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RULES AND REGULATIONS


CENTRAL PLATTE VALLEY – AURARIA DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Adopted April 9, 2019

APPROVED FOR LEGALITY

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Interim Executive Director, Community Planning and Development
City and County of Denver
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Introduction

The Central Platte Valley – Auraria (CPV-Auraria) district represents a unique and significant opportunity for growth and change in Downtown Denver. This document aims to ensure the level of design quality and neighborhood activity generated by new development is consistent with the exceptional potential represented by this area.
Evolution of Downtown Denver

Over the last 50 years Denver’s Downtown skyline has been slowly transforming. Today, Downtown Denver has the tallest buildings within at least 500 miles of the city and continues to evolve and grow in response to urban growth trends, market demands, employment opportunities, and improved transportation networks.

Prior to large high-rise buildings, Downtown Denver had a dense urban fabric, comprised of stone and brick buildings, many of which still remain and have been designated with historic status. These buildings bring a richness to Downtown Denver through their historic integrity, building scale, street activation, architectural details, craftsmanship, and quality of finishes.

Much of the high-rise development of the 1970’s and 1980’s was driven by maximizing floor plate sizes and generally catered to an auto-oriented culture of oversized streets. As a result, development often lacked a sense of street enclosure, ground floor facade transparency, articulation and activation, and did not reflect the Human Scale or positively impact the Public Realm. Moreover, while Downtown Denver developed with a large core of commercial uses, it never realized a true mixed-use pattern that also included residential, civic, and cultural facilities. Denver was not alone in this type of planning and development, and many American cities were plagued with similar outcomes of downtowns with active daytime employment centers, but vacant and dangerous nighttime spaces. More recently, many cities have sought to correct this by using zoning and other tools to encourage a vibrant, 24-hour mix of uses in downtown locations.

Through Blueprint Denver, the citywide land use and transportation plan, Downtown has been identified as an appropriate place for high intensity development. While continuing to develop a distinctive skyline, Downtown Denver’s new development should foster a better relationship with the street and Public Realm through smaller block sizes, facade breakdown, and intentional building placement. The aim is to achieve a built environment that respects the pedestrian, promotes a true mixture of uses, and activates the Public Realm with successful and vibrant ground floor uses.

Existing Context

Central Platte Valley - Auraria (CPV-Auraria) is located west of Lower Downtown, north of Auraria Campus, and east of Jefferson Park. The Consolidated Main Line (CML) railroad and South Platte River (River) bisect the area. The Regional Transportation District (RTD) E, C, and W light rail lines run parallel to the CML and include two stations within CPV-Auraria: Broncos Stadium at Mile High and Pepsi Center/Elitch Gardens

CPV-Auraria has largely remained underutilized and separated from Denver’s Downtown urban fabric. In the past, it was predominantly used for freight rail and its services, partly due to its convenient location along the River. While the River still supports a diverse ecology, the area’s industrial past and railroad-related uses have greatly affected the quality of the River and adjacent riparian areas over time. More recently, the area has been occupied by large entertainment and cultural venues served by acres of surface parking. This land use pattern has resulted in an unusually large and significantly underutilized land area within Downtown. The area’s position within the Downtown context provides an opportunity for a high level of allowed building intensity and mix of uses to promote a vibrant neighborhood that serves as a place to work, live, and play.
Future of CPV-Auraria

In 2017, property owners, community stakeholders, and the City of Denver initiated a process to develop a vision for future development in CPV-Auraria. Through this public process, the Downtown Area Plan Amendment (2018) was adopted. The Downtown Area Plan Amendment created a vision for CPV-Auraria to become a densely populated, mixed-use neighborhood that provides a range of housing types, becomes a center for innovative businesses, and embraces the River.

The River and adjacent Parks are envisioned to become an enhanced greenway with trail networks, widened riparian areas, and a mixture of passive and active uses. As the area evolves into a vibrant urban environment with retail and housing along the riverfront, its vitality will be enriched by connecting and extending the green network across the neighborhood. The area represents a major opportunity for Denver to create a diverse urban riverfront that accommodates a variety of compatible land uses, while also enhancing the rich ecology of the river.

A Vision for High Quality Design

The purpose of the CPV-Auraria Design Standards and Guidelines (DSG) is to foster the vision established by the Downtown Area Plan Amendment by setting clear expectations for the level of design quality expected for development in CPV-Auraria. The DSG guides the form, scale, character, and quality of individual projects to ensure CPV-Auraria evolves into a mixed-use neighborhood with a distinctive identity within the Downtown context.
Overview

Applicability
The DSG shall apply only to properties with Denver Zoning Code D-CPV-T, D-CPV-R, or D-CPV-C zone districts that are located within the design review area, which is bounded by Speer Boulevard, Interstate 25, and Auraria Parkway. All new construction, additions, exterior improvements, signs, and new or expanded outdoor use areas proposed in these zone districts shall follow these design standards and guidelines.

This document sets forth design standards and guidelines that provide the basis for review of proposed development on private properties and associated improvements in privately-managed Right-of-Way. Public Right-of-Way shall continue to be reviewed by the Department of Public Works and their requirements, which may deviate from this document. The Zoning Administrator shall utilize staff and design review findings by the Design Advisory Board when making a determination of Approval, Approval with Conditions, or Denial for proposed projects in CPV-Auraria.

SOUTH PLATTE RIVER
In recent history, development within Denver has generally turned its back on the South Platte River. Years of neglect, pollution, and industrial activities along the river had taken their toll on what was once a thriving natural habitat.

In the past few decades, several efforts by public, private, and non-profit partners have begun to reclaim the River as an amenity to be cherished and celebrated. A surge in the Downtown residential population has also created a critical need for additional Parks and Open Space. The River now represents an extraordinary opportunity to integrate an activated and functional ecological system into a dense, mixed-use, urban neighborhood. The design of projects that are adjacent to the River should incorporate the highest levels of design quality, activation, and pedestrian experience.

KEY STREETS
The Downtown Area Plan Amendment established the following as Key Streets in the future street grid for CPV-Auraria.

- 7th Street
- 9th Street
- Elitch Circle
- Little Raven Street
- Chopper Circle
- Water Street

Many of these streets are also reflected in the Denver Zoning Code, where they are required to provide a minimum amount of non-residential Active Uses at the Street Level.

Key Streets serve as important pedestrian and bicycle connections through CPV-Auraria, are anticipated to have high ground-floor commercial activity, and will be expected to have enhanced standards for exceptional design and quality. Some standards and guidelines that follow will reference the desired character along Key Streets.
One potential future connectivity network as envisioned by the Downtown Area Plan Amendment (2018). Roads, bridges, and other connections shown in the diagram are conceptual and subject to change based on future master planning and engineering studies.

### DESIGN REVIEW AREA

- **Existing Light Rail and Stations**
- **Existing CML**
- **Platte Valley Trolley**
- **Potential Street Extensions**

### Planned 5280 Loop

- **Existing Ped & Bike Bridge**
- **Potential All Mode Bridge**
- **Potential Ped & Bike Bridge or All Mode Bridge**
- **Potential Ped & Bike Bridge**

3. All new construction, additions, exterior improvements, signs, and new or expanded outdoor use areas proposed in the D-CPV-T, D-CPV-R, and D-CPV-C zone districts located within the design review area, shall follow the design standards and guidelines.
CPV-Auraria Guiding Principles

Development within CPV-Auraria should be well designed and detailed, such that it can be appreciated when viewed as a part of the city skyline and at the most intimate level by the pedestrian. The guiding principles that follow, support the vision for CPV-Auraria by describing the overarching design goals for the neighborhood. These principles are further reinforced by the intent statements, design standards, and guidelines to support a densely populated, mixed-use neighborhood with a distinctive identity in Downtown. Each project should express excellence in design and raise the bar for others to follow.

Sense of Place. A sense of place will be achieved through a cohesive and well-designed environment that contributes to one’s understanding of being within a particular district. A neighborhood built around intimate block sizes, proportional scale relationships between Streetwall height and the width of the street, and well-detailed architecture that relates to the street, will distinguish this area from others. Activated Off-Street Pedestrian Connections that become special refuge areas among busy streets can support a unique identity for the district. A well-detailed Public Realm that shares a common design language and engages active ground floor uses contributes to a legibility and liveliness that is comfortable, safe, and inviting year-round. The South Platte River serves as the singular element to be celebrated throughout and establish CPV-Auraria as a distinctive district within Downtown.

Human Scale. Moderate block sizes and a fine-grained network of pedestrian connections will organize CPV-Auraria into smaller building sites that promote a sense of Human Scale. Buildings that clearly define the Streetwall and utilize a variety of methods to break down large facades into smaller components further contribute to a comfortable scale in the urban environment. Additional architectural elements, such as windows, fenestration, cornices, and materials, and the design of the streetscape add the final layers that speak to our sense of Human Scale. The lower four to five stories of the building are especially important as they are within our direct and peripheral view. Above five stories, articulation with vertical and horizontal elements, like recessed or protruding balconies, help break down massive building facades.

Creativity. Innovative and distinctive design solutions will help define the future character of CPV-Auraria. Creative building design that creates distinctive architectural forms contributes to the sense of place, adds visual interest, and becomes a beacon for residents, employees, and visitors to experience. Streets built for people and transit, not vehicles, that incorporate neighborhood-wide stormwater infrastructure can become a green network drawing the river and nature into the district. Flexibility and creativity are inherent to the design envisioned for this area with multiple opportunities to push the boundaries in exchange for other community benefits.

Context. Design in CPV-Auraria will consider surrounding buildings, neighborhoods, and uses to create an interconnected district with contextual relationships throughout. Building Massing that responds to the adjacent and surrounding context supports a coordinated approach to a comfortable Public Realm and ensures appropriate transitions between neighboring structures. While each site may be developed and designed by a different team, thus taking on different shapes and forms, collectively they are harmonious within the district and contribute to an overarching idea that is reflective of its context, zoning, and other natural or human-made characteristics.

Sustainability. Social, economic, and environmental sustainability will be promoted in CPV-Auraria through various mechanisms that occur at a range of scales. Blocks and streets that incorporate interconnected Off-Street Pedestrian Connections, Enhanced Setbacks, and Open Space promote high levels of pedestrian activity and knit together green infrastructure to clean water before it enters the South Platte River. Buildings that are shaped to preserve access to natural light and air also support a vibrant, active, and economically viable Street Level. Building design and construction will incorporate sustainable materials and assembly methods that meet performance and durability criteria using current emerging technologies and low impact development practices.
4. A proportionate sense of street enclosure, breakdown of building massing, well-articulated facades, ample sidewalk space, and landscape elements, all contribute to a comfortable and engaging street that reflects Human Scale.

5. A cohesive and well-designed environment, that includes building design and the Public Realm, contributes to a sense of place and one’s understanding of being within a particular district.

6. Enhanced Commercial Setbacks provide additional space for retail spillover, outdoor dining, and other Street Level activities, while maintaining a comfortable clear walking path for pedestrians.

7. Social, economic, and environmental sustainability will be promoted in CPV-Auraria through various mechanisms that occur at a range of scales.
The CPV-Auraria Design Standards and Guidelines serve as one of several documents that are part of the City’s planning and development process for this area. The DSG are intended to implement adopted City regulations, plans, and policies. Key policy and regulatory documents relevant to CPV-Auraria are summarized below. All documents are available for download at www.denvergov.org/CPD.

**Comprehensive Plan 2000**

Denver Comprehensive Plan 2000 establishes an overarching vision for Denver as a city that is livable for its people, now and in the future. The Plan reflects the effort of hundreds of residents from different backgrounds and perspectives, who have agreed on the city’s long-term purposes, and suggested strategies that will sustain its intangible assets for the future. This document provides the highest level policy guidance for the location and character of urban development.

**Blueprint Denver**

Blueprint Denver is a citizen-driven, integrated land-use and transportation plan. The plan was adopted in 2002 and aims to enhance Denver life by using land in the way that is healthy for its economy, supports alternative modes of transportation, and maintains the integrity of neighborhoods. Blueprint Denver identifies and differentiates “areas of stability” from “areas of change” in order to guide new development. It identifies CPV-Auraria as the Downtown land use concept and an area of change. The current Blueprint Denver, and future updates, establish broad policy goals at the citywide and neighborhood context levels.

**Downtown Area Plan**

The Downtown Area Plan (2007) established more detailed policies for the Downtown area which includes Lower Downtown, Commercial Core, Cultural Core, Golden Triangle, Ballpark, Arapahoe Square, Auraria Campus, and three distinct areas of the Central Platte Valley.

**AMENDMENTS TO THE DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES**

CPV-Auraria Design Standards and Guidelines are Rules and Regulations adopted according to the process stated in Section 12.18 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code (DRMC). All amendments to the standards and guidelines shall be reviewed and adopted according to the Section 12.18 process.

**Downtown Area Plan Amendment**

The Downtown Area Plan Amendment establishes the overall vision and describes a set of goals and recommendations specifically for CPV-Auraria that directs future development of the area. The regulatory guidance found in the Plan Amendment recommend creation of new zone districts and DSG to shape future projects in CPV-Auraria. The Plan Amendment provides the most detailed policy direction for the area.

**Denver Revised Municipal Code**

The Denver Revised Municipal Code (DRMC) is the complete code of ordinances for the City and County of Denver. The CPV-Auraria Design Standards and Guidelines are adopted per the Rule-making authority provided in Section 12.18 of the DRMC.

**Denver Zoning Code**

The Denver Zoning Code preserves and promotes the public health, safety and welfare of the City’s residents and employees and facilitates the growth and expansion of the City. Zoning regulations provide the basic building form, parking, signage, and land use requirements for all neighborhoods within the City, including CPV-Auraria. As described in the Denver Zoning Code, specialized zone districts (D-CPV-T, D-CPV-R, and D-CPV-C) apply context-sensitive zoning requirements in CPV-Auraria. Section 12.2.8 of the Denver Zoning Code establishes the Design Advisory Board to review projects according to these design standards and guidelines.
Organization & Format

The DSG is organized to follow a typical approach to project design. Below is a list of the chapters and general description of the structure found within Chapters 1-5.

Introduction
Chapter 1 | Site Organization
Chapter 2 | Building Mass & Scale
Chapter 3 | Facade Design & Site Details
Chapter 4 | Streetscape Design
Chapter 5 | Building Signs
Glossary of Terms

Intent Statements establish the objectives to be achieved for each topic and may also be used to determine the appropriateness of alternative or innovative approaches that do not meet specific design standards. It is expected that projects will be consistent with all relevant intent statements.

Design Standards set prescriptive criteria for achieving the intent statements. They use the term “shall” to indicate that compliance is expected and are numbered by chapter for reference.

Design Guidelines provide additional suggestions to achieve the intent statements. They use the term “should” or “consider” and are numbered by chapter for reference.

Application of the Standards and Guidelines:
Projects are expected to be consistent with all relevant intent statements, but not all standards and guidelines may apply to every project in CPV-Auraria. Standards and guidelines that refer to design topics or elements that are not part of a development or redevelopment project are not applicable. Some standards and guidelines include a list of appropriate techniques or examples of how compliance can be met. These lists are informational and not intended to describe an exclusive or exhaustive set of methods.

Underlined Text in this Document: Underlined text indicates a cross reference to a related design topic or a hyperlink to a related web site. In electronic (Acrobat PDF) versions of this document, clicking on an underlined cross reference or hyperlink will open the related document page or web site. In most versions of Adobe Acrobat, clicking the Alt + left arrow keys will link back to the original page. Underlined text is also used to indicate terms that are defined in the Glossary of Terms.

Sidebars: These grey boxes offer background information about a related topic. They do not imply additional compliance or requirements.

FLEXIBILITY FOR CREATIVE OR INNOVATIVE DESIGNS

In some cases, an innovative or creative design approach that does not comply with specific design standards or guidelines may be approved if it is consistent with the guiding principles and relevant intent statements. It is the applicant’s responsibility to show that an alternative solution is consistent with, and effectively implements the guiding principles and intent statements of the CPV-Auraria Design Standards and Guidelines.

Flexibility for designs that do not comply with specific design standards or guidelines could be especially appropriate for entertainment, cultural and civic buildings that stand out from the surrounding context with unique building mass and scale, transparency, and/or ground floor active use patterns.

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THIS DOCUMENT

The design standards and guidelines include many photographs and diagrams to illustrate desired approaches. The illustrations are provided as examples and are not intended to indicate the only option(s).

If there appears to be a conflict between the text of the design standards and guidelines and a related illustration, the text shall prevail.
Using the Design Standards and Guidelines

This document is organized into an Introduction and five Chapters that are used by City Staff, the Design Advisory Board, and Planning Board to evaluate proposed projects. Project applicants should use the DSG to inform their design decisions on proposed projects. The Introduction summarizes the design review process and Chapters 1-5 provide specific design standards and guidelines.

Introduction
Used by all to understand the role of the design standards and guidelines, design review phases, and submittal requirements for each step of the review process.

Chapter 1 | Site Organization
Used by the Design Advisory Board and City Staff to evaluate the arrangement of buildings and related features on a site, as well as the functional character of those features and how they shape the Public Realm.

Chapter 2 | Building Mass & Scale
Used by the Design Advisory Board and City Staff to evaluate the three-dimensional mass and scale of a project and the relationship to the surrounding context.

Chapter 3 | Facade Design & Site Details
Used by the Design Advisory Board and City Staff to review the visual and functional character of individual buildings, particularly related to the design quality provided at the Street Level, on all Visible Facades, and in the Public Realm.

Chapter 4 | Streetscape Design
Used by the Design Advisory Board and City Staff to review the treatment of the area between the street and the Zone Lot line, especially if the street is under private ownership or maintenance. If this area is within public Right-of-Way, then Department of Public Works requirements apply and may deviate from this chapter’s standards and guidelines.

Chapter 5 | Building Signs
Used by City Staff to review the location and design of all signs in CPV-Auraria as well as Vital Sign Plans. This chapter is also used by the Planning Board and City Staff to review Comprehensive Sign Plans.
Facade Articulation
Windows & Transparency

Articulation and transparency of all faces of a building are important, but those facing streets, Parks, and Open Space are most critical. Transparency in the building facade adds visual interest, contributes to a sense of liveliness on the street, and improves safety through natural surveillance. At a building’s Lower Stories, a series of clear and unobstructed views both into and out of buildings enriches the urban experience for pedestrians and building occupants alike.

Intent Statements
3.E To provide a minimum level of transparency on all facades
3.F To ensure that building activities are visible from the Public Realm and vice versa
3.G To ensure that building facades do not cause glare or negative impacts to the Public Realm
3.H To encourage well-detailed fenestration and curtain wall designs

Design Standards
3.20 Street Level transparent facade areas shall be located to provide visibility into the Street Level Active Uses required by the Denver Zoning Code.
3.21 Street Level windows shall use transparent glass with a maximum visible light reflectance of approximately 0.15 to allow pedestrians to view the activity within the building.
   a. Clear glass for wall openings, i.e., doors and windows, shall be used along all Street Level facades for maximum transparency, especially in conjunction with retail uses
   b. Dark tinted, reflective or opaque glazing is not permitted for any required wall opening along Street Level facades
   c. Required transparency at the Primary Street Facing Facades shall not be blocked by signage, furnishings, or displays
   d. Highly reflective or mirrored glazing shall not be allowed

DENVER ZONING CODE TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS
The Denver Zoning Code requires a minimum percentage of Street Level transparency (the total linear feet of windows or permitted alternatives along the Street Level facade) to provide visual interest and activate the street and sidewalk. The design standards and guidelines in this section are intended to build on Denver Zoning Code Street Level transparency requirements.

Additional Information
Additional Information is provided as a bulleted list beneath some standards and guidelines to describe more detailed requirements or appropriate approaches and strategies.

Sidebars
Sidebars provide background information on the design topic or relationship to the Denver Zoning Code.

Photographs and Diagrams
Photographs and Diagrams visually describe the standards and guidelines.

