

CITY OF EAST CLEVELAND

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Adopted: June 16, 2026

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CITY OF EAST CLEVELAND

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OUR VISION

Inspiring all of our communities to thrive

OUR MISSION

To advance Cuyahoga County's social, economic, and environmental health through equitable community planning

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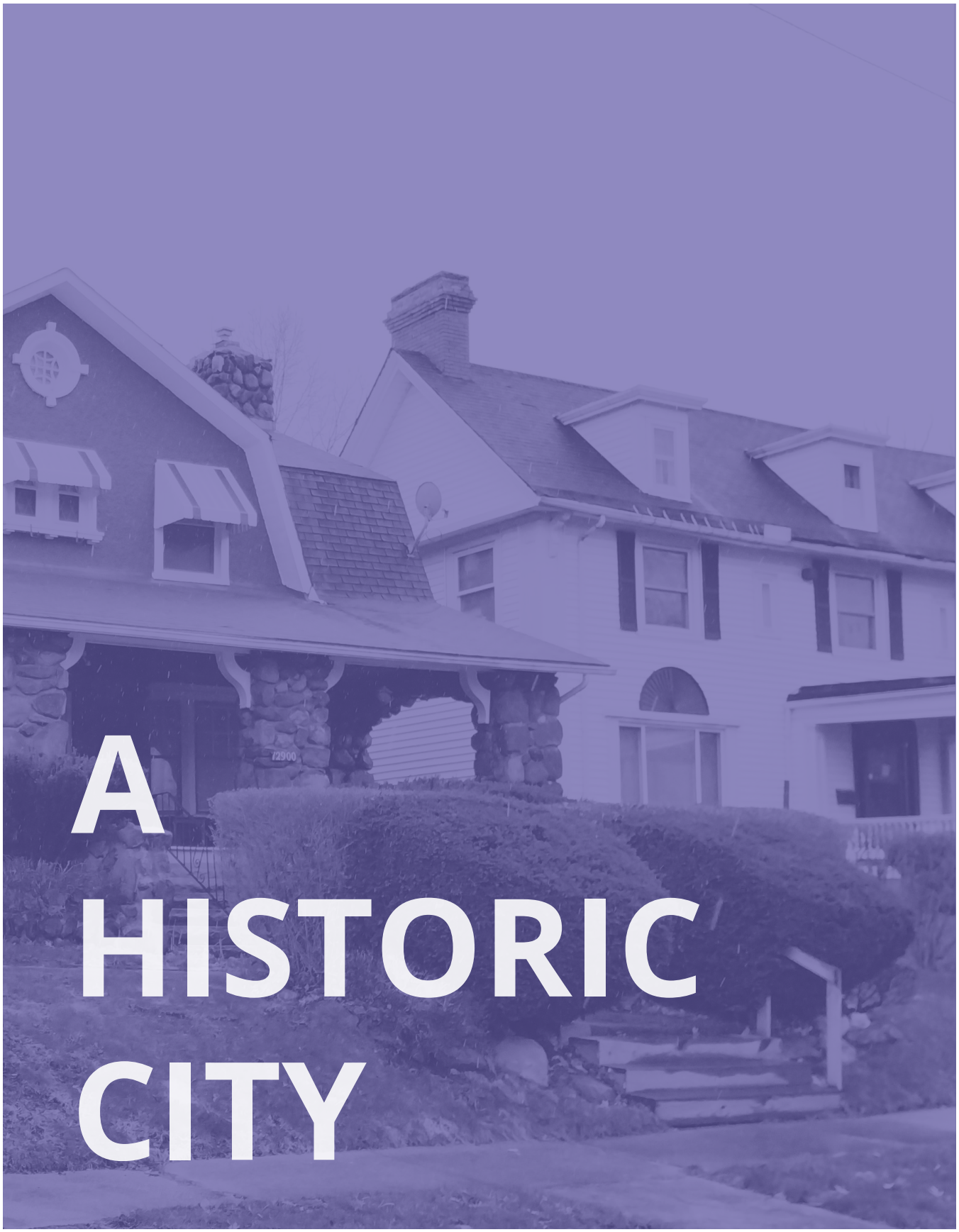
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A HISTORIC CITY

Source: Cuyahoga Land Bank

SECTION 1
INTRODUCTION

The East Cleveland Commercial Design Guidelines are the result of a partnership between the City of East Cleveland, the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, and the Cuyahoga Land Bank. These guidelines are intended to define the existing architectural character within the Commercial Overlay District where they apply and ensure high quality and aesthetically appealing commercial development occurs within this area.

This section outlines the history of the City of East Cleveland, recent planning efforts undertaken, new regulations enacted, the purpose and applicability of these guidelines, the existing character of the current CO district, and lastly, examples of new developments near the district that can help inform the desired character of the CO District.

1.1 PURPOSE & APPLICABILITY

PURPOSE

The Commercial Design Guidelines are meant to supplement the Commercial Overlay (CO) District regulations, which can be accessed in East Cleveland's Zoning Code, Chapter 1173. The Commercial Design Guidelines are intended to:

- Inform the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) decisions to encourage a level of consistency and predictability in the design review process.
- Provide guidance to property owners, developers, architects, and contractors on the expectations and desires of the community to aid in their preparation of appropriate plans for submittal to the Architectural Board of Review.
- Encourage high quality design that contributes to a sense of place, supports a walkable environment, and adds to an attractive corridor identity.
- Encourage the incorporation of amenities for pedestrians, transit riders, and cyclists.
- Incorporate sustainable and green practices.

APPLICABILITY

The Commercial Design Guidelines apply to all construction built under the regulations of the Commercial Overlay (CO) District and that is reviewed by the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) as described in Chapter 1333 in East Cleveland's Zoning Code. Refer to the city of East Cleveland for the official zoning map and the most up-to-date information.

INTERPRETATION

The role of the ABR is to interpret the design guidelines and ensure approved developments fulfill the intent of the design guidelines.

When interpreting the design guidelines, design criteria with the word “shall” signifies a mandatory requirement, one that involves little to no discretion. These requirements are of highest importance.

The design criteria with the word “should” communicates a desired, preferred, or encouraged outcome. These design criteria are meant to allow for a level of discretion and consideration by the ABR on the basis of feasibility and practicality. If context or site-specific constraints prohibit the direct implementation of certain outlined design guidelines, creative design solutions that meet the intention of these guidelines are encouraged and should be employed.

1.2 BACKGROUND

ZONING OVERLAY DISTRICTS

Starting in 2023, the City of East Cleveland partnered with the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission and the Cuyahoga Land Bank to develop two new overlay districts that can prepare the city for the future. The Residential Overlay (RO) District and the Commercial Overlay (CO) District provide regulatory support for development goals and further recommendations outlined in city plans, some of which had identified issues and limitations in the city's zoning code and highlighted the need for it to be updated to match the current and future needs of the community.

The purpose of the Commercial Overlay (CO) District is to:

Promote the redevelopment of commercial areas along major corridors and along transit routes as compact, mixed-use, walkable, and livable neighborhoods to:

(1) *Support the intent and objectives of plans adopted by the city;*

(2) *Increase transit use and expand other mobility options by developing an environment that makes walking, biking, and riding transit comfortable, convenient, and safe through enhanced streetscapes, amenities, and pedestrian-oriented buildings;*

(3) *Encourage infill development and the reuse of existing buildings;*

(4) *Increase the density of residential and commercial uses to support walkable environments and an efficient transit system while reducing auto dependency and roadway congestion;*

(5) *Increase convenient access to important services, goods, and employment by mixing different uses and locating them near residential areas;*

(6) *Encourage an appropriate mix of residential options to promote housing for people of different income levels and at different stages of life;*

(7) *Enhance the quality of buildings, public spaces, and walking environments to establish a sense of identity and attract employers, businesses, residents, and visitors; and,*

(8) *Incorporate sustainable and green practices.*

The CO district provides use standards, dimensional standards, and parking and loading standards. Additional standards that apply to both the RO and CO districts are also provided and address: accessory uses; bicycle parking; access, circulation and connectivity; open space, landscaping, and screening; lighting; and signs.

HISTORY OF EAST CLEVELAND

East Cleveland is a historic and culturally significant city. First incorporated as a village in 1895 and later growing into a city in 1911, East Cleveland was the first suburb outside of Cleveland. It is home to many historic places and structures, such as:

- **General Electric's Nela Park**, the world's first industrial park
- **Forest Hill Historic District**, a historic residential neighborhood that was originally designed by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and formerly part of the John D. Rockefeller estate
- **Forest Hill Park**, East Cleveland's largest park and what was left over of the John D. Rockefeller estate that was later deeded to East Cleveland
- **Lake View Cemetery**, founded in 1969, one of the largest garden cemeteries in the United States and home to the Garrett Morgan gravesite, Rockefeller Monument, and the Garfield Memorial

The city saw significant population growth following its incorporation as a city and reached its peak population of 40,000 in 1950. At the time it was the most densely populated suburb of Cleveland. Most of East Cleveland's housing stock was built in the 1910s and 1920s, with many stately homes and apartment buildings along tree-lined streets.

From 1960 to the 1980s, many young black families moved to East Cleveland as they saw it as a place to raise their families and an area of opportunity for homeownership as the city offered many spacious and affordable homes in established neighborhoods. From 1990 onward the city experienced a sharp decrease in population as residents moved into the outer suburbs amid several regional and local hardships. The city has settled around 13,000 residents as of 2020.


