

ARTICLE 21

SITE DESIGN STANDARDS

35.2600 Applicability

Those land uses designated as requiring site plan review in the land-use matrix (Appendix A) must comply with the requirements in this article along with the corresponding review procedures in Article 5.

35.2601 Legislative findings

The Common Council makes the following legislative findings regarding site design requirements:

- (1) The design and layout of a site, including principal and accessory buildings, parking areas and access drives, building service areas, docking and loading areas, and other elements, can have a substantial and long-lasting effect on the utility of the subject property and on surrounding properties and the overall character of the City.
- (2) The standards in this article, along with those in related articles, are intended to offer clear and practical guidance to property owners, design professionals, and public officials.
- (3) The standards in this article are intended to promote the public health, safety, and welfare and are reasonably related to the public purpose of achieving an attractive, functional, and prosperous community.

35.2602 Minimum design standards

Development subject to review under this division must adhere to the following design principles along with other requirements that may apply:

- (1) The location and orientation of all buildings must meet the individual lot size, width, setback and yard requirements set forth in the applicable zoning district regulations.
- (2) Buildings and other improvements must be arranged on a site and in a configuration that does not impede traffic accessibility and circulation to/from adjacent streets and adjoining sites developed with similar nonresidential uses.
- (3) Buildings must be arranged to reduce visibility of service areas from public streets, customer parking areas, and adjacent properties.
- (4) Service yards and facilities, including storage areas (if permitted) and docking and loading facilities, must be easily accessible by service vehicles, separated from the primary parking access and circulation functions, centrally located to serve multiple establishments and tenants (if any), designed to prevent backing up onto the public right-of-way, and integrated into the overall design of the buildings and landscaping features so the visual and acoustic impacts of these functions are located out of view from public streets and adjacent agricultural and residential-zoned areas through the use of thoughtful site layouts, architectural extensions of buildings, walls, fences, landscaping features and plantings, or a combination thereof.
- (5) Existing natural resources and topographic features of a site must be preserved where such features contribute to the beauty and utility of a development site.
- (6) Buildings and other improvements should be located to take advantage of a site's natural topography and drainage, existing vegetation and other natural features. Modifications to such features may be permitted when required for safety purposes, or, where modification contributes to and further visual appearance, function, and utility of the site.

Exhibit 21-1. Sites need to accommodate a wide variety of users



- (7) Utility services must be underground to reduce visual clutter.
- (8) A building must be arranged on the site so as to not impede traffic accessibility and circulation to or from adjacent streets and adjoining sites.
- (9) The front of the building must be generally parallel to the street or a public area, such as a courtyard, plaza, or the like. All buildings must be arranged to promote a consistent geometric pattern of buildings within the streets and blocks in the surrounding area among similar and compatible land uses.
- (10) The project may not create any hazard.
- (11) The project must be designed to avoid existing hazards, whether manmade or natural, and if avoidance is not possible, to mitigate the effects of the hazard to a satisfactory level necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.
- (12) Parking areas and pedestrian accessways located on the site must be designed to promote safety and efficient pedestrian and vehicle flow to and from adjacent streets and land uses. Continuous internal pedestrian walkways, no less than 5 feet in width, must be provided from the public sidewalk or right-of-way to the primary entrance(s) of all principal buildings on the site.

35.2603 Fences

Fences must be depicted on an approved site plan consistent with Appendix C.

35.2604 Gated access drives

Gated access drives must be depicted on an approved site plan consistent with § 35.2822.

35.2605 Buildings

Building footprints must be depicted on an approved site plan consistent with this article and Article 20. If the site is being designed to accommodate any new buildings or expansions, those areas should be depicted as well.

35.2606 Landscaping and buffers

Landscaping, buffers, and any natural resource protection and mitigation areas must be depicted on an approved site plan consistent with this article and Article 22.

35.2607 Parking and loading

On-site parking and loading areas, internal roadways, driveways, and pedestrian routes must be depicted on an approved site plan consistent with this article and Article 23.

35.2608 Accessibility

All uses and site plans must comply with applicable state and federal accessibility laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Key considerations in designing a site include accessible parking, accessible route, and accessible entrance.

35.2609 Cross-access connections

Cross-access connections must be provided between adjoining lots consistent with the standards in Article 23.

35.2610 Outdoor lighting

Outdoor lighting must be depicted on an approved site plan consistent with this article and Article 24.

35.2611 Signage

Permanent ground-mounted signs that require approval must be depicted on an approved site plan consistent with this article and Chapter 31 of the municipal code.

