Town of Ross

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Administrative Draft
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TOWN OF ROSS

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The Town of Ross is unique! It is a special place in an extraordinary setting with significant natural resources, high quality buildings and strong community identity. Residents value its historic character, small-town charm, tree-lined streets, wooded hillsides and meandering creeks. Ross continues to attract investment in its neighborhoods, through alterations and improvements to existing buildings as well as new construction. How can these changes be accommodated while respecting the design traditions of Ross? These design guidelines provide a tool to assist in achieving compatible development, while accommodating high quality, innovative design.

The Ross General Plan 2007-2025 addresses those values and states:

"We want Ross to retain these attributes and still be a dynamic and evolving community."

It also specifically calls for developing design guidelines for the community. In response to that directive, this document provides design guidelines for all residential areas in town. And, while it does not provide specific guidelines for commercial areas, it does set forth a set of high-level design principles that can apply throughout the community, for both residential and commercial development."

In This Chapter

Excellence of Design

A key section of the General Plan focuses on "Excellence of Design" and sets forth an important goal that underlies the principles and guidelines set forth in this document:

Goal 3: Design With Nature, Neighborhood and Community

"Ross encourages architectural variety of buildings and the open feeling of the Town. Buildings recede into the background while landscaping and open space take center stage. Ross' neighborhoods mix old and new construction through the use of appropriate building materials and landscaping, and through the appropriate design, scale, and siting of improvements. We have come to expect an excellence of design that blends with the neighborhood setting."

This goal provides the basis for ten Design Principles set forth in this document. These in turn are implemented through the design guidelines that follow.

Considering Context in Design

The General Plan also recognizes that conditions which influence compatibility vary throughout the community. It notes that sites on hillsides need special consideration, and that the context varies by the degree of the slope and the character of the road edge. In response to this, a series of Design Contexts are described in this document, followed by a description of Character Drivers that are intended to help understand how context plays a role in determining appropriateness of design.

Advisory Design Review Group

Design review is conducted by Town staff and an Advisory Design Review Group (ADR). The ADR provides professional review of design-related issues, including site planning, building massing, setbacks, light and air, and privacy, as well as material selection in architectural and landscape design. The objective of the process is to provide applicants with helpful advice early in the review process and to offer an opportunity for neighbor input and feedback. The professional design suggestions and solutions are provided in an informal setting conducive to dialogue and collaborative problem-solving.

Placeholder for current ADR Group Photo

Using the Design Guidelines

The Design Guidelines provide information, set expectations, and provide guidance to residents, design professionals, and prospective residents. The Ross Town Council, the ADR and Town staff will also use the Design Guidelines to review and evaluate development applications to ensure any development would be in keeping with the tenets of the General Plan.

Figure 1.1: SAMPLE DESIGN GUIDELINE

A Design Topic
Describes the topic area that the design guidelines fall within.

B Intent Statement
Explains the desired outcome and provides a basis for the subsequent guidelines. The intent statement is the most important component for each design topic and may be met in ways other than the design guidelines. If no guidelines address a specific design issue, the intent statement will be used to determine appropriateness.

C Design Guideline
Describes the design outcome. Guidelines are sequentially numbered in each chapter.

D Additional Information
Provides bullet lists of appropriate and inappropriate strategies for meeting the intent of the guideline.

E Context Specific Statements
Call-outs identify when a design guideline is especially important for a Character Area.

F Images
Clarify the intent of the guideline by illustrating appropriate and inappropriate design solutions.

Appropriate
Images marked with a check illustrate appropriate design solutions.

Inappropriate
Images marked with an X illustrate inappropriate design solutions

Building Placement

A building should be placed in a way that is considerate of its context. Where there is an established pattern of building setbacks, such as in the Constrained Grid Neighborhood context, a new building should be placed to align with the existing buildings and reflect the pattern on the block. Where there is no established setback pattern or a pattern that provides flexibility in setback on the site, buildings should be placed in a way that fits with the topography of the site.

1. *Locate a building within the range of established setbacks on a block.*

    a. Where front yard setbacks are uniform, align a new building with its neighboring buildings.

    * This is particularly important in Character Area 1, where traditional residential buildings comprise the majority of development.

Locate a building within the range of established setbacks on a block.

The Design Review Process

These are the steps in securing design review approval:

1. Meet with town staff early in project

Discuss the general approach and application of the design guidelines.

2. Prepare the design proposal

Provide sufficient information to enable informed decision-making. Staff will review the application for completeness and place the project on the agenda for an ADR meeting.

3. Meet with the ADR group

The ADR will discuss the project with the applicant and suggest modifications as appropriate. The ADR will then make a formal recommendation.

4. Staff prepares a report

The report will highlight how the project complies with the design guidelines and address any issues that the ADR may have raised.

5. Attend the Town Council hearing

The Town Council will consider the staff report with the ADR recommendations and act on the proposal.

CHAPTER 2
TOWN OF ROSS CHARACTER

Understanding the design character of Ross begins with a consideration of features that contribute to the town's distinct identity. This chapter describes some of the factors that contribute to the physical character of Ross. Natural features, roadway infrastructure, neighborhood design elements, site landscaping, building orientation and architectural design all contribute to Ross's distinct character. This chapter summarizes Ross's character at a townwide level and then discusses the factors that influence character at neighborhood, site and building levels.

In This Chapter

Ross Contexts

While diversity in design is a signature feature throughout Town, there do appear to be some geographic sub-areas that demonstrate consistency with respect to certain features. These may be considered different "contexts." A contexts map appears on page 10 and identifies six different contexts. Note that the boundaries are not sharply defined, because factors that contribute to context can change in very subtle ways.

The following descriptions should be used in conjunction with the guidelines. The context areas serve as a general guide for considering how the design guidelines may apply to different settings. For example, some building design guidelines may be interpreted with more flexibility when the building is not visible from the street. Where a particular design topic or individual guideline is especially relevant for a specific context, it is noted in the guidelines.

Major Arterial Corridor

This area is strongly influenced by Sir Francis Drake Boulevard itself and by Corte Madera Creek. Most sites and buildings in this area are visually separated from the road with fences, gates and other similar features.

Most properties in this area are connected to the street by walkways or gated vehicular entries. Because of the close proximity to the street, the front yard landscaping is often defined by tall landscaping and walls.

Constrained Grid Neighborhood

This area is defined by small lots and tight street systems. Buildings often are very close to the street and, due to their close distance, have a street presence through defined entryways, for example. Garages are often dominant along street frontages.

This area is defined by buildings that are located near the street and have entrances directly facing the street. Buildings are also parallel to the street, and have doors and windows that face the sidewalk. Landscaping on these properties is typically layered with a pathway, gate or similar feature.

Strong Street Relationship/Flat

In these areas, entries to homes are highly visible and houses have a consistent pattern of setbacks and orientation. A walkway typically provides a physical connection to the public realm. In some cases, on-street parking provides a somewhat more formal road edge.

Homes in this area may not be sited so that they are parallel to the street, but they are connected to the street with a pathway or other connection to the public right of way. Landscaping may highlight that path.

Moderate Street Relationship/Flat and Mild Slope

Properties in these areas have a fairly strong relationship with the street. Typically, houses are visible from the street, but not as strongly oriented to the street as some other areas. Winding roads create some differences in building placement and orientation, although some degree of consistency exists.

This area has a mixture of house placements. Some are oriented to the street, some are placed farther back from the public right of way. Topography may be a driver of building placement.

Minor Street Relationship/Moderate Slope

In these areas, steep topography often results in winding, narrow roads. Houses are somewhat, but not fully, visible from the street and commonly are set back significantly from the street.

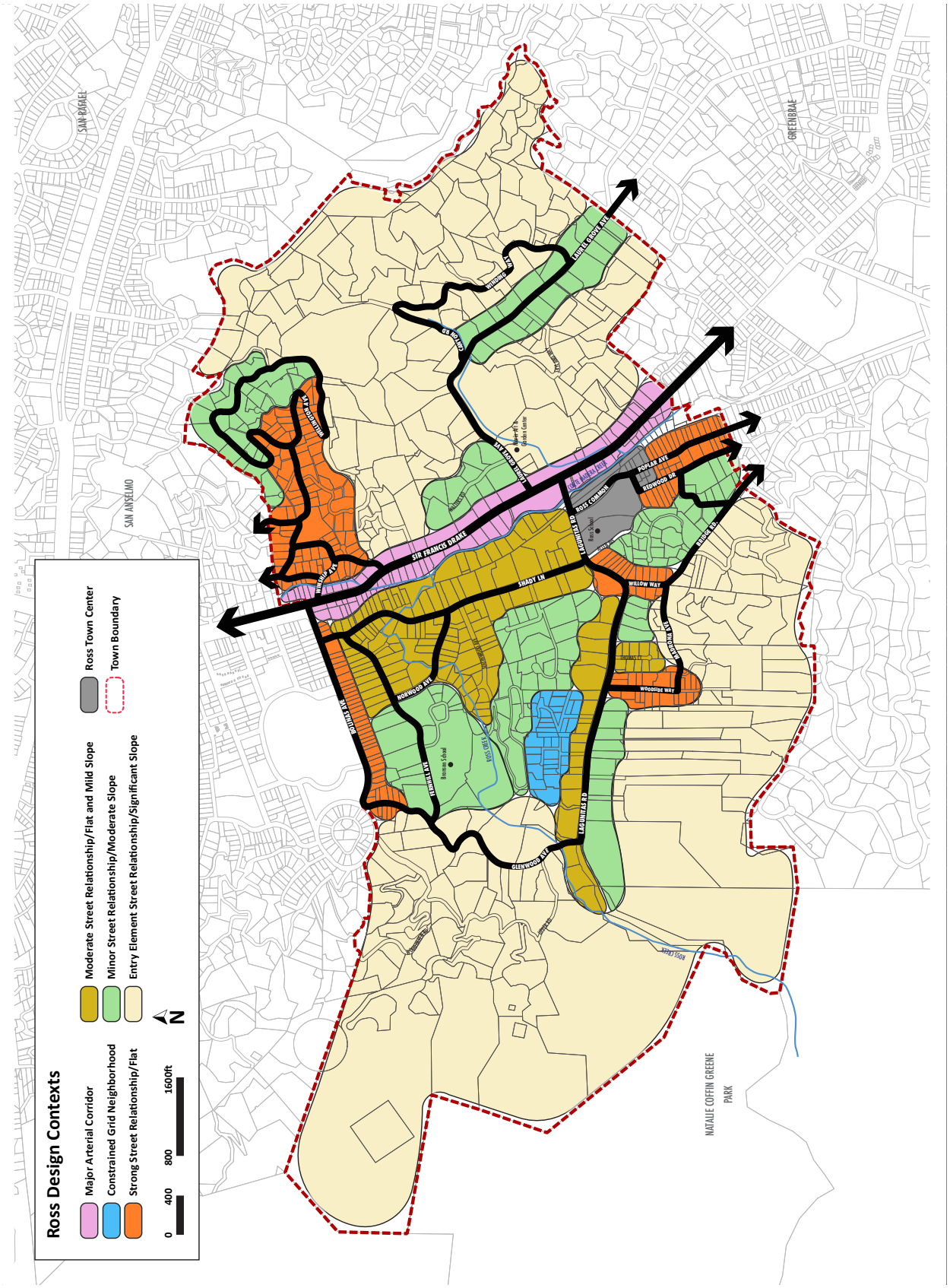
These areas often have thick vegetation that obscures houses from the street. In some cases, there are pedestrian pathways that lead from the public right of way to the entrance of the building. Driveways may be gated but are separated from the street by grade.

Entry Element Street Relationship/Significant Slope

Steep topography is the dominant driver of character in these areas. Houses are typically substantially separated from the public right of way. The view to a house is often obscured by steep topography and extensive vegetation. Driveways are typically the only connection between a house and the street. At the road edge, landscaping, fences and walks profoundly impact character as perceived from the public realm.

Few properties in these areas are visible from the street. Many are uphill, with a driveway leading to the home. Some are downhill, with portions of the building visible from the street. The relationship of these buildings with the street is minimal because of this topography change. Even though this context is currently characterized by homes located far back into the site and typically not visible from the street, the preferred location for homes would be closer to the street so they have a street presence.

Figure 2.1: DESIGN CONTEXTS



Character Drivers and Photo Observations

With its rich diversity of high quality design, there are some features that are consistent throughout the community. Other features appear in some areas, but not others. These contribute to the distinctive features of individual neighborhoods.

This section describes some of the individual elements that influence physical character in Ross. These may be considered at three levels of perception: (1) neighborhood, (2) site and (3) building - as described below. Photos illustrate character-influencing elements at these three levels.

NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL

Character drivers at a neighborhood level typically span multiple properties along a street. Neighborhood level features impact the character of groups of properties, but also each individual property. Variables include the degree of topography, the type of pedestrian facilities provided and the width of the roadway. Many neighborhood level characteristics are shaped by the qualities of the public right-of-way and the natural landscape.

SITE LEVEL

Site level character drivers are perceived on a property-by-property basis. These include how a building is placed relative to the street, the design of an entry to a property, the design of the front yard and the driveway. While site level characteristics are uniquely arranged on an individual property, there are some streets where many properties share similar site level characteristics.

BUILDING LEVEL

Building level character drivers also are perceived on a site-by-site basis. These include the form and massing of a building, its materials and the design of individual elements such as windows, doors and porches. Building level characteristics are unique to an individual property, but there are some areas where many properties share common characteristics at a building level.

NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL CHARACTER DRIVERS

STEEP TOPOGRAPHY/NATURAL STREET EDGE

Topography

- Steep topography partially obscures houses
- Hills and dropoffs create shorter views along the street

Streetscape Character

- The street edge is relatively natural, with informal landscaping
- No formal walkway
- The street is narrow with no shoulder or formal lanes

Contexts Where This Condition Exists

- Entry Element Street Relationship/Significant Slope
- Minor Street Relationship/ Moderate Slope
- Streets including: Upper Rd., Chestnut Ave., Crest Rd.

FLAT TOPOGRAPHY/FORMAL STREET EDGE

Topography

- Flat topography affords longer views along the block

Streetscape Character

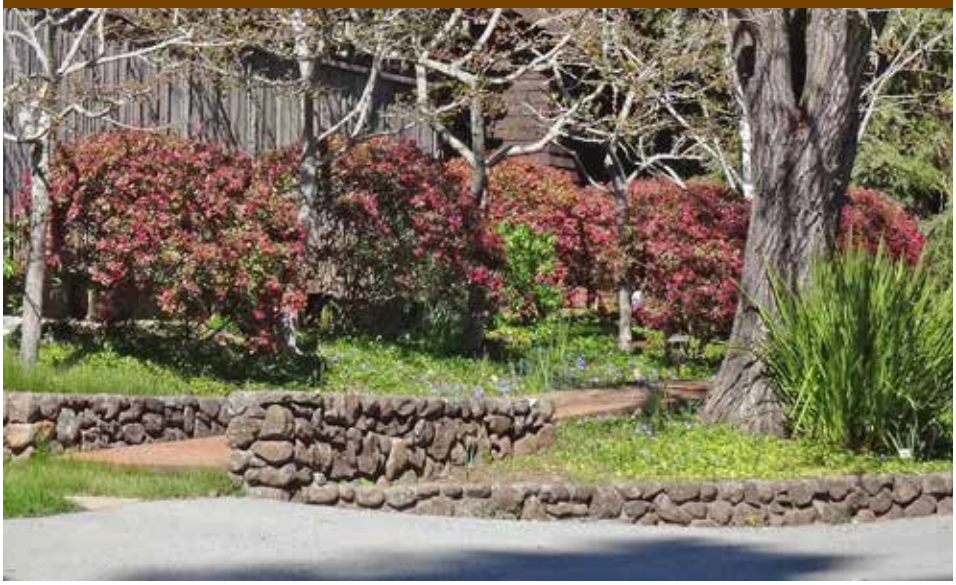
- The street edge gradually transitions from the public realm to the private realm
- Front yard landscaping offers visual interest from the street
- A formal sidewalk provides pedestrian access

Contexts Where This Condition Exists

- Strong Street Relationship/Flat
- Constrained Grid Neighborhood
- Moderate Street Relationship/ Flat and Mild Slope
- Streets including: Bolinas Ave., Poplar Ave., Wellington Ave.

NEIGHBORHOOD LEVEL CHARACTER DRIVERS

MODERATELY VARIED TOPOGRAPHY/ MODERATELY FORMAL STREET EDGE



Topography

- Moderately varied topography creates shorter views along the street

Streetscape Character

- The street edge has an informal shoulder
- Gentle transitions to the private realm occur with semi-permeable landscaping leading to a tall, opaque fence
- There is a formal pedestrian walkway along the street

Contexts Where This Condition Exists

- Moderate Street Relationship/ Flat and Mild Slope
- Minor Street Relationship/ Moderate Slope
- Streets including: Fernhill Ave., Lagunitas Rd., Shady Ln.

