Staunton Corridor Design Guidelines

DRAFT

March 2023

Staunton Entrance Corridor Overlay Districts

DRAFT Design Guidelines

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I. Background

A. Introduction to Staunton's Corridors

The City of Staunton, historically known as the Queen City of the Shenandoah Valley, has a rich and for the most part, a very successful development history. As the county seat of Augusta County and due to its central location in western Virginia, the city was an early home of important state institutions and the location of various educational establishments. After the Civil War, the community experienced decades of successful expansion and development. The interesting pattern of street grids overlaying hills provides for many interesting views and dramatic vistas. When this distinctive setting is paired with many surviving examples of important historic architecture, the result is a very unique city. The continual revitalization of Staunton's downtown in the past several decades has created a new era in the city's history. Over fifty awards and recognition from national organizations and media have validated Staunton's new era of pride and reflect its importance in the state and beyond in terms of economic growth, tourism development, and historic preservation efforts.

Staunton's corridors while varied in uses and overall character, all offer the opportunity to recognize the importance they play in the community's self-image and continued economic development opportunities. This update of the entrance corridor overlay district design guidelines offers the possibility of providing realistic and pragmatic suggestions for property owners and businesses. This update also reflects the national growing recognition of how important and linked the enhanced appearance and architectural quality is to the goal of economic growth, particularly in a community whose future is so tied to continued tourism recognition. By upgrading the functioning and appearance of these corridors, they can contribute to the city's continuing revitalization just as the historic downtown has in the past decades.

At the same time, one must recognize that these corridor guidelines are just a revision of existing guidelines and that they do not in of themselves cause positive change in growth and appearance enhancements. For these guidelines to be truly successful, the general public, developers, property owners, businesses and related civic groups have to understand and support them. Without continuing public education, upgrades may be challenging on some corridors. Other communities have shown the importance of tying these guideline regulations with corridor-specific public improvements along with local financial and technical incentives for improved chances of real upgrades on these important community routes.

B. The Evolution of Corridor Design Character

Generally, corridors are a community's primary vehicular circulation paths to the historic downtown and as such, many were formed in the earliest eras of a locality's history. As communities grew, corridors changed, grew and extended outward from the core. Older segments of corridors often were developed before the introduction of zoning and other land-use regulations. Therefore, there may be great variety in site sizes, building uses and designs as well as corridor widths, configurations and ongoing maintenance.

The location of corridors within a community in relationship to regional transportation networks and subsequent traffic counts result in varying degrees of economic activity and future development potential. By better understanding the nature of these corridors, the City may be able to develop more intelligent and rational policies that will support general goals of corridor economic development along with improved functioning and enhanced appearance.

Staunton has three general types of corridors:

1. Primarily residential streets with some small pockets of retail/office/service mix of businesses;
2. Largely more rural corridors that due to topography and age may have larger parcels of open space with some mix of limited business and industrial zoning;
3. Several traditional "commercial strip" corridors that have retail businesses on separate parcels with a mix of older local establishments and newer national franchise companies including "big box" retail and restaurant chains.

The "commercial strip" type of corridors is likely where more change and development will continue to occur. This activity is due to the historic and current location of these arteries and their corresponding larger traffic count. They include Richmond Avenue, Greenville Avenue, and more recent interest seen in revitalizing the West Beverley Street corridor which due to its location and land-use mix has not seen as much recent economic activity.

While these design guidelines are aimed at the private sector property owner and corresponding business, the city-owned street/right-of-way also plays an important role in the image and appearance of the corridor. The age, functioning, design, maintenance, and presence of any public streetscape amenities and improvements also affect the public's perception of a particular corridor in addition to the actual commercial activities along it.

New national franchise businesses will continue to gravitate to the corridors that have the largest traffic count along with the presence of other existing chains that help create the necessary customer base. Another recent trend that is affecting them is their aging nature coupled with an overbuilt amount of retail space nationwide. The result is increasing vacancies and even demolition of older retail including many malls throughout the country and even here on Greenville Avenue located in adjoining
Augusta County.

National market forces and regional trends affect the changing nature of these commercial corridors. Franchise architecture highlights important branding images to attract customers to familiar building designs. Each new generation embraces some aspects of the new while rejecting some eras of the old. Thus, these areas of the city will continue to see turnover in architectural expressions to respond to changing market forces in both renovation of existing buildings and new construction.

The challenge in regulating the appearance of developments and individual buildings in the corridor overlay districts is to create an overriding aesthetic. Quality building designs that reflect current architectural tastes and trends have strong market appeal. Recognizing this

reality while refining it to local conditions, emphasizing quality materials, and coordinating other aspects of the design such as building size, placement, and site elements can still create attractive and compatible new developments for the community. Thoughtful new planning, zoning, and guidelines will aid in improving the functioning and appearance of these important circulation routes while maximizing their economic growth potential.

C. Staunton's Designated Entrance Corridors, Corridor Zoning and Brief Descriptions

Staunton's currently designated entrance corridors are:

1. Augusta Street
2. Churchville Avenue
3. Coalter Street
4. Commerce Road
5. Greenville Avenue
6. Middlebrook Avenue
7. North Lewis Street/Central Avenue
8. Richmond Avenue
9. West Beverley Street

Frontier Drive, Route 262-Woodrow Wilson Parkway, and Statler Boulevard do not lead to Staunton's historic districts and according to state enabling legislation, they should not be designated as part of the entrance corridor overlay districts.

There is a wide variety of zoning classifications along these corridors. They include:
R-1: Low Density Residential District
R-2: Low Density Residential District
R-3: Medium Density Residential District
R-4: High Density Residential District
P-1: Professional District
B-1: Local Business District
B-2: General Business District
B-3: Planned Business District
HE-1: Higher Education District
I-1: Light Industrial District
I-2: Heavy Industrial District
TND-I: Traditional Neighborhood Development Infill District

Corridor Descriptions:

1. AUGUSTA STREET CORRIDOR

The Augusta Street Corridor is primarily a residential street with pockets of professional and local business uses. It is one of two major corridors historic downtown north towards other residential areas and subdivisions as well as combining with North Coalter Street to become U. S. Route 11 Business North. Augusta Street is mostly a two-lane street with occasional turn lanes at major intersections. Most of the office buildings are a traditional design, set back with landscaping at the edge of the street. Other commercial uses typically have parking in the front of the site with little to no landscaped edges. There are several larger sites containing strip type shopping centers as well as a set of professional offices. Some residential buildings have been converted to business use. Signs vary from pole mounted to monument signs as well as building mounted ones as well. There are several examples of larger back-lit signs that announce professional businesses even though they are not open in the evenings. Several of the strip shopping centers have one larger free-standing sign containing separate business signs.

2. CHURCHVILLE AVENUE CORRIDOR

Churchville Avenue is primarily residential and borders the entire north edge of Gypsy Hill Park. There are pockets of local businesses at key intersections on the western parts of the corridor. Churchville Avenue is mostly a two-lane street with occasional turn lanes at major intersections. Many of the sites are early-twentieth century residential that are setback and have landscaped front lawns. There are several residences that have been converted to businesses and have parking areas where yards used to exist. Some commercial buildings have parking in front with no landscaping while a few have landscaping as they were developed after the current corridor guidelines. Freestanding and wall signs tend to be large and dominant along this corridor.

3. COALTER STREET CORRIDOR

The Coalter Street corridor (along with Augusta Street) is primarily residential and serves as a main route to the northern sections of the city. It has large parcels with well-maintained sites of schools, churches, professional uses and Mary Baldwin University. There are pockets of local businesses along with several strip centers. It is a-two lane street with occasional turn lanes added at major intersections. Some commercial sites have buildings with deep setbacks and fronted with large parking lots. In these cases, there is typically a landscaped edge between the street and parking lot. On other commercial sites where the building has a shallower setback, there is paving between the building and the street allowing for parking. Residences are generally still in their original use and well maintained. Most signs are monument type at professional businesses. Large building mounted and pole mounted signs exist on some strip center businesses and at the intersection of Edgewood Road and Coalter Street.

4. COMMERCE ROAD & U.S. RT. 11 BYPASS CORRIDOR

This is a largely rural appearing route with commercial uses at the junction of Rt. 262. The railroad runs on the east/south side and goes through several industrially zoned sites. There are pockets of business and industrial uses south of Statler Boulevard. Several sites are rural and have expanses of fields, trees and plantings. Where there are commercial buildings, there is typically landscaping in front of parking. Entering downtown, there is a large electrical service hub on the north side. An industrial railroad yard is located across from the electrical equipment. Most recent buildings are one-story brick with office uses. Older industrial buildings tend to be more utilitarian in design. There is very little development on this corridor. Free-standing monument or pole signs provide the location for multi-tenant developments.

