

# USA Niagara

## Urban Design Standards

Adopted July 2024



USA Niagara  
Development  
Corporation

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1-1. Purpose and Background	1
1-2. Goals and Objectives	2
1-3. Program Area and Application of Standards	3
1-4. Interpretation	4
1-5. Existing Zoning	4
<b>2. SITE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>5</b>
2-1. Purpose and Intent	5
2-2. Building Placement	5
2-3. Pedestrian Facilities and Circulation	7
2-4. Off-Street Parking and Loading	8
2-5. Landscaping	11
2-6. Outparcel or Multi-Building Development	14
<b>3. BUILDING PLACEMENT AND FORM</b>	<b>15</b>
3-1. Purpose and Intent	15
3-2. Building Form	15
3-3. Ground Floor	17
3-4. Building Materials and Color	21
3-5. Mechanical, HVAC and Other Equipment	21
3-6. Building Rehabilitation and Re-use	22
<b>4. SIGNS</b>	<b>25</b>
4-1. Purpose and Intent	25
4-2. General Standards	25
4-3. Permitted Signs and Requirements	26
<b>5. REVIEW PROCEDURES</b>	<b>33</b>
5-1. Overall Intent	33
5-2. Schematic Proposal	33
5-3. Preliminary Proposal	34
5-4. Site Plan Review and Other Approvals	35
5-5. Final Proposal	35
<b>6. DEFINITIONS</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>7. APPENDIX</b>	<b>42</b>
7-1. Buffalo Avenue Architectural Design Standards	42

# LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	High-Quality Design and Pedestrian-Oriented Development	1
Figure 2.	USA Niagara Program Area	3
Figure 3.	Pedestrian Connections to Street	5
Figure 4.	Build-to-Zone	5
Figure 5.	Corner Entrance	6
Figure 6.	Pedestrian Access to Rear Parking	7
Figure 7.	Outdoor Seating and Dining	7
Figure 8.	Landscaped Walkway in a Parking Block	8
Figure 9.	Pedestrian-Friendly Parking Redevelopment	9
Figure 10.	Public Parking Garages	10
Figure 11.	Parking Lot Screening	11
Figure 12.	Landscaping and Circulation for Interior Parking Lots	12
Figure 13.	Green Infrastructure and Pervious Materials	13
Figure 14.	Multi-building or Outparcel Development	14
Figure 15.	Base, Mid-section and Crown	15
Figure 16.	Building Articulation Progression	16
Figure 17.	Transparency	17
Figure 18.	Artful Patio Railings	19
Figure 19.	Sidewalk Patio Furnishings	19
Figure 20.	Sidewalk Displays	20
Figure 21.	Building Components	23
Figure 22.	Wall Sign	26
Figure 23.	Window Sign	27
Figure 24.	Projecting Sign	28
Figure 25.	Awning Sign	29
Figure 26.	A-Frame Sign	30
Figure 27.	Ground Sign	31
Figure 28.	Sign Lighting	32
Figure 29.	Artful Signs	32

# 1 | INTRODUCTION

## 1-1. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The USA Niagara Development Corporation (USA Niagara), has been working alongside the City of Niagara Falls and New York State to foster improvements in Niagara Falls for nearly two decades. Until recently the focus has been along Old Falls Street and Third Street. These areas were the focus of a 2005 development and grant program entitled the Third Street & Old Falls Street Entertainment District. This district has been targeted for a range of public improvements designed to create an appropriate setting for various types of private retail and entertainment establishments, both through renovation/occupation of existing structures and new infill development. In 2009, USA Niagara and the City of Niagara Falls collaborated to develop a strategic action program for the purposes of formalizing and revitalizing the Buffalo Avenue Heritage District, a historic neighborhood south of downtown. USA Niagara established a grant program to assist in the financing of construction associated with renovation/development activities in these areas. In 2023, USA Niagara launched a grant program entitled Niagara Falls Small Business Property Improvement Program (NSBPIP), which includes properties fronting segments of Main Street, Portage Road, and Pine Avenue.

These design standards apply to the NSBPIP as well as other USA Niagara funded program area and are intended to best leverage public investments by shaping the design of development projects funded through USA Niagara's grant programs to realize active, pedestrian oriented uses. The intent is to improve the quality of life in Niagara Falls for both residents and visitors by capitalizing on characteristics of existing urban development fabric in Niagara Falls to facilitate new uses and development.



Figure 1. High-Quality Design and Pedestrian-Oriented Development

*Appropriately-scaled buildings of high-quality design and pedestrian-oriented ground level uses contribute to an active urban streetscape.*

## 1-2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of these design standards is to specify requirements for new development, conservation, adaptive use, enhancement of building renovation and streetscape enhancement within USA Niagara's program area.

Specific goals and objectives for these standards are as follows:

### 1-2-1. Goal 1: Support Economic Development and Redevelopment

The following objectives apply:

- A. Facilitate ongoing economic development initiatives being advanced by local/state agencies by fostering an urbane and active setting for development and redevelopment projects.
- B. Ensure that public investments to foster new development and redevelopment result in an appropriately-scaled and high-quality urban environment.
- C. Support development and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized land in the program area.
- D. Promote land value increases and tax base expansion.

### 1-2-2. Goal 2: Protect and enhance the historic character of the USA Niagara program area

The following objectives apply:

- A. Preserve remaining historical fabric and limit any further erosion to the built form.
- B. Provide design guidance to existing property owners.
- C. Reinforce distinctive identity by ensuring mass and form of new development fits within the existing fabric.
- D. Encourage and support new development that is attuned with existing design elements and respects the heritage of unique, high-quality structures.

### 1-2-3. Goal 3: Facilitate Mixed-use Development with Multi-modal Streets

The following objectives apply:

- A. Enhance the safety, comfort and enjoyment for all transportation users with multi-modal streets.
- B. Maximize retail, entertainment, lodging and residential choices.
- C. Promote well-designed and active streetscapes that appropriately leverage public infrastructure and grant investments.
- D. Include a mix of uses and densities typical of an urban environment.
- E. Promote design that cultivates a proud system of eyes on the street.

### 1-2-4. Goal 4: Support Local and Regional Planning Policies and Strategies

The following objectives apply:

- A. Support and implement current development policies outlined in public plans and projects by incorporating standards consistent with the overall objectives of the Niagara Falls Strategic Plan, City of Niagara Falls Comprehensive Plan, USA Niagara Development Strategy and the Buffalo Avenue Heritage District Revitalization Strategy.
- B. Realize supporting development to build upon various existing and planned tourist-oriented projects such as the Seneca Niagara Casino and its associated resort facilities; Conference Center Niagara Falls; and the Niagara Experience Center.

### 1-2-5. Goal 5: Support sustainable community principles and promote healthy, ecologically responsible development

The following objectives apply:

- A. Support green building practices by encouraging the pursuit of the U. S. Green Building Council's LEED Certifications for rehabilitation and new construction activities.

# 1-3. PROGRAM AREA AND APPLICATION OF STANDARDS

## 1-3-1. Primary Program Area

Figure 2 depicts the USA Niagara program area. The Buffalo Avenue Heritage District, identified on the map, includes additional design standards as appended. These standards address the residential nature of the District. The Park Place District - also identified on the map - is a historic district and could have additional design requirements. See 1-5-2 for more information.

## 1-3-2. Application

The design standards specified herein may be applied to areas of Niagara Falls as necessary for the administration of projects under the USA Niagara grant program. These design standards shall apply to repair, maintenance, rehabilitation and new construction projects undertaken in the USA Niagara program area.

Within the discretion of USA Niagara, the strict application of these design standards may be superseded by more site-specific standards in conjunction with any publicly-developed facility and/or project.

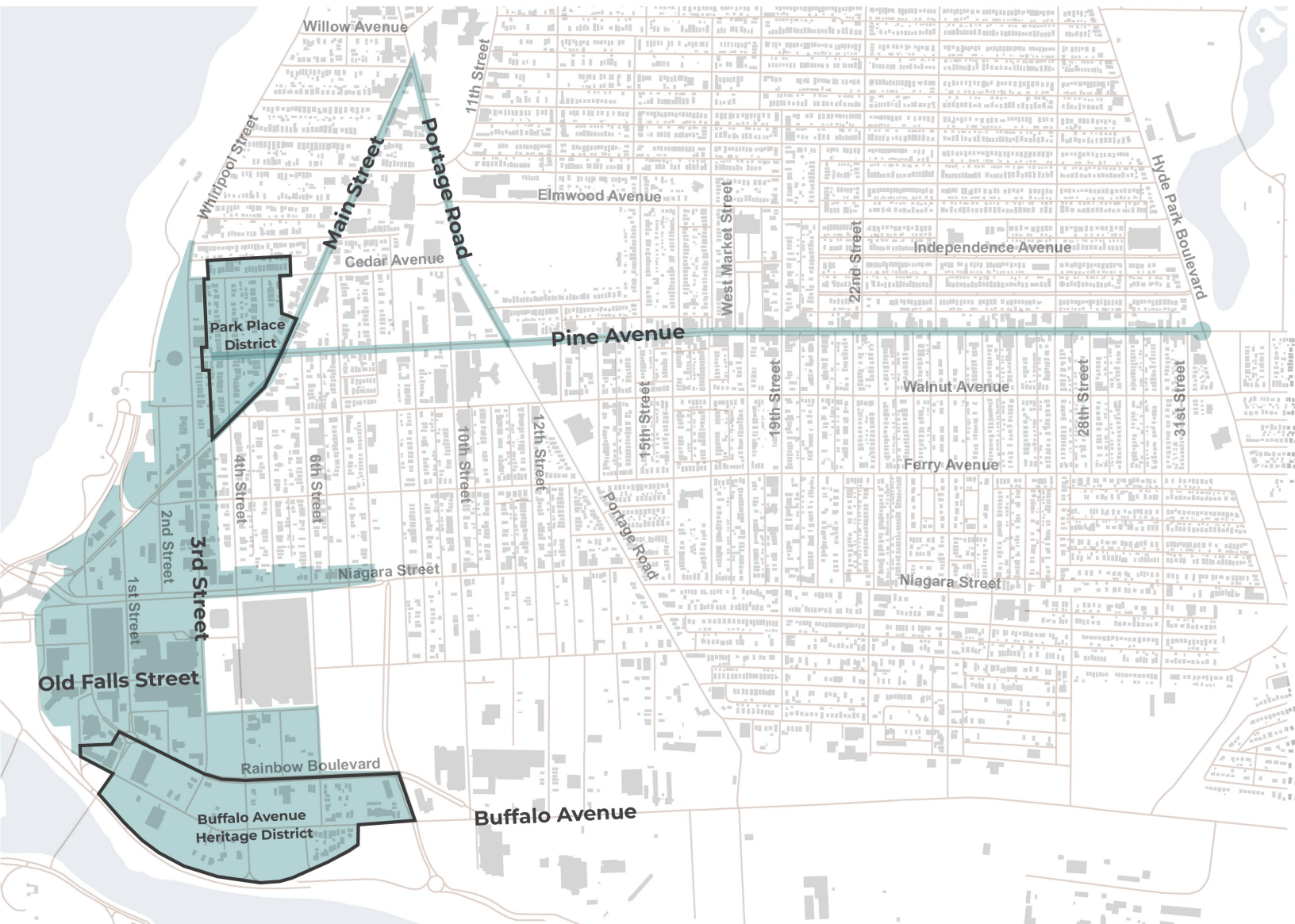


Figure 2. USA Niagara Program Area

## 1-4. INTERPRETATION

### 1-4-1. Rules of Interpretation and Word Usage

In interpreting and applying the provisions of these design standards, they shall be considered the minimum requirements adopted for the promotion of the objectives of the program. When used in the context of this document, the following rules of interpretation shall apply:

- A. Words/phrases such as "shall," "will," "must," "is required," etc. indicate standards which are compulsory.
- B. Words/phrases such as "should," "is encouraged to," "is desired," "is recommended to," etc. indicate standards that are strongly desired in the context of USA Niagara's program goals and objectives and should act to influence the design associated with the application, but are not mandated.
- C. Words/phrases such as "acceptable," "satisfactory," "adequate," etc. indicate standards that while not meeting the full intent of USA Niagara's program goals and objectives, represent an adequate approach to meet a particular standard, if the applicant can demonstrate an inability (in terms of site configuration, existing building components, physical constraints and/or requirements associated with other laws or regulations) to fully meet a recommended approach.
- D. Words/phrases such as "may," "allowed," etc. indicate permissible actions that are not required.

## 1-5. EXISTING LAWS

### 1-5-1. Compliance with Zoning

As of July 2009, the Niagara Falls Zoning Ordinance became law and governs zoning and development within the City of Niagara Falls. The code was last amended in September 2021.

Buildings and sites in the program area must comply with all relevant regulations and standards in their respective zoning districts. Additionally, buildings and sites must comply with relevant regulations outlined in the Design District Overlay, which applies to all C2 and D1 zoning districts.

Applicants for the USA Niagara program shall be responsible for following all applicable City of Niagara Falls zoning provisions. In cases where standards in this document conflict with the City's zoning chapter, the zoning regulations shall take precedent.

### 1-5-2. Compliance with Historic Preservation

Niagara Falls has a separate local law regulating historic preservation throughout the City. In 2009, the City designated a historic district called the Park Place District, as shown on the map on this page. Properties inside this district boundary will have to adhere to the City's Historic Preservation Law in Chapter 1335 of the City's code.

# 2 | SITE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

## 2-1. PURPOSE AND INTENT

The site design of a project is one of the most important determinants of the character (i.e., the feel and look) of the USA Niagara program area. Site planning involves the placement and design of various features associated with a project - pedestrian facilities, parking and service facilities, landscaping, buffering and screening- and the relationship of these features to both the street and buildings on and adjacent to a site.

The standards in this chapter are intended to define relationships, characteristics and coherence of site features for infill development (as well as rehabilitation/reuse projects that include planned exterior site improvements), which influence how the site and adjoining street areas shall be used for public purposes. Standards will help shape pedestrian facilities and connectivity as shown in Figure 3 as well as parking facilities and location, service facilities, landscaping, buffering and screening and outparcel or multi-building development.

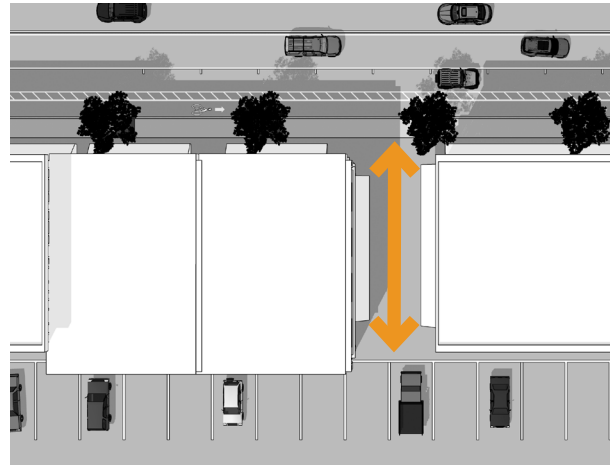


Figure 3. Pedestrian Connections to Streets

New buildings and structures shall be oriented to a major street and parking located to the side or rear of buildings. Pedestrian connections from the street to parking areas should be included.

## 2-2. BUILDING PLACEMENT

### 2-2-1. Orientation and Build-to-Zones

Street walls define the edges of urban commercial corridors, which together with sidewalks/streets and the sky plain, form spaces and exterior activity areas that urban designers often refer to in the metaphor of an “urban room.” The siting of new buildings/structures should be consistent and build upon existing street wall characteristics in the program area.

- A. To the maximum extent practicable, all buildings and structures shall be arranged to orient to the streets and to frame the corner at the intersection of two streets.
- B. New buildings and structures should be sited in such a way that is appropriate for the form and style of the structure and, where applicable, complements adjacent building siting and orientation.

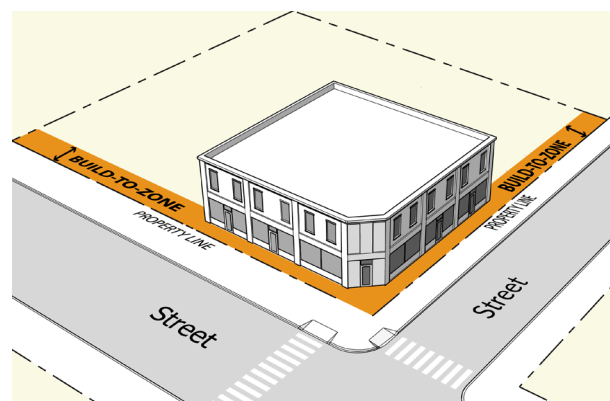


Figure 4. Build-to-Zone

The build-to-zone is the area of a lot designated for placement of the building facade along a street frontage, designated by a minimum and maximum setback.

- C. The front facade and primary entrance(s) of a building shall be oriented parallel to the sidewalk of a major street.
- D. Front setbacks for all new buildings shall be within a "build-to-zone" of 0 to 10 feet, as depicted in Figure 4.
- E. To the extent practicable, entrances to private parking garages shall not front upon a public street, but may front upon a public alley right-of-way.

### 2-2-2. Building Height

Buildings conveying a smaller-scale urban setting are suitable to the context of the USA Niagara program area. This should include 2-3 story buildings along major street walls. While taller or shorter buildings exist and will continue to be permitted by the City Zoning Code, techniques of building massing are required to support a comfortable, human-scaled urban environment.

- A. Within the program area, new buildings and structures are required to have a minimum height of 2 stories or 24 feet.
- B. In cases where it can be demonstrated that a 2-story building height is not feasible given the unique conditions of a project, 1-story development may be permitted within the "build-to-zone." In such cases, the height of the building shall be no less than 22 feet.
- C. In cases where development of greater than 3 stories is desired and permitted by the City's Zoning Code, the massing of the building shall be articulated to reinforce the visual prominence of the lower stories from its upper floors.
- D. Differentiation of lower-story features may be accomplished through techniques such as step-backs of the structure, strong cornice lines, differentiation of materials, and/or other techniques at the discretion of the designer.

