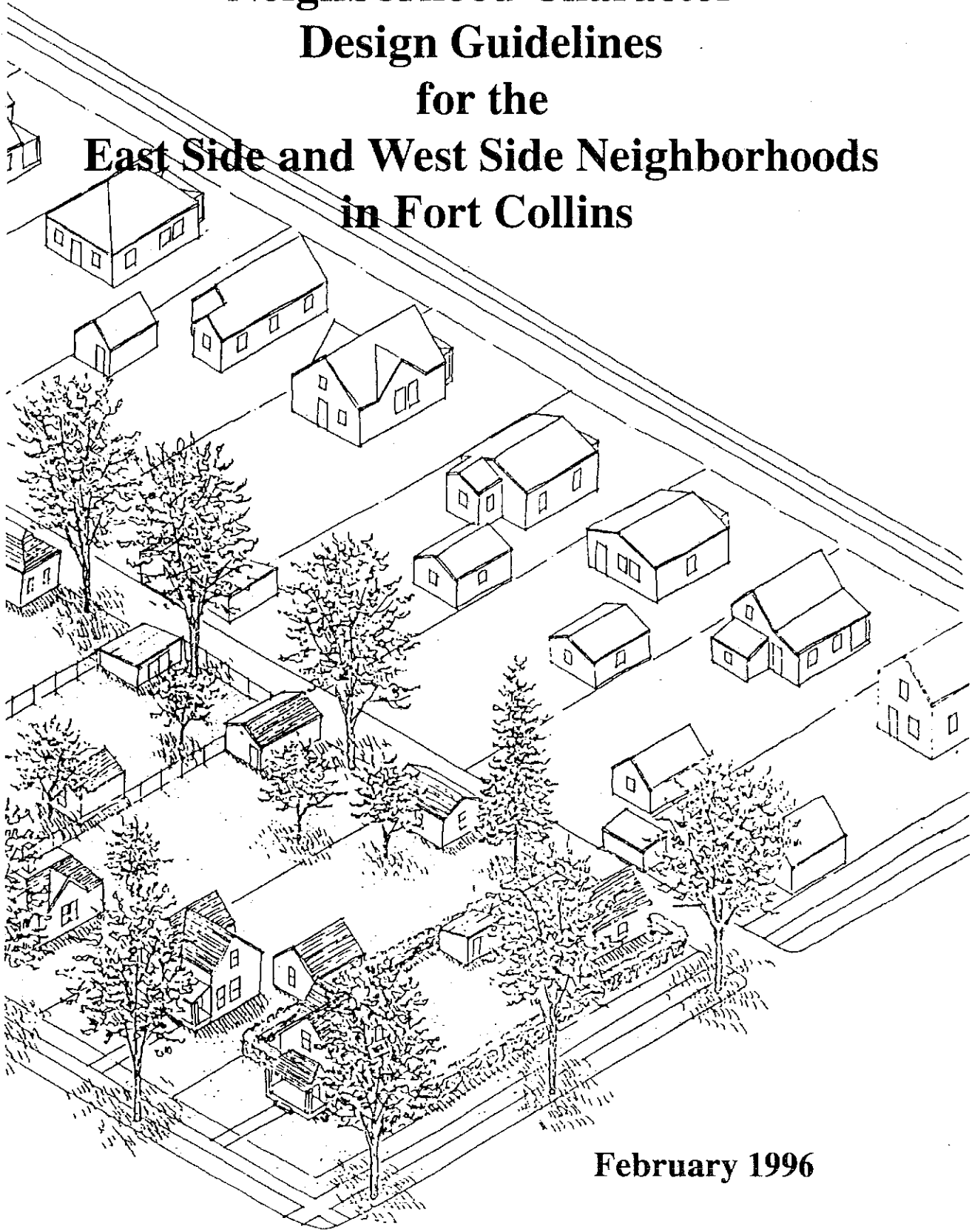
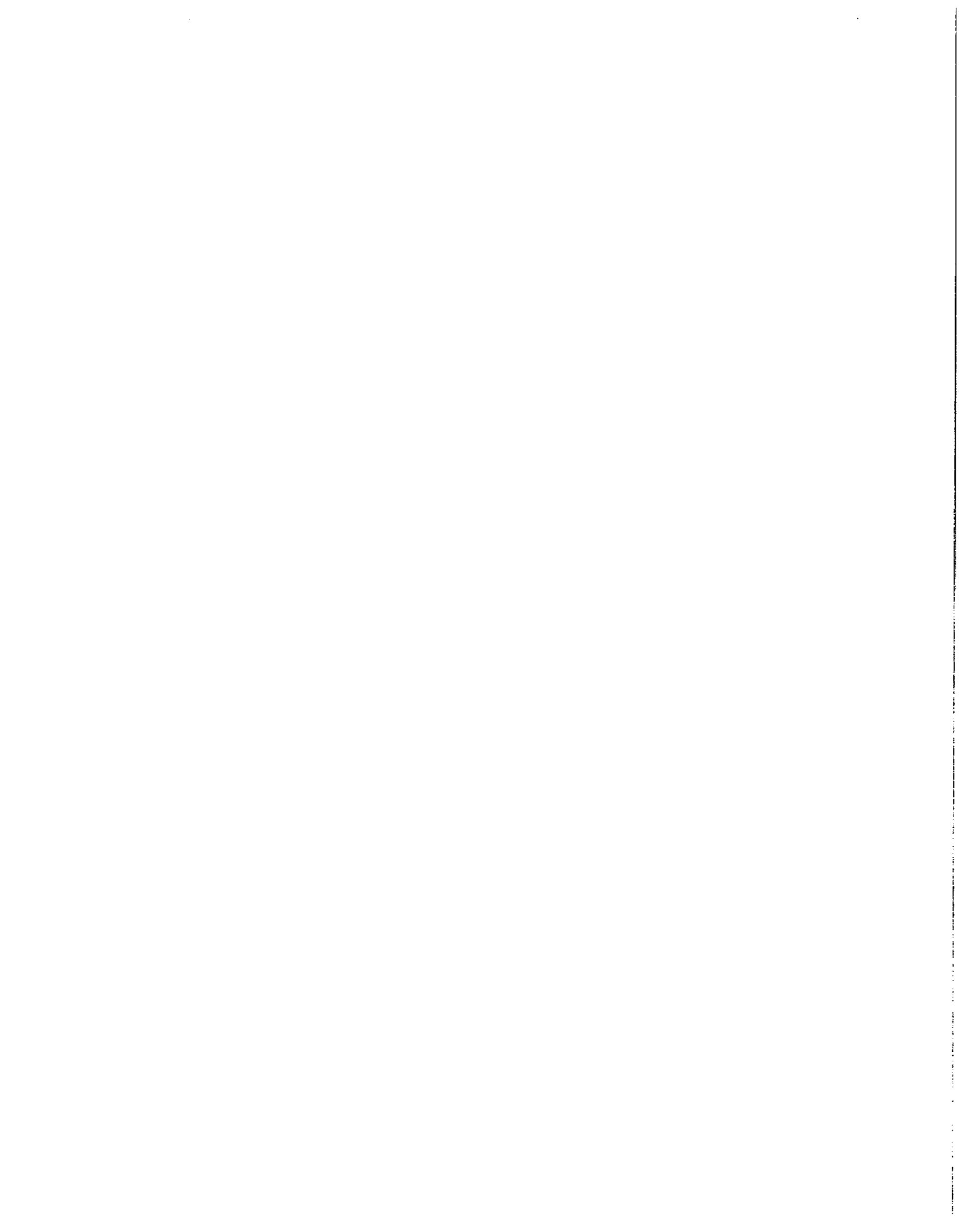


**Neighborhood Character  
Design Guidelines  
for the  
East Side and West Side Neighborhoods  
in Fort Collins**



**February 1996**



**Neighborhood Character  
Design Guidelines  
for the  
East Side and West Side Neighborhoods  
in Fort Collins**

**for**

**The City of Fort Collins**

**Guidelines with references to Zoning**

**February 1996**

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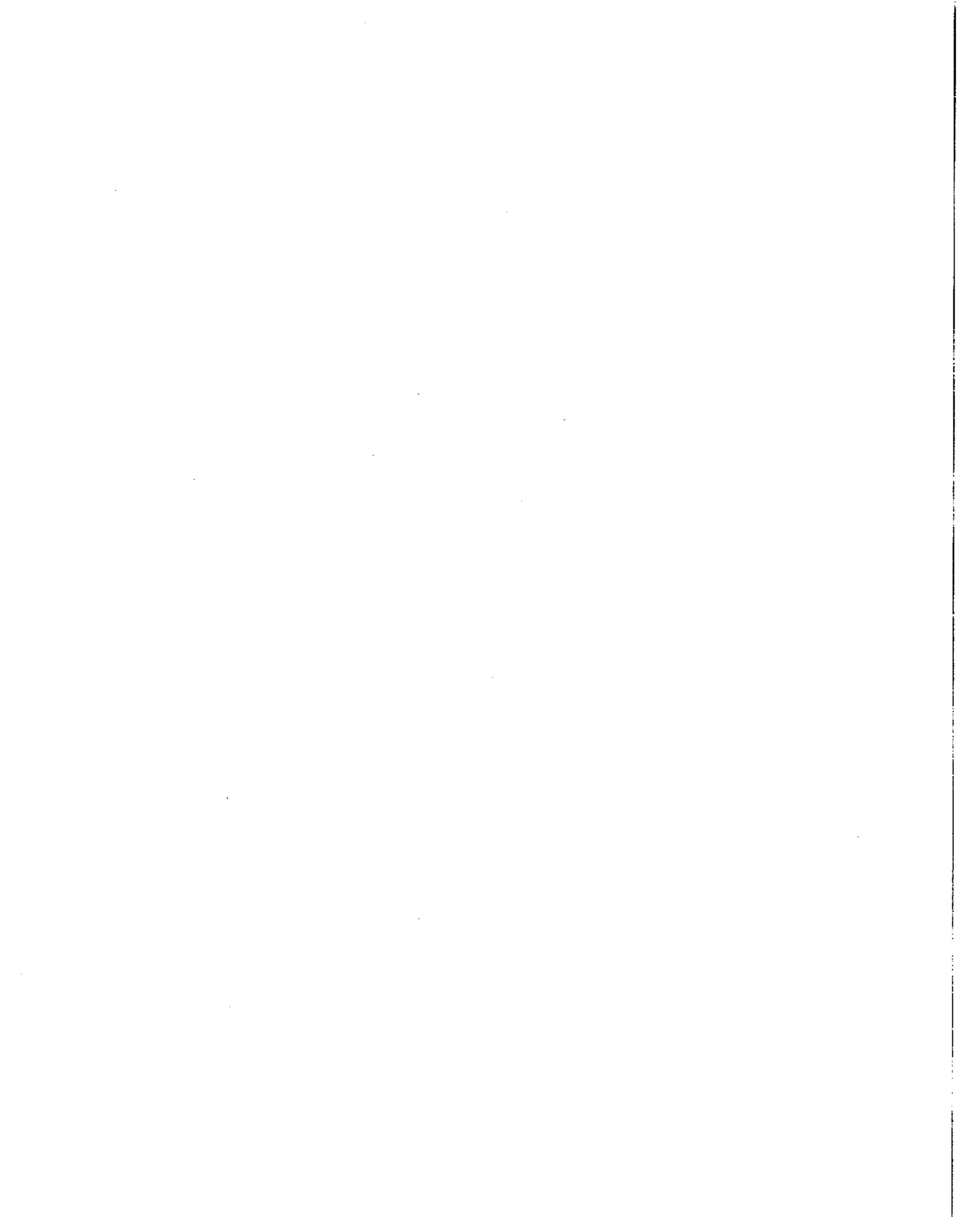
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Some material presented in this document is adapted from the City Code, the Land Development Guidance System and the Historic Resources Preservation Program Plan (1994), The West Side Neighborhood Plan (1989) and the East Side Neighborhood Plan (1986), all official documents of the City of Fort Collins. In addition, some material is from the draft Laurel Street Neighborhood Design Guideline Project (1982), the draft East and West Side Neighborhood Design Guidelines (1990) and the City of Fort Collins Historic Context (1992).

