Main Street Commercial Buildings

This section provides design guidelines for main street commercial buildings, which should be located primarily along San Benito Street and Fifth Street. These buildings are also appropriate for portions of other streets, generally one to two blocks on either side of San Benito Street.

This section includes guidelines for:

- Site Planning
- Building Form
- Roofs
- Building Facades
- Projecting Facade Elements
- Landscaping
- Fences and Walls
- Lighting
- Service Areas and Mechanical Equipment
- Business Signage
Building Form

A. First floor ceiling heights should be at least 14 feet tall.
B. Upper floor ceiling heights should range between 8 feet and up to 85 percent of the height of first floor ceiling.
C. Buildings should have a minimum of 2 floors and a maximum of 4 floors.
D. At street fronting entrances, the elevation of the ground floor should be at the grade of the adjacent sidewalk.
E. Stepbacks from the front facade are appropriate for upper floors.
F. Multi-level basements are allowed for parking.
G. Building widths should range from 25 feet to 50 feet. A single building wider than 50 feet may be appropriate if designed to look like multiple buildings. Each individual segment of the building should have a maximum width of 50 feet.

Site Planning

A. Building facades should be built at a zero foot setback along all property lines that are adjacent to a street. Storefronts, building entrances, outdoor dining spaces, and upper floor balconies may be recessed into the facade.
B. Buildings should have a minimum depth of 20 feet as measured from the front facade.
C. Building Zone: Buildings should occupy 100 percent of this zone.
D. Multifunctional Zone: Buildings, rear yards, courtyards, parking lots, and/or loading/unloading zones may occupy this zone.
E. Buildings should have a 5 foot rear setback if the rear yard is not adjacent to an alley. No other setbacks are required.
F. Access to parking and loading/unloading facilities should be provided by the alley. If an alley does not provide access to the property, a single two-way driveway is allowed. The driveway should not exceed a width of 20 feet and its centerline should be at least 30 feet from street intersections.
G. The front facade at the building corner adjacent to the intersection may be angled, curved, or recessed, but only if a building entrance is created at the corner.
Design Guidelines
Main Street Commercial Buildings

Building Facades

A. A cap, such as a cornice or a roof overhang, should define the top of the facade.
B. Upper floor facade.
C. Ground floor facade.
D. Horizontal design elements (such as a cornice line, awning, balcony, or change in building material) are encouraged to differentiate between the ground floor and upper floors.
E. 30 to 60 percent of each upper floor facade should be occupied by windows openings.
F. 60 to 90 percent of each ground floor facade should contain transparent windows/doors.
G. Ground floor facades should include one or more structural bays (not exceeding 24 feet) for storefronts. Each ground floor business should have at least one storefront and building entrance.
H. Access to upper floor uses should be provided on a street-fronting facade.

Roofs

The following types of roofs are encouraged:

A. Flat roof with parapet or cornice
B. Shed roof (only where building stepbacks occur)
C. Sloped roof combined with roof parapet
D. Roofing forms, slopes, details, materials, and overall design should be compatible with the overall style and character of the structure.
E. All roofs should include gutters/downspouts that:
   - Drain directly into a cistern, landscaped area, or storm drain system.
   - Match the trim or body color of the facade.
   - Are inconspicuously located.
F. Roof overhangs should not extend over a neighboring parcel or more than 3 feet over a public sidewalk (unless it covers a balcony that projects more than 3 feet over the sidewalk).
G. Appropriate types of roof materials that are encouraged on buildings include:
   - Slate or fiber cement shingles
   - Clay or concrete tile roofs
   - Composite roofing materials made of recycled natural fiber and recycled plastic
   - Tar, gravel, composition, or elastomeric materials (concealed by a parapet/cornice)

H. Vent pipes that are visible from streets, sidewalks, plazas, courtyards, and pedestrian walkways should be painted to match the color of the roof to make them less conspicuous.
**Building Facades | Colors**

A. Muted and soft colors are encouraged. Extensively bold, bright, fluorescent, and neon colors should be avoided. If used, extensively bold, bright, fluorescent, and neon colors should only be used as accent colors on window and door frames, building trim, and details.

B. Color applications on a facade should generally be limited to one or two main colors and two to three accent colors that complement the main color(s) of the structure.

