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DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE PROJECTS

The Residential Mixed-Use Guidelines provide specific and broad recommendations to create high quality buildings and site plans that will result in attractive, livable, and pedestrian-friendly mixed-use districts. They aim to be prescriptive enough to create a framework for design and carry out the community's urban design vision but flexible enough to allow for creativity and innovation in design and planning. This Chapter presents Design Guidelines on the following topics:

- A. Development Intensity
- B. Location of Commercial and Residential Uses
- C. Building Height and Form
- D. Building Relationship to the Street
- E. Building Design
- F. Building Setbacks for Light, Air and Privacy
- G. Auto Circulation: Site Access, Streets and Driveways
- H. Parking Location and Design
- I. Facilities for Walking, Bicycle, Transit
- J. Site Landscaping
- K. Usable Open Space
- L. Fences and Walls
- M. Services

A. DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

These guidelines ensure that projects contribute to the appearance and vitality of the mixed-use districts and respect the unique features of adjoining properties.

- A-1** Design projects to enhance the visual appearance of the street and district in which they are located.
- A-2** Locate and orient buildings to respect the need for privacy, light, and air of surrounding structures, especially adjoining low and medium density residential development.

DESIRABLE



This project provides architectural interest and enhances the visual appearance of the street. (Guideline A-1)

DESIRABLE



The taller stories of this project are located in the middle of the project which minimizes the impact of the project on adjacent neighboring property. (Guideline A-2)

DESIRABLE



These active commercial uses on the ground floor, including restaurant and retail, adjacent to the sidewalk create a lively pedestrian realm. (Guideline B-1)

DESIRABLE



This open air store frontage brings the retail activity to the street, engaging pedestrians who walk by. (Guideline B-2)

DESIRABLE



Continuous storefront windows and frequent, highly visible entrances along this street provides visual interest and promotes walkability. (Guideline B-2)

B. LOCATION OF COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL USES

These guidelines ensure that the ground floor commercial uses create an active pedestrian realm, that is an engaging and well-populated environment with a variety of uses and activities.

- B-1** Locate active commercial uses on the ground floor adjacent to the sidewalk, including retail, restaurant, and personal service uses.
- B-2** Provide continuous storefront windows, open air store frontages, and frequent, highly visible entrances for ground floor commercial uses adjacent to the street and sidewalk.

ACBD

- B-3** In ACBD-TC and ACBD-TA, locate buildings at or near the property line. Ground floor street frontage space is to be predominantly for active, pedestrian-oriented uses.
- B-4** In the ACBD, the residential component of mixed-use development adjacent to residential property shall be located to be functionally a part of the residential area. For example, primary access to the residential units shall be from the residential street, and residential units shall have view access to the adjacent residential neighborhood.

C. BUILDING HEIGHT AND FORM

Building Height

The purpose of these limits is to ensure that the scale of the building is compatible, and tall buildings are not located so as to overwhelm smaller scale buildings or block access to light and sun.

- C-1** Locate the taller portions of residential projects away from adjoining residential properties, in order to provide height transitions between taller and lower buildings, and to maximize light, air, and privacy for units.
- C-2** For projects adjacent to low and medium density residential zones, reduce the visual and shadow impact of upper stories by using one or more of the following design strategies:
- Locate upper floors in the center of the property at least 30 feet away from adjacent properties,
 - Step back the top one or two stories from the stories below.
 - Tuck the top story inside a pitched roof,
 - Use pitched roofs with dormer windows for top story rooms.

DESIRABLE



In this project, two-story units provide a transition between the taller portion of the project and adjacent neighboring property. (Guideline C-1)

UNDESIRABLE



In this project, the lack of step backs produces a bulky project that overwhelms the neighboring single-family property. (Guideline C-1)

DESIRABLE



In this project, breaking up the building into smaller discrete masses minimizes the bulk of the building. (Guideline C-5)

DESIRABLE



The building bulk is broken up through height recesses along the length of the building. (Guideline C-5)

DESIRABLE



The corner of this building is marked with an architectural element, which provides visual orientation from major commercial arterials. (Guideline C-7)

Building Form and Bulk

These guidelines ensure that continuous buildings with attached or stacked units on deep narrow lots do not end up being overly long and bulky, creating an incompatible institutional character within residential neighborhoods.

