



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY DESIGN GUIDELINES

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Prepared by



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01

INTRODUCTION

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01 INTRODUCTION

A. OVERVIEW

Santa Cruz County is one of the most unique places in California. The stunning natural environment hosts spectacular views and rich natural and open space resources that make this place cherished by residents and visitors alike. The dynamic changes in natural context have led to the development of communities that vary dramatically in character, ranging from coastal communities to Redwood forest enclaves and everything in between - each with their own history reflective of stories of past industry and ways of life.

As Santa Cruz County's communities continue to grow and change, it is critical that they do so in a way that aligns with the existing character that defines each unique context and continues to elevate design and foster healthy environments for inhabitants. Identifying design solutions that work for many natural and urban environments is a challenge. However, tailored design guidelines that rely on the fundamentals of community development, building form and scale, receptiveness to neighborhood character, and integration of sustainability, will guide future development and redevelopment and create new opportunities for housing, economic development and activity.

B. PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION

The Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines are crafted to ensure that development projects are attractive, functional, context-sensitive, and in alignment with community goals and objectives. The guidelines support the County's sustainability goals and contribute toward building functional and livable communities. These guidelines are designed to work



in tandem with development standards and other regulatory documents to construct a complete framework to ensure that new projects fit with the built and natural character of sites throughout the County. The guidelines offer illustrative examples of how new projects should be built or remodeled to best fit overarching objectives while still offering developers, architects, designers and property owners the flexibility to be creative in their projects. Alignment with the design guidelines is crucial in streamlining the review process and ensuring that project designs complement or enhance the community's vision.

The guidelines are organized into chapters based on project development type. The chapters are as follows:

Ch 2. Overarching Design Guidelines. These guidelines can be applied to all project types and provide design guidance for elements including site planning, building design, open space, multi-modal access and parking, community character and neighborhood transitions, landscaping, sustainable design, and utilities and trash enclosures..

Ch 3. Multifamily Residential Design Guidelines. Multifamily Residential projects can have a wide range of configurations and typologies. Guidelines

are provided for both small infill projects that are placed in an existing neighborhood, and larger-scale multifamily projects situated along transit-rich corridors. Particular guidelines are provided to prioritize scale and livability in the high-density “residential flex” multifamily zone district.

Ch 4. Commercial Design Guidelines. Both new and repurposed/retrofitted commercial development are addressed in this chapter, with special considerations for infill development strategies and organization of commercial uses within buildings.

Ch 5. Mixed-Use Design Guidelines. Mixed-use development is an efficient and effective pattern that combines residential and commercial development. The guidelines address the complexities of designing multiple uses on one site. Design strategies for both vertical and horizontal mixed-use typologies are outlined.

Ch 6. Workplace Flex Design Guidelines. The Workplace Flex zone district allows a mix of light industrial, office, and retail uses within one parcel. The guidelines establish criteria to facilitate innovative and context-sensitive development of projects in this zone district.

C. STREET TYPOLOGIES

These guidelines take into account the conditions and character of street typologies associated with different roadways in Santa Cruz County. The County has adopted a layered network approach to roadway classifications that incorporates multimodal planning. A balanced transportation system is based on the understanding that it is difficult for a single roadway to meet the demands and expectations of all modes simultaneously. A “layered” transportation network envisions streets as systems based on user types (pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, drivers).. In this approach, certain user types are prioritized

on specific streets. When compiled together the roadway system is then comprised of multiple networks of street types such that different users are traveling using different networks. This layering approach allows for each user type to have a higher quality experience as compared to an approach that attempts to accommodate all users on all streets.

Street typologies include:

Multimodal Corridors. Primary corridors for transit, cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles. Accessibility and mobility are prioritized, with wide sidewalks, buffered bike lanes, and frequent transit service. Community-serving commercial, mixed-use, and high-density multifamily residential land uses are appropriate.

Active Connectors. Corridors providing high-quality pedestrian and bicycle facilities that emphasize first and last mile connections to major land use destinations and transit. Residential and neighborhood-serving commercial and mixed-use land uses are appropriate.

Main Streets. Walkable commercial streets that cultivate an intimate and vibrant streetscape and create destination spaces that facilitate activity and social interaction. Commercial and mixed-use land uses are appropriate, with connection to neighborhoods.

Local Residential Streets. Low-speed streets connecting residential neighborhoods with commercial service areas, catering to pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

Rural Connectors. Long-distance connectors between rural neighborhoods and agricultural areas. Primarily used by vehicles and cyclists.

Mountain-Agriculture Streets. Local streets outside urban service boundaries.

In these guidelines, considerations for street frontage design are provided within the context of the street

typologies where development is expected to occur. Buildings should be designed to accommodate street zones to ensure safe and efficient travel and enhance the public realm. Street zones include the vehicle travel zone, bicycle zone, parking zone, pedestrian amenity zone, pedestrian sidewalk zone, and activity zone. Street zone requirements are different for Multimodal Corridors, Active Connectors, Main Streets, and Local Residential Streets. Specific guidelines are not provided for Rural Connectors or Mountain-Agricultural Streets, since the guidelines are focused on development in the urban area. For more information see Appendix A.

D. DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC AREAS

Design guidelines for the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor are provided as Appendix B to these design guidelines. Design guidelines for other specific geographic areas are provided in village, town, and community plans under separate cover, such as the Aptos Village Plan. To determine whether any specific geographic area design guidelines apply to a given parcel, consult Chapter 2 of the General Plan, as well as the County's online mapping application (<https://gis.santacruzcounty.us/gisweb/>).

E. HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES

The Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines should be used in conjunction with the Santa Cruz County General Plan, County Code, and Design Criteria for streets and frontages. The guidelines provide ideas and best practices for well-designed projects, whereas the General Plan, County Code, and Design Criteria set land use requirements and quantitative development standards that projects are legally required to follow. In cases where design guidelines are related to specific quantitative requirements, links to the relevant standards are provided.

Chapter 13.11 of the County Code identifies which project types are subject to the Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines. Projects that are not required to follow the Design Guidelines are still encouraged to follow applicable provisions in Chapter 2: Overarching Design Guidelines.

Project types with specific guidelines that are provided in Chapters 3 - 6 (multifamily, commercial, mixed-use, and workplace flex) should follow both the Overarching Design Guidelines and those specific guidelines.

Projects located within geographic areas with specific design guidelines should follow those guidelines as well as applicable portions of the Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines.

In some cases, specific guidelines serve to provide more detailed direction for topics addressed in the Overarching Guidelines, and in other cases they provide guidelines for topics that are unique to certain development types or geographic areas. The guidelines provided for the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor identify exactly which sections of the Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines should be followed for projects in that area (see Appendix B, Guiding Design Principles for the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor).

In any case where there is a conflict between the Overarching Design Guidelines and guidelines for specific project types, the specific project type guidelines shall take precedence. Guidelines for specific geographic areas take precedence over all other design guidelines.

Project applicants should also learn the street typology for the street where their project will be located, make note of any design guidelines that particularly apply to that street typology, and review street zone standards related to that street typology as provided in Appendix A.

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02

OVERARCHING DESIGN GUIDELINES

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02 OVERARCHING GUIDELINES

PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

The following design guidelines are intended to provide general direction for design across all development project types in Santa Cruz County. These general application guidelines address site features and design qualities that are common to most development types. Design guidelines that are tailored toward specific development types - including multifamily residential, commercial, mixed-use, and workplace flex developments - can be found in the other chapters of this document.

Project types with specific guidelines that are provided in Chapters 3 - 6 should follow both the Overarching Design Guidelines and the guidelines specific to that project type.

In some cases, the guidelines in Chapters 3 - 6 serve to provide more detailed direction for topics addressed in the Overarching Guidelines, and in other cases they provide guidelines for topics that are unique to certain development types.

These guidelines provide ideas and best practices for well-designed projects. In cases where design guidelines are related to specific quantitative requirements, links to the relevant standards are provided.

OVERARCHING DESIGN GOALS

- 1 Establish site planning and building orientation patterns that create active street edges and efficiently organize on- and off-site connectivity.
- 2 Create open spaces that support on-site uses and create a network of interconnected active, safe and attractive public and private open spaces.
- 3 Encourage new structures that have compatible mass and scale, architectural style and materials that respect and contribute to the neighborhood context.
- 4 Install landscaping and design utilities and trash enclosures to increase the quality of frontages, enhance open spaces, provide screening and contribute to the overall aesthetic of the site.
- 5 Integrate sustainable and pedestrian-oriented design across all development types.

A. SITE PLANNING

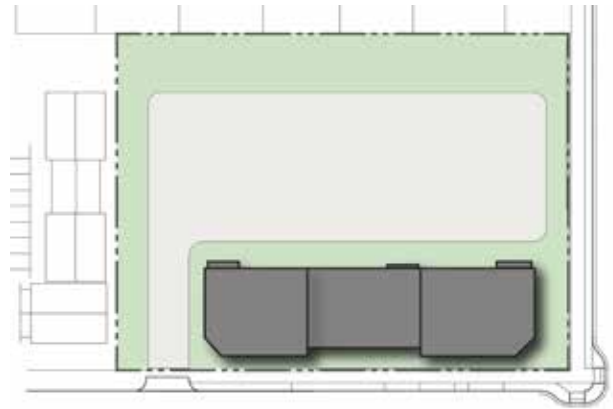
A1. Building Placement. Place new structures at or near public right-of-way edge of Main Street and Active Connector street types to activate the pedestrian realm. Where needed, building placement along Multimodal Corridors may allow landscaped buffers. Building placement along Local Residential Streets should follow the pattern of existing neighborhood context. Place buildings to preserve existing natural systems such as creeks.

A2. Corners. Locate new development to activate important street corners. Where needed, set back buildings to create corner plazas to be utilized as common open space in commercial, mixed-use, and workplace flex projects along Main Street and Active Connector street types. Extra setbacks at corners may also be necessary to ensure safe sight distance for drivers.

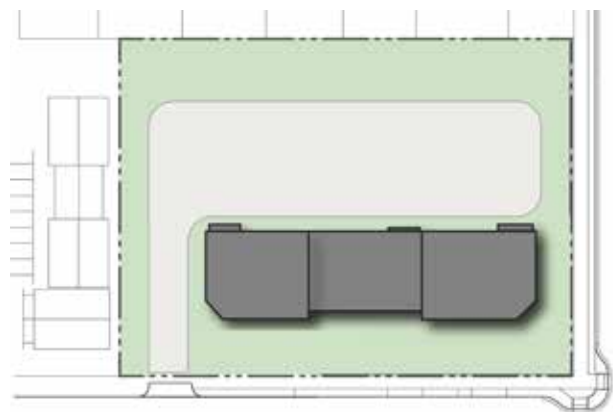
See SCCC 13.16.093 and County Design Criteria for site distance requirements.

A3. Building Orientation. Maximize the length of street-facing frontage of new structures along public streets to encourage street definition and activation.

A4. On-Site Parking. Provide on-site parking behind buildings rather than between buildings and street frontages, especially along Main Streets, Multimodal Corridors and Active Connectors. See Section D: Access, Circulation and Parking for more detailed guidance on parking design.



Active Connector / Main Street



Multimodal Corridor

A. SITE PLANNING



- 1 Activity zone
- 2 Pedestrian sidewalk zone
- 3 Pedestrian Amenity Zone



A5. Setbacks. Provide street-facing **setbacks** to ensure space for the pedestrian amenity zone, pedestrian sidewalk zone, and activity zone. See Appendix A for more information about appropriate widths for these zones along different street types.

Setback - distance between a building and a property line or other marker

A6. Usable Open Spaces within Street-Facing Setbacks. Design wider setbacks as active, usable open spaces such as pocket plazas and other programmable areas, especially for projects fronting Active Connectors and Main Streets. See Section C: Open Space for more detailed guidance on open space design.

A7. Interior Side and Rear Setbacks. Buffer new development from less intense neighboring land uses with increased side and rear setbacks.

See SCCC 13.10.323 for residential setback requirements, SCCC 13.10.333 for commercial setback requirements, and SCCC 13.10.335 for mixed-use setback requirements.

B. BUILDING DESIGN

B1. Upper Floor Stepbacks. Visually break up building mass through the use of upper floor wall **stepbacks**. This is especially important for buildings that are three or more stories when sited near lower-scaled structures on adjoining properties.

Stepback - setback of an upper floor of a building from a lower floor.

See SCCC 13.10.323 for residential third story setback requirements and SCCC 13.10.333 for commercial third story setback requirements.

B2. Wall Plane Variation. To add visual interest, consider creating setback offsets of at least one (1) foot in depth every 25 to 50 feet of wall plane along street-fronting walls.

B3. Roofline Variation. Consider using a variety of roof designs and dormers to create variation in building height and further enhance visual interest. Pitched roofs with dormers can be used to reduce the appearance of upper-floor building mass.

B4. Building Modulation. Provide vertical and horizontal **modulations** with elements such as facade extrusions and recesses, alternating materials and roof forms, to provide more interest and depth to the building facade.

Modulations - building facades differentiated by depth, direction, or material

B5. Facade Articulation. Provide an array of treatments such as trim, **awnings**, windows, balconies, and other architectural elements to create variation along the building facade.

Awnings - fabric projections that provide weather protection, identity, or decoration



B. BUILDING DESIGN



B6. Design Consistency. Select compatible and high-quality building materials that harmonize with the overall project design, landscaping, and neighboring structures.

B7. Balconies, Patios, Decks. Design decks, patios, and upper floor balconies along high-visibility corridors and frontages to create an “eyes on the street” effect and foster a more inviting and comfortable street environment.

B8. Windows. Place ground floor and upper floor windows and openings along all exposed edges of the building face with particular attention to public streets.



B9. Ground Floor Activity Area. Create an attractive and open ground floor design along building frontages for all development types in order to help activate the streetscape. Locate public and publicly-oriented uses on the ground floor of buildings to encourage pedestrian activity.

See SCCC 13.10.335(C) for ground floor commercial use requirements.



C. OPEN SPACE

C1. Frontage Open Space. Consider allocating activity zones along Main Street and Active Connector street frontages as open spaces for public use. These spaces can be designed as **plazas**, **forecourts** or **paseos**, programmed uses such as outdoor dining, mobile and pop-up businesses, farmer’s markets, temporary events, play spaces and community gardens. See Appendix A for more information about activity zones.

C2. Internal Open Space. Design internal open spaces tailored to on-site building users including common open spaces for building residents, and outdoor seating, **plazas**, **forecourts** and **paseos** to support businesses that do not have street frontages.

For projects along Multimodal Corridors, internal open spaces should be located in central and rear portions of the site in order to create a quiet environment insulated from street noise and emissions.

Plaza - public square

Forecourt - area between a building entrance and the sidewalk or street frontage

Paseo - walkway for strolling



C. OPEN SPACE



C3. Parklets. When possible, repurpose public right-of-way and parking spaces into passive common public space to serve as seating and outdoor retail for clientele and the general public. Such installations are well-suited for Main Street and Active Connector contexts.



C4. Amenities. Design open spaces with chairs, tables, trash receptacles, lighting, shade features, and landscaping to create outdoor social areas, especially along commercial frontages and on residential properties.



C5. Shading. Incorporate shade elements in open spaces through elements such as canopies, awnings, **trellises**, umbrellas, or other similar features. Adequate tree cover may fulfill this purpose as well.

Trellis - framework that supports and displays climbing plants

D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

D1. Primary Pedestrian Access. Locate primary ground floor pedestrian building entrances for access from the public sidewalk, especially on Multimodal Corridors, Active Connectors and Main Streets. If a building faces more than one of these street types, determine primary street frontage by the following priority: (1) Main Street, (2) Active Connector and (3) Multimodal Corridor.

D2. Residential Unit Pedestrian Access. Orient residential buildings so that the majority of ground floor units have individual entries from public streets. This encourages a safe and activated streetscape.

D3. Parking and Access. Locate parking areas toward rear of the site or otherwise obstruct from off-site views, while maintaining appropriate access for people with disabilities. On Main Streets, discourage parking lots between street frontages and buildings. On Multimodal Corridors, surface parking lots should occupy less than 50% of any single street frontage.

