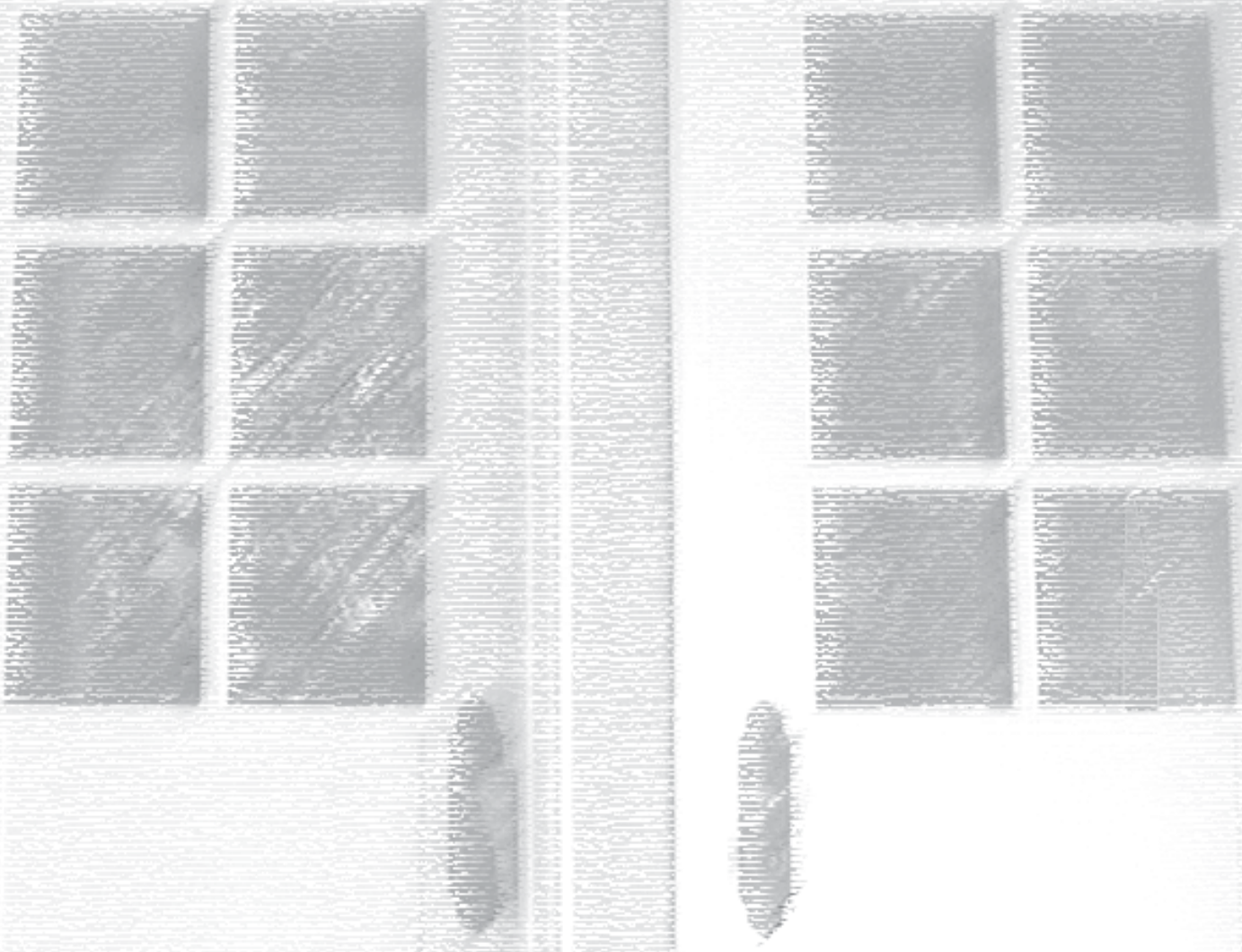
City of San Mateo

Duplex
Design Guidelines



For Designing and Reviewing Changes to
Duplexes and Two-Family Dwellings

City of San Mateo

Duplex Design Guidelines

Adopted:
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Reso. No. 1 (2004)

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1. Introduction

1) Purpose of the Guidelines

The diversity of San Mateo's neighborhoods help make it a great city. San Mateo is a place where walking is comfortable, where residents identify not just with their own dwellings but also with their neighborhood, and where people are proud of where they live. The City's residential stock is about half single-family and about half multi-family. The duplex, two-unit and small multi-family buildings can provide a graceful transition between neighborhoods of differing densities and provide a desirable housing choice for many. The *Duplex Design Guidelines* ("Design Guidelines" or "Guidelines") address design issues that may enhance the livability of San Mateo neighborhoods. The Guidelines address how a building's size, architectural character, and relationship to the street and nearby structures contribute to successful neighborhoods. The following building types are addressed in these Guidelines:

- All R2 zoned parcels that are proposed to be developed with two dwelling units;
- Additions to structures on R2 zoned parcels that have or are proposed to have two dwelling units; and
- Smaller parcels zoned for medium and high density residential may be limited to two dwelling units due to parcel size. In these cases the Design Guidelines may have limited applicability.

2) Development of the Guidelines

In 2002 the City Council directed staff to prepare R2 Duplex Design Guidelines. The Planning Commission conducted a study session on the potential design guidelines in November, 2002 and City staff conducted a series of workshops over a six-month period beginning in January, 2003. Concerns expressed at the workshops became the outline and topics covered in these Guidelines.

3) Use of the Guidelines

The Design Guidelines are intended for use by building owners and their designers, by neighbors, and by community groups in their review and consideration of new duplex and small multi-family dwellings and additions to these types of properties. The Planning Division staff, Planning Commission and City Council will also use the Guidelines in their review of projects.

The Guidelines establish basic criteria to consider when designing a building. Following the minimum criteria alone will not guarantee good design. A thoughtful application of the Guidelines will, however, cause a designer to consider the neighborhood context and other issues when developing a design, and reduce the potential for conflict and the delay and expense of project revisions.

The Guidelines are not intended to require an identical, regimented design for every building in a neighborhood. However, they are designed to help the reader identify the key building characteristics and components that define the character of the neighborhood. There are a variety of creative ways in which a building can be designed to incorporate those key elements and still retain its own individual identity. These Guidelines are intended to help in this effort.

New duplex and small multi-family buildings will be reviewed for compliance with these guidelines (as well as the other codes as mentioned below). There may be instances when unusual project characteristics, such as a unique lot shape, or the overall character of the neighborhood, make strict adherence to these Guidelines inappropriate. In those cases, the reviewing body (Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission, City Council) may determine that other design solutions may result in a better designed structure for the neighborhood.

The Design Guidelines are set up to complement other required City codes:

Zoning Code – The zoning code addresses building height, bulk, setbacks/daylight plane, parking, paving and other development standards. The Design Guidelines are intended to complement the Zoning Code to ensure a consistent quality of residential design.

Other Codes and Requirements – Other City codes that affect the design of duplex and small multi-family dwellings include, but are not limited to, the Building Code which covers all aspects of construction (structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing), Public Works requirements for all driveways, curb cuts and work in the public right of way (the sidewalk and street), the Heritage Tree Code which addresses the removal of significant vegetation, the Site Development Code which addresses major vegetation, slopes, landscape, and the Subdivision Code.