5. GREENVILLE AVENUE CORRIDOR

This is a traditional retail/commercial strip type corridor and Staunton's first major commercial corridor dating from post WW II. It is designated also as U.S. Route 11 and was the major highway to the southern parts of Augusta County and on to Lexington until the construction of Interstate 81. Older sites have paving up to the front property line. Some later developments have minimal landscaped edges while building types and sizes vary. Most are one-story simple commercial structures that have limited setbacks. Others are franchise design, particularly fast-food restaurants. There also are examples of strip commercial buildings set back further from the street to allow large parking areas in front. Signs are typically large pole types with some more recently installed monument types.

6. MIDDLEBROOK AVENUE & RT. 252 CORRIDOR

Middlebrook Avenue has a mixture of uses and building types from residential to industrial. It is rural in its aesthetic with abundant native landscaping along the avenue. This corridor is a local connector to the southwest portion of Augusta County. Beginning at the junction of Route 262, Middlebrook Road is a four-lane divided road with a planted median; the road then narrows to two lanes. Sites vary depending on use. Many of the industrial/commercial type buildings or one-story office/commercial buildings have paved parking lots up to the street. Some of these buildings have chain link fences securing their parking areas. There are scattered residences and historic homes with landscaping up to the street. Building types include early brick and frame houses along with larger industrial/commercial masonry buildings of various types of construction, materials and character. There are also a few newer one-story office buildings. There are very few signs on this corridor.

7. NORTH LEWIS STREET (EAST SIDE) & CENTRAL AVENUE FROM CHURCHVILLE AVENUE TO FREDERICK STREET CORRIDORS

The west side of Lewis Street is designated as part of the New Town Historic District, while the east side has various older industrial and retail buildings. The southern end of Central Avenue is the former site of Staunton's 1960's urban renewal experiment that resulted in the demolition of dozens of historic structures and their replacement with a row of bank buildings along with a fast-food franchise, a national chain motel and Staunton's main fire station. The northern section contains older commercial structures. Lewis Street is a two-lane street with parallel street parking on the west side. Central Avenue is a two-lane street where a few older buildings remain on the north side of Pump Street and the west side of Central Avenue to the north and south of Baldwin Street. Major new streetscape improvements were completed on Central Avenue in 2022. There are some parking lots that go through the block to Central Avenue and have no landscaped edges or enhancements. There are several houses with minimal landscaped setbacks. The sites of newer commercial buildings typically have street front landscaping. Most signs are pole mounted or located on the building facades.

8. RICHMOND AVENUE & U.S. RT. 250 CORRIDOR

Richmond Avenue is Staunton's busiest commercial corridor with a traditional mixed - use development and is home to several big box businesses and many franchise restaurants. It is the major gateway from I-81 and has the largest traffic counts of all of Staunton's corridors. For the most part, sites east of Bell Street are newer and have landscaped edges in front of parking areas. Utilities are underground. The exceptions are older sites and developments such as the Farm Bureau and Augusta County Fire Department where the paved parking meet the street. On the south side of Richmond Avenue beginning around Bell Street, the sites are higher as due to the increasing topography that extends beyond to Betsy Bell and Mary Gray hills. Buildings on this side and their parking areas are situated at that higher level. Buildings east of Bell Street are generally newer and include various national franchise designs, particularly fast-food types. Buildings west of Bell Street are older and contain more industrial/service type uses, particularly on the south side where the hilly topography occurs. At the eastern end of Richmond Avenue where the developments are more recent, most signs are monument types along with building-mounted signs. Proceeding west on the corridor, pole-mounted signs dominate along with building-mounted types reflecting older regulations.

9. WEST BEVERLEY STREET CORRIDOR

Originally West Beverley Street was more residential in character with various historic homes. However, a rezoning of sixty years ago created new commercial uses, and many parcels were developed among the deteriorating residences with minimal regulations. The result was much demolition and utilitarian designed new construction. It is a two-lane street from the entrance to Food Lion on the west end where it becomes wider and has a center turn lane. There are a variety of sites given that the street evolved from

rural/residential to commercial uses. Some of the businesses are in converted houses with the front lawn being paved for parking. Other strip commercial designs also have parking in front with paving to the street and no landscaping. The result is a lack of visual cohesion and an ill-defined street edge. There is a wide variety of types including older historic era vernacular frame dwellings, most of which have been renovated in recent years. Some have been converted to business uses and need basic maintenance. Other commercial buildings reflect franchise designs or are basic rectangular masonry utilitarian structures of varying size and site location. Small strip center type developments and buildings have typical designs. There is a wide variety of signs from aging pole signs to large building mounted types.

II. Planning a Project on Staunton's Entrance Corridors

A. Staunton's Comprehensive Plan: Corridor Goals & Objectives

The City of Staunton updates its comprehensive plan every five years and City Council may also create priorities in between those updates. The following goals and objectives relate to various aspects of the city's corridors.

- Encourage appropriate new development that is well planned, compatible, incorporates mixed uses when appropriate, and contributes to the resource base of the city.
- Coordinate planning on corridors to promote quality of life and architectural character.
- Encourage appropriate landscaping, architectural design, signage, viewshed considerations, and buffers along major thoroughfares.
- Enhance the physical attractiveness of the city through signage, landscaping and tree plantings, controlling litter, and reducing light pollution through "Dark Sky" techniques.
- Encourage commercial and retail structures that adjoin residential neighborhoods to utilize consistent or complimentary facades and site features to the surrounding neighborhoods when they are developed, redeveloped, or renovated.
- Expand the streetscape planning to include entry corridors immediately adjacent to and leading into the Downtown historic districts.
- Also, three-year priorities for economic development include reviewing and revising ordinances that are related to economic development to ensure that the city is business friendly and aligned with City Council's vision including the zoning ordinance and the corridor overlay ordinance.

B. Design Principles for Corridor Guidelines

The following design principles are intended to enhance the functional aspects and physical appearance of Staunton's entrance corridor guidelines to encourage and improve economic development.

1. Strengthen the street edge with buildings and landscape on major corridors.
2. Maintain a human scale in building design and outdoor spaces.
3. Where existing buildings or developments do not provide appropriate examples, new development should strive to implement the intended vision rather than repeat existing patterns.

4. Existing buildings or developments should be upgraded to a higher design quality as opportunities arise to reflect these guidelines.
5. Continue the emphasis on attractive and well-maintained landscaping.
6. Preserve and enhance natural character of topography, streams, and mature trees.
7. Mask the utilitarian by screening equipment, loading spaces, parking areas, and other uses that may have adverse visual impacts.
8. Continue to create an inviting public streetscape realm with coordinated designs as the City may invest in future public improvements along the corridors.

C. The Design Review Process for Property/Business Owners

Through the comprehensive plan and the Staunton City Code, the City strives to protect its natural, scenic, historic, architectural and cultural resources, particularly areas leading to or near historic districts. Section 18.83, Entrance Corridor Overlay District of the City Code provides the legal basis for the design review process on the designated entrance corridors.

Design review may include alterations to existing buildings and sites as well as new construction. Reviewed use types include commercial, institutional, industrial, mixed-use, and multi-family buildings and sites, as well as open space. Single-family uses are exempt from review as are state or federally owned projects and normal maintenance as well. These entrance corridors overlay districts are in addition to, and overlay, all other zoning districts so that any parcel of land lying in the entrance corridor overlay district shall also lie in one or more of the other zoning districts.

Applicants should submit their plans to the zoning administrator or designee for review in the planning department. That office will provide detailed guidance in regard to the required items for review that may include plans, maps, studies, reports, photographs, renderings and drawings. Depending on the scope and type of work that you would like to accomplish, you may need professional assistance: an architect to assist in designing building upgrades, an addition, or a new building; a landscape architect and/or civil engineer to help you with new site work; and a sign maker or graphic designer to create a new sign design.

The zoning administrator may request that the planning commission review the application depending on the scope, nature, or location of the project. That body may also review a project if the zoning administrator and the applicant cannot reach an agreement on any aspect of the development plan. If the applicant does not agree with the planning commission, he/she may appeal the decision to the city council and if they do not agree with the council's decision, they may appeal to the circuit court.

Section 15.2-2306 of the Code of Virginia provides the legal basis for localities to regulate the design of developments along arterial streets or highways that are significant routes of tourist access to the locality or to historic landmarks and historic districts.

