

5. Site Planning Policies & Standards

The following policies and standards are designed to guide future development within the West Tefft Corridor downtown area as shown in Figure 1-1, consistent with the following plan goals:

- A.** Provide and maintain a quality environment that will encourage varied size retail and office establishments, smaller independent businesses and downtown residences.
- B.** Create a pedestrian-friendly and vital business district by encouraging walking and making the downtown an exciting place to be.

The objective of these policies and design standards is to create a varied downtown that encourages pedestrian activity while not duplicating Olde Towne. Design standards are flexible and interpretive except where “shall” is used, in which case a specific requirement is followed. Standards where “should” is used provide a general direction that can be met by alternative proposals, to meet the intent of the standard.



Figure 5-1 Pedestrian-oriented street environment

Mixed Use Development

Residential and office uses should be included in projects within the West Tefft Street Corridor area. They will provide the convenience for pedestrians, including shoppers, clients and employees that a downtown requires to be vibrant and successful.

POLICY 5.1 Mixed Use Development

Mixed use projects that have residential uses mixed with commercial and office uses are highly encouraged. This type of development generates a wide variety of activity throughout the area, provides housing for employees, and promotes walking to and from work and shopping.



Fig. 5-2 Commercial / residential mixed use building

A. Commercial and office uses.

Commercial retail or office uses are required on the ground floor of street-fronting buildings to better accommodate pedestrians. Retail uses are generally preferred on the ground floor of buildings within the Commercial Retail land use category.

B. Residential uses and density. Residences may be placed on the upper floors of street-fronting buildings, or behind street-fronting buildings, as shown in Figure 5-3. Most of the residential units should be priced to be affordable for persons who work within the West Tefft Corridor. Live-work units (where building space is allocated to occupational uses) may occupy the ground floor in buildings behind street-fronting buildings. The density of residential units should be maximized, and attached units are encouraged at a minimum 18 units per acre, to provide attached units for efficient land use.

C. Land Use Ordinance requirements.

Proposed mixed use projects shall be in compliance with Land Use Ordinance Section 22.30.490, except that residential units located behind street-fronting buildings may be detached from those buildings.

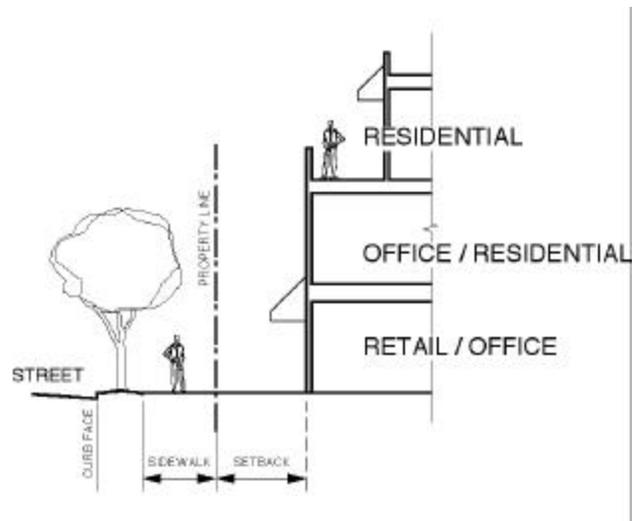


Fig. 5-3 Mixed-use building section

Building Location and Orientation

Buildings that are located close to the sidewalk are important to attract pedestrians, who are essential for the success of the downtown. Buildings close to the street provide a feeling of containment, and the street becomes an outdoor room filled with activity. Even auto-oriented shopping centers need to be designed with a pedestrian orientation at the street. A continuous row of neighboring buildings along the sidewalk, with minor variations and small, partially enclosed spaces or walkways, will create a pedestrian-friendly environment.

POLICY 5.2: Building Setbacks

Buildings should be located behind landscaping or interesting paved setbacks, and be allowed minor insets and patios to create a continuous pedestrian environment along the street.

