

The City of Kirkland

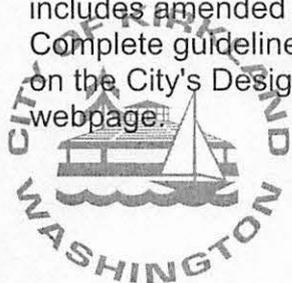
# Design Guidelines

## For Pedestrian-Oriented Business Districts



*A night out at downtown Kirkland's Park Lane*

Updated to incorporate guidelines for the Rose Hill Business District RH 8 Zone. This document only includes amended sections. The Complete guidelines are available on the City's Design Review Board webpage.



Adopted by the City Council pursuant to Kirkland Municipal Code Section 3.30.040.  
 Dated August 3, 2004  
 Updated: March 15 2022, O-4785  
 Attest:

*Penny Sweet*  
 Penny Sweet,  
 Mayor

*Adam Weinstein*  
 Adam Weinstein  
 Director,  
 Planning & Building  
 Department

# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED ELEMENTS</b>	<b>8</b>
Introduction	
Sidewalk Width - Movement Zone	
Sidewalk Width - Curb Zone	
Sidewalk Width - The Storefront Activity Zone	
Pedestrian Coverings	
“Pedestrian-Friendly” Building Fronts	
Special Consideration for Neighborhood Business Districts	
Upper-Story Activities Overlooking Street	
Lighting from Buildings	
Pedestrian-Oriented Plazas	
Pedestrian Connections	
Blank Walls	
<b>PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS AND SITE FEATURES</b>	<b>15</b>
Introduction	
Pathway Width	
Pedestrian Paths and Amenities	
Street Trees	
Public Improvements and Site Features	
Entry Gateway Features	
Public Art	
<b>PARKING LOT LOCATION AND DESIGN</b>	<b>21</b>
Introduction	
Parking Location and Entrances	
Circulation Within Parking Lots	
Parking Lot Landscaping	
Parking Garages	
<b>SCALE</b>	<b>25</b>
Introduction	
Fenestration Patterns	
Architectural Elements: Decks, Bay Windows, Arcades, Porches	
Building Modulation: Vertical	
Special Consideration for Neighborhood Business Districts	
Building Modulation: Horizontal	
Building Massing in Central Business District 1	
Special Considerations for Neighborhood Business Districts	
<u>Special Considerations for Rose Hill Business District 8</u>	

# Table of Contents continued

---

**BUILDING MATERIAL, COLOR, AND DETAIL** **31**

---

- Introduction
- Ornament and Applied Art
- Color
- Street Corners
- Signs

---

**NATURAL FEATURES** **34**

---

- Introduction
- Visual Quality of Landscapes
- Protection and Enhancement of Wooded Slopes
- Height Measurement on Hillsides
- Views of Water
- Culverted Creeks

The Illustrations throughout this document are provided by *MAKERS*.

- ◆ Enhance the gateway at the corner of NE 68th Street and 108th Avenue NE.
- ◆ Provide gathering spaces and relaxation areas within the center.

The following guidelines do not apply to the Neighborhood Center:

- ◆ Protection and Enhancement of Wooded Slopes
- ◆ Height Measurement on Hillsides
- ◆ Culverted Creeks

## Purpose of the Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Business Districts

The Comprehensive Plan establishes a hierarchy of commercial districts, with regional goods and services at the upper end and neighborhoods goods and services at the lower end.

Kirkland's Neighborhood Business Districts (BN, BNA, and MSC2) are important in providing neighborhood goods and services. Given the more localized draw for residents to meet their everyday needs, an emphasis on convenient and attractive pedestrian connections and vehicular access is important.

In addition, because these districts are surrounded by the residential land uses they serve, the design character and context of new development is critical to ensure that it integrates into the neighborhood.

The design guidelines are intended to further the following design objectives that are stated in the Plan:

- ◆ Establish development standards that promote attractive commercial areas and reflect the distinctive role of each area.
- ◆ Encourage and develop places and events throughout the community where people can gather and interact.
- ◆ Moss Bay neighborhood: Ensure that building design is compatible with the neighborhood in size, scale, and character.
- ◆ South Rose Hill neighborhood: Residential scale and design are critical to integrate these uses into the residential area.

