



CITY OF  
SUNNYVALE

# CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES



Updated 2013

# Citywide Design Guidelines

Adopted by City Council  
on June 23, 1992

Amended on December 18, 2012 – Revisions to Parking and Circulation section, including lighting. References to specific code sections were removed and references to other design guidelines were included. Consolidated Industrial Design Guidelines and Citywide Design Guidelines documents.

Amended April 8, 2014 – Revision to Building Design section regarding consideration of building height deviations.

Community Development Department  
City of Sunnyvale, CA

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# INTRODUCTION

The economic vitality of any community largely depends upon its physical image and the quality of its environment and life. In the past two decades, the City Council and Planning Commission of Sunnyvale increasingly have been interested in improving the overall image and enhancing the aesthetic quality of the City.

In 1969, the City Council adopted the basic goals and objectives for the City's appearance. The goals and objectives were incorporated into the 1972 General Plan. The goals were general and do not provide detailed direction on site design and architectural issues.

In 1987 the City Council placed the preparation of the Community Design Sub-Element on the Legislative Calendar. The Sub-Element established a set of specific citywide urban design goals and policies. Previously, specific design guidelines had been prepared only for designated areas such as Murphy Avenue and Lawrence/101. The City Council adopted the Community Design Sub-Element in 1990.

Since that time, specific guidelines have been created for:

- Precise Plan for El Camino Real
- Single-Family Home Design Techniques
- Taaffe-Frances Heritage Housing Design Guidelines
- Eichler Design Guidelines
- Downtown Specific Plan
- Moffett Park Specific Plan
- Murphy Avenue Design Guidelines

The Citywide Design Guidelines are applied to areas that do not have specific design guidelines. They are based on General Plan goals and policies and mainly address development projects on private properties. These Design Guidelines are intended to enhance the overall image of the City, protect and preserve the existing character of the community, communicate the image the community desires and achieve a higher design quality.

Sunnyvale, like many other communities in the San Francisco Bay Area, is trying to improve its physical image in creating the design quality of development proposals. To accomplish this, proposed projects are subject to a systematic design review. Acceptable proposals will have to demonstrate above-average design merit as expressed in the adopted Design Guidelines.

Protecting and preserving the existing desirable features of the City against potential negative impacts of new development is another challenge that the City has been facing. The Citywide Design Guidelines are intended to create a balance between both protecting the existing neighborhood character and accommodating new developments.

The policies established in the Citywide Design Guidelines communicate the minimum design qualities expected from development projects. The documentation of the policies provides project designers with a checklist of areas of concern and should assist them in designing higher-quality projects and provide a more powerful tool to staff in the review process. Through approved guidelines, staff is better able to direct as approved to suggest appropriate design for development.

The guidelines are a supplement to the City's Zoning Code, not a replacement. The guidelines are intended to provide more design direction than the Zoning Code; however, they establish only the minimum acceptable design standards. Higher-quality standards and innovative design options are strongly encouraged by the City.

# 1. SITE DESIGN

New development should adhere to the character of the existing neighborhood and be integrated into the surrounding development. New development should not dominate or interfere with the established character of its neighborhood. Site design of projects should be cohesive both functionally and visually.

## *SETTING*

1.A1.  
Design projects to be compatible with their surrounding development in intensity, setbacks, building forms, material, color, and landscaping unless there are specific planning goals to change the character of an area.

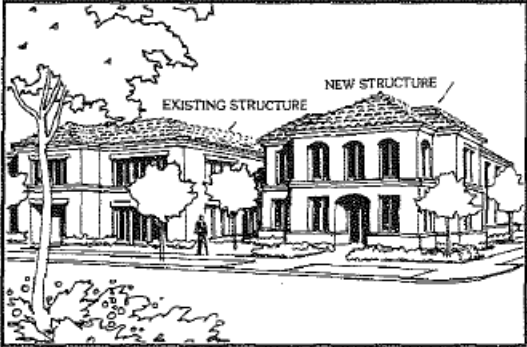
1.A2.  
Respect existing roadway patterns and driveways. Align new curb cuts with existing driveways and streets for streetscape continuity.

1.A3.  
Develop transition between projects with different uses and intensities to provide a cohesive visual and functional shift. Create transition by using appropriate setbacks, gradual building height, bulk, and landscaping.

1.A4.  
Integrate [perimeter landscaping](#) with the landscaping of adjacent developments for streetscape continuity.

1.A5.  
Minimize paved areas for curb cuts and parking on the street frontage of projects to maintain a continuous and attractive streetscape.

1.A6.  
Preserve natural site features such as mature trees, creeks, views, etc. and incorporate into the site design of the new project.

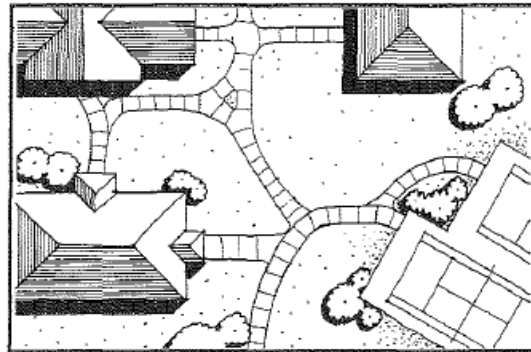


A3

1.A7.  
Protect existing nearby heritage structures and trees.

1.A8.  
Link on-site walkways to the public sidewalk system outside the project for ease of pedestrian access.

1.A9.  
Provide pedestrian links between residential developments and nearby employment and shopping centers, schools and parks to encourage pedestrian activities. Where new sidewalks are required, mature trees and landscaping should be preserved as much as possible by meandering sidewalks around them.



A9

## ***SITE ORGANIZATION***

1.B1.  
Locate site components such as structures, parking, driveways, walkways, landscaping, and open spaces to maximize visual appeal and functional efficiency. In multi-building complexes, a distinct visual link should be established among various buildings by using architectural or site design elements such as courtyards, plazas, landscaping and walkways to unify the project.

1.B2.  
Emphasize the pleasant components of the project such as existing trees and views, and disguise its less desirable scenes such as [loading and service areas](#) through placement and design of structures and landscaping.

1.B3.  
Locate noise and odor generating functions so that they do not create a nuisance for the adjacent properties.

1.B4.  
Orient nonresidential buildings on a site to relate to each other and to buildings on adjacent sites for aesthetic organization. Do not face the front of one building towards the back of another.

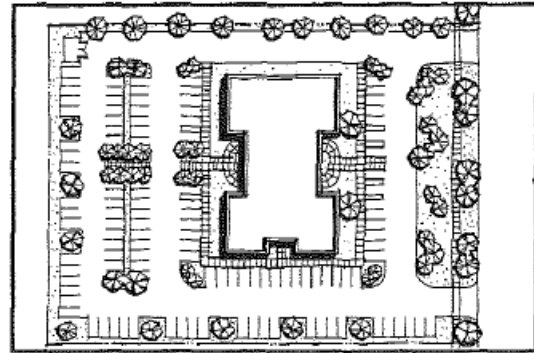


1.B5.

Do not dominate street frontage of projects by surface parking to encourage pedestrian orientation and a continuous streetscape. Limit paved areas on street frontages of nonresidential developments to one double row of parking and locate the rest of the parking elsewhere on the site. See the [Parking and Circulation](#) guidelines for more information.

1.B6.

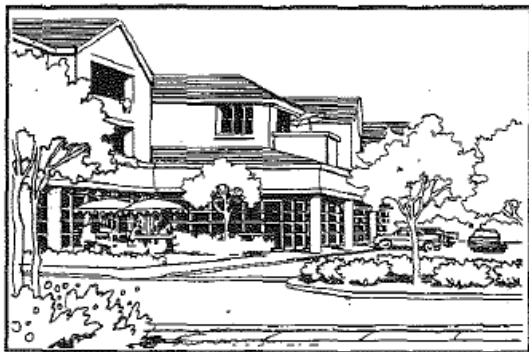
Where half or more of the parking is located at the rear of a retail/office building, provide main entries in the front and rear of buildings for convenient access.



B6

1.B7.

