DESIGN CRITERIA

# TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

**The Village of**

# RIVERDALE, ILLINOIS

& The Regional
Transportation Authority

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# INTRODUCTION

The Village of Riverdale has conducted a Transit-Oriented Development Study, in cooperation with the Regional Transportation Authority, to assess development and redevelopment opportunities in the neighborhood surrounding the Riverdale Metra station. This transit-oriented neighborhood is roughly bounded by Stewart Avenue on the west, 140th Street on the south, Indiana Avenue on the east, and Blue Island-Riverdale Road and the Little Calumet River on the north.

## Purpose of the Design Criteria

The Design Criteria outlined in this document are a proactive response by the Village of Riverdale to the development and redevelopment anticipated to occur within this neighborhood in the coming years. These Criteria will serve to ensure that future development and redevelopment exhibits the level of quality and attractiveness that Riverdale residents expect and that will enhance the neighborhood overall.

These Criteria address both **new construction** and **exterior renovation of existing buildings**, because both have the potential to significantly impact the character of the neighborhood. The Criteria supplement the use, location, bulk and other standards found within the Village's Zoning Ordinance. They are intended to facilitate appropriate new development and renovation by allowing for significant design freedom within general parameters that ensure that all structures contribute to the improvement of the whole. Evaluation of a proposed project will be based on both the *quality* of the proposed design and materials to be used, and the *relationship* of the project to its surroundings.

## Goals of the Design Criteria

The Design Criteria seek to:

- Maintain a development pattern that encourages pedestrian activity, while accommodating adequate parking.
- Make businesses appealing and welcoming to both pedestrians and drivers.
- Accommodate high quality commercial uses that are convenient to the Metra station.
- Sustain a high residential quality of life while also accommodating modern business activity.
- Ensure that a variety of housing types can be effectively accommodated within the neighborhood.

## Development Types Subject to Design Criteria

***Commercial and Mixed Use***: This land use category consists of existing and future developments that accommodate retail, office or service businesses (such as a hair salon or dry cleaner). Mixed-use structures include dwelling units on the upper floors in addition to ground floor commercial space.

***Multi-Family Residential***: This land use category consists of existing and future developments that accommodate condominium or rental dwelling units. These may be units within large multi-story buildings or semi-detached units such as townhomes, and will usually include shared outdoor parking and common green space.

***Single-Family Residential***: This land use category consists of detached residences with privately owned and maintained yards and off-street parking.

# CRITERIA FOR COMMERCIAL AND MIXED USE

## General

1. Newly constructed buildings should not overwhelm or disregard the adjacent context with regard to building location (setbacks), scale, bulk, massing, material, color, texture and fenestration.
2. Distinguishing features, historic elements and examples of craftsmanship should not be removed or covered during the alteration of existing older structures. Where damaged, they should be restored or recreated.
3. Materials that have been applied to cover older traditional façade elements should be removed and not replaced.
4. Consider the effect of small-scale details on visual appeal for pedestrians.
5. Consider the effect of overall forms, materials and colors on visual appeal for drivers.

*This building conforms to the character of its surroundings, in terms of bulk, massing, location, materials, and other features. It also holds visual appeal both for pedestrians and motorists.*

## Site Layout

1. New structures should not sit further than 10'-0" back from the public right-of-way line at street frontage(s), up to at least the second floor for multiple-story structures. A minimum setback of 5'-0" is recommended for landscaping at building fronts. Setbacks at interior lot lines should reflect neighboring buildings.
2. The main entrance(s) to all buildings should face the major street, with secondary entrance(s) as necessary from off-street parking areas or secondary street facades.
3. All service entrances, dumpsters and loading facilities should be located at the rear of buildings. They should be screened from view with fencing and / or landscaping so that they are not visible from public streets or parking areas.
4. Equipment (such as air conditioner units or exhaust fans) should be screened from view, and located either in the rear of the building or on the roof. No equipment should be mounted on street façade(s), or be visible from the street or customer parking areas.
5. Overhead utility service lines should be brought to structures from the side or rear, and utility hardware and meters should be mounted only to the side or rear of buildings, so that their visual impact is minimized.
6. Outdoor storage areas (including auto repair staging areas) should be located behind or beside buildings and be shielded from view of the street.
7. Businesses with "drive-thru" facilities should be sited so that drive-thru lanes and pickup windows are not prominently featured.