The following guidelines do not apply to these districts:

- ◆ Protection and Enhancement of Wooded Slopes
- ◆ Height Measurement on Hillsides
- ◆ Culverted Creeks

## Purpose of the Design Guidelines for the Bridle Trails Neighborhood Center (BCX Zone)

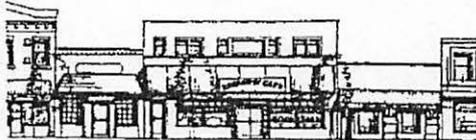
The Bridle Trails Neighborhood Plan was adopted in late 2018 by the City Council. The Neighborhood Plan encourages redevelopment of the Bridle Trails Neighborhood Center into a lively pedestrian-oriented, transit-supportive, mixed-use residential and commercial neighborhood center.

The design guidelines are intended to further the following design objectives described in the Plan for neighborhood center and summarized below:

- ◆ Careful attention to architectural scale, massing and upper story step backs, pedestrian orientation and connections, compatibility with surrounding residential uses and commercial uses across NE 70th Street, building modulation, and use of materials to reduce the appearance of bulk and mass.
- ◆ Buildings are oriented to adjoining rights-of-way and internal pedestrian pathways.
- ◆ Green building standards and sustainable site

## Purpose of the Design Guidelines for Rose Hill Business District 8

The Rose Hill Neighborhood Plan envisions this area east of 128th Avenue NE as an area with less intensive office, neighborhood retail, and neighborhood services uses. The area features a mix of smaller scale uses oriented towards both the regional and local population. The style of development should be more residential in character including conversion of single family homes into commercial businesses. Nearly all buildings should feature pitched roofs and porches or smaller covered entries. Over time, many smaller sites should be consolidated to maximize development opportunity and share vehicular access and parking. The design guidelines provide a number of street frontage options for businesses. In the future, the resulting development will be a mix of storefronts directly on the street, storefronts with small landscaped setbacks, businesses maintaining parking in front, and multi-story buildings with parking underneath.



Nonuniform Awnings and Facades (Recommended for Pedestrian Oriented Streets)



Incorporate transparent windows and doors and weather protection features along all non-residential facades adjacent to a sidewalk or internal pathway. Weather protection features could include awnings, canopies, marquees, or other permitted treatments. Alternative treatments may be considered if they meet the objectives. For example, reduced transparency and weather protection levels may be considered if an alternative configuration provides other amenities above and beyond what is required by KZC Chapter 92 and the Design Guidelines and, if building details or architectural treatments provide interest at close range and won't "deaden" the pedestrian environment or create a potential safety problem.

Guideline

Awnings or canopies should be required on facades facing pedestrian-oriented sidewalks. A variety of styles and colors should be encouraged on pedestrian-oriented streets, and a more continuous, uniform style encouraged for large developments on entry arterial streets.

"Pedestrian-Friendly" Building Fronts Issue

Building setbacks were originally developed to promote "pedestrian-friendly" building fronts by providing light, air, and safety. But dull building facades and building setbacks that are either too wide or too narrow can destroy a pedestrian streetscape. A successful pedestrian business district must provide interesting, pedestrian-friendly building facades and sidewalk activities.

Discussion

Building fronts should have pedestrian-friendly features transparent or decorative windows, public entrances, murals, bulletin boards, display windows, seating, or street vendors that cover at least 75 percent of the ground-level storefront surface between 2' and 6' above the sidewalk.



...should be at least 50 percent of the surface.

- ◆ Provide artwork on the surface.

Guideline

All building fronts should have pedestrian-friendly features as listed above.

Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland - Glazing

Building frontages along pedestrian-oriented streets in the Central Business District should be configured to have a 15' story height to ensure suitability for 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 along pedestrian-oriented streets 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 facade length. Continuous window walls should be avoided by providing architectural building treatments, mullions, building modulation, entry doors, and/or columns at appropriate intervals.

Special Consideration For Non-Retail Lobbies In Central Business District 1A & 1B

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.

