City of Vista

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Design Guidelines

An illustrated guide to the City's design priorities for development and redevelopment of commercial and residential property.

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Prepared by:
City of Vista
Planning Division
Community Development Department
200 Civic Center Drive

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Goal, Purpose and Use of these Guidelines

Goal

The overarching goal of these guidelines is to increase the level of design quality in the City, thereby creating a safer, more livable and more beautiful physical environment, suitable for the wide variety of community uses and needs. Project applications will be evaluated on how well they exemplify the following design priorities:

Site Planning

- Integration into surroundings
- Inclusion of an organizing element or focal point
- Building placement suited to the specific type of development and its surroundings
- Use of attractive forms, colors and materials
- Vehicle parking and circulation integrated with, and not overwhelming to the site or adjacent streetscape
- Inclusion of pedestrian amenities and circulation
- Grading concept sensitive to surrounding development and uses
- Well-placed utility infrastructure and facilities

Architecture

- Well articulated and detailed building elevations
- Consistent level of detail on all four sides of buildings
- Inclusion of architectural features such as insets, balconies, galleries and overhangs which create outdoor spaces
- Interesting and varied roof designs
- Appropriate and inventive use of color and materials

Lighting

- Mix of lighting types to deliver appropriate illumination levels to a variety of users, including pedestrians
- Attractive and compatible fixtures for all applications

Signage

- Appropriate scale and location
- Tasteful use of materials and illumination types
- Inventive use of color and style

Purpose

These guidelines are meant to assist the design phase of development proposals. They can be used by the development community, design professionals, staff members and decision makers in evaluating the merits of specific projects, and as a general guide for establishing a common understanding of design expectations. They are meant to

provide direction for the development and redevelopment of properties within the City. Additionally, the guidelines will support achievement of the following goals:

- Contribute toward implementation of the goals, objectives and policies provided in the General Plan;
- Contribute to a positive physical image and identity of the City;
- Promote a visually attractive, safe and well-planned built environment through the incorporation of sound design principles;
- Minimize negative impacts of new development and redevelopment.

Use

These guidelines are organized by the four critical design elements of Site Planning, Architecture, Lighting and Signage, rather than by type of use. The *design priorities* outlined should not be construed as either a complete set of instructions covering every development feature or the only means of achieving high levels of design quality. Designers are encouraged to draw upon their own ideas and experience.

Combined with the text discussion, illustrations depict examples of good and not-so-good application of the various design elements. The development projects shown in the photographs are representations of certain, specific concepts, and should, therefore, not be interpreted necessarily as broad examples of high quality development.

If any portion of these guidelines is found to be in conflict with provisions in the Development Code, the Development Code regulations shall prevail.

Meaning of "should" "shall" "will" "encouraged" and "discouraged"

- Guidelines that embody the word "should" are intended to be applied as stated. An alternative may be considered if it meets or exceeds the intent of the guidelines.
- Guidelines using the words "shall" or "will" are compulsory, and must be included in the project's design.
- Guidelines using the words "encouraged" or "discouraged" are desirable or undesirable, but are not mandatory.

Commercial Development

Well-designed, well-appointed, and well-used commercial centers not only create spaces where people are safe and comfortable to conduct their business, but these spaces can also become informal community centers and sources of community pride. Attractive buildings, signage, site furnishings and landscaping communicate messages about available goods and services, as well as convey a sense of community expectations. How a commercial development is designed and appointed, as well as how it is managed, send messages about how patrons are expected to behave – tables and benches invite patrons to linger on site and enjoy the space, while the lack of amenities and an unkempt appearance discourage it. Use of high quality building and site materials declare a community's respect for its physical environment and its residents. Commercial developments should be designed and built with these subtleties in mind. First-rate commercial developments then need to be accessible to patrons utilizing a variety of transportation methods. Safe internal pedestrian/ vehicular circulation and connections to off-site facilities are essential to creating facilities which are accessible to, and by, all potential users.

Residential Development

Single Family

Single family neighborhoods represent the single largest category of land uses in the City and have a tremendous impact on the policies, practices and economics of the Vista landscape. High quality, livable single family neighborhoods provide quality housing opportunities and stable property values which, in turn, facilitate reinvestment and neighborhood stability. These objectives should be of primary importance in the design and review of single family projects.

Multi-Family

Multi-family developments should be designed as small communities; care and attention should be given to the details which enhance the community's functionality and appeal. As with any residential community, efforts should be made to incorporate natural amenities unique to the site such as views, mature trees, natural drainage areas, etc. Connections to off-site facilities, including parks, sidewalks, shopping areas, etc., should be considered in the site planning process.

Open space and pedestrian circulation should be integral components of the site plan and not relegated to undevelopable areas and routes left over after siting building structures. Utilities planning, including declaration of individual or joint services, public or private metering, and location of utility boxes or other facilities such as trash enclosures, shall be accomplished on the site plan.

Integration into Surroundings

Guideline #1. Vista's beautiful setting and characteristic hilly topography create a distinct sense of place, and result in tremendous view opportunities. These features should be protected and enhanced whenever possible. Access to panoramic and mid-range views by project residents, patrons and the general public should be carefully considered during the site planning process. Project orientation, building heights and siting, as well as placement of signage and architectural features should be accomplished such that views of open space, major landforms or special landmarks are protected and enhanced, from both within the project and from the adjacent streets and neighborhoods. New single family developments should respect the scale, proportion and character of the surrounding area.

Guideline #2. Equally important to a project's visual assimilation, is its functional integration. Project site planning shall address off-site conditions including, but not limited to: slopes, sidewalk and trail connections, transit facilities and utility tie-ins. Use of design features such as retaining walls, which prohibit or complicate connections, shall be minimized. Proposed connections shall be fully illustrated on plans.

Guideline #3. Though generally a well-integrated residential project is not gated or walled, there are instances when these treatments are appropriate. When gates and walls are proposed, community entries should be well-marked with a distinctive theme. The theme established by the entry should be carried through and around the development with distinctive wall or fence design, unified street furnishings and common landscape and hardscape materials.

