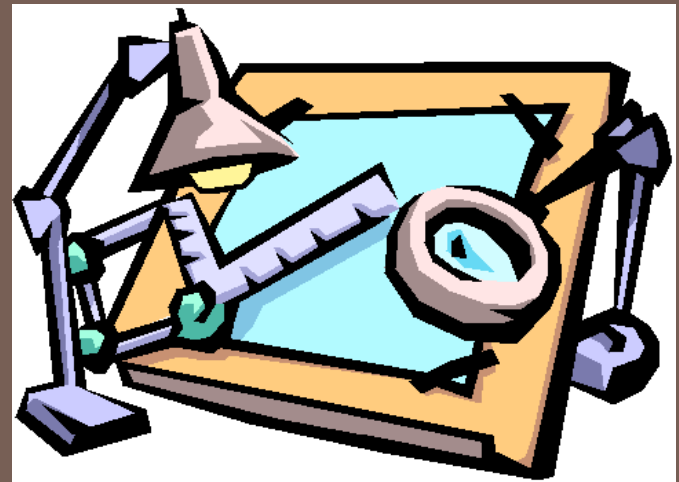


APA CALIFORNIA NORTHERN SECTION PLANNING COMMISSIONERS WORKSHOP #3

Design Review



May 11, 2013 - Hanson Hom, AICP

Presentation Objectives

- 
- Legal Foundation
 - Roles and Responsibilities
 - Design Guidelines
 - Design Review Approach
 - Dos and Don'ts
 - Examples

Is Design Review Legal?

- U.S. Supreme Court, *Penn Central Transp. Co. v City of New York* (1978)
“...this Court has recognized ...that States and cities may enact land use restrictions or controls to enhance the quality of life by preserving the character and desirable aesthetics features of a city....”
- California courts: aesthetic regulation permissible if reasonably related to public health, safety and welfare.

Legal Caveats

- Cannot violate general laws
 - ▣ First Amendment rights – freedom of speech
 - ▣ Constitutional principles of due process
 - ▣ Hearing and appeal process
- Must be reasonable and non-discriminatory
 - ▣ Consistency
 - ▣ Rational basis for decision
- Must not be arbitrary and capricious
 - ▣ Reference to design guidelines
 - ▣ Clear findings





Roles and Responsibilities

Staff Role

- Explain Design Process
 - ▣ Applicant (previous Planning Commission decisions)
 - ▣ Public
 - ▣ Decision makers
- Implement Design Review
 - ▣ In-house/consultant
 - ▣ Goal: work with the applicant to achieve a recommendation for approval

Planning Commission Role

- Determine consistency with community's design guidelines.
- Provide staff, applicant and the public with clear direction on design issues.
- Do not design the project for the applicant!
 - ▣ Designing a project in a public hearing generally does not produce good results.
 - ▣ Use study session or committee as an alternative to allow early input in an informal setting.

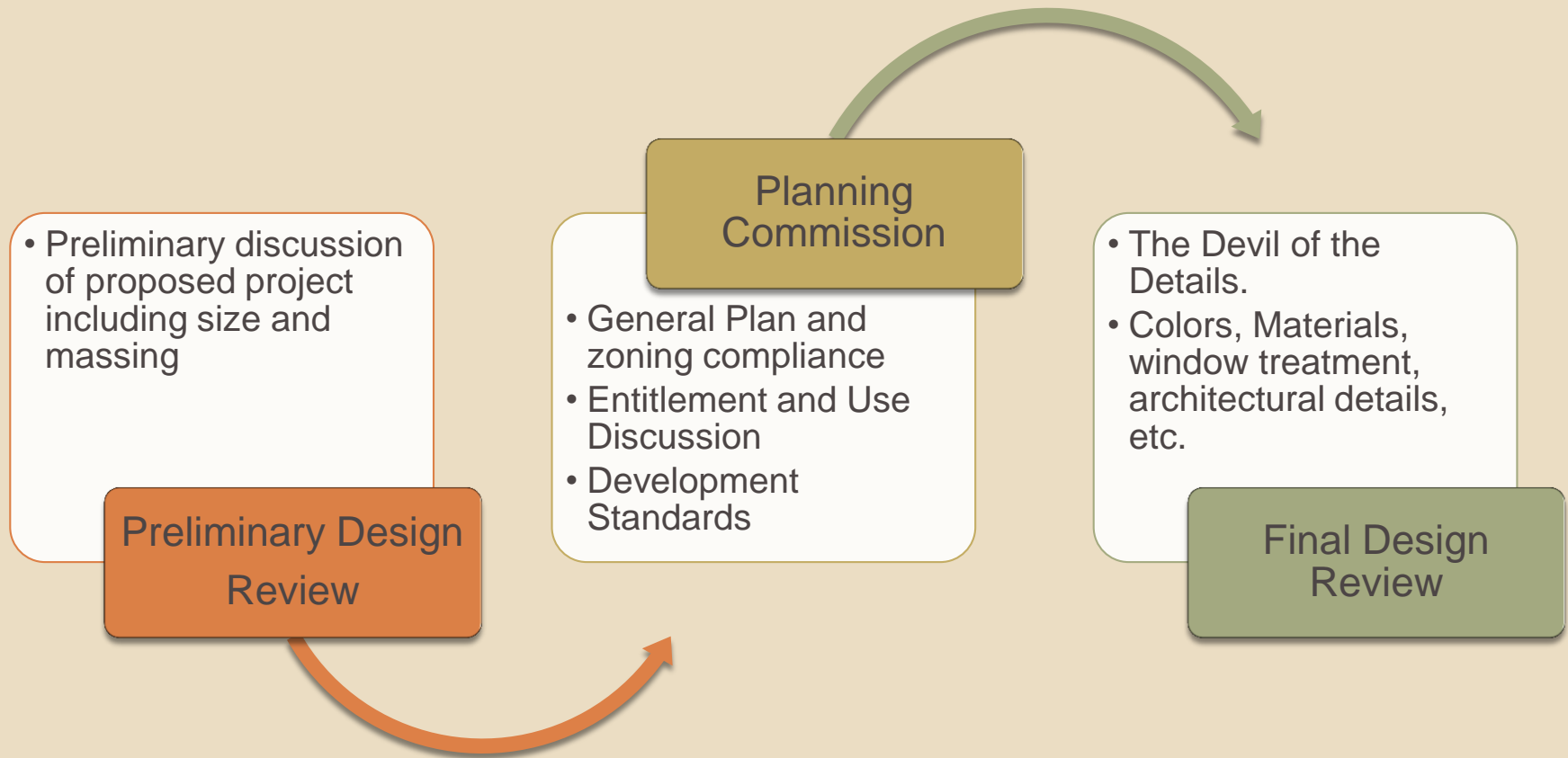
How to Make It Work

- Communicate with your staff
 - For meetings, contact early on to allow for a more thorough response
- Take advantage of additional training opportunities
 - Understand basic design principles and elements of architectural styles
- Allow yourself to reconsider your impressions during the public hearing



Design Review Boards

Version A: Planning Commission Performs Design Review



Version B:

Separate Design Review Board

- General Plan and zoning compliance
- Entitlement and Use Discussion
- Development Standards

**Planning
Commission**

**Design
Review**

- The Devil of the Details.
- Colors, Materials, window treatment, architectural details, etc.
- Form and Massing



Role of Planning Commission

- ✓ Ensure proposed use is consistent with General Plan and Zoning Ordinance
- ✓ Evaluate conformance with zoning standards
 - Setbacks, density, FAR, height, building coverage
- ✓ Evaluate conformance with other standards
 - Parking, landscaping, open space
- ✓ Evaluate variances and exceptions, if any

Role of Design Review Board

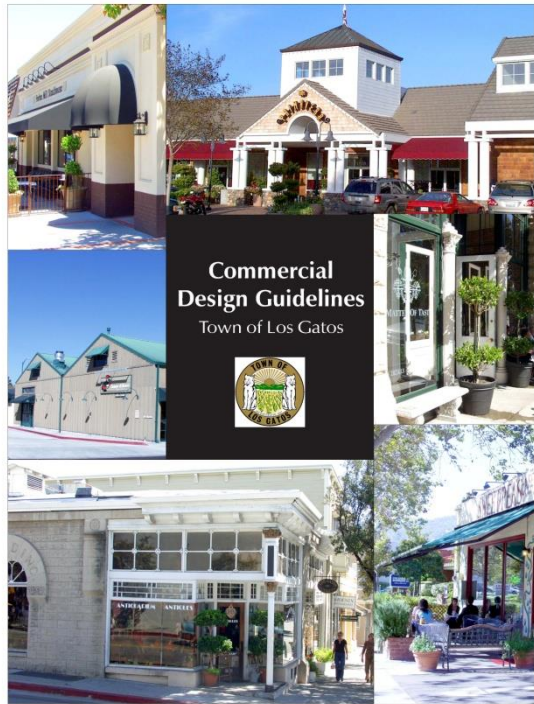


- ✓ Evaluate compatibility with existing or desired community character.
- ✓ Interpret community expectations, relying on General Plan, Specific Plans and the Design Review Guidelines.
- ✓ Oversee public design review process (Preliminary Review).