## Special Considerations for the Market Street Corridor

An historic style of street light should be used to reflect the nature of the 1890's buildings in the historic district at 7th Avenue and Market Street. These lights may also be used along other stretches of the corridor, particularly in the area between the Historic District and the Central Business District.

## Special Consideration for Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center

Pedestrian lighting should be provided along school walk routes and all pedestrian oriented streets in the center.

## Entry Gateway Features

### Issue

The Comprehensive Plan calls for gateway features at the key entry points into neighborhoods and business districts. Entry points differ in topography, available space, and surrounding visual character; nevertheless, gateway features should be reinforced by a unified design theme. Gateway features can be different in size or configuration, yet still incorporate similar materials, landscaping, graphics, and design elements.

### Discussion

The gateway features should frame and enhance views. Large sign bridges or flashing graphics would dominate the view and are inappropriate. Consistent elements that could be incorporated at all entry points might include:

- ◆ Distinctive landscaping such as floral displays or blue-green colored evergreen foliage.
- ◆ Multicolored masonry, perhaps forming a screen or wall on which an entry sign is placed.
- ◆ A distinctive light such as a column of glass block or cluster of globes.
- ◆ A unifying device such as the district's logo. In Downtown Kirkland, for example, a triangular sail logo could be a metal weather vane or an actual fabric sail on a steel armature.
- ◆ A repetitive element such as a series of closely spaced sails or lights.

- ◆ A trellis incorporating landscaping. A trellis or arbor is adaptable to space constraints.
- ◆ Similar artwork such as a different animal or bird sculpture at each entry.



## Guideline

*Construct entry gateway features at locations noted in the Comprehensive Plan. Gateways may be constructed in conjunction with commercial development. Emphasis should be placed on framing the view into the district.*

## Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

The transit center is another "gateway" experience. The center should be a focal feature that provides comfort and amenities for transit users. Some form of shelter with a strong architectural identity should be pursued.

## Special Consideration for Juanita Business District

The entry features should be "identity-giving elements" that reflect the business district and Juanita Bay. If successful they can become an identifying symbol or logo for the district and an attraction in themselves.

## Special Consideration for North Rose Hill Business District

Use public art and private efforts to establish gateway features that strengthen the character and identity of the neighborhood. Use landscaping, signs, structures or other features that identify the neighborhood.

At the southwest corner of NE 116<sup>th</sup> Street and 124<sup>th</sup>

## Special Considerations for Rose Hill Business District 8

Incorporate entry gateway features in new development on NE 85th Street at 132nd Ave NE. Gateway features should incorporate some or all of the following:

- \* Distinctive landscaping including an assortment of varieties of roses.
- \* Artwork (e.g. vertical sculpture incorporating historical information about Rose Hill).
- \* A gateway sign with the City logo.
- \* Multicolored masonry forming a base for an entry sign.
- \* Decorative lighting elements.

## Guideline

*Minimize the number of driveways by restricting curb cuts and by encouraging property and business owners to combine parking lot entrances and coordinate parking areas. Encourage side and rear yard parking areas by restricting parking in front yards. Require extensive screening where there is front yard parking.*

### Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Parking lot location and design is critical on busy entry streets such as Market Street, Central Way, Lake Street, Kirkland Avenue, and in the congested core area where pedestrian activities are emphasized. The *Downtown Plan* calls for limiting the number of vehicle curb cuts.

### Special Consideration for Juanita Business District and North Rose Hill Business District

Shared accesses and reciprocal vehicular easements should be established in order to reduce the number of curb cuts. The Juanita Business District Plan also encourages shared parking/service areas in Land Use Area JBD-1. This is particularly critical in TL 2, where buildings should front on 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to foster the desired pedestrian-oriented environment.

### Special Consideration for the Totem Lake Business District Core

Throughout the Totem Lake Business District Core, parking areas located between the street and the building should be discouraged. This is particularly critical in TL 2, where buildings should front on 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to foster the desired pedestrian-oriented environment.

### Special Considerations for Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center

Consolidate driveways within the neighborhood center, especially existing driveways that are currently closely spaced. Restrict or mitigate surface parking between buildings and the Cross Kirkland Corridor.

