



# Design Regulations & Guidelines

## What's Inside

- Requirements for site layout, architecture, and landscaping.
- Design requirements for special uses and/or areas such as the Midway Blvd and SR-20 corridors.
- Examples of designs that work well.

## Sections

- 1) Site Plan
- 2) Car Oriented Commercial
- 3) Neighborhood Context
- 4) Multi-Family Residential Design
- 5) Landscaping
- 6) Variances

### **Why?**

These regulations are intended to direct the look and function of new development to meet the community's goals defined in the Comprehensive Plan.

These goals describe design that is human scaled, people oriented, neighborhood appropriate, builds on our community's history and addresses the street and public areas.

The *Design Regulations and Guidelines* define required site and building components while promoting creative solutions.

### **When?**

The requirements described in this booklet apply to all new construction of commercial, industrial, public facility, and multi-family residential uses.

They also apply to exterior remodels whose value is 60% or greater of the value of the existing structures

### **How?**

Not all sections of this booklet may apply to your project.

There are sections that only apply to specific uses or locations.

When doing your design, check to see which sections apply to your project, and make sure you have met the requirements.

When you submit your application(s) to the City make sure your drawings clearly show how your project meets the requirements.

If you have any questions contact City staff for assistance.

## QUESTIONS? CITY OF OAK HARBOR



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# 1) Site Plan

## Purpose

These requirements direct the design of commercial, industrial, and public facility sites to ensure that development in our city meets the long term goals and community's vision described in the Comprehensive Plan. The basic principles of good site planning can be remembered with the acronym SAFE:

**S**—*safe*  
**A**—*attractive*  
**F**—*fits the neighborhood*  
**E**—*efficient and useable*

Achieving this involves attention to how sites, buildings, open spaces, and streets work together to create a positive sense of place.

The location of buildings, parking, landscaping, utilities, and service areas all affect the safety and enjoyment of the community and these design regulations address overall aesthetics, views from and to the site, site features, and screening negative aspects.

### **Remember !**

There are requirements for specific locations, multi-family residential, and car oriented uses that must be checked when designing a site.

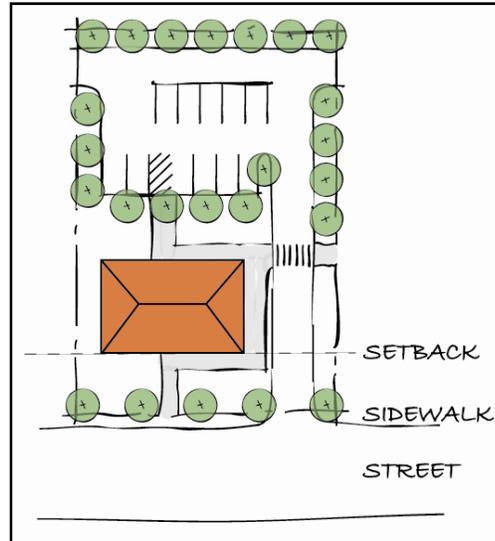
## Section Items

- i) Buildings
- ii) Streets
- iii) People
- iv) Cars
- v) Utilities

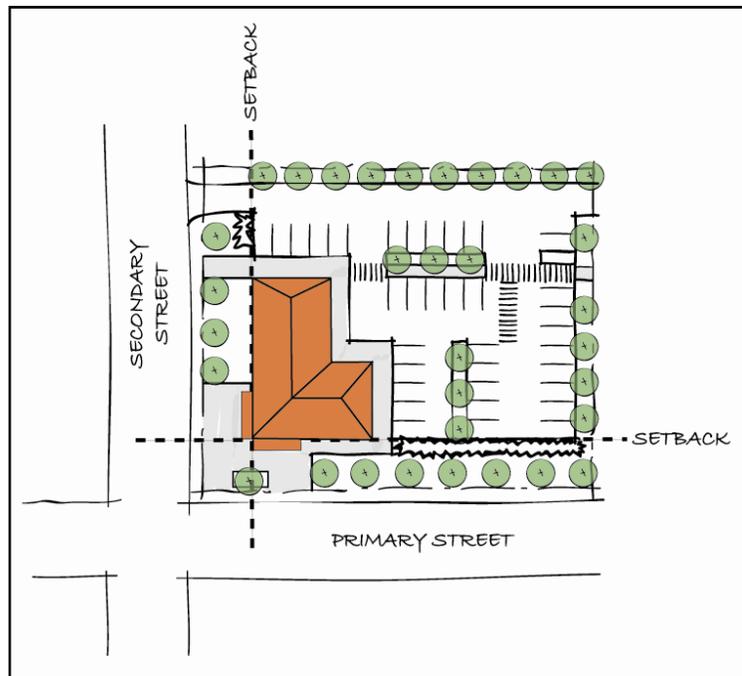
# 1) Site Plan

## i. Buildings

- 1) Streets shall be lined with retail or office space, living units, or landscaping, rather than parking lots, garages, or blank walls.
- 2) Orient buildings, entrances, windows and activity to face the street.
- 3) Maximize the length of the building at the street front.
- 4) Buildings shall be placed at the front setback line.
- 5) Corner lots of all intersecting pairs of arterials shall define frontages with buildings or street defining landscaping features on both streets. At least one frontage shall be defined by building.
- 6) Buildings shall incorporate materials and details that are fitting with the Pacific north west region and are appropriate for the community's existing design characteristics and the goals stated in the Comprehensive Plan.
- 7) Developments shall not be designed as barriers that separate neighborhoods or districts, especially for pedestrians.
- 8) Building entrances, walkways, and facades shall be designed to relate to neighboring buildings to establish a coherent development pattern that is people oriented.
- 9) Locate main entrances and display windows near to, and facing the street with a direct walking route from the sidewalk.



