

I. Overview

All commercial developments in Stratford will be informed by the design guidelines in this document. The guidelines are recommended to enhance the quality of built and natural environments, and the historic character of the town.

This document suggests guidelines for design elements, building materials and massing, streetscape amenities, and treescape to enhance the town's unique architectural and environmental qualities. When reviewing individual applications, these guidelines should be considered in conjunction with the officially adopted Stratford Zoning Regulations.

These guidelines are intended as a reference source and advisory planning tool for property owners, merchants, developers, town boards and commissions, and real estate professionals. They are applicable to all commercial properties in town and all multifamily residential buildings with three units or more, based on the definition of commercial structures specified in the Town's building code.

II. Architecture

Successful architecture is dependent on local climate, topography, history, neighborhood context, and building practices. Individual projects should link seamlessly with their surroundings, transcending style. Each applicant should take the following into consideration:

A. *Historical References*

- Stratford is committed to maintaining its intrinsic character that is derived from its historical origins as a small, New England town.
- Preservation and adaptive re-use of structures have an important place in this development, and new building styles should reflect integration but not necessarily imitation.

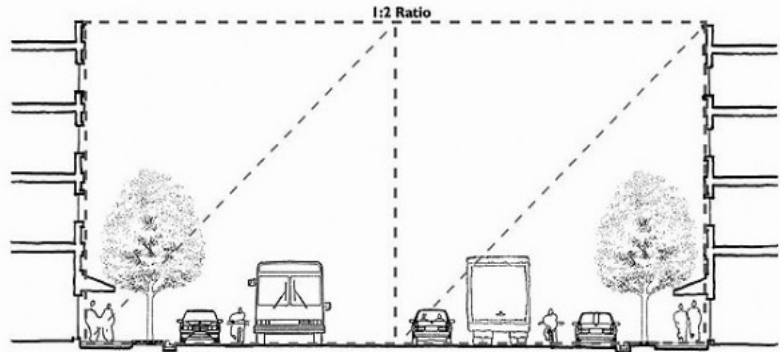
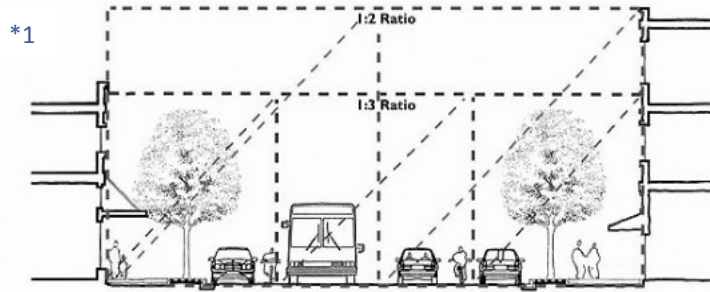
B. *Aesthetic Considerations*

a. *Massing*

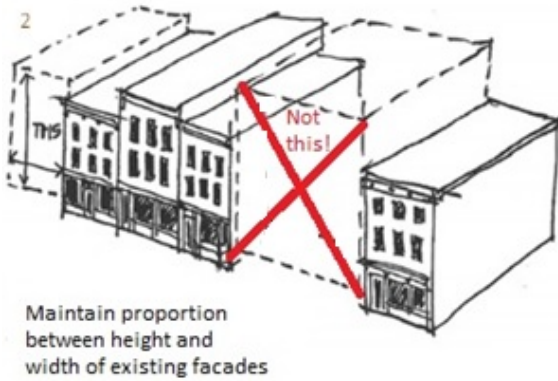
- Create compatibility in size and scale with surrounding buildings.
- Encourage proportionality between the height of the buildings which frame the street and the width of the right-of-way.
- Design to create interesting and proportional outdoor spatial relationships between buildings, open space and any setbacks on adjacent sites.
- Where appropriate, establish building rhythms with adjacent structures for visual continuity.

- Structures designed to a human scale will enhance pedestrian interest, aesthetics and comfort.

