City of Staunton, Virginia
Entrance Corridor Overlay District

STAUNTON VIRGINIA

Design Guidelines for Richmond Avenue

City of Staunton, Virginia

Entrance Corridor Overlay District

Design Guidelines for Richmond Avenue

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Design Guidelines for Richmond Avenue
introduction

Introduction:

The Entrance Corridor Overlay District and the Comprehensive Plan

Throughout the years, many citizens have expressed the desire to protect the overall quality of life in the City of Staunton. The 2003–2010 Comprehensive Plan carries forward the following guidelines written to address the protection of quality of life in the City:

"…conserve and/or protect the City's natural resources, historic character, and scenic qualities."

"…encourage appropriate development and/or re-development of land within the City."

The Priority Initiatives included in the Comprehensive Plan establish several specific goals to help accomplish these guidelines. Several of these Priority Initiatives directly address issues impacting the way we as a community should design and build within the Entrance Corridor Overlay District.

Regarding protecting the City's natural resources and scenic qualities from the impacts of development and ensuring their conservation the Priority Initiatives include:

- Encourage developers to designate open space and environmentally sensitive areas first and then design developments around these elements.
- Reduce hard surface parking area requirements and increase landscaping and tree planting requirements for commercial development, re-development, and renovations.
- Discourage further development in the floodplains.
- Protect and enhance streams and creeks in and around the City, including Lewis Creek, Asylum Creek, Gum Springs Branch, and Poague Run. Activities may include: Undertake restoration where needed. Also encourage landowners to take advantage of cost-share programs for native trees and shrub plantings along stream and creek corridors running through private lands.
- In addition to these Priority Initiatives, steep slopes, karst geology are included as primary factors to consider in the context of new development. Establishing creative design standards are included as an approach to development without degrading Staunton's scenic qualities.

Regarding protecting the City's historic character from the impacts of development and ensuring its conservation the Priority Initiatives include:

- The City, working with neighborhoods and the Historic Staunton Foundation, should identify properties throughout the city of historic or architectural significance – especially those along entrance corridors, thoroughfares, and in transitional neighborhoods.
- Take steps to preserve the architectural character of older neighborhoods that may not be included under the "historic" category, but are equally important to the look and feel of the city, especially pre and post World War II neighborhoods.
- When developed, re-developed, or renovated require commercial and retail structures that adjoin residential areas to utilize architectural facades and site features that are consistent with and/or complementary to the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Develop alternative approaches to street designs in order to ensure that the roads and intersections are scaled to the neighborhoods.

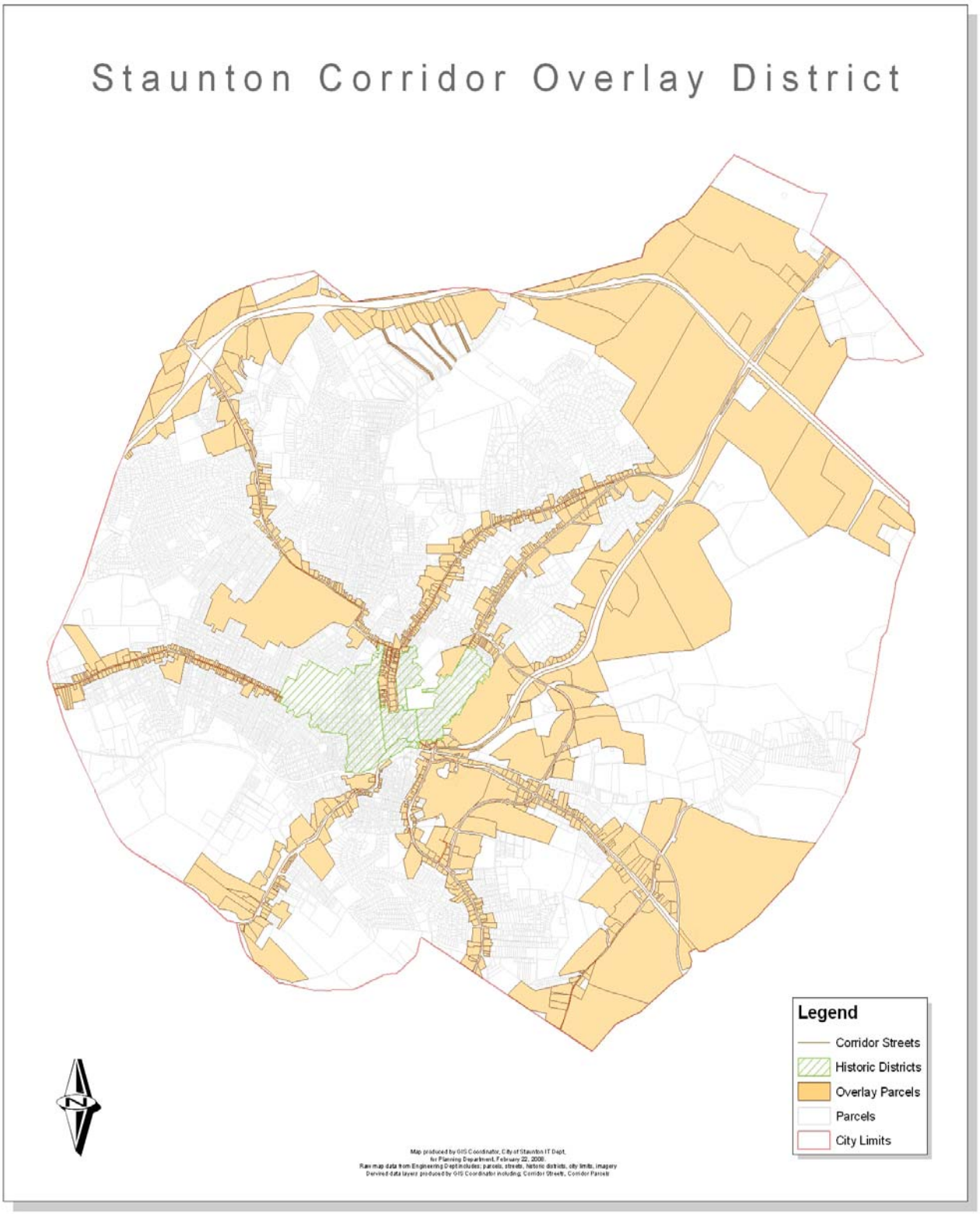
Regarding encouraging appropriate development and/or re-development of properties within the City the Priority Initiatives include:

- Include "walkability" as a primary design criteria for all new public and private development and re-development projects.
- Encourage siting of parking lots to the sides or rear of buildings, where appropriate; move parking to the side and rear of commercial and public buildings, rather than the front.
- Provide incentives for retro-fitting excess hard surface commercial parking areas to landscaped areas.
- Require landscaping and safe, user-friendly pedestrian network with designated walkways and crossings within commercial and public parking areas.
- Scale commercial parking requirements to typical use rather than capacity use, by lowering the minimum level of parking required and limiting the total amount of hard surface parking permitted.
- Require appropriately landscaped and sized sidewalks in all new developments or major re-developments with established design, maintenance standards for sidewalks based on area density and proximity to primary pedestrian destinations.
- Examine lot size, setback, and parking requirements for opportunities to improve flexibility in older neighborhoods and re-development areas.
- Seek ways to control light pollution. Examples include: require appropriate light fixtures for all new commercial and public facility development, re-development, and renovations.
- Reduce parking requirements by allowing and promoting shared parking and dual use especially for re-development, transitional areas, and planned mixed-use development.
- Educate the public, development community, local officials and staff on the principles and advantage of smart/good development (environmental, health, and financial).
- Support enhancement and priority implementation of the City's Master Landscaping Plan especially along entrance corridors and the pedestrian network.

The guidelines and priorities outlined in the Comprehensive Plan reconfirm the desire among the citizens of Staunton to conserve and protect the City's natural resources, historic character, and scenic qualities and encourage pedestrian friendly, human scaled development. Since 1747, the people of Staunton have built and lived in response to surrounding natural conditions leaving a legacy of streets, alleys, buildings, parks, gardens, and farms, by and large resulting in human scaled environments rich in multiple types of managed landscapes and styles of architecture. Learning from and applying historic approaches to building in Staunton while respecting the City's natural context and heritage have been central concepts in the development of these design guidelines.

Built within the ridge and valley topography typical of the Shenandoah Valley, the City of Staunton evolved in response to a dynamic and complex landscape. Historic downtown is located between two treed ridge lines with adjacent residential districts eased onto the near-by hills. These hills and masses of mature trees provide the green back drop for the City. Historical approaches to building uses structures to negotiate topographic changes, including terracing and site walls; disruption in the topography is in scale with the human body and once work was completed, has allowed the overall character of the slope to remain intact.

