

Brush Creek Design Guidelines

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BRUSH CREEK DESIGN GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

Brush Creek and Kansas City

In 1977, Brush Creek crested its banks, flooding adjacent properties. This devastating flood resulted in the loss of life and millions of dollars in property damage. Immediately the City's leaders began to seek solutions to this problem so that this type of devastating flood could be avoided in the future. Working with state and federal officials, the City completed a plan to correct flooding problems. Construction of the \$80 million project began in 1991. The Corps of Engineers, with the help of the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners, designed a flood control project that incorporated fountains, pools, waterfalls, dams, and a linear walkway the length of the project. These beautification features insured that the project would add amenities and linkages to the area, which in turn encourage development opportunities beyond what a plain engineering project could do. The Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners requested these design guidelines in order to further expand the impact of the flood control and beautification project to the entire Brush Creek Corridor as outlined in the "General Intent" section of the guidelines.

The initial phase of the Brush Creek project was completed in 1995 and opened to the public for their enjoyment. Future phases will include the development of recreational opportunities along the entire corridor. These opportunities will include boat rides, amphitheaters with musical events, biking, walking, sports and other activities associated with the park system. Additional landscaping and site amenities will enhance use of the corridor.

Area to Which Guidelines Apply

Areas abutting Brush Creek within the Plan boundaries, to include all property abutting the creek itself and all property touching park property and/or roadways that abuts the creek.

All development plans in these areas are subject to the review and approval of the Kansas City, Missouri Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners.

It should be noted that portions of the planning area lie within a designated flood plain. The City of Kansas City, Missouri has several projects currently underway impacting the creek alignment and flood elevations. It is crucial that anyone planning development or redevelopment of areas abutting Brush Creek within the area to which the guidelines apply, contact the City Engineer in the Public Works Department to coordinate the development with the proposed flood control plans for Brush Creek.

Purpose

The guidelines are a tool for review of proposed development in the Brush Creek Corridor. The content of the guidelines is not intended to preclude the requirements of any city, state or federal ordinances. The guidelines are intended to provide a direction for the orderly development of the

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Brush Creek Corridor. The guidelines are also intended to guide the character of the Corridor. If the guidelines differ from the guidelines included in any previously adopted plan, the most restrictive guideline shall apply.

General Intent of the Brush Creek Guidelines

- Improve the quality of life and livability of Kansas City by increasing the quality of its parks and open space, and achieving high standards of design in public improvements and private development near Brush Creek.
- Maintain and improve the image of the area surrounding Brush Creek.
- Create confidence in and provide assurance of the consistent quality of development around Brush Creek.
- Promote increased public use of Brush Creek public improvements.
- Maintain and reinforce public investment in Brush Creek, including investment in beautification and flood control.
- Use public investment in Brush Creek to create and encourage additional development in the area that is designed in such a way as to further create value in the area.
- Create a climate for quality development and redevelopment, and provide the design framework for public and private decisions about development and redevelopment.
- Tie together the eastern and western parts of the city along Brush Creek with quality development.
- Relate the development to Brush Creek, physically and visually.
- Create urban development that accommodates the automobile, but is designed particularly to serve the customer, employee, resident and visitor.

URBAN DESIGN ANALYSIS OF BRUSH CREEK ENVIRONS

Relation to A City Plan for Urban Design

The City Development Department prepared *A City Plan for Urban Design* with the assistance of a team of nine City departments and agencies as a vision of the future form of Kansas City. The City Plan Commission approved the Plan in 1991, as a guide for City staff in making decisions that support excellent urban design and quality development.

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0 Waterways and Transportation

The basic form of Kansas City is organized around a framework of waterways and transportation. Several goals from *A City Plan for Urban Design* relate to the Brush Creek Corridor's waterways and transportation.

- Preserve and expand the boulevard system throughout the city so that it continues to be the predominant visual and physical organizer of Kansas City

The Brush Creek Corridor has ten parkways and boulevards running parallel to, crossing, or connecting with it: Ward Parkway, Volker Boulevard, Swope Parkway, Brush Creek Boulevard, Van Brunt Boulevard, Benton Boulevard, The Paseo, Brookside Boulevard, Gillham Road and Rockhill Road. These parkways are part of the original boulevard system designed in 1893 and 1910.