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# Introduction

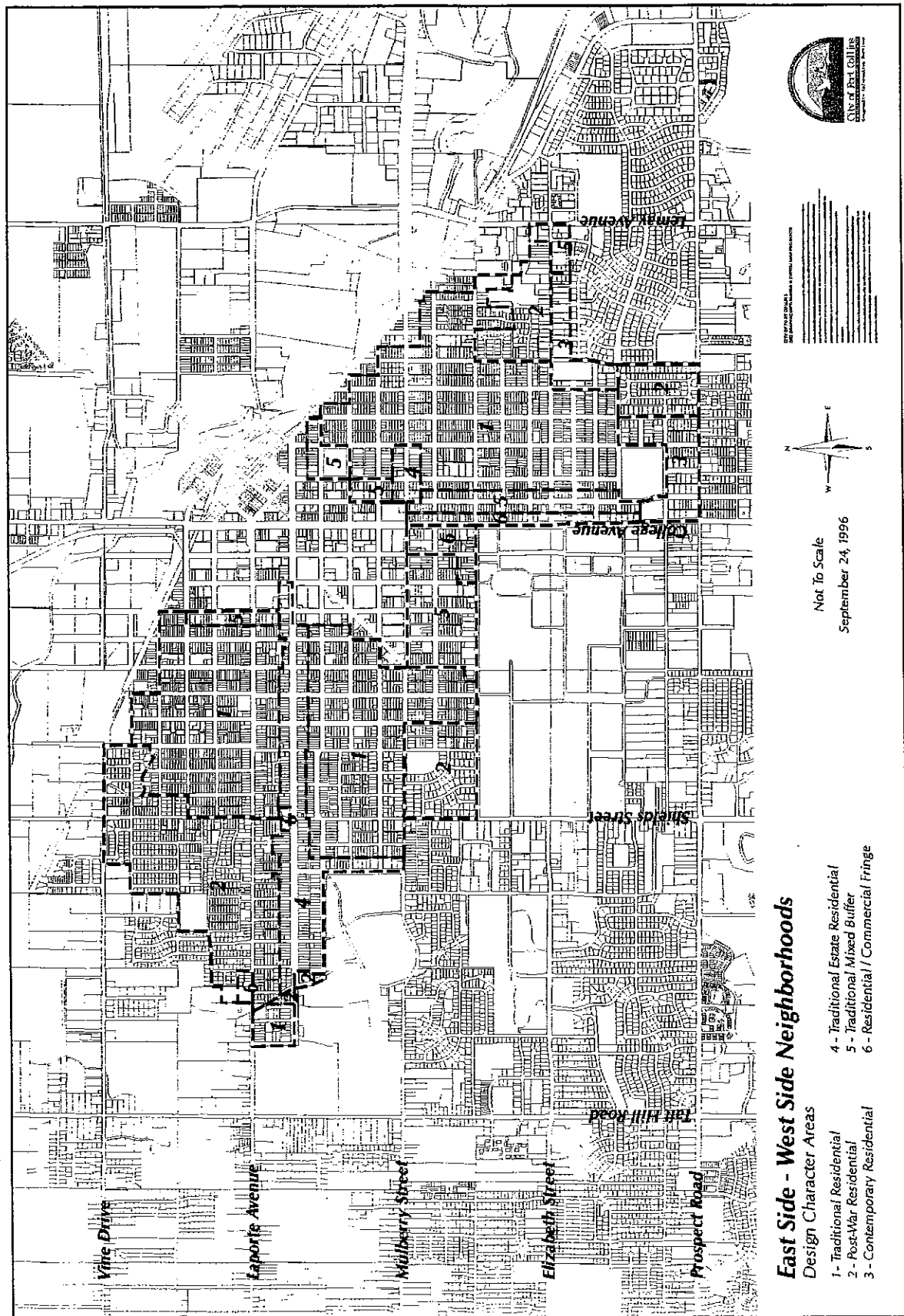


**A NOTE ABOUT THE USE OF GUIDELINES  
IN THIS DOCUMENT**

The term "Guidelines" is defined on page 6. In the context of this document, a "Guideline" is a suggested design approach that is not required to be followed. This information is provided as a suggestion to property owners. Compliance is encouraged, but not required.

Each major Guideline is written in bold face and is assigned a number, for ease of reference. Many of these Guidelines are in turn followed by additional statements that provide information related to the major Guideline. These are identified with a bullet (•).





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Not To Scale  
 September 24, 1996

**East Side - West Side Neighborhoods**

**Design Character Areas**

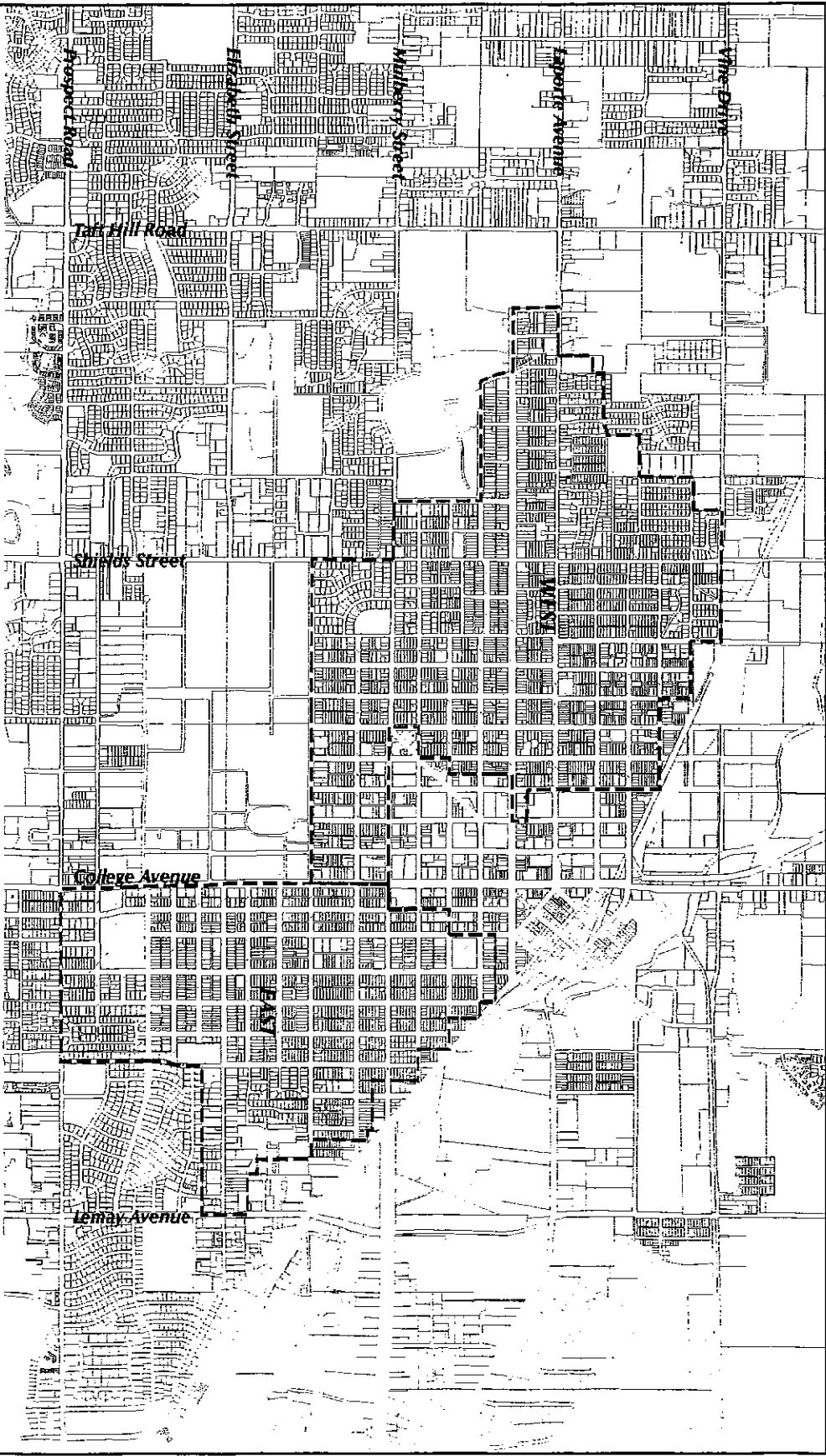
- 1 - Traditional Residential
- 2 - Post-War Residential
- 3 - Contemporary Residential
- 4 - Traditional Estate Residential
- 5 - Traditional Mixed Buffer
- 6 - Residential / Commercial Fringe

# East Side - West Side Plan Area

Not To Scale  
September 24, 1996



THE CITY OF CHICAGO  
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## Introduction

The Design Guidelines contained in this document focus on alterations and new construction within the East Side and West Side Neighborhoods of Fort Collins.

They are the community's adopted policies about design in these neighborhoods. They guide an approach to construction that will help protect the established character of the neighborhoods, while also allowing new compatible design. They do, however, make a distinction between "creativity" and simply being "different." Creative solutions that are compatible with the desired character of a neighborhood are strongly encouraged in the neighborhoods, while designs that seek to contrast with the existing context simply for the sake of being different are discouraged. The Design Guidelines focus on basic principles of urban design that promote a sense of neighborhood identity, and thus will enhance livability for residents. They seek to promote a pedestrian-friendly environment that is based on the traditional scale and character of the community.

The Guidelines also promote a concept of building that is "native" to Fort Collins. "Native Fort Collins" relates to the character of building materials, the mass and form of structures, and the extent of detail that is used on them. Generally speaking, these materials are simple, such as painted clapboard, brick, and rough-cut, ashlar stone.

By and large, the basic native character of Fort Collins is simple in design, with modest details. There are, however, some areas with larger homes that have more intricate forms and details, such as along Mountain Avenue, but

the majority of buildings are relatively small, in human scale. As a result, they provide visual interest to pedestrians. In most neighborhoods, buildings also relate to each other in "sets" along the street, often reflecting similar setbacks, materials and orientation on the site.

