

Section 6565.1,  
San Mateo County  
Zoning Regulations:  
Design Review (DR)  
Districts

---

COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER  
455 COUNTY CENTER, SECOND FLOOR  
REDWOOD CITY, CALIFORNIA 94063  
TEL: (650) 363-4161  
FAX: (650) 363-4849

## **CHAPTER 28.1. “DR” DISTRICTS** **(DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICTS)**

### **SECTIONS:**

- 6565.1. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE OF DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT
- 6565.2. ESTABLISHMENT OF DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE, DESIGN REVIEW ADMINISTRATOR AND DESIGN REVIEW OFFICER
- 6565.3. REQUIREMENT FOR DESIGN REVIEW AND APPROVAL
- 6565.4. EXEMPTIONS
- 6565.5. PRE-DESIGN CONFERENCE
- 6565.6. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS
- 6565.7. ACTION ON APPLICATION FOR DESIGN REVIEW
- 6565.8. PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENT
- 6565.9. NOTICE
- 6565.10. FINDINGS
- 6565.11. APPEALS
- 6565.12. AMENDMENT
- 6565.13. EXPIRATION
- 6565.14. INSPECTION AND OCCUPANCY
- 6565.15. STANDARDS FOR DESIGN IN EMERALD LAKE HILLS AND OAK KNOLL MANOR (AREAS ZONED RH/DR) AND DEVONSHIRE
- 6565.16. STANDARDS FOR DESIGN IN PALOMAR PARK
- 6565.17. STANDARDS FOR DESIGN IN OTHER AREAS
- 6565.18. STANDARDS FOR THE DESIGN OF COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES ON MIDDLEFIELD ROAD IN NORTH FAIR OAKS
- 6565.19. STANDARDS FOR DESIGN IN PLANNED COLMA DISTRICT
- 6565.20. STANDARDS FOR DESIGN FOR ONE-FAMILY AND TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MIDCOAST (EL GRANADA, MIRAMAR, MOSS BEACH, MONTARA)
- 6565.21. STANDARDS FOR THE PROTECTION OF TREES AND VEGETATION
- 6565.22. DROUGHT
- 6565.23. VIOLATIONS

### **SECTION 6565.1. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE OF DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT.**

- A. In any district which is combined with the “DR” District, the regulations of this Chapter shall apply.
- B. In addition to the regulations set forth in Chapter 27, Section 6550 et seq., proceedings for the determination of an area for the application of these regulations may also be initiated by a petition of the majority of the property owners in a given area. Upon receipt of such a petition, the Planning Director

shall set a date of hearing thereof, and give a notice as set forth in Section 6551 of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code.

C. In establishing the Design Review District, the Board of Supervisors hereby determines that:

1. Many communities, neighborhoods and areas in this County have deteriorated through poor planning, neglect of proper design standards, and the erection of buildings and structures unrelated to the sites, incompatible with the character of the neighborhood and insensitive to the natural environment, especially in older undeveloped or partially developed platted areas, existing and proposed communities, clustered developments and areas with unique environmental and/or resource value.
2. These conditions promote disharmony, reduce property values, and impair the public health, comfort, convenience, happiness and welfare.
3. The lack of appropriate guidelines and criteria for the design of new buildings and structures contributes to these conditions.
4. It is necessary and desirable to alleviate these conditions by providing appropriate guidelines and criteria for the maintenance and enhancement of property values, the visual character of especially fragile communities, the natural environmental resources and the public health, safety, comfort, convenience, happiness and welfare of the citizens of the County.
5. The review procedures of this Chapter will more effectively preserve and enhance the property values, the visual character of especially fragile communities, the natural environmental resources, and the public health, safety, comfort, convenience, happiness, and welfare of the citizens of the County.

D. The purposes of this Chapter are:

1. To recognize the interdependence of land values and aesthetics and to provide a method by which the County may encourage builders to develop land so that its value and attractiveness will endure.
2. To encourage development of private property in harmony with the desired character of the community or area in conformance with an adopted set of community design principles as well as the County General Plan, the Local Coastal Program (where applicable), and other Precise Plans.
3. To avoid and prevent community deterioration and to encourage the preservation and enhancement of property values and the visual character of communities and natural resources.

4. To improve the general standards of orderly and stable development in the County through review of the design of individual buildings, structures and their setting.
5. To improve and augment the regulations now included in ordinances related to planning, building and health in order to promote development which is in the best interest to the public health, safety and welfare of the County.
6. To establish standards and policies that will promote, preserve, and enhance building design, proper site development, and other environmental characteristics in communities and areas where previous planning and zoning controls have been found inadequate for these purposes and the economic and physical stability is threatened by new development.

It is not the purpose of this Chapter that regulation of design should be so rigidly interpreted that individual initiative is precluded in the design of any particular building or substantial additional expense is incurred. It is the intent of this Chapter that any regulation exercised shall be that necessary to achieve the overall objectives of this Chapter.

- E. Furthermore, it is the intent of this Board that, prior to the review of any application under the procedures set forth in this Chapter, a set of specific design review standards shall be developed for the communities in which the regulations of this Chapter apply. The design review standards shall be developed in accordance with procedures that will insure opportunity for the citizens of such communities to present their view. The design review standards so developed shall be incorporated as part of these regulations and shall be supplemental to the Community Design Manual approved and adopted by the Board of Supervisors as policy for the application of this Chapter.

**SECTION 6565.2. ESTABLISHMENT OF DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE, DESIGN REVIEW ADMINISTRATOR AND DESIGN REVIEW OFFICER.**

- A. There is hereby established a Design Review Committee consisting of three members to be appointed by the Board of Supervisors.
  1. Appointments shall be for three-year terms, except that the initial members shall be appointed to a one-year, a two-year and a three-year term so that subsequently one appointment shall expire each year. The Board of Supervisors may adjust the terms of any appointment to assure such overlap in terms occurs.
  2. Members shall be residents of San Mateo County. Two members shall be licensed architects or landscape architects. The third member shall be a resident of the unincorporated community in which the project being reviewed is located, as listed in Section 6565.7.2. For communities where

an advisory council has been established by the Board of Supervisors, the advisory council shall make a recommendation on resident third member candidates prior to appointment by the Board of Supervisors. The terms of the residents designated to serve on the Design Review Committee shall be three years.

3. Two members present shall constitute a quorum and two votes shall be required for action.
  4. The Board of Supervisors will appoint alternates for each member with the same terms and qualifications.
  5. The Design Review Committee shall adopt rules for the conduct of its business and a conflict of interest code.
  6. Members shall be paid \$50.00 per meeting not to exceed \$50.00 per month.
- B. The Director of Planning is the Design Review Administrator and may appoint in writing an assistant to act as the Design Review Officer, who may exercise all of the powers of the Design Review Administrator.

**SECTION 6565.3. REQUIREMENT FOR DESIGN REVIEW AND APPROVAL.** This Chapter shall apply in any district which is combined with the “DR” District, and shall apply to all new exterior construction which requires a building permit, grading or land clearing that requires a grading permit, or tree cutting that requires a tree cutting permit, unless the activity is determined to be exempt in accordance with Section 6565.4 below. All applicable activities shall be reviewed for conformance with this Chapter. No such applicable activity shall commence unless the design of the project has been approved.

**SECTION 6565.4. EXEMPTIONS.** The Design Review Administrator (DRA) may exempt activities which otherwise require design review from the requirements of this Chapter when such activities, in the judgment of the DRA, are minor in nature and will not have an adverse effect on compliance with design standards or guideline or zoning regulations applicable to the property or structure in question. Applications for exemption shall be filed in the manner prescribed by the DRA and shall be accompanied by a fee set by resolution of the Board of Supervisors. Exemptions shall be documented by the DRA, whose decision of exemptions shall be final.

**SECTION 6565.5. PRE-DESIGN CONFERENCE.** Prior to beginning design of a project in the Design Review District and submitting an application for Design Review, the project designer and owner shall request and shall participate in a pre-design conference with the Design Review Administrator. During the pre-design conference, the Design Review Administrator shall provide the designer and owner with written copies of the zoning regulations and design review standards and guidelines applicable to the property and project in question, shall review same with the designer and owner and shall answer any questions concerning appropriate design of the project. The

intent of the pre-design conference is to assure that the designer and owner are aware of the design standards and expectations of the County prior to commencing design of a project.

**SECTION 6565.6. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.** Applications for Design Review shall be submitted on forms supplied by the Design Review Administrator who may prescribe the form and scope of all applications and establish filing deadlines subject to any provisions of State statutes or County ordinances or policies.

The application for Design Review shall contain or be accompanied by the following information. (Plans and specifications submitted with an application for design review shall accurately reflect the entire exterior appearance of the proposal, but should be preliminary rather than construction drawings, as they may be subject to revision in whole or in part during the design review process.)

- A. Location map showing the building site, adjacent lots and streets. Indicate if adjacent lots are developed or vacant.
- B. Site plan, at a minimum scale of 1 inch = 20 feet, clearly showing:
  - 1. Property lines.
  - 2. Size of parcel.
  - 3. Existing and proposed ground contours.
  - 4. All existing trees and those to be removed and their size.
  - 5. Easements and utility lines.
  - 6. Percentage of lot coverage.
  - 7. Dimensions of setbacks.
  - 8. All existing and proposed improvements, including buildings, structures, decks, paving, fences, signs, etc.
  - 9. Where applicable, proposed septic leach field lines.
- C. Building elevations, at a minimum scale of 1/4 inch = 1 foot, clearly showing:
  - 1. All exterior walls.
  - 2. Natural grade in relation to all exterior walls.
  - 3. Building heights of all elevations.

4. Roof equipment, trash enclosures, fences, signs, exterior lights, and other structures or fixtures.
  5. Type of roof and exterior materials to be used.
  6. Color of materials or finish.
- D. Landscape plans. All submitted landscape plans shall follow minimum standards set by the Planning Director available at the offices of the San Mateo County Planning Division.
- E. A written explanation of how and why the design of the project conforms to the standards and guidelines for design review applicable to the location of the project.
- F. Floor area ratio as specified in the Residential Hillside (RH) zoning district regulations (Emerald Lake Hills and Oak Knoll Manor only).
- G. Building floor area as specified in the S-70, S-90, and S-100 zoning district regulations (Palomar Park and Devonshire).
- H. All proposed grading (cut and fill) and the total amount of grading in cubic yards (Emerald Lake Hills and Oak Knoll Manor only).
- I. Any additional information as determined by the Design Review Administrator necessary for evaluation of the development plans.
- J. Fees as set by resolution of the Board of Supervisors.

**SECTION 6565.7. ACTION ON APPLICATION FOR DESIGN REVIEW.**

- A. Review or action on an application for Design Review shall be taken by the Design Review Committee for projects located in the following communities:
1. Emerald Lake Hills and Oak Knoll Manor (areas zoned RH/DR only).
  2. Palomar Park.
  3. Devonshire.
  4. Midcoast (areas zoned R-1 only).

In all other areas within the Design Review District, review or action shall be by the Design Review Administrator.

- B. When the project in question requires another permit or approval, such as (but not limited to) a use permit, variance or subdivision, to be acted upon by the Zoning Hearing Officer, Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors, then the action of the Design Review Committee or Design Review Administrator shall be in the form of a recommendation to the decision-maker on the other permit(s), who shall act upon the application for design review only after receiving and considering such recommendation. In such cases, the decision-maker may refer any revisions to the design of the project back to the Design Review Committee or Design Review Administrator for further recommendation prior to taking action on the project.
- C. The Design Review Committee or Design Review Administrator may refer any matter directly to the Planning Commission when, in their opinion, such action will be in the public interest.
- D. Action on an application for Design Review shall be to: (a) approve the application and plans as submitted, (b) approve them with modifications, or (c) disapprove the application and plans.

#### **SECTION 6565.8. PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENT.**

- A. When action or recommendation on an application for Design Review is to be by the Design Review Committee, the Committee shall first hold a public hearing to receive comments on the project. Such hearings shall be sufficiently structured to assure that the comments of any interested person are considered and recorded prior to action, but shall be conducted in a manner which encourages the free and informal exchange of ideas between the project designer and the Design Review Committee.
- B. When action or recommendation is to be by the Design Review Administrator, the Administrator shall consider any comments received from any interested party prior to action and shall consult with the project designer or owner prior to taking any action or making any recommendation other than approval as submitted.

#### **SECTION 6565.9. NOTICE.**

- A. Public notice of each application for Design Review shall be provided at least ten (10) calendar days prior to any of the following:
  - 1. Public hearing and action by the Design Review Committee on a Design Review application.
  - 2. Public hearing and recommendation by the Design Review Committee to another decision-maker on a Design Review application.



3. Action by the Design Review Administrator on a Design Review application.
- B. Notice required by Section 6565.8.1, above, shall be provided by written mailed notice to:
1. The owner of the property which is the subject of the application.
  2. The project applicant as listed on the application.
  3. The project designer as listed on the application.
  4. All owners of property, as shown on the last equalized assessment roll, within three hundred (300) feet (or the notification area required for any other permit required for the project, whichever is greater) of the exterior limits of the property and any adjoining property owned by the same owner for which the application is proposed.
  5. Any person who has requested notice of all Design Review applications within that community within the preceding year.
- C. A notice of pending applications for building or grading permits which require design review under this Chapter, and tree cutting permits shall be conspicuously posted at eye level at the front of the property nearest the street in a manner outlined in paragraph 1, above of this section. Such notices shall be on forms provided by the County.
- D. Written notice of the findings and the decision on an application for Design Review shall be mailed to the applicant by first-class mail at the address set forth in the application and to any other person who has filed a written request therefore with the Design Review Administrator.

#### **SECTION 6565.10. FINDINGS.**

- A. The burden shall be on the property owner, project designer and permit applicant to demonstrate that the design of the project conforms to the standards and guidelines for design review applicable to the location of the project.
- B. In acting on an application for Design Review, the Design Review Committee, the Design Review Administrator or other decision-maker on the application shall make written findings stating how and why the project does or does not conform to the standards and guidelines for design review applicable to the location of the project.
- C. In making such findings, the decision-maker shall apply the following principles:

1. Regulation of design should not be so rigidly enforced that individual initiative is precluded in the design of any particular building or substantial additional expense incurred. The regulation exercised should be that necessary to achieve the overall objectives as set forth in Section 6565.1.4.
2. Appropriate design is based upon the suitability of a building for its purposes, upon the appropriate use of sound materials and upon the principles of harmony and proportion in the elements of the building.
3. Appropriate design is not based on economic factors alone.

#### **SECTION 6565.11. APPEALS.**

- A. Decisions on Design Review made by the Design Review Committee, the Design Review Administrator or the Zoning Hearing Officer may be appealed to the Planning Commission within ten (10) working days only by aggrieved persons. Notice of the public hearing shall be provided as specified in Section 6565.9. The Planning Commission shall review and consider points of appeal for each Design Review application. The decision of the Planning Commission may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors following the same procedures as for appeals to the Planning Commission.
- B. For purposes of this section, "aggrieved person" means any person who, in person or through a representative, appeared at a public hearing or by other appropriate means prior to action on an application for Design Review informed the County of his or her concerns about an application for such permit or who for good cause was unable to do either, and who objects to the action taken on such permit and wishes to appeal such action to a higher authority.

#### **SECTION 6565.12. AMENDMENT.**

- A. Subsequent to the granting of a design approval pursuant to this Chapter, the Design Review Administrator may approve amendments to the approved plans which, in the judgment of the Design Review Administrator, are minor in nature, without the public notice, hearing or appeal otherwise required or authorized by this Chapter. Such approval shall be in writing. Other amendments shall be processed as for new applications.
- B. Minor amendments may include, but are not limited to: interior modifications; relocations of doors and windows; adjustments in roof pitch or design; minor relocations of walls, fences or signs; and other adjustments in design, all only to the extent that they will not, in the judgment of the Design Review Administrator, have an adverse effect on compliance with design standards or guidelines or zoning regulations applicable to the project.

**SECTION 6565.13. EXPIRATION.**

- A. Design approvals granted pursuant to this Chapter shall expire five (5) years from the date of approval if all other permits required for the project have not been obtained and construction begun.
- B. Upon written request of the property owner, and for good cause, the Design Review Administrator may extend the expiration period for design approvals one year at a time.

**SECTION 6565.14. INSPECTION AND OCCUPANCY.** Before an occupancy permit is issued, the completed building must be inspected for compliance with the decision on the Design Review application.

**SECTION 6565.15. STANDARDS FOR DESIGN IN EMERALD LAKE HILLS AND OAK KNOLL MANOR (AREAS ZONED RH/DR) AND DEVONSHIRE.** The following design standards shall apply within Emerald Lake Hills and Oak Knoll Manor (areas zoned RH/DR only) and within Devonshire.

A. Site Planning

As much as possible, site new buildings on a parcel in locations that:

1. Minimize tree removal;
2. Minimize alteration of the natural topography;
3. Respect the privacy of neighboring houses and outdoor living areas;
4. Minimize the blockage of sunlight on neighboring buildings; and
5. Minimize alteration of streams and natural drainage channels.

B. Architectural Styles

Design new buildings that are architecturally compatible with existing buildings by requiring them to reflect and emulate, as much as possible, the predominant architectural styles and the natural surroundings of the immediate area (e.g., bungalow, craftsman, ranch). Avoid revivalist historical styles.

C. Building Shapes and Bulk

Design buildings with shapes that respect and conform to the natural topography of the site by requiring them to step up or down hillsides in the same direction as the natural grade. Control the bulk of buildings on hillsides by requiring them to be terraced up or down the hill at a uniform height.

D. Unenclosed Spaces

As much as possible, avoid the creation of unattractive, useless space beneath buildings by prohibiting buildings that are predominantly built on stilts.

