



MULTIFAMILY OBJECTIVE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

9102.01.170 Multifamily Objective Development Standards

- A. **Purpose.** The purpose of these design standards is to provide the public, building and design professionals, and decision-makers with objective criteria for eligible residential development in the City. The intent is to provide clear design direction that enhances an area's unique character and sense of place, respects existing neighborhood compatibility and privacy, and ensures a high-quality living environment.
- B. **Background.** Since 2017, the Governor has signed into law multiple housing bills, including Senate Bill 35 and Senate Bill 330 which provide for streamlined, ministerial approval processes for eligible multifamily residential development (two or more residential units), subject to certain conditions which may include affordability requirements, and where consistent with objective zoning and design standards.
- C. **Applicability.** The provisions of this chapter apply to all newly constructed residential projects, in all zones, that qualify for streamlined, ministerial processing per the Housing Accountability Act (HAA), and which meet the definition of "housing development projects" under California Government Code §69988.5(h)(2). These include multifamily housing with two or more units, and mixed-use projects with up to two-thirds of the project. Eligible residential projects shall comply with all objective development standards, City policies, thresholds of significance, zoning regulations, and design standards as established in the General Plan and the Arcadia Development Code.
 - 1. **Modification.** Residential projects seeking a modification(s) to any development standards set forth in the Arcadia Development Code shall not be eligible for streamlined, ministerial processing per SB 35.
 - 2. **Waiver on Objective Development Standards** Up to three (3) objective development standards from all of the individual sub-items under each category may be waived for any eligible mixed-use residential project without the requirement for an additional application. The applicant must provide an explanation as to why the development standard is not applicable or cannot be achieved. The waiver is subject to review and approval by the Director or designee. These decisions are not appealable.
 - 3. **Conflicting Standards.** Projects must meet objective development standards in this Division, in addition to all pertinent sections of the Arcadia Development Code and the California Building Code (CBC). If there is any conflict between these objective standards and existing City and/or State requirements, the more restrictive objective standard applicable to the project shall apply.
 - 4. **Severability.** In the event that a development standard is found to be unenforceable, invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Division, and all other development standards will remain enforceable.
- D. **Objective Development Standards Site and Building Design.**
 - 1. **Site Design.** Site planning refers to the arrangement of - and relationships between - buildings, parking areas, common and private open space, landscaping, and pedestrian connections. The site planning topics in this chapter include site layout and building placement, vehicular surface parking and access, pedestrian circulation and access, landscaping, and common and private open space.
 - a. Existing mature trees should be preserved and incorporated into development proposals.

- b. Decks and balconies should be recessed and/or incorporated into the massing of the home, rather than protruding out of the home, to enhance privacy.
- 2. **Building Form, Massing, and Articulation.** Building form, massing and façade articulation facilitates the distinction of individual units, or groups of units, through varied heights, projections, setbacks, and recesses. Materials and colors emphasize changes and hierarchy in building form.
 - a. **Massing** Where applicable, the third floor of the building must be set back a minimum of three feet from the first or first and second floor footprint.
 - b. **Wall Plane Variation.** All exterior walls must have a minimum two-foot variation in depth at least every 40 feet of wall length to provide relief along the wall plane. In addition, all walls shall include at least two of the following features: windows, trellises, arcades, balconies, different exterior material, or awnings.
 - c. **Cantilevers.** The upper floors shall not overhang or cantilever more than four feet over any of the lower floors.
 - d. **Four-sided Architecture.** Buildings shall be designed and articulated with details, articulation, different materials and/or colors, and different elements on all sides. The street-facing façade(s) shall feature additional elements or materials. Entirely blank walls are not allowed along any façade.
- 3. **Roofs.**
 - a. Roofs shall consist of a single style and slope throughout the project. On a building with a pitched roof, no portion of the main roof shall be flat.
- 4. **Parapets.**
 - a. Parapets shall be capped with precast treatment, continuous banding, or projecting cornices, dentils, or similar edge treatment.
 - b. Parapet material should match the building façade.
- 5. **Building and Unit Entries.**
 - a. **Street-Facing Entry.** Buildings located adjacent to the street shall have a ground-level primary building entry facing the primary street. The development shall also have front facing units that faces the site's primary public street.
 - b. **Non-Street-Facing Entry.** Buildings not located adjacent to a street shall have unit front entryways oriented to face internal common open space areas such as landscaped courtyards, plazas, or paseos.
 - c. **Corner Buildings.** An entry to a residential unit must be located within 25 feet of the corner of the building.
 - d. Every building shall contain at least one pedestrian entry that does not require access through a parking garage.
 - e. Corinthian columns are not permitted.
 - f. **Definition of Entries.** Both primary building and individual unit entries shall incorporate the following to clearly define the entrance:
 - i. Entry shall match the first floor plate height. Entry designs greater than one-story are not allowed.
 - ii. Entries should provide a sheltered area in front of the primary door. Flat roof porches are not allowed.
- 6. **Windows.** Window materials, color, and style shall be the same on all elevations.
 - a. Windows shall be recessed at least two inches from the face of the exterior wall.
 - b. When utilized, functional and decorative shutters shall be at least one-half the width of the window (for paired shutters), or a matching width (for a single shutter).
 - c. Architectural window detailing, such as sills, trim, and/or awnings should be provided.
- 7. **Materials and Colors.**
 - a. **Colors and Materials.** No more than three exterior paint colors and three façade materials shall be used.

