



Revitalization Guidelines for Corridors, Villages and Town Centres

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Preamble:

These guidelines apply to designated Corridors, Villages and Town Centres and are intended to supplement the *Design Guidelines For: Multi-Unit Residential, Commercial and Industrial, July 2012* which address form and character of developments across the city.

It is intended that both guideline documents will be considered together in conjunction with other applicable guidelines noted in each designated development permit area as detailed in the *Official Community Plan*. Collectively, the guidelines are intended to guide applicants in achieving new development and additions to existing buildings that result in design excellence, livability, and high-quality pedestrian environments. This is intended to contribute to sense of place and urbanism that is responsive to Victoria's context, while enabling flexibility and fostering creativity.

All visuals in this document are provided for illustrative purposes only to support description of the guidelines.

General Guidelines

1) Context and Streetscapes:

- a. Buildings flanking streets should create a sense of enclosure and human scale. To achieve this, buildings fronting streets should provide a "street wall" that is at a height approximately 1/2 to 1/3 the width of the flanking street. This can be expressed as a street-wall-to-street-width ratio range of approximately 1:2 to 1:3. For buildings located on corner sites, this principle should be applied to the facades facing both streets where possible.

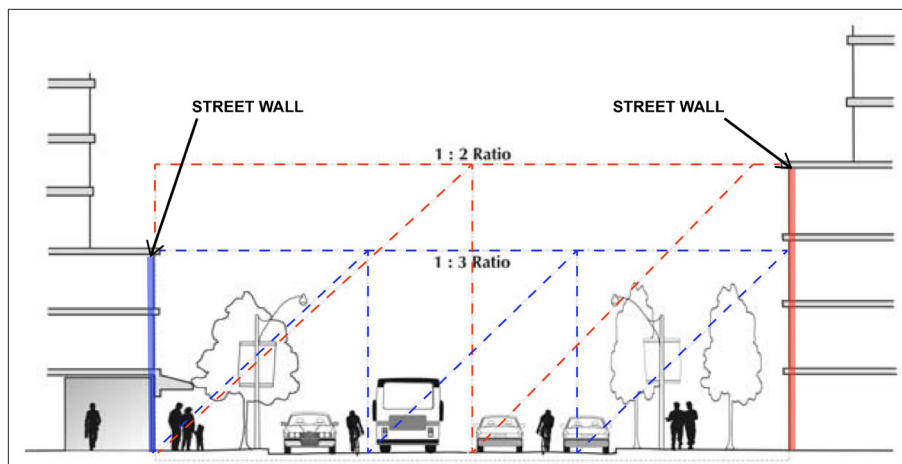


Figure 1: A building height-to-street-width ratio of between approximately 1:3 and 1:2 is recommended to frame streets and provide human scale. Portions of buildings above the street wall are encouraged to step back.

- b. To mitigate the visual impact of building height and to maximize sunlight exposure to the street, the upper portions of buildings above the street wall should be set back by at least two metres.
- c. Where an established pedestrian-friendly street wall exists, the front facade of new buildings should be generally aligned with adjacent buildings to create visual continuity along the streetscape.
- d. Buildings with commercial uses at grade should generally be built up to the sidewalk. Portions of the front facade may be set back from the front property line to accommodate features such as patios, courtyards or seating areas.
- e. Buildings should create "eyes on the street" and public spaces by orienting doorways, windows and balconies to overlook sidewalks, walkways, parks and other open spaces.
- f. Consider unique rooflines for taller buildings that have a visually prominent location (e.g. at corners, or at terminating vistas of streets) in order to create a distinct landmark.

