

# TOWER DISTRICT GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING GUIDELINES

JANUARY 2025



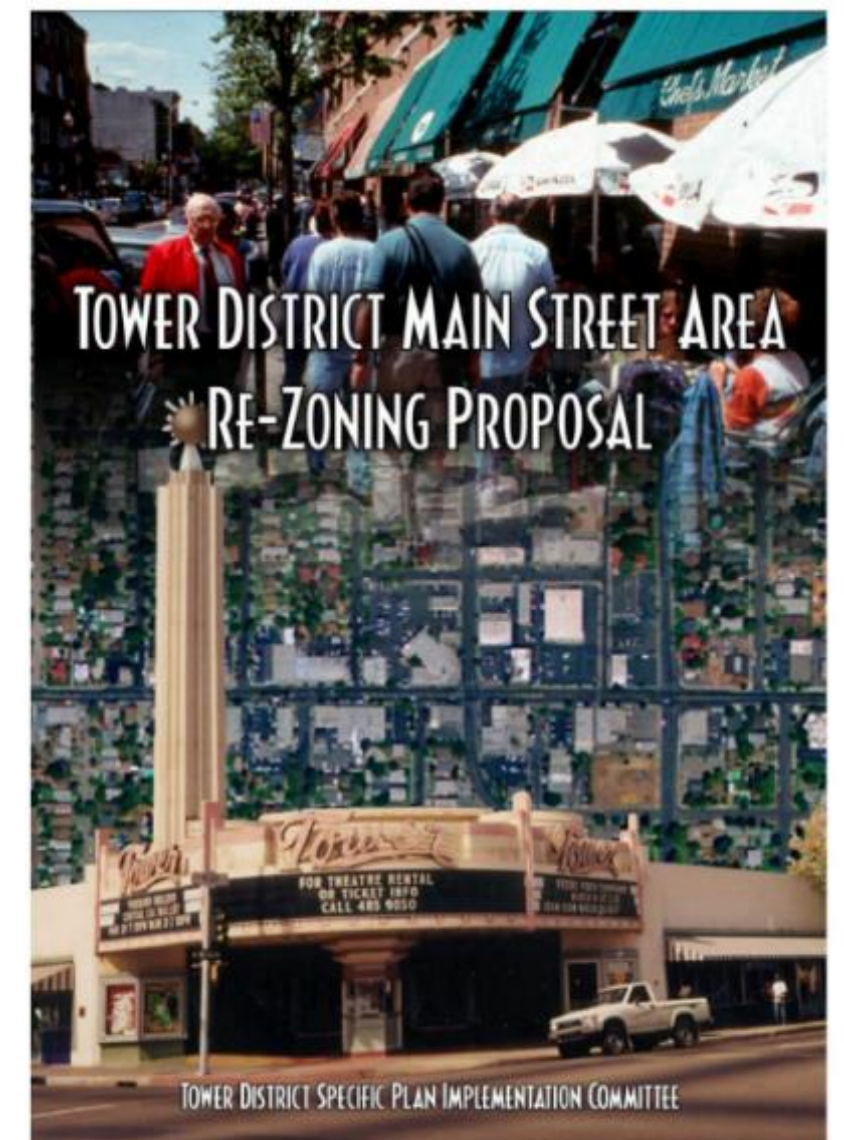
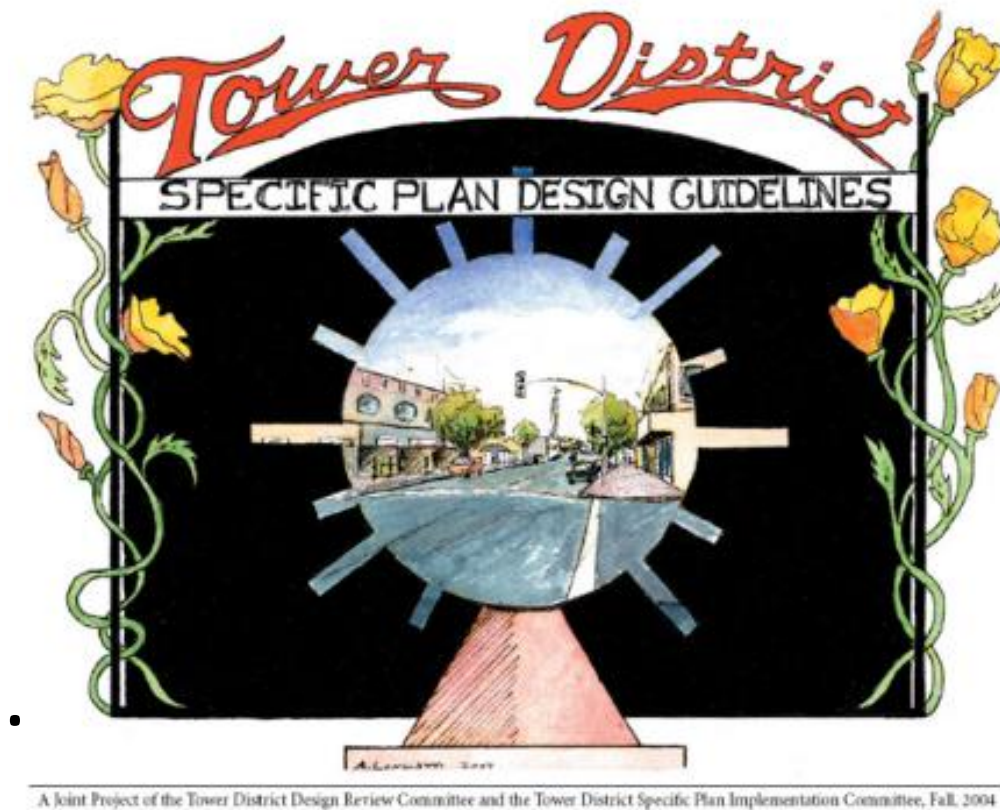


## Why update the Guidelines and add Standards?

- The 2004 Guidelines are over 20 years old
- Key Guidelines were written into zoning in 2015, when the Citywide Development Code was adopted.
- Anticipated Specific Plan policies need to be integrated
- California law requires clear standards to expedite review of qualifying affordable housing projects (*relatively rare in Fresno*)

### *Note:*

*Standards are explicit requirements, whereas Guidelines are often interpreted through design review.*



## **Add guidelines for SPECIFIC PLAN POLICIES as needed.**

LU 2.1 Promote mixed-use development along commercial corridors...

LU 2.2 Enable development of well-designed “missing middle” housing...

LU 3.4 Emphasize placemaking in Tower District.

LU 4.2 Require ... pedestrian-oriented storefronts along public sidewalks...

LU 4.5 Encourage grocery stores that offer fresh produce...



# How will the **GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS** document be different than the **2011 Guidelines**?

1. Update terminology to match the Citywide Development Code.
2. Refer to Development Code where guidelines have already been codified.
3. Split each topic into two subsections: Standards and Guidelines.
  - a) When a guideline is already fairly objective, make it an objective standard.
  - b) When a guideline is more subjective, keep it as a guideline to maintain flexibility.
4. Update chapter introductions and guideline narratives on key concepts.





# ORIGINAL STRUCTURE

## E. Parking/Vehicular Access

### 1. Surface Parking Lot Design

- The rear of the lot is the preferred location for surface parking.
- Surface parking lots adjacent to a street should only be approved if site conditions make it impossible to locate the parking behind the building. Under no circumstances should a parking lot be located between a building and the street for new construction.
- In no case should surface parking occupy more than 50% of a lot.
- Handicapped and bicycle parking should be provided for per current City standards.
- When a parking lot must be located adjacent to a street, a clearly marked pedestrian walkway must be provided from the sidewalk to the entrance of the building.
- When a parking lot must be located adjacent to a street, it should be buffered from the street with a screening wall or fence 3 to 4 feet in height in order to enclose the parking lot. Screening walls or fencing must be attractively designed and must use complementary (or the same) materials used for the building or materials that are specific to the area.
- Screening walls should be located 2 to 3 feet back from the sidewalk to allow adequate room for landscape materials. In addition, greenery/vegetation on or through the wall or fence is encouraged.
- Screening walls must have one pedestrian access point for every 50 feet of street frontage.

**THIS**



*The parking lot for this apartment house is behind the main structure, accessed by a driveway along the side of the building. This is the preferred placement for Multiple family parking.*

**NOT THIS**



*The parking lot for this apartment complex is in front of the main structure. This arrangement is never appropriate.*

# SUGGESTED NEW STRUCTURE

Refine general narratives to be Guidelines, such as at beginning of sections (not shown)

Divide items into Standards and Guidelines sub-sections

Remove items address by the Development Code

## E. Parking Setback

Change terminology to match Development Code

### 1. Surface Parking

#### a. Standards

- Surface parking shall be located behind the primary building and shall not be located between any primary building and a public sidewalk or street. For corner lots, this standard shall apply to the street with the highest classification per the Land Use and Circulation Map in the Fresno General Plan.
- Surface parking shall occupy no more than 50% of any lot.

#### b. Guidelines

When a surface parking is permitted adjacent to a public sidewalk or street due to a corner location, the following guidelines will apply:

- A clearly marked pedestrian walkway should be provided from the sidewalk to the entrance of the building.
- The surface parking area should be buffered from the street with a screening wall or fence 3 to 4 feet in height. Screening walls or fencing should be attractively designed and should use complementary (or the same) materials used for the building or materials that are specific to the area.
- Screening walls should be located 2 to 3 feet back from the sidewalk to allow adequate room for landscape materials. In addition, greenery/vegetation on or through the wall or fence is encouraged.
- Screening walls should have one pedestrian access point for every 50 feet of street frontage.

Handicapped and bicycle parking should be provided for per current City standards.

THIS



The parking lot for this apartment house is behind the main structure, accessed by a driveway along the side of the building. This is the preferred placement for Multiple family parking.

NOT THIS



The parking lot for this apartment complex is in front of the main structure. This arrangement is never appropriate.



# ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Guidelines have been evaluated and sorted using these categories.

## GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

fundamental concepts, introductions and sidebars

## REFER TO ZONING

already codified

## MAKE A STANDARD

consider existing Zoning precedents

## KEEP AS GUIDELINE

valuable but not readily quantified and/or needs flexibility



## GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

fundamental concepts, introductions and sidebars

Yellow box indicates topics to integrate within overarching narratives describing key topics. These narratives also serve as general guidelines.

### EXAMPLE

- 1. Architectural Design** It is not the intention of this document to regulate the architectural style of individual buildings. Creativity and diversity are encouraged. However, good architecture is critical to the creation of a beloved neighborhood, and the following guidelines should apply:
  - New buildings should fit in to their surroundings. This does not mean that the existing buildings must be copied, but that the context of any new building must be respected. Attempts should be made to tie the building into its neighbors through the use of similar massing, materials, roof type, architectural style, or some other technique.



## REFER TO ZONING

already codified

BASE DISTRICT ZONING was amended to address things like:

- Lot Size
- Pedestrian Access (street to building)
- Building Height
- Building Setback
- Parking Setback
- On-Site Open Space
- Exterior Materials
- Window Design

### EXAMPLE

#### 1. Front Yard Setbacks

- In general, single-family residential front yard setbacks vary in the Tower District. They range from as little as 5 feet to as much as 40. On built-up blocks, setbacks should be consistent with the established pattern of adjacent properties, as illustrated at right. On new blocks, or blocks with no clear pattern, front setbacks of 10 to 20 feet are most appropriate. The contemporary concept of meandering front yard setbacks is not appropriate in the Tower District.

## REFER TO ZONING

already codified

GENERAL STANDARDS in Zoning also address things like:

- Fences and Walls
- Parking
- Landscaping
- Refuse Collection Areas
- Signs

### EXAMPLE

- The width of the drive approach and driveway should be no greater than 16 feet. When a two-car garage is proposed, in the



## MAKE A STANDARD

consider existing Zoning precedents

Blue box indicates that:

- Zoning ordinance doesn't cover adequately
- Having standard is important
- Standard can be "objective"
- Standard would not be overly prescriptive
- Zoning chapters may offer precedents, such as Downtown District vehicular access standards

### EXAMPLE

#### **3. Proper Location and Treatment of Vehicular Access**

- If alley access is available, then vehicular access should be taken from the alley.
- If no alley is available, then access will be provided through driveway access from the street. For corner lots, this access should be taken from the lowest classified street or the street that is clearly less significant.

## KEEP AS GUIDELINE

valuable but not readily quantified and/or needs flexibility

Bronze box indicates language that:

- Requires judgement regarding compatibility, such as for a specific style or location.
- Might development feasibility because of physical parameter or financial implication.

### EXAMPLE

- Replacement windows should maintain the same size and be in the same location as the original windows. The number, size, style and shape of window panels should be consistent with the original windows.
- Where applicable, the existing original trim should remain intact when replacement windows are installed.
- Window screens that detract from the window are discouraged.



## **OUTLINE OF EXISTING GUIDELINES** (remains)

1. General Neighborhood Guidelines
2. Medium Density Residential Guidelines  
(for RS Zoning)
3. Medium-High & High Density Residential Guidelines  
(for RM Zoning)
4. Commercial Mixed-Use Guideline  
(for MX & mixed-use projects in Commercial Districts)





# Assessment of Existing Guidelines

## **PART 1**

## **GENERAL NEIGHBORHOOD STRUCTURE GUIDELINES**



## II. General Neighborhood Structure Guidelines

While the basic structure of streets, blocks, and lots is already in place in the Tower District, it is still useful to discuss it briefly. Certain situations may arise where this basic physical structure can be altered. Whether such a change is considered positive or negative should be based on the guidelines below:

### A. Street Network

The street network is one of the most critical components of urbanism. It determines not only how a neighborhood looks on a map, but also how cars circulate, whether or not people can walk, and how land is developed. In pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods like the Tower District, an interconnected street grid with short blocks is crucial to the area's ability to function.

#### 1. Street Interconnectivity

- Streets should form an interconnected network.
- Cul-de-sacs are inappropriate except when a freeway, railroad, or canal prevents connectivity.

#### 2. Block Lengths

- Block lengths should be short, averaging 200 to 300 feet.
- Maximum block length should be 500 feet.
- When new development is proposed on blocks longer than 500 feet in length, new streets should be created to break up these oversized blocks, if possible.

#### 3. Alleys

- Commercial mixed-use areas should have mid-block alleys

#### GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

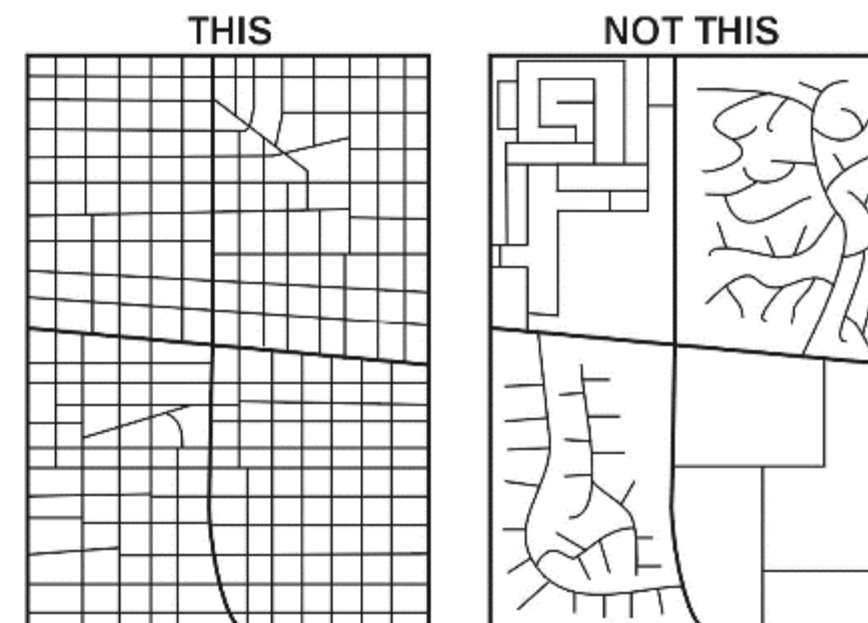
**Stress importance of connectivity. Address by limiting block length.**

#### MAKE A STANDARD

**Apply to project sites longer than 500 feet.**

#### MAKE A STANDARD

**Adapt Downtown Districts vehicular access standards (15-1504).**



**Street Network.** Traditional neighborhood street patterns vs. conventional suburban street patterns

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Encourage alleys but allow midblock parking layout flexibility.**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to FMC Section 13-110, Alley Closures.**

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Describe desired scale of development.**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to Base District standards.**

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Describe desired scale of development.**

- Alleys are also desirable in residential areas, though they are not as critical as in mixed-use and commercial areas.
- Redevelopment of blocks where alleys are missing should incorporate new alleys whenever possible.

