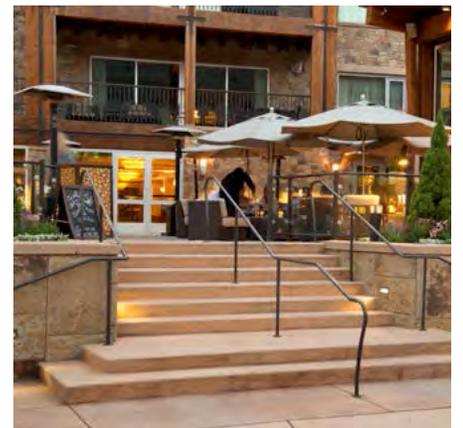
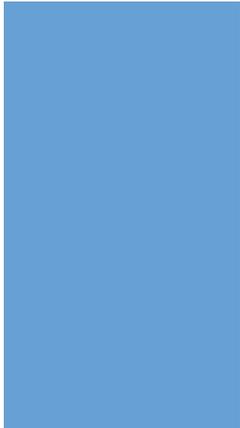




South Lake Tahoe Design Guidelines

March 8, 2016



Final
Draft

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Final Draft, March 8, 2016

PREPARED FOR:

City of South Lake Tahoe

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

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STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL

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SECTION ONE INTRODUCTION

The South Lake Tahoe Design Guidelines (Guidelines) provide visual imagery in order to support and clarify the intent of the City of South Lake Tahoe design standards. The Guidelines were developed to help project applicants and their designers understand the community's desired visual character and appearance for South Lake Tahoe. They apply to all projects except single family and multi-family residential projects within the City of South Lake Tahoe.

The Guidelines were developed as part of a collaborative outreach process. Community members were invited to take part of three public workshops and two online surveys. The first meeting and online survey focused on understanding what types of buildings, signage and landscape elements best represented the type of mountain architecture the community desired for South Lake Tahoe. The second meeting and online survey provided a venue for community members to comment on the Draft Design Guidelines. Survey and meeting results indicated that participants felt the imagery provided represented their desired aesthetic character for South Lake Tahoe. At the final public meeting the Final Draft Design Guidelines were presented, areas where the Draft Design Guidelines had been modified to respond to public input were identified and the community was provided another opportunity to provide input.

PURPOSE & INTENT

The primary purpose of the South Lake Tahoe Design Guidelines (Guidelines) is to provide a visual tool to help guide project applicants on how to meet the required design standards in a manner that meets the desired aesthetic of the community. They are intended to assist landowners, developers, tenants and their consultants, such as architects, who propose any alteration, addition, construction, and/or development in understanding the basic design ideas related to the City of South Lake Tahoe's (City's) design standards in order to improve the area's visual quality.

The Guidelines are not intended to inhibit innovative design or espouse one style of mountain design. They are intended to allow freedom of expression, innovation and creativity while developing built elements that are timeless or do not appear overly trendy. They provide an illustrative and descriptive tool for establishing and maintaining an overall unifying character and image for the entire community.

The goal of the Guidelines is to communicate design principles regarding how structures relate to the land, respond to climate, step with natural grades, and harmonize with the character of the surrounding landscape. Since there is not a required theme or style of mountain architecture, it is all the more essential for structures to relate to each other through the use of design elements such as locally found materials, scale, fenestration, style, massing and exterior paint colors.

The Guidelines are intended to be an aid to enhance the existing visual quality and experience within the community and direct future development in ways that are responsive to the specific environmental conditions and natural setting of South Lake Tahoe. They were developed in conjunction with community input in order to establish parameters which align with the community's objectives for mountain architecture and the desire for enhanced visual quality throughout the city.

The Guidelines describe how to aesthetically and sensitively execute applicable design standards and codes in a manner that is compatible with the mountain environment. For example, there are codes that set the parameters for height and coverage, however, they do not describe how to aesthetically and sensitively apply them to a site. This manual provides the guidance to accomplish this.

APPLICABILITY

The Design Guidelines apply to all commercial, tourist, mixed use, public/institutional and industrial projects (including additions, remodeling, relocation or new construction). They do not apply to single and multi-family residential projects. The Guidelines will be used during City review of permit applications as additional criteria for project review and communication with project applicants.

The Guidelines relate to aesthetic consideration of project development. Nothing herein alters current codes or best management practices (BMPs) requirements. All regulations and guidance in the City of South Lake Tahoe City Code, applicable Area Plans, the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Code of Ordinance, TRPA BMP Handbook and other applicable documents shall remain in effect.

The Guidelines are not intended as a "blueprint" for approval, rather they outline the important design elements and features which should be considered. The City will consider these Guidelines in reviewing projects. Applicants are invited to submit creative and imaginative projects which build on these Guidelines and contribute to the overall character of South Lake Tahoe.

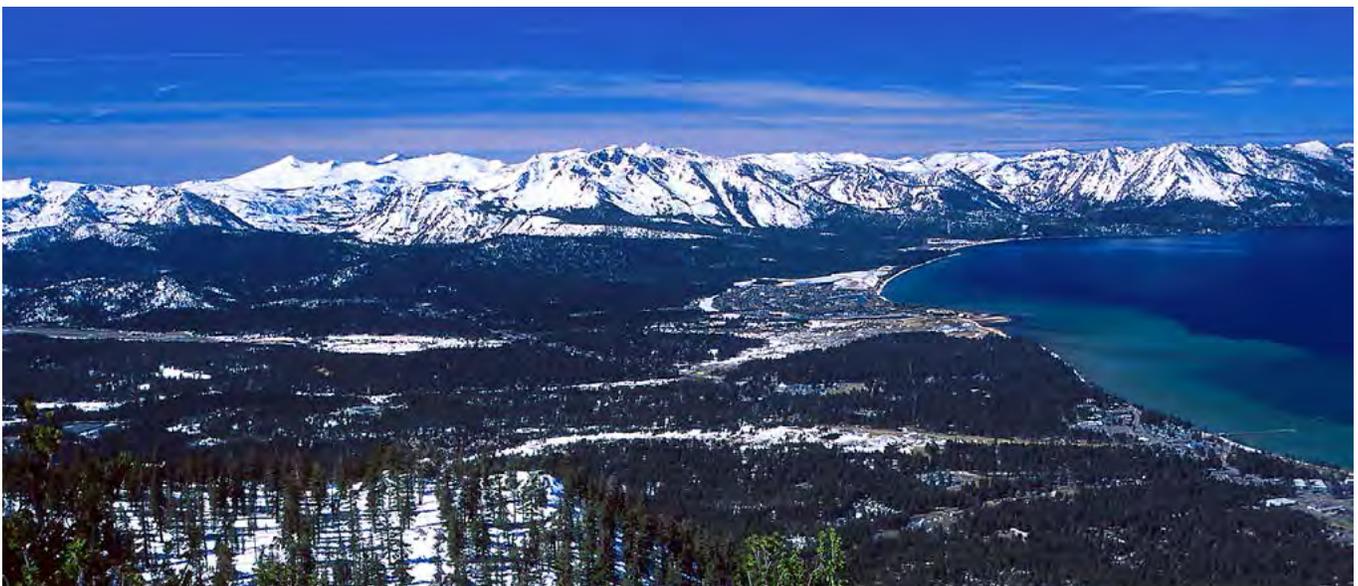
Individuals and entities proposing projects within the City of South Lake Tahoe should review these guidelines before initiating the design and development process. To facilitate project approvals, questions regarding the Guidelines, as well as other development-related questions, should be discussed with the City's Development Services staff as early in the development process as possible. The Guidelines have been developed in accordance with the City Code and Area Plans and TRPA's Code of Ordinances Design Standards and BMPs and are intended to further the broader goals and policies of the Regional Plan and the City's General Plan.

DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

The Guidelines have been organized to correlate with the City's citywide design standards and Area Plan design standards. They are presented in five sections:

- Site Design
 - General Design
 - Grading and Drainage
 - Building Placement
 - Parking
 - Bicycle Parking
 - Visual Screening
 - Pedestrian Circulation
 - Public Plazas and Open Space
- Building Design
 - Building Design and Articulation
 - Roofs
 - Building Height
 - Green Design
- Landscape
- Exterior Lighting
- Signage

Each section includes images, diagrams and illustrative examples in order to visually communicate how the Design Guidelines and existing city design standards can be met while developing a project that is compatible with the surrounding mountain environment. A summary of the section's design objective is provided at the start of each section. Image captions are provided to further communicate the design idea presented by the images, diagrams and illustrations.



The Design Guidelines apply to all projects within the City of South Lake Tahoe except single and multi-family residential projects. The unique natural setting of South Lake Tahoe is the best starting point for developing the site and building design.

2 SECTION TWO SITE DESIGN

OBJECTIVE

Fit and blend man-made improvements into the topography and forest.

The way in which buildings and built elements relate to the land is an important factor in defining the character and enhancing the visual quality of South Lake Tahoe. The area's natural setting with its forested mountains, crystal blue lake and fragile meadows are South Lake Tahoe's most important features. This section describes design guidelines for site work elements including grading and drainage, building placement, parking areas, pedestrian circulation, and public plazas and open spaces in order to ensure that the character of South Lake Tahoe is maintained.

LIMIT NEW DISTURBANCE AND KEEP EXISTING TREES, BOULDERS AND NATURAL ELEMENTS



Rock outcroppings and other natural elements should be incorporated into site design and public areas.



©Vance Fox.com; Ward Young Architects and Clark and Sullivan Construction

Retain existing natural features such as rock outcrops, trees and topographic features.



Site buildings and paved areas over existing disturbance to ensure the least amount of new site disturbance as possible.

MAINTAIN AND HIGHLIGHT VIEWS OF THE MOUNTAINS, FORESTS AND LAKE



Organize and design buildings to maintain ridgeline and forest canopy views.



Underground new utilities along commercial corridors in order to reduce visual distractions and enhance views of the surrounding landscape.



Site buildings and structures to maintain views of the mountains and lake.



Buildings and site elements should be organized to preserve lake views of significant size to make a greater visual impact when viewed from public areas.



Orient site features to capitalize and highlight views of the surrounding mountain and lake landscape.

GRADING AND DRAINAGE

OBJECTIVE

Work with existing topography so that built elements appear to be an extension of the existing natural forms or nestle easily within the landscape setting.

The most aesthetically pleasing mountain towns are those that appear to nestle into their setting, working through and around the landscape instead of perching on top of it. The intent of these guidelines is to foster grading which results in built work that appears to sit easily within the landscape instead of being imposed upon it.



Minimize grading and work with existing topography to minimize the use of retaining walls and integrate buildings into the site.



Preserving existing trees and incorporating naturally functioning systems into the site design is integral to the establishing the aesthetics of the place.



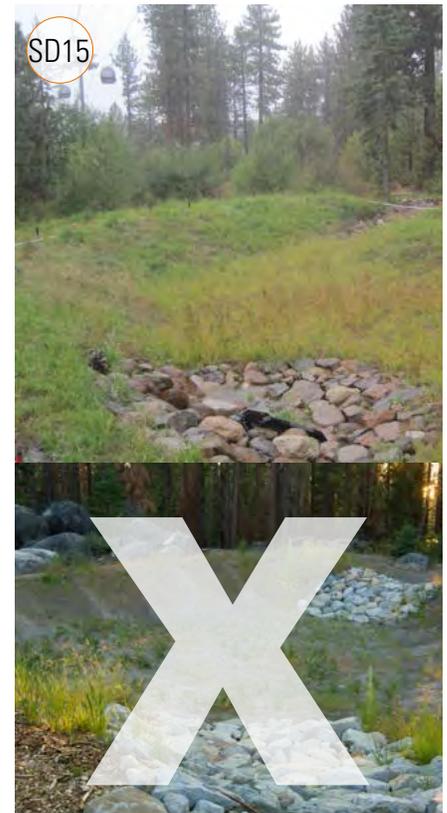
Revegetate graded slopes.



Smoothly merge graded areas into existing terrain and undulate the graded surface to mimic existing landforms. Do not create sharp transitions with a flat graded surface.



Natural drainage courses and existing drainage patterns should be protected.



Gracefully blend stormwater features into the look and feel of the surrounding terrain. Do not use sharp transitions or flat slopes that do not appear natural.



Design graded areas to appear as natural landforms. Smoothly merge graded areas into the existing terrain. Undulate slopes to mimic the surrounding landscape.

BUILDING PLACEMENT

OBJECTIVE

Organize buildings in such a way that respond to and take advantage of Tahoe’s natural setting while reinforcing the character of pedestrian and public areas in order to optimize visitor and resident enjoyment of outdoor spaces.

Building placement has a powerful impact on the perceptions of visitors and residents. Consideration should be given to all the aspects of the site: the physical characteristics, environmental conditions and social expectations to determine the arrangement and location for buildings that will provide the greatest benefit. The guidelines for siting of buildings are intended to encourage designs that respond to the natural setting.

Because each building’s relationship to the street impacts the character and function of pedestrian areas, the guidelines also encourage designs which reinforce the character of public areas and optimize visitor and resident enjoyment of outdoor spaces. Well organized buildings can create comfortable pedestrian plazas, promote walkability, encourage commerce, improve building performance and reinforce community identity.

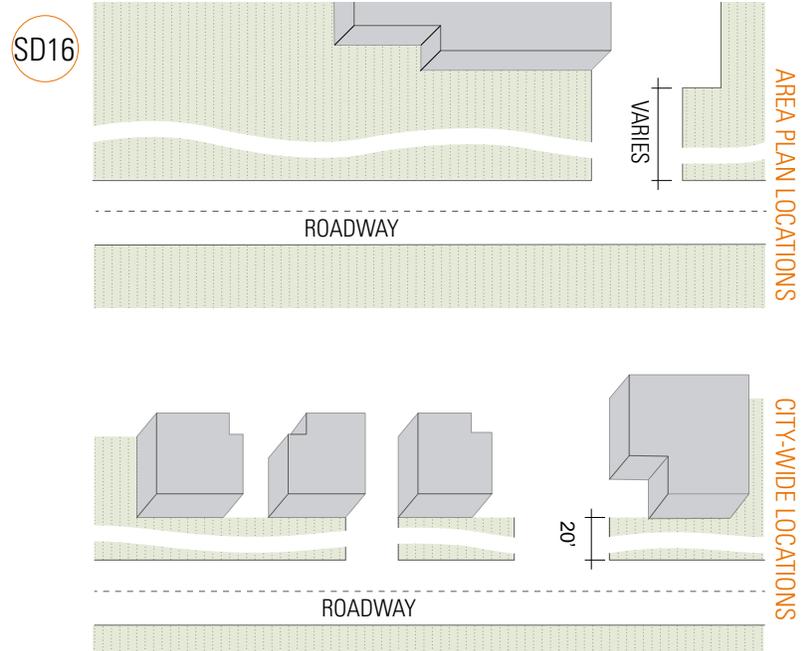


Image courtesy of BSA Architects

Site buildings at setback lines to create visual interest along the road corridors, allow for substantial landscape areas and pedestrian walkways.