Orient buildings toward public streets and provide view corridors into the project site. For a positive street experience, provide view corridors by controlling the spacing and angles of buildings on the site and by providing open vistas and plazas.



B8

1.B8.

Building facades in non-residential projects should be lively and include windows and main entries which face public streets for a pedestrian-friendly environment.

1.B9.

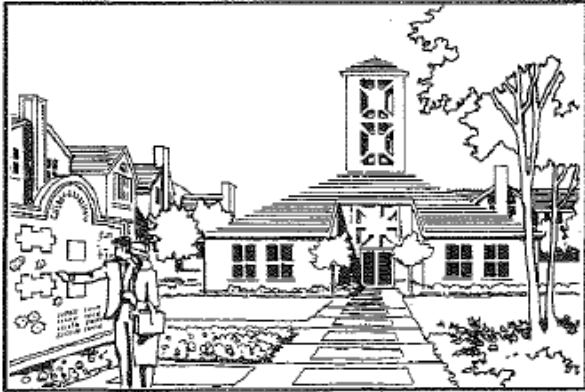
Residential projects may have a primarily internal orientation for privacy, providing that the site is visually linked with its surroundings by appropriate use of landscaping and building siting.

1.B10.

Provide convenient and safe pedestrian and automobile access to the site from adjacent streets.

1.B11.

Define site boundaries by landscaping and bands of decorative paving to announce entry into the site.



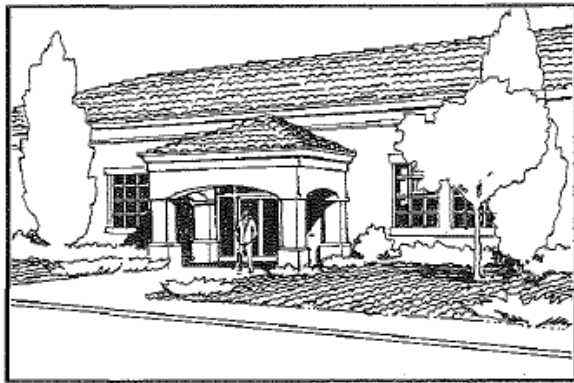
B12

1.B12.

Create main entries and define them with landscaping and other decorative features. Entries and focal points may be combined.

1.B13.

Design multi-building residential complexes to differentiate between private, semi-private, and common spaces through building placement, landscaping, gates, etc. Delineate each space for proper use and access by residents.



B13

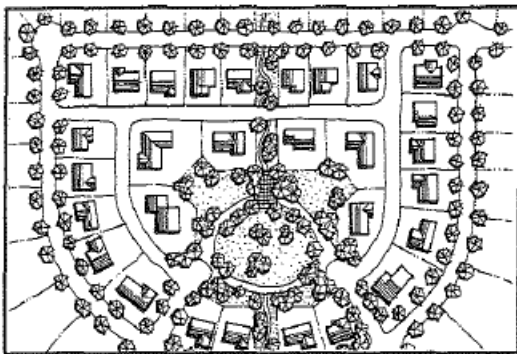
1.B14.

Design and locate a project's internal circulation pattern for maximum ease of movement and a minimum of safety hazards.

1.B15.

Consider energy efficiency in the siting of buildings. Shading of structures along the east, west, and south walls is recommended.

## *OPEN SPACE AND FOCAL POINTS*



C1

### 1.C1.

Design every project site for maximum utility of open space for ventilation, sunlight, recreation and views for both new and existing buildings.

### 1.C2.

In business parks and strip shopping centers, open space areas may be part of the focal points.

### 1.C3.

Open space areas may include benches, art, landscape, water, and hardscape features. Common open space areas should be usable for employees' and visitors' various outdoor activities.

### 1.C4.

Provide private usable open space areas for each unit and common usable open space for all units in attached single and multi-family residential developments. For non-residential projects, convenient employee access to nearby public parks and trail systems should be provided when feasible.

### 1.C5.

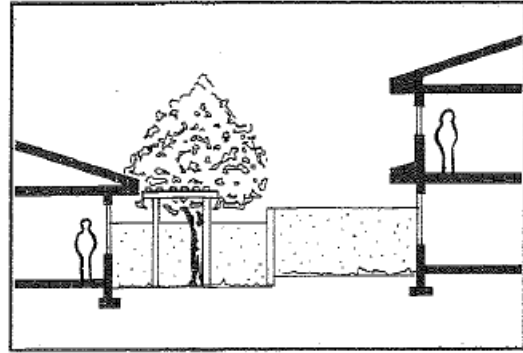
Provide an average of 300 to 500 sq. ft. of open space area per unit for every residential project. Private usable space is encouraged. Private open space includes: patios, porches, balconies, terraces, and decks. Minimum dimensions should be 12 ft. x 17 ft. Balconies may not be smaller than 7 ft. x 12 ft., and porches and decks should be at least 10 ft. x 12.

### 1.C6.

Provide direct access from the living unit to private open space.

1.C7.

Design private open space so it is not within the direct line of sight of other units. Privacy may be provided by means of grade changes and staggering of the balconies and patios, use of fences, walls, dense landscaping, and trellises.



C7

1.C8.

Provide direct access to common usable open space from all buildings. Common open spaces should be usable for recreational purposes. Landscaping strips of less than 50 ft. in width between buildings do not constitute usable common open space.

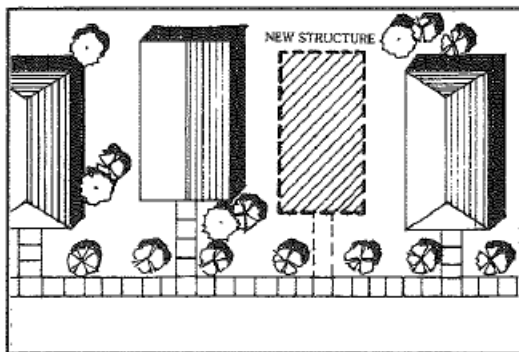
1.C9.

Develop one or more focal points for every project to create a sense of identification. Plazas, landscaping, water features, art works, changes in pavement textures and levels, and building architectural features may be combined to create focal points. For industrial areas, new buildings should have at least one major focal point and minor focal points. Focal points could be achieved through horizontal and vertical lines, change in material, change in color, change in form and shape of a portion of the building, etc. Combining the main entrances and the focal points is encouraged.

## 2. BUILDING DESIGN

Buildings should enhance the neighborhood and be harmonious in character, style, scale, color and materials with existing buildings in the neighborhood.

### *SETBACK*



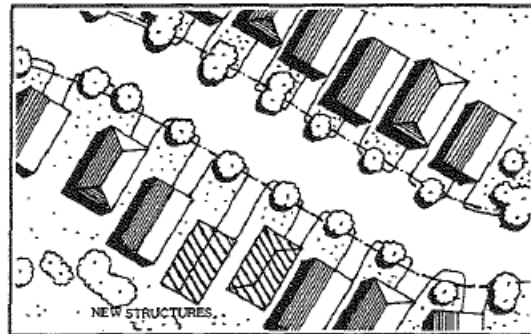
A1

2.A1.

In non-residential areas, maintain visual continuity of the streetscape by ensuring compatible front setbacks with adjacent buildings. Setback infill projects in areas with different front setbacks at a distance equal to the average setbacks of buildings on either side but still meet the minimum setback requirements of the Zoning Code.

2.A2.

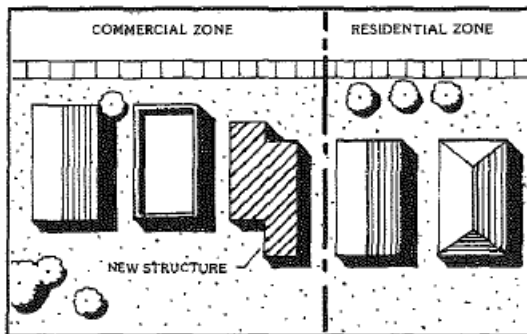
Provide variety in front setbacks, within a reasonable range, for single family detached residences and multi-unit attached building within the same development to create diversity along residential streets.



A2

2.A3.

Provide transition in setback distances for buildings in different Zoning Districts, i.e. multi-family and commercial development abutting each other, to maintain visual flow along more travelled streets.



A3

2.A4.