E. Facades

Design well articulated and proportioned facades by:

1. Avoiding the dominance of garages at street level;
2. Considering the placement and appearance of garages and the width of garage doors;
3. Prohibiting massive blank walls by creating aesthetic and proportioned patterns of windows and shadows; and
4. Relating the size, location, and scale of windows and doors to adjacent buildings.

F. Roofs

Design buildings using primarily pitched roofs. Design buildings with roofs that reflect the predominant architectural styles of the immediate area.

G. Materials and Colors

Make varying architectural styles compatible by using similar materials and colors which blend with the natural setting and the immediate area. Avoid the use of building materials and colors which are highly reflective and contrasting by requiring them to blend and harmonize with the natural woodland environment and vegetation of the area.

1. Use colors such as warm grays, beiges, natural woods, and muted greens. Prohibit the use of cool grays, blues, pinks, yellows, and white.
2. Encourage the use of building materials that are compatible with the predominant architectural styles of the immediate area. In areas where bungalow, craftsman, and ranch architectural styles are predominant, use real wood and stone building materials such as board and batten, wall shingles, fire-resistant roof shingles, flagstone, and rock. Avoid such materials as simulated stone and T-111 plywood. Ensure that all roof materials have Class "C" or better fire resistive ratings.

H. Utilities

Install all new service lines underground.

I. Signs

Control the use of signs so that their number, location, size, design, lighting, materials, and colors harmonize with their surroundings and are compatible with the architectural style of the building.

J. Paved Areas

As much as possible, keep the amount of visible paved areas (e.g., driveways, walkways, etc.) to a minimum.

**SECTION 6565.16. STANDARDS FOR DESIGN IN PALOMAR PARK.** The following design standards shall apply within Palomar Park.

A. Site Planning

As much as possible, site new buildings on a parcel in locations that:

1. Minimize tree removal;
2. Minimize alteration of the natural topography;
3. Respect the privacy of neighboring houses and outdoor living areas;
4. Minimize the blockage of sunlight on neighboring buildings; and
5. Minimize alteration of streams and natural drainage channels.

B. Architectural Styles

Design new buildings that are architecturally compatible with existing buildings by requiring them to reflect and emulate, as much as possible, the predominant architectural styles and the natural surroundings of the immediate area. Avoid revivalist historical styles.

C. Building Shapes and Bulk

Design buildings with shapes that respect and conform to the natural topography of the site by requiring them to step up or down hillsides in the same direction as the natural grade.

Control the bulk of buildings on hillsides by requiring them to be terraced up or down the hill at a uniform height.

D. Unenclosed Spaces

As much as possible, avoid the creation of unattractive, useless space beneath buildings by prohibiting buildings that are predominantly built on stilts.

E. Facades

Design well articulated and proportioned facades by:

1. Avoiding the dominance of garages at street level;
2. Considering the placement and appearance of garages and the width of garage doors;
3. Prohibiting massive blank walls by creating aesthetic and proportioned patterns of windows and shadows; and
4. Relating the size, location, and scale of windows and doors to adjacent buildings.

F. Roofs

Design buildings using primarily pitched roofs. Design buildings with roofs that reflect the predominant architectural styles of the immediate area.

G. Materials and Colors

Make varying architectural styles compatible by using similar materials and colors which blend with the natural setting and the immediate area. Avoid the use of building materials and colors which are highly reflective and contrasting by requiring them to blend and harmonize with the natural woodland environment and vegetation of the area.

1. Use colors such as warm grays, beiges, natural woods, and muted greens.
2. Encourage the use of building materials that are compatible with the predominant architectural styles of the immediate area. In areas where bungalow, craftsman, and ranch architectural styles are predominant, use real wood and stone building materials such as board and batten, wall shingles, fire-resistant roof shingles, flagstone, and rock. Ensure that all roof materials have Class "C" or better fire resistive ratings.

H. Utilities

Install all new service lines underground.

I. Signs

Control the use of signs so that their number, location, size, design, lighting, materials, and colors harmonize with their surroundings and are compatible with the architectural style of the building.

J. Lighting

Exterior lighting should be subdued and indirect, and glaring fixtures should be avoided.

K. Retaining Walls

Retaining walls should be surfaced, painted, landscaped or otherwise treated to blend with their surroundings.

L. Paved Areas

As much as possible, keep the amount of visible paved areas (e.g., driveways, walkways, etc.) to a minimum.

**SECTION 6565.17. STANDARDS FOR DESIGN IN OTHER AREAS.** The following design standards shall apply in other areas zoned Design Review.

- A. Proposed structures are designed and situated so as to retain and blend with the natural vegetation and landforms of the site and to ensure adequate space for light and air to itself and adjacent properties.
- B. Where grading is necessary for the construction of structures and paved areas, it blends with adjacent landforms through the use of contour grading rather than harsh cutting or terracing of the site and does not create problems of drainage or erosion on its site or adjacent property.
- C. Streams and other natural drainage systems are not altered so as to affect their character and thereby causing problems of drainage, erosion or flooding.
- D. Structures are located outside flood zones, drainage channels and other areas subject to inundation.
- E. Trees and other vegetative land cover are removed only where necessary for the construction of structures or paved areas in order to reduce erosion and impacts on natural drainage channels, and maintain surface runoff at acceptable levels.

- F. A smooth transition is maintained between development and adjacent open areas through the use of natural landscaping and plant materials which are native or appropriate to the area.
- G. Views are protected by the height and location of structures and through the selective pruning or removal of trees and vegetative matter at the end of view corridors.
- H. Construction on ridgelines blends with the existing silhouette by maintaining natural vegetative masses and landforms and does not extend above the height of the forest or tree canopy.
- I. Structures are set back from the edge of bluffs and cliffs to protect views from scenic areas below.
- J. Public views to and along the shoreline from public roads and other public lands are protected.
- K. Varying architectural styles are made compatible through the use of similar materials and colors which blend with the natural setting and surrounding neighborhoods.
- L. The design of the structure is appropriate to the use of the property and is in harmony with the shape, size and scale of adjacent building in the community.
- M. Overhead utility lines are placed underground where appropriate to reduce the visual impact in open and scenic areas.
- N. The number, location, size, design, lighting, materials, and use of colors in signs are compatible with the architectural style of the structure they identify and harmonize with their surroundings.
- O. Paved areas are integrated into the site, relate to their structure, and are landscaped to reduce visual impact from residential areas and from roadways.

**SECTION 6565.18. STANDARDS FOR THE DESIGN OF COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES ON MIDDLEFIELD ROAD IN NORTH FAIR OAKS.** The following design standards shall apply to parcels along Middlefield Road (areas zoned C-1/NFO and C-2/NFO) in North Fair Oaks.

A. Site Planning

1. Locate development on a parcel so that: (1) commercial uses abut the front property line, with the exception of recessed entryways, and directly face the street, (2) pedestrians have direct access to retail uses from the street,



and (3) storage areas are located toward the rear of the parcel (see Figure 1).

2. Perpetuate the existing pattern of small scale commercial development by requiring 25-foot or 50-foot wide building or storefronts within larger buildings which face the street (see Figure 2).
3. On corner parcels, locate development on both property lines; however, encourage the corner to be recessed up to a maximum of six (6) feet from the front and side property lines in order to create: (1) pedestrian plazas, (2) increased site distances, (3) prominent building entrances, and (4) more architecturally-interesting buildings (see Figure 3).

B. Mixed-Use Development

Encourage mixed-use development with commercial uses on the ground level and offices and/or residences on upper levels (see Figure 4).

C. Architectural Styles

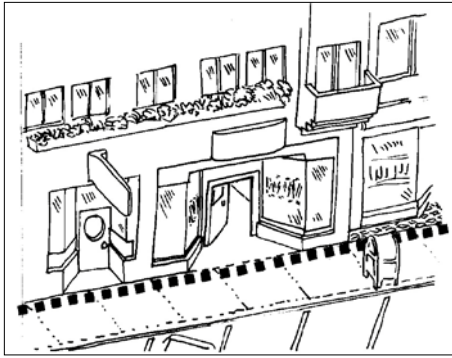
Encourage architecture that strongly enhances the overall appearance of the street and allow varying architectural styles.

D. Building Scale and Height

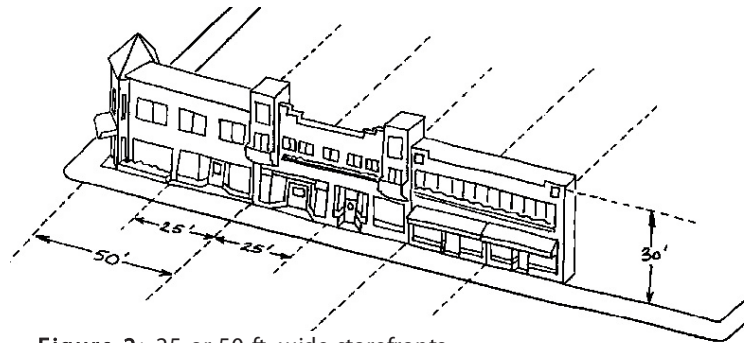
Harmonize building scale and height of commercial buildings with any adjacent residential buildings (see Figure 5).

E. Building Facades

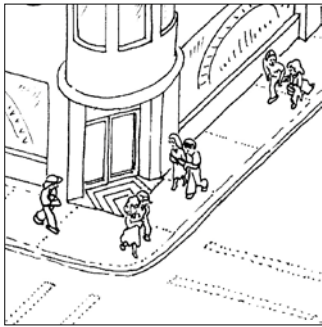
1. Design building facades with doors, windows, walls, and/or other elements that proportionately fit together and are humanly scaled in order to create a harmonious composition where no one element dominates or overwhelms another.
2. Encourage the use of door and window canopies and awnings (see Figure 6).
3. Encourage recessed entryways (see Figure 7).
4. Require that transparent windows which are seen by pedestrians be at least sixty (60) percent of the length of the building facade facing the street.
5. Prohibit opaque or reflective window tints and glazes.



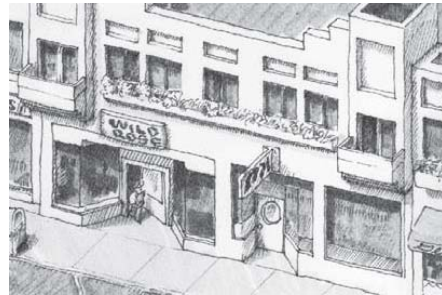
**Figure 1:** about the front property line, give pedestrians direct access



**Figure 2:** 25 or 50 ft. wide storefronts

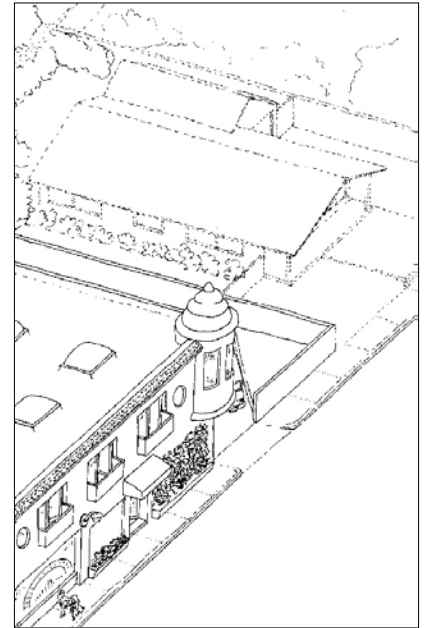


**Figure 3:** recessed corner entries create pedestrian plazas and prominent building entrances



**Figure 4:** mixed use development with residences on upper levels

**Figure 5:** harmonize building scale and height

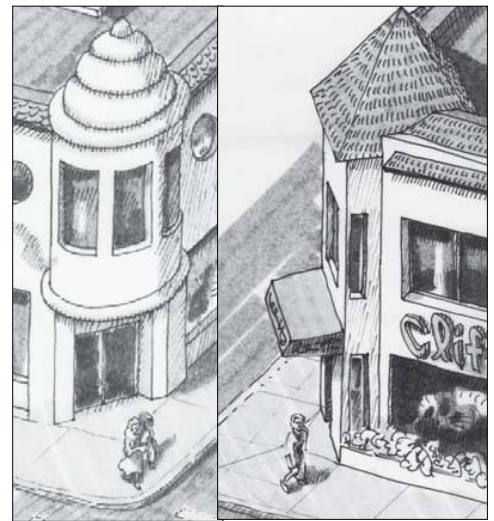


**Figure 6:** door and window canopies



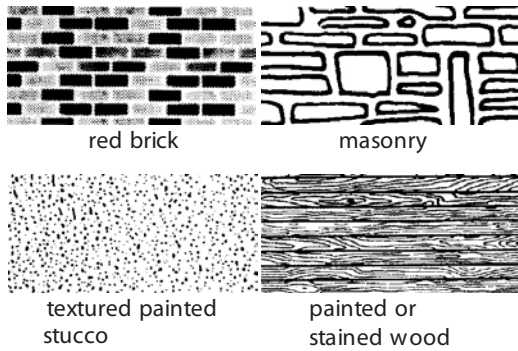


**Figure 7**  
recessed entryway

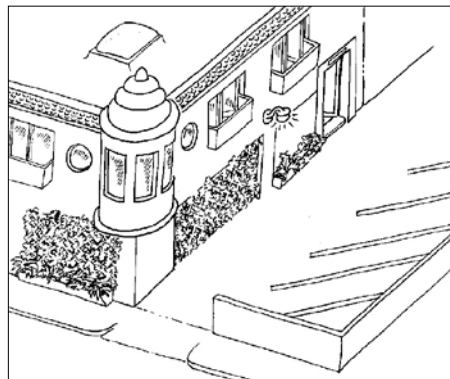


**Figure 8:** corner entries, projecting windows, towers, turrets, cupolas, on corner buildings

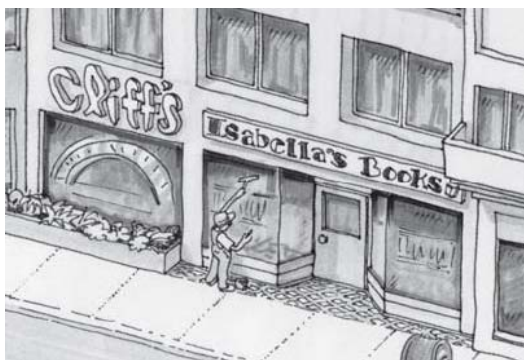
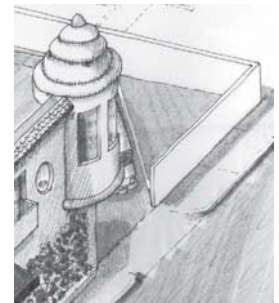
**Figure 9:**



**Figure 10:** off-street parking at the rear of the parcel

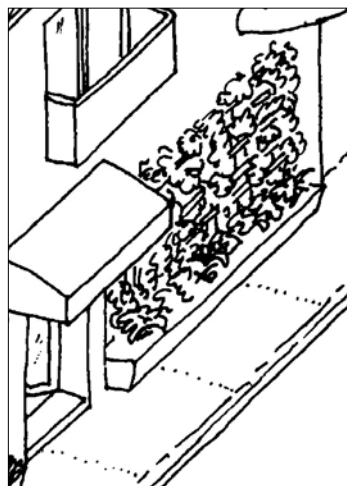


**Figure 11:** screen off-street parking and use common driveways

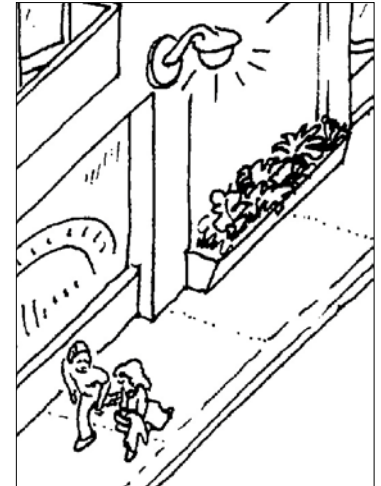


**Figure 12:** signs compatible with the surrounding environment

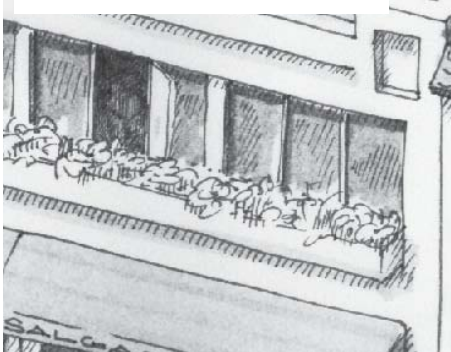
**Figure 14:** vines on walls and trellises



**Figure 15:** lighting to be compatible with building design



**Figure 13:** flowers in planters



6. Encourage the use of special architectural features on corner building, including corner entries at ground level and projecting windows, towers, turrets, and cupolas on the corners of upper levels (see Figure 8).

#### F. Materials and Colors

Use building materials and colors that are compatible with the design of the building and enhance surrounding development. Minimize the use of materials and colors that are highly contrasting and reflective.

1. Use building materials of durable quality.
2. Use exterior building materials that are in harmony with surrounding neighborhood and enhance the building style, e.g., red brick or other masonry, painted or stained wood, or textured painted stucco surfacing materials. Prohibit the use of unfinished cinder or cement block or corrugated metal siding when visible from a public street or residential use (see Figure 9).
3. Minimize the use of colors that are brilliant, deep, highly contrasting and reflective (e.g.: pink, orange, blue, purple) by allowing them: (1) for only design and/or accent purposes, and (2) to cover no more than twenty-five (25) percent of any one exterior side of a building.

