Sacramento County
Countywide Design Guidelines and Case Studies

Adopted by the Board of Supervisors
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Sacramento County
Countywide Design Guidelines

Board of Supervisors

Phil Serna, District 1
Patrick Kennedy, District 2
Susan Peters, District 3
Sue Frost, District 4
Don Nottoli, District 5

Nav Gill, County Executive
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Sacramento County is made up of nearly 1,000 square miles encompassing a diverse mix of landscapes from the very western portion of the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the scenic and biologically diverse lowlands of the Sacramento River Delta. In total, approximately 1.45 million people call Sacramento County “home” with a significant number of those residents residing within one of the many established communities of the unincorporated area. The established communities that make up the unincorporated County offer distinguished housing for every lifestyle – urban lofts, suburban family homes, executive housing and rural farms and ranches – along with a wide variety of parks, open space and recreational, commercial, industrial and institutional uses. With its ideal climate, astounding tree canopy, and expansive outdoor recreational amenities – including the 32-mile American River Parkway – Sacramento County provides a quality of life that is highly desirable.

The robust economy in the unincorporated Sacramento County is expected to grow significantly, attracting notable companies and a related workforce. With our existing communities and the anticipated growth, Sacramento County recognizes the importance to plan and develop land use regulations that reflect our value for high quality, sustainable and healthy community design. The three main objectives are to: achieve high standards for the quality of the built environment; advance sustainable development and provide business and user friendly practices. The expectation for these guidelines, in conjunction with our Design Review Program, is to foster more sustainable and healthy communities that improve the overall quality of life for all County residents. These guidelines, and the community discussion that guided their preparation, demonstrate this commitment.
1.1 **PURPOSE OF COUNTYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES**

These Countywide Design Guidelines provide consistent design principles to implement the County General Plan. They have been developed to encourage high quality development that strengthens the economic vitality of all areas of the County. The purpose of these guidelines is to create design recommendations and standards for review of projects that are easy to understand and will result in well-designed and sustainable projects that raise the overall design quality of development occurring within the County. They encourage active transportation and transit supportive development in appropriate locations and anticipate new types of opportunities where commercial and residential uses could be developed into new village centers that provide social and economic focus to the surrounding neighborhoods.

The Guidelines emphasize projects\(^1\) that contribute to the health of our residents and the beauty of our established communities within the unincorporated area. Further, they ensure that new development compliments the character of the surrounding area. In other words, the objective is to require new projects to contribute and enhance the existing and future surrounding community. This shall be done while accommodating the future vision of pedestrian friendliness, where pedestrians and bicyclists feel safe and comfortable, particularly in commercial and business districts. These guidelines inform development and redevelopment in ways that are environmentally conscious, economically sound, and which provide community-wide benefits. When these guidelines are properly applied to projects, we achieve quality design, while also improving the individual and community’s health, safety and livability.

These guidelines integrate development approaches to design and build healthy, sustainable, and inclusive neighborhoods. They promote a clean and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents. They integrate Urban Greening, which is a systems approach to plan, plant, care, and manage flora, structures and spaces, which lead to increased forest canopy, reduced storm water runoff, improved air and water quality, energy conservation, open space and ultimately, more sustainable communities.

The guidelines incorporate a broad spectrum of sustainability practices that include: 1) green building and construction which can facilitate sustainability by generating jobs, 2) increasing energy efficiency, water conservation, air quality and waste reduction, and 3) improving housing quality and the physical environment. Sustainable design guidelines promote use of solar, cool roofs, tree shading, green streets, urban greening, low impact development storm water features using River Friendly Landscaping, and more.

\(^1\) As used in this document, a project is defined as any proposed action that requires approval by the County and is subject to the County Zoning Code and these Design Guidelines.
Promoting active transportation, including walking and biking, along with improving access to transit, lowers household transportation costs, reduces greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, decreases traffic congestion and encourages development of jobs, housing, services and other amenities in close proximity to each other. Sustainable practices also accommodate the changing weather patterns and provide relief on the increasing hotter and drier days, while also capturing and infiltrating storm water from storm events. These sustainable practices contribute to building healthy communities. The most important part of building sustainable communities is creating neighborhoods that are healthy. That is why the County is calling out “Active Design” with this icon in the design guidelines.

Throughout the Guidelines, standards and policies that incorporate active transportation and contribute to a built environment that supports public health have been highlighted with the walking person icon. The purpose of this icon is to identify “Active Design.” Active Design shall be incorporated into all projects in order to reinforce the community’s and County’s goal to create a built environment that is healthy, sustainable, livable and promotes active transportation choices such as walking, bicycling, and accessing transit. There are many factors of the built environment that influence healthy choices and no single aspect of design can achieve this goal; however, by incorporating Active Design strategies into the built environment, physical activity and improved health can be achieved. More information about the synergies of the guidelines that support active design can be found in Appendix D.

The guidelines and standards outlined in the following sections have been based on national best practices in implementing design solutions and successful examples of guidelines from other jurisdictions. The Guidelines facilitate design review by helping applicants and County staff to identify major design issues and devise solutions early in the application process. In summary, the design guidelines are provided to:

1. Implement the objectives, policies and tools of the County General Plan and Housing Element;

2. Supplement and implement the contents of the County Zoning Code on matters of design and aesthetics;

3. Enhance, protect and maintain the value of property;

4. Enhance, maintain, and preserve community identity and quality of life;

5. Promote compatibility between new and existing development;

Project proponents should review the entire set of design guidelines prior to beginning the project’s design process.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

6. Promote a positive physical image for all types of development;

7. Promote a high quality of development that stimulates investment in and strengthening of the economic vitality of all areas of Sacramento County;

8. Improve community planning and design to promote healthy living and to balance integration of social, economic, and environmental concerns.

9. Utilize sustainable strategies in site design, building design, and landscaping;

10. Facilitate a clear and efficient design review process;

11. Provide guidance to the development community, architects/designers, property owners, and County staff; and

12. Provide for and maintain the health, safety, livability and welfare of all citizens of the County

1.2 APPLICATION

The Countywide Design Guidelines are a part of a structure of policy documents that guide development in Sacramento County. The Sacramento County General Plan defines the community vision and establishes a fundamental framework to guide decision-making about development, land use, resource management, public safety, public services, and general community well-being. Both the Sacramento County Zoning Code and Countywide Design Guidelines are implementing tools of the General Plan and Housing Element, and apply to all properties in unincorporated Sacramento County. The Zoning Code presents development regulations specifically applicable to new projects or substantial improvements to existing projects. The Guidelines are intended to supplement the Zoning Regulations with design criteria that supports and implements the goals and policies of the County. Design Guidelines adopted as part of Specific Plans and Master Plans generally supersede the Countywide Design Guidelines when they provide more robust direction.

When it has been determined that a project is subject to design review as outlined in Section 6.3.2.A of the County Zoning Code and elsewhere in these chapters, the design review process begins with either an application for one or more entitlement to the Office of Planning and Environmental Review (discretionary
projects), or can occur prior to building permit with a Design Review Application (non-discretionary projects). In either case, project proponents are encouraged to meet with the Design Review Administrator (DRA) for a pre-application conference and review of project context. This early review can inform the process and allows project proponents direct access to the DRA and associated design review process early on.

Once an application has been made, depending on whether it is a discretionary or non-discretionary project, the overall process could vary. For discretionary projects, design review will coincide with and be woven into the normal development process, which includes: review by the Project Review Committee (or PRC: a technical advisory-body that provides conditions of approval, review regarding technical requirements of projects, and/or troubleshooting various issues), environmental review, potential design review with input from the Design Review Advisory Committee (or DRAC: an advisory body made up of three members intended to make recommendations on a project’s overall design), and ultimately review by the appropriate hearing authority. The design review process for discretionary or non-discretionary projects is further defined as follows:

Discretionary projects are those projects that would require one or more entitlements or approvals, such as a rezone, conditional use permit or a special development permit. Prior to submittal, project applicants with discretionary projects are highly encouraged to meet with the Design Review Administrator (DRA) for a pre-application conference and context review. After the applicant submits their application, it is reviewed for consistency with the Design Review Guidelines by the DRA. During this review it is submitted to the Project Review Committee (PRC) for comment and review. Once PRC has been completed and initial review by the DRA is completed, the project is submitted for review before the Design Review Advisory Committee (DRAC). The DRA and DRAC prepare Design Review Guidelines conformance recommendations to be included in the project staff report to the reviewing authority. The reviewing authority may use the DRAC recommendations to apply conditions of approval to the project.

Non-discretionary projects are those projects that do not require a discretionary permit. These include projects that are consistent with the applicable zoning district in planned use and development standards and propose new construction, or exterior remodeling. Non-discretionary project applicants are highly encouraged to meet with the DRA in a pre-application conference to determine what is
expected of their project and to receive a preliminary determination of Design Review Guidelines conformance. The project’s Design Review Application should include required preliminary plans and a design review checklist. It is advisable that the design review process occur before the filing of a building permit application with the Building Permit Division. The project is reviewed approved by the DRA for conformance with the Design Review Guidelines, acting under the authority of the Planning Director. For major projects, review by the PRC may be required during the review and approval process. Design Review Approval is required before issuance of building permits.

The design review process rewards projects that meet the criteria outlined in these Guidelines. These projects will move faster through the process, requiring fewer review meetings. As noted, the design review process runs concurrently with the development review process and is not intended make the process lengthier unless the project does not meet the Guidelines.

The Design Review Guidelines operate at three levels of development: New Community Design, District Design, and Project Design. The New Community level of development is described in Section 7.0 and deals with comprehensive development of more than 50 acres. District level of development deals with comprehensive development areas containing multiple development sites. Project Design level of development deals with individual building design. At each of these levels of development elements of Sections 2.0; 3.0; 4.0; 5.0; and 6.0 are applicable to satisfy Design Review compliance.

1.3 ORGANIZATION

The Guidelines are organized in chapters according to major land use categories. Each chapter is organized into topic areas structured with a design principle, rationale, and guidelines and standards supporting each principle. Design guidelines reflect the County’s design objectives and are general rules to be incorporated into design solutions. A glossary of terms used within the document is included, as well as a summarized design review checklist to help track the overall success of a given project in meeting the intent of the guidelines, and various case studies. Accompanying drawings, illustrations and photographs are intended as examples to a range of design solutions. These examples should not be looked upon as the only design solution. Creativity and innovation in design is encouraged.
The primary goals of the Single-Family Guidelines are to ensure that new single-family development is a positive addition to the community and achieves the highest resident quality of life, whether in new or established neighborhoods. Single-family housing shall adhere to the applicable standards of the Zoning Code, unless alternatives can be justified by provisions of these Design Guidelines.

Single Family Design Review is based on three different areas of focus – Neighborhood Site Design, Building Design, and Landscaping/Site Elements.

Design Review Approval shall be applicable as follows:

1. For Subdivisions of 20 lots or more (new and previously approved tentative subdivision maps) and at a density of 8 dwelling units per net acre or less. Neighborhood Site Design Guidelines (Section 2.2) will be reviewed with the tentative subdivision map. Design Review of Building Design and Landscaping (Sections 2.3 and 2.4) is required, and may occur after the approval of the tentative map, but must occur prior to submittal for a building permit. Design Review of Building Design and Landscaping may be based on conceptual or illustrative drawings.

2. For Subdivisions at a density greater than of 8 dwelling units per net acre. Design review for Site Design, Building Design, and Landscaping (Sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4) is required concurrent with consideration of the tentative subdivision map.

3. For Subdivisions of less than 20 lots and at a density of 8 dwelling units per net acre or less, for custom lot subdivisions, and for tentative parcel maps. Neighborhood Site Design Guidelines (Section 2.2) will be reviewed with the tentative subdivision or parcel map. Design review for Building Design and Landscaping (Sections 2.3 and 2.4) may be required as a condition of approval in order to achieve General Plan objectives. The conditions of approval may specify the design objectives particular to the project (e.g. privacy to adjoining properties) to be evaluated prior to issuance of a building permit.
The three scenarios above are illustrated in the following matrix. The matrix also includes cases when Design Review is not applicable, unless as a condition of approval. Modular homes or homes manufactured off-site and built on-site shall also be subject to the standards applicable to single family residential development, including the Design Review process described in this section. Refer to Section 5.4.2.E of these guidelines related to cargo containers used as residential structures. Mobile or manufactured homes are also permitted in some single family residential districts and shall be subject to the use standards for mobile/manufactured homes and the development standards for mobile home subdivisions in the County Zoning Code.

### DESIGN REVIEW FOR SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS OR LOT DIVISION REQUESTS:

**KEY:**
- **B:** Design Review required prior to building permit submittal
- **M:** Design Review required with map approval
- **COA:** Design Review required only if condition of approval. Review is triggered prior to building permit submittal.
- **NR:** Design Review is not required.

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[1] If proposed residential development or other lot division request is in coordination with a rezone, the requirements for Design Review will be determined based on the proposed zoning designation.

[2] Building and landscape design proposed after a lot division within a non-single-family residential zoning district is approved, pursuant to Section 6.3.2.A, requires a Design Review regardless of Conditions of Approval.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

The process for using these design guidelines is to:

A. Review the Community Context / Neighborhood Compatibility Type (Section 2.1)
B. Respond to Neighborhood Site Design Standards (Section 2.2)
C. Apply the Building Design Standards (Section 2.3)
D. Apply the Landscape / Site Elements Design standards (Section 2.4)
E. Apply Active Design Principles as designated by the "图标 icon throughout Chapter 3.0

Design Review Submittals for Building Design shall include the following exhibits:

1. Conceptual Building Elevations of proposed homes, and any accessory structures, including elevations of all sides.
2. Illustrative Landscaping Plans for the front and side street yard areas, including irrigation plans. Landscaping Plans may be submitted concurrent with Water Conservation Plans.
3. Illustrative Fencing Details for the front and side street yard areas.
4. Landscaping and Fence Details for public areas.
5. Streetscape Drawings, showing a continuous portion of typical street frontage elevations and a three-dimensional streetscape view showing relationship to adjoining properties.

The County Design Review process is separate from any Homeowner Association architectural review process, and it does not take into account Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) that may be applicable to some neighborhoods.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

2.1 COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The County General Plan encourages infill of existing communities consistent with existing Community Plan and zoning designations, while striking a balance with the need to design new residential development that is compatible within the context of the project’s surroundings. The County General Plan and these Guidelines encourage continued investment in existing communities and recognize that new investment must often respond to market needs that may not be the same style and design as the existing neighborhood. These Guidelines seek design strategies to ensure new projects blend in with and complement their surroundings, and simultaneously enable property owners to develop at zoned densities. Innovation and creativity are encouraged to achieve highly livable neighborhoods.

An analysis of the appropriate community context within which a given project occurs is the first step in assessing appropriate design strategies for residential neighborhoods that meet the compatibility and livability goals of the Sacramento County General Plan.
2.2 Neighbohood Site Design

Design Principles
The land use planning for tentative maps involve decisions affecting street layouts, lot configurations, connectivity, and parks/green spaces. This section identifies design guidelines for creating livable communities and at the same time reducing potential land use conflicts.

Rationale
Subdivision design deals with neighborhood compatibility, the public and private realm interface and meeting the livability goals of the County General Plan at both the community scale and internal subdivision scale.

Good site design is an inherent part of good neighborhood design. Site Design addresses street and block patterns, lot configurations, a home’s orientation and massing, and the overall layout with regard to its lot. For projects subject to design review per Section 2 in existing neighborhoods, the site design should respect the existing context where preservation of this context is a community goal.

General Design Standards and Guidelines
• Each project that proposes to divide land should result in lots that are consistent with and well suited to the land use designations and policies set forth in the General Plan and in any adopted community plans, including both maps and text. Potential population densities of residential lots should not exceed the densities set forth in the General Plan or community plans, unless otherwise specified in the Zoning Code.

• In areas with topography, the design of the project should preserve natural contours where the natural topography is the predominant character of the area. To achieve this purpose, grading restrictions or building location restrictions may be placed on the final map.

• Where heritage and other healthy large canopy trees exist, steps should be taken to preserve and plan around them consistent with General Plan policies on tree preservation.

• Smaller lot sizes than that allowed in the underlying zoning district may be permitted so long as the average of all the lot sizes remain equal to or above the minimum zoned lot size.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

2.2.1 SUBDIVISION STREET AND BLOCK PATTERNS

Design Principles
Street and block patterns of new subdivisions should closely resemble the surrounding context in most cases, but poor design should not be repeated. Connections should be provided between new subdivisions and adjacent neighborhoods by streets as well as parks, open space systems and pedestrian/bike paths. Lot and block patterns should consider constraints such as topography and existing mature trees.

Rationale
Street and block patterns, and lot configurations are key contributors to the neighborhood fabric and character. Appropriate small-lot single-family subdivision design that fits the context and surrounding neighborhood helps maintain property values, increases the safety and security of all residents, promotes a “sense of place” and neighborly interaction, and improves mobility and quality of life for the community.

General Design Standards and Guideline
• Streets layout should reflect a street hierarchy consistent with the subdivisions location and internal needs. Streets shall be tree lined “complete streets” designed for pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular use consistent with the Improvement Standards for the street’s hierarchical designation. As separated sidewalks provide a safer and healthier environment for pedestrians, they are especially important where the residential street is a connection to schools, parks, or other civic amenities. The County Improvement Standards contain standards on separated and attached sidewalks.

• All street widths must meet County standards for both public and private road classifications, except where a Specific Plan or Master Plan provides for alternative street design. Alternatives to the street standards may be justified in infill situations due to topography, neighborhood compatibility or similar reasons.

• The circulation system should be logical, predictable, and designed to promote safety for all transportation modes, particularly pedestrians and bicyclists. Streets should connect to adjacent neighborhoods and provide direct access to schools, parks, community centers, and nearby retail for pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, transit and emergency vehicles.

• A grid or modified grid pattern to provide connectivity and walkability is the preferred street and block pattern. Modifications may be approved to match existing neighborhood context.
2.0 **Single-Family Design Guidelines**

- Where residential subdivisions are located adjacent to an open space preserve, street and block patterns should achieve visual and physical access to open space areas.

- Street patterns that create long uninterrupted sound walls should be avoided.

- Residential streets within the subdivision design should be slower and pedestrian-oriented. Incorporate traffic calming measures such as traffic circles, chokers, enhanced crosswalks, and narrower streets.

- Block lengths should be no more than 500 feet, especially for smaller lot developments (RD-5 and higher). For blocks that exceed 500 feet in length, mid-block paseos or pedestrian paths connecting to walking paths, bicycle lanes, schools and parks should be provided to ensure the walkability within the community. Larger lot subdivisions may have longer block lengths up to 750 feet.

- Street layout shall allow for adequate fire protection of all housing.

- Existing healthy mature trees should be preserved and incorporated into site design to add to the neighborhood character.

- Cul-de-sacs that side on to through streets or greenbelts should provide pedestrian access to connect to the adjacent through street. “Live-end” cul-de-sac design should be used to complement these areas and can include landscaping and benches.

- Access walkways and/or off-street trails should be provided to community destinations such as open spaces, parks and schools, and commercial centers from the neighborhood, to enhance the pedestrian and bike movement and safety.

- Each parcel of land should front on a public street or be served by a private road approved pursuant to the Zoning Code which is a component of an approved local street pattern. Lots with homes that back onto a street are only allowed where traffic volumes render lots with homes that front onto a street as unsafe.

- Gated communities are allowed when consistent with community goals.

- Blocks should be laid out in a pattern that enables individual lots to maximize solar access so that such features as solar panels and daylighting can be incorporated into the design of the home. Layout for solar access needs to be balanced with preservation of existing mature trees and planting of new trees for shade.
2.0 **Single-Family Design Guidelines**

- Where possible, residential streets should incorporate gently sloped swales or bio-retention areas that contain native vegetation to capture and treat stormwater. Green street practices and cool pavements shall be utilized whenever possible. Front yards, parkways, planter strips, and cul-de-sac islands are good candidates for these facilities.

- Tree planting provides many health and sustainability benefits while contributing to community design and should be designed into new neighborhoods. Tree shading will help keep neighborhoods cooler during seasonally warm days, improve air quality, conserve water and provide health benefits to the residents.

2.2.2 **Lot Size and Configurations**

**Design Principles**
Each project that proposes to divide land should result in lots that are consistent with and well suited to the land use designations and policies set forth in the General Plan and in any adopted community plans, including both maps and texts. Potential population densities of residential lots should not exceed the densities set forth in the General Plan or community plans, or unless otherwise specified in the Zoning Code.

**Rationale**
The size and configuration of building lots affects the community character and residential livability.

**General Design Standards and Guidelines**
- Each lot should maintain a relative consistency with the predominant neighborhood development character. Lots that are found to be significantly out of character, either in area, frontage, shape, or access provisions, may be denied if it is found that such character differences may result in detrimental impacts on adjacent properties.

- Lot frontage requirements, as set forth in the County Zoning Code, may be satisfied in the case of lots on a curved street, the rounded end of a cul-de-sac, or on a bulb corner if the resulting lot frontage results in a streetscape and pedestrian access that meets other requirements of these design guidelines.

- Refer to Zoning Code Section 5.4.2 for lot size and width standards.

*Existing mature trees should be preserved and incorporated into site design.*
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Different interior lot widths on the same block may be acceptable along the street to create visual diversity.

- Street corners are better suited for larger and wider lots with structures that reduce the appearance of bulk and mass along the streetscape.

- Significant grade changes between lots should be gradually stepped or terraced in order to preserve natural topography to keep with community character. Grading at the property line shall be in conformance with the County Improvement Standards, with deviations from the maximum grading approved by the Planning Commission.

- Lots that back onto an arterial roadway or are adjacent to a land use with a higher intensity non-residential zoning classification should incorporate landscaped buffer areas and deeper rear yards to mitigate potential noise, air quality, aesthetics, and land use compatibility impacts.
2.2.3 Subdivision Entry Treatments

Design Principles
Entry features should be well thought out as to the purpose they are intended to serve and provide for visitors and residents of the particular neighborhood. Entrances to individual neighborhood segments should help establish a hierarchy to circulation within the larger development, and provide individual identity for each segment while adhering to an overarching theme for the community. Signage, monumentation and landscaping also provide individual identity and branding for neighborhoods. These features provide a distinctive “gateway” to neighborhoods that can identify the unique characteristics of the area, help to create a “sense of place” and identity, while slowing traffic and enhancing the pedestrian experience.

Rationale
Entry features can establish a hierarchy to circulation that helps orient visitors and residents to communities and neighborhoods.
General Design Standards and Guidelines

- Common lots intended for entry features should include sufficient space to accommodate an organized landscape theme and other improvements such as theme walls, signage, water features, public art, pedestrian amenities such as seating or enhanced walkways/trellis features, and lighting.

- Entry features should be reflective and proportional to the size of the project.

- Entry features should be treated with complementary materials, colors, and forms to contribute to a consistent and recognizable community character.

- Entry signs should include the name of the community and other appropriate identifiers.

- Entry features should be designed to establish a hierarchy to the overall circulation within the larger development.

- Vertical elements should be used to define each entry by making them clearly visible.

- Lighting should be energy efficient and integrated into entry signage and monumentation elements.

- Facilitation of ongoing maintenance of entry features should be considered when designing these spaces.

- Entry walls should include a trim cap and should incorporate pillars, openings, or recesses/changes in direction intermittently to avoid long, uninterrupted flat wall planes.

- Landscaping shall be included adjacent to a wall when open to public view and shall be used to soften and screen the hard edge appearance of the wall, consistent with Zoning Code requirements.

- Landscape trees, plants and materials should represent local vegetation and natural materials, and should be drought-tolerant (Refer to Table 2.3 and Figure 2.9 for a list of suggested native plant species).
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

• Entry monument walls, signage, and landscaping must comply with the required sight lines at corners for vehicles and pedestrians as set forth in the County Improvement Standards.

• Gated subdivisions shall have a controlled pedestrian access gate in addition to the vehicle entry gate. The vehicle entry and any gatehouse structure shall be located a sufficient distance from the cross street to accommodate vehicle stacking and provide adequate space for vehicle turn-around.

• Enhanced pavement is encouraged at intersections and at transitions between the public and private areas, and should reflect circulation needs and safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

• Use of cool pavement and permeable materials is recommended, especially in pedestrian areas, walkways, driveways, patios, plazas, etc.

2.3 BUILDING DESIGN

Building design addresses the built form of the home, along with its detailing. For projects subject to design review per Section 2, new homes in existing neighborhoods should respect the architectural style of established homes on the block.

For projects subject to design review per Section 2, new homes in existing neighborhoods may continue the trend of diversity in the existing neighborhood by bringing fresh new styles while still respecting the overall scale of the neighborhood.

Homes in new subdivisions shall have design variety but utilize a consistent design vocabulary to provide a sense of a unified neighborhood.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

2.3.1 BUILDING SETBACKS AND ORIENTATION

Design Principles
Setbacks of single-family residential buildings should be compatible with the character and setback of the homes along the street and adjacent blocks. Single-family buildings should address the streetscape by creating an interactive relationship with the public streets, sidewalks and open spaces; thereby promoting a sense of community and safety. Variable setbacks to create interest and creativity are encouraged.

Rationale
Building setbacks and orientation help establish the continuity and character of a neighborhood and help protect the privacy of neighbors. Appropriate setbacks provide a transition between public and private areas, allow for social interaction, provide functional spaces for outdoor activities, allow for light, fresh air circulation within buildings, and provide spaces for landscaping, trees, ground cover, and shrubs.

General Design Standards and Guidelines
- For single-family subdivisions, front yard setbacks along a street may vary by up to 25 percent from the required setback to create interest, but should contribute to the visual continuity of the block. Garage setbacks need to maintain a minimum 19-foot setback. Greater deviations would require a Special Development Permit.
- For projects subject to design review per Section 2, the front setback of new homes within an existing block should generally be an average of the setbacks of the other homes on the block.
- For projects subject to design review per Section 2, new structures in existing neighborhoods should reinforce the existing rhythm of building widths and side setbacks.
- Homes should be oriented toward adjacent public streets by providing features such as entryways, windows, porches, stoops, and balconies along street frontages.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

where views are generally not obstructed. Active spaces oriented to the street encourages social interaction by providing for access, surveillance, engagement with passers-by, and control over the public realm, increasing safety and security for the users (Figure 2.3).

• Solar access for daylighting and solar panels should be considered when orienting buildings. Glazing should be located so as to maximize energy efficiency.

• Placement of windows should also consider the cooling benefits of Sacramento’s delta breezes.

• Vary the design and elevation of front porches to accommodate outdoor furniture and active uses by occupants while maintaining private yard areas

• Horizontal sliding doors on main entries are highly discouraged.

2.3.2 BUILDING SCALE AND MASSING

Design Principles
A single-family residential project should be compatible with the overall scale and mass of adjacent neighborhoods. Small-lot single-family housing should conform to applicable design guidelines in the Multi Family Design Guidelines 3.0. If projects are subject to design review per Section 2, new homes in existing neighborhoods should respect the overall scale and mass of other homes in the neighborhood.

Rationale
Scale and mass are important characteristics of buildings within single-family neighborhoods. For projects subject to design review per Section 2, new homes in existing neighborhoods and additions to existing homes should respect earlier, established building forms by minimizing the appearance of bulk and mass through site layout and architectural design. Homes in new subdivisions should be part of an overall consistent scale and mass to create a sense of unity to their neighborhood.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

The facade of this home has been broken down into smaller components to reduce the appearance of mass.

General Design Standards and Guidelines

- For single-family subdivisions, provide variation in the streetscape with different heights, setbacks, and roof shapes of buildings.
- To maintain a compatible scale and massing of streetscape, provide that the rhythm, size, and proportions of openings (windows, doors) be compatible with each other.
- The mass of a larger structure should be broken down into smaller components that are similar in scale to other buildings in the neighborhood.
- Reduce the appearance of mass of the upper stories on two and three story homes.
- Facades should be articulated to break up the surface, add interest, and reduce the appearance of mass.
- Roof style and articulation should be compatible and in context with that of the subdivision or the existing neighborhood.

2.3.3 DESIGN FOR PRIVACY

Design Principles

For projects subject to design review per Section 2.0, ensure that new single-family residential buildings in existing neighborhoods or additions in existing neighborhoods and those in new residential subdivisions are designed and constructed to protect the privacy of adjacent residential properties. This principle recognizes that adjacent residential properties have the ability to construct two-story structures consistent with zoning standards.

Rationale

Building height, the placement of windows and entries, setbacks, and landscaping all contribute to the level of privacy between adjacent properties. New two-story buildings with windows directly facing an adjacent residential home and private yard may adversely affect the privacy of adjacent units and shall be avoided.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

General Design Standards and Guidelines
- For projects subject to design review per Section 2.0, new two-story residential buildings directly adjacent to one-story residential buildings, should respect the privacy of adjacent one-story buildings (Figure 2.4).

- The direct line-of-sight between dwelling units, specifically bedrooms and bathrooms, should be avoided by orienting windows, balconies, and entryways so they do not directly face into adjacent property windows or private open space.

- Landscaping should be used as screening to enhance residential privacy.

2.3.4 ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Design Principles
For projects subject to design review per Section 2.0, building design should respect, enhance, and contribute positively to the predominant characteristic developments in the neighborhood. New homes in existing neighborhoods should be designed in a cohesive architectural style that complements the best examples of existing residential development on the block. If there is a mixture of styles on the block, then the design of infill construction may be more flexibly interpreted.

Rationale
Quality in detail and design contributes positively to the neighborhood. The use of cohesive, but different architectural “styles” and materials is intended to add variety to the buildings as is often found in neighborhoods that have evolved over time.

General Design Standards and Guidelines
- For single-family subdivisions, the building styles along the same street should be complementary and coordinated yet diverse. Variation of architectural styles along the same street is appropriate if the overall massing, form and setbacks of the homes is compatible.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Production home development projects should provide a minimum of four different housing product types.
- New stylistic interpretations of traditional architecture are encouraged, but fundamental design principles such as proportions, scale, shapes and rhythm shall be utilized.
- Architectural features and detailing should be proportional to the scale of the home, as well as to other homes of a similar architectural style in the surroundings.
- Individual elements of a structure should be consistent with that structure’s overall design or style.
- No building facade shall consist of an unarticulated blank wall or unbroken series of garage doors.
- The structure should have appropriate finishes on all sides to provide continuity. Materials should appear substantial and integral to the structure; and shall be durable so as not to readily succumb to weathering and aging. Material changes not accompanied by changes in plane appear “tacked-on” and are strongly discouraged.
- For most architectural styles, exterior colors should be in context or compatible with those in its neighborhood.
- Corner lots should present attractive facades to both adjoining streets through elements such as wrap-around porches, bays, entries, window treatments, and use of alternative materials such as brick and stone.
- Provide windows with views onto outdoor spaces for additional security and visual interest. Active uses, such as kitchens and living rooms, are encouraged to the front of the building for more “eyes on the street.”
- Energy conservation strategies should be employed including window shading devices, selection of colors to reduce heat gain, cool roofs, whole house energy systems, and use of high-quality insulation materials and radiant barriers to reduce energy consumption (especially the use of air conditioning during hot summer months), to the greatest extent possible.
- Inclusion of rain gardens and rain barrels to capture roof runoff is highly recommended.
- Use of recycled paint and other quality recycled materials is encouraged.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

2.3.5 ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

Design Principles
For projects subject to design review per Section 2.0, buildings should be well articulated through building elements such as the roof, entryway, windows, porches, balconies and decorative trim, which should be stylistically cohesive and proportional to the overall structure. Color, materials, and texture should convey a high-quality appearance and shall be complementary to the surrounding area. Products shall be of a quality that is durable and does not readily show signs of weathering and aging.

Rationale
Use of stylistically cohesive, character defining elements enhances visual compatibility and attractiveness of the building. Use of appropriate details maintains the authenticity of the building style, and can help to create a well-articulated building facade and scale.

2.3.5.a. ELEVATIONS AND FACADES

General Design Standards and Guidelines
• Attractive, well-articulated building facades should be created. Articulation can be achieved with windows, setbacks, entries, porches, and/or balconies. All elevations should be given design treatment with particular emphasis on those seen from the street or public way.

Figure 2.5: Streetscape diversity is achieved through different models and architectural treatments.
All elevations should be treated with the same high-quality details as the front of the house.

• Variety in use of materials is desirable. For projects in existing neighborhoods subject to design review per Section 2.0, the materials should complement existing neighborhood context.

• No building facade shall consist of an unarticulated blank wall or an unbroken series of garage doors.

• The structure should have appropriate finishes on all sides to provide continuity. Materials should appear substantial and integral to the structure; and shall be durable so as not to readily succumb to weathering and aging. Material changes not accompanied by changes in plane appear “tacked-on” and are strongly discouraged.

• For projects subject to design review per Section 2.0 and most architectural styles, exterior colors should be in context or compatible with those in its neighborhood.

• Corner lots should present attractive facades to both adjoining streets through elements such as wrap-around porches, bays, entries, window treatments, and use of alternative materials such as brick and stone.

• Provide windows with views onto outdoor spaces for additional security and visual interest. Active uses, such as kitchens and living rooms, are encouraged to the front of the building for more “eyes on the street.”

• Energy conservation strategies should be employed including window shading devices, selection of colors to reduce heat gain, cool roofs, whole house energy systems, and use of high-quality insulation materials and radiant barriers to reduce energy consumption (especially the use of air conditioning during hot summer months), to the greatest extent possible.

• Inclusion of rain gardens and rain barrels to capture roof runoff is highly recommended.

• Use of recycled paint and other quality recycled materials is encouraged.
2.0 Single-Family Design Guidelines

2.3.5.b. Roof Styles

General Design Standards and Guidelines

- Roof forms should be an integral part of the architectural design of the building. There should be a consistent relationship of slopes and pitches used on each building.

- For projects subject to design review per Section 2.0, the design of a roof on new homes in existing neighborhoods should fit in with designs of roofs on homes in the established neighborhood.

- For projects subject to design review per Section 2.0, new homes in existing neighborhoods should respect the primary roof pitch of the majority of existing homes on the block to allow for coherence of design, while displaying variety in details such as dormers and gable orientation.

- Flat roofs should be used only if it can be demonstrated that they fit in the overall design character of the neighborhood.

- Appropriate roof overhangs are encouraged to promote window shading and building longevity when appropriate to the architectural design of the home.

- Photovoltaic solar panels or solar shingles such as “solar slate” are encouraged to reduce the home’s use of energy from the grid.

- Homeowners are encouraged to consider roofing options that include recycled content.

- The use of “cool roof” options, including lighter colored, high albedo coatings and other “cool roofing” materials and applications are encouraged to achieve energy efficiency inside homes and reduce the heat island effect.

- The use of rooftop solar or wind turbine installations (where allowable) should be integrated into the overall home image and be non-obtrusive on the neighborhood imagery.

- Installation of radiant heat barriers and insulation in attic and rafters is encouraged to increase energy efficiency and interior livability.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

2.3.5.c. ENTRY FEATURES

General Design Standards and Guidelines

• Entry features are encouraged on all new homes.

• Entry features should be built to a minimum depth of six (6) feet; however, shallower entry features will be considered with justification.

• The scale and style of porch, entry and portico elements should be consistent with the scale and style of the home and incorporate CPTED principles.

• Porch columns and railings should be constructed of high-quality materials that complement the materials used in the overall exterior of the home.

Raised porch and portico element with stone veneer accent.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

2.3.5.d. DOORS

General Design Standards and Guidelines

- Exterior doors should be constructed of appropriate materials that complement the style of the home and provide security to the occupants.

- Exterior doors should include raised panels, glass, or some other form of detailing and articulation.

- Horizontal sliding doors on main entries are highly discouraged.

2.3.5.e. WINDOWS

General Design Standards and Guidelines

- Windows should be designed to complement the style of the home.

- Accent features such as sills, shutters, and canopies should be used at windows. Recessed windows should also be used where appropriate.

- A consistent window treatment should be used on all sides of the building.

- Reflective or tinted glass and opaque plastic skylights are discouraged.

- Provide overhangs or other shading devices, and select glazing that provides the greatest reduction in solar heat gain during the summer, when the sun is high overhead.

- Major glazing areas should generally face south to collect solar heat during the winter.

- Incorporate daylighting strategies such as: providing light shelves, glare control, courtyards, solar-tubes and skylights.

- Placement of windows should also consider the cooling benefits of Sacramento’s Delta breezes.
2.3.5.f. SIDING

**General Design Standards and Guidelines**
- For projects subject to design review per Section 2, use durable siding consistent with the style and character of the home. Siding materials for new homes in existing neighborhoods should complement the siding materials used on other homes on the block.
- Use high quality stucco application and appearance. The use of two materials, with one employed as wainscoting, can often add to the interest of the home, and lend a durable appearance.
- Highly reflective materials such as metals or glass should be avoided.
- Non-durable materials such as plastic, tin, and vinyl should be avoided.
- The color, texture, and bonding pattern of brick should be similar to established uses of brick in the neighborhood.

Examples of recommended building materials

- Brick
- Field ledge stone
- Stacked stone
- Stucco
- Horizontal siding
- Shingle siding
2.3.5.g. Lighting and Addresses

**General Design Standards and Guidelines**

- Exterior lighting contributes to the security of the home and should be pedestrian-oriented. Lighting fixtures shall provide adequate illumination of the front entry and building addresses so that both are clearly visible from the street, following CPTED guidelines. Recessed entryways should be clearly lit.

- The preferred location to display the address is affixed to the front of the home, clearly visible from the street.

- Exterior lighting should minimize light pollution caused by glare or spillage onto neighboring properties.

- In addition to the standards set forth in this section and 2.4.1 site and street lighting shall comply with Section 5 (Street Light Design) of the Sacramento County Improvement Standards.

- Energy efficient lighting strategies, including placing lights on timers or sensors, should be applied.

- Nighttime pollution of the sky is discouraged by following illumination levels required for safety per Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA).

*Lighting fixtures should be of high quality, and recessed entryways clearly lit.*
2.3.6 Garages

Design Principle
The garage should be placed in a way that minimizes its prominence on the public street. A range of different placement options is encouraged within the same block to create visual interest along the street. Garages on alleys are encouraged.

Rationale
De-emphasizing the appearance of the garage from the public street or open space and place higher emphasis on the active spaces such as the front entryway and porch enhances the streetscape and the pedestrian experience.

Design Guidelines
- Varied planes and setbacks should be used for three or more adjacent garage doors.
- A variety of garage placements should be created on the same block in order to de-emphasize garage doors and avoid garages from dominating the streetscape and the front of the house. Recessed garages, and garages placed at the side or rear of the home, are encouraged.
- Reduce the amount of expansive side-by-side concrete driveways by alternating the location of the garage so that two garages are not located side-by-side in single family developments, when feasible to do so.

Figure 2.6: Various garage and driveway orientation examples
2.4 LANDSCAPING / SITE ELEMENTS

The landscaping of a neighborhood has a major impact on establishing its character, sense of place, property values and livability. The landscaping of both the public and private spaces along a street contribute to how a neighborhood feels and how the street is used by its residents. People will walk more on safe and attractive tree lined streets. The trees’ natural canopies will also keep neighborhoods cooler during Sacramento’s seasonally hot days. Use of river friendly/drought-tolerant landscaping conserves water while remaining attractive year round. Site elements such as walls, fencing, sideyards, utilities, and storage enclosures, are an important ingredient of these landscapes and must be well designed as an integral part of the overall neighborhood. Placement of street furniture or a small corner plaza in key parts of the streetscape provides elements of public spaces to be enjoyed.