Specific sections of the City's Zoning Ordinance in the City Code provide more detailed standards for various aspects of permitted uses and requirements for site, signs, lighting, landscaping and building design than do these general principles and guidelines presented in

this document. In addition, building codes define specific national and state standards that must be followed in order to receive permits for construction. Applicants are encouraged to meet early in their project design feasibility stages with staff of the planning department to gain further information in regard to specific requirements for their project.

The following design principles and guidelines present general design priorities that can be adapted to individual circumstances of site and building design. While specific examples are provided, the enduring strength of the guidelines relies on their flexibility. Not every case and circumstance can be anticipated nor is the goal to prescribe the design of every development on the corridors.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a tool for property owners, developers, designers, and the City to create, review, and build distinctive, livable, and viable projects on Staunton's entrance corridors. They be site improvements, new buildings, the renovation of existing structures and/or combinations of all of the above. The intent is not to limit growth or development within the corridors nor to dictate specific stylistic designs or restrict creative design solutions. Rather, the structure and content of this manual are meant to give developers and reviewers the perspective and the flexibility to develop designs that meet the intent, principles and spirit of these guidelines and the general statements of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

III. Entrance Corridor Building Types

A. Influences on Corridor Development

The design character along the corridors varies widely due to various factors including:

- the era(s) in which they were originally constructed;
- the amount of growth and changes that have occurred over time;
- the level of regulation or lack thereof when they were originally developed;
- the more recent and current zoning classifications and regulations;
- architectural tastes and building technology of the of the corridor, and
- the eras when the corridors experienced larger amounts of growth and change.

B. Current Corridor Building Types

- Fast food drive through restaurants and sit-down restaurants
- Gasoline stations
- Hotels and motels
- Office and mixed-use buildings
- Converted residential dwellings to commercial or office use
- Retail-commercial one-story buildings
- Service buildings
- Strip centers and big box commercial buildings
- Traditional historic commercial buildings

IV. GUIDELINES FOR EXISTING BUILDING RENOVATIONS & ADDITIONS

A. Introduction

The Staunton corridors have a rich variety of building types and site conditions as outlined in Chapter III. Entrance Corridor Building Types. Some buildings are of recent construction and in fine condition while others are older and reflect an earlier time along the corridors. They may have been well maintained or need improvements. Others may have had alterations through the years and would benefit from an upgraded appearance.

More recently added buildings to the corridors have sites with underground utilities, landscaping and attractive signage. In contrast, some of the existing older properties may lack attractive site elements or the few that they have may be outdated. See Chapter X. Private Site Design & Elements for guidelines on site improvements.

Since there are many different types, sizes, and locations of buildings on the corridors, there are many possibilities on renovating them. This section of the guidelines is intended to give guidance on various design improvement potential for existing commercial buildings on the Staunton corridors.

B. Assessment & Plan

The first step is to tour the site and building to determine what items need attention and should be included in your plans. Once you know what repairs or replacements are needed due to poor condition of a feature, finish, material, or obsolete equipment and systems, you can begin to create a plan and a budget to address these items.

The next step is to assess the architectural character and quality of the building's overall exterior design and determine what enhancements might be appropriate. If the building is of a distinctive style and/or has unique features or materials that help define its character, consider retaining those elements in the new plan. If the building lacks such features, identify which elements and materials may benefit from a new design and replacement.

Create a design and scope of work for these improvements and combine them with the maintenance items to calculate a project budget. Consider creating a phased plan, if needed, for budget purposes. General categories of treatment plans are discussed in the next section

C. Typical Building Design Treatments

1. This section is intended to give guidance for modifications to existing buildings. These improvements may include:
   - modifying and/or extending the façade wall height;
   - adding a sign band area with a cornice or other sign locations on the building;
   - modifying or replacing the front door and entryway or the entire storefront;
   - replacing existing windows with a similar or a new design;
   - replacing wall materials;
   - modifying or replacing the roof with a new design form and materials, and

- adding wall treatments and details that help break down the mass and monolithic appearance of a building to help create human scale.

Minor modifications such as adding awnings, signage, and site improvements including landscaping and lighting are addressed in other chapters of these guidelines.

2. Treatments to existing buildings with no defining architectural characteristics can range from traditional to contemporary design treatments.

   Traditional treatments may include:
   - traditional materials (stone, brick, wood, stucco and/or contemporary materials that have the same appearance as traditional ones, and
   - traditional elements such as storefronts, vertical windows, cornices, and gable or hipped roof forms.

   Contemporary treatments may include:
   - mixing traditional and contemporary materials such as brick, stucco, and metal;
   - using more contemporary materials such as various metals, ceramic panels, various textured and colored glass;
   - using different window types and configurations other double hung types, and
   - creating new entrance placement and details.

3. For one-story commercial buildings desiring more visibility from the street, adding height to the front façade is an option. Many times, shallow sloped roofs have been added over storefronts to provide protection over the entry. Consider alterations that remove the added roof and extend the front wall height to allow for sign bands, awnings, cornices and other elements that give the building more presence on the street.

4. Many existing older buildings on the corridors originally had large storefronts that have been filled in with solid materials. Consider reopening these storefronts to bring back the original character of the building.

5. For larger buildings with monolithic designs, consider adding or using elements to help create scale and break down the mass such as articulated entrances and window trim, belt courses or string courses to divide levels of the façade, cornices above the first floor, material or color changes between the foundation or first floor and the upper floors, pilaster-like elements, or material or color changes to divide long facades into shorter bays. These are just some of the ways to create a more human scale for the exterior of unadorned buildings

6. Encourage the retention and re-use of any historic buildings that may be located on a corridor.

D. Guidelines for Additions

1. Determine if the building's design quality contributes to the desired architectural character of Staunton's corridors. If considered contributing to this goal, limit the size of the addition so that it is subordinate in both size and design to the existing building. If the existing building's design quality is assessed as not contributing to the character of the corridor, then the addition may screen the existing building. In this case, refer to Chapter V. Guidelines for New Construction.

2. 'If the existing building has a deep set back on the site, consider placing the addition to the front of the existing building to help reinforce the street edge of the corridor.

3. The construction materials and the color of the new addition should be harmonious with traditional building materials such as brick, wood, stone, or synthetic materials such as artificial stucco or cementitious siding on a case-by-case basis. If the existing building has quality materials, use them for the addition.

4. Generally, a small hyphen (an indented connector) is the easiest way to connect the new addition without having to make major changes to the existing building. Therefore, the new design in most cases should not use the same wall plane, roofline, or cornice height as the existing structure.

5. If a rooftop addition is being considered to add one or more stories to an existing building, a structural assessment should be made to ensure that the addition is feasible. Its design and materials should relate to the existing building if the quality of the original design is assessed as contributing to the city's aesthetic goals for the district; otherwise, new exterior design and materials would be appropriate. If considered non-contributing, new exterior design and materials would be appropriate. In this case, refer to the Chapter V. Guidelines for New Construction.

V. GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

A. Introduction

The following guidelines offer general recommendations for the design of new buildings. Since Staunton's corridors have subareas throughout the city, as well as a variety of zoning categories, these new construction guidelines may vary depending on the type of building. However, there are common design principles and guidelines for new buildings even though their types may be different; these are discussed later in this chapter.

The design of new construction on Staunton's corridors will depend on the existing architectural context of a particular corridor and new design can range from traditional to contemporary in terms of massing, details, materials etc. The intent is also not to encourage copying or mimicking any certain historic style.

These criteria are all important when considering whether proposed new buildings are appropriate and compatible; however, certain criteria may be more important in some situations. For instance, setback and spacing between buildings may be more important than roof forms or materials since there is more variety of roofs and some are not visible due to their slope. In addition, depending on the location and surrounding buildings, not all criteria may need to be met in every example of new construction.

B. Building Types

When designing new buildings, one needs to recognize that there is a great variety of new construction that might be constructed along Staunton's corridors. The design parameters of new buildings will differ depending on their context and use. These may vary from gas stations to service buildings to hotels or institutional buildings. See Chapter III. Entrance Corridor Building Types for further information.

C. Building Siting

For the purposes of these guidelines, site refers not only to the area of ground that the building sits on, but also to the position of the building on the site (setback and spacing). Front setback is the required area between the property line and the front wall of the building. Spacing between buildings depends on the side-yard setback requirements. Building siting also refers to density requirements as well as building and lot coverage. Site also includes a variety of elements such as parking, outbuildings, landscaping, and fences that are addressed under Chapter X. Guidelines for Private Site Design & Elements. Since these guidelines are related to an overlay district, they may take precedence over the underlying zoning in order to site the building more appropriately within its context than the standards of the zoning.