C. Painted building surfaces should have a matte finish. Trim work may have a glossy finish.

D. The natural colors of brick and stone material should be maintained. These materials should not be painted or glazed.

**Building Facades | Articulation**

Street facing building facades, as well as all facades that front a plaza, courtyard, or alley, should be articulated to improve the quality of the design. Appropriate methods of articulation include, but are not limited to:

- Increasing the number and/or size of window openings.
- Providing stylized windows and doors.
- Creating a defined base for the building.
- Providing three-dimensional expression lines (vertical and horizontal) between the floors of the structure and around storefronts and window openings.
- Adding depth and detail to the cornice or roof parapet.
- Recessing storefronts and windows into the facade to create depth and cast shadow patterns.
Main Street Commercial Buildings

Design Guidelines

Building Facades | Materials

A. Front facades are defined as facades that face streets or public spaces (some buildings may have multiple front facades). Side and rear facades should be designed with similar architectural elements, materials, and colors as the front facade. However, the design of side and rear facades may be simpler, more casual, and more utilitarian in nature.

B. Materials should be complementary to one another and appropriate for the architectural style or theme of the building.

C. The number of building materials used on a facade should be generally limited to no more than 3 different materials (excluding windows). Changes in material should generally occur when there is a change in the plane of the facade. The change in material should occur on inside corners of the building. If a change is proposed along the line of a single plane, a pronounced expansion joint should be used to define a clear separation.

D. Appropriate traditional building materials that are encouraged on facades include:
   - Brick, rock, and stone
   - Poured in place concrete
   - Concrete block
   - Fiber cement
   - Wrought iron (in storefronts)
   - Plaster or stucco
   - Hardie board
   - Ceramic tiles (as a secondary material)
   - Finished and painted wood trim
   - Wood, aluminum, copper, steel, and vinyl clad frames for windows and door (doors with windows are strongly encouraged)

E. Inappropriate building materials that should be discouraged on facades include:
   - Plywood
   - Hardboard
   - Unfinished lumber
   - Aluminum, textured T-11, or corrugated fiberglass, sheet metal, or tin siding

G. If used, bricks should be unglazed, earth tone, and in a horizontal orientation.

H. If used, brick and stone veneer should be mortared to give the appearance that they have a structural function.

I. Brick and stone materials should wrap around corners to give an appearance of structural function and minimize a veneer appearance.
Building Facades | Windows

A. Window openings should have a vertical orientation and proportion. If the window opening has a square or horizontal orientation, windows and windowpanes should have a vertical orientation.
B. Basic and simple window shapes are encouraged.
C. If used, window and door shutters should have a width that would enclose the entire window or door opening when the shutters are closed.
D. Windows should be recessed into the wall surface to help articulate the facade and to create interesting shadow patterns.
E. Windows that open and close should be used to encourage natural ventilation of the building and less dependence on energy to ventilate, heat, and cool the structure.
F. Ground floor storefronts should utilize clear transparent glass to provide clear views of storefront displays from the street and allow natural surveillance of the street and adjacent outdoor spaces.
G. Mirror and tinted glass is strongly discouraged.

Building Facades | Clerestory Windows

A. The upper floors of side and rear facades that directly overlook a rear yard on a neighboring residential lot should be designed with clerestory window openings. This will help preserve the privacy of the adjacent rear yard. Regular window openings are appropriate on these upper floor facades if the facade is setback from the property line of the adjacent yard by at least 20 horizontal feet and if mature trees, fencing, and landscaping are used to obscure views into the rear yard.
**Design Guidelines**

**Main Street Commercial Buildings**

### Building Facades | Storefronts

Elements of traditional “Main Street” storefronts are encouraged. These elements include the recessed entry door(s), display windows, the kickplate or bulkhead, transom windows, and a cornice defining the top of the storefront.

Storefronts should be recessed into the wall plane by at least 6 inches and should be framed by building piers or columns and a cornice or horizontal expression line.

### Building Facades | Structured Parking

Structured parking is strongly discouraged on portions of the ground floor that front a street, plaza, or courtyard, but is appropriate on portions of upper floors if:

- The parking deck along the street facade maintains a horizontal line and all sloping ramps or parking decks are not visible from the street.
- The facade includes regularly spaced window openings with metal frames that articulate the openings and provide vertical orientation within the openings. 30 to 60 percent of each facade should consist of openings.
- Includes compatible materials, colors, details, architectural elements, and textures as the ground floor facade.

Examples of appropriate (left) and inappropriate (right) upper floor facades with structured parking.

