



CITY OF SANTA CLARA  
SINGLE-FAMILY AND DUPLEX RESIDENTIAL  
**DESIGN GUIDELINES**   
2014





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# Chapter **1** Purpose

## Introduction

The residential design guidelines contained in this document are intended to address issues such as:

- Neighborhood Compatibility;
- Two-story Home Design;
- Privacy Protection;
- Architectural Design; and
- Sustainability.

The Guidelines provide a basis for preserving the existing neighborhoods and to ensure that new homes and additions are compatible with the context of the neighborhood.

The intent of these Guidelines is to provide guidance for homeowners, architects, and designers when considering a new home, remodel, or addition to an existing residence. The Guidelines are intended to encourage the orderly and harmonious appearance of structures and properties; provide fair and equitable treatment to all applicants; maintain property values throughout the City; and encourage the physical development of the City as anticipated by the General Plan.

## Goals and Objectives

The Guidelines are performance standards intended to allow flexibility in design while meeting the objectives of 5.5 Neighborhood Compatibility and 5.5.2 Transition Goals and Policies sections of the City's General Plan. It is the objective of these Guidelines to provide a guiding set of design policies that:

- Preserve the neighborhood character by encouraging new developments that are compatible in scale and character with existing housing;
- Promote a sense of community and place;
- Promote increased property values through improved architectural design, which also encourages other neighborhood building upgrades;
- Protect the harmony and appearance of existing neighborhoods by discouraging inappropriate and out of scale designs;
- Maintain a reasonable level of privacy for neighbors by encouraging thoughtful planning and design that respects the existing built environment, and;
- Streamline the architectural review process by clearly communicating community expectations to property owners and their design professionals.

## Design Guidelines: Basic Principles

These Guidelines are formulated on five basic architectural and design principles. The Guidelines cannot anticipate all design situations or physical limitations and opportunities so basic principles can be used in addressing conditions not covered by the design guidelines.

1. Design structures to be compatible with adjacent homes and the neighborhood.
2. Architectural styles should be true to basic architectural form; not a blend of styles and features.
3. Architecture should improve the neighborhood (including streetscape and property values), not detract from its appeal.
4. All materials should be of a high quality and serve to enhance architectural styles.
5. Projects should serve to enhance the built and natural environments.

## Applicable Projects

These Guidelines apply to single family and duplex residential projects. This includes applications for new structures, first and second-story additions.

## Public Improvements

Projects that require improvements in the public right-of-way will be reviewed for compliance with City policies and objectives. The Architectural Committee and Planning Division staff will work with City Water and Sewer, Electric, Engineering, Public Works, and other City departments to achieve the most appropriate results.

These improvements include, but are not limited to, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, driveways, street trees and landscape improvements, and maintenance in the public right-of-way adjacent to the subject property. Placement and visual treatment of utility vaults, boxes and meters will be reviewed for aesthetic impacts upon the property.

## Historically Significant Properties

As required by the Santa Clara Certified Local Government program, the City has established a list of Architecturally or Historically Significant Properties which is included in Appendix 8.9 of the General Plan.

Architecturally or Historically Significant Properties refer to prehistoric and historic features, structures, sites, or properties that represent important aspects of the City's heritage. Historic Preservation policies outlined in the 2010-2035 General Plan strengthen the City's Historic Preservation Goals. A 100-foot radius, defined as the Area of Historic Sensitivity, is approximately equal to all properties abutting, across the street, and adjacent to abutting properties of a historic resource. Applications for projects involving remodel and additions of these eligible properties should adhere to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Applications for properties within 100 feet of an eligible structure should adhere to Historic Preservation Policies outlined in the General Plan.

# Chapter 2 Neighborhood Compatibility

## 2a. Development in Existing Neighborhoods

**Goal: To create compatible design with the neighborhood.**

The concept of neighborhood does not necessarily follow tract boundaries. There can sometimes be little to no discerning characteristics between residential tracts in the City. Tract boundaries also divide some of the City's blocks, sometimes resulting in homes of different architectural styles on the same block. The potential impacts of neighborhood design may therefore not always follow tract boundaries, especially with proposals for second-story additions that may border patio homes to the side or rear of a different tract.

### Defining Your Neighborhood

When designing an addition that may be visible from the street or new home, the focus should generally be on the design characteristics of neighboring homes on both sides of the street of that block. For homes in tracts containing patio homes, or in tracts that border patio homes to the side or rear in different tracts, one's "neighborhood" should be extended to include those patio homes, in the interest of privacy protection.

Features that typically define a neighborhood include the following:

- Architectural styles, features, materials, and decorative elements;
- Garage location, size, and treatment;
- Roof forms, materials, orientation, slope, eave heights, and overhangs;
- Second-floor mass and appearance as viewed from the street;
- Treatment and scale of entryway or focal point of front facade;
- Articulation of exterior wall;
- Window types, size, placement, and proportions;
- Front, side and rear yard setbacks, and;
- Landscaping and fencing.

Meeting the goal for compatibility does not mean that the design of a new or remodeled home must copy every architectural detail of the neighboring homes. However, proposed designs should maintain, reinforce, incorporate, and be consistent with the common architectural features, patterns, and forms found on homes in the neighborhood.

# Important Considerations

Typical characteristics of a single family home in Santa Clara include:

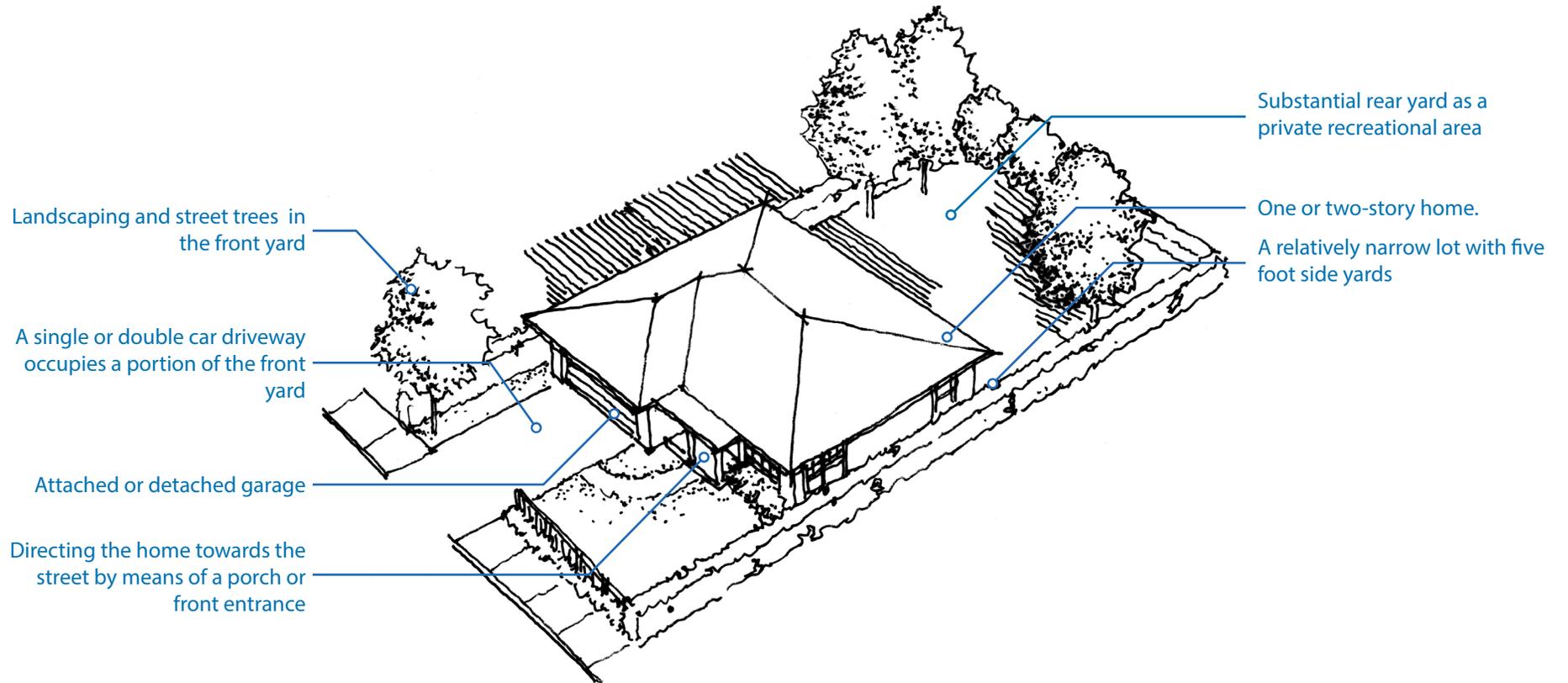


Figure 2.1 - Typical home in the City of Santa Clara

## 2b. Sensitive Design Solutions

**Goal: To create homes compatible with the neighborhood and maintain privacy.**

The following are specific guidelines for second-story additions. Special attention is devoted to second-story additions, as these project types have been the most challenging for the City and neighboring residents.

### Designing a Second-Story

While permitted by the Santa Clara City Code, second-story additions or new two-story homes, built in a predominantly single-story neighborhood, can be one of the most neighborhood sensitive and challenging situations. The design must pay special attention to neighborhood compatibility and privacy issues. Unless designed correctly, second-story additions can substantially change the scale and character of the neighborhood.

An application for a new two-story home next to a one-story home must be designed so it does not overshadow or dominate the one-story home by way of scale, proportion or massing, or unreasonably interfere or conflict with the privacy of neighbors.

Construction at or above the second-story should be carefully designed to minimize building massing, the placement of windows, balconies, and location of common living areas, in order to minimize potential impacts on adjacent properties. A proposed two-story design must demonstrate that it protects the privacy of neighbors.

# Important Considerations

## 1. Second-Floor Massing

- 1. The area of the second-floor should not exceed the common pattern of the neighborhood. For new second-stories in predominantly one-story neighborhoods, the second-floor area should not exceed approximately 66% of the first floor area (including the garage area). (Figure 2.2)
- 2. Unless two-story high walls are common in the neighborhood, maintain a roof segment between the first and second-floor walls for at least 50% of the building perimeter. Generally, these roof forms should be carried around building corners to provide visual continuity between adjacent house facades. In predominantly one-story neighborhoods, avoid two-story walls without intervening roof eaves on front elevations.
- 3. Second-floor ceiling heights should be minimized. If interior ceilings heights in excess of nine feet are desired, they should be achieved through the use of vaulted ceilings rather than increased wall height. (Figure 2.3)

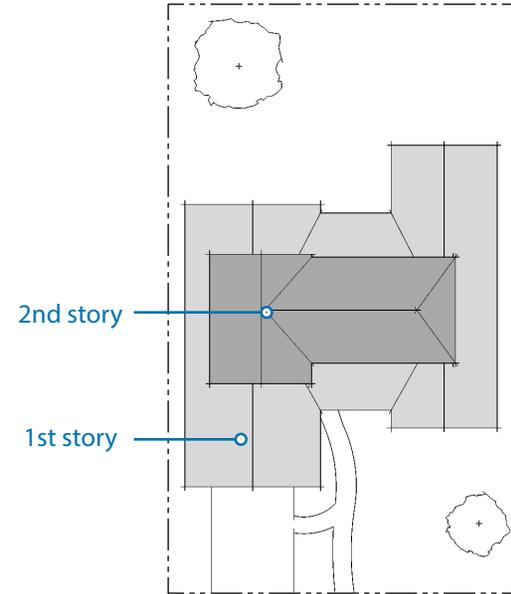


Figure 2.2 - Second-story addition is less than 66% of the first floor area.



Figure 2.3 - Vaulted Ceiling.

