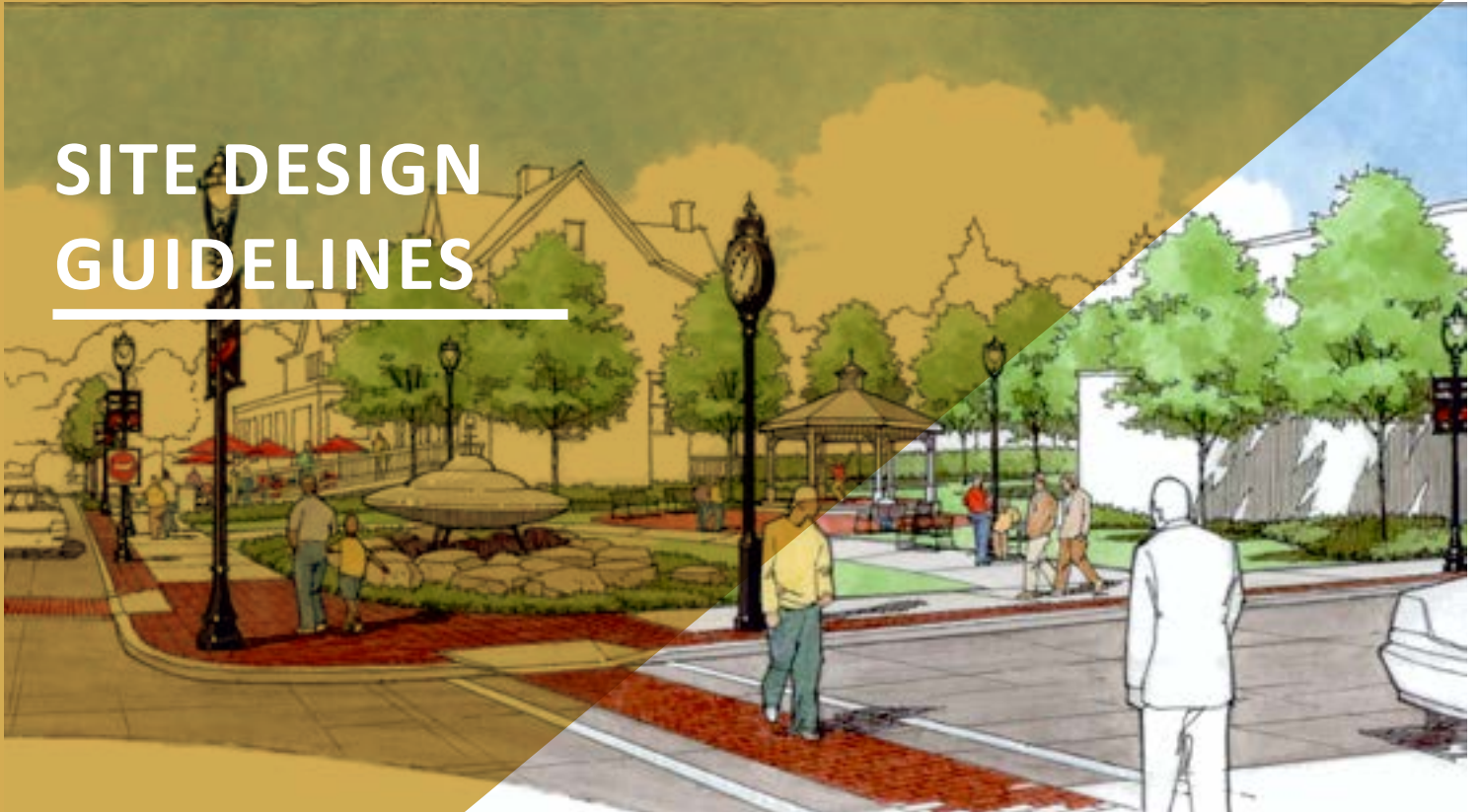




Included In This Section

Site Design guidelines are design specific guidelines that are prepared to direct the location of buildings and the method in which they interact with the streetscape or vehicular realm.

