COMMERCIAL DESIGN & RESTRICTIONS (CDR’s)

These commercial design & restrictions have been prepared by the Development Review Committee and adopted by the Board of Directors of the Highlands Ranch Community Association. The Development Review Committee reserves the right to add to or modify these design & restrictions at its discretion. Please check with the Community Improvement Services Department for the latest edition.
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I. BACKGROUND

It has been said that, “High quality design is the lifeline of The Highlands Ranch Community. In 1995, The Highlands Ranch Community founders understood the inherent relationship between community aesthetics and quality of life. They wanted to ensure that the Highlands Ranch Community would continue to grow as an attractive, economically viable place for residents, businesses and visitors.

Since then, the Highlands Ranch Community has experienced tremendous growth. It is home to premier shopping and dining experiences; popular entertainment opportunities; and a wide range of attractive residential neighborhoods. The Highlands Ranch Community has remarkable access to highways and the light rail service. Natural bluffs form the southern backdrop of the Highlands Ranch Community and are revered for their natural beauty, open space and recreational opportunities.

Despite the growth of the Highlands Ranch Community, residents and leaders have held fast to the original premise of creating and maintaining an attractive, distinctive community. The overall appearance of the community has been lauded by residents and visitors alike as one of the reasons they chose to locate here. It is within this context that high quality design of new development, redevelopment and open space is encouraged.

The Highlands Ranch Community Association (HRCA), has therefore adopted “Commercial Design & Restrictions” (CDR’s) as a tool to achieve and maintain the integrity of the community.

II. APPLICABILITY

A. The CDR’s apply to all new development and redevelopment in the Highlands Ranch Community that is subject to a Site Improvement Plan (SIP) or SIP amendment. This means they apply to virtually all land uses with the exception of single-family detached residential projects for which the “Residential Improvement Guidelines” properly address.

B. Recognizing that there are variations in the nature and scope of each particular project the CDR’s are NOT meant as an all-inclusive, one-size-fits-all document. Certain guidelines may be more appropriate than others, depending on the context, scale and use of the project or unique circumstances. For example, community, cultural, and recreation uses may have unique design or programming needs that would suggest a more creative or distinctive design approach. Other examples include medical, research and data centers, which may have certain functions that dictate certain architectural forms and treatments. Other uses may involve innovations in design and construction that are not necessarily anticipated by these CDR’s and may prompt other considerations. HRCA staff will work with all applicants early in the project review process to discuss the proposed usage and offer suggested design approach that will facilitate conformance to the enumerations of the CDR’s.
III. SUBMITTAL AND REVIEW PROCESS

A. Applicants are strongly encouraged to meet with HRCA staff early on in the design process to identify key issues and address concerns. At this “pre-submittal” stage, applicants may present design concepts through preliminary sketches, photographs, or similar materials that lend themselves to a productive dialogue with staff. This may be accomplished through email communication and/or meeting(s) with staff.

B. Addressing issues early will provide a more expedited review process as the submittal proceeds to the referral stage for Development Review Committee (DRC) review and consideration. The review process timelines for consideration may vary depending on such factors as project scope, complexity and location. Staff will consult with the applicant as to the specific process details during the pre-submittal discussion.

C. A Site Improvement Plan can typically be processed in 45 days or less from the date the application is formally submitted to the DRC for final approval, provided that all pertinent material is properly submitted by the applicant and responses to staff inquiries are received in timely manner.

IV. NOTICE OF DESIGN

To help reviewers understand the design concept, applicants are asked to submit a “Notice of Design” along with a proposed listing of materials. This is a narrative description (maximum two-pages), that outlines how the project is responsive to the CDR’s. It is an opportunity to identify key aspects, unique features or distinguishing characteristics of the design. It is also an opportunity to illustrate any project constraints that pose challenges to meeting key guidelines and how the design balances those challenges with the HRCA standards.

V. COMPLIANCE

The Douglas County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code call for projects to be “in conformance with the Community Design and Restrictions”. Projects are found to be in conformance with CDR’s when all concepts are responsive to the overall intent and vision embodied in the CDR’s, as adopted by the HRCA. Variations may be addressed by the DRC based on the unique use, characteristics and considerations of each project.
If, in the course of the review/approval process, there are any questions as to the intent or meaning of any word, phrase, section or chapter of the CDR’s, the final decision-making entity (the Design Review Committee and the Board of Directors, as applicable) shall render the official interpretation.

VI. CHARACTERISTIC

A. Relative to the context and characteristics of the natural surroundings and previously approved developments, the CDR’s herewith reinforce the desirable components and features in the area by providing an efficient, functional and attractive project that is well-integrated with the surrounding area.

1. Highlands Ranch is a community of many different neighborhoods with unique and distinctive development characteristics, each with their own qualities and attributes. These areas include traditional residential neighborhoods, a centralized shopping center, and numerous commercial pods located within neighborhood corridors, and transit-oriented developments with emerging commercial centers.
2. Thoughtful consideration of all neighborhood characteristics must take place to truly appreciate the overall concept of our planned community. The HRCA supports the plans and designs that will enhance and complement the existing infrastructure in relationship to the community at-large. For example: applicants should be familiar with the uses, amenities, important views and transportation options in the surrounding area; observe how people access and use the area at various times of day; note the architectural features and development patterns that define the character of the area, and be familiar with plans and sub-association leases and “Supplemental Declarations” that govern the proposed site.

