Belair/ Columbia Node Overlay

Columbia County
March 2006

EDAW

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Steering Committee

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1.0

Overlay Boundary Map


Intersection of Columbia Rd. & Belair Rd.
Columbia County Node Overlay Study
DRAFT
December 2005
Legend
Commercial zoning
Professional zoning
Overlay boundary
Glenora & Shady Grove Estates
Shadowmoor
Moss Creek
Hillbrook
Hidden Lake Townhomes
Highview Acres
COLUMBIA ROAD
BELAIR ROAD
PINEWOOD DRIVE
GLENORA DRIVE
ROMA COURT
RENEE STREET
WHISPERWOOD DRIVE
SHADOWMOOR DRIVE
MOSS CREEK DRIVE
MOREHEAD COURT
DRESDEN DRIVE
MAPLE DRIVE
HILLBROOK DRIVE
WYMBERLY DRIVE
LAKEFRONT DRIVE
WACCAMAW DRIVE
HIGHVIEW AVENUE
0 137.5 275 550 Feet
1 inch equals 500 feet
COLUMBIA COUNTY
EDAW
This map has been prepared to facilitate public access to information. Data shown is for planning purposes only and its accuracy is NOT warranted. EDAW and Columbia County, GA assume no liability for the quality, content, accuracy, completeness of the information and other items contained in this map. It is advised that you independently verify important information before use.

2.0

Overview

2.1 Goals

This pattern book establishes design guidelines for all new development within the Belair/Columbia Node. The goals of this pattern book are to:

- Improve the market image of the commercial node
- Reflect regional styles
- Improve safe pedestrian circulation
- Create clear transitions between commercial properties and single family neighborhoods
- Create a gateway to Columbia County from the Belair Road interstate access point off of I-20

Nodes are concentrations of development activity and are designated to contain the county's future commercial growth. For more information on nodes within Columbia County, please see the Columbia County Growth Management Plan.

The traditional main street of a small southern town is the inspiration for the Belair/Columbia Node Overlay

This picture illustrates how traditional design principles can be adapted into the modern retail center

2.2 Flexible Standards

This pattern book is intended to facilitate quality design in the Belair/Columbia Node. It contains examples of positive design features to emulate as well as poor design features to avoid. Many of the guidelines set forth in this book are requirements, while others are recommendations.

Creative designs and unusual situations may call for variations from the standards in this pattern book. In these cases, Columbia County staff should evaluate the proposal on its overall adherence to the design principles laid forth in this book.

Standards should not create an obstacle to creative design

Architecture

3.0

3.1 Architectural Style

It is recommended that buildings in the Belair/Columbia Node take traditional southern vernacular architectural styles as their model. This style was selected for the Belair/Columbia Node because it reflects native styles and because local architectural models are easily found. For example, these buildings can be found in any historic town center, such as downtown Augusta or Athens. Typically in a traditional town center buildings would be no more than 50 feet wide. Variations in massing, height, material, and facade ornamentation can be used to break up large buildings so they appear as a series of smaller buildings.

Here are some features of southern vernacular commercial architecture to note on the surrounding images:

- Parapet walls
- Cornice lines at top of facade
- Decorative patterns in brick arrangements or by using varied materials
- Columns or pilasters
- Store front windows
- Awnings
- Arcades

Materials should be traditional construction materials such as brick, stone, stucco, or natural wood. Materials that are not permitted include metal, composites, plastics, and vinyl or aluminum siding. Metal may be used for roofing materials.

Colors should reflect traditional materials. Predominantly neutral and earth tones are recommended, with trim colors usually in a white or black. No more than three colors should be used for each facade.

Human-scale details are encouraged. Human-scale detail can often be provided by the use smaller scale windows and doors. Patterns of brick or patterns of materials create additional detailing. Variations in material or design at the top and bottom of columns also provide visual detail. Cornice lines and other horizontal lines provide a variation in material and color as well.

Please see the glossary at the end for any unknown architectural terms.

Figure 1: Illustrated facade shows columns, detailed cornice and roof, a series of smaller scale windows and doors, variations in height and facade decoration.

3.2 Massing, Scale, and Height

Massing refers to the way one building can be visually broken into distinct volumes. The picture on the right creates a distinct central mass along with a change in material from brick to stucco.

To create a human-scale, large buildings must be broken into smaller masses. At the same time, buildings should have sufficient height to create an architectural presence.

The center of the building is much higher, creating an easily identifiable entrance

Massing, Scale, and Height Regulations:

- Every building should have a change in height and setback every 50 feet minimum. Usually these changes should occur along with changes in the facade (see 2.3 Facade, Side, and Rear).
- Storefronts wider than 70 feet should have a height element, a piece of the building that is higher than other surrounding pieces. Usually this height element should be in the center of the building, though it may also be placed at the corner.
- The minimum height of the highest point on the facade should be 18 feet, while the minimum average height for the facade should be 15 feet.
- The use of parapet walls is encouraged to hide utilities located on the roof.
- The maximum height for all buildings is 55 feet.

