

Citywide Multifamily Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards

CITY COUNCIL DRAFT FOR ADOPTION

OCTOBER 20, 2026



CITY OF COSTA MESA

77 Fair Drive

Costa Mesa, CA 92626



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CITYWIDE MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

A. INTRODUCTION

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of these Citywide Multifamily Residential and Mixed-Use Objective Design Standards (Standards) is to promote design excellence in new residential and mixed-use development projects in the City of Costa Mesa (City) that are consistent with state law, City goals, and the community's vision, while at the same time allowing for a more efficient and predictable process for the review and approval of projects.

2. WHAT ARE OBJECTIVE STANDARDS?

Enabled by state legislation, including Senate Bill (SB) 330 (2017) and 330 (2019), the State of California defines objective standards as those "that involve no personal or subjective judgment by a public official and is uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant or proponent and the public official before submittal" (California Government Code Section 65913.4 and 66300(a)(7)).

3. APPLICABILITY

Pursuant to Title 13 of the Costa Mesa Municipal Code, these Standards shall apply to all new construction of multifamily residential and mixed-use buildings (consistent with California Government Code Section 65913.4) of three or more stories in height located in any zone, unless alternative design standards have been established through a master plan in a Planned Development zone.

4. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER CITY PLANS, POLICIES, AND CODES

a) Costa Mesa General Plan

These Standards implement various policies of the City's General Plan, including the Land Use, Circulation, Noise, and Community Design Elements. Policies regarding building and site design enable the implementation of these Standards either in whole or in part, including, but not limited to, those regarding compatibility with adjacent existing neighborhoods; pedestrian safety, connectivity, and accessibility; and Costa Mesa's eclectic character.

b) Costa Mesa Municipal Code

These Standards regulate site and building design for multifamily residential and mixed-use development projects and are in addition to those regulations established in the City's Municipal Code, specifically Title 13 (Planning, Zoning, and Development, hereafter referred to as the "Zoning Code") and Title 5 (the Building and Structures Code). These Standards are meant to complement and not supersede the Municipal Code.

5. ADMINISTRATION

a) Adoption and Administration

These Standards shall be a stand-alone document adopted by reference in the Municipal Code. The Community Development Department shall be responsible for the administration of these Standards.

b) Procedures for Use, Review, and Approval

These Standards are intended for both development project applicants during the design of projects, as well as the City during the review of projects. Chapter III (Planning Applications) of Title 13 of the Municipal Code establishes the review and approval procedures of applicable projects subject to these Standards.

c) Deviations, Interpretations and Ambiguities

Allowability and procedures for the deviation from these Standards, if requested, shall be subject to the provisions of Chapter III (Planning Applications) of Title 13 of the Municipal Code. The Community Development Director shall have the responsibility and authority to interpret the meaning and applicability of these Standards.

d) Severability

These Standards are intended to be consistent with and shall be interpreted and applied to comply with all applicable state laws, as provisions may be amended from time to time and any successor statutes. If any provision of these Standards conflict with state law, the applicable state law shall prevail. If any provision of these Standards, or its application to any person or circumstance, is held invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unenforceability shall not affect other provisions or applications of these Standards that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application. The City Council declares that it would have adopted these Standards and each provision, section, sentence, clause, and phrase thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more provisions may be declared invalid or unenforceable.

6. USE OF PHOTOS

Photographs and captions are used alongside these Standards to provide examples of real-world built projects and how design features may comply or not comply with select Standards. The use of a photograph for a project does not mean that a similar project will meet the requirements of a Standard, nor does it mean that the project shown in the photograph is an exemplary project. Decision of compliance with a Standard shall be subject to the provisions of Chapter III (Planning Applications) of Title 13 of the Municipal Code.

B. BUILDING DESIGN OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

1. BUILDING MASS AND FORM

a) Intent

The intent of these Standards is to:

- Encourage compatibility in scale across adjacent buildings;
- Minimize the perceived length, height, and mass of buildings; and
- Allow for space, light, air, and privacy in between buildings.

b) Residential Structures of Three or More Stories

1. **Upper Story Setbacks.** When abutting a property in the R1, R2, and R3 zones along an interior property line, the building elevation, inclusive of balconies, along the interior property line of the third story and above shall be set back a minimum average of 15 feet from the property line, as illustrated in Figure 1, and shall be no closer than the minimum required setback set forth by the underlying base zoning district or applicable overlay zoning district.

