

ORDINANCE #12-9-2013A

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 165
OF THE MOUNT VERNON CODE OF ORDINANCES BY
AMENDING ARTICLE 11 CONCERNING DESIGN STANDARDS**

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
MOUNT VERNON, IOWA:**

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT. That Chapter 165, "Zoning Regulations," of the Mount Vernon Code of Ordinances be and the same is hereby amended by amending Article 11 to read as follows:

COMMERCIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

1101 Purpose

The purpose of this part of Article 11 (1101-1104) is to ~~preserve, enhance and extend the special historic, architectural and aesthetic features of the historic downtown Mount Vernon. This article identifies the architectural qualities that define the downtown area and proposes design standards to maintain that character in new projects and in existing building modifications in several zoning districts containing commercial properties.~~ establish minimum design criteria in order to protect and enhance existing development values while providing for modern aesthetics in City development generally.

1102 Scope

The design standards ~~emphasize existing styles and patterns and include: a) building size, dimensions, and proportions; b) exterior building materials; c) building facade treatments and d) site design standards.~~ The design standards apply to all new construction of commercial and residential buildings ~~intended for commercial use as well as any multi-family residential building of four (4) or more units, whether combined with commercial uses or not.~~ development in the Agricultural, High-Density Residential, Limited Commercial, General Commercial, Town Center, Business Park, Light Industrial, and Urban Corridor zoning districts. These standards also apply to all new additions and modifications to existing buildings ~~that are in compliance with these standards at the time of their passage within the named zoning districts, except for maintenance projects that replace existing building materials with like materials, such as roofing.~~ If an existing building covered by these design standards does not conform to these standards at the time of the passage of these standards and 25% or less of the exterior appearance of the existing non-conforming building is modified, then any

modifications to that building shall be made consistent with the existing design of that building. If more than 25% of the exterior appearance of an existing, non-conforming building is altered or modified, the entire building, including any additions, shall be brought into compliance with these design standards.

~~These design standards do not apply to any residential building of fewer than four (4) units used as a legal residence and housing no commercial activity, other than the allowed home occupation.~~

~~Commercial Design Standards apply only to the following Zoning Districts:~~

- ~~a. Town Center~~
- ~~b. Limited Commercial~~
- ~~c. General Commercial~~
- ~~d. Business Park~~
- ~~e. Light Industrial~~
- ~~f. Urban Corridor also known as Mixed Use Corridor~~

~~Historic overlay districts are not subject to these requirements, but are subject to separate design regulations found in the Historic Overlay Districts section of the code and applied during the Certificate of Appropriateness process.~~

Note: In the remainder of this Article, Agricultural, Limited Commercial, General Commercial, Business Park, Town Center (except for that part in the Commercial Historic District), and Light Industrial districts are treated similarly and will be referred to as “Commercial/Industrial.”

1103 Building Design Criteria

a. Building Size, Dimensions and Proportions.

~~1. Building Dimensions and Proportions:~~

~~2.1.~~ Building elevations wider than 30 feet shall be divided into smaller increments through articulation of the facade. This can be achieved through a variety of techniques including the following: divisions or variations in materials, window bays, separate entrances and entry treatments, porticos, variations in roof lines, awnings, variations in brick or stone work, colonnades, arcades, or changes in facade.

~~3.2.~~ Town Center: No single building shall have a building coverage area (building footprint) that exceeds 6000 square feet.

~~4.3.~~ Urban Corridor: No single building shall have a building coverage area that

exceeds 10,000 square feet.

5.4. Roof Form, Shape and Pitch. Roofs shall adhere to the following guidelines by district.

~~(a) Town Center.~~

~~(b) Commercial style buildings: All buildings shall have a parapet to screen the roof slope on any side of the building facing an adjacent street. Roof slopes behind storefront parapets are not dictated.~~

~~(c) Residential style buildings: Roof forms shall be hip, gable or combination hip/gable. Minimum pitch shall be 6/12. Hip and gable roof forms wider than 20 feet and facing a public right of way shall be divided into small expressions of the form with each element no wider than 20 feet.~~