Underlined Text
Underlined Text indicates terms defined in the Appendix, or provides clickable cross references to related document topics and website hyperlinks (in PDF version).
Summary of Design Review Process

The design review process is closely coordinated with the chapters of this document and is intended to follow the typical approach to project design. Each project will be evaluated based on its unique context and attributes. Approval or denial of an individual project will not set specific precedent for future design review decisions, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

At each stage, City Staff will review the submittal and determine whether the applicant is prepared to proceed to the Design Advisory Board for review. More than one submittal may be required by staff before proceeding to the review meeting with the Design Advisory Board. City Staff will make a recommendation to the Design Advisory Board regarding the project’s compliance with the design standards and guidelines. For some project types that are smaller in scope, such as exterior improvements or expanded outdoor use areas, the application may be able to be reviewed by administratively by City Staff or proceed directly to the Design Review submittal for review by the Design Advisory Board. City Staff will determine the appropriate process for each project on a case-by-case basis and inform the applicant at the required Pre-Application/Concept Review meeting.

The Design Advisory Board

The Design Advisory Board is empowered through the Denver Zoning Code to advise and assist the Community Planning and Development Department in the design review process. The board is composed of downtown residents, property owners, design professionals, and real estate development industry representatives who help ensure that projects are developed in accordance with these design standards and guidelines. See [www.denvergov.org/downtowndesign](http://www.denvergov.org/downtowndesign) for more information.

The Design Advisory Board advises on the project types listed below. New signs and Comprehensive Sign Plans are not reviewed by the Design Advisory Board and are subject to the standard citywide review processes as described in the table. For all types of review, the design standards and guidelines shall be used in conjunction with the Denver Zoning Code D-CPV-T, D-CPV-R, and D-CPV-C zone districts, and all other applicable regulations. The Design Advisory Board shall work within the established design review process to provide recommendations regarding project approval to the City’s Zoning Administrator.

### PROJECT TYPE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVIEWERS</th>
<th>REVIEW PROCESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Types Reviewed by the Design Advisory Board</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New building construction and additions</td>
<td>City Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major exterior building improvements, including significant changes in materials or transparency</td>
<td>Design Advisory Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major site improvements, including new or significantly expanded outdoor use areas in locations that are visible from the street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Types Not Reviewed by the Design Advisory Board</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor exterior building improvements</td>
<td>City Staff (may be referred to Design Advisory Board)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor site improvements, including small expansions to outdoor use areas or new outdoor use areas in locations that are not visible from the street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Sign Plans</td>
<td>City Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign permits</td>
<td>City Staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Review Process by Project Type
Concept Workshop

An optional Concept Workshop with City Staff is strongly encouraged to help facilitate an early understanding of unique Denver Zoning Code requirements in the D-CPV-T, D-CPV-R, and D-CPV-C zone districts and their relationship to these design standards and guidelines. The goal of the Concept Workshop is to establish a baseline of building character and design quality at the project’s conception that aligns with the recommendations of the DSG. This meeting should occur prior to the Pre-Application/Concept Review Meeting to identify and address possible conflicts early on in the process.

1. Pre-Application/Concept Review Meeting

A required Pre-Application/Concept Review Meeting with City Staff will address the design review process and submittal requirements necessary at each step. This meeting provides an opportunity for discussion of the proposed project with other various City agencies that may affect the overall design. The Concept Review meeting that is required for the citywide Site Development Plan (SDP) review process may also serve as the Pre-Application/Concept Review for the purpose of these DSG.
2A. Site Design and Massing Review Submittal

Following the Pre-Application/Concept Review meeting, and prior to a Formal SDP submittal, an applicant may submit materials for review of the general site organization and massing of the proposed project. The submittal shall focus on the design standards and guidelines found in “Chapter 1 | Site Organization” and “Chapter 2 | Building Mass & Scale” of this document. More detailed design elements described in “Chapter 3 | Facade Design & Site Details” and “Chapter 4 | Streetscape Design” should not be included in the submittal.

2B. Site Design and Massing Review Meeting

In a public meeting, the Design Advisory Board will review the Site Design and Massing Review submittal. This will provide an opportunity for early input from the Design Advisory Board related to the relationship of the proposed project to the surrounding context, site layout, access, location of building program and uses, and overall scale and massing. City Staff and the applicant (or the applicant’s designee) will present the item to the Design Advisory Board. Following the presentation, the Design Advisory Board shall discuss the merits of the application and provide input to the applicant on how the project complies with the design standards and guidelines. Design Advisory Board feedback will provide direction to help the applicant further develop a full Design Review submittal.

Only one Site Design and Massing Review meeting will be required in a typical process, but a significant change in the project may result in the Design Advisory Board requesting a second review. A project must proceed through the Site Design and Massing Review meeting and incorporate Design Advisory Board comments prior to submitting a Formal SDP.

3A. Design Review Submittal(s)

Once the applicant has completed the Site Design and Massing Review meeting with the Design Advisory Board, and concurrent with the Formal SDP submittal, the Design Review submittal may occur. The Design Review submittal shall incorporate Design Advisory Board feedback from the Site Design and Massing Review and include more detailed architectural and streetscape elements of the proposed project. The submittal shall address items reviewed previously and include additional topics found in “Chapter 3 | Facade Design & Site Details” and “Chapter 4 | Streetscape Design” of this document.

3B. Design Review Meeting(s)

In a public meeting, the Design Advisory Board will review the Design Review submittal. City Staff and the applicant (or the applicant’s designee) will present the item to the Design Advisory Board. Following the presentation, the Design Advisory Board shall discuss the merits of the application and provide input to the applicant on how the project complies with the design standards and guidelines.

In the Design Review meeting, the Design Advisory Board will review the topics found in all chapters of this document. However, Site Design and Massing characteristics addressed in Step 2 are expected to be largely resolved by this step in the review process. The Design Advisory Board may require additional submittal materials and/or subsequent meetings prior to making a recommendation.

At the conclusion of the Design Review meeting, the Design Advisory Board shall make a formal recommendation of Approval, Approval with Conditions, or Denial to the Zoning Administrator.
4. Final Determination

The Zoning Administrator, utilizing the recommendation of the Design Advisory Board, will make a final determination of Approval, Approval with Conditions, or Denial for the submitted application.

The Department of Public Works, Department of Parks and Recreation Office of the City Forester (City Forester), and other departments or agencies will also review and approve specific aspects of most applications through the SDP process. Review by other departments and agencies applies to all projects in the City and County of Denver and is not unique to CPV-Auraria.
Submittal Requirements

This checklist applies to new construction and additions. The Design Advisory Board will not review an application that is incomplete. The following materials are required prior to scheduling a Site Design and Massing Review or Design Review meeting with the Design Advisory Board. Submittal items may be combined where appropriate and required information is still clearly communicated. When necessary, the Design Advisory Board or City Staff may request additional information from the applicant to describe compliance with the design standards and guidelines.

Site Design and Massing Review Submittal (2A)

☐ CPV-Auraria DSG checklist addressing compliance with the topics in Chapters 1 and 2.

☐ Project goal statement defining the overall goals and objectives of the project including the program of uses and role within the context of the neighborhood. The narrative should address how the project address the Downtown Area Plan Amendment vision elements and Guiding Principles in the DSG.

☐ Project design intent statement defining the design intent of the project and describing how the proposed development meets the CPV-Auraria DSG. If a standard is not met, the applicant must demonstrate in the narrative how the proposed alternative better achieves the intent statement.

☐ Context map showing the location of the project within CPV-Auraria.

☐ Context photograph(s) showing the project location in relationship to surrounding buildings and context. These photos should include a comprehensive view of any adjacent building elevations and other existing development or features that could influence the proposed project.

☐ Massing analysis to demonstrate how the proposed project may influence views, access to light and air, shadow impacts, etc. on neighboring streets, properties, and Open Space.

☐ Neighborhood context analysis that examines the area within a ¼ mile radius from the site. The neighborhood context analysis should evaluate topics that could include, but are not limited to:
  a. major streets and block patterns
  b. vehicular access
  c. pedestrian/bicycle routes and connections
  d. transit routes, stations, and stops
  e. Parks and natural features
  f. surrounding building character (heights, materials, etc.)
  g. historic landmark properties
  h. Street Level land uses
  i. Public Realm elements (setback patterns, Enhanced Comercial Setback and Open Space areas, sidewalks, Amenity Zones, street trees, etc.)
  j. amenities and destinations (community centers, museums, entertainment, trails, libraries, schools, retail areas, etc.)
  k. topographic information (where significant)

☐ Block context analysis that examines the relationship of the project to the block where it is located. The block context analysis should evaluate topics that could include, but are not limited to:
  a. size of the block and arrangement of individual property boundaries or Zone Lots
  b. location and size of public streets, Alleys or Private Access Drives, vehicular access points, and Off-Street Pedestrian Connections
  c. Public Realm elements (setback patterns, Enhanced Commercial Setback and Open Space areas, sidewalks, Amenity Zones, street trees, etc.)
  d. Historic Resources
  e. existing and proposed building footprints
  f. existing and proposed building heights
  g. existing and proposed Tower separation
  h. existing and proposed building entrances
  i. existing and proposed Street Level land uses
### Submittal Requirements

- **Building elevation analysis** showing the elevation of the proposed project in context with the elevations of adjacent buildings
  - a. interior lots should include the entire block
  - b. corner lots should include both block faces and buildings across the street

- **Conceptual site plan** (scaled and dimensioned):
  - a. property lines and *Zone Lot* boundaries
  - b. required setbacks
  - c. site access and circulation
  - d. building footprints, including *Tower* locations (if applicable)
  - e. *Street Level* uses
  - f. site amenities, such as furnishings, lighting, *Open Space*, or Enhanced Setbacks

- **Conceptual building sections**, floor plans, and all elevations (scaled and dimensioned)

- Three-dimensional conceptual building massing views taken from the *Street Level* that incorporate photography of the surrounding context. Aerial birds-eye views are encouraged, but optional.

- Images and graphic representations of:
  - a. street sections to communicate street enclosure relationships
  - b. conceptual building program and uses
  - c. image precedents of the proposed design character and quality of the project

- If *Towers* are proposed, provide plans (scaled and dimensioned) showing floor plate size, linear dimension, and separation requirements from neighboring properties

- If a project is seeking the *Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative*, provide a narrative description and analysis showing compliance with these requirements. See "Chapter 1 | Site Organization".

- If a project is seeking the *Tower Floor Plate Linear Dimension Alternative*, provide a narrative description and analysis showing compliance with these specific requirements. See "Chapter 2 | Building Mass & Scale".

### Design Review Submittal (3A)

- CPV-Auraria DSG checklist addressing compliance with the topics in Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4.

- The following items listed above in the Site Design and Massing submittal checklist (revised as necessary):
  - a. project goal statement
  - b. project design intent statement
  - c. context map
  - d. context photographs
  - e. massing analysis
  - f. neighborhood context analysis
  - g. block context analysis
  - h. building elevation analysis

- Detailed site plans (scaled and dimensioned):
  - a. property lines and *Zone Lot* boundaries
  - b. required setbacks
  - c. site access and circulation
  - d. proposed building footprints, including *Tower* locations (if applicable)
  - e. *Street Level* uses
  - f. site amenities, such as furnishings, lighting, *Open Space*, or Enhanced Setbacks
  - g. streetscape plan
  - h. landscape plan
  - i. grading plan

- Detailed building sections, floor plans, and all elevations (scaled and dimensioned), including indication of potential future locations for signage.

- Three-dimensional architecturally rendered views taken from the *Street Level* that incorporate photography of the surrounding context. Aerial birds-eye views are optional, but encouraged to help communicate the relationship to the surrounding context.
Submittal Requirements

☑ Images and graphic representations of:
  a. street sections to describe street enclosure relationships
  b. proposed building program and uses
  c. elevations and details showing compliance with Street Level facade design and building articulation standards
  d. streetscape details, materials, etc.
  e. landscape details, materials, etc.

☑ Lighting plan and renderings showing the location and character of pedestrian site lighting and exterior building lighting.

☑ Window glazing details with architectural notation on elevations and sections to demonstrate compliance with transparency standards for Street Level Facades, Lower Story Facades, Upper Story Facades, and Tower Facades.

☑ List and provide photographic examples of all external building materials.

☑ Color and/or material samples to depict color, texture and material quality for construction (as needed).

☑ If Towers are proposed, provide plans (scaled and dimensioned) showing floor plate size, linear dimension, and separation requirements from neighboring properties.

☑ If a project is seeking the Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative, provide a narrative description and analysis showing compliance with these requirements. See “Chapter 1 | Site Organization”.

☑ If a project is seeking the Tower Floor Plate Linear Dimension Alternative, provide a narrative description and analysis showing compliance with these specific requirements. See “Chapter 2 | Building Mass & Scale”.

Overview
Policy & Regulatory Foundation
How to Use This Document
Design Review Process
Submittal Requirements
Chapter 1 | Site Organization

Site Organization addresses the arrangement of pedestrian connections, vehicle access, and service areas, as well as the spatial relationships of individual buildings and tower elements to the Public Realm.
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Site Organization Overview

A Alley, Private Access Drive, and Off-Street Pedestrian Connections
B Street Frontage
C Tower Placement
D Vehicle Access
E Service Areas & Utilities
F Open Space
G Enhanced Commercial Setback
Block Configuration & Vehicle Access

Block configuration addresses the size and shape of blocks within the neighborhood, including the length of individual block frontages facing surrounding streets and the location of Off-Street Pedestrian Connections that provide access across blocks. Vehicle access addresses the location and design of Alleys, Private Access Drives, and the Vehicle Access Points into blocks and buildings from surrounding streets.

The design standards and guidelines in this section ensure that block configuration and vehicle access promotes the guiding principles for site organization by breaking down large blocks into a Human Scale network of pedestrian connections that are protected from vehicle impacts. When larger blocks are broken up with Off-Street Pedestrian Connections, block interiors can be activated with shops, restaurants and Street Level dwelling units to create additional neighborhood focal points.

Intent Statements

1.A  To promote a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood with moderate block sizes and a network of pedestrian connections

1.B  To break up long facades into smaller components that promote Human Scale

1.C  To promote continuity of Street Level activity and minimize impacts on pedestrians

9. Block frontages exceeding approximately 350 feet shall incorporate at least one Off-Street Pedestrian Connection to an adjoining street frontage.
**Design Standards**

1.01 Blocks shall be configured to break down long frontages, provide pedestrian connections across the neighborhood, and minimize the number of Vehicle Access Points.

Appropriate strategies include:

a. Limit block sizes to keep individual block frontages to less than approximately 350 feet.

b. Configure blocks longer than approximately 350 feet to provide an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection between adjoining streets (see Standard 1.02).

c. Configure all blocks to consolidate Vehicle Access Points (see Standard 1.03).

1.02 Block frontages exceeding approximately 350 feet shall incorporate at least one Off-Street Pedestrian Connection to an adjoining street frontage.

a. Locate the entrance in the middle third of the block to break down the frontage length.

b. Locate the entrance to generally align with the entrances of neighboring Off-Street Pedestrian Connections to provide connections across the neighborhood.

c. Design the connection to be at least 15 feet wide and open to the sky (uncovered) for at least 15 feet in depth from the Lower Story Facade.

d. Design the connection to encourage pedestrian use per Standard 1.08.

e. Ensure continuous and perpetual public access.

f. Consider improving an Alley or Private Access Drive to also serve as an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection (see Standard 1.08).

g. Through connections should be avoided on blocks adjacent to the Consolidated Main Line, Interstate 25, or other locations where a full connection is not practical.
Block Configuration & Vehicle Access

11. Limiting the width of driveways and consolidating vehicle and utility access areas can help minimize pedestrian impacts.

12. This Private Access Drive primarily serves as an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection and can also accommodate vehicle access to parking areas.

PUBLIC WORKS REVIEW OF VEHICLE ACCESS

Vehicle access, including the design of Private Access Drives, is subject to review and approval by the Department of Public Works. In some cases, Public Works review may result in required changes that deviate from the design standards and guidelines.

DEVELOPMENT ON EXISTING BLOCKS

Block reconfiguration is not required for new development on existing zone lots. In such cases, the design standards and guidelines in this section will be used to promote the intent statements for block configuration and vehicle access, including use of already-defined Vehicle Access Points.
Block Configuration & Vehicle Access

1.03 Blocks shall be configured to consolidate vehicle access onto Alleys or Private Access Drives.

Use Alleys or Private Access Drives to provide consolidated access to:

- Parking areas or structures
- A combined Interior Vehicle Court
- Passenger loading areas (see Standard 1.09)
- Service and utility areas (see “Service Area & Utility Location” on page 36)

1.04 Where use of an Alley or Private Access Drive is not feasible to provide consolidated vehicle access, the number of Vehicle Access Points from the street shall be limited.

Limit access points based on lot width (as measured from Zone Lot Line to Zone Lot Line):

- Lot Widths 350 feet or less, or frontages of any length on a Key Street: One access point
- Lot Widths over 350 feet: Two access points (also see Standard 2.10)

1.05 Vehicle access points shall be located and designed to minimize impacts on the Public Realm.

- Avoid locating Vehicle Access Points along Key Streets
- Do not locate a Vehicle Access Point adjacent to a Park or Open Space
- Limit the width of driveways for vehicle access
- Recess vehicle access doors or entries from the street (see Standard 3.81)
- Consider using special paving materials to differentiate pedestrian and vehicle use areas

1.06 An Alley or Private Access Drive that is also intended to serve as an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection shall be designed to promote pedestrian use.

See Standard 1.08 for more information.
Block Configuration & Vehicle Access

1.07 An Alley or Private Access Drive with an entrance on the South Platte Riverfront shall be designed to also serve as an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection.

See Standard 1.08 for more information.

1.08 An Off-Street Pedestrian Connection shall be designed to promote pedestrian use.

Design an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection with:

a. A minimum width of 15 feet
b. The majority of its length open to the sky (uncovered)
c. Open public access during at least business hours, preferably 24 hours
d. Pedestrian-oriented lighting
e. Residential or commercial uses along at least part of its length (see “Street Level Facade Design & Uses” on page 68)
f. Connections to adjacent Open Spaces, Parks, or the South Platte Riverfront (see “Street Level Facade Design & Uses” on page 68)
g. Special paving materials or other elements to distinguish pedestrian use areas from vehicle use areas when an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection is integrated into a Private Access Drive

1.09 Passenger loading areas shall be designed to minimize pedestrian impacts.

Appropriate locations include:

a. A full-time curbside drop off lane that does not require narrowing of the Amenity Zone or sidewalk
b. Within an Interior Vehicle Court or off-street parking facility

Inappropriate locations include:

c. Between the sidewalk and building entrance, such as a porte cochere

Design Guidelines

1.10 Parcels located on the same block frontage should share vehicle access using an Alley or Private Access Drive.

Note that a Private Access Drive may connect to an Interior Vehicle Court rather than connecting between two frontages.

1.11 Alleys, Private Access Drives and Off-Street Pedestrian Connections with an entrance on the South Platte Riverfront should be oriented to frame views of the river.
15. Blocks shall be configured to consolidate Vehicle Access Points using Alleys or Private Access Drives.
The configuration of the street frontage, including setback and Open Space locations, establishes the interface between the edges of a block and the adjacent Public Realm. Building frontages along a block will generally be configured into one of the following frontage types:

- Building facades located near the minimum Primary Street setback defined by the Denver Zoning Code (2-5 feet for non-residential uses)
- An Enhanced Commercial Setback of 5 feet or more to extend the Public Realm between the sidewalk and building (see “Enhanced Commercial Setbacks” on page 29)
- An Enhanced Residential Setback of 7 feet or more to provide a transition from the Public Realm to private residential units at the Street Level (see “Enhanced Residential Setbacks” on page 29)
- An Open Space, such as a plaza or courtyard (see “Open Space” on page 29)

The design standards and guidelines in this section promote pedestrian-oriented frontage configurations that reflect the desired character of adjacent streets and uses, including riverfront and corner locations.

### Intent Statements

1. To ensure active, pedestrian-oriented streets
2. To promote an engagement between building uses and the Public Realm
3. To encourage provision of additional space for pedestrian movement, outdoor use areas, landscaping, and related amenities, particularly on Key Streets and the River
4. To encourage provision of Open Space that provides areas for pedestrian respite and breaks down long building frontages

### Denver Zoning Code Street Frontage Requirements

The Denver Zoning Code provides specific requirements related to building frontage, including minimum setbacks (which vary for Street Level residential units), maximum build-to ranges and minimum Private Open Space areas on larger Zone Lots.