Image courtesy of Tahoe Donner Cross Country Ski Center; Tahoe Donner Association, Dale Cox Architects

Modulate buildings to avoid creating a long row of buildings.



Locate corner buildings at the setbacks in order to create a strong street presence, define the pedestrian realm and encourage pedestrian activity.



Seating, outdoor dining and public gathering areas can be incorporated within the setback area.



Building placement should not intrude on or diminish the views of mountains or the lake as seen from public spaces and roadways.

RELATIONSHIP TO PUBLIC SPACES AND OTHER BUILDINGS



Cluster buildings where appropriate to create desirable and comfortable public outdoor spaces.



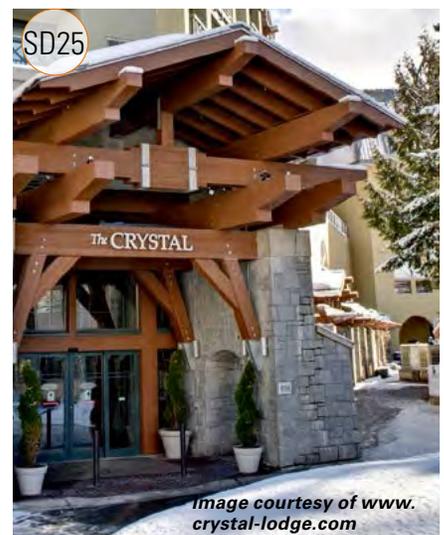
Infill building placed to coordinate with existing adjacent development and complement architectural style.

Site buildings in a manner that complements adjacent buildings.

RELATIONSHIP TO PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT AND ACCESS



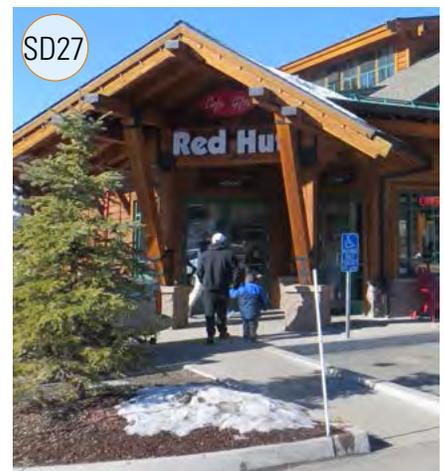
Site buildings so their spatial relationship provides for and promotes pedestrian access.



Highlight building entries through architecture and landscape.



Place building entries and frontage toward the primary linear street frontage to encourage and support a pedestrian environment.



Provide covered entries.



Orient the entry and major façade of commercial buildings toward the primary street frontage.

PARKING

OBJECTIVE

Provide convenient parking that is not visually obtrusive and does not impact pedestrian movement.

Parking with its related vehicular circulation and access points establishes the pattern of movement for trucks and automobiles and influences pedestrian and cyclist movement. The point where a driver enters or leaves a site affects both a project and the community as a whole.

The guidelines focus on siting and designing parking areas which do not dominate views from the roadway and public areas and encourage pedestrian movement by minimizing vehicular/pedestrian conflict areas and creating opportunities to park once and walk to multiple destinations.



Divide parking into smaller lots to decrease the view of large parking expanses.

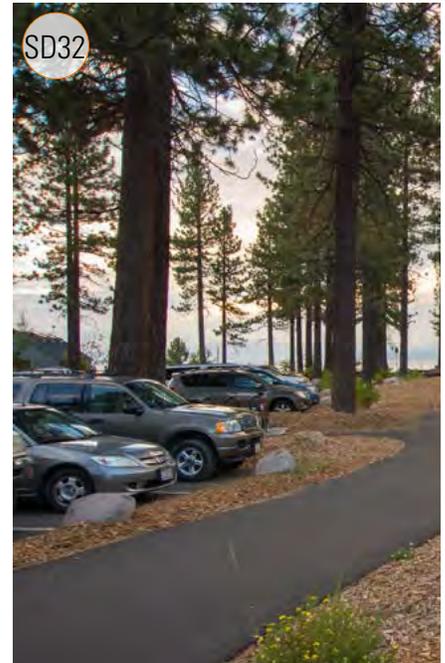


Parking located behind a building or on an interior side has less visual impact from the street in order to create a cohesive pedestrian environment and building frontage.

USING LANDSCAPE AND EXISTING TREES TO BREAK UP PAVING AREAS



Best management practices (BMPs), such as infiltration basins, can be incorporated into parking areas as part of landscape areas and offer an aesthetically pleasing and lower cost alternative to conventional stormwater treatment strategies.



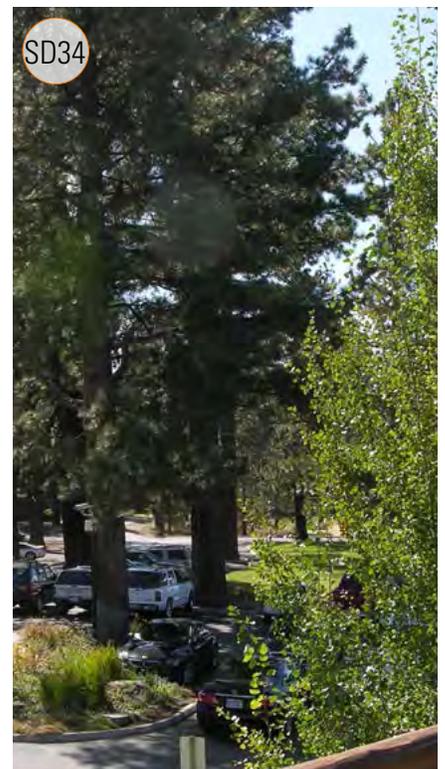
Integrate boulders into the landscape design where appropriate to prevent parking in landscape areas.



Integrate landscaping and barriers that prevent parking outside of designated areas as part of the overall parking and landscape design.



Incorporate islands of adequate size between parking areas to visually break up long lengths of parking as well as provide areas for snow storage that are out of the public rights of way.



Incorporate existing trees into parking lot design and provide adequate buffer to maintain and enhance plant health.

VISUAL SCREENING



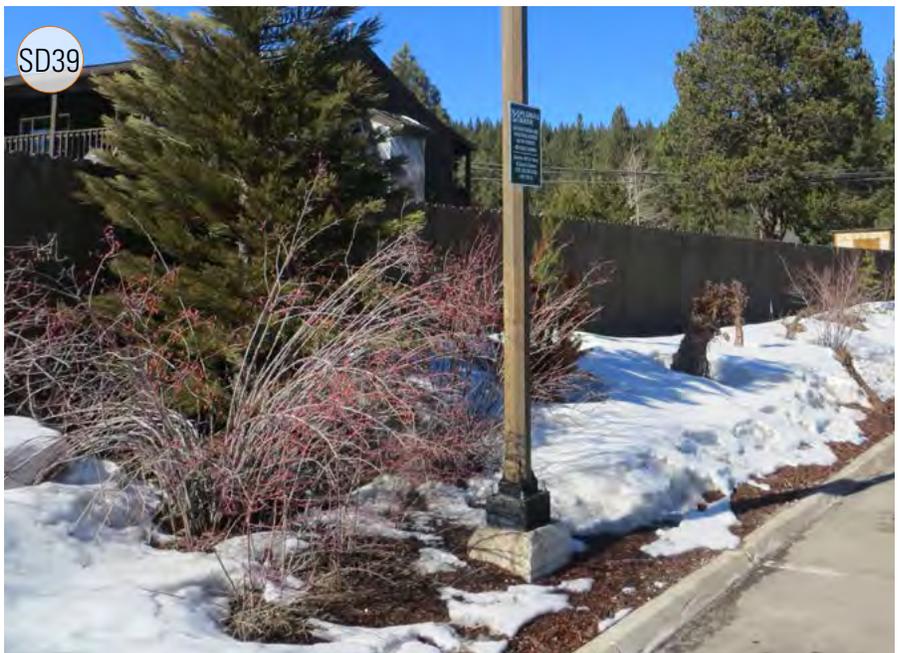
Fencing can be incorporated as part of the landscape elements used to screen parking from the roadway.



Incorporate landscaping in the setback area to screen parking from the street. Utilize informal planting strategies to create a more naturalized appearance of landscaping.



Utilize landscaping to screen underground parking that extends above natural grade.

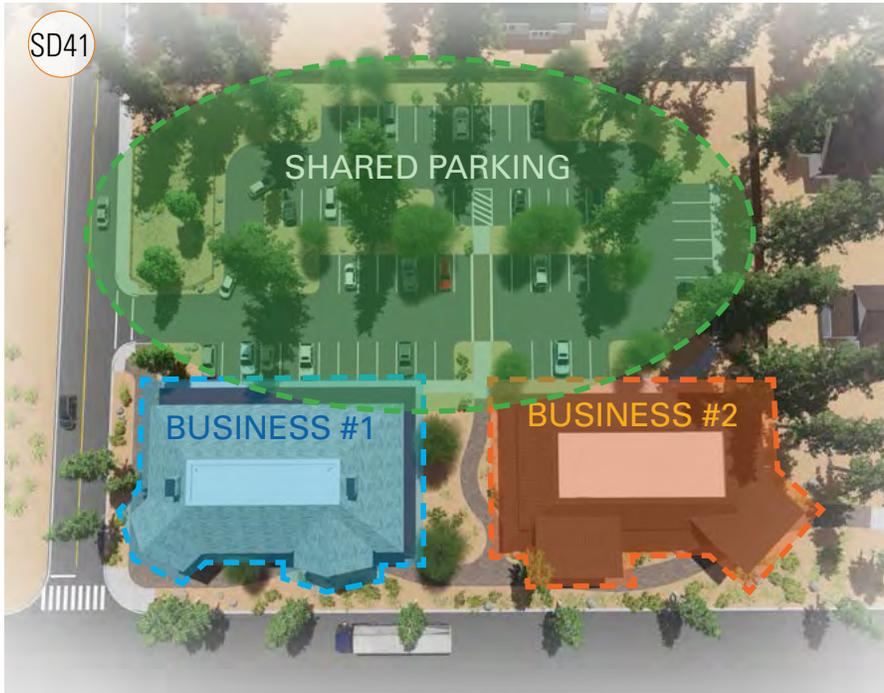


Buffer parking from neighboring residential uses with fencing.



The use of vertical separation, landscape and fencing can help screen parking areas from the road.

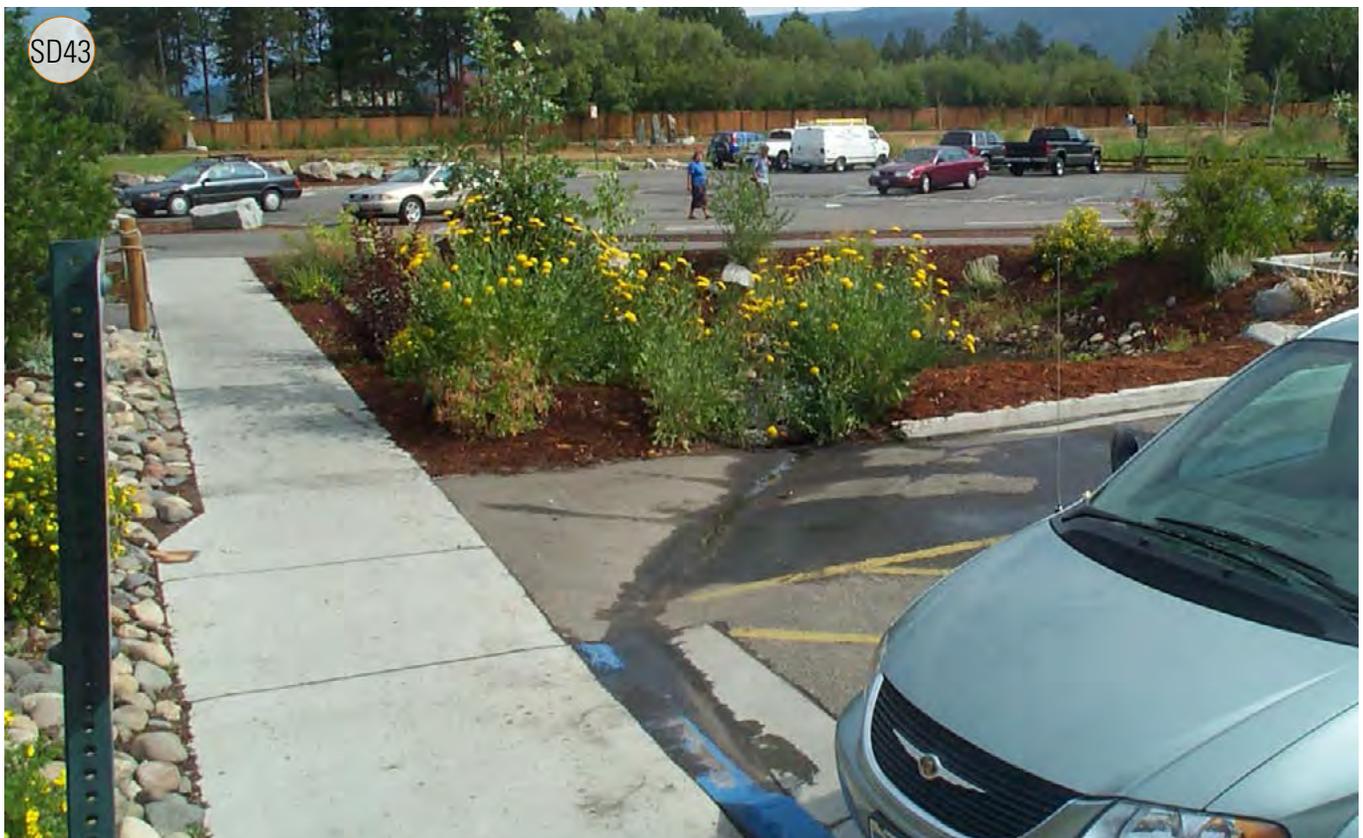
ENCOURAGING PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT



Encourage walkability and a park once atmosphere by providing shared parking and shared parking access points.



Locating access drives from side streets and alleys fosters pedestrian movement along the primary street corridor by reducing the number of times vehicle and pedestrians interface.



Pedestrian walkways through parking areas provide a safe place for people to walk away from moving vehicles and should be separated from the building by a landscape area.