1. Siting of new buildings and structures should take into consideration the setbacks, views, and locations of surrounding buildings with the goal of reinforcing the positive aspects of the location and strengthening the street wall and edge of the corridor.

2. Limit setbacks at major intersections so that the architecture can help define the corners of that particular sub-area.

3. Strive for contiguous building arrangement along the street face where feasible in terms of spacing.

4. Orient service areas to limit their visual impact on street front and any neighboring areas.

5. Consider connecting neighboring sites with interior lot private streets and pedestrian routes to reduce the need to return to the main corridor when visiting adjoining businesses.

D. Building Orientation

Siting of a building is the way it is oriented, or how its façade and main entrance face in relation to the street and other nearby buildings.

1. Site buildings so that their main entrances are facing the street on which they are located.

2. If a building has more than one orientation and needs more than one entrance façade, entrances should be designed to reflect this hierarchy. For instance, the prominent façade and the main entrance may face a major corridor while elevations facing local streets, parking, or adjoining developments can have secondary facades and entrances.

3. If a building and its main entry is oriented to a public space or a parking area, the street elevation should contain scale-reducing techniques for visual interest and should not be an unadorned blank wall. Its design should be integrated with the rest of the building.

4. Orient entrances for convenient access from adjacent buildings, sidewalks, parking, and bike paths.

E. Building Form & Articulation

The overall form and articulation of a building relates its combination of shapes, massing, proportions, and directional expression. A building's form, shape or mass, can be simple (a single box-like structure) or complex (a combination of elements used with projections or indentations and varied roofline). Also, a building can have horizontal, vertical, or square proportions.

1. Larger buildings should use form and articulation techniques to reduce their mass such as dividing the facades and other visible elevations into smaller bays with varying materials and colors. Also vary roof heights and forms to reduce the visual mass of the structure.

2. Use building mass appropriate to the context of the site. For instance, buildings with a large footprint, massing, or height should be placed in the core of larger commercial or office developments where the impact on adjacent smaller scale existing buildings is the least. Likewise, when making transitions to lower density areas, modulate the height and mass of the building to relate to smaller buildings.

F. Building Height & Width

Because of the variety in building forms and uses along Staunton's corridors, there is a corresponding wide variety in building heights and widths.

1. The maximum height of new construction varies depending on the zoning, but many new commercial buildings may still be one story depending on their use. Building width will depend on size of the parcel, the use, and corresponding parking requirements as well as its existing surrounding context of nearby buildings.

2. Consider increasing the height of new one-story buildings to create a parapet wall area for a more visible sign location along with a pronounced cornice to complete the façade design.

G. Building Scale

Scale is the relationship between the size of a building and the size of a person, its neighboring buildings, and its site. The design features of a building can reinforce a human scale or can create a massive scale. There is a very wide variety of scale on Staunton's corridors depending on a building's location, design, age, and use.

1. Reinforce the human scale of new design by including different materials, textures or colors within a large building and/or by dividing large facades and other elevations into different bays with different heights and planes. Articulated foundation, cornices, material changes and fenestration can also define human scale. A three-part building design with a differentiated base, upper story, and roof or cornice line also creates scale.

2. Use other techniques may include varying rooflines and window patterns, articulating entrances, adding cornices and string and belt courses to separate floor levels, and using other decorative features. Corner articulation, balconies, canopies, marquees, and awnings can all also help create more of a human scale.

3. Consider creating a three-part building design with a differentiated base, upper story, and roof or cornice line.

H. Roof Form & Materials

The importance of roof materials depends on its form. Certain roof types result in very visible roof materials. While larger commercial or mixed-use projects may have roofs hidden behind parapet walls, smaller commercial and office buildings often have very visible roofs. Common roof forms include hipped, gable, flat, and shed roofs. Frequently used roof materials include metal, composition shingles, rubber membranes, and built-up roofs of tar and gravel.

1. Use roof forms that complement the building design and contribute to a human scale.

2. Vary roofline to break up the mass of large-scaled buildings to avoid a visible monolithic expanse of roof. Use gable and/or hipped forms or different height of bays. Break the roof mass with elements such as gables, hipped forms, dormers, or parapets. Scale these features to the scale of the building.

3. When a shed or flat roof design is used, add a parapet to wall facing public view to screen the roof.

4. Consider using a special roof feature on buildings located at a gateway, a prominent corner or to highlight entry bays on larger structures such as a taller element like a decorative tower, a clock element or similar feature, but keep it in scale with the rest of the building.

5. On roofs that are visible, use quality materials such as standing-seam metal, architectural shingles, slate, or artificial slate.

6. Rubber membrane roofs or built-up roofs should be used on flat or sloping roofs that are not visible from public areas.

7. Any equipment located on a roof should be screened from public view.

I. Opening Types & Patterns

Most commercial buildings will have some sort of storefront to relate to their commercial function while other uses such as offices, hotels, service buildings and multi-story buildings may have separate windows and doors.

1. The rhythm, patterns, and ratio of solids (walls) and voids (windows and doors) of new buildings will depend on the use and can be designed in a traditional or contemporary manner.

2. The size and proportion, or the ratio of width to height, of windows of new buildings' primary facades may be vertical, horizontal or square. Their arrangement may be laid out in a pattern or in a more random fashion depending on the building's use and its overall design.

3. Traditionally designed openings are generally recessed on masonry buildings and have a raised surround on frame buildings. New construction may use these methods, or they may have openings that are flush with the rest of the wall.

4. Darkly tinted or mirror glass generally is not an appropriate material for windows or doors in new buildings.

5. Opaque spandrel glass panels should be used sparingly to conceal structural elements and/or where the design of a building's interior does not allow for the use of clear glass. Opaque spandrel glass panels should not be used as a decorative feature in place of clear glass.

J. Entry Features

Due to the commercial uses associated with most corridor buildings, it is important to design entry features that are an attractive and distinctive welcoming element and well- integrated into the overall façade design.

1. The design of any storefront, porch or portico should relate to the overall architectural style of the building.

2. In mixed-use buildings with upper-story residential or office use, consider placing first floor retail storefronts if the building faces a commercial corridor. Divide larger such buildings with storefront modules.

3. In buildings that are office or institutional uses, create an entry that is prominent to the façade design such as covered entries, porticoes, porches, etc.

K. Building Foundations

The foundation forms the base of a building. On some more contemporary styled buildings, it is indistinguishable from the walls of the building, while on others it is a different material or texture and is raised above ground level.

1. Consider distinguishing the foundation from the rest of the structure by using different materials, patterns, textures or through the use of a water table.

2. Brick or stone veneer should be used over a block or concrete foundation if the applied veneer appears as a masonry foundation. Avoid leaving a foundation of plain concrete block or poured concrete exposed without such a veneer.

3. On larger-scaled multi-story buildings, use a separate foundation material to create a visual base for the building.

L. Architectural Details & Decorative Features

Architectural details are important tools to create human scale and design character. Techniques include highlighting foundations, lintels, sills and cornices with contrasting materials and breaking up the mass of the building with bands at floor levels or projections at entries. These techniques are only a few of the ways to transform a massive building into one of human scale. Consider the façade design of all buildings - even service buildings can have attractive facades.

1. Provide attractive facade treatments on any elevation that is visible from streets/corridors or from any primary elevations of adjoining developments.

2. Use elements such as cornices, belt courses, water tables, bay divisions, columns, pilasters and cornices and variations in wall plane and roof features to create attractive building design.

3. Avoid large expanses of blank walls that are visible from the public right of way or neighboring developments.

4. Avoid decorative elements that do not relate to the architecture, but serve to turn the whole building into a sign.

5. Avoid oversized decorative elements.

M. Materials & Textures

The choice of a building's materials and textures may have a great visual impact. Coordinating these finishes within a development can tie together buildings of different sizes, uses, and forms while contrasting materials or textures within a large building may add visual interest and reduce its apparent scale. Traditional and modern materials offer many choices and may provide a variety of potential architectural treatments.

1. The selection of materials and textures for a new building may include brick, stone, cast stone, wood or cementitious siding, metal, glass panels, or other materials as deemed appropriate.

2. Using a variety of materials, textures, patterns and colors help to define and break down the mass and scale of a building to human scale and provide visual interest.

3. Larger-scale buildings whose primary facades have been divided into different bays, planes, and heights to reduce their visual impact also may use various materials and textures as well.

4. Use quality materials consistently on all publicly visible sides of buildings in the district. These materials should be long lasting, durable, maintainable, and appropriate for environmental conditions.