3.3 Facades, Side, and Rear

Human-scale detail and variation should be used to make facades interesting and inviting. Facades should be detailed and varied through the use of windows, doors, awnings, materials, height and pattern.

The rear and sides of a building may be less detailed so long as they are not visible from the public right-of-way or other private properties.

- The facade must vary a minimum of every 50 feet with a change of material, height, or decorative pattern.
- A detailed cornice is required at the top of every facade.
- The cornice line itself is a decorative horizontal element.
- The regular use of columns or pilasters is strongly encouraged.
- Columns should have variation of material or thickness to indicate their base and capital and should occur at least every 15 feet.
- Columns should be used when the building provides an arcade.
- Less expensive materials may be used on the side and the rear so long as these areas are not visible from the public right-of-way or other private properties.
- If the rear or side is visible from the public right-of-way or adjacent properties, the same material should be used on these sides and decorative patterns of materials, windows, awnings, and columns should be continued to these visible areas.

Horizontal bands are created by changing from brick to concrete.

Regular columns decorate this facade

This facade is more interesting because of regular windows and awnings

3.4 Windows and Doors

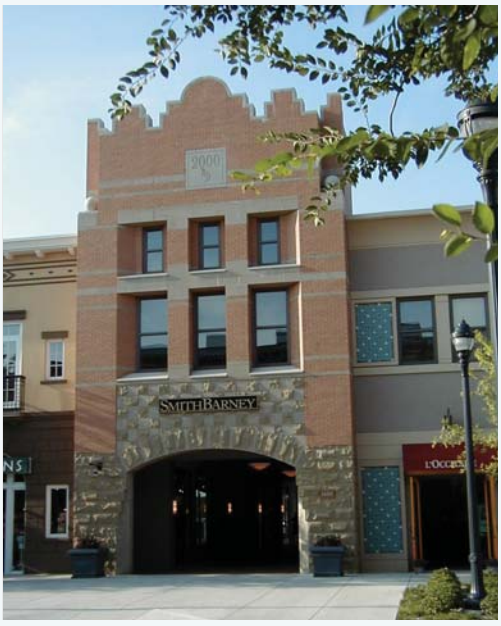
Appropriate: Human-scale windows with storefront displays

Inappropriate: Windows lack human-scale and spacing

Windows and doors are important architectural elements that create visual interest and are channels for interaction between indoor and outdoor space. Creating repetitive but varied patterns of human-scaled windows and doors is an effective way to break down large-scale facades.

- The main entryway should be marked with a prominent entry feature, such as columns, awnings, or a raised architectural element.
- Human-scale doors are encouraged.
- Doors made of glass with surrounding windows are encouraged.
- Store front displays of goods are encouraged.
- Signs in store front windows that block views into the store are discouraged.
- It is recommended that each building have a minimum of 20 percent glazing (glass covered areas).
- Tinted and darkened glass is not permitted.

3.5 Roof Form



A detailed parapet wall highlights this facade

Southern main street vernacular architecture is often defined by the use of parapet walls. Parapet walls increase the sense of presence of the building, screen roof-top utilities, and serve as an opportunity for ornamentation.

- Parapet walls should screen all roof equipment.
- Parapet walls should be made of the same material as the building facade, though the cornice material may vary.
- Metal parapet walls are not permitted.
- The parapet wall must vary in height at least one foot for every 50 feet minimum.
- Decorative variations in the shape and height of the parapet wall are encouraged.

As an alternative to using parapet walls, sloped roofs are also permitted.

- All sloped roofs should meet in a clear roof line or peak.

Periodic variations in height of the parapet wall are required, every 50 feet minimum

Sloped roofs are also permitted

3.6 Arcades and Awnings

Appropriate: Arcade is made of same material, facade comes to front of arcade

Inappropriate: Arcade is a separate element of different material than facade

Awnings may be used instead of arcades

All buildings must have either regular arcades or awnings. These are important decorative elements that also provide shade and shelter for pedestrians.

Arcade Regulations:

- Arcades should span at least half of the length of the facade.
- Arcades should be integrated into the building facade and be composed of the same materials as the facade.
- No separate arcades that are attachments to the facade are permitted.
- All arcades must be supported by decorative columns composed of material used elsewhere in the facade.
- Arcades should provide at least 8 feet of clear walking distance between the facade and the face of the columns supporting the arcade.

