

7.0 Conceptual Design Guidelines

Introduction

These guidelines are a result of the public participation process which has encompassed the Cedar Main Street Design Charette. They build on the design ideas presented in this report and provide a bridge between design concepts and the implementation of the community's ideas and aspirations for the Cedar Main Street corridor. The purpose of these design guidelines are to improve the vibrancy and ambiance of Cedar Main Street and in the process enhance the economic potential of Cedar Main Street businesses (both existing and future). Cedar Main Street is a local commercial center servicing Cedar and the surrounding area. It is positioned on Cedar Road and provides an alternative and scenic route for traversing the eastern portion of Vancouver Island. Cedar is not intended to be a major commercial center, as a large amount of retail already exists in and around Nanaimo. In contrast to the adjacent retail which includes many major big box brands, the community of Cedar envisions the main street evolving into a boutique and vibrant village center which will include, over time, smaller retail outlets, food and beverage opportunities and small scale office space. The Village plan envisions the main street including mixed use buildings with ground level commercial and office space and second floor (and in some cases third floor) residential space. New buildings which retain a residential scale and feel yet provide opportunities for shops, offices and cafes are encouraged.

Cedar Main Street has a variety of historic buildings within its existing building stock. Within the core main street area there are several notable historic buildings including: the Wheatshaf Inn, the St Phillips Anglican Church, the Malhe Restaurant. Refer to Appendix A for a more complete description of Cedar's historic architecture. While the buildings are historic the styles are eclectic and are hard to categorize under one category. It is the communities desire to have new buildings within Cedar draw on both historical precedents as well as provide variety and interest within the Cedar Main Street corridor. These design guidelines include suggestions for architectural massing, roofscape design, site planning, and have a special focus on the ground floor façade design to ensure that mixed use buildings enhance the pedestrian environment.

Purpose and Intent

These guidelines are not Development Permit Guidelines. They are not a regulatory document but rather an ideas document intended to provide ideas inspiration and a guide for the design intent of the design charette ideas. They do not specifically reference one historic architectural style, but rather reference elements of vernacular design and in some cases contemporary green design. An

approach to architectural design is suggested in which the building relates specifically to its intended uses, climatic considerations and the typical wood frame detailing and craftsmanship that local trades people would be familiar with in the past as well as the present.

The guidelines are broken down into eight components:

1. Building massing
2. Site planning (including allowable densities)
3. Green Building
4. Façade design
5. Detailing
6. Landscape design
7. Signage
8. Lighting

7.1 Building Massing

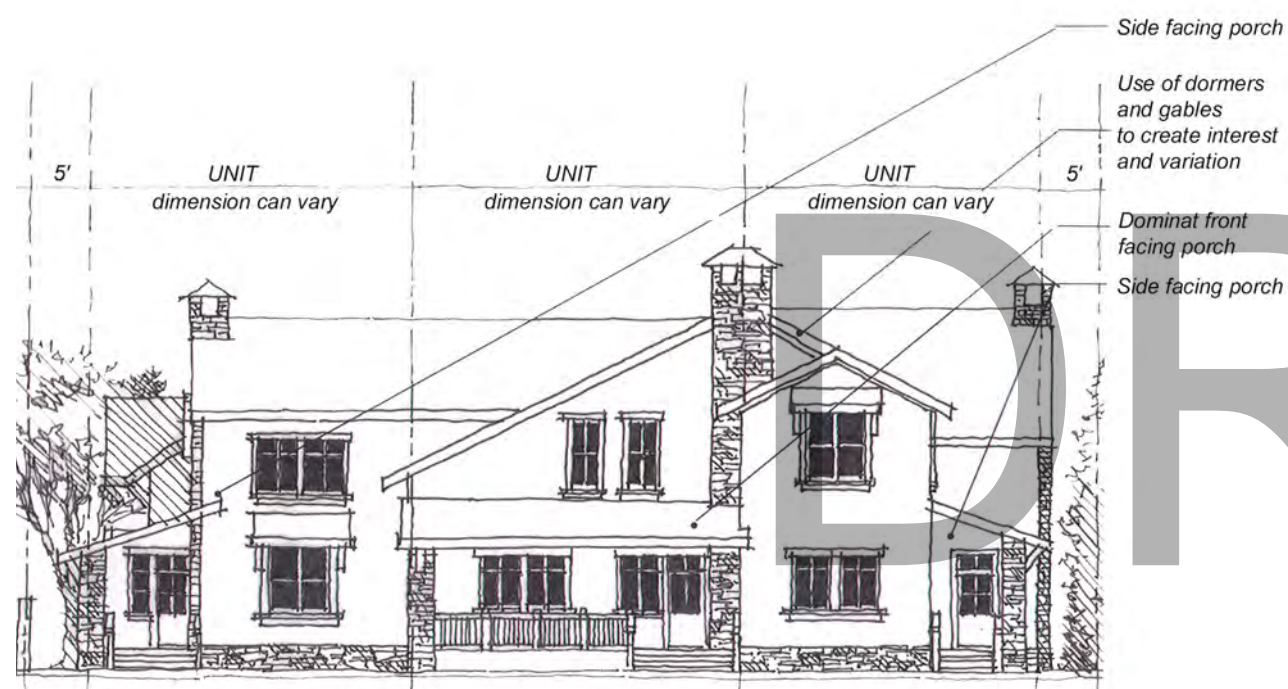
Architectural massing is the volumetric design the building takes. It is the three dimensional space in which the building occupies. In simplest terms it is the three dimensional form of the building. Architectural massing is important to the overall appearance of Cedar Main Street in that the building form can have the biggest impact on the character of Cedar Main Street. Large commercial structures have a different form and massing than smaller rural structures. For this reason it is important to suggest ways to lessen the impact of building form. Proposed buildings greater than 12M (40') in width facing the street may appear to be out of scale with the existing village like building fabric of Cedar Main Street. There are a number of ways of addressing this issue including:

