



Building Form and Architecture

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BUILDING FORM AND ARCHITECTURE

The City of Surprise’s character, image and identification is based, in large part, upon the architecture of its buildings; and how well those buildings are located and oriented on a site to relate to one another and the surrounding elements. A building’s size, shape, height, mass, color, materials, texture, roof-line, roof treatment, and window and entryway placement combine to give the user and passer-by a specific image and identification for a particular development; and in turn, the community as a whole. The following guidelines are intended to encourage excellence in the design of buildings proposed for new residential, commercial, office, civic, institutional and industrial development in Surprise, and to foster development that is consistent with the character and rural/urban form reflected in General Plan 2020.

GENERAL ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES – *Guidelines address possible approaches to the design of structures focusing on building scale, shapes, massing, heights, colors, materials, roof treatments, facades and building site orientation to achieve diversity and design excellence in residential and non-residential development.*

BUILDING FORM/SCALE/BULK/HEIGHT/RHYTHM



- Diversity of quality residential and non-residential architectural design should be encouraged throughout the City; with the design of projects reflecting a general continuity and harmony consistent with the general style and character of the community, while at the same time providing new, creative, forward-looking and dynamic approaches to design.
- Public/civic buildings should be “image making” and designed to reflect their significance as primary focal points of community pride and activity.
- Design of buildings, including building style, form, size, color and material, should take into consideration the development character of adjacent neighboring areas.

- Structures should be designed to create pleasing transitions to surrounding development; with the size, massing and height of the structure relating to the prevailing scale of adjacent development.



figure 2.1: Stair-Stepped Development

- Taller buildings should be made to appear less imposing by stair-stepping building height's back from the street, breaking up the mass of the building, and/or by providing a broader open space/pedestrian plaza areas as foreground for the building.
- Multiple buildings on the same site should be designed and grouped to create a cohesive, visual relationship among buildings, while at the same time, provide for pedestrian plazas, open space and view corridors to surrounding mountains.



figure 2.2: Orientation of Structures Provide Interest and Preserve Views and Open Space

- Building design and siting should consider solar orientation, as well as climatic and other environmental conditions.
- Monotonous look-a-like structures should be discouraged. Every effort should be made to design buildings that create a visually interesting “building rhythm” by varying building form, volume, massing, heights, roof styles and site orientation.



figure 2.3: Vary Styles and Site Orientation to Minimize Monotonous Look-a-Like Structures

- The concentrated use and location of stylized buildings as advertising, should be generally discouraged.
- High quality “stylized” or “theme” architecture that is characteristic of a particular historic period or forward- looking architectural trend should be permitted, provided it generally reflects, and is consistent with, the architecture of the area, and maintains architectural continuity and harmony with the community as a whole.
- Building design and siting should consider solar orientation, as well as climatic and other environmental conditions.
- Building design and orientation on the site should encourage safety and privacy of adjacent outdoor spaces, and should reduce noise and odor impacts received from, or generated by, the development project.



BUILDING FACADES

- Building facades should reflect design intent of the structure, while at the same time, provide an architectural “face” that relates to surrounding structures and streetscape; and contributes to the neighborhood and community character.
- Exterior building design, as well as architectural details related to color, type and application of materials and building form, should be coordinated for all elevations of a building to achieve harmony and continuity of design.
- The rear and side of buildings, especially those visible from adjacent streets, should be aesthetically enhanced and of an architectural character comparable with the front of the building.
- A variety of architectural design features, techniques, patterns, materials and color should be used to create variety and visual interest in the facade of buildings, provided the uses of such features are coordinated, related to the overall design of the structure and result in a unified design of the structure.