Regular awnings may be used instead of arcades. Awning Regulations:

- Awnings should cover at least half the length of the facade.
- Awnings should be rectangular in shape, made of canvas, and of a single color. A second color may be used for store signs.
- Canvas awnings must be maintained in good condition.
- The store name may be included on awnings, but no other writing is permitted.

4.0

Landscape Architecture

4.1 Site Design

The main goals for site design in the Belair/Columbia Node are to improve the level of landscaping, improve pedestrian circulation, and to break up large parking areas.

- Site designs that place a portion of the parking behind the building are encouraged to break up large parking areas.
- Creating designated pathways and driveways for interparcel access between commercial parcels for pedestrians and vehicles is encouraged.
- The number of curb cuts off of major thoroughfares such as Columbia Road and Belair Road should be minimized, and the distance between curb cuts should be adequate to allow efficient traffic flow.
- All parking areas must have at least one shade tree per every 12 parking spaces.

The basic components of site design at the Belair/Columbia Node are:

- A streetscape at the front of the site, adjacent to the street
- A parking area behind the streetscape and in front of the building
- A retail promenade behind the parking area and directly in front of the building
- The commercial buildings
- Loading and other service areas behind the buildings
- Buffers where necessary at the back of the site

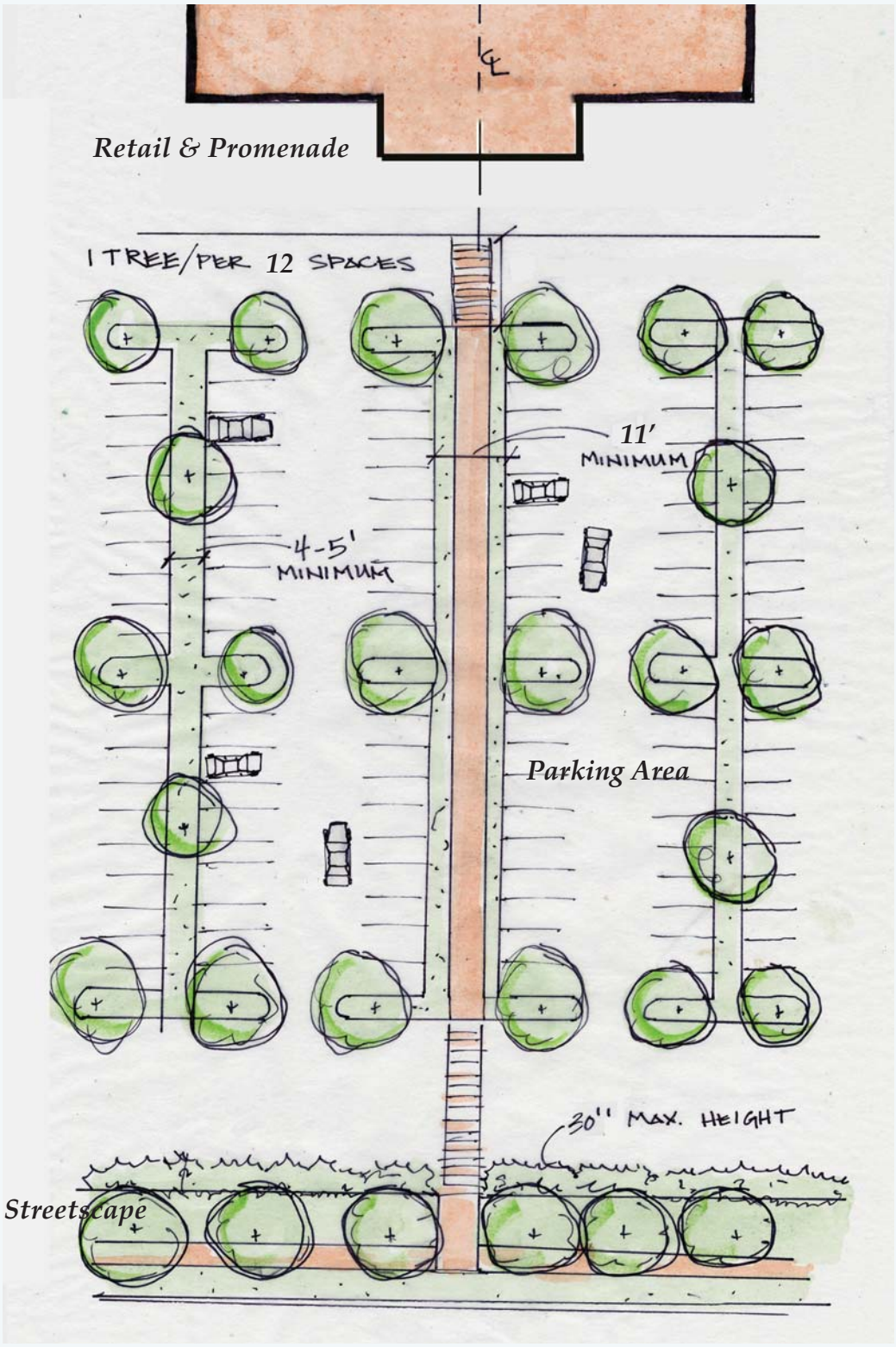


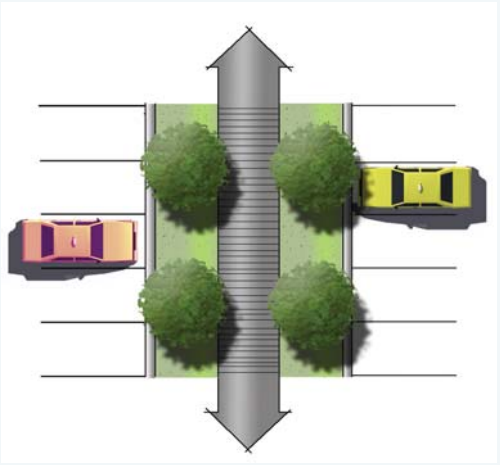
Figure 2: **Prototypical site design for Belair/Columbia Node. Note the streetscape, pedestrian path through the site, and parking lot landscaping.**

4.2 Pedestrian Access

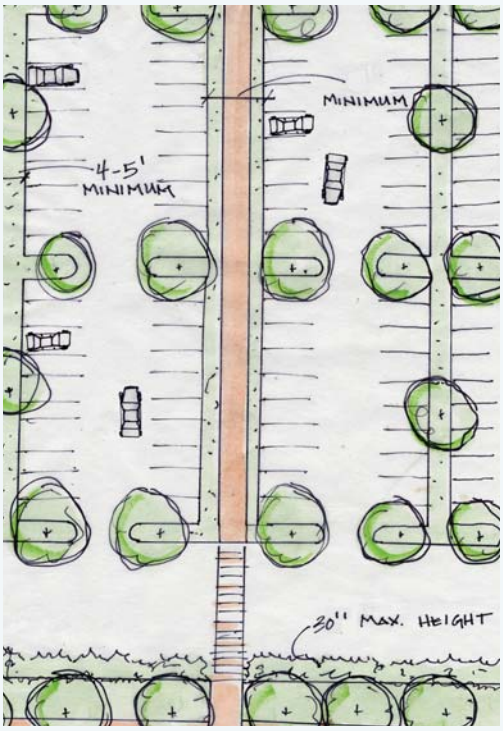
One of the goals of the node overlay is to improve the quality and safety of pedestrian access. Pedestrian access from the sidewalk and between parcels should be considered during site design, and pedestrian routes should be designated in the site plan.