### 2-2-3. Corner Lots and Sites

Corner lots present key opportunities for creation of buildings that can serve as landmarks or orienting features in the urban landscape.

- A. The design of buildings located on corner lots formed by the intersection of two major streets are encouraged to utilize variations in building massing to emphasize these locations as points of interest in the program area.
- B. Treatments at corner buildings may vary according to the architectural style employed at a particular site, and could include, but not be limited to features such as turrets/towers, curved walls, or cut corners.
- C. Where feasible in the context of the overall site/building design, primary entrances for corner parcels are encouraged to be located at the corner of the building as shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5 Corner Entrance

Example of possible treatment of building massing on corner parcels.

## 2-3. PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES AND CIRCULATION

### 2-3-1. Access and Easements

The block pattern of the USA Niagara program area often includes public service alleys that run parallel to major streets. Existence of these accessways presents opportunities for the creation of service or parking areas behind existing and proposed buildings – provided that appropriate pedestrian access is provided from major streets, as shown in Figure 6.

- A. All pedestrian access through parking lots in rear yards shall be located on private property and maintained by the respective property owners.
- B. Where feasible, developers are encouraged to create pedestrian access connecting to rear alley areas of at least eight feet in width, but no more than 15 feet in width.
- C. Access may be configured as open walkways or as an enclosed passageways within the ground floor of a building.
- D. Access shall be appropriately lighted to provide a safe and secure environment for pedestrians.

### 2-3-2. Sidewalk Uses

To facilitate street activity, uses in ground-level establishments are encouraged to be extended out onto adjoining sidewalks within public rights-of-way, for facilities such as for dining patios, cafes, and merchandise display areas. Such seasonal uses shall be subject to requirements to facilitate safety and other city regulations.

- A. All use of sidewalk areas shall be subject to approval/permitting by the City in accordance with applicable regulations, as well as other approvals associated with a particular sidewalk use (i.e., health department, alcohol beverage control/ state liquor authority, etc.).
- B. Areas for sidewalk uses may be placed immediately abutting an exterior ground-floor exterior wall of a principal building shall maintain an area along its entire frontage of at least eight feet in width for clear passage of pedestrians.

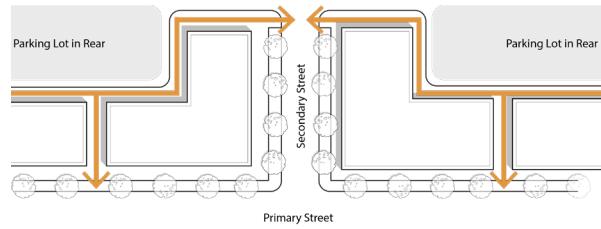


Figure 6. Pedestrian Access to Rear Parking

Where feasible, developers are encouraged to create pedestrian access easements to rear parking areas along alleys and connections to streets.



Figure 7. Outdoor Seating and Dining

Encroachments onto a sidewalk may be located abutting a building face or the curb line (in sidewalk "bulb-out" areas). In either case, an area of at least five feet in width must be maintained for clear passage by pedestrians.

- C. Where desired or required by other state or local regulations (e.g., alcoholic beverage control law), sidewalk uses may be separated by means of railings and/or other features to restrict access to the adjoining public right-of-way. All components of such railings/features shall be designed to be fully removable during off-season periods. Materials of such features shall be durable and shall complement/be consistent with the features of the building which it serves.
- D. Design features associated with sidewalk uses (awnings, railings, furniture, etc.) shall comply with detailed requirements presented under Section 3-3.
- E. All sidewalk uses shall comply with ADA standards.

### 2-3-3. Walkways in Parking Blocks

All parking blocks which contain more than 25 stalls, including access lanes and driveways, must include clearly identified pedestrian routes from the parking stalls to the main building entrance, public sidewalk along the street and/or central location. At a minimum, walkways shall

be provided between every parking block and meet the following standards.

All pedestrian walkways:

- A. Shall be distinguishable from vehicular ways by pavement material, texture, or raised in elevation.
- B. Shall have adequate lighting for security and safety. Lights shall be non-glare and mounted no more than 20 feet above the ground.



Figure 8. Landscaped Walkway in a Parking Block

*Sidewalks in planted areas provide for comfortable pedestrian connections between parking lots and buildings and/or the public sidewalks.*

## 2-4. OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING

The provision of off-street parking is regulated by the City's Zoning Code. While often necessary, the location of large parking facilities can impede the appearance and perceptions of a neighborhood or district. This section governs the overall orientation, placement and design of parking facilities in the context of enhancing street-level activity in the program area.

### 2-4-1. Surface Lots

- A. All surface parking lots shall be paved as defined in Chapter 6.
- B. Siting new surface parking lots within a front yard area is prohibited.
- C. The siting of rear parking lots is encouraged to include locating lots to allow for inter-connected access between multiple rear parking lots.
- D. Where feasible, access driveways to rear parking lots are encouraged to be located on minor side streets or alleys in

order to minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflicts along the building frontages on major streets.

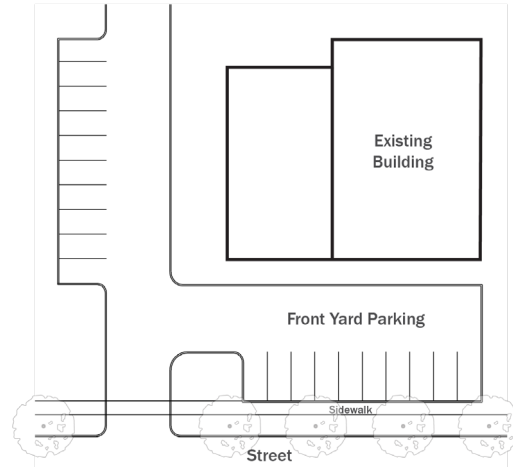
- E. Where feasible, pedestrian access to rear parking lots from a major street is encouraged to be provided via pedestrian access easements. All pedestrian access through parking lots in rear or side yards shall be located on private property and maintained by the respective property owners.
- F. If parking is visible from the street, it must be appropriately screened using a combination of masonry (i.e., consistent with materials/colors in adjoining buildings) and black ornamental metal fencing (i.e., wrought iron or commercial-grade, heavy-gauge, galvanized steel with rust-proof finish) of at least four and no more than six feet in height.

- G. Unacceptable/prohibited methods of parking lot screening shall include chain link fencing; stockade or other similar type of wood fencing; concrete masonry units that are inconsistent with materials used on adjoining buildings; and or screening consisting exclusively of landscape material (i.e., given difficulty in maintaining as effective screening).
- H. Existing parking areas located in side yard areas may be retained provided they are adequately screened from major streets.
- I. All new side yard parking shall be set back 10 feet from any building facade and shall not be located on a corner. Exceptions can be made for the rehabilitation of existing buildings as described below.
- J. During the redevelopment of a site or building and the buildings or structures on the site will remain and there is existing front yard parking, this parking shall be moved to the side or rear yards, when practicable.
- K. During the redevelopment of a site or building wherein parking relocates to the side or rear yards, the asphalt from pre-existing front yard parking shall be removed and landscaped in accordance with the standards under Section 2-5.
- L. When relocating front yard parking is not practicable, the frontage shall be landscaped and screened in accordance with Section 2-5-2. An example of re-utilization of this front yard space is depicted in Figure 9.

**2-4-2. Private Garages**

- A. Private parking garages that are an accessory use to a commercial or mixed-use building shall be designed to be integral to an overall building design, with consistent materials and massing of the principal building/use.
- B. Private parking garages are encouraged to be sited in a rear yard area and/or with primary access provided along a minor street.

**Non-Pedestrian Friendly Development**



**Pedestrian Friendly Development**

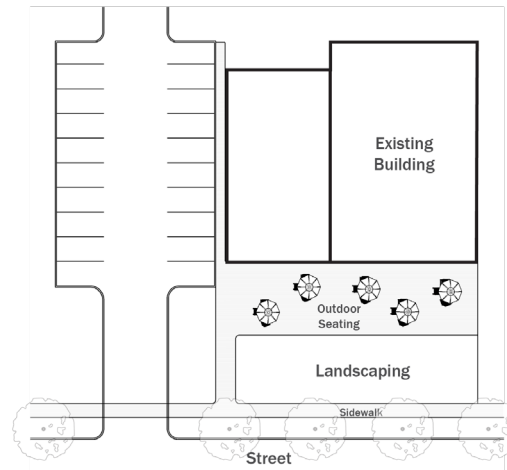


Figure 9. Pedestrian-Friendly Parking Redevelopment

The graphics above show an incremental approach to redevelopment that helps developers and property owners improve their sites without necessarily removing existing buildings.

The top graphic shows a lot that developed with both side and front yard parking, conveying an environment that is not pedestrian-friendly. The excess of parking, even if screened, does not invite pedestrians onto the site.

The bottom graphic shows the same site without front yard parking. Instead, the frontage includes landscaping and outdoor seating which is semi-public space that is welcoming to pedestrians. All parking has moved to the side yard, and in this way, parking is not sacrificed at the expense of frontage improvements. Rather, the parking is better utilized on the site for the sake of improved pedestrian comfort.

- C. Private garages should utilize colors and massing that coordinate with the site's primary structure.
- D. Where possible, garages shall be located on alleys in order to maintain the historical pattern, and to minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflicts along the building frontages on major streets.
- E. Where a configuration of a parcel prohibits preferred siting of a parking garage as noted above, facades along major street frontages shall conform to the overall principals of the architectural standards in Chapter 3.

**2-4-3. Public Parking Garages**

- A. The establishment of large, single-purpose public parking garages (i.e., private commercial parking structures) is regulated by the [City Zoning Code](#).
- B. Where permitted, such facilities shall not front upon major streets in the program area, unless, at a minimum, ground level areas of such structures are developed for retail or commercial uses (see Section 3-3) and the façades along major street frontages conform to the overall principals of the architectural standards in Chapter 3. Access shall be provided from secondary streets when practicable.

**2-4-4. Loading**

- A. Where feasible, designated loading and service access areas for buildings shall be conducted in rear yard areas.



Figure 10. Public Parking Garages

Where permitted, parking garages shall be designed with articulated facades and shall incorporate ground-level retail and/or commercial uses along major streets, when possible.

## 2-5. LANDSCAPING

### 2-5-1. Purpose and Intent

Landscaping shall be designed as an integral part of every development project, and not merely located in leftover portions of the site. Landscaping is intended to visually tie the entire development together, help define and announce entryways and circulation patterns and, where appropriate, help buffer less intensive adjacent land uses. Landscaping should respond to topography and streetscape conditions as well as building design. Lawns or garden plantings shall be retained in the setback area to maintain the historical relationship between buildings and the public realm.

The landscaping standards in this section are further intended to address existing frontages and parking lots and shall be additional to requirements in the City's zoning code.

### 2-5-2. Frontages

- A. When development and redevelopment projects within the program area have buildings setback from the street, the frontage shall include a combination pedestrian walkways, landscaping, plazas, outdoor seating or other semi-public space.
- B. Screening for surface parking lots shall include a combination of masonry (i.e., consistent with materials/colors in adjoining buildings), black ornamental metal fencing and/or landscaping such as ornamental trees, shrubs and/or hedges. All screening shall be a designed with consideration of "defensible space" and the principles and techniques associated with [crime prevention through environmental design](#).
- C. Unacceptable/prohibited methods of parking lot screening shall include chain link fencing; stockade or other similar type of wood fencing; and/or full masonry walls that are inconsistent with adjoining buildings.
- D. Developers shall improve all front and side yard areas along public streets, so as to provide a continuous, pedestrian-oriented environment.
- E. Required frontage improvements may include, but not be limited to hardscape paving, landscaping, and ADA access ramps



Figure 11. Parking Lot Screening

Screening parking lots can include a combination of landscaping (e.g., shrubs, ornamental trees and hedges), walls and fences.

to building entrances. Coordination with the City will be needed in case of encroachment into public right-of-way.

- F. Components of frontage improvements shall be consistent with the design components characteristics of adjoining public rights-of-way, in terms of materials, textures, and colors.

### 2-5-3. Fences and Walls

Walls, fences and other types of enclosures can greatly enhance the character of an urban setting as they can become additional elements in the streetscape. However, if not appropriately located and constructed with quality materials, these yard dividers can also detract from a neighborhood's ambiance. The following are standards for walls and fences intended to ensure such partitions are positive additions to the USA Niagara program area.

- A. Any fence or wall used for screening shall be constructed of high quality materials, such as decorative blocks, brick, stone, treated wood and wrought iron.
- B. Fences or walls which are more than 3 feet in height shall include openings with building components such as spindles or slats to discourage vandalism on large solid surfaces. Additional landscaping in front of a fence or wall may be required to mitigate vandalism.
- C. New fencing shall be compatible to the style and similar in scale, texture, color and form to the main structure and/or street on which the building is located.
- D. Prohibited materials for fences and walls include: smooth-faced gray concrete block, smooth-faced painted or stained concrete block, smooth-faced concrete panels, unfinished wood, wood stockade, PVC, plastic, chain link or corrugated metal siding.

### 2-5-4. Interior Parking Lots

- A. The interior of all uncovered parking blocks containing 10 or more spaces shall be landscaped according to the provisions in this subsection and as shown in Figure 12.

- B. The primary landscaping materials used in parking lots shall be trees, which provide shade or are capable of providing shade at maturity. Shrubbery, hedges and other planting materials may be used to complement the tree landscaping, but shall not be the sole means of landscaping. Effective use of earth berms and existing topography is also encouraged as a component of the landscaping plan.
- C. One shade tree shall be planted for every 5 parking spaces.
- D. Landscaped berms shall be at least 10 ft. wide, a maximum of 3 ft. high, and include a maximum slope of 3:1.

### 2-5-5. Screening of Dumpsters

- A. Refuse collection and/or dumpster locations shall be sited within enclosure structures within rear yard areas where feasible, or if necessary, given the configuration of a parcel, in side yard areas.
- B. Design of refuse container enclosure structures shall conform to architectural design standards in Chapter 3, and be complimentary in design with the main building.

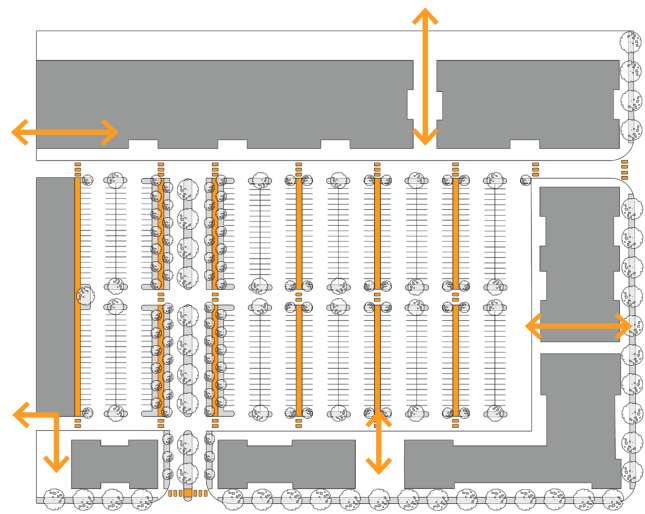


Figure 12. Landscaping and Circulation for Interior Parking Lots

Where feasible, developers are encouraged to create pedestrian circulation and access that is complemented by landscaped islands within interior parking lots.

**2-5-6. Green Infrastructure**

- A. All green infrastructure shall be located on private property and maintained by the respective property owners.
- B. Green infrastructure techniques should be employed to reduce the damaging effects of runoff on creeks and streams and can also add character and aesthetic benefits to streets and parking lots. Disconnecting or diverting some flow from storm sewers and directing runoff to natural systems such as landscaped areas, bio-swales, and rain gardens reduces water velocity and cleans stormwater runoff. Natural stormwater systems also permit reduced pipe size for storm sewers.
  - 1. Bio-swales are depressed areas adjacent to impervious surfaces that are sloped on either side, contain vegetation or riprap that maximize the amount of time water spends

over permeable surfaces before entering the storm sewer system. This allows water to naturally infiltrate the ground. Bio-swales also clean stormwater by removing pollutants.

- 2. Pervious paving allows water to infiltrate the pavement surface, reducing rapid runoff into streams and storm sewer systems. Pervious paving surfaces include interlocking pavers, porous asphalt, porous concrete and grid pavers.
- 3. Rain gardens are depressions that contain plants adapted to wet conditions, are designed to slow, capture and absorb rainwater.



Figure 13. Green Infrastructure and Pervious Materials

Green infrastructure strategies can include a combination of landscaped treatments such as bioswales and rain gardens and permeable paving treatments such as porous asphalt, pervious concrete and eco-pavers. All treatments shall be located on and maintained by private property owners.

## 2-6. OUTPARCEL OR MULTI-BUILDING DEVELOPMENT

### 2-6-1. Purpose and Intent

There are some parcels within the program area that are large enough to be occupied by more than one building now or in the future. As these properties develop or redevelop, the following provisions are intended to ensure that traditional "strip commercial" centers are avoided along these corridors.

### 2-6-2. Overall Site Layout and Building Orientation

All primary and pad site buildings shall be arranged and grouped to closely front primary streets, as shown in Figure 14. All primary and pad site buildings shall:

- Frame the corner of an adjacent street intersection;
- Frame and enclose a primary or "main street" pedestrian and/or vehicle access corridor within the development site; or
- Frame and enclose parking areas, public spaces or plazas, or other site amenities on at least three sides.

### 2-6-3. Pad Sites and Buildings

- The number, location and design of independent pad sites shall reinforce rather than obscure the identity and function of the primary commercial development.
- To the maximum extent practicable, pad sites shall be clustered together to define street edges and entry points or to enclose and create usable places between buildings. The even dispersal of pad sites in a widely-spaced pattern within the development, even if along the street edge(s), is discouraged.
- Wherever practicable, spaces between adjoining pad site buildings should be improved to provide small pockets (preferably heavily-landscaped) of customer parking, pedestrian connections, small-scale project amenities, or focal points. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - A landscaped pedestrian walkway linking customer entrances between two or more pad site buildings;

- A public seating or outdoor eating area;
- An area landscaped with a variety of plant materials emphasizing four-season colors, textures and varieties; or
- Sculptures or fountains.