- C-3** Design residential projects to avoid large box-like forms with continuous unrelieved surfaces.
- C-4** Include articulation in the project, such that the bulk as seen from existing neighbors is reduced. (See Building Articulation.)
- C-5** Minimize the bulk of the buildings by limiting building length, or designing buildings with two or more of the following special features to break up building bulk, including:
 - Horizontal and vertical setbacks and stepbacks (instead of a long flat wall);
 - Changes in roof form and height;
 - Major full-height recesses (typically at least 10 feet deep) along the length of the building that successfully break the building into smaller discrete masses.
- C-6** Ground level parking podiums and lobbies can be continuous without a break if the above guidelines are met.
- C-7** Provide visual orientation from the major commercial arterials through graduated heights and/or varied setbacks or architectural elements such as towers to mark entries or corners to reduce the scale of larger buildings and to provide visual orientation from the major commercial arterials.

D. BUILDING RELATIONSHIP TO THE STREET¹

These guidelines ensure that projects strengthen the pedestrian realm, foster pedestrian comfort, and emphasize neighborhood character.

Pedestrian-Oriented Areas

- D-1** Locate active uses on the ground floor, and provide continuous storefront windows and frequent, highly-visible entries.
- D-2** Locate buildings close to the sidewalk, to enclose the public realm of the street and sidewalk, and locate shops and restaurants next to the pedestrian sidewalk. Wider setbacks are appropriate to allow for the following:
 - Wider sidewalks where they are narrow;
 - Building entrances and facade articulation;
 - Outdoor cafes;
 - Plazas or other high activity public areas.
- D-3** Design setback areas to be used for public entry, gathering and outdoor commercial activity. Design them predominantly with hardscape, and provide shade and places to sit. They also may be appropriate places to locate pedestrian conveniences such as public telephones, trash receptacles, bicycle racks and newspaper dispensers
- D-4** Minimize the visibility of parking from the street and sidewalk, especially at corners. Locate parking to the side or rear of buildings, or underground.

1. See Endnote

DESIRABLE



This building is located close to the sidewalk, enclosing the public realm of the street and sidewalk. (Guideline D-2)

DESIRABLE



Active uses on the ground floor animate the pedestrian realm and promote walkability. (Guideline D-1)

DESIRABLE



Landscaping, trees, and a low wall help to ensure that the visual definition of the street edge is maintained. (Guideline D-5)

DESIRABLE



In CVCBD, when a property located along Castro Valley Boulevard, Redwood Road, or Lake Chabot Road is not built out to the front property line, and where a landscape setback exists or is created, provide a second row of the designated street trees as part of the site landscaping. (Guideline D-6)

Other Areas

- D-5** In areas where building frontage is allowed to be set back from the street, provide a substantial landscape zone between the sidewalk and the parking area to ensure that the visual definition of the street edge is maintained. Recommended design elements, in addition to tree planting, include low walls, raised planters, and small commercial use buildings or kiosk structures.
- D-6** In CVCBD, when a property located along Castro Valley Boulevard, Redwood Road, or Lake Chabot Road is not built out to the front property line, and where a landscape setback exists or is created, provide a second row of the designated street trees as part of the site landscaping.
- D-7** Arrange buildings located off of the street, such as at the rear edge of the site, in related groups or organized around plazas or internal circulation nodes. In addition, the site design needs to indicate a direct response to adjacent development in order to facilitate pedestrian and vehicular movement between sites and building.

Doors and Entrances

- D-8** Emphasize building entrances with special architectural and landscape treatments. Low quality trim materials, such as anodized aluminum, are not permitted for window and door trim.
- D-9** Locate all customer entries and entryways to be directly visible from the public sidewalk, and accessible from public and private walkways. Corner buildings are encouraged to have corner entries.
- D-10** Provide a pedestrian walkway from the public sidewalk to the entry frontage of buildings set back from the street edge.
- D-11** Design public street facing residential facades with individual entries, such as steps, porches, and paths from living units to the street help to break down the scale of multi-unit buildings.
- D-12** Provide attractive rear and side access to businesses where there is parking at the rear or side of the site, but in all cases, there must be a principal entry that is strong and visible from the public sidewalk.