## Parking and Access

1. Provide a clearly delineated and dedicated pedestrian access route from the sidewalk to building entrance(s).
2. No entrance to a business should occur further than 25'-0" back from the front property line.
3. New off-street parking should not be prominent when viewed from main streets— it should be located either behind or between structures. No off-street parking should occur in front of a building.
4. Access to off-street parking should be from a minor street, or a rear or side alley. New off-street parking should not be accessed from major streets, to minimize curb cuts and interruption of pedestrian traffic.
5. Off-street parking should be shielded from view from public streets using either: 1) landscaping; 2) wrought iron fencing and landscaping; or, 3) a low masonry wall and landscaping.
6. Parking lots should be shared between businesses where feasible to allow for a more efficient lot layout and to minimize curb cuts.
7. Garages, if provided for upper floor dwelling units, should not face public streets.

*This parking lot is screened from the street by landscaping.*

## Scale and Massing

1. Buildings should be three stories maximum, with a parapet wall and flat roof profile.
2. The first story of new buildings should be designed to reflect a pedestrian scale, with windows providing attractive displays at retail businesses.
3. Buildings should meet the ground with a solid base treatment that creates a visual transition from sidewalk to building wall. "Curtain wall" systems that extend to the ground are not recommended.
4. Break up long expanses of blank wall or glazing with pilasters to suggest structural bays, or vary massing and / or roofline to provide visual interest.
5. Protected entries should be provided at business entrances using an arcade, building inset, canopy or awning.

*A varied roofline, facades broken up by pilasters, and a corner tower containing the entrance all help to enliven this building.*

## Materials, Finishes and Colors

1. All facades facing streets, walkways or parking areas should be finished in face brick.

2. Rusticated, painted concrete masonry units are acceptable for facades not facing streets, walkways or parking areas.
3. Materials used should be of high quality and durability, and should complement existing contextual materials. Recommended accent materials include stone, simulated stone or pre-cast concrete (at building base or as accents), and wood or metal trim elements.
4. Stucco, simulated stucco ("Dryvit"), or clapboard siding is acceptable for use above the first floor.
5. A natural, neutral color should be chosen for the primary exterior façade material in new construction. Contrasting trim colors should be used to highlight architectural elements, such as window and door surrounds.
6. Applied elements—such as railings, awnings, signage and light fixtures—should coordinate with, rather than overwhelm, the color scheme of the building.
7. The utilitarian brick side and rear facades of older existing buildings, if in good condition, should be left unpainted, clean and in good repair.

## Windows, Doors and Awnings/Canopies

1. Windows and doors should reflect the prevalent traditional types found in the immediate vicinity in scale, proportion and construction.
2. Metal or wood frame storefront windows over solid bulkheads are recommended (glazing should not extend to the ground).
3. Upper floor windows in new buildings should typically be individual openings in solid wall planes and smaller in size than first floor windows. Bay windows at the second floor may also be considered.
4. Window profiles should match existing masonry opening profiles; framing should not be inserted to receive smaller "standard" window sizes and shapes.
5. Security grilles, if deemed necessary, should be retractable during business hours and as inconspicuous as possible (preferably mounted inside windows).
6. Awnings should not cover architectural details or span across structural bays.
7. Simple pitched awning profiles, either retractable or fixed, are preferred. Arched or rounded awning profiles are not recommended.
8. Weather-treated fabric awnings or fixed metal canopies are preferred. Awnings with a shiny finish (vinyl) are not recommended.
9. Internally illuminated or back-lit awnings are not recommended.