4) Organization of the Guidelines

The Design Guidelines are structured to address the variety of neighborhood types in San Mateo. Owners, designers and reviewers will use the Guidelines to evaluate the neighborhood and determine what design solutions would be visually compatible with the neighborhood and with the existing structure. The Guidelines direct readers to examine built patterns of the neighborhood and analyze individual components of a building, and how to determine they may contribute to the visual quality of the neighborhood and of the existing building. In some cases it may be appropriate to go beyond the existing built character and improve the architectural quality of the neighborhood, while maintaining compatibility with the neighborhood.

The Design Guidelines follow a consistent format that includes the following:

- A topic heading as per the table of contents;
- An introductory paragraph describing the topic;
- A series of questions that assist the reader in evaluating the topic to determine if there is an architectural pattern in the neighborhood and to understand if it is important to follow that pattern;
- The Guideline pertaining to the topic along with descriptive sketches. In some cases the sketches show both good and bad examples of design to clarify the intent of the guidelines.

5) The City Review Process

To allow construction of a new building or to make changes to an existing structure the following City approvals are required:

- An applicant must file a Planning Application with the City's Planning Division. Design review will occur as part of the Planning Application process and will include a Site Plan and Architectural Review (SPAR). The City's Zoning Administrator will make a determination as to the application's conformance with both the Zoning Code and these Design Guidelines, and will approve or disapprove the application. The application may also be referred to the Planning Commission for review.

- Upon Planning Application approval, an applicant must submit for a building permit to allow construction. Prior to issuance of a building permit, final construction drawings will be checked for conformance with the Planning Application and with applicable Building, Fire and other codes.

II. Design Guidelines

The visual quality of San Mateo is defined to a large degree by its neighborhoods. A single building out of context with its neighbors can appear disruptive. The following guidelines examine built patterns, building forms and other architectural features that may be common to a neighborhood, and suggest methods of maintaining or enhancing the neighborhood's most important visual qualities.

1) Setback Patterns

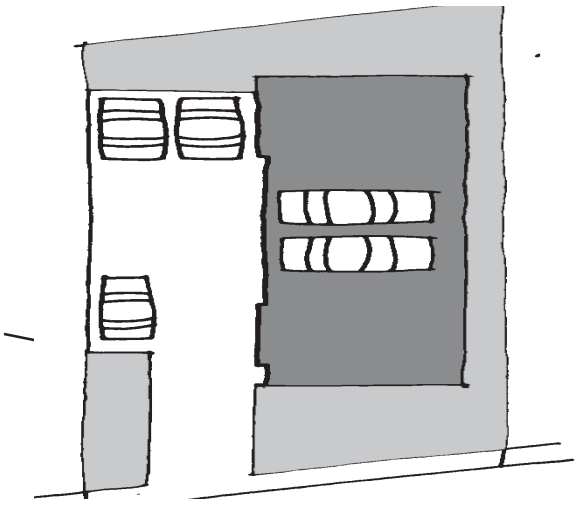
The pattern of building setbacks often establishes a pleasing architectural rhythm to a block. The Zoning Code requires a minimum setback from front, side and rear property lines (see Zoning Code). The neighborhood's setback pattern is established by the common distance between the building edge and the front property line, and also by the building footprint patterns of the neighborhood. A new building that is contrary to the established pattern could visually disrupt the appearance of the neighborhood. If there is no established setback pattern, greater flexibility in setbacks may be considered. Evaluate the neighborhood pattern of setbacks:

- Is there an existing dominant pattern of building setbacks that differs from the minimum Zoning Code requirement?
- What would be the effect of altering this pattern?

Guideline:

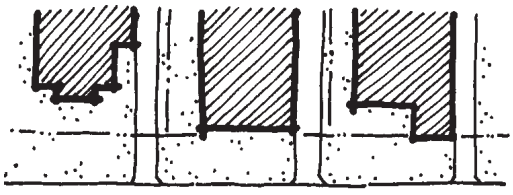
A. Setback Pattern.

If there is a strong setback pattern in the neighborhood, even if it is greater than the Zoning Code required setbacks, respect that pattern.

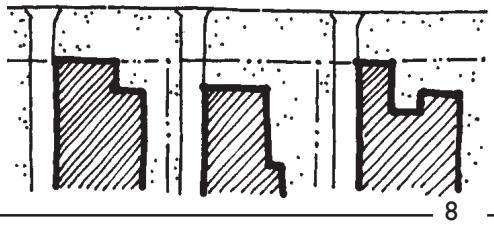


This neighborhood has a consistent setback and building footprint pattern.

The shaded new building does not respect the established building footprint pattern of the neighborhood because it is not offset at the front like all other homes in its neighborhood.



Street



This neighborhood has less of an established building setback or building footprint pattern. New construction or additions could have greater flexibility in their building form and location within the required setback.

2) Driveways

Wide driveways create more paved area and reduce frontyard landscaped area. Widening a driveway may result in a disruptive change to the neighborhood character. Observe the driveway pattern in the neighborhood:

- Are single or double width driveways common to the neighborhood?
- Could the parking needs of the building be met with a single width driveway?
- How would changing the driveway width affect the neighborhood pattern of the landscaping versus paving?

Guidelines:

A. Driveway Width.

Minimize driveway and curb-cut widths where possible within Zoning Code requirements.

B. Maximize Street Parking.

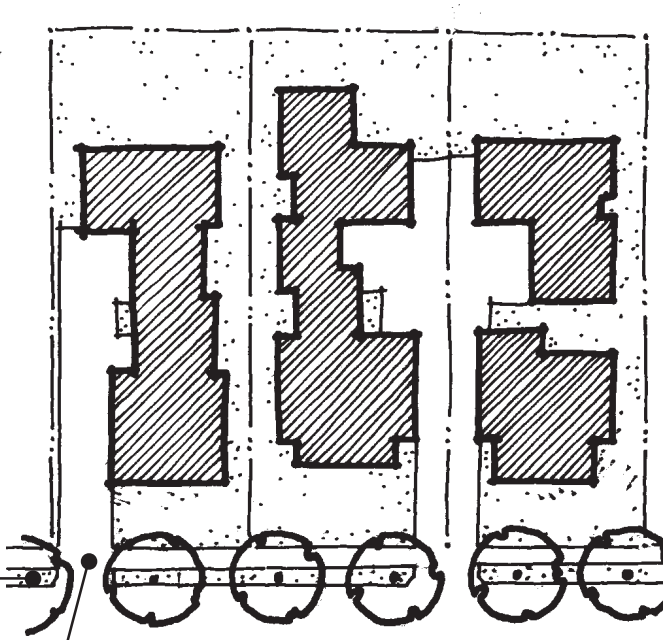
Locate driveways to maximize curb space suitable for on-street parking. Maintain on-street parking by providing a minimum of 20-feet between curb cuts where feasible.

C. Street Tree Pattern.

Minimize harm to existing street trees and provide opportunities for new trees by minimizing driveway widths and carefully placing driveways.

D. Shared Driveways.

Adjacent properties may each contribute to a shared required driveway width with a recorded easement.



Driveways (continued)

Pavement intended for parking and vehicle circulation can easily overwhelm duplex and smaller multi-family lots. Excessive paving also increases urban water runoff. To make the paved area appear smaller, portions of the paved area not necessary for circulation should be landscaped. When these small, unused areas are landscaped, they can significantly break up the appearance of the paved area.

Many duplex and multi-family buildings have front doors entering from the auto back-up area. The use of plants and special paving materials can help transform a bleak auto back-up space into a more desirable front door entry area. The auto circulation area may also be used as recreation space. The site design should consider recreation and play opportunities as well as site distances for safety purposes.

- Could portions of the paved area be used for planting to soften the paved appearance?
- Are on-site recreational needs of the residents being considered?
- Could pervious surfacing be used for vehicle areas to reduce runoff?

