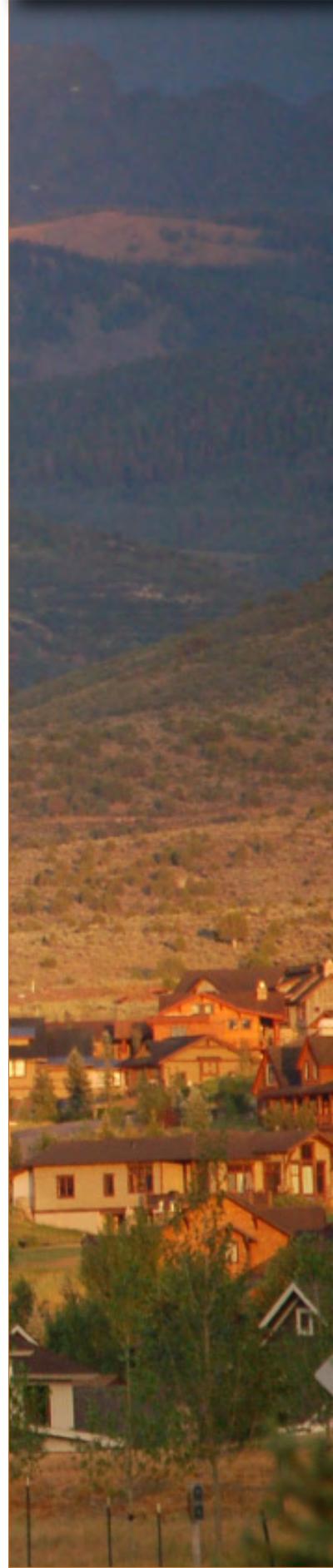


**CHAPTER 6:
Community Design and
Appearance**



Community Design and Appearance

How a community is designed and what a community looks like are attributes fundamental to the satisfaction of its residents and the success of its businesses. People's pride in their community often begins with their feelings

about its attractiveness and the way that its layout enhances their quality of life. Attributes of design and appearance are also fundamental to a community's character and its sense of place. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the

topics of design, appearance, sense of place and character in the Town of Eagle, including the surrounding unincorporated lands.



The Broadway streetscape, completed in 2005, provides a vibrant setting for the annual Flight Days event.

Elements of a Small Town

The phrase “small town character” was repeated often in the written portions of the Community Survey. In order to maintain the small-town feel experienced within the Town, Eagle should strive to retain or create the following:

- A. Compactness with concentric, incremental growth;
- B. Retail and service destination areas with shops, offices, restaurants and public buildings that front a single main street;

- C. Civic parks with shade trees in close proximity to the downtown core area;
- D. Single row parking on town center streets, or small perimeter parking lots;
- E. A mix of locally-owned businesses;
- F. Commercial services that meet everyday needs (grocery, drugstore, hardware, etc.);
- G. Residential neighborhoods close to the town center, sometimes with residential abutting commercial uses;
- H. A variety of housing types and sizes;
- I. A grid or modified grid pattern of residential development;
- J. A pedestrian scale that encourages walking;
- K. Easy access by automobiles;
- L. Pedestrian and bike connectivity to all Town destinations;
- M. Streets dimensioned for small town uses (not designed for maximum capacity);
- N. Opportunities for casual socializing and community interaction;
- O. Extensive agricultural lands and lands in an undeveloped natural condition in immediate proximity to the town boundary;

- P. A safe, secure, trusting environment; and
- Q. Good, safe schools within walking distance to most neighborhoods.

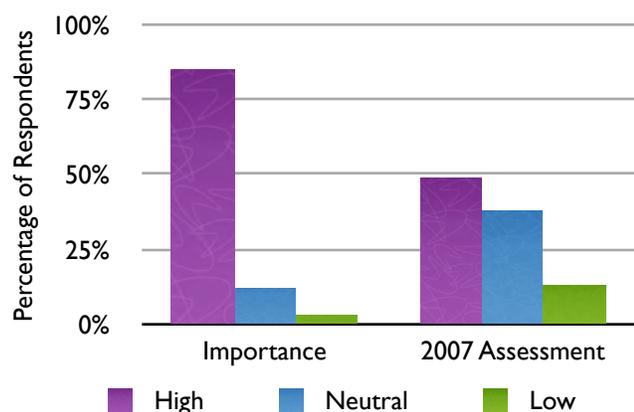


The Eagle Ranch commercial center



A Broadway commercial storefront

Community Survey Ratings of Scenic and Visual Quality: Importance as a Value and Assessment of Eagle's Status (2007)



The community survey graph above reveals that appearance of Town is very important to Eagle residents, but their assessment of Eagle's appearance shows that it could be improved. Through the development of community-wide design standards, the Town can promote a high standard of design that assures new development builds upon the existing character of Eagle, adding aesthetic value to the community. These standards can be enforced through the development review process, and should address the following: context, scale, massing, form, orientation, materials, density, texture, color, connectivity, signage, parking and streetscape improvements. These design standards should recognize Eagle's historic architectural character, particularly in the Town Center. The Town Center

Character Area contains multi-story wood and masonry buildings that abut one another, each with its own unique elements, but visually and spatially appearing as a whole. It is essential that historic resources be preserved, while encouraging compatible infill and redevelopment where appropriate.

