

# MULTI-FAMILY AND RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS



CITY OF SAN MATEO

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 1. ORGANIZATION

1.1 Organization .....	1
------------------------	---

## 2. PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

2.1 Purpose.....	3
------------------	---

2.2 Applicability.....	3
------------------------	---

2.3 Types of Buildings Regulated .....	4
--	---

## 3. SITE PLANNING

3.1 Pedestrian Access and Accommodations .....	9
--	---

3.2 Parking, Access, and Driveways .....	12
--	----

3.3 Frontage Elements in Central Business District (CBD) Zoning District .....	15
--	----

## 4. BUILDING DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

4.1 Massing and Articulation .....	17
------------------------------------	----

4.2 Ground Floor Requirements.....	31
------------------------------------	----

4.3 Additional Standards for Mixed-Use Buildings .....	32
--	----

4.4 Transitions and Screening .....	33
-------------------------------------	----

4.5 Roof Form .....	35
---------------------	----

4.6 Windows, Doors, Entry Design, and Security .....	36
--	----

4.7 Materials and Colors .....	42
--------------------------------	----

4.8 Additions to Existing Structures ....	44
---	----

## 5. LANDSCAPING, OPEN SPACE, AND EXTERIOR LIGHTING

5.1 Landscaping and Open Space .....	46
--------------------------------------	----

5.2 Exterior Lighting.....	50
----------------------------	----

## 6. OTHER SITE FEATURES

6.1 Accessory Structures and Enclosures .....	52
---	----

6.2 Utilities and Mechanical Equipment .....	53
--	----

6.3 Required Screening .....	54
------------------------------	----

6.4 Lightwells .....	54
----------------------	----

## 7. SPECIFIC PLAN AREA STANDARDS

7.1 Downtown Plan Area .....	57
------------------------------	----

7.2 El Camino Real Master Plan Area ..	62
--	----

7.3 Hillsdale Station Area .....	65
----------------------------------	----

7.4 Mariner's Island Specific Plan Area .....	69
---	----

7.5 Mid and South El Camino Real .....	70
--	----

7.6 San Mateo Rail Corridor Transit Oriented Development Plan Area .....	72
--	----

7.7 Vision of the Gateway.....	74
--------------------------------	----

8. DEFINITIONS .....	78
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## 1.1 ORGANIZATION

These Objective Design Standards for the City of San Mateo are organized into the following sections.

**Section 1** outlines the organization of the document.

**Section 2** describes the purpose and applicability of these Objective Design Standards for qualifying multi-family and residential mixed-use development projects in the City of San Mateo.

**Sections 3, 4, 5, and 6** work together and set forth standards that apply to projects at the site planning, building design, and site detail levels. General standards applicable to all development are provided at the beginning of each section, followed by specific standards based on building type (low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise).

**Section 7** establishes additive standards applicable within adopted specific plan areas.

**Section 8** provides supplementary definitions to those contained in San Mateo Municipal Code (SMMC) Chapter 27.04 (Zoning – Definitions).

*Graphics utilized in the following pages are to illustrate the specific components identified and may not necessarily capture all standards of the document with the graphic. Graphics, annotations, and captions shall not be construed to represent standards that are not specifically identified in the graphic and are illustrative for conceptual purposes; the standards text shall prevail.*



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# PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

## 2.1 PURPOSE

These Objective Design Standards (ODS) are established to:

- A. Provide clear, objective, and measurable standards for qualifying multi-family and residential mixed-use development throughout the City;
- B. Streamline the review of qualifying multi-family and residential mixed-use development projects to address housing needs of all income levels;
- C. Maintain and enhance San Mateo's charm through the built environment and ensure new development fits contextually into surrounding neighborhoods and districts by incorporating quality design in architectural styles, building massing, detailing, articulation, and materials/colors; and
- D. Ensure that pedestrian movement and experiences are considered foremost in the massing, placement, and design of new development.

## 2.2 APPLICABILITY

- A. The ODS set forth in this document apply to new multi-family development, residential mixed-use development, and additions to multi-family and residential mixed-use development pursuant to any provision of state law which references objective design standards, including but not limited to Government Code Section 65589.5 (Housing Accountability Act) and Section 65913.4, as may be amended from time to time.
- B. These ODS apply to private development projects on private property. The ODS may work in conjunction with adopted City of San Mateo documents that regulate use of and required improvements to public property abutting a development site.
- C. These ODS are additive to the requirements of the zoning district in which a development site is located, as specified in San Mateo Municipal Code Title 27 (Zoning) or any other provisions of the San Mateo Municipal Code. In the event of conflict, the San Mateo Municipal Code shall apply.
- D. In the event of any internal conflict within this document between citywide standards and standards applicable to a specific plan area, the specific plan area standards shall apply.



- E. If a project site is included within two or more specific plan areas simultaneously, all specific plan area standards shall apply.
- F. An applicant may propose a master plan, specific plan, or similar site-specific document for a large project site that proposes site specific objective design standards in-lieu of the standards contained within this document. If approved by the City, future development shall show compliance with these site-specific objective design standards.
- G. Graphics utilized in this document are to illustrate the specific components identified and may not necessarily capture all standards of the document with the graphic. Graphics, annotations, and captions shall not be construed to represent standards that are not specifically identified in the graphic and are illustrative for conceptual purposes; the standards text shall prevail.
- H. Projects that do not adhere to the these Objective Design Standards may elect an alternative review subject to the City's discretionary review process, applicable design guidelines, and General Plan policies and goals. Projects afforded concessions, waivers, or other density bonuses under the State Density Bonus Law (Government Code Section 65915), and projects subject to Senate Bill 35 (Government Code Section 65913) or any other applicable state law, may still use the Objective Design Standards or elect to utilize the City's discretionary design review process.

## **2.3 TYPES OF BUILDINGS REGULATED**

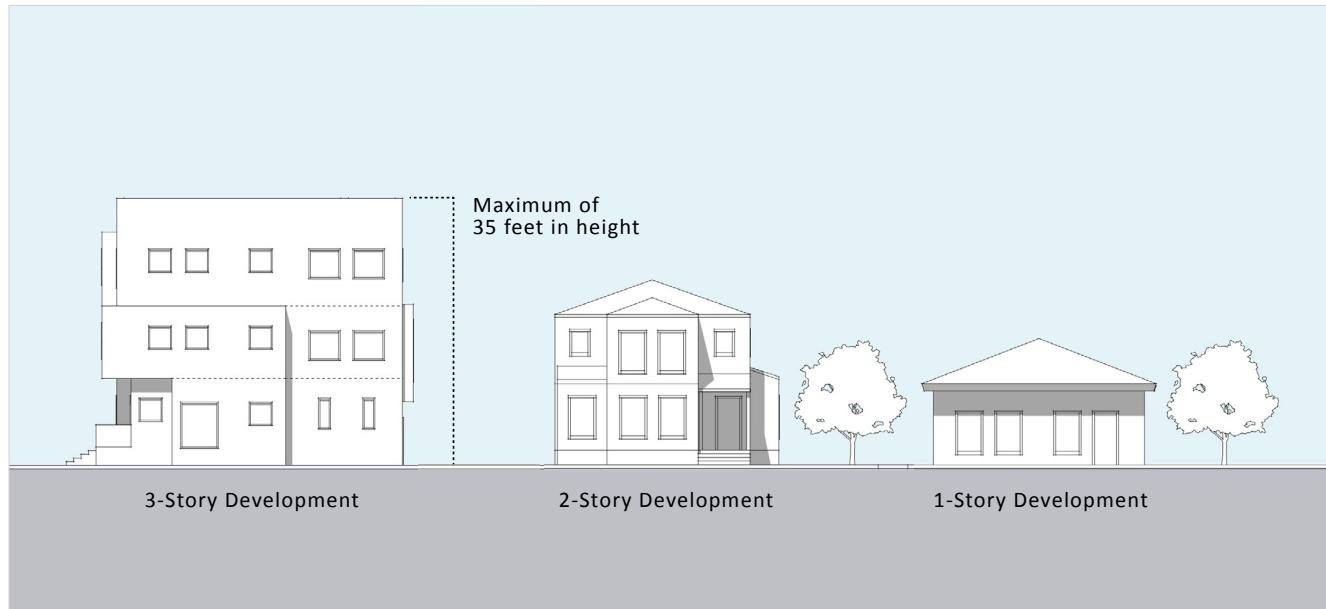
These standards establish regulations for three general building types: low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings, defined below:

- A. Low-rise shall mean buildings up to three (3) stories but no more than thirty-five (35) feet in height.
- B. Mid-rise shall mean buildings between four (4) and seven (7) stories but not more than ninety (90) feet in height.
- C. High-rise shall mean buildings eight (8) or more stories or more than ninety (90) feet in height.
- D. Where a standard within this document does not specify a specific building type, the standard shall apply to all building types.



## Low-Rise Buildings

**Low-rise** shall mean buildings up to three (3) stories but no more than thirty-five (35) feet in height.



*Figure 1: Low-rise shall mean buildings up to three (3) stories but no more than thirty-five (35) feet in height. (Section 2.2.H.A)*



*Figure 2: Two-story low-rise townhomes (Section 2.2.H.A)*



*Figure 3: Three-story low-rise triplex (Section 2.2.H.A)*



## Mid-Rise Buildings

**Mid-rise** shall mean buildings between four (4) and seven (7) stories but not more than ninety (90) feet in height.



*Figure 4: Mid-rise shall mean buildings between four (4) and seven (7) stories but not more than ninety (90) feet in height. (Section 2.2.H.B)*



*Figure 5: Four-story mid-rise development (Section 2.2.H.B)*



*Figure 6: Five-story mid-rise development (Section 2.2.H.B)*



## High-Rise Buildings

**High-rise** shall mean buildings eight (8) or more stories or more than ninety (90) feet in height.



Figure 7: High-rise shall mean buildings eight or more stories or greater than ninety (90) feet in height. (Section 2.2.H.C)



Figure 8: Ten-story high-rise development (Section 2.2.H.C)



Figure 9: Ten-story high-rise development (Section 2.2.H.C)



CITY OF SAN MATEO

### 3.1 PEDESTRIAN ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

#### 3.1.1 Pedestrian Paths

Onsite pedestrian paths shall comply with the following:

- A. The minimum width of a public pedestrian path shall be six (6) feet.
- B. All pedestrian paths on private property shall be clearly delineated using at least one (1) of the following:
  - 1. Colored and/or textured concrete
  - 2. Paving blocks or stones
  - 3. Grasscrete
  - 4. Tile
  - 5. Brick
  - 6. Masonry



Figure 10: Pedestrian paths on private property are clearly delineated with colored concrete. (Section: 3.1.1.B)



Figure 11: Public pedestrian paths shall be a minimum of six (6) feet wide. (Section: 3.1.1.A)



### 3.1.2 Pedestrian Paseos

If provided, pedestrian paseo(s) shall:

- A. Be open to the sky and connect to public sidewalks (i.e., paseos shall not dead end).
- B. Have a minimum twelve (12)-foot width, as measured from building face to adjacent building face for low-rise buildings.
- C. Have a minimum twenty (20)-foot width, as measured from building face to adjacent building face for mid-rise and high-rise buildings.
- D. Provide a minimum eight (8)-foot-wide public access easement within the required minimum paseo width for pedestrian access.
- E. Provide pedestrian-scale lighting along the length of the paseo. Such lighting shall be mounted not higher than twelve (12) feet, meet the latest Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) recommended values, and be directed downward or have a light cap.



Figure 12: A pedestrian paseo between low-rise buildings has a minimum eight (8)-foot-wide public access easement and a minimum twelve (12)-foot width, as measured from building face to adjacent building face. (Sections 3.1.2.B and 3.1.2.D)



F. Pedestrian paseos shall include a minimum of three (3) of the following pedestrian amenities for at least every twenty (20) linear feet:

1. Bench(es)
2. Shade structure(s)
3. Tree(s) consistent with the City Landscape Ordinance
4. Water feature or water fountain
5. Café tables and chairs
6. Textured, multi-colored, or patterned pavement
7. Public art
8. Decorative overhead lighting

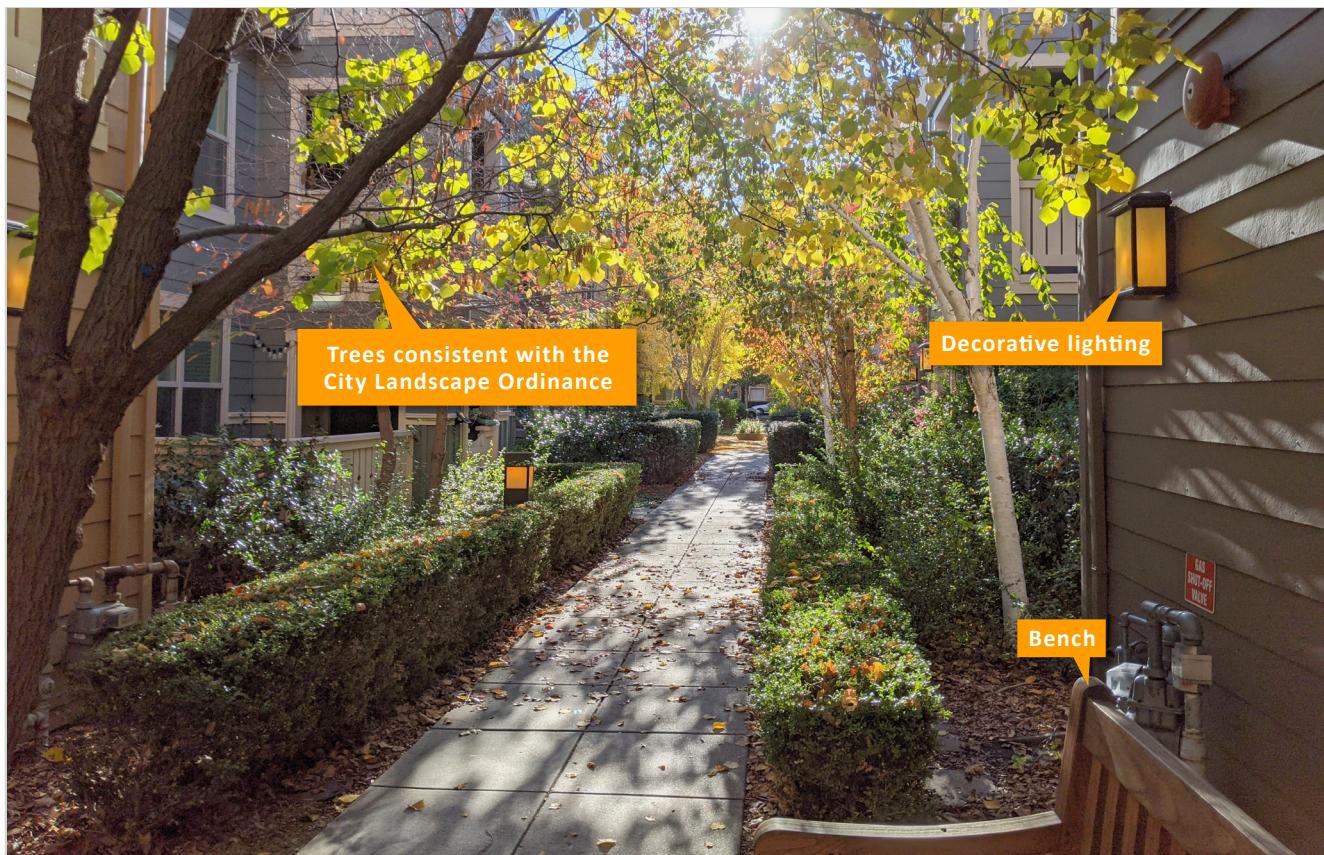


Figure 13: A pedestrian paseo includes trees (shade structures) consistent with the City Landscape Ordinance, a bench, and decorative lighting. (Section 3.1.2.F)



## 3.2 PARKING, ACCESS, AND DRIVEWAYS

### 3.2.1 Vehicle and Parking Area Screening

Where vehicles are visible from a public right-of-way (i.e., surface parking lots or rooftop garages), the following standards shall apply:

- A. Parking areas shall not be established within any required front setback area.
- B. Surface parking areas, including driveways, shall not occupy more than twenty-five (25) percent or sixty (60) feet of the project frontage, whichever is greater.
- C. Parking areas shall be screened from view from the adjacent primary street with a three (3)-foot-high textured or patterned block wall that is capped, or a landscape hedge, or combination of the two. If a wall is used, the wall shall be treated with a graffiti-resistant coating.
- D. Chain link or vinyl fencing shall be prohibited as a screening material for parking, lightwells, and utility structures/equipment.



