

Biltmore Village Historic District Design Guidelines

Book 1 – General Design Guidelines

Site Design for Cottage and Mixed-Use Areas

Site Design for Commercial Core Areas

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Public Signs, Parking Lots, Sidewalks and Medians

Signs

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Street Planting Plan

Site Design for Cottage and Mixed-Use Areas

1. Maintain the pattern and alignment of buildings established by the traditional setbacks from the street.
 - Most setbacks in the Cottage and Mixed-Use Areas were 10 feet (from the sidewalk).
 - Additions and screened enclosures should be located behind the historic front yard area.
2. Maintain the traditional design vocabulary used for defining building entrances, which consists of:
 - A projecting porch raised above ground level with steps, many project from the façade.
 - Orientation to the street. Primary entrances face the street and linked with a paved walk.
3. Maintain the line of street trees in the planting strip between the road and sidewalk.
 - Trees should be planted in the historic spacing pattern as much as possible.
 - Refer to the Tree Planting Plan.
4. Individual specimen trees are encouraged within yards from our recommended planting list.
Policy: The historic planting palette should be used where feasible. Flexibility should be defined for new uses, such as outdoor dining areas, where some deviation from the original plan may be needed.
5. Avoid locating plant beds in the strip between the road and sidewalk.
 - This strip should be planted with grass and street trees.
6. Locate plantings in traditional areas of the site.
 - Along fences, walks, foundations, and at porch edges.
 - See the HRC for suggestions.
 - HRC will review location, but not species selection.
7. Use low-scale lighting for walkways and patios.
 - Avoid fixtures that cast glare onto adjoining properties
 - Historic light fixtures may be used
 - Taller, compatible streetlights may be used at intersections.
8. Brick paving is encouraged for all public sidewalks.
 - The historic paving pattern should be used.

9. Consider using decorative paving within the interior of each lot.
 - Decorative paving for walkways and at building entrances is encouraged.
10. Develop a lawn-like image where feasible.
 - Large grass areas are encouraged.
 - Where paved surfaces are necessary, minimize their visual impact with landscaped edges.
 - Define edges of the yard with hedges.
 - Re-establish the planting strip between sidewalk and street.
 - Fences may be used in side and rear yards only. They must be kept behind any building façade that faces a street. Heights of up to 4 feet are allowed in side yards and up to 6 feet in rear yards. Historic fence patterns are strongly encouraged.
11. Screen service equipment and trash containers.
 - Historically, service areas were screened from public view with solid fences and hedges.
 - Use solid partitions or vertical/horizontal lattice screens, or consider a hedge.

Site Design for Commercial Core Area

12. Maintain the alignment of building fronts at the sidewalk edge.
 - An exception is where a cottage type building exists in the Core Area and has a front yard.
13. Maintain entrance orientation facing the street and sidewalk.
 - Side or rear entrances should appear subordinate to the main entrance.
14. Locate street trees in the historic planting line between the sidewalk and the street.
 - Use the tree planting plan.
15. Locate courts and patios to side yards or in the rear where feasible.
 - These are new elements in the Core and should appear subordinate to the historic context.
16. Screen service area with fences or hedges.
 - Consider clustering service areas for abutting properties to minimize the number of service area locations.

Public Spaces and Facilities, Lighting, Street Trees, The Plaza

17. Locate gazebos in public areas or at corners of parking lots.
 - Use historic designs or adaptations where feasible.
 - Use these structures for public information.
18. Maintain the original fan-shaped street plan.
 - This characteristic is essential to the historic integrity.
 - Closing streets in ways that would obscure the original plan is inappropriate.
19. Use the historic fixture design for street lighting.
 - Information is available from the HRC.
 - This applies to private and public utility installations.
20. Maintain the line of street trees in the planting strip between the road and sidewalk.
 - Trees should be planted in the historic spacing pattern as much as possible.
 - Refer to the tree planting plan.
21. Minimize the visual impact of the parking area with textured paving.
 - Use contrasting color and texture of paving to define parking stalls.
 - Define the median with decorative paving.
22. Planting in the median is inappropriate in the Plaza.
23. Maintain clear views to the Depot and the Church.

