

*Chapter 5:
Image & Design Plan*



*MIDWEST CITY, OKLAHOMA
Comprehensive Plan 2008*

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Introduction

The guidelines presented within this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan 2008 are intended to improve the quality of life, or “livability,” of Midwest City. These guidelines focus on elements of the man-made environment that can be enhanced, such as building materials, site design, landscaping, and similar elements. Such elements are often difficult to quantify because their aesthetic quality is inherently subjective. They often deal with the sensory response of people to the physical environment in terms of its visual appearance and spatial character and relationships. Although individual responses to aesthetic considerations vary, the careful application of image-related design principles in planning practice should enhance the quality of the built environment and the corresponding quality of life enjoyed by Midwest City’s citizens and visitors.

The images that travelers experience along major roadways often create a lasting impression of the local quality of life. It is apparent that Midwest City has recognized that major roadways offer a tremendous opportunity to enhance its image. The City has already made efforts at improving Midwest City’s image by revising its landscaping, screening, and sign ordinances. Additionally, several roadway medians have been landscaped and gateway entry treatments have been constructed. Because the impact of a community’s image is so vital, the recommendations within this chapter should be applied to development along arterial roadways and highways.

Elements such as landscaping, building materials, and signage – which are typically reviewed by the City during the development approval process – will serve as the basis for many of the recommendations herein. New projects offer the opportunity for development standards to be implemented as part of the zoning process. By implementing the image and design elements recommended here, site development and building design standards for future development can be applied throughout the City without the need for planned unit development zoning. Applying these standards in a uniform manner would have a significant impact on the quality of life and the community image of Midwest City.

Background and Development of this Chapter

The level, type, and amount of guidelines appropriate to enhance the image of Midwest City will ultimately come from the community itself. This process is accomplished by the City's leaders, with the support of the general public, constructing public policy to accomplish the vision the City has for itself. This chapter and subsequent recommendations were developed based on the following three primary sources.

Visual Character Survey:

A Visual Character Survey (VCS) is a technique where respondents are asked to score a series of photographs (images) based on their preferences with regard to what they find to be visually preferable. The images illustrate various aspects of the developed environment. The VCS is an effective method of receiving attitudinal, aesthetic-based input since the survey allows respondents the ability to view real-world examples of developed areas and elements. A VCS, consisting of 207 images, was administered to the Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC) and the Planning Commission.

Goals & Objectives Chapter:

The *Goals and Objectives* from Chapter 2 of this Comprehensive Plan provided the necessary direction to form the recommendation within this chapter. From the *Goals and Objectives* it is evident that the City substantially desires to improve the image of the City. The following goals and their objectives help establish a foundation for enhancing the image of the City:

- **Goal 3:** Promote a community image (community impression) of excellence that distinguishes Midwest City as a visually attractive community.
- **Goal 4:** Provide opportunities for coordinated, well-planned growth and development.
- **Goal 5:** Encourage a quality housing environment within the City that meets the needs of a variety of people.
- **Goal 7:** Establish a quality of life within Midwest City that is among the best in the region and State.

- **Goal 9:** Promote the development of vacant properties and areas within the City.
- **Goal 12:** Provide a stable, high quality economic environment that focuses on providing current and future residents of the City a good quality of life.
- **Goal 14:** Promote landscaping as a key development feature within the City.

Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC) Meeting:

The recommendations in this chapter are also based on the input provided at several meetings of the Comprehensive Planning Advisory Committee (CPAC). The CPAC discussed image and design issues and the level of appropriateness of the recommendations. The input received at the CPAC meetings was critical in the development of this chapter.

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Image-Related Elements to Consider

As stated in the introduction, the City can utilize zoning to ensure aesthetically pleasing projects. An example of the successful use of quality development standards in the City includes the Town Center/29th Street Redevelopment area. Some of the issues that can be considered by the City during the processing and approval of development projects are:

- Site Access/Layout
- Driveway Design, Location & Spacing
- Reciprocal Access Easements
- Alley Access
- Building Setbacks
- Floor Area/Building Envelope
- Building Materials/Architectural Elements
- Maximum Building Height
- Parking
- Landscaping
- Screening of Refuse Containers
- Signage
- Public Sidewalks
- Exterior Lighting
- Fencing

Each of these elements adds an important component to quality development. While some, such as building height, building setbacks, driveway location, sidewalks and parking, are addressed in the City Zoning Code, others, such as fencing and building materials, have traditionally been considered on a site-specific basis. The following sections of this chapter discuss design elements under such categories as Overall Design, Layout, Site Elements, and Building Standards.