*These simple pitched fabric awnings protect against the sun and provide visual interest. Facade-width awnings are appropriate here because the store consists essentially of one wide bay.*

## Signage

1. Building-mounted signage should be integrated with architectural façade elements and should never cover architectural details.
2. Signage should not project above the cornice line or be mounted on the roof of any building.
3. Street numbers should be prominently displayed at the main entrance to every business, and be clearly visible from the street.
4. Signage painted directly on storefront glass at the first floor, or applied to the narrow vertical face of awnings, is recommended.
5. Individual back-lit letters and signs illuminated by wall-mounted fixtures are recommended.
6. Free-standing signage is not recommended, with the exception of shared monument signage for multi-tenant properties. Pole or pylon signs are strongly discouraged.
7. Neon signs should be mounted on the interior of storefront windows only.
8. The following sign types are not recommended:

- Illuminated box signs, whether flat or projecting
- Flashing signs
- Moving signs, or signs with moving elements
- Electronic or fixed letter reader boards (theater marquees excepted)

9. Signage graphics and materials recommendations are as follows:

- Signs should contain a minimum of wording, in only one or two easily readable typefaces.
- Garish, unnatural colors are inappropriate; however, sufficient visual contrast between background and wording is recommended.

*Signs comprised of individual back-lit letters or painted on the narrow vertical face of awnings are recommended.*

## Lighting

1. Lighting should serve only to illuminate entries, signage, displays, adjacent pedestrian and parking areas, or to highlight significant architectural elements.
2. Building-mounted and free-standing light fixtures should be coordinated with each other and with the overall building design.
3. The following lighting types are not recommended:

- Visible fluorescent bulbs
- Exposed neon lighting on building exterior
- Colored bulbs, except for temporary seasonal decoration
- Internally illuminated awnings

4. Provide security lighting at parking lots, but control spillover into residential properties.

5. Security lighting fixtures should be concealed from view to the extent possible.

## Landscaping and Site Improvements

1. A landscape buffer of at least 2'-0" in width should be provided at the entire perimeter of buildings and parking areas, including between buildings and adjacent parking areas.
2. A landscape buffer of at least 5'-0" in width should be provided at entire site perimeter. At property lines adjacent to single-family residential uses, this buffer should be provided in conjunction with fencing.
3. Buffer plantings and foundation plantings should consist of a continuous row of low evergreen and / or deciduous shrubs planted in conjunction with low-growing annual or perennial plants and groundcover. Large expanses of exposed mulch should be avoided.
4. Large expanses of blank wall should be softened through the use of ivy or other hardy vines on trellises.
5. Maintain all viable existing trees.
6. Provide at least one shade tree for every 10 off-street parking spaces.
7. Provide one street tree for every 25'-0" of adjacent public parkway.
8. Flowering annuals in window boxes and / or planters are recommended, to add color and texture to the building façade and to highlight building entrance(s).
9. Low wrought iron fencing and / or masonry walls are recommended at the perimeter of outdoor dining / display areas and parking lots, utilized in conjunction with landscaping. Landscaping should occur on the "street side" of the fence or wall at lot lines abutting public streets.
10. Wood fencing can be used to enclose equipment and dumpster holding areas behind buildings, and should be fully screening and either painted or stained. Masonry walls are preferred for this purpose where nearby buildings are masonry.
11. Chain link fencing is not recommended.


*A landscape buffer at least five feet in width should line the perimeter of the site.*

# DESIGN CRITERIA FOR MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

## General

1. Newly constructed buildings should not overwhelm or disregard the adjacent context with regard to building location (setbacks), scale, bulk, massing, material, color, texture and fenestration.
2. Distinguishing features, historic elements and examples of craftsmanship should not be removed or covered during the alteration of existing older structures. Where damaged, they should be restored or recreated.
3. Materials that have been applied to cover older traditional façade elements should be removed and not replaced.