#### G. Off-Street Parking

1. Where possible, locate off-street parking at the rear of the parcel and behind buildings (see Figure 10).
2. Screen off-street parking when visible from a public street or residential use (see Figure 11).
3. Encourage the use of common driveways providing access to more than one parcel (see Figure 11).

#### H. Signs

1. Limit the number, location, size, design, lighting, materials, and colors of signs so that they are compatible with the building style (see Figure 12).
2. Require the content and design of signs, illustrations, and murals painted on exterior building walls to be compatible with the building and the surrounding environment.

I. Landscaping

Encourage the growing of:

1. Vines on walls and trellises; and
2. Flowers in planter boxes to enhance the appearance of blank walls when visible from a public street or residential use (see Figures 13 and 14).

J. Lighting

Require exterior lighting fixtures, standards, and all exposed accessory lighting to be compatible with building design (see Figure 15).

K. Utilities

Install new distribution lines underground.

**SECTION 6565.19. STANDARDS FOR DESIGN IN PLANNED COLMA DISTRICT.**

The following design standards shall apply to all land designated High Density Residential, Medium High Density Residential and Neighborhood Commercial (Residential Above) within the Planned Colma (PC) Zoning District:

A. Relationship to BART Station Area Specific Plan

The provisions of this section implement the BART Station Area Specific Plan. The BART Station Area Specific Plan provides further guidance in complying with the requirements of this section. The Specific Plan shall be used in conjunction with this section to design and evaluate development proposals.

B. Definitions

For the purposes of this subsection, the following terms are defined:

Courtyard Apartment Building. A multiple-story building containing multiple-family dwellings with shared entrances off a central courtyard.

Duplex. A building containing two-family dwellings with individual entrances.

Flat. A multiple-story building containing two-family or multiple-family dwellings with each dwelling on a separate floor.

Kiss-N-Ride Area. Designated curbside areas for passenger drop-off and pick-up.

Podium Apartment Building. A multiple-story building containing multiple-family dwellings with shared entrances over subsurface or ground floor parking.

Single-Family Home. A building containing a one-family dwelling.

Single-Loaded Apartment. Apartment unit configured to run the entire depth of a building from front to back.

Single-Story Commercial Building. A building containing commercial uses within one story.

Small Apartment Building. A multiple-story building containing multiple-family dwellings with shared entrances.

Townhouse. A multiple-story building containing one-family dwellings with each unit side-by-side and individual entrances.

C. General Residential Design Guidelines

The following guidelines shall apply to all building types.

1. Building Orientation

Require:

- a. Building entrances on streets, pedestrian ways, kiss-n-ride areas, central courtyards and parks and plazas rather than the interior of blocks or parking lots.
- b. Buildings to be placed along the frontage of the BART bus turnaround and kiss-n-ride area.

Encourage: Single-loaded apartments along the BART bus turnaround with service areas facing the BART area and active spaces facing an interior courtyard.

Prohibit: Street-facing facades consisting of a blank wall or an unbroken series of garage doors, or lined with off-street uncovered parking spaces.

2. Building Form

Require:

- a. Buildings to follow the natural topography by terracing up slopes.

- b. Variations in floor level, facades, roof patterns, architectural details, and finishes of large buildings to create the appearance of several smaller buildings.

Encourage:

- a. Unobstructed views along east-west street corridors, from the Planned Colma (PC) District to San Bruno Mountain and from surrounding areas to the area.
- b. Vertical, rather than horizontal, building forms.

### 3. Facades

Encourage:

- a. Grand entries, such as porches.
- b. Corner entries.
- c. Landmark features, such as towers, at corners of large buildings.
- d. Porches, patios, bays, solariums, and balconies.
- e. Vertical, rather than square or horizontal, windows.
- f. Casement or divided windows with individual panes of glass.
- g. High quality wooden windows and door frames.
- h. Windows and doors to be recessed one to three inches from the front facade.

Prohibit: Exterior stairs to upper floor units on street facing facades and the front half of side facades.

### 4. Roofs

Require: Mechanical equipment to be screened with parapets or the roof form.

Encourage:

- a. Roofs that are integral to the structure of the building and the design of the facade, rather than ornamental.

- b. Gable roofs.

Prohibit:

- a. Mansard roofs.
- b. Buildings covered entirely by a flat roof.

## 5. Materials

Encourage:

- a. Identical building materials on all sides of a building.
- b. Smooth-finish stucco.
- c. Horizontal wood siding.
- d. Light tints and bright accents, rather than earth tones.

Prohibit: Walls entirely of glass, reflective glass, textured stucco, and scored plywood.

## 6. Walls, Fences and Landscaping

Require: Trees to be planted every 30 feet in the setback along the frontage of the BART bus turnaround and kiss-n-ride area.

Encourage:

- a. Low walls or fences of light-colored stucco, concrete, masonry, or wood along front property lines.
- b. Low hedges along front property lines.

## D. Specific Residential Design Guidelines

In addition to the General Design Guidelines, the following guidelines shall apply to specific residential building types.

### 1. Podium Apartments

Require:

- a. Street entries placed every 50 to 60 feet.



- b. Porches, patios, bays, solariums, and balconies overlooking streets to be placed every 25 to 30 feet.
- c. Where necessary, second floor residential bays to be placed a minimum of 3 feet above retail awnings.
- d. A minimum 20-foot by 20-foot open courtyard area on the podium above parking.
- e. A tree survey for development in the eucalyptus grove north of D Street and east of the Colma BART Station.

Encourage:

- a. One entrance to serve no more than 16 units.
- b. Courtyards to contain shared facilities and paths, surrounded by porches, patios, and entry porticos.
- c. Courtyard landscaping to provide both common and private open space.
- d. Steps to connect courtyards to the street.
- e. Ground-level open space where possible.
- f. Roof decks integrated into overall building design, with wind screens and landscaping.
- g. Preservation of existing eucalyptus trees.
- h. Openings between parking levels and podium courtyards for sunlight and ventilation.

## 2. Podium Apartments, Small Apartment Buildings and Courtyard Apartments

Encourage:

- a. Porches, patios, solariums, and balconies to be a minimum of 6 feet deep and 50 square feet in size.
- b. Porches and patios to be accessible directly from the street or courtyard.
- c. Second floor residential bays to be placed a minimum of 3 feet above retail awnings.

Prohibit: Open railings on balconies.

3. Small Apartment Buildings and Courtyard Apartments

Require:

- a. Street entries placed every 25 to 30 feet.
- b. A minimum 20-foot by 20-foot open space area as a combination parking and open space area.

Encourage:

- a. One entrance to serve no more than 16 units.
- b. Pavement patterns and material to emphasize the combined pedestrian and auto use of parking and open space areas.
- c. Hard-surface playgrounds in parking and open space areas.

4. Duplexes, Flats and Townhouses

Require: Street entries placed every 25 to 30 feet.

Encourage:

- a. One entrance for every one to two units.
- b. Street-facing porches.
- c. Porches to be a minimum of 6 feet deep and 50 square feet in size.
- d. Porch support columns and roofs to appear integral to the structure of the building and the design of the facade, rather than ornamental.

E. Commercial Design Guidelines

The following guidelines shall apply to all commercial uses.

1. Building Orientation

Require: Buildings to face streets, pedestrian ways, kiss-n-ride areas, and parks and plazas rather than the interior of blocks or parking lots.

Encourage: Benches and small tables along ground floor retail frontages outside the public right-of-way.

Prohibit: Street-facing facades to consist of a blank wall.

## 2. Building Form

Require: Variations in floor level, facades, roof patterns, architectural details, and finishes of large buildings to create the appearance of several smaller buildings.

Encourage:

- a. Unobstructed views along east-west street corridors, from the Planned Colma (PC) District to San Bruno Mountain and from surrounding areas to the area.
- b. Vertical, rather than horizontal, building forms.

## 3. Facades

Require:

- a. Storefront floor to ceiling height of 12 feet.
- b. Street entries to ground floor retail shops placed every 25 to 30 feet.
- c. The design of residential entries to be clearly distinct from retail entries.
- d. Display windows of clear glass.
- e. Display windows to begin no higher than 30 inches above finished sidewalk grade.
- f. No more than 6 feet of blank, non-window, wall space in every 25 feet of storefront.

Encourage:

- a. Corner entries.
- b. Separate awnings for each shop, hanging 9 to 12 feet above the sidewalk.
- c. Columns or other vertical definition placed at least every 25 to 30 feet, alternating with entries.

- d. Storefront entries to be accented by 3- to 4-foot recesses for door swing space and associated display bays.

#### 4. Roofs

Require: Mechanical equipment to be screened with parapets or the roof form.

Encourage:

- a. Roofs that are integral to the structure of the building and the design of the facade, rather than ornamental.
- b. Gable roofs.

Prohibit:

- a. Mansard roofs.
- b. Buildings covered entirely by a flat roof.

#### 5. Materials

Encourage:

- a. Identical building materials on all sides of a building.
- b. Light tints and bright accents, rather than earth tones.

Prohibit: Glass curtain walls, reflective glass, textured stucco, and scored plywood.

### **SECTION 6565.20. STANDARDS FOR DESIGN FOR ONE-FAMILY AND TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MIDCOAST (EL GRANADA, MIRAMAR, MOSS BEACH, MONTARA).**

#### **SECTION 6565.20(A). BACKGROUND.**

##### 1. Application

The following design standards shall apply to all one-family (single-family) and two-family (duplex) development in all areas zoned "Design Review" (DR) within the urban Midcoast (El Granada, Miramar, Moss Beach, and Montara). Where used in this document, the terms "house," "home" and "single-family" shall also refer to two-family or duplex residential development.

## 2. Setting

The Midcoast has a unique character that makes it a desirable place to live. Although it is only a few miles from the more heavily urbanized Bayside, the Midcoast has a coastal, semi-rural, small town, diverse character that residents value and want to preserve. It is a collection of five distinct communities (Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton and Miramar), each with individual neighborhoods differing in architecture, size, scale and character. The individuality of each community is vital to the overall character of the Midcoast. Residents and visitors alike also enjoy the area's many natural amenities, including the beaches and bluffs, creeks and streams, hillsides and mountains.

## 3. Purpose/Legislative Intent

The purposes of the Design Review Districts Chapter (Chapter 28.1) are contained in Section 6565.1.D. Consistent with Section 6565.1.D, the purpose of the Midcoast design standards is to encourage new single-family homes and additions that have their own individual character, while ensuring that they are complementary with neighboring houses, the neighborhood character of each Midcoast community, and the surrounding natural setting.

The Midcoast design standards are intended for use by homeowners, builders, architects and designers, by neighbors, and by community groups in their consideration of new single-family homes and additions to existing homes. The Design Review Administrator, the Coastside Design Review Committee, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors will also use these standards in their review of projects, as set forth in Section 6565.7.

Each design topic in Sections 6565.20(C) through (G) is divided into two sections: (a) a discussion with illustrations section, and (b) a design standards section. The discussion and illustration section is intended to explain the reasons for the standards and to provide further clarification of the standards' objectives. The design standards section states the regulatory standards. Only the design standards section has the force of law and constitutes the regulatory criteria by which projects will be reviewed.

Consistent with Section 6565.1.0, the design standards are not intended to preclude individual initiative in the design of any particular project, nor to require that substantial additional expense be incurred. There are a variety of creative ways in which a dwelling can be designed to comply with the standards, but still retain its own individual identity. By thoughtful application of the standards and balancing of the design objectives embodied in the standards, an architect or designer can achieve compliance with these design standards and reduce a project's potential to cause conflict, avoiding costly delays caused by subsequent project revisions.

When the term “to the extent feasible” is used, it shall mean that if a house can be designed to comply with that standard, without conflicting with other applicable design and zoning requirements, the house shall comply with the standard. If a house cannot be designed to comply with the standard, it shall be designed to substantially comply.

4. Relationship to Other County Regulations

The design standards are intended to implement the County General Plan and the Local Coastal Program (LCP). The design standards are separate from, but intended to complement, other required County ordinances including the Zoning Regulations, which establish development standards for single-family and two-family residential development.

Consistent with Section 6565.10, it shall be the responsibility of the applicant and home designer to comply with both the Design Standards and the Zoning Regulations development standards (e.g., height limit, maximum floor area, setbacks and maximum parcel coverage). The emphasis for design review will be on a home’s appearance, not on its actual size or height. As such, compliance with design standards will be achieved by requiring design techniques consistent with zoning development standards and, where applicable, LCP policies, that make homes appear smaller, lower or less massive; house size or height reductions will not be required unless otherwise required by LCP policies.

Other relevant County ordinances include, but are not limited to: (1) the Building Regulations, which establish construction requirements including structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing requirements; (2) Public Works standards for driveways, curb cuts and other work in the public right-of-way; (3) the Heritage and Significant Tree Ordinances, which establish criteria for tree removal; and (4) the Grading Ordinance, which establishes standards for conducting grading activity.

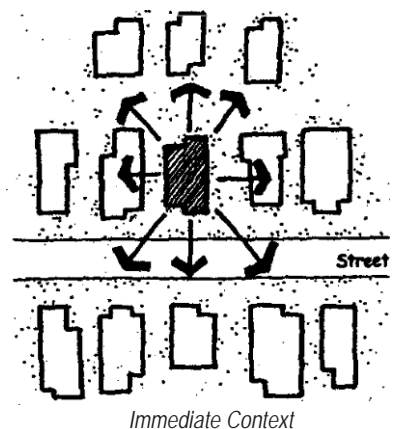
Where conflicts exist between the provisions of this section and the policies of the LCP, the policies of the LCP shall control.

**SECTION 6565.20(B). NEIGHBORHOOD DEFINITION AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER.**

1. Neighborhood Definition

a. Neighborhood Context

**Discussion:** What is a neighborhood? One of the first steps in designing a new home or an addition to an existing home is to understand the neighborhood in which the



home is located. A neighborhood generally has two components: (1) the immediate context, or how a house relates to adjacent houses and natural features, and (2) the neighborhood context, or how a house relates to the visual character and scale of other houses and natural features in the vicinity.

b. Neighborhood Limits

**Discussion:** The process of defining a neighborhood begins by defining the area surrounding a house within 300 feet. Then, other factors may be considered that would further influence the limit of a neighborhood, making it larger or smaller, such as noticeable changes in topography, or proximity to open space or the urban/rural boundary.



*Neighborhood Context*

**Definition:** A neighborhood is defined as the area within 300 feet of an existing or proposed house. Certain factors may be present which would further define or alter the limit of a neighborhood, making it larger or smaller, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Significant changes in topography;
- (2) Changes in land use such as from residential to commercial;
- (3) Proximity to designated open space or urban/rural boundary;
- (4) Changes in the land subdivision pattern;
- (5) A wide street or natural feature such as a riparian corridor;
- (6) Noticeable changes in building type, such as from one-story to two-story homes;
- (7) Visibility from off-site vantage points in the vicinity of the project.

2. Neighborhood Character

**Discussion:** What is neighborhood character? Neighborhood character is the combination of qualities or features within a neighborhood that distinguishes it from another neighborhood. For the purposes of these design standards, the key qualities or features of single-family residential neighborhoods include the

appearance of the homes (e.g., architectural style and elements), the collective appearance of the homes (e.g., pattern, scale, size), and the appearance of natural features (e.g., natural vegetation, landforms).

How does a house contribute to the visual character of a neighborhood? The architectural elements of a house such as its shape, the arrangement of its doors and windows, its roof style, and its architectural style all contribute to the appearance of the house, which in turn contributes to the collective appearance or character of the neighborhood. Some of the most common architectural elements that contribute to the character of an individual house and the collective character of the neighborhood are listed below:

- a. How houses are sited on their lots;
- b. How houses blend with surrounding scenic and natural environments;
- c. Architectural style, including how house styles compare, contrast or complement each other;
- d. Scale, or the appearance or proportion of a house relative to others, including the number of stories;
- e. Arrangement/placement/massing of major building forms;
- f. Parking and garage patterns;
- g. Location of entries;
- h. Roof forms;
- i. Exterior materials and colors;
- j. Window type and placement;
- k. Landscaping;
- l. Older buildings or features having historic character.

**Definition:** Neighborhood character is defined as the combination of qualities or features within a neighborhood that distinguishes it from another neighborhood. The key qualities or features of single-family residential neighborhoods include the appearance of the homes (e.g., architectural style and elements), the collective appearance of the homes (e.g., pattern, scale, size) and the appearance of natural features (e.g., natural vegetation, landforms).



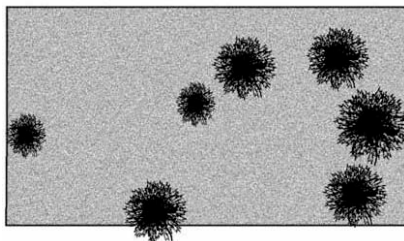
**SECTION 6565.20(C). SITE PLANNING AND STRUCTURE PLACEMENT.** One of the key elements that define the visual character of an individual house and the neighborhood is how it is located or placed on its site. A single building out of context with its site or neighboring houses can appear disruptive.

1. Integrate Structures with the Natural Setting

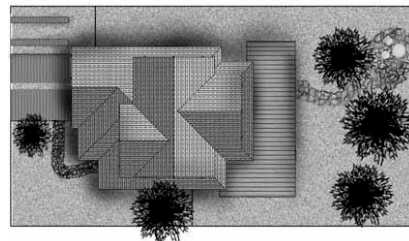
New houses, additions and accessory structures should be located, designed and constructed to retain and blend with the natural vegetation and natural landforms of the site, and should be complementary to adjacent neighborhood structures.

a. Trees and Vegetation

**Discussion:** When siting a new home or an addition on a parcel, the goal should be to disturb as little vegetation as possible, with priority placed on retaining healthy, native species and those trees that are heritage or significant trees by definition. Fire prevention measures should also be considered. Refer to County fire hazard prevention requirements.



