Part 5  Development Design Guidelines

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Part 5
Development Design Guidelines
1.0 Introduction

The purpose of the Development Design Guidelines is to provide appropriate standards or benchmarks applicable to new Downtown development. The Guidelines are informed by and reinforce the objectives of the Guiding Framework. Although they seek to provide clarity on intended outcomes of the Plan, they also provide flexibility within certain parameters to encourage distinction, variety and creative architectural responses.

The Guidelines are comprised of: Central District Built Form Design Guidelines, including guides for infilling within the Historic Blocks; Building Types Design Guidelines for designing a variety of buildings types applicable across the Downtown area; Environmentally Sustainable Design Guidelines; and, Site-Specific Guidelines for sites that have been given a greater level of consideration.

The Development Design Guidelines seek to provide the municipal development approval process with a reasonable degree of predictability by establishing a common understanding of design criteria and development standards among developers, neighbours and the City, early in the design and planning of new developments.

How to Use the Guidelines

As standards and benchmarks for new Downtown development, the Guidelines are informed by best practices in urban design but tailored to the unique conditions of Downtown Lethbridge. They help to guide and shape new buildings so as to reinforce the objectives of the Master Plan. At the same time, they provide flexibility within certain parameters to encourage distinction, variety and creative architectural responses.

Where developments do not conform to the guidelines but propose alternative standards, they should be assessed to ensure the intent and spirit of the guidelines are met with respect to the Vision, Principles and Guiding Framework presented in the Master Plan.
2.0 Built Character Framework Summary Table

Downtown Lethbridge and its environs is comprised of areas that are established and stable; areas that are dynamic and ever-changing; and, areas that are underutilized and in need of revitalization. While directing change and growth to Downtown is a fundamental objective of the Master Plan, development will not occur uniformly in scale or in time across the area. The Built Character Framework serves to provide a level of predictability with respect to where change ought to be directed and in what use, shape and form.

Because conventional land use and zoning approaches to planning are two-dimensional in their scope, they often do not have the intended outcome. Downtowns are complex environments with mixed and intertwined uses. Accordingly, for Downtown to thrive it should be understood as a hierarchal and ordered structure defined less by land use, and more by its built characteristics as defined by the pattern of streets and blocks, the forms of buildings and the interrelationship between all these components. Therefore, this Framework considers land uses with a focus on the character of built aspects to ensure that the outcomes intended are clearly understood.

The Built Character Framework builds on the Vision, Districts & Neighbourhoods and Public Realm Framework to define an inherent order to Downtown which can guide decisions regarding growth and development so as to ensure that changes reinforce the desired function, built quality and character of a given area. This hierarchy also serves to guide appropriate transitions between areas of varying densities, scales and land use intensities.

As indicated on the plan on the facing page, the Framework identifies a number of Built Character categorizes. The intended built character for each category is summarized on the following pages in the Built Character Framework Summary Table, which provides the appropriate uses, building heights, appropriate building types, and the applicable guidelines contained in this document.

As the Central Neighbourhoods are not subject to the Downtown Master Plan and not anticipated to change in character into the foreseeable future, the Neighbourhood Corridor and Neighbourhood General categories are excluded from the Table.
### 2.0 Built Character Framework Summary Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Built Character Category</th>
<th>Appropriate Uses</th>
<th>Minimum Height</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Core</strong></td>
<td>Retail Commercial Mixed-Use Live-Work Office Public</td>
<td>3 Storeys</td>
<td>6 Storeys</td>
<td>2 Storeys</td>
<td>Low-Rise Apt Main Street Mid-Rise Apt Small Format Retail* Medium Format Retail* Mid-Rise Office Civic Parking Structure</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Core: Heritage Blocks</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Urban Centre</strong></td>
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<td>3 Storeys</td>
<td>8 Storeys</td>
<td>2 Storeys (up to 20 Storeys at key sites)</td>
<td>Continuous House Forms Low-Rise Apt Main Street Mid-Rise Apt High-Rise Apt Small Format Retail* Large Format Retail* Mid-High Rise Office Civic Parking Structure</td>
<td>Building Types Sustainable Site Specific</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Corridor</strong></td>
<td>Retail Commercial Mixed-Use Live-Work Office Automotive Public</td>
<td>4 Storeys</td>
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<td>2 Storeys (6 Storeys at gateway sites)</td>
<td>Low-Rise Apt Main Street Mid-Rise Apt High-Rise Apt Small Format Retail* Large Format Retail* Mid-High Rise Office Civic Parking Structure</td>
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<td>Low-Rise Apt Main Street Mid-Rise Apt Mid-High Rise Office Civic Parking Structure</td>
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<td><strong>District Centre</strong></td>
<td>Retail Commercial Mixed-Use Live-Work Office Public</td>
<td>3 Storeys</td>
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<td>Low-Rise Apt Main Street Mid-Rise Apt Small Format Retail* Medium Format Retail* Civic Parking Structure</td>
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<td>3 Storeys</td>
<td>4 Storeys</td>
<td>2 Storeys</td>
<td>Low-Rise Apt Main Street Small Format Retail* Medium Format Retail* Civic</td>
<td>Building Types Sustainable Site Specific</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>District Neighbourhood</strong></td>
<td>Retail Residential Commercial Mixed-Use Live-Work Office Automotive* Public Industrial</td>
<td>2 Storeys</td>
<td>6 Storeys</td>
<td>2 Storeys</td>
<td>Continuous House Form Low-Rise Apt Main Street Mid-Rise Apt Small Format Retail* Industrial/Storage Civic</td>
<td>Building Types Sustainable Site Specific</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Type permitted for an interim period*
Central District
Built Form
Design Guidelines
3.0 Central District 
Built Form Design Guidelines

