

# Objective Development Standards Custom Zone Toolkit **DRAFT**

Prepared for the City of Santa Fe Springs  
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# I. Introduction

## Background

California must plan for more than 2.5 million units of housing in the next eight-year planning cycle (2021-2029), including 952 homes in Santa Fe Springs. Because of this, the State has passed a series of laws to combat the ongoing housing crisis and better meet the housing needs of Californians, including Senate Bill 35 (Streamlining Approvals), Senate Bill 167 (Removing Barriers), Senate Bill 330 (Expediting Residential Development), among others. These new laws have prompted every city across California to review residential development and design standards in an effort to support faster permitting timelines while still achieving reasonable design goals. Cities must ensure they are complying with all aspects of State law and not hindering the development of housing.

Each municipality has development standards for new buildings which are housed in the Zoning Ordinance of the Municipal Code. These often include building height, density, setbacks, open space, and parking requirements. Cities often supplement these with design guidelines and discretionary review processes to further guide architectural character and urban design; however, these add uncertainty and delays to housing project approvals, leading to fewer and more expensive housing projects. State law now requires that housing projects be reviewed against objective standards, and specifies that subjective standards and guidelines cannot be used to deny or decrease the density of new housing projects. To be considered objective, standards must be uniformly measurable/verifiable, knowable to all parties prior to application submittal, and require no subjective judgment in order to make a determination.

## Project Grant Funding

The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Council approved the 2020 Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) Housing and Sustainable Development (HSD) Call for Applications in November 2020. The goal of the SCP is to implement the policies and programs of Connect SoCal, the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS). With the 2019-2020 Budget Act, \$250 million went to prioritize planning initiatives that would increase housing production in communities throughout the state. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) received \$125 million of this funding to establish the Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) grant program. REAP provides one-time grants to regional entities for planning activities that facilitate compliance in implementing the sixth cycle of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), and this includes efforts to accelerate housing production – such as the development of objective standards.

SCAG awarded a REAP grant to the City of Santa Fe Springs (“City”) to document, assess, and modernize its multi-unit and mixed-use objective standards and permitting. This project, which also serves the cities of Montebello, Santa Monica, and South Pasadena, will help support a greater understanding of the role of objective standards in increasing housing production in Los Angeles County and throughout California. SCAG commissioned AECOM, a design and planning consulting firm, to create a “toolkit” of objective development standards that will assist the four cities in more quickly adopting new standards into their respective zoning codes.

## Objective Development Standard Toolkits

As part of Task 2.6, two common sets of standards were developed to be shared across each of the four cities served by the project – one for Mixed-Use projects and another for Multi-Family (Medium-Density) Residential projects. The standards have been tested on prototypical sites to ensure the standards enable intended development, allow for maximum density, and provide the appropriate level of regulation. For the most part, standards are designed to scale to different density and height limits, so the same or similar

standards can be used across zoning districts regardless of development intensity. This is an effort to simplify the code and ease the understanding and implementation of the standards.

This memo, the Custom Zone Toolkit, was developed specifically for Santa Fe Springs. The common standards were used as a basis for the Custom Zone Toolkit, which includes more tailored standards for the City's new Mixed-Use and existing R3 zoning districts. This document is intended to be reviewed by City staff, the public, and decision-making bodies for discussion and feedback. As a next step beyond the scope of this project, the City may adopt the new standards into the Zoning Code as appropriate.

As this is a toolkit of recommendations, standards selected by the City to propose for inclusion in the Zoning Code may need further refinement based on the City's unique requirements and approaches, including different measurement definitions and contextual considerations. Standards for Mixed-Use may be applied to the City's Downtown and TOD (Transit-Oriented Development) mixed-use zones as well.

**The standards are designed to:**

- Translate existing applicable Zoning Code regulations and design guidelines into clear, objective standards in compliance with Senate Bill 35;
- Allow the maximum density permitted by zoning consistent with Senate Bill 330;
- Focus on zones that apply to the highest volume potential development type, locations of greatest concern, or standards that are most challenging locally; and
- Inform building form and site planning while adapting to market trends and shifting demand.

**The toolkit is designed to:**

- Be the basis for the development of standards for multi-unit/mixed use projects that support the level of design the City expects, confirming compliance through an administrative process;
- Make it easier for applicants, staff, and the public to understand the regulations;
- Create greater certainty in the review process and streamline project approvals;
- Encourage housing production so the City can meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) goals; and
- Comply with state law that requires qualifying housing projects to be reviewed against objective standards<sup>1</sup>.

**Informing the Toolkit**

The project included a high-level technical analysis of existing policy documents, development standards and regulations, design guidelines, permit procedures, and recently approved projects and submitted applications under review to understand how the City currently processes applications and how long the process typically takes, as well as how standards are being interpreted and applied during the permitting and entitlement process. This analysis included a review of the General Plan Land Use and Housing elements and associated policies, the City's Zoning Code and specific plans, as well as a handful of

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<sup>1</sup> Senate Bill 9 also requires use of objective standards for related project reviews in single-family zones; separate from this SCAG project focused on multi-unit/mixed-use zones.

representative housing development projects. It resulted in initial findings and recommendations to inform the standards developed for the toolkit and other related actions for City consideration.

## **Public Engagement**

Additionally, the City undertook an engagement process to provide information to community members about the objective development standards and streamlined permitting project, and gather input to inform the creation of the recommended standards in the toolkit. The following outreach events were held to engage the public, stakeholders, and decision-makers in ways that result in meaningful participation.