BICYCLE PARKING

OBJECTIVE

Encourage active transportation use with secure and convenient facilities.

Bicycle trail connections in combination with bike-friendly amenities help encourage use of alternative modes of transportation.



Locate bike racks within close proximity to the main building entry.



Locate bike racks so they do not obstruct pedestrian movement.



Incorporate long-term bike parking to serve people staying at a site for over four hours. Long-term bike parking can be provided indoors when possible.



Locate bike racks so they are visible to encourage use and enhance security.

VISUAL SCREENING

OBJECTIVE

Minimize the visual impacts of parking and service areas.

The architectural design of a project shall include elements that screen from public view all external mechanical equipment, including refuse enclosures, electrical transformer pads and vaults, satellite receiving disks, communication equipment and utility hardware on roofs, buildings or the ground.



Design dumpster enclosures using materials and finishes consistent with the building architecture to unify the appearance of site structures and help protect visual quality. Screen dumpster enclosures that are visible from the street with landscaping. Dumpsters should be covered whenever possible to prevent precipitation from entering the dumpster, mixing with contents and then leaking out.



Utilize site planning and building placement and design to minimize the visibility of parking, utilities, and service and maintenance areas from public rights of way.



Utilize a combination of fencing, walls and landscaping to provide attractive visual screening.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION AND DESIGN

OBJECTIVE

Encourage safe and easy pedestrian movement within a site and between adjacent properties.

The design of the circulation system on a site is critical to creating safe travel routes between parking areas and building entrances. The guidelines identify the need for creating clearly defined and aesthetically pleasing circulation systems within and between project sites and providing connectivity to nearby transit stops and citywide pedestrian circulation systems.



Circulation systems should be separated from vehicular areas and provide convenient connections to pedestrian areas.



Provide for pedestrian circulation within the site and between adjacent properties.



Integrate project walkways with the existing and planned active transportation network, community areas and transit.

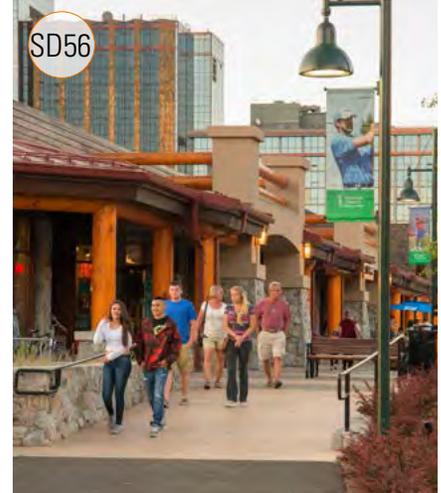


Image courtesy of Ben Fish

Create an interesting and inviting pedestrian environment with walkways and shared use paths that are separated from the roadway.



Design walkways for year-round circulation.



Provide wider sidewalks in heavily used commercial and tourist areas to accommodate higher numbers of pedestrians and provide opportunities for outdoor dining.



Sidewalks shall be provided along the full length of buildings that feature customer entrances.



Provide internal pedestrian connectivity to buildings, parking, open spaces and public amenities.



Separate walkways from vehicular areas in parking lots.

PUBLIC PLAZAS AND OPEN SPACE

OBJECTIVE

Create comfortable and desirable public gathering spaces.

Great public places are settings that bring people together—a place to see and to be seen. They provide a sense of character to the surrounding buildings and provide places for people to relax and enjoy themselves. They can serve as focal points and add to an area's visual enhancement. The guidelines describe the importance of designing high quality spaces that consider the surrounding landscape and scenic elements while providing for human comfort and visual interest.



Site public gathering spaces in locations with good solar exposure.



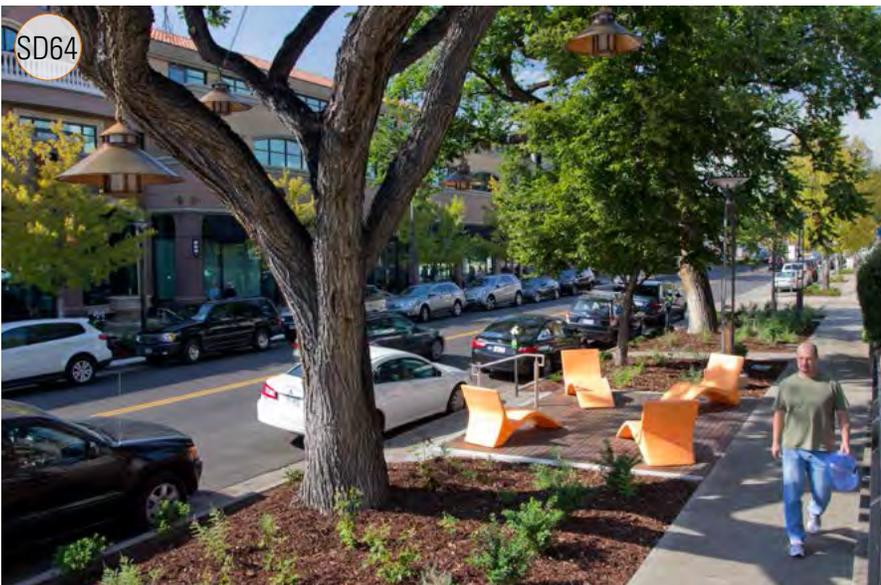
Provide desirable and comfortable public plazas. Site gathering spaces to take advantage of natural resources where possible.



Locate outdoor dining areas where solar exposure will maximize the opportunity for a comfortable year-round experience.



Site public gathering spaces where they are visible from the public street or other on-site pedestrian areas.



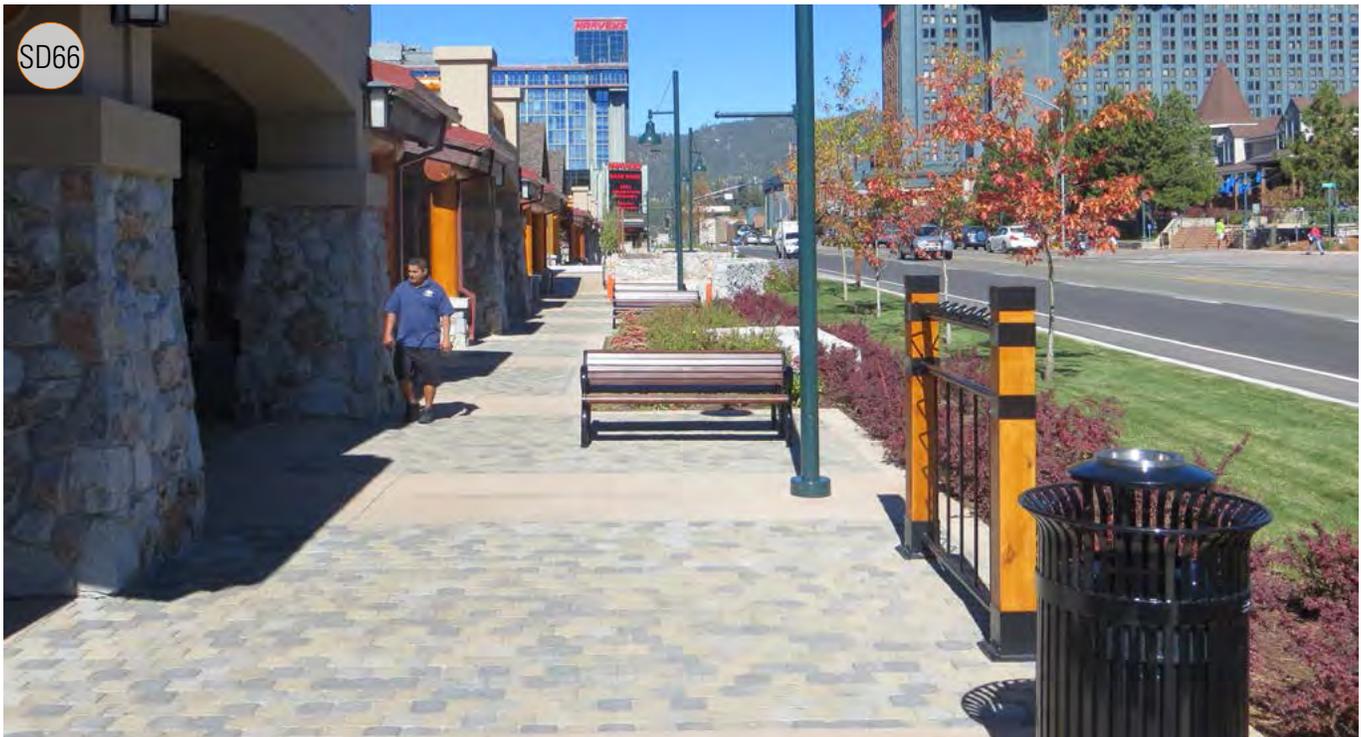
Use high quality plants, hardscape and pedestrian features that create an inviting atmosphere.



SD65

Image courtesy of magazine.inspirato.com/featrueed/family-time-in-vail-beaver-creek

Enhance the site's comfort and aesthetics through the use of seating, public art, shade, information kiosks and other amenities and design elements.



SD66

Provide pedestrian amenities in convenient locations, including benches and trash receptacles. Consider providing ski and snowboard racks in commercial areas near ski resorts, where appropriate.

3

SECTION THREE BUILDING DESIGN

OBJECTIVE

Design buildings and structures that harmonize with the character of the surrounding landscape, avoid a bulky and “box-like” appearance, and contribute to the quality and character of the mountain community.

The building guidelines establish a quality and character for the built environment that reflects the area’s mountain setting and environmental conditions. These guidelines are not intended to restrict imagination, innovation or variety in design, but rather are intended to highlight design principles that can result in creative solutions that establish special characteristics for the built environment. Scenic and visual quality is not a question of style and therefore no specific architectural style or theme is proposed. The intent is to create design solutions that encourage a variety of architectural forms, scales, colors and materials that collectively fit within the natural mountain environment.

BUILDING DESIGN AND ARTICULATION

OBJECTIVE

Building form, articulation, materials and colors should be compatible with the surrounding Tahoe environment.

Building exteriors are typically designed with clear distinction between the three main building components; the base, middle and top. The base grounds the building to the site through the use of materials and forms that convey a sense of weight and stability. The base of a building is also the most visually dynamic zone due to its connection to the street level. The building's middle section should incorporate materials, textures, colors and detailing to provide interest and articulation. The tops of buildings are encouraged to be capped with well-proportioned, pitched roofs that act as the uppermost unifying component.



Image courtesy of BSA Architects

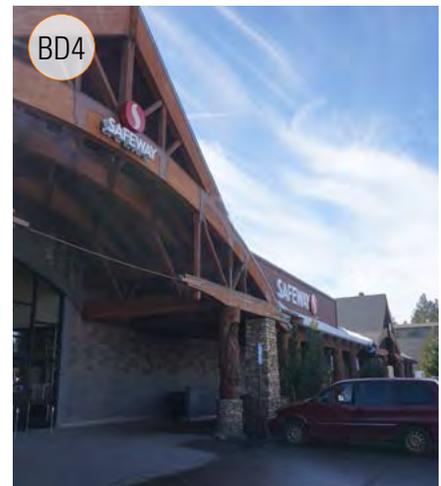
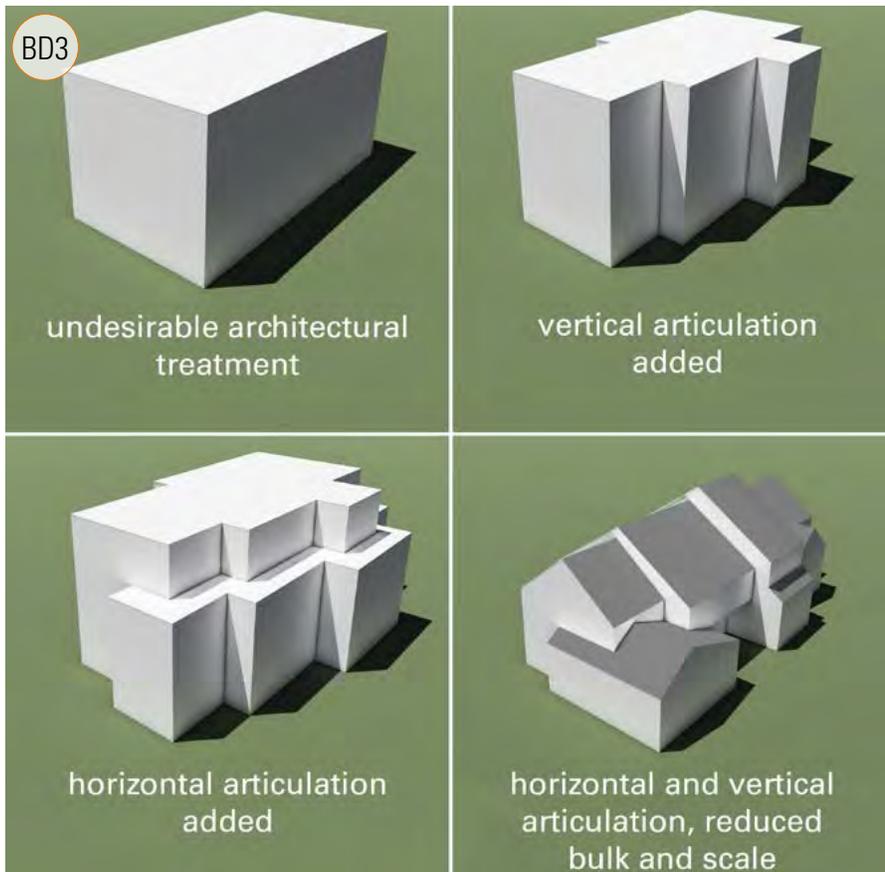
Buildings should have consistent architectural style and related detailing. All elevations visible to the public should have a complementary level of detailing.



Image courtesy of Ben Fish

Use gables, shed roof forms, cornices, balconies, roof terraces and other elements to step and articulate roof lines.

BUILDING FORMS AND ARTICULATION



The visual mass of large buildings should be broken up through the use of elements such as roof forms, gables, projections and arcades.

Use both horizontal and vertical articulation to reduce a building's scale and mass.



Break up building facades with projections, recesses, piers, textured materials, trim and other architectural details to avoid a bulky or "box-like" appearance.

BUILDING FORMS AND ARTICULATION



Screen all mechanical equipment from view.



Differentiated materials is one way to visually separate the base floors from the upper floors.



Protruding overhead canopies create interesting architectural façades and provide protection from falling snow.

BUILDING FORMS AND ARTICULATION



The choice of quality, timeless materials is an investment in a place that will last for generations. Placement, shapes, materials, texture, details and colors should contribute to the overall building articulation. Design complex building forms with setback, overhangs, porches and varied skylines and avoid simple or monolithic forms.



