

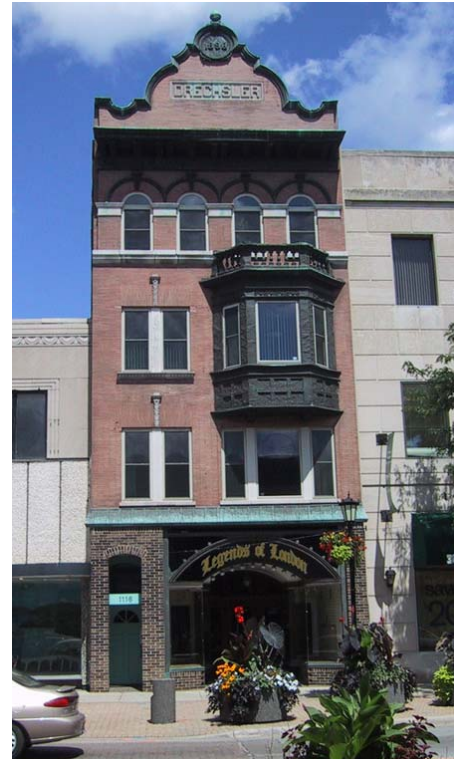
# Greater Downtown Development Guidelines

Village of Oak Park  
Crandall Arambula PC  
March 21, 2005

---

# Table of Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	
Development Guidelines	1
The Greater Downtown Master Plan	2
How to Use this Document	3
Design Review	4
<b>Development Guidelines</b>	
<i>Character</i>	5
Reinforce Oak Park's Sense of Place	6
Integrate the Environment	7
Promote Linkages to Oak Park's Heritage	8
Establish or Strengthen Gateways	9
Promote Architectural Compatibility	10
Preserve Historic Buildings	11
Integrate Art	12
<i>Pedestrian Emphasis</i>	13
Reinforce and Enhance the Pedestrian System	14
Define the Pedestrian Environment	15
Protect the Pedestrian from the Elements	16
Provide Places for Stopping and Viewing	17
Create Successful Outdoor Spaces	18
Integrate Universal Design	19
<i>Architecture</i>	
Residential Doors	20
Residential Windows	21
Residential Bay Windows	22
Balconies	23
Retail Doors	24
Retail Corner Doors	25
Retail Windows	26
Building Massing	27
Security/Privacy	28
Roofs	29
Rooftops	30
Wall Materials	31
<i>Lighting</i>	
Building Lighting	32
Pedestrian Lighting	33
<i>Signs</i>	
Wall Signs	34
Hanging Signs	35
<i>Sustainability</i>	
Green Architecture	36
<b>Development Guidelines Checklist</b>	



## Development Guidelines

Downtown Oak Park has experienced continued investment of time, money and energy over many generations. Development Guidelines help protect and enhance this investment.

### Why Do We Need Development Guidelines?

Guidelines give developers an understanding of the Village's expectations and provide the Village a framework for reviewing proposed projects. They ensure a degree of order, harmony and quality within the built environment. Guidelines encourage the development of attractive individual buildings and projects that together contribute to a unified and distinct downtown.

### Role of Development Guidelines

Guidelines do not prescribe specific design solutions; nor are they rigid requirements without flexibility. They are a discretionary review tool aiding in the design of buildings and sites with the intent to foster quality and innovation.

### Strengthening the Urban Fabric

There will always be many ways of meeting a particular guideline. The Development Guidelines provide a descriptive template for maintaining and improving the urban character of downtown without dictating or prescribing a specific *style or theme*.

The guidelines recognize and support downtown Oak Park's "urban fabric" where buildings are built edge-to-edge and engage the streets. The historic urban character of downtown Oak Park is maintained and strengthened by the guidelines. Moreover, the guidelines

reinforce the nature and quality of Downtown Oak Park by calling for new development and rehabilitation to complement and respect the character of Oak Park's existing historic buildings. Older buildings are not treated as leftovers and unattached fragments of the past.

### A Tool for Quality and Innovation

The guidelines also provide opportunities for new and innovative designs. Creativity and flexibility are encouraged within the parameters of the guidelines, which reflect the community's vision for Oak Park.

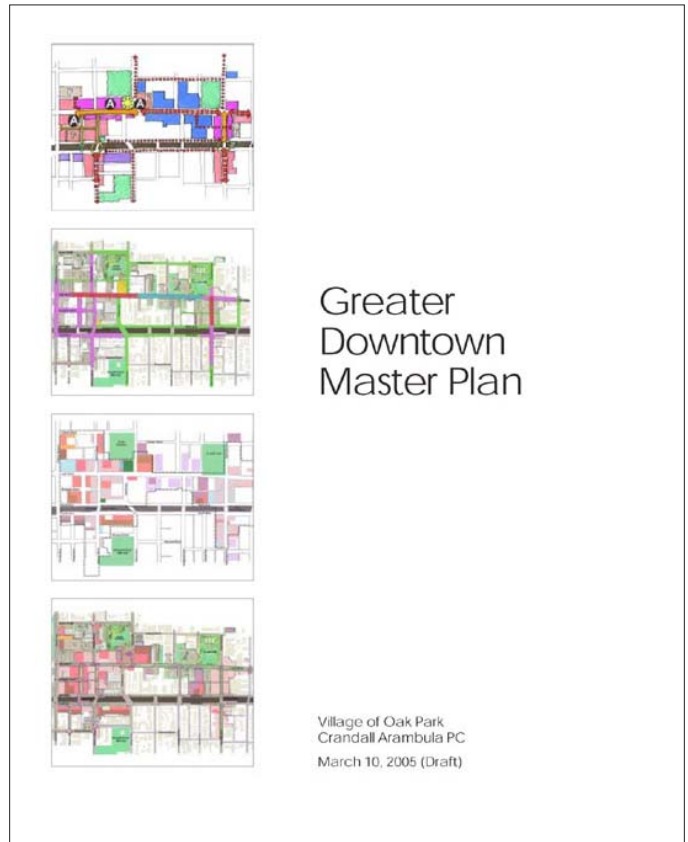
### Supplementary Documents

For certain instances, supplementary documents from the Historic Preservation Commission may need to be referenced.

## The Greater Downtown Master Plan

Oak Park's Development Guidelines support and complement the Greater Downtown Master Plan, helping bring to life the public realm and land use frameworks that are the foundations of the plan. These frameworks are based on the goals and objectives of the Village and the citizens of Oak Park. The frameworks are described in detail in the Greater Downtown Master Plan document. The goals supported by the Development Guidelines are summarized below.

