

Town of   
**Johnstown**

**Design Guidelines**



(Historic Photos Courtesy of Denver Public Library and Johnstown Historic Society)

**2005**

# **JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES**

## **Table of Contents**

Section 1 - Introduction

Section 2 –Purpose, Using the Guidelines

Section 3 - Guiding Principles – Johnstown’s “Style” - Desired Image and Character

Section 4 - Visual Corridors and Gateways

Section 5 – Residential Design Guidelines

Section 6 - Non-residential Design Guidelines

# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 1. Introduction

*“If you don’t know where you’re going, any road will do.”*

Johnstown cherishes its small town roots, its history as a service center for a large agricultural industry and a social center to the area’s farm families. Like most communities in the North Front Range, the Town has responded to a growing demand for housing, business and employment by expanding the Town limits including properties along Interstate 25 and US Highway 34.



Parish House – Johnstown Historic Society



Eureka Building – Colorado Historic Society

*“Just tell me what the Town wants to see”*

The Johnstown Design Guidelines are intended to promote on a consistent basis the highest-possible quality of planned developments and structures in Johnstown.

### **Guidelines Drafting Process**

As Johnstown began to grow and new developments were proposed, wide variations appeared in project features, amenities and project quality. The Town’s interest in good design and a “Johnstown-look” led to a design guidelines work program. In 2004, the Design Guidelines effort was sanctioned by the Board of Trustees as a Town-wide goal.

The Planning and Zoning Commission, assisted by the Town Planner, played an active role in the guidelines drafting process. The Commissioners met with the Board of Trustees to develop program objectives and researched the design guidelines process. The Commissioners toured developments in the North Front Range and discussed the issues at several work sessions.



Beginning in February 2005 the Commission hosted a series of open houses, inviting residents, landowners, developers, builders and other interested persons to comment on the Commission’s findings. A Design Guidelines web page was published on the Town’s web site.

# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES



## Acknowledgements:

### Board of Trustees:

Mayor Troy Mellon  
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Mark Romanowski  
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Scott James

### Planning & Zoning Commission:

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**Town Planner/Project Manager:** John Franklin

# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 2. Purpose

The Town-wide Design Guidelines (“Guidelines”) help to address several general design questions:

***What does the Town want to see?*** This question is often asked by planners and architects representing development and building clients. The Guidelines are offered as a unified answer, a consensus of community leaders and constituents, committed to writing. The Guidelines do not presume to dictate design solutions, but encourage the design process. The only exceptions are where a specific approach is warranted, such as choice of lighting, street furniture styles, or major entryways.

***What does the community want to look like?*** This bit of community self-searching was both easy and difficult to describe. The “public” side is intended to provide a sense of “community” and “place”, to promote interest and protect important parts of the Johnstown experience.

***How do the Guidelines become developments and structures?*** Most of the new areas of Town are zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD) or have a design review process which requires a dialogue between the Town and the developer/builder before a project is approved. The Design Guidelines will assist developers in achieving PUD review criteria including compatible neighborhoods and developments, elevating awareness as to quality design and context, and highlighting desirable features or vistas in certain parts of Town.

### 2.1 Using the Guidelines

The Town will use the Design Guidelines (“Guidelines”) to evaluate projects as part of a community development application review process. Applicants are encouraged to address elements of the guidelines in project design standards and final development plans. However, because project impacts, context and requirements vary from property to property, compliance with the guidelines alone cannot guaranty Town approvals.

The Guidelines address the general, desirable visual impacts of sound site planning, landscaping and architecture. Due to the wide variety of site conditions and development constraints, full compliance with the Guidelines does not guaranty Town approval. The Guidelines do not replace compliance with other plans regulations and standards.

The Guidelines are not intended to standardize form and color or promote an artificial “theme”, but to provide insight into community values. The Guidelines attempt to “lead by example” with illustrations, photos and details which interpret the requirements. The Guidelines apply to new development, or substantial redevelopment occurring at or above grade that is not maintenance or repair.

# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 2.2 Additional Design References

The Guidelines should be used in conjunction with other adopted plans, regulations and standards, including:

- Municipal Code, especially Zoning and Subdivision Regulations
- Johnstown Area Comprehensive Plan
- Johnstown Transportation Plan
- Johnstown/Milliken Parks, Trails, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan
- Johnstown Landscape Standards and Specifications
- Johnstown Design Standards for Public Improvements

# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 3. Guiding Principles

The first major step in the design guideline drafting process was to establish general preferences, and a direction for the evaluation. The Planning Commission and the Board of Trustees outlined in general terms their “vision” of the desirable visual aspects of the community, and what planning and design elements should be encouraged in new development. Citizens, builders and developers were then invited during the drafting process to comment on the principles.

### 3.1 Overall guiding principle:

*“As Johnstown grows and expands, the community desires to preserve the positive visual aspects of a small town, with human-scale structures and developments and an overall neat and open appearance.”*

The challenge of local land planning and design is to anticipate and accommodate growth while preserving the community character which appeals to existing and new residents.



- Many new residents come to Johnstown to live in a smaller, more open community.
- First impression of Johnstown today is of a small-scale, small town, in a rural setting, clean, and having an open feeling.
- Wide streets, parks and open spaces including cropland contribute to the openness
- The small Central Business District affords an opportunity for centralized commercial and social activities and attractions, such as BBQ Days and the Farmers Market.

### 3.2 Site Planning and Design:

*“Whenever practical and in accordance with the Johnstown Comprehensive Area Plan the Town encourages a variety of complimentary land uses within a development. ”*

- Encourage alternatives to conventional zone districts/land uses to provide a variety of density and design.
- Encourage more of a mix of land uses in small areas.
- Encourage low-intensity open design.

# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 3.3 Residential Site Design:

*“The original residential areas of the Town are very livable. New residential neighborhoods are encouraged to employ as many characteristics of the original Town as possible.”*



- Johnstown Style: Old town is very nice and open – no fences, use of alleys, small initial size of lots, small houses, large trees next to street in many areas.
  - Grid-based street system, tailored to traffic management and terrain.
  - Few or no fences, alleys, small and deep lots and small houses.
  - Canopies of large-growth street trees.
  - Define and encourage a “know-your-neighbor” design, including porches nearer to sidewalk and garages which are set back and are less dominant.
- Variety of densities, not all one lot size or housing type.
  - Unique neighborhoods.
  - Encourage distribution of lots & housing sizes and types.
  - Consider housing built over commercial.

## 3.4 Non-Residential Site Design:

*“Development and redevelopment in and around the CBD should draw from the positive character and heritage of the original business district.”*

## 3.5 Building Design:

*“When good design ages, it is “antique”. When poor design ages it is “junk”. No Junk” - JP&Z Commissioner John Mason*

Local design and construction should incorporate local materials, with emphasis on timeless elements such as masonry.

## 3.6 Residential Structures:

*“Pleasing architectural design in sufficient variety is encouraged in each neighborhood.”*

*“Production housing development should strive to look “custom-built” through variations in rooflines, trim, wall materials and special features.”*

## JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

*“Residential development is encouraged to draw elements from, but not just copy classic architectural styles.”*

*“The relative size of houses to open spaces is very important in a neighborhood. Houses should be sized in proportion to the size of their lot.”*

*“Dwellings have a public side which should interact with the neighborhood. Transition elements such as porches, entry’s, walkways and yards should visually relate the dwelling to the street.”*

*“Know-your-neighbor” design, including porches nearer to sidewalk and garages which are set back and are less dominant..”*

### 3.7 Non-residential:

*“Non-residential development should be of the highest possible quality in choice of materials and building form.”*

*“Design should reflect locational context, and a strong existing theme, especially for new buildings around the Central Business District and the older central part of the Town.”*

*“The scale and design of buildings should be unique and interesting, yet still fit the quality and style of the development or area, especially in retail centers and business parks.”*



*“Chain stores and restaurants should adapt designs to include visual elements of their surroundings.”*

*“The standardized, corrugated metal clad building with low-pitch roof has not proven to be a desirable design. Steel-framed buildings should include a variety of shapes, and exterior elements and materials to add visual interest, and plain panels relegated to a minor role in the design.”*

## 4. Visual Corridors and Gateways

**cor-ri-dor** From Italian *corridore* a place to run; a passageway.

As rustic villages became formal cities the basic functional street – the passageway - has played a critical part of public open space, becoming a gathering place, a place to view the features and character of the city. While the mode of travel has broadened the passageway, the corridor experience is still important for residents and visitors and remains a visible indicator of a community's image and livability.



Corridors can afford travelers a visual experience which relates to the community and the development, through landscaping, highway and private signs, light fixtures, street furniture, walkways and bikeways, and utilities, as well as the roadways themselves. A corridor image that is deliberately designed for desired appearance becomes a recognizable Town feature while reinforcing the vehicular circulation system and reducing potential safety conflicts.



Gateways are the recognizable entries to the community and are typically associated with the local highway and arterial corridors.

Gateway locations provide an opportunity to both identify the community and to promote the desired community image.

Intersections of corridors provide opportunities for attractive visual experiences for both drivers/passengers and for non-vehicular travelers. The visual experience can also mean more safety through care in design and can highlight development character.

The map at the end of this section highlights the primary visual corridors, and gateways.

### 4.1 GOALS:

1. Overall high-quality visual experience for visitors along the I-25 and US 34 corridors.
2. Visitor recognition of Johnstown's identity along the super-corridors.
3. Positive visual image of the town.
4. Enhanced visual orientation and organization of the arterial street system.
5. Drivers and pedestrian safety
6. Natural features such as the Front Range and Big Thompson River to be readily visible over and/or through nearby developments.
7. Minimize clutter and coordinate the appearance of corridor image elements.

8. Minimize visual and physical obstructions and other potential safety conflicts.

## 4.2 Corridor Appearance

The visual character of a corridor should convey the linear and flowing function of the thoroughfares and reinforce the circulation, thereby assisting in orientation and contributing to a sense of organization for the town. Corridor image visual character is influenced by the width of the corridors, the scale of various corridor image elements, and the level and uniformity of treatment.

### 4.2.1 “Super” Corridors - Interstate 25, US Highway 34

Johnstown has annexed properties along a five-mile segment of I-25 from Hwy 56 to US 34, including all or part of four interchanges and, next to the regionally significant I-25/ US 34 Interchange. Other unincorporated properties along both highways may annex to the Town.



In the term of visual quality, I-25 and US 34 will represent Johnstown’s identity, image and character to North Front Range residents, and the many visitors to the region. As the corridors develop, the quality of design of each development plays a very critical role in the final look of the Town’s “front door”.

#### 4.2.1.1 Super-Corridor Guidelines

Because of the expanse of these corridors and higher traffic volumes and speeds, large-scale elements will have the most visual impact.

- Developments along the corridor should provide enhanced landscaped open areas, utilize noticeably varied building and parking setbacks and highlight natural areas.
- Campus-style business parks are encouraged along the corridors.
- Development layouts, building scale and placement are encouraged to afford opportunities for views of the magnificent Rocky Mountains including Longs Peak on the west side of I-25.
- Open storage and loading areas should not be visible along the corridor.



- Signage programs and designs along the corridor should be especially image-conscious. The Town supports the Tourist Oriented Development signage (blue signs) along the highways as the signs promote local businesses and reduce the need for very large signage.