DESIRABLE



The special treatment of the awning highlights the entrance of the building. (Guideline D-8)

DESIRABLE



This customer entry is directly visible and accessible from the public sidewalk, which strengthens the pedestrian realm. (Guideline D-9)

DESIRABLE



This project exhibits consistent design integrity, as the building components are in keeping with the Art Deco style. (Guideline E-1)

DESIRABLE



This ground floor storefront consist of clear glass display windows and a glass entry, allowing pedestrians to see inside the space. (Guideline E-4)

E. BUILDING DESIGN

These guidelines seek to create unified and harmonious building compositions, promote quality architecture, and visual diversity. No official architectural style is dictated or preferred.

Architectural Style

E-1 Design projects with a consistent design integrity, exhibited by all building components including, but not limited to, building mass and articulation, roof forms, windows (proportion and design), building materials, facade details (doors and entrances), fencing, and landscaping.

E-2 Design publicly-visible exterior facades, or building walls to be substantial, permanent, and integral to the entire building.

Building Design

E-3 Organize facade areas to provide:

- Horizontal emphasis through recesses, ornamentation and other types of decorative detail;
- Pedestrian orientation through overhangs, eaves, awnings, display windows and architectural ornamentation; and
- Harmonious composition through use of complementary combinations of materials and colors.

E-4 Design commercial building facades fronting on sidewalks to consist of storefronts that include a preponderance of clear glass display windows and entry doors, that provide visibility into the ground floor lease space.

- In some circumstances, such as when building security would be placed at risk or when a side or rear wall of a building is adjacent to or near the street, shallow display windows, containing merchandise or artworks, are encouraged.
- Ground floor office uses are discouraged, per the Land Use Element of the Specific Plans, but, where present, must be designed and maintained as storefront spaces.

E-5 Include architectural elements providing shade and weather protection for pedestrians, such as overhangs and arcades.

Building Materials

- E-6** Use building materials that convey a sense of durability and permanence. Use high quality materials that will last for the life of the building. Install materials so that building facades do not stain or deteriorate quickly.
- E-7** Use the highest quality and most durable materials at the ground floor of buildings, because those can be most impacted by landscaping, people, and automobiles. Ground floor exterior materials must be tile, stone, brick, glass, concrete, and other highly durable materials. Do not use stucco or EIFS in the first three feet above sidewalk level.
- E-8** Use exterior siding materials such as stucco, wood siding, masonry, tile, wood shingles, metal panels, and glass panels. Do not use scored plywood, aluminum siding, or shake or wood shingles.
- E-9** Use a complementary palette of materials on all four sides of buildings. Use building materials of similar durability and quality throughout the project.
- E-10** Locate material changes at interior corners as a return at least six feet from the external corners or other logical terminations; and not at external corners.
- E-11** Use secondary materials (such as ceramic tile, terra cotta, or wood millwork) applied to the primary finish material that are complementary to the primary material and compatible with the overall building design. Do not use false stone, plastic, aluminum, or plywood.

E-12 Finish any blank building walls adjacent to and visible from residential properties with quality materials; and maintain them free of any signs or graffiti.

E-13 Where they are visible from the street or adjacent to pedestrian walkways, design the blank sides and backs of buildings to provide visual interest by making use of such elements as recesses, bays, covered walkways, or shallow display windows. Highly textured materials that provide contrasts of shade and light or murals are other appropriate design solutions for otherwise blank walls that are visible to adjacent uses. (Murals are considered public art and would require a public hearing.)

DESIRABLE



This project uses brick and other high quality materials that convey a sense of permanence. (Guideline E-6)

DESIRABLE



This project uses tile for the first three feet above the sidewalk level, which is highly durable and adds a decorative element to the ground floor design. (Guideline E-7)

DESIRABLE



Although this project incorporates several colors into its facade, it does so successfully as the colors are harmonious with each other. (Guideline E-14)

DESIRABLE



The green and yellow colors on this facade serve as accent colors, rather than being used for the entire facade. (Guideline E-15)

Building Colors

- E-14** Select a coordinated palette of complimentary colors, rather than a patchwork of competing colors.
- E-15** Use bright colors only as accent colors.
- E-16** Do not use fluorescent or neon colors.

ACBD

- E-17** Integral color exterior building materials are preferred, whenever possible, for new buildings or for exterior remodellings, and such materials should not be painted, with the exception of integral color stucco or comparable materials, which may require long term repainting. Wood siding is a traditional exterior building material, which does require painting for weather protection, as do certain other materials over time.

- E-18** Use exterior paint schemes for that are compatible or harmonious with other colors within any particular business district.