Overall Design: Gateway/Entranceway Treatments

Rationale:

Communities that lack visual individuality tend to be anonymous within a region. In contrast, the addition of eye-catching gateways can vastly improve the public’s perception of an area. The City’s general boundaries along major thoroughfares such as Sooner Road, SE 29th Street and NE 23rd Street are only vaguely defined, making it difficult for people to recognize when they have entered the City. The incorporation of carefully designed gateways in strategic locations will announce to residents and visitors that they have “arrived” and are welcome in Midwest City.



Illustration 5-1
GATEWAY/ENTRANCEWAY

Recommendations:

The City should remodel existing gateways and establish new gateways at certain intersections/entryways into the City. Recommended locations for these gateways are shown on **Plate 3-1** (the *Thoroughfare Plan Map*) in Chapter 3. By possibly sponsoring a competition for the design of such gateways, the City could attract widespread public interest in these important community image features.



Illustration 5-2
GATEWAY/ENTRANCEWAY



Illustration 5-3
GATEWAY/ENTRANCEWAY



Illustration 5-4
GATEWAY/ENTRANCEWAY

Overall Design: Landscaping Elements

Rationale:

In addition to landscaped medians, landscaping elements placed alongside roadways also enhance visual quality. Such elements are often incorporated into individual sites as they are developed; however, they are not required for all development in Midwest City. This issue will be discussed in a later section.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the City take advantage of the public domain of the lengths alongside roadways and incorporate landscaping elements within the adjacent rights-of-way. Many communities have successfully incorporated native plants, such as wildflowers, along their highway rights-of-way. An expanse of flowers indigenous to the region would provide an attractive, seasonal transformation of these major corridors.

The City should continue in its efforts to enhance the areas along Interstate 40 with landscaping. Historically, cities have been successful in lobbying state departments of transportation for assistance with landscaping efforts. The City should work in conjunction with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation in improving the Interstate 40 corridor. Any landscaping that is integrated alongside these roadways should utilize locally recommended, drought tolerant plants and xeriscape techniques to reduce the amount of watering needed.



Illustration 5-5
LANDSCAPING ELEMENTS



Illustration 5-6
LANDSCAPING ELEMENTS



Illustration 5-7
LANDSCAPING ELEMENTS

Overall Design: Residential Screening

Rationale:

At present, the City requires a screening wall or fence to be erected between residential and non-residential uses. The non-residential use typically constructs such a wall. However, there is no requirement for any type of screening between neighborhoods and roadways. Screening elements, whether a wall or landscaping, should be required between neighborhoods and arterial/collector streets. Screening should be initially constructed by the developer and be of quality materials (e.g., steel poles with brick columns for walls), and then should become the responsibility of the private property owners (typically a homeowners association).



Illustration 5-8
SUBDIVISION WITHOUT A SCREENING WALL

A requirement to screen residential neighborhoods from roadways would serve several functions. First, screening would improve the appearance from the road - the view of backyard fences and garages would be transformed to a more aesthetically pleasing perspective of a visually cohesive screening element. Increased privacy for residents' homes is another positive effect. In addition, screening not only improves the image of the roadway but also serves as a buffer for homeowners by decreasing the impact of noise from the adjacent roadway. There are several elements that can be used for effective screening as the following recommendations exemplify.

Recommendations:

Screening elements, whether a wall or landscaping, should be required between neighborhoods and arterial/collector streets.

Masonry Screening Walls

If a screening wall is used, the wall should be constructed entirely (100 percent) of brick, masonry, or other



Illustration 5-9
MASONRY SCREENING WALL

like material. It should also be at least six feet in height. Wood, although it is an attractive material to use for screening walls initially, is a high maintenance material and should therefore not be permitted for screening walls.

