

SMART GROWTH OVERLAY DISTRICT (SGOD) DESIGN STANDARDS

PART ONE: GENERAL DESIGN STANDARDS

These General Design Standards are set forth to:

- Promote preservation of open space and natural resources;
- Promote access to and through the site on foot or on bicycle;
- Maintain the visual sense of neighborhood character; and
- Create a vibrant neighborhood center.

These Standards are applicable in all subzones. These Design Standards are intended to clarify the permitting review process, and to define expectations for the size, bulk, exterior sheathing, open space, and placement of structures. These Design Standards shall supersede all other standards set forth elsewhere in the Zoning By-laws, other than those set forth in the QSGOD.

I. DEFINITIONS

In these Design Standards, the words "shall," "should," and "may" are used to describe specific conditions. To clarify the meanings intended by the use of these words, the following definitions apply:

A. **Shall:** A mandatory condition. Where certain requirements in the design or application of the standard are described with the "shall" stipulation, it is mandatory that these requirements be met.

B. **Should:** An advisory condition. Where the word "should" is used, a condition is considered advisable, but is not mandatory. Noncompliance with a condition stipulated with the word "should" will not be the basis for Plan Disapproval.

C. **May:** A permissive condition. No requirement or recommendation is intended.

II. ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

A. Building Design

1. **Blank Walls.** Buildings should avoid large blank walls.
 - a. Buildings should not be designed with long, undifferentiated surfaces, facades or store frontages.
 - b. Buildings should have large windows that open to facilitate indoor-outdoor interaction with street.
 - c. Windows on walls perpendicular to the street are encouraged.
2. **Ground floors.** Ground floors or bases immediately next to pedestrians should reflect a higher level of detail refinement and high quality materials, with substantially transparent, open facades for commercial uses at street level.
3. **Middle Floors.** Architectural features may include: belt courses or horizontal bands to distinguish individual floors; change in materials and color and/ or texture that enhance specific form elements or vertical elements of the building; a pattern of windows; and/or bay

windows to give scale to the structure.

4. **Top Floors.** Building design should clearly distinguish tops of buildings from the façade walls by including detail elements consistent with the traditional neighborhood buildings such as steep gables with overhangs, parapets and cornices.
5. **Rooftops.** Rooftop building systems (i.e., mechanical and electrical equipment, antennas) should be screened from all key observation points by integrating them into the building design with parapets, screens or other methods. The roof line or top of the structure shall be clearly distinguished from its façade walls.

B. Distinctive Features

New buildings should exhibit design compatible with their context. Design elements should respect the scale, massing and materials of architecturally significant local buildings and landscape.

1. New buildings should generally include:
 - Operable windows, especially on storefronts.
 - Solid kick panels below windows;
 - Large storefront windows, where applicable;
 - High level of fine grained detailing and trim;
 - High quality materials, such as wood, brick, and stone;
 - Canopies, variable parapets, and cornices; and,
 - Pitched roofs.
1. Buildings should be designed with transom or clerestory windows above entrances, display windows and projected bay windows.
2. Multiple paned windows that divide large areas of glass into smaller parts should be used to add human scale.
3. Building entry treatments should be arched or framed in a manner that welcomes people, offers protection from the elements, and emphasizes the building's architecture.
4. Architectural elements should be human-scaled. Improve and support pedestrian-orientation by using components such as:
 - Non-reflective storefront windows and transoms;
 - Pedestrian-scaled awnings;
 - Architectural detailing on the first floor; and
 - Detailing at the roof line.
5. Solid canopies or fabric awnings over the sidewalk may be used.
6. Vinyl awnings are not permitted.

C. Massing

The massing of large buildings should reflect the functions of the building and respond to the scale of traditional buildings by including major facade elements, which help to break the building into smaller pieces with distinctive appearances.

1. Building design should break up building mass by incorporating different facade treatments

at an appropriate interval, where practical.