Examples of appropriate storefronts.
A. For a facade that fronts a street, plaza, or courtyard, at least 75 percent of the facade's width should contain projecting elements that create shade for pedestrians, such as awnings/marquees, or projecting second floor balconies, and colonnades.

B. Awnings and marquees should not project more than 6 feet from the facade.

C. Balconies and decks should not project more than 6 feet from the facade.

D. Bay windows should not project more than 3 feet from the facade.

E. Projecting signs should not project more than 2 feet from the facade. The area of the sign should not exceed 6 square feet.

F. A minimum clearance of 8 feet (measured from the sidewalk to the bottom of the element) should be provided along sidewalks.

G. External chimneys, external staircases to upper floors, and garage doors are strongly discouraged on the front facade.

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Projecting Facade Elements | Awnings, Marquees, and Trellises

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I. Colorful canvas and fabric awnings are encouraged and preferable to permanent awnings made of glass, plastic, or metal. Backlit awnings are discouraged.
### Projecting Facade Elements | **Balconies**

A. Balconies may be open or covered with a roof or upper story balcony.
B. Balconies should be designed with materials, colors, and details that are compatible with the style of the building and the materials used on the facade. The balcony should not have a tacked-on appearance or look like it was an addition or afterthought.
C. The distance between roof-supporting columns, piers, or posts on balconies should not exceed their height.

#### Examples of appropriate balconies.

### Projecting Facade Elements | **Bay Windows**

A. Bay windows should not exceed 8 feet in length.
B. Bay windows should be designed with materials, colors, and details that are compatible with the style of the building and the materials on the facade.
C. If more than one bay window is provided on a facade, at least 4 feet of horizontal separation should occur between the two bay windows.
D. Windows should be provided on all sides of the bay window. Windows should have a vertical orientation and proportion.

#### Examples of appropriate bay windows.
Landscaping

A. The following areas should be landscaped and regularly maintained to be free of weeds, overgrown vegetation, and litter:
   - Yards that are visible from streets, sidewalks, and/or other public spaces.
   - Common outdoor areas within any development.
   - Private and public surface parking lots.

B. New trees should have a caliper size of 3 inches measured 12 inches from the ground. If the species is not available in this size, a caliper of 2-½ inches measured 12 inches from the ground may be acceptable.

C. In order to provide adequate pedestrian clearance, trees should be pruned regularly so that there is at least 8 feet of vertical clearance between the lowest branches of the tree and the grade of the adjacent sidewalk or walkway. They should also be pruned to maintain the health, vigor, and natural shape of the tree, and to maintain vehicular clearance and sight lines.

D. Landscaping should be maintained in a healthy and attractive state and be watered, weeded, generally maintained, and replaced (if necessary) by the property owner/manager.

E. Landscaped areas should be irrigated with automatic drip/bubbler irrigation systems that do not spray water outside the planting area.

F. Trees that provide a canopy of shade in the summer and that do not drop heavy cones, sap, fruit, and seedlings are encouraged along sidewalks, walkways, and near parking spaces. Surface parking lots should be designed with landscaping features such as:
   - Landscaped planters should be located between public sidewalks and parking lots, and should be at least 5 feet wide. These should be landscaped with a combination of shrubs, trees, and flowering plants.
   - 1 tree should be planted per 4 parking spaces. Trees may be planted in landscaped planters, tree wells in pedestrian walkways, and/or diamond shaped planter boxes located between parking rows. Diamond-shaped planter boxes and tree wells should be at least 5 feet square. Tree grates and root guards are strongly encouraged for trees planted within walkways.
   - Ground cover, low-lying shrubs, and trees should be planted within the planters and planter boxes. Tree grates or landscaping may be used within walkways.
**Landscaping (Continued)**

- **H.** Trees should have an adequately sized planting area based on the amount of room needed for tree roots. Root barriers, tree guards, and tree grates are encouraged for trees are planted near sidewalks and walkways.

- **I.** Flowerpots and planter boxes are encouraged to add color and variety to the landscape. These should be located on overhangs, columns or posts, balconies, and below windows. Flowerpots and planter boxes should be compatible with the architecture style of the building.

- **J.** Indigenous or drought-tolerant landscaping that can grow in the microclimate of Downtown Hollister is strongly encouraged. Plants and trees should be adaptable to the site’s microclimate, soil, and orientation/aspect.

- **K.** The amount of space dedicated to lawns should be minimized to reduce water demand and the use of fertilizers. Lawns should only be used in areas that are intended for relaxation or play.

