

DEVELOPMENT CODE

ARTICLE 151. 20 ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN REVIEW

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Section 151.20.001

Purpose

The purpose of the Architecture and Design Review Article is to promote reasonable and context-sensitive site and building design standards for certain types of development including commercial, industrial and certain multi-family development. Design is a term that is used to describe the image and character of the city's built environment and includes both site and building architectural considerations. ~~The Architecture and Design Review Guidelines will offer opportunities to create aesthetically pleasing and diverse building forms and site developments that compliment the visual, physical, social, and functional components of Sierra Vista.~~ [More specifically, the Architectural and Design Review Standards are intended to ensure the following:](#)

- [1. Siting and architectural design of structures harmonize visually with surrounding development and creates a built environment that is safe and aesthetically pleasing;](#)
- [2. The arrangement of buildings, parking areas, drive aisles, storm water detention areas, pedestrian ways and other features of the site combine to create a functional project that is convenient for users of the property.](#)
- [3. Unsightly uses, features or activities are screened from public view and from adjacent property, and dissimilar uses are separated by buffers to prevent conflicts, promote privacy, and maintain property values;](#)
- [4. Landscaping that provides a visually pleasing setting for structures on the site, complements the architecture of the project, blends harmoniously with the natural landscape, conserves water, does not conflict with public or private utilities, and is suited to the site and Sierra Vista's climatic conditions.](#)

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5. Provide materials and colors that are appropriate to the architectural style of the structures, complement neighboring properties and project a high quality image.

~~The Architecture and Design Review process will assist private developers in evaluating and implementing public concerns regarding the aesthetics of development. It will ensure that new development does not have an adverse aesthetic, health, safety, or architecturally related impact upon existing adjoining properties, or the City in general.~~

Section 151.20.002

Applicability

A. Architectural and Design Review shall be required for:

1. New buildings and new site development;
2. Exterior facade modifications to existing buildings requiring a building permit;

B. Exceptions:

1. Single family detached dwelling units and related accessory structures.
2. Multi-family development where there are 4 or less units located on one lot and related accessory structures.

~~Section 151.20.002~~

~~Architecture and Design Review Required~~

- ~~A. The design of buildings and sites shall conform to this Article and to the overall intent of the adopted Architectural and Design Guidelines except as exempted herein.~~
- ~~B. Architecture and Design Review shall be required for all new development located in any multi-family, commercial, or industrial zone and shall regulate:~~
- ~~1. The exterior structural and architectural features of buildings or other structures, except as provided by Section 151.20.004.~~
 - ~~2. The exterior structural and architectural features visible from a public street or public area, including color and materials, of all exterior alterations or additions to existing buildings, except as provided by Section 151.20.004.~~

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- ~~3. Site development that is associated with any new development, including Recreational Vehicle and Mobile Home Parks (clubhouses, meeting areas, etc.) except as provided by *Section 151.20.004*.~~
- ~~4. Site development improvements that involve the addition of 25 percent or more parking stalls to an existing parking area. (Shall apply to the new parking area and the existing parking areas to the extent reasonably feasible.)~~
- ~~5. Exterior commercial, multi family and industrial wall and ground mounted signage that is regulated by *Article 151.10*.~~

Section 151.20.003 **Review Authority**

For all projects requiring Architectural and Design Review, the Director of Community Development or designee shall act as the decision making authority.

- ~~A. For all proposed projects requiring Architecture and Design Review, the Director shall act as the decision making authority for building design.~~
 - ~~1. Architecture and Design Review performed by the Director shall be considered administrative review and shall not require public notice or hearing.~~
- ~~B. The Development Review Committee (DRC) shall be the decision-making authority for the site-related design components of a project (see applicable policy for additional DRC authority).~~

Section 151.20.004 **Limitations on Design Review**

- ~~A. Architecture and Design Review shall not be required for the following (though all other applicable Development Code provisions apply):~~
 - ~~1. The interior designs of buildings.~~
 - ~~2. Any of the following use types:~~
 - ~~a. Single Family Residential Development~~
 - ~~b. Multi-Plex (4 units per lot or less) Residential Development~~
 - ~~c. Townhouse Residential Development~~