2) Building Design:

- a. Building facades, especially those facing streets, should be well-designed and articulated with human-scale architectural features that create visual interest for pedestrians. Facade designs should consider the rhythm and pattern of existing building facades and architectural elements in the surrounding context, such as building articulation, rooflines, window placement, entryways, canopies and cornice lines.
- b. Large expanses of blank walls should be avoided. Where this is not possible, design treatments such as vertical plant materials, landscaping, art (e.g. mosaic, mural or relief) or the use of other building materials and building elements are encouraged to add visual interest.
- c. Weather protection for pedestrians should be provided in the following manner:
 - a) Individual canopies or awnings of sufficient depth should be provided to protect pedestrians from inclement weather, especially at building entrances.
 - b) The underside of canopies should be illuminated.
 - c) Canopies with translucent or frosted glazing are encouraged to maximize winter sunlight, particularly for north-facing facades.
- d. For buildings located on a corner, the corner design should include an architectural feature that addresses and emphasizes the corner. Strategies to achieve this include but are not limited to a chamfered or setback corner, prominent glazing, or a primary building entrance oriented to the corner.
- e. The first storey of a mixed-use or commercial building should be designed with a minimum floor-to-ceiling height of at least 4m and a minimum depth of approximately 10 metres to accommodate a range of commercial uses.
- f. Buildings with commercial uses at grade should be designed with a series of modulated storefronts and entrances, with transparent glazing. This design strategy is encouraged even where the building has a single tenant or use.



Figure 2: Modulated, transparent storefronts create interest for pedestrians and encourage activity along the street.

- g. Buildings that extend along sloping sites should be designed to follow and respond to the natural topography while maintaining a strong relationship of facades and building entrances to the street. Where retaining walls are unavoidable, they should be designed to ensure that they do not negatively impact the pedestrian experience along adjacent sidewalks.

3) Parking:

- a. Parking should be located underground or to the rear of buildings to provide human scale pedestrian environments. Where rear yard surface parking is proposed, building designs and landscaping interventions should be employed so that parking is integrated into sites in a manner that results in an attractive and safe environment.

4) Livability:

- a. Where two or more buildings are located on a single site, or where a single structure contains two or more building elements above a common base or podium, a comfortable separation space should be provided for residential units, with consideration for window placement, sunlight penetration to residential units, and adequate spaces for landscaping.

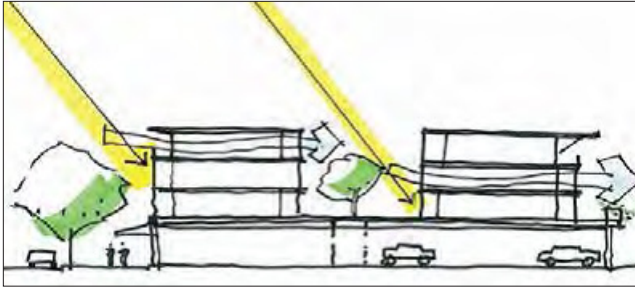


Figure 3: Comfortable separation space allows for sunlight access to individual units and outdoor spaces.

- b. Multi-unit buildings should be designed to provide a sensitive transition in scale to adjacent, smaller developments through considerations for massing and other design features. Strategies to achieve this may include but are not limited to setting upper storeys back, varying roof lines, siting or scaling buildings to reduce shading, etc.
- c. Residential building designs are strongly encouraged to include common outdoor space such as landscaped courtyards or rooftops, where possible.
- d. Buildings with residential use should be designed so that units receive daylight and natural ventilation from at least two sides of the building, or from one side and a roof. Where possible, provide dwelling units with a choice of aspect: front and back, or on two sides (for corner units).
- e. Residential buildings located along busy arterial streets should incorporate design features that minimize noise and pollution impacts (e.g. triple-pane glazing, residential units oriented towards courtyards, design of residential units with multiple orientations or side orientations, and building air intakes located away from the road).
- f. As a means to improve privacy between adjacent buildings, consider design solutions such as window size, window height, window placement and orientation, exterior landscaping, privacy screens or the use of frosted glazing on balconies.
- g. Pedestrian walkways that connect the primary entrance of multi-unit residential or commercial buildings with the adjacent public sidewalk should be a minimum of 2m wide and distinguishable from driving surfaces by using varied paving treatments.