- ✓ building located at front setback
- ✓ building façade is maximized along sidewalk
- ✓ parking in rear
- ✓ access to neighbors is provided



- ✓ building located at both frontage setbacks
- ✓ street defined by building and landscaping
- ✓ building entrance and façade face street
- ✓ access to neighbors is provided for cars and people

# 1) Site Plan

## i. Buildings

- 10) Incorporate similar, or complimentary patterns from existing developments within the neighborhood or adjacent streets (such as elevation, outline, window treatment, entrances, and roof lines).
- 11) Blank walls are not permitted; all walls must have visual interest.
- 12) Buildings should be designed for the city context and directed to the street not toward the neighbor or parking areas.
- 13) Window displays are required over the majority (min 75%) of the front façade (industrial uses may be granted administrative variances from this regulation).
- 14) Entrances shall be articulated and the main entrance shall be distinguishable from other entrances.
- 15) Separate entrances are required for residential uses in multiple use buildings.
- 16) All building facades facing or visible from the street or sidewalk shall be articulated. Vertical articulation shall be at each 10 ft or storey interval. Horizontal articulation shall be used to differentiate storefronts and/or provide visual interest.
- 17) No interval of a roof line shall be unbroken for greater than 100 ft for sloped roofs or 50 ft. for flat roofs.



- ✓ entrance articulated with details
- ✓ well articulated façade
- ✓ architecture with a Pacific north west feel



- ✓ building directed toward the street
- ✓ articulated roof line
- ✓ weather protection provided at entrance

# 1) Site Plan

## i. Buildings

- 18) Fully glazed facades are not permitted. Administrative variances for showrooms may be granted if the building entrance(s) and other facades are significantly enhanced with elements that provide added interest, are human scaled, and fit the context of the surrounding neighborhood (this type of variance is not applicable for Harborside).
- 19) Buildings on corner lots shall provide: 1) special treatments of pedestrian weather protection at the corner of the building, 2) a corner architectural element (such as bay windows, turret, roof deck, balconies, sculpture, etcetera), and 3) a corner entrance or a people space of at least 100 sq. ft.
- 20) Metal siding, concrete blocks, mirrored glass, or stucco shall be used in combination with other materials and should not be the predominant facade material.

**Note!**

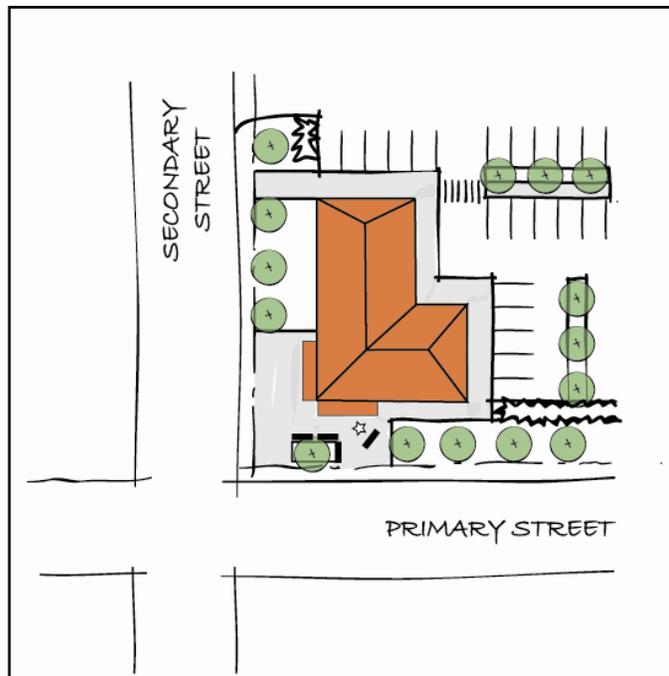
These requirements apply only to commercial, public facility, retail and industrial uses.

**Remember!**

Check the Neighborhood Context section for other requirements that may apply.



- ✓ architecture that addresses the corner
- ✓ mix of facade materials
- ✓ special pedestrian weather protection
- ✓ corner building entrance

