

## 15.05.120 Mixed-Use and Nonresidential Design Standards

### Commentary:

This section represents a repeal and replacement of the existing mixed use and nonresidential design standards sections.

**Broader Applicability.** The current nonresidential design standards were expanded on in this subsection, including standards from the current CBD and mixed-use zoning districts, which were sometimes carried forward as-is and in other cases revised to be reconciled with similar standards that should apply more broadly. The current mixed-use district design standards were revised to apply more broadly to all mixed-use buildings, since the MU district has rarely been used in Longmont (Roosevelt MU project and 1<sup>st</sup> & Main). The standards were simplified to eliminate the requirements for building types and adoption of a regulating plan. The separate standards for retail sales, office, financial, restaurant and hotel establishments were not carried forward as-is, but rather applied more broadly as effective design standards for all mixed-use and nonresidential buildings in the city.

**Should Some Uses/Districts be Exempt?** The nonresidential design standards currently apply to industrial uses, which can be problematic for what is otherwise a very different type of building/use/quality. This requires further discussion. As an alternative to a broad applicability, we could develop separate (and less stringent) standards for industrial uses depending on the use and location.

**Relocation of other Development Standards.** Several sections from the current 15.05.120.A were not carried forward in the design standards but rather relocated to applicable sections within the development standards Chapter 15.05 – for example, the pedestrian access standards in 15.05.120.A.3 will be relocated to Section 15.05.060 and reconciled with those standards. Similarly, parking design standards will be relocated to Section 15.05.080 and reconciled with those standards. We did not carry forward the reflective glass provision that limits glazing to a maximum of 15 percent visual light reflectivity (which we heard was difficult to administer and enforce).

### A. Purpose

The mixed-use and nonresidential design standards are intended to implement comprehensive plan strategies and to promote high-quality design of an urban environment. The standards are further intended to:

1. Protect and enhance the character and quality of Longmont’s neighborhoods;
2. Provide visual interest and variety;
3. Enhance the pedestrian scale of development and the streetscape;
4. Mitigate negative visual impacts from the scale, bulk, and mass of large buildings; and
5. Balance the community’s economic and aesthetic concerns.

### B. Applicability<sup>17</sup>

This Section 15.05.120 shall apply to:

1. New mixed-use and nonresidential uses and structures in all zoning districts, including Planned Developments.

<sup>17</sup> Did not carry forward 15.05.120.A.2 (modifications to nonresidential design standards) that reference alternative approach for infill and redevelopment pursuant to current 15.01.040.B. That process will be further developed in the procedures.

2. Modification or enlargement of any existing mixed-use or nonresidential development in an amount greater than 25 percent of the gross floor area.

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### C. General Design Standards

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1. Design review board – [Reserved].

2. Site Layout

- a. Compatibility with Natural Site Conditions<sup>18</sup>

- i. Development shall be avoided on sites with unusual topography.
- ii. Building envelopes and areas of site disturbance shall be selected based on the location of natural landforms, native vegetation, mature trees, underlying geology, mapped hazard areas, and required setbacks pursuant to this Code.

- b. Compatibility with Adjacent Development

Development shall respect local development patterns and site features to the maximum extent practicable. Elements that shall be coordinated between adjacent sites include:

- i. Shared driveways for access;
- ii. Linkages of internal vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems;
- iii. Linkages of open space systems;
- iv. Areas and access for refuse and recycling collection;
- v. Drainage and detention facilities; and
- vi. Other improvements where a coordinated approach benefits the larger area.

- c. Pedestrian Gathering Spaces<sup>19</sup>

Outdoor spaces for pedestrians, such as plazas, outdoor seating areas, and other amenities with connecting pedestrian paths shall be included with mixed-use and nonresidential developments.

- d. Developments with Multiple Buildings<sup>20</sup>

- i. Buildings shall be arranged on the site so that their orientation frames, encloses, or otherwise gives prominence to a pedestrian corridor, an outdoor gathering space, a “main street” pedestrian or vehicle access corridor within the site, or the corners of street intersections or entry points into the development.

