

# Chapter 10: Design Standards for Streetscapes

Pagosa Springs has the opportunity to have an enhanced Downtown where pedestrians share streets with buses, automobiles and bicycles. This mix of traffic can provide a sense of excitement and enhance the pedestrian experience if all the elements are kept in balance.

Streetscape designs for the Historic Business District will help establish a sense of visual continuity while still expressing the unique qualities of the area. A consistent set of street furniture elements expressing an image of contemporary and historical Pagosa Springs should be used whenever feasible.

## Pedestrian Environment

The Downtown should continue to develop as a pedestrian-oriented environment. Streets and sidewalks should encourage walking, sitting and other outdoor activities. Buildings should be visually interesting to invite exploration by pedestrians. Existing pedestrian routes should be enhanced. These are important concepts because buildings are experienced at close proximity by pedestrians. Provide a safe pedestrian environment.

## Open Space

Interesting and inviting streetscapes often contain small areas for activities and respite. These supplemental gathering spaces contribute to the character of the street and provide visual interest.

Opportunities for expanded public plazas along the street edge exist in several sections of Downtown in areas with vacant lots or potential for redevelopment. These paved and landscaped spaces may include expanded sidewalks, formal entry plazas and informal public gardens. In all cases, visibility and accessibility from the street should be considered a priority.

### 10.1 Open spaces should read as accents along the established public right-of-way.

- In general, the majority of the sidewalk edge of a single Downtown block should consist of building walls. Voids between structures that are publicly accessible open spaces should be designed as subordinate to the defined street edge and should include seating and public art opportunities.

### 10.2 Design public open space to contain year-round activity zones.

- Integrate seasonal activities into the overall design and programming of public open spaces.



*The character of the streetscape contributes to the vitality of Historic Districts. (Pagosa Springs, CO)*



*Several areas of Pagosa Springs already have amenities in place that enhance the pedestrian experience. However, materials and finishes should be similar. (Pagosa Springs, CO)*

### 10.3 Site planning for public open space should maximize opportunities for sun and shade.

- Solar access should be considered in locating site furnishings and activity zones.
- Deciduous shade trees should be strategically located to provide shade during the summer months.

## Seating

Several areas of the Downtown have amenities in place that enhance the pedestrian experience. New furnishings should continue to enhance the area while working with existing features. Where feasible, benches, planters, lighting, publication boxes and trash and recycling receptacles should be located in a “furnishings zone” which maintains a clearly defined pedestrian travel lane.

### 10.4 All street furniture in the public right-of-way should be of similar materials and finishes.

- Draw upon local character and materials for street furniture design. For example, a simple black metal strap bench would be appropriate.

### 10.5 Sidewalk seating and benches placed in public plazas should be compatible with the historic character of the community.

- Benches installed within the public right-of-way should be uniform in design and placement throughout the Historic Business District.
- Benches may serve as opportunities for public art.

## Lighting

### 10.6 Pedestrian light fixtures and poles installed in the public right-of-way should be uniform in style and placement.

- Exterior lighting designs and fixtures should be considered an opportunity for a temporary or permanent public art installation.
- Pedestrian light poles should be spaced equally and be approximately twelve (12) to fifteen (15) feet in height.
- Light fixtures and poles should be consistent with other lighting throughout the Downtown Master Plan.
- Pedestrian light fixtures should cut off or full cut-off in design.

**10.7 Lighting for parking areas, service areas buildings, pedestrian routes and public ways shall be compliant with town lighting standards.**

- Light sources shall be cut-off or full cut-off in design and installed in a manner that will shield the lights from public view and avoid glare and light spill.
- The light source shall not emit a significant amount of the fixture's total output above a vertical cutoff angle of 90 degrees directly visible from neighboring properties. Any structural part of the fixture providing this cutoff angle shall be permanently attached.
- Parking lot light poles should be a maximum of 15' in height.
- Parking lot lighting schemes should be designed at human scale to ensure pedestrian safety.

**10.8 The light pole should be designed to accommodate special decorative accessories.**

- Mounts for hanging planter baskets, banners and seasonal lighting schemes should be included.

## Publication Boxes

Free information and publication boxes are often grouped together and located in areas experiencing high pedestrian traffic. The visual impacts of these boxes should be minimized. If left unchecked, poorly maintained boxes can detract from the overall character of the street. Many cities are now creating screening devices aimed to contain groups of boxes. The screening acts to mitigate differences in sizes and color and also identifies specific, acceptable locations.

