

FORM & CHARACTER – DEVELOPMENT PERMIT GUIDELINES

Chapter 2 - The Design Foundations: apply to all projects and provide the overarching principles for supporting creativity, innovation and design excellence in Kelowna.

- Facilitate Active Mobility
- Use Placemaking to Strengthen Neighbourhood Identity
- Create Lively and Attractive Streets & Public Spaces
- Design Buildings to the Human Scale
- Strive for Design Excellence

The General Residential and Mixed Use Guidelines: provide the key guidelines that all residential and mixed use projects should strive to achieve to support the Design Foundations.

- The General Guidelines are supplement by typology-specific guidelines (e.g., Townhouses & Infill on page 18-19, High-Rise Residential and Mixed-Use on page 18-42), which provide additional guidance about form and character.

Chapter 2 - Design Foundations

Apply To All Projects

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High-Rise
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*Note: Refer to the Design Foundations and the Guidelines associated with the specific building typology.

Consideration has been given to the following guidelines as identified in Chapter 18 of the City of Kelowna 2040 Official Community Plan:

SECTION 2.0: GENERAL RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED USE						
RATE PROPOSALS COMPLIANCE TO PERTINENT GUIDELINE <i>(1 is least complying & 5 is highly complying)</i>	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
2.1 General residential & mixed use guidelines						
2.1.1 Relationship to the Street	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
a. Orient primary building facades and entries to the fronting street or open space to create street edge definition and activity.						✓
b. On corner sites, orient building facades and entries to both fronting streets.						✓
c. Minimize the distance between the building and the sidewalk to create street definition and a sense of enclosure.						✓
d. Locate and design windows, balconies, and street-level uses to create active frontages and 'eyes on the street', with additional glazing and articulation on primary building facades.						✓
e. Ensure main building entries are clearly visible with direct sight lines from the fronting street.						✓
f. Avoid blank, windowless walls along streets or other public open spaces.						✓
g. Avoid the use of roll down panels and/or window bars on retail and commercial frontages that face streets or other public open spaces.						✓
h. In general, establish a street wall along public street frontages to create a building height to street width ratio of 1:2, with a minimum ratio of 11:3 and a maximum ratio of 1:1.75. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider streets (e.g. transit corridors) can support greater streetwall heights compared to narrower streets (e.g. local streets); • The street wall does not include upper storeys that are setback from the primary frontage; and • A 1:1 building height to street width ratio is appropriate for a lane of mid-block connection condition provided the street wall height is no greater than 3 storeys. 						✓
2.1.2 Scale and Massing	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
a. Provide a transition in building height from taller to shorter buildings both within and adjacent to the site with consideration for future land use direction.					✓	
b. Break up the perceived mass of large buildings by incorporating visual breaks in facades.			✓			
c. Step back the upper storeys of buildings and arrange the massing and siting of buildings to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize the shadowing on adjacent buildings as well as public and open spaces such as sidewalks, plazas, and courtyards; and • Allow for sunlight onto outdoor spaces of the majority of ground floor units during the winter solstice. 		✓				

2.1.3 Site Planning	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
a. Site and design buildings to respond to unique site conditions and opportunities, such as oddly shaped lots, location at prominent intersections, framing of important open spaces, corner lots, sites with buildings that terminate a street end view, and views of natural features.					✓	
b. Use Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to better ensure public safety through the use of appropriate lighting, visible entrances, opportunities for natural surveillance, and clear sight lines for pedestrians.						✓
c. Limit the maximum grades on development sites to 30% (3:1)						✓
d. Design buildings for 'up-slope' and 'down-slope' conditions relative to the street by using strategies such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stepping buildings along the slope, and locating building entrances at each step and away from parking access where possible; • Incorporating terracing to create usable open spaces around the building • Using the slope for under-building parking and to screen service and utility areas; • Design buildings to access key views; and • Minimizing large retaining walls (retaining walls higher than 1 m should be stepped and landscaped). 						✓
e. Design internal circulation patterns (street, sidewalks, pathways) to be integrated with and connected to the existing and planned future public street, bicycle, and/or pedestrian network.					✓	
f. Incorporate easy-to-maintain traffic calming features, such as on-street parking bays and curb extensions, textured materials, and crosswalks.	✓					
g. Apply universal accessibility principles to primary building entries, sidewalks, plazas, mid-block connections, lanes, and courtyards through appropriate selection of materials, stairs, and ramps as necessary, and the provision of wayfinding and lighting elements.						✓
2.1.4 Site Servicing, Access, and Parking	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
a. Locate off-street parking and other 'back-of-house' uses (such as loading, garbage collection, utilities, and parking access) away from public view.						✓
b. Ensure utility areas are clearly identified at the development permit stage and are located to not unnecessarily impact public or common open spaces.						✓
c. Avoid locating off-street parking between the front façade of a building and the fronting public street.						✓
d. In general, accommodate off-street parking in one of the following ways, in order of preference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underground (where the high water table allows) • Parking in a half-storey (where it is able to be accommodated to not negatively impact the street frontage); 						✓