Figure 14: Parking and driveways shall occupy no more than twenty-five (25) percent or sixty (60) feet of the project frontage, whichever is greater. (Section 3.2.1.B)



Figure 15: The parking area is screened from view from the adjacent primary street with a three (3)-foot-high landscaped hedge. (Section 3.2.1.C)

### 3.2.2 Roof-top Parking

Roof-top parking shall be screened by a parapet wall of a minimum three (3)-foot height and shall be constructed of the same material(s) as the building on which it is located.

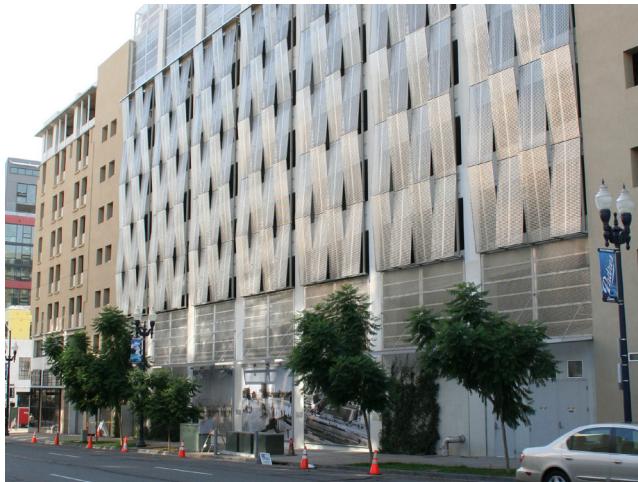
### 3.2.3 Parking Entrances and Curb Cuts

For developments that front more than one (1) street, driveways and entrances to parking facilities (surface parking or parking structures) shall be located on the secondary street frontage, side street, or alley unless access is only provided from the primary street frontage, or if the City traffic engineer requires access to occur from a primary street for traffic flow purposes. In circumstances in which a development site fronts two (2) primary streets, the developer may select the street to be used for the parking entrance.



### 3.2.4 Parking Structures

- A. For mixed-use buildings, any structured parking facility integrated into the building and located along a street shall not have more than fifty (50) percent of that frontage consisting of non-active uses, as defined in this document. Any portion of the frontage used for parking shall either be enclosed or shall have ground-level screening consisting of decorative metal grates, evergreen landscaping, or combination of the two.
- B. For multi-family residential buildings, any structured parking facility integrated into the building and located along or facing a public street shall either be enclosed or shall have ground-level screening consisting of decorative metal grates, evergreen landscaping, or both.
- C. Any stand-alone parking structure located along or facing a public right-of-way shall include at least one (1) of the following treatments:
  1. Landscape screening consisting of evergreen species covering at least the first two (2) lower stories of the parking structure.
  2. Public murals or art.
  3. Decorative screening elements attached to the structure, such as grills or vertical slats.



*Figure 16: Decorative screening elements screen the parking structure from the public right-of-way.  
(Section 3.2.4.C.3)*



*Figure 17: Active uses ground level parking structure  
(Section 3.2.4)*



### 3.3 FRONTEAGE ELEMENTS IN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (CBD) ZONING DISTRICT

In the CBD zoning district, a building's primary street frontage shall include either a plaza/publicly accessible open space or seating as stated below:

#### 3.3.1 Plazas or Publicly Accessible Open Space

A publicly accessible plaza/publicly accessible open space, subject to the following:

- A. For each one hundred fifty (150) feet of horizontal building frontage or portion thereof, at least one hundred (100) square feet of plaza/publicly accessible open area shall be provided.
- B. Each plaza/publicly accessible open space shall have a minimum depth and width of ten (10) feet.
- C. Where more than one (1) plaza area/publicly accessible open space is required based on building frontage, plaza/open space areas may be combined into one larger area.
- D. For buildings with a horizontal length of less than one hundred and fifty (150) feet, no plaza or publicly accessible open space is required. However, public seating shall be provided along the building frontage as required by subsection 3.3.2.

#### 3.3.2 Seating

Publicly accessible seating shall be provided on private property, subject to the following:

- A. One (1) seating unit shall be provided for each fifty (50) horizontal feet of building frontage, with a seating unit defined to be a seating area at least two (2) feet in width.
- B. Public seating shall either be distributed along the street frontage or provided in groupings within plazas and/or publicly accessible open spaces.
- C. At least fifty (50) percent of provided public seats shall have backs and armrests.



Figure 18: Publicly accessible seating on private property (Section 3.3.2)



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## 4.1 MASSING AND ARTICULATION

### 4.1.1 Blank Walls

Blank walls shall be limited to a maximum of twenty (20) feet in length on all stories.

### 4.1.2 Articulations Details

The following façade articulations shall be a minimum depth of twelve (12) inches. These shall be in addition to requirements for wall plane and massing breaks identified below for each building type. For low-rise and mid-rise buildings, at least two (2) of the following shall be provided. For high-rise buildings, at least three (3) of the following shall be provided:

- A. Architectural projections such as roof eaves, overhangs, cornices, pergolas, or metal, wood, or glass awnings
- B. Balconies per unit
- C. Box or bay windows per unit
- D. Window recesses and edges, including mouldings and reveals with at least three (3)-inch depth
- E. Projecting or recessed rooms or units for a minimum of ten (10) percent of the units along the building façade for low-rise development or a minimum of thirty (30) percent of the units for mid and high-rise development
- F. Horizontal mouldings that are at least three (3) inches minimum



Figure 19: A low-rise development with at least four different façade articulations (Section 4.1.2)



### 4.1.3 Building Materials and Color

Buildings shall not be monochromatic in color scheme and use of materials. The following approaches shall be used:

- A. A combination of at least three (3) different colors and/or materials shall be used on each building elevation, inclusive of trim. For example, the combination could be two (2) different colors and one (1) different material. No more than six (6) colors and/or materials may be utilized on each building elevation. Public art or murals shall not contribute to minimum or maximum colors and/or materials.
- B. Each color or material excluding trim shall constitute at least ten (10) percent of the building façade.
- C. A change in color or material shall be characterized by a minimum six (6)-inch offset from the adjacent building plane, or architectural element such as moldings or bandings shall be used to create the offset.
- D. Change of materials (for example, stucco to brick, etc.) including veneers shall not end at an outside exterior corner.



Figure 20: A mid-rise building with different colors and materials on the building façade to avoid a monochromatic color scheme and use of materials. (Section 4.1.3)



#### 4.1.4 Massing Breaks – Generally

Structures three (3) or more stories and sixty (60) or greater in length shall follow the rule of thirds in which a structure is divided into at least three primary masses. Possible ways to break a horizontal mass into three elements are illustrated below.

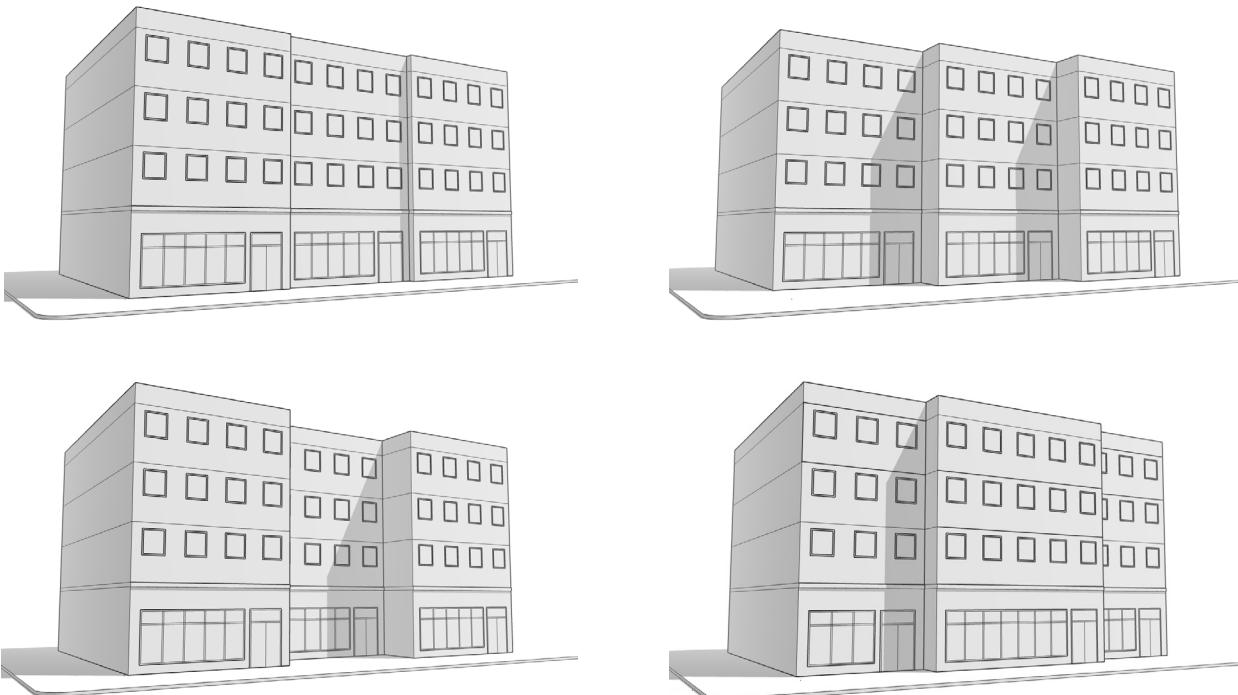


Figure 21: Possible ways to divide a horizontal mass into three elements (Section 4.1.4)



#### 4.1.5 Massing Breaks - Low-rise Buildings

Low-rise buildings shall have a minimum eighteen (18) inch-deep wall plane break for every fifteen (15) to thirty (30) feet of horizontal wall length.



*Figure 22: Low-rise buildings shall have a minimum eighteen (18) inch-deep wall plane break for every fifteen (15) to thirty (30) feet of horizontal wall length. (Section 4.1.5)*



#### 4.1.6 Massing Breaks - Mid-rise Buildings

**A. Building Composition.** Mid-rise buildings five (5) stories or lower in height shall be divided into at least two (2) sections: either a base and a top or a body and top. Mid-rise buildings of six (6) or more stories in height shall have a base, body, and building top.

##### 1. Base

a. The base shall be differentiated from the body and/or top through bands, string course, corbels, cornices, materials, and/or colors. If provided, the top of banding and/or string courses shall be located at the base of a window where a typical windowsill of the story above the base would be located, or at any point below that down to the line between the base and body stories.

b. For buildings six (6) stories or lower in height, the base, if provided, shall be no more than two (2) stories.

c. Seven (7) story mid-rise buildings shall provide a two (2) story base.

##### 2. Body

a. The body shall be a greater number of stories than the base.

##### 3. Top

a. If provided, the top shall not exceed one (1) story.

b. If provided, the top shall be differentiated from the base and/or body along all building facades by either its building material, wall plane or stepback, color, projected roof overhangs (minimum eighteen [18] inches), stepped parapets, roof cornice, bands, or a combination thereof.



Figure 23: Mid-rise buildings of six (6) or more stories in height shall have a base, body, and building top. (Section 4.1.6.A)



**B. Wall Planes.** At least one (1) of the following wall plane treatments shall be incorporated into the building design as described below.

1. Horizontal Wall Plane Breaks.

- a. Along all building frontages, a wall plane offset shall occur at least every twenty (20) to forty (40) feet of horizontal building length, with the offset being a minimum of two (2) feet in depth and five (5) feet in length.
- b. The horizontal wall plane offset/break shall follow the rule of thirds described in subsection 4.1.4.

2. Vertical Wall Plane Breaks. A change in the depth of the wall plane shall occur along the height of all building facades, unless stated otherwise. This shall be accomplished by incorporating at least one (1) of the following:

- a. Roof cornice on the top floor.
- b. A stepback or projection of a minimum of five (5) feet in depth between the base and the body of the building, meaning the body can be recessed or projected relative to the base. Along the primary and secondary frontages, projections from the base may occur on all stories above the base. No wall plane shall extend into the required setback or public right-of-way.
- c. A change in building material or color between the base and body characterized by a twelve (12)-inch minimum offset from the surrounding building wall.
- d. A minimum ten (10)-foot stepback immediately above the building base or for the top floor along all building facades facing a right-of-way.