## 2. Walls

1. The front and side walls of the second-floor should be set back from the first floor to minimize mass and bulk. Second-floor areas should be set back at least five feet from the front wall of the first floor, and three to five feet from the side and rear walls of the first floor. (Figure 2.4)
2. For second-floors with an area greater than 35% of the ground floor area, setbacks of the second-floor should be greater than these minimums.
3. Avoid a bulky appearance when adding a second-story to the front facade. (Figure 2.5)

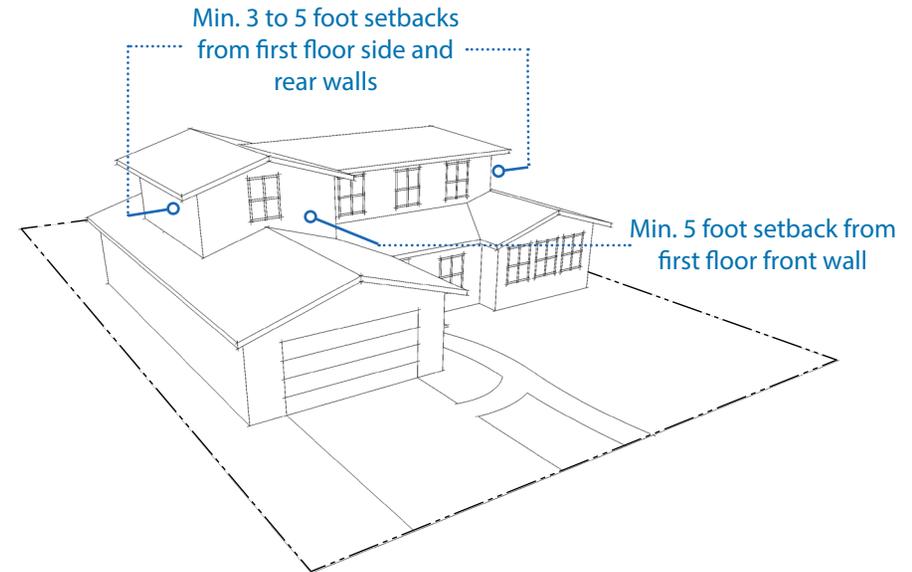


Figure 2.4 - Second-story addition setbacks are measured from first floor walls planes.



Figure 2.5a - Second story addition is adequately set back from the first floor and does not have a bulky appearance.

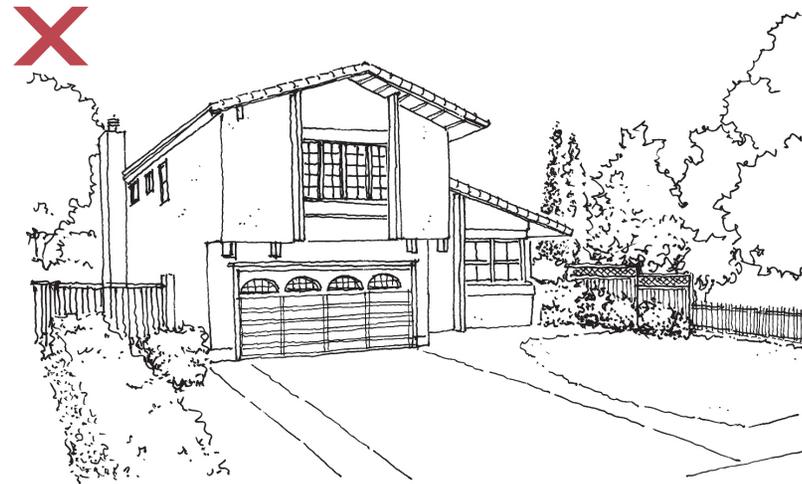


Figure 2.5b - Bulky second-story addition.

4. Provide horizontal insets and offsets of two feet deep by six feet wide minimum, for any second-floor walls of 25 feet in length or greater. These insets or offsets shall fall within setback requirements. (Figure 2.6)

### 3. Windows

1. Where proposals include second-floor side-facing windows located within 15 feet of a side property line, applicants are encouraged to raise the window sill level of these windows to a minimum of five feet above the finished floor. Other common design techniques include the use of clerestory or frosted windows. (Figure 2.7)
2. Larger second-floor windows should orient towards the front and rear. Second-floor windows on the sides of a home should be kept to the minimum building code size for light, ventilation, and emergency egress. Placement, design, and orientation of all windows and glass doors on the sides of the home should pay strong consideration towards privacy impacts. (Figure 2.8)
3. Avoid aligning side yard second-floor windows directly with windows on neighboring properties.

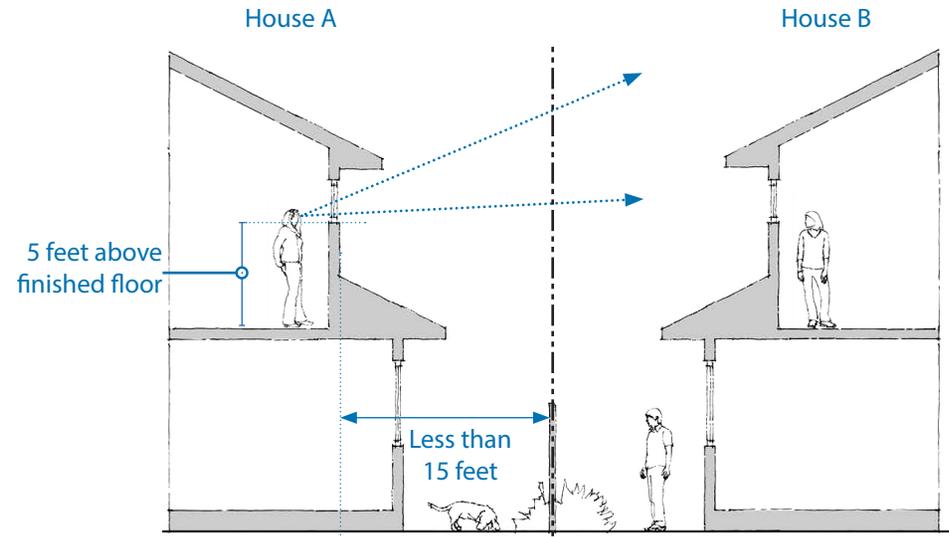


Figure 2.7 - Second-story windows on *House A* are raised at least five feet above the finished floor, reducing privacy impacts.

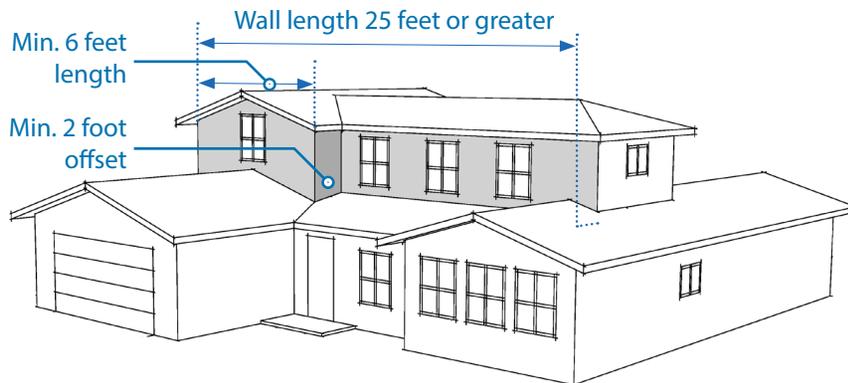


Figure 2.6 - Appropriate offset second-story walls.

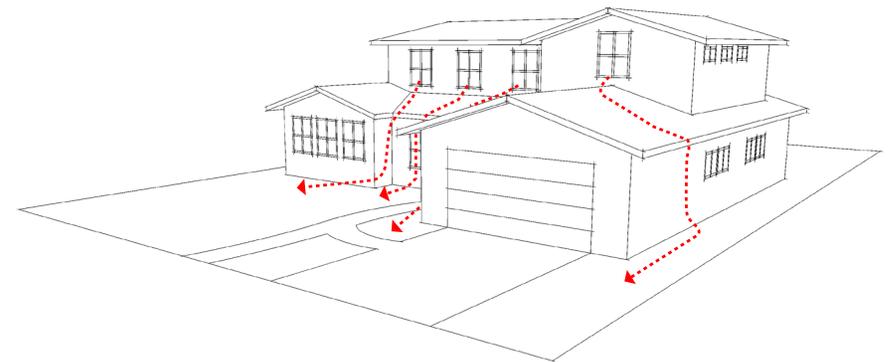


Figure 2.8 - Larger second-floor windows at the front provide emergency egress. Smaller second-floor windows on the sides provide privacy.

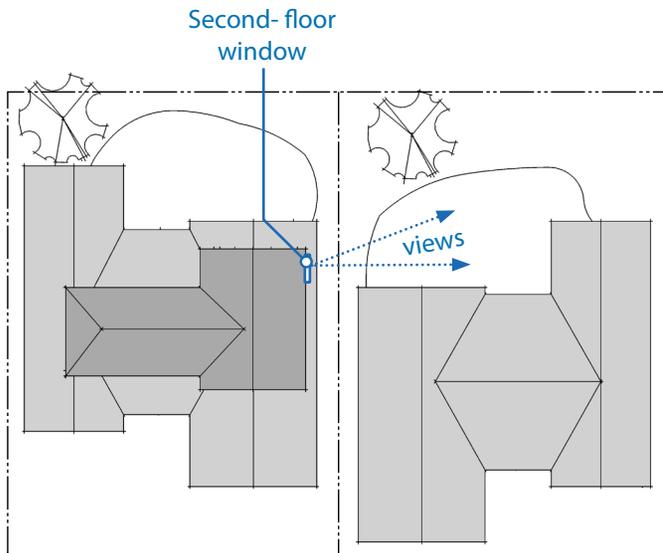


Figure 2.9 - Inappropriate second-story window with direct views into the neighboring yard.



Figure 2.10 - Trees and landscaping can block the line of sight into neighboring private spaces.

4. Whenever feasible and compatible with the architectural style, avoid window placement in locations that look directly into adjacent neighbor's space or active private yard spaces. (Figure 2.9)
5. On second-floor bathroom windows, use obscure glass where possible and/or substitute a skylight.
6. Install landscaping that may grow to block the line of sight into neighboring side and rear yard whenever feasible. This includes planting trees, and adding landscaping on trellises or arbors that meet Zoning requirements. (Figure 2.10)

#### 4. Roof Forms

1. Unless existing roof forms consist of gable roofs, hipped roofs over the second-floor are preferred as they minimize the visual mass of the building. (Figure 2.11)
2. Gable or shed roofs with a shallow pitch should be used in Mackay or Eichler style homes. (See Figure 2.14 on page 11)



Figure 2.11 - Second-story addition with hipped roof.

## 2c. Patio Homes

**Goal: To create homes compatible with the neighborhood and maintain privacy.**

Some homes in the City were constructed in the Eichler or mid-century modern patio home style. The Mackay and Fairmede tracts in the City contain notable examples of entire neighborhoods of homes built in this style.

Unlike most other ranch style tract homes in the City, these patio homes were originally designed with large expanses of walls with minimum ornamentation, interior atria, low-sloped roofs with large overhangs, exposed roof beam ends, and simple wall planes (glass or vertical groove wood siding). Typically these walls were oriented toward enclosed front, side, and rear yard spaces. Since the living areas in these homes are more exposed to the outdoor yards, privacy impacts from alterations to homes on neighboring properties are more likely to occur than in other residential areas of the City.

Designing a new or remodel project in neighborhoods of patio homes requires additional considerations for the privacy of nearby residents. Particular attention to privacy impacts must be considered for a new two-story home or addition. New project designs for homes that border these patio homes should incorporate a similar modern design style.