2.4.1 PLANTING AND LANDSCAPING

Design Principle
Residential subdivisions shall have a coherent overall landscape strategy including street trees as part of a “complete streets” design. Large common areas in the public realm should be considered for special landscape design treatment with public art as a consideration. Additionally, on-going maintenance of landscapes is essential to ensure long term neighborhood sustainability and success.

Individual residential lots should be designed to maximize opportunities for usable, attractive, and well-landscaped open spaces. Landscaping should complement the architectural design. The design and placement of driveways and walkways should allow for a maximum amount of “meaningful” landscaping to be incorporated into the site design. A variety of plantings should be selected and provided appropriately for their intended use. Special consideration should be given to creating environmental benefits, such as providing shade, using native drought tolerant planting, treating and/or reducing stormwater runoff, and providing habitat for the local species. All landscaping plans shall be coordinated with requirements of the Water Conservation Ordinance.
Planter strip along a local residential road is planted with native vegetation and utilized as a stormwater treatment device.

2.0 Single-Family Design Guidelines

Rationale
Treatment of the landscape in the public and private areas is a major component of neighborhood creation, character, and compatibility. Landscaping can be used as a strong complement to buildings and to make a positive contribution to the aesthetics and function of the specific lot, building, and area. Landscaping of the individual lot can also provide for a smooth transition between the public and the private area and improve the safety along the streets. Landscaping and landscape maintenance are critical components of any successful residential project and shall be considered an essential part of the design and construction process, particularly for single-family residential developments.

2.4.1.a. Planting

Design Guidelines
- Incorporate trees, shrubs, plants, groundcover, and grass areas within single-family development projects to create a well-designed landscaped environment for residents and those viewing from public areas.

- Front yard areas should be designed using landscape elements pertaining to form, horizontal and vertical lines, hardscape and softscape, and ornate qualities that are compatible to the primary structure.

- Visual openness should be maintained in front yards to provide for visual surveillance of the street and sidewalks.

- Visual focal points such as sculpture and public art are strongly encouraged to be integrated into subdivision common area landscaping.

- To the extent feasible, existing mature trees and shrubs that represent existing significant landscaping shall be preserved.

- All plants should be given enough space to grow to their natural size.

- Provide street trees in the front and side street yards of residential lots, consistent with Section 5.2.4.C of the Zoning Code.
2.0 **Single-Family Design Guidelines**

- Air conditioning/mechanical equipment and trash enclosures should be placed out of view from the public right-of-way and should be screened with landscaping. Shading air conditioning equipment helps conserve energy.

- Unpaved areas should be planted with irrigated plant materials, and mulched where landscaping would be challenging to minimize weed growth and improve appearance.

- For subdivisions, planting strips located between the sidewalk and street should be at a minimum six (6) feet wide to allow for a mature tree to grow. Planting strips less than six (6) feet wide must be consistent with the improvement standards and still provide for the planting of smaller canopy trees.

- Provide sidewalk shading with the planting of street trees in the public realm, consistent with the County Improvement Standards.

- For subdivisions, marked entries should incorporate landscaped open space areas. Enhanced parkways and tree lined medians can create an attractive entrance and are encouraged.

- Various water conservation measures and systems to capture and treat stormwater should be employed through landscaping to the extent feasible, in accordance with the Water Conservation Ordinance and the River Friendly Landscape Design Toolkit.

- Primary selection of trees and plant species should be from the California native palette and other drought tolerant species. Invasive species are strongly discouraged (Refer to Table 2.3 for a list of suggested native plants selection).

- Hydrozoning-grouping plants by water needs for irrigation water efficiency should be implemented.

- Low water use groundcovers or plants should be planted. Use of high input water consuming decorative lawns is discouraged.

- Deciduous trees and shrubs that shade the west and south sides of the home are...
2.0 **Single-Family Design Guidelines**

- Encouraged to minimize solar heat gain of the building.

- Shade trees should be strategically planted to shade pavement areas and air conditioners.

- Trees that become diseased, die or require removal, should be replaced in order to sustain the tree canopy and benefits provided by the landscape palette.

- Bare soils should be planted or mulched with bark, stone, or other suitable materials to avoid unnecessary runoff.

- Bio-retention areas or “rain gardens” are encouraged in the front and rear yard, where feasible.

- Utilize the River Friendly Landscape Design Toolkit for the new California landscape.

- Reduce yard waste by utilizing River-Friendly landscaping practices such as carefully selecting the right size plants for the yard, mulching, and providing for composting.

- For new subdivisions, street-side landscaping areas should be depressed and planted with native vegetation. Open curbs or curb cuts should be provided to allow for stormwater collection into these areas for filtration/infiltration.

- Garden or raised beds for growing vegetables are encouraged.

- Use of known high allergen plantings is discouraged.
### TABLE 2.2: INVASIVE PLANTS AND RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVES
(Source: River-Friendly Landscape Guidelines, Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LATIN NAME</th>
<th>COMMON NAME</th>
<th>NON-INVASIVE ALTERNATIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cortaderia selloana</td>
<td>Pampasgrass</td>
<td><em>Leymus condensatus</em> (Giant wildrye ‘Canyon Prince’) or <em>Muhlenbergia rigens</em> (Deergrass)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. jubata</td>
<td>Jumbagras, Jubatagras</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genista monspessulana</td>
<td>Scotch Broom</td>
<td>Heteromeles arbutifolia (Toyon) or <em>Ribes aureum</em> (Golden Currant) or <em>Salvia clevelandii</em> (Cleveland Sage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. striatus</td>
<td>Portuguese Broom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spartiun junceum</td>
<td>French Broom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sesbania punicea</td>
<td>Spanish Broom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genista monspessulana</td>
<td>Scarlet Wisteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</td>
<td>Red Gum Eucalptus</td>
<td>Populus fremontii (Fremont Cottonwood) or <em>Quercus lobata</em> (Valley oak)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. globulus</td>
<td>Blue Gum Eucalyptus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamarisk species</td>
<td>Saltcedar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sapium sebiferum</td>
<td>Chinese Tallowtree</td>
<td>Cercis canadensis, <em>C. occidentalis</em> (Eastern Redbud, Western Redbud)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedera canariensis</td>
<td>Algerian Ivy</td>
<td>Achillea millefolium (Common Yarrow) or <em>Ceanothus species</em> (California Wild Lilac) or <em>Heuchera maxima</em> and hybrids Giant Alumroot/Coral Bells)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. helix</td>
<td>English Ivy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. hibernica</td>
<td>Irish Ivy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinca major</td>
<td>Big Periwinkle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennisetum setaceum</td>
<td>Fountaingrass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sacramento Countywide Design Guidelines**

2-30
California Native and Drought-Tolerant Low Water-Use Plants

Nandina domestica
Heavenly Bamboo
Harbour Dwarf

Chitalpa X tashkentensis
Chitalpa Pink Dawn

Leucophyllum zygophyllum
Cimarron Blue Ranger

Perovskia x atriplicifolia
Lacey Blue Russian Sage

Rhamnus californica Eve
Case Compact Coffeeberry

Salvia clevelandii
Winifred Gilman Blue Sage

Salvia
Bee’s Bliss Creeping Sage

Baccharis pilularis
Twin Peaks #2 Ground Cover Baccharis

Ceanothus maritimus
Violet maritime ceanothus
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

2.4.1.b. Irrigation

Design Guidelines
• An automatic irrigation system that includes a controller with weather station, rain shut-off valves and sensors shall be installed and properly programmed in the front yard to provide consistent coverage of all planted areas consistent with the Water Conservation Ordinance. A home on a corner lot should have an automatic irrigation system that covers the yard fronting both streets.

• Turf and groundcover are more effectively irrigated with a conventional spray system. Head-to-head spray coverage is recommended. Avoid overspray onto sidewalks and adjacent properties.

• A drip irrigation system is recommended for vegetable beds, shrubs and trees to provide deeper, more even watering. Drip irrigation also permits greater water conservation than a conventional spray system.

• Irrigation controls must be screened from view by landscaping or other attractive site materials.

• Installation of rainbarrels, as an additional irrigation source, is highly encouraged.

Drip irrigation provides deeper watering and permits greater water conservation.
Figure 2.8: Single-Family Example #1 with Water-Conserving Landscape

WATER - CONSERVING LANDSCAPING

- **Existing Brick Planter**
- **Cimarron Blue Ranger** (Leucophyllum zygophyllum 'Cimarron')
- **Jerusalem Sage** (Phlomis fruticosa)
- **Lacey Blue Russian Sage** (Perovskia x atriplicifolia 'Lacecap Blue')
- **Bee's Bliss Creeping Sage** (Salvia 'Bee’s Bliss')

Eve Case Compact Coffeeberry (Rhamnus californica 'Eve Case')

Heavenly Bamboo Harbour Dwarf (Nandina domestica 'Harbour Dwarf')

Winifred Gilman Blue Sage (Salvia clevelandii 'Winifred Gilman')

Chitalpa Pink Dawn (Chitalpa x tashkentensis ‘Pink Dawn’)

Violet maritime ceanothus (Ceanothus maritimus 'Valley Violet')

Twin Peaks #2 Ground Cover Baccharis (Baccharis pilularis 'Twin Peaks #2')

Landscape Liaisons
PO Box 218
Cool, CA 95614
(530) 887-9887

“Walk-On” Wood Mulch
On Soil Surfaces in All Planting Areas
2 to 3 inches Thick
2.0  **Single-Family Design Guidelines**

**Figure 2.9:** Single-Family Example #2 with Water-Conserving Landscape
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

WATER - CONSERVING LANDSCAPING

Figure 2.10: Single-Family Example #3 with Water-Conserving Landscape

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(530) 887-9087

Sacramento Countywide Design Guidelines

2-35
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

2.4.1.c. PAVING AND HARDSCAPE SURFACES

Design Guidelines

• The paving materials selected should contribute to the overall appearance of the home.

• Alternative paving surfaces, such as concrete pavers, brick, or stone are encouraged for driveway and walkway surfaces to reduce the appearance or large, paved areas. Use of pervious paving materials is encouraged.

• Alternative driveway and paving treatments (such as Ribbon or Hollywood driveways) are common in older neighborhoods and can provide guidance for new homes in existing neighborhoods for those projects subject to design review, per Section 2. Ribbon driveways are made up of two parallel strips of paving, with a strip of grass or pervious pavers between the paving strips to allow the rain water to soak in. This type of design minimizes impervious surfaces by only using conventional pavement on the area where a vehicle will be driving or parking, and not the surfaces between the wheels.

• Impervious surfaces should be minimized to the greatest extent possible to reduce stormwater runoff and urban heat island effect. Alternative paving surfaces such as permeable paver blocks and permeable concrete should be considered for driveways, walkways, and patios.

• Porous streets and sidewalks that allow stormwater to seep into the ground and adjacent drainage swales are recommended.

• Utilize cool pavement whenever possible to reduce urban heat island impacts.

• Integrate a variety of paving/hardscape treatments to reduce runoff and obtain the greatest benefits in cooling, groundwater infiltration and aesthetics.
2.4.2 Parks, Open Space and Drainage/Flood Facilities

Design Guidelines

- Parks and open space should be integrated into neighborhoods to encourage outdoor recreation and preserve natural habitats. Size, type and location shall be sized and located as to support the community master plan goals.

- Parks and open space should be strategically located in residential areas and be accessible via roadways, transit routes, and off-road pedestrian and bicycle trails and paseos (walkways) wherever possible.

- Parks and open space areas should be used as methods to connect communities and neighborhoods and provide alternative modes of travel via sidewalks and trails.

- Open space areas could be used to delineate community or neighborhood boundaries.

- Neighborhood parks are encouraged to be centers of neighborhood activity and could be combined with schools, community recreation centers, libraries and other civic uses.

- Parks and open space areas should include linear parkways with off-street trails integrated with the transportation system. Public Safety is a high priority and CPTED principles should be applied to the design of off-street trails.

- Flood protection and drainage facilities shall be designed to provide multiple public benefits wherever possible. Facilities shall include multi-purpose improvements consisting of recreation, the environment, storm water runoff, water reclamation, infiltration, groundwater recharge, flood control, etc. Attractive land use basins, such as parks (in addition to Quimby land dedication requirements) or parkways with trails that also convey water to water quality basins or similar facilities and provide some water quality treatment are examples of desired multiple public benefit facilities.

- Open space should be connected to provide habitat corridors through urban environments.
2.4.3 Walls and Fences

**Design Principle**
Fencing must be of high-quality and durable materials that will enhance the overall character of the home and contribute to the positive appearance of the neighborhood.

**Rationale**
Well selected fencing adds to the overall character of the neighborhood while providing for privacy, security, and also visual surveillance of the public realm.

**Design Guidelines**
- Fencing shall be located and constructed in conformance with the Zoning Code, Title III, Chapter 1, Article 5 “Regulations Pertaining to Walls and Fences.”
- Fencing must allow unobstructed visibility of the front entrance, and in the case of homes on corner lots, the front and any side entrances.
- The style, materials, and color of the fencing should complement the style, materials, and color of the home.
- High-quality materials, including wood, metal, stucco, and some forms of vinyl fencing, are acceptable fencing materials.
- Chain link fencing is highly discouraged for use as a front yard feature.
- Front yard fencing for new homes in existing neighborhoods is discouraged on blocks where the majority of the homes do not have front yard fencing.
- Landscaping shall be included as part of the design for any fence or wall and should be used to soften and screen large masses of blank walls.
- When fencing is proposed, a combination walls and fences using decorative fence elements such as tubular steel is preferred. Solid block walls shall use decorative block, pilasters and capping where visible to the public, consistent with the Zoning Code.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Landscaping shall be included adjacent to a wall when open to public view and should be used to soften and screen the hard edge appearance of the wall, consistent with the Zoning Code.

- Use of materials that are consistent with the style of the home is encouraged.

2.4.4 UTILITIES AND STORAGE

Design Principle
The visibility of utilities and storage facilities should be minimized by placing them at the side or rear of the home and screening them from view from the public street or open space.

Rationale
Utilities and service features are less attractive but necessary parts of a home. By placing these features away from public view and screening them, using fences and landscaping, the aesthetics of the neighborhood can be improved.

Design Guidelines
- Trash receptacles should be placed in the side or rear yard and adequately screened by landscaping or side yard fence. Trash areas should be designed to accommodate recycle bins. If trash receptacles are to be stored in the garage the garage must be able to allow user access to them.

- Storage sheds should be located in the rear yard and shall comply with setback requirements. Placement in the side yard is acceptable if the shed is adequately screened by landscaping or a side yard fence, when proposed with the initial home construction.

- Accessory structures should be similar in character and materials to the main building, but subordinate in massing, scale, and height when proposed with initial home construction.

- Antennae should be mounted at the rear of the home. Satellite dishes should be mounted on the home to minimize their visibility.

- Heating and cooling units should not be roof-mounted or placed at the front of the home. Heating and cooling units should be placed in the attic or at the side or rear of the home and screened by a side yard fence or landscaping. Solar panels do not need to be screened.
2.0 SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Wherever possible utilities should be undergrounded.
- Where feasible, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units should be placed on the north side of the primary structure or garage (if not the street side) to shade the units and minimize energy consumption.
- All new HVAC equipment shall meet SMUD's latest guidelines for energy efficiency.
- Installation of building integrated solar panels and micro wind-turbines on the roof are encouraged and not precluded by any of the guidelines in this document.
- All new homes are subject to the State of California’s Building requirements. Efforts should be made to advance energy reductions and enhance conservation efforts to achieve the zero-net energy 2020 goals for new homes.
- Home electric vehicle chargers are encouraged.
- Plumbing systems that provide outdoor plumbing connection for use in greywater irrigation are encouraged, consistent with health requirements.
- Refer to the commercial design guidelines Section 4.4.6 for guidelines for wireless communication facilities.
The purpose of this chapter is to provide planning and design guidelines for multifamily development that supports those goals and objectives of the County General Plan and Housing Element, providing for residential development that is a positive addition to providing healthy and sustainable communities and resident quality of life.

The multifamily design guidelines and standards apply to all residential projects of eight dwelling units per acre and greater. This wide range of attached and detached housing products, include apartments, townhomes, and small lot single-family projects. The small-lot single-family guidelines are supplemented by the standards in Chapter 2.0. Modular homes, homes manufactured off-site and built on-site as multifamily residential developments, shall also be subject to the Zoning Code standards and the design guidelines for multifamily residential development in this chapter. Refer also to Section 5.4.2.E of these design guidelines for guidelines for cargo containers used as residential structures. Mobile or manufactured homes are also permitted in most multifamily residential districts and shall be subject to the use standards for mobile/manufactured homes and the development standards for mobile home subdivisions in the County Zoning Code.

A. The process for using these design guidelines is to:
B. Determine the Community Context and Housing Category Type (Section 3.1)
C. Respond to Site Design standards (Section 3.2)
D. Apply the Building Design standards (Section 3.3)
E. Apply the Landscape/Site Elements Design standards (Section 3.4)
F. Apply Active Design Principles as designated by the “レビュ” icon throughout Chapter 3.0

3.1 CONTEXT AND HOUSING TYPES

It is the intent of these multi-family design guidelines to support multi-family development that is consistent with the applicable provisions of the Sacramento County General Plan and Housing Element. A major goal
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

The purpose of these design guidelines is to help new multifamily development be context sensitive and fit within the surrounding community, both existing and proposed. The following sections illustrate the process to be used to determine the Community Context that applies to a development site and the appropriate Housing Type for use on it. It is important to recognize that the County of Sacramento contains diverse communities and undeveloped areas that vary in character from rural to urban.

### 3.1.1 Community Context Types

Knowing the existing zoning of the surrounding community is a simple step in determining the community context type of the site. This section outlines the process of determining the community context type and the eventual multifamily development category that may be appropriate within each predominant community context.

**Step 1: Identify the Community Context Type**

Three major community context types for purposes of evaluating multifamily projects have been identified in Sacramento County.

- **Community Context Type A** consists of small agricultural communities of predominantly large and small rural residential lots, agricultural parcels, and some smaller scale agricultural related retail uses.
- **Community Context Type B** consists predominantly of single-family residential subdivisions, along with larger estate lots, and supporting neighborhood retail centers.
- **Community Context Type C** consists of a range of existing neighborhoods with predominantly multifamily housing types, small lot single-family, and surrounding commercial and industrial activities in a more urban setting.

Representative zoning districts for this context type are shown in Table 3.1.

These Multi-Family Design Guidelines complement the Zoning Code for the districts described for each context type by providing urban design and architectural direction not contained within the Zoning Code and that are consistent with County planning policies. (See Appendix A.)

An analysis of the appropriate community context within which a given project occurs is the first step in assessing appropriate design strategies for residential neighborhoods that meet the compatibility and livability goals of the Sacramento County General Plan and Housing Element.
### 3.0 Multifamily Design Guidelines

**Table 3.1: Land Use Zones and Community Context Type Determination**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Zones</th>
<th>Existing Zoning Districts</th>
<th>Maximum Housing Density</th>
<th>Adjacent Community Context Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agricultural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG-160</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG-80</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG-40</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
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<tr>
<td>AG-20</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IR</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interim General and Limited Agricultural</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agricultural Residential</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR-10/A-10</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR-5/A-5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR-2/A-2</td>
<td>2 ac/unit</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR-1</td>
<td>1 ac/unit</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interim Estate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE-2/2A</td>
<td>2 units/ac</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RE-1</td>
<td>4 units/ac</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
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<tr>
<td>RE-3</td>
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<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residential</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD-1 or R-1-A/B</td>
<td>1 unit/ac</td>
<td>Context Type A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD-2 or R-2/A</td>
<td>2 units/ac</td>
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<tr>
<td>RD-3 or R-3</td>
<td>3 units/ac</td>
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<td>RD-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>RD-5</td>
<td>5 units/ac</td>
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<td>RD-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>RM-1</td>
<td>8.5 units/ac</td>
<td>Context Type B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM-2</td>
<td>8.5 units/ac</td>
<td>Context Type B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3.1: LAND USE ZONES AND COMMUNITY CONTEXT TYPE DETERMINATION (CONT.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LAND USE ZONES</th>
<th>EXISTING ZONING DISTRICTS</th>
<th>MAXIMUM HOUSING DENSITY</th>
<th>ADJACENT COMMUNITY CONTEXT TYPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>RD-10</td>
<td>10 units/ac</td>
<td>Context Type B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>RD-20</td>
<td>20 units/ac</td>
<td>Context Type C</td>
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<td></td>
<td>RD-25</td>
<td>25 units/ac</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>40 units/ac</td>
<td>Context Type C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>20 units/ac</td>
<td>Context Type C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LC</td>
<td>20 units/ac</td>
<td>Context Type C</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>GC</td>
<td>40 units/ac</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M-1</td>
<td>Not Permitted</td>
<td>Context Type C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP 2: DETERMINE THE PREDOMINANT ADJACENT CONTEXT TYPE

The second step is to identify and measure the predominant adjacent context type. The methodology for this determination follows the calculation below:

Calculate the linear feet of the site perimeter that is shared with each context type group, excluding street frontages.

Refer to Table 3.1 for guidance on appropriate context type determination.

Divide the total number of linear feet for each context type group by the total shared site perimeter of the property.

The category that shares at least 60 percent of the total shared perimeter will determine the community context type of the project. In cases where the project site is adjacent to two or more context types, the project site category will be determined to be the lower of the adjacent context type group.

An example of the calculation appears in Figure 3.1.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

Calculations to determine the category for the multifamily development project will be as follows:
West - Adjacent to RD-7 (Context Type B) = 150 feet
  North - Adjacent to RD-7 (Context Type B) = 180 feet
  East - Adjacent to RD-5 (Context Type A) = 150 feet
  South - Adjacent to street - not included in the calculation

Perimeter of the property = 480 feet
  Total linear feet for Context Type A = 150 feet
  Total linear feet for Context Type B = 330 feet

Total linear feet for Context Type A ÷ Perimeter = 150 ÷ 480 = 0.30 = 30%
Total linear feet for Context Type B ÷ Perimeter = 330 ÷ 480 = 0.70 = 70%

Since Context Type B is more than 60 percent of the project site shared perimeter, and Context Type A is 30 percent of the project site shared perimeter, Property X would be classified as a Context B Type site.
Property X is adjacent on three sides with properties in two zoning districts as follows:
On the west, Property X measures 150 linear feet and is adjacent to RD-7;
On the north, Property X measures 180 linear feet and is adjacent to RD-7;
On the east, Property X measures 150 linear feet and is adjacent to RD-5; and
On the south, Property X measures 180 linear feet, and is adjacent to a street.
**Step 3: Determine the Appropriate Multi-Family Category**

Some multifamily housing designs are more suitable than others for each community context type in Sacramento County. Development guidelines and standards have been organized to locate the appropriate building scale, setbacks and building heights to reflect each community.

Thus, multifamily development projects have been organized into three categories to correspond to each context type.

- **Category I** multifamily projects are suitable for a site that shares at least 60% of its perimeter with Context Type A properties.

- **Category II** multifamily projects are suitable for a site that shares at least 60% of its perimeter with Context Type B properties.

- **Category III** multifamily projects are suitable for those sites that share at least 60% of its perimeter with Context Type C properties.

The development standards also take into account the characteristics of adjacent collector and arterial streets, and roadway corridors. Multifamily sites which are adjacent to collector streets, arterial streets or highways may increase their building massing, heights, and densities as outlined in this document.

The dimension of the site adjacent to a future planned street widening for collector, arterial, highway or a similar major street will be excluded from the calculation.

**3.1.2 Multifamily Category Types**

These interim design guidelines establish three categories of multifamily design criteria consistent with the context type of adjacent existing communities.
Figure 3.2: Examples of Category determination based on surrounding context type
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Category I Multifamily Projects**

Category I projects will be located in areas with mostly very low- and low-density residential uses, rural residential areas, and large single-family estate lots with adjacent agricultural lands (five units per acre or less). This category of multifamily projects would likely occur along or next to major transportation corridors where multifamily residential and commercial uses are typically found. Projects developed as Category I sites should locate buildings further from property lines, with an emphasis on landscaping to buffer buildings and surface parking lots. Buildings should generally be no more than two stories in height, although three-story buildings are acceptable. Sidewalks, if present, should have landscaped parkways between the curb and sidewalk.
3.0 Multifamily Design Guidelines

Figure 3.3: Category I example
Category II Multifamily Projects

Category II projects will be located in areas with mostly low-density and medium-density residential uses (seven to 15 units per acre). Multifamily projects often occur along major transportation corridors where existing multifamily residential and commercial uses are found. Category II projects should be set back from surrounding properties so that their greater mass will not overwhelm adjacent properties. Landscaping should be provided along property lines to soften the transitions between the multifamily units and adjacent single-family development. Buildings may be as tall as four stories interior to the lot and closer to the streets, but should be designed to maintain privacy for any adjacent single-family properties. Wherever possible, sidewalks should provide a landscape buffer between the sidewalks and curb.
Figure 3.4: Category II example
3.0 Multifamily Design Guidelines

Category III Multifamily Projects

Category III multifamily projects will be located in areas mostly urban in character with surrounding high-density residential uses (more than 15 units per acre) as well as commercial, mixed use or industrial uses. Sidewalks are usually present, in some cases buildings are built to property lines. Category III projects may have four or more stories closer to the street. The most intensely developed Category III projects may provide structured or podium-style parking. Category III projects may also be mixed use projects, with commercial uses on the first floor, and residential units above. Mixed use projects shall comply with guidelines and standards outlined in the County of Sacramento Commercial and Mixed Use Guidelines.

Category I and II projects may be allowed to step up to the next higher multifamily category along major transit-oriented corridors, transit priority areas, or major arterial and collector roadways. These include projects in Corridor Plans, Transit-Oriented Districts, Special Planning Areas, and non-residential Neighborhood Preservation Areas (special overlay) subject to the approval of the Planning Commission through the Conditional Use Permit and design review process. The application of these Housing Category Types is found in individual sections below.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Figure 3.5:** Category III example

*Category III: (3+ Story)*

- **Interior Lot**
  - Buildable Area
  - Street
  - Sidewalk
  - Front Yard Setback
  - Landscape Parkway
  - Porches/Decks/Patio

- **Corner Lot**
  - Buildable Area
  - Street Side yard
  - Corner Lot

This diagram illustrates the multifamily design guidelines for Category III properties, focusing on interior and corner lot layouts with necessary setbacks and buildable areas. The guidelines ensure a balance between functionality and aesthetics in multifamily residential developments.
3.1.3 Multifamily Housing Types

A range of housing types can be provided within multifamily districts. These building types may include: garden apartments, two- and three-story walk-up apartments; row houses or town-houses; small-lot single-family homes; four-, six-, and eight-unit apartment buildings; clustered buildings; podium apartments; mid-rise and high-rise towers; duets and duplex buildings; and “pull” apart town house designs (Refer to Figure 3.3).

All the described multi-family housing types shall adhere to the applicable standards of the Zoning Code, unless alternatives can be justified by provisions of these Design Guidelines. Mobile or manufactured homes are also permitted in certain districts, as addressed in the use standards for mobile or manufactured homes and development standards for mobile home subdivisions in the Zoning Code.

It is the intent of these Design Guidelines to allow for maximum design flexibility to achieve a quality residential environment. The development standards are intended as a general guide, and creative and innovative designs are highly encouraged.

These design standards provide the minimum requirements to maintain compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods, increase safety and security for the residents, promote health and active design and create a high quality environment with a strong sense of place in Sacramento’s communities. Creative, imaginative and sustainable design solutions for multifamily designs are encouraged. The use of green and sustainable development standards and practices in planning, design, construction, and renovation of new and existing buildings should be used wherever possible.

The guidelines and standards cannot address all specific conditions or possible solutions to site and building design. Architects and building designers are continually creating new and imaginative solutions to multifamily housing design that would also be applicable to multifamily housing zones. The guidelines and standards are intended to be flexible in their application. Alternative design solutions that meet the intent of the goals and principles of the design guidelines may be acceptable, upon review through the Design Review process.
Figure 3.6: For small-lot single-family developments, refer to Single Family Design Guidelines.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

*Figure 3.6: Multifamily housing prototypes (Cont.)*
3.2 SITE DESIGN

3.2.1 NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY

Design Principle
Multifamily developments should be compatible with surrounding neighborhoods while providing a quality living environment. Good site planning and project design should minimize impacts on existing and planned adjacent uses. Project design should address traffic, relationship or access to transit, parking, circulation and safety issues, particularly for pedestrians, control of light and glare, noise, odors, dust, air quality and security. Site layout and design should create a clear definition and relationship between the public and private realm. Neighborhood compatibility can be achieved through control of semi-public and semi-private spaces, landscape, lighting, access and building details to improve the safety and security of residents.

Rationale
Sustainable multifamily design that fits the context and surrounding neighborhood maintains and contributes to property values, increases the safety and security of all residents, promotes a “sense or place,” increases social and neighborly interaction, and improves the overall health and quality of life for the community.
Building Orientation

Design Guidelines

• Harmonize with surrounding uses and improve the overall appearance and character of the neighborhood through building massing, scale, heights, and style.

• Long expanses of windowless, blank walls are avoided. All building facades are treated aesthetically with changes in materials, colors, artwork, use of pilasters, building lines, ornamentation, and/or other aesthetic treatments; and, contain durable quality materials.

• Orient buildings to adjacent public streets by providing entryways, windows, porches, stoops, balconies, and other active spaces along street frontages. Active spaces oriented to the street provides for visual access, surveillance, and control over public realm, increasing safety and security for the users.

• Locate surface parking lots to the sides and rear of the lot with building massing oriented to the street, to the greatest extent possible. Provide parking lots with adequate auto and pedestrian-scale lighting and security as a safety feature.

• Arrange multifamily residential buildings to provide functional, public and private outdoors spaces for the use of residents. Centrally locate active common open spaces such that they are easily accessible to all residents.

• Design and landscape street setbacks to create an attractive and varied streetscape. Include landscaping elements such as shade-trees, shrubbery, and ground cover. Avoid large expanses of hard surfaces, paving, rock and bark cover.

• Design building orientation to access and use solar energy and maximize wind direction for natural ventilation.
3.0 Multifamily Design Guidelines

Connectivity

Design Guidelines

- Provide connections between new projects and adjacent neighborhood streets and pedestrian and bicycle paths. Connecting streets should be designed with appropriate widths to discourage overloading traffic on existing streets, and support walking and bicycling. Provide for future connections to currently underdeveloped properties.

- Provide for future connections to currently underdeveloped properties. Gated communities are discouraged in locations where there is good opportunity for connectivity to adjoining neighborhoods. Gated communities may be appropriate for some projects.

- Promote access to new development by providing multiple points of entry and exit. Separate entry/exit access should be provided for pedestrians to promote safety and avoid auto/pedestrian conflicts.

- Create slower, pedestrian-oriented residential streets within the project site and its surrounding neighborhood through traffic calming measures such as traffic circles, chokers, and narrower streets, to the greatest extent possible.

- Design connectivity with adjacent developments via internal drives and biking or walking trails.

- Allow pedestrian movement to and along sidewalks to be clear and unobstructed. Use of separated sidewalks is encouraged.

- Design pedestrian paths and access to be clearly visible during the day and well-lit after dark.

- Spatially define and activate streets and common open space areas with building entries, storefronts and outdoor furnishings (if a mixed-use project). Front pedestrian routes with commercial storefront uses onto public spaces and street edges.

- Define major connectivity routes with hierarchical landscaping treatment by providing more substantial landscaping at major entries, with lesser treatment at minor entries.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Street Elevation**

**Design Guidelines**

- Design the building elevation along public streets with respect to its surrounding context. The design should foster an appearance of a residential neighborhood, with articulation and scale, particularly at street level, reflecting the character, rhythm, height, and massing of nearby residential buildings.

- Provide entries that allow residents to “see and be seen.” Integrate entries with second floor elements such as balconies and decks. Building entries, including doors, porches, and stoops should be the predominant feature of street fronting buildings.

- Discourage long expanses of windowless, blank walls. Allow direct views to the street from active spaces within dwelling units through windows facing the street.

- Discourage garages and on-site parking dominating building facades along streets.

*Building articulation through color, materials and rooflines define the character of the neighborhood along public streets.*
3.0 Multifamily Design Guidelines

“Good Neighbor” Design

Design Guidelines
• Projects should be mindful of adjacent developments through use of “good neighbor” design strategies such as massing and building orientation.

• Consider shade impacts on adjacent properties in site design.

• Consider the existing grade and topography of the site in building layout, height, scale, and massing to maintain compatibility with adjoining lower intensity residential uses. Taller buildings on hillsides should be stepped back or reduced in height when adjacent to lower intensity residential uses to maintain the privacy of rear yards, patios, and private outdoor spaces.

• Improve the visual quality of the streetscape with projects that complement, rather than replicate, the architectural style and character of the surrounding area.

• Minimize the potential for the disruption of privacy of adjacent neighbors/buildings through building design that restricts views directly into adjoining buildings, private open spaces, yards, and patios.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Corner Lots**

**Design Guidelines**

- Create a strong relationship between corner lots and adjoining streets through elements such as wrap-around porches, bays, and entries.

- Create attractive building facades facing both streets through massing and design of corner lots.

- Create attractive building facades through well-articulated sides of buildings. Achieve articulation with windows, setbacks, entries, porches, and/or balconies. Provide windows with views onto outdoor spaces for additional security and visual interest.

Windows and entries on corner facades create strong visual statements.
3.0 Multifamily Design Guidelines

3.2.2 Setbacks

**Design Principle**
Setbacks of multifamily residential structures should be compatible with the character and setback along the street and surrounding neighborhood. Multifamily developments constructed adjacent to single-family residences should reflect the larger setbacks of the neighborhood, whereas reduced setback may be appropriate in more urban areas.

**Rationale**
Building setbacks help establish the continuity and character of a neighborhood and help protect the privacy of neighbors. Appropriate setbacks provide a transition between public and private spaces, provide functional spaces for outdoor activities, allow for light, fresh air circulation within buildings, and provide spaces for landscaping, trees, ground cover, and shrubs.

**Design Guidelines**
- Provide building setbacks that reflect the surrounding context.
- Design site plans with variation in both the street patterns and the siting structures so the appearance of the streetscape does not become overly repetitive and monotonous. Avoid continuous rows of buildings with the same setback. Modulate and vary building setbacks to avoid monotonous streetscapes, create small outdoor places along the street frontage, and better define entries and front yards.
- Design the primary facade of buildings with varied setbacks to create an interesting and attractive street edge, while maintaining minimum average setbacks consistent surrounding properties and these Guidelines.
- Extend porches, stairs, and stoops into the front setback to articulate the building facade and promote use of stairs over elevators.
- Design setbacks between buildings so that spaces are usable or are part of the overall pedestrian scheme.
### TABLE 3.2: GENERAL SETBACK REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Main Residence</th>
<th>Open Porch or Balcony</th>
<th>Rear</th>
<th>Interior Side Yard</th>
<th>Corner/Street Side Yard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>20’ min.</td>
<td>12’ min.</td>
<td>20’ min.</td>
<td>5’ (1 story)</td>
<td>20’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>15’ min.</td>
<td>8’ min.</td>
<td>20’ min.</td>
<td>5’ (1 story)</td>
<td>15’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>12’ min.</td>
<td>6’ min.</td>
<td>15’ min.</td>
<td>5’ (1-2 stories)</td>
<td>15’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Setback requirements applicable to all surrounding uses types, excluding single-family residential. For setback requirements adjacent to single-family residential, refer to Table 2.2.
2. Setbacks may be reduced equal to the average setback of building on adjacent lots.
3. A 0’ front setback may be allowed at the discretion of the Planning Director upon design review in projects located in urban areas, mixed use projects, live work conditions, or where existing setbacks on adjoining lots are similar.
4. Setbacks on interior side yards above three stories or 35’, shall be increased 1’ in width for every 2’ in height up to a maximum setback width of 25’.

Based on the Housing Category Type, setbacks that differ from the Zoning Code standards may be used as outlined in Table 3.2, measured from the street right-of-ways, providing that they can be justified as being in accordance to overall provisions of these design guidelines. Setbacks shall allow enough room for utilities, if greater than those outlined. Front setbacks shall be measured from the front property line or future front property line if street dedication is required for future rights-of-way. The intent is to provide for lesser setbacks in more urban, commercial settings (Category III projects). These alternative setbacks do not apply when located adjacent to single-family residential homes.
Setback from Existing Single-Family Residential

Design Principles
Multifamily housing development design should complement adjacent single-family homes, and should reflect larger setbacks through variation of building heights and stepping back building heights from adjacent single-story structures.

Rationale
Existing single-family residents are often adversely impacted by adjoining multifamily projects due to increased noise, traffic, increased shading, light and glare, and unwanted visual intrusions into both indoor and outdoor private spaces and yards. Good design can resolve many compatibility problems between single-family homes and adjacent multifamily residents through the use of appropriate setbacks, screening, landscaping, and control of scale and massing of multifamily buildings, particularly near the property line between single family and multifamily properties.

Proper side yard and rear yard setbacks are critical to creating compatibility of scale and building massing. Use of open or green spaces can provide an attractive transition between projects while providing needed separation.

Generally, single-family homes allow for minimum five-foot side yards, and minimum 20-foot rear yards. Multifamily dwellings should provide additional setbacks, landscaped screening along property lines, and limit the building lengths along property lines to reduce potential impacts on adjacent sites. Street widths provide sufficient distances and setbacks from existing single-family residences across the street.
3.0 **MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**Design Guidelines**

- Consider the scale, character and location of the multifamily project and the type and width of the street in locating building massing on the site (i.e., portions of buildings with two or more stories and long building facades).

- Design building heights of new multifamily projects to be compatible with adjoining building heights to minimize potential impacts on adjacent single-family residences.

- Step back multi-story structures to reduce the bulk and mass adjacent to single family homes.

- Orient windows and balconies on multi-story structures away from single family homes and use opaque or clerestory windows on sides facing single family homes. If privacy objectives cannot be met, then greater setbacks may be required.

- Multifamily buildings adjacent to existing single-family zoned parcels shall provide a minimum setback from the adjacent single-family lot line consistent with the standards outlined in Table 3.2. Setback requirements shall be measured from the property line.

- Required setbacks adjacent to existing single-family residences shall not apply to front yard setbacks of sites with single-family residences across a street.

- Plant dense evergreen shrubs and trees along the property line with adjacent single-family homes in order to create a substantial buffer. Use of a wider planter (10 feet +) may be necessary to support dense landscaping.
ON-SITE BUILDING SEPARATION

Design Guidelines
Multifamily buildings should be separated by a sufficient distance to maintain and protect the privacy of units facing one another, reduce unwanted noise, and provide for light, ventilation, and air circulation to the buildings and windows opening into common open spaces.

Rationale
Multifamily residential design often involves the organization on one site of several buildings separated by open spaces, paseos, parking lots, drive isles, and yards interior to the project. Buildings too close to one another can impact the livability of residences due to reduced privacy, intrusions of noise, and/or reduced light, air, and ventilation to individual units. Good building design and thoughtful placement of buildings and landscaping can help to create an attractive and more livable environment for residents.

This distance will maintain a sense of enclosure while providing sufficient separation for ventilation, light, air, and privacy of interior units. Buildings can be closer together at corners, or at ends of the buildings where windows, private outdoor spaces, and balconies are not directly facing one another. Small narrow interior yards (less than 5’ in width) often become left over unsupervised, unusable nuisance spaces that collect trash, garbage, and are seldom maintained. In some cases, however, tighter spaces, if relatively short in distance, can create attractive pedestrian alleyways leading to larger common open spaces, courtyards, and pedestrian plazas or leading to parking areas.

