

CHAPTER 7

DESIGN GUIDELINES

SECTION GENERAL 701

701.1 Applicability. All new development requiring a site plan, plat, or construction documents to be approved prior to building permit issuance is subject to the following design guidelines. These guidelines are not intended to discourage development, but to promote smart and aesthetic development throughout the city. Development plans that fail to meet the full extent of these guidelines, but remain within the spirit of such guidelines are still subject to approval by Variance, as described within these regulations. When a requirement is denoted by “should”, it is considered permissive and the Planning Director is authorized to waive such requirement if the specific site constraints make compliance unfeasible. Such waiver shall occur during the Site Plan Review. The burden of demonstrating that the submitted plans are appropriate and in compliance with the spirit of the guidelines, and that permissive requirements are not feasible, falls upon the applicant.

701.2 General Requirements. The following design guidelines shall apply to all new development subject to this section.

A. Building Siting. Residential buildings shall be oriented with the front facade towards the street, public thoroughfares, or central greenspaces. Commercial Buildings shall be oriented with the front facade facing a public street. Parking lots shall be located in the side or rear setbacks of the development.

B. Underground Utilities. All new electricity, cable, fiberoptic, telephone or other communication lines shall be located underground, except in cases where the utility provider is not able to provide underground service. Developers shall be responsible for the underground routing and installation of all utility lines. All individual service lines shall be routed below ground to residential or non-residential buildings. Unnecessary above ground appurtenances shall be eliminated. Site utility markers or signs shall be consistent with architecture and materials of the site.

C. Enclosures for Mechanical Units and Dumpsters. Permanent enclosures for dumpsters and mechanical units are required. Enclosures shall consist of a masonry or similar based structure to match and complement the development’s building materials, with a painted wood or metal opaque service gate. The overall height of the enclosure shall be at least two feet taller than the dumpster or mechanical units. When possible, service areas shall be located away from the public view, preferably at the rear of the building. It is also recommended that rear entry homes use the alley as the refuse container collection area.

D. Site Lighting Required. Private streets, driveways, parking lots, walks and service areas shall have an evenly distributed minimum lighting level of one foot candle for commercial development and four-tenths foot candle for residential development. The

maximum allowed total height of all lighting, including all appurtenances, shall be twenty feet.

1. All exterior lighting fixtures shall be shielded to prevent glare onto adjacent properties or right-of-way.
2. The use of metal-halide luminaires is recommended, but high-pressure sodium is also permitted.
3. No blinking, flashing, animated, or fluttering lights are permitted.

E. Grading and Drainage. Each site should be graded for proper surface runoff and shall be developed in accordance with the following requirements:

1. All paved surfaces should have a minimum one percent cross slope to drain. All grassed or otherwise vegetated surfaces should have a minimum two percent cross slope to drain.
2. Stormwater runoff should be collected and piped underground. The use of drainage ditches should be avoided where steep slopes apply.
3. Each site should be designed to minimize erosion to the extent possible. Best Management Practices shall be used in design and during construction to prevent erosion. Alternative erosion control methods are strongly encouraged, such as the use of permanent vegetative erosion matting versus concrete or rip-rap rock. Temporary erosion control devices must be managed and removed from site when construction is completed. Permanent erosion control devices must be permanently managed by the owner or dedicated as public infrastructure, in accordance with these regulations.
4. Each site must be designed in such a manner as to eliminate post-development excess stormwater runoff onto adjacent properties. All new development sites shall be capable of retaining or detaining stormwater excess flows for a twenty-five year storm event of twenty-four hour duration. Each development should be designed to utilize existing natural drainage features of the site.
5. Development should work with the existing contours of the land to the greatest extent feasible.

SECTION 702

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

702.1 Residential Subdivisions. In all new subdivisions, the following minimum design standards apply:

- A. Architectural variation in home design, as well as variation in siding material and colors, are required.

- B.** Floor plans should be arranged so that the front entrance of a home is noticeably visible from the public street, accented by a front porch, patio, or motor court.
- C.** No more than fifty percent (50%) of garage doors or garage entrances shall face the public street, being considered front-loaded garages. Back alleys should be used when appropriate for rear loaded homes.

702.2 Multi-Family Housing. For all new multi-family developments, the following minimum design standards apply:

- A.** All structures within the development shall be such that the exterior, architectural character, and functional plans thereof is harmonious and compatible with adjacent housing developments. The Planning Director shall determine whether this requirement has been met as part of the Site Plan review process.
- B.** Building fronts shall have variations in the elevations to diversify the front planes facing a public space. Multi-family buildings shall have offset building planes with facade breaks every fifty feet or less.