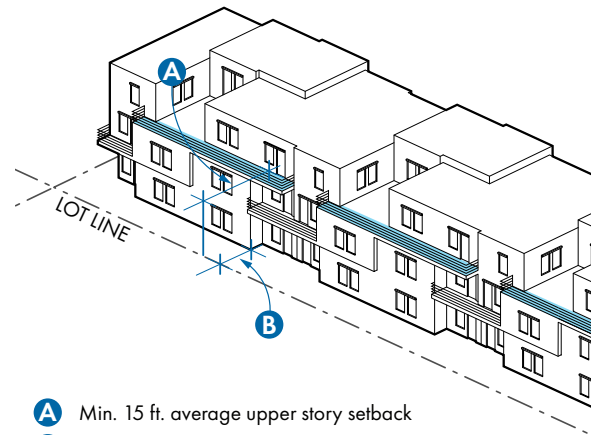


FIGURE 1: Upper Story Setbacks

2. FACADE DESIGN

a) Intent

The intent of these Standards is to:

- Discourage “blank walls;”
- Minimize the perceived length, height, and mass of buildings;
- Reflect the eclectic character of Costa Mesa’s built environment; and
- Encourage a diversity of facade designs and styles that are visually interesting and engaging.

b) Facade Length

1. **Maximum Facade Length.** Public street-facing facades shall provide at least one facade break such that no facade length, measured as the horizontal distance across a continuous building facade, exceeds 150 feet. A facade break, either as a projection or recess in the entirety of the facade, shall measure at least four feet deep perpendicular to the facade and at least eight feet long parallel to the facade, as illustrated in Figure 2. Facade breaks are not required for townhouses or above-grade parking structures.

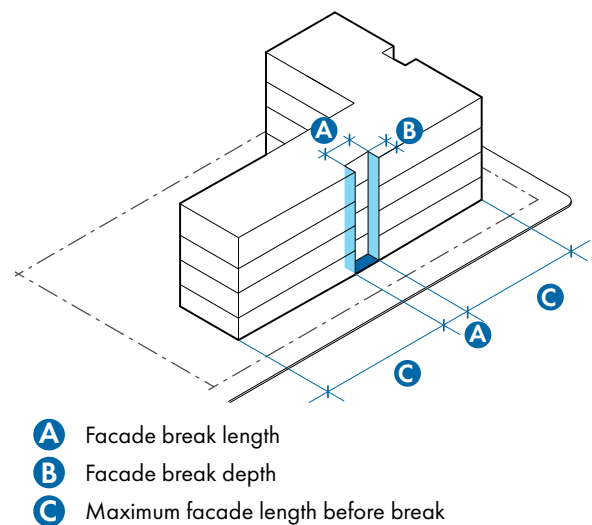


FIGURE 2: Facade Break

c) Facade Modulation and Articulation

1. Minimum Facade Modulation or Articulation.

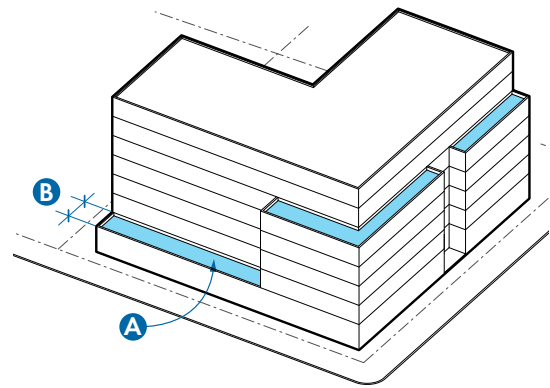
Public street-facing facades shall incorporate either facade modulation and/or facade articulation as described below. Facades separated by a required facade break in accordance with Subsection b) shall be considered separate facades. Facade modulation and articulation are not required for townhouses or above-grade parking structures.

- a. **Facade Modulation.** Use of recesses or projections of the facade for at least a minimum of 25 percent of the facade area, measured by a minimum of 2 feet in depth and a maximum of 10 feet in depth, as illustrated in Figure 3.
- b. **Facade Articulation.** Use of one of the following design features for every maximum 75 feet length of facade, as illustrated in Figure 4.
 - i. A change in apparent building height of at least 4 feet, such as variations in parapet height or roofline.
 - ii. A change in facade materials or colors.
 - iii. Use of pilasters or engaged columns projecting a minimum of 6 inches from the facade.