- Recognize quality of life elements.
- Design for the pedestrian.
- Enhance the pedestrian environment.
- Suggest a mix of uses both vertically and horizontally.
- Address building height and density.
- Revitalize retail.
- Provide additional open space.
- Provide high-quality design.
- Maintain and enhance the historic character.
- Preserve historic/small town feel.
- Establish development that is transit- and pedestrian-oriented.
- Improve transit usage.



## How to Use this Document

Oak Park's guidelines consist of Development Guidelines and an accompanying checklist for design review.

### **Development Guidelines**

Each set of guidelines is divided into chapters such as “architecture,” “character” or “lighting.”

Each specific guideline contains a descriptive statement and examples of appropriate and inappropriate applications. Examples are described using both text and photographs.

### **Use of Visual Examples**

The visual examples included in each guideline are models for design and review purposes only. They are not intended to be specific examples that should be replicated. Instead, they are intended to provide designers, developers and the Design Commission a means to effectively judge a building relative to appropriate and inappropriate design criteria.

### **Development Guidelines Checklist**

The Oak Park process for design review ensures that quality projects get built downtown. The Development Guidelines checklist is to be used for design review. Categories that do not apply need not be addressed; other categories should be in compliance for a project to receive approval.

# Design Review

All new development, additions, remodels and renovations within the Greater Downtown Master Plan area are subject to design review to determine the observance of Development Guidelines.

The process for design review is based on the extent of work proposed and whether it falls under one of the following three categories:

- Exterior maintenance and repair.
- Minor exterior modifications.
- Major exterior modifications.

Projects will be evaluated for

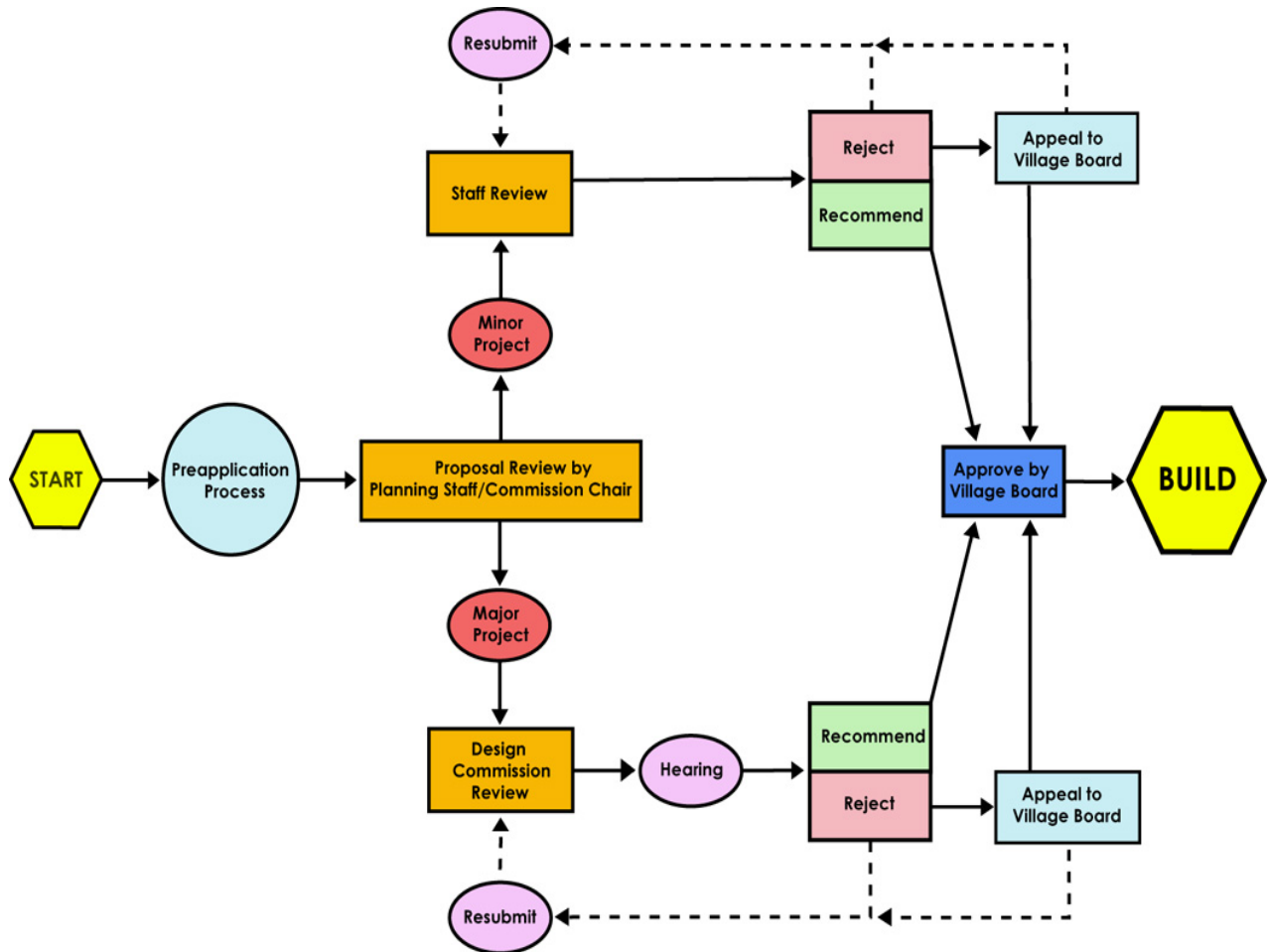
consistency with the master plan, the Village of Oak Park Zoning Ordinance and the Development Guidelines.

The Development Guidelines are applied during Village staff review of development applications. Decisions will be made by staff or the Design Commission to approve, approve with conditions, or deny a proposal. Development projects are reviewed to determine consistency with the Greater Downtown Master Plan and the Development Guidelines.

Where a project is found to be inconsistent with the Development

Guidelines, staff or the Design Commission may impose conditions of approval. It may also be determined that design details or other site factors warrant project approval without observance of Development Guidelines.

For those applications that are substantially inconsistent with the guidelines, staff or the Design Commission also have the option to deny the development request.