## Site Layout

1. New structures should not sit further than 25'-0" back from the public right-of-way line at street frontage(s), up to at least the second floor for multiple-story structures. A minimum setback of 5'-0" is recommended for landscaping at building fronts. Setbacks at interior lot lines should reflect neighboring buildings.
2. The main entrance(s) to all buildings should face the major street, with secondary entrance(s) as necessary from off-street parking areas or secondary street facades.
3. All service entrances, dumpsters and loading facilities should be located at the rear of buildings. They should be screened from view with fencing and / or landscaping so that they are not visible from public streets or parking areas.
4. Equipment (such as air conditioner units or exhaust fans) should be screened from view, and located either in the rear of the building or on the roof. No equipment should be mounted on street façade(s), or be visible from the street.
5. Overhead utility service lines should be brought to structures from the side or rear, and utility hardware and meters should be mounted only to the side or rear of buildings, so that their visual impact is minimized.

## Parking and Access

1. Provide clearly delineated and dedicated pedestrian access routes from the sidewalk to lobby or dwelling unit entrance(s).

2. No exterior entrance to a lobby or dwelling unit should occur further than 25'-0" back from the front property line.
3. Off-street parking should not be prominent when viewed from main streets— it should be located either behind or between structures. No off-street parking should occur in front of a building.
4. Access to off-street parking should be from a rear or side alley, to minimize curb cuts and interruption of pedestrian traffic.
5. Off-street parking should be shielded from view from public streets using either: 1) landscaping; 2) wrought iron fencing and landscaping; or, 3) a low masonry wall and landscaping.
6. Garages, if provided, should not face public streets.

## Scale and Massing

1. Buildings should be three stories maximum, with either a pitched roof profile or a parapet wall and flat roof profile.
2. Buildings should meet the ground with a solid base treatment that creates a visual transition from sidewalk to building wall. Windows that extend to the ground are not recommended.
3. Utilize a mixture of façade materials to break down the scale of multi-unit buildings.
4. Break up long expanses of blank wall with pilasters and / or projecting bays, or vary massing and / or roofline to provide visual interest.
5. Building entrances should be highlighted, as well as protected from the elements, with a building inset or canopy. Awnings are not recommended for this purpose.
6. Decks and balconies should be built of high-quality treated lumber, and painted or stained.

## Materials, Finishes and Colors

1. All facades facing streets or accommodating dwelling unit entries should be finished in face brick.
2. Rusticated, painted concrete masonry units are acceptable for facades not facing streets or accommodating building entries.
3. Materials used should be of high quality and durability, and should complement existing contextual materials. Recommended accent materials include stone, simulated stone or pre-cast concrete (at building base or as accents), and wood or metal trim elements.
4. Stucco, simulated stucco ("Dryvit"), or clapboard siding is acceptable for use above the first floor.

*This multi-family building features a parapet wall and flat roof profile, a series of projecting bays that breaks up the bulk of the building, and prominent, inset entrances. Recommended landscape elements include the metal fence and buffer of low evergreen shrubs.*

*Stone, simulated stone, and precast concrete are among the recommended accent materials.*

5. Synthetic material siding, trim and windows are acceptable, but wood is preferred.
6. A natural, neutral color should be chosen for the primary exterior façade material in new construction. Contrasting trim colors should be used to highlight architectural elements, such as window and door surrounds.
7. Applied elements—such as railings, awnings and light fixtures—should coordinate with, rather than overwhelm, the color scheme of the building.
8. The utilitarian brick side and rear facades of older existing buildings, if in good condition, should be left unpainted, clean and in good repair.

## Windows, Doors and Awnings/Canopies

1. Windows and doors should reflect the prevalent traditional types found in the immediate vicinity in scale, proportion and construction.
2. Windows in new buildings should typically be individual openings in solid wall planes. Bay windows may also be considered to break down the scale of multi-unit buildings.
3. Window profiles should match existing masonry opening profiles; framing should not be inserted to receive smaller "standard" window sizes and shapes.
4. Fabric and vinyl awnings are not appropriate; weather protection should be provided with a building inset or a fixed metal or wood canopy.

