

Urban Design Guidelines

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Urban Design Guidelines

1.0 Objectives

Urban Design Guidelines are a means to illustrate the Town of Paradise's expectations during the development review process for new neighborhoods, for neighborhood intensification, and for development along Topsail Road. While these guidelines do not address the details of individual properties, they do provide guidance regarding the relationship between adjacent sites and between a site and the public realm. Through Urban Design Guidelines, the Town of Paradise can emphasize that public and private developments should carefully consider the aesthetic and functional relationships that exist between private properties and between public and private spaces.

1.1 What is Urban Design?

1.1.1 APPLICATION

Urban Design Guidelines can either be a solely informative / educational tool or they may be implemented through revisions to the Municipal Plan, and through technical design standards, such as the Development Regulations and Engineering Subdivision Guidelines.

1.1.2 TOWN PLAN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Town of Paradise Urban Design Guidelines are grounded in the Guiding Principles of the new Town Plan. The design guidelines describe site-specific design solutions that, when implemented, translate the Guiding Principles into measurable improvements of the built-environment.

The Guiding Principles of the new Town Plan are:

- **DENSITY**
Promote and locate higher density development adjacent to the main transportation corridors
- **CONNECTIVITY**
Pursue an interconnected street system and enhance connectivity to and within the key corridors and to the outlying neighbourhoods for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.
- **WALKABILITY**
Locate core commercial services and schools within a 5-minute walk from residential neighborhoods.
- **ACTIVITY**
Create a physical and built environment that provides opportunities for safe daily physical activity.
- **DIVERSITY**
Provide a full range of housing types to create diverse neighborhoods, including housing for seniors, students, and people living with disabilities.
- **ACCESSIBILITY**
Encourage employers to locate jobs close to affordable homes.
- **NATURAL**
Create a linked system of natural areas and parks and ensure these features are restored, enhanced, and are protected.
- **ECOLOGICAL**
Build greener infrastructure that ensures the ecological integrity of the Town is maintained.

Main Street Guidelines

2.0 Introduction

Paradise lacks an identifiable central commercial area or town centre. The majority of commercial uses in the Town are located on Topsail Road at the eastern end of the Town. To a lesser extent, commercial uses can be found along the Trans-Canada Highway and scattered along Paradise Road and St. Thomas Line. The commercial uses found in the town are individual businesses and small shopping areas that predominantly cater to local residents. Even though there are over 65 unique products and services offered throughout Paradise, the main commercial artery weaving through the Town has no identifiable character and is primarily optimized for vehicular through-traffic.

Topsail Road is an arterial main street where development is low in profile, set back from the street, and separated from other buildings by large areas of asphalt. This type of development has created gaps in the urban fabric and has produced an uninviting pedestrian environment and incomplete streetscapes.

Topsail Road is a prime location that presents significant opportunities to intensify and enhance development in a manner that creates attractive pedestrian environments, contribute to vibrant new neighbourhoods, and create transit-friendly places. The Topsail Road Main Street Corridor Design Guidelines recognize that the corridor is mostly built out. The guidelines will help facilitate the intensification and evolution of Topsail Road over time to a more balanced vehicular and pedestrian environment. The guidelines also promote the development of mixed-use nodes with quality streetscapes defined and supported by buildings and landscape design.

TOPSAIL ROAD



Corridor

The objectives of the Topsail Road Main Street Corridor Design Guidelines are as follows.

CHARACTER

- Foster compatible development that will contribute to the recognized or planned character of Topsail Road; and
- Facilitate a gradual transition to more intensive forms of development on Topsail Road.

WALKABILITY

- Promote a comfortable pedestrian environment and create attractive streetscapes; and
- Encourage high-quality built form and establish a strong street edge along the road.

ACCESSIBILITY

- Accommodate a broad range of uses including retail, services, commercial, office, institutional and higher density residential; and
- Enhance connections that link development sites to public transit, roads and pedestrian walkways.



Main Street Guidelines

2.1 Function

2.1.1

Topsail Road should be designed to serve a variety of functions, including transit, active transportation, connections to adjacent communities, connections between neighbourhoods, and connections to local roads.

2.2 Streetscape

2.2.2

Narrow travel lanes as much as possible (3.25-3.5m wide) to accommodate wider sidewalks, sodded buffers and space for street tree planting.

2.2.3

Provide or upgrade a 1.8 metre wide unobstructed curbed concrete sidewalk on both sides of Topsail Road in areas where building entrances face the street. In areas of insufficient road right of ways, provide generous sidewalk and sodded boulevard on one side of the street only. Ensure that marked pedestrian crossings are located at key locations.

2.2.4

Add sodded planting boulevard between sidewalks and curb to create buffer between pedestrians and vehicular traffic.



2.1.1

2.2.5

Plant trees in sodded buffer or between sidewalks and adjacent properties to create continuous street edge. Visually narrowing the street can entice car drivers to adopt lower vehicle speeds. Ideally, trees should be spaced at 6-9 meter intervals.

2.2.6

Consider the type and location of trees to ensure that higher branching trees are positioned to ensure there is no interference with truck traffic, sight lines, and utilities.