2. Building massing should consider existing views and incorporate site and building design features that may help to preserve those views from public rights-of-way.
3. Color schemes should help reduce apparent size and bulk of buildings and provide visual interest.

III. LANDSCAPING

Landscaping should be designed to:

- Enhance the pedestrian environment,
- Provide shade,
- Minimize irrigation requirements,
- Integrate buildings and paved areas into the environment, and
- Contribute to stormwater management and treatment.

A. Landscape Design.

1. Existing significant trees should be preserved where feasible.
2. Streets and access drives shall be lined with shade trees.
3. Large paved areas should be visually divided and screened with greenery.
4. Buffers should be provided within and around the development, with the provision of continuous planting beds for hedges, shrubs or other plantings to screen pavements, especially parking areas from streets, except that landscaping should not create undue barriers for pedestrians.
5. Buildings should be integrated into the landscape with plantings, taking care to soften the harshness where buildings meet parking areas.
6. All buildings shall have foundation landscaping.
7. All islands and landscape areas shall be of a width that is suitable to support healthy plant growth.

B. Plantings

1. Plantings shall be indigenous and drought resistant. Plants listed on the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List shall not be used.
2. Plantings should be selected to provide seasonal interest in foliage, bloom and fragrance, so that pedestrians experience a pleasant environment.
3. Street trees should be used in commercial and residential environments to create overhanging canopies of trees.
4. Trees species should be selected so as to minimize damage to trees by vehicles and to maintain signage visibility. Trees listed on the Massachusetts Prohibited Plant List shall not be used.
5. Trees shall be indigenous and draught and disease resistant.

IV. MATERIALS

A. Exterior Finish Materials.

1. Materials should have texture or pattern.
2. Materials should be consistent with the existing or intended neighborhood character, including brick, wood, and stone. Wood siding should be clapboard or shingles.
3. Applied foam ornamentation and EIFS (Exterior Insulation & Finish System) shall not be used. Vinyl and aluminum siding are prohibited.

B. Surfacing and Curbing Materials

1. Roads, driveways and parking areas shall be graded, surfaced with asphalt, concrete, or other suitable non-erosive material. Pervious paving is encouraged.
2. Sidewalks shall be surfaced with concrete, brick, or stone, and should be constructed to permit rainwater to infiltrate the soil.
3. Overflow parking, which shall be designated and defined as not less than 10% of surface parking spaces, shall be surfaced with pervious materials.
4. Curbing shall be vertical granite for sidewalk areas adjacent to buildings and sidewalks along roadways within Subzone C. Curbing is not required for all areas, and may in fact be undesirable for implementing Low Impact Development stormwater management practices (e.g. allowing stormwater to exit from paved surfaces via sheet flow onto adjacent vegetated areas). Sloped granite curbing, or other material and design suitable for safe and easy migration of reptiles and amphibians shall otherwise be used.

V. PROJECT ENVIRONMENT

A. Lighting

Distinctive features of the building, including entries, signage, canopies, and areas of architectural detail and interest should be illuminated. Pedestrian scale pole lights along streets and walks should be provided.

1. Pedestrian-scale lighting shall be used to illuminate all sidewalks and walkways through parking areas.
2. Light fixtures should be dark-sky friendly light fixtures. All light fixtures, other than pedestrian-scale lighting less than 14 feet tall, shall be fully shielded to reduce light pollution. This shall generally mean that light fixtures should be constructed and installed in such a manner that all light emitted by it, either directly from the lamp or a diffusing element, or indirectly by reflection or refraction from any part of the lighting fixture, is projected below the horizontal.
3. Fixtures that produce glare or that spill light to adjoining sites are prohibited.
4. Lighting in display windows to illuminate the sidewalk may be provided.
5. Solar powered and/or LED lighting should be used.
6. Lighting should be provided around all structures, driveways, driveway entrances, walkways, entrances, pathways, or other means and handling pedestrian and vehicular traffic,

throughout parking areas, and along interior streets. A minimum of two foot-candles is recommended at all locations.