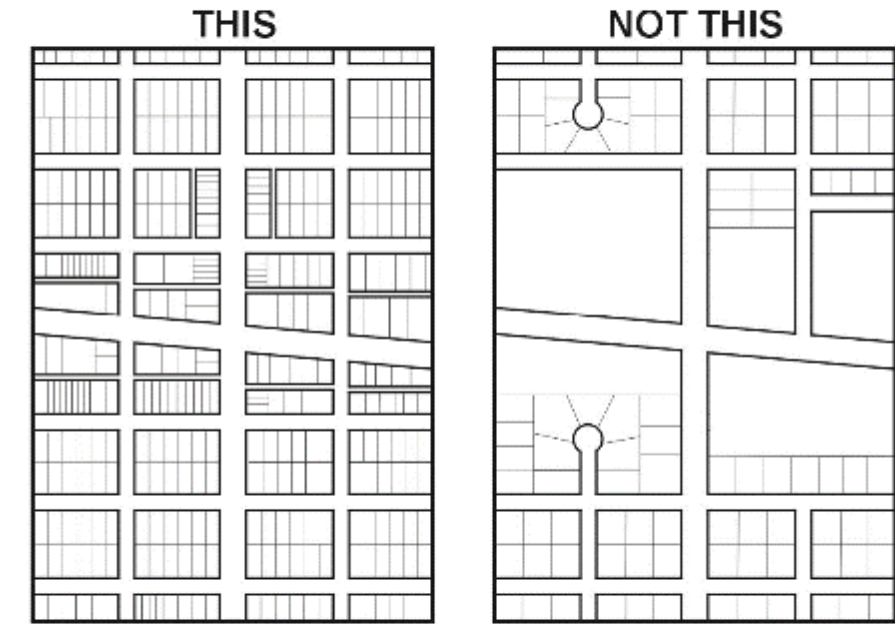
- Alleys are not to be vacated or abandoned by the City of Fresno unless and until a showing can be made that the continuing existence of the subject alley clearly poses endangerment to the community's health and safety.

**B. Lot Layout**

Lots in traditional neighborhoods like the Tower District were small by modern suburban standards. Only later did lot sizes in the commercial areas dramatically increase. Future development should return to the small lot pattern of the past whenever possible in order to retain the neighborhood's diversity and pedestrian scale.

- Single family residential lots should generally range from 4,000 square feet to 12,500 square feet.
- Multiple family residential lots should generally range from 6,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet.
- Commercial mixed-use lots should generally range from 6,000 square feet to 40,000 square feet.

- Lot width should be less than the lot depth.
- Each lot should front on at least one public street, but lots should not have frontage on two parallel streets. Rather, lots should extend to mid-block, backing onto another lot or an alley.
- No lot should be so large as to occupy its whole block, and no lot



**Block and Lot Patterns.** Shown on the left is a traditional neighborhood block and lot layout. Shown on the right is a "suburbanized" traditional neighborhood. This should not be allowed in the Tower District. New development should reintroduce the traditional pattern where it has been distorted by insensitive development.



**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Describe desired building, street, yard relationships.**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to Base District standard for minimum frontage coverage.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

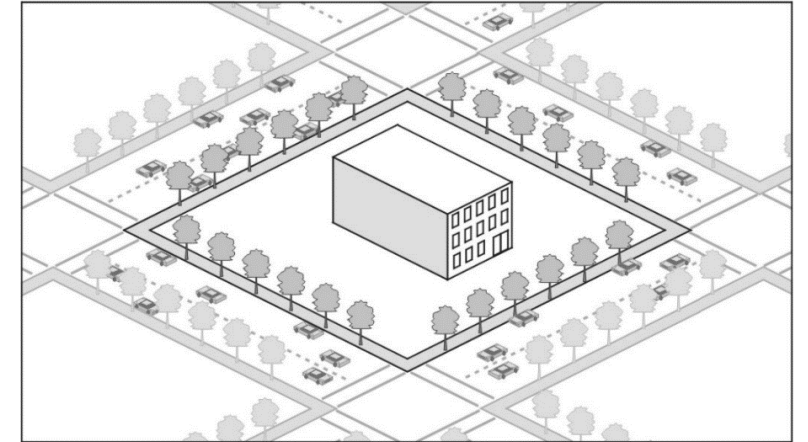
**Adapt RM pedestrian access and window design standards (15-1005).**

**C. Building Arrangement**

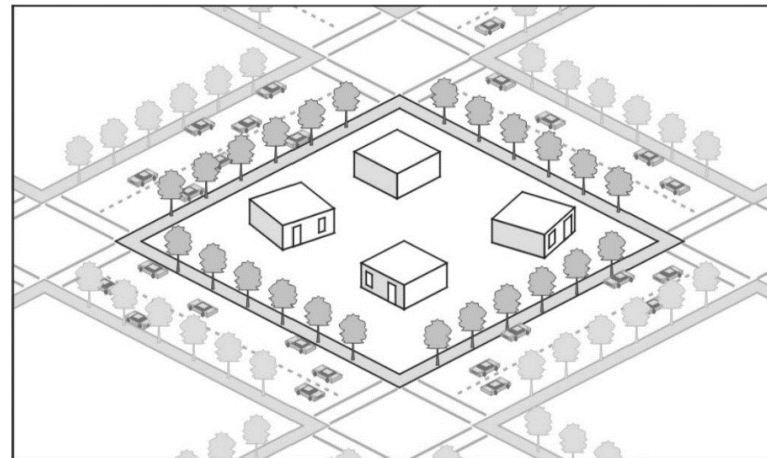
Specific guidelines for setbacks and other aspects of building arrangement are described in subsequent sections of this document and will vary by zone, but in general the following principles apply:

- Buildings should be located toward the front of the lot, with private open space—such as yards and parking—in the rear of the lot.
- Buildings should present active fronts to public streets. Features such as entrances, windows, and balconies should be oriented to the street to keep it monitored, lively and safe.
- There should be a clear separation between the public and private realms. Spaces should either be in public view and under surveillance, or private and protected.

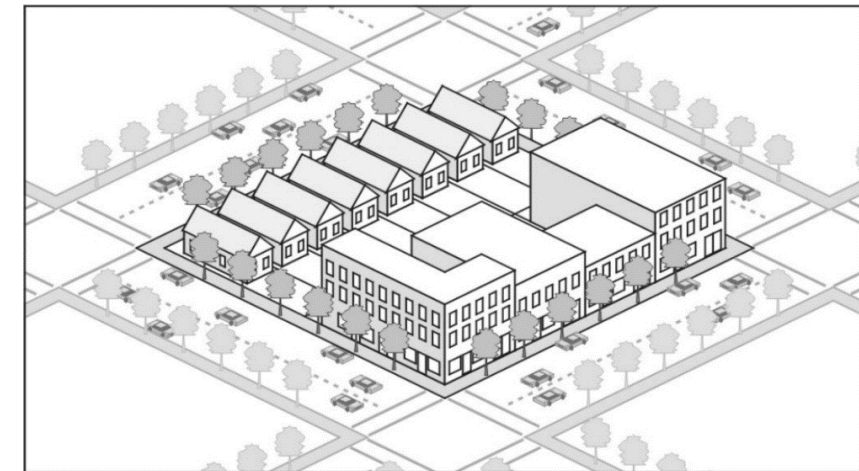
**NOT THIS**



**NOT THIS**



**THIS**



**NOTE:** Existing graphics will be incorporated, if available.

**D. Street Design**

Although the Tower District has an established street pattern, there may be instances where modifications to streets are proposed. There also may be instances in the future where new streets are created. When streets are being added, removed, or modified, the following guidelines should be followed:

**1. Roadways**

- Roadways in traditional neighborhoods are typically narrower than their suburban counterparts. This slows traffic, increases walkability, and creates spatial definition. Existing streets should not be widened, and new streets should be made as narrow as possible.
- The interconnected grid street pattern found in traditional neighborhoods disperses traffic and reduces the need for large arterials. The existing grid should be maintained and enhanced whenever possible.
- On-street parking reduces the demand for off-street parking and provides the pedestrian with a physical and psychological buffer from traffic. On-street parking should exist on all streets except where transit stops or driveways are necessary. On-street parking should not be removed for traffic lanes. In some areas, it may be appropriate to limit on-street parking for the provision of bicycle lanes.

**2. Sidewalks**

- All streets of the Tower District should have sidewalks on both sides, without exception.

Commercial/Mixed-Use Areas

- Sidewalks in the Commercial Mixed-Use Area should be wide, with a minimum of 10 feet of width.

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Describe importance of street connectivity, pedestrian-street relationships, spatial definition, on-street parking, .**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Mixed Use District sidewalk standards (15-1104).**



**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Mixed Use District sidewalk standards (15-1104).**

- There should not be planting strips in Commercial/Mixed-Use Area sidewalks, but tree wells are appropriate.
- The sidewalk should be divided into three zones: an outer furniture area, a central walkway, and an inner furniture area.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**AND MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt “Standard Operational Requirements Outdoor Dining in the Public Right-of-Way.”\***

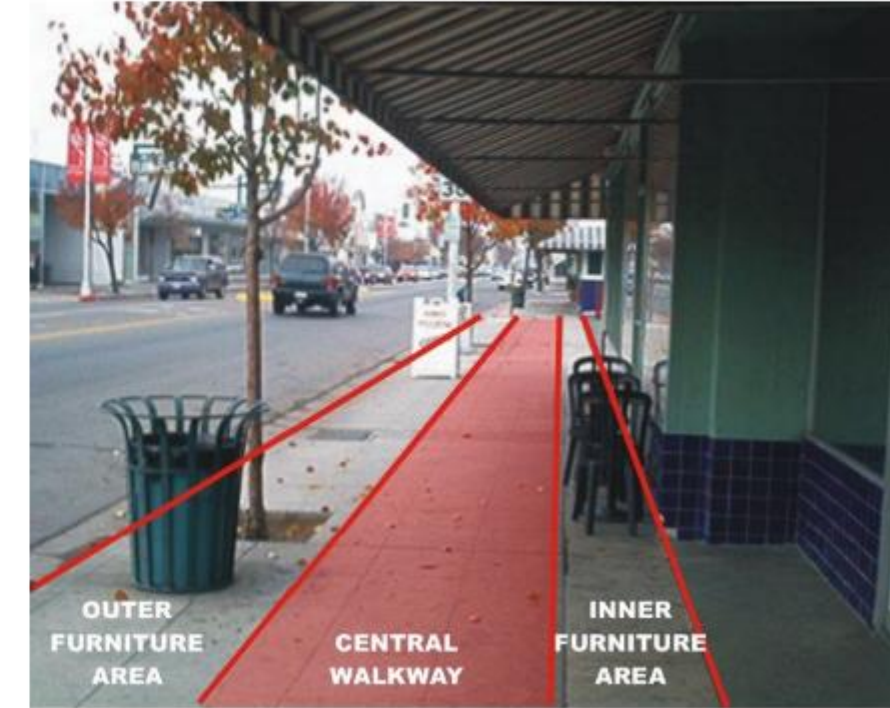
- The central walkway area of the sidewalk should occupy at least 50% of the sidewalk width, and should under no circumstances be less than 5 feet wide. The central walkway should be free and clear of all objects.
- The outer furniture area should occupy no more than 40% of the sidewalk width, provided there is sufficient walkway area. Streetlights, street trees, vending machines, bike racks, benches, transit shelters, and other street furniture should be located in this area. If there is sufficient space, tables may be placed here by adjacent businesses.
- The inner furniture area should occupy no more than 20% of the sidewalk width, provided there is sufficient walkway area. Benches, and dining tables may be placed here by adjacent businesses. Sidewalks narrower than 8 feet should not have an inner furniture zone.
- Outdoor dining areas are subject to zoning ordinance requirements and also require an encroachment permit from the City of Fresno Department of Public Works.

Residential Areas

- Sidewalks should be at least 4 feet wide.
- A planting strip, or tree lawn, 3 to 5 feet wide should be located between the sidewalk and the curb of the street. Existing tree lawns should be preserved.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Mixed Use District sidewalk standards (15-1104).**



**Sidewalk Zones.** Sidewalks should contain an outer furniture area, a clear central walkway, and, when there's enough room, an inner furniture area.



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**AND MAKE A STANDARD**

**Develop list of acceptable street trees that new standard can refer to. Illustrate examples of other street features.**

**3. Historic Features of the Tower District**

- Historic street features that define the Tower District, including, but not limited to, streetlights, street trees, median islands, hitching posts, railings, and Craftsman-style gateways should be maintained and protected.
- Every effort should be made to maintain the historical lighting where it exists—e.g. the pineapple lights of Van Ness Avenue.



**Pineapple Lights.** Historical pineapple lights found throughout the Tower District, as shown at left, should be maintained.

# Assessment of Existing Guidelines

## **PART 2**

## **MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL GUIDELINES**

(applies to RS Zoning Districts)



### III. Medium Density Residential Guidelines

The bulk of the land in the Tower District is occupied by medium density residential uses. These areas are characterized by a dominance of single-family dwellings, although small-scale apartment houses often co-exist nicely among the houses. Architecture is varied and ornate, and often historic in nature. Most activity in these areas will consist of remodeling or additions to existing structures. However, some replacements or new construction will take place occasionally.

#### A. Lot Size

While the zoning ordinance establishes minimum lot dimensions, the purpose of this section is to emphasize that the walkable character of the Tower District depends on smaller lots. Therefore, this section established guidelines for maximum lot sizes.

##### 1. Width

- On average, lots should be 35 to 60 feet in width, and no larger than 100 feet in width.

##### 2. Depth

- On average, lots should be 100 to 150 feet in depth. Except in the instances of unusually narrow blocks, lots should not extend the entire depth of the block, fronting on 2 streets. Rather, lots should extend to mid-block.

##### 3. Area

- Lots should not exceed 0.5 acres in size.

#### B. Building Placement

The zoning ordinance establishes parameters for building placement through the use of minimum yard or building setback requirements.



*Single Family Homes. Typical Tower District single-family residences.*

#### GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

#### REFER TO ZONING

Refer to RM District standards.



These must be followed, or a variance must be obtained for an exception. The guidelines below offer additional guidance.

**REFER TO ZONING**

Refer to Base District standards.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

Adapt NR Overlay standard using average of existing front setbacks.

**REFER TO ZONING**

Refer to Base Zoning facade alignment standards.

**REFER TO ZONING**

Refer to Base District standards.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Describes exceptions in specific scenarios.

**1. Front Yard Setbacks**

- In general, single-family residential front yard setbacks vary in the Tower District. They range from as little as 5 feet to as much as 40. On built-up blocks, setbacks should be consistent with the established pattern of adjacent properties, as illustrated at right. On new blocks, or blocks with no clear pattern, front setbacks of 10 to 20 feet are most appropriate. The contemporary concept of meandering front yard setbacks is not appropriate in the Tower District.

**2. Building Orientation**

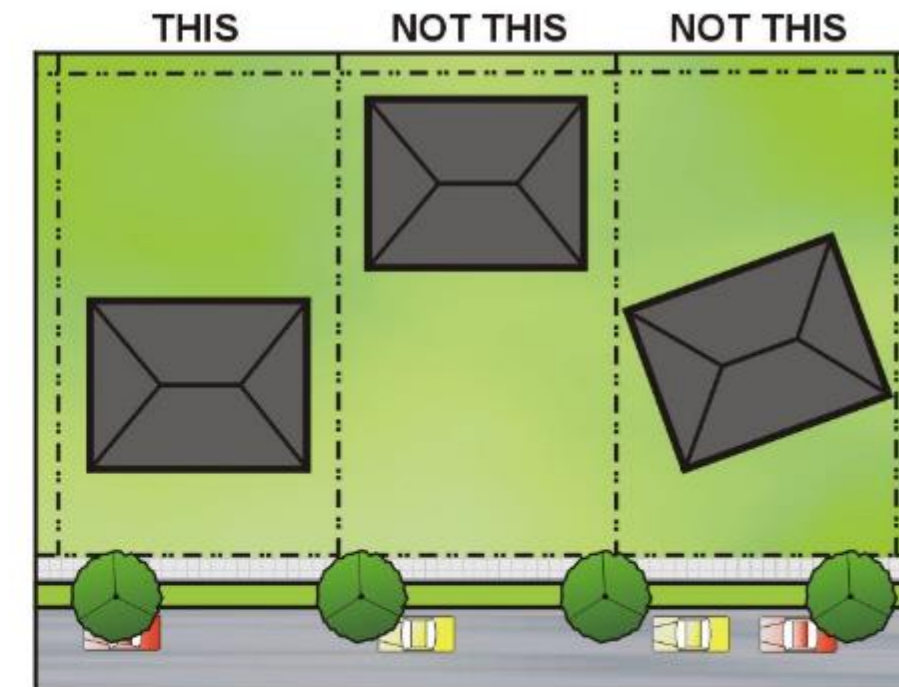
- Buildings should not be angled in orientation relative to the adjacent street right-of-way. Façades should be parallel to rights-of-way (i.e. facing the street).

**3. Side and Rear Yard Setbacks**

- In general, side and rear yard setbacks should be consistent with adjacent properties. On new blocks, or blocks with no established pattern, side and rear setbacks of 3 to 6 feet are most appropriate.
- In some instances, side yard setback requirements may present difficulties. For example, narrow lots without alley access may require that the dwelling be constructed within one of the side yard setbacks in order to allow adequate room on the other side for a driveway that leads to a detached garage. In these instances the Design Review Committee would be supportive of a variance from this requirement. If a structure is built within the minimum required setback requirement, a firewall may be required per City building codes.



**Uniform Setbacks.** This Tower District Street of uniform front yard setbacks creates a very pleasant place to live. These patterns should be preserved and maintained.



