CHAPTER 2:
DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PRIVATE PROPERTY IMPROVEMENTS

I. PRINCIPLES AND ORGANIZATION

The intent of these guidelines is to provide design direction for the exterior improvement of private property along Park Street including renovations and additions to existing properties and new construction. All buildings except for residential buildings of four units or less are covered by these guidelines.

The goal for these guidelines is not to create a uniform “style” or character for the street, but rather to allow Park Street to evolve as a distinctive place that builds on the strengths of its culturally diverse businesses and neighborhoods. The desired outcome of well-designed private property improvements, combined with well-designed public street improvements described in Chapter 3, will be a safe, attractive, pedestrian-friendly and economically vibrant “Main Street” for the Southside.

A. URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The urban design principles embodied in the Park Street Design Guidelines are not new. Based on the key elements of historic downtowns, these principles underpin the design of some of the most popular and economically viable urban commercial business districts in the United States. Walkable streets, human-scaled architecture, public spaces, street furnishings, and landscaping are common design features that make these places attractive places to shop, work, and live.

The Park Street Design Guidelines are based on the following urban design principles:

Land Use
A mix of uses that encourage pedestrian activity and express the street’s cultural identity including retail, restaurants, residential, offices, service businesses, civic uses and public open spaces are encouraged.

Buildings
Buildings are at least two stories high to give scale to the street with ground floor retail/commercial and upper floor residential and office uses. Buildings are located closer to the street to create a sense of enclosure for the public sidewalk. Building setbacks provide space for amenities that enhance pedestrian activity along the street.
Parking
Parking lots are located on the sides and rears of buildings and are shared by two or more businesses.

Walkability
Sidewalks/Terrace areas are a minimum of 10 feet wide with a six foot wide unobstructed sidewalk zone and minimum four feet wide terrace next to the public street. Street furnishings are provided in the terrace to enhance the pedestrian character and use of the street including pedestrian scale lighting, benches, bicycle racks, information kiosks, etc. Crosswalks are clearly marked and include pedestrian refuge islands for safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings.

Streets
Streets are designed to accommodate efficient traffic flow and multiple transportation choices including bicycle, bus and future light rail or electric streetcar options.

Landscaping
Tall canopy street trees are provided to shade the sidewalk, provide a sense of enclosure for the street, and visually unify the blockface.
B. PARK STREET CHARACTER

Park Street is a complex urban corridor that varies, from one end to the other, in both character and scale, with a wide variety of building types. For the purpose of these guidelines, the street can be divided into two design districts.

Both the northern and southern parts of Park Street are expected to change over time. Park Street is situated close to downtown Madison and the University and because of this proximity, investment interest in the street is expected to increase. These guidelines will assist property owners in directing their investments to achieve an attractive and pedestrian friendly character over the entire corridor.

Northern Design District: North of Olin Avenue

The northern portion of the district is the gateway to Downtown Madison and the University. This area includes Park Street’s historic core where buildings are built closer together and closer to the street. Building heights vary. Meriter Hospital, near Regent Street, exceeds six stories while the remainder of this section has one and two story buildings. There is a well-defined pattern of blocks and side streets that provide strong connections to the adjoining neighborhoods. The predominant mix of uses includes retail, restaurants and service businesses. This section also includes St. Marys Hospital, which is proposed to front on Park Street between Erin Street and Delaplaine Court. Generally, this section of the street has more pedestrian activity than the southern district.

Southern Design District: South of Olin Avenue

The southern portion of Park Street represents the entrance to the City of Madison from the Beltline Highway. This section includes a mix of commercial, industrial and residential uses with a greater degree of auto-oriented uses, such as commercial strip centers, than the northern district. This section also includes important civic and community uses including the South Madison Library, the Boys and Girls Club, Harambee, Metro’s South Transfer Point, and the Catholic Multi-Cultural Center. Two redevelopment areas that are identified in the South Madison Neighborhood Plan-the Wingra Creek area and the Villager Mall area-are part of this section.