This project 's horizontal form is not well-suited to its use or site. It is a commercial project located below street grade with reduced visibility and ability to buffer the adjacent multi-family residential from the street.

In contrast, this project is more vertical in nature and reflects a harmonius relationship to the surrounding hillsides, yet does not obscure views to the distance.

Organizing Element, Focal Point

Guideline #4. Use of focal elements not only provides orientation and organization for users, they distinguish one development from another. Towers, fountains and other focal points can become local landmarks. These features accomplish site recognition in some of the same ways as large signage, but become less of a site accessory and more of a fully integrated architectural feature. They are also less obtrusive to the surrounding community. Creation of a focal point can be accomplished through use of features such as towers, taller or otherwise remarkable building entries, or with landscape elements such as monument trees, fountains and plazas. The type of development; i.e., commercial or residential, and the site design will dictate the most appropriate type of element. These elements provide the focal point for a safe and understandable pedestrian circulation system so essential to good development. Proposed site plans will be evaluated for their clear understanding and easy navigation by users.

This development lacks a focal point or understandable organization. There is no obvious "starting point" for users, vehicles or pedestrians.

Distinguishable features and special paving treatments act as landmarks and delineate a clear and understandable circulation system which differentiates between people spaces and vehicle spaces.

Building Placement

Commercial

Guideline #5. Buildings shall be street adjacent when appropriate. Street adjacency is almost always appropriate in Vista's more intense downtown setting, but is also frequently appropriate in suburban locations along major arterials. Buildings located next to the street can provide a more varied and interesting streetscape for motorists, as well as a more pedestrian friendly environment. Instead of catering only to the motorists, by separating vendors and foot traffic with large uninviting expanses of parking, buildings with goods visible to passing pedestrians invite potential customers in. This site planning technique can bring pedestrian-friendliness to the major thoroughfare, a domain previously dominated by vehicles. It often has the added benefit of traffic calming, as motorists voluntarily slow down to view visible activities and displays.

Guideline #6. Site plans should be designed so that building footprints can be articulated; i.e., buildings should incorporate variations composed of insets, entries, corners and jogs integrated with adjacent outdoor areas in order to create intricate and inviting pedestrian/visitor spaces. The spaces between buildings should not be relegated to service entrances and/or garbage collection facilities. They can become valuable amenities for use by patrons.

Guideline #7. Buildings with angled corners or plazas are encouraged at corner locations. This technique provides the opportunity for multi-layered and inviting views by motorists and pedestrians on intersecting streets.

Guideline #8. Whenever possible, new structures should be clustered to create plazas and pedestrian malls. When clustering is impractical, a visual link should be established between separate structures through the use of an arcade system, trellis or other structure. This applies to pad as well as inline buildings.

Guideline #9. Building orientation, placement of windows and doors, and pedestrian facilities should recognize the site's internal and external connections.

Street-adjacent building placement creates both a draw for curious passers-by, and a more appealing landscape as it frames the street with activity.

Building Placement

Residential

Whereas the priorities for commercial developments are permeability and unbroken connections, residential site planning (pad elevations and building placement) and architectural design (building elevations and building heights) should prioritize the livability and privacy of future residents, as well as the provision of visual diversity for the community at-large.

Guideline #10. Residential development should strive to avoid monotony of the streetscape by utilizing one or more of the following techniques:

- Variable front setbacks for dwellings and garages, as well as variation in lot development patterns establish unpredictable patterns of visible open spaces and create interesting streetscapes.

- Variable side yard setbacks result in different types and sizes of yard and patio areas, and enhance opportunities for privacy.

- Variable building and lot widths provide differing amounts of open space areas between structures, and in single family developments, allow the siting of different types and sizes of homes.

- Variable garage placement (setbacks) and orientation (angled or side-loaded) can be used to break up the monotony of garage doors on the street, and garage door design can diminish their visual impact. Multiple panel door designs, windows or other architectural detailing should be used on garage doors within the same development. Recessing the garage frontage by a minimum of three feet from the dwelling's first story frontage can also lessen its impact.

Guideline #11. Clustering of buildings can create increased opportunities for privacy and open space and should be used whenever practicable or possible.

Building orientation, placement of windows, doors and pedestrian facilities should recognize a development's internal, as well as external, connections.

Circulation & Parking

In the past, accommodation of vehicles for both parking and circulation, has been prioritized over the needs of pedestrians. As a result, both commercial and residential developments have given over less space to this user, making communities increasingly difficult to navigate on foot or by bicycle. The following guidelines bring the pedestrian back to equal status with the car, by emphasizing pedestrian circulation as a fundamental organizing component of site planning.

Guideline #12. Entries and parking lots establish a patron's first impression of a project, therefore, the goal of parking lot design should be to create friendly and inviting entry courtyards or extensions of the buildings, rather than pavement-covered areas to park cars. Commercial entry drives shall have an adjacent pedestrian entry path.

Guideline #13. Where parking lots must accommodate more than 40 cars, they should be broken up into multiple, smaller lots by means of intervening landscaping, access drives, or buildings in order to avoid large unbroken expanses of paved area.

Guideline #14. An understandable hierarchy of circulation shall be created for commercial centers with more than two parking courts. This hierarchy shall consist of major access drives with no parking, circulation drives with limited parking, and parking aisles which access spaces.

Guideline #15. To minimize conflicts between entry and parking traffic, parking spaces and aisles in commercial developments should be setback from the street entry a minimum of 50-feet, creating an entry "throat" which does not intersect or branch into secondary drive aisles.

Guideline #16. Parking and circulation layouts of adjoining commercial developments should be coordinated and interconnected wherever possible to allow for reciprocal vehicular and pedestrian access without re-entering the street. Direct pedestrian linkages to adjacent residential areas should be made wherever appropriate. Parking in attached residential developments should be located as near to the units they serve as possible. Guest parking should be located conveniently throughout the community, serving all units adequately and easily.