3. Projects should provide comfortable transitions of scale and character with the surrounding area. Adjoining sites and buildings should relate in terms of building massing and heights, landscape patterns and connections; fostering a comfortable and inviting environment.

   a. Projects should be designed in a way that compliment and contribute to the uniqueness of the Community. This may include adaptation of the site plan template or corporate prototype architecture and colors that would respond to
centers character conditions. Projects should demonstrate a balance between the need for strong, corporate or branding identity (as applicable), yet support the integrity of local character.

b. Creation of a distinctive and unique setting: Development should be inclusive of concepts that promote defined projects as attractive destinations within the community. All projects should create or link with open spaces, trails and amenities that promote active or passive public uses. The design of amenities that provide distinction to the project such as artistic bike racks, public seating, artwork, and creative landscaping approaches are highly encouraged.

c. Site characteristics: Utilization of site location prominent features and unique characteristics to guide how the plan is integrated into site should take advantage of certain elements that could add distinction, while eliminating undesirable aspects. Design considerations should also promote strategies that enhance and preserve the views of prominent natural or built landmarks.

VII. PLANNING

A. Visibility: Projects that are highly visible from street venues should relate to the street in both visual and functional viability; emphasizing pedestrian connections, coordinated landscaping and aesthetic presence. Some sites may contain “high profile” designs with a need for prominent identity; while other sites may be better suited to a less complicated, but nonetheless high quality design that relates to the center or area as a whole.

B. Entrance: Consideration of things like entry monuments, landscaped medians, special lighting, unique paving, fencing, low walls, artwork, planters or other landscape elements to aid in defining an entrance setting.
C. Projects Continuation (Phased): All phased projects will be constructed with the perimeters of the sites visible to the public and shall be finished with final landscaping, lighting and streetscape elements as approved with the SIP. Future development shall be graded and seeded with natural grasses along with temporary irrigation.

VIII. RELATIONSHIP TO STREETS

A. Enhance street corridors and views: The relationship to the street can contribute and enhance the visual strength of the overall street corridor and draw people into the project. Consideration of extending “similar” types trees, landscape strip treatment, artwork, streetscape elements and lighting to complement the area overall. The creation of focal points through building placement, special architecture, special landscaping, mountain views, amenities or similar landmarks lend to strong aesthetic relationships of existing street venues.

B. Street edge: Notwithstanding applicable zoning regulations governing setbacks, the arrangement of one-and two-story buildings should be at or near the street edge in order to screen parking, define street edges, reinforce a sense of place and activate
pedestrian activity. Taller buildings may be setback or stepped-back farther from the street to provide a comfortable pedestrian scale and relate to the scale of adjacent buildings.

C. Corner sites. Corner sites should relate to the street. Buildings situated at the corner can serve as gateways or focal points and should be used to their greatest advantage including considerations for pedestrian access. Frame the intersection with appropriate building massing, landscape treatment and high quality architectural design. Service areas should be located away from the corner.

IX. BLENDING OF ARCHITECTURE

A. A concentrated effort of design should be prevalent to garnish a good fit between old and new or redeveloped projects, particularly in places where similar architectural character or themes have been applied. Take care to introduce fresh, updated solutions that also respect the overall scale and character of the area. This may include use of compatible building proportions, a complementary color or material, unified signage, way finding or streetscape elements, or similar measures.
B. Design quality is an important metric in the continued development of the Highlands Ranch Community. Some venues may require a more distinctive, artistic or creative architecture than others. For example, some shopping center areas may have separate design standards with unified themes and similar characteristics that lend themselves to certain design strategies. Consultation with staff will help to ensure your project meets the noted standards found at www.hrcaonline.org.

X. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Native environmental features on and around the site should be considered at the earliest phase of the project development. The preservation of such will enhance the project while mitigating impacts of development.

A. Mitigation of environmental impacts:

1. Considerations of environmental factors, such as topography, drainage, vegetation, solar orientation, natural ventilation, and natural day lighting of interior and exterior spaces, protection from snow and wind to reduce environmental impacts. Considerations about the site and building designs and energy consumption costs as well as providing comfortable public spaces should be prevalent.

2. Natural drainage should be integrated into the project design by incorporating them as project amenities, identification features, connections to trails, etc.

3. Retaining walls:
a. The visual impacts of retaining walls should be minimized by distributing them throughout the site and/or terracing them and incorporating landscaping on spaces between terraces.

b. Retaining walls shall consist of materials and colors that blend with the natural or constructed environments, as applicable, based on the context of the site. Wall finishes should consist of cut stone or architectural block and should be capped with a ledge stone for a finished appearance and dimension.

c. Where sculpted “shotcrete” walls are formed for retaining walls, special consideration shall be given to the application of forms, textures and colors to ensure blending of the walls with the natural landscape to the extent possible. The verticality of taller walls should further be reduced by incorporating horizontal ridges, patterns and shadowing effects.

4. Implement effective measures to reduce water consumption for every aspect of the project; i.e.; appropriate drainage and detention design; efficient irrigation/plumbing systems; and, use of minimal water-consumptive vegetation within landscape design.