---

## Character

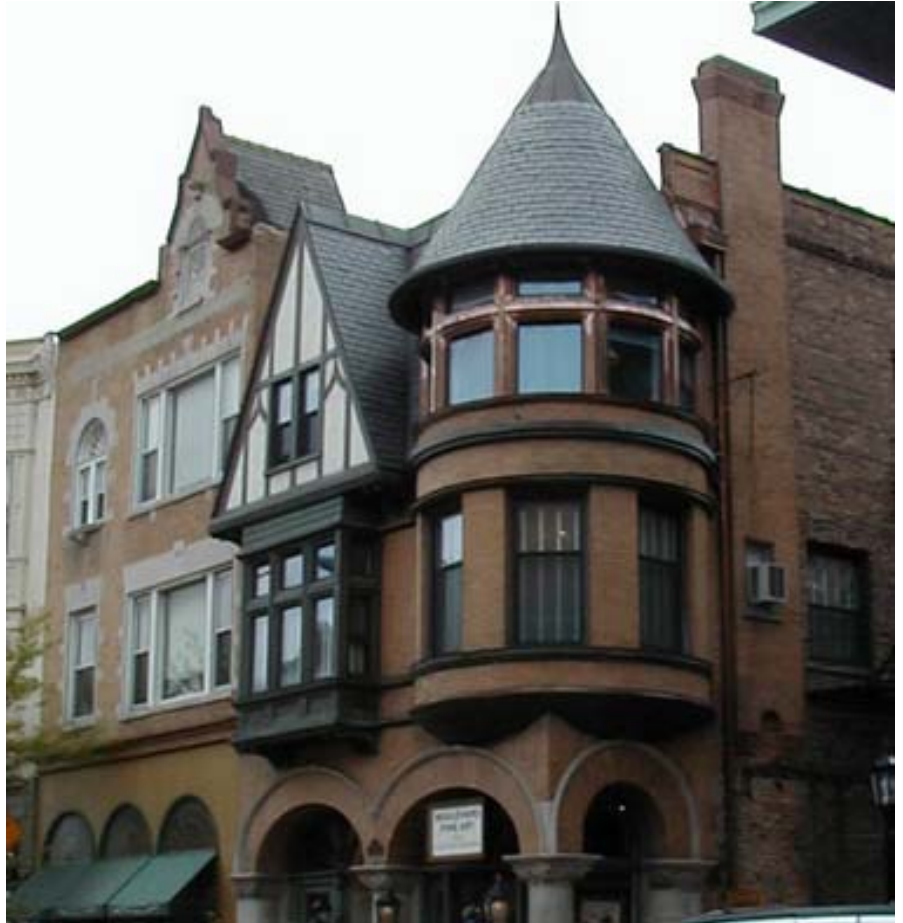
The Character Guidelines address the qualities that give Oak Park its uniqueness and personality. They consider what makes downtown a special collection of buildings and spaces forming a distinct “place,” not simply a group of individual projects.

### Elements

These guidelines are divided into the following elements:

- Reinforce Oak Park’s sense of place.
- Preserve historic buildings.
- Promote linkages to Oak Park’s heritage.
- Establish or strengthen gateways.
- Promote architectural compatibility.
- Integrate the environment.
- Integrate art.

Visual examples are included as models for design and review purposes. They are intended to provide designers and the Design Commission a means to identify appropriate and inappropriate character elements.



## Reinforce Oak Park's Sense of Place

### Guideline

*Strengthen the qualities and characteristics that make downtown Oak Park unique.*

### Description

Historically, downtown has been the heart of Oak Park. Development that authentically reflects Oak Park's history and reconnects to its significant features will reinforce its unique qualities.

### Appropriate

- Special features at the street level that enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Human scale that fits the historic block structure of downtown.

### Inappropriate

- Historic "theme-park" development not authentic and specific to downtown Oak Park's heritage.
- Design that is universal or generic and could be built anywhere – such as what one might see at an airport terminal or typical shopping mall.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*



## Integrate the Environment

### Guideline

*Orient buildings and projects toward Oak Park's natural and landscape features, including different scales of natural and man-made amenities.*

### Description

Building designs should capitalize on Oak Park's parks, squares and courtyards. Designs should relate to the natural environment. Materials, colors and forms should be used that harmonize with the natural setting and provide a smooth transition between the natural and built environments.

### Appropriate

- Active and passive gathering places and walkways oriented toward parks and open, natural spaces.
- Safe and convenient public access to open space amenities.
- Elements engaging the natural environment where the sight, sound and feel of nature can be directly experienced.
- Walkways paved with high-quality materials (such as brick or stone) that are harmonious with the natural surroundings.



*Appropriate*

## Promote Linkages to Oak Park’s Heritage

### Guideline

*Encourage development that reveals and fosters Oak Park’s architectural heritage and history of community, the arts and quality design.*

### Description

Oak Park’s distinct architectural character was carved by architects such as William J. Van Keuran, Henry Fiddelke, E.E. Roberts, Roy Hotchkiss, Charles White, Lawrence Buck, George W. Maher, Frank Lloyd Wright, Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, Meyer and Cook, and many others who brought to the Village a sense of community and artistic pride. The design of new buildings and open spaces in downtown should reinforce this excellent tradition and celebrate Oak Park’s spirit of innovation.

### Appropriate

- Building design that refers to Oak Park’s architectural heritage.
- Preservation and rehabilitation of buildings and sites significant to Oak Park’s heritage.
- Downtown location for cultural facilities celebrating Oak Park’s history.

### Inappropriate

- Pastiche or garish application of design motifs that bear no relation to the building or the site.
- “Theme-park-styled” or theatrical use of historical forms unrelated to Oak Park.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*



*Inappropriate*

## Establish and Strengthen Gateways

### Guideline

Use architectural and landscape elements to gracefully mark transitions and entrances.

### Description

Entrances into downtown Oak Park should be celebrated at many levels. Pedestrians, commuters and visitors should experience a sense of “entering” or moving from the public to private realm.

Pedestrian-scaled gateways may be spatially defined by using traditional building elements such as arches, arcades, pylons, columns, fountains and bridges. Landscape, sculptural and artistic elements can also be used to identify a gateway.

### Appropriate

- New buildings designed to work with existing buildings to create gateways.
- Historic markers in sidewalk paving to strengthen sense of entry into a particular district.
- Gated internal courtyards.
- Gateways to indicate changes in land use (i.e., from retail mixed use to residential).
- Gateways to indicate change or separation in transportation modes (i.e., from auto to pedestrian areas).
- Ornamental or decorative elements combined with lighting or signs.

### Inappropriate

- Gated private compounds.
- Utilitarian gateway materials such as chain link.
- Awkward architectural statements.



Appropriate



Appropriate



Inappropriate



## Promote Architectural Compatibility

### Guideline

*New buildings should be “good neighbors” and contribute to the quality and character of their architectural context.*

### Description

Buildings should “fit” with their architectural surroundings – relating to nearby buildings rather than calling attention to themselves through disruptive design excesses or novel variations. Materials, color, texture, scale, form, silhouette, height, rhythm and proportion all influence a structure’s compatibility with its surroundings. Architectural elements should enhance not detract from the area’s overall character.