- Buildings can be articulated to create interest, harmony and scale within their architecture. In certain cases relief from this design element can be given if the roof massing can be articulated through oversized overhangs, supported by wooden bracketry and be inspired by vernacular building forms found in the surrounding area (such as barns or mills).
- Roofscapes can be designed to provide usable space through dormers and gables.
- Street frontage facades can be articulated in the horizontal and vertical planes.
- Buildings can have multiple storefronts with independent entrances.



Additional considerations for larger buildings include:

Ensuring buildings have a human scale along Cedar Main Street. Buildings should maintain a two story building height as viewed from Cedar Main Street unless the roof is hand framed. In this case third floor space may be bonused and could be built into the roofscape. It is recommended that under the following conditions be strived for: no more than 40% of the third floor exterior walls may have full height studs. If the building contains bonused third floor space, aim for no more than 50% of the roof containing attic space. As a general guideline keep the maximum top plate elevation no greater than 9M (30') above adjacent grade.



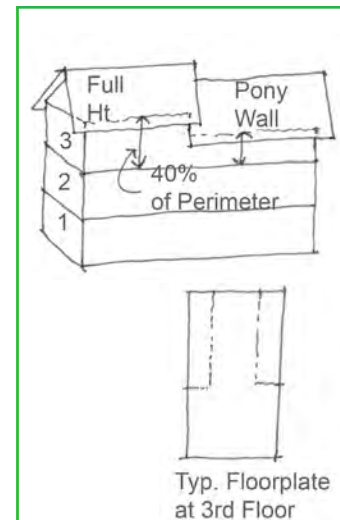
Storefront entrances should be protected from the weather. This can be accomplished by: Maintaining covered porch areas adjacent to storefront entrances. Providing wood frame canopies above storefront doors. Extending roof elements at least 1.8M (6') past the building envelope provided the roof above is no more than 5.5M (18') in average above the storefront threshold. Canvas and fabric storefront canopies are discouraged. Over time they require maintenance and replacement and are not in keeping with the residential character of Cedar Main Street.

For smaller buildings (such as less than less than 40' in width facing Cedar Main Street) the architecture can address the following ideas:

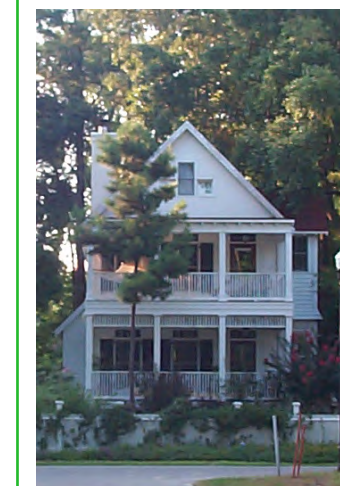
- The architecture shall retain a residential scale in massing. Simplicity in façade design and roof design is important.
- First floor heights shall be generous and front porches are encouraged. The building should have a vertical orientation and not be in a simple rancher style. This can be achieved using generous floor to ceiling heights.
- Preference shall be given to the gable end of roofs facing the street. Work with the adjacent architecture to compliment it through contrasting roof orientations and shapes. Exceptions can be made for buildings utilizing passive solar and requiring certain roof orientations.



- Buildings should try to maintain a two story building height as viewed from the Cedar Main Street unless the roof is hand framed. In this case third floor space may be bonused (permitted based on meeting certain criteria) and may be built into the roofscape under the following conditions: aim for no more than 60% of the third floor exterior walls having full height studs. If the building contains bonused third floor space, aim for no more than 30% of the roof containing attic space. The maximum top plate elevation shall be no greater than 8.5M (28') above adjacent grade.

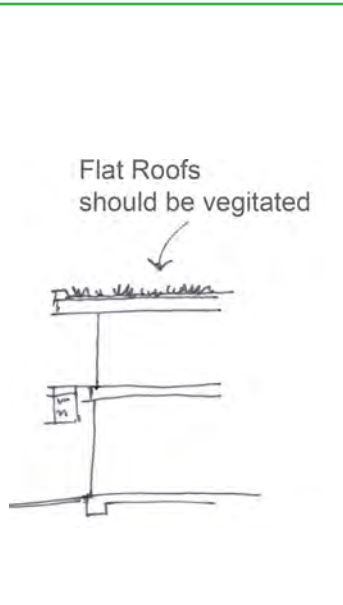


Left: Carriage homes are encouraged as a way to infill on existing lots. Space must be maintained between the carriage home and primary building to ensure usable outdoor space.



