

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

Introduction

Urban design goals help guide public and private actions to produce a city which is visually appealing. Urban design addresses aspects of the public and semi-public sectors of the community; streets, sidewalks, parks, plazas and community centers. Concern is also needed for compatibility between various types of development -- both public and private. Urban design offers guidelines for architecture, landscape architecture, public works, public art and transportation facilities.

Urban design has a particularly interesting role in Kennewick's development. As the city matures and grows, it will be necessary to continually seek opportunities for creating comfortable and attractive public settings.

The Urban Design Element is comprised of one basic goal, which is supported by a number of policies. The goals and policies are related, and address the quality and character of the community.

GOAL 1: ENHANCE THE AESTHETICS OF THE URBAN AREA.

The primary function of the Urban Design Element is for the development of guidelines which will enhance the visual appearance of the city. Aesthetics is defined as a branch of philosophy dealing with the nature of beauty, art, and taste, and with the creation and appreciation of beauty.

Implementation of this goal will, therefore, offer a means for the city and its citizens to

express pride in how the city appears to its citizens and visitors.

Policies:

1a) Develop logical circulation patterns for vehicles and pedestrians.

Pedestrian and traffic movement must be safe, efficient and attractive. Circulation patterns that are based on traffic generating uses increase urban design potential by establishing corridors which can be landscaped, have improved building facades, and view orientations.

1b) Landscape public right-of-ways with special emphasis given to those areas which have heavy pedestrian and motor traffic.

Landscaping is a very important feature of urban design. Proper landscaping improves the appearance of an area and makes a more pleasant experience for the users and viewers of the area.

1c) Enhance public pedestrian areas with benches, lighting and similar amenities.

Public areas should offer pleasant seating and adequate lighting to invite users to a comfortable and secure area. Public spaces without such amenities will not be as inviting and may be unsafe.

1d) Develop and implement a program of making traffic control boxes less noticeable.

Traffic control boxes are necessary to assure better and safer vehicle movement. However, they are often quite large and not compatible with their surroundings. Relocating to more obscure locations or painting the boxes so they blend with their surroundings will be beneficial.

- 1e) Encourage all existing commercial and industrial uses along state highways and major and minor arterials to develop and implement landscaping and building facade programs consistent with city ordinances and policies.**

State highways and major and minor arterials are those streets which are most heavily traveled by citizens and visitors. Improved landscaping and building facades will make these trips more pleasant, and give visitors the impression that the city and its property owners care about the city's image.

- 1f) Beautify cluttered and unkempt public areas.**

Public areas must be maintained to an acceptable standard, not only because of the impact on surrounding areas, but also because the city should be prepared to "set an example" and follow its own rules.

- 1g) Encourage better accessibility to the water recreational areas.**

The Columbia River and Lake Wallula is a major recreational element of the city's recreational program. The river and lake are inaccessible from the Blue Bridge

downriver to Two Rivers Park due to the federal levee system. All required steps must be taken to provide better access to the river and lake for recreational and viewing purposes.

- 1h) Encourage the Downtown Kennewick/Columbia Drive Association to improve the appearance of their buildings and premises.**

The Downtown Kennewick/Columbia Drive areas is a part of the original town of Kennewick. There are many buildings of a historic nature and there are areas that can be landscaped and be more pedestrian-oriented. Property owners and merchants should continue to take pride in the area and make all reasonable attempts to improve its appearance.

- 1i) Encourage the establishment of a palette of colors that can be referenced whenever businesses decide to improve the exterior appearance of their business in order to create a homogenous appearance.**

All businesses are encouraged to improve the appearance of their buildings. In some cases, this simply means a coat of paint. However, care should be taken to assure that exterior colors do not "clash", and that the end product is well-planned and well-executed.

- 1j) Encourage better designed public buildings with a variety of landscaping.**

Public entities have a responsibility to set examples and to follow their own rules and guidelines. This responsibility includes architecture and landscape architecture. Every possible means must be taken to assure public property is well designed and well maintained. At the same time, the public's dollar must be well spent.

permanent display of art work. All remodels and new construction should provide space for sculptures, mobiles, frescos, unique wall and floor coverings, and the like.

1k) Construct a cultural and convention center.

The city does not have a place dedicated to cultural activities or large-scale conventions. Recognizing that an active cultural program with adequate facilities is a very important feature of urban design, all necessary steps should be taken to provide facilities for such activities.

1l) Encourage and provide a means for local artists to display their works in public buildings.

1m) Provide the opportunity for local artists to locate permanent art work in public places.

1n) Develop a program whereby persons talented in the performing arts have the opportunity to perform in public places with minimal or no cost to the audience.

Performers and audiences alike enjoy having the opportunity to perform and view musical, dance, poetry and other such events at a minimal cost.

Public buildings and spaces offer excellent opportunities for the