B. Landscaped Areas

Projects should be designed and sited to maximize opportunities for creating usable, attractive, well-integrated landscaped common areas.

1. Site design should incorporate quasi-public landscaped common areas with new mixed use development, with special focus on corner landscape treatments and courtyard entries.
2. Site design should create parks as focal points within the Project.
3. Substantial street-side gardens, including rain gardens, between buildings and streets that are visually accessible to the public view should be provided.
4. Development should be set back, where appropriate, to preserve a view corridor.
5. Species selected for landscaped areas shall be indigenous, draught resistant species and should require minimal irrigation or fertilizer.
6. Where feasible, landscaped areas should be utilized for management of stormwater run-off.

C. Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities and Service Areas

1. All utilities shall be underground, to the extent feasible.
2. All dumpsters, utility/service areas shall be screened.

VI. SIGNS

Signage should provide information that is simple and legible, of a size and location that avoids competing with or obscuring the architecture of the building. In general, the number of signs on a facade should be kept to the minimum necessary to effectively communicate the messages being conveyed. Signage should be unique to this town rather than being generic. Signs should be architecturally compatible with the style, composition, materials, colors and details of the building and with other signs on nearby buildings while providing for adequate identification of the business. These Standards also apply to signage in a residential complex. Alternative signs not meeting these standards may be allowed if it is found by the Plan Approval Authority that the design and appearance are superior and comply with the intent of these Design Standards.

1. **Lighting.** Building and signage lighting shall be indirect, with the light source(s) hidden from direct pedestrian and motorist view. For exterior sign illumination, shaded gooseneck lamps should be used. Signage should have the capability of being lit in the evening, although the source of light should not be visible to motorists or pedestrians.
2. **Materials.** Signs shall be constructed of natural materials, such as metal or wood. Permanently painted window signage may be used and should be compatible with the architecture of the building. Painted window signs shall not consume more than one-third of the glazed area of the window.
3. **Prohibited and restricted signs.** Internally illuminated signs (including neon) are prohibited. Temporary window signage shall be limited to one-third of the window surface area. Vinyl signs and electronic message boards are prohibited.

4. **Projecting signs.** Projecting signs shall not be greater than twelve square feet in area and may have a maximum width of three feet. Such signs shall not extend beyond the first floor of the building. No less than eight feet of clearance shall be provided between the sidewalk elevation and the lowest point of the projecting sign. The maximum distance between a sign and building face shall be one foot. Signs should not block or obliterate design details, windows or cornices of the buildings on which they are placed.
5. **Sales Center Signage.** Signs used for directional purposes or to advertise any Sales Center within the District shall conform to the general conditions applicable to all signage.
6. **Park, Trail and Bikeway Signage.** Signs used to mark or to indicate directions to parks and bicycle or other trails should be sized so that they can be read by passing cars when adjacent to roadways, or by pedestrians and cyclists when adjacent to pedestrian- or bikeways. Use of natural materials such as wood is preferred.
7. **Other Signs.** The provisions of the Easton Zoning By Law, Chapter 10, "Regulation of On-Site Premise Signs By Zone" as in effect May 21, 2007 shall otherwise apply.

VII. SITE PLANNING

A. Connectivity

1. The site shall provide, within the Project boundaries, constructed pedestrian/bicycle connections to all internal and adjacent recreational, civic, commercial, office, industrial, and/or multifamily residential uses. Pedestrian walkways or sidewalks shall also connect uses within the site, including business and residential uses. This requirement may only be waived if it can be demonstrated that it is not feasible for safety, economic, or topographical reasons.
2. The site plan shall include easements and rights of way within the Project boundaries necessary to provide for future vehicular connections to all adjacent recreational, civic, commercial, office, industrial, and/or multifamily residential uses. If applicable, such easements shall connect to existing off-site easements. This requirement may only be waived if it can be demonstrated that it is not feasible for safety, economic, or topographical reasons.