~~(d)(a) Commercial/Industrial. Flat roofs forms are permitted providing that no more than 50% of the roof area of any single structure shall be a continuous flat roof. Front facing gable forms and hip roof forms are permitted on residential style buildings. Hip and gable roof forms wider than 30 feet and facing a public right of way shall be divided into smaller expressions of the form with each element no wider than 30 feet. Roof pitch shall be a maximum of 4/12 for Prairie Style designs and a minimum of 6/12 for other residential architectural styles if parapet walls are incorporated to screen the flat roof; otherwise, gable or hip roofs are required.~~

~~(e)(b) Urban Corridor (also known as Mixed Use Corridor) and HR Districts. Roof forms shall be hip, gable, or combination hip/gable. Minimum pitch shall be 6/12. Hip and gable roof forms wider than 2030 feet and facing a public right of way shall be divided into smaller expressions of the form with each element no wider than 2030 feet.~~

b. Architectural Elements

1. Exterior Building Materials. Building exteriors shall adhere to the following guidelines by district:

~~(a) Town Center. Buildings shall be clad in brick, stone, wood lap siding, or cement based lap siding accents. Concrete formed with liners to replicate other permissible building materials is permitted. New buildings shall be clad in brick with stone accents and bases. Additions to existing buildings must be clad in a material similar to the cladding material of the original structure.~~

~~(b) Residential style buildings: Permitted roof materials may include asphalt shingles, slate or simulated slate shingles, standing seam metal, or other similar roof materials.~~

~~(e)(a)~~ In the Commercial/Industrial districts,

~~Buildings~~ street-facing facades shall be clad in brick, stone or stucco. Decorative concrete masonry units may be used including split-faced, burnished or stone-faced units. ~~Accent materials may include architectural metal trim and glass block, pre-cast concrete, split face or fractured concrete block, concrete formed on site with liners to replicate other permissible building materials or similar decorative materials.~~ Stucco shall comprise no more than 20% of any building exterior and shall be located a minimum of 3 feet above grade to prevent discoloration or damage. Wood or cement based lap siding may be used on residential design styles only up to a maximum of 20% of the first floor and 50% of the upper stories.

~~(d)(b)~~ In the HR and Urban Corridor districts, (also known as Mixed Use

~~Corridor).~~ Buildings shall be clad in brick, stone, wood lap siding or cement based lap siding. Concrete formed on site with liners to replicate other permissible building materials is permitted on commercial style buildings. ~~Residential style buildings may only use concrete formed with liners for foundations.~~

Permitted roof materials may include asphalt shingles, slate or simulated slate shingles, standing seam metal, or other similar roof materials.

~~e. For all Zoning Districts listed above the following shall apply.~~

~~d. Color of Building Exterior. Building exteriors should assume similar visual characteristics to the historic structures in the Town Center District. Brick shall be natural red or red-orange. For other permanent finishes earth tones are acceptable with deep color for accents (windows, doors, etc.). Paint color applied to exterior surfaces is not covered by these guidelines but should be consistent with the paint colors used in Town Center. It is prohibited to paint a brick surface.~~

~~e. Masonry or Concrete. Design elements such as foundation, chimney, brick and mortar joint should assume similar characteristics as other historic structures. Smooth concrete may be used as a foundation material if the foundation is not exposed more than 2 feet above the ground.~~

f.c. Building Facade

- ~~1.—Canopies and Awnings. Retractable canopies or retractable awnings are encouraged in commercial architectural styles and are allowed with all styles of architecture. Such awnings/canopies shall be made of canvas, vinyl, or other non-rigid materials. Awning shapes or profiles shall be a right angle (cross-section projecting from the wall) with an allowed drop of 8 inches. Curved sections (horizontal projection) are allowed for openings of 10 feet or narrower.~~
- 2.—Architectural Detailing, Features, and Building Articulation. Architectural detailing shall be added to the building form. Architectural detailing may include cornices, parapets, keystones, quoins, decorative brick work, accentuated window heads and sills, architectural metal as it serves period style, and similar items, ~~as enumerated below. Architectural details shall adhere to the following guidelines:~~
- 3.—Where horizontal top facades are used, such as a parapet wall, the cornice shall be articulated with ornament which steps out, or in some other fashion accentuates the top of the facade. Roof forms which overhang shall have a cornice board at the juncture of the eave and wall. Window and door heads and window sills shall be articulated with a pattern (brick) or contrasting material which emphasized the head or sill. Projecting features such as canopies and porches shall include some measure of architectural ornamentation. Gable ends on pitched roofs 6/12 or greater or with a vertical height of greater than 8 feet shall have decorative material, contrasting banding, or other architectural treatment to divide the area into smaller segments; however, -

If the roof or gable end is not visible from the public right of way or adjacent property lines, then gable end guidelines do not apply.