Figure 24: Wall plane treatments shall be incorporated into the design of mid-rise buildings. (Section 4.1.6.B)



Figure 25: Vertical wall plane breaks can be accomplished by incorporating a roof cornice or change in material or color between the base and body. (Section 4.1.6.B)



### 3. Flat Plane Variation

a. For every twenty (20) to forty (40) feet of horizontal street frontage, the building façade design shall change in detailing to create distinct building segments. This change in detailing shall include at least four (4) of the following:

- i. Change of materials and or color(s)
- ii. Differing window size (twenty [20] percent or greater difference in height or width)
- iii. Change in windows treatments (including trim, type of window, sills, shutters, mullions)
- iv. Inclusion, or change, of cornices
- v. Inclusion, or change, of columns or pilasters
- vi. Inclusion, or exclusion, of balconies
- vii. Inclusion, or change, of horizontal banding (i.e., transition from simple band to frieze and cornice etc.) to break up the structure's massing
- viii. Wall plane offset (minimum eighteen [18] inches)
- ix. Change in roof form or heights aligned with the building segment(s)

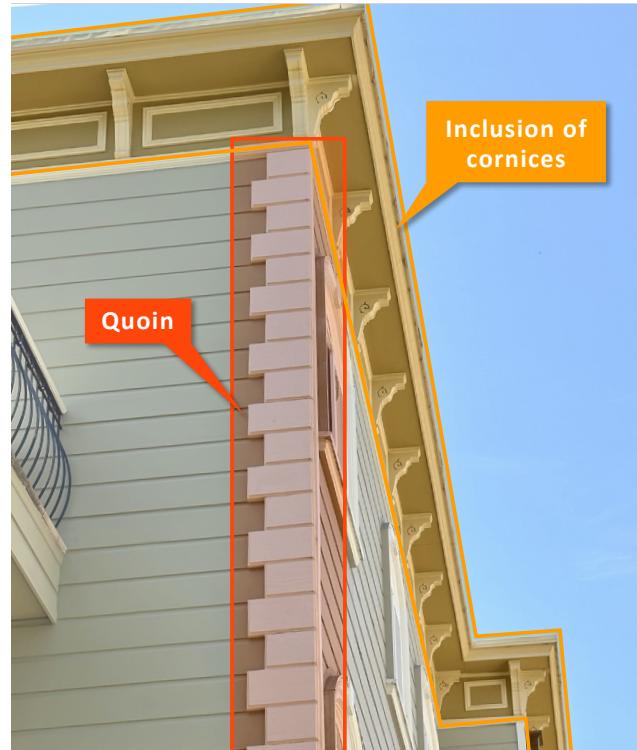


Figure 26: Quoin and inclusion of cornices, create distinct building segments. (Section 4.1.6.B)



Figure 27: Differing window sizes and alignment of windows along their top edges create distinct building segments. (Section 4.1.6.B)

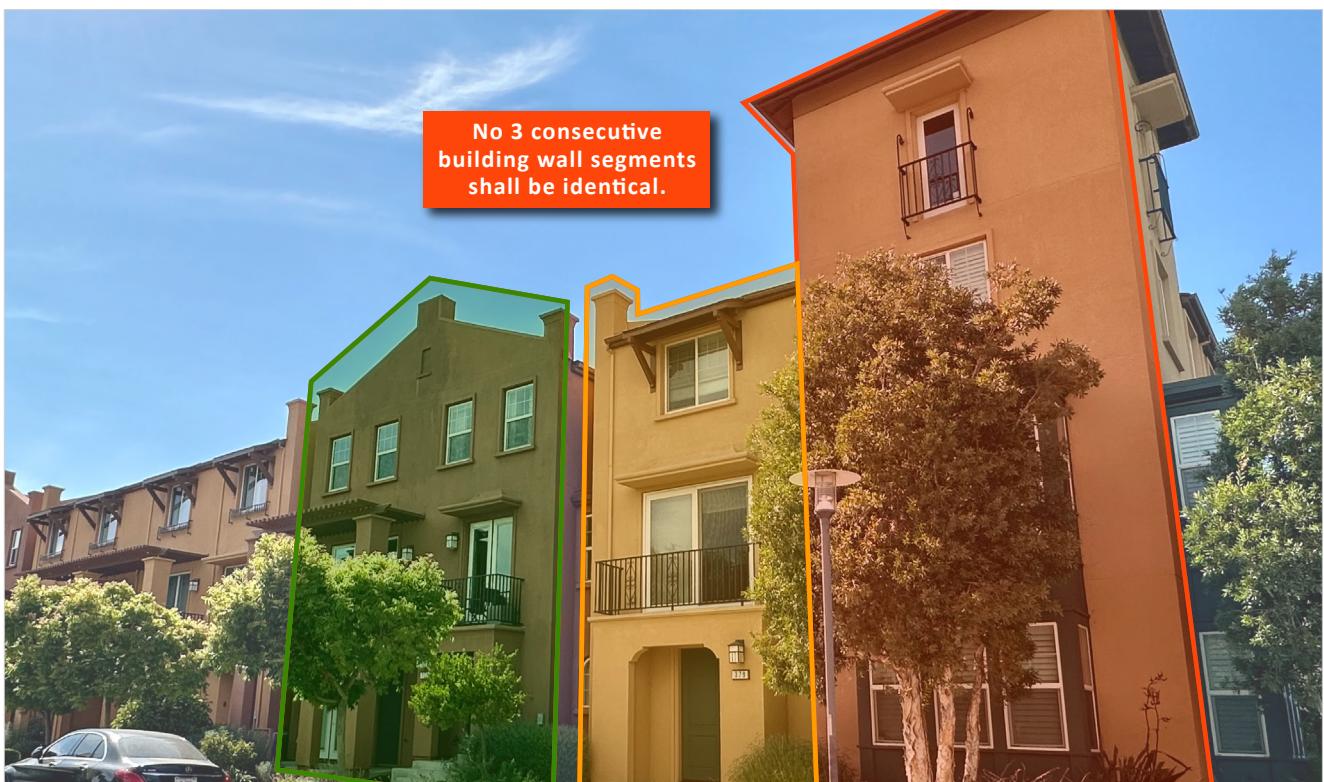


Figure 28: To prevent repetitive wall designs, no three (3) consecutive building wall segments shall be identical.



**C. Building Corner Treatment.** At the intersection of two (2) primary streets or a primary and secondary street, building corners shall incorporate at least one (1) of the following:

1. A corner cut of at least ten (10) feet at the base of the building
2. A tower element which extends between three (3) to six (6) feet in height from the building ridge
3. Special treatment of either different exterior materials, paint colors, recesses, or projections relative to the adjacent units, or combination of these features
4. An architectural element such as a cupola, quoin treatment, rooftop sculpture, or spire based on the architectural design of the overall structure



Figure 29: Examples of massing breaks in mid-rise buildings (Section 4.1.6.C)



#### 4.1.7 Massing Breaks - High-rise Buildings

**A. Building Composition.** High-rise buildings shall be divided into at least three (3) sections: base, body, and top.

1. Base

a. The base shall be two (2) to three (3) floors in height.

2. Body

a. The body shall be the floors above the base of the building, up to the top as defined below.

b. The body shall be a greater number of stories than the base.

3. Top

a. The top shall be no more than a maximum of two (2) stories.

b. The top shall be differentiated from the base and body by at least two (2) of the following:

i. Building material

vi. Projected roof overhang (minimum

ii. Wall plane break (minimum of two [2]

eighteen [18] inches)

feet in depth and five [5] feet in length)

vii. Stepped parapets

iii. Stepback (minimum ten [10] feet along  
all building facades)

viii. Roof cornice or distinguishing  
architectural element(s) such  
as overhangs, pergolas, etc.  
on the uppermost floor

iv. Color

v. Eaves



Figure 30: High-rise building wall plane horizontal offset examples (Section 4.1.7)

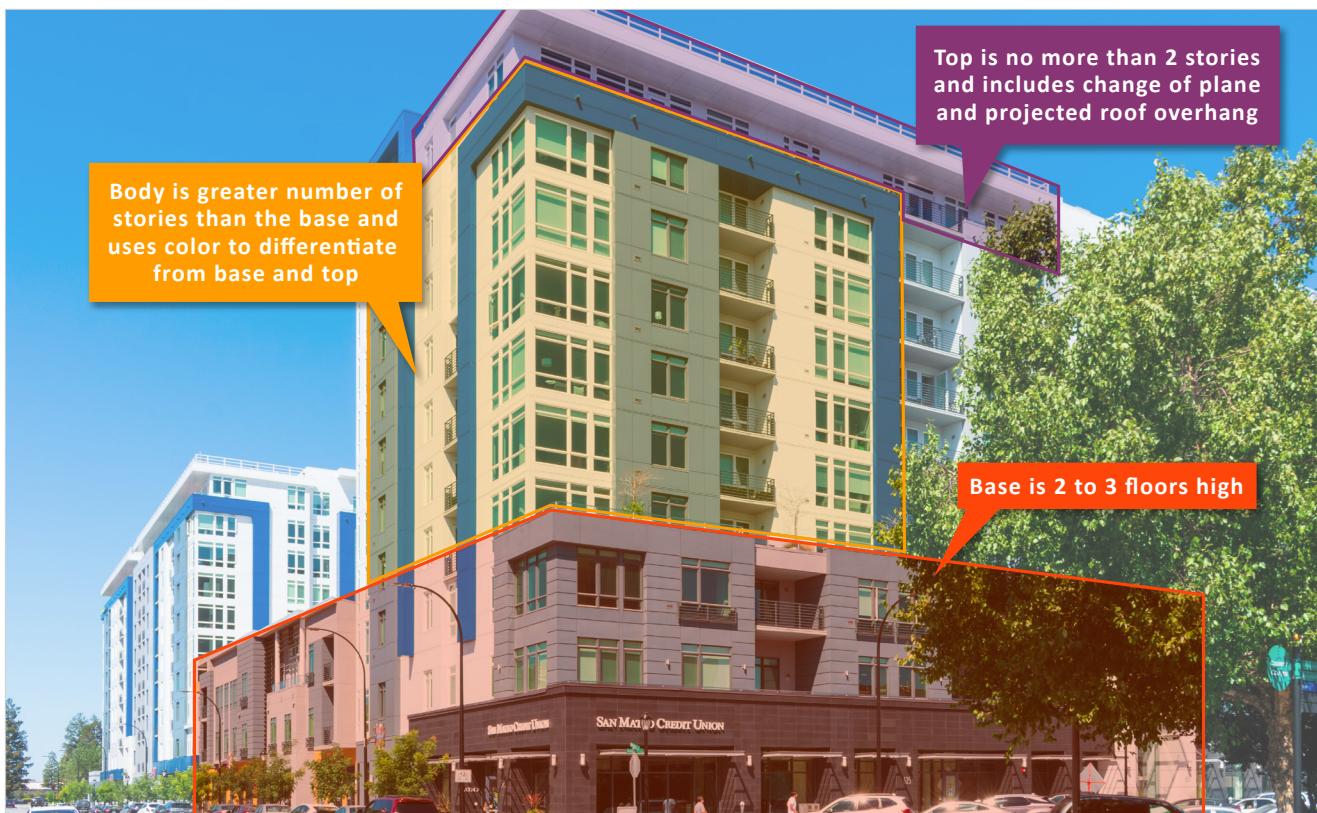


Figure 31: High-rise building wall plane vertical massing breaks (Section 4.1.7)



**B. Massing Breaks.** At least one (1) of the following shall be incorporated to break up building massing:

1. Horizontal Wall Plane Break.
  - a. Along all building frontages, a wall plane offset shall occur at least every twenty-five (25) to fifty (50) feet of horizontal building length, with the offset being a minimum of two (2) feet in depth and five (5) feet in length.
  - b. The horizontal wall plane break/offset shall follow rule of thirds described in subsection 4.1.4.
2. Vertical Wall Plane Breaks. Articulation shall be provided on all building facades. This shall be accomplished by incorporating at least three (3) of the following:
  - a. Roof cornice on the top floor
  - b. A stepback or projection of a minimum of five (5) feet in depth between the base and the body of the building, meaning the body can be recessed or projected relative to the base. Along the primary and secondary frontages, projections from the base shall only occur on the body of the building. No wall plane shall extend into the required setback or public right-of-way.
  - c. Change in building material or color between the base and body characterized by a minimum twelve (12)-inch offset from the surrounding building wall
  - d. A stepback of a minimum ten (10)-feet immediately above the building base or for the top floor



### 3. Flat Plane Variation

a. Every twenty-five (25) to fifty (50) feet of horizontal street frontage, the building façade design shall change in detailing to create distinct building segments. This change in detailing shall include at least four (4) of the following:

- i. Change of materials and or color(s)
- ii. Differing window size twenty (20) percent or greater difference in height or width
- iii. Change in windows treatments (including trim, type of window, mullions)
- iv. Inclusion, or change, of cornices
- v. Inclusion, or change, of columns or pilasters
- vi. Inclusion, or change, of horizontal banding (i.e., transition from simple band to frieze and cornice, etc.) to break up the massing of the structure
- vii. Wall plane offset (minimum eighteen [18] inches)
- viii. Inclusion or exclusion of balconies
- ix. Change in roof form or heights aligned with the building segment(s)

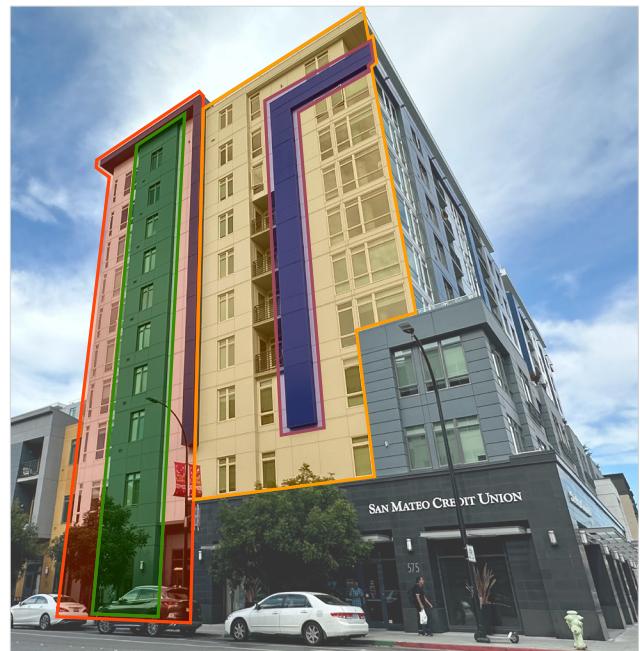


Figure 32: To prevent repetitive wall designs, no two (2) contiguous building wall segments shall be identical.

**C. Building Corner Treatment.** High-rise buildings shall incorporate the same corner treatment standards as mid-rise buildings.



## 4.2 GROUND FLOOR REQUIREMENTS

### 4.2.1 Mixed-Use

- A. At least seventy-five (75) percent of the ground floor commercial wall area shall be glazed.
- B. The finished floor to ceiling height for ground floor retail/commercial uses shall be at least twelve (12) feet.



Figure 33: Ground floor commercial uses shall be at least 12 feet in height. (Section 4.2.1.B)

### 4.2.2 Residential

Entries to ground-floor residential units shall be located eighteen (18) to forty-two (42) inches above or below the grade of the adjacent public sidewalk.