2.2.7

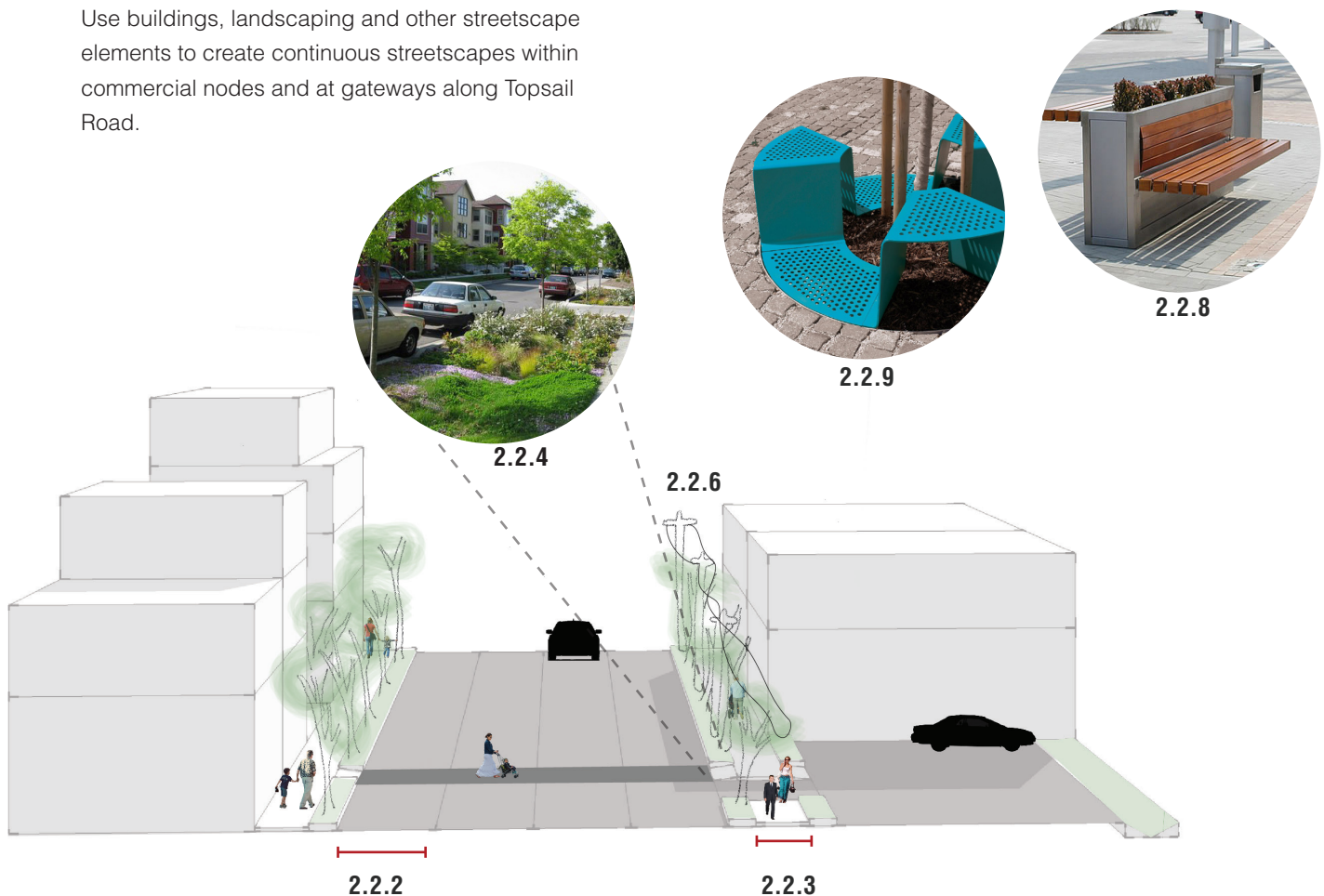
Use buildings, landscaping and other streetscape elements to create continuous streetscapes within commercial nodes and at gateways along Topsail Road.

2.2.8

Provide seating areas in public places wherever appropriate. Ideal locations are near a building's front doors, next to a side street, and in sunny locations.

2.2.9

Couple seating with amenities (street furniture) such as trash receptacles and public art. Street furniture should be professionally designed for beauty, comfort, interest and durability.



Main Street Guidelines

2.3 Built Form

2.3.10

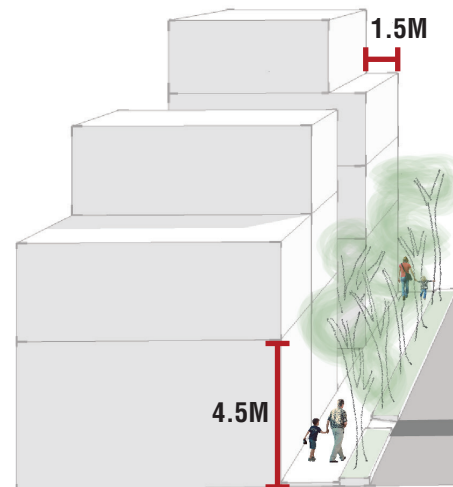
Create new or enhance existing commercial and mixed-use nodes as well as gateways along Topsail Road and reinforce the prominence of these locations through appropriate massing and building heights. Integrate public amenities such as bus stops and transit shelters.