### 2-6-4. Freestanding Kiosks and Automated Teller Machine (ATM) Structures

- All kiosk-type buildings and structures shall be integrated with the overall commercial or center development, and shall be subject to the same guidelines as all other buildings within the development.
- Freestanding kiosks and drive-up ATM structures shall not be located along the primary access street frontage.
- Access to a freestanding kiosk or drive-up ATM structure shall not be from the adjacent public streets. Access shall be from drives and streets internal to the development.
- Freestanding kiosks and drive-up ATM structures shall comply with the building design standards applicable to pad sites as specified in this section.

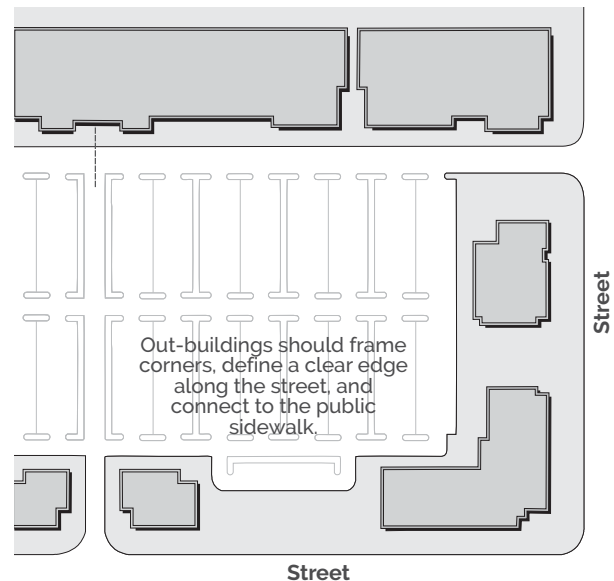


Figure 14. Multi-building or Outparcel Development

Multi-building or outparcel development should include buildings that more closely front primary streets with parking shifted to the rear of these outer buildings.

# 3 | BUILDING PLACEMENT & FORM

## 3-1. PURPOSE AND INTENT

New development must exhibit sound building and design practices. The standards contained in this section are not intended to dictate the use of any specific architectural style.

Traditional design features of existing commercial/mixed use buildings in the USA Niagara program area should be used to guide the designer in massing, proportion, rhythm, scale, textures, and patterns for new buildings. However, new creative interpretations of traditional design may be permitted.

Attention should also be made to a building's placement, orientation and form to ensure a consistent urban street wall and pedestrian-friendly corridors. The standards in this section define building orientation, massing, location, street wall, and the location of uses necessary to create a lively urban environment.

Exceptions to these standards may be made if the proposed design is deemed to be of extraordinary quality yet compatible with the spirit and intent of these standards.

## 3-2. BUILDING FORM

### 3-2-1. Building Composition

New development should respond to proportions and rhythm of architectural features in early 20th-century mixed-use structures that are common in the program area.

Where large-scale and/or modern structures predominate, developers shall incorporate similar or contemporary interpretations of early 20th-century commercial design features to achieve a human-scaled street setting.

- A. Buildings shall exhibit a clearly defined base, mid-section and crown, as depicted in Figure 15. This can be accomplished using a combination of architectural details, materials and colors.
- B. Architectural details or features such as dormers, masonry chimneys, cupolas, clock towers and other similar elements are encouraged.
- C. Whenever an infill building is proposed, the developer shall identify common architectural elements (e.g. cornice line, window height/width and spacing) found among neighboring or nearby structures. These data shall be used to guide the design of façades fronting on major streets, utilizing a similar rhythm or alignment.

### 3-2-2. Facade Composition

- A. Façades of buildings shall be broken down into a series of appropriately proportioned "structural bays" or components typically segmented by a series of columns, masonry piers, or pilasters that frame window, door and bulkhead components. The maximum width of one bay shall be 20 feet.
- B. Early 20th-century mixed-use buildings in the program area are generally two-stories in height. The base level of new infill buildings shall not be higher or lower than the height of adjoining or nearby buildings.

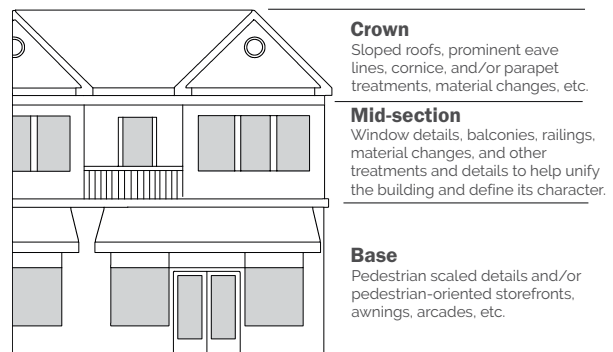


Figure 15. Base, Mid-section and Crown

Buildings in the program area should exhibit typical architectural elements that help define the building's base, mid-section and crown. This basic building definition should guide the design for new construction and redevelopment.

- C. Cornice lines shall be expressed as unique building elements.
- D. A parapet or top cornice projection shall be encouraged at the top of all building walls facing a street, or for taller buildings, also between the second story and subsequent upper stories.

**3-2-3. Wall Articulation**

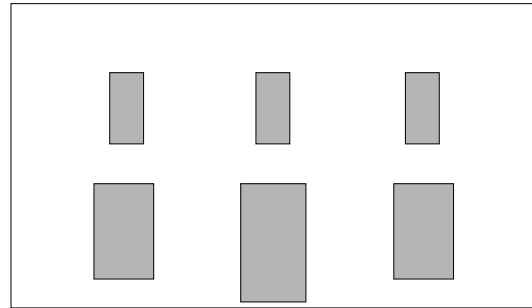
- A. Long, blank, unarticulated wall façades that face a major street are prohibited.
- B. Elevation features should have depth, avoiding a flush or flat appearance.
- C. Where a portion of a building façade without windows is necessary to front on a major street, it shall be “broken” by vertical and horizontal articulation (e.g., sculpted, carved or penetrated) characterized by breaks (reveals, recesses) in the surface of the wall, as depicted in Figure 16. This must also be consistent with existing standards in the City’s Zoning Code under §1319.2.3 (4).

**3-2-4. Lighting**

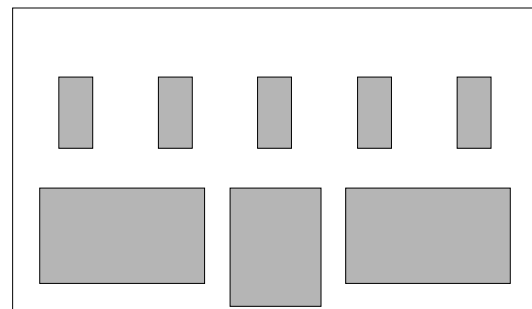
Building and site lighting should focus on safety and security without compromising on building and neighborhood character. Special attention should be paid to lighting design and placement on historic buildings and structures. The following lighting requirements shall apply to all buildings in the USA Niagara program area:

- A. Lighting on historic buildings and structures should be replaced or repaired in accordance with appropriate State, Federal or local requirements for historic preservation.
- B. All lighting fixtures shall be compatible with a building’s character, style, scale and intensity of illumination.
- C. All lighting shall be shielded and focused to direct light downward.
- D. All lighting shall use white lights that cast a similar color to daylight.

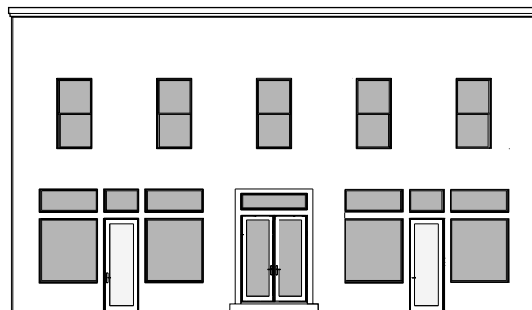
Figure 16. Building Articulation Progression



Proportion of opening sizes to building mass is too small



Increase the number of upper floor openings and the size of the first floor openings



Articulate openings



Break-up the building mass with columns and/or pilasters, and panels

## 3-3. GROUND FLOOR

### 3-3-1. Active Ground Floor

An active ground floor use is one that promotes and contributes to an active pedestrian realm and environment. Common active ground floor uses include but are not limited to retail establishments, restaurants, brew pubs, salons, health clubs, etc. In accordance with these design standards:

- A. Any building in the USA Niagara program area shall have an active ground floor that is oriented to the pedestrian realm.

### 3-3-2. Storefront Features

The design of storefronts, entranceways and awnings should promote a sense of openness; making sites visually accessible creating an active and vibrant atmosphere with displays that encourage active street life and window shopping.

- A. Glazing and openings shall promote a flexibility of ground floor uses and the potential for change over time.
- B. Window openings shall express sills and headers of metal or stone, as well as a defined bulkhead on display windows.
- C. Transoms or transom-level openings are encouraged for larger window units.
- D. Use of tinted or reflective glass is prohibited.
- E. Use of operable windows is strongly encouraged.

### 3-3-3. Windows and Transparency

Windows and transparency also contribute to a walkable and pedestrian-friendly environment. The following requirements for windows and transparency shall apply to all new and redeveloped buildings in the USA Niagara program area:

- A. The proportion of glazing to overall ground floor/storefront façade area shall be a minimum of 50% on façades facing a major street.
- B. The proportion of glazing to overall upper floor façade area shall be a minimum of 25% on façades facing a major street.
- C. Historic windows should be replaced or repaired in accordance with appropriate State, Federal or local requirements for historic preservation.



Figure 17. Transparency

*Buildings in the program area should have a high level of transparency on the ground floor to contribute to a pedestrian-friendly and walkable environment.*

**3-3-4. Awnings and Canopies**

The design of storefronts, entranceways and awnings should promote a sense of openness; making sites visually accessible creating an active and vibrant atmosphere with displays that encourage active street life and window shopping.

- A. Ground floor awnings and canopies are encouraged to provide weather protection and accentuate the color, pattern, and graphics of the streetscape environment.
- B. Fully retractable awnings are encouraged; however, fixed awnings are acceptable if retractable awnings are not feasible for a particular façade application.
- C. Awnings shall be made of commercial-grade, non-reflective fabric, and shall not be internally or back-lit. "Day-glo", reflective, and/or plastic awnings are also prohibited.
- D. Awnings or canopies that encroach over a portion of an adjoining street right-of-way must be approved by the City.
- E. All structural and mechanical components of awnings or canopies shall maintain a clearance height of at least nine feet.

**3-3-5. Front Entrances**

A building's front entrance and door is an essential component that can convey historic character as well as orient to the pedestrian and public realms. The following front entrance/door requirements shall apply to new and redeveloped buildings in the USA Niagara program area:

- A. Front entrances shall orient to the building's primary street.
- B. Front entrances shall connect to a public pedestrian way via a 5' sidewalk.
- C. Front entrances shall be visible from the primary street and shall not be obscured by landscaping or other architectural elements.
- D. Historic doors should be replaced or repaired in accordance with appropriate State, Federal or local requirements for historic preservation.

**3-3-6. Security Grills**

Security grills, if utilized at all, should be installed internally in an unobtrusive manner and should not obscure any architectural details of a building.

The housing of such equipment should be internally mounted behind the display window. If security grills are used they shall be rectangular open mesh grills, since they provide visibility into the store for better security and for maintaining streetscape interest. Permanent bars on windows are prohibited.

**3-3-7. Operable Doors and Window Walls**

- A. Storefronts with a ground-level food and beverage/retail uses are encouraged to incorporate operable doors and/or window walls to provide seasonal open-air access between patio and internal areas. Such operable elements shall still conform to other façade articulation standards in this chapter.

**3-3-8. Railings**

- A. Railings used in sidewalk patio applications shall be fabricated of black metal, such as wrought iron or commercial grade, heavy gauge, galvanized steel. Railing parts and fittings for patios shall be removable and designed so as not to damage any street maintenance equipment. This shall require coordination with and permission from the City.
- B. The use of "artful" designs is encouraged for patio railings to add visual interest to the streetscape, provided railings utilized also complement the building's materials
- C. All railings shall be established in a way that allows for a clear pedestrian path to be maintained.

**3-3-9. Patio Furnishings**

- A. No tables or chairs or other furniture shall be placed so as to impede building entrances.
- B. All outdoor dining furniture, including tables, chairs, umbrellas, and planters, shall complement the color scheme of the streetscape and building to which it is associated and shall be moveable to allow indoor storage during off-business hours.
- C. All outdoor dining furniture shall be constructed of durable, commercial-grade materials, preferably metal or wood. Injection molded plastic or resin dining furniture may be acceptable, provided that such furniture is dark in color (e.g., dark green, black) and is fabricated out of commercial grade materials that meet the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards for outdoor plastic furniture. This shall require coordination with and permission from the City.



Figure 18. Artful Patio Railings

Example of an "artful" design of patio railings for an outdoor seating area.



Figure 19. Sidewalk Patio Furnishings

Sidewalk patio furniture shall complement the color scheme of the streetscape and it shall be constructed of durable and moveable materials as shown above.

- D. Umbrellas may be used in sidewalk patios in lieu of canopies or awnings. Umbrellas shall be solid in color and shall not bear any commercial logos or advertising. They shall be secured to the ground with a movable, weighted, commercially-designed base.
- E. All furnishings shall be established in a way that allows for a clear pedestrian path to be maintained.

### 3-3-10. Sidewalk Merchandise Display

- A. Accessory sidewalk display of merchandise shall be limited to cards, artwork, gardening/floral products, fresh produce and packaged food items, books, newspapers, and similar small items for sale or rental to pedestrians (i.e., non- automobile oriented).
- B. Merchandise for sale shall be limited to that related to the principal use of property (i.e., an extension of the principal use, rather than an expansion and/or new use).
- C. Displays shall generally be located directly in front of the storefront of the principal use for which it is intended and shall not block building entrances.
- D. All tables, racks, and/or other equipment used for display shall be fabricated of durable, commercial grade materials that complement the color scheme of the storefront.
- E. Sidewalk displays/sales shall not be permitted when the principal use or business is not open.
- F. Displays shall not exceed forty-eight inches in height, project more than 48 inches from the building wall facing a street, nor total more than an area equal to 2/3 of the total display window area, measured in square feet.
- G. Signage advertising the merchandise display shall be limited to one "A-Frame" sandwich sign, designed in accordance with Section 4-3-5.
- H. All displays shall be established in a way that allows for a clear pedestrian path to be maintained.



Figure 20. Sidewalk Displays

*If properly designed/maintained, sidewalk displays of merchandise can add to street life.*

## 3-4. BUILDING MATERIALS AND COLOR

### 3-4-1. Building Materials

- A. Traditional building materials may be combined with new building technologies.
- B. Combinations of the following materials are encouraged or acceptable in the design of new buildings fronting on a major street. The following should be considered for major building walls:
  1. New or used face-brick.
  2. Masonry.
  3. Terra cotta.
  4. Cut stone, rusticated block (cast stone).
  5. Stucco/exterior plaster (acceptable only if smooth troweled and only if used in upper story applications).
  6. Textured, treated, decorative concrete.
  7. Wood and/or "engineered" or composite wood clapboard (for rehabilitation of existing residential-style structures only).
- C. The following should be considered for other facade and/or storefront features:
  1. Wood or metal (cornices and window frames).
  2. Stone or formed concrete (cornices, pilasters).
  3. Clear glass (particularly for display windows).
  4. Glass block (for transoms or other accent opening only).
  5. Ceramic tiles (bulkheads).
  6. Stamped metal (bulkheads).
- D. The use of the following materials is prohibited:
  1. Rough-finished stucco.
  2. Reflective, mirrored, tinted, or opaque glass.
  3. Imitation stone or brick (fiberglass, plastic, or concrete).
  4. Rough sawn or "natural" (unfinished) wood.
  5. Used brick with no fired face (salvaged from interior walls).
  6. Plastic panels.
  7. Exterior insulation finish systems.
  8. Vinyl/aluminum siding.

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## 3-5. MECHANICAL, HVAC AND OTHER EQUIPMENT

### 3-5-1. Requirements for Screening Equipment

- A. All mechanical, HVAC, and similar types of equipment should be mounted on roofs wherever feasible and screened by means of architectural features such as parapet walls and/or cornices.
- B. All venting/ducts of HVAC equipment shall be incorporated into the interior systems of a building and shall not be mounted on an exterior wall visible from major street face. This shall be in compliance with all relevant regulations in §1319.2.4 of the City's Zoning Code.
- C. All venting including cooking fans shall be directed away from the sidewalks and should be vented to the roof.

## 3-6. BUILDING REHABILITATION AND RE-USE

### 3-6-1. Purpose and Intent

This section presents standards related to particular issues associated with rehabilitation of existing buildings in the program area. While early 20th-century buildings in the program area have undergone a great deal of alternation over their history, they still retain a number of character-defining features, which collectively present opportunities to restore a sense of place and human scale to the area. These types of buildings, when properly rehabilitated and re-used, can draw pedestrian and economic activity.

A basic tenet of preservation and rehabilitation is to minimize disturbance to the character of existing building fabric. Therefore, in the treatment of buildings in the program area, it is best to first preserve/replace rather than replace important features of existing buildings.

### 3-6-2. Structures Eligible for Inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places

Certain individual structures have been determined by the New York State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). USA Niagara maintains a list of these NRHP-eligible structures.

- A. In addition to standards set forth herein, rehabilitation of NRHP-eligible structures within the program area shall also conform to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- A. All historic structures in the USA Niagara program area shall also meet and receive any needed approvals from the City's Historic Preservation Commission and be in accordance with Chapter 1335 of the City's code.
- B. Prior to final approval of a grant application, the developer shall undertake SHPO consultation to ensure that the proposal conforms to the above standards.

### 3-6-3. Character-Defining Features

Character-defining features of existing buildings collectively establish a sense of place, provide human scale and add rich detail to a streetscape. Typical features include historic façade materials; cornices and pilasters; vertically-oriented upper story windows, larger first floor openings; trim around openings/fenestration; and the rhythm of horizontal and vertical elements along a street face.

