

Chapter I: Introduction

I.1 VISION

The vision statement for Bay Meadows Phase II contained in the approved Specific Plan Amendment (page I-8) includes a number of important qualitative objectives for this new San Mateo neighborhood, among them transit utilization, pedestrian priority, vibrancy, sustainability, and recognition of historic Peninsula character. These Design Guidelines and Development Standards (alternatively referred to as the "Design Guidelines") have been prepared to ensure that those objectives are met as Phase II is built out over time and that the designs to be submitted for subsequent SPAR by the City of San Mateo conform to a commonly held vision and set of expectations. Although they are comprehensive, these Guidelines are primarily concerned with providing quantitative guidance and visual inspiration for those parts of the development that are seen and used by the public – what is cumulatively referred to here as the public realm – and which includes the interconnected system of streets and open spaces, and the buildings that frame them. The guidelines thus focus on two areas. The first is ensuring that all buildings recognize and contribute to a larger pattern and sense of place making. The second, that the landscape of the streets and open spaces framed by these buildings is equally attractive, and unifies and distinguishes the neighborhood.

These guidelines include criteria relating to:

- Volumetric and height controls for buildings: to ensure that the spatial character of places where people walk is well-proportioned, that sidewalks and streets are activated with ground floor use, access and surveillance by residents, and that there is variety in height from one place to another.
- Vehicles and circulation: to minimize the impact of personal and service vehicles on the public realm and to create a hierarchy of street frontages.
- Architecture: to maximize the opportunity to create an authentic neighborhood through assurance of variety, quality and compatibility of buildings and building types.
- Landscape: to ensure that the tactile and qualitative character of the public realm is rich and well detailed, that the parks and open spaces are varied and specific, and that ecological opportunities are realized.

I.2 HOW TO USE THESE GUIDELINES

This document presents the design standards to guide developers and builders and their architects and engineers in designing buildings and environments at Bay Meadows Phase II for review by the City of San Mateo. The standards and guidelines herein, in conjunction with the standards and conditions specified in the project approvals noted below, are the criteria that form the basis of evaluation for review and approval of future applications at Bay Meadows. The prior approvals include:

- Bay Meadows Phase II Specific Plan Amendment ("Specific Plan Amendment")
- Conditions of Approval PA 02-105 Bay Meadows Specific Plan Amendment
- Bay Meadows Phase II Development Agreement
- Mitigation Monitoring Program

- San Mateo Rail Corridor Transit-Oriented Development Plan (Adopted June 6, 2005)
- Conditions of Master Tentative Parcel Map adopted on November 7, 2005 pursuant to Resolution No. 111 (2005) and conditions of other maps applicable to a particular Block or parcel.

The City of San Mateo's Zoning Code Section 27.88.050 explains that the Specific Plan Amendment governs over the Zoning Code. The Bay Meadows Phase II Specific Plan Amendment authorizes these Design Guidelines to override the Zoning Code in certain specified areas. Thus, in a variety of places (including, in some cases, definitions), these Design Guidelines differ from the City of San Mateo's Zoning Code. In case of a conflict between these Design Guidelines and the City of San Mateo's Zoning Code, these Design Guidelines shall govern.

These Design Guidelines do not duplicate but instead build upon what has already been approved in the Specific Plan Amendment, and must be read in conjunction with it. Future Site Plan Architecture Review ("SPAR") approvals must be consistent with these Design Guidelines. Once a SPAR is approved for a Block, subject to applicable CC&Rs or any applicable limitations or density allocations, an owner of a sub-parcel in that Block may modify design in accordance with the Bay Meadows Specific Plan Amendment ("SPA"), these Design Guidelines, and subject to the approval of the City, in accordance with the City's procedures for SPAR modification.

These Design Guidelines are organized based on location (Block, street) and typology (building type). Each chapter (except this chapter) is organized in two parts: (1) general, site-wide conditions and (2) location and typology-specific conditions. In reviewing the requirements for a particular development Block, a user must review both the site-wide conditions of each chapter as well as the location and typology-specific conditions of each chapter.

Each applicant must be prepared to explain how its proposed design is consistent with the overall design intent and goals of these Design Guidelines and the Specific Plan Amendment, and so long as the proposed design is found to be consistent with the overall design intent and goals of these Design Guidelines and the Specific Plan Amendment, a project may be approved even if one or more specified items or conditions are not satisfied. Throughout these Design Guidelines, the strongest level of design intent is specified by the use of terms such as "must," "shall" and "prohibited." Preferred design items are designated as a condition which is "encouraged," "preferred," "recommended," "appropriate," or as one that "should" be included. Preferred design items are considered "voluntary" and need not be included in a proposed project. Items that include one or more criteria or elements that are qualified with "discouraged," "inappropriate" or "should not" be included, are acceptable if the approving body finds the proposed design is nonetheless consistent with the overall design intent and goals of these Design Guidelines and the Specific Plan Amendment.



Figure I-1
Alternative Illustrative Plan



Figure I-2
Mixed-use pedestrian-friendly street



Figure I-3
High quality landscape



Figure I-4
Retail sidewalk

Furthermore, these Design Guidelines should not be used to prevent individual buildings from incorporating sustainability elements such as “green” roofs or energy generating roofing materials; provided, however, that a SPAR application may not be denied because it does not include voluntary sustainability elements.

In accordance with the Specific Plan Amendment, the Design Guidelines address streets, Blocks and buildings, including the minimum subparcelization of Blocks and buildings required to be in keeping with the overall scale of the neighborhood. Consistent with the Framework Plan in the Specific Plan Amendment, each Block may be parcelized into any number and size of subparcels. Rather than mandate a specific minimum subparcelization, these Design Guidelines provide criteria, including “break zones,” height variation, varied roof forms and variations in architectural styles which limit monolithic facades and achieve the appearance of separate buildings. In this manner the Design Guidelines address the intended concern, namely the breaking up of building massing.

In the SPA and throughout these Design Guidelines, there are references to the maximum number of stories and the maximum height of structures. The maximum number of stories and the maximum heights contained in these Design Guidelines do not include towers, spires, campaniles, chimneys, cupolas, domes, minarets, steeples or similar projections. Similarly, the maximum number of stories does not apply to aboveground parking structures. Overall maximum height measured in feet of all structures (including aboveground parking) is specified in the SPA (in conformance with Measure P).

Diagrams contained in these Design Guidelines may or may not contain specific dimensions. If specific dimensions are shown on a diagram, then conformance with the specified dimension is mandatory. However, if specific dimensions are not shown on a diagram, then placement is flexible and voluntary. A proposed project may not be denied due to failure to comply with non-specific or voluntary dimensions, such as an “encouraged” break-zone or a “recommended” area for open space. The drawings and diagrams in this document are not to scale and shall not be scaled.

Similarly, pictures and illustrations contained in these Design Guidelines are intended to demonstrate one of many ways that a requirement can be fulfilled. They are qualitative in character, and do not create precise mandates.

Street names contained in these Design Guidelines are only for ease of reference. Official street names will be approved by the City at a later date. Words and phrases not defined herein have the meaning as defined in the Specific Plan Amendment or the Bay Meadows Phase II Development Agreement, or if not defined in either of those documents, they shall have the meaning as defined in the San Mateo Municipal Code.