Picture to the right: Example of recommended proportionality between the height of the buildings and the width of the right-of-way (minimum 1:3 with a preferred ratio of 1:2)

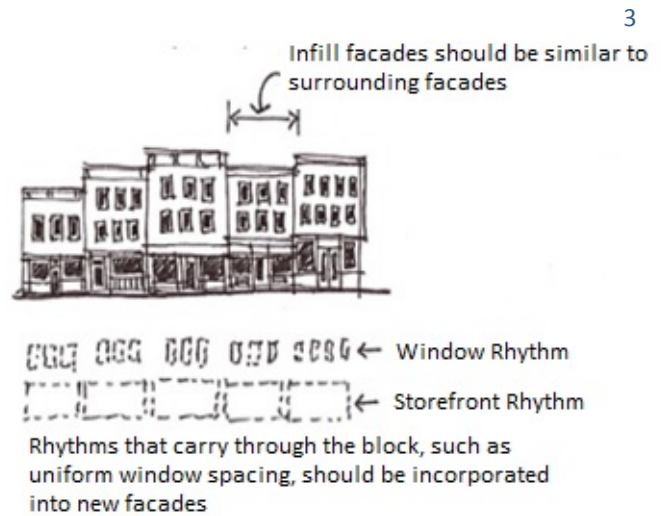


(The American Institute of Transportation Engineers "Designing Walkable Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach" 2010)



Picture to the top: Example of appropriately scaled commercial mixed use buildings

Picture to the right: Example of building rhythm that promotes visual continuity.



*Photo credits are enclosed at the end of this document

Picture to the right: Example of buildings framing the street with interesting enclosures.



b. Building Placement

- Site buildings to frame the street with pleasing, interesting enclosures.
- Keep front building setbacks in relation to the adjacent buildings, with careful consideration of size, build and sunlight.
- Recommend parking in the rear of the building.



Picture to the left: Example of recommended parking placement to the rear of the building.

c. Access and Driveway

- Design the main entrance, exits and rear entrances to be welcoming, safe, accessible and clearly marked with appropriate signage.
- Allow for possible bike paths, pedestrian access and coordination with available public transit.



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Picture to the top: Example of recommended design of entrance and exit to commercial buildings.

Picture to the right: Example of recommended coordination of access ways to buildings with bike/pedestrian and public transit infrastructure on the right-of-way.



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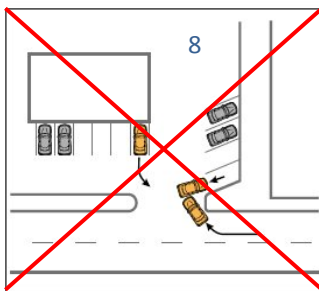
Stop signs or signalized intersections

Bicycle lanes each side of two-way streets

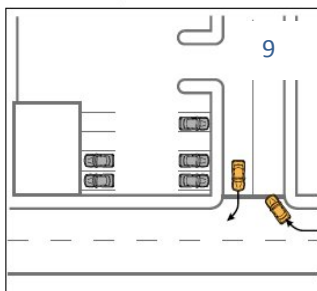
Bicycle box for bike left turn priority

Circulator/shuttle bus bay located beyond intersection to increase efficiency

Separation zone for transit stops, street trees, furnishings, and utilities



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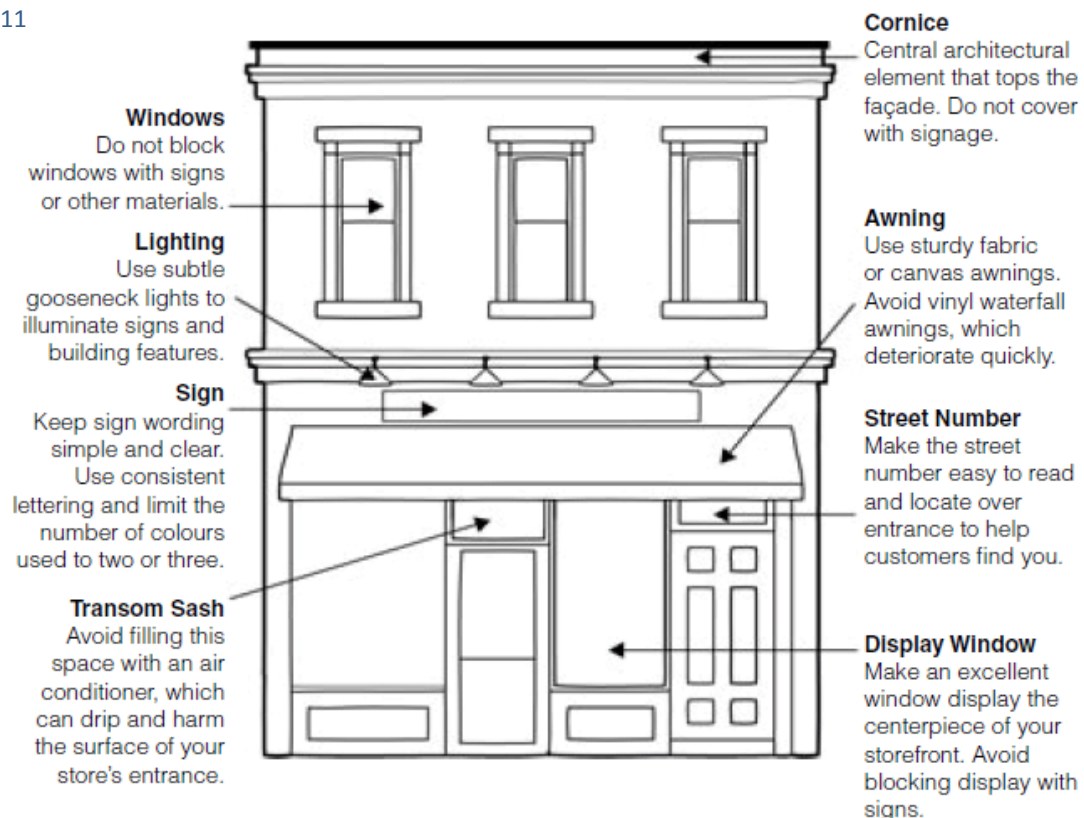
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Pictures to the top: Examples of parking placement encouraged and discouraged near entry/exit to private properties.

