

DESIGN ELEMENT

Preface

The Design and Historic Preservation Design Elements are not mandated under the state planning law. They are included in the Arcata General Plan because the issue of community appearance and livability is important to Arcata. In addition to addressing community-wide design features and criteria, the Design Element also is important for protection of scenic and visual qualities of the City and the coastal zone as required by the California Coastal Act of 1976.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Overview of Arcata's Design Character. The city of Arcata is located in a setting of great natural beauty. A sense of physical and visual separation from other communities is provided by extensive open space lands which surround the city. These include Arcata Bay, marsh lands, and agricultural lands to the south; the agricultural lands of the Arcata Bottoms to the west; the Mad River and its agricultural floodplain to the north; and forested hills to the east. For residents and visitors alike, the aesthetic encounter with the landscape of the North Coast is presented along the State Route 101 corridor and several other principal roadways. From the south, the State Route 101 parallels and provides scenic views to the marshes and open waters of Arcata Bay to the west and agricultural land with a forested coastal foothill backdrop to the east. The sense of scale and "fit" of the Arcata townscape complements this scenic rural coastal environment.



The overall urban form of the city consists of a dense and compact urban core centered around the Plaza and downtown, with a series of varied and dispersed residential neighborhoods extending into the hills and bordering agricultural areas. These provide residents with a range of housing environments and an immediate relationship to natural areas. Several interspersed agricultural areas

accentuate the juxtaposition of town and country. Much of the character of Arcata is derived from the architectural styles of its buildings, particularly of older historical residences and commercial buildings near the City's center. For the most part, buildings are small in scale and only a few buildings are three stories or more in height.

Guiding Principles and Goals.

- A. Promote orderly and harmonious development of the City.
- B. Assure that new development is designed to preserve important natural features and scenic resources.
- C. Promote building designs that are well suited to their functions and sites.
- D. Prevent excessive and unsightly grading of hillsides associated with development.
- E. Create visual environments which are of high aesthetic quality and variety.
- F. Achieve maximum benefit from natural environmental settings.
- G. Assure that new buildings are designed to fit appropriately with the existing neighborhood context.
- H. Promote stability of land values and desirability of investment in the City.
- I. Incorporate "green building" concepts and features into new and renovated structures.

5.2 POLICIES

The Design Element contains the following policies:

- D-1 Overall Community Character
- D-2 Downtown Arcata Design
- D-3 Scenic Routes, Resources, and Landscape Features
- D-4 Subdivision Design
- D-5 Residential Design
- D-6 Design of Commercial and Industrial Development
- D-7 Landscape Design

POLICY D-1 OVERALL COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARACTER

Objective. Maintain a community with diversity and quality in the built environment; with small-scale structures that are harmonious with their neighborhood context; and with a sharp physical and visual distinction between the urban area and the surrounding open space lands.

D-1a **Maintain small scale of building.** Buildings shall be designed to maintain the small-scale character of the community.

- 1. This may be accomplished by breaking larger developments into several smaller buildings rather than constructing a single large, monolithic building.
- 2. This shall be accomplished by avoiding large, unbroken expanses of wall and roof planes.
- 3. This shall be accomplished by providing articulation in building mass, surfaces, rooflines, wall planes, and facades, and including architectural ornamentation.

D-1b Emphasize Arcata Plaza area as the main community focal point. Buildings fronting on streets around the Arcata Plaza shall be multi-story. Architectural and other design elements shall emphasize the importance of the Arcata Plaza as the community's main focal point for commerce, entertainment, and special events. Designs shall promote pedestrian access and continuity of retail space at the street level. Parking should be accommodated off-site to the extent practicable.



D-1c Promote quality and diversity of design compatible with neighborhood context. Site and building design shall be harmonious with the neighborhood context, including existing structures. Within new subdivisions, diversity in building appearance rather than repetitive designs is encouraged.

D-1d Preserve natural landforms and landscape features. Site designs shall have the minimum disturbance necessary to natural conditions such as existing contours and vegetation, and shall preserve, to the maximum extent practicable, any unusual natural features.

D-1e Promote energy efficiency and solar access. Site and building design shall emphasize energy efficiency and solar orientation.