**Front Setbacks and Building Orientation.** Homes should be set back 20 to 30 feet from the street, and should be oriented parallel to the street, rather than at an angle.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Maintain neighborhood scale, while remaining consistent with Zoning.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt NR Overlay standard for building massing (15-1611).**

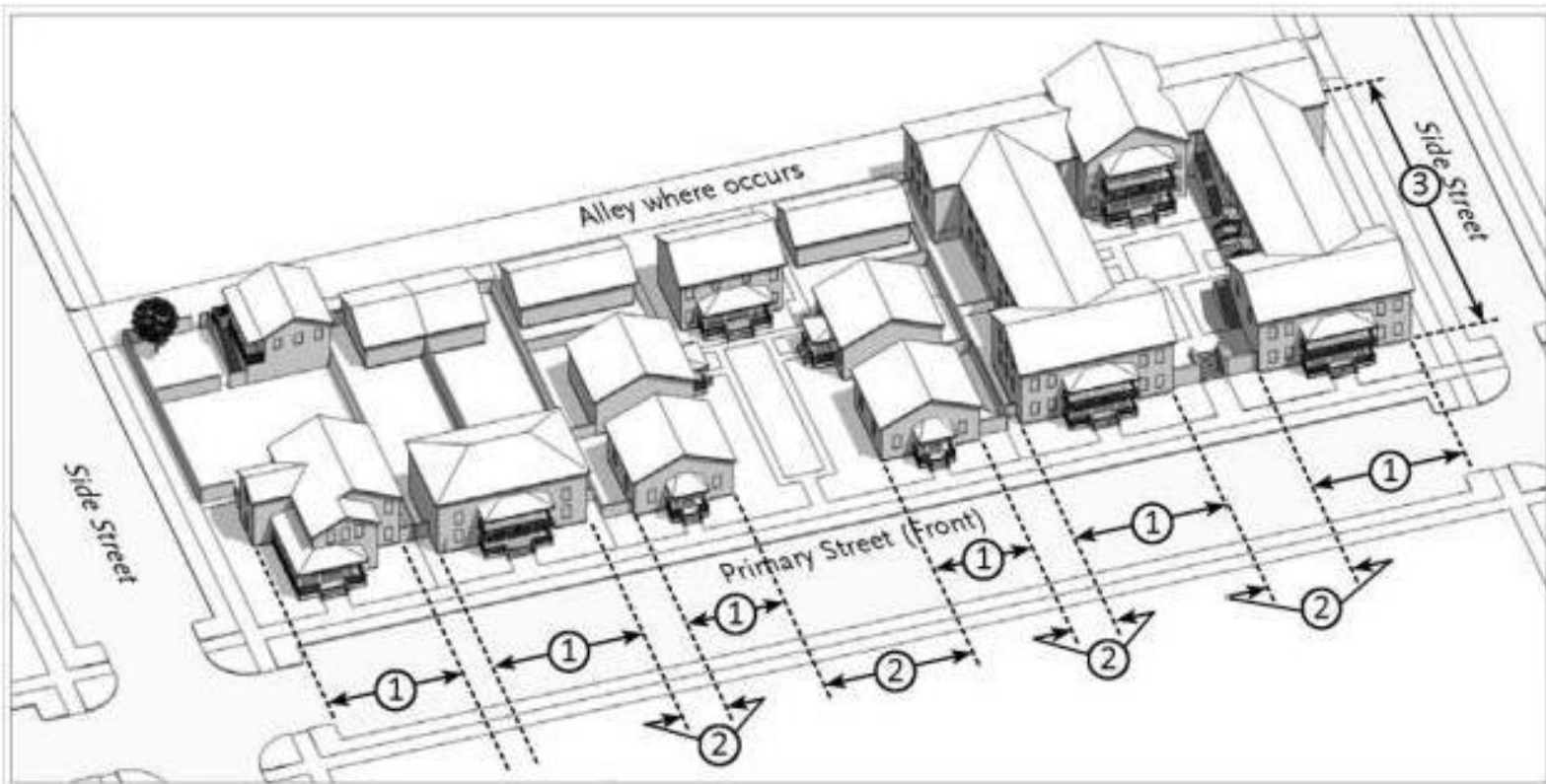
**C. Building Size**

**1. Height**

- In general, buildings should not grossly exceed the height of their neighbors. In the Tower District this ranges from 1 to 2 stories. Specific height requirements vary from zone district to zone district and specific requirements for individual parcels are described in the zoning ordinance.

**2. Width**

- In general, building widths should be consistent with adjacent properties. On new blocks, or blocks with no established pattern, building widths of 30 to 50 feet are most appropriate.



**NOTE:** graphics from zoning code precedents may illustrate concepts.

**SHOWN:** building mass facing streets from Section 15-1611.



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Encourage detached garage but don't require.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Strengthen Base District standards.**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**While building design standards will encourage traditional development patterns, site-specific compatibility requires design review.**

**D. Parking/Vehicular Access**

**1. Garages**

- Garages should be detached from the house and placed at the rear of the lot so that street visibility is limited.
- In instances where a detached garage is not possible or practical, attached placement may be considered. Attached garages must complement the house and the surrounding neighborhood as much as possible. Attached garages should be set back 10 to 20 feet behind the face of the main structure. Under no circumstances should the garage be placed closer to the street than the residence.

- Garages should maintain the same architectural style of the residence. Design elements such as roof pitch, building materials, attic vents and windows should match that of the residence.

**THIS**



**Detached Garage Behind The House.** *The place where the car lives should not visually dominate the place where the people live. Streets lined with homes like this one are pleasing and popular.*

**NOT THIS**



**The Snout House.** *This garage dominates the façade of the house. To a pedestrian, this street looks more like a warehouse district than a neighborhood. The Tower District would not be a special place if homes like this were allowed to proliferate.*



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Style and site-specific compatibility requires design review. Also refer to garage setback standards.**

need not be set back from the front of the house. When carports are constructed, architectural features of the residence (roofline, columns, attic vents, etc.) should be incorporated into the carport.

- Temporary carports, consisting of canvas or steel pipe, etc., are inappropriate.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Prohibit pipes as visible form of support, and canvas awnings and canopies.**



**Carports.** Architecturally, these carports appear to be an extension to the residence since the columns and roof materials of the main residence are consistent in the carport.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown Districts standards for vehicular access (15-1504).**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Require ribbon driveways infilled with lawn, brick, river rock, or permeable pavers.**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to 15-2417, Parking and Loading, which sets a maximum width of 18 feet.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**See ribbon driveway reference above.**

**3. Proper Location and Treatment of Vehicular Access**

- If alley access is available, then vehicular access should be taken from the alley.
- If no alley is available, then access will be provided through driveway access from the street. For corner lots, this access should be taken from the lowest classified street or the street that is clearly less significant.

- For lots with access from a street, ribbon driveways (“Hollywood Drives”) are preferred over solid concrete driveways. This is illustrated in the photo to the right. Ribbon driveways soften the overall street visibility of the residence. As shown, the typical and preferred ribbon driveway consists of two concrete strips and lawn in the center. However, other natural materials, such as brick or river rock may be used in place of the center grass strip.

- The width of the drive approach and driveway should be no greater than 16 feet. When a two-car garage is proposed, in the case of an exceptionally wide lot or from a side street, landscape materials are encouraged to soften the increased amount of cement. A dual ribbon driveway or landscaping in the middle of the two drives would be appropriate.



**Ribbon Driveway.** Preferred ribbon driveway design with lawn treatment.



**Ribbon Driveway With Alternative Materials.** This photo shows good use of acceptable alternative materials for ribbon driveways.



**Landscape Treatment for 2 Car Garage.** This corner lot, 2 car garage, appropriately uses landscaping to soften the driveway.



**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt NR Overlay standards for direct paths from sidewalks (15-1611).**

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Consider context-specific compatibility during design review. Keep strong language in Guidelines. Safeguard basic compatibility with general standards.**

**E. Pedestrian Access**

- Pedestrian access from the street should be taken from a separate paved path that leads to the dwelling's front door directly from the street sidewalk. The path should not begin at the driveway or any other point (see graphic on page 44).



**Pedestrian Access.** Paths should be provided to the main entry of the house directly from the sidewalk.

**F. Façade Elements**

1. **Architectural Design** It is not the intention of this document to regulate the architectural style of individual buildings. Creativity and diversity are encouraged. However, good architecture is critical to the creation of a beloved neighborhood, and the following guidelines should apply:
  - New buildings should fit in to their surroundings. This does not mean that the existing buildings must be copied, but that the context of any new building must be respected. Attempts should be made to tie the building into its neighbors through the use of similar massing, materials, roof type, architectural style, or some other technique.



**New Building.** This recently constructed residence does an excellent job of fitting into the neighborhood.

- Renovations of, and additions to, existing buildings should follow the original style. Victorian gingerbread should not be added to an art deco building, nor should a classical structure be remodeled to be moderne.
- Materials used in renovations of, and additions to, existing buildings should be consistent with the original materials. For example, stucco should not be used in place of the clapboard siding on a Craftsman.
- New buildings that mimic historical styles are acceptable and welcome, but they must be accurate interpretations. A well-done modern building in a traditional style is very pleasing, but a poorly done imitation of a historical home is quite unpleasant and looks cartoonish and fake. Special attention must be paid to materials, proportions, and ornamentation originally used in the proposed style. See table on page 28 for architectural styles



**Roof Forms.** The steep pitch and crossed gables of this Tudor home are key components to its architecture. Additions to this type of residence should maintain the same roofline.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

Also allow entrances that face courtyards connected directly to public sidewalk.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Use design review to maintain compatibility.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

Prohibit metal security doors facing streets.

**REFER TO ZONING**

Refer to Base District standards.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Keep guidance for window composition as part of design review.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINES**

Use design review to maintain compatibility.

**2. Doors**

- Each building must be accessed through a primary entrance that faces, and is parallel to, the street.
- Replacement doors should be of the same type as the original, or fit with the architectural style of the residence. Metal security doors are not appropriate for the Tower District.

**3. Windows**

- Windows must be provided along all walls that face a street.
- Windows should be vertically oriented, i.e., taller than they are wide. Also, each window should be individually articulated and should not form long horizontal or vertical bands. In some styles, such as the Craftsman, windows were grouped, and this is an appropriate technique to use. However, framing at least 4 inches in width must separate individual windows in a group, and no group may have a width greater than 1.5 times the height of the group.
- Windows should not be flush with solid building surfaces, but rather recessed at least 4 inches from the exterior wall plane.
- Windows should be single-hung sash, double-hung sash, casement style, or other similar types. Horizontally sliding windows and non-opening windows are inappropriate.
- For the replacement of windows on existing structures, replacement windows should look as similar to the original window as possible in order to preserve the residence's architectural design.
- Windows may include glazing bars, or muntins. The addition of glazing bars can break up the house's façade and add texture to the building. On historical homes, the original muntin and pane



*Screen Doors. Unlike a metal security door, this screen door is appropriate for this single family residence.*



**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt from NR Overlay standards (15-1611).**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Develop new standard to prohibit windows facing directly into neighbor’s windows.**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Consider context-specific compatibility during design review. Safeguard neighborhood compatibility with general standards.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt from NR Overlay standards (15-1611).**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Consider context-specific compatibility during design review. Safeguard neighborhood compatibility with general standards.**

pattern should be maintained when windows are replaced. However it is inappropriate to install replacement windows with fake muntins when the original windows did not have muntins (ie were not multi-glazed).

- Vinyl or wood window frames are preferred, whereas metal window frames are discouraged.

- Whenever possible, upper-floor windows at the rear and sides of buildings should be placed to maximize the privacy of the neighboring properties.

- Replacement windows should maintain the same size and be in the same location as the original windows. The number, size, style and shape of window panels should be consistent with the original windows.
- Where applicable, the existing original trim should remain intact when replacement windows are installed.
- Window screens that detract from the window are discouraged.

**4. Roofs**

- Generally, roofs should be pitched and not flat. Common roof types in the Tower District single-family residential areas are gabled, hipped, and gambrel roofs.

- For additions or renovations, the roof type, pitch, and color should be consistent with that of the original structure.
- For new buildings that mimic historical styles, the roof type should be appropriate to the proposed architectural style.
- For additions or renovations of existing structures, roofing materials used should generally match the original roofing materials, particularly when the original material is tile, slate, or tin. In the case of wood shake roof replacement, use of composite materials is encouraged.



**Casement Windows.** *If ever replaced, the pattern, size and shape of these casement style windows should be maintained.*








**Roof Type.** *This tile roof is appropriate for this Mediterranean-style house.*

## Common Architectural Features of Tower District Homes

*This list is not meant to be exhaustive, nor will it be the sole determining factor in the review of projects. It is merely intended to give readers an idea of the styles of architecture present in the area.*

### KEEP AS GUIDELINE

Keep as important guidance.  
Interpret context compatibility  
during design review.

	Style	Cladding Materials	Roofing Materials	Other Features
	<b>Neo-Classical</b>  <i>Including Colonial Revival, Italianate, etc.</i>	Brick, clapboard, smooth stucco	Wood shingles, composite shingles, sometimes ribbed tin.	Pedimented doors and gables, classical columns, porticos, ornamented cornices, balustrades,
	<b>Mediterranean</b>  <i>Including Spanish Colonial, Monterey, Mission Revival, etc.</i>	Smooth stucco.	Red ceramic tile of various types—straight barrel mission tile, tapered mission tile, Spanish tile, or American Spanish tile.	Quatrefoil windows, shaped parapets, arched entry porches.
	<b>Tudor</b>	Usually smooth stucco, sometimes brick or stone.	Wood shingles, slate shingles, composite shingles as a replacement.	Half-timbering, multiple front gables, multi-level eaves, rounded entryways.
	<b>Craftsman</b>	Usually clapboard, sometimes split wood shingles or stone.	Wood shingles, composite shingles.	Eaves decorated with exposed rafter tails and cutout brackets, large porches with tapered piers, low-pitched roofs.
	<b>Prairie</b>	Stucco, clapboard.	Clay tiles, wood shingles, composite shingles as a replacement.	Wide eave overhangs that are boxed without brackets, low pitched roofs, geometric patterns of small pane window glazing, tall casement windows.



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Keep and promote during design review.  
Recognize that overly-prescriptive standards can  
reduce development feasibility.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt and combine with NR Overlay standards  
for exterior materials (15-1611).**

**5. Siding (Cladding) Materials**

- For renovations and additions to existing buildings, siding materials should match the original materials. In new construction, materials should be comparable to those in the neighborhood and should be appropriate to the selected architectural style of the house (i.e., stucco should not be used for a Victorian, and fish-scale shingles should not be used on a Mediterranean).
- For new buildings that mimic historical styles, the cladding materials must be appropriate to the proposed architectural style.
- For existing structures with horizontal lap (clapboard) siding, every effort should be made to maintain the original materials; however, if new horizontal 6" or 8" siding is proposed, it should match the width and style of the original or that which is typical to the period. When new siding is installed, the original trim of the windows and vents should be left intact.

- Approved siding materials are as follows:
  - a. Bevel or Bungalow
  - b. Dolly Varden
  - c. Drop siding
  - d. Tongue and groove
  - e. Channel Rustic
- Sidings which are **prohibited** in the Tower District are as follows:
  - a. All Vertical Siding (except board on bat and board on board)
  - b. Rough sawn plain
  - c. T1-11, in any form.



**Appropriate Stucco.** This unique stucco application is appropriate for this early ranch house. However, it would be inappropriate on a Craftsman style home.



**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Limit use of stucco and other materials. Integrate with NR Overlay standards for exterior materials (15-1611).**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Allow stucco without restrictions related to style. Style-specific standards may be overly restrictive.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt NR Overlay standards for porch design (15-1611). Add new standard regulating security doors, security window bars, and alarm boxes.**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Determine appropriateness of attic vents during design review process.**

- d. Kerfed Rough Sawn
- e. Reverse Board and Batten
- f. Metal siding of all types and design
- g. Concrete block or cinder block that is not completely covered by approved siding.
- Stucco is appropriate for existing homes and new homes that mimic historical styles only when stucco was the original cladding material used for that style. In cases where stucco is appropriate, the method of application must match that originally

used for such homes. Generally, modern stucco applications which are highly textured, such as spatter dash, are inappropriate on historic styles such as Mediterranean and Tudor, which used a smoother troweled finish.

- 6. Security**
- Security doors and security window bars are inappropriate for the Tower District. Both detract from the architectural beauty of the neighborhood and create the false impression that the area is crime-ridden and dangerous.
  - Front porches should not be enclosed with security fencing. Many Tower homes were specially designed to connect the porch entrance to the front yard.
  - Alarm boxes for home security system should be placed in an inconspicuous location to limit street visibility.

- 7. Attic Vents**
- Architecturally, the attic vent is an important element in the various styles in the Tower District. The attic vent should be consistent with those in the neighborhood and relative to the style of the residence.



**Attic Vents.** Common attic vent types in the Tower District.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Site-specific and style-specific standards are open to interpretation, and may be overly restrictive.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Add new standard for balconies and bay windows articulation standard. Consider balcony proportion and style during design review. For porches, adapt 15-1611, NR Overlay, for porch design.**

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Other standards will help maintain residential character. Consider style and specific context during design review.**

- Similar attic vents should be carried through to any auxiliary structure on the lot, i.e., garages, carports, second dwelling units, storage sheds, etc.

**8. Balconies**

- Balconies are encouraged. However, they must be attractive and incorporated architecturally into the building. Balconies that are not consistent with the proportions, style and materials of the building will be strongly discouraged.

