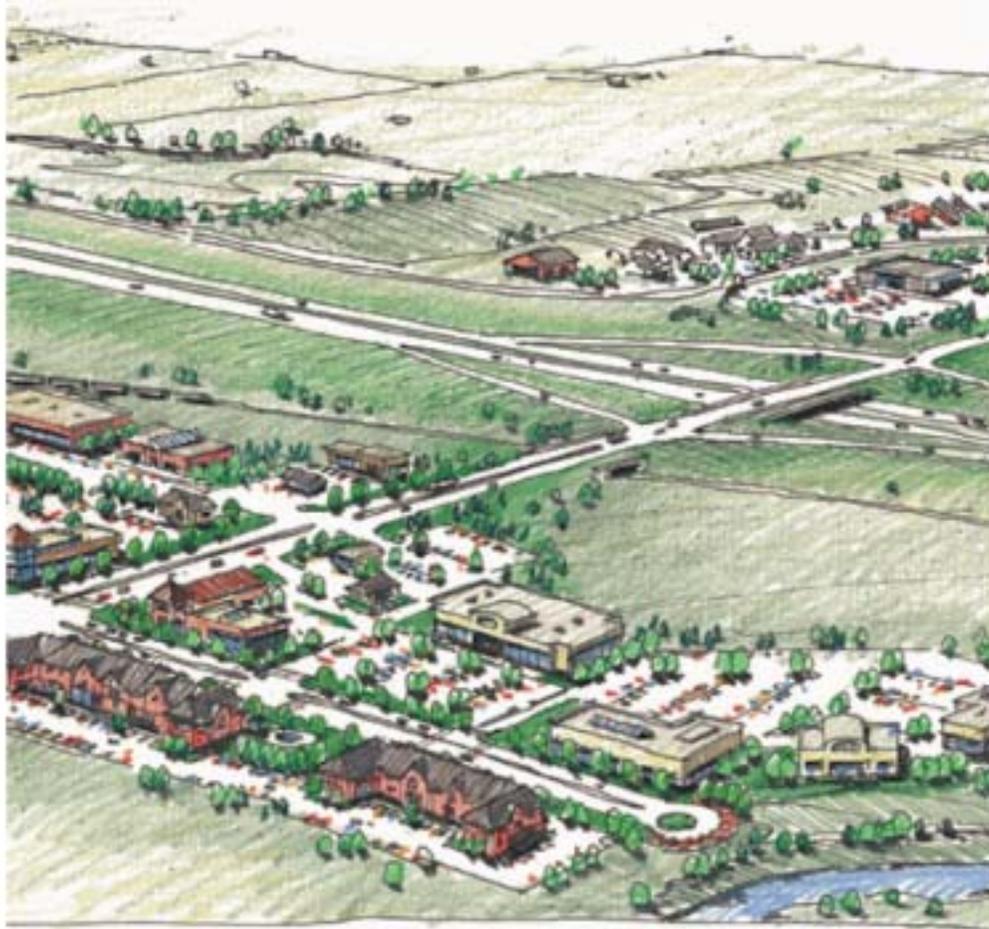


# DEVELOPMENT DESIGN STANDARDS FOR THE I-25 CORRIDOR



May 2001

Note: This is the Regional Draft of the Design Standards for the I-25 Corridor. Each participating community will be adopting a variation of this document based upon existing regulations and community preference. Any questions about which standards will be applied in a particular community should be directed to that community.

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# I. Introduction

## A. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Over the last fifteen years, the North Front Range of Colorado has experienced a tremendous amount of growth. The I-25 Corridor, though it remains largely agricultural in character, has more recently begun to feel the cumulative impacts of this growth. In addition, the impacts of growth are also beginning to become apparent on the region's transportation systems. Many roads will rapidly approach and exceed capacity if growth trends continue. To add to the complexity of the Corridor's issues, its future is regulated by not one, but 8 separate government entities. To respond to these challenges, the Northern Colorado Regional Communities I-25 Corridor Plan was conceived and developed by the following organizations:

- City of Fort Collins
- City of Loveland
- Town of Windsor
- Town of Berthoud
- Larimer County
- Weld County
- Town of Timnath
- Town of Johnstown
- North Front Range Transportation and Air Quality Planning Council
- Colorado Department of Transportation

The project covers an area 1 mile on either side of the I-25 right-of-way for a distance of 32 miles. The project area, as illustrated on Figure 1, extends from 2 miles south of Hwy 56 (Berthoud exit) to County Road 58 just north of Fort Collins, encompassing a total land area of over sixty square miles.

The general goal of the I-25 Corridor Plan and Design Standards is to create a framework for development that focuses on improving the quality, location, environmental sensitivity, and long-term viability of land uses. To help build a better understanding of how this goal translates into future land use and transportation patterns for the Corridor, a Preferred Vision was developed through a process of public and private input. This "visioning" process identifies "How?" and "Where?" future development should occur in the Corridor. If current development patterns are not desirable, then where *should* development occur? If, tilt-up, concrete panelized structures are not desirable, what characteristics *should* new construction have? *Would* agriculture remain a viable use in the Corridor in the long-term? What types of transportation system *would* best serve future development patterns? Each of these questions, among others, was thoroughly evaluated during the input process.

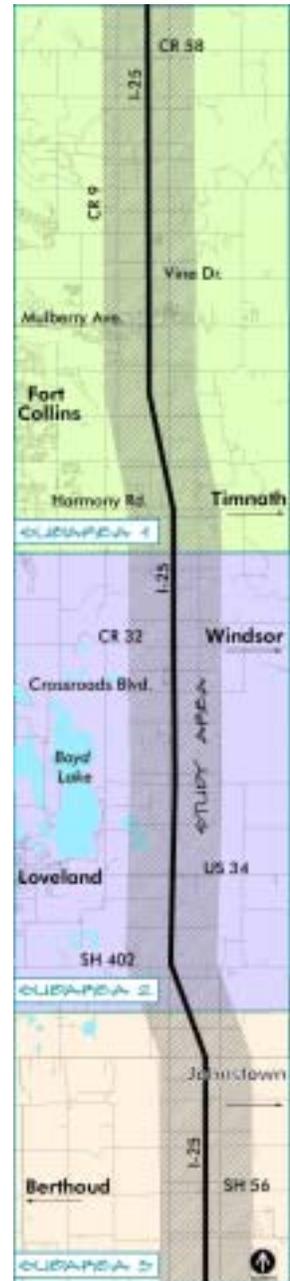


Figure 1--Study Area

## B. CORRIDOR DESIGN PRINCIPLES



Figure 2—Preferred Corridor Vision

Five Corridor Design Principles were developed in the visioning process. Each principle represents a broad goal to be addressed by the plan and the design standards to achieve the Preferred Vision. These principles were fine-tuned and supplemented throughout the development of the design standards as various issues arose and the Vision became increasingly clear. Following is a list of the Corridor Design Principles, accompanied by a summary of each.

**1. Establish a range of development types and intensities within the Corridor. Focus urban levels of development within compact “activity centers.”**

The Preferred Vision promotes developing more compact “activity centers” near interchanges, east-west highways, future transit stations, and other transportation hubs. The design standards closely examine these activity centers and break them into a series of design components. Standards for multi-modal connections, landscaping and screening requirements, and menus of design elements are all provided to improve the quality and appearance of residential, commercial, and industrial development often found in these centers; more detailed standards are provided for transit nodes and urban development cores served or expected to be served by high frequency transit in the future. Other standards are provided for areas in between the activity centers to help locate specific land uses and create a more open character of development.

**2. Coordinate local and regional transportation investments to increase future mobility and mode choices within the Corridor.**

Long-range viability of the Corridor’s transportation system is perhaps one of the most critical and challenging issues that the region must address. Rapid growth trends can help invigorate smaller communities in the Corridor, but without significant local and regional investments in transportation they also bring a rapid increase in traffic congestion and a decrease in mobility. Although transportation improvements are being addressed at a local level, coordinating these improvements with ambitious growth plans for neighboring communities and the greater region has been an ongoing challenge. In addition to coordination issues, a statewide lack of funding for transportation improvements leaves most Corridor roadways in danger of failure within twenty years.

The Preferred Vision, as illustrated in Figure 2, proposes a north-south roadway system to alleviate congestion on I-25, serve local trips between communities and activity centers, and better serve desired land use patterns. In constrained areas,

it promotes a modified interchange and frontage road system. It also emphasizes the integration of long-range plans for alternative modes, such as commuter rail, into current and future developments. The standards and accompanying I-25 Corridor Regional Plan address how and where the parallel roadway system might occur. Both documents also provide specifications at a local and site scale for providing appropriate supporting infrastructure for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.

### 3. **Preserve natural areas, open lands, and views that contribute to the open character of the Corridor.**

The open character of the Corridor is not only scenic for motorists and residents, but provides an important visual separation between communities and increases the value of new development nearby. Participants in the visioning process expressed concern about the encroachment of development on these sensitive areas, particularly those, such as river corridors and wetlands that provide wildlife habitat and contribute to water quality. Acknowledging that outright preservation of all open lands within the Corridor is not feasible; the Preferred Vision approaches the protection of open areas under several layers of specificity. The standards establish boundaries for easily recognized areas, such as riparian corridors, where development should not occur. Other less tangible areas, such as views, are protected through broad setbacks and a more open character of development, including informal landscape buffers and reduced building heights.

### 4. **Maximize long-term property values and community benefits within the Corridor by improving the overall quality and functionality of development.**

The quality of existing development within the Corridor varies greatly. Little incentive exists for a developer or business owner to go beyond the minimum requirements provided without some guarantee that adjacent properties will be developed to equally high standards. The Preferred Vision strives to create an *expectation* of quality development that is visible throughout the Corridor. This expectation will be reinforced through the application of the design standards. The standards reflect a growing recognition that just as transportation improvements need larger coordination to be successful, development can also be impacted positively or negatively by the quality of what surrounds it.