Landscaping Screening Elements

In addition to screening walls, various types of landscaping can provide effective screening. Examples include landscaped berms, which generally need wide setbacks, and requirements should include that the landscaped berms be three to four feet in height with a maximum slope of 1(Height):3(Length).



Illustration 5-10

SUBDIVISION WITH LANDSCAPED SCREENING

Certain types of trees can provide effective screening as well. This option can be seen in **Illustration 5-10**. General requirements for landscaping elements being used for screening should include a maintenance provision to ensure that a consistent visual screening is provided.

Overall Design: Subdivision Entry

Rationale:

Entranceways into neighborhoods improve neighborhood identity, image, and character. These features can serve as markers for the community and allow residents and visitors to clearly identify subdivisions. A greater sense of place can also be created for neighborhoods using entranceways. Additionally, the image and impression of the area is generally enhanced by the architectural and landscaping elements typically found in entranceways.

Recommendations:

Currently, Midwest City has no requirements concerning subdivision entranceways. The City should consider establishing standards for entryway signs that would be used if the development community decides to construct such an entranceway. While entryways may not be required, establishing standards by which they would be erected would ensure that a high standard would be met. Either a neighborhood (subdivision) entryway freestanding sign or a wall plaque attached to a masonry screening wall at the main entranceway into the neighborhood should be allowed and encouraged. Standards for the perpetual maintenance of the entranceways, which should be the responsibility of a homeowners association, should also be outlined.



Illustration 5-11
NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRANCEWAY



Illustration 5-12
NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRANCEWAY



Illustration 5-13
NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRANCEWAY



Illustration 5-14
NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRANCEWAY

Overall Design: Sidewalks

Rationale:

Perhaps the most basic element necessary for a pedestrian environment, sidewalks allow people to move freely. With the advent of the automobile and the post-1950s development design that is based on automobile-oriented consumers, pedestrian activity is not as prevalent as it once was in American cities and towns. However, sidewalks remain a significant method of transportation for many people in a community.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the City ensure that sidewalks/walkways are integrated along roadways in order to create the opportunity for safer pedestrian travel. Sidewalks should be constructed such that they are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The City has and should continue retrofitting/constructing sidewalks (along streets that are already developed) according to existing policy.



Illustration 5-15
MAJOR STREET WITH SIDEWALKS



Illustration 5-16
MAJOR STREET WITHOUT SIDEWALKS

Overall Design: Platting Adjacent to Creek & Drainage Areas

Rationale:

Creeks and drainage ways offer great recreational and scenic opportunities within Midwest City. Since much of the remaining vacant land will likely be developed as residential, it is probable that at least a portion of this development will occur adjacent to creeks or drainage areas. In order to protect the integrity of the storm drainage system and to reduce the potential for flooding, the City must adopt a comprehensive policy for designing residential developments adjacent to these creeks and drainage areas. Where the floodplain is reclaimed, the City should encourage non-detrimental, non-intensive land uses, such as parks and open space.

The City should continue to prohibit the platting of residential and commercial lots within the floodways of creeks and drainage areas, which have the potential for carrying significant volumes of stormwater runoff.

Illustration 5-17 shows a recommended platting alternative and a photograph where residential lots are placed adjacent to creeks or drainage areas with a collector street as a buffer. The City can preserve the carrying capacity of these drainage ways by designating them as private open spaces or by incorporating them into the City's park system. Platting collector streets along creeks allows

continuous access and visibility of the creek for scenic and aesthetic enjoyment opportunities. This concept also helps to slow stormwater runoff before it enters the drainage way or creek.