SITE DESIGN GUIDELINES



BACKGROUND DATA

The Borough of Mars currently has many underutilized parcels within the downtown core area that are not providing buildings or site improvements adjacent to the sidewalk or roadway. These spaces are prime for additional development and/or expansion of businesses. By creating buildings in these spaces the community will be able to provide a more congruent, uniform and attractive downtown corridor. Equally important in both the short and long term future is to promote adaptive re-use of the current building within the community. While not many buildings are currently of outstanding architectural character, it is more sustainable and responsible to further utilize existing facilities (potentially expanding) before tearing down buildings for new establishments. Through a process of adaptive re-use and infill development the community can witness a more vibrant and attractive downtown corridor.



INFILL ANALYSIS

Currently the Borough downtown core area has many “missing teeth” in the overall Grand Avenue corridor. This lack of continuity of buildings with equal setbacks is creating a spotty or patchwork atmosphere for the community. This lack of cohesive atmosphere provides residents and visitors with an unattractive atmosphere and an increased distance between potential destinations. It is through this atmosphere that the community has continued to expand into a vehicle centric downtown and spacing themselves from a pedestrian friendly environment.

SITE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Many parcels within the downtown are currently underutilized or entirely vacant. Often buildings have setbacks that are overly gracious and creating green space or excessive parking lots along the commercial corridors. These spaces can be better utilized as building or civic spaces. By doing so the community will be able to:

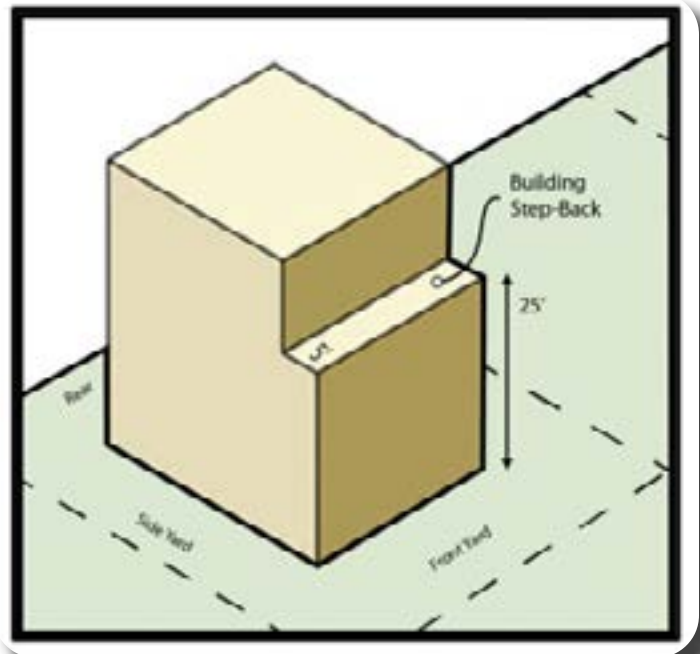
- Increase the amount of rental space
- Increase the variety of rental spaces
- Improve the overall atmosphere and feel of the downtown
- Better capitalize on existing parking available in off street facilities
- Increase tax revenue through additional business creation or expansion

While these spaces are often constructed in the most cost effective manner, it is important to note that new buildings should be built to meet the common building design guidelines and promote the overall community vision. For the Borough of Mars the new buildings should:

- Cap out at no more than 35 feet in height – Placing a cap on building height instead of floors will allow the infill development to be utilized by multiple end users and design styles. This flexibility will also allow for adequate adaptive reuse in the future.
- Offer setbacks above the second floor or 25 vertical feet – Above 25 vertical feet in total building height setbacks should be created to limit the viewable facewall by pedestrians. The efforts of stepping a

building will help the community retain the small form factor of development from a pedestrian or vehicular perspective, yet improve the density and amenities within each building.

- Offer a no less than 5 linear foot setback of upper floors – Setbacks should be no less than 5 linear feet from the facewall. This setback value is provided as a minimum as this will hide the true height of the upper floors from a pedestrian perspective



- Incorporate a mixture of uses – By providing the community with additional spaces, the downtown will be provided with improved rental spaces. These spaces should be designed to meet several groups or services, including:
 - Retail/amenities on the first floor
 - Professional services on the second and third
 - Residential on upper floors
- Limit light on the upper floors or setbacks – By limiting the lighting in upper floors or setbacks the true height of the building can be hidden. Additionally this will improve privacy of residential development on the upper floors.