SECTION **COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT** **703**

All new commercial development shall be designed in accordance with the following requirements:

A. Building Design.

- 1.** Long, uninterrupted, flat facades shall be avoided. Facade breaks are required every fifty feet or less. Building facades should have a defined base (bottom), and cap (top).
- 2.** Any facade facing a public street shall consist of fifty percent (50%) stone, masonry, drivit, stucco, or similar masonry-like material. The use of glazing (such as on windows and doors), may account for up to half of this requirement.
- 3.** Vinyl or aluminum plank, for entire walls, are not permitted, when such wall is visible from a public street.

B. Additional Screening Requirements.

- 1.** Service bays, loading docks, mechanical areas or overhead doors should not be visible from a public street.
- 2.** Parapet or screen walls are required to screen any rooftop mechanical units. Screen walls and parapets shall be unified with the architecture, materials and color of the main structure.

LANDSCAPING AND BUFFERING

704.1 General Provisions.

A. Greenspace Required. All new development, except single-family residential, must provide a minimum fifteen percent (15%) of the overall site in greenspace. Greenspace includes buffer area, lawns, islands, medians, and any other non-agricultural planted space. All greenspace, not otherwise planted, must be covered with permanent vegetation such as ground cover or turf grass.

B. Formal Greenspace Required. All new development over fifteen (15) acres in size must be equipped with at least one centralized formal greenspace equal to at least three percent (3%) of the site (which counts toward the overall greenspace requirement).

C. Street Trees. Two (2) street trees are required (one on each side of the road) for every one-hundred (100) linear feet of roadway along all improved or new public streets. Street trees must be planted in the greenspace adjacent to the street, but no closer than three (3) feet from the street edge or curb.

D. Tree Islands. Tree islands are required in all parking lots. One (1) tree island is required per every twelve (12) parking spaces, and islands should be at least as large as the adjacent parking space. Tree islands must be provided at each end of all parking rows, regardless of the length. Tree islands on double loaded parking rows should be contiguous. All tree islands should be raised at least six (6) inches with perimeter curbing.

E. Site Trees Required. Five (5) canopy trees and three (3) understory trees are required per acre for all commercial and multi-family or duplex developments. Such developments less than one acre in size are exempt from this requirement.

Two (2) canopy trees are required per each single-family residential dwelling in a subdivision.

F. Planting Locations. One (1) canopy tree is required to be planted in each commercial parking island; trees take precedence over utility placement. Canopy trees should be planted between the building/street or parking lot/street. Understory trees should be planted to accent the front building facade.

G. Amenity Plantings Required. Each development shall incorporate some type of amenity planting, such as shrubbery planted in street medians, around entrance signs, or along the sidewalks as hedges.

H. Greenspace, including plant materials, turf, landscape beds, and irrigation, is the responsibility of the property owner or owner's association. Landscaped areas must be adequately watered and maintained.

704.2 Landscape Buffering.

704.2.1 Project Boundary Buffers. A landscape buffer shall be required to be consistently preserved or installed along the side and rear property lines of all new development where the adjacent zoning is less intensive than the proposed development. For the purposes of this section, properties separated by a public street are not considered adjacent. The minimum depth for such buffers shall be equal to the minimum side and rear setbacks, with a minimum depth of fifteen (15) feet unless otherwise specified in this section. Project boundary buffers shall extend along the entire length of the property line.

A. Buffers Between Adjoining Residential Development. Project Boundary Buffers shall only be required between residentially zoned properties if the proposed new development consists of multi-family housing of five (5) units or more.

B. Buffers Between Non-Residential Developments. Regardless of the adjacent zoning, project boundary buffers shall be required for the following developments:

- A. adult entertainment establishments,
- B. airports,
- C. animal shelters,
- D. asphalt or concrete plants,
- E. correctional facilities,
- F. crematories,
- G. dog kennels,
- H. major auto repair establishments,
- I. firing ranges,
- J. junkyards,
- K. manufacturing,
- L. railroad facilities,
- M. recycling facilities,
- N. resource extraction,
- O. trucking companies,
- P. truck stops,
- Q. major utilities,
- R. warehouse and distribution facilities,
- S. retail buildings greater than 40,000 square feet in area,
- T. waste related facilities.