### Appropriate

- Traditional architectural elements (for example, classical cornice) used at a scale and level of detailing proportionate to the size of the building.
- Forms, proportions, rhythms, materials, colors and architectural motifs that are suggested by and complement adjacent buildings.

### Inappropriate

- Out-of-scale, over-simplified, cartoon-like cornices or other traditional architectural elements applied without regard to size or use of the element.
- Building elements that do not respect the scale, materials, proportions and heights of adjacent historic or significantly high-quality buildings.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*

## Preserve Historic Buildings

### Guideline

*Renovation, restoration and addition to historic buildings in Oak Park should respect the original structure.*

### Description

Architectural elements of individual historic buildings add to the atmosphere and uniqueness of the downtown as a whole. Older buildings should be preserved in their entirety when beneficial and “facadism,” or preserving only the facade, should be avoided. If preservation is not possible, a sensitive and viable compromise in rehabilitation and reuse should be made that retains the building’s historic character.

Financial incentives at local, state and federal levels that recognize the merits of historic reuse can add to the financial viability of preservation and renovation.

### Appropriate

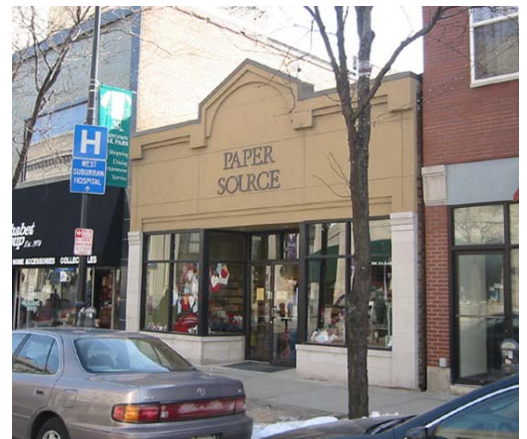
- Retain significant original characteristics of scale, massing and building materials of historic buildings, particularly along their street facades.
- Additions to buildings should neither deform nor detract from the composition of the facade or be out of scale with the building.
- Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship should be treated with sensitivity and repaired rather than replaced if possible. All buildings should be respected as products of their time.

### Inappropriate

- Incompatible additions or building alterations using contemporary materials, forms or colors on building facades.
- Removal of historic architectural features such as details or finishes.



Appropriate



Inappropriate



Inappropriate



## Integrate Art

### Guideline

*Public art should be used in keeping with the character of a site or downtown as a whole. When used, public art should be integrated into the design of the building or public open space.*

### Description

Large scale public art pieces bring focus to an outdoor space while small scale pieces can bring detail and delight to the ground floor of a building or low wall. At any scale, art should not overwhelm outdoor spaces or render buildings mere backdrops. Three dimensional sculpture, murals or other art forms are appropriate only when well designed.

If well executed, surface art work painted or attached to a large blank wall can add interest, whimsy and spice. Sometimes murals created as community art projects can be poorly executed, easily damaged and compete with buildings and the streetscape. To be deemed appropriate, art work should be permanent and designed to age well.

### Appropriate

- Artwork designed specifically for and integrated into the building or site.
- Professionally designed.
- Durable, low maintenance materials that are vandal resistant.

### Inappropriate

- Amateur art projects.
- Artwork used as advertising.
- Subjects and themes that may offend, incite or embarrass the community or individuals of Oak Park.
- Display conditions that detract from the artwork.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate Display Condition*

---

## Pedestrian Emphasis

The intent of the Pedestrian Emphasis Guidelines is to promote an environment where the pedestrian is the priority. Simply stated, downtown must maintain a clear and comfortable separation between pedestrian and vehicle areas.

Where unavoidable intersections occur, pedestrian comfort, safety and interest must not be compromised. The pedestrian should be safe and comfortable in all seasons and hours of the day, and in all areas of downtown.

The Pedestrian Emphasis Guidelines fall into the following topics:

- Reinforce and enhance the pedestrian system.
- Define the pedestrian environment.
- Protect the pedestrian from the elements.
- Provide places for stopping and viewing.
- Create successful outdoor spaces.
- Integrate universal accessibility.

Visual examples are included as models for design and review purposes only. They are intended to provide designers and Design Commissioners a means to identify recommended and not recommended pedestrian emphasis elements. They are not intended to be specific examples that should be replicated.



*Appropriate*

## Reinforce and Enhance Pedestrian System

### Guideline

*Maintain the pedestrian as the priority in downtown, eliminating pedestrian barriers and ensuring that walking routes are safe, direct and pleasant.*

### Description

Pedestrian routes should be attractive, easy to use and encourage walking and activity downtown. Sidewalks should be continuous, avoiding interruptions such as vehicle curbcuts or changes in direction or grade. Walkways should be free of barriers such as utility poles, newspaper boxes, cafe tables and chairs, permanent planters, tree grates or other obstructions and clutter.

Separate and protect pedestrians from visual and other nuisances. For instance, mitigate noise and odors by screening or enclosing loading docks, mechanical equipment, garbage dumpsters and other unsightly items. These components should be located away from areas where pedestrians congregate and, instead, be located in service areas or alleys whenever possible.

### Appropriate

- Pedestrian access along traditional rights-of-way.
- Mid-block landscaped pedestrian walkways within “superblocks.”
- Parking lot walkways.
- Enclosures around trash dumpsters.
- Utility/substation enclosures.
- Automatic crosswalk lights.

### Inappropriate

- Indirect or circuitous pedestrian routes.
- Permanent or temporary pedestrian route obstructions.
- Crosswalk lights that require pressing a button.



*Appropriate Crossing*



*Inappropriate Trash Screening*



## Define the Pedestrian Environment

### Guideline

*A building should provide a continuous human scale of variety and visual richness for a positive pedestrian experience along its ground floor street front.*

### Description

The most important part of a building is its ground floor – the lowest 15 feet of the facade that a person experiences walking past or entering the building. This “pedestrian experience zone” should extend horizontally across the sidewalk and provide an enclosed, continuous and comfortable street edge for the pedestrian. Building transparency at ground floor should foster interaction between the public and private realms.

### Appropriate

- Windows – transparent or with displays at street level.
- Walls that create visual interest by providing a variety of forms, colors and compatible cladding materials.
- Facades providing a rhythm by using bays, columns, pilasters or other articulation at street level.
- Signs and lighting at ground level that contribute to the human scale.