D-1f Create buffers between incompatible land uses. At boundaries between different land-use designations, and where different and incompatible land-uses are adjacent, buffer areas shall be incorporated into site design for new development. Buffers may consist of additional setbacks, landscaping, and visual and noise barriers such as fences or walls.

D-1g Provide for bicycles, pedestrians, and transit in design. Design of commercial, industrial, and multi-family housing shall incorporate provisions for bicycle and pedestrian circulation, and bus transit. Facilities should be located and designed so that these alternative travel modes are fully interconnected.

D-1h City edges. The development pattern shall be managed to retain the sharply demarcated physical and visual separation of Arcata from the urbanized areas of Eureka and McKinleyville. This shall be accomplished by:

1. Restricting development in surrounding open space lands to very low density (minimum parcel size from twenty to sixty acres).
2. Requiring that construction in hillside areas shall be sited so that it does not intrude above the ridgeline.
3. Retaining existing vegetation, providing landscape screening, and shielding exterior lighting to minimize visible impacts of any development on prominent sites or in open space areas, especially hillside sites visible from State Route 101.

D-1i **Renewable green building.** Site and building design shall incorporate green building concepts including maximizing use of recycled materials and recycling, energy efficiency, solar access, insulation, energy efficiency, use of toxic-free materials, natural lighting, native landscaping, permeable surfaces around structures, and minimizing construction waste generation.

POLICY D-2 DOWNTOWN (CENTRAL – COMMERCIAL) DESIGN

Objective. Maintain and continue to develop a built environment which accentuates the Plaza and surrounding downtown lands designated in the Commercial-Central use category as the commercial and cultural hub of the city, maintains the historical flavor of building and site design, integrates bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and which incorporates appropriate trees and other "softscape" elements.

D-2a **Design of Arcata Plaza.** The basic historical pattern or design of the Plaza shall be retained, including the symmetrical arrangement of pathways, the open expanse of lawn, and the central focal point of the McKinley statue.

D-2b **Streetscape design.** Future changes to public street rights-of-way in the downtown shall focus on improving amenities and safety for pedestrians, bicycles, and reasonable and safe vehicle access. The following design features should be considered in future improvement projects:



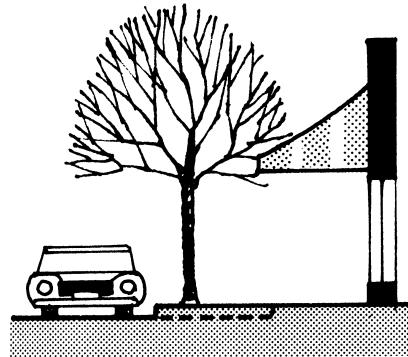
1. Increase the width of sidewalks.
2. Demarcate pedestrian crosswalks with pavement marking or special paving materials or colors.
3. Provide or improve bike lanes, where appropriate.
4. Incorporate street trees in appropriate locations.
5. Use special paving materials or patterns for sidewalks at key locations or intersections.
6. Provide landscape screening between parking lots and the street.

7. Provide street and parking lot lighting that is adequate for safety but that is not overly bright.
8. Establish a uniform lighting fixture and post (or pole) design for streetlights;
9. Establish a uniform design for various items of "street furniture," such as benches, trash receptacles, water fountains, etc.
10. Require undergrounding of utilities and elimination of poles and overhead wires.

D-2c **Alleys.** The existing alleys in the downtown shall be retained and should be improved as multi-functional accessways. Businesses are encouraged to use alleys for secondary entries. Enhancements should emphasize amenities and safety for pedestrians, such as improved surfacing, lighting, landscaping, and enclosures for garbage and recycling receptacles where space permits.

D-2d **Street trees.** The City shall encourage the installation of street trees within the downtown area. The City shall develop a comprehensive street tree planting and maintenance program which includes the following components:

1. Identification of streets where trees may be installed.
2. Standards for the location of street trees; generally, locations will either be in wells located between on-street parallel parking areas, in cutouts within the sidewalk where the sidewalk is of sufficient width (7 feet or more), or in containers where the preceding locations are not workable.
3. Standards for spacing between street trees (usually 20 to 35 feet on center).
4. Specification of a list of acceptable tree species and the appropriate streets and locations for each species.
5. Standards for size of trees and specifications for their installation (e.g. size of well, staking, materials).
6. Identification of responsibilities, procedures, and standards for tree maintenance. Where space is insufficient for street trees, trees may be incorporated into the landscape design on private property adjacent to the street property line.