5. Surface water and runoff of the pervious surface on-site is highly suggested. Vegetative ground cover, permeable pavers, decomposed granite and similar materials are encouraged. Use plant materials, bio-swales, and land form techniques.

6. Design storm water detention in ways that integrate into the overall landscape system and are visually appealing on the site. Encourage multiple uses such as
passive recreation or wildlife habitat on detention and retention efforts. Develop detention areas as amenities for enjoyment or active play areas while incorporating the landscaping plan throughout the site to provide a more natural and aesthetic appearance.

XI. ACCESS

A. Projects should promote convenience, efficiency, and mobility in all multi-modal transportation and safety designs that affect all users.

B. Mitigate conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians by limiting curb cuts along certain streets and building frontages. Share curb cuts and driveway access points among multiple developments or buildings when possible.

C. Design well-defined circulation systems within the sites and link users directly with entries, public spaces and connections to adjoining uses, trails, transit, and other pedestrian systems.

D. Sidewalks should be designed with ample width; accommodating pedestrian flow and circulation. Particularly in retail or mixed-use areas, sidewalks should be planned to accommodate multiple potential uses and functions at peak times, considering outdoor seating, landscaping, and lighting and related amenities. Ensure that site amenities do not impede the path of travel.

E. We encourage projects that are conducive to walking, bicycling and transit use by providing safe pedestrian environments and convenient amenities such as shade, seating, bike racks, etc. Avoid drive-through lanes; instead, use site design to encourage pedestrian access ease.

XII. PARKING

A. Design parking areas that serve both automobiles and pedestrians in a safe, convenient and attractive setting and eliminate/mitigate negative impacts with appropriate screening and design.

B. Designs should not under estimate or overstate the average demand levels. Projects proposing significantly more parking than the Community’s
minimum requirements may be subject to a parking variance, and may be required to construct parking structures to minimize the land area devoted to parking, create more walkable areas, and limit visual and environmental impacts of surface parking.

C. Surface parking should be designed to reduce the visual domination of all vehicles. Building configuration, landscaped parking islands and pedestrian routes should be utilized to break up surface lots.

D. The integration of systems for pedestrian routes within a project as well as connections to surrounding uses should be employed. Sidewalks, separated pathways, designated crosswalks and similar measures should be utilized to guide pedestrians and enhance routes with things like landscaping, low walls, signage, lighting or special paving.

E. Mitigate the visual impact of parked vehicles from streets and open space areas by locating parking at the rear of buildings, using low walls, berms, and landscaping inclusive of evergreen and deciduous trees.

F. Designs should be made to minimize heat island effects of paved areas by using medians, peninsulas, courtyards and pedestrian walkways landscaped with shade trees, and using paving materials such as concrete, with high solar reflectance, enhancing the visibility of the project.

XIII. Equipment Storage/Service Areas

A. Reduce the visual impact of service, storage and mechanical areas and related equipment from public spaces and ensure a well maintained property.

B. Designs that are visible to the public need to provide an appropriate level screening of such features through walls, plantings or other design treatments. ATM’s and similar public functions may be designed in more prominent locations for safety.

C. Air conditioners, fans, vents, antennas and network dishes will need to be effectively screened from adjacent grade-level views. All mechanical rooftop equipment shall be shown to scale on all building elevations and cross sections to adequately illustrate how effective screening will be achieved. Here is a listing of examples:

1. Placing units in the center of the roof area or away from prominent vantage points.

2. The parapet should be raised on all sides of the building to be as high as or higher than the highest mechanical unit or vent.

3. Secondary roof screening systems should be designed to be as high as or higher than the highest mechanical unit or vent.

4. Implement screening systems that enclose groups of units rather than each individual unit and that appears as an architectural feature of the overall building, using materials and colors compatible with the building.
D. Screening of ground-mounted equipment and components: These should be incorporated into the design of the building, located away from public areas or screened from public view with landscaping and/or screen walls.

1. Building drainage systems such as downspouts and pipes should be internal when/where possible and should be incorporated into the building design and screened or painted to be compatible with the building design.

2. Electrical transformers and similar above-ground utility equipment should be located to minimize visibility and/or should be painted or screened to reduce visual impacts; outdoor generators, coolers, permanent storage and similar functions should be located to minimize visibility and/or should be screened with masonry walls and/or landscaping that is compatible with the design of the project.

E. Trash/recycling receptacles should accommodate both standard trash and recycling services and shall be adequately sized and may be shared with other sites when feasible. These areas should be located to provide convenient access for service trucks without conflicting with pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

F. Trash dumpsters must be enclosed with an approved enclosure design consistent with the materials and colors of the building. Enclosure walls should include a cap or ledge along the tops. The enclosure must have a solid (or perforated) metal gate system that effectively screens the view of dumpsters and is powder coated or factory-finished in a complementary color to the project. The enclosure must be at least 20" higher than the dumpster or the enclosure shall have an approved cover. The enclosure shall be sized adequately to accommodate all dumpster types.

G. Drive-through lanes are not favorable and generally should be avoided to promote more walkable, compact development patterns. If necessary, drive-through lanes should be located and screened to reduce the prominence of the canopy and lighting, if any, and to reduce the visibility of stacked cars from the street. Strategies may include a combination of strategic location, integrated design, landscaping, berms and low walls. Canopies, menu boards, bollards and similar features related to drive-through areas should be coordinated with the design of the building and detailed on the Site Improvement Plan.