d. *Façade, Entrance and Roof Elements*

- Consider Stratford's nearby historical precedents wherever possible.
- Establish horizontal continuity by referencing adjacent prominent façade detail and rhythms, such as with brick coursing, mouldings or fenestration.
- Include architectural detailing and apply it consistently throughout the design. Ensure such details are compatible with the historical context.
- Arrange window patterns with a balanced spacing and conscious rhythm.
- Avoid long, unarticulated facades and ensure neighborhood compatibility.
- Accentuate entrances with strong definition and legibility for individual tenants.
- Consider signage needs during the design phase so it becomes an integral part of the building.
- Build elements with protective canopies, stairs, columns, wall or roof projections and recesses to human scale at sidewalk level to encourage pedestrian use.
- Consider rooflines of adjacent properties to avoid clashes in style and materials.

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Picture to the top: Example of recommended façade, entrance, and roof elements

e. *Material, Color and Surface Texture Elements*

- To the extent possible, use natural materials such as wood, stone, brick, glass and metal in their traditional applications.
- Avoid the use of vinyl or aluminum siding; consider fiber cement as an alternative to conventional materials.
- Coordinate all exterior elevations of the building using color, materials, architectural form and detailing to achieve continuity.
- Limit the number of different materials on the exterior of the building elevation to avoid visual overload.
- Avoid large, unarticulated or monolithic facades. Use detailing to add relief and shadow patterns to otherwise flat facades.

Pictures to the right and below: Examples of buildings whose exterior elevation is well-coordinated in terms of color, materials, architectural form, and detailing to achieve continuity.



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Seth Harry and Associates, Inc.
Architects and Planners 7-02

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Picture to the left: Example of a commercial franchise building where natural material such as brick is blended with glass to create the desired architectural character.

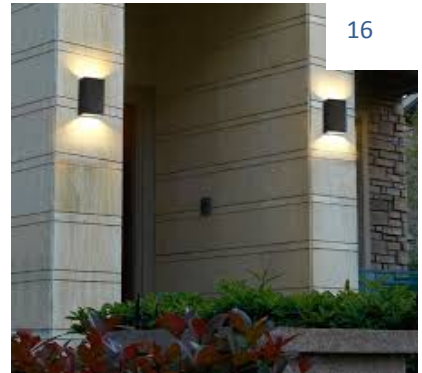
f. Lighting

- Position lighting to reduce or limit glare, distractions or spill-over onto adjacent properties.
- Light fixtures with canopies or shields help properly direct the light where desired.
- Use warm white light lamps rather than those that cast a yellow or blue light.
- The style of all exterior light fixtures should relate to adjacent properties and to the neighborhood as a whole.

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Picture to the top: Example of recommended light fixtures' positioning to reduce or limit glare.

Picture to the left: Example of recommended light fixtures' positioning to reduce or limit glare.

g. Landscaping, Screening and Fencing

- Plant street-side trees and shrubs to enhance design features of the buildings, and to provide shade, visual interest and spatial organization.
- Appropriate plant choices will aesthetically link adjacent areas, as well as existing vegetation, and provide year round interest.
- Proportion landscape elements to the scale of the built environment to soften the structure and add human scale to the project.
- Low maintenance and self-sustaining projects are suggested.
- Represent varying year round interest, texture, form and habit in landscape project.
- Choose native plantings where appropriate.
- Use fences to buffer or screen necessary but discordant elements such as HVAC units, transformers and dumpsters.
- Allow for pedestrian access through parking lots to avoid landscape plantings being trampled.



