

Mixed Use Option Design Guidelines

Purpose: Pima County encourages new development and redevelopment to provide a compatible mix of land uses to increase the proximity of places where people live, shop, work, recreate and pursue other daily activities. The purpose of the design guidelines is to ensure that mixed-use development is well designed, compatible with adjacent land uses, contributes to the character of the neighborhood and larger community, and creates vibrant, pedestrian oriented places. Mixed-use developments should be of high quality and visually appealing from adjacent streets and surrounding neighborhood with an emphasis on building placement and orientation as well as site landscape. Energy efficient, sustainable development is highly encouraged.

Applicability: Section 18.51.07 of the Pima County Zoning Code requires all mixed-use developments to be reviewed and approved by the Pima County Design Review Committee. The design guidelines are provided as a tool by which the Design Review Committee can base their recommendations on mixed-use developments. The guidelines are flexible and are not intended to be a list of requirements for mixed-use developments. They are, however, a guide by which the Design Review Committee can base their recommendations and comments.

Organization: The guidelines are divided into five sections; layout, parking/circulation, landscaping, signage, and safety. Each section has a related design objective. This design objective states what the community hopes to achieve. Design guidelines are provided to give direction to the Pima County Design Review Committee, who will determine whether or not the proposed mixed-use developments meet the intent of the Zoning Code and guidelines.

Layout

Design Objective: Mixed-use developments should create an inviting and attractive destination for local residents and region wide users. Buildings, and spaces between buildings, should be designed and oriented to create safe, pleasant, and active environments.

Guidelines:

- Pedestrians should be able to easily identify primary entrances into commercial establishments.
- Buildings should be oriented to a defined pedestrian walkway or street.
- Building materials and colors should exhibit quality and help establish a human scale while providing visual interest.
- To facilitate the creation of a sense of place, developers are encouraged to incorporate artists into the design team from the inception of planning in order to integrate art into their projects.
- Low occupancy uses such as warehouses, storage, and parking will not be counted in the evaluation of mixed-use functions.
- Special attention should be given to the design of project and building corners as an opportunity to create visual interest and invite activity.
- Transit stops should be incorporated into the layout of all mixed-use developments, regardless of service availability. Space should be available

- Buildings should be located in areas that recognize local viewpoints and landmarks. Views of landmarks and natural features should be highlighted through the placement of structures.
- Larger sites should feature places where people can gather. Public spaces should contribute to the overall sense of place and site identity and help to attract pedestrian users to the development.
- Loading docks should be located in areas that have the least amount of impact on residential uses.

Parking, Vehicular and Pedestrian Circulation

Design Objective: The project's circulation system should promote efficient movement of vehicles in a clear and well-defined manner that minimizes conflicts with pedestrians and bicycles. Pedestrian users should find that public spaces and gathering places are clearly identified and easy to access and locate.

Guidelines:

- The design of access and circulation should tie the development into the overall neighborhood creating opportunities for nearby residents to access the project either on foot, bicycle, or other form of alternate transportation.
- The joint use of driveways and parking areas should be encouraged to reduce overall parking needs. A convenient pedestrian connection must exist between the building facilities and/or properties to qualify as a joint use parking facility.
- Primary building entrances should front major pedestrian access-ways.
- Link new mixed-use developments with existing developments and trail systems.
- Provide variety in setback, height, color and building size and form to enhance the pedestrian experience. This should be done under a unified concept.
- Parking should be conveniently located near non-residential uses but visibly minimized from arterial streets and public spaces.
- Roadways and pedestrian access should be designed to provide maximum access to public transportation.

Landscaping

Design Objective: Landscaped areas should be used to frame and soften structures, to define site functions, to enhance the quality of the environment, and to screen undesirable views. Landscaping should work with buildings and surroundings to make a positive contribution to the aesthetics and function of both the specific site and the area.

Guidelines:

- Preserve public access to public areas of interest such as parks, natural features, landmarks and monuments.
- Include open spaces with special amenities that encourage use, such as benches and sitting areas
- If several buildings are proposed for a site, the spaces between the buildings should contribute to the overall positive open space of the area
- Open spaces should connect with and provide views to natural amenities
- Service and trash areas should be screened from view on all sides.

- Service areas should not impede access to amenities.
- Tree selection and location should promote safety and security, enhance natural environment, provide shade for vehicles and pedestrians and minimize maintenance requirements.
- Plant selection and placement should reduce heat islands wherever possible.
- Low water use plants and native vegetation should be used to landscape new developments.
- No invasive plant species should be allowed in the landscaping design.

Signage

Design Objective: Visitors and residents should be able to locate and identify major attributes of the development through a unified signage concept.

Guidelines:

- Design buildings with careful consideration for the incorporation of signage and lighting.
- Signage should contribute to the overall architectural and landscape theme.
- Signage should be made of materials that can tolerate extreme weather.
- Signage should be used to clearly identify public versus private/residential areas.

Safety

Design Objective: Visitors and residents should find that the development provides the best possible design to protect their personal safety and safety of their property.

Guidelines:

- Architectural features should be used to provide weather protection and shade, as well as highlight building features and entries.
- Sidewalks, paths and bike lanes, which are protected from traffic, are encouraged.
- Landscaping and lighting should be used to identify entrances, pathways, public spaces, and bus stops.
- Covered bus stops and waiting areas should be provided to provide pedestrians with outdoor areas sheltered from extreme heat, wind, or rain.
- Lighting should contribute to the overall safety of the development, and landscaping should incorporate safe-by-design standards.

Context

Design Objective: Visitors and residents should find that new mixed-use developments conform to the existing character of the area, and build upon an established sense of place in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Guidelines:

- Views of significant landmarks should be maximized in the design of mixed use developments.
- Significant architectural styles existing in the area should be reflected in the selection of architectural styles for new mixed-use developments.

- Local street patterns should be considered and connected to as much as possible in the layout of mixed use developments.
- Visitors should find mixed use developments interesting in appearance and buildings within these developments should be varied as much as possible yet based on a similar architectural theme.
- Existing historic sites, as well as the natural environment, should be incorporated and highlighted in the overall architectural and landscape design.

Standards that should be considered by the design review committee when considering a mixed use development request.

1. The proposed project is in keeping with the intent of the mixed-use design guidelines.
2. The proposal satisfactorily mixes uses as defined in the Pima County zoning code.
3. Proposed open spaces, parking areas, pedestrian walks, signs, lighting, landscaping, and utilities are adequately related to the site and are arranged to achieve a safe, efficient and harmonious development to accomplish the objectives set forth in section 18.51.07 of the Pima County zoning code.
4. The proposal is not detrimental to the orderly and harmonious development of its surroundings.
5. The proposal satisfactorily mitigates any adverse impacts to the natural environment.
6. The request is in harmony with the general intent and purpose of the Pima County zoning code.
7. Project is innovative in its approach and design.
8. Project achieves excellence in its comprehensive approach to mixed-use design principles.
9. Project shows high interconnectivity between all proposed uses, between proposed uses and open space, between proposed uses and natural features, and between proposed uses and adjacent development.