

**CHAPTER 13  
DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**Section 1300.00      Design Guidelines**

**Section 1300.01      Purpose**

The purposes of this section are to:

- A. The purpose of this Section is to establish procedures and standards to serve as a guide for the design, location, and relationship of new development with respect to adjacent properties and the already existing development within Ravenna Township. .
- B. To aid in maintaining a sense of the physical aspects of Ravenna Township. Pertinent to the physical appearance is the design of the site, buildings, structures, planting, signs, street hardware, and other objects that are observed by the public. These standards are not intended to restrict innovation or variety or to dictate a particular architectural style, but rather to assist in focusing on design principles which can produce creative solutions that will result in a satisfactory and complimentary visual appearance within the township, preserve property values, and promote the public health, safety and welfare.
- C. To aid in maintaining a sense of the physical aspects of rural areas and suburban settings of the Ravenna Township. Pertinent to the physical appearance is the design of the site, buildings, structures, plantings, signage and other features observed by the public.
- D. To retain remaining examples of physical design and construction in the Township that reflects its heritage, history, culture and architecture, while encouraging revitalization and infill development of Ravenna Township.

**Section 1300.02      Design Guidelines and Standards**

The following guidelines are intended to give general and specific guidance to the form and appearance of development within the Township. These guidelines and standards are to serve as the guidelines for the appropriate community design.

Relationship to Adopted Plans and Policies

- A. The site plan shall conform to and reflect all Township plans and policies; all community master plans or comprehensive plans; and other adopted plans or policies related to the development of the Township.
- B. The site plan shall conform to all Federal, State, Regional, and County adopted rules, regulations, plans and/or policies that relate to the development and redevelopment of the Township.
- C. The site plan shall conform to the statement of intent for the zoning district in which it is located.

**Section 1300.03 Objectives of the Design Criteria**

The quality of the Township will be maintained by preserving and respecting its historic buildings and structures, pattern and scale of development, building profiles and significant features, both natural and manmade, and by ensuring compatible development, which correspondingly enhances the community's heritage, culture and rural/suburban character. The preservation of historic buildings and significant features are of primary importance. Preservation and conservation of historic buildings and structures as well as other significant features associated with the site need to be an integral part of any project's design. The removal or alteration of historic buildings or structures or significant features should only take place after all other alternatives have been considered.

The objectives of the design guidelines and standards are to evaluate the relationship of the proposed development's features in order to minimize the possibility of adverse impacts upon surrounding properties and the community. The overall design of the project should show the following:

- A. That a proper relationship exists between thoroughfares, driveways, and parking areas to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- B. That the design of the buildings is developed with consideration to the adjacent properties in terms of building height, material, and overall character.
- C. That the building's location and placement should be developed with consideration given to minimizing the removal of trees and change of topography.
- D. That the on-site vehicle circulation is designed to ensure adequate access for fire and police protection.
- E. That the project's design provides for adequate screening of the site, parking lots, and service areas from surrounding properties by landscaping.

**Section 1300.04 Design Elements**

**A. Building Design Standards**

Building design should be appealing and compatible with surrounding buildings in terms of massing, roof shapes, heights, and window proportions. The exterior form of the building should be emphasized through variations in horizontal and vertical orientation, colors, textures, and materials.

**1. Scale, Height, and Mass**

- a. The scale, height, and mass of structures should be related to, and compatible with, its site and with the use, scale, and architecture of the buildings that have a functional or visual relationship to the proposed structure. For instance, taller buildings should be stepped down to lower buildings along the property periphery. Where structures out

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of scale with surrounding land uses are unavoidable, it is preferred that landscaping techniques be utilized to give the appearance of a reduction in building height to a scale more compatible with neighboring buildings.

- b. It is generally desirable for the building to be composed of either one primary form that is carved into or added upon it to give the building some distinction.
- c. Another approach is to create a composition of distinct forms and connect them through common elements such as bands of material, window rhythm, etc. This is especially important when you have large buildings such as industrial structures.
- d. Using office spaces, loading areas, entrances, etc. to break up large facades is quite effective.
- e. Small areas can receive distinctive treatments in color, canopies, awnings, columns, and the like to break down the over bearing nature of the building.
- f. Roof shapes and pitches for additions should be compatible with those of the main building and should match neighboring structures as to pitch and general proportion.