D-2e **Design criteria for new structures and additions.** The height, scale, and mass (volume) of new buildings and additions to existing buildings shall be compatible with other buildings in the immediate vicinity. Each building shall have an entry from the sidewalk to the street-level floor. Building elevations shall be articulated: long, continuous, unbroken wall and roof planes should be avoided. The visual organization and proportions of building elevations — including the size, spacing and shape of window and door openings — should be consistent with neighboring buildings. Architectural detailing and ornamentation, such as cornices, eaves, recessed or covered entryways, and awnings, are encouraged. Design review

applications shall include depiction of buildings on adjoining lots, either in elevation drawings or photographs.

D-2f **Design criteria for vacant lots on Arcata Plaza.** In addition to the criteria in D-2e, the following criteria shall also apply to development on vacant parcels with frontage on streets surrounding the Plaza:

1. All buildings shall have a minimum height of two stories to create a sense of enclosure for the City's central open space and focal point.
2. All floors of buildings should be parallel to and at the street parcel line.
3. Any building located at a corner or intersection shall incorporate architectural features at the ground floor which emphasize pedestrian circulation, such as building cut-offs, walk-through arcades, pedestrian spaces, or similar elements.
4. Parking is encouraged to be provided off-site; if any on-site parking is provided, it shall be accessed from the rear.
5. Loading docks shall not be required.



D-2g **Design criteria for remodeling existing facades (storefronts).** In remodeling facades, the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features shall be avoided whenever possible. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced whenever practicable. Storefronts shall be designed to fit inside the original opening and not extend beyond it. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing structures shall not be prohibited when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical or architectural character of the property. The size and proportions of any additions shall be compatible with the original building.

D-2h **Site design, including parking areas.** The placement of new buildings and building additions on a site should be compatible with site layout on neighboring properties. In general, buildings should be sited immediately adjacent to the sidewalk and any onsite parking should be placed to the rear of the building. Parking areas shall be separated from the street and sidewalk by a landscape buffer of at least six feet. Trees that reach a mature height of at least twenty feet should be included in the interior of all parking lots with more than two parking spaces. Pedestrian spaces, circulation areas, or gathering areas are encouraged as design elements.

D-2i **Design of signs.** Permanent signs in the Central-Commercial area shall be oriented to pedestrians rather than automobile traffic, and shall conform to the following criteria:

1. Signs shall be placed so that they do not obscure other building elements such as windows, cornices, or decorative details.
2. Size, materials, style, and color shall complement the building facade and shall be compatible with the surrounding area.
3. Copy shall be limited to icons, logos, business identification, and hours of operation (rather than advertising copy).
4. Flush-mounted signs with copy in a specifically designated horizontal band is the preferred type; monument and hanging (cantilevered) signs may be allowed, provided that the latter has a vertical clearance of at least 7.5 feet and an encroachment permit is obtained.
5. Pole signs shall be prohibited, except for public traffic, directional and safety signs.
6. When lighted, signs shall be designed to minimize glare and with the minimum amount of illumination necessary to make the sign legible; neon signs with distinctive designs are acceptable. Plastic-faced internally lit signs should be discouraged.
7. At the time of any future alterations of an existing sign, the sign shall be required to be modified to conform in its entirety to these policies. Alterations shall mean any change to the structure, area, or height of a sign, but shall not mean a change in copy.

D-2j **Incorporation of amenity features in new development.** Any new development shall incorporate an appropriate combination of project enhancements in lieu thereof. Potential enhancements include, but are not limited to, the following:

special paving materials in parking lots	special architectural features
public art, including sculpture and murals	flower beds
outdoor spaces for public use	window boxes
street trees or street furniture	courtyards
fountains or other water features	awnings
secondary pedestrian access from alleys	planted wall trellises
balconies or decks on upper floors	recessed entryways
sidewalk and/or entry mosaics or decorative tile	

POLICY D-3 SCENIC ROUTES, RESOURCES, AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Objective. Identify and protect scenic routes, resources, and landscape features. Retain natural features, coastal scenic resources, and scenic vistas as important aesthetic components of the built environment and visual and associative links to nature. Minimize impairment and obstructions of scenic views to the minimum necessary to allow reasonable development.

