

Staunton Corridor Overlay Design Guidelines Update PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP

March 16, 2023

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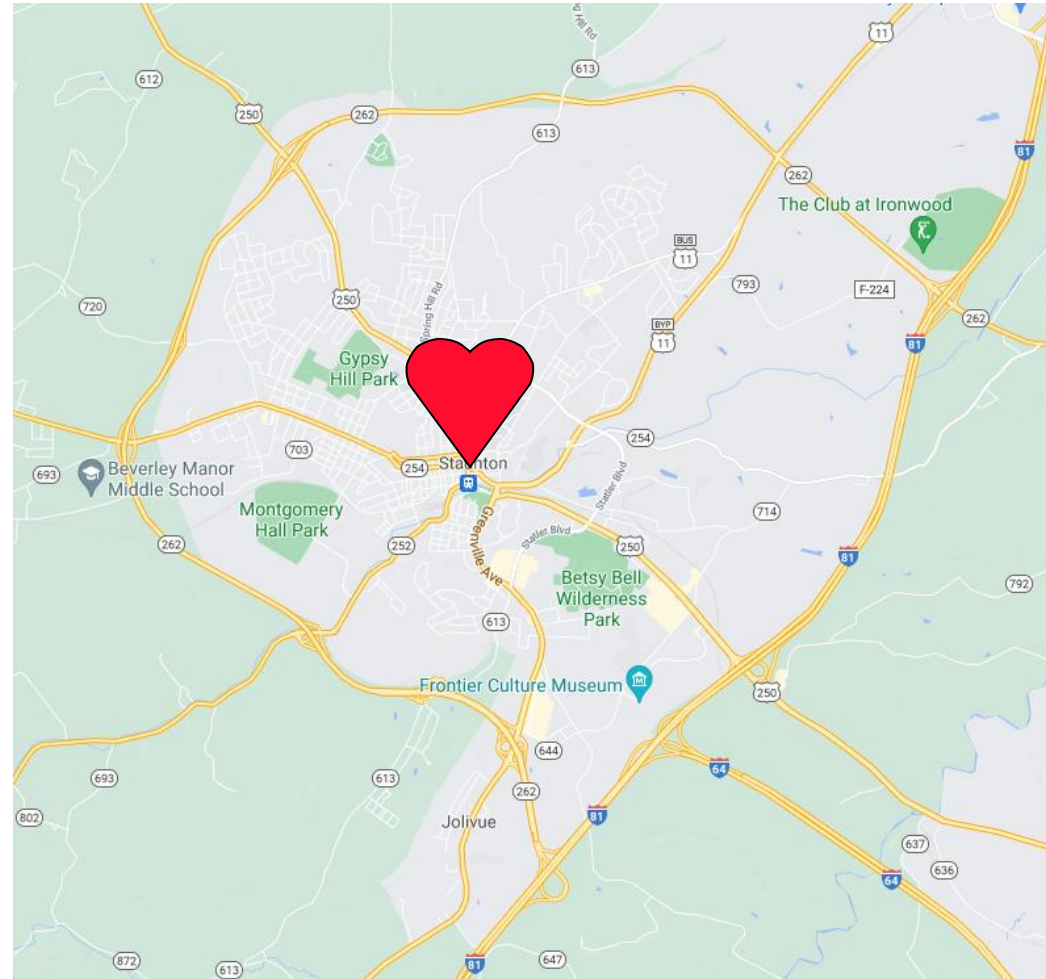
Current Status of New Corridor Guidelines

- Draft delivered and reviewed by staff in November.
- Meeting to discuss relationship of new GLs to the underlying zoning.
- In light of confusion of existing corridor ordinance, existing corridor guidelines & current underlying zoning, what is next step?
- Unravel existing corridor ordinance and the existing guidelines to separate their guidelines from their standards and relate to zoning as needed.
- Staunton Staff & Officials review this new draft of guidelines' text and list of graphics along with samples.