Guideline:

D. Reduce apparent amount of paved area.

i. Locate landscaping in unused portions of the auto back-up area. Landscaped areas should be large enough to accommodate trees (5' x 5' min) where possible.

ii. Design auto circulation areas to be multiple use areas, accomplished by landscaping, special pavement materials and recreation amenities.

iii. Consider using pervious paving materials capable of supporting vehicle use while allowing absorption of water into the soil.

Trees and landscaping visually break up the paved area and provide a desirable front door entry to the rear dwelling.

3) Entries

Front walkways, front doors and front porches that face the street are common to most San Mateo neighborhoods. Front doors and windows that are visible from the street also make for safer neighborhoods by keeping 'eyes on the street' and by providing opportunities for neighborly associations. Evaluate the design and visibility of entries in your neighborhood:

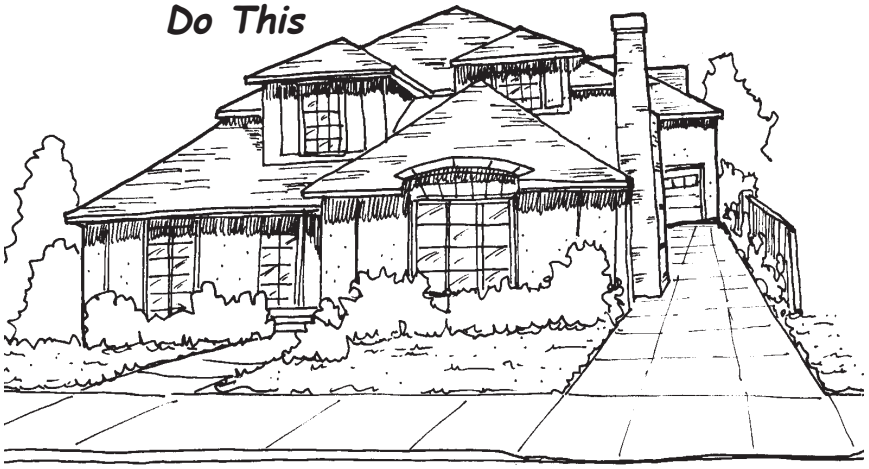
- How prominent are the primary pedestrian entries in the neighborhood?
- Are front porches common to the neighborhood?
- What would be the effect of altering the pattern of entries in the neighborhood?

Guidelines:

A. Visible Front Entries.

At least one dwelling should provide a main entry that is obvious from the street. Visible front entries improve street security and create a 'human scaled' appearance to a building. Do not block front entries with walls, screens, or tall hedges.

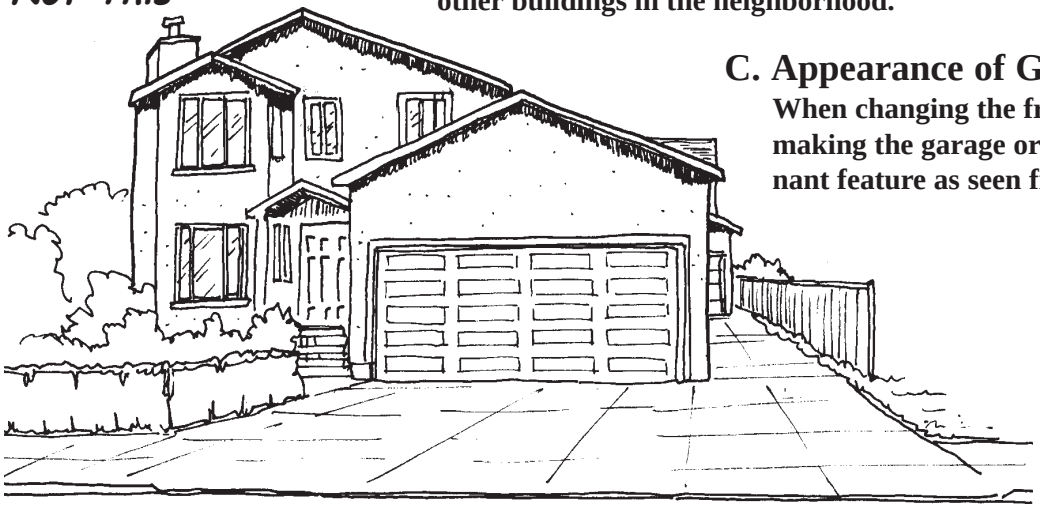
Do This



B. Front Porches.

If front porches are a part of the neighborhood pattern, a new building or new entry should consider including this feature similar in size, location and proportions to the other buildings in the neighborhood.

Not This



C. Appearance of Garage.

When changing the front of a building, avoid making the garage or a blank wall the dominant feature as seen from the street.

For building additions, avoid having the garage become the closest architectural element to the street. Also see Zoning Code for required garage setbacks.

4) Building Envelope

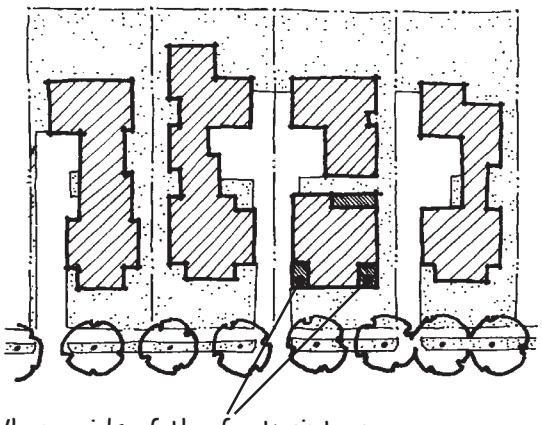
Similar to setbacks, the complexity of building forms contributes to the visual quality of a neighborhood. The complexity of the building forms may also affect the apparent mass of the building. Less complex or simpler forms often appear more massive and larger, while buildings with more variety in their forms appear less massive and often more interesting. Changes to a consistent pattern of building forms appears disruptive to a neighborhood. If there is little pattern of established building form, greater flexibility in building footprint and massing may be considered. Evaluate the neighborhood pattern of building footprint and massing:

- Is there an existing pattern of building footprints?
- Are building forms highly complex or simple in form?
- What would be the effect of altering the pattern?

Guideline:

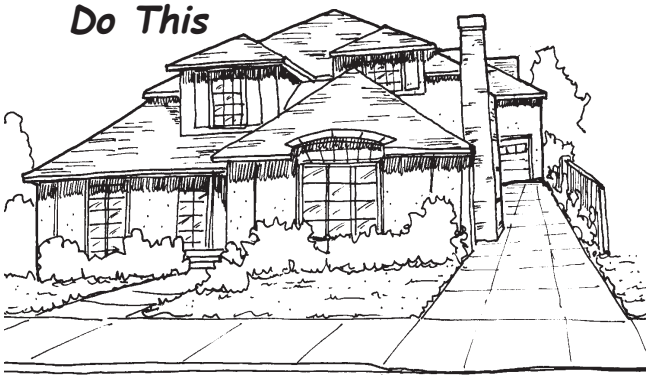
A. Building Envelope

Observe the variety in the building forms and footprints within the neighborhood. If a common pattern or level of complexity exists, new buildings should have a similar amount of variety in their footprint and massing.