## 4.3 ADDITIONAL STANDARDS FOR MIXED-USE BUILDINGS

### 4.3.1 Consistent Design

Mixed-use buildings shall carry the same theme on each elevation across residential and non-residential uses, using at least two (2) of the following approaches:

- A. Primary (non-accent) material(s)
- B. Primary (non-accent) color(s)
- C. Window detail (sills, frame) and proportions
- D. Repeating recess depth



Figure 34: Mixed use buildings demonstrate consistent design on all elevations through the use of primary materials or colors, similar window detail and proportions, and similar treatment of top. (Section 4.3.1)

### 4.3.2 Differentiate Between Residential and Commercial Uses

In mixed-use buildings, distinct awning or entry treatments shall be used for commercial/retail uses to distinguish from the residential uses. Different treatments include, but are not limited to, doorway materials and recesses, signage, and paving in front of the entry.



## 4.4 TRANSITIONS AND SCREENING

### 4.4.1 Neighborhood Transitions

For proposed development projects over thirty-two (32) feet in height, where the side or rear property line abuts a property in the R1 zoning district, the following standards shall apply:

**A. Stepback – Low-rise Buildings.** For low-rise buildings within ten (10) feet of the abutting R1 zoning district, the third story shall step back at least five (5) feet from exterior building wall of the second story below. The stepback shall apply only to building facades within ten (10) feet of the identified R1 district. Alternatively, the entire building may be set back at least ten (10) feet from the abutting property line.

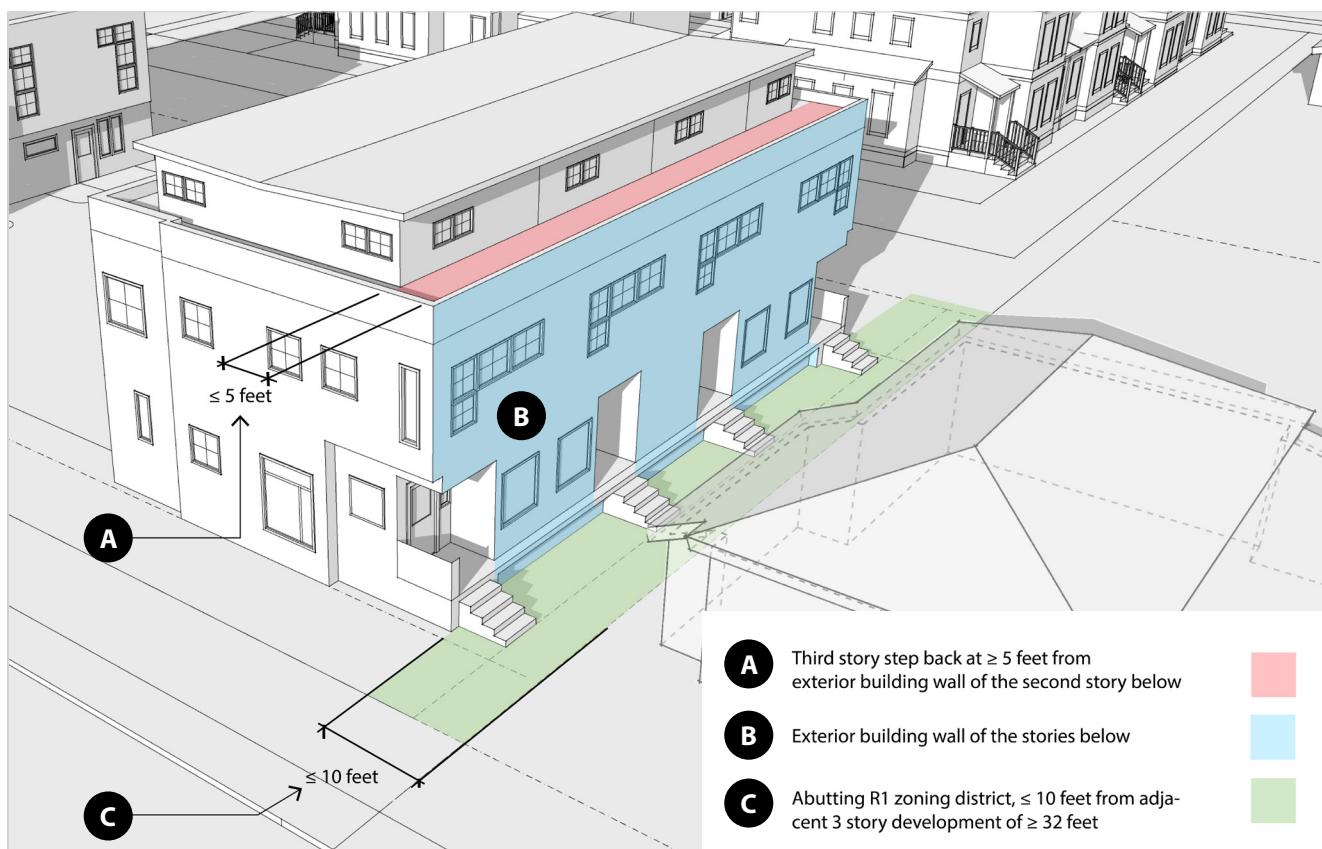


Figure 35: Illustrated Low-rise Stepback (Section 4.4.1.A)



## B. Stepback – Mid-rise and High-rise Buildings.

1. For mid-rise and high-rise buildings within twenty (20) feet of an abutting R1 zoning district (measured from the proposed mid/high-rise building to the R1 property line), a minimum ten (10)-foot stepback shall be provided above the second story for mid-rise structures and twenty (20) feet for high-rise structures. The stepback shall apply only to building façades within twenty (20) feet of the identified R1 district. Alternatively, the entire building may be set back at least twenty-five (25) feet from the property line for mid-rise structures and forty (40) feet for high-rise structures.
2. For mid-rise and high-rise buildings located across a secondary or lower classification street from an R1 zoning district, a minimum ten (10)-foot stepback shall be provided above the second story for at least seventy-five (75) percent of the street façade building wall.
3. **Landscape Screening.** Evergreen screening trees shall be:
  - a. Planted at an interval of fifteen (15) to thirty (30) feet to achieve sixty (60) to seventy (70) percent screening at five (5) years of growth along interior property lines abutting an R1 zoning district.
  - b. Consist of species that attains a twenty (20)-foot minimum height at maturity.
  - c. A minimum fifteen (15)-gallon size at time of planting.

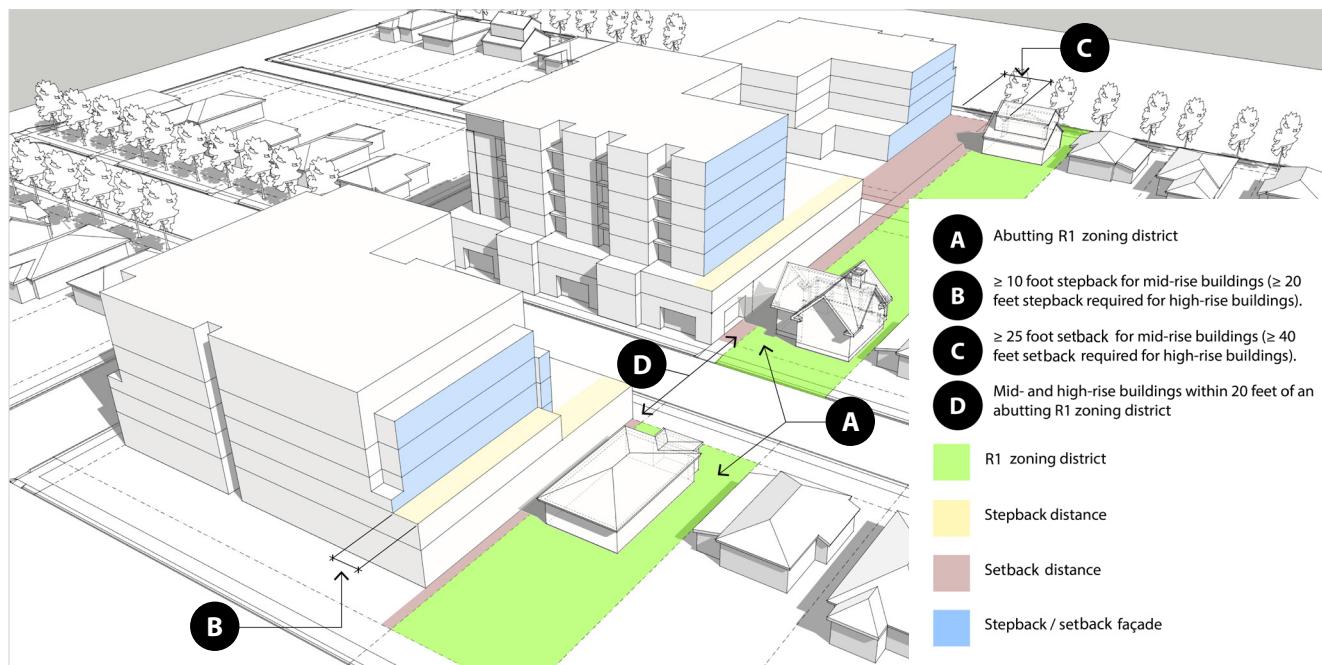


Figure 36: Illustrated mid-rise and high-rise stepback (Section 4.4.1.B)



## 4.5 ROOF FORM

### 4.5.1 Variation

All buildings up to four (4) stories in height shall provide variations of roof height and/or form for thirty (30) percent minimum of the roofline.

### 4.5.2 Additional Requirements

- A. A building shall have no more than two (2) variations in roof form.
- B. Eave treatment including depth, material, style, and brackets shall match on a building.
- C. Roof parapets, if provided, shall include a coping on the top and a drip edge.



Figure 37: Percentage of roof line (Section 4.5.1)



Figure 38: Variations in roof form (Section 4.5.2)



## 4.6 WINDOWS, DOORS, ENTRY DESIGN, AND SECURITY

### 4.6.1 Window and Door Alignment

**A. Vertical Alignment.** For building facades that front a street or public right-of-way, windows, doors, arches, and balconies shall align vertically along a center line through these elements. Where the ground floor or base of a building is a nonresidential use, vertical alignment shall begin from the second floor or wherever the residential use begins.

**B. Horizontal Alignment.** Sets of windows, doors, arches, or balconies may span more than the width of a single element above or below if the left-most and right-most outside edges of the set of elements align with the width of the elements above or below and if the elements within a set are evenly spaced. The following exceptions are allowed:

1. Juliet balconies may be centered evenly over the set of elements they span.
2. Balconies may be wider than the element they are aligned with on the floors above or below and if they project twelve (12) inches or more from the face of the building.

**C. Window and Door Size.** The following shall apply to all windows and doors except for curtain wall windows and commercial storefront windows.

1. Windows and doors shall be vertically oriented, rectangular, and taller than they are wide.
2. For residential uses, vertical window elements shall be maintained through proportionality and divided lites.
3. Windows, doors, arches, and balconies must be equal in size or smaller than the element they are aligned with on the floor below.
4. Where wider glazed openings are desired, use ganged or grouped windows, subject to the following:
  - a. Grouped windows shall have a minimum of three (3) inches of building façade surface between them
  - b. Ganged windows shall have a mullion between them

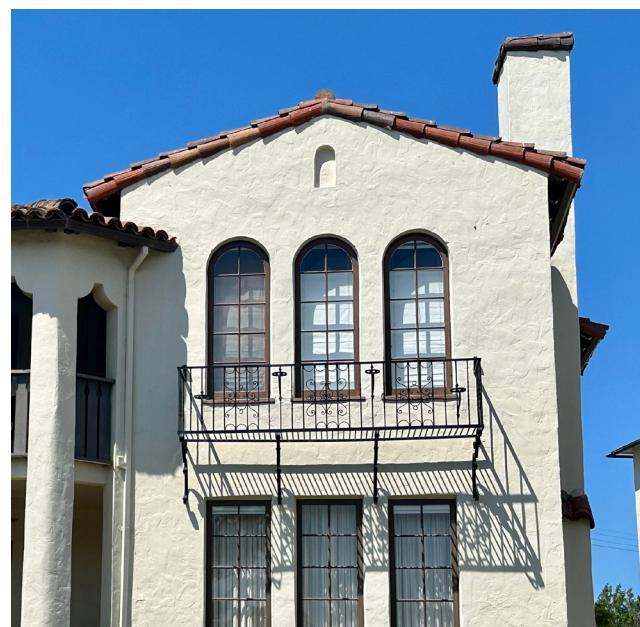


Figure 39: Grouped windows with a minimum of three inches of building façade surface between them (Section 4.6.1)



## 4.6.2 Windows – Depth

Windows shall be recessed a minimum of three (3) inches from the exterior wall surface unless the architectural style dictates flush (curtain wall) or protruding windows. Alternatively, a three (3)-inch window trim may be provided. Where a curtain wall is used, no recess or protrusion is required. Wainscoting, sills, and/or reveals shall be incorporated into deep-set windows.



Figure 40: Window recesses and edges, including molding and reveals of at least three (3)-inch depth (Section 4.6.2)



Figure 41: Window recesses and edges, including moldings and reveals of at least three (3)-inch depth (Section 4.6.2)

## 4.6.3 Windows – Reflectivity, Transparency, and Details

- A. **Window Reflectivity.** The use of reflective glass is prohibited to reduce the occurrence of bird collisions. Low-reflectivity dark tinted glass is prohibited except on residential units.
- B. **Window Transparency.** Transparent glass guardrails and parapets shall be prohibited for mid-rise and high-rise buildings and/or in conjunction with green roofs or terraces to reduce the potential for bird collisions.
- C. **Window Details.** All windows shall include detailing using at least two (2) of the following approaches, depending on the proposed architectural style:
  - 1. Window trim
  - 2. Projected lintel
  - 3. Projected sill
  - 4. Sashes
- D. **Lites.** Lites shall be square or vertically oriented rectangles.
- E. **Matching Lite Size and Proportions.** The size and proportion of lites shall be consistent among windows in a group.



#### 4.6.4 Windows – Mixed-use Buildings

The street-level façade for retail/commercial ground floors shall have windows with a minimum seventy (70) percent transparency between a height of three (3) and twelve (12) feet, measured above sidewalk grade.

#### 4.6.5 Entries, Doors, and Stairways

**A. Entry Locations.** All building entries shall adhere to the following standards:

1. Each façade adjacent to a street shall have at least one (1) pedestrian or main entry fronting the primary or secondary street frontage or, where public paseo exists, to that paseo.
2. Low-rise Buildings
  - a. When fronting a public right-of-way, each ground-floor residential unit shall provide a main entry oriented toward a primary or secondary street frontage. Where a unit fronts both a primary and secondary street, only one main entry shall be required.
  - b. When adjacent to an internal courtyard or common open space, each residential ground floor unit shall provide direct access via an entry door to this area.