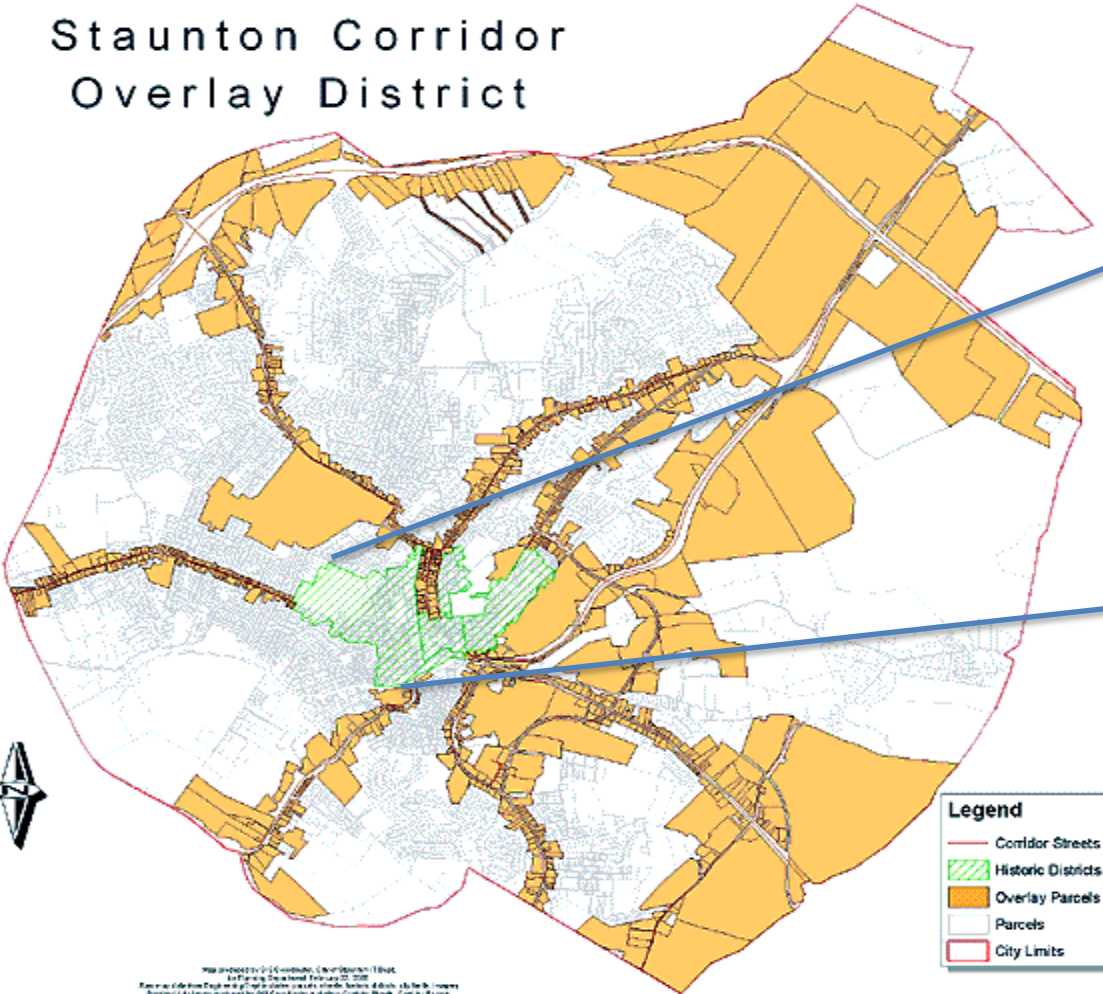
Basis of the State Legislation for Corridor Overlay: Relationship to Historic Districts

Downtown is the heart of our community and corridors are the arteries that lead to it...

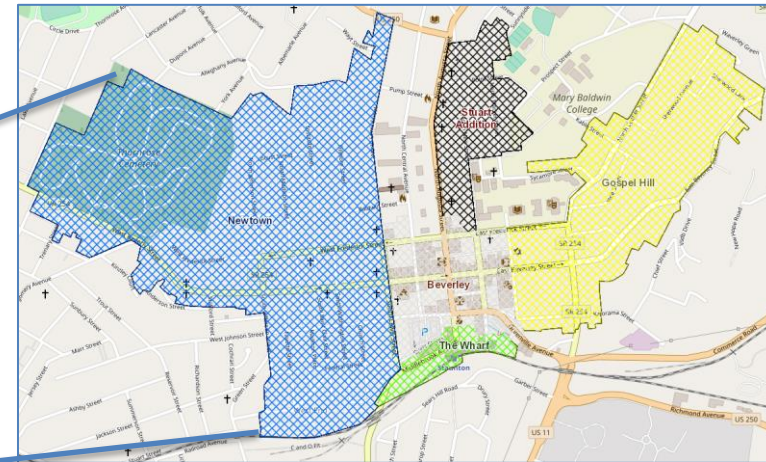


Corridor Overlay District & Historic Districts

Staunton Corridor Overlay District



Historic Districts





Designated Corridors in Staunton

- North Augusta Street
- Central Avenue
- North Coalter Street
- Churchville Avenue
- Commerce Road
- Frontier Drive
- Greenville Avenue
- Lewis Street
- Middlebrook Avenue
- Richmond Avenue
- Statler Boulevard
- West Beverley Street
- Woodrow Wilson Parkway/Rt.252

Designated corridors that do not reflect state enabling legislation that corridor overlay districts should lead to historic districts:

- Frontier Drive
- Statler Boulevard
- WW Parkway-Rt 262

Typical Corridor Sequence

- Rural to urban
- New to old
- Less to more dense
- Larger to smaller parcels
- Vehicular to pedestrian emphasis



Influences on Corridor Character

- Time
- Topography/natural features
- Amount of growth in region
- Level of regulation when developed
- Architectural tastes & building technology
- Vision or lack thereof for corridor



The Corridor Experience: *Why is it Important?*

- Community gateways & thruways
- Basic to auto-oriented society
- Used daily by most of community
- Major tourist/visitor route
- Provides first impression of community
- Location of much retail/service/employment