CVCBD

- E-19** Use predominant building colors that are generally light in tone. (This does not restrict the color palette to any one color range, such as earth tones.) Avoid Corporate colors not consistent with this or other guidelines on color. Darker colors may be used for trim.
- E-20** Use muted colors for large areas such as building walls.
- E-21** Wood siding and trim may be left natural and stained to be light in tone.

- E-22** Use a consistent color scheme for a building's entire facade and all visible sides.

- E-23** Use a color scheme that is compatible with the colors of adjacent buildings, unless the colors of adjacent buildings strongly diverge from these Design Guidelines. In such a case, the Guidelines shall prevail.

- E-24** Wherever possible, limit the number of colors appearing on the building exterior to no more than three colors or tones of the same color, including trim and accent colors.

- E-25** Use architectural detailing, including the use of color, that complements and embellishes principal design features, materials and colors of a building facade.

Building Articulation

E-26 Design window recesses, window trim, doorways, columns, overhangs and other architectural elements to be substantial in depth, in order to create shadow and architectural relief. Incorporate at least three and typically four of the following features that provide articulation and design interest, on all sides of buildings:

- Minimum depth of at least two inches from glass to exterior of trim or wall edge around windows;
- Decorative trim elements that add detail and articulation, such as window and door surrounds with at least a two-inch depth; or deeply recessed windows (more than two inches). They must be designed as an integral part of the design, and not appear “tacked-on;”
- Pitched / variegated roof forms;
- Roof overhangs at least 18 inches deep;
- Variety in use of materials, especially at ground level stories, for detailing at building entrances or other special parts of the building;
- Building base (typically bottom three feet) that is faced with a stone or brick material, or is delineated with a channel or projection; and/or
- Railings with a design pattern in wood, metal, or stone.

DESIRABLE



This facade incorporates projections and other articulation elements throughout the façade design which adds architectural interest and a visual play of light and shadow. (Guideline E-26 & 27)

DESIRABLE



The facade is articulated to break the project down to smaller components and reduces bulk. (Guideline E-26 & 27)

UNDESIRABLE



Although this project incorporates several articulation elements such as window trim, belt course, and variable roof forms, the unbalanced facade composition (overly heavy third story), disproportionate windows, non-harmonious roof forms produces an overly bulky building. (Guideline E-26 & 27)

UNDESIRABLE



Using different colors on a building facade is not a successful way of providing vertical articulation as it does not create shadow or provide architectural relief. (Guideline E-26 & 27)

DESIRABLE



The building facade incorporates building projections, such as balconies, and recesses which enhance the design and articulation of the building. (Guideline E-27)

DESIRABLE



The variable roof elements break the building masses into smaller units. (Guideline E-29)

E-27 Incorporate projections and recesses throughout the façade design to add architectural interest and a visual play of light and shadow. Examples include: bay windows, chimneys, front porches, balconies, overhangs, brackets, and cornices.

E-28 Incorporate building projections that enhance the design and articulation of the building. These may project into required front, side, and rear yards up to the limits allowed in the development standards.

Roof Forms

E-29 Incorporate variable roof forms into the building designs, to the extent necessary to avoid a boxy appearance of buildings. This may be accomplished by changes in roof height, offsets, change in direction of roof slope, dormers, parapets, etc.

E-30 Design roof forms such that no more than two side-by-side units are covered by one unarticulated roof. Articulation may be accomplished by changing roof height, offsets, and direction of slope, and by introducing elements such as dormers, towers, or parapets. Other alternative design approaches that achieve the same goal of breaking down building masses into small individual units may also be acceptable, for example shifting the units in section and varying the design treatment for individual units.

E-31 Design roof elements to have a functional integrity that is part of the overall building design. Do not use false roof forms, such as those used for purely decorative or advertising purposes. Do not use mansard roofs on any building with a height less than four stories.

E-32 Call visual attention to corners and entries using architectural features such as tower elements.

Windows

- E-33** Design window patterns and proportions to enhance all facades of the building and add architectural interest. Differentiate window designs (size, proportion) to reflect the different components of residential units, for example entrances, living areas, stairways, and bedrooms, while ensuring harmony within that variety.
- E-34** Design the locations and proportions of all window openings with consideration for the overall composition of the building facade.