*Undeveloped site*



*Sensitive site development to retain vegetation and other natural features*

**Standards:** To the extent feasible, site new buildings, additions, and associated infrastructure (wells, septic systems, water tanks, paved areas) on a parcel in locations that:

- (1) Minimize tree and vegetation removal to the extent necessary for the construction of the structures.
- (2) Retain heritage and significant trees, with priority placed on retaining healthy, native species. Blend new structures and landscaping with the remaining natural vegetative cover of the site.
- (3) Tree removal and replacement shall be in accordance with Section 6565.21, Standards for the Protection of Trees and Vegetation. Replacement trees and new trees shall be from the list specifying recommended/discouraged species for the Midcoast, adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

b. Grading

**Discussion:** As defined in the County Grading Ordinance, grading is any excavating, filling, or placement of earth materials or a combination of these activities. Excavation (or cutting) is the mechanical removal of earth material, while filling is the deposit of earth or waste material placed by artificial means. The following design standards are intended to regulate the aesthetic aspects of grading; the technical aspects of grading are regulated by the County Grading Ordinance. In the interest of retaining as much of the natural character of the site as possible, an effort should be made to place structures so that grading activity and the area disturbed by grading is limited; however, on sloping sites and where a basement is proposed, it is recognized that a certain amount of excavation may be necessary so that the end result is a house that blends into the site.

**Do This**



*Structure is designed to blend with the natural contours and features of the site. Only grading necessary for construction was used.*

**Not This**



*Structure is not suited to the terrain. Extensive grading was used to create building pad, and to terrace site beyond the immediate vicinity of the structure.*

**Standards:** To the extent feasible, site new buildings, additions, and associated infrastructure (wells, septic systems, water tanks, paved areas) on a parcel in locations that:

- (1) Minimize filling or placement of earth materials. Avoid raising the building pad for a new home or an addition above the existing grade,

unless required for technical or engineering reasons by a registered civil engineer, licensed architect or geotechnical consultant.

- (2) Allow limited excavation when needed to blend the house into the site.
- (3) Limit grading to the footprint of the structure and its immediate vicinity, unless otherwise required for technical or engineering reasons by a registered civil engineer, licensed architect or geotechnical consultant.
- (4) Result in a finished grade beyond the structure and its immediate vicinity that is similar to the existing grade, unless otherwise required for technical or engineering reasons by a registered civil engineer, licensed architect or geotechnical consultant. Existing grade means: (a) natural grade, or (b) grade at time of house construction/enlargement, providing that prior grading on the site was approved by the County or occurred before the County regulated grading activities.
- (5) Keep the height of freestanding retaining walls to a minimum. Retaining walls shall be surfaced, painted, landscaped or otherwise treated to blend with their surroundings.

c. Streams and Other Drainage Features

**Discussion:** The Midcoast communities are crossed by a number of streams. In addition, many less developed drainage features including swales, gullies and ditches cross the area. If there is a stream or other drainage feature on or adjacent to your property, you should consult the Local Coastal Program Sensitive Habitats Component for policies related to sensitive habitats, riparian corridors and wetlands to determine if these policies apply.

All streams and natural drainage features should be avoided when deciding where structures should be placed to protect them from erosion, siltation and polluted runoff. Man-made drainage features may be covered or relocated in order to conform with the design standards of this section, provided that: (1) sensitive habitats are not disturbed and (2) alterations are done pursuant to a drainage plan prepared by a registered civil engineer and reviewed and approved by the Planning and Building Division.

Builders should also take advantage of the opportunity to improve local storm drainage systems and protect streams and drainage features from erosion, siltation, and polluted runoff by improving water retention and movement on site, prohibiting runoff onto neighboring properties, and preventing overloading of local stormwater systems. Please refer to Section 6565.20(E) for guidelines regarding landscaping and paved areas that should be used to enhance project appearance and stormwater pollution

control. Please also refer to the County's Stormwater Pollution Prevention program publications, available at the Planning Counter, for further information and innovative ideas on this topic.

**Do This**



*Structure is set back to avoid alteration of natural drainage feature*

**Not This**



*Structure is too close to natural drainage feature*

**Standards:**

- (1) Avoid locating structures on or near streams and natural drainage features.
- (2) Permit alteration of man-made drainage features when necessary, providing that (a) LCP Sensitive Habitats Component policies are met, where applicable, and (b) alterations are done pursuant to a drainage plan prepared by a registered civil engineer and reviewed and approved by the Planning and Building Division.
- (3) Do not alter the site in a way that would cause significant drainage problems, erosion or flooding.
- (4) Locate structures outside of flood zones, drainage channels and other areas subject to inundation.

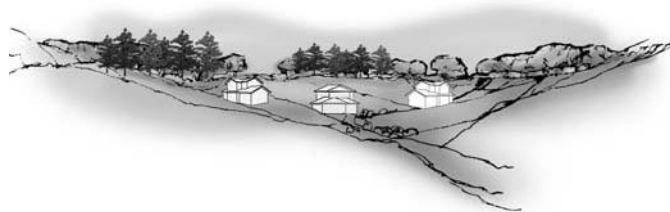
d. Ridgelines, Skylines and View Corridors

**Discussion:** The varied terrain of the Midcoast offers scenic views of both the ocean and the hills that should be protected. The LCP Visual Resources Component contains policies protecting ridgelines and skylines. As defined by LCP Policy 8.7, ridgelines are the tops of hills or hillocks normally viewed against a background of other hills. A skyline is the line where sky and land masses meet. The Cabrillo Highway Scenic Corridor offers perhaps the most significant public views in the Midcoast; however, other public views should be considered as well. A public view is a range of vision from a public road or other public facility. It is important to note that the LCP may require the maximum building height for structures located on a ridgeline or skyline to be lower than the maximum allowed by the Zoning Regulations.

### Existing

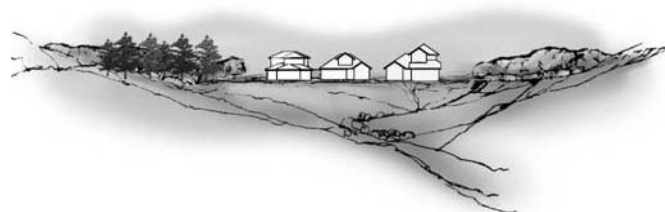


### Do This



*Structures blend with existing landforms and vegetation.*

### Not This



*Ridgeline silhouette has been destroyed through the removal of vegetative masses and natural landforms.*

### Standards:

- (1) Please refer to LCP Policy 8.7.
- (2) If development is proposed on a ridgeline because there is no other developable building site on the parcel, ensure construction blends with the existing silhouette by maintaining natural vegetative masses and landforms and does not extend above the height of the forest or tree canopy.

#### e. Relationship to Open Spaces

**Discussion:** In some areas of the Midcoast, the neighborhood's proximity to designated open space is one of the factors which defines the neighborhood character, and special attention should be paid to those transition or buffer areas where residential and open space land uses meet.

**Standards:** Consider how a new or remodeled home will appear as viewed from adjacent designated open space areas; the structure placement and

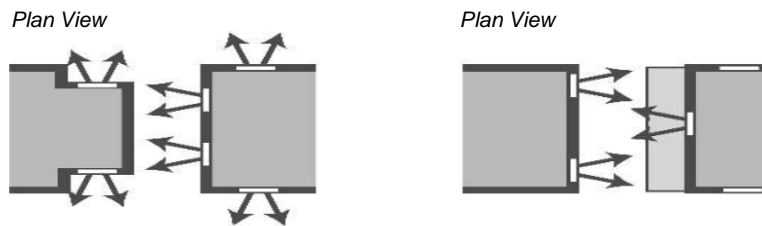
design shall harmonize with the natural setting with regard to massing and materials.

## 2. Complement Other Structures in the Neighborhood

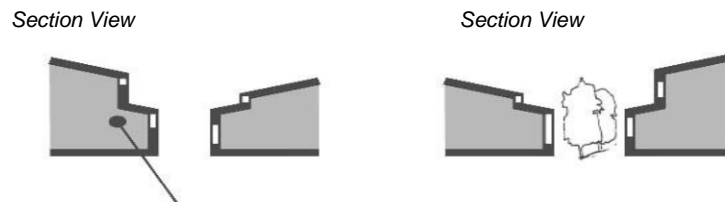
Most home building in the Midcoast takes place on “infill” lots - vacant parcels next to developed lots with existing homes. As such, careful attention must be paid to the placement, orientation and design of new homes and additions to ensure that they are complementary to other homes in the neighborhood.

### a. Privacy

**Discussion:** Privacy is one of the keys to a property owner’s enjoyment of their property and their quality of life. The placement of a new home or an addition, and/or the location of windows on a new home or an addition, can have a significant impact on privacy, both for the neighbors and for the occupants of the new home. Decks and balconies can provide outdoor living space and add architectural interest to a home. However, they must be carefully designed to avoid substantially affecting neighbors’ privacy. It is particularly important to consider the impact the placement of a new structure and/or windows may have on privacy when setbacks are the minimum allowed by the Zoning Regulations. This may involve modifying a proposed floor plan or proposing other architectural solutions or landscaping to enhance privacy. To reduce the potential for future privacy conflicts, a project designer should also consider the probable location and intensity of development that is likely to occur on parcels in the vicinity of the proposed project.



*Windows are arranged and offset from neighbors to maximize privacy.*



*High windows and clerestory windows allow light inside with minimal privacy impacts.*

*Landscaping or obscure glass can also reduce privacy impacts.*

*Note: When using landscaping to create privacy also consider the potential view impacts that could occur from mature trees.*

**Standards:** To the extent feasible, site and design new buildings, additions, decks, balconies and associated infrastructure to respect the privacy of neighboring houses by:

- (1) Locating, orienting and designing windows, entrances, decks and balconies to minimize and mitigate direct views into neighboring houses and outdoor decks/patios.
- (2) Locating, orienting and designing high activity areas (kitchen, family room, patio) so that they are not adjacent to low-activity areas (bedrooms) on adjacent properties.
- (3) Proposing rooftop decks only when they are: (a) designed to avoid direct views into neighboring houses and outdoor decks/patios; (b) accessed by interior means and (c) integrated into the roof design.
- (4) Using appropriate landscaping and other architectural solutions such as clerestory windows or obscure glass.

b. Views

**Discussion:** Homes in the Midcoast enjoy a variety of views. Some are views of the ocean, others are of the hills, and others are vistas through the neighborhood. Views add value and enjoyment to a property; however, private views are not protected by existing regulations. Due to the configuration and size of some parcels and their topography, there may be no way to build without affecting someone else's view. However, when designing a new home or an addition, an effort should be made to minimize the effect on views from neighboring houses. Possible methods to minimize view blockage include: locating living space where it would have less view impact, increasing the setback of second stories, lowering roof plate heights, and choosing roof forms that minimize mass. To reduce the potential for future view conflicts, a project designer is encouraged to also consider the probable location and intensity of development that is likely to occur on parcels in the vicinity of the proposed project.

**Do this**



*A second story stepped back from the front and sides minimizes view blockage from neighboring homes.*

**Not This**



*A more massive second-story creates greater view blockage.*

**Standard:** When designing a new home or an addition, an effort should be made to minimize the effect on views from neighboring houses.

**SECTION 6565.20(D). ELEMENTS OF DESIGN.** One of the greatest challenges of residential construction in the Midcoast is the building of a contemporary home that is compatible with surrounding, older homes of varying styles built during previous eras when the construction of smaller homes, and sometimes homes of lower quality, was more typical. The architectural elements of a house can affect its apparent mass, architectural character, and the visual quality of the neighborhood. Every effort should be made, by following these guidelines, to place new structures so that they blend with those existing nearby and to achieve a higher quality of design and construction. Elements of design explored further in this section include: (1) building mass, shape, and scale; (2) architectural styles and facades; (3) roof design; and (4) exterior materials and colors.

1. Building Mass, Shape and Scale

The apparent mass of a building is determined by the actual size of the building, and whether or not the building shapes and facades are simple or broken into more varied forms. With regard to actual size, new homes and additions must meet the building floor area standard set by the Zoning Regulations. However, even a home that complies with this standard may appear massive or bulky, if the building shape and/or facade is too simple. Simple forms often appear more massive and larger, while houses with more variety in their forms appear less massive and often more interesting. Likewise, long, blank walls appear more massive than walls with spaces and corners that create shadows and architectural interest. Finally, a house should appear to be proportional, or in “scale,” with other buildings in the neighborhood. The following standards encourage building designs that reduce apparent mass and increase compatibility with the neighborhood.



a. Relationship to Existing Topography

**Discussion:** Many existing lots in the Midcoast are on steep slopes, and in many cases, the topography of a site is its key natural characteristic. New homes and major additions should be designed so that the structure will follow the existing contours of the land. A building's appearance of bulk can be reduced by shaping the building forms so that they harmonize rather than contrast with the existing topography.

While projects proposing the use of either manufactured homes or stock building plans are not prohibited, such projects may encounter difficulty in conforming to the existing topography and to other design standards. Applicants for such projects should be prepared to the standards of this section.

**Do this**



*Building forms step down with the existing grade and there is no unused under-floor space.*

**Not This**



*Building forms do not step down with the existing grade.*

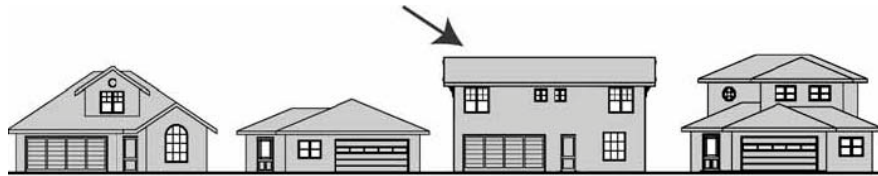
**Standards:** To the extent feasible, structures shall:

- (1) Conform to the existing topography of the site by requiring the portion of the house above the existing grade to step up or down the hillside in the same direction as the existing grade.
- (2) On downslope lots, minimize unused, enclosed space between the lowest floor and the grade below. When planning additions, consider converting existing under floor space to living area, rather than adding an additional story.
- (3) Minimize building extensions out over a slope supported on high stilts.

b. Neighborhood Scale

**Discussion:** "Scale" refers to a relative level or degree, or a proportion or relationship between two things. Neighborhood scale refers to the appearance of a home in relation to other homes in the neighborhood; is it properly

related in size, height or other characteristics (shape, level of detail or articulation, etc.) to other homes in the neighborhood? Or is it out of proportion to other homes? As mentioned previously, whether or not a house appears proportional to adjacent homes is determined by the size and height of the house and whether or not the building shapes and facades are simple or broken into more varied forms. For example, large homes generally look less massive if they have more varied, rather than simple building forms. As such, even homes of different sizes can be in scale with one another if they share other architectural characteristics including building shape, simplicity or complexity of building form, and architectural styles and details. Where adjacent homes are not built to conform to these design standards (e.g., they have little articulation and appear out of proportion, boxy or massive), project designers are encouraged to avoid repeating such mistakes in an effort to be in scale with the neighborhood.



*This house appears out of scale because its form is too simple.*



*The revised design became compatible with its neighbors by stepping back the second story and providing variation in the roof and building forms.*

### **Standards:**

- (1) New and enlarged homes should respect the scale of the neighborhood through building dimensions, shape and form, façade articulation, or architectural details that appear proportional and complementary to other homes in the neighborhood.
- (2) On relatively level lots, avoid designs that incorporate more than two useable floors, excluding basements, within the maximum height limit, since this contributes to a massive or boxy appearance for the home and makes it more difficult to be in scale with surrounding one and two story homes. Multiple stories are allowed on sloping lots where it is necessary to ensure that the home steps up or down with the slope.

c. Second Stories

Most homes built today are two-story homes, and a common way to increase the size of existing homes is to add a second story. This presents a challenge, when the parcel being built on is surrounded primarily by one-story homes, or where a new two-story home or second-story addition has the potential to impact the privacy and views of existing homes. The following sections describe how two-story homes and second-story additions can be designed to be compatible with, and have minimal impact on, existing homes.

(1) Second-Story Location

**Discussion:** Since a second-story over a portion of a house will visually emphasize that area of the home, placing the second-story over just one portion of the home can make it appear unbalanced. Placing the second story over the entire first story can make the home appear boxy. Locating the second story toward the center of the first story and away from property lines results in a more balanced, less boxy appearance and increases light into neighboring properties.



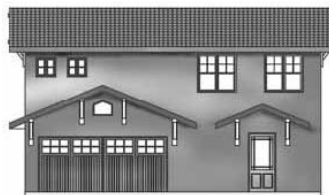
*These second stories held toward the center of the property allow greater sunlight into neighboring properties and help protect views and privacy.*

**Do This**



*This second story addition centered over the lower floor away from property lines appears less boxy.*

**Not This**



*This second story appears more boxy.*

**Not This**



*This second story located only over the garage appears out of balance.*

**Standards:**

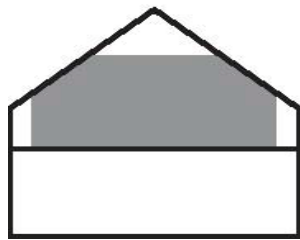
- (a) Locate the primary portion of the second stories toward the center of the first story and away from property lines whenever feasible.
- (b) Avoid locating second stories only over the garage.

- (c) One story designs are strongly encouraged in areas where one-story homes are predominant. If a two-story design is chosen, minimize the size of the second story.
- (d) Where new homes or additions are to be located between one and two-story homes, consider split-level designs with the two-story portion of the home oriented toward other two-story homes.
- (e) Avoid designs where large areas or lengths of upper-story walls overhang or cantilever out over lower-story walls.

