



Town of Cochrane

# Integrated Neighbourhood Design Guidelines

May 1, 2013

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We would like to thank all those people for their generous individual contributions and support during the Town of Cochrane Integrated Neighbourhood Design Guidelines development process.

Cochrane Town Council

Town of Cochrane Staff

The development and building industry representatives

Again, a big thank you to all those who participated and for your commitment to continuing to support outstanding quality of design, building, and development in Cochrane.

We look forward to your active participation in implementing these guidelines.

Consulting Team

Urban Systems Ltd.

&

MVH Urban Planning & Design Inc.

# Mayor's Message:

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## Made in Cochrane

The Town of Cochrane has a unique sense of community and history. These qualities have created a special feeling that residents want to conserve. At the same time, as the region moves towards a more compact and environmentally sensitive footprint, challenges remain to make more intensive land uses fit within our new neighbourhoods. While we have a tradition of mixing densities and land uses in our downtown, our new neighbourhoods need design guidelines to ensure that they properly complement and enhance our community while integrating a variety of housing types and uses.

These guidelines were developed with Town of Cochrane staff and Council, and the development community. We have ensured that these design guidelines are customized to the needs and aspirations of Cochrane. They are concise, clear and practical to achieve the goal of high quality design that we all support.

I would like to thank all those who took part in developing these design guidelines including the development community, Town Council and staff. We value your contributions and look forward to your continued efforts to develop great neighbourhoods in Cochrane.

Truper McBride, Mayor

Town of Cochrane

March 2013

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# 1

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Vision: Building Great Neighbourhoods in Cochrane

A great neighbourhood is a place where people are engaged with their surroundings. Residents know their neighbours, say hi to visitors, and feel safe. Great neighbourhoods meet the diverse needs of their residents by providing a variety of housing options in an integrated fashion to create an inclusive environment suitable for all ages. Great neighbourhoods also provide basic services and amenities such as a corner store, school and local park, all within a five minute walk. Great neighbourhoods are easy to access and move through, whether in a vehicle, riding a bike or on foot, through a simple hierarchy of streets that create a sense of orientation in the neighbourhood by their size and design. The result is a diverse and affordable community for all ages – from young families to mature adults.



## 1.2 Intent and Scope

The Guidelines focus on desired outcomes providing ample flexibility for the applicant to develop their own approach to meet the intent of each guideline while minimizing the impact on potential yield. Similarly, the Integrated Neighbourhood Design Guidelines will not prescribe specific architectural character or treatment, but will encourage each applicant to develop neighbourhoods that are distinctive and respond to their unique sense of place and context.

These guidelines will provide design direction to the development community and an evaluation tool for Town staff, Cochrane Planning Commission, and Council. They have been developed in consultation with Town staff, Council and the development community so as to reflect Cochrane's unique cultural, historical, and physical context.

Integrated neighbourhood design means that the land uses are compatible with each other and their context. These design guidelines provide direction for neighbourhood design in the Town of Cochrane, especially in the integration of higher densities and mixed housing in future neighbourhoods.

Generally, these guidelines only apply to single-family, multi-family residential and supporting commercial and institutional land uses as they relate to neighborhood design.

The guidelines in this document apply to the following:

- Area Structure Plans
- Neighbourhood Plans
- Development Permits

Applicants will be encouraged to consider these Design Guidelines in preparing architectural controls.

Applications subject to these design guidelines will be reviewed using the Guideline Summary and submission requirements included at the end of this document.

The review conducted under these Guidelines and through the Guideline Summary will take into consideration the level of planning (i.e. ASP vs. DP) inherent to the application.



↑ Integrated neighbourhood design means that the land uses are compatible with each other and their contexts.

## 1.3 Goals

There are three primary goals for these *Integrated Neighbourhood Design Guidelines*:

- Provide concise and self-evident design guidelines that contribute to high quality neighbourhood design and construction.
- Create guidelines that are inspiring, innovative and flexible and encourage the development of unique context-sensitive neighbourhoods consistent with Municipal Development Plan policy, the Land Use Bylaw and other Town regulations.
- Provide an evaluation tool for staff, Council, and residents of Cochrane to guide good design and build value in new neighbourhoods

Implementing these guidelines will result in new neighbourhoods that complement the Town's existing character. These guidelines will help developers, builders, administration and the community by:

- Reinforcing the distinctive high quality commitment;
- Providing flexibility and creativity;
- Enabling and encouraging a mix of housing;
- Increasing "value" by creating walkable, diverse and vibrant neighbourhoods;
- Providing further review and approvals clarity.

## 1.4 Design Principles

These design principles will guide the overall design review process:

- Retain natural features and landscapes to benefit the larger community.
- Encourage retention of views and visually sensitive areas such as views to and from the mountains, the valley, and ridge lines.
- Develop and integrate various forms of residential development that complement existing neighborhoods and provide architectural integrity and variety.
- Create local commercial services to meet the daily needs of the neighbourhood while being careful not to compete with destination retail in downtown Cochrane for weekly and special needs.
- Develop a variety of safe and social spaces, parks and amenities that provide areas for gathering and interacting between various users and uses.
- Deliver a network of pathways throughout new communities and provide connection points for the existing network of pathways at the periphery of the site.
- Encourage healthy neighbourhoods that foster increased physical activity and social interaction.
- Encourage implementation of green building techniques to reduce the overall impact of the built environment on human health and natural systems.



↑ Design Principle - Develop and integrate single family and multi-family housing.



↑ Design Principle - Appropriately size the commercial uses so they meet the neighbourhood needs.

