CHAPTER 4
SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

INTRODUCTION

Single-family developments are made up of detached units that are usually surrounded by a yard. This chapter provides general guidelines for the design of tract developments in all areas of the City, with the exception of all Specific Plan areas where site-specific guidelines and standards take precedent. The City encourages new development to use designs and an urban form that recall the area's history and small town character. Desirable features include:

- Houses on lots oriented toward the street.
- Relatively narrow streets.
- Landscaped parkways between curbs and sidewalks.
- Large canopy trees.
- The use of alleys, detached, or recessed garages located at the rear of the lot.

The following topics are addressed:

1. Site Planning and Design
2. Building Design
3. Utilitarian Aspects

Note: "Green Building" principles are identified with an oak tree symbol.

SITEPLANNING&DESIGN

A combination of varying lot widths and setbacks should be incorporated in order to provide different amounts of open area between structures. This variation will allow placement of different shapes and sizes of homes.

The motorist and pedestrian experience in tract home development can be greatly enhanced by placing buildings along the street edge and containing the length of local streets. Variation in building setbacks is strongly encouraged to avoid the "barrack" effect of tract housing developments.

1. Sharp angled lots create poor building sites and should be avoided.
2. Development should include open-ended cul-de-sacs that provide pedestrian and bicycle access to open space, parks, and other neighborhoods while restricting through automobile traffic.
3. To improve circulation in new neighborhoods and subdivisions, local streets should be interconnected.

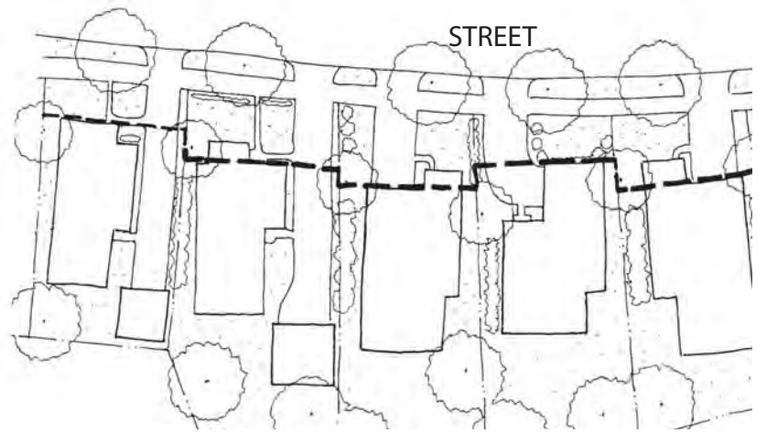
SITE PLANNING & DESIGN (CONT.)

4. Lot layouts and design techniques that reduce noise are encouraged. Such techniques include:
   - Increased setbacks.
   - Significant landscape buffer areas.
   - Sound insulation in the building construction.
   - Placement of air conditioning units away from property lines and side yard areas.
5. New developments should use design layout techniques that give individuals maximum privacy within and outside the homes. Such techniques include:
   - The offset of windows between units.
   - Alternating outdoor patio areas.
   - Consideration of fence height in relation to grade changes.
6. Lots should be designed to maximize daylighting opportunities for homes.

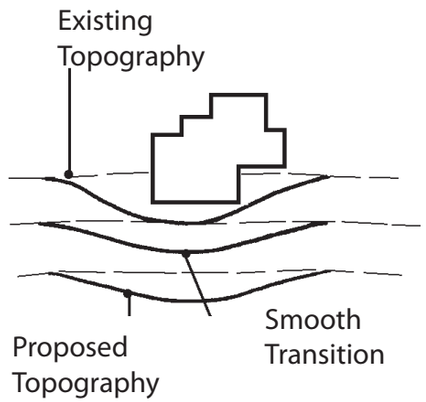
SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

SITE PLANNING & DESIGN (CONT.)