Corridors Not Going Away

- Key part of regional transportation networks
- Often well positioned for reuse & redevelopment
- High volumes of traffic & #s of users/workers/residents
- Serviced by existing infrastructure
- Many segments of locality are stakeholders on corridors





Project Goals

- 1. Update the design guidelines for the City's 13 Entrance Corridor Overlay Districts*
- 2. Ensure that they are well defined, easy to understand and well illustrated with renderings, illustrations & photographs.*
- 3. Are written to ensure that they give clear directions to result in high-quality, well-designed projects that will enhance the corridors' character.*
- 4. Incorporate changing technologies including building & site materials, alternative energy sources, new lighting concepts, etc.*
- 5. Assist in the protection of Staunton's heritage resources while supporting planning & development in the districts that reflects the unique character of each individual corridor & the City.*

Steps to Corridor Improvements

- Vision for Guidelines (C.P.)
- ↓
- Goals for Guidelines
- ↓
- Guidelines-Text & Graphics
- ↓
- Regulations-Align with GLs

Other Opportunities:

- Public Improvements
- Financial Incentives
- Technical/Design Assistance



Sample Corridor Design Guideline Goals

- Encourage economic development: business friendly & business smart
- Enhance the function
- Enhance appearance
- Mask the utilitarian
- Maintain human scale
- Enhance pedestrian experience
- Build on sense of place



3 Types of Corridors in Staunton

1. Primarily Residential

- N. Augusta St.
- N. Coalter St.
- Churchville Ave.

2. Largely Rural Settings

- Commerce Rd.
- Middlebrook Ave.

3. Commercial Strips

- Greenville Ave.
- Richmond Ave.
- W. Beverley St.
- Lewis St. & Central Ave.

Note: Recommended for Removal

Frontier Drive

Statler Blvd.

WW Parkway – Rt 262



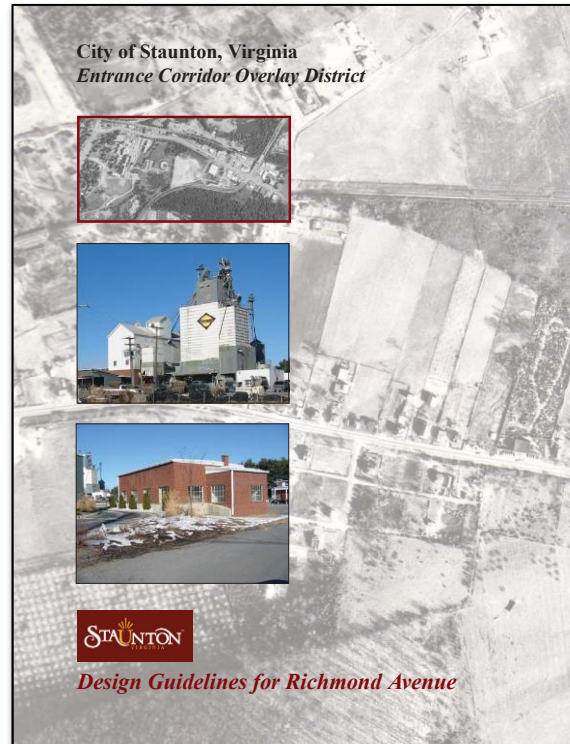
Corridor Plan vs Design Standards vs Design Guidelines

PLAN

- Creates a certain vision for a particular area
- Has phases, timeline & implementation steps
- Results in concrete actions & projects

Example:

- Central Avenue Streetscape Plan



STANDARDS

- Detailed requirements
- Very limited flexibility
- Spelled out in numbers
- Often listed in zoning ordinance sections
- May or may not have graphics

Example: Zoning, Sign, Landscape & Parking Regulations in City Code

GUIDELINES

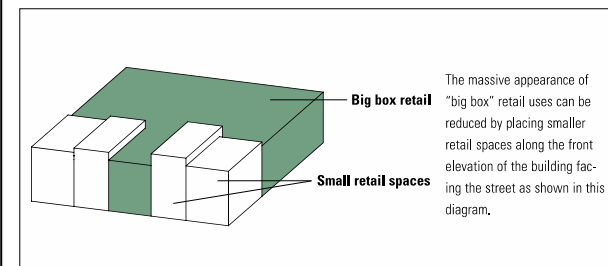
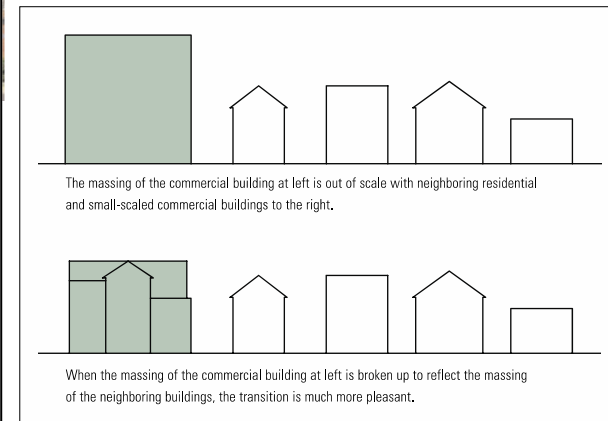
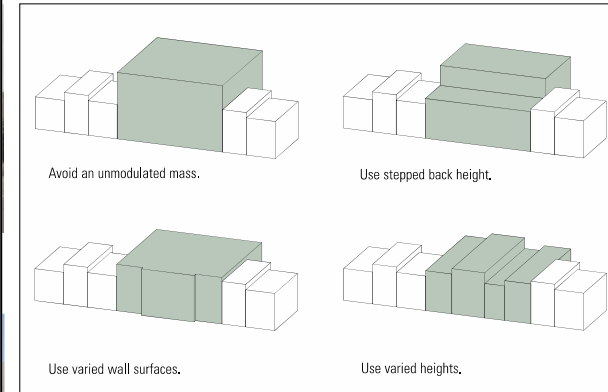
- Currently 11 documents
- Consolidate to 1