Map of the Entrance Corridor Overlay District
Adopted April 10, 2008



The Purpose of the Design Guidelines

The Entrance Corridor Overlay District Ordinance and the Design Guidelines:

The Entrance Corridor Overlay District is intended to implement the City of Staunton's Comprehensive Plan goal of protecting the city's natural, scenic, historic, architectural and cultural resources. The passing of the ordinance on April 10, 2008 meets this Comprehensive Plan goal by establishing design standards within the ordinance and providing design guidelines for each corridor, ensuring the compatibility of development, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse proposals with the resources identified in the comprehensive plan as important. The ordinance and design guidelines promote the general welfare of the community by creating attractive human-scaled environments; increase commerce; improve property values; and increase public awareness of the natural, scenic, historic, architectural, and cultural resources near and outside the City's historic preservation districts.

The Entrance Corridor Overlay District ordinance provides standards for design expectations all of the corridors share such as the height of signs, the width of beds for plants, and the placement of utilities underground. But since each of the corridors has unique characteristics, these design guidelines provide recommendations for approaches to site and building design that perpetuate these unique characteristics. Our first step was to look carefully at Richmond Avenue based on the expectations of the Comprehensive Plan for the Entrance Corridor Overlay District. Each of the designated entrance corridors has unique strengths, challenges, and existing resources. In order to begin to understand the dynamics along each road City staff conducted general site analysis, researching and mapping traffic levels, setbacks and square footage of commercial buildings, patterns of commercial history, and natural resources along Richmond Avenue. These design guidelines are based on identifying and amplifying these existing strengths, with the understanding the Comprehensive Plan has focused our priorities on development perpetuating, rather than erasing, the existing character of Richmond Avenue.

Richmond Avenue:

Richmond Avenue is a section of the larger U.S. Route 250 located within Staunton City limits. Over 500 miles long,, U.S. Route 250 begins in Richmond to the east, ending in Sandusky, Ohio. The most western extent of Richmond Avenue begins at its intersection with Greenville Avenue, near the railroad underpass, and continues east / southeast to the Staunton City limits. Beginning near the city's downtown, the eastern most section of Richmond Avenue from Greenville Avenue to Statler Boulevard includes the most urban conditions and some of the oldest buildings on the road. Richmond Avenue continues towards the east between Statler Boulevard and Frontier Drive, featuring small scale buildings of various ages and the remnants of the historic African-American community Union Town. Richmond Avenue continues on from Frontier Drive to the Staunton City limits to the east. This last section of Richmond Avenue is characterized by larger scale retail development including Wal Mart and Lowes stores, several fast food restaurants, and medium sized shopping centers. B-1, B-2, and I-1 zoning comprise the land use designations for the properties adjacent to the Richmond Avenue corridor. Pockets of parcels zoned I-1, Light Industrial use are located on the areas of Richmond Avenue where topographic conditions likely limit access to or the scale of development.

These design guidelines are intended to support recommendations addressing urban form included in the Richmond Road Multimodal Corridor Study completed in October, 2009 by Renaissance Planning Group. The Virginia Department of Transportation figures for 2006 place the Annual Average Daily Traffic for the section of Richmond Avenue from Greenville Avenue to Statler Boulevard between 10,000—14,999 trips; from Statler Boulevard to Frontier Drive between 20,00-24,999 trips, and from Frontier Drive to Interstate 81 25,000 trips and above.

Recommended Priorities for Development Review

Exempt from all Entrance Corridor Overlay District review:

- All legally non-conforming buildings, sites, signs, walls, plants, walkways, entrances, parking lots, etc.
- Single family residential buildings and sites
- City, State, and Federal Government facilities

Applicability of the Design Guidelines:

- When the areas of any parcel beyond 1,200 feet from an adjacent corridor are not visible from an adjacent corridor, it is recommended that the areas not visible from an adjacent corridor be exempt from the Design Guidelines. *(as amended 2.10.11)*

Full Entrance Corridor Overlay District review to include placing overhead utilities underground with parcel boundaries; planting requirements; providing pedestrian and vehicular access; building placement, architectural character, etc.:

- New or major re-configuration of a site development plan.
- Construction of a new building
- Major re-construction or alteration of the size, shape, or facade of any building, including relocation of any doors or windows or removal or alteration of any architectural features, details, or elements.
- Major reconfiguration of the corridor such as the addition or removal of medians, the addition of turning lanes, addition of curb and gutter or sidewalks, etc.
- Any site development involving the relocation or removal of overhead utilities.

Partial Entrance Corridor Overlay District review to include planting requirements, providing pedestrian and vehicular access, architectural character, etc.:

- Additions to existing site development plans resulting in changes of less than 50% of the existing site configuration.
- Construction of and addition to an existing building resulting in an increase of less than 50% of the total square footage of the existing building.
- Expansion of parking lots resulting in an increase of less than 50% of the total square footage of the existing parking area.
- Minor changes in the corridor to include lane striping and similar activity
- Additions to existing planting resulting in an increase in 50% or more of the existing site plantings.

Review for Entrance Corridor Overlay District signs:

- Re-facing of existing site signs; continuing businesses
- Re-placement of all signs and sign supports: all changes of business or change in use on existing site
- Addition of all new site signs

Review for Entrance Corridor Overlay District lighting:

- Addition of all new exterior lighting

Right-of-Way responsibilities:

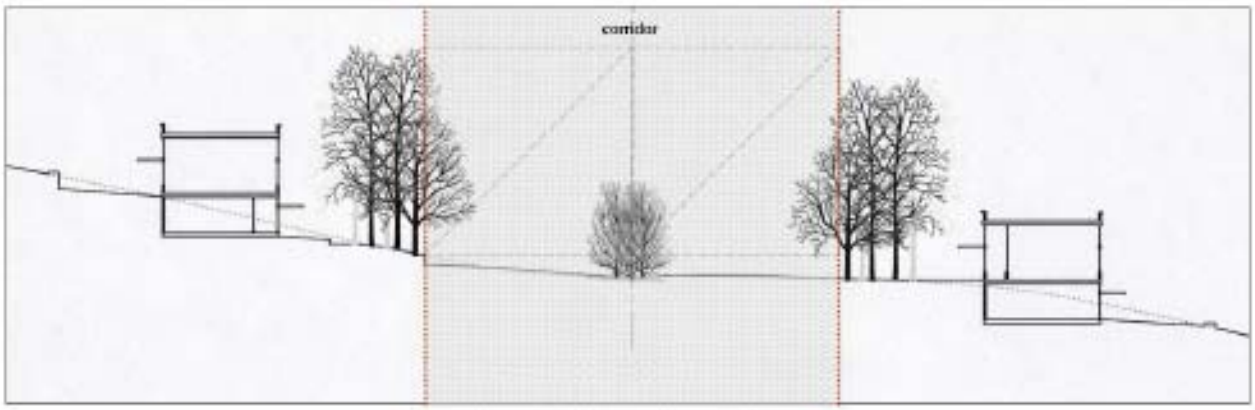
- It is recommended the owner or occupant of any land or premises abutting upon any public street right-of-way, including the sidewalk and between the sidewalk and the curb, maintain all plantings whether installed by the property owner or occupant or City of Staunton.

Design Guidelines for Richmond Avenue
recommendations for sites

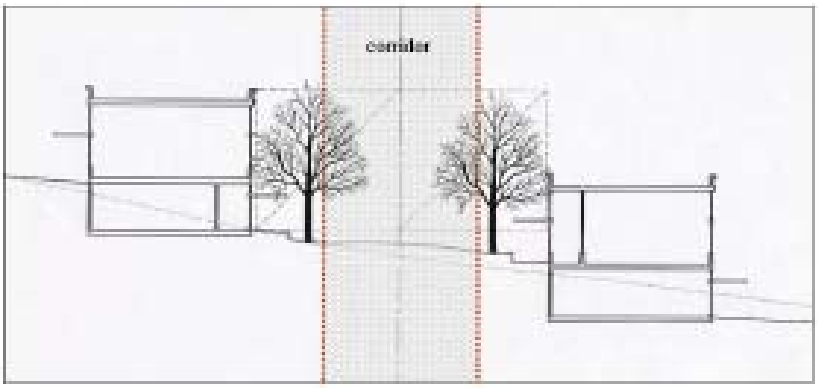
Recommendations for Sites:

General Site Design

- Establish priorities for site design based on integrating existing land forms, stream beds, or significant plant communities into the development of a site. By emphasizing site design that integrates these characteristic resources rather than eliminating them, the essential natural and scenic qualities unique to Staunton remain consistent regardless of the changing needs of business development. Slopes of 25 percent or greater should remain undisturbed and used to provide recreation and watershed protection.
- Avoid overly tall retaining walls, earth plinths, or excessive cut and fill. Over scaled walls and earth plinths disrupt or eliminate characteristic land forms, eliminate existing trees and other plants, isolate development from adjacent sites and create environments out of scale with human physical dimensions. Site retaining walls should be in proportion with the building and relate to building elements such as water tables and foundations.
- Utilizing incremental land terraces is recommended; using buildings to negotiate changes in elevation, constructing retaining walls in scale with human proportions, and blending grading smoothly into the surrounding topography are approaches historically employed in the Shenandoah Valley landscape. Where existing land forms have been previously disrupted, approaches to grading should attempt to re-establish the overall character of the pre-existing land forms.
- Sites should not be used as long term borrow pits or for fill storage, with the exception of quarry sites.