### Inappropriate

- Blank, flat, nondescript walls not articulated by any visual interest or detail at street level.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*

## Protect the Pedestrian From the Elements

### Guideline

*Provide pedestrians with protection from wind, sun, rain, sleet and snow.*

### Description

Awnings and canopies are encouraged along the ground floor of buildings to protect pedestrians from rain and snow during inclement weather and provide shade in summer.

The design of awnings and canopies should be an integral component of the building facade. Awnings should be well proportioned with the building and sidewalks. Awnings should not be so large as to impact street trees, light fixtures or other street furniture.

### Appropriate

- Fixed or retractable canvas awnings.
- Horizontal metal canopies, especially if transom or clerestory windows are above storefront glazing.

### Inappropriate

- Awnings made of vinyl or other synthetic fabrics.
- Backlit awnings.
- Oversized advertising or tenant signs on awnings.
- Oddly-shaped forms.



Appropriate



Inappropriate



Inappropriate



## Provide Places for Stopping and Viewing

### Guideline

*Provide safe, comfortable places where people can stop to sit, rest and visit.*

### Description

People will use seating, bringing humanity to the urban environment only if they feel safe and comfortable. People like to sit and relax in open and populated areas rather than in secluded spots.

People-watching, socializing and eating are restful and pleasurable activities for the pedestrian. Stopping places increase both a sense of security and actual security. Seating tends to be used more frequently as rest areas between major destination points. Seating is also desirable outside food and drink establishments and near food vendors. While benches provide the simplest way to provide seating, wide steps, the edges of landscaped planters and low walls can also be appropriate.

### Appropriate

- Formal or informal seating areas near active retail establishments.
- Places for stopping and viewing adjacent to parks, squares, plazas and courtyards.

### Inappropriate

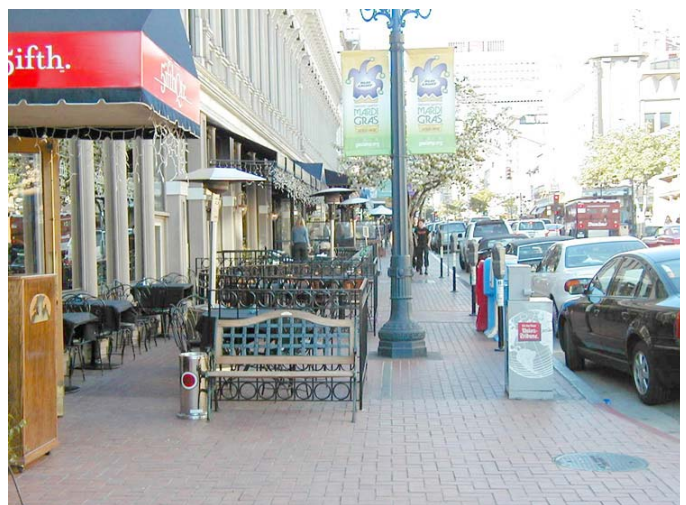
- Seating areas more than three feet above or below street grade.
- Seating in areas that are not accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Seating areas that become a public focal point, making people uncomfortable.
- Seating areas adjacent to loading, service bays or storage areas.
- Seating areas that are hidden, secluded, dark or unsecured locations behind or to the side of buildings.
- Cafe seating that impedes pedestrian traffic.



Appropriate



Appropriate



Inappropriate

## Create Successful Outdoor Spaces

### Guideline

*Spaces should be designed for a variety of activities during all hours and seasons.*

### Description

Outdoor spaces should be inviting and maximize opportunities for use. These spaces should be spatially well defined, friendly, accommodating and secure.

All areas should work well for pedestrians and accommodate special events as well as passive activities.

- Areas intended for public gathering should avoid separation from the street by visual barriers or change of grade.
- Outdoor spaces should be human-scaled, easy to maintain and “alive” – intimate and quiet or active and boisterous spaces alike.
- Trees, shrubs and plants should help define walkways, create appropriate transitions from the park to the street and provide visual interest.
- Structures, pavilions and sitting areas should be easily accessible. They should be secure and feel safe during day and evening hours.
- Buildings surrounding green spaces should give the space visual definition and surround it with active ground-floor uses.
- Rooftops should be considered for garden terraces.

### Appropriate

- Courtyards, squares, forecourts and plazas with active adjacent ground-floor uses.
- Greenways or pedestrian walkways in residential areas. If used, front doors should engage these spaces.

### Inappropriate

- Pocket parks without active enclosing uses.
- Permanent pedestrian route obstructions.



*Appropriate*

## Integrate Universal Design

### Guideline

*Accommodate accessibility for persons with disabilities in a manner that is integral to the design of the building and public right-of-way.*

### Description

On existing buildings, all ramps, lifts and elevators should be designed to be graceful and natural parts of a project, rather than simply a means of meeting the requirements in an awkward or minimal manner. In new buildings, all entrances should be designed to minimize or eliminate the need for ramps, lifts or elevators for persons with disabilities.



*Inappropriate*

### Appropriate

- Ramps to existing building entrances that provide direct access but are screened and/or integrated into the stairway design.
- Ramps constructed of similar or compatible materials as the building, stairs and walkways.

Other universal design features such as:

- Handrails at all exterior stairs.
- Detectable warnings at top step of all exterior stairs.
- Accessible parking near entrances to buildings.
- Entry doors that do not open out onto the sidewalk.
- Entry doors that have sufficient space at their latch stile side to allow a person in a wheelchair to independently open the door.

### Inappropriate

- Ramps that obstruct or limit pedestrian access from stairs or walkways.
- Ramps that do not provide safe and convenient access to building entries.



---

# Architecture

## Residential Doors

### Guideline

*Residential front doors should provide a friendly transition between the public and private realms.*

### Description

Doors should be substantial enough to suggest privacy yet welcoming to those who approach and enter. The design of a door should respond to its setting. If a door faces an active street, it is appropriate to separate the door from the street with a comfortable change of grade – perhaps two or three feet. For less active areas, transitional porches might be used.

### Appropriate

- Multi-panel painted doors.
- Doors combined with transom windows or side lites.
- Durable, high-quality metal door hardware.
- Wood solid core doors.
- Doors accessed from transitional areas such as porches, terraces, stoops or canopy-covered entries.
- Moderate, human-scaled change of grade from sidewalk level to townhouse door – rising approximately three feet or waist level; not above eye level.
- Lobby entries to multi-family buildings providing double or multiple doors.