### Reasons to have Design Guidelines

The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide a basis for making objective decisions about the appropriateness of proposed work that may affect the character of these neighborhoods; to inform the community and to educate property owners about the city's design policies; and to provide information for decision-making by design, planning and construction professionals, owners, staff, and City boards and commissions. Property owners are encouraged to use the Guidelines as a means of assuring that future work will be compatible with the investments made by their neighbors. They also may be used in interpreting the City's Land Development Guidance System.

### Interpretation of terms

These definitions apply to terms used in the guidelines.

*Appropriate* - In some cases, a stated action or design choice is defined as being "appropriate" in the text. In such cases, by choosing the design approach referred to as "appropriate", the reader will be in compliance with the Guideline.

*Building Front* - The primary facade of the dominant mass of a building.

*Compatible* - Performing in harmonious combination with others.

*Consider* - When the term "consider" is used, a design suggestion is offered to the reader as an example of one method of how the Design Guideline at hand could be met.

*Context* - In many cases, the reader is instructed to relate to the context of the project. The "context" relates to the lots and their improvements that are found on the same block as the proposed project and on the block facing it. The context also is considered to be the Design Character Area of the neighborhood.

*Guideline* - In the context of this document, a Guideline is a suggested design approach that is not required to be followed. Compliance is encouraged, but is not required.

*Preferred* - In some cases, the reader is instructed that a certain design approach is "preferred." In such a case, the reader is encouraged to choose the design option at hand, but all of the other approaches may be considered.

*Primary Facade* - The principal elevation of a building, which usually faces the street or other public way.

*Should* - If the term "should" appears in a Design Guideline, compliance is strongly encouraged, but is not required.

### How many Guidelines apply?

The number of Guidelines that are relevant to each project varies. For example, if the proposed work involves construction of a new alley building and a driveway, then Guidelines for site planning, parking and new building would apply. Those for additions to an existing structure would not. At the outset of a project, the reader should determine which guidelines are applicable to a project.

### Goals for design review

In general, the intent of the design guidelines is to enhance the built environment of the East and West Side Neighborhoods and to ensure that new construction is in character with the existing fabric that is described as desirable by the community in both scale and appearance.

It is not the intent to freeze the appearance of the neighborhoods in time, to make everything new appear as though it comes from a specified period. Fort Collins has seen change already, and the goal is that this change continues in such a way that it does not detract from the existing character of the neighborhoods that residents have described as desirable.

Change should be reflected in subtle ways, with differences in detail, rather than in broad-scale features, such as building scale and materials. Rather, new construction should be similar to that seen traditionally in overall mass and scale, materials, and treatment of openings and yet distinguishable as new.

## General design goals for the neighborhoods:

Residents identified these design goals for the East Side and West Side Neighborhoods:

- To protect the character of established resources, including structures and site features, present in the neighborhoods,
- To protect property values and investments,
- To minimize negative impacts on adjacent properties from inappropriate development,
- To encourage pedestrian activity, and
- To convey a sense of human scale.

## Policies that provide the basis for Design Guidelines

The Design Guidelines are founded on the City's goals as stated in elements of the Comprehensive Plan through the following adopted documents:

### *Goals and Objectives, adopted 1977*

This document serves as the foundation for all other elements of the City's Comprehensive Plan. It states that the City should "promote the preservation and maintenance of older houses and buildings which, while not of a degree of significance to merit official designation, make an important contribution to the character and historical development of the City."

### *East Side Neighborhood Plan, adopted March 1986*

Direction is found within the Historic Conservation section of the plan where it states:

- Improvements to older structures should be made, to the extent possible, according to applicable Design Guidelines;

Additional policies related to community character are also included in sections on Transportation, Private Maintenance, and Open Space.

### *West Side Neighborhood Plan, adopted July 1989*

The Land Use Plan section of the WSNP provides direction to institute Design Guidelines. In the General Policies section for the entire neighborhood, Land Use Policy 2 states, "Property values should be maintained through clearly stated and enforced regulations and guidelines for change." This is also stated within the "Buffer area" description as: "Encourage use of planned developments or the LDGS for proper site planning and institute design guidelines." These guidelines are later referred to for use in other areas such as the Conservation, Residential Multi-Family, and City Park Edge. Comments on the Canyon Avenue Area suggest the use of design criteria and discussion of the Campus Commercial Area suggests enhancing the visual image of the area.

The plan presents a vision of the neighborhood which provides a contrast to the style of newer suburban communities. The WSN vision is of:

- A residential area easily accessible by foot, bicycle, and automobile to parks, schools, and small family-owned stores.
- Preserving the human scale of the past with tree-lined streets laid out in a grid pattern, front porches set back from the streets, back yards facing the alley, and houses oriented to the pedestrian scale.
- Continuation of the vitality and variety of housing adjacent to the shopping opportunities of downtown and the cultural opportunities of CSU.
- Maintenance of the socio-economic mix within the neighborhood — the diversity of ages, ethnic mixture, incomes, family composition, and the renter/owner mix of residents.
- Offering the full range of well-maintained community facilities and services expected in new quality neighborhoods of Fort Collins.

In addition to the City's Comprehensive Plan, direction for design review is also emphasized within the Land Development Guidance System for Planned Unit Developments. These Design Guidelines are to be used in such cases in addition to the Neighborhood Compatibility Criteria.

### **Relationship to zoning**

These Design Guidelines supplement the zoning regulations that exist for areas contained within the East Side and West Side neighborhoods. They are intended to help accomplish goals provided for in the neighborhood plans and that are implemented in the zoning regulations. In particular, they should reinforce the character of single and duplex residential uses.

# Character Descriptions of the Neighborhoods







## Character Descriptions of the Neighborhoods

### Existing Character

Many similarities in character exist throughout the East Side and West Side Neighborhoods. Common throughout, except in some of the commercial areas, are clearly defined streetscapes and front yards. This is the result of generally wide streets with a planting strip between the curb and sidewalk. Mature street trees, set in a rhythmic spacing along the street, help to define this public area.

Most structures are set back from the street creating a front yard covered in grass, with walks leading to single entries. Structures vary in height from block to block, but again are usually consistent within a block. Seldom do structures exceed two stories except for half stories built into the roof structure.

Materials include brick and wood lap siding in older structures. Some of the newer homes have metal siding and some older homes have been resided with aluminum and other fabricated materials. Some variations in character also occur throughout the East Side and West Side neighborhoods, mostly a result of the different uses allowed, the sizes of lots and buildings, and the style of design resulting from the era during which the building was built.

### Property Characteristics

Each block has three distinct "zones:" a semi-public zone, a semi-private zone, and a private zone.

Elements in the semi-public zone include: the mature street trees in a planting strip of grass or other permeable ground cover between the curb and sidewalk and a detached sidewalk.

Elements in the semi-private zone include: front and side yards, with fairly uniform setbacks and mature vegetation, and walks that lead to elevated formal entries. These are often integrated into porches on the front of residences that face the street.

Elements in the private zone include: the structure itself and remaining private yard running back to an alley, often with a secondary structure. Characteristics typical of this zone are sloped roofs on residential structures; a similarity in mass and scale between structures within a block; a variety of styles of design; the use of brick and wood lap siding; distinct side and rear yards, with associated landscaping; alley structures; and on-site parking spaces located to the side or rear.

### **Design Character Areas**

While many features described above are common throughout the East Side and West Side Neighborhoods, the details of how these features are combined do vary within certain smaller collections of lots and blocks. For purposes of more clearly defining the immediate context of a property, the neighborhoods are organized into a series of "Design Character Areas" that share similar characteristics. These are defined on Map 2.

In an effort to make documents consistent and for ease of use and understanding, design character areas described in this document draw upon the land use delineations made in the neighborhood plans as a starting point. Additionally, field observations, comparisons of aerial photographs and plat maps were undertaken to define the boundaries of these areas. Areas of similar character exist in both neighborhoods. Therefore, character area descriptions apply.

There are six different design character areas. Each design character area is a collection of several characteristics that are cohesive enough to distinguish it from other areas. For example one area has multi family structures, mixed in with single family while another has a commercial residential mix.

Each area has distinct building types, with similar sizes and proportions that can be described as characteristic of the majority of structures. Exceptions to these typical sizes do exist; however, the goal is to fit within the normal range. In most instances the exceptions are due to later changes to an original structure. These are not considered context setting. It is the combination of these categories that produces the overall visual impression when looking at a property. Depending on the specific design and location, one category may have more importance than another. Each situation needs to be assessed individually, based on the immediate surrounding context. These measurements are not intended to take the place of zoning limits. In many instances the range varies from the minimum and maximum zoning allowed. Often in older areas building occurred prior to zoning being set.

Each area is described below, by location, general description, and typical measurements.

Categories measured were front facade width, roof ridge length, front setbacks, side setbacks, building height, footprint area, and building floor area. Building height is measured to the top of the ridge.

### **Traditional Residential Design Character Area**

This area is the core of both the East and West Side Neighborhoods. It is made up of the Laurel School Neighborhood, which constitutes the core of the neighborhood on the East Side, and the Holy Family Neighborhood, which is the core of the West Side. The remainder of this design character area consists of subdivisions surrounding these landmark districts.

This area is made up almost exclusively of single-family structures. This area appears cohesive through similar orientations of structures and front setbacks. It contains high concentrations of historically significant structures. Most structures were built prior to

1945. All the older subdivisions within this area were part of the original plat addition to Old Town Fort Collins.

Most of the single family residences are a mix of one, one-and a-half and sometimes two story structures, often with the second story only detectable from dormers present on the roof. Roofs are sloped, often with the ridge perpendicular to the street, with flat roof exceptions on a few southwestern and modern style buildings. The main entry faces the street and is usually integrated into a front porch. The lots are platted with the long dimension perpendicular to the street. A variety of styles is seen, resulting in differing forms and appearances.

Typical dimensions:

*Front Facade Width:* 20'-30'

*Roof Ridge Length:* 25'-30' When ridge is parallel to the street and 30'-45' when ridge is perpendicular to the street.

*Front Setback:* 20'

*Side Setback:* 5'-10' depending on facade width there is often one side with the minimum and the other with a more defined yard. In some instances there is a driveway through the larger side yard.

*Building Height:* 15'-22', most buildings are single story, 22'-30' for two story

*Footprint Area:* 800 sq. ft.-1200 sq. ft.

*Building Floor Area:* 800 sq. ft.-1200 sq. ft. for single story, 1200 sq. ft.-2500 sq. ft. for two story.

**Postwar Residential  
Design Character Area**

These areas developed following World War II and as a result are located farther from the downtown in the southeastern corner of the East Side and the northwestern corner of the West Side. One area in the West Side lies just north of the CSU campus. While many streets are laid out in a traditional grid, on occasion the streets are laid out in a curvilinear fashion or with cul-de-sacs.