(2) Lowering the Eave Line

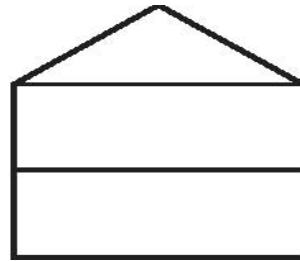
**Discussion:** One way to make a two-story home more compatible with its single-story neighbors is to lower the eave line of the second-story roof. Lowering the eave line also ties the two stories of a house together. Setting second-stories back into the area of rooflines is often a solution for meeting Daylight Plane requirements, and it generally will lower the apparent height of the home. Lowering the eave line of the second-story roof can also reduce the apparent building mass, which may result in the scale of the building being more compatible with its neighborhood.

**Do This**



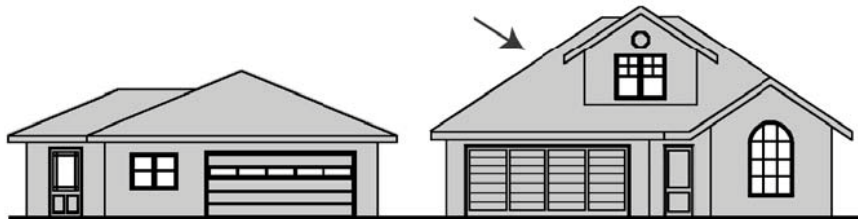
*Second floor rooms in attic space allow roofline to be lowered with minimal reduction in floor area.*

**Not This**



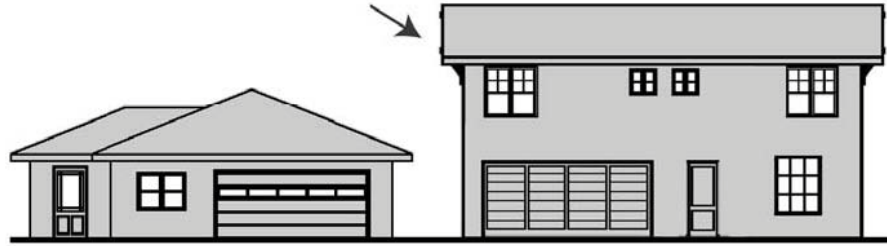
*Full height second story results in tall walls and a more massive appearance to the home.*

**Do This**



*Second floor stepped back from property line and held within the roofline of the main portion of the home.*

**Not This**



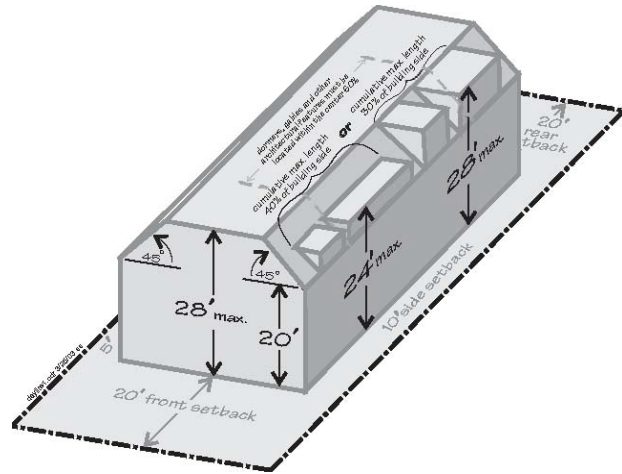
Avoid creating tall two-story exterior walls that are less compatible with single-story neighbors.

**Standard:** Consider bringing some portions of the roof down to the gutter or eave line of the first-story roof to reduce the apparent mass of the building.

d. Daylight Plane/Facade Articulation

**Discussion:** The Daylight Plane/Facade Articulation requirements contained in the County Zoning Regulations are included below as a starting point for designing a two-story home or a second story addition. For more detail regarding facade articulation, please refer to Section 2, Architectural Styles and Facades.

**Standards:** New residential development shall conform to either the daylight plane or facade articulation options described in this section, as determined by the project applicant.



- (1) Daylight Plane Option - The daylight plane shall be established on two opposite house sides, i.e., either from the front and rear setback lines, or from the side setback lines, as determined by the project applicant and approved by the Design Review Committee.

The daylight plane shall be measured from the setback line at existing grade, upward a vertical distance of 20 feet, and then inward at an angle of 45 degrees until the maximum building height is reached.

Cornices, canopies, eaves, roof overhangs, chimneys, fire escapes, stairways; landing places; uncovered porches, and similar architectural features may extend into the daylight plane at the front, side, or rear yard, to the extent allowed by Zoning Regulations Section 6406.

Chimneys, pipes, mechanical equipment, antennae, and similar equipment may extend into the daylight plane up to a maximum of 36 feet as required for safety or efficient operation.

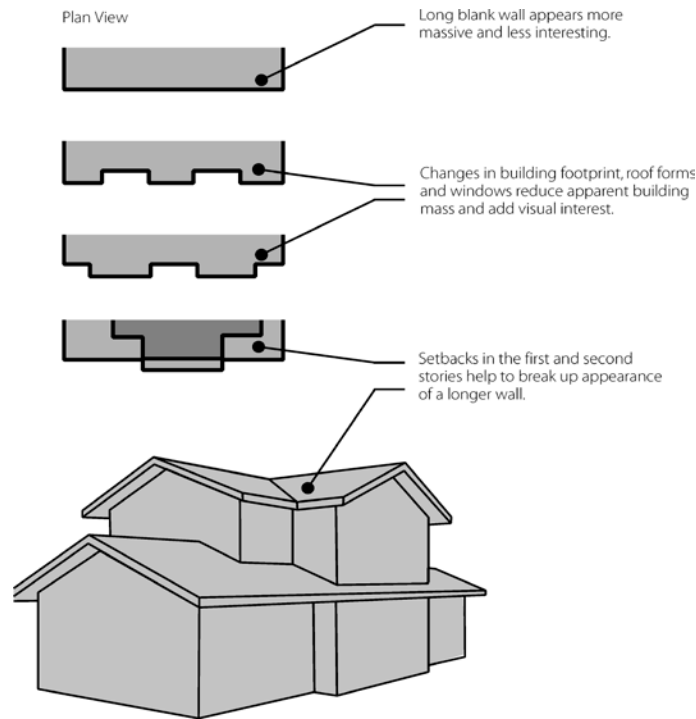
Dormers, gables and other architectural features located in the center 60% of the house may extend into the angled portion of the daylight plane, subject to Design Review Committee approval, provided that:

- (a) The combined length on any building side does not exceed 40% of the length of that building side, and the height of such features does not exceed 24 feet.
  - (b) The combined length on any building side does not exceed 30% of the length of that building side, and the height of such features does not exceed 28 feet.
- (2) Facade Articulation Option - Facade articulation shall be provided on all building sides, and is subject to approval by the Design Review Committee. Facade articulation is intended to break up the appearance of shear walls through the placement of projecting or recessing architectural details, including decks, bays, windows, balconies, porches, overhangs, and cantilevered features.

In order to approve proposed facade articulation, the Design Review Committee must find that: (a) all building facades are well articulated and proportioned, and (b) each building wall is broken up so as not to appear shear, blank, looming or massive to neighboring properties.

e. Wall Articulation

**Discussion:** Building wall gaps that articulate the walls of the house create shadows and contribute to the architectural character of the home. These changes to the form of a building can have a great affect on the apparent building mass. Longer flat walls generally appear more massive and less interesting. Adding steps and breaks to long or tall walls will reduce apparent mass and add visual interest. Likewise, changes in building materials or colors and appropriate architectural details can help break up long or tall walls and keep a house from appearing massive or boxy.



**Standards:** These standards apply in addition to either the Daylight Plane or Façade Articulation Options in the preceding section:

- (1) Require at least one step or off-set extending to grade on the long dimension of the house.
- (2) Projecting or recessing architectural details (decks, bays, windows, balconies) and changes in building materials or colors are also encouraged to visually break up building walls.

## 2. Architectural Styles and Features

Many architectural features can affect whether or not a house appears to be compatible with its neighborhood, including building bulk and height, which are discussed in the previous sections. Other important elements in defining compatibility include architectural style and architectural details, such as window, door, and garage patterns and types.

### a. Architectural Style

**Discussion:** When designing a new home or an addition, architectural style should be evaluated by considering what building elements define the architectural style of the house (e.g., building shape, roof design, exterior materials, window size and type, etc.), what defining elements are common to other houses in the neighborhood, and what elements characterize the natural setting (e.g., vegetation, landforms, etc.).

There are many different architectural styles present throughout the Midcoast communities. In some neighborhoods, the architectural style is more defined than in others and on some houses it is more apparent than on others. Designing a home and choosing a style that is complementary to adjacent homes can be challenging when the homes are of many different styles, have no defined architectural style or do not conform to these Design Standards (e.g., they have architectural details that are inconsistent, out of proportion, or inappropriate for the style). In that case, a project designer should strive for a style that at least is not jarring or disruptive in appearance when compared to adjacent homes, and foster compatibility through other elements of design such as similar building shapes, exterior materials or colors, window/door styles, and roof massing and design. While no particular architectural style is prohibited, a style that reflects the Midcoast's coastal, semi-rural, diverse, small town character (e.g., coastal craftsman) will more readily be found to be complementary to the neighborhood. Finally, consideration should also be given to the natural setting, and a complementary style chosen depending on whether the site is, for example, steeply sloped, heavily wooded, or more open in character.

**Standards:**

- (1) Use an architectural style and design elements that complement the predominant style of nearby homes, only when such homes conform with the design standards. Likewise, avoid the architectural styles and design elements of nearby homes when such homes do not conform with the design standards. Where no predominant architectural style can be defined, encourage compatibility through the use of similar building shapes, exterior materials or colors or architectural features such as roofs, windows/doors, etc.
- (2) Architectural styles that complement the coastal, semi-rural, diverse small town character of the area, such as coastal craftsman are encouraged. Contemporary and uncommon styles can be compatible if building shapes and materials are carefully chosen to complement other homes in the neighborhood.
- (3) Architectural styles that complement the natural setting are encouraged.

b. Openings

**Discussion:** Windows and doors are often the most visually distinctive features on a house. They are a link between private and public space and can provide a sense of security for both. They also can establish an architectural rhythm and affect the apparent mass of the house. There may be a proportion to the openings - vertical or horizontal - that is common to



the house or the neighborhood. Dominant window/door materials or style - such as an arched shape or divided windows - should also be considered.

**Do This**



*Style and materials of new second-story windows match and appear compatible with the original first -story of the house.*

**Not This**



*These new second-story windows are of different shape and proportions and material (metal vs. original wood) than the original first-story and do not appear compatible.*

**Standards:**

- (1) Select windows and doors that are compatible with the dominant types on the house and in the neighborhood; when assessing compatibility consider the size and proportions of the openings, materials, and style or detailing.
- (2) When designing and placing windows and doors, consider their location, size and proportions and how they may relate to adjacent buildings; walls broken by proportioned patterns of windows are encouraged where neighbor's privacy can be protected.

c. Entries

**Discussion:** Front walkways, front doors and windows, and front porches that face the street make for safer neighborhoods by keeping “eyes on the street” and create a human-scaled appearance to a building. The design and prominence of entries in the neighborhood should also be considered.

**Do This**



*Scale of entry is compatible with other features of the house.*

**Not This**



*Entry is out of scale and has a commercial appearance.*

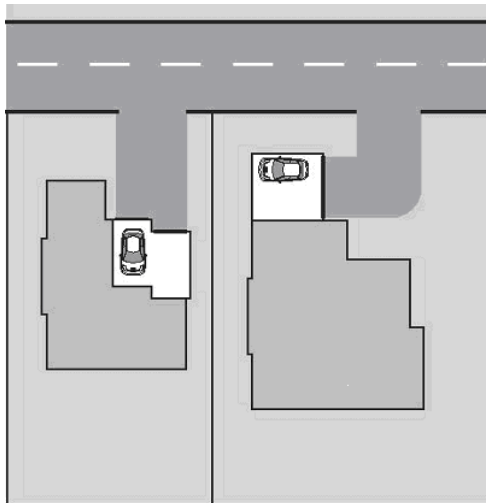
**Standards:**

- (1) Front Doors - Design front entries on a scale compatible with the other features of the house to maintain a residential rather than institutional or commercial appearance.
- (2) Front Porches - Where front porches are a part of the neighborhood pattern, a new house or new entry should consider including this feature similar in size and proportion to the other homes in the neighborhood.

d. Garages

**Discussion:** The location, size, position and appearance of a garage can have a great effect on the appearance of a home and should be designed with care. While in most cases it is preferable to emphasize the front entrance of a home, rather than the garage, a prominent garage may be unavoidable, particularly on steeply sloping lots. In some neighborhoods, there may be an established pattern in the size, position or appearance of garages. Examples of patterns that meet the design standards are garages with single rather than double garage doors, or garages facing away from or set back from the street. If there is no established pattern, greater flexibility in design and appearance of garages should be considered.

**Plan View**



*Garages appear less prominent when facing away from or set back from the street.*



*When a prominent garage is unavoidable, choose decorative garage doors that are consistent with the home's architectural style.*

**Standards:**

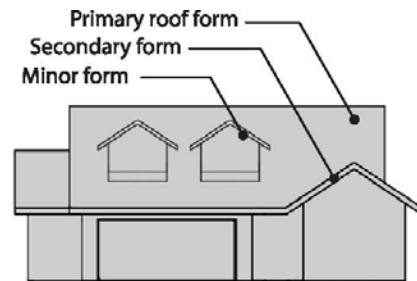
- (1) Avoid making the garage the dominant feature as seen from the street. Where it is unavoidable, for example on steeply sloping lots, pay special attention to garage appearance by choosing decorative doors (or two single rather than one large double door) that are consistent with the style of the house, and by articulation of the front garage facade.
- (2) Respect the existing pattern in the size, position or appearance of the garages in the neighborhood, providing that pattern conforms with the design standards.

3. Roof Design

Roof shape and type can be the most obvious elements in defining the appearance of a house and a neighborhood. When designing a new home or an addition, it is important to consider the massing of roof forms and neighborhood roof patterns and compatibility.

a. Massing and Design of Roof Forms

**Discussion:** The mass of a roof and how it is articulated into different shapes contributes to the character of a house. Most houses with sloped roofs, and many with flat roofs, have a primary roof form and smaller secondary and minor forms that contribute to the overall style of the house. Evaluate the massing of the roof form and determine how it will benefit the appearance of the house and be compatible with the neighborhood.



**Standards:**

- (1) When planning a new home or second story addition, begin with a primary roof form. Consider additions to the primary roof such as secondary roof forms and dormers that may serve to reduce the home's apparent mass and scale, provide visual interest and have an appropriate number of roof forms. Additional roof forms shall be architecturally compatible with the primary roof form's slope and material.
- (2) Pitched roofs are encouraged; flat roof designs may be acceptable if the height does not exceed 22 feet from existing grade for the flat roof

portion, the flat roof portion does not exceed 20% of the total roof area, and it is compatible with neighboring homes.

- (3) Non-reflective roof materials and colors are encouraged. Solar panels are acceptable in appropriate locations where they will blend with the rest of the roof.

b. Design Compatibility

**Discussion:** Some neighborhoods have roof patterns that are distinctive and repeatable from home to home. Other neighborhoods have greater variety or less distinctive roof forms, and greater deviations from neighboring roof forms could appear acceptable. Roof patterns are created through the roof slope, materials and massing of roofs. Evaluate the pattern of roofs in the neighborhood.



*These two-story houses all display roof forms compatible with their architectural style and compatible with neighboring roof forms.*

**Standard:** If there is an established architectural style of roofs in a neighborhood, roof shape and types should be compatible with roofs in the neighborhood and with the existing home. Express this compatibility through roof forms, slope, materials and massing. Applicants may also consider alternate roof forms that improve the architectural quality of the house where the design enhances the character of the neighborhood.

4. Exterior Materials and Colors

**Discussion:** Exterior materials and colors should complement the style of the house and that of the neighborhood, and blend with surrounding natural features when viewed from a distance. These standards are not intended to interfere with individual initiative, but rather to encourage compatibility within neighborhoods and with the natural setting. When selecting materials and colors, consider the type and character of materials and colors, number of different materials and colors, the quality of materials, and how ornamentation is applied. While no building material or color is prohibited as a matter of policy, as with other design elements, the neighborhood context provides direction for the choice of materials and colors. Use of complementary materials and colors will help a house appear compatible with its neighbors and blend with its natural setting including surrounding vegetation and landforms. Darker rather than lighter exterior colors may be used to reduce the apparent mass of a home.



*The exterior materials and appropriate ornamentation of these houses complement the natural setting.*

## **Standards:**

### a. Compatibility

- (1) Use non-reflective exterior materials and colors that complement and improve the neighborhood and are compatible with the architecture of the house.
- (2) Consider the exterior materials and colors used on neighboring houses; strive for complementary materials and colors on new and remodeled homes; avoid the use of materials and colors that are too similar, repetitive, or clashing.
- (3) Use warm, muted colors and natural appearing materials on the house that blend with the surrounding natural features when viewed from a distance. While earth-tone colors are encouraged, along with darker colors used to reduce apparent mass, other colors may be appropriate based on the architecture, neighborhood and surrounding natural features.

- b. Quality - Use exterior materials and colors that are of a similar or better quality of those used in the neighborhood and are consistent with the architecture of the house; avoid T-111 siding unless necessary for additions to match the existing house.

### c. Quantity

- (1) Use a number of exterior materials and colors that is consistent with the neighborhood and the architectural style of the house.
- (2) Encourage the use of three or more colors on larger houses to reduce the appearance of bulk by emphasizing architectural features and trim.
- (3) Discourage the use of a single exterior material or color in a large unbroken surface.