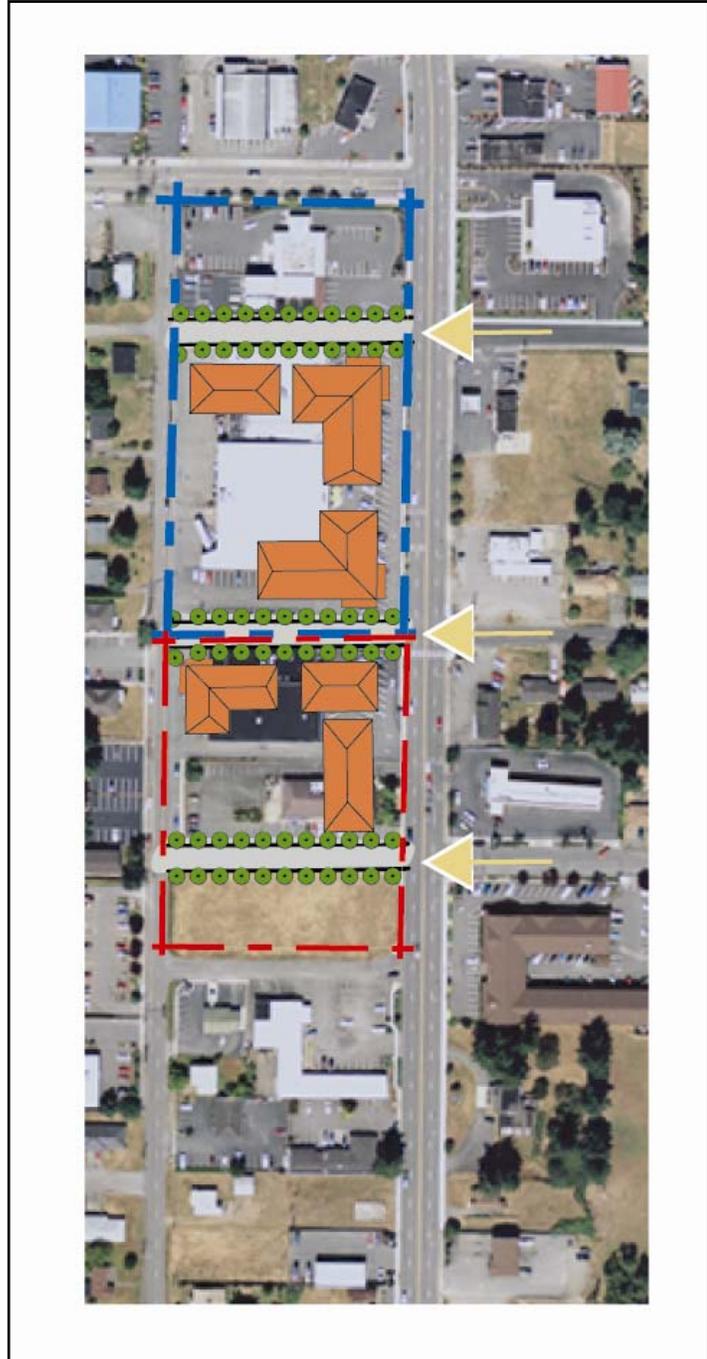


- ✓ building addresses the corner with architecture
- ✓ people space provided at the corner including sculpture, benches and landscape planter

# 1) Site Plan

## ii. Streets

- 1) Access roads are required through large lots or lots with both front and rear frontages . These roads shall include street trees and sidewalks and shall be generally aligned with the traditional street grid system. Multiple building developments shall address these roads in the same way as existing streets (in terms of landscaping, building placement and screening requirements). These roads should be designed to feel like city streets for people walking and driving down them, not like lanes through a parking lot.
- 2) Gaps in the street grid shall be completed by providing connecting streets. An administrative variance limiting these connections to only pedestrian and bicycle ways may be granted if a well designed proposal can be shown to be: 1) practicable, 2) allows for full pedestrian and bicycle access in both directions, 3) is generally aligned with the street grid, 4) is human scaled, 5) incorporates landscaping, and 6) meets all other design requirements.



- ✓ development on large lots with front and rear street frontage requires through roads (where possible aligned with the existing street grid)

# 1) Site Plan

## iii. People

- 1) Design the site to maximize safety and efficiency for walkers while minimizing conflicts with cars (including human scaled lighting, signage, and other appropriate elements). This shall be achieved by providing safe, separated and well delineated pedestrian walkways between the street, building entrances, parking areas, neighboring sites, transit stops and public walkways.
- 2) Locations for transit stops may be required on large sites over five acres.
- 3) A minimum of four bicycle racks per building shall be provided at convenient locations on site.
- 4) If there is no room for a sidewalk in the right-of-way, it must be provided on site.
- 5) 200 s.q. ft. of people space per building is required. Large sites over five acres shall provide an additional 200 sq. ft. per acre. These shall be safe, well designed spaces which include seating, shade trees, human scaled lighting and trash receptacles at practical locations on site (Harborside sites are exempt from this requirement).
- 6) Weather protection is required at entrances.
- 7) Human scaled lighting at entrances and along the front facades of buildings is required and shall be shielded to eliminate glare and off site lighting.



- ✓ safe, well designed pedestrian connection (includes lighting, landscaping, grade detailing)



- ✓ people space appropriately located next to the entrance and sidewalk
- ✓ details such as using landscaping to define the people space, and moveable chairs are well used here

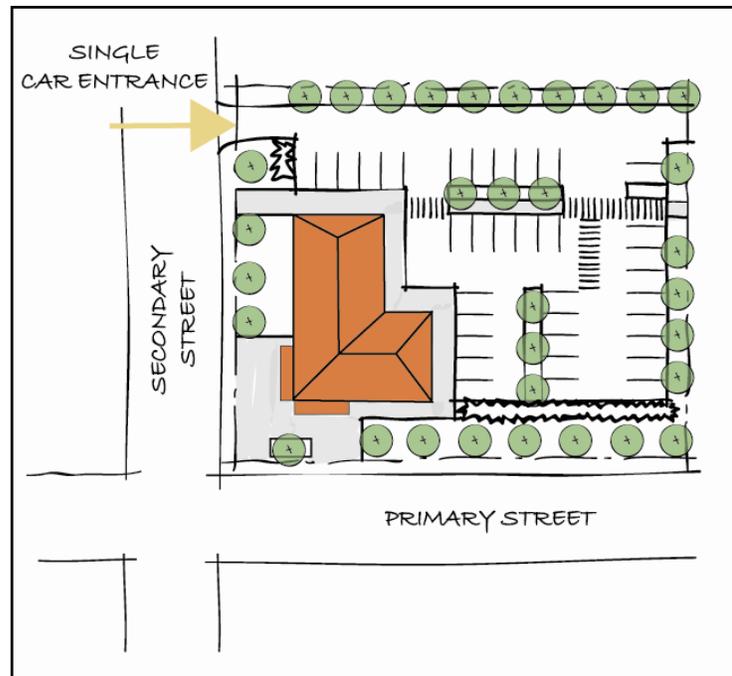
# 1) Site Plan

## iv. Cars

- 1) Each site shall have a single car entrance designated. Additional service entrance(s) may be permitted provided: 1) it is demonstrated to be a reasonable option due to site conditions or use, and 2) additional design features are used to enhance the site's visual quality.
- 2) Where possible car access shall be provided from the side or minor frontage (this does not apply to sites along SR-20).
- 3) Separate car and pedestrian traffic with safe walkways. For safety, extra care in the design of car access points and the crossing of sidewalks for pedestrian safety should be taken.
- 4) Clearly demark walkways, reduce car access to the smallest practical, and ensure that walkways are not secondary to car access.
- 5) Parking for cars or garage doors (for commercial sites) should not front the street as much as is practicable; as well, unenclosed parking areas shall not be located closer to the street than the front edge of the building, or between the building and the street.
- 6) Parking reductions may be granted for developments which include either of the following: parking structures, or direct access to transit facilities.
- 7) Parking lot lighting shall be shielded from shining off site or producing glare and limited to no more than 20' tall.