- ~~4.—Urban Corridor. No street-facing facade may have a continuous length greater than 50 feet without an offset in the building elevation equal to a dimension of at least five feet.~~
- ~~5.—Commercial/Industrial. No street-facing facade may have a continuous length greater than 100 feet without an offset in the building elevation equal to a dimension of at least five feet.~~

- 6-1. Building Facade Transparency. In commercial ~~style~~ buildings a minimum of 50% of the ground level facade fronting a public street and a minimum of 20% of

the side elevations shall consist either of windows or doors to allow views into and out of the building's interior. A minimum of 10% of the front facade of all upper floors of commercial, retail, restaurant and entertainment uses shall be transparent via windows and/or balcony doorways.

~~7.—Window Design. Commercial storefront architecture shall have large fixed expanses of glass on the lower floor. Prairie style windows can incorporate a large amount of glass but it should be broken into smaller window pane units by exterior muntins or smaller sash units. Residential style buildings shall incorporate windows similar in dimensions and character to residential windows.~~

~~8.—In residential style commercial use buildings, transparency guidelines shall follow the common practices for residential buildings.~~

~~9.—Urban Corridor. Windows in new development shall be similar in dimensions and character to residential windows. Glass curtain walls or commercial storefront windows are not permitted for new development in the UC District. Window area on each facade shall be equal to at least 20% of the area of that facade.~~

10.2. Building Ground Level Expression. In commercial, office, and mixed use buildings above one story, the ground level shall be distinguished from the floors above by the use of one or more of the following elements: horizontal banding, an intermediate cornice line or a change in building materials, for example.

~~Franchise Architecture. Standard franchise architecture (building design that is trademarked or identified with a particular chain or corporation and is generic in nature) is prohibited. Franchise or national chains must follow this ordinance to create a building that is supportive of the overall context established by the Town Center District in the City of Mount Vernon.~~

1104 SITE DEVELOPMENT

a. Sidewalks and Walkways

1. Sidewalks. Pedestrian accessibility and continuity shall be provided throughout ~~the commercial areas~~ all districts, including. ~~C~~ontinuous sidewalks shall be provided along all public street frontages. ~~Clearly defined and lighted pedestrian walkways shall extend between parking areas and all building entrances. The surface shall consist of a stiff broom finished center field surrounded by smooth steel troweled edge bands. Joints shall be troweled, not saw cut. Joints shall be spaced no greater than the width of the sidewalks.~~

~~(a) Town Center. Sidewalks must follow the current pattern for commercial style buildings and extend the sidewalk from the building front to the curb. Sidewalks in front of residential style commercial buildings should conform to the standards of the neighboring residential standards as outlined in the Code of Ordinances, Section 136.08.~~

~~(b)~~(a) _____ Urban Corridor. Because of the residential style of this district, sidewalks should follow the guidelines for residential sidewalks as set forth in the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 136.

~~(e)~~(b) _____ All other districts. Sidewalks must be a minimum of 6 feet in width. If this is inconsistent with the surrounding sidewalk width, modifications should be made to fit with the surrounding area, but not less than ADA standards, generally five feet in width.

2. Private Walkways. Walkways to parking areas, around buildings or on private properties on or adjacent to public right of way shall be a minimum of four feet wide and constructed of either colored concrete or brick pavers. Clearly defined and lighted pedestrian walkways shall extend between parking areas and all building entrances. The surface shall consist of a stiff broom- finish.