3. Building Entrances

- a. Primary building entrances shall<sup>21</sup> be oriented toward pedestrian walkways and plazas, with direct, continuous connections to the street without requiring pedestrians to walk through

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<sup>18</sup> Some communities include standards for generally responding to natural site conditions (a) and surrounding development (b).

<sup>19</sup> Added applicability to mixed-use developments and removed the following: “particularly for commercial and public/institutional/civic developments.”

<sup>20</sup> New standards. Did not carry forward “to the maximum extent practicable, building setbacks from adjacent streets should be minimized to establish pedestrian-oriented street fronts.” Building setbacks are established in the zoning district regulations and are not typically negotiable through design standards.

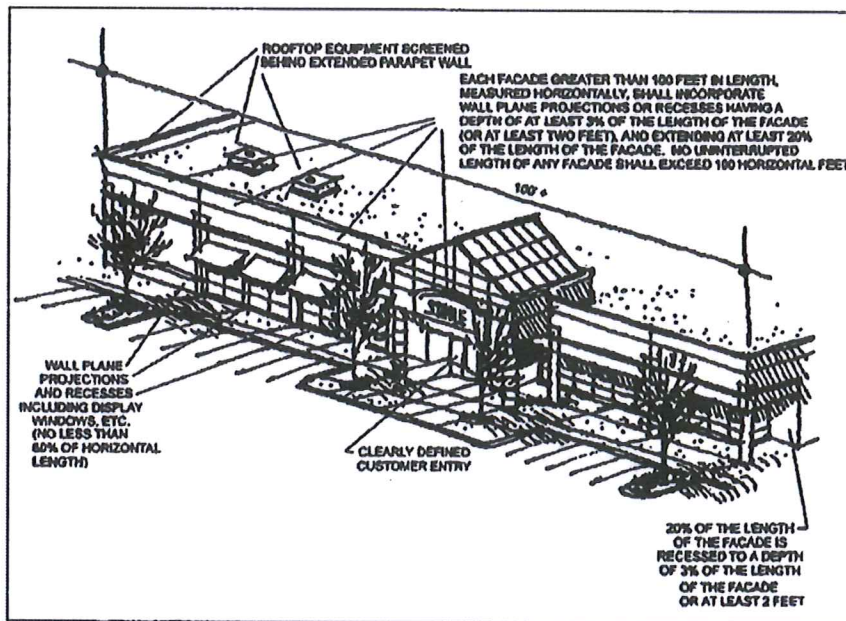
<sup>21</sup> Currently “should.”

parking areas. Entrances for buildings on a corner may be curved or angled to face the intersection of such corner.<sup>22</sup>

- b. Buildings that front on the St. Vrain Creek Corridor, parks, plazas, and open space shall have a primary building facade with a customer entrance that faces the corridor or public area.<sup>23</sup>
- c. All customer or resident/visitor entrances shall create architectural interest and variation from other portions of the building by incorporating at least three of the following:<sup>24</sup>
  - i. Changes in building plane through recesses and/or projections;
  - ii. Canopies, awnings, arcades, galleries, or other overhangs;
  - iii. Tower elements;
  - iv. Architectural embellishments;
  - v. Changes in building material, color, and/or texture; or
  - vi. Other design elements that add visual interest as determined by the Director.

#### 4. Building Articulation<sup>25</sup>

##### a. Horizontal Articulation



*Update graphic for legibility and to reflect revised standards.*

- i. Each building façade shall incorporate at least three of the following elements:
  - (A). Change in building materials (required);
  - (B). Change in wall plane projections or recesses
  - (C). Change in building colors;

<sup>22</sup> Last sentence on corner entrances carried forward from current mixed-use district standards, 15.03.150.F.2.k.

<sup>23</sup> From current mixed-use district standards, 15.03.150.F.2.f.iii.

<sup>24</sup> Based on current standards, including those for entrances to retail, office, restaurants, hotels, etc.

<sup>25</sup> Based on the current standards for retail, office, financial, restaurant, and hotel uses in Section 15.05.120.B.2 and the building articulation standards from the current mixed-use district and CBD district standards.