*As recommended, the windows in these buildings are individual openings in the wall planes, free of fabric or metal awnings. However, the use of siding on the upper story is not recommended; street facades for multi-family buildings should be faced entirely in brick.*

## Signage

1. Building-mounted signage should be integrated with architectural façade elements and should never cover architectural details.
2. Street numbers should be prominently displayed at the entrance to every lobby and / or dwelling unit, and be clearly visible from the street.
3. Individual back-lit letters and signs illuminated by wall-mounted fixtures are recommended.
4. Free-standing signage is not recommended, with the exception of monument signage integrated with perimeter fencing and landscaping. Pole or pylon signs are strongly discouraged.
5. Signage graphics and materials recommendations are as follows:
    - Signs should contain a minimum of wording, in only one or two easily readable typefaces.
    - Garish, unnatural colors are inappropriate; however, sufficient visual contrast between background and wording is recommended.

## Lighting

1. Lighting should serve only to illuminate entries, signage, adjacent pedestrian and parking areas, or to highlight significant architectural elements.
2. Building-mounted and free-standing light fixtures should be coordinated with each other and with the overall building design.
3. The following lighting types are not recommended:
   - Visible fluorescent bulbs
   - Neon lighting
   - Colored bulbs, except for temporary seasonal decoration
4. Provide security lighting at parking lots, but control spillover into dwelling units.
5. Security lighting fixtures should be concealed from view to the extent possible.

## Landscaping and Site Improvements

1. A landscape buffer of at least 2'-0" in width should be provided at the entire perimeter of buildings and parking areas, including between buildings and adjacent parking areas.
2. A landscape buffer of at least 5'-0" in width should be provided at entire site perimeter. At property lines adjacent to single-family residential uses, this buffer should be provided in conjunction with fencing.
3. Buffer plantings and foundation plantings should consist of a continuous row of low evergreen and / or deciduous shrubs planted in conjunction with low-growing annual or perennial plants and groundcover. Large expanses of exposed mulch should be avoided.
4. Large expanses of blank wall should be softened through the use of ivy or other hardy vines.
5. Maintain all viable existing trees.
6. Provide at least one shade tree for every dwelling unit.
7. Provide one street tree for every 25'-0" of adjacent public parkway.
8. Flowering annuals in window boxes and / or planters are recommended, to add color and texture to the building façade and to highlight building entrance(s).
9. Fences and railings at street-facing facades and yards should be metal rather than wood.
10. Masonry or fence enclosures used to conceal equipment and / or dumpsters should be solid and tall enough to fully conceal.
11. Low wrought iron fencing and / or masonry walls are recommended at the perimeter of parking lots, utilized in conjunction with landscaping. Landscaping should occur on the "street side" of the fence or wall at lot lines abutting public streets.
12. Chain link fencing is not recommended.

# DESIGN CRITERIA FOR SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

## General

1. Newly constructed homes should not overwhelm or disregard the adjacent context with regard to building location (setbacks), scale, bulk, massing, material, color, texture and fenestration.
2. Distinguishing features, historic elements and examples of craftsmanship should not be removed or covered during the alteration of existing older homes. Where damaged, they should be restored or recreated.
3. Materials that have been applied to cover older traditional façade elements should be removed and not replaced.

## Site Layout

1. Setbacks should reflect neighboring homes.
2. Front doors should face a public street.
3. Trash collection and outdoor storage areas should be located in rear yards, and screened from view with fencing and / or landscaping so that they are not visible from public streets.
4. Equipment (such as air conditioner units) should be screened from view, and located in rear yards. No equipment should be mounted on street façade(s), or be visible from the street.
5. Overhead utility service lines should be brought to homes from the side or rear, and utility hardware and meters should be mounted only to the side or rear of homes, so that their visual impact is minimized.

## Parking and Access

1. A clear and safe route should be provided from the public sidewalk to the front door.
2. Driveways should not be prominent when viewed from public streets— where feasible, they should be located behind homes and accessed from alleys. No off-street parking should occur in front of a home.
3. Garages should not face public streets.