CMP ClevelandMemory.org

HISTORY OF EUCLID AVENUE

East Cleveland's main street is Euclid Avenue, which runs the length of the city and connects to various surrounding cities, reaching to downtown Cleveland. Euclid Avenue is a historic corridor that was once known internationally for its concentration of mansions from E 9th Street to E 55th, called Millionaires Row. After the1920s its residential character changed as people moved towards the surrounding suburbs and the mansions were re-purposed as apartments or demolished and gave way to commercial development that expanded throughout the corridor from downtown Cleveland to East Cleveland. The majority of Euclid Avenue commercialized from 1920s until the 1960s. The commercial developments suffered economically from the 1960s onward, leading to a concentration of vacancy along Euclid Avenue, especially in East Cleveland.

In 2008, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority's premier Healthline Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line was built along Euclid Avenue, spanning from the Louis Stokes-Windermere Transit Center in East Cleveland to Public Square in Cleveland. Since the Healthline's construction, there has been a great deal of reinvestment along this corridor. The bus line also connects with many large employers and institutions near and along the corridor, further west in University Circle.

With great public transit assets, nearby employers, and large institutions, East Cleveland has opportunity for reinvestment.



EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE CO DISTRICT

The CO District pertains to the properties along the main corridor, Euclid Avenue. Leading up to the Louis Stokes-Windermere Transit Center, there are Healthline BRT stations, each with a shelter, kiosk, map/schedule, seating, and decorative paving. Euclid Avenue is also lined with sidewalks on both sides—ranging between four and eight feet—with no landscaping buffering the sidewalk from the road.

The Superior and Euclid Avenue Intersection is a prominent intersect that marks a change in character along Euclid Avenue. The area south of Superior Avenue, serves as the gateway into East Cleveland and is largely an urban environment with a grid-like street network and a robust transit system. Euclid Avenue within this area does not have a well-defined character as many dilapidated structures have been demolished, leaving a concentration of vacant lots between Lakeview Road and Farmington Road. Within this area, the redevelopment of the Mickey's building on Woodlawn Avenue acts as an anchor for new development. Moving towards Superior Avenue, it is more residential with larger, older homes fronting the street.

From Superior Avenue onward, Euclid Avenue is more commercialized with several strip malls, older two-story mixed use buildings, and apartments fronting the street. Several important institutions are also located along Euclid Avenue within East Cleveland, such as the East Cleveland Public Library, East Cleveland City Hall, and Shaw High School.







DESIGN EXAMPLES FOR THE COMMERCIAL OVERLAY DISTRICT

Below are newer developments—within and near the CO District—that can serve as examples of the types of design that are envisioned in the Commercial Overlay District.



FIGURE 1 | THE MICKEY'S BUILDING & CIRCLE EAST TOWNHOMES

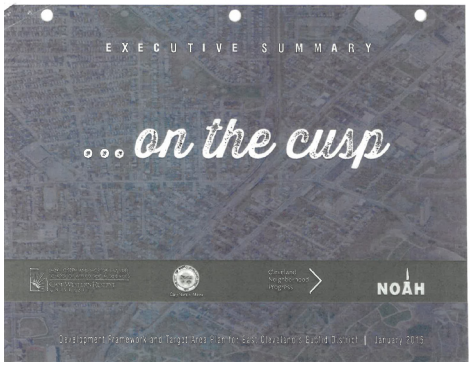
The Mickey's building will be the first large-scale development in the CO District since 2014, when the CircleEast Townhomes were built.



FIGURE 2 | LA COLLINA & THE MONROE

La Collina & the Monroe demonstrate how to appropriately combine traditional and modern materials to contribute to a neighborhood commercial character that is desired in the CO District.

1.3 RELEVANT PLANS



DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND TARGET AREA PLAN FOR EAST CLEVELAND'S EUCLID DISTRICT (2015)

The City of East Cleveland partnered with Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, Case Western Reserve University, and the Northeast Ohio Alliance for Hope (NOAH) on a target area planning process—heavily rooted in public engagement—for the redevelopment of the Euclid Corridor District into a "high amenity, mixed-use district for residents that love urbanity." The district included a 2-mile stretch along Euclid Avenue from Lakeview to Taylor Road. This targeted approach was seen as a feasible development strategy for the reinvestment in East Cleveland.

A key element of the Plan is developing the southwest portion of the study area into a dense residential neighborhood that supports the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system and provides a variety of new high quality housing options at different price points. The plan outlined key principles that development projects should support, such as:

- Dense residential development
- Emphasize the pedestrian at every turn
- Be complementary in mass, scale, and construction to surrounding community
- Achieve mixed-income and racially diverse resident demographic



CITY OF EAST CLEVELAND VISIONING PROJECT (2020)

The City of East Cleveland worked with the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University to lead a visioning project that engaged residents and stakeholders in identifying opportunities and recommendations for East Cleveland's rejuvenation.

Some key aspects of the vision and recommendations include:

- Capitalizing on the strong sense of community pride and engagement
- Establishing a new land use plan consistent with City goals, objectives and citizen interests
- Significantly reinvesting in neighborhoods
- Providing a range of housing options to meet all needs
- Building off of the City's transportation assets
- Re-imagining and codifying the City's development review processes, zoning, and review criteria
- Strengthening and redefining East Cleveland's image and perception
- Enhancing neighborhoods through housing preservation and blight reduction



ACTION PLAN FOR EAST CLEVELAND TARGET AREA (2022)

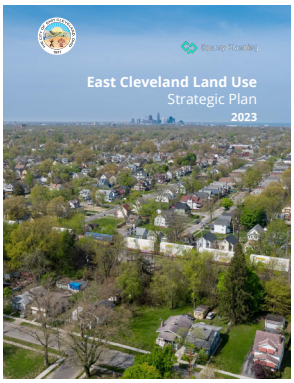
The Action Plan builds on the recommendations from the 2020 City of East Cleveland Visioning Project and the 2015 study focusing on the area at the border of East Cleveland and Cleveland for targeted improvements. The Action Plan highlights Euclid Avenue transportation improvements and infill housing as placemaking priorities, and the importance of an inclusive, mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhood.

The Action Plan recommends large-scale multi-family and commercial redevelopment along Euclid Avenue with infill housing on neighborhood streets.

The Action Plan highlights three critical factors for success: high-quality zoning, high-quality architecture, and high-quality walkability. To ensure high-quality construction, the plan specifically recommends the development of design guidelines.

CONNECT EC REPORT (2024)

The Connect EC Report summarizes feedback from its community engagement process and provides 30 placemaking actions for the Circle East District. The placemaking actions relate to five categories: Greenways, Pocket Park, Public Art, Streetscape, and Landscape. The goal of this project was to reimagine and rebuild public spaces in East Cleveland with community collaboration at the forefront.



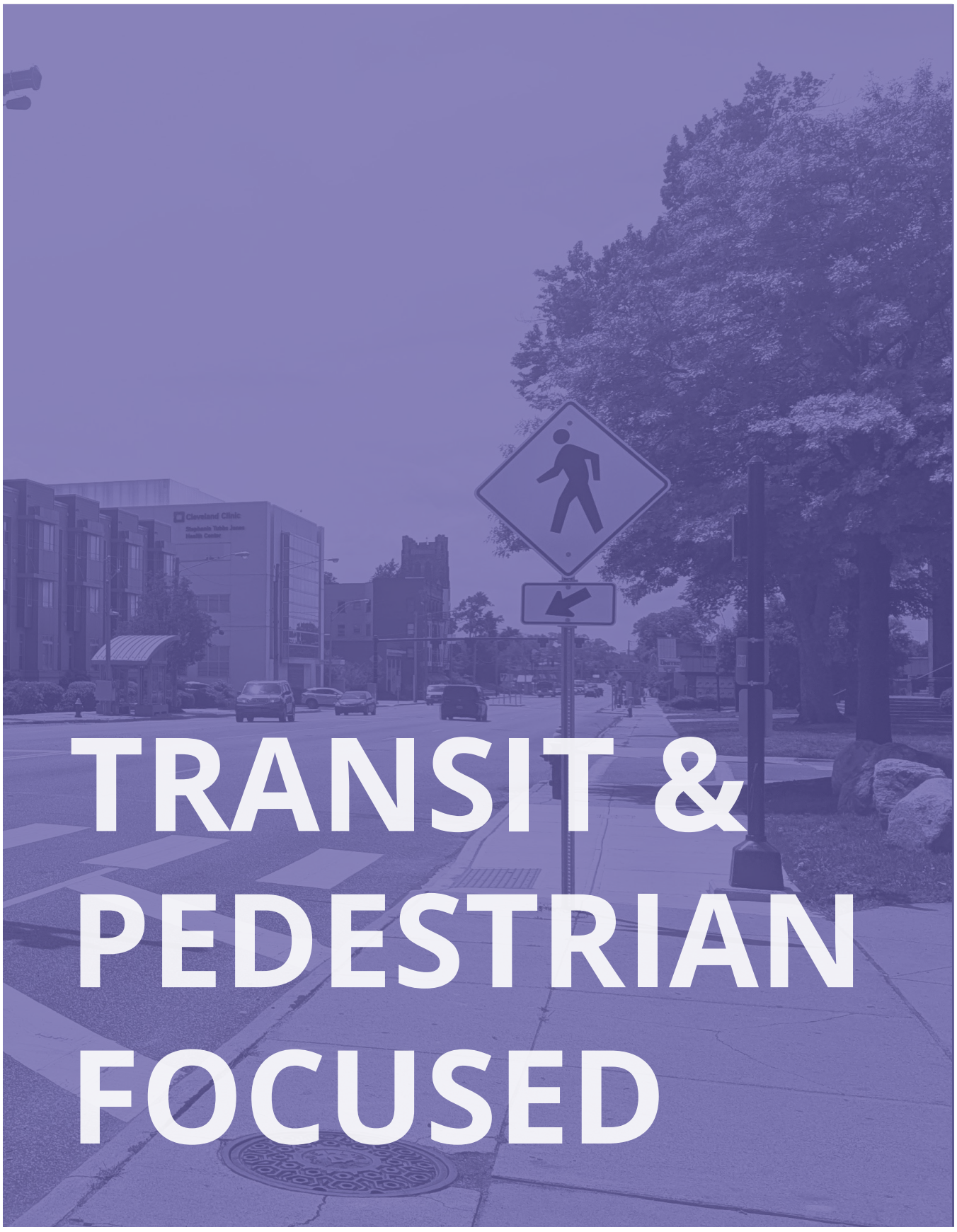
EAST CLEVELAND LAND USE STRATEGIC PLAN (2023)

