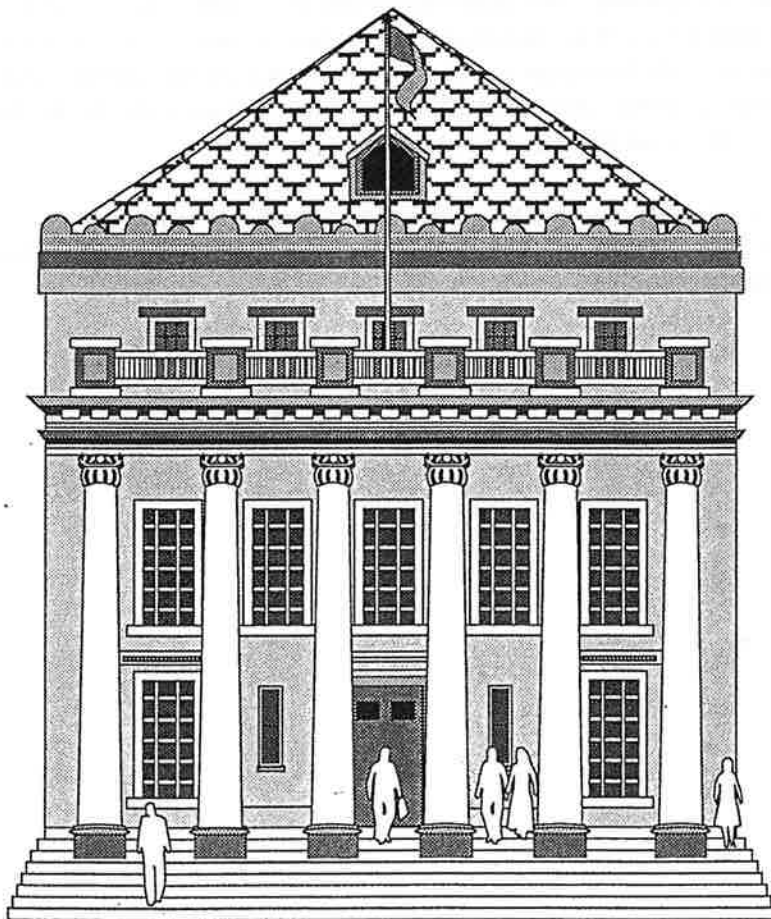


*Design Guidelines Manual*  
**Development of  
City of Gainesville Buildings**



Approved by the  
Gainesville City Commission  
January 11, 1999.



## **Introduction**

The City of Gainesville has established the goal of a quality built environment as a fundamental way to achieve economic development, quality-of-life, and civic pride objectives. Public City buildings represent a means to achieve these objectives, because they serve the entire community, are highly visible and are symbolic structures that convey a powerful message about the importance, pride, and overall values of the community. For these reasons, it has been a long-standing tradition to place public, civic buildings in a highly visible location within the community. Often, this is a central and prominent location, and often terminates a street vista. Such a location conveys the message that this is an important civic building.

This manual describes the design guidelines and approval process for proposed City buildings. The guidelines have been adopted by resolution of the City Commission as guidelines intended to achieve the above-stated objectives.