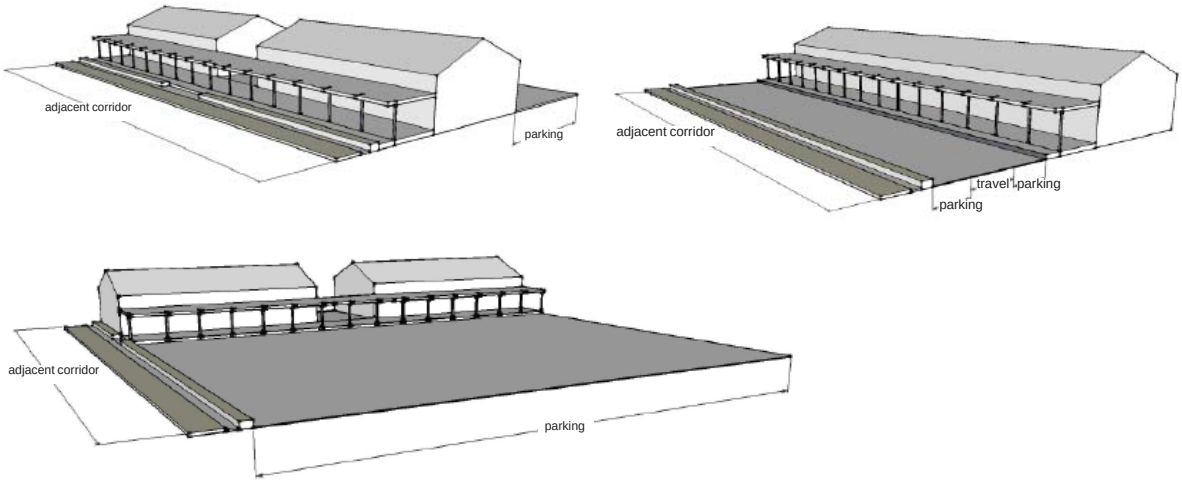


Schematic terracing of parking lots and buildings

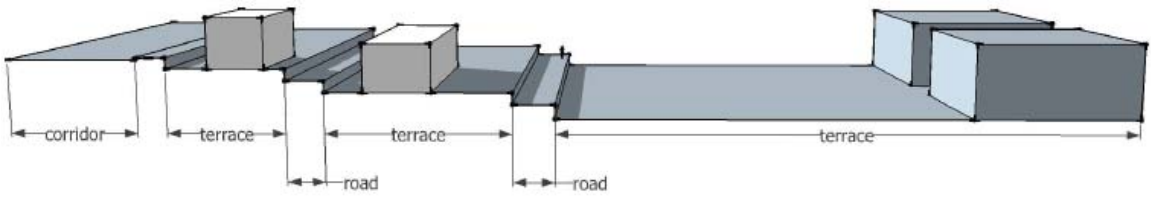


Schematic terracing of parking lots and buildings; detail

- Resulting soil quality and structure on heavily disturbed sites should be carefully considered in terms of their practical ability to support long term plant growth. Appropriate species choice and site reclamation may be useful components of site design considerations.
- Site rehabilitation efforts involving the reclamation of large areas of impervious surface should utilize the Center for Watershed Protection publication Urban Stormwater Retrofit Practices Version 1.0 published in August, 2007 for appropriate guidelines and recommendations.
- Options for the location of parking include: parking to the side and back of buildings; a single travel lane and two rows of parking between the building and the corridor; and/or parking lot located in front of the building provided the building is placed perpendicular and adjacent to the corridor. Additional parking configurations may be considered. Provide terraced parking lots to integrate existing land forms.
- Retaining walls resulting from site terracing should be in scale with the building foundation and human dimensions. Retaining walls out of scale with the building foundations and/or human dimensions are recommended stepped, with plantings of trees and/or shrubs provided at each level. Provide site walls to reflect established material traditions: local stone, concrete, or brick are appropriate materials for walls along Richmond Avenue. Fencing may include wood and metal. Chain link fencing is not recommended.
- Site design should include sidewalks providing planted, pedestrian passage: connecting parking lots to buildings within the site; connecting to adjacent parcels; connecting to adjacent neighboring communities; with the overall intent of allowing for comfortable and useable pedestrian access throughout the corridor.
- Site design should allow for vehicular connections between adjacent sites.



options for parking configurations



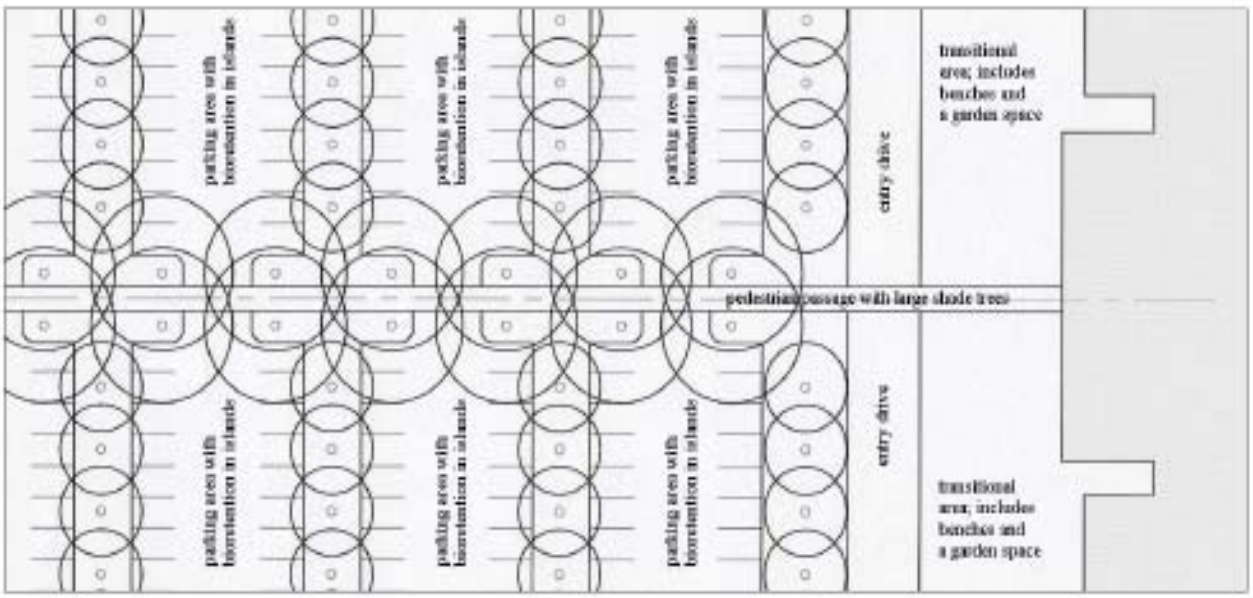
provide terraced parking lots and building placement to integrate existing land forms

Plants and Parking Areas

The following plantings are recommended for parking areas:

- One large canopy tree inside the parking lot for every ten spaces provided; planted at 2” caliper, dbh, minimum; 15’ tall for multi-stemmed trees
- One large canopy tree at the rate of 25’ on center along the full perimeter of the parking lot, planted at 2” caliper, dbh, minimum; 15’ tall for multi-stemmed trees
- An evergreen hedge, 3½’ tall, whenever parking is located adjacent to a sidewalk on the corridor; plants to be a minimum of 18” tall (measured from the top of the soil) upon planting. Evergreen hedges shall be maintained at no wider than 3½’; it is recommended no hedge, or other site feature, be permitted which materially impedes vision at vehicular entrances or exits to and from a property. Limiting species choices for hedges to species demonstrating mature height and width characteristics appropriate for the use is recommended.
- Large canopy trees along vehicular passageways at the rate of 25’ on center
- Sub canopy trees along all pedestrian passages at the rate of 15’ on center, planted at 2” caliper, dbh, minimum; 15’ tall for multi-stemmed trees.
- All plantings shall be subject to American Standard for Nursery Stock/ ANSI Z60 2004-1 for minimum root ball size, transplanting standards etc.

Hedge planted between sidewalk and adjacent parking lot; this planting includes trees



An example of a pedestrian walkway through the center of a parking lot with integral bioretention in the parking lot islands.