Use brackets and overhangs to intercept sunlight and encourage building shadowing articulation where significant amounts of glazing is used. Windows and doors should relate to the structural expression of the building.



Glazing should avoid large amounts of reflective window planes without suitable overhangs or other mitigation.

PEDESTRIAN LEVEL DESIGN AND DETAILING



Views into a hotel lobby or retail space are visually inviting.



The quality and character of each building should contribute to the overall public space and create pleasing, usable outdoor spaces.

PEDESTRIAN LEVEL DESIGN AND DETAILING



BD14

Store front detailing should be scaled to the pedestrian.



BD15

©VanceFox.com; MWA Architects

Massing of building elements should emphasize pedestrian scale, create intricacy and detail in the built environment and prevent a cold or impersonal aesthetic.

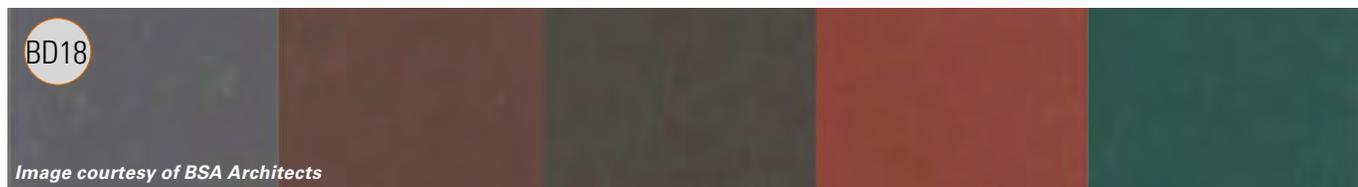
COLOR SUGGESTIONS



Varying the texture and scale of wall materials of appropriate color adds visual interest. Textures shall be incorporated throughout each structure, in both materials and in the form and detailing of the building. Materials should appear closer to their natural state rather than a manufactured state.



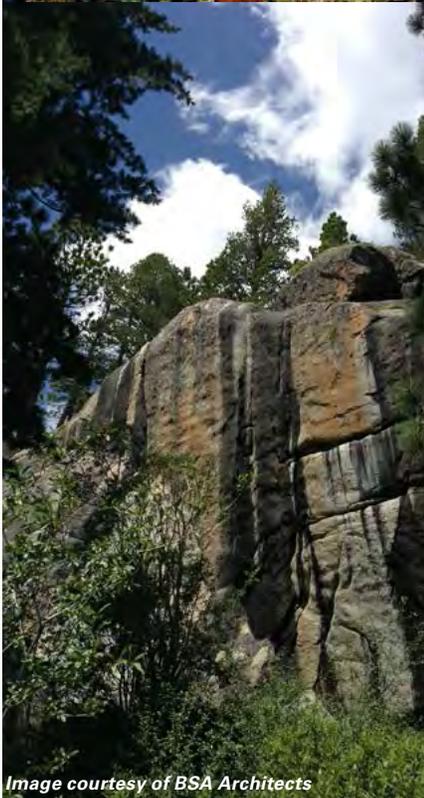
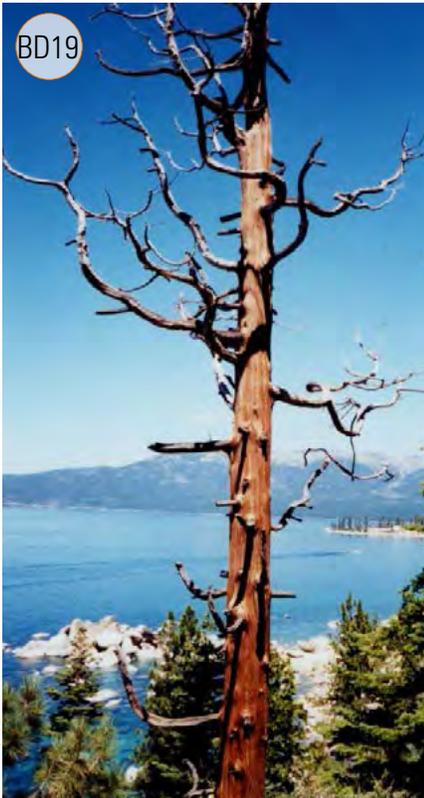
Building Facade Color Suggestions



Doors and Windows Color Suggestions

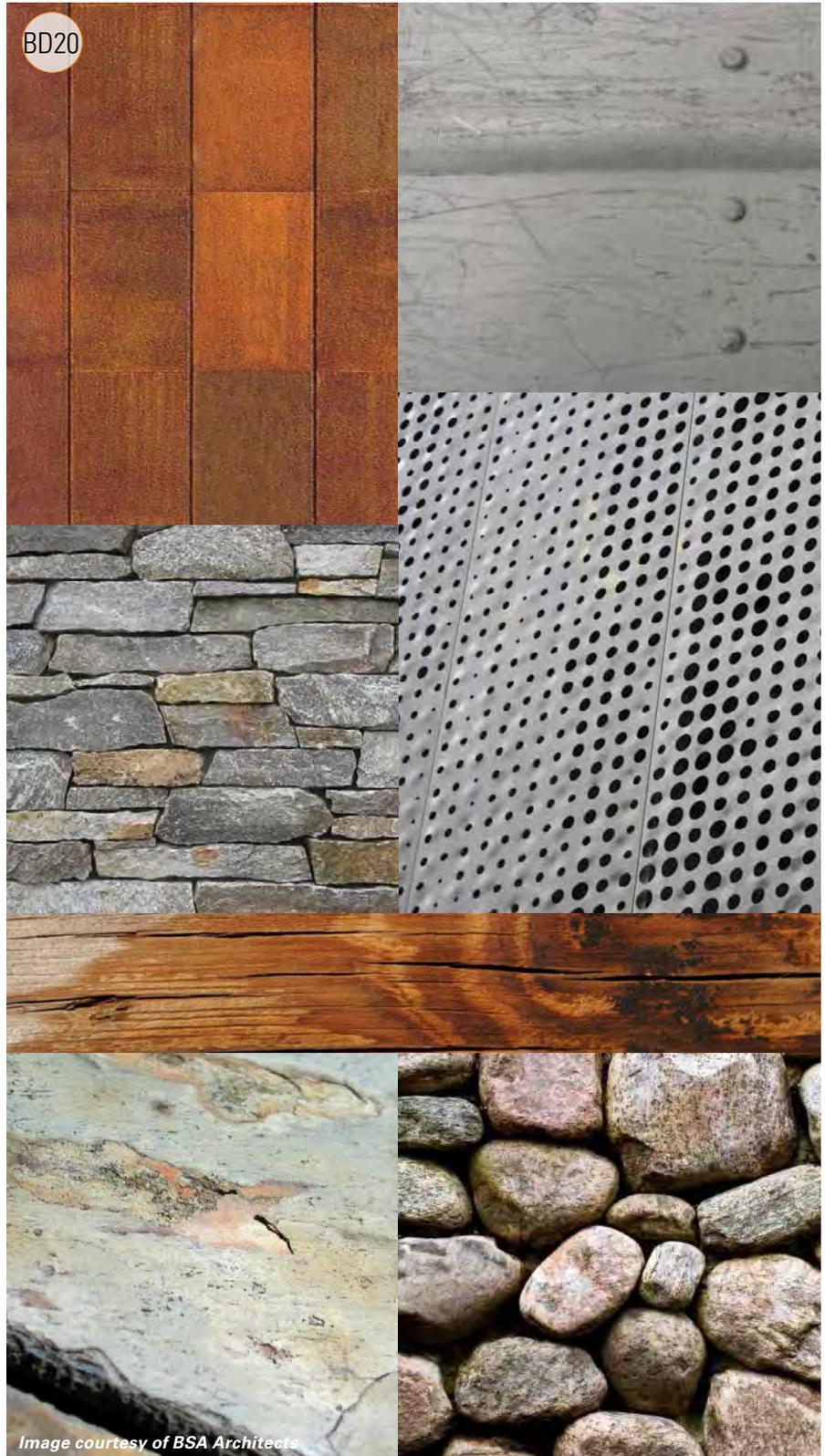
Building colors shall draw from a natural palette in darker shades and minimize reflectivity. Avoid bright colors that compete with the natural surroundings and consider how the color may appear over large surface areas and in juxtaposition to other building materials. Use accent colors (maximum 10% of building face) for doorways, windows, graphics and storefront displays. Accent colors should complement base colors.

USE OF NATURAL MATERIALS



Local Natural Palette

Utilize natural building materials such as wood and stone to articulate design features. Natural stone can link building elements to the surrounding environment. The use of larger stone at the building's base gives it an anchored and structural appearance. Metal elements are typically incorporated as accents.



Textured Materials + Trim

SIMPLICITY IN FORM AND DETAILING



BD21
Image courtesy of BSA Architects
Incorporate metals and other more contemporary materials as accents.



BD22
Remodels can enhance existing buildings by incorporating dormers for building articulation, adding windows and transparency to encourage pedestrian movement, and utilizing a neutral color palette that fits within the mountain landscape.



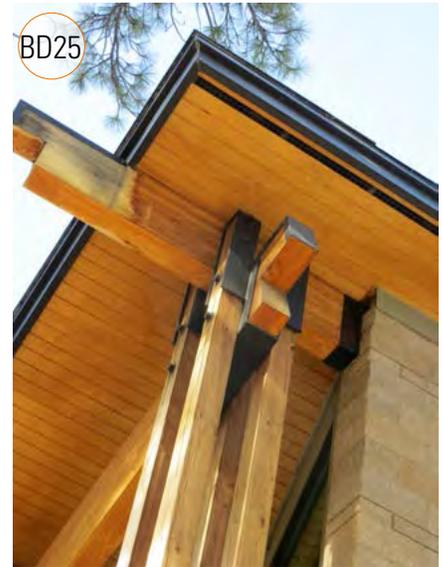
BD23
©Vance Fox.com; Ward Young Architects and Clark and Sullivan Construction

Use metals and other contemporary materials sparingly. Simplicity in overall composition should be the goal. Consider how metals and other contemporary materials relate to primary building materials such as wood and stone.

SIMPLICITY IN FORM AND DETAILING



Use stucco sparingly and in combination with natural materials such as stone and wood.



Simplifying the number and types of materials used allow for greater emphasis to be placed on construction details such as bracket, joints and overhangs.

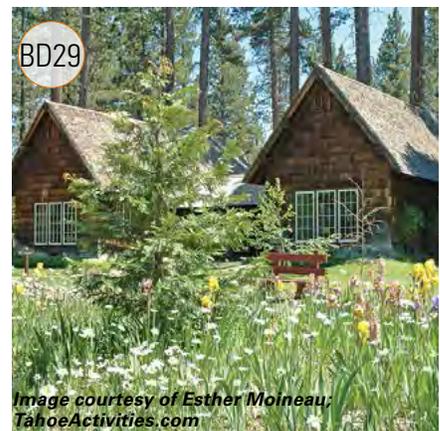


Materials which complement each other and respond to the natural surroundings can create a simple, seamless transition from building to landscape.

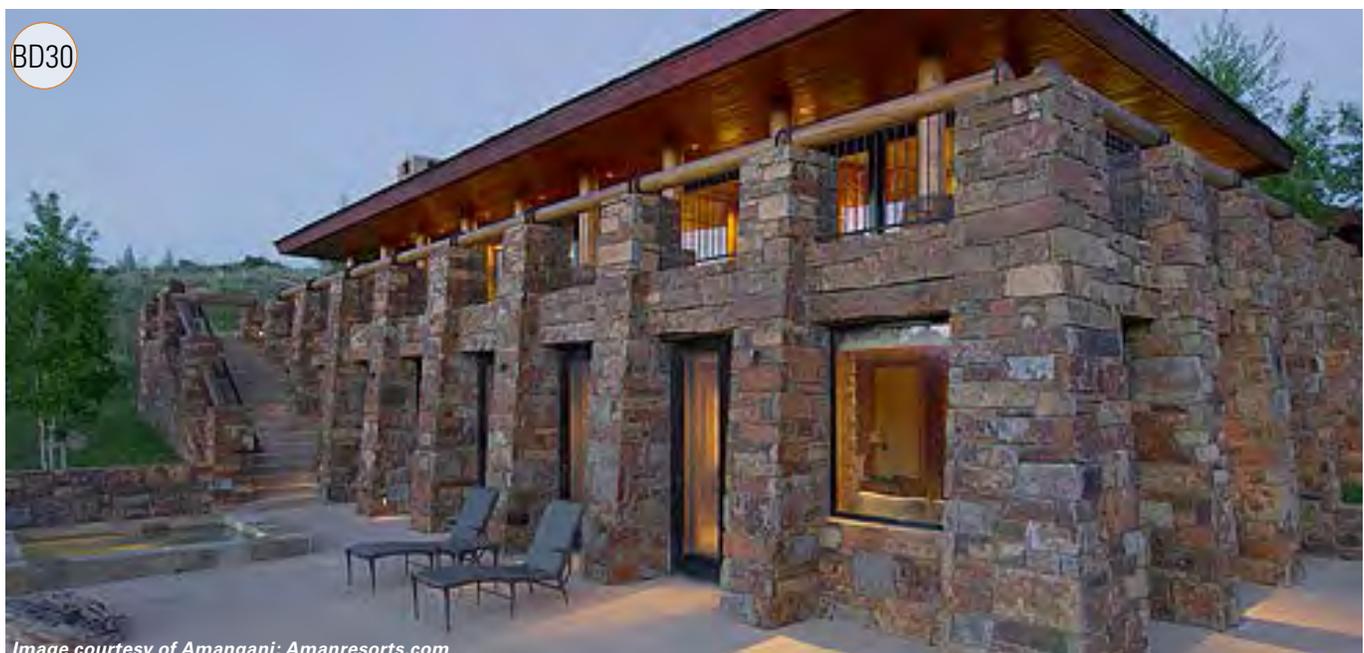
DRAW FROM ELEMENTS OF HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE



Example of historic building from which to draw design elements and materials.



Examples of historic buildings from which to draw design elements.



Consider old Tahoe heritage historical references and incorporate stone and other design elements in a manner which takes into account the building's overall composition, massing and style.

MOUNTAIN ENVIRONMENT DESIGN



Authentic building materials such as stone and timber are consistent with traditional mountain architecture, but they may also be incorporated into more contemporary designs that also fit within the natural mountain environment. Consider the importance of timelessness and do not create overly trendy designs that may quickly become dated.

ROOFS

OBJECTIVE

Create varied, sloping roof-scapes that complement natural forms and Tahoe architectural traditions.