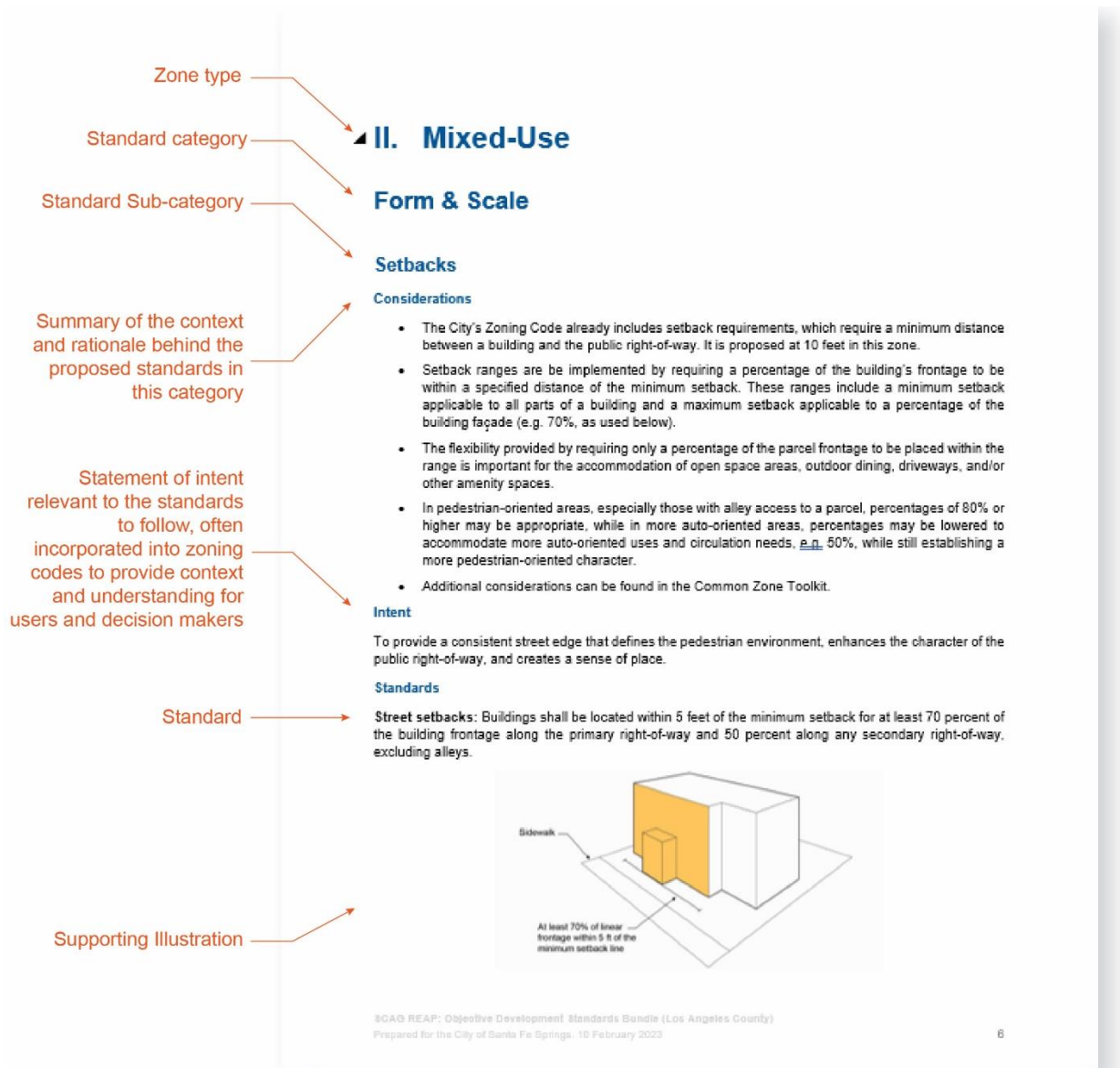
- **City Council/Planning Commission Study Session:** This event was held on July 19, 2022, to inform the City's decision-makers in a joint session about the project and relevant State laws to collaborate on locally appropriate solutions to increase capacity potential and accelerate housing production.
- **Public Workshops:** Two community workshops focused on building an understanding of objective standards and providing the public with an opportunity to give feedback on draft materials. The first workshop was held at City Hall on July 20, 2022. The second is **TBD**. Both workshops were hybrid meetings with opportunities for in person and virtual participation, and were coordinated with the City's Housing Element rezoning project.
- **Final Project Presentation:** The final presentations to the Planning Commission and City Council will be held in the spring, providing background, analysis, and a summary of the proposed objective standards and other project deliverables.

## How to Use the Toolkit

For each zoning district, standards in the toolkit are organized into four categories:

- Form, related to the overall building massing and scale;
- Frontage, related to how the building meets the street and façade design;
- Open Space, related to the provision of private and common outdoor/recreational space;
- Parking, related to the provision of auto and bike parking.

The guide below explains how the sections and sub-sections in this document are intended to be used:



## II. Mixed-Use

### Form & Scale

#### Setbacks

##### Considerations

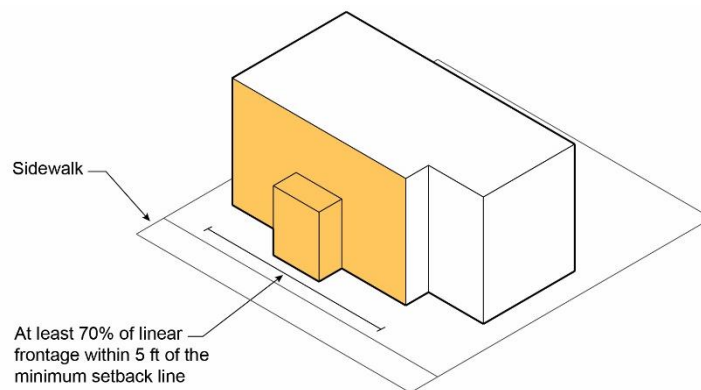
- The City's Zoning Code already includes setback requirements, which require a minimum distance between a building and the public right-of-way. It is proposed at 10 feet in this zone.
- Setback ranges are implemented by requiring a percentage of the building's frontage to be within a specified distance of the minimum setback. These ranges include a minimum setback applicable to all parts of a building and a maximum setback applicable to a percentage of the building façade (e.g. 70%, as used below).
- The flexibility provided by requiring only a percentage of the parcel frontage to be placed within the range is important for the accommodation of open space areas, outdoor dining, driveways, and/or other amenity spaces.
- In pedestrian-oriented areas, especially those with alley access to a parcel, percentages of 80% or higher may be appropriate, while in more auto-oriented areas, percentages may be lowered to accommodate more auto-oriented uses and circulation needs, e.g. 50%, while still establishing a more pedestrian-oriented character.
- Additional considerations can be found in the Common Zone Toolkit.

##### Intent

To provide a consistent street edge that defines the pedestrian environment, enhances the character of the public right-of-way, and creates a sense of place.

##### Standards

**Street setbacks:** Buildings shall be located within 5 feet of the minimum setback for at least 70 percent of the building frontage along the primary right-of-way and 50 percent along any secondary right-of-way, excluding alleys.