D-3a **Designation of coastal scenic highways.** The following coastal scenic highways are hereby designated:

1. 7th Street and Bayside Road, from 7th Street overcrossing to Crescent Drive
2. Bayside Cutoff, from State Route 101 to Old Arcata Road
3. Old Arcata Road, from Bayside Cutoff to Crescent Drive
4. Samoa Blvd. (State Route 255), from Crescent Drive to Manila
5. Janes Road, from 11th Street to Foster Avenue
6. State Route 101, from the southerly City boundary to the Mad River
7. South "I" Street, from Samoa Blvd. south
8. South "G" Street, from "H" Street to State Route 101
9. All public roads west of the City in the Arcata Bottom

D-3b **Designation of non-coastal scenic highways.** The following non-coastal scenic highways are hereby designated:

1. Fickle Hill Road
2. Jacoby Creek Road
3. Golf Course Road
4. L. K. Wood Blvd. from the St. Louis Road Overcrossing to 14th Street

D-3c **Design policy for projects affecting scenic highways.** The following standards shall apply to any development which affects scenic highways:

1. Billboards or other off-premises signs are prohibited.
2. Landscape planting along State Route 101 shall not interrupt scenic views to the bay or eastward across agricultural lands.
3. New development or redevelopment in the industrial area of South "G" Street shall provide dense landscape screens along all perimeter lot lines visible from State Route 101.
4. The City shall work jointly with the County of Humboldt, Caltrans, and the Coastal Commission to enhance scenic views along scenic highways, particularly State Route 101 and 255 corridors.

D-3d **Scenic entryways.** The appearance of the following additional entryways should be enhanced with appropriate landscaping and entry signs or structures:

1. Samoa Blvd. (State Route 255) between Jackson Ranch Road and "K" Street
2. State Route 101 between Bayside cutoff and Samoa Blvd.
3. State Route 101 between the Mad River and Giuntoli Lane
4. State Route 299 from North Bank Road to Giuntoli Lane
5. Old Arcata Road from Bayside Cutoff to Jacoby Creek Road

These public improvements may include uniform landscaping, pedestrian enhancements, and directional signing.

D-3e **Arcata Bay—Open waters, shoreline, and tidal marshes.** Proposed land uses and development shall not significantly alter the natural appearance or landforms of the waters, shoreline, and tidal marshes of Arcata Bay, which are designated in the natural resource land-use category. Where these resources are visually degraded, developments shall be required to restore or enhance their appearance.

Development within the area bounded by Samoa Blvd., Butcher's Slough and Gannon Slough shall include local native plant landscaping, screenings and other measures to ensure compatibility with scenic coastal resources and with the educational, recreational, wildlife and other uses of the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge and the Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary.

D-3f **Bay and ocean views.** Views of Arcata Bay and the Pacific Ocean from vantage points along public streets in hillside areas of Arcata shall not be blocked by development. Any impairment or partial obstruction of these ocean views from new development shall be the minimum necessary to allow reasonable development.

D-3g **Wooded hillsides.** Views of wooded hillsides forming the City's eastern edge from vantage points along public streets west of the State Route 101 should not be blocked by development.



D-3h **Farmlands and open countryside.** Views of farmlands and open countryside — in the Arcata Bottom, along the State Route 101 south of Samoa Boulevard, north of Giuntoli Lane, and along State Route 255 west of the city, should be protected. New

development should be sited and designed to minimize any impairment of such views.

D-3i **Preservation of hedgerows (windrows, or rows of trees).** Preservation of the following windrows, hedgerows, or groves of trees shall be encouraged:

1. The cypress windrows separating Arcata Heights from the Sunset neighborhood.
2. The trees along the north and western edges (Alliance Road) of the Sunset neighborhood.
3. The trees on the small knoll adjacent to State Route 101 south of Spear Avenue.
4. The windrow of trees adjacent to the west side of the State Route 101 between 7th and 14th Streets.
5. Windrows in the Arcata Bottom.
6. The row of trees along the westerly side of State Route 101 at the State Route 299 interchange.
7. The groves of eucalyptus and other trees which line Bayside Road between Union Street and Crescent Way.
8. The elm trees on "J" Street between 14th and 16th Streets.
9. Redwood Grove at 7th and Union, and Bayside Road to be left intact.