Rehabilitation and Remodeling

- E-35** Design remodels and additions to conserve the design integrity and character of the existing building.
- E-36** Do not close, move or enlarge exterior openings for doors and windows without consideration for the overall composition of the building, including all other remaining exterior openings.
- E-37** Design additions to existing buildings with consideration for the overall form of the resulting building or complex buildings; additions must not mix styles or introduce incongruous design motifs to an existing building or building complex.
- E-38** Do not remove or cover high quality original finish materials and ornamentation integral to the design integrity of the building with new incompatible materials.

- E-39** Use materials to fill openings or to repair damage to the existing building that match existing exterior materials.
- E-40** Design new windows and doors to match existing window, door and hardware materials, except when the existing materials are of low quality, in which case they all shall be replaced with wood or high-quality metal materials.
- E-41** Design elements added to the exterior of buildings, including windows and doors, security hardware, fire escapes, utility boxes, and screens of any kind, to be compatible with the existing design detail and composition of the building facade.
- E-42** Use exterior paint colors that conform to the Design Guidelines.

UNDESIRABLE



This project uses too many different window designs (different bay window styles, smaller windows are not consistent) which results in an inharmonious facade. (Guideline E-34)

DESIRABLE



Although the windows on this facade differ in shape and size, the consistent use of trim style and windows with similarly space mullions help create a consistent look. (Guideline E-34)

DESIRABLE



Sufficient distance between buildings on the same project site allows ground floor access to light and air. (Guideline F-2)

F. BUILDING SETBACKS FOR LIGHT, AIR, AND PRIVACY

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure adequate setbacks for residential units in the project and ensure the project respects the residential units in adjoining buildings.

- F-1** Provide adequate light, air, and privacy for residential units in the project, as well as for residential units on adjoining properties.
- F-2** Provide distance between buildings on the same project site that is adequate to ensure light, air and privacy for adjacent residential units and to minimize shadows on open space.
- F-3** Use design strategies to protect privacy, such as: offsetting windows of adjacent units; locating minor windows above eye level, and using opaque glass for minor windows.

G. AUTO CIRCULATION: SITE ACCESS AND DRIVEWAYS

These guidelines ensure a safe and convenient pedestrian environment and an attractive street frontage to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle activities.

Site Access and Curb Cuts

- G-1** Minimize the number of entrances and exits to parking areas, in order to minimize conflicts with pedestrians, reduce congestion at street intersections, and preserve existing on-street parking.
- G-2** Locate entries and exits to allow direct, through movement among individual parking areas where possible.
- G-3** In the CVCBD, provide access to rear parking areas predominantly from side and rear streets; direct access from Castro Valley Boulevard and other major arterials is discouraged.

Shared Site Access and Parking

- G-4** Minimize the number of entrances and exits to parking areas in order to minimize conflicts with pedestrians and reduce congestion at street intersections.
- G-5** Share parking areas and/or parking entrances/exits between adjacent properties to the maximum extent feasible. Place covenants on deeds to ensure continued shared use.
- G-6** Design vehicular circulation to allow through movement between adjacent parking areas.

DESIRABLE



In this project, commercial and residential parking is accessed using one driveway, which minimizes the number of entrances and exits to parking areas and reduces conflict with pedestrians. (Guideline G-1)

DESIRABLE



The parking garage entrance is located on the side of the building and not along the main frontage street. (Guideline G-3)

DESIRABLE



The parking area is separated from the building by a landscaped area and walkway, which provides a better visual outlook for residents. (Guideline H-6)

H. PARKING LOCATION AND DESIGN²

These guidelines ensure that the visibility of parking is minimized from public streets and that parking areas will not create a negative visual outlook for the residential units.

H-1 Locate parking to the rear or side of buildings, underneath buildings, or underground and avoid land intensive surface parking lots. Recommended parking locations include the following:

- Interior Side Parking
- Rear Yard Parking
- Partial Below Grade Parking
- Below Grade Parking
- Tuck Under Parking
- Parking Wrapped with Living Space

H-2 Disperse contiguously paved areas throughout the project in smaller segmented parking areas rather than creating land intensive surface parking lots.

2. See Endnote

H-3 Do not locate parking between buildings and the street.

- Parking areas between the building edge and the sidewalk are not allowed. Buildings may be located behind other buildings that are located at the street edge, with on-site parking provided between the two sets of buildings.
- In the ACBD TA, locate all parking areas behind street frontage buildings and ground floor use areas.
- In ACBD RC, locate parking areas to be interior to or at the back of the site where it is not visible to the street, and/or by garage space in the building where no more than one garage door is visible to the street. Apartment type buildings built over exposed parking spaces are not permitted.

