

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

The following central business district design guidelines for architecture, landscaping, signage, and lighting could form the basis for and be incorporated into a formal design guideline ordinance.

Architectural Guidelines

The intent of the key architectural guideline principals is to ensure a base level of quality architecture and encourage proposals that will fit within and contribute to the established western architectural context of Grand Lake.

Grand Lake has a unique architectural aesthetic already established. Henry Schnoor, a German trained architect and highly skilled builder may have originated the “Grand Lake wooden slab siding” style found throughout Grand Lake’s architecture. This rustic western style has come to be an icon of Grand Lake. It is recommended that new buildings constructed along Grand Avenue be designed in a similar manner to Grand Lake’s historic buildings. The use of the “Grand Lake wooden slab siding” is encouraged.

Grand Lake’s older buildings were constructed in a similar pattern to many of America’s historic towns. They were built on the edge of street right-of-ways and false storefronts were added to many buildings to make them appear as if they were much larger than they actually were. False storefronts can still be found on a number of Grand Lake’s commercial buildings.

Grand Lake should attempt to revitalize existing buildings that are inconsistent with the Town’s rustic western style. Establishing a façade grant program through the town of up to \$1,000 and paint grants of \$100 can induce owners to improve their buildings. A low-interest loan pool by a consortium of Grand County banks can be even a greater incentive than free money (from grants). Local / regional architects can be recruited to provide design assistance.

Key Architectural Design Guideline Principals include:

■ Façade materials and treatment

- All sides of a building should express consistent architectural detail and character
- Building entrances should be designed to be visually prominent with distinguishing façade variations, recesses, projections, or other integral building forms
- Consist of durable, long lasting materials that will keep it’s appearance over time

- Building frontages should exhibit human scale detailing on the ground floors
- Use reveals, projections, and other subtle changes in texture and color of wall surfaces. Building colors should emphasize natural, muted earth tones

■ Windows

- 50% of the façade that faces the street should be composed of transparent materials- to the extent possible that it is compatible with the proposed use
- Should be deep set and utilize mullions
- Should be well lit to facilitate a positive merchandising environment
- Should incorporate clear glass on storefronts, windows and doors. Highly reflective or mirrored glass should not be allowed.

■ Covered walkways

- Covered walkways with boardwalk are a response to climate, providing protection from the weather and help articulate the mass and minimize the apparent bulk of a building. Covered walkways and arcades should be provided on all buildings frontages where pedestrian traffic is likely.
- Column treatments for the covered walkways should be consistent per business, should be constructed of wood, and take design cues from existing canopy column treatments in the central business district.
- All boardwalk conditions should be designed to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and strive to address the needs of disabled individuals.

■ Roofs

- Use of “false fronts” / parapets on commercial buildings in the central business district is encouraged to screen flat roofs.
- False fronts should be designed to screen mechanical and HVAC equipment from the street level.
- Flat roofs shall be designed to accommodate maximum snow loading conditions.

■ Infill / building additions in the central business district

- When a new use (infill) / addition is proposed to an existing commercial development the newly constructed portion of the building should appear as an originally conceived part of the design. The new additions should match the scale and reflect the proportions of the original structure where they adjoin or are adjacent. New construction of a different height and bulk, than that of the original structure, should not occur abruptly.

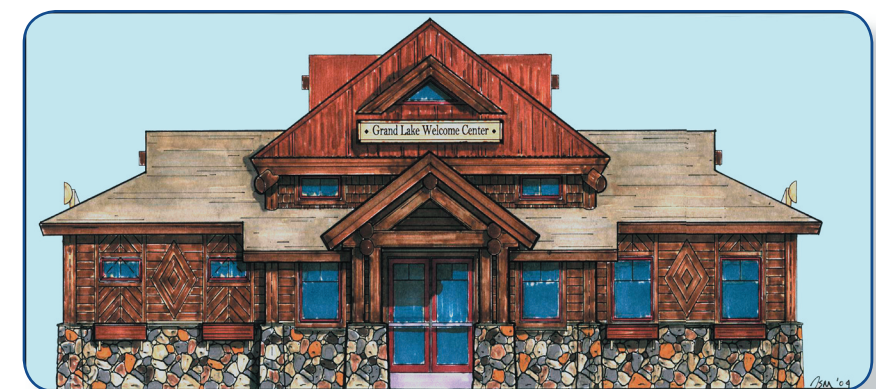
- New additions should match the existing approved architecture of the existing central business district. The extension of canopy elements, lighting, boardwalks, planting areas, fenestration (window) patterns, structural rhythms, and use of materials should exhibit a seamless transition between existing and new construction.