The design standards and guidelines in this section build from the Denver Zoning Code requirements and provide additional guidance regarding the location and design of frontage elements.
Design Standards

1.12 **Street Frontages shall be configured to promote pedestrian activity around the edges of a block.**

Use one or more of the following strategies, depending on the frontage condition:

a. An **Enhanced Commercial Setback** of at least 5 feet to extend the Public Realm between the sidewalk and building where significant through pedestrian traffic or outdoor dining uses are anticipated, especially along Key Streets and the South Platte Riverfront (see Standard 1.13)

b. An **Enhanced Residential Setback** of at least 7 feet (15 feet on the South Platte Riverfront) to provide a transition from the Public Realm to private residential units at the Street Level (see Standard 1.14)

c. One or more **Open Spaces** at a primary building entry or access point to an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection, especially along the River (see Standard 1.15)

d. Building facades set back less than 5 feet from the Primary Street property line where there is sufficient pedestrian space in the Right-of-Way and no outdoor dining areas or similar amenities are planned between the building facade and street

**ENHANCED COMMERCIAL SETBACKS**

An Enhanced Commercial Setback is the additional space created when buildings with Street Level frontages that do not contain residential units are set back at least 5 feet from the Primary Street property line, but are still positioned within the Primary Street build-to range provided in the Denver Zoning Code. They can range in size from modest setback areas provided by building offsets to larger areas with outdoor patio seating, landscaping or other amenities.

**ENHANCED RESIDENTIAL SETBACKS**

An Enhanced Residential Setback is the additional space created when buildings with Street Level frontages containing residential units are set back at least 7 feet (15 feet on the River) from the Primary Street property line, but are still positioned within the Primary Street build-to range provided in the Denver Zoning Code. They provide space for a transition from the Public Realm to private residential units, which may include porches, stoops, landscaping or other features.

**OPEN SPACE**

For the purpose of these design standards and guidelines, an Open Space is a privately-owned space that is adjacent to and physically open to the street, allowing public access at least during business hours and meeting specific Denver Zoning Code criteria applicable to Private Open Space.

Examples include privately-owned courtyards, plazas, and similar features. An Open Space is differentiated from an Enhanced Setback by its dimensions, which may extend beyond the maximum build-to range specified in the Denver Zoning Code, but typically would occur along only a limited percentage of the street frontage. It is differentiated from a Park because it is privately-owned and would generally not provide neighborhood-level recreation space.
Street Frontage, Setback & Open Space Configuration

1.13 An Enhanced Commercial Setback shall be configured to promote pedestrian activity along the street frontage.
   a. Locate an Enhanced Commercial Setback at-grade with the adjacent sidewalk
   b. Activate an Enhanced Commercial Setback with pedestrian-oriented design features (see "Street Level Facade Design & Uses" on page 68)

1.14 An Enhanced Residential Setback shall be configured to provide a transition between the Public Realm and adjacent Street Level residential uses.
   a. Provide a clear visual connection between the Public Realm and entries to residential units
   b. Incorporate design features to provide a public-private transition (see "Street Level Facade Design & Uses" on page 68)

1.15 Open Space shall be configured to promote pedestrian connections between the Public Realm and private development.
   a. Locate Open Space at-grade with the adjacent sidewalk
   b. Locate and orient Open Space to maximize sky exposure and solar gain in winter months for human comfort
   c. Configure Open Space to provide a direct visual connection to the Public Realm
   d. Activate Open Space with pedestrian-oriented design features (see "Street Level Facade Design & Uses" on page 68)
   e. Where possible, use Open Space to highlight access to an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection

Design Guidelines

1.16 Primary Street building setbacks should generally align with setback patterns established on adjacent Zone Lots.

Note that adjusted setback patterns may be appropriate to accommodate an Enhanced Setback, or an Open Space.

1.17 At the intersection of two Primary Streets, the frontages should be configured to clearly define the corner and enhance a sense of street enclosure.

Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Locate building facades less than 5 feet from the Primary Street property line
   b. Use a distinctive building corner treatment to highlight a primary building entry

1.18 Enhanced Commercial Setback and Open Space areas should be located in areas where other publicly-accessible spaces do not exist.
18. An Enhanced Commercial Setback is appropriate to extend the Public Realm between the sidewalk and building where significant through pedestrian traffic or outdoor dining uses are anticipated.

19. An Open Space shall be configured to promote pedestrian connections between the Public Realm and private development.

20. Street Level Active Uses can incorporate Enhanced Setbacks to provide additional space for pedestrian movement, outdoor use areas, landscaping, and other related amenities.
Tower Placement & Separation

Tower placement and separation addresses the location of Tower building elements when using the Denver Zoning Code Standard Tower or Point Tower building forms, including the orientation of tower elements and separation between towers.

The design standards and guidelines in this section promote Tower locations and orientations that preserve access to sunlight, frame views and maintain spacing between towers along the skyline. They also promote Tower designs that are located or stepped back from the Lower Story Facade to preserve Human Scale, reinforce the Tower Stories as the defining element of the Public Realm, and enhance pedestrian comfort by interrupting any downward wind shear from a Tower.

Tower placement and separation work together with Tower massing and design to determine the overall visual and physical effects on adjacent properties and the Public Realm. Tower massing, including floor plate alternatives, are addressed in “Building Massing” on page 44. Tower design details are addressed in “Facade Articulation” on page 58.

Intent Statements

1.H To ensure access to light and air from the Street Level
1.I To promote visual permeability from within and outside the neighborhood
1.J To promote Human Scale at the Street Level
1.K To promote building forms that contribute positively to the Denver skyline
1.L To provide daylighting to uses located in Towers
1.M To promote varied Tower spacing

DENVER ZONING CODE
TOWER BUILDING FORMS & TOWER SEPARATION ALTERNATIVE

The Denver Zoning Code establishes Standard Tower and Point Tower Building Forms that allow potentially unlimited height for Tower building components above specified heights that meet maximum Tower Floor Plate and minimum Tower Floor Plate Separation requirements.

The Denver Zoning Code also specifically enables a Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative that allows for a reduced minimum separation to provide flexibility in special circumstances where creative Tower designs are found to meet the design standards and guidelines for Tower Floor Plate Separation included in this section.

Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative designs must be consistent with and exceed overall design goals and objectives while demonstrating exceptional creativity and incorporating high-quality iconic design. Standard 1.19 - Standard 1.22 will be used to review Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative designs in the D-CPV-R and D-CPV-C zone districts.
Design Standards

1.19 When using the Denver Zoning Code Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative available to the Point Tower Building Form in the D-CPV-R zone district, the Tower shall be located near a Park that is adjacent to the River.

a. A Tower will be considered to be ‘near’ a Park if it is located within a linear distance of the Park that is no more than 1.5 times the average width or depth of the Park.

b. Example using Park width: Where a Park has an average width of 300 feet, a Tower located within 450 feet of the edge of the Park, as measured parallel to the River, would be eligible for use of the Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative.

c. Example using Park depth: Where a Park has an average depth of 200 feet, a Tower located within 300 feet of the edge of the Park, as measured perpendicular to the River, would be eligible for use of the Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative.

1.20 When using the Denver Zoning Code Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative available to the Point Tower Building Form in the D-CPV-R zone district, a Tower Floor Plate shall be separated from any other Tower Floor Plate by a minimum distance related to the size of the nearby Park.

a. The minimum Tower Floor Plate Separation may be reduced to 100 feet where the nearby Park is at least one-half acre in size and has a minimum average width of approximately 150 feet and minimum average depth of approximately 100 feet, as measured relative to the River.

b. The minimum Tower Floor Plate Separation may be reduced to 80 feet where the nearby Park is at least one acre in size and has a minimum average width of approximately 250 feet and minimum average depth of approximately 150 feet, as measured relative to the River.

22. When located near a large Park that is adjacent to the River, Tower Floor Plates shall be separated by a minimum distance that is related to the size of the Park.
Tower Placement & Separation

1.21 When using the Denver Zoning Code Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative available to the Standard Tower Building Form in the D-CPV-C zone district, the Tower shall be located within 300 feet of the Consolidated Main Line railroad tracks.

1.22 When using the Denver Zoning Code Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative available to the Standard Tower or Point Tower Building Form in the D-CPV-R or D-CPV-C zone district, the Tower shall meet or exceed design standards and guidelines for tower massing and design.

See “Building Massing” on page 44 and “Facade Articulation” on page 58.

1.23 Towers shall be located and oriented to preserve light and air and promote Human Scale at the Street Level.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Orient a Tower perpendicular to the nearest street frontage unless such orientation would not maximize tower separation or sky exposure
b. Set a Tower back from the Lower Story Facade by approximately 15 feet or more
c. Extend a Tower directly above a Lower Story Facade where a building is already set back 15 feet or more to provide space for an Enhanced Setback or Open Space
d. Extend a Tower directly above a Lower Story Facade at a building corner located at the intersection of two Primary Streets.

1.24 Towers shall be located to preserve development opportunities on adjacent Zone Lots.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Locate a Tower approximately 40 feet or more from side interior Zone Lot Lines to allow for Towers to be located on adjacent Zone Lots while meeting minimum Tower Separation requirements provided in the Denver Zoning Code
b. Orient a Tower perpendicular to adjacent side interior Zone Lot Lines where a Tower may be constructed on the adjacent Zone Lot

23. Towers shall be located and oriented to preserve light and air and promote Human Scale at the Street Level.
**Design Guidelines**

1.25 **Tower** placement, spacing, and orientation should be sensitive to existing and planned buildings.
   
   Appropriate techniques include:
   
   a. Positioning and orienting a **Tower** to preserve views and sky exposure from adjacent properties, Open Spaces, building amenity areas and the **Public Realm**
   
   b. Using a Waldram Diagram to evaluate and maximize sky exposure from adjacent streets and the **Public Realm**

1.26 **Towers** should be staggered when located in a clustered arrangement to create visual interest within the skyline.
   
   Appropriate techniques include:
   
   a. An offset in plan of sufficient distance that achieves a vertical staggering effect when viewed from a distance
   
   b. A variation of 5 stories or more provides a difference in height that can be perceived at **Street Level**

1.27 **Towers** should be placed to increase the distance between adjacent building facades beyond minimum requirements.

1.28 **Towers** should be located to serve as visual anchors at important locations.
   
   Appropriate locations include:
   
   a. Intersection of **Key Streets**
   
   b. Transit node
   
   c. Large public **Park**

1.29 **Towers** should be placed and oriented to improve building energy performance, natural ventilation, and daylighting.
Service Area & Utility Location

Service area and utility configuration addresses the location and functional characteristics of the services and utilities that support residential and commercial uses that activate the neighborhood.

Service areas may include, but are not limited to:
- Waste/recycling storage and collection areas
- Loading docks

Utilities may include, but are not limited to:
- Vents
- Meters
- Transformers and mechanical equipment
- Telecommunications equipment

The design standards and guidelines promote service area and utility configurations that are concealed within and behind buildings to promote a safer, more comfortable, and attractive Public Realm and pedestrian environment.

Intent Statements

1.N To minimize the visibility and impact of service areas to the Public Realm

1.O To reduce conflicts between servicing activities, pedestrians, and cyclists

1.P To promote the use of Alleys or Private Access Drives as the primary means of accessing service areas and utilities

1.Q To protect Enhanced Setback areas, Open Spaces and other highly pedestrian-oriented areas from noise and odor impacts associated with service areas

1.R To minimize and discourage multiple curb cuts along Primary Streets

PUBLIC UTILITY REQUIREMENTS

Denver’s local utility provider, Xcel Energy, must approve utility locations. The utility provider also reserves the right to install utilities in permanent on-site locations.

When not located along an Alley or Private Access Drive, utilities should be located within a building alcove, utility room, or landscaped area, and be fully screened from the Public Realm.
Design Standards

1.30 Service areas and utilities shall be located and configured to minimize impacts on the Public Realm.
Appropriate service area and utility locations include:
   a. Along an Alley or Private Access Drive
   b. Within a building, to the rear of other uses or beneath the Street Level
   c. Within a building alcove when locating along an Alley or Private Access Drive is not possible (utilities only - see Guideline 1.33)
   d. Within a sub-surface vault or elevator

Inappropriate service area and utility locations include:
   e. Adjacent to an Enhanced Setback or Open Space
   f. Adjacent to a building entry
   g. Any frontage facing the South Platte Riverfront

1.31 Dumpsters or other trash receptacles associated with building uses shall be located and configured to be screened from the Public Realm.
See “Fences, Walls, & Screens” on page 86.

Design Guidelines

1.32 Access to service areas should be through Vehicle Access Points shared with other services areas or uses to minimize pedestrian and Public Realm impacts.
See Standard 1.03 for additional information.

1.33 When not located along an Alley or Private Access Drive, utilities should be located within a building alcove, utility room, or landscaped area and be fully screened from the Public Realm.

1.34 Where service areas and utilities are not located away from the Public Realm, they should be screened to limit negative impacts.

1.35 When utilities must be visible and cannot be screened from the Public Realm, they should be painted with a color consistent with the building, family of street furnishings, or used as a canvas for an artistic element.
Chapter 2 | Building Mass & Scale

Building Mass & Scale addresses the three-dimensional characteristics of building volume, particularly as it relates to the street and adjacent properties.
27. Configuring a building's mass and scale to develop a variety of volumes, using techniques such as shifts in the facade plane, breaks up monolithic building forms and adds Human Scale character.
### Building Form Massing Components by D-CPV Zone District

Some design standards and guidelines in this document refer to specific components of a building (e.g., the Lower Stories or Tower). The components vary depending on the Downtown Central Platte Valley-Auraria (D-CPV) Zone District and Denver Zoning Code building form (e.g., General Building Form or Point Tower Building Form), as illustrated in the table below. The Lower Story Facade, Upper Story Facade and Tower Facade are the Primary Street-Facing Facades of each building component.

*Note that the division between Lower Story Facades and Upper Stories/Tower may be considered to be at a lower story where Upper Story Setbacks are located below the maximum height specified in the Denver Zoning Code. For example, if an Upper Story Setback is located above the 2nd story, stories 3+ will be considered to be Upper Stories (General Building Form) or a Tower (Point Tower and Standard Tower Building Forms).

**The building form is not permitted in the referenced Central Platte Valley-Auraria (D-CPV) Zone District.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Form</th>
<th>D-CPV Zone District</th>
<th>Lower Stories</th>
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<th>Tower</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Building Form</strong></td>
<td>D-CPV-T</td>
<td>Stories 1-5* (Upper Story Setback required above 5 stories)</td>
<td>Stories 6*-12</td>
<td>Not applicable **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D-CPV-R</td>
<td>Stories 1-5</td>
<td>Not applicable (max height of this building form is 5 stories in D-CPV-R)</td>
<td>Not applicable to General Building Form</td>
</tr>
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<td>Stories 9*+</td>
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**A. Change in Upper Story Setback Height**

28. To meet **Standard 2.02**, a change in Upper Story Setback height must be a minimum of one story for the depth of the Upper Story Setback (15 feet).

29. To meet **Standard 2.02**, a change in Upper Story Setback height must raise or lower the setback by at least one story and be combined with a change in facade plane or material/color.

**B. Facade Plane Change**

30. To meet **Standard 2.02**, a facade plane change must be a minimum of 3 feet and apply to the full height of the Lower Story Facade.

31. To meet **Standard 2.02**, a facade plane change must cause the facade to inset or project and be combined with either a change in Upper Story Setback height or material/color.

**C. Change in Building Materials or Color**

32. To meet **Standard 2.02**, a change in materials/color must apply to the full height of the Lower Story Facade.

33. To meet **Standard 2.02**, a material/color change must create variation in the appearance of the facade and be combined with either a change in Upper Story Setback height or facade plane.
Combining Three Massing Techniques (A-C)

34. A coordinated change in all three Building Massing techniques described in Standard 2.02 may be used to meet the standard.

35. A coordinated change in Upper Story Setback height, facade plane, and materials/color creates a distinct Building Massing break that divides the facade into smaller modules.

Flexibility for Lower Story Facade Massing

36. As illustrated above, flexibility may be provided for alternative designs that meet the intent statements for building mass and scale but do not utilize the specific Building Massing techniques described in Standard 2.02.
Building Massing significantly impacts how the size of a structure is perceived by a person at the Street Level. Comfortable Streetwall height, Upper Story Setbacks generous Tower separation distances, and Facades that are broken down into smaller individual masses, reduces the perceived bulk of a structure and creates a more visually interesting block. These strategies are especially important for portions of buildings that front onto the Public Realm.

The visual massing of Towers can be reduced with tall, slender and sculptural forms that complement Denver’s skyline. Towers generally have reduced visual and physical impact on the Street Level when they have a limited Tower Floor Plate size, or when the overall Massing appears to be smaller through Upper Story Setbacks or stepbacks that distinguish the Tower from the building’s Lower Stories.

Intent Statements

2.A To ensure Building Massing supports a comfortable Street Level experience

2.B To encourage building modules that break down uninterrupted monolithic frontages

2.C To use Building Massing to purposefully reinforce building uses or adjacent distinctive features

2.D To promote building sizes and proportions that contribute to visual permeability within and across the neighborhood

2.E To allow creative and innovative Building Massing

2.F To coordinate Building Massing across the Lower Story Facade and Upper Story Facade/Tower Facade

2.G To encourage buildings that respond to the surrounding context
Design Standards

2.01 Building Massing shall promote a sense of Human Scale at the Street Level.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Incorporating Upper Story Setbacks or stepbacks to reduce the visual impact of taller buildings on the Public Realm.

b. Clearly distinguishing the Street Level from the remainder of the Lower Stories (see “Street Level Facade Design & Uses” on page 68).

2.02 Buildings with over approximately 150 feet of Primary Street frontage shall incorporate coordinated Building Massing techniques on the Lower Story Facade.

Combine two or more of the following:

a. A minimum one-story change in the height* for the depth of an Upper Story Setback (15 feet)

b. A Facade plane change with a minimum depth or projection of 3 feet that extends the full height of the Lower Story Facade

c. A building material or color change that extends the full height of the Lower Story Facade

Note that Upper Story Setbacks at or below the height specified in the Denver Zoning Code will count towards the zoning requirement for an Upper Story Setback.

2.03 Changes in Building Massing shall be purposeful and reinforce the design intent of the building.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Identifying changes in interior uses

b. Enhancing important building features

c. Reinforcing structural bays or other architectural systems

d. Clearly defining the Street Level, Lower Stories, and Upper Stories/Tower

37. Coordinated Massing techniques, such as changes in height of an Upper Story Setback, facade plane, and materials, are important to breaking down the appearance of building bulk and providing visual interest on long facades.

38. Changes in Building Massing shall be purposeful and reinforce the design intent of the building.
When using the Denver Zoning Code Tower Floor Plate Linear Dimension Alternative available to the Point Tower Building Form and Standard Tower Building Form, a Tower shall exhibit exceptional creativity and iconic design.

Appropriate strategies include:

a. Creative Tower designs incorporating tapering Tower Floor Plate sizes that require flexibility for some larger Tower Floor Plates within the tapering design

b. Creative Tower Floor Plate designs that incorporate curves or unusual angles

c. Creative Tower designs incorporating other characteristics described in "Exceptional Creativity & Iconic Design" at right

The newly constructed Vancouver House in British Columbia, Canada, incorporates a tapering design with curves and unusual angles.

EXCEPTIONAL CREATIVITY & ICONIC DESIGN

Iconic building designs establish a focal element in the urban environment that breaks from convention in a striking manner to create a special place. These structures are easily identifiable, recognizable, and stand out from their surrounding context. They often embody a sense of pride for the community, and may gain national or international recognition.

Iconic designs are:

- Unique: Does not follow convention
- Elegant: Simple design with sophisticated details
- Metaphorical: Design that represents a larger idea or philosophy
- Innovative: Forward thinking use of technology, materials or techniques
- Intentional: Design elements that are meaningful rather than decorative
- Enduring: Design that withstands the test of time
Design Guidelines

2.05 Building Massing techniques should be coordinated between Lower Story Facades and Upper Story Facades/Tower Facades to promote a cohesive design.

2.06 Building Massing should clearly communicate the base, middle, and top of the building.

2.07 Building Massing should emphasize key building features such as primary entries, or corner elements when located at street intersections.

2.08 Buildings with less than approximately 150 feet of Primary Street frontage should incorporate coordinated Massing techniques on the Lower Story Facade.

See Standard 2.02 for buildings with more than 150’ of frontage.

2.09 Buildings with more than approximately 200 feet of Primary Street frontage should be designed to further reduce visual mass and scale.