- A. In addition to standards set forth herein, rehabilitation of NRHP-eligible structures within the program area shall also conform to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- B. The pattern of character-defining features shall be used as a guide for rehabilitation projects. Developers are encouraged to first seek to rehabilitate and preserve existing character-defining features of a building.
- C. Building elements that are beyond repair or require replacement to facilitate a particular use shall be designed to maintain the overall character of former features, in terms of, but not limited to the following characteristics:
  1. Rhythm and pattern of openings and fenestration along a street face.
  2. Scale of replacement elements (in the context of the overall façade design).
  3. Similar or complementary materials.

### 3-6-4. Facade Rehabilitation

Developers are encouraged to preserve the historic character of a building façade and/or storefront, when it is intact.

- A. Architectural details on existing structures should be retained and maintained in their original form, where possible.
- A. If the storefront glass is intact, it should be preserved.
- B. If a storefront or façade has been significantly altered, developers must restore it to its original design to the maximum extent practicable.
- C. Where original architectural features are missing and no evidence of their character exist, a design that is a contemporary interpretation of traditional elements may be used. However, as shown in Figure 21, the design must convey the character of typical storefronts, including but not limited to: the transparent character of the display window, recessed entry, transoms, and cornice.
- D. Replacement features shall not involve introduction of new architectural styles that differ from the overall style of the building, such as but not limited to inappropriate canopy structures, mansard roofs/cornices, etc.

- E. Architectural details on new buildings shall be compatible with existing details in terms of design and scale.

### 3-6-5. Window Replacements

Original windows are important features that help convey the existing character of a building. These elements should be preserved, when feasible, or replaced with windows of a similar design, as well as made of materials that are compatible in terms of texture and color.

- A. The vertical proportions of upper-story windows contribute to a building's historic character. Replacement windows shall retain similar proportions. Window details such as lintels and historic sashes should be repaired and/or restored, when feasible.
- B. Blocking or replacement windows differing in size from original openings is prohibited.
- C. Replacing windows that are currently blocked is strongly encouraged where feasible.
- D. Glass blocks are not permitted (except for basement windows).
- E. Windows for historic structures may require additional approval from the City's Historic Preservation Commission.



Figure 21: Building Components

Buildings in the program area should have a high level of transparency on the ground floor to contribute to a pedestrian-friendly and walkable environment.

**3-6-6. Replacement Materials & Surface Treatments**

- A. If material replacement is necessary, use of materials shall be similar to those employed historically. Substitute materials may be used if they match or are similar to the original in appearance, finish and profile as closely as is possible.
- B. Cleaning of historic material surfaces shall be undertaken using measures that will not damage the finish of such materials. For example, sandblasting of masonry or other features is prohibited.
- C. Painting of natural colored masonry or other building features is prohibited unless it can be documented that the surface had been historically finished with paint.

**3-6-7. Additions**

Building additions shall be treated in a manner that does not detract from the historic character. Design of additions shall:

- A. Complement the original structure through appropriate scale, mass and shape.
- B. Not obscure or hide character-defining features of the original building.
- C. Include detailing at similar height and depth as the original building.

**3-6-8. Porches**

Porches shall be retained in original form and new residential construction is strongly encouraged to include front porches wherever applicable and/or consistent with historic structures or treatments. Porches shall:

- A. Reflect the original appearance and use original materials, wherever possible.
- B. Be oriented toward the front of the structure.
- C. Include components, such as columns, railings and spindles, consistent with the architectural style and color.
- D. Remain relatively open.

**3-6-9. Interim Improvements to Buildings Awaiting Rehabilitation**

- A. Property owners are encouraged to undertake interim repairs to buildings awaiting rehabilitation. Such improvements shall include, but not limited to removal of non-conforming sign features, replacement of windows, and/or sealing the structure to prevent further deterioration.
- A. In the repair of window or window openings, the preferred measure is to repair or replace window units in accordance with section 3-6-5. If this is not feasible given uncertainties regarding the ultimate reuse/ redevelopment of a building, sensitively sealing the window openings with painted wood or other materials to present a somewhat finished appearance is acceptable.

# 4 | SIGNS

## 4-1. PURPOSE AND INTENT

Signs in pedestrian-oriented commercial areas should be designed to accommodate pedestrian shoppers along sidewalks and motorists driving at slower speeds. Considerations such as location, style, color and illumination are very important in designing an attractive, functional sign. The standards in this section address these issues and are intended to help developers and business owners create quality signs that enhance and support the character of the USA Niagara program area.

It should be noted that the standards contained within this section represent additional standards for the program area from those required under applicable City of Niagara Falls regulations (e.g., zoning code, sign ordinances, etc.). They are not intended supersede any such existing City regulations; in the event of a conflict in requirements between these urban design standards and any requirement in the City Code, the requirements of the City shall govern.

## 4-2. GENERAL STANDARDS

### 4-2-1. Requirements for All Signs

- A. Permitted total sign area (i.e., total square footage of signs for a particular establishment/use) shall be governed by City codes; all proposed signs shall be subject to City review and permitting.
- B. As a prerequisite to participation in the grant program, all signs that do not conform to City codes/regulations and/or to these urban design standards shall be removed or retrofitted to be in conformance.
- C. Signage and graphics should be pedestrian-oriented in size, placement, and materials.
- D. Sign colors should complement the overall color scheme used for the entire building.
- E. Signs shall not obscure or block any architectural feature of a building.

### 4-2-2. Prohibited Signs

- A. Free standing pole or pylon signs.
- B. Non-accessory signs as defined in Chapter 6 (e.g., billboards).
- C. Temporary or portable signs including portable lighted sign panels, vehicle-mounted signs, streamers, advertising banners, handbills or other similar types of signs features/types, except:
  1. Banners associated with civic events and/or festivals or grand opening— after first receiving approval and a temporary use permit by the City.
  2. "A-Frame", sandwich board signs, in accordance with Section 4-3-5.
- D. Signs encroaching upon a public right-of-way and/or attached to any element within a public right-of-way (e.g. lighting fixtures), except as specified in these standards and in City codes or regulations.

## 4-3. PERMITTED SIGNS AND REQUIREMENTS

The signs and associated standards below apply to the permitted signs in the USA Niagara program area.

### 4-3-1. Wall Signs

- A** The maximum height for a wall sign shall be:
- 3 feet in the R4 and R3-C Districts;
  - 4 feet in the D2-A, D2-B, C2-A and C2-B Districts; or
  - 10 feet in the D1-A, D1-b, D1-C and D1-D Districts.
- B** The maximum sign area for a wall sign shall not exceed:
- 16 square feet in the R4 and R3-C Districts;
  - 36 square feet in the D2-A, D2-B, C2-A and C2-B Districts; or
  - 20% of the building facade or 100 square feet, whichever is less, in the D1-A, D1-b, D1-C and D1-D Districts.
- D.** Wall signs shall not extend farther than 12 inches from the side of a building wall.
- E.** Wall signs shall be attached flush to a building façade and are encouraged to be located above a primary entrance, where feasible.
- F.** Wall signs shall not obscure architectural details or features, including windows, transoms, or cornices.
- G.** Signs shall be placed consistent with the proportion and scale of the elements within the building's façade. For example, a particular wall sign may fit well on a blank wall area, but might overpower the finer scale and proportion of a lower storefront.
- H.** The façade design of a building shall suggest the proper placement of a sign. Ideally, a fascia or other flat detail is the most suitable location for a wall sign.
- I.** Up to one wall sign shall be permitted per building facade with street frontage.
- J.** Individual mounted letters (with or without internal illumination) are encouraged and preferable for wall signs.

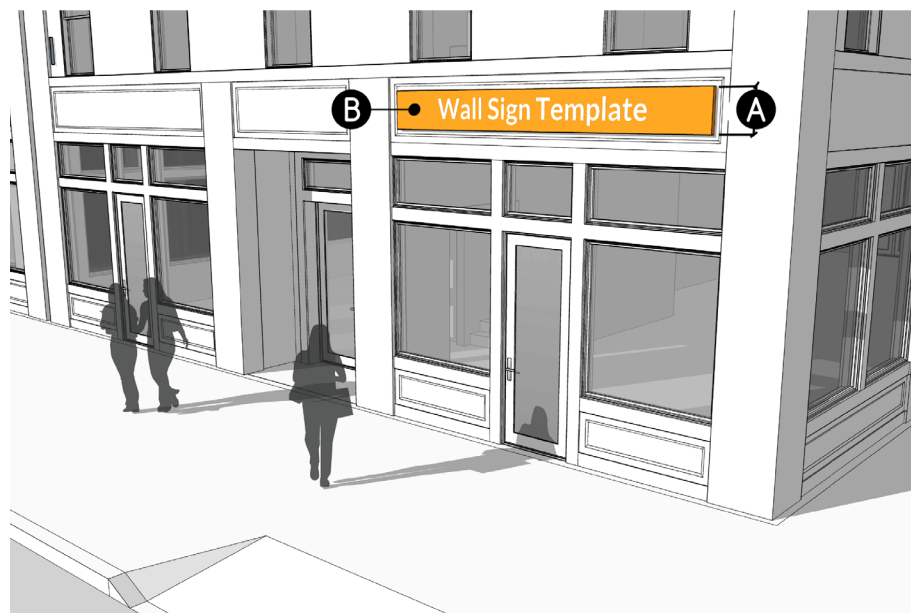


Figure 22. Wall Sign

#### 4-3-2. Window Signs

- A Window signs (permanent) are encouraged, provided that they shall not cover more than:
  1. 25% of the area of each window in the R4 and R3-C D2-A, D2-B, C2-A and C2-B Districts; or
  2. 50% of the area of each window in the D1-A, D1-b, D1-C, and D1-D Districts.
- C. Window signs shall not block any window area required for light, ventilation, or emergency exit by applicable code.
- D. Window signs shall not be in any window higher than the level at which the principal use takes place.
- E. Glass-mounted graphic logos may also be applied provided they do not exceed the 25% area limitation.
- F. Window signs shall primarily consist of professionally applied individual letters on the interior surface of the window that are intended to be viewed from outside. White or gold-leaf paint are the recommended colors.
- G. Makeshift or amateur sign message applications on windows with conventional paint or other mediums are prohibited.
- H. No window sign above the ground floor shall be illuminated.



Figure 23. Window Sign

### 4-3-3. Projecting Signs

- A** Projecting signs shall be hung at a 90° angle from the face of the building and shall not project beyond:
  1. 3 feet in the R4 and R3-C Districts; or
  2. 4 feet in the D1-A, D1-B, D1-C, D1-D, D2-A, D2-B, C2-A and C2-B Districts.
- B** The lowest portion of a projecting sign shall be placed at least 9 feet above sidewalk, and shall be located at least 25 feet from other projecting signs for maximum visibility.
- C** Projecting signs shall not exceed:
  1. 8 square feet in max area or 3 feet in height in the R4 and R3-C Districts; or
  2. 16 square feet in max area or 4 feet in height in the D1-A, D1-b, D1-C, D1-D, D2-A, D2-B, C2-A and C2-B Districts.
- C. Projecting signs shall be pinned at least 6 inches away from the wall for best visibility.
- D. No projecting sign shall extend higher than the second-floor windowsill or be placed on or attached from any roof of a building.
- E. Decorative iron and wood brackets that support projecting signs are encouraged where feasible. The lines of the brackets should harmonize with the shape of the sign and the façade as a whole.
- F. No more than one projecting sign per business establishment shall be permitted, except in instances where an establishment has more than one customer entrance or faces onto more than one public right-of way.
- G. Projecting signs that add to the pedestrian streetscape are strongly encouraged.
- H. Projecting signs that encroach above a public right-of-way shall be first approved by the City in accordance with applicable regulations.

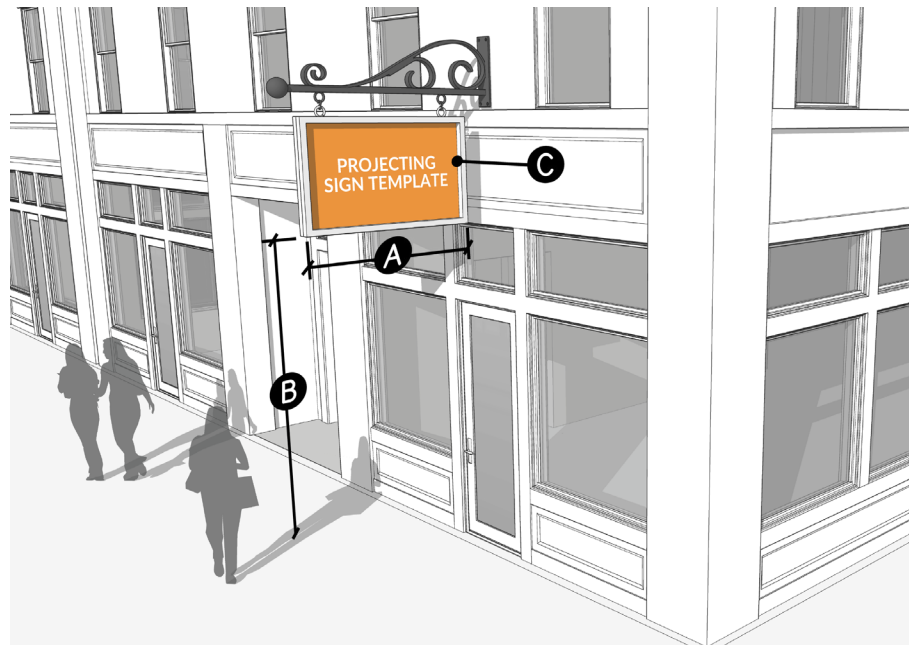


Figure 24: Projecting Sign

#### 4-3-4. Awning Signs

- A Awning signs shall have a minimum height of 9 feet.
- B No more than 25% of an awning sign's surface area shall be used as signage.
- C While primarily intended to provide shade and shelter, limited sign copy on awnings are permitted.
- D Where feasible, awnings shall be provided with removable valance and end panels to accommodate future changes in sign copy.
- E Painting cloth awnings in order to change sign copy is prohibited.
- F Awning signs shall not extend outside the overall length or width of the awning or extend above the height of the building wall to which the awning is attached.
- G The text copy is limited to the name of the business only and is to be located only on the fabric valance flap of the awning and/or on the bottom portion of side panels of the awning.
- H Back-lit internally illuminated awning signs are prohibited.
- I Awning signs shall only be permitted on the ground floor.



Figure 25: Awning Sign

**4-3-5. A-Frame Signs**

- A** Sandwich-board signs shall have a maximum sign face area of 12 square feet per side, with a maximum sign face width of 3 feet measured from the sign legs and a maximum height of 4 feet.
- B** A maximum of 1 sandwich-board sign per individual retail use/ service business (including food and beverage establishments) shall be permitted.
- C** The sign may be placed within the sidewalk right-of-way provided it does not impede pedestrian traffic and safety.
- D** Sandwich-board sign bases shall be weighted with a minimum 10-pound ballast, incorporated into the overall design of the sign, to ensure stability in windy conditions. Use of improvised measures to secure signs (e.g., concrete blocks, sand bags, etc.) are prohibited.
- E** A-Frame signs shall be constructed of rigid, durable, all-weather materials so as not to lost structural integrity in inclement weather.
- F** The sign shall be placed immediately in front of the use to which it refers.
- G** The sign shall be displayed only during business hours.
- H** A-Frame signs shall not obscure motorist views or sight lines.
- I** A-Frame signs shall not be located on public property.



Figure 26. A-Frame Sign

**4-3-6. Ground Signs**

- A** The maximum height shall be:
  - 1. 4 feet in the R4 and R3-C Districts; or
  - 2. 5 feet in the D1-A, D1-b, D1-C, D1-D, D2-A, D2-B, C2-A and C2-B Districts.
- B** The maximum sign area, excluding the area of the monument's base, shall be:
  - 1. 20 square feet in the R4 and R3-C Districts; or
  - 2. 24 square feet in the D1-A, D1-b, D1-C, D1-D, D2-A, D2-B, C2-A and C2-B Districts.
- C** The sign shall have a front setback of 5 feet from the sidewalk or front lot line, whichever is further from the street
- D.** Ground signs shall also be setback at least 3 feet from all other lot lines.
- E.** Ground signs for buildings which are set back less than 20 feet from the right-of-way may require a variance from the City of Niagara Falls.
- F.** Up to 1 monument sign may be permitted per lot provided the conditions in this section are met.
- G.** Internal illumination shall be prohibited.

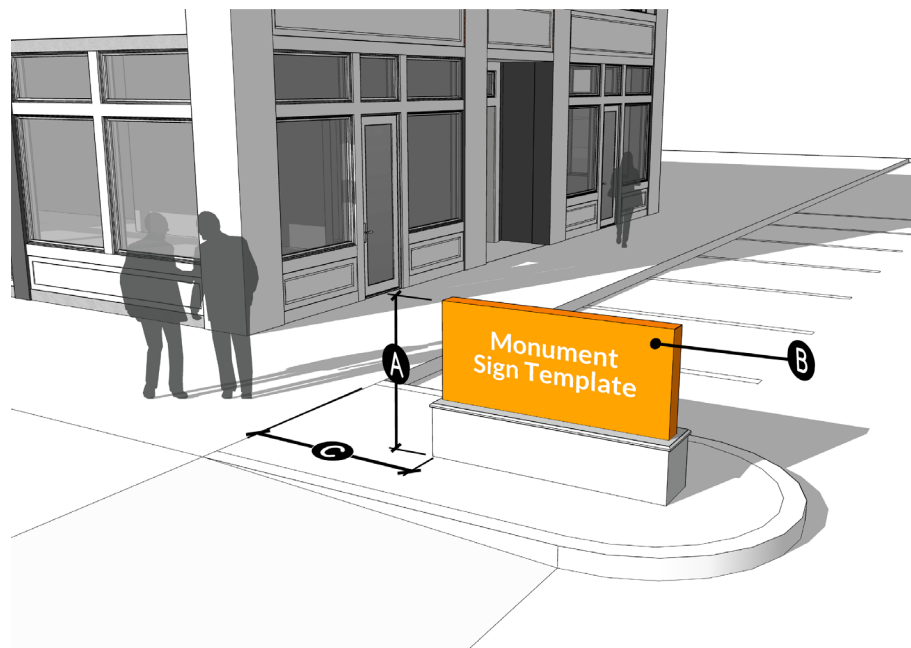


Figure 27. Ground Sign

#### 4-3-7 Illuminating Signs and Sign Lighting

- A. Lighting that comes from direct shielded light sources which are carefully integrated into the overall design of the building is preferred and encouraged.
- B. Lighting of signs shall avoid creating glare or light distribution that adversely affects motorists or pedestrians.
- C. Neon signs may be allowed so long as they are carefully designed in size, shape and color that complement the architecture of the building. Neon signs are not permitted in any residential district.
- D. Internally illuminated signs which are also historically significant shall be considered on a case-by-case basis by USA Niagara.