Generally, parcels in this section of Park Street are larger and buildings are built further apart and farther away from the street than the northern district. Most buildings are one story in height. In many cases, there are no side streets and the traditional block pattern evident in the northern district disappears. The Southern section generally lacks a sense of street enclosure, continuity of buildings and uses, and street connections to the adjoining neighborhoods. Combined, these factors contribute to less pedestrian activity and street life than the northern section. New construction proposed in the Southern Design District will require more sensitivity to blend within a less defined context with larger lots and a variety of building patterns.
Park Street Existing Building Typology

Park Street is a complex urban corridor that varies, from one end to the other, in both character and scale, with a wide variety of building types. The following Existing Building Typology illustrates many of the building styles found on Park Street.

**Historic Buildings**
- Two or more stories
- Vertical massing
- Built to the street
- Free standing or attached

**Contemporary Commercial Buildings**
- Typically 1 or 2 stories
- Horizontal massing
- Facades include masonry, metal & wood siding
- Free standing

**Strip Commercial Buildings**
- Typically 1 story
- Horizontal massing
- Multiple tenants
- Large portion of the site devoted to parking

**Franchise Buildings**
- Typically 1 story
- Corporate design
- Free standing
- Large portion of the site devoted to parking

**Converted Commercial Buildings**
- Former gas stations, garages, etc.

**Residential Buildings Converted to Commercial Use**
- Two stories
- Pitched roof
- Free standing

**Auto Sales and Service Buildings**
- Single story
- Large portion of the site devoted to parking
- Free standing

**Industrial Buildings**
- Large scale
- Manufacturing or warehouse use
- Free standing

**Institutional Buildings**
- Number of stories varies
- Medical, transit, civic uses
- Masonry facades
- Free-standing

**Multi-family Residential Buildings**
- Apartments
- Large structures
- Large green spaces

**Other Residential Buildings**
- Apartments & condominiums
- Free standing
- Small number of units
C. ORGANIZATION OF URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

These guidelines have been organized into two principle sections: General Design Guidelines and Specific Design Guidelines. The General Design Guidelines present broad principles related to blockface design, site design, building design, building height, and property maintenance. Specific Design Guidelines provide specific, numbered guidelines for all private property improvements, including new construction projects, existing building and site renovation projects, and private signage. There are also a variety of special projects including redevelopment projects, expansions to the St. Marys and Meriter hospital districts, multi-tenant buildings, as well as building restoration and historic preservation projects.

A description of the design review and approval process and glossary of key terms is provided at the end of this chapter.
II. GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following General Design Guidelines provide overarching design principles that are common to all new construction and renovation projects on Park Street. These guidelines fit into several functional categories: blockface design, site design, building design, building height and property maintenance.

A. BLOCKFACE DESIGN

The buildings and sites along Park Street are not isolated structures. The placement and appearance of the buildings, sites, and signs contribute to the character of the entire block and ultimately to the character of the street. A blockface is one side of a street block. Because Park Street runs mostly north and south, the blockfaces along the street are oriented either east or west. When the buildings along a street block are closely spaced or contiguous, the blockface becomes a cohesive vertical element or “street wall”. The opposing blockfaces along the street create a series of relatively parallel street walls that – to varying degrees – enclose the public streetscape and create outdoor, linear “rooms”.

The general guidelines for how private property owners can improve the blockface design include:

- Coordinate building and site designs with adjoining properties.
- Promote shared driveways and parking.
- Use landscaping and furnishings to enhance the public sidewalk.
- Consider infill development and landscaping to create a continuous blockface.

B. SITE DESIGN

Site design refers to the physical arrangement of buildings, walkways, parking lots, landscaping and other elements on a property. The placement of these elements on the site will contribute to the functional and aesthetic character of the site and Park Street. For example, sites with large front parking areas or large setbacks generally contribute little to the aesthetic quality or walkability of Park Street. Site development that places well-designed buildings closer to the street will strengthen the character and spatial enclosure of the street.