## Circulation Within Parking Lots

### Issue

Large parking lots can be confusing unless vehicle and pedestrian circulation patterns are well organized and marked. Parking lots should be combined to reduce

### Special Considerations for Rose Hill Business District 8

Encourage development to locate and orient buildings towards the street with parking to the side or the rear.

At a minimum this should include:

- Non-residential facades located directly adjacent to the sidewalk or buildings featuring a modest landscaped front yard area or plaza area between the sidewalk and the façade.

- Primary building entries and windows facing the street.

- Landscaping trimmed to maintain visibility between the sidewalk and the building.

Office and residential developments are encouraged to locate and orient buildings towards an interior open space or courtyard, where space allows. In this scenario, primary building entries may orient towards the open space provided there is direct visibility into the open space from the sidewalk. Windows should be provided on the street façade. Buildings may be

located towards the rear of the property provided they meet landscaping, parking, pathway, and façade standards along the front (see Figure XX).

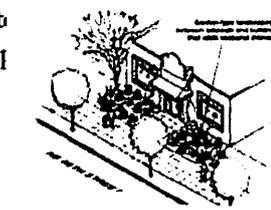
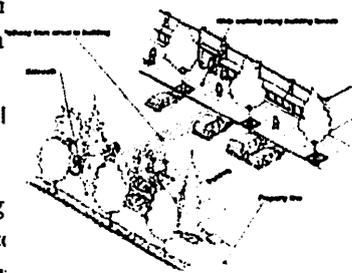
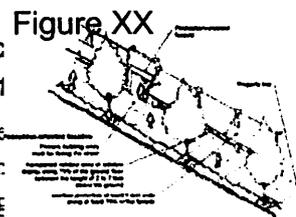
al

### Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Because of the high density and core area, parking accommodations should be provided.

### Parking Issue

Parking of spaces should be located in landscaped areas.



Kirkland, efficient are a top priority. The core area that is approximately 3/4 to 1 mile long and 1/2 mile wide.

Large quantities of parking spaces, and destroy the parking lots should be eliminated. This is not possible, green parking lots.

Figure XX: NE 65<sup>th</sup> Street parking options for the East End properties. The option in the middle with the parking lot in front is the least preferred option. Note the required pedestrian elements and landscaping features.

### Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Pedestrian features should be differentiated from vehicular features; thus fenestration detailing, cornices, friezes, and smaller art concepts should be concentrated in Design Districts 1 and 2, while landscaping and larger architectural features should be concentrated in Design Districts 3, 5, 7, and 8.

### Special Consideration for the Totem Lake Business District Core

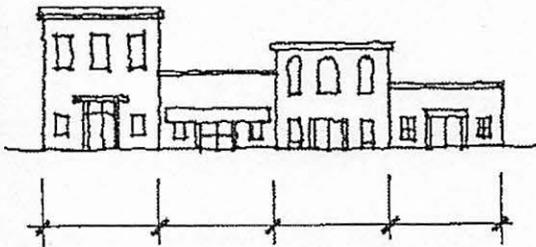
Balconies provide private open space, and help to minimize the vertical mass of structures. Residential building facades visible from streets and public spaces should provide balconies of a sufficient depth to appear integrated with the building and not "tacked on".

### Building Modulation – Vertical Issue

Vertical building modulation is the vertical articulation or division of an imposing building facade through architectural features, setbacks, or varying rooflines. Vertical modulation adds variety and visual relief to long stretches of development on the streetscape. By altering an elevation vertically, a large building will appear to be more of an aggregation of smaller buildings. Vertical modulation is well-suited for residential development and sites with steep topography.

### Discussion

Urban design guidelines should address vertical modulation in order to eliminate monotonous facades. Vertical modulation may take the form of balcony setbacks, varied rooflines, bay windows, protruding structures, or vertical circulation elements – the technique used must be integral to the architecture.