Structures are small single family ranch houses. Some larger multi-family complexes were built more recently. The single family structures differ from the earlier cottages in their orientation and simplicity of design. Most were rectangular ranch houses built with the long dimension parallel to the street. The slopes of roofs are shallower than those on historic homes. There is less detail than on historic structures. This is apparent in shorter roof overhangs and less ornamental trim. There are similar setbacks often with the front setback the same for every house on a block. One primary entrance is provided on the front facade but there is seldom a front porch, usually just a simple concrete stoop with no covering over the entry. They were one story structures without dormers or other breaks in the roof planes. Due to a lack of detail and simplicity of materials, less variety in styles occurs than in the landmark areas. What is most important is that a style works cohesively throughout a structure rather than appearing as a series of unrelated alterations.

Typical dimensions:

*Front Facade Width:* 30'-40'

*Roof Ridge Length:* 30'-40'

*Front Setback:* 15'-25' but 20' was most typical

*Side Setback:* 5'-10'

*Building Height:* 13'-18' for single family, 18'-25' split level and two story ranch style

*Footprint Area:* 800 sq. ft.-1200 sq. ft.

*Building Floor Area:* 800 sq.-1200 sq. ft.

**Contemporary Residential  
Design Character Area**

This Design Character Area is limited to the southern end of the East Side in two locations. One portion surrounds three sides of the old high school and the other is part of a larger area near the hospital, along Smith and Elizabeth Streets.

Structures within this area were built more recently, from the 1960's to the present. The structures are similar to those in the Postwar Residential Area in that they are primarily single family, one story ranch houses and some split-level designs. The main roof ridge is parallel to the street and the slope of the roof is less than on historic buildings. They differ from the earlier ranch houses in size, these being larger, in detail applied, these have more, and in the exterior form, which is often more complex than the simple rectangular box.

Typical dimensions:

*Front Facade Width: 30'-40'*

*Roof Ridge Length: 20'-50', some of these are L-shaped with breaks in the ridge line.*

*Front Setback: 20'-40'*

*Side Setback: 5'-25', larger lots allow for more generous setbacks*

*Building Height: 15'-25'*

*Footprint Area: 1200 sq. ft.-2000 sq. ft.*

*Building Floor Area: 1200 sq. ft.-3500 sq. ft.*

### **Estate Residential Design Character Area**

This Design Character Area has two locations. The larger is on the West Side and contains the historically significant Mountain Avenue area. This piece also contains the areas where Oak and Jackson Streets face onto City Park. A second, smaller area along Mulberry Street, between Remington and Peterson Streets, on the East Side also has similar characteristics.

Structures here are large older homes and are sited on lots larger than those found elsewhere in the immediate vicinity, that being mostly the Traditional Area. They also have prominent front porches that, on the West Side, face onto a green space, either the park or a central median strip. On the East Side the orientation is toward a major boulevard which is an important entry into the core of town. Some of these structures closer to College Avenue now have commercial uses but the only noticeable change from the front should be signage.

Square structures are as common as rectangular ones in this area with either two full stories before reaching the eaves or long sloping roofs with the upper stories fit into the roof structure. In the latter case the ridge is parallel to the street with large dormers. Along Mountain Avenue, in many instances the houses are built close to the minimum allowed side yard setbacks leaving small side yards relative to the large homes. The front setbacks are similar, which in combination sets up a prominent wall of buildings along the avenue. This emphasizes the open space the houses look out onto.

Typical dimensions:

*Front Facade Width: 30'-45'*

*Roof Ridge Length: 20'-40' for hipped roofs, 30'-60' for gable ended roofs*

*Front Setback: 25'-50'*

*Side Setback: 5'-20'*

*Building Height: 15'-30'. buildings are typically 2 stories*

*Footprint Area: 1500 sq. ft. - 2800 sq. ft.*

*Building Floor Area: 2000 sq. ft.-4500 sq. ft.*

### **Transitional Mixed Buffer Design Character Area**

There are five separate locations for this Design Character Area in both the East and West Side Neighborhoods.

The first is located on the West Side between the southern portion of the Traditional Residential character area, the downtown and the Residential/Commercial Fringe character area, at Laurel Street and College Avenue.

The second location is on the West Side, along the west side of Meldrum Street between the back of lots on Mountain Avenue and Cherry Street on the north end.

The third and fourth locations are on the East Side along Remington Street from Buckeye Street to the back of lots along Oak Street with a break at Mulberry Street.

The fifth location is on the far east side of the East Side along Elizabeth Street.

This Design Character Area is defined by its location between residential and commercial areas. It has a mix of uses from residential to multifamily to commercial. Most of the existing structures are residential style even though some have been adapted to commercial uses. There are some large office buildings and multi-family structures that are exceptions. It is recognized that larger structures are allowed here but owners are encouraged to continue the residential nature of development either by incorporating existing structures or designing new structures that are compatible with the existing. When determining a point of reference for design, look to the adjacent residential character instead of the more contemporary commercial that surrounds the downtown.

For existing residential structures typical dimensions are similar to those in the Traditional Character Area. Dimensions listed here are for newer multi-family structures that also include fraternities and sororities. There is one exception to these figures and that is the University office building on Sherwood Street, which is substantially larger than any other structures in the area.

Typical dimensions of residential context:

*Front Facade Width:* 20'-40'

*Roof Ridge Length:* 30'-50'

*Front Setback:* 15'-25'

*Side Setback:* 5'-15'

*Building Height:* 20'-30' This is frequently a flat roof which appears larger than a sloped roof at the same height.

*Footprint Area:* 1,000 sq. ft.-3,000 sq. ft.

*Building Floor Area:* 1,000 sq. ft. -5,000 sq. ft.

## Residential/Commercial Fringe Design Character Area

This Design Character Area is made up of four separate areas that have the same affect on the neighborhood by virtue of their commercial uses. The first area is on the West Side in the vicinity of Laurel Street and College Avenue near CSU. The second area is on the East Side along the east side of College Avenue from Buckeye Street to Mulberry Street. The third area is on the West Side, on the north side of the intersection of Mountain Avenue and Shields Street. The fourth area is on the West Side, along the north side of Laporte Avenue between Frye Avenue and Fishback Street.

Each has a slightly different character based on the location. It differs from the Transitional Mixed Buffer area in that the ability to recognize the original residential nature of structures is less of a goal due to commercial activity being the prevalent use here.

The first and second segments are located in the vicinity of Laurel Street and College Avenue near CSU, and a similar strip is found on the East Side along the east side of College Avenue from Buckeye Street to Mulberry Street. This area has seen a number of residential structures turned to commercial uses with additions. In a number of cases additions have been built out to the sidewalk edge. Due to proximity to the university there is a mix of pedestrian and vehicle orientation. In many cases the original structure is no longer visible. In others there is a clear demarcation between an original residential structure and newer commercial style additions. A goal for this area is to reconcile these differences into one cohesive building. New additions to existing structures should attempt to incorporate changes that work together as one cohesive design.

The third area, which is on the north side of the intersection of Mountain Avenue and Shields Street, has larger retail structures that contrast to the surrounding residential neighborhood. There are two concerns in this area. The first is that the landscape strip that separates the sidewalk from the street is interrupted by asphalt parking on the northwest corner of the intersection. The second is the use of metal and plastic materials that is in contrast to the more natural palette of wood, brick, and stone used on the surrounding historic structures.

The fourth area is a strip of vehicle-oriented commercial uses along the north side of Laporte Avenue between Frye Avenue and Fishback Street. This was at one time a series of residential structures that have been turned into business uses with a few newer structures always intended for commercial use. These newer structures are usually simple brick structures with flat roofs. The most noticeable characteristic here is the lack of landscaping in the front and side yards of structures where they have been turned over to parking.

Typical dimensions:

*Front Facade Width:* 30'-100' most are typically 50' for new construction and 30' for original residences used for commercial.

*Roof Ridge Length:* Where there is a sloped roof, most often from an original residential structure, there is a typical 30'-60' dimension. In newer construction where there is a flat roof it ranges from 40'-100'.

*Front Setback:* 0'-40', Those structures on Laurel Street and College Avenue that have new construction are often built out to the sidewalk. Adaptive uses of older residential structures usually maintain the original setback.

*Side Setback:* 0'-15' Again, those structures on Laurel Street and College Avenue that have new construction are often built out to the side lot lines.

*Building Height:* 10'-30'

*Footprint Area:* 2,000 sq. ft.-10,000 sq. ft.

*Building Floor Area:* 2,000 sq. ft.-15,000 sq. ft. with most typically being closer to 4500 sq. ft.

## Development trends

The older neighborhoods of Fort Collins are becoming more popular as historic structures and mature landscaping become a limited resource. The proximity to downtown and to the University contribute to the desirability of this area. As a result, property owners continue to renovate and expand many of the existing homes. These expansions are in the form of additions to the basic footprint, pop-tops, which are additions that raise the roof of a structure, and the construction of new alley houses. Scrape-offs, or clearing the site of the original structure before starting new construction, have not been frequent and this problem has been addressed through the City's demolition ordinance for Landmark structures. However, as prices increase and the stock of older fixer uppers shrinks, additional requests for demolition are likely.

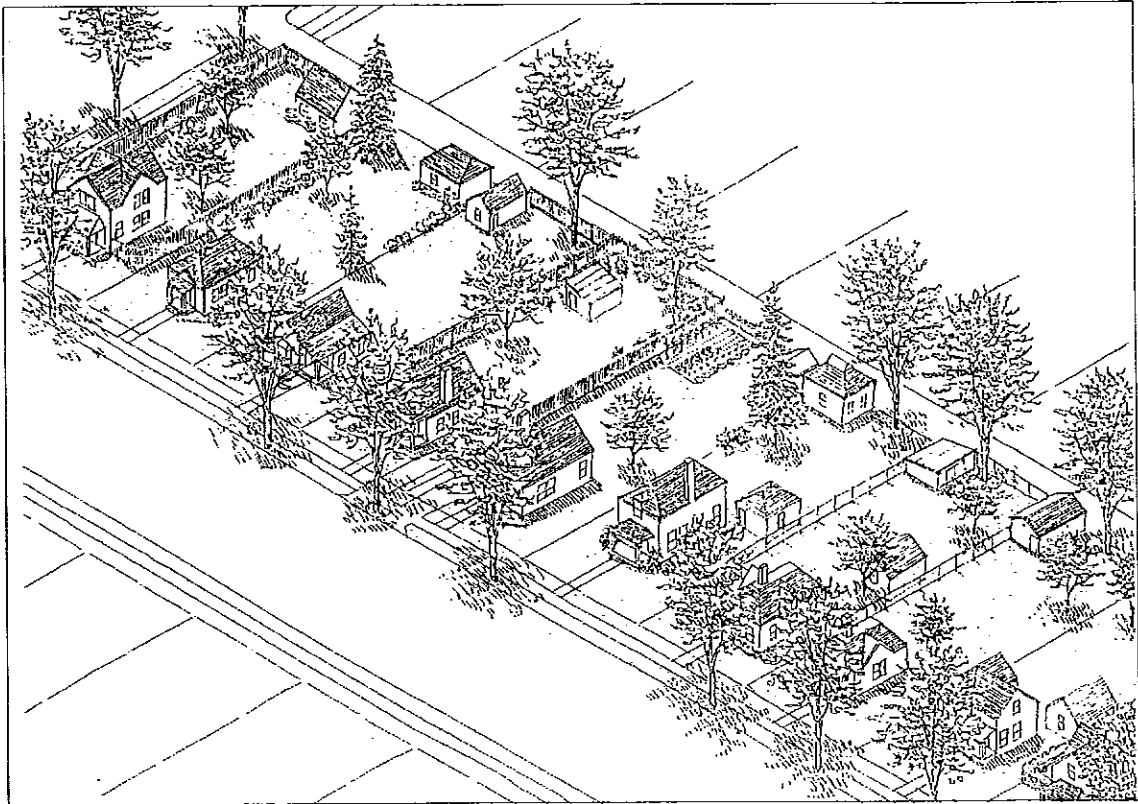
Some areas near the University and College Avenue are seeing changes to residential style structures as they turn to commercial uses. Often these use commercial storefront additions that clash with the character of the existing residential style structure.