- d. Ornamentation - Use ornamentation or architectural details to reduce the appearance of bulk on larger homes. Apply ornamentation in a manner consistent with the style and size of the house; avoid using ornamentation in a manner that will make the house appear too plain or overly decorated.

**SECTION 6565.20(E). ADDITIONAL SITE PLANNING AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS.**



*Vary the design of contiguous projects to avoid a repetitive appearance.*



*Avoid creating mirror-image or duplicate homes on adjoining parcels.*

**Standards:**

1. Multiple contiguous or nearby projects developed concurrently by one owner, applicant, developer, or builder shall:
  - a. Avoid similar or the same, but reversed, building elevations and/or floor plans located directly across the street from each other or on adjacent parcels.
  - b. Vary in structure placement enough to avoid a “tract home” appearance.
  - c. Vary in design style, exterior detail, rooflines, finish materials, and landscaping enough to avoid overly repetitive appearance.
2. To the extent feasible, structures should be located and designed to minimize the blockage of sunlight on neighboring buildings (see further discussion under “Second Stories”). Siting and design for energy conservation/generation purposes is encouraged.

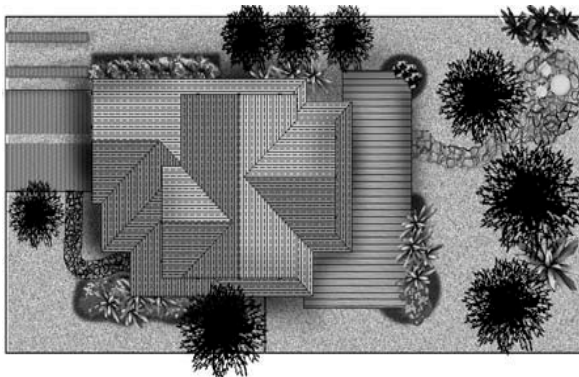
**SECTION 6565.20(F). LANDSCAPING, PAVED AREAS, FENCES, LIGHTING AND NOISE.**

While the appearance of new residential structures is of primary importance, ancillary development on a residential site can also have a significant visual impact, and should be designed carefully to complement a new or remodeled home and to prevent adverse impacts to neighboring properties. The following section provides guidance and standards for landscaping, paved areas, fencing, lighting and noise.

1. Landscaping

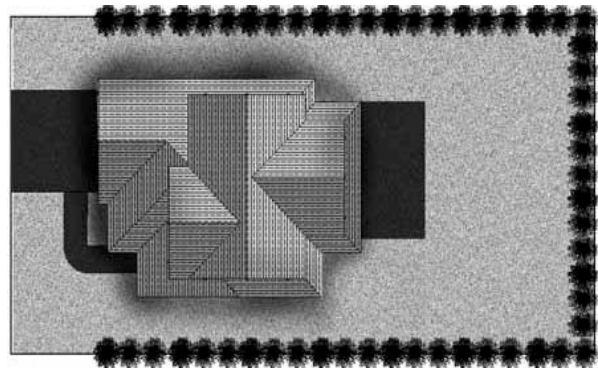
**Discussion:** Landscaping should complement and enhance the design of the home, while harmonizing with the overall landscape character of the neighborhood. New landscaping should also harmonize with existing trees and vegetation remaining on site. Landscaping should not be used in place of other more permanent architectural solutions, but should be used to accent or enhance architectural features. When developing a landscape plan, consideration should be given to water availability and the function of the landscaping - to provide shade or screening, or to protect privacy - and location and species should be selected accordingly. For more detailed landscape plan requirements and specifications, please see the County's Minimum Standards for Landscape Plans.

**Do This**



*New landscaping harmonizes with existing trees and natural character of the neighborhood.*

**Not This**



*Landscaping does not present a natural appearance.*

**Standards:**

- a. Require a landscape plan prepared according to the County's Minimum Standards for Landscape Plans.
- b. Finished landscape plans should be compatible with and enhance the design of the home and the trees and vegetation remaining on the site and in the surrounding neighborhood after construction.
- c. Tree removal and replacement shall be in accordance with Section 6565.21, Standards for the Protection of Trees and Vegetation. Replacement trees

and new trees shall be from the list specifying recommended/discouraged species for the Midcoast, adopted by the Board of Supervisors. Native and drought-tolerant species are encouraged.

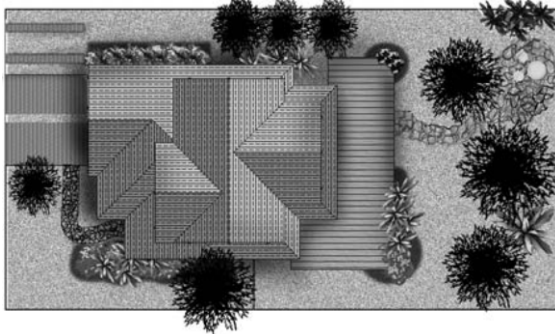
- d. Finished landscape plans shall include provisions for watering plants as needed to ensure initial plant growth. Different watering systems including low cost, low technology systems may be appropriate depending on the plants chosen. Drip irrigation systems are encouraged where appropriate.
- e. Landscaping along retaining walls is encouraged using planted areas along the bottom and top of the walls to reduce their apparent height and blend with their natural surroundings.
- f. All landscaping shall be drought-tolerant, and either native or non-invasive plant species. No plant species listed as problematic and/or invasive by the California Native Plant Society, the California Invasive Plant Council, or as may be identified from time to time by the State of California shall be employed. No plant species listed as “noxious weed” by the State of California or the U.S. Federal Government shall be utilized within the property. The requirement for drought-tolerant landscaping shall not apply to fruit or vegetable gardens.
- g. A smooth transition between development and adjacent open areas should be maintained through the use of landscaping and plant materials which are native or appropriate to the area.
- h. Utilize vegetated swales and bio-retention cells to aid in treatment of stormwater and dry weather runoff, where appropriate.

## 2. Paved Areas

**Discussion:** Environmentally sensitive planning and design of paved or hardscape areas on site will produce a more natural appearance and prevent stormwater pollution by reducing the volume of surface runoff, increasing infiltration, and preventing pollutants from entering the creeks and ocean. Please refer to the County’s Stormwater Pollution Prevention program publications, available at the Planning Counter, for further information and innovative ideas on this topic.

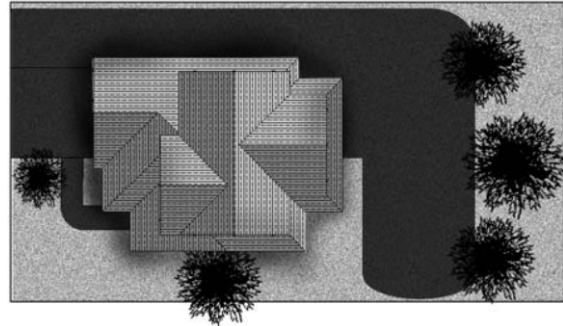


**Do This**



*Amount of hardscape and size of driveways, walkways and parking areas minimized; alternatives to asphalt and concrete used.*

**Not This**



*Directly connected impervious surface covers most of lot.*

**Standards:**

- a. Minimize the hardscape or impervious areas on site in order to maximize permeable surfaces that have a more natural appearance, reduce the volume and improve the quality of runoff into creeks and storm drains.
- b. Maximize the use of surfaces on site that have a more natural appearance than asphalt or concrete, decrease runoff and maximize absorption; alternative surfaces may include wood decks, special perforated paving systems, unmortared brick, stone or tile.
- c. Driveways, walkways and parking areas on site should be as small as possible within allowable standards, and should drain into adjacent onsite landscaped areas, where possible.
- d. Minimize directly connected impervious areas on site by means of landscaping or other permeable surfaces to soften the visual appearance, allow absorption into the soil and reduce runoff.

3. Fencing

**Discussion:** Site fencing should complement and enhance the design of the home, while harmonizing with the overall character of the neighborhood. Fencing should be considered and designed as an integrated part of the project, not left as an afterthought when the project is completed. Fences and walls shall comply with the height limits specified in Section 6412 of the Zoning Regulations.

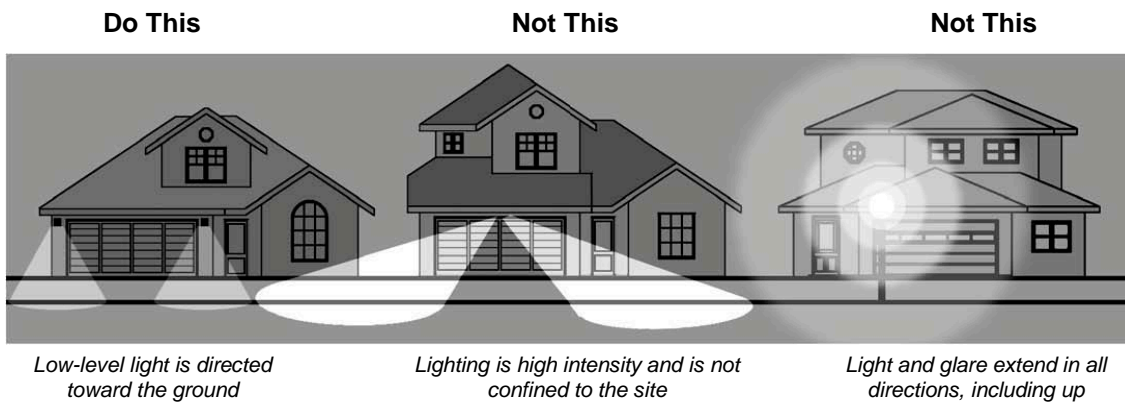


*Fence designs enhance the homes' architectural style.*

**Standard:** The design of fences, walls and similar site elements shall be compatible with the architecture of the main buildings and should blend with the surrounding neighborhood.

#### 4. Lighting

**Discussion:** The location and style of exterior and interior lighting chosen for a single-family home can have a significant impact on the home's design. It can also affect adjacent neighbors, or depending on topography, more distant views from scenic corridors. An appropriate lighting plan will complement the home's design and provide adequate light and security for the subject site. At the same time, the plan should prevent direct light and glare from extending in any direction, including upward, beyond the boundaries of the site. In general, low-level lighting directed toward the ground is preferred.



#### **Standards:**

- a. Choose exterior lighting that is architecturally integrated with the home's design, style, material and colors.

- b. All exterior, landscape and site lighting shall be designed and located so that light and glare are directed away from neighbors and confined to the site. Low-level lighting directed toward the ground is encouraged.
- c. Exterior lighting should be minimized and designed with a specific activity in mind so that outdoor areas will be illuminated no more than is necessary to support the activity designated for that area.
- d. Minimize light and glare as viewed from scenic corridors and other public view corridors.

5. Noise

**Discussion:** Unwanted noise impacting neighboring properties can be avoided through proper placement and design of new homes, residential additions and ancillary equipment. For example, outdoor activity spaces should be located away from neighbor's bedrooms. Ancillary equipment, for example irrigation systems, pool equipment, generators and the like, should be located away from neighbors and be as quiet as possible. Walls, fences, and landscaping can also be used to buffer sound between neighboring properties.

Please note that all land uses shall conform to the County Noise Ordinance, administered by the Environmental Health Division. The Noise Ordinance limits unusually loud, uncommon noise that would disturb the neighborhood peace.

**Standard:** Design new homes, residential additions and ancillary equipment to reduce noise impacts on neighboring properties.

**SECTION 6565.20(G). UTILITIES AND ANCILLARY STRUCTURES.** Utilities and ancillary structures are a necessary, but often unsightly, component of residential construction. Consideration should be given to minimizing the visual impact of such facilities. Property owners and project designers are encouraged to coordinate building, utility and ancillary structure placement at the start of a project, so that all zoning, environmental health and design standards can be met.

**Standards:**

- a. Consistent with General Plan Policy 4.20, install all new service lines underground for the segment extending from the nearest existing distribution point/pole to the new home or addition.
- b. All wells, storage tanks, exterior trash and storage areas, electric and gas meters, fire sprinkler valves, irrigation backflow prevention devices, transformers, and other ancillary structures shall be screened from view in a manner that is compatible with the building and site design. Screening materials shall be substantial and durable.

- c. To the extent feasible, all ancillary structures should be located to the rear or side of the site and/or away from the street.

**SECTION 6565.20(H). SECOND UNITS.** The development of second dwelling units in single-family residential neighborhoods is an efficient and effective way to increase affordable rental housing options. However, it is important that second units be designed and constructed to be compatible with surrounding homes, and so that they do not detract from the single-family character of the area.

**Standards:** The following design standards shall apply in addition to the design standards in this section (6565.20) and the standards for second dwelling units contained in Chapter 22.5 of the County Zoning Regulations:

- (1) Required parking spaces for second dwelling units shall be in a location that can conveniently be used by occupants of the unit and to avoid a “parking lot” appearance.
- (2) Due to the increased density, second units shall be designed to avoid substantially affecting the privacy of neighboring properties. The privacy standards contained in Section 6565.20(C) shall also apply to second units.

**SECTION 6565.21. STANDARDS FOR THE PROTECTION OF TREES AND VEGETATION.** The following standards shall apply in all areas zoned DR. In Emerald Lake Hills, Oak Knoll Manor, Palomar Park and Devonshire, the following standards shall apply to trees 6 inches or more in diameter or 19 inches or more in circumference (measured at 4 1/2 feet above the ground), while in all other areas the following standards shall apply to trees 12 inches or more in diameter or 38 inches or more in circumference (measured at 4 1/2 feet above ground).

- A. Prohibit the removal of a tree unless:
  - 1. There is no alternative building site for a house, driveway, or accessory structure, or
  - 2. Except for any property in the Coastal Zone, tree removal is necessary: (a) to utilize the property in a manner which is of greater public value than any environmental degradation caused by the action, or (b) to allow reasonable economic or other enjoyment of the property, or
  - 3. A tree: (a) is diseased, (b) could adversely affect the general health and safety, (c) could cause substantial damage, (d) is a public nuisance, (e) is in danger of falling, (f) is too closely located to existing or proposed structures, (g) acts as a host for a plant which is parasitic to another species of tree which is in danger of being infested or exterminated by the parasite, or (h) is a substantial fire hazard.

The Planning Director or other reviewing body for the project shall have the authority to request a written report substantiating the removal of any tree in accordance with this subparagraph.

- B. The replacement of lost trees when required shall be in a manner prescribed by the Design Review Committee or Design Review Administrator, as is applicable, but shall not exceed the following specifications:
1. For each loss of a significant indigenous tree, there shall be a replacement with three (3) or more trees of the same species using at least five (5) gallon size stock.
  2. For each loss of a significant exotic tree, there shall be a replacement with three (3) or more trees from a list maintained by the Planning Director. Substitutes for trees listed by the Planning Director may be considered but only when good reason and data are provided which show that the substitute tree can survive and flourish in the regional climatic conditions.
  3. Replacement trees for trees removed shall require a surety deposit for both performance (installation of tree, staking, and providing an irrigation system) and maintenance. Maintenance shall be required for no less than two (2) and no more than five (5) years.
  4. Loss of any particular replacement prior to the termination of the maintenance period shall require the landowner at his/her expense to replace the lost tree or trees. Under such circumstances, the maintenance period will be automatically extended for a period of two (2) additional years.
  5. Release of either the performance or maintenance surety shall only be allowed upon the satisfactory installation or maintenance and upon inspection by the County.
  6. Where a tree or trees have been removed on undeveloped lands and no existing water system is available on the parcel, the replacement tree or trees, if required to be installed, shall be of sufficient size that watering need not be done by automatic means. Under such circumstances, water can be imported by tank or some other suitable method which would ensure tree survival in accordance with subparagraphs (4) and (5), above.
  7. Postponing the planting of replacement trees can be done if approved by the Design Review Administrator.
- C. Plant additional drought-tolerant trees from a list maintained by the Planning Director and shrubs as may be required for screening to minimize and soften the appearance and impact of development on the street, adjacent homes, and the community. Substitutes for trees listed by the Planning Director may be

considered but only when good reason and data are provided which show that the substitute tree can survive and flourish in the regional climatic conditions.

- D. On parcels with no or few trees, plant additional indigenous or other drought-tolerant trees and shrubs as may be required. All trees shall be at least five (5) gallon size stock unless otherwise required by the Design Review Committee or Design Review Administrator, as is applicable.
- E. Protect all existing significant and heritage trees (as defined in Parts Two and Three of Division VIII of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code) from damage during construction activities including grading. Additional protective measures shall be required for landscaping around significant or heritage trees. The following criteria are to be followed unless topography, proximity of proposed structures, or other valid reason determined by the Design Review Committee or Design Review Administrator, as is applicable, are found to restrict construction so much that protecting any particular significant or heritage tree is not practicable and would mandate less restrictive measures. Any exception to the below listed criteria shall be determined in advance by a licensed landscape architect and best management practices in lieu shall be presented to the decision maker for review and approval:
  - 1. Compaction of soils within the dripline of the tree is to be avoided. Only very limited use of heavy equipment within the dripline shall be allowed and should be brought to the attention of the Design Review Administrator prior to such incursion.
  - 2. Grading in the vicinity of any indigenous significant or heritage oak, bay or madrone tree shall be done with detailed plans provided in advance by a licensed landscape architect. Under no circumstances will fill or excavation at the base of any significant or heritage oak, bay or madrone tree exceed four (4) inches from existing grade.
  - 3. Additional protective measures such as fencing shall be required to prevent damage to the trunks and root systems of trees during grading and construction.
  - 4. Trimming of low lying limbs of indigenous trees should be avoided by rerouting construction equipment or by bracing or guying such limbs out of the way of construction equipment. Any such work to shift limbs shall be done under the strict supervision of a licensed landscape architect or arborist.
  - 5. The transplanting of significant sized or heritage trees is not considered practicable and is to be avoided.