### 5. **Continue steady economic development in the I-25 Corridor.**

The Corridor is poised to receive a great deal of new development and economic growth in future years. The Preferred Vision is based upon the anticipation of continued growth for years to come, in a carefully coordinated, planned manner. Implementation of the plan and standards will not only improve the appearance and function of the Corridor, but will create a desirable place that is inviting to investors, developers, and residents.

## C. ORGANIZATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

Building upon the Corridor Design Principles described above, this document is organized into the following four types of standards:

**Locational Standards**—These standards provide guidance for communities on how and where different land uses of varying intensities should occur within the Corridor, to provide a framework for implementing the Corridor Design Principles. Location Standards provide a basis for each jurisdiction’s master planning and zoning decisions within the Corridor. The Locational Standards may require that multiple steps be taken by a jurisdiction to achieve the intent. These steps may include modifications to existing zoning or land use regulations. In other situations, a Locational Standard may require ongoing coordination between several jurisdictions, such as a city and county.

**Design Standards for Activity Centers**—These standards provide the tools for creating an improved quality of appearance and more integrated mix of land uses for concentrated areas of development within high visibility, high traffic areas of the Corridor. These standards help create definition for these “Activity Centers” by establishing more organized, urban, development patterns, high quality building and site design, and landscaping. Although each activity center will vary in size, land uses, proximity to transit, density, and other characteristics, the standards apply consistency in the form of development quality and function.

**Design Standards for Areas In Between Activity Centers**—These standards ensure that development between established activity centers is sensitive to and protects the open character and significant natural features of the Corridor.

## D. HOW THESE STANDARDS ARE TO BE APPLIED

Due to the broad scale of the study area and the large number of jurisdictions involved in the project, each of the above sections is structured in a way that addresses regional goals at varying levels of complexity. The standards provide a regional baseline for development that addresses each of the Corridor Design Principles. In cases where a particular jurisdiction may wish to adopt a level of quality that goes beyond the baseline, a second tier of standards has been built in to the document in the form of “recommended standards.” These recommended standards serve as “optional” or “supplemental” standards and provide a much higher level of specificity and complexity where appropriate.

While it is the hope that jurisdictions will adopt all of the standards to create a consistent level of development quality throughout the Corridor, it is recognized that a certain amount of tailoring will need to occur to meet individual jurisdictional needs. Additional flexibility is provided in the form of an alternative compliance provision that would allow communities to work through unusual circumstances that may arise with a particular site or project, avoiding undue hardship caused by a literal interpretation of the standards. The standards may be implemented and enforced as part of the jurisdiction’s regulatory structure in one of several ways: as an overlay district, as a separate zoning district, or as an integrated part of existing regulations.

## E. ORGANIZATION OF SECTIONS

Due to the broad scale of the study area and the large number of jurisdictions involved in the project, each of the sections of the document is structured in a way that addresses regional goals at varying levels of complexity. Following is a more detailed description of each of the components to be applied as discussed. In addition, a glossary of terms is provided at the end of the document to clarify specific items within the standards.

**Intent**—This statement explains the background and design intent of the standards that follow. The intent should be used to help interpret the application of a standard in a specific situation. In cases where special conditions arise that are not specifically addressed by the standards, the intent statement should serve as the basis for determining the appropriateness of the proposed design.

**Regional Baseline Standard**—This is a statement representing the baseline requirement to be met by each of the participating jurisdictions to achieve the intent of a specific goal. The Regional Baseline Standard is a mandatory statement, indicated by the use of *shall* or *must* in the language and should be applied universally to the Corridor. In some jurisdictions, a Regional Baseline Standard may exceed or fall short of an existing regulation. Due to the number of participants involved, it was not feasible to match the details of each jurisdiction’s code, rather, the intent was to provide a baseline for those jurisdictions without existing regulations. Where minor variations occur from an existing regulations, the more restrictive standard shall apply.

**Recommended Design Standards**—These are optional, but strongly suggested, additional measures to be taken to meet a given standard. Recommended Design Standards are not provided in all cases, but are typically provided for more complex design concepts where several layers of specificity may be appropriate. In cases where multiple recommended standards are provided, they are organized sequentially from least to most prescriptive. This structure is intended to provide flexibility for individual jurisdictions to choose how aggressively a particular design concept is pursued, through the adoption of all or some of the standards.

**Recommended Implementation Strategies**—These are optional implementation techniques and tools that are strongly suggested as measures to achieve a Locational Standard. In most cases, the strategies represent proven techniques that are being used by some of the jurisdictions within the Corridor area. Use of these strategies will often require modifications or additions to existing land use regulations.



## II. General Provisions

### A. INTENT

The intent of these design standards is to improve the overall quality and organization of development within the I-25 Corridor Study Area. As prescribed, the standards will create a variety of development types. These types will range from compact, urban forms within activity centers, to a less intense, open character of development on the fringes of and between established centers. Providing this range of types will help protect the Corridor's open character and natural amenities by ensuring the compatibility of new development with existing uses, concentrating new development within activity centers, creating a complementary mix of land uses near future transit stations, and improving mobility within the Corridor.

### B. APPLICABILITY

The design standards shall apply to all new development and redevelopment within the I-25 Corridor Study Area. The standards shall not apply to construction of individual homes on existing lots, existing subdivisions, or agricultural uses and operations, but shall apply to residential subdivisions that consist of more than one lot.

### C. REVIEW PROCESS

An appropriate review process shall be established by each jurisdiction as deemed appropriate at the time of adoption.

### D. ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE

Upon request of an applicant, the approving jurisdiction may approve an alternative approach that may be substituted in whole or in part for a plan meeting these design standards. This approach is intended to apply in unusual circumstances that might arise with a particular site or project, avoiding undue hardship caused by a literal interpretation of the standards.

**Procedure**—An alternative compliance approach shall be prepared and submitted in accordance with the submittal requirements as set forth by each jurisdiction. The approach shall clearly identify and discuss the modifications and alternatives proposed and the ways in which the plan will better accomplish the intent of these design standards than would an approach which complies with these design standards.

**Review Criteria**—To approve an alternative approach, the approving jurisdiction must find that the proposed alternative approach accomplishes the intent of these design standards equally well or better than would an approach which complies with these design standards.



### III. Locational Standards

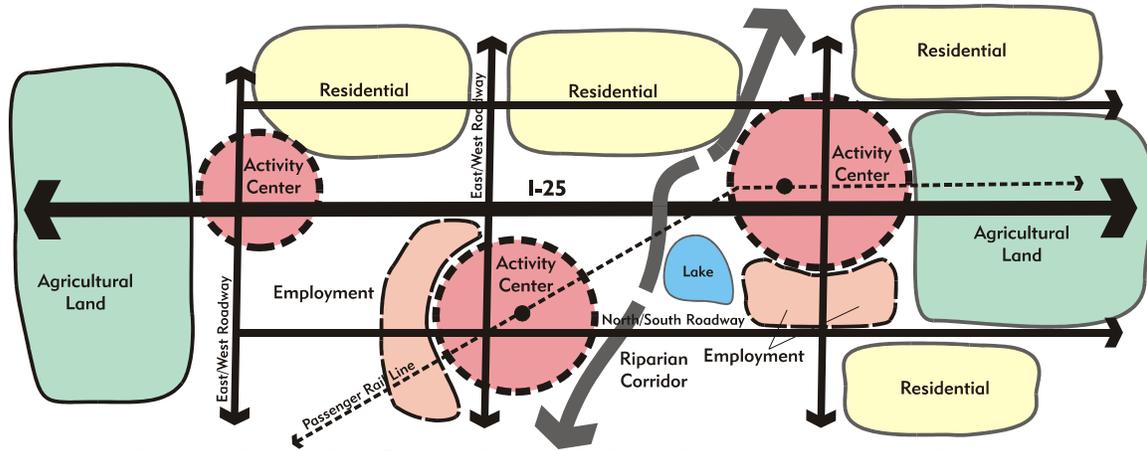


Figure 3—The concept diagram above illustrates the general land use relationships that the Locational Standards promote within the Corridor.

#### A. INTENT

These Locational Standards are intended to provide guidance on creating land use patterns that support the Preferred Vision, maintaining the attractiveness and distinct character of the Corridor, preventing future development from occurring in a linear or haphazard pattern along existing frontage roads, and ensuring that future development is located to make the most efficient use of local and regional transportation investments. This guidance is provided through both specific regulatory statements and through the suggestion of policies or concepts, such as a Transfer of Development Units (TDU) or similar program, already being used in some areas of the Corridor, that may help communities accomplish these goals.

#### B. APPLICABILITY

These standards shall apply to all development within the boundaries of the I-25 Corridor Study Area as adopted by the underlying jurisdiction. They are intended to be supplemented by, and provide the framework for the design standards.

#### C. LOCATION OF ACTIVITY CENTERS

##### 1. Intent

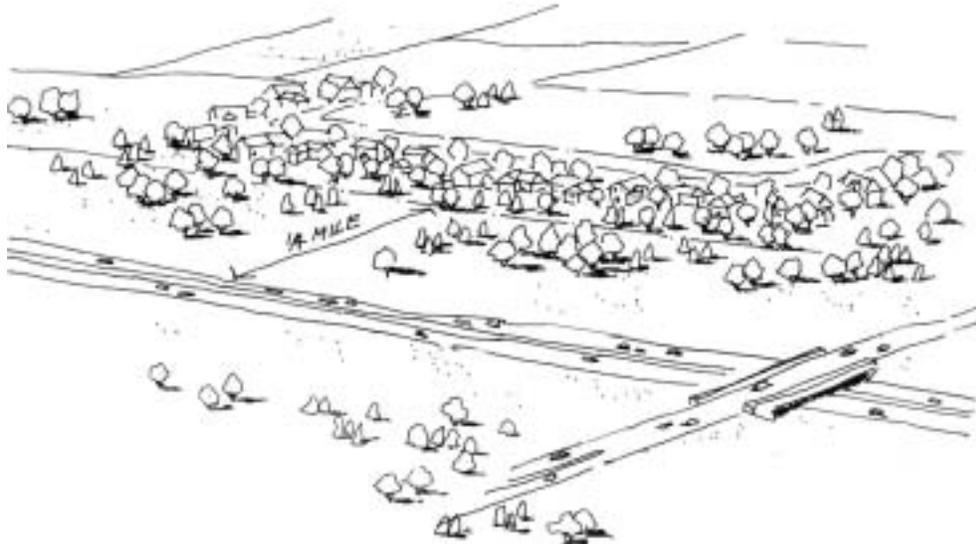
According to the Preferred Corridor Vision, new development should be concentrated in activity centers to support efficiency of alternative modes of transportation and to reduce short-term land consumption. The activity centers should be designed to provide a mix of urban uses, including employment, residential, retail, and commercial. It is the responsibility of each jurisdiction to define the location and extent of activity centers within their Growth Areas.