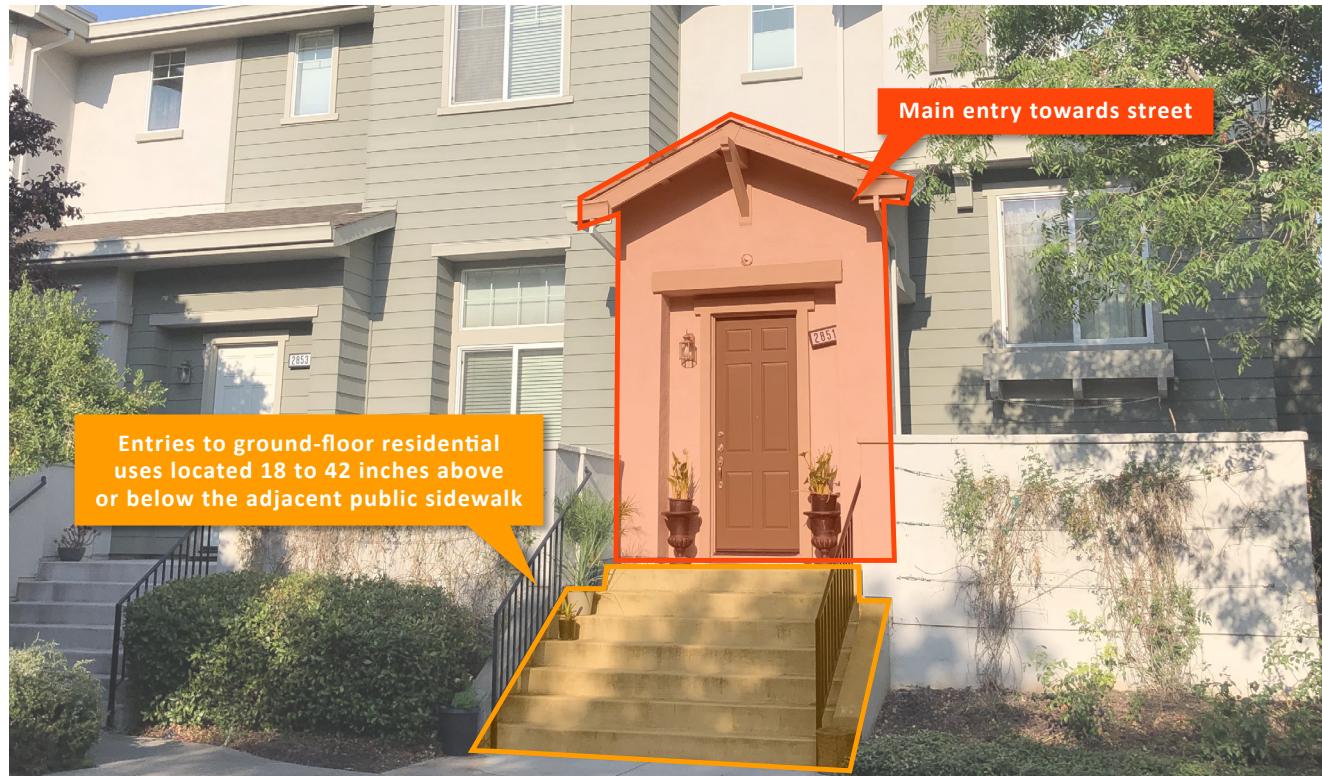


Figure 42: Main entries in low-rise buildings (Sections 4.2.2 and 4.6.5.A)



3. Mid-rise and High-rise Buildings. Mid and high-rise building entrances shall follow the residential entry requirements for low-rise buildings. In addition, mid and high-rise buildings may provide ground floor entries for residential units that are oriented toward a street, internal courtyard, or a lobby entrance that serve several units.
4. Mixed-Use Buildings
  - a. Pedestrian access to the residential uses shall be via a lobby or individual entries that are separate from commercial use access.
  - b. At least one (1) access to residential uses shall be located at a primary frontage or secondary frontage.

**B. Residential Entry Design.** Ground-floor residential entries fronting a public right-of-way or common space shall have at least one (1) fenestration element and one (1) entry element from the lists below. The entry element shall be at least three (3) feet in depth.

FENESTRATION ELEMENTS	ENTRY ELEMENTS
Transom window	Covered front porch
Sidelight window	Stoop
Awning with a minimum 3-foot projection (but not extending into any public right-of-way)	Recessed entry Forecourt

Table 1: Building opening elements

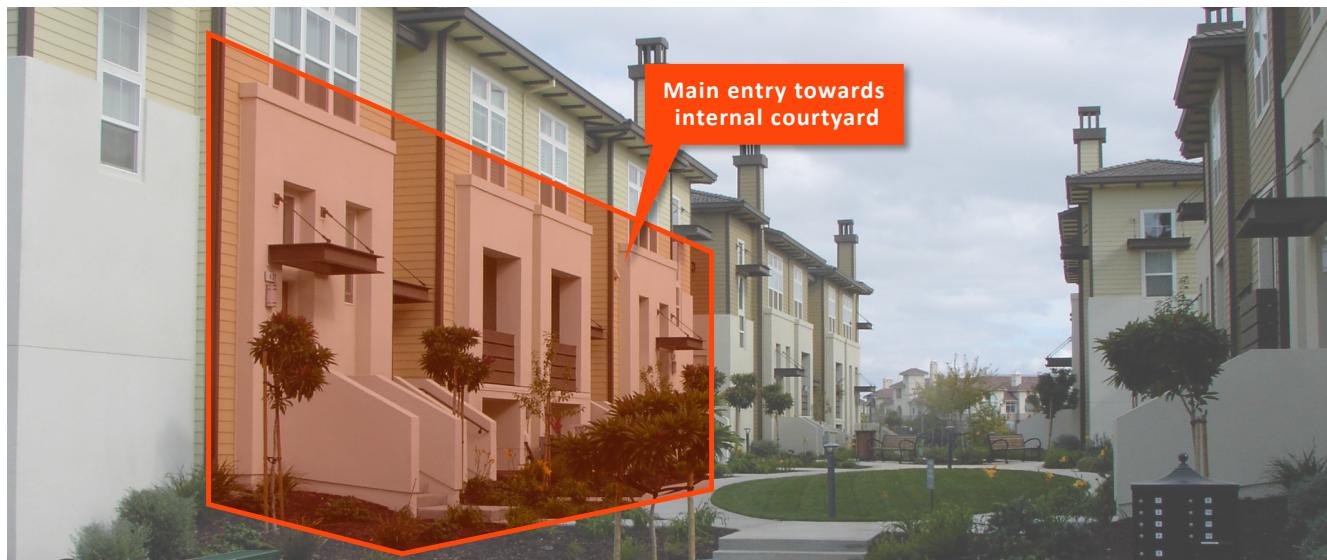


Figure 43: Main entries toward an internal courtyard (Section 4.6.5)



**C. Retail/Commercial or Other Non-residential Entry Design.** Non-residential ground-floor uses shall adhere to the following:

1. Each tenant space shall have an individual entry.
2. Each entry shall have direct at-grade access from any adjacent sidewalk.
3. Each entry shall be inset or offset no more than thirty-six (36) inches from the adjacent building façade.
4. Each entry shall have at least two (2) of the following features:
  - a. Awning or canopy (glass, wood, or metal only)
  - b. Contrasting color relative to adjacent building wall
  - c. Transom or sidelight windows
  - d. Double doors
  - e. An entrance enhanced with decorative hardware (wrought iron, brass), decorative framing (cornice), and/or artwork (mural, stained glass, tiling)



*Figure 44: Individual entry for tenants in retail/commercial or other non-residential entry design (Section 4.6.5.C)*



*Figure 45: Decorative framing (Section 4.6.5.C)*



#### D. Garage Doors.

1. For projects with ten (10) or more residential units, individual garage doors shall not face a public street but shall be oriented towards an alley or private street/driveway internal to the project.
2. All individual garage doors shall be recessed a minimum of six (6) inches from the surrounding building wall.



Figure 46: Minimum six (6) inch recess (Section 4.6.5.D)

#### E. Utility Room Entries.

1. Exterior-facing utility rooms and emergency exit corridor doors shall not be located on the primary street frontage.
2. When visible from a public right-of-way, utility room doors and emergency exits shall be the same materials, colors, and style as the main entry doors.
3. These standards shall not apply if they conflict with the rules and regulations of PG&E, another private or public utility conveyor, or the Fire or Building Code.

#### F. Loading Dock Doors.

1. Loading dock doors shall fully screen the interior loading dock area.
2. Doors shall use materials that limit visibility, such as translucent glass or decorative metal, and included in the material palette specified for the building.

#### G. Exterior Stairways.

Exterior stairways/stairwells shall face interior spaces such as plazas, gathering areas, and parking areas. This standard shall not apply if it conflicts with the Fire Code or Building Code.

### 4.6.6 Design for Security

All exterior walls fronting shared areas, interior courts, parking areas, open space, and walkways shall feature at least one (1) viewpoint through a window, door, balcony, or patio at least every thirty (30) feet on each building story.



## 4.7 MATERIALS AND COLORS

### 4.7.1 General Standards Applicable to All Development

- A. **Colors.** Neon colors, as defined in Section 8, shall be prohibited. Colors of the same hue shall be differentiated by at least three shades.
- B. **Allowable Materials.** Materials used throughout on exterior walls, as trim, for windows and doors, and as roofing material shall be allowed according to the following Materials Table.
- C. **Quality.** Durable exterior architectural materials and finishes with a minimum life expectancy of twenty-five (25) years and roofing with a minimum life expectancy of thirty (30) years, as identified in a materials specifications sheet, shall be used on the exterior of the buildings.



Figure 47: Colors of the same hue shall be differentiated by at least three shades. (Section 4.7.1.A)



MATERIAL	NOTES
Exterior Walls, Including Trim and Accent	
Brick	Including brick veneer
Concrete	
Stone	
Stucco	True stucco only (Lime or Portland Cement); excluding synthetic stucco and Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS)
Plaster	Verified for exterior use only
Glass	
Tile	
Rammed Earth	Low-rise only
Wood Siding	
Fiber Cement Board	
Metal	Excluding corrugated metal
Wood	Plywood allowed only as accent; not a main material
Building Base	
Brick	
Concrete	
Stone	
Metal	
Ceramic Tile	
Metal	Excluding aluminum and corrugated metal
Wood	Plywood allowed only as accent; not a main material
Fiberglass composite	
Glass	

Table 2A: Materials Table - Exterior Walls and Building Base Materials (Section 4.7.1.B)



MATERIAL	NOTES
Window Frames	
Wood	Excluding plywood
Metal	Excluding corrugated metal
Fiberglass	
Composite	
Vinyl	
Roofing Materials	
Composition, asphalt, and fiberglass shingle	
For flat roofs, any flat roofing materials that are building code compliant.	
Clay and concrete tile	
Slate	
Green roofs	
Solar shingles	
Colored metal/natural copper	

Table 2B: Materials Table - Window Frames and Roofing Materials (Section 4.7.1.B)

## 4.8 ADDITIONS TO EXISTING STRUCTURES

Additions to existing structures shall incorporate and match all the following features if they are present in the existing building(s):

- A. Roof form
- B. Window and door type, materials, proportions, and details such as recesses, mullion/muntin width, and pattern etc.
- C. Colors and materials
- D. Articulation patterns
- E. Cornices, banding, string courses, and corbels
- F. Balconies



STATION PARK GREEN, CITY OF SAN MATEO

# 5

# LANDSCAPING, OPEN SPACE, AND EXTERIOR LIGHTING

## 5.1 LANDSCAPING AND OPEN SPACE

### 5.1.1 General Standards Applicable to All Development

A. Landscaping. Landscaped areas and shared open spaces shall incorporate at least three (3) of the following:

1. Use of hardscape materials for up to fifty (50) percent of surfaces, with hardscape defined to include paving materials, gravel, and stone or tile work
2. Interior building entrance with direct access to open space(s)
3. Building paseo with direct access to open space(s)
4. Fixed seating elements with shade structures which face open space(s)
5. In a mixed-use project, commercial patio and/or pedestrian-oriented windows and/or service bars/counters facing the open space. Any queuing areas provided shall be designed to avoid pedestrian travel ways and public rights-of-way.



Figure 48: Elements that may be incorporated in landscaped areas and shared open spaces (Section 5.1.1.A)



## B. Private Open Space for Individual Units.

1. The fronts and sides of balconies shall consist of glass, slats, or partially transparent grating or railing that is at least fifty (50) percent visually open.
2. Enclosed private ground-floor open spaces fronting a public street and/or sidewalk shall have an enclosure between three (3) and four (4) feet in height. Enclosure materials shall be limited to the following:
  - a. Walls of a color and material(s) that match those used for the main building(s)
  - b. Wrought iron or dark colored steel, aluminum, or cable fencing
  - c. Glass
  - d. Wood

## C. Common Open Space.

1. Common open space areas and amenities shall be located to be easily accessible to all residents via common walkways.
2. Green roofs and decks shall be physically and legally accessible to all residents.
3. Dog run areas and community gardens in developments exceeding twenty-five (25) units can count towards the open space requirement.

## D. Tree Wells. New tree wells shall be located in line with adjacent, existing tree wells when those locations are compliant with the City's pedestrian and tree master plans.