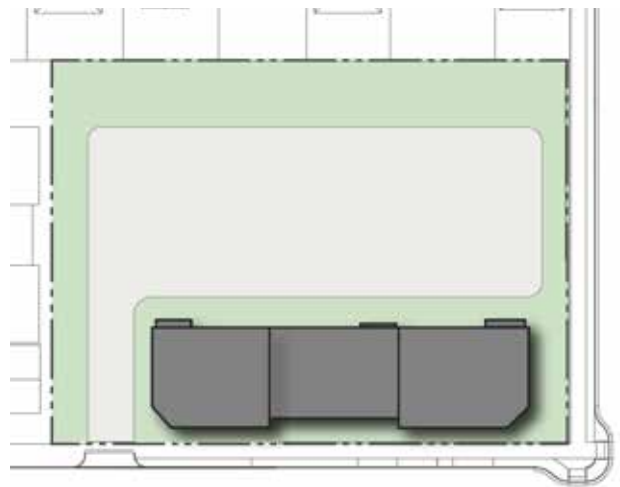
See County Design Criteria and SCCC 13.16 for parking design requirements.

D4. Curb Cuts. Limit curb cuts for vehicle entrances and exits to maximize pedestrian character and safety. Curb cuts should not exceed the minimum width required.

See County Design Criteria for curb cut requirements.

D5. Landscape Buffers. Parking lots located along street frontages should include landscaped buffers to screen and soften the appearance of parking lots. See Section G: Landscaping for more guidance on parking lot landscaping.

D6. Surface Parking Coverage. Consider limiting the total automobile area (parking, driveways, travel lanes, etc.) to less than half of the total site area, inclusive of surface parking lots and new streets. Underground or structured parking is encouraged as an alternative to surface parking lots where feasible and appropriate.



D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

D7. Parking podiums. For buildings with integrated parking garages, maximum height of a **parking podium** visible from a street should be one story from finished grade. Parking podiums should only be open-sided on the back or when facing alleys. Integrate shallow commercial spaces at ground level to activate the streetscape.

Parking podium - Above-ground parking structure enclosed by walls and supporting residential or commercial space overhead.

D8. Bike Parking. Install shared long and short term bike parking outside buildings along Multimodal Corridors, Active Connectors and Main Streets, and in interior building locations for on-site residents and workers, if applicable. Provide covered bike parking whenever possible.

See SCCC 3.16.040 for bike parking requirements.

D9. Paving Materials. Create more comfortable pedestrian environments through the use of high-quality paving materials for on-site, at-grade surfaces used by both vehicles and pedestrians on private property. Consider pavers, colored concrete, and stamped or scored concrete.

D10. ADA Compliance. Ensure minimum four-foot wide wheelchair-accessible pedestrian pathways, including where sidewalks cross driveway ramps.

D11. Pedestrian Crossings. Create enhanced internal pedestrian crossings delineated with materials or colors to prioritize pedestrians within developments. Mid-block pedestrian crosswalks should be provided on blocks longer than 500 feet.

D12. Access to Amenities and Networks. Connect building and site design to transit stops and pedestrian/bike networks. Provide controlled pedestrian access to creeks and other open space amenities where appropriate. Consider public access easements through large parcel developments.



E. COMMUNITY CHARACTER



E1. Sense of Place. Encourage traditional and contemporary styles that respond to the character and climate of the local community, while reinforcing a sense of place through adaptation of local architectural influences.



E. COMMUNITY CHARACTER



E2. Consistent Theme. Ensure visual interest and continuity with the streetscape and adjacent neighborhoods through massing, architectural styles, materials, colors, and other treatments that respect local scale and character. Use design elements such as materials, colors, textures, and rooflines to articulate the design theme.



E. COMMUNITY CHARACTER

E3. Identity. Where possible, incorporate art and sustainable elements to celebrate local stories and community values.



E4. Frontages. Provide staggered block frontages and pedestrian areas within setbacks to reflect massing that is consistent with adjacent structures.



E. COMMUNITY CHARACTER



E5. Complementary Style. Use complementary textures, colors, and materials to ensure that new buildings seamlessly blend into existing residential neighborhoods and mixed-use and commercial corridors.

Rehabilitate existing buildings by retaining the architectural style of original buildings while adding new elements that improve functionality such as skylights that maximize natural light.



F. NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSITIONS

F1. Stepped Massing. Encourage building massing to be **stepped-down** or provide greater setbacks when adjacent to property designated for low-density residential development in order to create visual interest and reduce the perception of bulk and height.

Stepped-down massing - shorter building height near the edges of a new development where the new development borders existing shorter buildings.

See SCCC 13.10.323 for residential third-story setbacks and SCCC 13.10.333 for setback requirements for commercial buildings adjacent to residential or agricultural developments.

F2. Scale Contrasts. Reduce the bulk and scale of multi-unit and mixed-use buildings by including upper-level dormers, angled roofs and other similar architectural elements.

Use a variety of colors and materials to de-emphasize the bulkiness and height of upper building levels.



F. NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSITIONS



F3. Finer Scale. Encourage larger buildings to be broken up into smaller, distinct individual forms reflective of the scale and character of adjacent structures and the local neighborhood.

See SCCC 13.11.070(B)(3) for infill development design strategies.



F. NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSITIONS



F4. Horizontal Elements. Use horizontal linear elements such as porches, balconies, **clerestory windows**, **cornices** or **plinths** to counteract the vertical mass of taller buildings and complement the character of surrounding neighborhoods.

Clerestory Windows - windows above eye level designed to let in light



Cornice - molding along the ledge of a building

Plinth - base or platform that supports a structure



F. NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSITIONS

F5. Transitional Landscaping. Use trees and landscaping to soften scale differences, particularly in areas where trees and vegetation are unifying aspects of community character. Landscaping should also be used to provide privacy screening when a commercial project adjoins existing residential or lower-scale commercial development.

See SCCC 13.11.070(D) for landscaping design requirements.



G. LANDSCAPING



G1. Corridor Landscaping. Along commercial corridors, use landscape treatments to define outdoor spaces, screen unsightly features, buffer pedestrians from high-traffic areas, and create a shaded, inviting pedestrian experience while maintaining public safety.



G2. Plant Palette. Utilize locally appropriate plant species to improve quality of life, reduce heat island impacts and create the conditions for thriving wildlife habitats and ecological systems. Encourage plant species that provide habitat or food sources for butterflies, birds, honey bees and other pollinators.



G3. Green Landscapes. Consider green roofs, green walls and edible landscapes. Edible plants may be segregated into particular landscaped areas such as community gardens or integrated with the larger landscape.

G. LANDSCAPING



G4. Tree Placement. Locate trees to increase shade and provide buffers for parking areas, buildings, and the public realm. For security purposes, openings should be incorporated into the landscape design to provide clear views into sites.

California Building Code 5.106.12.1 Surface parking areas. For non-residential and mixed-use projects, shade tree plantings, minimum #10 container size or equal, shall be installed to provide shade over 50% of the parking area within 15 years.

California Building Code 5.106.12.2 Landscape areas. For non-residential and mixed-use projects, shade tree plantings, minimum #10 container size or equal, shall be installed to provide shade over 20% of the landscape area within 15 years. Exception: Playfields for organized sport activity are not included in the landscape area calculation.

See SCCC 13.11.070(D), SCCC 13.16.060(D) and County Design Criteria for landscape design requirements for sites, streets and parking areas.



H. SUSTAINABILITY

H1. Energy Conservation. Reduce energy usage and carbon footprint using energy efficiency and energy generation technologies in the building and open space design in support of Santa Cruz County's Climate Action Plan goals.



H2. On-Site Energy Production. Encourage the installation, maintenance and use of solar and wind power generation systems on new or remodeled commercial buildings. Explore structures and mechanisms that can serve a dual purpose as public art features either through their design, movement or lighting.



H3. Passive Solar Design. Consider passive heating and cooling techniques during building design. Integrate these elements to articulate building facades.

Passive Solar heating and cooling - The use of the sun's energy directly for heating and cooling. Walls and floors are stone, concrete, or other materials that collect, store and distribute solar heat. Windows and shades are designed to let in light and heat in the winter but not in the summer, based on the angle of the sun in the sky.



H. SUSTAINABILITY

H4. Shading. Control solar heat gain and glare using external shading devices.



H5. Operable Windows. Incorporate operable windows or ventilated double facades to allow natural ventilation and reduce energy consumption.



H6. Natural Lighting. Maximize exposure to daylight with glass, skylights, atriums, and **light reflectors**. Design windows on northern facades and shading on southern facades to reduce reliance on artificial lighting.

Light reflectors - trim around light fixture to maximize light transmittal from the fixture or from a window and direct light to other areas



H. SUSTAINABILITY

H7. Stormwater Management. Create an integrated system of **pervious** and **impervious** systems that function together to capture, transport, filter/prefilter and treat stormwater on site in order to reduce off-site flows, replenish groundwater and provide water for landscape irrigation. Incorporate **swales** and **rain gardens** into the design of pedestrian amenity zones.

Pervious - Allowing water to pass through. Examples of pervious site materials include landscaping, gravel, brick or stone pavers without grout, and pervious asphalt and concrete.

Impervious - Not allowing water to pass through. Examples include roofing, asphalt, concrete, and grouted brick or stone pavers. Runoff from impervious surfaces causes erosion and flooding.

Swale- Landscaped linear ditch that collects, filters, and slows the flow of stormwater.

Rain Garden - Garden bed planted with deep-rooted species that collects and absorbs on-site stormwater into the soil.

See County Design Criteria for stormwater management design requirements.



H. SUSTAINABILITY



H8. Building Stormwater Runoff. Encourage drainage systems that divert stormwater runoff from building rooftops, parking areas, and hardscapes (sidewalks, pathways, plazas) into **cisterns** or stormwater systems integrated into on-site open space designs or public art features.

Cistern - A tank for storing water, located above or below ground.



H9. Preserve Existing Natural Systems. Situate buildings to preserve existing natural systems and mitigate negative environmental impacts.

See SCCC 13.11.070(B) for environmental consideration requirements in site design.



I. TRASH ENCLOSURES AND UTILITIES



I1. Trash Location. Ensure trash enclosures are located away from public view and pedestrian path of travel on Main Streets, Active Connectors and adjacent parcels in order to minimize noise and odor impacts typically associated with garbage collection and storage.

I2. Trash Size. Ensure enclosures are of sufficient size to house the number and size of bins and containers needed to accommodate the waste generated by building users, including trash, cardboard, cans and bottles, food waste, green waste, and other recyclables.



See SCCC 13.11.070(C)(2) for recycling and waste storage design requirements.

I. TRASH ENCLOSURES AND UTILITIES



13. Trash Screening. Screen trash enclosures to reduce their visual impact on the overall site and building design. Screening should be constructed of durable materials. Structural screening such as fences should be supplemented with landscaping.

14. Utility Screening. Either contain (within a building) or fully screen all utility cabinets, meters, and backflow prevention devices on Active Connectors and Main Streets to reduce visual impacts. Screening mechanisms can include landscaping, fencing, low walls, or other techniques.

See SCCC 13.11.070(C)(1) for utility equipment design requirements.



15. Outdoor Storage and Delivery Screening. Screen outdoor storage and delivery areas containing materials, supplies, utilities or equipment from public view along Multimodal Corridor,s, Active Connectors, Main Streets, and Local Residential Streets. Consider using landscaping and art elements to screen larger areas.



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03

MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

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Purpose and Applicability

Multifamily Design Goals

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03 MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL

PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

The following design guidelines are intended to inform the scale, character and features of multifamily residential projects in Santa Cruz County. Multifamily residential projects include a variety of building typologies, ranging from small-scale duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes that resemble large single family homes, to larger townhome projects, apartment buildings and condominiums.

These guidelines apply to all multifamily residential projects, although some guidelines are specifically oriented toward smaller or larger projects. The guidelines provide ideas and best practices for well-designed projects, and should be used in conjunction with the County's General Plan, County Code, and Design Criteria for streets and frontages. In cases where design guidelines are related to quantitative

requirements, links to relevant standards are provided.

Specific development standards and appropriate design guidelines for multifamily projects may depend on the street type, zone district, and General Plan land use designation of the parcel where the project is located. For instance, the "Residential Flex" zone district allows higher housing density, more lot coverage, and less open space compared to other multifamily districts and is most appropriate in areas with a mix of larger-scale existing development and connection to transit, such as Multimodal Corridors.

Multifamily residential projects should follow both Chapter 2: Overarching Design Guidelines and the guidelines provided in this chapter.

MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GOALS

- 1 Provide livable and functional multifamily housing that is affordable to residents of a variety of income levels.
- 2 Cultivate inviting frontage conditions and activate the streetscape and provide natural surveillance ("eyes on the street") while also serving ground floor residential units.
- 3 Allow creativity and flexibility in architectural form and design that accommodates high-density housing while respecting the scale, style and character of the local context.
- 4 Provide well-designed open space and other housing amenities that meet the needs of a diverse mix of residents.
- 5 Provide sensitive transitions between residential and commercial properties.
- 6 Plan and design efficient pedestrian and vehicular access layouts that prioritize direct pedestrian connections to the street and encourage residents to walk, bike, and take transit.

A. SITE PLANNING

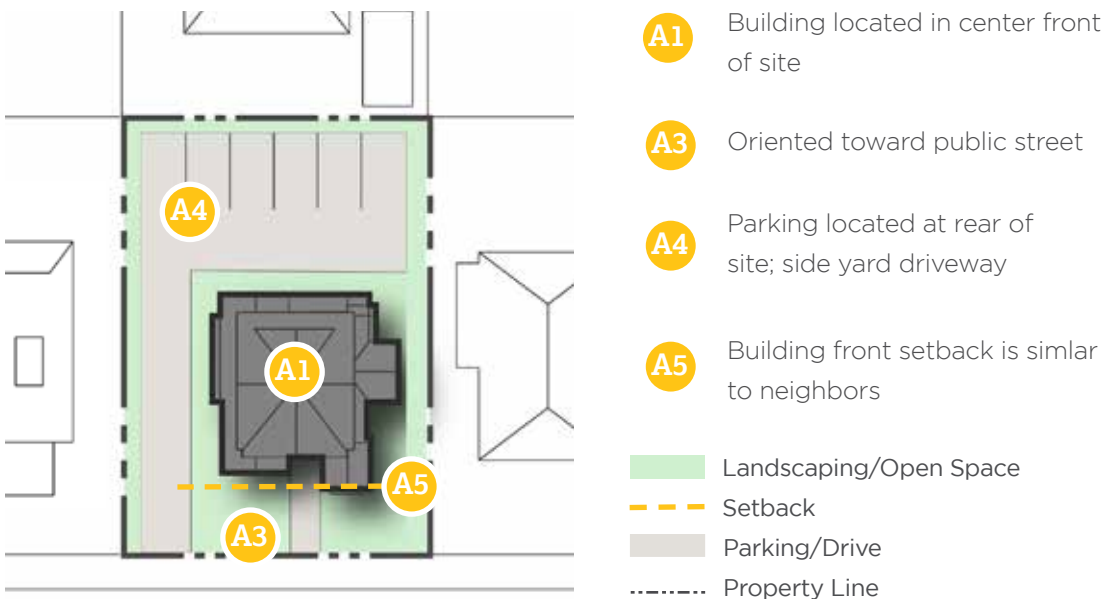
A1. Building Placement - Neighborhoods. Within residential neighborhoods, locate multifamily buildings in the center front of the site, especially if other buildings in the neighborhood follow this pattern. Locate front yards along public streets to assist in cultivating a sense of community and neighborhood feel.

A2. Building Placement - Corridors. Along Multimodal and Active Corridors, place buildings along the edge of frontages with adequate space to accommodate a front yard area between the building face and the edge of the fronting streetscape.

A3. Building Orientation. Orient buildings towards public streets with the primary entrance to housing units on the ground floor directly accessible from an adjacent sidewalk. Internally-facing buildings with primary entrances oriented toward a common space should prioritize the pedestrian experience. Primary building facades and entrances should not face parking areas when the option to face the street is available.

A4. Parking Location. When feasible, locate parking at the center or rear of the site, improving street frontages and minimizing views of parking areas from public streets. For sites adjoining other residential properties, locate access driveways at the side of the site where feasible to act as a buffer.

See County Design Criteria and SCCC 13.16 for parking design requirements.



SMALL-SCALE MULTIFAMILY

A. SITE PLANNING

A5. Front Yard Setbacks. Along streets where walking and streetscape activity is encouraged, site multifamily buildings close to the street to connect the development with the streetscape. A greater setback distance may be appropriate to create a common open space or enhanced front yards to enrich the streetscape.