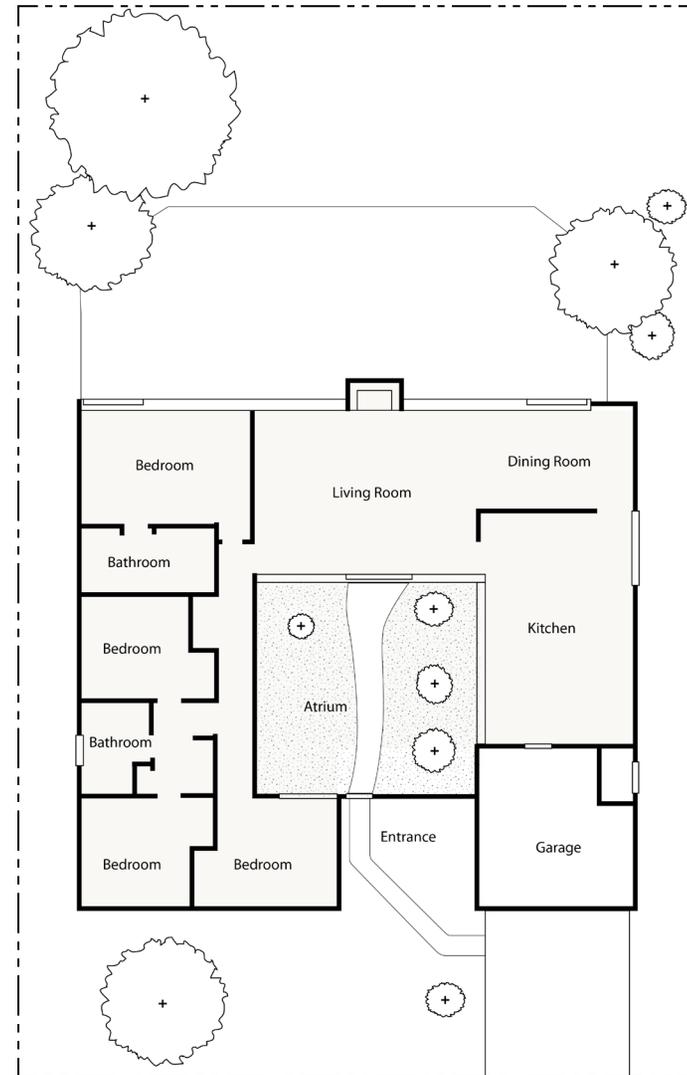


Figure 2.12 - A typical patio style floorplan having a central atrium.

## Important Considerations

1. Incorporate architectural features, materials, finishes, and forms that derive from the existing patio homes to help integrate the home into the neighborhood.
2. Use low slope gable or shed roofs with a maximum pitch of 3:12. Flat roof styles are also acceptable.
3. Use siding, exposed beams, and heavy fascia boards found in the original home designs.
4. Avoid the use and mixture of material from homes of different architectural styles such as divided light windows, fan-light windows, or raised panel doors.

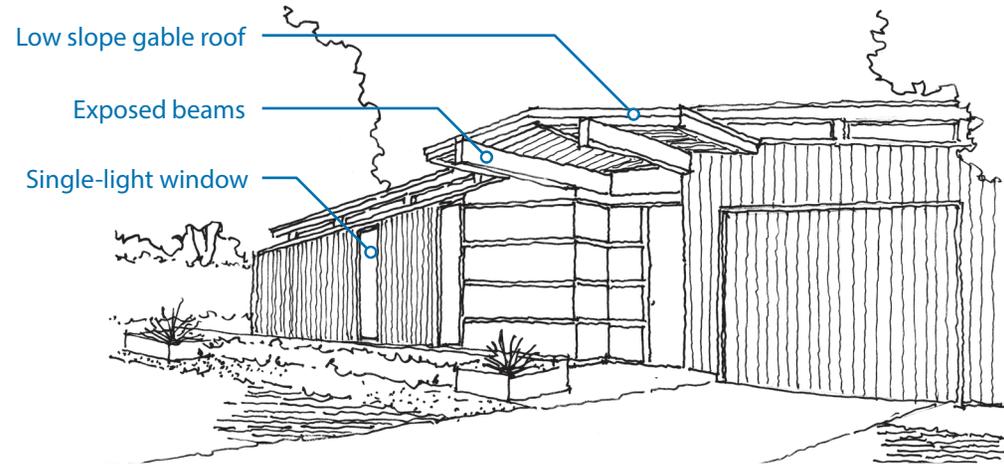


Figure 2.13 - Typical patio home features.

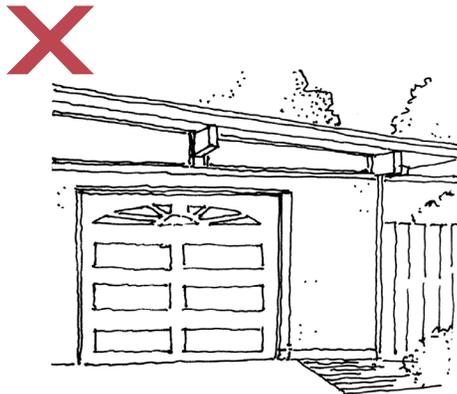


Figure 2.14a - Inappropriate garage design.



Figure 2.14b - Inappropriate roof shape.

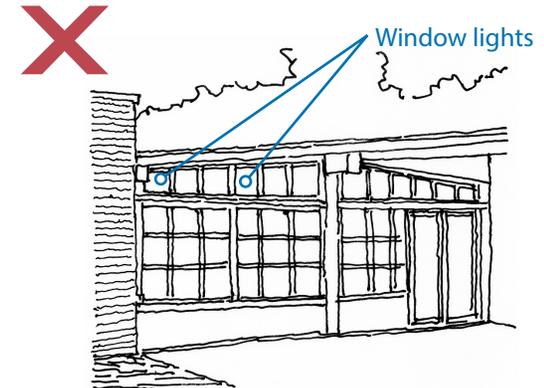


Figure 2.14c - Inappropriate amount of window lights.

# Important Considerations

## 1. Second-Story Additions

1. Patio homes located within well-preserved tracts are encouraged to be maintained as single-story homes to preserve their historical and contextual integrity. The addition of a second story within Patio/Eichler tracts is highly discouraged.
2. An increase in lot coverage should be considered as a way to encourage ground-floor and single-story additions.
3. For second-floor walls, minimize the number and size of windows facing the side and rear yards of a neighboring patio home.
4. Avoid the use of second-floor decks and balconies in neighborhoods of patio homes.
5. Use landscape-screening materials to block the line of sight into neighboring side and rear yards whenever feasible.
6. New second-floor or additions to Eichler type homes or other low roof pitch homes should use roof styles, slopes, overhang depths of approximately two feet, and other detailing that is compatible with the home's existing style.

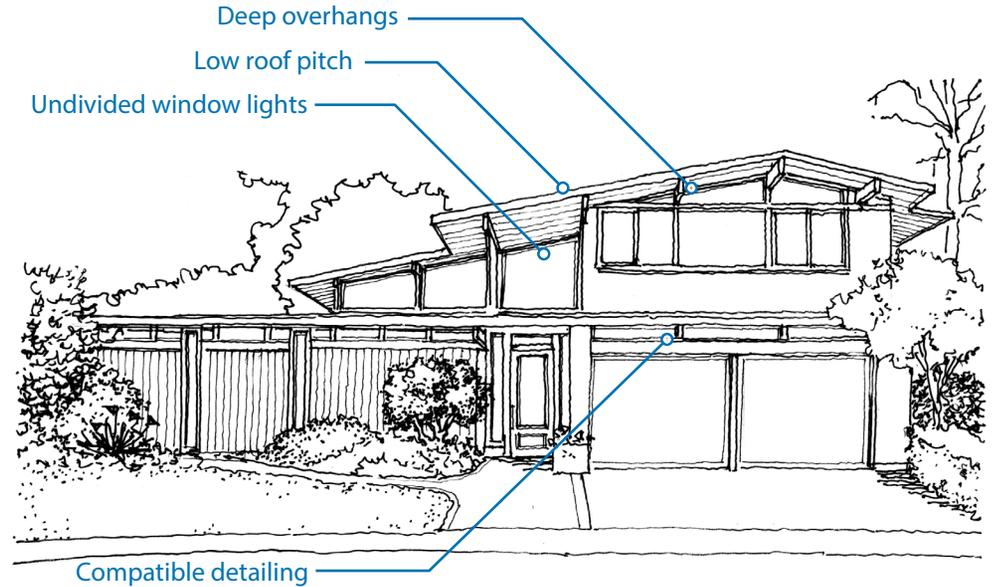


Figure 2.15 - Compatible second-story addition to patio home. Such additions are discouraged in well-preserved Eichler/patio home tracts.

# Chapter 3 Architectural Details

Use of architectural styles found in the neighborhood is encouraged to promote compatibility between existing and new or remodeled homes in the neighborhood. New construction should be compatible with the style or design of existing structures on the site and with surrounding properties and neighborhood character. The design should address the functional characteristics of the site and the relationship of the proposal with the surrounding properties and street.

## 3a. New Homes, Remodels and Additions

**Goal: Harmonize with the existing neighborhood.**

### Important Considerations

#### 1. Massing and Scale

1. Building height and bulk should be appropriate relative to one and two-story homes within the neighborhood. (Figure 3.1)
2. Offset the front and side walls of the second-story to avoid a massive, boxy, or bulky design.
3. Second-floor areas should be set back at least five feet from the front wall of the first floor, and three to five feet from the side and rear walls of the first floor.
4. Simple second-story pop-ups are discouraged.



Figure 3.1 - Homes with compatible scale massing.



Figure 3.2a - Original Home, representative of the neighborhood architectural style.



Figure 3.2b - Second-story addition designed from the original architectural form and appropriate for the neighborhood.

## 2. Architectural Style

1. While specific architectural styles are not regulated, the architectural features of the proposed design should be true to the architectural form and appropriate for the neighborhood. (Figure 3.2)
2. Architectural features should be adequate and appropriate for the size of the building and should not be overstated.

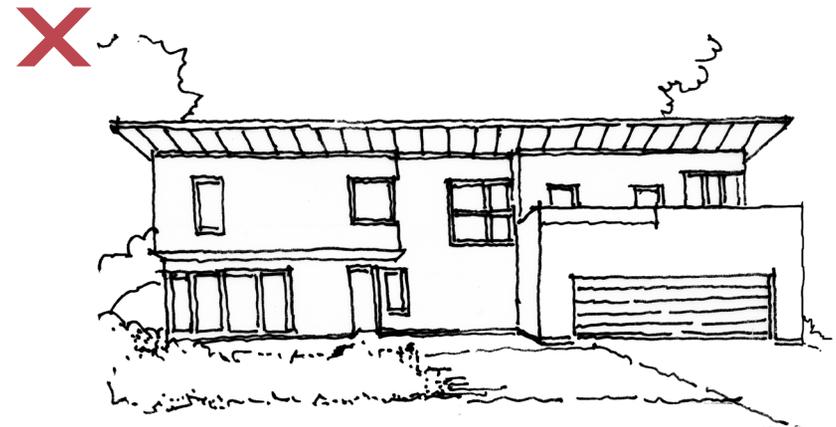


Figure 3.2c - Second-story addition that strays from existing architectural form and not appropriate for the neighborhood.

### 3. Materials and Finishes

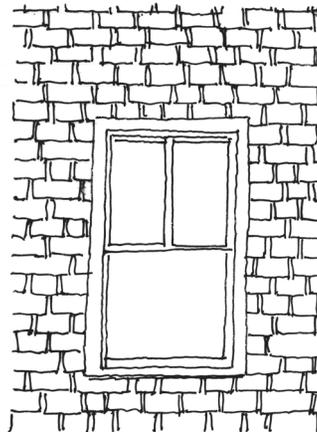
1. Building materials and finishes will be reviewed for quality and appearance with respect to existing development. Materials include wall, siding, roofing, windows and doors, fencing, supports and other structural or cosmetic features part of the visual appearance of the structure or property. Siding and shingles should be made of wood or a high-quality alternative. (Figure 3.3)
2. The use of high quality construction materials is important for long-term durability, maintenance, and appearance. Substitution of lower quality products or construction methods is highly discouraged.
3. Incorporate materials, finishes, and architectural details commonly found in the neighborhood to integrate, harmonize, and blend the home into the neighborhood.
4. Roof materials, building materials, and finishes should work in conjunction with one another and should be consistent with the architectural style of the building.
5. Building materials and finishes should harmonize and blend in with those found in the neighborhood to increase compatibility.