Non-residential buildings should have a street presence. Locate buildings as close to the setback lines as possible.

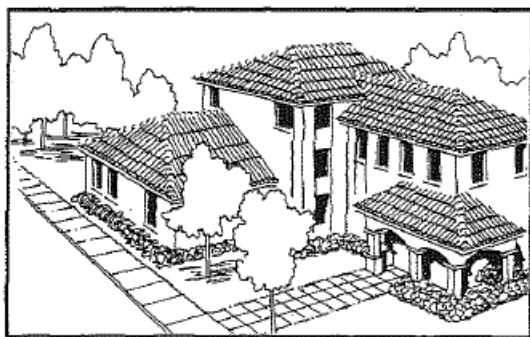
### *SCALE AND CHARACTER*

2.B1.

Break up large buildings into groups of smaller segments whenever possible, to appear smaller in mass and bulk.

2.B2.

Adjacent buildings should be compatible in height and scale.



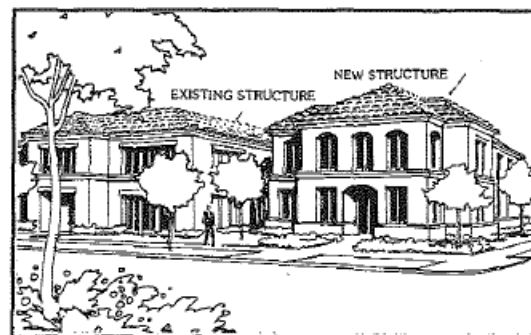
B1, B5

2.B3.

Buildings and additions should not shade more than 10% of the structures or open space areas on adjacent properties for proper solar access.

2.B4.

Maintain similar horizontal and vertical proportions with the adjacent facades to maintain architectural unity.



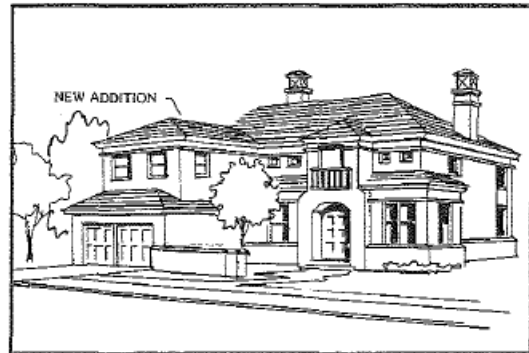
B4

2.B5.

Step back upper stories of building three stories or taller from public roads and adjacent low scale development to reduce the bulk impact.

2.B6.

Maintain the dominant existing scale of an area. Second story additions in a predominantly one story residential neighborhood should appear as one story.



B6

2.B7.

Placement of windows and openings on second story additions should not create a direct line of sight into the living space or the back yard of adjacent properties to maintain privacy.

2.B8.

In non-residential buildings maintain visually interesting activities at the street level by placing active facades with windows and openings on the street side to promote pedestrian activities.



B9

2.B9.

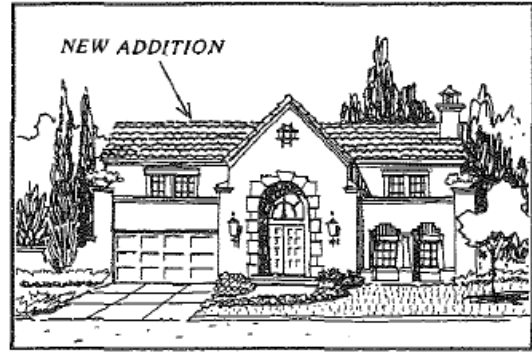
Interrupt front facades on large structures by various architectural elements such as trellises, balconies, steps, openings, etc., about every 30 ft. to appear smaller in scale.

2.B10.

Choose inset, multi-pane windows over a continuous band of single pane windows, to create a sense of scale.

2.B11.

Maintain the scale and character of the existing main structure in building additions by retaining similar proportions and rhythm present on the main structures.



B11

2.B12.

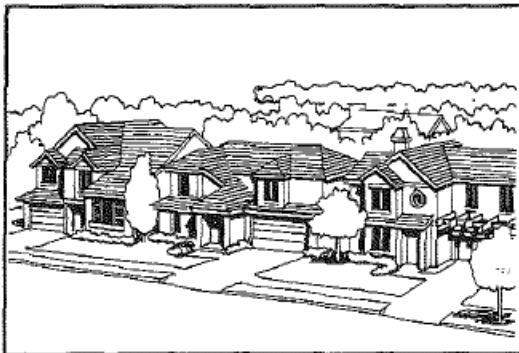
For industrial areas, where function necessitates a basic, box-like building form, exterior articulation such as change in color, material or plane should be introduced on an outer decorative shell encompassing facades which are visible from public streets. Set back less architecturally interesting facades of and screened them from public view by mature, dense landscaping as an alternative to furnishing quality architecture. Landscaping size and location should be determined on a site-by-site basis and may exceed the minimum required in the Zoning Code.

2.B13.

Only consider deviations to height limitations in the Zoning Code for a building when the deviation is:

- a) Necessary to elevate the finished floor out of the flood plain;
- b) For a pitched roof or other element that is consistent with the architectural character of the building (e.g., Tudor style);
- c) Compatible with the heights of adjacent development; or
- d) On a site that has been graded above natural grade.

## ***ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN***



C1

2.C1.

Maintain diversity and individuality in style but be compatible with the character of the neighborhood.

2.C2.

In areas where no prevailing architectural style exists, maintain the general neighborhood character by the use of similar scale, forms, and materials providing that it enhances the neighborhood.

2.C3.

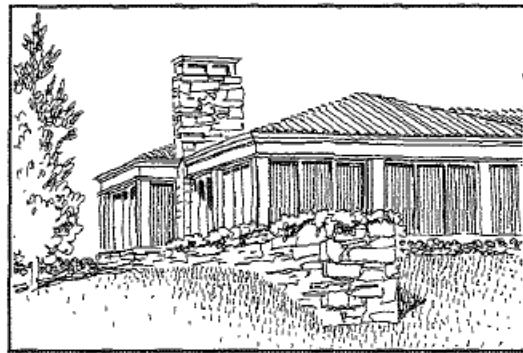
Develop a comprehensive architectural theme for multi-building complexes. Unify various site components through the use of similar design, material, and colors.

2.C4.

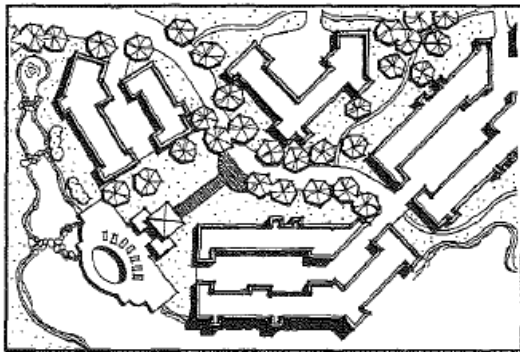
"Corporate architecture" and generic designs are not recommended. Design each project specifically with respect to its own surrounding environment.

2.C5.

Buildings should have three distinct components: base; middle; and, top. Define each component by horizontal and vertical articulation. Façade articulation may consist of changes in the wall plane, use of openings and projections, and material and color variations. Exceptions may be permitted only where a specific architectural style offers other types of building form and façade articulations, as determined by the planning staff.



C5



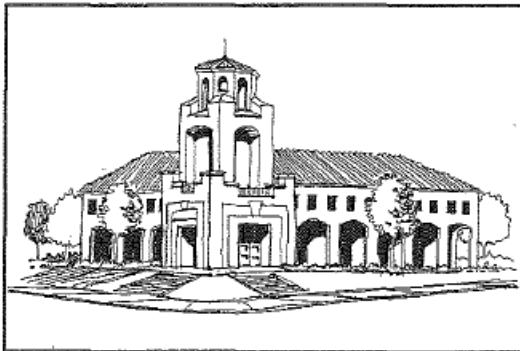
C6

2.C6.

Link buildings and sites together by proper building orientation, landscaping, and similarly designed building and site components.

2.C7.

Utilize landscaping around the perimeter of new buildings to enhance buildings, not to cover an unacceptable design.



