



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Subject: Downtown River Design Language

Issue: The Planning Commission on March 11, 1998 adopted commentary language to expand on Downtown design policies and Town design guidelines for properties along the West River Street corridor.

Reference: Town Design Guidelines; -RP (River Protection) Overlay District

Policy/Procedure: The attached Planning Commission commentary language will be considered in the review of projects on West River Street to determine consistency with the Downtown design policies and Town design guidelines. The language is to be considered supplementary to the Downtown Specific Plan and Development Code and have the same weight as adopted policies and guidelines.

Effective Date: August 29, 2000

Attachment

Approved by: _____
Tony Lashbrook, Director



Planning Commission Commentary Language on Downtown Design Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

SECTION 1

The purpose of this commentary is to provide further guidance and emphasis to property owners and project applicants on how the Planning Commission will implement the Downtown design policies and Town Design Guidelines for properties along the West River Street corridor, especially those visible from the Truckee River.

SECTION 2

For properties within the River Protection (RP) Overlay District, all buildings shall utilize earth tone natural materials such as wood, brick, and stone as the principal materials of the structure. This standard applies to exposed materials of the building and does not apply to structural materials that are overlaid by other materials and not visible from the exterior. Non-natural materials (metal, vinyl trim) may be used as accent materials or trim. Natural materials shall be used on all elevations of the building, including those elevations not facing the river. Appropriate earth tone colors for the principal materials of the structure are dark greens (imitating the colors of the forests), grey-browns (imitating the colors of the mountains), and tans (imitating the colors of grasses).

High-quality composition shingle in dark earth tone colors is the preferred roofing material for building. Metal-ribbed roofing (color – forest green or similar) may be considered on a case-by-case basis if such roofing is incorporated into the overall design of the building and its scale and mass does not overshadow the natural siding materials of the building.

SECTION 3

For properties that may be visible from the Truckee River corridor or along West River Street, buildings shall be designed with earth tone natural materials that blend with the natural surroundings. “Designed with” shall mean that natural materials will be the primary siding material of the building. Non-natural materials including metal-ribbed siding may be used as secondary wall treatments, design accents, and façade details.

The design and materials of the four elevations of the building may be considered separately based on their visibility from the river corridor and West River Street. For example, elevations not visible from the river corridor and street and facing other commercial and industrial buildings may be able to utilize more non-natural materials than the elevations facing the river corridor or street.

The Commission recognizes there are several factors that will be considered in determining the appropriate design of a building on a site. These include, but are not limited to, visibility from the river, visibility from West River Street and River Park Place, the mass and scale of the building; and screening of the building by landforms and other structures. In reviewing the design of a building, these factors will be considered as follows:

- C Visibility from river corridor: If the building is closer to and more visible from the river corridor, the building must be of higher quality than buildings that are located further away or not visible from the river corridor.
- C Visibility from street: If the building is closer and more visible to West River Street and River Park Place, the building must be of higher quality than buildings which are located further away or less visible from the street.
- C Mass/scale of building: Buildings that are larger and more massive must be of high quality.
- C Screening by landforms and other structures: If buildings are not screened by landforms or other structures, the buildings must be of higher quality than buildings screened by landforms or structures.

Higher quality buildings exhibit the following characteristics:

- C Principal siding materials are natural materials; metal siding is not exposed.
- C A variety of rooflines and roof forms are utilized including gabled roofs; composition shingle roofs are utilized over metal roofs.
- C The project is broken down into several smaller buildings or large building masses are broken up into smaller units of scale by emphasizing individuality of units rather than utilizing a single, large building.
- C There are changes in the wall plane and architectural details are added to add interest and relief to the building façade.