**9. Porches**

- Porches are encouraged. However, they must be attractive and incorporated architecturally into the building. Porches that are not consistent with the proportions, style and materials of the building will be strongly discouraged.
- Porches should be at least 6 feet deep.

**10. Façade Articulation**

- Façades should be more articulated and residential in character. However, even when façades of new buildings are strongly articulated, restraint should be used in the design of the home. The contemporary trend of the “McMansion,” with numerous gables, roof pitches, dormers, and out-of-proportion Palladian windows should be avoided in favor of more subtle approaches that blend with the more sublime historical architecture of the neighborhood.

**THIS**



*Historic Home. Calm, controlled, and beautiful.*

**NOT THIS**



*McMansion. Attractive, but too busy. Historical elements are not correctly applied.*



### Front yard fencing

Front yard fencing is discouraged in the Tower District. It creates a “fortress” mentality and an unwelcoming streetscape. The traditional pattern in the area is to have open, unfenced front yards lining the street, and this historical pattern should be preserved. Generally, no fencing should encroach beyond the plane of the front façade of the primary house. However, when front yard fencing is proposed, the following guidelines should apply:

- Front yard fences should not abut the sidewalk. The fence should be set back from the sidewalk at least 2 to 3 feet to allow room for landscape materials to soften the fence and to ensure pedestrian comfort.
- Fences constructed of brick, cement block, contiguous wood pickets, or other opaque methods may be no taller than 3 feet in height. Use of solid fencing materials is discouraged on corner and other highly visible lots.
- Fences constructed of wrought iron or decorative iron may be no taller than 4 feet in height. Wrought iron fencing should be a dark color and blend in with the front yard and house.
- Chain link fencing in the front yard is never appropriate.
- Fencing should match or complement the fencing materials on adjoining properties.

Some of the older Craftsman-era homes and lots in the Tower District were purposefully designed to share a bermed front yard between contiguous lots. The front entrances of these homes are in some cases three or more feet in elevation above the sidewalk. Fencing of any type in these situations disrupts the intended street design and is discouraged.

#### KEEP AS GUIDELINE

Integrate with standards in 15-2006-C, Fences, Walls, & Hedges.

#### REFER TO ZONING

Refer to 15-2006, Fences, Walls, & Hedges.

#### KEEP AS GUIDELINE

Site-specific and style-specific standards are open to interpretation. Compatibility addressed by general standards for traditional development patterns.



**Front Yard Fence.** These front yard fences exemplify use of materials and height.



**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to 15-2006, Fences, Walls, & Hedges.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Prohibit taller fences in front yard setback.**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Consistent with standards in Article 26, Signs.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Establish setback standard for accessory buildings.**

**2. Side and rear yard fencing**

- Side and rear yard fencing, placed outside of the required setback area, is allowed up to 6 feet in height. Any proposed side or rear yard fence greater than 6 feet requires approval of a zoning variance through the City of Fresno and should generally be discouraged by the Design Review Committee. Fencing materials should be consistent and complementary to the residence. Brick, wood, stucco or wrought iron are the preferred materials.
- The use of chain link or similar materials is strongly discouraged. However, in the event that chain link is proposed, efforts should be made to screen the chain link with landscaping. These screening measures will reduce the visual impact of the chain link fence.

- As shown in the photo to the right, efforts should be made to limit the encroachment of side yard fencing into the front yard when there is no front yard fence in place. Such placement of side yard fencing serves no purpose and disrupts the continuity of the neighborhood's front yard setback.

**H. Signs**

- There should be no signs in the medium density residential areas, except those permitted in relation to home occupations (refer to zoning ordinance).

**I. Accessory Buildings**

- Accessory buildings such as storage sheds or second dwelling units should be located to the rear of the property so that street visibility is limited. Consult the zoning ordinance for specific requirements regarding building placement.



**Rear Yard Fence.** This corner lot rear yard fence is tastefully done to complement the residence. Notice the use of the landscaping along the sidewalk side of the fence and how it softens the appearance.



**Side Yard Fence.** This side yard fence disrupts the continuity of the neighborhood front yard setback and is discouraged.



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Address specific context during design review.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Building code limits HVAC locations.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

Require screening on roof and ground.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

as that of the primary residence. Design elements such as roof pitch, building materials, attic vents and windows should match that of the primary residence.

**mechanical Equipment**

- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units should be located on the ground, either in the back or on the side of the residence. Units placed on the ground should be screened with landscaping. When rooftop placement is necessary, the unit should be located on the side or rear of the residence, in order to limit street visibility. In addition, roof-mounted units are to be screened from the view of adjacent properties.

**Lighting**

- Lighting fixtures should complement the architectural style of the primary structure. Industrial style lighting, such as flood lighting or fluorescent lighting, is not appropriate.
- Lighting should be permanently fixed to the structure.



**Hidden Equipment.** This residence's HVAC unit is not visible from the street.

# Assessment of Existing Guidelines

## **PART 3**

## **MEDIUM-HIGH & HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL GUIDELINES**

(applies to RM Zoning Districts)





## IV. Medium-High & High Density Residential Guidelines

The zone of medium-high and high density residential uses lies primarily along major streets. These areas are a vital component of the neighborhood. They offer a range of affordable housing types for residents and a slightly more peaceful atmosphere than the commercial/mixed-use area. Unlike suburban apartment complexes, lots are small and individually owned. Large-scale “complex” development is not appropriate and is strongly discouraged. While not encouraged, single family residences are allowed.

### A. Building Types

#### 1. Building Types Encouraged

The following multiple family types are appropriate for moderate density areas and should be encouraged:

##### a. Multiple Family Residential

- *Tower 4-plexes* are an appropriate Multiple family housing type for the Medium-High Density area. Tower 4-plexes are typically 2 story buildings, with 2 units per floor. Each unit usually has its own entrance accessed from the front porch, with the upper-floor units each having an entrance which leads to a private, enclosed stairway leading up to the second floor unit.
- *Walk-up apartment houses*, such as The Nelson on Van Ness south of McKinley, are an appropriate form of Multiple family housing. These structures typically have 8 to 16 units and are 2 to 3 stories in height. A single street entrance, with a double-loaded corridor layout, characterizes them, i.e., each floor has a central interior corridor, with apartments lined up on each side.



**Apartment Houses.** Typical Tower District apartment houses of the pre-WWII vintage on Van Ness Avenue.



**Tower 4-Plex** at Wishon and McKinley.

### GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

Update description of building types illustrative of desirable development. Consider making a sidebar.



## **GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Update description of building types illustrative of desirable development.**

**Consider making a sidebar.**

- *Stacked flats* are a type that are not currently common in the Tower District, but which would be appropriate. These are narrow buildings, perhaps 20 to 30 feet wide, with one apartment per floor. Stacked flats are usually two or three stories tall, and thus usually have two or three apartments. Usually, each unit has its own outside entrance, and upper-floor apartments are accessed via private interior stairways.
- *Courtyard apartments* are multiple family dwellings that are shaped like a letter "U," with the space in the middle landscaped as a courtyard. These are sometimes 1 story, but often two stories in height. Each unit typically has its own outside entrance. In two story examples, the upper floors are usually accessed by a shared outdoor staircase, which leads to an outdoor walkway that is used to access the apartments.
- *Bungalow courts* are a grouping of multiple detached apartments around a courtyard on a single lot.
- *Townhouses* are multiple family units arranged in a row, in a fashion similar to rowhouses. Each unit has its own exterior entrance and there is no vertical stacking of dwelling units.
- *Rowhouses*, narrow single-family homes that are built completely out to the side lot lines and form a solid street wall, are appropriate in the Medium-High Density Residential Area. Rowhouses are typically two or three stories in height.



*Walk Up Apartment House at Belmont and Broadway.*



*Bungalow Court housing*





**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Update description of building types illustrative of desirable development.**

**2. Building Types Discouraged**

The following building types are inappropriate for medium-high and high density areas and should not be constructed in this zone:

- a. Suburban-style apartment complexes

**B. Lot Size**

While the zoning ordinance establishes minimum lot dimensions, the purpose of this section is to emphasize that the walkable character of the Tower District depends on smaller lots. Therefore, this section establishes guidelines for maximum lot sizes.

**1. Width**

- On average, lots should be around 50 to 75 feet in width, and no larger than 100 feet in width.

**2. Depth**

- On average, lots should be 100 to 150 feet in depth. Except in the instances of unusually narrow blocks, lots should not extend the entire depth of the block, with frontage on two parallel streets. Rather, lots should extend to mid-block.

**3. Area**

- Lots should not exceed 1/2 acre in size. Large-scale suburban-style complexes are strongly discouraged. Rather, the pre-WWII pattern of small apartment houses on small, individually-owned lots should be encouraged.

**C. Building Placement**

**1. Number of Buildings**

- Generally, each lot should only have one primary building. The primary building will be the biggest, will be located at the front of

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to Base District standards.**

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Describe street-building relationship fundamentals.**



*Suburban Style Apartments, on large lots and surrounded by gates, are not appropriate in the Tower District.*

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Describe street-building relationship fundamentals.**

the lot, and must clearly be primary in its use. "Complex" style development with multiple buildings arranged on large lots amongst landscaping and parking should be strongly discouraged. Exceptions will be made for "bungalow courts," described later in this section.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Require street-oriented development. Adapt NR Overlay building frontage standards (15-1611).**

- Each lot may have one accessory building. Accessory buildings must be smaller than the primary building, must be located behind the primary building, and must clearly be secondary in use to the primary building. Examples would include garages, storage sheds and "granny flats" (second dwelling units).

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to Base District vertical and horizontal alignment standards.**

**2. Building Orientation**

- Buildings should not be angled in orientation relative to the adjacent street right-of-way. Façades should be parallel to street rights-of-way (i.e. facing the street).

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to RM District standards.**

**3. Front Yard Setbacks**

- Front yard setbacks are not required unless mandated by the zone district of the parcel. If front yard setbacks are used, they should average 5 to 10 feet and should not exceed 20 feet. First floors of houses or apartment buildings placed less than 10 feet from the sidewalk should be elevated 3 to 5 feet above grade to ensure privacy.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt NR Overlay building frontage standards (15-1611)**

- If the block is built up, then setbacks for new buildings must match those of existing buildings.
- For courtyard arrangements 50% of the street frontage should consist of building façades.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Modify side setbacks to allow zero side setback for duplexes and townhouses.**

**4. Side Yard Setbacks**

- Side yard setbacks are not required unless mandated by the zone district of the parcel. If side setbacks are used, they should not exceed a total of 10 feet or 25% of the street frontage.



**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to Base District standards.**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to Base District standards.**

**5. Rear Setbacks**

- There will be no requirement for rear setbacks, other than that required by the zoning ordinance. The rear of the lot is the preferred location for parking and private on-site open spaces.

**D. Building Height**

- No new building or addition should exceed three stories or 40 feet in height.
- Primary buildings should not be less than two stories in height.

## GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

Update description of building types illustrative of desirable development.  
Make sidebar.

### A Note on Rowhouses and Townhouses

Rowhouses are single-family homes on individual lots, much like the detached single-family homes that are dominant throughout Fresno. The primary differences are:

- | Rowhouses are built out completely to the side lot lines, so that they stand shoulder-to-shoulder with little or no space in between. This requires each rowhouse to have heavy masonry side firewalls.
- | They are usually closer to the sidewalk than detached houses, with front yards ranging from 10 feet deep to no front yard at all.
- | Rowhouses are typically 18 to 25 feet wide, and are typically at least 2 stories tall.
- | The ground floor is usually elevated 3 to 5 feet above the sidewalk grade to ensure privacy, and the main entrance is accessed via a "stoop."

Like regular single-family homes, each rowhouse is an independent structure on its own lot, and there are no commonly owned facilities or homeowners associations. Rather, the ownership of each home is fee simple, like standard houses.

Townhouses are similar, except multiple units are located in one building on one lot, divided by party walls. While individual units may be separately owned through a condominium arrangement, the structure and other facilities are held in common by a homeowners' association. Other times, a single person will retain ownership of the entire complex and rent out the individual units as apartments. Unlike apartment houses, however, each unit in a townhouse development has its own outdoor entrance, and units are not "stacked" vertically.

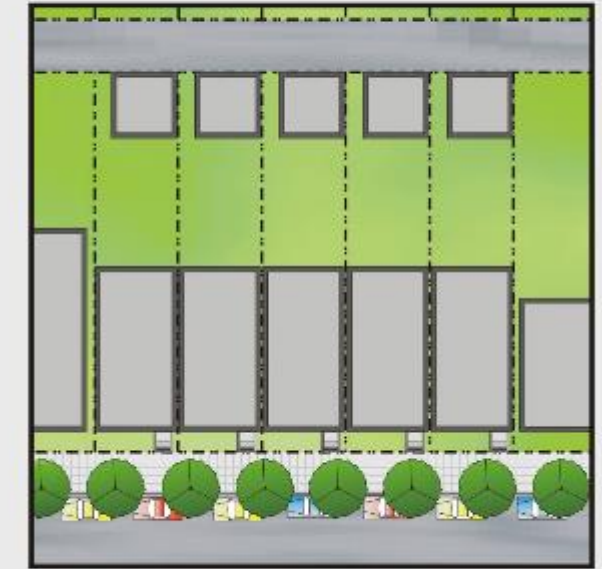
The drawings at the far right illustrate the differences between rowhouses and townhouses. Above are 5 rowhouses. Each is independently owned, is an independent structure, and occupies its own lot. The townhouses below are multiple units in a single building on a single lot. Otherwise, the two housing types are very similar.



Victorian rowhouses in San Francisco



Colonial townhouses in Celebration, FL



Sample rowhouse site plan



Sample townhouse site plan



## E. Parking/Vehicular Access

### REFER TO ZONING

Refer to RM District building setback, parking setback, and minimum frontage coverage requirements.

### MAKE A STANDARD

Adapt NR Overlay standards for direct paths from sidewalks (15-1611).

### REFER TO ZONING

Refer to RM District site design.

### KEEP AS GUIDELINE

### MAKE A STANDARD

Increase minimum setback standard from 1 foot (per 15-2006-D) to 2 feet. Regulate length of wall uninterrupted by access point.

#### 1. Surface Parking Lot Design

- The rear of the lot is the preferred location for surface parking.
- Surface parking lots adjacent to a street should only be approved if site conditions make it impossible to locate the parking behind the building. Under no circumstances should a parking lot be located between a building and the street for new construction.
- In no case should surface parking occupy more than 50% of a lot.
- ADA-accessible and bicycle parking should be provided for per current City standards.

- When a parking lot must be located adjacent to a street, a clearly marked pedestrian walkway must be provided from the street sidewalk to the entrance of the building.

- When a parking lot must be located adjacent to a street, it should be buffered from the street with a screening wall or fence three feet in height in order to enclose the parking lot. Screening walls or fencing must be attractively designed and must use complementary (or the same) materials used for the building or materials that are specific to the area.

- Screening walls should be located two to three feet from the back of the sidewalk (front property line) to allow adequate room for landscape materials. In addition, greenery/vegetation on or through the wall or fence is encouraged.
- Screening walls should have one pedestrian access point for every 50 feet of street frontage.

**THIS**



*The parking lot for this apartment house is behind the main structure, accessed by a driveway along the side of the building. This is the preferred placement for Multiple family parking.*

**NOT THIS**



*The parking lot for this apartment complex is in front of the main structure. This arrangement is never appropriate.*

**REFER TO ZONING**

Refer to setback standards.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Style and site-specific compatibility requires design review.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

Prohibit pipes as visible form of support, and canvas awnings and canopies.

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

Describe parking location fundamentals.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Style and site-specific compatibility requires design review.

**REFER TO ZONING**

Refer to RM District standards.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

Adapt Downtown Districts standards for vehicular access (15-1504-H).

**2. Garages and Carports**

Covered parking is a requirement in multiple family residential zone districts. Below are guidelines applicable to covered parking:

- Garages and carports should be placed at the rear of the lot so that street visibility is limited.

- Garages and carports should carry on the same architectural style of the residence. Design elements such as roof pitch, building materials, attic vents and windows should match that of the residence.

- Temporary carports, consisting of canvas or steel pipe, etc.. are inappropriate.

**3. Parking Structure/Underground Parking Design**

- Parking structures and underground parking areas are encouraged in the Medium-High and High Density Residential Areas in conjunction with residential development.

- Parking structures visible from the street must be as architecturally indistinguishable from the primary building as possible.
- Parking structures adjacent to the street must follow all guidelines set forth in this document for primary structures.

- Underground parking should not be visible from the street. Buildings suspended over parking areas by stilts should not be permitted

**4. Proper Location and Treatment of Vehicular Access**

- Automobile access driveways across the street sidewalk should be kept to an absolute minimum. They endanger and inconvenience pedestrians, especially those in wheelchairs.



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Encourage coordination among owners.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown Districts standards for vehicular access (15-1504).**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Encourage coordination among owners.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Add new standard for driveway removal and sidewalk restoration.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt from NR Overlay pedestrian access standards (15-1611).**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Addressed by RM District on-site open space standards (15-1004).**

- When possible, vehicle access driveways should serve more than one site.

- For lots with alley access, vehicular access driveways from the street should not be granted. Access should be taken from the alley.
- For corner lots without alley access, vehicle access should be provided from the lowest classified street on which the lot fronts (arterial, collector or local). For example, a parking lot for a building located on the corner of Olive and Lucerne Avenues will be granted access from Lucerne Avenue only.