Plants and Planting Patterns

Natural, horticultural, and agricultural traditions along Richmond Avenue include the following planted types that may be utilized in site design :

- *Existing Forest and Woodland:* Forest and Woodlands are complex systems of plants, surface litter, and soil, functioning in the larger landscape as sponges; absorbing and filtering rainwater as it falls. Because of this function, mature forests and woodland dominated by indigenous species are best preserved when ever possible, integrated into the overall design of the site and managed in conjunction with state and county urban forestry consultation. Site design focused on preserving trees through thoughtful grading practices and strategic integration of existing forests and woodland have the advantage of the immediate presence of mature plantings on site. Large stands of trees contribute to reduced site runoff; reducing the need for costly storm water infrastructure and helping to control erosion.
- *Re-forestation:* Re-forestation is a viable option for developed landscapes. Land too steep for buildings and sites typically kept with large areas of mown lawn are areas that may benefit from reforestation efforts. Using near-by indigenous forest and woodland as a guide is an effective approach to begin re-establishing forest and woodland species combinations lost in the process of land development. Forest and woodland plant communities vary with moisture conditions, soil type, and elevation; re-plant what was there as closely as can be ascertained. For assistance and more information about the management of forest and woodland fragments contact the Virginia Department of Forestry at http://www.dof.virginia.gov/index.shtml
- *Topography and Indigenous Plant Species:* In addition to forests and woodlands, existing conditions both on site and near-by can provide a wealth of clues regarding which species of plants naturally grow well in various conditions. Many of these plants can be utilized in developed landscapes, their use contributing to more easily sustained plantings when properly sited. Potential long terms savings could be seen in reduced need for water and fertilizer, which benefits both the property owner and the health of the watershed. In addition, planting indigenous plants in developed landscapes creates a sense of consistency in the overall landscape, helping to strengthen a sense of place.
- *Hedgerow:* Planted for centuries to divide agricultural areas, create microclimates for cultivating crops, buffer buildings from harsh weather patterns, and to serve as fences, hedgerows have a strong presence in the historic landscape of Staunton. Because they are used in multiple ways, hedgerows are simultaneously a natural, cultural, and historical landscape resource. Hedgerows are comprised of combinations of multiple tree and shrub species arranged in a wide band and may be larger or smaller in scale depending on the species included in the planting. Developed areas could benefit from hedgerow plantings particularly in areas able to take full advantage of the density and sense of enclosure inherent in this type of planting. Historically typical Virginia hedgerow species include Maclura pomifera (Osage orange), Crategus species (Hawthorns), Ilex species (Hollies), Viburnum species and Juniperus virginiana (Eastern Red cedar); in the developed landscape, hedgerows could be created with a wide range of plant species combinations. Hedgerow type plantings lend themselves very well to storm water management systems integrated into site design such as bioretention.
- *Orchard:* Staunton has a long history of fruit production within the city limits as well as in near-by Augusta County. 1950's aerials of the Richmond Avenue vicinity include evidence of orchard production. Fruit tree species common to orchard production in Virginia are apples (Malus sp.), peaches (Prunus persica) and pears (Pyrus communis). Orchards are typically planted in multiple, parallel rows forming a grid pattern. This pattern of planting facilitates pruning, fruit harvest and the movement of air through the trees. Virtually all tree species can be planted in a grid pattern which is easily integrated into site design comprised of the right angles typical of many developed sites.

- *Hedges:* Hedges are rows of closely spaced trees or shrubs planted to form a barrier between two distinct areas of a site. Hedges can establish boundaries, buffer a view, direct movement, or frame a view. A hedge along a roadway can be used to minimize the noise and movement and create distance and a sense of safety between pedestrians and near-by traffic. Hedging plants range from the smallest of shrub species to closely spaced trees and may be formal or informal in character. Hedging plants may be clipped into geometric forms, pruned to establish a more textured, irregular form, or allowed to grow into a more informal outline. Choosing a species that will mature at the height desired is the easiest way to establish an informal, low maintenance hedge.

Planting Configurations and Stormwater Management

The design of stormwater management systems such as bioretention are based on the natural ability of forests and woodlands to absorb and filter large amounts of rainfall. This process of absorption and filtering reduces the amount, velocity, temperature, and quality of rain water as it impacts local watersheds. When we clear and for development and replace indigenous plant communities, this mechanism for absorption and filtering is lost. By integrating plantings and soil profiles mimicking this natural system (like bioretention) in smaller increments throughout developed areas, such as parking lots, this function can be reestablished to a large degree. Including these kind of plantings throughout developed areas significantly impacts the quantity, velocity, temperature, and quality of stormwater runoff from paving and buildings.

- It is recommended provisions for stormwater management be surface based, integrated into developed areas incrementally, and utilize plant based systems of treatment.
- Stormwater ponds are discouraged.

Managing Site Plantings

- Management of Invasive Species: Plants included on the Virginia State or Federal lists of invasive exotic plants species should not be planted in the Entrance Corridor Overlay District and should be selectively or wholly removed from all sites as part of a larger landscape management strategy. In particular, remnant forest, woodland, and hedgerows require managing the presence of invasive plant species.
- Pruning and the Maintenance of Trees and Shrubs: Please refer to ANSI A 300 Part 1- Standards for pruning.
- Right-of-way responsibilities: It is recommended the owner or occupant of any land or premises abutting upon any public street right-of-way, including to the sidewalk and between the sidewalk and the curb, maintain all plantings whether installed by the property owner, occupant, or the City of Staunton.

Site and Building Signs

Sign characteristics not recommended include:

- A sign that is a moored balloon or other inflatable
- Any type of tethered floating sign
- Signs that move or change more frequently than every 24 hours
- Message boards of any type
- Window signs of any type covering more than 1/3rd of any window surface
- Human beings, animals, or plants in costume, wearing, holding, or used to hang signs
- Lighting of any type outlining any structure or window
- Pennants, ribbons, spinners, streamers or similar moving devices, whether or not they are part of a sign
- A sign, other than a public sign, that contains or consists of a searchlight, beacon, strobe light, or similar form of illumination
- A sign that produces sound for the purpose of attracting attention regardless of whether the sign has a written message content
- A sign that is illuminated so as to be unsafe to vehicular or pedestrian traffic

- A commercial window sign affixed to a window or door above the first floor of the structure unless the business to which the sign pertains does not occupy any first floor space
- Advertising vehicles, where the vehicle is parked so as to be visible from a public right-of-way in a parking space or parking area not associated with a car dealership; the vehicle is inoperable; or the vehicle is incapable of moving on its own or is not self-propelled
- All banners, except when used as a temporary sign
- Billboards of any type
- All roof signs
- Illuminated signs featuring changing or static screen display are not recommended for use on any property within the Entrance Corridor Overlay District.
- LED display signs are not on the list of permitted signs in the Entrance Corridor Overlay District, however the ordinance does allow staff to consider additional types of signs for approval. The use of LED displays along Richmond Avenue may be considered with the following conditions: The LED display should consist of yellow diodes on a black background. The LED display be turned off after the business closes; the LED display shall not move or change within a 24 hour period; should an LED display cause undue glare on adjacent properties or from near-by Richmond Avenue, the light levels should be dimmed and maintained at the reduced level. It is recommended these standards apply to other / similar types of LED signs.
- Sign bases should reflect site material and construction traditions. Stone and brick are appropriate materials; metal bases will be considered on a case by case basis.
- To provide consistency throughout the Entrance Corridor Overlay District, all channel letters and bubble signs should have dark bronze trim caps and returns; raceways should be painted to match mounting surface.
- Neon signs will be considered if used as part of a freestanding sign or sign located on a building face.
- Neon tubing, simulated neon tubing, and / or other linear lighting types or lighting configuration used to outline, edge, or otherwise emphasize building or site features is discouraged.
- Text and logos only on gas station canopies may be internally illuminated; the overall internal illumination of gas station canopies is discouraged.
- Small, standardized, neon “OPEN” signs are recommended; all other lighted signs located in building windows is not recommended.

Site and Building Lighting

Recommended lighting on Richmond Avenue includes the use of cut off and / or full cut off site, building, and canopy lighting for fixtures emitting over 1800 lumens. Maximum foot candle readings of 0.5 fc at the parcel boundary is recommended. Illumination should have intensities and uniformity ratios in accordance with the current recommended practices of the Illumination Engineering Society of North America Lighting Handbook. To provide consistency throughout the Entrance Corridor Overlay District, all site and building light fixtures should be dark bronze in color.

Design Guidelines for Richmond Avenue
recommendations for buildings

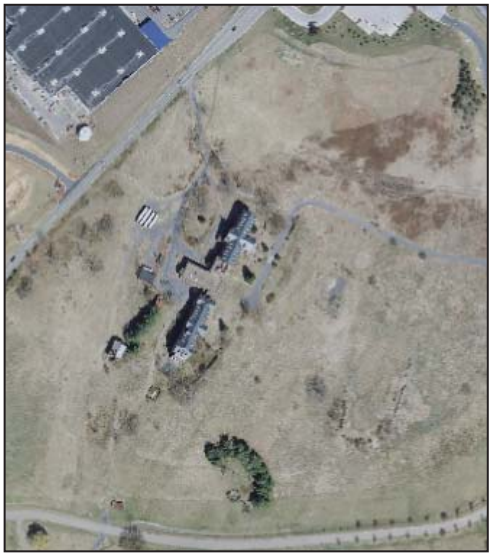
Recommendations for Buildings:

Existing Buildings as Design Sources

The Comprehensive Plan includes the protection of historic structures in changing areas as a policy goal. Staunton's unique cultural and historic characteristics are expressed in its remaining commercial buildings, industrial buildings, residences, cemeteries, site elements, and site configurations. While the Entrance Corridor Overlay District does not require the preservation of these buildings, we hope to encourage their retention and creative re-use, as well as offer them as examples for helping determine the character of future development and re-development projects on Richmond Avenue.