- Enhance the City's waterways so that they complement the boulevard system as another major physical organizer of the city. This will require that they are visible, accessible, and inviting for public recreational uses.

The Brush Creek Corridor is currently shaping the city as the first major east/west link in what has always been a linear north/south city. By improving access along the Creek, and drawing visitors and residents from east to west and west to east, the city can begin to make psychological barriers between east and west disappear.

Town Fork Creek flows into Brush Creek and Brush Creek flows into the Blue River. Because Town Fork Creek, Brush Creek and the Blue River flood, they have affected development around them. All three waterways in the Brush Creek Corridor have a potential for recreational uses.

- Develop a transportation system that integrates all forms of public and private transportation in a balanced, efficient, safe and aesthetically pleasing manner.

The transportation systems serving the Brush Creek Corridor include vehicles, buses, walking and bicycling, and potentially light rail. The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority has proposed light rail along the Brush Creek Corridor from the Country Club Plaza to Bruce R. Watkins Drive. Even though funding is not yet available, preliminary plans for a light rail right-of-way can begin to shape development along the Brush Creek Corridor.

Developing a balanced system of roadways, buses transportation, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and potentially light rail, and integrating it in a beneficial way with commercial, residential and recreational uses, will be a challenge in the Brush Creek Corridor.

- Enhance pedestrian circulation within the urban core, at urban and suburban hubs, and along boulevards throughout the city. Consider pedestrian circulation as part of the design of future streets and in the development and redevelopment of residential and commercial projects.

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Although the Brush Creek Corridor is attractive to pedestrians and bicyclers, walkways and bikeways are discontinuous. Guidelines in this report will help address this issue. A key issue will be how to get people to walk to the creek and along the creek and how to provide pleasant pathways integrated with other means of transportation.

1 Hubs of Activity

Hubs are high density focuses of activity, capable of being relatively self-sufficient in providing living, working, shopping and recreational opportunities for residents. Goals from *A City Plan for Urban Design* relating to hubs of activity are:

- Channel growth and redevelopment and concentrate it at well-designed, dense hubs of activity.

The Country Club Plaza is a major hub of development along the Brush Creek Corridor; Blue Parkway at Cleveland is a potential small hub of development. The Brush Creek Corridor can serve as a spine for development.

- Preserve and enhance the Central Corridor as the most dense, urban part of the city, and as a primary destination for residents and visitors.

The Central Corridor is defined as the area between the Missouri River and 51st Street, Southwest Trafficway to The Paseo. It includes about half of the Brush Creek Corridor, including the Country Club Plaza, the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art and Theis Mall.

2 Heart of the City

The heart of Kansas City is its urban core. The Brush Creek Corridor is going to create a new entranceway into the heart of the city by developing the waterway and the boulevards into a strong physical feature linking east to west. Goals relating to the heart of the city include:

- Preserve historic neighborhoods and buildings that are part of the unique heritage of Kansas City.

The Rockhill neighborhood in the Brush Creek Corridor is on both the Local and National Registers of Historic Districts. The Troostwood neighborhood has expressed an interest in becoming designated on the Local Register. Brush Creek itself is identified with the history of Kansas City. Any tour of the Plaza has always included a viewing of the creek accompanied by an explanation of how Tom Pendergast's cement company paved it.

- Support the design and construction of the Bruce R. Watkins Drive as a major opportunity to rebuild damaged neighborhoods, encourage quality new development, and showcase good design of public infrastructure.

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Bruce R. Watkins Drive, a project that has been shaping the central city for over 50 years, and is still not completed, will cross the Brush Creek Corridor. Transportation planners expect that the opening of Bruce R. Watkins Drive will contribute a substantial number of vehicles per day to the traffic count in the corridor. A key issue will be how such a major traffic carrier can be enhanced, particularly as it intersects with the Brush Creek Corridor, to take on a parkway character that will not physically or visually disrupt the Corridor.

3 Livability

Some of the keys to quality of life and livability in Kansas City are its parks, neighborhoods, and ease of movement throughout the city. The following goals in the area of livability can be applied to the Brush Creek Corridor.

- Preserve and enhance parks and open space, both public and private, in the city.

This will be a major goal in the Brush Creek Corridor because of the large amount of park and open space in the Corridor. Park land includes Brush Creek Park running the length of the Corridor, Theis Mall, and the Brush Creek Tennis Center.

- Achieve high standards of design in both public improvements and private development.