C8

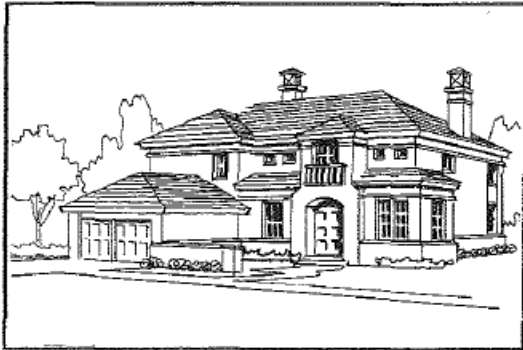
2.C8.

Nonresidential buildings on corner lots should demonstrate a strong tie to the public streets. Enhance street corners by special design features such as tower elements, celebrated main entrances, or landscape features. Residential buildings should create a tie to the public streets by proper siting and by landscaping.



2.C9.

Include decorative building elements in the design of all buildings. Add more interest to buildings by incorporating changes in wall plane and height, arcades, porticos, trellises, porches, balconies, dormers, windows, opening, etc.



C10

2.C10.

Repeat design and decorative building elements in all elevations and the roof, not just in the front facade.

2.C11.

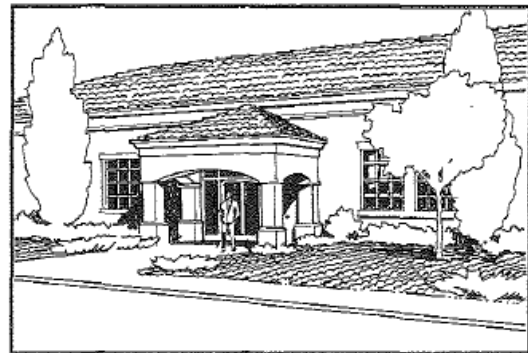
Windows and openings should be consistent with the architectural style of buildings and maintain similar proportions and rhythm with those on adjacent buildings.

2.C12.

Provide clear windows on street level on retail buildings to create interest for pedestrians.

2.C13.

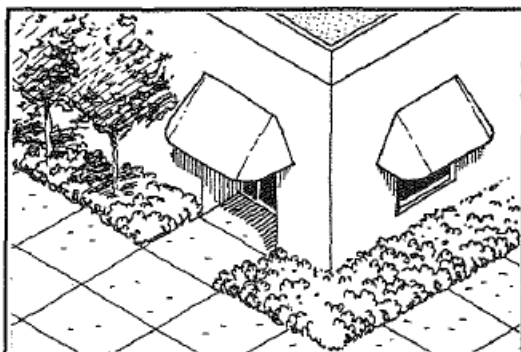
Define building entries by use of human scale architectural elements such as arches, posts, awnings, etc. Orient main entries toward public streets.



C13

2.C14.

Awnings and canopies should be compatible with the building design.



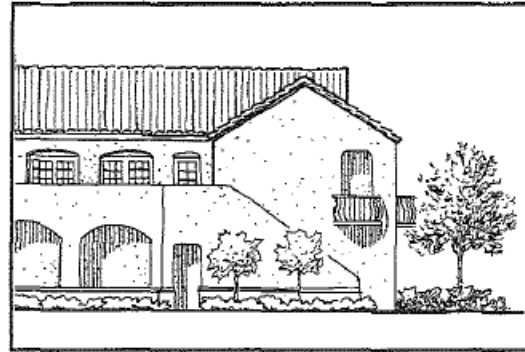
C15

2.C15.

Awnings should not cover or replace facade articulation by wrapping around buildings in continuous bands. Place awnings only on top of doors, windows and other openings.

2.C16.

In multi-unit residential projects, cluster unit entrances in small numbers and incorporate into the architectural design of the building. Avoid long balconies and walkways on the exterior of buildings.



C16

2.C17.

Design fire escapes and exterior stairs, elevator shafts, and balconies as part of the building, not as separate elements.

2.C18.

Consider privacy in placement of windows on adjacent structures in residential areas. Stagger windows, use high, frosted, or no windows where privacy is a concern.

2.C19.

Orient primary living areas in residential buildings toward private open space and views.

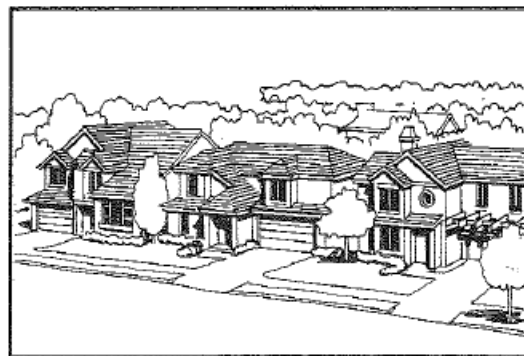
## *ROOF*

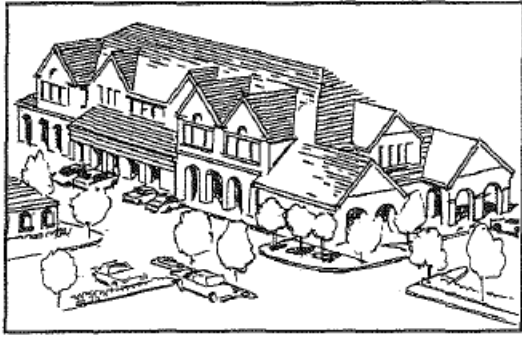
2.D1.

New roofs should be consistent in form and shape with the dominant roof form in the neighborhood.

2.D2.

Retail and commercial buildings in, or adjacent to residential neighborhoods, with predominantly gabled roofs, should have gabled roofs to create a residential scale and character.





2.D3.

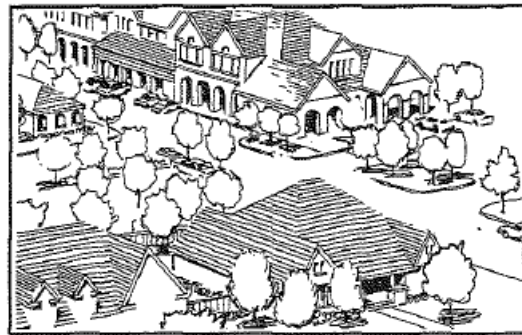
Long horizontal roof lines are not acceptable. Interrupt roof line by architectural treatment and features. In non-industrial areas, the maximum allowable unbroken roof line is 30 feet. Exceptions may be permitted only where a specific architectural style offers other types of roof forms and roof articulation.

2.D4.

Vary roof levels and forms on a large building to create diversity and to decrease the apparent scale of the building.

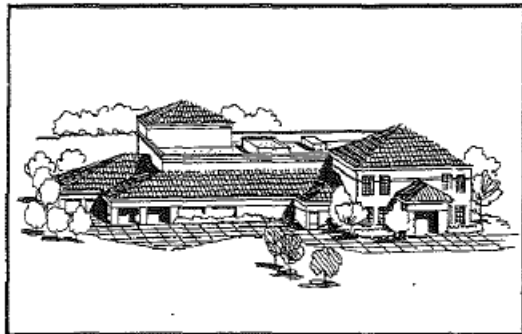
2.D5.

Include roofs on all elevations, not just on the front facades of buildings. Roof forms should express entrances to buildings.



2.D6.

Roofs should be an integral part of building design. False mansard roofs are not acceptable.

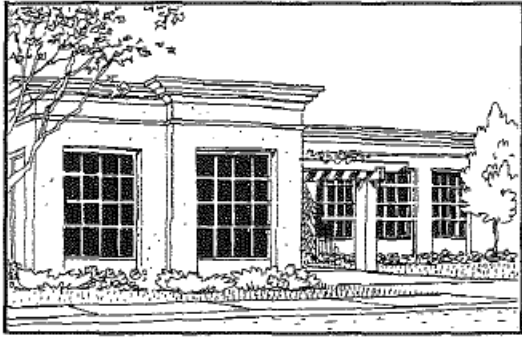


2.D7.

Include architectural elements such as projecting cornices in design of flat roofs to define the edge of the roof. Depending on architectural style, industrial buildings are encouraged to use these elements to enhance roof edges.

2.D8.