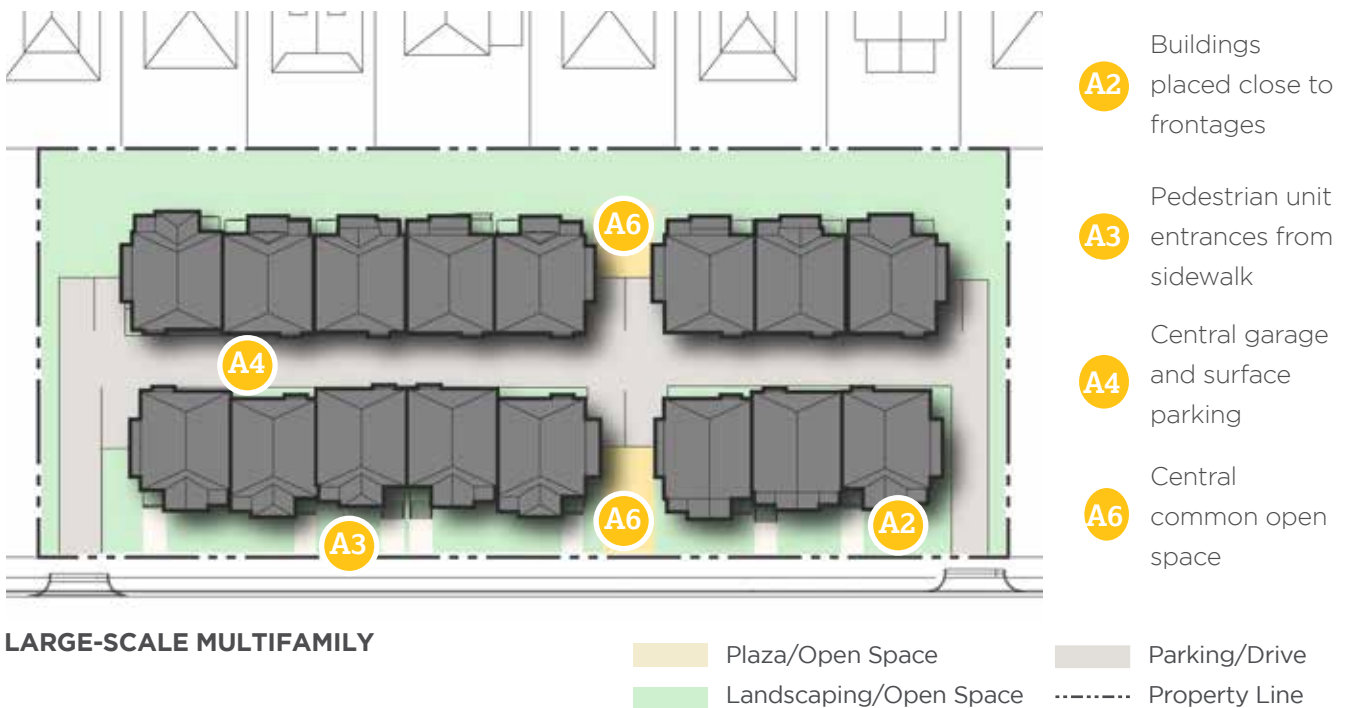
Along Local Residential Streets and in residential neighborhoods, assess setback distances of adjacent residential properties and site buildings to complement the existing pattern of front yard depth.

Along Multimodal Corridors, multifamily buildings may be placed further back from the street to buffer living areas from noise, privacy and emissions impacts.

See SCCC 13.10.323(C) for residential setback requirements and SCCC 13.10.323(F)(7) for front yard averaging requirements.

A6. Open Space. Locate common open space areas in front and side yard areas when possible. On larger sites with multiple structures or along Multimodal Corridors, explore centrally-located common open spaces. See Section C: Open Space for more guidance on common and private open space design.

See SCCC 13.10.323(D) for residential open space requirements.



B. BUILDING DESIGN



B1. Building Mass. Encourage highest building height and mass to be located near the center of the site and building footprint. Building mass should taper from the center of the site toward the property lines to emulate the scale and style of single-family residential development and allow for solar access to open spaces, especially within neighborhoods.

Design upper floor mass to complement neighborhood scale by incorporating design elements such as upper floor stepbacks and gable and hip roof forms.

See SCCC 13.10.323(C) for third floor stepback requirements.

B2. Wall Plane Variation. To add visual interest, consider offsets of at least one (1) foot in depth to differentiate building units and emulate surrounding development patterns.

B3. Setback Variation. On larger projects, consider utilizing fluctuating setbacks approximately every 25 to 35 feet or the width of one housing unit to create a rhythm along the street edge.

B4. Roofline Variation. Consider utilizing changing roof heights, roof slope angles and dormers to create variation in the roofline and building height profile and further enhance visual interest.

- B1** Building mass concentrated in middle of building
- B2** Varied wall planes
- B4** Roof pitches and dormers fit neighborhood

B. BUILDING DESIGN



- B1** Gable roofs de-emphasize upper floor building mass
- B2** Varying wall planes accentuate individual units
- B3** Setback variation
- B4** Roofline and height changes

B. BUILDING DESIGN

B5. Building Step-Backs. Upper floor building mass should be stepped back along internal frontages to provide solar access to common open spaces, internal drives, and other on-site spaces.

Upper-floor stepbacks along frontages should be incorporated along Local Residential Streets.

See SCCC 13.10.323(C) for third floor stepback requirements.



B6. Building Modulation. Create variation in building mass along building faces to diminish the sense of bulk, and provide more interest and depth to building form.

Building modulation to balance bulk and mass is especially important within the Residential Flex (RF) zone district where buildings may take up a larger percentage of the lot area compared to other residential zone districts.



B7. Facade Articulation. Provide an array of facade treatments such as trim, awnings, bay windows, balconies, and other architectural elements to create variation along the building face.

B8. Facade Design. Utilize a harmonious palette of materials and color to add visual interest.



B. BUILDING DESIGN

B9. Materials Modulation. Emphasize modulating and articulating building elements through material changes to create more visual interest.

B10. Design Consistency. Select compatible and high-quality building and landscape materials that harmonize with the overall project design, landscaping, and neighboring structures. On larger projects, ensure design continuity throughout the project through similar architectural styles, materials, colors, and other treatments.

See SCCC 13.11.070(D) for landscape design requirements, including requirements for front yards, plant species, tree planting and removal, site furniture and fixtures, and buffering and screening.

B11. Frontage Design. Locate the front door to housing in a visible location from the adjacent streetscape. Entrances that front Multimodal Corridors should be designed to create distance and differentiation from the streetscape. This may be achieved through landscaping, wider front yards, fencing, and/or elevated stoops.



B. BUILDING DESIGN

B12. Windows. Place ground floor and upper floor windows and openings along exposed edges of the building face with particular attention to buildings fronting public streets. Additionally, locate balconies, raised decks, patios and other outdoor private open space elements along highly visible frontages. This encourages doors and windows to open onto the public street and provides eyes on the street.



C. OPEN SPACE

C1. Private Open Space. On sites zoned Residential Multifamily (RM), provide 60 square feet of private open space for every unit. Site buildings to accommodate stoops and porches along ground floor unit entrances, including internal-facing front yards. On sites zoned Residential Flex (RF), higher density development may not allow for private open space for every unit. Wherever private open space is provided for multifamily projects, the minimum dimension should be six feet in order to ensure that the space is usable.



C2. Common Open Space. On sites zoned RM, provide 200 square feet of common open space per unit. On sites zoned RF, provide at least 15% of gross site area as private or common open space.

Locate common open space areas in front and side yard areas when possible. On larger sites with multiple structures or along Multimodal Corridors, explore centrally-located common open spaces, such as plazas, that are interconnected with a network of pedestrian paths to individual private open spaces. Wherever common open space is provided, the minimum dimension should be 15-20 feet to ensure that the space is usable.



See SCCC 13.10.323(D) for usable open space requirements.

C. OPEN SPACE

C3. Private/Common Open Space

Interface. Consider locating private open spaces for individual housing units next to common open spaces. Where possible, connect different open spaces with elements such as strolling paths to foster a sense of community.

C4. Amenities. Install chairs, tables, trellises and other shade features to create outdoor social areas in common spaces that serve as internal gathering spots.

C5. Front Yards. Design front yards and front setback areas to accommodate residential amenities, passive recreational activity, trees and landscaping.

Within front setback areas along Local Residential Streets and in residential neighborhoods, create a front yard environment that offers common open space for residents and complements the front yard use patterns in the neighborhood to help build community.

Along Multimodal Corridors and Active Connectors, use front yard areas to screen residential units, and consider locating common open space in interior areas such as courtyards to provide a more restful space for residents.

See SCCC 13.11.070(D) for front yard landscape design requirements.



C. OPEN SPACE



C6. Res Flex sites. On sites zoned RF, front yard setbacks and open space areas may be smaller compared to other multifamily sites in order to accommodate larger buildings and more residential units. On these sites, include common open space areas whenever feasible, especially on sites with more than 10 units. Consider providing common open space as one large area to enhance usability and a sense of community, in a location that is visible and easily accessed by all units, and accessible to users of all ages and physical abilities.



C7. Play Element Amenities. On large sites, consider installing on-site play features to support active and passive recreation needs for people of all ages and abilities and encourage a family-friendly community.



C8. Gardens. Explore community gardens to serve the needs of the development and neighborhood residents.

D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

D1. Curb Cuts. Limit curb cuts for vehicular access to a maximum of one per frontage and up to three for developments with more than two frontages. Curb cuts should not exceed the minimum width required. Driveways should be designed so that sidewalks remain ADA compliant as they cross driveways.

See County Design Criteria for curb cut requirements.

D2. Resident Parking. Encourage garage parking as the preferred covered residential parking option. On larger projects, encourage podium parking if feasible.

D3. Guest Parking. Consolidate and locate surface parking for guests, if required, at several locations throughout the project site, to reduce the visual impact of large swaths of parking.



D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING



D4. Efficient Parking. Encourage space-efficient parking options such as shared driveways, tandem parking, stacked parking, valet parking and parking garages to maximize space for building and open spaces..

D5. Access Drives. Locate vehicular access driveways at the periphery of the site. Design drives to visually accommodate two-way vehicular circulation on large sites. Consider creating shared driveways between adjoining properties.

See SCCC 13.16 and County Design Criteria for access driveway, vehicular parking and pedestrian path design requirements.



D6. Pedestrian Paths. Construct distinguishable pedestrian paths for residents and guests. Pedestrian paths should utilize different materials, colors and textures from the vehicular driveway, and ideally should be separated from the driveway. For large projects, design at least one mid-block pedestrian connection along each frontage with a clear and well-designed pedestrian path.

D7. Unit Access. When applicable, install high-quality exterior staircases accessing upper-floor units that match the aesthetics and materials of the building.

D8. Unit Entrances. For all street-facing ground floor residential units, consider providing a visible entrance that directly connects to the sidewalk to create a pleasant streetscape environment.



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04

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Contents

Purpose and Applicability

Commercial Design Goals

A. Site Planning

B. Building Design

C. Open Space

D. Access, Circulation and Parking



Magnolias

04 COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

The following design guidelines are intended to inform the scale, character and features of commercial projects in Santa Cruz County. Commercial land uses include consumer-focused retail, service, entertainment and visitor-accommodation uses as well as worker-focused office and laboratory uses. The Commercial Design Guidelines can be applied to new whole-site developments, infill development on existing properties, and redesign or repurposing of existing buildings for new commercial uses.

The guidelines provide ideas and best practices for well-designed projects, and should be used in conjunction with the County's General Plan, County Code, and Design Criteria for streets and frontages. In cases where design guidelines

are related to quantitative requirements, links to relevant standards are provided.

Specific development standards and appropriate design guidelines for commercial projects may depend on the street type, zone district, and General Plan land use designation of the parcel where the project is located.

Commercial projects should follow both Chapter 2: Overarching Design Guidelines and the guidelines provided in this chapter.

Commercial projects with residential components should follow Chapter 5: Mixed-Use Guidelines. Commercial projects in the Workplace Flex (C3) zone district should follow Chapter 6: Workplace Flex Guidelines.

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GOALS

- 1 Provide for a range of commercial development from small scale infill development on existing underutilized land to larger new commercial development.
- 2 Encourage a well-defined public realm through careful placement and design of buildings, streets and pedestrian areas so that commercial areas become destinations for residents and visitors.
- 3 Create active and attractive edge conditions along primary frontages of new and existing development to foster visually-engaging, functional and comfortable streetscape environments.
- 4 Ensure that commercial projects are designed and operated to be compatible with adjacent uses and neighborhoods and the surrounding natural environment.
- 5 Minimize impacts on residential areas by providing context sensitive site layout, landscaping, signage, building design and size, and on-site parking, loading, and circulation.
- 6 Accommodate parking that is adequate (but not excessive), contributes to a pedestrian-friendly, bicycle friendly, and transit-supportive environment, and supports a "park once" environment.

A. SITE PLANNING







A1. Building Orientation. Place buildings parallel to streets to maximize site efficiency, improve pedestrian flow and wayfinding, and create a linear urban edge along commercial corridors.

Orient buildings and open spaces with high pedestrian traffic such as shops, cafes, and plazas to face the street and engage the sidewalk, in order to create a more active and enjoyable pedestrian environment.

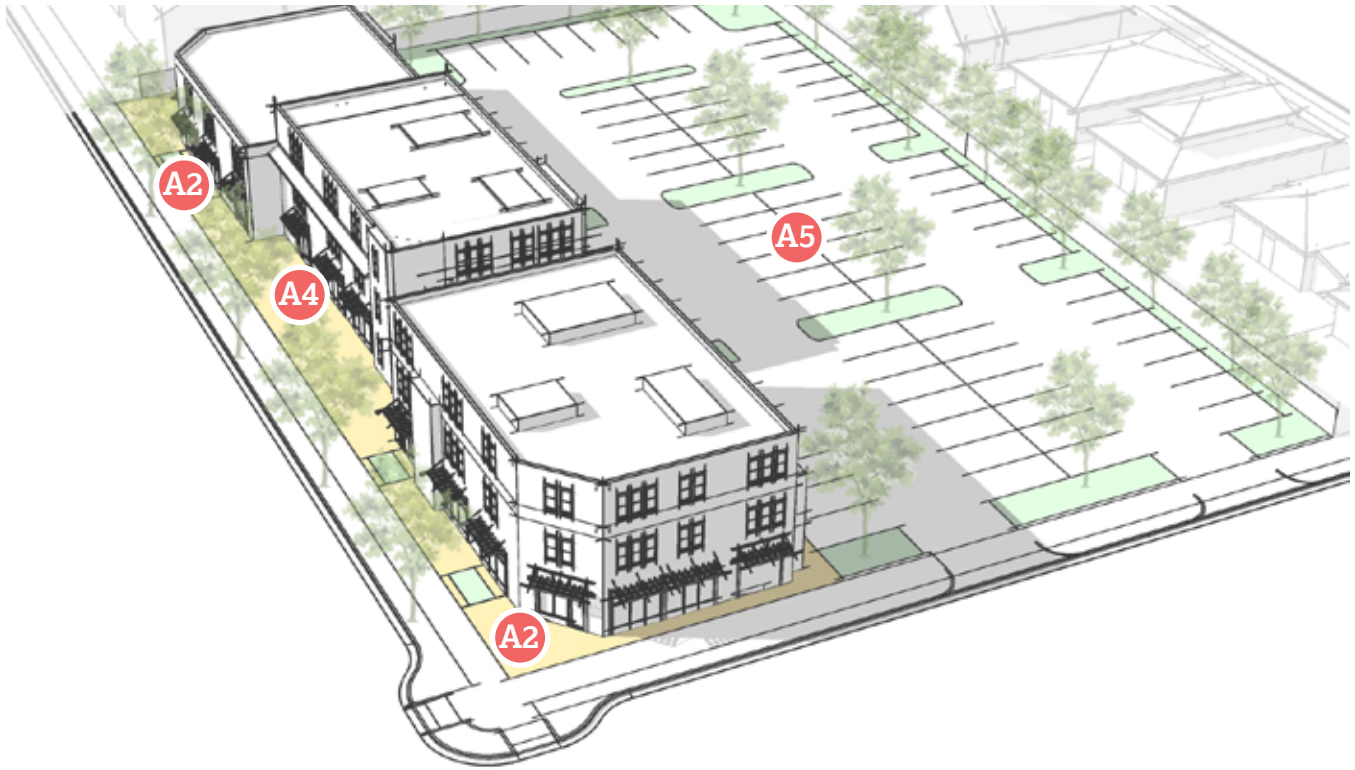
A2. Entrances. Locate primary entrances along streetscape frontages to develop direct access points and foster connection with the immediate pedestrian environment. Locate secondary entrances to access parking lots and rear or side building faces.