## 4.2.2 Gateways

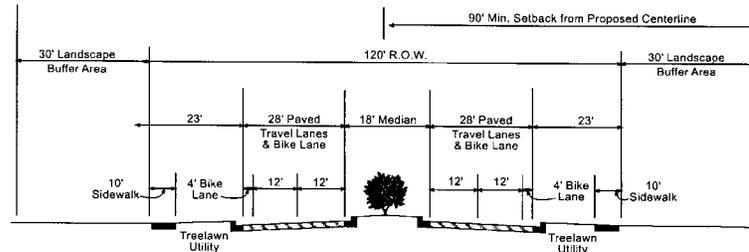
Gateway opportunities occur at existing and anticipated primary entrances to Town, especially at the major highway interchanges and where arterials cross into Town limits.

1. Gateway features should at the minimum, include Town identification signage in a landscaped setting, located and sized so as to be visible to motor vehicles. Enhancements such as special lighting and public art are also encouraged where appropriate.
2. Private development is encouraged to assist in creating the Gateways by providing space for entry signage, and by reinforcing the desired image through landscape treatment. Landmarks such as signature buildings will also reinforce the Gateways.

## 4.2.3 Arterial Streets

Arterial streets are designated in the Town Transportation Plan. Arterials form the main traffic-movement network after highways. Arterials are the primary visual corridors because they carry the highest volume of traffic are wider and the most visually prominent. As a bonus feature for Johnstown, the magnificent Rocky Mountains and Front Range views can be framed and featured by corridor design.

Arterials standards (interim and ultimate design) call for several elements of visual interest:



Ultimate Phase

- A landscaped median, 18'in width.
- No on-street parking.
- A minimum 10' or larger sidewalk, reflecting the scale and pedestrian characteristics of the corridor segment.
- A generous, formal landscaped right-of-way with additional private landscaping beyond.
- Elements with common design and/or color such as light fixtures, signs, and other street furniture.

#### 4.2.4 Collector Streets

Collector streets connect developments with the arterial streets. Major visual entries into developments typically occur at the intersection of collectors and arterial streets.



Collector street intersections should be designed to provide points of interest where they occur along the arterials.

#### 4.3 Landscaping

Landscaping is essential to achieve a desirable image. Plant material can soften the visual impact of adjoining activities and provide a psychological buffer between traffic and adjacent uses. Plants provide color and visual variety and can effectively reinforce or establish scale for pedestrian settings and vehicular settings.

- Designs should comply with the Johnstown Landscape Standards and Specifications
- Large, sturdy trees with high canopies are encouraged where corridors adjoin residential areas.
- Smaller, decorative trees including flowering varieties are encouraged where corridors adjoin non-residential areas and intersections or where mountain views are available.
- Formal rows of trees are encouraged along the roadway to provide a uniform and orderly appearance. A second or even third row of plantings is encouraged to help soften the visual impact or the potential loss of an individual specimen.
- Existing, mature trees should be preserved and integrated into the landscaping.

#### 4.4 Lighting

In addition to nighttime safety and security, light fixtures can convey a sense of continuity and formality.

- The Colorado Department of Transportation determines lighting for highways, especially interchanges and intersections.
- The Town has established a preferred street light fixture for its major arterials, but will consider alternate designs.
- Decorative fixtures, arms and poles are encouraged on local and collector streets in a development. Collector



streets should have a double fixture, while local streets will typically have a single fixture.

- The placement of street light fixtures should be planned with street tree locations to prevent tree canopies from interfering with the proper distribution or level of lighting.
- Directional and regulatory signs should be well lighted with the ambient light from street light fixtures or, where necessary, with direct lighting.
- Walkways in the arterial corridor should be well lighted with the ambient light from street light fixtures. Supplemental pedestrian-level lighting fixtures (8 to 14 feet height) lend a more human scale to the corridor image. The placement of pedestrian lighting fixtures should be coordinated with the placement of street lighting fixtures to minimize excess light and avoid clutter.
- Bus shelters, kiosks, and other street furniture should be adequately lighted for nighttime use for both security and function. Where possible, the light source should be incorporated into the structure of the furnishings.
- Landmarks such as monuments or flagpoles that are located within the corridor should be lighted with floodlights or spotlights. The lamp should be directed away from the viewer, and, if possible, the light fixture should be hidden.

## 4.5 Street Furniture

Street furniture includes streetlights (discussed previously), benches, trash receptacles, bus shelters, drinking fountains and kiosks. Benches and other amenities encourage people not driving to more fully use the corridor and help unify and enhance corridor appearance.



Street furniture should be simple and straightforward in design, and reflect the context and function of the location. A Town-wide standard is encouraged. If different designs are needed they should include common materials, finishes, and details. Street furniture should also be coordinated in appearance with other corridor image elements such as light fixtures and signs.

- Major corridors should receive the highest level of treatment in terms of the number of furnishings, consistent with their role as a prominent visual element of the corridor. However, the level of treatment should follow anticipated levels of activity. For example, a primary corridor in an open area could contain fewer furnishings than a primary corridor in the community core. Similarly, a secondary corridor located in an administrative area will contain more furnishings than a primary corridor in an industrial area.
- Street furniture such as waste containers should be placed adjacent to walkways, but out of the main flow of pedestrian traffic.



- Furnishings should be located in clusters and near other activities and entries.
- Seating areas including bus shelters should be located along the walkway edge farthest from the street and should be enhanced with plantings. Unsightly views should be screened and desirable views should be emphasized.
- Street furniture should be selected and sited to accommodate physically challenged individuals.
- Furnishings should be made of durable and low maintenance materials such as metal and concrete. A hard paving surface should support and surround each furnishing for ease of access and maintenance.