Roof design is important to snow management as well as being a major contributor to building character. Roofscapes should be considered not only for their appearance from the pedestrian level, but also from the view of the overall skyline. South Lake Tahoe's alpine character and mountain backdrop can be reinforced through roof design.

Snow management shall be considered during the design of the architecture and landscape. The effects of snow and ice buildup, if improperly handled, can pose risks to property and pedestrians, and impose high maintenance and snow removal costs.



Image courtesy of BSA Architects

Roof forms should be designed to minimize ice dams and damage due to snow creep (glacial action) and freeze/thaw cycles.



Image courtesy of Brent Bingham Photography; Tom Cole Architect

Roof slopes shallower than 5:12 may be considered where they comply with snow load requirements, other design standards and guidelines, and provide architectural interest.

BD36

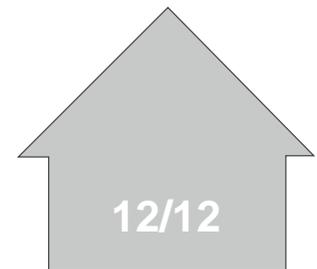


Image courtesy of BSA Architects

Pitch roofs that are no less than 5:12 and no more than 12:12 are preferred. Roof pitches below 5:12 may be considered on an individual basis.

ROOF COLORS AND MATERIALS



Appropriate roof materials, colors and reflectivity should take their cue from the surrounding natural environment.

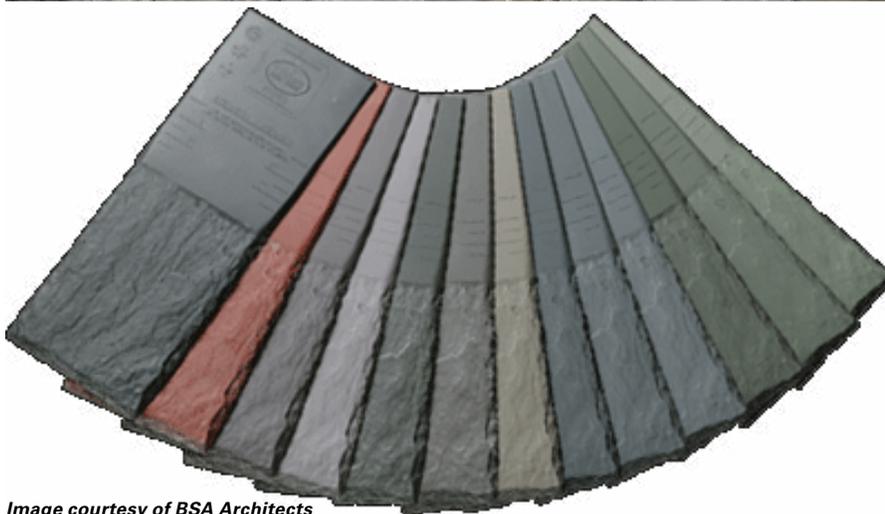


Image courtesy of BSA Architects

Roof material and colors should minimize reflectivity and blend with natural surroundings. Utilize nonglare and earthtone finishes to minimize reflectivity for roofs, mechanical equipment and skylights.



Image courtesy of BSA Architects

Use snow clips and snow fences where necessary. Consider retaining snow on the roof to minimize the impacts and liability of shedding snow and increase building insulation value.

ROOF FORMS



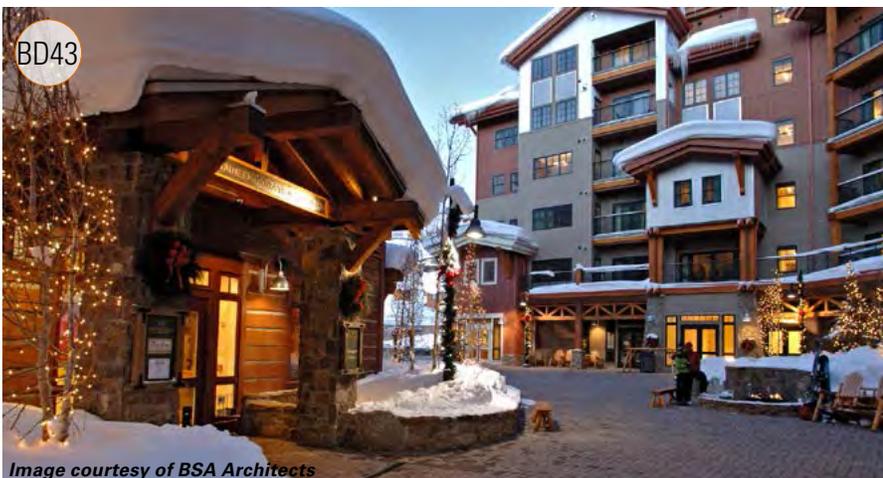
The use of timbers and visible logs should appear consistent with the timbers' structural properties and ability to support roof elements.



Mansard roof forms and flat roofs should not be used.



Different roof shapes, heights and slopes helps to break up the appearance of a large mass of the buildings.



Roof forms should be designed to protect public entry ways and pathways from ice and shedding snow without using energy consuming snow melt systems.



CAUTION: FALLING SNOW + ICE!
Image courtesy of BSA Architects

ROOF ARTICULATION



Roofs offer the opportunity to include distinctive design elements to relate the building to the mountain setting and prevent “block-like” structures by breaking up the rectangular form.



Roof design should have a definitive “top” that steps or breaks the rectangular form. Modulated roof forms that are varied in height or broken with architectural features and roof design elements are encouraged.



Cornices, balconies and other elements should be used, where appropriate, to terminate rooflines and accentuate setbacks between stories.

BUILDING HEIGHT

OBJECTIVE

Create a built environment that preserves views and visually corresponds with the surrounding mountain environment.

The skillful massing of building elements should emphasize pedestrian scale, create intricacy and detail in the built environment, and prevent a cold or impersonal aesthetic. The guidelines for building heights are intended to prevent structures from looming over the highway and overshadowing the naturalistic mountain aesthetic of the community.



Establish a consistent building frontage through the use of a minimum 15' height of the ground floor.



Relate building heights to open spaces to allow maximum sun and ventilation, protect from prevailing winds, enhance public views of surrounding mountains and minimize obstruction of view from adjoining structures.

BD50

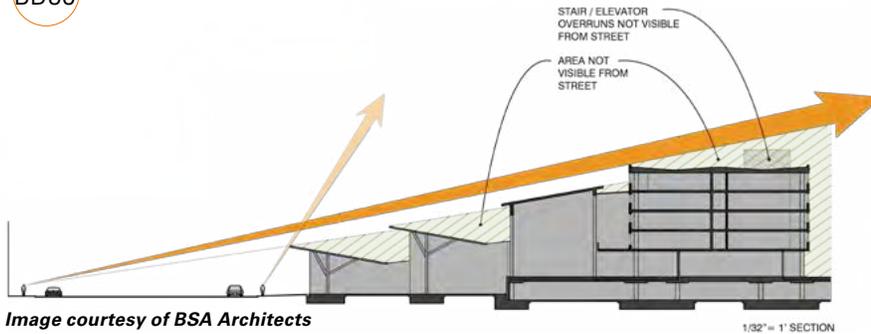


Image courtesy of BSA Architects

Step back building within a daylight plane along street frontages and adjacent residential areas to protect viewsheds, allow light and air, limit winter shading and preserve the pedestrian scale.

BD51



Image courtesy of Scott Kennedy at Sierra Tahoe Realty

Roof overhangs, projections and other architectural features can help visually step a building back from the street.

BD52



Image courtesy of hannastepan.cz; stepan

Ensure compatibility with adjacent uses. Provide additional buffering in addition to required setback for buildings permitted additional height.

BD53



Ensure compatibility with adjacent uses and viewsheds. Do not project building above forest canopy, ridge lines or detract from mountain or lake views.

BD54



Height and scale of buildings should be compatible with that of surrounding development. New development height should “transition” from the height of adjacent development to the maximum height of the proposed building.

GREEN BUILDING

OBJECTIVE

Minimize a building's impact on the environment while reinforcing the natural harmony of the Lake Tahoe landscape.



Incorporate durable buildings materials including the consideration of recycled materials and locally sourced building materials, e.g., stone and timber, when possible.

BD56



Image courtesy of BSA Architects

Reuse previously disturbed sites and incorporate new technologies to reduce the use of resources, including energy and water.

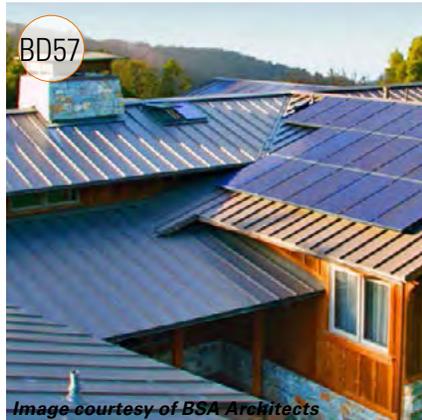


Image courtesy of BSA Architects



Image courtesy of BSA Architects

Exposed solar panels should be screened when possible and/or compatible with roof forms and the building's architectural character. Solar shingles can also be incorporated as part of green building design.

BD59

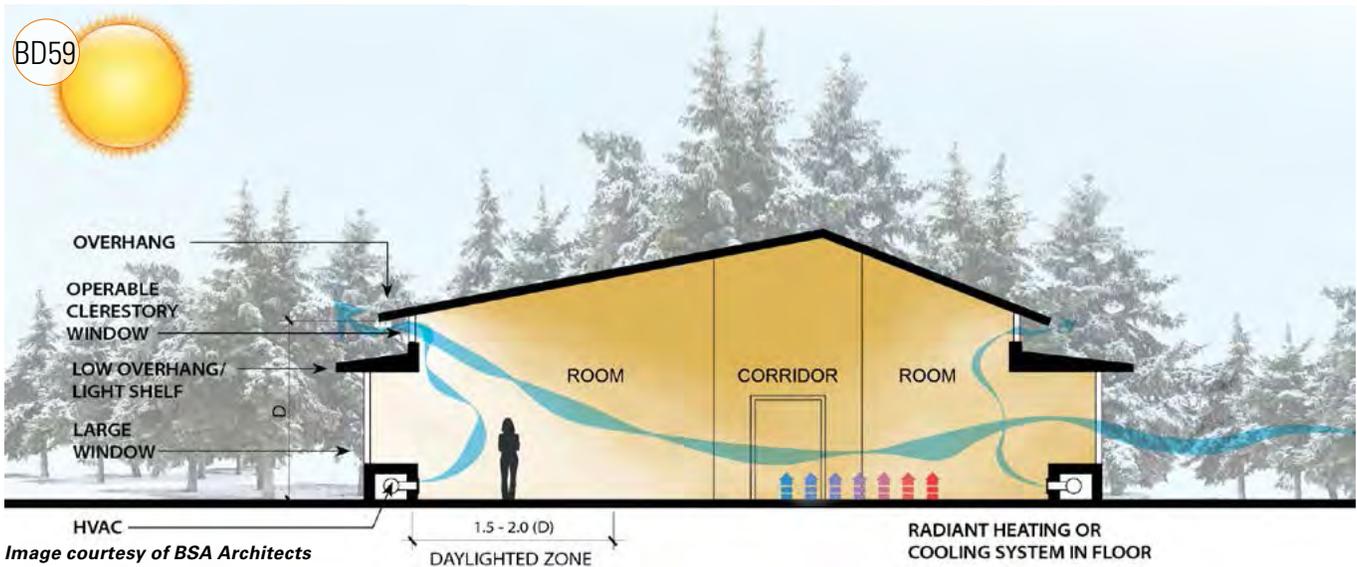


Image courtesy of BSA Architects

Use sustainable building materials that support indoor environmental health, passive environmental systems are encouraged.

4 SECTION FOUR LANDSCAPE

OBJECTIVE

Create an aesthetically pleasing, maintainable landscape environment while continuously reinforcing a connection to the natural environment that defines South Lake Tahoe.

The design of landscapes should respond to the intended site function with consideration of issues such as safety, maintenance and desired aesthetic quality. In areas focused on commercial and tourist activities, the landscape should create an inviting environment for pedestrians. This may be accomplished by establishing a rhythm of elements that unify the streetscape, providing plazas and gathering spaces that respond to a site's environmental factors and by screening undesirable views or framing impressive vistas. In contrast, undeveloped areas and areas abutting natural landscapes should incorporate plant materials spaced in natural-looking groups to seamlessly transition into the natural environment.

USE OF LANDSCAPE TO ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN AREAS, STREETSCAPES AND PUBLIC SPACES



Incorporate combinations of shrubs, groundcovers and boulders to create an attractive edge between the highway frontage and sidewalk while not blocking views of the lake.



Utilize vegetation to create pleasant outdoor spaces, reduce glare and heat, deflect wind, muffle noise, prevent erosion and integrate buildings into the surrounding landscape.



Create a quality built environment with the inclusion of amenities such as street furnishing, plantings and artworks to enhance the places that people will walk, gather or recreate.

USE OF LANDSCAPE TO ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN AREAS, STREETSCAPES AND PUBLIC SPACES



L4 Design landscapes to respond to seasonal environmental conditions to encourage outdoor spaces that are comfortable year-round.



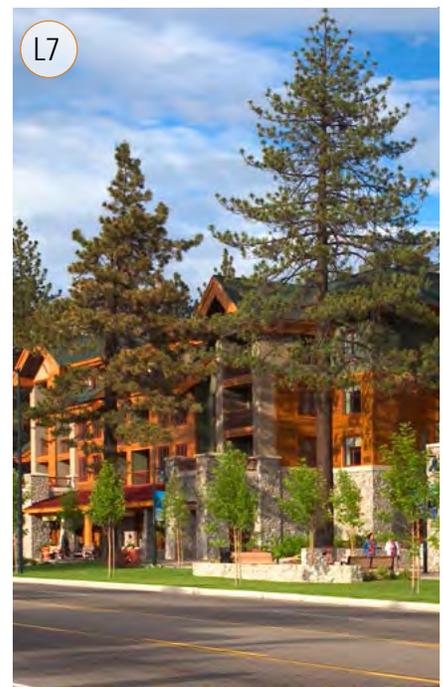
L6 Utilize ornamental and accent plant materials at building entries, exterior dining areas and pedestrian areas.



L8 Consider the use of deciduous trees in street frontages of commercial areas to allow for seasonal solar access and enhance the pedestrian zone.



L5 Landscape materials should enhance the street environment and commercial areas.



L7 Incorporating evergreens as part of the design of front yard setback areas can help restore a natural vertical element to the highway streetscape and integrate buildings into the surrounding landscape.