Picture to the top: Example of recommended landscaping and pedestrian access in parking lots to create visual interest.

h. Delivery Bays, Trash, Storage

- Locate and screen accessory building and functions such as trash containers, storage sheds and emergency generators away from parking areas, walks and adjacent land use.
- Use either a variety of evergreen plant materials or an architectural enclosure in character with the primary building.
- Conceal garage doors and loading areas from view of surrounding streets.



Picture to the top: Example of recommended screening of trash containers to prevent views from surrounding streets.

i. Sidewalks

- Encourage new sidewalks with a granite curb in Town Center along Main Street and Barnum Avenue.
- In all other locations of the Town, encourage sidewalk design compatible with the design character of surrounding properties.



*Pictures to the left and below:
Example of recommended sidewalk
treatments to enhance pedestrian
experience and create visual interest.*



j. Bike Racks and Street Furniture

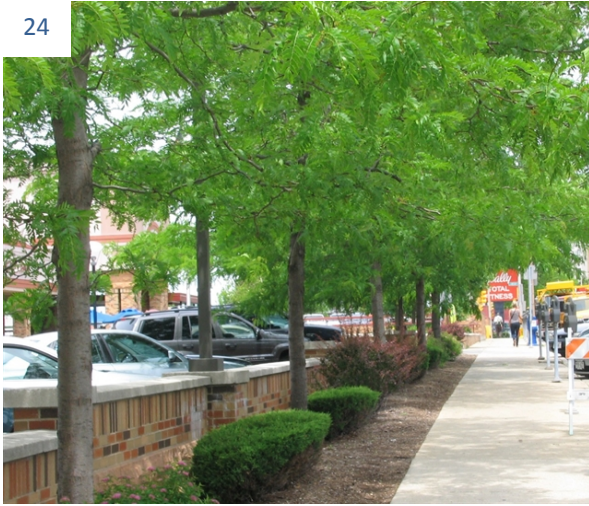
- Incorporate benches and bike racks into the building site design where appropriate. (A standard bench may be metal at strategic locations in the town, whose design reflects the character of the area, as seen in example below).



Pictures to the top: Example of recommended benches and bike racks on sidewalks.

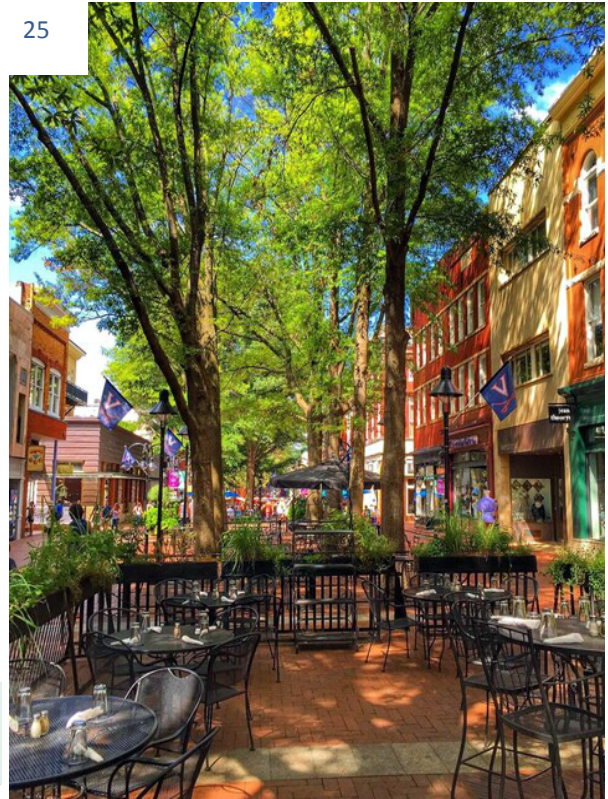
Picture to the right: Example of recommended outdoor seating that contributes to placemaking of commercial areas.

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Picture to the top: Example of recommended street trees for framing and defining streets.