Guideline #17. Commercial site plans shall be designed to physically and visually link the site to the sidewalk as an extension of the internal pedestrian circulation system. This will effectively separate pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and invite pedestrian access into the project.

Entry throat is too short, resulting in the need for drivers to make decisions too soon after exiting the street. This slows drivers down, potentially causing traffic back ups on the arterial and endangering pedestrians.

Circulation & Parking

Guideline #18. Pedestrians should have means of directly accessing buildings from the public right of way with sidewalk accommodations on both sides of entry drives when possible, and never on less than one side unless an alternative pedestrian access is proposed. Pedestrian-only pathways from parking areas should be provided in order to remove pedestrians from vehicle lanes.

Guideline #19. Adverse auto-oriented impacts of residential developments should be mitigated for by well-thought out provision of pedestrian amenities. Long uninterrupted lines of garage doors, carports or uncovered parking are discouraged. The use of parking drives around the perimeter of projects is also discouraged; as they tend to isolate project residents from surrounding neighborhoods and create a fortress-like appearance from the street.

Guideline #20. Vehicular entry points to parking lots should include landscaping and incorporate paving accents where the driveway crosses the public sidewalk.

Guideline #21. Driveways should not be the most prominent feature of a residential development. They should be kept to the minimum number and width required for the project, so that more space can be given over to residents as open space.

Guideline #22. Whenever possible, parking lot entries should be located on side streets or alleys in order to minimize conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles.

Parking lots should be broken into multiple, smaller lots, rather than one large lot and landscaped as "entry courts" to the buildings, rather than spaces to park vehicles. Pedestrian circulation must be a fundamental organizing concept of the site plan.

Circulation & Parking

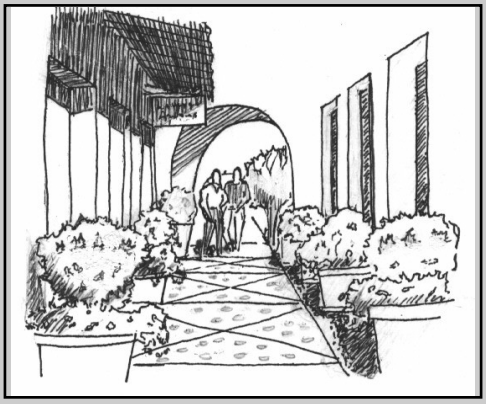
Guideline #23. Parking areas should be designed to minimize the need for pedestrians to cross parking aisles and landscaped islands to reach building entries. When it is necessary for pedestrians to cross landscaped areas, hardscape shall be provided on these pathways in order to minimize wear and tear on planting materials.

Guideline #24. Pedestrian circulation should be clearly delineated and separated from automobile circulation. The use of landscaping, walkways, and decorative hardscape to emphasize pedestrian areas is encouraged.

Guideline #25. Systems of internal pedestrian walkways should be included on all commercial and residential projects. These walkways should interconnect building entries with each other and with appropriate parking areas, while minimizing conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. Whenever determined feasible, site plans shall be designed so that walkways connect individual buildings directly, without forcing pedestrians to mix with vehicular traffic.

Guideline #26. Walkways should be well-marked by means of human-scale signage and lighting, along with distinctive paving and landscape planting treatments. Where feasible, trellises, arbors, arcades, or similar features should be used to mark pathways. Textured paving should not be so rough or irregular as to make walking difficult or discourage the use of baby strollers or wheelchairs.

Guideline #27. Layout of walkways should anticipate pedestrians' desired movements and should provide direct routes for them; e.g., they should allow pedestrians to "cut corners" in order to change direction without wearing a pathway over adjacent grass or groundcover. Meandering sidewalks or walkways should contain only shallow curves to avoid frustrating pedestrians with unnecessary detours.



Pedestrian connections from parking areas to storefronts are important for the ease and safety of visitors. Amenities such as artwork, decorative paving, and scaled down plantings and signage add to the pedestrian experience.

Pedestrian Amenities

Guideline #28. Vista has an ideal climate and therefore, the creation of outdoor spaces shall be a fundamental element in site plan development. These spaces should be designed as outdoor amenity areas which provide places to gather, as well as facilities that provide relief from the elements when needed. Such facilities would include plazas, courtyards, outdoor café areas and covered pedestrian walkways. These spaces should include amenities such as seating (tables and chairs, seating walls), fountains, unique landscape or hardscape, and artwork. These features should be combined with architectural elements, such as arched entries, arcades, balconies, galleries and pergolas to create an inviting layering of spaces, visible from other outdoor and indoor spaces.

Guideline #29. Every feature of pedestrian facilities should be human-scale, including signage, lighting and plantings.

Guideline #30. Higher degrees of architectural detail should be provided in courtyards and other pedestrian spaces when compared to other spaces. Furnishings (seating, pottery, lighting) paving, and plantings should be emphasized and richly detailed. Seating choices should be offered in both shaded and sunny areas, and paving should be enriched (pavers, brick or stamped concrete).

Guideline #31. Pedestrian spaces should be enhanced by planting accents such as trees, shrubs and/or vines espaliered against wall surfaces, flower beds, window boxes, and hanging pots with flowers and vines.

Guideline #32. Multi-family development projects should allow for well-appointed outdoor common areas which are accessible and usable to residents of all ages.

Commercial and residential developments should accommodate people as a fundamental component of the site plan development process. Site plans should provide places for people to gather, places to relax and places to walk. Facilities should be included that provide relief from the elements when needed.