- Provide continuous pedestrian access from the sidewalk to the primary building entrance.
- Pedestrian pathways should be a minimum 5 feet in width.
- Where a pedestrian route crosses a vehicular circulation area, signs and pavement markings should be provided to indicate to drivers that they are crossing a designated pedestrian route.
- Pedestrian access routes should not involve substantial grade changes or other obstacles to safe pedestrian access.
- If the pedestrian path runs along the edge of a parking area, a minimum 3-foot grass or planted buffer should be provided in addition to the 5-foot walkway. This ensures that cars do not infringe upon the walkway area.

A brick walkway surrounded by small trees



A planted buffer around the walkway protects it from encroachments by vehicles



Pedestrian pathway is marked through paint or pavement materials when it crosses the parking area.

4.3 Retail Promenade

Planters, brick paving, and a trash receptacle enhance this retail promenade

Appropriate: Promenade can be underneath an arcade

Inappropriate: Promenade is not wide enough and lacks landscaping and street furniture

Creating a retail promenade will enhance the shoppers' experience and improve the image of the Belair/Columbia Node. The retail promenade consists of a pedestrian area, plantings, and street furniture all provided immediately in front of the building facade. This creates a place for shoppers to walk and possibly take breaks during their shopping experience.

- The retail promenade should be a minimum of 8 feet in width, with an average width of 10 feet.
- Landscaping and/or street furniture is required on at least 10 percent of the retail promenade.
- Asphalt may not be used for any part of the promenade.
- Any covered arcade area qualifies as part of the retail promenade.

4.4 Streetscapes

Streetscapes serve to improve the public appearance of a node and to enable pedestrian and bicycle access. A consistent streetscape across different properties ties together a unified design theme for the node and will help to define the Belair/Columbia Node as a gateway to the county.

