

8-Point Visual Check for a Better Main Street

Adapted from worksheets originally provided by Dr. Wei Liu, AICP, CNU-A, University of Oklahoma.



Street Structure & Movement

Continuity of Street Edge

Continuity is the degree to which buildings, screening features, or landscape treatments create a unified, clearly defined street edge.

Look for a continuous street edge along the sidewalk:

___ **Performing Well — Maintain**

Street edge is consistent with few or no gaps.

___ **Opportunity Area — Close Gaps**

Occasional gaps or interruptions along street edge.

___ **Priority Opportunity — Take Action**

Large gaps, such as exposed parking lots or several linked vacant parcels, disrupt continuity.

Notes:

Parking Balance

Parking Balance refers to how parking is arranged and how much space it occupies—supporting the street without overwhelming sidewalks, buildings, or other uses.

Look at how parking is arranged and how much space it takes up—does it support the street or dominate it?

___ **Performing Well — Maintain**

Parking is well-integrated and proportionate.

___ **Opportunity Area — Close Gaps**

Parking takes up noticeable space but still allows room for other uses.

___ **Priority Opportunity — Take Action**

Parking dominates the street or limits space for sidewalks, landscaping, or other modes.

Notes:

Sidewalk Quality

Sidewalk Quality refers to how well sidewalks support continuous, comfortable pedestrian movement for all ages and abilities.

Look for sidewalks that are continuous, wide enough, accessible, and in good condition:

___ **Performing Well — Maintain**

Sidewalks are accessible, continuous, comfortable, and well-maintained.

___ **Opportunity Area — Close Gaps**

Sidewalks are generally present but may include narrow sections, minor gaps, missing ramps, or areas in need of repair.

___ **Priority Opportunity — Take Action**

Sidewalks are missing, severely limited, or in poor condition, making pedestrian movement difficult or unsafe.

Notes:

Pedestrian Crossings

Pedestrian Crossings refers to how well the street enables safe and comfortable pedestrian movement across it.

Look for visible, frequent, and well-designed crossings:

___ **Performing Well — Maintain**

Crossings are easy to find and feel safe and comfortable.

___ **Opportunity Area — Close Gaps**

Crossings exist but are limited or unclear.

___ **Priority Opportunity — Take Action**

Crossings are missing, difficult to use, or feel unsafe.

Notes:

Street Experience & Identity

Activation

Activation, or Street Interaction, refers to how buildings, businesses, and open spaces engage with the street—and how the street supports visible activity and use.

Look for active businesses, displays, and visual engagement at eye level.

___ **Performing Well — Maintain**

Most storefronts are active and engaging.

___ **Opportunity Area — Close Gaps**

Activity is present but inconsistent.

___ **Priority Opportunity — Take Action**

Storefronts are largely vacant, inactive, or lack visible interaction with the street.

Notes:

Lighting

Lighting refers to the extent to which lighting is scaled and positioned to support pedestrian visibility and comfort after dark.

Look for evenly spaced, pedestrian-scale lighting that illuminates sidewalks and faces.

___ **Performing Well — Maintain**

Lighting is well-distributed and pedestrian-focused.

___ **Opportunity Area — Close Gaps**

Lighting is present but uneven or not well-scaled.

___ **Priority Opportunity — Take Action**

Lighting is sparse, too high, or primarily focused on the roadway.

Notes:

Shade

Shade refers to the extent to which tree canopy, awnings, or other structures provide protection from the sun and improve pedestrian comfort along the street.

Look for continuous canopy or shading elements along the sidewalk.

___ **Performing Well — Maintain**

Shade is consistent and comfortable along most of the street

___ **Opportunity Area — Close Gaps**

Shade is present but limited or inconsistent

___ **Priority Opportunity — Take Action**

Street feels exposed with little protection from sun.

Notes:

Identity

Identity refers to the presence of consistent visual elements that create a recognizable and cohesive sense of place along the street.

Look for repeated signage, colors, materials, or branding elements.

___ **Performing Well — Maintain**

Identity is clear and consistent throughout the district.

___ **Opportunity Area — Close Gaps**

Identity is present in district but fragmented or uneven.

___ **Priority Opportunity — Take Action**

The district feels generic, uncoordinated, or lacks a clear identity.

Notes:

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