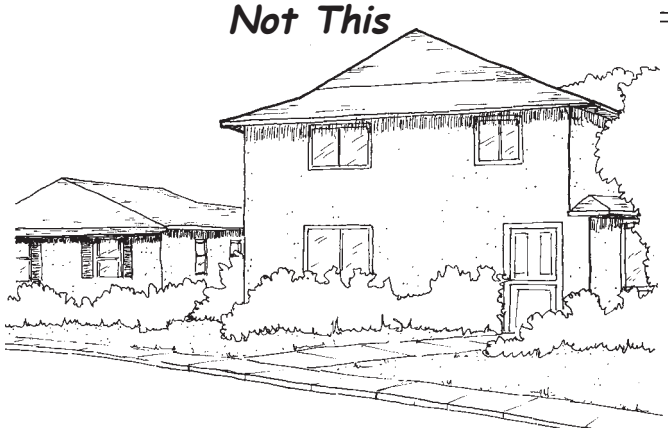
When voids of the footprint are filled in by new construction the apparent mass of the building increases

Do This



The first and second-story of this house show an exterior form with a great amount of variety that appears less massive.

Not This



Second-story addition with very rectangular building form appears massive next to its one-story neighbor. More variety in the second floor building design would have made it more compatible with its neighbor.

5) Neighborhood Scale

The scale of a building is its perceived size relative to the size of neighboring structures. For the purposes of these guidelines, neighborhood is defined as the block or general area where a group of buildings can be seen together. A compatible design will respect the scale of its neighborhood. The scale can be affected by the overall size of the building, how the façade is broken into more complex pieces, and how second-story portions are set back from the first level. To assess compatibility, examine the dimensions and proportions of neighboring buildings compared with those of the proposed structure:

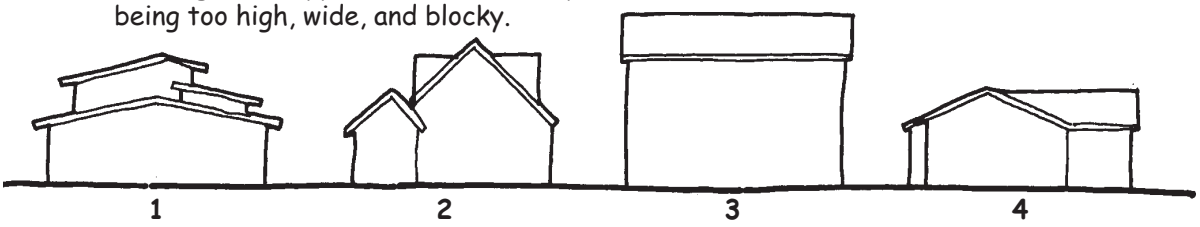
- Is there a common size or shape to buildings in the neighborhood?
- Does the proposed structure appear under or oversized in relation to neighboring buildings?
- What architectural forms and sizes could make the scale of the proposed building appear compatible with the neighborhood?

Guideline:

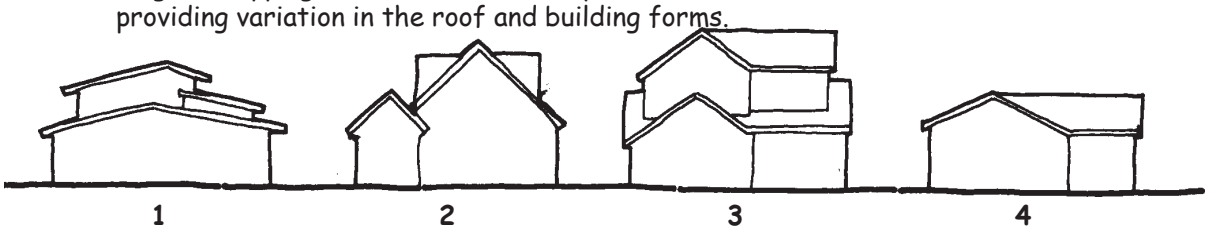
A. Neighborhood Scale

Observe the scale of buildings in the neighborhood. The proposed structure should respect the scale of the neighborhood through architectural forms and sizes compatible with the buildings in the neighborhood.

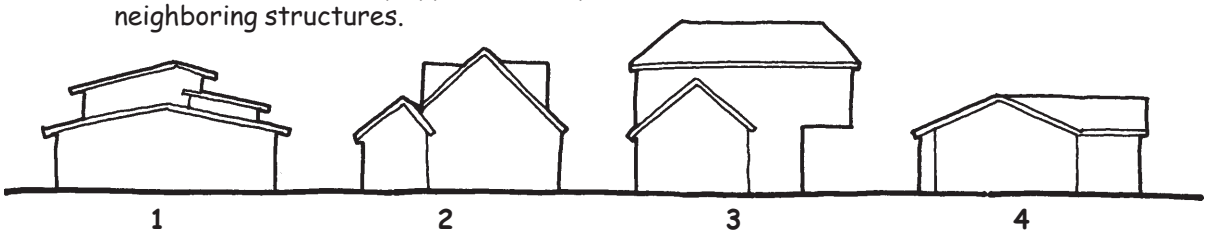
Building No. 3 appears out of scale by being too high, wide, and blocky.



The revised design of building No. 3 became compatible with its neighbors by reducing the height, stepping back the second story and providing variation in the roof and building forms.



Building No. 3 with cantilevered design to accommodate driveway appears incompatible with neighboring structures.



6) Building Form & Style

I. Compatibility with the Architectural Style.

Many architectural elements can affect how a building can appear compatible with its neighborhood such as building mass, height, architectural style, materials and detailing. San Mateo neighborhoods are home to many different architectural styles. In some neighborhoods the architectural style is more defined than in others and on some buildings it is more apparent than on others. Generally, it is best to continue to express the style of the existing building through appropriate design and materials. If the style of the building is changed with an addition, consider the impact of that change on the neighborhood. Evaluate the architectural style of the building and those of the buildings in the surrounding neighborhood:

- What design elements define the architectural style of the building? (e.g. massing, roof shape, materials, window type)
- Are the defining elements common to other buildings in the neighborhood?
- What would be the effect of changing the architectural style or some of the elements that are common to the neighborhood or the existing structure?

Guideline:

A. Compatibility With Architectural Style

A new building, an addition to a building, or a second building on a lot should be architecturally compatible with the existing structure and its neighbors. Consider the architectural style of the existing building and neighborhood established through building style, materials, architectural detailing, and size and placement of windows.

The rear building architecturally acknowledges the front and neighboring buildings with its sloped roof, generous roof overhangs, roof beam detailng, and pattern of divided lights in the upper half of the windows.

Building Form & Style (continued)

II. Compatibility of Building Forms.

Some neighborhoods in San Mateo are made up of buildings that have similar forms, proportions or architectural styles. Other neighborhoods have a greater mix of building types. Neighborhoods that have a similar urban form or style can be identified by characteristics such as similar height (e.g., one or two stories), common roof slope, similar window shape, common exterior materials, or common architectural detailing.

In areas where a common urban form is established, new development should respect the features that contribute to that developed form. The intent is not to mimic the architecture of any area, but if there is a dominant architectural character, to reflect the features that provide that character. Evaluate the architectural forms and features common to the neighborhood:

- Is there a consistent form of building massing in the neighborhood?
- Is there a roof shape common to the structures in the neighborhood?
- Are there window shapes or architectural detailing common to the structures in the neighborhood?

Guideline:

A. Compatibility of Building Forms

Identify if there are architectural forms, proportions or styles common to buildings in the neighborhood and if so, incorporate or acknowledge those in the design of the building.

The following three sketches illustrate a building in an existing neighborhood that is being expanded to a multi-family use. Architectural characteristics of the existing neighborhood include:

- One story buildings at the street;
- Sloping roofs;
- Trim around windows;
- Divided panes in the windows;
- Parking concealed from the street.