3. ~~Sidewalk Area Landscape~~Site Landscaping. ~~Street trees shall be planted within a landscaped parkway or in tree pits within the sidewalk area according to City standards. Street trees shall be spaced between 30 and 40 feet apart. Specific tree species shall conform to the tree ordinance.~~

~~(a) Street trees shall be planted within a landscaped parkway or in tree pits within the sidewalk area according to City standards. Street trees shall be spaced between 30 and 40 feet apart. Specific tree species shall conform to the tree ordinance.~~

~~(a)~~(b) _____ Where a building fronts the sidewalk, benches, planter pots, planter boxes or hanging planter baskets may be included and integrated into the building design to enhance the pedestrian experience and to provide seasonal color. Such enhancements shall ~~not~~ be positioned so as to ~~impede the normal flow of pedestrian traffic~~leave a four foot wide clear zone to meet ADA requirements.

~~(b)~~(c) _____ Where present, all yard areas shall be landscaped with trees, shrubs, ground cover and turf grass.

4. Accessibility and curb Ramps. All sidewalks and walkways shall meet the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for accessibility. ~~Where curb ramps are provided, they shall comply with city standards and shall direct pedestrian flow in a continuous manner. Curb ramp finish shall conform to the section entitled "Sidewalks." see Code of Ordinances, Section 136.08.~~

b. Parking

1. Surface Parking. Parking lot design shall adhere to the following guidelines:
~~Town Center. Following the current practice in this district, diagonal or parallel parking is permitted. Parking lots must follow the guidelines set forth below. All other districts.~~ Off street parking lots shall be designed and constructed utilizing civil engineering "best practices." ~~provided by the City Engineer.~~ Surface lots shall be paved with hot mix asphalt or Portland cement with edges and planting islands defined by concrete curb and gutter and parking spaces defined with painted striping. Parking on gravel, dirt or unreinforced turf is prohibited. Permeable pavement surfaces are strongly encouraged. In the Urban Corridor district, off street parking shall be located in the rear of the primary building. ~~Off street parking shall be located to the rear and/or side of buildings. Front yard parking is permissible only along a maximum of 20 percent of the total site frontage.~~
2. Parking Lot Landscaping. Parking lot design shall adhere to the following guidelines:
 - (a) A landscaped buffer strip at least seven feet wide shall be provided between all surface parking areas and the sidewalk or street. The buffer strip shall consist of shade trees, low shrubs and/or perennial flowers (maximum of three feet in height). Use of bio-filtration methods of landscape drainage design is strongly encouraged. Adequate sight distance shall be maintained at all driveway intersections.
 - (b) A landscape buffer at least seven feet wide shall be provided along the rear of all surface parking lots. This area shall be planted with shade trees and a continuous four foot tall shrub border or hedge of deciduous and/or evergreen shrubs.
 - (c) ~~Parking bays in excess of 100 feet in dimension shall be divided by intermediate landscaped islands at intervals of 100 feet. For single parking-~~

~~bays, landscaped islands shall provide at least one parking space of landscape area (9x18 feet) and shall be planted with one ornamental/dwarf tree, low shrubs, perennial flowers and/or ground cover/ornamental grasses (maximum of three feet in height). Landscaping shall be incorporated so that every parking space is within forty feet of a tree.~~

3. Bicycle Parking. Bike loops for parking at least five (5) bicycles ~~(three in town-center)~~ shall be provided within 20 feet of the main entry of commercial, mixed use and public buildings.

c. Outdoor Features

1. Fences and Screen Walls. — Fences shall adhere to the following guidelines:

~~(a) Decorative fencing where used for office and commercial uses in areas facing the primary street, such as entry courtyards or outdoor seating areas, shall be located between the building and the sidewalk.~~

~~(b)(a) Town Center and~~ Urban Corridor. No permanent fences shall be constructed in front of any commercial style architecture; fences are allowed for residential style architecture and must comply with the guidelines for fences in the Code of Ordinances.

~~(e)(b)~~ Temporary seasonal fencing may be used to mark off outdoor dining areas, so long as the area does not impede the normal flow of pedestrian traffic. ~~Temporary dining areas may not extend more than 48" from the building front.~~

~~Commercial/Industrial. Fencing may be mounted on decorative masonry wall of brick, stone, or architectural pre-cast concrete units. Total height of wall and fence shall not exceed 48 inches.~~

See Parking Lot Landscaping for fencing in parking lot areas, Article Eight, Section 807 of the Zoning Ordinance.