**Landscaping.** A minimum percentage of the setback area shall be landscaped with trees, shrubs, and/or groundcover, either in the form of in-ground landscaping or planters, as follows:

Frontages with shared entrances to internal circulation	50%
Frontages with individual residential unit entrances	30%
With a stoop taller than 30 inches	10%
Frontages with commercial tenant entrances	30%
With outdoor dining	10%

**Interior setbacks:** Buildings shall be set back a minimum of 15 feet from adjacent Residential zoning districts.



## Streetwall

### Considerations

- Streetwall standards, in conjunction with setbacks, can help create pedestrian-oriented development by mandating a certain level of massing at the street. It can also be used to move massing away from adjacent properties.
- Streetwall standards are often used to reinforce an existing, historic built form, but can also be used to create a new pedestrian-oriented district or corridor with a more traditional urban character.

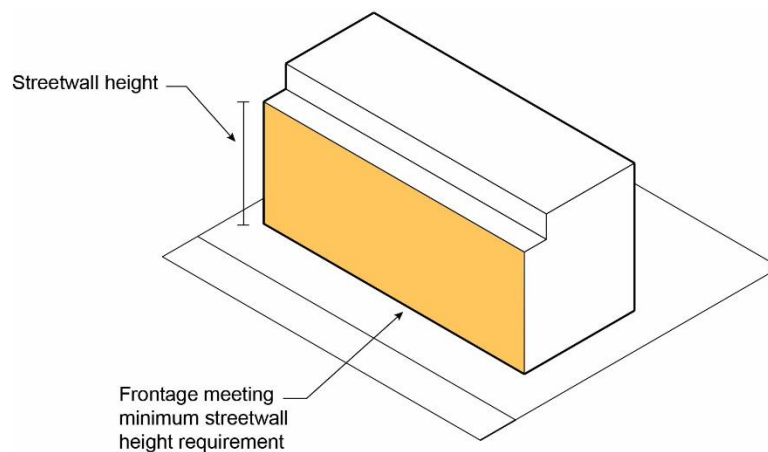
### Intent

To encourage urban form that “frames” the street and creates a sense of enclosure for pedestrians.

### Standards

**Streetwall:** Street-facing facades shall meet or exceed 25 feet (or 2 stories in height) for at least 75 percent of building frontage along public rights-of-way, unless the overall building height is lower than 2 stories.

Streetwall is defined as any street-facing façade, excluding appurtenances, within 5 feet of the minimum setback and is not required to be continuous.



## Stepbacks

### Considerations

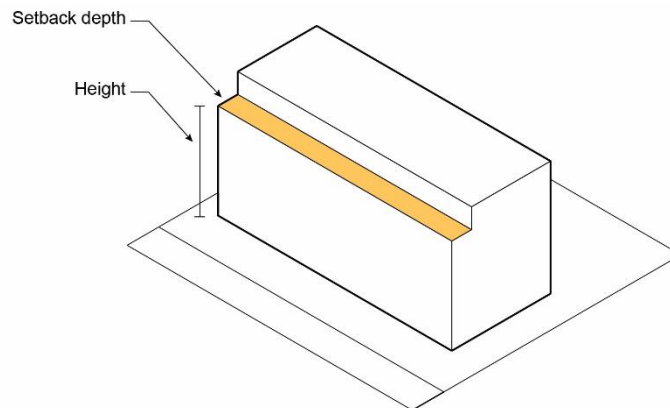
- The proposed height for this zone is 60 feet and 4 stories. As written, this standard is meant for Density Bonus projects that seek additional height in exchange for affordable housing.
- Portions of a building that are set back from the street frontage are generally more hidden from view and can give the appearance of a shorter building to those on the street.
- Interior stepbacks (also known as daylight/encroachment planes) are used to step down building massing to less intensive uses (e.g. where mixed-use meets single-family residential).

### Intent

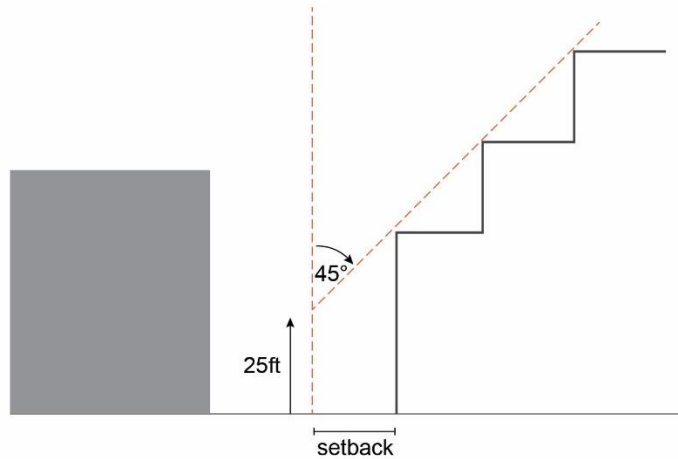
To encourage building heights and massing that are responsive to the surrounding context, including opportunities to reinforce the built character along streets as well as the need to transition to lower-density surroundings in the rear.

### Standards

**Street stepbacks:** Street-facing facades greater than 4 stories shall be stepped back a minimum of ten feet from the minimum setback line. Uses allowed within the setback depth include balconies, terraces, shade structures, and similar open space features.



**Interior/rear stepbacks:** Adjacent to Residential zoning districts, buildings shall not be located within a plane sloping upward and inward at a 45-degree angle measured from the vertical, starting 25 feet above the existing grade along the property line. Uses allowed within the stepback include balconies, terraces, shade structures, and similar open space features.



## Rooflines

### Considerations

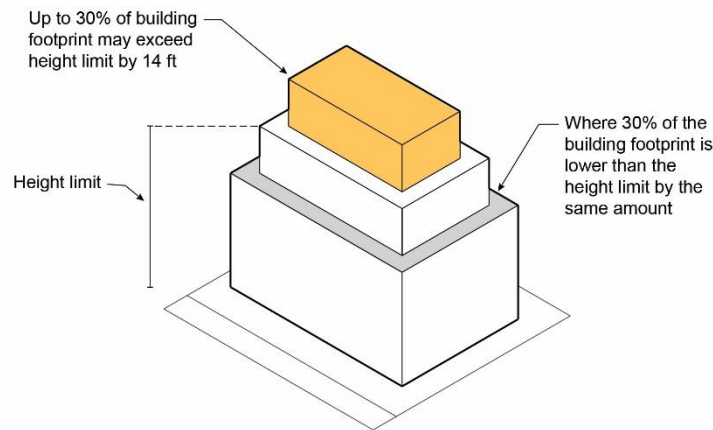
- Standards encouraging varied roof lines can help prevent monolithic buildings and add visual interest in new development.
- One approach can be to allow buildings to exceed height limits, but only for a percentage of the building footprint, so that the additional floor contributes to variations in the roof line and/or façade plane.
- If the additional height bonus (described above) is not desired, “height averaging” may be used, which allows the additional height only if other portions of the building are shorter in equal measure, so that the average height of building is at or even below the height limit. This could result in greater variation in building form and rooflines, but makes it somewhat less likely that a developer would choose this option.