USE OF LANDSCAPE TO ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN AREAS, STREETSCAPES AND PUBLIC SPACES



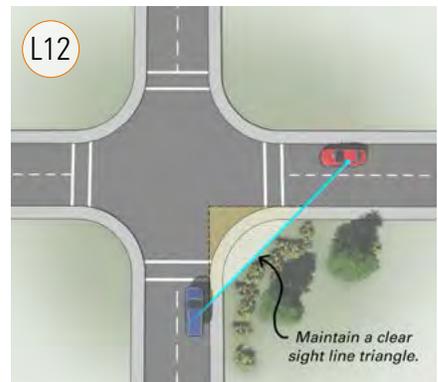
Vegetate setback areas. Consider opportunities to exceed minimum requirements for the appearance of a more established landscape.



Integrate stormwater facilities and bioswales as part of streetscapes, parking areas and other landscape areas. Landscaping should be recessed to receive stormwater runoff whenever feasible. Allowing for stormwater to flow into and infiltrate in landscape areas is preferred.



Maintain lines of site at intersections and driveways for vehicular traffic.



USE OF LANDSCAPE TO ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN AREAS, STREETSCAPES AND PUBLIC SPACES



L13 Utilize opportunities to incorporate natural drainage features as part of the landscape design.

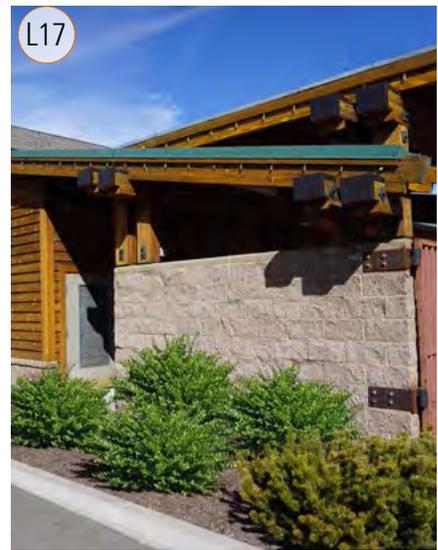


L14 Incorporating groupings of plant materials can add variety while also organizing the landscape to facilitate maintenance.



L15 Consider the opportunity to incorporate pockets of color and seasonal interest as part of the design of public spaces.

VISUAL SCREENING



Plant materials should be used to help block the view of trash enclosures from public areas and roads.



Creating landscape berms with naturalized shapes and contouring should be considered as part of visual screening for parking and service areas.

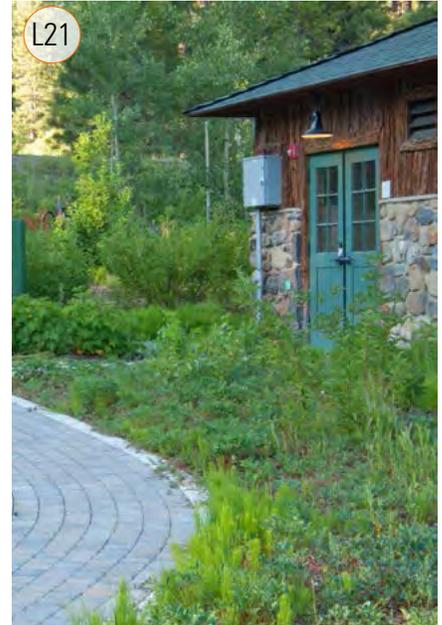


Screen parking and service areas with landscape materials. Incorporate a mix of plant materials to avoid a “wall” affect.

PLANT SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS



Select drought tolerant plant materials that are suited to the microclimatic variations in sunlight, soil and moisture conditions.



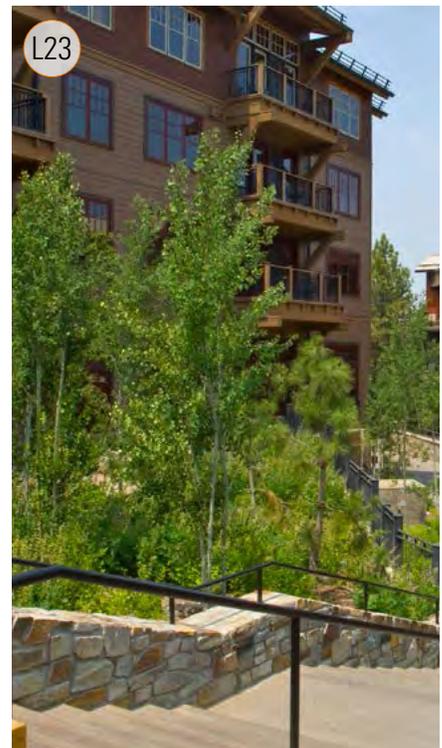
In snow storage areas and roof shed zones, utilize plant materials that are durable enough to handle abuse from snow loading such as herbaceous ground covers, grasses or flexible stemmed shrubs that grow back from their base such as dogwoods.



Utilize vegetation that is native or adapted to the region's climatic conditions while also considering the plant material's water needs. Limit ornamental species to accent plantings.



Preserve groups of existing trees where possible to increase the likelihood of survival.



Consider shade, sun exposure and wind blocking during the selection of trees.

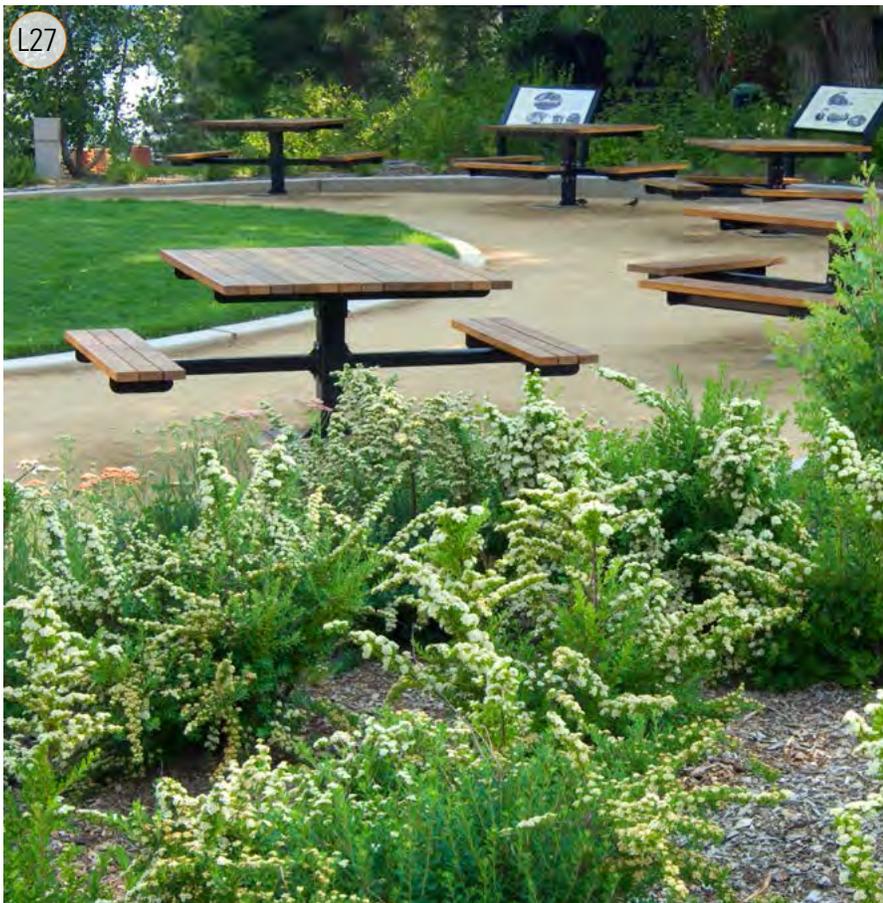
WATER CONSERVATION



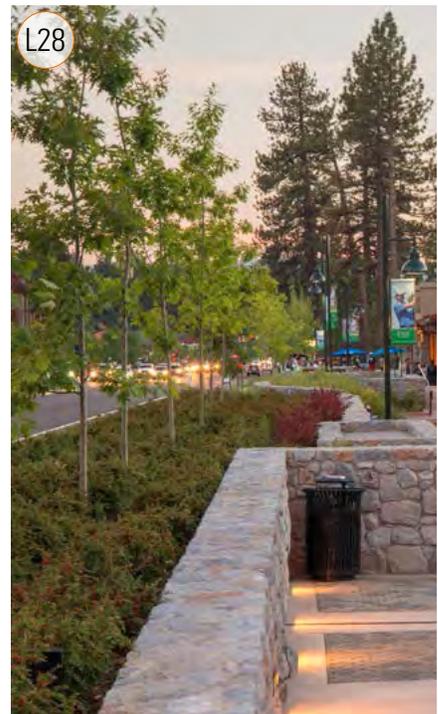
Use efficient water methods, group plantings into similar hydro-zones, use low-water use plant material and use irrigation systems with moisture sensors to control and conserve the use of water.



Consider maintenance and water conservation/irrigation needs during landscape design.



Utilize turf grass only in focused, limited applications.



Irrigate plantings and provide correct water levels to support the long-term growth of landscape. Drip and low-flow systems can minimize irrigation inefficiencies and evapotranspiration in order to maximize the use of every drop of water.

5 SECTION FIVE EXTERIOR LIGHTING

OBJECTIVE

Provide illumination for safety and security as well as enhancing the aesthetic appeal of a site.

Carefully designed lighting can reinforce the ambiance of streetscapes and public gathering areas as well as protect the night sky. These exterior lighting guidelines focus on limiting excess light, while still providing for safety and security and encouraging an enjoyable night time atmosphere for community spaces.

ACCENT LIGHTING TO ENHANCE AESTHETIC APPEAL



Image courtesy of Il Villaggio Osteria

Accent lighting can be used to accentuate building entries and signage.



Illuminate areas necessary for safe and comfortable use and illuminate special features of a building or landscape to add to the aesthetic appeal of a site.

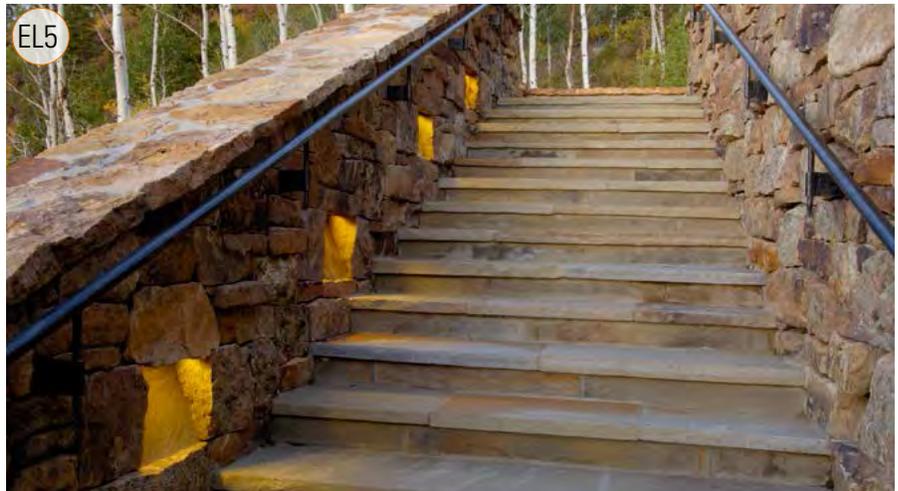


Image courtesy of lampsplus.com

Accent landscape elements with down lighting with concealed fixtures or fixtures with lens hoods.



Use lighting to accent features such as entries, arcades, chimneys, cornices, balconies, exterior trusses, highly textured material, knee braces, enriched architectural facades or landmark features. Do not light blank walls.



Use built in lighting and wall lighting to illuminate stairs and level changes.

ACCENT LIGHTING TO ENHANCE AESTHETIC APPEAL



Use exterior lighting to activate public pedestrian retail space.



Use pedestrian light poles that allow for approved banners to encourage an active pedestrian environment. Banners should be replaced as needed to maintain visual appeal and avoid showing damaged or faded banners. Plan for seasonal lighting. Consider the need for electrical outlets and incorporate as part of site design features such as tree wells, light poles and walls.



Utilize exterior lighting to accent architectural and landscape features and illuminate parking lots, streets and walkways. Seasonal lighting should only be used between November 1 and March 1 or as by approved permit.



Use lighting to enhance the pedestrian zone, public gathering spaces and private outdoor gathering areas.



ACCENT LIGHTING TO ENHANCE AESTHETIC APPEAL



Wall lights may be incorporated as part of the design to both provide accent lighting and illuminate the walking surface.



Direct accent lighting downward to illuminate landscape elements.



The combination of pedestrian lights, architectural lighting and interior lighting can create a more inviting pedestrian environment. Avoid the tendency to over-light which can create bright spots that tend to make adjacent unlit areas seem even darker. Carefully design lighting to consider both architectural/accent and functional lighting in order to provide reasonable levels for safety and security.