**10.9 Boxes should be organized into groups.**

- Boxes shall not impede pedestrian access and visibility or access between the sidewalk and on-street parking bays.
- Boxes should be uniform in design and placement.

## Trash and Recycling Receptacles

Trash and recycling receptacles are a necessary component to active pedestrian areas. Initially, trash receptacles were used only for trash collection. New non-smoking and recycling ordinances have resulted in multi-purpose containers, which include ash urns and depository for recyclables.

Trash and recycling receptacles are considered an integral component to the overall streetscape and serve as pedestrian amenities. Their design should be coordinated with the benches used in the Downtown.

**10.10 Trash and recycling receptacles should be installed in areas of high pedestrian activity.**

- Trash receptacles installed within the public right-of-way shall be uniform in style and placement throughout the Historic Business District.



*The light pole should be designed to accommodate special decorative accessories.*



*Publication boxes are often grouped together and located in areas experiencing high pedestrian traffic.*



*Pagosa Street Streetscape (Pagosa Springs, CO)*



*Midblock crossings linking the Historic Business District to other town amenities provide convenient access for pedestrians and bicycles. (Pagosa Springs, CO)*

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections

Convenient pedestrian and bicycle access should be provided throughout the Historic Business District.

**10.11 Consider placing bicycle racks and transit shelters on appropriate sites to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle connections.**

**10.12 Vehicular access should be provided predominately from the alley.**

- Curb cuts and automobile entrances along the street edge should be removed, when feasible.
- Sharing ingress and egress points with neighboring projects is encouraged, when alley access is infeasible.
- Use landscaping and lighting accents to identify entrances.

**10.13 Place parking areas behind the building in the rear of a site.**

- Access to parking areas should be provided through the alleys.
- See also the design standards for Parking found in Chapter 6.

## Street Trees and Sidewalks

Sidewalks, walkways and street trees should be compatible with the surrounding area. The alignment of original sidewalks with the street and the overall neighborhood layout is of importance, but should be enhanced and widened with new construction. Mature trees help define the character of the boulevards and streets and provide shade.

**10.14 New sidewalks should be compatible with the original design and alignment.**

- Sidewalks in the Historic Business District should be attached to the curb, though sidewalks along Lewis Street may be detached or separated by a planting strip or tree grates.
- A new sidewalk should align with those that already exist along a block and/or consistent with streetscape improvement plans.
- Scoring lines and finishes should be consistent with those employed historically.
- Using paving materials that are similar to those employed historically is preferred.
- Sidewalks inclusive of street trees should be 10 feet in width, minimum.

**10.15 Locate street trees along edges of sidewalks to maintain a clearly defined pedestrian zone.**

- Street tree installations should employ industry installation standards, including irrigation systems.
- Tree species shall be compatible with the local climate and result in dense canopies that provide shade during the summer months.
- Street trees located in areas of low pedestrian activity should be planted without tree grates, using crusher fines and/or ground covers to protect the soil.



*Tree Grate (Pagosa Springs, CO)*

**10.16 A standardized tree grate should be used to ensure uniformity along the public right-of-way and for efficient maintenance.**

- The tree grate should not detract from the overall streetscape design, but contribute to the desired character of the street.
- Tree grates should be uniform in style and may be an opportunity for public art if designed appropriately.

**10.17 Tree wells should provide electrical outlets for seasonal lighting displays.**

- Electrical outlets should be provided at each tree well to allow for tree lights and other uses.

## Public Art

The Pagosa Springs community is interested in the integration of public art into public improvements and private development. Public art could constitute a specific site or could be a component of a building.

**10.18 Public art pieces and displays should be presented to and approved by the Historic Preservation Board prior to installation in the Historic Business District.**

- Public art should include all types of mediums.
- Public art should be appropriate for the area in which it is displayed.

## Paving

An urban area generally includes a variety and an abundance of paving material. It is essential to establish paving standards for all paving improvements constructed in the public right-of-way, including sidewalks, crosswalks, handicap ramps, street surfaces and parking lots.

**10.19 Streetscape improvements should include standard and ornamental paving patterns to differentiate use patterns along the street.**

- When feasible, wider sidewalks may include a “furnishings strip” that contains benches, lighting, planters and trash receptacles to create a definitive edge to the street and to keep the primary pedestrian corridor unencumbered and accessible.
- Paved surfaces create an opportunity for markers to be inlaid in an area of high pedestrian activity. The markers could be located to highlight historic structures, uses or landmarks.
- Stamped concrete should be avoided. Brick pavers, cobbels and other natural materials are recommended.