

**East Providence Waterfront Special Development District Commission**  
**Design Review Guidelines – Taunton Avenue Special Development Sub-Districts**  
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**Introduction**

The East Providence Waterfront Special Development District Commission (“Waterfront Commission”) hereby adopts these Design Review Guidelines for Taunton Avenue Special Development Sub-District with the illustrative sketches in order to assure high quality design in all major developments. The Waterfront Commission requires that all developments within the East Providence Special Waterfront Development District (“Waterfront District”) undergo design review by the Commission and its Design Review Committee (DRC) subject to these design and performance standards. These guidelines shall apply to all new construction, expansions and/or additions of 50% of the gross floor area of existing buildings, or changes to exterior building façades for multifamily and nonresidential development, and to proposed demolition of existing buildings.

These Design Review Guidelines for the Waterfront District will help the City accomplish several important goals related to urban planning and project design review that would:

- Enable innovative and creative site planning, building design and development.
- Ensure that similar projects within the Waterfront District are judged according to the same standards.
- Help expedite design review by focusing on adherence to standards.

- Contribute to a more efficient design review and entitlement process.

The diverse nature of the City requires that design standards apply the aforementioned principles in a number of different contexts in order to weave good design into the accomplishment of the City’s goals for the waterfront district, including:

- Revitalization of the waterfront.
- Creation of additional housing units at all levels of affordability.
- Attraction of businesses to the City.
- Retention and expansion of existing businesses in the Waterfront District.
- Creation of additional open space and park areas in the Waterfront District.
- Growth in the City’s tax base with property tax and sales tax.

In order to ensure a balanced and principled approach to meeting the Waterfront District Commission’s goals, these Design Review Guidelines are intended to:

- Have a long-term perspective.
- Require quality design, materials and construction.

- Encourage ‘green’ construction practices as well as ‘green’ construction materials.
- Consider all stakeholder impacts.
- Be guided by the vision and strategy for the waterfront district and economic development.
- Be influenced by the historical, social, natural and economic drivers in the districts and neighborhoods.
- Be balanced by local and regional trends and goals.

### **Taunton Avenue Special Development Sub-District**

*Taunton Avenue.* The Taunton Avenue sub-district consists of properties which are impacted by the proposed transportation improvements for the Interstate 195 highway ramping changes, and three vacant and deteriorating properties along Taunton Avenue. The City of East Providence is also conducting ongoing planning and implementation efforts relating to commercial corridor revitalization for Taunton Avenue and Warren Avenue. Each of these corridors received RIDOT transportation enhancement grants for streetscape improvements, which was implemented in 2006.

The Taunton Avenue Special Development District is proposed to include a number of parcels which have been previously identified as being impacted by the proposed transportation improvements associated (the Interstate 195 highway ramping changes), and three properties which if left in their current state will continue to be a blighting influence and will undermine current commercial district revitalization efforts.

#### *164 Taunton Avenue – Vacant site, formerly Bomes Theatre*

This property is vacant. Redevelopment of this site to an active mixed use, such as ground floor commercial with second story

residential, is crucial to the overall well being of Taunton Avenue.

#### *205 and 213 Taunton Avenue*

These properties have a square footage of .32 acres and are zoned Commercial – 3. The property is partially vacant, and also contains a vacant three-story boarded-up tenement. The property has an extremely blighting influence on the commercial vitality of Taunton Avenue.

Certain areas of the Project Area, notably portions of Warren Avenue and Taunton Avenue, have areas that could be developed or redeveloped which are in close proximity to existing development. This “infill development” of vacant lots should require a “build-to” line to re-establish continuity of the street wall. Likewise, small-scale development without a directly abutting neighbor should be guided by adjacent development patterns as a means to incrementally fill empty portions of the streetscape and achieve compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

The following represents Development Guidelines for the use of the DRC and Waterfront Commission in the approval process of proposed developments within the Pawtucket Avenue Special Development Sub-District. Each design element is accompanied by a zoning reference which is Chapter 19, Zoning Ordinance of the City of East Providence, Article IX Waterfront Special Development District. Wherever there is ambiguity between the zoning requirement and a guideline, the zoning shall govern. The Sketch reference includes drawings to illustrate the design requirements. Not all elements require either a zoning reference or a sketch. Although the elements are listed as guidelines, it is the intent of the Waterfront Commission to enforce these provisions as they constitute “area and performance standards” as required by zoning. If any develop-

er cannot meet these guidelines, substantive justification must be presented to the Commission before any deviations can be approved.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES for Pawtucket Avenue Special Development Sub-District Section 19-472 (7)**