The Central District Built Form Design Guidelines provide appropriate standards and/or benchmarks applicable to all new development in what the Built Form Framework defines as the Urban Core. These guidelines are informed by best practices in urban design but tailored to the unique conditions of Downtown Lethbridge. They help to guide and shape new buildings so as to reinforce the objectives of The Guiding Framework. At the same time, they provide flexibility within certain parameters to encourage distinction, variety and creative architectural responses.

Built form refers to the function, shape and configuration of buildings that frame streets and open spaces. The distinct identity of Downtown Lethbridge relative to the rest of the city is closely linked to its “human scale” and the fine grain rhythm of uses and buildings. With respect to built form in Downtown, a central concern of these guidelines is the comfort, convenience, security and visual interest of the pedestrian as shaped by the experience primarily at the level of the sidewalk. In this regard, the built form character as defined by building height, massing, setbacks, parking location, orientation, and visual condition at the street are crucial to the pedestrian experience.

Where developments do not conform to the guidelines but propose alternative standards, they should be assessed to ensure the intent and spirit of the Master Plan Vision, Guiding Principles and Guiding Framework are met.

These guidelines work in concert with the other guidelines that comprise the Development Design Guidelines. Where Site-Specific Guidelines are applicable and provide greater detail on similar matters, they supersede these more general guidelines. Where appropriate these guidelines may provide standards that are applicable to developments in other areas of Downtown.
3.1 Building Elements

To encourage continuity in the streetscape and to ensure horizontal ‘breaks’ in the façade, buildings should be designed to reinforce the following key elements through the use of setbacks, extrusions, textures and materials:

- **Base** – Within the first three storeys, a Base should be clearly defined that positively contributes to the quality of the pedestrian environment in the level of animation, transparency, articulation and material quality.

- **Middle** – The body of the building above the base should contribute to the physical and visual quality of the overall streetscape.

- **Top** - The roof condition should be distinguished from the rest of the building and designed to contribute to the visual quality of the skyline.
3.2 Orientation & Placement

- All buildings should orient to and be placed at the street edge with clearly defined primary entry points that directly access the sidewalk.

- To discourage fragmentation and to encourage full utility of the rear lanes, 100% building coverage of the front-yard is encouraged for all developments and should be required for frontages that are less than 30 metres in width.

- Side-yard setbacks should not be permitted.
3.0 Central District Built Form Design Guidelines

3.3 Street Wall

- All Required Retail Frontages should have retail uses at-grade with a minimum 75% glazing to achieve maximum visual transparency and animation. Weather protection for pedestrians is encouraged through the use of awnings and canopies.

- Non-commercial uses at-grade should animate the street with frequent entries and windows. Residential uses should include individual at-grade access with appropriate privacy measures such as setbacks, landscaping, grade shifts, and porches.

- Where non-retail uses are not currently viable along a Required Retail Frontage, the grade-level condition should be designed to easily accommodate adaptive re-use.

- To be consistent with the prevailing street wall character and to reinforce the human-scale, the maximum height of the street wall is 4 storeys (16 metres) at which point the building will be subject to above-grade stepbacks.

- The minimum street wall height should be 2 storeys. The street wall should contribute to the ‘fine-grain’ character of the streetscape by articulating the façade in a vertical rhythm that is consistent with the prevailing character of narrow buildings and storefronts – generally in intervals between 6 and 12 metres.

- All ground levels, including residential uses, should have a prominent presence on the street with a floor-to-ceiling height that is no less than 4 metres.

- Commercial signage should add diversity and interest to retail streets, but not be overwhelming.

- Backlit sign boxes, billboards, revolving signs, and roof signs should not be permitted.

- Street walls should be designed to have the highest possible material quality and detail.

- No blank at-grade street wall conditions should be permitted on any frontage.
3.4 Height & Massing

- Minimum building heights for new developments should be 3 storeys (10 metres).

- Maximum building heights in the Heritage Blocks is 4 storeys (13 metres) with a bonus of an additional 2 storeys (6 metres) subject to the Infill Guidelines.

- Maximum building heights in the Urban Core is 6 storeys (20 metres).

- To ensure a balanced sense of enclosure on Galt Gardens, a bonus height of 2 storeys (6 metres) should be considered for frontages on the park that are not within the Heritage Block. The bonus is subject to:
  - Providing an additional above-grade setback at the 6th Storey;
  - Demonstrating excellence in quality and architecture; and,
  - Consistency with these guidelines.

- To reinforce a human-scaled street wall and to help mitigate wind issues, the upper storeys of new developments should step back a minimum 1.5 metres from the street wall. For buildings greater than 6 storeys, the stepback should be no less than 3 metres.