Design standards are an important strategy that can successfully guide developers to construct buildings that maintain and showcase local character. Design



Landscaping elements were part of the Broadway Streetscape project.

standards for the Central Business District, Broadway District, Chambers Avenue Commercial Area, Chambers Avenue

Industrial Area, North Interchange Area and U.S. Highway 6 Corridor have been established to this end. (See Chapter 4.07 in the Town of Eagle Land Use and Development Code.) These standards are evident in the design of Eagle Town Hall, Post Office Crossing, Capitol Theatre, mixed-use buildings in Eagle Ranch and the Broadway Redevelopment Streetscape project . The Streetscape project included the renovation of sidewalks, utilities, site furnishings, intersections, signage and pavement.

The Town and County should continue to work to maintain and improve the appearance of community gateways and streetscapes to attract and inspire future development and redevelopment and to create a sense of arrival and departure. Such enhancements might include the addition of trees and landscaped areas along streets and sidewalks, better lighting, public art, and acquisition of desirable open space along U.S. Highway 6.

Creating a Sense of Place

“Sense of place” is defined by the Eagle County Comprehensive Plan as the feeling that one experiences upon arriving at a unique and special destination. “Quality of life” and “family oriented community” infer a particular character of place. The 2007 Town of Eagle Community Survey records “quality of life” as the foremost reason residents live in Ea-

gle, and “family-oriented community” as the second most important reason. Respondents defined quality of life as accessible open space, safety for their families, and friendliness of locals.



Unique community events help to create a sense of place in Eagle.

Implementing design standards and providing for improved automobile and pedestrian connectivity throughout the area create opportunities to enhance Eagle’s existing sense of place. These measures can introduce unifying materi-

als, designs and furnishings to further establish and strengthen the Town’s unique identity. In addition, a uniform signage program that guides residents and visitors within the Town and throughout the Eagle Planning Area can be used to reinforce Eagle’s sense of place.

Maintaining a Sense of Community

The Town of Eagle is well equipped with places for community gatherings, events and socialization for all age groups. The community survey showed strong support for the Town’s cultural programs and local and regional community events such as Flight Days, Christmas on Broadway, 12th Night, 4th of July fireworks, Show Downtown Concerts, recreation



South end of Broadway



Eagle Ranch displays distinctive architectural features

district activities, and the Eagle County Fair and Rodeo. These events require significant local involvement and work, bringing local residents together and strengthening community ties and civic pride.

The maintenance and enhancement of parks, community buildings,

public spaces and the Fairgrounds should be a continued priority. The Broadway Redevelopment Streetscape project completed in 2007 is one demonstration of the Town's commitment to building and maintaining a stronger sense of community. The Town should continue to improve community facilities such as pocket parks, ball fields, basketball courts, and playgrounds to promote small town feel and community interaction. (See Chapter 9, Open Space and Recreation)

Guiding policies adopted in the 1996 Eagle Area Community Plan were aimed at maintaining the unique and special character and sense

of place in Eagle. Many of these policies and strategies have been successfully implemented. Others from the 1996 list combine with new policies to create the focus of this 2010 plan.



Eagle's new Justice Center



Commercial and residential solar applications promote energy efficiency

Energy Efficient Design

Another increasingly important aspect of community design is energy efficiency. Energy costs for local businesses and residents are significant and growing, and there are broader related concerns for the environment, for society and for the well being of the planet. Efficient design can bring costs down, reduce reliance on non-renewable fuels and

improve the overall quality of the environment. Locally, making energy efficiency a priority can also be a source of new jobs and a more diversified economy.

The Eagle area enjoys a high elevation semi-arid climate, with dry air and over 300 days of sunshine a year. There are wide variations in temperature between summer and winter months, and the potential for significant snowfall events. In this climate, neighborhood and building designs which can take advantage of solar gain in the winter and solar shade in the summer should be a priority. Attention should be given to the orientation of roads, driveways, trail corridors, building envelopes, roof lines and window openings in relation to the sun. The relationship of improvements to existing vegetation and the design of new landscaping on a site are also important considerations.

The Town of Eagle has recently demonstrated leadership in adopting R-58 and R-21 requirements in roof and wall insulation, and now allows clean-burning pellet stoves and boilers which can utilize local salvage wood (like beetle kill Lodge Pole pine) for fuel. For its part, Eagle County has adopted the Eco-Build efficient building codes, and has also adopted a Sustainable Community Index (SCI), a regulatory points-based development review tool which promotes resource efficiency, pedestrian- and

transit-oriented design, and environmental quality into new development projects.