Plan vs Design Standards vs Design Guidelines

DESIGN GUIDELINES

- More general & conceptual recommendations
- Offer some flexibility if concepts are met
- More specific than comp. plan vision & goals
- Overlay on top of zoning
- Often accompanied with graphics and photos

Example: Historic District Design Guidelines



What Guidelines Can Do

- Provide guidance for owners, architects and contractors
- Help establish design vocabulary for the corridors to enhance sites & buildings
- Reflect current best practices on corridor design
- Protect property values
- Increase property tax base
- Improve visitor & user experience on the corridor

What Guidelines Don't Do

- Increase new construction or rehabilitation activities (*role of market*)
- Improve maintenance of existing sites & buildings (*maintenance & bldg. code*)
- Regulate amount or location of new development (*zoning*)
- Regulate interior (*bldg. code*)
- **Provide detailed standards (*zoning ordinances in city code*)**



Staunton's Current Zoning Chapters: District Regulations

- 18.20 R-1 Low Density Residential District**
- 18.25 R-2 Low Density Residential District**
- 18.30 R-3 Medium Density Residential District**
- 18.35 R-4 High Density Residential District**
- 18.40 R-5 Manufactured Home Park District**
- 18.45 R-6 Manufactured Home Subdivision**
- 18.50 P-1 Professional District**
- 18.53 TND-I Traditional Neighborhood Development Infill District**
- 18.55 B-1 Local Business District**
- 18.60 B-2 General Business District**
- 18.65 B-3 Planned Business District**
- 18.70 B-4 Cultural and Recreational Planned Business District**
- 18.71 B-5 Mixed-Use Business District**
- 18.75 I-1 Light Industrial District**
- 18.80 I-2 Heavy Industrial District**
- 18.83 Entrance Corridor Overlay District**
- 18.85 H-1 Historic Preservation District**
- 18.90 HE-1 Higher Education District**
- 18.95 A-1 Agricultural-Forestal District**
- 18.100 I-3 Planned Industrial District**



Zoning District Regulations

Zoning District/Categories Regulations Such As R-1, Low Density Residential or B-1, Local Business District. They typically define with detailed **REQUIRED STANDARDS** such as:

- Allowed Uses
- Maximum Lot Coverage
- Front, Rear, & Side Yard Setbacks
- Building Height

These zoning district regulations date from the 1960s to current day & some sections may be periodically updated or new ones created like the corridor overlay chapter.



Staunton's Current Zoning Chapters: Supplementary Regulations

- 18.105 Development Standards for Uses Permitted on Review**
- 18.110 Accessory Uses**
- 18.115 Height**
- 18.120 Yard, Building Setback, and Open Space Exceptions**
- 18.125 Minimum Off-Street Parking Requirements**
- 18.130 Storage and Parking of Trailers and Commercial Vehicles**
- 18.135 Off-Street Loading and Unloading Requirements**
- 18.140 Signs, Billboards, and Other Advertising Structures**
- 18.145 Gasoline Service Stations**
- 18.150 Home Occupation**
- 18.152 Homestay**
- 18.153 Chickens**
- 18.154 Community Garden**
- 18.155 Temporary Uses**
- 18.160 Tents**
- 18.165 Lighting**
- 18.169 Site Plans**
- 18.170 Floodplain Districts and Regulations**
- 18.175 Landscaping and Screening**
- 18.180 Occupancy Limitations**
- 18.185 Telecommunications Facilities**
- 18.190 Nonconforming Buildings, Structures, and Uses of Land**



Staunton's Current Zoning Chapters: Supplementary Regulations

- Chapters that contain more detailed **REQUIRED STANDARDS** that generally related to properties on corridors include:
 - Off Street Parking
 - Signs & Billboards
 - Landscaping & Screening
 - Lighting
 - Site Plans



Nature & Status of Staunton's Zoning District Regulations & Supplementary Regulations

- These chapters contain **REQUIRED STANDARDS**, not guidelines.
- These zoning requirements have evolved over the years- some are quite old while others are relatively recent.
- New Comprehensive Plans with Current Visions & Current Goals are generally updated every 5 years.
- The zoning requirements and any updates are independent of these Comp Plan community vision updates and so some zoning standards may or may not be reflective of current community visions, interests, or desires.