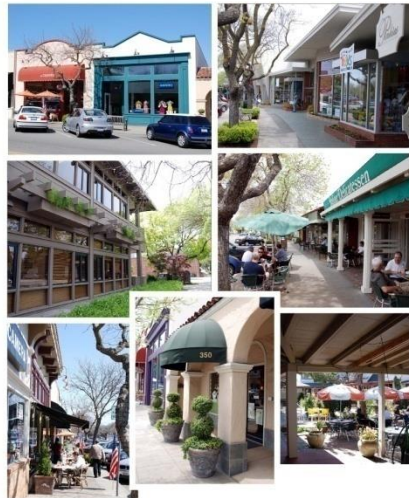
Optimum Partnership



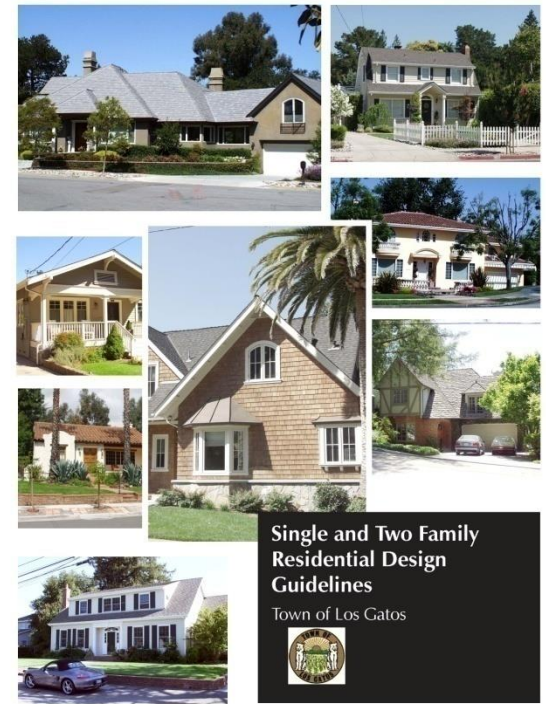
Design Guidelines



Downtown Design Guidelines City of Los Altos



Draft #5
January 28, 2010



Why Prepare Design Guidelines?



- ✓ Define and enhance community character.
- ✓ Strongly express community expectations.
- ✓ Bring objectivity and consistency to review process.
- ✓ Convey most important objectives (neighborhood context, sense of place, design principles).
- ✓ Enhance communications among applicants, staff and the Planning Commission.
- ✓ Facilitate design review and approval process.

Intent and Implementation

- **Design Standards**
 - ▣ Reflect values of community
 - ▣ Allow for diversity in community
 - ▣ Clear expectations and easy to understand
- **Implementation**
 - ▣ Early consistent feedback/direction
 - ▣ Clear review process
 - ▣ “Transparent” public process





Form-Based Codes

Form-Based Codes

- Detailed ***regulations*** to implement a community vision for a city or special plan area
- ***Not*** guidelines or advisory
- Addresses ***physical character***:
 - ▣ ***Relationship*** between building façade and public realm
 - ▣ ***Form*** and mass of buildings
 - ▣ ***Scale*** of street and blocks
 - ▣ ***Articulation*** of buildings