LIGHTING TYPES: CONSISTENT COLOR WITH TRUE COLOR RENDERING



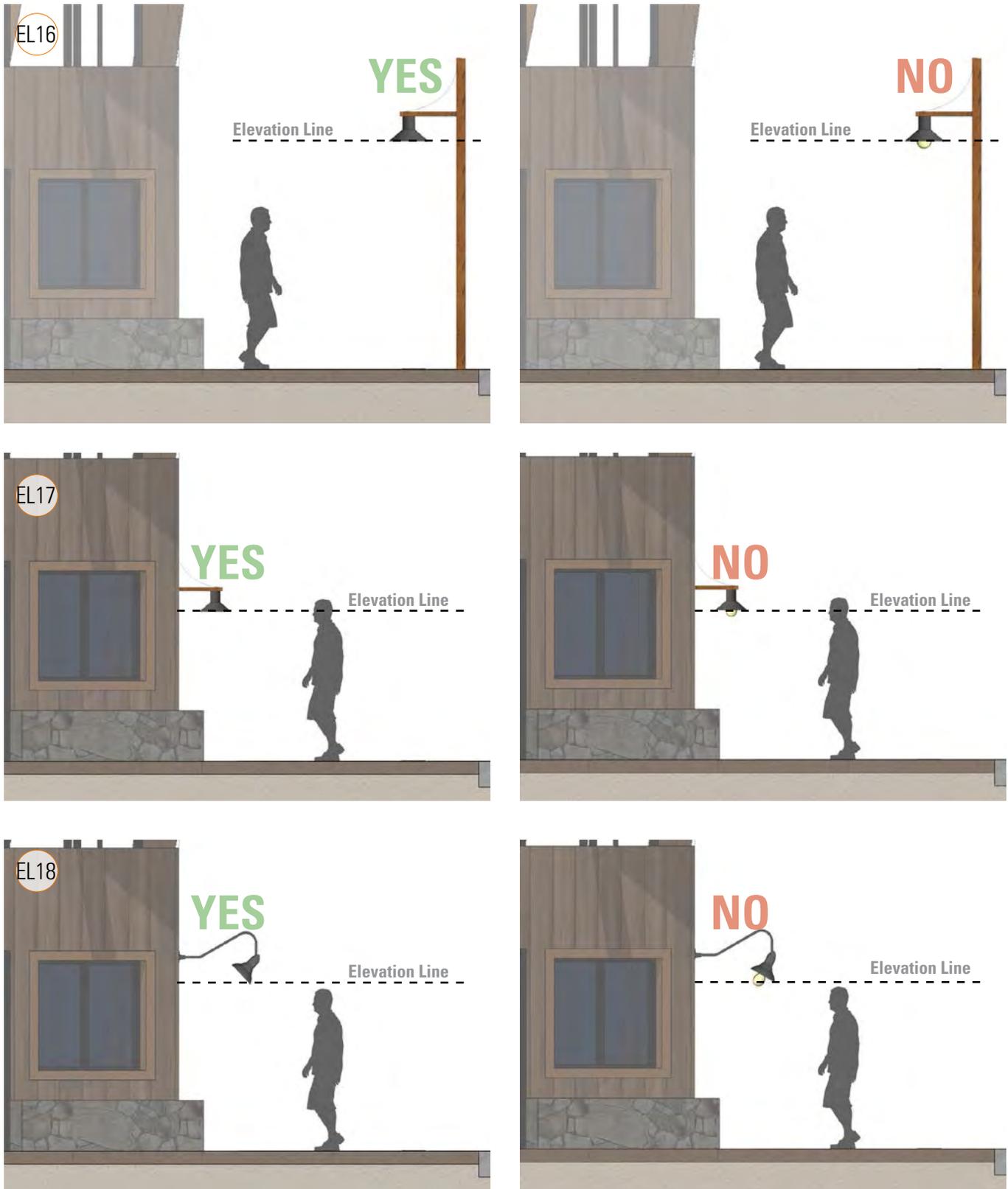
A consistent light color should be provided throughout a project and lighting that appears in the warm color range is preferred over a bluish/white light color. Energy efficient lighting types, including LED lighting, are recommended.

NIGHT SKY PROTECTION: DIRECTING LIGHT



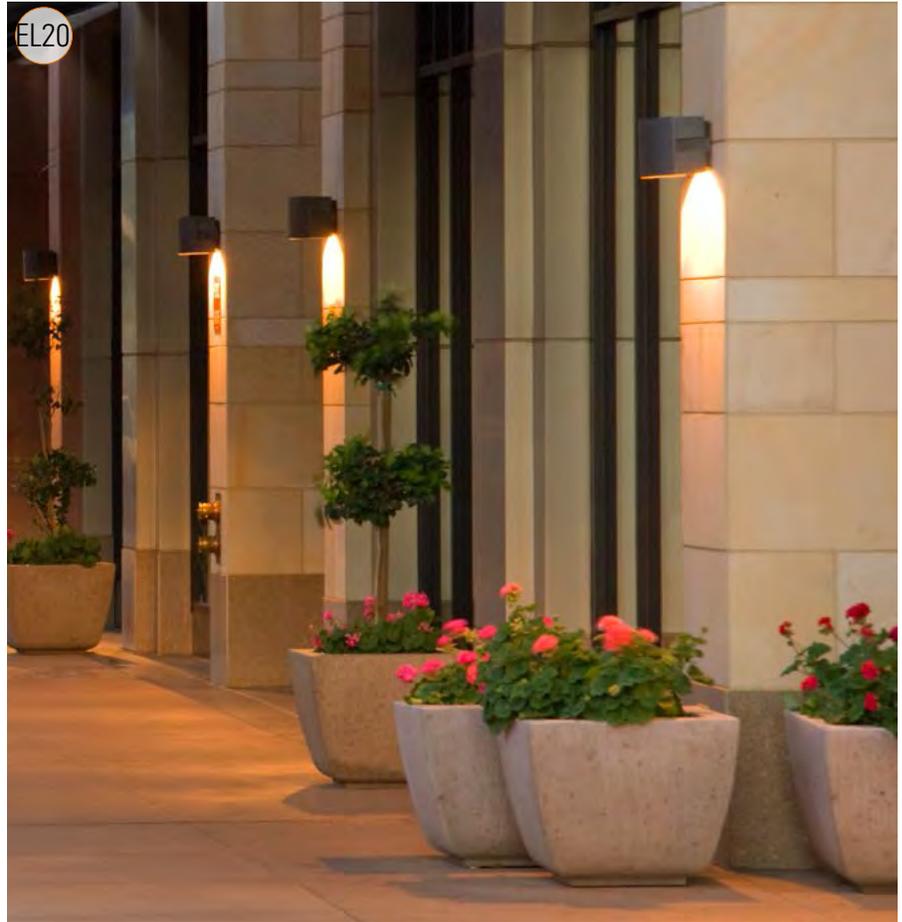
Face or direct light fixtures so light does not spill over to adjacent properties or up into the sky.

NIGHT SKY PROTECTION: SHIELDED LIGHT SOURCES



Direct light downward and utilize luminaries that shield light sources from view so the light is not visible as seen in elevation in order to preserve night sky views and reduce glare.

NIGHT SKY PROTECTION: SHIELDED LIGHT SOURCES



Luminaires that shield light sources and direct light downward should also complement the character of the public space and the building materials of adjacent architecture.

6 SECTION SIX SIGNAGE

OBJECTIVE

Enhance the city's visual environment by complementing the building's architecture and enlivening the streetscape while clearly and succinctly communicating business information.

The sign guidelines recognize commercial communication requirements of all sectors of the business community as well as the need to enhance the area's visual quality. Well-designed signs can contribute to a district's overall identity and help pedestrians and drivers locate businesses and services.

South Lake Tahoe includes a range of pedestrian and automobile oriented environments which require different signage considerations. The Guidelines focus on design criteria that can enhance the ability for signage to communicate effectively while positively contributing to South Lake Tahoe's visual environment through proper placement, use of materials and being appropriate to its setting.

Signage

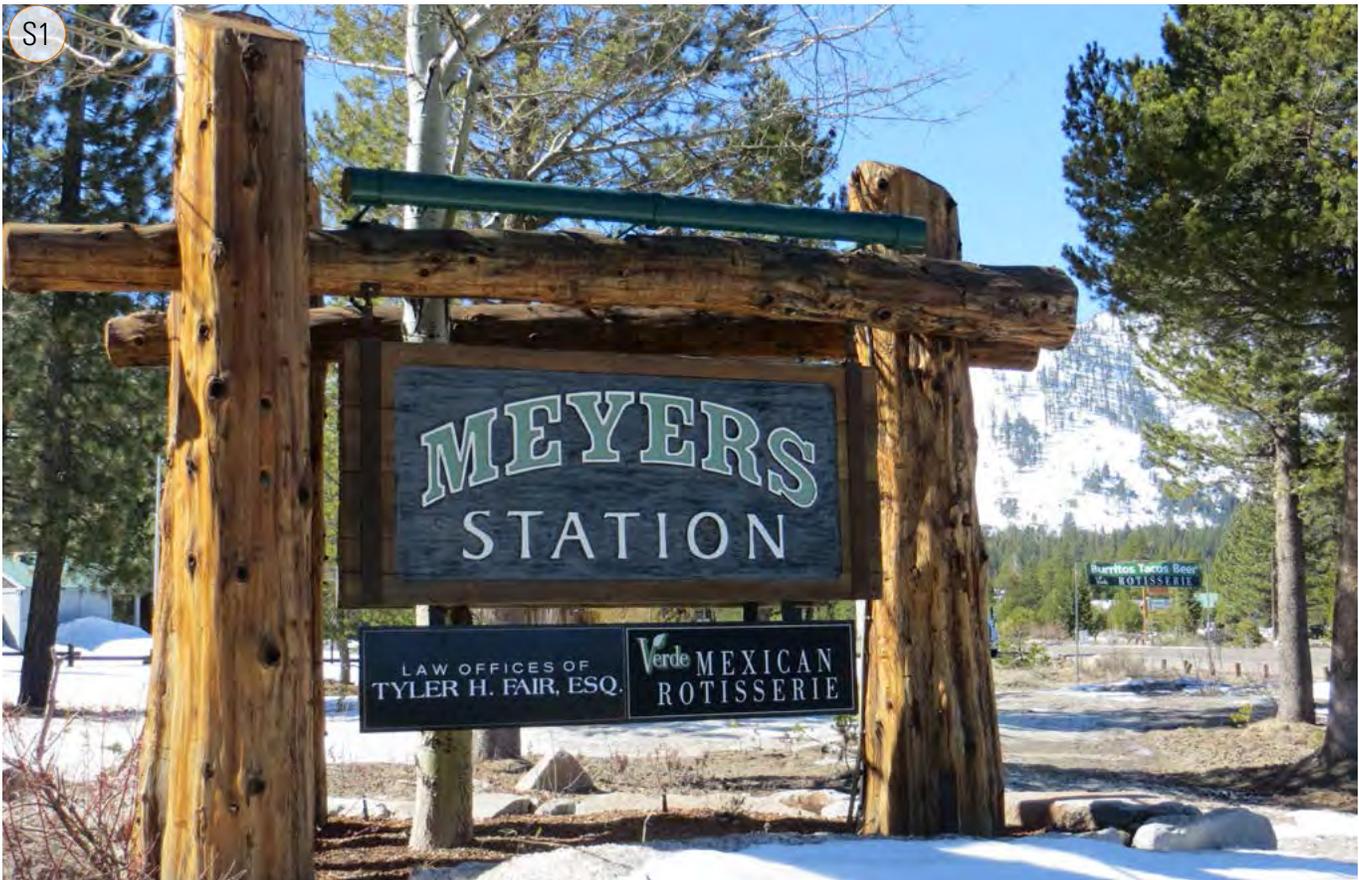
Along with architecture and landscape, signage is one of the most noticeable visual elements along South Lake Tahoe's roadways. Signs are an important part of the built environment in order to communicate information about area businesses and encourage economic vitality. Well-designed signs can contribute to a district's overall identity and help pedestrians and drivers locate businesses and services. However, poorly designed signs and the overabundance of signage can severely detract from the surrounding mountain and lake environment.

The following design principles are illustrated in this section and should be considered during the design and development of projects:

LESS IS MORE

The purpose and message of a sign should be immediately apparent. Signage that merely attracts attention without communicating the message is not effective. Too much information can be visually distracting to viewers, especially motorists. Limiting the amount of information included on a sign intended to be viewed from a motorist's vantage point can enhance overall legibility and wayfinding.

- **Keep the message brief and simple:** A succinct message that is simple and easy to read looks cleaner and is more visually appealing.
- **Consider every word:** Every word should directly contribute to the sign's overall message. Remove any unnecessary words to create a clear message.
- **Convey primary information:** Words and graphics should convey a business's identity or the services offered. Where possible, multi-tenant areas should consider branding the project area to reduce the information on the primary roadway sign and incorporate secondary level signage within the commercial center.
- **Use easy to read typefaces:** Typefaces should be easy to read. Overly intricate and mixed fonts can take more time for a viewer to decipher. Faddish typefaces may also become dated.



Keeping the message simple and branding the commercial centers can help effectively direct people to community destinations while reducing the amount of signage seen from the roadways.

PROPORTION AND BALANCE

The aesthetic quality of a sign arises from the relationships between sign design elements such as proportion and balance. Proportion is the relationship of one element to another. It is most often thought of in terms of the relative size and shape of elements. Proportion can help define the relationship among the sign elements and implies the order of significance.

Well-designed signs will have appropriate proportion between the various parts of the structure as well as between the various components of the graphic content. Sign proportions should be considered between the structure's height, width and depth, between elements of the graphic content, and between the graphic content to the overall sign.

Carefully consider the proportion of the copy to the overall sign background. If the letters take up too much of a sign, they may be harder to read. A general rule is that letters should not appear to occupy more than 75% of the sign panel area.

Physical balance is best described by two objects that are of equal weight, although they may not be of equal size. Visual balance is the perceived equilibrium of design elements. Balance on a horizontal axis can be achieved by having signs that do not appear "top-heavy". Monument bases that are proportional with the sign's height and other sign components can help achieve balance on the horizontal axis.

Balance on a vertical axis can be either symmetrical or asymmetrical. Symmetrical balance can be achieved when each half of the sign is a mirror image of the other half. In asymmetrical balance, each half is not identical, but the elements are arranged in a way that they feel balanced. This can be achieved by considering some of the following principles:

Visually,

- A large form is heavier than a smaller form
- Dark values are heavier than light values
- A textured form is heavier than a smooth form
- A complex form is heavier than a simple form
- Two or more smaller forms balance one large form

COLORS AND MATERIALS

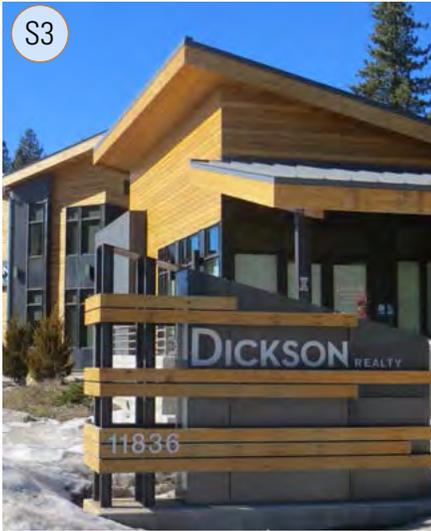
Similar to building design, sign colors and materials should draw from the area's natural palette, including darker backgrounds and the use of stone and wood. Bright colors should be limited and reflective, fluorescent and primary colors should not be used. Additionally, consideration should be given to the following:

- Colors and materials should contribute to overall legibility and design.
- Significant contrast should be provided between the sign background and the letters. Dark materials are recommended for sign backgrounds and light materials/colors are recommended for the sign letters.
- Too many colors can compete with content for the viewer's attention. Avoid too many different colors and limit the use of accent colors to increase visibility.



A sign's graphic content should relate to the overall proportions of the sign's structure. Aesthetic quality is enhanced when the relationships between sign design elements are balanced and in proportion with each other.