2.3.11

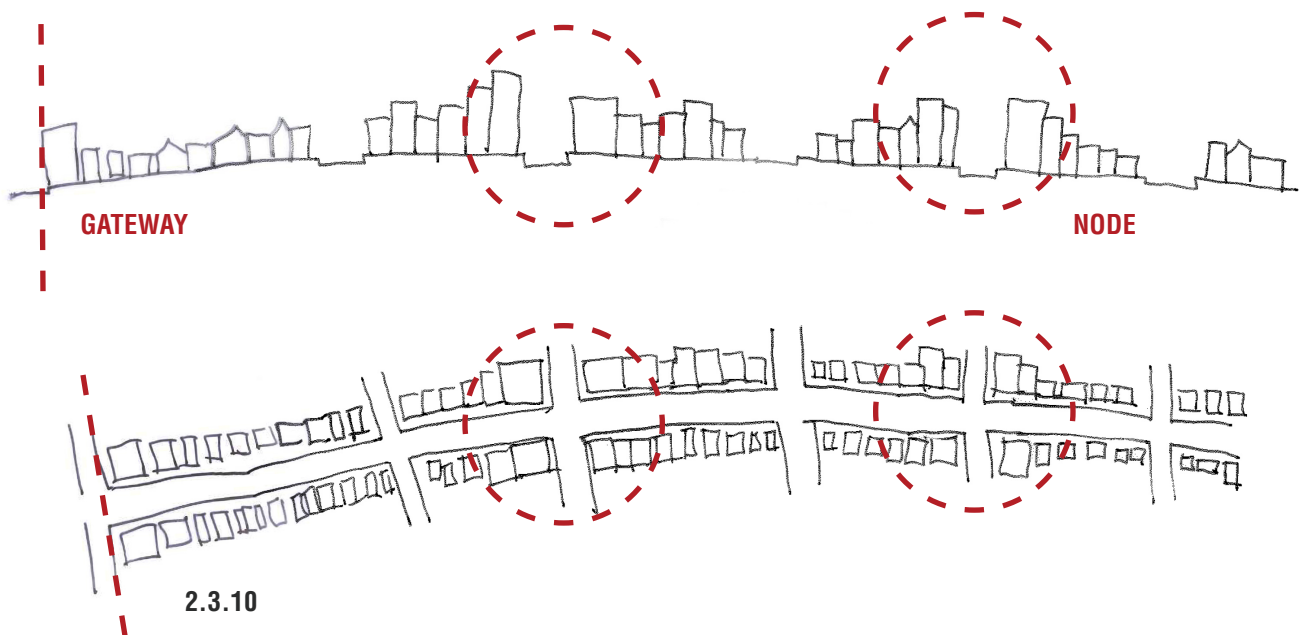
Encourage new mixed-use buildings at nodes and gateways with a 3-4 storey building base, a 4.5 metre floor-to-ceiling height for commercial ground floors and a 1.5 meter step back for storeys above the building base.

2.3.12

Provide enhanced architectural features and landscaping within commercial nodes and gateways.



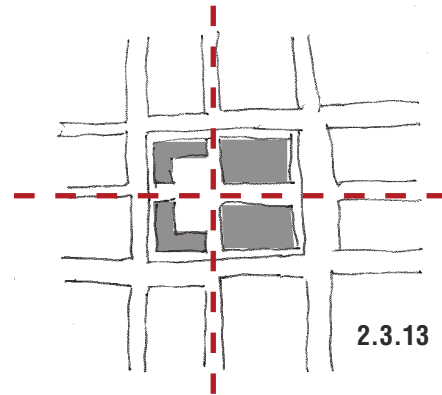
2.3.11



2.3.10

2.3.13

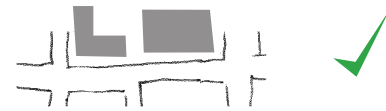
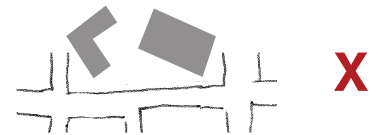
Organize development at commercial nodes around an internal circulation pattern that will allow for intensification over time. Design internal circulation pattern with direct connections to surrounding streets.

**2.3.13****2.3.14**

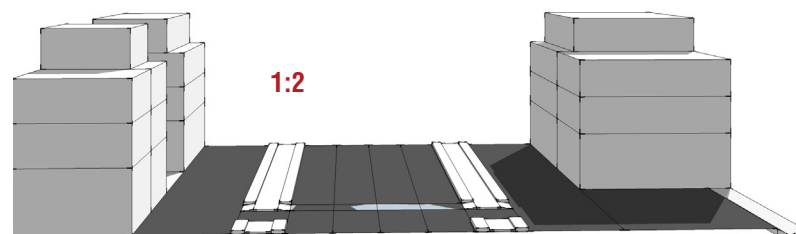
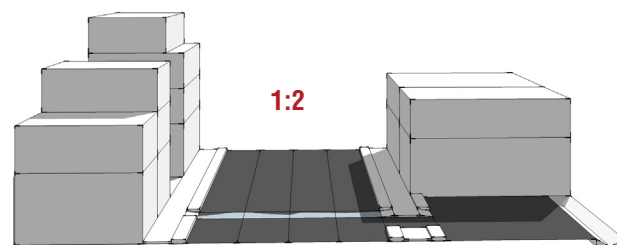
Aim for a minimum ratio of building height to road corridor width of 1:3 in commercial nodes and at all future development and redevelopment sites along Topsail Road; in other words the building heights are never less than half the width the road.

2.3.15

Site new buildings parallel to the street.

**2.3.15****2.3.16**

Ensure that commercial, mixed-use, institutional buildings and multi-unit residential buildings occupy the majority of the lot frontage. If the site is on a corner, situate the building at the lot line with the entrance at the corner.

**2.3.14**

Main Street Guidelines

2.3.17

Create a transition in the scale and density of the built form on the site when located next to lower density neighbourhoods to mitigate any potential impact.



2.3.17

2.3.18

Landscape the area in front of a building wall and use projections, recesses, arcades, awnings, colour and texture to reduce the visual size of any unglazed walls.



2.3.18

2.3.19

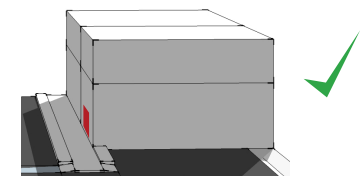
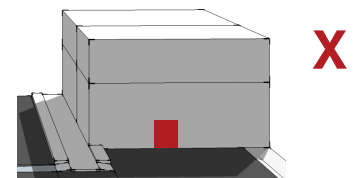
Design richly detailed buildings that create visual interest, a sense of identity and a human scale along Topsail Road.



2.3.19

2.3.20

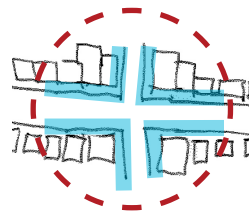
Orient the front façade to face Topsail Road and locate front doors to be visible, and directly accessible, from the street.



2.3.20

2.3.21

Use clear windows and doors at commercial nodes and gateways to make the pedestrian level façade of walls, facing the street, highly transparent. Locate active uses along the street at grade, such as restaurants, specialty stores, food retail, seating areas, offices and lobbies.