Analysis of Current Overlay Corridor Ordinance & Current Corridor Guidelines

- Reviewed the **current corridor ordinance** for **STANDARDS**: distilled to 5 pages related to parking, buildings, plantings, utilities, signs, and lighting.
- Reviewed the 11 sets of **current corridor “guidelines”**
 - 454 pages-due to much duplication of text & graphics
 - Similar but more categories than in the ordinance
 - Distilled them into guidelines and required **STANDARDS** -7 pages
- Combined the current ordinance & guidelines **STANDARDS** -6 pages for future consideration to be blended into the Zoning District & Supplementary Regulations.
- Reviewed 5 pages of guidelines for inclusion into new guidelines.

Breakdown of Standards & Guidelines

 #1 Staunton Zoning General Provisions.docx

 #2 Gen. STANDS from Corr. Ord.docx

 #3 Staunton GLExtracted Existing.docx

 #4 Staunton GL and STANDS Combined.docx

 #5 Staunton GL and STANDS Divided.docx

 #5 Staunton GL and STANDS Integrated.docx

 #7 Staunton STANDARDS ONLY.docx

 #8 Staunton GLS ONLY.docx



Staunton's Zoning & Guidelines Status

- **REQUIRED STANDARDS** are in both zoning district regulations and current corridor overlay ordinance and current guidelines leading to potential confusion for the property owner.
- The standards in the corridor overlay ordinance and in the current guidelines should be reviewed to see which ones should be combined into existing zoning regulations.
- Some older zoning district regulations also may be outdated and may not relate to current community visions that also can lead to confusion for the property owner.
- The opportunity is to make these regulations more user friendly and only in one location (the zoning ordinance) while also updating the corridor guidelines.
- Updating the zoning regs is a major longer term undertaking and would likely require some level of outside consultant assistance.

Staunton Corridors Analysis Report

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Richmond Ave	39
Rt 262 WW Prkwy	43
Statler Blvd	47
West Beverley St.	51

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AUGUSTA STREET CORRIDOR

General Type

The Augusta Street Corridor is primarily a residential street with pockets of professional and local business uses. It is one of two major corridors leading from downtown north towards other residential areas and subdivisions as well as combining with North Coalter Street to become U. S. Route 11 Business North.

Historic Evolution

Known as Augusta Street from the town's earliest founding, the southern section has never changed its name. The northern end has been known as the Valley Turnpike (1870), Turnpike to Harrisonburg, (1877), Winchester Turnpike (1891), and Valley Pike/Lee Highway (1920s).





Public Workshop Results

Overall, how well would you rate the appearance and functioning of Staunton's corridors

- All attendees rated them "Average"

Comments:

- There is a lot of variety within Staunton corridors.
- There are some bright spots i.e. Sheetz building close to road with pumps behind.
- Some corridors are ancient; some poor property maintenance, need more interconnectivity between neighboring businesses.



Public Workshop Results

Design review is now done by City staff, what is your opinion about this method of review? Do you think Staunton should establish a review board or keep the process as it is now and why?

- Let's try a review board
- Ease pressure on staff
- Promotes community involvement – public has a say
- Review board would be a more transparent process
- Need very clear guidelines



Public Workshop Results

What are your thoughts about a pilot project of enhancement programs such as design assistance, financial incentives, etc. for corridors?

- All groups responded “yes” to this idea
- Active engagement
- Carrot or Stick mentality – encourage rather than demand
- Tax Abatement?
- Source of funding?



Online Questionnaire

Please check your role as it applies to the Staunton entrance corridors

Property owner in a corridor 7% (18)



Tenant/business owner in a corridor 3% (9)



Interested city resident 90% (247)

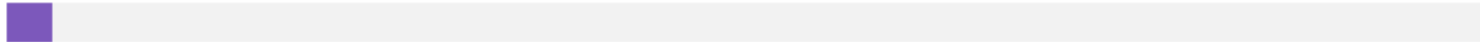


274 Responses

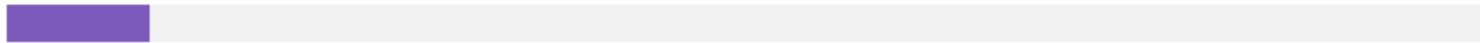
27 Property Owners/Business Owner on Corridor

How important do you think it is to improve the design character/appearance of Staunton's corridors?

