

RESOLUTION R-4739

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND APPROVING AMENDED DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR PEDESTRIAN ORIENTED BUSINESS DISTRICTS AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN.

WHEREAS, with the passage of Ordinance No. 4143 on October 21, 2008, the City Council initiated a process whereby it would consider amendments to the text of the Kirkland Zoning Code (KZC) for Central Business District Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8, including KZC Ch. 142, Design Review; and

WHEREAS, the City Council held study sessions on October 16, November 10, November 24, and December 16, 2008, to consider the issues, review solutions, and provide staff with draft regulations and guidelines; and

WHEREAS, at the request of the City Council, the Design Review Board held study sessions on November 17 and December 12, 2008, and January 5, 2009, to advise the City Council on Zoning Code and design issues; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that it is appropriate to amend the Design Guidelines for Pedestrian Oriented Business Districts as they directly support Ordinance No. 4177 (CBD Zoning Amendments) and under KMC 3.30.040 design guidelines bearing the signature of the Mayor and Director of the Department of Planning and Community Development are adopted by reference;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the City Council of the City of Kirkland as follows:

Section 1. The amendments to the Design Guidelines for Pedestrian Oriented Business Districts, attached hereto as Exhibit A, are hereby approved.

Section 2. The Mayor is hereby authorized to sign the amended Design Guidelines for Pedestrian Oriented Business Districts.

Passed by majority vote of the Kirkland City Council in open meeting this 3rd day of March, 2009.

Signed in authentication thereof this 3rd day of March, 2009.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

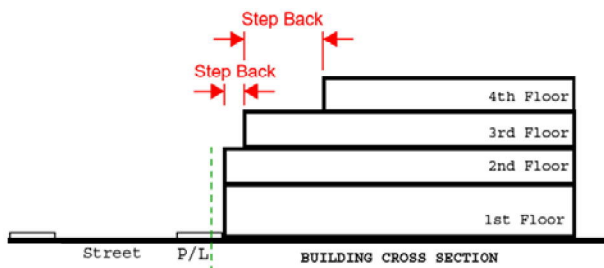
Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

**NEW GUIDELINES – SPECIAL  
CONSIDERATION FOR BUILDING  
MASSING IN CENTRAL BUSINESS  
DISTRICT 1 (CBD 1A & 1B) - UPPER  
STORY STEP BACKS**

**Issue**

Taller buildings can negatively affect human scale at the street level and should be mitigated. Upper story step backs provide a way to reduce building massing for larger structures. An upper story building *step back* is the horizontal distance between a building façade and the building façade of the floor below.



By reducing mass at upper stories, visual focus is oriented towards the building base and the pedestrian experience. In addition, greater solar access may be provided at the street level due to the wider angle which results from the recessed upper stories.



*Marina Heights*

Upper story step backs are appropriate in areas where taller buildings are allowed and imposing building facades at the sidewalk are intended to be avoided.

**Discussion**

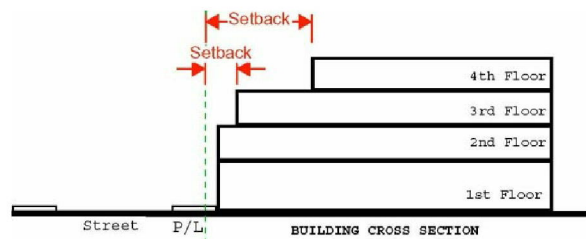
Design guidelines should address upper story step backs to improve the pedestrian experience and maintain human scale. When viewed from across the street, upper story step backs generally reduce perceived building massing and provide additional sunlight at the ground level. When viewed from the sidewalk immediately adjacent to the building, upper story step backs reduce the view of the upper stories and help maintain pedestrian scale by preventing large buildings from looming over the sidewalk.

Since the benefits of upper story step backs are primarily experienced from the public realm in front of buildings, the step backs should be located within a zone along the front property line.

Overly regimented building forms along front facades should be avoided to prevent undesirable building design. The arrangement of building step backs should create varied and attractive buildings consistent with the principles discussed in previous sections.

Upper story step backs also allow for additional eyes on the street in the form of decks and/or balconies. Upper story activities help improve the relationship of the building to the streetscape. Landscaping should also be incorporated at the upper stories to help soften building forms.

In order to quantify upper story step backs, measurement should be taken from the property line. *Setback* is the term used to describe the distance of a structure from the property line. By measuring from the pre-existing property line, setbacks provide for consistency in measurement and will account for projects where additional right-of-way is proposed or required along the property frontage for wider sidewalks and/or additional public open space.

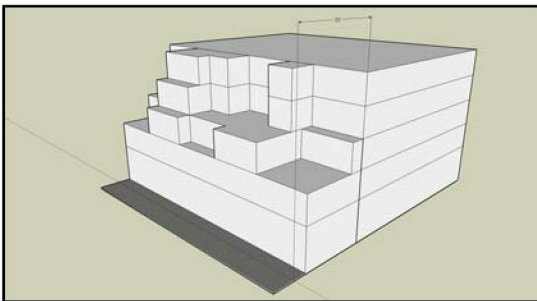


The required upper story setback should be allowed to be reduced if an equal amount of beneficial public open space is provided at the street level. A certain amount of building cantilevering over sidewalks may also be allowed if the pedestrian environment is not adversely affected.