D-3j **Streamside riparian areas.** Creeks or drainage channels and any associated riparian vegetation shall be retained in a natural state and incorporated into site design as a visual asset to development which adjoin them.

POLICY D-4 SUBDIVISION DESIGN

Objective. Achieve subdivision design which accommodates orderly growth; assures proper development of land and access to lots; promotes open space retention; insures adequate circulation, utilities, and services; preserves existing landforms; and retains significant vegetation.

D-4a **Design of roadways and subdivision improvements.** New subdivisions shall comply with the following criteria:

1. Unless it is demonstrated to be infeasible, all new lots shall have frontage on a public street or improved alley. Where direct access is infeasible, the number of lots or units to be served by a common access driveway easement shall be based on accessway design meeting all, but not limited to, these requirements: public safety access, ingress, egress, parking, utilities, drainage, and environmental issues.
2. The arrangement of proposed streets shall conform to the Transportation Plan, where possible. When not shown on the Street Plan, the design shall provide for the appropriate connections to existing streets. Cul-de-sacs should be avoided where possible.

3. The subdivision design may utilize narrow or "skinny" streets and various traffic calming approaches; alleys are encouraged for access to garages.
4. Gated subdivision streets shall be prohibited in order to maintain a sense of community.
5. Use of natural drainage techniques in subdivision design is encouraged. In general, curbing and gutters are appropriate for street drainage, safety and delineation and protection of pavement edge. Where curbing is not required, some other type of edge definition and stabilization shall be furnished.
6. Natural drainage patterns shall be preserved to minimize potential slippage and flooding. Building site grading shall be contoured to direct water away from structures.
7. No lighting shall be allowed that results in illumination above the tree canopy.
8. Sidewalks and bikeways shall be provided; sidewalks may be furnished on one side of the street only. In planned developments, additional sidewalks and bikeways may be located away from the street.
9. Illumination of streets shall be unobtrusive and the lowest intensity compatible with safety.
10. Landscaping shall be provided as part of subdivision design; plantings shall include street trees or an equivalent number of trees planted on individual lots adjacent to the street frontage.
11. Where subdivisions abut a major street or railroad, or include more than one land-use or housing type, landscape buffers shall be included at appropriate locations to create a visual screen and minimize any adverse impacts.

D-4b **Lot patterns.** Lot boundaries should be regular in shape and lots should either have direct access to a public street or to an access easement which connects to a public street. Clustering of lots with common open space areas and/or common parking lots is encouraged.

D-4c **Grading and hillside subdivisions.** In hillside areas, subdivision design and grading shall minimize disturbance to natural landforms, not destroy visual quality, nor create conditions that could increase the risk of landslides, flooding, or erosion. Designs shall comply with the following criteria:

1. Street layout should in general be parallel to topographic contours to reduce the extent of cut and fill slopes.
2. Long, continuous, or unbroken manufactured slopes should be avoided.
3. Graded slopes should be contoured by varying slope increments and undulating banks vertically and horizontally; building pad elevations should be varied to avoid the appearance of monotonous, flat, level pads.
4. Generally, slopes greater than 2:1 (horizontal: vertical) should be avoided.

5. Permitted densities shall be adjusted in designated hillside areas such that the steeper the slope, the less the allowed density; in such areas, at least fifty percent of each new lot shall be retained as ungraded "natural area."
6. Along ridgelines, new development or lighting which would extend above the tree canopy shall be prohibited.
7. Parallel on-street parking should not be provided on steep street segments; in such areas, alternative designs for on-street parking shall be required.

D-4d **Retention of natural features.** Design of subdivisions shall be based upon an analysis of the natural conditions and features of the site. To the maximum extent practicable, development shall be located to preserve natural features and avoid areas of environmental sensitivity, including but not limited to: wetlands, significant or mature trees or stands of trees, creekside riparian habitat areas, floodplain areas, and areas with slopes greater than thirty percent. Residential structures, including decks and balconies, shall not extend into significant natural areas.