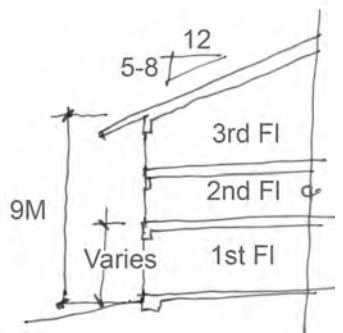
Above: Smaller buildings should have a vertical presence on the street





Right:
Third floor space needs to be built into the roofscape.

Far Right: Commercial storefronts should not be raised too far above street level.



General design recommendations all building sizes which can be considered to help offset the impacts of building massing and which will help define a village style architecture include the following points:

- Flat roofs should be avoided with exceptions made in cases like the installation of a certified as green roof.
- Roof overhangs shall be articulated in a variety of ways and where possible be generous. In some cases the overhangs at gables can be exaggerated with wood brackets and eave overhangs be kept to a minimum. In other cases gable end roof overhangs can be kept minimal while eave overhangs can be exaggerated through the use of exposed hand framed rafters and rafter tails.
- Look for opportunities to orient roofs for passive solar and proposed or future photovoltaic installations.



- In general roof pitches should not exceed 8:12. Exceptions can be made for narrower buildings where a steep roof is a key design element and the roof space is inhabited.
- Storefront entrances should be positioned near grade. In general they should not be raised more than 0.6M (24") above adjacent grade and where they are elevated accessible ramps may be integral

- to the architecture and architectural massing of the building.
- First floors of mixed use buildings facing Cedar Main Street should have at least a 3.0M (10') ceiling height on average. First floors of residential buildings facing Cedar Main Street shall have at least a 2.75M (9') ceiling height on average.

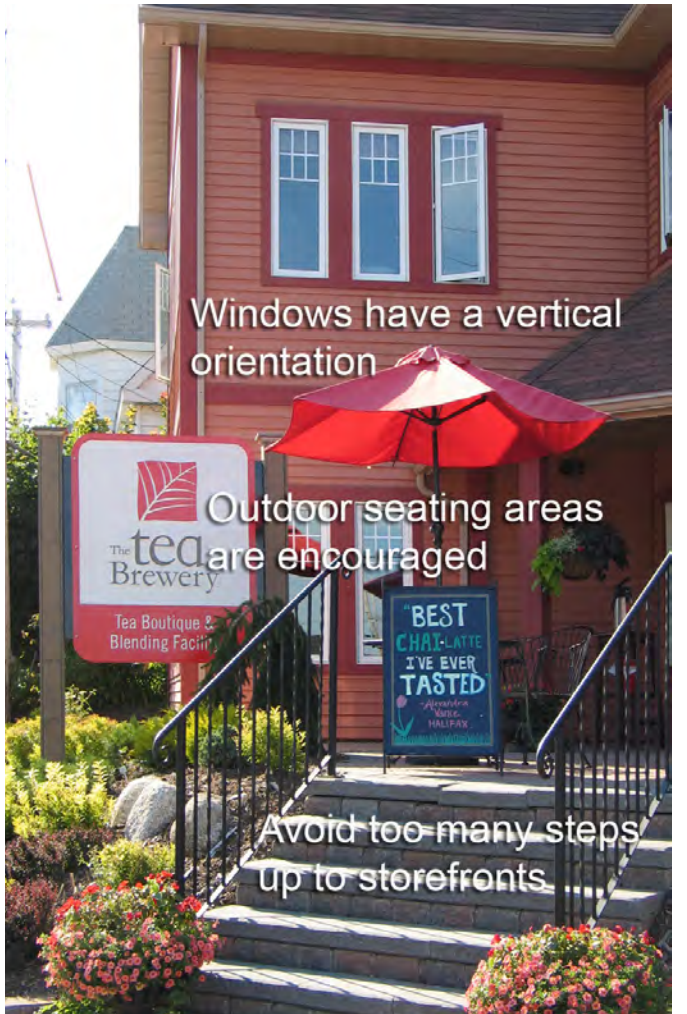
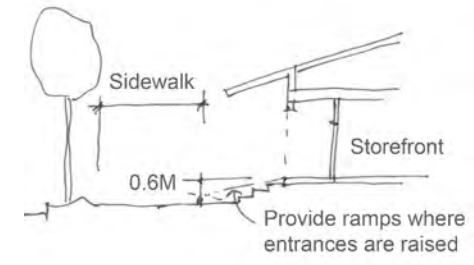
Floor Area Ratio (FAR):

Floor area ratio (FAR) is a common measure of building massing on a site. It is simply the ratio of built floor area to site area. The floor area ratio should be measured by the conditioned interior floor area (including exterior walls and sheathing) by usable urbanized area of the lot. Unusable areas such as protected natural areas (wetlands and forests) should be excluded from the site area calculations. Floor space ratios should not exceed 0.45 unless buildings follow the green building guidelines set forth in this document.

To encourage green buildings, different standards may apply. Where buildings do follow the green building guidelines the following floor area ratios could apply:

For mixed use buildings the floor area ratio should not exceed 0.8. Basements which daylight fully on one side due to the natural topography of the site may be excluded as floor area.