- For interior lots without alley access, an attempt should be made to share side street access with a neighboring property through an easement. If this is not possible, then an attempt should be made to share a driveway access with a neighboring interior lot. If this is not possible, access will be permitted from the primary street.

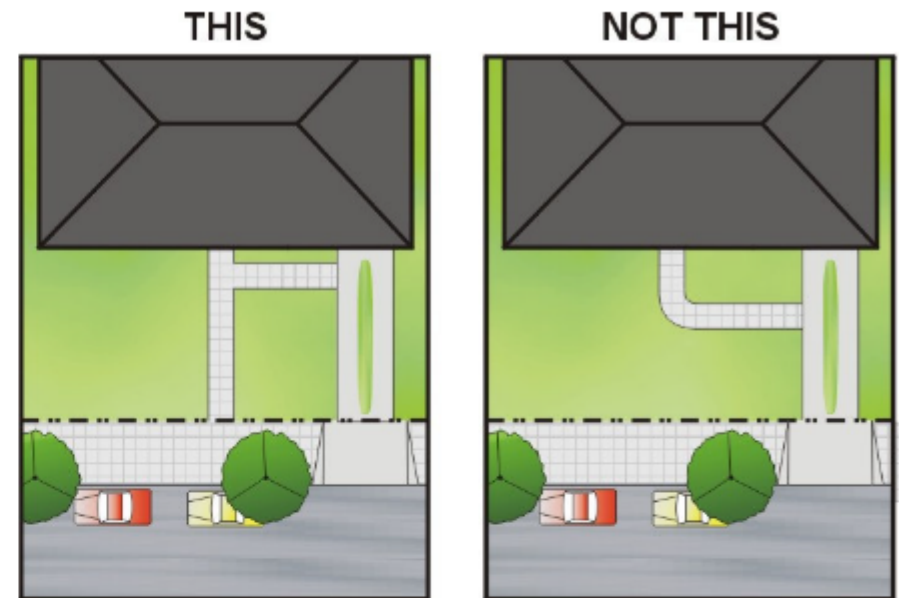
- If a lot with unnecessary access driveways is redeveloped or significantly altered, all unnecessary access driveways should be removed and the sidewalk restored.

**F. Pedestrian Access**

- Pedestrian access from the street should be via a separate paved path that leads to the dwelling front door directly from the street sidewalk. The path should not begin at the driveway or any other point.

**G. On-Site Open Space**

- For sites that have residential uses, provisions should be made for on-site semi-private open space (see the zoning ordinance for specific requirements).
- These areas should be sizable enough to be functional, but need not be excessively large, and should not occupy a larger portion



**Pedestrian Access.** A direct path from the sidewalk to the front door of the house or apartment building should always be provided.

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Addressed by RM District on-site open space (15-1004-D).**

of the lot than the structures.

- These open spaces should be clearly separated from the street and should be located at the rear of the lot behind the primary building or at the center of the lot in the form of a courtyard.
- This open space may take the form of play areas, decks, patios, or gardens. An alternative to ground level open spaces could be rooftop spaces.

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Describe importance of architectural compatibility generally.**

**H. Façade Elements**

**1. Architectural Design** It is not the intention of this document to specify the architectural style of individual buildings. Creativity and diversity are encouraged. However, good architecture is critical to the creation of a beloved neighborhood, and the following guidelines should apply:

- New buildings should fit in to their surroundings. This does not mean that the existing buildings must be copied, but the context of any new building must be respected. Attempts should be made to tie the building into its neighbors through the use of similar massing, materials, or some other technique.

- Renovations of, and additions to, existing buildings should follow the original style. Victorian gingerbread should not be added to an art deco building, nor should a classical structure be remodeled to be modern.

- Materials used in renovations of, and additions to, existing buildings should be consistent with the original materials. For example, stucco should not be used in place of the clapboard siding on a Craftsman.

- New buildings that mimic historical styles are acceptable and welcome, but they should be accurate interpretations. A well done modern building in a traditional style is very pleasing, but a poorly done imitation of a historical home is quite unpleasant and looks cartoonish and fake. Special attention must be paid to

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Site-specific and style-specific standards are open to interpretation and may be overly prescriptive.**

**THIS**



**NOT THIS**



**Façade Elements:** the building on the left shows good use of balconies, windows, cornices and a rooftop open space area.



**REFER TO ZONING**

**Street-facing entrances and common entrances addressed in RM District.**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**RM District glazing ratio standard.**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**RM District window standard.**

materials, proportions, and ornamentation originally used in the proposed style.

**2. Doors**

- For rowhouses and townhouses, each dwelling unit that fronts onto the public street should have a primary entrance that faces, and is parallel to, the street.
- For standard multiple family dwellings, all apartments should be accessed through an entrance that faces, and is parallel to, the street. This may be a centralized entrance that is used for multiple units, or each individual unit may have its own exterior entrance. Secondary entrances that do not face a street are allowed, but not in lieu of a street-facing entrance.
- For courtyard apartment buildings, some apartments may open onto the courtyard, but only if the courtyard and the entrance are visible and accessible from the street. In addition, the doors of the units adjacent to the street must open on to the street.

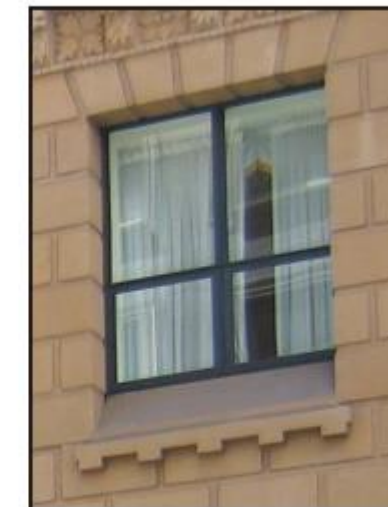
**3. Windows**

- Windows must be provided along all walls that face a street.
- Windows should maintain the same style and spacing along all sides of building.
- Windows should be vertically oriented, or taller than they are wide. Also, each window should be individually articulated and should not form long horizontal or vertical bands.
- Windows should not be flush with solid building surfaces, but rather should be recessed at least four inches from the exterior wall plane.
- Windows should be single-hung, double-hung, casement style, or other styles common to the area. Horizontal aluminum sliders and non-opening windows are strongly discouraged.



**Facade Elements.** This Tower District apartment house shows good use of balconies, porches, stoops, cornices, and internal stairways.

**THIS**



**NOT THIS**



**Windows.** Note vertical orientation and recess from exterior wall.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Offset neighbors' windows.**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Avoid overly prescriptive standards.**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Roof types vary among multi-family projects.**

**Adapt NR Overlay District standard (15-1611).**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District external stairs standards (15-1505).**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Address balcony/bay window articulation.**

**KEEP AS A GUIDELINE**

**Consider balcony proportion and style during design review.**

- Whenever possible, upper-floor windows at the rear and sides of buildings should be placed to maximize the privacy of the neighboring properties.

- Window screens that detract from the window are discouraged.

**4. Rooflines**

- The roof forms of buildings in the Medium-High and High Residential Area should be more varied and residential in character than in the neighborhood commercial mixed-use area. Flat roofs are appropriate, but other approaches, such as gabled roofs, hipped roofs, and mansard roofs with attic dormers should be used.

- Modifications or additions to existing buildings should maintain the original roof type.

**5. External Stairways**

- For stairways used to access upper-floors, internal enclosed stairways are preferred.
- When exterior stairways are used, they should be constructed directly adjacent to the structure behind a partial wall or fin that hides the stairs and railing. The partial wall should be consistent with the materials of the building.
- External stairways should be located on the side or on the rear of the building, unless they are designed to be an integrated architectural feature of the façade.

**6. Balconies**

- Balconies are encouraged. However, they must be attractive and architecturally incorporated into the building. Balconies that are not consistent with the proportions, style and materials of the building will be strongly discouraged.



**External Stairways.** This Tower District apartment shows appropriate treatment of external stairways by using materials consistent with the building.



**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt NR Overlay entry feature standards.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt NR Overlay District entry feature standards.**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Address sign details during design review.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt NR Overlay standards for direct paths from sidewalks (15-1611).**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**While design standards will help maintain residential character, consider style and specific context during design review.**

**7. Porches**

- Porches are encouraged. However, they must be attractive and appear to be architecturally incorporated into the building. Porches that are not consistent with the proportions, style and materials of the building will be strongly discouraged.
- Porches should be at least 6 feet deep.

**8. Stoops**

- Stoops are encouraged, especially for rowhouses and townhouses.

**9. Courtyard Arrangements**

- Any change or modification to any exterior feature, street address signs, for example, shall consist of identical design and application for each unit.

- Intrusions, screening, or blockage of the central court space is discouraged.

**10. Façade Articulation**

- Façades may be more articulated and residential in character or flatter and more urban in character. On already built-up blocks, the existing pattern should be respected. On new blocks, buildings closer to the street should be less articulated, and buildings further from the street may be more articulated. However, buildings in the Medium-High and High Density Residential areas should be generally calmer than their more articulated suburban counterparts.



***Stoops.** Stoops are most appropriate for rowhouses and townhouses, but can also be used for apartment houses.*

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Consistent with standards in Article 26, Signs.**

**KEEP AS A GUIDELINE**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Addressed by minimum frontage coverage.**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE - SPECIFIC**

**Building code limits HVAC locations.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Require screening on roof and ground.**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE - SPECIFIC**

**I. Signs**

- Signs announcing the name of an apartment building should be no greater than 25 square feet in area and should be attached to the façade, parallel to the façade, above the main entrance to the building.

**J. Accessory Buildings**

- Accessory buildings should be located behind the main building. If visible from the street, accessory buildings should architecturally resemble the primary building.

**K. Mechanical Equipment**

- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units should be located on the ground, either in the back or on the side of the residence. Units placed on the ground should be screened with landscaping. When rooftop placement is necessary, the unit should be located on the side or rear of the residence, so as to limit street visibility. In addition, roof mounted units are to be screened from the view of adjacent properties. Screening with parapet walls is recommended.

**L. Lighting**

- Lighting fixtures should complement the architectural style of the primary structure. Industrial style lighting, such as flood lighting or fluorescent lighting, is strongly discouraged.
- Lighting, other than parking lot lighting, should be permanently fixed to the structure.



# Assessment of Existing Guidelines

## **PART 4**

### **COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE GUIDELINES**

(applies to MX and mixed-use projects in Commercial Districts)



V.



## Commercial Mixed-Use Guidelines

The Commercial/Mixed-use areas of the Tower District are very important to its success, particularly the Olive Avenue corridor. It is the goal of the Specific Plan Implementation Committee and the Design Review Committee to ensure that new development in these critical areas remains pedestrian-oriented and attractive, and to encourage the integration of more residences into these areas, creating a vibrant mixed-use atmosphere.

### A. Components of a Mixed-Use Area

A Commercial Mixed-use area should be comprised of a diverse range of commercial and residential components that are compatible with neighborhood living and foster lively street life. These components fit three general categories:

#### 1. Pedestrian-Oriented Retail

Pedestrian-oriented retail uses are the backbone of traditional neighborhoods. They allow residents to acquire many of their daily needs conveniently on foot, reducing the need to drive as often as in newer suburban developments. The presence of shopkeepers ensures "eyes on the street," which helps to improve public safety. A variety of pedestrian-oriented retail establishments also ensures a fairly continuous flow of pedestrians who also serve as "eyes on the street" to provide a safe environment. Examples of pedestrian-oriented retail establishments are restaurants, cafes, bars, small grocery stores, shops, florists, bakeries, banks, and barber shops. Some small offices, which depend on foot traffic and pedestrian visibility, such as travel agents, are also included in this category for the purposes of these guidelines.

The scale of individual retail spaces should generally be limited to 10,000 square feet of building area in order to ensure diversity and pedestrian scale. "Big box" retailing is not appropriate in the Tower District.

### GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

**Address fundamentals for pedestrian-oriented retail, mixed-use development, and appropriate neighborhood scale.**

### REFER TO ZONING

**Use Base District standard.**



*"Main Street." Excellent mixed-use development: King Street in Alexandria, Virginia.*



*Pedestrian-oriented Retail. A "Main Street" area in downtown San Luis Obispo, California.*



## GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

### Important description of appropriate office and upper-story residential development.

#### 2. Offices

Various professional offices, including medical, business, and administrative offices are also an important component in a mixed-use area. Laboratories for medical, dental, and optometric uses are also included in this category.

#### 3. Residential

While the predominant focus of the Commercial Mixed-Use area may be commercial, it is the combination of housing and commercial components that provides a high level of convenience and amenity for those who choose to live there. Most residential units in the Commercial Mixed-Use area will be Multiple family in nature and will be located on upper-floors of mixed-use buildings. Hotels and “Bed and Breakfast” Inns are also an appropriate component of a commercial mixed-use area.

Certain uses are not compatible with a pedestrian-oriented traditional neighborhood and, therefore, would not be found in a commercial/mixed-use area, for example, businesses that cater exclusively to the automobile, including service stations, auto repair shops, and automobile sales. Convenience stores, fast food restaurants, and any business with a drive-through facility usually fall within this category. If any of these types of businesses do exist in a commercial/mixed-use area, they are designed for pedestrians. A key concept to maintaining the pedestrian environment is scale. Any proposed use that is too large will disrupt the pedestrian environment and not be considered compatible with the commercial/mixed-use area. Application of the design guidelines listed in this section will ensure that any proposed use in the commercial/mixed-use area will result in a change that fosters the pedestrian environment.

#### 4. Mixing Components

It is strongly recommended that new buildings in the Commercial Mixed-Use Area mix uses. In order to ensure that the different uses are designed compatibly, the following guidelines should apply:



**Automobile Oriented Commercial.** Suburban-style highway commercial development is not compatible with the Tower District and should not be permitted.

## GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

Keep description of mixed-use development.

## REFER TO ZONING

Ground-floor uses regulated by Base District standard.

## KEEP AS GUIDELINE

Update to reflect Entertainment District and Downtown District standards (15-1504 and 15-1504).

### a. Location of Residential, Office, and Retail on single properties

- Individual buildings may mix retail, office, and residential uses.
- The ground floor of all buildings in the Commercial/Mixed-use area should be occupied by retail uses or small office uses which depend on foot traffic.
- The second floor of buildings may have limited retail uses, either as a continuation of a street-level retail use, or as a separate space with its own sidewalk entrance.
- The basement level of a building may have retail, office, or residential uses.
- Residential uses should be located on upper-floors.
- Office uses should be located on upper-floors.

### b. Building Techniques to Minimize Conflicts Between Uses

- In order to facilitate a harmonious mix of uses, construction techniques should be used to minimize conflicts. Examples include soundproof walls/floors between uses, heavier walls or insulation than are used in single-use buildings, dual pane windows, and separate entrances and interior circulation halls for residential and non-residential areas of a building.

## B. Lot Size

It is important to note that the zoning ordinance establishes minimums related to lot size. These guidelines also give maximums, in order to maintain the pedestrian scale of the area.



**Mixed-use.** This building shows the proper relationship between residential uses and retail uses when located in the same building. The residential uses are located on the upper two floors, while the retail is at the street-level.



**REFER TO ZONING**

Refer to Base District standard.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Address scale of development.

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

Address appropriate scale of development.

**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

Address building frontage and frontage continuity.

**REFER TO ZONING**

Addressed by minimum frontage coverage.

**REFER TO ZONING**

Addressed by facade alignment standard.

**1. Width**

- On average, lots should be around 50 to 75 feet in width, and no larger than 200 feet in width.

**2. Depth**

- On average, lots should be 100 to 150 feet in depth. Except in the instances of unusually narrow blocks, double frontage lots are not appropriate.

**3. Area**

- Lots should not exceed one acre in size. Large-scale suburban-style shopping centers are strongly discouraged. Rather, the pre-WWII pattern of small structures on small, individually owned lots should be encouraged. Larger lots which are redeveloped should be subdivided whenever possible.

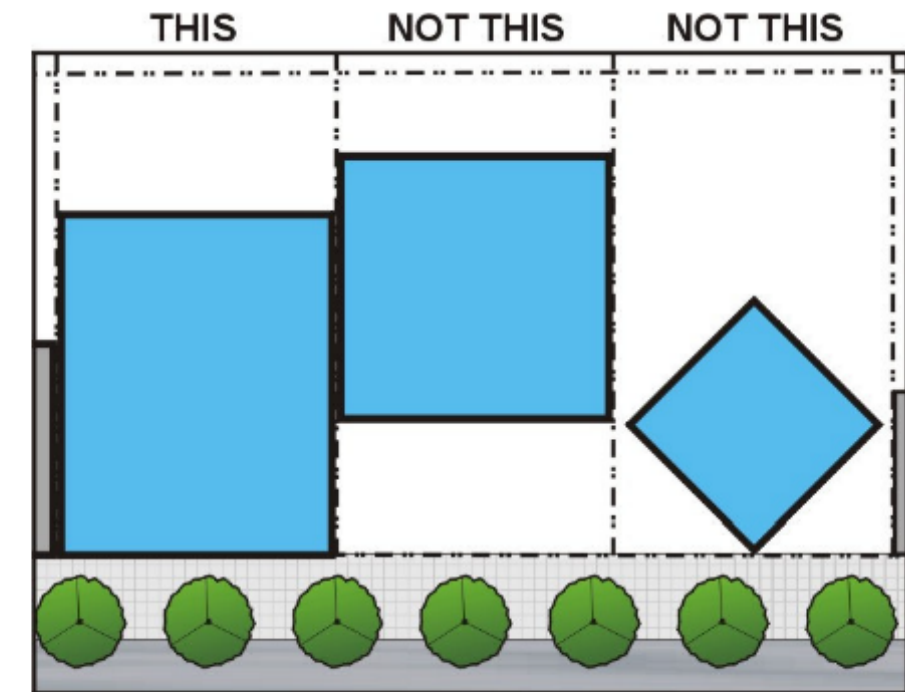
**C. Building Placement**

**1. Number of Buildings**

- Each lot should only have one primary building. The primary building will be the biggest, will be located at the front of the lot, and must clearly be primary in its use. Complex development with multiple buildings arranged on large lots amongst landscaping and parking is discouraged.
- Each lot may have one accessory building. Accessory buildings must be smaller than the primary building, must be located behind the primary building, and must clearly be secondary in use to the primary building.