- ✓ pedestrian access designed to be completely separated from, and not secondary to, car access
- ✓ light standards no taller than 20 feet



- ✓ single car entrance located off of secondary street
- ✓ pedestrian walkways well defined and separated from car traffic
- ✓ parking located no closer to the street than the front edge of the building

# 1) Site Plan

## v. Utilities

- 1) Stormwater ponds, swales, and other stormwater facilities shall be located at the rear of the lot and/or within parking areas. These facilities shall be incorporated into the site as much as practicable and be landscaped for aesthetics and to provide screening. Administrative variances may be granted if: 1) it is demonstrated that there is no other reasonable option due to site conditions or topography, and 2) additional design features are used to enhance the visual quality of the site.
- 2) Facilities shall be designed so that safety fences are not required. Administrative variances of this requirement must use 1) decorative open fencing and 2) enhanced landscaping.
- 3) Eco-block or other retaining walls for these facilities shall be screened, and/or have decorative finishes that appear natural or provide an aesthetic fit with the overall site design.
- 4) All service areas and trash enclosures shall be screened.
- 5) Trash enclosures may not be located closer to the street than the front of the building.
- 6) Provide locations to "set-out" dumpsters if the trash enclosure is not accessible for pickup by City equipment.
- 7) Locate utility meters so that they are not visually prominent from the street.



- ✓ natural stone used instead of concrete block
- ✓ stormwater facility is designed to look like a natural pond



- ✓ stormwater facility designed so that safety fencing is not required
- ✓ facility is designed to fit into the overall landscape plan

## 2) Car Oriented Commercial

### **Purpose**

These standards have been established for the design of sites with drive-through facilities and vehicle displays, to integrate operational elements, and site and building design. The following regulations assist these uses with making a positive contribution to the surrounding context, public streetscape and neighboring sites.

### **Section Items**

- i. Streetscape
- ii. Display areas
- iii. Canopies & bays

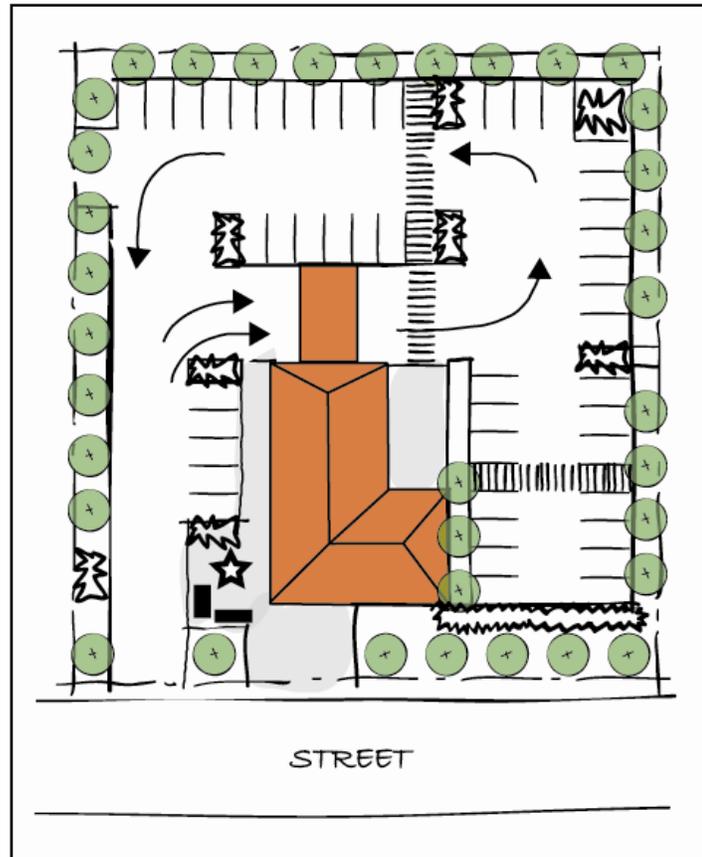
## 2) Car Oriented Commercial

### i. Streetscape

- 1) Locate the main pedestrian entrance at the corner or the more major street front.
- 2) Stacking lanes or driveways shall not be located between the building and street, or within the setback area.
- 3) Integrate stacking lanes and driveways into the larger landscape and streetscape concept.
- 4) Drive-through, car wash, and service bays should not face the main street frontage.
- 5) Multiple bays for drive-throughs, car washes, or service facilities must provide architectural or landscape features separating every three bays.



- ✓ service bays are not facing the main street frontage

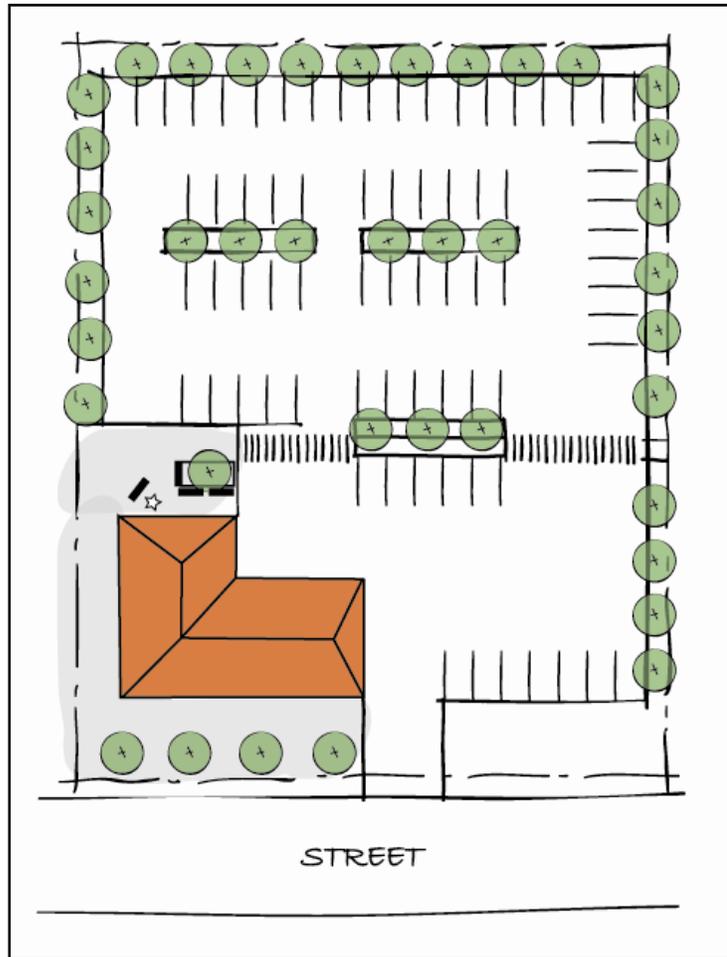


- ✓ main pedestrian entrance facing street
- ✓ drive-through lanes not facing main street frontage