Design Element	Zoning Ref	Sketch Ref	Guideline	Intent / Commentary
<b>Land Use</b>			<p><i>Permitted Land Use</i></p> <p>Commercial office and uses permitted by zoning.</p> <p><i>Architectural Guidelines</i></p> <p>(a) Minimum 2 stories required; maximum height of 4 stories.</p> <p>(b) Off-street parking preferred to be provided through parking structures, with limited on-grade parking; any on-grade parking shall not abut Taunton Avenue.</p>	
<b>GENERAL SITE CONFIGURATION</b>				
<b>Sidewalks</b>	Sec 19-483 (h)	SK-2 SK-9	Street trees required on all streets. Street tree locations shall enhance view corridors, without creating view barriers. Maximum distance between street trees shall be 50 feet, with typical or preferred spacing of 40 feet. Tree species selection shall be in scale with the street and surrounding buildings and shall create a shade canopy on the sidewalk.	The sidewalk is a critical element that ties the pieces of a neighborhood together. Sidewalks provide safety from moving vehicles. Sidewalks are an extension of the activity that takes place in the building – they should be lively, inviting and kept free of debris.

<b>Design Element</b>	<b>Zoning Ref</b>	<b>Sketch Ref</b>	<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Intent / Commentary</b>
<b>Existing Structures</b>			No existing structures shall be demolished without review and approval of the Waterfront District Commission. Lots may not be utilized (even for interim use) as surface parking lots. Review of demolition applications require presentation of design of proposed structure to take the place of the demolished structure. Demolition if approved, shall not take place until completed building permit and Waterfront Commission applications and fees have been filed and approved.	
<b>LOT CONFIGURATION</b>				
<b>Front Yard Treatment and Setbacks</b>	Sec 19-483 (b)	SK-4 SK-6 SK-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ All buildings shall be built to meet the back of the sidewalk with no setback below the third floor.</li> <li>○ No parking of vehicle in front yard of any building.</li> <li>○ No overhead garage or service doors facing primary streets or town square.</li> </ul>	To create a sense of community and street life, commercial and multi-family residential should have prominent street frontages.
<b>Side Yard Treatment and Setbacks</b>	Sec 19-483 (b)	SK-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Commercial – No Requirement.</li> <li>○ Residential – No Requirement.</li> </ul>	
<b>Corner Lots</b>			Building on corner lots shall be oriented to have two (2) front yards. Parking and automobile access shall be located at least 30 feet from corners.	Corner lots offer unique opportunities because of their visibility and access from two streets.

Design Element	Zoning Ref	Sketch Ref	Guideline	Intent / Commentary
<b>Entrances</b>		SK-3 SK-5 SK-8 SK-10	Entries shall be clearly identifiable and visible from the street.	Entries that are visible from the street make a project more approachable and create a sense of association among neighbors.
<b>PARKING</b>				
<b>Parking and Vehicle Access</b>	Sec 19-483 (e)  And Sec. 19-482		Siting shall minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and pedestrian safety. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parking lots shall not abut Taunton Avenue.</li> <li>○ Commercial uses in this area shall not be required to provide onsite parking. Residential shall encourage parking in structured parking behind primary street use on Taunton Avenue.</li> </ul>	Techniques used to minimize the impacts of driveways and parking lots include breaking large parking lots into smaller ones, minimizing the number and width of driveways and curb cuts, sharing driveways with adjacent property owners, locating parking in lower level or less visible portions of site, and locating driveways to minimize visual impact.
<b>Location of Parking on Commercial Lots</b>  <b>Parking Lot Light Trespass</b>	Sec 19-483 (e)		Parking lots on a commercial street frontage shall be prohibited.  Lighting of parking lots shall be designed to prevent light from shining onto adjacent residential uses. Lighting shall be directed at ground surfaces with upward light spread kept to a minimum.	Parking lots located along a commercial street front where pedestrian traffic is desirable lessens the attractiveness of the area to pedestrians and compromises the safety of pedestrians along the street.