Standing seam metal mansard roof design is strongly discouraged.



2.D9.  
Parapets and roof screens should be integrated architecturally into building designs. Placement, material, and color of roof screens should not impact the building architecture or roof form. Equipment wells are encouraged for sloped roofs.

2.D10.  
Obtain a true shadow effect where non-wood shingles are used by using materials with more depth and texture.

## ***MATERIAL AND COLOR***

2.E1.  
Develop a comprehensive material and color scheme for each project to tie in the various parts of the project. Choose a variety of colors and materials to add interest to buildings.

2.E2.  
Avoid large expanse of smooth surfaces such as concrete or glass. Use materials with a sense of scale and texture. For industrial areas, high-quality metal may be used as exterior siding or in large expanses. Break up large expanses of smooth material with expansion joints, reveals, or changes in texture and color.

2.E3.  
Avoid large expanse of highly reflective surfaces and mirror glass exterior walls to prevent heat and glare impacts on the adjacent public streets and properties.

2.E4.  
Choose high quality materials and paint to prevent degradation and for ease of maintenance.

2.E5.  
Use wrought iron, cast iron, or high quality wood for decorative features and trims.

2.E6.  
Coordinate exterior colors of adjacent structures on the same or adjacent sites.

2.E7.

Use strong, bright contrasting colors for ornaments and accent only.

2.E8.

Coordinate color and material of building additions with those of the principal structure.

2.E9.

Wall and ground sign design, material, and color should be compatible with the principal building on the site.

## 3. PARKING AND CIRCULATION

Project site should be conveniently accessible to pedestrians, bicycles and automobiles. Sufficient off-street parking is required for every project. On-site circulation patterns should be designed to adequately accommodate pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic.

### *CIRCULATION*

3.A1.

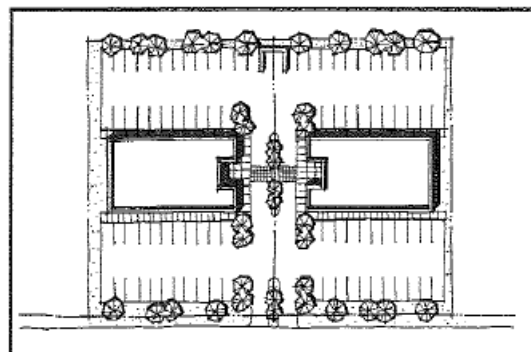
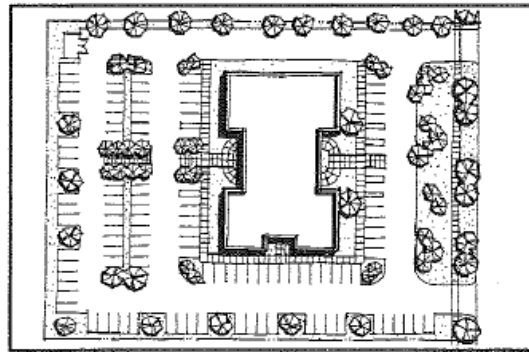
Walkways – All projects should have a clear and direct walkway between fronting streets and one or more of the primary building entries.

3.A2.

Pedestrian Connections – Provide pedestrian connections between all buildings on the site. Avoid pad buildings along street frontages without clear pedestrian links to the remainder of a shopping complex.

3.A3.

Pedestrian Access – Provide easy pedestrian access to building entries from side streets serving adjacent residential neighborhoods.



#### 3.A4.

Number of Walkways – Pedestrian walkways should be provided in all parking lots over 50 spaces. Walkways running parallel to the parking rows should be provided for every four rows and walkways running perpendicular to the parking rows should be no further than 20 parking stalls apart.

#### 3.A5.

Design of Walkways – Where walkways cross traffic lanes, the walkway should be clearly delineated with contrasting color and pavement pattern, and be raised slightly to form a speed table.

#### 3.A6.

Design of Walkways – Parking lots with over 150 spaces should have walkways designed with adjacent planting areas for trees and other landscaping.

#### 3.A7.

Pedestrian walkways should include the following features:

- a. At least 5 feet in width
- b. Separated from vehicular movements for at least 50% of its length
- c. Visually distinct from vehicular driving surfaces (e.g. pavers, brick, scored concrete, color.) Paint striping is not permitted.
- d. Appropriate lighting.

#### 3.A8.

Pedestrian Amenities – Pedestrian amenities and varied width walkways along storefronts are encouraged through the use of expanded plaza areas, landscaped amenity areas with benches, landscaping, special paving, and pedestrian scale lighting.

#### 3.A9.

Outdoor Eating Area – For development of new shopping centers, a single area should be set aside for all restaurant outdoor dining when possible. If this is not possible, additional area shall be designed to allow for both the placement of tables and chairs as well as comfortable pedestrian circulation in front of the building.

## *PARKING LOT DESIGN*

### 3.B1.

While surface parking is most typical, below grade parking facilities are encouraged to reduce the amount of paving. When surface parking is unavoidable, cluster parking spaces into small parking areas, dispersed around the site, to avoid large paved expanses.

### 3.B2.

Separate large parking lots of 120 or more cars into smaller subareas with landscaping, pedestrian walkways and/or buildings. For industrial areas, where large parking lots are needed, adequate landscaped pockets should be integrated into parking areas.

### 3.B3.

Landscaped strips between rows of parking are encouraged to reduce the visual sense of large areas of paving and to provide the ability to use bio swales to reduce the amount of storm water runoff. They may be continuous or broken into segments.

### 3.B4.

Landscaped islands are encouraged to break up long rows of parking spaces and reduce the visual width of parking aisles. One island for every 10 spaces is suggested as a minimum.

### 3.B5.

Parking lot edges at adjacent streets should be defined positively with three feet [walls](#) and/or box hedges. Parking lot edges at property or setback lines should include landscape islands with large species trees and low plants to visually break up long lines of parked vehicles.

### 3.B6.

Landscaped edges are encouraged along pedestrian sidewalks at storefronts to separate pedestrians from parked cars and vehicular traffic.

### 3.B7.

Angled parking is preferred in high–turnover uses such as retail, restaurant and recreation uses to make turn movements easier. One–way driveways should be used for angled parking spaces to reduce paving and increase layout efficiency.

### 3.B8.

Parking spaces should be marked in the following manner to encourage careful parking and increase usability of spaces.

- a. Double lines, one foot apart (as measured from the center) and four inches wide should mark the sides of each space.
- b. Lines should be 16 feet long, with a rounded radius end.

### 3.B9.

Lighting.

- a. Brightness. Lighting must provide a minimum average of 0.5 foot candles.
- b. Energy efficiency. High energy– efficient lighting, including LED lighting is encouraged. Lights which interfere with color recognition, such as sodium vapor is discouraged.
- c. Pole Height. Light poles are limited to 8 feet in height for pedestrian and residential areas. Light poles may extend up to 16 feet in height in other areas. Light poles must not exceed the height of the main building.
- d. Shielding. Shield light sources to prevent any glare or direct illumination on public streets or adjacent properties.

### 3.B10.

Drainage design. The design of landscaping islands and parking areas should intergrate parking lot and sign drainage to reduce storm water runoff velocities and minimize non–point source pollution. Drainage “weep holes” are required for 6–inch concrete curbs.

### 3.B11.

Security. Security kiosks and gates should allow queuing for at least 3 cars. Whenever security gates are provided, sufficient parking should be provided outside of the gate area for visitors.

### 3.B12.

Reserved car share spaces must be located close to the main building.

## ***PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING***

### 3.C1.

Adequately [landscape](#) all parking areas to reduce the effects of heat and glare from paving, and for visual relief.

### 3.C.2.

[Fully screen parking lots](#) adjacent to public streets by landscaping and berming. Screening should be at least 3.5 ft. high at the street level and must be at least 15 ft. wide.

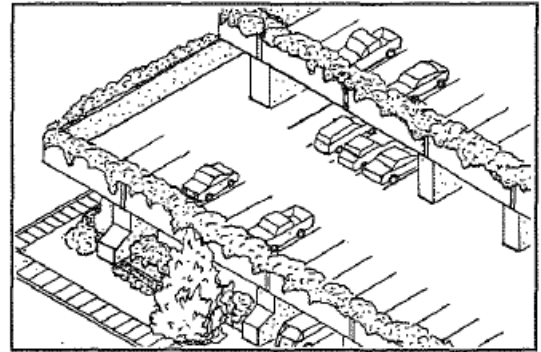


3.C.3.