- **L.** Plants and trees should be grouped based on the water demands of the species. Dividing the plants into low, medium, and high water use zones will help to prevent over watering.

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**Fences and Walls**

- **A.** Fences and walls should be compatible with the architecture of the building on the site.

- **B.** Pergolas and entrance arbors are allowed on fences/walls, but should not exceed 8 feet in height.

- **C.** Fences and walls should be articulated by having regularly spaced posts, changing the height, and using different building materials at the base, posts, or the cap of the fence/wall.

- **D.** Flat walls, chain link fences, and barbed wire fences are strongly discouraged.

- **E.** Fences and walls should be made from:
  - Wood
  - Natural stone or brick (unpainted)
  - Wrought iron
  - Concrete masonry
  - Other similar materials

- **F.** Fences and walls (excluding those made with stone or brick) should be painted to match or compliment the color of the building.
Examples of desirable nighttime lighting.

Examples of undesirable nighttime lighting.

Examples of decorative lighting poles and fixtures.

**Lighting**

A. Areas used by pedestrians should be illuminated at night to ensure safety. Such areas include:
- Surface parking lots and parking structures (entrances, elevators, and stairwells)
- Sidewalks, walkways, and plazas
- Automated Teller Machines (ATMs)
- Building entrances (including rear and service entrances)
- Garbage disposal areas
- Alleys
- Other areas routinely used by pedestrians

B. Site, building, and sign lighting should be located and directed to light the intended area of illumination and to prevent off-site glare impacts on adjacent buildings or properties.

C. Lighting should be provided at regular intervals to prevent the creation of light and dark pockets. Dark pockets can create uncomfortable areas for pedestrians and provide opportunities for criminals to hide in dark shadows. Light pockets can create a “fish bowl” affect and limit the ability to see outside of the light pocket.

D. Buildings and sites should not be over-lit to maintain a desirable nighttime ambience.

E. Lighting poles and fixtures should have a decorative/ornamental design that complements the structures on the site.
Service Areas and Mechanical Equipment

A. Trash disposal areas and shipping and receiving areas should be located within parking garages or to the rear of buildings. Trash disposal areas should be screened from public views from all sidewalks, streets, plazas, and public spaces.

B. Trash enclosures or garages should be used to store outdoor garbage containers or dumpsters.

C. The design of trash enclosures should be architecturally compatible with other buildings on the site, and their design should use similar forms, materials, and color applications.

D. The following should be screened from public views from streets, pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, plazas, courtyards and public spaces:
   - Electric and water utility meters
   - Power transformers and sectors
   - Heating/ventilation/cooling equipment
   - Irrigation and pool pumps
   - Satellite dishes (wider than 18 inches)
   - Antennas
   - Rooftop mechanical equipment
   - Other mechanical equipment

E. Appropriate methods of screening include fencing, landscaping, roof parapets, and equipment enclosures. The design of screening devices should be compatible with the main structure and conform to other sections of this Code. Noise levels of mechanical equipment should be minimized.

Examples of appropriate trash enclosures.

Examples of appropriate (left) and inappropriate (right) methods of screening.
A. To reduce clutter, signage should only be placed on facades that have building entrances.
B. Signs should not cover or obscure windows, doors, storefronts, building entrances, cornices, columns, or other architectural elements/details.
C. The gross area of signs parallel to a facade should not exceed 10 percent of the facade area.
D. Signs should be constructed of durable and weatherproof materials so they will not discolor, fade, crack, rust, or erode.
E. Simple and easy-to-read typefaces should be used on signs. Hard-to-read and intricate typefaces should be avoided.
F. Signs with symbols, characters, or graphics are encouraged if the symbol/character/graphic relates to the products sold or business name.
G. Signs that show depth and cast shadows are encouraged. Using individually cut or carved in letter or symbols to the base of the sign can create depth and shadows.
H. Sign materials and colors should compliment the building facade. Basic and simple color applications are encouraged and vibrant and fluorescent colors should be avoided.
I. The color of letters and symbols should contrast the base or background color of the sign to maximize readability.
J. Sign lighting should be directed and shielded to illuminate the sign and not to spill over to other parts of the building or site.
K. Internally illuminated box signs that light the entire sign (letters, symbols, logos, and background) are strongly discouraged.
A. The following signs are appropriate and encouraged for main street commercial buildings:
- Awning or marquee signs
- Storefront signs
- Building/primary tenant signs
- Window signs
- Projecting signs
- Directory signs
Guidelines for these signs are provided on the following pages.