## 2. Regional Baseline Locational Standard

Activity centers shall only be located at or near an I-25 Interchange, at the intersection of an east/west roadway and a north/south roadway within one-half mile of I-25, or within one-quarter mile of a passenger rail station, transit center, or park-and-ride facility. The location of Activity Centers shall be designated by the local jurisdiction administering these Design Standards.

## D. PREFERRED LOCATION OF RESIDENTIAL USES

### 1. Single Family Residential



*Figure 4—Residential subdivisions should be set back from I-25 to minimize noise impacts and protect the open character of the Corridor.*

#### a) Intent

Single-family, duplexes, and other similar low-density residences should generally be located outside of activity centers along the Corridor and set back from I-25 to protect views and minimize noise impacts on residents. Locating residences adjacent to an interstate highway, although often convenient in terms of access, frequently necessitates the construction of costly sound barriers or berms to keep noise impacts below acceptable levels. In addition to their cost, these barriers should also be avoided because of their visual impacts; they significantly detract from the scenic, open character of the Corridor, block mountain views, and limit future transportation options. Natural landforms should be used where possible to mitigate these impacts. If single-family uses are included within an activity center, they should be incorporated as part of an overall master plan for the center. The ¼ mile setback requirements in the Regional Baseline Standard contained in 1.b) below was determined based upon a review of existing development patterns along the Corridor, input from members of the development community, and citizens.

**b) Regional Baseline Locational Standard**

Building envelopes in subdivisions containing low-density residences such as single-family homes or duplexes shall not be located within ¼ mile of the I-25 right-of-way.

**c) Recommended Implementation Strategies**

- (1) Single-family subdivisions located between ¼ and ½ mile from the I-25 right-of way shall utilize clustering techniques to concentrate densities away from the I-25 right-of-way, maximize views, and preserve landscape features or open space.
- (2) Transfer of Development Unit (TDU) or similar programs shall be used as a means of achieving the required ¼ mile setback.

**2. Multi-Family Residential**

**a) Intent**

Multi-family residences should be located within or adjacent to activity centers, where a range of services, including transit, are available or are planned for the future. Actual densities of the residences will likely vary depending on existing uses, zoning, and site conditions but should generally range between 8 and 15 gross dwelling units per acre. A development vision and master plan should be drafted for each activity center and should, where appropriate, devote between 10% and 25% of the total gross land area to multi-family or mixed-use projects that incorporate residential uses. A plan should also ensure that residential uses within an activity center are sited to minimize noise and other undesirable impacts.

**b) Regional Baseline Locational Standard**

Multi-family residential uses shall be located within or adjacent to mixed-use activity centers, where employment, retail/commercial services, schools, recreation, transit service, and other amenities are available.

**c) Recommended Implementation Strategies**

- (1) Transfer of Development Unit (TDU) or similar programs may be utilized as a means of achieving increased densities for multi-family residential uses within activity centers.
- (2) The underlying jurisdiction shall approve up to a 25% increase in permitted density over what is allowed in the zoning district for vertically integrated mixed-use development, e.g., residential over commercial use.

## E. PREFERRED LOCATION OF NON-RESIDENTIAL USES

### 1. Commercial and Retail Development

#### a) Intent

Properties near interchanges, frontage roads, and other north/south or east/west roadways are valuable locations for commercial and retail businesses because of their high visibility, ease of access, and in some cases, because of their likelihood of functioning as future multi-modal hubs. To further enhance their visibility, businesses often spread out along these auxiliary road-



*Figure 5—Commercial and retail projects should be concentrated in activity centers and discouraged from developing in a linear “strip” form along frontage roads.*

ways, limiting future development potential and hindering circulation patterns. These standards are intended to ensure that commercial and retail development is concentrated within activity centers, rather than in a linear pattern along frontage roads or other roadways, to help preserve views from I-25, promote a more coordinated, compact pattern of development, take advantage of nearby services for employees, and to maintain critical transportation and infrastructure connectivity.

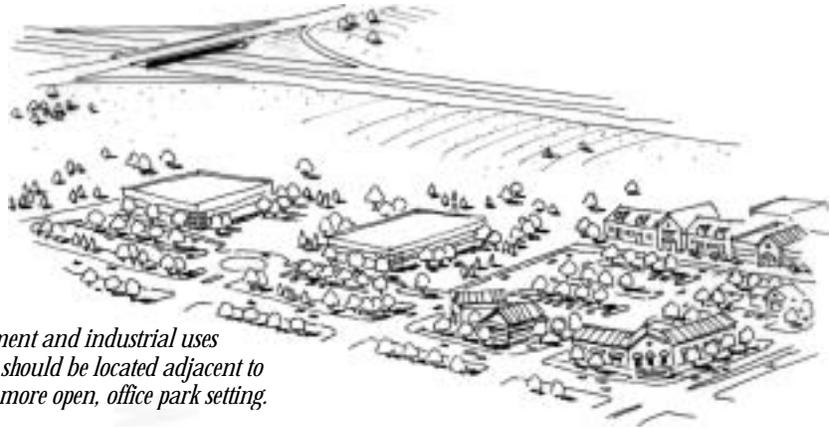
#### b) Regional Baseline Locational Standard

Commercial and retail development shall be concentrated within activity centers and discouraged in a linear “strip” form along frontage roads.

#### c) Recommended Implementation Strategies

- (1) Properties within agricultural districts, as defined by the underlying jurisdiction, outside of activity centers shall not be rezoned for commercial or industrial use, except for appropriate agribusiness uses.
- (2) Existing zoning within activity centers shall be reviewed and modified to support planned higher intensity commercial and retail uses.

## 2. Employment and Industrial



*Figure 6—Employment and industrial uses requiring large sites should be located adjacent to activity centers in a more open, office park setting.*

### a) Intent

Employment and industrial uses often require large sites not compatible with the more compact, urban pattern of development desired in activity centers. These uses should be located in an office park setting adjacent to activity centers. Other users desiring a location within an activity center will need to be evaluated individually for their compatibility with adjacent retail, commercial, and residential uses to ensure that issues such as vehicle and pedestrian connectivity and block patterns are adequately addressed in the site's design. These locations will allow employees to utilize nearby services and transit opportunities as well as help to create a more gradual transition between activity centers and the less intense development found in the outlying areas.

### b) Regional Baseline Locational Standard

Large employers and industrial uses shall locate in coordinated, campus or office park settings adjacent to activity centers or be integrated into the more urban pattern within activity centers.

## F. PROTECTION OF NATURAL FEATURES, RESOURCES, AND SENSITIVE AREAS

### 1. Intent

The visual quality and character of the Corridor relies heavily upon an open landscape, with riparian corridors, natural areas, and agricultural lands. These features add diversity and beauty to the Corridor and provide important wildlife habitat and drainage ways. These standards are intended to protect the open character of the Corridor and its significant natural features by



*Figure 7—The visual quality and character of the Corridor relies heavily upon an open landscape with riparian corridors, natural areas, and agricultural lands.*

restricting the types and densities of development in areas identified as having significant wildlife habitat, natural resource, or scenic qualities.

## 2. Floodplain

### a) Regional Baseline Locational Standard

Development shall be prohibited from occurring within the 100-year floodway boundary as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (F.E.M.A.).

### b) Recommended Locational Standard

(1) Development shall be prohibited from locating within the 100-year floodplain boundary as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (F.E.M.A.).

(2) Development shall be set back a minimum of 100 feet from the edge of identified floodplain boundaries as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (F.E.M.A.). Where an existing setback requirement is in place, the larger of the two shall apply.

## 3. Wetlands and Natural Areas

### a) Regional Baseline Locational Standard

Development shall be prohibited from occurring within a jurisdictional or non-jurisdictional wetland or natural area as defined by the underlying jurisdiction.

### b) Recommended Locational Standard

(1) Development shall be set back a minimum of 100 feet from the edge of a wetland or natural areas as defined by the underlying jurisdiction. Where an existing setback requirement is in place, the larger of the two shall apply.

## 4. Wildlife Habitat

### a) Intent

The presence of wildlife habitat areas is vital to the ecological balance and rural character of the Corridor. The protection of these areas should be an integral part of any development within the Corridor. Wildlife corridors should be maintained where possible as defined by the appropriate agency.

### b) Regional Baseline Standard

To the maximum extent feasible, disturbance or segmentation of blocks of contiguous wildlife habitat, as identified by the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or other federal, state, or local agency, shall be avoided. Best management practices shall be used to minimize and mitigate wildlife disturbance. All development plans that have the potential to adversely affect critical wildlife habitat shall depict and protect important habitat applicable to the site.

# IV. Design Standards for Activity Centers

## A. INTENT

Activity Centers should provide a mix of uses, such as employment, residential, retail, and commercial uses that accommodate and complement multiple modes of transportation, including bicycles, pedestrians, high-frequency bus, and commuter rail. This poses a challenge for the standards, because development patterns in these centers, sited near highways, frontage roads and major east/west roadways have typically been designed for high visibility, easily accessible, auto-oriented uses such as gas stations, fast-food establishments, and motels. The intent of these standards is to provide the tools for creating an improved quality of appearance and more integrated mix of land uses for concentrated areas of development. They will also improve circulation within and between the centers, by providing basic requirements for vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation to create connectivity between sites and integrate them with the surrounding transportation network.