2. Outdoor Storage. Outdoor storage of any kind, including vehicles, raw materials, etc. must be fully ~~or partially~~ screened from all adjacent public or private parcels or rights of way by means of fencing and/or landscaping. Seasonal equipment, supplies, etc. shall be either stored within each facility or within a permanent accessory structure. See Accessory Structures/Buildings.
3. Vending Machines. Outdoor vending machines must adhere to the following guidelines:

- (a) ~~Town Center and~~ Urban Corridor and Town Center. Outdoor vending machines are prohibited.
 - (b) ~~Commercial/Industrial~~ All other districts. Commercial buildings are limited to two vending machines; these machines must be grouped together, ~~screened from view,~~ and anchored in such a way that any anchorage is concealed. ~~No~~ No chains or cables are permitted.
4. Refuse. ~~Where storage is not accommodated as part of the principal building, refuse storage must be screened from view. Refuse enclosed as part of the principal structure must be contained and disposed of in accordance with applicable state, county and city health, safety and environmental codes. Use of sealed compactors is encouraged. All dumpsters shall be screened from view by a solid enclosure constructed of materials similar to the principle building, with heavy-duty doors.~~
 5. HVAC Equipment. HVAC equipment must be screened from view from any public street.
 6. Outdoor Audio. Amplified music, public address announcements, and other forms of outdoor audio are prohibited. ~~Outdoor music or other forms of amplified outdoor audio associated with special events shall be controlled by the City's regulations for specials events unless authorized by special permit by the City.~~
 7. Newspaper/Ad-paper Boxes. Newspaper/advertising paper dispensing machines are prohibited.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENT. That Chapter 165, "Zoning Regulations," of the Mount Vernon Code of Ordinances be and the same is hereby amended by ~~amending~~ adding the following to Article 11 to read as follows:

COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN STANDARDS

1105 Purpose

The purpose of this part of Article 11 (1105-1108) is to preserve, enhance and extend the special historic, architectural and aesthetic features of ~~historic-uptown~~ Mount Vernon. This article identifies the architectural qualities that define the Commercial Historic District ~~areas of the Commercial Historic District~~ and defines design standards to maintain that character in new projects and in existing building modifications.

1106 Scope

The design standards emphasize existing styles and patterns and include: a) building size, dimensions, and proportions; b) exterior building materials; c) building facade treatments and d) site design standards. The design standards apply to all new construction and to all new additions to existing buildings that are in compliance with these standards at the time of their passage, within the [Commercial Historic District](#) as they exist at the time of this ordinance adoption and as may amended from time to time by City Council action. If an existing building covered by these design standards does not conform to these standards at the time of the passage of these standards and 25% or less of any exterior elevation of the existing non-conforming building is modified, then any modifications to that building shall be made consistent with the existing design of that building. If more than 25% of any exterior elevation of an existing, non-conforming building is altered or modified, the entire building, including any additions, shall be brought into compliance with these design standards.

1107 Building Design Criteria

- a. **Building Size, Dimensions and Proportions.** Building elevations wider than 30 feet shall be divided into smaller increments through articulation of the facade. This can be achieved through a variety of techniques including the following: divisions or variations in materials, window bays, separate entrances and entry treatments, porticos, variations in roof lines, awnings, variations in brick or stone work, colonnades, arcades, or changes in facade. No single building shall have a building coverage area (building footprint) that exceeds 6,000 square feet.
- b. **Roof Form, Shape and Pitch.** Roofs shall adhere to the following guidelines:
 1. **Commercial buildings:** All buildings shall have a parapet to screen the roof slope on any side of the building facing an adjacent street. Roof slopes behind storefront parapets are not dictated.
 2. **Residential buildings:** Roof forms shall be hip, gable or combination hip/gable. Minimum pitch shall be 6/12. Hip and gable roof forms wider than 20 feet and facing a public right of way shall be divided into small expressions of the form with each element no wider than 20 feet.
- c. **Architectural Elements.** Building exteriors shall adhere to the following guidelines:
 1. **Commercial Buildings.** Buildings shall be clad in brick, stone, wood lap siding, or cement based lap siding accents. Concrete formed with liners to replicate other

permissible building materials is permitted. New buildings shall be clad in brick with stone accents and bases. Additions to existing buildings must be clad in a material similar to the cladding material of the original structure.