5) Materials and Finishes:

- a. Exterior materials that are high quality, durable and capable of withstanding a range of environmental conditions throughout the year are strongly encouraged, particularly on lower portions of buildings that are more closely experienced by pedestrians. High quality building materials include but are not limited to:
 - Natural wood
 - Composite materials
 - Brick masonry
 - Glazed tile
 - Stone
 - Concrete
 - Flat profile “slate” concrete tiles
 - Glass and wood for window assemblies
 - Standing seam metal roofing
- b. Light-coloured, heat reflective and permeable paving materials are encouraged for hard surfaces such as parking areas, walkways, patios and courtyards as a means to reduce storm water run-off and reduce heat-island effects. Light-coloured or heat reflective materials are also encouraged for rooftops to reduce heat island effects.

6) Landscaping and Open Space:

- a. Buildings that include residential units should include private open space (e.g. balconies, porches) or easily accessed shared open space in the form of courtyards, green spaces, terraces, yards, play areas or rooftop gardens.
- b. The rear yard of multi-unit or mixed-use buildings adjacent to lower scale residential development should provide landscaping and trees that mitigate the appearance of massing and contribute to a transition in scale.
- c. Landscape design should consider the local climate and water efficiency through species selection, including selection of draught-tolerant species, efficient irrigation systems or design of unirrigated landscapes, use of run-off for irrigation, presence of rain gardens and other approaches.
- d. Consider features in landscaping or open space that add to sociability, such as shared areas to sit, garden plots, play areas, balconies fronting courts, etc.

Area-Specific Guidelines:

In addition to the General Guidelines, the following guidelines apply to each specific designated area.

1) Mayfair Town Centre:

- a. Taller buildings should generally be focused in the western part of the site, near Douglas Street.
- b. Design taller buildings to have a clear architectural distinction between the base (podium or street wall portion), middle and upper portion of the building.
- c. The podium base or street wall portion of buildings are encouraged to be three to five storeys (approximately 10–15m) in height.
- d. Major redevelopment of the Mayfair Shopping Centre should incorporate an internal network of pedestrian-friendly streets and connections between Speed Street, Nanaimo Street and Oak Street in order to create a structure of city blocks and to support permeability for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

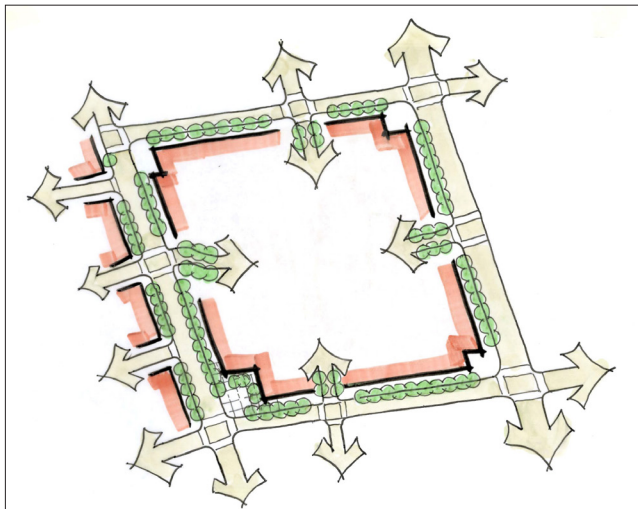


Figure 5: Major redevelopment of the Mayfair Shopping Centre site should establish an internal block structure connecting to adjacent streets.