Appropriate strategies include:

a. Combining all three Building Massing techniques described in Standard 2.02
b. Increasing the dimensions of the Massing techniques described in Standard 2.02 (i.e., change a facade plane greater than 3 feet)

2.10 Where a block frontage exceeds approximately 350 feet and it is not feasible to meet Standard 1.02, provide an Open Space with significant Building Massing break in lieu of an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection.
Building Massing

2.11 **Building Massing** should integrate creative designs to create architectural interest and reduce the overall scale of the building mass from the Street Level.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Varying the location of Upper Story Setbacks above the Street Level
b. Incorporating curves, angles or other shapes into Street Level and Upper Story Setbacks

2.12 **When multiple Towers are located on the same Zone Lot, they shall have distinct Massing and not be identical in shape.**

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Towers of different height
b. Changes in Tower Floor Plate size or dimension
c. Shifts in Facade plane

2.13 **Tower Facades** should incorporate facade plane changes or other similar Massing techniques to break down long frontages.

Use a facade plane change or similar technique at a minimum interval depending on the Tower building form:

a. **Point Tower Building Form:**
   Approximately 100 feet
b. **Standard Tower Building Form:**
   Approximately 150 feet

2.14 **Towers should be shaped to increase the distance between adjacent building facades beyond minimum requirements.**

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Offset Towers
b. Non-parallel walls
c. Tapering or curved Towers

2.15 **The Building Massing of Upper Stories and Towers should be organized to preserve sunlight and sky exposure from adjacent properties and the Public Realm.**

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Locating Upper Story Setback areas along an Enhanced Setback, Open Space, or other significant features in the Public Realm
b. Providing sufficient separation between or orient windows, balconies, or outdoor areas on adjacent properties to avoid looking directly into one another
c. Shaping Towers to minimize view and shadow impacts

**SKY EXPOSURE**

Sky exposure is the measurable amount of sky seen from a street, Park, or Open Space above and in between building masses. Bulky buildings can lead to a loss of sky exposure which can affect the comfort, quality, and use of the Public Realm. Shaping building mass can help protect access to the sky, improve the usability and enjoyment of outdoor spaces, and allow trees and vegetation to thrive.

42. **Upper Story Setbacks should be oriented toward Enhanced Setbacks, Open Space, or other significant features in the Public Realm to preserve sunlight and maximize sky exposure.**
Building Massing

2.16 The Building Massing of Upper Stories or Towers should incorporate opportunities to frame views from the Public Realm to important natural and neighborhood features.

Natural and neighborhood features may include:

a. Street or visual corridor terminus
b. Major intersection, bridge crossing, or transit node
c. Important public Parks, plazas, or Open Spaces
d. Rocky Mountains or the River

2.17 Building Massing should respond to the adjacent context including lower-scaled buildings and public spaces.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. A setback of at least 10 feet from an adjacent side interior Zone Lot line
b. An Upper Story Setback of at least 15 feet from the plane of the Lower Story Facade to reduce Streetwall height
c. A step down in overall building height
d. Definition of building modules that reflect the size and shape of adjacent buildings

2.18 Buildings adjacent to, or across the street from, a Park or Open Space should use architectural Massing to reinforce a sense of place, enclosure, and security that strengthens the public amenity.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Increasing building height as the Park or Open Space increases in size
b. Orienting buildings with Active Uses and transparency towards the Park or Open Space
c. Orienting Upper Story Setbacks along the Park or Open Space

See Guideline 2.24 for more information.

USING ARCHITECTURE TO FRAME VIEWS

Building Massing can be used to frame views from the Public Realm to important focal points such as the Rocky Mountains, South Platte River, or prominent architectural elements or Open Spaces. The organization of streets, Open Space, amenity areas, and Building Massing all contribute to the framing of significant neighborhood elements.

Towers and other tall building components can be an integral part of shaping what is being viewed. The design and placement of the building base, Tower, and adjacent Open Spaces work collectively to open up or frame a desired view. Well-designed tall buildings on prominent sites can become recognizable landmarks, providing points of orientation and visual interest within CPV-Auraria.
Collectively, the built environment shapes the pedestrian experience by creating a sense of enclosure and well-defined pedestrian zones. The character of the Streetwall (the predominant plane of the Primary Street-Facing Facade from the Street Level up to an Upper Story Setback or other significant shift in Building Massing) plays an important role in defining the edges of streets, Parks, and Open Space. Further, walkable streets that have a proportional sense of enclosure, tend to enhance the level of comfort felt at the Street Level.

This sense of enclosure is generally determined by the relationship between the height of the Streetwall and the width of the adjacent Public Realm (including the street and sidewalk) between the buildings. A proportionate Street Enclosure Ratio can make the Public Realm more comfortable and often contributes to pedestrian safety, as drivers have a tendency to slow down.

Streetwall height will often vary along a block frontage with Towers creating a high Street Enclosure Ratio and lower structures, such as row homes, create a comfortable Street Enclosure Ratio when combined with landscaping and street trees, especially along wide streets or adjacent to Open Space or Park areas.

**Intent Statements**

2.H To promote a well-defined Streetwall that establishes a proportional street enclosure

2.I To promote a range of Streetwall heights along the street and within each block

2.J To coordinate a scale relationship between the Streetwall of adjacent properties

44. The Streetwall height shall be approximately 60%-100% of the width of the Right-of-Way.
Streetwall Height

Design Standards

2.19 The predominant Streetwall height shall be approximately 60%-100% of the width of the Right-of-Way. Appropriate strategies include:

a. Incorporating taller Streetwall heights where the Right-of-Way is wide
b. Using Upper Story Setbacks to lower Streetwall to 100% or less of Right-of-Way width
c. Using landscaping, street trees or other elements to create a comfortable sense of Street Enclosure Ratio along portions of block frontage with a lower Streetwall, or wide Right-of-Way (exceeding approximately 100 feet)

Note that short sections of the Streetwall that are less than or exceed this range are acceptable and should be located to enhance a specific building element or use.

Design Guidelines

2.20 Streetwall height should vary throughout the street and within each block to support architectural variety.

2.21 Streetwall height should consider the adjacent existing neighboring context. At street corners, this includes the context on both streets.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Using Upper Story Setbacks and other Massing techniques to match a portion of the Streetwall immediately adjacent
b. Incorporating bold corner elements and Massing to distinguish these areas
c. Using cornices, material changes, and other facade articulation techniques to create a scale relationship between buildings (see "Facade Articulation" on page 58)
2.22 When Right-of-Way width is less than 80 feet, the predominate Streetwall height should be approximately 60%-80% of width.

2.23 When Right-of-Way width is more than 100 feet, the predominate Streetwall height should be approximately 80%-100% of width, or use additional street trees and other elements to enhance a sense of enclosure.

2.24 Streetwall height should respond to the scale and proportion of adjacent Parks and Open Space. Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Increasing Streetwall height as the Park or Open Space increases in size
   b. Decreasing Streetwall height or include Enhanced Setbacks and Open Space along the River

2.25 The height of the Streetwall should match the height of the Lower Story Facade along the majority of the block frontage. Appropriate techniques to define the Lower Story Facade as the Streetwall include:
   a. An Upper Story Setback (including Upper Story Setbacks required by the Denver Zoning Code)
   b. A cornice, pediment or similar element
   c. A reveal or similar element

Note that the height of the Streetwall may exceed the height of the Lower Stories along limited portions of frontage, especially where necessary to achieve a comfortable Street Enclosure Ratio.
49. A 100% (1:1) ratio of Streetwall height to Right-of-Way width provides a strong sense of street enclosure. Taller Streetwalls with ratios greater than 100% can negatively impact the sense of enclosure by creating a canyon effect that blocks sun and sky exposure.

50. A 50% (1:2) ratio of Streetwall height to Right-of-Way width provides a less strong sense of street enclosure, but can be mitigated by using street trees to contribute to the comfort level on the street. Shorter Streetwalls that create ratios less than 60% are not desired unless supplemented by additional street trees or other elements to enhance the sense of enclosure.
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Chapter 3 | Facade Design & Site Details

Once the basic building massing has been defined, the architectural details and surrounding site design help to further shape the identity of the project. Facade Design & Site Details addresses the design character of individual buildings, particularly how they are experienced from the Public Realm.
GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN SCALE DESIGN

Throughout this document, the term Human Scale is commonly used and refers to a built environment that is reasonably scaled and shaped to reflect physical and cognitive characteristics of humans. When walking along a street or sitting in an Open Space, people feel psychologically comfortable in spaces that proportionally reflect our physical scale and senses.

The understanding of what is perceived as Human Scale is based on its context. For example, what is considered proportionally designed and scaled in a low-rise community may not be appropriate for a high-intensity development. Therefore, it is important to capture a range of Human Scale principles as a combination of elements in the built environment, including street enclosure, building height and massing, architectural details and materials, street trees and landscaping, and ground-level paving, lighting, and furnishings.

• Street Enclosure refers to the degree to which the width of streets and other public spaces are visually defined by vertical elements such as buildings, walls, and trees. Streets where the Streetwall (or building facade directly adjacent to the street and sidewalk) is proportionally related to the width of the street, provide a comfortable sense of street enclosure, that appeals to our Human Scale senses and have a room-like quality. In a high-intensity urban environment where street widths are over 60 feet, a proportionate sense of street enclosure is especially important to properly frame our perception of space. Wide streets that lack a commensurate Streetwall can feel uncomfortably open and exposed to pedestrians.

See "Streetwall Height" on page 50.

• Trees and Landscape Areas play an important role in breaking down a space to the Human Scale, by positively contributing to a sense of enclosure, providing shade, and adding needed softness in an urban environment. Trees with large canopies are especially important on wider streets to alleviate a feeling of vastness by enclosing pedestrian spaces, and conversely on streets with tall buildings to break down overwhelming vertical elements.

See "Amenity Zone & Street Trees" on page 96.

• Facade Design and Architectural Details can significantly contribute to our sense of Human Scale by creating a variety of vertical and horizontal forms on the facade, using window and door openings, change in materials and textures, placement of awnings, canopies, signage, and lighting. However, it is not sufficient to simply incorporate these elements, the quality of design, proportion, and scale of these elements need to be harmoniously arranged for people to find it pleasing and reflective of the Human Scale. These elements in combination with uses and activity are directly responsible for the visual and experiential richness found at the Street Level in vibrant urban neighborhoods.

• Safety and Comfort are important aspects of any public space but especially true in dense urban settings. Transparency at the ground floor is highly desired as it provides “eyes on the street.” Mixed-use buildings with active ground floor uses generate additional foot traffic along the street and contribute to our sense of safety. Active retail spaces with well-lit window displays and pedestrian-scaled street lighting help us feel more comfortable after dark. Extensive tree canopy can provide relief from the sun and sudden wind gusts and make walking along the street more enjoyable. Thoughtfully placed street furnishings help us feel comfortable by breaking down a large street into smaller “rooms”, and provide areas to rest and enjoy city life.

• Sense of Place can be achieved when the techniques mentioned above are utilized and tailored to define a distinctive context. Streets and places that successfully achieve a Human Scale through visual richness and order, tend to embody a sense of place that is differentiated across the city. They are impressionable and memorable in the mind and become a place to return to time and time again.
51. Human Scale affects our sense of comfort and safety impacting a desire to walk down a street or to avoid it. Building facade designs that lack appropriate massing or articulation and include large expanses of undifferentiated building wall, generally create an undesirable pedestrian environment.

52. Human Scale can be addressed through simple techniques that break down the size and proportion of the urban environment. An intentional integration of pedestrian-oriented Street Level uses, facade articulation and architectural details, and streetscape features helps break down overall building massing and animate the Public Realm.
Facade Articulation

Thoughtful articulation that is coordinated with overall massing helps divide a large building into smaller modules that promote an engaging Human Scale pedestrian environment. Facades that incorporate changes in plane, materials, and rhythm add interest and delight lacking in long, repetitive or blank facades. Coordinating architectural details and articulation with interior uses further reinforces the clarity of the urban environment.

**Intent Statements**

3.A  To further refine building form and massing through facade articulation
3.B  To promote well-detailed Facade designs with texture and depth that provides a sense of Human Scale
3.C  To ensure a cohesive Facade design
3.D  To minimize blank or unarticulated Facades

**Design Standards**

3.01  *All Primary Street-Facing Facades, Visible Facades, and Tower Facades shall incorporate articulation techniques that reinforce building massing techniques.*

Appropriate articulation techniques include:

a. Vertical and horizontal projections/banding
b. Vertical and horizontal recesses
c. Window composition/design
d. Balconies or terraces
e. Continuing articulation techniques used on the Lower Story Facade onto the Upper Story Facade/Tower Facade

3.02  *A Lower Story Facade shall express a first or second story datum line.*

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Facade plane changes
b. Other architectural expressions such as belt courses, cornices, fenestration, awnings and canopies, or changes in material

53. Vertical projections, pilasters, columns and other elements, can create a rhythm on the facade.

54. Horizontal projections, material banding, color changes and other elements can create a rhythm on the facade.
3.03 Articulation techniques used on a Lower Story Facade shall continue around the corner of an Alley or Private Access Drive for approximately 50 feet.

3.04 Tower Facades shall be designed to be viewed from all sides.

3.05 Visible Facade areas not facing Primary Streets shall incorporate features to enhance visual interest and avoid long blank walls. Such features include:
   a. Articulation consistent with Standard 3.01
   b. Transparency consistent with standards for Primary Street-facing Facades (see “Windows & Transparency” on page 62)
   c. Wall Murals or other Public Art

3.06 Lower Story Facades and Upper Story Facades/Tower Facades shall limit walls without transparency or articulation consistent with Standard 3.01 to a maximum of 25 feet in length per segment.

55. Facade articulation that reinforces building massing adds texture and rhythm to promote a Human Scale urban environment. Several facade articulation techniques illustrated above, are examples of how to meet the design standards and guidelines of this section. Note that the illustration above combines articulation techniques with the massing techniques described in “Chapter 2 | Building Mass & Scale”.

56. A Lower Story Facade shall express a first or second story datum line.
Facade Articulation

3.07 Scaling elements, architectural details, and other forms of facade articulation shall be integrated into building massing so they do not appear to be a thinly applied surface treatment.

3.08 Facade designs shall consider locations for Upper Story building identification signage. Appropriate strategies include:
   a. Limiting large-scale building identification signage to taller buildings (12+ stories)
   b. Reserving an area along the roof parapet, or integrated into a roof cap feature, for future Upper Story building identification signage

3.09 Building mounted telecommunication equipment shall be properly screened/painted to integrate into the overall facade design and building massing.

Design Guidelines

3.10 Buildings with more than approximately 200 feet of Primary Street frontage should use coordinated massing and articulation techniques to break up the frontage into visually separate modules with distinct facades.

See “Building Massing” on page 44.

3.11 The horizontal plane of the Lower Story Facade should vary to reflect changes in building uses and structure while providing visual interest.

3.12 Adjacent buildings of varying heights should align design features to express an architectural scale relationship. Consider aligning features such as:
   a. Cornices
   b. Belt courses
   c. Fenestration patterns
   d. Building setbacks
Facade Articulation

3.13 Special attention should be given to the design of buildings located at street intersections.
   
a. Establish a clear and defined edge at the Right-of-Way
b. Activate a corner through high levels of transparency and signature building entries
c. Incorporate iconic architectural design elements to highlight components of the building

3.14 Variations in articulation, materials and fenestration patterns should be used to emphasize building features, such as entries, corner elements, and changes in interior use.

3.15 Facade articulation techniques used on the Lower Story Facade should coordinate with Upper Story Facades/Tower Facades to result in a cohesive building design.

3.16 All Tower Facades should include a variety of articulation, fenestration and material patterns to create visual interest.
   
a. Variation in the design and articulation of each tower facade is encouraged to provide visual interest and to respond to differing conditions within the adjacent context
b. Curtain walls should be articulated through changes in transparency, fenestration, mullion scale and pattern, and other architectural details (see “Windows & Transparency” on page 62)

3.17 When multiple Towers are located on the same Zone Lot they should be distinct and not identical, but can be complementary to each other and employ similar architectural articulation and design approach.

3.18 Tower Facade designs should consider ways to manage solar gain and improve building energy performance.
   
a. Appropriate techniques may include adjusting glazing ratios, balcony placements, or fenestration placement.

PASSIVE SOLAR DESIGN

Passive solar design techniques should be considered, especially on south and west facing facades. Incorporating screens, energy-efficient and/or operable windows and other methods, can minimize heat gain and contribute to reductions in energy use.
Articulation and transparency of all faces of a building are important, but those facing streets, Parks, and Open Space are most critical. Transparency in the building facade adds visual interest, contributes to a sense of liveliness on the street, and improves safety through natural surveillance. At a building’s Lower Stories, a series of clear and unobstructed views both into and out of buildings enriches the urban experience for pedestrians and building occupants alike.

**Intent Statements**

3.E  To provide a minimum level of transparency on all facades

3.F  To ensure that building activities are visible from the Public Realm and vice versa

3.G  To ensure that building facades do not cause glare or negative impacts to the Public Realm

3.H  To encourage well-detailed fenestration and curtain wall designs

**Design Standards**

3.19  Street Level transparent facade areas shall be located to provide visibility into the Street Level Active Uses required by the Denver Zoning Code.

**DENVER ZONING CODE TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS**

The Denver Zoning Code requires a minimum percentage of Street Level transparency (the total linear feet of windows or permitted alternatives along the Street Level facade) to provide visual interest, and activate the street and sidewalk. The design standards and guidelines in this section build on Denver Zoning Code Street Level transparency requirements.

3.20  Street Level windows shall use transparent glass with a maximum visible light reflectance of approximately 0.15 to allow pedestrians to view the activity within the building.

a. Clear glass for wall openings, i.e., doors and windows, shall be used along all Street Level facades for maximum transparency, especially in conjunction with retail uses

b. Dark tinted, reflective or opaque glazing is not permitted for any required wall opening along Street Level facades

c. Required transparency at the Primary Street Facing Facades shall not be blocked by signage, furnishings, or displays

d. Highly Reflective or mirrored glazing shall not be allowed

3.21  Lower Story Facades, excluding the Street Level, shall incorporate a minimum of 50% transparent glass with a maximum reflectance of approximately 0.30.
62. The design standards and guidelines for Windows & Transparency are intended to encourage visually interesting facade designs.

3.22 Upper Story Facades shall incorporate a minimum of 40% transparent glass with a maximum reflectance of approximately 0.35.

3.23 Tower Facades shall incorporate a minimum of 50% transparent glass with a maximum reflectance of approximately 0.35.

3.24 Secondary Facades on the Upper Stories of a building that face an Alley or Private Access Drive shall incorporate a minimum of approximately 25% transparent glass with a maximum reflectance of approximately 0.35.

3.25 Window designs shall be detailed to reinforce overall facade articulation and design.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Recessing or projecting a window bays or opening a minimum of 4 inches from the plane of facade

b. Creating substantial window framing that create a shadow line

c. Mullion patterns that provide depth and visual character

3.26 For mixed-use developments, levels of transparency should reflect different uses within the building.

a. A lower glass-to-wall ratio is typical of residential uses

b. A higher glass-to-wall ratio is typical of commercial uses

3.27 Clear, “Low E,” or slightly tinted windows should be used to ensure the visibility of pedestrian-oriented commercial uses.

3.28 Large expanses of glass should be subdivided into smaller units.

63. Window composition with substantial window framing provides interplay of depth and shadow on Building Facade.
Denver and its surrounding region have a long tradition of building in brick and stone. This tradition is complementary to the goals of these guidelines in the effort to provide scale, texture, detail, and color in the Downtown pedestrian environment. These materials have an inherently Human Scaled quality to them derived from their traditional shaping and placement by hand. Materials are not limited to Masonry. However the form, scale, detail, texture and quality of any materials used in close proximity to the pedestrian environment should be carefully considered.

### Intent Statements

3.I To encourage use of well-detailed exterior materials with texture and depth that provides a sense of Human Scale

3.J To integrate changes in exterior building materials with the overall design and articulation of the building

3.K To promote use of a variety of high-quality durable exterior materials

3.L To reduce resource and energy consumption through use of sustainable exterior materials

### Design Standards

3.29 Exterior building materials and finishes shall be properly finished and detailed to provide texture and depth.

3.30 Building materials shall be of proven quality and durability.
   a. Apply materials to ensure the appearance of quality
   b. Do not use building materials that require frequent maintenance

   Note that an applicant may be required to demonstrate the durability of unproven or unusual materials.