6. Existing significant or heritage trees shall be protected from damage by construction equipment and during felling operations while trees are being removed. Any damage to such a tree shall require the immediate attention of a licensed landscape architect or arborist to determine the extent of the damage and to determine if replacement trees will be required in accordance with the provisions of subparagraph B, above, of this section. In order to assist construction crews in protecting existing trees, a licensed landscape architect or arborist will fence off the trees in advance of any construction work in order to meet the intent of this section. Any such required fencing shall be removed when all construction work has been terminated.
7. Existing significant or heritage trees shall be protected from improper landscape management practices. A program shall be developed by a licensed landscape architect or arborist intended to provide the landowner with guidelines for the care, maintenance and protection of any existing significant and heritage trees.

**SECTION 6565.22. DROUGHT.** In the event that a declared drought and a water rationing program is instituted by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors or by the purveyor or other provider of water in a water district, any landscaping required by this Chapter shall be held in abeyance until such time as the water rationing program is terminated and the drought is found to be over. Under such unusual circumstances, the Design Review Committee shall have the applicant enter into an agreement to postpone all landscaping activity for the duration of the declared water emergency and rationing program. Such postponement will terminate when the emergency is declared over and the water rationing program ended at which time the landowner shall install the approved landscape plan.

**SECTION 6565.23. VIOLATIONS.** Any tree cut, removed, trimmed, or otherwise seriously damaged in violation of this Chapter shall be considered a violation of the provisions of either Part Two (Heritage Tree Ordinance) or Three (Significant Tree Ordinance) of Division VIII of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code, whichever is applicable.

(Chapter 28.1, Sections 6565.1 through 6565.9 - Added by Ordinance No. 2378 - July 29, 1976)

(Chapter 28.1, Sections 6565.1 through 6565.9 - Amended by Ordinance No. 3191 - and Sections 6565.10 through 6565.16 - Added by Ordinance No. 3191 - October 24, 1989)

(Section 6565.2 - Amended by Ordinance No. 3983 - August 8, 2000)

(Section 6565.2.1.B - Amended by Ordinance No. 3321 - April 29, 1991)

(Section 6565.4 - Amended by Ordinance No. 3983 - August 8, 2000)

(Sections 6565.6, 6565.9, 6565.15.8 and 6565.16.5 - Amended by Ordinance No. 3228 - May 15, 1990)

(Section 6565.6.2.I - Added by Ordinance No. 3321 - April 29, 1991)  
(Section 6565.6.7 - Added by Ordinance No. 3321 - April 29, 1991)  
(Section 6565.7 - Amended by Ordinance No. 3983 - August 8, 2000)  
(Section 6565.7.1 - Amended by Ordinance No. 3321 - April 29, 1991)  
(Section 6565.11 - Amended by Ordinance No. 4158 - February 25, 2003)  
(Section 6565.15.8 - Deleted by Ordinance No. 3321 - April 29, 1991)  
(Section 6565.16 - Amended and Renumbered to Section 6565.17 by Ordinance No. 3321 - April 29, 1991)  
(Section 6565.16 - Added by Ordinance No. 3321 - April 29, 1991)  
(Sections 6565.17 and 6565.20 - Added by Ordinance No. 3228 - May 15, 1990)  
(Section 6565.17 - Renumbered to Section 6565.19 by Ordinance No. 3321 - April 29, 1991)  
(Section 6565.18 - Added by Ordinance No. 3321 - April 29, 1991)  
(Chapter 28.1 - Amended by Ordinance No. 3499 - June 8, 1993)  
(Chapter 28.1 - Repealed by Ordinance No. 3604 - September 27, 1994)  
(Chapter 28.1 - Added by Ordinance No. 3604 - September 27, 1994)  
(Section 6565.20 - Amended by Ordinance No. 4212 - April 20, 2004)  
(Section 6565.1.D.2 - Amended by Ordinance No. 4500 - May 11, 2010)  
(Section 6565.20 - Amended by Ordinance No. 4500 - May 11, 2010)  
(Section 6565.20 - Renumbered to Section 6565.21 by Ordinance No. 4500 - May 11, 2010)  
(Section 6565.21 - Renumbered to Section 6565.22 by Ordinance No. 4500 - May 11, 2010)  
(Section 6565.22 - Renumbered to Section 6565.23 by Ordinance No. 4500 - May 11, 2010)  
(Chapter 28.1 "Coastal" - Repealed by Ordinance No. 4500 - May 11, 2010)  
(Section 6565.20.C.1.b(2) - Amended by Ordinance No. 4516 - August 10, 2010)  
(Chapter 28.1, Section 6565.1.D.2 and 6565.20-3 as amended by Ordinance Nos. 4212, 4500, and 4516) - California Coastal Commission certified amendment on September 15, 2010, and it became effective on that date.

MAT:fc – MATU0723\_WFR.DOC  
(2/1/11)



## **1982 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES**

By Resolution No. 43219 - April 6, 1982

### **Component 1. Locating and Planning New Development**

<u>Delete</u>	<u>Renumber</u>	<u>Amend</u>	<u>Add</u>
1.5(c)		1.15(d)	1.8(b)(c)

### **Component 2. Public Works**

2.53	2.13 to 2.14	2.16	2.13
	2.14 to 2.15	2.19(a)	2.19(b)(c)(d)
	2.15 to 2.16	2.20	(e)(f)(g)
	2.16 to 2.17	2.21(a)	
	2.17 to 2.18	2.28	
	2.18 to 2.19	2.29	
	2.19 to 2.20	2.32(a)	
	2.20 to 2.21	2.33	
	2.21 to 2.22	2.35(b)	
	2.22 to 2.23	2.41	
	2.23 to 2.24	2.44(d)	
	2.24 to 2.25	2.59(c)	
	2.25 to 2.26		
	2.26 to 2.27		
	2.27 to 2.28		
	2.28 to 2.29		
	2.29 to 2.30		
	2.30 to 2.31		
	2.31 to 2.32		
	2.31A to 2.33		
	2.32 to 3.34		
	2.33 to 2.35		
	2.34 to 2.36		
	2.35 to 2.37		
	2.36 to 2.38		
	2.37 to 2.39		
	2.38 to 2.40		
	2.39 to 2.41		
	2.40 to 2.42		
	2.41 to 2.43		
	2.42 to 2.44		
	2.43 to 2.45		

**Component 2. Public Works** (continued)

<u>Delete</u>	<u>Renumber</u>	<u>Amend</u>	<u>Add</u>
	2.44 to 2.46		
	2.45 to 2.47		
	2.46 to 2.48		
	2.47 to 2.49		
	2.48 to 2.50		
	2.49 to 2.51		
	2.50 to 2.52		
	2.51 to 2.53		
	2.52 to 2.54		
	2.54 to 2.55		
	2.55 to 2.56		
	2.56 to 2.57		
	2.57 to 2.58		
	2.58 to 2.59		
	2.59 to 2.60		
	2.60 to 2.61		
	2.61 to 2.62		
	2.62 to 2.63		

**Component 3. Housing**

3.13(a)(b)	3.14 to 3.16	3.17	3.13
3.18 (1980 LCP)	3.15 to 3.17	3.18(b)	3.14
3.19(e)(f)	3.16 to 3.18	3.19(a)(b)(d)	3.15
3.20 (1980 LCP)	3.17 to 3.19	3.23	3.20
3.21 (1980 LCP)	3.22 to 3.24	3.24	3.21
	3.23 to 3.26	3.26	3.22
	3.19 to 3.23	3.27(a)(b)	3.25
	3.24 to 3.27	3.29	3.28
	3.28 to 3.32		3.34(c)
	3.25 to 3.29		
	3.26 to 3.30		
	3.27 to 3.31		
	3.29 to 3.33		
	3.30 to 3.34		

**Component 4. Energy**

4.3(a)  
4.37

**Component 5. Agriculture**

<u>Delete</u>	<u>Renumber</u>	<u>Amend</u>	<u>Add</u>
		5.2	5.1(4)(5)
		5.3	
		5.4	
		5.5	
		5.6	
		5.7	
		5.8	
		5.9	
		5.10	
		5.16	

**Component 7. Sensitive Habitats**

7.9(b)	7.5(a)
7.18	7.15(b)

**Component 9. Hazards**

9.3(c) to 9.3(b)	9.3(c)
9.3(d) to 9.3(c)	9.10
9.3(e) to 9.e(d)	

**Component 10. Shoreline Access**

10.39A to 10.40	10.11(a)
10.40 to 10.41	10.30(c)(2)
10.41 to 10.42	
10.42 to 10.43	
10.43 to 10.44	
10.44 to 10.45	
10.45 to 10.46	
10.46 to 10.47	

**Component 11. Recreation/Visitor Serving Facilities**

<u>Delete</u>	<u>Renumber</u>	<u>Amend</u>	<u>Add</u>
11.26(c)		11.1 11.12(b) 11.14(c)(d)(e)(f) 11.15(a) 11.23(c) 11.26(a) 11.30(a)	11.26(c) 11.30(b)

## **1984 AMENDMENTS\*\* TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

### **COMPONENT**

#### **1. Locating and Planning New Development**

Policy 1.20 amended by Ordinance No. 2873 (Resolution No. 45327) - January 17, 1984.

Table 1.2 amended by Ordinance No. 2895 - June 5, 1984.

Table 1.3 amended by Ordinance No. 3002 - July 3, 1984.

Policies 1.13, 1.14, 1.15 and 1.19 amended, and Policies 1.27, 1.28, 1.29 and 1.30 added by Ordinance No. 2895 - June 5, 1984.

#### **2. Public Works**

Policies 2.21, 2.23 and Table 2.7 amended by Ordinance No. 2873 (Resolution No. 45327) - January 17, 1984.

Policies 2.14, 2.22 and 2.37 amended by Ordinance No. 2895 - June 5, 1984.

#### **3. Housing**

Policy 3.22 amended by Ordinance No. 2895 - June 5, 1984.

#### **5. Agriculture**

Policy 5.6 amended by Resolution No. 45327 - January 17, 1984.

Policy 5.14 amended by Ordinance No. 2895 - June 5, 1984.

---

*\*Through July 3, 1984, most amendments or additions to policies and tables of the LCP were enacted by ordinance. After that date, standard procedure is that they be enacted by resolution of the Board of Supervisors.*

**7. Sensitive Habitats**

Policy 7.18 amended by Ordinance No. 2895 - June 5, 1984.

**8. Visual Resources**

Policy 8.22 amended, and Policies 8.23, 8.33 and 8.34 added by Ordinance No. 2895 - June 5, 1984.

**9. Hazards**

Policies 9.2 and 9.9 amended by Ordinance No. 3002 - July 3, 1984.

## **1986 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

### **COMPONENT**

#### **1. Locating and Planning New Development**

Policy 1.20 amended by Resolution No. 47809 - March 4, 1986.

Table 1.4 amended by Resolution No. 47809 - March 4, 1986.

#### **2. Public Works**

Tables 2.3, 2.4, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.21 and 2.22 amended by Resolution No. 47809 - March 4, 1986.

#### **3. Housing**

Policies 3.20, 3.21, 3.28 and 3.29 amended by Resolution No. 47809 - March 4, 1986.

Policy 3.24 amended by Resolution No. 47809 - March 4, 1986.

## **1987 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

### **COMPONENT**

#### **1. Locating and Planning New Development**

Policies 1.32 and 1.33 added by Resolution No. 49044 - April 14, 1987 (see note below).

Map 1.2 added by Resolution No. 49044 - April 14, 1987.

Table 1.2 amended by Resolution No. 49044 - April 14, 1987.

#### **2. Public Works**

Policy 2.8 amended by Resolution No. 49673 - October 6, 1987.

Tables 2.7 and 2.17 amended by Resolution No. 48673 - October 6, 1987.

#### **3. Housing**

Policy 3.35 amended by Resolution No. 49044 - April 14, 1987.

Policies 3.16 and 3.19 amended by Resolution No. 49673 - October 6, 1987.

#### **5. Agriculture**

Policy 5.19 amended by Resolution No. 49044 - April 14, 1987.

#### **7. Sensitive Habitats**

Policy 7.9 amended by Resolution No. 49044 - April 14, 1987.

#### **10. Shoreline Access**

Policies 10.1, 10.2, 10.11 and 10.30 amended by Resolution No. 49044 - April 14, 1987.

Note: Policies 1.32 and 1.33 are identified as Policies 1.31 and 1.32, respectively, in Resolution No. 49044 (April 14, 1987). The change in numbering was required to eliminate duplication of numbering and confusion with Policy \*1.31, a "Measure A" policy added by Resolution No. 50289 (April 26, 1988).



## **1988 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

### **COMPONENT**

#### 1. Locating and Planning New Development

Policies 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.18, 1.28 and 1.29 amended by Resolution No. 50289 - April 26, 1988.

Policy 1.31 added by Resolution No. 50289 - April 26, 1988.

Table 1.3 amended by Resolution No. 50289 - April 26, 1988.

#### 2. **Public Works**

Policies 2.4, 2.6, 2.14 and 2.15 amended by Resolution No. 50289 - April 26, 1988.

#### 4. **Energy**

Policies 4.23 through 4.41 amended/renumbered by Resolution No. 50289 - April 26, 1988.

Policy 4.42 added/renumbered by Resolution No. 50289 - April 26, 1988.

#### 5. **Agriculture**

Policy 5.1 through 5.16 and Policy 5.22 amended by Resolution No. 50289 - April 26, 1988.

#### 7. **Sensitive Habitats**

Policies 7.1, 7.3 and 7.4 amended by Resolution No. 50289 - April 26, 1988.

#### 8. **Visual Resources**

Policies 8.5, 8.7, 8.15 and 8.18 amended by Resolution No. 50289 - April 26, 1988.

## 9. Hazards

Policies 9.2 and 9.9 amended by Ordinance No. 3150 - August 30, 1988.\*

Note: Resolution No. 50289 put into effect the voter initiative approved on November 4, 1986, and commonly referred to as Measure A.

In 1988, Resolution No. 50289 adopted amendments specifically voted upon on November 4, 1986, by initiative of the citizens of San Mateo County (commonly known as Measure A). In doing so, Policy 1.31 was added in order to provide a specific procedure for future amendments to certain policies marked with an asterisk (\*). These policies are found in the following components of the LCP: Locating and Planning New Development, Public Works, Energy, Agriculture, Sensitive Habitats, and Visual Resources.

It should be noted that Policy 7.4 (marked with an asterisk) refers to Policies 7.9, 7.16, 7.23, 7.26, 7.30, 7.33 and 7.44 (without asterisks) as they existed on March 25, 1986; any amendment to these policies will therefore require an amendment to Policy 7.4.

---

\* This amendment is an exception to the rule that revisions be accomplished by resolution of the Board of Supervisors.

## **1990 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

### **COMPONENT**

#### **2. Public Works**

Tables 2.4, 2.7, 2.10 and 2.17 amended by Resolution No. 54517 - November 20, 1990.

## **1991 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

### **COMPONENT**

#### **11. Recreation/Visitor Serving Facilities**

Policy 11.7 amended by Resolution No. 54823 - March 12, 1991.

## **1992 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

### **COMPONENT**

#### **2. Public Works**

Policy 2.37(c)(6) amended by Resolution No. 56015 - April 7, 1992. Table 2.17 amended by Resolution No. 56015 - April 7, 1992.

## **1993 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

### **COMPONENT**

#### **2. Public Works**

Policy 2.45 amended by Resolution No. 57533 - September 14, 1993.

Tables 2.16 and 2.18 amended by Resolution No. 57533 - September 14, 1993.

## **1995 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

### **COMPONENT**

#### **1. Locating and Planning New Development**

Table 1.3 amended by Resolution No. 59622 - September 12, 1995.

#### **2. Public Works**

Policy 2.8(d) added by Resolution No. 59622 - September 12, 1995.

Table 2.17 amended by Resolution No. 59622 - September 12, 1995.

#### **3. Housing**

Policies 3.1 through 3.28 amended by Resolution No. 59791 - November 7, 1995.

## **1997 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

### **COMPONENT**

#### **1. Locating and Planning New Development**

Policies 1.5(b), 1.8 and 1.23 amended by Resolution No. 61538 - November 18, 1997.

Table 1.3 amended by Resolution No. 61538 - November 18, 1997.

Table 1.5 added by Resolution No. 61538 - November 18, 1997.

#### **2. Public Works**

Policy 2.50(b) amended by Devil's Slide Tunnel Voter Initiative.

Policy 2.54(b) amended by Devil's Slide Tunnel Voter Initiative.

Policy 2.56(a) amended by Devil's Slide Tunnel Voter Initiative.

**3. Housing**

Policy 3.12 (renumbered from 3.16) amended by Resolution No. 60842 - February 11, 1997.

Policy 3.29 (renumbered from 3.36) added by Resolution No. 60842 - February 11, 1997.

Policy 3.21(d) (renumbered from 3.24) added by Resolution No. 61538 - November 18, 1997.

**5. Agriculture**

Policies 5.11(d) and 5.22 amended by Resolution No. 61538 - November 18, 1997.

**8. Visual Resources**

Policies 8.5, 8.7, 8.13, 8.15, 8.17 and 8.18 amended by Resolution No. 61538 - November 18, 1997.

**9. Hazards**

Policy 9.18 amended by Resolution No. 61538 - November 18, 1997.

**11. Recreation/Visitor Serving Facilities**

Policies 11.1, 11.2 and 11.15 amended by Resolution No. 61538 - November 18, 1997.

**1998 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

**COMPONENT**

**1. Locating and Planning New Development**

Policy 1.8 amended by Resolution No. 61697 - February 10, 1998.