The streetscape consists of three parts:

- A landscape buffer to set the pedestrian area back from the road (Street Buffer)
- The sidewalk
- A second landscape buffer to shield the view of parking areas (Parking Buffer)

Streetscape Regulations:

- The Street Buffer must be a minimum of 3 feet in width.
- Lights should be placed every 40 feet in the Street Buffer.
- Every other light in the Street Buffer should be a shorter, pedestrian-style light of a kind that matches the street lights.
- Both pedestrian and street lights should be capable of accommodating decorative banners to mark events or create a sense of a gateway into Columbia County.
- The Parking Buffer must be a minimum of 5 feet in width.
- The Parking Buffer must be planted with continuous shrubs or hedges a maximum of 30 inches in height.
- The Parking Buffer must have street trees planted every 40 feet on center minimum.
- The sidewalk area should be a minimum of 5 feet in width, and the 5-foot width should be clear of any obstacles.

Streetscapes benefit from the consistent use of trees and pedestrian lights

Recommended streetscape shows one row of trees, and a pattern of alternating pedestrian lights and street lights

Streetscape Regulations (continued):

- All trees planted for streetscape requirements should be 4-inch caliper minimum at time of planting.
- All street trees along Belair Road should be Red Maples.
- All street trees along Columbia Road should be Red Maples.
- Street and pedestrian lights must be historic and decorative in character.

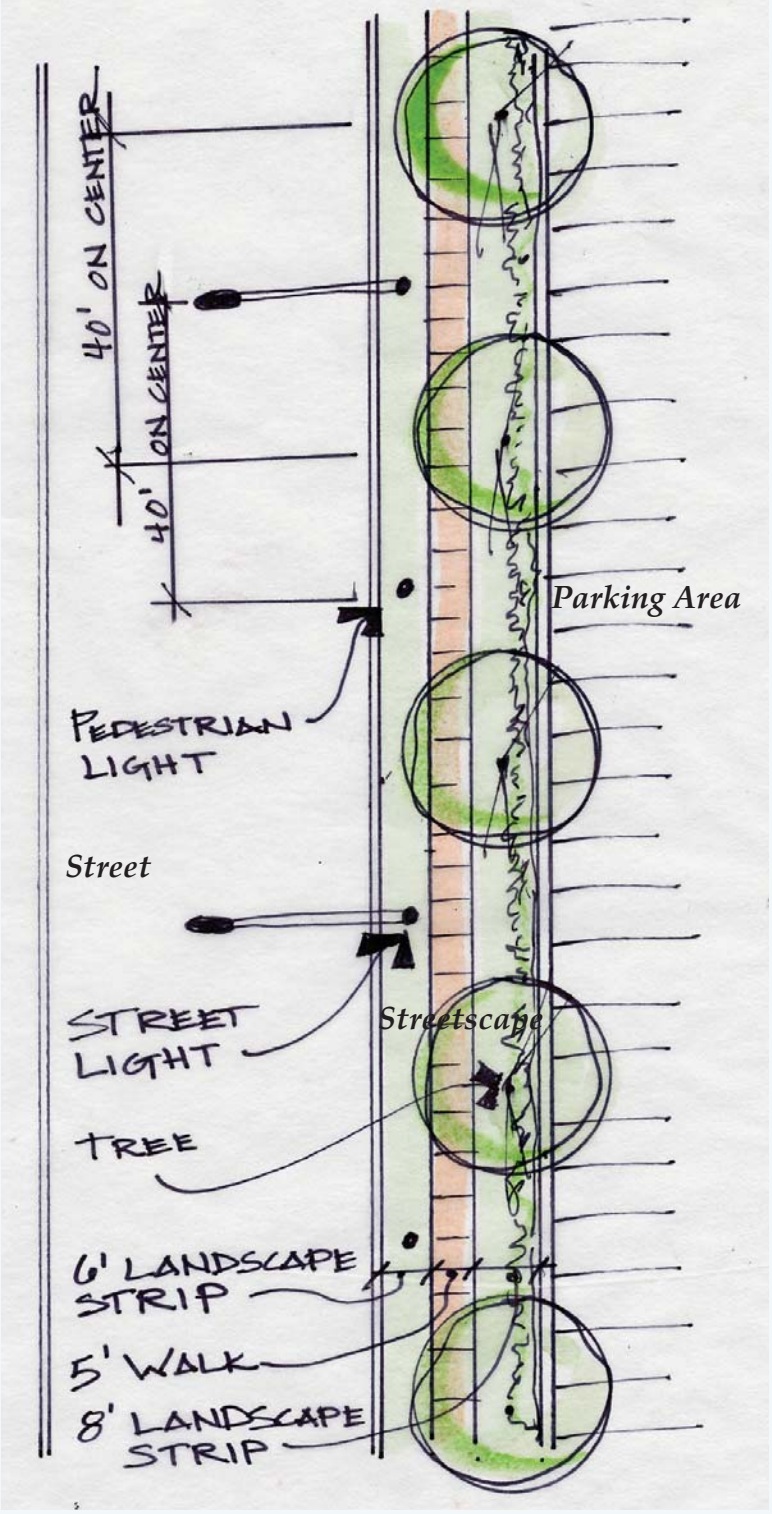


Figure 3: Recommended Streetscape Design

4.5 Street Furniture

The use of high-quality street furniture throughout the node will create a sense of long-term investment. Consistent street furniture will help to unify the design character of the node.