- Large setbacks from the street right-of-ways should be discouraged for new building construction.

- New construction should not incorporate precise replication of town center architecture but utilize similar colors, materials, textures, pattern repetition, rhythm and proportions to achieve architectural unity.



“Grand Lake wooden slab siding”



The proposed Welcome Center architecture fits into the character of Grand Lake

Existing gravel strip condition



Landscape Guidelines (gravel strip treatment)

There is currently no uniformity to the landscape strips that separate the Town's boardwalk from parking spaces. Some landscape areas are unsightly with little more than gravel and weeds covering the ground. Other strips are very well maintained, landscaped with grass and planter boxes.

It is recommended that consistent guidelines be used to direct the design of Grand Lake's landscape strips. Three different treatments of the landscape strip are recommended including lawn, raised planters, and landscaped areas that will promote the businesses they are located in front of. The town is encouraged to promote similar landscape styles on a block-by-block basis. Certain uniform items should be applied to the entire commercial strip in the downtown area such as consistent lighting and signage. Snow storage should be taken into account for the landscape strips.

The Town strongly encourages owners to provide outdoor art on their property or in the landscape / gravel strip to enrich the experience of Town visitors and create a stronger sense of place. Benches and/or sculpture plinths should be incorporated to each block in the downtown area. These plinths will allow for revolving artwork / sculptures to be located properly. If art is proposed in the public right-of-way, it must not preclude meeting sidewalk or planting requirements or interfere with safe vehicular, pedestrian or bicycle movements or maintenance of the boardwalk or utilities. The Town may consider a permanent purchase of sculptures / artwork for location in the gravel strip. Artwork should compliment and reinforce the character of its location in terms of its subject, scale, style and materials. For example, it may reveal some historical fact about the location, or draw attention to a unique physical quality of its site. A well-executed example of a permanent sculpture can be found at the corner of Grand Avenue and Garfield.

Stepping-stones or other defined walkways / paths should be placed to help guide tourists from parking areas through the landscape strips to the boardwalk and stores. These defined paths should also be maintained with snow removal during the winter months. Those planting strips that do not contain raised planters can be utilized for snow storage during winter months.

In addition to enhancing Grand Lake's landscape strips, it is recommended that additional hanging baskets and other flower boxes be utilized throughout the town. Grand Lake is currently only utilizing up to 20% of its available water, therefore additional water could be used to help support vast landscape improvements to Grand Lake's central business district.

Proposed gravel strip condition



(Left) Terrific example of utilizing sculpture in the "gravel strip"



(Right) An example of the boardwalk extending into the gravel strip.



Key landscape design guideline principals include:

- **Landscape / gravel strip treatment**
 - The gravel strips in the central business district shall be landscaped and treated uniformly on a block-by-block basis, permanent and automatic irrigation systems should be installed in all landscape / gravel strips
 - Distinct, formalized pedestrian pathway connections should occur at a minimum of every 25 feet within the landscape / gravel strips

Signage Guidelines

Commercial signage plans should reflect a balance between allowing adequate signage to conduct a business while adding to the overall design theme and protecting the visual aesthetic of Grand Lake's central business district.

It is recommended that the signage throughout Grand Lake be of a rustic western style, building on the town's thematic architecture. The signs should utilize native materials as much as possible including wood, stones and incorporate natural / earth-tone colors. Signage should be consistent throughout the town and should tie the business district together. Town funded signage could set a precedent and designate specific landmarks within the town (such as the dock, the town center, and the town entryway). Town initiated signage should be of same forms and materials as those signs proposed for the central business district entries.