Glossy and/or reflective colors and materials are prohibited.

- b. **Restriction on Materials Where Visible from Public Right-of-Way.** Bare concrete masonry unit blocks and slumpstone are prohibited on any area of the development visible from a public right-of-way.
- c. **Material Transitions.** Changes or transitions in façade treatment, such as veneers or textured materials, shall wrap around the corners of the building and extend at least 6 feet beyond the corners, or terminate at the nearest window or door.
- d. **Architectural Consistency.** Affordable units and market rate units within the same development shall be constructed of the same materials and details such that the units are not distinguishable from one another.

E. Vehicular Parking and Access. Vehicular parking and access shall comply with the provisions of Section 9103.07, Off-Street Parking and Loading, of the Arcadia Development Code.

1. **Enhanced Paving for Entry Driveways.** The first 15 feet of the primary vehicular driveway, starting from the property line, shall use colored, stamped, or textured concrete, pavers, or permeable paving treatments such as grass-crete. The enhanced paving shall be applied throughout the driveway to break up the appearance of the concrete.
2. **Projects with Controlled Entrances.** Projects with controlled entrances, including vehicular access gates to parking areas, shall accommodate at minimum the length of one vehicle (20 feet) entering the site without queuing into the street or public sidewalk.

F. Pedestrian Circulation and Access.

1. **Pedestrian Walkways.** Pedestrian walkways shall be provided according to the following standards:
 - a. **Walkway Width.** Pedestrian walkways shall be provided with a minimum width of four feet.
 - b. **Materials.** Pedestrian walkways shall be constructed of firm, stable and slip-resistant materials such as poured-in-place concrete (including stamped and textured concrete), concrete pavers, or permeable pavers.
2. **Walkways Adjacent to Driveways.** Clear, safe pedestrian access should be provided from parking areas to building entrances within pedestrian walkways. When all unit entries face a driveway, pedestrian walkways shall be located parallel to the driveway to minimize the need for pedestrians to cross drive aisles.

G. Common Public and Private Open Space. Common and private open spaces shall be provided as required by the underlying zone in Division 2, Zones, Allowable Uses, and Development Standards, of the Arcadia Development Code.

1. **Common Open Space.** Projects providing common open space shall satisfy the requirements below with passive or active recreation amenities as defined below. An applicant may provide common open space through an amenity not on this list if it is readily accessible by all residents for recreation and social purposes.
 - a. **Passive Recreation Amenities.** Picnic/barbeque area, open courtyard, dog park/dog run, rooftop deck, fire pit area, or other outdoor gathering spaces.
 - b. **Active Recreation Amenities.** Athletic gyms or courts (e.g. basketball, tennis, bocce ball), swimming pool or spa, playground.
 - c. **Common Open Space Requirements.** Common open space shall be located and arranged to allow visibility into the space from pedestrian walkways on the interior of the site.
2. **Private Open Space.** When roof decks are proposed, landscape planters such as planter boxes, potted plants, and/or boxed trees, shall be located along the edges of the roof deck to provide a screening buffer.

H. Landscaping. Landscaping shall be utilized for all outdoor areas that are not specifically used for parking, driveways, walkways, patios, or open space. Landscape planters must be provided throughout the development.

1. **Plant Selection.** Projects shall utilize native California and drought-tolerant plants selected from the City's Residential Landscaping Guide.

I. **Parking Area Design.**

1. Semi-subterranean parking structures are not allowed. A parking structure shall be considered to be semi-subterranean if the structure is partially underground.
2. **Materials and Colors.** Where applicable, a parking structure shall utilize the same colors and materials as the primary residential buildings.
3. **Orientation.** Parking areas shall be located behind or within the building or buildings so that it is not visible from the primary street frontage.
4. **Garage Doors.** Garage doors shall be oriented to face away from the primary street.
5. **Access.** Where applicable, alleys should be utilized to provide access to parking and service areas.

J. **Fences and Walls.** Site walls shall be constructed to match the primary building colors and materials. Fences and walls shall be constructed of materials such as wood, vinyl, wrought iron, brick, and stone. Chain link is prohibited. Refer to the Arcadia Development Code for additional regulations associated with fences and walls.

1. Both sides of all perimeter walls and fences should be architecturally treated. Walls shall be finished with a trim cap.
2. Where fences and walls of different materials or finishes intersect, a natural transition or break (such as a column or pilaster) shall be provided.

K. **Lighting.** Outdoor light fixtures, including pole lights, wall-mounted lights and bollards shall be fully shielded and downward-facing in order to minimize glare and light trespass within and beyond the project site.

L. **Vents and Exhaust.** All wall-mounted utility elements shall be located to ensure they are concealed from public view. All flashing, sheet metal vents, exhaust fans/ventilators, and meter boxes shall be painted to match the building wall material and/or color.

M. **Rooftop Equipment.** Rooftop equipment that is not able to be concealed within the architecture of the building shall be screened from view behind a parapet wall or through the use of screens. Screens must have the same façade treatment as the structure.