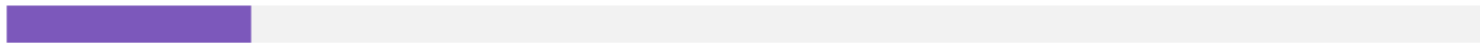
Not at all important 3% (8)



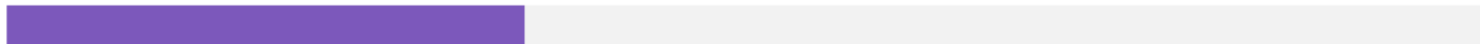
Slightly important 9% (26)



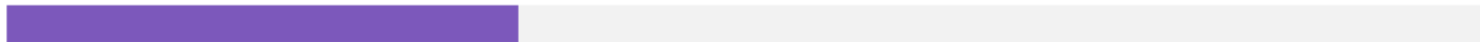
Moderately important 16% (45)



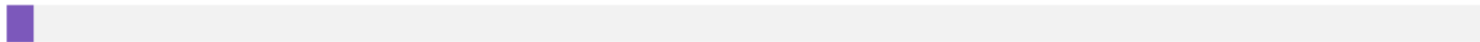
Very Important 35% (96)



Extremely important 35% (95)

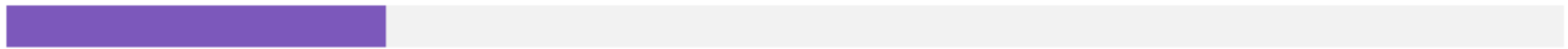


Don't know 2% (5)

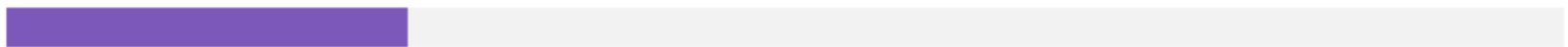


How effective, in general, do you think the City has been in enhancing the character/appearance of the corridors?

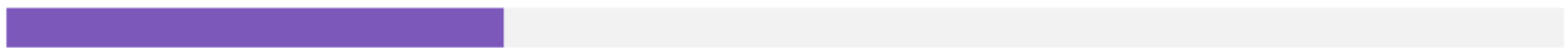
Not at all effective 24% (67)



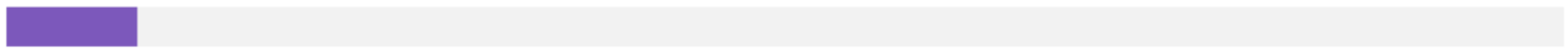
Slightly effective 26% (71)



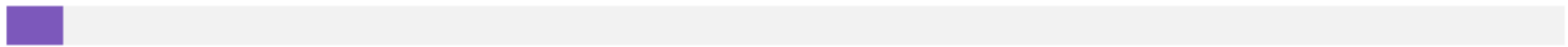
Moderately effective 32% (88)



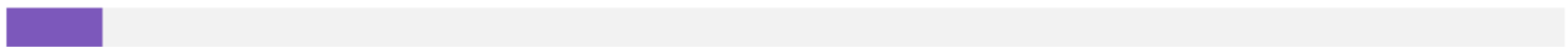
Very Effective 8% (23)



Extremely effective 4% (10)

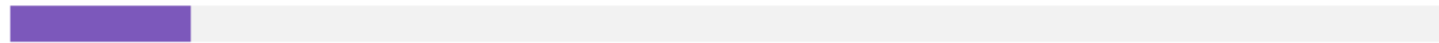


Don't know 6% (17)

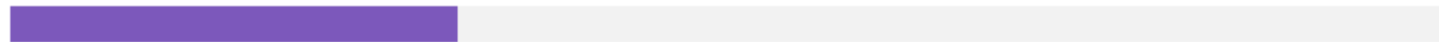


How helpful would you rate the corridor guidelines as a tool to prepare for applying to the City?

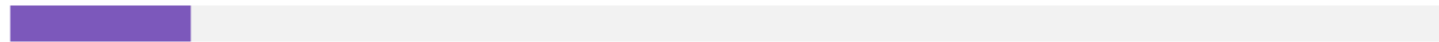
Not at all helpful 13% (2)



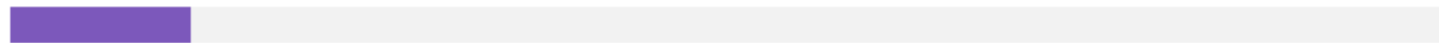
Slightly helpful 31% (5)



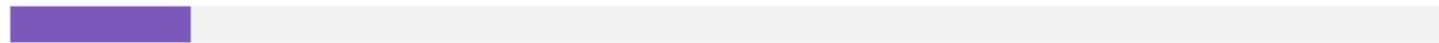
Moderately helpful 13% (2)



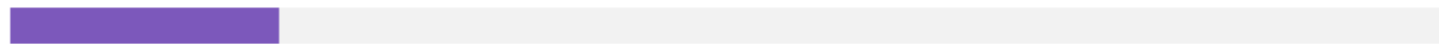
Very helpful 13% (2)



Extremely helpful 13% (2)



Don't know 19% (3)





New Design Guidelines Sections

1. Introduction/Background
2. Planning a Project on the Corridor
3. Entrance Corridor Building Types
4. GLs for Existing Buildings & Additions
5. GLs for New Construction
6. GLs for Franchise Design
7. GLs for Paint, Color, & Finishes
8. GLs for Signs
9. GLs for Awnings & Canopies
10. GLs for Private Site Design & Elements
11. GLs for Solar Panels