### Inappropriate

- Sliding glass doors.
- Unarticulated, flush doors.
- Doors raised more than three feet above sidewalk level for townhouses.
- Doors accessed directly from parking lots.
- Door glazing with simulated divided lites.
- Doors not directly accessed from the street or courtyard.
- Doors glazed with reflective or tinted glazing.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*

## Residential Windows

### Guideline

Windows should create an open and inviting atmosphere that enhances the experience of the building both inside and out.

### Description

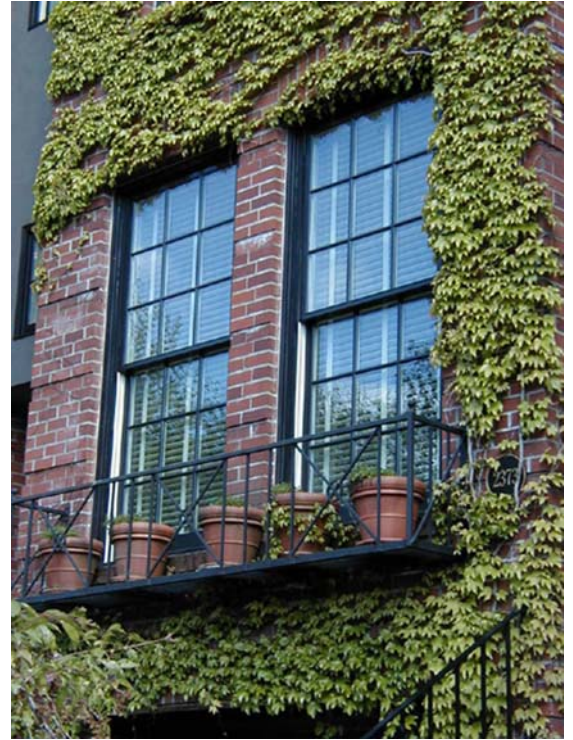
The windows of a residential building should be pleasing and coherent. Their size and detailing can add a human scale and visual interest to the building. Windows should be constructed with quality materials.

### Appropriate

- Multiple lites or divisions.
- Operable windows.
- Trim around framed openings.
- Appropriately scaled limestone exterior sills and lintels where installed in a masonry wall.
- Regular spacing and rhythm of similarly shaped windows.
- “Punched” windows recessed rather than flush with the building facade..

### Inappropriate

- Simulated divided lites.
- “Strip” windows with more horizontal than vertical emphasis.
- Windows flush with building facade.
- New or replacement vinyl frames and sashes.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*



## Residential Bay Windows

### Guideline

*Use bay windows to add variety and visual interest to the facade and views of outdoor spaces from the interior.*

### Description

Bay windows provide variation and relief along a building's facade; their sculptural form can add interest to walls. Contrasting color and materials are encouraged. Exuberant visual ornamentation may be added as further accent to window lintels or panels.

### Appropriate

- Bays on second story or higher floor levels.
- Contrasting but compatible wall cladding materials and colors.

### Inappropriate

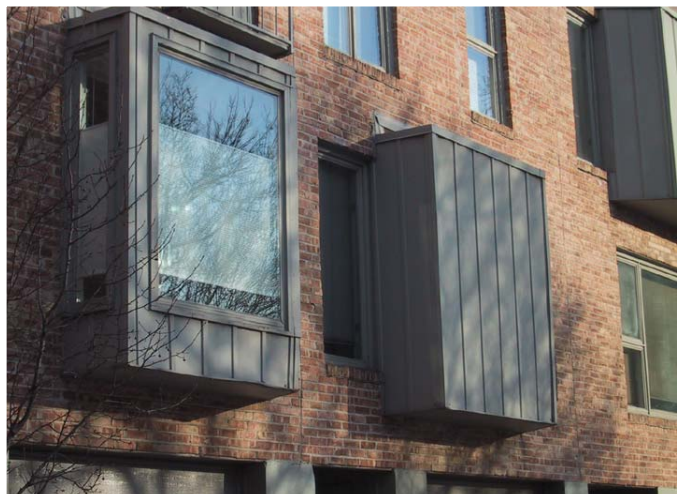
- Cladding materials such as corrugated metal panels, spandrel glass or rough sawn cedar.
- Poorly detailed panels or those without detailing.
- Projecting wall-mounted mechanical units.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*



*Inappropriate*

## Balconies

### Guideline

*Use balconies on housing units as an extension of the living space and to provide more “eyes on the street.”*

### Description

Balconies provide useable outdoor space and add to the perceived activity and safety of the street.

### Appropriate

- Balconies with a solid floor material and internal drain.
- Balconies with transparent enclosures.

### Inappropriate

- Balconies that are not integrated into or appear to be applied onto the building facade.
- Balconies with solid enclosures on all sides.
- Balconies with wood enclosures.



*Appropriate*



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*

## Retail Doors

### Guideline

*Doors should create an open and inviting atmosphere.*

### Description

Primary business entry doors for retail and commercial establishments should be transparent, allowing passersby to see the activity within the building and bringing life and vitality to the street. Doors with extra-large openings that blend the street activity with the building's interior are appropriate for restaurants and cafes.

### Appropriate

- Large cafe or restaurant doors that open the street to the interior by pivoting, sliding or rolling up overhead.
- Doors with a minimum of 50% window area.
- Building lighting emphasizing entrances.
- Transom, side lites or other window combinations.
- Doors combined with special architectural detailing.
- Double or multiple door entries.
- Well-detailed or ornate door hardware.

### Inappropriate

- Solid metal or wood doors with small or no windows.
- Primary entry doors raised more than three feet above sidewalk level.
- Doors flush with building facade.
- Clear anodized aluminum frames.
- Glazing with simulated divisions.
- Reflective, opaque or tinted glazing.



*Appropriate*



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*



## Retail Corner Doors

### Guideline

*Locate entry doors on corners of retail buildings wherever possible.*

### Description

Corner entries reinforce intersections as important places for pedestrian interaction and activity. Transparent doors and windows are strongly encouraged. Entries at 45 degree angles and free of visual obstructions are also encouraged.

### Appropriate

- Doors with large glass areas.
- Primary entrance located at building corner.
- Doors combined with roof or facade architectural elements such as bays or towers.
- Building wall lighting emphasizing entrance.

### Inappropriate

- Blank walls at corners of public streets.
- Visual and physical obstructions such as large columns.
- Primary entry doors made of clear anodized aluminum.
- Primary entry doors that are solid and windowless.
- Utility boxes, meters or mechanical units near the entrance door.
- Glass areas with simulated divisions (internal or applied synthetic materials).
- Reflective, opaque or tinted glazing in the door.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*

## Retail Windows

### Guideline

*Use windows that create an open and inviting atmosphere.*

### Description

Retail and commercial uses should use windows that add activity and variety at the street level, inviting pedestrians in and providing views both in and out.