### Intent

To allow space for variation and incentivize differing building heights within the same project, contributing to a more distinctive and visually compelling skyline.

### Standards

**Roofline variation:** Buildings may exceed the height limit by up to 14 feet for a maximum of 30 percent of a building’s footprint. This allowance is not applicable within interior/rear setbacks or stepbacks and may not be used in conjunction with a concession for building height through density bonus.



## Modulation

### Considerations

- Building modulation/articulation standards help to avoid monotonous and flat façades by requiring portions of a building façade to be stepped back from the street.
- The menu of standards options included below emphasize flexible approaches to modulation that are not specific to a particular architectural style and that allow for creativity in design.
- When modulation, length, and corner treatment standards are used together, it is important to understand how they relate to each other in specific areas with unique parcel sizes and development typologies so that unintended consequences are avoided.
- Dimension requirements may be modified to better fit the individual style or objectives of the city.

### Intent

To prevent building façades that are monolithic in appearance and avoid flat or featureless design.

### Standards

**Façade modulation:** Façades shall be modulated with at least three of the following elements:

- a) Balconies recessed at least 2 feet in depth;
- b) Vertical pilasters 3 inches in depth reflecting building structure or architectural style;
- c) Horizontal bands, trims, or reveals 3 inches in depth along multiple levels;
- d) A change in material or texture (excluding windows, doors and railings).

**Façade length:** Street-facing façades of 150 feet or longer shall include a minimum break of 10 percent of the façade length or 20 feet in width, at least 10 feet deep and open to the sky.

**Corner treatments:** Corner-facing facades of 75 feet or longer shall incorporate at least two of the following elements within 50 feet of the building corner along the primary frontage:

- a) A building entrance;
- b) A change in height of at least 4 feet for an area 10 feet by 10 feet minimum;
- c) A change in façade plane on upper stories of at least 2 feet in depth;
- d) A change of façade material or texture (excluding windows, doors and railings);
- e) A public open space or outdoor dining.

# Frontages

## Ground Floor

### Considerations

- Standards in this section are designed for both non-residential (including commercial) space or residential common spaces along the ground floor, such as lobbies, lounges, or fitness centers. If individual residential unit entrances are allowed on the ground floor, see the Multi-Family Standards in Section III of this document.
- Ground floor heights less than 14-15 feet have been shown to be harder to lease and less workable for adaptive reuse in the future. Note that this is a floor-to-floor measurement, so floor-to-ceiling heights will be lower in a finished tenant space.
- Transparency requirements should be higher in pedestrian-oriented retail areas (70-80%) and may be lower (around 50%) in more auto-oriented areas where transparency may not be as feasible for many uses.
- Some cities have begun to require shade structures (e.g. awnings) along certain corridors to protect pedestrians from direct sun and heat, particularly in places where street trees are not providing sufficient shade. An example of a shading requirement is provided.

### Intent

To promote an active, accessible, and comfortable pedestrian environment that enhances the public realm at a human scale, provides visual interest, and enables flexible uses over time.

### Standards

**Floor height:** Ground floor commercial, non-residential, and residential common spaces shall have a minimum height of 15 feet, measured floor-to-floor. Ground floor residential units shall have a minimum height of 10 feet, measured floor-to-floor.

**Elevation:** The ground floor shall be located within 2 feet above or below sidewalk elevation. Primary entrances shall be located at sidewalk elevation.

**Entrances.** Street-facing façades shall provide a minimum of one entrance per 100 feet of frontage that opens directly onto the sidewalk or another public open space.

Entrances shall be set back at least 30 inches from the public right-of-way.

Primary entrances shall be distinguished by at least one of the following:

- a) Awning/canopy;
- b) Overhang/recessed entry;
- c) Porch/portico;
- d) Trellis.

**Transparency:** Street-facing façades shall incorporate glazing for a certain percentage of the building frontage between 2 and 8 feet in height from sidewalk elevation. Windows shall provide views into display, lobby, sales, work, or similar active areas.

For non-residential and residential common space uses, at least 60 percent of the frontage shall be transparent.

For ground floor residential units, at least 15 percent of the frontage shall be transparent.

**Blank walls:** Windowless expanses of walls on the ground floor shall not exceed 20 feet in length. Blank walls over 10 feet in length shall be enhanced by one of the following:

- a) Pattern, motif, etching, or similar decoration;
- b) Landscaping that covers at least 50 percent of the wall area;
- c) Trellis or similar projection;
- d) Public art approved by review authority.

**Shading:** Shade structures shall allow a minimum vertical clearance of eight feet above sidewalk elevation. Shade structures shall not conflict with existing street trees.

**Security devices:** Any security devices (i.e. roll-up doors) shall be designed to be fully concealed and hidden from view during business hours.

## Façades

### Considerations

- Architectural elements can be difficult to standardize – especially when they must account for different architectural styles – and the standards here are meant to be flexible to allow architects creative license for various kinds of façade detailing.
- Transparency is important – though residential units require less than commercial uses. Solar heat gain in the summer can also be a reason to limit the transparency required, though that can be partially mitigated by appropriate shading.
- Allowing balconies to project a certain amount from the building façade – but only counting them towards the Open Space requirements with a larger dimension (see following section) – means they will need to be inset, adding another level of plane variation to the building façade.
- Lighting is important for safety in large projects, but is also a common complaint among neighbors of new development. These standards are designed to reduce or eliminate light trespass.
- General material standards are provided to prevent incongruent building façades with excessive changes in materials. The City may opt to include specific materials and/or colors standards based on the existing character of the street.

### Intent

To address the incorporation of architectural elements and features for attractive articulation, creating well-designed and coherent building façades with sufficient detail, relief and/or variation.