- To ensure architectural variety and visual interest, other opportunities to articulate the massing should be encouraged, including vertical recesses, cornice lines, and the design integration of mechanical penthouses.
3.5 Corner & Terminus Sites

- To enhance the distinction and landmark quality of new buildings on prominent corner or visual terminus sites, modest exceptions to stepbacks and height restrictions should be permitted to encourage massing and designs that accentuate the visual prominence of the site – architectural treatments can include tall slender elements such as spires and turrets.

- New developments on all corner sites should orient to both street frontages.

- New developments on terminus sites should align design features to the view axis which, in addition to tall elements, can include aligned entries or portico openings.

- As new developments on corner and terminus sites can shape the image and character of an area, they should have greater civic obligations to ensure that the highest possible standards in design and material quality.
3.6 Parking & Servicing

- Wherever possible, parking for new developments should be provided below-grade and accessed by a rear lane.

- Surface parking and service areas should be located to the rear of a development and generally not visible from the street.

- Where surface parking or service areas are exposed, they should be designed to include internal landscaping on islands at the ends of each parking aisle, clearly marked pedestrian access and paths, lighting and concealed with landscaped buffers and/or other mitigating design measures.

- Direct access for parking or service areas from the street should not be permitted.

- Where a structured public parking facility is visible, it should be designed to be integrated into the surrounding context by using similar façade articulation and materials, including small openings that function as 'windows'.

- Where a structured parking facility fronts on a street, the ground-level frontage should incorporate retail, public or other active uses.
3.7 Landscaping & Amenity Areas

- Roof gardens should be encouraged on all above-grade surfaces.
- Balconies should be designed as an integral part of the building rather than appearing to be “tacked-on”
- Courtyards, forecourts and other intimate spaces accessible to the public and animated with at-grade uses are encouraged.
- On broad sidewalks in retail areas, outdoor spill-out activities such as patios are encouraged to further animate the street.
Downtown Lethbridge has a rich history of architectural styles and expressions that includes excellent examples of modernity. New developments should seek to contribute to this mix and variety of high quality architecture while remaining respectful of context.

Building materials should be chosen for their functional and aesthetic quality and exterior finishes should exhibit quality of workmanship, sustainability and ease of maintenance.

Building materials recommended for new construction include brick, stone, wood, glass, in-situ concrete, and pre-cast concrete.

Too varied a range of building materials is discouraged in favour of achieving a unified building image.

In general, the appearance of building materials should be true to their nature and should not mimic other materials.

Materials used for the front façade should be carried around the building where side facades are exposed.

Stucco should not be used as a principle wall material at the lower levels of a building.

Vinyl siding, plastic, plywood, concrete block, darkly tinted and mirrored glass and metal siding utilizing exposed fasteners are discouraged.
3.0 Central District Built Form Design Guidelines

- Consistent building and ground storey heights
- Consistent horizontal alignment of façade elements
- Consistent storefront and window placement with appropriately proportioned window openings

Improperly sited development, stepped back from the street line
Properly sited development, built to the street line
A potential site for infill
Consistent building and ground storey heights
Consistent horizontal alignment of façade elements
Consistent storefront and window placement with appropriately proportioned window openings
3.9 Infill Design Guidelines for the Heritage Blocks

Where a new building is proposed within the Heritage Blocks, the composition of the whole street as place of heritage character should take precedence over any individual building. New infill buildings should conform to the urban standards and design principles established by the surrounding buildings and that demonstrate the best qualities that define the unique character of that block. These Infill Design Guidelines seek to achieve the appropriate ‘fit’ for a new building, such that it contributes rather than detracts from the distinct character of the Heritage Blocks.

**Building Placement**

- New buildings are to be built to the street line and consistent with adjacent buildings
- New buildings on corner sites should orient to both street frontages.
- To permit additions, 100% coverage should be permitted subject to these guidelines

**Building Heights**

- Minimum building heights for new developments should be 3 storeys (10 metres).
- Maximum building heights in the Heritage Blocks is 4 storeys (13 metres) with a bonus of an additional 2 storeys (6 metres) subject to:
  - All applicable guidelines
  - The protection and restoration of a heritage structure on the property or another property
  - The utilization of high-grade materials consistent with adjacent heritage properties; and,
  - A stepback no less than 3.0m for the additional storeys
Façade Articulation

- New buildings should respect the established pattern of façade division by ensuring the horizontal and vertical alignment of façade elements with neighbouring buildings.

- All new buildings are to have entries at regular intervals and continuous display windows consistent with the established pattern on the block.

- Windows should be carefully selected to reflect the existing pattern of the block.

- Windows should be vertically aligned from floor to floor and horizontally aligned with the neighbouring buildings.

- New buildings should include a cornice that is carefully aligned with neighbouring buildings and of similar proportions.

Façade Materials

- New buildings should consider the palette of materials and colours evident in existing heritage buildings on the block.

- Building materials should be chosen for their functional and aesthetic quality and exterior finishes should exhibit quality of workmanship, sustainability and ease of maintenance.

- Building materials recommended for new construction include brick, stone, wood, glass, in-situ concrete, and pre-cast concrete.