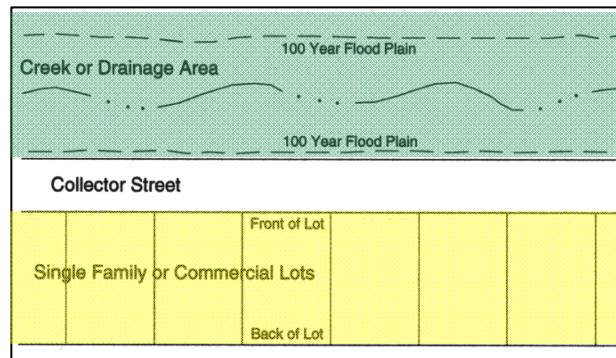


Illustration 5-17
RECOMMENDED PLATTING ARRANGEMENTS ADJACENT TO CREEK & DRAINAGE AREAS

Recommendations:

Midwest City should continue to restrict the platting of residential and non-residential lots within the floodplain and should prevent most development and reclamation within the floodplain area (100-year floodplain). As the vacant areas within Midwest City continue to urbanize, the potential for flooding will likely increase due to higher stormwater runoff volumes from impermeable surfaces. Protection of the floodplain areas and preservation of critical drainage ways can help to reduce capital expenditures that may be needed in the future to correct problems caused by urban flooding.

The city should consider requiring streets as a buffer to floodplains and drainage areas, as depicted in **Illustration 5-17**. In addition to leaving areas in a semi-natural state, other options for managing stormwater, such as primary and secondary channels, should be explored. It is recommended that the City investigate adopting additional design standards for drainage channels and detention ponds. Ideally, the standards would help ensure that drainage channels and detention ponds appear to be part of the natural environment.

Site Elements: Tree Preservation

Rationale

The practice of clear cutting is quite common throughout the United States. However, in recent decades the practice has become more controversial due to the environmental and visual affects on a community. Trees have a number of environmental benefits such as persevering of soils and slopes, supporting the natural ecosystem, and providing relief from the sun.



Illustration 5-18
TREE PRESERVATION

Recommendations

The practice of clear cutting residential or non-residential lots should be discouraged.



Illustration 5-19
TREE PRESERVATION



Illustration 5-20
TREE PRESERVATION

Site Elements: Landscaping

Rationale

As communities have become more urbanized, the need for landscaping elements has become increasingly apparent. Landscaped areas provide a natural visual relief within a stark man-made environment.

Recommendations

Landscaping recommendations have been made in this chapter in relation to medians and rights-of-way. The recommendations here focus on landscaping within non-residential sites along major streets and highways, and should apply to new construction and to any remodeling, or where the primary function of the building is altered. The City's present landscape standards, as recently revised, are adequate to meet these objectives.

Percentage of the Front Yard - Currently, the City requires that 75 percent of landscaping be in the front or side yards of a development. This percentage accomplishes the goal of providing landscaping in the front yard. However, along major thoroughfares, it is recommended that the City require 75 percent of the landscaping be in the front yard and not require any landscaping in the side yard. The front yard should be defined as



Illustration 5-21
LANDSCAPING



Illustration 5-22
LANDSCAPING



Illustration 5-23
LANDSCAPING

the yard adjacent to the thoroughfare. For properties with frontage along two streets, the front yard will extend along both streets.

Street Trees - Street trees should be required along the frontage of all major thoroughfares and should conform to the standards (i.e., spacing and tree type) set forth in the latest version of the Midwest City Landscape Plan. The incorporation of trees would add to the visual appeal of these thoroughfares, especially as the trees mature.

Parking Lots - It is further recommended that the City require concentrated landscaped areas within parking lots over a certain size (i.e., number of spaces). Specifically, at least ten percent of the overall parking lot should be landscaped.



Illustration 5-24
EXAMPLE OF PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING

Site Elements: Refuse Containers

Rationale

As ubiquitous as a parking lot, refuse is an unavoidable product of business development. Trash receptacles, however, do not have to be unsightly or reduce the visual quality of non-residential developments. Two key factors can ensure this: the placement of these receptacles and the design of screening elements for them.

Recommendations

Location - Trash receptacles should be prohibited in parking areas or should be placed within a visually screened area, preferably to the rear of the building.

Screening - Trash receptacles should be screened from public view with a masonry wall (on three sides with a gate on the fourth) that is at least one foot taller than the container and that is architecturally compatible with the primary building. “Public view” should be defined as the view from a major street as well as the view from any adjacent residential uses. “Architecturally compatible” should be defined as similar in material and color to the primary building. It is further recommended that the gated side, which is to be used for garbage pickup service, remain closed except when service is being provided.