STEEP TOPOGRAPHY/ MODERATELY FORMAL STREET EDGE

Topography

- Steep topography partially obscures houses and creates shorter views along the street

Streetscape Character

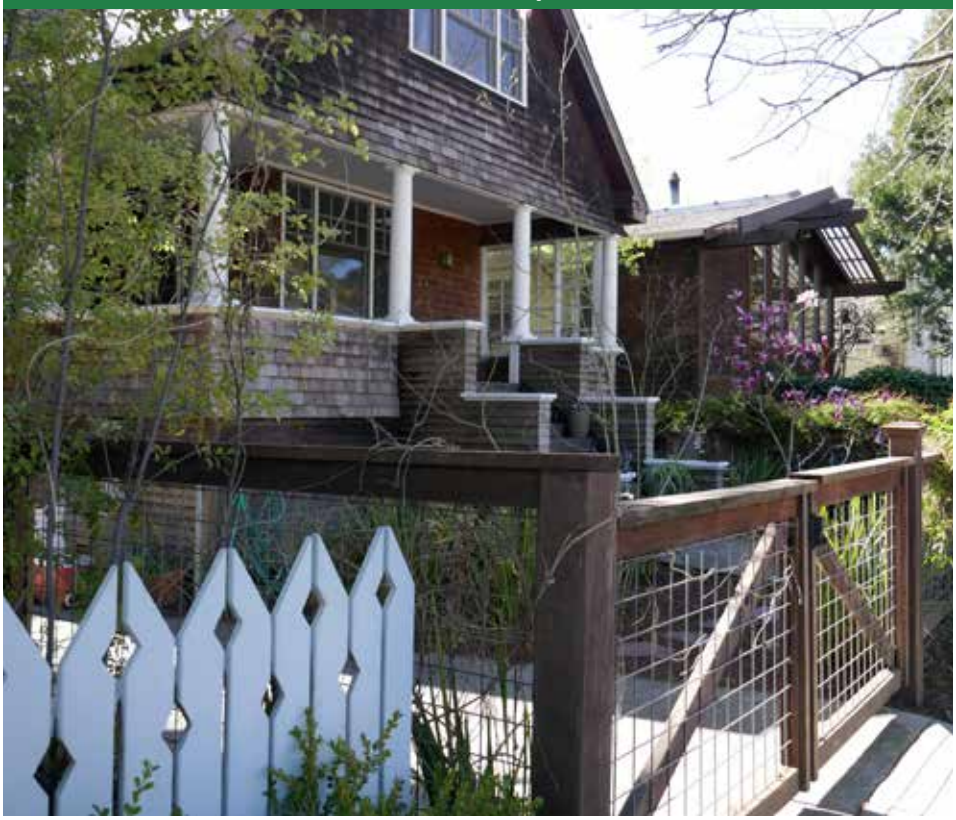
- The street edge has an informal shoulder
- There is a distinct transition to the private realm sometimes with a low, transparent fence
- The street is narrow with no formal lanes

Contexts Where This Condition Exists

- Moderate Street Relationship/ Flat and Mild Slope
- Major Arterial Corridor
- Streets including: Lagunitas Rd., Glenwood Ave., Ivy Dr.

SITE LEVEL CHARACTER DRIVERS

STRONG STREET ORIENTATION/CONNECTION



Building Placement and Orientation

- Building is placed close to the street and consistent with neighboring buildings
- Building is oriented to the street with a street-facing entry

Front Yard Design & Street Connection

- Front edge is defined with visually permeable plantings and a low fence
- Building is connected to street by a driveway and a walkway

Garage Location

- Garage is located behind the house (not pictured) and accessed from the street

Contexts Where This Condition Exists

- Strong Street Relationship/Flat
- Constrained Grid Neighborhood
- Moderate Street Relationship/ Flat and Mild Slope
- Streets including: Bolinas Ave., Poplar Ave., Wellington Ave.

MODERATE STREET ORIENTATION/ MINIMUM STREET CONNECTION

Building Placement and Orientation

- Building is placed back from the street, varied from neighboring buildings
- Building is generally oriented to the street

Front Yard Design & Street Connection

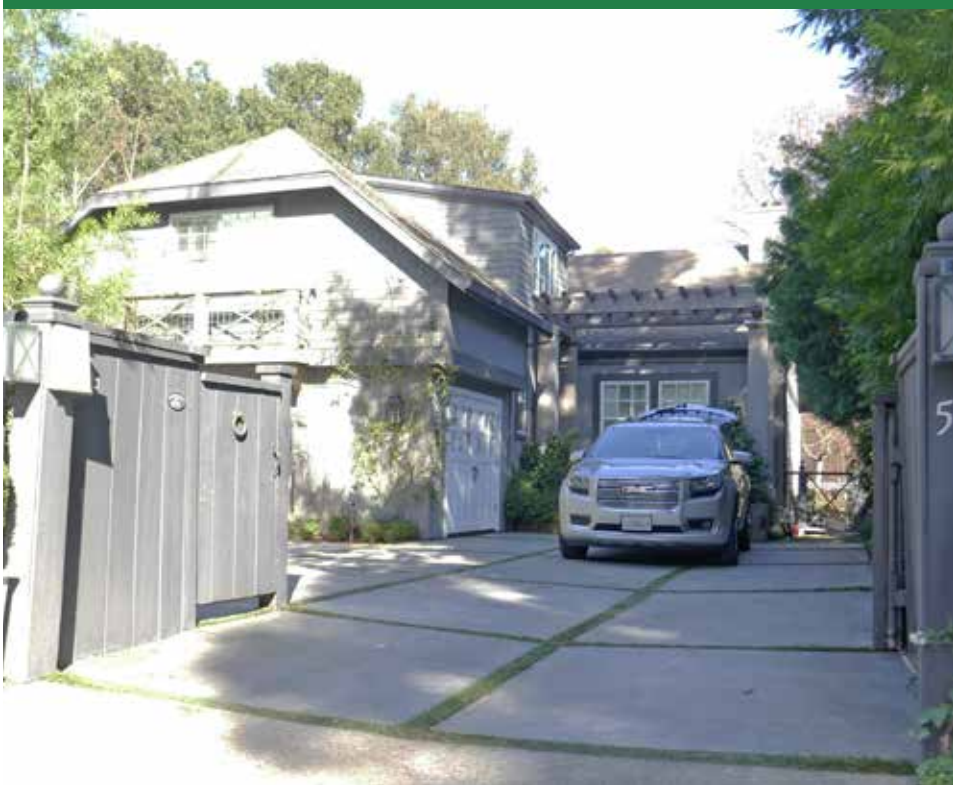
- Edge character is defined by significant topography, extensive landscaping and retaining walls
- Minimum connection to the street (driveway and gate only)
- Fencing is permeable and articulated with sections at different angles

Contexts Where This Condition Exists

- Entry Element Street Relationship/Significant Slope
- Minor Street Relationship/ Moderate Slope
- Streets including: Upper Rd., Chestnut Ave., Winding Way

SITE LEVEL CHARACTER DRIVERS

STRONG STREET ORIENTATION/ MODERATE STREET CONNECTION



Building Placement and Orientation

- Building is placed close to the street
- Edge character is defined by a high, visually impermeable fence

Front Yard Design & Street Connection

- Building is connected to street by a driveway that is shared with pedestrians

Garage Location

- Garage is located at the front of the house and accessed from the street, but is facing away from the street which reduces its visibility

Contexts Where This Condition Exists

- Strong Street Relationship/Flat
- Constrained Grid Neighborhood
- Streets including: Lagunitas Rd., Shady Ln., Sir Francis Drake Blvd.

MINIMAL STREET ORIENTATION/ MODERATE STREET CONNECTION

Building Placement and Orientation

- Building is placed back from the street
- Edge character is defined by fencing and landscaping, but there is some visual permeability

Front Yard Design & Street Connection

- Building is connected to street by a pedestrian gate and driveway

Contexts Where This Condition Exists

- Entry Element Street Relationship/Significant Slope
- Minor Street Relationship/ Moderate Slope
- Streets including: Laurel Grove Ave., Walters Rd., Glenwood Ave.

BUILDING LEVEL CHARACTER DRIVERS

CONTEMPORARY HOUSE/ TRADITIONAL MATERIALS

Building Details

- Wall openings include traditionally proportioned windows that are regularly spaced
- Front wall is highly transparent
- Design includes a high level of detailing to create contrast and richness on the façade

Materials and Color Palette

- Exterior materials are wood and stone; color palette is natural or muted

Massing and Form

- Building mass is highly articulated with height variation and mass modulation
- Roof is a traditional pitched (sloped) form

TRADITIONAL HOUSE/ TRADITIONAL MATERIALS

Building Details

- Wall openings are regularly spaced and have traditional proportions
- Front wall is moderately transparent
- Building includes a high level of detailing and ornamentation

Materials and Color Palette

- Exterior materials are wood and clapboard siding; the color palette is natural or muted

Massing and Form

- Roof is a traditional pitched (slope) form

BUILDING LEVEL CHARACTER DRIVERS

CONTEMPORARY HOUSE/MIX OF TRADITIONAL AND NEW MATERIALS

Building Details

- Wall openings are irregularly spaced and have smaller proportions
- Front wall is minimally transparent
- Building includes a moderate level of detailing

Materials and Color Palette

- Exterior materials are a mix of synthetic and natural materials; the color palette is natural and subdued

Massing and Form

- Building mass is highly articulated with height variation and mass modulation
- Roof is a flat form

CONTEMPORARY HOUSE/ TRADITIONAL MATERIALS

Building Details

- Wall openings are regularly spaced and have traditional proportions

Materials and Color Palette

- Exterior materials are natural wood shingles; the color palette is natural

Massing and Form

- Building mass is moderately articulated with large dormers
- Roof is a traditional pitched (sloped) form

Garage Design

- Garage is designed to match the primary house

Townwide Character Analysis

This section describes elements that contribute to Ross's physical character today. It focuses on features that occur in most parts of Town.

Informal Experience

There is an informal feel to one's experience in Ross. Varying topography, a mix of winding roads and gridded streets, along with a mix of informal sidewalks and walking streets create diversity in visual experiences for one on foot, on a bike or in a car. The rambling nature and variety of the landscape also adds to the Town's informal character. Within many neighborhoods, lot sizes, home sizes, building placement and building orientation vary considerably.

Diverse Architecture

While some attributes are shared among many buildings in Ross, such as the widespread use of natural materials, each building is different. Each property appears uniquely designed. This is partially a result of the varying lot shapes and sizes, as well as the intent of individual designers and property owners.

Connection to Nature

A sense of contact with nature pervades in Ross. Terraced topography, rambling landscapes and meandering creeks are features that are integral to the Ross experience. Most buildings fit harmoniously with environmental features through their siting, massing, use of materials and color palettes. Views to and from hillsides and distinctive geologic features also contribute to Ross's natural character.

Sense of Discovery

A sense of discovery exists along the Town's streets. The organic nature of the circulation system and the diversity of sites and architecture contribute to this quality. As one travels around a bend you may only glimpse a building that sits behind a heavily landscaped street edge. In another case, even when a home is highly visible, the design of a gate or a specimen tree provides a delightful surprise. One's experience may change rapidly upon turning a corner or proceeding to another road. The Town's historic bridges and creek crossings also contribute to this sense of discovery.

Lush and Varied Landscape

The lushness of Ross's landscape is a character-defining element. This green, leafy environment is unforgettable. Some areas are informal with wooded hillsides or groves of redwoods. Others are more designed and maintained. Everywhere, the landscape is integrated with the architecture, and an element of greenness is ubiquitous. These features and the layering of them with one another contribute strongly to the Town's character.

Topographic Diversity

Varying topography is a critical driver of character. The mix of generally flat areas, with slightly sloping places and dramatically steep areas adds to the informal experience. An entire neighborhood may be defined by elevation changes, but this also occurs on individual properties. A building's position at street grade, above or below the roadway also affects how it is perceived and how it contributes to the streetscape. This in turn impacts the Town's character.

Small Town Scale

Ross exhibits a small town character. No wide arterials dominate the Town's fabric. Streets range from two-lane roads to hillside roads that are so tight they function almost as "yield streets" where cars must carefully pass one another. These narrow streets provide a tight connection between private properties and the public way. Even Sir Francis Drake Boulevard is only a two-lane road. Buildings are generally of a modest overall scale, especially those visible from the street, which also contributes to the small town feel.

Walkable Experience

Ross is highly walkable. Narrow roadways slow traffic and the variety of streetscape experiences and the visual interest created by them are key factors. An ever-changing character is experienced where a roadway interfaces with private properties. Variety in landscapes, fences, street tree patterns, front yard designs, and architecture all contribute to this walkable experience.

Low Lot Coverage

Substantial open space relative to the footprint of buildings is a key feature. This is partially due to parcels that were shaped by topography and natural features, but is also an inherent design feature throughout the Town. Rarely does a site appear to be "maxed out."

Intermingling of Size, Scale and Lot Size

Building sizes vary, as do lot sizes. While small clusters of homes of a similar size and lot configuration exist, such as on Bolinas Avenue, lot characteristics vary widely across Town.

Detail and Craftsmanship

Many buildings demonstrate a thoughtful level of detailing. From ornate to more simplistic styles, thoughtful architectural detailing from house to house creates contrast, interest and a depth of shadow that provides a sense of scale. Window details, doors and shingle siding and trim are prominent architectural features that express a sense of craftsmanship in Ross. This richness of detail is cherished.

Mix of Traditional and Contemporary Architecture

Many of Ross's buildings were designed decades ago and traditional architecture is abundant. Over the years, newer styles have joined these early homes. They represent a spirit of architectural innovation that is respectful of its context. Traditional architecture is undoubtedly dominant, but the intermingling of newer designs adds diversity to community character. Newer interpretations of traditional architectural forms can be seen and clearly distinguished, but they also utilize materials and detailing that integrate well with older buildings. Some more modern forms with flat roofs and simple geometry also exist. This mixture of traditional and contemporary architecture is a notable characteristic of Ross.

Factors That May Influence the Importance of the Design Topics

Ross is a unique place with many different contexts. Development varies considerably throughout the Town, along streets and even between neighboring properties. Because of this, individual design topics may be more important in some situations or settings, and less important in others. For example, entry design may be less important for a property when a house is far above the road and is set back extensively. Key factors that may influence the importance of a design topic include:

Topography

In areas with steep terrain, buildings are often set back farther from the street and may not even be visible from the public realm. In these situations design topics such as building entry design, detailing and transparency may be less important to consider. Other topics such as street edge character, front yard design and connectivity to the street may be more important.

Street Configuration and Width

Street configuration and width may influence the importance of a design topic. On a narrow, winding street, building orientation and placement may not be an important topic to consider, because the curving streets and properties do not establish a strong pattern of setbacks or orientation. On a rectilinear street, setbacks and building orientation may be more important because there is more consistency from property to property.

Formality of Street Edge and Sidewalk Character

The formality of the street edge and the presence of a sidewalk may also impact the importance of a certain design topic. For example, when the street edge is informal, with vegetation and no sidewalk, it may be less important to consider connectivity from a building entry to the street. In other parts of Ross where the street edge has more formal landscaping and sidewalks, it may be more important to consider how a property connects to the street and how its front yard is designed.

Lot Size and Configuration

Lot sizes vary considerably throughout Ross. Where lot sizes are very large and irregularly shaped, a number of design topics may be less important, including building placement, building orientation, entry design and porch design. In other areas where lots are small and regularly configured, these topics may be more important.

CHAPTER 3
OVERARCHING DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The design guidelines in this document all seek to maintain the character of Ross while providing opportunities for new development and assuring Ross remains a desirable place to live. They promote maintaining traditional character, while encouraging creativity and contemporary design where appropriate. The following overarching design principles provide the foundation for the design guidelines. Each project should help to achieve these principles.

In This Chapter

New development should reflect and enhance the existing small-town character of Ross.

Thoughtful design should enhance the character of Ross, be sensitive to its surrounding context and create an enjoyable pedestrian-oriented experience.

New infill development should maintain this relationship by working with the natural environment, taking advantage of hillside features and avoiding excess cut and fill on a site.

Maintain the "Small-Town" Feel

New development should reflect and enhance the existing small-town character by creating low-density, appropriately-scaled design that represents diversity in design character. It should embrace and enhance Ross's landscape and existing vegetation, and should support a walkable, bikable community.

Provide Excellence in Design

Each development in Ross should express excellence in design. This includes the use of high quality, sustainable materials; utilizing high quality construction methods; and paying attention to the details of the project and its design. Thoughtful design should enhance the character of Ross, be sensitive to its surrounding context and create an enjoyable pedestrian-oriented experience.

Contribute to the Landscape

The Town of Ross is home to a diverse landscape and natural resources. Its tree canopy and signature "greenness" are key features of the town and should be maintained and enhanced. New plantings should utilize mature specimens and high quality landscape design.

Design in Harmony with Nature

Ross's existing buildings work with the natural landscape, highlighting its rolling hills and lush, varied landscape along the street. New infill development should maintain this relationship by working with the natural environment, taking advantage of hillside features and avoiding excess cut and fill on a site.

Design Buildings to Fit Within the Community

Ross's residential environment is an eclectic mix of some traditional, historic buildings and contemporary new development, nestled into landscape. New development should be sensitive to the existing built environment and should be designed to contribute to the existing context through the use of scale, massing, form and other features. Individual buildings should not dominate the landscape.

Respect Neighboring Properties and Prioritize Privacy

In addition to designing new development to take cues from existing residential development, it should also respect the privacy of neighboring properties. A variety of design options may be considered in order to achieve a design that respects the privacy of neighboring properties, including creating a natural, semi-transparent landscape buffer; strategically locating outdoor spaces to minimize their impact on neighboring properties; and carefully designing the mass and form of a new building to minimize looming effects.

Despite the varying character of residential areas of Ross, protecting the privacy of neighboring properties remains a priority. New development should consider the placement of the building relative to the adjacent properties to minimize potential negative impacts including blocking solar access or views. The use of landscaping, such as natural barriers, should also be considered, for existing development as well as new development. While these natural barriers protect neighbor's privacy, they should not be designed to create solid, tall barriers along a property edge.

A variety of design options may be considered in order to achieve a design that respects the privacy of neighboring properties.

The use of landscaping, such as natural barriers, should also be considered, for existing development as well as new development.

Encourage Sustainable Development

The Town of Ross has prioritized sustainability through policy and practice. Development proposals should continue to promote sustainability in a variety of ways including reducing energy consumption, conserving resources, minimizing environmental impacts, incorporating low impact development principles to mitigate stormwater impacts and utilizing sustainable materials. The overall design of a new development should utilize passive design strategies when possible, such as the siting and orientation of a building and the location of windows to minimize or maximize sunlight and cross-ventilation.

The hilly nature of much of Ross's residential areas creates many view opportunities to nearby natural features.

Maintaining Ross's heritage structures is essential to preserving the Town's unique character, as they define a crucial part of the built environment.

