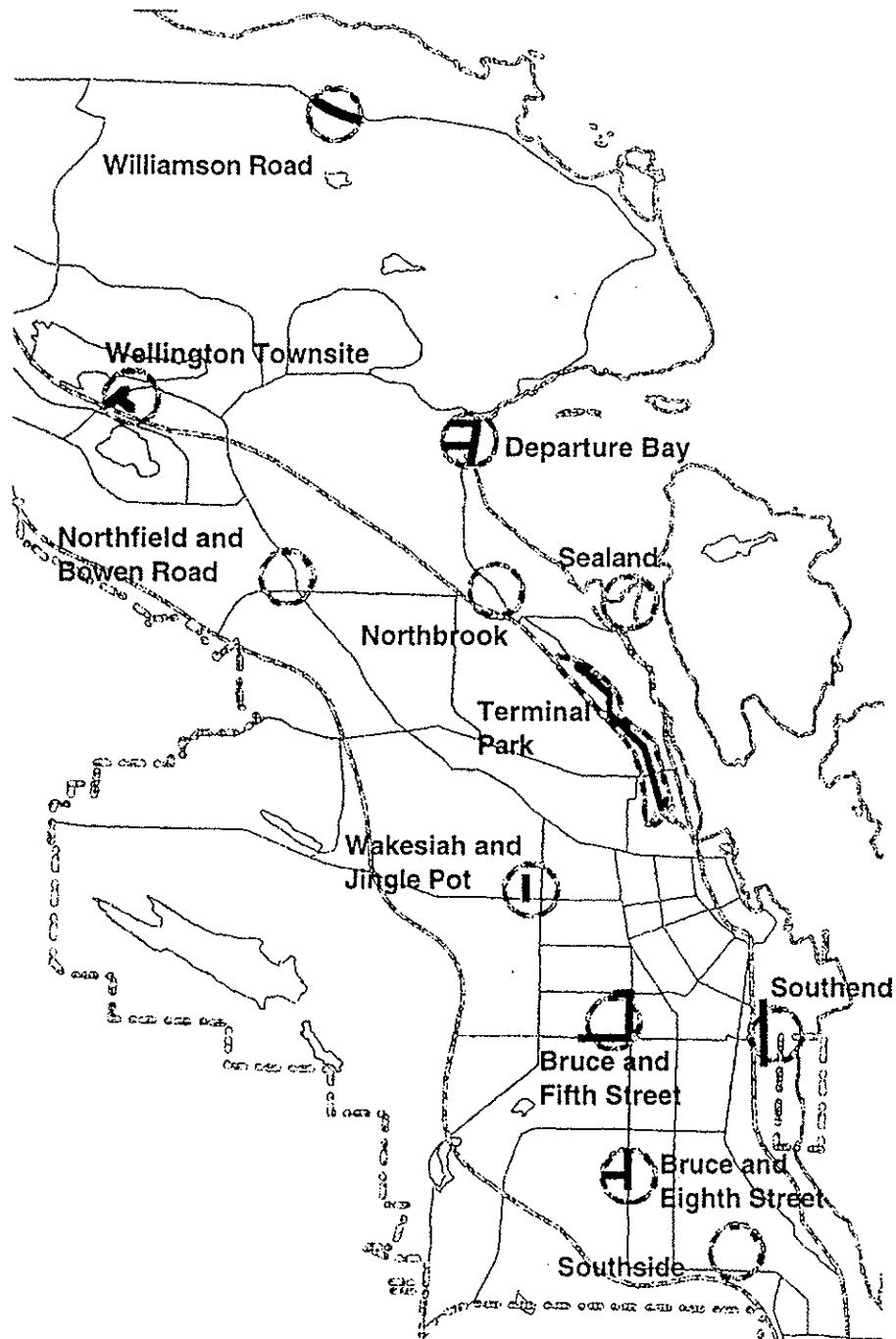


# Mainstreet: Design Guidelines



*for the City of Nanaimo*

submitted by

The Spaxman Consulting Group  
Reid Crowther & Partners Ltd.

APRIL 1998

CITY OF NANAIMO

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW 6000

## **MAINSTREET DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Guidelines for Development Permit Area No. 8.2.21 – Mainstreet Development

As adopted 1998-April-20 as part of Bylaw 6000 "Plan Nanaimo" and consolidated amendments.

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## **PURPOSE OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES**

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These guidelines provide design direction to those wishing to develop on **Mainstreets**. Although compliance with any specific guideline is not necessarily required, general and substantial compliance with the intent of all guidelines is.

They are designed to assist people who are proposing change and those evaluating proposals through the development permit processes.

These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the City of Nanaimo Official Community Plan, Zoning Bylaws and other relevant regulations and policies.