*Houses should be finished in brick, at least at the first floor. Garages should be unobtrusive, and walkways should be provided from the sidewalk to the front door. Note the landscape buffer along the street facade of each house.*

## Scale and Massing

1. Homes should not exceed two and one-half stories over a basement, and should have a pitched roof profile.
2. Utilize projecting bays, or vary massing and / or roofline, to provide visual interest.
3. The front door should be protected from the elements with a building inset or fixed canopy. Awnings are not appropriate for this purpose.
4. Decks and balconies should be built of treated and high-quality lumber, and painted or stained.

*Projecting bays and varied rooflines add visual interest to these houses. The fences along the street are metal, as recommended.*

## Materials, Finishes and Colors

1. All new home facades should be finished in face brick at least at the first floor.
2. Rusticated, painted concrete masonry units are acceptable at the building base (basement level).
3. Materials used should be of high quality and durability, and should complement existing contextual materials. Recommended accent materials include stone, simulated stone or pre-cast concrete (as façade accents), and wood or metal trim elements.
4. Stucco, simulated stucco ("Dryvit"), or clapboard siding is acceptable for use above the first floor.
5. Synthetic material siding, trim and windows are acceptable, but wood is preferred.
6. A natural, neutral color should be chosen for the primary exterior façade material in new construction. Contrasting trim colors should be used to highlight architectural elements, such as window and door surrounds.
7. Open railings, wood trim, accent siding and other architectural details should be used to provide visual interest at new and renovated homes.
8. The utilitarian brick side and rear facades of older existing homes, if in good condition, should be left unpainted, clean and in good repair.

## Windows and Doors

1. Windows and doors should reflect the prevalent types found in the immediate vicinity in scale, proportion and construction.
2. Window profiles should match existing masonry opening profiles; framing should not be inserted to receive smaller "standard" window sizes and shapes.