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garages or at-grade parking integrated into the building (located at the rear of the building); and Surface parking at the rear, with access from the lane or secondary street wherever possible. 						
e. Design parking areas to maximize rainwater infiltration through the use of permeable materials such as paving blocks, permeable concrete, or driveway planting strips.	✓					
f. In cases where publicly visible parking is unavoidable, screen using strategies such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscaping; Trellises; Grillwork with climbing vines; or Other attractive screening with some visual permeability. 	✓					
g. Provide bicycle parking at accessible locations on site, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covered short-term parking in highly visible locations, such as near primary building entrances; and Secure long-term parking within the building or vehicular parking area. 						✓
h. Provide clear lines of site at access points to parking, site servicing, and utility areas to enable casual surveillance and safety.						✓
i. Consolidate driveway and laneway access points to minimize curb cuts and impacts on the pedestrian realm or common open spaces.						✓
j. Minimize negative impacts of parking ramps and entrances through treatments such as enclosure, screening, high quality finishes, sensitive lighting and landscaping.						✓
2.1.5 Streetscapes, Landscapes, and Public Realm Design	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
a. Site buildings to protect mature trees, significant vegetation, and ecological features.	✓					
b. Locate underground parkades, infrastructure, and other services to maximize soil volumes for in-ground plantings.					✓	
c. Site trees, shrubs, and other landscaping appropriately to maintain sight lines and circulation.						✓
d. Design attractive, engaging, and functional on-site open spaces with high quality, durable, and contemporary materials, colors, lighting, furniture, and signage.					✓	
e. Ensure site planning and design achieves favourable microclimate outcomes through strategies such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locating outdoor spaces where they will receive ample sunlight throughout the year; Using materials and colors that minimize heat absorption; Planting both evergreen and deciduous trees to provide a balance of shading in the summer and solar access in the winter; and Using building mass, trees and planting to buffer wind. 					✓	
f. Use landscaping materials that soften development and enhance the public realm.						✓

g. Plant native and/or drought tolerant trees and plants suitable for the local climate.						✓
h. Select trees for long-term durability, climate and soil suitability, and compatibility with the site's specific urban conditions.						✓
i. Design sites and landscapes to maintain the pre-development flows through capture, infiltration, and filtration strategies, such as the use of rain gardens and permeable surfacing.		✓				
j. Design sites to minimize water use for irrigation by using strategies such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing planting areas and tree pits to passively capture rainwater and stormwater run-off; and • Using recycled water irrigation systems. 		✓				
k. Create multi-functional landscape elements wherever possible, such as planting areas that also capture and filter stormwater or landscape features that users can interact with.		✓				
l. Select materials and furnishings that reduce maintenance requirements and use materials and site furnishings that are sustainably sourced, re-purposed or 100% recycled.				✓		
m. Use exterior lighting to complement the building and landscape design, while: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimizing light trespass onto adjacent properties; • Using full cut-off lighting fixtures to minimize light pollution; and • Maintaining lighting levels necessary for safety and visibility. 						✓
n. Employ on-site wayfinding strategies that create attractive and appropriate signage for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists using a 'family' of similar elements.						✓
2.1.6 Building Articulation, Features and Materials	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
a. Express a unified architectural concept that incorporates variation in façade treatments. Strategies for achieving this include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulating facades by stepping back or extending forward a portion of the façade to create a series of intervals or breaks; • Repeating window patterns on each step-back and extension interval; • Providing a porch, patio, or deck, covered entry, balcony and/or bay window for each interval; and • Changing the roof line by alternating dormers, stepped roofs, gables, or other roof elements to reinforce each interval. 					✓	
b. Incorporate a range of architectural features and details into building facades to create visual interest, especially when approached by pedestrians. Include architectural features such as: bay windows and balconies; corner feature accents, such as turrets or cupolas; variations in roof height, shape and detailing; building entries; and canopies and overhangs. Include architectural details such as: Masonry such as tiles, brick, and stone; siding including score lines and varied materials to distinguish between floors; articulation of columns and pilasters;						✓