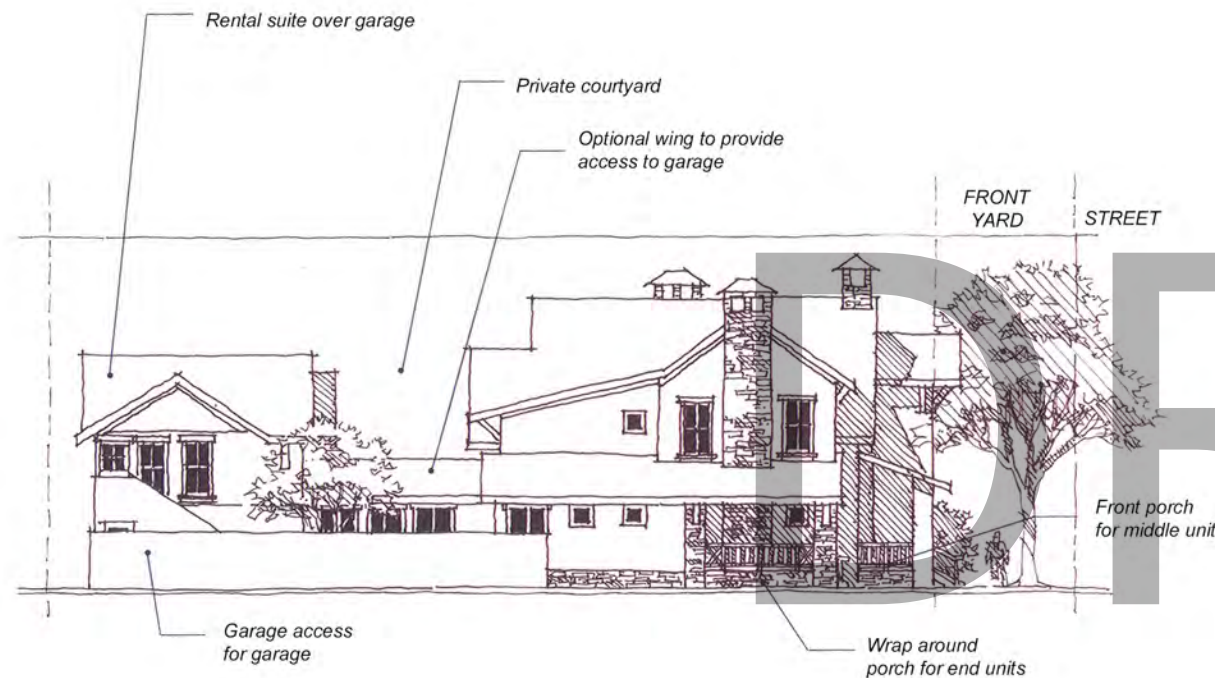
For residential buildings the floor area ratio should not exceed 0.6. Basements which daylight fully on one side due to the natural topography of the site should be included in the floor area calculations.



7.2 Site Planning

Setbacks:

It is intended that mixed use buildings in general be brought close to the street edge. This is important in village design as it brings the storefronts close to the sidewalk and to the pedestrian and creates a tighter knit framework of village buildings and thus encourages the creation of a village like ambience. As well large spaces between buildings should be avoided as it detracts from the level of interest and the village character of a walking street. Buildings close together with continuous or near continuous storefronts create a pedestrian oriented streetscape.



It is recommended that mixed use buildings shall adhere to the following setbacks:

Front yard maximum: 4.6M (15') **Front yard Minimum:** 2.3M (7.5'). At least 50% of the front façade should adhere to the maximum front yard setback. Create courtyards protected from the elements by bringing certain elements of the building forward.

Side yard: 3M (10') Maximum on at least one property line. 1.5M (5') Minimum with exceptions for zero lot line setbacks where a coordinated approach is made for creating a building to building (site to site) party wall. Side yards facing adjacent streets shall adhere to the front yard setbacks.

Rear yard: 2.5M (5') Minimum for secondary buildings and free standing garages, 40' for primary buildings. Outbuildings with residential uses are encouraged as long as usable outdoor space can be maintained between the outbuilding and primary building. The distance between the primary building and a free standing out building should be at least 6M (20').

Site Coverage:

The site coverage should be measured by the usable urbanized area of the lot. Unusable areas such as protected natural areas (wetlands and forests) may be excluded from the site area calculations. For mixed use buildings the area covered by habitable floor space (including garages) should not exceed 50% of the usable site area.