Protect Important Views

The natural landscape and views of nearby hills are key features of the Town of Ross and should be preserved. As such, new development should respect and protect existing views from the public way to nearby natural features. Where appropriate, new development could also consider framing views through the strategic placement of building forms.

The hilly nature of much of Ross's residential areas creates many view opportunities to nearby natural features. These views should be protected. New development should consider the views established from other properties and should respect them by creating a building that steps with the property and does not tower over neighboring properties.

Respect Heritage Resources

Maintaining Ross's heritage residential structures is essential to preserving the Town's unique character, as they define a crucial part of the built environment. A development proposal near a heritage structure should consider a design that is compatible, recognizing important design variables such as setback, roof pitch and street presence. Heritage residential structures should be reused where possible in order to be kept an active part of the community, whether in their original use or in a new, appropriate use.

Promote Public and Personal Safety in Design

Development in Ross should be designed to reduce the potential for fires and floods. Landscape plantings that reduce the potential for spreading a fire should be incorporated, and should also be located to minimize overhang to buildings that could fuel potential fires. Landscape design should also follow the established WUI standards.

CHAPTER 4
SITE DESIGN GUIDELINES

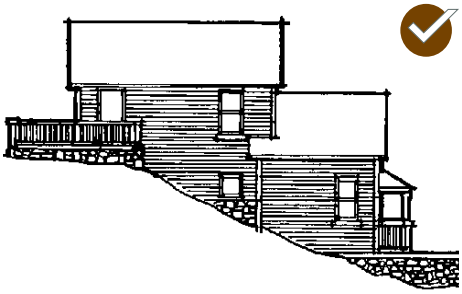
Introduction

This chapter provides design guidelines for site design. Site design refers to the arrangement, placement and orientation of buildings and site features on a parcel. It also includes the relationship between buildings and site features on one parcel to neighboring properties and the public realm. Site design considers:

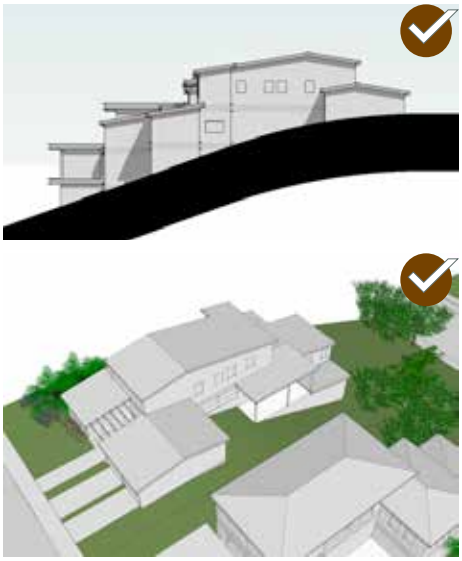
- Building placement
- Building orientation
- Secondary/accessory structure placement
- Street edge character/interface with the public realm
- Landscape design along street edge
- Front yard design
- Hardscape materials
- Pedestrian and Vehicular Connections
- Side Yard Relationships

In This Chapter

Step a fence with the natural topography of a site.



"Terrace" a building into a hillside to minimize the use of "cut and fill" and to create private outdoor spaces and site features.



Design a building to respect and reflect the natural topography, especially in hilly areas.

Designing with Topography

Some projects occur on sites with topography and grade change. A site design should work with existing topography wherever possible rather than creating a flat site. This is a sustainable practice and helps to retain terrain that contributes positively to Ross's character. A regrading effort should not negatively impact the public realm.

4.1 Design a project to integrate with and take advantage of existing topography.

a. Incorporate a topographic feature as an outdoor public space or landscape amenity where feasible.
b. Where on-site parking is provided, consider taking advantage of site topography to provide subterranean or partially subterranean parking.
c. "Terrace" a building into a hillside to minimize the use of "cut and fill" and to create private outdoor spaces and site features.
d. Where grading is utilized, the design should retain water on site, enhance percolation into soils and minimize runoff onto adjacent properties.
e. Step the first floor of a building along a sloped street to maintain a constant street presence.
f. Where a taller cut or change in grade is necessary, use a series of landscaped terraces or stepped walls.
g. Step a fence with the natural topography of a site.

4.2 Design a building to respect and reflect the natural topography, especially in hilly areas.

a. Locate a building to preserve the natural slope.
b. Design a building to be of a mass that reflects, respects and blends with site topography.
c. Design a building in modules that are oriented with the contours of the slope.
d. Locate a building to minimize obstruction of views and site lines from surrounding properties.
e. Utilize a roof pitch that is low and angled with the slope. Collectively, rooflines should reflect the naturally occurring ridgeline silhouette.
f. Select colors and materials for new development that blends with the natural colors and hues of the surrounding hillsides.
g. Utilize roof materials that are textured and of a darker tone such as brown, black and terracotta. Avoid bright or light-colored roofs.

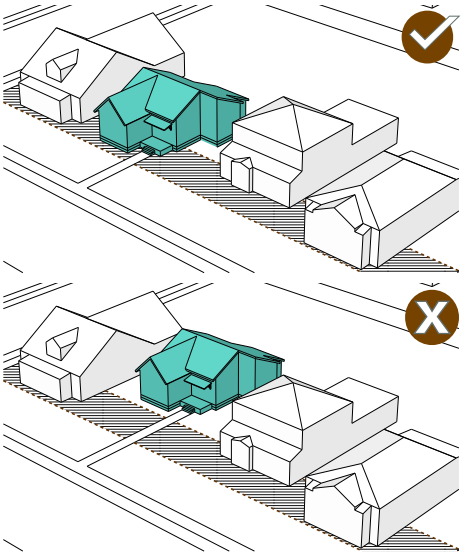
Primary Building Placement

A building should be placed in a way that is considerate of its context. Where there is an established pattern of building setbacks, such as in the Constrained Grid Neighborhood context, a new building should be placed to align with the existing buildings and reflect the pattern on the block. Where there is no established setback pattern or a pattern that provides flexibility in setback on the site, buildings should be placed in a way that fits with the topography of the site. This is especially relevant in the Minor Street Relationship/Moderate Slope and Entry Element Street Relationship/Significant Slope contexts.

Locate a building within the range of established setbacks on a block.

4.3 Locate a building within the established range of setbacks on a block and orient it to the street when a visible connection is possible.

a. Where front yard setbacks are uniform, align a new building with neighboring buildings.
   * This is particularly important in the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and the Strong Street Relationship/Flat context.
b. Locate a building to maintain the side yard spacing pattern along the street, where an established pattern exists.



Locate a building within the range of established setbacks on a block and orient it to the street when a visible connection is possible. The top image above illustrates a small range of setbacks, within which the new house, shown in teal, falls. However, the new development in the diagram below that does not fall within the established range of setbacks on the block and is, therefore, inappropriate.

4.4 Locate a building to minimize disturbance to the natural topography.

a. On sites with a steep slope, locate the building to complement the topography.
   * This is especially important in the Minor Street Relationship/Moderate Slope and Entry Element Street Relationship/Significant Slope contexts.

Where front yard setbacks are uniform, align a new building with neighboring buildings.

Where a building is visible from the street, locate the primary entrance on the front face of the building, or where it will be highly visible.

Primary Building Orientation

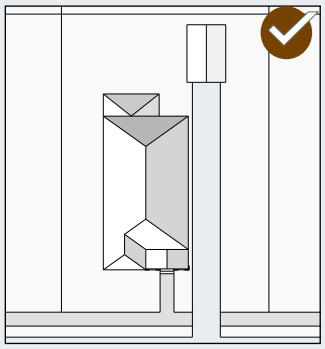
When a building is visible from the street, the primary entrance should orient to the street to create an engaging, pedestrian-friendly character. In many of Ross's contexts, such as the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and Strong Street Relationship/Flat, a porch helps make this connection. In other contexts, such as the Major Arterial Corridor and Minor Street Relationship/Moderate Slope, the relationship of the building to the street is not a character-defining feature. Therefore, more flexibility in building orientation should be allowed in these contexts.

4.5 Orient a building to face the street, where this is an established component of the context's character.

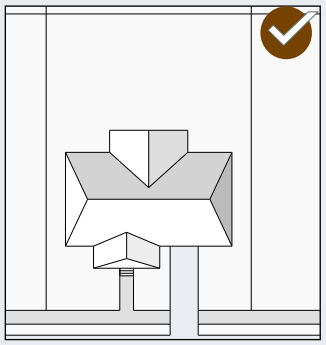
a. Where a building is visible from the street, locate the primary entrance on the front wall of the building, or where it will be highly visible.
   * This is especially important in the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and Strong Street Relationship/Flat contexts.

Figure 4.1: Example Building Orientations When Close To A Street

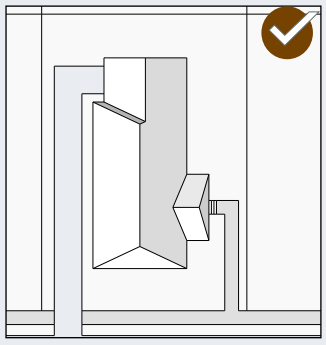
Depending on context, a range of building orientations may be appropriate for new development. The diagrams below illustrate a variety of building orientations, each of which may be appropriate, depending on context.



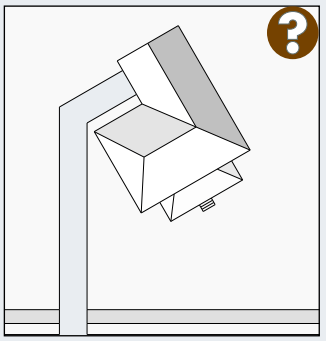
Building oriented toward and front wall parallel with the street.



Building oriented toward and front wall parallel with the street.



Front wall parallel to the street, with side entrance.



Front wall not parallel to the street. This orientation could be appropriate on a sloping site.

Secondary Structures and Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Placement

Secondary structure, such as garages, studios and sheds, and accessory dwelling unit (ADU) should be subordinate to the primary structure. They should be located to minimize the impacts of mass and scale on the primary structure and on adjacent properties.

4.6 Locate a secondary structure or ADU within the established location in the context.

a. Encourage a secondary structure to be placed to the rear of the front wall of the primary structure.
b. Where the established context includes secondary structures located forward of the front wall of the primary structure, orient the structure perpendicular to the street, where feasible, to minimize its appearance as a secondary structure.

4.7 Minimize the visibility of the secondary structure or ADU on the site.

a. Locate a secondary structure or ADU to the rear of a property, where feasible.
   * This is especially important in context areas where there is a strong relationship between the building entry and the public realm, such as the Constrained Grid Neighborhood, Strong Street Relationship/Flat and Moderate Street Relationship/Flat and Mild Slope.
b. Where a garage cannot be located to the rear of a property in one of the above context areas, minimize its visibility by orienting the garage perpendicular to the street.
c. Where a garage cannot be located to the rear of the property due to site constraints such as topography, design the garage to be visually appealing and to be part of the architectural style and design of the property.
   * This is especially important in Minor Street Relationship/Moderate Slope and Entry Element Street Relationship/Significant Slope context areas.
d. Where an ADU cannot be placed to the rear of the property, locate it behind the rear of the front wall of the primary structure.

Locate a secondary structure to be subordinate to the primary structure.

Where the secondary structure is visible from the street, orient the front wall of the structure to be parallel with the street.

Locate an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) to be subordinate to the primary structure.

Refer to the Town's Municipal Code

Refer to Chapter 18.42 to learn more about parking requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units.

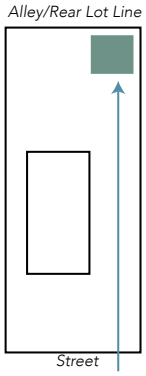
https://www.townofross.org/administration/page/title-18-zoning

Figure 4.2: Recommended Locations for Secondary Structures

The diagrams below illustrate the recommended location for a secondary structure. This includes a shed, studio, garage or other type of building. This table uses a garage as an example of a secondary structure. A description of each scenario is provided The context and lot configuration are also factors to consider. These address lots that will be highly visible from the street. In some deep lot conditions or hillside settings, other options may be appropriate as well.

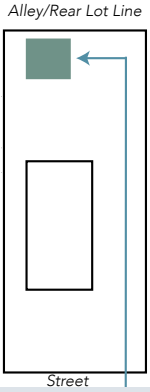
Detached Structure to the Rear of Primary Structure (Visible from the Street)

The secondary structure is located to the rear of the site and is visible from the street.



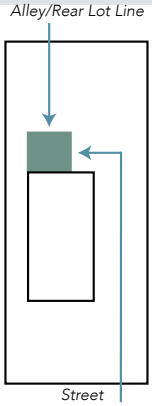
Detached Structure to the Rear of Primary Structure (Not Visible from the Street)

The secondary structure is located to the rear of the site, and placed fully behind the rear of the primary structure.



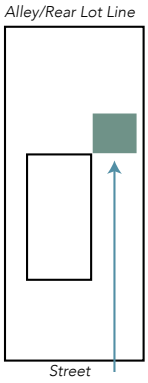
Attached Structure to the Rear of Primary Structure (Not Visible from the Street)

The secondary structure is located to the rear of and attached to the primary structure. It is not visible from the street.



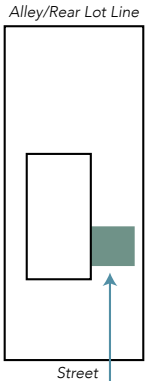
Detached Structure at Rear of Primary Structure

The secondary structure is located to the rear of the primary structure and is visible from the street.



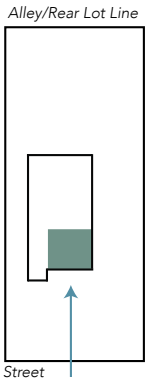
Attached Structure to the Side of Primary Structure

The secondary structure is attached to the primary structure and is set back from the front wall of the primary structure. The secondary structure may be one or two stories. Its design is consistent with the main house.



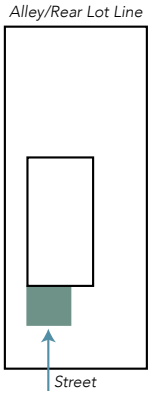
Incorporated Structure, Flush with Front Wall of Primary Structure

The secondary structure is slightly recessed from the front-most wall of the primary structure. This is appropriate for garages, not for other secondary structures.



Attached Structure, Projecting from Front Wall of Primary Structure

The secondary structure is set completely in front of the front wall of the primary structure. This is appropriate for the placement of garages, not for other secondary structures. This is appropriate only in a small lot in a hillside setting where a front-loaded garage is the only option.



Attached Structure, Projecting from Front Wall of Primary Structure with Side Garage Entrance

The secondary structure is set completely in front of the front wall of the primary structure. The vehicular entrance to the garage is placed on the side of the garage structure. This is appropriate for the placement of garages, not for other secondary structures.

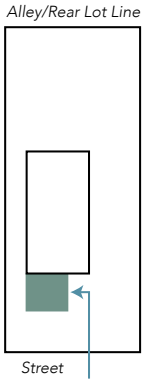
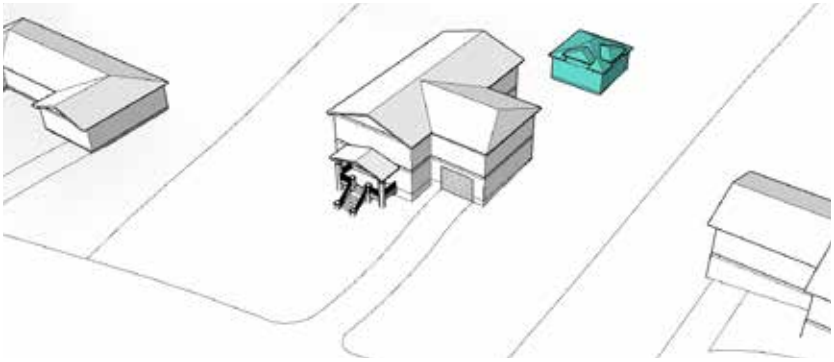


Figure 4.3: Recommended Locations for Accessory Dwelling Units

The diagrams below illustrate the potential location of an ADU on a site. A description of each scenario is provided.

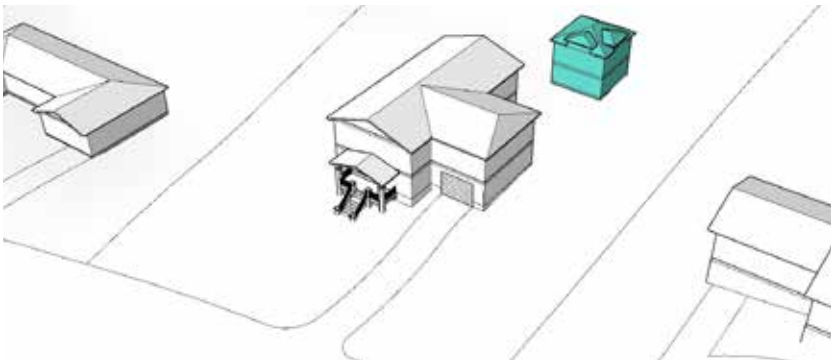
One-Story Detached ADU at the Rear of Property

The ADU is located at the rear of the site, and placed behind the primary structure. The ADU is one-story.



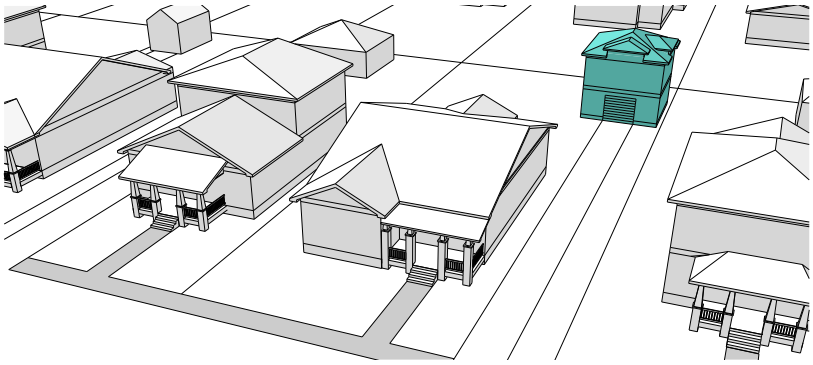
Two-Story Detached ADU at the Rear of Property

The ADU is located at the rear of the site, and placed fully behind the primary structure. The ADU is two stories.