the public realm

Key Differences

Traditional Zoning



Focused on use

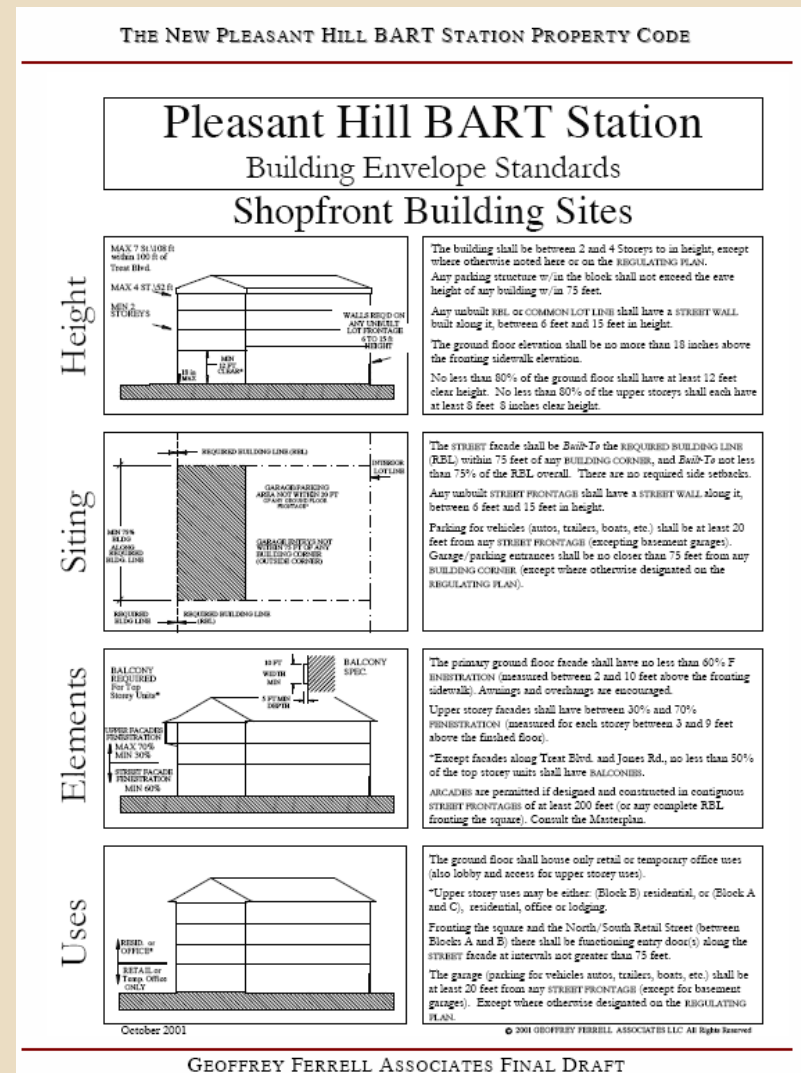
Form Based Codes



**More focus on
design & form**

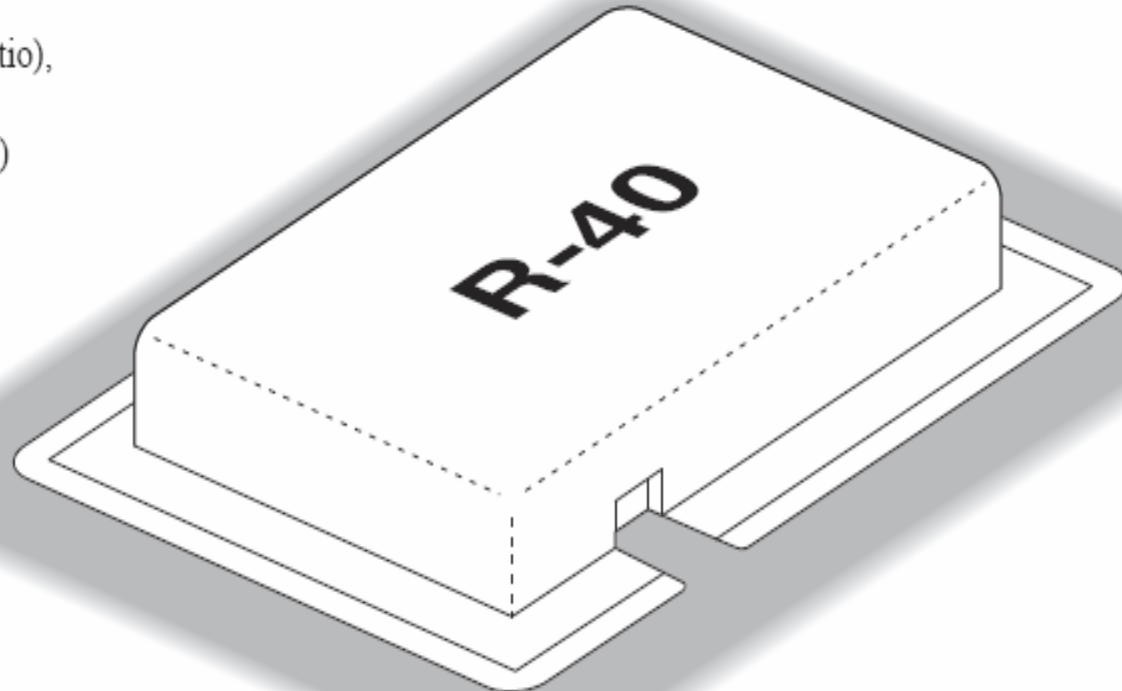
Form-Based Codes

- Administration
- Standards w/
illustrations:
 - Building Form
 - Public Realm/Streetscape
 - Architectural Detailing
 - Landscaping
 - Signage
 - Environmental Resources
- Definitions/Glossary



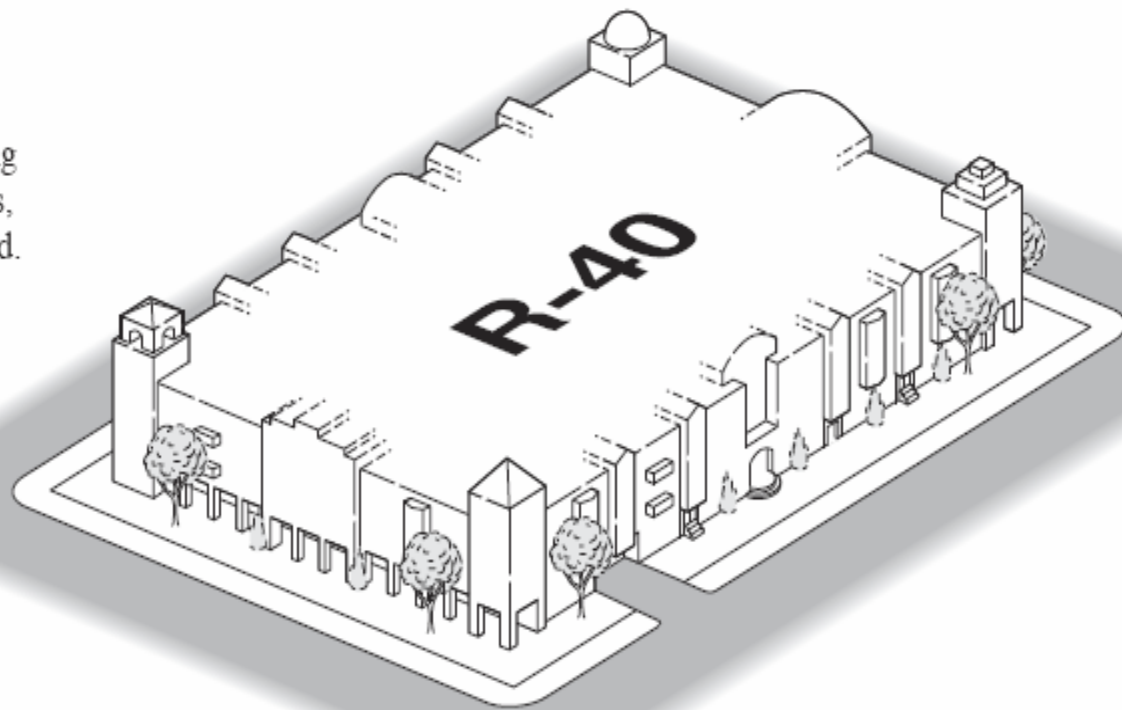
How zoning defines a one-block parcel

Density, use, FAR (floor-area ratio), setbacks, parking requirements, and maximum building height(s) specified.



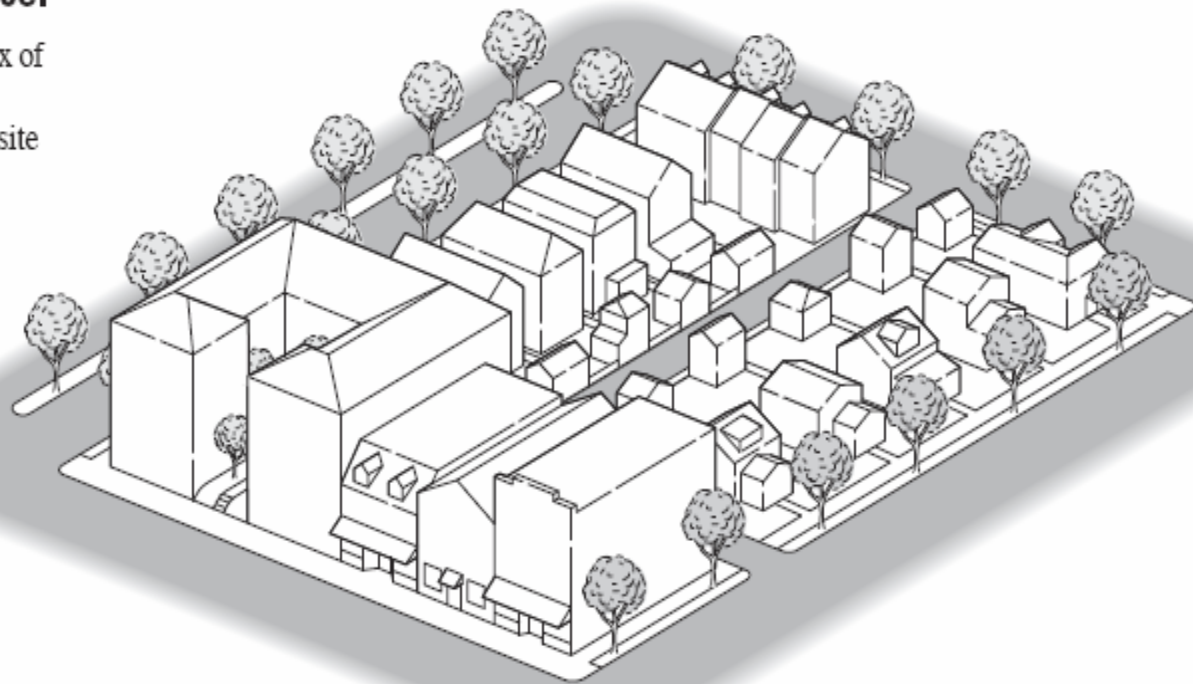
How design guidelines define a one-block parcel

Density, use, FAR (floor-area ratio), setbacks, parking requirements, maximum building height(s), frequency of openings, and surface articulation specified.



How form-based codes define a one-block parcel

Street and building types (or mix of types), build-to lines, number of floors, and percentage of built site frontage specified.



Design Review Approach

- Impression
- Analysis
- Conclusions
- Findings



Impression

- Initial thoughts right after you roll out the drawings
- Based on your knowledge and experience in the community
- Allow for “first impression” which may or may not be your final thoughts on the project

Analysis

- Critically examine the following:
 - ▣ Individual building elements
 - ▣ Overall massing and scale
 - ▣ Site plan and landscaping
 - ▣ Compatibility with neighborhood character
- Focus on design compatibility
 - ▣ Building as a whole; relationship of individual elements
 - ▣ Surrounding environment and neighborhood
 - ▣ Avoid dwelling on details

Conclusions

- Compare with design policies and guidelines
 - ▣ Review the staff report
 - ▣ Can you make the necessary findings to support your decision?
- Does the project “fit” into the surroundings?
- Are your conclusions consistent with other decisions made in similar circumstances?

Findings

- Articulate rationale for design decisions:
 - “I can’t put my finger on it, but this is a very unattractive building, it doesn’t fit in, and I can’t see approving it.”
- Cite policies, standards, and guidelines for public record
- Remember legal caveats

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR FINDINGS:

I. CEQA CLEARANCE

The project is categorically exempt from environmental guidelines (*Class 1 §15301, Existing Facilities*) since it represents an addition to a single family dwelling of less than 10,000 square foot of floor area.

II. SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING DESIGN REVIEW (Zoning Code Section §27.08.032)

1. The structures, site plan, and landscaping are consistent with the adopted Single Family Dwelling Design Guidelines in that:
 - a. The proposed addition will match the same exterior stucco siding, clay tile roof, and other architectural elements as those found on the existing home.
 - b. The detailing, window styles and sizes, roof design, and location of the addition is consistent with that of the original style of the home.
 - c. The proposed addition is consistent with other additions to similar style homes in the area, making it compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

Design Review Issues



Items to Keep An Eye On

- Design may be only one facet of your project review (e.g. use permits, CEQA evaluation, code compliance)



Items to Keep An Eye On

- Single Family Home Design Review: comments on a “dream home” may reflect personal preference or taste.

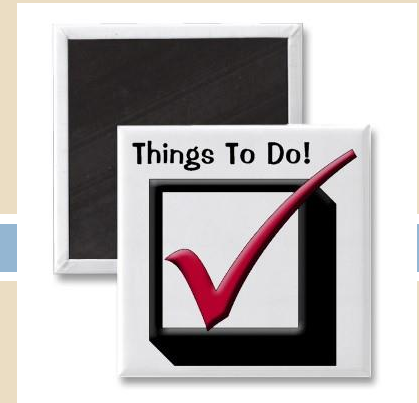


Items to Keep An Eye On

- Green building techniques may influence design solutions and priorities.



Things to DO



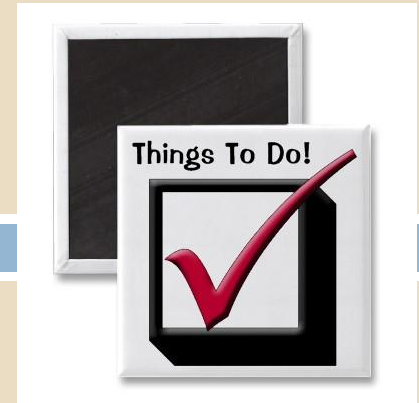
- Understand rationale of architect or designer before reaching decision.
- Consider design techniques to solve land use conflicts.
- Apply context sensitive design guidelines.
- Seek signature architecture, but where appropriate.

Context Sensitive Design?



Guggenheim Museum - Bilbao, Spain

Things to DO



- Seek clear plans with sufficient details
- Ask for colors and materials boards
 - Be wary of artistic enhancements
 - Elevations can be misleading
 - Ask for street-level renderings or accurate computer simulations
 - Show relationship to adjacent buildings

Things ***Not*** to Do



- ❑ Design by committee
- ❑ Dictate a specific architectural style unless strong basis (e.g. historic district)
- ❑ Rely on personal biases and preferences
- ❑ Let zoning regulations restrict creative design solutions
- ❑ Focus on density (*Allow for design solutions*)

Density Can Be Deceiving



Follow Up



Follow Up

- Are projects coming before the Commission generally meeting the design guidelines?
 - ▣ If not, examine the guidelines and implementation for clarity
- Did we make the right choices; did things turn out the way we thought? Are we getting the “right results” for our community?
 - ▣ Field trip to examine built projects in the field



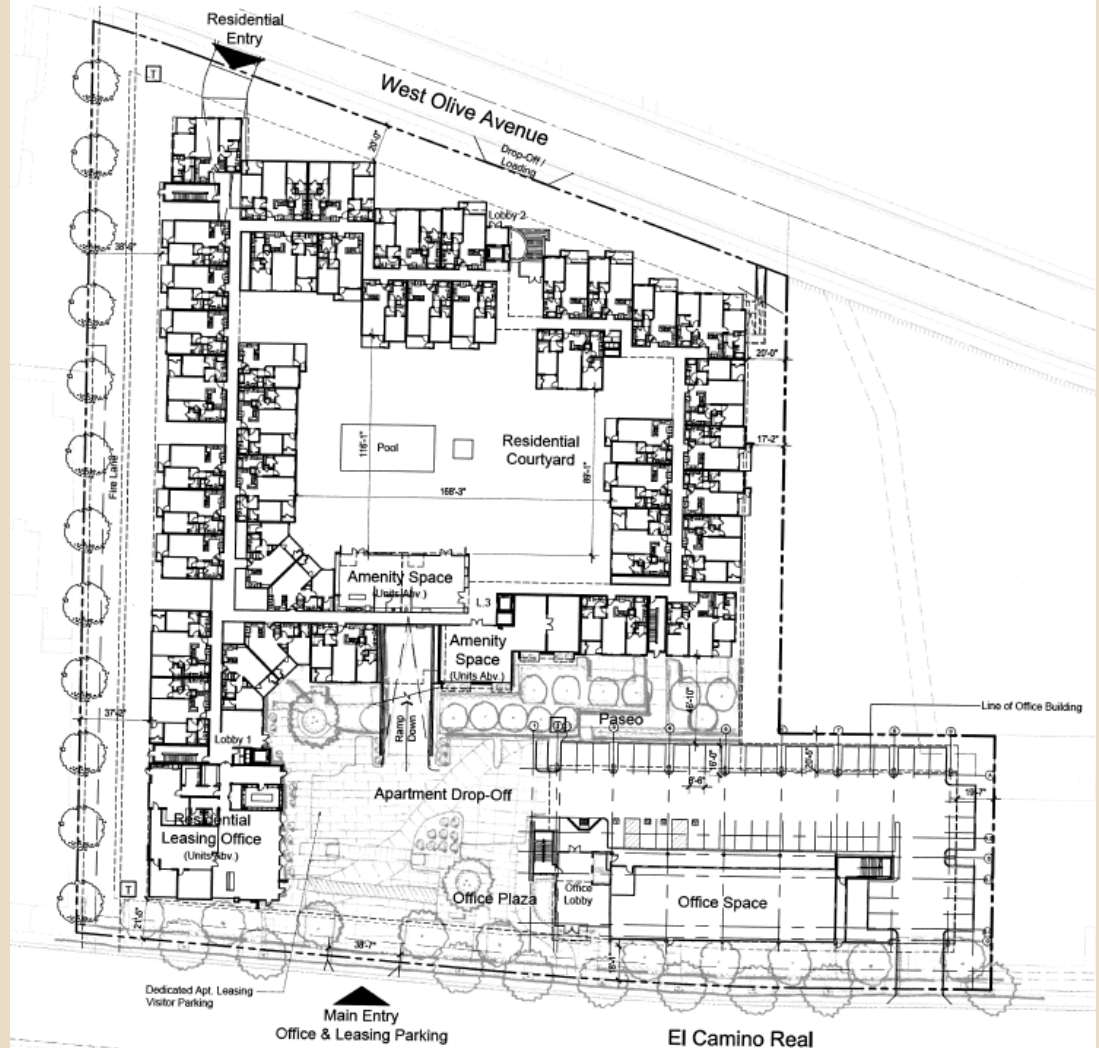
Examples

Example A: Mixed Use Project



Example A: Design Issues

- Streetscape
- Land use compatibility
- Open space relationship
- Architectural compatibility
- Building mass
- Sense of entry



Example A: Architecture/Building Mass



El Camino Real

Example A: Sense of Entry



Example A: Streetscape/Land Use Compatibility



West Olive Avenue

Example B: Transition Zone Project



Example B: Commercial Interface



Mathilda Avenue

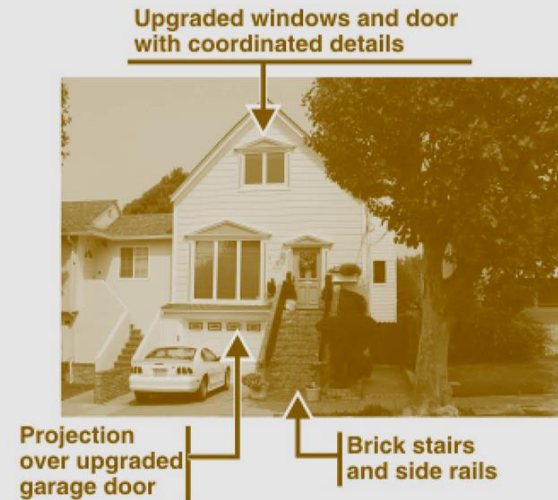
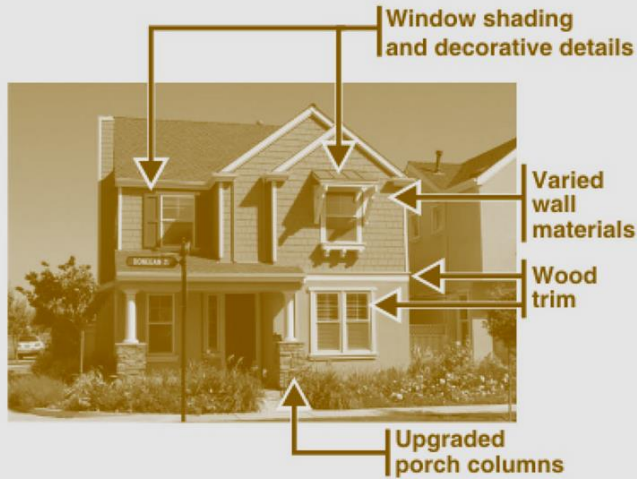
Example B: Residential Interface



