

CITY OF SUNSET HILLS  
**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Draft for Internal Review Only  
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prepared by



# General Commercial District

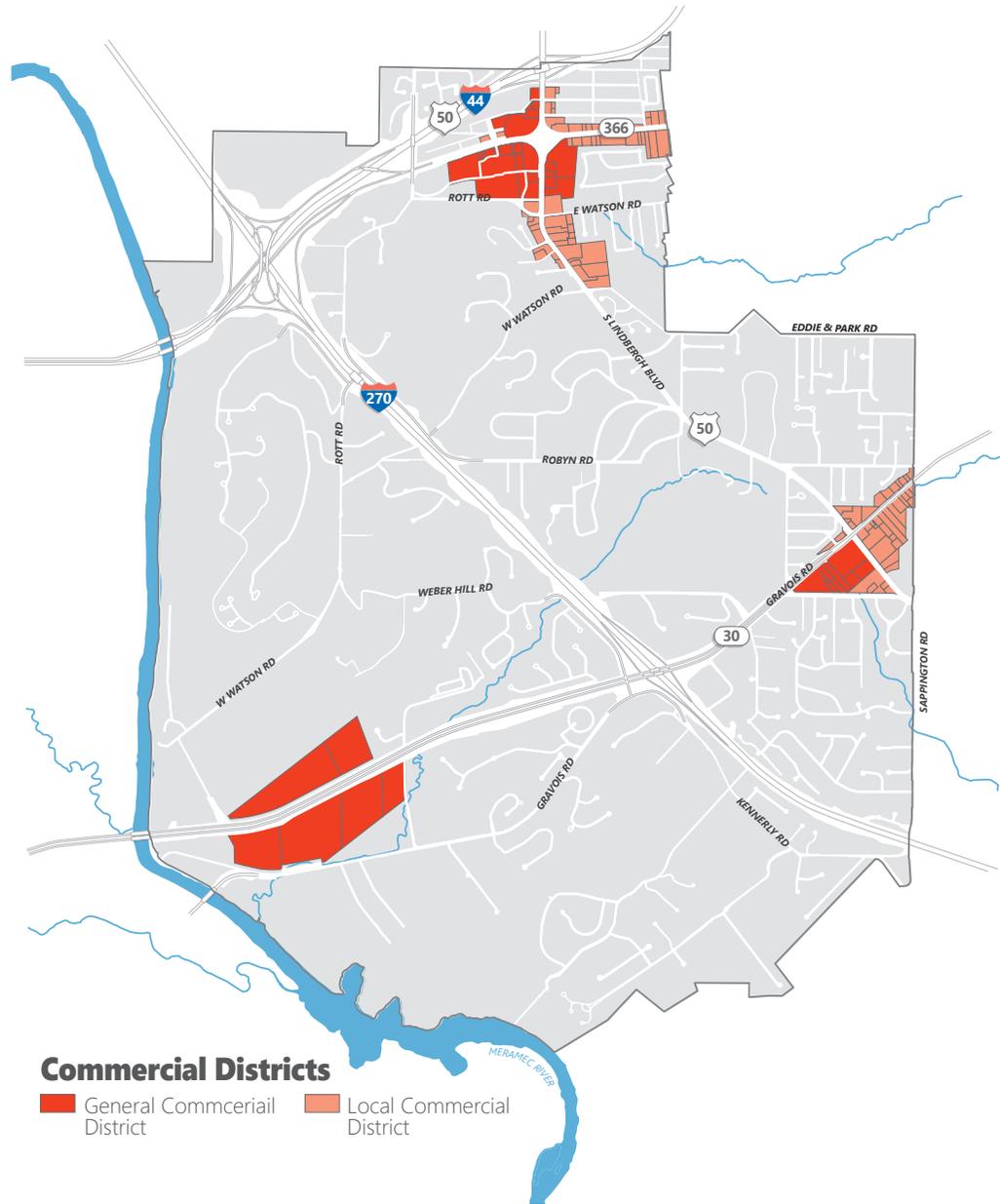
The General Commercial (GC) zoning district is located along the northwestern and southern portions of the intersection of Watson Road and South Lindbergh Boulevard, the southern portion of the intersection of Gravois Road and South Lindbergh Boulevard, and along Gravois Road from West Watson Road to the industrial district to the east. The intent of the GC zoning district is to accommodate retail and wholesale uses serving a larger consumer population.