Do This

Conversion of a house to a multi-family building that successfully acknowledges height, roof slope and window detailing.

Not This

Conversion of a house to a multi-family building that ignores building form, roof shape and window type.

Building Form & Style (continued)

III. Compatibility of Building Forms.

In neighborhoods where there is no common built form, greater design flexibility exists for new buildings, and a greater opportunity to define the area. The architectural solution should attempt to unify the character of the neighborhood.

Guideline:

A. Acknowledge Positive Design Features

In neighborhoods where a defined architectural form or style does not exist, the design should draw upon positive design features of buildings in the area and where appropriate, use those features to unify the neighborhood.

The following sketch illustrates how a new building or building addition may be designed to fit into an existing neighborhood of varying building types. The new building (center) has the following architectural characteristics:

- Sloped, one-story roof at entry;
- One-story portion of building adjacent to single-family neighbors;
- Taller wall adjacent to three-story neighbor;
- Stucco finish similar to both neighbors; and
- Concealed parking.

7) Wall and Roof Articulation

San Mateo's narrow (50 to 60-foot wide) and often long lots often lead to buildings of similar long proportions. Building walls that are long and unbroken appear out of scale with established San Mateo neighborhoods. Architectural features such as bay windows, entries and chimneys can be used to visually divide a building into smaller sections. Buildings can also achieve the architectural proportions common to San Mateo's neighborhoods by dividing walls and roofs into smaller sections. Consider the appearance of the building walls in relation to others in the neighborhood:

- Do the walls appear excessively long and out of scale with nearby structures?
- Do the proposed improvements include architectural features or changes in roof and building forms that will add interest to the building?

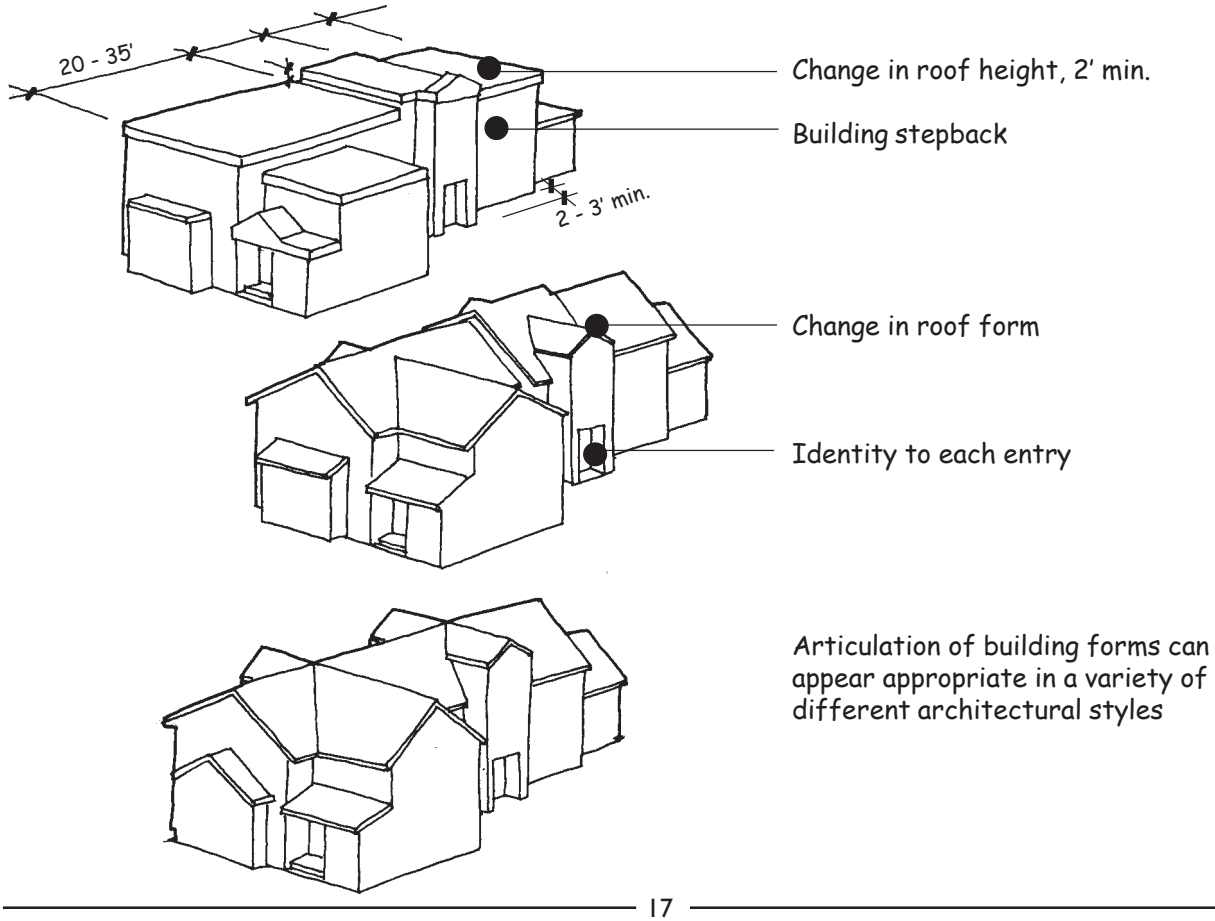
Guidelines:

A. Changes to Walls and Roofs.

Visually divide the building into smaller sections by providing a stepback in building walls and/or a step in roof height or roof form at intervals of 20 to 35 feet.

B. Architectural Features.

Dwelling units should have some individual identity within the project. This may be provided by distinctive entries, a break in the building form or appropriate use of materials, while continuing to be compatible with the overall design of the structure.



Wall and Roof Articulation (continued)

