Form and Character Development Permit Areas

4. Form and Character Development Permit Areas

The Town of Gibsons Official Community Plan has four Form and Character Development Permit Areas:

1. Upper Gibsons Commercial (UGC) Development Permit Area;
2. Multi-Unit Residential (MUR) Development Permit Area;
3. Gibsons Landing (GL) Development Permit Area; and
4. Industrial Commercial (IC) Development Permit Area.

The four Form and Character Development Permit Areas provide a standard of quality and design for development and public realm improvements in the Town of Gibsons. DPA boundaries for the Form and Character Development Permit Areas are shown on *Map C-4*.

1. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following general guidelines apply to all areas designated in the Form and Character Development Permit Area.

1. Professional Requirements

1. All development permit applications are encouraged to provide architectural plans prepared by a BC registered Architect, a detailed Site Plan, and a Landscape Plan prepared by a BC registered Landscape Architect.
    a. Notwithstanding the above, for minor development permit applications, the Town may, at their discretion, accept plans not prepared by a BC registered Architect or Landscape Architect.

2. Public Realm and Landscaping

1. Minimize site grading in favour of retaining natural vegetation, to the greatest extent possible.
2. Provide a quality public realm through the development of an accessible sidewalk and cycle network, and using pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, walkways, and public gathering spaces.
3. Buildings are encouraged to incorporate the following architecture, landscape design, and environmental attributes that reflect elements of the surrounding context, such as:
    a. Use of local and natural building materials, such as timber and stone, in combination with limited amounts of glass, concrete, or metal;
    b. Use both architectural and landscape features to provide a “gateway” or a distinct entrance to the site for both vehicle and active transport;
    c. Incorporate public art in plazas and other publicly accessible spaces on the property to enhance the overall open space network;

d. Incorporate Sḵwx̱uwú7mesh art, language, and culture in public realm designs;

e. Select streetscape elements, such as street furniture (benches, garbage receptacles, etc.), paving, lighting, and plant materials that reinforce local character and sense of place;

f. Provide significant landscaping adjacent to roadways and integrated within the site; and

g. Provide a clear distinction between private and public realms through subtle cues in materials, pathway edges, grade, and/or landscape design elements.

4. Landscape plantings should incorporate a variety of climate resilient trees, shrubs, and ground-cover plants, with a preference for plant materials reflective of the local environment. Locally invasive plants will not be permitted.

5. Low Impact Development techniques for stormwater management are encouraged, including:

   a. Swales; or

   b. Other landscape features that alleviate impacts of storm runoff from impervious surfaces, including:

   c. Roof and surface parking areas;

   d. Green roofs; and

   e. Permeable parking areas.

3. Building Form and Design

1. Individual architectural expression should be secondary to a building's contribution to the whole of the context or streetscape in which it is located.

2. Building walls facing a street must provide an articulated facade using two or more design techniques or features to minimize the perception of massing, eliminate large blank walls, provide visual interest, and enhance the appearance of the building. Design techniques or features may include:

   a. Variations in rooflines;

   b. Vertical or horizontal building wall projections or recessions;

   c. Visual breaks of Building facades into smaller sections;

   d. Use of a combination of finishing materials; and

   e. Other similar techniques or features.

3. Applicants are encouraged to design and construct new buildings with architectural styles, landscape design, and natural building materials that are well-suited to the pacific

northwestern climate, which complement the surrounding natural environment. Some options for building materials include, but are not limited to:

a. Natural and standard local wall materials;

b. Materials with a wood-like appearance;

c. Metal;

d. Steel;

e. Concrete and cement; and

f. Local Stone.

4. Site design, including Site Plans, Elevation Plans, and Landscape Plans, must identify proposed transitions from façade to public realm, and address the needs of walkers, transit patrons, cyclists, and people with various mobility needs, including:

    a. Appropriate screening and / or buffering of buildings and parking areas from neighbouring uses;

    b. Active travel circulation features; and

    c. Direct, convenient, and accessible connections between the building entrance and neighbouring pedestrian pathways, such as sidewalks and / or crosswalks.