### Standards

**Composition:** Street-facing façades shall include at least three of the following:

- a) Pattern of modulation or fenestration;
- b) Datum lines along the length of the building (e.g. cornice) at least 4 inches in depth;
- c) Repeated projections (e.g. architectural detail, shading) at least 4 inches in depth;
- d) Balconies over 20 percent of the elevation;
- e) Screening (e.g. lattices, louvers).

**Transparency:** Street-facing façades shall incorporate glazing for at least 30 percent of the façade, including ground floor transparency.

**Windows:** Windows shall be recessed at least 2 inches from the face of the façade.

Windows shall have a visible transmittance (VT) of 0.6 or higher. Mirrored, tinted or highly reflective glazing is prohibited.

Vinyl windows are prohibited.

**Materials:** A minimum of two materials shall be used on any building façade, in addition to glazing, railings, and trim, and shall correspond to variations in building plane.

A primary material shall cover at least 40 percent of any building façade, excluding windows.

**Color:** No more than four colors shall be applied to the building façade (one primary color and up to three trim colors), excluding art (e.g. a mural).



**Balconies:** Balconies shall project a maximum of 4 feet from the building façade and shall not be located within 6 feet of any interior property line.

**Roof decks:** Roof decks located within 25 feet of a Residential zoning district shall be set back a minimum of 5 feet from the building edge.

The sum of all roof decks on a single building shall not exceed 60 percent of the roof area to allow for mechanical equipment including solar panels.

**Lighting:** All structures, entrances, parking areas, common open spaces, and pedestrian pathways shall be lit from dusk to dawn.

Lighting shall be located to illuminate only the intended area, and a minimum of 90% of all lighting shall be directed downward.

Lighting shall not extend beyond an interior property line, and light sources shall not be visible from adjacent properties.

**Screening:** Mechanical equipment, excluding solar panels, shall be screened from public view.

**Fences and walls:** Barbed wire, chain-link, and razor wire are prohibited.

# Open Space

## Considerations

- Minimum open space area recommendations are based on the size and type of project. In the example standards below, private open space is specific to a unit, while common open space is shared by multiple residents, but generally not open to the public.
- While many California cities require open space through a per unit requirement (e.g. 200 sf/unit) some cities have moved to a requirement based on a building's gross floor area (GFA) to more closely correlate the amount of open space to the size of the building and the expected number of residents. With per unit requirements, a studio and a 3-bedroom unit would be required to provide the same amount of open space, despite likely differences in the number of people living in the unit.
- Open space requirements directly influence the massing and design of a building: in general, greater private and/or common open space requirements tend to lead to more balconies, upper floor terraces, ground floor courtyards, amenity spaces over parking podiums, and other types of open space that influence a building's character, scale, and form.
- Cities may opt to emphasize common space over private, or vice versa. Though we recommend combining the two into one residential open space requirement to allow for more design flexibility, cities may still prioritize one over the other by including standards for a minimum or maximum percentage which may be counted towards either, depending on the focus of the city. Private open space typically means more balconies, while common can lead to more courtyards or roof decks.
- Some cities now require open space for large non-residential/commercial buildings – and, while unlikely in a housing-focused project, a standard based on GFA is included below.

## Intent

To provide a variety of open spaces that contribute enhanced livability by providing residents access to light and air, and tie open space requirements to the size of buildings and number of residents.

## Standards

### Minimum Area

Minimum Open Space shall comply with the applicable design standards depending on type of open space. Areas used for parking, loading, or storage shall not be counted towards minimum Open Space.

- **Residential Open Space:** Projects with a residential component shall provide a minimum of 15 percent of the residential GFA as a combination of Common and Private Open Space.
- **Non-residential:** Projects with over 40,000 square feet of non-residential GFA shall provide a minimum of 5 percent of the non-residential GFA as Common Open Space.

### **Private Open Space**

**Access:** Private Open Space shall abut and have direct access to the associated tenant space.

**Amount:** A minimum of 30 percent of the required Residential Open Space shall be Private Open Space.

**Dimensions:** Private Open Space shall have a minimum area of 40 square feet and a minimum dimension of 5 feet in each direction.

**Distribution:** All Private Open Space shall be outdoors and may be located within a required setback or stepback.

### **Common Open Space**

**Access:** Common Open Space shall be available to all tenants of the building at no cost.

**Amount:** A minimum of 30 percent of the required Residential Open Space shall be Common Open Space.

**Dimensions:** Common Open Space shall have a minimum area of 500 square feet and a minimum dimension of 15 feet in each direction.

**Distribution:** A minimum of 70 percent of Common Open Space shall be outdoors, and a minimum of 80 percent of outdoor Common Open Space shall be open to the sky.

A maximum of 30 percent of Common Open Space shall be indoors (i.e. lounges, fitness centers, and similar). Indoor Common Open Space shall not include spaces primarily used for circulation.

**Landscaping:** A minimum of 25 percent of Common Open Space shall be planted area with a minimum dimension of 30 inches in each direction, with a soil depth of at least 18 inches.

**Trees:** A minimum of one 24-inch box tree per project or for every 500 square feet of outdoor Common Open Space, whichever is greater, shall be planted within the Common Open Space, excluding rooftop decks.

**Hardscape:** A maximum of 25 percent of Common Open Space may be paved in standard concrete, with the remainder using enhanced paving such as brick, natural stone, unit concrete pavers, textured/colored concrete, or similar.

**Water features:** A maximum of 5 percent of Common Open Space shall be decorative water features, such as fountains or reflecting pools.

# Parking

## Considerations

- According to recent California State law, no parking is required for housing within a half-mile radius of high-quality public transit stops. Regardless, it is expected that many new projects will include at least some parking.
- Curb cuts can create conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, as well as vehicles and other vehicles. In general, corridors should maintain building frontages while vehicular access is located on side streets or from alleys if present.

## Intent

To reduce the visual impacts of parking and the potential for conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians on the sidewalk.

## Standards

### Vehicle Access

**Driveways:** A maximum of one two-way driveway shall be permitted on sites with less than 200 feet of primary street frontage. A maximum of two two-lane driveways shall be permitted on sites with 200 feet or more of primary street frontage.

A minimum of one driveway shall be located on a secondary street or alley, where available.

Driveways and associated curb-cuts shall have a maximum width of 25 feet.

The minimum distance between driveways on the same lot shall be 50 feet.

Controlled entrances to parking (e.g. gates) shall be located at least 20 feet from the property line to allow for a queueing vehicle.