The following images represent the street furniture that should be used at the Belair/Columbia Node. Developers should select street furniture that is similar in design, materials, and color.

Street and pedestrian lights should be capable of accommodating banners.

Specified street furniture includes:

- Street lights
- Pedestrian lights
- Planters
- Fencing
- Bollards
- Benches
- Garbage cans

All developments must use standard node furnishings or furnishings of a similar type.

4.6 Lighting

Lighting should be designed to minimize light intrusion onto neighboring properties and to preserve dark night skies.

Lighting Regulations:

- Full cut-off light fixtures are required for all street and pedestrian lights.
- Parking lot light fixtures should be no more than 26 feet in height.
- Pedestrian light fixtures should be no more than 14 feet in height.
- Taller lighting is permitted along public roadways where required by the Department of Transportation.
- White spectrum lighting preserves true color perception and is recommended.
- Accent lighting to highlight architectural and landscape elements is encouraged.

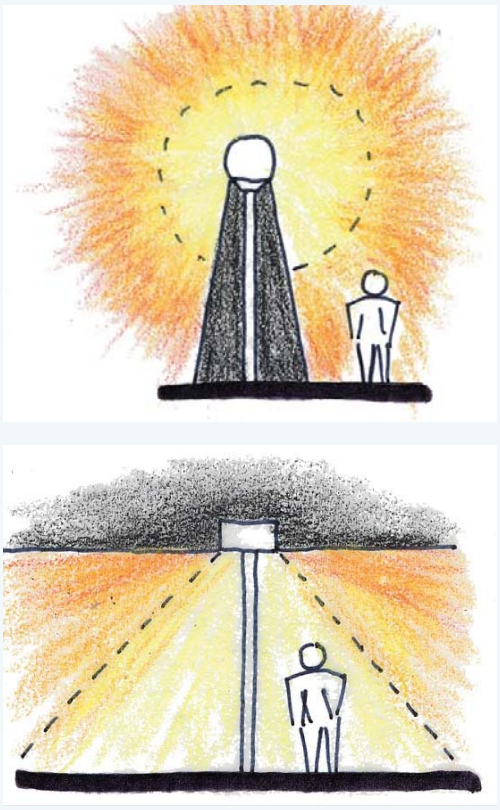


Figure 4: Full cut-off lighting fixtures protect dark skies

Illustration shows both street lighting and pedestrian lighting

4.7 Sign Guidelines

Signs, while important, should generally be subordinate to architectural and landscape features. Signs should integrate with architectural features by matching in scale and materials with surrounding buildings.

- All signs should be made of quality, durable materials.
- The text of all signs should be limited to the trade name and a minimal description of goods or products provided.
- Signs should coordinate with architecture in terms of materials and scale.

Development signs mark the entrances to commercial complexes:

- Monument style signs are required.
- Maximum height is 20 feet.
- A consistent foreground and background color should be used throughout the sign for individual store signs.
- The total size of the development sign shall be no more than 200 square feet, and the entire sign structure shall be no more than 500 square feet.

Wall-mounted signs are signs posted on buildings to advertise specific stores:

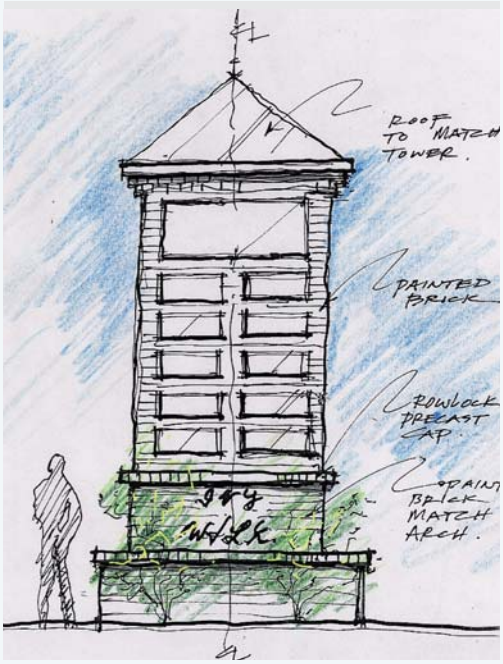
- Sign text should be limited to the store's trade name and a minimal description of goods or products provided.
- The maximum letter height should be 20 percent of the facade height or 48 inches, whichever is smaller.
- Wall- mounted signs should align with other facade elements, such as doorways and windows.