This is a primary reason for preparing design guidelines for the Corridor. The public investment in high-quality public improvements in the Corridor should provide opportunities for and stimulate high-quality private development.

- Encourage high-quality urban development that preserves and enhances the wide diversity of the city's neighborhoods.

One way to enhance neighborhoods is to strengthen the identity of neighborhoods, and the boundaries that define them. Making improvements in the Brush Creek Corridor should help strengthen it as a boundary for the neighborhoods in and adjacent to the Corridor.

- Continue to develop Kansas City as a city with an understandable form and an ease of orientation.

The signage section in the guidelines will address this goal. Coordinated signage in the Corridor can contribute to a sense of place, can also help orient pedestrians and bicyclers both at creek level and at street level and can increase the visual attractiveness of all areas.

4 Images

The image of Kansas City is formed by its landmarks and symbols. The following goals from *A City Plan for Urban Design* relate to how the Brush Creek Corridor can contribute to Kansas City's image.

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- Identify and enhance the primary visual elements that contribute to Kansas City's positive image for citizens and visitors.

The Brush Creek beautification project will contribute substantially to Kansas City's positive visual image. The design guidelines in this report will help strengthen the visual image of the Corridor.

Existing Urban Design Conditions in the Brush Creek Corridor.

The Brush Creek Corridor can currently be divided into three areas. Moving from Roanoke on the west end to Elmwood on the east are the *Plaza/University* area, *miscellaneous strip commercial development*, and the *Blue Parkway development area* with the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Center and the Swope Parkway Health Center development.

5 Architectural Character and Building Materials in the Brush Creek Corridor

Plaza / University Park, State Line to The Paseo

The Plaza/University Park area consists of an eclectic mix of Spanish, modern and contemporary architectural styles. High-rise apartment houses of brick and terra cotta built in the early 1900s front Brush Creek. Retail structures exhibiting eclectic Spanish motifs established the theme in the early part of the 1900s, including towers, wrought iron and use of brick and stucco. Newer construction in the Plaza area reflects the time in which it was constructed. The 1950s through 1970s structures are less ornamental, more reflective of the influences of the modern movement in architecture. Contemporary structures either reflect a post-modern influence or make some reference in their design to the Spanish motif established by the J. C. Nichols Company with the development of the Plaza. Exceptions are the new buildings between 47th Street and the Creek, east of Main, which have pre-cast concrete panel and a severe aesthetic that is incongruent with the rest of the area.

Fenestration of the buildings generally consists of articulated windows, punched and inset to cast shadows at the opening. Recessing of the windows or doors, and articulating the openings through the use of a change in materials, i.e., cut stone, terra cotta or other embellishment, emphasizes many of the openings. Buildings that have continuous surfaces and unarticulated openings are incongruent with the overall building and development pattern established in the area of the Plaza/University Park.

Materials and the building pattern established in this area are the two primary characteristics that help to unify the Plaza and adjacent areas. Most buildings are zero lot line developments, creating a defined street edge that models and establishes urban space. Building heights vary to some extent but are a fairly uniform two to three stories in the central retail area of the Plaza and taller along the edges of the Plaza. Building materials consist of primarily brick, stucco, terra cotta, cut stone and some pre-cast concrete. Iron work is prevalent in decorative elements of the older buildings.

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Buildings of more than two stories generally consist of a defined base, mid-section of several floors, and an articulated roof or top. Some of the newer buildings do not include this level of detail in design and are less successful because the mass created by the buildings are not of a human scale that characterizes other parts of the Plaza. *The Plaza Urban Design and Development Plan* provides planning and design guidelines for specific areas of the Plaza.

Miscellaneous Strip Commercial, The Paseo to Cleveland

An increase in the width of the park land abutting Brush Creek and intermittent commercial strip development along Swope Parkway defines this section of the corridor. The structures consist of older residential buildings, churches, and commercial development with limited architectural distinction. Most buildings are one or two stories with commercial store fronts and are occupied by retailers and other commercial businesses. None of the buildings are of noteworthy architectural design nor should they define the architectural character of the corridor.

This area has potential for redevelopment because of its proximity to the Bruce R. Watkins Roadway and the availability of deteriorated vacant or underused non-residential property. The architectural character should reflect the same use of materials as the Plaza reach and the Blue Parkway development proposed between Cleveland and Elmwood, south of Lake Eight, the largest lake in the Brush Creek flood control project.