Park Street is located within the watershed for Lake Monona, Lake Wingra, and Wingra Creek and development can affect the environmental quality and recreational value of these important water resources. Sustainable site design practices are encouraged to reduce or eliminate the negative affect of stormwater runoff on these resources.
The general guidelines for how private property owners should improve their sites include:

- Locate buildings close to the street.
- Connect entrances with public sidewalks.
- Avoid parking in front yards.
- Provide attractive landscaping/outdoor spaces.
- Complement the public ‘streetscape’.
- Locate trash and utility areas away from the street and provide appropriate screening.
- Promote crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).
- Employ sustainable design practices.

C. BUILDING DESIGN

The design of buildings is a key part of shaping a positive and attractive character to the Park Street corridor. New buildings and renovation of existing buildings should enliven the public streetscape, complement the character of adjacent buildings, and provide inviting entrances to pedestrians. Building designs should be sustainable, as well. “Green” architecture, which use water, energy, and other natural resources more efficiently, is encouraged.

The older, traditional mixed-use buildings found in the northern district provide a stronger sense of place with scale, proportion, and details that relate to the pedestrian. The detail and scaling found in these buildings generally makes them more appealing than some of the more modern facades located elsewhere on the corridor. These buildings have several distinct parts, including the storefront, upper facade, cornice, and signage area as shown in the illustration to the left.

It is not the intent of these guidelines for new construction or renovations on Park Street to recreate historic buildings. What is recommended is that building improvements incorporate the basic facade design elements of older buildings while encouraging creative architectural expression.

General design parameters for building design include:

- Create buildings with details and proportions that are scaled to the pedestrian.
- Complement scale and character of adjacent buildings.
- Encourage mixed-use buildings.
- Create inviting entrances.
- Maximize storefront transparency.
- Design all sides of the building visible to the public.
- Encourage franchises to respect the character of the street.
- Employ sustainable design practices.
- Provide details that express cultural identity.
D. BUILDING HEIGHT

These guidelines allow the flexibility to build taller, recognizing that it is good land use policy to promote greater density in Madison’s central area. However, determining appropriate building height will depend on the context in which the development is proposed. Is the development proposed as part of an existing, well-established blockface? Does the development adjoin an existing neighborhood? Is the development part of a redevelopment plan for a larger area?

A general rule of thumb for human-scaled, pedestrian-friendly urban streets is that the average building height should be at least one-third of the street right-of-way width to create a sense of enclosure. Considering that the typical width of Park Street is 105 feet within the public right-of-way, a building height of 35 feet or three stories would be a comfortable scale for the street. These guidelines generally recommend that new buildings on Park Street should not be less than two stories high or taller than four stories. Additional height may be granted in special cases if the proposed development exhibits extraordinary design quality that enhances the desired use mix, character, and affordability of Park Street.

E. PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Well-maintained buildings and sites present a positive and attractive business district image to visitors, customers, prospective tenants and owners. Additionally, property maintenance can contribute to crime prevention. Buildings should be kept clean and in good repair. Parking areas and open spaces should be kept free of trash and debris. Landscaping should be maintained and plants replaced when they die. Business and property owners should maintain their public sidewalks through regular sweeping and removal of litter from terrace areas. Quick removal of graffiti is also important for projecting a positive image for the business district.

Removal of graffiti is important for maintaining a positive image for the business area.
III. SPECIFIC DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following guidelines provide specific recommendations for all exterior private property improvements on Park Street. These guidelines cover all buildings except for residential buildings of four units or less. These guidelines supplement requirements established in the Madison Zoning Ordinance and property owners should consult applicable zoning requirements as they plan for their property improvements.

These guidelines are organized to identify their applicability to the type of improvement: new construction, renovations/additions to existing properties, or both. Guidelines are also provided for special conditions such as redevelopment areas, expansions to the Meriter and St. Marys hospital districts, multi-tenant buildings, and building restoration and historic preservation projects.

A. BLOCKFACE DESIGN

Buildings and sites are not isolated occurrences, and their design should respect, reinforce, and enhance the surrounding block. New construction can have a positive or negative affect on the shape and character of an entire block. The following guidelines detail how new construction or renovation projects can enhance, strengthen, or even create a new blockface along Park Street.