H. Shopping carts should have designated areas for short and long-term storage and returns to provide convenience for customers yet avoid conflict with pedestrians, parking or landscaping.

1. When exterior cart storage is located near an entry, it should be screened behind a masonry wall that matches the building materials and colors.

2. Cart returns in parking lots should relate to the design of the building or center they serve and shall not include advertising. Materials should be durable, resistant to chipping or fading and convey a sense of quality and permanence. Unfinished
aluminum framing, vinyl or plastic coverings and plastic form bumpers are not acceptable materials for cart returns.

XIV. PUBLIC SPACES

A. Parks, courtyards, pedestrian corridors, sidewalk cafes, outdoor seating, plazas and similar spaces for active or passive public uses are highly encouraged with all project designs. Understandably, there will be variation(s) with the scope and size of the spaces depending on the use and character of the project.

B. Public spaces should be located in prominent, accessible and safe locations and take advantage of adjacent amenities, pedestrian connections, views, and focal points.

C. Year-around activity areas should be oriented and designed to avoid intense direct sunlight in the summer and should provide features that account for varying seasonal and daylight/evening conditions. Design strategies should consider providing protection from sun and wind, moveable furnishings, climate control elements such as overhead weather protection or outdoor heaters, as well as pedestrian scaled lighting, water features, and site elements such as snow melt and removal.

D. All public spaces should offer safe and convenient access for wheelchairs (that meet current ADA standards) and strollers; provide simple way finding cues through signage, landscaping and paving; provide tactile experiences with changes in texture and surfaces; and provide adequate lighting and comfortable seating.

E. Materials utilized should be attractive, quality, durable materials such as stone, brick, integrally colored concrete and powder-coated/factory finished metals, as well as anti-graffiti coated elements, and other materials that resist chipping and fading. Patio umbrellas and awnings should be comprised of durable fabrics or other materials that relate to the design character of the project.

F. Water features should be designed to conserve and recycle water. With the exception of interactive spray fountains designed for children’s play areas, avoid fountain sprays due to evaporative loss. Avoid the appearance of dead space when a water feature is not in use.
XV. STREET/SIDEWALK EXPERIENCE

A. Create accessible, safe and inviting environments conducive to human interaction and activity at the street and sidewalk levels, with clear connections to building entries and edges.

B. Employ design strategies that foster accessibility. Projects should provide access for people of all ages and abilities in a way that is fully integrated with the project design (not tacked on). Consider including features that assist pedestrians in way finding and mobility such as level grades, textured paving surfaces, ample seating, appropriate lighting, clear signage and ramps for wheeled devices (wheelchairs, walkers, strollers, bicycles).

C. Projects shall incorporate streetscape features and amenities into the project that relate to the overall character of the project such as bike racks, trash receptacles, designated re-cycling receptacles, seating, and similar features for the convenience and comfort of the public. The use of street-scape design is recommended where projects interface with public areas such as along streets or open space areas, to help strengthen the relationship between the site and the larger community.

D. Foster safe environments through measures that allow for “eyes on the street”. Consider how sight lines, placement of doors, windows, balconies, street level uses, landscaping and lighting can encourage natural surveillance. Create or maintain unobstructed views at corners and along pathways. Walls and seating elements should be designed to deter skateboarding.

E. Weather protection should include elements such as awnings, canopies and shade trees that protect pedestrians from rain, snow or sun at places of concentrated activity, i.e. entries, transit stops or retail corridors. Such elements should complement the character and design of the building or area.

F. Consider a range of elements (overhead features, landscaped courtyards, arcades, raised planters, special paving, landscaping and lighting) near building entries and along storefronts that promote safe and comfortable interfaces between buildings and the public realm. Awnings, arcades, dining areas and galleries may encroach into the public sidewalk to within 5 feet of the curb, provided that structures clear the sidewalk vertically by at least 8 feet. Restrictions may apply based on right-of-way location and strong licensing provisions, as applicable.

G. Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors in residential projects. Residential projects should consider locating commonly used features or amenities such as group mailboxes, outdoor seating, clubhouses, or open spaces, in ways that encourage interaction.

H. Projects should consider enhancing the overall image of a property by upgrading utilitarian site elements such as sign posts, crosswalks, light pole bases and bollards beyond basic design. For example, if safety bollards are necessary in highly visible areas, they should be designed and colored to coordinate with the design of the
project. Utilitarian bollards painted with bright colors are not acceptable except in less visible service areas.

XVI. LIGHTING

A. Provide a coordinated program of lighting design. A hierarchy of project lighting should be provided, ranging from lighting of parking lots, pedestrian paths, landscaped areas and exterior building lighting. Main building entries and canopies should have the highest illumination levels on the site, followed by pedestrian spaces and routes.

B. Relate light fixture designs to the character of project. Accent lighting may be used to reinforce special architectural building features, blend into landscaping, or emphasize special design elements or art features. Lighting should be subdued and tasteful. Use parking lot and decorative pedestrian light poles and fixtures that are a design and color that complements the building and surrounding areas. Generally, black and silver colors are permitted.