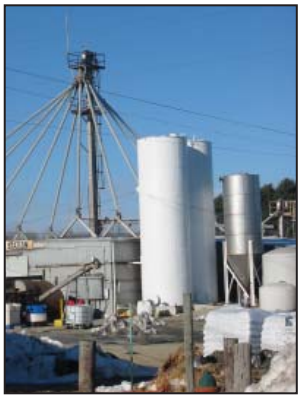
Buildings remaining from early points in the history of the street contribute to the character, mark the growth and location of the local community, and refer to cultural content in a manner that cannot be replaced or duplicated. Because of their value to the community, the adaptive re-use of existing historic buildings and site structures is encouraged in the Entrance Corridor Overlay District. Federal assistance through the National Park Service for the rehabilitation of historic buildings not located in historic districts may be available for property owners; contact http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/tax/brochure1.htm#10 for additional information. Staunton City and Virginia State incentives may be available for the rehabilitation of existing buildings for use as businesses in portions of the Entrance Corridor District overlapping the City's Enterprise Zones; please refer to the Staunton City web site for further information. http://www.staunton.va.us

The intent of this section of the design guidelines is to improve the quality of new and re-developed buildings. The Entrance Corridor Overlay District ordinance requires the design of adaptive re-use and newly constructed buildings based the scale, massing, materials, and construction methodology and manner of negotiating changes in elevation of near-by historic resources. Included below are examples of existing buildings with characteristics that may be used to inform new building design. Please note the replication of historic buildings is not encouraged; mimicking historic architecture may contribute to a misleading sense of historic development.



DeJarnette Sanitorium; appears in 1954 aerials; self supporting until 1975 : The DeJarnette Sanitorium was established in 1932 as a privately operated mental health facility for adult patients, as the special pay unit of the Western State Hospital which is currently located at the north end of Frontier Drive. In 1975

the center became a facility for the treatment of children and youth with severe behavioral disorders. The center included 65 weekday only residential program and a day program for 35 students. Through a series of changes in government policy and economic conditions the center eventually closed in the 1990's and remains vacant today. The facility includes a suite of buildings, arranged along an existing ridge line with the front of the buildings facing southeast. The buildings are multi-storied, constructed of red brick, with gable and cross gable roofs with dormers and closed pediments with lunette windows. Detailing on the building includes Ionic columns with composite capitals and entablatures. Windows are primarily round arched, six over six sash, with oversized keystones. Original roofing material was likely slate. The approximate square footage of each of the 1930's buildings is 38,000.



Augusta Co-op Farm Bureau: includes 12.736 total acres of land, with eight buildings; some of the existing buildings are used for retail sales of agricultural related supplies, others for the manufacturing and storage of farm related goods. Two properties currently owned by the Farm Bureau where previously owned by Augusta Frozen Food Co-op. Two of the largest buildings located at 1205B Richmond Avenue: the retail building and the easternmost manufacturing facility, appear in the 1954 aerials. The third large building at 1205B, also constructed for processing, appears in the 1963 aerials. The remainder of the existing five buildings where constructed some time after 1963. The approximate square footage of the three largest and earliest buildings are approximately 27,000, 25,000, and 17,000.

The Villages of Staunton, original location of Western State Hospital, appears in the 1954 aerial: Currently a mixed use development, this facility expanded over the years from the central three buildings, opened in 1828 to include working orchards and other farm components with approximately 24 buildings, including a dairy barn, and a cemetery still existing on the site. Begun as the Western Lunatic Asylum, the facility later became Western State Hospital, and finally Staunton Correctional Institute, closing its doors in 2003. The Commonwealth's move toward deinstitutionalization in the early 1970's ment a substantial decline of population for this site, the Dejarnette site, and the most recent Western State Hospital site on Frontier Drive. The majority of the hospital buildings are red brick, some with concrete entrances and details. The core buildings are multi-storied and feature gable and hip roof forms, some with closed pediments. The buildings include windows on all elevations of many types and styles. The buildings range in total square footage from 2,700, to 28,000, and larger.

General Building Characteristics

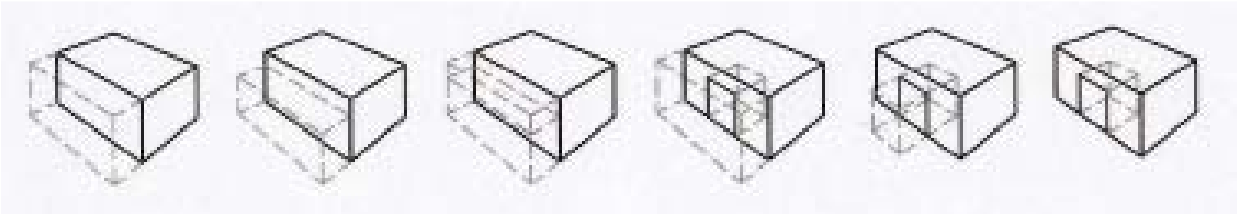
Based on the strengths of the example buildings provided as a source for design characteristics, the following recommendations are provided:

- New buildings should include one or a combination of the following materials/methods of construction: wood frame and fiber cement board with brick, stone, or concrete foundations; brick construction or brick facing; stone site wall/foundation combinations; finished concrete block; roofing material may include standing seam metal, asphalt shingle, and rubber membrane/parapet on flat roofs.
- Site walls retaining walls should be comprised of: stone, brick, or concrete; stone or brick facing on a concrete or cmu wall. The use of segmental/modular concrete block is discouraged. Site walls should be considered as part of site terracing in increments; site walls out of proportion with building foundations or the human figure are discouraged.
- The building foundations themselves or integral site walls are used to take up changes in elevation from the front of the building to the back. The first floor of the building is either located partially below grade at the back of this building with the brick foundation is stepped towards the rear or vice versa. The buildings utilize combinations of terracing into and building above the surface of the existing land form. Auxiliary spaces in buildings created by elevation changes create possibilities for additional useable space or provide areas to conceal the buildings mechanical systems.
- Roof forms recommended include gable, cross gable, hip, open and closed pediments, conical, and flat forms.

- Site materials recommended include local stone, asphalt, concrete, and exposed aggregate concrete.
- The building examples provided include transitional areas from the outside to the inside of buildings. These areas provide protection from the elements, allow areas for outdoor dining and gathering, provide covered walkways connecting business to business, and help modulate the scale of multi-storied buildings. It is recommend the front of all buildings include a transitional area a minimum of 15 feet deep; this area may be an attached porch, breezeway, colonnade, or other similar element; a minimum of one third (5 feet) of this are must be fully protected from the weather. Transitional areas may extend fully outside of the main building face, extend fully inside the main building face, or combine interior and exterior elements.

topographic contours indicate a continuation of the land form from one side of the building to another; with very large buildings, placing part of the building underground can help reduce negative impacts of a building out of scale with its surroundings

topographic contours indicate the earth has been pushed aside to create a flat spot for the building, eliminating characteristic land forms

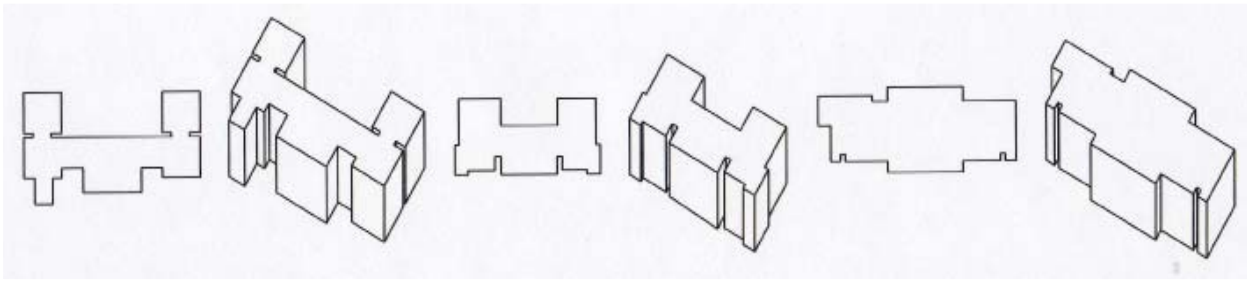


schematic strategies for combining types of transitional areas

These examples also include variations in the overall form of the buildings. The surfaces of simple box forms have been activated with variations in the surface of the building, with of the buildings including a variety of windows on all elevations; tinted glass is discouraged. New building elevations should include a minimum of three surface variations a minimum of 8 inches deep; variations a minimum of 2 feet deep should be provided when tied to a change in the roof line.