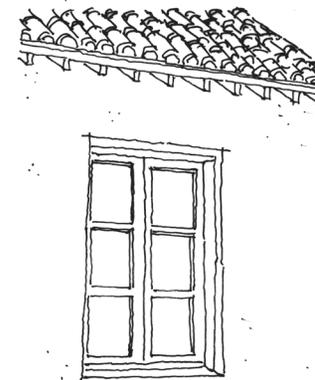
Wood Siding



Wood, Stone and Stucco



Wood Shingles



Stucco with Clay Tile Roof

Figure 3.3 - Building materials appropriate for homes in Santa Clara.

## 3b. Roof Forms

### **Goal: Roofs that blend in with the neighborhood**

The roof forms of many of the City's residential tracts are simple in design. New proposals are encouraged to match the distinct character or simplicity found in the neighborhood. Designs should avoid using excessive roof ridgelines, heights, hips, and valleys.

### Important Considerations

#### 1. Roof Forms

1. Roof design should avoid excessive roof ridgelines, heights, hips, and valleys. (Figure 3.4)
2. Roof design should be appropriate for the architectural style of the building.
3. Use roof forms that derive from those found in the existing home or neighborhood to increase the compatibility of the remodel and additions with the existing home and neighborhood. (Figure 3.5)



Figure 3.4a - Simple roof forms.



Figure 3.4b - A roof form with excessive hips, valleys, and ridgelines.



Figure 3.5 - Homes with roof forms that conform with the neighborhood.

4. New roof additions should conform to existing ridgelines. (Figure 3.6)
5. Consider integrating new second-floor space into the roof form for new second-story additions in predominantly single-story neighborhoods. (Figure 3.7)
6. Second-story roof elements should be in proportion with the rest of the building and not overwhelm ground floor elements, to avoid a bulky appearance. (Figure 3.8)



Figure 3.7 - A second-story integrated into the roof form and utilizing dormers.



Figure 3.6a - Roof addition that conforms to existing ridgelines.



Figure 3.8a - Second-story roof elements in proportion with the rest of the building.



Figure 3.6b - Roof addition that clashes with existing rooflines and style.



Figure 3.8b - Bulky second-story roof elements disproportionate to the first floor and neighboring homes.

### 3c. Architectural Features

#### **Goal: Visually pleasing homes.**

The use of architectural features is necessary for good architectural design. Architectural features include elements such as porches, railings, brackets, corbels, moldings and trim, cornices, shutters, bay windows, wainscots, and dormers.

#### Important Considerations

1. Use of architectural features are encouraged to help mitigate design problems such as large expanses of blank walls and large roof planes.
2. Features such as porches, cornices, railings, shutters, window flower boxes, and fan-lights, can provide significant building relief and visual interest, avoiding plain, blocky or boxy looking homes. Features should derive from elements that are present in the neighborhood and/or the existing home. (Figure 3.9)
3. While porches are encouraged as architectural features, they should be of adequate size to provide functionality. Porches designed for the sole purpose of aesthetics while not providing functionality are discouraged.
4. The use of stone, brick, or other wainscoting as a building base is encouraged. This base should wrap around the sides of the home from the front facade. (Figure 3.10)



Figure 3.9 - Home with visually interesting architectural elements.

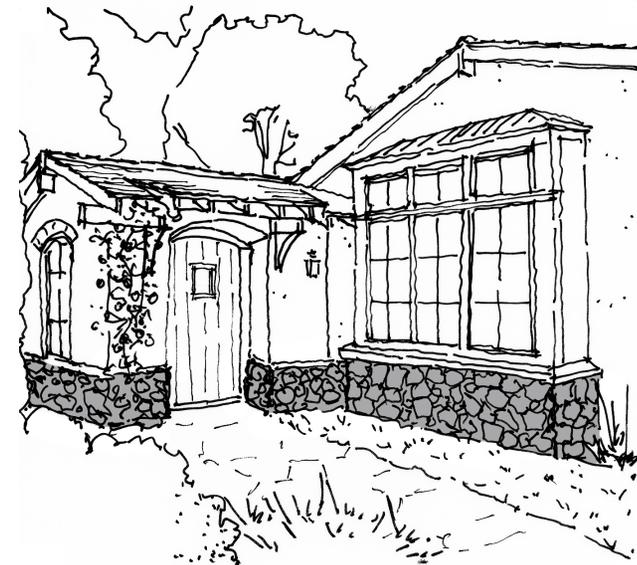


Figure 3.10 - Home with stone wainscoting.

5. Long, blank walls in excess of 25 feet in length should have off sets or architectural details that break up the expanse. (Figure 3.11)
6. Special architectural details such as wood shutters, trellises, columns and bay windows should not be used as a means of hiding the basic architecture. (Figure 3.12)



3.11a - Offset walls to break up a long blank façades.



3.11b - The lack of articulation leads to the appearance of long blank walls.

7. Exception: Patio homes should not have fanlights, divided light windows, raised panel doors, etc. that do not match existing architectural characteristics.



3.12a - Shutters can add visual interest while maintaining the home's basic architecture.



3.12b - Columns, bay windows, and shutters that overwhelm the home's basic architecture.

### 3d. Design and Location of Doors and Windows

#### Goal: Visually Pleasing Homes

Fenestration is the design and placement of windows and doors in a building. It is an important design element and should be appropriate for the style of the building. Fenestration is considered a part of the architecture and overall texture of the building.

#### Important Considerations

1. Align the centerlines of windows, doors, and other openings to create a harmonious, pleasing elevation. (Figure 3.13)
2. Window style and proportion should be similar to the existing architectural style of the building or neighborhood.

3. New window, doors, and trim on additions should match the existing windows and doors in material, style, orientation, and placement.
4. If a home does not currently have a clear architectural style, consider incorporating predominant window and window trim patterns found in the neighborhood in your proposed design.
5. Avoid mixing different window and door styles or materials in a building. (Figure 3.14)
6. Avoid windows and doors of extreme proportions such as horizontal or vertical slit windows.

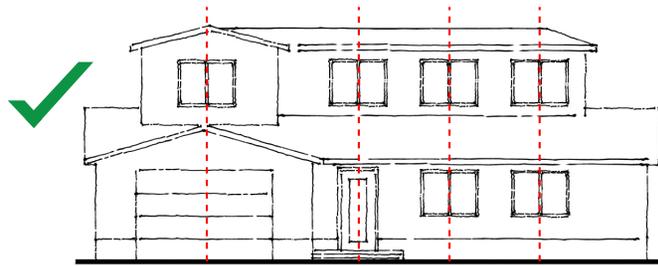


Figure 3.13a - Aligned fenestration on facade.

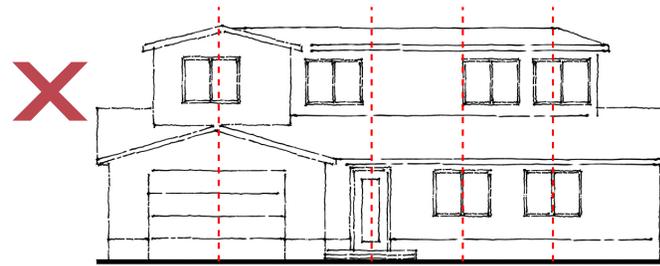


Figure 3.13b - Misaligned fenestration on facade.

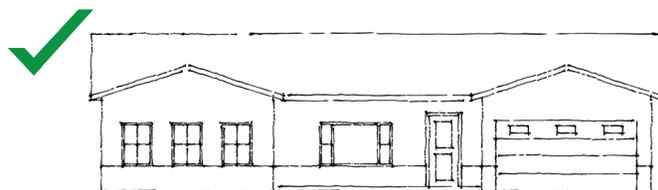


Figure 3.14a - Harmonious window style arrangement

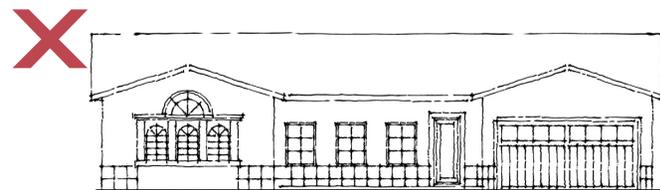


Figure 3.14b - Inappropriate mix of different styles.

7. The use of bay windows is appropriate but should be modest in size.
8. Sliding glass aluminum frame doors should be oriented away from street views.

### 3e. Outdoor Open Spaces

#### **Goal: Minimize Privacy Invasion**

Decks, balconies, roof gardens, and roof terraces can add visual interest to a home. However, these features can also intrude, or create perceived intrusion upon the privacy of neighboring residents.

#### Important Considerations

1. Minimize the use and size of second-floor outdoor spaces such as balconies and decks.
2. Locate second-floor outdoor spaces, if any, on rear elevations away from side property lines.
3. Second-floor outdoor spaces should be oriented away from adjoining side properties when located within fifteen feet of the respective side property lines.
4. Outdoor activity spaces should be adequately screened using lattice screens or solid panels to avoid direct line of sight views into the windows of adjoining residences. (Figure 3.15)

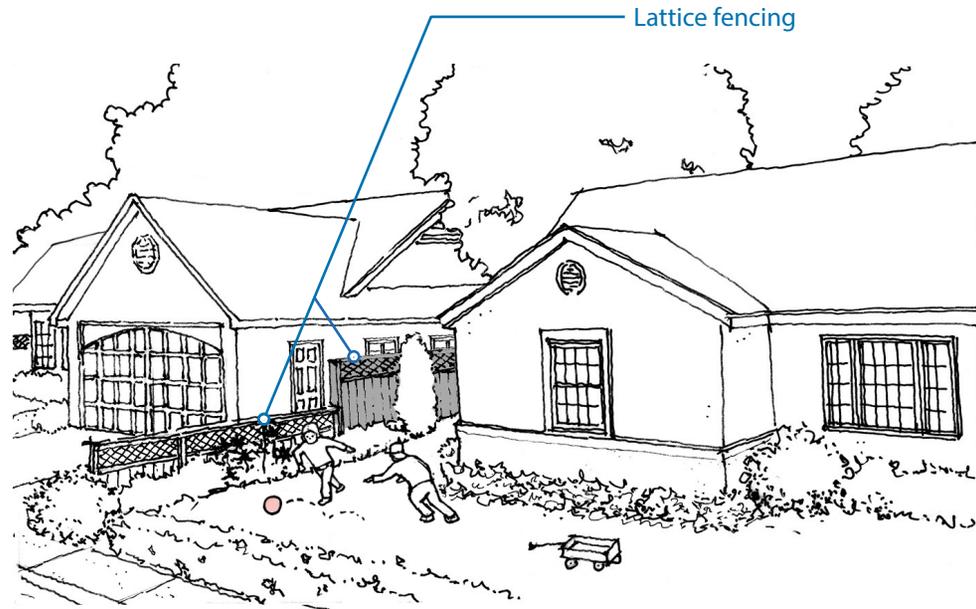


Figure 3.15 - Lattice fence screening windows from neighboring outdoor activity spaces.

5. Whenever feasible, use landscaping to screen the line of sight to and from neighbors' living space or private yards.
6. Minimize the size of the second-floor outdoor space to avoid use by a large group. Outdoor areas and decks encroaching into the rear yard which are elevated and accessible by second-story rooms should be limited to a maximum depth of four feet. (Figure 3.16)
7. The use of solid walls to frame one or more sides of the balcony are encouraged as a method of limiting the field of view from the balcony using existing articulations of the facade.
8. The placement, orientation, and design of the balcony should pay special consideration towards privacy impacts on neighbors and the subject home's own inhabitants. Measures for preserving privacy can include plantings on the balcony as well as obscure glazing.
9. Juliet-style balconies, or balconets, are encouraged, as they provide access to light and ventilation while disallowing outdoor activities.