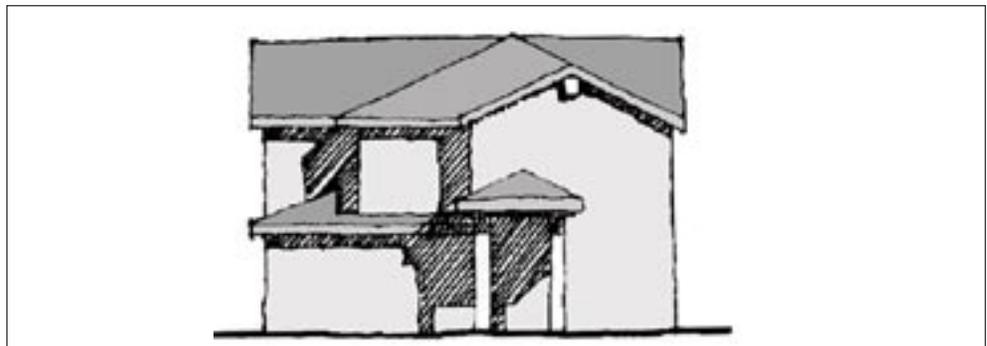


figure 2.4: Variety of Design Features Provide More Interest in Structure

- Building facades should utilize recessed entryways and windows, groupings of windows, horizontal and vertical offsets and reveals and three-dimensional detail between surface planes, to create shadow lines and break up long continuous flat wall areas.



figure 2.5: Architectural Recesses Create Shadows to Break-Up the Facade

- To facilitate the general public and emergency response services, all building facades must contain conspicuously placed street address numbers that are: sized appropriately to be seen from public rights-of-way and emergency services access; and consist of a material and style compatible with the character of the building.

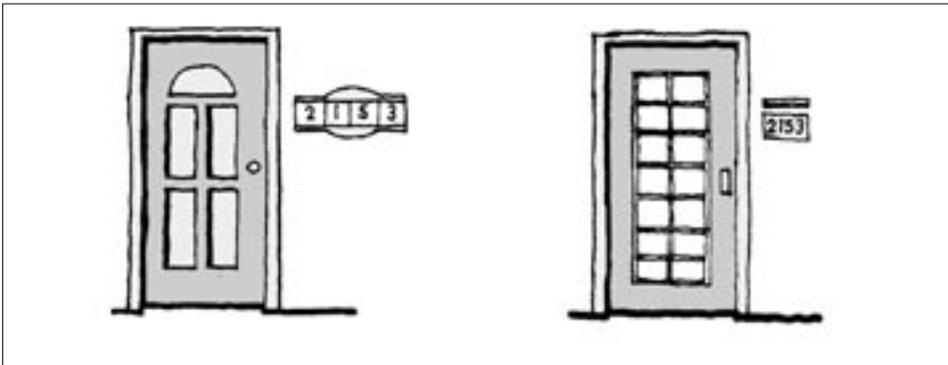


figure 2.6: Single-Family Address Numbers with 3" Numerals

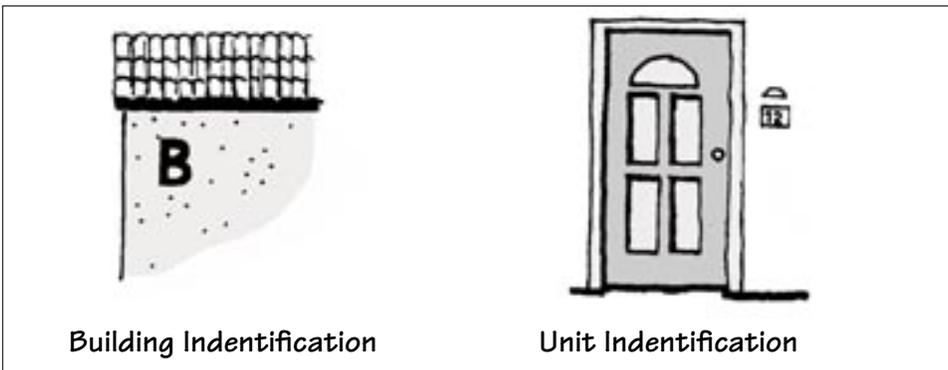


figure 2.7: Multi-Family Building and Unit Identification



ROOF ARCHITECTURE AND TREATMENT

- When appropriate to the style of a building, a variety of simple roof forms, including gable, shed and hip, used alone or in combination, are encouraged for all new development in order to add visual interest and diversity to the City’s “roof horizon” and to avoid the “sameness” of roof styles.

