

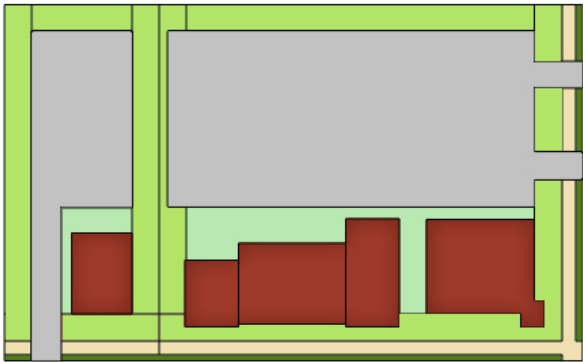


CHAPTER 4
COMMERCIAL

The City seeks to further invest in flourishing commercial development and expand business opportunities to support the Mesa community. Commercial development should complement and strengthen the existing community and character. Commercial development should strive to reduce reliance on automobiles, emphasize accessibility for all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists, and contribute to the creation of attractive, engaging, and distinctive streetscapes and places. Commercial development should consider building design with the goal of creating recognizable places that enhance the image of Mesa and incorporate sustainable principles that will help allow Mesa to flourish for years to come.

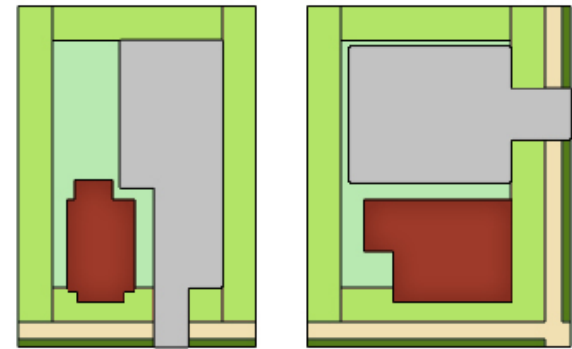
COMMERCIAL PROJECT TYPES

Mesa possesses a range of commercial locations across the city. Commercial sites range from large to small and have varying forms based on their location and uses. For the purposes of these design guidelines, four primary commercial project types have been identified.



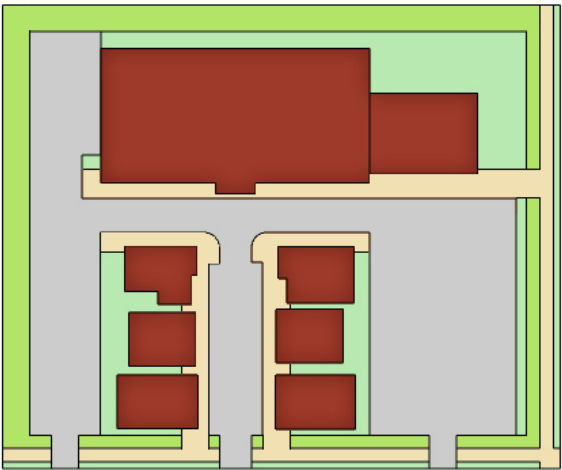
URBAN FORM

Urban lots typically have smaller setbacks, buildings are closer to the street and parking is provided in the rear. These project types may be developed as either single stand-alone lots or as combined lots and part of a larger development, thus they may be detached buildings or attached to adjacent commercial uses. Commercial buildings on urban lots may also hold multiple tenants in different parts of the building.



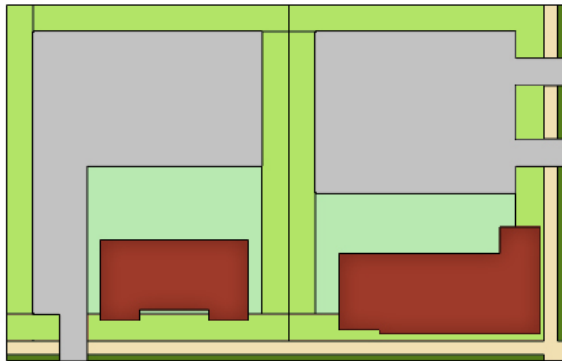
LOCAL SERVICING COMMERCIAL

Local serving commercial sites are small businesses that stand alone on a single lot. They may be located near several other local commercial sites or may be the only commercial lot on the block. Such development should reflect the character and scale of the residential neighborhood around it. A corner cafe, a boutique store, a small professional office, or a local deli are examples of local commercial uses that may exist within a residential neighborhood with minimal or no additional commercial uses.