D-4e **Open space and parks.** New residential subdivisions shall either be required to dedicate land for public parks or stormwater detention facilities, provide commonly-owned and maintained park or open space lands for use by residents of the subdivision, pay a fee in-lieu thereof, or some combination of the foregoing.

POLICY D-5 RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

Objective. Create residential living environments which meet the needs of residents, are aesthetically pleasing, provide for personal safety and privacy, promote social interaction, maintain continuity with the community's past, and provide for leisure needs. Blend residential design objectives with neighborhood conservation area objectives expressed in the Historical Preservation Element.

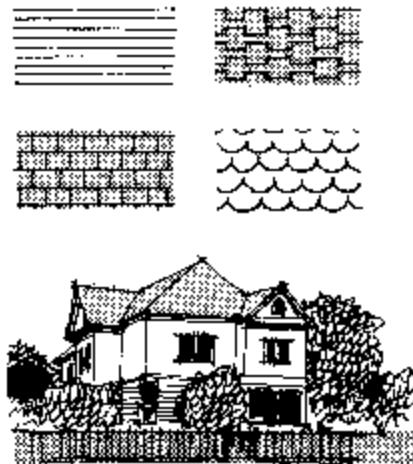
D-5a **Multi-family housing design.** Within each neighborhood where multi-family is allowed by the Land-Use Element, multi-unit housing designs should comply with the following criteria:

1. Buildings should maintain the scale and character of other residential structures in the immediate vicinity and avoid abrupt changes in height and bulk between structures.
2. Buildings should be grouped compactly to provide more usable open space.
3. Building elevations should be articulated and long, continuous wall and roof planes should be avoided. Architectural features such as bay windows, balconies, porches, and similar elements are encouraged.



4. Features should be incorporated into site and architectural designs which provide maximum exposure to sunlight and protection from rainstorms and other adverse climatic conditions (such as covered entryways).
5. Site and building design shall incorporate features to mitigate noise from nearby noise sources (see Noise Element).
6. Sufficient useable outdoor open space should be provided to accommodate the recreation and leisure needs of the residents, of the development, and individual households.
7. Individual units should be designed to be readily distinguishable from one another from the exterior.
8. Parking should be designed to protect the privacy of residents and prevent intrusion of noise and lights from vehicles.
9. Parking lots shall be landscaped with trees that reach a mature height of at least twenty feet and shall be visually screened from the street by solid walls, fences, or a planted landscape buffer of at least six feet in width. Site design should incorporate safety features that maintain visibility and provide security lighting.
10. Service and storage areas, such as for recycling and garbage, shall be screened by fencing or walls; appropriate landscape planting and setbacks from adjacent properties shall be provided.

D-5b Single-family residential design. The intent in single-family residential design shall be to allow maximum flexibility consistent with maintaining existing community character. Maintaining character means architectural style consistency, structures proportional to the site and surroundings, and harmony with the design of adjacent buildings. Good design respects its neighbors, is properly sited for privacy and solar access, minimizes disturbance of natural site conditions, and is landscaped to complement the streetscape, including street trees where appropriate.



Design of single-family houses on existing lots in hillside areas shall adhere to the following additional criteria:

1. Disturbance of existing landforms (cut and fill) shall be minimized.
2. Terrain-adaptive architectural designs which fit into the contour of the hillside are encouraged, including:
 - a. Reduced-footprint design with multi-level structures;
 - b. Multiple "Step-up" or "step-down" structures;
 - c. Stilt houses, with enclosure of area underneath the building.
3. Significant trees and drainageways should not be disturbed.

4. Development should be confined to portions of a site which are less steeply sloped.
5. Garages should be located under or over the structure depending on whether the lot is uphill or downhill from the street.
6. The scale and character of buildings should be matched with the terrain, scale, and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

POLICY D-6 DESIGN OF COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Objective. Create commercial centers and industrial areas which are functional, suited to the needs of the particular businesses, responsive to site conditions, and compatible with the neighborhood context.