### 2. Colors and Materials

The exterior colors and materials used on a building should compliment the surrounding buildings and blend with the natural setting. The use of natural materials and earth tones is highly desirable. However, bright colors may be appropriate for some structures.

### 3. Lighting of Building and Signs

- a. External lighting should enhance the building's design and landscaping, as well as, provide for safety and security. External lighting shall be designed to function without creating glare on adjoining properties and/or streets.
- b. External lighting of signs is preferred.

### 4. Compatibility with Neighboring Buildings and Structures

Structures should relate in size and general appearance to adjacent buildings and to the local neighborhood. A building's design, architectural features, and landscaping are ways by which a proposed building can be made aesthetically compatible with neighboring properties.

### 5. Public Spaces

Formal and informal outdoor places for the public to congregate should include access to, and protection from the sun, wind, and rain. The area should be landscaped utilizing shade trees to whatever extent possible. Public spaces should be designed in a manner to provide a strong connection to the surrounding neighborhood and the street (if located in close proximity to the roadway).

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### 6. Intrusive Impacts

The design of any proposed development should include techniques to minimize visual and auditory intrusion impacts. The development should be designed in such a manner as to contain any potential nuisances, and to protect individual occupants from any potential nuisances originating from adjoining lots. Design should incorporate the mitigation of any potential noise impact on sleeping quarters through building layout and/or orientation on the site. Landscaping arrangements can work well as sound insulation materials.

### 7. Additions and Accessory Structures

Any proposed building additions and accessory structures should be compatible with the original structure(s), so that the result appears to be an integrated whole. Moreover, design specifications should ensure that the buildings and/or structures blend with the natural terrain and vegetation of the site.

### 8. Residential Conversions to Other Uses

Any residential dwelling converted to another use should retain its residential appearance in order to be compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood. Conversions should be done in manner so that the only the exterior resembles a commercial use by means of screening walls, awnings, new windows and doors, landscaping, walkways, and permissible signage.

## B. Energy

Buildings should be designed to minimize reliance on mechanical heating and cooling through insulation and design. All proposed buildings should be designed and oriented to make use of sunlight for direct heating, solar water heating, and illumination, whenever possible. Also, natural ventilation and shading should be used to help keep buildings cool. Site layout, building design, and landscaping should all be coordinated to maximize energy conservation.

## C. Existing Structures

All of the existing structures on a property proposed for development should be examined regarding their potential value for continued use. Any structure in good condition, which provides potential housing, architectural significance, or historic value, should be considered for the following options (in the order given):

1. The structure should be integrated into the plans for the proposed development;
2. The structure should be moved to another site where it might be utilized;
3. The structure should be materially recycled; or

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4. The structure should be demolished.

Reduction of parking, setback or other requirements may be considered if it would facilitate preservation of a structure. Projects using existing structures of historic or architectural value should respect the traditional exterior style of the building.

### D. Landscaping

Landscaping must be included on all development plans in accordance with Chapter 11 of this Resolution. The landscaping must relate to the whole development. The landscaping should be integrated with the building's design to enhance the appearance of the project. Landscaping is also used to soften any adverse impacts of the buildings and any paved surfaces.

In addition, landscaping is important in controlling ground erosion, managing storm water runoff, and enhancing energy conservation strategies. The landscaping should consist of a combination of trees, shrubs and ground cover. The landscaping of any project should blend with the existing vegetation on nearby properties (if the neighboring vegetation is healthy and in compliance with these requirements). Moreover, innovation in landscape designs and choice of plants is encouraged to serve both aesthetic and functional purposes.

### E. Pedestrian and Bicycle Enhancements

The advancement of pedestrian and bicycle facilities to enhance non-motorized transportation opportunities should be incorporated in all development plans. The community's primary objective is to link residential areas, commercial and employment centers, and parks and open space areas with improvements that can be safely used by residents and tourists for non-motorized transportation and recreational purposes.