Transparency beckons people inside – whether a shop, gallery, restaurant or office. Restaurants and cafes benefit from windows that open allowing passersby to see, hear and smell the activity within. Views into stores should not be blocked.

### Appropriate

- Windows that open by pivoting, sliding or shuttering.
- Painted wood panels or tile clad panels below windows.

### Inappropriate

- Clear or light bronze anodized aluminum windows.
- White painted aluminum framed windows.
- Residential-styled bays, multi-paned divided lites, half-round or other similar forms.
- Small scale windows.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*

## Building Massing

### Guideline

*Use scale-defining devices to break up the longitudinal dimensions of buildings, creating a comfortable sense of enclosure by establishing an uninterrupted street edge.*

### Description

The length and breadth of a building should be friendly in scale and inviting to the pedestrian. Portions of a large building mass should be broken into smaller, appropriately scaled modules, with changes in plane indicated by bold projections and indentations. This allows an overly large building to appear as smaller, side-by-side buildings. Vertical and horizontal elements should be used to create a human scale and form a coherent pattern providing visual interest for the pedestrian.

### Appropriate

- Break down long expanses of building frontage both horizontally and vertically.
- Tripartite facade division – base, middle and top for taller buildings (over three stories).
- Terrace back upper levels.
- Vertical articulation of windows, columns and bays.

### Inappropriate

- Long unbroken volume along street facade.
- Smooth, undifferentiated facade.
- Suburban-styled horizontal orientation of building elements – walls, doors and windows.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*



## Security/Privacy

### Guideline

*Buildings should have safe entries and surrounding street environments for all users during all hours of the day.*

### Description

Downtown should be a place where people of all ages feel safe throughout the year during all hours of the day. However, downtown buildings should not become “fortress-like” and separated from public areas.

New buildings should create “eyes on the street” with active uses bringing people together and deterring crime naturally. People who inhabit buildings see their surroundings and are seen by others thereby inhibiting criminal activity. When security measures such as gates, screens or fencing are used, they should be designed as integral components of the building or site.

### Appropriate

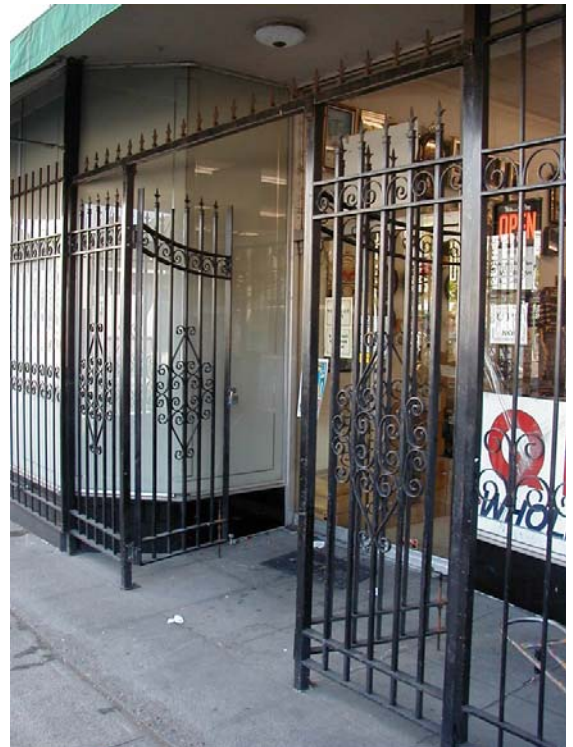
- Interior or exterior roll-up or sliding security gates that are not visible from the public right-of-way.
- Secured loading bays or service areas.
- Gated private courtyards or plazas.
- Security cameras or surveillance devices screened from view or integrated into the building design.

### Inappropriate

- Fixed exterior security gates on building edges that are visible from the public right-of-way.
- Fixed exterior security screened windows along public streets or gathering areas.
- Gated residential development.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*

## Roofs

### Guideline

*Create interesting and detailed rooflines and silhouettes.*

### Description

Building rooflines should enliven the pedestrian experience and provide visual interest with details that create forms and shadows. A building's silhouette should be compatible with those of other buildings along the existing streetscape.

In some cases, it may be appropriate to mark an entryway with a distinct form, such as a tower, to emphasize the significance of the building entry.

For residential buildings, roof massing should be simple yet detailed and articulated. For example, flat roofs may be appropriate if they have a cornice designed with depth and detail expressing the top of the building wall. Dormers set into sloped roofs may be appropriate. These forms provide visual interest and bring additional living space, light and ventilation to upper floor and attic spaces.

### Appropriate

- Dormer windows.
- Towers or similar vertical architectural expressions of important building functions such as entries.
- Varied roofline heights.
- If cornices are used they should be well detailed. They should have significant proportions (height and depth) that create visual interest and shadow lines.

### Inappropriate

- Unarticulated rooflines.
- Poorly detailed decorative roof forms.



*Appropriate*



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*



## Rooftops

### Guideline

*Integrate rooftop elements into building design.*

### Description

Roof shape, surface materials, colors, mechanical equipment and other penthouse functions should all be integrated into the overall building design.

Roof mounted mechanical equipment should be hidden from view by parapets. If building parapets do not provide adequate screening, screening walls or enclosures installed as an integral part of the architectural design should be used.

Roof terraces and gardens are encouraged.

### Appropriate

- Screened mechanical units.
- Rooftop penthouse occupied residential or office spaces.
- Rooftop gardens.
- “Green” roofs that reduce stormwater runoff.

### Inappropriate

- Exposed rooftop mechanical or electrical units.
- Exposed telecommunications equipment, including satellite dishes, cell-phone towers or antennae.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*



## Wall Materials

### Guideline

*Use materials that create a sense of permanence.*

### Description

Quality wall materials can provide a sense of permanence and bring life and warmth to downtown. Articulation of wall materials should be bold, using materials that show depth. It should be apparent that the materials have substance and mass, and are not artificial, thin “stage sets” applied only to the building’s surface.

### Appropriate

- Boldly articulated window and storefront trim.
- Natural or subdued building colors.
- Limited use of bright accent trim colors.
- Varied yet compatible cladding materials.
- Masonry materials – brick and limestone.
- Belt courses and medallions.