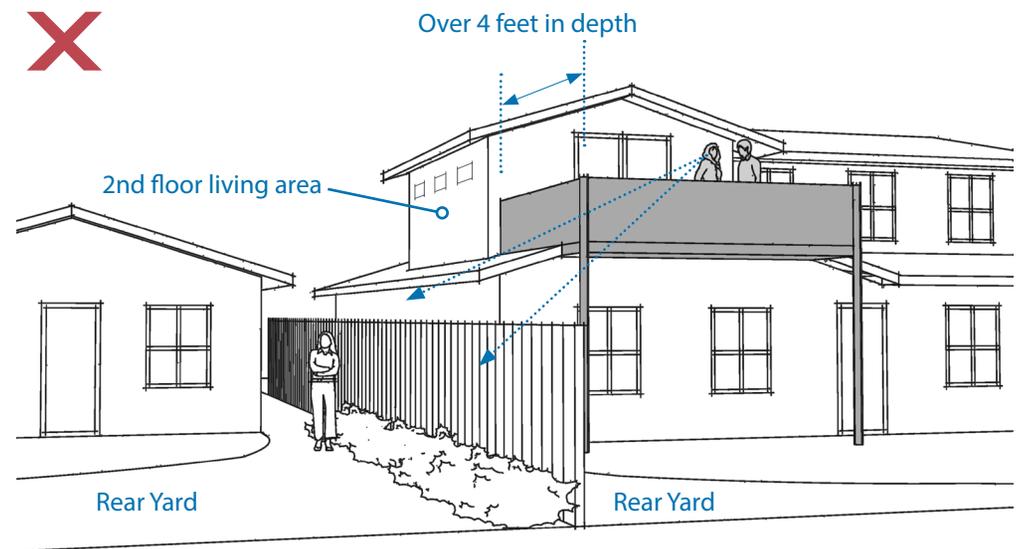


Figure 3.16 - Second-story outdoor space that is larger than recommended and views directly into the neighboring yard.

# Chapter 4 Site Planning and Streetscape Issues

## 4a. Site Planning

**Goal: Improve project design, minimize impacts on neighbors and promote neighborhood compatibility**

Good site planning for a new home or addition makes a significant difference in how the design fits the neighborhood and minimizes potential impacts on the neighbors. Sensitivity to the neighborhood patterns and orientation plays an important role in promoting neighborhood compatibility.

### Important Considerations

1. The location and orientation of a new home on a lot should be consistent with the prevailing patterns found in the neighborhood. (Figure 4.1)
2. Front and street side yard setbacks should match or not extend beyond, that which is typical for the block and appropriate for the scale of the proposed building.

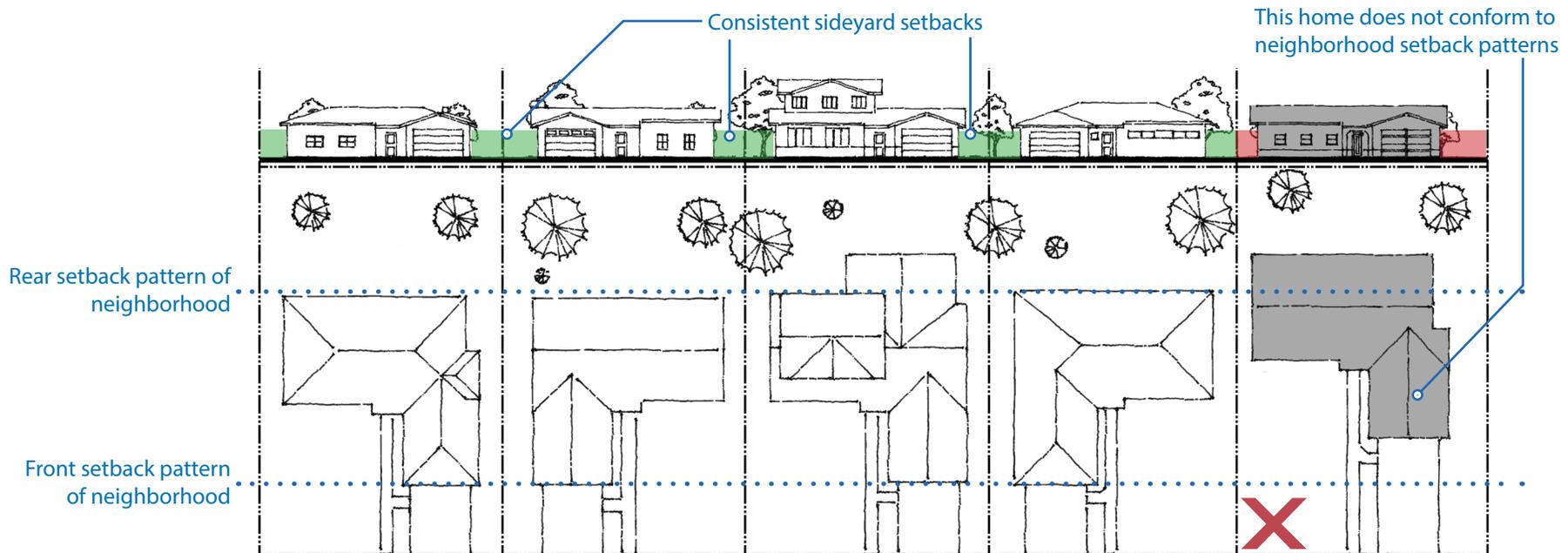


Figure 4.1 - Block of homes demonstrating setback patterns.

3. Proposed designs should minimize, to the extent possible, shading of adjacent homes and private yards. Impacts of scale, shadow, views, air, and light and other consequences of development upon nearby properties may require use of greater setbacks to provide less shading. (Figure 4.2)

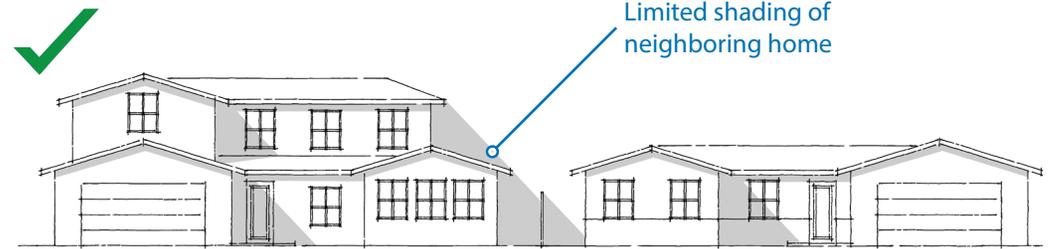


Figure 4.2a - Second-story addition with larger side setbacks to reduce shading of neighboring properties.

4. Building massing and orientation will subject to special consideration to weigh potential shadow impacts on neighboring properties.

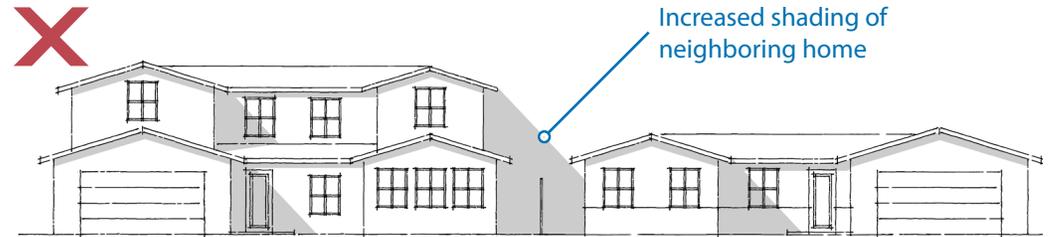


Figure 4.2b - Second-story addition built close to the allowed side setback, resulting in increased shading of neighboring properties.

5. Where appropriate, proposed setbacks should be adjusted to complement adjacent development or to accommodate special needs of the development as determined through the architectural review process.

6. Second-story additions should be set back from the front yard or street side yard walls of the first floor to reduce the appearance of bulk.

7. Second-story additions should be located away from the side and rear yards of neighboring residential properties as much as feasible.

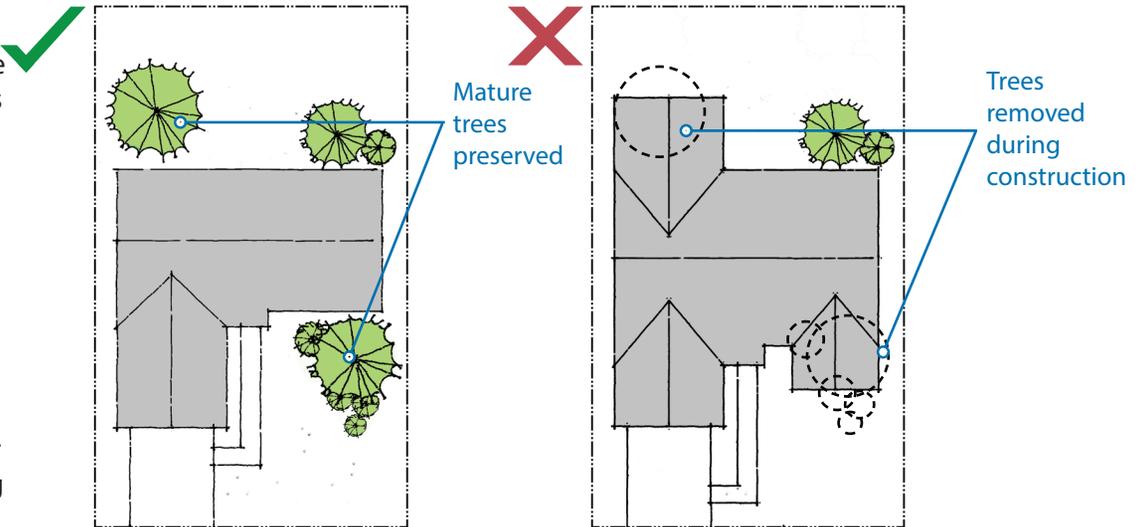


Figure 4.3a - Site planning that preserves mature trees.

Figure 4.3b - Site planning that removes mature trees.

8. Requirements for on-site grading and drainage should be considered at the preliminary stages of design development. The finished grade above the top of the nearest street curb should be used as benchmark.

9. Building pad heights should be determined early in the interests of flood hazard mitigation, stormwater runoff, design treatment of building elevations, and to consider appropriate measures to protect privacy on surrounding properties.

10. Locate buildings to avoid removing mature trees and landscaping to the extent possible. (Figure 4.3)

## 4b. Streetscape

### **Goal: Improve overall design of street and neighborhood**

Streetscape forms an integral part of neighborhood design by giving it an identity. Each property along a street or block has an opportunity to play an important role in this overall design. Architectural features and landscape design details are the two most important factors that contribute to creating a desirable streetscape.

### Important Considerations

1. The front of the house should be oriented toward the primary street frontage. Emphasis on the front porch or entry element toward the street by architectural design and landscaping treatment is encouraged. (Figure 4.4)



Figure 4.4a - Entry element emphasized with a porch, stairs and railings.



Figure 4.4b - Entry element emphasized by a landscaped arbor.



Figure 4.4c - Entrance element emphasized by stone pathway and landscaping.

2. In cases where the design concept requires locating the entrance at a different orientation, care should be taken to avoid turning entirely away from the street. (Figure 4.5)
3. Plant and maintain trees and landscaping in the front yard to provide shade, soften buildings, and improve the streetscape.
4. Maximize landscaped areas in the front yard.

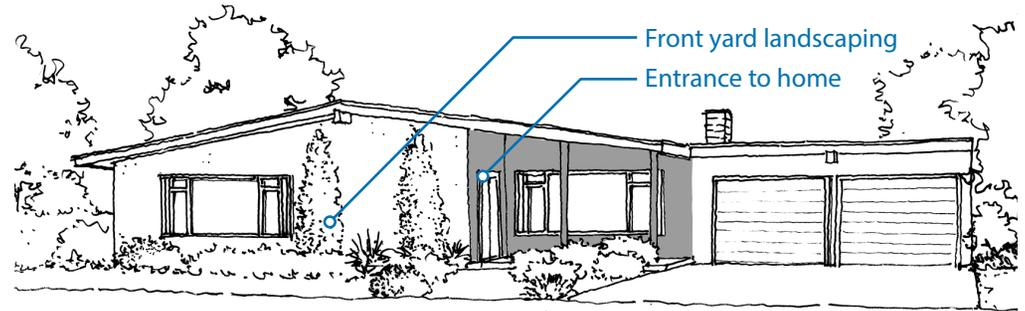


Figure 4.5 - Entrance door oriented towards the side, but having an entry porch oriented towards the front. This home also demonstrates a well-landscaped front yard area to soften the building at the foundation.