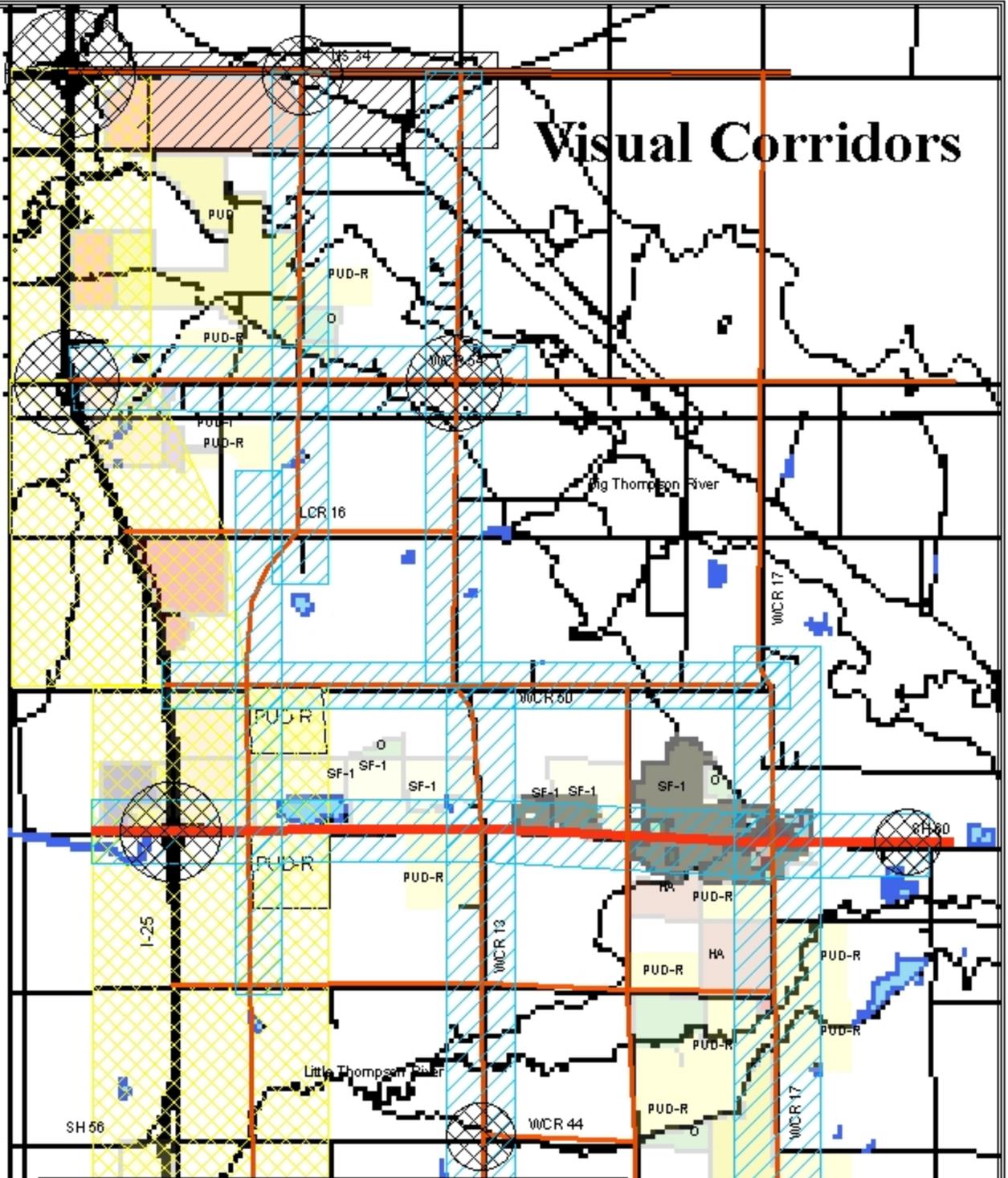


- Street signs and posts can be decorative elements in the development.
- Where feasible, traffic safety and information signs should be located on common poles or street light posts.

#### **4.6 SAFETY**

Because the corridor is essentially a transportation route for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, safety should be a major consideration in its design. This primarily involves eliminating physical obstructions, maintaining visibility, and providing traffic control devices and barriers. Generally, these actions will also improve the appearance of the corridor image by reducing clutter and coordinating various corridor image elements.

# Visual Corridors



## Legend

I-25 Corridor



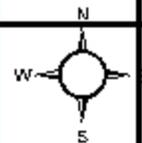
US 34 Corridor



Major Arterial  
Corridor



Gateway



# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 5. Residential Neighborhood Design and Appearance

### 5.1 Single Family Detached

Many of the following residential guidelines have been developed and implemented in Johnstown since 2000, and are intended to encourage high-quality and distinctive single family residential neighborhoods. The guidelines have been created with larger-production builders in mind, but are applicable to semi-custom and custom developments.

#### 5.1.1 Single family residential design objectives:

1. Implement Town's Guiding Principles
2. Implement Visual Corridors and Gateways
3. Establish neighborhood theme(s) distinguishable from others in the community (use clues from local natural surroundings, landmarks, and local history) and implement through identity of neighborhood and (Town-approved) street names.

#### 5.2 SITE PLANNING:

1. An old Johnstown style street grid, modified for traffic management, terrain and special features, is encouraged. Minimize the use of suburban – style cul de sacs and “eyebrows”, which feature overly-large expanses of pavement.



2. Provide for a variety and distribution of lot and dwelling sizes. Especially in a conventional suburban layout, the number of minimum-sized (6,000-7,000 sq.ft.) single family lots should be limited in proportion to larger lots.
3. Enhance the visual character of the streets within the project. Include old-style, tree-lined streets with detached walks. Refer to the Johnstown Transportation Plan for local and collector street classifications and cross-sections.