Figure 49: Enclosed private ground-floor open spaces fronting a public street and sidewalk (Section 5.1.1.B)



Figure 50: The fronts and sides of balconies shall consist of obscured glass, slats, or partially transparent grating or railing that is at least fifty (50) percent open. (Section 5.1.1.B)

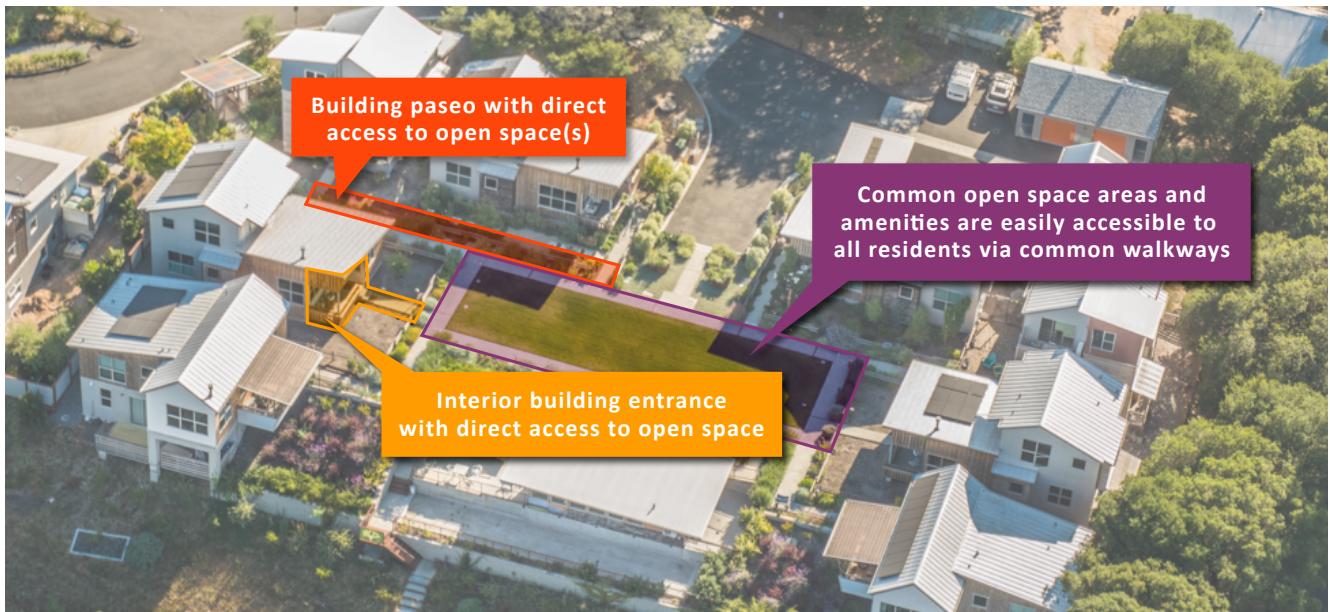


Figure 51: Common open space areas and amenities shall be located to be easily accessible to all residents in common walkways. (Section 5.1.1.C)



### 5.1.2 Shadow Requirements – Mid-rise and High-rise Buildings

Fifty (50) percent of required open space shall be unshaded between the hours of 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm at the spring and fall equinox. This standard shall not apply where the open space is already shaded by an existing building and no other opportunities for access to sunlight exist on the site.

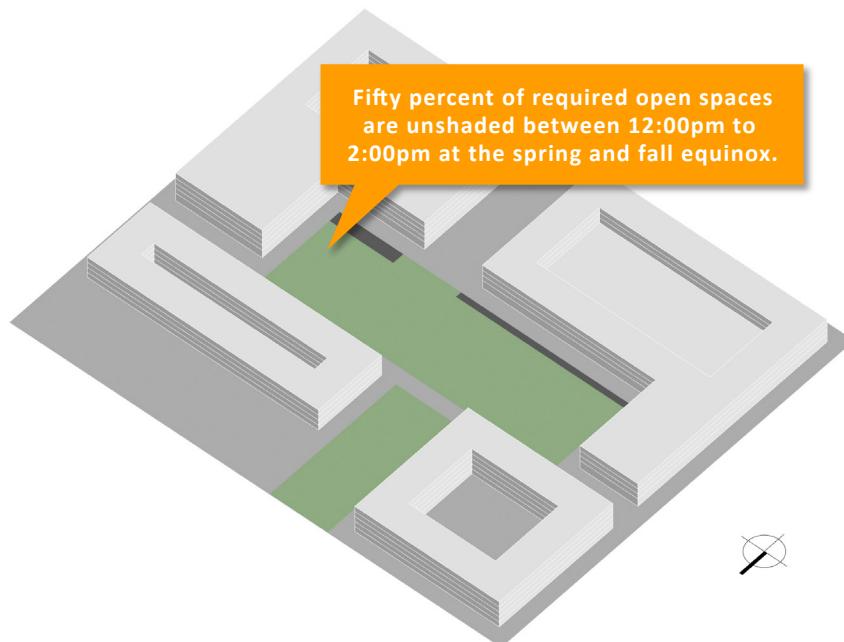


Figure 52: Shadow requirements (Section 5.1.2)



## 5.2 EXTERIOR LIGHTING

### 5.2.1 General Standards Applicable to All Development – Exterior Lighting for Private Property

- A. All exterior lighting fixtures shall include top covers to direct light downward unless such lighting is provided as landscape or public art/building wall uplighting that does not cause glare. Shielding shall match the style of the lighting fixtures.
- B. Security lighting shall be provided consistent with the requirements of San Mateo Municipal Code Section 23.54.060 (Exterior Security Lighting).
- C. No portion of a lighting fixture shall be mounted above the roof or parapet of the building.



Figure 53: Exterior lighting (Section 5.2.1)



**CITY OF SAN MATEO**

## 6.1 ACCESSORY STRUCTURES AND ENCLOSURES – GENERAL STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL DEVELOPMENT

### 6.1.1 Accessory Structures.

Accessory structures that require a building permit shall be designed with the same finishes, materials, and details as the primary building(s) and shall include the same roof pitch(es).

### 6.1.2 Solid Waste Enclosures.

Solid waste enclosure shall comply with all the following:

- A. Solid waste, recyclable materials, and green waste disposal areas shall be located on site wholly within a building or enclosure.
- B. Exterior waste collection and disposal areas shall not be located within a required front yard, street side yard, parking space, landscaped area, or required open space areas.
- C. Exterior waste collection and disposal areas shall not be located within twenty (20) feet of an adjacent lot that is developed with a residential use unless such areas are fully enclosed within a building.
- D. Solid waste enclosures shall be fully enclosed with masonry walls on three (3) sides, one (1) solid decorative metal gate for access, and a roof to prevent precipitation from entering the enclosure.
- E. Solid waste enclosures shall not be visible from public streets or shall be screened with landscaping. Visibility from alley locations is acceptable.
- F. Signage to inform what materials are appropriate and prohibited for each receptacle/area shall be posted inside each solid waste enclosure.
- G. Driveways or aisles shall provide unobstructed access for collection vehicles and personnel with at least the minimum clearance required by the collection methods and vehicles utilized by the designated collector.

### 6.1.3 Transit Stops.

Proposed or required transit stops located on public or private property shall include all the following: shelter, bench, lighting, and trash receptacles.



## 6.2 UTILITIES AND MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT – GENERAL STANDARDS APPLICABLE TO ALL DEVELOPMENT

### 6.2.1 Transformers.

- A. Transformers shall be located within a structure or placed underground.
- B. If (A) above is not feasible, an above-ground transformer shall be permitted but shall be located outside of any required setbacks and open space areas and shall be screened from public view with landscaping and fencing/walls.



*Figure 54: When transformers are infeasible to place underground, they shall be screened from public view with landscaping or walls. (Section 6.2.1)*

### 6.2.2 Solar Equipment.

- A. All rooftop solar equipment and fixtures other than solar collection panels shall be installed in the attic or flush mounted.
- B. Any ground-mounted solar equipment:
  1. Shall comply with the setback requirements of the zone in which it is located
  2. Shall not be visible from a public right-of-way
  3. Shall not be located within any required open space area
  4. Shall not obstruct vehicular or pedestrian travel ways



*Figure 55: Ground-mounted solar equipment is located outside of setback requirements or required open space areas and does not obstruct travel. (Section 6.2.2)*

### 6.2.3 Allowable Locations.

Ground-mounted utilities and mechanical equipment that directly serve the development shall be located within the private property outside any required open space area or any required landscape area, with the exception of irrigation control valves.



## 6.3 REQUIRED SCREENING

All above-ground onsite ancillary features shall be screened using at least one (1) of the following methods:

- A. Evergreen landscape materials or a landscaped berm of the same height as the ancillary feature.
- B. Low fencing or a wall consisting of the same color or materials as the buildings they serve.
- C. Roof-mounted mechanical equipment shall be screened so it is not visible from the adjacent public right-of-way using either rooftop parapet walls or rooftop enclosures.
- D. Transparent glass may not be used as a screening material.

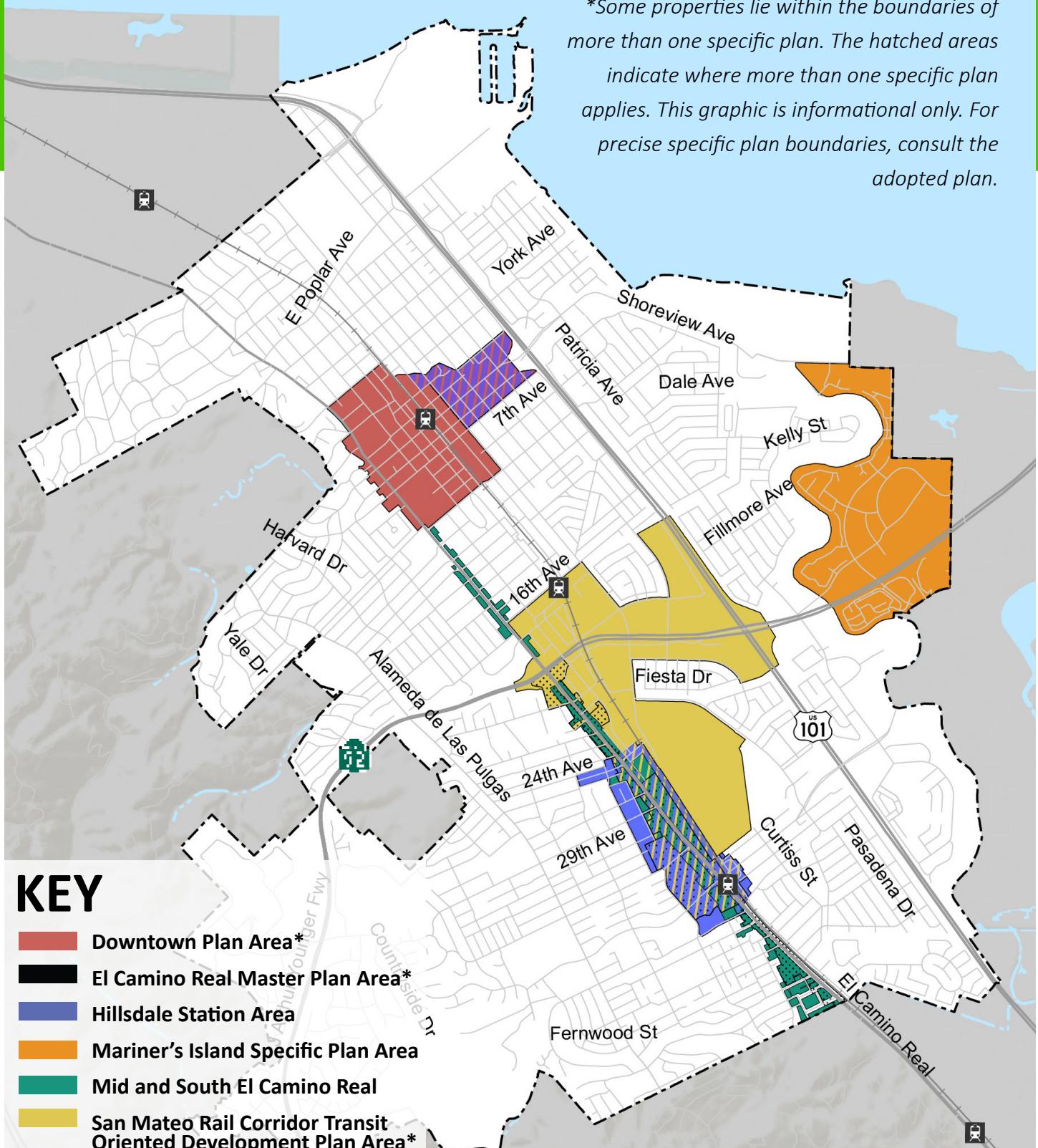


Figure 56: Roof mounted mechanical equipment shall be screened so it is not visible from the adjacent public right of way. (Section 6.3.C)

## 6.4 LIGHTWELLS

Lightwells shall not be located along the primary front façade of a structure. All light wells shall be screened from public view through landscaping, fencing, a wall, or a combination thereof.

\*Some properties lie within the boundaries of more than one specific plan. The hatched areas indicate where more than one specific plan applies. This graphic is informational only. For precise specific plan boundaries, consult the adopted plan.



## KEY

- Downtown Plan Area\***
- El Camino Real Master Plan Area\***
- Hillsdale Station Area**
- Mariner's Island Specific Plan Area**
- Mid and South El Camino Real**
- San Mateo Rail Corridor Transit Oriented Development Plan Area\***
- Vision of the Gateway\***
- City of San Mateo Boundary**
- Neighborhood Jurisdiction**

Figure 57: San Mateo Specific Plan Sites

**Source:**  
County of San Mateo Information Services  
Department. City of San Mateo 2023.



0 1/4 1/2 1 1-1/2 Miles

# SPECIFIC PLAN AREA STANDARDS

This Section establishes additional Objective Design Standards for which a specific plan or area plan has been adopted as identified in Figure 54. These standards are in addition to the standards outlined in the previous sections. Where there is an internal conflict between the general objective standards and specific plan area objective standards, the latter shall apply. Where a project is located within the sphere of multiple specific plan areas, all specific plan standards shall be followed.



## 7.1 DOWNTOWN PLAN AREA

### 7.1.1 Site Planning – Building Siting, Orientation, and Frontage Features

A. Massing and Articulation. At least two (2) of the following shall be incorporated into a building's design:

1. The ground floor shall be at least seventy-five (75) percent transparent (including windows and doors).
2. On the ground floor, use of large areas (minimum dimension of six [6] feet) shall be of clear glass.
3. For floors above the ground floor, align the tops or bottoms of windows horizontally on each floor for at least eighty (80) percent of all windows.

B. Façade Design. Building façade design shall include a change in the street-fronting façade through the use of vertical recesses or projections, building height, and/or colors and materials at intervals of twenty-five (25) to fifty (50)-feet.