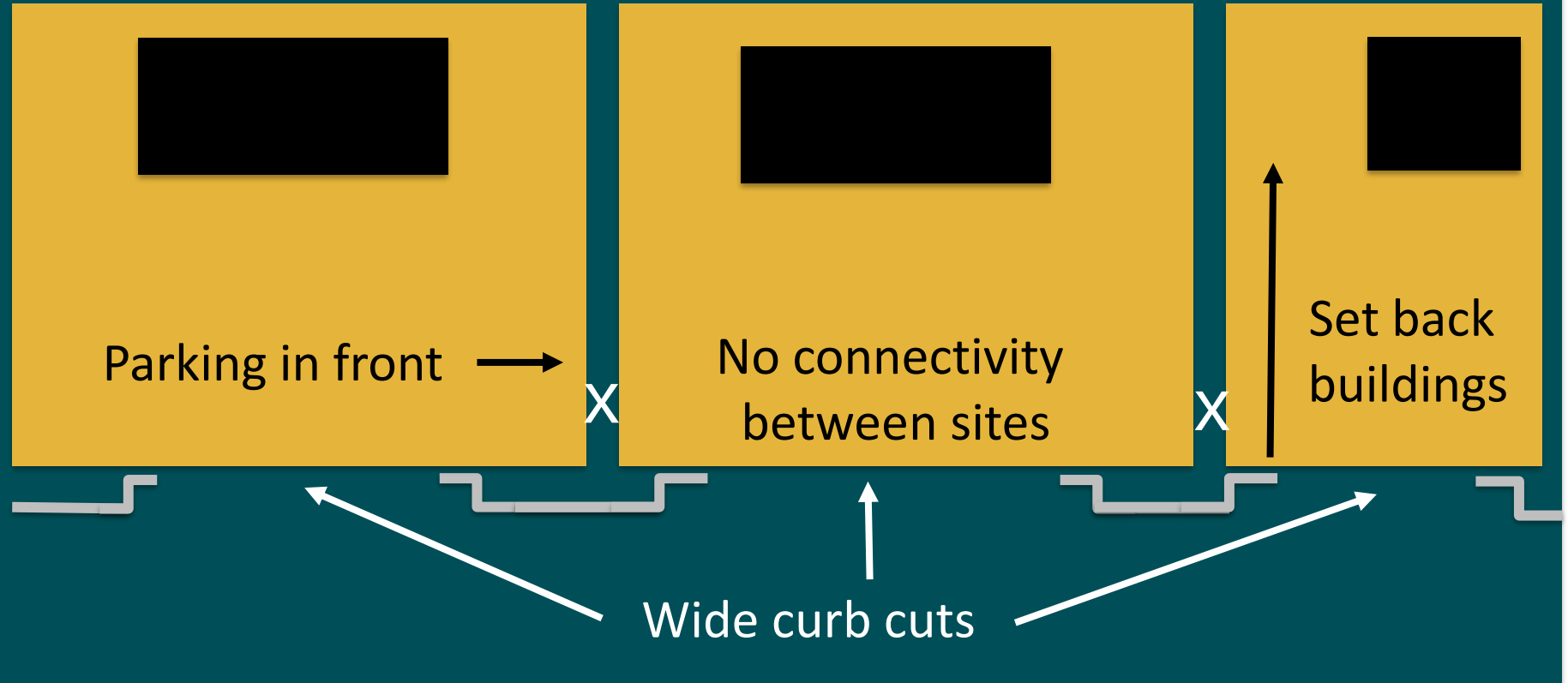


Design Guidelines for Sites

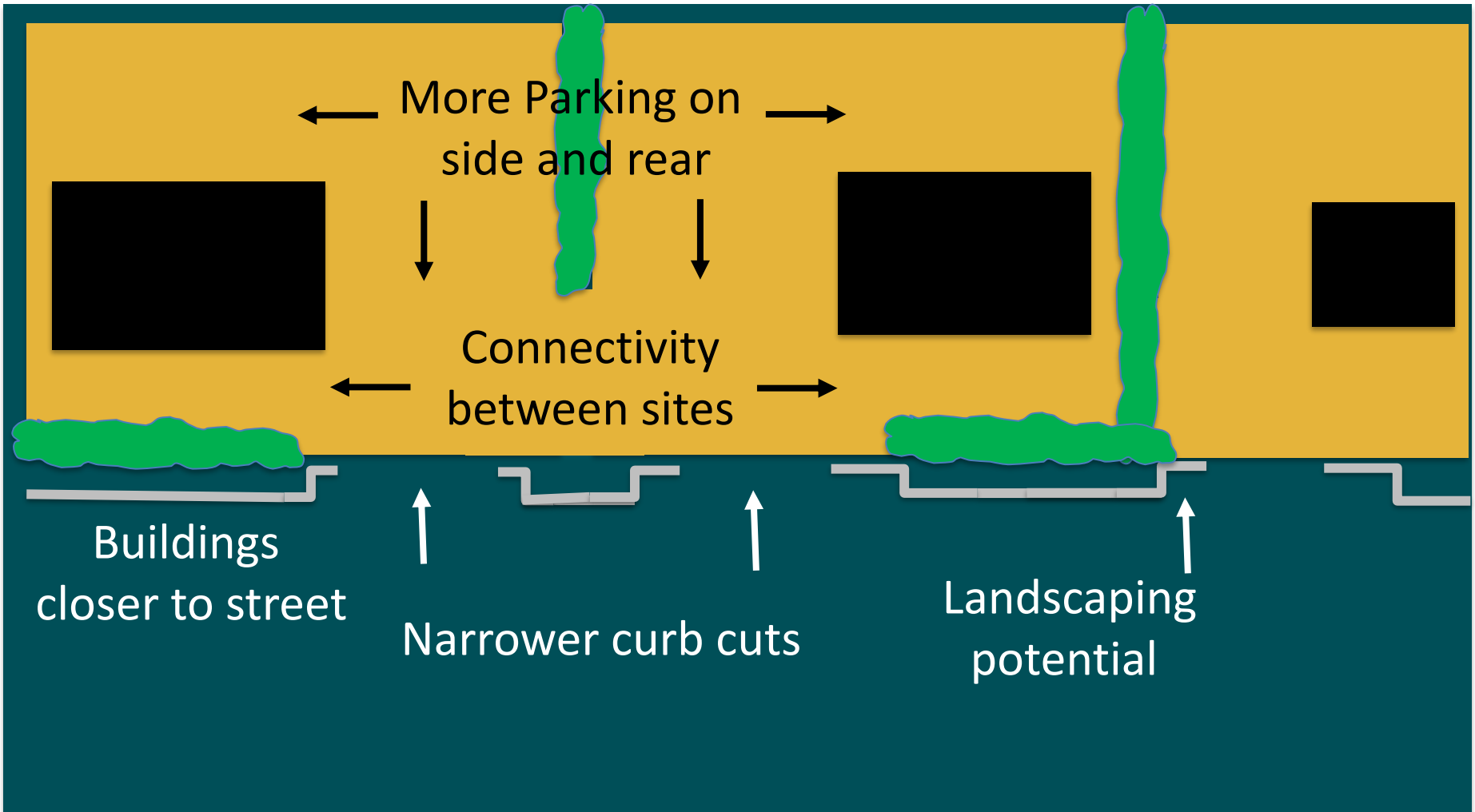


1. Context
2. Connectivity
3. Parking
4. Landscaping
5. Fences & Walls
6. Lighting

Typical Existing Site Conditions on Corridors

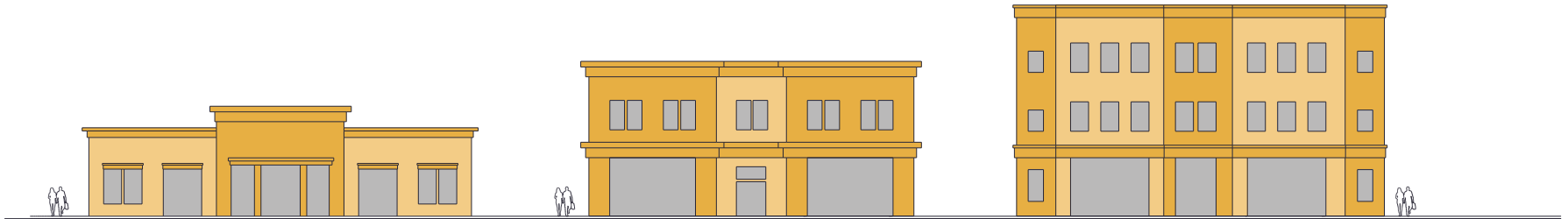


Potential Site Conditions on Corridors



Design Guidelines for New Construction

1. Surrounding Context
2. Building Siting & Orientation
3. Building Mass, Form and Scale
4. Building Height & Width
5. Façade Organization
6. Entrances, & Storefronts
7. Roof Forms and Materials
8. Materials, Finishes, & Colors
9. Architectural Details
10. Building Mounted Lighting
11. Appurtenances



Design Guidelines for Existing Buildings

1. Existing Building/Site
2. Planning the Renovation
3. Typical Design Treatments
4. Existing Building Upgrades
5. Additions to Existing Buildings
 - A. Location & Size
 - B. Architectural Compatibility
6. Building Mounted Lighting
7. Building Mounted Signage
8. Appurtenances



Next Steps



- Complete and adopt new corridor overlay ordinance and design guidelines.
- Review current Comp Plan vision & objectives to provide guidance in any future updating of the current zoning regulations.
- Incorporate any pertinent current corridor standards into the zoning regulations that support the vision.



Draft Corridor Design Guidelines

Staunton Corridor Design Guidelines

DRAFT

March 2023



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