Although many of these centers will not be served by transit in the short-term, the standards provide the necessary steps towards creating more transit-oriented centers. In addition to the regional baseline standards, a number of recommended standards provide additional measures that should be taken by those jurisdictions that have planned locations for future transit stops or park and rides or simply wish to take larger steps toward creating a transit and pedestrian-oriented community.

## B. APPLICABILITY

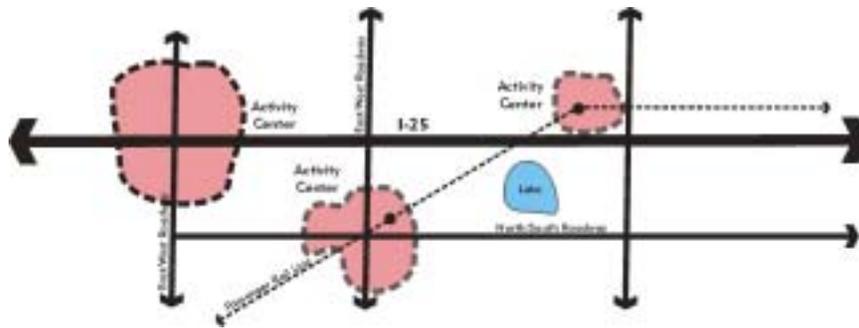


Figure 9—The size, shape and specific location of each activity center will vary, however, they will generally occur near an I-25 interchange or at the intersection of other major roadways or transit facilities.



Figure 8—General location of Activity Centers

These standards shall apply to all development within activity centers in the I-25 Corridor Study Area as defined by the underlying jurisdiction. General locations for activity centers are provided on the map above; however, specific boundaries should be determined by each jurisdiction using the following guidelines:

- Commercial, retail, office, industrial or multi-family residential uses occurring adjacent to a frontage road, east/west roadway, or near the intersection of an east/west and a north/south roadway within approximately one-half mile of I-25, as measured from edge of the right-of-way.

- Within one-quarter mile of an existing or planned high-frequency bus stop, transit center, park-and-ride, commuter rail stop, or other transit facility.

## C. CIRCULATION AND ACCESS

### 1. Vehicular Connections

#### a) Intent

These standards are intended to provide improved circulation and reduced vehicular traffic conflict by ensuring that circulation and access patterns within activity centers create an integrated transportation network for vehicles and bicycles. In addition, the frequency of driveways and other access points should be minimized to avoid conflicts with other traffic patterns, particularly within close proximity to highway interchanges.

#### b) Regional Baseline Standard

Vehicular connections shall be provided from a development site to adjoining streets, driveways, or other circulation systems on adjoining sites.

### 2. Pedestrian Connections

#### a) Intent

A continuous network of pedestrian walkways should be provided within and between developments to encourage people to walk between uses. In addition, clearly delineated circulation paths from parking areas to building entries create a friendlier, more inviting image for a development and support higher levels of pedestrian activity.



*Figure 10—A well-designed pedestrian network provides a clearly delineated pedestrian path from parking areas to building entries.*

#### b) Regional Baseline Standard

Continuous walkways shall provide connections to and between:

- (1) The primary entrance or entrances to each building, including pad site buildings;
- (2) All parking lots or parking structures that serve such buildings;
- (3) Adjoining arterial streets where potential transit stops or park and rides exist or are planned;
- (4) Any sidewalks or walkways on adjacent properties that extend to the boundaries shared with the development;
- (5) Any public sidewalk system along the perimeter streets adjacent to the development;
- (6) Adjoining land uses and developments;

- (7) Any greenway on or adjacent to the property; and
- (8) Other community amenities or gathering spaces.

**c) Recommended Design Standards**

- (1) On-site walkways shall be a minimum of 5 feet in width, except walkways adjacent to a parking area where cars may overhang the walkway, where the minimum shall be 7 feet in width.
- (2) At each point that a designated on-site pedestrian walkway crosses a parking lot, street, or driveway, the walkway shall be clearly visible to pedestrians and motorists through one or more of the following techniques:
  - (a) Painted crosswalks;
  - (b) A change in paving material or color;
  - (c) A change in paving height;
  - (d) A raised median walkway buffered by landscaping.

## D. DEVELOPMENT PATTERN/SITE LAYOUT

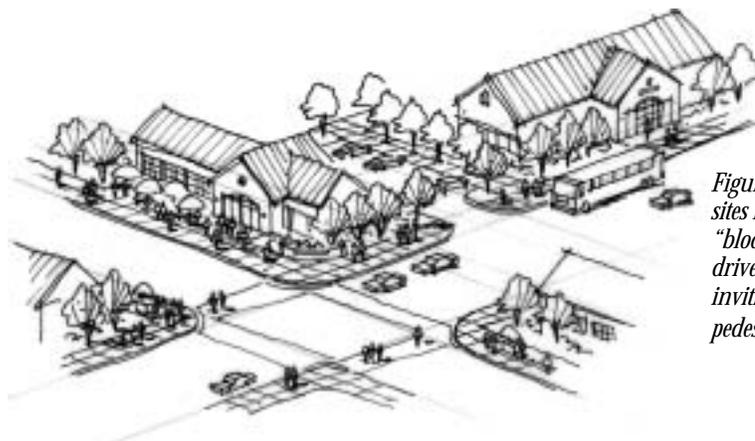
### 1. Intent

These standards focus on the repetition of similar design elements within a concentrated area of development to create a sense of visual unity. The standards outline desired block sizes, building orientations, and setbacks necessary to create an urban, pedestrian-oriented scale and appearance within an activity center.

### 2. Block Pattern

#### a) Intent

A pedestrian-oriented environment, as desired within activity centers, requires the creation of smaller, more urban scale “blocks” of development, with frequent street spacing and connections. This type of block pattern provides connectivity between uses, encourages pedestrian and bicycle activity, and enhances vehicular mobility. Variations in block sizes may need to occur to accommodate some larger uses within an activity center setting; however, vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle connectivity through the larger site should be maintained, irregardless of the type of use they are design to serve.



*Figure 11—Breaking large sites into a series of smaller “blocks” with frequent street or driveway spacing creates an inviting environment for pedestrians and bicycles.*

b) **Regional Baseline Standard**

To the maximum extent feasible, larger sites containing multiple buildings and uses shall be composed of a series of urban scale “blocks” of development defined by streets or driveways that provide links to adjacent streets along the perimeter of the site.

c) **Recommended Design Standard**

(1) Block sizes shall not exceed 10 acres for commercial development areas.

**3. Building Orientation: Street Frontages**

a) **Regional Baseline Standard**

New buildings located along a street frontage shall, to the maximum extent feasible, align building walls with existing buildings across the street to help create a consistent building edge.



*Figure 12—New buildings located along a street frontage should align building walls with existing buildings across the street to help create a consistent building edge, to the maximum extent feasible.*

**4. Building Orientation: Multiple-Building Developments**

a) **Regional Baseline Standard**

When there is more than one building in a development, all principal and pad site buildings shall be arranged and grouped so that their primary orientation complements adjacent, existing development, as illustrated in Figure 12.

## E. PARKING

### 1. Intent

Large blocks of uninterrupted parking detract from the appearance of a development and create a confusing and sometimes hazardous environment for both motorists and pedestrians. Parking should be strategically located away from primary streets and broken into smaller “blocks” defined by landscaped islands and walkways to help define the blocks, provide shade, and improve the overall appearance of parking areas. This configuration allows buildings to be brought forward to “frame” the street and provides space for additional landscaping, walkways, plazas, or other pedestrian-oriented uses to be focused near the street edge or building entry.

### 2. Parking Lots

#### a) Regional Baseline Standard

The number of contiguous parking spaces shall be limited to 20 and each block of 20 shall be separated from each other by at least one of the following methods:

- (1) A landscaped island that is at least 9 feet wide;
- (2) An orchard planting with tree diamonds;
- (3) A pedestrian walkway or sidewalk within a landscaped median that is at least 9 feet wide;
- (4) A decorative fence or wall, a maximum of 3 feet in height, bordered by landscaping on at least one side;
- (5) An access drive or public street; or
- (6) A building or buildings.



*Figure 13—Large parking areas should be broken into smaller blocks defined by landscaping and walkways.*

### 3. Parking Location and Amount

#### a) Regional Baseline Standard

To the maximum extent feasible, large areas of parking shall be distributed between the back or sides of a building, with not more than 50% of the parking for the entire property remaining between the principal building and the primary abutting street. This standard applies to parking lots of more than 50 spaces.



*Figure 14—Large parking areas should be distributed between the back and sides of a building and broken into smaller “blocks” of parking.*

### b) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) A reduction of one off-street parking space shall be allowed for every two on-street parking spaces located within a two-block radius of the development site.
- (2) To encourage higher-density, mixed-use development, shared or joint-use parking space requirements shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for adjacent uses that may have staggered peak periods of demand. For example, retail, office and entertainment uses would share parking areas and quantities to minimize total parking area and to encourage use of transit.

## 4. Perimeter Landscaping

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

The perimeter of all parking areas shall be buffered from adjacent streets, public rights-of-way, public open space, and adjacent uses by at least one of the following methods:

- (1) A berm 3 feet high with a maximum slope of 3:1 in combination with ever-green and deciduous trees and shrubs;
- (2) A hedge at least 3 feet high, consisting of a double row of shrubs planted 3 feet on center in a triangular pattern, along 75 percent of the perimeter length.
- (3) An opaque fence or wall at least 3 feet high in combination with landscaping, in accordance with fencing standards contained in Section I.

## F. BUILDING DESIGN/CHARACTER

### 1. Intent

These standards focus on creating a more distinct character for activity center development. The standards provide simple techniques, such as consistency in roof form, materials, and color to enhance commercial and industrial development and create a more unified development pattern. Pitched rooflines, with variations in design elements should be used on smaller structures to add character and visual interest to the blocky building forms often used for highway-oriented development within the Corridor, while larger industrial or “big box” structures should incorporate parapet walls, towers, peaked forms, mansards, and other architectural features to enhance the appearance of flat roofs. These features will also emphasize the contrast between the increased height and development intensity of the activity centers and the more open character of development in the surrounding areas.