### Inappropriate

- Bright or primary wall colors for the entire wall surface.
- Flagstone, simulated river rock or other similar veneer cladding.
- Painted brick.
- Synthetic stucco (EIFS).
- Rough-sawn cedar.
- Aluminum or vinyl siding.
- Simulated stone.
- Thin brick.



*Appropriate*



*Inappropriate*

## Lighting

The lighting of buildings and open spaces should not only provide security, but also contribute to the overall sense that the downtown is active and vital all hours of the day.

Lighting should be designed not simply to be utilitarian but to create a pleasant, welcoming atmosphere that does not contribute to “light pollution.” Use of glaring, offensively colored lights should be discouraged.

## Building Lighting

### Guideline

*Exterior lighting of buildings should be an integral component of the facade composition.*

### Description

Architectural lighting may be used to articulate the particular building design. Lighting of cornices, uplighting and other effects may be used.

Lighting should not cast glare into residential units or onto adjacent lots or streets in any way that decreases the safety of pedestrians and vehicles. Lights may, however, be used to create effects of shadow, relief and outline that add visual interest and highlight aspects of the building.

### Appropriate

- Wall-washing lighting fixtures.
- Decorative wall sconce and similar architectural lighting fixtures.
- Screened uplight fixtures on buildings or integrated with landscape.
- Lighting that provides natural color.

### Inappropriate

- Neon silhouette accent lighting.
- Bulb or flashing lighting.
- Fluorescent tube lighting.
- Security spotlight.
- Low pressure sodium lamps.



Appropriate



Appropriate



Inappropriate

## Pedestrian Lighting

### Guideline

*Lighting should be used to highlight sidewalks, street trees and other features, and harmonize with other visual elements in the greater downtown.*

### Description

Street lighting should be provided on all public streets, sidewalks, pedestrian walkways and public open spaces. Lights may also be used to highlight trees and similar features within public and private plazas, courtyards, walkways and other similar outdoor areas at night to create an inviting and safe ambiance.

### Appropriate

- Historical street lights.
- Black or dark green pole standards.
- Standards accommodating banners and hanging flower pots (potentially including automatic drip irrigation for pots).
- Footlighting that illuminates walkways and stairs.
- Fixtures concealed and integrated into the design of buildings or landscape walls and stairways.
- Bollard lighting that is directed downward toward walking surfaces.
- Seasonal string lights on buildings and trees.

### Inappropriate

- Flashing or colored lights.
- Exposed cords, outlets or other electrical devices that may provide safety hazards and are unsightly.
- Contemporary fixtures or over-scaled, utilitarian fixtures such as “cobra-head” lights.
- Concrete light fixture bases taller than eight inches.
- Ornamental or contemporary light fixtures.
- Low pressure sodium lamps.



Appropriate



Appropriate



## Signs

Signs may provide an address, identify a place of business, locate residential buildings or generally provide directions and information. Regardless of their function, signs should be architecturally compatible and contribute to the character of the downtown. Signs should be good neighbors – they should not compete with each other or dominate the setting due to inconsistent height, size, shape, number, color, lighting or movement. These guidelines are intended as a supplement to Oak Park's existing sign ordinance.

### Wall Signs

#### Guideline

*Signs should be sized and placed so that they are compatible with the building's architectural design.*

#### Description

Signs should not overwhelm the building or its special architectural features. Signs should not render the building a mere backdrop for advertising or building identification.

#### Appropriate

- Signs should be incorporated into the building architecture as embossing, low relief casting or application to wall surfaces.
- Signs should be constructed of individual, three-dimensional letters as opposed to one single box with cutout flat letters.
- Signs may be painted or made with applied metal lettering and graphics.
- Signs should be durable and long lasting.
- Signs may incorporate lighting as part of their design.
- Signs should be located above storefronts, on columns or on walls flanking doorways.

#### Inappropriate

- The material, size and shape of signs that overwhelm, contrast greatly or adversely impact the architectural quality of the building.
- Roof-mounted signs.
- Backlit signs.
- LED animated signs.
- Video signs.
- Painted window signs.



Appropriate



Inappropriate



Inappropriate

## Hanging Signs

### Guideline

*Hanging signs should be oriented to the pedestrian and highly visible from the sidewalk.*

### Description

Signs should not overwhelm the streetscape. They should be compatible with and complement the building's architecture, including its awnings, canopies, lighting and street furniture.

### Appropriate

- Required sign lighting should be integrated into the facade of the building.
- Signs should be constructed of high-quality materials and finishes.
- Signs should be attached to the building in a durable fashion.

### Inappropriate

- Signs interfering with sight lines, creating a safety hazard or obstructing views.
- Roof-mounted signs.



Appropriate



Appropriate

---

## Sustainability

The intent of the Sustainability Guidelines is to encourage environmentally-friendly yet economically-viable development in downtown.

## Green Architecture

### Guideline

*Use sustainable design practices whenever possible as long as they do not detract from the pedestrian activity and economic viability of downtown.*

### Description

Address the health of downtown in a holistic manner, considering environmental quality and long-term benefits to downtown activity and vitality. Guidelines and direction from official environmental certification programs such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) may be helpful in determining sustainable practices.

### Appropriate

- Consider how all of a building's systems work with each other and with the building envelope to maximize efficiency.
- Use highly-durable local materials.
- Follow a maintenance strategy to run building systems at maximum efficiency over the long term.

### Inappropriate

- “Green” practices that detract from high-quality design.
- Application of “green” design for marketing hype alone.



*Appropriate Green Roof*



# Oak Park Greater Downtown Master Plan DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES CHECKLIST

Project and Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Zoning: \_\_\_\_\_

Building Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Other : \_\_\_\_\_

Submission Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

	Applies		Complies	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
<b>1). Oak Park Character</b>				
• Reinforce Oak Park's Sense of Place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Integrate the Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Promote Linkages to Oak Park's Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Establish or Strengthen Gateways	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Promote Architectural Compatibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Preserve Historic Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Integrate Art	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2). Pedestrian Emphasis</b>				
• Reinforce and Enhance the Pedestrian System	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Define the Pedestrian Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Protect the Pedestrian from the Elements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Provide Places for Stopping and Viewing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Create Successful Outdoor Spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Integrate Universal Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3). Architecture</b>				
• Residential Doors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Residential Windows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Residential Bay Windows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Balconies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Retail Doors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Retail Corner Doors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Retail Windows	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Building Massing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Security/Privacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Roofs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Rooftops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Wall Materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4). Lighting</b>				
• Building Lighting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Pedestrian Lighting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>5). Signs</b>				
• Wall Signs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Hanging Signs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6). Sustainability</b>				
• Green Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>