3.31 Changes in building materials shall be used in coordination with changes in building mass and articulation to contribute to Human Scale.

   See “Building Massing” on page 44.

3.32 Any change in Facade materials shall be combined with a variation in the wall plane

   When changing Facade materials:
   a. Vary the wall plane with a projection or recess at least 4 inches wide and 4 inches deep
   b. Locate the material change at the inside corner of the variation in Facade plane and terminate into the rear wall plane to integrate the material change with overall Facade design

3.33 When used, architectural cast-in-place concrete shall incorporate textural detailing, color, and finish elements to ensure a high-quality final surface.

3.34 Cementitious Stucco, Fiber Cement Siding, EIFS (Exterior Insulating Finish Systems), or any other synthetic stucco materials shall not be used on any Visible Facade.

   Note that an exception may be appropriate for limited application of synthetic stucco materials on a Secondary Facade facing an Alley or Private Access Drive that is not intended to serve as an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection.
Facade Articulation

Exterior Building Materials

Design Guidelines

3.35 Visible building facades should incorporate materials that are appropriate to individual massing components, interior uses, and relationships with the Public Realm.
Appropriate techniques include:
  a. Use of especially durable materials at the Street Level
  b. Use of ‘heavy’ materials (i.e. brick, stone, or metal) on Lower Story Facades to anchor the building
  c. Use of ‘light’ materials that are either primarily transparent or metal, spandrel glass, etc. on Upper Story Facades/Tower Facades
  d. Use of curtain walls that employ high-quality materials and finishes with detail and texture
  e. Use of a variety of materials and material colors that reinforce building massing and articulation techniques

3.36 Building materials should be selected and applied to convey a sense of Human Scale.
Appropriate techniques include:
  a. Adding visual interest through texture, depth, finish and detailing
  b. Applying materials in units, panels or modules that produce shadow lines to help convey a sense of scale

3.37 All Visible Facades of a building should be treated equally in terms of materials, color, and design details.
  a. Building materials used on a Facade facing an Alley or Private Access Drive should be consistent with those used on Primary Street-facing Facades.

3.38 The use of highly reflective materials that generate glare and heat, especially at the Street Level, should be avoided.

3.39 The use of synthetic materials that imitate or falsely replicate natural material applications should be avoided. Synthetic materials should be used in ways that reflect their intrinsic characteristics.

3.40 Building materials should include new technologies that contribute to environmental sustainability.

3.41 Materials should be locally or regionally sourced when practical and available.

65. Carefully detailed materials should be used to reinforce building mass, scale, and articulation techniques.
Balconies are commonly expressed in building facades, and provide an important outdoor space, especially in dense communities. Placement and design of balconies can have a major impact on the Public Realm and on the overall building appearance and massing. Balcony arrangements should be carefully planned and integrated within the building facade to avoid additional massing and shadow impacts, reductions in privacy, and conflicts with street trees.

**Intent Statements**

3.M To integrate balconies into the design of the building facade and contribute to the overall articulation techniques

3.N To orient activity towards the Public Realm

3.O To limit the physical and visual effects of balconies on overall building scale

66. Inset or cantilevered balconies and terraces help create vertical and horizontal rhythms on the facade that break down building mass and scale into smaller modules.

67. Balconies design and placement shall not significantly increase the physical and visual building mass.

68. Balconies and terraces shall be incorporated into vertical and horizontal shifts in building massing.
69. Balconies, front doors, and patios facing Alleys or Private Access Drives create a sense of activity.

70. Extruded or protruding balconies should be designed to occasionally break the rhythm of repetitive floor plates and create a staggering effect of various sizes and shapes.

**Design Standards**

3.42 Balconies and terraces shall be accessory components of the overall Facade design.

3.43 Balconies and terraces shall be incorporated into the vertical and horizontal articulation of the building Facade.

3.44 Balcony design and placement shall not significantly increase the physical and visual building mass.

3.45 Balcony railings shall not significantly block visibility of facade.

3.46 Balconies located on the second or third story shall not extend beyond the private property boundary to protect privacy and minimize conflicts with the Right-of-Way.

3.47 Enclosed balconies shall be coordinated with each other and consistent with the overall Facade design.

**Design Guidelines**

3.48 Extruded or protruding balconies should be designed to occasionally break the rhythm of repetitive floor plates and create a staggering effect of various sizes and shapes.

3.49 Balcony railings on Primary Street-Facing Facades should be at least 40 percent open or transparent above a height of 18 inches, as measured from the balcony walking surface.

3.50 Balconies should be placed to further activate the street or public spaces. Appropriate placement includes:

a. On building facades that face a Park, or Open Space to maximize the number of “eyes on the park.”

b. On building facades facing active Alleys or Private Access Drives.
In a downtown context, buildings may have multiple frontages that face streets, Alleys, Private Access Drives, the South Platte Riverfront, Parks, or Open Spaces. Active commercial and retail uses are often the most desirable activity generators along the Street Level Facade because the resulting pattern of entrances and display windows provides multiple points of interaction between the building interior and adjacent public realm.

Street Level Facades with enhanced architectural elements that address Human Scale create streets that encourage and reinforce pedestrian activity. Lining the Street Level Facade with Active Uses further promotes a safe and animated Public Realm. Conversely, continuous uninterrupted glazing, lobbies, large-format commercial uses tend to be relatively un-animated spaces that lack a strong or engaging connection with pedestrians and do little to improve safety from natural surveillance and activity along the Street Level Facade.

On streets that prioritize residential character, Street Level residential units can create an animated frontage, broaden the range of housing choices, and increase the opportunity for social interaction and natural surveillance.

**DENVER ZONING CODE TRANSPARENCY REQUIREMENTS**

The Denver Zoning Code requires a minimum percentage of Street Level transparency (the total linear feet of windows or permitted alternatives along the Street Level facade) to provide visual interest, and activate the street and sidewalk. The design standards and guidelines in this section are intended to build on Denver Zoning Code Street Level transparency requirements.

**DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD REVIEW OF FACADE DESIGN FOR SIGN LOCATION**

Although the Design Advisory Board does not use “Chapter 5 | Building Signs” to review the location and design of individual signs, the Design Advisory Board does use “Chapter 3 | Facade Design & Site Details” to consider potential future sign locations when reviewing proposed building designs.

71. Where Key Streets intersect other streets, Street Level commercial space shall wrap the corner onto the intersecting streets.
Street Level Facade Design & Uses

Design Standards

3.51 On Key Streets, frontages meeting Denver Zoning Code requirements for Street Level non-residential Active Uses shall:

a. Be focused at building corners (i.e., at intersections of two streets or at activated Alleys and Private Access Drives). Where Key Streets intersect other streets, Street Level commercial space shall wrap the corner onto the intersecting streets

b. Incorporate wall openings, such as windows and doors, that comprise at least 75% of the Street Level facade

c. Include transparent windows that are not blocked by advertising, graphics, or other screening elements

3.52 A Street Level Facade shall be designed to provide Human Scale through articulation, transparency, and architectural details.

3.53 The Street Level facade shall incorporate elements to relate taller ground floor heights to Human Scale.

a. A perceived height of approximately 12 feet (floor to ceiling) is desired for a Street Level occupied by residential uses

b. A perceived height of approximately 14 feet (floor to ceiling) is desired for a Street Level occupied by commercial uses

3.54 Street Level facades shall use well-detailed, quality and durable materials that provide texture and depth.

See “Exterior Building Materials” on page 64.

3.55 Separate commercial uses at the Street Level shall have an individual public entry from the street.

3.56 Street Level building entries shall be emphasized through recesses, projected awnings and canopies.

3.57 Buildings shall maintain a relationship between the public sidewalk and elevation of Street Level commercial uses, not to exceed approximately 42 inches.

3.58 Street Level residential units shall include a vertical transition from the sidewalk level up to the finished floor elevation of the building, and not exceed approximately 42 inches.

Note that along the South Platte Riverfront, vertical separation greater than 42 inches may be acceptable.

3.59 Facade designs shall consider potential future locations for pedestrian-oriented signage.

Appropriate strategies include:

a. Incorporating a designated band or area for signage above the Street Level for potential future signage

b. Designing canopies and awnings to accommodate potential future signage

c. Designating areas to accommodate tenant or directory signage near primary building entries

72. Separate commercial uses at the Street Level shall have an individual public entry from the street.
Street Level Facade Design & Uses

3.60 Accent lighting should be coordinated with the scale and facade design of the building.

3.61 Exterior lighting shall be integrated with the building design, create a sense of safety, and encourage pedestrian activity after dark.
   a. Shield exterior lighting to reduce glare and eliminate light being cast into the night sky
   b. Orient exterior lights away from adjacent residential properties
   c. Develop a system for individual buildings or family of lighting with layers that contribute to the night-time experience
   d. Relate landscape lighting to the pedestrian scale and character, highlighting special landscape features

Design Guidelines

3.62 On Key Streets, the Street Level should be developed with as much street-oriented commercial frontage as practicable.

3.63 Commercial frontages should activate the adjacent Public Realm.
   Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Locate Highly Active Uses at or near the minimum Primary Street setback
   b. Enhanced Commercial Setback areas with pedestrian seating, outdoor dining, or an extended sidewalk. (see "Setback & Open Space Design" on page 76)
   c. Open Spaces such as plazas that are directly connected to building entries and Highly Active Uses

3.64 Commercial frontages with Highly Active Uses should be incorporated along the South Platte Riverfront.

73. When a variety of active uses and architectural elements at the Street Level are oriented to the street, they contribute to a sense of safety and activate the Public Realm.

74. Windows, stoops, and patios, such as this example can build upon the area’s unique location by orienting and focusing on the South Platte Riverfront.
3.65 *Street Level* commercial spaces should provide flexibility to accommodate other interim uses in areas where active retail is planned, but not yet fully established.

3.66 *Street Level* commercial spaces should be designed to accommodate future division to host small retail spaces or consolidation to support larger retail needs. Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Standardize structural bay spacing
   b. Provide multiple door openings
   c. Coordinate electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems with individual bays

3.67 *Street Level* retail frontages greater than approximately 100 feet in length should be interspersed with additional pedestrian entries or smaller *Active Uses* with a minimum depth of 15 feet.

3.68 The *Street Level* should be visually distinguished from *Lower Stories* above through the use of architectural elements including awnings, canopies, cornices, or lintels.

3.69 Canopies and awnings used to define the *Street Level* should be integrated into building design.
   a. Provide generously-sized awnings, metal awning screens and other vertical screens to provide shade for glass windows/doors while preserving transparency

   See “Awnings & Canopies” on page 80.

3.70 Overall building design and architectural features should be used to highlight commercial uses, storefronts, and tenant entries.

75. *Street Level* retail frontages greater than approximately 100 feet in length should be interspersed with additional pedestrian entries or smaller *Active Uses* with a minimum depth of 15 feet.

76. Commercial frontages should activate adjacent sidewalks using various methods, including extending outdoor seating into Enhanced Commercial Setbacks.
3.71 **Street Level** facade design should reinforce the physical and visual connections between interior spaces and the Public Realm.

a. Strategies, such as operable folding storefronts and roll-up doors, are encouraged to integrate indoor and outdoor spaces and activate the Public Realm.

3.72 **Activated Alleys and Private Access Drives** that include commercial and residential uses should incorporate the same features as street-facing Facades.

3.73 Buildings should accommodate a transition between adjacent sidewalks and **Street Level** residential units.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. A landscaped Enhanced Residential Setback area (landscape should not fully block visibility into and out from residential units)

b. Open Spaces such as courtyards

c. Stoops or small private yard areas

d. Vertical transition from Street Level to the finished floor of the building not to exceed approximately 42” (see Standard 3.58)

3.74 Landscaping should not entirely block views to and from interior uses.

3.75 **Street Level** facades adjacent to or across the street from a Park, Open Space, or the South Platte Riverfront should incorporate features that activate the edge and contribute to visibility and safety.

Appropriate features include:

a. Entrances and transparency linked to active interior uses

b. Outdoor seating areas

c. Adequate, pedestrian-scaled lighting

d. Clear sight lines into the adjacent area

77. Orienting Active Uses toward the South Platte Riverfront provides visibility and security and encourage continuous use and public “ownership” of the river. A variety of uses such as restaurants, cafes, and retail will enliven the area, offering more reasons to populate the riverfront and add to its vitality (see Guideline 3.64 and Guideline 3.75).

78. **Street Level** facade shall be designed to relate to Human Scale through articulation, transparency, and architectural details.
Street Level Facade Design & Uses

3.76 **Alleys** and **Private Access Drives** should be illuminated for vehicle and pedestrian safety.

3.77 **Security lighting** should be integrated into the architectural and landscape lighting system.

79. **Street Level** facades adjacent to or across the street from a **Park**, **Open Space**, or the **South Platte Riverfront** should incorporate features that activate the edge and contribute to visibility and safety.

80. A vertical transition and landscaped **Enhanced Residential Setback** provide a transition between adjacent sidewalk and a **Street Level** residential unit.
A high degree of visual and physical connection, including multiple entrances, support an active and safe Public Realm. Vibrant and interesting streets are often characterized by many active, street-related uses accessed by a series of pedestrian entrances from the sidewalk.

Well-articulated entrances create an arrival experience and identity that defines the transition between public and private. Direct, universal access from the sidewalk to each building or Street Level use, animates the street and encourages pedestrian activity to occur in the Public Realm rather than inside the building. Clear, visible entries and views from building interiors to the street provide security for building occupants and pedestrians.

Conversely, overly large or consecutive vehicular entries can negatively affect the pedestrian experience in the Public Realm. These vehicular entrances should be minimized in size and number, and designed to recede into the building facade.

**Design Standards**

3.78 **Entrances shall be easily differentiated from the adjacent facade.**

3.79 **A street facing pedestrian entrance shall be located to relate directly to an immediate interior Street Level building use.**

a. Locate commercial entrances near the elevation of the adjacent sidewalk.

b. Locate entrances to individual Street Level residential units approximately 6 to 42 inches above the elevation of the adjacent sidewalk.

*Note that along the South Platte Riverfront, vertical separation greater than 42 inches may be acceptable.*

3.80 **Entrances set back from the Public Realm by a plaza or entry court shall be visible and maintain direct, universal access from the sidewalk.**

**Intent Statements**

3.W **To ensure that pedestrian entrances are located to generate activity and vibrancy on the Street Level**

3.X **To emphasize importance of pedestrian entries as a defining feature of Street Level design**

3.Y **To minimize the impacts of vehicular entries**
3.81 Vehicle access doors facing a Primary Street shall be located and dimensioned to minimize vehicular impacts on pedestrians.
   a. Set back the access door at least 5 feet from the building facade
   b. Limit the width of the access door to no more than 25 feet

**Design Guidelines**

3.82 Primary building entrances should be emphasized over secondary commercial and/or individual residential entrances through signature building elements.
   Appropriate strategies include:
   a. Changes in massing and facade plane
   b. Differentiation in material and/or color
   c. Higher level of architectural detailing
   d. Landscape features
   e. Accent lighting

3.83 Entrances should be incorporated into activated Alleys or Private Access Drives that include commercial and/or residential uses.

3.84 Where light rail or multi-modal transit stations exist adjacent to a building, orient entrances toward the station.

3.85 Provide additional pedestrian interest and comfort at primary entrances.

3.86 Vehicle access doors facing a Primary Street should incorporate high-quality materials and finishes that are consistent with the building.

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82. A street facing pedestrian entrance shall be located to relate directly to an immediate interior Street Level building use.

83. Primary building entrances should be emphasized over secondary commercial and/or residential entrances through signature building elements.
A well-designed Public Realm is a flexible publicly-accessible space that can support a variety of uses and programmatic opportunities. The design should also create an environment that supports meets or exceeds public standards for universal accessibility, pedestrian comfort, safety, and high-quality architectural, landscape, and sustainable design.

New building developments have important on-site opportunities to provide publicly-accessible Enhanced Commercial Setbacks and Open Space, as well as semi-private Enhanced Residential Setbacks when building Street Level residential space. These spaces are typically privately-owned and maintained. However, with the exception of Enhanced Residential Setbacks, they should act as public places and be designed to encourage year-round public use. The location of Enhanced Setbacks and Open Space along with the type, size, and intended use of the space, may vary depending upon building use, site characteristics, and the range of additional publicly-accessible spaces available in the surrounding area.

Intent Statements

3.Z  To encourage a variety of Open Space

3.AA  To provide space for publicly accessible outdoor amenities adjacent to buildings that are visually open and contribute activity to the Public Realm

3.AB  To provide transitions between public and private areas

3.AC  To ensure that the quality of Enhanced Setbacks and Open Space contributes to the character of the street and the neighborhood

84. Enhanced Setback and Open Space areas are intended to ensure that spaces where buildings are not built directly along the sidewalk edge still contribute to activating the Public Realm.

85. Residential frontages along the South Platte Riverfront like the example above provide a transition between adjacent sidewalks and private residences, by incorporating elements such as terraces, stoops, planters, and seating areas. The cumulative effect of these technique provide a comfortable transition between public and private realm.
Street Level Facade Design & Uses

Setback & Open Space Design

Design Standards

3.87 **Open Space** shall not be enclosed by a roof or walls, including both temporary and permanent structures (aside from required barriers).

3.88 **Open Spaces** shall be fronted with **Highly Active Uses** on at least one side of the **Open Space**.

Highly Active Uses include, but are not limited to:

a. Retail storefronts
b. Restaurants and cafes
c. Building lobbies and building amenity areas
d. Recreation facilities
e. Arts, cultural or civic facilities

3.89 **Street Level** residential uses on the South Platte Riverfront, shall incorporate an Enhanced Residential Setback or Open Space to provide a semi-private transition zone.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Vertical grade separations
b. Stoops, porches, and patios
c. Seating areas
d. Landscaping

3.90 Enhanced Commercial Setback and Open Space areas shall be designed to provide pedestrian comfort.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Access to sun and shade
b. Benches, trash receptacles and other furnishings
c. Pedestrian-scaled lighting
d. Trees and landscaping

3.91 Enhanced Setback and Open Space areas shall not include landscaping, fencing, or walls that significantly block views to and from interior uses at the Street Level in order to provide natural surveillance of pedestrian areas.

3.92 Paving in Enhanced Commercial Setback and Open Space areas shall incorporate a variety of finishes, patterns, and detailing to distinguish different use areas and contribute to the Human Scale of the Public Realm.

86. Enhanced Setback and Open Space areas shall not include landscaping, fencing, or walls that significantly block views to and from interior uses at the Street Level in order to provide natural surveillance of pedestrian areas.
Design Guidelines

3.93 **Enhanced Commercial Setback and Open Space** areas should be designed to support a mix of passive and active uses.

3.94 **Street Level** facades should be augmented with **Enhanced Commercial Setbacks** that improve the pedestrian environment and serve as an extension of the **Public Realm**.
   a. Consider modest setbacks that add pedestrian use area
   b. Consider using complementary materials that are similar to the adjacent sidewalk, yet distinguish the **Enhanced Commercial Setback** area through changes in color, texture, and/or pattern

3.95 **Pedestrian areas** that are part of an **Enhanced Commercial Setback**, **Enhanced Residential Setback**, or **Open Space** should use high quality durable materials.

3.96 **Enhanced Commercial Setback**, **Enhanced Residential Setback**, and **Open Space** areas should be designed to complement adjacent building uses.

Complementary designs for an **Enhanced Commercial Setback** include:
   a. Areas that provide seating for customers of adjacent commercial storefronts
   b. Outdoor eating and servicing areas adjacent to a cafe or restaurant
   c. Landscaped courtyards with integrated seating to complement adjacent commercial uses

Complementary designs for an **Enhanced Residential Setback** include:
   d. Stoops or landscaped areas to transition to adjacent **Street Level** residential units
   e. Landscaped courtyards with integrated seating to complement adjacent residential units

3.97 **Planters or railings** with planters should be used when enclosure of outdoor eating and drinking areas is required.
Chapter 3 | Facade Design & Site Details

DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Street Level Facade Design & Uses
Setback & Open Space Design

3.98 **Enhanced Setbacks and Open Space areas** should incorporate features to enhance year-round usability.