These guidelines are to assist in the realization of the objectives to make Mainstreet an attractive, pedestrian friendly place with a rich diversity of activities and a compatible mixture of land uses.

They illustrate desired directions but are not definitive. Good design requires a creative balance among many features which must respond to the particular location, aspect and neighbourly requirements of the development being proposed.

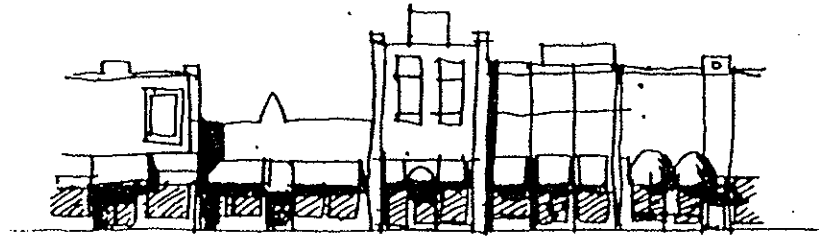
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## MAINSTREET DESIGN GUIDELINES

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### Frontage Uses

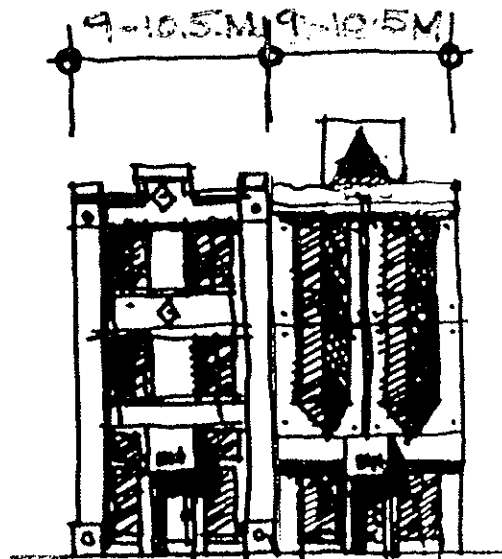
The main floor of the Mainstreet buildings must be commercial in nature, but those uses that have display windows and depend on high levels of pedestrian traffic are preferred. Street front doors and large areas of glazing are required for Mainstreet ground floor development.



### Architectural Bay Size

Individual store fronts should be no greater than 9m to 10.5m and preferably narrower.

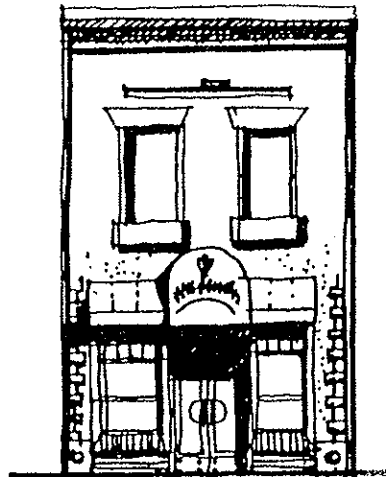
Building frontages should be varied in architectural treatment at least every 30m to provide the variety and interest required. This is to avoid long, dominating facades, canopies and other architectural features which impose an inhuman scale on the pedestrian realm.



### Heritage Structures and Landscape

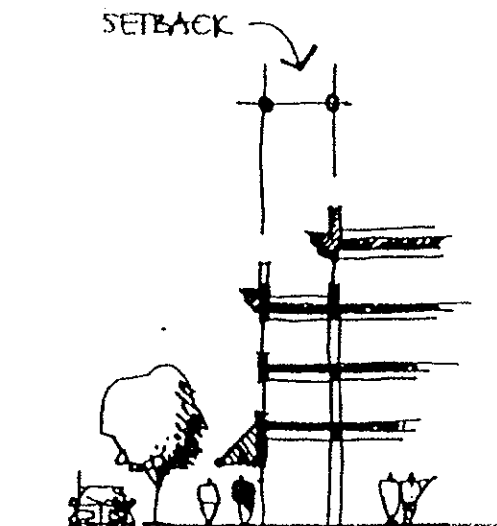
Identified heritage structures and landscape along Mainstreets should be protected and enhanced where possible. Care should be taken in the selection of materials and architectural features that are consistent with those of the period.

Special care must also be taken in the design of adjacent developments. The new building should compliment the heritage structure by using complimentary rhythms, proportion, details, colours and materials.