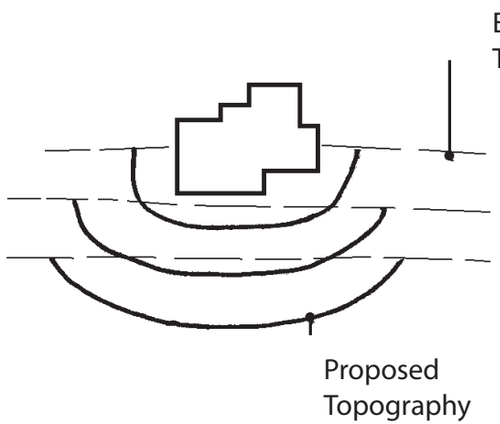
7. Varied front setbacks are encouraged to help create visually interesting streetscapes.
8. A minimum five-foot side setback variation should be provided between neighboring units for single-family dwellings.
9. Side yard setbacks should be varied where possible to help create different sized yards and private patio areas. This variation maximizes the use of land and enhances dwelling privacy.
10. Homes greater than two stories should have additional setbacks to avoid dominating the character of the neighborhood.
11. To contain speeds along the roadway and offer variety in the streetscape, streets should not extend for long distances without interruption by traffic calming measures, intersecting streets, or cul-de-sacs.



THIS



NOT THIS



SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

SITE GRADING

Development should relate to the natural surroundings and minimize grading by following the natural contours as much as possible. Graded slopes should be rounded and contoured to blend with the existing terrain.

1. Significant natural vegetation should be retained and incorporated into the project whenever possible.
2. Hillside landscaping should be used to minimize the project's potential visual impacts.
3. Site design should minimize grading of the site. Minimal grading is considered a fill or excavation of less than three feet in depth.
4. Road alignments should follow and maintain the existing contours to the greatest extent possible.
5. Buildings shall conform with the Hillside Development Ordinance.
6. Adhere to the City's Ridgeline Preservation and Guidelines at all times.

SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

PARKWAYS

Landscaped parkways and sidewalks should be incorporated to create comfortable pedestrian-oriented streets.

1. Sidewalks should be set back at least six feet from the road and a landscaped parkway with landscaping and street trees should be planted adjacent to the street edge.
2. Consider creating meandering walkways where possible to add to the aesthetic appeal and pedestrian experience.
3. Trees that will have 25-foot to 30-foot canopies at maturity should be planted within the parkway and should coordinate with the recommendations in the Santa Clarita Beautification Master Plan.
4. Trees planted in landscape parkways should be selected to minimize root problems and maintenance issues.

SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

PROJECTENTRYFEATURES

Entry features can be simple and attractive but should reflect the overall architectural identity of the neighborhood.

1. A combination of the following accent features should be incorporated into the project entry:
   - Ornamental landscaping.
   - Landscaped medians (minimum seven feet).
   - Water features.
   - Architectural monuments.
   - Decorative walls.
   - Enhanced paving (colored, textured, and permeable).
2. Project entry features should reflect the overall architectural identity or character of the development.
3. Driveway entries should align with existing or planned median openings and adjacent driveways, to the greatest extent possible.

SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

DRIVEWAYS&GARAGES

Garage placement should be varied to avoid creating a row of garages that dominates the streetscape. Offsetting the garage behind the front facade will help reduce negative visual impacts on the streetscape.

1. Some combination of side-loading, detached, and rear garages should be integrated into residential development site design.
2. Garages or side yards should be designed to accommodate three 90-gallon containers for garbage, recycling, and green waste.
3. Driveways should be long enough for a vehicle to be able to park completely on the driveway without having to overhang into the sidewalk or street.
4. Consider installing pervious paving systems or "Hollywood" style driveways, where the tracks for the car are separated by strips of green lawn, to reduce runoff.
5. Consider providing additional space within a two car garage to accommodate a tandem parking space for a third vehicle.
6. Garage doors should be recessed two to four inches within the wall plane to add shadow and visual interest.

SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

PUBLICSPACE,PARKLAND&TRAILS

Residents of housing projects should have safe and efficient access to usable open space, whether public or private, for recreation and social activities.

1. The design and orientation of these areas should take advantage of available sunlight and views and should be sheltered from the noise and traffic from adjacent streets or other incompatible uses.
2. Open space should focus on areas that are usable to the residents and not merely remainder parcels with marginal utility.
3. Bicycle and pedestrian pathways should provide convenient access to public or private parks.
4. A river-oriented recreational greenbelt and trails system along the Santa Clara River should continue to be constructed to tie together the communities of Santa Clarita.
5. Neighborhood parks should be integrated with a larger community-wide system and should incorporate jogging and hiking trails, bicycle paths, and equestrian trail links where appropriate.
6. Infrastructure elements such as landscaped storm water retention basins should be incorporated into the open space plan.

SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

NATURALRESOURCESPRESERVATION

Careful planning shall be taken into consideration when working in sensitive natural or native areas. Prominent and distinctive natural features of the community should be preserved and integrated as open space for the use and visual enjoyment of all City residents.

