Form-Based Design Standards:
A Simpler Approach
to Regulating Physical Form
Gateways:
Creating First Impressions
Second Chances:
Eventual Redevelopment
(25-30 Year Plan)
Defining the Community Vision
Visual Preference Surveys (VPS):

Audience rates each of 100 slides from -10 (Highly Unfavorable) to +10 (Highly Favorable)

Ratings averaged for each image

Images ranked from lowest to highest

Conclusions drawn for policy recommendations
Visual Preferences Always Similar:

- Two-story buildings closer to street
- Parking visually minimized, to rear
- Lots of trees in parking lots
- Building design reflective of region
- Pedestrian walkways and sitting areas
- Good landscaping and street trees
Visioning: The Charrette Process
Implementing the Community Vision
Form-based Regulations
Can be adopted in Various Ways
The Most Straight-Forward Being:
Form-Based Code
as an amendment to Zoning
or
Form-Based Design Standards
in the SALDO ordinance
Downtown Examples of Form-Based Code Regs
Figure 3-2. Build-To Zone. Both road frontage facades shall be placed within the build-to zone, which has a minimum and maximum distance from the property line.
Facade transparency is measured separately for the ground-floor levels and upper-floor levels. The ground-floor area is measured between two feet above the ground to 12 feet above the ground. Upper-floor areas are measured between 12 feet above the ground and the roof.

Figure 3.7. Facade Transparency. Facade transparency is a measure of the relative percentage of transparent window area compared to the amount of overall opaque facade area.
Required storefront. Areas indicated on the Regulating Plan for required storefront must meet minimum facade transparency requirements as well as include ground-floor shopfront windows to create an active and inviting pedestrian environment.

Figure 3.8. Required Storefront. Areas on the Regulating Plan which are shown with a heavy black line are required to have ground-floor storefront windows and meet certain facade transparency requirements.
Parameters for *Form-Based Design Standards*

**Maximum** front setback, (with allowances for alcoves)

**Minimum** building height (with functional upper stories)

Minimum street frontage built up to avoid gaps between buildings

Parking reduced and to rear or screened to the side (or off-lot)

**Maximum** block length

Broader mixture of uses within buildings and blocks (with “good neighbor” performance standards to avoid nuisances)

Shade tree planting along street and within parking lots

Primary entrance onto the street side for commercial buildings

**Minimum** glazing on street side(s) for commercial buildings

Can provide more variety in residential building types (single, two- and three-family), if such variety is desired)

**Maximum** houselot sizes in sewered areas for neighborhood parks, and in rural areas to protect significant open space.
Downtown Examples of Form-Based Design Standards
Landscaping

Downtown Parking

Airport Lounge (with both lunch and dinner on a long layover)

59.00
Planting and Maintaining Shade Trees
Form-based Design Standards

Along

Highway Corridors
FBDS Goal One:
Rear Parking, Minimum Height, and Maximum Front Setbacks with Shade Tree Plantings
Gasoline Stations with Rear Pumps
FBDS Goal Two:
Encouraging Mixtures of Land Uses That are Different but Compatible
FBDS Goal Three:  
Planting Trees  
Along Highway Corridors
FBDS Goal Four:
Creating Interconnections
Among Adjacent Land Uses
Figure 9-22. Connecting rear parking lots allows customers to drive to many other shops in the corridor without re-entering the highway and interrupting traffic flow. Such arrangements can be required for new development, expansion of existing buildings, and redevelopment.
Applying FBDS to Gateway Locations
Applying FBDS to
Rural Highway Locations:
Deeper Front Setbacks
with No or Very Little Front Parking
Supplemental Design Standards
Pedestrian Walkways in Parking Lots
Retaining Existing Trees
“Parking Groves”
(instead of Parking Lots)
Design Recommendations for better Commercial Strips

Building, Site Requirements:
Main facade oriented parallel to street
Operable front door must face street
Front door must be aligned with clear path from sidewalk (path: 8’ wide minimum, textured striping at all drive crossings)
Bike parking adjacent to entrance (2 minimum + 1 spot per 4 parking spots)
Buffers on both sides of path (20’ wide with landscaping and benches; rain gardens if appropriate)
Additional parking located to side and rear of buildings
All planting strips should be designed to capture and infiltrate runoff from adjacent paved areas
Additional native shrubs and ground covers should be planted in strips and buffers
Removal of Curb cuts and granting of side access encouraged

Building, Architectural Requirements:
Minimum height: 20’ at all points along facade
If facade is longer than 80’, building should be designed to look like multiple attached buildings (Setback or projection of at least 1’ depth per every 40’ of face length recommended)
Windows on first floor required
Additional requirements based on local vernacular

sidewalk: 8’-12’ wide
buffer: 12’ wide, 1 tree per 37’

No more than two rows of parking in front of buildings for all uses.
1 tree median between every 3 parking spots (10’ wide) for parking in front of buildings

buffer: 12’ wide, 1 tree per 37’ with shrubs, perennials and ground cover
sidewalk: 8-12’ wide
tree strip: 12’ wide, 1 tree per 37’
road (where possible, reduce number of lanes and/or lane widths. Add bike lanes).
median, 1 tree per 37’
road (see above)
Public Art in High-Visibility Outdoor Locations Downtown
Thank you.

Randall Arendt

rgarendt@comcast.net

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