2.1 New buildings and additions should complement the character of adjoining buildings in the blockface

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![Diagram showing blockface design with new construction and remodeled buildings.](image)
2.2 Creative architectural designs and details are encouraged so long as designs do not conflict or draw attention away from other buildings in the block.

2.3 The use of attractive landscaping is encouraged to establish continuity between buildings and to define the blockface where there are no buildings.

2.4 Shared parking and access between properties is encouraged.

2.5 New infill buildings should not vary by more than one story from the average building height in blocks that exhibit a concentration of existing buildings and a well-defined blockface. This condition, which primarily exists in the northern district, is illustrated to the left.

2.6 In special cases, new buildings may be built up to four stories to create a new blockface character. Building height bonuses up to two additional floors may also be allowed depending on the quality of the design, the contribution of the project to the use mix, activity, the provision for affordable housing, character of the street, and the affect of the development on the adjoining neighborhood.

2.7 Stepbacks of 15 feet from the building face should be provided at the third floor.

2.8 Greater flexibility for building height and stepbacks may be allowed as part of a coordinated redevelopment project approved by the City of Madison. See page 24.
B. SITE DESIGN

This section provides specific guidelines for the physical arrangement and aesthetic character of the site.

Building Setbacks and Orientation

2.9 New buildings should have a setback between 1 to 10 feet from the public sidewalk, depending on the adjacent buildings, to provide room for amenities that will enhance the visual and pedestrian character of the street.

2.10 Where new buildings are designed for existing blockfaces, the building setback should be consistent with adjoining buildings but not exceed 10 feet.

2.11 In areas with minimal sidewalk/terrace width (eight feet or less), building setback areas should include additional pavement to expand the sidewalk zone.

2.12 Buildings may be set back greater than ten feet to allow for the development of usable public open spaces such as pedestrian plazas.

2.13 In special cases, such as gas stations, setbacks can exceed 10 feet with provisions for walkways and landscaping that make these uses more attractive and inviting.

2.14 Walkways should be provided to connect the building entrance to the public sidewalk.

2.15 The building face should be parallel to Park Street.
2.18 Parking lots should be located on the sides or rears of buildings to establish a stronger streetface relationship between the building and the public sidewalk.

2.16 It is preferred to have the front of the building and the public entrance face Park Street. If the public entrance is allowed on the side of the building, it should be positioned close to Park Street and preferably as a corner feature of the building.

2.17 Additions to existing buildings should help bring the building closer to the street and minimize the “gap” in the street wall.

### Parking and Service Areas

2.18 Parking for new buildings should be located at the rear and on the sides of the building. Parking in the front of buildings is discouraged.

2.19 For existing properties, where the site area permits, parking in the front should be relocated to the side and rear of the building.

2.20 For properties, where front parking cannot be removed, walkways, landscaping, architectural features, and lighting should be provided to make these areas more attractive and inviting. Decorative fences, walls and/or landscaped edges should screen front parking areas from the public sidewalk. Screening should not exceed 3’6” in height.

2.21 All parking areas should be well landscaped and appropriately lighted.

2.22 Large parking areas should include walkways to allow safe pedestrian access to the building entrance.

2.23 Shared parking areas are encouraged. Whenever possible, adjoining parking lots should be linked to provide internal traffic circulation. Internal walkways should be provided to interconnect parking lots with building entrances. Driveways along Park Street should be minimized to improve traffic flow and reduce pedestrian conflicts.
2.21 This existing Park Street property can be improved with decorative fencing or landscaping to screen the front parking area from the public sidewalk.

2.24 Pedestrian areas and customer parking areas should be separated from loading, service, and drive through areas.

2.25 New parking ramps fronting on Park Street should include ground-floor commercial uses with attractive commercial facade design. The facade design for the upper stories should obscure the parking ramp and present an attractive building face for Park Street. The design of parking ramps should also complement the quality and design of the buildings they serve.