Provide a combination of a 15 ft. wide landscaping strip and a 6 ft. high decorative [wall](#) in parking lots abutting a residential use, or across the street from a residential use.

3.C.4.

Fully screen below grade parking from public view at street level by landscaping and berming.

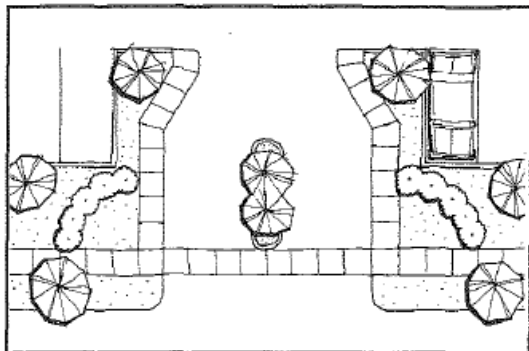


3.C.5.

Landscaping may be incorporated into the design of [parking structures](#) to soften the facades and to screen cars.

3.C.6.

[Driveway entrances](#) should receive special landscape treatment to break up paving expanses and to define the site entrance.

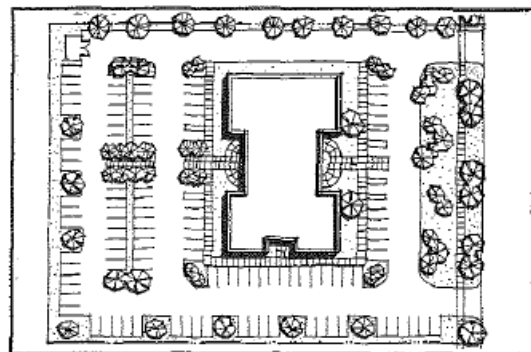


3.C.8.

Provide landscape islands all through parking lots. Islands should be minimum of 6 ft. wide and should be continuous between double rows of parking spaces. For industrial areas, landscape pockets should also be provided for every 8 parking spaces and at the end of each row of parking spaces.

3.C.9.

Provide a minimum of one tree for every 7 parking stalls. Always combine trees with shrubs or ground cover in islands. Trees with deep roots should be selected to avoid damaging the pavement.



3.C.10.

Landscape islands are preferred to tree wells. Where tree wells are provided, they should be a minimum of 5 ft. by 5 ft. in dimension.

3.C.11.

A minimum 6 in. high poured-in-place concrete curb should be provided around all landscaped areas to protect landscaping from automobiles (Section 19.46.050d).

## ***BICYCLE PARKING***

### 3.D1.

Bicycle parking areas should be lit at night throughout the year to increase safety. Special consideration should be used when deciding on the placement of lighting especially near residential areas.

### 3.D2.

To protect bicycles from theft and vandalism racks should not be obscured by landscaping fences or other obstructions. They should be in view of passing pedestrians or vendors.

### 3.D3.

Bicycle parking racks should be conveniently located close to a building entrance and should be clearly visible from the entrance and its approaches. Signs should be posted to direct bicyclists to the bike parking if this is not possible.

### 3.D4.

Protection from the weather should be provided for a portion of the rack parking. The ground surface area where the rack is situated should be an all-weather and drainable material. Consideration should be given to the material and how slippery it may become when wet.

### 3.D5.

Bicycle lockers should be conveniently located for the bicyclist, at least as close as the nearest motor vehicle parking area.

### 3.D6.

Lockers should be placed on hard all-weather surfaces and be protected from the weather. The lockers should have adequate drainage to ensure that bicycles remain dry during weather events.

### 3.D7.

Bicycle racks and lockers should be located outside of the typical pedestrian travel path with additional room for bicyclists to maneuver outside of the pedestrian way. Clearances are specified below.

### 3.D8.

Bicycle racks and lockers should be located at a sufficient distance from motor vehicles to prevent damage to parked bicycles, lockers or motor vehicles.

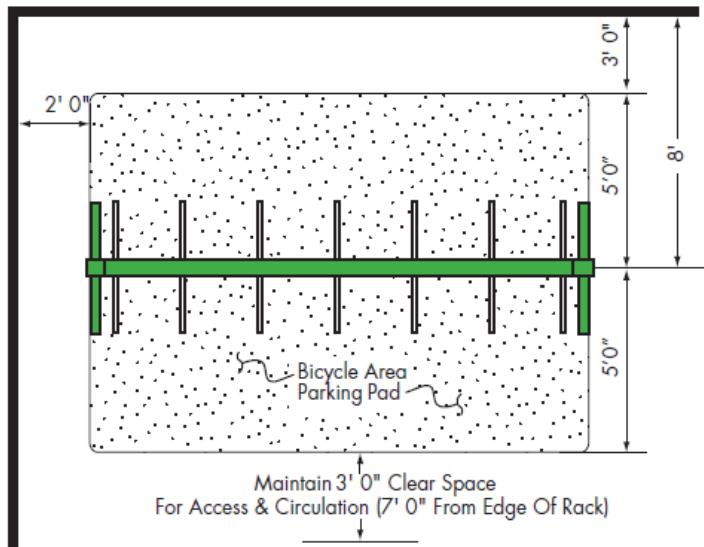
3.D9.

Signs should be posted to direct bicyclists to the locations of bike racks or lockers that may not be readily apparent. Similarly, signs indicating the location of bicycle parking should be posted wherever a NO BICYCLE PARKING sign is posted.

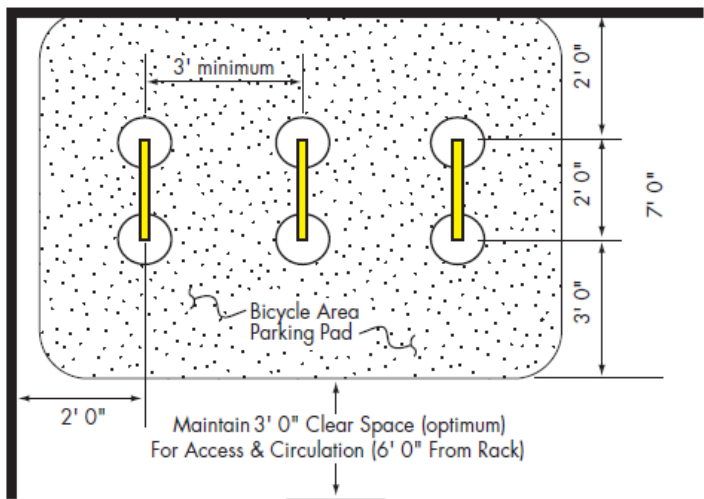
3.D10.

Racks should be installed with the following clear distances:

Coat Hanger Rack  
Plan View



Inverted U-Racks  
Plan View



Maintain 2' clear space from any building wall or other obstruction

Not To Scale

Figure 10-4:  
Bike Rack Placement Criteria (in Plazas or near Buildings)

Source: VTA Bicycle Technical Guidelines

## ***PARKING STRUCTURES***

### 3.E1.

Large commercial parking structures are not recommended in, or adjacent to, detached single family residential areas.

### 3.E2.

Incorporate both horizontal and vertical articulations in visible facades of parking structures to reduce bulk and mass problem.

### 3.E3.

Maintain similar proportions and rhythm of architectural elements similar to those on adjacent building elevations for architectural harmony.

### 3.E4.

Utilize the street level of parking structures for retail uses, or screen by dense landscaping and berming for visual relief.

## ***RESIDENTIAL PARKING***

### 3.F1.

Garage doors must be a minimum of 16 feet in width. For individual doors, each must be 8.5 feet wide.

### 3.F2.

A trellis roof qualifies as covered parking if it is more than 50 percent solid.

### 3.F3.

Existing functional two-car garages not meeting minimum area or dimension requirements may be considered adequate for additions above 1,800 square feet if they meet the minimum dimensions for most of the garage area. That is, if they do not meet the minimum dimensions just at the entry or because of a small obstructions such as a water heater.