The Kirkland Zoning Code establishes the requirements for upper story setbacks and provisions for allowing reductions to the required upper story setbacks in exchange for open space at the street level. The following guidelines are intended to provide the Design Review Board the tools to create varied and attractive buildings.

### **Guidelines – Upper Story Setbacks**

- *Buildings above the second story (or third story where applicable in the Downtown Plan) should utilize upper story step backs to create receding building forms as building height increases, allow for additional solar access, and maintain human scale at the street level.*
- *The final arrangement of building mass should be placed in context with existing and/or planned improvements, solar access, important street corners, and orientation with the public realm.*
- *A rigid stair step or “wedding cake” approach to upper story step backs is not appropriate.*



*Varied step back approach*

- *Decks and/or balconies should be designed so that they do not significantly increase the apparent mass of the building within the required upper story setback area.*
- *In addition to applying setbacks to upper stories, building facades should be well*

*modulated to avoid blank walls and provide architectural interest.*

- *Along pedestrian oriented streets, upper story building facades should be stepped back to provide enough space for decks, balconies and other activities overlooking the street*
- *Landscaping on upper story terraces should be included where appropriate to soften building forms and provide visual interest.*
- *Continuous two or three story street walls should be avoided by incorporating vertical and horizontal modulations into the building form.*
- *Limited areas of vertical three, four, or five story walls can be used to create vertical punctuation at key facades. Special attention to maintain an activated streetscape is important in these areas.*
- *For properties on Park Lane which front multiple streets and upper story setbacks are proposed to be averaged, concentration of upper story building mass along Park Lane should be avoided.*

### **Guidelines - Open Space at Street Level**

*Reductions to required upper story setbacks may be appropriate where an equal amount of beneficial public open space is created at the street level consistent with the following principles:*

- *Public open space should be open to the sky except where overhead weather protection is provided (e.g. canopies and awnings).*
- *The space should appear and function as public space rather than private space.*
- *Public open space should be activated with adjacent shops, outdoor dining, art, water features, and/or landscaping while still allowing enough room for pedestrian flow.*
- *A combination of lighting, paving, landscaping and seating should be utilized to enhance the pedestrian experience within the public open space.*
- *Where substantial open space “trade-offs” are proposed, site context should be the primary factor in the placement of the public open space (e.g. important corners, solar access.)*

***Guidelines - Building Cantilevering Over Sidewalks***

*Buildings may be allowed to cantilever over sidewalks if a sidewalk dedication and/or easement is required consistent with following guidelines:*

- *The total length of cantilevered portions of a building should be no more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the entire length of the building façade. The cantilevered portions of a building should be spread out and not consolidated in a single area on the building façade.*
- *Unobstructed pedestrian flow should be maintained through the subject property to adjoining sidewalks.*
- *Space under the building cantilever should appear and function as part of the public realm.*
- *The sense of enclosure is minimized.*

## **NEW GUIDELINE - GLAZING**

### **Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland**

Retail frontages in the Central Business District should have a 15' story height to ensure diverse retail tenants and enhance the pedestrian experience. Where these taller retail stories are required, special attention to storefront detailing is necessary to provide a visual connection between pedestrian and retail activity.

#### ***Guideline***

***Storefronts should be highly transparent with windows of clear vision glass beginning no higher than 2' above grade to at least 10' above grade. Windows should extend across, at a minimum, 75% of the façade length. Continuous window walls should be avoided by providing architectural building treatments, mullions, building modulation, entry doors, and/or columns at appropriate intervals.***

### **NEW GUIDELINE - NON-RETAIL LOBBIES IN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT 1**

#### **Special Consideration For Non-Retail Lobbies In Central Business District 1**

Non-retail uses are generally not allowed along street frontage within Central Business District 1. However, in order to provide pedestrian access to office, hotel, or residential uses located off of the street frontage or above the retail, some allowance for lobbies is necessary.

#### ***Guideline***

***Lobbies for residential, hotel, and office uses may be allowed within the required retail storefront space provided that the***

***street frontage of the lobby is limited relative to the property's overall retail frontage and that the storefront design of the lobby provides continuity to the retail character of the site and the overall street.***

## **REVISED GUIDELINE – STREET CORNERS**

#### **Issue**

Street corners provide special opportunities for visual punctuation and an enhanced pedestrian environment. Buildings on corner sites should incorporate architectural design elements that create visual interest for the pedestrian and provide a sense of human proportion and scale.

#### **Discussion**

Corners are crossroads and provide places of heightened pedestrian activity. Rob Krier notes that: "The corner of a building is one of the most important zones and is mainly concerned with the mediation of two façades." Corners may be accentuated by towers and corner building entrances.

#### **Guideline**

~~Property owners and developers~~ Buildings should be ~~encouraged to~~ designed to architecturally enhance building corners.

### **Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland**

Special attention should be paid to both the design and detailing of new buildings on corner sites in the pedestrian oriented design districts. Existing buildings could incorporate some of these elements (human-scale and visual punctuation) through the use of such elements as awnings and well-designed signs at the corner.

Downtown Kirkland has several "T" intersections, and the building located at the terminus of the street view corridor presents a high-visibility opportunity for special architectural treatment.

The corner of Central Way and Third Street marks a prominent gateway to the core area as well as the Downtown Transit Center and deserves special design emphasis.