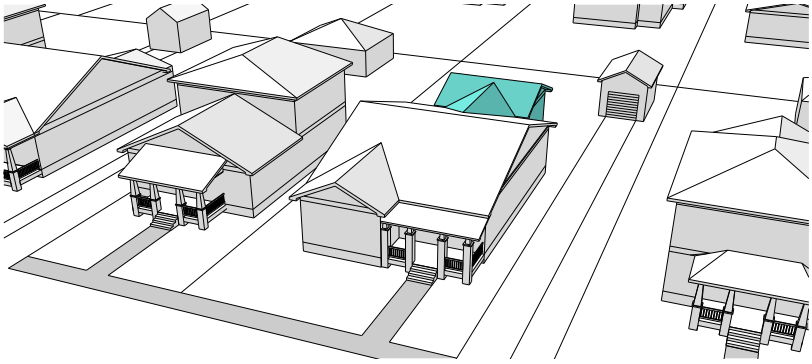
Two-Story Detached ADU at the Rear and Side of Property

The ADU is located at the rear of the site and to the side and fully behind the primary structure. It is visible from the street. The ADU is two stories and contains potential living space on the first and second floors.



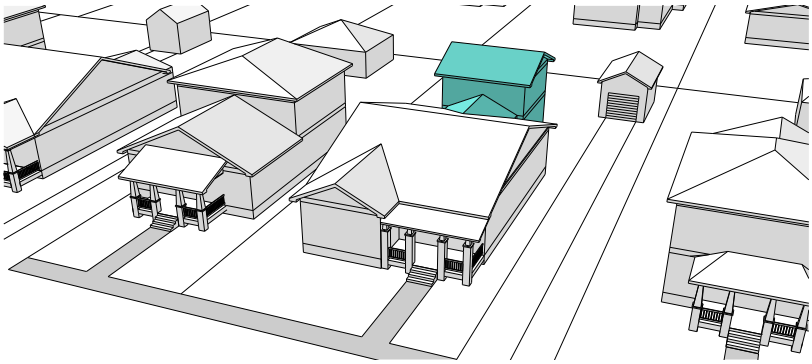
One-Story ADU Attached to the Rear of Building

The ADU is attached to the primary structure and is one-story in height.



Two-Story ADU Attached to the Rear of Building

The ADU is attached to the primary structure and is two-stories in height.



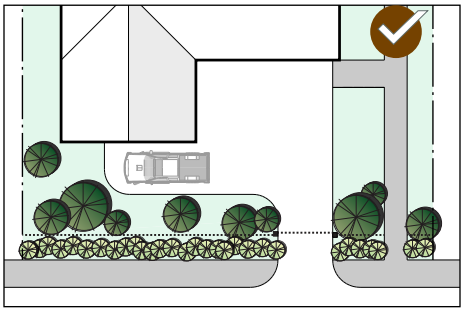
Garages and Off-Street Parking

Where a garage is visible from the public realm, it should be screened in order to make it subordinate to the property and the primary building. Where off-street parking is located on a site, it should be strategically located to minimize its visibility from the public realm is a key design consideration. Off-street parking spaces should be screened from the public realm using landscaping, fences, walls or other strategies, as discussed in the Street Edge and Landscape Design, and Fences and Buffers sections.

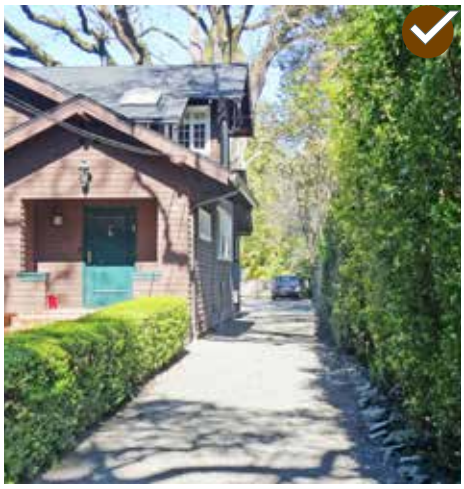
4.8 Screen a garage and off-street parking through the use of plantings, fences or walls at the street edge.

a. While plantings between 4' and 6' may be desired to minimize the visibility of cars on a site, plantings along the property line should maintain a low scale to contribute to the "small town feel." Refer to the Street Edge and Landscape Design section on page 40 and the Fences and Buffers section on page 42 for more information about selecting appropriate plantings and creating a "layered effect."

   * This is especially important for the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and the Strong Street Relationship/Flat contexts.



Screen a garage and off-street parking through the use of plantings, fences or walls at the street edge. The images above illustrate appropriate ways to screen off-street parking. However, the hedge the image on the left is too tall and too opaque to comply with the guidelines.



Minimize the visibility of a garage on the site. Locate a garage to the rear of a property, where feasible.

When a garage is visible from the street, design its façade to be a part of the architectural style of the property.

Choose a material for the driveway that is visibly distinguishable from the sidewalk in color, texture and/or style.

Select materials for the driveway and off-street parking that contribute to the overall site design.

Minimize the driveway width at the street.

Site Connections

Vehicular and pedestrian connections are key to each Ross context in order to establish a visual and physical link. While not every connection will be visible from the public realm to the home, the connection should be distinguishable in the front property line.

Vehicular Connectivity

While the vechicular connection between a site and the public realm is essential to the functionality of the site, it should be visually subordinate to the landscaping along the street edge and the building, if visible from the street. The vehicular connection should also be distinguishable from the public realm to create a safe pedestrian-vehicular junction.

4.9 Distinguish the driveway entrance from the surrounding public right of way.

a. Minimize the driveway width at the street. If a long driveway is needed on a site, increase the width of the driveway for parking as far back in the site as possible in order to minimize its visual impact.
   *This is especially important for the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and Strong Street Relationship/Flat context areas.

4.10 Select materials for the driveway and off-street parking that contribute to the overall site design.

a. Incorporate a material at the driveway entrance that is distinguishable from the public realm.
b. Where a long driveway is needed on the site, consider incorporating a specific material to designate parking areas.
c. Consider incorporating an accent material in order to define the driveway and parking areas. For instance, a driveway made of small concrete pavers with a brick or stone border distinguishes the driveway from surrounding landscaping.
d. Refer to the Hardscape section on page 50 for more details about appropriate materials to use.

4.11 Design off-street parking on the site to be a part of an overall site plan composition.

a. Consider the parking layout, parking area materials and screening when designing the overall front yard composition.
b. Consider incorporating a carport or overhang adjacent to the garage to utilize as a designated car space.
c. Where possible, orient off-street parking spaces parallel to the street to minimize the visibility of cars. Screening, discussed below and in previous sections, should also be incorporated.

Pedestrian Connectivity to the Street

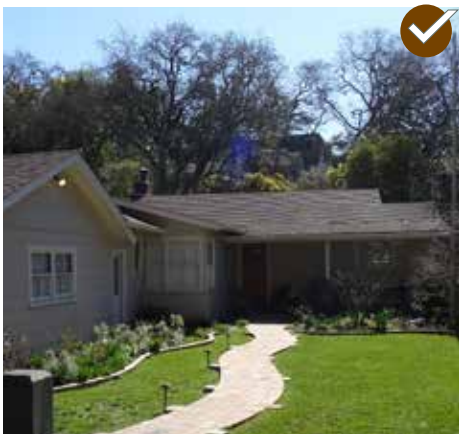
Pedestrian connections from a building to the street and from one property to another along the street should be provided, where possible, to establish a visual and physical connection with the street. In many Ross contexts, a path from the street or sidewalk leads to a front porch or stoop. However, other Ross contexts may define a pathway at the edge of the site that is not visible on the site due to topography and other site features.

4.12 Provide a clearly visible pathway from a house to the street.

a. Connect a path to the public sidewalk.
   *This is particularly important in the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and Strong Street Relationship/Flat contexts.
b. Distinguish a pathway to the entrance of the home by the use of distinct paving materials or site lighting.
   *This is particularly important in the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and Strong Street Relationship/Flat contexts.
c. Select hardscape materials that are compatible with materials selected for other hardscape areas of the site. Refer to the Hardscape section on page 49 for more information about appropriate materials.

4.13 Consider the use of a gate or an archway to highlight the connection of the pathway to the public realm in order to provide details and visual interest.

a. Refer to the Town Code Section 18.40.080(3) for more information about the requirements for single arbor-style entry elements on the front yard of a residential property.



Provide a clearly visible pathway from a house to the street.

Consider the use of a gate or an archway.

Distinguish a pathway to the entrance of the home by the use of distinctive paving materials or site lighting.

Where feasible and appropriate to the context, design the landscaping of a property to be layered.

Incorporate low-scale plantings along a street edge to maintain views through to the property.

Street Edge and Landscape Design

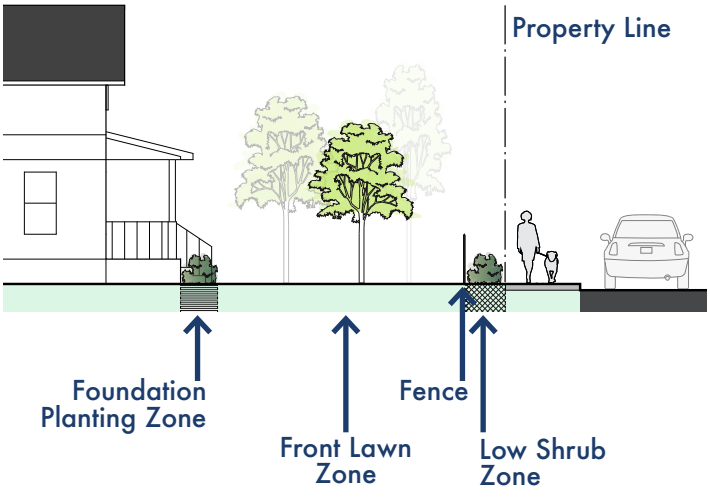
The design of landscaping and the site are key defining characteristics of Ross's context areas. This design begins at the street edge and moves inward on the site. The relationship between the street edge of a property and the public realm is key in setting the stage of the site, but also in providing functional requirements of privacy and safety. The street edge should be designed to allow for a visual connection between the street and the property, and should be designed to be attractive and enjoyable for passersby. The design of landscaping along the street edge should be designed to complement the architecture and site, and should also be compatible with the context. For instance, while the Strong Street Relationship/Flat context maintains low, manicured plantings at the street edge, the street edge in the Minor Street Relationship/Moderate Slope context sometimes includes taller plantings or sudden topographical changes. As the landscaping progresses into the property, a layered look is often appropriate for properties in Ross, creating a balance between visual connection and privacy.

4.14 Maintain a connection from the street the property, if possible.

a. Incorporate low-scale plantings along a street edge to maintain views through to the property.
   * This is especially important for the Constrained Grid Neighborhood, Strong Street Relationship/Flat, and Moderate Street Relationship/Flat and Mild Slope contexts.

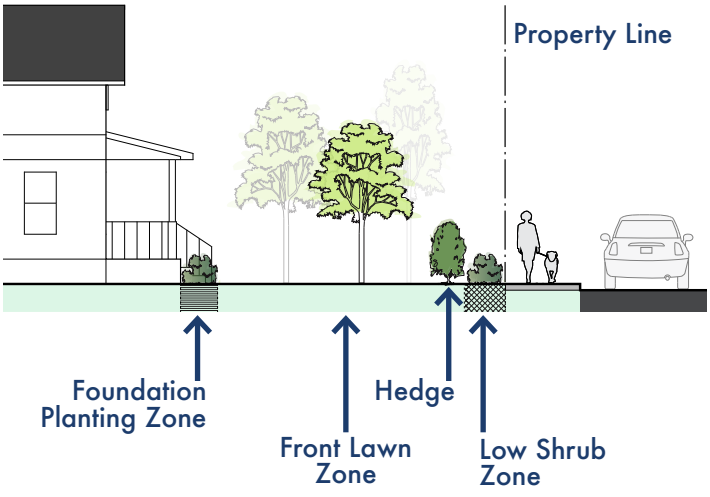
Landscape Edge Transitions with a Fence

In this scenario, the front property line is defined by a fence or wall buffered by low landscaping.



Landscape Edge Transitions with a Tall Hedge

The front property line is defined by a tall landsacping buffer that includes low landscaping in front.



4.15 Incorporate plantings along the length of the property line that create depth and visual interest, and that define the property.

a. Select planting materials that incorporate texture, color and depth at the property line.

4.16 Protect existing street trees along a property line.

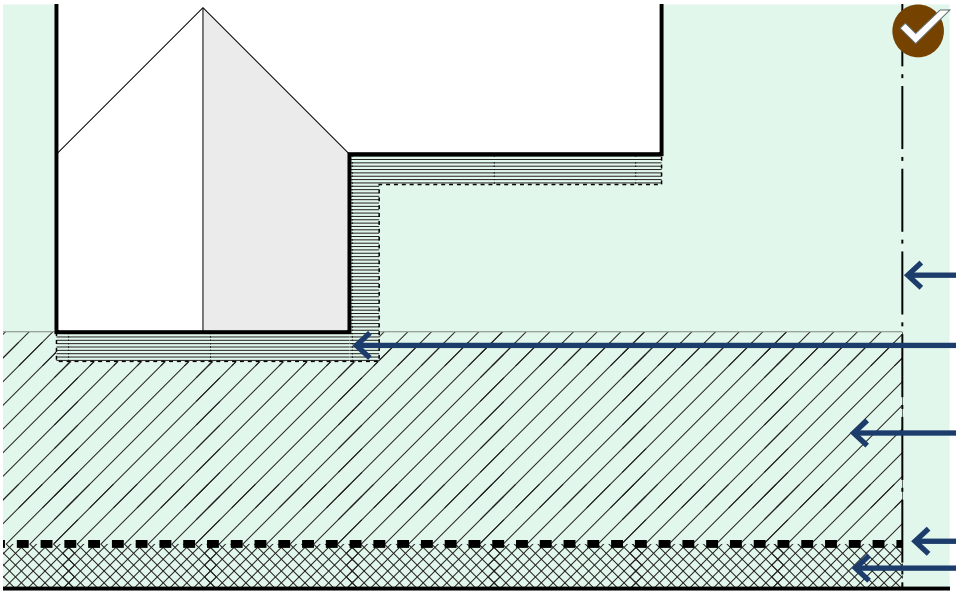
4.17 Layer the landscaping through the depth of a property.

a. Incorporate low plantings in the area closest to the street. Generally, plantings in the low shrub zone are between 0″ and 18″.
b. Design the landscaping in the front lawn zone to include a mix of medium scale plantings such as shrubs and taller, flowering plants. These plantings generally range from 18″ to 4″ in height.
c. Along the house and entryway in the foundation planting area, incorporate small trees and taller shrubs that transition into the entryway of the home. Generally, trees in this area are between 10′ and 18′ and shrubs may reach heights up to 6′.
    * Layering the landscaping is particularly important in contexts where the primary building is visible from the public realm. This includes the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and Strong Street Relationship/Flat contexts.

Design a wall, fence or natural buffer to permit views into the property from the street.

Incorporate low plantings at the property line in front of the fence to create a layered look.While this image illustrates the layered look along the front property line, the hedge is inappropriate because of its opacity and height.

Layer the landscaping through the depth of a property.



Where a hedge is desired as part of the planting strategy along the front edge of the property line, design and locate the edge to maintain visibility into the property and to create visual interest at the property edge.

Design fences, walls and landscape buffers to be in scale with the pedestrian.

Design a fence or wall to complement the architectural style and character of the building.

Refer to the Town's Municipal Code

Refer to Chapter 18.40.080 to learn more about the permitted height of solid fences.

https://www.townofross.org/administration/page/title-18-zoning

Front Yard Fences, Walls and Landscape Buffers

Fences, walls and landscape buffers, such as hedges, are common methods to delineate property in Ross. They are typically located along front lot lines. Along the front property line, the feature should be designed to allow for some views into the property. The design of a fence or wall should be coordinated with the overall site design of a property, should architecturally complement the main structure and should be in scale with the pedestrian. Where a solid fence or wall is desired, the height should be limited and lower plantings should be incorporated along the front of the feature to soften its appearance.

4.18 Design fences, walls and landscape buffers to be in scale with the pedestrian.

4.19 Design a wall, fence or landscape buffer to permit views into the property from the street.

a. Where a tall privacy fence or similar is desired, limit the solid portion and incorporate semi-permeable materials on the top portion of the buffer. For instance, where a 6' tall fence is desired, the top 18" should no more than 50% opaque.
b. Design the buffer to be semi-permeable. For instance, design a fence to include some negative space between slats or incorporate planting materials that have some visual permeability.

4.20 Where a privacy fence or similar is desired, set it back from the sidewalk and soften its appearance by incorporating landscape elements in front and/or behind.

a. Incorporate low plantings at the property line in front of the fence to create a layered look. Generally, the taller a fence, the wider the planting bed should be. For instance, a 3'-4' planting bed in the low shrub zone is necessary for fences over 4', while a 1' wide planting bed is appropriate for a 4' tall fence.
b. Consider incorporating plantings that are visible from the public right of way behind the fence or wall. When doing so, limit the opacity of these plantings to maintain views to the property.