Illustration 5-25
EXAMPLE OF A REFUSE AREA BEING SCREENED



Illustration 5-26
EXAMPLE OF A REFUSE AREA BEING SCREENED



Illustration 5-27
EXAMPLE OF A REFUSE AREA BEING SCREENED



Illustration 5-28
EXAMPLE OF A REFUSE AREA BEING SCREENED

Site Elements: Loading Areas

Rationale

Many types of non-residential uses require unsightly loading docks and service entrances to receive and distribute goods. Service bays, such as those used by automobile repair shops, can also be unattractive. Thus, their placement and screening are of a primary concern to ensure quality development. Currently, there is no regulation stating how service doors should be placed on-site or how far loading areas should be set back from street. The following recommendations define ways in which potentially negative impacts of loading areas can be alleviated through good design.

Recommendations

Location - The City should require that loading docks be positioned such that they do not face onto and are not visible from any thoroughfare. Loading docks should generally be located to the rear of non-residential buildings. Service doors (i.e., for a commercial use) should be placed to the side or rear of the structure. If loading areas are adjacent to residential uses, then they should be screened or have an additional setback.

Distance - Within its zoning regulations, the City should require loading areas to be set back from the street a specified distance.

Screening - If the site design cannot accommodate placing loading docks at the rear of the building, the areas should be screened from thoroughfares and from adjacent residential properties with masonry screening walls.



Illustration 5-29
LOADING/SERVICE AREA



Illustration 5-30
LOADING/SERVICE AREA



Illustration 5-31
LOADING/SERVICE AREA



Illustration 5-32
LOADING/SERVICE AREA

Site Elements: Outside Storage

Rationale

Outside storage areas are generally defined as areas where goods and materials are displayed or stored outside a building for more than 24 hours. Common examples include pre-fabricated storage sheds, pipe, lumber, and some landscaping materials. Although many non-residential uses require outside storage areas to accommodate the types and amount of goods necessary to be successful, such areas can detract from the overall positive image that Midwest City desires to portray along most major thoroughfares.



Illustration 5-33
OUTSIDE STORAGE (NOT SCREENED)



Illustration 5-34
OUTSIDE STORAGE (NOT SCREENED)

Recommendations

It is recommended that outside storage areas be screened by some type of device. Generally, outside storage areas should not face onto or be visible from any major thoroughfare. However, when a site cannot be designed in conformance to this, outside storage areas should be required to be screened from public view with a screening wall. Ideally, screening walls should have masonry components. The City should also specify that outside storage materials may not be stacked above the height of the screening wall.



Illustration 5-35
OUTSIDE STORAGE (SCREENED)



Illustration 5-36
OUTSIDE STORAGE (SCREENED)

Building Standards: Façade Materials

Rationale

The importance of building materials used on the facades of non-residential structures along arterial streets cannot be overstated. Cities across the nation have recognized the importance of ensuring that non-residential structures are as reflective of community image as signage, landscaping or any other development-related element commonly associated with aesthetics. Currently, 50 percent of a non-residential wall facing an arterial must contain brick, glass, rock, wood or other acceptable decorative exterior material.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the City establish a list of acceptable exterior materials to be used for buildings along major corridors. Masonry materials, which would include brick, stone brick veneer, custom-treated tilt wall, and decorative or textured concrete block, should be permitted by right. The City should permit other materials, including stucco and EIFS (exterior insulation and finish systems), along with any new material that has not been widely utilized (i.e., is a result of new technology) after review and approval by the Planning Commission. By specifying the materials that are permitted along thoroughfares, the City would aid developers by identifying one aspect of approval while ensuring that future non-residential development occurs in a visually cohesive manner that reflects a positive image of Midwest City.



Illustration 5-37
FAÇADE MATERIALS



Illustration 5-38
FAÇADE MATERIALS

Building Standards: Articulation of Building Facades

Rationale

Although they are generally thought of as unattractive, large expanses of flat walls are seen in many urbanized areas. In recent years, big-box retailers have received much attention for this practice and have been challenged on this aspect of their building design. Other non-residential uses, however, use this type of design as well. In response, many cities have established standards for varying exterior walls to address this visually unappealing design. This variation, or articulation, can be defined as an interruption or differentiation of the building wall plane with either a recess or an offset that projects away from the building wall plane by specified inches, feet, or percentage.