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k. Treescape

Trees add a natural canopy to the streetscape, enhancing the charm and appeal of Stratford's commercial areas. **Street trees** help create an inviting streetscape and provide shade and respite from inclement weather. They also act as a natural buffer from busy roads and soften the streetscape in the pedestrian environment. **Landscape trees** create attractive outdoor spaces for pedestrians to enjoy and improve the appearance of the town. **Parking lot trees** draw attention away from these built environments and provide a more welcoming atmosphere.

l. Street Trees

- To create a cohesive aesthetic for Stratford, seven species are recommended for their year round interest, form, texture and shape at maturity. These species were also chosen to accommodate underground sewer lines, overhead utilities and narrow sidewalks.
- **Recommended Street Trees:** Red Maple, Common Serviceberry (aka Downy), White Dogwood, Red Maple, Hackberry, Black Gum, and Swamp White Oak.
- Do not substitute trees on the Recommended Street Tree List with a columnar variety.
- No one tree species shall be planted where it already exists within two neighboring treepits.
- Incorporate small tree species to give balance.
- Maximize setbacks from building façade to curb in order to increase footage for

adequately sized tree pits and trees. To avoid blockage of storefronts and signage of first floor tenants, street trees should be as tall as possible when first planted.

m. Landscape Trees

- Landscape trees refer to all trees found in Stratford’s commercial areas that are not street or parking lot trees.
- Protect and maintain all heritage trees found in the public and private realm.
- Planting of new and replacement trees is encouraged where appropriate.



*Pictures to the left and below:
Example of recommended
landscaping in parking lots to
create visual interest.*

n. Parking Lot Trees

- By greening the visually harsh parking environments, the town’s landscape will become more inviting and pleasing.
- Plant trees in all parking environments to enhance the site.
- Avoid planting fruit bearing trees in parking lots.
- Discourage planting of pine trees under overhead wires.



The recommended street trees list and parking lot trees list are enclosed in subsequent pages.

Recommended Street Tree List for Stratford Commercial Centers

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size (Height/Spread)	Characteristics
<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>	Common (aka Downy) Serviceberry	S (15'-25'/15'-25')	Delicate white flowers in clusters bloom in March/April, vivid red and gold fall color (best small tree for fall color)
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Eastern Redbud	S (20'-30'/25'-35')	Profuse rosy-pink blooms in April, begins flowering at young age, bold landscape statement with graceful crown
<i>Cornus florida</i>	White Dogwood (variety)	S (25'/25')	Blooms white bracts (modified leaves) April/May, great red-purple fall color, does well near large buildings
<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Red Maple	M (40'-60'/25'-45')	Red flowers in spring, vibrant fall color
<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	Hackberry	M (40'-60'/40'-50')	Good fall color, showy bark, related to elm and has similar growth pattern (but without susceptibility to disease)
<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Black Gum (aka Tupelo)	M (30'-50'/20'-30')	Stunning fall color, grows in oval shape
<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	Swamp White Oak	L (50'-60'/50'-60')	Very tolerant of street conditions, good fall color, grows at moderate pace and can live more than 300 years

Recommended Parking Lot Tree List for Stratford Commercial Centers

Scientific Name	Common Name	Size (Height/Spread)	Characteristics
<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>	Common (aka Downy) Serviceberry	S (15'-25'/15'-25')	Delicate white flowers in clusters bloom in March/April, vivid red and gold fall color (best small tree for fall color)
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<i>Abies concolor</i>	Concolor Fir	M (30'-50'/15'-30')	Cones, conical and branched to base, some bluish needles, year round interest
<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	Eastern Red Cedar	M (40'-50'/8'-15')	Cones, female for blue cone berries, dense columnar crown, scaled branches
<i>Picea pungens</i>	Colorado Blue Spruce	M (30'-60'/10'-20')	Cones, dense pyramidal shape with horizontal stiff branches to ground, salt tolerant

<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> var. <i>inermis</i>	Male "Thornless Honey Locust"	L (30'-70'/30'-70')	Yellow flower early spring, brown pod, autumn foliage
<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	Swamp White Oak	L (50'-60'/50'-60')	Very tolerant of street conditions, good fall color, grows at moderate pace and can live more than 300 years
<i>Picea glauca</i>	White Spruce	L (50'-60'/10'-20')	Narrow dense spire at maturity, cylindrical cones, year round interest, salt tolerant
<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	Sycamore (aka American Planetree)	L (75'-90'/60'-70')	Pyramidal in youth, round crown when mature, showy bark, good urban tree where space permits (needs LARGE planting bed)

Photo Credits

1. American Institute of Transportation Engineers, 2010. *Designing walkable thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach*.
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21. Downtown Dublin Website. <https://www.visitdublinohio.com/things-to-do/downtown-dublin/>
22. Victor Stanley Website. <https://www.victorstanley.com/product/cbf-10/>
23. Dero Website. <https://www.dero.com/product/logo-bike-racks/>
24. City of Milwaukee
25. <http://www.offbeattravel.com/tji-charlottesville-virginia-downtown-historic-mall.html>
26. Stuckeman Family Building parking, Penn St University, State College, PA
27. SRP Design Studio, Norton, MI (Link?)