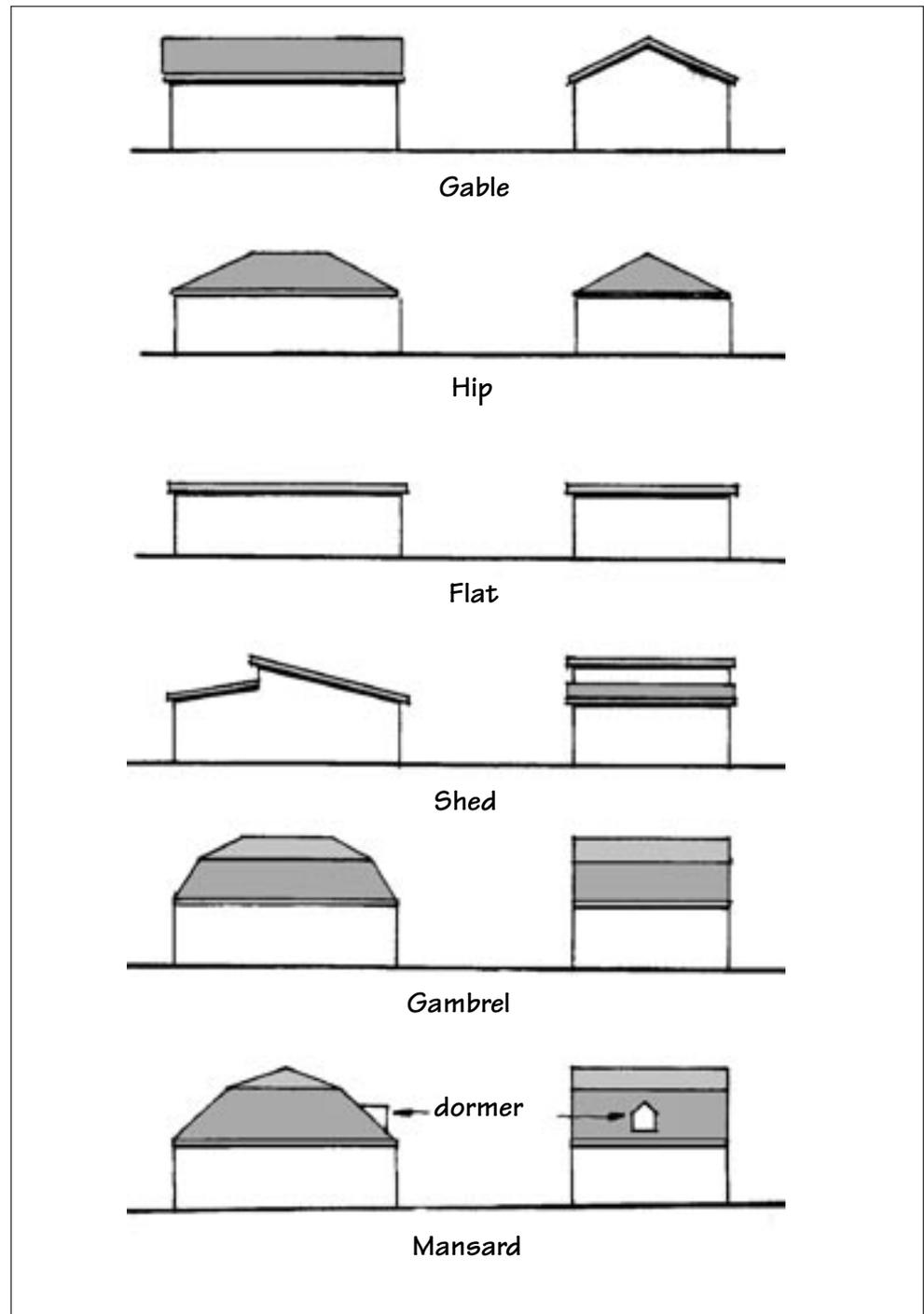


figure 2.8: Typical Roof Types

- Site orientation of residential structures, as well as variations in roof styles and heights, should be encouraged to prevent the creation of monotonous roof lines and look-alike roof orientation in new residential development.