## *PARKING SURFACES*

### 3.G1.

Residential parking surfaces that accommodate passenger vehicles only should be constructed with the following standard:

- a) Four inches of concrete with #3 rebar at 16 inches on center each way at mid-height; and
- b) Over six inches of aggregate base compacted to 95 percent relative compaction over sub-grade compacted to 90 percent relative compaction.

### 3.G2.

Permeable paving materials such as grass cell and turf block may be considered if the materials support anticipated vehicle traffic and weight. Materials should not cause maintenance problems.

## 4. LANDSCAPING

Landscaping should be used to enhance sites and buildings, control climate and noise, create transition between adjacent uses, unify various site components, and define and separate functions and activities.

### *GENERAL*

#### 4.A1.

Demonstrate a landscaping design concept and link various site components. Relate placement and type of plant materials to the site and buildings.

#### 4.A2.

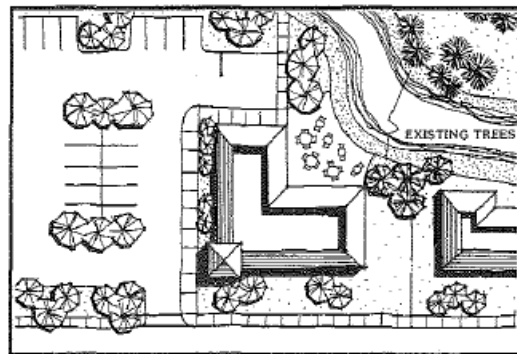
Preserve and incorporate existing natural features, particularly trees, on a site into the landscape design of projects.

#### 4.A3.

Use of a Certified Arborist or landscape architect to protect existing trees during construction is encouraged.

#### 4.A4.

Properly landscape all areas not covered by structures, driveways, and [parking](#).



A2

#### 4.A5.

Landscaping should always consist of live plant material, including a combination of trees, shrubs and ground cover. For non-industrial areas, use of colored rock, wood bark, and gravel in place of landscaping is not acceptable. For industrial areas, rock and gravel may be incorporated into the landscaping to enhance the design but should not replace live material.

#### 4.A6.

Choose a variety of plant material with different textures and colors. Use water-wise plant material, as specified in the Landscape regulations.

#### 4.A7.

Install a minimum of one tree for every 300 sq. ft. of landscaping. Minimum tree size is 15 gallon. Certain percentage of trees should be specimen size.

4.A8.

All shrubs should be a minimum of 5 gallons. One gallon size shrubs may be used for accent planting and ground cover.

4.A9.

Landscaping should always combine trees and shrubs with living ground cover.

4.A10.

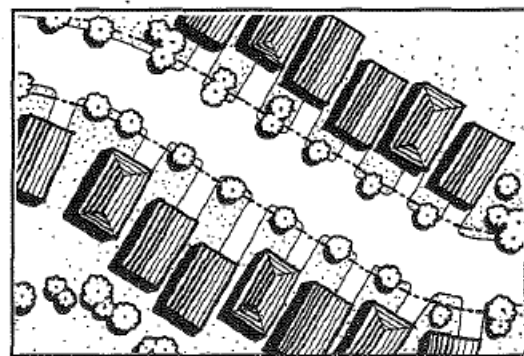
Use of appropriate native vegetation is encouraged. Use water conserving plant material in 70% of all landscaped areas.

4.A11.

Install permanent irrigation system in all required landscaped areas except in single family and duplex residences.

4.A12.

Install street trees along street side of projects according to the Department of Public Works requirements. In industrial areas, combine street trees with on-site trees to provide a double row of trees where possible.



A12

4.A13.

Incorporate design and location of [walls and fences](#) into the landscape design of projects.

4.A14.

[Treat focal points](#) and highly visible areas of the site with special landscaping treatment.

4.A15.

Incorporate all site furniture including planters, tree grates, newspaper racks, and light fixtures into the landscape design of projects.

4.A16.

Site furniture and light fixtures should follow the same design concept as the major structures on the site.

4.A17.

Always enhance automobile and pedestrian traffic paths by landscaping.

4.A18.

Future phases of a project site already cleared and graded should be adequately treated (e.g. hydro mulch) to prevent erosion and reduce aesthetic impacts.

## *PERIPHERAL*

### 4.B1.

Provide a minimum of a 15 ft. wide landscape strip along the public street side of all developments, except for single family residences. Landscape strips of more than 15 ft. are strongly encouraged to enhance the public streetscape.

### 4.B2.

Provide a minimum of a 4 ft. wide landscape strip along the sides and rear of all projects, except for single family detached residences and duplexes (which have different requirements).

### 4.B3.

Provide a minimum of 10 ft. wide landscape strip, plus a decorative masonry wall at least 6 ft. high, between all non-residential development and abutting residential uses.

### 4.B2.

To provide a visual transition between railroad tracks and industrial buildings, a minimum 10 foot wide landscaping strip should be provided along the frontage on railroad tracks.

## *INTERNAL*

### 4.C1.

Provide landscaped areas equal to approximately one fourth of the total square footage of each dwelling unit, per unit in all residential developments except for single family detached and duplexes.

### 4.C2.

Provide landscape areas equal to a minimum of 12.5% of the floor area in all commercial development.



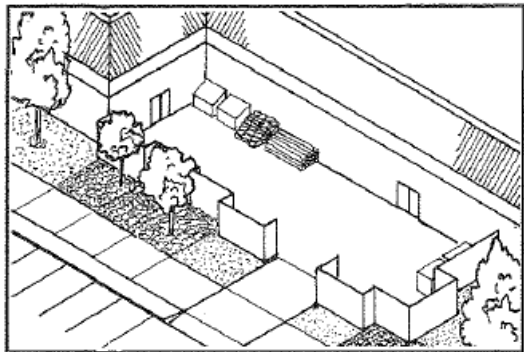
# 5. SERVICE AND ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

Service areas should be designed and located for maximum function and minimum impact on adjacent uses.

## *GENERAL*

### 5.A1.

Locate service areas and drives away from public streets and nearby residential uses. Place service facilities in the least visible areas. In multi-building complexes, service areas should be combined or located next to each other to minimize the visual and noise impact on the surrounding uses.



### 5.A2.

Provide convenient access for all service and emergency vehicles. Separate service drives from other on-site circulation patterns when possible.

### 5.A3.

Fully screen all service facilities from the public street and adjoining properties.

### 5.A4.

Screening devices should have a similar design

and material to the main structures on the site, and should be incorporated into the site design of the project.

### 5.A5.

Fences, walls, dense landscaping, berming, or any combination of the above, may be used to screen service areas and facilities.

## *ACCESSORY BUILDINGS*

### 5.B1.

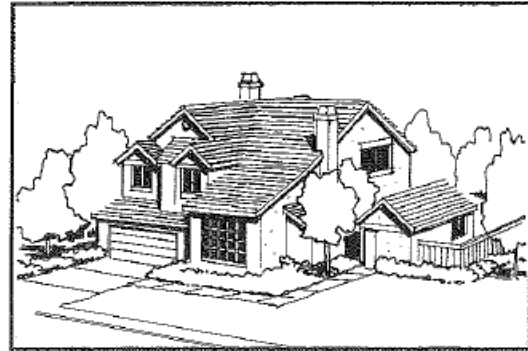
With the exception of security kiosks in industrial areas, do not locate accessory buildings in front setback areas between the main structures and public streets

5.B2.

The style, material, and color of accessory buildings visible from public streets should be the same as those of the main structures.

5.B3.

Accessory buildings should be proportional to the main structures in size and bulk. Avoid dominating site areas by accessory buildings.



5.B4.

Carport design, materials, and colors should be the same as main buildings. Enclose side elevations of carports to screen support columns on both ends.

5.B5.

Where carports back up to public streets or public view, provide rear carport walls to screen cars.

5.B6.

Include fascias in carport roof design to screen support beams and trusses.

5.B7.

Mimic the roof design of the main building in carport roofs.

5.B8.

Support columns should be proportional to the structure in carports (match stick columns are not acceptable).

5.B9.

In industrial areas, temporary buildings such as trailers should not be visible from adjoining public streets. Temporary trailers should be skirted with similar material and color as the trailers.