ornamental features and art work; architectural lighting; grills and railings; substantial trim details and moldings / cornices; and trellises, pergolas, and arbors.						
c. Design buildings to ensure that adjacent residential properties have sufficient visual privacy (e.g. by locating windows to minimize overlook and direct sight lines into adjacent units), as well as protection from light trespass and noise.						✓
d. Design buildings such that their form and architectural character reflect the buildings internal function and use.						✓
e. Incorporate substantial, natural building materials such as masonry, stone, and wood into building facades.					✓	
f. Provide weather protection such as awnings and canopies at primary building entries.						✓
g. Place weather protection to reflect the building's architecture.						✓
h. Limit signage in number, location, and size to reduce visual clutter and make individual signs easier to see.						✓
i. Provide visible signage identifying building addresses at all entrances.						✓

SECTION 4.0: LOW & MID-RISE RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE						
RATE PROPOSALS COMPLIANCE TO PERTINENT GUIDELINE <i>(1 is least complying & 5 is highly complying)</i>	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
4.1 Low & mid-rise residential & mixed use guidelines						
4.1.1 Relationship to the Street						
N/A						
i. Ensure lobbies and main building entries are clearly visible from the fronting street.						✓
j. Avoid blank walls at grade wherever possible by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locating enclosed parking garages away from street frontages or public open spaces; • Using ground-oriented units or glazing to avoid creating dead frontages; and • When unavoidable, screen blank walls with landscaping or incorporate a patio café or special materials to make them more visually interesting. 						✓
Commercial & Mixed Use Buildings						
k. Ensure buildings have a continuous active and transparent retail frontage at grade to provide a visual connection between the public and private realm.						✓
l. Site buildings using common 'build to' line at or near the front property line so that a continuous street frontage is maintained. Some variation (1-3 m maximum) can be accommodated in ground level set backs to support pedestrian and retail activity by, for example, incorporating recessed entryway, small entry plaza, or sidewalk café.						✓

m. Incorporate frequent entrances (every 15 m maximum) into commercial and street frontages to create punctuation and rhythm along the street, visual interest and support pedestrian activity.						✓
Residential & Mixed Use Buildings						
n. Set back residential buildings on the ground floor between 3-5 m from the property line to create a semi-private entry or transition zone to individual units and to allow for an elevated front entryway or raised patio. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A maximum 1.2 m height (e.g. 5-6 steps) is desired for front entryways. • Exceptions can be made in cases where the water table requires this to be higher. In these cases, provide a larger patio and screen parking with ramps, stairs and landscaping. 						✓
o. Incorporate individual entrances to ground floor units accessible from the fronting street or public open spaces.						✓
p. Site and orient buildings so that windows and balconies overlook public streets, parks, walkways, and shared amenity spaces while minimizing views into private residences.						✓
4.1.2 Scale and Massing	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
a. Residential building facades should have a maximum length of 60 m. A length of 40 m is preferred.		✓				
b. Residential buildings should have a maximum width of 24 m.						✓
c. Buildings over 40 m in length should incorporate a significant horizontal and vertical break in the façade.			✓			
d. For commercial facades, incorporate a significant break at intervals of approximately 35 m.	✓					
4.1.3 Site Planning	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
a. On sloping sites, floor levels should step to follow natural grade and avoid the creation of blank walls.					✓	
b. Site buildings to be parallel to the street and to have a distinct front-to-back orientation to public street and open spaces and to rear yards, parking, and/or interior court yards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building sides that interface with streets, mid-block connections and other open spaces and should positively frame and activate streets and open spaces and support pedestrian activity; and • Building sides that are located away from open spaces (building backs) should be designed for private/shared outdoor spaces and vehicle access. 						✓
c. Break up large buildings with mid-block connections which should be publicly-accessible wherever possible.		✓				
d. Ground floors adjacent to mid-block connections should have entrances and windows facing the mid-block connection.	✓					
4.1.4 Site Servicing, Access and Parking	N/A	1	2	3	4	5