Figure 28. Sign Lighting

*Direct lighting of signs can be integral architectural elements and also provide additional lighting for pedestrian safety and comfort.*

#### 4-3-8. Artful Signs

- A. Signs that advertise the occupant's business through the use of graphic or crafted symbols, such as cocktails, jewelry, book, etc. are encouraged.
- B. Artful sign features may be incorporated into any of the allowable sign types identified in Chapter 4.
- C. Artful features must comply with general and specific standards for signs in the program area.



Figure 29. Artful Sign

*If properly designed, artful or figurative sign features can add visual excitement to a business district.*

#### 4-3-9. Handbills and paper signs

- A. Temporary paper signs or handbills for announcements are acceptable only if affixed to the inside surface of a display window, and further provided that the cumulative sign area of such signs accounts for no more than 25% of the total window area, as noted in Section 4-3-2.
- B. Affixing temporary signs, announcements, handmade signs, handbills or other similar items to exterior wall faces, light poles, benches or other exterior street furniture is prohibited.

# 5 | REVIEW PROCEDURES

## 5-1. OVERALL INTENT

USA Niagara may invite, solicit, or accept proposals for grant programs for rehabilitation or new development in the Agency's program area in accordance with these standards, as well as all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations relating to development in the City of Niagara Falls.

USA Niagara will be responsible for selection, designation, and approval of grants for all development proposals, which shall be submitted and reviewed in three separate stages, as listed below.

USA Niagara, in their sole discretion, may waive, amend, supplement, or modify the submission requirements to best address the features and review requirements of a particular application.

Applicants for the USA Niagara program shall be responsible for following all applicable City of Niagara Falls zoning provisions. In cases where standards in this document conflict with the City's zoning chapter, the zoning regulations shall take precedent.

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## 5-2. SCHEMATIC PROPOSAL

### 5-2-1. Intent

This submission by the Developer is intended to allow informal review by USA Niagara and the City to clarify basic assumptions and conceptual issues.

### 5-2-2. Submission Requirements

The Developer must submit to USA Niagara the following information for review and approval prior to submitting a Schematic Proposal for development:

- A. Letter of Intent.
- B. Conceptual Site Plan. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".
- C. Conceptual Ground Floor Plan indicating Uses, Access, and Entries. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".
- D. Conceptual Elevations of Building Facades. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".

## 5-3. PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL

### 5-3-1. Intent

This submission by the Developer permits formal review and evaluation of the proposals in terms of appropriateness and conformity with requirements and objectives of these standards. It is also used to discuss the general design and development concept with the City and other applicable jurisdictions before final submission.

### 5-3-2. Submission Requirements

The Preliminary Proposal shall contain the following elements:

- A. A Site Plan at an appropriate scale describing the proposed use of the land, buildings, walks, parking areas, driveways, and pedestrian and vehicular use, open spaces including landscaping, with square feet calculations noted.
- B. Conceptual building plans, elevations, and sections showing organization of building functions/spaces, window fenestration, detailing, and façade materials, and other items to show compliance with the purpose and intent of the architectural design standards. These shall include:
  1. Site Plan indicating building mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and connections. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".
  2. Site Plan indicating building perimeter, landscaping, grading, and paving. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".
  3. Ground Floor, Roof, and Typical Floor Plans. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".
  4. Building Elevations indicating planar elevation changes, bulkhead, and roof elevations. Minimum scale: 1/8" = 1'-0".
  5. Building sections indicating building heights. Minimum scale: 1/8" = 1'-0".
  6. Front-wall Elevation indicating material treatment, location of marquees and cornice details. Minimum scale: 1/4" = 1'-0".
  7. Outline Specifications for basic mechanical systems, exterior materials, and colors.
  8. An analysis of pertinent building requirements in tabular form, showing how the proposed development meets each provision.
  9. A written statement of the proposal including floor area, type of building construction, number of parking spaces, preliminary cost estimates, phasing when appropriate, and other data that may assist in reviewing the proposal.
  10. Information regarding the Developer's experience and financial ability and method of proposed financing to carry out the proposal.
  11. Other information deemed by the Agency to be necessary to render a decision on the project.

## 5-4. SITE PLAN REVIEW AND OTHER APPROVALS

Following a determination by the Agency that the Developer's submission meets the completion requirements of this section, the Developer shall apply to the City for Site Plan Review in accordance with City of Niagara Falls requirements and other appropriate jurisdictions for any other necessary reviews/approvals.

Upon approval by the City and these other jurisdictions, the Developer may proceed with the final proposal.

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## 5-5. FINAL PROPOSAL

### 5-5-1. Intent

This submission by the Developer documents the final design of the development proposal which shall serve as the basis for the grant agreement between the Agency and the Developer. It shall incorporate any and all revisions, refinements, and conditions arising out of reviews/approvals from the Agency, City, and other jurisdictions.

### 5-5-2. Submission Requirements

The final proposal submitted by the Developer shall contain the following elements:

Site and construction plans conforming to the approved preliminary proposal, with any changes that may be required. The plan shall indicate all landscaping and site development details including walls, fences, plantings including tree plantings, outdoor lighting and street furniture, signage, ground surface materials, bounding streets, points of vehicular and pedestrian access, number and type of parking facilities, utility lines and connections, existing and proposed grading and draining, and public easements to remain. Specifically this shall include:

- A. Updated Site Plans, Floor Plans, Building Sections, and Elevations. Minimum scale: 1/8" = 1'-0".
- B. Plans, sections, and architectural elevations with typical exterior details, including marquees, cornices, open spaces, and plazas. Minimum scale: 1/4" = 1'-0".

- C. Samples of all exterior surface materials.
- D. Updated outline specifications.
- E. Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing drawings (if applicable for review).
- F. Work to be done by others and the responsible party identified.
- G. Details of material and specifications including construction cost estimates.
- H. A written statement noting major building dimensions and gross area of buildings, open space, proposed division of work between the Developer and public agencies (if applicable), evidence of equity capital and mortgage financing, and proposed time schedule for construction, including phasing if appropriate.

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## 6 | DEFINITIONS

The following definitions refer to terms, words, and phrases used in outlining permitted activities specified under these design standards. Where a term is not specifically defined herein, its common dictionary definition shall be utilized.

### **Agency**

The USA Niagara Development Corporation.

### **Artful**

A one-of-a-kind design that reflects the skills and talent of an artist, graphic designer, or other design professional.

### **Awning**

A roof-like structure of fabric or other tensile material, stretched over a frame as a shelter from the weather.

### **Balcony, Terrace, or Porch**

An unenclosed area on an upper floor level of a building or structure, extending outward from or abutting an exterior wall, with or without a roof.

### **Belt Course**

A horizontal band of masonry across the exterior of a building that stands out visually.

### **Building**

Any structure having a roof supported by columns or walls for the housing or enclosure of persons, animals, or goods. When such a structure is divided into separate parts by one or more un-pierced walls extending from the ground up, each such part shall be deemed to be a separate "building."

### **Building Height**

The vertical distance measured from the mean grade elevation of the lot to the highest point of building, including projections.

### **Build-to-Zone**

An area of a lot designated for placement of a building facade along a street, located parallel to a front property line. The build-to-zone defines an area in which the locations of building fronts can vary within a specified range.

### **Canopy**

A fixed projection extending outward from an exterior building wall, intended to provide shelter and/or as an aesthetic element of a façade design.

### **City**

The City of Niagara Falls, New York.

### **Column**

A vertical building member intended to support a roof, cornice, or other horizontal member/element of a building or structure.

**Cornice**

A building façade element consisting of a horizontal molded projection that crowns or completes a building or wall and/or separates the street oriented portion of a façade from its upper portion.

**Courtyard**

An open space enclosed partly or wholly by a building.

**Developer**

An individual, partnership, corporation, or entity, either private, public, or private/public partnership, which is designated to be eligible to receive USA Niagara grant funds for purposes of development in accordance with these urban design standards.

**Development Area**

The sum of the gross floor area of the several floors of a building or buildings, not including subsurface facilities (e.g., basements, subsurface parking facilities) or rooftop spaces.

**Easement**

Authorization by one property owner for use of all or a portion of his/her property by another person/entity for a specific purpose.

**Facade**

A front side(s) of a building, particularly those side(s) given distinguishing treatments along a public right-of-way and/or street.

**Fascia**

A flat horizontal band or member between moldings as part of a building façade, sometimes as part of a classical entablature, and often as the location for business signs in a storefront design.

**Forecourt**

An open court located along the frontage of a building on a public right-of-way.

**Frontage**

The linear distance of a lot or parcel that abuts a public right-of-way.

**Lot**

A parcel of land for occupancy by a building or use and the accessory buildings or uses customarily incident to it, including such open spaces that are arranged and designed to be used in connection with such building.

**Corner Lot**

A lot of which at least two adjacent sides abut for their full lengths upon streets.

**Interior Lot**

A lot other than a corner lot.

**Through Lot**

An interior lot which runs through a block from street to street.

**Open Space**

A part of a lot or building that is open and unobstructed to the sky (excluding awnings and similar projections), such as courts, esplanades, colonnades, yards, and roof terraces, but not including surface parking areas.

### **Outparcel**

A parcel of land, generally located on the perimeter of a larger parcel of commercial land, that is subordinate to the larger parcel.

### **Parking Garage, Private**

An accessory building or portion of a main building, used for the storage of motor vehicles as an accessory use.

### **Parking Garage, Public**

A structure or portion thereof, other than a private garage, used for the storage, available to the public, operated for gain, and which is used for temporary storage of automobiles or other motor vehicles (also known as "public parking ramp" and/or "public parking structure").

### **Patio, Sidewalk**

A seasonal, unenclosed extension of the ground floor use of a building or structure to accommodate outdoor dining and/or display of merchandise, extending from or adjoining a ground-floor exterior wall of a principal use/building on a parcel, either abutting or extending onto the adjoining public sidewalk of the subject property.

### **Paved**

Use of blacktop, asphalt, concrete, paving stones or other similar substance to create a smooth, dust-free surface, including bituminous penetration, but not the use of dirt, clay, slag, loose stone and/or gravel.

### **Pilaster**

A building façade element consisting of a vertical molded projection set into a wall that resembles a column, often including a capital and base.

### **Portico**

A porch entrance or covered walkway supported by evenly-spaced columns.

### **Principal Use**

The primary intended use of a lot or parcel.

### **Sign**

Any advertisement, announcement, direction or communication produced, in whole or in part, by the construction, erection, affixing or placing of a structure on any land or on any other structure or produced by painting on or posting or placing any printed, lettered, pictured, figured or colored material on any building, structure or surface; provided, however, that signs placed or erected by the City, County or State for the purpose of showing street names or traffic directions or regulations or for other municipal or governmental purposes shall not be included in this definition.

#### **A-Frame Sign**

A freestanding sign not exceeding 4 feet in height with an area no greater than 3 feet by 4 feet, of "A-frame" design and which is not illuminated.

#### **Awning Sign**

A sign which is displayed upon a sheet of canvas or other material used to protect from sunlight or rain, which is attached to the face of a building. Also a sign which is displayed upon a permanent roof-like shelter extending from part of a building face over an entryway.

**Monument Sign**

A sign that is supported by a foundation of one or more columns, uprights or braces not attached to or forming part of a building or structure. The sign shall be no higher than 5 feet above grade.

**Projecting Sign**

A sign attached to or supported by a building or structure in such a manner that it extends from the building's facade.

**Wall Sign**

A sign fastened or applied to the wall of a building or structure in such a manner that the wall becomes the supporting structure for or forms the background surface of the sign and which does not project more than 12 inches from such building or structure.

**Window Sign**

A sign which is applied or attached to the exterior or interior of a window or is installed inside of a window.

**Sign, Accessory**

An identification sign for the premises on which it is located or which advertises a product or service available on the premises on which it is located.

**Sign, Nonaccessory**

A sign which does not identify the premises on which it is located or advertises a project or service which is not available on the premises on which it is located, and shall include billboards, ground signs and pole signs, as well as any other device to be used for similar purposes.

**Stepback**

A design feature that involves recessing the front line of the structure in subsequent upper stories in a step-like manner.

**Storefront**

One or more portions of a retail or commercial building that abuts a street face or other type of public right-of-way.

**Story**

The portion of a building included between the surface of any floor and the surface of the next floor above it, or if there is no floor above it, then the space between the floor and the ceiling next above it.

**Street**

A public right-of-way designated for the conveyance of vehicles, pedestrians, and other modes of transportation. This definition also includes non-vehicular public rights-of-way, such as the Old Falls Street Pedestrian Mall.

**Street, Primary**

In the context of these standards, primary commercial streets in the Agency's program Niagara Falls program area, including Third Street, Old Falls Street, First Street, Niagara Street, and Rainbow Boulevard.

### **Street Wall**

A continuous wall face created by a collection of building façades of commercial and/or mixed-use buildings along an urban street.

### **Transom**

A window or fenestration in a building façade located above an opening such as a door or display window oriented horizontally and/or built on a horizontal crossbar; sometimes hinged on the top to allow it to swing open for ventilation.

### **Transparency**

The percentage of the facade wall area which includes openings for transparent glass windows and doors. Facade transparency at the first floor/ ground floor level is measured between two (2) feet above grade to ten (10) feet above grade. Facade transparency for upper floors is measured from second finished floor level to the ceiling of the topmost floor. Glass is considered transparent when it has a Visible Light Transmission (VLT) rating at the percentage as specified in the code or higher.

### **Yard, Front**

An open space extending the full width of a lot measured from a front property line abutting a public right-of-way to the nearest exterior wall of the building (excluding exterior porticos, porches, terraces, or similar partially enclosed structures). A lot may have more than one front yard depending on the number of public rights-of-way upon which it abuts.

### **Yard, Rear**

An open space extending the full width of a lot bounded in rear by the rear property line and bounded in the front by the nearest point on the rear-most building or structure on said lot or parcel.

### **Yard, Side**

An open space extending from the front yard to the rear yard and lying between the side property line and the nearest building or structure on said lot or parcel.

# 7 | APPENDIX

7-1. Buffalo Avenue Architectural Design Standards

# APPENDIX J: ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STANDARDS

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Overall Intent
- 1.2 District History and Planning Principles
- 1.3 Contextual Influences
- 1.4 Goals and Objectives of Design Standards
- 1.5 Program Area and Application of Standards
- 1.6 Rules of Interpretation
- 1.7 Definitions

### 2 Site Planning and Site Design Standards

- 2.1 Overall Intent
- 2.2 Building Siting and Site Design
- 2.3 Arrangement of Uses within Structures
- 2.4 Driveways and Parking
  - 2.4.1 Driveways
  - 2.4.2 Garages
  - 2.4.3 Surface Parking Lots
- 2.5 Landscaping
- 2.6 Walls and Fences

### 3 Architectural Design Standards

- 3.1 Overall Intent
- 3.2 Building Form and Type
  - 3.2.1 Residential-Scale
  - 3.2.2 Medium-Scale
  - 3.2.3 400 Block of Buffalo Avenue (north side)
- 3.3 Building Height
- 3.4 Materials and Surfaces
  - 3.4.1 Building foundations and retaining walls
  - 3.4.2 Building Walls
  - 3.4.3 Trim and Detailing
  - 3.4.4 Prohibited Materials
  - 3.4.5 Materials Not Listed

3.4.6 Material Application

3.4.7 Maintenance

3.4.8 Painting

3.4.9 Colors

3.5 Architectural Elements

3.5.1 Building Articulation

3.5.2 Roofs

3.5.3 Windows and Doors

3.5.4 Detailing

3.5.5 Additions

3.5.6 Porches

3.5.7 Awnings

3.5.8 Lighting

3.5.9 Signs

3.6 Structures Listed on or Eligible for Inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places

4 Review Procedures

4.1 Overall Intent

4.2 Schematic Proposal

4.2.1 Intent

4.2.2 Submission Requirements

4.3 Preliminary Proposal

4.3.1 Intent

4.3.2 Submission Requirements

4.3.3 Site Plan Review and Other Approvals

4.3.4 State Historic Preservation Officer Consultation

4.4 Final Proposal

4.4.1 Intent

4.4.2 Submission Requirements

Attachments

Appendix 1: Architectural Styles in the District

Appendix 2: Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Overall Intent

The standards outlined in this document are focused on components of individual structures that collectively contribute to the overall character and identity of the Buffalo Avenue Heritage District (herein after referred to as the "District"). It is not the intention of these standards to in any way discourage contemporary design, which through careful attention to siting, landscaping, scale, and materials may be complementary to existing heritage structures. Rather, the standards herein are intended to establish criteria by which alterations to existing buildings as well as construction of new

buildings can be measured. Some of the standards are precise whereas others are, by necessity, more general, allowing a range of alternative solutions. The standards have been specifically tailored to preserve, enhance and reinforce the unique qualities of the District. It is important to note that these standards shall not be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior feature in the District which does not involve a change in design, material or outward appearance.

## 1.2 District History and Planning Principles

The history of Buffalo Avenue from Main Street to John Daly Boulevard (formerly Quay Street) is unique to Niagara Falls. This area was the first to be settled by the Europeans who came to America. Prior to the beginning of the 19th Century, the area we know as downtown Niagara Falls was not a populated, situated community. Before the arrival of the Porter brothers, Native Americans (the Neuters and later the Senecas) were associated with the area around the Falls and there were Indian settlements near the French (and later English) forts along the Niagara River.