COMMUNITY SERVICING COMMERCIAL

Community serving developments include integrated retail shopping areas that are in close proximity to residential neighborhoods but may also serve the larger community. Commercial establishments providing convenient day to day shopping and services as well as high volume select shopping and entertainment uses are most commonly found within these developments.



MIXED-USE

Mixed-use may include ground floor commercial with other uses on upper floors. Multi-use buildings may allow taller heights and reduced front setbacks to fit with a more dense and urban environment.

A. SITE DESIGN

Good site planning can minimize a project’s impacts on its neighbors, continue existing desirable urban forms and patterns, that enhance the quality of existing development. Commercial and office developments should establish an overarching site design that contributes to the overall sense of place, promotes compatibility with adjacent uses and is pedestrian-friendly. Well organized buildings can promote walkability, encourage commerce, improve building performance and reinforce community identity.

1. Building Placement and Orientation

- a. Place buildings close to the street to create a strong presence that defines the public realm and encourages pedestrian engagement with the building.

b. Buildings should be oriented with primary entrances and windows facing the street. Buildings that face more than one street should provide pedestrian-friendly building design features such as windows, doors and walkways along both streets.

c. Pad buildings or secondary buildings within a group commercial development may face internal to the site, although they should provide pedestrian-friendly facade designs along the street edge and create attractive paths that connect to the anchor building.

d. In existing commercial developments with excess parking, additional building pads may be incorporated into the development. These pads should be clustered together along the primary street frontage to strengthen the pedestrian environment or along the primary access drive to direct visitors into the development.
- e. Drive-thru lanes, drive-thru pick-up windows and menu/ordering boards should not face public streets. It is the intent that these features should not dominate the public street frontage.

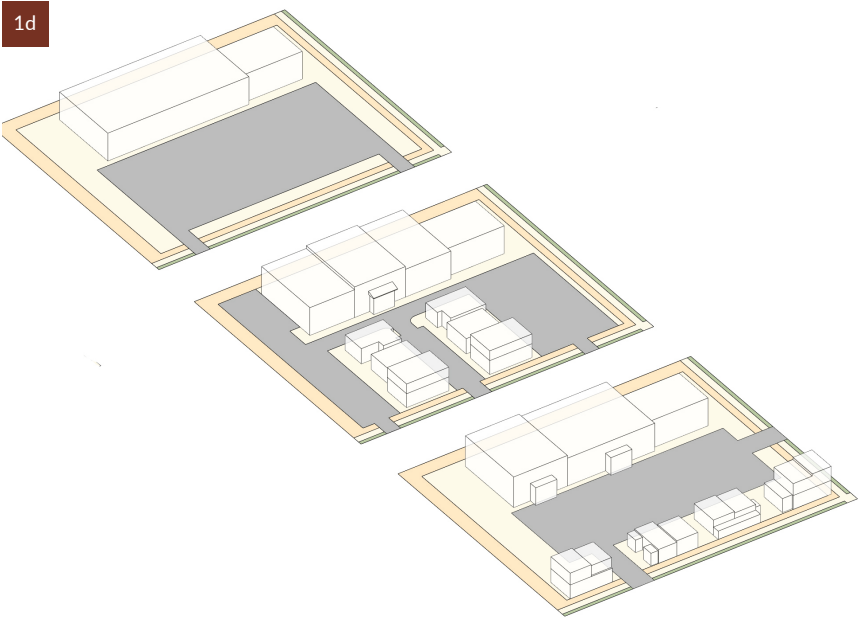
f. Drive-thru lanes and noise-generating areas, including ordering board speakers and pick-up windows, should be located away from adjacent sensitive uses, such as residential areas and outdoor eating areas, to reduce the impacts of noise and pollution that could be caused by stacking cars on such uses. Use landscaping and walls to help buffer potential impacts.

g. Corner sites should be designed with special attention to engaging all street frontages.

h. Noise generating functions should be located as far away as possible from adjacent, noncompatible uses.