2.26 All trash areas should be screened from public view. If possible, trash areas should be located inside buildings.

**Landscaping and Open Space**

2.27 Screen fences and/or landscaped buffers should be provided at property edges, particularly where commercial properties adjoin residential properties. City ordinance requires a 6 foot (height) fence separating commercial uses from residential use.

2.28 Property owners are encouraged to provide landscaped outdoor spaces for the use and enjoyment of employees and customers.

2.29 Landscaping and fencing should be designed to complement the character of the building and provide a pleasing relationship with adjoining properties and the public sidewalk.

**Site Lighting and Furnishings**

2.30 Cut-off light fixtures should be used to illuminate the site. Higher lighting levels should be considered for pedestrian use areas. Low-level building and landscape accent lighting is encouraged, where appropriate.

2.31 Lighting and site furnishings (benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, etc.) should be designed to complement the character of the building and provide a pleasing relationship with adjoining properties and the public sidewalk.
2.32 Bicycle storage facilities should be located near the building entrance.

2.33 Decorative, colored paving is encouraged for walkways and outdoor use areas.

Stormwater Management

2.34 The use of rain gardens and bio-retention basins to collect runoff and filter pollutants is encouraged, where practical.

2.35 Landscape islands, open spaces and porous pavements should be provided, where practical, for stormwater infiltration.

C. BUILDING DESIGN

This section provides guidelines for building design including building massing and articulation, materials and color, and windows and entrances. See Blockface Design, page 14, for building height guidelines.

Building Massing and Artication

2.36 “Green” building design that promotes energy efficiency, sustainable materials and environmentally friendly stormwater design practices is encouraged.

2.37 Avoid blank building walls with little detail or variety, particularly along primary facades. Improvements to these buildings should include details at the street level to create a more comfortable pedestrian scale and character.
2.4.1 Corner buildings should help define intersections with distinctive architectural character.

2.4.2 New corner buildings should be located near the sidewalk edge and should define the street intersection with distinctive architectural features such as towers, rounded walls, recessed entries or other design features.

2.4.3 Provide a positive visual termination at the top of the building.

2.4.4 Flat roofs are preferred for new buildings.

2.4.5 Designs for buildings that adjoin historic buildings should complement the proportion, scale and architectural details of the historic building. Copying historic appearance and details is discouraged.

2.4.6 Designs for buildings that adjoin historic buildings should complement the proportion, scale and architectural details of the historic building. Copying historic appearance and details is discouraged.

2.39 Large buildings should be broken up to avoid creating a monotonous building wall and enhance the pedestrian experience.

2.38 Provide architectural details at the ground floor to enhance the facade design through the use of materials and color, or by breaking the building into bays to break up large facades to create visual distinction.

2.40 All visible sides of the building should be designed with details that complement the front facade. Side facades that are visible from Park Street should receive equal design attention.

2.41 Building facades should be designed to create a visual distinction between the upper and lower floors of the building.

For large buildings, it is important to provide variation to the building face. Use of materials and color, or by breaking the building into bays to break up large facades to create visual distinction.
2.47 Franchise businesses are encouraged to modify their corporate designs to fit the Park Street character.

New Construction
Renovation & Additions

2.48 Where possible, existing, one-story buildings should be renovated with extended facades and parapets to increase building height and provide a more pleasing scale for Park Street.

New Construction
Renovation & Additions

2.49 Mechanical equipment should be screened from view by using screen designs that are architecturally integrated with the building design.

New Construction
Renovation & Additions

Materials and Color

2.50 Exterior materials should be durable, high-quality materials and appropriate for external use.

New Construction
Renovation & Additions

2.51 Brick, stone and terra-cotta are preferred primary materials for new buildings or additions.

New Construction
Renovation & Additions

2.52 The use of false brick or other “faux” sidings is discouraged.

New Construction
Renovation & Additions

2.53 Color choice should complement the style and materials of the building’s facade and provide a pleasing relationship with adjoining buildings.