*Vertical modulation in urban setting*

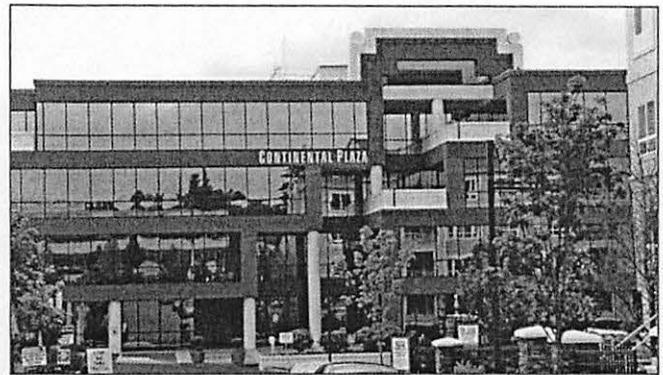
### Special Considerations for Rose Hill Business District 8

Site and orient multi-story buildings to minimize impacts to adjacent single family residents. For example, if a multi-story building is located near a single family property, provide landscaping elements and/or minimize windows and openings to protect the privacy of adjacent homes. Another consideration is to increase upper level building setbacks.

*Minimize setbacks regarding the existing terrain.*

### Guideline

*Vertical building modulation should be used to add variety and to make large buildings appear to be an aggregation of smaller buildings.*



*This building uses both horizontal and vertical modulation to add interest and reduce its visual bulk.*

### Special Considerations for the Totem Lake Business District Core

Since greater heights are allowed in TL 1 than elsewhere in the city, the impacts of increased height are a concern. Impacts associated with taller buildings are generally ones of reduced open space and privacy, shadowing and loss of light.

Massing of development in slimmer but taller towers rather than in shorter, wider buildings presents an opportunity to create open space between existing buildings, particularly when buildings step back from property lines and neighboring structures. For new buildings to fit in to the existing setting, a balance between higher and lower structures should be maintained.

To preserve openness between structures, separation between towers, both on a development site and between adjacent properties, should be provided. The specific separation should be determined based on height, relation and orientation to other tall structures, configuration of building mass and solar access to public spaces.



Taller buildings or “towers” in TL 1 should have relatively compact floor plates. The use of towers above a two-three story podium creates a varied building footprint and the perception of a smaller overall building mass. When the building’s mass is instead concentrated in lower buildings with larger floor plates, greater emphasis should be placed on open space and plazas to provide relief at the pedestrian level.

Design treatments used in the upper portion of a building can promote visual interest and variety in the Totem Lake Business District Core skyline. Treatments that sculpt the facades of a building, provide for variety in materials, texture, pattern or color, or provide a specific architectural rooftop element can contribute to the creation of a varied skyline.

### Special Considerations for Neighborhood Business Districts, Finn Hill Neighborhood Center (FHNC) and the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center, Bridle Trails Neighborhood Center (BCX Zone) Issue

Because these districts are typically integrated into residential areas, the design should reflect the scale of the neighborhood by avoiding long façades without visual relief.

#### Guideline

*Façades over 120 feet in length should incorporate vertical definition including substantial modulation of the exterior wall carried through all floors above the ground floor combined with changes in color and material.*

### Building Modulation – Horizontal Issue

Horizontal building modulation is the horizontal articulation or division of larger building façades. The lower portion of a multi-story building should incorporate pedestrian-scale elements and a strong base. The top of the building should incorporate distinctive roof treatments. Elevations that are modulated with horizontal elements appear less massive than those with sheer, flat surfaces. Horizontal modulation is well suited to downtown areas and automobile-oriented streetscapes where the development of tall building masses is more likely.

### Discussion

A lively urban character uses a variety of architectural forms and materials that together create an integrated pattern of development with recurring architectural features. Horizontal awnings, balconies, and roof features should be incorporated into new development provided that their appearance varies through the use of color, materials, size, and location.



### Special Considerations for Rose Hill Business District 8

Because of the proximity to low density areas, a combination of vertical modulation techniques to reduce the architectural scale of buildings is desirable to provide visual relief for the surrounding residential neighborhood. Modulation is encouraged at 30 foot intervals. Alternatives will be considered provided they meet the intent of the guidelines.