The Land Use Strategic Plan also came out of the 2020 City of East Cleveland Visioning Project. The Land Use Plan outlines four broad city-wide goals of Neighborhood Preservation, Neighborhood Development, Commercial Preservation, and Commercial Development.

The Land Use Strategic Plan identifies five target areas with more specific strategies. One of the identified target areas—which also coincides with the target area in the Action Plan—is the "South Superior Redevelopment Zone." The vision for this target area is a "medium-density corridor" with mixed-use and transit-supportive development along Euclid Avenue and with small multi-unit buildings and single-family infill homes in the surrounding neighborhoods. Key strategies for this target area include promoting infill residential development, promoting enhanced greenspaces, and supporting the Cuyahoga Land Bank's catalytic development.

REIMAGINE EUCLID CORRIDOR MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (UNDERWAY)

Coordinated by GCRTA and funded by NOACA, this plan is for the Euclid Corridor from East Cleveland's Stokes-Windermere Station to E.105th Street in Cleveland. The project goals include encouraging equitable economic development, enhancing transit connectivity, and improving accessibility, mobility, and safety for all modes of travel.



TRANSIT & PEDESTRIAN FOCUSED

Source: County Planning

SECTION 2
DESIGN COMPONENTS

The Commercial Design Guidelines are premised on an understanding of corridor and building typologies. It is important to understand how key components of a storefront, a mixed-use building, and the overall street contribute to a robust commercial corridor that prioritizes the pedestrian experience. These components provide context and an overall structure for the design guidelines. Considering these components ensures design elements are properly placed and relate to each other.

2.1 COMPONENTS OF A STOREFRONT

A well-designed and activated storefront can help pedestrians feel comfortable and enliven the walking environment. This can engage pedestrians on the street, encouraging them to window shop and visit multiple locations within a single trip. The components of a well-designed storefront are listed below and shown in the diagram at the bottom of the page.

STOREFRONT COMPONENTS

(A) **Signage/Sign Band**: Storefront signage should be clear, readable, and distinguishable from the street level, providing visual interest to draw in potential shoppers.

(B) **Overhead weather protection**: Awnings, overhangs, and arcades are encouraged—and should clearly define building entries, coordinate with the architectural style of the building, and increase comfort to pedestrians, store-goers, and transit users.

(C) **Storefront windows**: Storefronts should include large front facing windows to allow for the display of goods and services to pedestrians.

(D) **Storefront Door**: Doors on storefronts should be mostly transparent and be oriented to front on the sidewalk to further engage the street.

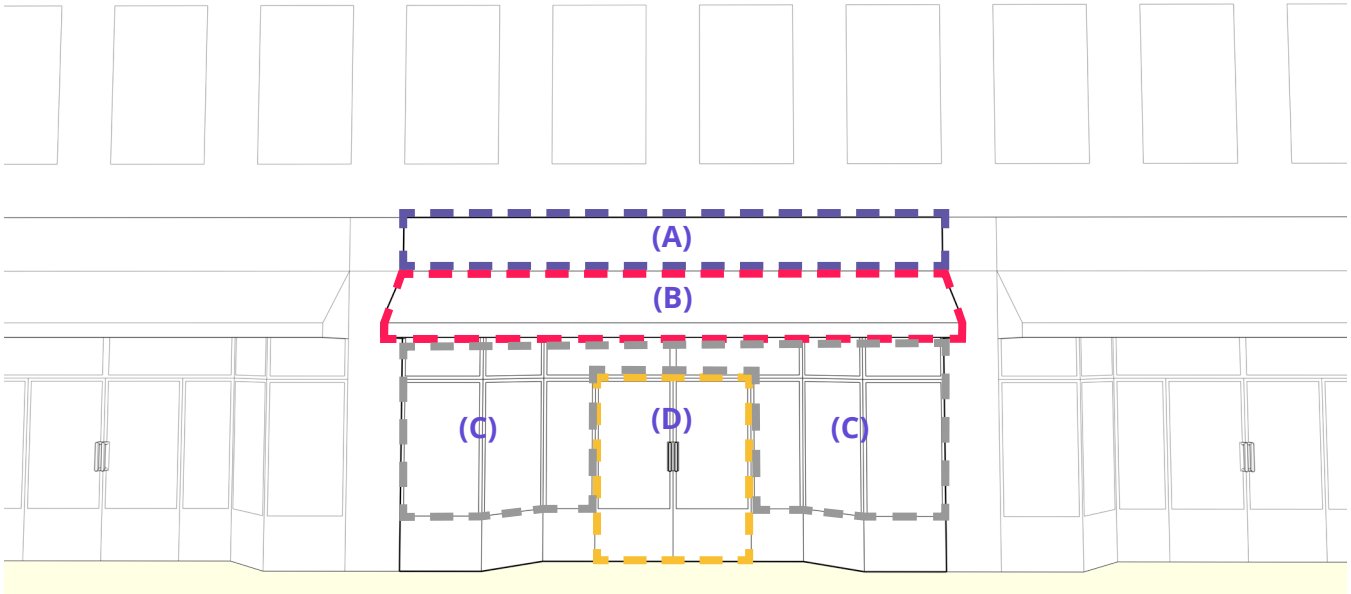






FIGURE 3 | COMPONENTS OF A STOREFRONT

Well-designed storefronts with ample transparent windows, like the examples above, are inviting to pedestrians and allow for more interaction between the building and the street, leading to a an enjoyable pedestrian experience.

2.2 COMPONENTS OF A MIXED-USE BUILDING

A well-designed building can help define the public realm, provide visual interest, and foster a sense of place. The components of a well-designed commercial or mixed-use building are listed below and shown in the diagram at the bottom of the page.

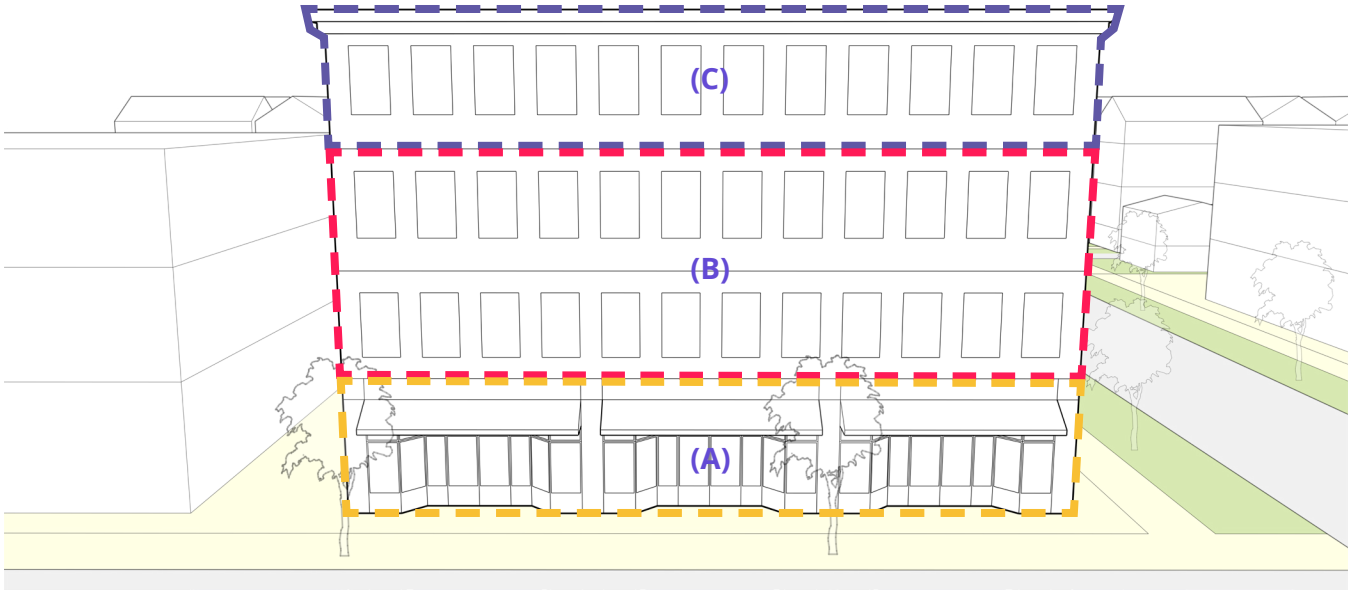
BUILDING COMPONENTS

Buildings should have clearly articulated base, middle, and top layers.