2. Exceptions to Facade Modulation.

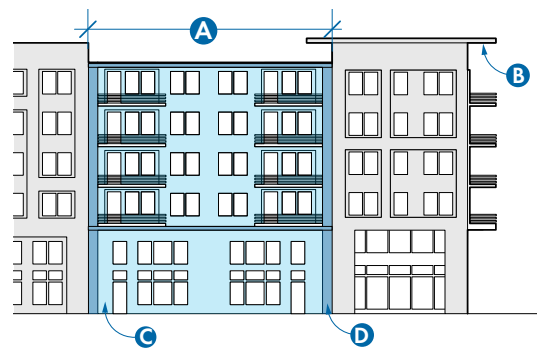
The following building elements shall not qualify as required facade modulation:

- a. Required facade breaks in accordance with Subsection b) Facade Length.
- b. Elements used for screening building equipment.
- c. Mechanical, plumbing, or electrical equipment.



- A Facade area projected or recessed
B Minimum 2 ft. to maximum 10 ft. depth

FIGURE 3: Facade Modulation



- A Maximum facade length
B Change in apparent building height
C Change in facade material or color
D Use of pilasters or engaged columns

FIGURE 4: Facade Articulation



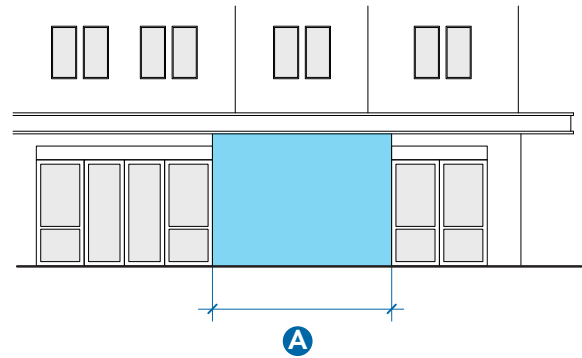
Use of pilasters/engaged columns and change in roof height.



Facade modulation and change in roof height.

d) *“Blank Walls”*

1. **Maximum Length of Blank Walls.** Blank walls consisting of a portion of a building facade without a window, door, or other facade opening, shall not exceed 10 feet for residential uses and 20 feet for non-residential uses, measured in length horizontally along the facade at each story of the building, as illustrated in Figure 5.
2. **Exceptions to Blank Walls.** A blank wall may exceed the maximum length if it provides one or more of the following elements for more than 75 percent of the blank wall area:
 - a. Green or living walls where walls attain at least 95 percent coverage within one year of installation, and where walls are maintained free of weeds and debris.
 - b. Lattices, louvers, or similar decorative facade treatment.
 - c. Public art/murals in compliance with CMMC Title 13, Chapter VIII (Signs) and reviewed by the Arts Commission.
 - d. Signage in compliance with CMMC Title 13, Chapter VIII (Signs).

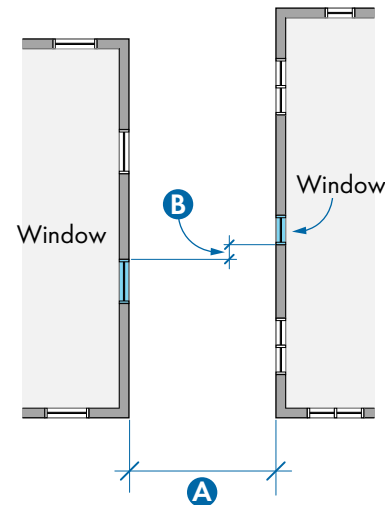


A Max. Length of Blank Wall

FIGURE 5: Blank Walls

e) *Windows*

1. **Window Alignment.** Windows shall not directly align with windows of dwelling units on an abutting lot. Windows located within 20 feet of an adjacent dwelling unit shall be horizontally offset by a minimum of 12 inches measured from the interior window edge so as not to produce a direct line-of-sight into adjacent dwelling units, as illustrated in Figure 6, unless use of privacy glass, clerestory windows with a minimum sill height of 5 feet, or glass block employed to block views.
2. **Window Detailing.** With the exception of non-residential uses and common residential spaces, windows shall either be recessed or projected a minimum depth of two inches as measured perpendicular from the building facade. At each window with frontage along a street a minimum of one of the following design features shall also be incorporated:
 - a. Trim of at least four inches in width around the entire window opening.
 - b. Sills, aprons, or lintels.
 - c. Shutters, awnings, trellises, or brise-soleil systems.
 - d. Juliet balconies on second floors and above.
 - e. Window planter boxes with living plants.