C. Transitions and Screening Elements. Proposed buildings taller than those immediately adjacent shall provide at least two (2) of the following:

1. Building roofline that steps down to adjacent building's height
2. The same horizontal lines from adjacent buildings carried to align roof cornices, cornices above retail windows, and sign bands
3. Vertically shaped window openings at the same height as the neighboring buildings' windows above the ground floor
4. Ground-floor awnings, canopies, and/or transom windows at the same height as the neighboring buildings over large retail display windows
5. Building base and/or kick plates to match adjacent buildings on either side



## 7.1.2 Building Design and Architecture

Buildings shall implement a Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style, as outlined and illustrated below:

A. Required Architectural Elements. To implement the architectural style, a structure shall include all of the following elements:

1. Building facing of light-colored stucco within a light reflectance value (LRV) range between 36 and 80; use of brick, tile, stone, stone casting, or wood as accent materials is acceptable
2. Low-pitched (below and including a 3:12 pitch) gabled or hipped roofs, sloped parapets, or flat surface with an eave overhang of not more than six (6) inches
3. Red tile roofs and tiles parapets; simulated materials are acceptable



*Figure 58: Building facing of light-colored stucco shall be used to achieve a Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style. (Section 7.1.2)*



*Figure 59: Tile and stone are acceptable materials to use to achieve a Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style. (Section 7.1.2)*



B. Additional Architectural Elements. Structures shall also include a minimum of seven (7) of the following elements:

1. Multi-level roofs
2. Asymmetrical massing
3. Arches that are pointed, rounded, or with a slight peak (Islamic arches); triple arched; or parabolic arches
4. Ornamental details derived from Spanish, Byzantine, Gothic, Italian, and Spanish historic architectural sources
5. Spiral columns
6. Multi-pane windows (to follow the general standards listed in Section 4.6)
7. Window grilles of wood, aluminum clad wood, or wrought iron. (Where used throughout the project, metal, iron and/or wrought iron shall be painted black or bronze)
8. Elaborate chimney tops consistent with the style, as illustrated below
9. Round or square towers
10. Decorative tiles consistent with the architectural style, as illustrated below
11. Vernacular Spanish Colonial Revival decorative ironwork
12. Ornamental treatments around doorways, stairs, surrounds, and/or windows consistent with the architectural style, as illustrated below
13. Deep recessed windows and doors at a minimum of twelve (12) inches



Figure 60: Rounded tower (Section 7.1.2)



Figure 61: Elaborate chimney tops (Section 7.1.2)



Figure 62: Spiral Columns (Section 7.1.2)



Figure 63: Asymmetrical Massing (Section 7.1.2)

C. Building Façade Materials and Colors. Structures utilizing a Spanish Colonial Revival architectural design as outlined above shall be exempt from the general building façade materials and color standards outlined in Section 4.1.

D. Windows, Doors, and Entries. Building and storefront entries shall include at least one (1) of the following design features:

1. Canopy or awning in conformance with any permitting or limitations of public right-of-way encroachment requirements
2. Architectural detailing such as a transom window, storefront window, kick plate, exterior columns, or mid-cornice
3. Landscaping portions of the width of the storefront under display windows, or flanking a building entry

E. Awning Materials and Colors. Awnings, if provided, shall have the following characteristics:

1. A minimum of five (5) percent larger than the width of the storefront openings to emphasize building proportions
2. Placed above windows and doors to maintain views of important architectural details
3. Aligned with adjacent awnings (plus or minus one (1) foot in height) unless ground floor elevation is more than that plus or minus one (1) foot from other adjacent buildings
4. Using the same hues as the overall building color scheme
5. In addition to materials listed under general standards, may be fabricated of canvas



F. Architectural Features. Buildings shall place the following features at the same height as adjacent buildings:

1. Cornices
2. Cornice above the second-floor awnings
3. Windowsills

### **7.1.3 Landscaping, Open Space, and Exterior Lighting**

Publicly accessible outdoor areas shall not be concealed from public frontages by fence/gates, insets, recesses, or setbacks.



## 7.2 EL CAMINO REAL MASTER PLAN AREA

### 7.2.1 Site Planning – Building Siting, Orientation, and Frontage Features

#### A. Setbacks.

1. All buildings shall be set back a minimum of ten (10) feet along El Camino Real to satisfy and provide for the “effective sidewalk” standard, as defined in Section 8.
2. Buildings taller than two (2) stories shall be set back ten (10) feet from the property line along El Camino Real.

#### B. Build-to-Lines.

1. A minimum of fifty (50) percent of the total property line frontage along El Camino Real shall be occupied by buildings built to the required setback line. Building(s) may be set back up to a maximum of twenty (20) feet behind the build-to line to provide a public amenity such as a wider sidewalk, plaza, outdoor seating, outdoor dining, or landscape area or any combination thereof.
2. For corner parcels, the building shall be built to the required street side setback for a minimum of fifty (50) percent of the side street property frontage.

#### C. Frontage Features.

For each twenty-five (25) feet of building frontage along El Camino Real, at least one (1) of the following ground floor elements shall be included (can be multiple instances of one [1] element):

1. Arcades
2. Awnings (no wider than a structural bay)
3. Trellises
4. Residential entry porch

### 7.2.2 Parking, Access, and Driveways

- A. Curb Cuts. Curb cuts along El Camino Real shall be prohibited if alley or secondary frontage is available. A maximum of one (1) curb cut along El Camino Real per development is permitted.
- B. Pedestrian Access. Access between surface parking areas and the public sidewalk shall be provided at forty (40)-foot minimum intervals along the parking frontage.



## 7.2.3 Building Design and Architecture

### A. Massing and Articulation

1. Stepbacks. A minimum four (4)-foot stepback along all building facades shall be provided above the second story.
2. Blank Walls. Side walls visible from El Camino Real shall not be blank walls. The portion of side walls visible from the public right-of-way shall continue the front façade architectural treatments with the same colors, materials, and articulation, including a matching width and depth of structural bays used on the building facade.
3. Structural Bays. The building façade shall be articulated (either recessed or projected) at every structural bay. The minimum depth of articulation along the façade shall be two (2) feet.



*Figure 64: A minimum four (4)-foot stepback shall be provided above the second story. (Section 7.2.3)*

### B. Windows, Doors, and Entry Design.

1. Recesses and Reveals. Windows shall have a recess or reveal of at least four (4) inches. Doors and eaves shall have a recess or reveal of at least eighteen (18) inches.
2. Entry Design. Storefront entries shall be directly accessible from El Camino Real.

### C. Materials and Colors.

1. For the portion of the façade above the ground floor, all the following are prohibited:
  - a. Glass curtain walls exceeding the width of the structural bays
  - b. Horizontal ribbon windows
2. Material changes shall occur at interior corners or major reveals.



## 7.2.4 Landscaping, Open Space, and Exterior Lighting

A. Areas between structures and the effective sidewalk shall be landscaped. Areas within three (3) feet of building entries and display windows shall be designed as a hardscape area for gathering and outdoor commercial activity with at least one (1) of the following:

1. Accent planters
2. Raised planter beds
3. Benches
4. Other types of pedestrian amenities such as fountains, seating areas, and public art

B. For buildings over two (2) stories, the ten (10)-foot setback area beyond the space required to create a ten (10)-foot effective sidewalk width shall be landscaped consistent with the El Camino Real Streetscape Plan.



Figure 65: Areas between structures and the effective sidewalk shall be landscaped. (Section 4.2.4)



## 7.3 HILLSDALE STATION AREA

### 7.3.1 Site Planning – Building Siting, Orientation, and Frontage Features

#### A. Setbacks – Transit Center Area

1. Buildings shall be set back from the back of curb along El Camino Real to create at least twenty (20) feet of combined effective sidewalk.
2. Buildings adjacent to the train station platform shall include a ten (10)-foot rear yard setback, which shall be designed to provide at least one (1) of the following:
  - a. Ramp compliant with ADA standards
  - b. Stairs with flat incline areas that allow bicycles to be pushed up/down, compliant with ADA standards

#### B. Setbacks - Parcels Adjacent to Laurel Creek

1. Buildings shall be set back from Laurel Creek consistent with the City's General Plan and SMMC Section 7.39.130.
2. The required setback area from Laurel Creek shall be publicly accessible, include at least fifty (50) percent landscaped open space, and include a pedestrian trail constructed to City standards.
3. Key Intersections. Buildings located on parcels that surround the intersections of 28th and 31st Avenues and Hillsdale Boulevard at El Camino Real shall provide a minimum ten (10)-foot setback at building corners on the ground floor facing intersections for a minimum of fifteen (15) feet along the intersecting frontages, or shall incorporate at least two (2) of the following elements:

a. Tower	c. Fountains or water features
b. Corner entry plazas	d. Public art installations

#### C. Pedestrian Access and Accommodations - Pedestrian/Mid-block Paseos for Mixed-Use and Residential

For projects located along the east side of El Camino Real, a minimum twenty (20)-foot-wide north/west pedestrian/mid-block paseo shall be provided on parcels three hundred (300) feet deep or greater.



### 7.3.2 Parking, Access, and Driveways

#### A. Parking

1. Surface Parking. Surface parking shall adhere to the following:
  - a. Shall not be located within twenty-five (25) feet of the El Camino Real-facing property line
  - b. Shall not occupy more than twenty-five (25) percent of a property for parcels, existing or combined, with more than two hundred (200) feet of El Camino Real frontage
  - c. Existing surface parking may be retained when improvements do not exceed fifty (50) percent of the replacement value of the existing development, as determined by the City Building Official
2. Vehicle parking shall be prohibited in front setback areas and along primary and secondary street frontages.
  - a. If a parking garage is an individual building part of a project, retail, or other active uses, such use shall occupy the ground-floor space of that parking garage along at least ninety (90) percent of the frontage of El Camino Real, at a minimum depth of forty (40) feet.
  - b. If structured parking is within a mixed-use building, a maximum of fifty (50) percent of the ground floor may be dedicated to parking.

B. Screening. Surface parking lots shall be screened from view from public streets as following:

1. Minimum height of three (3) feet; maximum height of six (6) feet
2. Consisting of wood, metal, or landscape wall
3. Shall be perforated (i.e., transparent) to a maximum of thirty (30) percent

### 7.3.3 Building Design and Architecture – Stepback

A minimum six (6)-foot stepback shall be provided above the third floor along all building facades for buildings over three (3) stories in height. Balconies are permitted within the stepback area above the third floor.

### 7.3.4 Windows

All residential units and residential units of mixed-use development shall have at least one (1) window that faces the creek.



### 7.3.5 Windows, Doors, and Entry Design

- A. Pedestrian Entries. Buildings shall have at least one (1) pedestrian entrance facing El Camino Real, the Transit Center, or the Caltrain right-of-way.
- B. Key Intersection Entries. Buildings located on parcels that surround the intersections of 28th and 31st Avenues and Hillsdale Boulevard at El Camino Real shall have a primary building entry oriented towards the corner that is visible from the intersection.

### 7.3.6 Landscaping, Open Space, Exterior Lighting, and Fencing

#### A. Landscaping

1. Retaining walls below the train tracks shall be treated with at least two (2) of the following design elements for at least seventy-five (75) percent of the wall surface:
  - a. Mural (no commercial messages allowed)
  - b. Architectural features of building exterior wall downward directed lighting
  - c. Landscaping

#### B. At least fifty (50) percent of the open space shall consist of a plaza with a combination of hardscape, benches, tables, pedestrian amenities, and lighting.

#### C. Frontage Features - Parcels Adjacent to Laurel Creek – Fencing.

1. Solid and chain link fencing are prohibited along the creek. Existing chain link fences shall be removed in association with any new development or redevelopment.
2. Where fencing is provided, it shall be transparent and be a maximum of four (4) feet in height.



Figure 66: Public plaza with benches and hardscape (Section 7.3.6.B)



Figure 67: Plazas with hardscape, benches, and pedestrian amenities (Section 7.3.6.B)



### 7.3.7 Development Along Palm Place

A. Mixed-use developments shall have at least two (2) of the following:

1. Building entrances facing Palm Place
2. Awnings at least (ten) 10 feet in length
3. Outdoor seating areas of at least one hundred (100) square feet in area provided with benches and/or chairs and tables

B. Ground-floor retail and restaurant uses facing pedestrian paseos shall include at least two (2) of the following elements:

1. Entrances
2. Awnings
3. Outdoor seating areas of at least one hundred (100) square feet in area provided with benches and/or chairs and tables

C. East-West Avenues. For buildings with primary frontage along east-west avenues, the following shall apply:

1. The area within five (5) feet of an entrance or display window shall be at least fifty (50) percent hardscape.
2. A building edge along the primary and secondary frontage shall be set back to create at least fifty (50) square feet of outdoor space, in addition to any setback required for a ten (10)-foot effective sidewalk. This space shall include at least one (1) of the following:
  - a. Landscape planters that provide seating
  - b. Seating wall (maximum two-and-one-half [2.5] feet tall)



## 7.4 MARINER'S ISLAND SPECIFIC PLAN AREA

### 7.4.1 Building Siting, Orientation, and Frontage Features - Massing and Articulation

No building shall exceed two (2) stories in height within one hundred (100) feet of the main lagoon channel, nor shall any residential construction fronting SR-92 exceed two (2) stories in height.

### 7.4.2 Landscaping, Open Space, and Exterior Lighting

- A. All landscaped setbacks or buffers shall consist of a berm at least one (1) foot in height that is planted so that at least eighty (80) percent of the berm is covered by vegetation (mature plant size) to provide screening of parking lots and interior roadways.
- B. Exterior Water Features. All developments shall include at least one (1) of the following:
  1. Pond
  2. Reflecting pool
  3. Fountain



Figure 68: Planted berm (Section 7.4.2.A)



Figure 69: Exterior water feature (Section 7.4.2.B)



## 7.5 MID AND SOUTH EL CAMINO REAL

### 7.5.1 Site Planning – Building Siting, Orientation, and Frontage Features

#### A. Massing and Articulation.

1. Stepbacks. All structures shall provide a four (4)-foot stepback above the second story facing El Camino Real for at least seventy-five (75) percent of the street façade.
2. Upper Floor. The upper floor shall include at least two (2) of the following, but not two (2) of any single approach.
  - a. Projecting roof overhangs of at least eighteen (18) inches
  - b. Varied parapet profile
  - c. Stepback with a minimum of three (3) feet for low-rise development and ten (10) feet for mid- and high-rise development along the El Camino Real street frontage
  - d. Balconies
  - e. Horizontal moldings
  - f. A change in materials and colors



Figure 70: Minimum four (4)-foot stepback above the second story (Section 7.5.1.A)



3. **Transitions and Screening Elements.** Buildings taller by five (5) feet than their immediate neighbors along the El Camino Real frontage shall relate to the neighboring structures by incorporating at least one (1) of the following:

- Building roofline that steps down to adjacent building's height
- Building setbacks at the height of the adjacent building's height
- Windows, ground floor awning, and canopies at the same height as the neighboring buildings (plus or minus one (1)-foot in height), unless ground floor elevation is more than plus or minus one (1)-foot from adjacent buildings
- Projecting cornices at the same height as major horizontal elements on adjacent buildings

B. **Windows, Doors, and Entry Design.** Distinctive entries to the building and individual uses that front El Camino Real shall be provided to incorporate at least two (2) of the following:

- Primary entrance that is at least fifteen (15) percent larger than other entrances
- Colors and materials that are a different hue than the primary materials and colors used on the building(s)
- At least one (1) unique entry detail on the building entry façade or door, such as detailed moldings, ornamental door handle and hinges, or decorative handrails

C. **Residential Entries.** Residential ground-floor units fronting El Camino Real shall incorporate at least one (1) of the following:

- Additional three (3)-foot landscaped setback
- Ground-floor level elevated at least two (2) feet above sidewalk level



*Figure 71: Residential ground floor unit entries shall incorporate at least an additional three-foot landscaped setback or be elevated at least two feet above sidewalk level. (Section 7.5.1.C)*



## 7.6 SAN MATEO RAIL CORRIDOR TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN AREA

### 7.6.1 Site Planning – Building Siting, Orientation, and Frontage Features

- A. Block Size. All new blocks shall be no more than three hundred (300) feet by six hundred (600) feet. A block can be bounded by streets, alleys, or pedestrian paseos.
- B. Setbacks.
  - 1. Mixed-use buildings with ground-floor commercial uses shall:
    - a. Be built adjacent to the sidewalk except where space to accommodate seating, outdoor dining, and retail display areas are provided.
    - b. Such setback areas shall not exceed ten (10) feet in depth for more than thirty (30) percent of the building's frontage.
  - 2. Residential-only or office-only buildings shall have setbacks up to fifteen (15) feet from the sidewalk(s) to accommodate building entries and landscaped areas.
  - 3. Residential setback areas shall include at least one (1) of the following for every unit that fronts the sidewalk:
    - a. Porch or stoop
    - b. Landscaped areas, with a minimum of thirty (30) square feet in area and minimum dimension of four (4) feet for any side
    - c. Small private gardens behind maximum three (3)-foot-high architectural wall
- C. Entries. All primary building entries shall face the public street and sidewalk.