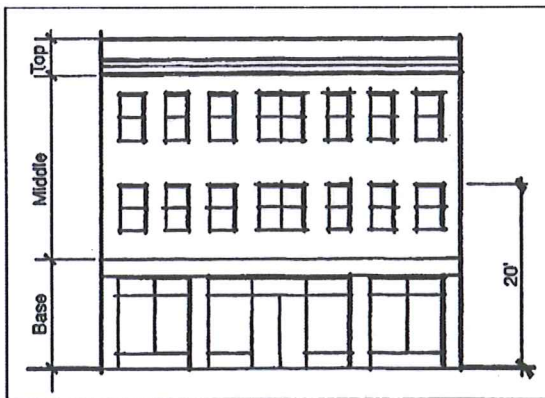


- (D). Change in textures; or
- (E). Variation in window design; or<sup>26</sup>
- (F). Other design elements that add visual interest as determined by the Director.

**b. Vertical Articulation**

Each principal building two stories or more shall be designed so that the massing or facade articulation of the building presents a clear base, middle, and top. <sup>27</sup> Lower levels can be differentiated from upper stories by incorporation of elements including, but not limited to, the following: <sup>28</sup>

- i. Low planters and walls;
- ii. Use of veneer banding or wainscot, change in materials, and change in textures;
- iii. Darker colors on lower levels;
- iv. Integrated covered walkways, trellises, or architectural awnings; or
- v. Other design elements that distinguish lower levels as determined by the Director.



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**c. OPTIONAL: Upper Story Floor Area Standard** [*provides more opportunities for roof terraces, outdoor spaces, scenic vistas, etc.*]

The upper-story of all buildings greater than two stories shall have a reduced floor area of at least 10 percent of the ground floor.

*Include graphic if retained*

**d. Comprehensive Design**<sup>29</sup>

- i. Primary building façades that are visible to the public shall be designed with a similar level of detail, patterning, and finish through the use of similar architectural features, building materials, and design of landscaping features. Blank walls void of architectural detailing shall be prohibited unless the Director determines that the façade is not visible from adjacent development or public rights-of-way.

<sup>26</sup> New.

<sup>27</sup> From current CBD district standards.

<sup>28</sup> Examples are new.

<sup>29</sup> From 15.05.120.B.2.d, revised for clarity and to remove subjectivity of “as visually attractive as the front” standard.

- ii. Accessory building façades shall be designed and finished to complement primary buildings through the use of similar colors, materials, and architectural style.<sup>30</sup>

**5. Roof Design<sup>31</sup>**

- a. No roofline along any building elevation shall exceed 30 feet in length without a visual variation that incorporates the following:
  - i. Projections or recessions of at least two feet in depth;
  - ii. Dormers;
  - iii. Change in roof height of at least two feet; and/or
  - iv. Distinct architectural features.
- b. Roofs of buildings shall have parapets or enclosures concealing flat roofs and roof-top equipment from public view, and such parapets and enclosures shall be constructed of materials that match the building in quality and detail. Each such parapet or enclosure shall have an average height of no more than 15 percent of the height of the supporting wall, a maximum height at any point equal to 33 percent of the height of the supporting wall, and three-dimensional cornice treatments.

**6. Ground-Floor Uses**

- a. Ground-floor facades with frontage on public streets shall have arcades, display windows, entry areas, awnings, or other such features along at least 60 percent of the horizontal length.<sup>32</sup>
- b. Ground-floor residential units with direct access to a public sidewalk or other public right-of-way shall comply with the design standards for multifamily dwellings in Section 15.05.110G.2.

**7. Transparency (Windows, Doors, and Openings)<sup>33</sup>**

- a. The ground floor of each façade facing a public street or other public area shall contain a minimum of 60 percent windows or doorways.
- b. Upper floors shall contain a minimum of 25 percent windows.
- c. Clear glass shall be used for storefront display windows and doors.
- d. Windows shall be accented and defined with detail elements, such as frames, sills, and lintels, and shall be located to visually establish and define the street or pedestrian ways facing portions of a building and to establish human scale and proportion.

**8. Building Materials**

**a. Generally**

Building façade materials shall either be similar to the materials already being used in the existing neighborhood or, if dissimilar materials are being proposed, other characteristics such as scale and proportions, form, architectural detailing, color, and texture shall be used to ensure compatibility despite the differences in materials.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> New.