As the University increases its enrollment, the neighborhoods nearby are absorbing the housing for many of these students. This is reflected in increasing rentals of existing structures, the construction of new, larger multi-family structures and the conversion of single-family residences into multi-unit structures.

## Goals for the neighborhoods

Through a series of community workshops, citizens provided additional detail related to already documented policies within the adopted neighborhood plans. In general, this can be described as preserving the feeling of a single-family, residential neighborhood and to promote a sense of integration between neighborhoods.

# Guidelines for All Projects







## Guidelines for All Projects

The following design guidelines apply to all construction projects within the East Side and West Side Neighborhoods. These include certain site improvements, alterations to existing structures and new construction.

Property owners are encouraged, but not required, to follow these guidelines. They are provided as information that will help property owners develop designs that will be compatible with those features of the neighborhoods that residents have identified as being important to the character of the area.

### Changes in Use

In some areas of the East Side and West Side neighborhoods, commercial uses have been introduced into buildings that originally served residential functions. In other locations, traditional commercial storefronts and even strip commercial building types have appeared. In all cases, commercial development should reinforce the established character of the neighborhood.

In some cases, a residential structure may be converted to commercial use. When this occurs, the residential character should be retained, such that the traditional character of the neighborhood is maintained.

**1. When adapting a residence to a commercial use, preservation of the original design character of the building is encouraged.**

- When converted to a new use, a house should retain its residential image.

**2. New uses that require the least change to the character of the original structure are preferred.**

## **Site Planning and Settlement Patterns**

The Guidelines in this section address the treatment of broad-scale design issues that are related to the basic arrangement of streets and lots and the manner in which buildings are sited on lots.

### **Settlement Patterns**

The layout of the streets and lots of individual subdivisions within the neighborhoods contributes to their distinct visual character. In addition, buildings are usually sited in similar ways within each character area. Such features should be retained.

#### **3. Placing the primary building entry at an elevation that is similar to that seen traditionally in the design character area is preferred.**

- Most entrances are located one to three feet above grade and are accessed by steps.

#### **4. Locating structures so they maintain solar access to adjacent properties, when physical conditions permit, is encouraged.**

- For example, locating an addition to one side of the lot such that it will cast the least amount of shadow onto adjacent properties is encouraged.
- Coordinating solar access concerns with other relevant city ordinances is also encouraged.

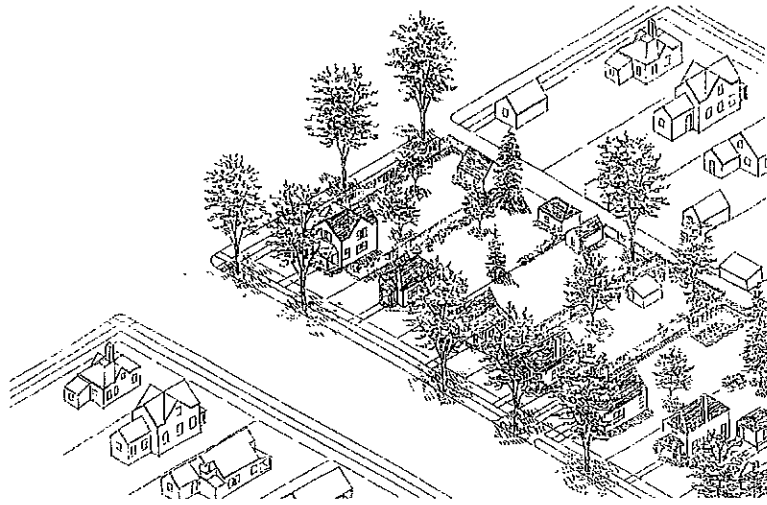
### **Building setbacks and spacing**

*(Note that the City Code allows eave overhangs up to two feet in required set-backs. This also applies to the guidelines in this document.)*

In many blocks in the neighborhoods, a distinct, uniform alignment of building fronts exists. Even where a variation in building setbacks does occur, the range is rather limited. This is an important characteristic that should be maintained. In addition, buildings are clearly separated by side yards, of approximately similar dimensions, such that a perceived regularity of spaces between buildings results. This is also an important characteristic that should be maintained.

### 5. Maintaining the established alignment of building fronts on the block is encouraged.

- The front yard setback of a new building should be within 10 feet, plus or minus of the median setback in the block.
- In general, taller portions of structures should be set back farther from the front setback than shorter portions.



5. *Appropriate: Maintain the established alignment of building fronts in the block.*

### 6. Maintaining the rhythm established in the design character area by uniform spacing of side yards is encouraged.

*Section 29-119 (5), Section 29-167 (5) and Section 29-210 (5) of the City Code establish a progressive formula for sideyard setbacks to respond to the height of the building.*

*As provided in the zoning ordinance, side yard setbacks shall be not less than five (5) feet.*

- Side yard setbacks should appear similar to others in the block, as seen from the street.
- Free-standing buildings on the same lot should not be constructed with less than six (6) feet of separation, except that breezeway connections between adjacent buildings are acceptable if designed to be in harmony with the affected structures. Exception: Portions of the Campus Commercial area and some blocks along Riverside Avenue have been constructed with little or no separation between adjacent buildings. On those blocks, this pattern should be continued to the extent allowed by local building codes.
- With a large structure that occupies several lots, also express the sense of traditional side yard spacing by "articulating" the mass of the building to suggest the rhythm of side yard spacing.

**7. Variety in rear yard set-backs in a block is appropriate.**

- Typically, buildings should be set back a minimum of five (5) feet from the alley.

**8. Maintaining the sense of spaciousness seen traditionally in the neighborhood by retaining significant portions of the site as open space is encouraged.**

- Coverage of planted areas should be a minimum of 50% of the lot.

**Building Orientation**

Traditionally, buildings have had their primary entrances oriented to the street. This helps establish a "pedestrian-friendly" quality to the block, which is vitally important. It is a characteristic that should be maintained.

**9. Orienting the front of a primary structure to the street and clearly identifying the entrance is encouraged.**

*Section 29-119 (8), Section 29-167 (8) and Section 29-210 (8) of the City Code provide for the orientation of main entries to be on the front facade of the building.*

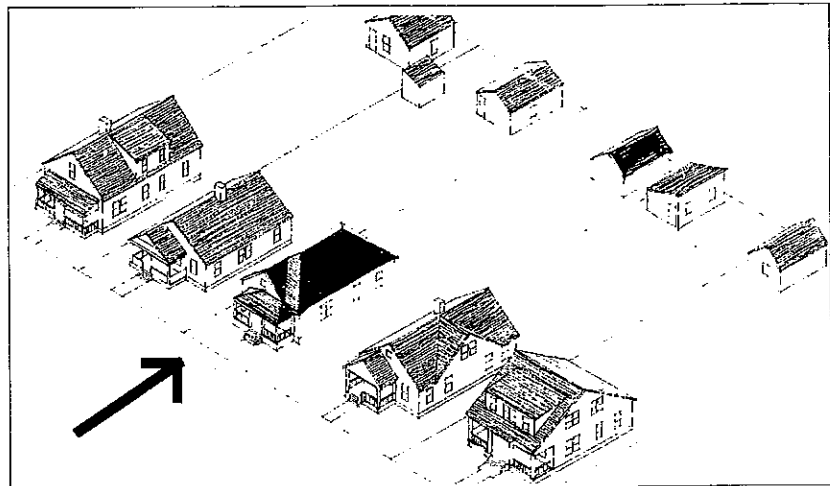
*Section 29-119 (13), Section 29-167 (13) and Section 29-210 (13) of the City Code require the front of an alley house on corner lots to face the street.*

- The main entrance to a building should face the street.
- A prominent entry will contribute to the "pedestrian-friendly" character of the street.
- An entry that appears to be raised at the same height as porches seen traditionally in the neighborhood is preferred.
- The entry should appear similar in scale to those seen traditionally in the context.
- Avoid oversized entries that are out of character with those seen traditionally in the neighborhood.
- If a secondary entry is to be located on a side yard, consider positioning it such that the privacy of adjacent properties will not be affected.
- Retaining the orientation of primary entrances, usually facing the street, when planning a new addition is encouraged.



*9. Appropriate: Orienting the front of a primary structure to the street is encouraged.*

9. Continued...



9. *Appropriate:* The front of this primary structure is appropriately oriented to the street.

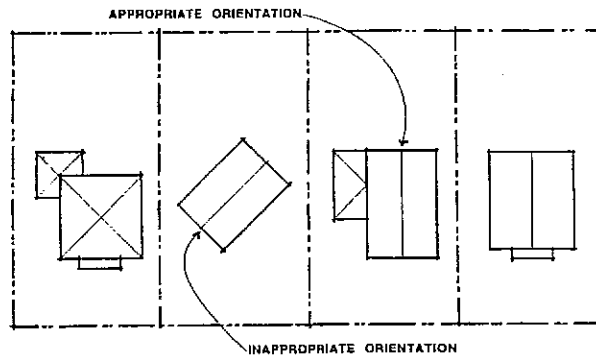


9. *Appropriate:* Clearly identifying the primary entrance to a building is encouraged. An entry that appears to be raised at the same height as porches seen traditionally in the neighborhood is preferred.

Section 29-119 (7),  
Section 29-167 (7) and  
Section 29-210 (7) of the City  
Code require primary exterior  
walls longer than 6' to be  
parallel or perpendicular to  
lot.

**10. Orienting the primary mass of a building parallel to the lot lines and maintaining the traditional grid pattern of the block is encouraged.**

- An exception is where an established subdivision has introduced curvilinear streets.



10. *Inappropriate:* Orienting the building parallel to the lot lines and maintaining the traditional grid pattern of the block is encouraged.

## Driveways and Curb Cuts

Traditionally, most parking was accessed from alleys in the neighborhood. As a result, many blocks have very few curb cuts. This approach is preferred. In more recent subdivisions, however, access is sometimes provided from the street. In all cases, the visual impacts of driveways and curb cuts should be minimized.