## 4c. Driveways, Paving, Carports & Garages

### **Goal: Improve overall design of home and street**

Driveways, paving, carports, and garages can have a significant impact on the appearance of the property and the streetscape. Properties with excessive paving in the front yard have a stark, plain, and unfriendly appearance due to an inadequate mix of natural features.

### Important Considerations

1. Excessive paving is discouraged on all properties so that the stormwater runoff and heat reflection/absorption is minimized. Natural landscaping enhances the visual attractiveness of properties and the overall neighborhood.
2. Use of interlocking pavers, stamped and colored concrete, brick or stone instead of a plain concrete driveway is encouraged.
3. The use of permeable paving materials such as turf-block or interlocking pavers is encouraged as a driveway material.
4. An efficient and convenient layout of parking and pedestrian circulation is encouraged to minimize paving coverage. Circular driveways are discouraged to avoid over-paving the front yard and multiple curb cuts.

5. Multiple driveways on a single family lot are discouraged. A minimum of 25 feet should be maintained between driveways to retain on-street parking spaces.
6. Driveways should not terminate in front of living area. Where no other option exists, there should be a planter area with a five-foot minimum width between the residence and the driveway.
7. Provide and maintain a two feet planter strip between a driveway and an adjoining property whenever feasible.
8. Fences and hedges within the street setbacks and affecting views from or to driveways should be no taller than three feet.
9. If garage doors face away from the street, then special attention needs to be given to the design of the front elevation of the garage. The elevation should not be a blank wall but should be designed as part of the front façade of the house. (Figure 4.6)
10. Garage doors should be recessed in from the face of walls as much as possible.
11. Do not locate the face of garages forward of other portions of the house unless that is the predominant pattern in the neighborhood.
12. Garages should be oriented to the main structure in a manner compatible with nearby properties.
13. Carports are discouraged because they typically do not hide the visual clutter and have a dated appearance. Carports are typically not a common feature of a neighborhood and can create an inconsistent style.

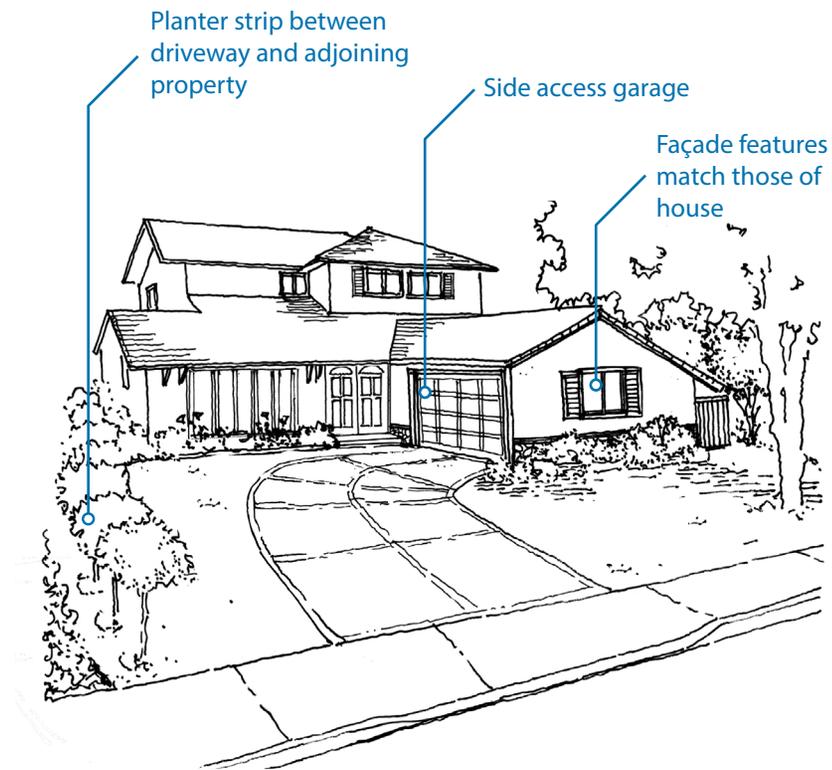


Figure 4.6 - Home with garage oriented away from the street. Façade features windows and shutters matching the home's front elevation.

## 4d. Mass & Bulk / Scale & Height

### **Goal: Reduce mass and bulk of homes**

Development proposals should be reviewed for their overall size and intensity relative to adjacent homes and the prevailing neighborhood pattern. Designs should reduce the appearance of mass and bulk wherever possible. This is especially critical with two-story homes.

## Important Considerations

### 1. Articulation and Massing

1. Large blank walls, lack of architectural relief or building articulation, excessive building heights, inadequate setbacks and other design features should be eliminated so that proposals are not out of scale with the neighborhood.
2. Reduce the perception of mass and bulk of two-story homes, by offsetting the second-floor walls from the first floor walls on the front and side elevations. (Figure 4.8)
3. Provide horizontal offsets for long walls of two feet deep by six feet wide minimum along any second-floor walls of twenty-five feet in length or greater. These insets or offsets should fall within Zoning setback requirements.



Figure 4.7 - Two-story home having second-story walls set back from first floor walls.

## 2. Basements

1. Basement additions that result in the raising of the home to more than three feet above the adjacent grade height are strongly discouraged. Such additions may lead to excessive bulk and conflict with the scale of the neighborhood.
2. Concrete foundations exposed as a result of the addition of a basement should feature a material treatment consistent with that of the subject home if more than 12 inches of the foundation, measured from the adjacent grade, is exposed. Material treatment of the concrete foundation should extend from the finished grade to the maximum recommended raised height of three feet. This treatment of the exposed foundation should be carefully designed along faces visible from the public right-of-way and private streets.
3. Landscaping should be provided to soften the appearance of the basement addition along areas visible from public view.
4. Areas of emergency egress should be treated with high-quality materials and/or adequately screened with sufficient landscaping permissive to the functionality of the egress.
5. Basements should be exempt from lot coverage and floor area ratio (FAR) calculations.

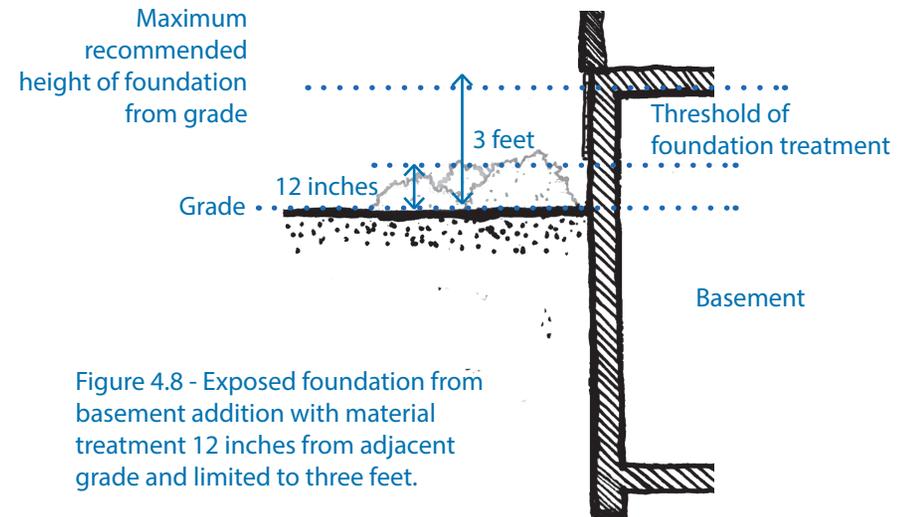


Figure 4.8 - Exposed foundation from basement addition with material treatment 12 inches from adjacent grade and limited to three feet.

## 4e. Entry Features

### **Goal: Entry Features in scale with home and neighborhood**

Entry features shall be reviewed for appropriate size and scale relative to the home and neighboring properties. Designs should be in scale, proportion, and character to architectural style of the home.

### Important Considerations

1. A prominent front porch or entry should be provided.
2. Two-story entryways and other overstated entry features are inappropriate and should be avoided. They create visual discord with the base architectural style and streetscape of most neighborhoods.
3. To reduce an inappropriate visual mass, the eave line of the entryway feature should match or be within two feet or the first story eave line. In no case should a front entry be substantially higher than the first floor eaves. (Figure 4.9)
4. The design and details of the entry feature should derive from the architectural style of the home.
5. Entrance features should be of human scale with height designed to be proportionate to the porch. (Figure 4.10)
6. Entry feature designs should avoid double-gable roof forms.



Figure 4.9a - Entryway that does not greatly exceed eavelines.



Figure 4.9b - Entryway that exceeds eavelines producing a massive appearance.

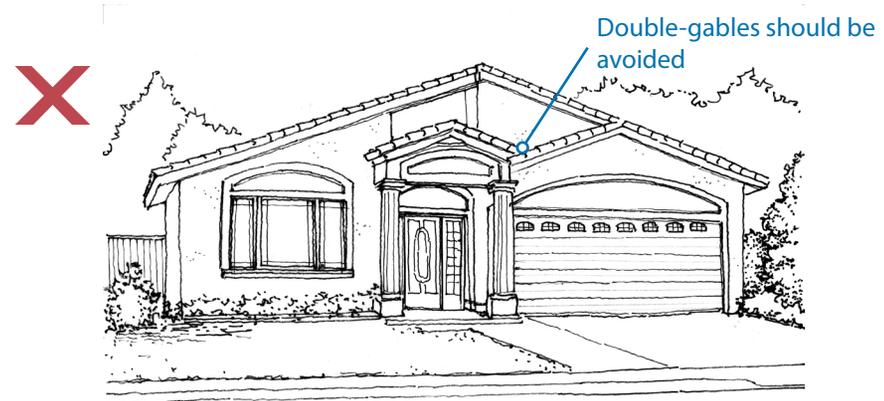


Figure 4.10 - Massive columns create an overstated entryway disproportionate to the porch area and home.

## 4f. High Volume Living Areas

**Goal: High volume living areas that are designed in a manner not apparent from outside**

Interior areas with high ceilings that are one-story on the inside, may appear on the outside as if they are two-story spaces. This can add significantly to the perception of mass and bulk of the home; if not designed properly.

### Important Considerations

1. High volume and/or attic storage areas that appear two stories tall from the outside are discouraged. (Figure 4.11)
2. When high volume living areas in excess of nine feet high are necessary, they should be achieved through the use of vaulted ceilings rather than increased exterior wall height.
3. Double-volume spaces within two-story homes are discouraged. (Figure 4.12)

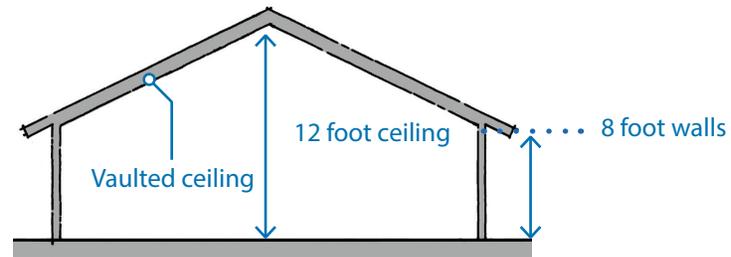


Figure 4.11 - High volume living areas: Positive example utilizes vaulted ceilings to achieve a higher ceiling rather than increasing wall and building heights.