Green Building Considerations:

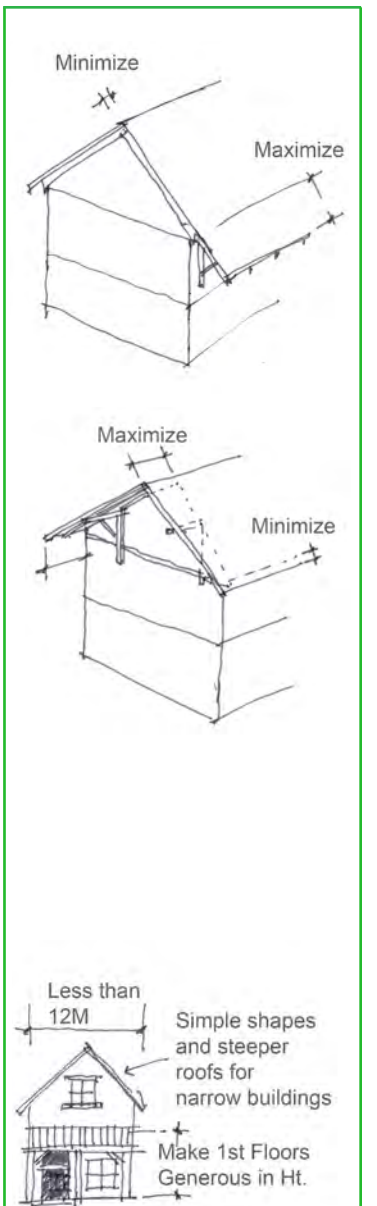
At least 50% of the exterior space excluding natural areas should be permeable. Asphalt driveways are discouraged. Permeable driveway materials such as structural turf, gravel and granite crush are encouraged. At least 10% of the usable site area should be used to gather and distribute rain water from the site paved areas and the roofscape back into the ground.

Also see 6.0 Landscape Design.

Residential uses:

It is important to maintain a reasonable but not overtly large average dwelling unit size within Cedar Main Street. Smaller units are encouraged as they are often more affordable to build, own and rent. Smaller apartment and townhouse style units will complement the existing housing stock in Cedar and provide for a variety of housing options for Cedar residents. Multi-family housing offers a low maintenance lifestyle to its residents and is a good option for young people, small families, singles and seniors. The following are policy recommendations which could help shape a diversity of housing options in Cedar Main Street.

The maximum allowable density for mixed use and residential buildings should be 48 units per usable hectare (20 units per usable acre). The maximum unit size should be the following: For projects up to 19 units per usable hectare (8 units per usable acre) – 180 SM (1,800sf); for projects from 19 units per usable hectare (8 units per usable acre) to 34 units per usable hectare (14 units per usable acre) – 120SM (1,200 sf); for projects greater than 34 units per usable hectare (14 units per usable acre); 80SM (800sf). The minimum dwelling size shall be 45 SM (450sf) in a studio configuration with full cooking facilities. No more than half of the units in any one project shall be less than 50SM (500sf) and shall be greater than 120SM (1,200sf).



Note: maximum residential densities will be a product of several criteria including building siting, setbacks, site coverage, floor space ratios, usable site area, building massing and allowable building height.

General Site Planning Considerations:

Mixed use buildings shall avoid having residential units facing Cedar Main Street (with exception for front doors and hallways provided they do not exceed 1.8M).

Drive through windows for commercial establishments are discouraged. This was a point brought up by residents during the charette.

Parking:

Where parking can be located on the street and the building lot frontage is less than 12M (40'), commercial and residential parking requirements may be waived. Where parking cannot be located on street, the following parking requirements may be required: One parking stall should be provided per 100SM