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- ~~3. Minor additions or alterations to commercial and industrial development as determined by the City.~~

Section 151.20.0045

Pre-submission Architecture and Design Review Process

A. For all proposed development that requires Architecture and Design Review, a pre-submission meeting shall be held. ~~Application shall be made on an Architecture and Design Review Pre-Submittal meeting form.~~ This meeting is intended to provide early feedback regarding the proposed building and site design compliance with the Standards Guidelines. Pre-submission meeting submittal requirements ~~shall be as indicated on the application form, but~~ should generally include sufficient information to enable staff to determine whether the design complies with the Standards Guidelines.

Recommendations shall be provided to the applicant regarding the proposed design and site layout but no final or binding decision shall be issued until such time as a formal submittal of plans is provided. The pre-submittal meeting may be combined with the ~~required~~ site plan or building plan pre-submittal meeting if desired.

B. The architecture and design plans of a site or building, shall be submitted and reviewed concurrently with the site plan or building plan review process. All comments will be integrated within the site and building plan comments and forwarded to the applicant.

Section 151.20.0056

Submittal Requirements

~~The application~~ Submittal requirements for Architecture and Design Review shall include:

~~A. Application form signed by owner or, if applicable, agent (letter of agency required).~~

~~A.B.~~ Exterior color elevations – 1/8 inch minimum scale. Elevations shall include:

1. Materials, details, and features (including plumbing and electrical meter locations, other mechanical equipment, and methods of concealment, etc.). (Elevations should not include superimposed landscaping or trees.)
2. Heights scaled and identified.
3. All sides of the building with north/south/east/west directionals identified
4. Roof plan ~~(if needed to indicate proposed mechanical equipment and required screening).~~

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~~5. Colored elevations will be required prior to final architectural approval but are not required for initial submittal.~~

C. Additional information may be submitted to clarify issues, as determined by the applicant. Such information could include perspective drawings, color renderings, paint chip or material samples, computer-generated prints, etc.

~~D. Site Plan indicating conformance with both the design requirements and with the applicable elements of Article 151.18, Site Plans section of the Development Code. A preliminary site plan is sufficient at this stage provided the information provided enables staff to determine compliance with site-related design guidelines.~~

Section 151.20.006

Architectural and Design Standards

A. Facade Materials. Facade materials shall be appropriate to the architectural style and vernacular of the development and be of high quality and proven durability in Sierra Vista's weather conditions.

1. Approved facade materials include wood, stucco, brick, stone, textured concrete, glass, textured and split face or ground face concrete masonry units, and brick, stone, or metal veneers (and their artificial derivatives). Additional facade materials can be considered as determined by the City. The materials shall be incorporated in proportionate quantities to the overall building elevation based on the zoning and location of the development.

a. Project located within a commercial zoning district and adjacent to collector or arterial roadway shall require that 75 percent of the building wall visible from a public right-of-way or facing an existing residential use include an approved facade material.

b. Project located within a commercial zoning district and adjacent to local roadway shall require that 50 percent of the building wall visible from a public right-of-way or facing an existing residential use include an approved facade material.

c. Project located within a industrial zoning district shall require that 25 percent of the building wall visible from a public right-of-way include an approved facade material.

d. Project located within a residential zoning district shall require that 50 percent of the building wall visible from a public right-of-way or facing an existing residential use include an approved facade material.

2. At least two (2) different facade materials, shall be used on all walls of the building that are visible from a public right-of-way or adjacent to a residential use.

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B. **Building Color.** The following standards shall apply to building color:

1. A minimum of 75 percent of the exterior walls and roofs shall use muted colors and earth tones with a light reflectance value (LRV) of 50 percent or less.
2. Bright colors are appropriate only for accents.
3. For buildings located within the West End, there shall be no limitations on building color.

IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE STANDARDS, AT LEAST THREE ADDITIONAL STANDARDS SHALL BE MET FROM THE DESIGN ELEMENTS BELOW.