1. Building and landscaping design should complement and respect environmentally sensitive areas such as the Santa Clara River corridor or those areas designated in the Santa Clarita Best Management Practices Guidebook.
2. Attractive natural amenities, such as rock outcroppings, vegetation, streams, and drainage areas, should be preserved to enhance the landscape and provide visual interest, scale, and/or recreational opportunities.
3. Major landforms, such as ridgelines, natural drainage ways, streams, rivers, valleys, and significant vegetation should be retained, especially where these features contribute to the overall community identity.
4. Open space and recreational uses tied to the Santa Clara River corridor, as identified in the Land Use Element and Open Space Plan, should be preserved and enhanced.
5. All oak tree preservation ordinances shall apply to all work proposed in areas where native oak trees exist.

SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

NATURALRESOURCESPRESERVATION (CONT.)

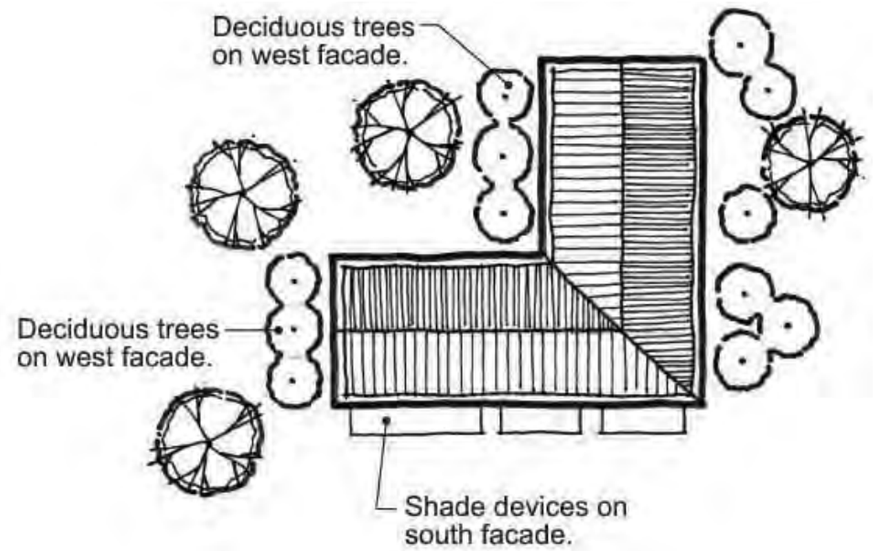
6. Development should be clustered on less environmentally sensitive areas of the site to maximize open space preservation and resource protection.
7. New developments should preserve or improve natural conditions on or adjacent to the site, such as wildlife habitats, streams, creeks, views, and should restore riparian habitats to a natural state.
8. Buildings, parking areas, and open space should be arranged to minimize the use of sound walls next to the freeway, arterial or collector streets.
9. A transition between development and adjacent open space, sensitive, and/or native habitat should be designed to help preserve the rural character of the Valley. Such transitions may include larger lots, buffer areas, and landscaping to blend development with the surrounding open area.
10. Streets and units should be arranged to provide access to open space, parks and water ways within or adjacent to the project. Placement of units should not obstruct views of open space and parks.

SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

PLANTINGDESIGN

Integrating mature plants at the time of construction can help a neighborhood look established and welcoming.

1. Each unit should provide at least one 24-inch box size tree from a City approved list, with a minimum height of 9 feet and a spread of 3 feet to 4 feet.
2. Street trees should be located no closer than five feet to utilities.
3. Street trees should be located no closer than ten feet to street lights, unless otherwise directed by the City.
4. Lineal root barriers should be installed at each tree planted within six feet of the curb or walk. Root barriers on the curb side should be 24 inches deep and root barriers on the walkway side should be 18 inches deep. Root barriers should extend six feet to each side of the trunk of the tree.



SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

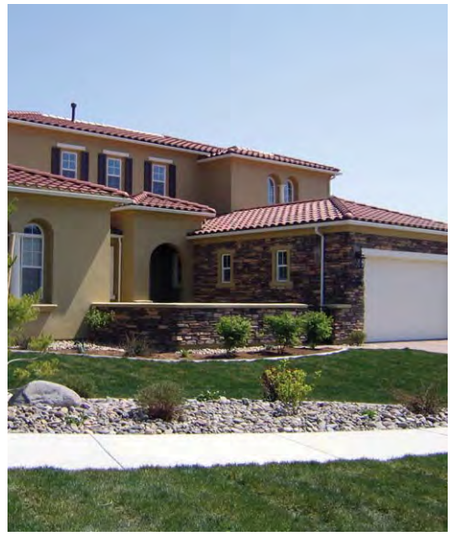
PLANTING DESIGN (CONT.)