(A) **Base**: Should be designed in a way that is inviting, enhances the pedestrian experience, and enlivens the sidewalk.

(B) **Middle**: Should be predictable from floor to floor, creating a vertical proportion to the exterior. Windows should be sized appropriately to the use of the middle floors.

(C) **Top**: Including the roof, should be architecturally distinguishable and provide visual interest. Rooftop utilities and mechanicals should be screened.



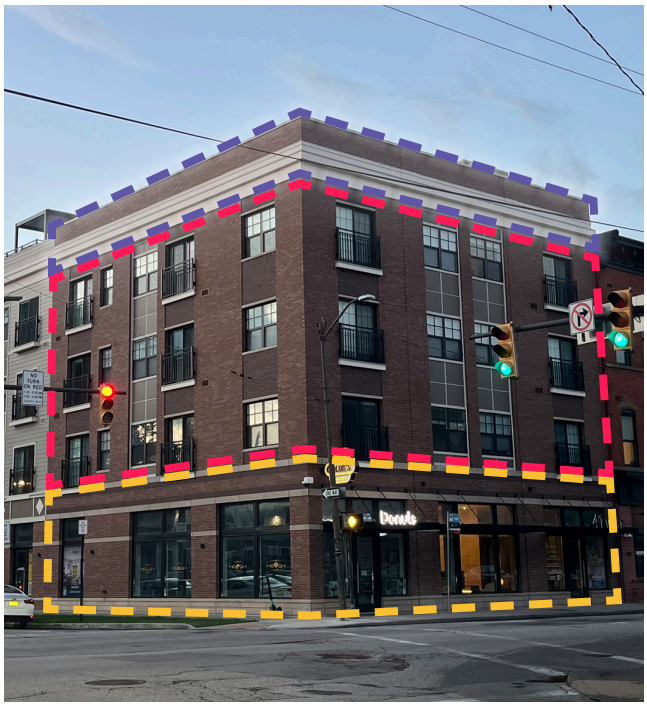






FIGURE 4 | BUILDING COMPONENTS

Despite being built with different architectural styles and at different times, all of the above buildings have a clearly articulated base, middle, and top to help provide visual interest, foster a positive and comfortable public realm, and create a sense of place.

2.3 COMPONENTS OF A STREET

In addition to the design of a building, there are four other components of a streets that are important to consider, especially when designing a street that prioritizes the safety and comfort of the pedestrian and that contributes to a lively commercial corridor.

STREET COMPONENTS

(A) Frontage Zone: Includes the space between a building's front facade and the pedestrian zone that should allow pedestrians to window shop and enter or exit a building without disrupting pedestrian travel. This area may accommodate additional pedestrian amenities like outdoor dining.

(B) Pedestrian Zone: Also considered the sidewalk, provides space for pedestrian travel and should be continuous, comfortable, and safe for all pedestrians, and be free of any obstructions or street furnishings.

(C) Amenity/Furnishing Zone: Provides a buffer between the pedestrian zone and the roadway and allows dedicated space for pedestrian amenities—such as street trees, bike racks, bus stops—and other street elements such as utility poles and street signs.

(D) Roadway Zone: Provides, at a minimum, dedicated space for vehicular traffic, but with extra space, may accommodate vehicular parking, bus lanes/stations, cycling lanes, etc. The roadway zone should be designed to encourage safe driving speeds and pedestrian awareness.

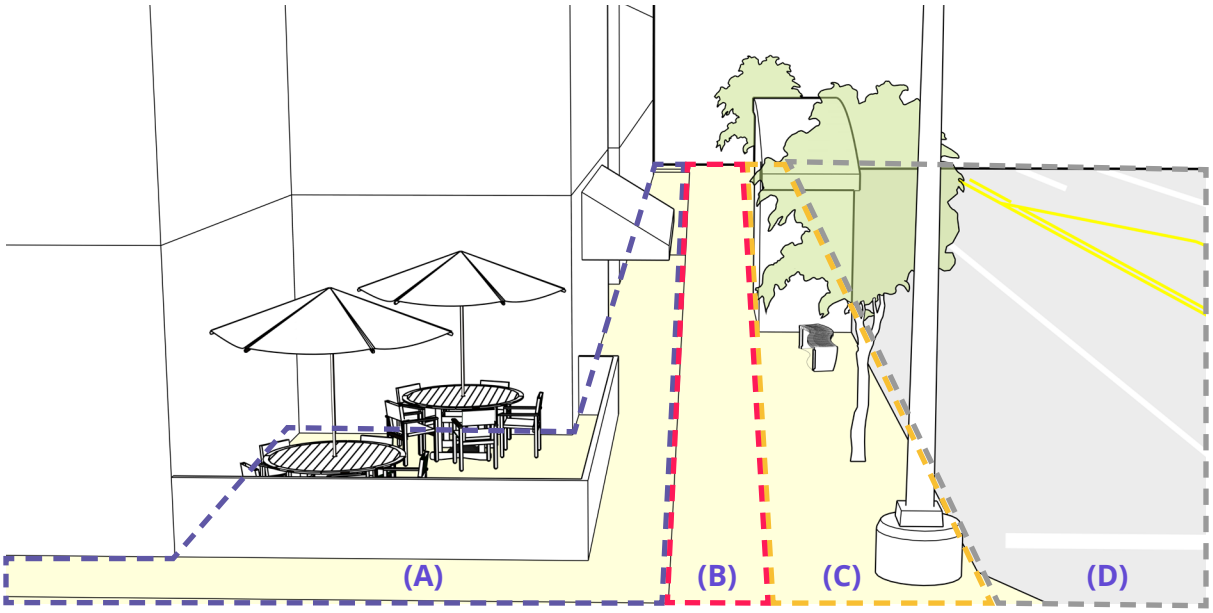


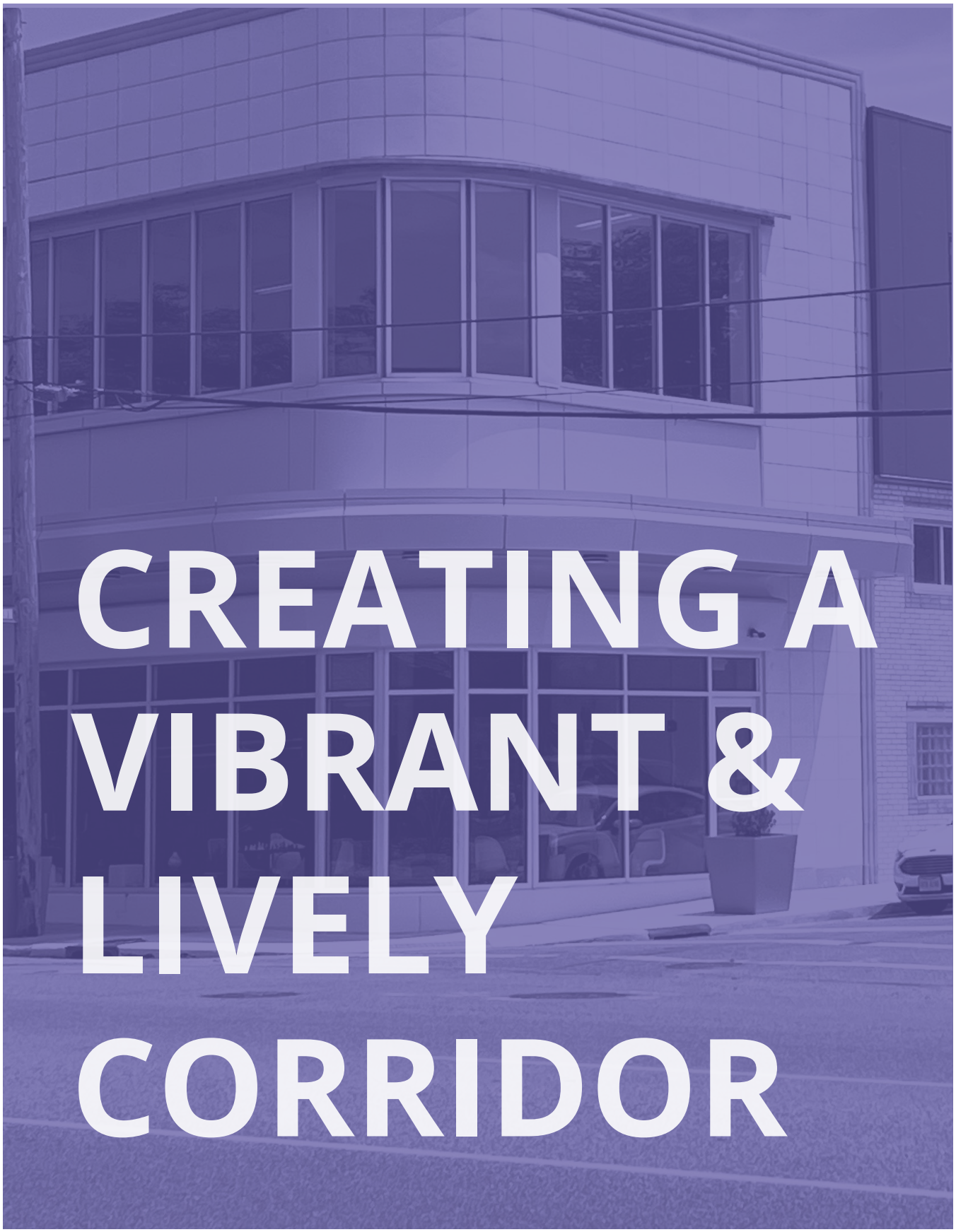






FIGURE 5 | STREET COMPONENTS

In each of the above examples, the street components are clearly defined which help contribute to comfortable walking environments. The size of the different street components vary by context. For example, the bottom left example has a wider Amenity/Furnishing Zone which provides extra buffer for pedestrians on a busy road. The bottom right example has landscaping in the frontage zone, which allows for a more private and intimate setting along a residential area.