5. Buildings are encouraged to use fire-resistant building materials, including fire-resistant roofing materials and composite wood or non-wood products with the appearance of traditional wood shakes, such as:

    a. Concrete/cementitious tiles;

    b. Clay tiles;

    c. Metal roofing;

    d. Asphalt shingles;

    e. Synthetic slates; and

    f. Green roofs with green or garden space are permitted on flat roofs.

6. Buildings are encouraged to consider opportunities for the use of sustainable finishing materials and design to the extent possible, including:

    a. Recycled materials or materials with a high-recycled content;

    b. Concrete with at least 25% fly ash or slag;

    c. Wood products certified CSA Sustainable Forest Management Standard or equivalent;

    d. Integrate passive solar design into architecture and landscape design;

e. Energy efficient design and internal infrastructure including structural supports for future solar panels;

f. An emphasis on natural light through the significant glazing and orientation of buildings to views and/or other significant natural features;

g. To the extent possible, identify any incorporated standards such as Solar Ready and LEED;

h. Use of healthy, durable building materials to optimize the life-span of buildings; and

i. Architecture and landscape design that integrates water conservation and rainwater management, including permeable surfaces in outdoor spaces.

7. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate environmentally sustainable elements in the exterior features of the building and the landscape design. This may be achieved by:

   a. Buildings and roadways sited to retain existing trees, vegetation, and other important natural features;

   b. Incorporation of visible "green" landscaping features such as rain gardens, infiltration trenches, green walls roofs, and drought-tolerant native plants; and

   c. Incorporation of visible "green" building features and materials such as skylights, rain barrels, local wood and stone, solar panels, recycled exterior materials, and exterior elements for window shading.

8. Development should be designed and lit in a manner that addresses Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, such as:

   a. Clearly defined boundaries including private, semi-private, and public space;

   b. The ability to provide natural surveillance through "eyes on the street" from indoor and outdoor spaces;

   c. Providing secure access points including gates, lighting, and locks to areas such as parkades that are not afforded sufficient security through lighting and eyes on the street;

   d. Landscape design that provides clear sight lines and lighting, and avoids opportunities for concealment; and

   e. Pedestrian pathways and parking lots should be sufficiently lit to ensure pedestrian comfort and security.

9. Support service facilities and structures such as loading bays, refuse containers and storage areas, should be located and screened with walls, fencing, hedging, planting, other screening materials or a combination of these materials to minimize visibility from public areas.

10. General modification of standardized corporate or franchise building designs or features may be required in the event of conflict with these design guidelines.

4. Lighting

1. Gentle, indirect illumination of building facades, walkways, and signage is encouraged. Exterior and interior night lighting should be subtle and use neutral-toned bulbs, contributing to a visually harmonious and inviting atmosphere across the neighbourhood.
2. Design lighting to minimize light spill, glare, and sky glow by using non-glare full cutoff fixtures aligning with Dark Sky principles.
3. Lighting should be provided at the main entries to commercial and multi-unit residential buildings.
4. Buildings are encouraged to be oriented to maximize solar exposure while minimizing shadow impacts on adjacent buildings and common areas.
5. External lighting for fascia and wall signs should be directed downward and use lighting fixtures such as 'goose neck' style. All wiring and conduits are to be concealed.

5. Signage

1. Design of signage is encouraged to comply with the following guidelines:
    a. All signs should be creative and architecturally coordinated with the overall design of buildings and landscaping;
    b. Signs should be made from durable materials and sustainable materials to the extent possible. Accommodation will be made for signs made by local artists;
    c. Changeable illuminated copy signs are discouraged, except where such signage is a functional requirement of the business activity (i.e., movie theatres, gas stations);
    d. Internally lit signage (backlit box), and fluorescent, neon, and coloured lighting are discouraged, with the exception of internally illuminated channel lettering;
    e. Freestanding signs should be restricted to a maximum height of 4.5 m above grade.
2. Ornamental pediments, which may contain signage, are encouraged on commercial buildings and at the main building entrances of multi-unit residential buildings.
3. Multi-unit commercial buildings are encouraged to have an attractive, simple, single-entry sign rather than multi-tenant signs which create a cluttered appearance.