Design Guidelines
• Maintain separation between residential buildings sufficient to provide privacy between units and outdoor private open spaces and balconies.

• Orient windows, private balconies, patios, and courtyards between buildings to protect the privacy of users and reduce unwanted noise between units.

• Use fencing, landscape screening, and the orientation private outdoor spaces of units to protect the privacy of units facing one another in adjoining buildings.

• Eaves, balconies, porches, and other architectural elements can project into interior side yards and open spaces between buildings if the privacy of units is maintained.
3.0 MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Staggering and offsetting of window, entries, balconies, and private patios can provide for greater privacy where buildings are closer together.

- Buildings can be located closer together where windows, entries, balconies, and private outdoor spaces are not facing one another.

- Staggering building facades along interior spaces creates additional variety and interest to the site and building design.

- Avoid small, narrow interior side yards with no functional purpose that can become nuisance areas without proper maintenance.

3.2.3 OPEN SPACE, COMMON OUTDOOR AMENITIES AND DRAINAGE/ FLOOD FACILITIES

**Design Principle**
Utilizing sustainable design elements, multifamily developments should provide easily accessible and functional open spaces and common outdoor amenities for residents. Landscaped storm water quality design measures shall provide multiple public benefits and be integrated into open space areas to provide storm water quality benefits and landscaping benefits. Open spaces may include all landscaped yards, planters, planted buffers and common recreation areas such as playgrounds, pools, gardens, picnic areas, tot lots, and community patio areas. Common open spaces should be provided as appropriate for the ages and number of residents living within the project.

**Rationale**
Well-designed and accessible common open spaces foster a sense of community within a multifamily project. Attractive open and outdoor spaces promote mental and emotional wellness and encourage physical activities that are key to creating active and healthy communities. By making open spaces more accessible from adjacent livable spaces, a wide range of activities are generated within and around open spaces throughout the day. Visual surveillance of open spaces provides for safety and security of users. Open spaces and common amenities within multifamily projects offer the types of private and semi-private spaces associated with single-family residences.
3.0 Multifamily Design Guidelines

Design Guidelines

- Provide pools, recreation facilities, tennis courts, spas, hot tubs, seating, water fountains, tot lots, walking paths through the project and similar features as common open space amenities to serve different age groups, as appropriate.

- Flood protection and drainage facilities shall be designed to provide multiple public benefits wherever possible. Facilities shall include multi-purpose improvements consisting of recreation, the environment, storm water runoff, water reclamation, infiltration, groundwater recharge, flood control, etc. Attractive land use basins, such as parks (in addition to Quimby land dedication requirements) or parkways with trails that also convey water to water quality basins or similar facilities and provide some water quality treatment are examples of desired multiple public benefit facilities.

- Parks and open space areas should be used as methods to connect communities and neighborhoods and provide alternative modes of travel via sidewalks and trails.

- Open space areas could be used to delineate community or neighborhood boundaries.

- Parks and open space should be integrated into projects to encourage outdoor recreation and preserve natural habitats.

- Public safety is a high priority and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles should be applied.

- Locate and organize common open spaces such as parks, plazas and gardens as large meaningful areas, and not unusable fragments. Emphasize doors, entries, windows and private open spaces opening onto these common areas to the greatest extent possible.

- Design open spaces connected by a comprehensive, on-site pedestrian circulation system to maximize accessibility and use by residents from all buildings.

- Locate and landscape open spaces, recreation areas, plazas and courtyards to take advantage of solar orientation, provide protection from wind, afford shade and reduce heat island impacts during hot summer months.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

- Provide recreation areas for children, unless a multifamily project is identified as an “adults only” or “senior” project. Provide appropriate amenities to serve anticipated residents (such as on-site child care and play lots for projects with families and children, less parking and more walking paths for senior housing).

- Locate common open spaces such as tot lots, children’s play areas, picnic facilities, pools, and similar amenities to allow maximum visibility from surrounding residences and streets.

- Locate common facilities such as laundry rooms, mailboxes, and community areas adjacent to common open spaces to maximize their visibility and activity. Consider providing compact clothes washers/dryers in each unit to better utilize common spaces and increase safety.

- The Zoning Code requires that a minimum of 30 percent of the total project site area shall be provided as landscaped open space including walkways, drive aisles, parking areas, etc. Utilize sustainable landscape practices when selecting and locating trees and plant materials.

- For all multifamily projects of 25 units or more, a portion of all common open space shall include outdoor amenities such as, but not be limited to, picnic tables and outdoor seating, pools, common patios, tot lots and play equipment, tennis courts, barbecue areas, walking paths with distance markers, outdoor fitness equipment, hot-tub, community garden or other similar active recreation spaces for the residents.

- All small-lot developments shall provide a common open space with amenities if there is no neighborhood park or other available open space with recreational amenities within a half-mile walking distance of residential units.

- All on-site outdoor amenities shall be preserved and maintained for the life of the project, unless otherwise approved by the Planning Director.
• Active recreational facilities may be replaced with similar amenities, subject to the approval of the Planning Director.

• Public and common use areas shall be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.

• Private balconies are not included in the percentage of landscaped open space.

• For townhomes and small lot developments, private yard areas may be counted towards total open space.

3.2.4 PRIVATE OPEN SPACE

Design Principle
Multifamily developments should provide easily accessible private open space to all dwelling units. There should be an emphasis on dwelling units opening onto private open spaces.

Rationale
Private open spaces provide for a pleasant and functional living environment for residents. Private open spaces act as transitional areas between public open spaces and the private and semi-private spaces of the dwelling unit. Private outdoor open spaces provide residents with an attractive outdoor place that can be used for outdoor eating, barbeques, small private gardens and flower beds, sunbathing, or simply enjoying the environment.

Design Guidelines
• Design usable open spaces such as porches, front yards, patios, decks, and balconies to qualify as private open spaces. Consider safety within the design.

• Provide each dwelling unit with a private open space such as an at-grade patio, stoop, porch, or balcony for upper stories for the exclusive use of that unit. Private open space should be a minimum of 40 sq. ft. per dwelling unit. For high rises, open space may be substituted by common facilities, especially for higher densities.

• Provide private open spaces of a reasonable size to afford functional and comfortable outdoor living opportunities. Provide balconies and porches at a width deep enough to allow for a chair or small table to be used.
3.0 MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Do not place amenities such as air conditioning and other mechanical equipment in private open spaces such that it may render the space unusable or fragmented.

- Locate private open spaces to take advantage of solar orientation, shade in the summer, and breezes to the greatest extent possible.

- Integrate decks and patios into the overall design of the building, such that it does not appear to be applied to the building facade.

- Personal storage spaces (storage closets) may be designed as extensions of private open spaces, decks, or porches, or placed within garages and carports.

- Encourage raised front porches or front stoops for ground floor units. The first floor level, if raised above the grade of the sidewalk directly in front of the front entrance, provides for greater privacy at the entry and improves surveillance of the public street.

- The Zoning Code requires a minimum of 40 sq. ft. per dwelling unit of private open space, such as balconies and patios.

- Ground floor private patio spaces may be counted as a subset of the overall 30 percent landscaped open space requirement.
3.2.5 **SCALE AND MASS**

**Design Principle**
The scale and mass of multifamily residential structures should be compatible with the adjacent neighborhood and vary based on character, scale, and edge conditions of surrounding existing developments.

**Rationale**
Stepping building heights, breaking up the mass of the building and shifting building placement can help mitigate the impact of differing building scales and intensities.

**Design Guidelines**
- Step down buildings at upper levels in neighborhoods with relatively smaller scale, particularly single-story, buildings on adjacent lots.
- Allow a scale transition between larger-scale buildings and smaller-scale buildings on adjoining lots.
- Use varied roof forms, mass, shape, and materials to create variations in building facades.
- Encourage variation in the number and mix of unit sizes to the greatest extent possible.
- Create varying front setbacks, staggered roof planes, and variety in orientation for units clustered into one structure. Avoid a monotonous or monolithic institutional appearance in favor of an appearance of distinct and articulated smaller attached buildings.
- Design buildings with a street facade which is complementary in scale and massing to its surrounding.
- Provide a sense of pedestrian scale at the ground level for buildings facing public streets and spaces through appropriate use of building materials, and details such as posts, wainscoting, decorative tiles, shutters, and window boxes.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Massing and Scale on Major Streets**

**Design Guidelines**
Building massing and scale should be intensified along major streets and at intersections to define the street edge.

**Rationale**
Many multifamily housing projects are often located near or adjacent to major collector and arterial streets. These streets are four to six lanes wide and most often provide sufficient capacity to handle traffic generated by multifamily housing developments. Greater building massing along wider streets helps visually define the street edge and create a sense of place and street enclosure. In combination with appropriate pedestrian improvements and design features, such massing can help create a more interesting, pleasant, and safe street environment. It is also important to note that the location of multifamily housing along major streets raises several issues, which can be addressed through good design, such as controlling street noise, air quality impacts, and the quality of the street environment for pedestrians.

**Design Guidelines**
- Help define the street edge through the location of building massing and heights. Increase building mass and height proportional to the street width, with higher massing on wider streets and decreased massing on narrower streets. Housing Category III projects should have a greater massing along major streets with decreased setbacks and greater heights.

  - Reinforce the pedestrian scale along the street edge through orientation of building entries, windows, stoops, front porches, and decks.

  - Define the street corner and create a strong visual statement at intersections with taller buildings, design elements and massing on corners.

  - Design building massing and height to be greater along the street edges and at corners of wider arterial and collector streets and stepped down in scale to be compatible with the scale and massing of lower intensity buildings on adjacent lots.
3.0  **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

- On major collector and arterial streets with widths of 80 feet or more, building heights may increase along the street front by an additional one story or 15 feet (whichever is greater) above the existing height limit, provided the setback standards adjacent to existing single-family residential lots are maintained in accordance with Table 3.2.

- On major arterial and collector streets with widths of 80 feet or greater, front yard setbacks from the street, front property lines, or back of sidewalks shall conform to the existing setback standard.

**Height Limits**

**Design Guidelines**

- Relate building heights closest to property lines to the height and scale of adjacent buildings.

- Allow buildings to have greater height in more intensely built areas. Greater heights (no height limit) are allowed and encouraged for Housing Category III projects.

- Require site specific design reviews based on sightlines to determine whether taller building design fits within the context of its surrounding.

**Density**

**Design Guidelines**

- Multifamily developments should be within the ranges per existing zoning, except that Multifamily developments in Category III locations may have a high density over the base zoning with the issuance of a Special Development Permit. For such higher density projects, overall community compatibility should be closely evaluated.

- Density requirements should also comply with other requirements, particularly with infill lots in existing neighborhoods.
3.0 MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

3.2.6 CIRCULATION

Design Principle
The visual prominence of vehicles should be minimized by siting parking areas to the rear or side of the property rather than along street fronts, and by providing underground or partially underground parking. Surface parking areas should be screened from views exterior to the site. Parking shall be designed to minimize potential pedestrian-vehicle conflicts. Parking areas should incorporate good designs that include: trees, lighting, landscaped stormwater features, cool and pervious pavement and pavers. A larger number of smaller parking areas are preferred to a smaller number of large parking areas. Parking should be configured to reduce the distance between a resident’s parking space and dwelling unit.

The location and design of driveways should minimize the impact of automobile circulation on the pedestrian environment and adjacent properties.

Paseos can supplement the role of streets and drives in the pedestrian circulation network. An accessible and appropriately lit pedestrian paseo network may provide front door access to units and allow for higher overall densities. Paseos should be designed as pedestrian streets and allow for clear and comfortable access to common site amenities, the public street, and visitor parking.

Rationale
Planning for safer and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians can result in an aesthetically appealing site, increased pedestrian safety and activity, improved overall mobility, reduced amount of impervious surface, and increased open space on site. Well-designed vehicle and pedestrian circulation within the development helps clarify the relationship between private and public spaces and areas intended primarily for vehicles versus pedestrians. Smaller driveways, curb cuts and parking areas can reduce barriers to pedestrian movement, improve the aesthetics of the site, and reduce development costs.
3.0 MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design Guidelines
- Organize street patterns in multifamily site designs to be clear and understandable, supporting wayfinding (methods by which individuals orient themselves and navigate through an area) by users.

- Organize the circulation system of larger multifamily projects (80 units or more) as a simple hierarchy of streets, driveways, parking areas and alleys with at least two points of access to public streets where feasible.

- Encourage well connected pedestrian routes within the project site and to the surrounding neighborhood, with an emphasis on relationships to open space networks.

- Provide reasonable access for persons with disabilities and consider the age of residents when designing facilities.

Organize street patterns and pedestrian paths to be clear, understandable, and easy to navigate.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Entrances, Exits and Connections**

**Design Guidelines**

- Create internal circulation and connections between the project and the street to address the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles. If located along a transit route, provide convenient route and schedule information along with access to transit stops from multifamily projects.

- Design new projects that provide connections to adjacent development and allow for connections to future developments.

- Minimize total impervious surface resulting from pavement, sidewalks, and parking through use of landscaping and landscaped open spaces.

- Locate vehicular entrances and exits to provide for safe sightlines and distances from street corners and intersections.

- Provide adequate and well landscaped pedestrian ingress and egress from the development to public rights-of-way, bus stops, and public transit to reduce long walking distances.

- Connections through public and common use areas must be accessible to people of all ages and those with disabilities.

*Multifamily development entrances and connections are accentuated by paving treatments and landscaping.*
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Public Streets**

**Design Guidelines**
- Allow new projects to provide for as many on-street parking spaces as safely as possible.
- Design a planter strip between the curb and sidewalk as an additional buffer between the streets and pedestrians on the sidewalk, thereby increasing safety and allowing for street tree planting and as a stormwater quality benefit to help slow, filter and reduce the amount of runoff to the street gutters.
- Multifamily developments in Category II and III should provide a minimum 5-foot wide planter strip between the pavement edge and sidewalk. In infill areas, sidewalks and planters may match the existing pedestrian environment, with the intent to separate sidewalks from the street wherever possible.

*Sidewalks, planter strips and on-street parking add functional and aesthetic appeal to multifamily units fronting public streets.*
3.0 **MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**INTERNAL STREETS**

**Design Guidelines**

- Design internal streets to connect to local landmarks or amenity features such as parks or community buildings, tot lots, or stands of large trees, if present adjacent to or near the project.

- Design internal streets to include landscaping and provide spaces and pedestrian amenities for social interaction such as small gathering areas, “gang” mail boxes, benches and seating, water features, and shaded areas.

- Provide traffic calming measures such as roundabouts, narrower roadways, on-street parking, chokers, and speed bumps along internal streets. Provide signage, flashing beacons, well-marked crosswalks and other areas where pedestrians and bicyclists are present.

- Design internal streets with sidewalks to promote pedestrian activity within the development. Walking paths with a route map that notes distance will encourage internal walking for health and physical activity.

- On larger projects, provide loop circulation on internal streets to the greatest extent possible and minimize segregation of common open spaces.

- Develop projects that face internal streets to enhance the general livability, visual quality, and safety of the streets.

- Design internal streets, parking lots, and driveways as parking courts that provide for additional outdoor hard surface play spaces by controlling traffic speed and movements. Such joint use of parking areas provides opportunities for additional social interaction between residents.

- Consider designing narrower street sections where fire access is not required to reduce the amount of impervious area and enhance the appearance of driveways.

- For internal streets, include a minimum 5-foot wide landscaped buffer along roadways adjacent to property lines.

Well-designed internal streets act as both vehicular and pedestrian connections and enhance the general livability of the neighborhood.
Driveways and Internal Circulation

Design Guidelines

• Minimize the number and width of driveways and curb cuts. Design shared driveways to the greatest extent possible.

• Create textures, patterns, and colors in the design of paved parking areas or entries to create visual interest and to distinguish them from other paved areas. Do not design large monolithic areas of single color untextured paving.

• Use accent paving such as textured paving and paving blocks in driveways. Use of permeable concrete, cool pavements and pavers is desirable.

• Design driveways to be well lighted and distinct from building lighting, common housing lighting, or appropriate scaled street lighting.

• When designing streets with cul-de-sacs, “live-end” cul-de-sacs are preferred. “Live-end” cul-de-sacs provide for pedestrian access at the ends to adjoining streets, open spaces, parks, and trail systems while still permitting the cul-de-sac to be used as a common outdoor space. “Live-ends” should be landscaped and can include benches, providing nice areas for sitting and socializing.

• For driveway access with ten or fewer units, consider a T-shaped turnaround. A dimension of 20 feet by 80 feet will accommodate most vehicles.

• Consider using Hollywood driveways to reduce the amount of impervious area and enhance the appearance of driveways (refer to the County’s stormwater quality design standards).

• Design traffic islands with attractive, low-maintenance shrubs or perennials, appropriate for the soil and moisture conditions. In many cases, shade trees are desirable to improve air quality, reduce heat island impacts and extend the life of the pavement.

• Dead end driveways should be less than 150 feet long, and have appropriate turnarounds as needed.

• Design circular cul-de-sacs with a radius of 40 feet or less to the greatest extent possible.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

- Minimum widths for internal streets or driveways, per Fire Department Standards
  - Uncurbed driveway with no parallel parking when fire lane is not necessary – 16’
  - Curbed internal street with no parallel parking – 20’
  - Curbed internal street with parallel parking on one side – 28
  - Curbed internal street with parallel parking on both sides - 36’
- Street design and width should be confirmed with the Fire Department.
Paseos provide common outdoor spaces and allow for pedestrian access through the development, and connection to adjacent developments (where possible). Front door access to units may be provided via paseos, with these spaces acting as both public and semi-private spaces. These spaces could be further enhanced to be user-friendly through the use of appropriate pedestrian amenities such as seating, lighting, fountains, and landscaping. Paseos can also function as outdoor gathering places for residents and provide additional recreational amenities such as game tables, small children play areas, picnic tables, outdoor gazebos, community gardens, barbeque areas and other smaller community amenities.

Paseos that terminate on a public street should be attractively landscaped and identified with an entry gateway.

**Design Guidelines**

- Locate paseos where vehicular connections are infeasible due to project or site constraints.
- Visually identify paseos by special paving and pedestrian-scale lighting.
- On pedestrian pathways, include amenities such as trellises, trees, seating, lighting and landscaping that visually extend the open spaces for safe pedestrian use. Provide lighting for safety and visual access.
- Front buildings onto paseos with windows, entries, and balconies to increase the visual surveillance of the area for safety and security.
- Limit the length of the paseo walkway and provide perpendicular connections from the paseo between buildings to parking areas, public streets, and open spaces.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

- Design paseos to provide sunlight during the day, whenever feasible.
- Allow a paseo to be named as a special place with buildings lining the paseos taking their addresses from the paseo.
- Direct roof runoff to bioretention planters and landscaping strips in the paseos for treatment, whenever possible.
Parking

Parking is critical to the success of a multifamily residential project. Parking needs to be convenient, accessible, safe, screened from street views, and well landscaped to reduce summer heat gain, and controlled stormwater runoff. With the exception of higher intensity urban areas, mixed use villages, and town centers where apartment buildings are more common, most new apartment designs are two- to three-story walk-up structures. These are often referred to as garden-style apartments with a mix of unit types serving singles, couples, and young families.

Two basic strategies can be applied to the site layout of multifamily apartments:

1. Internalized parking lots with good configuration layouts and buildings that ring the site and allow for casual surveillance. These layouts should be encouraged.

2. Externally parking with buildings that cluster around a central common open space with parking oriented to the exterior.

In most developments, both approaches are utilized to conform to site conditions. As part of a larger project, integration of attached multi-family units with small-lot detached single-family units is highly desirable and can be a very complementary and integrated project.

External parking increases building setbacks from adjacent properties, and provides more direct access to on-site community recreational facilities. However, external parking lots become more exposed to the surrounding community.

Design Guidelines

- The minimum number of parking spaces is regulated by the Zoning Code. Reductions to the minimum standards can be made for Category III projects. The Zoning Code further requires that a portion of the parking be covered.

- Locate parking and vehicle access away from street corners.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

- Screen parking areas visible from the street right-of-way with landscaping, berms, or decorative visual barriers. Discourage use of fences or walls as the preferred method of screening parking from the street.

- Buffer parking areas from adjacent residential properties. Provide landscaping adjacent to and within parking areas to screen vehicles from view.

- Parking areas should incorporate good designs that include: trees, lighting, landscaped stormwater features, cool and pervious pavement and pavers. Plant trees and shrubs to soften the overall impact of parking areas and to provide shade, heat island cooling, noise reduction and improved air quality.

- Multiple smaller parking lots are preferred over single, large lots to minimize the expansive appearance of parking areas. However, the parking lot design should not negatively impact the design of the project.

- If large parking areas are needed, design a clearly defined pedestrian path inside the parking area that provides safe, well-marked and easy access to and from buildings and sidewalks.

- Locate secure bicycle parking close to, and with direct access to, residential buildings and entries. Bike lockers are preferred for overnight security. Consider providing a bike share program for residents.

- Set back parking adjacent to dwelling units to provide a buffer between the parking area and living areas and to reduce the potential impacts of noise and light on adjacent residences. Provide appropriate buffers through a combination of landscaping, walkways, private outdoor patios and/or low walls.

- Do not allow parking and paving to directly touch against residential buildings.

- Incorporate stormwater quality measures into the parking areas to treat the storm runoff and enhance the parking areas by providing shade and reducing the amount of paving. Vehicle wash areas shall be designed to the latest stormwater quality design standards, and ideally capture the brown water for use in landscape irrigation.

- Consider subterranean parking for Category III projects located along three and four lane roads, with paseos or similar public spaces as entrances to the complex, and allowing better utilization of site area.

- Paved surface parking areas should be separated from the primary residential building by a minimum four foot wide walkway and/or a minimum seven foot wide landscape strip.

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Parking needs to be convenient, accessible, and safe, screened from street views, and well landscaped to reduce summer heat gain, and controlled stormwater runoff.
Residential parking spaces shall be clearly marked and located closest to the residential unit, to the greatest extent possible.

On-site parking spaces should be assigned to individual units.

Additional visitor parking equal to 0.5 spaces per unit shall be provided with spaces clearly signed and labeled and managed to avoid misuse by residents.

Meet County of Sacramento ADA requirements and standards.

Meet County standards for parking lot shading.

Condominiums, townhouses, or similarly owned units where certain parking spaces are deeded, granted by easement, or otherwise permanent assigned spaces shall be located to be visible from a window(s) of the unit to which it is assigned, whenever possible, unless such spaces are contained within a garage. The location and regulation of unassigned spaces shall be placed under the control of the project homeowners’ association.

Tuck under and subterranean parking may be permitted for projects in the RD-20 or higher density zoning districts, located along three and four lane roads, with paseos or other public spaces as entrances to the complex to better utilize the site.
3.0 **MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**BIKE PARKING**

**Design Guidelines**

- For Categories II and III, a minimum of one bike parking space per unit shall be provided with guest bike parking at one space per 10 units provided on site. Private storage areas in units may qualify for bike parking. Bike parking for guests should be clustered in common areas for easy convenience.

- Bike racks shall be designed with the most current designs that provide secure locking features and are attractive. Many bike racks double as public art to add interest.

*Bike parking is provided in easily accessible common areas and in close proximity to residential buildings.*
3.3 SITE DETAILS

3.3.1 BUILDING DESIGN

Design Principle
Building design elements shall respect, enhance, and contribute positively to the predominant characteristic of existing developments in the neighborhood. Variety and distinctiveness in design is desirable.

Rationale
Quality in detail design and materials contributes not only to the long-term value of a project, but to the neighborhood as well. The use of different “styles” and materials is intended to add variety to the buildings just as is often found in neighborhoods that have evolved over time.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Building Articulation and Design for Privacy**

**Design Guidelines**
- Design large projects (greater than 50 units) to contain a variety of building elevations. Avoid excessive repetition of elevations throughout a neighborhood or project with little or no differentiation.

- Minimize upper story views into adjacent private yards. Multifamily projects should be designed to respect the privacy of surrounding uses.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Sustainable Design Strategies**

**Design Guidelines**

- Utilize sustainable design strategies in building design and reflect this practice in the site design, building orientation, on-site stormwater management, and material selection.

- Employ energy conservation strategies including shading devices and use of trees to reduce the heat gain of buildings and parking lots including the selection of colors to reduce heat gain and the use of high-quality insulation and radiant barrier materials to reduce energy consumption (especially the use of air conditioning during hot summer months) and increase resident comfort, to the greatest extent possible.

- Use water conserving features in irrigation systems and drought-tolerant plants in landscaping.

- Design and use heat sinks and geothermal systems as an alternative to typical heat and cooling systems.

- Employ energy and water efficiency practices when selecting appliances, fixtures and lighting consistent with the state of California’s Green Building Code and the goals to achieve zero net energy buildings.

Employ a variety of sustainable design strategies to improve the quality of the site environment.
3.0  **MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**ENTRY FEATURES**

**Design Guidelines**

- Design entry features such as porches, stoops, balconies, and porticos to add visual interest to buildings.

- Design entry features that are clearly visible and distinguishable as the primary entrance.

- Design the depths of decks, stoops, and porches at a width deep enough for a chair and table.

- Provide at least one building entry on an accessible route to accommodate people with disabilities and mobility constraints.

Well articulated entry features define the character of the development.
3.0  **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Windows and Openings**

**Design Guidelines**

- Design windows and doors to add variety and interest to the building design. Avoid grids of repeated windows.

- Use double glazed windows, glass block, roof top sky lights, and opaque window glass to reduce noise and visual intrusion into adjoining units.

- For stepped up units, use high and translucent windows for the upper stories.

- For developments facing the street, provide large window openings to maximize natural ventilation and sunlight and allow visual surveillance of the street.

- Provide overhangs or other shading devices, and select glazing that provides the greatest reduction in solar heat gain during the summer, when the sun is high overhead.

- Major glazing areas should generally face south to collect solar heat during the winter.

- Incorporate daylighting strategies such as: providing light shelves, glare control, courtyards, solar-tubes and skylights.

- Placement of windows should also consider the cooling benefits of Sacramento’s Delta breezes.

*Good location and design of windows and doors allow ventilation and surveillance.*
Garages and Carports

Design Guidelines

- Minimize garage doors along street fronts to appear less dominant in the street-facing building facades. To reduce the visual dominance of garages along the street, garage doors can be recessed within the building design, turned perpendicular to the street, and divided into smaller individual one car entries.

- Locate garages and carports to the side and rear of developments. Garage carports and accessory buildings should not be located on front yards or front and side yards facing a public street.

- Vary the locations of garages to avoid the appearance of garage door rows. Detached garages or alley loaded garages are other desirable alternatives.

- Design carport roofs in a consistent style and character as the main building, except as needed to provide for solar panels or other sustainable design.

- Choose materials and colors of garages and carports to be compatible with the main building design.

- Provide lighting in carport areas.

- Electric vehicle charging stations are encouraged.

- Fully enclose storage for boats, recreational vehicles and trailers, as well as storage sheds, when visible from the street or active adjacent uses.

- Design additional private storage spaces for individual units within carports.

- Provide solar panels integrated within carport roofs as a sustainable design strategy to conserve energy where possible.

Materials, colors, and rooflines of carports and garages reflecting main buildings enhance the design of the development.
3.0 Multifamily Design Guidelines

Rooflines

Design Guidelines

- Vary roof elements to minimize the appearance of mass and bulk of buildings.
- Correspond rooflines to variations in building massing and articulation with bays, gables, dormers and strong eave elements.
- Design roofs (form, style, and pitch) to further enhance and articulate the architectural vocabulary used in the facades and to be compatible with the style and character of the neighborhood. Generally, sloping roofs are more rural in character; flat roofs are more appropriate in urban situations.

Varied rooflines help add interest and character to buildings, and to the neighborhood.
Material/Colors/Textures

Design Guidelines

- Use sustainable building materials that are high quality, durable, provide energy efficiency benefits, require low maintenance, and complement the design of the building. Use of quality recycled products is encouraged.

- Use a combination of varied materials, textures, and colors. It is generally preferred that the number of materials used on the exterior be such that a clean, uncluttered design is the result.

- Consider use of “Permanent” roof materials such as concrete and clay tile with reflective surfaces because of their fire resistance, low maintenance, energy conservation and insulation values, and consistent appearance over time. Woodshake or shingle roofing meeting fire safety standards is also acceptable. Composition shingles should be of the heavy laminated dimensional type, and of at least a 25-year quality.

- Use material textures and colors to help articulate the building design.

- Use color variations to unify various building elements, and harmonize with the overall neighborhood design.

- Use color differentiation within the same multifamily project to reduce monotony, blandness, and repetitiveness within the building facades. Accentuate individual units with varying color schemes, materials, and textures to achieve greater variety, visual interest, and richness in the character of the neighborhood.

- The use of “cool roof” options, including lighter colored, high albedo coatings and other “cool roofing” materials and applications are encouraged to achieve energy efficiency inside homes and reduce the heat island effect.

- The use of rooftop solar or wind turbine installations (where allowable) should be integrated into the overall building design and be non-obtrusive on the neighborhood imagery.

- Installation of radiant heat barriers is encouraged to increase energy efficiency and interior livability.
3.0 **MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**PERSONAL STORAGE**

**Design Guidelines**

- Provide a minimum of 80 cu. ft. enclosed storage area for each residential unit.

- Locate personal storage spaces within each unit, in common storage areas or design them as an integral part of carports and garages. Personal storage can also be designed adjacent to decks and ground floor private patio areas.

*Personal storage designed within and near residences*
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Lighting**

**Design Guidelines**

- Design site lighting to have a scale, design, and color that best complements the character and design of the multifamily development. Internal street lighting should be compatible with site lighting throughout, creating a cohesive aesthetic for the area.

- Provide energy efficient lighting in all common areas and facilities, including pedestrian and vehicular routes. The emphasis should be on personal safety, with lighting landscape or building surfaces secondary.

- Use attractive and pedestrian-scaled lighting.

- Provide adequate lighting in open spaces.

- Provide lighting at even illumination levels, adequate to provide safe visibility. If light fixtures are visible, they should be of low intensity or have adequate diffusing lenses to minimize their brightness. Use landscaping lighting that is glare free or glare minimized.

- Lighting should be accomplished in a manner that it does not create glare for pedestrians or adjacent properties. Do not allow spillover and glare from lighting fixtures onto interior spaces of buildings and adjacent properties.

- Use lighting fixtures of high quality and durable materials.

- Limit night lighting, visible from the exterior of a building, from the project’s boundaries and from public streets and sidewalks to that necessary for security, safety, and identification. Screen night lighting from adjacent residential areas and direct in a downward manner or beyond the boundaries of the parcel on which the building is located or beyond the public right-of-way that the lighting intends to illuminate.

- Employ Energy Star appliances and energy efficient lighting in construction, to the extent feasible, consistent with the adopted Green Building Policy.

- The Zoning Code provides minimum lighting illumination standards.

*Attractive lighting in common areas adds visual interest to site design and increases safety.*
In all cases, use fully shielded fixtures for street lights.

For street lights, use Sacramento Department of Transportation approved LED lights or other acceptable high energy efficiency lights.

Locate street lights between 9 and 16 feet above grade with a maximum average spacing (per block face) of 100 feet on center, aligned with the street trees on each side of the street.

Pedestrian lighting in common areas should be between 8 and 12 feet in height.

Lighting in parking areas should be between 10 and 14 feet in height.

Ground level pedestrian lighting, such as bollards, should not exceed 4 feet in height.

Use under canopy and entry lighting to illuminate the pedestrian walkway which may be shaded from streetlights. These fixtures may be recessed down lights or pendant fixtures set in the soffit or other wall mounted shaded fixtures.

In addition to the standards set forth in this section, site and street lighting shall comply with Section 5 (Street Light Design) of the Sacramento County Improvement Standards.

Lighting fixtures complement the style and material of the building, and the general environment of the development.
3.3.2 SIGNAGE

Design Principle
Attractive entry signage should be provided at primary locations to assist residents, visitors, and emergency vehicles in wayfinding.

Rationale
Well-designed and well-lit signage provides easy wayfinding, and can contribute to the design and character of the development.

Design Guidelines
• Integrate signs of quality consistent within the design of the project.

• Design entry signs in keeping with the character of the surrounding community.

• Design monument signs in keeping with the style and character of the main building design, and locate within a landscaped area.

• Clearly mark and light vehicular and pedestrian signage for residents, visitors, and emergency vehicles.

• Design all primary entry and exit signage to the development to be clearly visible from a distance, and be well illuminated at dark.

• Provide clearly visible and lit building address signage.

• Building address should be designed with letters that are four to eight inches high since they are visible from a distance of 20 feet.
3.4 LANDSCAPE DESIGN

3.4.1 LANDSCAPING

Design Principle
Residential projects should be designed to maximize opportunities for usable, attractive, and well landscaped open spaces. Landscaping includes trees, shrubbery, and ground cover. Landscaping can also include “hardscape” elements such as outdoor pedestrian amenities, play areas and play structures, walkways, walking paths, plazas and gathering places, pools, sport courts, and decorative pavers.

Rationale
Landscaping can be used to complement buildings and to make a positive contribution to the aesthetics and function of the specific site and area. These aesthetics contribute to the mental and emotional well-being of residents, and help to reduce stress. Landscaping helps reduce stormwater runoff, filters water and captures carbon and air particulates to improve air and water quality, provides shade during summer months, and lowers temperatures reducing heat island impacts. Landscaping also provides additional habitat to local animals and birds.

Design Guidelines
- Design open space networks as a hierarchy of visual and physical movement, both within the project site and through the neighborhood. Street trees should be larger shade trees per the County’s street tree list.

- Use planted areas to enhance the appearance of structures, define site functions of outdoor spaces, and screen undesirable views of parking areas and utilities. This standard does not apply to small lot and cluster projects, as circumstances vary.

- Design exterior site design and landscaping as functional recreational spaces and/or community site amenities.
3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

- Integrate natural attributes and topography into the multifamily development, designed as a neighborhood feature or focal point to the greatest extent possible.

- Incorporate appropriate landscaping that includes a variety of trees, shrubs, and other plantings. Utilize Sacramento County's River Friendly Landscape (RFL) Guidelines for plant material selection, placement, and maintenance. The sustainable RFL guidelines are water and energy efficient, reduce maintenance, improve air quality, and divert green waste from landfills.

- Plant unpaved areas with irrigated plant materials. Mulch unpaved areas where landscaping would be challenging to minimize weed growth and improve appearance. Use of mulch created from development's green waste is desirable.

- Provide ongoing maintenance to identify and ensure the timely replacement of any dead or diseased vegetation.

- Design landscaping to be compatible with building design. Use trellises, arbors, cascading landscaping, vines, and perimeter garden walls wherever suitable.

- Consider security issues in the landscape design of the site, including creation of barriers and screening.

- Do not allow landscaping to impede fire access to hydrant connections.

- Plant street trees at least every 25 feet on average, not exceeding 40 feet.

- Limit surface paving, driveways, parking, and hardscape materials in landscape front yards to 25% of the total front yard area. Use permeable or cool pavements to the greatest extent possible.

- Landscaped areas shall be properly maintained.

- Plants, shrubs, and trees shall be selected that are appropriate for the local climate and site conditions. Use drought tolerant planting material to the greatest extent possible in the selection of landscape materials.
3.0 Multifamily Design Guidelines

- Along streets with greater than 50,000 vehicles Average Daily Trips (ADT), plant trees conducive to absorbing particulates including deodor cedar, valley oak, and redwoods. Utilize canopy trees for pedestrian areas to increase shading, cool the pavement and support walking.

- Use of known high allergen plantings is discouraged.

Grades and Grading

Design Guidelines
- To minimize grading, follow natural contours to the greatest extent possible.
- Round and contour grading to blend with the natural terrain.
- Design the use of slopes based on aesthetic ease of landscaping considerations.
- Incorporate natural vegetation within the design to the greatest extent possible.

Tree Preservation

Design Guidelines
- Preserve and incorporate existing and native trees within the project site design to the greatest extent possible.
- Retain existing mature trees in landscape and building location plans to the greatest extent possible. Where existing trees must be removed, trees shall be replaced in accordance with General Plan policies.

Incorporation of existing trees within site design provides screening and aesthetic appeal.
3.0 **MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES**

**IRRIGATION**

**Design Guidelines**

- Provide all landscaped areas with irrigation systems as needed to sustain the landscape. Head-to-head spray irrigation is recommended for turf and groundcover, and drip irrigation is recommended for shrubs and trees to provide deeper, more even watering. Certain plants and trees only need irrigation to get established, then irrigation is on an as-needed basis.

- Avoid overspray onto sidewalks, streets, impermeable surfaces and adjacent properties. Consider conducting water audits from time to time to ensure overwatering is not occurring.

- Use automatic controllers with weather station, sensors and rain shut-off valves for water conservation.

- Screen irrigation systems from public view by aesthetic landscaping.

- Flood protection and drainage facilities shall be designed to provide multiple public benefits wherever possible. Facilities shall include multi-purpose improvements consisting of recreation, the environment, storm water runoff, water reclamation, flood control, etc. Attractive joint use basins, such as parks (in addition to Quimby land dedication requirements) or parkways with trails that also convey water to water quality basins or similar facilities and provide some water quality treatment are examples of desired multiple public benefit facilities.

- All landscaped features designed as stormwater quality measures shall be maintained for the life of the project. Proper maintenance of these features will be ensured by the local agency through a maintenance covenant that the property owners sign before the approval of the project.
MAINTENANCE OF LANDSCAPING

All landscaping required to be installed as part of a development project shall be maintained for the life span of the project. Maintenance of landscaping shall consist of regular watering, pruning, fertilizing, clearing of debris and weeds, removal and replacement of dead plants, and repair and replacement of irrigation systems and integrated architectural features on site.

INSTALLATION OF REQUIRED LANDSCAPING

Landscaping required as part of a development project should be installed prior to final building inspection. In the event that weather conditions prevent effective installation of required landscaping, the developer should be encouraged to provide a performance bond or other security in the amount equal to the value of the landscaping.
3.4.2 FENCING AND WALLS

Design Principle
Fencing and walls in multifamily developments should complement the design of buildings and help define boundaries, without being visually and physically obtrusive.

Rationale
The design of fencing and walls can enhance the appearance and character of the development. Fencing helps control unwanted intrusions into private and common open spaces, increases safety, and helps define, frame, and control private, public, and semi-public spaces. These can also serve as signs, lighting, outdoor seating, and places for public art.

Design Guidelines
• Design sound walls, masonry walls or fences to minimize visual monotony through changes in plane, height, material, texture or significant landscape massing where appropriate.

• Design fencing as an integral part of the site design. Use attractive fencing designs and materials, such as wrought iron, brick mix, or shortened walls with fencing. Fencing should be attractive from both sides of the property line.

• Use landscaping as screen fences to the greatest extent possible.

• Set back fencing on street sides as much as possible and soften with landscaping to minimize a “fortress” appearance.

• Solid fencing, walls, large hedges, or other similar barriers exceeding four feet in height are discouraged within street-side setback areas.

• “Live-ends” can also be used in breaks between fencing and walls to provide access and improve mobility through the site to adjacent areas.

• Provide solid fencing between multifamily developments and single-family developments, except where pedestrian connections are needed and where “live-ends” are used.
3.4.3 PAVING AND HARDSCAPING

Design Principle
Multifamily developments should incorporate pervious, cool and decorative paving treatments that permit infiltration of stormwater which reduces run-off and heat island impacts.