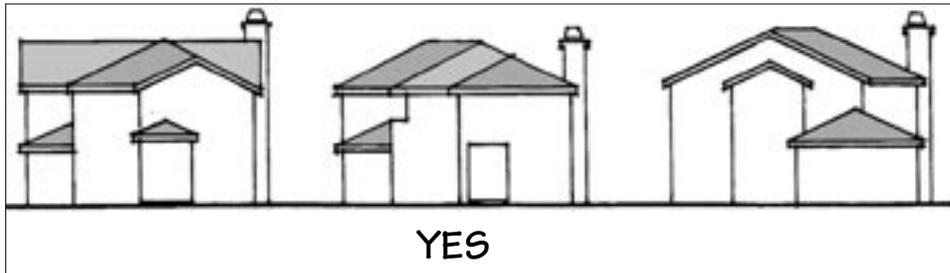


figure 2.9: Varying Roof Forms Encouraged

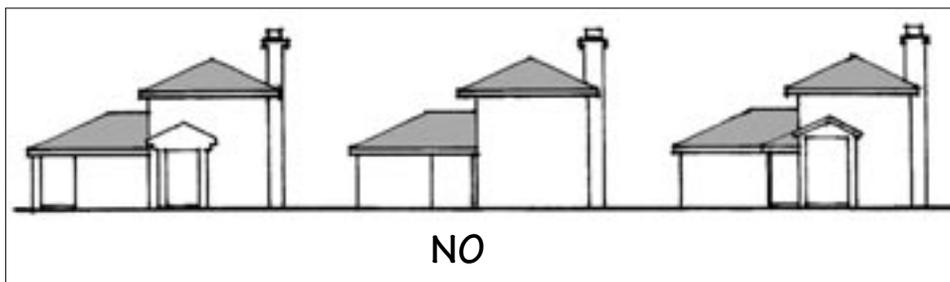


figure 2.10: Repetitive Roof Forms Discouraged

- Roof design for new residential development should vary, yet maintain the prevailing character and scale of the neighborhood, and in particular, immediately adjacent structures, through the use of color and form.
- Full roof architecture utilizing simple roof forms is encouraged for all new commercial and industrial development; while long, continuous mansard roofs, false mansard roofs, large expanses of flat roofs and veneer parapets are discouraged.
- Rooflines of large buildings should vary in height and setback to reduce the apparent scale of the building, break up long continuous horizontal facades and minimize their overall visual impact on surrounding development

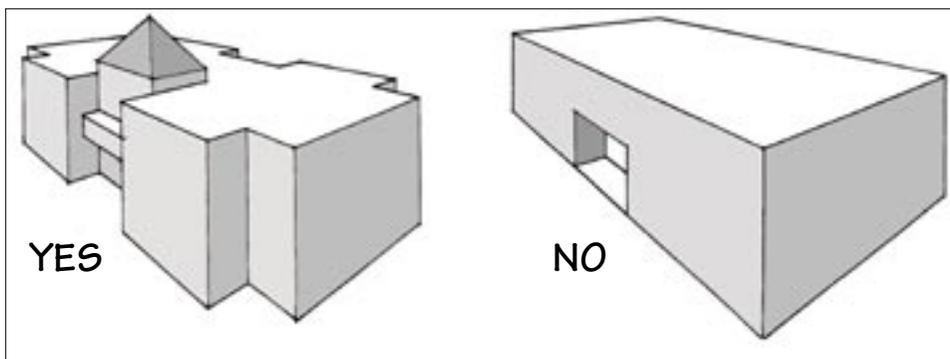


figure 2.10: Variations in Roof and Facade Lines Lessen Visual Impact of "Big Box" Architecture.