The community settled and developed by the Porters and their associates was from the outset intended to be an industrial city. The presence of water for transportation of goods, and especially for power, made this the ideal spot for manufacturing and trade. The mid-19th Century hydraulic canal and later hydroelectric power plants brought the dream of these early settlers to reality. The leading families of the young community, the Porters, the Whitneys, the Rankines and Henry Perky, were all somehow associated with industry and all lived on Buffalo Avenue. Only the Schoellkops were missing, having their estate on Main Street. They were all making industry happen at the dawn of the 20th Century.

Every American city at that time had a fine residential street like Buffalo Avenue (Buffalo's Delaware Avenue and Cleveland's Euclid Avenue are contemporary examples), but only Buffalo Avenue had among its finest residences one of the largest factories in the City: Henry Perky's Shredded Wheat Factory, which came to be known as the "Palace of Light". That Henry Perky lived across the street from his factory was not unusual, however the fact that the owners and managers of other factories chose to build fine mansions next to his factory, is unprecedented. For this reason, Buffalo Avenue had, within an approximately six block stretch, an identity that was both high-end residential and industrial.

The vision for the future of the District reflects this unique relationship. Stemming from the Niagara Falls Strategic Master Plan's call for protecting stable residential areas, and for preserving and enhancing heritage resources, the theme of the District consists of the following principles:

1. **Park Neighborhood:** The Niagara River (the "River") and Niagara Falls State Park (the "Park") are significant natural assets that form the southern boundary of the District. The District should be considered as an extension of the Park that connects the River and Park with downtown Niagara Falls.
2. **Unique Historic Character:** The historic development of the riverfront and simultaneous development of industrialist's homes side-by-side with the Shredded Wheat Factory are unique to the City of Niagara Falls. Remnants from this important period in the City's history should be celebrated, restored and reinforced through strategic public and private investments.
3. **Variety of Development Opportunities:** Individual residences and small- to medium-scale buildings should be encouraged to reinforce the eclectic mix of quality historic structures and uses. The precedent of the "Palace of Light" presents an extraordinary opportunity to recall this unique juxtaposition in a sizable, infill development.
4. **Downtown Destination:** The District's proximity within downtown Niagara Falls makes it part of a larger regional attraction. Improved physical and visual linkages should be promoted to capitalize on tourist visits to the downtown area.
5. **Sustainable Community:** Home to one of the earliest developments of renewable energy resources in the United States, Niagara Falls is positioned to remake itself as a sustainable city. The District should be a focus of

sustainable community values through the promotion of green building technology, regenerative development, environmental health and social equity.

### 1.3 Contextual Influences

Determining a period of significance is a required first step in establishing a design theme for a heritage district, as it aids in understanding what was located there historically and what remains as evidence of that historic past. Further, the period of significance establishes important context and serves as a reference guide to the rehabilitation and restoration of existing structures and the design of new in fill buildings. The period of significance for the District has been determined to be mid-19th to mid-20th centuries – the period when Buffalo Avenue was established itself as home to the City's industrialists.

The following building styles, concurrent with the period of significance, are present in the District, and form the basis for District design standards.

i. mid-19th Century

1. Greek Revival
2. Gothic Revival
3. Vernacular worker cottages

ii. late-19th Century

1. Italianate
2. Queen Anne

iii. Early 20th Century

1. Arts and Crafts

iv. 1920's-30's

1. Neo-Classical
2. Georgian
3. Tudor
4. Italian (Spanish) Colonial

Refer to Attachment 1: Historic Architecture Index for descriptions of these styles and examples from the District.

### 1.4 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF DESIGN STANDARDS

The primary goal of these design standards is to specify site planning, site design and architectural design requirements that reinforce District identity and character, thereby strengthening its sense of neighborhood and place. Design standards will apply to new construction, adaptive reuse and rehabilitation projects funded through the USA Niagara development Corporation. Specific goals and objectives for these standards are as follows:

#### Goal 1: Support economic development and redevelopment

**Objectives:**

- Facilitate on-going economic development initiatives being advanced by local/state agencies by fostering an urbane and active setting for development and redevelopment projects.

- Ensure that public investments to foster new development and redevelopment result in an appropriately-scaled and high-quality urban environment.
- Support development and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized land in the District in a manner consistent with neighborhood context.
- Promote land value increases and tax base expansion.

**Goal 2: Support local and regional planning policies and strategies**

**Objectives:**

- Support and implement current development policies outlined in public plans and projects by incorporating standards consistent with the overall objectives of the *Niagara Falls Strategic Plan*, *City of Niagara Falls Comprehensive Plan*, and *USA Niagara Development Strategy*.
- Realize supporting development to build upon various existing and planned tourist-oriented projects such as the Seneca Niagara Casino and its associated resort facilities; Conference Center Niagara Falls; and the Niagara Experience Center.

**Goal 3: Facilitate the creation of a park-like, pedestrian-scaled, residential and mixed-use District**

**Objectives:**

- Promote the identity of the District and the natural beauty of the setting by maximizing opportunities for extensions of the park landscape into the District, and the complementary development of the public streetscape.
- Enhance the safety, comfort, and enjoyment of downtown Niagara Falls by non-vehicular users including pedestrians, bicyclists and transit patrons.
- Maximize retail, entertainment, lodging, and residential choices.
- Promote well-designed and active streetscapes that appropriately leverage public infrastructure and grant investments.

**Goal 4: Protect and enhance the historic character of the District**

**Objectives:**

- Preserve remaining historical fabric and limit any further erosion to the built form.
- Provide design guidance to existing property owners in order to restore and promote design quality to individual structures, which in turn contribute to the District as a whole.
- Reinforce the District's distinctive identity by ensuring mass and form of new development fits within the existing fabric.
- Encourage and support new development that is attuned with existing design elements and respects the heritage of unique, high-quality structures within the District.

**Goal 5: Support sustainable community principles and promote healthy, ecologically responsible development**

**Objectives:**

- Conserve natural systems such as topography, vegetation and habitat, and site hydrology.
- Extend native vegetation consistent with Frederic Law Olmsted's intentions for the Niagara Reservation into the District.
- Support green building practices by encouraging the pursuit of the *U. S. Green Building Council's* LEED Certifications for rehabilitation and new construction activities.

## 1.5 Program Area and Application of Standards

The primary program area for which District design standards apply encompasses all buildings and parcels identified in Figure \_\_\_.

## 1.6 Rules of Interpretation

In interpreting and applying the provisions of District design standards, they shall be considered the minimum requirements adopted for the promotion of the objectives of the USA Niagara Development Corporation program. When used in the context of this document, the following rules of interpretation shall apply:

- Words/phrases such as “shall”, “will”, “must”, “is required”, etc. indicate standards to which adherence is specifically required.
- Words/phrases such as “should,” “is encouraged to,” “is desired,” “is recommended to,” etc. indicate standards that are strongly desired in the context of USA Niagara’s program objectives and should act to influence the design associated with the application, but are not mandated.
- Words/phrases such as “acceptable,” “satisfactory,” “adequate,” etc. indicate standards that while not meeting the full intent of USA Niagara’s program objectives, represent an adequate approach to meet a particular standard, if the applicant can demonstrate an inability (in terms of site configuration, existing building components, physical constraints and/or requirements associated with other laws or regulations) to fully meet a recommended approach.
- Words/phrases such as “may”, “allowed”, etc., indicate permissible, but not required actions.

## 1.7 Definitions

The following definitions refer to terms, words, and phrases used in outlining permitted activities specified under these design standards. Where a term is not specifically defined herein, its common dictionary definition shall be utilized.

**Agency.** The USA Niagara Development Corporation.

**Artful.** A one-of-a-kind design that reflects the skills and talent of an artist, graphic designer, or other design professional.

**Awning.** A roof-like structure of fabric or other tensile material, stretched over a frame as a shelter from the weather.

**Balcony, Terrace, or Porch.** An unenclosed area on an upper floor level of a building or structure, extending outward from or abutting an exterior wall, with or without a roof.

**Belt course.** A horizontal band of masonry across the exterior of a building that stands out visually.

**Building.** Any structure having a roof supported by columns or walls for the housing or enclosure of persons, animals, or goods. When such a structure is divided into separate parts by one or more un-pierced walls extending from the ground up, each such part shall be deemed to be a separate “building.”

**Building Height.** The vertical distance measured from the mean grade elevation of the lot to the highest point of building, including projections.

**Canopy.** A fixed projection extending outward from an exterior building wall, intended to provide shelter and/or as an aesthetic element of a façade design.

**City.** The City of Niagara Falls, New York.

**Column.** A vertical building member intended to support a roof, cornice, or other horizontal member/element of a building or structure.

**Contributing Building.** An existing building whose architectural design contributes to the theme of the District. Contributing buildings in the district that are National Register eligible are subject to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for rehabilitation.

**Cornice.** A building façade element consisting of a horizontal molded projection that crowns or completes a building or wall and/or separates the street oriented portion of a façade from its upper portion.

**Courtyard.** An open space enclosed partly or wholly by a building.

**Developer.** An individual, partnership, corporation, or entity, either private, public, or private/public partnership, which is designated to be eligible to receive USA Niagara grant funds for purposes of development in accordance with these urban design standards.

**Development Area.** The sum of the gross floor area of the several floors of a building or buildings, not including subsurface facilities (e.g., basements, subsurface parking facilities) or rooftop spaces.

**Easement.** Authorization by one property owner for use of all or a portion of his/her property by another person/entity for a specific purpose.

**Façade.** A front side(s) of a building, particularly those side(s) given distinguishing treatments along a public right-of-way and/or street.

**Fascia.** A flat horizontal band or member between moldings as part of a building façade, sometimes as part of a classical entablature, and often as the location for business signs in a storefront design.

**Forecourt.** An open court located along the frontage of a building on a public right-of-way.

**Frontage.** The linear distance of a lot or parcel that abuts a public right-of-way.

**Lot.** A parcel of land for occupancy by a building or use and the accessory buildings or uses customarily incident to it, including such open spaces that are arranged and designed to be used in connection with such building.

**Corner Lot.** A lot of which at least two adjacent sides abut for their full lengths upon streets.

**Interior Lot.** A lot other than a corner lot.

**Through Lot.** An interior lot which runs through a block from street to street.

**Open Space.** A part of a lot or building that is open and unobstructed to the sky (excluding awnings and similar projections), such as courts, esplanades, colonnades, yards, and roof terraces, but not including surface parking areas.

**Parking Garage, Private.** An accessory building or portion of a main building, used for the storage of motor vehicles as an accessory use.

**Patio, Sidewalk.** A seasonal, unenclosed extension of the ground floor use of a building or structure to accommodate outdoor dining and/or display of merchandise, extending from or adjoining a ground-floor exterior wall of a principal use/building on a parcel, either abutting or extending onto the adjoining public sidewalk of the subject property.

**Paved.** Use of blacktop, asphalt, concrete, paving stones or other similar substance to create a smooth, dust-free surface, including bituminous penetration, but not the use of dirt, clay, slag, loose stone and/or gravel.

**Pilaster.** A building façade element consisting of a vertical molded projection set into a wall that resembles a column, often including a capital and base.

**Portico.** A porch entrance or covered walkway supported by evenly-spaced columns.

**Principal Use.** The primary intended use of a lot or parcel.

**Sign.** Any advertisement, announcement, direction or communication produced, in whole or in part, by the construction, erection, affixing or placing of a structure on any land or on any other structure or produced by painting on or posting or placing any printed, lettered, pictured, figured or colored material on any building, structure or surface; provided, however, that signs placed or erected by the City, County or State for the purpose of showing street names or traffic directions or regulations or for other municipal or governmental purposes shall not be included in this definition.

**Sign, Accessory.** An identification sign for the premises on which it is located or which advertises a product or service available on the premises on which it is located.

**Sign, Nonaccessory.** A sign which does not identify the premises on which it is located or advertises a project or service which is not available on the premises on which it is located, and shall include billboards, ground signs and pole signs, as well as any other device to be used for similar purposes.

**Stepback.** A design feature that involves recessing the front line of the structure in subsequent upper stories in a step-like manner.

**Storefront.** One or more portions of a retail or commercial building that abuts a street face or other type of public right-of-way.

**Story.** The portion of a building included between the surface of any floor and the surface of the next floor above it, or if there is no floor above it, then the space between the floor and the ceiling next above it.

**Street.** A public right-of-way designated for the conveyance of vehicles, pedestrians, and other modes of transportation. This definition also includes non-vehicular public rights-of-way, such as the Old Falls Street Pedestrian Mall.

**Street, Major.** In the context of these standards, primary commercial streets in the Agency's downtown Niagara Falls program area, including Third Street, Old Falls Street, First Street, Niagara Street, and Rainbow Boulevard.

**Street Wall.** A continuous wall face created by a collection of building façades of commercial and/or mixed-use buildings along an urban street.

**Transom.** A window or fenestration in a building façade located above an opening such as a door or display window oriented horizontally and/or built on a horizontal crossbar; sometimes hinged on the top to allow it to swing open for ventilation.

**Yard, Front.** An open space extending the full width of a lot measured from a front property line abutting a public right-of-way to the nearest exterior wall of the building (excluding exterior porticos, porches, terraces, or similar partially enclosed structures). A lot may have more than one front yard depending on the number of public rights-of-way upon which it abuts.

**Yard, Rear.** An open space extending the full width of a lot bounded in rear by the rear property line and bounded in the front by the nearest point on the rear-most building or structure on said lot or parcel.

**Yard, Side.** An open space extending from the front yard to the rear yard and lying between the side property line and the nearest building or structure on said lot or parcel.

## 2 Site Planning and Site Design Standards

### 2.1 Overall Intent

Site planning and site design involve the placement and design of various features associated with a project – buildings, walkways, landscape, and parking – and the relationship of these features to the street and adjacent buildings.

The standards in this chapter are intended to define relationships, characteristics, and coherence of site features in order to ensure projects contribute to the District's theme.

### 2.2 Building Siting and Site Design

"Street walls" define the edges of urban corridors, which together with sidewalks/streets and the sky plain, form spaces and exterior activity areas that urban designers often refer to in the metaphor of an "urban room."

#### Standards

- Building location and spacing should be consistent with existing patterns on the block. New buildings should be positioned to conform to the established setback (minimum 10 feet and maximum of 25 feet from the public right-of-way).
- Width of new buildings should be consistent with existing buildings.
- Structures should be sited in such a way that is appropriate for the form and style of the structure and, where applicable, complements adjacent building siting and orientation.
- Except in limited situations in campus or estate-style development (see below), the primary entrance to a principal structure shall be required to front upon a public street.
- Campus or estate-style site arrangements (i.e., involving two (2) or more principal buildings on a single lot of record) may be permitted on lots of one (1) acre or greater in area, provided that either: 1) one or more of the principal structures on the campus or estate is placed along the lot frontage in accordance with the established front yard setback (minimum 10 feet; maximum 25 feet); or 2) campus or estate structures are oriented inward with a landscaped forecourt and a front ornamental wall or fence is placed within the established front yard setback (minimum 10 feet; maximum 25 feet) to support continuity of the street wall. See Section 1.13 Walls and Fences for information on wall and fence design.
- Entrances to private parking garages shall not front upon a public street, but may front upon a public alley right-of-way.

### 2.3 Arrangement of Uses within Structures

Although the District is predominately zoned for residential uses, the proposed update to the City's Zoning Code would allow in the District a limited range of commercial uses, which are currently prohibited. For this reason, it is important to provide guidance on the arrangement of uses within structures. Accordingly, this section pertains to the location and arrangement of uses within a building with intent of encouraging maximum opportunities for pedestrian-scaled, street activity.

- Active uses that engage pedestrians shall be located along the ground floor of buildings on all street frontages.
- In mixed-use buildings, residential uses should be located on the second floor and higher. Office uses that do not typically attract high pedestrian traffic can also be located on the second floor.

### 2.4 Driveways and Parking

The historical configuration of the neighborhood typically allowed no more than two vehicles at each property. The Buffalo Avenue addresses (and some of the Riverside Drive, Whitney Place and Hillcrest houses) had parking accessed

from the rear via publicly- or privately-owned alleys. This section governs the overall orientation, placement, and design of driveways and parking garages in the context of enhancing street-level appearance and activity in the program area.

#### 2.4.1 DRIVEWAYS

- Driveways shall be a maximum of 10' wide when located in front yards.
- Driveways should be composed of exposed aggregate concrete or unit paver material. Asphalt is acceptable. Loose rock or compacted soil is not acceptable for drives.
- Driveways should extend toward the rear of the property where a garage would be located.

#### 2.4.2 GARAGES

- Parking garages that are an accessory use to a commercial or mixed-use building shall be designed to be integral to an overall building design, with consistent materials and massing of the principal building/use.
- Private garages shall be located at the rear of the lot, or with a minimum front setback of 35 feet from the public right-of-way. Detached garages are preferred -- possibly connected to the main building through the use of breezeways.
- Private garages should utilize colors and massing that coordinate with the site's primary structure.
- Where possible, garages shall be located on alleys in order to maintain the historical pattern, and to minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflicts along the building frontages on major streets.
- Where a configuration of a parcel prohibits preferred siting of a parking garage as noted above, façades along street frontages shall conform to the overall principals of the architectural standards in Chapter 3.

#### 2.4.3 SURFACE PARKING LOTS

- Off-street parking must be behind or to the side of the building. Rear alley access to parking areas should be encouraged when available, especially for multi-family dwellings or mixed-use structures.
- The siting of rear parking lots is encouraged to include locating lots to allow vehicles to travel from one private parking lot to another without having to enter the street (i.e., reciprocal access).
- Where feasible, access driveways to rear parking lots are encouraged to be located on minor side streets or alleys in order to minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflicts along the building frontages on major streets.
- Where feasible, pedestrian access to rear parking lots from a major street is encouraged to be provided via pedestrian access easements.
- In certain circumstances, existing parking areas located in side yard areas may be retained provided they are adequately screened from major streets.
- If parking is visible from street, it must be appropriately screened using a combination of masonry (i.e., consistent with materials/colors in adjoining buildings) and black ornamental metal fencing (i.e., wrought iron or commercial-grade, heavy-gauge, galvanized steel with rust-proof finish) of at least four and no more than six feet in height. Incorporation of appropriate landscaping as part of such a screening technique is required.
- Unacceptable/prohibited methods of parking lot screening shall include chain link fencing; stockade or other similar type of wood fencing; concrete masonry units that are inconsistent with materials used on adjoining buildings; and/or screening consisting exclusively of landscape material (i.e., given difficulty in maintaining as effective screening).
- Refer to City of Niagara Falls codes for lighting and drainage.