Public Signs, Parking Lots, Sidewalks and Medians

24. Use coordinated graphics throughout the village.
 - Use similar letter styles, colors, and materials.
 - Sign categories to be coordinated include: information about services and businesses; directions to major facilities; regulation of traffic and parking.
25. Plan parking lots to be sub-divided into small components so that the visual impact of large paved areas is reduced.
26. As much as is possible, develop a lawn-like image for parking areas:
 - Minimize the visual impact of curb cuts by reducing their number by sharing access drives with adjacent properties. This may require developing cross-property easements. By minimizing the number of curb cuts, the edge of the sidewalk remains more strongly defined. Turning movements and pedestrian crossing conflicts are also reduced. This concept was established in the original plan and is still valid today.
 - Provide planting buffers at the parking lot edges;
 - Where parking lots abut the public right-of-way, the City Landscape Ordinance calls for a 10' buffer. The HRC will consider narrower buffers where adequate plant materials are provided.
 - Also include islands in the interior of lots where feasible.
 - Use historic street light design at edges of lots, and along pedestrian walkways.
 - Use compatible contemporary lights for interiors of lots. These should have shielded lamps to minimize glare.
 - Parking lots should be placed to the rear or side locations.
 - Use textured paving to distinguish interior surfaces from the street.

Policy: The historic streetscape character should be re-established throughout the Village, including street trees, lighting, and sidewalk paving.

27. All sidewalks within the core area should be paved in brick.
 - Use the historic paver dimensions.
 - The paver color shall be dark red throughout the Village.
 - The pattern may be a running bond or basket weave.
28. Original granite curbs and fan-shaped storm sewer intakes shall be preserved.
 - Preserve original stone curbs where they exist.
 - Replace concrete curbs with new granite where feasible, or relocate stone curbs from other sites.
29. The original tree planting scheme shall be re-established in all rehabilitation and new construction.
 - The historic spacing of 40 feet on centers shall be used.
30. Street trees should be included in all landscaping plans.
 - Consider using the historic tree guard designs.
31. Consider using granite curbs for planter retainers.
 - Granite trim elements were included in historic design schemes.

Signs

These guidelines apply in addition to the sign regulations in the City sign ordinance. Where there is a conflict between the two, the decisions of the Historic Resources Commission will govern. The HRC has the authority to grant variances to these guidelines if special circumstances warrant them. Street addresses are not counted as signs, as long as they are displayed in a functional, unornamental manner. The frames and supports for signs will not be considered a part of the sign as long as they are modestly proportioned and are not major architectural statements. Sign area will be computed by standard mathematical formulas for common, regular geometric shapes. Or

in the case of an irregularly-shaped sign or letters painted or affixed to a surface, the area will be calculated by the entire area within a single continuous rectilinear perimeter that encloses the extreme limits of the signage.

Policy: Signs should be subordinate to the architecture and overall village character throughout the district.

- A cloth banner will be allowed in addition to the permitted signs on a temporary basis (30 days maximum) for “grand openings” and closings.
- 33. No off-premise sign are allowed in the village (as noted in 1924 deed covenants for the Village).
- 34. No movable or portable signs are allowed in any location in the Village.
- 35. No roof signs are allowed in the Village.
- 36. Position flush-mounted signs to fit within architectural features.
 - Coordinating the color scheme and materials with the front façade.
 - Avoid obscuring ornament and detail.
- 37. Locate projecting signs along the first floor level of the façade.
 - Positions near the building entrance are encouraged.
- 38. Where several businesses share a building, coordinate the signs.
 - Align several smaller signs, or group them onto a single panel.
 - Use similar forms or backgrounds for the signs, to visually tie them together.
- 39. Sign materials should be compatible with the façade materials.
 - Painted wood, fabric and metal are encouraged.
 - Large plastic surfaces are inappropriate.
- 40. Illuminate signs in such a way as to enhance the overall composition of the façade.
- 41. Use indirect light sources for illuminated signs.
 - These focus light on the sign and objects on display in a similar manner, so the viewer’s eye moves comfortably between the two elements.
 - Shield light sources to minimize glare;.
 - Internal illumination is not allowed.
- 42. In all cases, limit the number of signs as follows:
 - Single-occupancy buildings: two business identification signs are allowed per lot, only one of which may be free-standing; one awning sign and occasional product displays are allowed in addition to these limits; one additional attached sign is allowed on corner lots.
 - Multiple-occupancy buildings: See sign sub-area.

Signs in the Cottage Area

- 43. Flush-mounted signs should be on the building face where architectural detail is not obscured.
 - The maximum total area of flush-mounted signs shall be 10 square feet per sign.
 - The maximum projection of the sign surface from the wall shall be 6 inches.
 - One building-mounted sign is allowed for each tenant.
- 44. Free-standing signs for single-occupancy buildings:
 - A size limit of 20 square feet per sign face.
 - Maximum of two sign faces per street frontage.
 - Maximum of 6 inches between faces.
 - Maximum height is 8 feet, measured from the street elevation at the nearest curb, to the top of the sign.
- Free-standing signs for multiple-occupancy buildings:
 - size limit of 20 square feet for the first tenant and 10 square feet for each additional tenant space (40 square feet total maximum).
 - One sign is allowed for each building or development; two sign faces are permitted.
- 45. One porch-mounted sign is allowed if hung from the boxed beam above the porch or project

from a porch column.