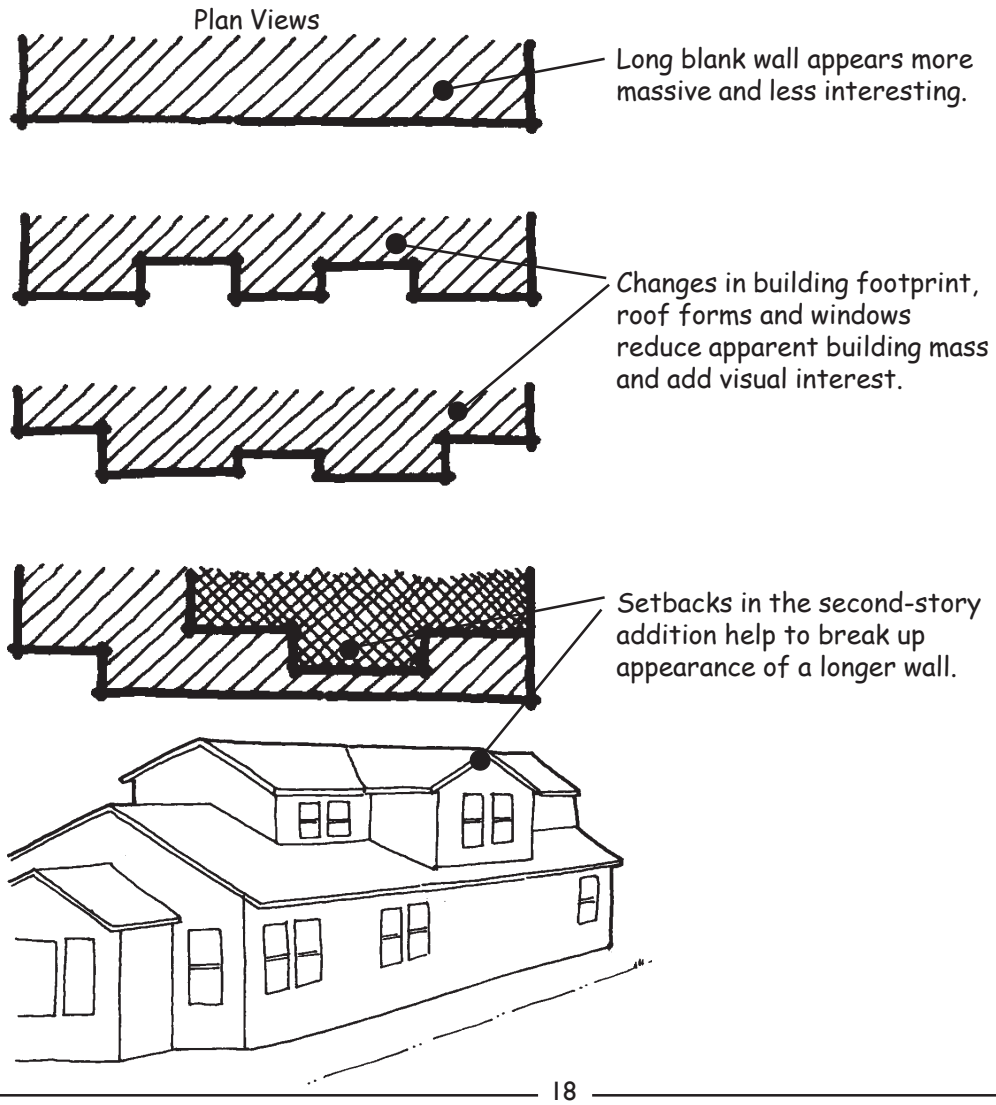
Building wall gaps or setbacks that articulate the walls of the structure create shadows and contribute to the architectural character of the home. These changes to the form of a building can have a great affect on the apparent building mass. One option often explored for expanding a home is to fill-in some of these areas. Longer flat walls generally appear more massive and less interesting. When planning an addition to a building, consider how the addition will affect the appearance of the structure's longer walls.

- Do proposed changes remove architectural features that break-up the apparent mass of the building?
- Do the proposed changes include new features that will add visual interest to long or tall walls?

Guideline:

C. Wall Articulation

Avoid creating long or tall blank side walls. Breakup the appearance of long side walls with steps in the building wall, and place windows where neighbor's privacy can be respected. Also consider changes in materials and appropriate architectural detailing that add scale to long walls.



8) Roof Design

I. Design Compatibility.

Roof shape and type can be the most obvious elements in defining the appearance of a building and a neighborhood. Many neighborhoods have roof patterns that are distinctive and repeatable. Other neighborhoods have greater variety or less distinctive roof forms, and greater changes to roof forms could be acceptable. Roof patterns are created through the roof slope, materials and massing of roofs. Evaluate the patterns of roofs in the neighborhood:

- What are the common roof slopes?
- What materials are common to most roofs?
- How is the massing of the roofs commonly arranged?
- What would be the effect on the neighborhood of altering the roof of the building?

Guideline:

A. Compatibility of Roof Forms

If there is an established architectural style of roofs in a neighborhood, consider roof shape and types that are compatible with roofs in the neighborhood and with the existing building. Express this compatibility through roof forms, slope, materials and massing. Applicants may also consider alternate roof forms that improve the architectural quality of the building where the design does not detract from the character of the neighborhood.

The roof slope and generous overhang of the new rear building is compatible with the existing front and neighboring building roofs.

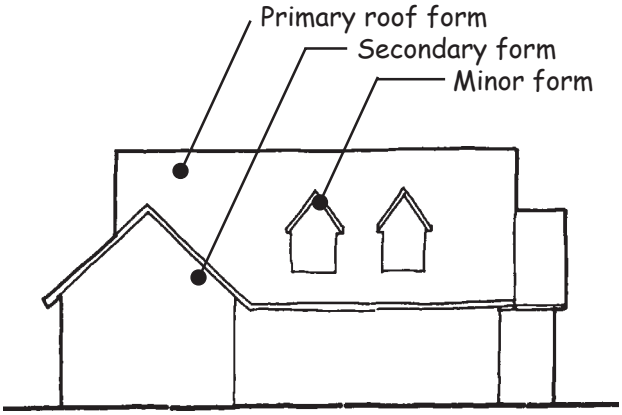
Steeply sloped roofs and composition roofing are the common elements to the roofs of these buildings. A new building in this neighborhood should be compatible with these characteristics.

Roof Design (continued)

II. Massing of Roof Forms.

The mass of a roof and how it is articulated into different shapes contributes to the character of a building. Most buildings 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 structure. Evaluate the massing of the roof forms and determine how an addition to the roof form will benefit the appearance of the building and be compatible with the neighborhood:

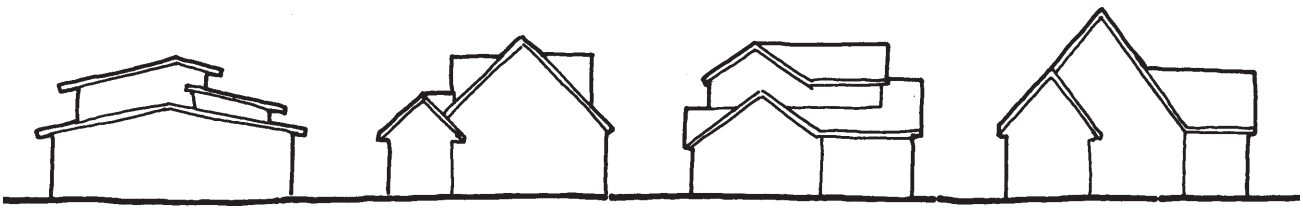
- Does the existing building have primary and secondary roof forms?
- Would the addition change the appearance of those roof forms?
- Do the proposed roof forms contribute to the overall style of the building?
- What would be the effect of altering the common roof patterns of the surrounding neighborhood?
- Would a different roof style reduce the apparent mass of the building while being compatible with the neighborhood?



Guideline:

A. Massing of Roof Forms

When planning a new building 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 building's apparent mass and scale, provide visual interest, and have an appropriate number of roof forms. Additional roof forms should be architecturally compatible with the primary form's slope and material, and be consistent with the established pattern of roof forms in the neighborhood. Consider changing roof style if it would enhance the appearance of the building and neighborhood, and reduce overall massing of the building.