### Surface Parking

**Setbacks:** Parking shall be set back a minimum of 30 feet from the primary frontage, 10 feet from any secondary frontage, and 5 feet from any adjacent Residential zoning district.

Parking shall be buffered by permitted non-parking uses or a landscaped setback adjacent to the property line, except for vehicle/pedestrian access.

Landscaped setbacks shall include hedges or shrubs with a minimum height of 3 feet at the time of planting that form a continuous visual screen to block vehicle headlights.

**Landscaping:** A minimum of 5 percent of the parking area shall be landscaped and permeable, in addition to any landscaped setbacks. This area shall be distributed throughout the parking area.

**Trees:** A minimum of one shade tree for every 4 vehicle parking spaces shall be planted and evenly distributed throughout the parking area.

## Structured Parking

**Setbacks:** Structured parking shall be set back a minimum of 15 feet from any adjacent Residential zoning district.

Above ground parking shall be buffered by permitted non-parking uses with a minimum depth of 35 feet adjacent to the primary street property line, except for vehicle/pedestrian access.

Semi-subterranean parking shall not extend beyond the building façade and may not project higher than four feet above sidewalk elevation.

## Bicycle Parking

**Minimum spaces:** Bicycle parking shall be provided based on primary use as follows:

Use	Short-term	Long-term
Residential	10% of long-term; 2 minimum	1 space per four units; 2 minimum
Office/Industrial	1 space per 8,000 sq ft, 2 minimum	1 space per 8,000 sq ft, 2 minimum
Other non-residential	1 space per 4,000 sq ft, 2 minimum	1 space per 4,000 sq ft, 2 minimum

**Short-term parking:** Short-term bicycle parking shall be located within 50 feet of and visible from a primary entrance.

Short-term bicycle parking may be located within the public right-of-way subject to approval from the Director and the Director of Public Works, provided that an unobstructed sidewalk clearance of at least 5 feet is maintained for pedestrians at all times.

Each required bicycle parking space shall have a parking rack securely fastened to the ground. Parking racks shall support each bicycle at a minimum of two points, including at least one point on the frame, and shall allow the frame and at least one wheel to be locked with a U-shaped lock.

**Long-term parking:** Long-term bicycle parking shall be located on the ground floor or one level below, within 75 feet of an accessible building entrance, and without requiring the use of stairs.

Long-term bicycle parking shall be provided in covered, lockable enclosures with permanently anchored racks for bicycles, lockable bicycle rooms with permanently anchored racks, or lockable, permanently anchored bicycle lockers.

A minimum of 1 electrical outlet shall be available in each long-term bicycle parking area for the use of electric bicycle charging.

**Horizontal storage:** Each horizontal bicycle space shall be designed to maintain a minimum of two feet in width and six feet in length, with a minimum of seven feet of vertical clearance.

**Vertical storage:** Each vertical or wall-mounted bicycle space shall be designed to maintain a minimum of three feet six inches in length, with three feet between racks and a minimum of seven feet of vertical clearance.

**Aisles:** Access to bicycle parking spaces shall be at least five feet in width. Bicycle spaces shall be separated from auto parking spaces or drive aisles by a fence, wall, curb, or at least five feet of open area.

## III. Multi-Family Standards

### Form & Scale

#### Setbacks

##### Considerations

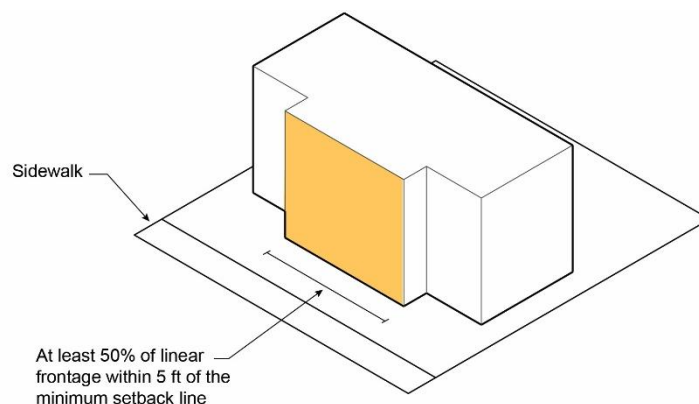
- Street setback standards help contribute to an area's urban form by establishing either a traditional, pedestrian character in which buildings are placed directly adjacent to the street; or alternatively, by establishing a more auto-oriented character where buildings are placed towards the rear of the parcel, typically with parking in front.
- Low to medium-density residential developments typically have larger setbacks than higher-intensity uses in order to give residents privacy and separation from the public realm. At least 5 to 10 feet is recommended.
- Buildings with consistent setbacks create a comfortable rhythm along the street and contribute to the walkability of the neighborhood.

##### Intent

To provide a consistent street edge that defines the pedestrian environment, enhances the character of the public right-of-way, and creates a sense of place.

##### Standards

**Setbacks:** Buildings shall be set back a minimum of 15 feet from the property line. A minimum of 50 percent of ground-floor building frontage shall be placed at or within 5 feet of the front setback.



**Landscaping:** All setbacks shall be landscaped with the exception of driveways and pedestrian paths.

## Stepbacks

### Considerations

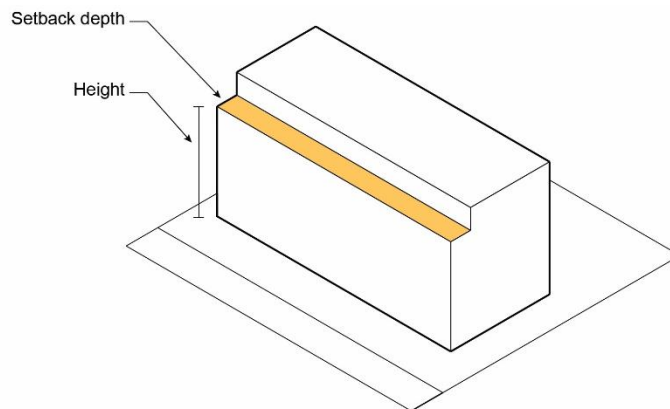
- Building height is limited to 25 feet in the R3 zone; new projects may apply for additional height through the state Density Bonus program, which is generally when stepbacks would be required.
- Street stepbacks are used where there may be sensitivity to massing along the street frontage and/or where new development is permitted to be significantly higher than existing development and height transitions are desired.
- Portions of a building that are set back from the street frontage are generally more hidden from view and can give the appearance of a shorter building to those on the street.
- Interior stepbacks are used to step down building massing to less intensive uses (e.g. where mixed-use meets single-family residential).

