

# MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES



**CITY OF MODESTO**  
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
PLANNING DIVISION

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Guidelines for Multi-Family Residential Developments is to provide a clear set of design policies to project sponsors, such as developers, property owners, architects and designers. These are the primary design issues that City staff, the Planning Commission and City Council will use to evaluate project proposals. The goal is to expedite the planning review process by clearly stating the City's expectations for quality design of multi-family residential development. Safety, livability, and long-term viability will guide the evaluation of multi-family residential development proposals.

## Goals & Objectives

The Guidelines are intended to address the following goals and objectives:

- Maintain a high quality of craftsmanship in development through the use of building styles, design elements and materials;
- Design for surrounding context and scale of urban form and land uses;
- Promote design excellence for infill and redevelopment sites;
- Facilitate multi-family residential connectivity to non-motorized transportation routes, public transportation / mass transit, and open spaces;
- Promote efficient vehicular circulation and parking patterns – both on-site and in connecting to the adjacent street network;
- Establish multi-family residential developments that are integrated and compatible with surrounding land uses and neighborhoods – both existing and future;
- Enhance the quality of life for residents;
- Preserve / increase property values;
- Improve the City's aesthetic beauty and visual character.

## Intent

The Guidelines are to be used to assist developers, project applicants and City staff in producing high-quality multi-family development. City staff will use these Guidelines as a framework for evaluating development proposals and for commenting on the design aspects of proposed projects.

The Guidelines are general and may be interpreted with some flexibility in their application to specific projects. Variations may be considered for projects with special design characteristics in order to encourage the highest level of design quality, while at the same time providing opportunity for creativity on the part of project designers. These Guidelines are intended to be applied with greater flexibility for affordable housing projects, given the additional constraints typically associated with this type of development.

The design criteria will be used to evaluate development proposals. However, deviations from these criteria will be evaluated in terms of the goals and objectives described above. The Guidelines are also intended to ensure that new development is compatible with existing neighborhoods.

## Applicability

The Guidelines are intended to apply to all discretionary multi-family residential development proposals, for properties zoned R-2, R-3 and P-D. The way in which the Guidelines are applied, however, will vary from project to project, depending on the context associated with the proposed development site and surrounding neighborhood,

# INTRODUCTION

and the particular components and details of any given project design. Smaller, or infill, multi-family development proposals may also be reviewed against the City's "Neighborhood Compatibility Guidelines."

## Use of the Design Guidelines in the Review Process

The purpose of multi-family residential development proposal review is to consider building design, site planning, landscaping, parking, signs and other features that affect multi-family residential development function and appearance. In examining these project features, the review process allows for evaluation of the proposed development's relationship to the project site, the surrounding neighborhood, and the community as a whole.

Every project proposal is unique and requires review on a case-by-case basis. This process depends upon the exercise of discretion. The review process is intended to help achieve development that strikes a balance between the sometimes-competing interests of the project applicant and the City. The City generally does not dictate particular styles of design, instead preferring to encourage creativity and variety while advocating compatibility in scale and "flavor" with the surrounding neighborhoods.

## Other Applicable Regulations

The Guidelines primarily address building design and site design elements. Other codes and regulations will apply. Examples include the City's Zoning Code (Municipal Code, Title X), Standard Specifications, applicable building codes, and the Modesto Urban Area General Plan.

# I. SITE PLANNING

Site planning arranges building masses, open space, parking, and circulation to create a site design that is orderly, visually pleasing, and contributes both to the surrounding area and the development itself. The following design objectives should be achieved through thoughtful site planning:

- Neighborhood compatibility & integration;
- Access and connectivity;
- An attractive streetscape;
- Opportunity for social interaction;
- Comfort, convenience, and safety.

## A. Siting, Massing & Orientation

Multi-family residential development in Modesto may occur in a variety of contexts such as small infill sites in the existing urbanized area, larger greenfield sites in the City's planned urbanized area or downtown. Regardless of the location, new multi-family residential developments should be compatible with the existing or planned neighborhood. The arrangement of structures, circulation and open spaces should relate to the surrounding built environment in pattern, function, scale, and character. The following questions can be used to help evaluate a proposed site plan:

1. Does the development have vehicular and pedestrian connections to the neighborhood or is it isolated?
2. Do the buildings have a strong relationship with the street?
3. Does the development maintain a scale and character that is consistent with the surrounding development?
4. Does the siting reduce the visual bulk and mass of larger structures?