Key Signage design guideline principals include:

- **Central business district signage**
 - All signage should be architecturally integrated into their surroundings in terms of shape, size, color, texture, and lighting so that they do not visually compete with the architecture of the building and design of the site. Signs should be integrated as such they become a natural part of the building façade.
 - Signs shall be constructed of durable, high quality architectural materials. Treated wood, stone, brick and stucco are the preferred materials for signs.
 - Select colors carefully. Sign colors shall compliment the colors used on the building and the project as a whole. Colors or combinations of colors that are harsh and disrupt the visual harmony and order of the street are unacceptable.
 - Use contrasting colors. Provide a substantial contrast between the color and the material of the background and the letters or symbols to

make the sign easier to read during the day and night. Light letters on a dark background or dark letters on a light background are most legible.

- Business identity, either by accent bands, paint or other applied color schemes, signage, parapet detailing, decorative roof details or materials should not be the dominant architectural feature of a building. Accent colors should be used judiciously.

- New construction design should anticipate signage. Designs should provide logical sign areas, allowing flexibility for new users, as the building is re-used over time.

- Signs should be installed at similar heights to create a unified sign band, should not obscure architectural detailing and should use a combination of awnings, wall and projecting signs for visual interest. Locate wall signs at the first floor level only for retail uses.

- Pedestrian oriented sign are encouraged. These signs are designed for and directed toward pedestrians so they can easily and comfortably read the sign as they stand adjacent of the business.

- Projecting signs (any sign supported by a building wall and projecting there from at least twelve (12) inches or more horizontally beyond the surface of the building to which the sign is attached) should be located so they generally align with others in the block. Projecting signs must have eight (8) feet clearance, and may not extend more than four (4) feet from the building wall. The size of projecting signs is limited to three (3) feet wide and six (6) square feet. The number of projecting signs is limited to one per business.

- Flashing, rotating, blinking, chasing or moving signs (except for time and temperature), animated signs, searchlights, inflatable free-standing signs, tethered balloons or signs that create the illusion of movement should be prohibited.

- **Signage Illumination**

- Use illumination only if necessary

- Sign illumination shall complement, not overpower, the overall composition of the site.

- Use a direct light source. All lighted signs shall have their lighting directed in such a manner as to illuminate only the face of the sign. When external light sources are directed at the sign surface, the light source must be concealed from pedestrians’ and motorists’ “lines of site.”

- The use of individually cut, backlit letter signs is encouraged.

Lighting Guidelines

Site lighting, security lighting, and architectural / landscape lighting should

provide the user with illumination levels appropriate for the designed activity (i.e. parking, walking, outdoor dining). Illumination levels should also be reasonably uniform throughout the site and strive to minimize glare.

Uniform lighting styles should be utilized throughout the Grand Lake central business district. Lights should be designed to be of pedestrian scale and consistent with Grand Lake’s western/rustic style. Lights should be designed to protect the night sky from light pollution.

Key Signage design guideline principals include:

- **Central business district lighting**

- Recommended light level guidelines and uniformity ratios established by the Illumination Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) in the IENSA Lighting Handbook (current addition) should be considered along with predominant lighting characteristics of the surrounding area when determining appropriate solutions to lighting design.

- Use high quality light. White light (i.e. metal halide, compact fluorescent, and inductive) is recommended over orange or yellow light (i.e. low and high pressure sodium, and mercury vapor).

- Light glare or excess brightness should be minimized. Cut-off fixtures, mounting heights, and the elevation of potential viewers must be considered for effectively controlling glare by directing light below the horizontal

- Lights should be directed to shine downward and shall be shielded from emitting light upwards

- Lights should be shielded so that concentrated rays of light will not shine directly onto other properties. Shielding or aiming fixtures away from adjacent businesses should control light trespass beyond property lines. Light trespass should not exceed ambient levels.

- Lights should only be placed where they are needed and the intensity of light shall be no more than the minimal amount need by the land use

- Obtrusive (lights “trespassing” onto adjacent properties) lights should be avoided

- Public facilities should not be illuminated unless they are being utilized

- Commercial lighting should be turned off after businesses have closed

- Landscape feature lighting and lighting at the pedestrian level is encouraged

- Architectural lighting should be used to highlight special features only. Lighting of expansive wall planes or the use of architectural lighting that results in hotspots on walls or roof planes should be avoided.



An example of a business benefiting from the gravel strip.



An example of underutilizing the gravel strip.



Grand Lake has wonderful examples of western and rustic signage.