C. Commercial or Industrial Buffering. Where a commercial or industrial zoning district abuts two street frontages (primary and secondary streets) and the secondary street adjoins a residential zoning district, there shall be a thirty five (35) foot buffer and there shall be no egress and ingress from the secondary street. This shall include not only maintained streets but also platted and recorded right-of-ways. This buffer area herein required is in addition to other required setbacks or screening.

704.2.1.1 Standards.

A. Constructed Buffers. Project boundary buffers shall consist of a continuous solid screen to the height of six (6) feet, serving as a sight and noise barrier. Constructed buffers shall be planted with canopy trees spaced not less than five (5) feet apart at maturity, and a continuous or staggered row of shrubs creating a dense hedge of a minimum of six (6) feet in height at maturity. 50% of trees and 100% of shrubs shall be evergreen.

B. Natural Buffers. Existing, healthy, natural forest cover and other vegetation shall be used to meet buffer requirements, provided that the existing tree cover exceeds fifteen (15) feet in height, and the existing tree canopy covers 75% or more of the required buffer area. Natural buffer areas shall be a minimum of twenty (20) feet in depth. Supplemental plantings may be used to enhance a natural buffer to meet these requirements.

C. Buffers with Overhead Utilities. Buffers where overhead utilities make larger tree planting impractical shall be planted with understory trees.

D. Variations in Buffer Width. Buffer width shall normally be calculated as perpendicular to the property line, however, design variations are allowed and shall be calculated based upon the average width of the buffer. In no case shall the minimum width of the buffer be less than half the required minimum width.

704.2.2 Utility and Service Area Buffers. A continuous evergreen hedge (min. six (6) feet in height at planting), a wall or opaque fence (min. six (6) feet in height), or a combination of the two shall be provided around all ground located service areas, such as dumpsters, mechanical equipment, outdoor storage, and loading/unloading areas. The use of berms to reduce the height of required shrubs, walls or fences is permitted, provided that the buffer is a minimum of six (6) feet in height upon completion.

704.2.3 Parking Area Buffers. A continuous evergreen or semi-evergreen hedge (min. twenty-four (24) inches in height at planting) shall be planted along the perimeter of all parking areas lots to screen from the public view.

704.2.4 Riparian Buffers. Riparian buffers shall be indicated on all site plans, preliminary plats, and final plats for all perennial and intermittent streams, and naturally occurring ponds and lakes within the development, as designated by the United States Geological Survey (USGS).

1. Size. Riparian buffers apply to each side of the stream and shall begin at the most landward limit of the top of the bank perpendicular to the direction of stream flow. Riparian buffers shall be a minimum for 50 feet in width for perennial streams and 30 feet for intermittent streams. Buffers for naturally occurring lakes and ponds shall be 5 feet from the water's edge.

2. Remain in Natural State. Riparian buffers shall remain in a natural undisturbed state, except as allowed by Variance.

3. Encroachments. Crossings by streets, driveways, railroads, recreational features, intakes, docks, utilities, bridges, or other facilities shall be allowed provided they are designed to minimize the amount of intrusion into the riparian buffer.

704.2.5 Easements within Buffers. Required utility easements may cross landscape buffers when necessary, but may not otherwise be located within a required landscape buffer, unless approved by the Public Works Director.

704.3 Maintenance. The owner, developer, or owner's association shall be responsible for continuous maintenance of the installed landscape materials, including plant materials, turf, landscape beds, and irrigation. If landscaping materials die or suffer damages, the owner or developer will be responsible for replacement of the plant materials to match the approved landscape plan.

704.4 Landscape Preservation. Existing trees or plant materials that are to be preserved shall be indicated on the Landscape Plan. Significant trees shall be preserved and maintained where feasible. The Planning Director may give credit for existing trees, so preserved and maintained, and modify the requirements for greenspace and site plantings.

SECTION 705

FENCES, WALLS AND HEDGES

705.1 Permit Required. A fence permit is required to erect, move, or replace an existing fence or repair fifty (50) percent or more of an existing fence. A fence permit may be obtained from City Hall and must be obtained prior to installation of or replacement of a fence. Said permit shall be valid for ninety (90) days, however, at the discretion of the Planning Director, the permit may be extended for an additional ninety (90) days. The information required includes the height, materials, location of the fence, distances from each structure on the property, and lot size. Tenants must have property owner authorization to apply for a fence permit.

EXCEPTION: Fences used for agricultural purposes are exempt from the requirements of this section. Agricultural purposes shall include land zoned A and used for the raising of crops, horticulture, animal, and poultry husbandry.