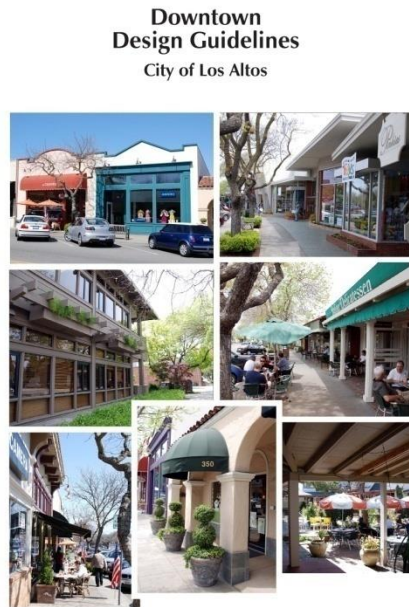
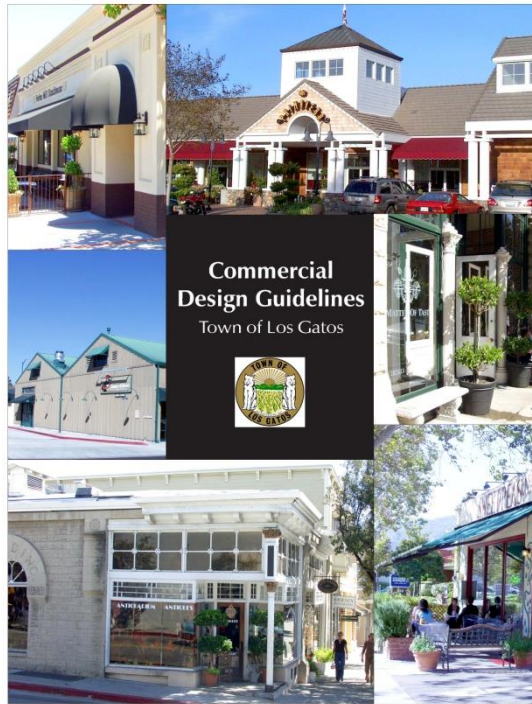
Charles Street



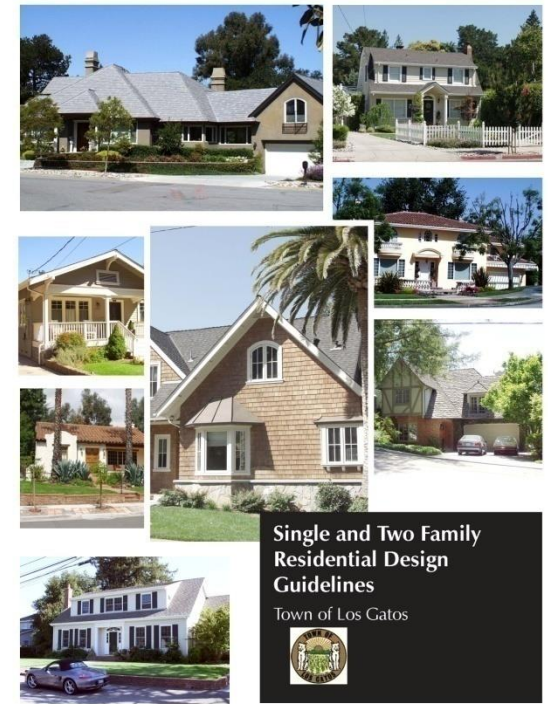
Questions and Discussion



Major Elements of the Document



Draft #5
January 28, 2010



Introduction/Intent

- Why guidelines developed?
- What is purpose?
 - ▣ Information
 - ▣ Regulatory
 - ▣ Toolkit

City of Los Altos Downtown Design Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

Los Altos is blessed with a downtown of unique personality and vitality with a wide variety of shops, restaurants, offices, and services focused primarily on serving the local community. Constructed over a period of many decades, the development patterns are supportive of a strong pedestrian environment, and its structures offer a rich palette of the community's history.

Residents and visitors alike appreciate the special *Village Character* of Downtown Los Altos, but the identification of those features that are most responsible for the establishment of that highly prized character has often been elusive, and difficult to convey to property owners wishing to make changes to existing structures or build new ones. The intent of these design guidelines is to better describe the nature and elements of that *Village Character* by pointing out special features of existing downtown development and by examples from other communities with a similar village scale and character.

The design guidelines that follow provide practical and time-tested methods for preserving and enhancing the special qualities of the Downtown Los Altos village scale and character while offering ample opportunity for increased economic vitality. They supplement and reinforce the *Los Altos Downtown Design Plan*, and are intended to assist applicants in visualizing appropriate designs and in understanding community expectations, while providing fairness and consistency in the City's downtown development review and approval process.

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

The community wishes to support and enhance the unique character of Downtown Los Altos. Property owners and developers will be expected to fit their projects into that existing fabric with sensitivity to their surroundings, and a recognition that the sum of the whole is more important than any single building or use. Buildings should be seen as unique, identifiable, and distinct from other buildings, but this distinction should be subtle, not dramatic.

A high quality of traditional architectural and landscape design is expected with abundant detail carried out in a manner that is authentic to the architectural style selected by the applicant.

Applicants are not required to meet all guidelines, but should be in substantial conformance with the design guidelines and the Required Findings set forth in the sidebar on page 11.

INTRODUCTION

1

INTENT

INTENT

These guidelines are intended to accomplish the following:

- Support and enhance the unique Los Altos Downtown Village Character.
- Maintain and enhance an attractive Downtown pedestrian environment.
- Provide a mix of uses to meet the needs of community residents and visitors.
- Encourage increased Downtown vitality with additional retail shops, offices and residents.
- Encourage creative design and architectural diversity.
- Encourage appropriate historic preservation.
- Encourage sustainable design and development.
- Establish a strong sense of entry at Downtown gateways.
- Provide adequate, attractive and convenient public parking.
- Encourage the maintenance and upgrading of uses, properties and signage.
- Encourage signage appropriate to the Downtown Village scale and Character.
- Implement the Los Altos Downtown Design Plan.
The city will consider development incentives for projects that implement or preserve elements of the Downtown Design Plan (e.g., paseos and courtyards) on a case-by-case basis.

For City staff assistance in the development review process, please contact the City's Planning Department at (650) 947-2750

**CONTACT
FOR INFO
AND HELP**

Community Expectations

Letting the applicant know in advance that the community has its own unique expectations

City of Brentwood

INTRODUCTION

1

certainty about design expectations during project review.

- Provide a high level of design quality.
- Encourage a diversity of neighborhood living spaces and residential design.
- Provide a high quality of design in residential areas regardless of density.
- Ensure sensitive transitions between residential areas of differing densities.
- Provide guidance for future home additions and renovations within established neighborhoods.
- Integrate new infill development into Brentwood's established neighborhoods.