- e. Building design should emphasize Douglas Street as the primary retail street of the Mayfair Town Centre. However, building designs should not “turn their back” on adjacent streets. Instead, provide facades that address all street frontages and are consistent with the General Guidelines for Building Designs (SECTION 2).
- f. Building design that results in a landmark expression is encouraged at the intersection of Douglas and Finlayson Streets.
- g. The tower portions of buildings above six storeys in height should generally be sited and designed to maintain access to sunlight, with a sufficient face-to-face separation distance between towers on the same site, and a sufficient clear distance to lot lines abutting other developable parcels. A desired face-to-face separation distance for towers at the Mayfair Shopping Centre site (the area bounded by Douglas Street, Nanaimo Street, Blanshard Street and Tolmie Avenue) is 25 metres.

2) Gorge at Irma Village:

- a. Development within this village should create multiple smaller storefronts facing Gorge Road and turning the corner onto Irma Street to support a variety of neighbourhood-oriented commercial uses.

3) Douglas-Blanshard Corridor:

- a. In the Humber Green area between Douglas and Blanshard Streets, residential units are encouraged to be oriented to inner courtyards or quieter interior streets to mitigate noise impacts from adjacent arterial traffic. However, building designs should not “turn their backs” to Douglas and Blanshard Streets. Instead, provide facades that address all street frontages and are consistent with the General Guidelines for Building Designs (SECTION 2).

4) Gorge Road East Corridor

- a. Redevelopment along Gorge Road East should consider site planning and building massing to preserve and enhance view corridors looking south from Balfour Street and Carroll Street toward the Olympic Mountains.

Proposed Additional Content for Victoria West Neighbourhood (1 of 3)

6) Craigflower Village

- a. Craigflower Village is envisioned as a neighbourhood-serving area with smaller storefronts, facades activating street or park edges regardless of use, and with scale transitioning to the adjacent neighbourhood. To achieve this:
 - i. Buildings with commercial uses at grade should feature frequent entries and smaller storefront modules. A maximum distance of 10 metres for each module should be maintained.
 - ii. Between Raynor Street and Russell Street, new buildings should be sited close to the sidewalk's edge, regardless of use. Greater setbacks are encouraged where they accommodate residential or commercial patios or porches.

7) Skinner Street Corridor

- a. Development in the Urban Residential (designated) areas of the block bounded by Skinner Street, Russell Street, Raynor Avenue, and Catherine Street:
 - i. should be designed with special attention to transitioning to the lower scale development on the same block, as this block contains potential development at different scales.
 - ii. should be developed with (a) streetwall(s) of no more than 3 storeys fronting onto Raynor Avenue, with front yard landscape and individual entries on the ground floor, for compatibility with the surrounding lower-scale residential context.
- b. Multi-unit buildings (townhouses, houseplexes or house conversions) in the Traditional Residential (designated) areas along Skinner Street should be designed to be compatible with the scale and rhythm of existing development along the street, including the scale and massing of buildings, the presence of landscaped front yards, and adjacent historic buildings.

8) Catherine at Edward Small Urban Village

- a. Buildings fronting along Catherine Street between Edward Street and Langford Street are encouraged to establish a consistent streetwall close to the sidewalk's edge, regardless of use, with individual entries on the ground floor. Greater setbacks are encouraged where they accommodate residential or commercial patios or porches.
- b. Features which activate the frontage (e.g. glazing along the ground floor, entries, patios or porches, and windows or balconies providing for surveillance of the public realm) should wrap around the corner to activate the laneway as a pedestrian or gathering space and provide for surveillance.

9) Westside Large Urban Village

- a. The section of Wilson Street stretching from its intersection at Bay Street and running east along the edge of Vic West Park is envisioned as an important gathering area. In addition to the General Guidelines, development in this area should provide frequent entries and be set back to provide sufficient space for pedestrian circulation, patio dining and street furniture along the Wilson Street frontage.
- b. With new development, maintain or enhance the pedestrian connection that links Tyee Road to Wilson Street through the site as illustrated conceptually in Figure 6.
- c. Buildings fronting on the Wilson Street – Bay Street intersection should engage the intersection with corner entries, enhanced pedestrian treatments or small plazas.
- d. Buildings at the two identified terminating vistas on the west side of Bay Street, identified in Figure 6, should create a distinct landmark consistent with the General Guidelines.