Existing businesses in the district are primarily one story buildings with a range of restaurants, big box retailers, motels, and banks. Businesses are in standalone dedicated structures or connected commercial strips. The following guidelines are not targeted to specific uses but should be applied to all uses within this district.

# Local Commercial District

The Local Commercial (LC) zoning district is located along the northwestern and southwestern portions of the intersection of Watson Road and South Lindbergh Boulevard, along South Lindbergh Boulevard between the General Commercial district to the north and residential areas to the south, and in the northwestern portion of the intersection of Gravois Road and South Lindbergh Boulevard. The intent of the LC district is to accommodate retail and office uses of a smaller scale which are intended to provide convenience shopping and services to persons living in adjacent residential areas.

Existing businesses in the district are primarily one story office or commercial service uses, restaurants, and small scale retail establishments. Businesses are in standalone dedicated structures or connected commercial strips. The following guidelines are not targeted to specific uses but should be applied to all uses within this district.



# Guidelines

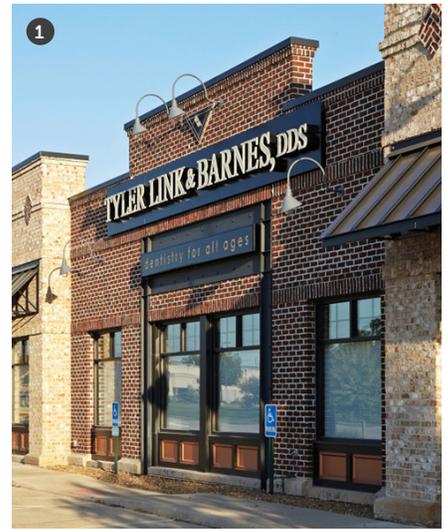
## Building Placement and Orientation

The City of Sunset Hills recognizes the importance of building placement and orientation in cultivating attractive, pedestrian friendly, and viable commercial corridors in the General Commercial and Local Commercial Districts. The City has refrained from detailing specific building placement and orientation requirements to provide the building developer with as much freedom and creative license as is possible while still contributing to the overall aesthetic of the area.

### General Commercial District

- Anchor buildings (mid-size retailers of approximately 20,000 square feet or more) and their parking lots should be placed inline with existing adjacent developments.
- Outlot development is encouraged and should be setback a minimal distance from the edge of the right of way to ensure that the variation between anchor buildings and the outlot building is not overly contrasting and maintains the character of the corridor.
- Public gathering spaces should be incorporated as an amenity for larger developments when appropriate.

- Cross access between parking lots is encouraged.
- Street frontage should be maintained through the use of low-profile landscaping and decorative walls or fencing.
- Although the General Commercial District is a primarily auto-oriented area, uses in this district should make an effort to create a pedestrian friendly environment with display windows, attractive detailing, as well as convenient and hospitable entrances.
- Properties should be designed to appeal to all users and provide the same means of use by incorporating Universal Design and ADA standards wherever possible.
- Any outdoor dining areas should be well landscaped and incorporated into the overall site design, and when adjacent to roadways, parking areas, or parking circulation areas should be well separated and screened.
- When a building intersects with the centerline of a primary street or open space the façade of that building should be located and designed to visually attract a viewer's attention at the end of a visual axis and to terminate a view with a significant architectural feature such as a tower, architecturally embellished entryway, or similar distinctive architectural device.



- 1 One-story commercial building that complements the scale and character of the other properties.
- 2 Street frontage with low-profile vertical landscaping.
- 3 Pedestrian friendly environment created by benches, wide sidewalks, display windows, and attractive detailing.