### 11. Minimizing the visual impacts of curb cuts is encouraged.

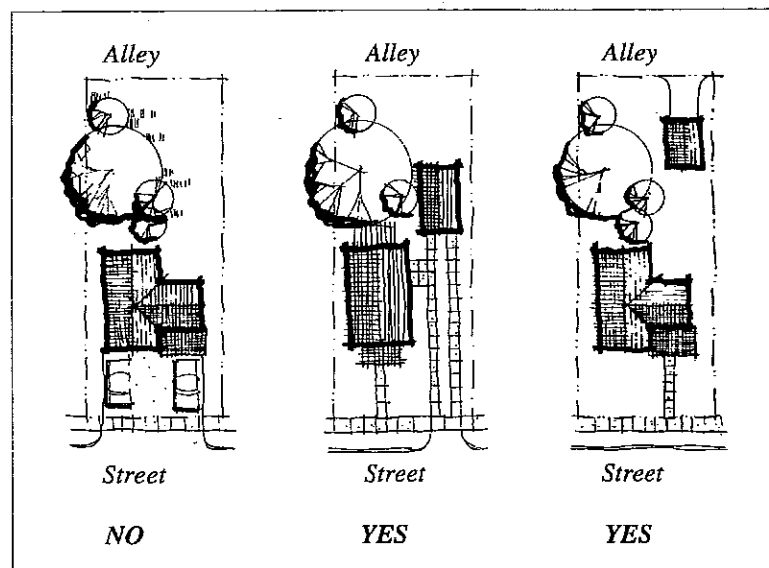
- If allowed through other city regulations, only one curb cut should be provided for a lot.
- The width of a curb cut should not exceed 15 feet.

*Section 29-492 (1) of the City Code requires utilization of alleys to provide parking access. New curb cuts will be limited.*

*Section 29-492 (3) (c) of the City Code requires parking areas to be set back from street as far as primary structure for non-single family uses.*

### 12. Minimizing the visual appearance of driveways and other paved surfaces is encouraged.

- Provide auto access from an alley when physical conditions permit.
- Use a single lane driveway when physical conditions permit.
- Locating a driveway to the side is also appropriate.



**12. Appropriate:** Minimizing the visual appearance of driveways and paved surfaces is encouraged. The middle illustration above shows a drive that uses two strips of concrete for driving surfaces, thereby reducing the amount of impervious surface in the front yard.

## Parking

In order to enhance the pedestrian-orientation of the neighborhoods, the visual impacts of cars should be minimized. On-site parking should be subordinate to other uses and the front yard should not appear to be a "parking lot."

In the context of this document, a "large" parking area is one with more than five cars.

*Section 29-492 (c) of the City Code prohibits parking in front of building.*

*Section 29-493 (2) (b) of the City Code requires perimeter landscaping around paved parking areas over 1800 s.f.*

*Section 29-492 (3) (c) of the City Code prohibits spillover of light from parking area lighting.*

*Section 29-493 (2) (f) of the City Code requires internal landscaped islands equal in area to 6% of overall lot for lots of 4500 s.f. in area or more.*

### **13. Parking areas should not be visually obtrusive.**

- Parking areas should be located to the rear of the property, when physical conditions permit.
- Parking should not be located in the front yard, except in the driveway, if it exists.
- The front of a garage should be set back a minimum of ten feet from the primary front of a building.



*13. Inappropriate: Parking areas should not be visually obtrusive.*

### **14. Large parking areas should be screened from view from the street.**

- 75% of automobile head-light illumination from large parking areas should be screened from adjacent lots and 20% of the cross-section view of the parking area from the street should be screened.

### **15. Provide landscaped islands in large parking areas.**

- Minimizing the amount of hard surface is preferred.
- Divide large parking areas with planting areas.

## Lighting

Traditionally, site lighting was quite limited in the neighborhoods. The low-scale quality of this lighting contributed to the area's residential character. Today, commercial uses may require more lighting and an increased desire to install security lighting also must be recognized. Minimizing the impacts of lighting is still a goal and in all cases, the lighting should be designed such that it remains focused on the subject at hand and does not spill over onto adjacent properties.

*Section 29-493 (2) (b) of the City Code requires screening of light from parking lots onto streets.*

### **16. Security and parking area lighting should be shielded.**

- Focusing lights on walks and entries is preferred. Lighting that is focused up at building walls is discouraged.
- The light source should be shielded such that no direct light from the source is visible from adjacent properties.

### **17. Using lighting to unify the building composition at night is preferred.**

- Balancing the color and intensity of lighting among building features is encouraged.
- Minimizing the overall intensity of lighting to meet functional needs is encouraged.

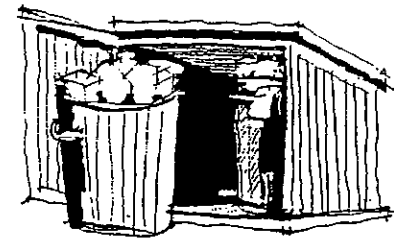
## Service Areas

Service areas include locations for trash containers, transformers and other mechanical and electrical equipment that may require an exterior facility. In all cases, these features should remain visually unobtrusive.

*Section 29-478 (a) & (b) of the City Code requires screening of dumpsters and rooftop mechanical.*

### **18. Minimizing the unpleasant visual appearance of service areas is encouraged.**

- Locating dumpsters and other service equipment to the rear of the lot, when physical conditions permit, is encouraged.
- Service areas should be screened from public view with fences, walls, and plantings, or a combination of these elements.



*18. Appropriate: Service areas should be screened from public view.*



## Design in the Public Right of Way

Many important features exist within the public right of way that contribute to the sense of character for the neighborhoods. Among these are the use of detached sidewalks, with a planting strip next to the curb, and the rhythm established by evenly-spaced street trees. Such features should be retained.

### Streets

The street pattern established by the traditional grid in many portions of the neighborhoods forms one of the most important characteristics of the area. In a few locations, curvilinear streets were introduced. These, too, contribute to the character of the area. The basic character of this traditional street layout should be retained.

#### **19. Maintaining the traditional rectilinear grid pattern of streets is encouraged.**

- Established street layouts should not be altered. Where the grid is established, it should be retained except where earlier subdivision plats introduced curvilinear streets.
- New driveways, as well as street improvements, should be arranged such that they continue the grid pattern.

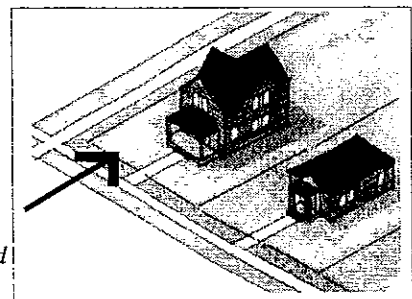
### Sidewalks

Paved sidewalks are found throughout the neighborhoods. Most are detached from the curb, with a planting strip between. This separates the sidewalk from parked cars and moving traffic and enhances the pedestrian orientation of the area. This is one of the most important characteristics of improvements in the right of way and should be retained.

#### **20. Sidewalks should be detached, separated from the curb with a planting strip.**

- Preservation of original flagstone walks, where they exist, is encouraged.

*20. Appropriate: Maintain the alignment of the detached sidewalks.*



**Alleys**

A system of alleys is found throughout the neighborhoods that provides access for service and parking functions. In some areas, the alley also provides access to carriage houses. These alleys should be retained and they should continue to serve a mix of needs. This helps reduce the impact of the car on the street.

**21. Maintaining the simple character of alleys is encouraged.**

- According to other city regulations, alleys will be improved when housing is introduced there to provide adequate emergency response. If the alley is to be paved, the paving width should be kept to the minimum required for emergency vehicle access, to maintain the relatively simple character of these ways.



*21. Appropriate: Maintaining the simple character of alleys is encouraged.*

The curb, planting strip, sidewalk and associated vegetation are located in the City's R.O.W. and are consequently the property of the City.

**Street Trees**

Large, established trees create one of the most important visual characteristics of the neighborhoods and this image should be maintained. Removal or installation of a street tree must be coordinated with the City Forester.

**22. Preservation of street trees, when their physical conditions permit, is encouraged.**

- Maintaining the spacing pattern of established street trees is encouraged.
- When a tree must be removed, or where a gap in the rhythm of street trees already exists, installing a new street tree is encouraged.

*Section 27-17 of the City Code outlines the powers and duties of the City Forester.*

22 continued...

- Where planting conditions permit, installing a replacement tree in a location that will continue to express the established rhythm is encouraged.
- Consult with the City Forester to arrange installation of trees and to select appropriate species.



*22. Appropriate: Maintaining the pattern of established street trees is encouraged.*

### The Planting Strip

The planting strip, between the curb and the sidewalk, provides space for plantings and street trees. Traditionally, the character has been quite simple, consisting of grasses and trees. This modest character should be maintained.

### **23. Maintaining the tree planting strip as a lawn area is preferred.**

- Planted turf is preferred. Planting schemes that treat these areas as flower beds or rock gardens are discouraged.
- Using small (less than 10 square feet) areas of paving to provide access from cars parked on the street may be considered.
- Extensive (greater than 10 square feet) areas of hard surfaces are discouraged.
- Structures, including fences, are discouraged in the planting strip. Berms in the planting strip are also discouraged.
- Edging materials, such as rocks or wood timbers, are discouraged.



*23. Appropriate: Maintaining the tree planting strip as a lawn area is preferred.*

### **On-street Parking**

Parking on the street is an established tradition in the neighborhoods. While concerns for the impacts of parking may exist, the design character is also important. In general, parallel parking is preferred, because this provides a “friendlier” edge to pedestrians on the sidewalk, and because it accommodates bicycle use on the street.

#### **24. Parallel parking is preferred for on-street locations.**

- New diagonal parking is discouraged. Note, however, that in a few locations, diagonal parking is established and is a part of the tradition of the block. In such cases, it is appropriate to retain the diagonal arrangement. Note also that all on-street parking is under the control and jurisdiction of the City's Department of Transportation.

### **Landscape Design**

These landscape design guidelines apply to work within front and side yards that is visible from the public way. They provide guidance for plantings and site structures, including fences.

### **New Planting**

While a wide variety of plants can grow in the Fort Collins climate, those that are better adapted and that require less water are preferred. At the same time, materials that convey the scale and texture of plantings used traditionally in these areas are especially encouraged.

#### **25. Selecting new trees and shrubbery that are well adapted to the Fort Collins climate is encouraged.**

- Refer to the *Guide to Landscaping*, published by the City's Parks and Recreation Department, for suggestions.

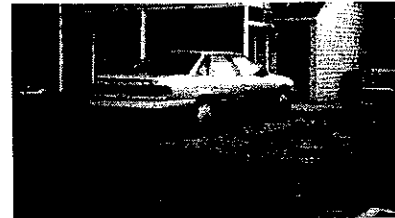
**Lawns**

Traditionally, front yards in the neighborhoods were developed as lawns. Accent plantings occurred in plant beds, which typically were located at the building foundation or in isolated plant beds. This tradition should be continued.