2.3.21

2.4 Pedestrians & Cyclists

2.4.22

Direct pedestrian and cyclists to local trails (i.e. Newoundland T'Railway) where they run parallel and in close proximity to Topsail Road.

2.4.23

Connect pedestrian walkways between adjacent properties, to facilitate circulation between sites.

2.4.24

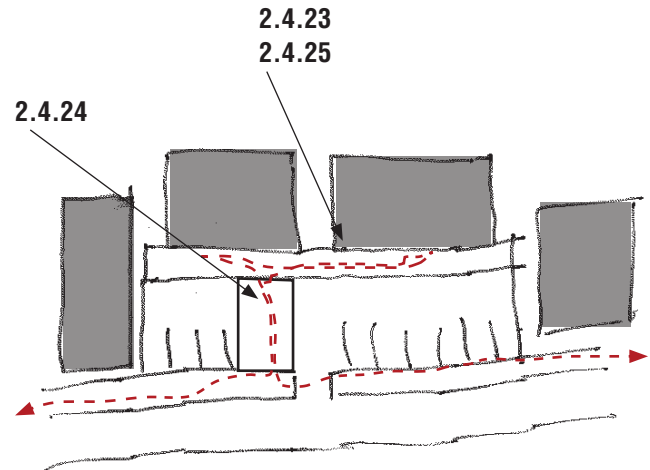
Provide direct, safe, continuous and clearly defined pedestrian access from public sidewalks to building entrances.

2.4.25

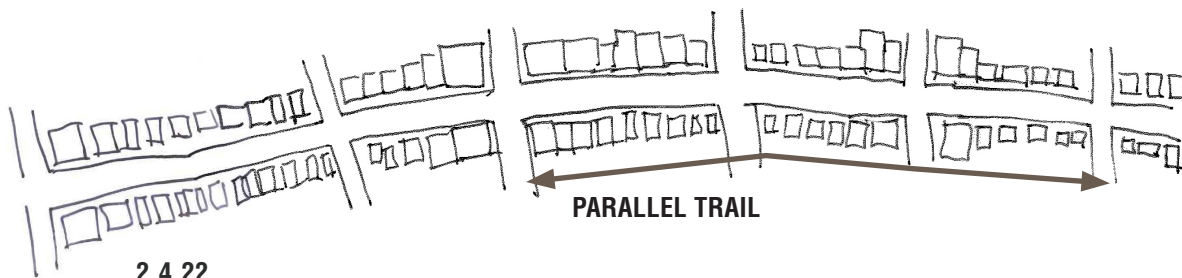
Provide unobstructed pedestrian walkways that are a minimum of 2.0 meters wide along any façade with a customer entrance, along any façade adjacent to parking areas, and between the primary entrance and the public sidewalk. Provide additional width where doors swing out and car bumpers can potentially interfere with the walkway.

2.4.26

Provide site furnishings such as benches, bike racks and shelters, at building entrances and amenity areas. Ensure that these locations do not conflict with pedestrian circulation.



2.4.26



2.4.22

Main Street Guidelines

2.5 Vehicles and Parking

2.5.27

Avoid large areas of uninterrupted parking. Minimize total amount of parking through shared parking between adjacent properties.

2.5.28

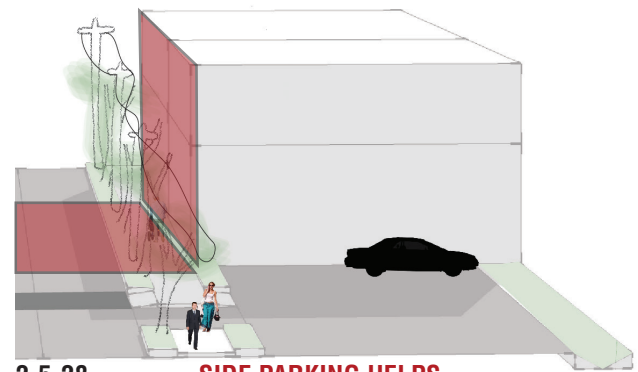
Locate surface parking spaces at the side or rear of buildings. Provide only the minimum number of parking spaces required by the Development Regulations.

2.5.29

Share vehicular access to parking areas between adjacent properties in order to reduce the extent of interruption along the sidewalk and the number of driveways exiting on Topsail Road.

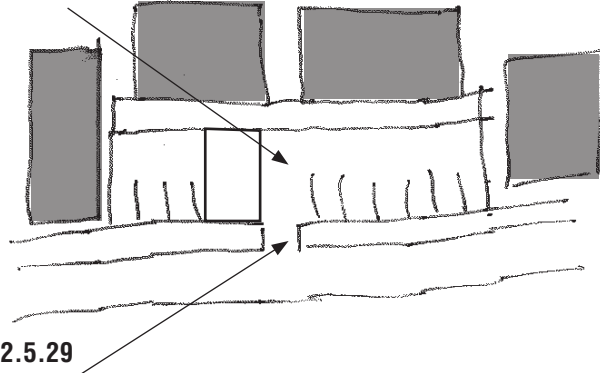
2.5.30

Link parking lots of adjacent properties in order to allow for the circulation of vehicles between sites.



SIDE PARKING HELPS BUILDINGS MAINTAIN STREET FRONTAGE

2.5.27
2.5.30



2.5.31

Use Planting strips, landscaped traffic islands and/or paving articulation to define vehicle routes and define smaller parking 'courts' that provide pedestrian walkways, improve edge conditions and minimize the aesthetic impact of surface parking.

**2.5.32**

Use amount of landscaping proportionate to the overall parking lot size, but generally, 1 tree for every 8 parking spaces is recommended or as directed by the Development Regulations.

**2.5.31****2.5.33**

Provide a landscaped buffer between parked vehicles and the sidewalk where parking areas must be situated adjacent to the sidewalk. This buffer should be located within the private realm to not reduce the total sidewalk width.