## Local Commercial District

- Buildings should be pushed to the front lot line when possible to make the district attractive for people when they are both walking and driving.
- Display windows, attractive detailing, and inviting entrances are encouraged to create a more pedestrian friendly environment in otherwise automobile oriented areas.
- Outdoor dining areas are encouraged and when adjacent to roadways, parking areas, or parking circulation areas should be well landscaped and screened to create comfortable and separate areas that are incorporated into the overall site design.
- Outdoor plaza or seating areas are encouraged to create attractive and pedestrian oriented seasonal spaces. Buildings should frame these outdoor areas.
- When a building intersects with the centerline of a primary street or open space the façade of that building should be located and designed to visually attract a viewer's attention at the end of a visual axis and to terminate a view with a significant architectural feature such as a tower, architecturally embellished entryway, or similar distinctive architectural device.

1 A small scale shopping center.

2 Outdoor dining and seating areas are screened, landscaped, and attractive.

## Building Façade

In order to support the development and redevelopment of commercial areas that have exciting and unique storefronts the City of Sunset Hills encourages developers to design façades in a manner that is pedestrian friendly and aesthetically pleasing from all sides visible from the public right of way. In general, the following concepts should be considered.

### General Commercial District

- Whenever possible, the façade of a building which fronts to a public road should be the primary entrance. When this is not possible, the façade should be designed to reduce visual mass and create an interesting visual rhythm through varying color, texture, and articulation components.
- It is highly encouraged that service areas be located at the rear of buildings or other inconspicuous areas. Service areas which are visible from the front or corners of buildings should be avoided.
- Window glazing should be clear or slightly tinted and should comprise a significant portion of primary façades.
- Windows should respect the pedestrian scale and be consistent with the grade of pedestrian walkways.
- Window size and placement should be complementary on all façades.

### Local Commercial District

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- It is highly encouraged that service areas be located at the rear of buildings or other inconspicuous areas. Service areas which are visible from the front or corners of buildings should be avoided.
- Windows of clear glass or low emissivity coating should comprise a significant portion of primary façades and are encouraged on all façades.
- Windows should respect the pedestrian scale and be consistent with the grade of pedestrian walkways.
- Window size and placement should be complementary on all façades.

- 1 Buildings with adequate window size and placement on all façades.
- 2 Attractive facade with visual rhythm and interest through varying color, texture, and articulation.
- 3 Buildings with adequate window size and placement on all façades.





## Building Materials

The City of Sunset Hills encourages developers to utilize high quality building materials to ensure that development in its commercial corridors is easily maintained and attractive for years to come. In general, the following concepts should be considered for each district.

### General Commercial District

- A minimum of 60 percent of the wall of buildings where the primary entrance is located should be constructed of building materials such as masonry, stone veneer systems, stucco, or precast panels with inlaid or stamped brick texture.
- A minimum of 40 percent of other walls are encouraged to be constructed of building materials such as masonry, stone veneer systems, stucco, or precast panels with inlaid or stamped brick texture.
- It is encouraged that the predominant colors used in the design of buildings be complementary to those used in nearby properties as is appropriate.
- A maximum three-color palette is recommended.
- Damaged or deteriorated exterior building materials should be repaired or replaced.

### Local Commercial District

- The wall of buildings where the primary entrance is located should be constructed of building materials such as masonry, stone veneer systems, stucco, or precast panels with inlaid or stamped brick texture.
- A minimum of 40 percent of other walls are encouraged to be constructed of building materials such as masonry, stone veneer systems, stucco, or precast panels with inlaid or stamped brick texture.
- It is encouraged that the predominant colors used in the design of buildings be complementary to those used in nearby properties as is appropriate.
- A maximum three-color palette is recommended.
- Damaged or deteriorated exterior building materials should be repaired or replaced.