Features may include, but are not limited to:

a. Trees, canopies, awnings, or other features that provide shade where the space is exposed to the summer sun
b. Seating areas designed and oriented to provide winter warmth where the space may be shaded in the winter

3.99 **Larger Open Spaces** should be designed to accommodate events such as outdoor markets or performances, where possible.

3.100 **Enhanced Commercial Setbacks and Open Space areas** should provide both formal and informal seating areas.

Formal seating may include, but is not limited to:

a. Integrated benches
b. Movable chairs or benches

Informal seating may include, but is not limited to:

c. Planter ledges that provide seating
d. Bollards or planters

3.101 **Water features or water design themes** should be considered to enhance the quality and character of Open Space.

a. Water features should be functionally and visually integrated with the overall design of the Open Space
b. Water features should be designed to be attractive and useful with or without water
c. Water features should be interactive and engaging to users in the Public Realm

3.102 **Trees and plantings in an Enhanced Setback or Open Space area** should be hardy and drought tolerant.

See “Amenity Zone & Street Trees” on page 96.

3.103 **Enhanced Setback and Open Space areas** should incorporate any required on-site water quality systems.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Incorporate stormwater system design into the overall design of the Public Realm
b. Design water quality areas beyond purely functional requirements to be attractive in wet and dry conditions
c. Off-site locations for larger integrated networks that combine water quality requirements from multiple projects are also appropriate

See “Stormwater Management & Landscape” on page 104.

3.104 **Public Art** should be integrated into an Enhanced Commercial Setback or Open Space area, where possible.

See “Public Art” on page 102.
Awnings and canopies provide architectural interest and help break down large building facades to the human-scale along the Public Realm. They also provide important sun and weather protection especially at primary building entries and individual entries.

### Intent Statements

3.AD  To ensure that awnings and canopies are integrated into the overall building facade

3.AE  To add visual interest to the pedestrian environment and contribute to the Human Scale of the Street Level

3.AF  To enhance the pedestrian environment by providing shade and comfort

3.AG  To create interesting rhythms and patterns along the building facade

### Design Standards

3.105  Awnings and canopies shall be an integral part of the architectural design of the building.
   a.  Incorporate awnings and canopies into vertical and horizontal shifts in building massing and articulation
   b.  Awnings and canopies shall not be supported by posts in the Public Realm, but be cantilevered or hung from the building face

3.106  Awnings and canopies shall be fabricated of quality durable materials consistent with materials used on the building.

3.107  Awnings and canopies shall not interfere with existing or proposed street trees.
DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

Street Level Facade Design & Uses

Awnings & Canopies

3.108 Awnings and canopies should be consistent with, and relate to, the Facade design of the building.

3.109 The design of awnings or canopies from one building and block to the next should be diverse, but compatible with the overall architecture and streetscape design.

3.110 Awnings and canopies should contribute to the Human Scale of the Street Level and not be located over approximately 12-14 feet above the sidewalk.

3.111 Awnings and canopies should be sized to realistically provide shelter.

3.112 Awnings and canopies should be designed as individual components and not be continuous and uninterrupted along the street frontage.

3.113 Awnings and canopies should be durable, permanent architectural elements.

3.114 Retractable awnings should be considered to provide shade for seasonal outdoor seating.

3.115 Canopies should incorporate transparent or translucent glazing to permit the passage of light, and avoid deep shadowed spaces.

91. Awnings and canopies should be designed as individual components and not be continuous and uninterrupted along the street frontage.

92. Canopies should incorporate transparent or translucent glazing to permit the passage of light, and avoid deep shadowed spaces.
Structured Parking Facades

Zoning standards in the D-CPV districts require that a majority of Primary Street-facing parking structure facades be wrapped by Active Uses. The remaining visible areas must still screen structured parking to avoid views of parked cars from the street and further strengthen the characteristics of the Public Realm. The following standards and guidelines address the visible portion of parking structures to complement the design context of the area as expressed in the scale, proportion and materials of nearby buildings.

Intent Statements

3.AH  To promote structured parking facades that are fully activated with uses

3.AI  To minimize the impact of vehicles and structured parking on the Public Realm and surrounding properties

3.AJ  To ensure all parking structures have well designed facades that are visually compatible with the character and quality of the overall building facade

Design Standards

3.116 Structured parking shall be completely wrapped with another use on facades facing Key Streets.

3.117 Facade areas with Visible Structured Parking shall be designed to minimize the visual impacts from the Public Realm. Appropriate techniques include to screen security lighting and headlights:
   a. Use of non-transparent materials for approximately the first 36 to 48 inches of the facade on each floor, to block the view of headlights
   b. Architectural features and screening that block the view of ceiling and security lighting
   c. Use of fully-shielded LED or other lighting not exceeding approximately 6,500 lumens

3.118 Facade areas with Visible Structured Parking shall reflect the overall pattern of openings on the building facade and meet the same transparency standards for non parking facades.
   a. Use similar opening proportions to those on the overall facade
   b. Align openings with those on adjacent buildings or facade areas

3.119 Visible Structured Parking shall be integrated into the overall Facade and utilize architectural articulation consistent with the rest of the building design.
   Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Continuing similar building materials across facade areas with Visible Structured Parking
   b. Continuing vertical and horizontal articulation across facade areas with Visible Structured Parking
   c. Maintain a high level of architectural design and finish. Expanses of blank walls shall not be allowed

See "Facade Articulation" on page 58.
Structured Parking Facades

3.120 Mechanical ventilation systems for structured parking shall be located to minimize the impact on adjacent properties.
   a. Locate ventilation and mechanical systems away from entrances, windows or balconies of adjacent properties.

3.121 Design treatments used for Visible Structured Parking shall continue around the corner for approximately 50 feet of an Alley or Private Access Drive-facing Facade.

3.122 When Alley or Private Access Drive is available mechanical ventilation systems shall not be located on Primary Street-facing Facade. When an Alley or Private Access Drive is not provided, mechanical ventilation shall not be visibly located on a Primary Street-facing Facade.

Design Guidelines

3.123 Structured parking should be completely wrapped with another use on all Primary Street-facing Facades as much as practicable.

3.124 Street facing Visible Structured Parking should be designed to accommodate future conversion to non-parking uses.

3.125 Alley and Private Access Drive-facing facades of parking structures that face adjacent non-parking uses should be designed to mitigate impacts on neighbors.
   a. Use features such as screened facade openings that block views of headlights and lighting.
   b. Locate ventilation and mechanical systems away from entrances, windows or balconies of adjacent properties.

DENVER ZONING CODE LIMITATION ON VISIBLE PARKING

In the D-CPV-T/R/C zone districts, the Denver Zoning Code includes a limitation on the visibility of parking structures above the Street Level along Primary Streets. This limitation requires any parking structure facade located within 70% of the street-facing Zone Lot width to be wrapped by an Active Use, meaning that any portion in the remaining 30% of the Zone Lot may be visible. To minimize the visual prominence of parking structures, the design standards and guidelines in this section build on the Denver Zoning Code limitation and express the architectural quality that is expected for any Visible Structured Parking.
Appropriate designs for the top of a building are influenced by many factors, which may include location, height, building composition, architectural expression, and overall ‘fit’ within the existing context of the city skyline. Importantly, rooftop appurtenances must be considered early in the design process and integrated into the overall architectural composition, rather than simply attached as an afterthought. While not all building rooflines will warrant a signature feature, a roofline that utilizes architectural features highlighted through lighting and form can enhance the design and presence of a building at night.

Intent Statements

3.AK  To create building rooflines that positively contribute to the quality and character of the city skyline

3.AL  To fully screen mechanical and telecommunication equipment from view

3.AM  To incorporate environmentally sustainable building technologies

Design Standards

3.126  Rooftop mechanical and service elements, such as ventilation equipment, elevator penthouses, mechanical rooms, antennas and telecommunications equipment, shall be screened and set back from the roof edge/parapet to minimize visibility from the Public Realm.
   a. Set back equipment by at least 10 feet from the roof edge/parapet
   b. Where rooftop mechanical and service elements are taller than 10 feet in height from the rooftop, increase setbacks by one foot for each foot of additional height

3.127  Rooftop mechanical, service and amenity elements shall be integrated into building design and massing to minimize visual clutter on the skyline.

   Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Integrating rooftop mechanical, service and amenity elements (such as a rooftop deck) into rooftop architectural features
   b. Using materials and colors that are complementary to Upper Story Facade or Tower Facade treatments to screen rooftop mechanical and service elements

3.128  Rooftop screening material that is visible from the street shall be proven to be of durable and quality material that complements the overall facade design.

3.129  Mechanical equipment located adjacent to or facing window or door openings shall provide screening and sound buffers to mitigate noise and visual impact.
Building Rooftops

96. Rooftop screening should be expressed as part of the building composition and fully integrated architecturally.

Design Guidelines

3.130 Building rooftops and parapets should enhance the character of the skyline and strengthen the identity of individual buildings.

3.131 Rooftop lighting should be designed with adjustable intensity controls.

3.132 Rooftop screening should be expressed as part of the building composition and integrated into the building design and massing.

3.133 Environmentally sustainable technologies such as solar panels, planted green roofs, and blue roofs for water runoff collection and treatment, should be incorporated into the top of buildings.

DENVER GREEN BUILDING ORDINANCE

The Denver Green Building Ordinance requires that new buildings with 25,000 or greater in gross floor area, including those who must only comply with the provision of a cool roof, must submit required documents for review when constructing either a new roof or a roof replacement. Buildings Renewable energy devices being used to fulfill a Green Buildings Ordinance requirement shall also be submitted for review, regardless of the size of the system.
Fences, Walls, & Screens

Where buildings are set back from the sidewalk edge, low fences and walls can provide a threshold between public and private space. A low fence creates comfortable separation while encouraging interaction between residents and passersby. In contrast, taller fences and walls evoke a sense of fortification and create isolated enclosures.

Intent Statements

3.AN To ensure that fences, walls, and screens enhance the pedestrian environment and are well integrated into the overall streetscape.

Design Standards

3.134 Primary Street-facing fences and walls shall not exceed approximately 42 inches in height above the Street Level.

3.135 Fences and walls shall complement the architectural style and materials of the Lower Story Facade.

3.136 Side yard fences and walls shall connect to the side of a building a minimum of 2 feet back from the front facade of the building.

3.137 Fences, walls, and screens for service areas and utilities shall be designed to minimize visibility from the Public Realm and complement adjacent building facades.

a. Use colors and materials that are complementary to the building facade color and materials
b. Screen dumpsters or other trash receptacles with high-quality materials and/or landscaping that is consistent with building design.
Fences, Walls, & Screens

99. Fences and walls shall complement the architectural style and materials of the Lower Story Facade.

Design Guidelines

3.138 Methods other than fences and walls to create appropriate transitions between the Public Realm and Street Level uses are preferred.

3.139 Fences and walls to enclose a private space should be used sparingly.

3.140 When enclosure of outdoor eating and drinking areas is required, railings should be designed as an integral part of the building Facade.

3.141 Fences, walls, and screens should be made of durable and low-maintenance materials, such as metal or Masonry.

3.142 Gates should be in proportion to the fence or wall and not exceed approximately 42 inches in height above the Street Level when adjacent to the Public Realm.
Chapter 4 | Streetscape Design

Streetscape Design addresses the quality of the space found between the street edge and the face of the building or private property boundary. This space is the primary area of public occupation and significantly shapes the pedestrian experience.
Streetscape design addresses the character of the space generally located between the street edge and face of adjacent buildings, including the sidewalk and Amenity Zone. Well-designed streetscape and landscape elements support safe and comfortable pedestrian movement and add distinctive character to the area. The design standards and guidelines included in this chapter are focused on the character and quality of the experience, rather than specific design solutions, to provide flexibility in addressing technical engineering and infrastructure requirements.

Typically, streetscapes and the street itself are located within a public Right-of-Way located between private property. In cases where public Right-of-Way applies, the Department of Public Works and the Office of the City Forester has review and approval authority and may result in a deviation from the design standards and guidelines stated in this chapter.

Right-of-Way areas that are privately owned and managed shall use these standards and guidelines to address the design character and quality of the streetscape. Other associated processes or documents, such as Infrastructure Master Plans or Development Agreements, may require additional standards related to block size, vehicular access, streets, and the Public Realm.

**Streetscape Elements**

The urban streetscape of CPV-Auraria will include a progression of spaces from the street to the Primary Street Zone Lot Line (usually near the edge of the sidewalk). The standards and guidelines in this chapter primarily address design treatments within the Amenity Zone and sidewalk areas. "Setback & Open Space Design" on page 76 provides specific design standards and guidelines for Enhanced Setback and Open Space areas which are located on private property, but are often directly linked to the sidewalk and overall streetscape.
Introduction to Streetscape Design

100. Typical streetscape progression from the street to Amenity Zone to sidewalk.

101. The street is the paved area within the Right-of-Way that is typically reserved for vehicular traffic, bicycles, transit, and on-street parking.

102. The Amenity Zone is the area between the street and sidewalk that is improved with street trees, paving, street furniture or other amenities. See “Amenity Zone & Street Trees” on page 96 for additional information.

103. Sidewalks provide the primary pedestrian walkway between the Amenity Zone and the Primary Street Zone Lot Line. They may be directly linked to Enhanced Commercial Setback and Open Space areas described in “Setback & Open Space Design” on page 76.
Streetscape Furnishing & Lighting

Streetscape furnishings contribute to the identity and character of a district. Elements such as seating, bicycle racks, trash/recycling receptacles, and newspaper dispensers add important functionality, as well as visual interest, to the street. Street furnishings create the settings for resting, sitting and eating, and social encounters with others. Such settings may be of great importance to the elderly, those with limited mobility, and adults who have small children. In addition to their functional aspects, furnishings can also be socially significant as they support a comfortable environment and encourage human interaction.

Streetscape lighting provides illumination of both the roadways and the Public Realm for visibility, safety, and security. Pedestrian lighting complements required street lighting and contributes to the safety and design quality of the nighttime pedestrian experience.

Intent Statements

4.A To use furnishings and lighting elements to contribute to the activity and Human Scale of the streetscape

4.B To promote a comfortable, safe, and clean pedestrian environment

4.C To ensure that streetscape furnishings and lighting are made of high-quality, durable materials

4.D To allow creative furnishing and lighting designs

RESPITE AREAS

Respite Areas are small spaces adjacent to the sidewalk that encourage pedestrians to briefly dwell and linger in the Public Realm. These can be especially useful near Street Level commercial and retail land uses. Respite Areas should include seating elements, shade from street trees, and other furnishings that create a comfortable space for a short break from the urban environment.

FLEXIBILITY FOR SMALL LOTS

Flexibility in the application of the Streetscape Design standards and guidelines may be appropriate for smaller lots (lots less than approximately 75 feet in width).
4.01 Streetscape furnishings shall be provided to encourage pedestrian activity. Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Benches
   b. Planters
   c. Bicycle racks
   d. Trash containers
   e. Pet waste bag dispensers

4.02 Streetscape furnishings shall be located to maintain a clear pedestrian walkway at least 8 feet in width.

4.03 Streetscape furnishings shall be durable and suitable for outdoor conditions in the local climate.

4.04 Streetscape lighting shall be designed to contribute to the pedestrian experience and enhance a sense of security. Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Placing fixtures at lower heights
   b. Use of fixtures that provide even lighting
   c. Installation of fixtures at sufficient intervals to avoid dark zones

4.05 Streetscape lighting shall be located to minimize current and future conflicts with street trees.
Streetscape Furnishing & Lighting

Design Guidelines

4.06 Seating should be designed so that it does not hold water and/or debris.

4.07 Seating should be located to utilized desired sun and/or shade areas.

4.08 Streetscape furnishings should discourage overnight use.

4.09 Trash receptacles should be provided and have multiple functions such as landfill, compost, and recycling.

4.10 Streetscape furnishings should incorporate creative designs.
Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Streetscape furnishings that serve multiple purposes such as planters with integrated seating or lighting
   b. Flexible and movable seating
   c. Incorporating Public Art

4.11 Streetscape furnishings should consider opportunities to support wireless connectivity, mobile communication, and other similar technologies.

4.12 Pedestrian lighting should be integrated into streetscape design elements.
Appropriate locations include:
   a. Streetscape furnishings
   b. Landscape planters
   c. Paving systems
   d. Walls, railings, or bollards

4.13 Telecommunications equipment, signage, and other pole-mounted elements should be integrated into pedestrian lighting or other streetscape features to reduce unnecessary clutter within the Public Realm.

107. Streetscape furnishings should incorporate creative designs.

108. Pedestrian lighting should be integrated into streetscape design elements.
Streetscape Paving

Changes in paving material, color, or finish can distinguish varying pedestrian conditions in the streetscape, such as sidewalks and Amenity Zones, and help break down large spaces to a more Human Scale. It can also be used to help establish the character of a district or special zone. Unique colors, textures and materials can be used to create variety, embellish the Public Realm, and guide movement through subtle wayfinding cues.

Intent Statements

4.E  To encourage coordinated paving designs
4.F  To identify different areas of the streetscape
4.G  To promote paving designs that help manage stormwater

Design Standards

4.14 Streetscape paving shall incorporate a variety of finishes, colors, patterns, and/or detailing to distinguish different use areas and contribute to the Human Scale of the Public Realm.

Design Guidelines

4.15 Paving materials should be coordinated along blocks and streets to maintain a consistent design approach.

4.16 Paving design should be used to differentiate varying uses and areas of the streetscape.
Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Use of distinctive paving to differentiate the Amenity Zone from the pedestrian walkway
   b. Use of distinctive paving to differentiate the sidewalks from an Enhanced Commercial Setback, Open Space, or Private Access Drive
   c. Use of creative paving designs that distinguish different types of mobility or identify specific streets/districts

4.17 Permeable paving should be considered to allow infiltration of stormwater.
Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Ensure permeable paving meets requirements for pedestrian use
   b. Design permeable paving to be easily cleaned and maintained to encourage proper function over time

PAVING MATERIALS IN PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

The Department of Public Works reviews and approves paving materials and designs within public Right-of-Way. Public Works may approve unique or distinctive paving designs in public Right-of-Way if applicants have a program in place to ensure ongoing maintenance of special paving.

STREET PAVING

This section addresses only pedestrian-area paving within the streetscape that is between the curb and Zone Lot. They do not address the paving of vehicular travel lanes, bicycle lanes, or other paved areas within streets, Alleys, or Private Access Drives.
Amenity Zone & Street Trees

The Amenity Zone is the area between the street and sidewalk that can incorporate street trees, paving, streetscape furnishings, stormwater management systems and other amenities. Amenity Zones frame the Public Realm, promote clean air and water, and provide landscape areas that soften the urban environment.

Street trees are especially vital in higher intensity areas as they contribute substantial environmental and economic benefits. They contribute to the health and vitality of the neighborhood by providing shade to the sidewalk and outdoor seating areas, helping mitigate the urban heat island effect, and filtering vehicular noise and exhaust.

Trees also help break down the urban environment to Human Scale. They have an ability to focus and tie the streetscape together, and be used to screen, connect, or emphasize adjacent structures or objects. As trees branch across the pavement, they tend to visually reduce adjacent building height and street width.

Intent Statements

4.H To create a well-designed and coordinated streetscape experience

4.I To ensure Amenity Zone designs and materials retain their quality over time

4.J To introduce natural elements to the streetscape

4.K To ensure thoughtful placement and long-term viability of street trees

CITY FORESTER APPROVAL

A permit is required from the Department of Parks and Recreation Office of the City Forester prior to planting or removing trees from the public Right-of-Way per Chapter 57 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code.
Amenity Zone & Street Trees

Design Standards

4.18 The **Amenity Zone** shall incorporate a variety of pedestrian-oriented amenities.
Appropriate techniques include:
- a. Street trees and landscape areas
- b. Paved pedestrian use areas
- c. Outdoor eating and serving areas
- d. Fixed and movable furnishings
- e. Pedestrian lighting

4.19 **Amenity Zone** designs shall respond to an adjacent dedicated Bicycle Facility.
Appropriate techniques include:
- a. Providing designated pedestrian access to/from the Bicycle Facility
- b. Locating bicycle racks to be accessible from the Bicycle Facility

4.20 Bollards located in Amenity Zones shall not obstruct pedestrian or bicycle mobility.

4.21 Streetscape design adjacent to multifamily residential projects shall address pet-related impacts.
Appropriate techniques include:
- a. Prioritizing designated pet areas on-site within the building, on outdoor amenity decks, or in Enhanced Residential Setbacks or Open Space near primary building entrances
- b. Providing pet-resilient landscaping in the Amenity Zone that can survive impacts related to dogs or other pets
- c. Considering limited use of barriers or fencing to protect landscape areas

4.22 Street tree planting shall follow current Office of the City Forester rules and regulations.

4.23 Street trees shall be resilient to the local climate and urban conditions.
Amenity Zone & Street Trees

4.24 Tree grates, when required, shall be designed and sized to accommodate mature trunk sizes.

4.25 Street tree planting areas shall be designed to support the root system of mature trees. Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Dimensioning tree trenches to be at least 5 feet wide by 15 feet long, larger or continuous areas that stretch the entire block are preferred
   b. Using suspended pavement systems with Structural Cells
   c. Using structural soil, when Structural Cells are not feasible
   d. Using permeable pavers

Design Guidelines

4.26 Bollards should be removable or retractable, and should be slim in character to not be visually distracting.

4.27 Signs, display kiosks, utility boxes, and other ground-mounted appurtenances should be consolidated and integrated with other streetscape elements to reduce unnecessary clutter within the Amenity Zone.