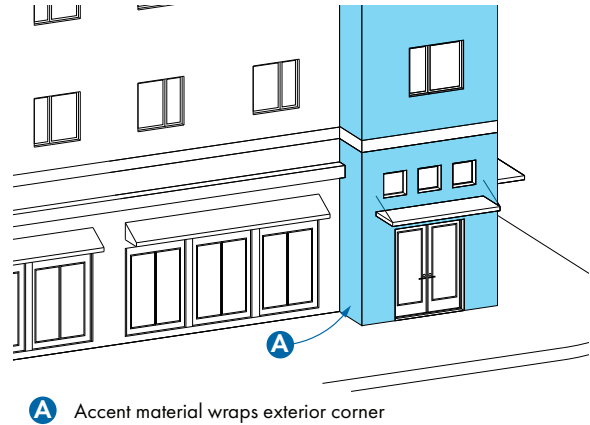
A 20 ft. or less between dwellings

B 1 ft. min. horizontal offset

FIGURE 6: Window Alignment

f) Architectural Styles, Materials, and Colors

1. **Design Consistency.** Each building, inclusive of additions and renovations to the building, shall be consistent with a singular architectural style and the style's associated materials, finishes, and colors. Street facing facades of a building shall employ the same quality and style of architectural detailing and articulation.
2. **Material and Color Transitions.** When proposed, facade accent materials and colors shall wrap all exterior corners of a building by a minimum of two feet in length, as illustrated in Figure 7.



A Accent material wraps exterior corner

FIGURE 7: Material and Color Transitions

3. GROUND FLOOR DESIGN

a) Intent

The intent of these Standards is to:

- Encourage human-scaled design;
- Ensure that ground floor uses respond to and engage with streets and sidewalks;
- Ensure accessibility and visibility of ground floor commercial uses to support economic development;
- Ensure the livability, privacy, and security of ground floor residential units; and
- Foster “eyes on the street” to enhance visibility, safety, and comfort.

b) Ground Floor Height

1. **Ground Floor Height.** The minimum floor-to-floor height of the ground floor shall be 12 feet. The height shall be measured from the finished floor of the ground floor to the finished floor of the second floor.

c) Ground Floor Elevation

1. **Ground Floor Elevation.** The finished elevation of the ground floor shall be provided as follows:
 - a. Ground floor non-residential uses, including live/work units, and common residential spaces: Average finished floor elevations located along a public street shall be within 24 inches of the grade of the adjacent sidewalk, unless a greater elevation is required to satisfy applicable Building Code, flood protection, or drainage requirements.
 - b. Ground floor residential units: With the exception of dwelling units required for accessibility pursuant to state law, finished floor elevations shall provide a grade separation of a minimum of two feet and a maximum of six feet above the elevation of the adjoining sidewalk at the primary building entry.



Accent material and color transition at corners.

d) *Ground Floor Entries*

1. Number of Entrances for Non-Residential Uses and Common Residential Spaces. A minimum of one building entry shall be provided every 150 linear feet of street-facing ground floor building frontage. When adjacent to a street, the entry shall front/be oriented towards the street and provide a pedestrian walkway to the street.

2. Ground Floor Non-Residential Uses and Common Residential Spaces. With the exception of back-of-house entries, building entries for non-residential uses and common residential spaces shall incorporate at least two of the following design features, as illustrated in Figure 8:

- A roofed element over the entrance that protrudes at least two feet from the building facade, such as an awning, canopy, trellis, or overhang. Such an element shall not encroach into the public right-of-way.
- An increase in total height of the ground floor entry by no more than five feet in height to accommodate a protruding entry.
- A projected or recessed entry area of at least 50 square feet in floor area with a minimum dimension of 5 feet in any direction, such as a terrace, forecourt, gallery, arcade, or shopfront.