2. Residential buildings: Permitted roof materials include asphalt shingles, slate or simulated slate shingles, standing seam metal, or other similar roof materials.
- d. Color of Building Exterior. Commercial ~~Historic District~~ building exteriors should assume similar visual characteristics to the historic structures in the ~~Town Center~~ District. Brick shall be natural red or red-orange. Paint color applied to exterior surfaces is required to be generally consistent with the paint colors used throughout the historic district. It is prohibited to paint a brick surface.
 - e. Masonry or Concrete. Design elements such as foundation, chimney, brick and mortar joints should assume similar characteristics as other historic structures. Smooth concrete may be used as a foundation material if the foundation is not exposed more than 2 feet above the ground.
 - f. Building Facade
 1. Canopies and Awnings. Retractable canopies or retractable awnings are encouraged in commercial architectural styles and are allowed with all styles of architecture. Such awnings/canopies shall be made of canvas, vinyl, or other non-rigid materials. Awning shapes or profiles shall be a right angle (cross section projecting from the wall) with an allowed drop of 8 inches. Curved sections (horizontal projection) are allowed for openings of 10 feet or narrower.
 2. Architectural Detailing, Features, and Building Articulation. Architectural detailing shall be added to the building form. Architectural detailing may include cornices parapets, keystones, quoins, decorative brick work, accentuated window heads and sills, architectural metal as it serves period style, and similar items as enumerated below. Architectural details shall adhere to the following guidelines:
 - (a) Where horizontal top facades are used, such as a parapet wall, the cornice shall be articulated with ornament which steps out, or in some other fashion accentuates the top of the facade. Roof forms which overhang shall have a cornice board at the juncture of the eave and wall. Window and door heads and window sills shall be articulated with a pattern (brick) or contrasting material which emphasized the head or sill. Projecting features such as canopies and porches shall include some measure of architectural ornamentation. Gable

ends on pitched roofs 6/12 or greater or with a vertical height of greater than 8 feet shall have decorative material, contrasting banding, or other architectural treatment to divide the area into smaller segments.

(b) If the roof or gable end is not visible from the public right of way or adjacent property lines, then gable end guidelines do not apply.

3. Building Facade Transparency. In Commercial Historic District buildings, a minimum of 50% of the ground level facade fronting a public street and a minimum of 20% of the side elevations shall consist either of windows or doors to allow views into and out of the building interior. A minimum of 10% of the front facade of all upper floors of commercial district buildings shall be transparent via windows and/or balcony doorways.
4. Window Design. Commercial district storefront architecture shall have large fixed expanses of glass on the lower floor. Prairie style windows can incorporate a large amount of glass but should be broken into smaller window pane units by exterior muntins or smaller sash units. Residential buildings shall incorporate windows similar in dimensions and character to residential windows.
5. Building Ground Level Expression. In Commercial Historic District buildings of more than one story, the ground level shall be distinguished from the floors above by the use of one or more of the following elements: horizontal banding, an intermediate cornice line, or a change in building materials, for example.
6. Franchise Architecture. Standard franchise architecture, (building design that is trademarked or identified with a particular chain or corporation and is generic in nature), is prohibited. Franchise or national chains must follow this ordinance to create a building that is supportive of the overall context established within the historic district.

1108 SITE DEVELOPMENT

a. Sidewalks and Walkways

1. Commercial District-Property Sidewalks. Sidewalks must follow the current pattern for commercial style buildings and extend the sidewalk from the building front to the curb. Walkways to parking areas, around buildings or on private properties on or adjacent to public right of way shall be a minimum of four feet wide and constructed of either colored concrete or brick pavers. The color applied to surfaces is required to be generally consistent with the paint colors used throughout the

historic district. [See Section 1107d.](#)