New Construction
Renovation & Additions

2.54 Property owners are encouraged to use a three-color paint scheme with a “base” color on the majority of the building surface, “trim” colors used on building features such as window and door trims and cornices and “accent” colors on signs, awnings and other architectural details.

New Construction
Renovation & Additions

2.55 Painting of natural brick and stone is discouraged. Property owners should consult with a professional cleaner to identify cleaning methods that will prevent damage to brick or stone surfaces.

New Construction

2.48 This before and after study shows how an existing one story building at 1817 S. Park Street can be improved with an extended parapet to create a sense of an upper story.
Windows and Entrances

2.56 The ground floors of commercial retail buildings should have at least sixty percent of the street wall area devoted to windows to enhance the pedestrian character of Park Street.

2.57 Office buildings and other non-retail buildings should have at least forty percent of the street wall devoted to windows.

2.58 Windows on the ground floor should not be darkly tinted, colored or have a mirrored finish.

2.59 Building entrances should be designed as the focal point of the facade.

2.60 Entrances of new buildings or additions located close to the sidewalk should include recessed entries to allow for pedestrian movement.

D. SIGNAGE DESIGN

Building signage should fit with and enhance the character of a building and the overall environment of the Park Street area. The City of Madison regulates building signage including dimension, location and installation practices. The following signage guidelines supplement the City’s signage ordinance to provide guidance as it relates to appearance.

2.61 Preferred sign types include building mounted signs, window signs, projecting signs, and awning signs.

2.62 Signs should be simple and easy to read.

2.63 Sign colors should relate to and complement the primary colors of the building facade.

2.56, 2.61 Good examples of attractive storefronts and signage.
2.64 Sign design and placement should fit the character of the building and not obscure architectural details.

2.65 Signage should generally be centered within the prescribed signage area of the building.

2.66 Plastic box signs are highly discouraged.

2.67 Opaque backgrounds and white or light letters are preferred for backlit signs.

2.68 Individually mounted backlit letters are an acceptable form of signage.

2.69 The use of small, well-designed building-mounted light fixtures is a preferred method of illuminating signage.

2.70 Window signs should not mask a majority of the storefront.

2.71 Freestanding signs should be attractively designed. Signs should be coordinated with adjoining properties and public street signage to avoid visual clutter.

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The photo above is an example of existing signage that adds to the visual clutter of Park Street and detracts from its visual character.
E. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

The following section identifies design guidelines for several special conditions involving new construction and renovation activities on Park Street. Property owners and developers should consider these guidelines as additions to the guidelines previously presented.

Redevelopment Sites

Several sites have been identified in the South Madison Neighborhood Plan and the Park Street Possibilities to Reality Report as potential redevelopment opportunities to change the use mix, character, density and activity of Park Street and stimulate the physical and economic revitalization of the Park Street corridor. These sites include the Ann Street/Badger Road/Vilager Mall area near the Beltline Highway; the Wingra Creek/Labor Temple area near the center of the Park Street corridor; and, the northeast quadrant of the Regent Street and Park Street intersection at the entrance to the University of Wisconsin campus. Over time, other sites may be identified and approved for redevelopment. Design guidelines for the coordinated phase development of redevelopment sites, include the following:

2.72 Redevelopment sites should be developed as mixed-use centers incorporating quality architecture and site design.

2.73 Density is encouraged to enhance the pedestrian activity of the street.

2.74 Buildings should be positioned to serve as attractive visual termination points for streets leading into the development from Park Street.

2.75 Buildings should be positioned to develop an attractive blockface along Park Street and internal streets. Buildings should be located with minimal setbacks at corners to define intersections.

2.76 Buildings facing Park Street may be built up to four stories in height. Additional stories, up to six stories total, may be allowed depending on the quality of the design such as the contribution of the project to the use mix, activity, the provision for affordable housing, character of the street, and the affect of the development on the adjoining neighborhood.
2.77 Buildings located away from Park Street may be built up to six stories provided their placement is not detrimental to adjoining residential areas and they are consistent with existing zoning. Buildings should be stepped back at least 15 feet from the building face at the third floor.