- The use of architectural features such as three dimensional cornice treatments, enclosed parapet wall forms and details, and overhanging eaves are encouraged to enhance the architectural character of the roof.
- Flat roofs should only be used in conjunction with other roof styles if they are consistent with a particular style of architecture and incorporate decorative parapet forms and walls that are an integral part of the overall architecture of the building.
- Parapet walls should be designed and constructed in a manner to appear as a solid, three-dimensional form rather than a veneer.

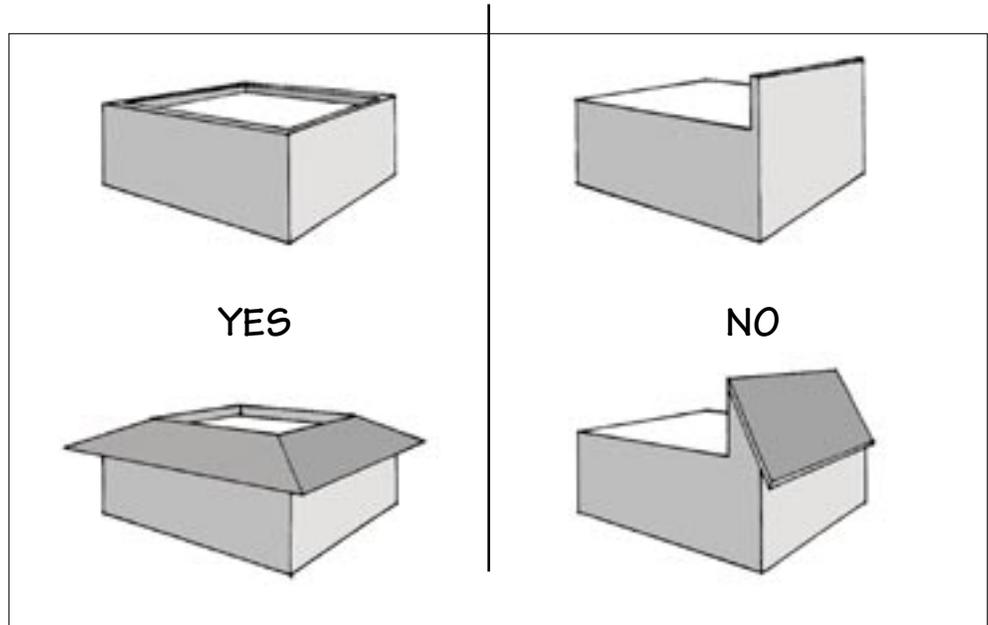


figure 2.11: Real and False Parapets

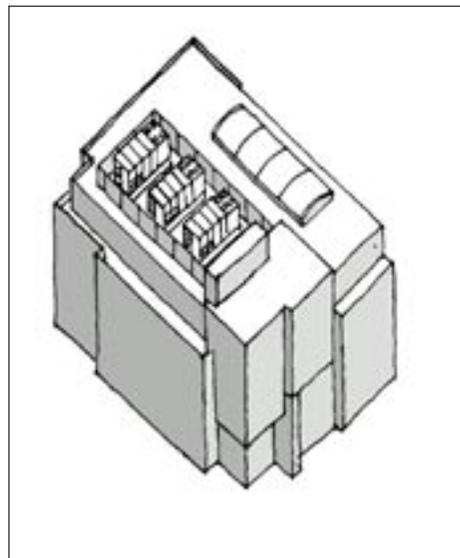


figure 2.12: Screening Roof Top Mechanical Equipment

- Roof-top plumbing, vents, ducts, air conditioning and heating equipment, communication antennae and any other mechanical or electric equipment should be located away from public view; and screened in a manner so as not to be visible from any angle or any height outside a building.