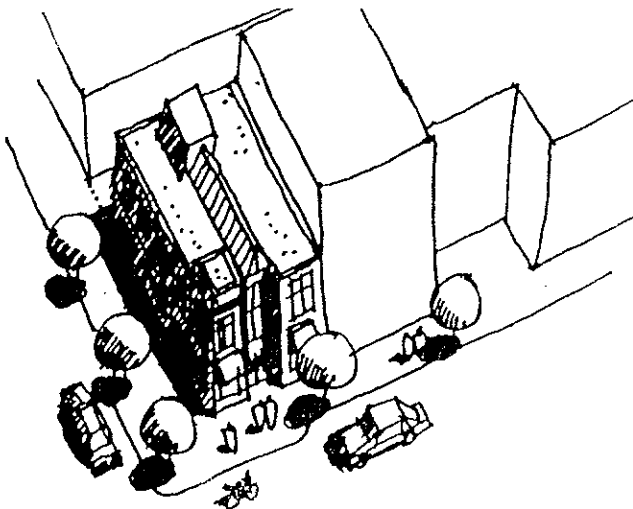
### Upper Storey Set Backs

Third and fourth floors are encouraged to be set back from the Mainstreet building face. This will decrease the scale of the building from street level, will provide areas for residential decks, and will decrease shadowing from south side buildings.



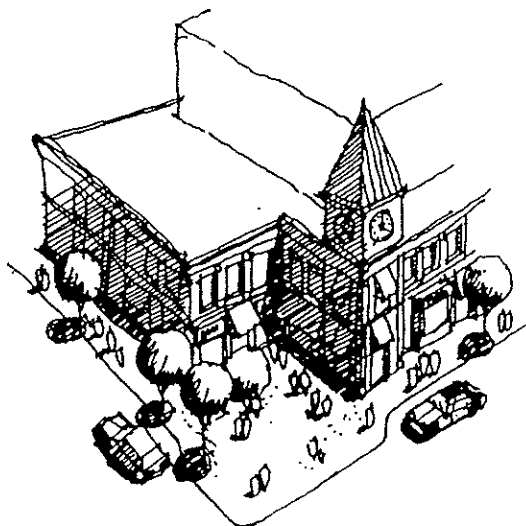
### Corner Development

Development at corner sites is encouraged to create commercial exposure on both elevations. The provision of display windows or courts improves the vitality of flanking elevations for the pedestrian and driver. Where secondary street facades are not directly used for commercial merchandising, the facade is encouraged to have a high level of architectural detail.



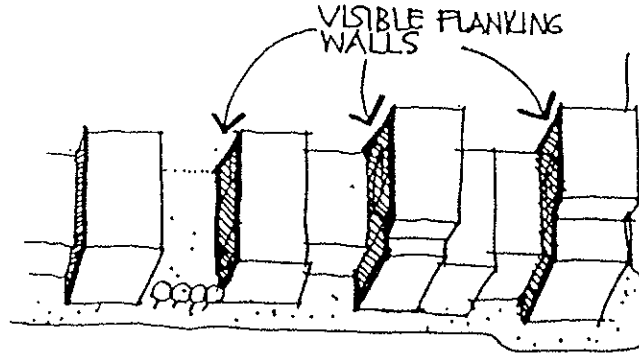
### Celebration of Principal Street Corners

Intersections are landmarks for pedestrian and driver orientation and have a higher than average exposure for business patrons. To emphasize this reality at principal or important intersections or corners, the architecture at these locations is encouraged to feature the corner with landmark design, or alternatively, to provide a semi-public open space to animate and vitalize the intersection.



### Visible Flanking Walls

Visible flanking walls which face Mainstreet (frontage) and abutting walls (flankage) require care in their design. Public art or architectural treatments which reduce the apparent massing or enhance the aesthetic value of visible flanking walls are strongly encouraged.



### Facade Treatment

New development should respect the vertical and horizontal rhythm, proportions and details of flanking buildings.

The design of the building should reflect the change from commercial to residential through the use of balconies, bay windows, changing roof lines and other appropriate architectural detailing. Height variances for special architectural features that are important to the character of the Mainstreet should be considered.

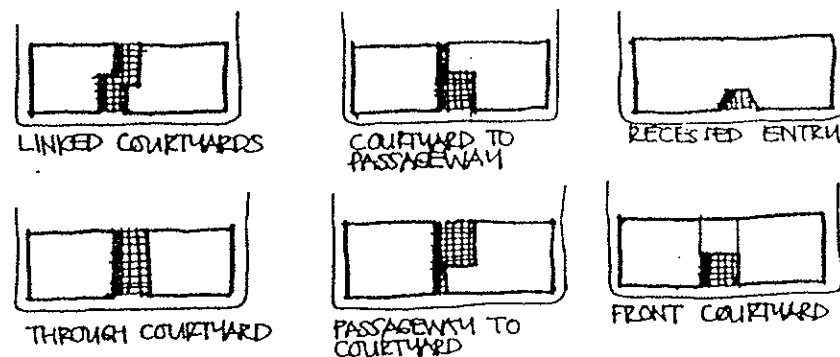
In order to develop buildings that will age well, appropriate exterior materials shall be used. The exterior materials of all buildings shall be brick, coloured metal, vinyl or wood siding. Other materials may be considered that fit into the village theme and which will age well. No exposed building face should be more than 20% stucco unless the design is judged exceptional by Council.