**2. Building Orientation**

- Buildings should not be angled in plan relative to the adjacent



**Front Setbacks and Building Orientation.** In the “Main Street” area buildings should be brought right up to the street, with no front setbacks. Front setbacks inconvenience pedestrians, degrade the definition of the street as a public place, and leads to highway-strip signage that must “shout” at passing motorists.

street right-of-way. Façades should be parallel to rights-of-way.

### 3. Front Setbacks

- No primary building should be set back from the street in the Commercial Mixed-Use area unless it is for the purpose of providing a wider sidewalk or sidewalk dining. All primary buildings should be built out to the front lot line at the sidewalk edge. Buildings that are set back damage the pedestrian experience.

- Front façades should not be angled in orientation relative to the front property line.

### 4. Side Setbacks

- Buildings in the Commercial/Mixed-Use area should stand shoulder-to-shoulder, without gaps or spaces between them, forming a solid, continuous streetwall. This spatially defines the street, creating a pleasant pedestrian environment and forming a clear separation between the public and private realms. In particular, the front 12 feet of a building must be built out to the side lot lines, unless a side setback is necessary for vehicular access or a pedestrian passage from a parking area to the street.

In particular, the front 12 feet of a building must be built out to the side lot lines, unless a side setback is necessary for vehicular access or a pedestrian passage from a parking area to the street.

- If a side setback is necessary, then the building façade should not be less than the necessary area to accommodate the setback.
- The side walls beyond the front 12 feet may be set back.
- For corner lots, sides facing a street should be treated like the front of the lot, and setbacks should not be permitted.

### 5. Rear Setbacks

- There is no minimum requirement for rear setbacks. The rear of the lot is the preferred location for parking lots, yards, or other

#### GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

Address building frontage and continuity.

#### REFER TO ZONING

Refer to Base District standards.

#### MAKE A STANDARD

Adapt NR Overlay standard for vertical and horizontal alignment (15-1611-C).

#### REFER TO ZONING

Refer to frontage coverage standard.

#### GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

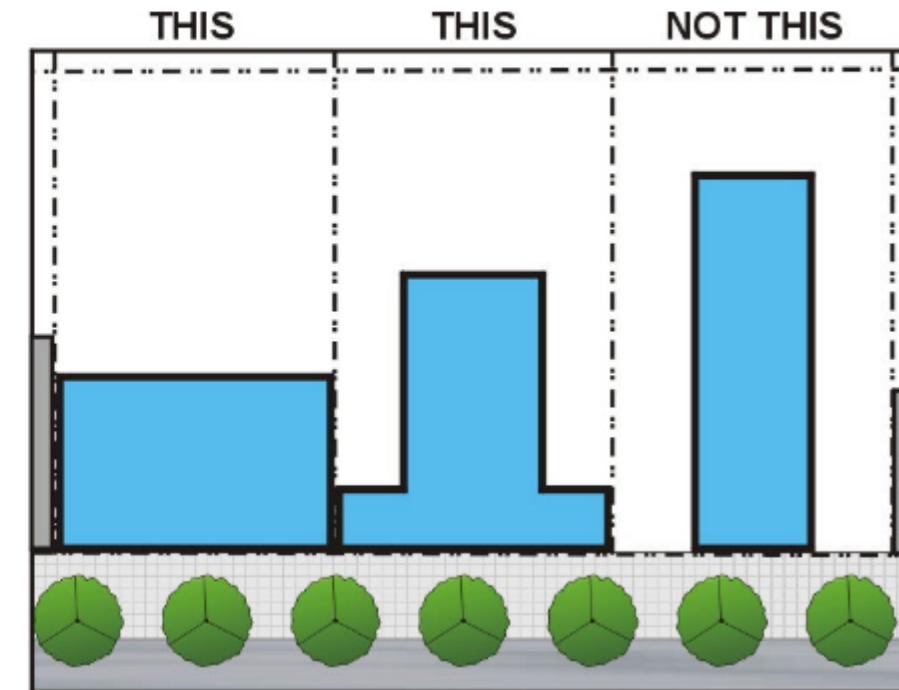
Address building frontage and continuity.

#### KEEP AS GUIDELINE

Encourage continuous frontage to extent possible.

#### REFER TO ZONING

Refer to parking setback and frontage coverage standards.



**Side Setbacks.** Main Street buildings should be built shoulder-to-shoulder to form a continuous street wall.



unbuilt areas.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Also refer to residential transition standards in zoning.**

- When a property with commercial development abuts a residential property, buffering must be provided in the form of setbacks, landscaping and walls.

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to Base District standards for maximum building heights.**

**D. Building Height**

- The maximum height for new structures in the Commercial Mixed-Use Area should be four stories. No structure should exceed 55 feet in height.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Emphasize street wall continuity for sense of place from spatial enclosure.**

- All new primary structures should have a minimum height of two stories. However, in instances where an existing structure is destroyed by fire, etc., it is exempt from this two-story minimum height requirement and may be rebuilt as it originally existed.

## E. Parking/Vehicular Access

### 1. Parking Requirement

Due to its mixed-use, walkable nature, parking should be addressed differently in the Tower District than in other areas of the City. While most visitors may arrive into the district via an automobile, they typically only park once, and then walk from destination to destination thereafter—unlike suburban locations, where visitors usually drive and re-park from destination to destination. Also, with a mix of uses, there is more opportunity for shared parking, since some uses are idle while others are busy. Furthermore, the amount of parking allowed should be limited, because too much surface parking degrades the pedestrian experience and dilutes the neighborhood's "critical mass." Therefore, parking requirements in the Commercial/Mixed-Use Area should be addressed as follows:

- Minimum: The minimum amount of parking provided should be at least 40% of the minimum parking requirement of the C-5 zone district (The C-5 zone district requires 1 square foot of parking area for 1 square foot of building area, unless the proposed use falls into any of the special uses with other requirements).
- Maximum: The maximum amount of parking allowed should be no more than 120% of the minimum parking requirement of the C-5 zone district.

### 2. Surface Parking Lot Design

- As stated above, the rear of the lot is the preferred location for surface parking.

- Surface parking lots adjacent to a street should only be approved if site conditions make it impossible to locate the parking behind the building. In no case should surface parking occupy more than 50% of a lot.

#### GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

Keep strategic statements regarding parking.

#### REFER TO ZONING

Refer to parking standards in zoning.

#### GUIDELINE NARRATIVE

Also refer to frontage coverage standard.

#### MAKE A STANDARD

Refer to parking standards in zoning.



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Also refer to frontage coverage and parking setback standards.

**REFER TO ZONING**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

Address access to any building entrance that is not along public sidewalk.

**REFER TO ZONING**

Refer to landscaping standards (15-2421).

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

Increase minimum fence/wall setback (now 12"). Limit length of wall without a break.

**REFER TO ZONING**

Refer to landscaping standards (15-2421).

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

- In new construction, parking lots should not be located between the building and the street, but should always be located behind the building or in a shared location.

- ADA-accessible and bicycle parking should be provided pursuant to current City standards.

- When a parking lot must be located adjacent to a street, a clearly marked pedestrian walkway must be provided through the parking lot from the sidewalk to the entrance of the building if the building pre-dates these guidelines and is set back.

- When a parking lot must be located adjacent to a street, it should be buffered from the street with screening: a wall, fence or solid landscaping three feet in height in order to enclose the parking lot. The screen could be a green wall consisting of plant material or a solid wall constructed of bricks, stone, or similar materials. Chain-link fencing is inappropriate.

- Screening walls or fencing must be attractively designed and must use materials complementary or identical to those used for the building.

- Screening walls or fencing must be attractively designed and must use materials complementary or identical to those used for the building.

- Screening walls should be located two to three feet back from the sidewalk to allow adequate room for landscape materials. In addition, greenery/vegetation on or through the wall or fence is encouraged.

- Screening walls must have one pedestrian access point for every 50 feet of street frontage.

**3. Parking Lot Landscaping and Street Trees**

- Parking lots should have landscaping as required by City standards of one shade tree for every two parking stalls. Trees should be a minimum of 15 gallons when planted. In pedestrian-oriented urban environments, some landscaping techniques, such as grassy berms, are inappropriate.

- Parking lots should have landscaping as required by City standards of one shade tree for every two parking stalls. Trees should be a minimum of 15 gallons when planted. In pedestrian-oriented urban environments, some landscaping techniques, such as grassy berms, are inappropriate.



**Parking Lot Screening Wall.** Parking lots which are located adjacent to a street should be bordered by a screening wall.



**Parking Lot Landscaping.** This commercial lot shows adequate landscaping for the parking lot.



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Consider more specific guidance for Tower District street trees.

**REFER TO ZONING**

Refer to tree and irrigation standards (15-2307 and 15-2309) .

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

Adapt Downtown District parking structure design and vehicular access standards (15-1504).

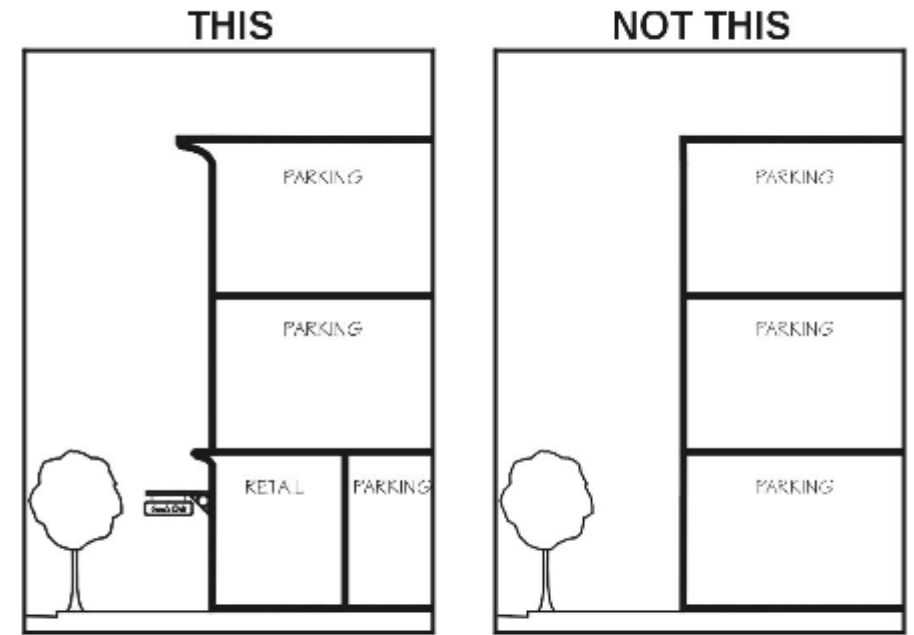
- All proposals must provide for street trees as required by city standards. Street tree species and size should be consistent with the existing Tower District streetscape and City requirements.
- All new landscape areas are required to install automatic irrigation. Irrigation should be adjusted to avoid overspray onto hardscaped areas, including sidewalks, buildings, sidewalks, etc.
- Property owners must routinely maintain landscaping including the replacement of any diseased or dead plant/tree. Trees should not be topped; instead, trees should be pruned to encourage upward growth and tree canopy development.

**4. Parking Structure/Underground Parking Design**

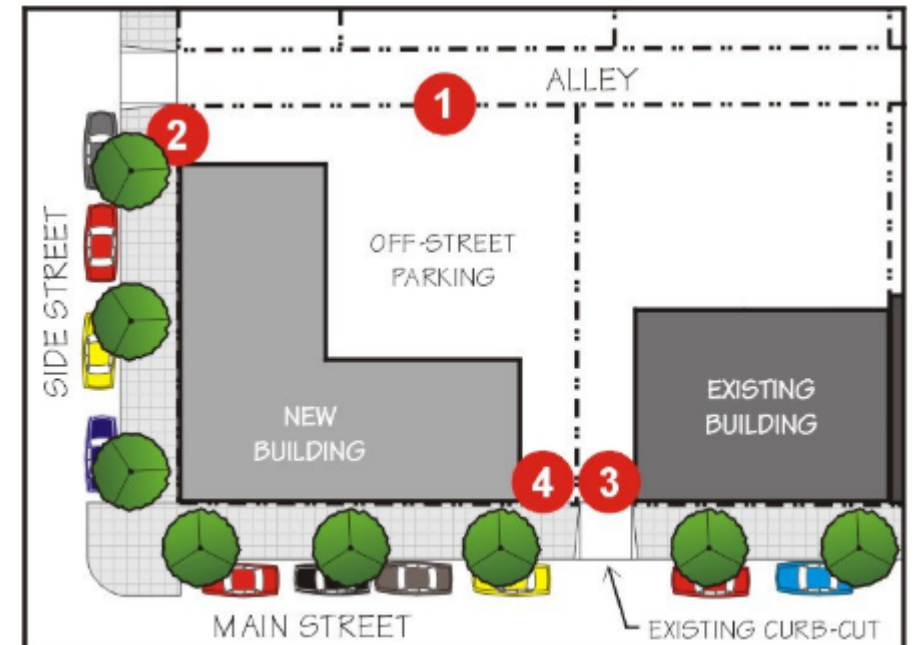
- Parking structures and underground parking areas are permitted and encouraged in the Commercial Mixed-Use areas.
- Parking structures located at the front of the lot must be wrapped with storefronts at street-level, and the upper-floors must be architecturally indistinguishable from other buildings.
- Underground parking areas should not be visible from the street. Buildings suspended over parking areas by stilts should not be permitted.

**5. Proper Location and Treatment of Vehicular Access**

- Automobile access driveways across the sidewalk should be kept to an absolute minimum. They endanger and inconvenience pedestrians, especially those in wheelchairs. When possible, driveways should serve more than one lot.
- For lots with alley access, no access driveways should be granted from a street. Access should be taken from the alley.
- For corner lots without alley access, access should be taken from the lowest classified street on which the lot fronts. For example, a parking lot for a building located on the corner of



**Parking Structure Design.** Parking garages should be lined with retail storefronts at the street-level, rather than presenting blank walls to the street.



**Location of Vehicular Access.** Vehicular access should be kept away from the main street whenever possible. This illustration shows priority for access for new development. Alleys are the first priority, side streets, the second, and the main street, the least desirable location for vehicular access. If access can be shared with an existing main street curb cut, that option should be utilized. New curb cuts will only be granted on main streets if the other options are not available.



Olive and Lucerne Avenues will be granted access from Lucerne Avenue only.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Encourage coordination among owners.**

- For interior lots without alley access, an attempt must be made to share side street access with a neighboring property through an easement or reciprocal access agreement. If this is not possible, then an attempt must be made to share a driveway with a neighboring interior lot. If this is not possible, access will be permitted from the primary street.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Add new standard for driveway removal.**

- If a lot with non-conforming driveways is redeveloped or significantly altered, access should be redesigned to eliminate unnecessary driveways and restore the sidewalk.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Also refer to on-site open space standards (15-1104).**

**F. On-Site Open Space**

- For sites that have residential uses, provisions should be made for some sort of semi-private open space (see the zoning ordinance for specific requirements).
- These areas should be sizable enough to be functional, but need not be excessively large, and should not be the predominant use.
- These open spaces should be clearly separated from the street, and if located on the ground they should be located at the rear of the lot behind the primary building.
- On-site open spaces should be inaccessible to the general public.
- On-site open space may take the form of play areas, yards, decks, patios, or gardens. An alternative to ground-level open spaces should be rooftop spaces.

**G. Façade Elements**

The design of building façades is one of the most critical features of a neighborhood. While the Tower District is a neighborhood of diverse

architectural styles, there are certain fundamental elements that all of the best buildings in the area have in common.

**1. Architectural Design.** It is not the intention of this document to regulate the architectural style of individual buildings. Creativity and diversity are encouraged. However, good architecture is critical to the creation of a beloved neighborhood, and the following guidelines should apply:

- New buildings should fit in to their surroundings. This does not mean that existing buildings should be copied, rather that the context of any new building should be respected, in order to tie the building into its neighbors through the use of similar massing, materials, or some other technique.
- Renovations of, and additions to, existing buildings should follow the original style. Neoclassical elements should not be added to an art deco building, nor should a classical structure be remodeled to be modern.
- Materials used in renovations of, and additions to, existing buildings should be consistent with the original materials. For example, wood siding should not be used in place of the stucco on an art deco building.
- New buildings that mimic historical styles are acceptable and welcome, but they must be accurate interpretations. A well-done modern building in a traditional style is very pleasing, but a poorly done imitation of a historical building is quite unpleasant and looks cartoonish and fake. Special attention must be paid to materials, proportions, and ornamentation originally used in the proposed style.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Use design review to address a particular context.  
Note that multiple design standards help address community character.**



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Provide as a guide. Check for consistency with zoning standards.**

**Façade Glossary of Terms**

**Bulkhead** – A “kickplate” at the bottom of a storefront bay below the display windows, usually made of tile, stone, or carved wood panels.