Blue Parkway, Cleveland to Elmwood

This area has the potential to develop into the eastern anchor of the corridor and the gateway to the corridor from the east. Architectural character should respect the views to Lake Eight and Brush Creek.

The Swope Parkway Health Center has established the development pattern and the architectural character in this area. This consists of a contemporary design using light colored brick masonry and steel construction with a curved façade, and a tower. The family development center constructed adjacent to the south of the Health Center also has similar materials and a curved façade.

The Health Center building is set back from Blue Parkway with the parking in front. The proposed development to the east also has the parking along Blue Parkway with the majority of the buildings set back far from the right-of-way.

To help tie the Corridor together, the design of structures and buildings should reflect the pedestrian scale of the Plaza and its architectural character. This includes the use of primarily brick, stucco, terra cotta, cut stone and some pre-cast concrete. Iron work is prevalent in decorative elements of the older buildings, windows have punched openings, and most roofs are of Spanish tile.

GUIDELINES FOR THE BRUSH CREEK CORRIDOR

A. Linkages

Definition: physical and/or visual connections between important elements, including focal points and activity centers, inside and outside the project.

Intent/purpose: to strengthen relationships and encourage movement between important elements inside and outside the project; to improve the ease of orientation within the project; to help incorporate the image of the surrounding area within the project area; reinforce east/west connections with the city.

Guidelines:

- 1) Projects abutting Brush Creek should incorporate pedestrian pathways linking the project to Brush Creek.
- 2) Pedestrian linkages should be accessible to people with disabilities; should offer a variety of visual and textural stimuli; should provide locations for rest and some relief from wind and hot sun, while connecting destinations where people work, plan, and/or live; and should be designed for safety in terms of slopes, materials, and visibility.
- 3) Projects should provide pedestrian pathway connections linking adjacent activity centers. This could include pedestrian links to the Country Club Plaza and Theis Mall at the west end, or the Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center and the new community center at the east end of the Brush Creek Corridor.
- 4) Projects should be designed in such a way as to not obstruct east/west pedestrian linkages along the Brush Creek Corridor, and should contribute to providing a continuous east/west pedestrian linkage along the Brush Creek Corridor.
- 5) General use parking lots should be located at logical points along pedestrian linkages where people may want to begin a walk along the creek, but they should be located to the side of, not in the path of, pedestrian linkages.
- 6) Projects should be designed in such a way as to promote visual linkages east/west along the Brush Creek Corridor. Alternatives for accomplishing this are:
 - a) providing clear fields of view across what otherwise might constitute a physical or psychological barrier, or,
 - b) providing a focal point such as landscaping, sculpture, or a structure that would tend to draw the eye across physical and psychological barriers and thereby help to bridge them.

- 7) Focal points, such as certain types of landmarks, should be located at key visual points, including at locations where roadways or pedestrian ways make major directional changes, or at the intersection of two boulevards, or at the intersection of a boulevard with an arterial street.
- 8) The scale, massing, articulation, and orientation of structures to be located adjacent to Brush Creek should provide a compatible and inviting transition and linkage between Brush Creek and its immediate surroundings. Landscaping should also be used to provide a green linkage the length of the Brush Creek Corridor, and between the Creek and surrounding areas, particularly in the less urban areas east of The Paseo.
- 9) Developments along the length of the Brush Creek Corridor should incorporate some building materials, or landscaping, in common to help visually unify the Corridor and to help connect it to surrounding areas. This could include ornamental iron, native limestone, or a particular type of tree, ornamental grass or flower.

B. View corridors

Definition: key visual connections between two points.

Intent/purpose: to preserve views of significant features within the Brush Creek corridor in order to help fix a positive image of the corridor in the minds of residents and visitors, aid the public in becoming oriented within the area, and heighten “entrance experiences”; to make the spatial relationships understandable through the visual tie between various elements in the landscape; to provide appropriate views into, out of, and within a development project, especially views of the creek.