### Intent

To encourage building scales that are responsive to the surrounding context, including opportunities to reinforce the built character along streets and transition to lower-density surroundings.

### Standards

**Street Stepbacks:** On street-facing façades, portions of a building above the second story shall be stepped back a minimum of 5 feet, measured from the building façade.



**Interior Stepbacks:** On façades abutting R1 zoning districts, the building shall be stepped back above the second story a minimum of 5 feet, measured from the building façade.

## Modulation

### Considerations

- Building modulation/articulation standards help to avoid monotonous and flat façades by requiring portions of a building façade to be stepped back from the street.
- The menu of standards options included below emphasize flexible approaches to modulation that are not specific to a particular architectural style and that allow for creativity in design.
- Dimension requirements may be modified to better fit the individual style or objectives of the city.

### Intent

To design buildings with sensible forms and a unified architectural vision, creating visual patterns and rhythms in the façade while mitigating the monolithic appearance of larger buildings and avoiding flat or featureless design.

### Standards

**Building length:** Buildings shall be no longer than 6 units or 150 feet in length, whichever is less, with a minimum separation of 10 feet between buildings.

**Façade modulation.** Street-facing façades over 2 stories in height shall incorporate two of the following:

- a) A sloped roof with a pitch greater than 3/12;
- b) A flat roof with a minimum 2-foot vertical height difference for a minimum of 10 feet in length and depth;
- c) A top-level stepback of at least 2 feet for a minimum of 25 percent of the length of the façade;
- d) A terrace at least 5 feet in depth and 8 feet in width, open to the sky, at least every 50 feet;
- e) Balconies over 20 percent of the elevation;
- f) A change in material or texture (excluding windows, doors and railings).

**Façade break.** Façade planes adjacent to R1 zoning districts shall not exceed 50 feet in width without a façade break of at least 5 feet deep and 10 feet wide.



# Frontages

## Ground Floor

### Considerations

- Standards are designed for individual residential unit entries – townhome development being the most likely product below 25 dwelling units per acre. Activation of the street through high-quality design is especially important at lower densities since there are fewer people/businesses to make the street active.
- Entrances oriented toward the street and direct pathways help maintain connection to the public realm, while setbacks and an elevation change of at least a few steps can help physically separate them from passers-by.
- Walls, fences, and hardscape over 30 inches in height adjacent to the sidewalk can constrain the public realm, so it's recommended to set those back and provide a landscaped buffer.

### Intent

To promote an active, accessible, and comfortable pedestrian environment that enhances the public realm at a human scale, promotes a sense of openness, and enables flexible uses over time.

### Standards

**Entrances:** Residential units located adjacent to a street shall have a primary entrance facing the street. Entrances shall have a minimum 3-foot covered landing area at the same grade as the interior floor.

Entrances shall incorporate at least three of the following:

- a) Recession at least 2 feet from the building façade;
- b) Overhead projection of at least 2 feet in depth (e.g. porch roof);
- c) A sidelight window, adjacent window, or door with a window;
- d) At least one stair, up or down, from the pedestrian pathway;
- e) Paving material, texture, or pattern differentiated from the pedestrian pathway.

**Elevation:** Buildings shall have a finished floor between two and four feet above the nearest public sidewalk elevation. On sloping sites, up to 25 percent of units may have finished floors up to 6 feet above the nearest sidewalk.

**Paths:** Pedestrian pathways to all primary entrances and common areas shall have a minimum clearance of 3 feet in width, including to lobbies, open space, parking, and refuse collection areas.

Where located parallel to a driveway, a change of material or pattern shall distinguish pedestrian pathways from vehicular travel lanes.

**Walls and fences:** Freestanding walls, fences, and raised planters taller than 30 inches shall be set back a minimum of 18 inches from the property line, separated by planted area.

**Stoops and patios:** The side of a patio or stoop (when parallel to a sidewalk) taller than 30 inches shall be set back a minimum of 18 inches from the property line, separated by planted area.

## Façades

### Considerations

- Architectural elements can be difficult to standardize – especially when they must account for different architectural styles – and the standards here are meant to be flexible to allow architects creative license for various kinds of façade detailing.
- Transparency is important – though residential units require less than commercial uses. Solar heat gain in the summer can also be a reason to limit the transparency required, though that can be partially mitigated by appropriate shading.
- Allowing balconies to project a certain amount from the building façade – but only counting them towards the Open Space requirements with a larger dimension (see following section) – means they will need to be inset, adding another level of plane variation to the building façade.
- Lighting is important for safety in large projects, but is also a common complaint among neighbors of new development. These standards are designed to reduce or eliminate light trespass.
- General material standards are provided to prevent incongruent building façades with excessive changes in materials. The City may opt to include specific materials and/or colors standards based on the existing character of the street.
- In some townhome projects, particularly those on narrow lots, developers often build “side-loaded” townhomes in which the units are oriented parallel to the street, facing the driveway, so that the front of development appears to be the side of a unit. This typology has implications for the character of the neighborhood as the buildings don’t always appear to “address” the street. Objective standards can help to mitigate this effect.

### Intent

To address the incorporation of architectural elements and features for attractive articulation, creating well-designed and coherent building façades with sufficient detail, relief and/or variation.

### Standards

**Transparency:** Street-facing façades shall incorporate glazing for at least 20 percent of the overall façade, including at least 15 percent of the ground level.

**Windows:** Windows shall be recessed at least 2 inches from the face of the façade.

Windows shall have a visible transmittance (VT) of 0.5 or higher. Mirrored, tinted or highly reflective glazing is prohibited.

Vinyl windows are prohibited.

**Materials:** A minimum of two materials shall be used on any building façade, in addition to glazing, railings, and trim, and shall correspond to variations in building plane.

A primary material shall cover at least 40 percent of any building façade, excluding windows.

No more than four colors shall be applied to the building façade (one primary color and up to three trim colors), excluding art (e.g. a mural).

**Color:** No more than four colors shall be applied to the building façade (one primary color and up to three trim colors), excluding art (e.g. a mural).

**Balconies:** Balconies shall project a maximum of 4 feet from the building façade and shall not be located within 6 feet of any interior property line.