H-4 Locate garage entrances and driveways to the side of the property instead of at the center.

H-5 Screen parking areas from view from the pedestrian sidewalk.

H-6 Separate parking areas from buildings by at least a raised concrete walkway or a landscaped area, preferably both. Parking spaces must not directly abut buildings.

I. FACILITIES FOR PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLES AND TRANSIT³

These guidelines ensure the provision of adequate facilities for pedestrians, bicycles and transit to promote and facilitate alternative modes of transportation and improve circulation in the Ashland Cherryland and Castro Valley Business Districts.

Sidewalks, Street Trees, and Other Public Right-of-Way Improvements

- I-1** Provide new or repaired improvements in the public right-of-way along the lot frontage, including sidewalks, street trees, curbs, and gutters, following the Specific Plans and the Alameda County Engineering Design Guidelines.
- I-2** Provide street trees along the street frontage that enhance the visual appearance of the street and provide shade for pedestrians, but do not block the visibility of commercial signs.
 - In CVCBD, when a property located along Castro Valley Boulevard, Redwood Road, or Lake Chabot Road is not built out to the front property line, and where a landscape setback exists or is created, provide a second row of the designated street trees as part of the site landscaping.
 - In CVCBD, space trees planted adjacent to the sidewalk area to the established street tree pattern, creating a double row of street trees that provide an arcaded shade canopy for the sidewalk area.

3. See Endnote

Pedestrian Sidewalks and Walkways

- I-3** Locate buildings to be contiguous wherever possible, and make accommodations for pedestrian circulation between adjacent businesses and sites.
- I-4** Where new parking areas are to be located adjacent to existing parking areas on an adjoining site or sites, provide pedestrian walkways that connect the two areas.
- I-5** Provide sidewalks within residential projects, connecting from the street or driveway to unit entrances.
- I-6** In CVCBD, provide pedestrian walkways with landscape amenities from within parking areas to permit and encourage direct access to Castro Valley Boulevard, Redwood Road, or Lake Chabot Road, to shop entries, and to other pedestrian-oriented uses and destinations.

DESIRABLE



Provide new or repaired improvements in the public right-of-way along the lot frontage, including sidewalks, street trees, curbs, and gutters. (Guideline I-1)

DESIRABLE



In CVCBD, space trees planted adjacent to the sidewalk area to the established street tree pattern, creating a double row of street trees that provide an arcaded shade canopy for the sidewalk area. (Guideline I-2)

DESIRABLE



Provide short-term bike parking in parking areas and other locations near commercial building entrances. (Guideline I-9)

DESIRABLE



Locate decorative paving in priority locations such as parking areas. (Guideline H-5)

Decorative Paving

I-7 Incorporate decorative pervious paving into paved and landscaped areas in order to enhance the appearance of the project, reduce the visual impact of paved surfaces and act as a traffic calming measure. Decorative paving includes: brick, patterned colored concrete (stamped, not just scored), stone blocks or pavers, interlocking colored pavers, grasscrete, and other comparable materials.

I-8 Locate decorative paving in the following priority locations:

- The first 20 feet of the driveway closest to the street;
- Parking areas;
- Parking areas or fire turnarounds that can also occasionally function as outdoor courtyards.

Bicycle Parking and Storage

I-9 Provide short-term bike parking in parking areas and other locations near commercial building entrances.

I-10 Provide accessible and secure on-site bicycle parking/storage facilities in each residential building.

Transit Shelters

I-11 If the provision of a transit shelter is required, provide transit shelter that enhances the streetscape and that offers adequate seating and shade

J. SITE LANDSCAPING⁴

These guidelines serve to ensure that projects provide landscaping to manage stormwater, support passive heating and cooling, improve air quality, provide an attractive visual outlook for residences, and beautify neighborhoods and communities. In addition, the following guidelines support the use of landscaping as an integral part of design to promote quality of life and the environment.

Site Plan and Landscaping Treatments

J-1 Incorporate landscaping in order to create an attractive visual outlook for residential units, create usable open space, maximize stormwater infiltration, and provide privacy for adjacent residential units. Provide at least the minimum percentage of site landscaping required.

J-2 Design site landscape treatments to be attractive, with a consistent design integrity throughout the project.