Attentive architectural and landscape details



Usable open space



Prominent entries



Quality architectural details

1.5 COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

- New housing will foster a sense of community and place.
- New residential development will respect the scale and character of adjacent homes and neighborhoods.
- A sense of place will be provided by retaining views of surrounding hills and scenic open spaces, wherever possible.
- Usable open spaces and parks will be provided within residential neighborhoods.
- Pedestrian orientation within and between neighborhoods will be emphasized to enhance mobility.
- Variety and diversity of architectural character will be provided in all new subdivisions.
- Unity of design treatment will be expected on all sides of residential buildings, not just on the front facades.
- Garages and driveways will not be allowed to dominate street frontages.
- High-quality durable materials will be used throughout new residential development.
- Careful attention will be given to architectural and landscape details including roof overhangs, window trim and decorative elements, porch columns and railings, trellises and other features that add visual richness to the home and neighborhood.
- A strong commitment will be made to landscaping in a new residential development. Plant palettes should include large canopied shade trees, flowering plants and other interesting plant selections.

Sense of Place

Community examples as a foundation for the guidelines

VILLAGE CHARACTER

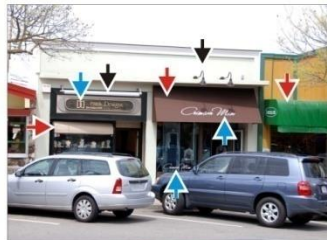
2



Landscaping and amenity buffers between pedestrians and parked cars

City of Los Altos Downtown Design Guidelines

VILLAGE CHARACTER FEATURES



Great diversity in awnings, signage and sign lighting



Facade setbacks and outside seating



Visually interesting entries with natural materials



Variety of building forms

City of Los Altos Downtown Design Guidelines

VILLAGE CHARACTER FEATURES



Side wall breakup and visual interest



Public social spaces



Intimate courtyards and patios

VILLAGE CHARACTER

2



Pedestrian scale signage and landscaping with personality



Strong presence of second floor uses on the street



Residential units included in the downtown mix of uses

Neighborhood Context

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES
City of San Bruno

1
INTRODUCTION



Older neighborhoods include both standard and substandard lots within an urban block pattern



Post-War neighborhoods include subdivisions with curved streets and culs-de-sac

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

The review and approval of new homes and of additions to existing homes involves a balancing of the concerns and interests of the applicant with those of surrounding neighbors who have invested in their homes over the years. The review process seeks to accommodate the applicants' unique needs while ensuring that the special qualities of San Bruno's neighborhoods are respected.

Increasingly, larger homes are becoming the norm in Bay Area communities. Many are located in older neighborhoods which were developed at a time when smaller homes were common, and styles were more modest in their outward appearance. The city believes that larger homes are a natural transition that can be accommodated, but that they should not be allowed to overwhelm their neighbors.

These design guidelines are intended to assist homeowners and builders in designing their projects with sensitivity to their neighbors, and to communicate the community's expectations regarding new residential construction. The primary community expectations are encompassed by the Basic Design Principles outlined on the following page.

DEFINITION OF NEIGHBORHOOD

Neighborhoods can be viewed from a variety of perspectives, including social, development history, elementary school attendance, physical character and many others.

With respect to the visual compatibility of any individual house, it is most often the home's immediate surroundings that determine whether it appears to be a good neighbor or an unwelcome intrusion. When evaluating the appropriateness of a proposal, the city will give the greatest weight to how it fits into its immediate surroundings, generally defined as the block on which it sits (i.e., adjacent homes on the same block face and homes immediately to the rear of the site) and homes across the street from the site. In the case of corner lots, the visual context may be slightly larger.

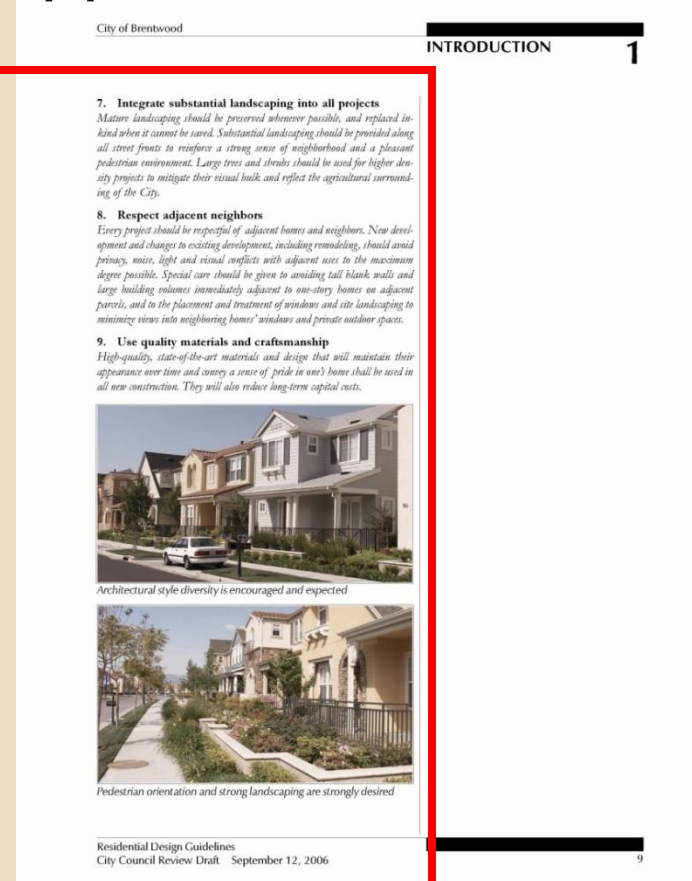
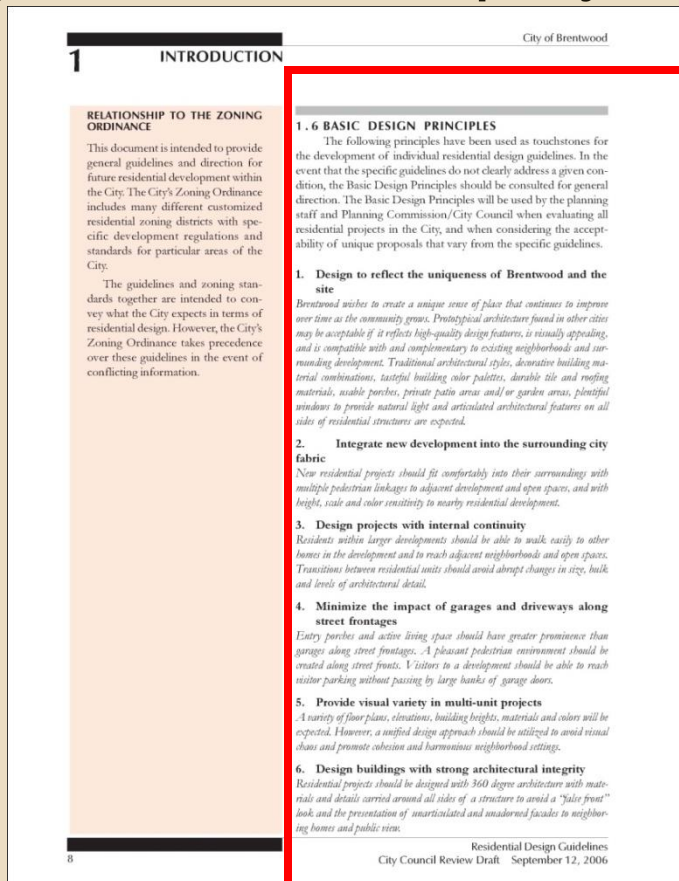
In some cases where the site is part of a tract of land developed over a relatively short period of time with several homes of similar size and style, that broader context may be viewed for new project compatibility.

However, common sense must prevail. Isolated houses or groups of houses that have changed the essential size, bulk and character of an original housing tract may not be used as examples to justify similar changes elsewhere in the area that would not be viewed in context with the new development.

If in doubt as to the neighborhood context that will be considered, applicants should consult with planning staff early in the design process.

Basic Design Principles

Establishing the important principles for the design guidelines and project approvals



Regulatory Framework

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES City of San Bruno

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW FRAMEWORK

The current San Bruno Zoning Ordinance and other adopted residential development ordinances are the city's official framework for single and two-family residential development.

While the Zoning Ordinance establishes firm standards, subject to variances under special conditions, the city's other adopted ordinances require more discretionary review. These design guidelines are intended to assist both property owners and city decision makers in arriving at reasonable and informed decisions.

The current development framework is summarized in this chapter.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS SUMMARY

Single-family houses are permitted in both the R-1 and R-2 Zoning Districts, while two-family houses are allowed on larger lots in the R-2 Zoning District.

The standards, and regulatory mechanisms which allow for exceptions under special circumstances, governing the review and approval process are summarized immediately below, and covered in detail following the summary.