## 2) Car Oriented Commercial

### ii. Display areas

- 1) Vehicle display lots shall meet the design and landscape requirements of parking lots relating to tree planting requirements.
- 2) Vehicle display lots must provide at least one walkway that connects street frontages, buildings and neighboring sites.
- 3) Vehicle display areas may be no closer to the street than the setback, and products may not be displayed in the setback areas.
- 4) 50% of the street frontage may be used for vehicle display areas.
- 5) Display areas along the street frontage may be raised up to a maximum of four feet above grade.



- ✓ 50% of frontage for vehicle display
- ✓ no display permitted closer to street than edge of building
- ✓ walkways provided as part of circulation plan
- ✓ trees provided as per parking lot requirements (may be clustered)

## 2) Car Oriented Commercial

### iii. Canopies and bays

- 1) Drive-throughs, car washes and service bay structures shall be no taller than the roof line of the main building and should appear to be smaller than the main building (bays should appear as secondary to main building) and shall incorporate architectural elements of the main building.
- 2) Lighting under canopies shall be completely shielded from shining out from under the canopy.
- 3) The main street oriented façade shall not be dominated by the drive-through canopy or bay component of the site.
- 4) Canopies shall look like roofs, not platforms.
- 5) On any portion of street frontage with a canopy, street trees shall be planted with 20 ft spacing.



- ✓ canopy looks like roof not platform
- ✓ lighting under canopy completely shielded
- ✓ canopy design matches building architecture



- ✓ any portion of street frontage with a canopy shall have street trees planted with 20 foot spacing

## 3) Neighborhood Context

### Purpose

The character or context of an area is defined by such factors as its built environment, natural features and open space, type of buildings, architectural style, and quality of public facilities.

These regulations guide new development to maximize opportunities by completing fragmented street patterns, intensifying activities, and creating stronger linkages with surrounding neighborhoods and commercial areas. This will help ensure that new development will be compatible and complimentary to the existing character of the city while also following the goals and policy direction of the Comprehensive Plan.

### Section Items

- i. Harborside
- ii. SR-20
- iii. Midway Blvd
- iv. Residential neighborhoods

## 3) Neighborhood Context

### i. Harborside

- 1) All overlay district regulations are applicable.
- 2) Only one driveway access is permitted per site.
- 3) Parking is only permitted in the rear of buildings.
- 4) Buildings must be located on the street frontage property line.
- 5) Weather protection shall be provided along building frontages and shall be placed no more than 15 ft above the ground.
- 6) All awning and/or canopies must be designed to compliment the aesthetic and architectural characteristics of the Harborside neighborhood.
- 7) Back-lit awnings are prohibited.
- 8) Building entrances shall recessed into the building as per the historic context of the neighborhood.
- 9) Buildings shall respect the architectural heritage of the neighborhood with complimentary choices for materials, building scale, proportions and architectural details.



- ✓ building located at front setback
- ✓ weather protection along front façade
- ✓ awning and canopies designed to compliment architectural characteristics of Harborside

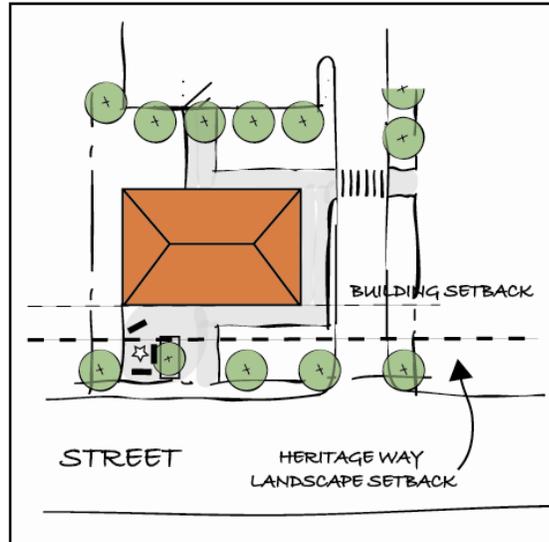


- ✓ building entrances shall be recessed as per historic context of Harborside
- ✓ materials and architecture shall compliment existing context
- ✓ parking is only permitted in the rear of buildings

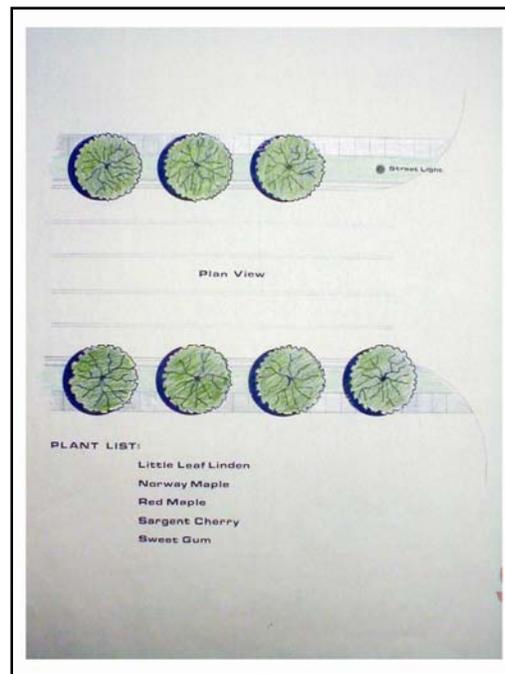
## 3) Neighborhood Context

### ii. SR-20

- 1) All frontages along SR-20 must conform to the Heritage Way landscape plan. This includes a required 20 foot landscape area with approved tree species planted every 30 feet.
- 2) Parking areas are not permitted in the Heritage Way landscape area. Walkways & people spaces are permitted in this area, provided the required number of street trees remain.