Rationale
Quality paving treatment in areas such as parking lots, common areas, and pedestrian walkways can enhance the visual appearance of a project and promote walkability and activity that contributes to healthy residents while also providing environmental benefits.

Design Guidelines
- Use alternative paving material such as brick, modular pavers, stamped, and integral colored concrete for walkways, patios, common areas and in the parking spaces in the parking lot.
- To reduce stormwater runoff in parking lots, use permeable materials such as porous asphalt-concrete (AC), grasscrete, or interlocking modular pavers in those areas with traffic volumes and soil conditions can support such materials, and where consistent with fire apparatus equipment needs.
- Create well designed planting strips to direct drainage and increase percolation of water runoff. Planting strips designed as vegetated swales and bio-retention facilities can be used for stormwater quality treatment.
- Use decorative paving at crosswalks, at primary intersections, and in common spaces.
3.4.4 SERVICES AND UTILITIES

**Design Principle**
Multifamily developments should provide easily accessible service facilities to all dwelling units that should not be visible from the street to the greatest extent possible.

**Rationale**
Location and design of common service facilities should be easy for residents to find and use. Good location and design minimize auto and pedestrian hazards.

**MECHANICAL AND HVAC**

**Design Guidelines**
- Incorporate mechanical equipment into the design of the building to the greatest extent possible.
- Locate mechanical equipment on building roofs to the greatest extent possible, screened from view. If mechanical equipment is located on the ground, screening should be either a solid wall/fence or landscaping.
- Locate all mechanical equipment in areas with the least amount of auto and pedestrian traffic.
- Use low-sound emitting mechanical equipment, with consideration of sound impacts from mechanical equipment on surrounding environments.
- Design and use heat sinks and geothermal systems as an alternative to typical heat and cooling systems.
- Refer to the commercial design Section 4.4.6 for guidelines for wireless communication facilities.

*Screening and locations such as sides and niches of buildings and niches for mechanical units reduce any pedestrian and auto hazards, and are out of public view.*
Accessory structures complement main buildings through materials, colors and architectural style.

3.0 **Multifamily Design Guidelines**

**Accessory Structures**

**Design Guidelines**

- Design materials and colors of accessory structures, such as mailboxes and laundry rooms, to be consistent with the main buildings.

- Design roof pitch of accessory structures to be consistent with the predominant roof slope of the main buildings.
3.0 MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES

TRASH AND RECYCLING

Design Guidelines

• Screen all trash and recycling enclosures from public view by landscaping and locate enclosures to minimize visual conflicts with units, common open spaces, or adjacent properties.

• Provide easy access to trash removal enclosures, with curbs and other traffic restraints avoided in these areas.

• Consider composting facilities to support on-site gardens, soil amendments and to divert waste from the landfills.

• Consider utilizing commercial waste haulers that support food waste to fuel/energy projects and programs and who utilize clean fuels in their waste trucks.

• Use durable materials for trash and recycling structures and enclosures, and complement colors of trash and recycling structures to be consistent with the main buildings.

• Provide trash and recycling education information near enclosures, with the enclosures located in a safe and secure location and kept clean and odor-free.

• Locate trash collection areas and facilities so as to minimize noise intrusion on on-site and adjacent off-site living areas.

• For small lot single-family residences with individual trash and recycling receptacles, trash and recycling storage should be provided to the side or rear yard of the residence and/or screened from public view. Site plans shall indicate how trash collection is managed.

• All trash and recycling enclosures shall be a minimum of 10 feet from all residential property lines and street yards.

• Trash enclosure areas shall be designed to the County’s latest stormwater quality source control design standards.

• The Zoning Code provides setback standards for the location of trash enclosures.

Trash enclosures should be designed in safe and secure locations and complement the colors and materials of the main building.
The purpose of this chapter is to provide overall planning and sustainable design principles and guidelines for commercial projects. Commercial projects are divided into three forms: commercial districts, commercial corridors, and commercial centers. Commercial districts occur as major centers of regional or subregional commercial activity. Commercial corridors contain commercial activity and bisect many neighborhoods and often are public transit corridors. Commercial centers are smaller in scale and serve the commercial needs of the neighborhoods nearby. Projects within these three types are subject to the Commercial Design Guidelines which have the goal of providing commercial projects that are well designed to meet the community design goals of the Sacramento County General Plan.

Many existing commercial districts, corridors, and centers are characterized by their auto-oriented commercial past, individually developed projects and sites, and franchise architecture. Many of these older commercial developments require revitalization. These Commercial Design Guidelines are to be used to guide this revitalization and to provide standards for new commercial development in the County.

4.1 Understanding Context: Commercial Districts

Projects in commercial districts should further the economic and image objectives for the district and advance healthy and sustainable communities in the County. Each project should contribute to the streetscape, pedestrian and auto access objectives, architectural and signage design objectives for the site and surrounding area. To do this, projects will need to be planned and designed to complement both existing and anticipated future investment. Project applicants need to consider the following questions.

- Site connections: How can driveway and sidewalk connections increase the connectivity and accessibility to the site from adjacent neighborhoods and development?
- Building alignments: What are the typical building and landscape setbacks along public streets?
- Streetscape and landscape design: What type trees exist along public streets? Is there a landscape plan for the corridor or district?
- Roadway and parking lot design: How can parking lots and driveways be designed to increase connectivity and safety for pedestrians, people with disabilities, and bicyclists in the district?
4.0 **Commercial Design Guidelines**

- Architectural context: What are the strongest architectural features in the district and how can the project complement these themes or ideas?

- Signage design: How can an overall signage concept contribute to the graphic identity of the project and the district?

It is the intent that the response to these issues shall be based on these Commercial Design Guidelines and that they are evaluated on a community life cycle basis to maximize community benefit over time and encourage projects that serve as a catalyst for positive change.

4.2 **Commercial District Site Design Principles and Guidelines**

Commercial projects of all sizes should be planned and well designed as distinctive and competitive addresses with an emphasis on connections to the surrounding community. Their design should emphasize health and sustainability principles with strong provisions for pedestrian, people with disabilities and bicyclist access.

### 4.2.1 Community Design Objectives

Renovated and new development should reflect the implementation of community design principles and concepts for commercial districts, corridors, and projects.

**Design Guidelines**

- Renovated and new projects should be designed to reinforce sustainable planning and design objectives for the surrounding district and neighborhood. This could include creation of gateways, tree-shaded parkways, open spaces, an interconnected system of pedestrian ways, or other design features.

- Renovated and new projects should be designed to reinforce sustainable planning and design objectives for the surrounding district and neighborhood. This could include creation of gateways, tree-shaded parkways, open spaces, an interconnected system of pedestrian ways, or other design features. Innovative project...
This street demonstrates desirable elements in a suburban street. It has a planting strip and pedestrian scaled lighting, and planting along parking areas. It combines the pedestrian friendly elements of shopping streets with the transportation needs of suburban streets.

**Desirable**

A typical commercial corridor street with a hodge-podge of streetscaping, curb cuts, building setbacks, and signage.

**Undesirable**

A street with undesirable design elements, including a lack of plantings, poor pedestrian lighting, and an inconsistent streetscape.

Design is encouraged, so long as these designs respect the building form and scale of the surrounding area, with consideration of building heights, setbacks, orientation, architectural style, and landscape transitions.

- Renovated and new projects should be planned and designed so that the siting and shape of buildings contribute to the district’s identity and urban design concepts. This could include orientation and siting of buildings, composition of roof forms, and architectural treatments.

- The frontage of primary commercial roadways and connecting side streets should be enhanced by the design of commercial buildings and centers. They should improve streetscape, building edge and land use continuity. Service areas should be located so as not to disturb pedestrian circulation, land use continuity, or the function of adjacent land uses.

- Providing openings to fences and sound walls can provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent neighborhoods and should include “live-end” features. Also used in cul-de-sacs, “live-ends” provide for pedestrian access at the ends to adjoining streets, open spaces, parking lots while permitting the access point to be used as a common outdoor space. “Live-ends” should be landscaped and can include benches, providing nice areas for sitting and socializing.

- Paseos should be utilized to provide common outdoor spaces and allow for pedestrian access through the development, and connection to adjacent developments.

- Building and parking setbacks should be designed as an extension of the urban design concept for the district, neighborhood, or center. This includes the depth, edge treatment, pedestrian facility and landscaping of setback areas.

- Renovated and new projects should support urban design concepts with open spaces that create gateways, act as collectors for pedestrian systems, or provide a social focal point for a project and the surrounding district.

- Renovated and new projects should have signage and graphic identity concepts that support both project and district planning and economic objectives.

**4.2.2 Roadway Design and Streetscaping**
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

Landscape, lighting and signage for every project should contribute to the implementation of streetscape principles and concepts for commercial corridors or districts. Streetscape and landscaping should promote pedestrian activity and provide for pedestrian safety, access, comfort and connections while contributing to overall placemaking and objectives for commercial districts or centers. Landscaping and trees can be used to complement buildings and to make a positive contribution to the aesthetics and function of the specific site and area. These aesthetics contribute to the mental and emotional well-being of customers, and support economic activity. Landscaping helps reduce storm water runoff, filters water and captures carbon and air particulates to improve air and water quality, provides shade during summer months and lowers temperatures reducing heat island impacts.

Design Guidelines

• Renovated and new projects should have an inter-connected system of roadways, pedestrian walks and sidewalks. This system should connect to the district and neighborhood and should be safe and attractive to pedestrians and invite walking activity.

• Projects should possess an overall landscape and streetscape concept plan. The plan should reinforce the placemaking, connections, and shopping environment objectives for the project and surrounding district.

• Projects should provide an overall street lighting and furniture concept plan. The plan should identify the types and location of lighting fixtures and furniture. The lighting and furniture should be a coordinated “family” with color and style that complements site and architectural concepts and invites shoppers to use it. The lighting plan should use fixtures that are energy efficient, contribute to a safe environment and reduce impacts on dark skies.

• Roadway and street design should incorporate various methods of traffic calming to support pedestrian circulation and active transportation objectives. This could include changing paving materials in crosswalks, undulations, reduced speeds, flashing beacons, etc.

• Use accent paving such as textured paving and paving blocks in driveways. Use of permeable concrete, cool pavements and pavers is desirable. Minimize and share driveways wherever possible.

• Along streets with greater than 50,000 vehicles ADT, plant trees conducive to absorbing particulates including deodar cedar, valley oak, and redwoods. Utilize canopy trees for pedestrian areas to increase shading, cool the pavement and support walking.

It is the intent that projects be evaluated on a community life cycle basis to maximize community benefit over time and encourage projects that serve as a catalyst for change.
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

ENHANCED SUBURBAN STREET
- Detached sidewalks
- Auto-scale lighting and signage
- Landscaping added to public ROW
- Setback buildings
- Consolidate curb cuts
- Connect parcels

STOREFRONT STREET
- Planting strip and street trees in ROW
- Pedestrian-scale lighting and signage
- Buildings along the street edge
- Connected sidewalks and storefronts
- Interconnected parking and drives
- Parking behind buildings

HYBRID STREET
- Planting strip and street trees in ROW
- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Pedestrian and auto-scaled signage
- Some buildings along the street edge
- Connected sidewalks and storefronts
- Interconnected parking and drives
- Parking behind or next to buildings
4.2.3 Building Setbacks and Alignments

Buildings in established commercial addresses should have setbacks that support streetscape, circulation and image objectives for the district.

Design Guidelines

• Buildings should be sited and designed to reinforce the pedestrian experience. Building edges should be transparent and provide a visually interesting shopping experience at a pedestrian’s pace.

• Buildings and centers should align and design building edges with adjacent projects so that they support overall urban design objectives for the district and shape and activate spaces and streetscape, and are compatible with adjacent projects yet balanced against the Design Guidelines.

• Building setbacks should contribute to overall streetscaping concepts for the district. The setbacks should be sized to support the size and spacing of trees and visual continuity of the district.

• When a project is located within a district with a design plan, or within an urban context including suburban locations in transition, shopping centers should define public street frontage with building edges and storefronts.

• Urban and suburban areas in transition are generally the commercial corridors in existing communities. Shopping Centers and Commercial areas in new growth areas should be guided by design principles in Specific Plans, New Community Design Guidelines and other planning entitlements, and with use of these Design Guidelines to ensure that the built environment enhances and supports active design, the pedestrian experience, and healthy communities.

• In non-urban locations, some public street frontage should be defined by building edges and storefronts as necessary to create a pedestrian experience.

This street has many desirable elements for a suburban or neighborhood storefront. It has street trees, transparent and connected shops and stores, pedestrian scaled lighting and signage, and architectural variety. Even though it faces a parking lot, it makes for a pedestrian-friendly edge.
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

- When necessary, setbacks should provide for landscape screening of parking and loading areas. This could include tall evergreen trees, shrubs, trellis, and/or berming.

- The corners of intersections should feature design components, such as storefronts and landscaping and should deemphasize parking lots.

- All landscaping and paving shall consider the needs and safety of people with disabilities.
4.2.4 BUILDING EDGES AND STOREFRONTS

Building edges and storefronts should be planned and designed to be an integral part of a district’s pedestrian system.

Design Guidelines

• Building edges should contribute to a safe, comfortable and interesting pedestrian shopping experience. At least eight (8) feet of unobstructed sidewalk should be provided along storefront edges.

• Display windows should comprise at least 33% of the width of the facade that faces a public street. When large blank walls are unavoidable, they shall be articulated with 3-dimensional elements, such as planters, and softened with vines and shrubs.

• Renovated and new commercial buildings and centers should have a clearly understood system of connected storefronts and entries. Sidewalks, streetscaping and building edges should be designed in a coordinated fashion.

• Building edges and storefronts should be designed to reflect both auto-oriented and pedestrian-oriented merchandising needs of the tenants and district. Pedestrian safety, access and comfort should not be sacrificed by an auto-oriented design approach.

• Corner and mid-block pad buildings should be oriented toward and have some transparency to the street. Drive-through windows should minimize their visual and functional impact on the sidewalk, safe pedestrian circulation routes, and community design objectives, as further addressed in Section 4.2.6.

4.2.5 PARKING LOTS AND DRIVEWAYS
COMMUNITY SHOPPING CENTERS

The illustration shows a site concept plan for a community commercial center.

The concept features:
- Buildings located along the street edge and parking in the interior of the site;
- Architectural variety and connected system of storefronts and displays;
- Interconnected driveways and walkway system with a small park; and
- Service areas located out of sight.

CONTRIBUTION TO STREETS

Community Shopping Center

Hybrid District Context

In suburban districts that are undergoing a more urban transition, contribution to streets could include:
- Creation of internal pedestrian "main streets";
- Residential uses/mixed-use interface with existing residential streets; and/or
- More continuous storefronts along public streets.

KEY
A Anchor Store
B In-line Shops
C Commercial Pad
D Open Space/Public Art
S Service/Loading Docks
Walkway
Parking lots and driveways should be planned to reduce the number of curb cuts; provide interconnectivity between sites; and designed to support pedestrian activity, safety, connections and comfort.

**Design Guidelines**

- Parking for commercial uses should be located next to or behind buildings. These parking areas should be divided up into smaller, landscaped lots with defined pedestrian connections.

- Renovated and new projects should be planned to reduce the number of curb cuts and driveways. Where possible, projects should share driveways and parking access with adjacent sites to provide an interconnected system of auto and service access points.

- Projects should have a hierarchy of primary and secondary drives and roads. Primary driveways should be designed as streets. This includes incorporating sidewalks, streetscape and lighting to improve wayfinding and reinforcing site design and pedestrian connection concepts.

- Parking lots and driveways should provide pedestrian connections to storefronts. Dedicated walkways through parking lots and sidewalks should be included in the design of access roadways. Distinguish walkways from driving surfaces using varied surface treatments, and raising walkways, separated or protected walkways or similar design approaches.

- Traffic calming techniques should be employed in parking and driveway areas to support pedestrian circulation concepts.

- Parking areas should incorporate best practices that include: trees, lighting, landscaped storm water features, cool and pervious pavement and pavers. Plant trees and shrubs to soften the overall impact of parking areas and to provide shade and noise reduction, heat island cooling and improved air quality.

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1 "Cool pavements" refers to a type of pavement technology that better reflects solar radiation and stays cooler in the sun than traditional pavements. Pavement reflectance is enhanced by using a reflective aggregate, clear binder, or reflective surface coating. While hot pavements aggravate the urban heat island effect by warming the local air and contribute to global warming by radiating heat into the atmosphere, cool pavements store less heat, increase the solar reflectance of roads and lower surface and air temperatures. Thereby, cooling stormwater run-off, to reduce the damage to local watersheds; slowing atmospheric chemical reactions that create smog; offsetting warming caused by greenhouse gases; and saving energy on street lighting and air conditioning that will reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants.
• Parking lots shall include trees to provide shade and reduce temperature, consistent with Zoning Code standards. Tree selection, planting approach and irrigation should provide for rapid growth and sustained health of shade trees. Small ornamental trees are appropriate for accent planting but should not be used as shade trees.

• Trees and landscaping elements shall be used to organize large parking areas into recognizable smaller segments that reflect pedestrian circulation and site organization and scale.

• Lighting in parking areas should be LED lights or other acceptable high energy efficiency light, with automatic controls to dim lights after certain hours or when no one is present. Lighting shall be adequate to provide for a safe environment.

• Create textures, patterns, and colors in the design of paved parking areas, entries, or other high traffic pedestrian paths, to create visual interest and distinguish pedestrian routes from other paved areas. Do not design large monolithic areas of single color untextured paving.

• Use accent paving such as textured paving and paving blocks in driveways. Use of permeable concrete, cool pavements and pavers is desirable.

• Incorporate storm water quality measures into the parking areas to treat the storm runoff and enhance the parking areas by providing shade and reducing the amount of paving.

• Where feasible, provide for electric vehicle fast-charging stations, car and bike share locations, and other alternatives such as zip car.

• Bike racks shall be designed with the most current designs that provide secure locking features and are attractive. Many bike racks double as public art to add interest.
PARKING LOT DESIGN

This sketch illustrates many desirable features of a retrofitted parking lot project that includes development of a new pad building.

The features include:
1. Landscaped parking lot edges
2. Shade trees to keep it cool
3. Pedestrian walkways with a special paving treatment that connect to storefron ds and adjacent development
4. Pedestrian scaled lighting in pedestrian areas
5. Clear and well-designed entry signage
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

The illustration shows a site concept plan for a Big Box commercial center.

The concept features:
- Anchor and pad tenants in locations that are visible from freeway;
- Buildings located along the street edge and parking in the interior of the site;
- A flexible block pattern that can accommodate a variety of uses and provide a connected system of storefronts and displays;
- Interconnected driveways and walkway system with a small park; and
- Service areas located out of sight.

**Desirable**

Big Box Center

**Organizational Pattern**
- Flexible street and parking systems
- Defining internal and public street edges

**Access**
- Three primary access points
- Visual access to freeway for anchor and pads

**KEY**
A  Anchor Stores
B  In-line Shops
C  Commercial Pads
D  Open Space/Public Art
S  Service/Loading Docks
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

Commercial Pad Project

This illustration shows a site concept plan for a commercial pad site.

The concept features:
• Buildings located along the street edge or corner with parking in the side and rear of the site;
• Architectural interest and storefronts along street;
• Interconnected driveways and walkway system with adjacent sites; and
• Service areas located out of sight.

Desirable

Commercial Pad Site Plan

Key
E Entry
S Service

Street Orientation for Pads

Mid-Block Site
• Parking in side and back
• Street orientation
• Connected and landscaped parking lots

Corner Site
• Corner orientation with parking in rear and side
4.2.6 Drive-Through Businesses and Automobile Service Stations

This section provides guidance for the development and review of drive-through businesses, as well as automotive service stations, automobile repair centers, and automobile washes, which are frequently provided in combination with each other. The County Zoning Code classifies and defines the following auto service uses:

• Automobile service stations address gas stations and convenience stores of all types, including:
  » “Primary automobile service stations,” stand alone facilities devoted primarily to the retail sales of gasoline and similar motor fuels and the sale of travel aides and automobile accessories to the public, with auto service, repair, maintenance facilities hydrogen fueling stations, and electric vehicle charging stations as incidental or secondary uses; and
  » “Secondary automobile service stations,” where the retail sales of gasoline and similar motor fuels, hydrogen fueling, or electric vehicle charging stations for the public is an incidental or secondary use to a primary commercial or business establishment, such as a grocery store or government center.

• Automobile repair centers, in which the primary use is repair of automobiles, are classified and defined in the County Zoning Code as “major automobile repairs” and “minor automobile repairs.”

• Automobile washes are facilities designed for the purpose of either self-service or automatic washing of automobiles, either as stand alone uses or as secondary uses to an automotive service station or other primary land use.

The design guidelines are flexibly structured to respond to varying site conditions and neighborhood settings. Automobile service stations in the County come in a variety of forms:

• Standalone neighborhood convenience gas stations and convenience stores;

• Traveler centers that may be combined with other services (typically restrooms, convenience retail, automated teller machines, automobile washes, food service, drive through restaurants, hydrogen fuel, and/or electric vehicle charging stations);
4.0 COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

• A secondary or ancillary use to a retail or business establishment, providing gas pumps and other services, such as drive through restaurants, automobile washes, hydrogen fueling, and electric vehicle charging stations, to provide a one stop shop; and

• Other custom formats to serve special uses or business needs.

The trend towards multi-service convenience retail centers that are less auto-oriented and more retail-oriented in character creates an opportunity to better integrate drive through businesses and automobile service stations into the diverse context of the County, while promoting walkability and supporting the design of active communities. To this end, drive through businesses and automobile service uses should be designed with the following considerations:

• Balance business needs and standardized designs with the local sense of place of the community or neighborhood. Encourage design that is responsive to the local and regional context and contributes to the established or desired character and identity of the commercial or neighborhood area.

• Support a more pedestrian-friendly environment along public streets, particularly in urban and commercial settings, and in the organization of private streets internal to a project, to support the safe access of both automobiles and pedestrians.

• Provide quality architecture and landscape design that complements or ensures compatibility with adjacent land uses and on-site activities.

• Minimize impacts to adjacent land uses from on-site activities with appropriate siting of facilities, screening of service functions, and application of landscape buffers between uses.

• Coordinate the requirements of various on-site functions within a commercial or business center, particularly shared ingress and egress points and safe internal vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation.
Design Guidelines

Site and District Design

• Encourage design that is responsive to the local and regional context and contributes to established or desired character and identity of the commercial or neighborhood area. Projects should aim to enhance the community or neighborhood.

• Projects should support a pedestrian-friendly environment along public streets and reinforce or enhance the streetscape image of the district or neighborhood.

• In urban areas and commercial corridors, building structures, such as convenience stores and lobbies and generous landscaping should be located close to the street, to help define the street edge. Within the more rural parts of the County, wider landscaped setbacks are preferable for consistency with setbacks of adjacent developments and structures.

• Service windows and stacking lanes for drive-through businesses should have minimized impact on public streets, particularly at corner sites. These facilities should be located interior to the development to minimize conflicts with pedestrians and circulation, and should be appropriately screened. Screening for drive-through lanes located interior to the development may include, but is not limited to, landscape and/or architectural features such as low walls or fences, trellises, arbors, or other architectural features. Where a drive-through lane is located between a building and the public right-of-way, screening shall be accomplished with a combination of architectural features and landscaping.

• Distinguish walkways from driving surfaces by using varied paving treatments and by raising walkways to curb level. Stacking lanes should also be clearly delineated from other driving surfaces.

• Design the majority of the pedestrian level façade facing the street highly transparent with clear glass windows and doors that animate public streets and maximize views in and out of the building.

• Provide weather protection at the main building entrance, for areas close to public transit stops, bicycle parking, walkways, and in places with pedestrian amenities.

• Provide customer entrance doors clearly visible from public streets and directly accessible from the public sidewalk. Provide customer entrance doors that are close to parking areas.

• Locate required bicycle parking close to the building entrance in a manner that does not impede pedestrian movement.
4.0 COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Locate access for stacking lanes away from public streets or driveways so that vehicle queues do not block traffic on public streets or affect on-site vehicular and pedestrian circulation. Locate driveway entrances and exits as far away from the street intersection as possible, designed in accordance with the County Improvement Standards.

- Locate noise-generating uses, including drive through speakers and music, repair shop operations and machinery, car wash openings, vacuum stations, loading and refuse areas and stacking lanes away from sensitive uses (e.g., housing, schools, and day care centers). Where this cannot be avoided, buffer noise impacts with landscaping or landscaped berms and attenuating fencing in accordance with the landscape and screening requirements of the County Zoning Code.

- Provide separate stacking lanes for two or more drive-through uses, such as a car wash and drive-through restaurant located on the same site.

Additional Siting Guidelines for Pump Islands and Automobile Washes:

- Design automobile service stations to provide clearance and unobstructed circulation for fuel delivery trucks.

- Pump island curbs or bollards are encouraged, to provide protection to fuel dispensing units.

- Openings to wash bays should not face an adjacent residential zoning district.

- Openings to wash bays should not face and/or should be screened from the public right-of-way (except at driveway access locations). Screening should consist of landscaping or a low decorative wall, in accordance with screening requirements in the County’s Zoning Code.

- Vacuuming or drying equipment should not be placed adjacent to a residential zoning district, unless separated from the residential zoning district with a building or other solid barrier; and should not be placed along a public street, unless adequately screened to reduce visibility.

Architecture

- The design of stand alone automobile service stations should conform to the dominant existing or planned character of the surrounding neighborhood. This can be accomplished through the use of similar forms, materials, and colors. In areas where no existing or little context exists, project applicants should work with the County to determine the character and design theme for the project.

- The design of a facility that occupies a pad or portion of a building within a larger commercial or business center should be compatible with or enhance the design elements of that center.
• Service station pump island canopies, including supporting columns and ancillary buildings should be architecturally compatible with the primary service building(s) in color, materials and building design.

• Drive-through elements should be architecturally integrated into the building rather than appearing to be applied or appear as an appendage to the building.

• All sides of a building should express consistent architectural detail and character. All site walls, screen walls, and pump island canopies, and other covered outdoor areas should be architecturally integrated with the building, with similar materials, colors, and details.

Landscaping

• The design of stand alone automobile service stations should conform to the dominant existing or planned character of the surrounding neighborhood. This can be accomplished through the use of similar forms, materials, and colors. In areas where no existing or little context exists, project applicants should work with the County to determine the character and design theme for the project.

• Incorporate landscaping that is compatible with the public realm landscape image and dominant existing or planned streetscape character of the commercial or neighborhood district.

• Landscaping should be provided near the primary building(s) to soften the structure and integrate it with the surrounding environment. Landscaping should be provided in accordance with the landscape requirements in the County Zoning Code.

• Trees should be provided along pedestrian pathways to provide shade, reduce heat island effects, particularly in parking lots, and reduce glare.

• Where site constraints require the location of the drive-through lanes, drive through areas, driveways, or parking areas between the street and the building, the view of the lanes should be minimized with the use of screening, landscaping, and other design elements, such as low decorative walls. Plant street trees, shrubs or other vegetation along the edge of the street. Use trees, shrubs and low walls to screen automobiles and automobile lights from view, while allowing visibility into the site.

• Landscaping and other screening should be installed to control the effects of facility operations, such as light, noise and vehicular movement adjacent to an existing residential or agricultural-residential use or zoning district and other sensitive uses. Refer to the County Zoning Code for landscape buffer and screening requirements adjacent to residential and agricultural-residential zoning districts.
AUTO REPAIR CENTER PROJECT

This illustration shows a site concept plan for an auto service center.

The concept features:
• Street orientation for offices, lobbies and convenience stores;
• Parking and driveways located away from pedestrian sidewalks and pathways; and
• Architecturally interesting and pedestrian-friendly designs facing public streets.

KEY
L Lobby/Office
S Service Bays

Auto Repair Center Site Plan

AUTO REPAIR CENTER IN CONTEXT

Residential

Commercial Street

Auto Repair
• Lobby and office facing street
• Service bays in rear of site
• Parking in rear and side portions of site
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

The illustration to the left shows a site concept plan for an auto service station and drive-through business on a shared lot.

The concept features:
1. Trees, shrubs, and other vegetation to define the street edge, shade sidewalks and parking areas, and screen automobiles from view, while allowing visibility into the site.
2. Buildings and the pump island canopy on the site are architecturally compatible in color, materials, and design.
3. Use of walls and landscape buffers to screen and attenuate noise from facility operations.
4. Walkways to connect the automobile service station and drive-through business with adjacent streets.
5. Shared driveways with enhanced paving at curb cuts.

KEY
A Automobile Service Station Store and Fuel Pumps  B Automobile Wash  C Drive-Through Business
4.0 **Commercial Design Guidelines**

**Lighting**
- On-site lighting should be designed to support the safety and security of the site and be designed so that no source of light is visible off the property, unreasonably disturbs occupants of adjacent properties, or interferes with traffic operations.

- Exterior lighting design should take into account background lighting levels of other sources and the characteristics of the surrounding area.

- Direct and reflected glare should be minimized.

- Light fixtures mounted under pump island canopies should be completely recessed into the canopy, using flat lenses that are flush with the underside or ceiling of the fuel canopy. Lights should not be mounted to the top or sides of the canopy, nor should side fascias of the canopy be illuminated.

- Site and parking lot lighting should utilize full cut-off fixtures, aimed downward and away from the property line.

- Building mounted lighting should be full cut-off fixtures, aimed downward, and shielded so the light source is not visible off the property.

**Signage and Corporate Identification**
- Business identity, either by awnings, accent bands, paint or other applied color schemes, signage, parapet details, or materials should not be the dominant architectural feature.

- All signage should be architecturally integrated with the building façade or the site's surroundings, in terms of size, shape and lighting, such that they do not visually compete with the building architecture or design of the site.

- Signs for multiple corporations sharing the same site should be integrated as one unit to create a shared identity for the property or should be located and designed as a package, where signs do not visually compete with each other.

- Ground mounted monument signs are preferred over canopy fascia signs.

- New development should anticipate and provide logical sign areas, allowing flexibility for new uses as the building is reused over time.

- Raceways and transformers should be hidden, when possible.
4.2.7 **INTEGRATED TRANSIT**

New commercial development and renovation of existing centers and buildings should be planned and designed to facilitate access to transit.

**Design Guidelines**

- Renovated and new projects should be clearly connected to transit services. Sidewalks should provide direct access to transit stops. Special considerations for patrons should be taken into account, such as shopping cart storage and bike racks.

- Transit stops should be conveniently and centrally located in commercial districts. They should be easy to find and collocated with commercial services and amenities. Their location and design should be coordinated with Transit provider.

- Transit stops/shelters and connecting pedestrian routes should be well lit, visible and facilitate access for people with disabilities.

- The business owner is encouraged to provide a location for convenient route and schedule information.

- Bicycle facilities should be designed into the site plan in a way that supports use of bicycles.
4.2.8 Transition to Residential Areas

Renovated and new projects should be designed to enhance adjacent residential neighborhoods and promote active transportation from these neighborhoods, rather than automobiles for short trips. Projects should be designed to reduce the visual, noise and use impacts on adjacent residential areas.

Design Guidelines

- Renovated and new projects should enhance the connections to shopping streets. They should provide streetscape, sidewalks, building setback and storefront design that link residential streets to main commercial and transit streets. Residents should be able to walk a direct route from their homes to commercial center stores without traversing parking lots and having to walk out of their way around perimeter fencing and walls.

- Renovated and new projects should provide a landscape plan that supports the design and pedestrian access objectives for contiguous residential streets.

- New projects should acknowledge the scale and proximity of adjacent residential neighborhoods by stepping down in height, increasing setbacks, and providing a more friendly building orientation.

- Paseos should be utilized to provide common outdoor spaces and allow for pedestrian access through the development and connection to adjacent developments.

- Unnecessary tall concrete block sound walls should not separate commercial uses from residential uses. Where sound walls exist or are necessary, breaks in the sound walls shall be provided for access from adjacent neighborhoods and designed as “live-ends.”

- Placing loading and service areas adjacent to residential areas is discouraged. Site circulation and placement of loading areas should be incorporated into the project so that it is screened and held back from residential areas. Where screening walls are required, they shall be designed as a natural extension of the architectural and landscaping concepts for the project. Evergreen trees should be used for screening and to help with noise reduction.

- Automotive and service bays should orient away from residential development and public streets. Service bays should not dominate the public street frontage.
TRANSITION TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS

This diagram indicates the desirable and undesirable site planning approaches in terms of interfacing with an adjacent residential neighborhood.

DESIRABLE
- Sets buildings toward the street corner
- Connects sidewalks to neighborhood street with landscaped storefront edge
- Hides service and loading area within building envelope
- Provides landscaped site border
- Uses low-scale and reflected lighting to direct light away from neighbors

UNDESIRABLE
- Sets mass of building along lot line next to houses
- Has curb cuts and no landscaping along residential street
- Has outdoor loading area next to residential property that is visible from street
- Has no landscape buffer at site edges
- Has tall parking lot lighting and security lighting that spills into residential yards
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

4.3 Landscaping/Site Elements

Landscape design should be a defining feature for every project that contributes to the community’s health, sustainability, image, and pedestrian activity, safety, access and comfort. Landscaping should promote pedestrian activity and provide for pedestrian safety, access, comfort and connections while contributing to overall placemaking and image objectives for village districts. Landscaping and trees can be used to complement buildings and to make a positive contribution to the aesthetics and function of the specific site and area. These aesthetics contribute to the mental and emotional well-being of customers, and support economic activity. Landscaping helps reduce storm water runoff, filters water and captures carbon and air particulates to improve air and water quality, provides shade during summer months and lowers temperatures reducing heat island impacts.

Design Guidelines

• The design of landscaping for commercial projects should reduce the creation of heat islands and filter harmful greenhouse gas and smog. Landscaping should provide softscape areas in place of paving and create shade. All site areas not covered by structures, walkways, driveways and parking should be landscaped.

• Site landscaping should include stormwater quality treatment features, such as vegetated swales, to attenuate flows and remove pollutants from runoff before it leaves the site, consistent with the County’s stormwater quality control measures.

• New and renovated commercial projects should use landscaping to reinforce overall site and architectural design concepts for the project and surrounding neighborhood. This includes a hierarchy of canopy trees, accent/flowering trees, shrubs and groundcover. Drought tolerant planting should be used consistent with the County Water Conservation Ordinances. Special hardscape, such as pavers, stained concrete, and stone, should be used to identify pathways and gathering places in projects. UngROUTed pavers and permeable pavements are encouraged to reduce runoff.

• Incorporate appropriate landscaping that includes a variety of trees, shrubs, and other plantings. Utilize Sacramento County’s River Friendly Landscape (RFL) Guidelines for plant material selection, placement and maintenance. The sustainable RFL guidelines are water and energy efficient, reduces maintenance, improves air quality and diverts green waste from the landfills.

New and renovated commercial projects should use landscape to reinforce overall site and architectural design concepts for the project and surrounding neighborhood.
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

- Landscaped storm water quality design measures shall provide multiple public benefits and be integrated into open space areas to provide storm water quality benefits and landscaping benefits.

- Provide on-going maintenance to identify and ensure the timely replacement of any dead or diseased vegetation.

- Design landscaping to be compatible with building design. Use trellises, arbors, cascading landscaping, vines and perimeter garden walls wherever suitable.

- Consider security issues in the landscape design of the site, including creation of barriers and screening.

- Do not allow landscaping to impede fire access to hydrant connections.

- Preserve and incorporate existing and native trees within the project site design to the greatest extent possible.

- Retain existing mature trees in landscape and building location plans to the greatest extent possible. Where existing trees must be removed, trees shall be replaced on-site or in another location, acceptable to the Planning Director, to compensate for the loss in canopy and environmental benefits. Participation in the County’s Tree Mitigation program to compensate for canopy loss is also acceptable.

- Provide all landscaped areas with irrigation systems as needed to sustain the landscape. Comply with the County’s Landscape Ordinance.

- Landscaping should be used to enhance and soften screening of loading and parking areas. It should also be used to help frame views and edges.

- The design of any non-building structures such as entry gateways, pavilions, or walkway trellises shall complement their related commercial center or building design and/or theme.

- Artwork and other amenities, such as benches, murals, sculptures and fountains, are encouraged in public areas of projects. The landscape plan should identify locations and infrastructure support (i.e., lighting, power, water, etc.). Placement of amenities should not adversely impact people with disabilities by encroaching into walkways.
4.0 COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Tree plantings used to satisfy the county parking shade requirements should be located in an ordered pattern that enhances the overall site image, reduces the visual impact of large parking areas, and reflects the pedestrian movement from car to buildings and communal open spaces.

- Mature trees, rock outcrops, creeks and other desirable natural site features should be preserved and incorporated into the landscape plan. Projects located adjacent to open space, creeks or wetlands should include a landscape interface that is coordinated and consistent with natural areas. A vegetative buffer should be included to treat runoff before it reaches the natural area.

- Use of known high allergen plantings is discouraged.

Drainage/Flood Facilities:

- Neighborhood parks are encouraged to be centers of neighborhood activity and could be combined with schools, community recreation centers, libraries and other civic uses.

- To encourage sufficient usage, parks and open space should be strategically located in or near residential areas and commercial districts and be accessible via roadways, transit routes, and off-road pedestrian and bicycle trails and paseos (walkways).

- Size, type, and location shall be sized and located as to support the community master plan goals.

- Flood protection and drainage facilities shall be designed to provide multiple public benefits wherever possible. Facilities shall include multi-purpose improvements consisting of recreation, the environment, storm water runoff, water reclamation, infiltration, groundwater recharge, flood control, etc. Attractive joint use basins, such as parks (in addition to Quimby land dedication requirements) or parkways with trails that also convey water to water quality basins or similar facilities and provide some water quality treatment are examples of desired multiple public benefit facilities.

- Public safety is a high priority and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles should be applied.

- Open space should be connected to provide habitat corridors through urban environments.

Outdoor sitting and gathering places with public art add to the quality of the shopping experience, create a social focus for the project and adjacent neighborhoods, and add value to tenants that benefit from sharing patrons.
4.4 Commercial Architectural Design Principles and Guidelines

New projects and renovation of existing buildings should contribute to the design and placemaking objectives for their commercial district and adjacent neighborhoods.

4.4.1 Architectural Design Concepts

Projects in specific plan or other special planning districts should support existing architectural design policies and concepts. Every renovation and new commercial project should pursue architectural concepts that are compatible and further image and economic goals for the district and adjacent neighborhoods. Consult with the Office of Planning and Environmental Review for projects in these areas.

Design Guidelines
• For freeway and arterial-oriented big box centers, design themes should tie together all the tenants in the center. When multiple centers are located in the same district, they each should provide design concepts that enhance the continuity of the street as a single business address.

• In aging strip districts, new and renovated commercial projects should strive to introduce new design themes and concepts emphasizing pedestrian safety, access, comfort and interconnectivity.

• New or renovated freestanding commercial pad buildings should be designed to meet both the merchandising needs of the tenant and image objectives and design themes for the district.

• For renovated or new commercial projects in a residential context, they should reflect the architectural traditions, scale and character of the adjacent neighborhood.

• The use of green and sustainable development standards and practices in planning, design, construction and renovation of new and existing buildings should be used wherever possible. Sustainable green infrastructure should be utilized wherever possible.
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

4.4.2 Building Form and Massing

Building massing and orientation should result in a pleasing and coherent composition of building elements and spaces.