A3. Open Spaces. Locate public open spaces and plazas facing Main Streets and Active Connectors in order to create social gathering spaces that are welcoming and visible.

Open Spaces

-  Plaza/Open Space
-  Landscaping/Open Space
-  Parking/Drive
-  Property Line

A. SITE PLANNING



A4. Setbacks. Site buildings close to the required street-facing setback(s) along Main Streets and Active Connectors, unless a greater distance is being used to enhance the public realm with large activity zone uses such as outdoor dining and plazas. Allow expanded landscape buffers or other similar features on Multimodal Corridors that require mitigation from noise and emission.

See SCCC 13.10.333 for commercial setback requirements.

A5. On-Site Parking. Ensure parking is clustered toward the rear of a site (opposite street frontages), allowing the building to activate street frontages. Provide shared driveways and coordinated parking opportunities with adjoining properties. Building frontages should not face parking areas when the option to front the street is available.

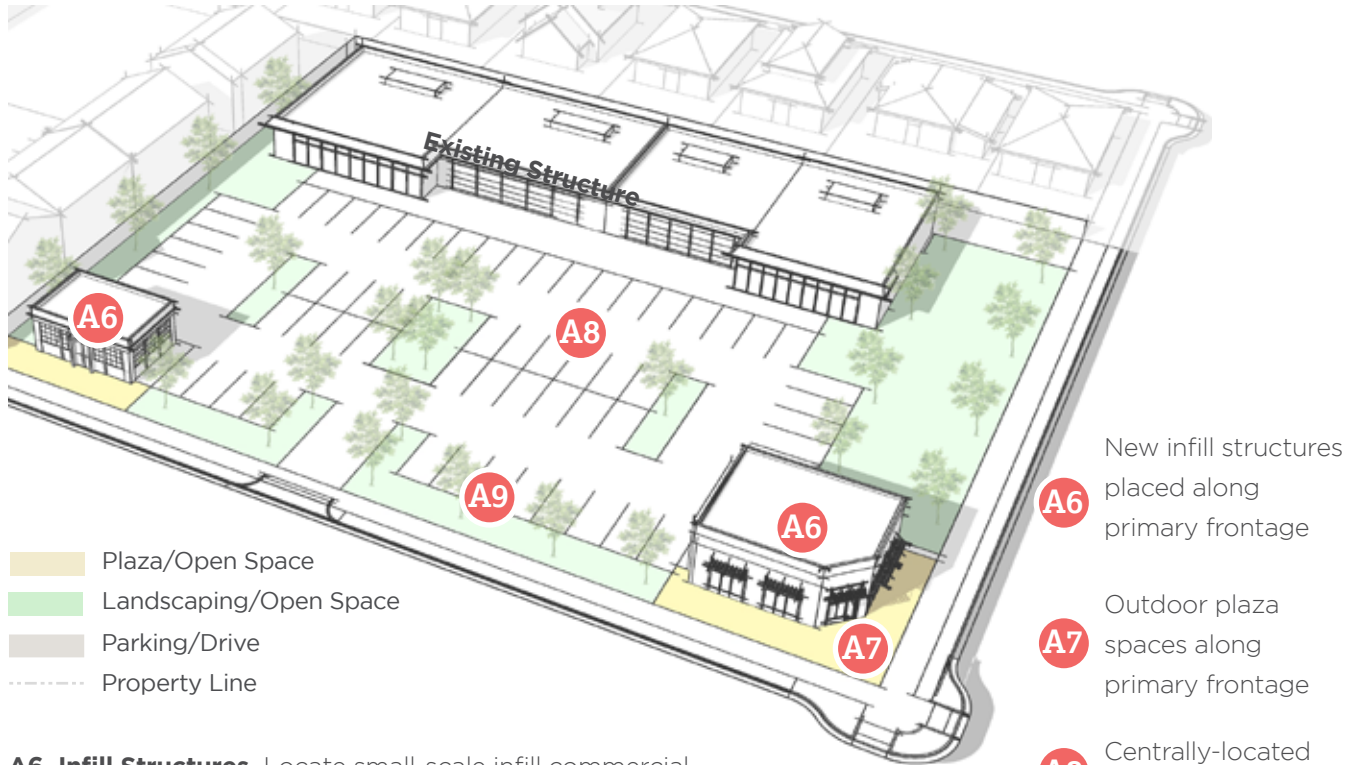
See SCCC 13.16 and County Design Criteria for parking design requirements.

A2 Entrances oriented toward frontages and corners

A4 Building setback to allow space for plaza

A5 Rear-located parking

A. SITE PLANNING - INFILL



A6. Infill Structures. Locate small-scale infill commercial development within existing parking lots facing public streets such as Main Streets and Active Connectors. Prioritize infill development in strategic locations such as street intersections and parcel edges.

A7. Infill Open Space. Add common public spaces to create active areas that front the immediate streetscape and support the infill commercial development.

A8. Infill Parking. Site infill commercial development to create consolidated, centrally-located parking.

A9. Infill Frontage Enhancement. Install a landscape buffer along the primary frontage to create an attractive edge condition that screens areas of exposed parking lot and provides a pedestrian-friendly experience, especially along Main Streets.

See SCCC 13.11.070(B)(3) for infill design strategies, SCCC 13.11.070(D) for commercial infill landscaping, and SCCC 13.16 and County Design Criteria for parking design requirements.



A. SITE PLANNING - BUILDING PROGRAM



A10. Ground Floor Uses. Where possible, encourage ground floor spaces fronting public streets to be primarily occupied by retail, restaurant, personal services, cultural destinations, and other similar public oriented businesses. Place the most active functions, such as restaurants, office lobbies and common customer areas, along public streets with gracious sidewalks and landscaping. Front internally-facing buildings with similar ground floor uses toward a common space with pedestrian orientation. These uses can be accompanied by parklets to further extend activities into the public realm.

See SCCC 13.10.335(C) for ground floor commercial use requirements.



A11. Ground-Floor Height. Consider providing ground floor minimum floor-to-floor height of 15 feet to best support retail and office uses.

A12. Small Scale Retail. Encourage temporary and permanent small scale retail opportunities in front of ground floor office spaces that require privacy from pedestrian traffic.



B. BUILDING DESIGN



B1. Articulated Frontages. Consider including articulated frontages for commercial buildings and projects, with alternating setbacks, building planes, and varied colors and materials to create more pedestrian interest.

B2. Street Activation. Design commercial buildings to directly engage the street by using first floor overhangs, tree canopies, seating areas, extended outdoor dining, and well-defined entrances. Encourage active frontages along streets and alleys by incorporating features such as window glazing, outdoor seating, and landscaping. Also include functional art such as decorative bike racks, fences, and murals. These areas should enhance the experience for pedestrians and bicyclists while encouraging people to linger and visit local businesses.

- B1** Articulated frontages
- B2** Floor overhangs, awnings, tree canopy to activate street
- B3** Ground-floor building transparency to create visual interest for pedestrians



B. BUILDING DESIGN



B3. Ground-Floor Building Transparency.

Make internal building activities visible from public streets and internal pathways, unless there are privacy or security concerns. prevent transparency. Encourage ground-floor, street-facing building walls of non-residential uses to provide transparent windows or doors with views into the building for at least 60 percent of the building frontage, in order to create visual interest and to help stores showcase their merchandise or services.



B4. Building Mass. Design multi-story commercial buildings along corridors, in commercial centers, and for specific uses such as medical centers. Incorporate single-floor building volumes and horizontally-oriented building elements in areas where low-lying buildings are cherished aspects of community character.



B5. Multiple Buildings. Develop larger sites with multiple buildings or building forms that include a variety in designs and functions. The individual buildings should include variation and articulation in their setbacks, stepbacks and heights in order to break up the bulkiness of the development.

B. BUILDING DESIGN

B6. Pedestrian Scale. Step-back upper floors from the street to avoid a “canyon effect.” and preserve a human or pedestrian scale along the street edge.

Use porches, arcades, or balconies to counteract the vertical emphasis of taller buildings.

Additionally, use a variety of materials and/or colors to de-emphasize the size and bulk of upper floors.

B7. Interesting Facades. Include façade elements and materials that make larger buildings more visually interesting and less bulky, particularly along streets and pedestrian pathways.

B8. Entrances. Use features such as overhangs, business signs, and/or recesses to create an architectural focal point and draw attention to stores and restaurant entrances.



B. BUILDING DESIGN



B9. Adaptive Reuse. Retain the original character and unique features of historically designated buildings that are retrofitted or reused for a new purpose, to maintain the cultural history of individual neighborhoods. This should be accomplished in accordance with local historic preservation regulations.

Additionally, require historical buildings to maintain important façade or architectural features during retrofits and expansion projects.

See SCCC 16.42 for historic preservation requirements.

B10. Signage. Provide clear and architecturally consistent business identification signage. In shopping centers and in buildings with multiple businesses, adopt a cohesive signage program for all businesses.

See SCCC 13.10.581 for signage requirements.

B11. Blank Walls. Minimize the use of blank walls, particularly at the ground-floor level. Where necessary, blank walls should be textured or layered with different materials or should incorporate art enhancements where appropriate.

C. OPEN SPACE



C1. Location. Locate outdoor gathering spaces so they are visible from public streets or trail networks, accessible from the building/street, and connected to other pedestrian facilities.



C2. Landscaping. Encourage publicly-accessible plazas and open spaces to include a combination of landscaped and hardscaped elements. Ensure that high-quality paving materials, such as stone, concrete, tile, pavers, or brick are used for hardscaped elements.



C3. Paving. Coordinate paving, planting, and other landscape materials with the design of the building and site.



C4. Public Art Integration. Ensure that art, sculpture, and interactive installations are meaningfully integrated into the open space design.

C. OPEN SPACE



C5. Amenities. Provide benches, tables, and shade in plazas and other outdoor areas. These features should be made from high-quality, durable materials consistent with the architectural theme of the building and surrounding neighborhood.



C6. Parking Space Conversion. Along Main Streets, Active Connectors, and on internal parking lots, consider allowing conversion of parking spaces into outdoor dining and other commercial use, where adequate parking exists and other requirements such as ADA access can be met.



C7. Outdoor Retail. Design open spaces to host outdoor retail environments that support indoor uses such as restaurants, cafes, artist studios, etc.



C8. Events. Program publicly accessible open spaces with a wide variety of temporary and frequent events such as farmers markets, wine tasting, etc.

D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING

D1. Sidewalk Connections. Provide on-site pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists, separated from vehicular traffic, that connect building entries to adjacent public sidewalks.

See County Design Criteria and SCCC 13.16 for pedestrian and bicycle pathway requirements.



D2. Walkway Design and Materials. Include elements such as contextually-appropriate paving materials, trellis structures, landscaping, pedestrian-scaled lighting, seating and trash receptacles along sidewalks and pedestrian pathways.

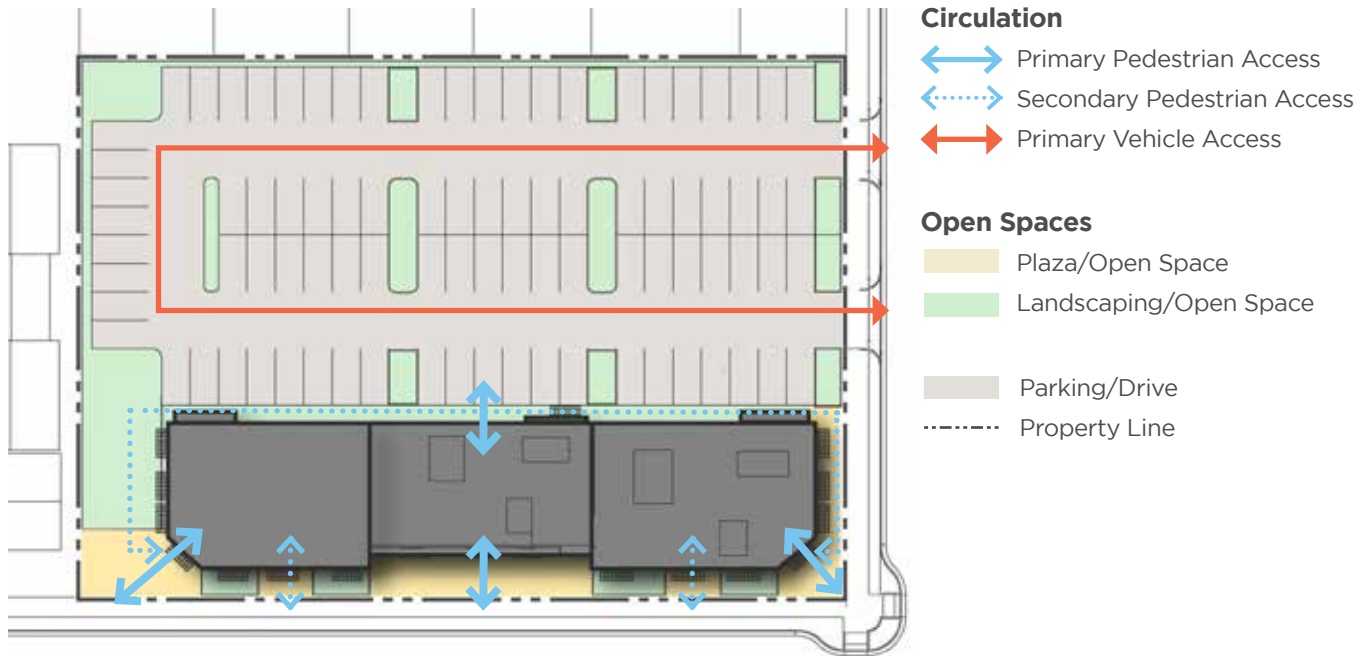


D3. Drive-Through Design. Where drive-throughs are allowed, design drive-through facilities to mitigate problems such as pollution, congestion, noise and appearance. Buffer drive throughs from residential uses and provide adequate room to accommodate queuing vehicles on site.

See SCCC 13.16.091 for drive-through facility design requirements.



D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING



D4. Parking Location. Provide vehicle drop-off areas and limited short term, retail-friendly teaser parking along sidewalks. The remainder of the parking should be behind the building or in underground or structured parking, in order to maintain an attractive and pedestrian-oriented frontage to major streets.

D5. Parking Size. Encourage large outdoor surface parking lots to be broken up by landscaping and stormwater planters.

D6. Shared Parking. Maximize opportunities for shared and stacked parking to reduce parcel footprint devoted to parking. Include interior vehicle connections between properties.

D7. Bicycle Parking. Provide convenient and secure bicycle parking adjacent to building entrances. The design and materials should be coordinated with the site and building design. Whenever possible, bicycle parking areas should be covered and located in areas which are clearly visible to site users.

See SCCC 13.16 and County Design Criteria for vehicular and bicycle parking requirements.



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05

MIXED USE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Contents

Purpose and Applicability

Mixed-Use Design Goals

A. Site Planning

B. Building Design

C. Open Space

D. Access, Circulation and Parking



05 MIXED-USE DESIGN GUIDELINES

PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

The following design guidelines are intended to inform the scale, character and features of horizontal and vertical mixed-use residential and commercial projects in Santa Cruz County. Horizontal mixed-use consists of separate residential and commercial buildings within a single parcel. Vertical mixed-use consists of residential and commercial uses within the same building.

The guidelines provide ideas and best practices for well-designed projects, and should be used in conjunction with the County's General Plan, County Code, and Design Criteria for streets and frontages.

In cases where design guidelines are related to quantitative requirements, links to relevant standards are provided.

Specific development standards and appropriate design guidelines for mixed-use projects may depend on the street type, zone district, and General Plan land use designation of the parcel where the project is located.

Mixed-use projects should follow both Chapter 2: Overarching Design Guidelines and the guidelines provided in this chapter.

MIXED USE DESIGN GOALS

- 1 Provide flexibility to allow for a wide variety of mixed-use developments to enhance the County's overall economic vitality.
- 2 Ensure active and inviting ground floor commercial spaces that support a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- 3 Create visual interest through design variation, architectural details, and high-quality materials.
- 4 Provide well-designed housing that is affordable to residents of a variety of income levels and is located within walking distance to stores, services, jobs, and community amenities.
- 5 Enhance public safety through increased natural surveillance and eyes on the street.
- 6 Create well-designed public and semi-public gathering places that support social interaction and community cohesion.
- 7 Accommodate parking and circulation on site to maximize connections between different land uses.