**2.5.36****2.5.34**

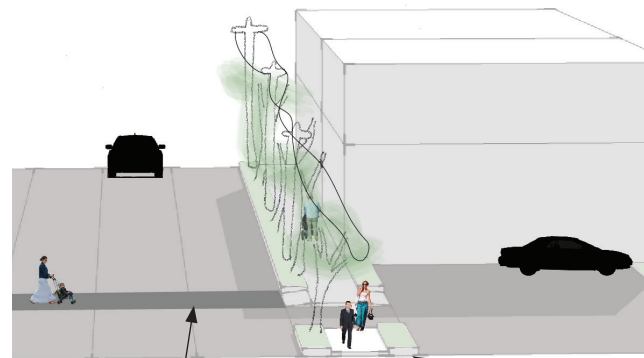
Use distinctive pavement and/or markings to indicate pedestrian crossings.

2.5.35

Situate service and drop-off area circulation so that is doesn't interfere with pedestrian circulation.

2.5.36

Use permeable paving where appropriate, to promote drainage.

**2.5.34****2.5.33**

Main Street Guidelines

2.6 Landscaping

2.6.37

Select plant species that are indigenous or compatible with local climate and soil conditions. Plantings should require minimal seasonal watering or be drought resistant. Select plants that are tolerant to road salt.

2.6.38

Use continuous landscaping to reinforce pedestrian walkways within parking areas.

2.6.39

Coordinate tree and street light locations with above and below-grade utilities.

2.6.40

Provide a landscape area along the edge of a site where parking areas, drive lanes or stacking lanes are adjacent to a public street. Use trees, shrubs and low walls to screen cars from view while allowing eye level visibility into the site.



2.6.38

2.6.41

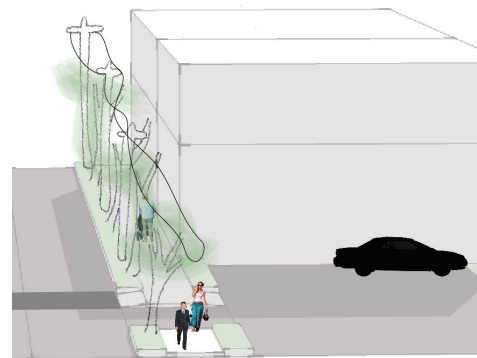
Plant trees, shrubs and ground cover on any unbuilt portions of the site that are not required to meet minimum parking requirements. This may include any areas reserved for future phases of development.

2.6.42

Protect and feature heritage, specimen and mature trees on site by minimizing grade changes and preserving permeable surfaces.

2.6.43

At commercial nodes, landscape areas between buildings and the sidewalk with foundation planting, trees, street furniture, and walkways to the public sidewalk.



2.6.40

2.7 Signs

2.7.44

Eliminate visual clutter.

2.7.45

Locate and design ground-mounted and wall-mounted signs to complement the character and scale of the area and promote an active, pedestrian-friendly environment.

2.7.46

Restrict temporary and portable signs. Prohibit billboards, revolving signs and roof signs on private property.

2.8 Servicing and Utilities

2.8.47

Share service and utility areas between different users, within a single building or between different buildings, to maximize space efficiencies.

2.8.48

Enclose all utility equipment within buildings or screen them from both Topsail Road and private properties to the rear. These include utility boxes, garbage and recycling container storage, loading docks and ramps and air conditioner compressors.

2.8.49

Design lighting so that there is no glare or light spilling onto surrounding uses.

2.8.50

At commercial nodes, provide lighting that is appropriate to node's character with a focus on pedestrian areas.



2.8.48

Greenfield Guidelines

3.0 Introduction

The majority of residential development in Paradise has been in the form of residential subdivision developments of predominantly single detached dwelling units. These have occurred as water and sewer servicing has extended off the main roads of Topsail Road, Paradise Road, and St. Thomas Line, particularly around Adam's Pond. The main residential areas are the former St. Thomas Town site, Elizabeth Park, Donovan Terrace, and Karwood Estates. New developments are currently approved for lands around Octagon Pond. Large lot residential areas have been developed at Topsail/ Three Island Pond and in the area of Topsail Bluff, where municipal water and sewer services are not planned.

The Design Guidelines for Greenfield Development address a number of issues associated with recent residential development trends in Paradise. Individually planned neighbourhoods have led to a disconnected and fractured development pattern. Cul-de-sacs are a common method of local road design. This reduces the number of physical connections throughout new communities, and can have a negative effect on pedestrian circulation and snow removal operations. In some instances, long, uninterrupted blocks have been developed. This is giving conflicting cues as to the appropriate speed of vehicles and can undermine the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Garages are becoming a dominant feature of front building facades, reducing the amount of habitable ground floor space and negatively impacting the look of new residential dwellings.

3.1 Layout

3.1.1

Identify and buffer sensitive environmental features and link to other features to ensure that the natural heritage system is protected, enhanced or restored, and that ecological systems are not negatively affected through the development of new neighbourhoods.



3.1.1

3.1.2

Create a connected network of parks, greenspaces and public lands that is structured by existing natural features and connected by pathways and sidewalks. Make this network easily accessible on foot or bike from homes throughout the neighbourhood.



3.1.2

3.1.3

Maintain natural drainage networks to retain functional surficial drainage and watercourses and to support storm water management infrastructure such as storm water management ponds.



3.1.3

3.1.4

Incorporate existing healthy trees within development blocks or lots when establishing block patterns. Provide enough space for healthy growth and protect trees and their roots during construction and grading.



3.1.4



Greenfield Guidelines

3.1.5

Incorporate landform features and topography in the design of road and block patterns to maximize vistas and visual interest and reduce extensive earth movement requirements.

3.1.6

Base street layout on a grid pattern that is modified in response to natural open space or existing street conditions in order to maximize connections for vehicular, cyclist, and especially pedestrian traffic.