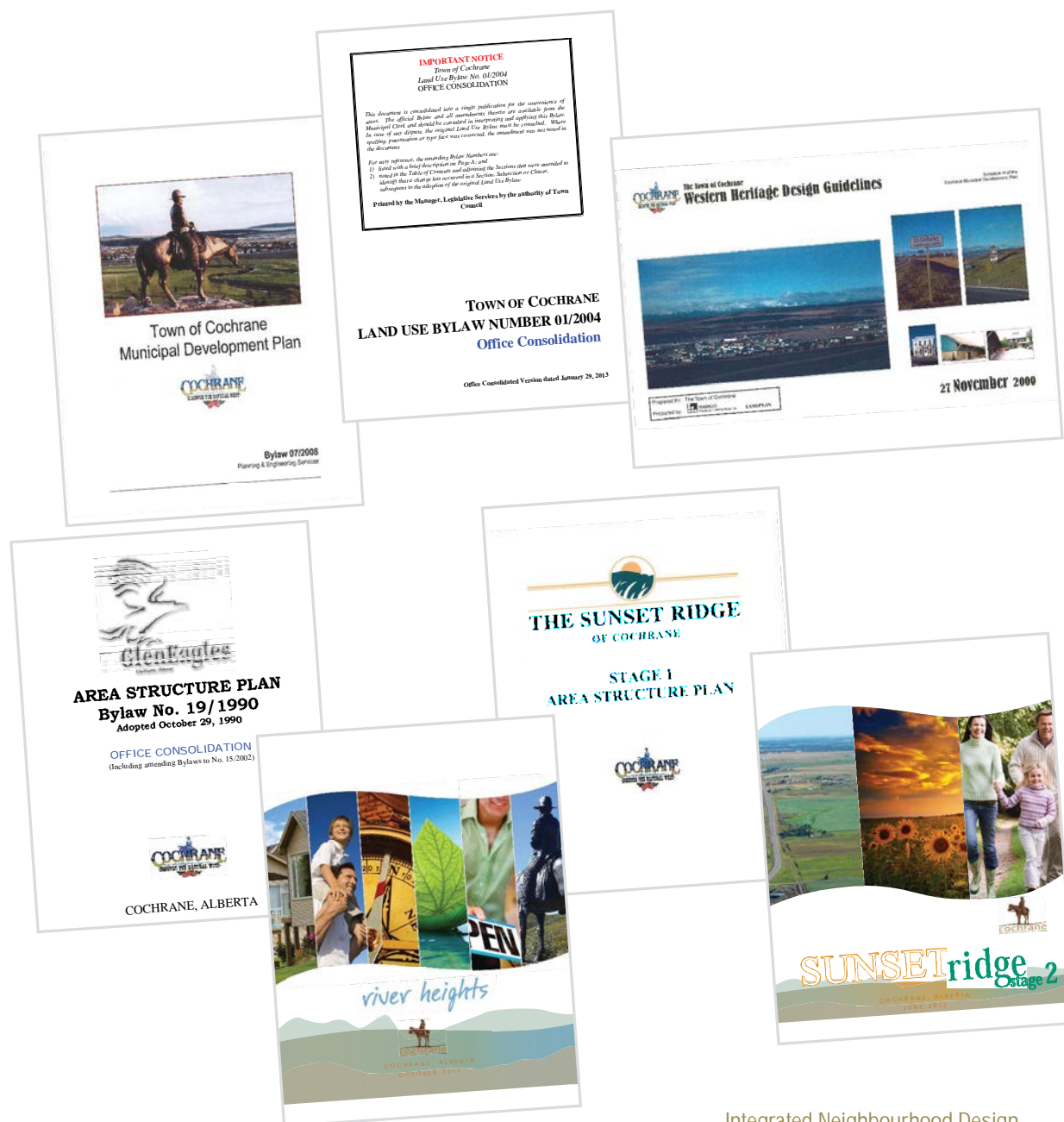


## 1.5 Relationship to Other Town of Cochrane Documents

These design guidelines will be used within the context of other Town policy documents and regulations. These documents and regulations include but are not limited to:

- The *Town of Cochrane's Land Use Bylaw and Engineering Standards* that are directly related to these design guidelines, noted where applicable, and supersede these design guidelines where there is conflict;
- The *Municipal Development Plan (MDP)* which provides over arching policies for development in the form of goals, objectives and policies; and
- The *Cochrane Sustainability Plan (CSP)* provides a shared, long-term vision for meeting the needs of Cochrane today without limiting the opportunity for future generations to meet their own needs.
- *Area Structure Plans and Neighbourhood Plans* that provide further details on specific development proposals.
- *The Western Heritage Design Guidelines* provide design direction to ensure that Cochrane's western heritage is reflected in key areas within the community.

These Guidelines shall in no way limit the legal liability of the applicant from compliance with the *Alberta Building Standards*, the *Land Use Bylaw*, and any other statutory requirements or regulations.



# 2

## CONTEXT SENSITIVITY

Cochrane is blessed with a dramatic natural setting boasting mountain and river views and long vistas. This dramatic natural environment has helped shape Cochrane's unique sense of place. Retaining the area's natural features, landscapes and views to and from hillside areas benefits the larger community and reinforces Cochrane's identity.

### 2.1 Natural Character

Development should work with the land to emulate the natural character. The transition between environmental reserve areas and development areas should be of benefit to the whole community. Preservation of the natural areas in our neighbourhoods reinforces our unique identity for the benefit of the community.