- Vinyl siding, plastic, plywood, concrete block, darkly tinted and mirrored glass and metal siding utilizing exposed fasteners are discouraged.
Signage

- Signage should be restricted to the horizontal signage band and to lettering painted on awnings, display windows and storefront doors.

- Well proportioned and designed projecting signs should also be permitted.

- Backlit sign boxes, billboards, revolving signs and roof signs should not be permitted.
Building Types
Design Guidelines
Building Types refers to the conventional terms used to describe standards of building forms such as “Row House”. The Downtown has evidence of a tremendous variety of building types due to the extent of its area, its long history and the broad mix of uses. While many building types are appropriate and desirable, some are not desirable due to their location or because they are not consistent with the objectives of the Master Plan. At the same time, there are types that are not currently evident in the Downtown, but would be appropriate when the market permits.

The following section outlines the appropriate and desirable building types for the Downtown and provides the general guidelines that would apply to the siting, scale and configuration of each typology. Section 2.0 Built Character Framework Summary Table establishes in which parts of Downtown the following buildings types are appropriate.
4.0 Building Types Design Guidelines

Part 5
Development Design Guidelines

Built Character Category
• Neighbourhood Corridor
• Neighbourhood General

4.1 Residential & Mixed-Use Types

Single House Forms

Description
• Single House Forms refers to singular buildings that have a low-rise residential character often characterized by a pitched roof and entry porch.
• Types include “Single-Family”, “Semi-Detached”, and “Multiplexes”

Residential Density
• 24-72 units per hectare (10-39 units per acre)

Building Placement & Orientation
• Consistent with adjacent house forms where existing
  • Front setback: min. 3.0m (10’)
  • Side setback: min. 1.5m (5’)
  • Oriented to the street
  • Corner sites must address both street frontages

Massing & Height
• Consistent with adjacent house forms where existing
  • Massing will vary with architectural style
  • Roof lines are generally sloped
  • Heights range between 2-3 storeys (7-10m)

Parking & Servicing
• Spaces: 1 per residential unit and/or 1 per 45 commercial square metres (net)
  • Location: rear garage and/or off site
  • Access: rear lane

Other Design Considerations
• Front porches should be provided
  • Ensure appropriate buffering and privacy through a modestly raised grade-level and/or with landscaping
  • Ensure adequate amenity areas in the front and rear yards
  • An above-grade amenity area may be provided on the roof on an attached rear parking garage
4.1 Residential & Mixed-Use Types

**Continuous House Forms**

**Description**
- Continuous House Forms refers to a series of attached buildings that have a low-rise residential character often characterized by pitched roofs and entry porch.
- Types include “Townhouses” and “Stacked Townhouses”

**Residential Density**
- 60-312 units per hectare (25-130 units per acre)

**Building Placement & Orientation**
- Consistent with adjacent house forms where existing
- Front setback: min. 3m (10’)
- Side setback: not required
- Oriented to the street
- Corner sites must address both street frontages

**Massing & Height**
- Consistent with adjacent house forms where existing
- Massing will vary with architectural style
- Upper storeys may step back
- Roof lines are generally sloped
- Heights range between 3-6 storeys (7-20m)

**Parking & Servicing**
- Spaces: 1 per residential unit and/or 1 per 45 commercial square metres (net)
- Location: to the rear in individual, shared garage or surface lot and/or off-site
- Access: rear lane

**Other Design Considerations**
- Front porches should be provided
- Ensure appropriate buffering and privacy through a modestly raised grade-level and/or with landscaping
- Ensure adequate amenity areas in the front and rear yards
- An above-grade amenity area may be provided on the roof on an attached rear parking garage

**Built Character Category**
- Urban Centre
- District Neighbourhood
- Neighbourhood Corridor
- Neighbourhood General
4.1 Residential & Mixed-Use Types

Low-Rise Apartment Form

Description
- Low-Rise Apartment Forms refers to buildings that have multiple units (side-to-side and stacked), generally accessed through a shared central corridor.
- Types include “Garden Apartments”, “Courtyard Apartments” and “Podiums”

Residential Density
- 83-360 units per hectare (34-145 units per acre)

Building Placement & Orientation
- Consistent with adjacent similar forms where existing
- Front setback: not required and will depend on street character and land uses
- Side setback: dependent on site and residential unit orientation.
- Oriented to the street
- Corner sites must address both street frontages
- Where residential uses are at-grade, the units should have direct access to the street

Massing & Height
- Massing should articulate a street wall consistent with this plan or adjacent developments
- Upper storeys may step back
- Roof lines are generally flat
- Heights range between 4-6 storeys (13-20m)

Parking & Servicing
- Spaces: 1 per residential unit and/or 1 per 45 commercial square metres (net)
- Location: off-site, below-grade, concealed above grade or to the rear in a shared garage or surface lot
- Access: rear lane

Other Design Considerations
- Central entry point for apartment units accessed directly from the street
- Amenity areas can be provided to the rear, as a roof garden or as a raised amenity area above a concealed parking level
- Where at-grade retail uses are included, weather protection (such as awnings) should be provided to pedestrians
4.1 Residential & Mixed-Use Types

Low-Rise Main Street Form

Description
- Low-Rise Main Street Forms refers to traditional mixed-use buildings that have commercial uses at-grade with multiple units stacked above, accessed vertically