**Figure I-1**

The multi-family buildings, shown in Figures I-1 and I-2, maintain a strong relationship to the street.



**Figure I-2**



# I. SITE PLANNING

## Encouraged:

- ☑ Utilize public and private streets, rather than driveways, to provide vehicular access to units;
- ☑ Orient buildings parallel to the public street or to the developments internal streets;
- ☑ All units should be well integrated into the project's overall site design with front doors, porches and living area windows facing the street or common open space areas;
- ☑ Shelter open space areas and recreational amenities from the noise and traffic of adjacent streets or other incompatible uses;
- ☑ Children's play areas should be visible from as many units as possible and from private open space areas;
- ☑ Step back upper floors, particularly when adjacent to lower-density residential land uses;
- ☑ Variation in building setbacks to provide visual interest and shadow patterns;
- ☑ Features to encourage pedestrian activity and the use of public transit such as: direct access to public streets, widened sidewalks, shaded seating opportunities and weather protection near transit stops.

## Discouraged:

- ☒ Buildings that ignore the street;
- ☒ Development that is physically disconnected from the community;
- ☒ Three-story structures adjacent to single-family homes;
- ☒ If noise attenuation is required, sound walls should only be used after all other options have been exhausted.

**Figure I-3**

*This is an example of a building that ignores the street.*



# I. SITE PLANNING

## B. Common Open Space

Common open space provides opportunities for social interaction and safe play areas for children, and reduces the perceived density of development. These open space areas should include features such as:

- Community Gardens;
- Large box trees;
- Pedestrian-scale lighting;
- Gazebos or other decorative shade shelters;
- Play structures and other recreational amenities.

### Encouraged:

- ☑ Provide seating areas and furniture where adults can supervise children and enjoy passive social activities;
- ☑ Consider comfort factors, including sun orientation and shade, when selecting seating areas;
- ☑ Provide direct, convenient access from ground-level private open space to common open space.

Common open space can result in improved quality of life for residents and property owners. Figures I-4 and I-5, below, illustrate good examples of common open space design.

**Figure I-4**

*Common open space conveniently accessible to residents.*



**Figure I-5**

*Seating provided within common open space area.*



# I. SITE PLANNING

## C. Private Open Space

### Encouraged:

- ☑ Provide private open space such as patios, porches, decks, and balconies;
- ☑ A private open space area of 50 s.f. or greater per unit, with no dimension less than five feet;
- ☑ Screen patios and balconies for privacy;
- ☑ Along neighborhood and collector streets, the front setback can be used as a small patio or recreational lawn area. A three-foot-high fence or wall located in the front yard provides a comfortable separation of private space from the public sidewalk;
- ☑ Clearly define boundaries between private and common open spaces by low walls or plant materials.

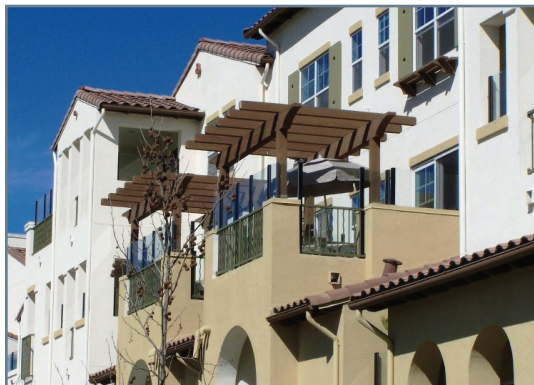
### Discouraged:

- ☒ Walls that prevent residences from looking out of their private open space.

Private open space is often provided in the form of a semi-enclosed balcony, as illustrated in Figures I-6 and I-7, below.

**Figure I-6**

*Private patios with low walls and shade structures.*



**Figure I-7**

*Covered private patios.*



# I. SITE PLANNING

## D. Community Amenities

Community amenities and features such as picnic areas and “tot lots” are welcome additions and offer convenient, inviting spaces for residents to gather and recreate. Community amenities should provide areas for passive and active recreation and enhance the overall quality of development.