2.78 Where appropriate, internal streets should be included as part of the development plan to improve connections between Park Street and the adjoining neighborhoods.

2.79 Developments should promote narrow, “pedestrian friendly” streets with on-street parking.

2.80 Streetscaping and traffic calming features should be incorporated to enhance the pedestrian character of the development.

2.81 Development plans should limit driveways and curb cuts on Park Street.

2.82 Shared parking is encouraged with a preference for enclosed parking integrated as part of the mixed-use building design. Surface parking is preferred first behind buildings and then on the side of the building.

2.83 Developments are encouraged to incorporate well-designed open spaces for customer, employee, resident, and community use.

Meriter and St. Marys Hospital Districts

The development of the Meriter and St. Marys Hospital districts should follow the guidelines for the redevelopment of key sites previously presented. However, the design parameters for these districts differ from other Park Street sites. For example, the expansion plans for Meriter and St. Marys Hospitals include buildings that exceed four stories. The design of these buildings fronting Park Street should include architectural detailing and upper-story setbacks of at least 15 feet to break up the building. For buildings taller than four stories, setbacks may occur at the fourth story.

New parking ramps fronting on Park Street should include ground-floor commercial uses and attractive commercial facade designs. The facade design for the upper stories should obscure the parking ramp and present an attractive building face for Park Street. The design of parking ramps should also complement the quality and design of the buildings they serve.

The Meriter and St. Marys Hospital districts should include streetscape and landscape improvements that establish a strong pedestrian character for Park Street and internal streets. Internal streets should be included in development plans, where practical, to facilitate connections to the adjoining neighborhood.
Multi-Tenant Commercial Buildings

Park Street has a number of multi-tenant commercial buildings or “strip centers” located primarily in the southern section of the corridor. The design of new centers and improvements to existing centers should follow the design guidelines presented in this document. If possible, new centers should be at least two stories in height with residential or office uses on the upper floors. New centers should front directly on Park Street with parking located at the rear of the building. Rear and side facades should be designed to blend with the design of the front facade, with complimentary colors and materials.

Facade Restoration and Historic Preservation

Several buildings located primarily at the north end of Park Street are older commercial structures which have historic value and interest. The ground floors of many of these structures have been altered over time while the upper stories generally retain their historic appearance.

When considering building improvements, property owners of older commercial structures are encouraged to restore the original character of the building. Property owners should refer to historic photos and conduct exploratory removals to determine the feasibility of restoration efforts. The following guidelines should be considered for improving older commercial buildings:

2.84 The distinguishing features of the original building should be preserved. The removal or alteration of historic materials or distinctive architecture features should be avoided, whenever possible.

2.85 Where practical, restore original masonry and reconstruct missing elements such as cornices, windows and storefronts that were part of the original building design. If restoration is not feasible, design new elements to compliment the character, materials and design of the original building.

2.86 Remove any inappropriate elements, signs, canopies, etc. that cover details and features of the original building.

2.87 Painting of natural brick or stone is strongly discouraged when those materials are in good condition. Property owners should consult with a professional cleaner to identify cleaning methods that will prevent damage to the brick or stone surfaces.
IV. DESIGN REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The Park Street Design Guidelines presented in this document have been adopted by the City of Madison and incorporated as part of an ordinance establishing the Park Street Urban Design District.

Urban Design Districts are established for many of the city’s most important corridors. The Park Street Corridor will be established as the City’s seventh urban design district because of its importance as a major community entrance, an important community business district and a key gateway to the Downtown, State Capitol, and University of Wisconsin. The purpose of such districts is to create and maintain a higher level of quality in the appearance of buildings and properties. Exterior changes to properties within an Urban Design District will be reviewed against the District’s guidelines, in addition to zoning and other applicable requirements. Exterior changes include activities such as new construction, remodeling/rehabilitation, additions, changes to the parking lot, and signage.