Guidelines:

- 1) Developments should include a plan to protect important views by designating on the site plan:
 - a) locations from which views of the water in Brush Creek are visible, locations from which the water can be seen and from which access is possible, and the location of open space, buildings, landscaping, and pathways that will protect, provide access to, or provide a frame for these significant views;
 - b) locations from which views of major landmarks, such as fountains, sculpture, or important architectural features either within the project or outside the project are visible, and the location of open space, buildings, landscaping, and pathways that will protect, provide access to, or provide a frame for these significant views; and
 - c) locations from which there are views into the property which could serve to attract people into the development, such as a view of the front entranceway, and the

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location of open space, buildings, landscaping, and pathways that will protect, provide access to, or provide a frame for these significant views.

- 2) Developments should not block significant views of Brush Creek or major landmarks in the Brush Creek Corridor (such as the Spirit of Freedom Fountain), from adjacent landowners.
- 3) The site design should designate major entranceways into a development and include some type of entry feature such as landscaping, an entry monument, sculpture or fountain.

Architectural Character and Materials

Definition: the overall design type and detailing of structures, including construction materials.

Intent/purpose: to provide a consistent design within a project so that it harmonizes with, and has some elements in common with other major developments in the vicinity of the project, and so that it will contribute to visually organizing and giving a human scale to the project; human scale is one that a person will feel comfortable with in terms of visual and physical perception of size, familiar features, and usability.

Guidelines:

- 1) Architectural materials should reflect those that currently predominate in the corridor, i.e., stone, brick and block masonry, non-reflective glass and architectural metals.
- 2) All buildings within any give development should use similar material, whether on attached or detached structures.
- 3) Simulated materials, such as stucco board and aluminum siding, are not appropriate as exterior finish materials in the Brush Creek Corridor, and are not recommended.
- 4) Development projects should have a consistent architectural design as reflected in building height and massing, and in architectural design details, as well as building materials.
- 5) Design of buildings on the perimeter of projects should reflect sensitivity to edge and boundary conditions, and should present the view of a finished edge to adjacent uses. This should include screening of mechanical equipment, loading docks and trash receptacles. This should also include screening of parking lots as outlined in Section 7 - Parking.
- 6) The design of building facades facing Brush Creek should consider both the view of the Creek and the view from the Creek; the design should present a finished edge to the Creek and should include screening of mechanical features. The façade facing the Creek should not continue unbroken in a horizontal direction for more than 100 feet; a setback

of one or more floors of a building or structure of at least three floors above grade in height, may be considered an adequate substitute for one or two “breaks” in the building wall or face.

- 7) The design of buildings should help reduce mass and contribute to a human scale of development through use of such techniques as using more than one color or texture on a façade, having a defined base and architecturally defined main entrances, setbacks from the building base, an articulated façade and roof, and plane changes within the building elevations.

Height/Density/Bulk Controls

Definition: (1) Height refers to either the height of the building in feet, or the number of stories; (2) Density is measured in dwelling units per acre and is further defined in Floor Area Ratio (FAR) which is the ratio of gross square footage of building to total gross square footage of land area; (3) Bulk refers to the massing of the building on the lot.

Intent/purpose: to develop controls that will result in structures in a project that are in scale with, and provide transitions to, surrounding properties and uses, that do not significantly block views and sunlight, that are of a human scale and create a sense of space, that provide the perception of public accessibility to the project, that provide for development at a scale that is economically feasible, and that allow for development throughout the full length of the Brush Creek Corridor from the Country Club Plaza to the Blue River.

Guidelines:

- 1) The height of buildings should be stepped down as they approach the park property line adjoining Brush Creek; taller buildings and portions of buildings should be located further from the Creek, and shorter buildings and portions of buildings should be located closer, and adjacent to, the Creek.
- 2) In general, the FAR for development along the creek should be no greater than 3.0.
- 3) In general, the height of structures above ground level including parking, should not be greater than 2 stories in the area between Brush Creek and the first roadway to the north and south of the creek; in general, the height of structures above ground including parking in the Brush Creek Corridor should be no greater than 10 stories.
- 4) The maximum height of buildings at creek level should not totally block views of any of the eight lakes in the Brush Creek flood control project from structures located on the bluffs to the north and south of Brush Creek; project designs should respect view corridors designated by the City.
- 5) Architects and planners should consider solar access to Brush Creek in designing the height, massing and orientation of buildings; building design and siting should minimize

the blocking of sunlight from creek edges and pathways, particularly in the fall, winter and spring.