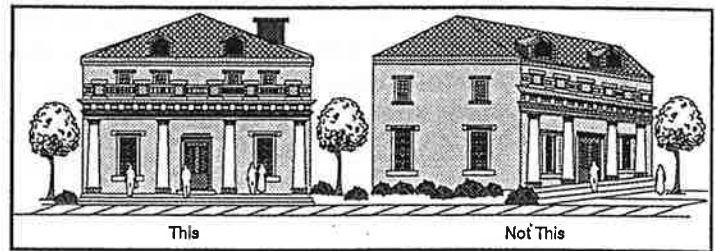
# Design and Construction Checklist

## I. Building Orientation

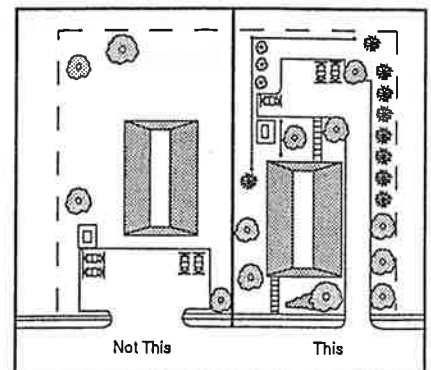
- The building is pulled up relatively close to street and sidewalk, to provide lively street frontage and pedestrian orientation (taking into account locations of adjacent buildings, the existing development patterns in the surrounding area, existing topographic features, and other contextual factors). In some instances it will be appropriate for a civic building to be set back from the street and sidewalk in whole or in part.
- The building and the primary building entrance face the more primary street.
- Parking is located in the rear (preferred), or to the side with a decorative screening wall or hedge or both. The screening is 3-4 feet in height.



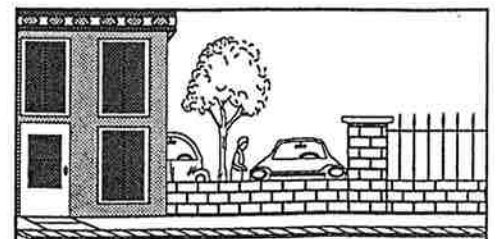
Building facades pulled up to sidewalk.



Main entrance orientation



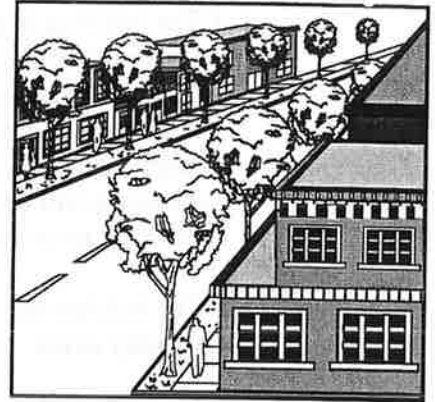
Parking lot location.



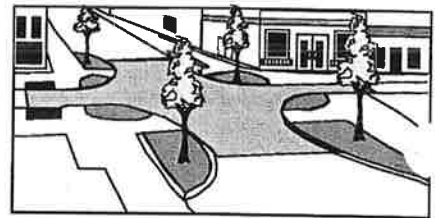
Screening wall.

## II. Pedestrian Connections and Features

- An ample **sidewalk** is provided in front, and along all street edges. The unobstructed sidewalk width is at least 5 feet. For City buildings that draw large numbers of citizens, the width is at least 10 feet. Sidewalks provide connections to adjacent land uses and, when feasible and appropriate, to major trip-generating land uses within walking distance.
- Landscaping** includes formally aligned street trees (from the approved list of street trees in the Gainesville Land Development Code) to frame the street and shade the sidewalk. When a diversity of tree species is selected, the trees are of a similar size and shape.
- The building includes a covered **front stoop or porch**.
- Crosswalks** serving the building are enhanced for pedestrian safety and convenience, if feasible and appropriate. Types of enhancements can include, but are not limited to, landscaped bulb-outs, and clearly articulated crosswalk areas, with modified surface (texture, brick, striping changes, contrasting color, etc.), when feasible.
- Interruptions to the pedestrian network** are minimized. This can be achieved with such features as narrow ingress and egress driveways, a minimum number of curb cuts, modest turning radii, sidewalks with few gaps, curb ramps, and modest block face lengths.

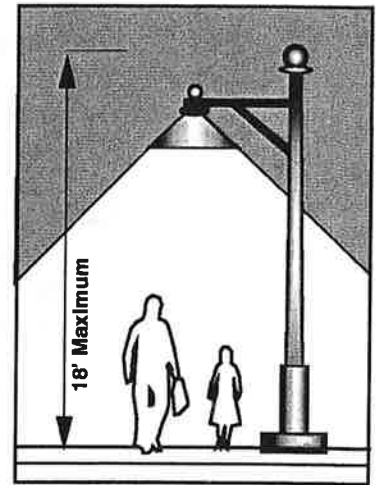


Formal landscaping



Bulb-outs and width restriction

- Lighting** is pedestrian-oriented and pedestrian-scaled. This can be achieved with lighting structures having a maximum height of 18 feet, lighting directed downward and using cutoffs, and use of full-spectrum lighting (with metal halide preferred).
- Pedestrian features** are included. This can be achieved with such features as canopies, arcades, colonnades, seating areas, picnic areas, water features, clock towers, information kiosks, public art, etc.
- Chain link **fence**, razor wire or barb wire are not used.