5. Avoid monotonous surfaces that do not add visual interest to the building's exterior design.

N. Building-Mounted Lighting

Exterior building lighting helps to provide security and may highlight architectural elements such as main entries to a commercial building.

1. Lighting for new structures should be designed to be an integral part of the overall design by relating to the style, material, and/or color of the building.

2. Fixtures should be the full cutoff variety to limit the impact of lighting on neighboring properties.

3. Building-mounted accent lighting should be shielded and directed toward the building.

4. Rope lights, neon, or other tube lighting to convert the entire building into an accented sign-like design should be avoided.

5. Colored lighting should generally not be used outside of temporary seasonal displays.

6. Flashing or intermittent lights or lights of changing degrees of intensity generally should be avoided.

O. Appurtenances

Appurtenances refer to the miscellaneous equipment and elements that are necessary for the building to function in its appropriate use.

1. Building service, loading, and utility areas should not be visible from public streets or adjacent developments, or from access drives within large developments. Such service areas should be located behind the main structure in the least visible location possible or screened if otherwise visible from the right-of-way or other public places.

2. Mechanical equipment on roofs or sides of buildings should not be visible from streets. These elements should be screened from public view on all sides if otherwise visible. The screening should be consistent with the design, textures, materials, and colors of the building. Another method is to place the equipment in a non-visible location behind a parapet wall.

3. When the mechanical equipment, vents, meters, satellite dishes and similar equipment is ground mounted, screening should include either an opaque fence or wall made of the same material as the building or an evergreen hedge that screens objectionable views.

4. Items such as roof ladders, railings, roll-up doors, and service doors should be located on building elevations that are the least visible from public streets/corridors and adjacent developments or from access drives within large developments. Their colors should be coordinated among all these elements and blend with the rest of the building.

5. Dumpster enclosures should include gates that close, and the enclosure be constructed of either an opaque fence or wall made of the same material as the building.

6. In terms of cell/mobile antennas, as technology changes, telecommunications equipment will change and appropriate new designs or screening methods may vary. The equipment of these changing technologies, if highly visible, should be designed to minimize their impact on the visual quality of the individual parcel and of the corridor as well.

P. Building Types: Additional Considerations

When designing a new building or a development of several buildings, follow the guidelines as outlined in sections A through O above. Also, there may be additional considerations depending on the type and use of the particular building being designed. For further guidance, see the following additional recommendations.

- Service/Gas Stations
  Canopies should complement their associated buildings in materials and scale, and be integrated with the buildings' overall design.

- Strip Center-small buildings
  Smaller strip type commercial centers should increase the height of their facades to have a stronger visual presence on these corridors. In addition, the taller front elevation would allow for a sign band area and a cornice or other element of visual interest at its roofline.

- Strip Center-large with building pad sites
  The design of pad site buildings that are part of an existing larger commercial development should be coordinated with the rest of the structures on the property. These pad site buildings should have similar materials, roof forms, and design details as the other buildings on the site if possible.

- Strip Center-large with an anchor building
  The design of this type of development should coordinate the anchor business with the rest of the buildings on the site. The anchor should not use a standard franchise design that does not relate to the rest of the development's design.

- Office-small/medium buildings
  Small and medium size office buildings should increase the height of their facades to have a stronger visual presence on these corridors. In addition, the taller front elevation would allow for a sign band area and a cornice or other element of visual interest at its roofline.

- Office-large buildings
  As mentioned in the general new construction guidelines, these large buildings' designs should use a variety of techniques to reduce their monolithic size and to result in a more human scaled appearance while ensuring a clearly visible main entrance to the facility. Some sort of entrance portico or canopy may be a part of this building type design to provide a sheltered drop-off area for frequent visitors. This feature should be designed as a complementary element within the overall design of the building.

- Hotel
  Some sort of entrance portico or canopy may be a part of this building type design to provide a sheltered drop-off area for its guests and visitors. This feature should be designed as a complementary element within the overall design of the building.

- Industrial
  Industrial building design may incorporate different materials such as painted metal, EIFS (artificial stucco), and textured concrete masonry units as the primary materials, preferably on secondary public rights of way, not visible from main thoroughfares. High quality materials such as brick and stone should be incorporated into the design where possible, particularly on primary facades that are highly visible from main thoroughfares.

- Institutional-Churches, Schools, Government Buildings
  For these buildings, either reinforce the street wall through a minimal setback, or use a deep setback within a landscaped area to emphasize the community function of the property depending on the use and the context of the site. If desired, give these new buildings more complex forms, reflecting their distinctive use and functional needs.

  These buildings by their nature may have large footprints. Depending on the location, their massing should be reduced so they will not overpower any neighboring smaller buildings. Techniques could include using different materials and textures, varying the surface planes of the building, stepping back the building as it increases in height, and breaking up the roofline with different elements to create smaller compositions.

Ensure that these buildings have human-scale design features since they frequently have a monumental scale. There is a difference between monumentally-scaled and massively-scaled buildings. These monumental buildings still relate to the human scale but are larger due to their use and the importance of their community function. Massive buildings are simply huge buildings that are not intended to relate to human scale. These buildings that are freestanding may have a gable or hipped roof with variations to add visual interest and reduce the scale of a monolithic roof.

VI. GUIDELINES FOR FRANCHISE DESIGN

A. Introduction

Franchise design refers to the standardized approach that national companies employ when constructing or renovating their commercial buildings. Initially many of these chains used architectural design to be their brand. Therefore, a building's shape, roof, materials, color, and/or unique architectural features along with ample sized signage could be readily identified as the company's trademark image. Thus, the buildings almost served as a visual billboard so customers always would easily recognize the business.

These standardized designs did not take into consideration the existing context or architectural traditions of the communities in which they were locating. Many localities now are requesting or requiring that these franchise designs relate more to local corridor design goals, and many chains now offer design options to respond to these concerns. In addition, some of the older franchise designs were beginning to look dated in light of new architectural trends, so companies recently have made extensive changes to update their look and their brand.

The variety and number of franchise businesses have increased over time. From fast food restaurants and hotels, to car dealerships and big box retail stores, national companies are located on most corridors in most communities including the City of Staunton.

Fortunately, in today's market, more of these companies appear to be responding to current architecture trends and less on the building's design as a brand/logo. They are using traditional and new materials in interesting ways and they are "decorating the box" with more contemporary designs to which the market responds favorably.

These companies also seem to recognize that many communities want to improve the image of their aging and disjointed, auto-oriented corridors. As the City of Staunton continues to work with the private sector to upgrade these areas, the vision, goals, and guidelines of these districts need to be communicated and applied to these franchise companies as they upgrade their existing buildings or construct new ones. In that regard, several fast-food establishments on Staunton corridors recently have upgraded their prior images with new designs for both remodeling projects and new buildings.

B. Guidelines

1. Any remodeling of existing franchise buildings should follow Chapter IV. Guidelines for Existing Building Renovation & Additions.

2. Any new construction for franchise buildings should follow Chapter V. Guidelines for New Construction.

3. Any site work for franchise buildings (existing or new) should follow Chapter X. Guidelines for Private Site Design & Elements.

4. All sign types, designs, placement, size and lighting should follow Chapter VII. Guidelines for Signs as well as for the more detailed requirements found in the Zoning Ordinance, Section 18.140.

5. Standard franchise designs are discouraged unless they reflect the corridor goals of higher quality materials and building designs that enhance the visual character of the district.

6. Franchise designs that use over-scaled generic building elements, roof forms, and colors over large expanses of the building to communicate a standardized brand should be discouraged.

7. If the company uses franchise design elements and/or colors that are unique and symbolic of a particular chain business, they should be secondary to the overall architectural design.

8. Franchise buildings should include basic forms, roof designs, materials and colors that result in a design that can be easily remodeled if the building is vacated. Uniquely branded buildings may be difficult to sell or lease resulting in long-term vacancy or blight.

9. Large buildings with franchise tenants known as “big boxes” should use scale-reduction techniques and quality materials on all sides of their buildings visible from a public-right-of-way, not only the façade.

VII. GUIDELINES FOR PAINT, COLOR, & FINISHES

A. Introduction

Many materials in new or recent construction have finishes that are natural to the material such as brick or stone; others are factory finished such as metal or vinyl, or have a finish that is embedded in the material such as artificial stucco. Paint is typically limited in use and is primarily used on wood components, but can be used on other materials such as metal.