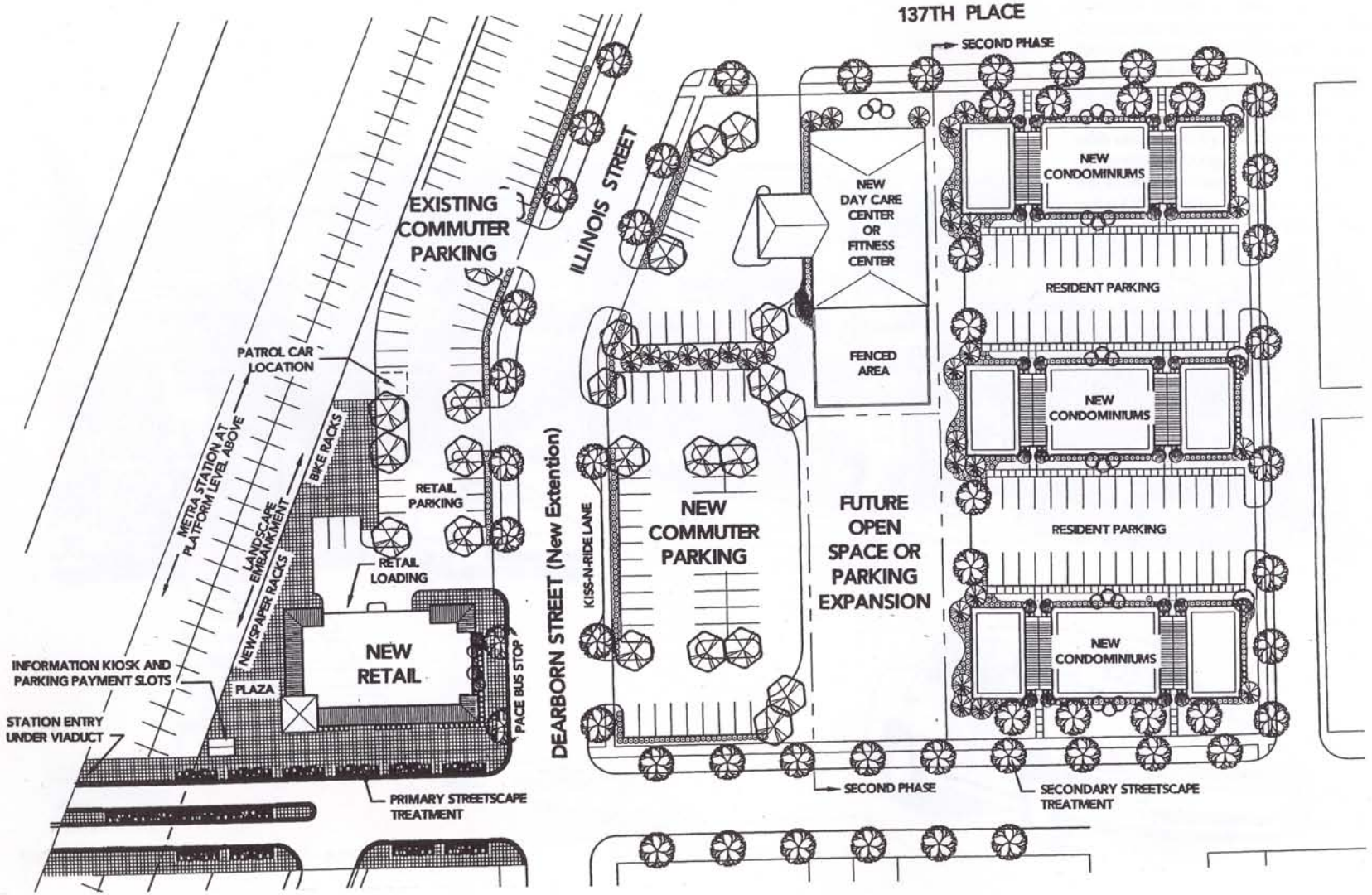
## Landscaping and Site Improvements

1. A landscape buffer of at least 2'-0" in width should be provided at the building foundation, where visible from a public street.
2. Foundation plantings should consist of a continuous row of low evergreen and / or deciduous shrubs planted in conjunction with low-growing annual or perennial plants and groundcover. Large expanses of exposed mulch should be avoided.
3. Maintain all viable existing trees.
4. Provide at least one new shade tree per home on-site.
5. Provide one street tree for every 25'-0" of adjacent public parkway.
6. Flowering annuals in window boxes and / or planters are recommended, to add color and texture to the front of homes.
7. Fences and railings at street-facing facades and yards should be metal rather than wood.
8. Chain link fencing is not recommended.

# REDEVELOPMENT PROTOTYPES

The two redevelopment prototypes presented on the following pages provide some guidance in interpreting these Design Criteria. They present proposed design solutions (in both plan and sketch format) for two key sites within the neighborhood, and demonstrate the level of quality and attention to design that the Village of Riverdale desires. The first is a proposed retail development located immediately to the east of the existing Riverdale Metra station, and the second is a proposed condominium development on a site overlooking Riverdale Park approximately one block west of the Riverdale Metra station.