The scale, number of housing units of development, and the expected tenant mix, will determine the number and type of amenities needed. Projects should incorporate amenities based on the recommended guidelines contained in the following table:

**Multi-Family Residential: Recreational Amenities**

Type	Number of Dwelling Units				
	Less than 5	5-25	26-100	101-150	150 and greater
Major	0	0	1	1	2
Minor	0	1	1	2	2

- Major recreational amenity examples: Swimming pool and spa, weight room/gym, resident clubhouse/recreation building, learning center/computer room and common usable open space.
- Minor recreational amenity examples: Children's play area, volleyball courts, basketball courts, community gardens, picnic/barbeque areas and other such amenities appropriate to serve the residents of the project.

### Encouraged:

- ☑ Consider the expected tenant mix when choosing the type and size of community facilities;
- ☑ Provide separate, but not necessarily segregated, play areas or informal outdoor spaces for different age groups;
- ☑ Provide common laundry facilities (if laundry hookups are not provided in individual dwelling units).

Left:  
**Figure I-8**  
A swimming pool is an excellent example of a communal amenity.



Right:  
**Figure I-9**  
“Tot lots” provide convenient and safe places for children to play.



# II. CIRCULATION & PARKING

Safe and efficient circulation and parking arrangements take into consideration the needs of pedestrians, children at play, parking lot appearance, and prevention of car theft and damage. In addition, careful consideration of building design and orientation for garages and carports can deemphasize these accessory structures and result in improved aesthetics.

## A. Circulation

A multi-family residential area should not become an isolated island within the neighborhood. Where complementary land uses (e.g. multi-family residential, retail, service, parks/open space, etc.) are in close proximity, direct access should be provided.

### Walkways and Pedestrian Connections

Walkways should be designed to provide convenient access and connections both internally and externally. Walkways should be safe, accessible, well-lit, landscaped and connected to the following (see Figures II-1 and II-2, below):

- The primary entrance or entrances to each building or group of buildings;
- On-site or shared community amenities, such as swimming pools, community centers, recreational facilities, and common open spaces;
- Public sidewalks, parks, greenways, and paseos;
- Nearby stores, shopping centers, office buildings, and restaurants.

**Figure II-1**

*Landscaped, "centralized" walkways surrounding communal amenities.*



**Figure II-2**

*Well-connected walkways provide convenient internal access.*



# II. CIRCULATION & PARKING

## Access, Circulation & Street Connectivity

### Encouraged:

- ✓ Where feasible, include public or private streets through the project site to create a connected street network (see Figure II-3);
- ✓ Entry drives and through-streets should have an adjacent but separated pedestrian path. Include special accents that define and provide visual interest to entries. Examples include specialty lighting, textured paving, and landscaping;
- ✓ Where feasible, include low-volume residential streets that serve individual building clusters;
- ✓ Vehicle speeds should be controlled by appropriate design, signage, variations in street texture/widths, and traffic calming devices.

## B. Parking

Parking areas should be attractive, safe, functional, and easily accessible. Several smaller, landscaped parking areas are preferred to large, open expanses of parking lot. Other parking guidelines are as follows:

### Encouraged:

- ✓ Several smaller, landscaped parking courts that group parking near dwelling units;
- ✓ Parking areas should be accessed from and located interior to the development, rather than along perimeter street frontages (see Figure II-4);
- ✓ Minimize parking visible from the perimeter of the site (including garages and carports);
- ✓ Parking areas should be located and oriented so as to maximize security (visible from residences);
- ✓ Garages and carports should be consistent with residential structures in terms of construction materials and building design;
- ✓ Guest parking should be clearly identified and evenly distributed. If private streets are used, parallel parking along the street for guests is preferred.

### Discouraged:

- ✗ Large, undivided parking areas;
- ✗ Long, dead-end drive aisles;
- ✗ Streets or drive aisles that are excessively straight and/or wide;
- ✗ Gated streets and driveways.

Left:  
**Figure II-3**  
Through streets provide connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Right:  
**Figure II-4**  
Carport roofs should match the design and materials of the main buildings.



# III. BUILDING DESIGN

The goal of the building design guidelines is to address the overall external appearance of the development, including building forms, details, and proportions. They are not intended to mandate a particular architectural style or a specific design character. The primary focus should be to construct a high-quality residential development, that is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood.

## A. Building Scale, Height & Massing

One of the most important components of building design is the form of buildings. Issues to consider include:

1. Is the design consistent with the scale, height and massing of the surrounding neighborhood?
2. Is the development integrated into an existing low-density neighborhood along minor (less than four lanes) streets?
3. Is the development bordered by a major street with minor residential streets to the rear?
4. Is the development in the Redevelopment Area?