Residential Density
- 96-180 units per hectare (40-75 units per acre)

Building Placement & Orientation
- Consistent with adjacent similar forms where an infill site
- Front setback: not required
- Side setback: not required
- Oriented to the street
- Corner sites must address both street frontages

Massing & Height
- Massing should articulate a street wall consistent with this plan or adjacent developments
- Upper storeys may step back
- Roof lines are generally flat
- Heights range between 3-6 storeys (10-20m)

Parking & Servicing
- Spaces: 1 per residential unit and/or 1 per 45 commercial square metres (net)
- Location: to the rear and/or off-site
- Access: rear lane

Other Design Considerations
- Highly transparent and articulated retail use at-grade
- Weather protection (such as awnings) should be provided to pedestrians
- Above-grade levels may be multiple-storey, back-to-back and/or through units
## 4.0 Building Types Design Guidelines

### Built Character Category
- Urban Core
- Urban Centre
- Urban Corridor
- Civic Character
- District Centre
- District Neighbourhood

### 4.1 Residential & Mixed-Use Types

#### Mid-Rise Apartment Form

**Description**
- Mid-Rise Apartment Forms refers to buildings greater than 6 storeys tall that have multiple units (side-to-side and stacked), accessed through a shared central corridor.
- Types include “Perimeter Blocks” and “Slabs”

**Residential Density**
- 350-670 units per hectare (145-280 units per acre)

**Building Placement & Orientation**
- Front setback: will depend on street character and land uses
- Side setback: dependent on site and residential unit orientation for up to street wall height – min. 18m (60’)
- Oriented to the street
- Corner sites must address both street frontages
- Where residential uses are at-grade, the units should have direct access to the street

**Massing & Height**
- Massing should articulate a street wall consistent with this plan or adjacent developments
- Upper storeys above the street wall should step back 3m min.
- Roof lines are generally flat but top levels should be articulated
- The mechanical penthouses should be architecturally integrated
- Heights range between 7-12 storeys (22-40m)

**Parking & Servicing**
- Spaces: 1 per residential unit and/or 1 per 45 commercial square metres (net)
- Location: off-site and/or below-grade, concealed above-grade or to the rear in a shared garage or surface lot
- Access: rear lane
Other Design Considerations

- Central entry point to the apartment units accessed directly from the street
- Amenity areas can be provided to the rear, as a roof garden or as a raised amenity area above a concealed parking level
- Where at-grade retail uses are included, weather protection (such as awnings) should be provided to pedestrians
- Visual prominence obliges the highest possible quality and architectural design
4.1 Residential & Mixed-Use Types

High-Rise Apartment Form

Description

- High-Rise Apartment Forms refers to buildings greater than 12 storeys tall that have multiple units (side-to-side and stacked), generally accessed through a shared central corridor.
- Types include “Point Towers”

Residential Density

- 300-800 units per hectare (125-330 units per acre)

Building Placement & Orientation

- Front setback: will depend on street character and land uses - not required if mixed-use
- Side setback: dependent on site and residential unit orientation for up to street wall height – min. 25m (80’) setback above the street wall
- Oriented to the street
- Corner sites must address both street frontages
- Where residential uses are at-grade, the individual units should have direct access to the street

Massing & Height

- Massing should articulate a ‘podium’ at a street wall height that is consistent with this plan or adjacent developments
- Upper storeys above the street wall should step back 3m min.
- To minimize visual and shadow impacts and to ensure elegant slender proportions, the floor plate dimensions should be as uniform as possible and should not exceed 30m (98’)
- Roof lines are generally flat but top levels should be articulated
- The design of the mechanical penthouses should be architecturally integrated
- Heights range between 13-25 storeys (40-80m)
Parking & Servicing

- Spaces: 1 per residential unit and/or 1 per 45 commercial square metres (net)
- Location: off-site and/or below-grade, concealed above-grade or to the rear in a shared garage or surface lot
- Access: rear lane

Other Design Considerations

- Central entry point for apartment units accessed directly from the street
- Amenity areas can be provided to the rear, as a roof garden or as a raised amenity area above a concealed parking level
- Where retail is at-grade, a high level of transparency and weather protection (such as awnings) for pedestrians should be provided
- Visual prominence obliges the highest possible quality and architectural design
- High-rise developments should be subject to wind and shadow studies, as well as an impact assessment of adjacent industrial uses
**4.0 Building Types Design Guidelines**

**Built Character Category**
- *Urban Core*
- *Urban Centre*
- *Urban Corridor*
- *District Centre*
- *District Corridor*
- *District Neighbourhood*
- *Neighbourhood Corridor*

**4.2 Office & Commercial Types**

**Small to Medium Format Retail**

**Description**
- Low-Rise Small to Medium Format refers to small scale office or commercial buildings that have one or more units placed side-to-side and/or vertically stacked.
- Types include “Podium”, “Main Street Building” and “Retail Pad”
- “This type is appropriate as an interim means of encouraging the infilling of vacant and underutilized sites in certain locations to the discretion of the municipality and until such time that mixed-use developments are feasible