Efficient transportation is another important energy consideration. This plan speaks clearly to the desire to improve public transportation systems, and to reduce reliance on the personal automobile by encouraging development that is compact, close to public transit routes, close to job and service centers and well connected to both internal and external destinations by well designed and managed pedestrian and bike trail systems.

Continued improvements in energy efficiency, indoor air quality, materials conservation, and environmental stewardship can and should be pursued through the implementation of new and innovative building codes and design guidelines. The Town could look to adopt its own Sustainable Community Index and/or to incorporate LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) guidelines to better ensure safe, durable, efficient and environmentally friendly developments. Efficient public transit and multimodal movement systems between neighborhoods and community centers should be an on-going priority. Eagle County should continue its work to enhance regional transportation systems, and should also be a leader in the analysis, testing and implementation of renewable energy systems and cost effective energy efficient design strategies.

Community Design Goal #1: *Eagle’s small town character and neighborhood look and feel is preserved.*

POLICIES	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES
<p>Community Design Policy 1.1</p> <p>New development should build upon and add value to Eagle’s unique community character through adherence to high quality standards of design and construction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Develop new design standards for parts of Town where they are currently lacking that address the following, at a minimum: character, building orientation, scale, massing, street alignments, architectural features, parking, lighting, signage, and streetscape improvements. B. Revise existing design standards to improve design direction, clarify contradictions, provide better and more accurate definitions, and address issues related to mixed-use development. C. Develop design standards for unincorporated areas within the planning area boundary. D. Ensure that all design standards developed for the Eagle Planning Area reflect applicable Character Area design features and attributes (refer to Chapter 5). E. Create a development review matrix to streamline the review process and better ensure adherence with design standards. F. Retain and showcase existing design elements that contribute to the heritage and sense of place of the community and encourage new design to reflect such forms and materials, particularly within the Town Center Character Area.
<p>Community Design Policy 1.2</p> <p>Maintain and improve the appearance of community gateways and streetscapes to better establish and reinforce the Town’s identity and sense of place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Work to enhance the Town’s Wayfinding, Signage and Gateway Guiding Document that identifies appropriate locations, and designs for directional signs in the area. Address vehicular, pedestrian, transit, trail and other signage. B. Design gateways to reflect the town’s unique identity, providing a clear sense of arrival and departure. Gateways should be enhanced through the addition of landscaping, signage and public art. C. Design streetscapes to include a set of common design elements for the Town, building on the Town’s unique character and sense of place.

<i>POLICIES</i>	<i>RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES</i>
<p>Community Design Policy 1.3</p> <p>Work to maintain and enhance the sense of community in the Eagle area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Enhance pedestrian access and the quality of public gathering areas within established parts of town. B. Require new development to provide amenities that promote social interaction such as sidewalks, parks, open space systems, and bicycle paths. C. Design public gathering areas to accommodate activities consistent with their intended use. Differentiate areas suitable for small scale neighborhood activities and events from those suitable to support larger community activities and events. D. Promote community events and festivals, including but not limited to Flight Days, Christmas on Broadway, 12th Night, 4th of July fireworks, Show Downtown Concerts, recreation district activities and the Eagle County Fair and Rodeo.

Community Design Goal #2: *Energy efficient designs and building codes promote energy conscious lifestyles, and help to reduce overall energy consumption in the Eagle Planning Area.*

POLICIES	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES
<p>Community Design Policy 2.1</p> <p>New development should build upon and add value to Eagle’s unique community character through adherence to high quality standards of design and construction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Adopt progressive building and construction codes and high standards related to energy efficiency and materials conservation. B. Support and contribute to efforts to educate local residents regarding energy efficient designs and practices. Provide information through the Town of Eagle and County website and government sponsored brochures, press releases and events, as well as other outlets. C. Adopt as a minimum energy efficiency standards related to solar gain and shading, to include guidelines related to building orientation, roof designs, window orientation and design, landscaping and solar energy rights. Balance the desire for the appropriate utilization of passive solar design with the desire for attractive building form and architecture. D. Adopt beyond-minimum-compliance energy efficiency standards, codes and incentive packages for all new buildings, redeveloped buildings and new development areas. Address lighting, heating, cooling, circulation, insulation, building materials, appliances and solar orientation. E. Implement incentives for improving energy efficiency within existing buildings.
<p>Community Design Policy 2.2</p> <p>Support transit oriented development, and improvements that promote multi-modal transportation options within the Town’s Urban Growth Boundary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Work collaboratively to secure the necessary funding for an efficient user-friendly local and regional public transit system. B. Identify and secure future locations for regional transit stops within the Eagle Planning Area. C. Promote compact development, allowing increased residential, retail and mixed use densities in areas close to transit stops. D. Ensure multimodal connectivity between all residential areas and public destinations.