*Figure 15—Incorporating a variety of roof planes into a building's design can enhance its appearance.*

## 2. Roof Form: Buildings Less than 10,000 sq.ft.

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

Roofs on primary structures with a floor plate less than 10,000 sq.ft. shall be pitched with a minimum slope of at least 5:12 or provide the appearance of 5:12 pitch through the use of a modified mansard roof.

### b) Recommended Design Standard

- (1) At least one of the following elements shall be incorporated into the design for each 50 lineal feet of roof:
  - (a) Projecting gables;
  - (b) Hips;
  - (c) Horizontal/vertical breaks.
- (2) Three or more roof slope planes shall be incorporated into a design.

## 3. Roof Form: Buildings Larger than 10,000 sq.ft.

### a) Regional Baseline Standards

Roofs on structures with a floor-plate of greater than 10,000 sq.ft. shall have no less than two of the following features:

- (1) Parapet walls featuring three-dimensional cornice treatment that at no point exceed one-third of the height of the supporting wall;
- (2) Overhanging eaves, extending no less than 3 feet past the supporting walls;
- (3) Sloping roofs not exceeding the average height of the supporting walls, with an average slope greater than or equal to 1 foot of vertical rise for every 1 foot of horizontal run;
- (4) Three or more roof slope planes.



*Figure 16—Architectural variations, such as the parapet wall and overhangs on the “big-box” building shown above, can help break up the appearance of flat rooflines.*

## 4. Building Form/Façade Treatment

### a) Intent

Development near I-25 and other major roadways is typically oriented towards an internal access road or parking area, leaving large, unsightly blank walls and loading docks in prominent view for passing motorists. To avoid this situation, all sides of a building visible to the public, whether viewed from I-25, another roadway, or a nearby property, should display a similar level of quality and architectural finish. This should be accomplished by integrating architectural variations and treatments such as windows and other decorative features into all sides of a building design.

**b) Regional Baseline Standard**

Two or more of the following design elements shall be incorporated for each 50 horizontal feet of a building façade or wall:

- (1) Changes in color, texture, or materials;
- (2) Projections, recesses, and reveals, expressing structural bays, entrances, or other aspects of the architecture with a minimum change of plane of 12 inches;
- (3) Grouping of windows or doors;
- (4) Arcades or pergolas providing pedestrian interest.



*Figure 17—A variety of design elements, such as the windows and awnings on the building above, should be incorporated into facades and walls to provide visual interest.*

**c) Recommended Design Standards**

- (1) Building walls that face public streets, adjacent developments, or connecting pedestrian frontage shall be subdivided and proportioned along 60% of the façade using features such as:
  - (a) Windows;
  - (b) Entrances;
  - (c) Arcades;
  - (d) Arbors;
  - (e) Awnings.
- (2) Building facades facing a primary access street shall have clearly defined, highly visible customer entrances that feature no less than 2 of the following:
  - (a) Canopies or porticos;
  - (b) Overhangs, recesses/projections;
  - (c) Arcades;
  - (d) Distinctive roof forms;
  - (e) Arches;
  - (f) Outdoor patios;
  - (g) Display windows;
  - (h) Planters or wing walls that incorporate landscaped areas and/or places for sitting.

## 5. Materials and Colors

### a) Intent

Development near I-25 is typically highly visible to passing motorists. High-quality building materials should be used to add texture, color, and visual interest to the otherwise bland appearance of large walls, roofs, and facades. A palette of appropriate materials and colors should be established for each activity center to create a unified appearance.

### b) Regional Baseline Standard

One or more of the following building materials shall be incorporated into a structure's design:

- (1) Stucco;
- (2) Brick;
- (3) Stone;
- (4) Tinted, textured masonry block.



*Figure 18—Variations in materials and massing can be used to break up large buildings and provide interest at the street level.*

### c) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) Smooth faced gray concrete block and tilt-up concrete panels are prohibited.
- (2) Ribbed metal siding is prohibited as a primary exterior surface material. It may be used as trim material covering no more than 10% of the façade or as a roof material.
- (3) Façade colors shall be earth tone colors with a low reflectance. High-intensity, metallic, or fluorescent colors are prohibited.
- (4) High-intensity primary, metallic, or fluorescent colors are prohibited on any roof area visible from a public or private right-of-way or public open space.

## G. LANDSCAPING

### 1. Intent

Landscaping can be a visible indicator of quality development, and is particularly important with the high visibility of activity centers to passing motorists. Landscaping should be used as an opportunity to visually tie an entire development together by screening parking or service areas, accenting entryways, enhancing the appearance of buildings, buffering automobile traffic, creating an at-



*Figure 19—Site landscaping should include a variety of plant materials for year-round interest.*

tractive, shaded environment along street edges, and defining circulation for vehicles and pedestrians. Water-wise, “xeriscape” landscaping should be encouraged.

## 2. Materials and Quantity

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

A minimum of 20 percent of a site’s total square footage shall be reserved for landscaping consisting of a variety of trees, turf grasses, shrubs, annual and perennial flowering species, mulches, or groundcovers selected for hardiness, drought tolerance (xeriscape), and year-round interest.

### b) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) An approved list of xeriscape or low-water plant materials shall be available from the underlying jurisdiction.
- (2) All plant materials shall be installed in the following minimum sizes:
  - (a) Deciduous shade trees—2 inch caliper
  - (b) Ornamental trees—1 ½ inch caliper
  - (c) Evergreen trees—6 feet high
  - (d) All shrubs—5 gallon container
  - (e) Groundcover, annuals, and perennials—1 gallon container
- (3) Accent materials such as stone, steel, masonry, and wood utilized as part of a building or development’s overall theme shall be integrated into the landscape design to add interest and create visual continuity.
- (4) Reduced plant sizes may be approved for affordable housing projects.

## 3. Site Perimeter Landscaping Abutting Street Edges

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

Building setback areas along all arterial, collector, or local streets, as well as along private streets and internal drives shall be landscaped with a minimum of 1 tree for every 35 linear feet of frontage.



*Figure 20—Landscaped areas can be used to buffer parking areas from the street and provide a safe pedestrian pathway.*

### b) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) Where a detached walkway is provided, a curbed landscaped area, which is a minimum of 7 feet wide shall be incorporated between the walkway and the adjacent roadway.

#### 4. Site Perimeter Landscaping Adjacent to the I-25 Right-of-Way

##### a) Regional Baseline Standard

Developments whose site perimeter is directly adjacent to I-25 shall provide a landscaped buffer of at least 80-feet between the building or parking lot edge and the I-25 right-of-way or frontage road. Buffers shall consist of informal clusters of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs planted in an offset pattern and shall consist of a minimum of 1 tree and 10 shrubs per 25 lineal feet of frontage.



*Figure 21—Buildings adjacent to I-25 should provide a landscaped setback of at least 80 feet.*

##### b) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) Berms shall not be permitted directly adjacent to the I-25 right-of-way where they block long-range views of mountains and open lands for motorists on I-25.

## H. SERVICE AREA, OUTDOOR STORAGE, AND MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

### 1. Intent

Typical orientation of businesses towards internal access roads and parking areas often leaves exposed mechanical equipment, outdoor storage, outdoor sale yards, and service areas located behind buildings visible to motorists driving on I-25. The visual impact of these areas should be mitigated by shifting them out of high visibility areas and screening them.

### 2. Location

##### a) Regional Baseline Standard

Loading docks, outdoor storage yards, and all other service areas shall be located to the sides and/or rear of a building, except when a site abuts I-25; in which case, said areas shall be located to the sides of the building that do not face I-25.



*Figure 22—Service areas should be located away from high-visibility areas and screened.*

### b) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) With the exception of off-street parking and loading areas, all industrial uses shall be carried out entirely within completely enclosed buildings or structures.

## 3. Screening

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

All outdoor storage yards, loading docks, service areas, and mechanical equipment or vents larger than 8 inches in diameter shall be concealed by screens at least as high as the equipment they hide, of a color and material matching or compatible with the dominant colors and materials found on the façades of the primary building. Chain link, with or without slats, shall not be used to satisfy this screening requirement.

### b) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) Equipment that would remain visible despite screening due to differences in topography (i.e., a site that is at a lower grade than surrounding roadways) shall be completely enclosed.

# I. FENCING AND WALLS

## 1. Intent

Fences and walls can be very effective for buffering and screening. However, in excess, they can create a visually monotonous streetscape, block views from a roadway, and create a fragmented pattern of development. Variations in materials, height, and style, within an overall theme should be used to integrate a fence or wall with the surrounding development and provide a more attractive appearance from the street. This is particularly important directly adjacent to the I-25 right-of-way, where a fence or wall would be highly visible to passing motorists. In these high-visibility areas, fencing and walls should also integrate landscaping into their design to further soften the appearance from I-25.



*Figure 23—Fences and walls should be set back from the sidewalk edge and landscaped to provide visual interest.*

## 2. Materials

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

Walls and fences shall be constructed of high-quality materials, such as, tinted, textured blocks; brick; stone; treated wood; or ornamental metal and shall complement the design of an overall development and its surroundings. The use of chain link fencing or exposed plain cinder block walls shall be prohibited.



*Figure 24—Changes in materials, architectural projections, and landscaping can all be used to effectively break up large walls.*

## 3. Location

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

Opaque fences and walls, taller than 3 feet in height, shall be set back at least 6 feet from the back edge of an adjacent public sidewalk, and such setback area shall be landscaped with turf, shrubs, and/or trees, using a variety of species to provide seasonal color, plant variety, and to reduce visual prominence of screen walls.

## 4. Maximum Length

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

The maximum length of continuous, unbroken, and uninterrupted fence or wall plane shall be 40 feet. Breaks shall be provided through the use of columns, landscaping pockets, transparent sections, and/or a change to different materials.

## 5. Maximum Height

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

In front yard setbacks, the maximum height of a solid fence or wall shall be 36 inches. In all other locations the maximum height of a fence or wall shall be 6 feet.