4. To promote the quality image of new developments, perimeter streets including landscaping should be developed as early as possible.
5. Provide traffic-calming layouts and features.
6. “Alley-loaded” style of housing is encouraged to provide added variety.
7. Rural-style streets are encouraged in large, estate-lot (one-half acre or larger) neighborhoods.
8. The internal development pattern should be opened up in strategic locations to frame views of the mountains and other natural features.
9. Preserve and recycle old farmsteads and barns as functional features into neighborhood uses such as daycare, community rooms & gardens.
10. Existing oil and gas facilities should be isolated as much as possible from homes and neighborhoods.



## JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The minimum buffers are 150' radius for wellheads and 200' radius for tank batteries. Decorative and secure screen fencing should be provided around the facilities. While the buffers can be used for open space, the placement of active public parks around such facilities is discouraged.

### 5.3 PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE, TRAILS:

1. Refer to Johnstown/Milliken Parks Open Space and Trails Plan for neighborhood park locations.
2. Coordinate with School District regarding school sites.
3. Developers are encouraged to construct parks (and request reimbursement from the neighborhood park development fee) as early in the homebuilding phase as possible - before 50% of the homes are permitted.
4. Developers are encouraged to provide privately owned and maintained (casual and formal) open areas, and recreation opportunities for young children and their parents (tot lots).
5. Provide landscaped entryways including medians. Refer to Johnstown Landscape Standards.
6. Provide at least 25' landscaped buffer from arterial rights of way.
7. Provide for functional pedestrian circulation throughout project and connections to attractions such as schools, parks and commercial areas.
8. Refer to Johnstown/Milliken Parks Open Space and Trails Plan for major off-street trails system.
9. Major Trails/Walks - 10' wide and 6" thick concrete for truck-based snow maintenance. Refer to Johnstown Design Standards.
10. Arterial walks should meander with approximately 2' offset every 100'.

### 5.4 FENCING:

1. Highways and Arterial Streets: Neighborhoods with rear yards backing to arterials should have at minimum, 6' privacy fencing along such arterial streets, major collector streets and different land uses such as railroad lines and non-residential facilities. Each neighborhood ( $\frac{1}{4}$  section) is encouraged to have a different fence style and/or layout.
2. Preferred arterial fence consists of 1x6 stained/sealed cedar pickets with top and bottom rail and 36" masonry columns with pitched decorative cap every 100'. Masonry walls are encouraged. Vinyl fences will be considered, but are not encouraged.
3. Fencing along arterial streets should randomly move away from a straight fence line to create landscaped pockets" at entryways, street corners and/or fence runs over 600'. These pockets are privately maintained and may be located within easements to allow consistent



## JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

irrigation and maintenance along with the arterial buffer landscaping.

4. Special and unique neighborhood entryway fencing is encouraged.
5. Adjoining public parks and open space areas, a 42" stained/sealed (Town-approved color) cedar fencing consisting of three 1x6 rails carriage-bolted to 4x4 posts is preferred. When such fences are part of perimeter system 36" masonry columns with pitched decorative cap every 100' should be included.
6. "Neighbor-friendly" fencing is encouraged in rear yards.



### 5.5 LANDSCAPING:

1. Neighborhood landscaping shall comply with the Johnstown Landscape Design Standards.
2. Builder-provided front yard landscaping is encouraged as an enhancement, and may be required.

### 5.6 STREET LIGHTING:

1. Should differ from other neighborhoods and reflect the neighborhood's design theme.
2. Should be shielded and reflected to minimize light pollution and glare.
3. Collector and Local – Town-approved decorative lighting fixtures and poles.
4. Arterial lighting – Town-approved curved pole and fixture.
5. Off-street trail and park lighting –Town-approved fixtures.



### 5.7 STREET FURNITURE:

1. School Bus Stop Shelters as determined by the School District and approved by the Town.
2. School crossing crosswalk signals on collectors and arterial streets, where needed.
3. Benches and wastebaskets located strategically along major paths and sidewalks.
4. Johnstown-Logo street name signs on standard or custom, Town-approved posts.
5. Mailboxes – Postmaster-approved cluster-type mailboxes are required. Cluster boxes should be located near a streetlight and on a local street or in a pull-off area on a collector street. To minimize traffic impacts and neighbor concerns, smaller boxes should be distributed throughout the subdivision.



## JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

### 5.8 ARCHITECTURE:

1. Especially in a conventional suburban-style layout, there should be a broad distribution of homes based upon gross livable floor area, with a small proportion of homes between 1400 -1500 sq.ft.
2. Patio Homes and similar housing types should have gross livable floor areas above 1200 sq.ft.
3. Avoid uninteresting housing styles with few roofline, wall or trim details.
4. Offer a wide variety of styles and models.
5. Identical setback and placement of homes on lots along a street creates monotony and is discouraged. Identical or similar-appearing home model elevations should not be constructed within three lots on either side or across the street.
6. Vary front setbacks –minimum 3' stagger.
7. Vary side setbacks – shift houses to one side of lot
8. Minimum 2-car garages.
9. Vary garage placements, including: recessed 2-4' from front, right-angled, side to rear, rear/alley loaded. Front setback may be reduced for side-on or other alternate garage orientations.
10. Masonry includes stone, brick, and stucco: minimum 30% of net (less windows and doors) front wall area plus at least 24" wrap around corners.
11. For side elevations, provide windows, wall projections, trim and other details to break up large expanses of wall, especially towards the front portion of homes and including the upper floors.
12. Provide for enhanced elevation design details where elevations are directly visible from adjoining streets.
13. Lap siding should include appropriately proportioned window trim and corner trim.
14. Use single-story elements (covered porches, projecting rooms) to provide interest and to transition the scale of two and three story homes to street.
15. Supports for porches and decks – cross-section should be proportional to height.
16. Walls facing toward a public street should have at least 15% of surface area in windows.
17. Exposed foundations walls above 6" from grade should be covered with materials similar to the wall above.
18. A variety of roof elements are encouraged with a main roof and complementary secondary roofs (usually over minor rooms), porches, entryways and wall pop-outs.
19. Roof pitch should be appropriate to the house style, but 4:12 or greater is encouraged.
20. Provide for proportional roof overhangs which compliment the particular house style.
21. Roof materials should be as richly textured as possible, such as architectural laminated composition (30-year) and concrete/slate. Eaves should be covered.

**JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES**



# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 5.2 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

Multi-family residential - attached residential (duplex and above), townhomes, row housing, condominiums and apartments.

### 5.2.1 GENERAL

1. Lower intensity/density multi-family development (8-12 du/ac average) is encouraged near major arterials or as a transition between non-residential and single family developments.
2. Higher density (12 du/ac+) residential should be located at commercial or transit centers and not next to single family neighborhoods.
3. Residential-over-commercial is encouraged in the Central Business District or in new multi-use activity centers near I-25.



### 5.2.2 SITE PLANNING

1. Provide an attractive separation, such as a landscaped buffer from adjoining lower-density residential development sufficient to maintain an open appearance. Do not place parking or rows of garages against single family lots.
2. Provide for a “public side” along perimeter streets and for internal private areas exclusive to the residents. The public side should provide for landscaped front yard with walkway connections to public sidewalk.
3. Buildings should vary in orientation relative to the street.
4. In planned unit developments at least 30% of the site is to be in open area, including landscaped buffers and amenities, while 10% of the site is to be in park and recreation use.
5. Project amenities should be appropriate to the anticipated occupants and at the minimum include common plazas and parks, playgrounds and paths. Large developments should provide clubhouses and recreation facilities such as fitness centers.

### 5.2.3 ACCESS AND PARKING

1. Refer to Johnstown Transportation Plan for access restrictions based upon classification of street.
2. Driveways should promote free flow of traffic from the street into the property for at least 50' without driveways or cross-traffic.

## JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

3. Refer to Johnstown Parking Regulations for requirements.
4. Required off-street parking should be located away from the perimeter of the development, or fully screened from view.
5. Garage openings and covered parking should be oriented away from the street.

### 5.2.4 LANDSCAPING

1. Refer to Town of Johnstown Landscape Standards and Specifications.
2. Entry features should be used to highlight access to the development and provide a point of interest along the street.
3. Strong perimeter landscaping
4. Extensive landscaping of common open space areas and parking, provision of amenities is encouraged to maintain the residential character of the development.

### 5.2.5 ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

1. Trash enclosures should fully screen the dumpsters and recycle bins from view. Enclosures should match the materials and design of the buildings.



2. Mailboxes. Postmaster-approved mailbox clusters should be located in one or more covered and well-lighted areas.

### 5.2.3 ARCHITECTURE

1. Buildings in or near the older portions of Town should not exceed three stories.
2. Buildings in developments adjacent to single family neighborhoods are encouraged to adapt the architectural features of single family detached residential, to achieve a “large house” appearance. Street-side entries, sloped roofs, varied roof height, reduced upper floors, variable wall planes, and covered porches/entries help achieve the large house look.
3. Higher density, larger scale multi-family is encouraged in mixed-use areas where there is more flexibility to reflect or contrast with the scale and materials of the surrounding development.
4. While emphasizing the public street image, design and materials quality should be employed on all sides.



## JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

5. Regional materials such as timber and stone provide texture and richness to residential and should be liberally used. Masonry, including stone and brick should be provided for the entire first floor, or 40% of the overall wall surface, whichever is the greater amount.
6. Rooftop equipment and services should be screened from view, especially from public thoroughfares.
7. External balconies are encouraged, but should not be used for storage.
8. Garages can be used to transition building scale, and to provide a buffer against other uses.



# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 6. NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The Town desires quality development, and believes that quality development desires to locate in a community that cares about its appearance. Non-residential development includes retail, office and light industrial and will be primarily located in highly visible areas adjoining Corridors and Gateways, and therefore will serve as the principal indicator of the Town's image. On the other hand, quality non-residential development in Town will encourage other quality development. Although uses and functional impacts vary, non-residential developments have several design characteristics and requirements in common, such as large building mass, greater demand for access and large parking and loading areas. Specialty commercial areas such as the existing Central Business District and so-called new urban commercial villages have unique characteristics and requirements.

### 6.1 Site Planning

Site planning should result in a development which achieves the following objectives:

1. Logical and pleasing arrangement of building(s), access, parking and landscaping elements on a site.
2. Sites which feel open and in proportion to the size of the building(s).
3. Project layout and features which reinforce the Town's Gateways and Corridors.



#### 6.1.1 Building Placement and Orientation

1. An open, low-density campus-style arrangement of buildings is encouraged. Exceptions are special activity centers such as the Central Business District (CBD) or "new urban" villages.
2. Height and spacing should maximize desirable views to and from the building(s).
3. Distances of buildings from public streets should create interest and variety.
4. At Gateways and major intersections, buildings should be closer to the roadways and entries, windows or other active areas face out to the streets or intersection.
5. Building floor plans and/or groups of buildings should establish open areas such as landscaped plazas and courtyards and visible entryways.
6. In the CBD or new urban areas, the buildings should be close to the sidewalk and street, but provide for small and large open courtyards and plazas.

#### 6.1.2 Motor Vehicle Access and Parking

1. Access is regulated by the Johnstown Transportation Plan and must be designed to accommodate specific traffic and site conditions.
2. Access to properties should be located as far away from arterial intersections as possible to reduce movement conflicts and allow sufficient stacking space for turns.
3. Adjoining properties are encouraged to share major access points and allow for cross traffic.