**Cornice** – A projecting, continuous, prominent architectural feature near the top of a building.

**Display Windows** – Windows that are specifically designed to allow for the presentation of merchandise to pedestrians.

**Double-hung Window** – A two-part window, with upper and lower sashes that open by sliding vertically on pulleys.

**Façade** – The exterior wall of a building, particularly a wall that faces a street.

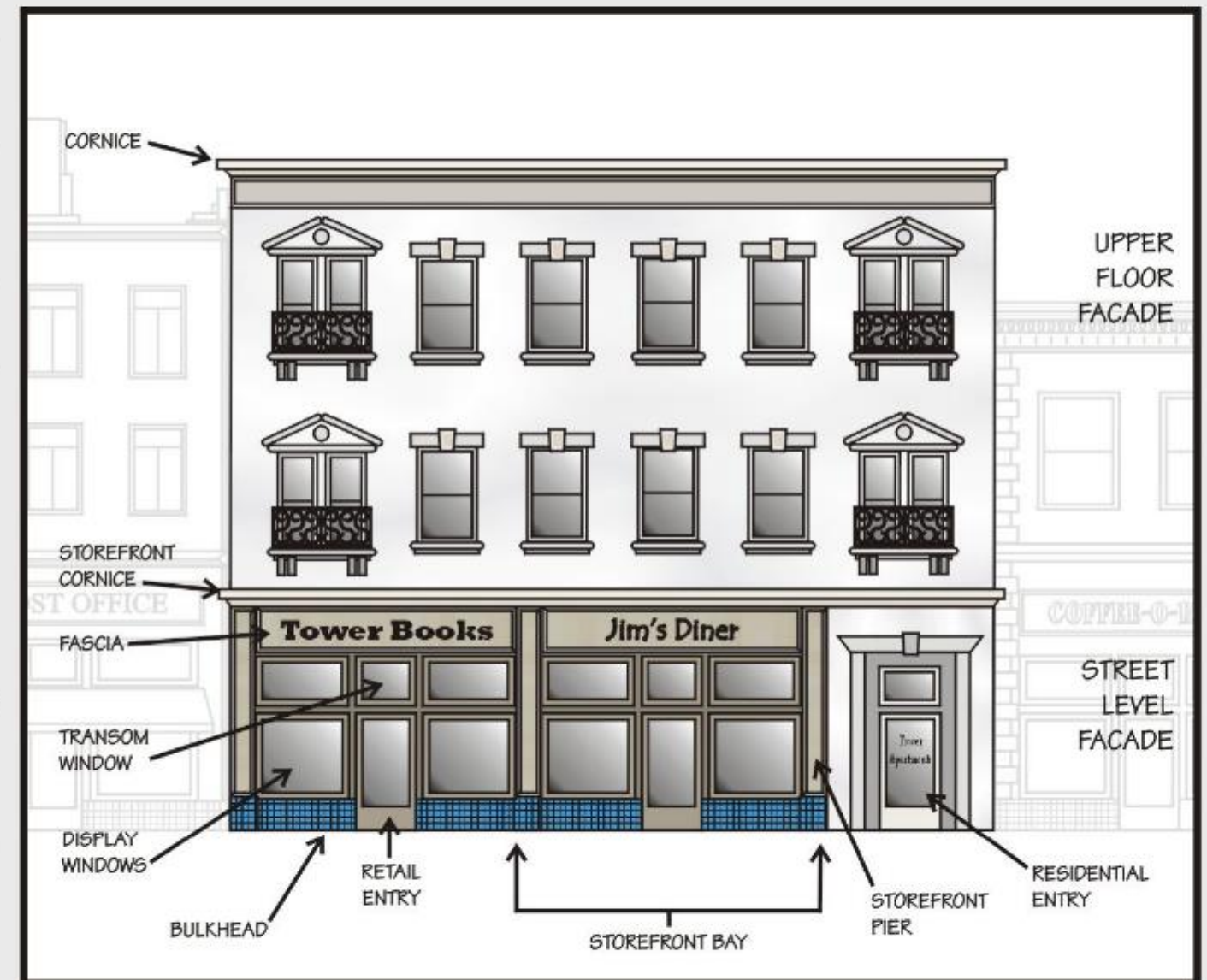
**Fascia** – The horizontal area of the storefront façade that is below the storefront cornice and above the entry and display windows.

**Parapet** – A low, solid, wall or railing along the edge of a roof that blocks visibility to rooftop equipment.

**Pier** – A vertical support that divides storefront bays.

**Storefront Bay** – A vertical division of the street-level façade that consists of piers, a frieze, display windows, and a bulkhead.

**Transom Window** – A hinged window over a door.



**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District storefront standards (15-1505-F). Add storefront bay width standard.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt NR Overlay facade alignment standards (16-1611).**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Add storefront pilaster/pier standard.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District building height articulation standards.**

**2. Storefront Bays**

- Street-level façades wider than 30 feet or consisting of more than 1 retail space should be divided into a series of storefront bays.
- Bays should be 12 to 25 feet wide and should maintain a consistent width along each façade.
- Each bay should typically include piers, a door, display windows, a fascia, a bulkhead, and a transom.
- There should usually be one retail space per bay, but if large retail spaces may span multiple bays, the bays should remain. Secondary bays that are part of a large retail space would usually not have doors, just display windows.

- The area within a storefront bay should parallel the adjacent sidewalk, and should not be set at an angle. Part of the surface may be angled in order to form a recessed entryway, but these surfaces must be symmetrical and the overall orientation of the bay must parallel the street.

**3. Storefront Piers**

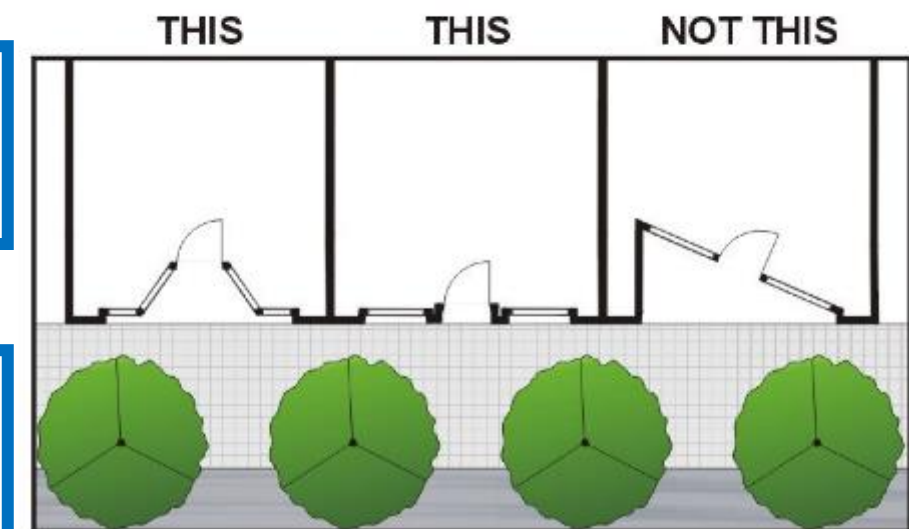
- Bays should be divided by piers, which should be one to three feet wide and should be made of a solid material, such as brick, stone, or wood—not glass or aluminum. Each pier should protrude outward from adjacent surfaces three to six inches.

**4. Storefront Fasciae**

- Each bay should have a fascia area, which is a horizontal wall surface between piers, above the display windows and doors, and below the storefront cornice. This is the preferred location for wall signs.
- Storefront fasciae should be uniform in size throughout the building, and should range from two to five feet in height.



**Storefront Bays.** This building shows the proper division of a street-level façade into a series of storefront bays.



**Storefront Orientation.** Storefronts, even when they have recessed entries, must parallel the sidewalk.



**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District storefront frontage standards (15-1505). Include more durable material options.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District building height articulation standards (15-1505).**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Describe desired entry patterns.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District pedestrian access standard (15-1504).**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District pedestrian access standard (15-1504).**

**5. Bulkheads**

- All buildings should implement a one to four foot high tile treatment on the bulkhead wall of the building façade. Bulkhead tiles should be ceramic.
- The bulkhead should serve as the visual “base” of the buildings and should protrude slightly from the surfaces above it.

**6. Storefront Cornice**

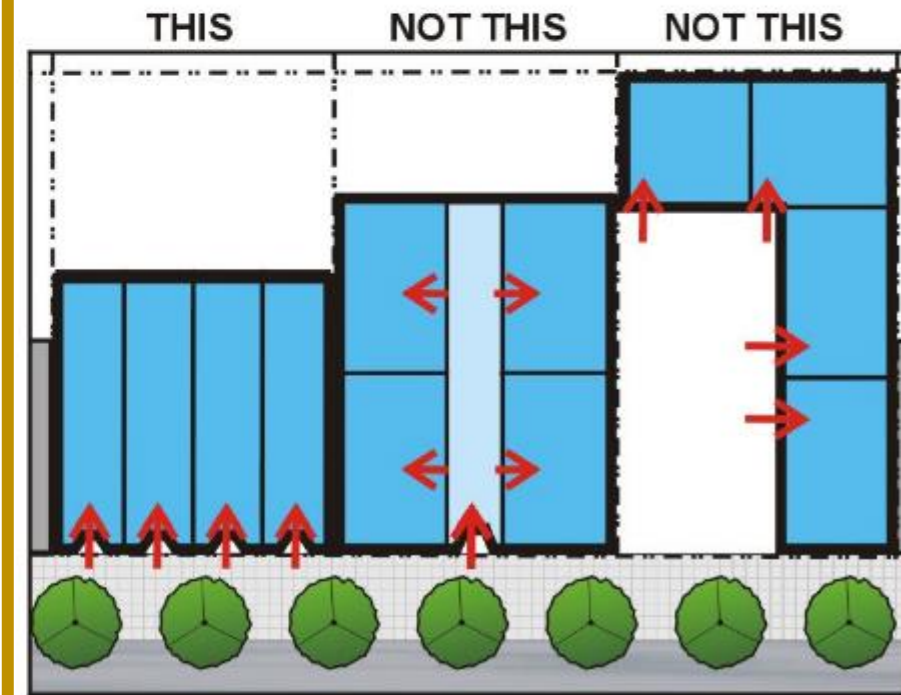
- Multi-storied buildings should use a decorative storefront cornice to differentiate the street-level storefronts from the upper-floors.

**7. Location of Building Entrances**

- For buildings with multiple retail spaces, each individual retail space on the first floor should have its own separate entrance at the front of the building oriented to a street. Retail uses may not be arranged around an inner circulation system in a mall-like setting. Retail uses may have secondary entrances in the rear of the building.
- For buildings with multiple family residences, all residences should be accessed through one centralized entrance, which faces a street and is used exclusively to access dwellings. This entrance should be locked and secure and available only for residents and their guests. Individual dwelling units should be accessed through an interior circulation system. The suburban practice of giving each apartment its own outside entrance, accessed from shared outdoor corridors is inappropriate. Multiple family residences may have secondary entrances in the rear to access yards or parking.
- For buildings with upper-floor office uses, all office uses should be accessed through one primary entrance, which faces a street. Individual offices should be accessed through an interior circulation system. The suburban practice of giving each office its own outside entrance, accessed from shared outdoor



*Bulkheads. Various examples of acceptable bulkhead tile in the Tower District.*



*Retail Entrances. Each individual ground-level space should have its own pedestrian entrance facing the street*



## **MAKE A STANDARD**

### **Adapt Downtown District private frontage standards (15-1505).**

corridors, is inappropriate. Office uses may have secondary entrances in the rear to access yards or parking.

#### **8. Treatment of Primary Entrances**

- All primary entrances should be located at the front of the building, parallel to the street.
- Entrances may be recessed. Recessed entryways may be no more than six feet deep or 10 feet wide. Exceptions may be made for theaters, in which case it may be appropriate for a larger recessed entry.
- Rails or other obstructions that block direct access from the sidewalk may not block recessed entryways.
- Entryways should be at the same grade as the sidewalk, and no steps, up or down, should be required for entry.
- For buildings with upper-floor residences, the residential entrance may be grand and overstated or discreet and understated.
- For buildings with upper-floor office uses, the main entrance for upper-floor offices should be architecturally grand and should have a strong presence.



**Separated Residential and Retail Entrances.** This small mixed-use building has separate entrances for retail (left) and residential (right) components.



**Recessed Storefront Entrance.** Doors into retail spaces may be recessed within the façade, as is done in this building. Note also that the entry is located at the same exact grade as the sidewalk, which is the preferred approach.



**GUIDELINE NARRATIVE**

**Describes critical building-street relationship.**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to MX window design standards.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Address upper floors. Adapt Downtown District window opening standards.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District window materials standards (15-1505).**

**9. Windows**

Windows are a critical component of a building's appearance and function. In order to ensure that buildings are attractive and the streets are safe, the following window guidelines should apply.

- Windows should be provided along all walls that face a street. Windowless walls repel pedestrians because they feel unsafe and uninteresting.

- For ground floor walls, at least 50%, but no more than 80%, of the wall area should consist of windows, arranged primarily as large storefront display windows.

- For upper-floors walls, at least 20%, but no more than 50%, of the wall area should consist of windows.
- The bottom of ground floor windows should be no more than four feet above the adjacent sidewalk grade.
- Windows on upper-floors should maintain coherent and consistent rhythms, both vertically and horizontally. Random and jumbled sizing and spacing of windows should be avoided.
- Upper-floor windows should be vertically oriented, or taller than they are wide. Also, each window should be individually articulated and should not form long horizontal or vertical bands.
- Upper-floor windows should not be flush with solid building surfaces, but rather should be recessed at least four inches from the outside wall plane.

- Upper-floor windows should be single-hung sash, double-hung sash, casement style, or other similar types. Horizontal aluminum sliders and non-opening windows are discouraged.
- Glass should be clear, not reflective, especially at the street-level.

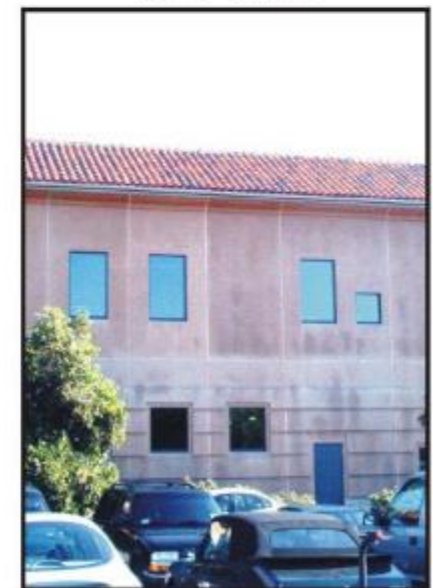


**Windows.** Windowless walls repel pedestrians and are inappropriate for any wall facing a street in the Commercial/Mixed-Use Area.

**THIS**



**NOT THIS**



**Window Rhythms.** Windows should be arranged to have understandable and pleasing patterns of sizing and spacing—both vertically and horizontally—within a building façade.



**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District window materials standards (15-1505).**

- Vinyl or wood window frames are preferred, whereas aluminum window frames are discouraged. Frames should be shaped and molded to provide additional relief to the façade.
- Curtin wall systems (in which entire wall surfaces consists only of glass) are inappropriate.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Also refer to MX corner frontage standard.**

**10. Block Corners**

- Areas of buildings that occupy the corner of a block should be architecturally embellished to give prominence to the corner. Turrets, towers, bay windows, cupolas, and other methods should be used to make the block corner stand out.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Give general intent for building materials.**

**11. Siding (Cladding) Materials**

- The cladding materials "palette" should be kept very simple. Buildings should not have more than two primary cladding materials.
- Upper-floor building primary cladding materials should convey a sense of strength and solidity. Brick, stone, and stucco are most appropriate. Stucco, when used, should not use a highly textured application such as spatter dash, which is appropriate for modern houses but not for urban buildings. Wood, vinyl, aluminum, or other materials are not appropriate.
- Storefront primary cladding materials should be brick, stone, or carved wood panels. Wood, when used, should be painted and not stained. Doors should match storefront window frames, and should be made of crafted wood, stainless steel, bronze, or other ornamental metals.
- Decorative accent materials may be brick, ceramic tile, pre-cast concrete, molded plaster, carved wood, or other similar materials.
- Accessory buildings visible from the street should use materials consistent with the primary structure.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District building materials and finishes standards (15-1505).**



**Block Corners.** This new building in Downtown Mountain View, California, gives appropriate architectural prominence to the block corner.



**Visual Distinction between Upper and Lower Floors.** This building uses different colors and materials to distinguish the street-level storefronts from the upper-level apartments.



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Give general intent for building materials.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District building height articulation standards.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District window and door materials standards (15-1505).**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Give general intent and address alarm box location flexibly.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown District frontage standards (15-1505).**

**KEEP AS A GUIDELINE**

- Corporate design elements for chain businesses should be downplayed to assure integration in the neighborhood.