- a) Extend, integrate and conserve natural features and corridors in keeping with Municipal Government Act Regulations. These features may include water courses, wetlands, and vegetation to enhance local Town character, wildlife habitat, and environmental integrity.
- b) A variety of native trees and vegetation shall be incorporated into the landscape design to minimize maintenance and integrate planting design into the natural patterns and planting of the landscape. Existing planting patterns and connections to adjoining properties shall be reinforced and extended.



↑ Natural features and corridors should be conserved in neighbourhood design.



↑ Native trees and vegetation shall be incorporated into landscape design.

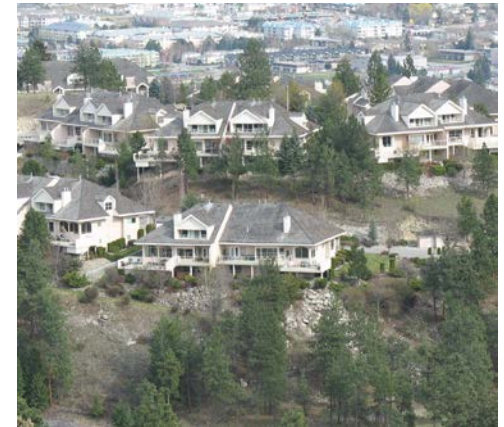


## 2.2 Slope Sensitive Design

To ensure that the Town's hillsides continue to provide a beautiful backdrop to the valley bottom and reinforce Cochrane's identity, hillside development should sensitively integrate with its natural surroundings and the environmental integrity of hillside areas should be preserved. Cochrane's hillsides contain a number of unique natural characteristics such as watercourses, ravines, treed areas, and outcrops. The natural characteristics of sites should be used to enhance the quality of development and their preservation should contribute to Cochrane's visual, environmental, historical, and cultural character.

- a) Identify and integrate the natural site characteristics into the development concept.
- b) Ensure that new hillside development:
  - positively contributes to Cochrane's hillside character;
  - integrates seamlessly with its hillside context;
  - preserves the aesthetic values of Cochrane's scenic backdrop;
  - respects views both to and from the hillside;
  - provides safe access that fits the hillside context;

- maintains many of the unique natural features of the hillside, such as rock outcrops, watercourses, ravines, mature trees and vegetation, and ridgelines;
- protects wildlife habitat and environmentally sensitive areas;
- avoids unstable or hazardous portions of the hillside and provides protection against slope instability and erosion;
- uses economic and efficient approaches to construction and maintenance;
- adheres to the regulations and policies pertaining to development on or adjacent to escarpment areas contained within the Town of Cochrane Land Use Bylaw and Municipal Development Plan.

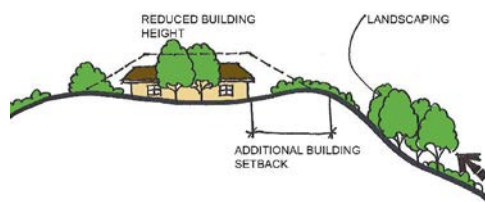


↑ Native vegetation and spacing between buildings reduce visual impacts of housing on slopes.

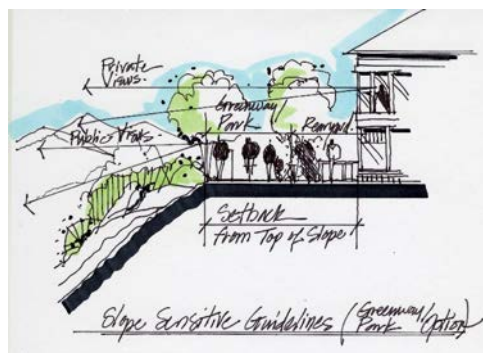
## 2.3 Viewshed Preservation

Cochrane's hillsides are highly visible from the valley floor. They function as landmarks in the community and reinforce Cochrane's unique sense of identity and place. Careful attention is required when planning development, to ensure that the aesthetic, scenic and natural qualities of the Town's hillsides are preserved.

- a) Consider views in and out of the site, especially along sensitive ridges, major roads and open plains areas in order to reinforce Cochrane's unique natural context.
- b) Preserve the natural qualities of Cochrane's ridgelines for the benefit of the community-at-large. To minimize view impacts to the ridgeline, development should consider design approaches such as:
  - provide additional building setbacks from the top of ridgeline;
  - establish a greenway to provide public access to the ridgeline;
  - preserve or plant trees and vegetation to screen development;
  - reduce building height to ensure that new development has a low profile on the ridgeline.



- ↑ Provide additional setbacks along ridgelines to reduce visual impacts.



- ↑ Conserve the ridge edges for public access where possible for community benefit.

## 2.4 Natural Drainage

Stormwater design shall consider the existing water features and natural flows on the site, adjacent requirements, and strive to combine the design with recreation and wildlife enhancement.

- a) Locate detention ponds along natural land forms and use native vegetation to integrate the design into the existing topography, provide an attractive amenity, and reduce unnecessary longer term maintenance costs;
- b) Encourage the use of natural and low water usage landscaping and xeriscaping in yards;
- c) Encourage the use of recycled water/ rainwater for irrigation (e.g., rain barrel).





↑ Incorporate natural wetlands into site design.



↑ Encourage on-site water collection and re-use.