### Encourage:

- ☑ Scale, height and massing that is compatible with adjacent single-family homes for multi-family residential development integrating into existing single-family neighborhoods;
- ☑ Transition of scale, height and massing consistent with the surrounding neighborhood—this generally includes reduced building height at street intersections;
- ☑ Scale, height and massing consistent with the Downtown or the Redevelopment Area for projects in those locations.

### Discourage:

- ☒ Building heights that are significantly greater than adjacent development;
- ☒ Buildings that are out of proportion with the overall development.

Left:  
**Figure III-1**  
*Four or more stories might be appropriate in an urban setting.*

Right:  
**Figure III-2**  
*Building height limited to two stories at an intersection helps provide a sense of reduced density when three-story buildings are located towards the interior of the site.*



# III. BUILDING DESIGN

## B. Presentation

Building materials and construction techniques have a significant impact on a development's relationship to the surrounding neighborhood. The following factors should be considered:

1. Is there a dominant design theme in the neighborhood?
2. In what era was the neighborhood built?
3. Are building forms and ornamentation highly complex or simple?

### Encourage:

- ✓ Four-sided building articulation;
- ✓ Ornamentation, such as recessed windows, moldings, decorative trim, and wood frames
- ✓ Side and rear elevations should maintain the same design features as the front elevation;
- ✓ Location of stairwells and elevator shafts interior to buildings and sites;
- ✓ Veneers that turn corners and avoid exposed edges.

### Discourage:

- ✗ Boxy and monotonous façades that lack human scale and have large expanses of flat wall planes;
- ✗ Excessive repetition of architectural elements over a long façade;
- ✗ The use of low-quality materials that do not wear well or contribute to a sense of permanence.

**Figure III-3**

*A mix of building materials/ colors, variation in the vertical plane, and appropriate use of landscaping all work together to provide improved "curb appeal."*



# III. BUILDING DESIGN

## C. Building Entries

Building entries are the key to the public/private interface and should be designed with sensitivity. The following considerations should be made in designing the building entry:

1. Is there a common entry design in the neighborhood?
2. Does the entry appear inviting from the public street?

### Encourage:

- ☑ Individual and differentiated entries with a strong relationship to the street(s);
- ☑ A transitional area from the public space or walkway to the private dwelling unit entry, such as porches, stoops, and roof canopies;
- ☑ Attractively designed courtyard doors or gates used at building entries.

### Discourage:

- ☒ Keyhole entries (primary entrance hidden from view on the side or within deep recess of the building should be avoided).

These entries provide good visibility and maintain a strong relationship with the adjacent street and public spaces.

**Figure III-4**

*An example of individual entries with a strong relationship to the adjacent street and sidewalk.*



**Figure III-5**

*The flanking planters and recessed door provide a welcoming transitional area from the walkway to the entrance.*



# III. BUILDING DESIGN

## D. Stairs

For multi-family residential developments, stairs often become obstacles to achieving designs that integrate well into neighborhoods. Stairs should be designed to be unimposing and supportive of the neighborhood context and building design. The following concepts should be taken into account in designing stairs:

1. How do other nearby developments integrate stairs into the design of buildings?
2. Does the stair design dominate the building design or presentation?

### Encourage:

- ☑ Upper floor dwelling units should be served with flights of stairs internal to the building;
- ☑ Seamless integration with building design;
- ☑ High-quality construction materials.

### Discourage:

- ☒ External stairwells with landings serving multiple units;
- ☒ Obtrusive stairwells that dominate the building design.

**Figure III-6**

An example of a stairway that is well-integrated into the building design.



**Figure III-7**

External stairways that are recessed into the space between dwelling units/buildings are safer and more functional.



# III. BUILDING DESIGN

## E. Roofs

Roof shape and type can be one of the most defining elements in the appearance of a neighborhood. In designing a project, the following considerations regarding roof design should be made.

1. Is there a predominant roof pattern in the neighborhood?
2. Are there materials common to most roofs in the neighborhood?
3. How is the massing of roofs commonly arranged?

### Encourage:

- ☑ Roof pitches and materials to match the prevailing roof types in the neighborhood;
- ☑ Combinations of different roof heights that create variation and visual interest;
- ☑ Roof lines that are varied within the overall horizontal plane for larger buildings;
- ☑ Vents that are consolidated, painted to match the building or otherwise "camouflaged."