Standards

A. West Tefft Street front and street-side setbacks. The required setback for development fronting West Tefft Street is five feet from the right-of-way, except as provided below. Building space shall occupy at least 60 percent of the site width at the setback, except as allowed below.

- 1. Additional setback for articulation.** Up to 50 percent of a building façade may be set back further to a distance of no more than 50 percent of the fronting façade width at the front setback, as shown in Figure 5-4.
- 2. Maximum open frontage.** A maximum of 40 percent of street frontage may be open to the interior of a site.
- 3. Additional setback for outdoor gathering space.** The front setback on West Tefft Street may be increased up to 20 feet to accommodate outdoor dining or a semi-public gathering space such as a courtyard or small plaza. A semi-public space shall be open to the public during business hours of the fronting business, shown in Figure 5-5.

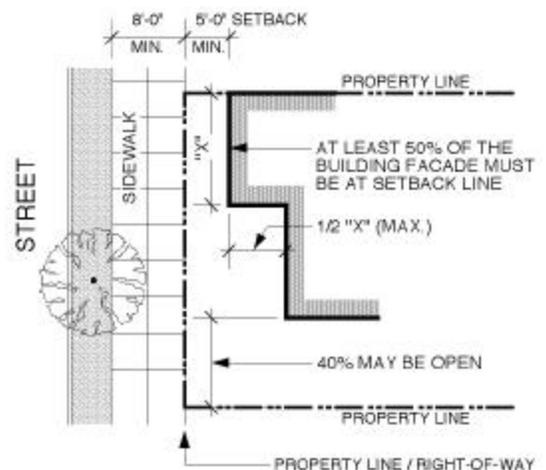


Fig. 5-4 West Tefft Street front setback



Fig. 5-5 Setback for semi-public space

4. **Design of additional setback.** Any additional setback beyond five feet shall be designed to reveal or express building and site interior areas and functions, provide vertical and landscaped relief to buildings and to provide space for outdoor activity, illustrated in Figure 5-5 and 5-6.
5. **Interior buildings.** Buildings may be allowed within the interior of the site (such as major stores) if conforming street-fronting buildings are proposed to be constructed at the time of interior development.

B. Development within the front setback.

The setback space shall be developed with either, or a combination of the following choices in 1 or 2:

1. Landscaped planters (ground level or raised) with drought-tolerant plants and trees, or
2. An extension of the sidewalk, to be furnished with street amenities from the following list:
 - a. Benches, chairs, tables, trash containers,
 - b. Fountains, public art
 - c. Planters (ground level or raised),
 - d. Potted plants, hanging flower baskets, etc.
 - e. Surfacing should be concrete or pavers that may be colored, in patterns or symbols, which should express tasteful abstract or representational images. Accent or border pavements are encouraged that create focal points, texture and pattern within the setback area.
3. A solid wall up to 36 inches tall is permitted, and an additional height of 24 inches may be utilized for transparent railings, clear glass or plastic, when used to enclose features in subsection B.2.
4. Features within the setback shall be designed and maintained to promote easy walking between the sidewalk and adjacent property.