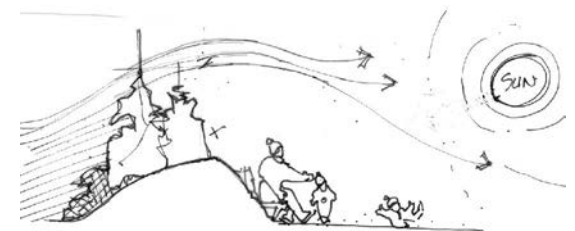
## 2.5 Four Season Design

The goal of four season design is to create comfortable outdoor environments during all seasons. Four season design shall include the consideration for weather protection, snow clearing and storage, and building orientation as well as multiple season recreation use and access.

- Consider street and building orientation to minimize the effects of the prevailing winter winds. Identify the direction of the prevailing winter winds, and indicate how the neighbourhood design limits its negative effects.
- Consider using tree planting, berms, and other landscape treatments to limit the influence of cold winter winds on public spaces.
- Take advantage of solar warmth when considering building orientation, where practical.
- Identify potential snow storage locations and demonstrate how they will reduce impacts on existing landscape and adjoining uses.



↑ Street and building orientation can reduce wind effects and maximize sunlight.



↑ Use tree planting, berms and solar orientation to reduce negative effects of winter winds.

# 3

## NEIGHBOURHOOD



Cochrane's neighbourhoods have a major role in contributing to its identity and sense of community. It is important that these neighbourhoods continue to meet the broad and ever changing needs of existing and future Cochrane residents. Neighbourhoods are where we raise our families, retire to, establish friendships, build community, develop ideas and earn a living. With such an important yet broad mandate, it is critically important that neighbourhoods are designed to effectively and safely carry out these varied roles.

### 3.1 Neighbourhood Transition

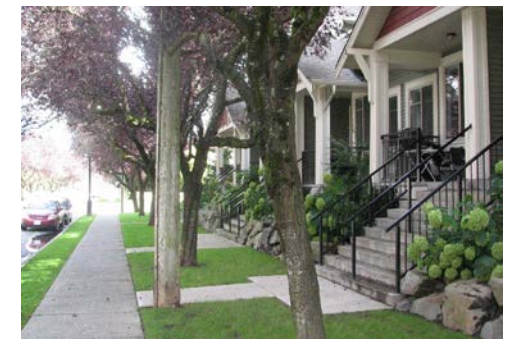
- a) Neighbourhoods should create an adequate transition, and/or buffer, to existing or proposed business, industry or natural resource extraction. These transitions and/or buffers should include adequate building setbacks and landscaping

### 3.2 Building Relationship to the Street

- a) Consider the context of adjacent land uses and their relationship to the street.
- b) Active edges adjacent to the street shall create inviting streetscapes. Buildings

should feature doorways, porches, and windows, as well as weather protection features such as awnings, canopies, and arcades.

- c) Larger buildings, including apartments and townhomes, shall be designed with detail and articulation to break up uniform facades and building mass to create an attractive streetscape.
- d) Clearly identify and articulate building entrances. Development shall be designed to provide an inviting and interesting street entrance as well as attractive building facades facing the street.
- e) De-emphasize garage entrances to public roads where possible by creating recessed garages, or placing the garage in the rear yard, or accessing the garage from a rear lane.



↑ Outdoor seating space on the porch activates the street.





- ↑ Active edges adjacent to the street with doorways, porches, and windows at the street level.



- ↑ This corner house has one entrance on each facing street to engage the street on two sides of the house.



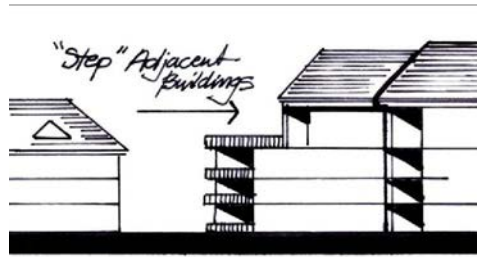
- ↑ Larger buildings should have detailed facade design and articulation to create an attractive streetscape.



- ↑ Recessed garage and porch extension into front yard de-emphasizes garage entrances.

### 3.3 Form and Massing

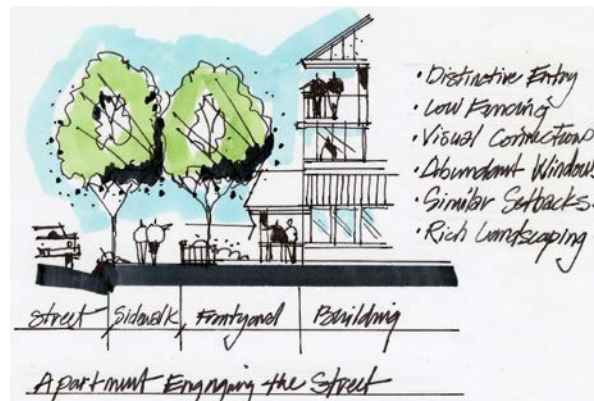
- "Step" building heights to relate to adjacent buildings
- Scale building height and massing in proportion to open spaces and street corridors.
- A variety of roof configurations should be provided for residences including accent gables, dormers, and variation of roof ridges both parallel and perpendicular to the street.
- Apartment buildings should be designed to soften the impact of massing and present a low-density residential scale toward the street.
- Consider alternate forms of housing that meet the intent of these Guidelines. (i.e. zero lot line homes, secondary suites, etc.)
- The visual impact of large facades should be reduced by breaking the facade into smaller pieces, through design details to create visual interest, and by using a variety of high quality materials and textures.



- ↑ Step building heights from larger buildings to smaller buildings.



- ↑ Multiple rooflines and articulated facade add visual interest to large facades.