a. Vehicular access should be from the lane. Where there is no lane, and where the re-introduction of a lane is difficult or not possible, access may be provided from the street, provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access is from a secondary street, where possible, or from the long face of the block; • Impacts on pedestrians and the streetscape is minimised; and • There is no more than one curb cut per property. 						✓
b. Above grade structure parking should only be provided in instances where the site or high water table does not allow for other parking forms and should be screened from public view with active retail uses, active residential uses, architectural or landscaped screening elements.						✓
c. Buildings with ground floor residential may integrate half-storey underground parking to a maximum of 1.2 m above grade, with the following considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-private spaces should be located above to soften the edge and be at a comfortable distance from street activity; and • Where conditions such as the high water table do not allow for this condition, up to 2 m is permitted, provided that entryways, stairs, landscaped terraces, and patios are integrated and that blank walls and barriers to accessibility are minimized. 	✓					
4.1.5 Publicly-Accessible and Private Open Spaces	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
a. Integrate publicly accessible private spaces (e.g. private courtyards accessible and available to the public) with public open areas to create seamless, contiguous spaces.					✓	
b. Locate semi-private open spaces to maximize sunlight penetration, minimize noise disruptions, and minimize 'overlook' from adjacent units.					✓	
Outdoor amenity areas						
c. Design plazas and urban parks to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contain 'three edges' (e.g. building frontage on three sides) where possible and be sized to accommodate a variety of activities; • Be animated with active uses at the ground level; and • Be located in sunny, south facing areas. 			✓			
d. Design internal courtyards to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide amenities such as play areas, barbecues, and outdoor seating where appropriate. • Provide a balance of hardscape and softscape areas to meet the specific needs of surrounding residents and/or users. 						✓
e. Design mid-block connections to include active frontages, seating and landscaping.	✓					
Rooftop Amenity Spaces						
f. Design shared rooftop amenity spaces (such as outdoor recreation space and rooftop gardens on the top of a parkade) to be accessible to residents and to ensure a balance of amenity and privacy by:						✓

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limiting sight lines from overlooking residential units to outdoor amenity space areas through the use of pergolas or covered areas where privacy is desired; and Controlling sight lines from the outdoor amenity space into adjacent or nearby residential units by using fencing, landscaping, or architectural screening. 						
<p>g. Reduce the heat island affect by including plants or designing a green roof, with the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure trees and tall shrubs to the roof deck; and Ensure soil depths and types are appropriate for proposed plants and ensure drainage is accommodated. 		✓				
4.1.6 Building Articulation, Features, and Materials	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
<p>a. Articulate building facades into intervals that are a maximum of 15 m wide for mixed-use buildings and 20 m wide for residential buildings. Strategies for articulating buildings should consider the potential impacts on energy performance and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Façade Modulation – stepping back or extending forward a portion of the façade to create a series of intervals in the façade; Repeating window pattern intervals that correspond to extensions and step backs (articulation) in the building façade; Providing a porch, patio, deck, or covered entry for each interval; Providing a bay window or balcony for each interval, while balancing the significant potential for heat loss through thermal bridge connections which could impact energy performance; Changing the roof line by alternating dormers, stepped roofs, gables, or other roof elements to reinforce the modulation or articulation interval; Changing the materials with the change in building plane; and Provide a lighting fixture, trellis, tree or other landscape feature within each interval. 				✓		
<p>b. Break up the building mass by incorporating elements that define a building’s base, middle and top.</p>						✓
<p>c. Use an integrated, consistent range of materials and colors and provide variety, by for example, using accent colors.</p>						✓
<p>d. Articulate the façade using design elements that are inherent to the buildings as opposed to being decorative. For example, create depth in building facades by recessing window frames or partially recessing balconies to allow shadows to add detail and variety as a byproduct of massing.</p>					✓	
<p>e. Incorporate distinct architectural treatments for corner sites and highly visible buildings such as varying the roofline, articulating the façade, adding pedestrian space, increasing the number and size of windows, and adding awnings or canopies.</p>						✓
<p>f. Provide weather protection (e.g. awnings, canopies, overhangs, etc.) along all commercial streets and plazas with particular attention to the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary building entrances; 						✓

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjacent to bus zones and street corners where people wait for traffic lights; • Over store fronts and display windows; and • Any other areas where significant waiting or browsing by people occurs. 						
g. Architecturally-integrate awnings, canopies, and overhangs to the building and incorporate architectural design features of buildings from which they are supported.						✓
h. Place and locate awnings and canopies to reflect the building's architecture and fenestration pattern.						✓
i. Place awnings and canopies to balance weather protection with daylight penetration. Avoid continuous opaque canopies that run the full length of facades.						✓
j. Provide attractive signage on commercial buildings that identifies uses and shops clearly but which is scaled to the pedestrian rather than the motorist. Some exceptions can be made for buildings located on highways and/or major arterials in alignment with the City's Sign Bylaw.						✓
k. Avoid the following types of signage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internally lit plastic box signs; • Pylon (stand alone) signs; and • Rooftop signs. 	✓					
l. Uniquely branded or colored signs are encouraged to help establish a special character to different neighbourhoods.	✓					