MAXIMUM PERMITTED FLOOR AREA

The maximum permitted floor area of a new house or existing house plus additions is inversely proportional to the size and slope of a lot. The maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is determined by the formulas and two charts below. Follow these steps to determine the Maximum Permitted Floor Area for your lot (*San Bruno Municipal Code Section 12.200.050*).

Step 1: Calculate the Gross Lot Size

Establish the gross lot size by multiplying the length

of the property by the width. This will give the square footage of the lot. Some lots will not be perfect rectangles, requiring some extra calculations or outside help.

Lot Width	x	Lot Length	=	Gross Lot Area
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Step 2: Calculate the Adjusted Lot Area

Smaller lots are allowed a higher Floor Area Ratio (FAR) than large lots. Find your lot size in Chart 1 below.

Step 3: Calculate the Permitted Floor Area

The average slope of the lot will determine the maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR). Use the following formula and Chart 2 below to determine the permitted floor area.

Gross Lot Area from above	x	Adj. Factor Chart 1	=	Adjusted Lot Area	x	Max. FAR Chart 2	=	Maximum Permitted Floor Area
---------------------------	---	---------------------	---	-------------------	---	------------------	---	------------------------------

	CHART 1: LOT ADJUSTMENT FACTOR																			
Lot Size *	2,500	3,000	3,500	3,750	4,000	4,500	5,000	5,500	6,000	6,500	7,000	7,500	8,000	8,500	9,000	9,500	10,000	10,500	11,000	
Adjustment Factor	1.20	1.16	1.12	1.10	1.08	1.04	1.00	0.97	0.94	0.91	0.88	0.85	0.82	0.79	0.77	0.75	0.73	0.71	0.68	
Lot Size *	11,500	12,000	12,500	13,000	13,500	14,000	14,500	15,000	15,500	16,000	16,500	17,000	17,500	18,000	18,500	19,000	19,500	20,000	>20,000	
Adjustment Factor	0.66	0.64	0.62	0.61	0.60	0.59	0.58	0.57	0.56	0.55	0.54	0.53	0.52	0.51	0.50	0.49	0.48	0.47	0.46	
	CHART 2: MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE FLOOR AREA																			
Average Slope (%)	<10	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	.550	.550	.545	.541	.537	.533	.529	.524	.519	.514	.509	.505	.500	.495	.490	.485	.480	.475	.470	
Average Slope (%)	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	>45	
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	.465	.460	.456	.451	.446	.441	.436	.432	.427	.422	.417	.412	.407	.402	.397	.392	.387	.383	.380	

Development Review Process

Helping the applicant understand the process and where to go for help

1

INTRODUCTION

City of Brentwood

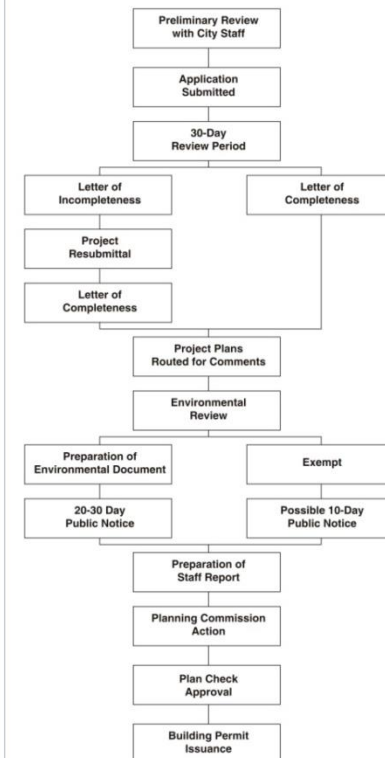
CITY STAFF SUPPORT

Applicants are encouraged to meet with City and Fire District staff at an early stage during preparation of development plans to discuss any issues or conditions that may need special attention in the planning and design of the project. Contact points for the City of Brentwood and outside agencies most often involved in development review are listed below.

Development applications and fee schedules are available on-line at www.ci.brentwood.ca.us.

- **Community Development Department**
104 Oak Street
Brentwood, CA 94513
(925) 516-5407
- **Public Works Department**
120 Oak Street
Brentwood, CA 94513
(925) 516-5420
- **Parks and Recreation Department**
740 Third Street
Brentwood, CA 94513
(925) 516-5444
- **Police Department**
9100 Brentwood Boulevard
Brentwood, CA 94513
(925) 634-6911
- **East Contra Costa Fire Protection District**
134 Oak Street
Brentwood, CA 94513
(925) 634-3400

For additional information, visit the City of Brentwood website at www.ci.brentwood.ca.us



District Guidelines

Special guidelines
for unique areas if
needed

*“One size fits all”
is often not adequate*

Town of Los Gatos

C-2 DISTRICT

The C-2 District is Los Gatos' Central Business District where retail shops, restaurants, and service businesses combine to create a unique social and economic focal point for the community. Much of the Town's unique character is defined by the downtown's commercial area's uniform scale, massing, types of buildings, and very strong pedestrian orientation.

The District is roughly two blocks wide, stretching along Santa Cruz Avenue from Highway 9 (Los Gatos/Saratoga Road) on the north to the Town Limit on the south, and along the frontage of Main Street west to near Tait Avenue.

There are several distinct areas within the district. The heart of the area extends along the Santa Cruz Avenue frontage from Royce Street to Main Street, and is composed of traditional *Main Street* type buildings constructed at or near the front property line and forming a virtually continuous line of interesting shop fronts along both sides of the street.

Building patterns north of Royce Street on the west side and Bachman Avenue on the east side are substantially different with many structures or small complexes of buildings physically separated from their neighbors and often set back substantially from the front property line. Within this *Village* scale area, the uses along Highway 9 are much more automobile oriented than those along Santa Cruz Avenue.

Santa Cruz Avenue south of Main Street has mostly newer development, greater setbacks from the front property line than the area to the north, and less of a *Main Street* style building design character.

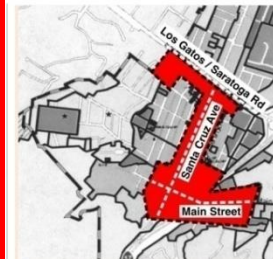
Main Street east to the Town Hall is similar to the Main Street style area of Santa Cruz Avenue, and has more structures that are two stories in height.



North Santa Cruz Avenue

Commercial Design Guidelines

C-2 DISTRICT 3



C-2 District boundaries

INTENT OF THE C-2 DISTRICT GUIDELINES

- Maintain and enhance the pedestrian orientation of the existing Central Business District (CBD)
- Maintain retail and visual continuity
- Maintain a building scale and character sympathetic to the existing fabric of the CBD
- Recognize the special scale and character of unique subareas within the CBD
- Respect the historic community roots in the Town core
- Maintain and encourage diversity
- Provide for visual interest and richness
- Keep signs subdued in recognition of the strong pedestrian orientation of the street

Details and Examples

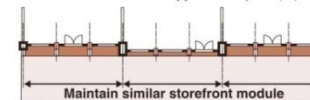
- Examples of the guidelines applied
- Multiple Solutions
- Diagrams to clarify
- Photos to illustrate

Town of Los Gatos

3.3 BUILDING DESIGN (C-2A SUBDISTRICT)

3.3.1 Maintain a building front module that is consistent with the remaining block front streetscape

- a) Pilasters and columns along with wall beams and cornices which are in front of the building wall and display windows should be used to provide a layering and hierarchy of structure. Storefront widths should be similar to those of other adjacent stores. This is of special importance for buildings with street frontages which are wider than the norm along a street front.
- b) In general, pilasters and columns should occur at intervals of no more than approximately ten (10) feet.



3.3.2 Design buildings along North Santa Cruz Avenue and Main Street to be compatible with traditional architectural styles

- a) Characteristics of traditional *Main Street Contemporary* architecture include the following:
- Shaped parapets or projecting cornices at street wall tops
 - Large display windows framed by high quality materials
 - Projecting columns and pilasters
 - Column/pilaster bases and bulkheads below display windows
 - Projecting belt courses and other moldings
 - Decorative details
- b) Provide architectural details to enhance the visual interest of facades. Elements that are encouraged include the following:
- Projecting cornices with decorative moldings and/or brackets
 - Shaped parapets
 - Planter boxes
 - Projecting molding
 - Inset medallions



C-2 DISTRICT 3



Desirable storefront components



Contemporary storefront compatible with traditional design

Example: Building Design - Garages

Town of Los Gatos

BUILDING DESIGN 3

3.4 GARAGES

3.4.1 Limit the prominence of garages

- Avoid designs that allow the garage to dominate the street facade.
- Limit the garage width to a maximum of 50 percent of the total facade width.
- Set garages back from the front facade.