- ↑ Apartment buildings can use lower scaled features and massing along the street to better integrate with adjacent lower density residential uses.



- ↑ High quality materials and textures add visual diversity to large facades.



### 3.4 Mixed blocks

Ensure the compatible and harmonious development of multi-family residential housing with single-family housing in the same neighbourhood and on the same block. Building types shall be mixed, in accordance with the guidelines in the above section regarding Building Form and Massing.

- a) Encourage mixed blocks with single family houses, single attached homes, duplexes, apartments and townhomes.
- b) Townhome buildings shall contain no more than six units in a row to create a well-articulated and interesting streetscape.
- c) Apartments should be incorporated (not necessarily on the same block) so that they integrate well with the neighbourhood.
- d) Apartments shall have a street orientation and shall be appropriately scaled and stepped so that they are compatible with other adjoining residential types and are consistent with Land Use Bylaw requirements .



↑ Single family residential street character is not changed with addition of duplex housing as the form and character remains the same.



↑ Setting back the second unit on the same lot can maintain the single family residential character of the neighbourhood.



↑ Duplex residential unit that looks the same as a single family residence, except for the second front-entry .



↑ Townhomes shall not contain more than six units in a row to create variation and human scale along the street.

### 3.5 Privacy

Residential buildings shall have a clearly defined transition between public spaces on the street and private yards.

- a) Differentiate between public and private spaces by providing edge definition with grade change where possible, low fencing and and/or layered shrub planting combined with earth mounding.
- b) Balance the need for privacy, security and the desire for community by considering:
  - Using vertical landscaping or solid fencing to reduce visibility and limit overlook to private spaces within the yard;
  - Using landscaping and transparent or low level fencing to encourage social interaction and visual accessibility to less private areas within the yard;
  - Siting residential units so that they are able to flank or back onto open space or linear park systems;
  - Constructing rear lane or rear yard garages to obstruct direct views into the yard; and
  - Providing adequate outdoor private space.



↑ Sidewalk location set below main living area creates privacy.



↑ Landscaping enhances sense of privacy.



↑ Setback and landscape treatment adds to privacy.



### 3.6 Fencing and Screening

Fencing, or an appropriate alternative, should provide delineation between public and private spaces.

- a) Fencing shall be wood, wrought iron, aluminum, or an approved alternate and should complement the character of development.
- b) Encourage fencing and screening that is permeable to promote visual accessibility and security while balancing the need for privacy.
- c) Minimize the visual impact of retaining walls, where possible, by stepping the walls on the slope and combining landscaping at least 50% along the face of the wall to soften the transition and break up the continuous wall effect. Explore alternative design methods (i.e. vegetated retaining walls).



↑ Low fencing in front yards if required, create a definition between public and private space.



↑ Low fencing in the front yard and higher fencing in the backyard permit privacy, yet a physical connection to neighbours



↑ Rail fencing, combined with vegetation, can create a softer termination between spaces.



↑ Stepping retaining walls and adding vegetation reduce the visual impacts of high walls.

# 4

## CONNECTIONS



Successful neighbourhoods bring people together. The Town is committed to achieving highly connected, walkable and integrated neighbourhoods that offer transportation choices and are accessible for all ages and abilities.

### 4.1 Street Design

The mobility network shall consider all modes of transportation, and the need for efficient networks with meaningful destinations for pedestrians. Walking and biking shall be encouraged by linking development to adjacent sidewalks, trails, and pathways. Convenient, safe, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle connections shall be provided.

- a) Design the mobility network such that walking and biking are convenient, safe, and accessible.
- b) Ensure the street is designed to accommodate all modes of transportation.
- c) Ensure the street pattern is designed to accommodate future transit.
- d) Develop a street pattern that facilitates intuitive wayfinding and is easy to navigate.

- e) Use special signage, landscaping, surface treatments and natural features that complement the character of the neighbourhood at key gateway locations within the neighbourhood.
- f) Ensure all streets are designed to facilitate pedestrian activity and to enhance the pedestrian experience through the use of sidewalks, pathways, landscaping and lighting.
- g) For all street types within a neighbourhood, incorporate sidewalk design, planting, lighting and pedestrian crossings to enhance the pedestrian experience.



- ↑ Street trees, separated sidewalks and on-street parking provide a pleasant and safe pedestrian experience.

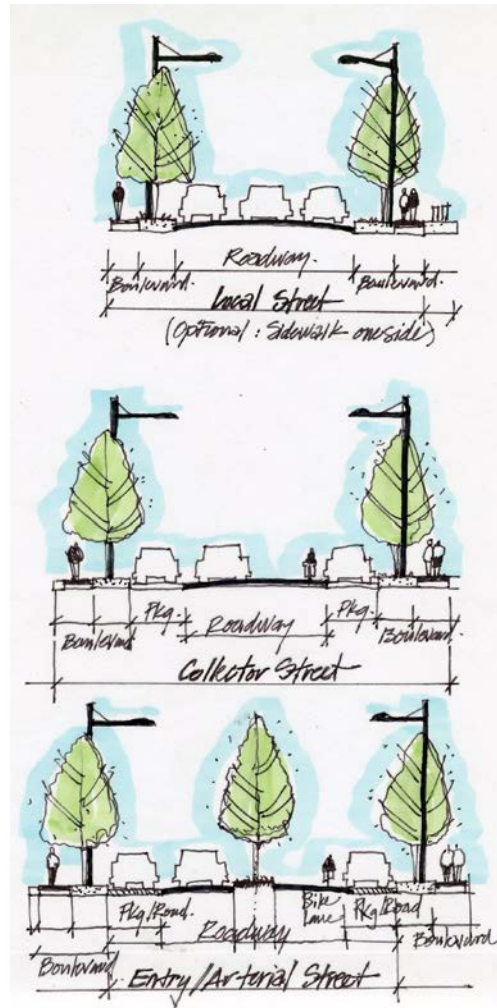




- ↑ Design the street so that walking and biking are convenient, safe and accessible.