A. SITE PLANNING - VERTICAL MIXED USE



- A1** Building placed close to front and side property lines
 - A2** Larger building setback provided to create plaza
 - A3** Mid-block pedestrian path/connection
 - A4** Primary parking located behind buildings
- Plaza/Open Space
 - Landscaping/Open Space
 - Parking/Drive
 - Property Line

A1. Building Placement. Place buildings along the edge of the sidewalk to activate the pedestrian realm, especially along Main Streets and Active Connectors.

A2. Building Setbacks. Site buildings close to the required setback to provide street definition, unless a greater setback distance is appropriate to enhance the public realm (outdoor retail, plaza, etc.) or to avoid noise or traffic impacts.

See SCCC 13.10.334(A) for mixed-use setback requirements.

A3. Mid-Block Pedestrian Paths. Create enhanced internal pedestrian crossings delineated with materials or colors to prioritize pedestrians within developments. Provide mid-block pedestrian paths between and through buildings.

See SCCC 13.16 and County Design Criteria for pedestrian path and parking design requirements.



A. SITE PLANNING - VERTICAL MIXED USE



A4. Parking Location. Ensure parking is clustered to the rear of the site, allowing the building to activate street frontages and provide shared parking opportunities with adjoining properties. Building frontages should not face parking areas along Main Streets and Active Connectors when the option to front the street is available.

A5. Building Orientation. Orient buildings toward public streets with the primary entrance(s) to the site or to commercial uses directly accessible from the sidewalk. Include multiple entrances from Main Street sidewalks. Buildings with primary entrances oriented toward an internal public space rather than a public street may be appropriate if they enhance the pedestrian experience.

A6. Ground-Floor Uses. Encourage ground-floor spaces fronting primary streets to be primarily occupied by retail, restaurant, and personal service uses that generate pedestrian activity and engage the sidewalk to create an active and enjoyable pedestrian environment.

See SCCC 13.10.334(C) for ground floor use requirements.

- A5** Buildings oriented toward frontages
- A6** Active ground floors with open facades and active space



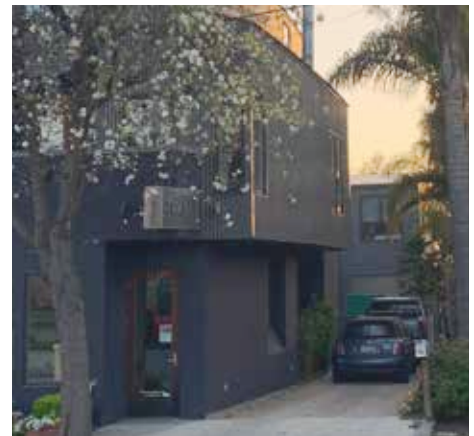
A. SITE PLANNING - HORIZONTAL MIXED USE



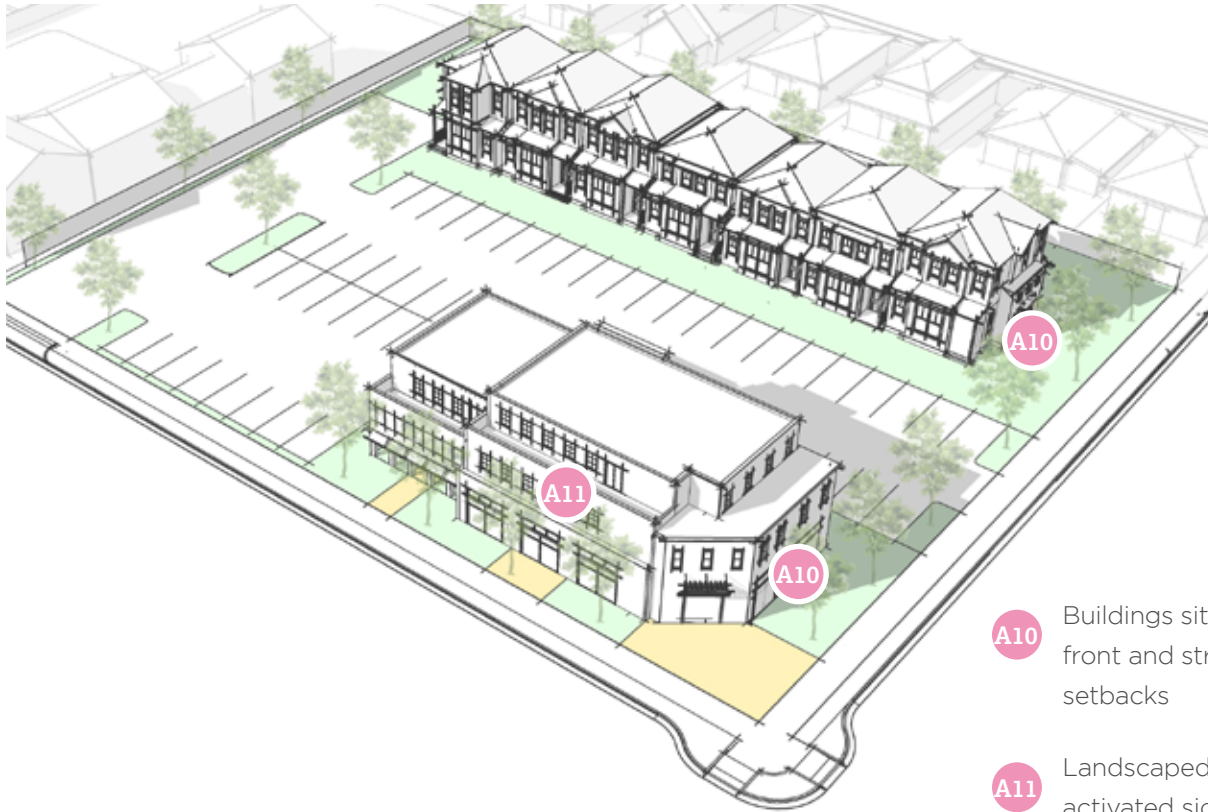
A7. Building Placement. Prioritize placement of commercial buildings along the edge of sidewalk to activate the pedestrian realm, especially along Main Streets and Active Connectors. Residential structures may be most appropriate along the rear or side of the site.

A8. Mixed-Use Compatibility. Design and locate service entries, loading areas, and trash areas associated with commercial uses so they minimize conflicts with residential uses located on site.

A9. Parking Location. Locate parking for on-site commercial uses at the center of the site, allowing the parking to provide a buffer from on-site residential uses and maximize shared parking opportunities between residential and commercial uses. Dedicated private residential parking areas should be located in a private area away from public commercial parking.



A. SITE PLANNING - HORIZONTAL MIXED USE



- A10** Buildings sited toward front and street side setbacks
- A11** Landscaped and activated sidewalk along commercial frontage

A10. Building Setbacks. Site buildings close to the required setback, unless a greater distance is being used to enhance the public realm (outdoor retail, plaza, etc.).

See 13.10.334(A) for mixed-use setback requirements.

A11. Sidewalk Activation. Ensure that buildings with high pedestrian traffic uses (retail, restaurant, commercial services, community-serving uses, or other active uses) face public streets and engage the sidewalk to create an active and enjoyable pedestrian environment. Maximize opportunities for temporary and permanent retail uses along sidewalks fronting Main Street and Active Connectors.



A. SITE PLANNING - RESIDENTIAL USE CONSIDERATIONS



Vertical Mixed Use



Horizontal Mixed Use

A12. Residential Location. In vertical mixed-use developments, locate residential uses on the upper floors above ground floor retail or office. In horizontal mixed-use developments, locate residential uses along Local Residential Streets or at the rear of the site to provide visual privacy and complement existing residential uses.

A13. Residential Spaces. Place active residential spaces such as entrance lobbies, recreation spaces, and amenity areas along public streets.

A14. Floor Height. For development flexibility, consider designing ground floor to have a floor-to-floor height of 10 to 14 feet, with a minimum subsequent floor(s) height of 9 to 10 feet.

A15. Utilities - Accessibility. Ensure that utilities are conveniently located and accessible from tenant spaces but screened from the street and other pedestrian areas.

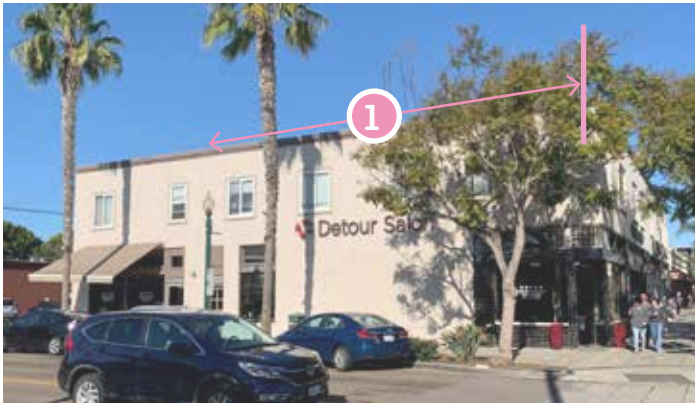
See SCCC 13.11.070(C)(1) for utility design requirements.

- 1** Upper-floor residential
- 2** Residential structures detached from commercial structures

- Plaza/Open Space
- Landscaping/Open Space
- Parking/Drive
- Property Line



A. SITE PLANNING - COMMERCIAL USE CONSIDERATIONS



1 45'-60' depth 2 15' ground floor height



A16. Commercial Use Location. Place retail spaces and office entry lobbies and meeting spaces along active street frontages.

See SCCC 13.10.334(C) for ground floor commercial use requirements along Main Streets, Active Connectors and Multimodal Corridors.

A17. Ground-Floor Height. For development flexibility, consider providing ground floor minimum floor-to-floor height of 15 feet to best support retail and office uses.

A18. Office Depth. Encourage ground floor office space in a mixed-use building to have a depth of between 45 and 60 feet. Where possible, multiple smaller offices should be created in favor of a single large office space.

A19. Retail Depth. Encourage ground floor retail uses in a mixed-use building to have a depth of at least 45 feet. Where possible, encourage 60 foot depths to accommodate a wider range of tenants, especially food tenants.

A20. Pop-Up Retail. Provide small pop-up retail spaces where the minimum depth for commercial uses is not possible.

B. BUILDING DESIGN

B1. Step Backs. Step back at least 50% of third floor exterior walls an additional 10 feet from the minimum required setback to break up building bulk, especially abutting non-commercial parcels. In no case should a third story be stepped back less than the first and second stories

See SCCC 13.10.333 for third story setback requirements abutting non-commercial parcels.

B2. Blank Walls. Discourage any unarticulated/blank building wall that exceeds 10 feet in length. Specifically encourage building articulation associated with entrances, building projections or recesses, doorway and window trim, and other details that provide architectural design interest.

Different methods can be employed, including varying wall planes, heights, contrasting materials and colors, awnings, canopies, and arcades.

Enhance visual interest by incorporating architectural relief, architectural detail, or landscaping.

B3. Entrances. Provide multiple commercial and residential entrances into buildings, particularly into ground-floor uses.



B. BUILDING DESIGN



B4. Ground-Floor Building

Transparency. Transparent windows or doors for ground floor commercial spaces are encouraged. Ground floor transparency should offer views into the building for at least 60 percent of the building's length along primary and secondary frontages. Position windows for visibility by both pedestrians and motorists at street level in order to create interest in commercial activities and improve safety.



B5. Expansion into Sidewalks.

Encourage doors or sliding windows that enable ground-floor restaurants and retail to expand into outdoor amenity zone areas along publicly-accessible sidewalks with appropriate permits and while meeting County Design Criteria and maintaining a sidewalk pedestrian zone for unobstructed travel.



B. BUILDING DESIGN

B6. Design Consistency. Provide visual interest and design continuity throughout all sections of the project - including residential and commercial sections - through similar architectural styles, materials, colors, and other treatments.

B7. Storefront Width. Reduce the perceived size of larger buildings to maintain pedestrian scale and rhythm. Consider limiting the width of building bays to maximum 50 feet.

B8. Signage. Signage should be located and scaled so it can be read and accessible to motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists as appropriate. Signage and other advertisement displays and installations should be primarily affixed to commercial portions of the project.

See SCCC 13.10.581 for sign design requirements.

B9. Adaptive Reuse. Encourage the adaptive reuse of older buildings. Encourage historical buildings to maintain important façade or architectural features during retrofits and expansion projects. Similarly, development of buildings next to historic or culturally significant buildings should respect the architectural character of existing historical buildings.

See SCCC 16.42 for historic preservation requirements.



C. OPEN SPACE



C1. Commercial Open Space. Where space allows, integrate public plazas into the design of commercial portions of mixed-use projects, creating large activity zones.

See also Open Space guidelines in Chapter 4, Commercial Guidelines.

C2. Residential Open Space. Provide a total of at least 50 square feet of private and/or common open space per dwelling in mixed-use projects. Common open spaces should have a minimum dimension of 15 feet. Private open spaces should have a minimum dimension of six feet.

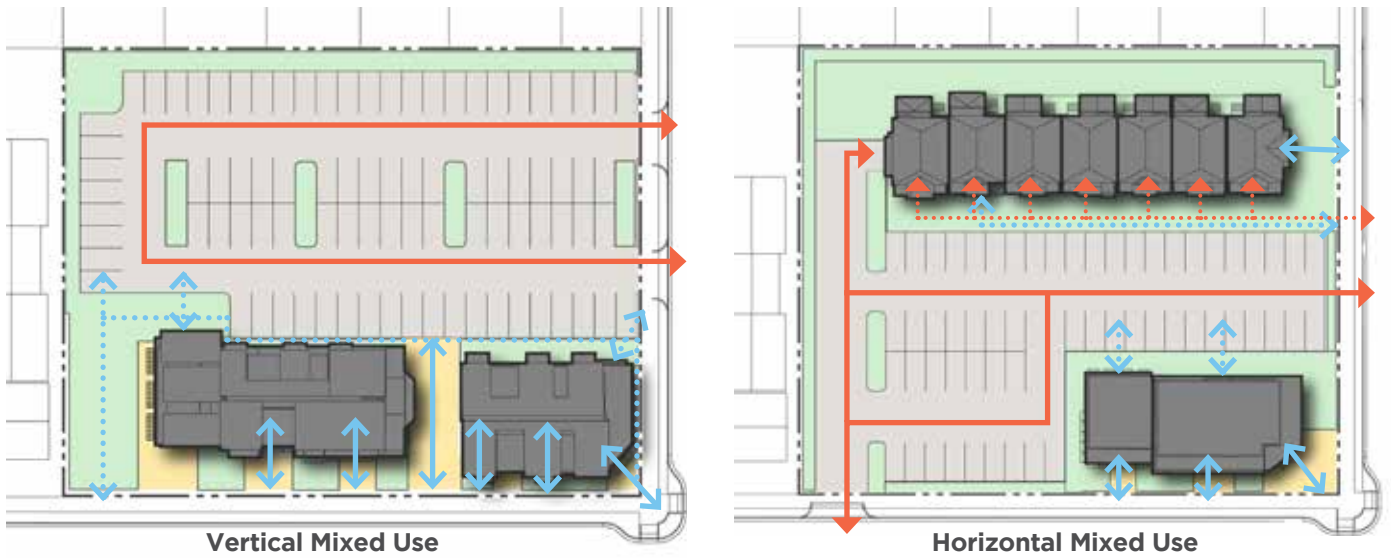
In some cases, it may be appropriate to locate common open spaces along street frontages adjacent to commercial uses and make these open spaces available to the public.

See also Open Space guidelines in Chapter 3, Multifamily Residential Guidelines. However, note that minimum required residential open space for mixed-use projects is less than that for multifamily projects due to the combination of uses on site

See SCCC 13.10.334(A) for mixed-use open space requirements.



D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING



Circulation

- Primary Pedestrian Access
- Secondary Pedestrian Access
- Primary Vehicle Access
- Secondary Vehicle Access

Open Spaces

- Plaza/Open Space
- Landscaping/Open Space
- Parking/Drive
- Property Line

D1. Shared Parking. Maximize opportunities for shared parking between residential and commercial uses that have parking demand at different times of day, to reduce the overall parcel footprint devoted to parking.

See SCCC 13.16.070(B) for shared parking standards.

D2. Curb Cuts. Minimize pedestrian and vehicle conflicts by limiting the number of curb cuts to a maximum of two per project if possible.

See County Design Criteria for curb cut design requirements.

D3. Well Connected Spaces. Link different commercial, residential, and open space areas with internal pathways.



D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING



D4. Parking Location. Provide vehicle drop-off areas and limited short term, retail-friendly teaser parking along sidewalks. The remainder of the parking should be behind the building or in underground or structured parking.