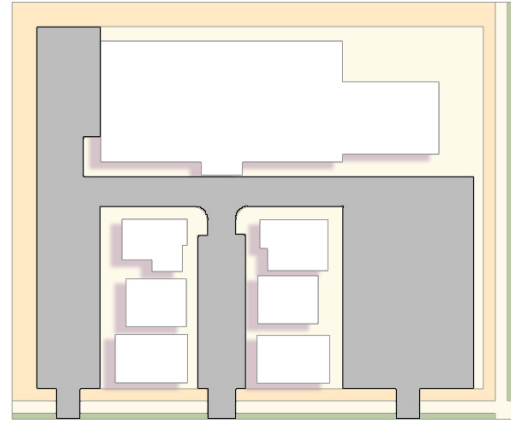
i. Consider the solar orientation of buildings to mitigate solar exposure, maximize natural shade, and reduce energy consumption.

j. Buildings should be sited and designed to maximize the use of sunlight and shade to create comfortable and inviting spaces, for energy savings, and to mitigate the “heat island” effect.

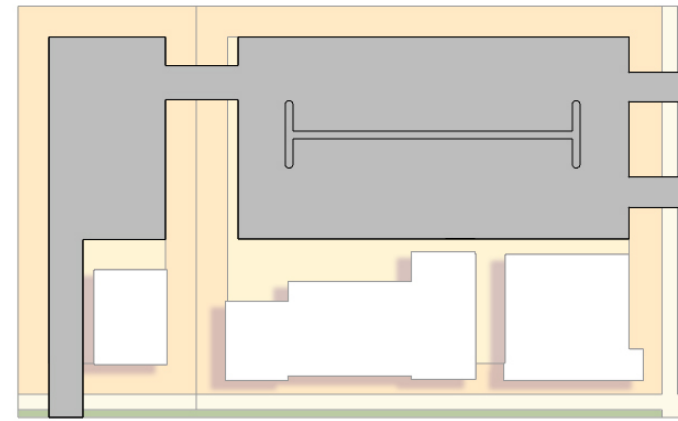


Quality Development

2a, g



2a, b



2a, b



2c, e



2i



2j



2e



Design Guidelines

1a



2. Parking and Circulation

- a. Buildings in commercial developments should be the focal point of the site with parking as a supporting feature. Locate parking lots to the rear or side of buildings to create a building-focused streetscape.
- b. Large surface parking areas should be divided into a series of smaller, connected parking lots with defined landscaped medians, pedestrian paths and intervening pad buildings to reduce the visual impact associated with large expanses of pavement and vehicles.
- c. Parking aisles are encouraged to be perpendicular to building entrances, so pedestrians walk parallel to moving cars and minimize the need to walk between parked cars or cross drive aisles.
- d. Alternative driveway paving materials (such as pavers; stamped, colored asphalt; stamped, textured concrete; or similar decorative materials) are encouraged.
- e. Design parking and circulation to minimize conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles.
- f. Parking design should maximize opportunities for pedestrian and vehicular circulation between adjacent sites by providing shared access drives.
- g. Shared parking and shared access drives are encouraged where practicable. This reduces the total amount of pavement and circulation space needed, allowing for more developable space for businesses and fewer curb cuts to detract from the streetscape. Permeable paving materials are encouraged where the use allows.
- h. Connect commercial developments to the surrounding area with a network of safe and convenient pedestrian connections. Dedicated pedestrian paths through parking areas shall be paved with a hard, durable material that differs from the drive aisle.
- i. Carpool spaces, electric vehicle charging stations, bike share locations, and ridesharing passenger pick-up and drop-off areas are encouraged.
- j. The periphery of all surface parking areas shall be designed to hide the major portions (i.e. height) of automobiles from view from the street. Screening may be accomplished by using walls berms, and hedges of shrubs) along the street periphery.
- k. Shaded pedestrian paths should be provided from parking structures and/or lots to buildings or street, access points, as well as between buildings and on project perimeters. Shade can be provided by planting materials or built structures.
- l. The "heat island" effect should be mitigated by increasing shaded areas throughout parking lots.



3. Public Spaces and Pedestrian Amenities

- a. Commercial developments should feature public spaces that are designed to the size and demands of the particular use and may include:
 - i. Patios that offer opportunities for casual gatherings or outdoor seating;
 - ii. Plazas that function as pedestrian arrival points or settings for recreation and relaxation;
 - iii. Paseos with benches, fountains and other pedestrian amenities;
 - iv. Amphitheaters; and
 - v. Active and passive play areas.
- b. Public spaces within the development should be pedestrian-friendly, inviting, engaging and give a sense of safety.
- c. Pedestrian areas should include a variety of shading options such as tree groupings, trellises, canopies and awnings for sun protection and heat reduction.