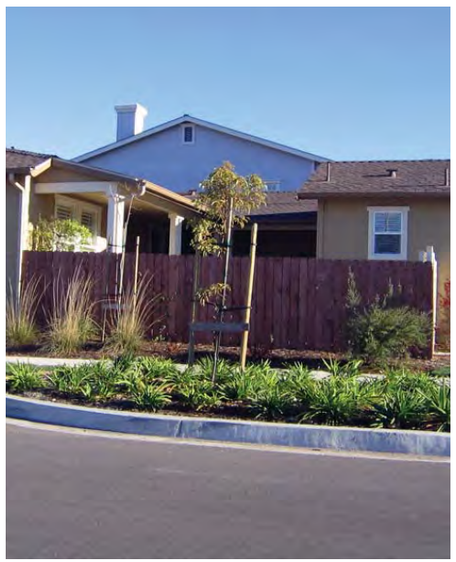
5. Each street tree should be watered by two deep watering bubblers separate from all other irrigation. Bubbler installation should comply with applicable City standards and details.
6. Deciduous trees should be planted along the west facing side of homes to provide shade in the summer and allow maximum solar gain in the winter.
7. Drought tolerant grasses should be used for lawn areas where possible.
8. Sod should be used for turf installation. Turf installation should be limited due to high watering needs. Special permission shall be obtained from the City to install lawns by seeding.
9. Due to challenging soil conditions found throughout the Valley, extra care should be given to prepare and apply soil amendments prior to planting.

SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

PLANTINGDESIGN(CONT.)

10. "Structural soil" should be considered for tree planting in areas that might be subject to compaction, such as street edges, narrow medians, and parking lots.
11. Irrigation systems should utilize water conserving methods and incorporate water efficient technologies, such as, drip emitters, sub-grade capillary action irrigation for turf areas, evapotranspiration controllers, and moisture sensors.
12. Landscaping that is installed by a developer should include hardscape coverage such as decorative paving, wood decking, decorative stone, and similar non-irrigated areas.
13. All plants should be compatible with Sunset Western Garden Book's climate zone 18.





SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

WALLS&FENCING

While walls and fences provide a functional need, they should add visual interest and prove to be an enhanced site feature.

1. Materials such as wood, wrought iron, and stone should be used for walls and fences.
2. Walls and fences should be designed in a style, material, and color that complement the dwelling units to which the wall or fence is attached.
3. Natural colors that are consistent with the architectural theme are encouraged.
4. Both sides of all perimeter walls or fences should be architecturally treated.
5. Stone and brick walls should remain the natural color.

BUILDINGDESIGN

Building forms and facades influence cohesiveness, comfort, and aesthetic pride and can generate pedestrian activity and increase a sense of security. Any good design should take into consideration fundamental design principals including continuity, mass, scale, rhythm, and proportion. All new buildings and remodels should incorporate 360-degree architecture, which is the full articulation of all building facades, including variation in massing, roof forms, wall planes, and surface articulation.

The following guidelines are intended to provide a general framework for design, and do not mandate specific architectural styles, themes, or details. Chapter 3 of this document should be consulted prior to developing building design drawings to ensure that the appropriate community character is incorporated into the building design. The City will be open to considering innovative, alternative design concepts that were not envisioned at the time that these guidelines were written; however an attempt should be made to comply with the general intent of the guidelines provided.

BUILDING DESIGN

MASSING

Mass is defined as a three-dimensional form, such as a cube, box, cylinder, pyramid, or cone. The way the forms are sized directly relates to the way building elements are emphasized or de-emphasized. Voids or open spaces in the forms can change the forms' appearance and make the building more interesting.

1. Variation of front yard setbacks, lot widths, and one and two story homes should be used to create a diversity of architectural massing.
2. Massing design should include:
   - Variation in the wall plane (projection and recess).
   - Variation in wall height.
   - Roofs located at different levels.
3. Step back portions of the upper story of a two-story home in order to reduce the scale of the facade that faces the street and to break up the overall massing.
4. Combinations of one, one and one half, and two-story units should be provided within tract development.
5. All street fronting facades and facades facing a space greater than 20 feet between two houses or structures should be fully articulated and should include a variation in massing.
6. Include architectural elements that add visual interest, scale, and character to the neighborhood, such as recessed or projecting balconies, verandas, porches, etc.