- ✓ 20 foot landscape setback along SR-20
- ✓ only people spaces allowed in landscape setback



- ✓ approved species of trees to be planted with 30 foot along SR-20 frontage

## 3) Neighborhood Context

### iii. Midway Boulevard

- 1) Through streets aligned with the existing street grid shall be provided on sites fronting Midway Boulevard. An administrative variance limiting these connections to only pedestrian and bicycle ways may be granted if a well designed proposal can be shown to be: 1) practicable, 2) allows for full pedestrian and bicycle access in both directions, 3) is generally aligned with the street grid, 4) is human scaled, 5) incorporates landscaping, and 6) meets all other design requirements.
- 2) Through lots having two street frontages including one on Midway Blvd. shall provide complimentary landscaping and street improvements along the rear frontages, including: street trees planted with 25 ft spacing, 5 ft landscape strips, and walkways.
- 3) Reductions in parking requirements may be granted for providing shared driveways between sites.



- ✓ through streets aligned with the existing street grid are provided
- ✓ complimentary street improvements along the rear

## 4) Multi-Family Residential Design

### Purpose

The character of residential neighborhoods is important to the community; as is the tradition of providing a range of housing types and densities.

These regulations are intended to ensure that multi-family housing: 1) suits the neighborhood it is located in, 2) helps define friendly and attractive new neighborhoods, 3) is designed to add to the visual character and quality of Oak Harbor's neighborhood streets, and 4) is designed to meet the needs of residents.

### Section Items

- i. Buildings
- ii. People
- iii. Cars

## 4) Multi-Family Residential Design

### i. Buildings

- 1) Street trees planted every 25 ft. are required along the frontages of all multi-family residential uses.
- 2) Street front facades must include windows and entrances visible from the street.
- 3) Blank walls are not permitted; all walls must have visual interest.
- 4) Buildings should be designed for the neighborhood context with views, windows, and entrances directed to the street not toward the neighbor or parking areas.
- 5) The main entrance does not have to face the street if it opens onto a porch, or courtyard that faces the street, and other major architectural details are used to draw attention to the entrance.
- 6) All ground level units shall have direct access to a minimum of 70 sq. ft. of private yard area. This area shall partially screened from neighboring units and uses.
- 7) All ground level units shall have either a separate entrance from the exterior, access from a central courtyard, or access from an interior lobby.
- 8) Buildings shall incorporate materials and details that are fitting with the Pacific north west region and are appropriate for the community's existing design characteristics and the goals stated in the Comprehensive Plan.



- ✓ windows and front doors face street
- ✓ architecture designed to fit into existing neighborhood



- ✓ ground floor residences have private yard space accessible from the unit
- ✓ street trees are provided
- ✓ windows, and balconies are directed toward the street

## 4) Multi-Family Residential Design

### i. Buildings

- 9) Metal siding, concrete blocks, mirrored glass, or stucco shall be used in combination with other materials and should not be the predominant façade material.
- 10) Use building elements such as bay windows, dormers, roofs, trellises and support structures as features that provide smaller scale interest.
- 11) The existing architectural characteristics of buildings along neighboring streets shall be reflected in the design of new buildings by incorporating the following into their design: similar roof pitches; similar window sizes and placement, similar type of entrance features such as porches where appropriate, similar architectural style and detailing and complementary landscaping.
- 12) Roofs should have consistent pitches and overhanging eaves, demonstrating a common-sense recognition of the local climate by utilizing appropriate pitches, drainage and materials.



- ✓ bay windows, dormers, roofs, balconies are used to provide smaller scale interest



- ✓ architectural features highlight the locations of main entrances
- ✓ garages are set back from the front edge of the facade

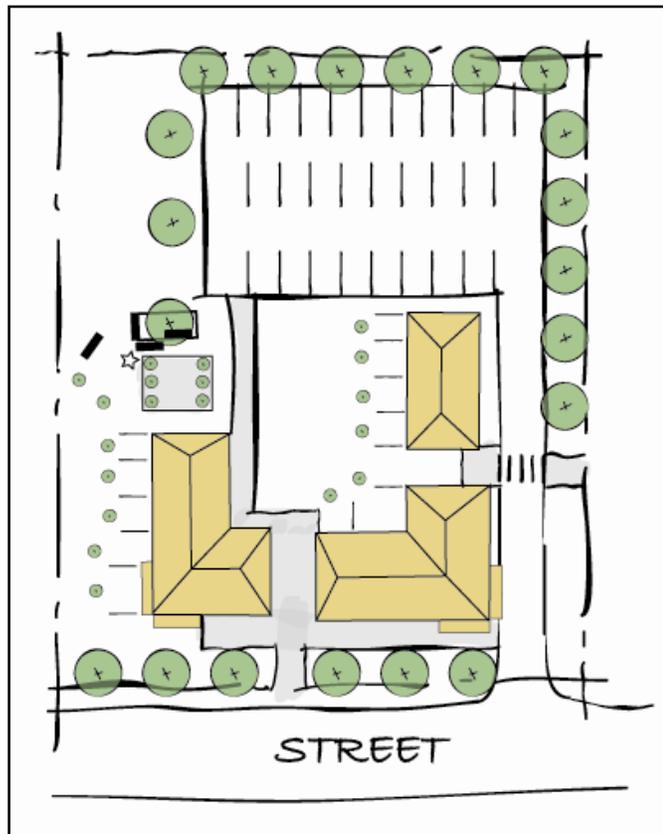
## 4) Multi-Family Residential Design

### ii. People

- 1) In addition to side and rear yards, sites with over eight units must provide safe, well designed common people spaces which include seating, shade trees, and human scaled lighting in practical locations on site. 100 sq. ft. of common people space shall be provided per unit. (Harborside sites are exempt from this requirement). These spaces must be easily visible and central to the site, with direct access to the street.
- 2) Human scaled lighting is required throughout the site including entrances, and along walkways.