See SCCC 13.16 and County Design Criteria for vehicular parking design requirements.



D5. Screening. Screen surface parking located adjacent to roadways with a decorative wall, hedge, trellis, or landscaping. Also screen surface parking from residential neighborhoods to reduce the visual impact of large parking areas.

See SCCC 13.16.060 and SCCC 13.11.070(D) for parking screening requirements.



D6. Bicycle Parking. Provide convenient and secure exterior bicycle parking adjacent to commercial building entrances. Provide convenient and secure indoor bicycle parking for residents. Whenever possible, bicycle parking areas should be covered and clearly visible to site users.

See SCCC 13.16.040 for bicycle parking design requirements.

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06

WORKPLACE FLEX GUIDELINES

Contents

- Purpose and Applicability
- Workplace Flex Design Goals
 - A. Site Planning
 - B. Building Design
 - C. Open Space
 - D. Access, Circulation and Parking



06 WORKPLACE FLEX

PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

The following design guidelines are intended to inform the scale, character and features of workplace flex projects in Santa Cruz County.

The Workplace Flex (C3) zone district provides for employment centers with a flexible mix of office, retail, and light industrial land uses as well as other ancillary uses to meet the needs of businesses and workers. The Workplace Flex Design Guidelines encourage flexibility and innovation in realizing developments that can accommodate workplace functions such as offices, sales, research and development, light assembly, and shipping and distribution. The guidelines are crafted to ensure that development and site improvements result in functional, attractive, sustainable, and context sensitive projects with an innovative mix of land uses.

These guidelines provide ideas and best practices

for well-designed projects, and should be used in conjunction with the County's General Plan, County Code, and Design Criteria for streets and frontages. In cases where design guidelines are related to quantitative requirements, links to relevant standards are provided.

Specific development standards and appropriate design guidelines for workplace flex projects may depend on the street type of the parcel where the project is located. Workplace flex developments may be appropriate along Multimodal Corridors and Active Connectors, as well as frontage roads and other places with easy highway access for light industrial operations.

Workplace flex projects should follow both Chapter 2: Overarching Design Guidelines and the guidelines provided in this chapter.

WORKPLACE FLEX DESIGN GOALS

- 1 Provide for a range of commercial uses with flexibly-designed spaces for multiple business types and changing business needs over time.
- 2 Reuse and repurpose underutilized parcels and buildings along transportation corridors into employment centers and community destinations.
- 3 Minimize noise and sound impacts to residential areas by providing landscape buffers and other design elements.
- 4 Create well designed common open and built spaces that offer amenities to both workers and visitors to the workplace flex development.
- 5 Design to encourage workers to walk, bike and take transit to employment centers from nearby commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods.

A. SITE PLANNING



- A1** Buildings oriented toward primary frontage
- A2** Larger setbacks along primary frontage to accommodate activity zone
- A3** Centrally located flexible open space
- A4** Parking does not dominate the building frontage

- Plaza/Open Space
- Parking/Drive
- Landscaping/Open Space
- Property Line

A1. Building Placement. Place buildings close to frontages. Encourage buildings along Active Connectors and Multimodal Corridors to enhance the pedestrian experience and add visual interest.

A2. Building Setbacks. Site buildings at the minimum required setback, unless a greater distance is being used to accommodate an activity zone or create a buffer necessary to mitigate air and noise impacts.

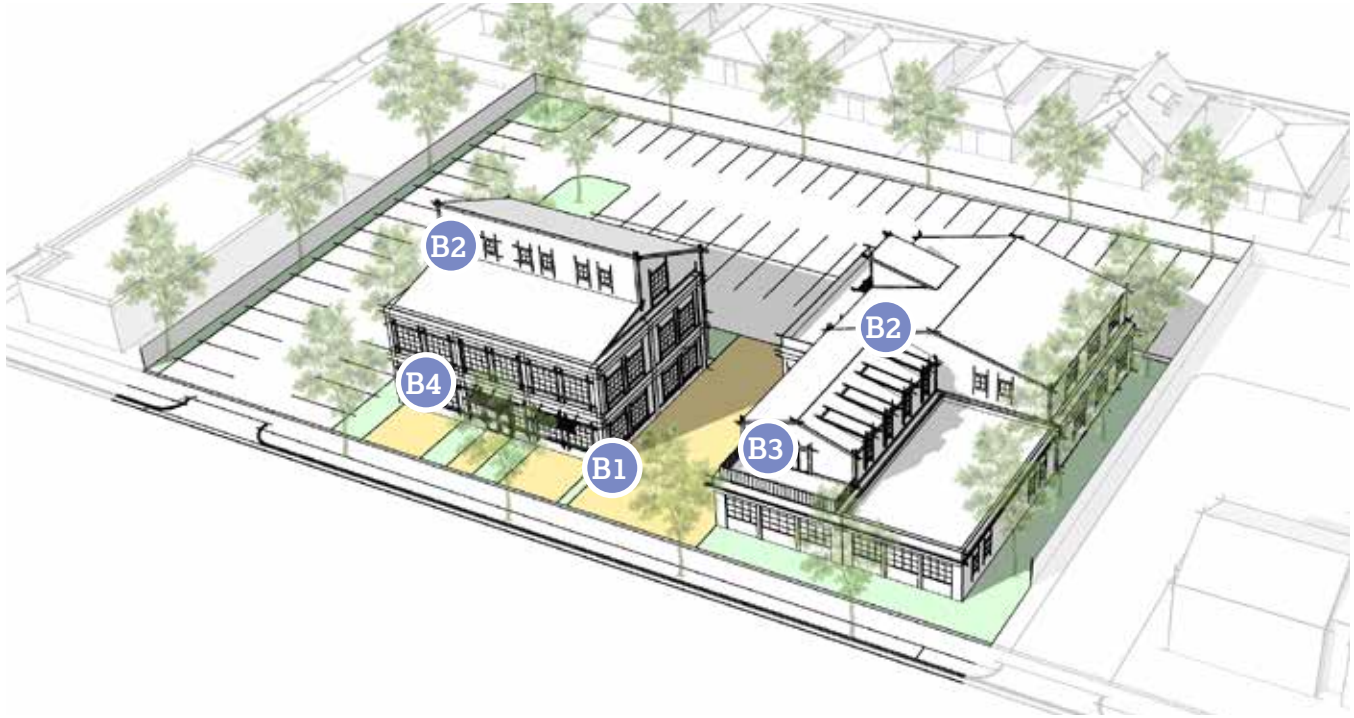
See SCCC 13.10.333 for commercial setback requirements.

A3. Public Gathering Places. Create centrally-located common open spaces that are interconnected with a network of pedestrian paths.

A4. Parking Location. Encourage parking to be located in central or rear portions of the site, allowing the building to activate street frontages and minimizing views of parking areas from public streets. Building frontages should not face parking areas when the option to front a public street is available.

See SCCC 13.16 and County Design Criteria for parking design requirements.

B. BUILDING DESIGN



B1. Setback Variation. Consider utilizing varying setbacks and stepbacks on street edge when fronting along pedestrian-oriented streets such as Active Connectors, in order to avoid long wall expanses and maintain human scale.

B2. Roofline Variation. Consider changing roof heights and designs and dormers to create variation in the height profile and further enhance visual interest.

B3. Building Modulation. Create variation in building mass along building faces to diminish the sense of bulk.

B4. Floor Height. Require a minimum floor-to-ceiling height of 15 feet and allow a maximum building height of 50 feet to accommodate a flexible mix of commercial uses.

See SCCC 13.10.333 for workplace flex development standards.

- B1** Two buildings use different setbacks
- B2** Roofline and height changes
- B3** Modulating features along facades
- B4** 15 foot floor-to-ceiling height minimum

B. BUILDING DESIGN

B5. Facade Articulation. Provide an array of facade treatments such as trim, awnings, bay windows, balconies, and other architectural elements to create variation along the building facade.



B6. Frontage Design. Locate the front doors to shops, eating establishments, offices, art studios and cultural destinations in a visible location from the adjacent streetscape..



B7. Building Step Backs. Where needed, setback upper floor building mass in order to create better scale with the adjacent uses and provide solar access to common open spaces.

See SCCC 13.10.333 for commercial third story setback requirements.



B. BUILDING DESIGN



B8. Design Consistency. Ensure visual interest and design continuity throughout all sections of the project - including light industrial, office, and retail spaces - through similar architectural styles, materials, colors, and other treatments. Contemporary or industrial styles may be more appropriate than traditional styles.



B9. Fenestration. Where possible, place ground floor and upper floor windows and openings along all exposed edges of the building face with particular attention to frontages.



B10. Materials and Colors. Use a variety of colors and materials to de-emphasize the mass and bulkiness of buildings and add visual interest.

C. OPEN SPACE

C1. Open Space Design. Landscape open spaces with trees and plantings to serve the diverse needs of workers. Ensure paving, planting and other landscape elements are coordinated with the design of the building and site.

See SCCC 13.11.070(D) for landscaping design requirements.



C2. Amenities. Provide seating, tables and shade elements.



C3. Evenly Distributed. On large sites, evenly distribute open spaces to be within walking distance of different employment centers. Program essential amenities such as seating and lighting at these locations.



D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING



D1. Pedestrian Connections. Design mid-block pedestrian connections with clear and well-design pedestrian paths.

See SCCC 13.16 and County Design Criteria for pedestrian path design requirements.



D2. Frontage Width. Provide a street frontage of at least 60 feet in order to accommodate larger buildings and truck access required for light industrial land uses.

See SCCC 13.10.333(B) for minimum parcel frontage requirements.



D3. Parking Design. Parking should be located in rear or central portions of the site and hidden from views from adjacent streets. Where possible, parking should be shared among different uses.

See SCCC 13.16.060 for vehicle parking design standards.



D4. Bike Parking. Distribute and locate bike parking in high visibility areas, preferably close to building entrances.

See SCCC 13.16.040 for vehicle parking design standards.

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APPENDIX A: Street Zone Standards

Contents

Purpose and Applicability

Street Zones Overview

Street Zone Standards: Multimodal Corridor

Street Zone Standards: Active Connector

Street Zone Standards: Main Street

Street Zone Standards: Local Residential Street



NATURAL FOOD

P
1

A STREET ZONE STANDARDS

PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

This appendix outlines regulatory street zone standards for new developments. The vehicle travel zone, bicycle zone, and parking zone are roadway zones that work together to ensure safe and efficient roadway travel. The pedestrian amenity zone, pedestrian sidewalk zone and activity zone are sidewalk public spaces that front a building and allow for safe and pleasant pedestrian travel and social gathering.

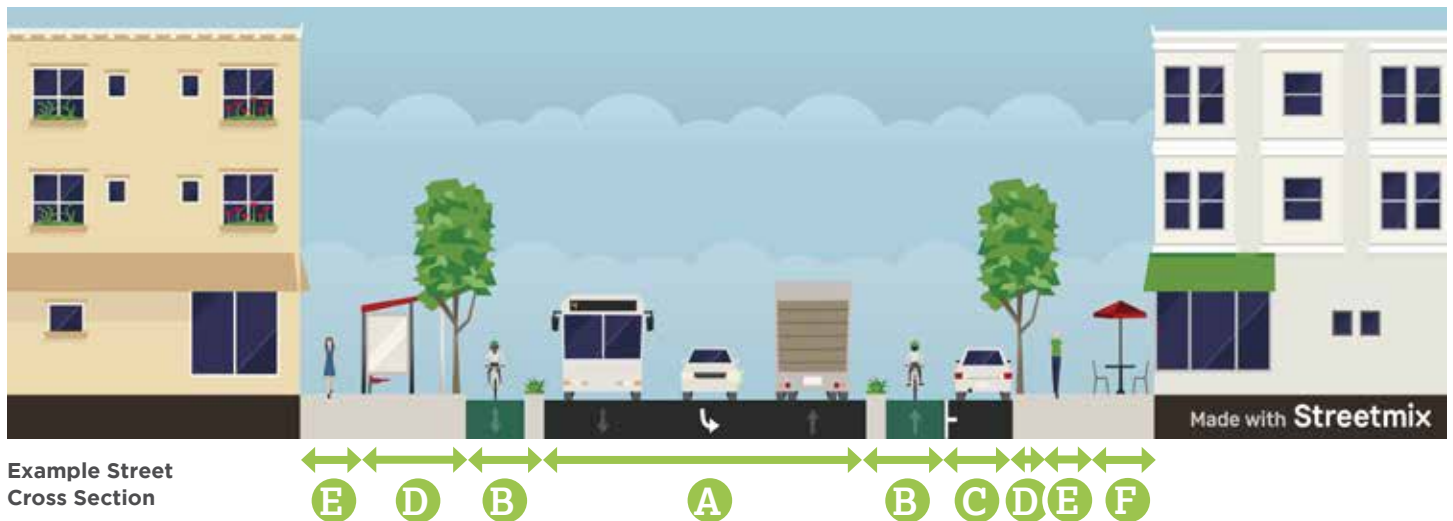
Street zone standards are provided for Multimodal Corridors, Active Connectors, Main Streets, and Local Residential Streets. These four street types are part of Santa Cruz County's layered transportation

network which prioritizes certain user types on specific streets. Street types are designated by the Access and Mobility chapter of the Santa Cruz County General Plan. Street zone standards are different for each street type based on the users prioritized for that street type and the associated street frontages and streetscape character.

The street zone standards are crafted to ensure that the resulting public realm is functional, attractive, and supportive of the County's sustainability goals. These standards should be used in conjunction with the General Plan, County Code, and Design Criteria for streets and frontages.



Street Zones Overview



Example Street Cross Section

Street Zones

- A** The **Vehicle Travel Zone** provides standard-width lanes for cars and wider lanes for shared use by cars and buses. Turn lanes and traffic lights are provided as needed to avoid traffic congestion in this zone.
- The **Bicycle Zone** provides designated bicycle travel facilities in the form of either Class I facilities (separated bicycle paths), Class II facilities (designated bicycle lanes), or Class IV facilities (protected bikeways as shown in the illustration). On roadways where there is not space to accommodate a bicycle zone, there may be Class III bicycle facilities (bicycle routes where signage is used to indicate that bicycles and vehicles should share the vehicle travel zone).
- B** The **Bicycle Zone** provides designated bicycle travel facilities in the form of either Class I facilities (separated bicycle paths), Class II facilities (designated bicycle lanes), or Class IV facilities (protected bikeways as shown in the illustration). On roadways where there is not space to accommodate a bicycle zone, there may be Class III bicycle facilities (bicycle routes where signage is used to indicate that bicycles and vehicles should share the vehicle travel zone).
- C** The **Parking Zone** contains street parking for vehicles. It may be appropriate for parking to be parallel or diagonal to the building frontages. In some cases, it may be appropriate to allocate space for drop-off zones or parklets, or remove street parking from one or both sides of the street.
- The **Pedestrian Amenity Zone** contains landscaping (trees and planting) and street infrastructure such as lighting, parking meters, and utilities. In some cases, the Amenity Zone may also contain seating and art elements. This design of this zone must incorporate accessibility and shall not block access to bus stops, on-street parking, intersections and street crossings.
- D** The **Pedestrian Amenity Zone** contains landscaping (trees and planting) and street infrastructure such as lighting, parking meters, and utilities. In some cases, the Amenity Zone may also contain seating and art elements. This design of this zone must incorporate accessibility and shall not block access to bus stops, on-street parking, intersections and street crossings.
- E** The **Pedestrian Sidewalk Zone** is a contiguous uninterrupted pathway allowing flow of pedestrian movement and full accessibility along the sidewalk.
- The **Activity Zone** provides space for activities such as outdoor dining in front of commercial uses and a landscaped buffer for ground floor residential uses. The Activity Zone must be designed to incorporate accessibility requirements.
- F** The **Activity Zone** provides space for activities such as outdoor dining in front of commercial uses and a landscaped buffer for ground floor residential uses. The Activity Zone must be designed to incorporate accessibility requirements.

Building and Site Design Related to Street Zones

The pedestrian amenity zone, pedestrian sidewalk zone, and activity zone may be located within the right of way or within public property, dependent on property line location. In areas where the sidewalk width is constrained, buildings should be set back far enough from the street to accommodate these zones, and dedication of these zones may be offered to the County. Other aspects of building and site design should also relate to the street type and street zone configuration, such as upper floor setbacks, ground floor height and transparency, pedestrian and vehicular access, and open space design.