*Section 29-119 (15)  
Section 29-167 (15) and  
Section 29-210 (15) of the City  
Code establish a maximum  
amount of hard surface in the  
front yard.*

**26. A grass lawn should be the dominant material of a front yard.**

- Grasses that tolerate low watering are especially appropriate.
- Cacti and other "desert" plants, if employed, should only occur as accent elements.
- The use of rock and gravel is discouraged, and if used, should only occur as an accent element.
- Minimizing the amount of hard surface paving for patios, terraces or drives in front yards is encouraged.



*26. Inappropriate: Minimizing the amount of hard surface paving for patios, terraces or drives in front yards is encouraged.*

*Section 29-511 (1) of the City  
Code limits fence height to 48"  
when located within 20 feet of  
the front property line.*

**27. Maintaining the visual connection to the front lawn from the street is encouraged.**

- Enclosing a front lawn such that it is not visible from the street is discouraged. (Doing so would negatively affect the pedestrian-orientation of the block.)
- A front yard fence should have a "transparent" character. Therefore, use of spaced pickets or wrought iron is encouraged.



*27. Inappropriate: Enclosing a front lawn such that it is not visible from the street is inappropriate.*

**Fences and walls**

Using fences and retaining walls in front yards are not strong traditions in the East Side and West Side neighborhoods. When they were used in front yards, fences were low and appeared semi-transparent. Wood pickets or thin metal members were typical. A few low retaining walls also were seen. These were stone or brick. When fences and retaining walls are used in such locations, this established tradition should be maintained. Greater variety is appropriate in side and rear yards.

*Section 29-511 of the City Code establishes a 48" maximum height for fences in the front yard.*

**28. If they are to be used, fences should be in character with those seen traditionally in the neighborhood.**

- Low fences, less than 40 inches in height, are encouraged in front yards. Taller fences may be considered in side and rear yards.
- Transparent elements, such as wrought iron and wood picket, are appropriate.
- Chain link and solid "stockade" fences are discouraged in front yards.
- Note that using no fencing at all is often the best approach.



*28. Inappropriate: Taller fences may be considered in side and rear yards.*

**Alley edges**

Traditionally, alleys were simple in character, and many lacked any distinct landscaping. While this simple character should be maintained overall, it is true that today, alleys serve a wider range of uses and they are therefore more visible to the public. For this reason, some landscaping is appropriate along alley edges. It should remain simple in character, however.

**29. Property owners are encouraged to provide landscaping along alley edges.**

- This landscaping should be simple in character. The use of low hedges and fences is particularly appropriate.
- When providing landscaping along alley edges, maintaining clear sight lines for automobiles is encouraged.

## Architectural Design

The Guidelines that follow in this section address the design of new structures. They also apply to alterations and additions to existing buildings. Note that new, contemporary design solutions are encouraged when they are also compatible with the established character of the context.

### Mass and Scale

The mass and scale of building is one of the most important design issues in the East Side and West Side Neighborhoods. The traditional scale of single family houses dominates much of the neighborhoods and this enhances the “pedestrian-friendly” character of the streets. In many cases, original housing was smaller than current standards might support. However, to the greatest extent possible, new construction should maintain this established scale. While new buildings and additions are anticipated that are larger than many of the early houses, this new construction should not be so dramatically larger that the visual continuity of the neighborhood is compromised.

#### **30. A buildings should reinforce a sense of human scale.**

- Buildings may convey a sense of human scale by employing techniques such as these:
  - Using building materials that are of traditional dimensions,
  - Providing a one-story porch that is similar in size to those seen traditionally,
  - Using a building mass that is similar in size to those seen traditionally,
  - Using a ratio of window to wall (solid-to-void) that is similar to that seen traditionally, and using window openings that are similar in size to those seen traditionally.

#### **31. A building should appear similar in scale to the scale that is established in the block.**

- Subdividing a larger building mass into smaller “modules” that are similar in size to buildings seen traditionally is encouraged. (See the Design Character Area descriptions for typical sizes.)
  - Other, subordinate modules may be attached to the primary building form.

**32. A front elevation should appear similar in scale to those seen traditionally in the block.**

- The front should include a one-story element, such as a porch.
- The primary plane of the front should not exceed two stories in height.
- A single wall plane should not exceed the typical maximum width in the relevant Design Character Area Description.



*32. Appropriate: Front elevations should appear similar in scale to those seen traditionally in the block.*

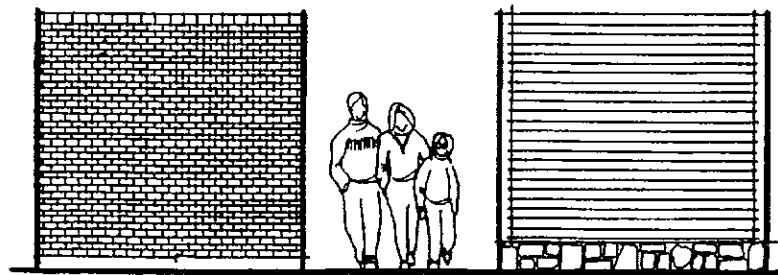
**33. A new building should appear similar in height to those seen traditionally in the Design Character Area.**

- Traditionally, buildings ranged in height from 18 to 27 feet, as measured to the top of the roof ridge. A new building should include components that are within this height range.
- The building front should not exceed two stories.
- See the City Code for the maximum height limits.

**34. Stepping a building down in height as it approaches adjacent, smaller structures on adjacent lots, is encouraged.**

**35. Building materials should contribute to the traditional sense of scale of the block.**

- The use of traditional materials will continue the established scale. See the Design Guidelines for building materials that follow.



*35. Appropriate: Building materials should contribute to the traditional sense of scale of the block.*



## **Building Form**

Buildings should have roof and building forms that contribute to a sense of visual continuity for the neighborhood, by repeating typical forms.

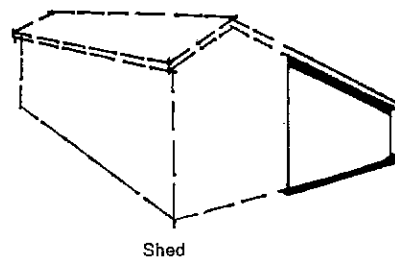
### **36. The use of building forms that appear similar to those seen traditionally in the Design Character Area is encouraged.**

- Simple rectangular solids are appropriate throughout the neighborhoods.
- A residential building should have a simple rectangular mass as its primary form.

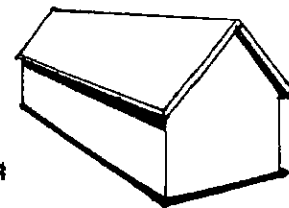
### **37. The use of roof forms that are similar to those seen traditionally in the Design Character Area is encouraged.**

- Visually, the roof is the single most important element in an overall building design.
- Gable and hip roofs are appropriate for primary roof forms in all areas. Shed roofs are appropriate for some additions. Flat roofs should be used only in the traditional residential and residential commercial fringe zones.
- Roof pitches should be 6:12 or greater.
- The primary ridge line of a residential structure should not exceed the typical maximum for the relevant Design Character Area.
- On residential structures, eave depths should be similar to those seen traditionally in the neighborhood.

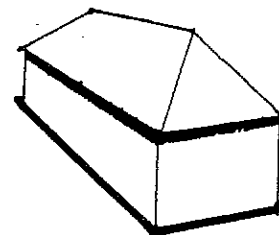
*Section 29-119 (14)  
Section 29-167 (14) and  
Section 29-210 (14) of the City  
Code provide a range of  
acceptable roof pitches.*



Shed



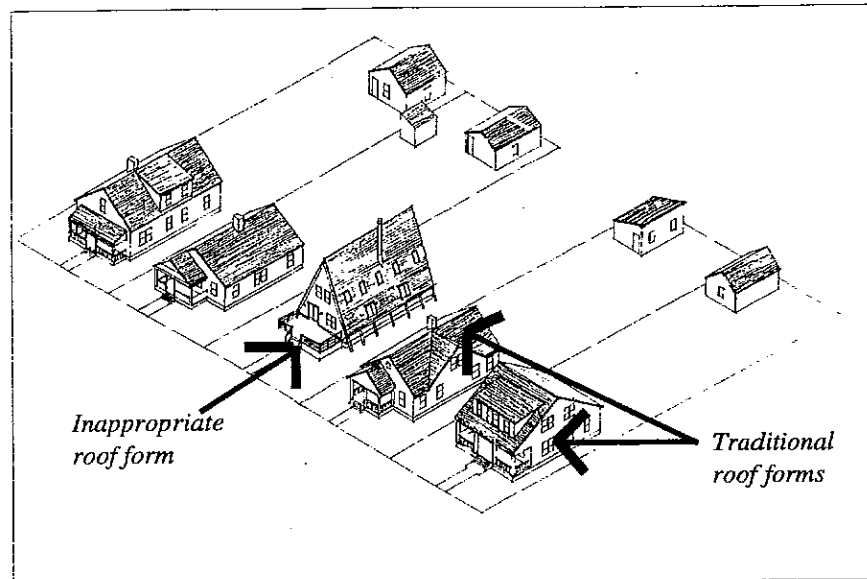
Gable



Hip

**37. Appropriate:** *Gable and hip roofs are appropriate for primary roof forms in all areas.*

37 continued...



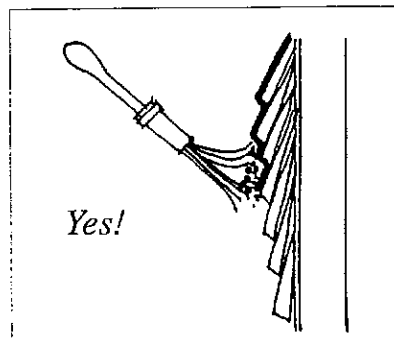
**37. Inappropriate:** Use roof forms that are similar to those seen traditionally.

### Building Materials

Building materials of new structures and additions to existing structures should contribute to the visual continuity of the neighborhood. They should appear similar to those seen traditionally to establish a sense of visual continuity.

#### **38. The use of building materials that appear similar to those used traditionally in the area is encouraged.**

- Horizontal lap siding is appropriate in most applications. Brick also is appropriate.
- All wood siding should have a weather-protective finish.
- Although traditional materials are preferred, synthetic materials, such as aluminum siding, may be used if they convey a scale and texture similar to that of traditional materials.
- Use of highly reflective materials is discouraged.



**38. Appropriate:** All wood siding should have a weather-protective finish.

**39. The use of masonry that appears similar in character to that seen traditionally is appropriate.**

- Brick should have a modular dimension similar to that used traditionally. Jumbo brick is discouraged.
- Stone, similar to that used traditionally, is also appropriate.
- Tile and stucco are appropriate as secondary materials.



*39. Appropriate: The use of masonry that appears similar in character to that seen traditionally is appropriate.*

**40. Roof materials should convey a scale and texture similar to those used traditionally.**

- Asphalt and metal shingles, as well as tiles are appropriate materials.
- Roof materials should have a matte, non-reflective finish.