Design Guidelines

- The placement and shape of buildings should support placemaking objectives for projects. Buildings should shape, enclose and define pedestrian edges and spaces and streets.
- Freestanding “big box” stores are discouraged. Large stores should be integrated into in-line shops or wrapped in storefront buildings.
- A coherent family of roof forms should support urban design and site concepts. This could include creating gateway elements, reducing the scale of large buildings to better fit a fine-grained commercial or residential context, or support placemaking objectives.
- Roof forms or parapets should be continuous, not superficial forms limited to the most visible areas.
- The massing of a commercial center should result in well-proportioned buildings. Bay spacing, horizontal and vertical rhythms should have a pleasing composition.
- Long, unbroken blank walls are discouraged. Each side of buildings should have an uniform approach to design and detail. Any non-pedestrian focused façade shall have articulation related to the overall building design.
- Corner bay articulations, stepping and varying wall planes, raising and lowering parapet walls, and trellises can be used to reduce the visual monotony of large buildings. Varying building height with one, two or and three-story forms is strongly encouraged as a way to increase visual interest.
- Canopies, arcades and other architectural treatments, such as reveals, recesses, projections and cornices can be added to buildings to give tall walls a pedestrian-friendly scale.

The shopping centers below have unifying design themes. The top example uses a uniform architectural style with variations in scale. The lower example has a variety of styles but emphasizes a strongly defined “main street” image and pedestrian orientation.
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

Making Connected Spaces

The illustrations on the right show desirable and undesirable approaches to shaping and site planning commercial buildings.

Desirable
- Responds to urban design objectives for district gateway
- Shapes, connects and activates pedestrian edges and spaces
- Reduces visual size of overall building by articulating building and roof forms
- Pleasing and well proportioned composition of building elements

Undesirable
- Ignores urban design and streetscape objectives for district gateway
- Does not create connected, comfortable or defined pedestrian spaces
- Presents large and unarticulated building and roof forms
- Poorly proportioned building elements
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

4.4.3 Architectural Design and Features

The architectural design of projects should have a vocabulary of design elements that contributes to overall design and image concepts at a district and pedestrian scale.

Design Guidelines

- Architectural details such as arcades, recessed exterior balconies, changes in façade treatment, window awnings, canopies, setbacks, recesses, reveals, or other building elements should be used to enhance the building and streetscape character.

- Franchise architecture should be minimized and dealt with in the context of the surrounding area. Franchise architecture includes pseudo-historic styles or “trademark” roof shapes, which sacrifice the integrity of a project or district to promote a single tenant.

- The composition of building elevations should elaborate on massing and urban design objectives for commercial projects and their districts.

- The design of renovated and new projects should employ architectural concepts that have a unifying vocabulary of forms, design elements, details and materials. All facades of buildings should draw on the same vocabulary of forms, detail and materials.

- Integrated base wainscoting, cornices, canopies, awnings, brackets and other design features that add a finer grain of detail and design are encouraged.

- Building entrances should be designed as prominent features. Canopies, porticos, recessed entries, added ornamentation and other design elements should enhance the design of entries.

- Refer to Section 5.4.2.E for guidelines on cargo containers used for commercial building structures.

These photos show features that are desirable for creating pedestrian friendly shopping edges. The designs have transparent storefronts, wide sidewalks with areas to sit, and integrated awning and signage concepts.
4.4.4 MATERIALS AND COLORS
Selection of materials and finishes for new and renovation projects should be of high quality and reinforce overall image and massing concepts.

Design Guidelines
- Architectural materials should convey an image of quality and durability. Buildings shall be constructed with high quality materials that are durable and enhance building character. Stucco, brick, stone, terra cotta, tile, exterior insulation and finish systems (EIFS), or other solid-facing materials should be used. Certain materials have an inherently inexpensive, insubstantial, or garish quality, and are discouraged. These include:
  - Roofs of composite shingles, painted tiles, metal or other sheet material.
  - Walls of vinyl, plywood, or other sheet materials.
- Use sustainable building materials that are high quality, durable, provide energy efficiency benefits, require low maintenance, and complement the design of the building. Use of quality recycled products is encouraged.
- Use of “Permanent” and/or cool roof products and materials with reflective surfaces are desirable because of their low maintenance, energy conservation and insulation values.
- Employ Energy Star appliances and energy efficient lighting in construction, to the extent feasible, consistent with the adopted Green Building Policies and requirements.
- Maintain windows free of obstructions and signs to promote maximum visibility of merchandise, and visibility by Sheriff patrols consistent with CPTED strategies.
- Materials and their use should reinforce and enhance architectural concepts.
- Visible roofs should be designed as an integral part of the building design, and clad in clay, concrete tile, or the similar high quality materials.
- Walls should be clad in substantial materials and be well detailed to give walls a pedestrian-friendly scale. Architectural treatments including canopies, awnings, trellises, and other architectural treatments should be included to provide a high quality storefront design.
- A variety of materials should be used on building faces visible to the public. Accent materials shall be of high quality materials that do not appear as an appendage.
- Faux-styles are discouraged. When buildings are designed with obvious references to a period style, materials shall
be consistent with that period or style. Honest interpretations of historic styles are acceptable.

• The use of color is encouraged; however, garish colors and materials are discouraged.

• Ground floor storefront display windows should be transparent clear glass. Awnings and canopies should be used for sun protection. Windows on upper floors may be lightly tinted, but should not be reflective.

• Exterior cart storage areas adjacent to buildings shall have an enclosure with a design consistent with that building.

• Any fenced or screened outdoor seating or vending areas next to a building shall have the enclosure designed to be consistent with the building design.

4.4.5 Lighting
Lighting should be an integral part of the planning and design of commercial projects, anticipating the needs of the shopping experience, businesses and adjacent residential areas.

Design Guidelines
• Lighting in service areas should be the minimum required for operation, and be designed to minimize visibility of those areas.

• Low, pedestrian-scaled lighting fixtures are encouraged to help identify and light pedestrian routes.

• Lighting should provide for business interest even after hours, when business is closed, to contribute to pedestrian presence and sense of safety.

• Provide energy efficient lighting in all common areas and buildings, including pedestrian and vehicular routes. The emphasis should be on personal safety, with lighting landscape or building surfaces secondary.

• Light fixtures should face downward or employ shielding to reduce light sources and visibility from outside the site.

• Lighting in parking areas should be LED lights or other acceptable high energy efficiency light, with automatic controls to dim lights after certain hours or when no one is present. Lighting shall be adequate to provide for a safe environment.

• All lighting fixtures visible to pedestrians shall be designed to minimize glare.
LIGHTING

These illustrations demonstrate how lighting concepts should consider general lighting, pedestrian and security needs while adding to the visual interest of commercial centers. They show how lighting is kept focused on the site to reduce glare on adjacent areas.

Light fixtures should face downward or employ shielding to reduce light sources and visibility from outside the site.

LOADING AREAS AND TRASH ENCLOSURES

The Guidelines encourage integrating the design of loading and service areas into the overall development. This example provides architectural treatment for a loading dock. Trash enclosures should be architecturally designed to match the retail and commercial buildings.
4.4.6 Service Areas

Service facilities should be concealed from public view.

Design Guidelines

• Trash bins and compactors, utility meters, transformers, and other service elements should be enclosed or otherwise completely concealed from view. Service elements, including screening with walls or fences, should be designed as integral elements of the commercial project’s architecture or landscaping.

• Services, utilities, and equipment should be enclosed or buried and should be placed outside of landscape planters at gateway entrances, or otherwise concealed from view.

• Roof-mounted equipment should be concealed by enclosures that are consistent in design with the building design.

• Coordinate with utility companies to encourage the placement of utility fixtures, such as fire backflow preventers and electrical boxes, outside of planter areas and/or to screen such fixtures.

• Provide trash and recycling education information near enclosures. Enclosures shall be in a safe and secure location and shall be kept clean and odor-free.

• Trash enclosure areas shall be designed to the County’s latest storm water quality source control design standards and shall provide trash and recycling education information.

• Radio and television receiving dishes should be located to the side or rear of the lot (or on that portion of the lot most distant from the street). Any dish located within a side yard or corner lot should be located in the back portion of the lot, furthest from the fronting street. Receiving dishes are encouraged to be screened from view from the street with enclosures that are consistent with the building design.

Wireless Communication Facilities:

• Refer to the County Zoning Code for development standards for wireless communication facilities, in addition to the following guidelines.

• The addition of wireless communication equipment on existing structures, including roof-mounting and co-location on existing poles, is preferred.
• Roof-mounted antennas and equipment are required to be constructed, mounted, and painted to blend in with the predominant architecture of the building and/or appear as part of the building.

• New towers and related structures should use materials, colors, textures, screening, and landscaping that best allows them to blend in with the prevalent architecture of the project or with the natural features around the site, as applicable. Neutral grays, blues, greens, browns, and dull metallic colors are recommended. Artistic and stealth designs are also encouraged; however, each structure will be evaluated individually for approval by the County.

• Existing site features, including trees, mature vegetation, and structures should be used as screening, when possible, to allow new facilities to blend in with the background at increased site distances.

• Use of “stealth by design”\(^2\) is encouraged, to disguise and ensure new facilities are compatible with the surrounding environment. Disguising or camouflaging cell towers and cell tower elements helps to preserve the aesthetics of the project site while maintaining purpose and function. Examples of stealth designs include flagpoles, utility poles, street or parking lot lights, bell towers, clock towers, tree-like structures (e.g., monopines or monopalms), public art, and etc.

• Use of pole structures (e.g., street lights, utility poles, and flag poles, as shown in the examples below), compatible with the neighborhood streetscape character, are preferred. Placement of such structures should be coordinated with existing development, so as not to interfere with public access, including Americans with Disabilities Act requirements. The height of pole structures should complement and not exceed the height of existing street lights or utility poles within the neighborhood and shall not exceed the acceptable heights for structures permitted by the County’s Zoning Code.

• Where a new tower is constructed, it should be enclosed with fencing, not less than six feet in height; composed of solid wood, masonry, chain-link fencing with slats, or other approved alternative; and equipped with appropriate anti-climbing devices, to protect against unauthorized climbing. Alternatively, equipment shelters located at the ground level should be raised above a 6 inch curb and screened with landscape materials or enclosed, as appropriate, to protect against potential vandalism; or should otherwise be buried underground.

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2 “Stealth by Design” is an approach to architecture that disguises buildings or structures to blend with their surroundings, while maintaining purpose and function.
4.5 Commercial Signage

Signage should contribute to the graphic identity and wayfinding objectives for the commercial district, center, or project while reinforcing the project’s architectural and site planning concepts. New free-standing and monument signs require design review.

4.5.1 District Signage

Development and public works projects in specific plan or special planning areas should support signage policies and design concepts. Signage identifying shopping and commercial districts should support both wayfinding and graphic identity objectives both day and night. The signage plan should provide consistency throughout the district.

Design Guidelines
- District image themes and design concepts should be reflected in district-wide signage.
- Median, monument, and other district identity and wayfinding signage should be designed and located as part of an overall district signage plan. Signage must comply with ADA requirements.
- Placement and maintenance of district signage must be coordinated with the County Department of Transportation.

FAMILY OF SIGNAGE
This drawing illustrates the “family” of signage for a commercial district.
The signs include:
- A. District monument sign
- B. Site entry signage
- C. Wayfinding signage
- D. Banners
4.0 Commercial Design Guidelines

4.5.2 Signage for Multi-Tenant Projects

For commercial development with multiple tenants, monument, entry, wayfinding, tenant and other signage should be designed as a “family.”

Design Guidelines

• Commercial centers should have an overall “Master Signage Criteria”. They should express a “family” of signage that supports the merchandising needs of tenants, wayfinding, and graphic identity objectives for the project, district, and adjacent neighborhood. Signage must comply with ADA requirements.

• Commercial projects’ signage plan should have designs for known tenants and future unknown tenants.

• Large garish signs unnecessary to the commercial use of a commercial center are discouraged.

• Monument signs are preferred and encouraged rather than pole signs unless pole signs are authorized within a designated district with specific guidelines and architectural intent.

• Affixed individual characters for signs are encouraged.
4.5.3 **Signage for Single-Tenant Buildings and Pads**

Design Guidelines
- Signage for single tenant buildings should be developed to reflect landscape and architectural concepts for the project.
- Signage for single tenant commercial buildings and pad buildings should be designed to complement the architectural design. The sign location, shape, letters and lighting should “fit” the building’s facade.
- All the building’s signs should be designed as a one graphic idea. An unrelated and uncoordinated building, window and entry signage is discouraged.
- Monument signs are preferred and encouraged. Cabinet signs (i.e., box signs that are typically mounted on walls) are discouraged.
- Affixed signs with individual characters are encouraged
- Affixed signs should be placed only on vertical surfaces below the eaves or parapet line.
- Signage must comply with ADA requirements.
- These guidelines are intended to apply to a new sign proposed in conjunction with the construction of a new commercial building, remodel, or tenant improvements where a new sign is proposed, and are not intended to apply to the replacement of existing signage.

4.5.4 **Water Tanks and Towers**

Design Guidelines
- Tower structures should be designed as site area landmarks and integrated with the existing environment or new site development.
- Logos, murals, or other works of art may be painted or attached to water tanks, towers, or other structures, permitted under the County’s Zoning Code.
• Water tanks and towers should use colors and landscaping that best allows them to blend in with the prevalent architecture of the project or with the natural features around the site, as applicable. Artistic designs or otherwise, neutral color shades are recommended; however each structure will be evaluated individually and approved by the County.

• Signage on water tanks or towers should be used to identify the project, a community or neighborhood, or community services and events on the site, but should not be used to advertise individual businesses, tenants, or products.

• The tower base should be integrated into the surrounding landscape. For example, by allowing safe public access beneath it, enhancing with landscaping (where appropriate), and incorporating plaza or open space that serves as a transition to adjacent ground level uses.

4.5.5 Billboard Signs and Digital Billboards

Design Guidelines
• In accordance with the County’s Zoning Code signage standards, signs shall not create a distraction to drivers, such as moving or rotating signs and signs that include words, phrases, symbols, lights, motion, sound, fumes, mist, or other characteristics that may interfere, mislead, or confuse traffic. The location of signs should not interfere with on-site vehicular circulation or restrict visibility to traffic on adjacent streets or parking areas.

• Signs should be scaled in proportion to site or building elements and use high quality materials, colors, and landscaping that complements the design themes of the site development.

• The size of signs should be scaled to its intended audience, whether scaled to be visible from a moving vehicle or to provide information to pedestrians.

• The base of the sign, where accessible to the public, should be designed as part of the pedestrian or commercial shopping experience. It should be designed with a pedestrian-scale and enhanced with landscaping, art, or other pedestrian amenities or features, where appropriate.
4.0 COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

4.5.6 Temporary Signage

Design Guidelines
• Temporary signs permitted by the County for commercial projects should be designed to a similar standard as permanent signage reflecting the same overall objectives.

4.6 Operational Elements

In many cases, the proposed use of a building or the operational characteristics of the use may influence site design. Public and private spaces often have different screening and safety needs, and the intended hours or anticipated noise levels may influence the entryways, lighting, access, and orientation of the building, particularly when located close to a residential neighborhood.

The following guidelines should be considered in the site design for all new commercial, mixed-use and employment projects, and also incorporated into future business practices.

Design Guidelines
• Business hours should generally be confined to between 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., and may be further reduced depending on proximity to nearby residential uses.
• Security lighting should be coordinated with the Sheriff, and should be dimmed during late-night hours or equipped with motion detection features. Use of cameras for security is recommended.
• Improve and/or increase access to fresh and healthy foods, such as partnering with the Health Education Council on Healthy Stores and Healthy Restaurants Initiatives. In partnership with the Health Education Council and others: make healthy foods, local fruits and vegetables, and other staple items more visible, accessible, affordable and attractive to neighborhood residents, and increase retailer sales and resident consumption of healthy foods.
• Encourage the use of healthy food menu choices for drive-through and sit down fast food restaurants. Participation with the Health Education Council and Healthy Restaurant Initiative is suggested in order to support business owners in the success of this program.
• Promote access to and provide incentives for the use of public transportation.
• Promote the use of bicycles, walking, and other healthy alternatives to vehicular travel.

• Noise generating activities, such as loading and unloading, should be confined to normal business hours, and should be minimized during the early and late hours, especially when located near residential uses. Compliance with the County Noise Ordinance is required.

• Provide appropriate setbacks and areas for outdoor use by customers (e.g., outdoor gathering places for smoking, talking or waiting to enter the business) so as not to obstruct the sidewalk or access to other businesses within the commercial center. Provide outdoor seating and shade for customers to socialize as space allows.

• On-site security should be used during special events or sales to control access, parking, and to discourage loitering outside of the business.

• Wheel stops or similar measures should be used to prevent shopping carts or utility carts from leaving the perimeter of the property or commercial center.

• Maintain landscaped areas, lighting and security features consistent with CPTED strategies and in a manner to provide a safe environment for customers and employees.

• Maintain windows free of obstructions and signs to promote maximum visibility of merchandise, and visibility by Sheriff patrols consistent with CPTED strategies.

• Commercial Centers should attract a wide range of commercial and retail businesses. Providing healthy food sources and choices; such as full-service grocery stores, ethnic food markets, farm stands or farmers’ markets, and food establishments that provide fresh food supporting sustainable local food systems is desirable.

• Incorporate co-location of other facilities or services that supports the needs of residents (i.e. health care center, recreation center, farmer’s market, drug or corner store, deli, bank, etc.).

• Consider utilizing commercial waste haulers that support food waste to fuel/energy projects and programs and that utilize clean fuels in their waste trucks.
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The purpose of this chapter is to provide overall planning and sustainable design principles and guidelines for office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments, either located in each of their respective zoning districts, as the predominant land use character of the project area, or for specific land uses classified under these zoning districts. This chapter addresses all types of non-residential development, except commercial and mixed-use district developments, addressed in Chapters 4 and 6, respectively. Where there is uncertainty about the type of project and applicable design guidelines, the County will determine which of the district settings are most applicable and best describes the physical character of the local context and the section of the design guidelines that should apply.

The Guidelines are to be used to review business district designs, as well as individual project designs, while advancing healthy and sustainable communities in the county. Business district design concepts apply to corporate office and medical office campuses; public or institutional places of worship, government centers, civic centers, senior or congregate care facilities, and hospitals; business or industrial park complexes; and other similar uses that are often planned as campuses with common vehicular access and a need for a system of pedestrian connections. Business district design concepts also apply to multi-use project developments with secondary uses that relate to or complement the services of the primary use, such as places of worship that may include ancillary administrative offices, school or training facilities, social or day care centers, and other services; and senior and assisted living facilities that may incorporate a variety of living, skilled nursing, hospitality, entertainment, social, and recreational uses and amenities. Other developments are comprised of individual sites in a non-campus setting, including single tenant and multi-tenant office, industrial, and institutional developments and public and civic use developments (e.g., community centers, libraries, civic centers, clubs, lodges, and places of worship) that may occur in a variety of neighborhood settings. Pedestrian scale and connections need to be addressed in all settings.
5.0 Office, Business Park, Institutional and Industrial Development Design Guidelines

5.1 Understanding Context

Office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments can occur in a variety of contexts: from urbanized or urbanizing mixed-use commercial corridors, industrial sites or centers in transition to other uses, to suburban or rural residential neighborhood areas. Each setting warrants differing responses for project development and design. The guidelines in this chapter establish the basic design principles and concepts that should be used to review the unique characteristics of these types of project developments, in the context of project site conditions and neighborhood settings. Office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments should be planned and designed to reflect both the needs of the tenant and the identity and quality of the business district or neighborhood setting. Each project should contribute to the streetscape, sustainable site planning, pedestrian connectivity and architectural quality objectives for the district and surrounding area. To do this, every office, business park, institutional, and industrial development needs to be planned and designed, with sustainability in mind. Development that is renovated or new development must complement existing development, while anticipating future investment and changes in use. Each project sponsor should be prepared to answer the following questions pertaining to the site context.

- Site connections: How can site planning provide pedestrian and vehicular connections between buildings in and outside the project? What other safety elements should be included?

- Building alignments: What are the building edge and spatial relationships among groups of buildings? What is the orientation of building lobbies and entries?

- Streetscape and landscape design: What type of landscaped setbacks and treatments exist along public streets? What landscaping needs replacement? How can the landscape plan be enhanced to attract pedestrians and promote walking? How can the landscape help to improve the environment?

- Roadway and parking lot design: How can parking lots and driveways be designed to increase connectivity and safety for pedestrians, people with disabilities, and bicyclists in the business district or neighborhood? How can trees and cool, permeable pavements be used to reduce heat generated by parking lots?

- Architectural context: What are the strongest architectural features in the business district or neighborhood and how can the project complement these themes or ideas?

- Signage design: How can an overall signage concept contribute to the graphic identity of the project and the business district setting?
5.2 **Project Design Principles and Guidelines**

Office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments should possess an overall design framework that provides an internal organizational structure and a contextual response to the surrounding neighborhood.

Office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments should be designed with good pedestrian connections to public transit and public realm circulation networks.

Use of landscaping features can provide cohesion and continuity through the various districts and neighborhood areas in the county.

### 5.2.1 Project Design Objectives

Office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments should be planned to accomplish both functional and business district or neighborhood design objectives.

**Design Guidelines**

- Business district or individual project developments should possess a clear organizational structure that coordinates with and connects with the surrounding neighborhood. The urban design concept for business district development should make it a distinctive address, with a definable hierarchy of streets and focal points. Individual projects should be designed to relate and contribute to the identity and urban design concepts of the neighborhood. This could include the siting, massing, and architectural treatment of buildings.

- Office, institutional, business, or industrial park complexes should be planned to provide centrally located or accessible commercial services and conveniences for employees, and visitors. A system of pedestrian paths and walkways should be designed to connect businesses to common outdoor spaces, services, public amenities, and adjacent developments.

- Office, business, and industrial parks should provide a deliberate gateway and entrance design that respects the streetscape character and identity of the surrounding neighborhood. The frontage of primary roadways and connecting side streets should be enhanced by the project design. Projects should improve the continuity of the street/streetscape, surrounding uses, and the aesthetic character of the neighborhood.
5.0 Office, Business Park, Institutional and Industrial Development Design Guidelines

- The interface of office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments with other types of uses, particularly residential, should be planned carefully. The transition in scale, use, visual privacy, noise, odors, operational hours and traffic flow should respect the needs and livability of adjacent neighborhoods.

- Industrial parks or projects should be clearly separated from residential areas with adequate buffers to them from noise, vehicular, and development scale impacts.

- Projects should have signage and graphic identity concepts that support the project’s planning objectives and design themes.

5.2.2 Roadway Design and Streetscape

Streets should be designed to reflect both the placemaking and circulation objectives for new and existing business districts or neighborhood areas.

Design Guidelines

- Business district designs should have complete streetscape concepts and strategies that contribute to their identity, safety and comfort.

- Streets should have a design hierarchy. Primary address streets should demonstrate a “higher order” of streetscape, setbacks, medians and other distinctive features. Projects should be sited and designed to address the surrounding street hierarchy and context.

- Functional street requirements for truck and emergency vehicle access should be accommodated and not over-sized. Streets should not be used for queuing or backing into loading and service yard areas.

- All streets should be designed to encourage pedestrian and transit use, with transit access in close proximity to buildings. The design of raised sidewalks and planting strips should contribute to the comfort and safety of walking in business districts and connectivity to neighboring areas or uses.

- Traffic calming techniques, such as a change in elevation and paving materials, should be used at crosswalks, drop-offs and lobby zones – in addition to appropriate signage and speed limits.
• Special hardscape, such as pavers, stained concrete, and stone, should be used to identify pathways and gathering places in projects. Use of permeable pavers, permeable concrete, and cool pavements is highly recommended for all pedestrian facilities, in parking lots, plazas, building entrances, public use and other suitable areas.

• Construct and utilize green street design practices to the greatest extent practicable. Curb cuts into landscaped drainage swales and medians are part of green street design that is encouraged.

• Streetscape concepts and themes should be a distinctive feature for business districts. This includes tree selection, lighting, furniture, signage, decorative walls, arbors, pylons, trellis, art and other design elements.

• Streetscape should reinforce urban design concepts for the business district or neighborhood. This includes creation of gateway elements, defining focal points, framing views and edges, and highlighting architectural design features.

• Paseos should be utilized to provide common outdoor spaces and allow for pedestrian access through the development, and connection to adjacent developments.

• When necessary, streetscape should screen views of parking lots and loading areas. Berms or shrubs should be used to screen parking lots.

• Street and parking lot trees with large canopies should be planted to increase the amount of shade and reduce heat in project developments.

• Trees should not block the visibility of identification signage.
BUSINESS PARK MASTER PLANS

This diagram illustrates elements of a business park site plan with light industrial, office, and “flex-tech” uses. The plan concept indicates desirable locations for:

1. Signage, landscape and buildings framing the business park entry and primary street;
2. Building lobbies oriented towards the street and intersections with parking at the side and rear;
3. Buildings clustered and aligned to create pedestrian-friendly edges and spaces; and
4. Clear comfortable connections to transit and services.
5.2.3 Parking and Loading Areas

The visibility of parking and loading areas should be reduced when planning and designing for office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments.

Design Guidelines

• On-site circulation concepts, and use of landscaping, should reduce the visibility of parking lots from adjacent buildings and public streets.

• The design of on-site circulation and parking lots should reflect the need for mixing and segregation of modes (i.e., trucks, autos, transit, pedestrians and bicycles).

• Parking lots should be to the rear or side of buildings to allow buildings to front onto public streets.

• Loading areas should be located to the rear or inside side yards. Loading areas should not be visible from public streets or adjacent buildings.

• For corner parcels, parking should be accessed from primary streets and service areas from secondary streets.

• Landscaping should be used to enhance and soften the screening of loading and parking areas.

• Lighting in parking and pedestrian areas should be LED lights or other acceptable high energy efficiency light, with automatic controls to dim lights after certain hours or when no one is present. Lighting shall be adequate to provide for a safe environment.

• Business park or district developments are encouraged to provide electric vehicle fast-charging stations, car and bike share locations, and other alternatives such as zip car.
5.0  **Office, Business Park, Institutional and Industrial Development Design Guidelines**

5.2.4 **Building Setbacks and Alignments**

The overall planning concepts for office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments should result in a pleasing composition of buildings that support an image objective, shape and enliven public and common spaces while enhancing pedestrian connections.

**Design Guidelines**

- Building entrances should be designed as a prominent feature of buildings. Building entries should be placed to reinforce their presence on primary business streets and where they can enhance pedestrian linkages to other buildings, transit, parking areas and facilitate drop-off of employees and visitors.

- Building setbacks along public streets should enhance the streetscape, particularly the pedestrian realm and reflect the district design objectives.

- The design of entries should be inviting and employ architectural elements such as canopies, recessed lobbies, contrasting materials and colors, landscaping, and expressive building massing.

- Buildings located at street intersections should orient building entries toward the corner. This is particularly important at key intersections and entryways.

- Building orientation and placement should shape and activate public spaces.

- Building design should place public uses toward streets and public spaces. Private and service uses should be placed to the rear or away from public spaces. For industrial buildings, business and reception areas should face public streets.

- Industrial buildings should place auto parking adjacent to lobby and public areas and truck loading and parking adjacent to service and manufacturing areas.

- Multi-tenant single story buildings should face lobbies toward public streets.
• Loading and service bays should orient away from residential development and public streets. Loading and service bays should not dominate the public street frontage.

• Trash enclosures, utility meters, transformers, and other services should be screened and located away from adjacent neighborhoods and out of view from public streets and building entry areas.

• All landscaping and paving shall consider the needs and safety of people with disabilities.

• Orientation of new buildings within a business district should take advantage of solar and wind access.
5.2.5 Integrated Transit

All business district projects should facilitate access to transit for employees and visitors.

Design Guidelines

- Transit facilities should be centrally located throughout business districts. They should be visible, lit and provide shelter from the elements, and socially integrated into the planning of new and renovated projects. The design and location of transit shelters shall consider safety and be coordinated with transit providers.

- Pedestrian connections to transit facilities should be easy to navigate, safe, comfortable, and friendly.

- Shelters and lighting shall be provided. The design of shelters shall anticipate the number of transit patrons and their physical comfort. Shade, see-thru screening from wind and rain, benches or lean bars shall be design considerations for transit shelter design. Solar facilities on shelters are highly encouraged. Advertising on shelters should not exceed the signage allowed by transit providers and should not obstruct the ability for passersby to provide visual surveillance.

- Bike facilities and reasonable access to them, by employees and visitors, should be designed into every project and consistent with the Zoning Code.

- Business districts and projects should be planned, designed and managed to reflect the County’s transportation demand reduction programs.

- Business districts and projects should be planned, designed and managed to support employee’s health and visitors desiring to walk around the districts for pleasure and exercise. Maps/signs providing walking routes and distances encourage walking. All projects should be designed to integrate with adjacent neighborhood or County-wide bike trails, where applicable.

A bus transit stop adjacent to the office development entry.

Desirable.
5.3 Landscaping/Site Elements

On-site landscaping should reinforce overall site and architectural concepts; increase walkability, pedestrian safety, access, health and comfort; reduce heat gain, water consumption and pollution/flooding from stormwater runoff.

Design Guidelines

• Landscaping should contribute to the “sense of place.” It should enhance the definition and distinctiveness of courtyards, plazas and other public spaces.

• Ancillary elements such as patio shelters, outdoor furniture, trash and recycle containers, storage sheds, bicycle enclosures shall be integrated into the overall landscape concept and be architecturally compatible with the project design.

• Landscaping should reinforce the project’s site entry concepts.

• Planting in front and side yards should reinforce the business district’s streetscape concept.

• Foundation planting and accent planting should be used to enhance architectural and massing concepts for buildings.

• Accent planting and color should reinforce architectural and site design entry expression.

• Screen planting should be used around parking lots and to block undesirable views. Parking lot screen planting should be approximately 30 inches tall, provide adequate security and visibility, and not obstruct security cameras and lighting.

• Grading should be done to fulfill functional and drainage requirements while reinforcing site planning and architectural design concepts. Grading can provide elevation changes that bring interest to design concepts.

• Drought tolerant landscaping should be used in accordance with the County Water Conservation and Landscape Ordinance. Irrigation plans should provide for use of recycled water and minimize the use of potable water.

• The design of landscaping should reduce the creation of heat islands caused by roadways, buildings,
rooftops and parking lot paving.

- Rainwater collection systems should be used to offset the water required for landscape irrigation. Consider the use of rainwater collection barrels to provide non-potable water for irrigation purposes. Rainwater harvesting systems should be designed to capture 50% of the total roof area (including surface runoff and/or roof runoff) for landscape irrigation use.

- Parking lots shall include shade trees, per Zoning Code standards. Tree selection, planting approach and irrigation should provide for rapid growth and sustained health of shade trees. Small ornamental trees are appropriate for accent planting but should not be used as shade trees. All trees and landscaping shall be maintained. In the event a tree is removed, it shall be replaced by a tree with similar benefits.

- Site landscaping shall include stormwater quality treatment features, such as vegetated swales, to attenuate flows and remove pollutants from runoff before it leaves the site, consistent with the Guidance Manual for On-site Stormwater Quality Control Measures. Use of the River Friendly Landscape Designs Guidelines will provide stormwater quality treatment while; conserving water, improving air quality, reducing maintenance needs and reducing greenwaste. These guidelines are referenced in the Appendix.

- An automatic irrigation system requirements should be consistent with the Zoning Code.

- Flood protection and drainage facilities shall be designed to provide multiple public benefits, wherever possible. Facilities shall include multi-purpose improvements consisting of recreation, the environment, storm water runoff, water reclamation, infiltration, groundwater recharge, flood control, etc. Attractive joint use basins, such as parks (in addition to Quimby land dedication requirements) or parkways with trails that also convey water to water quality basins or similar facilities and provide some water quality treatment are examples of desired multiple public benefit facilities.

- Public safety is a high priority and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles should be applied.

- Special hardscape, such as pavers, stained concrete, and stone, should be used to identify pathways and gathering places in projects. Use of permeable pavers, permeable concrete, and cool pavements is highly recommended for all pedestrian facilities, in parking lots, plazas, building entrances, public use and other suitable areas.
Landscaping Office and Industrial Projects

Landscape Public Street Edges
Site plans for new and retrofitted business and industrial centers should improve public street edges. This photo shows a public street that was improved as part of a parking lot addition to an existing industrial development.

Employee Outdoor Spaces
Outdoor eating and break areas should be designed into projects. Landscaping should provide a comfortable environment.

Public Art
Public art is encouraged for office and industrial projects. This could include sculpture, specialized paving, fountains and other features that add visual interest and amenity.
5.0 Office, Business Park, Institutional and Industrial Development Design Guidelines

- Artwork and other amenities such as murals, sculptures, and fountains are encouraged in public areas of projects. The landscape plan should identify locations and infrastructure support (i.e., lighting, power, water, etc.).

- Mature trees, rock outcrops, creeks and other desirable natural site features shall be preserved and incorporated into the landscape plan to the greatest extent possible. Building placement and configuration shall protect any heritage and landmark trees. Where existing trees must be removed, trees shall be replaced on-site or in another location, acceptable to the Planning Director, to compensate for the loss in canopy and environmental benefits. Participation in the County’s Tree Mitigation program to compensate for canopy loss is also acceptable.

- Projects located adjacent to open space, creeks and wetlands should integrate these natural features into the project design. Views and the location of outdoor patios, plazas or eating areas should be considered in the context of the site’s natural features. The project landscape theme and plantings should be coordinated and consistent with adjoining natural areas. If an existing or proposed trail exists, coordinate a connection and easement from the project to the trail. A vegetative buffer should be preserved or created to treat off-site runoff before it reaches the natural area.

- Landscaping, artwork, amenities, and paving should consider the access needs, safety, and comfort of all users.

- Use of known high allergen plantings is discouraged.
5.4 Architectural Design Principles and Guidelines

New office and industrial buildings should reflect both their tenants’ business needs and contribution to the design objectives for the business district or neighborhood. The architectural design for industrial and office projects should strive for design excellence. Building design should be unique to the project. “Stock plan” buildings and generic designs are discouraged. The use of green and sustainable development standards and practices in planning, design, construction and renovation of new and existing buildings; along with green infrastructure should be used wherever possible.

5.4.1 Building Form and Massing

The massing of buildings should express a combination of the internal function and external urban design objectives for the business district or neighborhood.

Design Guidelines

- The shape and orientation of buildings should support overall district design concepts. This includes framing of gateways, views, edges and focal points.

- New buildings should respond to their architectural context by transitioning in scale, stepping the massing, reflecting the bay spacing and rhythm, and using fenestration patterns of historically or architecturally significant adjacent buildings.

- Building massing and siting should demonstrate a response to how they are viewed. This includes orientation and posture towards streets and being seen from all directions.

- The massing and shape of buildings should result in a coherent and pleasing composition of roof, wall, building base and site landscape elements.

- Long, unbroken blank walls are discouraged. Each side of buildings should have a uniform approach to design and detail.

- Roofs should be designed as integral elements of building architecture. Flat roofs with a continuous parapet around the entire building are preferable to mansard or other superficial roof forms.
• Roof-mounted equipment should be screened from view with enclosures that are consistent with the building architecture.

• Industrial buildings should be designed and configured to reflect how they function as well as business district and site design objectives. Industrial building facades should incorporate design features, including window canopies, structural plasters or columns, window mullions, and mechanical equipment screens.

• Buildings should be sited and oriented to create and activate public spaces. Building massing should provide an appropriately scaled edge for pedestrians.

• Wherever possible utilities shall be undergrounded.

5.4.2 Architectural Design and Features

Architectural design features and themes should provide a pleasing composition of elements and support massing concepts.

A. General Design Guidelines

• In business districts or neighborhoods where an architectural theme or style has not been established, the project proponent shall define an appropriate theme or style for the community or neighborhood.

• The architectural appropriateness of buildings should be considered. This includes the choice of materials, architectural design features, proportions and other desirable attributes appropriate to the use.

• The vertical and horizontal bay spacing should have a pleasing rhythm and composition in building elevations. Articulation of building and structural elements, including windows, entries, and bays is desirable. Design features such as canopies, trellis, and grillwork should be designed as part of the building’s composition of design elements. Poorly proportioned “tacked-on” elements that do not fit the building’s character are discouraged.

• Lobbies and entries should be featured in the design of all building elevations. For buildings within a business district, the scale and pedestrian use of entries shall provide a connection to the rest of the district.
New office and industrial buildings should reflect both their tenants’ business needs and contribution to the design objectives for the district.

- Walking edges of buildings should provide visual and tactile interest. Utilize Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) practices to provide for pedestrian safety.

- Vertical elements in buildings within a business district, such as elevators, stairways, and multi-story interior spaces should be studied as opportunities for design enhancement. Stairways shall be easily accessed and in prominent view to encourage use and promote health.

- For industrial buildings, louvers, vents, mechanical equipment, loading bays, roof venting, skylights and other functional elements should not be treated as an afterthought. They should be hidden or deliberately treated as an architectural feature.

- Window patterns for buildings should result in pleasing and sophisticated elevations.

B. Guidelines for Public and Civic Uses

As appropriate to the use of the project, site design should address the general design guidelines in Section 5.2, the lighting guidelines in Section 5.4.4, and the service area guidelines in Section 5.4.6.

Site Design

- As appropriate to the use of the project, site design should address the general design guidelines in Section 5.2, the lighting guidelines in Section 5.4.4, and the service area guidelines in Section 5.4.6.

- Building orientation should facilitate the intended function or use of the project and address the primary street.

- Business district or project development should be designed with landscape and architectural design features that complement the dominant existing or planned character of the surrounding context. This can be accomplished through the use of similar forms, materials, and colors.

- Projects should reinforce or enhance the streetscape image of the neighborhood.

- Business district developments should be designed to support a pedestrian-friendly environment, with a comprehensive pedestrian network (of walkways, elevators, ramps, stairways, and etc.) that support neighborhood access and connect buildings and uses to adjacent open space, parking, and transit.

- Buildings should be oriented around open space or common areas, such as courtyards, plazas, retail uses,
Office Building Development

In contrast to a plan that separates buildings by surface parking lots, this concept diagram illustrates a cluster of office buildings that results in a new street and address.

**KEY**

D  Shared Entry Drive and Drop-off
T  Transit Stop
L  Building Lobby
P  Parking at Sides and Rear of Building

(Street trees not shown)

**INDUSTRIAL SITE ORIENTATION**

- **Single Tenant Building**
  - Corner Site
  - Mid-Block Site

- **Multi-Tenant Building**
  - Mid-Block Site

**KEY**

P  Parking
L  Lobby
S  Service/Vehicle Storage
5.0 Office, Business Park, Institutional and Industrial Development Design Guidelines

INFILL OFFICE BUILDINGS

This diagram shows an infill office building in a commercial district.

It features:
- Aligning setbacks with adjacent buildings;
- Stepping the building height to match the height of adjacent buildings;
- Orienting the lobby towards the public street; and
- Locating parking at the rear of the site.

MASSING CONCEPTS

These elevation diagrams illustrate how to add interest to industrial buildings by purposely stressing the “meter” or rhythms created by structural bays and a functional program. The lower elevation diagram illustrates how office uses, entry lobby, screen wall and manufacturing portions of a large industrial project can be composed.
cafeterias, and other shared use facilities or amenities.

- Site entries for vehicular and pedestrian access shall be clearly demarcated, easily accessible, and minimize pedestrian, and vehicular conflicts.