C. Projects should limit overall site lighting to a low-level intensity and provide cut-off and powder coated finishes on shielded fixtures. The use of energy efficient fixtures including LED is encouraged. Use of high pressure sodium or yellow lights is discouraged.

D. Lighting design should generally provide subdued lighting, except in cases where more festive, dramatic or innovative lighting designs may be appropriate such as commercial areas intended for entertainment and dining. In all cases, lighting should be tasteful and sensitive to impacts on surrounding areas.

E. Projects should incorporate pedestrian lights in ways that enhance community identity and pedestrian safety. Consider how mounted banners or planters can enhance
vibrancy of the overall area. These elements should be mounted for safety and durability and detailed through the SIP process.

F. Incorporate accent lighting into the building design to create visual interest, depth and shadows. Focus and direct building lighting to accentuate architectural elements and landscaping with a subdued wash of light while limiting upward directed light.

G. Decorative light fixtures should complement the style, materials and colors of the building and may be coordinated with surrounding site and pedestrian lighting where appropriate. The source of illumination should be hidden or otherwise shielded by acceptable opaque material.

H. Lighting must be directed, shielded and cut off so as not to cause light trespass, glare or off-site impacts. Lighting under entry canopies, gas/service stations and similar applications should be flush-mounted.

I. Safety and security of the building and surrounding area should be enhanced through lighting design.

XVII. LANDSCAPING AND IRRIGATION

A. Planning and design

1. Develop an approach to landscaping that takes into account both the regional climate and the microclimate of the site, important views to and from the site, and relationships with surrounding landscapes. Design landscaping to reinforce desirable community landscape patterns and characteristics, while enhancing the use and characteristics of the project.

2. Projects should use native and drought tolerant plant materials in conjunction with high quality site design, to reduce water consumption. Select plants for their adaptability to the site (including microclimate, soils, sun, moisture, slope, and maintenance) and group plants by their water-use need to ensure efficient irrigation. Xeriscape principles and a recommended plant list are available at www.hrcaonline.org.
3. Use landscaping strategically to enhance the project design. Use thoughtful landscaping design to create and reinforce visual gateways, pedestrian paths and destination focal points to and around the site. Strategically locate and select landscaping to provide shade and human comfort in parking lots and public spaces, enhance building architecture, and define transitions between public and private spaces. Landscaping should also be designed to screen or buffer views of more utilitarian functions of the site, soften vertical walls and similar applications.

4. Ensure year-round visual interest. Landscaping should provide a varied yet cohesive palette of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs that are carefully selected and located to create visual interest throughout the seasons. Create layered compositions of plant material with varied heights, colors and textures.

5. Promote safe environments through landscaping and soil preparation and amendments. Landscaping should be used to effectively enhance or screen elements of a project, as appropriate, but should not interfere with reasonable surveillance of parking lots, entries, service areas, ATM’s, and similar pedestrian areas. Locate thorny trees and shrubs so that at maturity they do not encroach into walkways.

6. Projects Continuation (Phased): All phased projects will be constructed with the perimeters of the sites visible to the public shall be finished with final landscaping, lighting and streetscape elements as approved with the SIP. Pad sites shall be graded and seeded with natural grasses along with temporary irrigation.

B. Plant location

1. Locate plants and trees to allow for mature growth, in consideration of structures, signs, light poles, parked cars, sight distance triangles, fire hydrants, and adjacent
landscaping. Landscaping should not interfere with key views of commercial buildings or signage. Plants should generally be spaced to ensure that no more than 1/3 of the plant’s mature canopy (spread) will overlap into another plant’s canopy. To allow trees in tree grates to grow to maturity, build a continuous planting strip beneath the sidewalk, use underground tunnels filled with soil, or use a structural soil mix in vaults. Keep as much of the surface unpaved as possible or use reusable pavers.

2. Consider planting deciduous trees to shade the west, south and east sides of buildings in summer, and evergreen trees to provide winter windbreaks on the west and north edges of the site.

3. Position large trees appropriately. Locate canopy and other large trees no closer than four feet from the back of curbs or sidewalks, driveways and other hard surfaces to buffer trees from stress caused by salt, snow piling, vehicle overhang and compacted soils, and to allow trees to mature without buckling hard surfaces.

4. Consider slope treatment where appropriate, locate trees, shrubs and native grasses on slopes 3:1 or greater (use drip irrigation for trees and shrubs and temporary irrigation for native or drought-tolerant grasses).

5. Coordinate the characteristics and spacing of trees along streets and adjoining properties to provide a cohesive pattern and promote a sense of place. If mixing species, alternate them in a regular pattern.

6. Provide adequate clearance around utilities. While screening of utility boxes and other mechanical equipment is desirable, care should be taken to ensure that plant selection and location does not functionally obstruct access to utility boxes, fire hydrants, and similar elements. Consult with utility providers for specific landscape standards.

C. Irrigation

1. Plan landscapes with irrigation system requirements in mind. Permanent, functioning, automatic irrigation systems are generally required in all cases, with the exception that hand watering may be used for plantings in flowerpots and temporary irrigation may be used for the establishment of native grasses.