Multimodal Corridor Objective

Multimodal Corridors like Soquel Drive and Capitola Road prioritize transit, specifically bus rapid transit (BRT) and other long distance modes of travel. To encourage more people to walk, bike and take transit, new developments along multimodal corridors allow a wide variety of uses that are complimented with pedestrian and transit friendly design elements.

Multimodal Corridor Street Zone Standards Table

Vehicular Zone	11'-0" maximum width inside vehicle travel lanes and 12'-0" maximum width outside vehicle/bus travel lanes	A
Bicycle Zone	6'-0" minimum width buffered or 8'-0" unbuffered Class II bike lanes	B
Parking Zone	8'-0" maximum width when parking zone is provided. Parking may be removed to prioritize bicycle and transit infrastructure (left side of cross section illustration) or drop-off zones (right side of cross section illustration).	C
Pedestrian Amenity Zone	4'-0" minimum width, 5'-0" minimum width for transit shelter	D
Pedestrian Sidewalk Zone	5'-0" - 6'-0" clear pathway	E
Activity Zone	Varies; activity zones are not always appropriate along multimodal corridors.	F

Land Use Considerations

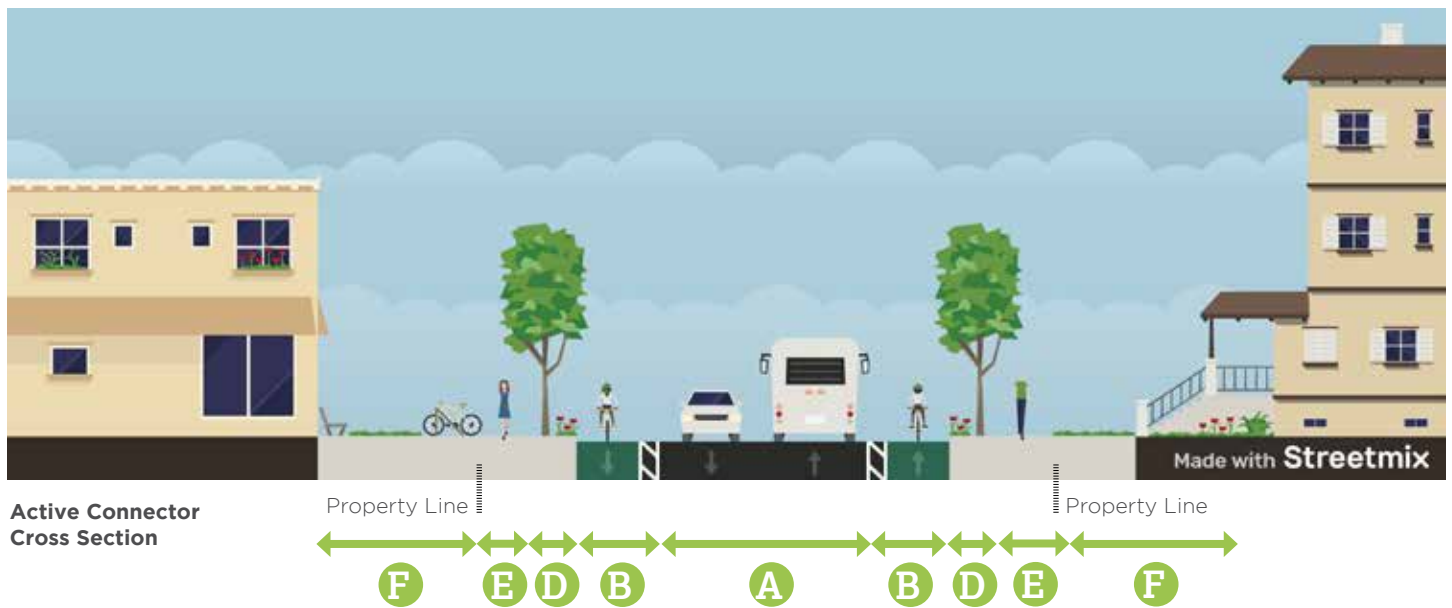
Along Multimodal Corridors, high building intensity residential and commercial land uses are appropriate, including compact housing options, mixed-use development, and diverse employment opportunities to support more frequent and convenient transit service.

Building and Site Design Considerations

Existing Multimodal Corridor right of ways in Santa Cruz County are not wide enough to accommodate pedestrian and activity zones. Therefore, regardless of minimum setback requirements for a given zone district, buildings should be set back far enough from property lines to accommodate pedestrian amenity, pedestrian sidewalk, and activity zones as appropriate, as shown in the cross section.

New buildings should be multiple stories. Ground floor spaces should contribute to activation of the streetscape. Building entries should be located along the corridor street frontage. Vehicular access should be via two-way driveways, designed at least 100 feet apart if possible to avoid interruptions to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel along the corridor. Vehicular access from side roads should be provided on corner lots.

Street Zone Standards: Active Connector



Active Connector Objective

Active Connectors like Brommer Street prioritize walking, biking and transit. New infill developments allow a wide variety of uses that are complimented with safe, comfortable and dedicated pedestrian and bike facilities that provide critical first and last mile connections to transit, neighborhoods, and major destinations.

Active Connector Street Standards Table

Vehicular Zone	10'-0" maximum width travel lanes (1 lane in each direction)	A
Bicycle Zone	6'-0" minimum width buffered or unbuffered Class II bike lanes	B
Parking Zone	Parking zone is not recommended for active connectors	C
Pedestrian Amenity Zone	4'-0" minimum width	D
Pedestrian Sidewalk Zone	6'-0" minimum clear pathway	E
Activity Zone	Varies; activity zones are not required on Active Connectors	F

Land Use Considerations

Along Active Connectors where pedestrians and bicycles are prioritized, encourage land uses to facilitate neighborhood trips and "last mile" commutes. Diverse housing options, neighborhood commercial and personal services, and small office uses are appropriate, as well as community facilities such as schools, religious institutions and parks.

Building and Site Design Considerations

Existing Active Connector right of ways in Santa Cruz County are generally wide enough to accommodate pedestrian zones but not activity zones. Within front yard setback areas, property owners may choose to provide private activity zones using design elements such as landscaping and porches, as illustrated in the right side of the cross section; or public activity zones using design elements such as bike racks and benches, as illustrated in the left side of the cross section.

New buildings should be multiple stories. Especially at street corners, consider ground floor spaces that contribute to activation of the streetscape. Building entries should be located along the corridor street frontage. Vehicular access should be via two-way driveways, designed at least 100 feet apart if possible to avoid interruptions to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel along the corridor. Vehicular access from side roads should be provided on corner lots.



Main Street Cross Section



Main Street Objective

Main Streets like Portola Drive are pedestrian oriented destination streets. To encourage more people to walk, bike, shop and socialize, new developments allow a wide variety of uses with a strong emphasis of street-activating ground floor uses. Street trees, landscaping and wide sidewalks with activity zones help strengthen the destination character.

Street Standards Table

Vehicular Zone	10'-0" maximum width travel lanes	A
Bicycle Zone	5'-0" minimum width Class II bike lanes	B
Parking Zone	8'-0" maximum width. Parking may be removed to prioritize pedestrian amenities such as drop-off zones, parklets (right side of cross section illustration), and food trucks (left side of cross section illustration).	C
Pedestrian Amenity Zone	4'-0" minimum width	D
Pedestrian Sidewalk Zone	6'-0" - 10'-0" clear pathway	E
Activity Zone	10'-0" - 15'-0" width	F

Land Use Considerations

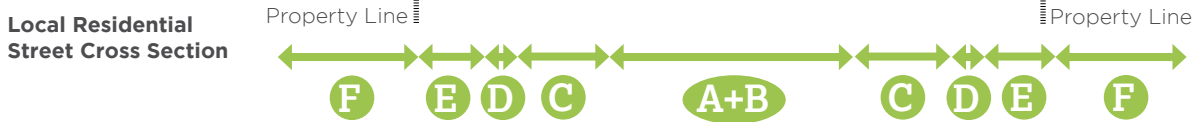
Along Main Streets where pedestrians are prioritized, encourage ground floor retail, restaurant, and other "active" commercial land uses that serve to enliven pedestrian activity. Encourage infill mixed-use development to increase building intensity and support economic vitality of Main Street businesses.

Building and Site Design Considerations

Existing Main Street right of ways in Santa Cruz County are generally not wide enough to accommodate the extra wide sidewalks required to support the pedestrian and activity zones that are important to the success of this street type. Buildings should be set back from property lines to accommodate these zones as needed. In some cases, design elements such as second floor overhangs or arcade buildings (left side of cross section illustration) can serve to provide activity zone space within the building footprint.

New buildings should be multiple stories and ground floor spaces should have large window areas and entrances that activate of the streetscape. Vehicular access should be via two-way driveways, designed at least 100 feet apart if possible to avoid interruptions to transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel along the corridor. Vehicular access from side roads should be provided on corner lots.

Street Zone Standards: Local Residential Street



Objective

Local Residential Streets like Felt Street provide access to residential neighborhoods. These low-speed and low-traffic streets are shared by pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles and allow for a wide mix of residential developments including both single and multifamily development uses.

Street Standards Table

Vehicular Zone	10'-0" maximum width travel lanes (1 lane in each direction)	A
Bicycle Zone	Shared Class III bikeways	B
Parking Zone	8'-0" maximum width	C
Pedestrian Amenity Zone	2'-0" minimum width	D
Pedestrian Sidewalk Zone	6'-0" minimum clear pathway	E
Activity Zone	10'-0" minimum width for multifamily developments	F

Land Use Considerations

Along Local Residential Streets, encourage a variety of single and multifamily residential development, including infill development that respects the surrounding neighborhood character.

Building and Site Design Considerations

Typical existing Local Residential Street right of ways in Santa Cruz County are wide enough to accommodate vehicular and parking roadway zones and pedestrian amenity and sidewalk zones. Within front yard setback areas, property owners may choose to provide activity zones using design elements such as landscaping and porches, as illustrated in the cross section. Activity zones should be provided for multifamily developments.

Vehicular access should be via one or two-way driveways. Street parking should also be provided to conveniently accommodate guests and deliveries.



APPENDIX B:

Design Principles for the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor

Contents

I. Introduction

- ◆ How to Use This Appendix

II. Vision

III. Design Principles for the Private Realm

- ◆ Overarching Private Realm Design Principles
- ◆ Distinct Character Areas
- ◆ Style and Character
- ◆ Desirable Uses
- ◆ On-Site Parking
- ◆ Internal Circulation and Access

IV. Design Principles for the Public Realm

- ◆ Green Street Features
- ◆ Public Art

B Design Principles for the Pleasure Point

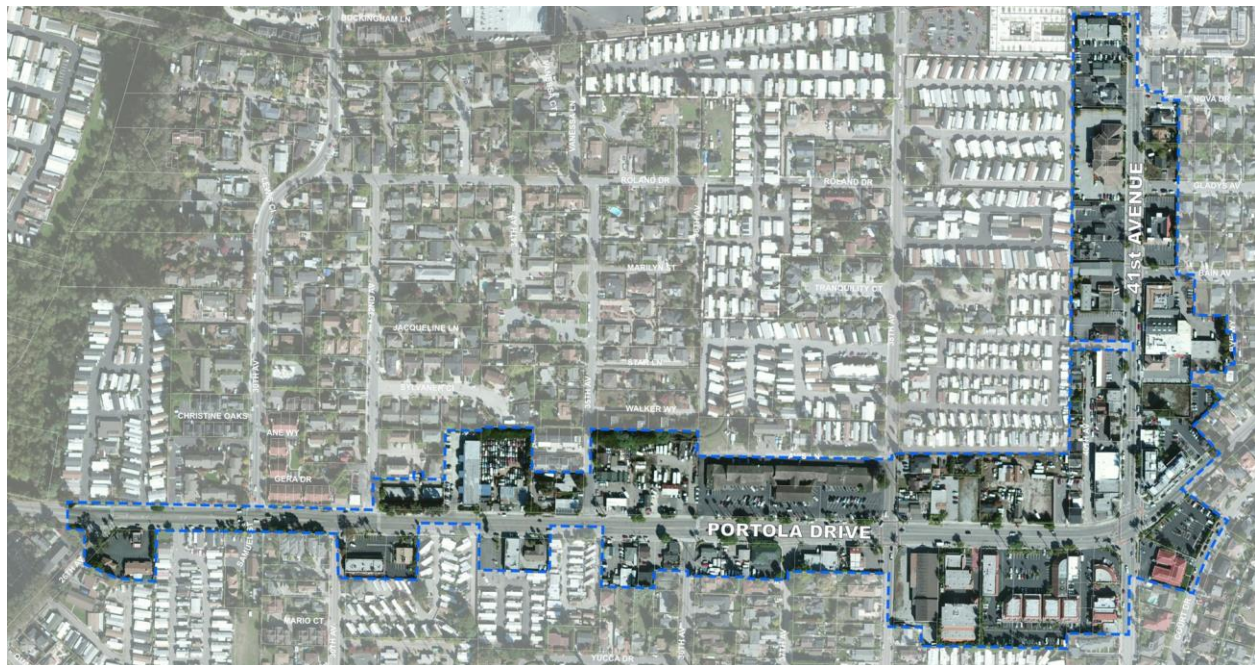
Commercial Corridor

I. INTRODUCTION

Bordered by the ocean to the south and Portola Drive to the north, and located west of 41st Avenue, Pleasure Point is a unique community with a strong connection to the ocean and surf culture, outdoor living, and with vibrant local businesses and eclectic architecture. Seeing an increased interest in developing the commercial area of Pleasure Point, in 2018 the County initiated a community planning effort focused on the commercial corridor (Corridor) along Portola Drive between 26th Avenue and 41st Avenue, and including lower 41st Avenue north of Portola Drive to the border with Capitola (see map below).



East Cliff Drive in Pleasure Point



The Pleasure Point Commercial and Mixed-Use corridor includes both Portola Drive and lower 41st Avenue, as shown in the figure above.

Working collaboratively with the community through a series of public workshops, the county developed a Planning Study (Study) with a vision and guiding design principles for the Corridor. The Study can be viewed [here](#):

<https://sccoplanning.com/PlanningHome/SustainabilityPlanning/PleasurePointCommercialCorridor.aspx>.

This Appendix incorporates the vision, private realm design principles, and public realm design principles from the Study that apply to private development. Other public realm design principles have been incorporated into the Santa Cruz County General Plan. Quantitative standards provided in the Study have been codified in the Santa Cruz County Code as special standards for commercially zoned sites in the Pleasure Point commercial corridor.

This Appendix, along with General Plan policies and County Code standards, ensures that future development contributes to the community vision for the Corridor as a vibrant, active, locally focused community where people shop, dine, live, relax, and interact, that is safe and convenient for all modes of travel, with varied architectural styles, attainable workforce housing, and interesting open spaces.



Lower 41st Avenue

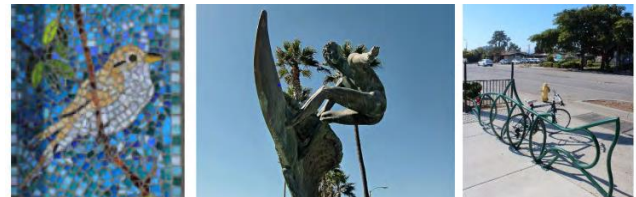
The Study also included streetscape concepts that provided various options for reconfiguring the Portola

Drive streetscape and roadway. These concepts are being further evaluated and will be considered in future planning efforts.

HOW TO USE THIS APPENDIX

This Appendix applies to all new development and redevelopment projects on parcels within the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor, as identified in the County [GISWeb \(santacruzcounty.us\)](http://GISWeb.santacruzcounty.us). The Vision (Part II of the Appendix), Private Realm Design Principles (Part III), and Public Realm Design Principles (Part IV) provide guidance for site planning and building design, addressing design considerations such as architectural style and community character and compatibility, active street frontages, transitions to residential parcels, on-site parking, circulation and access, public art and green street features.

The Private Realm Design Principles in Part III of the Appendix also identify distinct character areas within the corridor and desired land uses within these areas that should be considered when establishing new uses in the corridor.



This Appendix is to be used in conjunction with the Santa Cruz County General Plan, County Code, Design Criteria, and Design Guidelines. As the Design Principles for the Corridor address several aspects of building and site design comprehensively, only the following sections of the Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines apply to development within the Corridor:

- Chapter 2, Overarching Design Guidelines
- Appendix A, Street Zone Standards

Where conflicts exist between the Design Principles for the Corridor and the applicable sections of the Santa Cruz County Design Guidelines, the Design Principles for the Corridor will take precedence.