D-6a **Design of commercial development.** The following criteria shall apply to design of new commercial development, except for the Plaza area (which is addressed in Policy D-2):

1. To encourage pedestrian access buildings should be sited so that entries and front facades face the public sidewalk; loading docks and vehicular entrances shall be located to the side or rear.
2. When located adjacent or near to residential areas, buildings should respect the residential character by avoiding long, uninterrupted expanses of wall and roof planes, and by incorporating architectural features such as covered entries or porches, cupolas, towers, arbors or pergolas, etc. which add variety and interest to larger buildings.
3. Pedestrians and bikes should be accommodated through appropriate location of walkways and rain-sheltered entrances to buildings.
4. Drive-through service windows for restaurants shall be restricted to the Valley West area.
5. Where commercial development abuts residential or other non-commercial uses, appropriate visual and noise buffers shall be included in the site design, such as increased setbacks or landscaped screening.
6. Service and storage areas shall be screened by fencing and appropriate landscape plantings.
7. The siting and design of buildings shall promote energy-efficiency and solar access, and shall minimize impacts on other nearby uses.
8. Parking areas are encouraged to be provided to the rear or side of buildings and include trees that reach a mature height of at least twenty feet whenever feasible.



9. Noise impacts shall be minimized through acoustical features in building design and on site sound attenuation.

D-6b **Design of industrial development.** In addition to the criteria stated in Policy D-6a, the following criteria shall also apply to new industrial development:

1. Building facades that include regional materials (e.g., locally produced wood, stone and recycled products) are encouraged. Prefabricated and manufactured materials may be used only where they are compatible with surrounding development.
2. Outdoor storage areas, including storage of trucks and equipment, shall be screened from view from adjacent streets and parcels by appropriate fencing and landscaping.



D-6c **Design of institutional development.** Since institutional uses—such as churches, schools, government facilities, and others—are frequently located within residential areas, their design shall be reviewed for compatibility with the adjacent residential neighborhood. In addition, the City requests that HSU, school districts, and other institutional entities adhere to the following criteria, which shall apply to design of any facilities within Arcata:

1. Long, uninterrupted expanses of wall and roof planes should be avoided and architectural features which add interest and variation, such as porches, cupolas, towers, arbors or pergolas, etc., should be incorporated.
2. Appropriate buffers and screening should be provided between institutional uses and adjacent residential uses, including increased setbacks, fencing, and landscaping.
3. The massing of buildings and the visual organization of facades, including the proportion of window and door openings to total wall surface, exterior materials and colors, and architectural detailing and ornamentation, should be designed to harmonize with any adjacent residential uses.
4. Appropriate setbacks and landscaped buffers should be provided to minimize noise and visual impacts.

D-6d **Design of signs.** The following criteria shall apply to all signs, except those located within the Central-Commercial Area use category:



1. Signs shall be placed so that they do not obscure other building elements such as windows, cornices, or decorative details.
2. Size, materials, style and color shall complement the building facade and shall be compatible with the surrounding area.
3. Copy shall be limited to icons, logos, services identification, and hours of operation (rather than advertising copy) except as required by law or ordinance.
4. Flush-mounted signs and monument signs are the preferred types; no more than one free-standing sign may be allowed per

business street frontage (including alleys), and freestanding signs shall not exceed fifteen feet in height.

5. Pole signs are discouraged; when permitted, such signs shall not exceed fifteen feet in height.
6. Signs shall not be of a height or design which is intended to be read from the State Routes 101 or 299, except for in the commercial visitor-serving district.
7. When lighted, signs shall be designed to minimize glare and with the minimum amount of illumination necessary to make the sign legible; neon signs are acceptable.
8. All off-premises (or off-site) business identification and advertising signs are prohibited.
9. The planned sign program is encouraged whenever there are multiple businesses on a site; no more than three signs may be allowed per parcel except through approval of a planned sign program permit. The planned sign program shall require harmony in shape, placement, materials, and other appropriate design elements for all signs on the site.
10. At the time of any future alterations of a lawfully permitted existing sign, except for a change in copy, the entire sign shall be modified as necessary to conform to these policies.

POLICY D-7 LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Objective. Promote landscape designs which are appropriate for the climate zone and the specific site conditions, integrate harmoniously with the scale and architecture of buildings on the site, improve the overall aesthetic appearance of the city and its neighborhoods, and serve to protect the general safety and welfare.

D-7a Landscape plans required. A landscape plan drawn to scale shall be required for all new development subject to discretionary review by the City. The plan shall

identify existing and proposed trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and other landscape elements. Native species are encouraged for all new landscaping.