BUILDING DESIGN

ARTICULATION

Building designers should incorporate 360-degree architecture into every design, which is the full articulation of all building facades, including variation in massing, roof forms, wall planes, and surface articulation.

1. Building facades should be well-articulated with windows, moldings, pilasters, exposed chimneys, variation of building materials, etc.
2. Buildings should be designed with the integration of varied texture, relief, and design accents on all walls.
3. Acknowledging sensitivity to a budget, it is expected that the highest level of articulation will occur on the front facade and facades visible from public streets. However, similar massing, materials, and details should be incorporated into every other building elevation.
4. There should be a change in wall planes on all sides of the house visible from a public street.
5. Materials and articulation used on the front facade should be incorporated into side and rear facades that are visible from a street or similarly important viewshed.

BUILDING DESIGN

ARTICULATION (CONT.)

6. Surface detailing should not serve as a substitute for well integrated and distinctive massing.
7. Architectural elements that add visual interest, scale, and character, such as recessed or projecting balconies, trellises, recessed windows, insets, verandas, porches, and changes in materials and textures are strongly encouraged. These features should be used to create shadow patterns that contribute to a building's character.
8. The incorporation of balconies, porches, and patios is encouraged.
9. Building elements and details should be consistent with the chosen architectural style.
10. Chimneys should be exposed as architectural features rather than hidden within a wall surface. Chimney caps should be decorative and conceal spark arrestors.

BUILDING DESIGN

VARIEDARCHITECTURALDESIGN

To avoid a repetitive street scene, buildings within tract developments should utilize different materials and building forms on front facades.

1. Single-family developments should be articulated to project an image of a collection of customized homes.
2. A random pattern of no fewer than one different floor plan per every six houses is recommended.
3. New developments should use at least two different roof lines and two different pitches throughout the project, i.e. gables, hips, dormers.

BUILDING DESIGN

ROOFFORMS

Roofs should reflect a residential appearance through roof pitch and material selection.

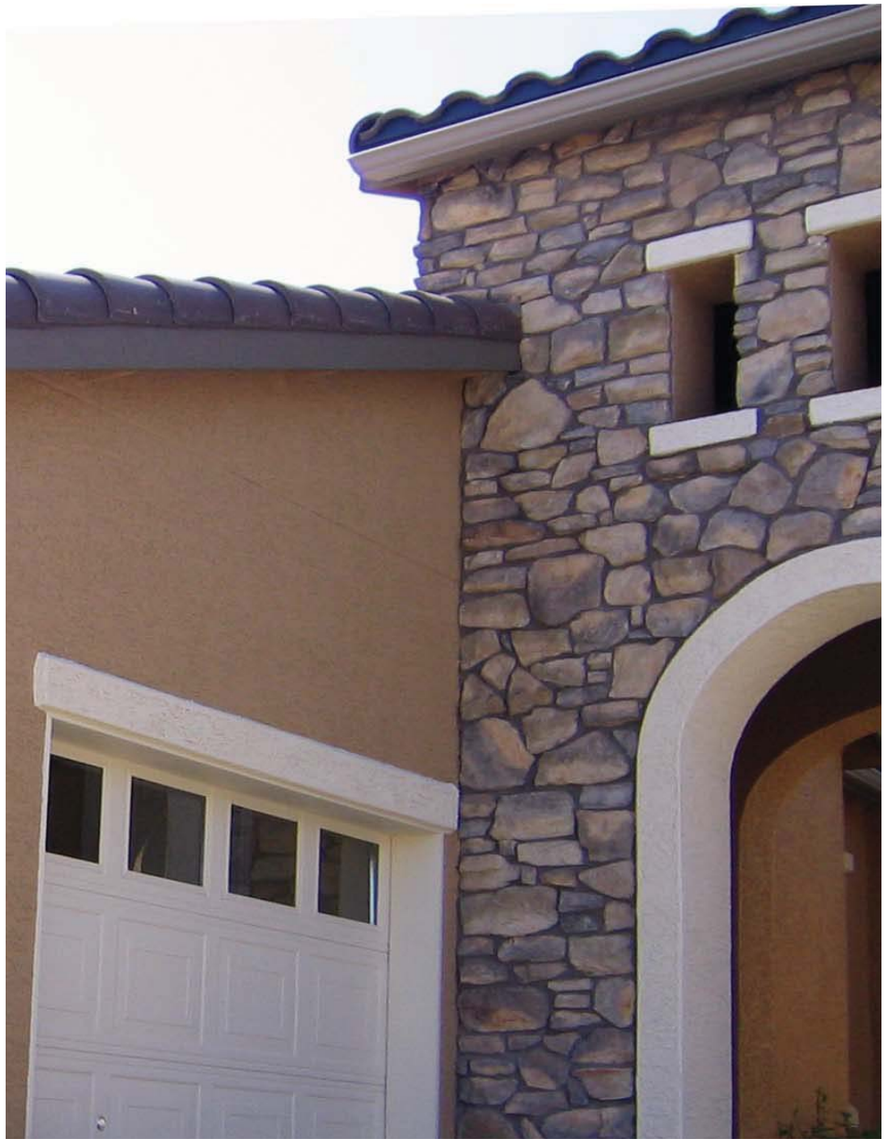
1. In tract developments, multiple rooflines should be incorporated throughout the project (e.g., gabled, hipped, dormers).
2. Roof overhangs should be sized appropriately to the desired architectural style.
3. Multi-form roofs, gabled roofs, and shed roof combinations are encouraged to create varying roof forms.
4. Flat roofs and A-frame type roofs are discouraged unless appropriate to the architectural style.
5. Roof lines should vary in height and long horizontal roof lines should be broken up.
6. Roof materials and colors should be consistent with the desired architectural style.