- ↑ Design streets to support bike facilities including parking.



- ↑ Develop street types to have different design requirements

## 4.2 Open Space, Parks, and Amenity Areas

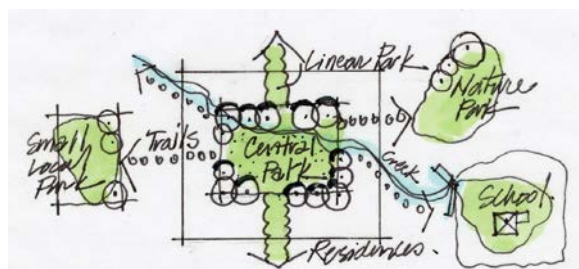
Provide a wide variety of accessible, safe and social public spaces, parks, and community amenities to facilitate gathering and interaction between users of all ages.

- Illustrate how the neighbourhood includes a variety of open spaces, amenity areas, play spaces, play fields and parks such as plazas, courtyards, greens/commons, and community gardens designed for the four seasons.
- Include open spaces that feature a high level of activity programming for all ages, where appropriate, as well as high quality landscape architecture to make them functional, safe, and enjoyable. These spaces shall include a rich palette of planting for different seasons, abundant street furniture, and local public art.
- To ensure that the open spaces present a safe, attractive and distinctive face to the street, park entrances and edges should receive special design attention.

d) Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles by ensuring open spaces, amenity areas and park spaces are accessible and safe by:

- Providing residential units within or fronting the park;
- Providing public access in the form of streets and/or pathways within or adjacent to the park;
- Ensuring parks and amenities are located within close proximity to residential or commercial uses; and
- Providing direct and highly visible entrances;
- Consider providing natural and informal play spaces that reflect and reinforce Cochrane's unique setting.

e) Use landscaping, fencing, pathways and natural features to delineate the various purposes within a park area.



↑ A variety of amenity areas can be designed for the four seasons.



↑ Provide a variety of parks and open spaces for all ages not only children.



↑ Park areas should receive special attention to blend into the neighbourhood.



↑ Implement "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design" by having housing units facing the park and therefore ensuring "eyes on the park".

### 4.3 Parking, Loading and Circulation

- a) Parking should be located at the side or rear of the site to support street-oriented commercial uses.
- b) All parking and loading areas must be visually screened with landscaping or appropriate fencing from public streets and adjoining properties. Screening methods must be effective on a year round basis.
- c) Provide landscaped areas that terminate each row of parking.
- d) Buffer all surface parking from adjoining residential uses and street frontages using four season landscape screening creating a continuous green strip along the property line.
- e) Surface parking shall provide full cutoff lighting that does not impact adjoining properties.
- f) Access and egress points to the surface parking and underground parking shall be coordinated where possible to minimize unnecessary access roadways and lanes from the street.
- g) Minimize the visual and physical impact of large surface parking areas by encouraging underground parking for mixed use and multiple family residential developments.
- h) Underground parking areas should be well lit and painted in a light color to improve visibility and security.
- i) Access to loading bays associated with the larger format retail stores - it will be important that loading bays are positioned in locations where their visual impact is minimized.
- j) Discourage drive-through restaurant formats in neighbourhood commercial centres where pedestrian-oriented commercial formats are preferred.
- k) Site circulation should be carefully considered and adequate space allowed for queuing traffic waiting to be served. Queuing traffic should not interfere with pedestrian movement or back out onto adjacent streets.



↑ Defined pedestrian corridors buffered from parking supports encourages walking.



↑ Landscaped islands break up large surface parking areas and provide visual amenity to patrons.



# 5

## COMMERCIAL



The intent of these guidelines is to local commercial services to meet the daily needs of the neighbourhood while being careful not to compete with destination retail in downtown Cochrane for weekly and special needs.

These guidelines must be considered in conjunction with the approved Western Heritage Design Guidelines.

### 5.1 Neighbourhood Commercial Designs

- a) Reinforce the image and significance of the neighbourhood centre by designing commercial or mixed use developments as pedestrian-oriented community focal points.
- b) Commercial spaces should be centrally located and complementary to public spaces and parks and be easily connected via a logical pedestrian network.
- c) Site design should prioritize the connection between the street and the front elevation and entrance of the building by discouraging front yard parking and including patios and outdoor seating, wider sidewalks and enhanced landscaping. This is especially important at the street corner to reinforce a sense of arrival and significance.

- d) Ensure commercial development occurs at an appropriate scale that is sensitive to the adjoining residential uses.
- e) Outdoor spaces adjacent to building fronts should allow the activity in the building to be extended onto the sidewalk without obstructing pedestrian circulation.



↑ Neighbourhood commercial should not compete with the long established Downtown Cochrane Commercial area.



## 5.2 Entrances and Access

- a) Store entrances should be clearly visible and designed for universal accessibility.
- b) Level changes from the sidewalk to entrances should be minimized to allow easy access.



↑ Store entrances should be visible and designed for universal accessibility.