4.21 Where a fence, wall or landscape buffer is used along a long front property line, visually articulate it in order to avoid a uniform appearance.

a. Vary the height of the feature or alter the distance from the street where it is placed.

b. Consider the following techniques to enhance the visual interest:
   - Change its opacity
   - Incorporate a second or third material for visual interest
   - Vary the design of the fence

4.22 Design a fence or wall to complement the architectural style and character of the building.

a. Incorporate material(s) that will complement the architectural scale and style of the building.

b. Construct a fence or wall to include design detail that complements the context and includes appropriate design qualities. Appropriate materials and details for different contexts include:
   - Restricting chain link fences to only the hillside contexts, and requiring visible portions of the chain link fence to be screened with plantings
   - Limiting welded wire and crimped wire fences in the hillside zones to 4"-6" open mesh, with plantings covering 50% of the fence. In all other zones, the open mesh should be limited to 2.5"
   - Open wire fences should generally include plantings to cover 50% of the fence
   - Solid fences should be limited in height and set back with plantings according to their height, as described in guideline 4.20.

Design a fence or wall to complement the architectural style and character of the building.

Use materials that are durable.

4.23 Use materials that are durable.

a. Consider the use of finished metal, natural wood and other similar materials for the design of a new fence.
b. Consider the use of natural stone for the design of a new wall.
c. Avoid materials such as chain link, unless in the Entry Element Street relationship/Significant Slope context area. Where chain link is used in this context area and is visible from the street, it should be screened with natural plantings.

4.24 Where a hedge is desired as part of the planting strategy along the front edge of the property line, design and locate the edge to maintain visibility into the property and to create visual interest at the property edge.

a. Plant a hedge in front of or behind an existing fence or wall, at a height that is no more than the fence or wall.
b. Where a hedge is not adjacent to a fence or wall, limit its height to 4' along the property line. Where a hedge over 4' in height is desired, set it back from the property line and include a planting bed of low shrubs that is at least 3' in width.

Plant a hedge in front of or behind an existing fence or wall, at a height that is no more than the fence or wall.

Gates

The use of vehicular and pedestrian gates leading from the public right of way onto a private property is common in Ross. A gate should be designed to complement the scale, style and materials of a fence, wall or other barrier placed along the property line. It should also be designed to allow visual permeability into a property.

4.25 Design a gate to be a continuation of and complement to the style, scale and materials of the fence, wall or natural barrier, as well as the architecture of the home.

4.26 Locate a pedestrian gate to maintain the design relationship with the fence or wall, and to maintain the visual connection into the property.

a. When locating a pedestrian gate on the property line, limit its height to 4'.
b. Where a pedestrian gate is set back from the property line, it may be taller than 4', but must incorporate landscaping around the edges of its base and must be no more than 50% opaque on the top 18" of the gate.

4.27 Design a pedestrian gate to be compatible with the fence or wall.

a. Incorporate a pedestrian gate that is the same height as or is lower than the fence or wall height.

4.28 Incorporate a vehicular gate that is compatible with the fence or wall.

a. Locate the vehicular gate in alignment with the fence or wall to maintain its visual definition of the property.
b. Design the vehicular gate to be low in scale (typically around 3') to maintain the visual connection between the public and private realms.
c. Where a tall vehicular gate is desired, it may not be solid over 4'. The top 18" of a vehicular gate that exceeds 4' must be no more than 50% opaque to maintain the visual connection into the property.

Incorporate a vehicular gate that is compatible with the fence or wall.

Design a pedestrian gate to be compatible with the fence or wall.

Design a pedestrian gate to be compatible with the fence or wall.

Design a gate to be a continuation of and complement to the architecture of the home.

Locate the vehicular gate in alignment with the fence or wall to maintain its visual definition of the property.

Design a vehicular gate to be low in scale to maintain the visual connection between the public and private realms.

Utilize landscaping materials that minimize the need for irrigation.

Creative solutions that maintain a sense of traditional front yards are encouraged.

Front Yard Design

A landscaped front yard is an important feature in residential neighborhoods throughout Ross. The front yard provides a space that separates a home from the public realm and that provides a sense of entry to the property. It also provides visual interest along the street. A front yard should be designed to complement the architecture and the site, and to incorporate natural plantings, and minimize hardscape and surface runoff. The majority of front yards in Ross incorporate a range of planting materials including small trees and low plantings. However, it is important to recognize that front yard character and plantings vary based on context area. The majority of the guidelines that follow focus on the front yards of residential buildings that are highly visible from the street. On properties in hilly areas, landscaping should be maintained and should be designed in accordance with Wildland Urban Interface Standards to minimize the risk of fire.

4.29 Maintain a landscaped front yard.

a. Creative solutions that maintain a sense of traditional front yards are encouraged.
b. Maintain visibility from the street to the house.
    * While this is crucial for context areas including the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and the Strong Street Relationship/Flat, it may be more difficult for context areas such as the Entry Element Street Relationship/ Significant Slope.
c. Utilize landscaping materials that minimize the need for irrigation.
d. Minimize the amount of hard surface in a front yard. Where a hard surface is needed, incorporate porous paving materials that retain water on site.

4.30 Incorporate plantings that create a layered look from the street to the home to create a sense of entry to the building.

a. Consider incorporating low-scale trees (generally 12'-25' in height) that screen a home from the street and frame views, but that do not visually obscure a home from the street.
b. Design a visible front yard to include foundation-scale plantings that provide a transition between the front yard and the home.

4.31 Within the Foundation Planting zone, incorporate plantings that visually connect a house to its site.

a. Utilize plants ranging from 30"-42" in height. However, where the entry or porch is raised, incorporate plants that match the height of the floor level of the porch.

4.32 Where a property is located within a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) zone, follow the Fire District guidelines for tree and plant selection.

Consider incorporating low-scale trees (generally 12'-25' in height) that screen a home from the street and frame views, but that do not visually obscure a home from the street.

Within the Foundation Planting zone, incorporate plantings that visually connect a house to its site.

Wildland Urban Interface Standards

Information on the criteria for meeting the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Standards can be viewed using the following link:

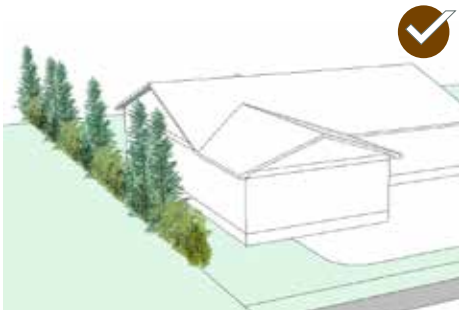
http://fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fire_prevention_wildland_codes

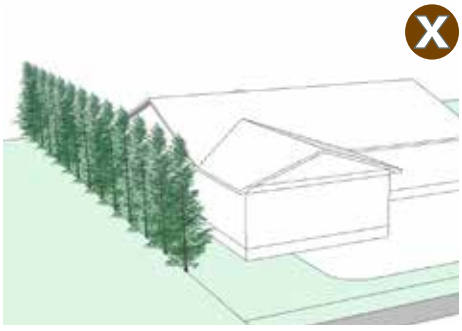
FEMA Flood Maps

Use the following link to determine whether your property is within the FEMA flood zone. If so, other regulations apply.

http://www.marinmap.org/Html5Viewer/?viewer=fema_lomc_h5&run=AutoSuggestAddress

Avoid creating an opaque buffer that obscures all views between properties by limiting the height of the buffer to 6' and/or using a material(s) that is partially transparent.





Where a fence, wall or natural buffer is used along a long property line, visually articulate the buffer in order to avoid a uniform appearance.

Side Yard Relationship

In addition to the importance of designing a site to be visually appealing from the street, the design should also consider the relationship with adjacent sites. While a natural buffer, fence, wall or other form of separation between sites is appropriate, a solid, tall buffer that isolates one site from another is inappropriate. A site design should also not block views, light or air, and should not create unnecessary shadow on a neighboring property.

4.33 Incorporate a natural buffer, fence or wall between properties to provide privacy.

a. Avoid creating an opaque buffer that obscures all views between properties by limiting the height of the buffer to 6' and/or using a material(s) that is partially transparent.
   * This is especially important for properties in the Constrained Grid Neighborhood, Strong Street Relationship/Flat and Moderate Street Relationship/Flat and Mild Slope contexts where lots are smaller and homes are closer to one another.
   * On larger lots with greater distances between homes, incorporating a barrier that is up to 12' in height may be appropriate if evergreen is used.

4.34 Consider the existing access to views, light and air neighboring properties have when adding or incorporating tall trees or plantings, or building a new structure on a site.

4.35 Minimize the amount of shadow created on neighboring properties.

Incorporate a natural buffer, fence or wall between properties to provide privacy.

Retaining Walls

Retaining walls are common and may be needed in parts of Ross. The visual impact of a retaining wall should be minimized. It should appear low in scale and blend with the natural environemnt. This may include stepping the height of the retaining wall to follow the topography, and using materials and textures that blend with the setting.

4.36 Step a retaining wall to follow the natural topography.

4.37 Design and detail a retaining wall to provide visual interest. Appropriate methods include:

- Scoring
- Staining
- Landscape screening (vines or other vegetation)

Design and detail a retaining wall to provide visual interest.

Create a defined form by using pavers to outline planting beds or driveways.

Select hardscape materials that complement the architecture and site.

Where a hard surface is needed, incorporate porous paving materials that retain water on site.

Strategically utilize hardscape materials to highlight components of the landscape design, such as the change in paving texture above that highlights the driveway.

Hardscape Materials

While the use of significant amounts of hardscape materials in the design of a front yard is discouraged, these materials are often needed to bring definition to a specific component of the front yard landscape design. Hardscape materials can also provide visual interest and should be selected to complement the architecture and overall site design. Refer to the Town Code Section 18.41.100t to learn more about requirements for drainage and impervious surfaces.

4.38 Minimize the amount of hardscape materials used within a front yard design.

a. Where a hard surface is needed, incorporate porous paving materials.

4.39 Strategically utilize hardscape materials to highlight components of the landscape design. For instance:

- Create a defined form by using pavers to outline planting beds or driveways
- Highlight a change in paving texture to define a walkway, on-site parking or a driveway

4.40 On smaller lots, design the hardscaped sections to be considered a uniform composition.

* This is particularly important for contexts that have a driveway, entry path and parking area that are visible from the street, such as the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and Strong Street Relationship/Flat contexts.

4.41 Select hardscape materials that complement the architecture and site. Example materials include:

- Concrete with a weathered appearance. Appropriate finishes include natural water-wash, acid-etch, sandblast and surface retarder. This material is especially appropriate in creating "Hollywood" or "tire track" driveways with a planted center strip, and "step stone" driveways with concrete panels.
- Gravel
- Chip seal (gravel with asphalt binder)
- Decomposed granite with stabilizer
- Sand-set or mortared brick that is compatible with the building in color and style
- Precast concrete pavers or stone pavers that are compatible with the building in color and style
- Interlocking concrete pavers (rectilinear patterns are preferred)
- Cellular grassed paving
- Turf reinforcement systems

4.42 Avoid the use of stamped concrete.

Site Lighting

Site lighting is often used to enhance a property or for safety. Lighting should be designed to minimize light pollution. It should be coordinated with the site design.

4.43 Incorporate site lighting only where it is needed.

4.44 Scale site lighting to its purpose.

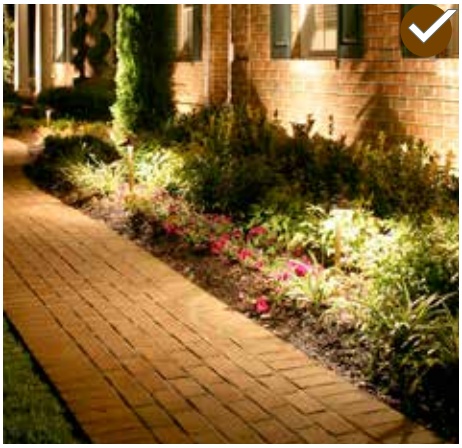
a. Use small scale fixtures with down-lighting to illuminate pedestrian walkways, whenever possible.

4.45 Shield site lighting to minimize off-site glare onto adjacent properties and toward the sky.

a. Orient a fixture downward.
b. Incorporate a cut-off shield to direct light downward.

4.46 Select lamps with warmer colors.

4.47 Install a lamp that is energy efficient.



Scale site lighting to its purpose.

Shield site lighting to minimize off-site glare onto adjacent properties and toward the sky.

International Dark Sky Criteria

Information on the criteria for meeting the International Dark Sky Association's standards can be viewed using the following link:

https://www.darksky.org/our-work/lighting/

Incorporate stormwater management systems that minimize runoff and maximize water quality.

Sustainability and Design

Development in Ross should incorporate sustainable design features to reduce environmental impacts, to reduce stormwater runoff, and to conserve water and energy. When designing a site, sustainability practices should be incorporated. Following Fire District guidelines is required for properties within a WUI zone; however, these guidelines offer best practices for properties outside of the zones as well.

4.48 Incorporate drought tolerant plant materials in a site design.

4.49 Select materials that reduce energy consumption.

4.50 Incorporate landscaping to reduce the need for heating and cooling.

a. Use trees and landscaping to create shade in warm months and sun exposure in cool months.

4.51 Where a property is within a WUI zone, follow the Fire District guidelines in a site design.

4.52 Where a property is not within a WUI zone, consider following these best practices to reduce fire risk and maintain a sustainable site design:

- Keep ornamental gardens and plantings irrigated
- Remove pyropitic plants and flammable materials from the site
- Incorporate fire-resistant plants where feasible
- Prune trees to eliminate dead wood and branches over chimneys and roofs

Low Impact Development (LID)

Low Impact Development (LID) is a specific development strategy that addresses stormwater runoff at the source, closely mimicking the natural, pre-development, hydrologic systems rather than building infrastructure to handle runoff. LID principles not only increase the environmental benefits of a development, but also are fiscally beneficial to communities. For single-family development, consider solutions listed below as well as scaled-down versions. These guidelines address external features.

4.53 Maintain pre-development hydrologic characteristics to minimize stormwater impacts.

a. Preserve natural vegetation and drainage patterns.
b. Incorporate a natural drainage way as an amenity on a site.
c. Alter natural drainage patterns only to mimic pre-development hydrologic characteristics.

4.54 Incorporate stormwater management systems that minimize runoff and maximize water quality.

Consider management systems that:

a. Provide areas for stormwater to infiltrate into the ground to mimic the natural water cycle.
b. Remove pollutants from stormwater through uptake by plants and trees in rain gardens.
c. Provide flows through vegetative buffers to remove pollutants.

4.55 Select appropriate LID Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the site.

When incorporating LID features into the design of a building and/or site, consider the following:

- Consider the watershed in which the project is located.
- Consider the existing runoff system around the site.
- Incorporate and design new LID systems and features to work in concert with and improve the existing runoff system.

For more information:

To learn more about Low Impact Development (LID) principles, the importance of incorporating them into a project and the economic and environmental benefits of LID features, visit the following websites and documents:

California LID Portal (from the California Stormwater Quality Association):

https://www.casqa.org/resources/california-lid-portal

Toolbox (from the California Stormwater Quality Association):

https://www.casqa.org/resources/lid/toolbox

"Reducing Stormwater Costs through Low Impact Development (LID) Strategies and Practices":

https://www.casqa.org/sites/default/files/downloads/epa_2007_-_reducing_stormwater_costs_through_lid.pdf

"Low Impact Development Technical Design Manual":

http://srcity.org/1255/Low-Impact-Development

CASQA's Best Management Practices Handbooks:

https://www.casqa.org/resources/bmp-handbooks

Caltran's Standards for Stormwater Management:

http://dot.ca.gov/des/oe/construction-contract-standards.html

4.56 Design a site to utilize LID principles and stormwater treatment measures that are most conducive to that location.

a. Consider alternative site layout techniques to reduce the total amount of impervious area. This may include designing compact, multi-story structures, clustering development and creating shared driveways or pathways.
b. Minimize the amount of surface parking.
c. Use rainwater as a resource to reduce runoff and to be retained on-site for irrigation purposes, where possible.
d. Use drainage as a design element, incorporating vegetated swales, depressed landscape areas and bioretention areas where possible.
e. Maximize choices for mobility, accommodating alternative modes of transportation to automobiles.
f. Identify self-treating areas such as green roofs or large landscaped areas to remove pollutants.

4.57 Consider incorporating and combining systems and features from each of the LID categories.

a. Consider incorporating "conservation designs" that focus on preserving open space, such as clustered development, reducing pavement and creating shared driveways.
b. Consider incorporating "infiltration practices" that focus on engineering structures or landscape features that are designed to capture and infiltrate runoff such as basins and rain gardens.
c. Consider incorporating "runoff storage practices" that capture, store and reuse stormwater runoff including rain barrels, green roofs and depressional storage in landscape islands.
d. Consider incorporating "runoff conveyance practices" that route excess runoff through swales and long flow paths in landscaped areas with minimal piping and hard surfaces, while maintaining traditional flow patterns of high flow events offsite.
e. Consider incorporating "filtration practices" that direct stormwater runoff to bioretention areas, rain gardens, vegetated swales and filter strips that capture pollutants from the runoff.
f. Consider incorporating "low impact landscaping" that reduces impervious surfaces, increases infiltration potential and improves the aesthetics of a site such as native plants, re/planting turf areas and amending soil to improve infiltration.