Paint technology has evolved throughout the years as technology has changed. The finish of paints ranges from matte to a gloss finish and there is a great variety of available paint colors. The technology of this product continues to evolve for a wide number of applications on various building materials. The proper process for surface treatment prior to paint application has also evolved and depends on whether a surface has been painted in the past.

Tasteful color combinations and careful placement of color can enhance a building. Inappropriate or garish colors, colors placed on a building incorrectly, too many colors, or monolithic color treatments, can all detract from the overall appearance of a building.

B. Guidelines

1. Keep existing finishes well maintained and consult manufacturing specifications on factory finishes for best maintenance practices.

2. Brick is intended to remain unpainted; however, if the brick has been painted in the past or the brick is aesthetically unattractive, use a masonry paint product. Masonry is intended to breathe, and inappropriate paint coatings can cause moisture issues if they are sealants and trap moisture within the masonry wall.

3. Use care when removing paint from masonry, soft metal, or wood so as not to damage the material. Test a small sample before undertaking overall paint removal.

4. Paint and finish color choices are a design characteristic that can be changed in the future. In some cases, business owners or tenants may desire a certain color or shade of colors to reflect their personal preference or the brand or logo of their business; brand colors should complement the overall appearance of the design but not dominate it.

5. Select a coordinated palette of colors for each property that includes site elements in addition to the building itself. Set the color theme by choosing the color for the material with the most visible area, such as a brick wall area or a metal roof, and relate other colors to it.

6. Select natural tones instead of overly bright and obtrusive loud colors that can have the effect of turning much of the building into a garish appearance.

7. Treat similar elements with the same color to achieve a unified rather than overly busy and disjointed appearance.

8. For most buildings, the numbers of paint colors are typically limited to three: a wall or field color, a trim color, and an accent color for signs, doors, etc.

9. After using other scale reduction techniques discussed earlier in these guidelines, also consider using color variation to break up the mass of a building and provide visual interest.

10. Consider using lighter colors on roofs where appropriate to encourage heat reflection and energy savings.

VIII. Guidelines for Signs

In general, the following sign types are appropriate for use on parcels and buildings on Staunton corridors. Refer to the Zoning Ordinance, Section 18.140 for more detailed information and requirements in regard to type, location, size, design, color, material etc.

A. Sign Types

- Monument Signs
  A monument sign is a ground-mounted sign and are placed in a manner that will not obstruct motorists' view from the surrounding streets or driveways.

- Freestanding Pole Signs
  Pole signs are freestanding and generally located closer to the corridor than the building. They have a central support composed of one or two poles. If the parcel has multiple businesses, there will be different sections of the sign to identify each establishment. They generally have some sort of lighting to identify the business in evening hours.

- Wall Signs
  Wall signs for commercial buildings are located above the storefront, within the frieze of the cornice, on covered transoms, or on the pier that frames display windows, or generally on flat, unadorned surfaces of the facade or on side elevations of the building in areas clearly designed as sign locations. Wall signs do not extend beyond the roofline or beyond the edge of the building.

- Projecting Signs
  A projecting sign is attached perpendicular to the wall of a building, and it is sized to be compatible with the façade. There is sufficient height for clearance for pedestrians, but the sign generally is not higher than the windowsill of the second story if more than one story. Projecting signs are hung at ninety degrees to the face of the building.

- Window Signs
  Window signs are those attached to the inside or outside face of a window and are generally painted letters or decals. Window signs are approximately at eye height for good pedestrian visibility. Optional locations may include near the top or bottom of the display window glass, or on the glass panel of the entry door.

- Awning/Canopy Signs
  Awning and canopy signs generally are placed on the valance area only. Letters are painted, screened or sewn on the fabric.

B. Guidelines

1. Place signs so that they are an integral part of the façade and do not obstruct architectural elements and details that define the design of the building. Locations should respect the signs of adjacent businesses.

2. Respect the design and visibility of signs for adjacent businesses.

3. Use colors and appropriate materials that complement the materials and color scheme of the building, including accent and trim colors.

4. Freestanding pole signs and monument signs are to be mounted on a base and should reflect site material that may include brick, stone, or metal.

5. The number of signs used should be limited to encourage compatibility with the building and to discourage visual clutter.

6. Signs should be compatible with and relate to the design elements of the building including proportions, scale, materials, color, and details.

7. Shape of signs for commercial buildings should conform to the area where the sign is to be located.

8. Rooftop signs, signs that project above the elevation of a building, moving signs, billboards, and off-site signs and portable signs, banner signs, inflatable or floating signs, moving or changing signs within 24 hours, message boards, and oversized window signs should be avoided.

9. Wall signs should be indirectly lit with a shielded light source directed toward the building.

10. Freestanding signs may be externally or internally illuminated; external illumination should be directed downward.

11. Illumination of any sign should not be directed toward any residential area or adjacent street.

12. Internally illuminated channel letters may be appropriate on corridor buildings.

IX. Guidelines for Awnings and Canopies

Awnings and canopies have a variety of applications and benefits. From a design standpoint, they help to highlight specific buildings and businesses, and provide an opportunity for a splash of color that can be coordinated with a business brand. They also protect pedestrians from the weather, shield window displays from sunlight, and conserve energy. Awnings and canopies can also be used for effective signage.

A. Awning Types

- Standard Sloped Fabric
  Whether fixed or retractable, sloped awnings are the traditional awning type and are appropriate for storefronts on both new and existing buildings and on residential buildings. Materials vary from synthetic acrylic fabrics that look like traditional cotton, to plastics. Cotton fabric is rarely used today.

- Boxed or Curved Fabric
  Boxed or curved fabric awnings have typically been used on newer commercial buildings.

- Sloped Metal and Aluminum
  Sloped awnings can be made from standing-seam aluminum (or other metal), be powder-coated with any color, and be made in a variety of shapes to fit a particular building or need. They can also be made of a steel frame and polycarbonate sheets.

- Canopies
  Canopies are generally flat and extend from the face of a façade and are supported by beams, hanger rods or columns. Canopies also can be free-standing and these drive-through types are used most frequently at gas stations.

- Marquees
  A marquee is essentially a canopy that is used over entrances to theaters or other destinations and includes the name of the business and has space for changeable signs. Marquees generally have lighting in the face of the canopy highlighting the name of the business, events, etc.

B. Placement & Design Guidelines

1. Place an awning or canopy carefully within the storefront, porch, door, or window openings so it fits the building and does not obscure other important features or elements or damage materials

2. Choose designs that do not interfere with existing signs, street trees, or other elements along the street.

3. Choose an awning shape that fits the opening in which it is installed. Use materials and forms that are compatible with the associated building.

4. Make sure the height of the bottom edge of the awning or canopy meets code requirements.

5. Canopies, including service station canopies and drive-through canopies, should complement their associated buildings in materials and scale, and be integrated with the building's overall design.

C. Materials & Color Guidelines
   1. Coordinate color scheme of awnings and canopies with the overall building color scheme.

   2. For fabric awnings, solid colors are appropriate in most cases. Wide stripes and narrow stripes may also be appropriate.

   3. Avoid using shiny plastic-like fabrics.

   4. Use materials that are compatible with the associated building.

   5. Gasoline station canopy color should be compatible with the overall color scheme of the rest of the property. Brand colors may be appropriate for use on gas station canopies if executed tastefully.

D. Canopy Lighting Guidelines
   1. Flush mount the canopy lighting to the ceiling of the canopy utilizing a recessed cut-off design.

   2. Illumination of the canopy cornice or sign should be external.

   3. Do not internally illuminate the canopy cornice.

   4. Use fully shielded lighting fixtures with the bottom of the lens flush with the canopy.

   5. Use colors on the canopy that complement the colors used on the building.

   6. Minimize number of logos displayed on the canopy.

X. Guidelines for Private Site Design & Elements

A. Introduction

Private sites along Staunton's corridors vary widely depending on the use, location and character of the corridor. Many newer commercial sites along the corridors have incorporated landscaping and other site features to make the corridor and their business more attractive to residents and visitors traveling the corridors in the community. The goal of these site guidelines is to assist, not only new businesses, but existing establishments on the corridors consider site improvements to make their business more attractive and inviting.

B. Context

1. There is a rich variety of topography along Staunton's corridors that, in many locations, has been incorporated into the site design. For instance, on Richmond Avenue the south side of the street rises to, and buildings have been incorporated into, the hillsides in many different ways.

2. Integrate existing land forms, stream beds or significant plant areas into development of a site when feasible.

3. Consider using terracing to mitigate elevation changes along corridors and integrate the scale of the terracing with the scale and articulation of the building façade and foundation.