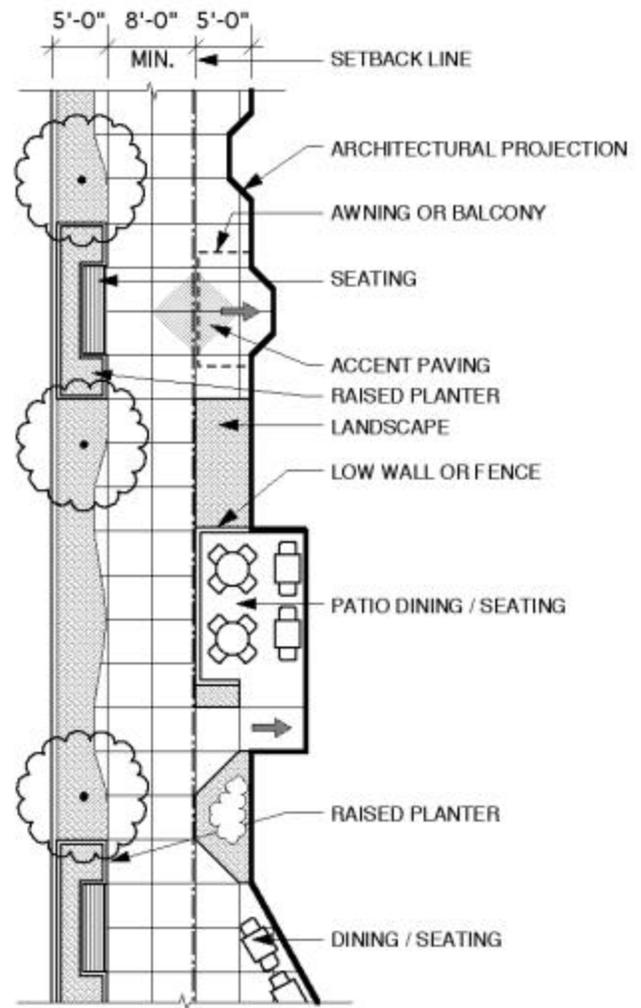


Fig. 5-6 Suggested features in front setback

C. Front and street-side setbacks and frontage features – other public streets than West Tefft. The required setback from the street right-of-way is zero feet. Building space shall occupy at least 70 percent of the frontage at the setback (maximum open frontage of 30 percent). Exceptions to the front setback standard and development within the front setback shall be as allowed in standards A.1-5 for West Tefft Street. Features within the sidewalk and setbacks are encouraged as shown in Figure 5-7.

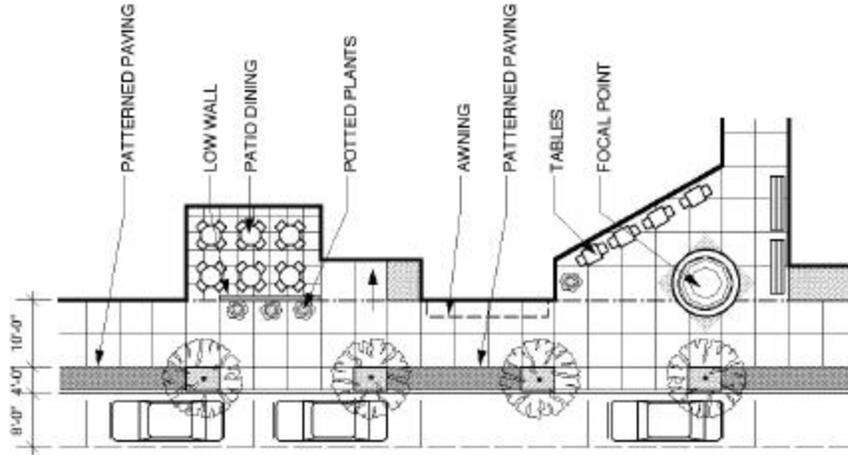


Fig. 5-7 Suggested features on other streets than West Tefft

D. Second-story setback. Second floors may be set back up to 10 feet from first floor frontages to accommodate elements such as porches, balconies, or trellises, which are encouraged, as shown in Figure 5-8. A second floor setback should not exceed 10 feet.

E. Third story setback. Third story frontages shall be set back a minimum 10 feet such that no façade is taller than two stories at the street, as shown in Figure 5-9.