2. Design irrigation on separate valve zones (hydro zones), as appropriate, based on water use requirements, slope aspect and sun/shade micro-climates. Incorporate the use of drip systems or other low-volume application systems and use smart controllers and rain sensors to conserve water. Spray heads must minimize overspray to non-pervious areas including sidewalks, buildings and roadways. Shrubs and trees should be irrigated by drip, bubbler or low volume spray heads. Annual, perennial and ground cover areas may be irrigated with fixed or pop-up spray heads.
3. Determine appropriate irrigation schedules. Irrigation schedules should be set at night or early morning to minimize evaporative loss and also when pedestrians are less likely to be present.

VIII. Building Form and Composition

A. Provide appropriate relationships of scale within context of the area. Building massing and form should be modulated to reduce bulk appearances and create interest. Projects should provide gradual transitions of building height and mass such that no building appears “out of place” relative to the overall context of the area.

1. Taller buildings should establish gradual scale relationships with the surrounding area by varying building heights and aligning similar architectural features and patterns, particularly at pedestrian levels.

2. Where multiple, free-standing buildings are proposed as part of a single project, the massing of buildings should be coordinated but varied enough to provide for interest and distinction among buildings.

B. Apply base, middle, top compositional strategy. This tradition of architectural expression can be applied in a number of ways such as through variations in building forms, wall planes, horizontal and vertical elements, window patterns and building materials, provided they are proportionate to the building scale and combine to form a cohesive composition. For example:

1. A building “base” should be scaled, articulated and treated with materials that reinforce the building’s placement within the site and relationship with the pedestrian zone.

2. The “middle” of the building typically responds to the function of the building through fenestrations and design expressions.

3. The “top” of the building is an opportunity to complete the building forms, provide varied rooflines for interest, and contribute to unique silhouette against the sky. For example, use articulated cornices, eaves, canopies, bracket supports, trim in contrasting materials and colors, and variations in roof heights and forms.

4. The traditional base, middle, top composition should be applied to most retail, office and commercial projects. Some multi-family buildings, buildings with highly contemporary architecture or innovative design and other circumstances may dictate alternative ways to compose building forms and reduce massing.

C. Reduce building mass through proportioning strategies. A well-proportioned building has components (windows, for example) that have the same proportion as the other components (structural bays, panels, façade sections, etc.). Consistent proportional compositions should be provided throughout the building massing and façade composition.
D. Transition building height to reduce mass and relate to adjoining buildings. Taller buildings may have forms or façade elements that “step down” or “step-back” to create relationships of scale with the street or adjoining buildings.

E. Provide a human-scale through design strategies. Mass may be reduced in a number of ways including: variations in the building envelope; jogs in the wall planes; creation of architectural focal points at important corners or vantage points; angled or curved corners; varied roof-lines; and similar measures that break down the basic geometry of the building.

F. Use generous balconies and terraces to reduce mass. Where appropriate to the use, balconies and terraces should be incorporated into vertical and horizontal shifts in building forms. The character and function of these elements should be evident from the street.

XIX. FAÇADE

Buildings should convey a high quality, inviting and enduring aesthetic that complements the character of the surrounding area.

A. Context

1. Design should fit within context and character of the area. Take cues from the positive architectural attributes, character and vision of the area to develop a complementary yet unique design aesthetic. Creativity and unique design expression is encouraged. However, projects should relate architecturally to their surroundings by incorporating complimentary forms, materials, color palettes, or scaling patterns.

2. Adapt corporate formulas and design standards to reinforce the Highlands Ranch Community as a unique place. Prototypical site plans and architecture may need to be modified to reflect the context of the area. Staff will work with applicants to respect standard building footprints and maintain corporate recognition, while also confirming to these local guide-lines.

B. Facades:

1. The design of all building façades should combine to create a high quality, unified architectural composition. The level of design detail on each façade may correspond to the degree of visibility and interaction with the public. Facades visible from streets, pedestrian routes, parking areas, parks, trails and adjacent
neighborhoods shall have the highest degree of architectural attention and quality materials. At a minimum, street-facing wall treatments should “wrap” around the corner of less prominent sides to the extent that they coincide with an architectural form or feature.

2. Arrange façade elements to create a sense of proportion, rhythm and pattern. Create an interesting, tasteful and cohesive composition of elements. Arrange bays, fenestrations, columns, pilasters, arcades, and similar features to create interest. Repetitive patterns should accent (not define) a building façade. Asymmetrical rhythms may be desirable, particularly on larger walls.

3. Apply architectural elements and patterns both horizontally and vertically. Consider using vertical elements to break up the scale of predominantly horizontal masses and horizontal elements to define vertical massing. Score lines, control joints and similar features should be scaled and detailed appropriately so as to be discernible from a distance.

4. Design buildings such that the primary functions and uses can be readily appreciated, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, incorporate design flexibility so that the building remains useful over its life span.

5. Building facades should incorporate depth, where appropriate, by using architectural projections, balconies, decks, artistic elements, and similar measures provided they are integrated into the overall design. Architectural features should be based on authenticity of building form and character with a high degree of design integrity, artful purpose and craftsman-ship. Avoid “tacked-on,” unrelated elements.
6. Where large expanses of blank walls are unavoidable, consider uses or design treatments to soften the wall and provide interest at the pedestrian level. For example, incorporate wall setbacks or indentations, water tables, landscaped walls, public art, raised planters, trellises, seating or other secondary elements.