Other Sign Regulations:

- Each business should have no more than three signs total.
- Signs that are not permitted include billboards, pole signs, banners, neon signs, balloon signs, flashing signs, moveable-type signs, and search lights.

Inappropriate: Wall mounted sign does not coordinate with materials or scale of building

Appropriate: Store signs are in proportion with storefront below



Monument development sign incorporates architectural design elements and materials

4.8 Buffers and Fences

Landscaped buffers are required between any single family use and any non-single family use as well as between multifamily and commercial or industrial uses.

- A 20-foot buffer is required between single family uses and any other land use.
- A 20-foot buffer is required between multifamily residential uses and commercial uses
- The landscaped buffer shall consist of a continuous wall of mature evergreen shrubs.
- Parking, storage, or other similar uses should not occur in the buffer area.
- A solid wooden fence should also be used for screening at the edge of the buffer, and it should be 6 feet in height.
- Barriers and buffers between commercial properties are not encouraged except where necessary for security. In fact, provisions should be made to promote pedestrian and vehicular access between adjacent commercial developments.

Fencing Regulations:

- Fencing must be opaque.
- Preferred fence material is pressure-treated natural wood. Brick and stone walls may be used instead of fencing.
- Fences that do not serve a screening purpose may be painted aluminum tubing.
- Fences should be no more than 6 feet tall except when they are used to screen dumpsters and utilities, in which case they can be a maximum of 8 feet in height.

Opaque wooden fence used for screening between commercial and residential uses

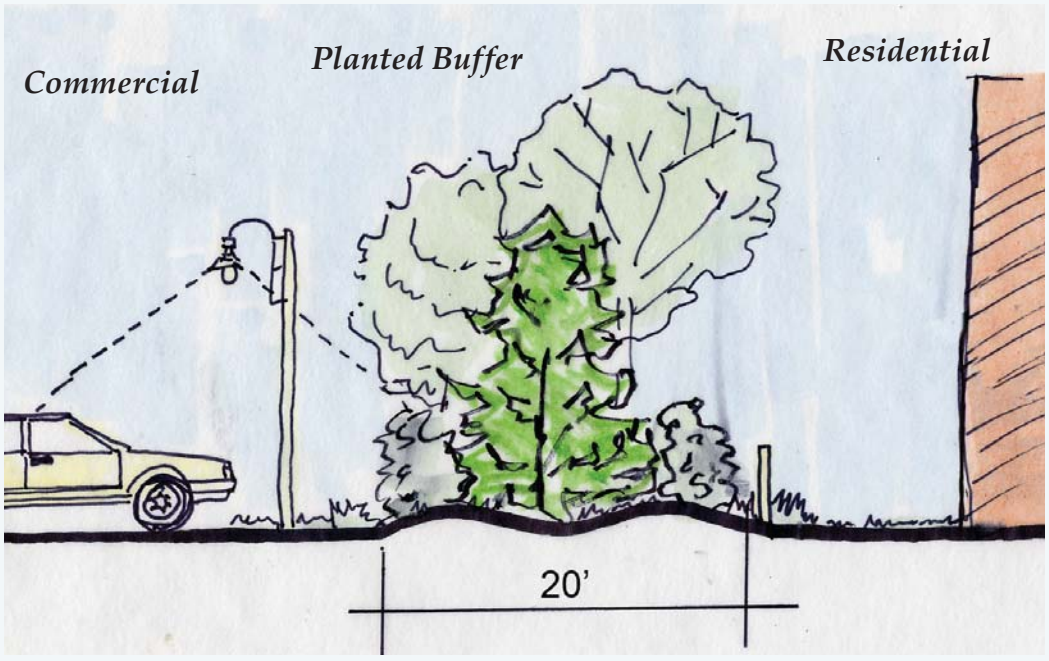


Figure 5: **Landscaped buffer between commercial and residential uses**

5.0

Other Issues

Commercial developments in the Belair/ Columbia Node should not present visual blight to any public right-of-way or any residential property. Preventing visual blight can best be done primarily by proper site design and secondarily by screening.