4. Landscaping and Shading

- a. Incorporate existing natural features such as trees, topography, washes, and vegetation into the site plan when practicable.
- b. Incorporate low impact development design practices for stormwater retention into the overall landscape plan.
- c. Landscaping should be used to define building entrances, parking lots, and the edges of various land uses. Consider safety, environmental impacts, and accent elements when selecting and locating landscaping features.
- d. Nuisance trees and plantings that have thorns, stickers and sharp leaves or drop flowers and fruit should be avoided near pedestrian walkways and parking spaces to maintain safe and clear paths of travel.
- e. Use deciduous trees along south and west facing facades and in pedestrian areas to provide seasonal shading.
- f. Use landscaping to screen less-desirable areas from public view (i.e., trash enclosures, parking areas, storage areas, loading areas, public utilities, and mechanical equipment).
- g. Provide weather and sun protection, such as overhangs, awnings, canopies, etc. to mitigate climatic and solar conditions.
- h. Misting systems and other similar cooling techniques should be used in common areas to provide necessary relief from the desert sun.

5. Lighting

- a. Design exterior lighting as an integral part of the building and landscape design.
- b. Use of accent lighting to create a focal point or highlight architectural features on a building should be considered.
- c. Provide pedestrian scale light features in pedestrian activity areas. This helps to create a sense of security, but also enhances the pedestrian experience.
- d. Lighting in parking areas shall be harmonious with the building design and with the architectural theme of the overall project.



B. ARCHTECTURAL DESIGN

1. General Design

- a. Commercial building design must be pleasant, inviting, and promote safety to engage pedestrians and activate storefronts.
- b. Provide architectural interest and detailing consistent with the context of the area, use of the property and building.
- c. The use of standardized corporate architecture in the design theme of a building should be secondary to consistency with the architecture of the larger development, surrounding neighborhood or community.

- ii. Recesses or projections in the building facade surrounding the entrance;
- iii. Peaked roof or raised parapet structures over the door;
- iv. Display windows surrounding the entrance.

2. Building Entrances

- a. The main entrance should generally face the primary street with secondary entrances to the side or rear to allow access to available parking. A hierarchy of entry points should be provided for each site and to each building. Entrances shall be designed with one or more of the following:
 - i. Canopy, overhang or arch above the entrance;

- b. Recess or cover entrances to provide shelter as well as ample area for queuing to avoid pedestrian congestion and safety conflicts with vehicles.
- c. Large multi-tenant buildings should provide distinct entrances and retail fronts to support each tenant and allow flexible design that will accommodate alternative uses in the future.
- d. Buildings with a pedestrian unloading or drop-off area should incorporate an entry plaza that includes decorative paving, lighting, and landscaping.