7. Coordinate design with project signage.
   a. Consider how the placement, sizing, mounting and illumination requirements of the sign will work within the context of the building design as a whole.
   b. Mixed-use buildings should designate locations for planned signage on the building elevations. Demonstrate how changeable tenant signs will be accommodated including wall, projecting and awning signs, as applicable.

C. Building Entries
   1. Design obvious, pedestrian-scaled entries.
      a. Building design should orient primary entries to streets, plazas, public drop-off areas or other public spaces. Consider dual or shared entries, as appropriate, for buildings located at the edge of streets with parking in the rear.
      b. Larger buildings in particular should employ variations in architectural forms, height and massing to guide users to the building entrance(s).
      c. Building entries should be sized proportionately to the building and surrounding uses, but also be reduced in scale where necessary to provide an inviting pedestrian level.
      d. Entries should be clearly distinguished from the façade bay and be given prominence through: recess/projection, weather protection, articulation, arcades/colonnades, architectural details, materials, colors, accent lighting and other measures to create an inviting pedestrian-scaled experience.
      e. Avoid deep recessed entries where shadowing will interfere with visibility or cause icy surfaces.

D. Windows
   1. Window fenestrations should be integrated into the function and design of the building.
      a. Provide a unified, hierarchical composition of windows that corresponds to the building’s base, middle and top.
      b. Proportion windows vertically wherever possible to convey a traditional, urban character. Verticality can be emphasized through window scaling, spacing patterns, mullions and architectural trim and detailing.
c. Articulate window design through architectural ornamentation that composites the character of the building. Consider recessing windows and providing distinctive framing, lintels, sills and mullions to create depth and interest.

d. Use windows for natural, indoor lighting as much as possible.

e. A high degree of transparency at the street level is encouraged in retail settings to provide interest and activity at the street and sidewalk level.

2. Glazing

a. Low-E coatings are encouraged to provide energy conservation while maintaining a high degree of transparency.

b. Fritting (bonding of opaque coating on the inside surface of the glass) or shade devices at least eight feet above the ground floor level may be provided to address solar heat gain.

XX. MATERIALS/COLORS

Design projects with a cohesive mix of durable materials, colors and finishes that convey a sense of permanence and richness of detail.

A. Provide a diverse, yet unified mix. A mix of contrasting textures, color and materials is encouraged, provided the overall palette results in a cohesive appearance (not stark, unrelated changes in materials or colors).

B. Encouraged Materials. Encouraged materials include masonry (stone, brick, architectural pre-cast concrete, cast stone, integrally colored (not painted)
architectural concrete block, and pre-fabricated brick panels), cement fiber siding, metal, glass and cement stucco.

1. Wood siding or wood elements should generally be limited to accent areas and must be of a composite or finished/treated wood that conveys high quality and longevity. Wood is not acceptable for fencing or screening applications.

2. Shading devices such as awnings, canopies, trellises, sunshades and other elements must consist of durable, high quality materials such as tile, canvas or metal in a matte finish.

3. Building materials that are not permitted include highly reflective glass curtain wall systems, unfinished/grey concrete masonry units, vinyl or vinyl siding.

4. Natural stone should not be painted or stained unless it can be demonstrated through testing of actual stone sample that the natural striations and texture of the stone will be maintained and the overall appearance of the building will be enhanced as a result.

5. The use of stucco or similar synthetic coating systems should be avoided at ground level or where there will be regular contact with people, maintenance equipment, irrigation systems, etc. to avoid damage or discoloration over time.

C. Address proportions of scale and detail through materials. The scale of building material components should correspond with the overall scale of the building to reinforce a sense of permanence.

1. Large and/or tall buildings should use large brick or stone units to form a building “base” rather than small brick units or thin stacked stone. Similarly, large buildings or portions of buildings that will be viewed primarily from a distance should employ larger scale materials to enhance legibility of the building.

2. Smaller buildings, buildings seen from the street, and the portions of a building where pedestrians will be present should incorporate texture, variation in materials and colors, and detailing that can be seen and appreciated at a close range.

3. A discernible change in plane should be provided where different materials meet, such as a recessed or projected wall, ledge or reveal.

D. Color palettes should complement the architecture of the building and complement the character of the surrounding natural and built environments.

1. To convey a sense of timelessness and quality, building colors should consist primarily of warm earth tone colors. Draw inspiration from natural Colorado landscapes including but not limited to browns, creams, warm grays, mossy greens, gold, terra cotta and some reds.

2. Colors should be tasteful and complement the area but need not match colors of adjacent buildings. Avoid monotony of colors within an area by selecting colors
that relate to, yet are varied to some degree, from adjacent projects within the surrounding area.

3. Tone down or shade brighter hues and integrate them into the overall earth tone color palette. For example, rather than bright red, use a deeper tone or shade.

4. When beige, tan, cream or similar colors are used, the underlying hue should generally be toward yellow rather than red to avoid the appearance of pink buildings in certain light.

5. Brighter, bolder colors (including corporate branding colors) may be applied to areas or elements of the building where they are secondary in application compared to the main body or features of the building, or are otherwise applied in ways that do not dominate the overall color palette or cause the building to look out of place relative to the area. Counteract stronger colors by integrating natural materials and textures into the overall design.