B. Corner Lots

1. Buildings on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts.
2. Parking and automobile access should be located away from the corners, where practical.
3. Residential entries and special landscaping should be incorporated into corner lots by setting the structure back from the property lines.

C. Parking and Vehicle Access

1. Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and pedestrian safety.
2. Surface parking areas shall be set back from structures and property lines by a minimum of 5 feet. Other than parallel parking, off-street parking shall be set back from Washington Street by at least 20 feet and from streets internal to the Project by at least 5 feet.
3. Parking areas should serve both parking and public open space needs.
4. Travel lanes adjacent to surface parking stalls shall be as follows:

<u>Type of Parking</u>	<u>One Way width</u>	<u>Two Way width</u>
90 degree	24 feet	24 feet
75 degree	20 feet	24 feet
60 degree	18 feet	24 feet
45 degree	16 feet	24 feet
Parallel	10 feet	20 feet

5. Surface parking stalls shall be 9' X 18' except that up to 30% of required parking spaces may be for compact cars, and may be 8.5' X 16'. Angled parking shall be sized proportionally.
6. Site access points shall be designed to minimize conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, as illustrated in Figure 1. Driveway entrances shall not resemble that described as "Least Desirable." Driveway entrances may resemble that described as "Better Design for Some Commercial Driveways." Driveway entrances should resemble that described as "Most Desirable Design for All Driveways."



Figure 1.

C. Pedestrian and Bicycle Amenities

1. Site planning should consider the safety and convenience of pedestrians and bicyclists in travelling within the site and to adjacent destinations, and should preserve and enhance the pedestrian environment in mixed use areas by providing for continuous sidewalks that are unencumbered by parked vehicles and are minimally broken within a block by vehicular access
2. Sidewalks shall be provided adjacent to all public rights-of-way and streets.
 - a. Sidewalks should connect to destinations within and adjacent to the site.
 - b. Sidewalks shall be surfaced with concrete, brick, or stone; minimum width shall be five feet. Surface treatments should be pervious, unless additional stormwater runoff treatment will be provided through alternate methods.
3. Delineated walkways should be provided through parking lots, connecting to destinations within and external to the site and to sidewalks.
4. Entry areas shall be protected from the weather.

5. Entryways should be provided that link the building to the surrounding landscape.
6. Open spaces at street level should link to the open space of the sidewalk.
7. Building entrances should emphasize pedestrian ingress and egress as opposed to accommodating vehicles.
8. Overhead weather protection should be designed with consideration of: the overall architectural concept of the building; uses occurring within the building (such as entries and retail spaces) or in the adjacent streetscape environment (such as bus stops and intersections).
9. Sidewalks shall be constructed to allow benches, trash containers, and planters, which shall be provided near retail entrances and at bus stops. At bus stops, such benches shall be protected from the weather.
10. Bike racks shall be provided near entrances to retail and residential buildings. Bike racks should be covered. At least 1 bicycle space shall be provided for every 40 parking spots.

D. Streets and Streetscapes

1. Street design standards shall not be limited to defined rights of way but shall also apply to driveways and internal ways which function as streets.
2. Trees shall be provided in continuous planter strips whenever possible, along both interior and exterior streets and along or in between rows of parking stalls, as shown in the example illustrations (Figure 2a, 2b, & 2c.) Hedges, shrubs, and other plantings, especially evergreen species, should also be provided.



Figure 2a



Figure 2b



Figure 2c

- a. Street trees shall be deciduous, indigenous species that provide summer shade, winter light, and should provide year-round visual interest.
- b. Planter strips shall have an inside width suitable to support healthy plant growth.
- c. The use of tree grates for planting individual trees should be limited to the extent possible.