### Courtyards and Pedestrian Walkways

Courtyards are encouraged because they add interest and provide semi-public space along pedestrian oriented commercial block frontages. These spaces also increase the net frontage exposure for retailers and provide for added landscaping or cafe seating.

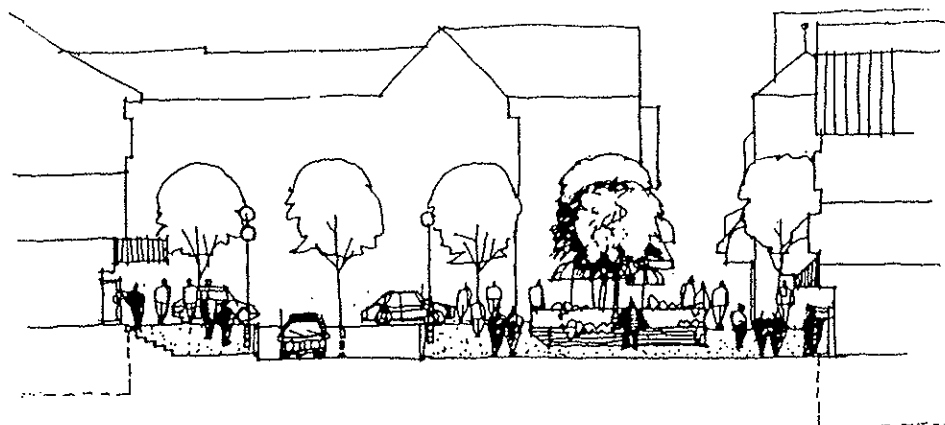
Pedestrian walkways through or beside buildings connecting Mainstreet to rear lanes and parking lots are encouraged. The design of these walkways and passages must be based on principles of universal access, safety, good sight lines and illumination to allow for 24 hour use.



### Open Space & Street Furniture

Public open spaces provided on private property should be designed to encourage pedestrian activities such as walking, sitting, providing protection from the sun or rain, locking of bicycles and window shopping. The areas may be open at all times, or secured at night.

The furniture and landscape materials used in these areas should compliment those in the public realm along Mainstreet. This includes benches, lighting, refuse containers, bicycle racks, paving patterns, planters and finishes.

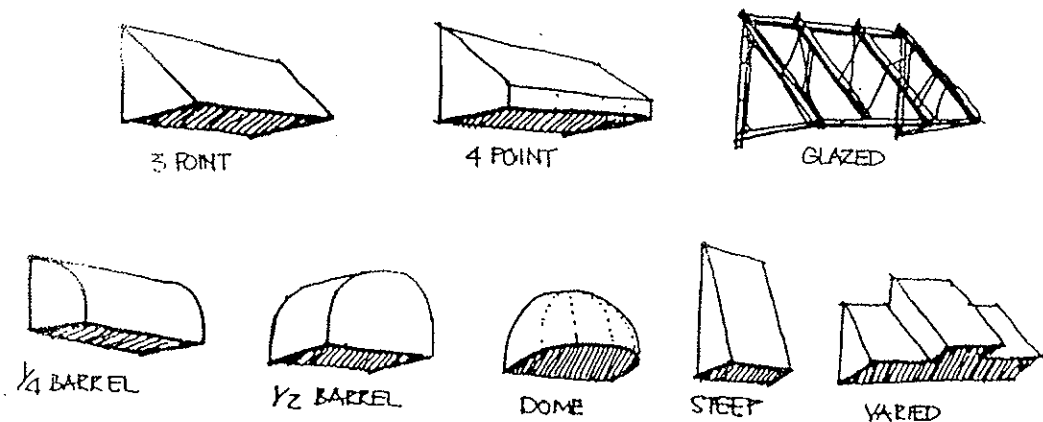




## Canopies

To protect pedestrians from rain, continuous weather protection is encouraged on all Mainstreets. Canopies are preferred to arcades, which tend to reduce daylight and create hidden corners and blind spots.

The design of the canopy should relate and enhance the architectural form of the building. Signage on the canopies is encouraged, provided it is carefully integrated with the style and design of the canopy. Canopies should also vary from shop to shop with long canopies being avoided.



## Fences and Screening

Fences and screening can be used for creating privacy between residential and other uses, adding character to courtyards or shielding of service equipment like garbage bins. While appropriate screening is encouraged, for safety reasons attention must be paid to preserving good sight lines at grade level in public areas.