- Windows are recommended to provide interest and surface variations on building elevations. Building walls without windows are discouraged.
- The design of gas station canopies, building canopies and other accessory structures should be compatible with the scale, color, materials, and detail of the buildings they serve.

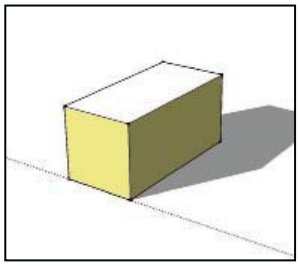
examples of porches and breezeways in new buildings



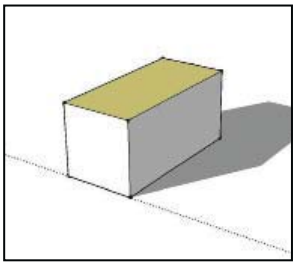
schematic variations in building form

variations in overall building form on new buildings

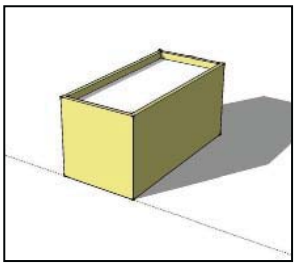
For the purposes of the design guidelines, the following definitions of exterior building walls and roofs shall apply. The definition of building walls and roofs is important when the use of walls and roofs for the display of signs for example: signs attached to walls are recommended in the Entrance Corridor Overlay District; the use of any signs attached to building roofs is not recommended. *(as amended, 2.10.11)*



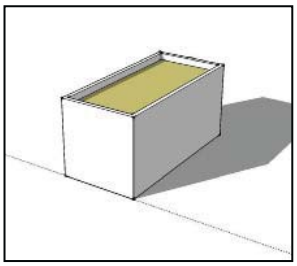
flat; walls



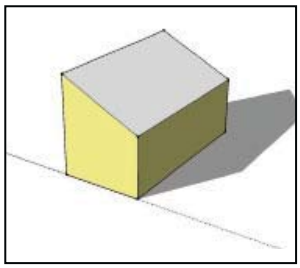
flat; roof



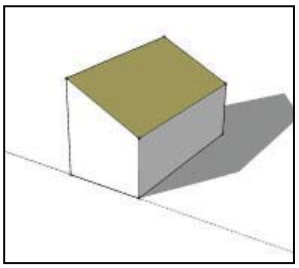
parapet; walls



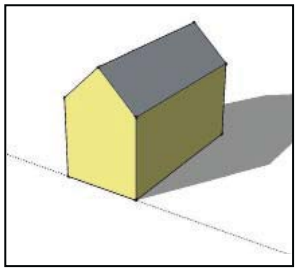
parapet; roof



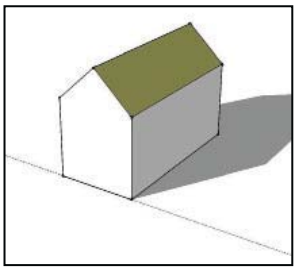
shed; walls



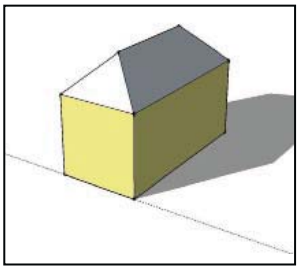
shed; roof



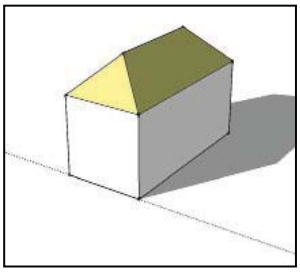
gable; walls



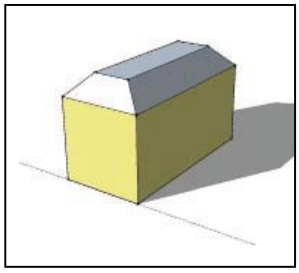
gable; roof



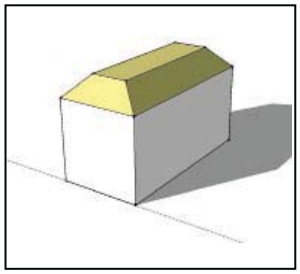
hip; walls



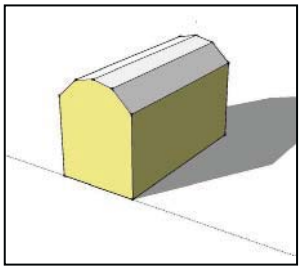
hip; roof



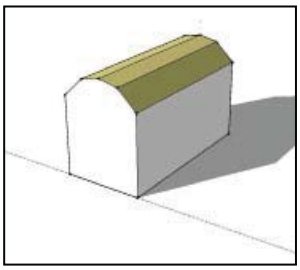
mansard; walls



mansard; roof



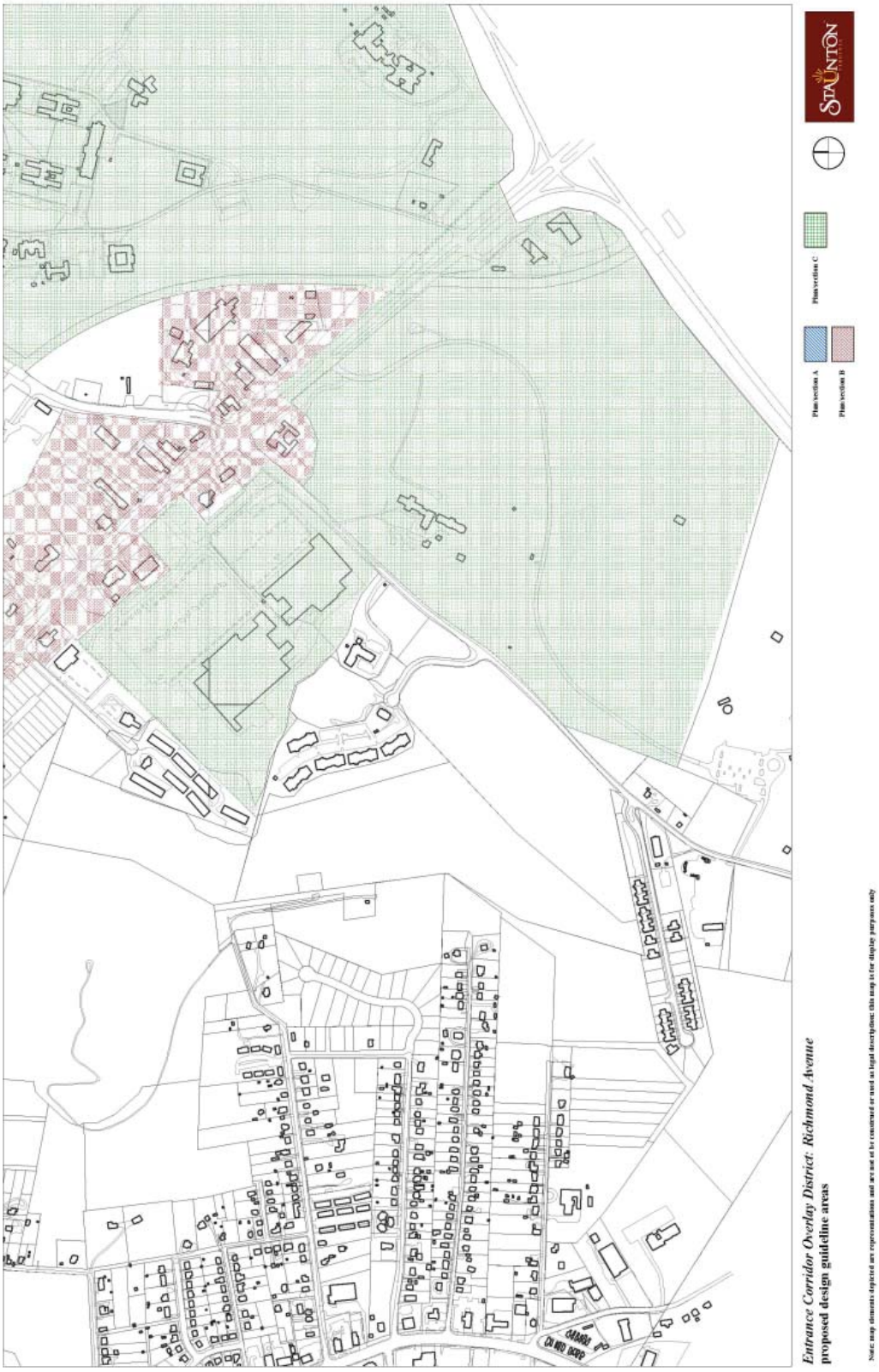
gambrel; walls



gambrel; roof

Design Guidelines for Richmond Avenue
recommendations for community form

Design Guideline Areas along Richmond Avenue



Entrance Corridor Overlay District: Richmond Avenue
proposed design guideline areas