Illustration 5-39
ARTICULATION OF BUILDING FACADES



Illustration 5-40
ARTICULATION OF BUILDING FACADES

Recommendations

Developers along major corridors should be discouraged from using a building design that achieves a “big box” effect. To accomplish this, it is recommended that architectural variation of the exterior walls of any structure visible from a specified roadway(s) be required. This requirement should apply to all non-residential structures 25,000 square feet in size or greater. The variation should be at least three feet in depth for every 25 feet in vertical or horizontal length. Such a standard will ensure that unbroken planes of wall will not be predominant along the major roadways.



Illustration 5-41
ARTICULATION OF BUILDING FACADES



Illustration 5-42
ARTICULATION OF BUILDING FACADES

Supplemental Recommendations

Keep Midwest City Beautiful

The City should establish a formal neighborhood/community clean up program. The City, non-profit organizations and other volunteer groups ideally would sponsor this program. Volunteers from various organizations could be used to address issues such as trash removal, painting or other maintenance jobs that are appropriate for volunteers. Areas of the City should be selected based on need for this event.

Continued Code Enforcement

The City currently has a proactive code enforcement policy. It is recommended that the City maintain its current level of code enforcement. Furthermore, areas of the City that are blighted should receive additional attention for code violations. The effort will be aimed at improving blighted areas by quickly resolving further code violations.

Portable Storage Units Regulations

Currently, the City has regulations regarding the use of portable storage units (Commonly referred to as PODS [Portable On-Demand Storage]). Cities across the country have received citizens' complaints and concerns about these large white containers because they are often placed in front yards for an indefinite amount of time. It is recommended that the City continue to limit the use of portable storage units through its current ordinance.



Illustration 5-43
EXAMPLE OF A PORTABLE STORAGE UNIT

Conclusion

It is recommended that the following policies be adopted in order to preserve and improve Midwest City's overall community image:

- 1) The City should continue to pursue improving its overall image through the use of design standards.
- 2) The recommendations that relate to improvements that can be initiated by the City should be prioritized and then included within the Capital Improvements program.
- 3) The recommendations related to aesthetic elements that will be the result of private development should be incorporated into the City's zoning and/or subdivision regulations.

These three policies, in conjunction with the recommendations listed throughout this chapter will be useful tools to guide development. Overall, this chapter has proposed recommendations that will influence the aesthetics of non-residential and residential development along Midwest City's thoroughfares. Since future business development will have an important affect on the image of the City, it is critical that the City implement these design recommendations. A prime opportunity is presented with undeveloped areas in the eastern and northern portions of the City. In these areas, the City can take aesthetics into consideration from the earliest stages of development because many properties have not yet developed. The recommendations discussed throughout this chapter are summarized in **Table 5-1**.

Recommendation
<p><i>Table 5-1</i> IMAGE & DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS Midwest City, Oklahoma</p>
<p><u>Gateways:</u> The City should remodel existing gateways and establish new gateways at certain intersections/entryways into the City. Recommended locations for these gateways are shown on Plate 3-1, the <i>Thoroughfare Plan Map</i>.</p>
<p><u>Landscaping Elements:</u> It is recommended that the City take advantage of the public domain of the lengths alongside roadways and incorporate landscaping elements within the adjacent rights-of-way.</p>

Table 5-1(Continued)
 IMAGE & DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS
 Midwest City, Oklahoma