### Discourage:

- ☒ The use of low-quality materials that do not wear well or contribute to a sense of permanence;
- ☒ Large, monotonous expanses of roof planes.

**Figure III-8**

*Variation in roof design provides visual interest.*



# III. BUILDING DESIGN

## F. Color

The thoughtful use of color can have a positive impact on the overall appearance of a multi-family residential development. Color should be used as a design element to accent building features, break up monotonous expanses and stimulate visual interest.

### Encourage:

- ☑ The use of more than one predominant color. Consideration should be given to the color variation on structures in the surrounding neighborhood;
- ☑ Compatible accent colors to enhance important building features such as window sashes, mullions and trim;
- ☑ Materials such as brick, stone, copper, etc. should be left in their natural colors.

### Discourage:

- ☒ Colors in conflict with the surrounding neighborhood (“loud” or neon colors);
- ☒ Painted natural materials, such as brick, stone, copper, etc;
- ☒ A lack of variation on large buildings.

Natural materials such as stone, brick, and wood timbers can compliment an appropriate color palette (see Figures III-9 and III-10, below).

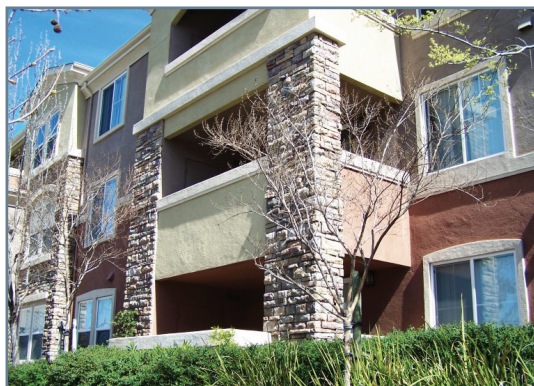
**Figure III-9**

*This is good example of the use of compatible accent colors and stone materials, which provide overall visual interest.*



**Figure III-10**

*This multi-family residential complex is painted with complimentary neutrals and accentuated by natural stone.*



# IV. LANDSCAPING

Strategically placed, well-chosen plant materials can contribute to attractiveness and success of a multi-family residential development. The following design objectives should be achieved through the selection and placement of plant materials:

- Compliment building architecture
- Provide shade
- Provide visual relief from the built environment
- Screen unattractive areas
- Enhance safety/security
- Define outdoor spaces and edges
- Discourage graffiti
- Enhance the surrounding neighborhood
- Contribute to overall resident satisfaction

## A. Plant Materials

The following guidelines should be followed when considering landscape design and plant materials.

### Encourage:

- ☑ A three-level planting system consisting of ground cover in the front strata, shrubs in the middle strata, and trees throughout;
- ☑ A variety of plants used on the planting palettes for front yards, courtyards and common open space areas to create an individual identity for each space;
- ☑ Native plants and drought-tolerant landscaping;
- ☑ Concentrate water-intensive landscaping such as turf grass in active recreation areas;
- ☑ Landscape plantings to define property lines and distinguish private space;
- ☑ Deciduous trees located throughout a development to mitigate summer heat for buildings, passive open space areas, walkways and parking lots;
- ☑ Large stones, fountains, statuary, art and other complementary amenities in the landscape to create a unique environment and provide an identity.

Left:  
**Figure IV-1**  
*A low wall, that doubles as a planter, provides and abundance of color and greenery along the sidewalk.*

Right:  
**Figure IV-2**  
*Well-maintained landscaping along the building edge improves the streetscape for residents and passers-by alike.*



# IV. LANDSCAPING

## Discourage:

- ❌ Water intensive landscape plantings;
- ❌ Planting high-maintenance ground cover such as grass in narrow strip areas;
- ❌ Trees and shrubs planted so close together that they create maintenance and security problems at maturity;
- ❌ Plants with invasive root systems planted in close proximity to hardscape materials;
- ❌ Planting that creates litter or stains pavement and vehicles.

Figures IV-3 and IV-4 illustrate additional examples of quality landscape treatment.

**Figure IV-3**

*The combination of trees and drought-tolerant plants can provide an attractive and lush landscape.*



**Figure IV-4**

*Landscaping can be used to define areas, such as driveways. This example doubles as a functional element by forming a safety median.*



# V. MISCELLANEOUS SITE ELEMENTS

This chapter addresses miscellaneous site design elements such as fencing, site furniture, utilities, storage areas, mailboxes, and signage that contribute to the comfort and convenience of residents' daily activities. The following guidelines encourage a variety of site elements that reinforce safety concepts, increase opportunities for social interaction, reduce maintenance, and promote neighborhood compatibility.