HEIGHT AND BULK	Zoning Ref	Sketch Ref	Guideline	Intent / Commentary
Scale	Sec. 19-482	SK-3 SK-5 SK-8 SK-10	<p><b>Height</b> – Minimum two stories above grade. Maximum height of four stories.</p> <p><b>Building Massing:</b> Building shall occupy a minimum of 75% of frontage along Taunton Avenue.</p> <p><b>Street setback</b> shall not exceed 10 feet from back of street for sidewalks, terraces and street trees. Parking between building and sidewalk and within the setback area is prohibited. Café seating is encouraged along the building face provided a minimum 6'-0" clear path unobstructed by signs, poles, trees, etc. is maintained at all locations.</p>	

BUILDING ELEMENTS	Zoning Ref	Sketch Ref	Guideline	Intent / Commentary
Building Design	Sec 19-483 (a)		<p>Building design elements, details and massing shall create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural continuity within the district.</p> <p>Buildings shall exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building.</p> <p>Large unarticulated boxes are prohibited.</p> <p>All buildings elevations shall be articulated by window openings.</p>	<p>Interesting design through articulation can create intervals to reduce perceived building mass and promote compatibility with their surroundings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Modulating the façade by stepping back or extending forward a portion of the façade.</li> <li>○ Repeating the window patterns.</li> <li>○ Providing a porch, patio, deck or covered entry for each interval.</li> <li>○ Providing a balcony or bay window for each interval.</li> <li>○ Changing the roofline by alternating dormers, stepped roofs, gables, terraces, or other elements to rein-</li> </ul>

<b>BUILDING ELE- MENTS</b>	<b>Zoning Ref</b>	<b>Sketch Ref</b>	<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Intent / Commentary</b>
				force the modulation or articulation interval. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Changing the materials with a change in the building plane.</li><li>○ Providing a lighting fixture, trellis, tree or other landscape feature with each interval.</li></ul>



**Permitted Elements on Primary Building Elevations**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Prohibited</b>	<b>Permitted</b>
Awnings			◆
Dumpsters / Service		◆	
Windows	◆		
Entrance Doors	◆		
Utility Meters		◆	
Bulkheads		◆	
Ventilation Louvers		◆	
Signage			◆ Sec. 19-483(i)
Animated signs or LED signs		◆	
ATM Drive up		◆	
ATM Windows (walk-up only)			◆
Garage Doors / Loading Dock		◆	

<b>BUILDING ELEMENTS</b>	<b>Zoning Ref</b>	<b>Sketch Ref</b>	<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Intent / Commentary</b>
<b>Exterior Finish Materials</b>	Sec 19-483 (a)		<p>Building exteriors shall be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.</p> <p>The following materials are prohibited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Vinyl siding.</li> <li>○ Aluminum siding.</li> <li>○ EIFS.</li> <li>○ Split face block; architectural block permitted by review.</li> </ul> <p>The following materials are permitted on all structures, although in selecting exterior finish and materials, it is important to consider context of abutting structures and character:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wood (cedar) shingles.</li> <li>○ Wood clapboard</li> <li>○ Cement (clapboard) siding,</li> <li>○ Stucco.</li> <li>○ Brick, stone, rubble, pre-cast concrete.</li> <li>○ Standing seam metal.</li> <li>○ FYPON, AZEK or other synthetic trim or cornice material.</li> </ul> <p>Ancillary features such as soffit materials, ridge vents, gutters and downspouts, and storm doors are permitted to be fabricated from aluminum, vinyl, PVC, or Fiberglas pending approval of specified items by the Design Review Committee.</p>	<p>Selection and use of exterior materials is a key element in the breakdown of scale for larger buildings. Incorporation of cornice lines, belt courses, banding or multiple materials is encouraged to produce buildings that will fit into the local character.</p>

<b>BUILDING ELEMENTS</b>	<b>Zoning Ref</b>	<b>Sketch Ref</b>	<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Intent / Commentary</b>
<b>Building Design Commercial</b>	Sec 19-483 (a)		<p><b>Commercial</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ground floor shall extend to front property line.</li> <li>○ Setbacks at entries and café terraces are permitted, (see Front Yard Treatment and Setback, First bullet).</li> <li>○ Building façades are permitted to step back from the front property line above the second floor.</li> </ul>	
<b>Building Design Residential</b>	Sec 19-483 (a)		<p><b>Residential</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ All street façades are required to have windows.</li> <li>○ Front doors/entrances shall face the street.</li> <li>○ Garage doors are prohibited from the primary building elevation.</li> </ul>	
<b>Appurtenances</b>			<p><b>Trash</b> facilities to be accommodated within buildings or roofed structures. Loading doors are not permitted to face onto Taunton Avenue.</p> <p><b>Mechanical systems</b> are to be housed within buildings, or on screened rooftop service areas.</p> <p><b>Site features</b> such as lighting, fencing, trash cans, bike racks shall coordinate with existing.</p>	