CREATING A VIBRANT & LIVELY CORRIDOR

Source: Cuyahoga Planning

SECTION 3
DESIGN GUIDELINES

LAYOUT

The design guidelines are organized into eight topics:

- Orientation & Placement
- Massing & Scale
- Architectural Elements
- Fenestration
- Townhomes
- Pedestrian Amenities
- Parking
- Solar Energy Systems

A combination of graphics and images are provided to further illustrate the guidelines.

INTERPRETATION

When interpreting the design guidelines, the word ***"shall"*** signifies a mandatory requirement, one that is not discretionary; the word ***"should"*** is a preferred requirement; the word ***"may"*** signifies a permissive or discretionary requirement.

All words and terms used have their commonly accepted and ordinary meaning unless the context in which they are used clearly indicates the contrary or they are specifically defined in Section 4 of these Commercial Design Guidelines or in Title 5 of the East Cleveland Zoning Code.

3.1 ORIENTATION & PLACEMENT

Building orientation refers to the visually perceived direction of the front, rear, and side facades of a building. The orientation of buildings is important to minimize walking distances, provide interest and activity along a street, and shape the public realm.

(A) The front facade of new construction should be oriented to the primary street by having the building's entrance, primary windows, and facade details facing the street.

(B) The orientation and placement of buildings should contribute to a sense of enclosure and defined space by incorporating the following:

- **(1)** Placing buildings in close proximity to the sidewalk and providing easy access to pedestrians.
- **(2)** Incorporating public spaces, plazas, and parks in a way that centralizes and activates those spaces, such as by having windows and entrances face into the public spaces.

(C) Maximize the space on the lot by constructing buildings along the extent of the width of the lot or placing smaller buildings to one side. Placing buildings in the middle is discouraged. See diagram to the right.

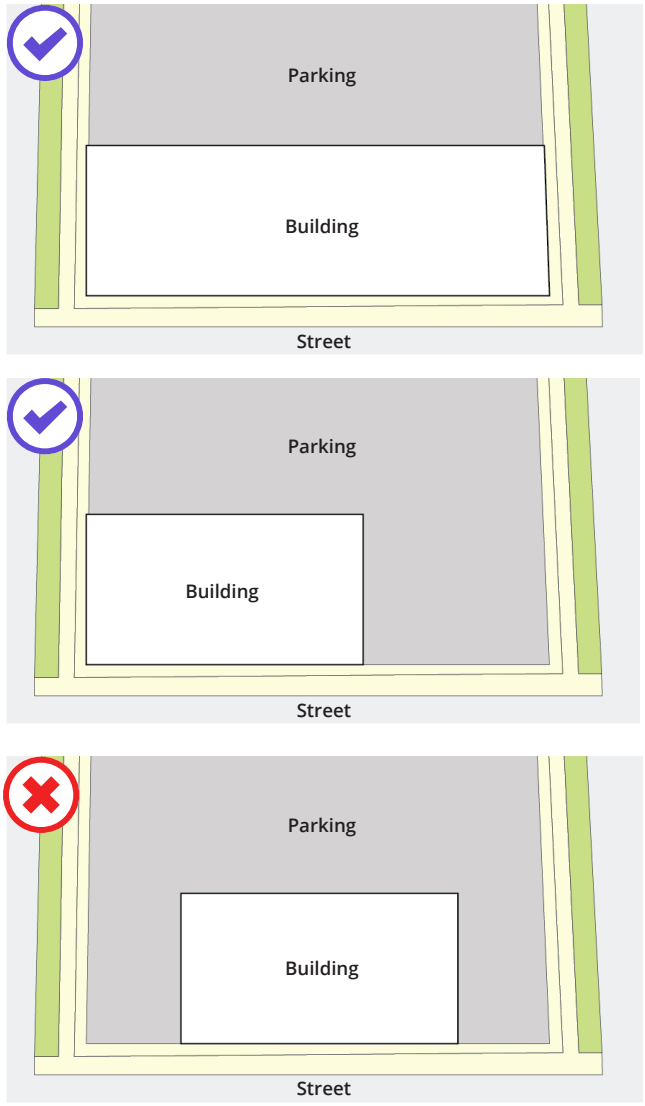


FIGURE 6 | BUILDING PLACEMENT

Building along the extent of the width of the lot is ideal as the continuous frontage frames the walking environment. Placing buildings to one side can help emphasize the corner and leave room for future development. Placing buildings in the middle makes the development feel disconnected and makes the walking environment less comfortable.



FIGURE 7 | CONTINUOUS FRONTAGE

The front facade of the buildings contribute to a sense of enclosure with continuous building frontage along the sidewalk.



FIGURE 8 | ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCE

A prominent entrance faces the primary street and is easily accessible from the sidewalk.



FIGURE 9 | ORIENTATION & PLACEMENT

The building and its entrance are oriented to the primary street. However, the building is placed towards the middle of the lot frontage with parking surrounding it on both sides, which makes it feel disconnected.

3.2 MASSING & SCALE

Massing and scale generally refer to the visual perception, form, and size of a structure. Massing and scale are directly affected through the footprint, lot coverage, and height of a building. The arrangement of different materials and parts of a building can also affect the perceived mass of a structure. In areas where there are few existing buildings, any new development will establish a pattern from which future development can take its cues. Because of this, matching what is existing becomes secondary to development standards outlined in the CO District and guidelines addressed in this section.

(A) Buildings should be scaled in a way that frames the street and leads to a comfortable pedestrian experience. A ratio of 1 increment of building height at minimum to 3 of street width is preferable for buildings fronting a primary street, such as Euclid Avenue.

(B) The height and bulk of proposed buildings and structures should be in scale and proportion with each other and not visually dominate the site or street.

(C) For larger projects, multiple buildings within a single project or the appearance of multiple buildings are preferable to monolithic buildings that take up the full block.

(D) The desired general development pattern in accordance with the East Cleveland Land Use Strategic Plan includes the following:

- **(1)** Structures should be larger in scale and density to support transit-oriented development closer to primary commercial and transit corridors, such as Euclid Avenue.
- **(2)** New construction should transition down in terms of size, massing, and scale as it gets farther into residential neighborhoods.

(E) Different techniques can be used to visually transition between buildings of different scales, including:

- **(1)** Stepping back upper stories or adjusting the roof pitch of larger massed buildings on the side where they are adjacent to smaller massed buildings.
- **(2)** Including additional buffer space between larger massed buildings and smaller massed buildings.
- **(3)** Including horizontal architectural details such as cornices and window frames on larger massed buildings that align with the roofline of the adjacent smaller massed buildings.
- **(4)** Using trees and other greenery to soften hard edges between differently massed buildings.

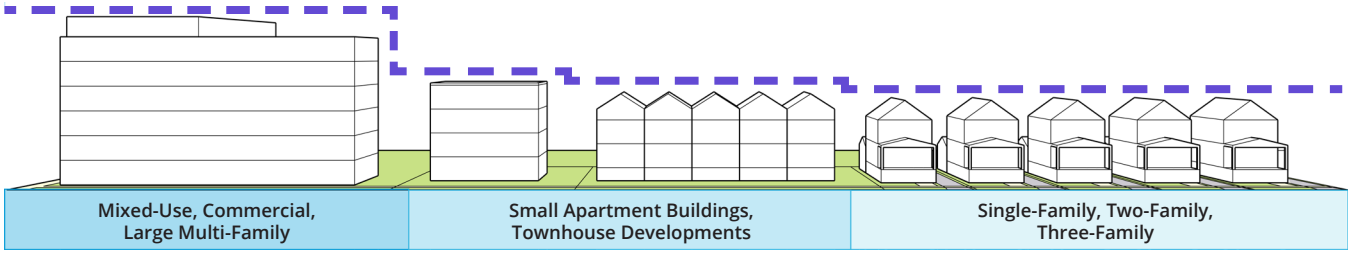


FIGURE 10 | DESIRED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

The development pattern shown above illustrates a pattern of stepping down in density and in height as buildings are located further from the primary street (to the left in the image).