C. **Building Scale.** It is important that a building be scaled to its context. In order to ensure appropriate scale, the following standards shall be used:

1. Define a rhythm and pattern of windows, columns, awnings, and other architectural features;
2. Provide a human scale to the primary entrance;
3. Express the position of each floor in the external design of a building to establish a human scale:
 - a. Articulate structural elements; and/or
 - b. Change materials between floors; and/or
 - c. Use an expression line.

D. **Building Massing.** The following massing techniques shall be used:

1. Wall planes shall be divided into modules that express traditional dimensions such that a primary facade plane shall not exceed 75 feet in length without a jog which shall divide the facade into subordinate elements each less than 75 feet in length.
2. Change the height of a wall plane or building mass by providing vertical articulation. The change in height shall be at least 20 percent of the vertical height of an adjacent wall plane or building mass;
3. Change the roof form to express different modules of the building mass;

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4. Divide large wall planes into smaller components by changing the arrangement of windows and other facade articulation features, such as columns or strap work.

E. **Roof Form.** Incorporate the following features to add architectural articulation and reduce perceived scale:

1. Overhanging Eaves;
2. Multiple roof planes;
3. A cornice or molding to define the top of a parapet;
4. A flat roof with parapet
5. A sloping roof with a minimum pitch of 4:12.

F. **Location and Orientation of Building Entrances.** A building entrance serves both the building's tenants and customers. In addition to its functionality, it can enliven the building's context, especially when the building entrance provides access directly from the public sidewalk. A city block with buildings that have entrances directly accessible from the public sidewalk encourages walkability and increases the possibilities for pedestrian movement and activities, including shopping and social interactions.

1. The following standards apply to the design and placement of building entrances:

- a. The main entrance to a building that is open to the public shall be clearly identifiable by emphasizing and enhancing the level of architectural details such as a change in plane (e.g., porticos, recessed entrance on the street level facade), differentiation in material and color, or enhanced lighting.
- b. The primary entrance of a building shall be oriented to face a street, plaza or pedestrian way.
- c. Locate utility, mechanical room, or service entrance doors away from the public sidewalks.

G. **Windows.** The placement, pattern, scale, size, and sequence of windows on building facades, including proportions and details around them, are an important aspect of a building's fenestration as they determine its appeal, charm, and character. Buildings with poor fenestration appear visually uninteresting. Scale, proportion, added architectural details, such as appropriate use of materials, trims, bands (i.e., an expression line) and cornices bring visual interest to building facades, enhance the building's design, provide a connection from the outside to the inside of the building through a window, and provide a human scaled backdrop to the street space.

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1. The following standards apply to the design and placement of windows on a building.

- a. Maximize the number of street level facade openings for windows.
- b. Organize the placement of windows and doors on the building elevation relative to each other and the building's forms to ensure they are balanced and proportionate.
- c. Set storefront window frames at a height above the finished grade to reflect traditional main street building qualities, such as display windows.
- d. Recess window frames, including storefronts, from the typical wall plane surface to provide a shadow line and to accentuate the storefront. At a minimum, the depth of the recess should be proportionate to the scale of the window.
- e. For the upper level facades, provide a fenestration pattern that includes window openings that are greater in height than width.
- f. Include operable windows on the upper level facade.
- g. Delineate changes in surface material by a reveal or a recess detail.

H. **Site Design.** Site design is an important factor when measuring the economic success of a commercial development. Careful planning, design, and construction enables new development to take advantage of Sierra Vista's climate to reduce energy usage and costs, thereby providing long term economic sustainability as energy prices fluctuate. On the other hand, poor project siting and design can detrimentally impact the potential to harvest solar energy, create a less automobile dependent environment, and address economic sustainability.

1. Pedestrian/Outdoor amenities. The following standards apply to the design and placement of pedestrian amenities:

- a. Covered walkways or canopies;
- b. Textured or raised pavement areas for pavement connections within a site. Such materials shall be designed to minimize the transition between differing surfaces and should themselves avoid excessive indentation or texturing;
- c. Courtyards, pedestrian gathering areas. Low walls or split-rail fences, or similar, to define such areas, are encouraged.
- d. Outdoor benches and elements that can be built to include seating, such as landscape planters;

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e. Pedestrian-scale light fixtures in areas of high pedestrian use such as patios, outdoor dining areas, connecting pathways, etc.

f. Outdoor dining areas.