- 6) Buildings should have a defined base and architecturally defined main entrances, stepbacks from the building base, an articulated façade and roof, and plane changes within the building elevations to minimize the bulk and mass of buildings, and to create a human scale and perception of public accessibility for the project.
- 7) Building massing should reflect the general orientation of the Corridor, i.e., an east/west axis.

Build-To Lines and Setbacks

Definition: Build-to lines are lines that a designated façade of a building or buildings must be built on. Setback lines are lines that designate the minimum distance between a reference line (usually a property line) and a building, or portion thereof.

Intent/purpose: to provide for a cohesive development pattern along the Brush Creek Corridor. Build-to lines may define an urban development character. Setbacks may help define the creek area, open space, or pedestrian area.

Guidelines:

- 1) Where a street wall exists, consisting of building fronts aligned with only a minimum setback from the street, infill buildings should maintain the existing setback and should be generally consistent with the existing setback of adjacent buildings.
- 2) In the more dense, urban portions of the Brush Creek Corridor, the design of projects should create a consistent, pleasing, urban-style street frontage by providing the maximum amount of building face along a frontage build-to line established at the minimum setback allowed in the Zoning Ordinance for residential uses, and at no more than 20 feet from the front property line for non-residential uses.
 - a) at least eighty percent of the front façade of the building should be constructed on the build-to line; and
 - b) two-thirds of the length of a build-to line along the frontage of the adjacent street, excluding driveways and streets, should be occupied by the façade of a building. For corner lots, the length of the build-to line should be two-thirds of the length of each adjacent street frontage.
- 3) Buildings, not parking areas, should help define the boundaries of open space in the more dense urban portions of the Brush Creek Corridor.

Access

Definition: the means of providing for physical movement into and out of a site by vehicles and pedestrians in order to enable the site to be utilized; a determining factor in the successful development of the site.

Intent/purpose: to provide opportunities for the public to walk or drive to and within the development while minimizing conflicts between the two; to promote an orderly, visually pleasing and active street environment for workers, residents and visitors; to accommodate the automobile but not at the expense of the customer, employee, resident or visitor; to provide adequate and efficient servicing of the development by trucks and utility vehicles, but to minimize the visual and noise impact of such service.

Guidelines:

- 1) Each development should include a clear, understandable and landscaped pedestrian circulation system that provides pedestrian linkages between buildings, between parking lots and buildings, and between a development and Brush Creek, and between a development and adjacent uses.
- 2) Buildings on a development site should be located in a way that allows pedestrians to directly reach their destinations within the site, or to directly reach continuous pedestrian walkways linking destinations outside the development. Buildings should have entrances accessible to the pedestrian on all sides adjacent to a street. Site design should provide direct access into the buildings from the public sidewalk.
- 3) All access shall meet and should exceed the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).
- 4) In order to provide public access to the creek and access to maintain Brush Creek and other public lands, cross access, pedestrian easements, and maintenance easements should be provided on a development site if requested by the City and the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners.
- 5) Because the Brush Creek Corridor is proposed to include a bicycle route as part of the regional bicycle system, all developments should consider in the site design locations for bicycle parking and bicycle access connecting with the regional route.
- 6) In order to minimize the disruption of green space and pedestrian pathways along boulevards and streets in the Brush Creek Corridor, curb cuts should be kept to a minimum. On boulevards and parkways, one curb cut is allowed for every 75 linear feet of frontage on the streets, with a minimum of one curb cut per property; the maximum width of a curb cut is 25 feet. Property owners should investigate sharing curb cuts.
- 7) Median cuts are restricted to no more than one cut for every 250 feet of parkway.

- 8) Access drives for service and delivery vehicles should be located so as not to disrupt other vehicular or pedestrian circulation, or to visually detract from the fronts of buildings or from focal points within the project or along the Creek.
- 9) The design and location of access drives and other roadways through a development should prevent headlights from shining into adjacent residential areas.

G. Parking

Definition: areas designed for the temporary storage of vehicles, either in surface lots or in structures.

Intent/purpose: to provide temporary storage space for vehicles that will serve rather than dominate the development, especially visually; to be not generally visible, and to be screened; to provide convenient pedestrian connections to the structures or facilities that the parking serves.