Proposed Additional Content for Victoria West Neighbourhood (2 of 3)

- e. With redevelopment of the block west of Bay Street, new development is encouraged to create an internal pedestrian and/or road network linking the neighbourhood to the west, Bay Street, and Langford Street. (See, for example, conceptual illustration in Figure x.)
- f. In order to transition sensitively to the neighbourhood to the west, building streetwalls on the east side of Alston Street should be no more than 3 storeys in height. Upper storeys should be set back.

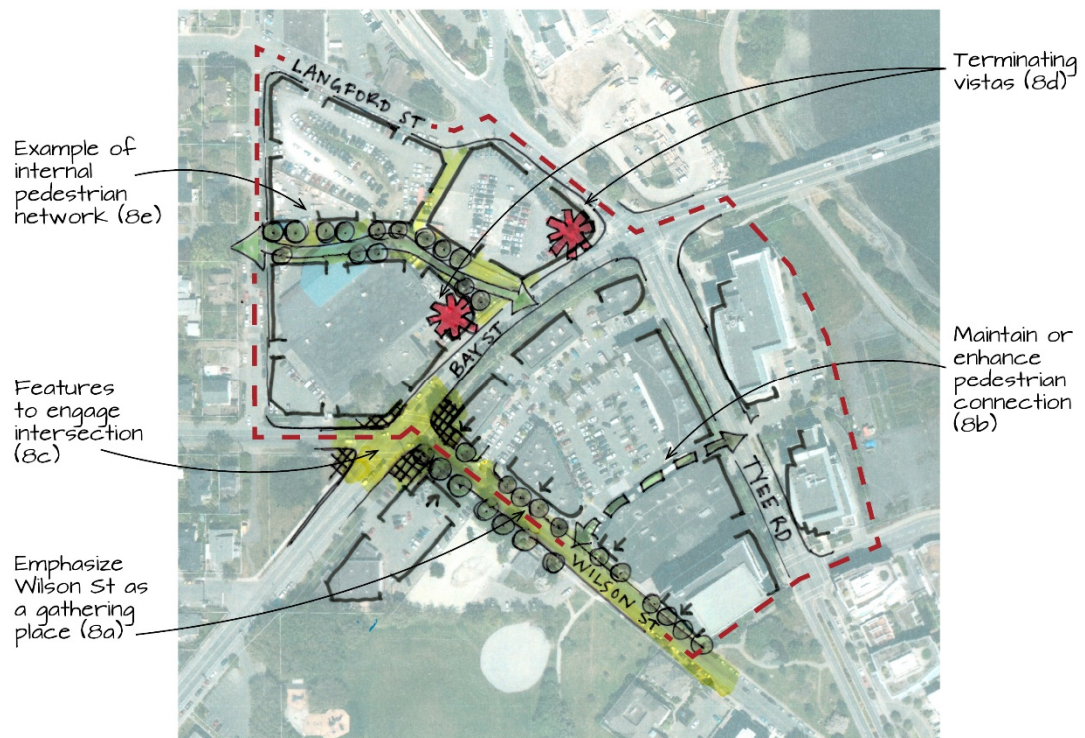


Figure 6: Conceptual illustration for Westside Large Urban Village

10) Esquimalt Road Corridor

- a. New development within the corridor and located between Mary Street and Victoria West Park should be designed to respect the public view corridor identified from Catherine Street at Edward Street, looking south to the Olympic Mountains, by considering the location, siting, massing and design of new development.
- b. Uses along the south side of Esquimalt Road which are adjacent to the (future) E&N Rail Trail should provide for active frontages facing the trail, with entries, transparent glazing, and upper floor windows or balconies which provide for “eyes on the trail.” Pedestrian areas with a mix of hard and soft landscaping should be provided adjacent to the trail and delineated from the portion of the trail which is for active movement.