B. The following signs are inappropriate and strongly discouraged on main street commercial buildings:
- Pole mounted or lollipop signs
- Billboards
- Inflatable or windblown signs
- Signs that produce smoke or sound
- Signs with animated or moving characters
- Changeable letter marquee signs (except for theaters or concert venues)
- Window signs that occupy more than 25 percent of the window’s area
- Roof mounted signs
- Permanent sidewalk signs
- Monument signs

Examples of appropriate signs.

Examples of inappropriate signs.
Business Signage | Awning or Marquee Signs

**A. Description:** A sign that is printed or mounted on an awning or marquee.
B. Signs should be placed only on the front face or valance of the awning or marquee.
C. Signs should not exceed a height of 12 inches or a length of 48 inches.
D. The width of the sign should not exceed 80 percent of the width of the awning or marquee.
E. Marquee signs may be illuminated by backlighting behind individually mounted letters or symbols, by neon tubing, or by the internal illumination of sign symbols and letters.
F. Awnings/marquees (and associated signs) should provide a minimum of 8 feet clearance over a sidewalk, walkway, or other public space.

Examples of appropriate awning (top) and marquee (bottom) signs.

Example of a sign illuminated with backlighting.

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Business Signage | Storefront Signs

**A. Description:** A horizontally oriented sign that is mounted on the facade above the entrance to ground floor stores.
B. The distance between the lowest point and highest point of a storefront sign should not exceed 36 inches.
C. Storefront signs should not project out from the facade more than 12 inches.
D. Ground floor business within a building may have one or multiple storefront signs. However, the cumulative width of all storefront signs on a facade should not exceed 50 percent of the facades width.
E. Storefront signs should be placed in an area that is above the ground floor storefront windows and below the windows on the second floor.
F. Storefront signs may be illuminated externally by lights mounted on the facade, by backlighting behind individually mounted letters or symbols, by neon tubes, or by the internal illumination of sign symbols and letters.

Example of appropriate storefront sign.

Example of a sign with external illumination.
**Business Signage | Building/Primary Tenant Signs**

Description: A horizontally oriented sign that is mounted above the windows of the top floor of the building. These signs are used to identify the name of the building or the primary tenant of the building.

B. Only one of these signs should be placed on a single building.

C. The distance between the lowest point and highest point of a building/primary tenant sign should not exceed 36 inches.

D. Building/primary tenant signs should not project out from the facade more than 12 inches.

E. Building/primary tenant signs may be illuminated externally by lights mounted on the facade, by backlighting behind individually mounted letters or symbols, or by the internal illumination of sign symbols and letters.

**Business Signage | Window Signs**

Description: A temporary or permanent sign that is placed on or within 18 inches of a window (including windows on doors). Window signs include posters for advertisements and sales, product merchandise posters, open and closed signs, and painted or etched business names and logos.

B. Window signs should only be used on the windows of non-residential uses.

C. Window signs should not occupy more than 25 percent of a window.

D. Permanent window signs should be created with permanent, fade resistant paint, gold-leaf lettering, or glass etching.

E. In store lighting or an externally mounted light should be used to illuminate window signs. The use of neon tubing should be limited to “open” and “closed” signs.
**Business Signage | Projecting Signs**

A. Description: A double-sided sign that projects perpendicular to the facade and hangs from a mounted wall brace or ceiling of a balcony.

B. Projecting signs may project up to 2 feet from a facade.

C. Projecting signs should provide a minimum of 8 feet of vertical clearance from the ground.

D. Projecting signs that hang from the ceiling of a balcony or arcade shall not exceed a width of 2 feet and should be centered within the balcony.

E. The maximum area of a projecting sign should not exceed 10 square feet.

F. Projecting signs should be mounted near storefront entrances.

G. The top of a projecting signs should be located below the windows on the second floor of the building.

H. A maximum of one projecting sign should be allowed for every storefront entrance on the facade.

I. Projecting signs should be externally illuminated by a light mounted on the facade or by neon tubing used to illuminate letters, symbols, and accent frames.

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**Business Signage | Directory Signs**

A. Description: A small sign that is attached flat against the facade at the eye level of pedestrians. Directory signs are either used to identify an individual business within a storefront or to identify multiple tenants that are accessible by a shared entrance or lobby.

B. Directory signs should not exceed an area of 6 square feet.

C. Only one directory sign should be allowed for each storefront or lobby entrance.

D. External illumination is strongly encouraged.