BUILDING DESIGN

WINDOWS&DOORS

Windows and doors help to define the architectural style of a building while providing daylight to interior spaces and visual interest to building facades.

1. Window and door type, material, shape, and proportion should complement the architectural style of the home.
2. Maximize daylighting and views through window placement and design.
3. Window articulation, such as sills, trim, kickers, shutters, or awnings, should be applied where appropriate to the architectural style to improve the facade of the home.
4. Primary upper and lower windows should stack vertically whenever possible.
5. To enhance privacy, windows on side elevations of adjacent homes should be staggered whenever possible. Windows should not be positioned directly opposite of windows in an adjacent structure.
6. Where appropriate to the architectural style, windows should be generously inset from building walls to create shade and shadow detail. The minimum inset should be three inches.
7. Any faux shutters should be proportionate to the adjacent windows to create the appearance of a real and functional shutter.
8. EPA “Energy Star” labeled windows with low-e coatings are encouraged.



BUILDING DESIGN

MATERIALS&COLORS

The selection and placement of building materials should provide visual interest at the pedestrian level. Materials and colors should be used to enhance buildings by adding color, shadows, and interesting forms.

1. Piecemeal embellishment and frequent changes in materials should be avoided. All structure elements should be architecturally treated.
2. Material changes should occur at intersecting planes to appear substantial and integral to the facade. Avoid material or color changes at the outside corners of structures.
3. Selection of materials that complement adjacent buildings and their surroundings is encouraged.
4. Materials should be utilized that reduce the transfer of heat into and/or out of the building.
5. Recycled content materials, such as wood substitutes, recycled concrete, and asphalt, as well as non-toxic materials, should be used whenever possible.
6. Natural materials such as brick, stone, or copper should be left the natural color.
7. Large areas of intense color should be avoided. While more subdued colors usually work best for overall building color, bright or accent colors are typically appropriate for trim, windows, doors, and key architectural elements.

UTILITARIANASPECTS

Any equipment, whether on the side of a structure or on the ground, should be screened. The method of screening should be architecturally compatible in terms of materials, color, shape, and size. The screening design should blend with the building design, which may include a continuous screen.

1. Rain gutters, downspouts, vents, and other roof protrusions should complement the adjacent materials and/or colors.
2. The design of ancillary structures (guest houses, cabanas, barns, storage sheds, etc.) should be architecturally compatible with the main structure through the use of wall and roof forms, materials, architectural detailing, fence or wall connections, and landscaping.
3. New electrical, telephone, cable television, and other distribution lines and mechanical equipment should be placed underground.
4. Utility connections located above ground should not interfere with or adversely impact access, visibility, appearance, or the character of the structures near which the connections are located and should be screened with landscaping.
5. Design solutions that reduce impacts and/or constraints from railroad rights-of-way within the planning area are encouraged.