The first step when considering exterior changes to a property in an Urban Design District is to discuss the proposal with the City’s Urban Design Commission (UDC) staff. They will offer consultation on the changes and advice on the steps necessary to get the project approved. Projects within an Urban Design District generally require a public hearing before the UDC, which meets twice a month. Although the UDC is charged with reviewing such changes, UDC staff can often approve minor alterations, small additions, and signage.

After approval by the UDC (or its staff), building permits can be applied for. Building permit applications and plans will be circulated to UDC staff to be reviewed for compliance with the plans approved by the Commission before the permit is issued.

The property owner is encouraged to engage an architect that is familiar with applicable codes, guidelines and the approval process to prepare plans for the proposed improvements.

The property owner should also contact the alderperson to discuss the project. Depending on the scope of the project, the alderperson may request that the property owner meet with the neighborhood association and the business association.

Finally, property owners who want to renovate their properties are encouraged to contact the City of Madison for potential grant and loan assistance for facade improvements and other building improvements.
V. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following definitions have been provided as a guide to the language of design guidelines included in this chapter.

Bioretention Basins: Retention areas that use native plants and soil conditioning as a method for managing stormwater runoff.

Blockface: The row of building facades that face the street for the length of one block.

Bump-out: Curb extensions at sidewalks that reduce the roadway width from curb to curb and provide a larger area for pedestrian amenities and activities. Bump-outs also serve as a traffic calming measure as they tighten turning radii, making vehicles take corners at slower speeds.

CPTED: Crime Prevention through Environmental Design. These guidelines promote design that eliminates or reduces criminal behavior and at the same time encourages people to "keep an eye out" for each other.

Cut-Off Light Fixtures: Outdoor light fixtures that direct light downward and minimize the amount of light projected upward from these fixtures.

Facade: The exterior face or wall of a building, often distinguished from other faces by architectural details.

Franchise Design: Duplicated building design that is characteristic of a particular chain of businesses irregardless of the distinct character of the surrounding area.

Infill Building: New construction that occurs between existing structures in areas where no building exists. Infill building can help fill in holes in the blockface.

Mixed-use Development: A development that incorporates a series of different uses. A mixed-use development may have a vertical orientation, in which different uses are found on different floors. Other mixed-use developments on large parcels may be horizontal in nature and locate different uses along the ground level.

Parapet: A low, protective wall or railing along the edge of a roof, balcony, or similar structure.
**Porous Pavement:** Pavements that allow water to directly enter the ground due to the material’s pervious nature or through separate pervious areas integrated into the pavement.

**Rain Gardens:** Garden areas that include grasses, perennials, and shrubs and other native plants to collect, infiltrate and filter rain that falls on impervious surfaces (driveways, streets, or roofs). Rain gardens minimize the negative impacts of excessive runoff caused by impervious surfaces.

**Refuge Islands:** Points along a crosswalk, including an enlarged median, that give pedestrians a safe place to pause when crossing a wide street with multiple lanes of traffic.

**Setbacks:** The required (or actual placement) of a building that is a specified distance away from a road, property line, or other structure.

**Stepbacks:** Upper stories of buildings that are recessed or setback from the lower stories of buildings. For example, a third floor stepback of a building would not be built to the outermost edge of floors one and two, thereby minimizing the physical presence of taller buildings along the street.

**Streetscape:** The visual character of a street as determined by elements such as structures, access, greenery, open space, view, etc. Elements include both natural and man-made components, including buildings, paving, planting, street hardware, and miscellaneous structures.

**Storefront:** The street-facing facade of the first floor of a commercial or mixed-use building. Traditionally, storefronts were made inviting through the use of displays, windows, and well-designed signage.

**Sustainable Design:** A broad term referring to design and building concepts with a focus on energy efficiency, natural resource conservation, natural lighting or ventilation, and often a focus on using building materials that were collected in an environmentally sensitive manner.

**Traffic Calming:** The act of slowing traffic to posted speeds and limiting dangerous vehicular movements to accommodate safer access and mobility of pedestrians, bicyclists and other motorists.

**Wayfinding:** A system of directional signage that provides directions to prominent features or key destinations in and around a given area.