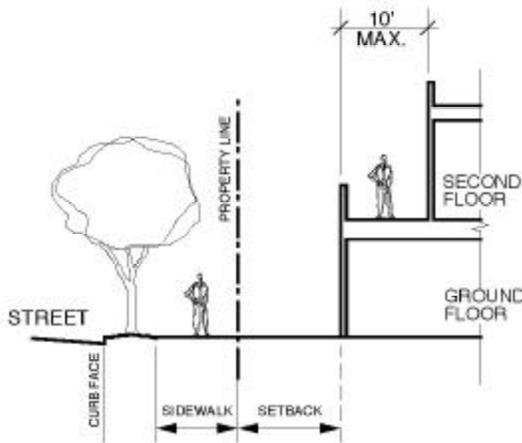


Fig. 5-8 Second-story setback

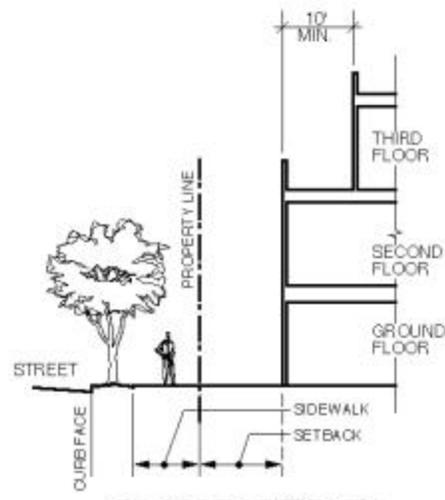


Fig. 5-9 Third-story setbacks

F. Building Entries.

1. **Entry location.** Ground floor primary access to all street-fronting commercial buildings shall be from the main fronting street. Secondary access may be provided from the rear and side of the building.
2. **Entry treatment.** Entries should be well-defined in the site plan and scaled to pedestrian proportions. Specific features such as sidewalk edges, low walls, building elements or landscaping should highlight each entry. Entries should be recessed entry bays to create spaces between the street and buildings.

Site and Open Space Orientation

The overall appearance and “walkability” of each site is of extreme importance in establishing a vibrant downtown. By providing features that attract pedestrians, the area will avoid development that resembles suburban, nondescript strip malls and contribute to a distinct sense of place.

POLICY 5.3: Pedestrian circulation

Pedestrian circulation is essential for economic and social success within the downtown. As much or more attention is necessary to the design of walkways or paseos as to vehicle travel. Within the large sites in the West Tefft Corridor, improved pedestrian walkways should connect properties, streets and parking to building entrances and gathering spaces.

A. Walkways (Paseos). Landscaped decorative walkways (paseos) are encouraged, in order to provide connections between buildings, to rear parking lots, and to properties in the area, as shown in Figure 5-10.

1. Where shown on the Circulation Plan, they are required in the vicinity of the project.
2. Where walkways are to connect to adjacent properties, a joint access agreement should be executed between the property owners.
3. Minimum widths are 5 feet pavement, free of landscape or furniture; and 8 feet total.

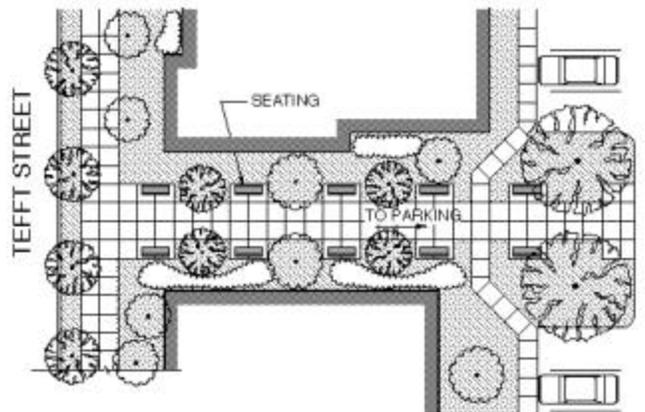


Fig. 5-10 Paseo or walkway

POLICY 5.4: Plazas, Courtyards, and Outdoor Dining

Pedestrian-oriented places such as plazas, courtyards, and outdoor dining, are strongly encouraged to provide gathering spaces throughout the downtown.

Standards

- A. Public and semi-public spaces.** Gathering spaces in either the public or private realm are encouraged within and bordering development projects, to provide for a human-scale environment, illustrated in Figure 5-11.