MATERIALS AND CONTRIBUTION TO ARCHITECTURE



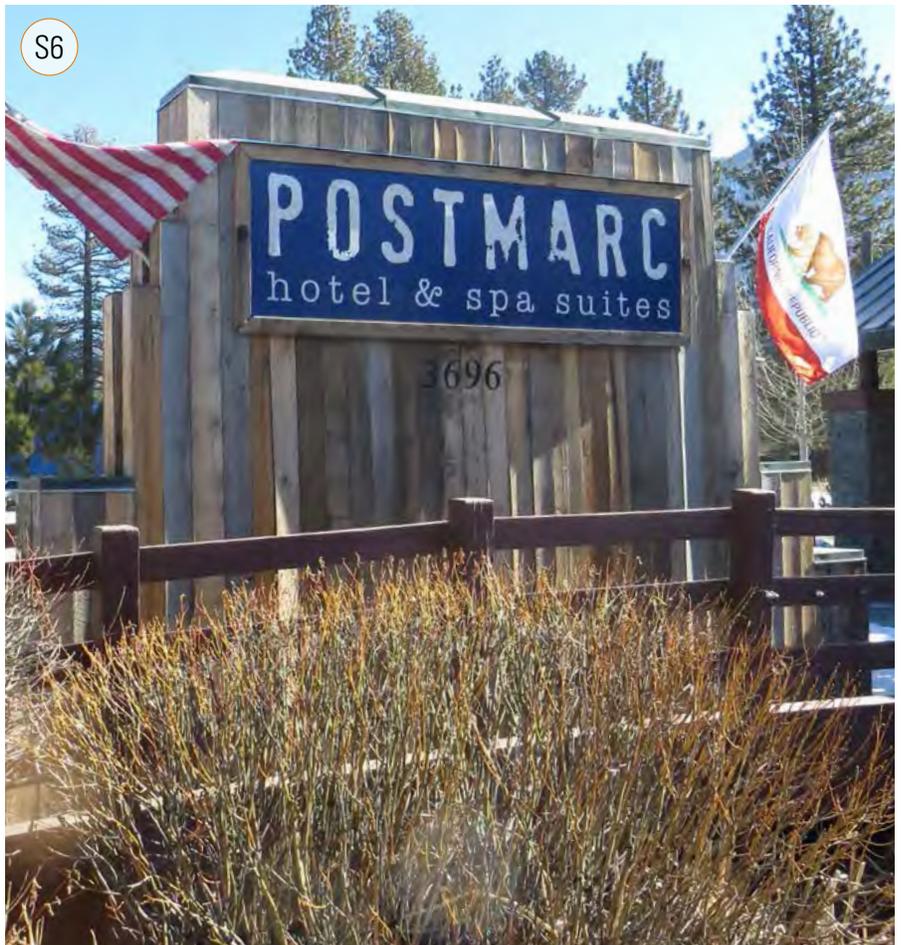
Signage that coordinates with the building architecture can add another opportunity for architectural expression.



Complement a project's architectural style and exterior lighting with signage. Select materials and supporting devices that positively contribute to the overall character of the area.



Use natural building materials such as wood and stone that is coordinated with site architecture.

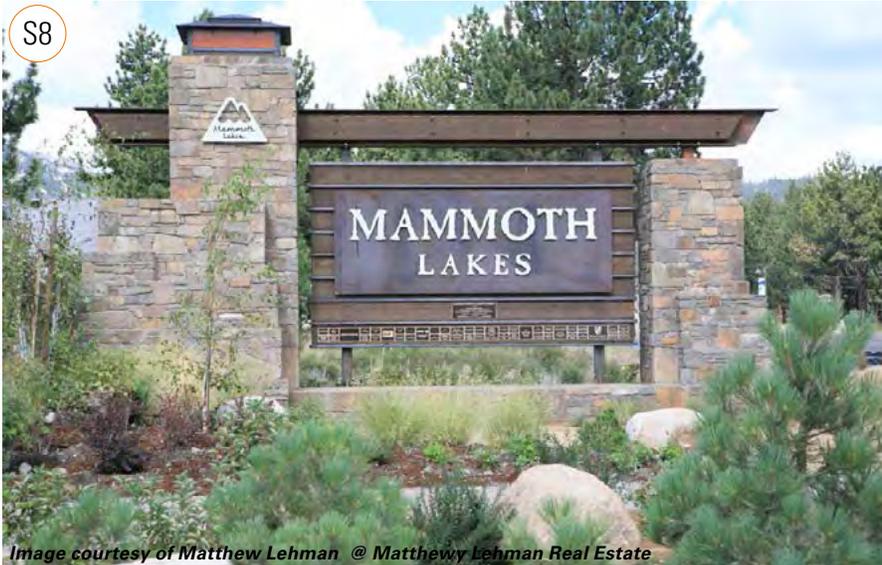


Colors should draw from a natural palette and dark, muted background colors are preferred. Limit the use of bright colors to accents and avoid reflective, fluorescent colors.



Materials and font types should contribute to a sign's overall legibility and positively contribute to the area's overall visual character.

SIGN PLACEMENT



Integrate freestanding signs into the landscape through the use of plants and sign bases that visually anchor the sign to the site.



Provide pedestrian level identification of major buildings through flush building signage.



Utilize elevation signs hung from the soffit board of fascia for businesses that can be viewed from the street and sidewalk.



Pedestrian level signage can be smaller and attached under arcades to reduce the number of signs along a street.



Incorporate building signage with internally illuminated channel letters between appropriately spaced architectural features such as columns or dormers.



Signage placed in dormers can be incorporated as an architectural element.

SIGN CONSTRUCTION ELEMENTS AND COPY



Sign construction elements that are well proportioned and balanced with the sign face area may be considered if they meet other design standards.



Support freestanding signs with two or more poles or a monument base. Supporting devices should provide aesthetic contributions to the sign structure.



Use trademarks on natural backgrounds to quickly convey messaging.



Keep copy simple and easy to read by keeping the amount of text to a minimum. Too many messages can be visually distracting. A sign with a brief, succinct message is more attractive and is typically more effective as it is easier to read quickly.



The visual quality of motor fuel price signs are enhanced by incorporating them within a thoughtfully designed stone monument base.

ILLUMINATION



Lighting should comply with night sky standards, including being directed downward and being fully shielded in order to illuminate the sign face and avoid light spill into adjacent areas.



Use dark colors or opaque material as the background of interior illuminated signs to limit the amount of light transmitted.



Indirect backlighting of individual letters can create a soft glow while providing adequate illumination.



Use indirect and/or diffused lighting to prevent light sources from being visible from public rights of way or adjacent properties and to soften the light's appearance.

MULTI-TENANT SIGNAGE



Consolidating signage into a unified system with consistent font types and colors can reduce sign clutter and helps to avoid overwhelming motorists with too many signs. Consider flexibility in design so tenants can be added or changed over time.



Develop signs with a high aesthetic quality and professional construction standards.



Branding multi-tenant commercial areas can help reduce the number of individual businesses listed on each street sign. Simplify tenant names and use logos where possible to reduce the amount of copy on each sign.



Signage carved into natural wood or high density foam core can help unify tenant signage.



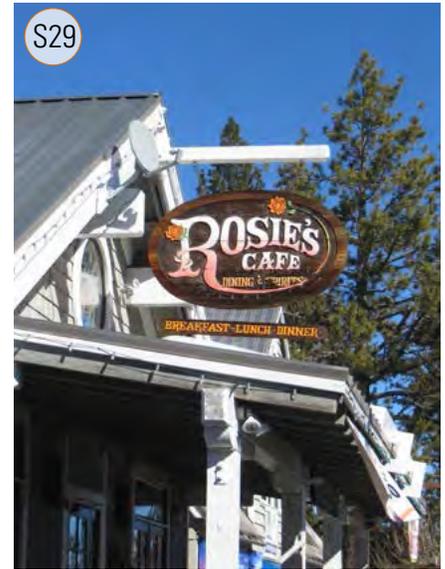
Design and locate signs to be compatible with their surroundings in terms of size, shape, color, texture and lighting. Do not visually compete with other signs.

INTEGRATING SIGNAGE AS PART OF BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS



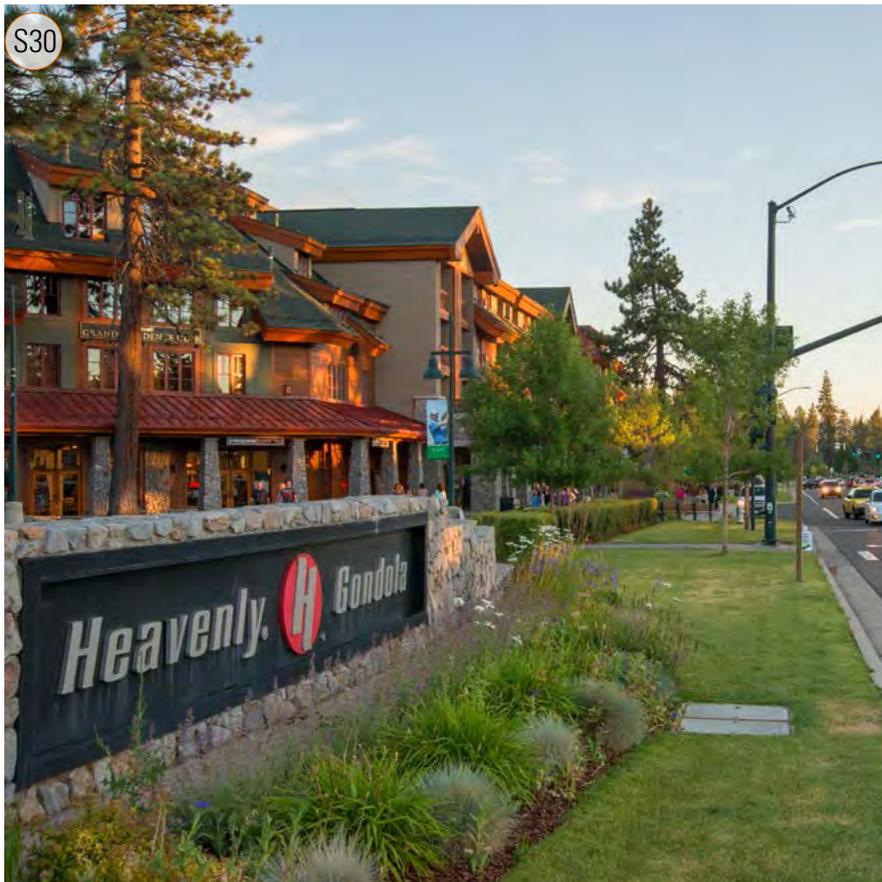
S28

Signage presents an opportunity to convey unique and interesting aspects of a business through artful designs.



S29

Incorporating signage as part of the building design can eliminate barriers for pedestrian movement and allow more space for other outdoor public spaces.



S30

Integrating signs as part of the landscape feature can help reduce sign proliferation along the roadway. Incorporating plantings can soften the view of a sign from all sides.



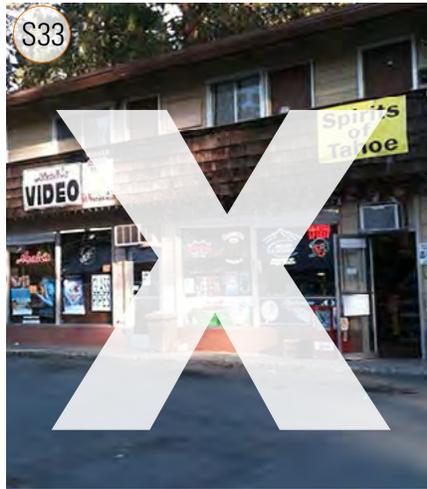
S31

Window signage that does not exceed 25 percent of the window area can be an elegant way to communicate business information to pedestrians and create interest at the street level.

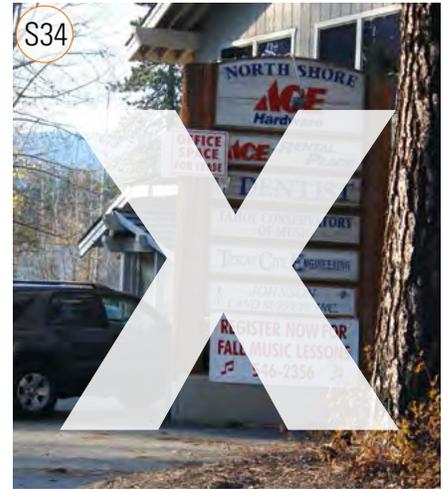
GENERALLY INAPPROPRIATE SIGNS



Pole signage



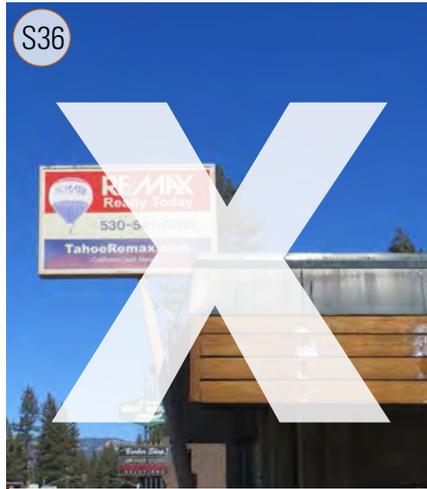
Banner signage and signage attached to mansard roof



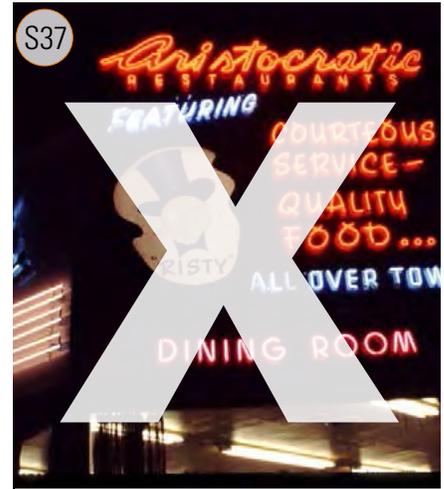
Amount of sign copy and structural elements are not proportional



Signage attached to roof



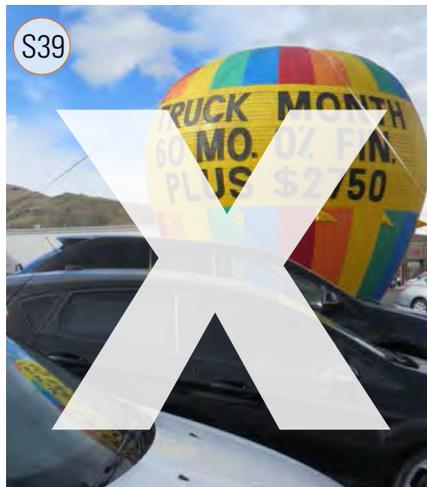
Construction elements don't add to the overall aesthetics



Bright, neon signage



Signage that is dark, dated and has trendy typefaces



Inflatable sign displays



Flags and banner signs