Site Landscaping Locations

J-3 Provide site landscaping in the following priority areas:

- Between commercial and residential buildings
- In areas that are visible from the primary living areas of residential units
- Within common open space areas
- Along the edge of driveways
- Along the property perimeter
- Between buildings and driveways
- Between buildings and parking

4. See Endnote

DESIRABLE



Provide landscaping within common open space areas. (Guideline J-3)

DESIRABLE



Incorporate landscaping in order to create an attractive visual outlook for residential units. (Guideline J-1)

DESIRABLE



Provide landscaping along the property perimeter. (Guideline J-3)

DESIRABLE



Incorporate trees, landscape islands, shrubs, and groundcover throughout parking areas. (Guideline J-6)

DESIRABLE



Shade paved surfaces to the maximum extent feasible to reduce heat gain and other environmental effects. (Guideline J-7)

DESIRABLE



Incorporate innovative stormwater management practices, such as permeable pavers in parking areas. (Guideline J-10)

DESIRABLE



Design landscaped areas to serve as stormwater management areas as well as visual amenities. (Guideline J-9)

- J-4** Do not reduce the amount of existing landscaping on site.

Parking Area Landscaping

- J-5** Landscape parking lots, driveways, and other auto circulation areas in order to improve the visual appearance of circulation and parking areas from residential units, from the common areas of the project, and from adjacent properties.

- J-6** Incorporate trees, landscape islands, shrubs, and groundcover throughout parking areas, consistent with required standards.

- J-7** Shade paved surfaces to the maximum extent feasible in order to reduce heat gain and other environmental effects.

Stormwater Management

- J-8** Incorporate best management practices for stormwater management, per Alameda County requirements under the Clean Water Act permit (Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit of October 14, 2009) and per the Alameda County Engineering Design Guidelines.

- J-9** Design landscaped areas to serve as stormwater management areas as well as visual amenities.

- J-10** Integrate stormwater management facilities into the site landscaping. Innovative stormwater management practices are encouraged. Use of mechanical management systems are generally not allowed.

Site Landscaping Materials

J-11 Provide landscaping to comply with the State's Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance (SB-1881), as amended, and as per the Bay-Friendly Landscape Guidelines, as amended, from StopWaste.org.

J-12 Select landscaping materials that meet the following criteria:

- Bay-friendly plants, typically found in arid California landscapes
- Drought Tolerant plants)
- Low-water use plants
- Hardy enough to withstand close contact with pedestrians and vehicles

J-13 Landscape areas requiring higher water usage for maintenance shall be restricted to small courtyards and other kinds of intensively used areas.

J-14 Use fast growing, long lived species that will achieve the desired size and form at maturity without extensive pruning or training once they have been established.

J-15 Use accent landscaping and special landscape elements, such as feature planting, including free-standing columns or trellises with vines for vertical accent, to give visual expression to site circulation, especially at entrances and exits.

DESIRABLE



Select landscape materials that are bay-friendly, drought-tolerant, and low water use. (Guideline J-11)

DESIRABLE



Select landscape materials that are hardy enough to withstand close contact with pedestrians and vehicles. (Guideline J-11)

DESIRABLE



In this example, the tot lot is located in a central location and accessible by the residential units and includes seating for adults supervising their children. (Guideline K-3 and K-4)

UNDESIRABLE



In this example, the tot lot is located far away from residential units. (Guideline K-3)

DESIRABLE



This project provides seating areas and tables in the common open space area. (Guideline K-1)

K. USABLE OPEN SPACE⁵

These guidelines ensure that projects provide enjoyable usable outdoor living areas for residents and light access, privacy, and a sense of openness is maintained in higher density developments.

Usable Open Space for Residents

K-1 Provide both common open space and private open space for residents' recreation and relaxation.

- Design common open space as a space where people can interact, host guests, and also enjoy some time alone in the fresh air.
- Design private open space for the exclusive use household members to eat outside, garden, enjoy the fresh air, and grill outdoors.

K-2 Provide usable open space that may have a dual function for stormwater treatment and incorporates strategies such as grassy swales, vegetated swales, flow through planters, rain gardens, etc.

Common Open Space: Courtyards, Plazas, and Green Spaces

K-3 Design common open space(s) to be a shared open space for use by all residents.