**Building Placement & Orientation**
- Front setback: not required
- Side setback: not required
- Oriented to the street
- Corner sites must address both street frontages

**Massing & Height**
- Massing should articulate corners on sites at intersecting streets
- Roof lines are generally flat
- Heights range between 2-6 storeys (7-20m)

**Parking & Servicing**
- Spaces: 1 per 45 commercial square metres (net)
- Location: below-grade, to the rear and/or off-site
- Access: rear lane

**Other Design Considerations**
- High level of transparency should be provided at-grade and fronting street
- Weather protection (such as awnings) should be provided to pedestrians
- Amenity areas can be provided to the rear or as a roof garden

Desirable - street oriented with appearance of double storey height
4.0 Building Types Design Guidelines

4.2 Office & Commercial Types

Large Format Retail

Description

- Low-Rise Large Format refers to large scale commercial buildings that have one or more units placed side-to-side and/or vertically stacked.
- Types include “big box” and “lifestyle centres”
- “This type is appropriate as an interim means of encouraging the infilling of vacant and underutilized sites in certain locations to the discretion of the municipality and until such time that mixed-use developments are feasible

Building Placement & Orientation

- Front setback: not required
- Side setback: not required
- Oriented to the street
- Corner sites must address both street frontages

Massing & Height

- Massing should articulate corners on sites at intersecting streets
- Roof lines are generally flat
- Heights range between 2-6 storeys (7-20m)

Parking & Servicing

- Spaces: 1 per 45 commercial square metres (net)
- Location: below-grade, concealed at and/or above-grade, to the rear and/or off-site
- Access: rear lane and/or side street if possible

Other Design Considerations

- High level of transparency should be provided at-grade and fronting street
- Weather protection (such as awnings) should be provided to pedestrians
- By placing the large retail use on the second level and above the parking, smaller scale commercial uses at street level can act as a ‘sleeve’ concealing the parking areas while providing a positive street frontage
4.0 Building Types Design Guidelines

Built Character Category

- Urban Core
- Urban Centre
- Urban Corridor
- Civic Character

4.2 Office & Commercial Types

Mid to High-Rise Office Forms

Description

- Mid & High-Rise Office Forms refers to office buildings greater than 6 storeys tall.

Building Placement & Orientation

- Front setback: not required
- Side setback: not required
- Oriented to the street
- Corner sites must address both street frontages

Massing & Height

- Massing should articulate a street wall consistent with this plan or adjacent developments
- Bulk of the tower should be as slender and evenly proportioned as possible
- Upper storeys above the street wall should step back 3m min.
- Roof lines are generally flat but top levels should be articulated
- The design of the mechanical penthouses should be architecturally integrated
- Heights range between 6-20 storeys (22-40m)

Parking & Servicing

- Spaces: 1 per 45 commercial square metres (net)
- Location: below-grade, concealed above-grade, to the rear and/or off-site
- Access: rear lane

Other Design Considerations

- Central entry point for office units accessed directly from the street
- Amenity areas can be provided to the rear, as a roof garden or as a raised amenity area above a concealed parking level
- Where at-grade retail uses are included, weather protection (such as awnings) are provided to pedestrians
- Visual prominence obliges the highest possible quality and architectural design
4.3 Industrial & Storage Types

Industrial & Storage Types

Description
- Industrial & Storage Types refers to structures generally associated with warehousing, workshops and other light industrial uses.

Building Placement & Orientation
- Front setback: 0-3m (0-10’)
- Side setback: 0-3m (0-10’)
- More animated aspects of the use (entries, windows, offices, etc.) should be oriented to the street
- Corner sites must address both street frontages

Massing & Height
- Massing should articulate a street wall consistent with this plan or adjacent developments
- Upper storeys above the street wall must step back a min. 1.5m
- Roof lines are generally flat
- The design of mechanical penthouses and other visible utilities should be architecturally integrated
- Heights range between 1-3 storeys (4-10m)

Parking & Servicing
- Spaces: 1 per 45 commercial square metres (net)
- Location: to the rear
- Access: rear lane where possible

Other Design Considerations
- Primary entry points and signage should be oriented to principle street frontage
- Parking and servicing areas should be buffered from view with appropriate landscaping including trees
- Blank walls due to functional requirements should be oriented away from the primary street and should be mitigated through material and/or architectural detailing where visible.

Built Character Category
- District Neighbourhood
- Industrial Character
4.0 Building Types Design Guidelines

Built Character Category

• All Categories

4.4 Civic Building Types

Description

• Civic Building Types refers to structures associated with institutional or cultural uses for the community such as places of worship, schools, museums and community centres.