- There should be a visual distinction between street-level and upper-level floors. This can be accomplished by using different materials and/or colors for storefronts and upper stories. It is appropriate, however, to use upper-floor colors, materials and cornice for street-level entrances to upper-floor uses.

**12. Security**

- Security gates for storefront businesses should be located inside buildings, not outside.

- Security window bars are inappropriate for the Lower District and should not be used on windows directly facing a street. They detract from the architectural beauty of the neighborhood and present an image of instability and fear.

- Alarm boxes for security systems should be placed in an inconspicuous location to limit street visibility.

**13. Awnings**

- The use of awnings is encouraged on both street-level floors and upper-floors.

- Awnings should be constructed out of canvas or other similar materials.
- Awnings should be of a traditional, triangular profile shape, as opposed to square or rectangle.
- Retractable awnings are strongly encouraged.
- The building should support all awnings. Structural supports should not be placed in public rights-of-way.

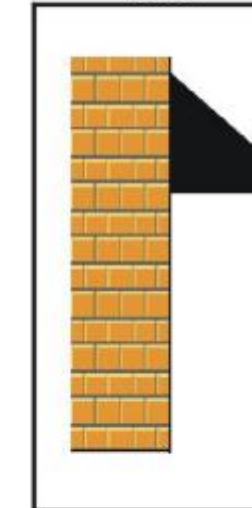
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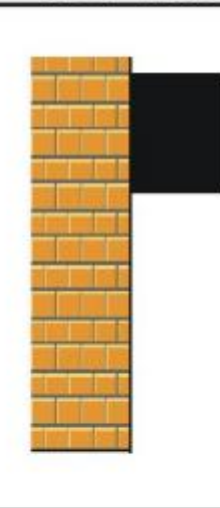
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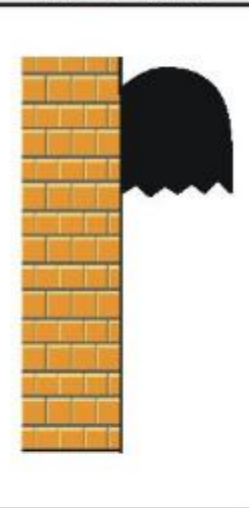
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**NOT THIS**



**NOT THIS**



**Awning Profiles.** Awnings should be triangular in profile, not rounded or boxed.



**KEEP AS A GUIDELINE**

---

**MAKE A STANDARD**

---

**Adapt Downtown District frontage standards (15-1505).**

**KEEP AS A GUIDELINE**

---

**MAKE A STANDARD**

---

**Create new standard for balconies.**

**KEEP AS A GUIDELINE**

---

**MAKE A STANDARD**

---

**Adapt Downtown District external stairs standards (15-1505).**

- Upper-floor awnings should be located directly over the windows and should be the same width as the window.
- Street-level awnings may extend horizontally over multiple windows.

- Street-level awnings should leave 8 feet of vertical clearance over the sidewalk, and should not interfere with street trees, streetlights, or traffic.

**14. Roof Forms**

- The roof forms of buildings, as viewed from the street, should be generally flat (not pitched) in nature. Parapets, cornices, and other architectural methods should be used to add distinction and ornamentation.

**15. Balconies**

- Balconies are encouraged. However, they should be attractive and architecturally incorporated into the building. Balconies that are not consistent with the proportions, style and materials of the building will be strongly discouraged.
- Balconies should have at least 10 feet of clearance above the sidewalk.

**16. External Stairways**

- For stairways used to access upper-floors, internal enclosed stairways are preferred. Exterior stairways are inappropriate and should not be used. External stairways and walkways are suburban configurations, and do not help to create the kind of urbanity that is most appropriate in the Commercial Mixed-Use Area.

**THIS**



**DZ COMMENTS**

This graphic ended up on the wrong page. It should be on the following page.

**NOT THIS**



**Façade Articulation:** Buildings in the Commercial/Mixed-Use Area should be less articulated than their suburban counterparts. Rather than using recesses and stepbacks to achieve visual interest, elements such as columns, pilasters and cornices should be used.



**Balconies.** Balconies should be beautiful, and should be architecturally incorporated into the design of the building, rather than just being added on as an afterthought.



**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt RM District facade alignment standard (15-1005)**

**17. Façade Articulation**

- In general, façades should be relatively simple and flat and should address the street squarely. Rather than using radical setbacks and recesses to create visual interest, pilasters, columns, cornices, and similar forms of surface relief should be used.

**H. Outdoor Dining**

**1. Sidewalk Dining**

- Sidewalks may be used for dining areas by adjacent businesses provided there is sufficient width. Dining tables and chairs may be located either in the outer furniture area or inner furniture area. No dining may take place in the central walkway area of the sidewalk. An encroachment permit from the city Public Works Department must be obtained in order to establish sidewalk dining.
- The central walkway area of the sidewalk should occupy at least 50% of the sidewalk width, and should not be less than 5 feet wide. The central walkway should be free and clear of all objects.
- The outer furniture area may occupy no more than 40% of the sidewalk width, provided there is sufficient walkway area.
- The inner furniture area may occupy no more than 20% of the sidewalk width, provided there is sufficient walkway area. Sidewalks narrower than 8 feet should not have an inner furniture area.
- If alcohol is to be served, outdoor dining areas require enclosure by a wall or wrought iron fence. The wall or fence should be compatible with the architecture of the building.

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt “Standard Operational Requirements for Outdoor Dining in the Public Right-of-Way.”\* Also keep general discussion as guideline.**



**Sidewalk Dining:** The sidewalk shown here places tables and chairs for dining in the appropriate locations, in both the inner and outer furniture area. A walkway of 5 feet is maintained.

\* <https://www.fresno.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/D.C.6-C-006-Outdoor-Dining-within-the-Public-Right-of-Way.pdf>

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown Districts standards for private frontages (15-1505).**

**KEEP AS A GUIDELINE AND**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Note: CMS does not allow large-format retail, but MX allows large-format.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Adapt Downtown Districts standards for private frontages (15-1504-J).**

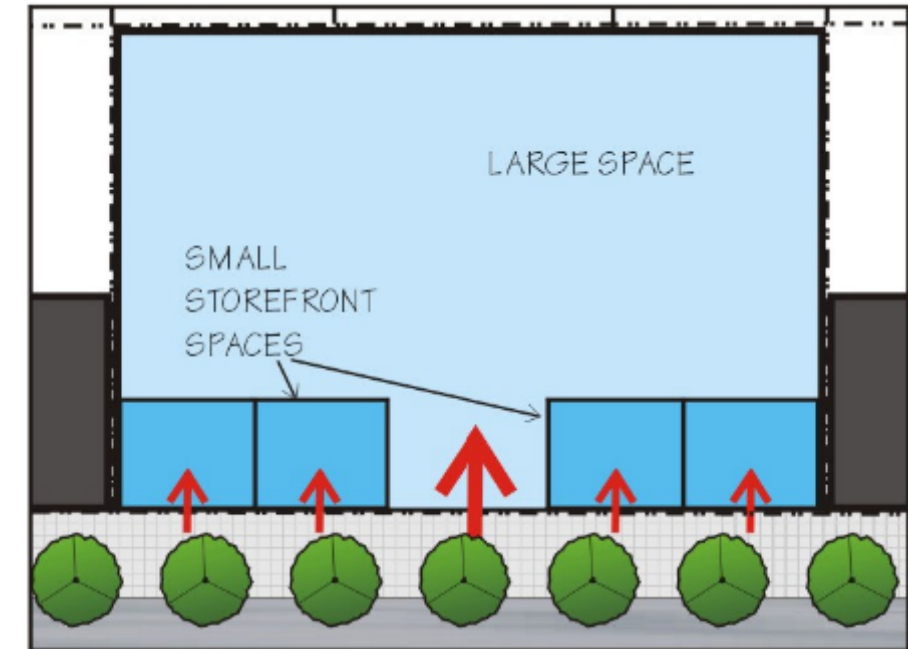
**2. Recessed Patios**

- Recessed patios are allowed, but should only be used when sidewalk dining or rear patio dining is not possible.
- Recessed patios should not be more than 10 feet deep.
- A solid wall three to four feet in height should enclose recessed patios. Walls should be an extension of the building and consist of the same materials.

**I. Size of Retail Spaces**

- In general, individual retail spaces should not exceed 10,000 square feet in size. Exceptions should be made for grocery stores, theaters, and other special circumstances. Exceptions will not be made for retail stores or restaurants. "Big Box" style retailing is not appropriate in the Tower District.

- When a large use is appropriate, its street frontage should be limited to 50 feet, and it should be "wrapped" with small storefronts at the ground level. An excellent example of this technique is the Tower Theater. This will prevent large expanses of inactive sidewalk and will keep the street area lively.



**Large Retail Spaces.** Shown above is an example of "wrapping" a large single use with smaller storefront spaces. In instances where a large single space is appropriate, it must be dealt with using this technique.



## J. Signs

*All proposed signs must be consistent with the sign ordinance contained in the Fresno Municipal Code. The guidelines below take some requirements directly from the code and offer additional standards to ensure compatibility with the streetscape in the Tower District.*

### **KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Also refer to Article 26, Signs.**

#### **1. General Sign Guidelines**

- Signage should be architecturally incorporated into the building and should not obscure architectural features of the building. Signs should be mounted in locations that respect the design of a building and should not cover windows, grillwork, pilasters, cornices, and ornamental features.
- Each business should be entitled to at least 40 square feet of sign area, and no individual sign should exceed 100 square feet in area.
- The total area of all signs for a building should not exceed 10% of the façade area of the building (or portion of the façade area that corresponds to a single business).
- For buildings with multiple tenants, a master sign program should be approved (refer to zoning ordinance).
- Internally illuminated “can” signs are inappropriate and are discouraged.
- Painted wall signs should be designed and applied by a professional and should be of high quality.



*Painted Wall and Awning Signs. This building tastefully incorporates both a painted wall sign and an awning sign.*



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**If needed, update terminology.**

**Sign Types**

*Wall Sign – A sign painted or mounted on a building wall that projects less than 12 inches from the wall.*

*Window Sign – A sign displayed on or within 3 feet of a window or glass door and is visible from outside of the building in which it is displayed.*

*Awning Sign – A sign that is painted, printed, or stenciled onto the surface of an awning.*

*Under-Awning Sign – A pedestrian-oriented sign that is suspended beneath an awning over and perpendicular to the sidewalk.*

*Projecting Sign – A pedestrian-oriented sign mounted on a building that extends horizontally at least 12 inches from the wall over the sidewalk.*

*Marquee Sign – A roof-like sign which projects over the sidewalk entrance to a theater. Typically includes a large neon sign announcing the name of the theater and a readerboard sign announcing the names of acts and shows at the theater.*

*Vertical Blade Sign – A tall, narrow sign mounted to the side of a building.*

*Roof Sign – A sign that is mounted on the roof of a building and extends above the roofline.*

*Pole Sign – A sign that is self supporting, and is mounted on a pole in a fixed location unattached to a building.*

*Monument Sign – A low-profile freestanding sign that is mounted directly into the ground on a permanent, fixed base unattached to a building.*



**Wall Sign**



**Window Sign**



**Awning Sign**



**Under-Awning Sign**



**Projecting Sign**



**Marquee Sign**



**Vertical Blade Sign**



**Roof Sign**



**Pole Sign**



**Monument Sign**



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Also refer to Article 26, Signs.

- Signs should be constructed of high quality materials that are appropriate to a pedestrian environment, such as wood, metal or neon.
  - Signs should have individual raised lettering and should be externally illuminated.
  - The sign's content should be limited to the business name or logo.
  - All electrical conduit should be concealed from public view.
- 2. Wall Signs (referred to as “occupancy signs” in the zoning ordinance)**
- Wall signs are the preferred sign type for indicating the name and nature of a business located within a retail storefront.
  - Storefront fasciae and friezes are the most appropriate locations for wall signs.
  - Wall signs on fasciae, friezes, lintels, piers, spandrels, and other areas should be sized to fit within these surfaces and not extend beyond them.
  - Wall signs should be centered over the corresponding storefront entrance. If a large store spans multiple bays, the wall sign may be centered over the whole frontage occupied by the store.
  - No wall signs should be located within the storefront pier except for barbershop poles, restaurant menus, and upper-floor tenant directories.

**THIS**



*Externally Illuminated Signage. The pictures above are good examples of externally illuminated signs.*



*This wall sign fits completely within the frieze area and does not obscure any architectural features of the building.*

**NOT THIS**



*This wall sign covers up part of a pilaster and hangs over the bottom of the frieze.*



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Also refer to Article 26, Signs.

**3. Window Signs (referred to as “occupancy signs” in the zoning ordinance)**

- Total coverage of signs on the exterior or interior of windows at the street-level should not exceed 20 percent of the total window area visible from the exterior of the building. Signs should not be placed on upper-floor windows.
- Window signage area counts towards total allowed signage area noted above (two square feet per linear foot of street frontage).
- Window signs should not contain product advertising.

**4. Awning Signs (referred to as “occupancy signs” in the zoning ordinance)**

- Signage on the awning may be located on the valence, but not the angled portion of the awning.
- Lettering should be no higher than 10 inches.
- Signage on awnings counts toward the total permitted sign area.

**5. Projecting Signs and Under-Awning Signs (referred to as “occupancy signs” in the zoning ordinance)**

- Projecting signs and under-awning signs are encouraged.
- Projecting signs may be mounted directly to the building façade, typically on a pier or fascia.
- Projecting signs should be horizontal and pedestrian-oriented in nature, and should not extend vertically beyond the roofline (one story buildings) or storefront cornice (multi-story buildings).
- Projecting signs and under-awning signs should be limited to one 18 square foot double-faced sign on each street frontage occupied by each tenant. Faces of double sided signs should be parallel.



*Projecting Signs. Signs like this building façade mounted projecting sign are encouraged.*



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

Also refer to Article 26, Signs.

- Projecting signs and under-awning signs should not project more than six feet beyond the property line and should not encroach within three feet of the curb.
6. **Marquee Signs** (referred to as “occupancy signs” in the zoning ordinance)
- Marquee signs are permitted when used exclusively for theaters. Animated and changeable message signs or marquee signs used for product advertisement are not encouraged.
  - Marquee signs should not be counted toward the total sign area permitted, but their size should be limited based on functional and aesthetic concerns as determined by the DRC.
7. **Vertical Blade Signs** (referred to as “occupancy signs” in the zoning ordinance)
- Vertical blade signs should be permitted for hotels and theaters only and should be limited to one per building.
  - Vertical blade signs should in no way obscure upper-floor windows, and should be mounted directly to a solid pier or pediment area between windows.
  - Vertical blade signs should not extend below the storefront cornice and should not extend more than 10 feet above the roof line.
  - Vertical blade signs should not project more than six feet beyond the property line and should not encroach within three feet of the curb.
8. **Roof Signs**
- Roof signs are generally inappropriate in the Tower District and are not permitted by the zoning ordinance. Roof signs that predate the sign ordinance may remain in place, however.



**Marquee Signs.** The Tower District Theater marquee sign is appropriate for its type of use.



**Roof Signs.** This roof sign exemplifies the architecture of this building.

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Also refer to Article 26, Signs. Review metrics for consistency.**

**9. Freestanding Signs: Pole Signs and Monument Signs**

Freestanding signs of all types, including pole signs and monument signs, are inappropriate in the Tower District. Freestanding signs are more appropriate in contemporary highway commercial areas, not walkable traditional neighborhoods. No new freestanding signs should be allowed. Freestanding signs should only be allowed for buildings that pre-date these guidelines and are set back from the street 10 feet or more and thus depend on a freestanding sign for visibility. In these instances monument signs may be allowed, but must conform to the following guidelines:

- When a pre-existing building is set back more than 10 feet from the roadway, a monument sign may be permitted. Under no circumstances should new pole signs be erected.
- Monument signs will be limited to 32 square feet in area.
- No monument sign should exceed five feet in height.
- There may be only one monument sign per parcel. If a parcel has multiple tenants, they must all be advertised on a single monument sign.
- Monument signs should be set back at least three feet from the sidewalk edge.

**K. Accessory Buildings**

- Accessory buildings must be located behind the main building. If visible from the street, accessory buildings should resemble the primary building architecturally.

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Minimum frontage coverage required.**



**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**Building code limits HVAC locations.**

**MAKE A STANDARD**

**Require screening on roof and ground.**

**REFER TO ZONING**

**Refer to 15-2016, Trash and Refuse Collection Areas.**

**KEEP AS GUIDELINE**

**L. Mechanical Equipment**

- Elevator penthouses, HVAC units and other roof-mounted equipment should be screened by a parapet wall and located on the side or rear of the structure to limit street visibility. Parapet wall materials must be consistent with materials used for the rest of the facade and should be incorporated in the building's design. Parapet walls should be at least one foot higher than the mechanical equipment.

- Architectural consideration should be given to buffer the visual impacts of trash enclosures, storage areas, loading areas, utility boxes and any other needed but unattractive aspects to a business.

**M. Lighting**

- Lighting fixtures should complement the architectural style of the primary structure. Industrial style lighting, such as flood lighting or fluorescent lighting, is discouraged.
- Lighting, other than parking lot lighting, should be permanently fixed to the structure.



**Building Attached Lighting.** The lighting on this Tower District establishment complements the style of the architecture and is encouraged.