## DEFINITIONS

Definitions in Section 19-471 of the East Providence Zoning Ordinance shall govern where such terms are used. The following are common architectural terms that are used in some (not all) of these Guidelines. The intent is to clarify and amplify the terms. These definitions are suggested and are not mandatory. The source is the Glossary of Architectural Terms by *Archiseek*.

1. **Aluminum Siding** - Lightweight material that is often painted rather than left in its natural color.
2. **Asphalt Shingle** - A roofing material made of a brown or black tar like substance mixed with sand or gravel.
3. **Axonometric** - A drawing technique devised to represent three dimensional objects on flat paper. Verticals are drawn to scale, but diagonal dimensions are distorted.
4. **Balcony** - A platform projecting from an upper story and enclosed by a railing.
5. **Baluster** - Any of the small posts that make up a railing as in a staircase; may be plain, turned, or pierced.
6. **Balustrade** - The combination of railing held up by balusters.
7. **Bay** - Buildings are often divided into repetitive elements, or bays, defined by the space between two horizontal beams, or pairs of vertical columns.
8. **Bay Window** - A set of two or more windows that protrude out from the wall. The window is moved away from the wall to provide more light and wider views.
9. **Beam** - A Horizontal load-bearing element that forms a principal part of a structure, usually using timber, steel, or concrete.
10. **Building Code** – Rhode Island State Building Code.
11. **Canopy** - A projection or hood over a door, window, niche, etc.
12. **Cantilever** - A projecting elements, such as a beam or porch, supported at a single point or along a single line by a wall or column, stabilized by a counterbalancing downward force around the point of fulcrum.
13. **Cedar Shingle** - A roofing material made of durable pinewood.
14. **Cement Plaster** - A mixture of sand and cement that is applied to the exterior foundation wall beneath ground level to aid in watering proofing.
15. **Clapboard** - Tapered horizontal boards used as siding, thickest on their bottom edge; each overlaps the one below. Also known as weatherboard or siding.

16. **Colonnade** - A row of columns forming an element of an architectural composition, carrying either a flat-topped entablature or a row of arches.
17. **Column** - A slender, upright structure, usually a supporting member in a building. Freestanding or self-supporting structural element carrying forces mainly in compression; either stone, steel, or brick, or more recently, concrete.
18. **Corbel** - A projecting wall member used as a support for some elements of the superstructure. Also, courses of stone or brick in which each course projects beyond the one beneath it. Two such structures, meeting at the topmost course, creates an arch.
19. **Corbeling** - Stone or wood projecting from a wall or chimney for support or decoration.
20. **Cornice** - Decorative projection along top of wall. The uppermost section of moldings along the top of a wall; any molded projection of similar form.
21. **Cornice Return** - A short continuation of the face board at the gable end of a house.
22. **Course** - A continuous row of building materials, such as shingle brick or stone.
23. **Crown molding** - A molding where the wall and ceiling meet; uppermost molding along furniture or cabinetry.
24. **Cupola** - A small, dome-like structure, on top of a building to provide ventilation and decoration.
25. **Dental** - A molding motif that projects from the edge of a roof line or cornice.
26. **Dormer** - The setting for a vertical window in the roof. Called a gable dormer if it has its own gable or shed dormer if a flat roof. Most often found in upstairs bedrooms.
27. **Eave** - The projecting lower edge of a roof.
28. **Elevation** - An orthographic view of some vertical feature of a building. (Front, rear, side, interior elevation). A primary building elevation is the view of the front of the building.
29. **Entablature** - The area above an entryway in which the transom is contained.
30. **Exterior Wall** - An outside wall.
31. **Façade** - One of the exterior faces (walls) of a building.
32. **Face Brick** - A finished, non-defective brick yielding good appearance and construction quality.
33. **Fascia** - A horizontal band or board, often used to conceal the ends of rafters; the front of an object. Same as a face board.
34. **Fenestration** - The stylistic arrangement of windows in a building.
35. **Fieldstone** - A stone used in its natural shape.