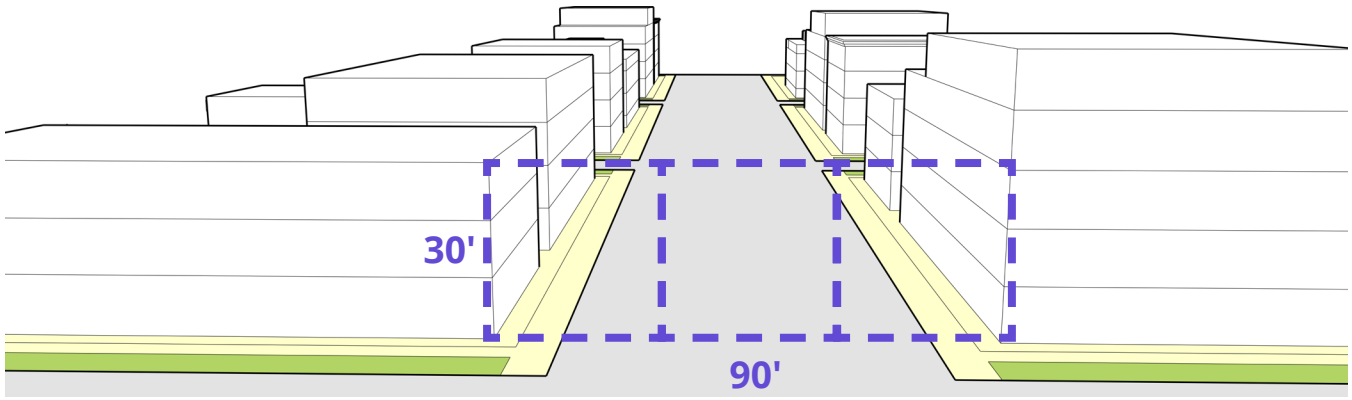


FIGURE 11 | HEIGHT-TO-WIDTH RATIO AND COMFORT

The height-to-width ratio can frame the pedestrian realm and greatly affect the perceived comfort of that space. Generally the minimum ratio of 1 increment of height to 3 of width is effective at creating a sense of enclosure leading to increased comfort. For example, if the right-of-way is 90 feet wide, the height of the front facade should be at minimum 30 feet.



FIGURE 12 | MULTIPLE BUILDINGS WITHIN A SINGLE PROJECT

Despite being a single building, Welleon located on the west side of Cleveland, is designed in a way that reduces its scale from street level by utilizing different materials and architectural breaks to create the appearance of multiple buildings.

3.3 ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

The architectural style of a building is a set of elements and characteristics that make it distinguishable or identifiable. It is not the purpose of these design guidelines to recommend a specific architectural style, but rather encourage the incorporation of architectural elements in an intentional manner that contributes to the visual interest and promotes interaction between pedestrians and the building.

(A) Facades that front primary and secondary streets should be given equal design consideration for architectural elements.

(B) Buildings that abut street corners should include architectural elements that highlight and emphasize the corner.

(C) Additional architectural elements such as bay windows, decorative shingles, varied exterior materials, or other forms of articulation should be included to add visual variety to the street facing facade of a structure. The use of these architectural elements should be regular, predictable, and consistent with the chosen architectural style of the building.

(D) Blank walls that are exposed four (4) feet in height or higher above the finished grade shall include blank wall screening treatments such as trees, shrubs, planters, or other creative screening design solutions.

(E) Particular attention should be given to the placement and landscaping around utilities such that they are screened from public view.

(F) Simulated exterior finishes, such as artificial stone should be of high quality that successfully mimics the natural material and be durable to the Northeast Ohio climate. Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS) siding or painted brick are prohibited.

(G) Vertical elements, such as columns and pilasters, should not obstruct views from windows and routes from entries.

(H) A roof's form, style, pitch, and material should be compatible with the chosen architectural style of the building.

(I) Large scale commercial and mixed-use buildings should include architectural or material-based articulation to reduce the perceived mass of the building while still aligning with the built context of the block. Consider the following techniques to achieve this:

- **(1)** Incorporate architectural elements such as recessed or protruding entrances, balconies, bay windows, brick patterns, etc.
- **(2)** Use color or material-based articulation across the front face of a building.
- **(3)** Ensure primary and accent building materials visually complement each other in terms of color, texture, and pattern.
- **(4)** Ensure the pattern or repetition of any chosen architectural feature, recess, projection, or break is regular, intentional, and predictable.



FIGURE 14 | ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS THAT EMPHASIZE THE CORNER

Utilizing subtle angles, this building successfully emphasizes the street corner, and serves as a focal point of the building and surrounding area.



FIGURE 13 | BUILDING FRONTING PRIMARY AND SECONDARY STREETS

This building, located on Cleveland's west side extends architectural design elements to both the primary and secondary facades, ensuring both streets have architectural details.

3.4 FENESTRATION

Fenestration refers to a building's windows and doors. Fenestration is an important component of a building's facade as its style and placement can impact the building's perceived scale and its relationship to the street and to other buildings. Fenestration should be designed to be inviting while preserving privacy to adjacent buildings.

(A) Within the same level (base, middle, and top) windows and doors should be related in design, operating type, proportion, and trim. Windows and doors should be proportional and to scale with the rest of the building.

(B) Fenestration should be used as architectural elements that add relief or visual interest to the facade and wall surface.

(C) Fenestration should be a key component of the architecture of a building and should relate and enhance the chosen architectural style of the building.

(D) Primary first floor facades should include transparent fenestration on at least 60% of the ground floor facade, between 2 and 8 feet above the finished grade.

(E) Transparent fenestration should provide unobstructed views at least 5 feet into the building where there are *Active Uses at Street Level*, as defined in the Commercial Overlay District (CO).

ENTRANCES

(F) The primary entrance on the front facade of a building should be inviting to pedestrians.

(G) Entries to retail and commercial uses should be prominent and clearly identifiable to pedestrians.

(H) Secondary entrances may be located facing the rear parking area, but primary retail entrances should always be located along the primary street where possible or secondary street when necessary.

(I) For corner lots, entrances may be oriented at a 45-degree angle, or front the primary street but include transparency on the secondary street to encourage pedestrian access and maximize visibility from both the primary street and secondary street.

WINDOWS

(J) On ground floors, areas with *Active Uses at Street Level*, as defined in the CO District, should be given preference for window placement.

(K) In areas of the ground floor where windows are not feasible, blank wall screening treatments such as trees, shrubs, planters, or other creative screening design solutions are required.

(L) Windows on the ground floor of a townhouse, apartment building, or residential portion of a mixed-use building should be designed in a way that preserves privacy for residents.

(M) Middle floors should be articulated differently than the ground floor, with window openings that are sized appropriately to the floor's use.

(N) On middle and top floors, windows should be evenly distributed and regularly placed, to avoid large stretches of blank facades.

(O) Reflective glazing is discouraged on all windows.



FIGURE 15 | RELATED FENESTRATION

This building includes windows and doors with a related design and trim within each of its base, middle, and top levels.



FIGURE 16 | TRANSPARENCY ON THE FIRST FLOOR FACADES

The first floor of this building has at least 60% transparency on the first floor, allowing for greater interaction between the interior and exterior of the building.



FIGURE 18 | EMPHASIZING THE CORNER

This building emphasizes its corner, providing pedestrian access from both the primary and secondary streets. This is technically not the entrance, however it still feels inviting to pedestrians.



FIGURE 17 | CORNER LOT ENTRANCE

This corner building has a storefront entrance located on the primary street, and transparency that extends to the secondary street to encourage pedestrian access and maximize visibility.

3.5 TOWNHOMES

Within the CO District, townhouse developments are allowed as a permitted or conditional use depending on location. However the design of townhomes that front a commercial or transit corridor should strike a balance between ensuring privacy for residents and being designed in a way that encourages a comfortable walking environment.

(A) Townhomes should take design cues from adjacent commercial or mixed-use buildings in terms of massing, scale, and setbacks.

(B) Blank walls along the street frontage shall be avoided.

- **(1)** Townhomes may orient towards a common drive, small park, or common space. However, the unit closest to the street should be designed such that entrances, windows, porches, or other front facade elements face the street.
- **(2)** When a townhome is placed on a corner lot, fenestration, architectural detailing, windows, porches, or other front facade elements should face both streets.
- **(3)** When a townhome is placed on a corner lot, the primary entrances should face the primary street.

(C) All townhomes shall have a pedestrian path that connects the primary front entrance directly to a public sidewalk.

(D) When proposing multiple townhouse developments along the same street, each development should be visually distinguishable from each other.

(E) Windows and openings on the first floor of a townhouse should be designed in a way that preserves privacy for residents, while still encouraging a comfortable walking environment. This can be done through:

- **(1)** Utilizing stooped entrances so the first floor is sufficiently elevated from the sidewalk level.
- **(2)** Utilizing landscaping to screen first floor windows and soften hard edges.
- **(3)** Including fencing at the lot line to clearly define public and private space.
- **(4)** Recessing first floor windows or a portion of the front facade to ensure adequate privacy.

(F) Within a townhouse development of more than three units, each unit should have some differences to be visually distinguishable. To visually distinguish units within a townhouse development, consider varying some of the following elements:

- **(1)** Roof lines or roof pitches.
- **(2)** Facade material or color.
- **(3)** Fenestration trim.
- **(4)** Individual unit setbacks.
- **(5)** Architectural protrusions such as bay windows, porches, or balconies.

(G) Attached garages placed in the rear of the townhouse are preferred.



FIGURE 19 | DESIGNING FOR PRIVACY WHILE STILL ENCOURAGING STREET INTERACTION

The above two examples of ways to utilize design elements to keep first floor privacy while still emphasizing interaction with the street. Utilizing stoops, first floor recessions, and landscape screening (left), and decorative fencing to define public and private space (right) can allow townhomes to seamlessly fit with commercial development without compromising privacy.