## 5.3 Awnings and Canopies

- a) Encourage the provision of awnings and canopies within the first floor of a building to reinforce the architectural character of the building and to improve the pedestrian environment by providing protection from inclement weather.
- b) Ensure that supports are attractive and are sited to minimize impact on pedestrian movement.
- c) Consider the use of transparent canopies on the north elevation of buildings to offer more direct light to the sidewalk.



↑ Canopy provides weather protection and enhances the architectural character of the building.



↑ Canopy provides opportunity for outdoor seating and animation.

## 5.4 Building Elevations

- a) Prohibit elevations that are blank and clad in a single material where they are visible from the public realm.
- b) Elevations of any significant size should be broken down through a combination of window openings, projections and recessions, and the use of different materials.
- c) On larger sites, higher building massing should step back from the street edge.
- d) The base, middle and top of the building should be clearly expressed through the use of materials and the design of architectural elements.
- e) High quality exterior finishes shall be used to ensure the integrity of the building envelope and to present an attractive appearance.
- f) All buildings shall be faced with materials, which exhibit a durable permanent quality appearance. Materials should not stain easily, either due to atmospheric conditions or when used in combination with other materials. Materials shall be of a low maintenance type, retaining a consistent clean appearance.
- g) All colours, materials and finishes shall be coordinated on all exterior elevations of the buildings to achieve total continuity of design.
- h) Colours proposed may be a major consideration in design approval. All colour schemes must be submitted to the Development Officer for approval and shall include samples of all finishes.
- i) Encourage a high proportion of glazing along the facade of the building to ensure communication between the inside and outside of the building. Store front windows should be transparent; faux glazing is discouraged.
- j) Support both flat and sloped roofs provided the top of the building is clearly articulated with an appropriate cornice or parapet.



↑ Building massing of larger buildings should be broken down by window openings, setbacks and materials.



↑ On larger sites, higher buildings will step back.



- ↑ Support flat and sloped roofs provided the top of the building has a cornice or parapet.



- ↑ A high proportion glazing is required along the street.



- ↑ Columns, materials and finishes will be coordinated to achieve design continuity.



## 5.5 Signage and Monumentation

- a) Design signage and monumentation to complement and reinforce the overall character of the site by incorporating consistent materials and colors.
- b) Encourage a wide variety of appropriate signs including: banner; fascia; awning; canopy; window; and projecting signs.
- c) Signs that are externally lit should have fixtures that are appropriately scaled to the building and the signage. Over-illumination of signage is to be avoided.
- d) Sign and monument elements shall be designed to a pedestrian scale. Pylon signs are discouraged.
- e) Signage shall be strategically located to maintain site lines clear of visual obstructions.



↑ A wide variety of signs will be permitted.



↑ Sign and monument elements shall be designed at human scale.



↑ All signs and monumentation shall complement the character of the neighbourhood.

## 5.6 Active Frontages

- a) Buildings will play an important role in animating and enlivening the site. In order to add interest, life and vitality to adjacent spaces, building frontages will need to be active. Creating active frontages means:
- Frequent doors and windows with limited blank walls. Large store windows allowing passers-by clear views inside and enabling communication between inside and outside.
  - Articulating facades with awnings, colonnades or other projections that provide a more comfortable threshold in inclement weather and enable uses to overlap onto adjacent sidewalks.
  - Providing 'spill out' space along the sidewalk, incorporating outdoor seating for cafes/restaurants or display space.
  - Orienting restaurants, cafes and other social commercial spaces to southern exposure (with protected area from wind).
  - Buildings play an important role in defining and enclosing a pedestrian oriented street space. As a result buildings should be built parallel to the right-of-way with zero set-backs except where outdoor seating or plaza space is provided.

- Building frontage should be continuous, with gaps between buildings kept to a minimum to maintain a sense of enclosure.



↑ Frequent doors and windows create engaging storefronts.



↑ Spill out space extends interior uses outside and invites interaction.



↑ Transparency created by large windows invites shoppers or visitors indoors.

## 5.7 Public Realm Design

- a) Provide a destination point with meaningful connections to bring users to the site from the broader community.
- b) Create universally accessible and defined pedestrian links within neighbourhood centres and in between commercial spaces adjacent to and in close proximity to primary street frontages and parking areas in order to promote walking and synergy between businesses and patrons.
- c) Provide bicycle-friendly connections to and within the development with dedicated areas for bike storage.
- d) Create public gathering spaces as natural extensions of and integrate with adjacent commercial uses that facilitate social interaction and community building. These designated areas may include interpretive elements, water features, public art display, shelter options and seating areas.
- e) Design and use special pavements and hardscape materials in between and around buildings to add visual interest, define distinctive spaces and create a more aesthetic experience for the user.
- f) Placement of consistent site furniture such as benches, trash receptacles, and bicycle racks throughout the site that complement existing standards in downtown Cochrane.
- g) Create a hierarchy of streetscapes to facilitate intuitive wayfinding. Design elements including street trees, special paving material, monumentation and landscaping can be used to reinforce important neighbourhood connections and corridors.
- h) Provide landscape buffers between sidewalks/paths and parking lot drive aisles to create a separation of uses between pedestrians and automobiles and promote safe circulation.
- i) Create enhanced landscape features at focal areas such as entry points and gathering spaces. These could be in the form of 'landscaped pods', and may include accent plant species, greater planting density, and/or seasonal flowers.
- j) Provide frequent landscaped parking islands that break up expansive surface parking areas, add visual amenity and weather protection and are wide enough to accommodate trees and promote root growth.
- k) Provide landscape screening along street frontages that are adjacent to parking areas.
- l) Manicured sod to be used only in accent areas or along street frontages to enhance visually prominent areas.
- m) Encourage the design and installation of public art at highly visible locations to animate the site and engage the public.