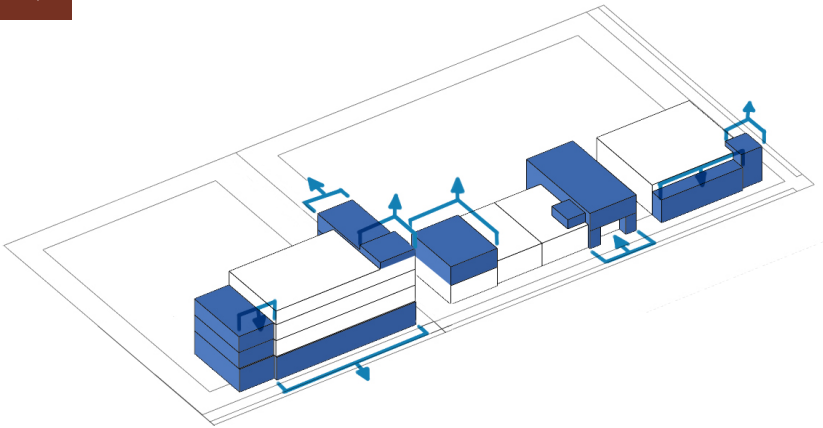


3. Massing and Scale

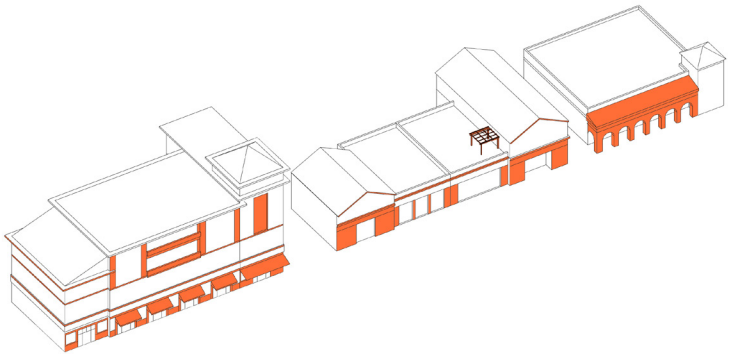
- a. Building mass should vary to reduce the appearance of size and relate more easily to the human scale.
 - b. Step the facade back or include protruding bays that extend forward to cast shadows and highlight prominent features entrances and corners.
 - c. Vary the roof line and height of different wings of the building to avoid an appearance of excessive repetition along the street.
 - d. Focus massing variations on pedestrian level elements such as entrance porticoes, single story protruding lobbies, and highly transparent vestibules where it has a high value in promoting walkable neighborhoods.,
 - e. Building mass and scale should be compatible with adjacent lots and buildings. Taller buildings or taller portions of a building should be located internally to a site with building heights stepping down as they reach the edges of site where smaller scaled development exists.
- c. The ground floor of commercial buildings should include an arrangement of windows and doors to increase transparency.
 - d. Ground floors should include at least one material band change to visually create a base to the building. In tall or multi-story buildings, additional materials, architectural elements, or roof forms placed above this base should be used to distinguish between the pedestrian realm and upper portions or floors of the building.
 - e. Building facades above the ground floor should use a simpler design and incorporate different colors, materials, trim, or detail than the ground floor, so as to maintain a clear hierarchy to the building and highlight the commercial and pedestrian level foremost.
 - f. Large buildings that require expansive windowless facades to accommodate interior use shall incorporate design elements like arcades, architectural details and screens, pergolas, or landscaped trellises to create a more active appearance.



3b, d



4a, b



4. Façade Articulation

- a. All sides of buildings shall include architectural detailing and features. However, the highest level of articulation and detail should occur on the front facade and facades generally visible from the street and other public spaces. Blank, windowless walls should be avoided when facing a public street.
- b. Break up large facades into collections of smaller units. The facade of a longer building can be visually broken up into several facades to avoid monotonous or overly repetitive design.

4d, e



5. Materials and Colors

- a. High-quality, authentic building materials - such as stone, brick, wood, and stucco - should be utilized to enhance the building’s architectural character and assure a long-lasting building life. Use of materials to artificially simulate another material, such as stucco used to mimic wood, is prohibited.
- b. A variety of materials should be used to emphasize a differentiation between the various components of a building. The combination of materials on a building facade shall be appropriate to its style and design.
- c. The selection and placement of building materials should provide visual interest at the pedestrian level. Materials and colors should be used to enhance buildings and adjacent pedestrian spaces by adding color, shadows, and interesting forms.
- d. The use of metal siding exclusively on any building is prohibited. Metal siding used for accents on any development shall be of the decorative, architectural metal type. The use of corrugated metal siding is prohibited unless used as a decorative element to accent a particular architectural style.
- e. Exterior building colors should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood setting and should be in keeping with the geographic and climatic conditions specific to Mesa.
- f. Changes in material should occur at a change in wall plane, preferably at an inside corner.
- g. Side and rear facades visible to the public shall include materials of equal quality to the front facade.
- h. Materials should be selected that have proven durability in extreme temperatures and under high amounts of sun exposure.



6. Signage

- a. Signs should be designed using similar style, materials, and colors that coordinate with building architecture.
- b. Strong contrast helps signs stand out from their surroundings. Bright, reflective, and fluorescent colors should be used sparingly and only when complimentary to the buildings overall design theme.
- c. Signs should be simple and easy to read.



7. Service Areas and Utilities

- a. Loading, storage, and service facilities must be screened from public view. Screening materials, colors, and finishes should be designed as an integral part of the site architecture. Landscaping or other methods of screening may also be utilized.
- b. Service and loading areas should be located behind buildings or other areas not designed for pedestrians or as primary vehicular circulation through the site.
- c. Trash enclosure walls and gates must be architecturally compatible with the building design and should be carefully integrated into the site plan.
- d. Mechanical equipment, electrical meter and service components, roof drainage systems and similar utility devices whether ground level, wall mounted, or roof mounted, shall be screened and designed to appear as an integral part of the building.



C. EXAMPLES AND INSPIRATION