3.1.7

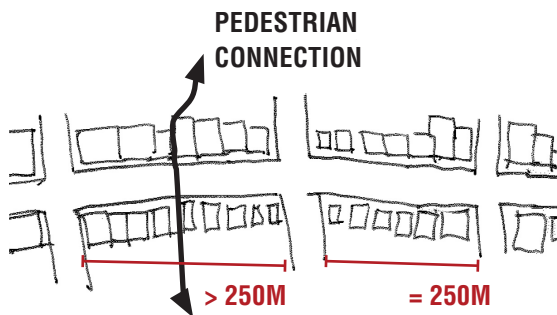
Limit cul-de-sacs where the topography of a site does not constrain grid-based block development.

3.1.8

Provide pedestrian connections where ending streets or cul-de-sacs occur, in order to enhance the level of connectivity through the community.

3.1.9

Connect new streets to existing streets in adjacent developments and plan for future connections to land that has yet to be developed.



3.1.13

3.1.10

Concentrate higher density residential units around neighbourhood focal points that include potential transit stops, commercial areas, schools, community facilities, parks and multi-use trails.

3.1.11

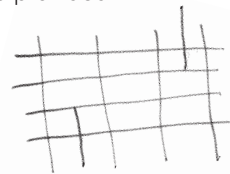
Create walkable neighbourhoods with pathways, trails and sidewalks that are accessible year round and that connect destinations such as future transit stops, commercial areas, schools, community facilities and parks.

3.1.12

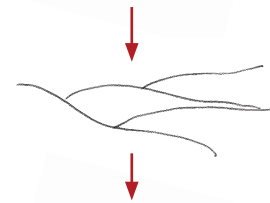
Design collector streets to be direct and continuous through the neighbourhood so homes are within walking distance of transit, schools, mixed-use nodes and other destinations along them.

3.1.13

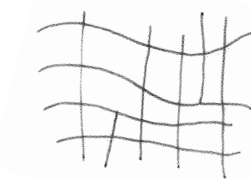
Limit block lengths to not exceed 250 meters. Where a block is longer than 250 meters, a through-block pedestrian walkway or a mid-block parkette should be provided.



BASIC GRID



TOPOGRAPHY



ADAPTED GRID

3.1.5

3.1.14

Consider rear lanes where desirable to eliminate the need for driveways and street facing garages. Appropriate locations for rear lanes could include properties along collector roads or facing open spaces.

3.1.15

Maximize opportunities for passive energy conservation and south facing exposure through street orientation, block pattern, building location and heights. Use vegetation and architectural detailing for shading and wind protection.

3.1.16

Create a transition in height from taller buildings to adjacent lower buildings, particularly when connecting to an adjacent development or neighbourhood.

3.1.17

Locate schools sites on sites that have at least two road frontages and are near a neighbourhood park or greenspace.

**3.1.16****3.1.18**

Locate neighbourhood parks along collector or local streets, and ensure that they are generally square or rectangular, depending on features within the park.

3.1.19

Locate parks so that they front onto at least two streets, or have the longest edge front onto the street. Locate parks at 'T'- intersections to terminate streetscape views.

**3.1.17****3.1.19**

Greenfield Guidelines

3.2 Street Design

3.2.20

Create cycling-supportive neighbourhoods with bicycle routes that serve local destinations, and that are linked to a town-wide network of bicycle routes. Routes include wide shared-use curb lanes, designated on-road bicycle lanes or multi-use pathways.

3.2.21

Design pathways, trails and walkways that are connected to the road right-of-way so that they link to a sidewalk and cross at an intersection.

3.2.22

Include a landscaped buffer between the arterial right-of-way and the local right-of-way for single-loaded streets fronting onto arterial roads.

3.2.23

Design roads at the entrances to neighbourhoods to create a sense of arrival with such elements as enhanced landscape treatment.

3.2.24

Construct sidewalks on both sides of streets that serve key destinations, such as future transit stops, greenspaces, or to community facilities like schools.

3.2.25

Plant trees along all streets in a consistent pattern and coordinate with the location of street amenities and utilities. Base selection and location of trees on soil conditions, bearing capacity, and urban forestry principles.

3.2.26

Design crosswalks in areas with higher pedestrian and vehicular traffic volumes to be visually different from the street surface. Ensure that they are universally accessible.

3.3 Residential Building & Site Design

3.3.27

Locate residential buildings close to the property line and provide visual interest along the streetscape with a variety in setbacks and projections.

3.3.28

Orient all buildings towards streets and/ or open spaces to provide a sense of enclosure and enhanced safety through “eyes on the street.” This can be further enhanced by maximizing the number of windows facing the street or open space.

3.3.29

Mix various types of housing on each street while considering the relationship (height, size, bulk) between each other, and to existing houses.

3.3.30

Consider appropriate dwelling design relative to solar orientation for heating and cooling.

3.3.31

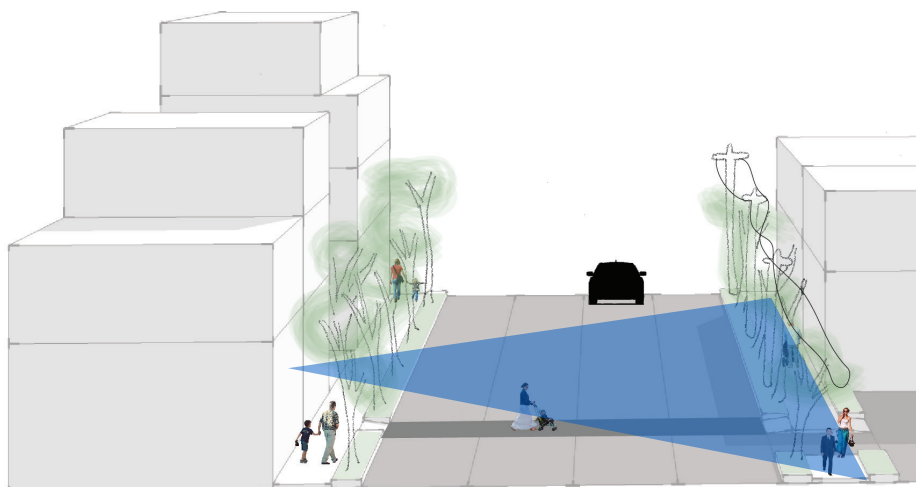
Design buildings at key intersections as “landmark buildings”, with enhanced height, massing, building projections, architectural elements, and public space.