6. Parking

1. Where on-site parking is provided, it should not visually dominate a development. Parking areas should incorporate significant landscaped areas within the lot. A landscape bed should be placed between every 10 parking stalls in a row.

Industrial Commercial Development Permit Area

5. INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA (IC)

1. Purpose

The Industrial Commercial Development Permit Area is designated under Section 488(1)(d)(e) of the LGA to regulate the form and character of commercial and light industrial development. This area is applied to lands designated as Industrial Commercial in the OCP. The intent of this area is to encourage a high standard of site design, building form, and landscaping to improve the appearance of the Upper Gibsons business district. Landscaping and building design shall be carefully considered to integrate this area with the surrounding mixed-use commercial and medium-density residential development.

2. Area

The Industrial Commercial DPA applies to lands designated as Industrial Commercial in the OCP. This DPA is primarily located along the Sunshine Coast Highway, Payne Road, and Venture Way in Upper Gibsons, as shown on *Map C-4.*

3. Justification

The character of this area is transitioning from industrial to service-based activities. Council would like to improve the architectural identity of the area, its relationship with surrounding uses to create a more attractive service area..

4. Guidelines

1. Building Form and Design

1. Building design must be compatible with surrounding development and land uses and incorporate visual interest to avoid monotonous appearance or blank walls.
2. Monolithic structures and long expanses of straight walls facing the roadway should be avoided.
    a. Walls facing roadways should incorporate elements that add variety and vertical definition such as windows, entrances, and sloped roofs.
    b. Larger buildings should be designed in a way that creates the impression of smaller blocks or units.
3. Buildings and structures should be pedestrian oriented at the ground level. This can be achieved by:
    a. An emphasis on the fenestration (the arrangement and positioning of windows);
    b. Providing architectural emphasis, awnings, or step-backs at the first or second storey to impart a pedestrian-scale to building frontages; and

c. Inclusion of weather protection on buildings along pedestrian routes at maximum 3.5 m height above finished grade through the use of awnings, arcades, and canopies that are integral with the building form.

4. Buildings should generally be finished in painted or coated metal, wood, or textured concrete rather than leaving untreated flat concrete blocks as the final building finishes.

   a. Buildings and structures should be permanent in nature and should not appear to be temporary structures or trailers.

   b. Design lighting to minimize light spill, glare, and sky glow by using non-glare full cutoff fixtures.

2. Screening and Landscaping

1. The site should be provided with proper screening and landscaping (*Image 8*) composed of grass, vegetated earth berms, shrubs, trees, other vegetation, or a combination of these in areas such as:

   a. Along the property edge next to roadways:

   b. Between parking areas, roadways, and buildings,

   c. Breaking up larger parking areas, and

   d. Between buildings and parking areas.

Image 8. Landscape buffers with a variety of tree, shrub, and ground cover.

2. The landscaping should consist of a mix of coniferous and deciduous vegetation, with low plantings and taller tree species at intervals. Large areas of bark mulch, bare earth, landscape fabric, gravel or other similar materials are not suitable.

3. Outdoor and rooftop service installations, including mechanical, electrical, and other service equipment, should be enclosed with a screening structure that relates to the building design.

5. Mechanical equipment (such as air conditioning and ventilation, antennae and receiving dishes) should not be visible from street level except for solar panels, windmills or other equipment directly required to the reduction of energy use and greenhouse gases. Where visibility is unavoidable, use planting to screen and mechanical equipment and improve the appearance of building façades.

3. Transitions

1. Transitions between the Industrial Commercial DPA and adjacent mixed-use or residential properties should ensure privacy and avoid the impacts of noise, glare, and shadows through a combination of the following methods:
    a. Landscaping (minimum 3.0 m buffer),
    b. Fencing, combined with dense shrub plantings or hedges,
    c. Trees that can grow to sufficient height to screen the commercial use from a 3 storey multi-unit dwelling.
2. Commercial buildings should be sited to afford maximum privacy to adjacent residential and rural properties.

4. Parking

1. Parking lots with more than 10 stalls should include a landscape island for every ten stalls to provide for the greening of the area.
2. All parking must include bicycle parking conveniently and visibly located adjacent to the main entrance.