Integrated Grading & Utility Infrastructure

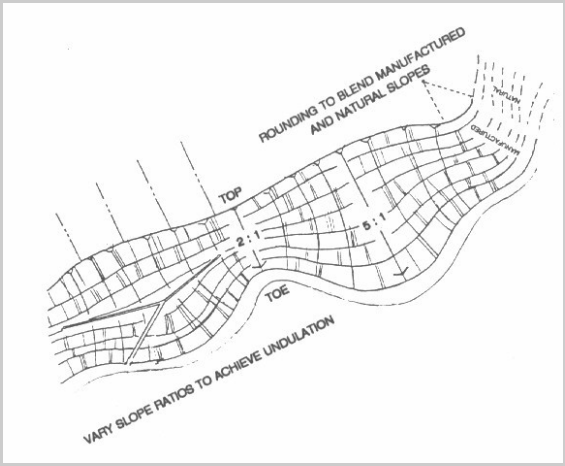
Guideline #33. Grading and utility design are fundamental to the finished appearance of a project. These two components should be designed with the end goal of seamless integration into the site surroundings. Project sites should be tied into adjacent landforms through creative grading concepts and the aesthetics of above-ground utility facilities should not be set aside on the grounds of functionality.

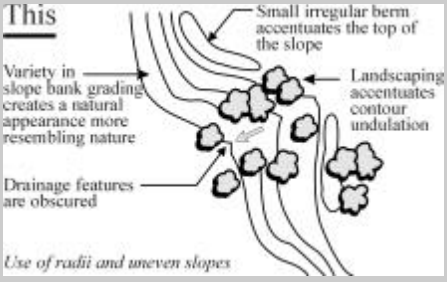
Guideline #34. Poorly planned utility infrastructure can have a large impact on the final appearance of a development project if necessary facilities must be accommodated in locations where they are obtrusive, unattractive or a nuisance. For these reasons, project civil engineers, utility consultants and landscape architects shall confer during the preparation of grading, improvement, and landscape architectural plans to coordinate the placement and installation of utilities, site lighting, irrigation systems, and landscape planting. Site plans shall reflect all proposed utility improvements.

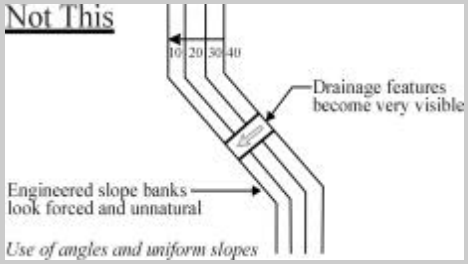
Guideline #35. Grading concepts often utilize the same standard slope ratios, bench heights and planting palettes. The result is a manufactured and predictable appearance. Varying these characteristics, and expanding design practices to include the use of other techniques such as contour grading, will merge the project to its surroundings and result in a more natural appearance.

Guideline #36. Manufactured slopes over 5 feet in height should be designed to reflect the appearance of surrounding natural hillsides and to avoid long flat-planed surfaces. This should be achieved by means of slope undulation, i.e., curving both the tops and toes of slopes, and varying the slope gradient from the 2:1 maximum steepness to flatter ratios such as 5:1 on others.

Guideline #37. Tops and toes of manufactured slopes should be contoured and landscaped to blend into adjacent terrain. A smooth transition should be made where the planes of manufactured and natural slopes intersect.







Use of alternative grading techniques such as contour grading and varying slope ratios, create a more natural appearance and help a new development blend seamlessly into its surroundings.

Integrated Grading & Utility Infrastructure

Guideline #38. Aesthetic impacts of drainage terraces and down drains should be softened by the use of river rock, colored concrete, or other treatments which produce a more natural appearance than do standard drainage devices. Terrace benches should be of sufficient width to provide for visual screening of terrace drains by means of berming or similar design measures. Unless determined necessary, down drains should not be placed at visually prominent locations such as intersecting streets.

Guideline #39. Exterior wall drainage, utilities, cabinets, and other systems shall be integrated into the building design.

Guideline #40. Utility boxes such as power transformers, irrigation controllers, telephone connection boxes, etc., which are not placed underground shall be effectively screened by means of shrubs or other landscape treatment.

Guideline #41. Ground-mounting of mechanical equipment, with appropriate wall or landscape screening is encouraged as an alternative to roof mounting.

Guideline #42. Trash enclosures shall be directly accessible to garbage pick-up trucks via alleys or driveways whenever possible, in order to avoid the necessity of substantial hand carrying of trash containers or hand pushing of dumpsters. Enclosures shall be located substantially away from public views, pedestrian, and circulation areas. Enclosure walls shall be at least six feet high and shall be made of strong durable materials consistent with the colors and finishes of nearby buildings. Doors shall be self-latching and of heavy duty construction sufficient to withstand hard usage. Interior concrete or metal curbs shall be included to prevent damage to the enclosure walls. Solid covers that meet storm water regulations are required, and should be integrated into decorative overhead structures such as trellises, especially where the trash enclosure is visible from above.

Guideline #43. Utilities which are added once the project has opened, such as communication facilities, should be integrated into the existing project structures and hidden from view to the extent practicable. Free-standing communication facilities are strongly discouraged and are only acceptable when other alternatives do not exist.

Drainage structure in top photo is obtrusive and not well-integrated into the development. In contrast, the bottom photo depicts a drainage solution integrated into project landscaping, creating an interesting mix of materials and textures.

Use of Attractive Forms, Colors and Materials

Guideline #44. Form as a unifying characteristic in site design is often ignored. Designers should utilize interesting forms, as well as colors, textures and materials in site circulation, site furnishings and landscaping, as well as building architecture.

Guideline #45. Arcs and angles utilized in building architecture should be carried into hardscape and planting as appropriate to create attractive and varied spaces. Mixtures of materials, colors and textures add appealing layers to a built environment and provide more dimensions for the user to experience. As with shapes and forms, a palette of materials, colors and textures should be used in a unified approach to all components of project design.

Guideline #46. Roofing materials should generally be a mixture of lighter and darker colors, producing the appearance of natural variation. Spanish style roofing tiles should be stacked; i.e., doubled, tripled and quadrupled, at the eaves and randomly elsewhere over the roof surface to add texture and richness. With two-piece tiles, mud grouting should be placed between the stacked tiles.