C. Connectivity

1. Maintain or provide a strong sense of community, by providing pedestrian and vehicular links from a corridor site to nearby neighborhoods, parks, schools and other public destinations.

2. Consider creating vehicular connectivity with adjacent sites when undertaking new site plans.

3. Consider creating or reinforcing existing pedestrian pathway system connections within a site and between adjacent sites, linking buildings, parking areas and green spaces and find opportunities to connect to any nearby public pedestrian pathways or sidewalks.

4. Add designated, separate sidewalks with planted areas through large parking lots.

5. Provide crosswalks at points of vehicular access routes and in front of building entrances.

6. Ensure that new paving materials are compatible with the character of the area. Scored concrete with broom finishes, colored, exposed aggregate concrete, and brick or unit pavers are examples of appropriate applications. Avoid large expanses of bright white or gray concrete surfaces.

D. Parking

1. Off-street parking lots should be designed, located, and buffered in order to minimize their visual impacts on surrounding areas and respond to the topographic character of the site as feasible. Locate parking to the side and rear of buildings depending on site conditions and building location. Limit parking in front of the building to a one row with a second row behind the edge of the adjoining corridor if possible.

2. Divide the size of large parking lots though the incorporation of landscaping, walks, or other features, and by dividing the lot into modules or smaller lots. Avoid large expanses of asphalt.

3. Parking lots should be designed to minimize impervious surfaces and mitigate stormwater runoff.

4. Screen parking lots with berms, plant materials, or walls, or a combination of these materials. Limit the height of walls, berms, or shrub layer plantings to that of the height of the vehicles they are screening. Where needed, limb up canopy trees to open views.

5. Many existing older buildings on Staunton's corridors are setback ten to fifteen feet allowing for pull-in parking on asphalt with no curb or sidewalk. In these situations, consider installing a surface such as permeable pavers, to create parallel parking and an edge to the site that better defines the site and the street.

6. The number and width of curb cuts should be the minimum necessary for effective entry and exit site traffic circulation. Whenever possible, curb cuts shall be combined with adjacent entrances.

7. Bicycle parking facilities should be provided within areas where significant bicycle traffic is anticipated. They should be located in designated areas close to buildings and pedestrian paths. The design, materials, and color of the bicycle racks should coordinate with other site elements and should be well-lit for night time uses.

E. Landscaping

1. Select plant materials that are hardy to the region, have longevity, and ease of maintenance. Also preserve and integrate any existing stands of trees and landscaping as practical in new designs.

2. Consider color, texture, height, and mass of plant selections in a planting composition.

3. Use plant materials to soften large buildings, hard edges, and paved surfaces and provide shade during the summer months.

4. Create well-defined outdoor spaces, delineate pathways and entries, and create a sense of continuity from one site to the next through the use of landscaping.

5. At the core of any larger commercial development, consider more formal plantings organized around open spaces.

6. Consider using landscaping areas that also provide storm water treatment, such as rain gardens.

7. Screen parking viewed from public right of way, service areas, utilities, loading and storage areas and using walls, fences, landscaping such as trees, shrubs and other landscaping features or a combination of the elements.

8. Consider separate parking aisles with medians planted with shade trees.

9. Use landscaping along walkways to help separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic.

10. Avoid isolated islands of single trees.

11. Property owners and/or tenants should maintain all plantings in any public right-of-way whether installed by them or by the City of Staunton.

F. Fences & Walls

In addition to landscaping, fences and walls are useful elements to shape outdoor spaces and screen undesired views. On Staunton's corridors, there is very limited use of fencing on commercial properties. Where they do exist, it is generally on industrial sites where chain link fences enclose the site for security purposes. If a wall or fence is desired to create outdoor spaces, the following guidelines should be considered.

1. When a wall is an integral part of, or an extension of a building, select wall materials that complement the building's materials. Use a scale and level of ornateness of the design of any new walls and fences that relate to the scale and ornateness of the building within the site. Use simpler designs on small lots.

2. Choose high-quality materials and designs using materials such as brick, stone, metal, and wood. Avoid untreated wood, chain-link, wire fences, concrete block walls, mass-produced fence materials such as diamond lattice panels, or synthetic materials such as plastic or fiberglass timbers.

3. Use paint or opaque stains on pressure treated or unpainted wooden fences.

4. For any existing walls with an unclad surface of concrete masonry block or metal chain link, consider screening with a vegetative buffer on the side facing adjacent properties or visible from a public site or rite-of-way.

5. If a fence or wall spans an area longer than one-third of the property line, modulate and articulate the wall with techniques to provide visual interest from the public right-of-way. Examples to break up a long expanse include inserting vertical piers of a different material, height, or width in an intentional rhythm or by adding a vegetative layer(s).

6. Avoid exceeding the average height of other fences and walls of surrounding properties.

7. Avoid fences at the front of a lot facing the street along areas zoned business on the corridors.

8. Fence stringers (the structural framing of the fence) should be located facing the interior of the subject lot, with the finished side facing out away from the subject property.

9. Avoid overly tall retaining walls along street edges that are out of scale with the character of the corridor.

G. Lighting

1. Select light posts and fixtures that are sympathetic to the design and materials of the building and its neighbors and creates a coherent exterior lighting aesthetic for the site. At the same time, select pole heights and fixtures to reduce light spill and over-lighting the outdoor environment.

2. Coordinate and use exterior lighting to accent landscape and outdoor site features such as pathways, sidewalks, handrails, steps, and bollards. Pedestrian scaled poles and luminaires are an average of ten to twelve feet in height.

3. Consider making use of adaptive lighting controls, allowing lighting levels to be reduced during off-peak periods.

4. When possible, consider the use of LED lights for outdoor lighting of all types. Dim when possible, or shut-off completely when not needed.

5. Use full cutoff luminaires to provide better lighting and prevent unwanted glare.

6. Lighting should provide for appropriate and desirable nighttime illumination for all uses on and related to the site to promote a safe environment.

7. Avoid using building accent lighting that is too bright and draws too much attention to the building. Reasonable levels of accent lighting to accentuate architectural character may be appropriate in individual instances when it is shielded and is not aimed towards neighboring properties, sidewalks, pathways, driveways, or public rights-of-ways in such a manner as to distract travel.

8. Gasoline station/convenience store aprons and canopies should utilize fully shielded lighting fixtures with the bottom of lens flush with canopy.

9. Colored lighting generally should not be used outside of temporary seasonal displays.

XI. Guidelines for Solar Panels

A. Introduction

In the near future, it can be anticipated that some corridor parcels and buildings will contain solar panels in order to reduce energy costs and contribute to a reduction of fossil fuel use. Considerations would include the type and size of the lot, the building type and design (particularly the roof size and configuration), the near or desire to screen the panels without affecting the functioning of the panels themselves. This concept is known as the "least visible high-performance location."

B. Guidelines for Installation Options

1. Rooftop

    a. Rooftop arrays should follow the general shape of the roof.
    b. Frames should not extend beyond the roof edge.
    c. The height of the panel array should not be taller than the ridge of the roof.
    d. On larger flat-roofed buildings, a parapet wall or other screening techniques may conceal panel arrays if they are visible without affecting their performance.

2. Ground mounted

    a. Ground-mounted systems may be considered an accessory use and they may need to meet structure setback requirements in the zoning district in which the system is to be constructed.
    b. Depending on the number of panels needed for a ground mounted application, the panels may be in a single-row configurations or in multiple rows.
    c. The panel arrays should be set back from the boundaries of the site.
    d. Any public-facing edges should have an attractive border condition by using landscape buffers, fences, but avoid chain link.