3. Ground Floor Residential Units. Each residential unit located on the ground floor shall provide a primary building entry directly to the exterior. For units with frontage along a public street, the entry shall front/be oriented towards the street and provide a pedestrian pathway to the street, as illustrated in Figure 9. For units located interior to a parcel with no frontage along a public street, the entry shall front/be oriented towards a private street or exterior common area, such as a courtyard, plaza, or paseo, and provide a pedestrian walkway to the private street or exterior common area.

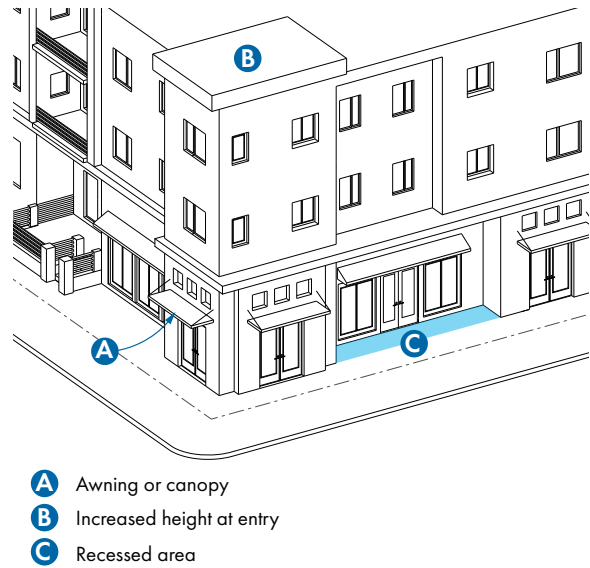


FIGURE 8: Ground Floor Non-Residential Uses and Common Residential Spaces

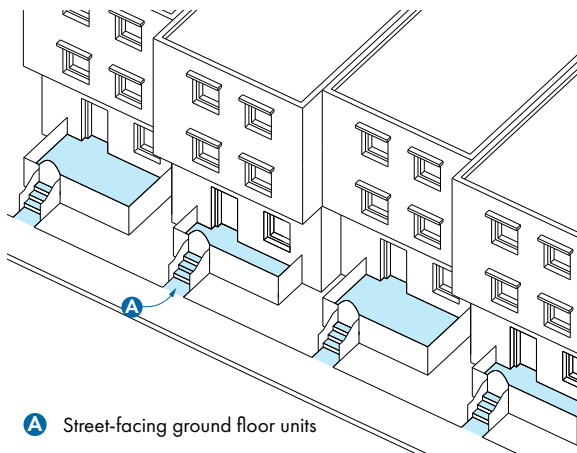


FIGURE 9: Ground Floor Residential Units



Ground floor residential units.

4. Transitional Entry Space. Ground floor residential units shall provide a transitional space between the entry into the unit and the street or common area. The transitional space shall be at least 50 square feet in floor area with a minimum dimension of 5 feet in any direction in the form of a porch, terrace, stoop, dooryard, or similar entry feature, as illustrated in Figure 10.

5. Separate Entries. Non-residential uses and residential uses in the same building shall not share common areas, such as lobbies, entrances, or hallways. These separations shall be permanently maintained.

e) *Ground Floor Transparency*

1. Minimum Transparency. Minimum ground floor transparency is measured as the percentage of facade area that consists of transparent openings relative to the total area of the ground floor facade. Street-facing ground floor facades shall provide transparent openings in the facade, such as windows, doors, and other facade openings, for at least the following minimum percentages, as illustrated in Figure 11.

- a. Ground Floor Residential Units: 30 percent
- b. Non-Residential Uses and Common Residential Spaces: 60 percent

2. Obscured Transparency. The use of color-tinted, mirrored, or reflective glass shall be prohibited. The use of indoor security bars, grilles, and gates shall be concealed from street view during business hours using systems such as ceiling cavities, side pockets, or similar systems. The use of exterior security bars, grilles, and gates shall be prohibited. For non-residential uses, with the exception of medical uses, elements that obscure more than 25 percent of visibility into required transparent openings shall be prohibited, such as blinds, drapes, curtains, signs, merchandise, or similar elements.