## 2.5 LANDSCAPING

The District evolved as both a residential and industrial area. The landscape should reflect those original uses, while responding to the theme of park neighborhood.

- Landscaping should respond to topography and streetscape conditions as well as building design.
- Lawns or garden plantings shall be retained in the setback area to maintain the historical relationship between buildings and the public realm.
- Landscaping should emulate the historical paradigm, which consisted of perennial plantings, flowering bushes and low borders along the front porches.
- Native species should be utilized as much as possible.
- Trees, shrubs and lawns must be regularly maintained through mowing, pruning and trimming.

## 2.6 Walls and Fences

Walls, fences and other types of enclosures can greatly enhance the character of an urban setting as they can become additional elements in the streetscape. However, if not appropriately located and constructed with quality materials, these yard dividers can also detract from a neighborhood's ambiance. The following are standards for walls and fences intended to ensure such partitions are positive additions to the District.

- Fence heights and materials shall be compatible with their site location and surrounding development.
- Although generally discouraged, fences in the front yard shall be more formal in design and lower in height when sited close to the street or sidewalk.
- Fences in the rear yard offer more flexibility with greater allowance for height and design.
- All side fences shall be limited to a maximum of six (6) feet in height.
- The finished side of all walls and fences must face the common property line boundary, or the public way.
- Only the following fence materials shall be allowed: painted wood, wrought iron (or aluminum closely resembling wrought iron), stone, brick or brick faced concrete.
- All other fence materials, including chain link, vinyl-clad chain link, wood stockade, PVC, plastic, or other similar materials are prohibited unless substantially screened from public view by landscaping or other means.

## 3 Architectural Design Standards

### 3.1 Overall Intent

The design standards in this chapter are primarily intended to reinforce the heritage theme sought for the District, as described in Section 1.2 by addressing architectural components of buildings. To that end, adherence to basic design criteria will help to protect the historical integrity of existing structures, as well as to ensure quality construction of new structures that are compatible with existing District building fabric. Accordingly, these architectural design standards apply to both existing buildings and new, infill construction.

More specifically, these design standards identify how existing structures can maintain design integrity through appropriate maintenance practices, restoration and, when necessary, replacement of materials or architectural components. Additionally, traditional design features of former and existing District buildings should be used to guide the design of new structures, particularly with respect to massing, scale, materials, colors, and architectural features.

The language in this chapter is not intended to dictate the use of any specific architectural style; rather it is intended to call attention to typical architectural components for the purpose of achieving a level of design continuity throughout the District. New and creative interpretations of traditional design are permitted and encouraged, provided they adhere to the general design principles outlined in this chapter.

Exceptions to these standards may be made if the proposed design is deemed to be of extraordinary quality yet compatible with the design theme and intent of the District.

### 3.2 Building Form and Type

Building form and type significantly influence the look and feel of the District. The building form and scale of structures in the neighborhood have historically ranged from large residential mansions to sizable apartment buildings to a factory. The following are building types that contribute to the District theme, and that are acceptable as infill development.

#### *Architectural Style*

##### 3.2.1 RESIDENTIAL-SCALE

The existing neighborhood fabric is primarily comprised of residential structures, which have a commonality of mass and density that can be treated as a cohesive element in the District. Most of the existing residential buildings contribute to the District theme, as they were built in the late 19th or early 20th century. Because the District has lost a significant portion of residential building fabric over the past 30 years, it is critical to protect and restore this built form since it is the foundation of the heritage theme. This domestic-sized development type with varied mass blocks, bays, porches, gables, dormers, and porte cocheres should continue to be the predominant built form within the District.

##### 3.2.2 MEDIUM-SCALE

There are a few locations within the District where a grouping of sites would allow for a medium-scale building. The former Lockeil Apartment Building that once stood at the corner of Buffalo Avenue and Third Street is a good representation of the form and size of a medium-scale development, and its design qualities, such as consistent belt courses, string courses and water tables to delineate various levels, should be emulated.

However, in order to adhere to the heritage theme, this type of development should not overwhelm the District landscape with respect to both scale and quantity. Over-use of this development type would diminish the focus on the residential-scale development. Nonetheless, medium-scale development is permitted in the District, but in the instances where such development could occur, careful attention must be paid to the placement and orientation of the building with respect to neighboring residential scale development. Additionally, the building shall be primarily a residential use with retail space limited to 5,000 square feet at the ground level. Large, non-residential construction would be wholly inappropriate to the District theme.

##### 3.2.3 400 BLOCK OF BUFFALO AVENUE (NORTH SIDE)

During the District's period of significance, the north side of the 400 Block of Buffalo Avenue was home to the aforementioned Shredded Wheat Factory. This ancestry provides a unique precedent for construction of a large infill building in the core of the District. However, due its size in square feet and height, such development would not be permitted under the proposed CNF zoning amendment. Nonetheless, special consideration for this site should be allowed in order to help reinforce the residential/industrial coexistence stated in the theme, provided stringent adherence to design standards is met.

The following are design standards specific for a unique development opportunity on the north side of Buffalo Avenue's 400 Block. These standards are in addition to all other design criteria herein. Should residential-scale or medium-scale development occur on this particular site, these standards would not apply.

- This site should be developed as a focal point of the District based on the historic precedent of the Shredded Wheat Factory, i.e., the "Palace of Light".
- Any such development must be a mixed use facility with retail space on the first floor.
- The building should be oriented along the existing alley and have varied setbacks from Buffalo Avenue. The center portion of the structure should have a zero lot along Buffalo Avenue similar to the original factory.

- The building should be comprised of hipped roof lines; flat roofs are discouraged.
- Natural daylighting through large windows between masonry piers should be a significant factor in scaling and massing of the structure.
- The building should have warm colors that emulate the original factory and that blend well with existing structures in the District.
- Below grade parking is strongly encouraged. Surface parking may be permitted on what was the front lawn of the factory to provide parking primarily for the first floor retail uses. However, front yard landscaping shall provide a sufficient buffer between the parking area and the public sidewalk. Front yard green space and public amenities shall be provided consistent with the proposed public uses.

### 3.3 Building Height

Buildings in the District historically were 2 ½ to 3 stories in height and were comprised of varied site lines, roof shapes, projections and heights, which collectively contributed to the uniqueness of the neighborhood. However, the buildings also had similar heights and elevations that provided a level of continuity within the District. Both qualities are encouraged to continue.

- All structures shall be a minimum of 25 feet and a maximum of 45 feet in height. The 400 Block site would be an exception to this requirement, provided a proposed development conforms to design criteria outlined in Section 2.2.3. In this case, the development should be a minimum of 45 feet and maximum of 80 feet in height in order to emulate the strong presence of the former Shredded Wheat Factory.
- New buildings or altered existing buildings, including all appurtenances, must be constructed within 15% of the average height of existing buildings on the block.
- Wherever feasible, floor to floor heights should approximate the existing building in the block.
- When feasible, new residential structures shall have their first floor elevation approximately the same distance above the front-grade as the existing buildings in the block.

### 3.4 Materials and Surfaces

The materials and surfaces of buildings are aspects that define their individuality and express historical tastes and methods of construction. The scale and texture of material elements are specific to the era of construction. District structures were predominately constructed with traditional building materials such as wood, brick, stone, stucco and tile. Applied with a high level of craftsmanship, these materials were arranged in various combinations among the many design styles resulting in a rich architectural heritage for the District.

Accordingly, materials used in the construction or rehabilitation of structures in the District should match or be reminiscent of materials used in the highest-quality examples of residential structures in the District.

#### 3.4.1 BUILDING FOUNDATIONS AND RETAINING WALLS

The following materials are permitted for use in the construction of foundation and retaining walls.

- Rough and cut stone
- Rusticated masonry
- Various types of high-quality concrete-based products to emulate stone or rusticated masonry finishes (e.g., cast stone)

### 3.4.2 BUILDING WALLS

The below materials are encouraged for use on building walls.

- Painted wood clapboard
- Cedar shingles
- Cement fiber board or wood composite materials that emulate traditional paint-able wood clapboard
- Brick masonry
- Finished/ cut stone
- Various types of high-quality concrete-based products to emulate stone or rusticated masonry finishes (e.g., cast stone)
- Stucco/ exterior plaster
- Terra cotta
- Limited types of high-impact exterior insulation and finish systems (EIFS) that involve a durable, smooth trowel finish that emulate historic stucco finishes

### 3.4.3 TRIM AND DETAILING

- Painted wood
- Cement fiber board or wood composite materials that emulate paint-able wood, metal, finished stone
- Masonry or formed concrete
- Various types of high-quality concrete-based products to emulate stone or rusticated masonry finishes (e.g., cast stone)
- Terra cotta

### 3.4.4 PROHIBITED MATERIALS

Use of the following materials are not permitted.

- Pre-engineered metal structures
- Composite (engineered) wood clapboard
- Used brick with no fired face (salvaged from interior walls)
- Imitation stone or brick made from synthetic materials such as fiberglass or plastic
- Unfinished concrete masonry unit (CMU)
- Vinyl or metal siding
- Other EIFS
- Plastic panels
- Reflective, mirrored, tinted, or opaque glass

### 3.4.5 MATERIALS NOT LISTED

Materials resulting from new technological advances may be permitted, subject to USA Niagara approval, provided such materials meet the overall design objectives for the District.

### 3.4.6 MATERIAL APPLICATION

The following standards shall apply to the application of building materials.

- Original materials on existing structures must be kept in place.
- Missing elements should be replaced using materials that match, whenever possible, the physical properties, design,

color, texture, and appearance of the original. The use of imitation replacement materials is strongly discouraged.

- Combinations of the aforementioned materials are encouraged or acceptable in the design of new buildings.
- Exterior materials should wrap around the house, rather than be applied only to the front for "curb appeal" purposes.
- Traditional building materials may be applied using modern construction techniques and practices.

### 3.4.7 MAINTENANCE

Proper upkeep and maintenance of surface materials is important to ensure the longevity of building components.

- Ordinary maintenance and repair of any architectural feature, which does not involve a change in design, material, color or outward appearance is acceptable.
- Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than removed or replaced.
- Surface materials shall be cleaned only when necessary to remove heavy soiling or to stop deterioration.
- Surface cleaning shall be done by the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage exterior architectural features are not permitted.
- Historic mortars, appropriate to the age of the building, must be used in order to protect the aged masonry.

### 3.4.8 PAINTING

- Wood clad structures in the District have depth and natural variances present in the material, and shall be painted or stained (colored stain) regularly and appropriately to maintain the integrity of the material.
- Masonry structures, particularly brick and stone, shall not be painted. Painting stucco surfaces is permitted.
- Masonry structures shall limit surface painting to trims and accent features on metal, wood, cornices, and window frames.

### 3.4.9 COLORS

The following standards shall apply to the use of colors.

- Historically appropriate paint colors shall be used to maintain and enhance the rich and varied appearance of the neighborhood.
- Color combinations shall be appropriate to the time period and architectural style of the structure.
- Property owners should reference historic palettes available at many commercial outlets for suggested colors and combinations (see *Appendix 1*)
- Coloration of masonry structures shall be achieved by use of the inherent color of natural building materials rather than the application of color to the surface of materials.
- Mortar color of existing structures must be compatible with the original mortar of the building.
- Medium density structures should exhibit earth tone colors evident of the natural color of a particular building material – shades of brown, tan, sand, brick red, terra cotta, grey, etc.
- Window/door frames on residential-scaled structures can range in color, but should complement the overall color scheme of the structure. Window/door frames on medium-density structures are encouraged to use dark bronze, brown, or black.
- All window/door frames and elements should have the same color, except for prominent architectural element, such as pediments, which can have a different, but still, complementary color.
- Architectural elements should match, or subtly contrast with appropriate color/tone, the window/door frame color. This applies to fascia, cornice material, columns, railings, etc. on residential-scaled structures and to cornices,

pilasters, piers, etc. on medium density structures.

- Bright or garish color tones on window/door frames or architectural elements are not acceptable.
- Awnings and canopies can consist of bright or prominent color, but the selected color must accent the predominate color of the larger structure.

### 3.5 Architectural Elements

The character of the District has resulted from a rich collection of architectural styles with a range of individual features. It is important that these architectural elements, which provide detail, texture and depth to a building, contribute to the District's character.

#### 3.5.1 BUILDING ARTICULATION

While specific architectural styles and/or interpretations may vary, new infill structures shall generally incorporate elevation features consistent with the range of elements in surrounding residentially-scaled structures.

- Buildings shall be articulated and incorporate elevation features to sufficiently define their bottom (i.e., foundation), middle (main building levels), and top (roof).
- Designs should focus details on places where vertical and horizontal elements meet, such as roof peaks, the ends of the fascia boards, column capitals and bases, porch railings, and window trim.
- Elevation features should have depth, avoiding a flush or flat appearance.
- Building components such as porch, window, and elevation components should all be aligned with patterns exhibited along the street face to the greatest extent feasible.

#### 3.5.2 ROOFS

- Flat roofs are prohibited on buildings/ structures or portions of buildings or structures that front upon or are visible from public streets, with the exception of medium-scaled structures, i.e. apartment buildings.
- Roofs should be comprised of simple roof lines with an expressed hierarchy of a steeper primary roof with shallower pitched ancillary roofs or dormers added to expand the roof volume or to allow windows in upper levels.
- Various types of sloped roof types may be used and shall be a function of the overall architectural style of the proposed structure(s). Sloped roof types that may be employed include, but would not be limited to: gable, cross-gable, hipped, cross-hipped, gambrel, and mansard.
- Where applicable, roofs should be consistent with the relatively steep slopes existing in the district, but no less than "7 on 12" (i.e., at least 7 inches of rise over 12 inches of run).
- The application of surface details that imitate the appearance of a sloped roof on a flat roof structure (e.g., use of mansard roof panels on a side flat-roofed structure to imitate the appearance of a sloped roof) is prohibited.
- Roof materials can be slate, tile or asphalt shingles (brightly colored asphalt shingles or metal roof panels are not permitted).
- Skylights, solar panels, satellite receiving units and other roof top accessories should be compatible with existing building design, and should not be prominently visible from the street.
- Gutters and downspouts should be made of color-finished aluminum, sheet metal or other non-corrosive material. The color of the finish should be complimentary to color pallet used on the structure. Gutters should not be made of raw or unfinished aluminum or steel.

### 3.5.3 WINDOWS AND DOORS

Windows and doors are highly visible elements of existing buildings in the District. Historic windows and doors are characterized by multi-faceted mullions and muntins, and panels with deep relief. These qualities provide a layered effect that contributes greatly to the authentic appearance of the neighborhood.

- Windows and doors, original to the house, must be retained and repaired, when necessary, rather than replaced.
- Replacements units can be installed if existing windows or doors are functionally obsolete, and must be of similar appearance, size and material.
- Windows and doors should be in the similar vertical and horizontal proportions and styles as in the neighboring structures.
- Vertically-oriented windows (roughly two units tall to one unit wide) should be used to reinforce the general rhythm along the street.
- Grouping several vertical windows together is preferred over installation of a single, horizontal "picture window".
- Placement of wall openings should be at a consistent elevation along the street.
- Smaller, horizontal windows and ornamental windows can be used as accent elements, but should be limited in use.
- Typical, four inch trim should be installed around windows and doors to outline the opening and to add depth to the structure.
- The use of traditional materials for window trim components (e.g., painted wood or metal) is encouraged, however, other types of materials/combination of materials may be acceptable in light of durability needs and how the use of such materials fit into the overall context of the structure's design.
- Windows are encouraged to be operable.
- Glass blocks are not permitted (except for basement windows).
- Raw or unfinished aluminum is not acceptable for storm doors and windows.
- Windows shall be articulated, at a minimum, as double-hung, "one-over-one" panes of glass, although more detailed articulation of window panes (e.g., "four-over-one", "six-over-one", "four-over-four", etc.) is permitted.
- Structural muntins are preferred. Free-standing divisions must be on the exterior of the window and never between the glass layers.
- Iron bars or other types of protective devices covering doors or windows (excluding basement windows) are not permitted.
- Storm windows/doors should be replaced with energy efficient glass rather than replacement of the entire unit.
- Caulking and weather stripping are highly recommended to improve energy efficiency by reducing influx of air around wall openings.

### 3.5.4 DETAILING

Buildings in the District are characterized by highly articulated detailing, including cornices, window and door surrounds, columns and pilasters, and pediments.

- Architectural details on existing structures should be retained and maintained in their original form, where possible.
- If elements are beyond repair and require replacement, they should be replaced with the same material.
- If it is not possible to use the same material, substitute materials may be used if those materials have the same appearance, scale and texture of the original.
- A building shall not be altered to create a false historic appearance; detailing that is not appropriate to the time-period and architectural style of the building may not be added.
- Architectural details on new buildings shall be compatible with existing details in terms of design and scale.

### 3.5.5 ADDITIONS

Additions to buildings shall be treated in a manner that does not detract from the historic character of the District.

- Additions should complement the original structure through appropriate scale, mass and shape.
- Additions on character-defining elevations, especially the street facing/front of the structure, are not permitted.
- Additions should not obscure or hide character-defining features of the original building.
- Additions should have detailing at similar height and depth as the original building.

### 3.5.6 PORCHES

Many residential properties in the District have usable front porches, which create a semi-private space where cultural ideals of family, community, and nature blend together. Front porches are an important characteristic of the District, as they encourage interaction between neighbors, put “eyes on the street,” and introduce a distinctly urban and human scale to the community. Existing porches should be retained in original form and new construction is strongly encouraged to include front porches.