Guideline #47. One dominant color should be used for the building walls. Although subdued colors, such as beige, tan, cream, sand, light gray, etc., usually work best as the dominant wall color, bolder colors may be used if they are consistent with the character and style of the project. Whenever possible, materials with integral color, such as brick, should be left natural.

Guideline #48. Interior streets of multi-family developments should be gently curving, especially if necessary to conform to existing topography and provide visual relief. Long straight streets should be avoided.

Guideline #49. Fencing and walls shall be architecturally compatible with the buildings on the site. Fences and walls shall be made of low maintenance, durable materials. Wood fencing and chain link fencing are not appropriate for commercial or industrial applications, unless approved as part of an entitlement.

Mixes of arcs and straight angles in the first photo, along with a variety of textures (stone, stucco, wood, metal and plant materials) in the second photo, result in appealing contrast and layered detail.

Generally

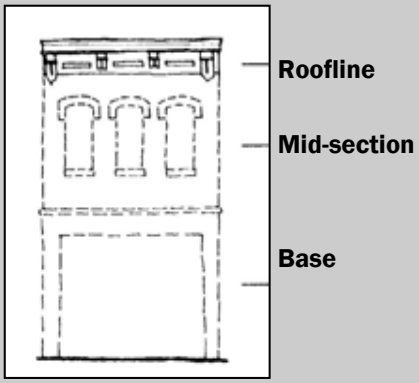
Guideline #1. Buildings should be designed to reinforce pedestrian scale. This can be achieved by articulating separate stories and by increasing the level of design detail on the first floor. First floors should be designed with detailing important to a user traveling on foot. Recessed entries and windows, the use of accent materials such as wood, tiles or stone applied in an interesting pattern or the unexpected placement of artwork add to the layering and interest of the first floor. Additional appeal can be added through the use of interesting or intricate canopies and landscaping palettes.

Guideline #2. Long, blank, unarticulated building walls over 25 feet in length are strongly discouraged. In order to reduce mass and bulk, facades should be interrupted by vertical and horizontal variations in wall and roof planes, building projections, projecting ribs, reveals, door and window bays, and similar design elements/ techniques. The use of varying materials also helps to reduce wall massing; material alterations should occur at locations where wall planes change.

Guideline #3. Stepping back of upper stories from the ground level façade of commercial structures is encouraged.

Guideline #4. Each building should be designed with a well-defined base, a mid-section body, and a top story (roofline).

- *Building Base* – The design of the building base should differentiate it from the upper floor of the building. This may be a projection of the lower wall surface and/or different materials or color. It may be created by a heavier or thicker design treatment of the entire ground floor, or by stepping back the upper floor.
- *Mid-Section* – Mid-sections of buildings should be designed with sufficient articulation and detailing to complement, but not overwhelm, the lower floor. This can be accomplished by providing recessed openings for windows or groupings of windows, or with projections such as balconies and covered decks. Long or large wall surfaces with flush-mounted windows or no windows should be avoided.
- *Roofs and rooflines* – The design of roofs and rooflines should provide visual interest from the streets below and complement the façade. Strong, attractively detailed cornices and/or parapet walls are required on all flat roof designs.



Building design should be conceived of as consisting of these three separate and equally important components.

Building Elevations

Guideline #5. Design features should be consistent on all elevations of a building. Side and rear building facades should exhibit a level of design detail and finish compatible with the front façade, particularly if they are visible from off-site locations. Parapet walls should be architecturally treated to avoid a monotonous appearance.

Guideline #6. Multi-tenant buildings should communicate a balanced rhythm through repeated architectural elements such as doors, windows, signage, and/or structural components such as columns or piers.

Guideline #7. Tops of walls should receive adequate attention. They should terminate with a pitched or contoured roof, a cornice, or varied parapet heights which establish and reinforce the rhythm of the storefronts.

Guideline #8. Primary building entries should be easy to identify. The use of design features such as canopies, porticos, peaked roofs, arches, columns, towers, recesses and wing walls that highlight entries are encouraged. Outdoor patios and integral planters that incorporate landscaped areas and frame entries are also encouraged.

Guideline #9. Building entrances should be oriented toward walkways but should be designed to minimize conflicts between passers-by and people entering or leaving the building. This can be achieved by recessing into the façade, those entrances which open onto walkways less than ten feet wide. This is especially important for street-adjacent development types.

Guideline #10. Blank, windowless walls are strongly discouraged. If windowless walls are proposed, appropriate wall articulation and other enhancing design features shall be incorporated into the design.

Guideline #11. Balconies can be recessed, cantilevered, or supported on columns for the dual benefit of forming verandas below. When covered to form a gallery, balconies become an attractive indoor-outdoor element.

Guideline #12. Attached ground floor covered walkways such as verandas, pergolas and arcades are encouraged for commercial and other pedestrian-intensive uses because they add variety and interest to wall planes, and provide a partially protected exterior space. In commercial developments, they provide functional transitions to indoor spaces; places to remove jackets or close umbrellas before entering merchandise areas.

The tops of walls are an important element of building elevations and should not be forgotten.

Storefronts

This section consists of additional items applicable to mixed use or traditional downtown style development.

Guideline #13. Storefronts are comprised of specific components which need individual attention:

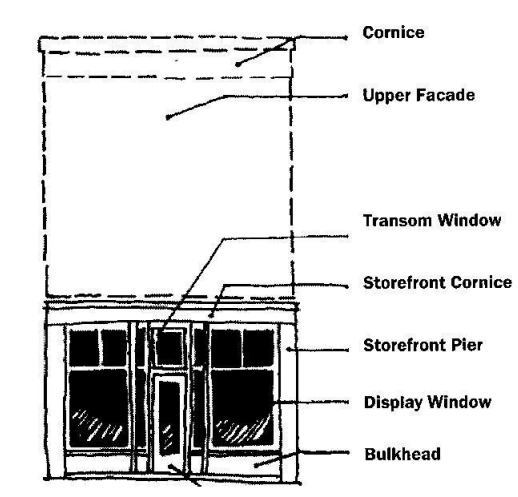
Transom Window: The small window (sometimes hinged) above the transom bar of a door or another window.