3.3.32

Design building façades so that windows and doors are prominent features that address the streets they front.

3.3.33

Site and design residential buildings on corner lots so that both the front and the side of the building are oriented to the public street and are detailed with similar quality and style.



3.3.28

Greenfield Guidelines

3.3.34

Incorporate porches, which are big enough to accommodate sitting areas, into the overall architecture of the building. Wrap porches around the building façade on corner units.

3.3.35

Avoid extreme roof pitches with oversized roofs.

3.3.36

Locate surface parking areas of multi-unit residential buildings away from public view and not between the public street and the building. Design and landscape parking areas so they do not detract from any rear yard amenity space.

3.3.37

Provide a landscape buffer along the edges of multi-unit residential parking areas, in situations where they are along a public street. Provide breaks in the buffers to connect the sidewalk to walkways on the site. Buffers may include low shrubs, trees, and decorative fences.

3.3.38

Design residential buildings so that garages do not dominate the width of the front façade and do not project past the front wall. Design driveways so that they are not wider than the garage.

3.3.39

Provide shared driveways for ground-oriented attached dwellings to maximize area for trees, utilities, on-street parking, and snow storage, and to minimize the physical disruption of sidewalks along the street.



3.3.38



3.4 Non-Residential Building & Site Design

3.4.40

Locate community buildings and other non-residential buildings close to the street edge, with their primary face oriented to the street, and the front door directly accessible from the public sidewalk. Vary setbacks and projections, to provide visual interest along the streetscape.

3.4.41

Locate on-site surface parking areas to the side or rear and not between the public right-of-way and the front of the building. Landscape these parking areas to screen views of cars while maintaining view for natural surveillance.

3.4.42

Locate garbage and loading areas so that they are not visible from the public street. Screen or enclose them with similar materials as the main building.



3.4.42

3.4.43

Provide a landscaped buffer between residential areas and the service areas or rear lot areas of abutting non-residential development. Plant buffer to create a dense year-round screen.

3.4.44

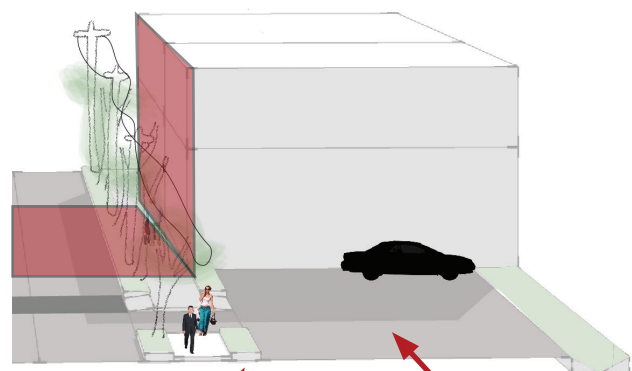
Reduce and delay stormwater runoff from a property by using techniques such as stormwater retention gardens, permeable paving and surfaces, and stormwater re-use.

3.4.45

Provide a landscape buffer along the edge of parking areas in situations where they are along the public street. Provide breaks in the buffers to connect the sidewalk to walkways on the site. Buffers may include low shrubs, trees, and decorative fences.

3.4.46

Provide pathways between residential areas and non-residential sites that directly and clearly connect these areas.



3.4.43

3.4.41

SIDE PARKING HELPS BUILDINGS MAINTAIN STREET FRONTAGE

Greenfield Guidelines

3.5 Greenspaces

3.5.47

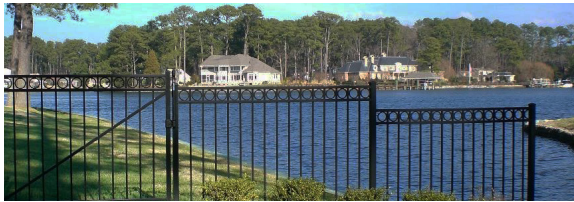
Design stormwater management areas, and other greenspaces that have the majority of their frontage onto public roads, to make a visible contribution to the neighbourhood.

3.5.48

Naturalize the edges of stormwater management areas to deter public access and to create wildlife habitats. Use decorative fencing that complements the natural character of the area when fencing is needed for safety.

3.5.49

Design streetscapes with open accessible frontages along greenspaces, such as woodlots and stormwater management ponds. Provide fencing along greenspaces only to prevent direct access to sensitive environmental areas or unsafe conditions.



3.5.48

3.5.50

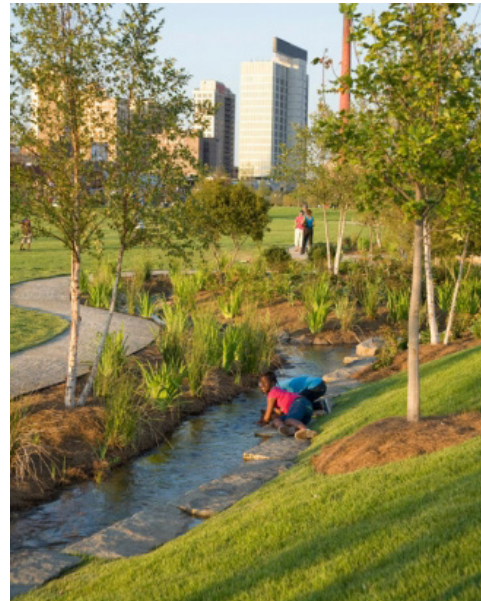
Provide landscape buffer areas around natural features, such as woodlots or watercourses, to protect the ecological functions. Plant these buffers with native tree and shrub species to prevent invasive plant species from becoming established.

3.5.51

Provide trees and sidewalks along the edge of parks and greenspaces to complement the treatment across the street.