- Repair or replacement of porches must reflect the original appearance and use original materials, wherever possible.
- Porches should be oriented toward the front of the structure in order to create a welcoming transition from the public street to the private structure.
- Porches should be large enough to provide sufficient space for seating. At minimum, a porch should be 6 feet by 12 feet. A larger porch is encouraged, particularly a span across the front of a structure, provided the overall size of the porch fits appropriately and proportionately to the architectural style of the structure.
- Two-family homes or structures incorporating two levels of habitable uses (e.g., B&B, Inn) are encouraged to incorporate stacked porches, one for each level of living space.
- Porch components, such as columns, railings and spindles, should be consistent with the architectural style and color of the structure. Porch roofing materials should also be consistent with the main building.
- Porches may have a limited enclosure system for protection, but should remain relatively open.
- Complete porch enclosure is strongly discouraged. However, if necessary, such enclosure shall be done in a manner that reveals the original open configuration using historically compatible windows, recessed behind character defining railings, posts and detailing.

### 3.5.7 AWNINGS

Awnings were common on residential and commercial properties throughout the District’s period of significance. Awnings regulate the amount of direct sunlight entering a building and subsequently reduce the amount of heat from the sun during the summer. Awnings are also a particularly attractive way to enhance and enliven the appearance of a building. Contemporary materials and construction methods make them cost-efficient.

- Shed-style awnings should be used for double hung or fixed sash windows.
- Box style awnings are appropriate for outward opening casement windows.
- Canvas or canvas type awnings are permitted. Aluminum or metal awnings visible from the street are not permitted.
- Operating frame awnings are preferred on the street side of structures. Fixed frame awnings are permitted on the back side of structures.
- Stripes were very common historically, and would be appropriate on any era building in the District, as would most solid colors.
- Colors should be chosen using the architectural style guidelines table (see *Appendix 1*). Additional information on awnings is provided in Section 3.5.9 Signs.

- Back-lit awnings are prohibited.

### 3.5.8 LIGHTING

Lighting serves an important function in illuminating areas for safety, creating a welcoming space, and highlighting architectural features. Additionally, light fixtures are important architectural elements that contribute greatly to a building's style.

- Original exterior light fixtures must be retained, and should be rehabilitated, whenever possible.
- If rehabilitation is not possible or original lighting is not present, appropriate replacement fixtures that are consistent with the building style, size and material should be installed.
- Lighting that highlights architectural features and enhances night time aesthetics of buildings is encouraged.
- Lighting recessed into cornices and porch elements that provides ambient light to the surrounding neighborhood is encouraged.

### 3.5.9 SIGNS

Although a mostly residential area, a limited range of commercial uses would be permitted under the proposed CNF zoning amendment. Such commercial enterprises would likely desire to locate signs on their property to identify and locate their establishment. Signage in the District should appropriately reflect this change from residential to commercial use. However, the original single-family residences did not have signage, and do not have built-in signboards or windows appropriate in size or placement for lettering. It is therefore important to treat identifying signs in a sensitive manner so they fit within the heritage theme.

Moreover, signs in this pedestrian-oriented neighborhood must be designed so as not to interfere with pedestrians along sidewalks yet still be visible for passing motorists. Other considerations such as location, style, color and illumination are also very important in designing an attractive, functional sign. The standards in this section address these issues and are intended to help business owners create quality signs that add to and support the character of the District.

It should be noted that the standards contained within this section represent *additional* standards to those required under applicable CNF regulations (e.g., zoning code, sign ordinances, etc.). They are not intended supersede any such existing CNF regulations; in the event of a conflict in requirements between these design standards and any requirement in the City Code, the requirements of the CNF shall govern.

- Small signs hanging from the cornice of a porch would be appropriate and where possible, should be used.
- Where no porch is on the street façade, attaching a similarly sized sign to the face of the building would be an acceptable substitute.
- If the face of a building is proximate to the sidewalk/street, the sign may be suspended from a bracket perpendicular to the building.
- Permitted total sign area (i.e., total square footage of signs for a particular establishment/use) shall be governed by City codes; all proposed signs shall be subject to City review and permitting.
- Small, free-standing signs on front lawns are acceptable, as many buildings are set back too far for other types of signage to be effective. These signs shall be limited to a maximum 16 square feet per side.
- If spot lighting is required, gooseneck lamps are acceptable to provide illumination for building mounted signs.
- Colors of a sign shall coordinate with the colors of the building.
- If awnings are on the building, they make an excellent location for signage. Lettering should be placed on the valence of the awning. This allows for improved view ability and permits easy changes in the signage since the

valences can be removed and re-lettered at minimal expense. Additionally, if the awnings are operable, the lettering would be visible in both the open and closed positions (for further information, see Section 2.5.7 Awnings).

- Portable A-Frame or “sandwich-board” signs shall meet the following design standards:
- A maximum of one sandwich-board sign per individual retail use/ service business (including food and beverage establishments) shall be permitted.
- Sandwich-board signs may be placed on the grassed area of the public right-of-way between the sidewalk and the business enterprise; placement between the sidewalk and the street is not allowed.
- Sandwich-board signs shall have a maximum sign face area of eight square feet per side, with a maximum sign face width of three feet measured from the sign legs. Sandwich-board sign bases shall be weighted with a minimum ten-pound ballast, incorporated into the overall design of the sign, to ensure stability in windy conditions. Use of improvised measures to secure signs (e.g., concrete blocks, sand bags, etc.) are prohibited. Sandwich-board signs shall be truly portable and cannot be permanently affixed to any structure or sidewalk, and must be removed from the public right-of-way at the end of each business day.

The following are sign that are prohibited from the District.

- Back lit or neon signs.
- Large, free standing pole or pylon signs.
- Non-accessory signs (e.g., billboards).
- Temporary or portable signs including portable lighted sign panels, vehicle-mounted signs, streamers, advertising banners, handbills or other similar types of signs features/types, except:
  - Banners associated with civic events and/or festivals or grand opening—after first receiving approval and a temporary se permit by the CNF.
  - “A-Frame”, sandwich board signs, in accordance with criteria outline above.
- Signs encroaching upon a public right-of-way and/or attached to any element within a public right-of-way (e.g. lighting fixtures), except as specified in these standards and in City codes or regulations.
- All signs that do not conform to City codes/regulations and/or to these design standards should be removed or retrofitted to be in conformance.

### **3.6 Structures Listed on or Eligible for Inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places**

Several individual structures may be listed on or be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). In addition to standards set forth herein, rehabilitation of NRHP-eligible structures within the program area shall also conform to the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix). Should conflict between the District design standards and the Secretary of the Interior Standards arise, the Secretary of the Interiors standards shall prevail.

Prior to final approval of a grant application, for National Register Eligible structures the property owner and USA Niagara shall undertake SHPO consultation to ensure that the proposal conforms to the above standards.

## 4 Review Procedures

### 4.1 Overall Intent

The Agency may invite, solicit, or accept proposals for the grant program for rehabilitation or new development in the Agency's program area in accordance with these standards, as well as all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations relating to development in the City of Niagara Falls. The Agency will be responsible for selection, designation, and approval of grants for all development proposals, which shall be submitted and reviewed in three separate stages, as listed below.

The Agency, in their sole discretion, may waive, amend, supplement, or modify the submission requirements to best address the features and review requirements of a particular application.

### 4.2 Schematic Proposal

#### 4.2.1 INTENT

This submission by the Developer is intended to allow informal review by the Agency and the City to clarify basic assumptions and conceptual issues.

#### 4.2.2 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Developer must submit to the Agency the following information for review and approval prior to submitting a Schematic Proposal for development:

- Letter of Intent.
- Conceptual Site Plan. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".
- Conceptual Ground Floor Plan indicating Uses, Access, and Entries. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".
- Conceptual Elevations of Building Facades. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".

### 4.3 Preliminary Proposal

#### 4.3.1 INTENT

This submission by the Developer permits formal review and evaluation of the proposals in terms of appropriateness and conformity with requirements and objectives of these standards. It is also used to secure agreement on and approval of the general design and development concept by the City and other applicable jurisdictions before actual work by the Developer occurs.

#### 4.3.2 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Preliminary Proposal shall contain the following elements:

- A Site Plan at an appropriate scale describing the proposed use of the land, buildings, walks, parking areas, driveways, and pedestrian and vehicular use, open spaces including landscaping, with square feet calculations noted.
- Conceptual building plans, elevations, and sections showing organization of building functions/spaces, window fenestration, detailing, and façade materials, and other items to show compliance with the purpose and intent of the architectural design standards. These shall include:
  - Site Plan indicating building mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and connections. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".
  - Site Plan indicating building perimeter, landscaping, grading, and paving. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".

- Ground Floor, Roof, and Typical Floor Plans. Minimum scale: 1/16" = 1'-0".
- Building Elevations indicating planar elevation changes, bulkhead, and roof elevations. Minimum scale: 1/8" = 1'-0".
- Building sections indicating building heights. Minimum scale: 1/8" = 1'-0".
- Front-wall Elevation indicating material treatment, location of marquees and cornice details. Minimum scale: 1/4" = 1'-0".
- Outline Specifications for basic mechanical systems, exterior materials, and colors.
- An analysis of pertinent building requirements in tabular form, showing how the proposed development meets each provision. A written statement of the proposal including floor area, type of building construction, number of parking spaces, preliminary cost estimates, phasing when appropriate, and other data that may assist in reviewing the proposal. Information regarding the Developer's experience and financial ability and method of proposed financing to carry out the proposal.
- Other information deemed by the Agency to be necessary to render a decision on the project.

#### 4.3.3 SITE PLAN REVIEW AND OTHER APPROVALS

Following a determination by the Agency that the Developer's submission meets the completion requirements of this section, the Developer shall apply to the City for Site Plan Review in accordance with City of Niagara Falls requirements and other appropriate jurisdictions for any other necessary reviews/approvals. Upon approval by the City and these other jurisdictions, the Developer may proceed with the final proposal.

#### 4.3.4 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CONSULTATION

For rehabilitation projects involving buildings that meeting eligibility criteria for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)<sup>1</sup>, the Preliminary Proposal shall be forwarded to the SHPO for review and consultation, concurrent with any necessary City review and approvals. Upon completion of the SHPO consultation process, the Developer may proceed with the final proposal.

### 4.4 Final Proposal

#### 4.4.1 INTENT

This submission by the Developer documents the final design of the development proposal which shall serve as the basis for the grant agreement between the Agency and the Developer. It shall incorporate any and all revisions, refinements, and conditions arising out of reviews/approvals from the Agency, City, and other jurisdictions.

#### 4.2.2 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The final proposal submitted by the Developer shall contain the following elements:

Site and construction plans conforming to the approved preliminary proposal, with any changes that may be required. The plan shall indicate all landscaping and site development details including walls, fences, plantings including tree plantings, outdoor lighting and street furniture, signage, ground surface materials, bounding streets, points of vehicular and pedestrian access, number and type of parking facilities, utility lines and connections, existing and proposed grading and draining, and public easements to remain. Specifically this shall include:





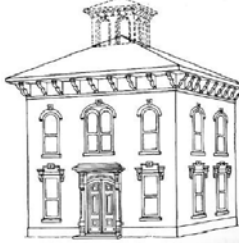






- Updated Site Plans, Floor Plans, Building Sections, and Elevations. Minimum scale: 1/8" = 1'-0".
- Plans, sections, and architectural elevations with typical exterior details, including marquees, cornices, open spaces, and plazas. Minimum scale: 1/4" = 1'-0".

## ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STANDARDS

- Samples of all exterior surface materials.
- Updated outline specifications.
- Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing drawings (if applicable for review).
- Work to be done by others and the responsible party identified.

**Details of material and specifications including construction cost estimates. written statement noting major building dimensions and gross area of buildings, open space, proposed division of work between the Developer and public agencies (if applicable), evidence of equity capital and mortgage financing, and proposed time schedule for construction, including phasing if appropriate.**

**Attachment 2: Historic Architecture Index**

	<b>Georgian</b>	<b>Federal/Adam</b>	<b>Greek Revival</b>	<b>Gothic Revival</b>	<b>Italianate</b>	<b>Tudor</b>	<b>Queen Anne</b>	<b>Dutch Colonial</b>	<b>Mediterranean</b>	<b>Neo-Classical</b>	<b>Craftsman/ Bungalow</b>
	1700-1780	1781-1820	1875-1860	1840-1880	1840-1885	1840-1885	1880-1910	1880-1940	1890-1915	1895-1950	1905-1930
											
Roof, Chimney and Dormers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hip or side-gabled roof</li> <li>• Half-round and pedimented dormers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hip or side-gabled roof</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gabled or hip roof of low pitch</li> <li>• Pedimented dormers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steeply pitched roof, often cross gabled</li> <li>• Decorative vergeboards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low pitched roof, often hip style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steep, side-gabled roof</li> <li>• Highly decorative chimney with multiple pots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steeply-pitched, multi-faceted roof</li> <li>• Intricately detailed chimneys with multiple pots</li> <li>• Dormers of varied size and shape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gambrel Roof</li> <li>• Side gabled/gambreled</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low pitched roof, often of clay tile</li> <li>• Overhangs with brackets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prominent cornices and roof balustrades</li> <li>• Pedimented and highly detailed dormers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-layered roof</li> <li>• Hipped or side-gabled</li> <li>• Shingles</li> <li>• Deep, bracketed overhangs</li> </ul>
Exterior Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prominent multi-layered cornices</li> <li>• Dentil moldings</li> <li>• Quoins</li> <li>• Pilasters</li> <li>• Belt Courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prominent multi-layered cornices</li> <li>• Dentil molding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide, divided cornices</li> <li>• Columns or pilasters (round or square), often full-height leading to a pediment</li> <li>• Flat, Smooth wall surfaces</li> <li>• Rectilinear shapes and forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finials</li> <li>• Gothic Arches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide overhanging eaves supported by decorative brackets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asymmetrical facades</li> <li>• Masonry surfaces, often brick with stucco</li> <li>• Half-timbering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-layered cornices</li> <li>• Intricate railings, posts, cornices and detailing</li> <li>• Brackets</li> <li>• Exterior surfaces clad in varied materials and textures</li> <li>• Geometric projections</li> <li>• Towers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prominent, multi-layered cornices</li> <li>• 1½ story</li> <li>• Masonry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stucco wall surfaces</li> <li>• One story columns and pilasters, sometimes paired</li> <li>• Decorative Stone work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Columns with decorative classical capitals</li> <li>• Highly symmetrical</li> <li>• Masonry or smooth surfaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Varied wall surfaces and materials</li> <li>• Some Tudor style half-timbering</li> <li>• Stucco and shingle very common</li> <li>• Natural finishes or earth tones</li> </ul>
Fenestration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double-hung, divided sash windows</li> <li>• Large or paired windows</li> <li>• Palladian windows</li> <li>• Shutters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double-hung, divided sash windows</li> <li>• Palladian windows</li> <li>• Large or paired windows</li> <li>• Shutters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double-hung or casement, multi-panes windows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Window crowns/drip moldings</li> <li>• Gothic arched (pointed) or square windows</li> <li>• Bay windows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tall, narrow windows, often arched or curved with decorative surrounds and hoods</li> <li>• Bay windows with articulated crowns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tall, narrow multi-paned casement windows, often metal with leaded glass</li> <li>• Decorative brick window surrounds</li> <li>• Bay windows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large single pane windows, varied sizes, shapes and styles, often ornamental</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double-hung, divided sash windows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple windows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balanced fenestrations</li> <li>• Elaborated window surrounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ribbon windows</li> <li>• Casement windows or double-hung with divided upper</li> </ul>
Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Center entrances</li> <li>• Columned entry porches or stoops</li> <li>• Prominent pediments above entry doors</li> <li>• Sun Porches with full-wall multi-pane windows/doors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Columned Stoops</li> <li>• Center entrances</li> <li>• Prominent pediments and fanlights above entry doors</li> <li>• Sidelights flanking entry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entry porches with columns</li> <li>• Entry door surrounded by narrow transoms and sidelights</li> <li>• Double entry door</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entry or full-width one-story front porches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double entry doors</li> <li>• Entry Porch with intricate detailing and slender columns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Front porches absent or recessed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partial or wrap-around asymmetrical porch</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arched above doors, and principal windows or beneath porch roofs</li> <li>• Tile steps/porch floors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full height entry porch or pronounced pilasters</li> <li>• Elaborate entrance door and surround</li> <li>• One story side wings/porches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Porches, especially at entrance</li> </ul>
Colors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Dutch Colonial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Dutch Colonial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Dutch Colonial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep colors with light columns mimicking stone</li> <li>• Cottages in light shades with subtle trim colors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light shades on the body with contrasting single color trim and detailing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep colors or darkly stained wood</li> <li>• Contrasting base colors, lighter to accent wood, never stark white</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-chromatic</li> <li>• Vivid and contrasting shades</li> <li>• White trim</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Colonial Revival utilized colors that represented stone precedents</li> <li>• Gray and white trim</li> <li>• Yellow was popular</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body of house in light colors to reflect California origin of style</li> <li>• Trim white or light shade of color</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Dutch Colonial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep, rich colors</li> <li>• Layered or multiple hues to accent detailing and trim</li> </ul>
Materials in the District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clapboard</li> <li>• Brick</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brick</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stone</li> <li>• Clapboard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wood</li> <li>• Stucco</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brick</li> <li>• Stucco</li> <li>• Half Timbering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shingle</li> <li>• Clapboard</li> <li>• Brick</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clapboard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stucco</li> <li>• Stone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brick</li> <li>• Stucco</li> <li>• Stone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brick</li> <li>• Stucco</li> </ul>

BUFFALO AVENUE HERITAGE DISTRICT

## Attachment 2: Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (Department of Interior Regulations under 36 CFR 67) pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

The Department has developed a document entitled *Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* to help property owners, developers, and Federal managers apply the Secretary of the Interior's Standards during the project planning stage by providing general design and technical recommendations. Unlike the *Standards*, the *Guidelines* are not codified as program requirements. Access to these guidelines is available on the National Park Service website at: <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/index.htm>

### The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.