Bulkhead. A bulkhead is the space located between the pavement/sidewalk and the bottom of a traditional storefront. Maximum bulkhead heights for new storefront designs should be approximately 36 inches.

Cornice. The projecting member of a building elevation which spans the top of the storefront. Cornices help to reduce scale by defining stories.

Display Window. Display windows are primarily constructed of glass. Display windows are typically designed to be recessed into the storefront opening, between piers.

Piers. Piers frame the storefront and define space between adjacent buildings and/or storefronts. Piers typically match the design and detailing of a façade's upper stories.



Guideline #14. Storefronts should be based on modules approximately 25 feet wide. New buildings that are wider than existing facades on the street should be broken down into a series of "structural bays" or storefronts segmented by a series of columns or piers.

Guideline #15. Each storefront should be treated like as a small building, with its own base, roofline, and door and window pattern.

Guideline #16. Corner buildings should include storefront design features for at least 50% of the wall area on the sidewall.

Guideline #17. Building recesses are encouraged to define entryways and window openings along a building's exterior, and to provide a weather-protected transition zone from sidewalk to store interior. Recommended treatments are special paving materials such as ceramic tile or brick, ornamental ceilings such as coffering and decorative light fixtures.

Guideline #18. Storefront windows should be as large as possible and at least 18 inches off the ground (bulkhead height). Glass should be inset a minimum of three inches from the exterior wall surface to add relief to the wall. A substantial proportion of the wall area should be occupied by display windows in order to display retail goods. Generally, storefront windows should have a greater vertical than horizontal axis. This can be accomplished by visually breaking up the windows into sections taller than they are wide.

Guideline #19. Elements that increase natural lighting, such as clerestory windows, skylights or greenhouse windows and wells, are strongly encouraged.

Multi-Family

The following section consists of additional items applicable to the architecture of multi-family residential development. Whenever applicable and practicable, the same standards shall be utilized when rehabilitating existing multi-family buildings so as to ensure high quality developments in the city.

Guideline #20. Varying the heights of design elements in attached multi-family residential buildings reduces perceived building mass. When elements are reduced on end units, the massing impact of the building is reduced both to nearby pedestrians and from further away. Alternatively, reducing the height of interior units helps to visually break the building mass into smaller elements.

Guideline #21. Maximum allowable building envelopes are intended to allow for design flexibility; i.e., options for locating building mass, as well as provide openings for light and air. Too often, however, the envelopes are completely taken up in order to maximize floor area, resulting in monotonous flat-planed side and rear elevations. This problem may be avoided by stepping down two-story attached residential buildings to one-story units on the ends and/or providing wall articulation on the sides and rear of buildings comparable to that on the front. This is especially important on hillside, corner and through lots where the side and rear elevations are directly visible from a street or from residences above or below.

Guideline #22. Primary entries of residential structures should be designed as focal points of front elevations and should be immediately identifiable. Entries should be inviting in appearance and covered or inset to provide weather protection.

The entryways of these two multi-family development are well-marked through the use of various design features, and give individual residents a sense of privacy and ownership.

Multi-Family

Guideline #23. The multi-family residential function of a building should be communicated by encouraging the design of visually appealing buildings featuring quality materials, varied facades and pleasing compositions.

Guideline #24. The first floor of the buildings should be related to the street and should be consistent with the first floors in neighboring buildings. Setback patterns should be consistent with the buildings located in the vicinity of the site.

Guideline #25. The height, scale and mass of the buildings should be similar to that of other buildings in the neighborhood.

Guideline #26. At single family edges, multi-family buildings should maintain low profiles to provide a transition between higher density residential areas. Taller elements of a building, such as upper floors, should be increasingly stepped back from adjacent single family residences to provide an attractive transition and reduce the visual appearance of mass.

Guideline #27. Architectural elements, such as porches, stairs, railings, fascia boards, and trim should be used to enhance the character of the buildings.

Guideline #28. Material changes that occur at changes in plane and that appear substantial and integrated into the structure are encouraged. Material changes not accompanied by changes in plane and appear tacked on are strongly discouraged.

Guideline #29. The design of fences and walls shall be architecturally compatible with and of the same architectural style as the primary structures. The fences and walls shall be made of low maintenance, durable materials. Wood fences are not acceptable unless approved as part of an entitlement. Chain link fencing is prohibited.

Guideline #30. Masonry walls exceeding fifty feet in length shall include decorative pilasters to break up the plane of the wall. Walls must be faced with quality materials such as brick, stone, or stucco. Slump stone or precision block are not acceptable.

Guideline #31. Detailed information on materials used shall be provided in the form of a material sample board with actual sample and specifications for each material used so as to ensure quality of product used on the buildings (exterior and interior of the units).

The use of varying materials and architectural elements adds character and breaks up the mass of the buildings.

Guideline #32. Attractive, centrally located, common open space with functional amenities shall be provided. Projects with 10 units or more shall include at least one of the following amenities:

- Pool and spa
- Clubhouse or multi-purpose room
- Gymnasium or exercise facility
- Half basketball court
- Tot lot

Projects with 25 units or more shall include at least two of the above amenities. Projects with 50 units or more shall include at least three of the above amenities. Equivalent amenities may be substituted for those listed as part of an approved entitlement.

Guideline #33. Projects of 4 to 9 units shall provide amenities commensurate with the level of development proposed, subject to approval of the decision making body.

Guideline #34. Outdoor open space areas shall be designed to incorporate usable features such as courtyards with benches, playgrounds with areas for adult supervision, pedestrian trails, picnic areas, and walkways. Undifferentiated, empty landscape areas are highly discouraged.

Guideline #35. Laundry hook-ups (washer and dryer) shall be provided in all individual multi-family units.