- Where feasible, parking lots should be divided into a series of connected smaller lots. Landscaped bulb-outs or planting wells should be incorporated to provide shade and reduce the urban heat island effect in paved areas.

- Site features, such as bicycle racks, waste and recycling bins, planters, and benches should be integrated into the site development.

- Service or storage areas that can be viewed from above are encouraged to incorporate roof structures or other design approaches to screen the contents of the enclosure from view.

- Service and loading areas should be avoided from predominantly residential streets, when possible.

**Architecture**

Building design should address the general design guidelines for building form and massing in Section 5.4.1; the guidelines for architectural design and features in this section; guidelines for materials and colors in Section 5.4.3; and the following guidelines.

- Buildings within a business district should be compatible with the design elements and style of the business district.

- Architectural elements, including massing, roof forms, entries, and architectural details should complement the architectural style and proportion of the building.

- Building forms should exhibit a discernable base, middle, and roof line, using colors and materials that complement these parts. Darker colors and/or heavier materials are encouraged to be provided at the base and supporting lighter colors and materials used above it.

- Building entries should be a major focal point of buildings, designed as an integral part of the building form. Building entries should be easily identified and emphasized through building massing, architectural details, and materials.
Horizontal and vertical articulations, changes in wall planes, and different materials and textures should be used to reduce the massing and give visual interest to buildings. These articulations should relate to the spacing and configuration of structural bays, the development context, program functions, and the properties of materials used on the building facade.

Architectural details, such as expansion joints, reveals, cornices, eaves, and window treatment should be used to provide an attractive elevation to all facades, visible from public streets.

Materials should wrap building elements in their entirety. Changes in materials along a building elevation should occur at inside corners.

Accent colors that complement the building’s color palette should be used to distinguish special areas or entries.

Landscaping
Landscape design should address the general design guidelines for landscaping/site elements in Section 5.3 and the following guidelines. Refer also to the County Zoning Code for landscape requirements, based on the project’s applicable zoning.

Incorporate landscaping that is compatible and integrates with and supports the public realm landscape theme and streetscape identity of the neighborhood and surrounding uses.

Landscaping along the street should be appropriate to the scale, orientation, and use of the site.

Perimeter landscaping within a larger project should reflect the character of the landscape themes in the neighborhood.

Use of drought tolerant landscaping and water conservation techniques are encouraged, as guided by the County Zoning Code.
C. Guidelines for Places of Worship

Places of worship or religious institutions may be located in residential or nonresidential zoning districts. Given the level of activity of many religious facilities and the needs of faith groups at various stages of development, the context and size of religious facilities varies greatly in the County. To respect these needs, places of worship are permitted or conditionally permitted (by the Zoning Administrator) in most zoning districts in the County, so long as the proposed project can be shown to fit into its surrounding context, whether in urban, suburban, or rural residential neighborhood areas; commercial or mixed-use districts; or as building renovation or reuse opportunities, occupying a commercial or site. There is an increasing trend towards large or more regional community facilities and multi-use facilities (religious centers) that may include accessory uses, such as schools, offices, social halls, training facilities, day care centers, and etc. These proposals are often characterized by occasional gathering for special events or practices and site activities that can result in or cause issues related to traffic, parking, and project compatibility.

Places of worship should address the design guidelines for public and civic uses above, as well as, the following design guidelines. Guidelines for business districts are applicable to multi-use projects.

Site Design

• The scale of development should be aligned with the character and development intensity of the surrounding neighborhood. Major or regional facilities are generally discouraged in neighborhood areas that are more locally focused and low-scale in character, such as within residential, agricultural, or agricultural residential districts or neighborhoods. The scale of development and distance to surrounding and existing or planned development will be considered, to ensure land uses and activities are compatible with the future development patterns in the neighborhood.

• The uses or functions of a religious center should be organized as a group of buildings connected by walkways or combined into one facility. Major activity spaces within a center should be designed to allow for future expansion.

• Buildings should be organized so that the main entrance to the facility or worship hall is the focal point of the facility and visible from the street and parking areas. Buildings should also be organized to highlight other key focal points on the site, such as significant vistas or natural features.

• Buildings should be oriented to activate public outdoor spaces within the project and take advantage of natural features of the site whenever possible, including significant resources or views. Common and small
outdoor spaces are encouraged, to provide a variety of places for people to gather, congregate, and enjoy the outdoors.

- Large regional religious centers are encouraged to be located adjacent to transit and incorporate guest drop-off and pick-up zones. Clear pedestrian links should be provided to transit stops and guest drop-off and pick-up areas.

- Event and activities and amplified sound shall respect surrounding uses, including hours of operation and permit requirements, as regulated by the noise ordinance in the County Zoning Code.

- Where possible, places of worship are encouraged to share parking with other adjacent facilities with occupancy peaks at different times of day, as regulated by the County Zoning Code.

- Where applicable, terraced parking areas, organized into smaller, connected parking courts that are compatible with the existing topography of the site, are encouraged.

Architecture
- The architectural style and massing of projects should be compatible with the building form and scale of the surrounding area.

- Upper floors should be setback from lower floors, to reduce the mass of religious centers, particularly adjacent to lower scaled neighborhood development.

- Unique architectural features, such as towers, spires, stained glass, public art, or other unique design elements should be used to enhance the identity of the facility.

- Vertical elements and unique architectural features, such as towers, spires, stained glass, public art, or other identifying monuments are encouraged to be integrated into the overall architectural composition and expression of the primary worship facility.

- Shapes, forms, and symbols used should be acceptable to all users and to the surrounding neighborhood.

- The main building entry should be grand or grander, prominent, and inviting, employing high ceilings and strong design elements, such as oversized doors, arches, or large windows.

- Where possible and desirable, multi-paned glass to allow natural light into worship buildings is encouraged.
Building façade renovations, including storefront developments, should be articulated through use and design of windows, entries, wall planes, façade articulation, and roofs.

Window shapes and locations should be integrated into the architectural design of buildings.

Use of natural materials, such as wood, stone, or metal are encouraged. Reflective glass should be avoided, particularly adjacent to residential or at the pedestrian level.

**Landscaping**
- Site continuity should be maintained by applying a consistent landscape design theme and coordinating lighting, street furniture, landscaped gateways, and signage.
- Landscaping and screening should be used to control the effects of facility operations, such as light, noise, and parking. Refer to the County Zoning Code landscape buffer and screening requirements, particularly adjacent to Residential and Agricultural-Residential zoning districts.
- Landscaping used in outdoor spaces and activity areas, such as gardens, gathering spaces, playgrounds, and picnic facilities should highlight or serve as a transition to building facilities.
- Use of landscaping to provide shade, color, and texture is highly encouraged.
- Special paving patterns and textures are encouraged to emphasize important areas or features.

**D. Guidelines for Self Storage Facilities**

- Self storage facilities are encouraged to be constructed to appear as commercial or industrial buildings that house self-storage units within, when feasible (see examples to the right).

- Buildings facing the public right-of-way, including manager units, lobbies, and/or front office functions should be articulated, to reflect the character of the neighborhood.

- Large unarticulated, building elevations or walls, visible from the street or public right-of-way, should be avoided. Rather, the facades of self storage facilities should be articulated through the use of colors that are compatible with the surrounding
neighborhood; material changes; changes in building heights; and building design details, including horizontal and vertical building reliefs and articulation of building entries, windows, and roofs.

- Building elevations or walls or fences adjacent to a street or public right-of-way, as applicable, should be articulated and/or screened with landscaping. Use of public art is also encouraged along outer security walls or fences, as applicable.

- The street frontage of self storage facilities shall be landscaped in accordance with the landscape requirements of the property’s zoning district.

E. Guidelines for Cargo Containers

Cargo containers are frequently used for temporary or permanent commercial, industrial, and residential storage purposes, as temporary offices for the staging of construction activities, and as temporary building facilities, to subsequently be replaced by permanent structures. In addition, cargo containers may be used as an inexpensive and innovative building structure alternative for a permanent residential, commercial, institutional, or industrial development, calling for additional architectural and site design guidelines.

Cargo Containers Used for Storage and Other Temporary Uses

- The size of the cargo container should be the minimum size needed to serve the planned use, subject to the applicable use regulations for the intended function of the cargo containers, (e.g., for storage or temporary uses), as regulated in the County Zoning Code.

- In Agricultural, Agricultural-Residential, and Recreational zoning districts, cargo containers used for storage on a permanent basis, or other use for an extended period of time and as required by the conditional use permit, should be screened from view of the public right-of-way by fast growing landscaping, such as evergreens, fencing, or other acceptable means of screening, as regulated by the County Zoning Code.

- In residential, commercial, employment, and industrial zoning districts, cargo containers should be screened from public view or if used as the primary building structure, should be integrated with the site development in accordance with the design guidelines for “Cargo Containers Used as Permanent Building Structures,” that follow.
Cargo containers should be painted a solid neutral color or color(s) that match the surrounding setting and/or complement adjacent structures. Artistic designs are also permitted and encouraged, subject to review and approval by the County.

**Cargo Containers Used as Permanent or Semi-Permanent Building Structures**

Cargo containers, such as pre-manufactured units for shipping, are designed and built to provide structural support. These containers are typically manufactured in a limited number of standardized dimensions and can be used in a number of ways to create modular buildings and other enclosures for residential, commercial, and industrial uses, as shown in the residential and commercial examples that follow.

- Design cargo containers to be compatible in appearance to adjacent development. Employ siding, roofing, colors, and other materials that complement or enhance the character or sense of place of the surrounding neighborhood.

- Building massing, scaled to the pedestrian and a variety of materials, textures, and colors should be used to articulate building elevations, as guided by the general architectural design guidelines in this section. Artistic and innovative designs are encouraged, so long as the development is consistent with the general character and spirit or sense of place of the neighborhood setting.

- Locate primary entrances of the cargo container building along the street and/or along internal paths, or screened from other permanent building structures, if designed within a larger business district or campus setting.

- Cargo container used for residential purposes shall also follow the use standards for manufactured housing in the County Zoning Code.

- Cargo containers used for residential accessory units should be coordinated in design with the main building residence.
5.0 Office, Business Park, Institutional and Industrial Development Design Guidelines

5.4.3 Materials and Colors

Material and color selection of buildings should reinforce the overall massing and architectural concepts of the business district or neighborhood, while portraying a sense of high quality and permanence.

Design Guidelines

- Architectural materials should convey an image of high quality and durability. Preferable facade materials include plaster, articulated pre-cast concrete panels, certain metals, such as steel and aluminum, natural stone, and masonry (e.g., brick, tile, and glass block). Curtain wall systems with large continuous surfaces are discouraged. Concrete block, if used, should be split-faced. Precision blocks should be used sparingly only as color or texture accents. Combining materials should support the overall architectural concept.

- Use sustainable building materials that are high quality, durable, provide energy efficiency benefits, require low maintenance, and complement the design of the building. Use of quality recycled products is encouraged. Products shall be of a quality that is durable and not readily show signs of weathering and aging.

- Use of “Permanent” and/or cool roof products and materials with reflective surfaces are desirable because of their low maintenance, energy conservation and insulation values.

- Material selection for buildings should be appropriate for building type, location and context. Materials that have an inherently residential or garish quality are discouraged.

- Discouraged roofing materials: composite shingles, painted or glazed tiles.

- Discouraged wall materials: metal siding, plywood, hardboard or vinyl materials.

- Similar quality materials and colors should be used on all sides of office, institutional, and industrial buildings.

- Window glass should be lightly tinted or clear. Reflective and very deeply tinted glass is discouraged. Windows should be oriented or shaded to minimize heat transfer from summer sun. Provide natural lighting features where possible.

- Reflective materials, such as mirrored glass and unpainted steel siding or roofs, are discouraged.

- Use of solar and wind turbines is encouraged, should be properly placed to obtain premium results and designed to support the overall architectural context.
TILT-UP CONSTRUCTION

These illustrations show methods for improving the design of tilt-up concrete buildings.

Common use: Office and Industrial Buildings

- Cost effective
- Fast construction
- Allows for design variations

**Undesirable**
- Lacks color or texture variation
- Flat profile
- Poor panel and window proportions

**Desirable**
- Added color and texture to panels
- Architectural profile
- Expresses bays and window system
- Expresses corner window
- “Notched” parapet

CONCRETE MASONRY CONSTRUCTION

These illustrations show methods for improving the design of concrete block buildings.

Common use: Office and Industrial Buildings

- Durable material
- Variety of textures and colors
- Easy to mix patterns and shapes

**Undesirable**
- Poor proportions
- Fake mansard roof out of scale with building
- Flat and utilitarian walls

**Desirable**
- Rich patterns and colors
- Materials and patterns provide good proportions in bay and horizontal rhythms
- Corner patio or design feature
METAL SIDING CONSTRUCTION

This illustration shows methods for improving the design of metal buildings.

Common use: Industrial and Warehouse Buildings

- Cost effective
- Fast construction
- Easy to “accessorize”

Undesirable
- Lacks variation
- Looks utilitarian
- Flat profile
- Poor panel and window proportions

Desirable
- Changes color and siding profile
- Adds storefront windows and doors system
- Garage doors part of design concept
- Canopies add shadow and define entry

CURTAIN WALL CONSTRUCTION

This illustration shows methods for improving the design of curtain wall buildings.

Common use: Office Buildings

- Durable quality system
- Mix and match with other panel systems and materials
- Dramatic day to night lighting mood swing

Undesirable
- Lacks color or texture variation
- Flat profile
- Poor panel and window proportions

Desirable
- Variety in window and panel system patterns
- Bay rhythms expressed in elevation patterns
- Enhances sculptural quality of building
- Sun screens can add shadow and visual interest
The color and textures of materials should enhance the expression of architectural features. The pattern of wall materials should acknowledge the scale and proportions of building elevations.

Employ Energy Star appliances and energy efficient lighting in construction, to the extent feasible, consistent with the adopted Green Building Policies and requirements. Material selection should promote energy efficient and environmentally sustainable design.

Efforts shall be made to advance energy reductions and conservation efforts to achieve California’s zero-net energy 2030 goals for commercial buildings.

5.0 OFFICE, BUSINESS PARK, INSTITUTIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT DESIGN GUIDELINES

5.4.4 LIGHTING

Every project should have an overall lighting plan for pedestrian pathways, architectural lighting, lobbies and entryways, parking lots, and service areas.

Design Guidelines
• Lighting should enhance the architectural and site design concepts while being energy efficient. Architectural lighting is encouraged.

• Spillover lighting that is visible from outside the site should be avoided by orienting fixtures downward or shielding light.

• Energy efficient lighting shall be at levels that provide public safety and meet or exceed Zoning Code standards.

• Low, pedestrian-scaled fixtures are encouraged to help identify and light pedestrian routes.

• Lighting in service areas should be the minimum required for operation, and should be designed to minimize the visibility to those areas, while providing for a safe environment. Motion controlled lighting is recommended.

• Lighting should be LED lights or other acceptable high energy efficiency light, with automatic controls to dim lights after certain hours or when no one is present. Lighting shall be adequate to provide for a safe environment.
LIGHTING CONCEPTS

Site Lighting Concepts

KEY
1. Pedestrian-Scaled Path Lighting
2. Architectural Lighting
3. Lobby/Entry Lighting
4. Parking Lot Lighting
5. Outdoor Yard Lighting

Example of pedestrian pathway lighting
INDUSTRIAL DESIGN FEATURES

These diagrams illustrate how to add interest by careful placement and expression of industrial building functions in the elevation.

1. Roof Vents
2. Louvers
3. Loading Dock Bays
4. Skylights
5. Mechanical Penthouses
6. Clerestory Windows
7. Mechanical Screen
8. Ladders
9. Windows
5.0 Office, Business Park, Institutional and Industrial Development Design Guidelines

- Provide energy efficient lighting in all common areas and buildings, including pedestrian and vehicular routes. The emphasis should be on personal safety, with lighting landscape or building surfaces secondary.

5.4.5 Screen Walls and Security Fences

Service and loading dock areas should not be placed in visually prominent locations. They should be screened from view. Screen walls are generally regarded as mitigation for poor site planning. However, when walls or fences are required, they should be designed as an extension of the architectural and landscape design concepts.

Design Guidelines
- Screen walls should be architecturally treated as an extension of the building. They should be architectural concrete block, and a cement plaster finish or otherwise reflect the design and materials of the building. Vertical and horizontal reveals, accents and other details should be included.
- Screen walls along pedestrian routes or sidewalks should be set back to allow for landscaping consistent with Zoning Code setback standards.
- Chain link fencing is discouraged. When slats are necessary, they should be of vinyl materials.
- When razor wire or barbed wire is necessary, it should not be visible from public streets or adjacent properties. A Minor Use Permit is required.
5.0 Office, Business Park, Institutional and Industrial Development Design Guidelines

5.4.6 Service Areas

Service facilities should be concealed from public view.

Design Guidelines

• Trash bins and compactors, utility meters, transformers, and other service elements should be enclosed or otherwise completely concealed from view. Service elements should be designed as an integral element of the business district’s or project’s architecture. Services and equipment should be enclosed or buried, or otherwise concealed from view.

• Provide trash and recycling education information near enclosures. Enclosures shall be in a safe and secure location and shall be kept clean and odor-free.

• Trash enclosure areas shall be designed to the County’s latest storm water quality source control design standards, and shall provide trash and recycling education information.

• Equipment located on a project site shall be located so as to not interrupt project visual image or pedestrian path systems. Elements shall be landscaped or treated externally with color and material to not deter from the project image.

• Roof-mounted mechanical equipment should be concealed by enclosures that are consistent in design with the building roof.

• Refer to the commercial Section 4.4.6 for guidelines on wireless communication facilities.
5.5 PROJECT SIGNAGE

Signage should be designed to comprehensively enhance the identity of the business district or neighborhood.

5.5.1 DISTRICT SIGNAGE

Business Districts should have overall signage and graphic identity concepts that guide district, site and building signage design that identify the uses and provide wayfinding, both day and night, and graphic identity objectives.

Design Guidelines

• Business district projects should have one detached monument sign located at the principal entry. Larger corner sites may be allowed a second sign, to be located on the corner.

• Monument signs should be incorporated into the landscaping concept, consistent with the architecture of the buildings that they serve.

• Wayfinding signage is encouraged. Signage that directs people to building addresses, parking and visitor areas should be designed to reflect the graphic identity of monument and building signage. All signage shall comply with ADA requirements.

• Refer to the commercial Sections 4.5.4 and 4.5.5 for guidelines addressing water tanks and towers and billboard signs and digital billboards.
5.5.2 Multi-Tenant Buildings

Multi-tenant buildings within business districts should have graphic standards and schedule for monument, building, tenant and wayfinding signage. Business districts should have an overall signage design concept that sets forth standards for tenant signage.

Design Guidelines
- Multi-tenant buildings should have an overall signage design concept supported by tenant standards.
- Signage should be systematically located and styled to support the architectural design.
- Signage should be designed and located so as to not detract from the building design image.
- All building signage shall comply with ADA requirements.

5.5.3 Single-Tenant Buildings

COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL ZONE
A. Monument Sign
B. Entry Sign
C. Building Sign

INDUSTRIAL/OFFICE PARK ZONE
A. Non-directory Sign
B. Directory Sign
C. Wayfinding Sign
D. Tenant Sign
A consistent signage design concept should be used for single tenant buildings.

Design Guidelines
- Building signs should appear on one elevation or on two elevations if located on a corner.
- Affixed signage should be placed only on vertical surfaces below the parapet or eaves. Roof signs are discouraged.
- Corporate parapet signage should include only the company name or logo and address. Naming services or products on building signage is discouraged.
- All building signage shall comply with ADA requirements.

**SIGNAGE LOCATION**

**KEY**
1. Monument Entry Sign
2. Building Occupant Sign
3. Window Sign
4. Blade Sign

Single Tenant Building

Multi-Tenant Building
5.0 Office, Business Park, Institutional and Industrial Development Design Guidelines

5.5.3 Temporary Signage

Temporary signage permitted by the County for office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments should be designed to a high graphic and construction quality.

5.6 Operational Elements

The operational elements design guidelines mirror those of the commercial section. Please refer back to Section 4.6 for this information and details.
The purpose of this Chapter is to provide design principles and guidelines for mixed-use village centers and projects that provide an integrated mix of uses including residential, office, retail, and civic activities. These centers and projects provide a social, healthy, sustainable and economic focus for Sacramento County’s communities and commercial corridors.

Mixed use may be created as part of New Communities, or may evolve within larger infill sites and redeveloped older commercial sites. Pedestrian and transit-oriented designs are integral within the buildings and include horizontal or vertical mixed use. New mixed use projects are a major element in creating and fostering a sense of place within their segment and the related community.

There are three types of Mixed Use Centers, as outlined in the Zoning Code. These types include: 1) Neighborhood Mixed Use Centers (NMC), Community-Regional Mixed Use Centers (CMC), and Corridor Mixed Use Centers (CMZ).

6.1 UNDERSTANDING CONTEXT: VILLAGE CENTER DISTRICTS

Village center projects provide a social and economic focus for surrounding communities. Each project should contribute to the streetscape, pedestrian and auto access objectives, architectural and signage design objectives for the site and surrounding area. They should establish and reinforce a sense of place for their project area. Project sponsors need to consider the following questions.

- Site connections: How can driveway, sidewalk and other perimeter areas provide connections to increase the connectivity and accessibility to the site from adjacent neighborhoods and development? How can the district attract and benefit from public transportation access?

- Building alignments and orientation: How can building alignments, orientation and transparency contribute to pedestrian attraction and usages? What should be the building and landscape setbacks?

By planning and developing residential and commercial land uses together, projects can be better connected to the community and provide pedestrian-friendly central places.
This aerial photo shows a typical commercial strip area with intermingled apartment projects.

Some common features include:

USES
1. Mix of pre- and post-war commercial uses
2. Scattered apartment projects in between and adjacent to commercial centers

ISSUES
1. Walled separation between uses and parcels
2. Auto-oriented planning and pedestrian isolation
3. Lack of social focus for surrounding community

DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES
1. Integrating residential and commercial uses with renovated or new development as an economic development catalyst
2. Creating better pedestrian connection between neighborhoods and commercial corridors
3. Creating transit and pedestrian-friendly options to isolated apartments
These photos show an example of an integrated and friendly mixed-use suburban district with a grocery store-anchored shopping center and apartments. Storefronts connect the residential and commercial projects that include a small park, outdoor cafes, and public art.

- Building alignments and orientation: How can building alignments orientation and transparency contribute to pedestrian attraction and usages? What should be the building and landscape setbacks along public streets that will support the community objectives to provide a pedestrian usable focus? How are existing and proposed building storefronts, communal open space, and entries oriented?

- Streetscape and landscape design: What type trees exist along the adjoining public streets? Is there a landscape plan for the neighborhood or district? How can the landscape plan help to knit the project together and link it to the surrounding community? What landscaping needs replacement? How can the landscape plan be enhanced to attract pedestrians and promote walking?

- Roadway and parking lot design: How can parking lots and driveways be designed to increase pedestrian comfort, safety and connectivity? How can trees be used to reduce heat generated by parking lots?

- Architectural context: What are the strongest architectural features in the development center area and how can the project complement these themes or ideas?

- Signage design: How can an overall signage concept contribute to the graphic identity of the project and the district?

### 6.2 Village Center Design Principles and Guidelines

Village center districts should provide a community design framework that blends a mix of uses together around well-defined, active communal spaces.

#### 6.2.1 Creating a Sense of Place

New mixed-use residential and commercial projects should provide a social and economic focus for surrounding neighborhoods by creating a sense of place.
6.0 VILLAGE CENTERS / MIXED-USE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Design Guidelines

- Mixed-use village centers should locate and connect commercial and residential uses to result in a sense of community. Buildings should shape and activate streets and public spaces. Adjacent commercial and multi-family residential uses should be designed to create and share public spaces and streets.

- A unified design concept should be established and be reflected in the architectural style, landscaping, lighting fixtures, signage and other public amenities provided. The use of corporate or franchise architecture is discouraged in the Village Center and shall not be used as compatible theme or style.

- New mixed-use developments should use open space, streets and community facilities to provide social and design focal points. Villages should have a central place such as a town square, main street or village plaza. “Parklets” also effectively contribute to providing social spaces. All these public spaces should be linked by an easily recognized pedestrian system.

- New mixed-use village centers should provide common open space as a centrally located and defining feature.

- Communal activities, such as recreation and gathering spaces, should be centrally or purposefully located to contribute to the social interaction of mixed-use projects and surrounding neighborhoods and feel welcoming.

- The travel experience for pedestrians and drivers should contribute to the sense of community and “neighborhood belonging” in new village center projects and adjacent neighborhoods. The travel experience should convey that pedestrians and bicyclists are present and that autos are secondary.

- New buildings should be designed and oriented to spatially define and activate streets and common open space areas with building entries, storefronts and pedestrian routes. Commercial storefront uses should face public spaces and street edges. These designs promote the sense of safety for those present.

- Village Center parking should not dominate any aspect of the centers pedestrian and open space systems and community image.
• Village Centers should attract a wide range of commercial and retail businesses. Providing healthy food sources and choices; such as full-service grocery stores, ethnic food markets, farm stands or farmers’ markets, and food establishments that provide fresh food supporting sustainable local food systems is desirable. Drive-through fast food restaurants are not appropriate in Village Centers.

• Village Centers should incorporate co-location of other facilities or services that supports the needs of residents (i.e. health care center, recreation center, farmer’s market, drug or corner store, deli, etc.).

6.2.2 Connections to the Community

New mixed-use and commercial projects should be planned as an extension of adjacent new or existing neighborhoods.

Design Guidelines
• Gateways and edges of new village development should provide landscape, street improvements and furnishings as common amenities that are shared with adjacent neighborhoods.

• Village Centers should not be socially gated or distinguished as an enclave.

• New mixed-use projects should provide for connections of existing and future streets.

• Principal access roads into new mixed-use development areas should be of similar scale as streets in adjacent residential neighborhoods. In the event that the adjacent streets are oversized, incorporate designs to reduce street widths and speeds in order to provide a pedestrian dominated environment.

• The street patterns at the edges of a mixed-use village project should be extended into the site.

• The design for new villages, and for retrofit of existing shopping or commercial centers, should have emergency and service vehicle access that maintains the pedestrian friendliness of the street.

• Unnecessary tall concrete block sound walls should not separate commercial uses from residential uses. Where sounds walls exist or are necessary, provide breaks in the sound walls for access from adjacent neighborhoods and designed as “live-ends.”

• When designing sound walls, pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent neighborhoods can
TOWNHOUSE AND STOREFRONT DEVELOPMENT

This site diagram illustrates how a mixed-use project can be planned to fit into the surrounding commercial district and neighborhoods. The concept diagram includes townhouses and commercial storefronts on a redeveloped site.

T  Transit stop
C  New Commercial Storefronts
P  Parking
R  Residential

Pedestrian Connections to Storefronts and Neighborhoods
include “live-end” features. Also used in cul-de-sacs, “live-ends” provide for pedestrian access at the ends to adjoining streets, open spaces, parking lots while permitting the access point to be used as a common outdoor space. “Live-ends” should be landscaped and can include benches, providing nice areas for sitting and socializing.

6.2.3 CREATING PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY STREETS

Village center projects should be organized around pedestrian-oriented streets rather than driveways and parking lots.

Design Guidelines

• Pedestrian connections between commercial and residential developments should be active, friendly, attractive and safe. Large blank walls should not face streets or walkways.

• Public streets must meet the Sacramento County Improvement Standards, including standards for traffic calming. Auto speeds should be between 10-25 mph.

• Mixed-use villages should have a street design that reflects both a functional and design hierarchy that supports a sense of community.

• Primary organizational streets in villages should incorporate planting strips, medians and other design features.

• Private drives should be designed as pedestrian-friendly streets that are a natural extension of the surrounding neighborhood.

• All village streets should include an interconnected system of separated sidewalks and crosswalks.

• Minimize the number and width of driveways and curb cuts.

• Quality paving treatment in areas such as parking lots, common areas, and pedestrian walkways can enhance the visual appearance of a project; promote walkability and activity that contributes to healthy residents, while also providing environmental benefits.
6.0 **Village Centers / Mixed-Use Design Guidelines**

- Use accent paving such as textured paving and paving blocks in driveways. Use of permeable concrete, cool pavements and pavers is desirable.

- Paseos should be utilized to provide common outdoor spaces and allow for pedestrian access through the development, and connection to adjacent developments.

6.2.4 **Block Sizes, Lot Patterns and Building Orientation**

New village center projects should use a block, lot and building pattern that provides an overall organizational structure and results in a pedestrian-scaled environment.

**Design Guidelines**

- Traditional residential-scaled blocks should be used as a reference for the pattern and scale that organize mixed-use village areas. A grid or modified grid block pattern is preferred.

- Block patterns should result in a pedestrian-scaled neighborhood that is comfortable for pedestrians and increases access options for the village and surrounding areas.

- Design concepts for mixed-use villages should consider the scale and character of residential streets. The sizes of lots, scale of buildings, and width of streets should be planned to support the design concept.

- Lots and parcels should be planned to promote friendly residential and commercial building orientation towards neighborhood streets. Lot and parcel patterns should orient storefronts, porches, and yards to enhance the social role of village streets. Residential entries and lobbies should face streets and common open spaces.

- Service areas for commercial uses should be located at the edge of the site and screened to reduce impacts on residents.

- Special siting and building design strategies that protect residential livability near service areas should be incorporated into project design. Avoid trash enclosures, loading docks or other noise-generating areas in close proximity to residential uses. If proximity is unavoidable, establish operational requirements for noise or odors to residents.
6.2.5 Parking

Parking in village center projects should support commercial and residential requirements but with less visual prominence than auto-oriented strip commercial centers.

**Design Guidelines**

- Solutions that minimize the visual impact of residential and commercial driveways should be used, including sharing driveways, using alleys, or other innovative design approaches.
- Parking for commercial uses in villages should be located next to or behind buildings. These parking areas should be divided up into smaller, landscaped lots with defined pedestrian connections.
- Parking lots on corner sites should not be located near the intersection and occupy space for streetfront buildings or open space features.
- Residential parking for mixed-use village developments should be located in courts that are not visible from public streets; broken up with shade trees and landscaping; and use a variety of paving materials. For residential uses, a maximum of four garage doors (spaces) should be allowed without a five-foot break between groups of doors.
- Mixed-use village projects involving a planned development process should consider alternative parking solutions including tandem parking, remote parking, single car garages and other methods of reducing the visual presence of parking and cars from the street.
- Parking areas should incorporate designs that include: trees, lighting, landscaped storm water features, cool and pervious pavement and pavers. Plant trees and shrubs to soften the overall impact of parking areas and to provide shade and noise reduction, heat island cooling and improved air quality.
- Flexible use of parking areas provides opportunities for additional social interaction between businesses, customers, and residents by providing space for large special events and festivals.

*These photos show desirable ways to treat on-street parking. The top photo shows parallel on-street parking with street trees, sidewalks and lighting. The bottom photo shows angled on-street parking.*
6.0 **Village Centers / Mixed-Use Design Guidelines**

- Lighting in parking areas should be LED lights or other acceptable high energy efficiency light, with automatic controls to dim lights after certain hours or when no one is present. Lighting shall be adequate to provide for a safe environment.

- Create textures, patterns, and colors in the design of paved parking areas or entries to create visual interest and to distinguish them from other paved areas. Do not design large monolithic areas of single color untextured paving.

- Use accent paving such as textured paving and paving blocks in driveways. Use of permeable concrete, cool pavements and pavers is desirable.

- Incorporate storm water quality measures into the parking areas to treat the storm runoff and enhance the parking areas by providing shade and reducing the amount of paving.

- Residential parking garages should be located behind the front building elevation.

- Multi-story garages serving mixed use villages should have an exterior design that is consistent with the village design theme and image. When garages are located along major pedestrian circulation routes, the ground floor frontage should be considered for commercial or public focused use.

- Provide for electric vehicle fast-charging stations, car and bike share locations, and other alternatives such as zip car.

- Bike racks shall be designed with the most current designs that provide secure locking features and are attractive. Many bike racks double as public art to add interest.
These sections show how streets can be designed to accommodate commercial and residential frontage. The illustrations include a “community street” that is wider and has community-serving commercial uses, and a “main street” that has neighborhood-serving retail.
6.2.6 STREETSCAPE AND LANDSCAPING

Streetscape and landscaping should promote pedestrian activity and provide for pedestrian safety, access, comfort and connections while contributing to overall placemaking and image objectives for village districts. Landscaping and trees can be used to complement buildings and to make a positive contribution to the aesthetics and function of the specific site and area. These aesthetics contribute to the mental and emotional well-being of customers, and support economic activity. Landscaping helps reduce storm water runoff, filters water and captures carbon and air particulates to improve air and water quality, provides shade during summer months and lowers temperatures reducing heat island impacts.

Design Guidelines

• Landscape concepts should enhance the linkages between residential and commercial uses.

• All streetscape improvements must meet the Sacramento County Improvement Standards. Larger trees will require wider planting strips.

• Mixed-use village developments should provide a comprehensive streetscape plan. The plan should satisfy street design; pedestrian safety, access and comfort; and visual amenity objectives for the village. Signage, lighting and landscaping should provide a thematic identity for mixed-use sites. The use of green and sustainable development standards and practices in planning, design, construction and renovation of new and existing buildings should be used wherever possible.

• Streetscape should enhance the identity of the village center by employing a variety of trees and other plant material that contributes to each street’s identity and character.

• Along streets with greater than 50,000 vehicles ADT, plant trees conducive to absorbing particulates including deodar cedar, valley oak, and redwoods. Utilize canopy trees for pedestrian areas to increase shading, cool the pavement and support walking.

• In residential areas, projects should include at least one street tree per lot or 30’ of lot frontage, whichever is smaller. Trees should be placed in planting strips, sidewalk tree wells or front yards in a manner that supports the village comprehensive streetscape plan.

• Sidewalks adjacent to storefronts should be wide enough to accommodate outdoor sitting areas and landscape. This should include a combination of at least four feet for planting, eight feet for sitting, and
Streetscaping should enhance the identity of the village center by employing a variety of trees and other plant material that contribute to each street’s identity and character.

6.0 VILLAGE CENTERS / MIXED-USE DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Streetscaping should enhance the identity of the village center by employing a variety of trees and other plant material that contribute to each street’s identity and character.

- Streetscaping should six feet clear for walking.

- Street trees with large canopies are required for sidewalk areas. Trees should be spaced 25-30 feet on center and be coordinated with the bay spacing and storefront design of the project.

- Include street furniture and pedestrian-scale lighting in planning and development of mixed-use projects.

- Landscaped storm water quality design measures provide multiple public benefits and should be integrated into open space areas to provide storm water quality benefits and landscaping benefits.

- Incorporate appropriate landscaping that includes a variety of trees, shrubs, and other plantings. Utilize Sacramento County’s River Friendly Landscape (RFL) Guidelines for plant material selection, placement and maintenance. The sustainable RFL guidelines are water and energy efficient, reduces maintenance, improves air quality and diverts green waste from the landfills.

- Provide on-going maintenance to identify and ensure the timely replacement of any dead or diseased vegetation.

- Design landscaping to be compatible with building design. Use trellises, arbors, cascading landscaping, vines and perimeter garden walls wherever suitable.

- Consider security issues in the landscape design of the site, including creation of barriers and screening.

- Do not allow landscaping to impede fire access to hydrant connections.

- Preserve and incorporate existing and native trees within the project site design to the greatest extent possible.

- Retain existing mature trees in landscape and building location plans to the greatest extent possible. Where existing trees must be removed, trees shall be replaced on-site or in another location, acceptable to the Planning Director, to compensate for the loss in canopy and environmental benefits. Participation in the County’s Tree Mitigation program to compensate for canopy loss is also acceptable.
6.0 **Village Centers / Mixed-Use Design Guidelines**

- Provide all landscaped areas with irrigation systems as needed to sustain the landscape. Comply with the County’s Water Conservation Ordinance. Utility services and equipment should be enclosed or buried, or otherwise concealed from view.

- Use of known high allergen plantings is discouraged.

**Drainage/Flood Facilities**

- Size, type, and location should be sized and located as to support the community master plan goals.

- To encourage sufficient usage, parks and open space should be strategically located in or near residential areas and commercial districts and be accessible via roadways, transit routes, and off-road pedestrian and bicycle trails and paseos (walkways).

- Neighborhood parks are encouraged to be centers of neighborhood activity and could be combined with schools, community recreation centers, libraries and other civic uses.

- Public safety is a high priority and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles should be applied.

- Flood protection and drainage facilities should be designed to provide multiple public benefits wherever possible. Facilities should include multi-purpose improvements consisting of recreation, the environment, storm water runoff, water reclamation, infiltration, groundwater recharge, flood control, etc. Attractive joint use basins, such as parks (in addition to Quimby land dedication requirements) or parkways with trails that also convey water to water quality basins or similar facilities and provide some water quality treatment are examples of desired multiple public benefit facilities.
6.0 VILLAGE CENTERS / MIXED-USE DESIGN GUIDELINES

6.2.7 INTEGRATING TRANSIT

Transit access is of particular importance for village center districts. Bus and transit stops should be safe, social and centrally located places that help energize and focus village districts.

**Design Guidelines**

- Transit facilities should be centrally located in the village district. They should be visible and socially integrated into the planning of new and redeveloped village centers.
- Pedestrian connections to transit facilities should be easy to understand, safe, comfortable and friendly.
- The business owner is encouraged to provide a location for convenient route and schedule information.
- Shelters and lighting should be provided. The design of shelters should anticipate the number of transit patrons and their physical comfort. Shade, and screening from wind and rain should be a design consideration for transit shelter design.
- Bike facilities should be designed into every village.
6.0 Village Centers / Mixed-Use Design Guidelines

6.3 Village Center Architectural Principles and Guidelines

Each project in a village should contribute to placemaking objectives for the community.

6.3.1 Building Form and Massing

Massing and orientation for residential, commercial and mixed-use buildings in village districts should have a pleasing composition while reinforcing placemaking, economic and social objectives.

Design Guidelines

• Building form and design should have a deliberate street and street corner orientation in village districts.

• Upper levels should have expressive design features, such as balconies and bay windows, that give the building a rhythm and residential scale.

• Roof forms should reflect the project’s architectural context. In a commercial context, the roof may be flat or have a strong horizontal cornice element. In a residential neighborhood edge or village context, roof forms should include hip or gable elements.

• For vertical mixed use, the uses should be an identifiable design element.

• Roof-mounted equipment shall be concealed by enclosures that are consistent in design with the building roof.

• The massing concepts of multi-story development should transition in scale between commercial streets and single-family residential streets.

• Building design concepts should include stepping down the scale and mass and increasing side or rear yard setbacks of taller buildings where they are adjacent to existing single-family areas.

This photo shows a residential building with expressive design features giving the building a rhythm and reinforcing placemaking objectives.
MAKING MIXED-USE SOCIAL

These two site diagrams illustrate two ways to develop a site with a mix of residential and commercial uses.

The design concept on the top is undesirable because it:

- Has disconnected commercial development;
- Creates multiple curb cuts and several disconnected parking lots;
- Creates an isolated walled subdivision; and
- Results in unsafe and uncomfortable pedestrian experience.