4.58 Integrate Low Impact Development (LID) systems and features to minimize impacts.

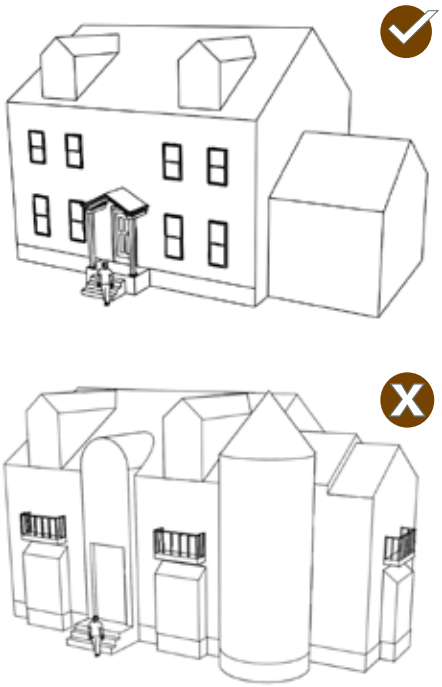
a. Incorporate permeable surfaces into the overall site design on small surface areas such as pathways, rather than parking lots or large areas in the right-of-way.
b. Include a stormwater management feature - such as a bioretention swale or another planted paving system, greenroofs and rain gardens/barrels/cisterns, as a site amenity or landscape feature.
c. Utilize native plants (Appendix F in the LID manual) that do not require additional irrigation beyond the initial plant establishment period.
d. Use permeable surfaces that allow water infiltration.
e. Use generous site landscaping (and depressed areas) to absorb site runoff.
f. Collect and use rainwater for irrigation. Consider incorporating 'laundry to landscape' and other greywater landscape irrigation systems.
g. Use drip irrigation systems, where appropriate, to conserve water.
h. Install an automatic irrigation system that supports a water conserving irrigation site design.
i. Incorporate permeable surfaces.
j. Design landscaping and irrigation to prevent non-stormwater runoff.

CHAPTER 5
BUILDING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Introduction

This chapter provides design guidelines for building design. Building design addresses the visual character of a structure, including the arrangement and design of features, scale, massing and the relationship to surrounding development. It also includes color palettes, building materials and the way a building fits into its natural setting.

In This Chapter



Design a new building to be simple in mass and form. The top illustration shows a new building that uses simple forms, whereas the building shown below incorporates too many forms and becomes too complex.

Vary the massing of a building to reduce its perceived size.

Building Mass, Scale and Articulation

The overall size, height and form of a building and its components help determine how it is perceived. Although a building may be larger than adjacent ones, it should not be monolithic in scale or create a jarring contrast, especially in contexts where the street grid and relationship between adjacent buildings is a key feature. In order to reduce the perceived mass and scale of a building, a variety of articulation techniques can be applied. Building articulation techniques include vertical or horizontal changes in materials, color, wall plane offsets, one-story elements or other elements that reduce the perceived size of a building. While some articulation methods reduce the perceived building mass by utilizing human-scale components, others reduce the actual building mass and scale by changes in height or wall planes. Where a building is located near a shared rear or side lot line, variation in massing may be particularly important. Potential articulation methods are shown in Figures 5.1 and 5.2.

5.1 Design a new building to be simple in mass and form.

5.2 Design a new building to be in scale with adjacent buildings.

* This is particularly important for buildings that are visible from the public realm and that are in contexts with smaller lots, including the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and the Strong Street Relationship/Flat contexts

Design a new building to be in scale with adjacent buildings. The new building above (shown in turquoise) is out of character because it appears much larger than the houses in the surrounding context.

5.3 Vary the massing of a building to reduce its perceived size.

a. Consider using one or more of the articulation methods shown in Figures 5.1-5.4.

5.4 Establish a sense of human scale in the design of a building.

a. Use vertical and horizontal articulation design techniques to provide a human scale and to create visual interest.
b. Use materials that convey scale in their proportion, detail and form. For example, materials applied in units help convey a sense of scale.

5.5 Maintain established development patterns through the use of similar building widths along the street.

a. Design a new building to reflect the established range of building widths that occur on a block.
    * This is particularly important in the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and Strong Street Relationship/Flat contexts.
b. Where a building design exceeds the traditional width, indicate the traditional width with a change in material or a change in wall planes.

Maintain established development patterns through the use of similar building widths along a street.

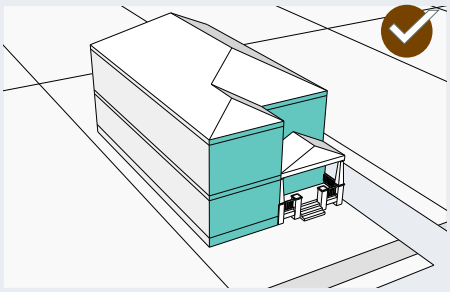
Establish a sense of human scale in the design of a building. The building above incorporates a one-story porch to convey a pedestrian scale.

Use vertical and horizontal articulation design techniques to provide a human scale and to create visual interest.

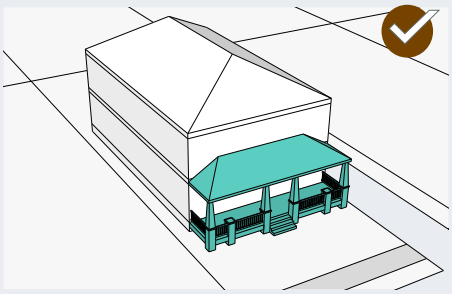
Figure 5.1: Front Wall Articulation Methods

The following models illustrate some ways a building mass can be varied to reduce the perceived mass and to relate to the scale of adjacent buildings. A photo accompanies each model to show a built example of the articulation method.

Front Wall Offset



Front Wall One-Story Element



Front Wall Stepback

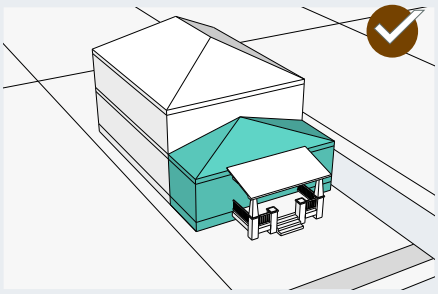
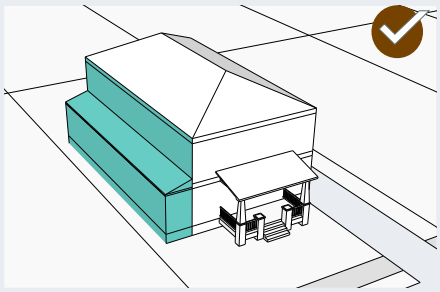
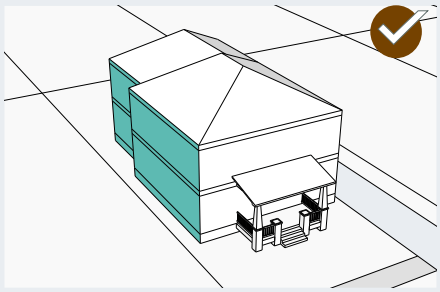


Figure 5.2: Side Wall Articulation Methods

Side Wall Stepback



Side Wall Offset



Side Wall Plane Change

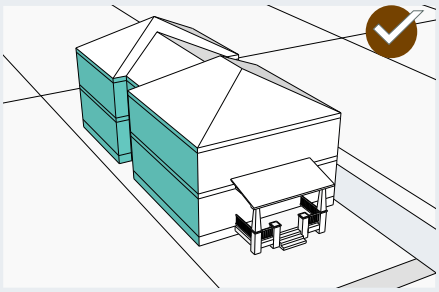
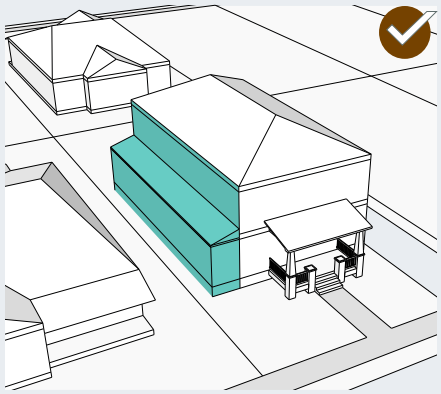


Figure 5.3: Side Massing Sensitivity Methods

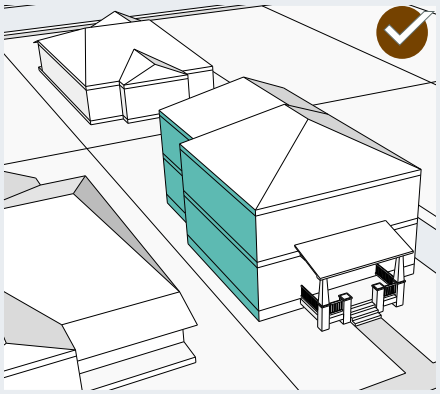
The following articulation models illustrate ways in which a multi-story building - including a primary structure, an ADU or a secondary structure - that is built near a shared side lot line can be respectful of the privacy of the neighboring property.

Side Wall Stepback



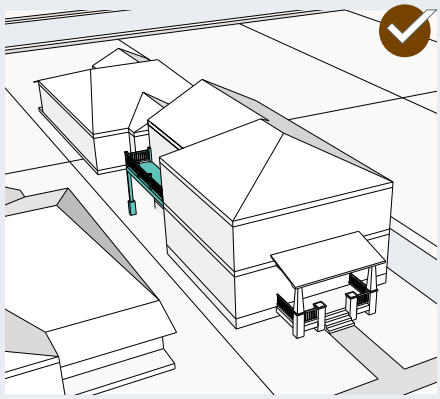
The side wall stepback reduces the presence of an upper-story mass along the shared lot line.

Side Wall Offset



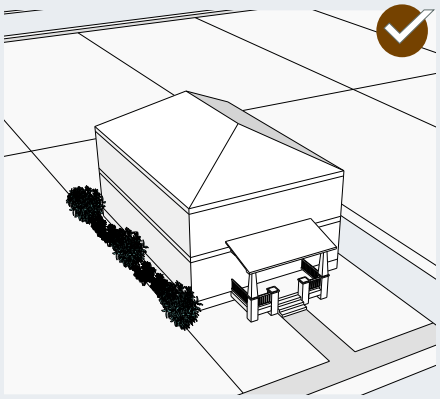
A side wall offset reduces the full, two-story mass at the shared lot line and decreases the amount of building that may loom over a neighboring structure.

Side Wall Balcony



A side balcony incorporates a side wall offset in which the balcony fits. While activity will still occur in the balcony space, the presence of a balcony is less invasive than a full second-story that abuts an adjacent property line.

Side Wall Landscaping

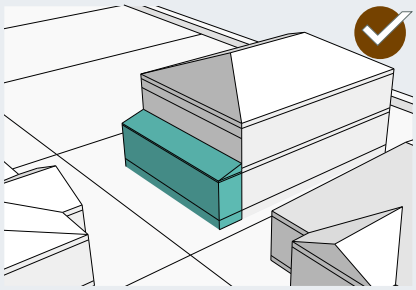


Side wall landscaping provides a visual barrier between adjacent structures.

Figure 5.4: Rear Massing Sensitivity Methods

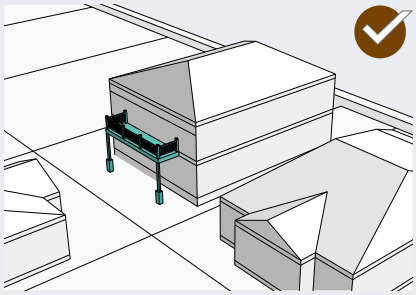
These articulation models illustrate ways in which a multi-story building that is built near a shared rear lot line can be respectful of the privacy of a neighboring property.

Rear Wall Stepback



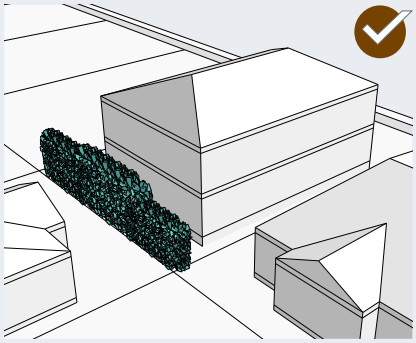
A rear wall stepback reduces the second-story mass, stepping a building away from a shared lot line rather than looming over a neighboring property.

Rear Wall Balcony



A rear wall balcony provides additional distance between the two physical buildings while still providing outdoor space.

Rear Wall Landscaping



Rear wall landscaping can provide a visual barrier, especially when a building mass is not articulated.

Design a roof to be generally compatible in massing and form to buildings in the context.

Design a roof to be consistent with the overall architectural design and detailing of the structure in terms of the form and material.

Roof Form

Roof form addresses the pitch, orientation and shape of a building's roof. The roof of a building should be integrated with the overall design of a building. A roof should be compatible in mass and scale with the roofs in the neighborhood.

5.6 Design a roof to be consistent with the overall architectural design and detailing of the structure.

a. Use angles, pitches and materials that coordinate with a building's overall design.

5.7 Design a roof to be generally compatible in massing and form to those of buildings in the block.

a. Where a variety of roof forms are prevalent in a context, more variety in roof form is appropriate.

Figure 5.5: Appropriate Roof Forms

The forms shown below show common roof forms seen in Ross.Other other roof forms may be compatible if they still meet the Roof Form intent statement above. Consult with Town staff about the use of alternative roof forms.

Gable

Hipped

Flat

Shed

Materials and Color Palette

Exterior building materials provide a sense of scale and texture that conveys design quality and visual interest. Building materials can contribute to visual continuity in a context area and create texture, depth of detail and shadow on a building.

5.8 Use exterior materials to create visual interest as viewed from the public realm.

a. In areas where compatibility is important, use a material that is compatible in visual character, pattern and texture with those of neighboring properties.
b. Limit the number of materials so that the building does not look overly complex.

Use exterior materials that create visual interest from the public realm and that are compatible with adjacent properties and the block.

5.9 Use high quality exterior materials that are proven durable in Ross's climate.

a. Select materials that have proven durability under high amounts of sun exposure.

5.10 Encourage building colors that are visible from the street to be generally compatible with those seen traditionally in Ross.

a. Incorporate a natural color palette in hillside contexts.
b. Avoid overuse of sharp or overly bright colors that create a jarring contrast with existing Ross contexts.

Encourage building colors that are visible from the street to be generally compatible with those seen traditionally in Ross.

Figure 5.6: Potential Building Materials

The materials shown below meet the guidelines described above and are potential materials for single-family residential development in Ross. These examples are not the only materials that meet the intent and design guidelines described above; other materials are also appropriate in Ross.

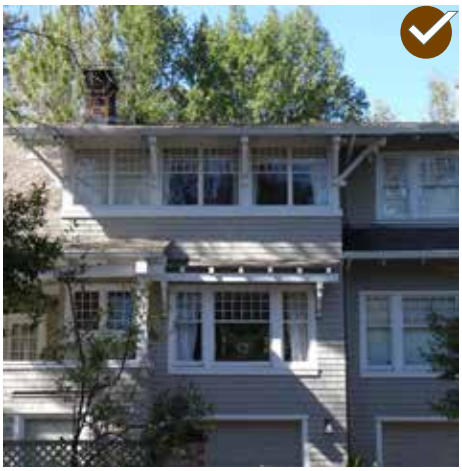
Stucco

Wood

Masonry, such as stone or brick

Create a visually interesting façade through the use and arrangement of windows, entrances, materials and other architectural elements.

On sloping sites provide visual interest to the primary façade design that is visible from the street.



Create visual permeability with transparent wall openings, such as doors and windows.

Façade Design

The primary façade of a single-family home should be designed to create a connection to the street. This may occur by composing entrances, windows, materials and other architectural elements that face the street to provide visual interest. Large expanses of unarticulated or blank walls facing the street should be avoided. Where compatibility with the context is an objective, these elements should be arranged in ways similar to the patterns established on surrounding buildings.

5.11 Create visual interest on a wall facing the street with windows, entrances, materials and other architectural elements.

a. Incorporate windows and doors that face the street.
b. Incorporate a porch or other clearly defined entryway that faces the street.

5.12 Create visual permeability with transparent wall openings, such as doors and windows.

* This is more critical when a building is located close to the street, which often occurs in the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and Strong Street Relationship/Flat contexts.

Create a visually interesting façade through the use and arrangement of windows, entrances, materials and other architectural elements.

Entry Design

Building entries are a critical link between the public and private realm. Buildings should use architectural features to establish a connection between the street and the home. The key is to create a clear visual and physical linkage, so a primary entrance to a building is clearly identifiable. In some contexts, this is most successfully accomplished through the use of a front porch, patio, stoop or otherwise highlighted entryway. In other contexts where the building may be set back farther from the street or is located on steep topography, a primary entrance may not be visible from the street. In these cases, other options such as pedestrian pathways or arbor entries may be utilized to create a sense of connection with the street. For more information on arbor entries and front yard design, please see the site design chapter.

5.13 Design a primary building entrance to create a visual and physical connection to the street.

5.14 Use an architectural element to highlight an entrance. Potential methods include:

a. Orient the element towards the public realm.
b. Potential elements to incorporate include:
   - Porch
   - Portico
   - Stoop
   - Canopy/Overhang
   - Building recess
   - Moldings

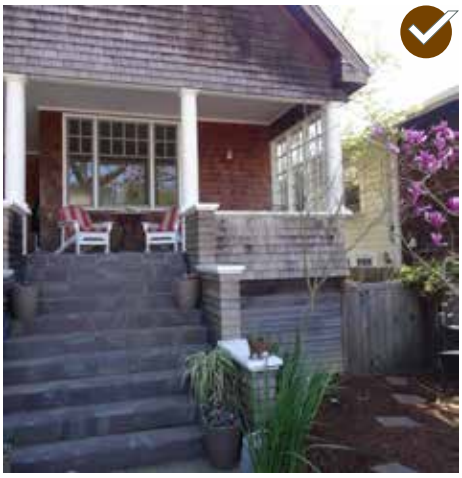
5.15 Size and proportion an entry element to be in the range of scales seen on nearby buildings.

a. This is particularly important in the Constrained Grid Neighborhood and Strong Street Relationship/Flat contexts.

5.16 Design a first-story element to be similar in size, location and proportion to those of homes in the context.

a. Where possible, locate a first-story element to be in alignment with first-story elements seen on neighboring properties or with the front wall of the primary structure of neighboring properties.

5.17 Design a porch to be functional, with a minimum depth of 5'.



Design a primary building entrance to create a visual and physical connection to the street.

Use an architectural element, such as a stoop, to highlight an entrance.