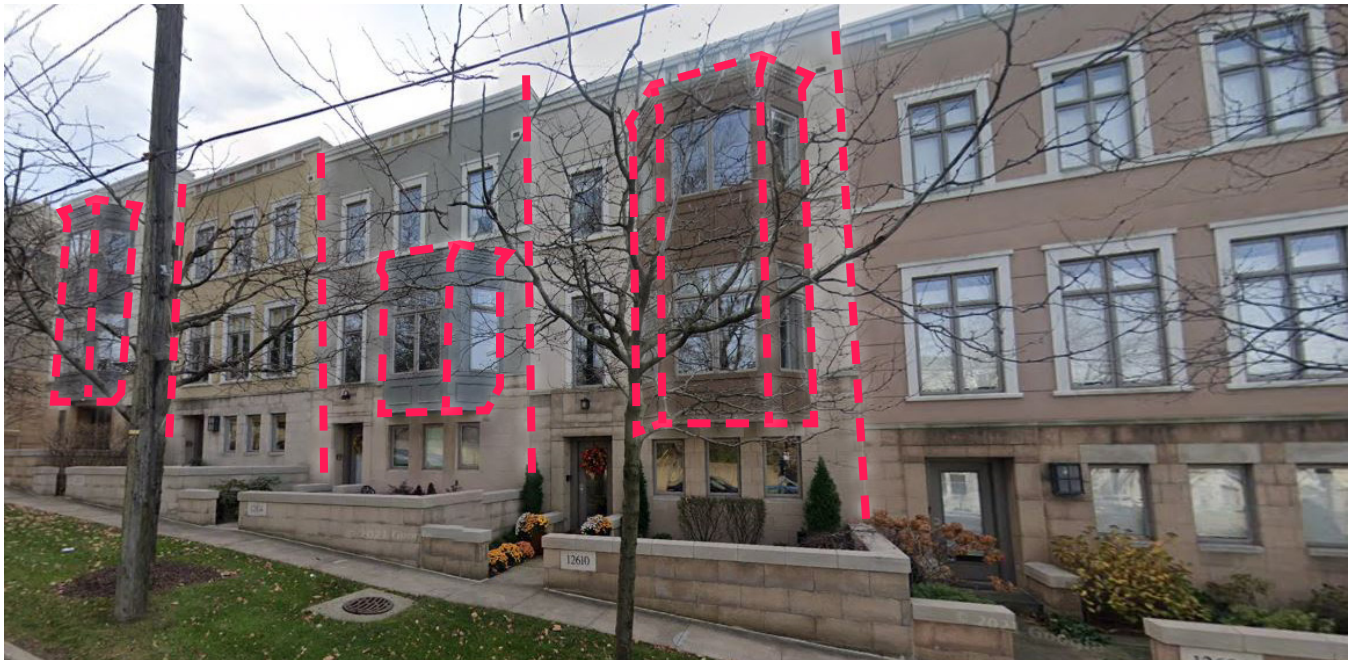


FIGURE 20 | VISUALLY DISTINGUISHABLE UNITS

These townhouses have visually distinguishable units that feature differing bay window protrusions and facade colors, while at the same time keeping consistent window trims, cornices, and other horizontal articulation that allows the building to re visually cohesive.

3.6 PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

Developing a commercial street that is safe, comfortable, and interesting to pedestrians is of the utmost importance to increase foot traffic. This supports a lively commercial center, builds a stronger sense of community, supports active living, and enhances public safety. Providing pedestrian amenities enhances the overall experience, therefore encouraging pedestrians to stay longer, frequent more often, and connect with others.

(A) Overhead weather protection—such as awnings, overhangs, and arcades—are encouraged and should be appropriately located to clearly define building entries and orient towards pedestrian areas.

- **(1)** Awnings and overhangs should be made of durable material and coordinate with the architectural style of the building.
- **(2)** Awnings and overhangs should be located in conjunction with doors, windows, and other openings, and should not be wrapped around buildings in continuous bands.

(B) Pedestrian amenities such as benches, lighting, trash, and recycling receptacles should be conveniently placed together and should be placed in a regular pattern along the primary street.

(C) Pedestrian amenities—such as planters, landscaping, street trees, lighting, trash and recycling receptacles, bike racks, or seating—should be placed in the Amenity Zone and/or the Frontage Zone to ensure at least five feet of unobstructed pedestrian travel.

- **(1)** Street trees and landscaping should be prioritized in the Amenity Zone, however where there is no Amenity Zone, planters and other landscaping should be considered in the Frontage Zone.

(D) Outdoor dining and seating areas are encouraged in the Frontage Zone and should consider bright colored furniture to add eye-catching elements.

(E) Existing and future transit stops should be considered in the layout of new developments to ensure convenient transit access and use.

- **(1)** The location of entrances, walkways, and pedestrian amenities should allow for convenient, safe, and comfortable pedestrian access from a transit stop to the site.
- **(2)** The site should allow for enough space to accommodate a transit stop while maintaining at least five feet of unobstructed pedestrian travel along a sidewalk.
- **(3)** Overhead weather protection may be expanded, especially at the corner or where there is a nearby transit stop to provide a covered waiting environment for transit riders.

(F) Plazas and parks should be designed to be welcoming, interesting, and comfortable by including the following elements:

- **(1)** Provide a mix of hardscape and landscaping (such as trees, grassy areas, or planters).
- **(2)** At a minimum provide amenities such as seating, weather protection/shade, and trash/recycling receptacles.
- **(3)** Consider including public art and refer to the Connect EC Report for community-desired themes and ideas.













FIGURE 21 | KEY PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

Above are examples of pedestrian amenities—such as overhead weather protection, inviting plazas, bright colored seating, accessible transit stops, outdoor dining, and landscaping— within different contexts that contribute to a comfortable and engaging pedestrian environment.

3.7 PARKING

Parking in this section refers to off-street dedicated parking areas including enclosed structures/ parking structures and outdoor paved lots. It is important for driveways and parking structures to not be visually or physically imposing to support a pedestrian-oriented environment.

(A) Parking areas and structures shall be located to the rear or side of the principal building.

(B) Parking structures shall be secondary structures on the lot and shall not overshadow the principal building in scale or design.

(C) Parking structures, parking spaces, and driveways should be designed to be as discreet as possible and limit impediments to the pedestrian zone.

(D) Outdoor paved parking areas should be minimized and should include landscaping to reduce environmental consequences.

- **(1)** Consider alternative durable paving material such as brick pavers, stamped concrete, or porous asphalt to help with better water filtration.
- **(2)** Consider lighter colored material to minimize heat coming from the pavement.
- **(3)** Internal landscape islands should be distributed in a regular pattern throughout the parking lot and designed to provide a pedestrian path through the outdoor parking area to the building entrance.

(E) Parking structures visible from the primary street should positively contribute to the visual interest and pedestrian activity and should not be distinguishable from other commercial buildings by incorporating the following:

- **(1)** The base level facade of a parking structure that faces a primary street should be wrapped with an active use with a depth of at least 15 feet.
- **(2)** Parking structure facades, especially on the base level, that face a secondary street should avoid blank walls and be screened using landscaping, public art, or some form of facade articulation.
- **(3)** The first floor height of the garage should match the first floor of other nearby buildings fronting the street.
- **(4)** Parking structure ramps should by minimally visible, if at all.

(F) Pedestrian entrances to a parking structure are encouraged and should be easily accessible and identifiable from the primary street.

(G) Parking structure openings for vehicular exit and entrance should be placed on the secondary street and should minimize potential conflicts with pedestrians.



FIGURE 22 | PARKING LOT PLACEMENT

The parking lot is de-emphasized as it is placed in the back with the vehicular entrance from a secondary street and is visually shielded from the primary street by a public plaza with trees, planters, and pedestrian amenities.



FIGURE 23 | PARKING GARAGE SCREENING

The parking garage (not shown) is located within the development, with vehicular entrances located in the back and more active uses, pedestrian elements, wayfinding signage and landscaping along the primary street frontage which contribute to a pedestrian friendly environment.



FIGURE 24 | PERMEABLE PAVERS

The parking lot uses light-colored permeable pavers which leads to better water filtration and minimizes heat.

3.8 SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

Solar energy systems—including those that are integrated into a building, roof-mounted, or ground-mounted—provide the ability to power a building through sustainable means, and they are encouraged to be included throughout East Cleveland. Design guidelines for solar energy systems aim to balance aesthetic concerns and maintenance needs with siting requirements for effective use and energy expectations.

(A) Solar potential should be considered for new developments as rooftop solar panels and ground-mounted solar are strongly encouraged.

  (1) Solar canopies over parking areas (also called solar carports) are also encouraged as they provide better usage of existing space, do not require building alterations, and can improve customer parking experience by protecting visitors from the sun, rain, and snow.

(B) Solar panels should be designed in a manner that minimizes their impact on adjacent properties and view from the public right-of-way.

  (1) Solar panels should have an anti-reflective coating to limit glare and reflection.

  (2) The angle of solar carports and ground-mounted solar panels should be adjusted to limit glare into adjacent properties while ensuring they re sufficiently productive.

  (3) Rooftop solar panels and all accompanying equipment should be compatible with the color of the building's materials, and panels should be arranged in rectangular form.

(C) Rooftop solar panels should be located on the side or rear planes of a roof; however, they are allowed on the front-facing plane of the roof when necessary for functionality.