Fig. 5-11 Semi-public gathering space

- 1. Orientation.** Gathering space designs should take advantage of a south-facing orientation, adjacent to walls to capture sunlight and avoid windy conditions. They should be oriented toward building entrances and near other adjacent ground floor uses that animate and enliven the space (Figure 5-12).
- 2. Enclosure.** The design of gathering spaces should have enclosure on at least two sides, to shelter users from wind and provide a sense of place and security. Enclosure can be a building wall, a screen wall or solid fence or landscape.
- 3. Landscape.** Landscape should be utilized to further define and contain a space.
- 4. Layout.** Public use of the space should be designed for its intended purposes, such as eating, seating, passing through, socializing and resting, and the design should avoid conflicts between these activities.

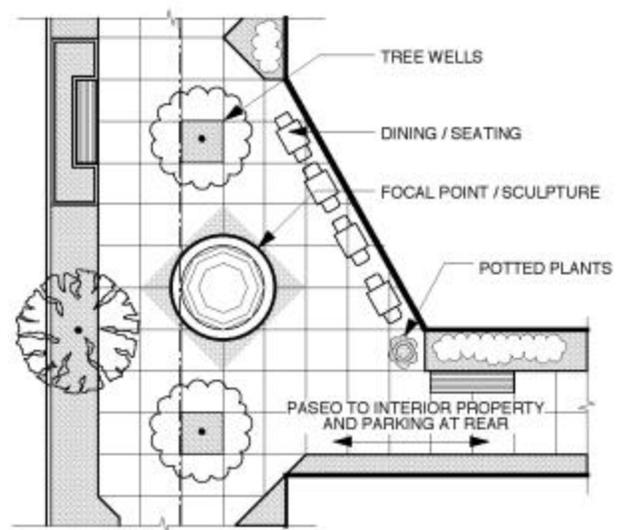


Fig. 5-12 Semi-public space

5. **Open space features.** Open spaces should provide a contrast to the built environment with landscaping and distinctive features such as fountains and art.

B. Public art. Public art, as a feature that is accessible to the public, is strongly encouraged to be a part of gathering spaces to draw people into and through them, as well as along sidewalks and buildings.

1. Public art should identify areas that have a unique identity and celebrate local history, culture and nature. Generic, commercially related art is discouraged.



Fig. 5-13 Sculpture in Porterville

2. Diverse media and art forms are encouraged, such as, but not limited to statues, vertical and horizontal works, surface decorative designs, and murals (particularly on firewall facades).

3. Public art should be integrated into development projects. An artist should be part of the design team and participate from the project's inception. Public art proposals shall be reviewed for approval by the Nipomo Arts Commission as part of the development review process, prior to use permit approval. Maintenance and security arrangements shall be provided with public art projects.

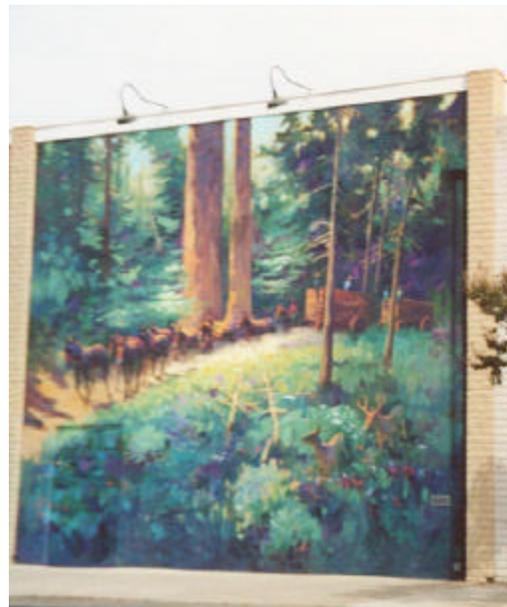


Fig. 5-14 Mural in Exeter

4. Art pieces should be located within public property or directly adjacent to be visible and accessible by the public.



Fig. 5-15 Bronze sculpture

5. Public art should be included in public works, parks and recreation projects or other public infrastructure projects.

C. Planters. Potted plants and built-in planters should be located along sidewalks and throughout gathering spaces to enliven them with color and additional landscape, illustrated in Figures 5-15.