<sup>31</sup> The first standard is currently under heading “Parapets” in Section 15.05.120.B.3 for retail, office, financial, restaurant, and hotels. Did not carry forward roof design and screening standard from 15.05.120.A.9 that was loosely required “to the maximum extent practicable.” The second standard is new.

<sup>32</sup> From 15.05.120.B.2.c.

<sup>33</sup> New, based on the new standard for residential but increased to more closely match the current mixed-use district standard for retail, restaurant, and office uses. Numbers iii and iv were carried forward from the mixed-use district standards in 15.03.150.F.2.e.

<sup>34</sup> From current CBD district standards.

**b. Allowable Building Materials**

Allowable façade materials include:

- i. Brick or stone;
- ii. Split-face and ground-face masonry units;
- iii. Decorative architectural tile;
- iv. Stucco;
- v. Integrally-colored concrete or decorative concrete;
- vi. Wood;
- vii. Quality repurposed materials;
- viii. Glass;
- ix. Quality architectural metal panels or steel beams; or
- x. Other comparable quality alternative materials.

**c. Use of Metal<sup>35</sup>**

Quality architectural metal panels may be used on the exterior of buildings pursuant to the following:

- i. [Reserved].
- ii.
- iii. Standing seam (not corrugated) metal roofs are allowed.

**d. Alternative Materials<sup>36</sup>**

Alternative building materials may be considered through a minor modification if the applicable decision-making body determines that the design creates a high-quality or unique building design that meets the purpose and intent of the standards in this section.

**9. Exterior Color**

Black, fluorescent, bright or highly saturated hues shall not be used as the predominant color on any wall or roof of any principal or accessory structure. These colors may be used as building accent colors provided they are compatible with the building design and other primary colors on the building, and providing they do not constitute more than 10 percent of the area of each elevation of a building, excluding windows, doors, and wall signs.

**10. OPTIONAL: Design for Security** [*to be consistent with Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards*]

**a. All Mixed-Use and Nonresidential Development**

Sites shall be designed to avoid the creation of areas that are shielded on multiple sides by barriers such as walls or bushes and thus have low visibility. Such areas shall be avoided in site design to the maximum extent practicable or otherwise well-lit with some form of surveillance.

**b. Multifamily Development** [*if retained – relocate to multifamily standards*]

Multifamily developments comply with the following:

- i. Shared mailboxes shall be located in high-visibility and well-lit areas.

<sup>35</sup> The mixed-use district currently allows architectural metal panels. Discuss options to allow more flexibility..

<sup>36</sup> Expands current alternative provision in the mixed-use district.

- ii. Shared community rooms, such as game rooms and laundry rooms shall be visible from common, walking, and driving areas. All shared community rooms shall have transparent panels to view into the room before entering.

## D. Feature Buildings

### 1. Applicability

These standards may apply to the following "feature buildings":

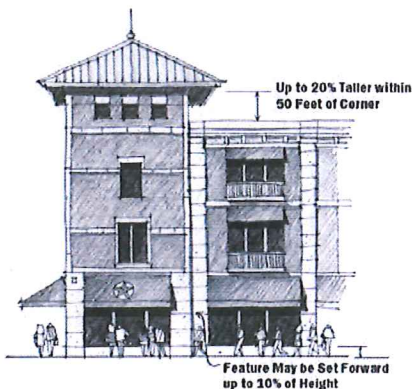
- a. Buildings located on axis with a terminating street or open space; or
- b. Buildings at the intersection of any combination of arterial and collector streets.

### 2. Design Features

- a. Feature buildings may be designed with accentuated and distinctive entrances and articulation that is offset from the wall planes and extends above the eave or parapet line of the main part of the building.
- b. Building wall materials, window design, roof and parapet design and lighting may be varied to create a distinctive design for feature buildings.

### 3. Building Height

- a. A feature building's height may be increased up to 1 story more than the maximum height allowed for the first 50 feet or one-third of the building length, whichever is greater, from the street intersection or terminus of a street or open space, to allow for creative tower and other architectural elements.



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