(D) Rooftop solar panels shall be placed in a manner that maintains access to all utilities and accessory features such as chimneys and vents.

(E) Ground-mounted solar should not be located in the front yard. Ground-mounted solar should be located in the rear yard, but shall conform to all setback regulations when oriented at minimum design tilt, except as otherwise allowed for building mechanical systems.

(F) Ground-mounted solar shall not exceed 15 feet in height when oriented at maximum tilt.



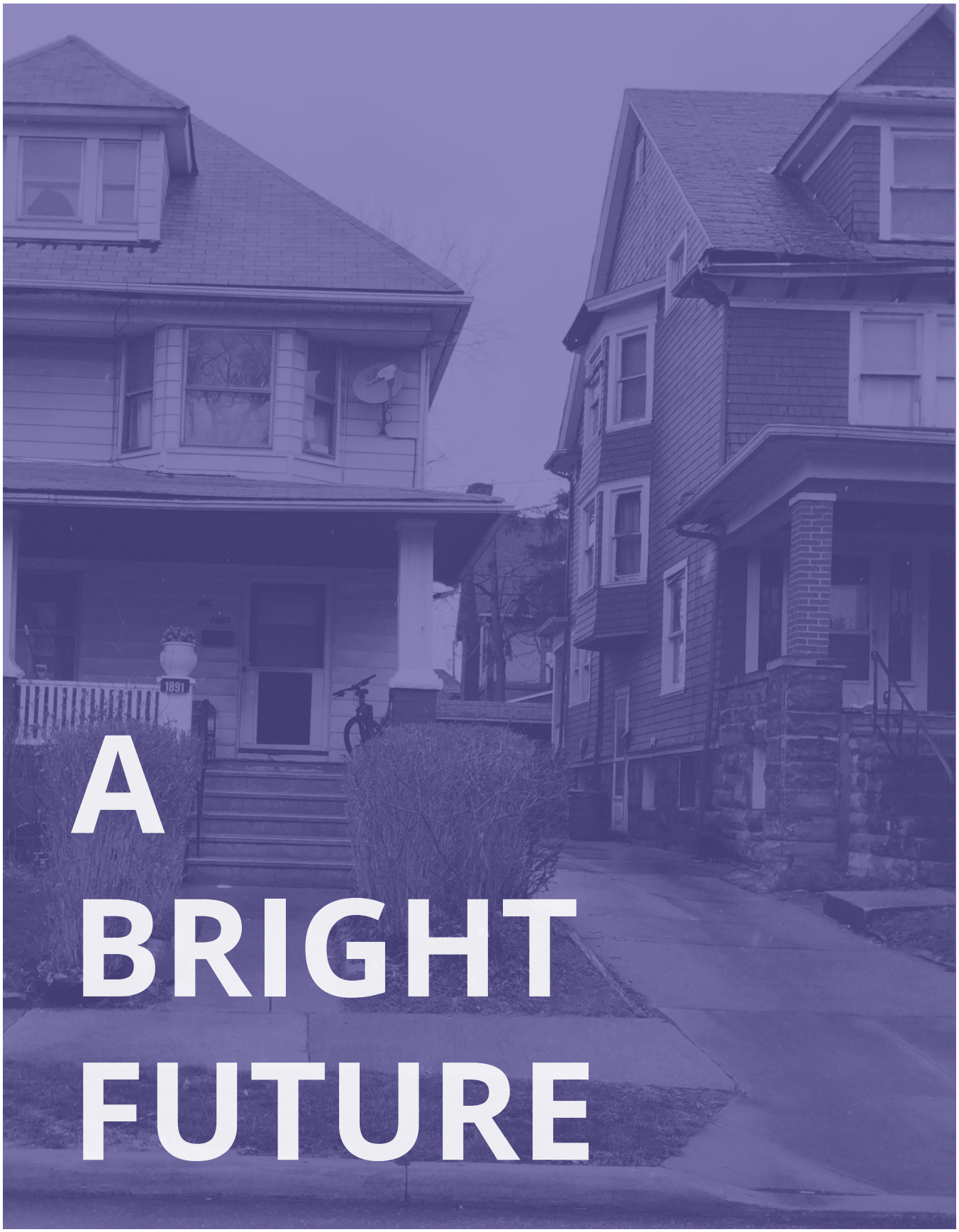
FIGURE 25 | SOLAR CANOPY

This solar canopy is placed over the rear parking lot of a building which provides shade for cars in the parking lot and provides clean energy for the development.



FIGURE 26 | ROOF-MOUNTED SOLAR PANELS & SOLAR CANOPY

This mixed-use building maximizes its solar energy capture by having both roof-mounted solar panels and a small solar canopy its parking.



A BRIGHT FUTURE

Source: Cuyahoga County Land Bank

SECTION 4
DEFINITIONS

The East Cleveland Commercial Design Guidelines use a variety of architectural and design related terms. The following section defines commonly used terms in this document. If not appearing in this section, refer to Titles 1 and 5 of the East Cleveland Zoning Code.

(A) Architectural Break. Any break in the plane of a building facade, achieved through facade recesses, protrusions, or other architectural elements.

(B) Architectural Style. A set of architectural elements and characteristics that together make a building distinctive and reflective of a particular design tradition.

(C) Articulation. The addition of architectural detailing or the variation in the building facade to give more dimension and prominence to certain design elements, and divide the building facade into meaningful, distinct parts.

(D) Bay Windows. A window that projects outside the line of a building as well as the compartment it is located in.

(E) Building Frontage. The length of a building facade measured in a single straight parallel line with the abutting street(s) or parking lot(s).

(F) Building Orientation. The visually perceived direction of the front, rear, and side facades.

(G) Compatible. The ability of different architectural components to exist together without conflict.

(H) Context. The conditions that surround a particular site, including other buildings and structures, streets, public spaces, and natural features.

(I) Cornice. Ornamental molding on an exterior wall over the top of a door, window, or along a roofline.

(J) Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS). A non-load-bearing exterior wall cladding system that consists of an insulation board attached either adhesively, mechanically, or both, to the substrate; an integrally reinforced base coat; and a textured protective finish coat.

(K) Facade. Any exterior face of a building. The front facade is designated by its relationship to the street.

(L) Fenestration. A building's or structure's windows and doors.

(M) Fenestration, transparent. The transparent glass surface of windows and doors that allows visual permeability into and out of the building. Also referred to as “glazing.”

(N) Finished Grade. The finished ground level adjoining the building at all exterior walls.

(O) Gable Roof. A roof type with a triangular shape with the base resting atop the house and two slopes that meet at a peak, which creates a flat-faced end (a gable) shaped like an "A" .

(P) Hipped Roof. A roof type which consists of four slopes that meet at a peak and does not have a flat-faced end or gable.

(Q) Internal Landscape island. Landscaped areas distributed in a regular pattern throughout a parking lot.

(R) Massing. The combined effect on overall perceived size influenced by the height, width and form of the building or structure.

(S) Primary Street. The sole or principal public road that provides access to the property. Where a property has two or more street frontages, the primary street is that with the highest classification, as determined by the Federal Highway Administration's Road Function Classification system. If multiple streets abutting a property have the same road function classification, then all streets with the highest classification shall be identified as primary streets. The following streets shall always be considered primary streets: Euclid Avenue Superior Avenue.

(T) Proportion. The relationship between the building's different architectural components to each other and to the building itself, of which their size and placement can contribute to the building having a more vertical or horizontal emphasis.

(U) Roofline. The uppermost line or point of the facade or parapet of a flat roof structure, or the lower edge of an eve, gable or rake of a sloped roof structure.

(V) Roof Pitch. Generally defined by using a ratio of how many inches a roof rises vertically for every 12 inches it runs horizontally.

(W) Scale. The real and perceived size of a structure or building which is impacted by a building's massing and proportions. See massing and proportion.

(X) Screening. A method of visually shielding, obscuring, or concealing one abutting or nearby structure or use from another using fencing, walls, berms, or densely planted vegetation.

(Y) Secondary Street. Any street that abuts a proposed development that is not determined to be a primary street.

(Z) Solar Energy Systems. A structurally integrated design feature or a device that can be roof-mounted, ground-mounted, or built as a canopy meant for the generation or storage of electricity from sunlight, or the collection, storage, and distribution of solar energy using a variety of techniques including the use of photovoltaic panels to harness the energy.

(AA) Stoop. A raised structure that is attached to and protrudes from any facade of a building that serves as part of an entryway of the building.

(AB) Street Side. A single side of a dedicated street including properties and public right-of-way.

(AC) Streetscape. The appearance of a street shaped by surrounding natural and man-made elements such as: building front facades, landscaping, sidewalks, street furniture, signage, and street lighting.

(AD) Townhouse Development. A residential development that consists of three or more dwellings placed side-by-side and that share walls with other dwellings on one or both sides.

(AE) Walkability. The design of the street and buildings that prioritizes the pedestrian's travel experience including their safety, enjoyment and convenience. It emphasizes the relationship and interaction of buildings to the street.

(AF) Walking Environment. Includes walkways, paths, sidewalks and other pedestrian right-of-ways and the surrounding elements that impact the experience along these paths. See Streetscape.

(AG) Wrapping. Placing active uses (such as retail establishments, lobbies, gyms, meeting rooms, etc.) at the street-level of a parking structure facing the primary street.


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