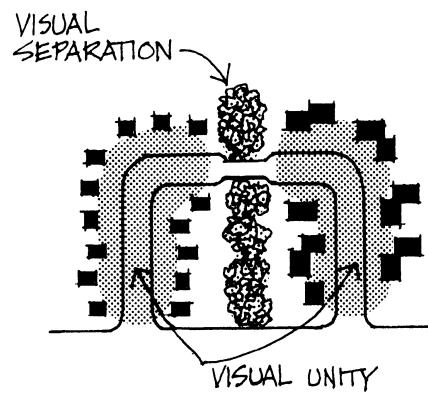
D-7b **Planting area required.** A minimum landscape planting area shall be required in all commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential land-use zones; these shall be contained in the zoning ordinance and expressed as a percent of site area.

[Revised by Ordinance No. 1377, September 2008]

D-7c **Parking lot landscaping.** All parking areas, other than single family residential, containing two or more parking spaces shall be landscaped. Landscaping shall include a minimum of a six-foot wide screen or buffer between the parking area and any public street. Trees that reach a mature height of at least twenty feet shall be provided within the parking area at a ratio of one or more trees to each five parking spaces.

D-7d **Site design criteria.** Landscaping shall be an integral part of site development, connecting site design elements, enhancing the site identity, and creating a pleasing appearance. Landscape designs shall conform to the following criteria:

1. Existing natural site vegetation should be incorporated, to the extent appropriate.
2. Coverage by impervious surfaces should be minimized in order to reduce runoff.
3. Cut and fill slopes shall be landscaped for erosion prevention.
4. Landscaping should include trees adjacent to the public street right-of-way, where appropriate.
5. Consideration should be given to native plant species and to those non-invasive exotics which have demonstrated adaptability to local climate.
6. Where a development borders a major street, railroad, or different land-use type, a landscape buffer shall be provided to create a visual screen, promote privacy, and to shield the development from any adverse external effects, and to shield neighboring properties from any adverse effects of the development. The buffer may include fencing, berms, plantings, or a combination thereof. The appearance of fences from public streets should be softened with plant materials.
7. The design for a particular site should harmonize with the surrounding landscape, including the landscape design of adjacent lots.
8. Site design should incorporate safety features such as maintaining visibility and providing security lighting.



D-7e **Upgrade of non-conforming landscape.** When improvements are made to structures on sites where landscaping is non-conforming, landscaping should be required to be upgraded if feasible.

D-7f **Maintenance of required landscaping.** All required landscape plantings shall be properly maintained to assure survival; any non-surviving plants shall be replaced.

5.3 IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

#	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME
LU-1	<p>Design Review Standards, Sign Regulations, Language Standards (LUC Amendment) Prepare a PLUC amendment (formerly LUDG) to implement Design Element policies, including standards for review, sign regulations, landscape standards, and applicability of design review (specify when design review and approval is required).</p>	Community Development Dept./Planning Commission	Year 1
D-1	<p>Design Review Commission/Project Design Review Review and approve the design of private and public projects.</p>	Comm. Devel. Dept./Design Review Comm.	Ongoing
D-2	<p>Downtown Street Tree Program Prepare a street tree program consistent with the Design Element for review and recommendation by the Design Review Commission and approval by the City Council. Financial assistance may be provided by the Arcata Community Development Agency.</p>	Public Works Department/Downtown Business Organizations	Year 1
D-3	<p>Design Criteria and Brochure Prepare design review brochures or handouts which explain and illustrate design criteria, standards, and procedures.</p>	Community Development Dept./Design Review Comm.	Year 1
D-4	<p>Design Awards Program Recognize and award projects that demonstrate the highest quality design and context.</p>	Comm. Devel. Dept./Design Review Comm.	Ongoing
D-5	<p>Samoa Blvd. Public Improvements Program The City of Arcata shall work to obtain funding to develop a specific public improvements program to improve the appearance of Samoa Blvd. from State Route 101 to "I" Street. These improvements may include uniform landscaping, pedestrian enhancements, and directional signing.</p>	Public Works Department	Year 2
D-6	<p>Design Review MOU Develop Memorandum of Understanding with other governmental agencies for design review</p>	City/County/State agencies/Special Districts	Year 2