These two-story buildings all display primary and secondary roof forms compatible with their architectural style

Roof Design (continued)

III. Lowering Eave Line.

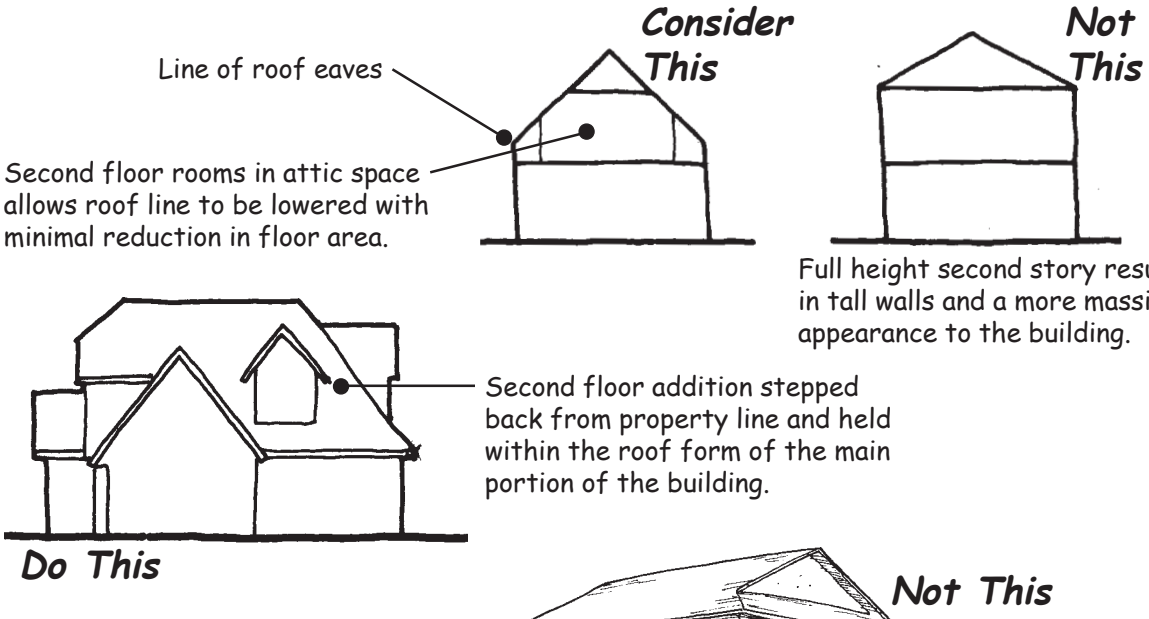
Lowering the eave line of a second-story roof can add to its compatibility with single-story neighbors. Lowering the eave line ties the two stories to a building height common to many San Mateo neighborhoods. Setting second-story additions back into the area of roof lines is often a solution for meeting Daylight Plane requirements and it generally will lower the apparent height of the building. 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. Evaluate the proposed structure or addition:

- Is there an existing pattern of single-story or full two-story buildings in the neighborhood?
- Would the proposed structure or addition create wall heights that are compatible with or different from the pattern of buildings in the neighborhood?
- What would be the effect of altering the pattern found in the neighborhood?

Guideline:

A. Eave Line

If the neighborhood does not have a dominant pattern of tall two-story walls, 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.



9) Placement of Windows & Balconies for Privacy

A second-story or other addition to a building can create privacy issues for occupants and adjacent neighbors. When planning an addition, evaluate how new windows and balconies may affect the privacy of the building's occupants and that of the neighbors:

- Are planned windows directly aligned with neighboring windows or offset from them?
- Can the proposed floor plan be modified to protect a neighbor's privacy?
- What architectural or landscaping solutions might enhance privacy?
- Could the use of transom or clerestory windows allow desired light and air while avoiding privacy impacts?

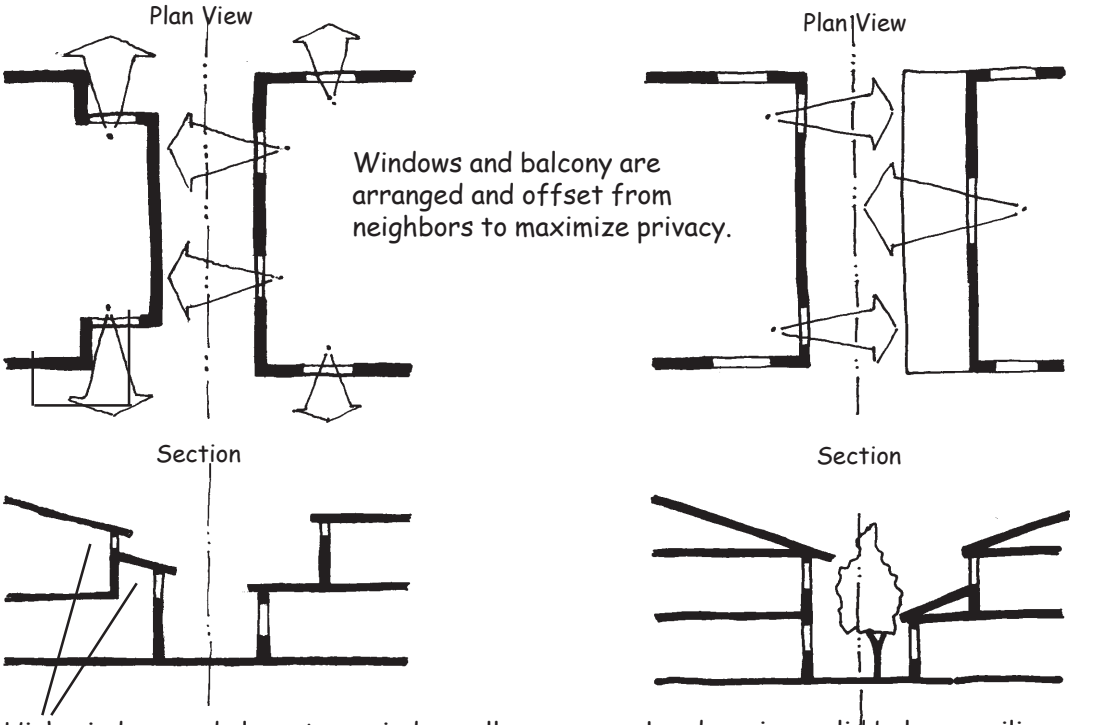
Guideline:

A. Window Placement

Design building additions to respect adjacent neighbors privacy through careful planning of window locations and type of windows, use of landscaping, and/or architectural solutions.

B. Balcony Placement

Locate second-story balconies with respect for neighboring privacy. Consider balcony locations away from property lines to limit intrusion on private open space.



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

Note: When using landscaping to create privacy consider the potential view impacts that could occur from mature trees. Also, note that landscaping is not a solution for inadequate architectural solutions.

Landscaping, solid balcony railings or obscure glass can also reduce privacy impacts.

10) Exterior Materials

Exterior materials should complement the style of the existing building and that of the neighborhood. When selecting materials, consider the types of materials, number of different materials, the quality, and how ornamentation is applied. As with other design elements, the neighborhood context provides direction for the choice of materials. Use of similar materials will help a building appear compatible with its neighbors. When planning the exterior architectural appearance of a building evaluate the existing materials used on the building and others in the neighborhood:

- Do the exterior materials complement those on the existing building and those found in the neighborhood?
- Is the quality of materials comparable to that of buildings in the neighborhood?
- Is the number of different finish materials comparable to that of buildings in the neighborhood?
- Does the proposed building appear too plain or overly decorated?
- What would be the effect of using exterior materials that are different from those on the existing building or those in the neighborhood?

Guidelines:

A. Compatibility

Use exterior materials that are common to the neighborhood and compatible with the architecture of the new or existing building.

B. Quality

Use exterior materials that are of a similar or better quality of those used in the neighborhood, and that are consistent with the architecture of the new or existing building.

C. Quantity

Quantity refers to the number of different exterior materials used on a building. Apply an amount of exterior materials in a manner consistent with the neighborhood and the architectural style of the new or existing building.

D. Ornamentation

Apply ornamentation in a manner consistent with the style of the building. Avoid using ornamentation in a manner that will make the building appear too plain or overly decorated.

The materials of this building appear compatible because they are mostly wood, and they have a common style of heavy and exaggerated proportions.

The stucco and tile materials of this building are compatible because they are of a defined architectural style – Spanish Mediterranean, and are an appropriate amount of ornamentation for this style building.