Note: map elements depicted are representations and are not to be construed or used as legal description; this map is for display purposes only

Entrance Corridor Overlay District: Richmond Avenue
proposed design guideline areas

Note: map elements depicted are representations and are not of be construed or used as legal description; this map is for display purposes only

Recommended Design Areas for Richmond Avenue:

Section/Plan A

- Recommended range of total square footage for new buildings is 2,000 to 40,000; scale to near-by existing buildings
- Front of the building should be oriented parallel to and facing the corridor
- Maintain sidewalk on the north side of Richmond Avenue only
- Minimum front, side, and back setbacks as per underlying zoning with adjustments to coordinate with adjacent conditions; with setbacks of 25 feet or greater expectations for transitional spaces described in "recommendations for buildings" (page 25) increase
- Off-street parking lots are recommended located on the side or back of the building
- Parking lots within a block should be interconnected
- Provide large canopy street trees a the rate of 20' on center along the full length of corridor frontage; provide planted at 2 1/2" caliper, dbh, minimum; 15' tall for multi-stemmed trees; street trees to be installed between the sidewalk and the corridor
- It is recommended stormwater management employ green roofs; rain water collection systems; storm-water planters; and plantings designed to serve both the demands of stormwater management and and creating pedestrian friendly environments
- Parking located along sidewalk edge should provide a 3 1/2' evergreen hedge between the sidewalk and parking lot' planting bed should be a minimum of 4' wide.

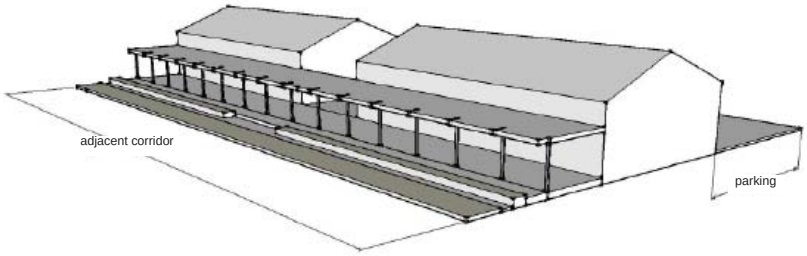
Section / Plan B

- Recommended range of total square footage for new buildings is 2,000 to 60,000; recommended scaled to near-by existing buildings
- Infilling existing larger parking lots with new buildings is recommended
- Maintain sidewalk on the north side of Richmond Avenue only, ending east of 1015 Richmond Avenue; the pedestrian network re-orienting at this point to a parallel network of streets
- Off-street parking areas may include two rows of parking and one travel lane between the corridor and new development, with any remaining off-street parking located to the side or back of the building
- Additional parking configruations may be considered.
- Front of the building should be oriented parallel to and facing the corridor; appropriate adjustments will be considered when site design is responsive to existing ridge lines or other landscape features
- Minimum front, side, and back setbacks as per underlying zoning with adjustments to coordinate with adjacent conditions; with setbacks of 25 feet or greater expectations for transitional spaces described in "recommendations for buildings" (page 25) increase
- It is recommended stormwater management employ green roofs; rain water collection systems; storm-water planters; and plantings designed to serve both the demands of stormwater management and and creating pedestrian friendly environments
- Parking located along sidewalk edge should provide a 3 1/2' evergreen hedge between the sidewalk and parking lot' planting bed should be a minimum of 4' wide.

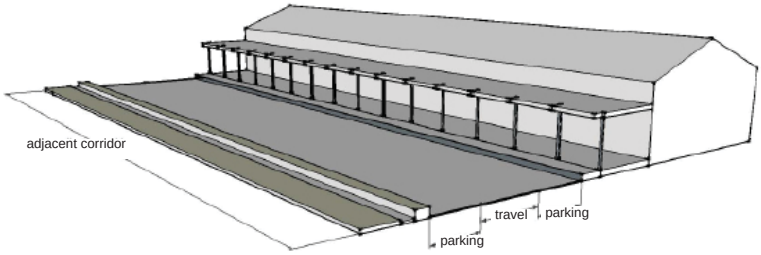
houses and neighborhood corner gas station share coordinated setbacks

Section / Plan C

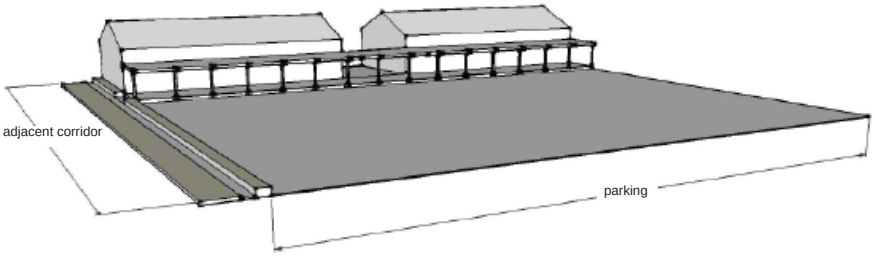
- Recommended range of total square footage for new buildings is 8,000 to 150,000; recommended scaled to near-by existing buildings
- Infilling existing larger parking lots with new buildings is recommended
- Off-street parking areas may include two rows of parking and one travel lane between the corridor and new development, with remaining parking located to the side or back of the building
- Front of building should be oriented parallel to and facing the corridor with adjustments appropriate in response to existing ridge lines or other landscape features
- The front of buildings may be placed perpendicular and adjacent to the corridor with off-street parking located in front of the building
- Additional parking configruations may be considered.
- Minimum front, side, and back setbacks as per underlying zoning with adjustments to coordinate with adjacent conditions; with setbacks of 25 feet or greater expectations for transitional spaces described in “recommendations for buildings” (page 25) increase
- It is recommended stormwater management employ green roofs; rain water collection systems; stormwater planters; and plantings designed to serve both the demands of stormwater management and and creating pedestrian friendly environments
- Parking located along sidewalk edge should provide a 3 1/2’ evergreen hedge between the sidewalk and parking lot’ planting bed should be a minimum of 4’ wide.



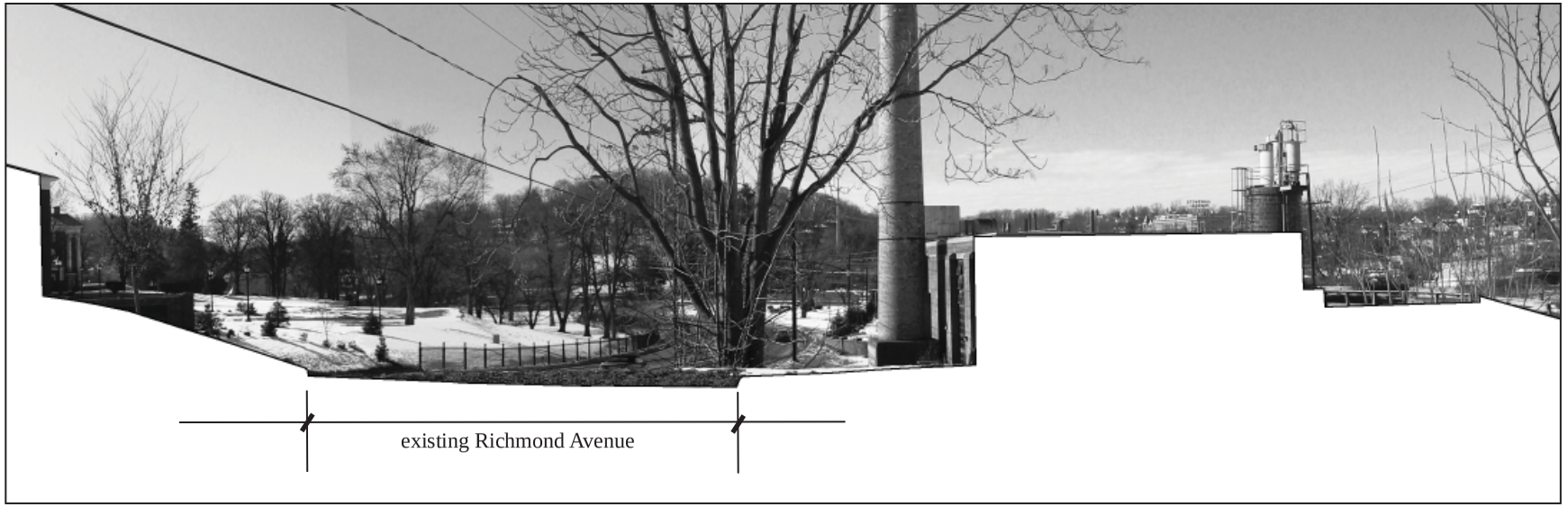
parking configuration possible: Section/Plan A, B, and C