Building Placement & Orientation

• Front setback: setback depend on location, street and intended uses – key civic landmarks can accentuate their distinction by setting back to create a forecourt and to contrast with adjacent buildings
• Side setback: will vary depending on location
• Where the use has significant unanimated functions, the more animated aspects of the use (entries, windows, offices, etc.) should be oriented to the street
• Corner sites must address both street frontages

Massing & Height

• Massing should articulate a street wall consistent with this plan or adjacent developments
• Design should respond to key visible site though aligned entries, vertical elements and massing
• Roof lines will vary and should be expressive to enhance the civic prominence of the building
• The design of mechanical penthouses and other visible utilities should be architecturally integrated
• Heights may vary ranging between 1-6 storeys (4-20m)

Parking & Servicing

• Spaces: parking requirements will vary depending on the use but generally 1 per 45 square metres (net)
• Location: to the rear, below grade or off-site
• Access: rear lane where possible

Desirable: Yates Memorial and its forecourt
Other Design Considerations

- Primary entry points and signage should be clearly identifiable and oriented to principle street frontage.
- The architectural quality and design should serve to clearly distinguish the building as a public use and provide the community with sense of civic pride.
- Parking and servicing areas should be buffered from view with appropriate landscaping including trees.
- Blank walls due to functional requirements should be oriented away from the primary street and should be mitigated through material and/or architectural detailing where visible.
- Landscaping should work in concert with architecture to enhance and reinforce the public purpose of the building and its visual connectivity to the surrounding community.

Desirable - complementary in areas with heritage character

Desirable - transparency to enhance civic presence

Desirable - unique landmark design
Part 5
Development Design Guidelines

4.0 Building Types Design Guidelines

Built Character Category
- Urban Core
- Urban Centre
- Urban Corridor
- Civic Character
- District Centre
- District Neighbourhood

4.5 Above-Grade Parking Facilities

Description
- Multi-level above-grade parking facilities that may be stand-alone or integrated into a development consisting of other uses.

Building Placement & Orientation
- Front setback: not required
- Side setback: not required
- Oriented to the street
- Corner sites must address both street frontages

Massing & Height
- Massing should reinforce intended street wall character and corners on sites at intersecting streets
- Roof lines are generally flat
- Heights will vary depending on the location, number of levels and/or the scale of the development it may be integrated with – generally 3-5 storeys (7-18m)

Design Guidelines

Site Planning
- Animated at-grade uses should occupy as much street frontage as possible.
- At-grade parking and/or servicing access to retail stores should be provided to the rear and concealed from the street.
- Locate vehicular access to the parking structure from laneway to ensure minimal physical and visual impacts on the pedestrian environment.
- Locate pedestrian access to parking at street edges, with direct access. Ensure stairs to parking levels are highly visible from street on all levels.
- Ensure all interior and exterior spaces are well lit, inclusive of parking areas, vehicular circulation aisles, ramps, pedestrian accesses, and all entrances
- Maintain continuous public access to parking at all hours and in all seasons.
If a phased facility, ensure a visually complete façade design that can be seamlessly extended to accommodate an expansion.

**Façade**

- Maximize retail store fenestration, and signage opportunities.
- Provide articulated bays in the façade (4-8m in width) to create fine-grain storefront appearance.
- Provide pedestrian amenities such as awnings, canopies, and sheltered entries.
- Create visual and massing prominence at the corner.
- Provide façade treatment that conceals the parking levels and that gives the visual appearance of a multi-storey building articulated with ‘window’ openings.
- Provide cap treatment (at roof/cornice line) that disguises views of rooftop parking and/or mechanical equipment.
- Utilize high quality materials that are compatible with existing prominent Downtown buildings, such as brick and lime stone.
Environmentally Sustainable Design Guidelines
5.0 Environmentally Sustainable Design Guidelines

Environmentally Sustainable Design Guidelines encourage project proponents to design, construct, and operate buildings and landscapes in an environmentally responsible manner. Sustainable design affects the form and articulation of buildings. Lethbridge is a leader in environmental and energy innovation and is committed to the concept of sustainability.

Sustainable design can be defined as architecture and engineering that establishes the conservation of natural resources and systems as a primary consideration in the planning, design, and construction process. To achieve this goal, all proposed projects will be evaluated against the intent and spirit of the following design guidelines. This includes public as well as private development, and encompasses streets, parks, and buildings.

A Sustainability Plan for the City will likely urge LEED-certified levels of sustainable design and encourage the private sector to meet that challenge. In line with the sustainable strategies and LEED, opportunities exist to rehabilitate underused or deteriorating historic resources with new functions through adaptive reuse to strengthen the unique character of Downtown. These principles are outlined in the Central District Built Form Design Guidelines. As a principle of sustainability, new additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction should not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, height, proportion and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

A typical sustainable design standard to pursue is a LEED (U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating of Bronze. This requires all buildings to achieve at least 50% of the available LEED credits for sustainable design. More information on this program is available at the U.S. Green Building Council’s web site at www.usgbc.org/leed.

The following section provides an overview of the LEED requirements, and is for general information only.
Guidelines

Building Materials
- Limit the Volatile Organic Compound content in architectural materials.
- Use local materials where possible, and employ post-consumer recycled content and post-industrial recycled content.
- Specify and use salvaged or refurbished materials where possible.

Construction Waste Management
- Develop a construction and demolition waste management plan that incorporates recycling.
- Energy
  - Utilize Environment Canada Energy Star Building Program requirements.
  - Buildings should use natural ventilation and passive energy design to accomplish all heating and cooling requirements where possible.
  - Installation of a waste heat recovery system is recommended.
  - Use building-integrated or directly-connected renewable energy systems.