Guideline #36. Gated entries are encouraged to provide security for the residents of the development.

Guideline #37. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines should be followed in the design of multi-family projects to reduce the potential for areas susceptible to criminal activities.

Guideline #38. Condominium maps are highly encouraged to ensure that conversion of units in the future does not trigger new development standards or requirements.

Guideline #39. Garage access shall be internally provided to the main residential building(s) or directly connecting to the individual unit or by way of an interior corridor that internally connects the garages to the units. A parking management plan shall be provided to ensure proper allocation of parking for residents and guests as well as ensure use of garage space for parking and not storage.

Centrally located amenities appropriate to the size of the project are critical to its success.

Roofs

Guideline #40. Roofs are as powerful as elevations in determining the visual quality of the streetscape in commercial and residential development, and should be designed as an integral component of the overall building form. A harmonious diversity of roof forms can add variety and interest to a street. One method for achieving this is to create different hip and gable-end roof treatments for the same floor plan. Visual interest can be further achieved by varying the rooftop ridges so that some are parallel and some are perpendicular to the street. Pitched roofs – either gable, shed, or hip – are encouraged. Shallow pitches should be used where it is necessary to de-emphasize the apparent building mass.

Guideline #41. Deep roof overhangs and soffits can add architectural interest while also providing the functional benefits of creating shade and sheltering exterior surfaces and wall openings from the elements. Shadows created by deep overhangs can, in and of themselves, constitute a design feature that defines the architectural character of the building. Overhangs are often cantilevered in contemporary architecture, creating a clean and angular appearance, while in traditional design they are typically complemented with corbels, exposed rafter tails, heavy beams and other elements that create a sense of solidity and permanence.

Guideline #42. Roof designs which include offset roof planes, eave heights and rooflines are encouraged in order to add visual interest and to help break large buildings into smaller modules. Roofs for larger buildings should include two or more roof planes.

Variety in roof types and materials, along with multiple roof planes in a single style are desired.

Roofs

Guideline #43. Roofline elements, including parapet walls, should be carried around all elevations, regardless of orientation to the right-of-way.

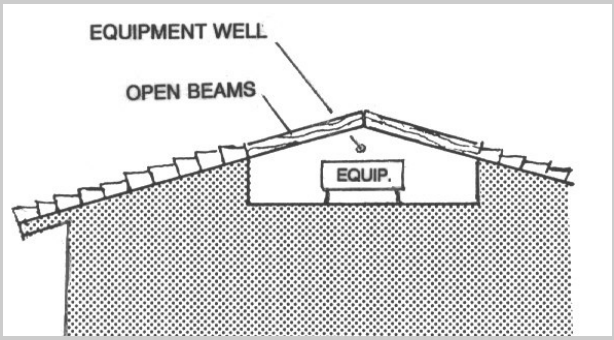
Guideline #44. Flat roofs should include ornamental cornices and edge details.

Tops of walls on flat-roofed buildings should not be forgotten; appropriately treated, they have significant design impact.

Guideline #45. Screening of roof-mounted mechanical or utility equipment is required. The method of screening should be architecturally integrated with the structure in terms of materials, color, shape and size. Equipment should be screen by solid building elements (e.g., parapet wall) instead of add-on screening (e.g., wood or metal slats).

Guideline #46. Mechanical equipment should not be visible from any angle or any height outside of the building.

Guideline #47. Allow for a central screened location to accommodate antennas multi-family residential units.



Designing equipment wells in lieu of after-the-fact screening mechanisms yield a much more pleasing and well-integrated solution. This is critical when rooftops of proposed structures are visible from above.

Color and Materials

Guideline #48. Finish materials should be appropriate to the building's architectural style. Similarly, appropriate combinations of materials should be used. The application of incompatible or low-quality finish materials can obscure and diminish the building's architectural merits, as well as discourage appropriate maintenance.

Guideline #49. Accent materials should be used to highlight building features and provide visual interest.

Guideline #50. Exterior materials and architectural details should relate to each other in logical ways; i.e., heavy materials should appear to support lighter ones. Similarly, varied color schemes should, in most cases, place lighter colors above darker tones in order to emphasize the building's solidity.

Guideline #51. Changes in materials should occur at inside corners to make building volumes appear substantial. Materials changes at the outside corners or in plane, give an impression of thinness and artificiality, and should be avoided.

Guideline #52. Awnings can be used to protect pedestrians, add interest and color to buildings, and in some instances, accommodate pedestrian-oriented signage.

Guideline #53. Awnings should be made of durable materials which will not fade. Aluminum or vinyl are not acceptable materials, however, projecting metal awnings that are a structural part of a building may be.

A variety of materials, combined appropriately, significantly enhance a basic building design, adding interesting visual layers.

Awnings can be designed for a number of different applications and can be constructed from an array of materials.

Lighting

Guideline #1. Lighting is an essential design element which should be addressed at project initiation and not left to the implementation phase. Lighting should be provided in passageways, around doors and in other areas as appropriate to improve safety, security and ambiance. Lighting facilities should be an appropriate mix of site and pedestrian-scaled facilities.

Guideline #2. Fixtures should complement the architectural style and be compatible with the development in which they are located. On each project site, all lighting fixtures should be from the same family of fixtures with respect to design, materials, color/finish and color of light.

Guideline #3. Use of exterior lighting to accent architectural features and landscape elements is encouraged. Up-lighting at the base of walls and in landscape areas can create interesting shadow patterns and a sense of drama which are absent during daylight hours.

Guideline #4. Decorative accent lighting and fixtures above the minimum one foot-candle illumination levels of surrounding parking lots should be provided at vehicle driveways, entry throats, pedestrian paths, plazas, and other activity areas. However, lighting levels at property lines shall not exceed allowable thresholds established in the Development Code.

Guideline #5. Wall-mounted lights should not extend above the height of the wall or parapet on which they are mounted. Parking lot lighting should be no taller than what is required to provide safe, well-lit parking lots as established by a photometric study.