- All rooftop screening should be part of the articulation of a building and not appear as an afterthought; and should be architecturally compatible with the primary structure.

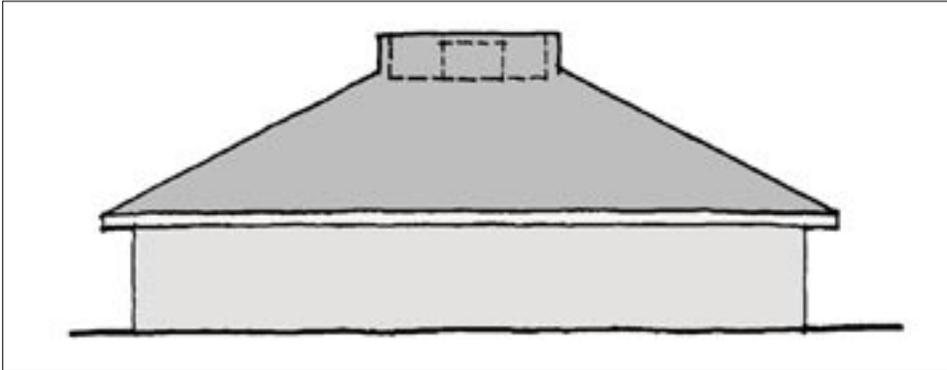


figure 2.13: Roof Top Screening as Part of Roof Architecture

- Chimneys, roof flashing, rain gutters, downspouts and other roof protrusions should be painted and finished to match the color of the adjacent surface, unless being used expressly as a trim or accent element.
- Solar panels located on rooftops should be placed consistent with roof pitch, and sized and colored so as to appear as an integral part of the overall roof design.

COLORS AND MATERIALS

- Variation of colors in roof and facade treatment in residential development is encouraged, provided the color variations maintain harmony and consistency with the overall character of surrounding buildings.
- Colors that are compatible with the general arid environment of the community, and that help reduce reflected heat and glare into public areas, are encouraged.
- The use of accent colors, especially in commercial areas, should be encouraged to provide a festive and lively streetscape.
- The use of bright or intense primary colors should be moderated, and permitted only in areas where their use would not overwhelm surrounding development or create an uncoordinated or cluttered-looking building.
- More subtle, less intense colors should be used on larger, more plain-looking buildings, while the use of a greater variety and intensity of color should be reserved for smaller structures.





- Color should be used to accent entryways and special architectural features of a building.
- Materials utilized for buildings should reflect the climate of Surprise; should be durable and of high quality and non-reflective or heat generating.
- Building materials and finishes should reflect the context of the site and the neighborhood.
- A change in the use of building material on a structure should reflect a change in the plane of the structure.
- Materials applied to any building elevation should wrap around onto adjoining walls of the structure to provide design continuity and a finished appearance to the building.
- There should be a consistent use of building materials on a structure, with the use of a variety of many different materials on the same structure minimized to avoid a cluttered-looking structure.



WINDOW AND DOOR PLACEMENT

- The size and proportion of windows and door openings should be consistent with the scale of the building; reflect the character of the neighborhood and be compatible with immediately adjacent buildings.
- Windows and doors should be aligned and sized to bring order to the building façade.
- Windows and doors should be sufficiently recessed and placed to create façade patterns that add variety and visual interest to the building design.
- Windows in residential development above first floors should generally have a pattern similar to that of the first floor to unify the façade of the structure.



figure 2.14: Placement of Windows Unify the Facade

- The number of windows and their placement and treatment should reflect the climate of the area and contribute to the building’s energy efficiency and conservation.
- Window and door placement for “big box” commercial and industrial buildings should be sufficiently recessed to create shadows and provide noticeable breaks in facades.

- Awnings over windows and doors are encouraged, provided they are an integral part of the architecture of the building and reflect the design and character of the structure.