## A. Walls & Fencing

Yards adjacent to a street represent a transitional area between the public corridor and the private and semi-private space of multi-family residential developments. Where appropriate, fencing can be used to create a greater sense of security and privacy for the residents by differentiating between public and private space and allowing for natural surveillance or "eyes on the street."

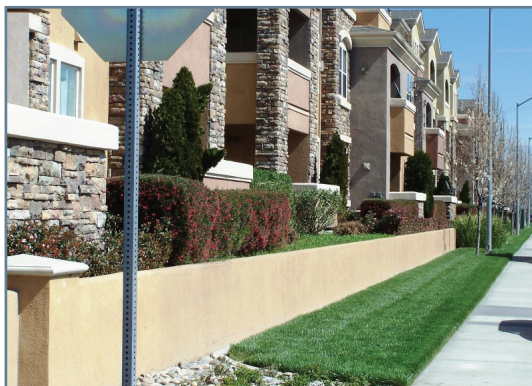
The following guidelines for the use and design of fencing are intended to promote safety, while maintaining an open and friendly neighborhood character:

### Encourage:

- ☑ Dense landscaping and short walls can be combined to provide an effective separation between public and private space (See Figure V-1);
- ☑ When walls are required for sound attenuation, decorative walls should be used and should match the architectural style of the buildings;
- ☑ Decorative elements and durable materials such as brick, stone, and decorative wrought iron that compliment the residential quality of the development and the surrounding neighborhood;
- ☑ Decorative pilasters between sections of walls and fencing;
- ☑ Concrete capstones on stucco walls for architectural enhancement.

**Figure V-1**

*A combination of landscaping and low walls along the street help to establish a subtle indication of the public/private interface.*



# V. MISCELLANEOUS SITE ELEMENTS

## Discourage:

- ⊗ Fencing along the street in neighborhoods where yards have an 'open' character;
- ⊗ Low-quality fencing and wall materials such as chain link, vinyl, and pre-cast concrete;
- ⊗ Plain flat walls.

## B. Site Furniture

Outdoor seating areas can greatly enhance the comfort and enjoyment for residents and guests alike. The following guidelines apply.

## Encourage:

- ☑ The design, selection and placement of all site furnishings should be compatible with the overall site design and architectural character of the development;
- ☑ Seating opportunities should be provided in both sunny and shaded areas;
- ☑ Seating in areas that offer opportunities for social interaction and informal surveillance, such as a bench near a communal mail box or benches near "tot lot" areas and laundry rooms;
- ☑ Trash receptacles should be located near and distributed throughout common open areas and near community facilities.

**Figure V-2**

*Benches next to trees are a simple, practical and popular example of useful site furniture.*



# V. MISCELLANEOUS SITE ELEMENTS

## C. Utilities & Mechanical Equipment

Infrastructure and equipment should generally be screened from view, to the extent possible.

### Encourage:

- ☑ Screen utility and mechanical equipment (e.g. electric and gas meters, electrical panels, transformers and cable and telephone junction boxes, HVAC units) from view with landscaping and/or construction that is compatible with the building design (See Figure V-3);
- ☑ Equipment placed on mansard or flat roofs should be screened from neighboring buildings and public streets;
- ☑ Orient utility and mechanical equipment away from any building elevation facing a street. When equipment is required to be installed adjacent to the street, it should be placed underground or screened from view (see Figures V-3 and V-4).

### Discourage:

- ☒ Roof-mounted equipment on hipped and gabled roofs;
- ☒ Wall-mounted air conditioning units.

**Figure V-3**

*Excellent use of landscaping to screen mechanical equipment from view.*



**Figure V-4**

*"Artificial" screening methods can also be effective.*



# V. MISCELLANEOUS SITE ELEMENTS

## D. Trash & Storage Areas

### Encourage:

- ☑ Locate trash enclosures in convenient but not visually prominent areas, such as inside parking courts or at the end of parking bays;
- ☑ Trash bins should be accessible for trash collection but should not conflict with circulation or parking;
- ☑ Trash enclosure design and location should protect residents and adjacent uses from noise and odors;
- ☑ Trash enclosures should be constructed from the same or similar materials and finishes as adjacent buildings;
- ☑ Trash enclosures should be screened from view of nearby dwelling units and streets with vines or shrubs on three sides.