Guidelines:

- 1) In general, surface parking lots should be located at the sides or rear of structures. Surface parking lots should be separated from streets and park lands by a decorative wall, a berm or a solid landscape screen at least 4 feet in height.
- 2) Parking aisles should be aligned perpendicular to the building's façade that they serve, in order to minimize the number of traffic lanes pedestrians must cross.
- 3) Multiple small parking lots are more desirable than single large lots; larger surface lots should be subdivided with landscaped islands including trees.
- 4) Surface parking lots containing more than twenty-five (25) spaces:
 - a) should provide landscaping within the parking lot equal to twelve percent of the gross parking lot area, including drives, and
 - b) the landscaped area should contain at least one over-story tree for every two hundred (200) square feet of landscaped area.
- 5) Pedestrian walkways and plazas adjacent to parking and driveways should be visually and spatially separated from them through use of additional site elements, including bollards, lighting, landscaping, and special pavement treatments.
- 6) Parking garages located above grade should be generally consistent in height with, but not taller than, the height of the buildings in adjacent commercial and residential neighborhoods; should incorporate design approaches such as those outlined in Section III, Height/Density/Bulk Controls, that can help make transitions to the scale of nearby buildings;

should have screened openings that obscure the parked vehicles; and should be designed so that lighting in the structure, or from vehicles in the structure, does not shine or glare into adjacent uses. Exterior finishes of parking structures should match the adjacent occupied buildings the parking serves.

H. Streetscape

Definition: consists of the roadway including medians and associated landscaping, fountains, sculpture, sidewalks, on-street parking, street lighting, pedestrian lighting, traffic signals, signs, benches, trash containers, newspaper and other vending machines, and bus shelters, within the area of the right-of-way.

Intent/purpose: to provide safety, comfort and convenience for pedestrians; to provide safety and ease or orientation for vehicle users; to provide a common design element throughout the development that can help to unify it; to provide a safe and pleasant separation of pedestrians and vehicles; to help make surrounding development to human scale and user-friendly; and to provide a generally pleasant environment.

Guidelines:

1. All development and redevelopment projects should include a streetscape plan for all public streets within the development that includes all items listed in the definition (a) above, unless otherwise approved.
2. All streetscape plans for boulevards or parkways are subject to review and approval by the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners.
3. All streetscape plans should consider materials used and amenities included in streetscapes adjacent to the project, as well as the materials and character (traditional, contemporary) of the development/redevelopment project itself.
4. All streetscape plans should include street tree plantings of a size, species and spacing approved by the City Forester; all developments fronting a boulevard or parkway shall conform to Parks and Recreation's *Tree Master Plan for Boulevards and Parkways*.
5. Unless there are physical barriers, all streetscapes in new developments along boulevards and parkways should include a 10-foot planting strip between the curb and the edge of the sidewalk, and a 6-foot sidewalk. Unless there are physical barriers, all new developments and redevelopments in other locations should have a minimum 6-foot planting strip and a 6-foot sidewalk.
6. The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) should review all streetscape plans for arterial streets. KCATA may designate locations for bus stops, bus shelters and

bus pulloffs, which should be included in the streetscape plan. All streetscape plans should also include sidewalks, benches and trash cans at bus stop locations.

I. Open Space

Definition: all areas not occupied by buildings or structures.

Intent/purpose: to provide positive space that is used to add value to the built environment; to provide opportunities for people to interact or feel comfortable, whether they are involved in active or passive enjoyment of the space; to complement and help unify the development; to preserve view corridors, to provide a link to Brush Creek, and to break up building massing so as to provide a more human scale.

Guidelines:

1. Open space should be designed as part of the overall building and project design and should not be considered space left over after the buildings are sited.
2. Each development's open space should link directly with the park along Brush Creek and with any other adjacent City park, parkway or boulevard, through such methods as continuity of landscaping, paving materials, pathways and unobstructed vistas.
3. The design of each development's open space should include spaces that will attract activity, such as a courtyard with seating, a fountain, sculpture, a garden or a shady pathway between buildings.
4. User safety should be a primary consideration in open space design. The spaces should convey a feeling of openness and security. Blind alley space and dead-end spaces are not acceptable.

J. Landscape

Definition: plantings and associated hardscape (walls, solid edges/borders) within public and private open space.

Intent/purpose: to provide a setting or context for structures in a development that can provide the following benefits: minimize runoff, help cool the air, help purify the air by absorbing exhaust gases and giving off pure oxygen, help lower energy costs, help provide shade and comfort for pedestrians, help muffle noise, provide visual screens, provide a sense of scale that makes people feel more comfortable, contributes to surrounding property values, and attracts and gives pleasure to customers, clients and citizens by providing a pleasant transition from adjacent roadways into the development.