- Maximum size is 4 square feet.
 - Only one porch-mounted sign is allowed per porch.
 - Maximum projection shall be 36 inches from the mounting surface.
46. Window signs may be painted on the glass or they may be suspended inside the building at the glass plane.
- Window signs may not exceed 25% of the glass area.
 - One window sign is permitted per building face.
47. Awnings that incorporate symbols as signs are encouraged.
- Sign area may occupy no more than 20% of the awning surface.
 - Sign area may not exceed 10 square feet per awning.
48. Product displays may be located on the sidewalk or near a business entrance.
- Product displays may occupy no more than 25% of the linear frontage of the building.

Signs in the Commercial Core

49. Flush-mounted signs should be on the building face where architectural detail is not obscured; the maximum total area of flush-mounted signs shall be 20 square feet per sign.
50. Free-standing signs for single-occupancy buildings has a size limit of 10 square feet per sign face. Free-standing signs for multiple-occupancy buildings has a size limit of 20 square feet per sign face.
- Maximum height is 8 feet, measured from the street elevation at the nearest curb, to the top of the sign.
 - Two sign faces are permitted.
51. Projecting signs shall have a maximum area of 10 square feet per face; a maximum of two sign faces per building is allowed.
52. Window signs may be painted on the glass or they may be suspended inside the building at the glass plane.
- The maximum area shall be 20 square feet for all window signs.
 - Window signs may not exceed 25% of the glass area.
 - One window sign is permitted per building face.
53. Awnings that incorporate symbols as signs are encourages.
- Awning sign area may occupy no more than 20% of the awning surface
 - May not exceed 10 square feet per awning.
54. Product displays may be located on the sidewalk or near a business entrance and occupy no more than 25% of the linear frontage of the building.

Signs in the Highway Commercial Area

55. Flush-mounted signs should be on the building face where architectural detail is not obscured; the maximum total area of flush-mounted signs shall be 30 square feet per sign.
56. Free-standing signs shall have a maximum of 60 square feet per sign face; two sign faces are allowed; space between sign faces may not exceed 12 inches; maximum height is 18 feet, measured from the street elevation at the nearest curb, to the top of the sign; two sign faces are permitted.
57. Projecting signs shall have a maximum area of 15 square feet per face; a maximum of two sign faces per building is allowed.
58. Window signs may be painted on the glass or they may be suspended inside the building at the glass plane.
- Window signs may not exceed 20 square feet for all window signs.
 - May not exceed 25% of the glass area; one window sign is permitted per building face.
59. Product displays may be located on the sidewalk or near a business entrance and occupy no more than 25% of the linear frontage of the building.

Color

(An approved color palette is available for viewing at the offices of the HRC)

60. Limit colors on a building to three or less. This applies to base, trim and accent colors.
61. Use color to coordinate façade elements in an overall composition.
 - Upper and lower floors should be a part of one color scheme.
 - Signs, awnings, and screens should be a part of the coordinated color scheme as well.
62. Reserve bright colors for accents only (entrances and signs) and in small amounts.
63. Accent colors may be selected without restriction to the approved colors.
64. Trim colors (strap-work, fascia boards, window frames, porch columns and balustrades) must be selected from the approved palette.
 - Historically, trim color is darker than the base color.
65. Base colors must be selected from the approved palette.
 - Base colors should be muted earth tones or pastels; use only one base color.
 - Historically, base color is lighter than the trim color.

Illumination

Policy: Lighting of site and building elements should enhance the historic characteristics of the district.

66. Use lighting to unify the building composition at night.
 - Window displays, entrances, signs, and building details.
 - Avoid overpowering the building or other façade elements with extensive lighting.
 - Display windows in commercial buildings should remain the dominant element.
67. Balance the color and intensity of lighting among the building features.
 - Sign lighting should be balanced in color and intensity with light in display windows.
 - Warm-colored lights are preferred for all exterior lighting.
 - Fixtures should be concealed, very simple, or appropriate to the period of the building.
 - When renovating historic structures, use lighting fixtures that are similar to original.
68. Christmas season lighting shall be coordinated throughout the village.
 - Clear white lights may be used to outline architectural elements, such as roof lines and windows.
 - This lighting may only be used during the Christmas holiday season.
 - It is not necessary to get approval if the lights are in compliance with this guideline.
69. Landmark buildings (Biltmore-Oteen Bank, McGeachy Building) may be illuminated with floodlighting and may be used year-round.
 - Each lighting scheme for a Landmark building will be individually reviewed by HRC.