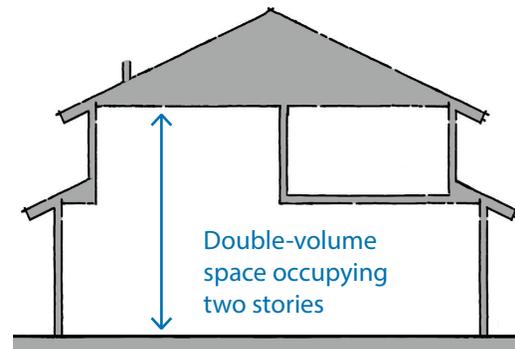
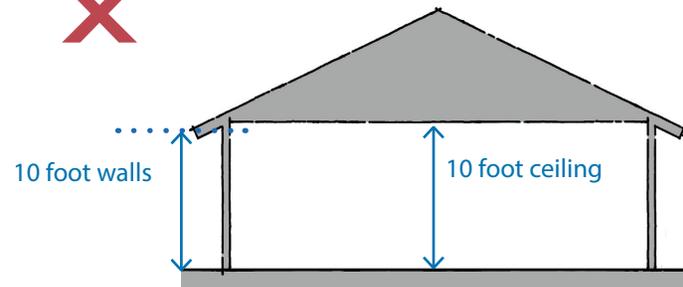


Figure 4.12 - Double-volume living areas taking up two or more stories are discouraged.

## 4g. Accessory Buildings

**Goal: Accessory buildings that harmonize and blend with the primary home and neighborhood.**

Accessory buildings not properly designed, can add significantly to the perception of mass and bulk of the home and visually dominate the home.

### Important Considerations

1. Accessory buildings should be subordinate structures relative to the main residence.
2. Multiple accessory buildings are inappropriate on single family and duplex lots.
3. Accessory buildings should be constructed of materials and finishes that are the same or complement the main structure. Doors and windows should also be the same as the main structure.
4. Roof pitches and overhangs of accessory buildings should match the main structure.

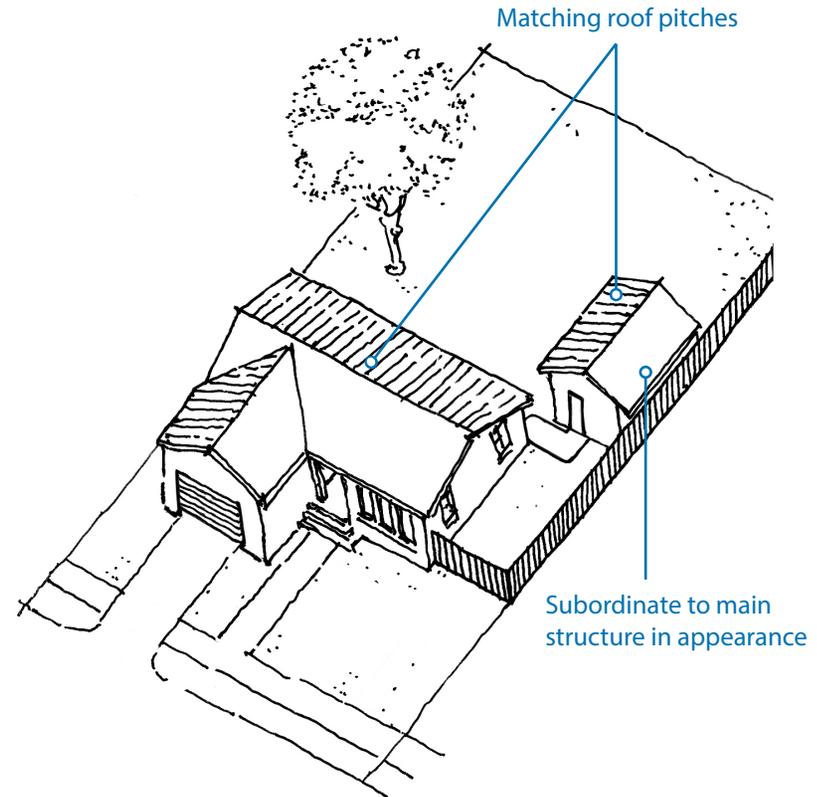


Figure 4.13 - Home with accessory building.

## 4h. Equipment Location

**Goal: Equipment with minimum visual presence.**

### Important Considerations

1. Locate residential equipment, such as air conditioning units and pool equipment within enclosed yards to minimize any visual or noise impacts to neighboring properties.
2. Equipment should be located at least five feet from property lines and acoustically shielded to avoid noise impacts on neighboring properties.
3. Ground mounted equipment should not obstruct passageways through side yards.
4. Roof mounted air conditioners and ductworks from ground mounted units are discouraged but may be necessary on some homes with no other feasible alternative. In these cases, the unit and ductwork should be screened.
5. All equipment must comply with the noise standards outlined in the 2010-2035 City of Santa Clara General Plan.

## 4i. Yards & Landscaping

**Goal: Yards and landscaping that enhance and beautify home and neighborhood.**

Landscaping enhances the overall appearance and value of residential properties. Good landscaping positively affects the aesthetic quality of life and the environment of the community. It establishes a relationship between the building and its site. Landscape buffers can be used to maintain privacy of homeowners from neighboring properties.

Landscaped areas are those that drain directly to the subsoil and may include hardscape as defined below:

- Front and street side yards, including park strips, should be landscaped and properly maintained; lawn or groundcovers are appropriate in most cases.
- Hardscape and driveways shall not occupy more than one-third of each front or street side yard. (Figure 4.14)

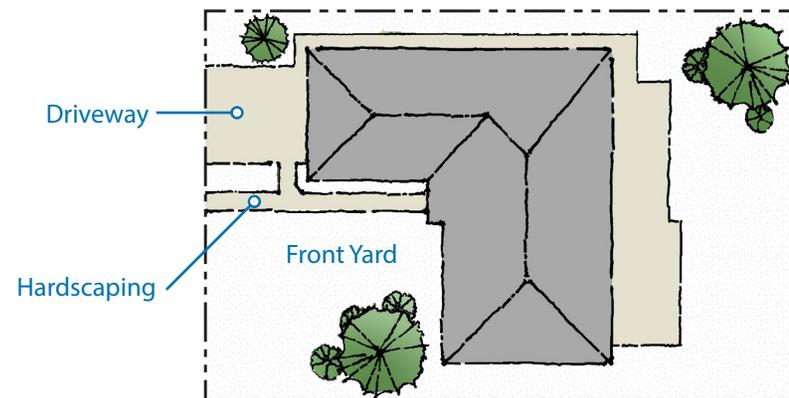


Figure 4.14 - Property having less than a third of the front yard area hardscaped.

- Open and usable rear yard recreational areas should be approximately 20 by 36 feet on single family lots. Open and usable rear yard recreational areas should be approximately 15 feet by 30 feet for each unit on duplex lots. Recreational areas in the rear yard should be immediately accessible to the living space of the residence.
- Plants such as native or drought tolerant types with low water requirements and automatic irrigation systems are encouraged.
- Mature trees should not be removed without reasons of health, safety, or undue hardship related to appropriate property development. Mature trees provide privacy between adjoining properties and are a significant benefit to the environment.
- Potted plants of all sizes may be utilized but are not recognized as a part of the minimum required landscaped area.

## Ground Cover

Ground covers other than lawn may be used in the interest of water conservation in lawn areas or to act as a substitute for lawn. Ivy as ground cover is generally discouraged, as it has too often been improperly utilized and typically is not a native species. The use of artificial turf as a substitute for natural ground cover is also discouraged. Using a variety of plants not only softens the visual appearance of the development, but also adds to the character of the house and variety to the streetscape.

## Hardscape Areas

In most cases, hardscape, or hard-surface landscape areas such as driveways and walkways, should be a lesser part of the overall landscaped area in order to minimize stormwater runoff, heat absorption and large expanses of empty open space. Walkways, patios and courtyards are encouraged but generally should be accented with planting area that have a pleasing visual impact. Paving materials such as brick, pavers, stone, decomposed granite, or turf block can be used to minimize the extensive use of concrete.

## Irrigation

On single family residential properties, automatic systems and water-conserving irrigation systems are strongly encouraged but are not required, except as a specific condition of approval. For duplex-zoned properties, an automatic irrigation system should be installed and maintained in functional condition in each separate planter area.

## Important Considerations

1. **Foundation Plantings:** Plantings at the foundation of a structure (including a wall or fence) soften the transition from the surrounding ground paved areas to the vertical plan of the structure. Generally shrubs and trees are utilized to create the desired effect. The size and quality of foundation planting needed varies with the nature and architectural design of the development. (Figure 4.15)
2. **Street Yard Landscaping:** The front yard and any street yard landscaping design for the majority of the residential areas of the City calls for lawn, ground cover and tree plantings. Landscape elements can be effectively used to differentiate private outdoor yard space from the public street while visually blending with adjacent properties.

Additional accent plantings to complement this design or other innovative landscape treatments are encouraged. Front yard landscaping includes any landscaped areas within the public right-of-way that adjoins the property. These areas are to be considered a part of the landscaped area of that particular parcel and are to be maintained by the adjoining property. However, these areas are not to be counted towards the minimum required front yard landscaped area.

Check with the City Engineering Department about the underground utilities and on-street parking needs that may be affected by plantings in the public right-of-way.



Figure 4.15 - Landscaping at the base of a home softens the transition between building and ground.

3. **Water Conservation:** The City encourages the use of water conservation techniques. Water conservation practices include selection of trees and shrubs that are suitable for the climate in Santa Clara County, the use of recycle water, and rainwater harvesting. The use of native species and drought tolerant plans is strongly encouraged. (Figure 4.16)

Development proposals should be reviewed for conformity with the following:

1. Meet the minimum standards of the Santa Clara City Code;
2. Appropriate landscaping improvements that are in keeping with the nature and scale of the proposal;
3. Necessary upgrades to plantings, materials and maintenance; and,
4. Consistency with the water conservation ordinance.

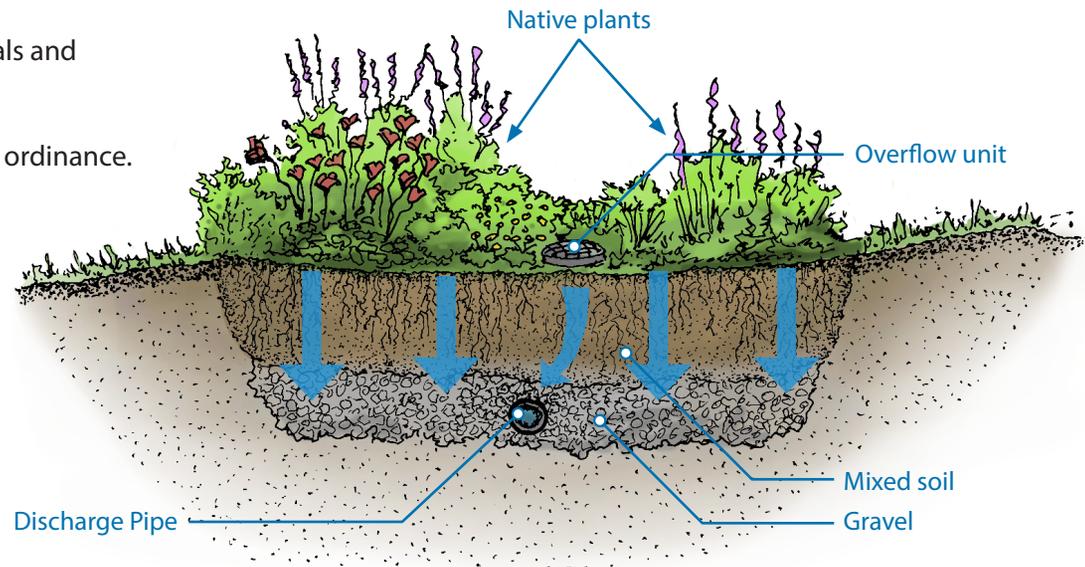


Figure 4.16 - A raingarden utilizes native plantings and permeable materials to filter pollutants. It can be used in conjunction with rainwater harvesting systems.

## 4j. Fences and Walls

### **Goal: Fences that enhance and beautify home and neighborhood.**

Fencing should be compatible with the type of use and zoning upon the property and should comply with the required height and setback regulations. A variety of prefabricated and textured masonry fences may be appropriate in some cases. Where fencing is required by the Santa Clara City Code or as a condition of approval, both sides of the fence should be suitably textured and finished.

Fences intended for the purpose of mitigating views, noise or other impacts, should be of an appropriate height (as allowed by the City Code) from finished grade to accomplish the task for which they are intended.