Indoor Air Quality
- During construction, ventilation system components should be protected and construction contaminants should be minimized.
- Install permanent air-monitoring systems in buildings. These systems monitor supply and return air, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and VOCs.
- HVAC and refrigeration equipment should not contain CFCs or HCFCs.
- Use building materials that do not use CFCs or HCFCs as foaming agents or in other parts of the manufacturing process.
Landscaping / Exterior Design

- Design sites in accordance with erosion and sediment control ordinances.
- Plant at least one tree on the site for every 1,000 square feet of impermeable surface on the building lot, including parking, walkways, and plazas.
- Utilize exterior plantings that are tolerant of the local climate, soils, and natural water availability.
- Use light-coloured roofing materials with high reflectance.
- Use light-coloured materials on parking lots, not blacktop.

Occupant Recycling

- In a multi-story building more than four stories, a mechanical system should be installed that allows for the floor to floor transportation and sorting of recyclable materials.

Siting

- Implement a plan that preserves topsoil and existing trees.
- Limit the construction disturbance to 50 feet beyond the building perimeter.
- Restore degraded habitat areas on the site.
- Develop “brownfield” sites using EPA guidelines.

Transportation

- Provide suitable means for securing bicycles for at least 5% of the building occupants.
- Provide transit and pedestrian-friendly physical links to mass transit infrastructure, such as bus stops.
5.0 Environmentally Sustainable Design Guidelines

Water Conservation

- Install fixtures that use 20% less water than the water usage requirements in the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (Check Canadian Requirements).
- Install a grey water system that recovers non-sewage waste water or uses roof or ground storm water collection systems, or recovers ground water from sump pumps.
- Install cooling tower systems designed with delimiters to reduce drift and evaporation.
- Utilize exterior plantings appropriate for natural water availability.

Water Quality

- Install oil grit separators or water quality ponds for the pre-treatment of runoff from surface parking areas.
- Use pervious paving materials for non-landscaped areas on the site.

General Sustainable Development Guidelines

- Coordinate programmed areas that will benefit from sun exposures in appropriate zones within the building.
- Manipulate building envelopes to respond to climate and orientation.
- Utilize energy efficient building systems for insulation vapour barriers, air infiltration, thermal lag / thermal bridges, and roofing.
- Understand the appropriate glazing systems that respond to building type, location, and orientation. These systems may include spectrally selective glass, low-E glass, electrochromic coatings, and insulated glass.
- Develop exterior and interior shading devices that minimize heat gain.
• Minimize the use of mechanical shading devices that require extensive maintenance and energy consumption.

• Minimize the use of hazardous or “off-gassing” materials and VOCs.

• Utilize native, local, and indigenous building materials.

• Incorporate recycled or salvaged materials where appropriate.

• Employ wood products harvested from certified forests.

• Specify and require biodegradable materials when appropriate.

• If possible, select materials based on life-cycle costs.

• Consider the integration of photovoltaic panels and/or fuel cells for electricity generation.

• Encourage recycled grey-water for appropriate uses.

• Utilize low-flow delivery systems to minimize water consumption.

• Develop lighting controls that manage energy consumption. These may include task lighting, daylighting, and energy efficient artificial lighting.

• Encourage operable windows that provide fresh air to interior workspaces.

• Establish a tenant recycling program.

• Encourage building systems that monitor and control excessive energy consumption.
# LEED Canada-NC 1.0 Project Checklist

## Sustainable Sites

### Prereq 1
- **Erosion & Sedimentation Control**
  - Required
- **Site Selection**
  - 1
- **Development Density**
  - 1
- **Redevelopment of Contaminated Site**
  - 1
- **Alternative Transportation, Public Transportation Access**
  - 1
- **Alternative Transportation, Bicycle Storage & Changing Rooms**
  - 1
- **Alternative Transportation, Alternative Fuel Vehicles**
  - 1
- **Reduced Site Disturbance, Protect or Restore Open Space**
  - 1
- **Reduced Site Disturbance, Development Footprint**
  - 1
- **Stormwater Management, Rate and Quantity**
  - 1
- **Stormwater Management, Treatment**
  - 1
- **Heat Island Effect, Non-Roof**
  - 1
- **Heat Island Effect, Roof**
  - 1
- **Light Pollution Reduction**
  - 1

## Water Efficiency

- **Water Efficient Landscaping, Reduce by 50%**
  - 1
- **Water Efficient Landscaping, No Potable Use or No Irrigation**
  - 1
- **Innovative Wastewater Technologies**
  - 1
- **Water Use Reduction, 20% Reduction**
  - 1
- **Water Use Reduction, 30% Reduction**
  - 1

## Energy & Atmosphere

- **Fundamental Building Systems Commissioning**
  - Required
- **Minimum Energy Performance**
  - Required
- **CFC Reduction in HVAC&R Equipment**
  - Required
- **Optimize Energy Performance**
  - 1 to 10
- **Renewable Energy, 5%**
  - 1
- **Renewable Energy, 10%**
  - 1
- **Renewable Energy, 20%**
  - 1
- **Best Practice Commissioning**
  - 1
- **Ozone Protection**
  - 1
- **Measurement & Verification**
  - 1
- **Green Power**
  - 1

## Materials & Resources

- **Yes ? No**
  - 14 Points
Site-Specific Design Guidelines