- d. This section shall not require that trees be planted where they will obscure traffic sight lines.
3. Vehicle entrances to buildings should not dominate the streetscape. Structures should be oriented to provide pedestrian entrances to the sidewalk.
4. Streets and sidewalks, especially crossing points, should be designed to promote universal access and shall comply with ADA standards.
5. Pavement on streets on which there are no parking, loading area, or emergency/fire access requirements shall be no wider than 20 feet. Pavement on streets with parallel parking one side shall be no wider than 28 feet, which shall be 2 driving lanes which shall be 10' wide and one lane of parking which shall be 8' wide.

VIII. SURFACING, DRAINAGE, & IRRIGATION

Roads, driveways and parking areas shall be graded, surfaced with asphalt, concrete, or other suitable non-erosive material, and drained in a manner to prevent nuisance of standing water, erosion, or excessive water flow across abutting streets or ways, within the proposed parking area, to abutting properties, and to wetland resource areas; natural drainage courses shall be utilized insofar as possible. Pervious asphalt, pervious concrete, pervious pavers or reinforced turf should be used where consistent with sound engineering practices, such as in low traffic volume areas and parking areas located in areas furthest from the buildings being served.

To the extent feasible and practical, stormwater management shall incorporate Low Impact Development strategies. Low Impact Development (LID) is a stormwater management strategy concerned with maintaining or restoring the natural hydrologic functions of a site to achieve natural resource protection objectives and fulfill environmental regulatory requirements.

LID employs a variety of natural and built features that:

- Collect and treat stormwater runoff close to its source.
- Reduce the rate of runoff,
- Filter out its pollutants, and
- Facilitate the infiltration of water into the ground.

Rather than collecting runoff in piped or channelized networks and controlling the flow downstream in a large stormwater management facility, LID takes a decentralized approach that disperses flows and manages runoff closer to where it originates, and incorporates a set of overall site design strategies as well as highly localized, small-scale, decentralized source control techniques such as, for example, rain gardens, roof run-off collection or infiltration system, and permeable paving.

1. Low Impact Development techniques should be used throughout the site.
2. Detention and filtration systems shall be located onsite and shall have curvilinear sides, so as to appear a natural part of the landscape.
 - a. Manmade embankments shall have maximum side slopes of three (3) feet horizontal and one (1) foot vertical, or retaining walls shall be employed.
 - b. Landscaped erosion control techniques shall be used in place of visible riprap.
3. Natural drainage courses should be utilized insofar as possible.

4. Curbing shall be required only as necessary to limit off pavement vehicle access or for pedestrian safety, unless other suitable materials are used.
5. All stormwater LID features, detention, and filtration systems shall be designed to conform to the most recent edition of the Stormwater Management Policy of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.
6. Impervious surface should be minimized.
7. Paved roadway, parking, and other impervious areas should be drained toward Low Impact Development practices such as bioretention areas (rain gardens), roadside swales and infiltration structures.
8. Stormwater from roof areas should be directed to subsurface cisterns properly sized and engineered for re-use as on-site irrigation water. Any excess overflow from such systems should be recharged to the ground. If necessary, supplemental water for irrigation shall be provided from on-site private irrigation wells.
9. Stormwater from roof areas that cannot be practically collected for on-site irrigation reuse shall be infiltrated or directed to landscaped areas (e.g. rain gardens), and shall not be allowed to flow onto paved surfaces.
10. Automatic irrigation systems that incorporate rain shut-off devices shall be used on site to ensure maximum water efficiency. Irrigation systems shall be designed so as not to operate during precipitation events, in windy conditions, or during the hottest part of the day (8am to 6pm). The amount of water applied should be sufficient to only fill the effective root zone and minimize evaporative loss.

IX. Erosion and Sedimentation Control

Project design and development practices shall comply with recommendations in the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's most recent edition of the "Massachusetts Erosion and Sediment Control Guidelines for Urban and Suburban Areas."