- ✓ common open space is designed to be practical, safe, centrally located and visible



- ✓ 100 sq. ft. of common open space is provided per unit
- ✓ ground floor units each have a min of 70 sq. ft. of directly accessible private yard area

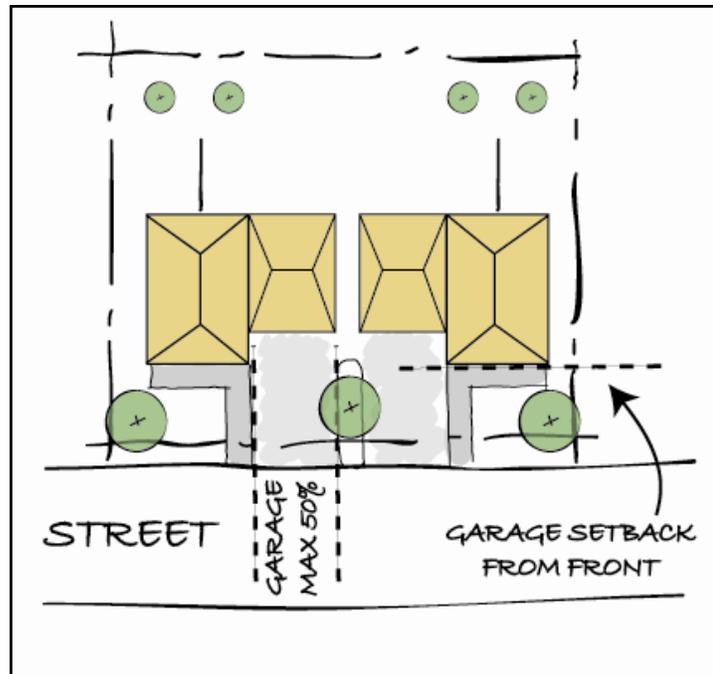
## 4) Multi-Family Residential Design

### iii. Cars

- 1) The garage facing the street may not be more than 1/2 of the façade in length.
- 2) The garage wall facing the street must be no closer than the wall containing the main entrance (or to the edge of a covered porch or deck if provided).
- 3) If there is living space above the garage, and it has windows and/or a functional balcony facing the street, these provisions may be varied.
- 4) Parking lot requirements apply to multi-family developments.



- ✓ garage has living space with windows above so it can be closer to the street than the rest of the building



- ✓ garage facing the street is no more than 1/2 the façade
- ✓ garages walls can be no closer to the street than the rest of the façade.

## 5) Landscaping

### Purpose

At its most basic, site landscaping provides shade for people, visual interest and beauty, and helps define the structure for the overall site that architecture alone can not accomplish.

These regulations are intended to improve the quality of the built environment by providing consistent streetscape landscaping, reducing the unsightliness of parking areas, adding to the overall aesthetics of developments and screening views of service areas or other less attractive elements.

### Section Items

- i. Boundaries
- ii. Screening
- iii. Buffers
- iv. Parking Lots
- v. Standards

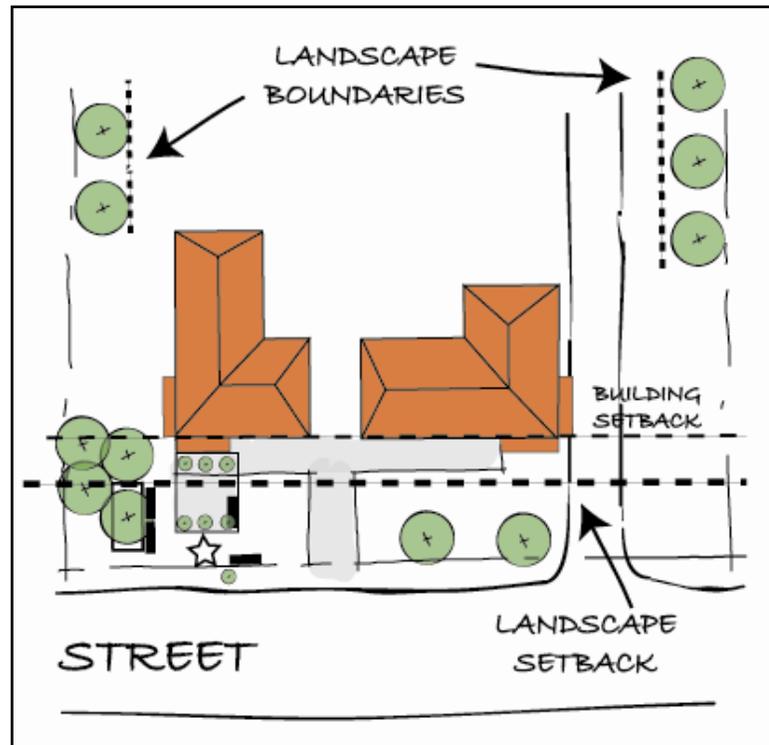
## 5) Landscaping

### i. Boundaries

- 1) A 5 ft. landscape boundary is required along the rear of lots.
- 2) 5 ft. side yard landscape boundaries are required from the rear property line to the rear edge of the building.
- 3) Landscaping and trees may be clustered to provide alternative equivalents to boundary requirements (trees and landscape area must remain the same).
- 4) The street frontage landscape setback shall be 20' along SR-20, 10' along arterials, and 8' on all other roads.
- 5) Boundary and street frontage landscape strips shall be planted with the following, or equivalent groupings: 1) trees at 25' intervals, and 2) shrubs, ground covers, sod, or other landscape features to provide 75% cover at the time of planting.
- 6) Parking areas are not permitted in the landscape strips. People spaces may be included in the landscape strips provided the number of required trees remain.