11) Openings

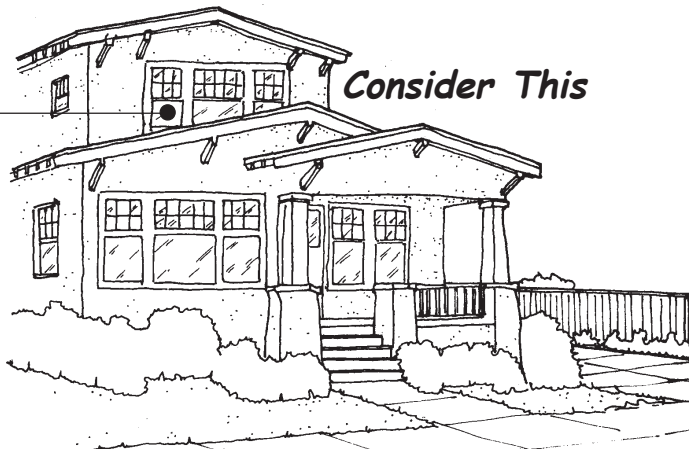
Doors and windows are often the most visually distinctive features on a building. They are a link between private and public space and can provide a sense of security for both. They also can establish an architectural rhythm and affect the apparent mass of the building. Evaluate the openings on the building and in the neighborhood:

- Is there a dominant proportion to the openings – vertical or horizontal – that is common to the building or others in the neighborhood?
- What are the dominant window materials on the building and in the neighborhood?
- Is there a window or door style – such as an arched shape or divided lights – common on the building or in the neighborhood?
- What would be the effect of altering the established pattern or style of window or door openings?

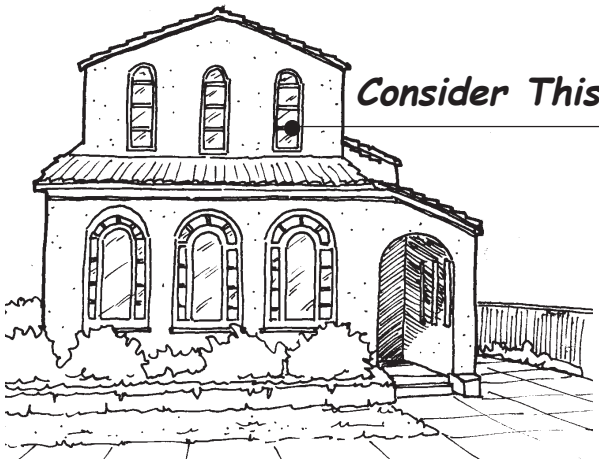
Guideline:

A. Window Compatibility

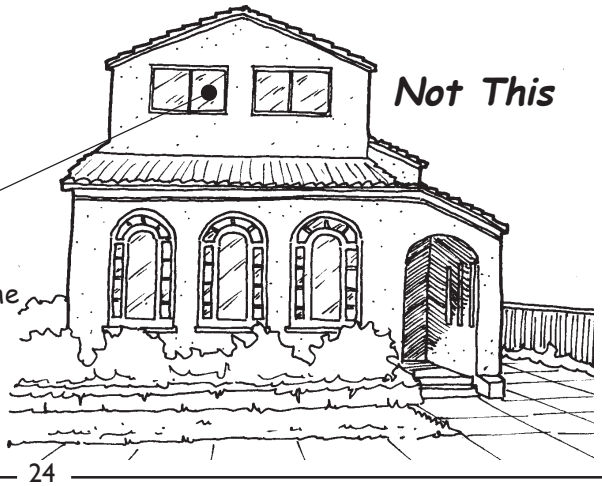
Select windows and doors that are compatible with the dominant types on the building and in the neighborhood, including proportions of the openings, materials, and style or detailing.



Style and materials of new second-story windows match and appear compatible with the original first-story of the building. New or replacement windows should match or exceed the quality of existing windows.



New second-story windows have similar proportions and are of same material (wood) as original first-story windows.



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.

12) Open Space.

Open space provides areas for residents to enjoy balconies, patios, and landscaped areas typical of San Mateo neighborhoods. In addition, landscaped areas can include pervious surface that absorbs rainwater and avoids urban runoff. Open space can be located in setback areas, on balconies, and in other non-auto areas. It should be developed as a mix of walkable and landscaped areas for residents to use, and contribute to the aesthetic character of the City.

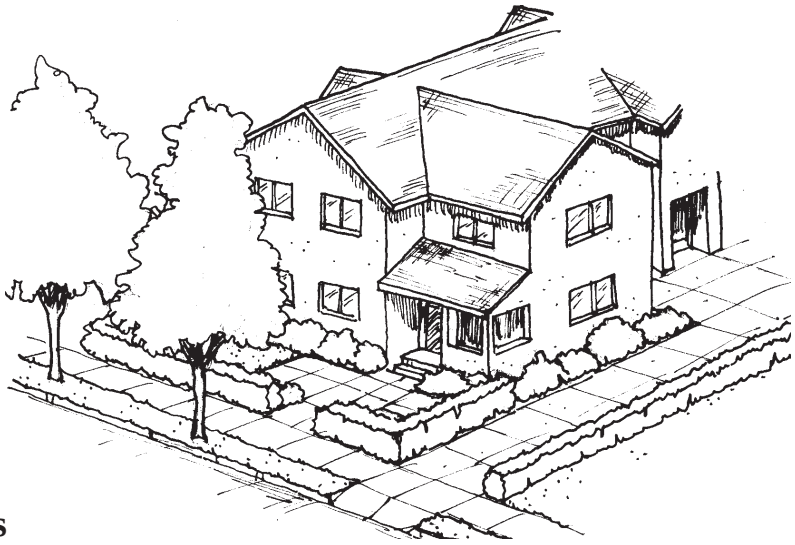
The front yard setback can be developed as a usable open space area. A 3-foot high fence or hedge located at the front property line provides an acceptable level of privacy without "walling" off the street or restricting views of the sidewalk. A fence or hedge may not be appropriate in neighborhoods where front yards have an "open" character.

Guideline

A. Walkable and Planted Areas

Develop open space with a mixture of walkable and planted areas. Walkable areas may be decks, patios, lawn or other similar surface. In neighborhoods where hedges or low fencing are common in the front yards, a 3-foot height fence or hedge may be used to define front yard open space.

Auto circulation areas often occupy a large percentage of the site but may also be used as usable open space where practical. These areas may double as entry courts to front doors, play areas and sitting spaces. After evaluating site lines and safe space for vehicle needs, consider the possible multiple use of these areas as open space. Landscaping and special paving materials often enhance the pedestrian quality and encourage the multiple use of the space.



Guideline:

B. Multi-Use of Paved Areas

After evaluating for safety, consider designing vehicle areas to also function as usable open space – enhanced with landscaping, special pavement materials and recreation amenities.

Open Space (continued)

Design open space areas with consideration of sun, wind, and noise. Usable open space should be provided with both sun and shade areas where possible, be shielded from strong winds, and be located away from heavy traffic areas. Patios should be located away from the north edge of buildings to avoid total shading and have shade trees when located adjacent to a south wall. Landscaping and fences can be used to buffer wind and noise, and/or maintain privacy from adjacent neighbors. In order to be properly located, the comfort of open space areas should be considered during the initial site layout.

Guideline:

C. Open Space Comfort

To create comfortable and usable open space areas, consider the effects of sun, wind, and noise during the initial site layout.

Special paving and landscaping are used to reduce the paved area adjacent to the side of the building and provide a pleasant entry to the rear units.

Acknowledgements

City Council

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Sue Lempert, Council Member

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