### Important Considerations

1. Fences and hedges in the front yard setback area should be no taller than three feet.
2. Fencing should not be used to visually isolate a property from the street. Solid fence materials such as stucco walls and masonry walls often block the views of the property from the street and create a fortress-like appearance from the street. An open fence with use of natural non-reflective materials and natural materials or colors should be used whenever possible. An exception is when Patio homes have been designed with fencing that blocks views of an intended private yard from the street.

3. Fences should be treated with landscaping elements to soften the appearance of the fence material from the public right-of-way. Fence gates that are compatible with the style of the house can be used improve the appearance of the neighborhood. (Figure 4.17)

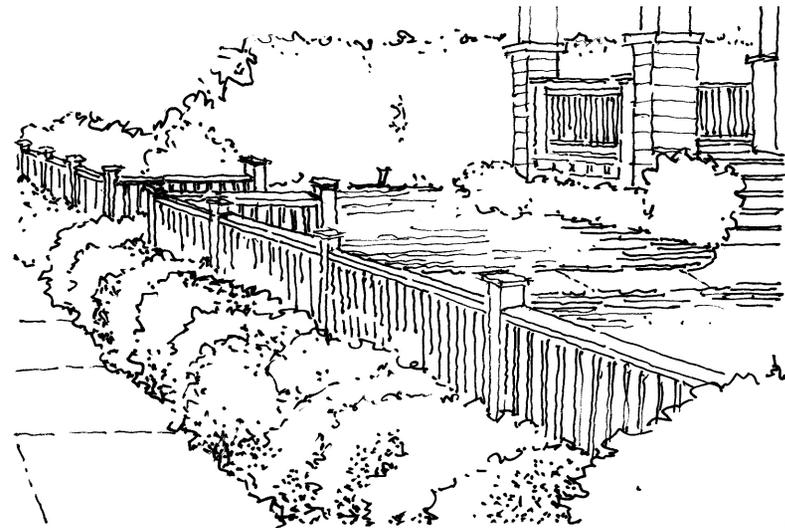


Figure 4.17 - An appropriate height and material front-yard fence with landscaping.

4. Dilapidated fencing should be replaced, repaired, or refinished at the time of construction of any approved improvements on the property.
5. While designing fences along street side yards of corner lots, care should be taken to keep the adequate visibility and sight distance for drivers.
6. Chain link, barbed wire, and razor wire are not appropriate in residential areas and are strongly discouraged. Such fences are not permitted when visible from the public right-of-way. An exception to this may be warranted under extraordinary conditions, if approved by the Architectural Committee.
7. Fences along the property's frontage should be of open-face design as to not fully obstruct views into front yard areas. Solid fences along property frontages are highly discouraged.
8. A two foot minimum setback is encouraged between the front property line and front-yard fence. Setbacks should be adequately landscaped to soften the fence's appearance. (Figure 4.18)

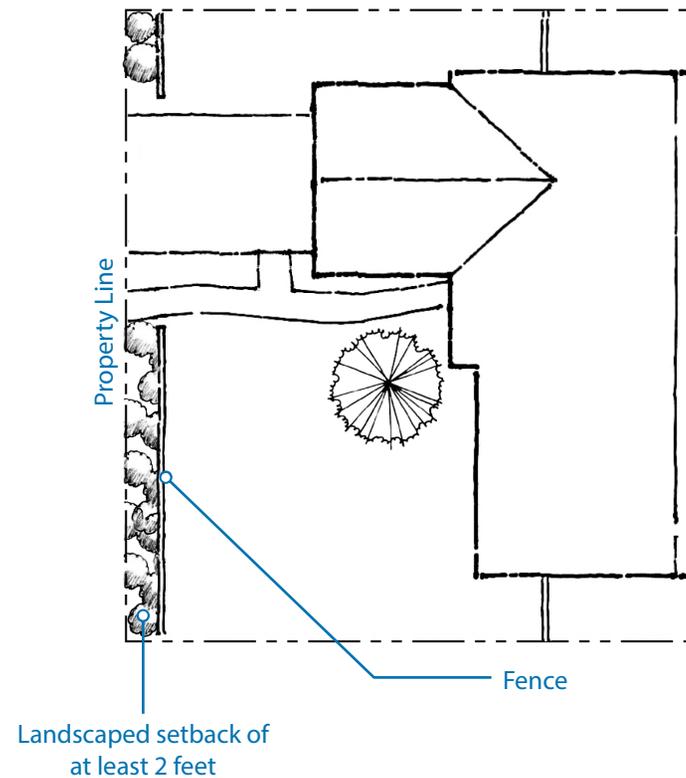


Figure 4.18 - Appropriate fence setback and placement with landscaping in plan view perspective.

## 4k. Exterior Lighting

**Goal: Exterior lighting that enhances and beautifies the home and neighborhood.**

Exterior lighting, if possible, should reflect away from adjoining residential properties and public streets.

### Important Considerations

1. Use shielded light fixtures where necessary to direct light to the ground and protect adjacent properties from excessive glare. (Figure 4.19)



Figure 4.19 - Homes utilizing shielded vs. unshielded light fixtures. Fixtures without proper shielding can disturb neighbors and contribute to light pollution.



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# Chapter 5 Energy Efficiency

## 5a. Solar Access and Panels

**Goal: Solar systems with minimum visual presence that blend with home and neighborhood.**

Applicants are encouraged to incorporate solar energy systems into their projects. Homeowners can minimize non-renewable heating and cooling methods and maximize solar heat gain by using solar panels and innovative building design features such as the use of overhangs, having south-facing windows and planting trees that provide shade.

Building placement and adjacencies should be considered such that they do not unreasonably affect the solar access on neighboring properties. Solar panels and other roof-mounted equipment can detract from the appearance of a home and appear obtrusive if not integrated into the design.

### Important Considerations

1. Orient the massing of the home and roof forms away from the side yards of neighbors as much as possible to minimize blocking their solar access.
2. Locate roof mounted solar energy equipment and panel below ridgelines and on sides of roof away from street view wherever possible. Non-glare and non-reflective type panels should be utilized.

3. The design and placement of roof-mounted solar panels should account for the heights of existing trees and future growth. This applies to both trees on-site and on neighboring properties, including City Heritage Trees and street trees.

## 5b. Integrate Sustainable Design

**Goal: Integration of sustainable design features and elements into the building early in the design process.**

### Important Considerations

1. Specify recycled, sustainably harvested, or sourced building materials such as siding, paving, decking, and insulation.
2. Preservation and/or adaptive reuse of structures is preferred over demolition. Recycle and reuse materials on-site from dismantling and/or demolition of a building or site improvements as much as possible.
3. Consider heat reflecting roof systems to reduce roof heat gain. Balance the benefits of light colored roofs with aesthetics.

4. Incorporate alternative energy generation into the design of building forms and roofs. Establish effective location for solar panels on either the main or accessory building.
5. Consider utilizing gray water systems and rainwater collection systems for on-site irrigation and water conservation.

## 5c. Utilize Passive Heating and Cooling

***Goal: Building placement and massing should consider the potential for passive heating and cooling techniques.***

### Important Considerations

1. Design building volumes to minimize large areas of south or west facing windows to reduce summer sun exposure
2. Use appropriate sized overhangs, porches, trellises, or vegetation, such as deciduous trees, on south facing building sides to reduce heat gain on exposed walls and windows.
3. Use the thermal mass of floors and walls to maximize thermal storage and moderate daily temperature swings.
4. Providing cross-ventilation by locating operable windows and skylights to catch prevailing breezes.

# Chapter **6** Appendix

## 6a. Glossary

### **Basement**

A floor level of a building that is below the first story, partially or completely below adjacent grade.

### **Bi-level House**

A house with two levels.

### **Bulk**

The actual or perceived large visual size, volume or mass of a building or portion thereof.

### **Clerestory window**

A high window above eye level. The purpose is to bring in outside light, fresh air, or both into the inner space.

### **Compatible**

Capable of existing together without conflict or ill effects.

### **Dormer**

A dormer is a structural element of a building that protrudes from the plane of a sloping roof surface. Dormers are used, either in original construction or as later additions, to create usable space in the roof of a building by adding headroom and usually also by enabling addition of windows.

### **Fanlight window**

A fanlight is a window, semicircular or semi-elliptical in shape, with glazing bars or tracery sets radiating out line an open fan. It is typically placed over another window or doorway.

### **Footprint; Building Footprint**

The outline of a building at all of those points where it meets the ground.

### **Gable roof/Gable wall**

A gable is the generally triangular portion of a wall between the edges of a sloping roof. The shape of the gable and how it is detailed depends on the structural system used and aesthetic concerns. Thus the type of roof enclosing the volume dictates the shape of the gable. A gable wall or gable end more commonly refers to the entire wall, including the gable and the wall below it. A gable roof is a pitched roof having a gable at each end.

### **Gambrel roof**

Gambrel is a shortened name for a gambrel roof shape, a usually symmetrical two-sided roof with two slopes on each side. The upper slope is positioned at a shallow angle, while the lower slope is steep. This design provides the advantages of a sloped roof while maximizing headroom inside the building's upper levels and shortening what would otherwise be a tall roof.

### **Guidelines**

General statements of policy direction around which specific details may be later established.

### **Hip roof**

A hip roof or hipped roof is a type of roof where all sides slope downwards to the walls, usually with a fairly gentle slope. A house with a hip roof has no gables, or other vertical sides to the roof.

### **Hipped gable roof**

A hipped gable roof, also known as a gablet roof or Dutch gable, is a roof with a small gable at the top of a hip roof.

**Impervious Surface**

Surface through which water cannot penetrate, such as roof, sidewalk, and paved parking lot. The amount of impervious surface increases with development and establishes the need for drainage facilities to carry the increased runoff.

**Juliet-style balcony, or balconet**

A balcony that only slightly protrudes from the plane of the building face. The narrow width of a balconet provides little if any standing room while allowing access to ventilation and light.

**Mackay or Eichler-Style**

A house that is part of a tract developed by John Mackay or Joe Eichler.

**Mass**

The actual or perceived visual size and expanse of a building or portion thereof.

**Mitigate**

To ameliorate, alleviate, or avoid to the extent reasonably feasible.

**Ordinance**

A law or regulation set forth and adopted by a government authority, usually a City or county.

**Overlay**

A land use designation on the Land Use Map, or a zoning designation on a zoning map, that modifies that basic underlying designation in some specific manner.

**Patio Home**

A detached single-family unit, typically situated on a reduced-sized lot, that orients outdoor activity within enclosed front, rear or side yard patio areas for better utilization of the site for outdoor living space.

**Pop-up**

A second-story addition with one or more walls not set back from those of the existing ground floor.

**Porch**

A covered structure open on at least one side attached to a structure.

**Preserve, v.**

To keep safe from destruction or decay; to maintain or keep intact. (See "Maintain")

**Reconstruct**

Build or form (something) again after it has been damaged or destroyed.

**Rehabilitation**

To repair, preservation, and/or improvement of substandard housing.

**Restore**

To renew, rebuild, or reconstruct to a former state

**Scale**

A graduated range of values forming a standard system for measuring or grading something.

**Setback**

The distance between a property line and the closet outside building wall or structural support of a first or second-floor.

**Split-level House**

A house with multiple levels, with a level that is between the upper and lower floors.

**Tract House**

A house that is part of a subdivision, typically one of several designs used in a tract.

**Mullion**

A mullion is a vertical element that forms a division between units of a window, door, or screen or is used decoratively.

**Muntin**

A muntin is a strip of wood or metal separating and holding panes of glass in a window.

**Neighborhood**

An area within one or two blocks, but not more than 500 feet away from the subject property.

**Sash window**

A sash window or hung window sash window is made of one or more movable panels of glass, which are often separated from other panes by narrow muntins.

**Window light**

An individual pane of glass.

**Windowsill**

A ledge or sill forming the bottom part of a window.

**Wainscoting**

Wooden paneling that lines the lower part of the walls of a room.



*Guidelines and text prepared in collaboration by the City of Santa Clara and M-Group. Illustrations, graphic design and layout prepared by M-Group.*