## J. SIGNAGE

### 1. Prohibited signs

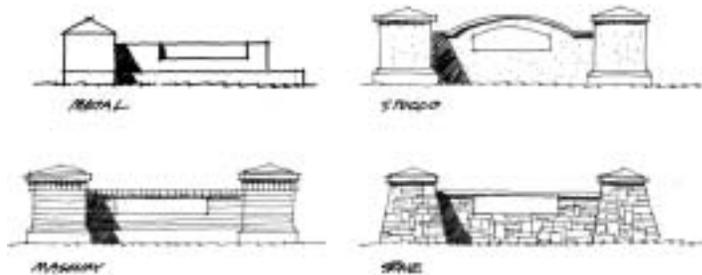
#### a) Intent

Existing signage within the Corridor includes tall, pole-mounted signs, billboards, and site-specific monument signs of all shapes and sizes. The sheer number, frequency, and variety of signs create a visual clutter along the Corridor that detracts from its rural character. To help alleviate this problem, billboards, pole-mounted, roof signs, and flashing signs should be eliminated over time.

#### b) Regional Baseline Standard

The addition, enlargement, or replacement of pole signs, billboards, or flashing signs shall be prohibited.

### 2. Freestanding signs



*Figure 25—Colors, materials, and forms used for monument signs should complement the architectural character of the building or overall development.*

#### a) Intent

On-site signs, such as monument signs should be designed with consistent design elements, such as a base material, height, and lettering style, to create a visual continuity and quality to development.

#### b) Regional Baseline Standard

All new or replacement freestanding signs shall be monument signs that shall not exceed 10 feet in height. Such signs shall be consistent with the architectural character of the site and building, incorporating at least one of the primary materials, colors, or design elements of the associated structure(s).

#### c) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) Monument sign bases and/or signs shall utilize one of the following complementary materials or elements as a primary feature to create visual continuity within activity centers.
  - (a) Native Colorado sandstone or similar type of stone;
  - (b) River cobblestone;
  - (c) Brick;

- (d) Color tinted and textured concrete masonry;
  - (e) Metal or iron detailing;
  - (f) Other materials of similar high-quality as utilized on the primary structures in the Activity Center.
- (2) Monument-type signs shall be attached to the ground with a base whose width and length are at least as large as the bottom edge of the sign face.
  - (3) Signs shall not be placed where they obscure important architectural features such as entrances, display windows, or decorative elements when viewed from the public right-of-way.



*Figure 26—Materials, colors, and other design elements of signs should be consistent with the architectural character of the surrounding development.*

### 3. Advertising within the I-25 Right-of-Way

#### a) Intent

Common signage types help create predictable cues for motorists traveling the Corridor. Programs such as CDOT’s Specific Information and Business Signs (LOGO) Program should be used to meet the advertising needs of businesses to improve the appearance of the Corridor and minimize motorist confusion.

## K. WIRELESS COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

### 1. Height, Color, and Location

#### a) Intent

Wireless communication, facilities, towers, and associated equipment need to be carefully designed to avoid being visually intrusive in activity centers, where development is concentrated and is highly visible from I-25. Height and color of these facilities should be consistent with their surroundings.

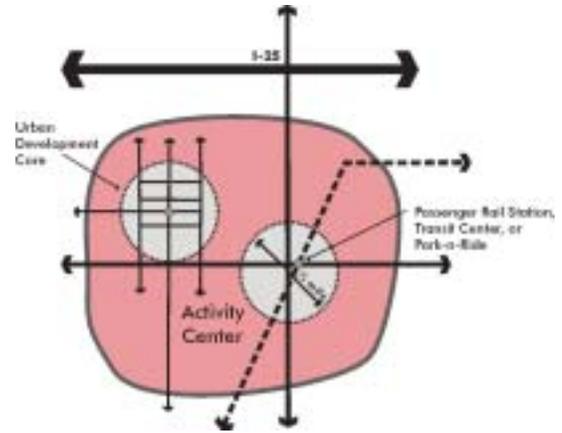
#### b) Regional Baseline Standard

Wireless communication towers shall, to the maximum extent feasible, be combined with and consistent with the architectural style of an existing structure and surrounding development area by utilizing similar materials, height, roof forms, textures, scale, and mass.

## L. DEVELOPMENT PATTERN AND SITE LAYOUT FOR TRANSIT NODES

### 1. Intent

These urban development standards are intended to apply only in situations where a more transit and pedestrian-oriented form of development is desired. These areas, illustrated below, will typically be located within one-quarter mile of a planned passenger rail station, high frequency bus line, park-and-ride facility, or transit center facility. Alternatively, they may also be applied in a development's urban core, where a mix of residential and non-residential uses and a high level of pedestrian activity is desired.



### 2. Block Pattern

#### a) Intent

In transit nodes, where efficient pedestrian circulation is necessary, development should occur as a series of smaller, more urban scale "blocks," with frequent street spacing and connections. This type of block pattern provides clear connectivity between uses, encouraging transit ridership through increased pedestrian and bicycle activity. It also enhances vehicular circulation, enabling efficient use of feeder bus service and other alternative modes.

#### b) Regional Baseline Standard

Larger sites containing multiple buildings and uses shall be composed of a series of urban scale "blocks" of development, with an average length of 660 feet. Blocks shall be defined by private driveways and public streets that provide links to adjacent streets along the perimeter of the site.

### 3. Building Orientation: Street Frontages

#### a) Regional Baseline Standard

A minimum of 30% of the development site's street frontage shall be occupied by building wall. The remaining 70% of the street frontage may be occupied by decorative architectural walls or fences (no higher than 3 feet) and/or landscaped entryway signage or features.

#### b) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) Buildings shall be oriented to frame and enclose a "main street" pedestrian and/or transit access corridor within the development site.

#### 4. Building Setbacks

##### a) Intent

Building setbacks or build-to lines should be narrowed from typical highway-oriented patterns to a more intense, urban pattern that allows buildings to



*Figure 27—In transit nodes, buildings should be oriented to frame adjacent streets through the use of narrow, consistent setbacks.*

frame the street, create a more intimate, pedestrian scale of development, and create a unified appearance for a street edge. To establish appropriate setbacks, each street should be evaluated in terms of its development character and cross-section to determine appropriate setback dimensions.

##### b) Regional Baseline Standard

Buildings shall be oriented to frame adjacent streets through the use of narrow, consistent setbacks.

##### c) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) Build-to lines shall be established for each arterial or collector street within a mixed-use activity center to help account for different road widths and cross sections, as well as changes in development character that may warrant variations in setbacks.
- (2) There shall be no minimum front, rear, and side yard setbacks required to promote increased densities in mixed-use areas provided local building code requirements are met.

#### 5. Building Orientation: Major Intersection

##### a) Intent

Intersections of intense development activity in activity centers need to be carefully designed so that all four corners are linked and function as a whole. Avoiding deep setbacks behind large expanses of parking and orienting buildings towards the street will help create a more pedestrian-scaled environment desired in an activity center.

##### b) Regional Baseline Standard

A development located at the intersection of two collector or local streets, shall to the maximum extent feasible, orient building walls within each quadrant to the street to frame the corner of the intersection.

**c) Recommended Design Standards**

- (1) To the maximum extent feasible, new buildings shall be aligned with existing buildings located across the intersecting streets to "complete" the space around the corner and create visual continuity between developments.
- (2) A minimum of 60% of the development site's street frontage shall be occupied by building wall, decorative architectural walls or fences (no higher than 3 feet) and/or entryway signage or features.

## V. Design Standards for Areas In Between Activity Centers

### A. INTENT

These standards are intended to ensure that development in between established activity centers is sensitive to and protects the open character and significant natural features of the Corridor. To protect these features, such as riparian corridors and sweeping mountain and agricultural views, a more open character of development needs to be established in these areas. Landscape buffers should be provided at the development edge adjacent to I-25, building heights and densities should be reduced, and larger setbacks should be established between development and I-25. Each of these elements will help create a transition between the higher densities of an activity center and the surrounding open lands.



*Figure 28—Development in between activity centers should be sensitive to and protect the open character of the Corridor.*

These standards shall apply to all development occurring within the boundaries of the I-25 Corridor Study Area, excluding development within an activity center as defined by the underlying jurisdiction.

### B. APPLICABILITY

These standards shall apply to all development occurring within the boundaries of the I-25 Corridor Study Area, excluding development within an activity center as defined by the underlying jurisdiction.

### C. RESOURCE PROTECTION

#### 1. Protection of Natural Features, Resources, and Sensitive Areas

##### a) Intent

The Corridor's natural areas are critical in contributing to its character. Development should be organized and designed to protect, appropriately use, or enhance natural features, resources, and sensitive areas such as wetlands, bluffs, or riparian corridors. The standards seek to accomplish this through the establishment of setbacks and boundaries for development in the vicinity of natural features.

- b) **Regional Baseline Standard**  
Development shall be set back a minimum of one hundred feet from the centerline of streams, the high water mark of water bodies, and delineated wetland boundaries as defined by the underlying jurisdiction.



*Figure 29—The Little Big Thompson River just east of I-25 is characteristic of many of the Corridor’s riparian areas.*

- c) **Recommended Design Standards**
  - (1) To the maximum extent feasible, streams, water bodies, and wetlands shall be connected or integrated with similar features on adjacent sites.

## 2. Preservation of Existing Trees and Vegetation

- a) **Intent**  
Open, high plains largely define the landscape character of the Corridor. However, many large trees exist near established farmsteads, irrigation ditches, and riparian corridors. Existing trees and vegetation should be preserved to provide buffers between developments or as site amenities within a development.
- b) **Regional Baseline Standards**  
To the maximum extent feasible, existing significant trees and vegetation shall be preserved. For the purposes of this standard, a “significant” tree shall mean deciduous trees with a caliper of greater than 4 inches and evergreen trees 15 feet or greater in height. No cut or fill over a 4-inch depth shall occur within the drip line or root area of any preserved tree without evaluation and approval of the disturbance by a qualified arborist, forester, or the underlying jurisdiction.