2. ~~Other historic district~~[Residential Property Sidewalks](#). Sidewalks must be a minimum of 6 feet in width. If this is inconsistent with the surrounding sidewalk width, modifications may be approved to fit with the surrounding area; however, ADA requirements must be met in all cases.
 3. Walkways. Walkways to parking areas, around buildings or on private properties on or adjacent to public right of way shall be a minimum of four feet wide and constructed of either colored concrete or brick pavers. [The color applied to surfaces is required to be generally consistent with the paint colors used throughout the historic district. See Section 1107d.](#)
 4. Commercial [Historic](#) District Landscape. Street trees shall be planted within a landscaped parkway or in tree pits within the sidewalk area according to City standards. Street trees shall be spaced between 30 and 40 feet apart. Specific tree species shall conform to the tree ordinance.
 5. Where a building adjoins the sidewalk, benches, planter pots, planter boxes or hanging planter baskets may be included and integrated into the building design to enhance the pedestrian experience and to provide seasonal color. Such enhancements shall not be positioned so as to impede the normal flow of pedestrian traffic.
 6. Where present, all yard areas shall be landscaped with trees, shrubs, ground cover and turf grass.
 7. Accessibility and [C](#)urb Ramps. All sidewalks and walkways shall meet the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for accessibility.
- b. **Parking.** Parking lot design shall adhere to the following guidelines:
1. Off street parking lots shall be designed and constructed utilizing civil engineering "best practices" provided by the City Engineer.
 2. Surface lots shall be paved with hot mix asphalt or Portland cement with edges and planting islands defined by concrete curb and gutter and parking spaces defined with painted striping. Parking on gravel, dirt or turf, or any other surface than those specified is prohibited. Permeable pavement surfaces are strongly encouraged.
 3. **Parking Lot Landscaping.**
 - (a) A landscaped buffer strip at least seven feet wide shall be provided between

all surface parking areas and the sidewalk or street. The buffer strip shall consist of shade trees, low shrubs and/or perennial flowers (maximum of three feet in height). Use of bio-filtration methods of landscape drainage design is strongly encouraged. Adequate sight distance shall be maintained at all driveway intersections.

(b) A landscape buffer at least seven feet wide shall be provided along the rear of all surface parking lots. This area shall be planted with shade trees and a continuous four foot tall shrub border or hedge of deciduous and/or evergreen shrubs.

(c) Landscaping shall be incorporated so that every parking space is within 40 feet of a tree.

4. **Bicycle Parking.** Bike loops for parking at least five (5) bicycles shall be provided within 20 feet of the main entry of commercial, mixed use and public buildings.

c. **Outdoor Features**

1. **Fences and screen walls.** Fences shall adhere to the following guidelines:

(a) Commercial District Properties. No permanent fences shall be constructed in front of any commercial style architecture;

(a)(b) Residential Properties. Fences are allowed for residential style architecture and must comply with the guidelines-regulations for fences in the Code of Ordinances. Temporary seasonal fencing may be used to mark off outdoor dining areas, so long as the area does not impede the normal flow of pedestrian traffic. The total height of wall and fence shall not exceed 48 inches.

2. **Outdoor Storage.** Outdoor storage of any kind, including vehicles, raw materials, etc. must be fully or partially screened from all adjacent public or private parcels or rights of way by means of fencing or landscaping. Seasonal equipment, supplies, etc. shall be either stored within each facility or within a permanent accessory structure. See Accessory Structures/Buildings.

3. **Vending Machines.** Outdoor vending machines are prohibited.

4. **Refuse.** All commercial dumpsters shall be screened from view by a solid enclosure constructed of materials similar to the principle building, with heavy-duty doors.

5. **HVAC Equipment.** HVAC equipment must be screened from view from any

public street.

6. Outdoor Audio. Amplified music, public address announcements, and other forms of outdoor audio are prohibited unless authorized by special permit by the City.
7. Newspaper/Ad-paper Boxes. Newspaper/advertising paper dispensing machines are prohibited.

SECTION 3. REPEALER. All Ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

SECTION 4. SEVERABILITY. If any section, provision or part of this Ordinance shall be adjudged invalid or unconstitutional, such adjudication shall not affect the validity of the Ordinance as a whole or any section, provision or part thereof not adjudged invalid or unconstitutional.

SECTION 5. WHEN EFFECTIVE. This ordinance shall be in effect from and after its final passage, approval and publication as provided by law.

First reading on the ____ day of _____, 2013.

Second reading on the ____ day of _____, 2013.

Third and final passage on the ____ day of _____, 2013.

SCOTT C. PETERSON, MAYOR

ATTEST:

SUE RIPKE, ASSISTANT CITY ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK

I certify that the foregoing was published as Ordinance No. _____ in the Mount Vernon Sun on the ____ day of _____, 2013.

SUE RIPKE, ASSISTANT CITY ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK