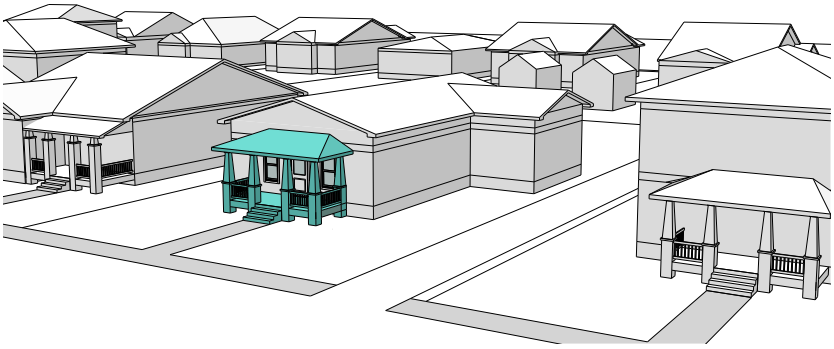
Size and proportion an entry element to be in the range of scales seen on nearby buildings.

Figure 5.7: Recommended Building Entry Location and Character

The location of the primary entrance of a building varies among residential contexts in Ross. In many neighborhoods, there is a consistency in the way in which entrances are designed and maintaining these patterns is an objective. In other neighborhoods, more diversity exists in the way in which entrances are designed and, therefore, more variety is appropriate. This table below identifies several scenarios of entry locations to a single family residence. A description of each scenario is provided. Other designs that are not illustrated here may also be appropriate, when they are consistent within the range of consistency or diversity that occurs in the context.

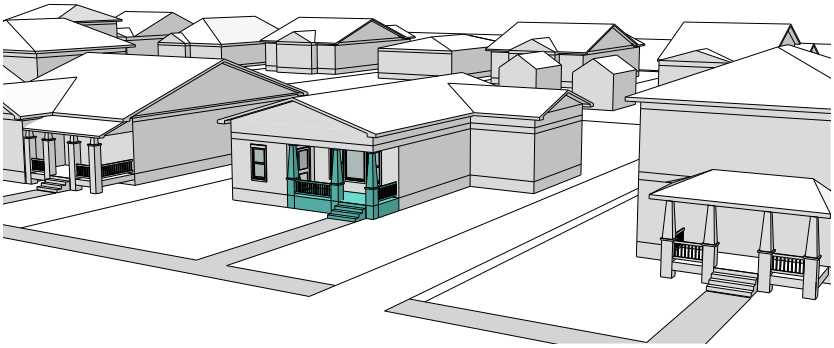
Covered Porch Entry Centered on the Facade

The primary entrance to the single-family home is located on the front wall of the house and faces the street. A covered, projecting porch defines the entrance.



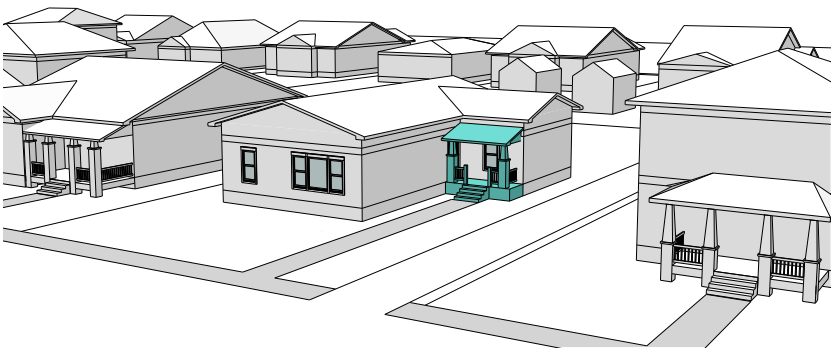
Covered Porch Entry on Side of the Facade

The primary entrance is perpendicular to the street, and opens onto a porch that faces the street. The recessed porch defines the entrance.



Covered Porch Entry Along Side Wall

The primary entrance is located along a sidewall and opens onto a small porch. The porch defines the entrance.



Doors

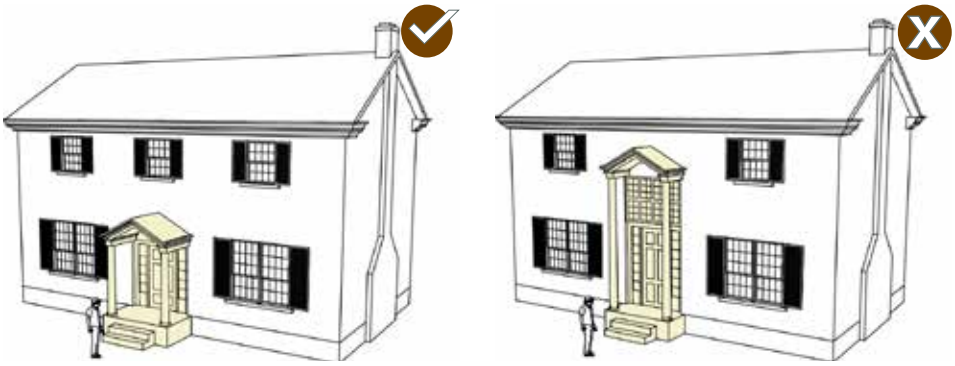
A street-facing door provides a key visual connection between the public and private realms. This enhances walkability and street level interest. The door should be easily recognizable.

5.18 Design the primary entrance of a home to be clearly identifiable. Consider the following:

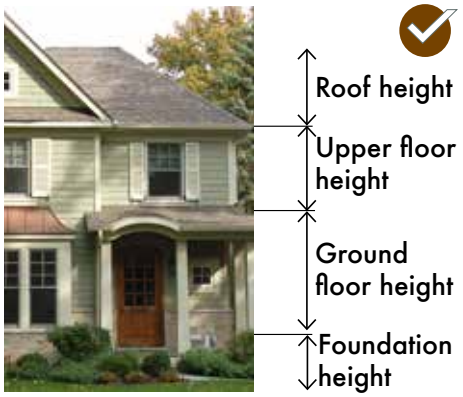
a. Change in color and material of the door and/or surrounding materials (such as trim or moldings)
b. Accent windows such as a transom or sidelight

5.19 Size a door to be easily readable and recognizable, and to be in proportion to the scale of the house.

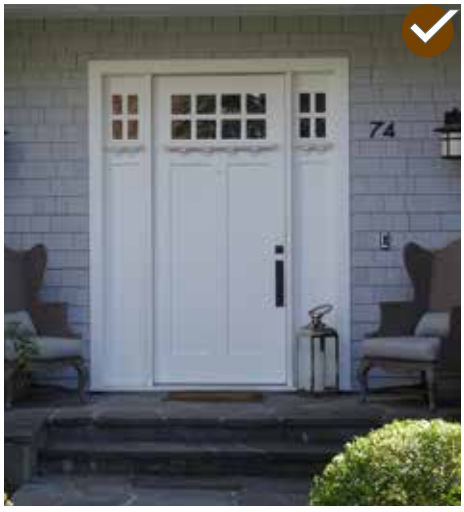
5.20 Design a door as part of the overall style of the building.



Size a door to be easily readable and recognizable, and to be in proportion to the scale of the house. The illustration on the left shows a door and building entry that are in scale with the design of the building. The building on the right shows a door and entry that are too large for the scale of the home and its other features.



Size a door to be easily readable and recognizable, but not to be overly large.



Design a door as part of the overall style of the building.

Place a window opening to correspond to an actual interior space.

When replacing a window, choose a window that fits within the existing opening and that matches the design of the existing windows on the elevation.

Windows

Windows are key design elements for residential buildings, providing a balance of solid to void. Windows also create a visual connection between the public realm and a building and create "eyes on the street," contributing to a feeling of safety. Where compatibility within a context is important, consider the window patterns, proportions and transparency levels of neighboring single-family homes when deciding on window sizes and placement.

5.21 Locate windows to create visual interest along a street.

5.22 Design a window to be proportional to the wall size and the architectural character of the building.

5.23 Size and proportion a window to be in the range of heights and widths of windows seen traditionally in the block.

5.24 Encourage the use of windows that create a sense of depth, profile and shadow on a street-facing wall.

a.

Locate and space windows to express a traditional rhythm and create visual continuity.

Detailing

Detailing helps create visual interest and a sense of craftsmanship, while reducing a building's perceived size. This can be accomplished with elaborate ornamentation, layering of materials and patterns or simple accent lines. However it is implemented, detailing should create contrast, shadow lines and visual interest. Because thoughtful detailing is a common feature of homes in Ross, it is important throughout the various contexts areas.

5.25 Use detailing to create interest and provide a sense of scale. Appropriate techniques include:

- Accent lines
- Ornamentation
- Color/material change
- Minor wall offsets
- Eaves and overhangs
- Window and door framing details

Use detailing to create interest and provide a sense of scale.

Detailing helps create visual interest and a sense of craftsmanship, while reducing a building's perceived size.

Because thoughtful detailing is a common feature of homes in Ross, it is important throughout the various contexts areas.

Use detail on a garage to break up its perceived mass.

Use materials and finishes compatible with the primary building.

Design an ADU to be subordinate to, and coordinated with, the primary building.

Secondary Structure and ADU Design

Garage design encompasses exterior materials, garage door design, window openings, scale and massing. The intent of this standard is to minimize the presence of garages as perceived from the street. Garages should be visually subordinate to the primary building and their design should be coordinated with the design of the primary building to maintain a cohesive look. These guidelines are particularly important where a garage is visible from the street. More flexibility may be appropriate where the garage is hidden from the view of the street.

5.26 Design a secondary structure or ADU to be subordinate to, and coordinated with, the primary building.

a. Use materials and finishes compatible with the primary building.
b. Use exterior materials that are compatible with context.
c. Use detail on a garage door to break up its perceived mass.
d. When feasible, use separate, single-car entrance doors rather than a single two-car entrance door.

5.27 Use an arbor entry or architectural detail (such as an overhang), to help mitigate the visual impact of a garage door.

Design a secondary structure to be subordinate to the primary structure.

When feasible, use separate, single-car entrance doors rather than a single two-car or (three-car) entrance door.

Sustainable Building Design

Development in Ross should incorporate sustainable design features whenever possible to reduce environmental impacts and conserve energy. Building designs should incorporate sustainability features and technologies that maximize energy efficiency and address seasonal changes in natural lighting and ventilation conditions.

5.28 Choose a material that reduces energy consumption.

a. Use a local, recycled material where possible.
b. Use a light colored surface material that reflects heat.
c. Consider incorporating an energy-generating feature on a site. This may include a freestanding solar panel, solar powered lighting or similar feature.
d. Consider incorporating a living roof.

5.29 Consider a building design feature that conserves energy.

a. Utilize external shading (landscape and/or integrated into the building) to keep out summer sun and let in winter sun.
b. Design windows to maximize light into interior spaces.
c. Use exterior shading devices, such as overhangs, to manage solar gain in summer months and welcome solar access in winter months.
d. Incorporate a renewable energy device, including a solar collector or wind turbine.

5.30 When redeveloping a site, salvage or reuse site and building materials where possible.

a. Incorporate a functional existing building into a redevelopment project in order to minimize waste and greenhouse gas emissions associated with demolition.

5.31 Incorporate solar-oriented, energy-generating technologies in a building.

a. Locate attached or detached solar technologies, such as solar panels and solar cells, where sun will be harvested.
b. Locate a solar panel to the rear portion of a roof or on a secondary structure to minimize its visual impact on the public realm.
c. Choose a solar panel that includes a low amount of visual contrast in its design and color to the roof.

Locate attached or detached solar technologies, such as solar panels and solar cells, where sun will be harvested, as well as where technologies are least visible from the public realm.

CHAPTER 6
TREATMENT OF HERITAGE RESOURCES

Many buildings in Ross reflect the early history and development of the community, and could be considered to have historic significance. While they may not be formally designated as historic resources, they are a part of the heritage of the community. In that sense, the guidelines that follow address these properties as "heritage resources." Many property owners will seek to preserve these properties. This section provides guidelines that owners may elect to use when making improvements to these heritage properties.

In This Chapter

Respect the original design character of the building.

Heritage Preservation Principles and Best Practices

When considering projects involving heritage resources, a set of preservation principles applies regardless of project type or property type. Consider the following principles in addition to guidelines in this chapter.

Respect the original design character of the building.

Do not try to change the style of a heritage resource or make the structure look older than its actual age. Confusing the character by mixing elements of different styles can weaken the appearance and heritage quality of the structure. Likewise, when constructing an addition, do not try to emulate a heritage style to make the addition look older than its actual age. Additions should relate to the original building in general massing and scale, but should be distinguishable. Additions should be designed and located to be subordinate to the original structure. An addition should be located to the rear of the original structure whenever possible, and to the side when the rear is not possible, in order to minimize the visibility of the addition.

Protect and maintain significant features and stylistic elements.

Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship should be treated with sensitivity. The best preservation procedure is to maintain heritage features from the outset to prevent intervention. Protection includes the maintenance of heritage material through treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint.

Preserve any existing original site features or original building materials and features.

Preserve original site features wherever possible and maintain them to avoid deterioration. Avoid removing, altering, obscuring or covering an original material or feature.

Repair deteriorated features and replace only those elements that cannot be repaired.

Upgrade existing materials, using recognized heritage preservation methods wherever possible. If disassembly is necessary for repair or restoration, use methods that minimize damage to original materials and the replacement of original configuration.

Design additions and alterations to a heritage structure to respect it and maintain its integrity.

When constructing an addition, do not try to emulate a historic style to make the addition look older than its actual age. A contemporary design for an alteration or addition to a heritage structure should not be discouraged as long as it does not destroy character-defining features of the heritage structure and as long as the design is compatible with the heritage structure and the district. Wherever possible, a new addition or alteration to a heritage structure should be done in such a manner that if it were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

FIGURE 6.1: PREFERRED SEQUENCE OF TREATMENTS FOR A HERITAGE RESOURCE

Treatment 1: Preserve

If a feature is intact and in good condition, maintain it as such.

Treatment 2: Repair

If the feature is deteriorated or damaged, repair it to its original condition.

Treatment 3: Reconstruct

If the feature is missing entirely, reconstruct it from appropriate evidence. If a portion of a feature is missing, it can also be reconstructed.

Treatment 4: Replace

If it is not feasible to repair the feature, then replace it with one that is a simplified interpretation of the original (i.e., material, detail, finish). Replace only that portion which is beyond repair.

Treatment 5: Compatible Alteration

If a new feature or addition is necessary, design it in such a way as to minimize the impact on original features. It is also important to distinguish new features from heritage elements.

Approaches to Heritage Preservation Projects

Preservation projects may include a range of activities, such as the maintenance of existing heritage elements, repairs of deteriorated materials, the replacement of missing features and the construction of new additions. When planning a preservation approach, consider the following treatments of a heritage resource to determine which is appropriate to the project.

Preservation

The act or process of applying measures to sustain the existing form, integrity and material of a building. Some work focuses on keeping a property in good working condition by repairing features as soon as deterioration becomes apparent, using procedures that retain the original character and finish of the features. Property owners are strongly encouraged to maintain properties in good condition.

Rehabilitation

The process of returning a property to a state that makes a contemporary use possible while still preserving those portions or features of the property which are significant to its traditional, architectural or cultural values. Rehabilitation may include a change in use of the building or additions.

Renovation

The process of improving by repair, to revive, a building. In renovation, the usefulness and appearance of the building is enhanced. The basic character and significant details of a building are respected and preserved, but some sympathetic alterations may also occur.

Restoration

The process of reproducing the appearance of a building exactly as it looked at a particular time. This may include the removal of later work or the replacement of missing heritage features.

Remodeling

The process of changing the heritage design of a building. The appearance is altered by removing original details and by adding new features that are out of character with the original. Remodeling of a heritage structure is inappropriate due to the loss of original fabric.

Reconstruction

The process of rebuilding a structure that no longer exists exactly as it appeared traditionally.

Guidelines for the Treatment of Heritage Building Features

Individual architectural features, building elements and materials of a heritage structure create the character of the structure. Therefore, meticulous care and proper treatment of each feature is crucial to maintaining the character of a heritage structure.

Character-Defining Features

Character-defining features contribute to the design of a structure. Select an appropriate treatment that will provide for proper preservation of significant features. The method that requires the least intervention is preferred.

6.1 Preserve a significant character-defining feature.

a. Cornices, porches, turned columns, brackets, exposed rafter tails and jigsaw ornaments are examples of character-defining features that should be preserved.
b. Do not remove or alter features that are in good condition or that can be repaired.

6.2 Repair a deteriorated character-defining feature.

a. Patch, piece-in, splice, consolidate or otherwise upgrade existing materials, using recognized preservation methods.
b. Removing a damaged feature that can be repaired is not appropriate.

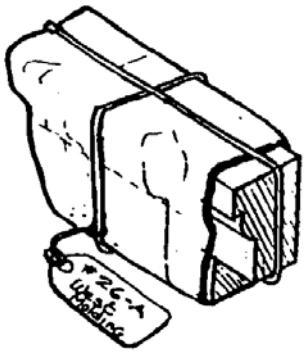
6.3 When disassembly of a heritage feature is necessary for its repair, use methods that minimize damage to it.

a. When removing a heritage feature, document its location so it may be repositioned accurately.

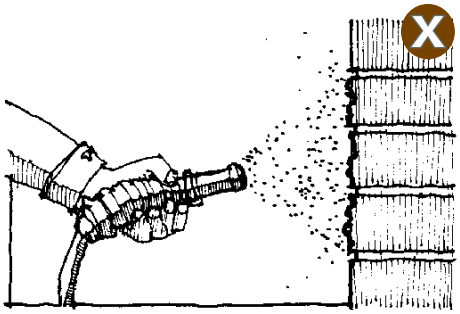
6.4 Use technical procedures for cleaning, refinishing and repairing character-defining features that will maintain the original finish.

a. Use the gentlest means possible that will achieve the desired results.
b. Employ treatments such as rust removal, caulking, limited paint removal and reapplication of paint or stain where appropriate.