Recommendation
<p><u>Residential Screening:</u></p> <p>Screening elements, whether a wall or landscaping, should be required between neighborhoods and arterial/collector streets. Appropriate methods are masonry screening walls and landscaping screening elements.</p>
<p><u>Subdivision Entry:</u></p> <p>The City should consider establishing standards for entryway signs that would be used if the development community decides to construct such a sign. While entryways would not be required, establishing standards by which they would be erected would ensure that a high standard would be met. Either a neighborhood (subdivision) entryway freestanding sign or a wall plaque attached to a masonry screening wall at the main entranceway into the neighborhood should be allowed and encouraged.</p>
<p><u>Sidewalks:</u></p> <p>It is recommended that the City ensure that sidewalks/walkways are integrated along roadways in order to create the opportunity for safer pedestrian travel. Sidewalks should be constructed such that they are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The City has and should continue retrofitting/constructing sidewalks (along streets that are already developed) according to existing policy.</p>
<p><u>Tree Preservation:</u></p> <p>The practice of clear cutting residential or non-residential lots should be discouraged.</p>
<p><u>Platting Adjacent to Creeks and Drainage Areas:</u></p> <p>Midwest City should continue to restrict the platting of residential and non-residential lots within the floodplain.</p>
<p><u>Landscaping:</u></p> <p><u>Percentage of the Front Yard</u> - Currently, the City requires that 75 percent of landscaping be in the front or side yards of a development. This percentage accomplishes the goal of providing landscaping in the front yard. However, along major thoroughfares, it is recommended that the City require 75 percent of the landscaping be in the front yard and not require any landscaping in the side yard. The front yard should be defined as the yard adjacent to the thoroughfare. For properties with frontage along two streets, the front yard will extend along both streets.</p> <p><u>Street Trees</u> - Street trees should be required along the frontage of all major thoroughfares and should conform to the standards (i.e., spacing and tree type) set forth in the latest version of the Midwest City Landscape Plan.</p> <p><u>Parking Lots</u> - It is recommended that the City require concentrated landscaped areas within parking lots over a certain size (i.e., number of spaces). Specifically, at least ten percent of the overall parking lot should be landscaped.</p>

Table 5-1(Continued)
 IMAGE & DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS
 Midwest City, Oklahoma

Recommendation

Refuse Containers:

Location - Trash receptacles should be prohibited in parking areas and should be placed within a visually screened area, preferably to the rear of the building.

Screening - Trash receptacles should be screened from public view with a masonry wall (on three sides with a gate on the fourth) that is at least one foot taller than the container and that is architecturally compatible with the primary building.

Loading Areas:

Location - The City should require that loading docks be positioned such that they do not face onto and are not visible from any thoroughfare. Loading docks should generally be located to the rear of non-residential buildings. Service doors (i.e., for a commercial use) should be placed to the side or rear of the structure.

Distance - Within its zoning regulations, the City should require loading areas to be set back from the street a specified distance.

Screening - If the site design cannot accommodate placing loading docks at the rear of the building, the areas should be screened from thoroughfares and from adjacent residential properties with masonry screening walls.

Site Elements: Outside Storage:

It is recommended that outside storage areas be screened by some type of device. Generally, outside storage areas should not face onto or be visible from any major thoroughfare.

However, when a site cannot be designed in conformance to this, outside storage areas should be required to be screened from public view with a screening wall. Ideally, screening walls should have masonry components. The City should also specify that outside storage materials may not be stacked above the height of the screening wall.

Facade Materials:

It is recommended that the City establish a list of acceptable exterior materials to be used for buildings along major corridors. Masonry materials, which would include brick, stone brick veneer, custom-treated tilt wall, and decorative or textured concrete block, should be permitted by right.

<p><i>Table 5-1(Continued)</i> IMAGE & DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS Midwest City, Oklahoma</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Articulation of Building Facades:</u></p> <p>Developers along major corridors should be discouraged from using a building design that achieves a “big box” effect. To accomplish this, it is recommended that architectural variation of the exterior walls of any structure visible from a specified roadway(s) be required. This requirement should apply to all non-residential structures 20,000 square feet in size or greater. The variation should be at least three feet in depth for every 25 feet in vertical or horizontal length.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Keep Midwest City Beautiful:</u></p> <p>The City should establish a formal neighborhood/community clean up program.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Continued Code Enforcement:</u></p> <p>The City currently has a proactive code enforcement policy. It is recommended that the City maintain its current level of code enforcement. Furthermore, areas of the City that are blighted should receive additional attention for code violations. The effort will be aimed at improving blighted areas by quickly resolving further code violations.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Portable Storage Unit Regulations:</u></p> <p>Currently, the City has regulations regarding the use of portable storage units. It is recommended that the City continue to limit the use of portable storage units through its current ordinance.</p>
<p><i>Source: City of Midwest City’s Image & Design Plan.</i></p>