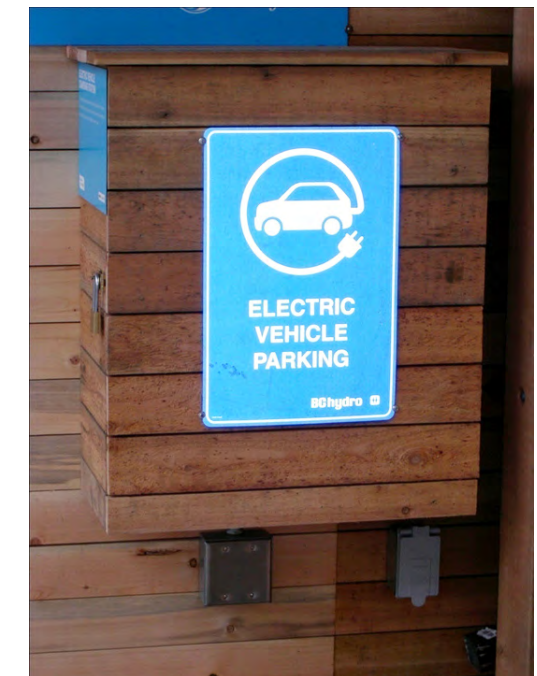
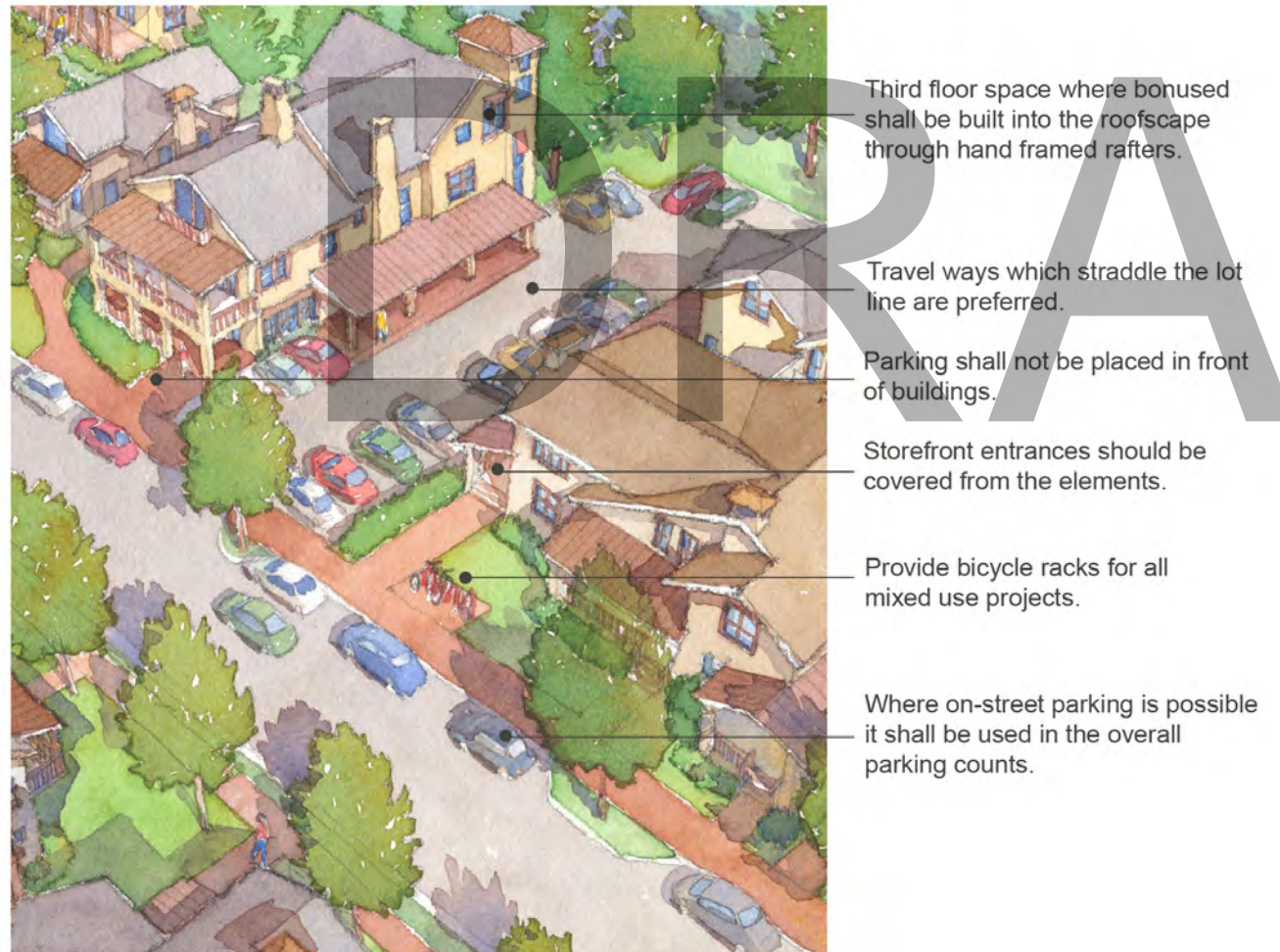
(1,000 sf) of commercial or office space. One parking stall shall be provided per each residential unit. In certain cases parking requirements may be less restrictive for residential units in mixed use buildings. For instance a policy could be written allowing for one parking stall shall be provided per each three residential units if the project follows the green building guidelines set forth in this document.

Parking stalls should not be located in parking lots in front of buildings facing Cedar Main Street. Parking which is located at the rear of the lot is encouraged. In some cases parking lots may be sited between buildings (where opportunities exist for a shared travel way). As a green building incentive, shared travel ways for parking lots which straddle the lot line could result in one less parking space required per lot after the parking calculations have been tabulated. For lots adjacent to an alley, parking must be accessed only by the alley.

7.3 Green Building

Design Idea 5 of the design charette speaks to the residents desire to maintain a rural and natural setting and for buildings to take a conservation approach to design, thus enforcing the idea of living in a natural setting. The residents have a strong desire for buildings to be more energy efficient and 'water smart' (having water conservation methods integral to their design). A variety of green building incentives may be put in place, including allowing for more floor area to be built on a site if green building practices are followed. Builders, owners and designers should reference the RDN Sustainability checklist.

To help define what constitutes green building it is recommended that to classify as a green building, the builders, owners and designers must follow a standard green building certification program and process. Some programs that could be implemented include Built Green BC, LEED NC (new construction) and Energuide (an energy efficiency rating system). Using an already established program such as these requires that the building be certified green by a third party and the public can be assured that the owners, builders and designers have produced a green building. For example a policy could be written that



to qualify as meeting the intent of green building in Cedar mixed use and residential buildings must be certified as a minimum of BuiltGreen Gold. In addition: each residential unit must meet an Energuide rating of 80.

The green building programs noted here encourage the use of renewable energy, the creation of passive environmental control systems (such as passive solar and passive cooling) and promote the use of local and renewable building materials.

The green building initiative could be expanded to include recommendations such as:

Buildings should not use vinyl windows (Vinyl off gasses and its manufacturing process is water and energy consumptive), buildings shall not use asphalt shingles (they are short lived and contain many chemicals that can leach into the ground water when disposed of), landscaped areas shall not include more than 40% turfgrass (maintaining turfgrass is energy and water consumptive) and each building shall provide at least one electric car charge outlet accessible to a user of the building (such as a store owner, or residential tenant).