The bottom example is a desirable design concept. The concept is desirable because it:

- Has connected commercial buildings that share parking and access;
- Creates good pedestrian edges that are connected and interesting;
- Creates a variety of public and private spaces;
- Has a variety of housing designs; and
- Enhances access to adjacent neighborhoods.
6.0  VILLAGE CENTERS / MIXED-USE DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Units should be oriented toward public streets and commons rather than neighboring backyards.
- Parking for commercial or mixed use buildings should be designed and located to mitigate noise and visual impact on adjoining residential neighborhoods.
- Residential and commercial development should be interfaced with streets or open spaces rather than sharing a property line.

6.3.2 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

Architectural features should reinforce massing, place-making concepts and express the mixed-use nature of village centers.

Design Guidelines

- Commercial and residential buildings in mixed-use villages should contribute to overall planning and place-making objectives, while providing architectural variety. They shall conform in design to the relevant provisions of the Multi-Family Guidelines (Chapter 3.0), the Commercial Design Guidelines (Chapter 4.00 and the Employment Center Design Guidelines (Chapter 5.0)
- Residential and commercial buildings should express their function and purpose. Commercial storefront buildings should be designed to create a successful shopping experience. Transparent storefronts, bay spacing and details should reflect the pedestrian scale and pace of storefront retailing.
- Storefronts should maximize openness and transparency.
- Residential design features should enhance the expression of individual units and houses. This includes balconies, bay window elements, roof design, entries, porches, and window patterns.
6.3.3 Materials and Colors

Selection of materials and finishes should support architectural and massing concepts for village centers.

Design Guidelines

- Commercial frontage portions of mixed-use projects should utilize materials and colors that support retailing and image objectives for shopping environments.

- Use sustainable building materials that are high quality, durable, provide energy efficiency benefits, require low maintenance, and complement the design of the building. Use of quality recycled products is encouraged.

- Use of “Permanent” and/or cool roof products and materials with reflective surfaces are desirable because of their low maintenance, energy conservation and insulation values.

- Employ Energy Star appliances and energy efficient lighting in construction, to the extent feasible, consistent with the adopted Green Building Policies and requirements.

- Portions of mixed-use projects with residential frontage should use colors and materials that enhance the project’s architectural concepts and are compatible with adjacent residential streets.

- Architecture within each mixed-use project should use a palette of materials that convey an image of quality and durability. Certain materials have an inherently inexpensive, insubstantial or garish quality. These materials should not be used in new construction or renovation.

Examples include:

- Roofs: glazed or painted tiles, highly reflective metal or sheet materials, fake shingles made from metal or plastic materials

- Walls: vinyl, metal, plywood, T-111 siding, masonite or other sheet materials

- Wood or hardboard siding, if used, should be shiplap or board-and-batten.

- Shiplap should be installed so there are no visible joints. Board-and-batten should be installed so there are no visible joints in the underlying “board” material.
6.0 **Village Centers / Mixed-Use Design Guidelines**

- Painted surfaces should use colors that reinforce architectural concepts and are compatible with natural materials, such as brick or stone.

6.3.4 **Lighting**

Lighting concepts should be an integral part of the overall village design concepts anticipating the needs of pedestrian and automobile circulation, open spaces, storefront shopping, and residents.

**Design Guidelines**

- Lighting on commercial elevations of mixed-use village projects should support overall objectives for the street and storefront design.

- Elevations with residential front porches should have individual lights that illuminate entries and walkways.

- Lighting in service or common areas should be shielded from adjacent residential units.

- Lighting should provide for business interest even after hours, when business is closed, to contribute to pedestrian presence and sense of safety.

- Provide energy efficient lighting in all common areas and buildings, including pedestrian and vehicular routes. The emphasis should be on personal safety, with lighting landscape or building surfaces secondary.
LIGHTING A PEDESTRIAN DISTRICT

These sketches illustrate a family of lighting elements that provide for the safety and functional requirements for mixed-use villages.

1. Parking and Street Lighting
2. Street Lamps
3. Pedestrian-scale Light Bollards
4. Wall-mounted Sidewalk Lighting

These sketches illustrate the selection of street trees for a mixed-use neighborhood. Tree selection should reflect County Improvement Standards and the district’s urban design objectives.

1. Street Canopy Trees
   Where: Wide streets, residential frontage
   Require: 6-7’ planting strips
2. Vertical Street Trees
   Where: Medians, near intersections
   Require: 5-6’ planting strips
3. Smaller Upright Street Trees
   Where: Storefront edges
   Require: 4-5’ tree-cuts
6.3.5 **Walls and Fences**

Screen walls are generally regarded as mitigation for poor site planning. However, when walls or fences are required, they should be designed as an extension of village architectural and landscape design concepts.

6.3.6 **Service Areas**

Service and loading dock areas in village centers should be placed in locations that are not visually prominent and screened from view.

**Design Guidelines**

- Loading areas should be located to rear or inside side yards. Loading areas should not be visible from public streets or adjacent buildings.

- Trash bins and compactors, utility meters, transformers, and other service elements should be enclosed or otherwise completely concealed from view. Service elements should be designed as an integral element of the project’s architecture.

- Provide sound-attenuation features around noise-generating areas such as trash enclosures and loading docks. Such features may include fully enclosed loading docks and higher dock walls.

- Locate noise generating services so that vehicular service drives have a minimized noise impact on any adjacent residential uses.

- Provide trash and recycling education information near enclosures. Provide enclosures in a safe and secure location kept clean and odor-free.

- Design trash enclosure areas to the County’s latest storm water quality source control design standards, and provide trash and recycling education information.

- Refer to the commercial Section 4.4.6 for guidelines on wireless communication facilities.
6.0 Village Centers / Mixed-Use Design Guidelines

6.4 Village District Signage

Village district signage should help define the district’s identity and address a pedestrian’s pace and scale.

6.4.1 District Image and Wayfinding Signage

Village centers should have overall signage and graphic identity concepts that guide district, site and building signage design day and night.

Design Guidelines
- Village image and design themes should be reflected in a district-wide signage plan. The plan should include a “family” of signage that supports the merchandising needs of tenants, wayfinding, and graphic identity objectives for the village and adjacent neighborhood.
- District identity and wayfinding signage should be designed and located as part of an overall district signage plan.
- Placement and maintenance of village district signage must be coordinated with the County Department of Transportation and comply with ADA requirements.
- Refer to the commercial Sections 4.5.4 and 4.5.5 for guidelines addressing water tanks and towers and billboard signs and digital billboards.

6.4.2 Multi-Tenant Project Signage

Village center buildings should have graphic standards and schedule for building, tenant and wayfinding signage that reinforce pedestrian scale and pace of the district.

Design Guidelines
- Multi-tenant buildings in village districts should have an overall signage concept plan.
6.0 VILLAGE CENTERS / MIXED-USE DESIGN GUIDELINES

- A project’s signage plan should be designed for known tenants and future unknown tenants.
- Large, garish signs unnecessary to the commercial use of a village center are discouraged.
- Affixed signs should be composed of individual characters; cabinet signs are discouraged.
- Affixed signs should be placed only on vertical surfaces below the eaves or parapet line. Rooftop signs are discouraged.

6.4.3 STOREFRONT SIGNAGE

Storefront signage should reinforce the pedestrian orientation of village centers.

- Awning signs are allowed with graphics and signage limited to vertical surfaces. Awning signs should count against cumulative areas for affixed signs.
- Suspended blade signs are allowed under awnings or canopies.
- Maintain windows free of obstructions and signs to promote maximum visibility of merchandise, and visibility by Sheriff patrol consistent with CPTED strategies.

6.5 PROJECT OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

The operational elements design guidelines for mixed-use mirror those of the commercial district section. Please refer back to Section 4.6 for this information and details.
6.0 Village Centers / Mixed-Use Design Guidelines

This sketch shows a family of signage that would be appropriate in a mixed-use village district.

1. District Signage
2. District Banner Signage
3. Wayfinding Signage
4. Street Signage
5. Blade Signs
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7.0 NEW COMMUNITIES DESIGN GUIDELINES

7.1 PURPOSE

Sacramento County expects high quality design in new communities and other large projects. One of the objectives of the County’s General Plan Land Use Element is to have urban design in the unincorporated County that is functional, aesthetically pleasing, and distinctive. This objective will be met through the County’s Design Review program – a process in which projects from individual buildings to entire new communities are reviewed to ensure that their design is compatible with the project’s surroundings and that the project will be a positive addition to the County, both functionally and aesthetically. The County has established design guidelines for residential and non-residential projects which are at the individual building or subdivision scale and design guidelines for new communities which are at the community-wide scale.

The purpose of the guidelines in this chapter is to assist master planning of new communities at the community-wide scale. The application of these guidelines will contribute to the development of high quality new communities where residents could reside, work, socialize and recreate. New communities encompass master plans for new growth areas, master plans for large infill projects, and major revisions to existing planned communities. Master plans for communities in new growth areas and communities in established urban areas should indicate the community’s special character, image, livability and sustainability that contribute to the quality of life in Sacramento County.

Using the County-wide Design Guidelines, master plan documents for new communities shall illustrate consistency with design guidelines for each of the plan’s land use components (commercial, industrial, residential, etc.). All new communities shall submit a project level set of Design Guidelines or equivalent that demonstrate compliance substantial conformance with the County’s Guidelines and provide a fine grain of detailed project design features. The Master Plan Design Guidelines shall be evaluated on:

- A comprehensive response to meeting and exceeding the new community goals, planning principles, and guideline objectives in Chapter 7.0; the development design guidelines contained in Chapters 2.0, 3.0, 4.0, 5.0 and 6.0; the relevant County Department of Transportation, Department of Parks and Recreation, and local park District Design Guidelines; and the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan Design Guidelines (adoption pending).
• Meeting its stated special and unique character, sense of place, and contribution to the health and well-being of present and future residents of Sacramento County.

• Providing a finer grain of specific details for the quality envisioned for the project, including building form, theming at the neighborhood and community level, a robust list of amenities, design and activation of the public realm, and the relationship between uses.

7.2 PLANNING GOALS

The Design Guidelines for New Communities shall implement the goals and policies of the County’s 2030 General Plan.

The specific goals for new communities shall encompass:

• Mix of Land Uses: Mix land uses to build complete communities that combine a variety of housing options, retail and commercial opportunities, employment centers, civic and community facilities, public spaces, and recreational amenities. Locate vibrant and compact mixed-use town centers and lifestyle centers near neighborhoods and in major transportation corridors, providing an environment where pedestrians feel safe and comfortable.

• Walkable Neighborhoods: Create neighborhoods with housing, jobs, public spaces, goods and services located within reasonable walking and biking distance of each other. Build compact, mixed-use communities with safe and appealing streetscapes, paseos (walkways) and trails to encourage pedestrian and bicycle travel.

• Range of Housing Options: Plan and build a range of housing choices within neighborhoods, varied by cost, design, size, location, and tenure to allow a diversity of economic levels, age groups and cultures to live together. Locate housing near places of work, retail, and educational and health services; and provide an integrated transportation system to offer residents an alternative to traditional, segregated suburban neighborhoods.
7.0 **NEW COMMUNITIES DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- **Comprehensive Transportation System:** Integrate land use and transportation planning to design and implement a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system, tied to both local and regional networks. Provide facilities that encourage walking, biking and public transit usage as preferred alternatives to automotive travel. Encourage compact mixed-use developments along transportation corridors clustered around transit stops.

- **Natural Resource Preservation:** Protect, enhance, and preserve natural resources as valued assets that provide critical ecosystems and food production.

- **Focus on Livability:** The community shall as a whole and in its parts enhance the quality of life, health and wellness for its residents and users, and provide a unique sense of place and contribution to the community.

- **Focus on Sustainable Design:** Sustainable design supports development in ways that are environmentally conscious, economically sound, and which provide community-wide benefits. Sustainable design increases community resilience, as well as enhances health, livability and protects natural resources. Design strategies should be used that support energy and water conservation, water use efficiency, integrative storm water treatment, urban greening and forestry, green infrastructure, and use of renewable resources. Active design strategies are also sustainable and should also be used to provide active transportation choices such as walking, bicycling, and accessing transit in coordination with safety and crime prevention through environmental design elements.

- **Comprehensive Planning:** All parts of the community should function as an integrated whole.

- **Integrated with Other Communities:** The land use plan for a new master plan community should be integrated with those of adjacent master plan communities. For instance, land uses along the community’s borders should be compatible with land uses of the adjacent community.
7.3 APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

- These guidelines shall apply to all development encompassing new communities of over 50 acres that are not part of an existing plan.

- Master plans of new communities should include the following components and meet and exceed the objectives of the following guidelines. It is recognized that some projects, due to size limitations, cannot include all of the components.

7.4 COMPONENTS

(Note: Figure 1 “Components of a New Community” illustrates the application of many of the following guidelines)

7.4.1 VILLAGE CENTER / MIXED USE DISTRICTS

Design Guidelines

- Because a village center serves as the center or “downtown” of the community, a center should be a mixed-use district with higher intensity development, located in a centralized location with the community. A village center should also have strong pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections to the rest of the community. Vehicular connections shall be provided that are clearly identifiable and connect to the rest of the community.

- Village centers should use open and landscaped spaces such as courtyards and plazas, streets and community facilities (civic buildings) to provide social and design focal points. The community’s main civic buildings and spaces should be located in prominent locations and be established as community landmarks. Village centers should also have a central place such as a town square, main street or village plaza which could be areas of community events such as live theater, concerts, festivals and street fairs.

- To create a sense of place, streets should be aligned such that they provide views of prominent buildings and spaces and which will also aid in orientation and way-finding.
7.0 **NEW COMMUNITIES DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- There should be a variety of land uses with institutional, commercial, office, and high density housing in a mixed-use setting. The scale of mixed uses should be at the block level.

- To enhance walkability and connectivity, the predominant street pattern for village centers should be a grid or modified grid pattern with maximum block lengths of 300 to 500 feet. Blocks of greater than 500 feet should have mid-block crosswalks and pass-throughs.

- When any mixed-use district is designated in a master plan, it shall have a master development plan. This master development plan shall have a residential component and at least one or more of other uses: retail/services, office/institutional, public/civic.

- For horizontal mixed-use, contiguous discrete areas devoted to one use of no more than three to five acres are encouraged.

- Design of village center plans and elements shall conform to the Village Center/Mixed-Use Guidelines in Chapter 6.0.

### 7.4.2 COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

**Design Guidelines**

- Commercial districts adjacent to residential neighborhood areas should be concentrated in centers (nodes) rather than spread thinly along frontages of major roads in typical “strip mall” fashion.

- Commercial districts should be located so that all residential neighborhoods and employment centers have convenient access to appropriate commercial activity so as to reduce auto usage and promote alternative modes of travel.

- Commercial districts should include a wide spectrum of uses to serve the new community’s commercial activity needs and contribute to the economic vitality of the community.

- Commercial districts should vary in size from community commercial districts with large anchor stores and grocery stores that serve the entire community to neighborhood commercial districts that may have a small grocery or convenience store, pharmacy or health center, and serve the nearby neighborhood.
• For the convenience of residents, community commercial districts should be located no more than one (1) mile apart from each other. Neighborhood commercial districts should be no more than ½ mile from another neighborhood commercial district or the nearest community commercial district.

• To create a sense of place while contributing to the vitality of the district, commercial districts should be designed around well-defined active communal spaces that include a central place, such as a large courtyard, main street or plaza. These communal spaces could be sites for special events.

• To maximize connectivity within the commercial districts and so support pedestrian activity, the overall vehicular and pedestrian circulation pattern in larger commercial districts should be a grid or modified grid pattern that include roadways and driveways. As much as possible, a major roadway such a thoroughfare or arterial should not separate residential areas from commercial areas.

• Design of commercial district plans and elements, shall conform to the Commercial Design Guidelines in Chapter 4.0.

Communal spaces should be located throughout the commercial district.

Driveways with diagonal parking increase connectivity within the commercial district.
7.0 New Communities Design Guidelines

7.4.3 Office, Business Park, Institutional, and Industrial Developments

Design Guidelines

• To encourage public transit use, high intensity business districts should be located within ¼ mile of public transit.

• High intensity business districts should be located near major residential and commercial areas and have auto, pedestrian and bicycle linkages to those areas.

• For the convenience of its employees, business districts should have supporting user facilities such as dining and day care.

• Business districts shall have a clear master plan framework and design aesthetic that also incorporates a landscape theme and elements contributing to the health and wellness of employees and patrons.

• Heavy industrial uses, such as manufacturing or processing, should be located near railroad lines and/or major thoroughfares. These uses should be buffered where appropriate, from residential, commercial and high intensity business districts to eliminate or reduce impacts to these areas.

• Office, business park, institutional, and industrial developments shall meet the design standards at the building district, complex, and individual building level as described in Chapter 5.0.
7.4.4 RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Design Guidelines

• To encourage income diversity within a master plan community, there should be a variety of housing types and densities, and could include single family homes, duplexes, triplexes, accessory dwelling units, townhomes, condominiums, and apartments in a variety of settings.

• For the convenience of its residents and to encourage pedestrian and bicycle activity, residential neighborhoods should include neighborhood parks and schools that are located together or separately in central locations, with safe pedestrian and bicycle access.

• Residential neighborhoods should plan for neighborhood-oriented institutional uses such as churches, day care centers, health centers, and private schools.

• If the overall project includes employment centers, then the project should provide connections and facilities to encourage pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use between employment centers and residential neighborhoods. Strive to locate residential neighborhoods within walking distance (1/2 mile) of employment centers.

• Residential neighborhoods should provide strong connections to major project or community amenities, such as community centers and regional trails systems.

• Medium and high density residential developments should be integrated into the community in a transit-supportive fashion such as locating apartments next to shopping centers that are served by transit lines.

• Residential densities should increase as development meets a community or neighborhood center in order to maximize the number of potential customers that are near the community or neighborhood center.
In environmentally sensitive areas and areas abutting land intended to remain rural, provide appropriately lower densities and preserve open spaces by clustering units close to roads and existing developments.

Residential neighborhoods should have a variety of housing types in a grid or modified grid street pattern to enhance walkability and connectivity. Block lengths should be 500 feet or less. Blocks of greater than 500 feet should have mid-block crosswalks and pass-throughs.

Residential units that are used to meet Housing Element Program A4 requirements are required to have at least a certain percentage of its residential units to be built at a density that is equal to or exceeds the current Housing Element’s “default density”. This “default density” is considered appropriate to accommodate the development of future affordable housing.

Alleys can remove garages from the streetscape and can improve the streetscape of a residential neighborhood.

Streets that are main routes to neighborhood focal points such as schools and parks shall be “complete streets” with safe access for all users, including pedestrians (sidewalks), cyclists (bike lanes), transit and vehicles. Complete street landscaping shall include trees to provide shading and enhance the users experience while contributing to improving air quality and the surrounding environment.

Housing that accommodates elderly, special needs, a range of income levels and preferences should be available, and incorporate active design elements.

Residential neighborhood design of plans and elements shall conform to the Design Guidelines for Single Family Chapter 2.0 and Multi Family Chapter 3.0.

Housing that accommodates the housing needs of the elderly and other special needs groups should be provided.
7.0 NEW COMMUNITIES DESIGN GUIDELINES

7.4.5 PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND DRAINAGE/FLOOD FACILITIES

Design Guidelines

• Size, type, and location shall be sized and located as to support the community master plan goals.

• To encourage sufficient usage, parks and open space should be strategically located in or near residential areas and commercial districts and be accessible via roadways, transit routes, and off-road pedestrian and bicycle trails and paseos.

• Parks and open space areas should be used as methods to connect communities and neighborhoods and provide alternative modes of travel via sidewalks and trails.

• Open space areas could be used to delineate community or neighborhood boundaries.

• Parks and open space should be integrated into neighborhoods to encourage outdoor recreation and preserve natural habitats.

• Neighborhood parks are encouraged to be centers of neighborhood activity and could be combined with schools, community recreation centers, libraries and other civic uses.

• Parks and open space areas should include linear parkways with off-street trails integrated with the transportation system. Public safety is a high priority and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles should be applied to the design of off-street trails.

• Flood protection and drainage facilities shall be designed to provide multiple public benefits wherever possible. Facilities shall include multi-purpose improvements consisting of recreation, the environment, storm water runoff, water reclamation, flood control, etc. Attractive joint use basins, such as parks (in addition to Quimby land dedication requirements) or parkways with trails that also convey stormwater to water quality basins or similar facilities and provide some water quality treatment are examples of desired multiple public benefit facilities.

• Open space should be connected to provide habitat corridors through urban environments.
7.0 **New Communities Design Guidelines**

### 7.4.6 Transportation Systems

**Design Guidelines**

- Design the circulation system with multiple routes by: 1) creating direct, short and simple linkages between residential neighborhoods and activity centers; 2) reducing the need to use arterial streets for local trips; and 3) combining circulation routes with other community elements (e.g. pedestrian and bicycle paths through parkways).

- Transportation needs of the community should be served by an integrated and balanced system for vehicular, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian use.

- Master plans should provide direct and efficient connections between internal transportation infrastructure (including roads, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, trails and transit routes) and existing, planned or proposed transportation infrastructure adjacent to the Master Plan boundaries.

- To encourage transit usage, high density residential and commercial mixed-use projects (vertical or horizontal) should be located within walking distance (¼ mile) of a transit center.

- Development should reflect the use of average residential and commercial densities that maximize transit system ridership.

- The streetscape design of the circulation system should clearly portray the street hierarchy with attention to traffic calming and pedestrian safety.
7.4.7 SUSTAINABILITY

Design Guidelines

- The master plan as a whole and in its parts shall support sustainable design principles that reflect those delineated in the Sacramento County 2030 General Plan, and the Active Design guidelines highlighted throughout the Countywide Design Guidelines and further described in Appendix D of these guidelines. Sustainable Design elements shall be used that contribute to improving the human, economic and environmental health of the community.

- Use Chapters 2.0, 3.0, 4.0, 5.0, and 6.0 of the Sacramento County-wide Design Guidelines to indicate sustainable design strategies at the project level.
7.0 NEW COMMUNITIES DESIGN GUIDELINES

FIGURE 7.1
COMPONENTS OF A NEW COMMUNITY

- Agricultural - Residential
  - Properties along community's border with agricultural area.

- Neighbourhood Commercial Districts
  - Spaced about 1 mile from nearest Commercial Districts.

- Village Center/Mixed-Use District
  - Located centrally within the community along major roadways and major transit routes.

- Gradually more intense development toward the center of the Village Center and Commercial Districts.

- Major roadways
  - (Thoroughfares & arterials) are complete streets with transit service and sidewalks and bicycle lanes that are separated from the roadway by wide landscaped strips.

- Medium and high density residential areas adjacent to Commercial District
  - Community Commercial District has grid system of streets and driveways.

- Open space areas with off-street pedestrian/bicycle trails used to link neighborhoods and delimit neighborhood and community boundaries. Open space areas are also used as "green infrastructure" to treat stormwater.

- Industrial Area
  - Buffered from residential and commercial areas with open space corridors. Site has access to major roadway.

- High employment Business Park
  - Located near major residential and commercial areas and transit stops. Commercial services are available within Business Park.

- Extensive system of two-lane through streets to distribute traffic and relieve pressure on major roadways. These streets also have bioswales to encourage percolation of stormwater.
APPENDIX A: RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

The Countywide Design Guidelines are intended to work in-concert with existing and future policy and regulatory documents.

A.1 SACRAMENTO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

The Sacramento County General Plan guides the County to the year 2030 by establishing goals and policies that address land use, circulation, economic development, and urban design issues. Reviewed by the Planning Commission and adopted by the Board of Supervisors, the General Plan serves as a basis for decisions that affect aspects of everyday life, from where residents live and work to how they move about. The General Plan is implemented by decisions that direct the allocation of public resources and that shape private development. In essence, the General Plan is the blueprint for the community’s vision of Sacramento County.

A.2 SACRAMENTO COUNTY HOUSING ELEMENT

The Sacramento County Housing Element is part of the General Plan. The goal of the Housing Element is to promote an adequate supply of decent, safe and affordable housing to meet the needs of all residents of Sacramento County. Design concepts influence the built environment, and land use decisions play an important role in protecting the public health, safety, and welfare of the County’s citizens, shaping the pattern of community development, and in promoting physical activity.

A.3 SACRAMENTO COUNTY ZONING CODE

The Sacramento County Zoning Code is the County’s major implementation tool for the General Plan. The Code regulates structures and uses of property within designated zoning districts by, for example, setting limits on building height, requiring setbacks, and specifying the percentage of a site which must be landscaped. These Design Guidelines complement the Zoning Code by providing urban design and architectural direction that the Zoning Code does not.
A.4 COMMUNITY AND SPECIFIC PLANS

A community or specific plan is a detailed plan for the development of a particular area. Falling under the broader umbrella of the General Plan, these plans provide more restrictive standards for the types of uses permitted, development criteria (setbacks, heights, landscape, architecture, etc.), design guidelines, and circulation and infrastructure improvements. Specific plans are often used to ensure that multiple property owners and developers adhere to a single common development plan, as well as to provide flexibility in development standards beyond those contained in the Zoning Code.

A.5 COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR PLANS

A commercial corridor plan is a detailed plan for the development of a segment of a major thoroughfare. These plans provide standards for the types of uses permitted, development criteria (setbacks, heights, landscape, architecture, etc.), design guidelines, and circulation and infrastructure improvements. These plans are identified in the Zoning Code.

A.6 SPECIAL PLANNING AND NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION AREAS

Special Planning Areas (SPA) and Neighborhood Preservation Areas (NPA) are districts or neighborhoods where additional flexibility in uses and/or development standards beyond those contained in the Zoning Code is desirable due to unique characteristics of area. These areas are identified in the Zoning Code.
Appendix B: Special Standards

B.1 ADA Transitional Pedestrian Guidelines

The County is in the process of updating pedestrian facilities to respond to the American Disabilities Act (ADA). All new sidewalks, crosswalks, and buildings located in public rights-of-way need to comply with the Federal laws regarding accommodating persons with disabilities. The County has prepared guidelines that demonstrate how to design sidewalks and other facilities that support accessibility requirements.

B.2 Disabled Access

Title 24 and ADA

Disabled access for new and renovated development is governed by California’s Title 24 (provides standards for disabled access, energy efficiency and seismic design) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act’s Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). Every project is required to be designed to provide access. This includes public infrastructure projects, site planning for private development, and building design.
B.3 Universal Design

The Design Guidelines encourage design solutions for persons of all abilities through universal design concepts. Universal design is the process of ensuring that the built environment is accessible, understandable, and navigable to people with a wide range of abilities and conditions affecting one or more of the senses, motor skill, reach, range of motion, and/or general mobility. Universal design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities; communicates necessary information effectively (regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities); and can be approached, reached, manipulated, and used regardless of the individual's body size, posture, or mobility.

Universal access and design is encouraged in multifamily housing to benefit people of all ages and abilities by making all components of the built environment more usable and readily accessible by as many people as possible at little or no extra cost. Moreover, universal design must be aesthetically pleasing and functional for people with mobility, visual, hearing, and other impairments as well as those who have no significant disability.

Universal design is a higher standard than the standard required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Universal design may exceed the minimum program requirements of the building codes. Universal design is best achieved through innovative design of building and spaces, rather than through prescriptive measures and should be considered from the earliest design stages.

B.4 Stormwater Quality Design Principles

The County's Department of Water Resources has prepared development standards for new and redevelopment projects which require the use of stormwater quality control measures on most projects. The County has published the Guidance Manual for Onsite Stormwater Quality Control Measures that contain design criteria and guidelines for these measures, which are intended to reduce pollutants in urban runoff and attenuate the volume and rate of runoff discharged to the local stormwater drainage system and creeks and rivers. Since many of the measures will affect site grading, drainage and parking lot layout, project applicants should strive to integrate stormwater quality measures into their projects at the earliest possible phase of design. Early consideration allows for more effective and economical options possibly requiring less long-term maintenance. Also, many of the stormwater quality measures fulfill other ordinances.
B.5 CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

In recent years designers and architects have begun to recognize crime as a man-made hazard that can be resisted through quality design. The new design approach to crime prevention is known as “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” (CPTED). It is more far-reaching than dead-bolts on doors or locks on windows; it is the use of design to eliminate or reduce criminal behavior while at the same time encouraging people to “keep an eye out” for each other.

The following CPTED strategies can be applied through design guidelines to residential, commercial, industrial and mixed-use developments to help create safer, more livable communities.

NATURAL SURVEILLANCE
The placement of physical features, activities, and people in a way that maximizes visibility is one concept directed toward keeping intruders easily observable, and therefore less likely to commit criminal acts. Features that maximize the visibility of people, parking areas, and building entrances are: unobstructed doors and windows, pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and streets, front porches, and appropriate nighttime lighting.

TERRITORIAL REINFORCEMENT
Physical design can also create or extend a sphere of influence. Users are encouraged to develop a sense of territorial control while potential offenders, perceiving this control, are discouraged. This concept includes features that define property lines and distinguish private spaces from public spaces using landscape plantings, pavement designs, gateway treatments, signage, and open (“CPTED”) fences.

NATURAL ACCESS CONTROL
Natural access control is another design concept directed primarily at decreasing crime opportunity by denying access to crime targets and creating a perception of risk for offenders. People are physically guided through a space by the strategic design of streets, sidewalks, building entrances, landscaping, and neighborhood gateways. Design elements are very useful tools to clearly indicate public routes and discourage access to private areas and structural elements.
MAINTENANCE
Care and maintenance allow for the continued use of a space for its intended purpose. Deterioration and blight indicate less concern and control by the intended users of a site and indicate a greater tolerance of disorder. Proper maintenance prevents reduced visibility due to plant overgrowth and obstructed or inoperative lighting, while serving as an additional expression of territoriality and ownership. Inappropriate maintenance, such as over pruning shrubs, can prevent landscape elements from achieving desired CPTED effects. Communication of design intent to maintenance staff is especially important for CPTED related ideas to be effective.

B.6 SAMPLE HOA CONDITIONS

The following condition is a recommended standard condition to be applied to small lot and townhome residential projects. The intent is to ensure that a HOA is formed in all cases, and that Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&Rs) be recorded that outline the respective duties of the HOA and individual property owners. There are many different product types, and this condition may be modified for individual circumstances. Any provisions of State Law pertaining to HOAs would supercede any portion of this condition. For small lot detached products, this condition does require that the HOA maintain the residences; it would require that there be “step-in” provisions for enforcement by the HOA if individual property owners do not meet the CC&R standard.

1. Establish a Homeowners’ Association and record Declaration of CC&Rs that clearly establishes the respective maintenance and repair responsibilities of the Association and the individual residence owners, including, but not limited to:
   » Front yard landscape maintenance by the Association for all residential lots;
   » Maintenance by the Association of all private streets and alleys;
   » Landscaping and general maintenance by the Association of project common areas and paseos;
   » Maintenance, paint, repair, and eventual replacement of all other residential dwelling improvements including exterior surfaces by the residence owners in accordance with the maintenance manual provided by the developer to initial purchasers;
» Provisions relating to the storage and disposal of trash including provisions requiring trash containers to be maintained in garages or in the residence except when the container is at the curb on refuse collection days and provisions relating to the placement of materials during the Neighborhood Cleanup Program;

» Provisions prohibiting the conversion of garage bays to uses such as workshops or storage that prevent the parking of vehicles in the garage.

The following condition is intended to address situations where the primary make-up of property owners are investors who may not be completely engaged in property maintenance and long-term stability. This condition does not require that units be owner-occupied over the life of the unit.

2. The Board of Directors of the HOA shall be comprised of owner occupants. Initial sale of homes for ownership by investors/absentee owners of the entire subdivision shall be limited to no more than ten percent (10%) of the residential units in the subdivision.

The following condition is intended to more specifically address placement of garbage containers, especially in cases where there are dead-end private streets.

3. Garbage containers will be serviced on the street of a resident’s address. On a private street that is not a through streets, all containers must be placed on one side of the street as designated by the County in order for service to be performed. It will be necessary to have CC&Rs that prohibit parking on service day for these streets. During Neighborhood Clean-up Programs, all materials will need to be placed on the main street that crosses the street which is not a through street. No material will be serviced on a private street which is not a through street. All owners on private streets and the HOA will need to sign a Release of Liability for any damage that may occur while the County provides service to those private streets.
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This chapter uses case study projects to demonstrate how the Design Guidelines can make projects more responsive to their context, result in site planning that connects new development to the surrounding neighborhood, and helps to improve the design of buildings.

This chapter includes four case studies:

A-1 Infill Mixed-use
A-2 Shopping Center Renovation
A-3 Office Development
A-4 Fast Food Drive-Through Site

MEETING COMMUNITY DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The case studies anticipate the types of projects that will become increasingly important investments in Sacramento County’s communities. They reflect four important design principles:

1. Projects have to be better connected to adjacent neighborhoods and to each other.
2. Reinvestment in existing commercial districts, in terms of renovation and redevelopment of older centers, needs to reflect the same design and site planning expectations as new projects.
3. Thoughtful design and site planning of franchise tenants can meet both community design and business objectives.
4. Good site planning can lead to more social and environmentally friendly places.
CASE STUDY ORGANIZATION

The case studies are organized to reflect how projects will be evaluated in the design review process. They reference the sections of the Guidelines that pertain to the type of design issues being addressed.

SITE CONTEXT:
There is a brief overview of key features of the site surroundings and context.

SITE PLAN FEATURES:
Site planning features are summarized. These include how the site is connected to the community, its contribution to community and project design objectives, and how the project creates social and pedestrian-friendly places.

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES:
This includes massing and architectural concepts that support community design and project image objectives.
Case Study A-1: Mixed-Use Infill

This case study illustrates how the design guidelines would apply to a 3.9 acre infill site. The case study demonstrates how commercial and residential uses can be co-located resulting in a social and pedestrian friendly place and neighborhood destination.

CONTEXT: The site is located on the corner of a commercial corridor and residential neighborhood street next to a community park.

SITE PLAN FEATURES: The site plan provides walking edges on both the commercial and residential street. Commercial storefront buildings share parking and driveways. Live-work units are adjacent to the commercial uses and the project’s common open space. Placing the housing at the back of the site provides “eyes-on-the-park”, making it safer and a visual amenity for residents.

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES: The building massing uses variations in 2 and 3-story height and roof shape to frame passageways and street edges. Architectural use of balcony, porch and bay window elements add variety and scale to the townhouse buildings. The scale and transparency of storefronts adds to the street’s pedestrian safety, access, comfort and interest.

This is a view from the sidewalk of a storefront building. Live-work townhouses and common open space can be seen to the right.
The case study massing diagram shows what the project would look like facing the community park. The park would be an amenity for the development. The townhouses would provide “eyes-on-the-park” security.

1. Commercial Storefronts
2. Live-Work
3. Townhouses
4. Open Space

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
Site Area 3.9 acres
Residential (2.6 acres)
18 Townhouses
10 Live-work Units
Commercial (1.3 acres)
17,000 SF
68 parking spaces
APPENDIX C: CASE STUDIES AND CHECKLISTS

SITE PLAN
1. Commercial Storefronts
2. Live-Work
3. Townhouses
4. Open Space
5. Existing Commercial Office

PARKING DIAGRAM
1. Commercial Parking
2. Residential Parking Courts
3. Residential Driveways
4. On-street Visitor Parking
Case Study A-2: Shopping Center Renovation

This case study illustrates how the design guidelines would apply to renovation of an existing 12-acre shopping center. The case study demonstrates how redevelopment of aging commercial pad buildings and renovation of anchor stores can improve the image and viability of older shopping centers.

Context: The site is located on the corner of two commercial corridors and is adjacent to a residential neighborhood.

Site Plan Features: The site plan provides walking edges along the commercial streets and connects buildings with tree-lined sidewalks and driveways. Site entries are reinforced with the design and orientation of buildings and landscaping. Parking areas are defined by landscaping and walkways.

Architectural Features: The building massing supports overall urban design concepts for the district and the project including commercial street gateways, site entries and edges. Each building provides a walking edge that connects to an overall system of storefronts. Lighting and signage concepts support the overall identity and design themes for the redevelopment of the center.

This is a view from the sidewalk across the street from the shopping center’s main entry. Storefront buildings frame the entry drive.
The case study massing diagram shows what the project would look like with street-oriented pad buildings, landscaped driveways, and expressive massing.

1. Commercial Storefronts
2. Anchor Stores
3. Site Entries

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Site Area 12.0 acres
Commercial (FAR 0.25)
130,700 SF
522 parking spaces
(4/1,000)
SITE PLAN

1. Storefronts
2. Anchor Stores
3. Site Entries
4. Commercial District Gateway

Primary Walking Route
Case Study A-3: Office Development

This case study illustrates how the design guidelines would apply to a 7.3 acre office site. The case study demonstrates how commercial office projects can create public spaces, connect to the community and respond to different edge conditions.

CONTEXT: The site is located in an area with commercial, residential and institutional uses. The site also has freeway visibility.

SITE PLAN FEATURES: The site plan groups building lobbies around a plaza space. The plaza includes amenities for employees, such as outdoor seating areas and public art. The plaza also connects to a trail along a canal linking it to the surrounding community. Offices have views of the trail and landscape surrounding the buildings.

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES: The two-story building design demonstrates how a tilt-up panel system can be made more interesting by creating variation in the system panels and adding greater emphasis on the design of lobbies and stairs. The three-story lobbies are transparent and include projected sun shades. Pulling the stairs outside the office building provides another design opportunity.

This is a view from the parking lot of the lobbies and plaza space. The plaza’s public art, seating areas and trail-edge landscaping are seen beyond.
The case study massing diagram shows how the lobbies frame an outdoor public space that is connected to the waterway trail.

1. Lobbies
2. Stairwell
3. Plaza and Public Art
4. Waterway Trail
5. Parking Lots

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
Site Area 7.3 acres
Commercial Office (0.25 FAR)
80,000 SF
320 parking spaces
APPENDIX C: CASE STUDIES AND CHECKLISTS

SITE PLAN
1. Lobbies
2. Plaza and Public Art
3. Waterway Trail
4. Parking Lots
5. Site Entry

Primary Walking Route

Sacramento Countywide Design Guidelines
C-11
CASE STUDY A-4: FAST FOOD DRIVE-THROUGH

This case study illustrates how the design guidelines would apply to a 1.8-acre fast food site with three pads. The case study demonstrates the benefits of shared parking and connected walkways. The result is a small social and friendly dining district.

CONTEXT: The site is located near a major commercial intersection along a commercial street. Residential uses are located next to the site.

SITE PLAN FEATURES: The site plan provides walking edges along the front of the restaurant pads and outdoor seating areas. Parking is connected with a shared driveway. Drive-up windows are located on the side of each building. Building entries are located where they can be seen and accessed from the sidewalk and parking areas. Walkways connect to adjacent sites.

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES: The building massing wraps the food preparation and service areas with transparent public lobbies and dining. The dining areas flow out onto outdoor seating areas along the sidewalk. Lobbies, dining elements and lighting make the cluster of businesses an attractive evening destination.

This is a view from the sidewalk of the outdoor seating areas and lobbies. A planting strip and canopy street trees provide shade.
The case study massing diagram shows three fast food pads with drive-up windows. The buildings’ lobbies face the street and include outdoor eating areas along the sidewalk. Shared parking is in the rear of the site.

1. Lobbies
2. Outdoor Seating
3. Drive-up Windows
4. Shared Parking

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Site Area 1.8 acres
Fast Food Pads (3 pads at 4,000 SF)
12,000 SF
120 parking spaces
SITE PLAN

1. Lobbies
2. Outdoor Seating
3. Drive-through Windows
4. Shared Parking

Primary Walking Route
The checklist below is intended to be a summary of the issues addressed by the principles. It is not meant to be a regulatory device or a substitute for the language and examples found in the principles themselves. Rather, it is a tool for evaluating the success of a given project in meeting the intent of the design principles.