XXI. SIGNAGE

A. All signage must conform to the following criteria:

1. All signs shall maintain a minimum distance of one-half the letter height from all architectural features, parapets and building corners, etc.

2. All signs shall be internally illuminated individual letter types.

3. No script, logo, or sign color will be permitted unless approved by landlord, at its sole discretion. Business name and logo must be as is registered with the Secretary of State or other authority (Proof of registration of business name/logo may be required).

4. Wording of signs shall not include the product sold except as part of tenant’s trade name or insignia. Sign must use your name as you are registered to do business.

5. No exposed raceways, crossovers, ballasts, or conduit will be permitted (unless existing or specific approval is given).

6. All signs shall be limited to individual Pan Channel letters 5” deep, which will be centered horizontally and vertically on the respective fascia (unless otherwise approved).

7. Cabinet signs are not allowed outside of Town Center South unless a part of a registered trademark or logo; logo may not exceed 24 inches in height.

8. No single letter may exceed 20 inches in height; overall stack height cannot exceed 26 inches in height; linear footage cannot exceed 70% of sign band.
9. All signs must have 60 MA. transformers on all Mercury Argon gas tubing; 30 MA. transformers may be used on red neon tubing. LED lights are allowed. All signage shall comply with Section 30-Lighting Standards of the Douglas County Zoning Resolution.

10. Tenant shall be permitted to place upon its entrance gold leaf or white decal lettering not to exceed 2” in height and no more than 144 square inches, indicating hours of business, emergency telephone numbers, etc.

11. Except as provided herein, no banners, pendants, names, insignia, trademarks, advertising placards, or other descriptive material shall be affixed or maintained upon the exterior walls of the building, within 24” of the windows, or outside of the building.

B. Commercial/Retail Center Tenants - Sign length may be no longer than 70% of the linear sign band/fascia for that tenant. (If a sign is restricted to a portion of the tenant's sign band, then the 70% rule will not apply to that specific area, but will still be required to have one-half of the letter height of space around the sign.)

C. Medical/Office Type Buildings - May have two (2) different tenants represented with signage on two (2) elevations. The elevations must be adjoining and only one (1) sign is allowed per elevation. If there is a building name sign, one of the tenants may use the same elevation as the building name as long as there is more than 100 linear feet of fascia and the fascia can easily accommodate two (2) signs.

D. Monument signage is allowed per site on a case-by-case basis. A shopping center will be allowed a sign per street and no more than one sign per entrance. No monument sign shall exceed 6’ in height or 12’ in width, including the base or side columns. All
E. Directional signs are allowed on the interior of a shopping center or pad site that needs to guide traffic. There may be no more than four (4) directional signs per site. These signs can be no taller than 4’ high by 3’ wide and must have a base and color than matches the building. Directional signs are for the purpose of directing traffic to a tenant or in a direction and can give information such as “exit” or “entrance”. Directional signs may not contain signage for a business that has color, logo, or verbiage specific to that business. All designs must be approved.
Appendix A: Suggested Plant List

For your convenience, the following list of shrubs, trees, flowers, and grasses is provided:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Large Deciduous Trees</th>
<th>Small Deciduous Trees</th>
<th>Evergreen Trees</th>
<th>Evergreen Shrubs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Linden</td>
<td>Crabapple Species</td>
<td>Colorado Spruce</td>
<td>Junipers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bur Oak</td>
<td>Newport Plum</td>
<td>Pinon Pine</td>
<td>Mugho Pine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marshall Seedless Ash</td>
<td>Golden Raintree</td>
<td>Rocky Mt. Juniper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thornless Honeylocust</td>
<td>Scrub or Gamble Oak</td>
<td>Austrian Pine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red Maple</td>
<td>European Mountain Ash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hackberry</td>
<td>Hawthorn Species</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chokecherry</td>
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(Due to their problematic growth habits, **the following trees are not recommended:**

1. Aspen
2. Russian Olive
3. Willow varieties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deciduous Shrubs</th>
<th>Groundcover &amp; Vines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amur Honeysuckle</td>
<td>Creeping Mahonia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bluestem Willow</td>
<td>Native Clematis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bush Ciquefoil</td>
<td>Perwinkle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese Lilac</td>
<td>Sedum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain Mahogany</td>
<td>Snow-in-Summer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon Holly Grape</td>
<td>Germander</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red-Osier Dogwood</td>
<td>Strawberries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wooly Yarrow</td>
<td>Euonymus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Virginia Creeper</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dryas</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Common Yellow</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purpleleaf Wintercreeper</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hales Honeysuckle</td>
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<td>Bear Berry</td>
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Commercial Design & Restrictions

Recommended Grasses:

High maintenance areas: Will require permanent irrigation and regular mowing:
- Merion Kentucky Bluegrass (fine blade, more water)
- Alta Tall Fescue Grass and Smooth Bromegrass (coarse blade, less water)

Low maintenance: Will require temporary irrigation, mowing is not recommended because it would prohibit the grasses from naturally reseeding and the forbes from flowering, which could promote weed infestation:
- Alta Tall Fescue Grass and Smooth Bromegrass
- Forbes: Primose
  - Indian Paintbrush
  - Prairie Cornflower
  - Rocky Mountain Penstemon
- Buffalo Grass (requires little water, will brown with no water, and is not allowed in front yard)