Pedestrian lighting

### III. Building Facades

- The **building entrance** is prominent and well defined.
- Building height is at least two stories**, if financially feasible and if such a design will not obscure significant viewsheds.
- Blank walls** are minimized, and substantial glazing (at least 30 percent glazing at street level) included, along with facade articulation. Blank walls are also minimized along the sides and rear of the building, though with more flexibility allowed.
- Dumpsters and outdoor mechanical equipment** are located to the rear or side of the building, and screened to minimize visual clutter, odor and noise. If along the side, these items are at least 20 feet from the sidewalk. Outdoor mechanical equipment is also allowed on the roof, if screened to minimize visual clutter, odor and noise.

- Service bays and service doors** are located to the rear of the building.
- Roof** slopes are used. If slopes are not feasible or appropriate, flat roofs are accompanied by parapets.
- Predominant exterior **building materials** fit into the context of the area. Predominant exterior materials, excluding materials for windows, do not include vinyl, aluminum, other forms of metal, plastic, or featureless, untinted concrete.

#### **IV. Other**

##### **Energy efficiency and Natural Area Conservation**

- The building is evaluated for availability, life cycle costs, and feasibility of alternative energy sources including solar, natural gas, and heat recovery (hru), in addition to traditional fossil-fuel-generated electrical energy sources.
- A determination is made as to whether utility incentives, rebates, tax incentives, grant monies, or special financing are available for energy improvements.
- HVAC system sizing does not exceed the Manual J calculations for residential construction or Manual N calculations for commercial buildings. The preferred location for ductwork is in conditioned space or unconditioned buffered space. Ductwork located in attics or unconditioned crawlspaces are airtight.

- Lighting is reviewed by an independent lighting specialist.
- Solar heat gain is minimized on the east and west facing windows through the use of landscaping, external shading or thermally selective glazing.
- The building is evaluated for participation in a state or national energy efficiency building program, such as Green Lights, Energy Star, LEEDS, etc. If a building cannot feasibly meet each standard of a program, all reasonable measures are implemented.
- Important natural areas (if any) on the site are conserved or mitigated, and incorporated into a walkable urban design for the site. These important natural areas are prominent site amenities that are protected through sensitive design techniques or otherwise mitigated.

## **Design Review Process for Public City Buildings**

### **Step 1**

City Commission approves development of a new City building, or a substantial expansion or exterior remodeling of an existing City building. (Buildings, renovations or alterations which are reviewed by the Historic Preservation Review Board shall not be subject to this process.)

### **Step 2**

For each new city building, substantial expansion or substantial remodeling, a staff team is formed. The team includes representatives of the department that will occupy the building, as well as Community Development, Public Works, Building Inspection, Fire and Police. The team initiates the Request for Proposals process.

### **Step 3**

The staff team and the selected project architect hold two meetings with the public in the area where the building will be constructed, in order to obtain public input. One meeting is prior to specific design work, to obtain information on the community's general objectives for the building. The other meeting is after preliminary design based on input from the first meeting.

### **Step 4**

An ad hoc design review committee is established which discusses any proposed City building after the two public meetings but still at the early conceptual stage, as well as reviews the near-final design. The design review committee comprises ~~standing appointments from the Commission (including architects, and landscape architects, as well as ad hoc appointments for each particular project, including at least one~~ representatives of the affected neighborhood, and other appointments as appropriate.

### **Step 5**

The committee reports on its design review in a presentation to the City Commission prior to submission of preliminary site plan approval to the appropriate reviewing board (either Development Review Board or City Plan Board or staff), and also provides written comments to the appropriate reviewing board or staff. It is understood that variations in the final elevations or site plan may result from the appropriate reviewing board's or staff's review process.