4.28 Underground utilities and access to them should be consolidated to avoid conflicts with the Amenity Zone.

4.29 Underground parking structures should be designed to allow the planting of street trees and avoid conflicts with the Amenity Zone above.

4.30 Landscape areas should avoid being fully enclosed by raised borders that restrict pedestrian movement and the natural flow of stormwater from adjacent areas.
Amenity Zone & Street Trees

4.31 **Amenity Zone** designs and materials should promote long-term quality and ease of maintenance.
Appropriate techniques include:

a. Using high-quality durable materials, including landscape materials
b. Using modular elements that may be removed to allow maintenance access or replacement
c. Using integrated irrigation systems

4.32 **Planting areas** should be designed to protect trees.
Appropriate techniques include:

a. Using woody shrubs and other landscape material to surround street trees
b. Using features that retain organic surface treatments and other ground covers in the tree bed

4.33 **Building location and streetscape designs** should promote development of a mature tree canopy.
Appropriate techniques include:

a. Providing bulb-outs that allow space for larger canopy trees
b. Stepping buildings back by approximately 5 feet above the third floor to allow room for symmetrical canopy growth

4.34 **Low Impact Development (LID)** stormwater management systems should be integrated into the **Amenity Zone** where appropriate.

See “**Stormwater Management & Landscape**” on page 104.
Bicycle Parking

Intent Statements

4.L To promote sufficient bicycle parking that is appropriate to adjacent uses

4.M To ensure that bicycle parking is safe, secure, and easily accessible

DENVER ZONING CODE BICYCLE PARKING REQUIREMENTS

The Denver Zoning Code provides specific requirements for fixed bicycle parking. The design standards and guidelines in this section are intended to build on Denver Zoning Code requirements with additional guidance regarding the placement and character of bicycle parking. They are also intended to encourage the provision of additional bicycle parking beyond minimum requirements.

115. Bicycle parking shall be located near active pedestrian areas that are visible from the street.

Design Standards

4.35 Bicycle and scooter parking shall be located to avoid conflicts with pedestrian traffic.

4.36 Bicycle racks and scooter parking shall be located a minimum of 4 feet from street trees. Further distances are encouraged to avoid use of trees as additional docking stations and/or racks.

4.37 Bicycle and scooter parking shall be located near active pedestrian areas that are visible from the street.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Within safe and convenient access to main pedestrian entries
b. In an Amenity Zone
c. In an Enhanced Commercial Setback or Open Space (in a way that complements the design and functionality of the space)

Design Guidelines

4.38 Bicycle parking should be located adjacent to Highly Active Uses to increase security and natural surveillance.

4.39 In active commercial areas, additional bicycle parking, beyond Denver Zoning Code minimums, should be provided.

Additional bicycle parking is especially important adjacent to:

a. Dedicated bicycle facilities
b. High traffic pedestrian areas
c. Transit stops
d. Multi-tenant building entrances
4.40 Bicycle parking provided in addition to minimum Denver Zoning Code requirements should incorporate creative designs. Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Integration with streetscape furnishings, lighting, etc.
   b. Incorporation of Public Art
   c. Use of Bicycle Corrals

   Note that the design of bicycle parking located in the public Right-of-Way will be subject to approval by the Department of Public Works.

4.41 Enclosed bicycle parking should include individually secured bicycle facilities.

4.42 Enclosed bicycle parking should include a variety of end-of-trip facilities. Appropriate facilities include:
   a. Bicycle repair and service equipment
   b. Water fountains
   c. Courtesy equipment (benches, mirror, towel service)

4.43 Buildings containing more than 100,000 sf of office uses should include bicycle commuter shower facilities. Appropriate facilities should include:
   a. Showers and clothing storage areas for bicycle commuters
   b. Two showers for every 100,000 square feet of office use
   c. Equal shower access for all users
   d. Lockers that are clean, well-maintained, and large enough to accommodate saddle bags, helmets, and clothing
   e. Easy accessibility to bicycle parking
Public Art captures and reinforces the unique character of a place. The setting for Public Art should be considered part of the experience of the art itself. The impact of the place on the art may be as great as the art’s impact on the place. The two together enrich the Public Realm, encourage pedestrians to linger and return, and generally create memorable experiences. Public Art contributes to the Public Realm by making buildings and Open Spaces more interesting, engaging, and memorable. Locations with the most impact and opportunities for Public Art can often be identified and secured when considered early in the project planning stages.

Note that the City and County of Denver has an existing Public Art program that is established through the Denver Revised Municipal Code. Public Art described in this section may or may not be a formal component of this program, but rather represents art that is accessible and able to be enjoyed by the public.

**Intent Statements**

4.N To encourage the use of Public Art to enhance the Public Realm

4.O To ensure Public Art is publicly accessible and integrated into the Public Realm

**PUBLIC ART GOALS**

- **Intentional.** Incorporate Public Art into the early stages of the planning and design process for each new development. Successful Public Art is not an afterthought and must be integral to the overall growth of the built environment.

- **Creativity.** Aim for the highest interest and quality by enabling artists to create original and sustainable artwork, with attention to design, materials, construction, and location. Artworks should be curated carefully and build upon the surrounding collection of Public Art.

- **Placemaking.** Use dynamic visual elements to create focal points, meeting places, and social landmarks that will enhance Downtown’s image and vibrancy.

- **Identity.** Define and enhance the distinct quality of Downtown’s diverse visual and cultural environments. Provide meaningful opportunities for communities to participate and identify with each other through arts, culture, and history.

- **Wayfinding.** Foster a common language for residents and visitors to communicate with through visual clues and landmarks that help them navigate and embrace a potentially unfamiliar environment.
**Public Art**

**Design Standards**

4.44 *Public Art*, when provided, shall be located to be properly viewed and experienced from the *Public Realm* and avoid conflicts with other streetscape elements.

**Design Guidelines**

4.45 *Public Art* should be considered based on the following process and objectives:

a. Access at all hours and seasons and use of the site
b. Opportunities for rotating installations and diversity of scale and material
c. Opportunities for art to be embedded in public spaces and infrastructure

4.46 *Public Art* should be integrated into the overall vision for the project architecture, landscape and site design by incorporating the artist into the design team early in the process.

Appropriate *Public Art* opportunities may include:

a. A conceptual framework to organize Enhanced Sebacks, Open Spaces and the overall streetscape
b. An independent sculpture or two-dimensional work that marks an entryway, corner, feature area, or view terminus
c. A combination of visual arts with the building elements, including facades, canopies, floors, lighting, etc.
d. Visual arts combined with the landscape design, functional, or decorative elements of a site, such as water features, lighting, seating, paving, walls, fences, entrances and exits, etc.

4.47 *Public Art* should be constructed using durable materials that can withstand weather and physical touch.
Stormwater Management & Landscape

Stormwater management is a critical component of development everywhere. Integrating solutions within a development retains, redirects or otherwise prevents stormwater from entering City systems and the River. On-site detention and management of stormwater greatly reduces impacts on adjacent collection areas, ecosystems and treatment facilities. Flood resiliency, stormwater management, and Public Realm design objectives can and should be integrated into a comprehensive system.

Intent Statements

4.P To use creative best management practices to recycle and filter water on site

4.Q To reduce the amount of supplemental water used for on-going operations and maintenance of landscape areas

4.R To use design solutions that reduce infrastructure needs to accommodate stormwater flow

LID STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Low Impact Development (LID) is stormwater management approach to address rainfall in a way which more closely mimics the natural hydrologic system at the site prior to development. LID stormwater management systems, such as the stormwater planter illustrated above, allow for infiltration, storage, filtration, evaporation and/or detention of stormwater close to the location where the rain fell. They promote environmental sustainability by increasing water quality and reducing off-site impacts.

119. Stormwater landscape areas shall be designed beyond purely functional requirements and be attractive in wet and dry conditions.

120. Amenity Zones should be designed to address stormwater management and meet the intent of Public Works’ Ultra-Urban Green Infrastructure Guidelines.
4.48 Stormwater landscape areas in the streetscape shall be designed beyond purely functional requirements and be attractive in wet and dry conditions.

4.49 Stormwater solutions should be accommodated within the property.

See “Setback & Open Space Design” on page 76.

4.50 Amenity Zones should be designed to address stormwater management and meet the intent of the Department of Public Works Ultra-Urban Green Infrastructure Guidelines. Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Fully landscaped Amenity Zones may be appropriate around the perimeter of public parks, along the River, or along enhanced pedestrian corridors
   b. Where fully landscaped Amenity Zones are not feasible or appropriate, consider alternative design solutions that maintain a pervious surface

4.51 Stormwater runoff should be directed towards landscape areas where possible.

4.52 Grey water should be used for landscape irrigation where feasible.

4.53 Native or adapted plants with low water requirements should be used.

4.54 Landscape areas required by the Denver Green Building ordinance should be coordinated with stormwater management to create systems that serve multiple uses.
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Chapter 5 | Building Signs

Building Signs addresses design aspects related to sign type, location, materials, and lighting. In addition to identifying various uses and tenants, signs play an important role in defining the visual character and quality of the urban environment. This chapter will not be used by the Design Advisory Board in the review of projects.
DENVER ZONING CODE SIGN REQUIREMENTS

Division 10.10 of the Denver Zoning Code provides base requirements for the erection, remodeling, enlarging, moving, operation and maintenance of all signs.

The design standards and guidelines in this Chapter are intended to build on Denver Zoning Code requirements.
HIERARCHY OF SIGNAGE

When planning signage, it is important to understand the purpose that each sign can play, and to consider the hierarchy and scale of signs types, messages and designs. “Layering” information will help visitors obtain the information they need, while also ensuring that every proposed sign has an objective. The diagram and related photographs below illustrate layering of primary, secondary and additional/iconic signage consistent with the guiding principles for building signs.

A PRIMARY SIGNAGE
Located near active building entrances and strategically placed to be viewed from longer distances. Typically one primary sign per business is appropriate.

B SECONDARY SIGNAGE
Secondary signage provides additional information that is viewed from shorter distances and at the pedestrian level. Typically one to three secondary signs per business are appropriate.

C ADDITIONAL SIGNAGE
Additional/iconic signage promotes creativity, context-sensitivity and overall sense of place, often through artistic, three-dimensional imagery. Typically one iconic sign per business is appropriate.

COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLANS

Division 10.10 of the Denver Zoning Code enables a Comprehensive Sign Plan process that allows flexibility in zoning requirements for the size, type and location of signs identifying the use and location of signs for large facilities (as defined in the Denver Zoning Code) subject to review by City Staff and the Planning Board. The Denver Zoning Code also enables a Comprehensive Sign Plan process that allows for projecting signs and canopy signs on smaller facilities subject to review by City Staff. This flexibility is offered in exchange for a coordinated program of signage ensuring a higher standard of design quality for such signs.
Building Sign Location

Signs provide a vital service in an urban district, informing pedestrians and expressing the character and tone of the experiences within. Signs have a powerful presence in the streetscape and can affect the pedestrian and vehicular experience significantly.

Intent Statements

5.A To encourage signs that promote a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented street frontage
5.B To improve wayfinding by identifying primary entrances
5.C To provide clear identification of building uses and tenants
5.D To ensure signs are located to be subordinate to and integrate with the building design

Design Standards

5.01 Signs shall be located at, or just above, the Street Level or near the top of the building rather than midway along a facade.

5.02 A building shall not have more than one sign located above the Street Level on each facade.

5.03 Signs at the Street Level shall be located for pedestrian use and visibility.

Appropriate strategies include:

a. Locate signs at, or just above, the Street Level
b. Incorporate a distinct signage band area at the Street Level
c. Integrate signage within a storefront
5.04 Signs shall be subordinate to and integrate with the overall design of the facade. Appropriate strategies include:
   a. Ensure that signage is not the most prominent feature of the facade
   b. Locate signs in architectural bays or panels
   c. Utilize other areas of the facade designed and reserved specifically for signage
   See “Street Level Façade Design & Uses” on page 68.

5.05 Signs for Street Level uses shall be located adjacent to the identified use unless part of a Joint Identification Sign.

5.06 Signs shall be designed to avoid conflicts with streetscape elements. Streetscape elements to consider, include:
   a. Street trees
   b. Street lighting
   c. Street furniture

Design Guidelines

5.07 Signs located above the Street Level should be reserved to identify the building or for a single major tenant.

5.08 Signs for multiple tenants above the Street Level should be consolidated into a Street Level Joint Identification Sign.
   See “Joint Identification Signs” on page 118.

5.09 Signs should clearly designate tenant spaces and building entries.
## Building Sign Character & Material

### Intent Statements

**5.E** To promote well-designed and durable signage that retains a quality appearance over time

**5.F** To ensure that sign design is subordinate to and integrates with overall building design

### Design Standards

**5.10** Signs shall be designed to complement the design of the building facade.

**5.11** Signs shall incorporate durable materials that will maintain their quality over time. Appropriate materials include, but are not limited to:

a. Metal  
b. Stone such as slate, marble or sandstone  
c. Painted, gilded or sandblasted glass

**5.12** Signs at the **Street Level** shall incorporate design details, materials, and scaling elements that relate to **Human Scale**.

**5.13** Signs located above the **Street Level** shall include only a single line of text and may not occupy more than 600 square feet of area.

*Note that a **Comprehensive Sign Plan** may allow flexibility from this standard.*

**5.14** Box or cabinet signs shall not be allowed.

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127. Signs at the **Street Level** shall incorporate design details, materials, and scaling elements that relate to **Human Scale**.
Building Sign Character & Material

128. Signs shall incorporate durable materials and complement the design of the building facade.

Design Guidelines

5.15 Signs should be designed to work together to create a cohesive identity for the building facade or tenant.

5.16 Signs located at corner entrances, within an Open Space, or in other highly-visible locations should be designed to be creative and iconographic.
   Appropriate techniques include:
   a. Incorporate symbols or representations of products into sign design
   b. Utilize iconic typography in sign design
   c. Integrate creative lighting into sign design

   Note that projecting signs must incorporate iconographic features (see “Individual Sign Types – Projecting Signs” on page 116).

5.17 Signs located above the Street Level should generally use symbols, rather than names or words.

5.18 Signs should be designed using distinctive materials and craftsmanship.

129. Signs should be designed to work together to create a cohesive identity for the building facade or tenant.
Building Sign Lighting

Intent Statements

5.G  To encourage sign lighting that maintains its quality over time

5.H  To ensure that sign lighting does not adversely affect the Public Realm or adjacent properties.

Design Standards

5.19  Sign lighting shall be integrated into the design of the sign or facade.
      Appropriate strategies include:
      a.  Indirect back lit/halo lighting
      b.  Lighting arms that provide direct lighting
      c.  Lighting integrated into an architectural feature

5.20  Sign lighting shall avoid adverse impacts to the Public Realm and adjacent properties.
      Appropriate strategies include:
      a.  Focus lighting directly towards the sign
      b.  Incorporate hoods or caps to avoid indirect glare

5.21  Electrical conduits and raceways for sign lighting shall be integrated into the design of the facade and not directly exposed.

5.22  Electronic message boards shall have auto dimming capabilities to respond to daylight conditions.

Design Guidelines

5.23  Sign lighting should be provided to support nighttime pedestrian activity.

5.24  Sign lighting should be consistent with overall building lighting.
130. Sign lighting shall be integrated into the design of the sign or facade.

131. Lighting arms can provide direct lighting onto signs.

132. Sign lighting should be consistent with overall building lighting.

133. Indirect back lit/halo lighting is an appropriate way to integrate lighting into the design of the sign.
Elementary Signs

Intent Statements

5.I To promote projecting signs that contribute to the overall arrangement and variety of signage on the building facade.

5.J To promote projecting sign designs that enliven the pedestrian environment with creative, expressive, and iconic shapes.

Design Standards

5.25 Projecting signs shall be designed to be creative and iconographic.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Incorporate symbols or representations of products into sign design
b. Utilize iconic typography in sign design
c. Integrate creative lighting into sign design

5.26 Projecting signs shall be three-dimensional.

Appropriate techniques include:

a. Use shapes that limit the need for signage text
b. Incorporate three-dimensional objects, such as products related to the advertised use, in sign design (objects may be abstracted)

DESIGN REVIEW OF PROJECTING SIGNS

Projecting signs may be permitted through an approved Comprehensive Sign Plan for a large facility, or through a staff-approved plan for a smaller facility. City Staff will review and approve applications for new or modified projecting signs.
Individual Sign Types – Projecting Signs

135. Projecting signs shall be designed to be creative, iconographic, and three-dimensional.

136. Projecting signs shall be designed to be creative, iconographic, and three-dimensional.

137. Projecting signs shall be designed to be creative, iconographic, and three-dimensional.

138. Projecting signs shall be designed to be creative, iconographic, and three-dimensional.
**Intent Statements**

5.K To promote appropriate use of a variety of sign types

5.L To limit the visual impact of multiple signs on a building facade

5.M To maintain the appearance of an active Street Level with a high percentage of transparency

**Design Standards**

**ARCADE SIGNS**

5.27 Arcade signs shall be mounted parallel to the building facade within an arcaded building entry or perpendicular to the building facade hanging from an arcade.

**GROUND SIGNS**

5.28 Ground signs shall be located only in Enhanced Commercial Setback or Open Space areas and scaled for pedestrians.

**WALL SIGNS**

5.29 Wall signs shall be designed to fit within sign bands or architectural details on the building facade.

5.30 Where a wall sign is used as a joint identification sign, it shall be located adjacent to a primary building entry.

**WINDOW SIGNS**

5.31 Window signs shall not cover more than 15% of the window area.

5.32 Arcade signs should be scaled to be compatible with the overall arcade design.

5.33 Materials used for ground mounted signs should be coordinated with materials used on adjacent buildings.

5.34 Joint identification signs should be designed with a coordinated set of materials, colors and typefaces.

5.35 Where a wall sign will be internally-lit, separate internally-illuminated lettering should be used rather than a single internally-illuminated box.

5.36 Window signs should generally be scaled for pedestrians and located at, or below, pedestrian height.

a. Limit window signs to logos or additional product information

b. Use individual lettering rather than solid color backgrounds
Individual Sign Types – Non-Projecting Signs

139. Arcade Sign - a sign attached to the roof or wall of an arcade and totally within the outside limits of the structural surfaces which are delineating the arcade.

140. Ground Sign - a sign attached to the roof or wall of an arcade and totally within the outside limits of the structural surfaces which are delineating the arcade.

141. Joint Identification Sign - a sign which serves as a common or collective identification for three or more businesses on the same zone lot (note that Joint Identification Signs are a type of wall or ground sign).

142. Wall Sign - a sign attached to, painted on or erected against a wall, fascia, parapet wall or pitched roof of a building or structure (note that a wall sign may be used as a joint identification sign).

143. Window Sign - a sign which is applied or attached to, or located within three feet of the interior of a window, which sign can be seen through the window from the exterior of the structure.
Glossary of Terms
Glossary of Terms

The terms included here are terms that are consistently referenced throughout the design standards and guidelines. Many of the terms are consistent with Denver Zoning Code definitions but are included in this document for ease and accessibility. For terms that are not included here, refer to the Denver Zoning Code, Section 13.3 Definition of Words, Terms and Phrases as well as Section 11.12 Use Definitions.

ACTIVE USES
See Street Level Active Uses and Highly Active Uses.