### Discourage:

- ☒ Locating trash enclosures in required setback areas;
- ☒ For security reasons, trash enclosure locations and design should not create blind spots or hiding areas.

**Figure V-5**

Well-screened trash enclosures enhance multi-family residential development. Mounded landscaping provides additional screening.



## E. Mailboxes

### Encourage:

- ☑ Locate mailboxes in highly visible, well-lit areas;
- ☑ Incorporate mailbox design features that are consistent with the development's building style;
- ☑ Trash receptacles in close proximity.

### Discourage:

- ☒ Avoid mailboxes that look like an add-on or afterthought.

**Figure V-6**

Mailboxes should be built into structures constructed from the same materials as the main buildings.



# V. MISCELLANEOUS SITE ELEMENTS

## F. Signage

### Encourage:

- ☑ Professionally designed signage that contributes to the unique identity of a development (see Figure V-7);
- ☑ Monument signs that are clear and legible to identify the development;
- ☑ Internal circulation signage and visitor parking areas should be clearly indicated;
- ☑ Developments with more than fifty units should provide a directory that shows the location of buildings and individual dwelling units within the development;
- ☑ Building numbers and individual unit numbers should be readily visible, in a consistent location, well lit at night, and compatible with the overall design of the development.

**Figure V-7**

*A professionally designed, landscaped monument sign that matches the overall design of the complex.*



# VI. SAFETY

Residents have a basic right to feel safe and secure in their homes. The following guidelines promote the use of site planning, landscaping, community involvement, and physical and psychological barriers to create a safe environment and to prevent crime, vandalism, and graffiti. The principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) are used extensively. The CPTED strategies described here should be incorporated into the design of multi-family residential developments whenever possible.

## A. Resident Visibility

### Encourage:

- ☑ The orientation of buildings, as well as its features, including windows, entries, and private open space should be designed to maximize views of the street, common open space, parking areas and dwelling unit entrances;
- ☑ The management office should be located in a central, visible location and community meeting rooms and other amenities should also be located close to other heavily used areas;
- ☑ Locate laundry rooms adjacent to the children's play area to facilitate supervision, with doors and walls to allow views both into the laundry room and outside to the surrounding area.

## B. Separation of Public & Private Space

Development design should use a "hierarchy of space" to define territory for public space (streets), community space (common open space, play areas, communal laundry, community center, etc.), and private space (individual units and private open space).

### Encourage:

- ☑ The use of design elements to define the public/private edge, such as special paving, change in building materials, and grade separations, or physical barriers such as landscaping, fences, walls or screens all three feet in height or less;
- ☑ Accentuate building entrances and individual dwelling unit entries with architectural elements, lighting and/or landscaping to emphasize their private nature.

## C. Access

### Encourage:

- ☑ Design elements that enhance security, while maintaining and encouraging access for disabled individuals;
- ☑ Doors to community facilities should be key-controlled by residents;
- ☑ Courtyard gates and shared building entrances that access individual units should automatically lock when closed.

### Discourage:

- ☒ Security bars on windows;
- ☒ Window design and placement that would attract unauthorized entry should be avoided.

# VI. SAFETY

Left:  
**Figure VI-1**

An attractive fence serves as a separation of private and public space.

Right:  
**Figure VI-2**

An attractive gate provides security for residents.



## D. Lighting

Lighting levels will vary depending on the specific use and site characteristics, but the overall consideration should be to provide lighting levels sufficient that intruders cannot lurk in shadows, that steps and other grade changes are apparent, to enable residents to easily unlock their door or identify visitors on their doorstep, and to reduce theft and vandalism.

### Encourage:

- ☑ The entire site should be well lit, with special attention given unit entries, mail box areas and other common facilities;
- ☑ Install lighting along walkways and internal circulation streets;
- ☑ Light standards should be residential/pedestrian in scale and be spaced appropriately for the fixture, type of illumination and pole height;
- ☑ Lighting designed to shine downward and eliminate skyward glare and spill-over to adjacent properties.

Left:  
**Figure VI-3**

Pedestrian-scaled decorative light fixtures add character, while providing overall illumination.

Right:  
**Figure VI-4**

This type of lighting helps illuminate a dark walkway, while shining the light downward, so as not to disturb neighboring residents.