Fig. 5-15 Parkway and potted plants

D. Outdoor dining. Formal outdoor dining venues with designated areas for tables and chairs are highly encouraged, as shown in Figure 5-16.

1. Design suggestions.

- a. Outdoor dining is encouraged to be located near building entries and windows, inset or adjacent to the façade, within setbacks or elsewhere on-site, within patios or decks, and away from vehicle parking and drives.
- b. Outdoor dining should be located on paved surfaces for pedestrian safety. It should include aisle access to individual tables for service and customer access. Lighting and heating should be included and designed for energy efficiency and to minimize glare unto public and private property.
- c. Room should be planned for pedestrian circulation around dining areas.
- d. Noise should be minimized by distance from traffic, or use of walls and windows.

2. Design requirements.

- a. Outdoor dining proposals shall comply with parking, setback and other requirements of the Land Use Ordinance.
- b. Sidewalk dining is allowed with approval of a county Encroachment Permit and a Zoning Clearance in accordance with these standards.
- c. Proposals to utilize sidewalks shall show proposed dining located at the rear of the sidewalk and not at the curb, and shall include a three-foot tall wall or fence, to provide a formal edge, security and enclosure. The wall or fence design shall be consistent with design features or themes of the primary use and this design plan.

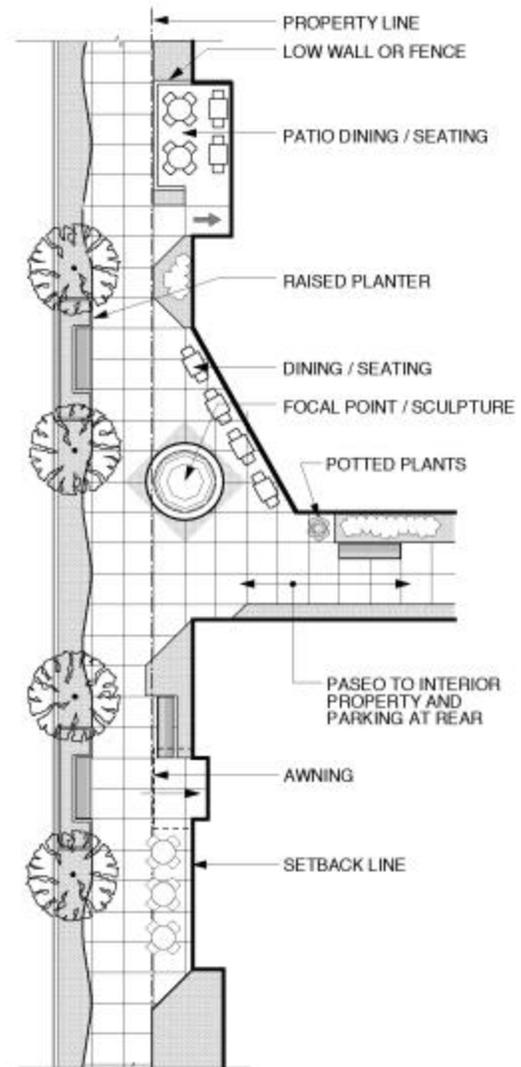


Fig. 5-16 Sidewalk dining examples

Parking Lots

POLICY 5.5: Parking Lots

Parking lots should be easily accessible, serve multiple parcels, have attractive landscaping, and be located so that they enhance the desired pedestrian orientation.

Standards

- A. Location of parking.** Off-street parking lots shall be designed to maximize street frontage for business structures and outdoor activities. Parking at the sides of buildings that front public streets should only be utilized if no other feasible location is possible. Parking areas should be located near the rear or center of the site, surrounded by buildings and landscaped areas.
- B. Driveway location.** Where a corner lot is being developed, the parking lot entry should be located on the side street. Parking drives shall be designed and provided to access adjacent properties through mutual access easements or other means.
- C. Consolidated parking.** Multiple businesses are encouraged to share a common lot based on hours of operation and needs of the business and enter into a joint use, shared access and maintenance agreement.
- D. Parking lot size.** Provide small parking bays of 24 cars or fewer, with walkways and landscape between them, as shown in Figure 5-17.