Side-loaded townhomes shall incorporate at least one front-facing balcony.

**Lighting:** All structures, entrances, parking areas, common open spaces, and pedestrian pathways shall be lit from dusk to dawn.

Lighting shall be located to illuminate only the intended area, and a minimum of 90 percent of lighting shall be directed downward.

Lighting shall not extend beyond an interior property line, and light sources shall not be visible from adjacent properties.

**Screening:** Rooftop equipment, excluding solar photovoltaic, shall be screened from public view.

**Fences and walls:** Barbed wire, chain-link, and razor wire are prohibited.

# Open Space

## Considerations

- Minimum area recommendations are based on the size of the project.
- Some cities have moved from a per unit requirement to one based on gross floor area (Los Angeles) or per bedroom (Pasadena) in order to better correlate the amount of open space to the size of the building and the expected number of residents.
- Basing the residential open space requirement on gross floor area is the simplest calculation for staff, yet the amount of floor area can change throughout the design process, making it harder for developers who don't provide beyond the minimum.

## Intent

To provide a variety of open spaces that contribute enhanced livability by providing residents access to light and air, and tie open space requirements to the size of buildings and number of residents.

## Standards

### Site Landscaping

At least 15 percent of the overall site shall be landscaped.

### Minimum Area

Minimum Open Space shall comply with the applicable design standards depending on type of open space. Areas used for parking, loading, or storage shall not be counted towards minimum Open Space.

- **Residential Open Space:** Projects with a residential component shall provide a minimum of 15 percent of the residential GFA as Private Open Space and 5 percent of the residential GFA as Common Open Space.

### Private Open Space

**Access:** Private Open Space shall abut and have direct access to the associated tenant space.

**Dimensions:** Private Open Space shall have a minimum area of 40 square feet and a minimum dimension of 5 feet in each direction, with a vertical clearance of at least 8 feet.

**Distribution:** Private Open Space shall be outdoors and may be located within a required setback.

## Common Open Space

**Access:** Common Open Space shall be available to all tenants of the building at no cost.

**Types:** Common Open Space shall be provided by at least one of the following and designed to comply with the associated standards:

- a) Backyard or courtyard on the ground floor;

**Dimensions:** Common Open Space shall have a minimum area of 360 square feet and a minimum dimension of 15 feet in each direction.

**Distribution:** Common Open Space shall be outdoors, and a minimum of 80 percent of Common Open Space shall be open to the sky.

**Landscaping:** A minimum of 15 percent of Common Open Space shall be planted area with a minimum dimension of 30 inches in each direction, with a soil depth of at least 18 inches.

**Trees:** A minimum of one 24-inch box tree per project or for every 500 square feet of Common Open Space, whichever is greater, shall be planted within the Common Open Space. At least 50 percent shall be shade trees.

**Hardscape:** A maximum of 50 percent of Common Open Space may be paved in standard concrete, with the remainder using enhanced paving such as brick, natural stone, unit concrete pavers, textured/colored concrete, or similar.

**Water features:** A maximum of 10 percent of Common Open Space shall be decorative water features, such as fountains or reflecting pools.

- b) Roof deck, terrace, or similar on upper floors;

**Dimensions:** Common Open Space shall have a minimum area of 400 square feet and a minimum dimension of 15 feet in each direction.

**Distribution:** Common Open Space shall be outdoors, and a minimum of 80 percent of Common Open Space shall be open to the sky.

**Landscaping:** A minimum of 15 percent of Common Open Space shall be planted area with a minimum dimension of 30 inches in each direction, with a soil depth of at least 18 inches.

**Hardscape:** A maximum of 50 percent of Common Open Space may be paved in standard concrete, with the remainder using enhanced paving such as brick, natural stone, unit concrete pavers, textured/colored concrete, or similar.

**Water features:** A maximum of 10 percent of Common Open Space shall be decorative water features, such as fountains or reflecting pools.

- c) Multi-use driveway.

**Paving.** The entire surface of the driveway shall be comprised of permeable pavers.

**Landscaped buffer.** The driveway shall be lined by a minimum 18-inch wide planted area, except at garage entries and pedestrian pathways. If the landscaped buffer is adjacent to a wall, it shall include shrubs or vines of at least 24 inches in height.

# Parking

## Considerations

- According to recent state law, no parking is required for housing within a half-mile radius of public transit stops. Regardless, it is expected that most new projects will include at least some parking.
- Curb cuts can create conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, as well as vehicles and other vehicles. In general, corridors should maintain building frontages while vehicular access is located on side streets.

## Intent

To reduce the visual impacts of parking and the potential for conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians on the sidewalk.

## Standards

### Vehicle Access

**Driveways:** A maximum of one two-way driveway shall be permitted on sites with less than 200 feet of primary street frontage. A maximum of two two-lane driveways shall be permitted on sites with 200 feet or more of primary street frontage.

At least one driveway shall be located on a secondary street or alley, where available.

Driveways and associated curb-cuts shall have a maximum width of 25 feet.

The minimum distance between driveways on the same lot shall be 50 feet.

Controlled entrances to parking (e.g. gates) shall be located at least 20 feet from the property line to allow for a queueing vehicle.

### Surface Parking

**Setbacks:** Parking shall be set back a minimum of 30 feet from the primary frontage, 10 feet from any secondary frontage, and 5 feet from any adjacent Residential zoning district.

Parking shall be buffered by permitted non-parking uses or a landscaped setback adjacent to the property line, except for vehicle/pedestrian access.

Landscaped setbacks shall include hedges or shrubs with a minimum height of 3 feet at the time of planting that form a continuous visual screen to block vehicle headlights.

**Landscaping:** A minimum of 5 percent of the parking area shall be landscaped and permeable, in addition to any landscaped setbacks. This area shall be distributed throughout the parking area.

**Trees:** A minimum of one shade tree for every 4 vehicle parking spaces shall be planted and evenly distributed throughout the parking area.

### **Structured Parking**

**Setbacks:** Structured parking (including underground) shall be set back a minimum of 5 feet from any adjacent Residential zoning district.

Above ground parking shall be buffered by permitted non-parking uses with a minimum depth of 35 feet adjacent to the street property line, except for vehicle/pedestrian access.

Semi-subterranean parking shall not extend beyond the building façade and may not project higher than four feet above sidewalk elevation.

Parking areas with controlled entrances, including access gates, shall accommodate at minimum the length of one vehicle without queuing into the public right-of-way.