3.5.52

Design pathways to enhance the function and character of the type of open space they occupy, keeping in mind user safety, lighting and intended operational hours.



3.5.50

Stormwater Management

4.1.1

Reduce impervious hard surfaces wherever possible. The surface area of driveways and parking areas should be as small as possible within allowable standards.

4.1.2

Maximize porous pavement, and landscaped areas with adequate size and soil conditions to capture roof drainage and increase the total amount of water runoff absorbed through infiltration.

4.1.3

Encourage rain barrels or cisterns in new buildings to accommodate grey water irrigation.

4.1.4

Consider vegetated or “green” roofs especially in areas with minimal landscaping, to minimize water runoff, improve building insulation, and provide additional outdoor amenity areas.

4.1.5

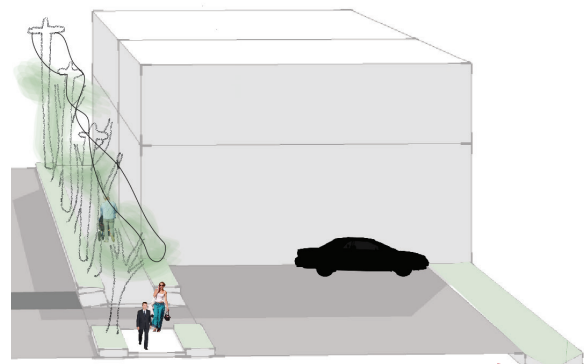
Incorporate vegetative or grassy swales on the perimeter of larger parking areas to catch storm water. These drainage basins should be planted with native plant materials that thrive in wet conditions or left to naturally re-vegetate.

4.1.6

Provide well-drained on-site snow storage areas in locations that enable melting snow to enter a filtration feature prior to being released into the storm water drainage system.



4.1.1
4.1.2



4.1.5

Road Typologies

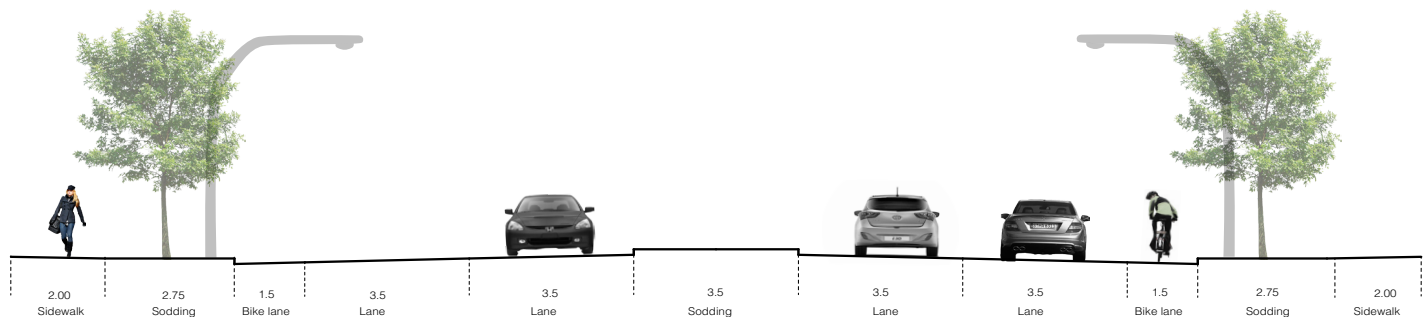
The Town of Paradise Engineering Guidelines for Subdivisions define the characteristics of three different street classes.

Arterial Roads are designed for 12,000-30,000 annual average daily traffic volumes and traffic movement is the first design consideration.

Collector Roads are designed for 12,000-30,000 annual average daily traffic volumes and traffic movement and land access are considered of equal importance.

Local Roads are designed for less than 1,000 annual average daily traffic volumes and traffic movement is the second design consideration.

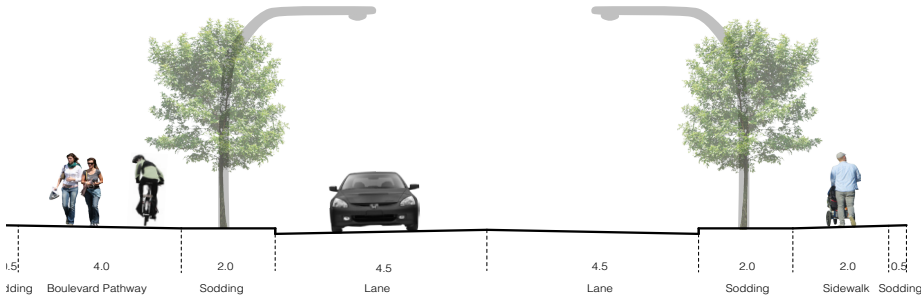
The design guidelines recognize that streets are part of the public realm and should not only contribute to the visual image of the Town but should also be functional in striking a balance between all modes of transportation.



Arterial

30M ROW

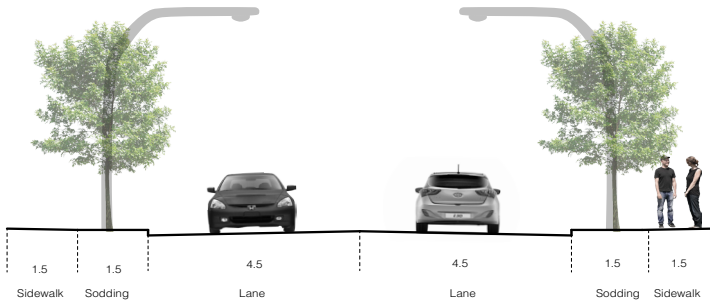
- No on-street parking
- On-street bike lanes
- Sodded median with turning lanes
- Sodded planting/utility strip with tree planting



Collector

20M ROW

- On-street parking
- Multi-use pathway
- Sodded planting/utility strip with tree planting



Local

15M ROW

- On-street parking
- Sodded planting/utility strip with tree planting