- ✓ trees planted with 25 foot intervals
- ✓ ground cover and sod over 75% of area



- ✓ side lot landscape boundaries end at the rear of buildings
- ✓ people spaces are encouraged for landscape setbacks, while parking and buildings are prohibited
- ✓ some trees are clustered to provide an alternative equivalent to requirements

## 5) Landscaping

### ii. Screening

- 1) Vehicle storage, garages, mechanical equipment, trash dumpsters, product storage, and service areas are to be fully screened. Fencing may only be used in combination with plantings.
- 2) Landscape buffers may be required for these, or other uses with similar impacts if adjacent to residential zones.



- ✓ trash containers hidden from view with sturdy and attractive enclosure



- ✓ mechanical equipment attractively secured and screened with landscaping

## 5) Landscaping

### iii. Parking lots

Parking lots have the potential to dominate a site, resulting in developments that are less attractive, diminish the streetscape and make the community less people oriented.

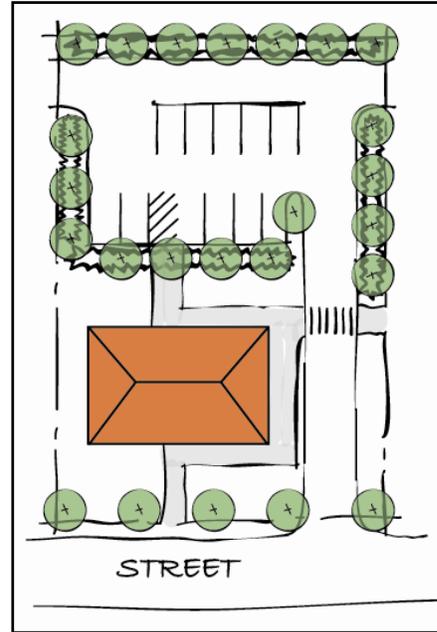
The following regulations define design parameters that reduce the negative impacts of parking areas while ensuring that they are useable, safe and attractive for the community and neighboring developments.

- 1) A full perimeter of hedging & trees is required where there are no walkways or buildings. The perimeter shall be a minimum of 5' wide, have trees spaced every 20'.
- 2) The hedging may include combinations of landscaping and decorative screening walls and shall be a minimum of 30" high with a maximum of 48" along street frontages.

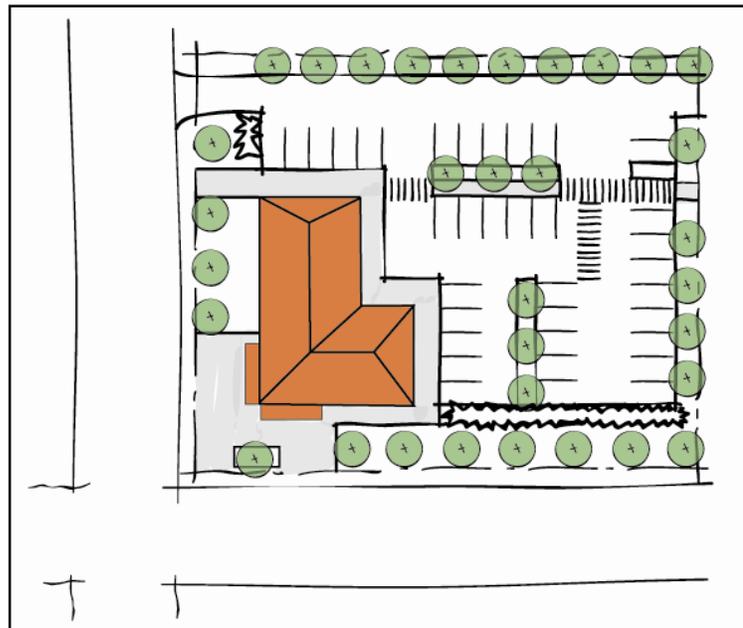
### Large parking lots

#### (21 parking spots or more)

- 1) A minimum of 15% of the area in the parking lot must be landscaped.
- 2) Trees shall be planted in an orchard-like pattern in 5' wide planter strips between facing rows of parking spaces. These planter strips may be reduced in width to 4' if combined with walkways. In these planter strips, trees shall be planted at 20' intervals. Ground-covers and/or shrubs shall be planted covering 75% of the ground at the time of planting.



- ✓ a perimeter of hedging and trees is required around parking lots



- ✓ large parking lots require 15% of the area landscaped
- ✓ trees in 5 ft. planter strips are required between facing rows of parking spots
- ✓ safe pedestrian routes are part of the circulation plan

## 5) Landscaping

### iv. Standards

- 1) A landscape plan, prepared by a registered landscape architect is required for all developments.
- 2) All multi-family residential developments shall incorporate Garry Oaks into their landscape designs.
- 3) Irrigation systems are required for all commercial landscapes and common landscapes in multi-family residential developments. Water conserving drip irrigation systems are preferred.
- 4) Deciduous trees shall be a minimum of 3" trunk diameter at the time of planting.
- 5) Coniferous trees shall be a minimum of 6 feet tall at the time of planting.
- 6) Shrubs and ground covers shall be a minimum size equal to 2 gallon potted plants where appropriate.
- 7) All planter areas must have at least 3 ft. of amended soils (or more if determined necessary per species proposed).
- 8) Parking lot planters shall be a minimum of 5 ft. X 8 ft. measured from inside of curbing.

## 6) Variances

### Purpose

Because of the complexity of sites and development scenarios, not all regulations will be achievable or yield the desired outcome.

Therefore, the *Design Regulations and Guidelines* have been developed with built-in options and procedures for varying from these standards.

Those areas of flexibility have been identified throughout this booklet, including the requirements with which variance requests will be assessed. The following outlines what is required of applicants for processing administrative variances .

### Section Items

- i. Process & Requirements

## 6) Variances

### i. Process & Requirements

- 1) To apply for an administrative variance(s), an applicant must include the following at the time of submitting application(s): 1) a list of the design regulations that are being varied; 2) a narrative clearly explaining each of these, including how the proposed change(s) meets the standards for variances; and 3) a drawing(s) clearly showing the areas where changes are being proposed (this must be a separate drawing(s) specifically for the purpose of reviewing the variance).
- 2) The administrative variance will be reviewed as part of the overall application review process, and will meet the requirements of the Oak Harbor Municipal Code.