7.4 Façade Design

As inhabitant of villages and towns, residents for the most part do not enter the many private buildings within their community. However, the exterior of the village buildings create the outdoor walls that define the public space of village life. Façade design is important in that it conveys the ambiance and quality of the village's public space. Care must be taken in the design of the exterior of the village buildings to create a pedestrian scale, and charm associated with rural villages and hamlets such as Cedar.

Storefront Windows:

In mixed use buildings the storefront windows become a dominant component of the façade. Care shall be taken into the design of storefront windows. Inspiration can be taken from traditional and vernacular small town store fronts such as those illustrated here. In general most of the first floor street front façade should be used for the display of merchandise, the daylighting of the store interior, and to give presence of the storefront to the street. Storefront windows should be at least square in proportion and preferably have a dominate vertical element to the design through the use of true divided lites and intermediate window mullions. Where possible transom windows should be located above (where ceiling heights allow). Opening transom windows are a traditional design element to naturally ventilate the store space and add to the character and charm of the storefront.

Storefront windows should be protected from glare by canopies and porch roofs and should not be overly obstructed by landscaping. Ideally storefront windows shall be adjacent to hard surfaced areas such as sidewalks, patios, terraces and courtyards. Vinyl windows should not be used for commercial storefronts. Recycled wood windows, and hand crafted wood windows, either natural or painted are preferred. If aluminum storefront windows are used they should be in an accent color such as an earth red or green. Raw aluminum and commercial gray and silver colours are not allowable as they are associated with urban storefronts and will detract from the village charm. The use of accent colours will help convey a rural charm and ambiance.

Other Windows:

Long horizontal windows are discouraged. In general windows should mimic the vernacular, have true divided lites and be in vertical or square configurations.



Left: Commercial storefronts should provide ample window area for the display of merchandise and for providing good natural daylight within the establishment.

Where possible place transom windows above doors and provide generous first floor ceiling heights.



Far Right: Maintain views into the storefronts. Landscaping is required but should not impede the storefront's visibility. Colour and wood siding is encouraged and adds charm and character to the village.

Below Right: Where possible provide usable outdoor space adjacent to the storefront.



Oversized windows are encouraged. Window trims should be kept to a minimum or may be true to historic detailing. Only operable shutters should be used. Decorative shutters that do not match the window opening size should be avoided as they appear fake and degrade the overall quality of village design. Window boxes are encouraged.

Siding:

A variety of siding materials and textures within the village creates interest, contrast and when thought through can add an element of harmony to the village. The proper use of textures and siding trims can also break up large building expanses. The following materials should be avoided as they are associated with urban and not rural villages: Raw concrete (unless board formed or coloured), stucco, steel and aluminum siding (unless in accent areas), cementitious boards (such as hardboard - as it appears fake close up). The following materials are encouraged: cedar shingles, cedar board and batten, cedar shiplap, natural stone, locally milled timbers. These are materials that will add to the village craftsmanship of Cedar. All other common materials are acceptable if used to their advantage (such as brick, tile, colour panels in accent areas only).

Colour:

Vibrant colours on commercial facades is a staple of many historic villages throughout Canada and in other parts of the world. Adding the element of tasteful and vibrant colours to mixed use buildings announces their presence to the street. In buildings in which generous amounts of colour are applied to the façade, the buildings should strive to the following: simple architectural massing, contrasting field, trim and window colours, colours found within the region in historic buildings true to their era. In addition to colour, hand painted murals and signs integral to the façade are acceptable provided they are reviewed in concept prior to any formal design review.





- Gable (end of roof ridge)
- Rake (overhang at gable)
- Frieze Board (trim under overhang)
- Window Trim (Head)
- Window Trim (Jamb)
- Window Trim (Sill)
- Transom Window (high window which sits over doors or storefront window)
- Storefront Window (Large glass window at shop front)

7.5 Detailing

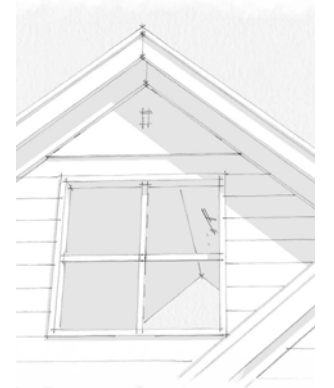
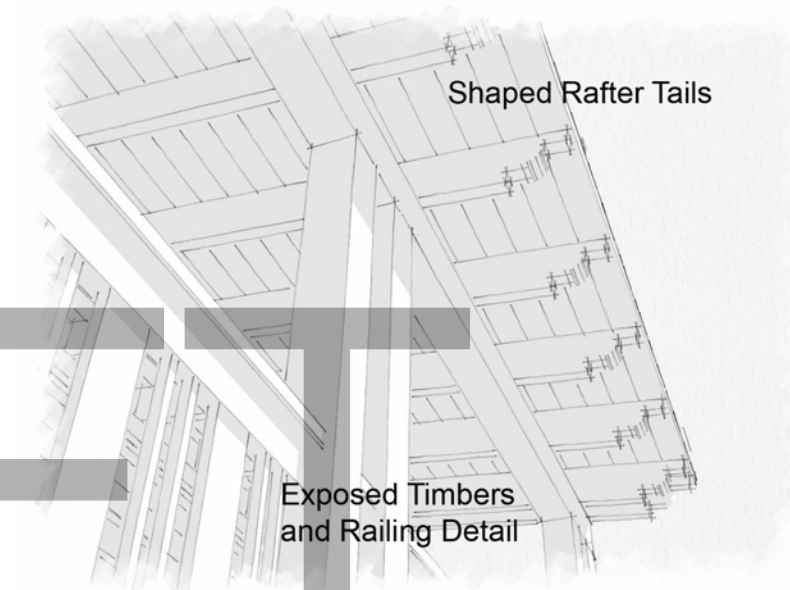
Architectural detailing is an important design element that contributes to the overall village ambience. In small rural areas more and in particular in traditional villages across Canada building detail is often the design element that becomes associated with a particular place. On the West Coast we have an abundance of wood so heavy timber detailing is often used as an expression of the local culture and craftsmanship. It is part of the local culture of building. This helps root the architecture in the context of local place and will help define what type of place Cedar becomes as it builds out over the next few years. The proper use of architectural detailing will reinforce Cedar's rural charm and connection to its natural setting.