705.2 General Provisions. Fences and walls within the municipal limits shall conform to the following minimum design standards:

A. Fence Construction: Horizontal and vertical support posts shall be located inside of the fenced area or otherwise hidden from adjacent properties and the general public's view. Shadowbox style fencing may be used to conceal the fence supports.

B. Materials: Fences or walls may be constructed only of the following materials:

1. Provisions General to all Zoning Districts: Fences may be solid wall construction (brick, stone, or stone-faced block); post/plank construction (metal, wood or vinyl); or vinyl-coated chain-link, with limitations as described in this section. No more than two different types of fencing material are permitted. No fence shall be made of, in whole or in part, cloth, canvas, or other like material. The use of barbed wire, razor wire, welded wire, chicken wire, or single strand wire is prohibited, unless specifically authorized by these regulations.

2. Commercial Districts: Metal palisade-style security fencing is permitted, provided that the height, location, and opacity complies with all applicable provisions of these regulations.

3. Industrial Districts: Barbed or razor wire shall be permitted only if the lowest strand is at least seven (7) feet above grade, and when used for security purposes in addition to a regular fence.

C. Location/Setbacks: Fences located along a side or rear setback may be installed on the property line. Fences located within the front yard shall be located at least fifteen (15) feet from the edge of the street or curb, and not within the right-of-way.

D. Height: Fences and walls shall be restricted in maximum height as follows:

1. Residential Districts: For all properties zoned A, R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, and R-5, the maximum height of a fence in a rear or side yard is six (6) feet. Maximum height in a front yard is four (4) feet, but also must comply with the following regulations:

a. Privacy Fences Prohibited in Front Yards. Sight proof fences are not allowed in the required front yard. The fence shall have some open spacing, such as open picket type, wrought iron, or other non-opaque fence design. Visibility through front yard fencing shall not be reduced by greater than fifty (50) percent.

b. Corner and double frontage lots.. The above requirements for fences in a required front yard apply to both front yards on a corner lot. On a double frontage lot, fences, or walls of no more than a height of six (6) feet may project into the yard space at the designated rear of the building.

2. Commercial Districts: For all properties zoned CBD, C-1, and C-2, the maximum height of a fence in a front, rear, or side yard is six (6) feet. Visibility through front yard fencing shall not be reduced by greater than fifty (50) percent.

3. Industrial and Public Service Districts: For all properties zoned I and PS, the maximum height of a fence in a front, rear, or side yard is eight (8) feet. Visibility through front yard fencing shall not be reduced by greater than fifty (50) percent.

E. Sight Distance Triangle: Fences on property that is at the intersection of two streets must allow for adequate sight distance. The sight distance triangle is defined as a line twenty-five (25) feet back from the corner along both the front and side property lines. These two points are connected by a diagonal line. This sight distance triangle must be kept free of fences that would obstruct the motorist views of oncoming traffic.

705.3 Fences or Walls Located within Easements. Fences may not be located directly over any underground utility lines, but may be located within utility easements located in the side yard and/or rear yard. It should be noted that placement of a fence in the utility easement is at the risk of the property owner as the Municipality and utility companies have no responsibility for repair of any fence damaged by construction or maintenance activities on the property.

705.4 Stormwater Flow. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to ensure that a fence does not block or obstruct the flow of storm water.

705.5 Pedestrian Gates. Gates to fences must be a minimum of three (3) feet wide to allow for passage of emergency personnel and equipment.

705.6 Maintenance. All fences must be maintained upright and in good and sound condition, free of damage, breaks or missing structural members. Vegetation adjacent to the fence must be maintained in good condition or trimmed as appropriate. Missing boards, pickets, or posts shall be replaced within forty-five (45) days with material of the same type and quality. Fences designed for painting or similar surface finishes shall be maintained in their original condition as designed. All exposed steel, except the galvanized metal fences, shall have a colored finished coat applied to them and be preserved against rust and corrosion.

705.7 Temporary Fencing. Temporary fencing, such as plastic silt fences or safety fences, is permitted and may be required for active construction projects by the Building Official. Temporary fencing is not to remain in place longer than is necessary to perform its function.

705.8 Fencing Required for Certain Areas and Uses. All towing companies, junkyards, salvage yards, major auto repair operations, and similar operations that store junked or inoperable motor vehicles, and any such business that regularly has items such as, but not limited to, appliances, mowers, yard equipment, and auto parts, in the public view, shall block the view of all such items with 100% opacity privacy fencing and screening as provided in this section. Any existing facilities or operations of this nature within the municipal limits at the time of adoption of these regulations shall comply with this section within ninety (90) days of the effective date of these regulations.