STYLES OF INFILL

The styles of infill development or architectural features will determine the character of the Grand Avenue Corridor area. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that the colonial theme be continued within the downtown corridors. By creating new buildings that capitalize on the available retail space and roadway frontage the community will be able to better create a strong downtown that is attractive and inviting for people to stroll along, shop and visit dining establishments. Creating this style of infill development can be completed by:

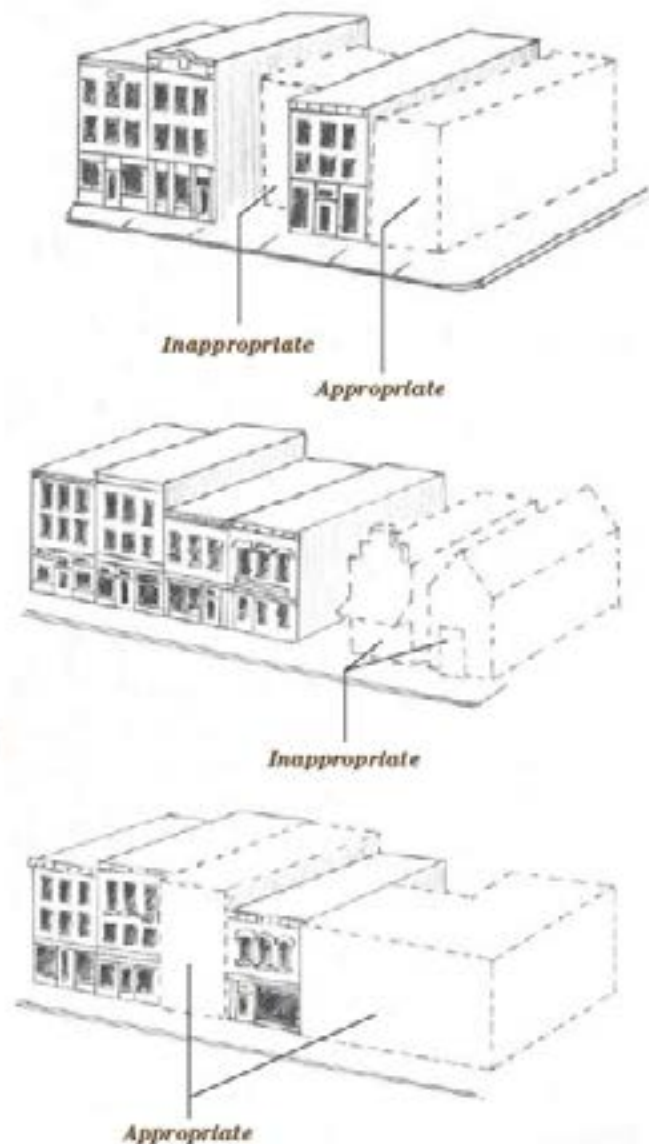
- Utilizing similar materials – By utilizing similar materials and methods of construction the community will be able to bring the unique characteristics that present within the downtown into new buildings. All infill development should have a similar offset as historic buildings and provide a visually appealing façade.
- Matching similar scales of building forming and massing – Matching the forming and massing of the period correct structure within the community will help improve the identity of the downtown. Current buildings cap out at a total of three stories and have an approximate occupiable floor height of 35 feet. This can be increased artificially through setbacks, but the street frontage should continue to resemble this form and massing of development.
- Including architectural elements of local historic buildings – Attempting to recreate elements of the historic or original buildings within the downtown core will help infill buildings tie together with their surrounding properties.

BUILDING PLACEMENT

- Placement - Within an existing context of historic buildings, there is a customary or prescribed building placement. It is important to respect the common setback and placement of buildings in order to maintain the continuity of the streetscape. This should be regarded as a “build to” line, as well as a building setback.

Consideration should also be given to the vistas both along the streetscape or roadway for structures set near the road, and from the road for structures set back away from the road. Carefully consider any new

BUILDING PLACEMENT



construction adjacent to the existing structures: will the new construction interfere with the views?

- Form - Whenever possible, the existing historic context of the building form should be respected, including the volume of the form in relation to its site. Building height, proportion, and lot coverage should be compatible with the dominant form on the street. Orientation of the form to the street also should be the same as the context. For example, if all of the buildings on a given street are gable-fronted facing the street, new infill buildings should have a similar form and orientation.
- Solid/Void Pattern - The ratio and pattern of wall-to-window openings is common within a given building type and age. Respecting this pattern helps to unify the streetscape.