Care should be taken in the detailing of any part of the exposed structure. This includes roof overhangs, porches, window canopies, chimneys, steps, railings and trim. Exposed structural elements are always encouraged and add an additional dimension to any architecture. These can include exposed rafter tails, timber brackets, posts and beams which may support roof appendages. Where mechanical connectors are required they may be galvanized to protect from the elements and should be designed as a detailed component of the building and not always specified from hardware catalogues (with exception of decorative connectors).

Railings should meet all applicable codes but the use of glass accent panels, wire meshes and other design ideas to break away from repetitive vertical pickets is encouraged.

At gable ends the use of frieze boards and other trims is encouraged. Accents such as tile and panels should be used to break up large expanses of siding. The use of universal builder details such as belly boards is discouraged. Window trims may be kept to a minimum or can be true to historic detailing.

Roof top mechanical units should be screened from view with design elements that are integral to architectural massing.



Above: Care should be taken in detailing the facade. Use trim in appropriate dimensions and locations.

Left: When possible expose the buildings structural elements and detail accordingly.

Far Left: Illustrated Facade Glossary



7.6 Landscape Design

Landscape design can be a defining element of village life. Creativity and sustainability are critical components of village design and should not end at the building. Small gardens, native plants and indigenous materials such as local stone and boulders will contribute to Cedar's rural charm and connection to its natural setting.

In general the landscape design of mixed use and residential buildings should focus on water smart plantings, contain generous outdoor spaces for the pedestrian, and create a vibrant and social focus to Cedar Road. Lawns are discouraged and turf areas should not exceed 60% of the soft landscape areas of the developed portion of the site (excluding natural areas). Ornamental grasses (many of which are deer proof), native ground covers and shrubs and small ornamental trees should dominate the planting palette. Perennial garden areas particularly in proximity to storefront areas are strongly encouraged.

Commercial, mixed use and multi-family projects should be designed by a registered landscape architect or competent garden designer. As a policy

Right: Use low walls in strategic locations to create usable and intimate outdoor spaces. Ornamental grasses provide visual interest, are water smart and are deer proof.

Far Right: Signs can be free standing, set on the sidewalk, hung off poles or the building and in special cases can be painted onto the architecture.



to encourage thoughtful landscaping, bonding based on the landscape architect's cost estimate of the installed value of the soft (plant material) and hard (paving) landscaping may be required prior to the release of building permit.

Small walls and picket fences which suggest outdoor spaces but generally do not exceed 0.9M (36") in height are allowable within the front yard setback areas.

Propane tanks, mechanical units such as heat pumps, and garbage and recycling storage areas should be screened from view and not be placed within the front or rear setback areas.

Where sidewalks may be located on private property they should attempt as best as possible to match with the materials, design and dimensions of the adjacent or nearby sidewalks that they will connect with.

7.7 Signage

The intent of the Cedar Main Street signage is that signs are hand crafted and provide individuality to each commercial establishment. No one font is preferable over another and creativity is encouraged. Signs are intended to cater to the pedestrian and not to vehicular traffic. Reader board, flashing, neon and back lit signs are discouraged. Refer to the RDN's by-law which regulates signs.





7.8 Lighting

Cedar Main Street is rural and dark sky area. Extensive illumination of architecture, parking areas and roadways is not desirable as it detracts from the rural character of Cedar. The use of full cut off flat lens lighting is preferred. Project lighting should be limited to indirect light sources. Low level landscape lighting is encouraged which illuminates pathways and where the light source is not directly visible. It is recommended that if architectural elements are illuminated they meet the intent of following conditions: The light source is not visible, aim for no more than 20% of the building façade being illuminated, when light fixtures are specified illustrate them with catalogue images or photographs prior to the final design review of the project so the reviewers can appreciate what they may look like. Parking areas may be illuminated provided the light source is not visible (such as through the use of reflectors).



Left: Landscape lighting must not have exposed light sources. In ground lighting, indirect lighting and back lighting of plant material are all acceptable solutions.

Far Left: Hand crafted signs are desirable.