**Architectural Features**

Entries are clearly defined on most structures in the neighborhood. Porches, porticos and stoops are elements that typically define entries. These features add a one-story element to the fronts of buildings, helping to establish a uniform sense of a human scale along the block. They are essential elements of the neighborhood that should be maintained.

Other architectural details also contribute to the sense of character of the street, adding visual interest for pedestrians. Their continued use is strongly encouraged.

**41. The use of architectural features that provide visual interest to pedestrians is encouraged.**

- Porches, brackets, and ornamental details are examples of such features.
- For residential structures, providing a porch, oriented to the street and scaled to be similar to those seen traditionally in the neighborhood, is encouraged.



*41. Appropriate: The use of architectural features, such as porches and ornamental details, that provide visual interest to pedestrians is encouraged.*

**42. Where a deck is used, it should be unobtrusive, as seen from the street.**

- Locating a deck to the side or to the rear of the primary structure is preferred.

**43. Using windows and doors on primary facades that are similar in size and shape to those seen traditionally is encouraged.**



*43. Appropriate: Using windows and doors on primary facades that are similar in size and shape to those seen traditionally is encouraged.*

**44. The solid-to-void ratio of a building should appear similar to that seen traditionally in the Design Character Area.**

The solid-to-void ratio is the relative percentage of wall to windows and doors seen on a facade.

### **Solar Collectors and Service Equipment**

Fort Collins is an ideal area for using solar energy. The south-facing surfaces are optimum for solar gain, but when this occurs on the street-side, the design may detract from the block's visual integrity. All solar designs, therefore, should be considered carefully.

**45. Minimizing the visual appearance of solar collectors, skylights and satellite dishes is encouraged.**

- Locating these elements to the rear of the lot or of the building, such that they are not prominently visible from the street is encouraged.



*45. Inappropriate: Locating solar collectors to the rear is encouraged.*

*Section 29-478 (a) & (b) of the City Code requires screening of dumpsters and rooftop mechanical equipment.*

**46. Screening the view of service equipment from the street is encouraged.**

- This includes transformers, utility meters, switch gear and roof-top mechanical equipment.

**Secondary Structures**

Traditionally, secondary structures were subordinate to the primary structure on a lot. These were detached buildings and in many cases were located in the rear and accessed by an alley, if available. The tradition of detached secondary structures is encouraged because this reduces the overall perceived mass of building on the site. This includes sheds and garages.

**47. Locate a secondary structure to the rear of the lot, behind the primary structure, when physical conditions permit.**

- Locating a secondary structure to the side of the primary structure, but set back substantially is also appropriate.
- See also the special guidelines for alley houses.



**47. Appropriate:** *Locate secondary structures to the rear.*

*Section 29-119 (9), Section 29-167 (9) and Section 29-210 (9) of the City Code require an additional 10 foot setback beyond front wall of primary structure for secondary structures located in sideyards.*

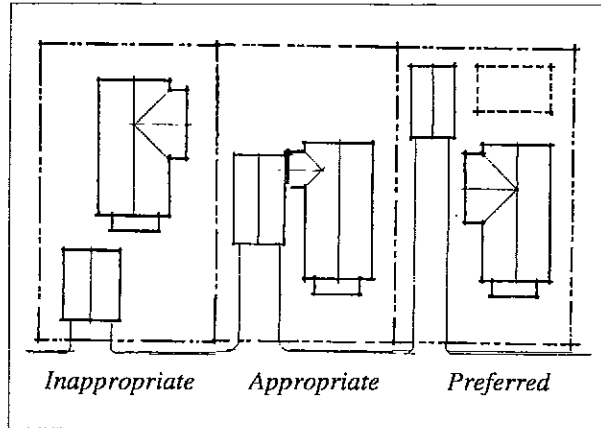
**48. Locating a garage such that its visual impacts will be minimized is encouraged.**

- Locating the garage at the rear of the lot, accessed from the alley, is preferred. Locating it to the side of the primary structure, but set back substantially, is also appropriate.
- Locating a garage in the front yard is discouraged.
- If a garage must be accessed from the street, set it back at least ten feet behind the primary building facade.



**48. Inappropriate:** *Locating a garage such that its visual impacts will be minimized is encouraged.*

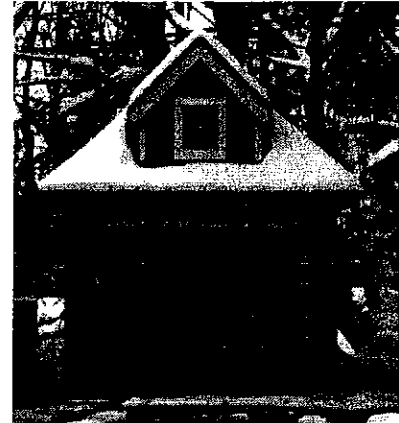
48. continued...



48. Locating a garage at the rear of the lot is preferred.

49. A detached garage is preferred.

- This will help reduce the perceived mass of the overall development.
- When the garage must be attached, the percentage of building front allocated to it should be minimized.



49. Appropriate: A detached garage is preferred.

50. A secondary structure should be simple in form and character.

- Basic rectangular forms, with hip or gable roofs, are appropriate.



50. Appropriate: A secondary structure should be simple in form and character.

## Service Areas

Service areas should not be visually obtrusive.

### **51. Minimizing the visual impacts of a service area as seen from the street is encouraged.**

- Screening a service area from view is preferred. See also Guideline #18.
- Locating a service area in the rear, accessed by an alley, is preferred.

## Alley Houses

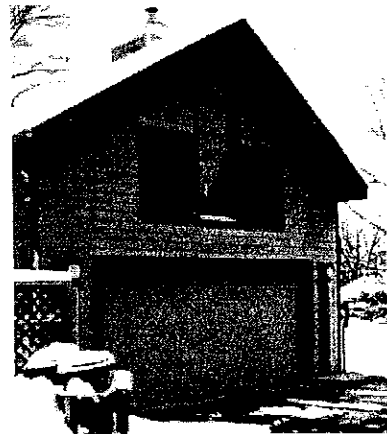
New “alley” housing may be accommodated in the rear of lots in some areas. Where construction of an alley house is permitted by other city regulations, it is important that the building be in character with the block. Traditionally, alleys contained simple buildings and most appeared smaller in scale than the primary structure, which was oriented to the street. This relationship should be continued.

### Mass and Scale of Alley Houses

Alley houses should appear subordinate in scale to those seen traditionally along the street front.

### **52. Minimizing the perceived mass of an alley house is encouraged.**

- Dividing the mass of an alley house into “modules” to reduce its perceived scale is encouraged.
- A single wall plane should not exceed thirty (30) feet in width without a significant (5 foot minimum) change in setback.



*52. Inappropriate: Alley houses should appear subordinate in scale to those seen traditionally along the street front.*

Section 29-119 (11),  
Section 29-167 (11) and  
Section 29-210 (11) of the City  
Code provide a size limit of  
800 s.f. for alley houses.

**53. An alley house should appear subordinate in height to those seen traditionally along the street front.**

- Alley houses that include one and one-and-one-half story elements are preferred.
- Alley houses should not exceed two stories in height.

**Architectural Character of Alley Houses**

An alley house should appear to be in character with the neighborhood and in particular with secondary structures seen traditionally.

**54. An alley house should appear to be visually related to the primary structure.**

- Consider using similar materials and massing to convey a sense of relatedness.



*54. Appropriate: An alley house should appear to be visually related to the primary structure. (This alley house, located on the left, appears visually related to the primary structure, on the right.)*

**Architectural Details of Alley Houses**

While a wide latitude is appropriate in the treatment of architectural details on an alley house, the overall character should be one that is subordinate to that of the primary structure.

**55. Architectural details on an alley house should appear simpler than those used traditionally on primary structures.**



## Color

All property owners are encouraged to employ color schemes that will help establish a sense of visual continuity for the block. While color in itself does not affect the actual form of a building, it can dramatically affect the perceived scale of a structure and it can help to blend a building with its context.

### **56. A color scheme should be simple in character.**

- Using one base color for the building is preferred. A muted color is appropriate for the base color.
- Using only one or two accent colors is also encouraged, although precedent does exist for using more than two colors in some situations.

### **57. Coordinating the entire building in one color scheme is preferred.**

- Using the color scheme to establish sense of an overall composition for the building is strongly encouraged.

## Additions to Existing Buildings

When planning an addition to an existing building, consider the effect the addition will have on the character of the building itself and on the block.

### Ground Level Additions

### **58. An addition should be compatible in size and scale with the existing building.**

- An addition should be visually subordinate to the existing building.
- If it is necessary to design an addition that is taller than the existing building, it should be set it back substantially from primary facades. (A minimum setback of 10 feet is recommended.)
- On a large addition, consider separating the addition from the existing structure and use a smaller connecting element to link the two.

**59. Respecting traditional alignments that may exist on the street when planning additions to buildings is encouraged.**

- Some roof lines and porch eaves on existing buildings in the area may align at approximately the same height. Avoid placing additions in locations where these relationships would be altered or obscured.

**60. The exterior materials of a new addition should be compatible with the materials of the existing structure.**

- Materials that appear similar to those seen traditionally are compatible.

**61. Roof forms should be compatible with those of the existing structure.**

- Typically, gable, hip and shed roofs are compatible.
- Flat roofs are generally inappropriate.

**62. On primary elevations of an addition, the solid-to-void ratio should be similar to that of the existing structure.**

- The solid-to-void ratio is the relative percentage of wall to windows and doors seen on a facade.

### **Roof-top Additions**

Roof top additions should be in scale with the established character of the block.

**63. The mass and scale of a roof-top addition should be subordinate to the scale of the existing building.**

- An addition should not overhang the lower floors of the existing building in front or along the sides.

*Section 29-119 (10),  
Section 29-167 (10) and  
Section 29-210 (10) of the City  
Code prohibit rooftop or  
second floor additions from  
overhanging the front or  
sidewalls of existing buildings.*

**64. An addition should respect the established orientation of the existing building.**

- If, traditionally, the building had a horizontal emphasis, for example, this perceived orientation should be maintained.

**65. A roof-top addition should be set back from the existing building front.**

- This will help preserve the original profile of the existing building form as seen from the street.
- A minimum setback of 10 feet is recommended.

**66. The materials of a roof-top addition should be similar to those of other upper stories in the neighborhood.**

- The materials also should be compatible with the existing structure.

**67. Windows in an addition should be similar in character to those of the existing structure.**

**68. The roof form of an addition should be in character with the remaining portion of the existing roof.**

- The roof slope should be similar to that of the existing structure.
- If the roof of the existing building is symmetrically proportioned, so should the roof of the addition be.
- Eave lines on the addition should be similar to those of the existing building.

**69. Dormers should be subordinate to the overall roof mass and should be in scale with existing ones on similar structures in the Design Character Area.**

*Section 29-119 (14),  
Section 29-167 (14) and  
Section 29-210 (14) of the City  
Code provide a range of  
acceptable roof pitches.*