↑ Pedestrian connections between stores and different uses create a safe and supportive environment.





- ↑ Consider using water and seating areas to create focal elements.



- ↑ Use landscaping and various hardscapes to enhance the pedestrian experience.

## 5.8 Service Areas

Service areas should be designed as an integral part of the overall site/building design and not regarded as an after-thought. Care should be taken to screen service areas so that they are not visible from surrounding public areas or adjacent streets. Materials used for solid screen walls should be similar to those used on the building's exterior.

## 5.9 Lighting

The quality and quantity of lighting is an important contributor to the overall character, functionality and safety of the site.

- a) Ensure streetlights, parking lot lights and pedestrian scale fixtures match existing Town of Cochrane standards and provide safety for users.
- b) Provide soft lighting for signs and monumentation.
- c) Consider accent lighting for focal landscape areas and gathering nodes.
- d) Ensure lighting conforms with the Town's Dark Sky Lighting policy and Town of Cochrane lighting standards contained within the Land Use Bylaw.



- ↑ Soft lighting encourages after hour use and reinforces unique site character.



# GUIDELINE SUMMARY

**Purpose:** These guidelines are intended as a guide to applications and therefore are not absolute. The guidelines and summary will be used by applicants, staff, planning commission and council as a reference for the completeness of an application. Some of the summary elements may not apply in all cases. A rationale will be required in such cases to demonstrate why a particular element is not applicable or has not been addressed.

Primary Element	Relevant Section	Sub-Element	Yes (Y) / No (N) / Not Applicable (n/a)	Comments/ Rationale
1. Overall Design Principles	1.4	Retain natural features		
		Retain views and visually sensitive areas		
		Integrate single and multi-family housing while providing a variety of architectural styles		
		Create local commercial development that does not compete with downtown		
		Provide a wide variety of public spaces, parks, and amenities		
		Use recreation pathways to connect to adjacent communities		
		Encourage healthy neighbourhood that facilitate active living		
		Use green building techniques to reduce impact on natural systems		



Primary Element	Relevant Section	Sub-Element	Yes (Y) / No (N) / Not Applicable (n/a)	Comments/ Rationale
2. Context Sensitivity	2.1	<b>Natural Character</b> - retain the natural features such as trees, slopes, rock formations, ravines and water courses		
		Plant native trees and vegetation		
	2.2	<b>Slope Sensitivity</b> - integrate the site's natural character into the design		
		<b>Hillside Development</b> - ensure hillside development responds to and respects its character and context		
	2.3	<b>Viewshed Preservation</b> - use creative ways to preserve the aesthetic and natural qualities of the hillsides		
	2.4	<b>Natural Drainage</b> - consider existing water features and flows in conjunction with recreation and wildlife enhancement		
	2.5	<b>Four Season Design</b> - consider approaches to create comfortable outdoor environments throughout the year		





Primary Element	Relevant Section	Sub-Element	Yes (Y) / No (N) / Not Applicable (n/a)	Comments/ Rationale
3. Neighborhood	3.1	<b>Neighbourhood Transition</b> - ensure adequate transition between existing and proposed uses.		
	3.2	<b>Building Relationship to Street</b> - use building location, form, massing, garage location, entrances, and porches to enhance the streetscape		
	3.3	<b>Form and Massing</b> - step buildings, setbacks, roof shapes, articulations, to reduce building		
	3.4	<b>Mixed Block</b> - implement mixed types and densities of housing while respecting character and adding diversity in form and character		
	3.5	<b>Privacy</b> - balance need for privacy and security using planting, fencing and grade		
	3.6	<b>Fencing and Screening</b> - to define and separate, yet provide necessary visual access and integration		
4. Connections	4.1	<b>Street Design</b> - develop a hierarchy of streets and connectivity within and adjacent to the neighbourhood		
	4.2	<b>Open Space, Parks, and Amenity Areas</b> – develop a network of connected spaces that are safe, convenient, well sized, and attractive		
	4.3	<b>Parking, Loading and Circulation</b> - ensure efficient access, circulation and parking within the neighbourhood		

Primary Element		Sub-Element	Yes (Y) / No (N) / Not Applicable (n/a)	Comments/ Rationale
5. Commercial	5.1	<b>Neighbourhood Commercial</b> - create centrally located local commercial centres that do not compete with		
	5.2	<b>Entrances and Access</b> - create visible and universally accessible entrances, but right sized not to compete with downtown		
	5.3	<b>Awnings and Canopies</b> - reinforce architectural character and provides protection from inclement weather		
	5.4	<b>Building Elevations</b> - use animated walls and finishes, transparency, high quality materials, and careful colour consideration		
	5.5	<b>Signage and Monumentation</b> - fitting in number, colour, location, size, and appropriately lit		
	5.6	<b>Active Frontage</b> - use windows, doors, outdoor signage to animate the street in a variety of streetscapes, consider elements to create active and vibrant public safe spaces		
	5.7	<b>Public Realm Design</b> - landscape planting, furniture, pedestrian scale lighting, pavement variation, bicycle racks, linkage in trails and pathways, signage, parking, screening		
	5.8	<b>Service Areas</b> - integrate and screen mechanical requirements		
	5.9	<b>Lighting</b> -provide accent lighting that meets pedestrian lighting, dark sky policy		