The following regulations apply:

- Utility wires must be buried by the developer for any new commercial development with more than 150 feet of frontage on Columbia or Belair. High voltage utility wires are excluded from this requirement.
- Outdoor storage of materials is not permitted.
- Utilities and dumpsters must be out of view of both the public right-of-way and nearby residential properties.
- Loading and service areas should be out of view

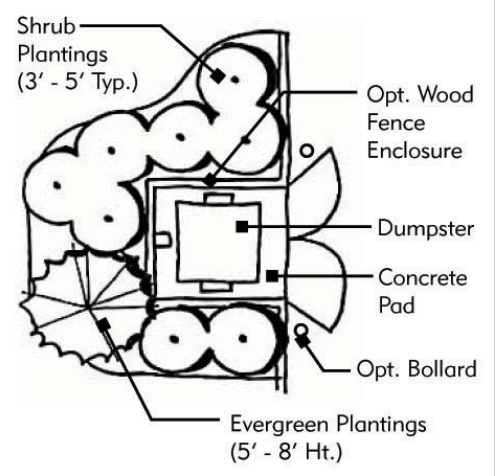
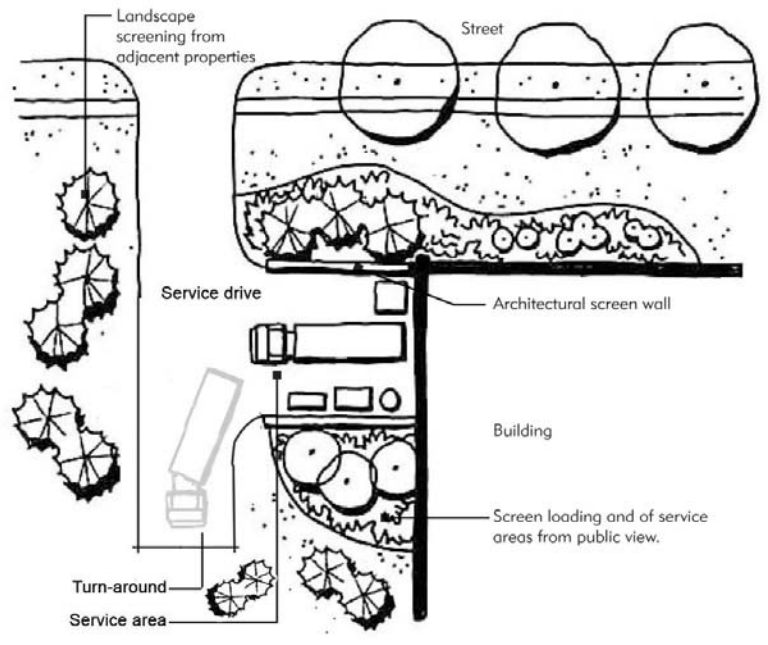


Figure 6: Illustration of proper location and screening of loading and dumpster areas



6.0

Glossary

Arcade - A covered walk, lit from the top, lined with shops or offices on one or more levels.

Awning - A roof-like covering of canvas, or the like, often adjustable, over a window, door, etc. to provide protection against the sun, rain, and wind.

Base - The lowest visible part of a building, often distinctively treated.

Capital - The topmost structure member of a column, pilaster, anta, or the like, often decorated.

Column - In classical architecture, a cylindrical support consisting of a base, shaft, and capital

Cornice - The exterior trim of a structure at the meeting of the roof and wall; Any molded projection which crowns or finishes the part to which it is affixed.

Development Sign - Free-standing sign that indicates an entire development.

Facade - The exterior face of a building which is the architectural front, sometimes distinguished from the other faces by elaboration of architectural or ornamental details.

Full Cut-Off Light Fixture - A light fixture where no light is shed above the horizontal line of the head of the light fixture.

Glazing - The glass surface of an opening; a window or door with glass.

Height Element - A part of a building where the facade raises to a greater height than adjacent parts of the building.

Human Scale - The arrangement of structures, spaces, and details in a way that relates well to the proportions of the human body and its normal operations.

Interparcel Access - Routes for vehicles or pedestrians to move between two independently owned or managed parcels without using the public right-of-way.

Massing - The visual appearance of distinct, discrete solid spaces occupied by a structure.

Parapet Wall - The part of a wall which is entirely above the roof.

Pilaster - An engaged pier or pillar, often with a capital and base; Or decorative features that imitate engaged piers but are not supporting structures, as a rectangular or semi-circular member used as a simulated pillar in entrances or other door openings and fireplace mantels.

Promenade - A suitable place for walking for pleasure, as a mall.

Scale - A system of proportion by which a building and its various parts relate to each other in size or extent.

Site Design - The arrangement of building and landscape materials on a site to achieve desired purposes, such as access or pleasing views.

Streetscape - The treatment of the landscape immediately adjacent to a public street, usually involving a sidewalk, street furniture, and trees, and usually for the benefit of pedestrian use.

Definitions adapted from "Dictionary of Architecture and Construction," edited by Cyril M. Harris.