11) Supplementary Guidelines for Light Industrial Development in Victoria West Corridors and Villages:

Context and Intent: The Victoria West neighbourhood is a mixed neighbourhood of largely residential, commercial and mixed uses with pockets of light industrial uses in specific corridors. These light industrial areas accommodate employees and customers, interface with public spaces such as streets and trails, are found adjacent to or across the street from residential or commercial areas, and may contain a mix of uses. Therefore, it is important that care be taken in designing light industrial development to provide a positive environment for users, to minimize impacts on adjacent non-industrial development, and to support the pedestrian environment and public realm.

Proposed Additional Content for Victoria West Neighbourhood (3 of 3)

In addition to the General Guidelines, the following additional guidelines apply to any development which permits a light industrial use:

- a. Where development with an industrial use is located adjacent to or across the street from residential development, ensure a sensitive transition by:
 - i. Screening any outdoor storage areas, work areas or loading areas, incorporating generous landscape where adjacent to residential uses. Where light industrial uses or loading are likely to generate noise, screening may include more substantial features (e.g. walls) which provide noise attenuation.
 - ii. Locating outdoor loading, work and storage areas away from adjacent residential uses.
 - iii. Providing sufficient building separation between light industrial uses and adjacent residential uses.
 - iv. Locating and screening ventilation and other equipment so as to minimize noise and visual impacts on residential uses.
- b. In development which mixes light industrial uses with other uses (including commercial and residential uses), design should mitigate impacts of industrial uses on non-industrial uses. These impacts include but are not limited to noise, odours, glare and visual impacts of outdoor storage and activity. Strategies to achieve this include but are not limited to:
 - i. Avoid residential overlook of loading areas or outdoor storage areas, through organization of building massing and orientation of windows and balconies.
 - ii. Incorporate methods for noise attenuation (e.g. triple-glazed windows; organization of building massing).
 - iii. Locate air intakes away from loading, circulation or work areas.

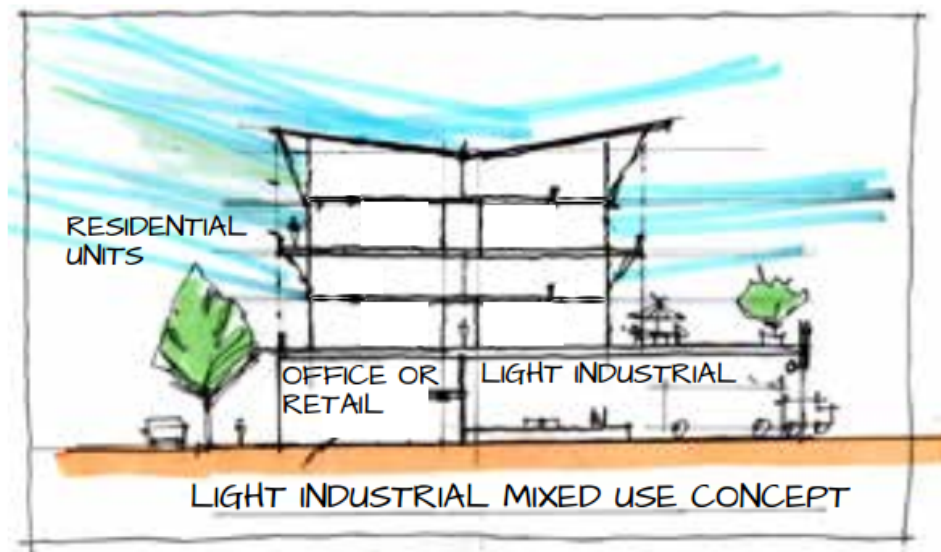


Figure 7: Example of a light industrial and residential mixed use building, showing how residential units might be set back from the loading areas.