Staunton Entrance Corridor Overlay Districts

DRAFT Design Guidelines Graphics List

March 2023

Chapter	Proposed Graphics
I. BACKGROUND	
A. Introduction to Staunton's Corridors	Sample photos of Staunton Corridors (3-5)
B. The Evolution of Corridor Design Character	Photos of 3 typical corridor types in Staunton
C. Staunton's Designated Corridors and Descriptions	This section will have an overall map of corridors and a picture for each corridor and brief description.
1. Augusta Street	
2. Churchville Avenue	
3. Coalter Street	
4. Commerce Road & U.S. 11 Bypass Corridor	
~~5. Frontier Drive~~	
6. Greenville Avenue	
7. Middlebrook Avenue & Rt. 252 Corridor	
8. North Lewis Street & Central Ave.	
9. Richmond Avenue & U.S. Rt. 250 Corridor	
~~10. Route 262 Woodrow Wilson Parkway~~	
~~11. Statler Boulevard~~	
12. West Beverley Street	
II. PLANNING A PROJECT ON STAUNTON'S ENTRANCE CORRIDORS	
A. Staunton's Comprehensive Plan: Corridor Goals & Objectives	City of Staunton logo
B. Design Principles of Corridor Guidelines	Highlight this text.
C. The Design Review Process for Property/Business Owners	
III. ENTRANCE CORRIDOR BUILDING TYPES	
A. Influences on Corridor Development	
B. Current Corridor Building Types	Photos of each type found in Staunton.
IV. GUIDELINES FOR EXISTING BUILDING RENOVATIONS & ADDITIONS	
A. Introduction	

B. Assessment & Plan	
C. Typical Building Design Treatments	4 examples already done. Add 1 more for a larger building, show existing historic fixed up – Churchville Ave, Lewis and Central, West Beverley, converted residential
D. Guidelines for Additions	Addition options done but needs a few edits
V. GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION	
A. Introduction	
B. Building Types	See above
C. Building Siting	Drawing showing existing (older) with setback and parking in front vs. new layout with buildings closer to street and parking to side and rear. (Fairfax ACOD 3.2) The new construction on Richmond Ave – Chic Filet, etc – are good examples. Photos. Show an intersection with construction on four corners? Need typical Staunton condition.
D. Building Orientation	3-D drawing with example orientation
E. Building Form & Articulation	Façade illustration done. Examples of one, two and three story buildings and how to modify form.
F. Building Height & Width	Illustration complete. Add analysis arrows.
G. Building Scale	Illustration complete. Add analysis arrows.
H. Roof Form & Materials	1, 2 and 3 story type with variety roof forms
I. Opening Types & Patterns	1, 2 and 3 story type with variety openings and patterns.
J. Entry Features	1, 2 and 3 story type showing various entry features
K. Building Foundation	Photo examples
L. Architectural Details & Decorative Features	Photo examples
M. Materials & Textures	Photo examples
N. Building-Mounted Lighting	Photo examples
O. Appurtenances	Roof illustration done
P. Building Types: Additional Considerations	
VI. GUIDELINES FOR FRANCHISE DESIGN	
A. Introduction	
B. Guidelines	
VII. GUIDELINES FOR PAINT, COLOR, & FINISHES	
A. Introduction	
B. Guidelines	Illustration showing color placement
VIII. Guidelines for Signs	
A. Sign Types	Illustrations showing variety of sign placement and types

B. Guidelines	
IX. GUIDELINES FOR AWNINGS & CANOPIES	
A. Types	Illustration showing type and placement
B. Placement & Design Guidelines	
C. Materials & Color Guidelines	
D. Canopy Lighting Guidelines	
X. GUIDELINES FOR PRIVATE SITE DESIGN & ELEMENTS	
A. Introduction	
B. Context	
C. Connectivity	Illustration complete
D. Parking	Illustration complete
E. Landscaping	Illustration showing landscaping along street edge and between lots
F. Fences & Walls	Illustration showing screened areas, definition of site
G. Lighting	Photos of lighting types
XI. SOLAR	
A. Introduction	
B. Guidelines for Installation Options	

Existing: Dark siding, mansard roof, asphalt to sidewalk, no landscaping, pole sign

Suggested: Remove mansard and dark siding, paint, add sign band, landscape between sidewalk and parking, incorporate sign in with landscaping

Existing: No color definition on buildings, parking asphalt contiguous with street, no pedestrian area

Suggested: Add awnings, sign bands, lighting and color definition. Change parking to parallel and add sidewalk

Existing: Continuous mansard roof, no clear connection between sign and business.

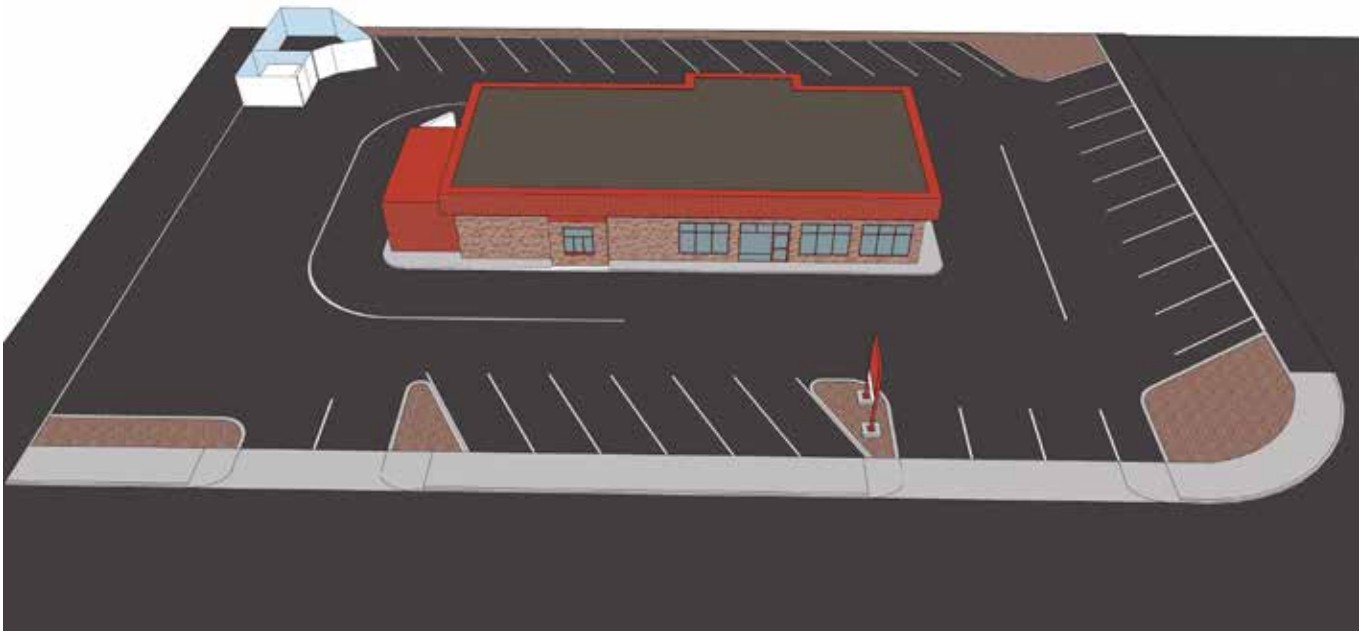
Suggested: Remove mansard, give more definition to front wall to better define businesses. Change to angled parking and add sidewalk and landscaping.

Existing: Same building from birds-eye view

Suggested: Same building from birds-eye view.

Existing: Large asphalt parking lot with no landscaping, front and side entrance not well defined, sign is ulitarian

Suggested: Landscape added, entrances enhanced, sign kept but painted and updated.

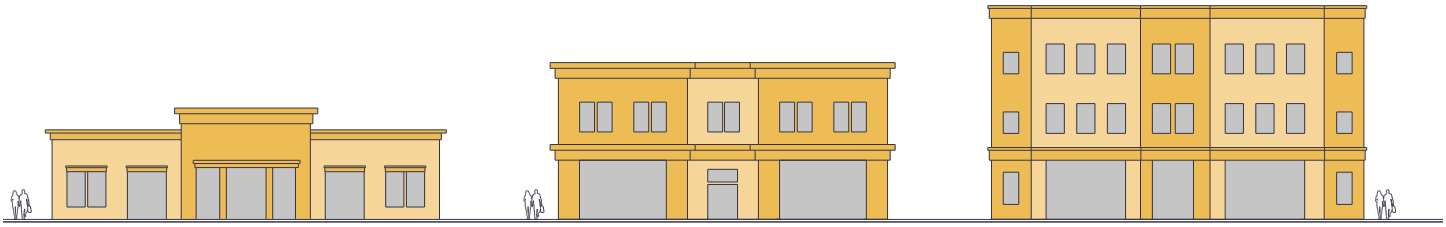


Existing former fast food restaurant with drive-thru and no landscaping.

Possible improvement to dine-in restaurant, updated building, better parking and landscaping.

streetview

shared parking



Break up massing for one, two, and multistory buildings using offsets, change of materials, rhythm of doors and windows.

Sample development on a hill with facade facing street and entrances on upper level. (Lewisburg, WV)

Simple older commercial buildings updated using signage and color. (Charlottesville)

Sample new strip development that is mixed use with parking and landscaping on the street-facing elevation. Buildings are traditional in design.

Sample new strip development with buildings that are traditional in design.

Sample new strip development that is a mix of traditional and contemporary elements that uses a variety of massing and roof types.