Project lighting should include fixtures to serve as building, path and site lighting from the same, or complementary, fixture families.

Signage

Guideline #1. Often, signage is treated as an afterthought in the design process, resulting in a lack of appropriate wall and/or ground space for signage placement, a lack of proportionality between the building/site dimensions and the size of signs, and a lack of compatibility between building and signage materials. To avoid these problems and treat signage as an integral aspect of commercial building design, signage shall be formally reviewed concurrently with the proposed site plan and building architecture.

Guideline #2. New development involving more than one sign shall submit a comprehensive signage program that details the size, location and material for all proposed signage.

Guideline #3. All signage components shall be integrated with one another and with the architectural design of the building. For instance, buildings with a traditional aesthetic should be outfitted with signs composed of traditional materials (e.g. wood, metal, stone, paint) and fabricated by traditional methods (e.g. hand-routing, hand-painting, sandblasting, saw or torch-cutting). In most cases, traditional signage should have a subdued color palette that integrates with the trim colors of the building. Contemporary architecture can better accommodate signage composed of synthetic materials (e.g. Lexan, PVC) and fabricated by more industrial methods. However, contemporary signs should not be excessively bright or reflective. Regardless of design or material, signs typically should not incorporate more than three colors.

Guideline #4. Individual signs within a multi-tenant building or complex are expected to use similar materials, color palettes, placement and lighting techniques, but individualized type styles can convey messages about the goods and/or services available. It is understood that many businesses have trademarked logos and color palettes, and that these logos and color palettes are essential to the branding of these businesses. Nevertheless, effective branding can be achieved with a variety of materials, mounting methods and lighting techniques. For instance, to be consistent with a traditional architectural style, rather than being represented with acrylic internally-illuminated cabinets or channel letters, a trademarked

An example of well-integrated pole, monument and tenant signage.

logo or lettering style could be hand-painted directly onto the building and illuminated externally with light fixtures of traditional design and material.

Guideline #5. Text should be simple and direct, typically confined to one line and conveying only the name of the business. Sign clutter is often the result of too much text, which detracts from the sign's legibility. This is particularly true of project identification signs for multi-tenant commercial centers. To avoid the visual clutter created by too much text, it is recommended that project identification signs accommodate no more than four tenant panels per face.

Guideline #6. Signage should have a three-dimension quality, with sufficient depth to convey solidity and create attractive patterns of shadow and light. Where the sign letters themselves are relatively flat (i.e. less than one inch thick), pin mounting that offsets the lettering from the building face is strongly encouraged.

Guideline #7. Size should be reasonable, only large enough to be legible to pedestrians and motorists within the practical viewshed of adjacent roadways and pedestrian spaces – in most cases, no more than one standard commercial block (360 feet) in any direction. Legibility at this distance should afford motorists ample decision time and space to safely access the site.

Guideline #8. Externally-illuminated signs are encouraged for all development types and are especially appropriate for projects within the downtown area and in areas allowing mixed use development. With the exception of wholly illuminated cabinet or box signs, most types of internally illuminated signage are allowed. While individual, channel-lit letters are acceptable, many other internal illumination options are encouraged. Options such as halo-illumination or reverse pan channel letters produce creative lighting effects which add to the texture and quality of the development.

Guideline #9. Projecting signage is appropriate for pedestrian-scaled and pedestrian-oriented developments. In multi-story building applications, projecting signage should be used to advertise first floor businesses only. Sign supports and brackets must be compatible with the design and scale of the building; decorative iron and wood brackets are encouraged.

Guideline #10. Hanging signs are encouraged in cases where there are building overhangs or covered walkways. Hanging signs should be simply designed and should not compete with other site signage.

These externally-illuminated and halo-lit signs are creative and sophisticated; they establish the expectation of high-quality goods and pleasant experiences.

Signage

Guideline #11. Window signage of commercial development is limited to no more than 25% of window area by the Development Code. The text of window signage should be limited to the business name and a brief message identifying the principal product or service or conveying other routine information (e.g. business hours) but not to regularly advertise sales or other promotions.

Guideline #12. Signs that contribute to pedestrian-friendliness and a strong sense of place inevitably enhance commercial viability in the long term by affording patrons a comfortable and pleasant visual experience that inspires longer stays, return visits and positive word-of-mouth comments to other potential patrons. Moreover, quality signage strongly connotes quality goods and services, which more than anything contribute to the reputation and long-term success of a business. Thus, it is ultimately the shopping experience itself that inspires the kind of customer loyalty that local businesses commonly rely upon – with the aesthetic quality of signage being a key aspect of this experience.

These signs are scaled and located appropriately for pedestrian users. They are well-suited to businesses wishing to communicate pedestrian friendliness. Because of their unique designs, they also help to create a sense of place.

Bargain Basement Stores

Guideline #1. Applications for bargain basement stores shall conform to the architectural design guidelines for general guidance, building elevations and commercial storefronts included herein. Conformance shall be determined by the decision-making body in the review of discretionary applications for bargain basement stores and exterior façade improvements may be required.

Guideline #2. Landscaping within any commercial center or single property requesting a bargain basement store shall meet all requirements of Chapter 18.56 of the Development Code and the City's Landscape Manual. Landscape conformity shall be approved prior to occupancy.

Guideline #3. Parking areas within any commercial center or single property requesting a bargain basement store shall be resurfaced to eliminate any pavement deficiencies within the center or on the site. Pavement sections shall meet City standards and all paving, parking lot striping, and directional markings must be installed to the City's satisfaction prior to occupancy.

Before and after conditions for a single-tenant storefront that was remodeled (above) and a commercial center that was remodeled (below). These improvements are exemplary of the type of architectural improvements anticipated with an application for a bargain basement store.

CITY OF VISTA
PLANNING DIVISION
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

200 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE
VISTA, CA 92084
PHONE: 760-639-6100
FAX: 760-639-6101
WEBSITE: WWW.CITYOFVISTA.COM