**8. Visual Resources**

Policy 8.5 amended by Resolution No. 61697 - February 10, 1998.

**11. Recreation/Visitor Serving Facilities**

Policy 11.15 amended by Resolution No. 61697 - February 10, 1998.

**2010 AMENDMENTS TO LCP POLICIES AND TABLES**

**COMPONENT**

**8. Visual Resources**

Policies 8.12 and 8.13 amended by Resolution No. 66612 - April 20, 2004 and by Resolution No. 70738 - May 11, 2010.

MAT:fc – MATU0698\_WFM.DOC  
(9/27/10)

# ***VISUAL RESOURCES COMPONENT***

## **NATURAL FEATURES--LANDFORMS**

### **8.1 Definition of Landforms**

Define landforms as natural topographic and landscape features which include, but are not restricted to, ridgelines, hillsides, canyons, coastal terraces, headlands, mountains, rock outcroppings, hills, cliffs and bluffs, sand dunes, beaches, wetlands, estuaries, streams, and arroyos.

### **8.2 Beaches**

Prohibit permanent structures on open sandy beaches except facilities required for public health and safety (i.e., beach erosion control structures).

### **8.3 Sand Dunes**

Prohibit development or uses that would alter the natural appearance of dunes, significantly hamper natural dune movement, conflict with the visual form of the dune ridgelines, destroy dune-stability vegetation, or require sand removal.

### **8.4 Cliffs and Bluffs**

- a. Prohibit development on bluff faces except public access stairways where deemed necessary and erosion control structures which are in conformity with coastal policies on access and erosion.
- b. Set back bluff top development and landscaping from the bluff edge (i.e., decks, patios, structures, trees, shrubs, etc.) sufficiently far to ensure it is not visually obtrusive when viewed from the shoreline except in highly developed areas where adjoining development is nearer the bluff edge, or in special cases where a public facility is required to serve the public safety, health, and welfare.

### **8.5 Location of Development**

- a. Require that new development be located on a portion of a parcel where the development (1) is least visible from State and County Scenic Roads, (2) is least likely to significantly impact views from public viewpoints, and (3) is consistent with all other LCP requirements, best preserves the visual and open space qualities of the parcel overall. Where conflicts in complying with this requirement occur, resolve them in a manner which on balance most protects significant coastal resources on the parcel, consistent with Coastal Act Section 30007.5.

Public viewpoints include, but are not limited to, coastal roads, roadside rests and vista points, recreation areas, trails, coastal accessways, and beaches.

This provision does not apply to enlargement of existing structures, provided that the size of the structure after enlargement does not exceed 150% of the pre-existing floor area, or 2,000 sq. ft., whichever is greater.

This provision does not apply to agricultural development to the extent that application of the provision would impair any agricultural use or operation on the parcel. In such cases, agricultural development shall use appropriate building materials, colors, landscaping and screening to eliminate or minimize the visual impact of the development.

- b. Require, including by clustering if necessary, that new parcels have building sites that are not visible from State and County Scenic Roads and will not significantly impact views from other public viewpoints. If the entire property being subdivided is visible from State and County Scenic Roads or other public viewpoints, then require that new parcels have building sites that minimize visibility from those roads and other public viewpoints.

#### 8.6 Streams, Wetlands, and Estuaries

- a. Set back development from the edge of streams and other natural waterways a sufficient distance to preserve the visual character of the waterway.
- b. Prohibit structural development which will adversely affect the visual quality of perennial streams and associated riparian habitat, except for those permitted by Sensitive Habitats Component Policies.
- c. Retain the open natural visual appearance of estuaries and their surrounding beaches.
- d. Retain wetlands intact except for public accessways designed to respect the visual and ecological fragility of the area and adjacent land.

#### \*8.7 Development on Skylines and Ridgelines

- a. Prohibit the location of development, in whole or in part, on a skyline or ridgeline, or where it will project above a skyline or ridgeline, unless there is no other developable building site on the parcel.

Consistent with Policy 9.18, a site of greater than 30% slope may be deemed developable if it is the only other building site on the parcel and can be developed consistent with all other applicable LCP policies.



Prohibit the location of development, in whole or in part, on a skyline, or where it will project above a skyline, when a developable building site exists on a ridgeline.

A skyline is the line where sky and land masses meet, and ridgelines are the tops of hills or hillocks normally viewed against a background of other hills (General Plan Policy 4.7).

- b. Where no other developable building site exists on a parcel, limit development on a skyline or ridgeline to 18 feet in height from the natural or finished grade, whichever is lower.
- c. Prohibit the creation of new parcels which have no developable building site other than on a skyline or ridgeline.

## **NATURAL FEATURES--VEGETATIVE FORMS**

### **8.8 Definition of Vegetative Forms**

Define vegetative forms as naturally occurring or introduced vegetation that grows in the Coastal Zone.

### **8.9 Trees**

- a. Locate and design new development to minimize tree removal.
- b. Employ the regulations of the Significant Tree Ordinance to protect significant trees (38 inches or more in circumference) which are located in urban areas zoned Design Review (DR).
- c. Employ the regulations of the Heritage Tree Ordinance to protect unique trees which meet specific size and locational requirements.
- d. Protect trees specifically selected for their visual prominence and their important scenic or scientific qualities.
- e. Prohibit the removal of trees in scenic corridors except by selective harvesting which protects the existing visual resource from harmful impacts or by other cutting methods necessary for development approved in compliance with LCP policies and for opening up the display of important views from public places, i.e., vista points, roadways, trails, etc.
- f. Prohibit the removal of living trees in the Coastal Zone with a trunk circumference of more than 55 inches measured 4 1/2 feet above the average surface of the ground, except as may be permitted for development under the regulations of the LCP, or permitted under the Timber Harvesting Ordinance, or for reason of danger to life or property.

- g. Allow the removal of trees which are a threat to public health, safety, and welfare.

#### 8.10 Vegetative Cover

(with the exception of crops grown for commercial purposes)

Replace vegetation removed during construction with plant materials (trees, shrubs, ground cover) which are compatible with surrounding vegetation and is suitable to the climate, soil, and ecological characteristics of the area.

### **STRUCTURAL AND COMMUNITY FEATURES--URBAN AREAS AND RURAL SERVICE CENTERS**

#### 8.11 Definition of Urban

Define urban areas and rural service centers in accordance with the Locating and Planning New Development Component Policies 1.3 and 1.10.

#### 8.12 General Regulations

- a. Apply the Design Review (DR) Zoning District to urban areas of the Coastal Zone:
  - (1) For one- and two-family development in the Midcoast, apply the design standards contained in Section 6565.20.
  - (2) For all other development, apply the design standards contained in Section 6565.17 and the design criteria set forth in the Community Design Manual.
- b. Locate and design new development and landscaping so that ocean views are not blocked from public viewing points such as public roads and publicly-owned lands.

#### 8.13 Special Design Guidelines for Coastal Communities

##### a. Montara-Moss Beach-El Granada-Miramar

- (1) Design structures that fit the topography of the site and do not require extensive cutting, grading, or filling for construction.
- (2) Employ the use of natural materials and colors that blend with the vegetative cover of the site.
- (3) Use pitched roofs that are surfaced with non-reflective materials except for the employment of solar energy devices. The limited use of flat roofs may be allowed if necessary to reduce view impacts or to

accommodate varying architectural styles that are compatible with the character of the surrounding area.

- (4) Design structures that are in scale with the character of their setting and blend rather than dominate or distract from the overall view of the urban landscape.
- (5) To the extent feasible, design development to minimize the blocking of views to or along the ocean shoreline from Highway 1 and other public viewpoints between Highway 1 and the sea. Public viewpoints include coastal roads, roadside rests and vista points, recreation areas, trails, coastal accessways, and beaches. This provision shall not apply in areas west of Denniston Creek zoned either Coastside Commercial Recreation or Waterfront.
- (6) In areas east of Denniston Creek zoned Coastside Commercial Recreation, the height of development may not exceed 28 feet from the natural or finished grade, whichever is lower.

b. Princeton-by-the-Sea

(1) Commercial Development

Design buildings which reflect the nautical character of the harbor setting, are of wood or shingle siding, employ natural or sea colors, and use pitched roofs.

(2) Industrial Development

Employ architectural detailing, subdued colors, textured building materials, and landscaping to add visual interest and soften the harsh lines of standard or stock building forms normally used in industrial districts.

c. San Gregorio

Encourage new buildings to incorporate traditional design features found in the San Gregorio House and other houses in the community, i.e., clean and simple lines, steep roof slopes, placement of windows and doors at regular intervals, doors and windows of equal proportions, and wood construction. Require remodeling of existing buildings to retain and respect their traditional architectural features, if any.

d. Pescadero

Encourage new buildings to incorporate architectural design features found in the historic buildings of the community (see inventory listing), i.e., clean

and simple lines, precise detailing, steep roof slopes, symmetrical relationship of windows and doors, wood construction, white paint, etc. Require remodeling of existing buildings to retain and respect their traditional architectural features, if any.

## **STRUCTURAL AND COMMUNITY FEATURES--RURAL**

### 8.14 Definition of Rural

Define rural as lands indicated on the LCP Land Use Map for rural use.

### \*8.15 Coastal Views

Prevent development (including buildings, structures, fences, unnatural obstructions, signs, and landscaping) from substantially blocking views to or along the shoreline from coastal roads, roadside rests and vista points, recreation areas, trails, coastal accessways, and beaches.

### 8.16 Landscaping

- a. Use plant materials to integrate the manmade and natural environments and to soften the visual impact of new development.
- b. Protect existing desirable vegetation. Encourage, where feasible, that new planting be common to the area.

### \*8.17 Alteration of Landforms; Roads and Grading

- a. Require that development be located and designed to conform with, rather than change landforms. Minimize the alteration of landforms as a consequence of grading, cutting, excavating, filling or other development.
- b. To the degree possible, ensure restoration of pre-existing topographic contours after any alteration by development, except to the extent necessary to comply with the requirements of Policy 8.18.
- c. Control development to avoid the need to construct access roads visible from State and County Scenic Roads. Existing private roads shall be shared wherever possible. New access roads may be permitted only where it is demonstrated that use of existing roads is physically or legally impossible or unsafe. New roads shall be (1) located and designed to minimize visibility from State and County Scenic Roads and (2) built to fit the natural topography and to minimize alteration of existing landforms and natural characteristics.

This provision does not apply to agricultural development to the extent that application of the provision would impair any agricultural use or operation,

or convert agricultural soils. In such cases, build new access roads to minimize alteration of existing landforms and natural characteristics.

#### 8.18 Development Design

- a. Require that development (1) blend with and be subordinate to the environment and the character of the area where located, and (2) be as unobtrusive as possible and not detract from the natural, open space or visual qualities of the area, including but not limited to siting, design, layout, size, height, shape, materials, colors, access and landscaping.

The colors of exterior materials shall harmonize with the predominant earth and vegetative colors of the site. Materials and colors shall absorb light and minimize reflection. Exterior lighting shall be limited to the minimum necessary for safety. All lighting, exterior and interior, must be placed, designed and shielded so as to confine direct rays to the parcel where the lighting is located.

Except for the requirement to minimize reflection, agricultural development shall be exempt from this provision. Greenhouse development shall be designed to minimize visual obtrusiveness and avoid detracting from the natural characteristics of the site.

- b. Require screening to minimize the visibility of development from scenic roads and other public viewpoints. Screening shall be by vegetation or other materials which are native to the area or blend with the natural environment and character of the site.
- c. Require that all non-agricultural development minimize noise, light, dust, odors and other interference with persons and property off the development site.

#### 8.19 Colors and Materials

- a. Employ colors and materials in new development which blend, rather than contrast, with the surrounding physical conditions of the site.
- b. Prohibit highly reflective surfaces and colors except those of solar energy devices.

#### 8.20 Scale

Relate structures in size and scale to adjacent buildings and landforms.

\*8.21 Commercial Signs

- a. Prohibit off-premise commercial signs except for seasonal temporary agricultural signs.
- b. Design on-premise commercial signs as an integral part of structure they identify and which do not extend above the roofline.
- c. Prohibit brightly illuminated colored, rotating, reflective, blinking, flashing or moving signs, pennants, or streamers.
- d. Design and minimize information and direction signs to be simple, easy-to-read, and harmonize with surrounding elements.

8.22 Utilities in State Scenic Corridors

- a. Install new distribution lines underground.
- b. Install existing overhead distribution lines underground where they are required to be relocated in conjunction with street improvements, new utility construction, etc.
- c. Exceptions to a. and b. may be approved by the Planning Commission where it is not physically practicable due to topographic features; however, utilities shall not be substantially visible from any public road or developed public trails.

8.23 Utilities in County Scenic Corridors

- a. Install new distribution lines underground, except as provided in b.
- b. For all development, exceptions may be approved by the Planning Commission when: (1) it is not physically practicable due to topographic features, (2) there are agricultural land use conflicts or (3) development is for farm labor housing. In addition, for building permits, exceptions may be approved by the Planning Commission for financial hardships. In each case, however, utilities shall not be substantially visible from any public road or developed public trail.

8.24 Large Agricultural Structures

Require large agricultural structures (i.e., greenhouses or buildings for the storage of farm or ranch equipment, products, or related uses) to employ a combination of the following criteria depending on the design problems of the site:

- a. Require agricultural equipment storage buildings to be constructed of materials or painted colors which blend with the natural vegetative cover of the site.
- b. Employ landscaping to screen structures from public view.

## **SPECIAL FEATURES**

### 8.25 Definition

Define special features as unique structural, land, or vegetative forms that possess or exhibit distinctive qualities that set them apart from all others, contribute significantly to the scenic resources of the Coastal Zone, and are listed in the Inventory of Special Features in the LCP.

### 8.26 Structural Features

Employ the regulations of the Historical and Cultural Preservation Ordinance to protect any structure or site listed as an Official County or State Historic Landmark or is listed in the National Register of Historic Sites.

### 8.27 Natural Features

Prohibit the destruction or significant alteration of special natural features through implementation of Landform Policies and Vegetative Form Policies of the LCP.

## **SCENIC ROADS AND SCENIC CORRIDORS**

### 8.28 Definition of Scenic Corridors

Define scenic corridors as the visual boundaries of the landscape abutting a scenic highway and which contain outstanding views, flora, and geology, and other unique natural or manmade attributes and historical and cultural resources affording pleasure and instruction to the highway traveler.

### 8.29 Designation of Officially Adopted State Scenic Roads and Corridors

Recognize officially adopted State Scenic Roads and Corridors as shown on the Scenic Roads and Corridors Map for the Coastal Zone. These are: Coast Highway south of Half Moon Bay city limits (State Route 1) and Skyline Boulevard (State Route 35).

### 8.30 Designation of County Scenic Roads and Corridors

- a. Expand existing County Scenic Corridors to include the visual limits of the landscape abutting the scenic road.

- b. Designate County Scenic Roads and Corridors as shown on the Scenic Roads and Corridors Map for the Coastal Zone. These are: Coast Highway north of Half Moon Bay city limits (State Route 1), Half Moon Bay Road (State Route 92), La Honda Road (State Route 84), Higgins-Purisima Road, Tunitas Creek Road, Pescadero Road, Stage Road, Cloverdale Road, and Gazos Creek Road (Coast Highway to Cloverdale Road).

#### 8.31 Regulation of Scenic Corridors in Rural Areas

- a. Apply the policies of the Scenic Road Element of the County General Plan.
- b. Apply Section 6325.1 (Primary Scenic Resources Areas Criteria) of the Resource Management (RM) Zoning District as specific regulations protecting scenic corridors in the Coastal Zone.
- c. Apply the Rural Design Policies of the LCP.
- d. Apply the Policies for Landforms and Vegetative Forms of the LCP.
- e. Require a minimum setback of 100 feet from the right-of-way line, and greater where possible; however, permit a 50-foot setback when sufficient screening is provided to shield the structure from public view.
- f. Continue applying special regulations for the Skyline Boulevard and Cabrillo Highway State Scenic Corridors.
- g. Enforce specific regulations of the Timber Harvest Ordinance which prohibits the removal of more than 50% of timber volume in scenic corridors.

#### 8.32 Regulation of Scenic Corridors in Urban Areas

- a. Apply the regulations of the Design Review (DR) Zoning Ordinance.
- b. Apply the design criteria of the Community Design Manual.
- c. Apply specific design guidelines for Montara, Moss Beach, El Granada, Princeton-by-the-Sea, Miramar, San Gregorio, and Pescadero as set forth in Urban Design Policies of the LCP.

#### 8.33 Exemptions

Exempt from Planning Commission architectural and site review agricultural related development (as defined in the Categorical Exclusion for Agriculturally Related Development (E-81-1)), and all buildings and structures which would not be visible from the roadway due to localized terrain and vegetative cover.



#### 8.34 Uses Allowed in Designated Historic Structures and Historic Districts

- a. In urban and rural areas, allow the following uses subject to a use permit: (1) single-family residential, (2) multiple-family residential, (3) schools, public and private, (4) libraries, (5) community centers, (6) conference centers, (7) clubs, public and private, (8) professional offices, (9) art galleries, (10) art studios, (11) museums, (12) shops and boutiques, (13) book stores, (14) country inns and hotels, (15) restaurants and cafes, and (16) bars.
- b. Use must be consistent with the resource protection policies of the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program.
- c. In rural areas, water use for the permitted use shall not exceed that provided for under “priority uses” in Policy 1.8(c) of the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program. Priority uses are allocated a maximum daily water use of 615 gallons per density credit.
- d. In rural areas, density of use shall not exceed that permitted under Policy 1.8(b) of the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program.

MAT:fc – MATU0699\_WFM.DOC  
(9/27/10)