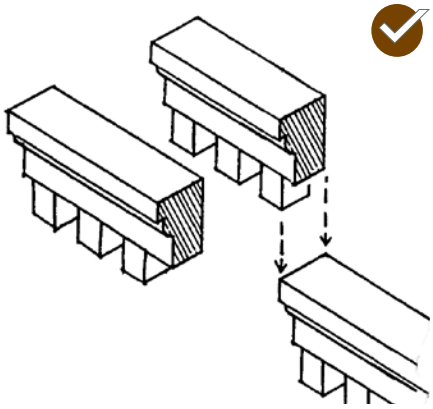
Preserve a significant character-defining feature.



When disassembly of a heritage feature is necessary for its repair, document its location so it may be repositioned correctly.



Use approved technical procedures for cleaning, refinishing and repairing heritage materials. As shown here, harsh cleaning methods, such as sandblasting or grinding are inappropriate.



Where replacement of an element is required, remove only those portions that are deteriorated beyond repair.

6.5 Replace a character-defining feature accurately.

a. The design should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence to avoid creating a misrepresentation of the building's history.
b. Use the same kind of material as the original when feasible. However, a substitute material may be acceptable if the size, shape, texture and finish conveys the visual appearance of the original. Alternative materials are usually more acceptable in locations that are remote from view or direct contact.
c. Restore altered openings on primary façades to their original configuration, when feasible, using heritage photos.

6.6 When reconstructing an element is impossible, develop a new design that is a compatible interpretation of it.

a. The new element should be similar to comparable features in general size, shape, texture, material and finish.

6.7 Avoid adding an architectural detail, such as a bracket or an intricate balustrade, that was not part of the original building.

a. For example, decorative millwork should not be added to a building if it was not an original feature. Doing so would convey a false history.

Roof

The character of a heritage roof should be preserved, including its form and materials, whenever feasible.

6.8 *Preserve the original roof form of a heritage structure.*

a. Avoid altering the angle of a heritage roof. Instead, maintain the perceived line and orientation of the roof as seen from the street.

6.9 *Preserve the original eave depth of a roof.*

a. The shadows created by traditional overhangs contribute to one's perception of the building's heritage scale and therefore, these overhangs should be preserved. Cutting back roof rafters and soffits or in other ways altering the traditional roof overhang is inappropriate.

6.10 *Preserve a decorative and functional roof feature.*

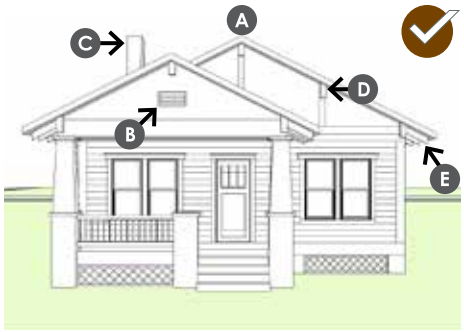
a. Preserve decorative elements, including crests.
b. Retain and repair functional roof features, including chimneys, half-round gutters, boxed soffits and downspouts.

6.11 *New roof materials should convey a scale and texture similar to those used traditionally.*

a. When choosing a roof replacement material, the architectural style of the structure should be considered.
b. Composition shingle roofs are generally appropriate replacements for wood shingles on residential buildings.
c. Shingles that contain embedded photovoltaic systems are also appropriate in dark colors.

6.12 *Minimize the visual impact of skylights and other rooftop devices.*

a. A skylight that is flush with the roof plane may be considered where it remains visually subordinate.
b. Skylights should not interrupt the plane of the heritage roof, and should be located below the ridgeline.
c. Locate electronic data transmission and receiving devices to minimize impacts to the extent feasible.



A Gable or Hip Roof Form
B Attic Vent or Window
C Chimney
D Decorative Roof Beam
E Exposed Rafter Tail

Preserve a decorative and functional roof feature.

Doors

The character-defining features of a heritage door and its distinct materials and placement should be preserved. When a new door is needed, it should be in character with the building. This is especially important on primary façades.

6.13 Preserve the decorative and functional features of a primary entrance.

a. These include the door, door frame, screen door, threshold, glass panes, paneling, hardware, detailing, transoms and flanking sidelights.
b. Avoid changing the position of an original front door.

6.14 Maintain the original proportions of a traditionally significant door.

a. Altering the original size and shape of a heritage door is inappropriate.
b. Avoid adding sidelights when not part of the original configuration.

6.15 When replacing a door, use materials that appear similar to that of the original.

6.16 When replacing a door, use a design that has an appearance similar to the original door, or a door associated with the building style or type.

6.17 Do not create a new entrance on a primary elevation that was not traditionally there.

Windows

The character-defining features of a heritage window, its distinct materials and its location should be preserved. In addition, a new window should be in character with the heritage building.

6.18 Preserve the functional and decorative features of a heritage window.

a. Features important to the character of a window include its frame, sash, muntins, mullions, glazing, sills, heads, jambs, moldings, operation and groupings of windows.
b. Repair frames and sashes rather than replacing them, whenever possible.

Preserve the functional and decorative features of a heritage window including the frame, sash, muntins, mullions, glazing, sills, heads, jambs, moldings, operation and groupings of windows.

6.19 Preserve the position, number and arrangement of heritage windows in a building wall.

a. On primary façades, enclosing a heritage window opening is inappropriate, as is adding a new window opening.

Preserve the position, number and arrangement of heritage windows in a building wall.

6.20 Preserve the heritage ratio of window openings to solid wall on a primary façade.

a. Significantly increasing the amount of glass on a character-defining façade will negatively affect the integrity of the structure.

6.21 Preserve the size and proportion of a heritage window opening.

a. Reducing an original opening to accommodate a smaller window or increasing it to receive a larger window is inappropriate.
b. Avoid converting an original window to a door on a visible façade.

6.22 Match a replacement window to the original in its design.

a. Maintain the size of the original window opening.
b. If the original is double-hung, then the replacement window should also be double-hung or appear to be so. Match the replacement also in the number and position of glass panes.
c. Matching the original design is particularly important on key character-defining façades.

Unfinished metal windows such as these alter the character of window openings, and should not be used in highly visible locations.

6.23 In a replacement window, use materials that appear similar to the original.

a. Using the same material as the original is preferred, especially on street-facing façades. A substitute material may be considered if the appearance of the window components will match those of the original in dimension, profile and finish. However, vinyl is inappropriate.
b. New glazing should convey the visual appearance of heritage glazing. It should be clear. Transparent low-e type glass is appropriate. Metallic and reflective finishes are inappropriate.

6.24 Match, as closely as possible, the profile of the sash and its components to that of the original window.

a. A heritage wood window usually has a complex profile. Within the window's casing, the sash steps back to the plane of the glazing (glass) in several increments. These are important details that distinguish the actual window from the surrounding plane of the wall and this practice should be continued.

6.25 Convey, as closely as possible, the character of heritage sash divisions in a new window.

a. Muntins that divide a window into smaller panes of glass should be genuine on key façades and other highly visible places.
b. Snap-on muntins located on the outside of a window may be used in secondary façades but should have a similar depth and shadow line.
c. Strips of material located between panes of glass to simulate muntins are inappropriate.

6.26 When installing a new window, locate it on a rear or other non-character defining elevation.

6.27 Where necessary, provide a setback in the design of dropped ceilings, during an interior renovation, to allow for the full height of existing window openings.

Porches

A porch is one of the most important character-defining elements of a residential structure. It provides visual interest and influences perceived scale. Preserve a porch in its original condition and form.

6.28 Maintain an original porch when feasible.

a. Maintain the existing location, shape, details and posts of the porch.
b. Missing or deteriorated decorative elements should be replaced to match existing elements; e.g., match the original proportions and spacing of balusters when replacing missing ones.
c. If enclosing a heritage porch is desired, enclose it in a manner that preserves the character of the original porch and building. For instance, this could include large sheets of glass and recessing the enclosure well behind the existing scrollwork, posts and balustrades.

6.29 Repair those elements of a porch that are deteriorated.

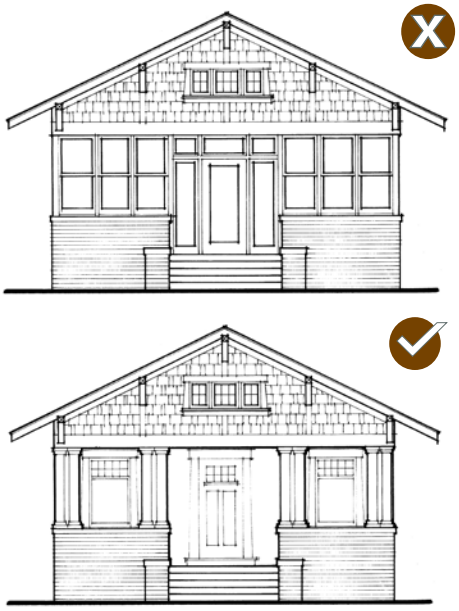
a. Removing damaged materials that can be repaired is not appropriate.

6.30 If a porch has been altered, consider restoring it back to its original design.

a. If the heritage design of the porch is unknown, then base the design of the restoration on other traditional porches on buildings of a similar architectural style.

6.31 When replacing a porch is necessary, it should be similar in character, design, scale and materials to those seen traditionally.

a. The size of a porch should relate to the overall scale of the primary structure to which it is attached.
b. Base the replacement design on heritage documentation if available.
c. Where no evidence of the heritage porch exists, a new porch may be considered that is similar in character to those found on comparable buildings.



The top model illustrates a heritage, vernacular house with an original porch that has been enclosed, which is an inappropriate treatment. The bottom model illustrates a replacement porch that has been designed similarly to the original porch, which is the preferred approach, when heritage documentation is available.

Materials

Primary heritage building materials should be preserved in place whenever feasible. If the material is damaged, then limited replacement which matches the original should be considered. These materials should never be covered or subjected to harsh cleaning treatments.

6.32 Preserve an original building material.

a. Avoid removing original materials that are in good condition.
b. Remove only those materials which are deteriorated, and must be replaced.
c. Masonry features that define the overall heritage character, such as walls, cornices, pediments, steps and foundations, should be preserved.

6.33 Repair a deteriorated primary building material.

a. Repair by patching, piecing-in, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing the material.

6.34 When replacing materials on primary surfaces, match the original material in composition, scale and finish.

a. If the original material is wood clapboard, for example, then the replacement material should be wood as well. It should match the original in size, the amount of exposed lap and in finish.
b. Replace only the amount required. For example, if a few boards are damaged beyond repair, then only they should be replaced, not the entire wall.
c. Do not strip traditionally-painted wood surfaces to bare wood to achieve a "natural look."

6.35 Do not use synthetic materials, such as aluminum, vinyl or panelized brick, as replacements for primary building materials.

a. Primary building materials, such as wood siding and masonry, should not be replaced with synthetic materials.
b. Modular materials should not be used as replacement materials. Synthetic stucco and panelized brick, for example, are inappropriate.

6.36 Covering an original building material with a new material is inappropriate.

a. Vinyl siding, aluminum siding and new stucco are generally inappropriate on heritage buildings. Other imitation materials that are designed to look like wood or masonry siding, fabricated from other materials, are also inappropriate.

6.37 Consider removing later covering materials that have not achieved heritage significance.

a. Once the non-heritage siding is removed, repair the original, underlying material.
b. If a structure has a stucco finish, removing the covering may be difficult, and may not be desirable. Test the stucco to assure that the original material underneath will not be damaged.

Contemporary interpretations of traditional fences should be compatible with the heritage context.

Design a replacement fence to be in character with the original and with those seen traditionally.

Mechanical Equipment

The installation of mechanical equipment should not be visible on the primary façade of a heritage structure.

6.38 *Install heating and air conditioning units in window frames that are not on the primary façade of the heritage structure.*

Fences

Heritage site elements, such as fences, contribute to the character of a heritage property and should be maintained. New site work that alters the heritage character of a property and its site elements should be avoided.

6.39 *Preserve an original fence.*

a. Replace only those portions that are deteriorated beyond repair.

6.40 *Design a replacement fence to be in character with the original and with those seen traditionally.*

a. The design of a fence that defines a front yard is traditionally low to the ground (less than 40 inches) and transparent in nature.
b. Contemporary interpretations of traditional fences should be compatible with the heritage context.
c. Note that using no fence at all is often the most appropriate approach.
d. Design a retaining wall that defines the front yard to be low to the ground.
e. Design a replacement retaining wall to be of materials traditionally used to construct a retaining wall.

Additions to Heritage Structures

An addition should be compatible with the primary structure and not detract from one's ability to interpret its heritage character.

6.41 Place an addition at the rear of a building, or set it back from the front, to minimize the visual impacts.

a. This will allow the original proportions and character to remain prominent.
b. Where an addition to a heritage structure is visible from the public realm, choose architectural features – such as windows and doors – that are similar in profile to the architectural features of the existing structure.

6.42 Design a new addition to be a product of its own time.

a. Do not attempt to replicate the appearance of the heritage structure.

6.43 Design a new addition to respect the mass and scale of the original structure.

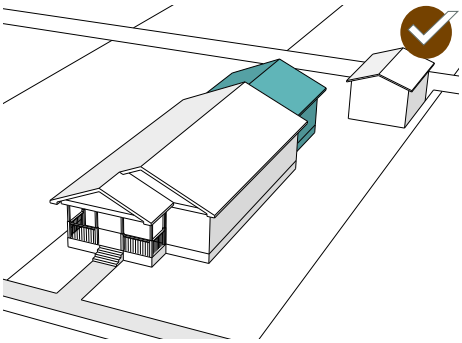
a. An addition should be simple in design to prevent it from visually competing with the primary façade.
b. For a larger addition, break up the mass of the addition into smaller modules that relate to the heritage house.
c. To keep the size of a higher mass as small as possible, use a lower plate height.

6.44 Design a new addition to respect the heritage materials and character-defining features of the heritage structure.

a. Do not destroy, damage or obscure original heritage materials.
b. Do not destroy, damage or obscure heritage character-defining features.

6.45 Utilize a roof form for a new addition that is in character with the original structure.

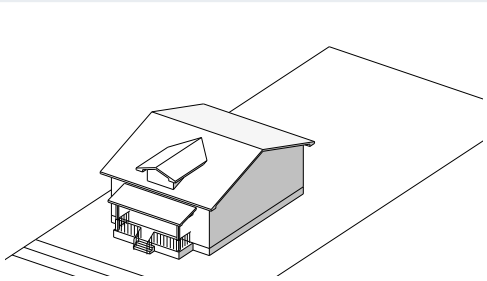
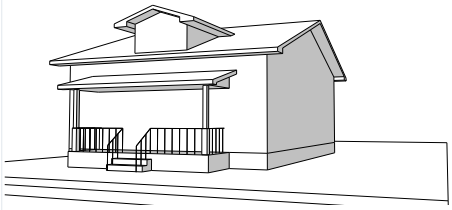
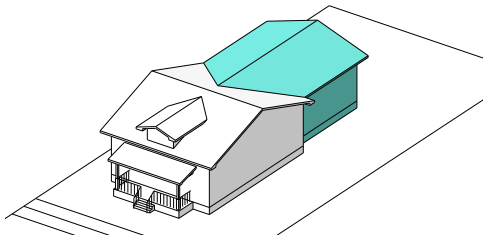
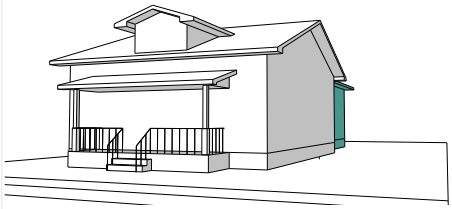
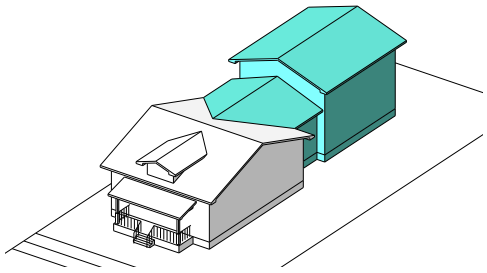
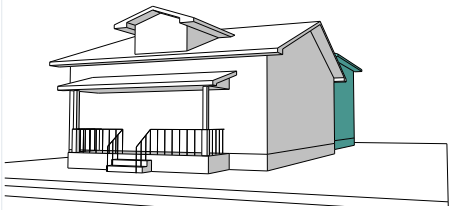
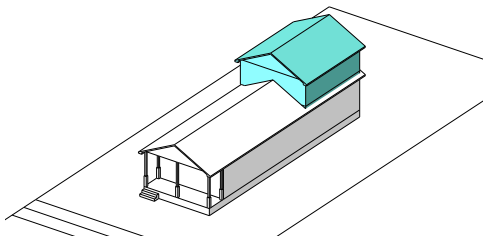
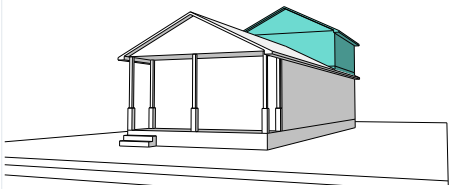
a. When constructing a rooftop addition, keep the mass and scale subordinate to the primary building.



Place an addition at the rear of a building, or set it back from the front, to minimize visual impacts.

Figure 6.2: Designing an Addition to a Heritage Structure

An addition to a property should be clearly differentiated from the original structure and be subordinately scaled as illustrated below.

Original Structure	Birds Eye View	Street View
The one-and-a-half story bungalow illustrated at the right is a heritage structure.		
One-Story Attached Addition The one-and-a-half story bungalow illustrated at the right is a heritage structure.		
One and a Half Story Addition with Connector The one-and-a-half story addition illustrated at right is appropriate because it is set back and clearly differentiated from the original structure with a connector.		
"Camelback" Style Rooftop Addition The roof-top addition illustrated at right is appropriate because it is substantially set back from the street.		
Inappropriate Two-Story Rooftop Addition The roof-top addition illustrated at right is inappropriate because it substantially alters the primary façade of the heritage structure.