existing significant tree.

D-6 Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas

Building sites should locate service elements like trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment away from the street front where possible. When elements such as dumpsters, utility meters, mechanical units and service areas cannot be located away from the street front, they should be situated and screened from view and should not be located in the pedestrian right-of-way.

E. Landscaping

E-2 Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site

Landscaping including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

- Soften the form of the building by screening blank walls. The west wall of the Thriftway on 42nd Avenue SW is a good example of this type of treatment.

	Parcels in the Core Commercial Area	Parcels Abutting Single Family Zoning	Parcels both in the CCA and Abut SF Zoning	All Other Non-SF Parcels
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



E-2: Landscaping that is integrated into the design of the building.



E-2: Landscaping as an effective buffer between buildings.