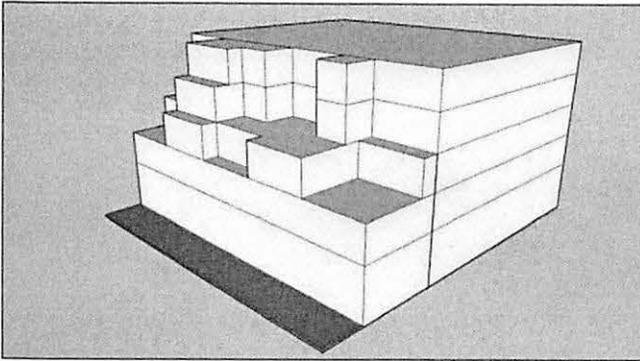
*Horizontal building modulation may be used to reduce the perceived mass of a building and to provide continuity at the ground level of large building complexes. Building design should incorporate strong pedestrian-oriented elements at the ground level and distinctive roof treatments.*

### Special Consideration for Downtown Kirkland

Large-scale developments, particularly east of the core area, should stress continuity in streetscape on the lower two floors. Setback facades and varied forms should be used above the second stories.

### Special Consideration for Building Massing in Central Business District 1 (CBD 1A & 1B) and the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center - Upper Story Step Backs, Bridle Trails Neighborhood Center (BCX Zone) 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.



*Varied step back approach*

- ◆ 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

### Special Considerations for Rose Hill Business District 8

Encourage buildings to utilize architectural styles common to neighboring residential areas. This includes hipped or gabled roofs, front porches or covered entries, and fenestration patterns that relate to adjacent single family homes.

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.
- ◆ A combination of lighting, paving, landscaping and seating should be utilized to enhance the pedestrian experience within the public open 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.

- ◆ 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).

### Guideline for CBD 1A & 1B only - 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 1/3rd 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.

### Special Considerations for Neighborhood Business Districts and FHNC Issue

Where buildings are close to the street in these neighborhood areas, vertical building massing can negatively affect human scale at the street level. Upper story step backs provide a way to reduce building massing. An upper story building step back is the horizontal distance between a building façade and the building façade of the floor below.

#### Guideline

*Above the ground floor, buildings should utilize upper story step backs to create receding building forms as building height increases. Rather than a rigid stair step approach, varied step back depths and heights should be used to create well modulated façades and usable decks and balconies overlooking the street.*

#### Issue

Within the South Rose Hill Neighborhood Plan, additional mitigation of scale impacts is called for.

#### Guideline

*Building height, bulk, modulation, and roofline design should reflect the scale and character of adjoining single-family development.*

## Color

### Issue

Color bolsters a sense of place and community identity (e.g., white New England villages, adobe-colored New Mexico towns, limestone Cotswold villages). Kirkland should consider emphasizing the existing color scheme and developing a unified design identity.

### Discussion

A variety of colors should be used in Kirkland. By no means should design be limited by overly-restrictive guidelines dictating color use. Based on Kirkland's existing color scheme, the following general guidelines can prevent garish, incongruous colors from being inappropriately applied or juxtaposed to more subdued earth tones and colors.

- ◆ Where appropriate, use the natural colors of

#### Special Considerations for Rose Hill Business District 8

Encourage design treatments that emphasize street corners through the use of building location and design, plaza spaces, landscaping, distinctive architectural features, and/or signage. Incorporate storefronts directly at the 128th street corners to reinforce the desired pedestrian-oriented character of the district.

Encourage special landscaping elements on all street corners including a variety of plant types and textures that add seasonal interest. Encourage all buildings located at or near street corners to incorporate special architectural elements that add visual interest and provide a sense of human proportion and scale. This could include a raised roofline, turret, corner balconies, bay windows, special awning or canopy design, and/or distinctive use of building materials.

#### Neighborhood Center (BCX Zone)

Special attention to the use of colors and materials should be used on a building's upper stories to reduce the appearance of taller buildings.

## 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 facades." Corners may be accentuated by towers and corner building entrances.



### Guideline

*Buildings should be 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.

#### Special Consideration for Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center

The corner of NE 68th Street and 108th Avenue NE provides a gateway to the Neighborhood Center. Buildings at this corner should be designed to enhance this gateway with elements such as building setbacks and step backs, architectural features, public open space, view preservation and art (see also Design Guidelines for Entry Gateway Features). Building frontages should encourage street level pedestrian activity.