36. **Finial** - A knob-like ornament.
37. **Finish Floor** - A finished walking surface.
38. **Foundation** - The base of a house providing stability and rigidity.
39. **Foundation Wall** - The masonry wall that rests on the footer.
40. **Gable** - A triangular area of an exterior wall formed by two sloping roofs.
41. **Gambrel** - A roof where each side has two slopes; a steeper lower slope and a flatter upper one; a 'barn roof'. Often found in Colonial revival houses in the "Dutch" style.
42. **Hipped roof** - A roof with slopes on all four sides. The "hips" are the lines formed when the slopes meet at the corners.
43. **Mansard** - A roof type with two slopes on each of the four sides, the lower slope being steeper than the other; capped off with a cupola, typically Victorian.
44. **Masonry** - Stonework or brickwork.
45. **Molding** - Shaped decorative outlines on projecting cornices and members in wood and stone.
46. **Mullion** - The vertical member separating adjacent windows.
47. **Muntin** - Wood or metal strips separating light.
48. **Parapet** - That portion of the wall that extends above the roof (wall surrounding a flat roof).
49. **Paved Terrace** – A paved surface adjoining a building to allow outdoor use, as an outdoor seating area of a restaurant. May be paved with concrete, decorative tile, block, brick or other impervious material, but not asphalt.
50. **Pediment** - A low triangular gable above a cornice, topped by raking cornices and ornamented.. Used over doors, windows or porches. A classical style.
51. **Pilaster** - A rectangular vertical member projecting only slightly from a wall, with a base and capital as will a column.
52. **Pitch** - The rate at which a roof or other surface slopes.
53. **Porch** - An open or enclosed gallery or room on the outside of a building.
54. **Portico** - A large porch usually with a pediment roof supported by classical columns or pillars.
55. **Rafter** - A roof beam sloping from the ridge to the wall. In most houses, rafters are visible from the attic. In styles such as craftsman bungalows and some "rustic" contemporaries, they are exposed.

56. **Raking Cornice** - The sloping moldings of a pediment.
57. **Return** - A wooden member nailed between the rafter-end and the stringer for bed board support.
58. **Ridge** - The top-most portion of a roof from which roof sides fall away.
59. **Rise** - The vertical distance from one stair tread to the next.
60. **Riser** - The vertical portion of a step. The board covering the open space between stair treads.
61. **Roof Pitch** - Degree of roof slant stated in inches rise per foot.
62. **Roof Types** - Style and shape of roofs - gable, gambrel, hip, mansard, shed, flat, butterfly, salt-box.
63. **Rough Sill** - The bottom rail of a window rough opening.
64. **Rubble** - Masonry construction using stones of irregular shape and size.
65. **Rusticated Stone** - Stonework, sometimes roughly finished, distinguished by having the joints deeply sunk.
66. **Siding** - The finished covering on the outside of non masonry walls of houses and buildings. Shingles, wood siding, aluminum siding, vinyl siding, stucco, etc.
67. **Sidelights** - Windows on either side of a door.
68. **Sill** - A horizontal piece forming the bottom frame of a window or door opening.
69. **Skylight** - A window in a roof to give light to a loft or room without other lighting.
70. **Slate** - A roof material made from a hard, fine-grained rock that cleaves into thin, smooth layers.
71. **Soffit** - The underside of a member such as a beam or arch, or of an eave, overhang, dropped ceiling, etc.
72. **Terra Cotta** - A mixture of sand and baked clay commonly used to make pipe for sewage disposal systems. A mixture of sand and baked clay used to form a shingle used on certain styles of architecture.
73. **Transom** - A small window just above a door.
74. **Vinyl** - A synthetic type of siding used for its economic value.
75. **Window Types:**
  - a) **Double Hung** - Two sash, vertical sliding
  - b) **Casement** - Side hinged

- c) **Awning** - Top hinged
- d) **Hopper** - Bottom hinged
- e) **Oriel** - Windows that generally project from an upper story, supported by a bracket.
- f) **Picture Window** - Fixed sash
- g) **Jalousie** - Glass slats, Venetian blind principle
- h) **Horizontal sliding** - two or more sash designed to slide over one another
- i) **Bay** - Extends beyond the exterior face of the wall
- j) **Bow** - Projected window with a curved surface often in the glass itself.
- k) **Combination** - The integration of two or more of the above into one unit.