Guidelines: All development and redevelopment projects presented to the Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners, the Board of Zoning Adjustment, the City Plan Commission and/or the City Council for review should include a landscape plan that accomplishes the following:

1. Preserves healthy, attractive plant materials of significant size (trees of a 5-inch caliper and larger);
2. Includes a combination of evergreen and deciduous plant material, preferably with multiple year-around ornamental qualities in coloration, bark, form, fragrance, fruit and/or flowers.
3. Emphasizes low-maintenance, water-conserving plantings that are well adapted to Kansas City's climate and soils, including use of native plant materials.
4. Clusters plant materials to provide plantings that are less likely to dry out, and are easier to maintain than scattered single plants, shrubs or trees.
5. Complements the project and the structures, including parking structures, by using a design that provides a frame for significant views, and screens for negative views, and mitigates harsh environmental effects including summer sun and winter winds.
6. Avoids contributing to safety problems by avoiding landscaping that can block security lighting, and block public views into an area.
7. Includes a method for maintenance and replacement of plant materials.
8. Includes street plantings on all streets with a size, type and spacing to be approved by the City Forester. In general, one street tree is required for every forty (40) feet of lineal frontage.
9. Includes overstory trees of a minimum 2.5 inch caliper and ornamental trees of a minimum 1.5 inch caliper.
10. Includes screening and landscaping of parking areas as stated in the Parking Guidelines.

K. Signage

Definition: a system of display boards or surfaces used for directions, identification, instructions or advertising; usually consisting of lettering, pictures, diagrams, decoration, etc. often in combination on a contrasting background surface.

Intent/purpose: to provide a clear, easily understandable, coordinated method of identifying and giving directions to projects and places that is complementary to and not in conflict with adjacent uses.

Guidelines:

1. Signage should be only identification signs and directional signs; for purposes of identification, monument signs and wall signs are appropriate.
2. There should be no more than one sign per façade, not to exceed three signs per use; one monument sign may be substituted for one façade sign. Businesses that are part of a single planned development are limited to two façade signs per business.
3. Façade signs should be no more than 10 percent of the façade on which they are placed.
4. Monument signs should not exceed 50 square feet, including base, and should be horizontally oriented, with the base wider than the height.
5. No façade sign should be greater than 20 feet in height; no monument sign should be greater than 6 feet in height; the height of the base of the monument sign should be less than half the height of the whole sign including base.
6. Signs should be internally lit, or have indirect lighting; use of non-blinking neon may be appropriate in areas of intense activity.
7. Pylon signs and off-site advertising signs are not appropriate in the Brush Creek Corridor.
8. Signs should be made of durable materials and be complementary to materials used throughout the project; use of masonry and stone is desirable.
9. Signage should be coordinated throughout the project in terms of materials and colors used, and lettering types; coordination with highly visible adjacent signage, in terms of size and materials used, is desirable.
10. Signage should be simple, clear, and legible in the circumstance in which it is seen - information on identification signage should only include company logo, name and address.
11. The location of signage should not block views of Brush Creek or focal points along the Creek, and should not obscure important architectural features.

L. Lighting

Definition: natural and artificial sources of illumination, particularly street lighting, pedestrian level lighting, lighting of signs and architectural features.

Intent/purpose: to enable people within the development or passing by the development to see well enough to find their destinations and to conduct their activities safely; to enliven a

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development and set the overall mood of the development; to help increase the sense of security and not negatively impact surrounding residences.

Guidelines:

- 1) Design of developments should include a site lighting plan to serve multiple purposes including vehicular and pedestrian safety and security, illumination of activity areas, and accent lighting for architectural features and landscaping.
- 2) Glare and spillage onto adjacent properties should be kept to a minimum through the use of cut-off fixtures or other devices; low-noise level lights should be used adjacent to residential uses.
- 3) Sidewalks and walkways should have pedestrian level lighting; combination pedestrian and street lighting is an acceptable option.
- 4) The design of exterior light fixtures should be consistent throughout a development, with the design complementary to the design of the overall development. The design and placement of exterior lighting fixtures should be coordinated with the design and placement of fixtures in Brush Creek Park and along boulevards and parkways, at locations where both fixtures would be visible at the same time.