- c) **Recommended Design Standards**
  - (1) Invasive or nuisance tree species such as Siberian elm or Russian olive shall be exempt from the above preservation requirements. Additional species may apply within individual jurisdictions.
  - (2) Significant trees not feasible for preservation shall be replaced on site with trees of the largest



*Figure 30—Existing, mature vegetation should be integrated into plans for new development wherever possible.*

caliper possible (not less than 4-inch caliper for shade trees and not less than 2 1/2-inch caliper for ornamental trees) to equal two times the total caliper inches removed.

- (3) Where preservation of all significant, mature trees on a site would render a site undevelopable, a minimum of 50% of all significant, mature trees shall be preserved.
- (4) All preserved trees shall be protected from mechanical injury during construction or demolition by construction fencing or similar technique.

## D. DEVELOPMENT PATTERN/SITE LAYOUT

### 1. Intent

Large employers and industrial uses should be located in coordinated, campus or office park settings within or directly adjacent to activity centers to minimize linear, strip development patterns along existing frontage roads and to concentrate desirable development densities and employees near activity center services and infrastructure. To facilitate these types of uses near activity centers, appropriate connections, development patterns and site layouts must be established.



*Figure 31—Non-residential buildings in between activity centers should be separated from frontage roads and I-25 by a broad landscape buffer.*

### 2. Setbacks from I-25

#### a) Intent

Non-residential development occurring in between activity centers should be set back from frontage roads and the I-25 right-of way to help deter linear, strip development patterns from connecting activity centers, minimize impacts on views, and maintain a more open character. Development should also be clustered towards the rear of the site where possible, to help achieve this goal.

#### b) Regional Baseline Standard

To the maximum extent feasible, all non-residential development shall be set back a minimum of 80 feet from the I-25 right-of-way or any frontage roads in order to maintain views over the building to the mountains.

### 3. Parking Lots

#### a) Intent

Large parking lots in open areas outside of established activity centers are potentially much more visible to motorists on I-25. This is particularly true when parking is located directly adjacent to existing frontage roads. To mitigate these visual impacts, parking lots should be located behind structures and away from

I-25 wherever possible. In addition, larger lots should be broken into a series of smaller blocks defined by landscaped islands or walkways.

**b) Regional Baseline Standard**

The number of contiguous parking spaces shall be limited to 20 and each block of 20 shall be buffered from adjacent parking blocks by at least one of the following methods:

- (1) A landscaped island that is at least 9 feet wide;
- (2) A pedestrian walkway or sidewalk within a landscaped median that is at least 9 feet wide;
- (3) An orchard planting with tree diamonds;
- (4) A decorative fence or wall, a maximum of 3 feet in height, bordered by landscaping on at least one side;
- (5) An access drive or public street;
- (6) A building or buildings.

**4. Parking Location**

**a) Regional Baseline Standard**

To the maximum extent feasible parking shall be distributed between the front or back, whichever is least visible from I-25, and the sides of a building, with not more than 50% of the parking for the entire property remaining between the principal building and I-25.

**b) Recommended Design Standards**

- (1) If the percentage of site parking located between the primary building and I-25 is reduced to 30 %, the associated landscape buffer shall be reduced to 60 feet.

**5. Parking Buffers**

**a) Regional Baseline Standard**

Parking lot edges shall be buffered from I-25 and other public rights-of-way, public open space, and adjacent properties one of the following transition methods:

- (1) A 25-foot landscape buffer that consists of informal plantings of deciduous trees and shrubs; or
- (2) Open style fencing such as 3 or 4 rail, split rail, wood post or similar style in combination with informal plantings of deciduous trees and shrubs, as described in (1).

**6. Development/Open Land Transitions**

**a) Intent**

Due to the largely rural character of the Corridor, areas of new development are very visible to motorists on I-25, their linear edges typically defined by prop-

erty lines, roads, or other man-made boundaries. As an alternative to this rigid mode of development, the varied topography and landscape of the Corridor provides many opportunities for utilizing natural features as visual break points for development. Planted landscape buffers or existing stands of trees along stream corridors and irrigation canals can be utilized to provide a more natural visual transition between development and adjoining agricultural or open lands.

**b) Regional Baseline Standard**

Residential subdivisions within ½ mile of I-25 shall incorporate one or more of the following techniques to create a visual transition between development and surrounding agricultural or open lands:

- (1) Staggering building setbacks to create a softer development edge.
- (2) Establishing a landscape buffer along the rear or visible edge(s) of the property to create a soft visual edge to the development.
- (3) Locating structures near or behind existing stands of significant trees or vegetation so that the cluster of vegetation provides a buffer between the development and I-25.

**7. Fencing and Walls**

**a) Intent**

Open styles of fencing, such as split rail or wood post, are typical of the rural character of the Corridor’s outlying areas and help maintain broad views. Privacy fencing, particularly in close proximity to the I-25 right-of-way, inhibits views and creates a segregated appearance between parcels.

**b) Regional Baseline Standard**

In residential subdivisions visible from I-25, perimeter fencing shall be of an open style, such as 2, 3, or 4 rail, split rail, wood post, or other similar style characteristic of rural areas of the Corridor. This standard shall not apply in instances where prairie dog fencing is deemed necessary by the underlying jurisdiction.



*Figure 32—Open style fencing, such as this 3 rail plank fence, for residential subdivisions helps maintain a more open character in between activity centers.*

**c) Recommended Design Standards**

- (1) Consistent styles of fencing shall be used throughout the entire subdivision in order to achieve a cohesive appearance.

## E. BUILDING DESIGN/CHARACTER

### 1. Intent

Views of the mountains and surrounding agricultural lands between activity centers along I-25 make development, even in small quantities, seem much more visible than in areas near interchanges where development is generally expected to be. Minimizing building heights and mass and utilizing low contrast colors and materials can minimize the visual impacts of development in these rural areas of the Corridor.

### 2. Building Heights

#### a) Intent

Maintaining lower building heights within close proximity of the I-25 right-of-way will help maintain the open views and characteristics of the Corridor's rural areas. Building heights should be transitioned based upon a site's topography, distance, and visibility from the I-25 right-of-way.

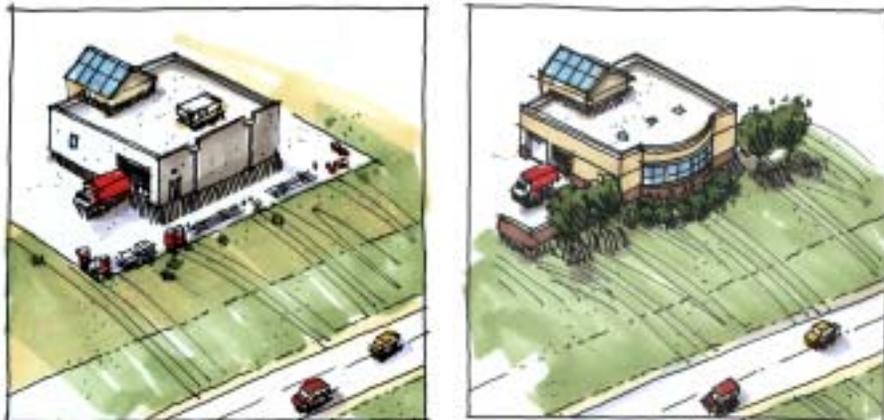
#### b) Regional Baseline Standard

Non-Residential building heights shall not exceed twenty feet within one hundred feet of the I-25 right-of-way or frontage road to minimize impacts upon views along the interstate.

#### c) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) Non-Residential and residential building heights beyond one hundred feet of the I-25 right-of-way shall not exceed forty feet to minimize impacts upon long-range views.
- (2) Where existing or natural site topography blocks views of the mountains or open lands from I-25, height restrictions shall not apply.
- (3) Height of structures shall be measured from the existing grade of the site.

### 3. Building Form/Façade Treatment



*Figure 33—Buildings highly visible from I-25 should display a similar level of quality and architectural finish on all visible sides.*

a) **Intent**

Due to the open character of the corridor, buildings with large, blank walls outside of activity centers are in prominent view of passing motorists. To avoid this situation, all sides of a building visible to the public, whether viewed from I-25, another roadway, or a nearby property, should display a similar level of quality and architectural finish. This can be accomplished by integrating architectural variations and treatments such as windows and other decorative features into all sides of a building design.

b) **Regional Baseline Standard**

One or more of the following design techniques shall be incorporated for each 50 horizontal feet of a building façade or wall:

- (1) Changes in color, texture, or materials;
- (2) Projections, recesses, and reveals, expressing structural bays, entrances, or other aspects of the architecture with a minimum change of plane of 12 inches;
- (3) Grouping of windows or doors;
- (4) Arcades or pergolas providing pedestrian interest.



*Figure 34—Design elements should be incorporated to break up large building walls, such as the pergola and other decorative features shown above.*

#### 4. **Building Materials and Color**

a) **Intent**

These standards are intended to minimize the visual impacts of non-residential development outside of Activity Centers in the Corridor. Colors with a high reflectance, such as white shades, make development in rural areas of the Corridor highly visible and should not be used. Muted colors with a low reflectance should be used for broad building surfaces, such as roofs or walls.

b) **Regional Baseline Standard**

White, high-intensity, metallic, black, or fluorescent colors shall not be permitted as a primary color for either the roof or walls of any non-residential structure.

## F. **SERVICE AREA, OUTDOOR STORAGE, AND MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT**

### 1. **Intent**

Typical orientation of businesses towards internal access roads and parking areas often leaves exposed mechanical equipment, outdoor storage, outdoor sale yards, and service areas located behind buildings visible to motorists driving on

I-25. The visual impact of these areas should be mitigated by shifting them out of high visibility areas and screening them.

## 2. Location

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

Loading docks, outdoor storage yards, and all other service areas shall be located to the sides and/or rear of a building, except when a site abuts I-25; in which case, said areas shall be located to the sides of the building that do not face I-25.



*Figure 35—Service areas should be located away from high-visibility areas and screened.*

### b) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) With the exception of off-street parking and loading areas, all industrial uses shall be carried out entirely within completely enclosed buildings or structures.