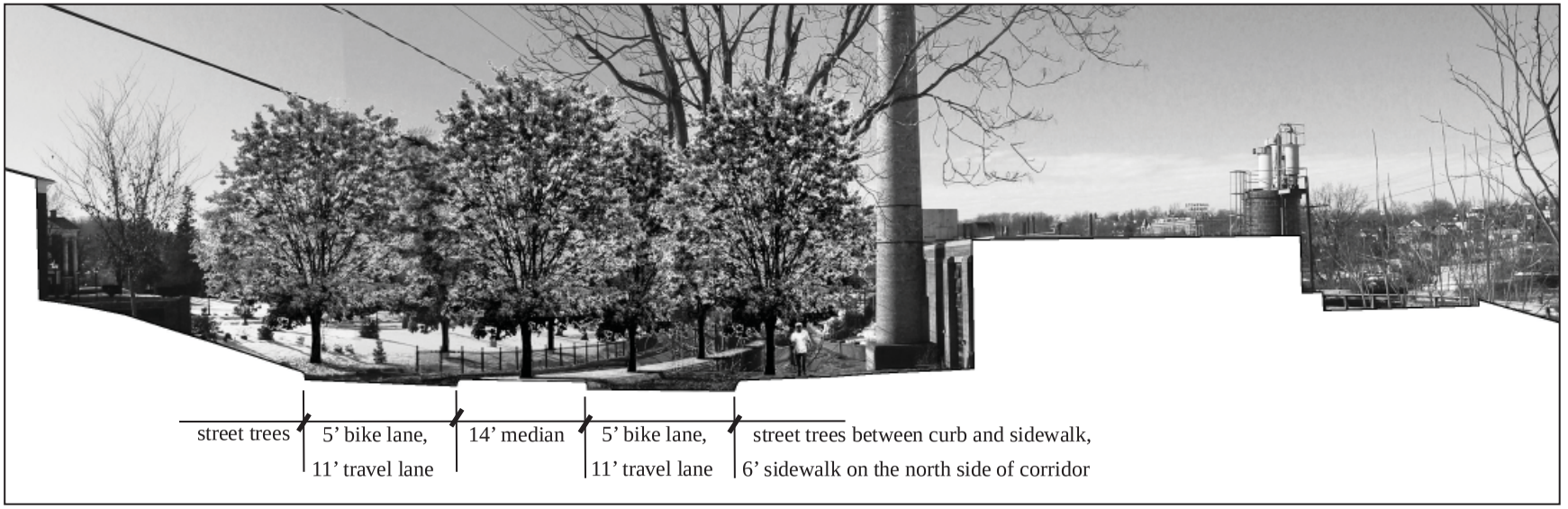
parking configuration possible: Section/Plan B and C



parking configuration possible: Section/Plan C only

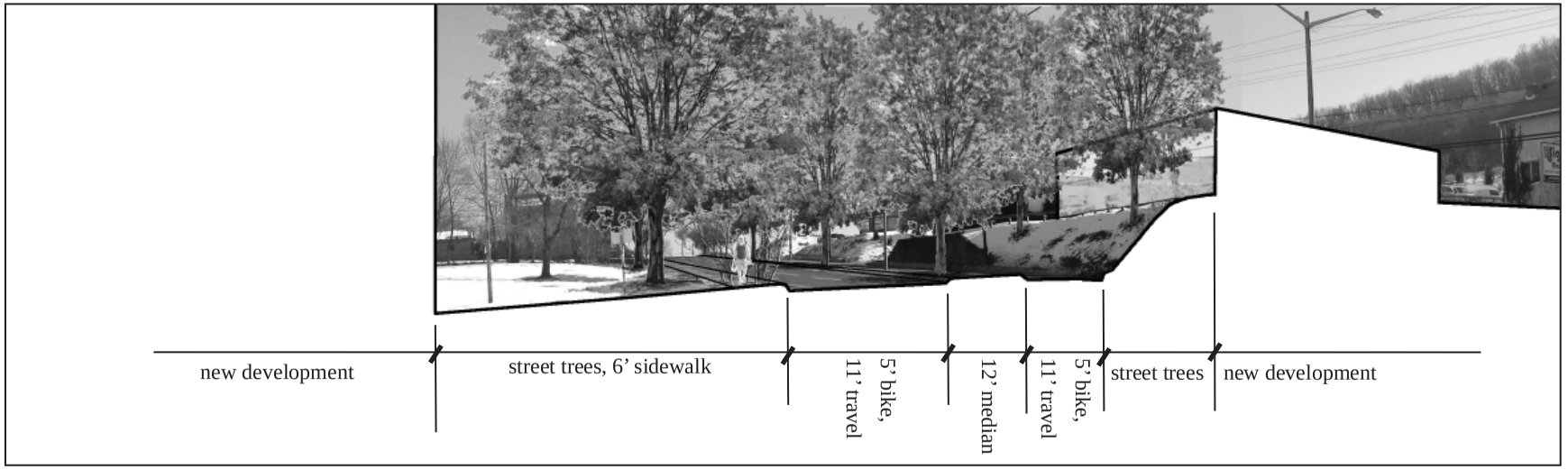


section: existing conditions

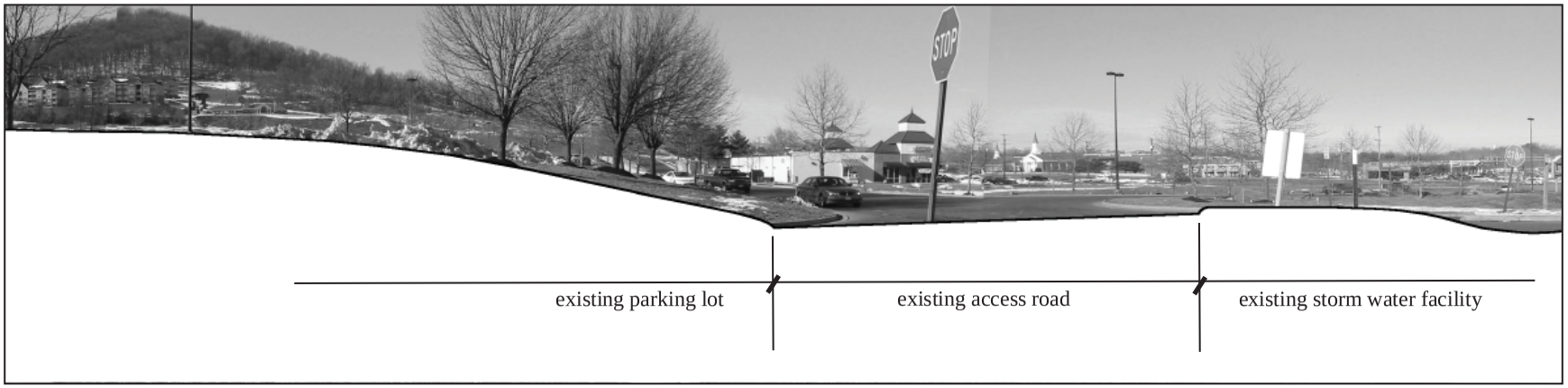


section: possible configuration

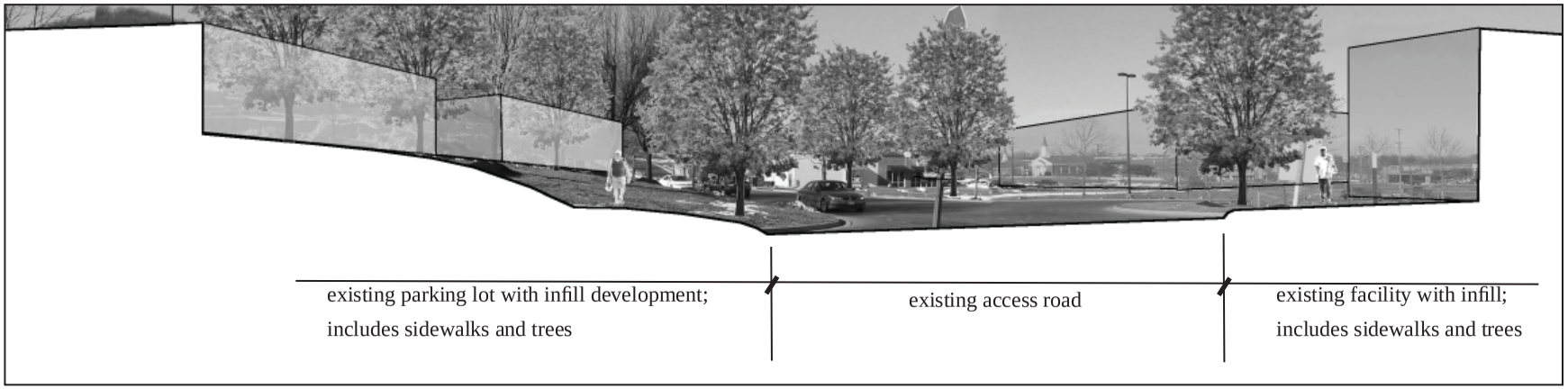
section: existing conditions



section: possible configuration



section: existing conditions



section: possible configuration

City of Staunton, Virginia

Amy Ransom Arnold, ASLA

Planning and Inspections Department
2010