

Gilroy Multi-family Residential Objective Design Standards

(*Interim May 2021 – Sept 2021)

The intent of Objective Design Standards is to provide developers with a clear understanding of the City's expectations for multi-family residential project design. Objective design standards are written as requirements, rather than guidelines; therefore, all multi-family residential projects must comply with each standard. Importantly, objective design standards regulate site and structure design only. Projects must also comply with all applicable building permit requirements and development standards such as height, setbacks, floor area ratio, etc. Multi-family residential projects that do not meet these objective design standards may be approved through the City's discretionary design review process.

Orientation

- **Structures Adjacent to a Street.** Structures adjacent to a street shall have front entry features oriented to the street.
- **Interior Structures.** Structures that are not adjacent to the street shall have front entries that are oriented to interior common areas such as paseos, courtyards, and active landscape areas. (CP)¹
- **Courtyard and Gathering Areas.** Internal courtyards and common areas shall be visible from the street, parking areas, pedestrian pathways, and/or interior building entries. (CP)

Massing and Articulation

- **Structure Height (adjacent to existing residential).** The side and rear walls of any structure within 10 feet of a required setback shall not be more than two stories higher or lower than the directly adjacent existing residential structure. Structures that exceed this height requirement shall stepback upper floors so that the wall plane does not fall within 10 feet of a required setback adjacent to existing residential.
- **Structure Length:** Structures shall have massing breaks, a minimum of every 50 feet along any street frontage or publicly visible area, using wall modulations, projections or recesses, or by stepping back the upper floors. Breaks shall be a minimum of five feet deep and 10 feet wide and shall extend at least two-thirds of the height of the structure.
- **Wall Modulation.** Publicly visible walls more than 20 feet in length along any street frontage or front elevation, or 30 feet along an interior rear or side elevation, shall be articulated by at least three of the following features:
 - doors and windows recessed by a minimum of two inches;
 - exterior arcades or other ground floor building recessions that provide sheltered walkways within the building footprint. These features shall have a minimum area of 48 square feet;
 - variations in wall plane (projection or recess) by a minimum of two feet in depth;
 - a recessed or projected entry with a minimum area of 24 square feet; or
 - vertical elements, such as pilasters, that protrude a minimum of six inches from the wall surface and extend the full height of the structure.

¹ (CP) indicates a standard that addresses crime prevention through environmental design.

* The City's *Interim* Objective Design Standards will be expanded into a more comprehensive set of standards.

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- **Roofline Articulation.** Rooflines shall be vertically articulated at 30-foot minimum intervals along the street frontage through one of the following techniques:
 - A change in height of a minimum four feet;
 - A change in roof pitch or form; or
 - The inclusion of dormers, gables, parapets, varying cornices, and/or clerestory windows.

Entries and Stairwells

- **Front Entries.** Structures shall include covered front entries with a minimum recess or projection of 48 square feet in area.
- **Balconies, Patios, and Porches.** All ground floor units and a minimum of 51 percent of the upper floor units shall include a balcony, patio, porch, or stoop, and this feature shall be a minimum 48 square feet in area.
- **Exterior Stairwells.** Exterior stairwells shall not be oriented to the street. For safety and security, exterior stairwells shall be oriented to interior spaces, such as plazas and gathering areas, parking areas, and pedestrian pathways and shall not be separated from these areas by landscaping, fences, or walls taller than three feet. (CP)

Colors and Materials

- **Primary Wall Material.** The primary wall material² shall be wood, stone, brick, stucco, fiber cement or other cementitious material, or composite wood or stone. T1-11 siding and other siding that use plywood (with the exception of board and batten) are prohibited.
- **Required Number of Materials.** Developments shall incorporate a minimum of two building materials on each structure elevation.
- **Colors.** Structures shall have at least one primary color, one secondary color, and two accent colors, in addition to roof color.

Circulation

- **Parking.** Parking shall not be located between the structure frontage and a public sidewalk.
- **Vehicular Circulation.** All parking areas shall be internally connected and shall use shared driveways within the development.
- **Pedestrian Circulation.** All structures, entries, facilities, amenities, and parking areas shall be internally connected with pedestrian pathways. Pedestrian pathways shall connect to the public sidewalk along each street frontage.

² Primary wall material: the material covering the largest percentage of surface area of any building face or elevation.

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Open Space and Common Areas

- **Outdoor Space.** Landscaping shall be located in all outdoor areas that are not specifically used for parking, driveways, walkways, patios, or other outdoor amenities as described below.
- **Paved Areas.** Paved areas shall not exceed 50% of the required setback area.
- **Active Outdoor Amenities.** Projects shall provide at least one active outdoor amenity (defined below) for every 20 units, with a minimum of one active outdoor amenity per development.
 - Approved amenities include plazas, courtyards, pocket parks, community gardens, pet areas, sport courts, swimming pools, and outdoor gathering areas that include a minimum of one feature element that encourages active outdoor use, such as a BBQ area, fire pit, trellis, or fountain.
- **Public Art.** Developments with more than 20 units shall provide at least one public art amenity. Public art shall be approved by the City Council following a recommendation by the Arts and Culture Commission.
- **Play Areas.** Developments with more than 10 units shall provide a play area with at least two structured play modules (e.g., slide and sand box, or tunnel and climber) and a picnic table adjacent to the play area as one of the required active outdoor amenities.
 - Senior or convalescent type housing is exempted from the play area requirement but shall provide a shaded outdoor patio area with minimum seating capacity of eight persons as one of the required active outdoor amenities.

Lighting

- All structures, entries, parking areas, refuse enclosures, active outdoor/landscape areas, and pedestrian pathways shall include dusk to dawn lighting for safety and security. (CP)
- Lighting shall be recessed or hooded, downward directed, and located to illuminate only the intended area.

Fences and Walls

- **Materials.** Chain link fences are prohibited.

Utilities and Service Areas

- **Screening.** Loading areas, utilities and utility vaults, and all mechanical equipment shall be screened or hidden from view from the public street.
- **Refuse Enclosures.** Trash, recycling, organic waste, and green waste bins and dumpsters shall be consistent with fire and building codes and shall be housed in a covered refuse enclosure with a gate that screens the trash receptacles. Sizing of the enclosures shall conform to solid waste provider requirements.
- **Refuse Enclosure Access.** Refuse enclosures shall have both a vehicular access gate and a pedestrian entrance. Gates shall be opaque. Access shall conform to solid waste provider requirements.