## 3. Screening

### a) Regional Baseline Standard

All outdoor storage yards, loading docks, service areas, and mechanical equipment or vents larger than 8 inches in diameter shall be concealed by screens at least as high as the equipment they hide, of a color and material matching or compatible with the dominant colors and materials found on the façades of the primary building. Chain link, with or without slats, shall not be used to satisfy this screening requirement.

### b) Recommended Design Standards

- (1) Equipment that would remain visible despite screening due to differences in topography (i.e., a site that is at a lower grade than surrounding roadways) shall be completely enclosed.

## G. WIRELESS COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT

### 1. Height, Color, and Location

#### a) Intent

Wireless communication, facilities, towers, and associated equipment need to be carefully designed to avoid being visually intrusive in more open areas of the Cor-



*Figure 36—Wireless communication towers are highly visible in more open areas of the Corridor and should be integrated with existing structures whenever possible.*

ridor, where any development is highly visible. Height, color, and location of these facilities should be consistent with their surroundings.

**b) Regional Baseline Standard**

Wireless communication towers shall not be permitted within ¼ mile of the I-25 right-of-way unless such facility is combined with and is consistent with the architectural style of an existing structure and surrounding development area by utilizing similar materials, height, roof forms, textures, scale, and mass.

**c) Recommended Design Standards**

- (1) The combined height of a wireless communication tower and its associated structure shall not exceed the maximum height allowed for a structure outside of an activity center.

## H. SIGNAGE

### 1. Prohibited signs

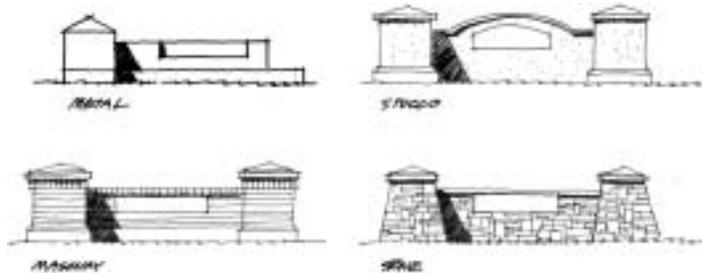
**a) Intent**

Existing signage within the Corridor includes tall, pole-mounted signs, billboards, and site-specific monument signs of all shapes and sizes. The sheer number, frequency, and variety of signs create a visual clutter along the Corridor that detracts from its rural character. To help alleviate this problem, billboards, pole-mounted, roof-mounted, and flashing signs should be eliminated over time.

**b) Regional Baseline Standard**

The addition, enlargement, or replacement of pole signs, billboards, or flashing signs shall be prohibited.

### 2. Freestanding signs



*Figure 37—Colors, materials, and forms used for monument signs should complement the architectural character of the building or overall development.*

**a) Intent**

On-site signs, such as monument signs should be designed with consistent design elements, such as a base material, height, and lettering style, to create a visual continuity and quality to development.

**b) Regional Baseline Standard**

All new or replacement freestanding signs shall be monument signs which shall not exceed 10 feet in height. Such signs shall be consistent with the architectural character of the site and building, incorporating at least one of the primary materials, colors, or design elements of the associated structure(s).

**c) Recommended Design Standards**

(1) Monument sign bases and/or signs shall utilize one of the following complementary materials or elements as a primary feature to create visual continuity.

- (a) Native Colorado sandstone or similar type of stone;
- (b) River cobblestone;
- (c) Brick;
- (d) Color tinted and textured concrete masonry;
- (e) Metal or iron detailing
- (f) Other materials of similar high quality as utilized on primary structures.



*Figure 38—Materials, colors, and other design elements of signs should be consistent with the architectural character of the surrounding development.*

(2) Monument-type signs shall be attached to the ground with a base whose width and length are at least as large as the bottom edge of the sign face.

(3) Signs shall not be placed where they obscure important architectural features such as entrances, display windows, or decorative elements when viewed from the public right-of-way.

## VI. Definitions

As used in this document, the following terms shall mean:

**Activity Center**—A concentrated area of development, often containing a mix of different land uses either within the same building or site, or within a localized area.

**Adjacent or Abutting**—To physically touch or border upon, or to share a common property line or border. “Adjacent” or “abutting” shall include properties or uses that are separated by a drive, street, or other public-dedicated right-of-way.

**Arcade**—A series of arches supported on piers or columns.

**Berm**—An earthen mound designed to provide visual interest, screen undesirable views, decrease noise, and/or control or manage surface drainage.

**Block Face**—The properties abutting one side of a street and lying between the two nearest intersecting or intercepting streets, or nearest intersecting or intercepting street and railroad right-of-way, unsubdivided land, water-course or regulatory boundary.

**Buffer**—Open spaces, landscaped areas, fences, walls, berms, or any combination thereof, used to visually cushion and provide a physical separation between adjacent structures or uses. A buffer provides a year-round, semi-opaque barrier; a filtered view between uses is still possible.

**Building Form**—The shape and structure of a building as distinguished from its substance or material.

**Build-To Line**—An imaginary line on which the front of a building or structure must be located or built and which is measured as a distance from a public right-of-way.

**Building Mass**—The three-dimensional bulk of a building height, width, and depth.

**Building Scale**—The size and proportion of a building relative to surrounding buildings and environs, adjacent streets, and pedestrians.

**Character**—Those attributes, qualities, and features that make up and distinguish a particular place or development and give such place a sense of purpose, function, definition, and uniqueness.

**Commercial Development**—The use of a property or structure for a purchase, sale, or transaction involving the disposition of any article, substance (including food), commodity, or service; the maintenance or conduct of offices, professions, or recreational or amusement enterprises conducted for profit and also including renting of rooms, business offices, and sales display rooms and premises.

**Development**—Any man-made change to improved or unimproved real estate including, but not limited to, buildings or other structures, filling, grading, or paving.

**Façade**—Front or principal face of a building, any side of a building that faces a street or other open space.

**Fence**—An artificially constructed barrier of any material or combination of materials erected to enclose, screen, or separate areas.

**Floor Area Ratio**—The relationship of the total floor area of a building to the land area of its site, as defined in a ratio in which the numerator is the floor area, and the denominator is the site area.

**Infill**—Development on a vacant or substantially vacant tract of land surrounded by existing development.

**Major Street**—"Major street" shall mean streets designated by the City or County's Master Plan as thoroughfares (arterials).

**Major Tenant**—Within a development center, any user or tenant containing 15,000 square feet or more of gross floor area. Where more than one user or tenant in such a center contains more than 15,000 square feet, the user or tenant with the largest amount of gross floor area shall be considered the center's "major tenant."

**Maximum Extent Feasible**—No feasible and prudent alternative exists, and all possible efforts to comply with the regulation or minimize potential harm or adverse impacts have been undertaken. Economic considerations may be taken into account but shall not be the overriding factor in determining "maximum extent feasible."

**Maximum Extent Practicable**—Under the circumstances, reasonable efforts have been undertaken to comply with the regulation or requirement, that the costs of compliance clearly outweigh the potential benefits to the public or would unreasonably burden the proposed project, and reasonable steps have been undertaken to minimize any potential harm or adverse impacts resulting from the noncompliance.

**Mixed-Use Activity Center**—An area of concentrated development containing more than one principal permitted land use type and generally served by high frequency transit. Such land uses may include office, retail, residential, or service uses such as hotels and motels. In a mixed-used development, the different types of land uses are in close proximity, planned as a unified complementary whole, and functionally integrated to the use of vehicular and pedestrian access and parking areas.

**Multi-Family Residential**—A building containing 3 or more dwelling units, not including hotels, motels, and similar group accommodations.

**Natural Features**—Include but are not limited to flood plains and surface drainage channels, stream corridors and other bodies of water, steep slopes, prominent ridges, bluffs, or valleys, and existing trees and vegetation.

**Non-Residential Development**—All retail, restaurant, service, hotels, motels, and similar businesses, including office or industrial uses.

**Orient**—To bring in relation to, or adjust to, the surroundings, situation, or environment; to place with the most important parts facing in certain directions; to set or arrange in a determinate position: as in "to orient a building".

**Open Space**—Any parcel of land or water unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for public or private use.

**Open Space Transitions**—The use of strategically planted landscape materials, to buffer, screen and create a more gradual visual transition from a more intensive land use, such as an industrial or commercial development, to surrounding open or agricultural lands.

**Pad Site**—Typically used in the context of retail shopping center development, a building or building site that is physically separate from the principal or primary building and reserved for free-standing commercial use. Typical pad site uses include, by way of illustration only, free standing restaurants, banks, and auto services.

**Pedestrian-Oriented Development**—Development that is designed with a primary emphasis on the street sidewalk and/or connecting walkway access to the site and building rather than on auto access and parking lots. This type of development typically warrants buildings being placed relatively close to the street with the main entrance oriented towards the street sidewalk or a walkway. Parking areas are provided but are not emphasized in the design of the site.

**Pedestrian Scale**—The relationship between dimensions and proportions of a building, street, outdoor space, or streetscape element to the average dimensions of the human body.

**Primary Abutting or Access Street**—The street abutting a development that carries the most traffic volume. If a development abuts two streets that have traffic volumes within 20% of each other, the Applicant shall designate which street is the "primary abutting or access street."

**Primary or Principal Building**—The building or structure on a lot used to accommodate the primary permitted use, such use possibly occurring in more than one building or structure. In a commercial center development, buildings on pad sites or free-standing kiosk/ATM machines are not "primary" buildings.

**Redevelopment**—Development on a tract of land with existing structures where all or most of the existing structures would be razed and/or reconstructed.

**Setback Line**—A line, parallel to the respective lot line and internal to the lot, that defines the required building setback.

**Single-Family Subdivision**—A single-family dwelling that is not attached to any other dwelling or building by any other means.

**Standards**—Shall mean mandatory regulations. Standards are indicated by use of the terms "shall" and "must."

**Steep Slopes**—Any portion of a development site where the natural grade of the land has a slope of 30% or greater.