Limiting the width of garages and setting them back from the front facade can minimize their visual impact

- Recess garage doors as much as possible from the garage facade.
- Consider adding trellises with landscaping over garage doors to soften their visual appearance.
- Integrate the garage into the house forms in a manner that de-emphasizes the garage doors.



Divided garage opening with high quality wood doors integrated into the house design helps minimize the visual impact of this garage



Avoid designs that allow the garage to dominate the street facade like this one does



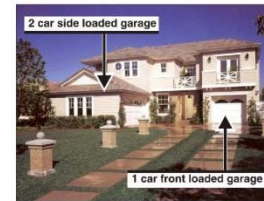
Recess garage doors from the facade as much as possible



Use windows and landscaped trellises over garage doors to soften their appearance

Town of Los Gatos

BUILDING DESIGN 3



Separating garages can reduce their visual impacts in some cases



Utilizing individual doors helps to reduce the visual impact of multi-car garages



Avoid wide driveways, as shown above, in favor of adding landscaping as below



3.4.2 Minimize the visual impact of larger garages

Three car garages may not be appropriate in most neighborhoods. Where larger garages are customary and appropriate, steps should still be taken to minimize their visual impact on the house and streetscape.

Some techniques include:

- Using side loaded or split apart garages where possible
- Accommodating additional cars in tandem spaces (see diagram on page 19)
- Separating the garage doors
- Breaking up driveway paving with landscaping and/or special paving

3.4.3 Integrate garage doors into the design with appropriate details

- Windows in garage doors are encouraged.
- Wood doors are encouraged.
- Use wood trim similar to the house windows



Garage door windows and trim in this Los Gatos house are closely related to the rest of the facade

Special Concerns

- Mixed Use
- Pedestrian friendly
- Building Mass/Scale
- Adjacent Land Use
 - Buffers
 - Privacy
 - Shade

City of Los Altos
Downtown Design Guidelines

DOWNTOWN CORE DISTRICT

3

3.2.7 Design larger structures to be sensitive to the unique scale and character of Downtown Los Altos

a) Adapt corporate prototype designs to relate both in form and scale to the adjacent downtown fabric.

- An Apple store prototype example in Walnut Creek and its modification for Downtown Los Altos, shown to the right, illustrates one way in which a corporate prototype design can be modified to fit into a small scale downtown environment.
- The GAP store in Los Altos, shown below, has been designed to appear as two structures to better fit into the existing downtown fabric.



This store in Walnut Creek illustrates the standard Apple prototype.



Los Altos



Los Altos

b) Avoid architectural styles and monumental building elements that do not relate to the small human scale of Downtown Los Altos.

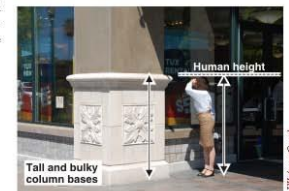
- The structures shown below and to the right are well designed, but would be out of place in Downtown Los Altos. These are all examples of what should not be done.



Walnut Creek

Exaggerated door height
Normal door height
Human height

Don't use exaggerated tall doors



Walnut Creek

Don't use over-size building elements



Walnut Creek

Don't use large arches

Signage

- Design principles and practices
- Prohibited sign types
- Standards and guidelines
- Reference to Sign Ordinance
- Variety of examples

City of Los Altos
Downtown Design Guidelines

DOWNTOWN CORE DISTRICT

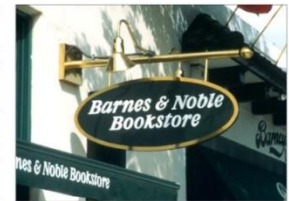
3.3.5 PROJECTING SIGNS

Projecting signs are relatively flat, two-sided solid panels attached to brackets which are mounted on and perpendicular to the face of buildings and storefronts. In addition to text, they may include graphic images that express the unique personality of an individual business.

- Use high quality materials.**
 - Use wood, metal or non-glossy fabrics. Avoid plastics.
- Limit the number and size of projecting signs.**
 - Use no more than one projecting sign per business frontage.
 - Limit the size of any projecting sign to five square feet.
 - Project signs no more than 36 inches from the building face, and provide at least 6 inches between the inside edge of the sign and the building.
- Relate the design of projecting signs and supports to the character of the building.**
 - Simple round or square horizontal supports with capped ends, painted black or white, are generally acceptable.
 - More decorative approaches may be desirable when appropriate to the sign and/or architectural character of the building.
- Position projecting signs to complement the building's architectural details.**
 - Locate solid panel signs below the first floor ceiling line, or no more than 14 feet above the sidewalk, whichever is less. Provide at least 8 feet from the bottom of projecting signs to the ground in pedestrian areas.
- Provide sign lighting only with shielded spotlights.**
 - Utilize high quality fixtures such as cylinder spots or decorative fixtures. Avoid exposed standard spot and flood light bulbs.
 - Design light supports to complement the design of the sign and building facade.



3



Blade signs are a smaller form of projecting sign.



Additional Content

- Resources
- Glossary
- Appendices

3.4 ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

San Bruno has a rich diversity of traditional architectural styles, reflecting its long history. They range from modest vernacular homes to Craftsman and more modern styles. The adoption of one of the city's many distinctive traditional residential styles is encouraged. The construction of bland and boxy generic structures, with limited distinction and detail, is strongly discouraged.

3.4.1 Select an architectural style with sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood



Avoid selecting an architectural style that is greatly different from the surrounding neighborhood

- In general, it is best to select a clear and distinctive architectural style rather than utilizing generic design elements or mixing elements from different architectural styles.



Select a traditional architectural style (two examples are shown above) that is suitable to the neighborhood rather than a generic style (below)



ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

These guidelines are not intended to establish or dictate a specific style. While a wide range of architectural styles is acceptable, there is an expectation that any specific style selected will be carried out with an integrity of forms and details that are consistent with that style.

The following are some resources that may be useful to homeowners, builders, and design professionals in understanding the special qualities of specific house styles.

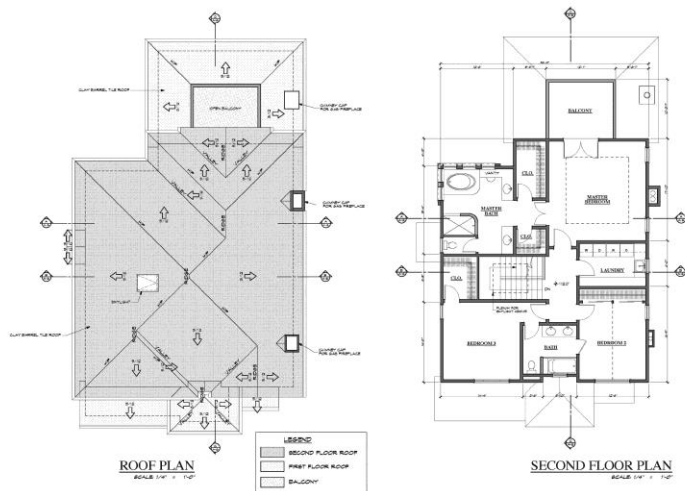
- **A Field Guide to American Homes**
Virginia & Lee McAlester
Alfred A. Knopf 2000
- **The Abrams Guide to American House Styles**
Wilkin Morgan
Harry N. Abrams, Inc 2004
- **House Styles in America**
James C. Massey
Penguin Studio 1996
- **Celebrating the American Home**
Joanne Kellar Bouknight
The Taunton Press 2005
- **The Distinctive Home, A Vision of Timeless Design**
Jeremiah Eck
The Taunton Press 2005
- **Traditional Construction Patterns: Design & Detail Rules of Thumb**
Stephen A. Mouzon
McGraw-Hill 2004

Resources for residential
architectural styles and
traditional detailing

Submittal Examples

APPENDIX A Submittal Requirements

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES
City of San Bruno



RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES
City of San Bruno

APPENDIX A Submittal Requirements