## **JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES**

4. Major access points should be emphasized through building location, landscaping and signage.
5. Circulation design should promote slower but efficient vehicle movement and create a good transition from higher-speed roads to pedestrian access.
6. Parking ratios and parking space size should comply with Johnstown Off Street Parking Regulations.
7. Perimeter and internal parking lot landscaping should comply with Johnstown Landscape Standards.
8. Parking locations such as on the side of a building should be considered in addition to between the building and street. Parking should be used in conjunction with landscaping to create variety of building placement and presentation to major streets.

### **6.1.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Access**

Not everyone can or wants to drive a vehicle to work or for shopping or recreation. Children, elderly, employees on break or people out for an evening or weekend stroll are “customers” who deserve to be accommodated. We are all pedestrians.

1. Commercial sites should provide for non-vehicular access, and construct appropriate and useful connections with nearby neighborhoods and community.
2. Many major trail connections in the community are identified in the Johnstown/Milliken Parks & Open Space Plan.
3. Pedestrian and bicycle access and facilities (benches, bike racks) should be conveniently located relative to entrances and activity areas. Product designs and color should compliment the project design.
4. Customers leaving their vehicles need safe routes to entrances with minimal cross traffic.
5. Routes and crossings should be visible and clearly marked for safety.

### **6.1.4 Transit and Passenger Stops**

Mass transit opportunities continue to grow in the North Front Range – Johnstown looks forward to accommodating regional transit services.

1. Major employment and commercial centers should provide for future bus access within the development.
2. Passenger drop off/pick up spaces should be planned near major entrances.
3. Vanpool and carpool parking should be afforded locations near major entrances.

### **6.1.5 Building Equipment and Services, Loading, Storage and Refuse**

The functional services for buildings and uses should not be readily visible to the public.

1. All electrical and other service lines should be located underground.

## **JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES**

2. Utility equipment such as transformers and cabinets should be screened from public view.
3. Roof mounted equipment should not be visible from public roadways.
4. Trash and recycling containers should be located in an enclosure made of materials matching the principle building. Enclosures should be located away from major roadways and near employee service doors for ease of use. Enclosures should be sited for large truck access and include a concrete apron.
5. Outdoor storage of equipment and materials should not be noticeable from public roadways, regardless of the relative elevation of equipment, materials or streets. Screening with plant materials is not fully effective and should be used only in conjunction with building walls, fencing, earth berms or similar structural screens.
6. Loading docks should not be visible from major streets. Durable screens such as buildings, walls, fences and earth berms should be used. Plant materials are not effective screens.
7. Trash enclosures, loading and service areas should be located out of view from residential uses.

### **6.1.6 Landscaping**

1. Landscape design should conform to the Johnstown Landscape Standards and Specifications
2. Xeriscape is encouraged – “zeroscape” is discouraged.
3. Developments should provide a strong, consistent landscaped edge along major roadways, especially corridors and gateways.
4. Developments should include landscaped buffers to adequately separate land uses.
5. Employee rest areas in a pleasant setting are encouraged.

### **6.1.7 Lighting, Street Furniture and Public Art**

1. Lighting levels along Johnstown’s streets and in developments should not be as intense as in major urban areas. Thus, local lighting should be strategic, addressing safety, aesthetics and commercial needs while maintaining lowest possible functional levels.
2. Indirect accent lighting on buildings to highlight features is encouraged.
3. “Wall-pack” style security lighting should be shielded/directed sharply downward.
4. Light fixtures under gas station canopies should be flush with the ceiling.
5. Arterial roadway lighting fixtures should conform to Town standard design.
6. Lighting fixture designs on local and collector streets should be distinctive and can be used to distinguish an activity center from other centers while linking the center’s street elements.
7. Lighting fixtures with fine detail such as Victorian fixtures are encouraged.
8. Parking lot lighting should be limited in height - 25’ maximum for small lots and near residential, and 30’ or lower for large lots. So-called cut-off lamp housings should be used to minimize glare and light spillage. All fixtures should include reflectors to control glare and to minimize wasted light.

## JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

9. When adjoining residential development, photometric analysis should verify low (.5 or less) foot-candle levels at property or project boundaries.
10. Street furniture is essential to the design of functional and aesthetically pleasing centers and provides visual links to major corridors. Benches, waste receptacles, bicycle racks and other furnishings on private property should be selected for durability and contextual design related to the development. Public street furniture including street signs and supports should conform to Town standards.
11. Art for public enjoyment is encouraged. Wall murals and freestanding sculptures representing the Johnstown culture and history adds interest if not excitement to commercial districts.

### 6.1.8 Fencing and Screening

The open feeling of the Town is adversely affected by solid fence – Fences should be sized appropriately and located only where necessary, such as for screening, security or noise mitigation.

1. Where fences are required for security or screening, the materials and design should complement the project design and have a pleasing appearance.
2. Long extensions of fence should be relieved by change of direction, landscape pockets or permanent artwork.
3. Fencing along arterials should include masonry columns-stone is preferred – at 100' spacing.
4. Fences and walls should have noticeable base and cap elements.
5. Vinyl fencing is discouraged.
6. Chain link fencing, especially uncoated galvanized metal, is discouraged, especially if visible from public streets.

### 6.1.9 Signs

1. Signage is subject to the Johnstown Sign Code. A master Sign Program is encouraged for multi-building developments
2. Monument-style signs with sturdy bases are preferred over pole-mounted signs.
3. Monument signs that are externally lit and are comprised of natural or natural-looking materials such as stone or stucco are preferred.
4. Freestanding signage should also contribute to a major corridor or gateway appearance by adding interest through materials, form and setting – or by being unobtrusive.
5. In the CBD or new urban activity centers, projecting signs, which can be more readily seen by pedestrians, are encouraged.



# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 6.1.10 Central Business District

Johnstown's historic commercial core is characterized by several site elements which should be adapted to new developments in the CBD:

1. Buildings are close to the main street (Parish Avenue).
2. Continuous, wide (as is possible) pedestrian walkways along the buildings.
3. Marked crosswalks at intersections.
4. Parking spaces accessible from the front.
5. Strategic landscaping and street furniture integrated into the walkways.
6. New development in or as an expansion of the CBD should improve on the original by providing features such as passageways to rear parking, exterior seating/eating patios, courtyards, and informational kiosks.
7. Provisions for hanging banners on light/street posts.
8. On blocks where residential structures are the predominant form, new or remodeled buildings should have similar landscaped front yards.

## 6.1.11 Specialty Commercial

1. Drive-through restaurant service lanes are to be located between the building and a public street, the menu signs and most of the vehicles should be screened from view.
2. Vehicle dealerships present unique challenges in terms of product display along corridors. A generous, creatively designed landscaped buffer is encouraged between the vehicles on display and the public right of way. Lot lighting should be directed away from the street and provided at minimum fixture heights and foot-candle levels to permit vehicles to be viewed on site. Dealership buildings should be proportional in scale to the outside parking and display area and should provide appropriate indoor display space.

## 6.2 Architectural Design

### 6.2.1 Goals:

1. Achieve the highest possible level of design quality in each project and building.
2. Extensive use of locally recognizable and durable materials such as timber and stone.
3. Application of scale, order, balance, rhythm and proportion according to location.
4. Interesting buildings and activity centers.
5. Buildings with future landmark value near Gateways.
6. Conservation and enhancement of scale and style of the Central Business District.

# JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

## 6.2.2 Style and Context

1. Johnstown’s preferred style for non-residential development favors lower density development patterns and low-height buildings. Super-corridor and Gateway developments may feature larger-scale developments and landmark buildings, such as hotels and offices.
2. A group of buildings should include one or more similar elements (contextual design).
3. Industrial buildings should appear to “hug the ground” with emphasis on ground level materials, details and colors.

## 6.2.3 Massing and Scale

1. Johnstown’s style is best represented by one-to-two-story buildings which achieve a human scale through use of street level elements – base or foundation elements, specific entryways, windows, textures and details.
2. Plain boxy-looking buildings with large expanses of featureless walls are not encouraged. Buildings should have visibly variable rooflines and wall planes.
3. Buildings should have distinctive entrances.
4. Rooflines other than parapets promote interest and variety.
5. Taller buildings should also use such scale features and details on the upper floors to provide a sense of scale.
6. In the Central Business District and major activity centers, buildings are encouraged to provide human-scale elements such as awnings and arcades which relate to pedestrian traffic.
7. Where warehousing is part of the building program, the offices and other service elements should be used to “step up” to the larger volume spaces.
8. Low pitch gable or flat roofs should be screened from view by parapet walls or other devices.



## 6.2.4 Materials, Texture and Color

1. Interesting and attractive buildings can be crafted from basic shapes with careful variation in materials and color.
2. Exterior materials with vintage local references include brick, stucco and painted wood – and corrugated metal similar to agricultural structures.
3. Local color palettes are largely natural colors and hues.
4. Corrugated metal as a primary exterior wall material is discouraged. If used, corrugated metal should be used on upper surfaces. The proportion of corrugated metal to each wall surface should be limited to 25% or less.

## JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

5. For sloped roofs, masonry tile or standing seam metal materials in darker colors is encouraged.
6. Trim colors can have a far greater range of hue including primary colors. Bright colors and hues can be used to accent elements, such as doors, window frames and other architectural details.
7. Bright, neon-type colors not associated with corporate logos are discouraged.
8. Plain gray concrete is not encouraged except as a trim feature.
9. Minimize the number of colors on the exterior.
10. Complementary colors used throughout a development with multiple buildings.

### 6.2.5 Building Equipment and Services

1. Loading areas should not be visible from public thoroughfares. Direct physical screening using walls, buildings, earth forms are preferred.
2. Waste handling units and trash dumpsters should be included in loading and service areas wherever possible. If freestanding, the enclosure should match the main building design.
3. HVAC and emergency generator units should not be visible and screened from public view by walls, buildings or earth forms.
4. The storage of goods and materials out of doors is discouraged.



### 6.2.6 Central Business District

1. The buildings in the historic commercial core reflect several styles and levels of quality, but the best buildings are the older buildings due to care of design, pedestrian-oriented scale and display and richness of materials and details.
2. New buildings in the CBD should borrow features and/or details from the historic structures - storefronts, recessed entries and awnings, for example - but apply them in attractive, contemporary ways.
3. Generous amounts of storefront windows on the main floor.
4. Entry features, including entry plazas.
5. Awnings or canopies over walkways.
6. Where residential structures dominate, new or remodeled buildings should maintain similar features such as porches, pitched roofs and trim details.



### 6.2.7 New Urban Activity Centers

1. Typically a modern interpretation of a small-town business district, the activity center should be more cohesive in design through



## JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

- extensive use of common materials and elements.
2. Modern architecture is encouraged over copies of classic styles.
  3. Buildings along the street should have a distinct open and inviting appearance at the street level, including recessed entries, storefront window treatment and plazas.

### 6.2.8 Specialty Commercial

1. Gasoline sales: Canopy supports should have sturdy-appearing proportions relative to height and include masonry as a base or full cover. Canopies should match the form, detail and color of the upper portions of the associated main building.
2. Wireless communication facilities and associated antennae and equipment should avoid being visually intrusive. Height and color of these facilities should be consistent with their surroundings. Blending antennae arrays with building features is encouraged.



**JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**Retail Commercial**



**JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**Office and Specialty Commercial**



**JOHNSTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**Light Industrial**