K-4 Locate common open space(s) in a central location that serves all the units, not at an extreme edge of the property. Common open space can be on the ground, or in courtyards above the ground level.

5. See Endnote

K-5 Include seating areas and other passive recreation facilities.

K-6 Include landscaping with trees, shrubs, and groundcover. If the space is not located on the ground, include extensive pots and planter boxes that accommodate trees, shrubs, and groundcover. See Site Landscaping Materials section for appropriate materials.

K-7 Include children's play areas in one of the common open spaces, unless the size and layout of the units are targeted exclusively towards empty-nesters, singles, and seniors.

Private Open Space: Yards, Patios, and Balconies

K-8 Design private open space to be used exclusively by a single unit.

K-9 Locate private open space in patios, balconies, decks, or other outdoor spaces attached to individual units.

K-10 Dimension private open space so there is room for a table and chairs where residents can sit outside.

DESIRABLE



This project incorporates chairs and landscaping in the common open space area, giving residents a space where people can interact, host guests, and also enjoy some time alone in the fresh air. (Guideline K-1)

DESIRABLE



This balcony is dimensioned where there is room for a table and chairs where residents can sit outside. (Guideline K-9)

DESIRABLE



Design fences and walls to be an attractive part of the project, with materials and designs that are compatible with the exterior building materials and demonstrate integrated design integrity in the project as a whole. (Guideline L-1)

DESIRABLE



Locate fences or walls on the property to define private open space and common open space areas, protect privacy, and buffer residents from noise sources. (Guideline L-2)

L. FENCES AND WALLS

These guidelines ensure that fences and walls contribute to an attractive street appearance.

- L-1** Design fences and walls to be an attractive part of the project, with materials and designs that are compatible with the exterior building materials and demonstrate integrated design integrity in the project as a whole.
- L-2** Locate fences or walls on the property to define private open space and common open space areas, protect privacy, and buffer residents from noise sources
- L-3** Use masonry materials for sound reduction purposes.
- L-4** Build fences and walls using masonry materials, and include a top or cap. Wood fences are acceptable in situations where it is not separating commercial and residential uses, and it is not likely to be damaged by automobile or truck traffic.
- L-5** Chain link or chain link with slats is not permitted.

M. SERVICES

Service area guidelines ensure that these areas do not detract from the overall quality of the common areas within projects. Additionally, they ensure that pedestrian connections are not disrupted by service or loading areas..

General

M-1 Locate ancillary facilities within buildings, not along the street facing facade, to the maximum extent feasible. Where ancillary facilities such as trash receptacles and utility meters absolutely cannot be incorporated into a building, locate them at the rear of the site in freestanding, completely enclosed structures designed to be compatible with the architecture of the rest of the development.

Loading

M-2 Design streets and driveways to accommodate vehicles commonly used for loading and unloading.

M-3 Minimize the visibility of loading areas in mixed-use residential complexes, and screen them with screen walls, landscaping, and other devices.

Trash

M-4 Provide on-site facilities for trash storage and for recyclable materials.

M-5 Provide trash areas within buildings, or centralized garbage dumpsters inside trash enclosures.

M-6 Build covered trash enclosures with durable materials such as stone, concrete block, steel, and heavy timber.

Utilities

M-7 Locate electrical panels to minimize their visibility from the street, in locations such as side yard walls, and/or behind landscaped areas. Integrate them into the design of residential buildings to the maximum extent feasible.

M-8 Minimize the visibility of utilities connections from the public street.

Storage

M-9 Provide bulk storage areas in garages or in residential buildings so people do not store bulk goods on outdoor balconies or patios that are visible to other residents.

DESIRABLE



Where ancillary facilities, such as trash receptacles, absolutely cannot be incorporated into a building, locate them in freestanding, completely enclosed structures designed to be compatible with the architecture of the rest of the development. (Guideline M-1)

DESIRABLE



Locate electrical panels to minimize their visibility from the street. In this example, utility meters are located on the interior side wall instead of the street facing facade. (Guideline M-7)

ENDNOTE

When meeting the design guideline or the design guidelines within this topic, the project must exhibit an overarching intent to reduce water quality impacts of development. Site Design Measures in combination with Low Impact Development and Bay-Friendly Landscaping principles must be integrated into development projects wherever feasible and practicable. Infeasibility must be demonstrated in projects where treatment measures cannot be practiced or included in site and building designs. Cost is not an acceptable defense for infeasibility.