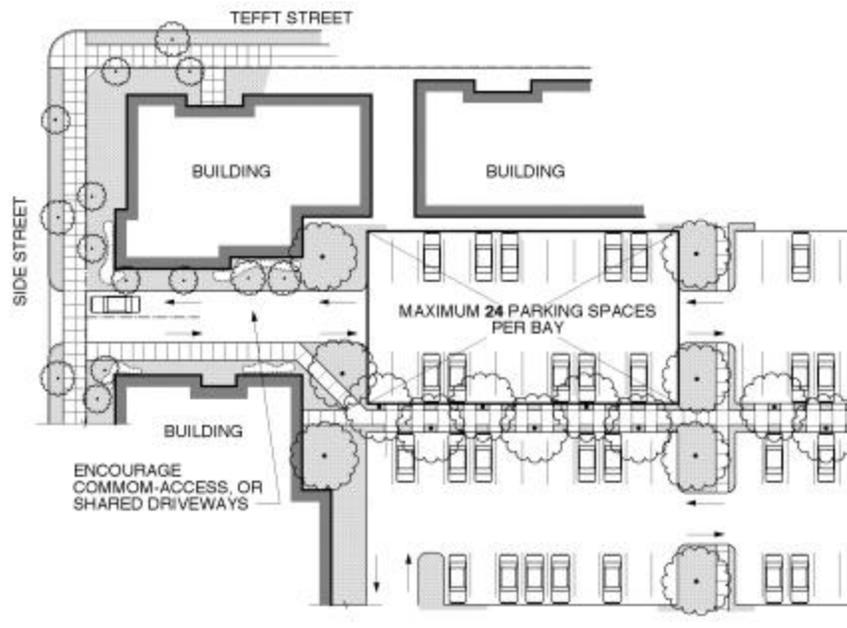


Fig. 5-17 Preferred parking location, access and design

- E. Screening.** Parking areas that are visible from the public right-of-way shall be screened to reduce glare from parked vehicles. Parking lots located adjacent to the street shall provide 3 feet of screening (berms, fences, walls, etc.) between the street and parking, as required by the Land Use Ordinance Chapter 22.18. Pedestrian access from the public sidewalk and within the site shall be provided through these screening devices at convenient intervals.

Utilities

POLICY 5.6: Utilities in Site Development

Public and private utilities are so numerous that they can be pervasive and interfere with the appearance and physical enjoyment of otherwise attractive development. The success of the West Tefft Corridor area is so important that particular attention needs to be paid to careful placing and screening of utilities.

Standards

- A. Content requirement.** Utilities listed below shall be included in project plans in addition to other application content requirements of the Land Use Ordinance.

Air release valves	Gas meters
Alarm boxes	Irrigation valves
Backflow preventers	Manholes
Burglar alarms	Meter boxes
Cable TV amplifiers	Phone pedestals
CCTV cameras	Pressure relief valve Drains
Check valves	Pull boxes
Cleanouts	Roof drains
Condensate drains	Speakers
Drain grates	Splice boxes
Drain valves	Transformer enclosure
Drip tubing	Utility boxes
Electric meters	Valve boxes
Exterior fire sprinkler pipe arrays	Vaults
Fire escapes	Vent pipes
Fireplugs	Water meters

- B. Utilities locations, screening and design.** Features in the above list are highly encouraged to be placed within buildings or other structures, or below ground. They should be in unobtrusive and safe locations. They shall be screened from or blended with the project to the maximum extent feasible. They shall be designed in an aesthetic manner. Utilities shall be avoided at and near driveways and front door entrances and display windows.