# NEW STATION RETAIL CENTER PROTOTYPE – PLAN VIEW

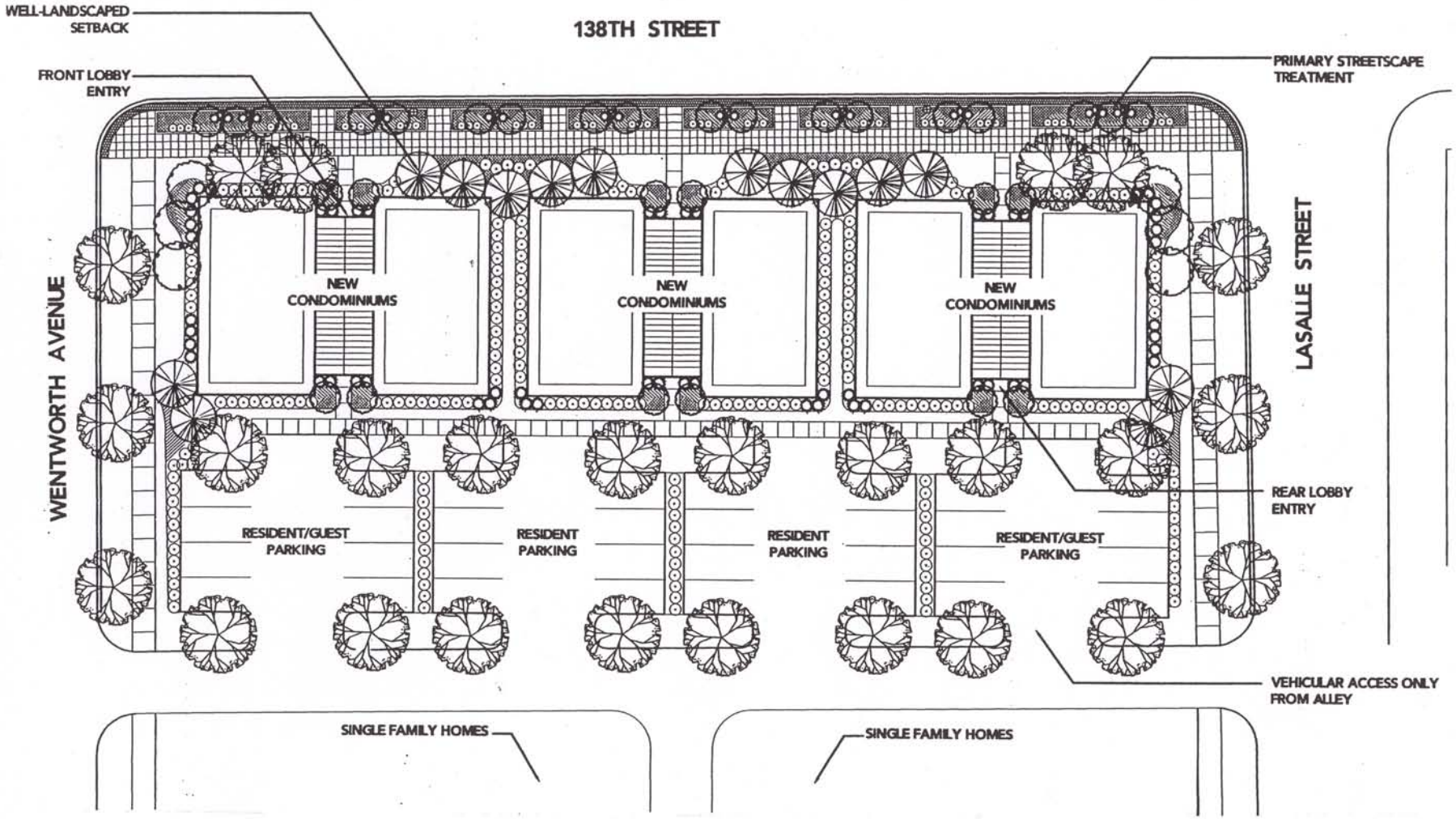


# NEW STATION RETAIL CENTER PROTOTYPE – ILLUSTRATIVE SKETCH

The retail center is a separate structure adjacent to the railroad embankment with frontage on 138th and Illinois Streets, providing approximately 5,000SF of convenience retail and service business space. Illinois Street is realigned to create a larger site adjacent to the tracks. The retail spaces will attract commuters who must pass by the storefronts to reach the commuter parking lots, but can also operate when the station is closed. The design of the center will reflect the station design at platform level to tie them together, and will be pedestrian-friendly in character.


VIEW LOOKING WEST TOWARD STATION AT 138TH STREET

# NEW CONDOMINIUM HOUSING PROTOTYPE – PLAN VIEW



# NEW CONDOMINIMUM HOUSING PROTOTYPE – ILLUSTRATIVE SKETCH

VIEW LOOKING EAST ALONG 138TH STREET FROM WENTWORTH AVENUE

This prototype infill housing project will accommodate such potential homeowners as: young single professionals; families with young children; and, empty nesters who wish to remain in Riverdale. These households are more likely to find transit accessibility appealing and will own fewer cars. Parking lot access is from the rear alley, allowing the streetscape in front to be uninterrupted and pedestrian-friendly. High quality materials are utilized, and design details reflect a residential scale.