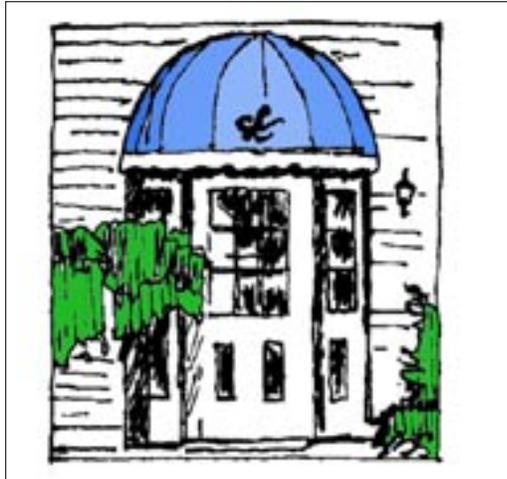


figure 2.15: Awning as key Element of Design of Facade

- Building entryways should be designed and sized appropriately to reflect the use of the building and pedestrian traffic related to the use.

- Doors and entryways should be designed and located to provide immediate identification of the building’s entryways.

- Doors and entryways for all commercial and office centers and civic buildings, should be designed and located to portray the importance of the building and its relationship to external pedestrian circulation systems.



BUILDING DETAILS

- Building and site details related to utility boxes, transformers, generators, chiller farms, mailboxes, trash bins and air-conditioning units should be integrated into the overall design of the building and development.

- Unsightly utility boxes, transformers, generators, chiller farms, air conditioning units and trash bins should be screened from view, yet remain accessible for servicing.

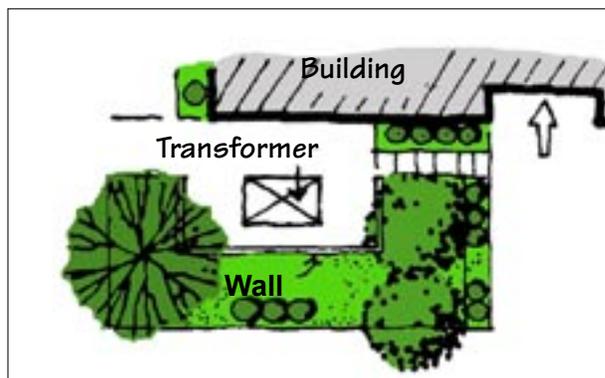
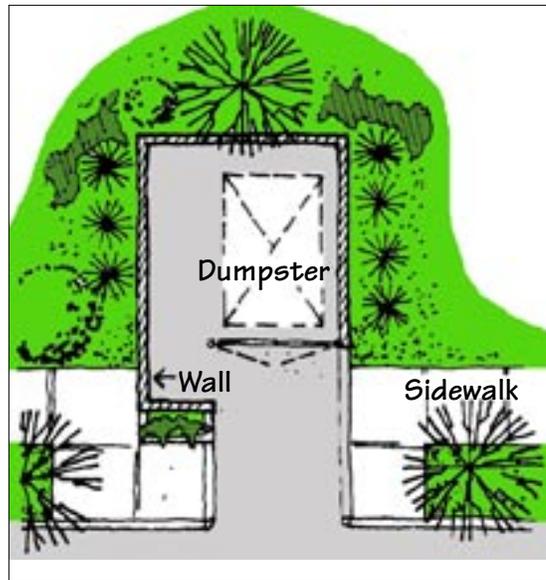


figure 2.16: Unsightly Utility Equipment Screened from View



- Design of and enclosures for accessory elements such as mailboxes, trash bins, and security huts and gates should be compatible with the architectural style of the project in which it is located.

figure 2.17: Proper Screening Technique Lessons the Effects of Unsightly Trash Area

- Group mailboxes for new residential development should not be freestanding, but placed into an architectural form that is strategically and conveniently located throughout the development as a part of the development's pedestrian open space and circulation system.



figure 2.18: Group Mailbox Areas Enhanced by Architectural Form