## ***FENCES AND WALLS***

5.C1.

Fences and walls should be compatible in style and material with the main structures on a site and integrated into landscape design.

5.C2.

To avoid the monotony of long solid walls and fences around the perimeter of projects, variation in height, texture, and color is recommended.

5.C3.

Signs, lights, and other street furniture incorporated into the design of fences and walls are encouraged.

5.C4.

For front yard fences in residential areas, open decorative type fences, such as picket, post, and rail are preferred.

5.C5.

Privacy fences over 6 ft. high in residential areas should consist of lattice work for that portion of fence being over 6 ft. high.

5.C6.

Chain link and barbed wire fences are not allowed in or adjacent to residential areas. In non-residential areas chain link fences are acceptable on school grounds and within parks. Wherever chain link or cyclone fences are used, landscaping should be provided to screen the fence. For non-industrial uses in industrial areas such as retail uses, cyclone or chain link fences are strongly discouraged.

5.C7.

Screening devices should always be made of opaque materials such as wood or masonry blocks.

5.C8.

Fences and walls used for noise control should be made of materials most suited for noise reduction, and which minimize reflective sound.

5.C9.

Security fences and gates should be of an open type to allow for maximum visibility of the secured area. Wrought iron and cast iron fences are recommended for security fences and gates for all uses.

## ***MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT AND OUTDOOR STORAGE***

5.D1.

Avoid locating mechanical equipment in front setback areas between the public street and buildings.

5.D2.

Locate mechanical equipment far enough from adjacent properties to not cause noise problems.

5.D3.

Fully screen roof top equipment by parapet walls or a roof well on all four sides.

5.D4.

Avoid individual screening of a group of equipment on a single roof. Contain all equipment within same roof screen.

## ***LOADING SPACES***

5.E1.

Time of Use – Specifically marked loading spaces are not required for uses which load at off-hours.

5.E2.

Size – A loading space must be 350 square feet in area with a minimum dimension of 35 feet in one direction.

5.E3.

Space Markings – Required loading spaces must be reserved with lot markings, signs or other techniques. Signs must indicate loading times if no specific loading space is reserved.

5.E4.

Location – A loading space must be located within 10 of the building served and cannot impede normal circulation of vehicular traffic through parking areas or traffic circulation aisles. In the ECR Combining District, loading areas must be set back 20 feet from any property line that abuts residential uses/zoning districts? Loading bays that include ramps, roll-up doors or gates that are prohibited between the face of the building and the street.

## ***TRASH ENCLOSURE***

5.F1.

All multi-family projects of 4 or more units and all non-residential developments should provide for adequate storage of trash and recyclable materials in containers in enclosed areas.

5.F2.

Trash enclosures should be conveniently accessible by collection trucks. Access driveways should be a minimum of 16 ft. in width.

5.F3.

Enclosures should not be located in setback, landscaped or parking areas.

5.F4.

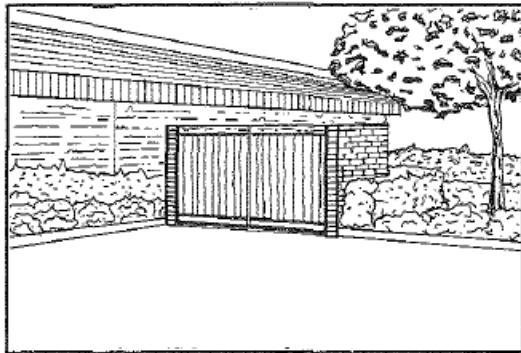
Provide adequate turnaround areas for collection trucks on non-through streets.

5.F5.

Provide a concrete pad in front of and within enclosures to prevent damage to pavement.

5.F6.

In multi-family developments, locate enclosures within 250 ft. of each unit for user's convenience.



5.F7.

Trash enclosures must screen trash containers on all 4 sides. The height of enclosures should fully screen the containers and should be a minimum of 6 ft. high.

5.F8.

In multi-family developments, provide a roof for enclosures when visible from any upper story.

5.F9.

The style, material, and color of enclosures should be similar to those of the main structure.

5.F10.

Enclosures should be made of masonry and match the main building in finish and color in Commercial Zones. Residential enclosures may be wood, painted to match the main building.

5.F11.

Steel enclosure gates in commercial areas and wood enclosure gates in residential zones are required as a minimum standard.

# GLOSSARY

<b>Activity</b>	The movement of people walking, playing, window shopping, shopping dining, etc. adding interest and excitement to areas of the City.
<b>Articulation</b>	Variations in the depth of the building plane which break up monotonous walls and create interesting patterns of light and shadow.
<b>Buffer</b>	A transition area between two land uses.
<b>Bulk and Mass</b>	The more surface area of a building seen at one time, the more “bulky” a building will appear to be. Further, the more a structure extends above its surrounding, the more likely it will be perceived as being “massive.” Both elements, surface area and height, are necessary to create an impression of bulk. Both are also relative measures and depend on the mass of surrounding development.
<b>Character</b>	Special physical characteristics of a structure or area that set it apart from its surrounding and contribute to its individuality.
<b>Cluster</b>	An assemblage that concentrates in specific areas.
<b>Compatible</b>	Elements of buildings that are in harmony with their surroundings and retain an individual identity while being perceived as part of a homogenous whole.
<b>Continuity</b>	Continuity depends on the treatment of transitions and the joints between house and ground, corners, gateways between spaces and decision points on a pathway. Transitions are often the most noticeable feature at the outdoor scale. They must be articulated if the spaces are to be readable and coherently jointed.
<b>Density</b>	Number of form elements per area.
<b>Design Criteria</b>	A set of functional and aesthetic standards formulated to serve as a basis for the evaluation of design proposals.
<b>Districts</b>	Areas of a city which have a unique character that are identifiable as different from surrounding areas because of distinctive architecture, streets, culture, landmarks or the type of activities and land uses.

<b>Diversity</b>	Elements that are different from one another and have various forms of qualities.
<b>Goal</b>	A statement of public purposes that establishes a general direction of effort on a comprehensive city-wide level and indicates the ends to be achieved by various actions.
<b>Identity</b>	A quality of sameness that makes a city, place or building unique and gives it a distinguishing character.
<b>Image</b>	The mental picture of a city or place taken from memory and based on subjective experience.
<b>Integrated Design</b>	Design elements appearing to have some relationship to the other elements.
<b>Linkage</b>	Two kinds: one links each space to another, the other links the activities. The relationship of each should be clarified to encourage flow.
<b>Lively Façade</b>	Active façade with openings.
<b>Objectives</b>	A situation that is capable of both measurement and attainment, and instrumental in the realization of goals. Objectives range in focus from general citywide concerns to specific district proposals.
<b>Open Space</b>	An area that is intended to provide light and air, and is designed for either environmental, scenic or recreational purposes.
<b>Open Space (Useable)</b>	An outdoor or unenclosed area on the ground or on a roof, balcony, deck, porch, pool area, patio or terrace designed and accessible for outdoor living, recreation, pedestrian access or landscaping, excluding parking facilities, driveways, utility, service or storage areas.
<b>Opportunity</b>	A situation where impending physical change or solutions to critical problems presents a chance to achieve a particular objective.
<b>Orientation</b>	An understanding or position relative to another. A space composed by properly oriented elements has a certain order.
<b>Path</b>	The channels along which the observer customarily, occasionally, or potentially moves. They may be streets, walkways, transit lines, canals or railroads.
<b>Policy</b>	A general course of action leading to the realization of goals and

objectives, and indicating priorities to serve as a guide for decision-making.

<b>Proportions</b>	Functional and decorative elements that are in scale with each other.
<b>Rhythm</b>	A repetition of architectural features.
<b>Scale</b>	The relative relationship in size of buildings and other objects to one another.
<b>Sense of Arrival</b>	A final destination within the sequence.
<b>Sense of Entry</b>	A gateway where one moves from outside to inside, and arrival zone.
<b>Sense of Identification</b>	A sense of uniqueness. Visual forms that will make it distinguishable from its surroundings.
<b>Street Presence</b>	To tie-in with or be a part of a streetscape.
<b>Transition</b>	The change from one condition to another.