## 7.6.2 Building Design and Architecture

### A. Articulation.

1. All upper-floor residential units facing local streets shall include at least one (1) of the following:
  - a. Occupiable outdoor deck designed as usable open space
  - b. Balcony
  - c. Bay window
2. All building facades visible from a public street or public area shall include at least three (3) of the following across the entire façade:
  - a. Trellises
  - b. Arcades
  - c. Awnings
  - d. Balconies
  - e. Belt courses along sill lines
  - f. Capped parapets

### B. Mixed-use Buildings.

1. Ground-floor retail and commercial uses shall have a façade area consisting of a minimum of seventy-five (75) percent windows and doors
2. Individual shops shall have a maximum storefront length of fifty (50) feet

## 7.6.3 Landscaping, Open Space, and Exterior Lighting.

For mixed-use developments of at least three (3) acres of site area or an entire block, a publicly accessible park or plaza of at least ten thousand (10,000) square feet in area, with a minimum dimension of fifty (50) feet for any side, shall be developed within the central portion of the site.



## 7.7 VISION OF THE GATEWAY

### 7.7.1 Massing and Articulation

A. Setbacks. The following setbacks shall supersede those required for the zoning district in which the project is located:

1. Along the north side of Third Avenue: Minimum twenty (20) feet from the Third Avenue property line.
2. Along the south side of Third Avenue and all of Fourth Avenue: Fifteen (15) to twenty (20) feet from the property line.
3. Along neighborhood streets: Fifteen (15) to twenty (20) feet from the property line.

B. Stepbacks.

1. Along the south side of Third Avenue and all of Fourth Avenue: Above thirty (30) feet of building height, an additional eight (8)-foot minimum stepback shall be provided along the right-of-way facade.
2. Along neighborhood streets: Above twenty-five (25) feet building height, an additional eight (8)-foot minimum stepback shall be provided along the right-of-way facade.

C. Height.

1. Along the south side of Third Avenue and all of Fourth Avenue: Height at the front setback shall be twenty (20) feet minimum and thirty (30) feet maximum along the right-of-way facade.
2. Along neighborhood streets: Height at the front setback line shall not exceed twenty-five (25) feet maximum along the right-of-way facade.

D. Architectural Styles and Materials. Buildings shall incorporate at least one (1) of the following per unit on all street-facing facades:

1. Porch(es)
2. Bay window(s)
3. Decorative wall(s) up to a maximum height of three (3) feet
4. Window box(es)



## 7.7.2 Building Design and Architecture

Buildings shall implement a Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style as outlined below:

A. Required Architectural Elements: To implement the architectural style, a structure shall include all of the following elements:

1. Building facing of light-colored stucco within a light reflectance value (LRV) range between 36 and 80; use of weathered brick (no brick veneer), tile, stone, stone casting, or wood as accent materials is acceptable.
2. Low-pitched (below and including a 3:12 pitch) gabled or hipped roofs, sloped parapets, or flat surface with an eave overhang of not more than six (6) inches.
3. Red tile roofs and tiles parapets; simulated materials are acceptable.

B. Additional Architectural Elements: Structures shall also include a minimum of seven (7) of the following elements, as illustrated above in Section 7.1 - Downtown Retail Core and Historic District.

1. Multi-level roofs
2. Asymmetrical massing
3. Arches that are pointed, rounded, or with a slight peak (Islamic arches); triple arched; or parabolic arched
4. Ornamental details derived from Spanish, Byzantine, Gothic, Italian, and Spanish historic architectural sources
5. Spiral columns
6. Multi-pane windows
7. Window grilles of wood, aluminum clad wood, or wrought iron. (Where used throughout the project, metal, iron and/or wrought iron shall be painted black or bronze)
8. Elaborate chimney tops consistent with the style
9. Round or square towers
10. Decorative tiles consistent with the architectural style
11. Vernacular Spanish Colonial Revival decorative ironwork
12. Ornamental treatments around doorways, stairs, surrounds, and/or windows consistent with the architectural style
13. Deep recessed openings at a minimum of twelve (12) inches



### 7.7.3 Windows, Doors, and Entry Design

#### A. Residential Entries.

1. On the south side of Third Avenue, all of Fourth Avenue, and neighborhood streets, front door entries shall be located at intervals of at least every twenty-five (25) to thirty (30) feet.
2. On neighborhood streets:
  - a. Entries shall include a porch or stoop.
  - b. Open porches may extend into the front setback area up to within ten (10) feet of the property line.
3. Along the south side of Third Avenue and all of Fourth Avenue:
  - a. Porches shall be allowed within the front setback area up to within ten (10) feet of the property line.
  - b. A buffer shall be provided between a residence entry and the public sidewalk with one (1) or more of the following:
    - i. Three (3)-foot-high architectural walls within two (2) feet of the sidewalk
    - ii. First-level living area one-and -one-half (1.5) to four (4) feet above sidewalk grade
4. Garage Entries. Garage entrances shall be designed so that backing out onto Third and Fourth Avenues is not allowed.



Figure 72: Entry with porch (Section 7.7.3.A)



MAIN STREET PASEO, CITY OF SAN MATEO

The following definitions apply to terms used in this document. Where terms are not defined, the definitions contained in San Mateo Municipal Code Chapter 27.04 (Definitions) shall apply.

**Blank Wall:** A ground-floor wall or portion of a ground-floor wall over ten (10) feet in height and a horizontal length greater than twenty (20) feet and does not include a transparent window or door.

**Building Silhouette:** The top and edges of upper floor or floors of a building.

**Building types, Low-rise:** Multiple-unit dwellings in attached, semi-detached, or detached structures that range between one to three stories and do not exceed thirty-five (35) feet in height. These buildings are characterized by features such as private yard areas for individual residences and individual parking facilities, such as attached or separate garages or carports accessible by an internal private driveway and/or alley. Such building types can include duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes; tuck-under housing; row housing; bungalow courts; courtyard housing; live/work units; and townhomes.

**Building types, Mid-rise:** A single building or collection of buildings containing multiple dwellings, ranging from four (4) to seven (7) stories and not exceeding ninety (90) feet in height. Mid-rise multi-family building type dwellings may also be combined with nonresidential uses as part of a mixed-use development.

**Building Types, High-rise:** A single building or collection of buildings containing multiple dwellings, with buildings of eight (8) stories or more or ninety (90) feet or higher in height. High-rise buildings typically include a shared pedestrian entry feature, such as an entry lobby, along a public street frontage and access hallways to individual dwelling units. High-rise multi-family building type dwellings may include mixed-use developments.

**Corner Building:** A building located at the intersection of two (2) streets, intersection of a street and a pedestrian paseo, or intersection of a street and public open space.



**Cupola:** A small dome-like structure on top of a building included to add visual interest.

**Effective Sidewalk Width:** The width of a paved pedestrian walking surface measured from the curb face to the building face, inclusive of both the public right-of-way sidewalk and any adjacent private property that extends the sidewalk width.

**Exterior Columns:** Vertical elements used to establish a visually prominent part of a storefront or building facade.

**Frontage Types, Primary Street Frontage:** The interface between the building frontage and street along arterial roadways that link residential and commercial districts and serve through traffic needs.

**Frontage Types, Secondary Street Frontage:** The interface between the buildings and the streets along collector roads and local streets that link neighborhoods to arterial street(s) and are not intended for through traffic or are designed to serve only adjacent land uses.

**Ground-floor (dwelling) Unit:** A unit where any habitable space (such as living, sleeping, eating, or cooking areas) is located on the ground level.

**Neon Color:** A color that is an extremely luminescent (reflective and bright), highly saturated version of a primary or secondary color such as blue, red, green, yellow, orange, pink, and purple.

**Non-active Use:** A use of a building or portion of a building used for parking, storage, or housing of mechanical equipment.

**Parapet:** A low wall built up above the level of a roof to hide the roof or to provide protection against falling, and similar structures associated with balconies, etc.

**Public Use Path:** A public use trail or similar connection other than a sidewalk.

**Reveal:** The inner surface of an opening or recess in a wall, typically in relation to a window or door.

**Roof Deck:** An open area located atop a building story that is open to the sky and is designed and used for passive open space by building tenants. May be located on any flat roof on or above the second building story.

**Roof Line:** The top edge of a roof or the top of the parapet, whichever forms the top line of a building silhouette.

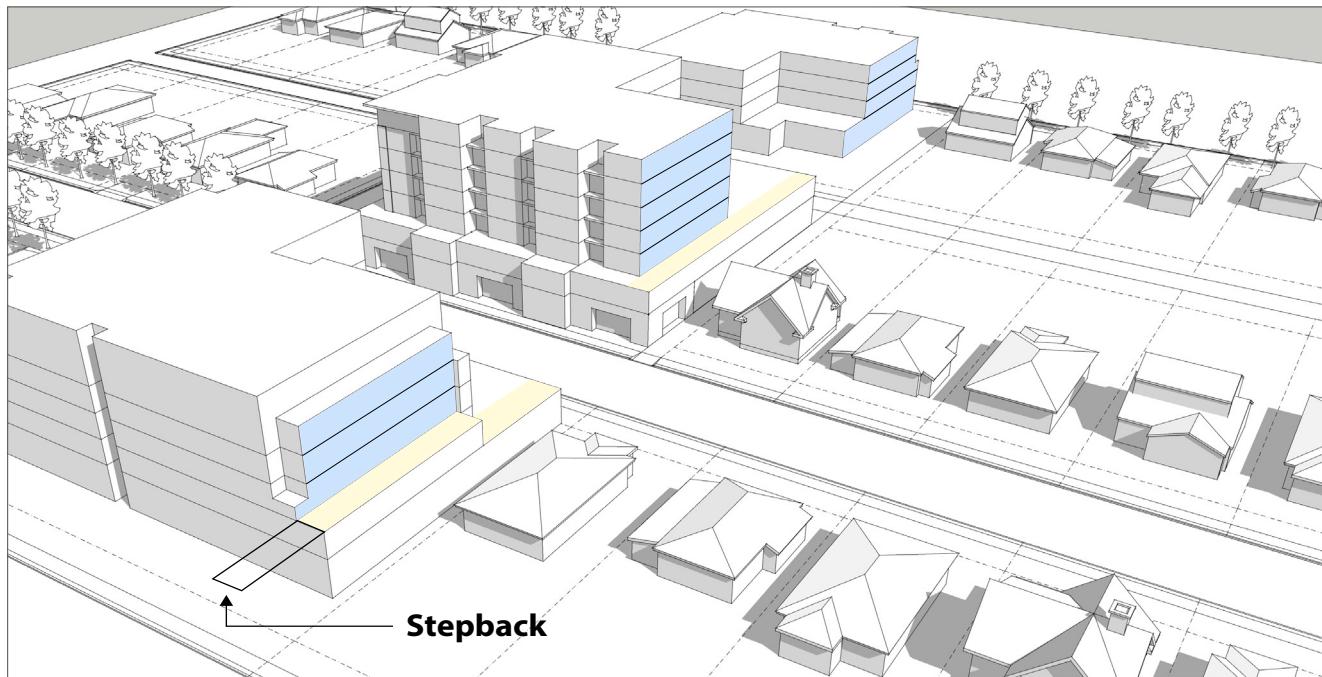


**Shade Structure:** A detached or attached structure that: 1) is designed to protect people from the sun and 2) is no higher than the first story of a building and has a roof or taut, durable tarp but does not have walls or covering on the sides. May include a patio cover, arbor, trellis, or similar structure. For the purposes of this definition, the term “wall” shall not include the wall of a building to which a shade structure may be attached.

**Spanish Colonial Revival:** An architectural style defined by low-pitched, red-tile roofs, stucco walls, rounded arches, and an asymmetrical façade. The style draws its inspiration from Spanish colonial architecture dating to Spain’s colonialization of the Americas in the 1700s.

**Stepback:** The horizontal shifting of mass towards the center of a building through a recession of a building wall. Stepbacks shall extend across all stories (horizontally and vertically), unless otherwise stated, and can create usable exterior spaces or terraces that provide access to, for example, fresh air, views, and gardening. Stepbacks shall be measured inward from the exterior face of building wall(s) of the story below. No portion of the building may intrude into the required stepback, except where intrusions are specifically permitted (below).

**Stoop:** A porch, platform, or stairway at the entrance of a house or other building.



*Stepback: The horizontal shifting of mass towards the center of a building through a recession of a building wall.*



**Tower:** A structure that is at least twice as tall as the dimension of the base width. Can be freestanding or part of a building.

**Transom Window:** A band of upper story windows typically above the top of door height to provide additional light and air into the interior of a residence or storefront.

**Tuck-under Parking:** Covered parking spaces constructed at the same ground level as the building(s) they serve, are covered by the upper floor(s) of the building(s) and are open on at least one side.

**Underground Parking:** Parking located partially or fully below grade. Includes ramping structures.

**Utilities and Mechanical Equipment:** Includes, but is not limited to, air conditioners; heaters; utility meters; cable and similar telecommunications equipment; backflow preventions; irrigation control valves; electrical transformers; pull boxes; all ducting for air conditioning, heating, and blower systems; fire protection equipment; transformers; and all roof-mounted equipment. These provisions do not apply to wireless telecommunications facilities.

**Window Trim:** The moldings covering the jambs and head of a window.