II. VISION

Identifying a shared vision for the future of the Pleasure Point Commercial Corridor was a key step in the community planning process. Each of the design principles are consistent with, and help implement, the Vision.

Vision Statement

This Vision Statement is key for describing how future public and private improvements shall meet community desires:

“Pleasure Point is a vibrant and eclectic place where people shop, dine, live, relax, and interact. A place where people can walk safely along wide and active sidewalks, ride bikes and skateboards on safe and comfortable bicycle lanes, drive cars and access transit on streets designed for all modes of transportation. A place characterized by buildings with varied architectural styles and sizes, compatible with local character, interesting open spaces, and with attainable workforce housing. Where parking is convenient but does not dominate the area. An active, locally-focused social and commercial center where the neighborhoods on the north and south sides of Portola Drive meet.”



Pleasure Point Street Fair, Portola Avenue

III. PRIVATE REALM GUIDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following guiding design principles apply to new and remodeled development projects on privately owned land in the study area. The “**private realm**” includes all uses located on private property, such as buildings, on-site parking, plazas and landscaping. While each parcel has its own unique size, shape and design constraints, the following design principles apply to all new private development along the Pleasure Point Commercial and Mixed-Use Corridor.

Purpose: To facilitate review and design of development projects so that each project contributes to the Vision for the area.

OVERARCHING PRIVATE REALM DESIGN PRINCIPLES



A. Support local economic vitality by encouraging a mix of businesses and uses that complement and support the surrounding residential neighborhoods, encouraging the inclusion of workforce housing, and discouraging new hotels.



B. Require quality architecture and materials that reflect the eclectic character of Pleasure Point. This includes supporting a variety of materials, colors and styles. However, large expanses of stucco on front and side facades are discouraged in the Pleasure Point community.



C. Encourage publicly-accessible plazas and landscaping to be incorporated into the site design of new development projects in order to improve aesthetics, create more shade, increase pedestrian activity and promote sustainability through the application of on-site prefiltration of stormwater.



D. Require private parking to be located at the rear of parcels where feasible so it is not fronting Portola Drive. This will allow buildings to be closer to street and allow for a more active pedestrian environment.



E. Minimize the appearance of building height by locating taller portions of buildings in the center of parcels and requiring articulated frontages.



F. Require buildings in the Corridor to respect the existing height limit with no exceptions and minimize the appearance of height through setbacks, upper story step-backs and articulated frontages.



G. Encourage the transition of underutilized properties and auto-oriented properties on the north side of Portola Drive west of 36th Avenue to mixed-use and residential development, with zoning and development standards that support attainable housing (including smaller units suitable for seniors and singles).



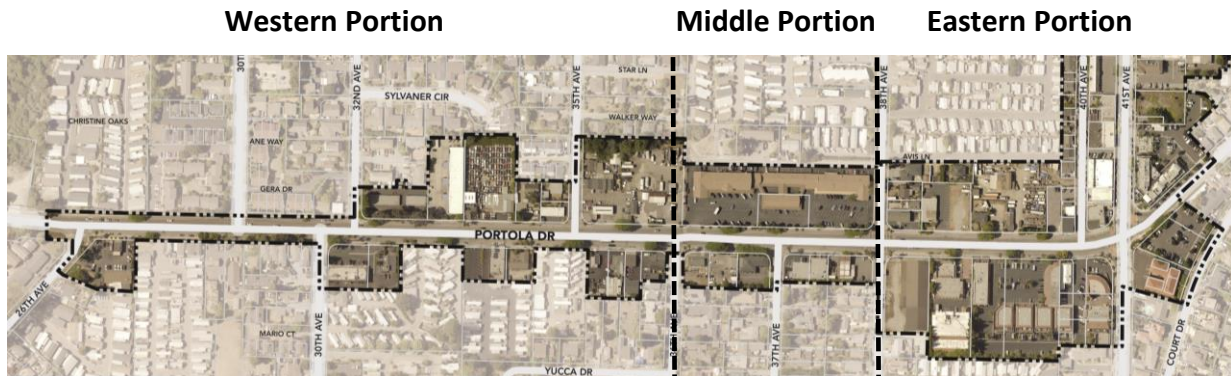
H. Support the transition of underutilized parcels east of 36th Avenue to predominantly commercial uses, with some residential units predominantly on the upper floors.



I. Encourage publicly accessible art on privately-owned parcels though the installation of murals, creatively designed bicycle racks and benches, and other decorative and functional art, especially within sites east of 36th Avenue.

DISTINCT CHARACTER AREAS

The Pleasure Point Commercial and Mixed-Use Corridor has a range of different lot sizes and existing uses, and the character of the area changes as people move along the corridor. In order to implement the Vision Statement while also considering variations in lot sizes and uses, the corridor is divided into three portions as shown below.



Western Portion (26th Avenue to 36th Avenue)

A residentially-oriented mixed-use area with some smaller-scale commercial uses. Ground floor residential is encouraged to replace auto-oriented uses to strengthen the residential character. Retail and office uses can be located on intermittent corners and other viable locations.



Middle Portion (36th Avenue to 38th Avenue)

A commercial mixed-use area that builds on existing local shops, restaurants, services and other destinations. New mixed-use projects are possible with residential uses and ground floor retail (some sites may be suited to horizontal mixed-use with some ground floor residential). There is a potential for micro-retail and small-scale dining kiosks within existing parking lots. West of 36th Avenue, the north side of Portola Drive transitions to a residential mixed-use area.



Eastern Portion (38th Avenue to 41st Avenue)

A commercial mixed-use area that builds on the existing mix of retail, restaurant and other commercial uses. New mixed-use projects are possible with residential uses on upper floors. Continue the diversity of uses and architectural character present on lower 41st Avenue.





STYLE AND CHARACTER

Intent: To protect and enhance the eclectic character of the Pleasure Point community by ensuring that future developments and improvements reflect the unique nature of the area.

1. **Architecture.** Require varied architectural styles and the use of natural materials that support the character of Pleasure Point. Discourage large expanses of stucco on front and side facades, corporate or franchise-specific architecture, or other styles that do not reflect the Pleasure Point community.
2. **Maximum Building Size.** Encourage small or fine-grain buildings that provide space for small local “mom & pop” stores, cafes and restaurants. Prohibit individual tenant spaces larger than 20,000 square feet from locating in the corridor to support local businesses and discourage larger chain or “big box” stores.
3. **Building Scale Character/Street Interface.** Require new buildings to be of an appropriate scale for the corridor, with building articulation and/or upper story step-backs from public streets.
4. **Massing.** Locate shorter (one to two story) buildings closer to Portola Drive and any three-story elements towards the middle of a parcel or site to reduce the feel of building mass from the street.
5. **Height.** Respect the existing height limit for any new building along the corridor.
6. **Setbacks.** Ensure variable building setbacks:
 - a. **Minimum:** Enough distance from face of curb to allow for a 10-foot sidewalk fronting Portola Drive and 6-foot sidewalks on side streets. Encourage larger sidewalks fronting Portola Drive when located in front of restaurants, cafes or similar uses to encourage outdoor dining.
 - b. **Maximum:** 20 feet from the edge of the sidewalk to any new building with ground floor commercial, restaurant or office uses fronting Portola Drive, or 30 feet from the edge of the sidewalk for any new building with ground floor residential uses fronting Portola Drive or for outdoor cafes. Allow outdoor

seating/active patio areas within setbacks in front of commercial and restaurant uses. Building setbacks within the allowable range shall be appropriate for specific conditions, including building height, the proposed use, and allowances for landscaping.

- 7. Neighborhood Transitions.** Ensure that commercial buildings along Portola Drive provide a minimum 30-foot buffer between the building and the property line adjoining a residentially zoned parcel. Encourage landscaping, plazas, mini-parks or parking in these buffer areas. Ensure new residential buildings along Portola Drive provide a minimum 20-foot buffer between the back of the building and the property line facing existing residential parcels. An additional 5-foot setback from the property line shall apply to the third story of any commercial or residential building adjoining a residential lot.
- 8. Step-backs.** Step back the third floor of all commercial and mixed-use buildings an additional 10 feet from the first two floors along Portola Drive to break up building bulk and maintain the eclectic character of the corridor.
- 9. Articulated Frontages.** Ensure that new buildings and projects include articulated frontages with alternating setbacks, building planes, and varied colors and materials to break up bulk and create more pedestrian interest.
- 10. Active Street Frontages.** Encourage active street frontages, new alleys and active use of alleys along the corridor that incorporate features including outdoor seating, landscaping, and decorative and functional art such as decorative bike racks, fences, and murals. These areas should enhance the experience for pedestrians and bicyclists while encouraging people to linger and visit local businesses. They should also have varied and articulated front facades with extensive window glazing at the ground floor, to support an interesting and comfortable pedestrian streetscape.
- 11. Activated Corners.** Encourage the repurposing of corners in existing large parking lots for more active uses, such as flower stands, micro-cafes, and public art, to assist in activating the corridor and neighborhood, while maintaining onsite parking requirements.
- 12. Plazas.** Encourage new plazas along the corridor that have a blend of hardscape and natural landscaping to create areas of social gathering and interest.
- 13. Pop-Up Events.** Encourage temporary pop-up events and joint use of private parking lots to activate them.
- 14. Mountain Views.** Ensure that new or substantially remodeled projects on the north side of Portola Drive continue to provide views of the Santa Cruz mountains through the site from the sidewalk on the south side of Portola Drive. Corridor views may be acceptable.



DESIRABLE USES

Intent: To ensure the future economic vitality of the area by supporting local businesses and encouraging a mix of commercial, office, public/quasi-public, and residential uses that complement the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

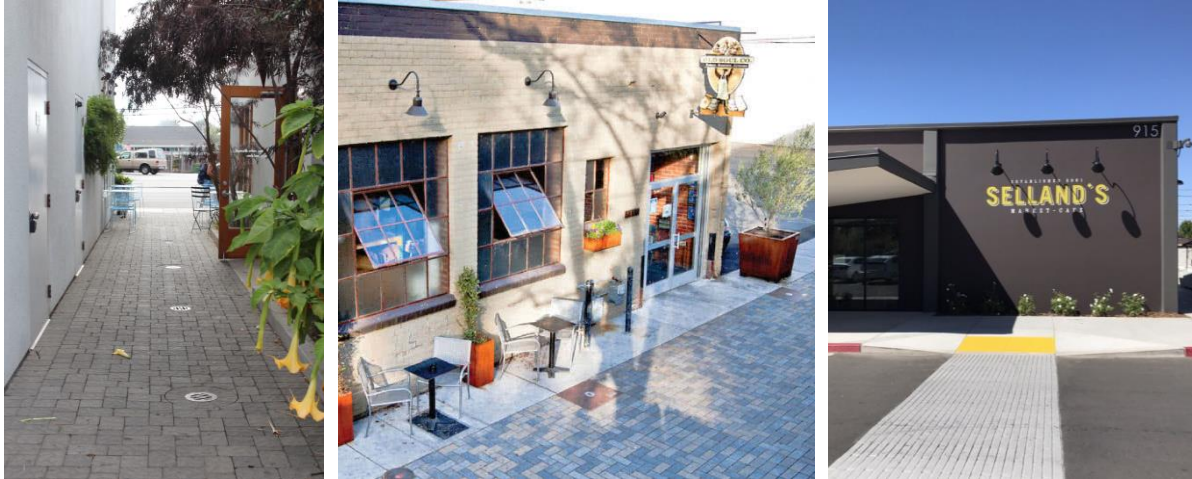
1. **Vertical Mixed-Use.** Encourage vertical mixed-use projects where the ground floor includes commercial and/or restaurant uses, and upper floor(s) contain commercial, office or residential uses. Vertical mixed use is the preferred type within the eastern portion between 38th Avenue and 41st Avenue.
2. **Horizontal Mixed-Use.** Encourage horizontal mixed-use projects on larger parcels where a variety of uses can be in different buildings on the same site. When utilizing horizontal mixed-use, orient commercial, restaurant and office uses closer to Portola Drive, and residential uses either set back from the street or located towards the sides, middle or rear of the project. Public/quasi-public uses such as community centers may also be incorporated.
3. **Workforce Housing.** Encourage new multi-family residential units consisting of attached housing developed at a density sufficient to support smaller dwellings, especially studios and one-bedroom units, that are more affordable by design to Santa Cruz residents and workers.
4. **Hotels.** Discourage new hotels within the corridor, which are less favored by the community.



ON-SITE PARKING

Intent: To avoid negative impacts on surrounding residential neighborhoods and existing businesses, new or substantially remodeled projects should provide adequate on-site parking that is convenient for patrons and residents while also ensuring adequate space for enlivening uses on the street and convenient access for bicyclists and pedestrians.

1. **Amount.** New projects in the study area shall comply with parking standards in the Santa Cruz County Code.
2. **Tandem Parking.** Tandem parking is allowed for single and multi-family uses in the Corridor.
3. **Location.** Encourage the efficient layout of on-site parking to reduce the overall amount of parking coverage on the site and limit the number of unique ingress and egress points from the site to either Portola Drive or side streets.
4. **Rear Parking.** Require new developments to locate on-site parking towards the rear of the site whenever feasible. Parking is allowed within setback and buffer areas when there are appropriate edge treatments to limit impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods.
5. **Stormwater Capture.** Encourage the use of permeable pavers, bio-swales and other methods in parking areas to capture onsite stormwater and pre-treat it before it goes into the public storm drain system.



INTERNAL CIRCULATION AND ACCESS

Intent: To ensure new projects prevent circulation conflicts and enhance connectivity through improved site access, cross easements, enhanced safety and reduced delivery truck conflicts.

1. **Driveways.** Design driveways and alley access points to improve site access, enhance safety and reduce vehicle conflicts with all modes of travel. Encourage shared driveways.
2. **Long Blocks.** Provide safe and comfortable pedestrian paths along driveways and alleys to help “break up” larger blocks and allow for a more pedestrian scale along the corridor.
3. **Cross Easement Coordination.** Encourage property owners to create connections behind and between adjacent parcels by adding new easements, and to better coordinate existing easements to provide more alley access and site access through the back side or middle of larger blocks or sites. Encourage vehicular access between parcels to reduce on-street congestion. Specifically, when Assessor’s Parcel Number 032-041-68 is redeveloped, a vehicular cross easement is desired to extend Avis Lane through the parcel to connect with 35th Avenue on the western boundary of the site.
4. **Truck Delivery Coordination.** Encourage businesses to schedule truck deliveries during off-peak daylight hours (between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM) so trucks do not conflict with commute times or create unwanted nighttime noise impacts for surrounding neighborhoods. Encourage deliveries and pick-ups for Portola Drive businesses to occur on Portola Drive rather than side streets.

IV. PUBLIC REALM GUIDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES



GREEN STREET FEATURES

Intent: To create and maintain an integrated green street system that allows for stormwater runoff capture and filtration as part of the overall streetscape design of Portola Drive.

1. **Stormwater Planters.** Install naturally drained, landscaped stormwater planters where possible, exploring the transition from piped to natural percolation and including these planters on sidewalks, medians, bulb-outs, quasi-public parks and plazas.
2. **Integration with Private Development.** Work with property and business owners to find creative ways to integrate private drainage/outflows with stormwater management systems located within the public realm.
3. **Permeable Paving.** Encourage the use of permeable paving materials or porous asphalt within the public realm along parking lanes.
4. **Plant Selection.** Use low-maintenance native or drought-tolerant plant species in streetscape landscaping to minimize water consumption and maintenance. Incorporate street trees that provide shade at regular intervals to improve the pedestrian experience and the scenic qualities of the corridor.

PUBLIC ART



Intent: To promote creativity and support the eclectic character of Pleasure Point through the placement of unique and functional public art.

1. **Location.** Display public art pieces at entry gateways, along Portola Drive, and on wide sidewalk spaces so they are highly visible and become iconic features for Pleasure Point.
2. **Style.** Create a cohesive series of art pieces either by theme, artist, style or materials and explore installation of artistically designed bicycle racks, trash receptacles, seating, lighting posts and utility boxes.
3. **Local Artists.** Explore opportunities for local artists to design, fabricate and install public art that reflects and promotes the surf and ocean culture of Pleasure Point.
4. **Dual Purpose.** Encourage art pieces that serve both an aesthetic and functional purpose, such as sculptural bicycle racks, trash receptacles, seating, lighting posts and utility boxes.
5. **Character and Style.** Encourage public art that reflects Pleasure Point's unique history and culture.