35.2612 Fire lanes

- A. **General requirement.** A fire lane, when required by the State of Wisconsin or the Fire Chief, must be constructed by the developer, at their cost, to ensure proper access to buildings in the event of a fire or other emergency situation.
- B. **Width.** A fire lane must have an unobstructed width of at least 20 feet, exclusive of shoulders, and an unobstructed vertical clearance of at least 13.5 feet.
- C. **Dead-end lanes.** A dead-end fire lane that is longer than 150 feet must have a turnaround at the end, as approved by the Fire Chief in consultation with the city engineer.
- D. **Signage.** A fire lane must be signed as required by the Fire Chief.

35.2613 Traffic visibility

All site improvements and landscaping must comply with the vision triangle requirements in § 35. .

35.2614 Transit stops

- A. **General requirement.** A transit stop, including a bench, may be required by the Maritime Metro Transit (MMT) when a development project includes more than 30 dwelling units or over 50 parking spaces and is located along an existing or planned MMT transit route. If MMT determines that a transit stop and a bench is necessary at that location, the developer must construct it—either as part of the development itself or within the adjacent public right-of-way—and ensure it is connected to the site by a suitable sidewalk. All costs associated with the transit stop, including construction and connection, are the responsibility of the developer.
- B. **Site plan.** A transit stop located on the development site must be depicted on an approved site plan.

35.2615 Outdoor storage areas

- A. Outdoor storage areas, when allowed, must be located in the rear yard or in the side yard.
- B. Outdoor storage areas adjoining residential, commercial, special purpose, and city center districts must be screened with a wall, a non-metallic fence, a berm, landscaping, or any combination, as approved by the zoning administrator. (to be verified)
- C. Materials kept out of doors may not exceed the height of required screening.
- D. Outdoor storage areas must be surfaced with concrete or asphaltic concrete. The zoning administrator may approve the use of gravel in low-traffic areas, provided that area is smaller than the remaining surfaced area. If gravel is allowed, the control of fugitive dust must be addressed to the satisfaction of the zoning administrator.

35.2616 Refuse storage

- A. **General requirement.** If garbage or recyclable materials are stored outside of an enclosed building, they must be kept in suitable storage containers.
- B. **Screening required.** If the storage containers would be visible from a public street, customer parking area, or a property in a residential, commercial, or city center zoning district, they must be located inside of an enclosure as described in this section.
- C. **Enclosure.** The enclosure must be made of a solid wall or a fence and include one or more access gates. An access gate must face away from any adjacent residential and commercial areas. The height of the enclosure must be at least 6 feet but not more than 7 feet above the surrounding grade.

- D. Placement.** Enclosures are permitted only in the rear yard, with placement in the side yard allowed as a less preferred alternative when placement in a rear yard is not feasible. An enclosure and service vehicles using the enclosure may not (1) impair vehicular access or snow removal operations, (2) be located within a buffer or a drainage or stormwater area, or (3) be within 20 feet of a public street, public sidewalk, or internal pedestrian way.
- E. Materials.** The enclosure must be made of the same material as the immediate adjacent wall of the principal building or such other material as would not detract from the immediate surrounding neighborhood. When visible from a public street, the enclosure must use materials visually similar to the principal façade materials.
- F. Concrete pad.** If dumpsters are used for garbage or recyclable materials, the enclosure must have a concrete base that extends at least 8 feet in front of the gated access.
- G. Site plan.** Refuse enclosures must be depicted on an approved site plan.
- H. Landscaping.** Landscaping around the enclosure must comply with § 35.2617.

Exhibit 21-2. An example of a dumpster enclosure

35.2617 Storage tanks for flammable and/or combustible liquids

- A. General requirement.** Any storage tank used for flammable or combustible liquids, when otherwise allowed with a permitted land use, must also meet the requirements outlined in § 6.150 of the municipal code.
- B. Site plan.** A storage tank used for flammable or combustible liquids that is outside of an enclosed building, must be depicted on an approved site plan.

35.2618 Encroachments into public right-of-way

If a proposed use or improvement is located in a public right-of-way, it must be shown on an approved site plan, and the property owner must get approval from the agency responsible for the right-of-way or proof that approval is not needed.

35.2619 through 35.2699 reserved

Exhibit 21-3. An example of an encroachment in a public sidewalk

Note: The consultant team is currently evaluating the need for a section related to natural resource protection and mitigation areas. If needed, that section will be included in future drafts of this article.