ALLEY
A public way that is less in size than a street, and which is not designed for general travel, which is used primarily as a means of access to the rear of residences and business establishments. Also see Private Access Drive.

AMENENITY ZONE
An area between the street and sidewalk that is improved with street trees, paving, street furniture or other amenities. See “Amenity Zone & Street Trees” in Chapter 4 for additional information and illustrations.

ARTICULATION
See Facade Articulation.

BICYCLE CORRAL
An on-street bicycle parking facility that can accommodate bicycles in the same area as an on-street vehicle parking space. They work best where sidewalks are too narrow to accommodate bicycle racks and in areas with both high levels of people bicycling and demand for bicycle parking.

BICYCLE FACILITY
A lane, path, or shoulder for use by bicyclists, or a shelter/parking facility for bicycles.

BUILDING MASSING
The overall configuration of the major three-dimensional volumes, modules, or elements of an individual building and its Facade. Such volumes, modules, or elements are generally defined by significant and recognizable changes in height, setback, or Facade plane. Also see Facade Articulation.

CEMENTITIOUS STUCCO
An exterior wall finish, usually composed of cement, sand, and lime, and applied while wet.

CITY STAFF
For purposes of these Design Standards and Guidelines, City Staff refers to the City Zoning Administrator and his or her designees in the Department of Community Planning and Development.

COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLAN
Division 10.10 of the Denver Zoning Code enables a Comprehensive Sign Plan process that allows flexibility in zoning requirement for the size, type and location of signs identifying the use and location of large facilities (as defined in the Denver Zoning Code).

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE
A structure that is designated as contributing to the historic or architectural qualities of a Historic District according to the provisions of Chapter 30 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code.

DENVER ZONING CODE
The Denver Zoning Code implements the city’s vision for the future of Denver, by calibrating regulations for structures, uses and parking by neighborhood context. The Denver Zoning Code generally sets forth quantitative requirements such as maximum heights or minimum setbacks that apply in addition to the discretionary design standards and guidelines included in this document. See www.denvergov.org/zoning for more information.
**Glossary of Terms**

**DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD**
A group of design professionals, development industry representatives, and downtown-area residents and property owners appointed by the Mayor of Denver to review and provide recommendations on proposed projects in CPV-Auraria using these design standards and guidelines. See “Design Review Process” on page 10 and [www.denvergov.org/downtowndesign](http://www.denvergov.org/downtowndesign) for more information.

**DOWNTOWN CENTRAL PLATTE VALLEY-AURARIA (D-CPV) ZONE DISTRICTS**
The Downtown Central Platte Valley-Auraria Transition (D-CPV-T), Downtown Central Platte Valley-Auraria River (D-CPV-R) and Downtown Central Platte Valley-Auraria Center (D-CPV-C) Denver Zoning Code zone districts in which these design standards and guidelines apply. The General Building Form, Point Tower Building Form and Standard Tower Building Form are implemented through the Downtown Central Platte Valley-Auraria (D-CPV) Zone Districts.

**ENHANCED COMMERCIAL SETBACK**
The additional space created when buildings with Street Level frontages that do not contain residential units are set back at least 5’ from the Primary Street property line, but are generally still positioned within the Primary Street build-to range provided in the Denver Zoning Code. Enhanced Commercial Setbacks can range in size from modest setback areas provided by building offsets to larger areas with outdoor patio seating, landscaping or other amenities.

**ENHANCED RESIDENTIAL SETBACK**
The additional space created when buildings with Street Level frontages containing residential units are set back at least 7’ (15’ on the River) from the Primary Street property line, but are generally still positioned within the Primary Street build-to range provided in the Denver Zoning Code. Enhanced Residential Setbacks provide space for a transition from the Public Realm to private residential units, which may include porches, stoops, landscaping and other features.

**ENHANCED SETBACK**
The space created when buildings are set back at or beyond the highest applicable minimum Primary Street setback dimension specified in the Denver Zoning Code, but are still positioned within the Primary Street build-to range specified in the Denver Zoning Code. See Enhanced Commercial Setback and Enhanced Residential Setback for specific types of Enhanced Setback.

**FACADE**
The exterior face or wall surface of a building. For the purpose of these design standards and guidelines, a Facade includes all stories of a building.

**FACADE ADJACENT TO A HISTORIC RESOURCE**
A Facade visible from a Historic District or Landmark Structure, or visible from a street, Alley or Private Access Drive within 1/2 block of a Historic District or Zone Lot that includes a Landmark Structure.

**FACADE ARTICULATION**
Design elements that add texture, interest, depth and rhythm to the Facade of a building, including horizontal and vertical projections, cornices, balcony rows, fenestration patterns, awnings and canopies, as well as horizontal and vertical changes in material, color and/or finish. Also see Building Massing.

**FIBER CEMENT SIDING**
A building material used to cover the exterior of a building. Fiber cement is a composite material made of sand, cement and cellulose fibers. Fiber Cement Siding includes HardieBoard and HardiePlank.

**GATEWAY CORNER**
An intersection where strong building massing will help invite pedestrians onto active sections of 21st Street.

**GENERAL BUILDING FORM**
A Denver Zoning Code building form that establishes the base set of standards for CPV-Auraria zone districts from which all other building forms deviate for specific situations.
**HIGHLY ACTIVE USES**
Uses that contribute to the activation and engagement of the pedestrian experience. These uses include (but are not limited to); retail storefronts; restaurants and cafes; building lobbies and amenity areas; indoor art or recreation facilities; arts and cultural facilities. Uses that are not considered Highly Active Uses are residential units, light warehousing, mini-storage, parking spaces or parking aisles. Also see Street Level Active Uses.

**HISTORIC DISTRICT**
A district that is locally-designated for preservation under the provisions of [Chapter 30 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code](#).

**HISTORIC RESOURCE**
A Landmark Structure or Historic District that is locally-designated for preservation under the provisions of [Chapter 30 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code](#).

**HUMAN SCALE**
The perception of a building and/or environment based on proportions, scaling elements, and context-sensitive solutions that allow a human to reasonably interpret the design through comparable elements in their own experience. See “Guiding Principles of Human Scale Design” in Chapter 3 for more information.

**INTERIOR VEHICLE COURT**
A vehicle use area within the interior of a block and accessed by an Alley or Private Access Drive. An Interior Vehicle Court may serve as a drop-off area for surrounding building uses and provide access to parking or service areas.

**KEY STREETS**
Unique or important streets in CPV-Auraria where context-specific design guidance is provided. See “Key Streets” on page 4 for more information.

**LANDMARK STRUCTURE**
A structure that is locally-designated for preservation under the provisions of [Chapter 30 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code](#).

**LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT**
A stormwater management approach to address rainfall in a way that more closely mimics the natural hydrologic system at the site prior to any development.

**LOWER STORIES**
The portion of a building generally located below an Upper Story Setback specified in the Denver Zoning Code. For example, where the Denver Zoning Code specifies an Upper Story Setback above 5 stories or 70 feet, the Lower Stories will generally be stories 1-5. However, the Lower Stories may be considered to end at a lower height where an Upper Story Setback is located below the maximum height specified in the Denver Zoning Code. See the related definitions of Lower Story Facade, Upper Stories and Tower as well as “Building Form Massing Components by D-CPV Zone District” on page 41 for more information.

**LOWER STORY FACADE**
The Primary Street-Facing Facade of a building’s Lower Stories. Note that the Lower Story Facade and the Streetwall often describe the same Facade areas, although the Streetwall will sometimes rise higher along Facade areas where there is no Upper Story Setback, or where a Tower rises directly above a building’s Lower Stories. See the related definitions of Upper Story Facade and Tower Facade, as well as “Building Form Massing Components by D-CPV Zone District” on page 41 for more information.

**MASONRY**
Building materials characterized by individual units laid in and bound together by mortar. Masonry materials include brick, stone and terra cotta.

**MASSING**
See Building Massing.
OFF-STREET PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION

An improved and maintained way providing pedestrian access from the Right-Of-Way into the interior of a block. For the purpose of these design standards and guidelines, an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection includes any improved pedestrian way through the interior of a block to provide pedestrian connections between block frontages or provide pedestrian access to uses located in the interior of a block. Note that an Alley or Private Access Drive may also serve as an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection when improved for pedestrian use. Note that some Off-Street Pedestrian Connections will also meet the definition of Open Space.

OPEN SPACE

For the purpose of these design standards and guidelines, an Open Space is a privately-owned space that is adjacent-to and physically open-to the street, allowing public access at least during business hours and meeting the Denver Zoning Code Article 13.1 criteria for areas satisfying a minimum percentage of Private Open Space, including minimum width, depth and overall area.

Examples of Open Space include privately-owned courtyards, plazas, expanded access points to Off-Street Pedestrian Connections and similar features that are intended to be publicly visible and usable. An Open Space is differentiated from an Enhanced Setback by its dimensions, which may extend beyond the maximum build-to range specified in the Denver Zoning Code, but typically would occur along only a limited percentage of the street frontage. An Open Space is differentiated from a Park because it is privately-owned and would generally not provide neighborhood-level recreation space.

PARK

A large publicly or privately-owned outdoor space providing neighborhood-level amenities or recreation areas. A Park is differentiated from an Open Space because it is not specifically associated with a privately-owned building or group of buildings and is generally much larger in size.

PARKLET

A sidewalk extension that provides more space and amenities for people using the street. Parklets are typically installed in parking lanes and use one or more parking spaces.

POINT TOWER BUILDING FORM

A Denver Zoning Code building form that allows for buildings that incorporate tall, slender Tower building elements. This building form sets more restrictive requirements for the size of a Tower Floor Plate than the, primarily commercial Standard Tower Building Form.

PRIMARY STREET

Any named or numbered street, and the South Platte River, in the D-CPV zone districts, as defined in the Denver Zoning Code.

PRIMARY STREET-FACING FACADE

Any Facade that is located roughly parallel to, and is visible from, a Primary Street. Primary Street-Facing Facades do not include Facades that are generally perpendicular to a Primary Street, although such Facades may still be considered as a Visible Facade or Secondary Facade.

PRIMARY STREET UPPER STORY SETBACK

See Upper Story Setback.

PRIVATE ACCESS DRIVE

An improved and maintained way providing vehicular access from the Right-Of-Way into the interior of a block. For the purpose of these design standards and guidelines, a Private Access Drive includes any privately owned off-street vehicle way through the interior of a block to provide individual vehicular access points to parking areas, service areas, an Interior Vehicle Court or similar features shared by multiple buildings or sites on a block. Note that a Private Access Drive may also serve as an Off-Street Pedestrian Connection when improved for pedestrian use. Also see Alley.
PRIVATE OPEN SPACE
A Denver Zoning Code term applied to publicly-accessible, but privately owned, spaces meeting minimum code-specified criteria. See Open Space.

PUBLIC ART
Any structure or other installation meeting the definition of “Works of Public Art” in Section 20-86 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code. Public Art includes, but is not limited to, paintings, sculptures, mosaics, earthworks, sound/light art and other artist-created works. For the purpose of these design standards and guidelines, Public Art may include works that are privately owned, but publicly accessible, including artwork located in Open Space.

PUBLIC REALM
Areas within the Right-of-Way (including streets and sidewalks) and Parks, as well as publicly-accessible areas on private property, including Off-Street Pedestrian Connections, Open Space and Enhanced Setbacks.

QUALITY
Refers to the use of a material that is low maintenance, will stand up to wear and tear, and is appropriate for the intended use or design application.

RESPITE AREA
Small space adjacent to the sidewalk that encourage pedestrians to briefly dwell and linger in the Public Realm. A Respite Area typically includes seating elements, shade from street trees, and other furnishings.

RIGHT-OF-WAY
The area of land that is intended to provide access to individual sites. The Right-Of-Way generally includes the roadway, sidewalks, Amenity Zone, and Alley. This area could be publicly owned by the municipality over which the road and sidewalk is built, or privately owned and maintained by others such as a metropolitan district or homeowners association.

SECONDARY FACADE
Any Facade that does not meet the definition of a Primary Street-Facing Facade, including Facades that face towards an Alley or Private Access Drive. Note that some Secondary Facades will also meet the definition of a Visible Facade.

SOUTH PLATTE RIVERFRONT
Areas fronting both sides of the South Platte River, including all streets and Parks that are located between the river and private development areas. Zone Lots adjacent to such streets and Parks, or the river itself, are adjacent to the South Platte Riverfront.

STANDARD TOWER BUILDING FORM
A Denver Zoning Code building form that allows for primarily commercial buildings that incorporate taller Tower building elements. This building form allows greater flexibility in the size of a Tower Floor Plate than the Point Tower Building Form.

STREET ENCLOSURE RATIO
A measurement of the proportional relationship between the Streetwall of a building and the width of the adjacent Right-of-Way. Note the perception of Street Enclosure Ratio may be influenced by landscaping or street trees that provide a sense of enclosure.

STREET LEVEL
The first story or level in a building or structure, as defined by the Denver Zoning Code. For the purpose of these design standards and guidelines, Street Level will generally be considered to be the story or level of a building or structure that interfaces directly with the Public Realm, including Street Level building frontages facing streets, Open Spaces and Off-Street Pedestrian Connections. Note that the Street Level is considered to be part of the Lower Stories.
Glossary of Terms

STREET LEVEL FACADE
The Primary Street-Facing Facade at the Street Level along with any other Street Level Facade areas that face the Public Realm, including Open Spaces and Off-Street Pedestrian Connections. Note that the Street Level Facade is part of the Lower Story Facade.

STREET LEVEL ACTIVE USES
Uses that contribute to the activation and engagement of the street, as defined by the Denver Zoning Code. The Denver Zoning Code requires a minimum percentage of Street Level Active Uses on a Primary Street-Facing Facade. Also see Highly Active Uses.

STREETWALL
The predominant plane of the Primary Street-Facing Facade from the Street Level up to an Upper Story Setback or other significant shift in building massing. Note that the Lower Story Facade is part of the Streetwall.

STRUCTURAL CELLS
A below pavement structural system that allows for tree roots to grow in less compacted natural soils, while providing the necessary support for paving systems that can accommodate pedestrian and vehicular loading. See "Suspended Pavement Systems & Structural Soil" in Chapter 4.

TOWER
The portion of a Point Tower Building Form or Standard Tower Building Form that is located above an Upper Story Setback specified in the Denver Zoning Code, including all stories where the Denver Zoning Code specifies a maximum Tower Floor Plate area, maximum Tower Floor Plate Linear Dimension and minimum Tower Floor Plate Separation (note that a Tower is sometimes also referred to as a Tower massing component or a Tower building element). For example, where the Denver Zoning Code specifies an Upper Story Setback above 5 stories or 70 feet, the Tower will generally be any portion of the building above 5 stories. Where the Denver Zoning Code specifies an Upper Story Setback above 8 stories or 110 feet, the Tower will generally be any portion of the building above 8 stories. However, a Tower may be considered to begin at a lower height where Upper Story Setbacks are located below the maximum height specified in the Denver Zoning Code or where the portion of the building that meets the maximum Tower Floor Plate area, maximum Tower Floor Plate Linear Dimension and minimum Tower Floor Plate Separation begins below the height specified in the Denver Zoning Code.

TOWER FACADE
The Primary Street-Facing Facades and Visible Facades of all stories of a Tower. See the related definitions of Lower Story Facade and Tower, as well as “Facade Levels” on page 39 for more information.

TOWER FLOOR PLATE
Any single story of a Tower, as measured to the exterior wall faces. The Tower Floor Plate is used for Denver Zoning Code requirements and design standards and guidelines related to Tower Floor Plate area, Tower Floor Plate Linear Dimension and Tower Floor Plate Separation.

TOWER FLOOR PLATE LINEAR DIMENSION
The longest horizontal distance between the exterior walls of a single Tower Floor Plate per the rules of measurement set forth in Article 13 of the Denver Zoning Code. Maximum Tower Floor Plate Linear Dimension promotes access to light an air and creative design solutions by limiting the width of individual Tower Facades.
Glossary of Terms

TOWER FLOOR PLATE LINEAR DIMENSION ALTERNATIVE
A Denver Zoning Code standard that allows for an increased Tower Floor Plate Linear Dimension on a Point Tower Building Form or Standard Tower Building Form to provide flexibility in special circumstances where creative Tower designs are found to meet the design standards and guidelines for the Tower Floor Plate Linear Dimension Alternative in Chapter 2.

TOWER FLOOR PLATE SEPARATION
The shortest horizontal distance between two Tower Floor Plates per the rules of measurement set forth in Article 13 of the Denver Zoning Code. Tower Floor Plate Separation promotes access to light an air by ensuring appropriate spacing between Towers.

TOWER FLOOR PLATE SEPARATION ALTERNATIVE
A Denver Zoning Code standard that allows for a reduced minimum separation between Tower Floor Plates on a Point Tower Building Form or Standard Tower Building Form to provide flexibility in special circumstances where creative Tower designs are found to meet the design standards and guidelines for the Tower Floor Plate Separation Alternative in Chapter 1.

UPPER STORIES
The portion of a General Building Form that is located above an Upper Story Setback specified in the Denver Zoning Code. For example, where the Denver Zoning Code specifies an Upper Story Setback above 5 stories or 70 feet, the Upper Stories will generally be any portion of the building above 5 stories. However, the Upper Stories may be considered to begin at a lower height where Upper Story Setbacks are located below the maximum height specified in the Denver Zoning Code. Note that the portion of a Point Tower Building Form or Standard Tower Building Form that is located above an Upper Story Setback specified in the Denver Zoning Code is defined as the Tower rather than the Upper Stories. See the related definitions of Lower Stories, Upper Story Facade and Tower, as well as “Building Form Massing Components by D-CPV Zone District” on page 41 for more information.

UPPER STORY FACADE
The Primary Street-Facing Facade of the Upper Stories of a General Building Form. Note that the Facades of a Point Tower Building Form or Standard Tower Building Form that are located above an Upper Story Setback specified in the Denver Zoning Code are defined as Tower Facades rather than Upper Story Facades. See the related definitions of Lower Story Facade and Upper Stories, as well as “Facade Levels” on page 39 for more information.

UPPER STORY SETBACK
A building setback required by the Denver Zoning Code at a maximum specified height above the Street Level to provide appropriate pedestrian height, scale and massing. For the purpose of these design standards and guidelines, Upper Story Setbacks may also refer to other setbacks above or below the maximum setback height specified in the Denver Zoning Code.

VEHICLE ACCESS POINT
A point providing vehicular access to a Zone Lot, parking area, parking structure or shared Alley/Private Access Drive from an adjacent street.

VISIBLE FACADE
Any Secondary Facade that is visible from the Public Realm at the time of construction without significant blockage by building or site features. For example, a Facade that is perpendicular to a Primary Street and faces towards an adjacent Open Space or existing lower-scale development on an adjacent Zone Lot that does not block views of the Facade from the Public Realm will be considered to be a Visible Facade. Note that some Visible Facades will also meet the definition of a Facade Adjacent to a Historic Resource.

VISIBLE STRUCTURED PARKING
A structured parking Facade that is not wrapped with another use and is located on the Primary Street-facing Facade, or faces a Historic Resource per the definition of a Facade Adjacent to a Historic Resource.
Glossary of Terms

WALL MURAL
A mural is any piece of artwork or super graphic (which does not serve as an advertisement) painted or applied directly on a wall.

WALDRAM DIAGRAM
A Denver Zoning Code technique to calculate the percentage of sky exposure that a building’s profile allows through to the street below.

ZONE LOT
As defined in the Denver Zoning Code, the land designated as the building site for a structure, or the land area occupied by a use or a structure. Many Denver Zoning Code requirements, such as Upper Story Setbacks are measured in relation to Zone Lot size or Zone Lot Line / Zone Lot Boundary Lines.

ZONE LOT LINE / ZONE LOT BOUNDARY LINE
As defined in the Denver Zoning Code, any line separating a Zone Lot from a street, an Alley, another Zone Lot or any other land not part of the Zone Lot. Many Denver Zoning Code requirements, such as Upper Story Setbacks, are measured in relation to Zone Lot size or Zone Lot Line / Zone Lot Boundary Lines.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
A member of City Staff appointed by the Executive Director of the Department of Community Planning and Development to take final action regarding zoning permits, make code interpretations and undertake other duties as outlined in the Denver Zoning Code. The Zoning Administrator may designate their authority to any member of City Staff.