**1** *Masonry, stone, or stucco are the building materials utilized where the primary entrance is located and colors used in the design are complementary to neighboring properties.*

**2** *Example of stone building material with brick texture.*

## Roofs, Awnings, and Canopies

Roofs, awnings, and canopies add visual interest and help to create a sense of place within commercial corridors. In order to foster the development of shopping environments that are inviting and unique the City of Sunset Hills encourages developers to consider the following concepts.

### General Commercial District

- Roofs should contribute to the visual interest of the district through both height and elevation changes using cornices, gables, hip roofs, or dormered roofs.
- Awnings and canopies should only be used when they are compatible with the architectural style of the building.
- Awnings and canopies may be placed above entrances and may extend over doorways and storefront windows; however, they should be limited to these areas of the façade of the building.
- The color of awnings and canopies should complement and enhance the overall color scheme of the building façade.
- Awnings should be made of a canvas, metal, or durable fabric that can be easily cleaned. Hard plastic or other materials that can crack, fade, or be easily broken are discouraged.
- Back and underlit awnings and canopies, shingle and mansard canopies, rounded awnings, and plastic awnings are discouraged.

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- Awnings should be made of a canvas, metal, or durable fabric that can be easily cleaned. Hard plastic or other materials that can crack, fade, or be easily broken are discouraged.
- Back and underlit awnings and canopies, shingle and mansard canopies, rounded awnings, and plastic awnings are discouraged.

- 1 *Colorful awnings placed only above entrances and made of materials that are easily cleaned.*
- 2 *An awning design compatible with the architectural style of the building.*
- 3 *Roof with elevation changes contributing to the visual interest of the buildings.*





## Signage

Good signs in a commercial corridor are effective tools for bringing awareness and attention to commercial areas. Bad signs on the other hand can add to visual clutter and make commercial areas unsafe and unattractive. In order to foster the development of viable, safe, and aesthetically pleasing commercial areas, the City of Sunset Hills encourages that developers consider the following concepts for each district.



## General Commercial District

- Wall and monument signs should be limited to business identification and description.
- The copy on wall and monument signs should be comprised of individually affixed letters. Box signs, flat signs, or other similar type signs are discouraged.
- External illumination of wall and monument signs is encouraged.
- Exterior advertising signs are discouraged.
- The size, material, color, and shape of wall signs should complement the architectural style and scale of the building and should be integrated as a component of the building's facade.
- Street numbers should be prominently displayed at the main entrance to every business and be clearly visible from the street.



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- 1 Monument sign is limited to business identification only.
- 2 Every business is clearly marked and visible from the street.
- 3 Monument sign is limited to business identification.
- 4 Wall sign size, material, color, and shape complement the architectural style.

## Transit, Bike, and Pedestrian Mobility

Although the City's General Commercial and Local Commercial Districts are primarily oriented to automobile traffic more and more residents are choosing to take alternative modes of transportation for their daily shopping needs. Sunset Hills would like to encourage this healthy lifestyle choice and therefore asks that developers consider the following concepts.

### General Commercial District

- Internal pedestrian walkways are encouraged to connect from public sidewalks within the right-of-way to building entrances.
- Circulation plans should minimize conflict points between pedestrians and vehicles and ensure visible and accessible crosswalks are installed where conflicts might occur.
- Where bike paths exist on roadways leading to General Commercial district areas, on-site bicycle parking is encouraged.

### Local Commercial District

- Internal pedestrian walkways are encouraged to connect from public sidewalks within the right-of-way to building entrances.
- Circulation plans should minimize conflict points between pedestrians and vehicles and ensure visible and accessible crosswalks are installed where conflicts might occur.
- Where bike paths exist on roadways leading to Local Commercial district areas, on-site bicycle parking is encouraged.

- 1 *On site bicycle parking at a strip shopping center.*
- 2 *An example of a safe, accessible, pedestrian crosswalk at a strip shopping center.*
- 3 *An example of an internal pedestrian promenade that connects patrons from the sidewalk to the building and protects them from the elements.*