**TABLE C-1: SAMPLE DESIGN REVIEW CHECKLIST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SITE DESIGN</strong></td>
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<td>Does site planning and design address the</td>
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<td>potential impacts on existing and planned</td>
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<td>adjacent uses?</td>
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<td>Does the project design address traffic,</td>
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<td>parking, circulation and safety issues, and</td>
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<td>security?</td>
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<td><strong>CIRCULATION</strong></td>
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<td>Is the visual prominence of vehicles</td>
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<td>minimized through siting and screening views</td>
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<td>from adjacent roadways and uses?</td>
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<td>Are parking facilities designed to be</td>
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<td>compatible with building design?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CIRCULATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the siting and design of driveways and entry-ways minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties and bicycle safety?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is direct, adequate, and safe pedestrian ingress and egress provided to, from and within the site?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>COMMON AND PRIVATE OPEN SPACE</strong></td>
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<td>Does the project provide opportunities for usable, attractive, and integrated open space?</td>
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<td>Do proposed planted areas enhance the appearance of structures, define site functions, and screen undesirable views?</td>
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<td>Are open space areas linked among adjacent developments, where opportunities allow?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LIGHTING AND SECURITY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is project lighting at an appropriate scale and compatible in design to the main structure?</td>
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**TABLE C-1: SAMPLE DESIGN REVIEW CHECKLIST (CONT.)**

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<tr>
<td><strong>LIGHTING AND SECURITY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the lighting of the project respect the adjacent residential development neighborhood through attention to scale, views, and excess lighting?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SERVICES AND UTILITIES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are amenities and accessory structures centrally located and easily accessible by residents?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are service elements and infrastructure such as trash dumpsters, loading docks and mechanical equipment appropriately screened and/or located away from street views?</td>
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<td><strong>FENCING</strong></td>
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<td>Is the design of proposed fencing and walls compatible with the overall design of the project?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does fencing located behind setback areas increase the sense of isolation from the rest of the community?</td>
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## TABLE C-1: SAMPLE DESIGN REVIEW CHECKLIST (CONT.)

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<tr>
<td><strong>SCALE / MASSING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the project compatible with its surroundings with regard to building scale, mass, setbacks, and articulation?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BUILDING DESIGN</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Is the project compatible with the scale and character of the adjacent residential neighborhood?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the project design complement the scale and character of adjacent properties?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the project respect and visually improve the predominant characteristics of height, massing, setbacks, and materials of the existing developments in the project area?</td>
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<td>Does the project incorporate variety and distinctiveness in design?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ENERGY CONSERVATION</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Does the project incorporate site planning and building design features that help reduce energy conservation?</td>
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ACTIVE DESIGN FOR A HEALTHY SACRAMENTO COUNTY

ACTIVE DESIGN GUIDANCE: PURPOSE

The purpose of this chapter is to promote quality design that enhances community aesthetics, reflects the community character and reinforces the community’s and County General Plan goals of sustainable design. When these guidelines are properly applied to projects, we achieve quality design and we also improve the public’s health, safety and livability. There is a need to improve the health of our communities. Application of the Active Design strategies will help to achieve these goals, provide overall planning and design principles, and guidelines for commercial districts.

Decisions on how and where to build homes, businesses, shopping centers, parks and schools all have significant impacts on human health. Mixed land uses (job/housing/retail proximity), densities, community connectivity, and active transportation (walking and bicycling) choices can all promote and increase walking and physical activity. By incorporating Active Design strategies into the built environment, physical activity and improved health can be achieved.

Active Design is not only healthy, it is also sustainable design. While enhancing the public’s health, it also reinforces the goals of environmental sustainability by reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, improving air and water quality, and preserving the natural environment. These strategies and guidelines are grounded in the data that the design of the built environment can have a crucial and positive influence on improving public health and is an essential tool in reversing the most pressing public health problems of our time.
THE CHRONIC DISEASE AND OBESITY EPIDEMIC: HEALTH ISSUES

For the last few decades, environmental and public health professionals have made great strides in helping to build and maintain a healthy society. Whereas infectious diseases were the gravest health threats of an earlier era, the biggest killers of our time are non-infectious, chronic diseases such as heart disease and stroke, cancer, chronic lung disease and diabetes, for which the leading risk factors are obesity, physical inactivity, poor diets and smoking. 1,2

Over the last two decades, obesity has become epidemic in California and the United States. Overweight/obesity, defined by a Body Mass Index or BMI over 25, now affects two-thirds of the adult population in California and Sacramento County. About one in three California children (31%), ages 10-17, is overweight or obese, and 43 percent of elementary school children in Sacramento County are overweight or obese. 3 (BMI is a measure of body fat that classifies adults into four categories: underweight, normal weight, overweight and obese.)

Obese children are ten times more likely to be obese adults than normal-weight children. The underlying causes of obesity — physical inactivity and a surplus of dietary calories — are second only to tobacco as the major causes of premature death.

Obesity increases the chances of developing type 2 diabetes, 4 which has more than doubled in recent years and leads to complications such as blindness, limb amputations, cardiovascular disease, and kidney failure. Type 2 diabetes is increasingly found among children, leading to medical complications in early adulthood, with serious consequences for quality of life and health care costs.

The California Health Interview Survey showed that 63 percent of Sacramento County residents fail to meet recommended guidelines for physical activity — 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week — putting them at high risk for being overweight and obese. According to the CDC only about 20 percent of U.S. adults are meeting both the aerobic and muscle strengthening components of the federal government's physical activity recommendations.

Chronic disease and obesity exact a toll not only on our health but also on our economy in the form of rising health care and disability costs and declining productivity and workforce availability. In 2000, the total direct and indirect health care costs attributable to obesity in the United States were estimated to be $117 billion, which is equal to each U.S. resident in the year 2000 paying $415 each. In 2006, the California Center for Public Health Advocacy estimated that the health care costs related to obesity in California were close to $41 billion. More far-reaching economic consequences include fuel expenses and costs from insurance, disability, absenteeism, and decreased productivity for the business sector. This economic burden is only anticipated to grow. If the current rate of increase in obesity continues, the total health care costs attributable to obesity are anticipated to double every decade, reaching $860 to $960 billion by 2030.

**Lack of Physical Activity and a Supportive Built Environment: Connecting Design and Health**

Part of the reason for today's lower rates of physical activity compared to the past is the changed built environment. Over the past 60 years, development patterns have been focused on the ease and speed of movement for automobiles and the dramatic separation of uses. Neighborhoods and communities are built with large distances between homes, jobs, schools, and shopping centers, forcing people to use vehicles for everyday trips. As a result, people use cars today for nearly every trip from home, even when the distances they need to travel are short. In fact, according to the National Household Travel Survey 28% of all trips

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5 California Health Interview Survey: [http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/Pages/default.aspx](http://healthpolicy.ucla.edu/chis/Pages/default.aspx)


today are less than one mile and yet 72% of those trips are taken by automobile. The design of our communities encourages this dependence on cars, which in turn leads to a number of health hazards in the built environment. Increased auto use contributes to elevated pollution levels, and fast-moving vehicles make the roads hazardous for the pedestrians and bicyclists that choose active transportation.

In recent years, physical activity levels at work, at home, and from transportation have decreased. The design of our buildings, streets, neighborhoods, and communities often makes physical activity difficult to achieve. Physical activity, once part of our normal lives, has been designed out of daily routines. Sedentary jobs have taken the place of manual labor, cars have replaced walking or bicycling, elevators and escalators have supplanted stair climbing, and televisions, computers, social media and video games have displaced active leisure pursuits, especially among children.

The biggest opportunity for improving public health may lie in changing these daily lifestyle norms. Community design that encourages the replacement of automobile use with walking and bicycling not only increases physical activity and ensures pedestrian safety, but also addresses numerous other health issues. The less we drive, the fewer collisions we have, resulting in fewer traffic injuries and deaths. As automobile use decreases, vehicle emissions decline, resulting in cleaner air. Chance interactions on the street lead to stronger social connections and mental wellness.

Well-designed public transit systems and access to transit can also help to increase physical activity levels and community health. Americans who use transit spend an average of 19 minutes a day walking between transit stops and destinations; and 29% meet the U.S. Surgeon General’s recommendation of at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day by walking to and from transit.

Community design can also address concerns over public safety and fear of assault, which are reasons given by people for choosing not to walk, use public transit, use recreational facilities or allow their children to play outside or walk to school. While many variables influence violence and crime in communities, aspects of the physical, built environment can also be designed to discourage crime. Appropriately placed landscaping, lighting, windows, porches, signs and more all contribute to a safer built environment. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) provides additional design guidance to create safer communities.

CREATING AN ACTIVE SACRAMENTO: THE KEY ISSUE

The design of a neighborhood influences how its residents will live. Planners, designers and architects can foster physical activity by designing spaces and streets that encourage walking, bicycling, and other forms of active transportation and recreation. A diverse mix of land uses, co-location of food markets and other retail, green belts and parks, along with a well-connected street system, and a good public transit system all facilitate increasing physical activity among residents. Narrow, quiet, well-shaded streets can encourage walking and bicycling among young and old alike. Streets that are safe for all will encourage more active use.

It is important to recognize that Sacramento County is very diverse and that the planning and design techniques that follow may apply differently depending on the context. In general, the more urban the context, the easier it will be to create these active communities since urban areas typically provide a well-connected network of streets with sidewalks and nearby destination. However, many of these concepts can also work well in suburban areas if careful attention is given to the layout of streets, parks, trails and commercial areas. In rural parts of the County, attention needs to be paid to providing places for people to walk or ride a bicycle either on the shoulder of roads or on separated trail networks.

It is also important to note that the design criteria that support active lifestyles discussed below depend on one another to have the most impact. Creating a compact, mixed use community that lacks good connectivity or a neighborhood with great streets but no nearby destinations will not support active lifestyles as well as a community that brings together all these key elements.
ACTIVE DESIGN STRATEGIES

COMPACT, MIXED-USE COMMUNITIES

People are more likely to meet recommended levels of moderate physical activity if they can incorporate such activity into their daily routines. This means people are choosing to walk, bike or take transit to reach daily destinations (i.e., work, school, and home) rather than driving. Therefore, creating environments where walking and biking is the easy choice means providing a greater mix of destinations located closer together. As a general rule of thumb, people are reasonably willing to walk 5 – 15 minutes (approximately ¼ to ¾ mile) and are more likely to consider riding a bike for trips between 1/2 to 3 miles. Research has shown that residents living in mixed-use, compact communities are four times more likely to walk for trips under 1 mile in length. 13

Compact, mixed-use communities also increase the accessibility of transit by placing more “customers” within proximity of transit stops. It is important to note that not all areas in Sacramento County are currently served by bus or light rail. Therefore, building “transit-ready” communities that are compact, walkable, and have a mix of uses will help ensure the success of future transit expansion. Access to public transportation is linked to increased physical activity, since transit use typically involves walking or bicycling to a bus or light rail stop. 14 Transit riders tend to walk 19 minutes a day, which is three times the amount of the average American. Commuting by transit rather than the automobile has been shown to increase as residential density increases, especially in neighborhoods designed around transit stations. 15

13 L. Frank et al., Linking Objectively Measured Physical Activity with Measured Urban Form: Findings From SMARTRAQ, American Journal of Preventive Medicine, at 117-1255 (February 2005).
Communities designed to provide greater opportunity for transit use, walking or bicycling can also help improve opportunities for physical activity among low-income people. Access to fitness facilities is more prevalent among certain groups in the population — typically, individuals with higher levels of education and income. However, when walking and cycling as part of transportation are considered, socioeconomic discrepancies in physical activity are reduced. In addition, those that live in compact, mixed-use communities are found to drive less or not own a car at all, which are significant benefits to those with restricted incomes.

Compact, mixed-use communities are especially important for the health and vitality of seniors. Currently, one out of five seniors does not drive. Research has found that individuals aged 65 and over who live closer to shops and services are more likely to walk and use public transportation, and take more total trips outside the home. By 2030, it is projected that 25% of the adult population in the greater Sacramento region will be over the age of 65. The land use patterns, housing options, and mobility options we currently have, and will be developing in the coming years, will play a significant role in affecting — for better or for worse — the growing senior population’s ability to remain active, independent, and engaged with family, friends, and community.

Choosing to walk or bike depends on more than just distance and proximity but also sense of safety, comfort, topography, and overall aesthetics.

CONNeCTivity

A roadway network should be designed with pedestrians and bicyclists in mind. An average person walks about 3 miles per hour and on a bicycle, can travel up to 8 – 10 miles per hour. Therefore, a key component of creating healthy communities and neighborhoods is ensuring a well-connected network of roadways and trails that provide residents short, direct routes to destinations.

The term connectivity is often used to describe how a roadway network is laid out and connected. In general, a roadway network with high connectivity will have short street blocks, numerous intersections, and minimal dead-ends (cul-de-sac). This type of roadway configuration will help reduce travel distance, increase route options, and allow for direct travel routes to destinations. All of these measures make walking and bicycling more feasible. Recent studies have underscored this point by demonstrating the association between increased pedestrianism and high street connectivity.19, 20

In comparison, a neighborhood with low connectivity will deter walking or biking. A poorly connected roadway often looks like a configuration of “loops and lollipops” that creates more circuitous trips and longer distance trips. This type of roadway layout funnels traffic onto a few arterial roadways resulting in wider roads that carry more cars travelling at higher speeds. This creates a hostile and dangerous environment for everyone, including motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. A study of 24 California cities in 2009

found a higher risk of fatal or severe crashes in cities with very low street network density. In addition, homes and businesses located next to these high-volume roadways usually require soundwalls, which can create additional physical barriers to pedestrian connectivity and decrease the overall visual appeal of the pedestrian environment.

A roadway network that works for bicycles and pedestrians also works for other modes of travel. Transit use is improved in communities with high connectivity. Recent research has indicated that transit stops in areas with well-connected street grids are used more heavily than those in areas with less connected streets. Transit service can include light rail, bus rapid transit, regular bus service and local or neighborhood shuttles. Creating a more connected street network that includes shorter route options also has a positive impact on overall performance of the network since it provides more redundancy and route choices. A system with low levels of connectivity will typically require several large arterial roadways and longer signal cycles at intersections while a well-connected street system relies on smaller streets, shorter blocks, slower speeds, fewer stops and signals and shorter signal cycles when signals are required.

A highly connected roadway network also improves the delivery of key local government services, such as emergency response. This type of network offers far more links and approaches for fire trucks and police rushing to an emergency. This is especially important when one route may be blocked. Research has also shown that a fire station is able to serve three times as much area with a connected roadway network as in an area with unconnected streets. Other benefits include increases in the efficiency of services such as garbage collection and street sweeping.

In terms of crime and safety, it is important to note that connectivity should be considered and applied differently based on the settings (i.e. urban, suburban, and rural). For example, high connectivity might best deter personal crime in a more urban area with heavier foot traffic and “eyes on the street.” However,

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a lower level of connectivity might better serve a suburban area with less foot traffic and concern centered on property crime prevention. Regardless of community type, good pedestrian connectivity using street networks, separate pathways and trails are key elements in providing active transportation choices.

The measures discussed above — density and connectivity — are general tools used to characterize physical environments that foster active living. There are additional measures, which are subtler and speak to how people perceive and interact with their physical environment. The urban design qualities discussed below refer to how people feel when they walk, bike, or drive along a street, and are good measures of site and street design that facilitate healthy lifestyles:

**Imageability** is the quality of a place that makes it distinct, recognizable and memorable. A place with high imageability is unique; it contains physical elements arranged in a way that captures attention, evokes positive feelings, and creates lasting impressions. Public plazas illustrate the potential health benefits of imageability. A public plaza is a publicly accessible space that excludes cars and promotes walking by providing pedestrians with a safe, comfortable space to gather, play, or simply watch things go by. Plazas often constitute welcome “interruptions” or places of respite from the urban grind, and provide destinations for those engaged in active transport. 25

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**Appendix D: Active Design**

**Enclosure** describes the degree to which urban design elements visually define streets and other public spaces. Adding tree canopies, on-street parking and placing buildings closer to the street to create a sense of enclosure, or an “outdoor room,” slows cars and improves pedestrian comfort. 26

**Human Scale** refers to size, texture and articulation of physical elements that match the size and proportion of humans, and correspond to the speed at which humans walk. Elements such as building detail, pavement texture, street trees, and street lights and furniture contribute to the human scale of a space.

**Transparency** describes the degree to which people can see or perceive what lies beyond the edge of a street or other public space. Windows and entrances along the street create an interesting and engaging environment that draws pedestrians along the sidewalk. Being able to see beyond the edge of buildings and being seen creates a safer environment for people on the street and inside buildings.

**Complexity** refers to the visual richness of a place. Complexity can be achieved in a number of ways. For example, the incorporation of temporary and permanent public art installations into the streetscape provides for a more attractive and engaging environment. Artistic bike racks are available that can incorporate art with functionality. Increasing the number of outdoor cafes enhances street activity. These examples contribute to the attractiveness of urban places, which in turn can encourage their use by pedestrians and bicyclists. 27

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27 Identifying and Measuring Urban Design Qualities Related to Walkability (Ewing R, Clemente O, Handy S, Winston E, Brownson RC, Active Living Research, 2005.)
SITE DESIGN

Several site design features can be integrated into a community in order to help achieve imageability, enclosure, human scale, transparency, and complexity—and, in turn, encourage walking and biking trips:

Shorter Building Setbacks
When buildings are set back far from the street edge, the roadway appears to be very wide. This may result in excessive vehicle speeds, creating an unsafe environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Conversely, buildings set closer to the street edge foster a sense of enclosure. The addition of buildings and trees that are adjacent to the sidewalk create a “street wall” that frames the street and narrows a driver’s field of vision. Taller buildings placed close together create a solid street wall and add to the sense of enclosure. People tend to feel more comfortable walking on streets with a sense of enclosure. People also tend to drive slower and more safely.

Street-Facing Building Entrances
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) utilizes strategies to deter criminal behavior and increase peoples’ sense of safety through the design of the built environment. Utilizing CPTED strategies as part of active design standards can reduce crime and increase community safety. These principles including natural surveillance, natural access control, and territorial reinforcement relate to building entrances.

Good site design utilizes natural surveillance. Building entrances designed to face the street helps maximize visibility and natural surveillance. Providing easily identifiable store and building entrances helps foster positive social interaction among legitimate users of private and public space. Creating an atmosphere that does not encourage or invite unlawful activity can help reduce opportunities for criminals. Other physical elements can support natural surveillance including well-designed and placed landscaping, and lighting that provides for nighttime illumination of parking areas, walkways, entrances and exits.

Good site design also utilizes natural access control. The placement of exits, fencing, lighting and

landscaping and the clear differentiation between public and private space is used to limit or control access and reduce the opportunity for crime. This can be achieved by providing sidewalks, pathways, pavement, lighting, landscaping and signage that clearly guide the public to and from entrances and exits.

By clearly delineating private space, a sense of ownership among residents is established, and creates an environment where “intruders” are more easily identified. Buildings, low fences, landscaping and other features can be used to express ownership and define public, semi-public and private spaces. Territorial reinforcement can be achieved with pavement treatments, landscaping, elevated porches, steps, signage, screening and fences that define and outline ownership of property.

**Parking Design that Considers Active Transport**

In general, when parking is available, people use it. Research in California indicates that increased parking supply may result in reduced active transportation and public transit use. An oversupply of parking increases the walking distances between business and other destinations, and reduces land available for other uses. Furthermore, parking lots increase heat island effect. This effect occurs when on hot, sunny days the sun heats dry, exposed surfaces, such as roofs and pavement, to temperatures hotter than the air, while shaded or moist surfaces — often in more rural surroundings — remain close to air temperatures. Heat island effect can compromise human health, contributing to respiratory difficulties, heat cramps and exhaustion, non-fatal heat stroke, and heat-related mortality. Heat island effect can also increase air pollution and impacts to water quality. Well-designed car parking will reduce unnecessary automobile travel, particularly when walking, bicycling, and public transit are convenient alternatives. Pedestrian and bicycle access points should be well identified. Parking should be provided for people with disabilities to support their needs for access and physical activity.

In multifamily and commercial settings:

- Parking located behind or on the side of buildings, with adequate lighting and security provided for safety will provide access to buildings but will not dominate the frontage along a street. If parking must be placed next to sidewalks it should be buffered with landscaping or low walls.

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• Well-designed pedestrian access and connectivity from transit stops through parking lots to retail and businesses is important in providing safe passage and encouraging people to walk and utilize transit for their shopping trips.

Sustainable Landscaping
Native, water-efficient, and climate-appropriate landscaping is a site design feature that offers numerous health benefits. Sustainable landscaping practices lower heat island temperatures and improve air and water quality. In various settings, views that include landscaping have a positive impact on health: College students with more natural views from their dorm windows score higher on attention tests; 31 workers with a view of nature from their desks claimed 23% fewer sick days than workers without views of nature; 32 patients recovering from surgery in hospital rooms with window views of natural scenes had shorter postoperative hospital stays, received fewer negative evaluations in nurses’ notes, and took fewer potent painkillers than matched patients in similar rooms with windows facing a brick wall. 33 Trees can play an important role in reducing crime rates and domestic violence, and can also increase social ties. In a study of Chicago public housing residents, University of Illinois researchers found that buildings with high levels of greenery had 52% fewer property and violent crimes than apartment buildings with little or no vegetation. Green spaces draw people outdoors, increasing surveillance and discouraging illegal activity. The green and groomed appearance of an apartment building is a signal that owners and residents care about a property, and watch over it and each other. Greener common areas also facilitated stronger social ties. The more trees and landscaping in the common spaces, the more those spaces were used by residents. Those individuals living closer to green spaces enjoyed more social activities, had more visitors, knew more of their neighbors, and reported committing fewer acts of aggression toward household members than those living near barren spaces. 34

34 Human – Environment Research Laboratory, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign.
Appendix D: Active Design

In residential neighborhoods where traffic volumes are low, streets should be designed to be narrow and slow to create an environment where pedestrians and cyclists can fit in. Ideally, the design of the street should establish that motorists will feel most comfortable at about 25 mph. The wide residential street shown on the top allows motorists to feel comfortable traveling at much higher speeds. By contrast, the narrow street shown on the bottom will allow cars to move more slowly and calmly through the neighborhood and will also work well for people walking or riding a bicycle. (Photos: Local Government Commission)

STREET DESIGN

Poor street design results in physical environments that are dangerous to pedestrians and bicyclists. When people do venture out to walk on poorly designed streets, they often face high-speed traffic and dangerous situations that result in high rates of pedestrian injuries and fatalities. These conditions further discourage people from walking and bicycling.

Walkable streets form the backbone of friendly, interactive, safe and secure neighborhoods. Along these streets, people know their neighbors. Walkable streets allow responsible motorists who live in or travel through the neighborhood to feel most comfortable at lower rather than higher speeds. Motorists traveling too fast for the neighborhood feel uncomfortable on curves, at intersection turns, and with the short length of blocks. Motorists who go the correct speed feel relaxed and in tune with the neighborhood. Neighbors, in turn, feel comfortable and safe walking, riding a bicycle, or chatting with neighbors along such streets. 35

Healthy streets are walkable streets, best measured by how pedestrians act and feel when walking along them. Strolling along healthy streets, pedestrians

feet relaxed. They enjoy the experience of walking in this environment and feel connected to their surroundings. Pedestrians in healthy street environments feel confident and in control, and do not feel threatened when encountering strangers.

Another measure of successful streets is the number of people walking along them. Streets are working especially well when pedestrians are using them and when people stop and talk with others. Walkable streets also foster a sense of ownership by everyone who uses them. People who feel comfortable on well-designed streets have the desire to protect and look after them. When a healthy street gets “sick,” the people who live on it want to nurture it back to health rather than move away. The health of a community can often be measured by the health of its streets.  

Complete Streets

The Complete Streets approach ensures that roads are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities. Sacramento County requires complete streets as part of its adopted improvement standards. This approach encourages communities to begin retrofitting poorly designed roads by adding sidewalks, trees, and bicycle lanes. Additional features that include reducing crossing distances, installing crosswalks and better bus stops all make walking and bicycling safer and more inviting for users of all ages and abilities. Good redesigns help reduce speed and conflict points, two big causes of crashes.  

Traffic calming is a way to retrofit existing streets that are often too wide and that encourage motorists to travel at higher speeds than are desirable. It is a way to reduce the negative effects of automobile use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for the property owner, retailer, walker and bicyclist. Maintaining slower speeds allows drivers to be more aware of their surroundings.  Traffic calming treatments affect the driver’s perception of the street, and cause a change in his or her behavior.  


Traffic calming comes in many shapes and sizes. The simplest tool is the speed bump, which can be effective on low-volume local streets but can be a challenge for emergency responders. Less severe treatments that use horizontal instead of vertical deflection tend to be equally effective and can also provide additional benefits. For example, the curb extension shown above not only slows vehicles entering and exiting the street but reduces the crossing distance for pedestrians and improves visibility. The mini-circle shown above can be used at intersections to slow vehicle speeds on all approaching streets and with attractive landscaping or public art can beautify the neighborhood and create a gateway. (Photos: Local Government Commission)

Roads designed with the minimum width and minimum number of lanes practicable reduce traffic speeds and pedestrian crossing distances. Continuous medians or short median islands on multilane streets simplify the crossing and reduce pedestrian crashes by up to 40%. Shorter crossing distances are especially beneficial to the elderly and people with disabilities, who may require more time to cross the street.

Complete streets support physical activity among people with disabilities by making streets and paths accessible to them. A number of environmental design factors have been shown to increase leisure-time activity among people with disabilities, including the quality of the walking path, the provision of targeted signage, and the accessibility of destinations and transportation along the path. Specific measures include: smooth, sufficiently wide paths that can accommodate a wheelchair or walker; paths with auditory crossing signals, adequate crossing times, clear signage, visible access ramps, and connections to walking, bicycling, and public transit routes.

Street intersections also need to be designed with all users in mind. In urban areas, that means building compact intersections that slow turning vehicles and shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians. Intersections of streets with on-street parking provide an opportunity to add curb extensions on the corners where vehicles are not allowed to park to shorten the crossing distance, improve visibility and slow vehicles making turns. Pedestrian crossings, especially at uncontrolled intersections, should include high-visibility crosswalk markings and signs alerting motorists to the crossing. At higher speed locations, additional tools including rapid flash beacons should be considered.

In healthy neighborhoods, people should feel comfortable walking at all hours. Street lighting helps pedestrians feel safer at night. Many neighborhoods prefer more numerous, smaller street lamps to the larger, more widely spaced, high-intensity lights often found in conventional neighborhoods. Low-angle, pedestrian scale lamps that emit full-spectrum light allow for more realistic colors at night, and they also reduce glare, letting people see the night sky.

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The design of sidewalks in residential neighborhoods affects the pedestrian environment. The top photo shows the problems with an attached sidewalk with a rolled curb: cars will tend to park on the sidewalk and create a hostile environment for people walking. This design fails to recognize that a comfortable sidewalk needs to have a well-defined curb zone, typically with a vertical curb that separates the street from the sidewalk. It also needs a “furniture zone” to provide a buffer to the street and space for trees, landscaping, hydrants, benches, etc. By contrast, the bottom image shows a well-designed sidewalk with a good furniture zone, ample and unobstructed space for walking, and a buffer for buildings and private spaces. (Photos: Local Government Commission and Dan Burden)

Appropriately-Sized Sidewalks, Buffered from the Street
Good sidewalk design recognizes that sidewalks have many functions beyond providing a place for people to walk. Sidewalks need to provide space for all the “stuff” that we need on our streets including hydrants, lampposts, signs, trash receptacles, transit shelters, landscaping, trees, etc. Sidewalks also provide direct access to stores and businesses, and have become extensions for outdoor dining, shopping, and socializing. Pedestrians feel safer when separated from parking flows and parking spaces. Because of these different functions, it is important to design sidewalks that include the following zones: a curb zone that creates a vertical separation between the street and sidewalk; a furniture zone for all the “stuff” discussed above; a pedestrian zone for walking; and a frontage zone adjacent to buildings, doors and fences. The furniture zone provides an important buffer between moving automobiles and pedestrian spaces; landscaping and trees may be incorporated into this zone, as well as the frontage zone.

The incorporation of sustainable landscaping and trees into street design provides numerous health benefits. Trees make streets more attractive for active transport by providing a sense of enclosure. The presence of trees on streets has been associated with higher rates of walking to school among children. 46 Trees

also improve air and water quality and can reduce asthma rates in children by sequestering particulates, carbon and other emissions. Trees reduce exposure to ultraviolet light from the sun, lowering the risk of skin cancer and cataracts. Noise can reach unhealthy levels in urban areas – trees reduce noise pollution by acting as a buffer and absorbing urban noise, especially high-frequency sounds that are the most distressing to people.

Trees calm traffic and, in turn, encourage walking. A treeless street can encourage higher speeds, increasing the frequency and severity of accidents. Street trees provide both visual interest and obstacles near the road edge, which encourage safer speeds and quieter neighborhoods. Closely spaced trees help motorists gauge and control their speeds. Narrower streets combined with street trees also slow drivers down, while maximizing shading of heat-absorbing asphalt. Trees planted between the curb and sidewalk improve safety by adding a buffer between moving vehicles and pedestrians.

The provision of seating, drinking fountains, restrooms, and other infrastructure supports increased frequency and duration of walking. In focus groups, seniors reported that benches and restrooms would support them in walking more, while tripping and traffic hazards were deterrents.

Sidewalk width, an important aspect of good sidewalk design, is best when consistent with its use. Sidewalks should be at least 5 feet wide to allow two adults to walk side by side. In front of schools or in commercial areas they should be wider to accommodate higher pedestrian volumes. In general, sidewalks should be wide enough to accommodate a range of pedestrian users safely, while not as wide as to feel empty. The needs of people with strollers, wheelchairs, or luggage should be considered.

Maintenance
Good maintenance should follow good site and street design, and arguably impacts all of the urban design qualities discussed above. Maintaining public and private spaces helps reinforce ownership, pride and a sense of order. Poor maintenance or deterioration signals greater tolerance of disorder. Many law enforcement agencies subscribe to the “Broken Window Theory,” which emphasizes that the sooner broken windows are fixed or graffiti is removed or trash is collected, the less likely it is that vandalism will occur in the future. Design features that can facilitate better maintenance of a space include low-maintenance landscaping and lighting treatments, as well as signage indicating who to call when maintenance is required, for such issues as light bulb replacement and plant overgrowth.

Acknowledgments
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Accessory Structures</strong></th>
<th>A structure detached from a principal building, located on the same lot and incidental to the principal use.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apartment Building</strong></td>
<td>Any building or portion thereof which contains three or more dwelling units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Architecture</strong></td>
<td>The practice of designing and building structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation</strong></td>
<td>The dividing or segmenting of building form into smaller components to create a sense of scale. Articulation may be described in terms of roughness of materials, number of openings, patterns in materials, differences in materials, massing, use of detailing, building setbacks and stepbacks, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance</strong></td>
<td>An aspect of rhythm achieved by matching different symmetrical and asymmetrical elements which, when perceived as a whole, display harmony or equilibrium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bay Spacing</strong></td>
<td>The spacing between structural columns (horizontal) and beams (vertical).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Berm</strong></td>
<td>A mound or wall of earth that may be landscaped to create a screen or barrier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balcony</strong></td>
<td>A platform enclosed by a railing or parapet which is suspended or cantilevered from, or supported solely by the principal structure; for private use of tenants or for exterior access to above-grade living units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block Length</strong></td>
<td>The longest dimension of a block, from one intersection to the next.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Built Environment</strong></td>
<td>The elements that are generally built or made by people as contrasted with natural processes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix E: Glossary

**Business District**
A commercial district or large-scale commercial development.

**Carport**
An automobile shelter having one or more sides open.

**Canopy**
A roofed structure constructed of fabric or other material placed so as to extend outward from a building providing a protective shield for doors, windows, and other openings, supported by the building and supports extended to the ground directly under the canopy or cantilevered from the building.

**Compatible**
Projects that give an appearance of existing together without conflict with respect to site architecture, and landscaping design.

**Commercial District**
A district comprised primarily of commercial and business activities.

**Community Design Framework**
The land use activities, circulation pathways and open space systems that define community character.

**Cul-de-sac**
A street with a single common ingress and egress, and with a turnaround at the end.

**Daylighting**
Strategies for increasing the percentage of illumination provided by natural light in a building, such as light shelves, toplighting, skylights, window, optimized building orientation and room layout, and devices used to redirect or transport light.

**Dead-end Street**
A local street open and accessible by cars at one end only.

**Design**
To create, fashion and arrange details or elements. The creation and execution of aesthetic and functional elements.

**Design Continuity**
A unifying or connecting theme or physical feature for a particular setting or place, provided by one or more design elements of the natural or created...
The use of design continuity helps to avoid abrupt and/or severe differences in character with adjacent properties.

**Design Review**

The comprehensive evaluation of a development and its impact on neighborhood properties and the community as a whole, from the standpoint of site and landscape design, architecture, materials, colors, lighting and signs, in accordance with a set of adopted guidelines and standards.

**Density**

The number of dwelling units per acre.

**Eave**

The underside of a sloping roof projecting beyond the wall of a building.

**Elevation**

A mechanically accurate “head-on” drawing of a face of a building or object, without the allowance for the effect of the laws of perspective. Any measurement on an elevation will be in a fixed proportion, or scale, to the corresponding measurement on the real building.

**Facade**

That portion of any exterior elevation on the building extending from grade to top of the parapet, wall, or eaves and the entire width of the building elevation.

**Fascia**

A flat board with a vertical face that forms the trim along the edge of a flat roof, or along the horizontal, or eaves, or sides of pitched roof. The rain gutter is often mounted on the fascia.

**Fenestration**

Windows, doors and other openings in building walls.

**Floor Area Ratio**

The relationship of the total floor area of a building to the land area of the parcel as defined in a ratio in which the numerator is the floor area and the denominator is the parcel area.

**Footprint**

The outline of a building at all of those points where it meets the ground.
**Appendix E: Glossary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Form</strong></td>
<td>The shape of a building or architectural features such as roofs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Franchise/Corporate Architecture</strong></td>
<td>Buildings that use a universal corporate architectural style, colors and signage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frontage, Lot or Parcel</strong></td>
<td>The portion of a property that abuts one side of a public street which allows primary access to the property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gateway</strong></td>
<td>A point along a roadway entering a city, or other defined planning area, at which a motorist gains a sense of having left the previous environs and of having entered the city or planning area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guidelines</strong></td>
<td>General statements of policy direction around which specific details are established. These are qualitative statements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hardscape</strong></td>
<td>Typically involves paved areas such as roads, sidewalks, driveways, fountains, shelters and medians where the upper-soil-profile is no longer exposed to the actual surface of the Earth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heat Sinks</strong></td>
<td>An environment or object that absorbs and dissipates heat using thermal contact (either direct or radiant).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Scale</strong></td>
<td>Generally refers to the use of human proportioned architectural features and site design elements clearly oriented to human activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HVAC</strong></td>
<td>Heating, ventilation and air conditioning equipment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industrial District</strong></td>
<td>An area planned and developed for industrial uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infill</strong></td>
<td>Building and land development that utilizes land within the environment that is unused or under-used and surrounded by existing development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Masonry</strong></td>
<td>Wall construction of materials such as stone, brick, adobe and concrete.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Massing**
The distribution of building volumes in regard to a) the building’s relative location on the site and b) the height, width, depth of the elements of a building relative to each other.

**Multifamily**
Residential development projects with three (3) or more units, including attached and detached units and densities greater than eight (8) dwelling units per acre.

**Open Space**
The total land area not individually owned or dedicated for public use, which is designed and intended for the common use and enjoyment of the residents or for conservation of natural resources.

**Open Space, Common**
Common open space includes all landscaped areas, yards, patios, swimming pools, putting greens, and other recreational-leisure facilities; areas of scenic or natural beauty and habitat areas; hiking, riding, or off-street bicycle trails; and landscaped areas adjacent to roads that are in excess of minimum required rights-of-way.

**Open Space, Private**
A usable open space adjoining and directly accessible to a dwelling unit, reserved for the exclusive use of residents of the dwelling unit and their guests.

**Orientation**
The direction that various sides of a building face.

**Outdoor Amenities, Common**
Outdoor open spaces and recreation facilities such as pools, patios, tennis courts, tot-lot and play equipment, hot-tubs and saunas, picnic and barbeque areas, tables, benches and outdoor seating for the use of residents within the residential project.

**Palette**
In building architecture, the set of colors to be used on a particular building or group of buildings. In landscape architecture, the set of planting materials to be used in the landscape design.
**Appendix E: Glossary**

**Parapet**
The portion of a wall that rises above the edge of the roof.

**Paseo**
A narrow pedestrian walkway or passageway through a site.

**Pedestrian Scale**
Describes an area designed to allow pedestrians to comfortably walk from one location to another and interact with the built environment; an effort to create an appropriate relationship between human beings and the size and function of surrounding buildings; an emphasis on building features and characteristics which can be observed in close proximity, at the speed a pedestrian would travel.

**Placemaking**
Planning places where deliberate placement of land uses, location and type of circulation, and shape and character of spaces result in social and economic focus for communities.

**Public Realm**
The public realm is the street space from the back of the sidewalk and includes public paths, trails, and open spaces.

**Private Realm**
The private realm is typically defined as all private interior and exterior spaces from the building façade to the private yard spaces. The area between the back of the sidewalk to the building facades is a “semi-public” or “semi-private” zone that is visible by the public and controlled by the private owner. Semi-private spaces or semi-public spaces may include front yards, side yards, landscaped setbacks and buffers, and common open spaces between buildings.

**Proportion**
The relationship between elements taken as a whole or in comparison to each other. Often expressed as a ratio.

**Urban Design Plan**
A plan for a neighborhood, district or corridor that emphasizes the design quality of public places.

**Scale**
Describes a relative magnitude and the relationship of the proportions among objects.
**Shiplap**
Wood siding profile that overlaps boards to prevent water penetration.

**Single-family Dwelling**
A detached building designed exclusively for occupancy by one (1) family.

**Site Plan**
A plan showing the form, location and orientation of a building or group of buildings on a site, usually including the dimensions, contours, paving, landscaping, and other significant features of the site. May also be referred to as a plot plan.

**Special Planning Area (SPA)**
Districts or zones that have unique development and/or design standards that supercede the County’s zoning ordinance.

**Standards**
They set the minimum and maximum requirements based on quantifiable criteria. Usually associated with and related to zoning.

**Streetscape**
A physical character of an area that may either abut or be contained within a public or private street right-of-way or access way that may contain sidewalks, street furniture, landscaping or trees, and similar features.

**Sustainability**
Sustainability is a systemic concept, relating to the continuity of economic, social, institutional and environmental aspects of human society. It entails preserving biodiversity and natural ecosystems, and planning and acting to maintain these ideals in a very long term.

**Theme District**
Design features such as spatial characteristics, signage, landscape or architecture that contribute to the image and identity of a district.

**Townhouse**
A single dwelling unit in a townhouse group, located or capable of being located on a separate lot, and being separated from the adjoining dwelling unit by an approved wall extending from the foundation through the roof and structurally independent of the corresponding wall of the adjoining unit.