2. Orientation of Building(s). The following standards apply to the placement and orientation of buildings:

a. Orient to views of activities, architectural landmarks, or natural features to provide visual interest;

b. Orient buildings to take advantage of solar energy that will allow for passive heating of building, provide natural light, and harvest solar power.

Section 151.20.007

Action by Decision-Making Authority

- A. The decision-making authority may take the following actions relating to the any application for Architecture and Design Review of a project: ~~pursuant to this Article:~~
1. Granting Approval. ~~An application may be a~~ Approved provided the project ~~it is determined that it meets the provisions of this Article and the overall intent of the Architectural and Design Guidelines.~~
 2. Granting Conditional Approval. ~~An application may be c~~ Conditionally approved, in coordination with the applicant, provided the project application and conditions in combination meet the provisions of this Article. ~~and the overall intent of the Architectural and Design Guidelines.~~
 3. Denial of Application. ~~An application shall be d~~ Denied if the project ~~it~~ does not meet the provisions of this Article. ~~and the overall intent of the Architectural and Design Guidelines.~~ In such event, the reasons for the denial shall be stated in writing to the applicant and every effort to work with the applicant to resolve the issues shall be undertaken.
- B. A building permit shall not be issued until the decision-making authority ~~Director~~ has approved the architectural and design components of a project, as described in this Article. ~~building design components of the development and the DRC has approved the site plan and site related design components of the project.~~

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Section 151.20.008

Waivers. ~~Appeals~~

Requests to waive or modify the Architectural and Design Standards or appeal staff comments will be heard by the Development Review Committee. No waiver or modification shall be granted unless one or more of the following circumstances exist:

1. Superior Alternatives. Where the development will provide an alternative which will achieve the purposes of the Architectural and Design Standards through clearly superior design, efficiency, or performance.
2. Protection of Significant Features. Where the waiver or modification is necessary to preserve or enhance significant existing environmental or cultural features
3. Deprivation of Reasonable Use. Where the strict application of the Architectural and Design Standards would effectively deprive the owner of all reasonable use of the land, due to its unusual size, shape, topography, natural conditions or location; provided:
 - (a) Such effect upon the owner is not outweighed by a valid public purpose in imposing the Architectural and Design Standards in this case, and
 - (b) The unusual conditions involved are not personal to, nor the result of actions of the developer or property owner, their predecessors or agents.
4. Technical Impracticality. Where strict application of the Architectural and Design Standards would be technically impractical in terms of engineering, design, or construction practices, due to the unusual size, shape, topography, natural conditions or location of the land or due to improved efficiency, performance, safety, or construction practices which will be realized; provided:
 - (a) The development will provide an alternative adequate to achieve the purposes of the requirement, and
 - (b) Any unusual conditions creating the impracticality are not personal to, nor the result of the actions of the developer or property owner, their predecessors or agents.
5. No Relationship to the Development or Its Impacts. Where all or any part of the Architectural and Design Standards has no relationship to the development or to the impact of the development on the public facilities, land use, traffic, or environment of the neighborhood and the general community, due to the location, scale, or type of development involved.

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Section 151.20.009

Appeals

Any action of the ~~decision-making authority~~ Director or the Development Review Committee carried out pursuant to this Article may be appealed as provided by *Article 151.30*.

~~Section 151.20.09~~

~~Effect~~

~~No temporary or final certificate of occupancy permit shall be granted unless all requirements and any conditions of the Architecture and Design Review approval have been completed. The colors, materials, building design and signs, as applicable, shall be established and maintained in accordance with the approved plans unless approval to the contrary is granted by the Director.~~

Section 151.20.010

Failure to Comply with Approval or Conditions

Failure to comply with any of the terms or conditions of an Architecture and Design Review approval shall constitute a violation of this Code subject to the *Article 151.32 Violations and Penalties*.