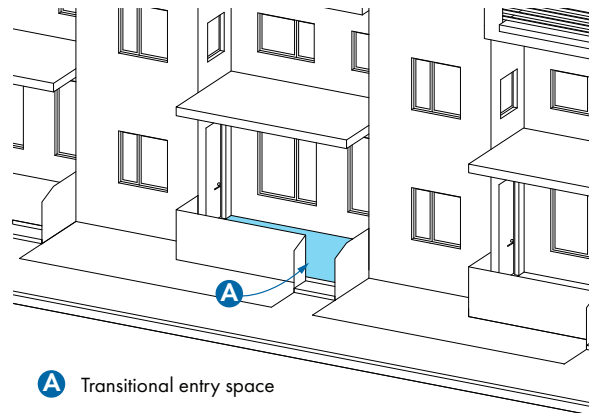
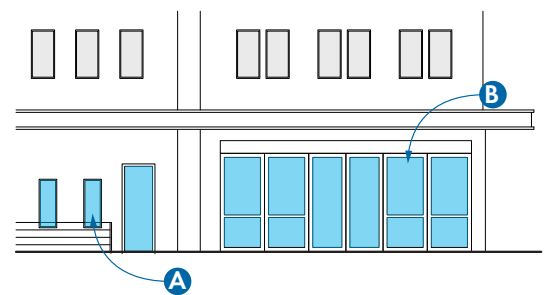


FIGURE 10: Transitional Entry Space



- A** Min. 30% Transparency for Ground Floor Residential Units
- B** Min. 60% Transparency for Ground Floor Non-Residential Uses

FIGURE 11: Minimum Transparency



Ground floor residential units with direct access to the street.



Ground floor residential units with transitional entry spaces.

C. SITE DESIGN OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

1. APPLICABILITY OF OTHER RELATED STANDARDS

The applicable development standards set forth in the following sections of Title 13 of the CMMC shall apply, with the additions and exceptions established in these Standards.

- Article 9 (General Site Improvement Standards) of Chapter V (Development Standards), specifically:
 - Section 13-73 (Trash enclosures).
 - Section 13-74 (Elevation and screening requirements).
 - Section 13-75 (Fences and walls).
- Chapter VI (Off-Street Parking Standards), specifically:
 - Article 3 (Development Standards)
- Chapter VII (Landscaping Standards)

2. ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

a) Intent

It is the intent of these Standards related to access and circulation design to:

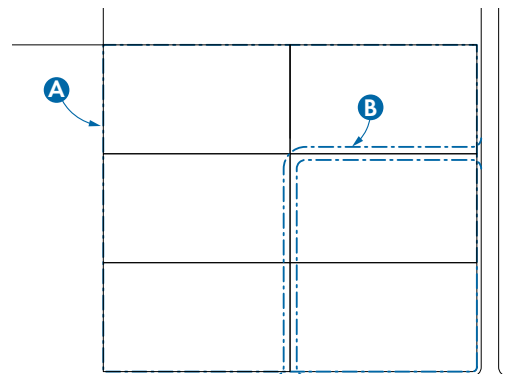
- Augment the applicable standards set forth in CMMC Title 13, Chapter VI (Off-Street Parking Standards);
- Promote visual and physical connectivity between buildings, entries, common and public areas, amenities, destinations, and the adjoining neighborhoods through human-scaled design;
- Facilitate the “breaking down” or subdivision of large sites into walkable segments;
- Promote visibility, safety, comfort, and pedestrian activity along common areas.

b) Development Projects Sites Greater than 4 Acres

1. **Large Sites.** Development projects of four acres or more in the site area shall provide at least one private street or publicly-accessible pedestrian paseo, in accordance with Subsection c) as a means to “break down” or subdivide the larger site into smaller segments of approximately two acres each in site area, as illustrated in Figure 12.



Pedestrian walkway in between buildings.



- Ⓐ Large development site
- Ⓑ Private street

FIGURE 12: Development Projects on Sites Greater than 4 Acres

c) Pedestrian Access and Circulation

1. Pedestrian Walkways and Paseos. Pedestrian walkways and paseos shall be clearly differentiated from streets, driveways, drive aisles, parking aisles, and parking and loading areas through grade separation and/or the use of different paving material, including, but not limited to, concrete, scored/stamped or tinted concrete, exposed aggregate concrete, brick or concrete pavers, or similar material. The use of asphalt as well as loose or moveable materials, including, but not limited to, stepping stones, cobblestones, pebbles, river rocks, and gravel, shall be prohibited except if used as decorative landscaping elements outside of a walkway or paseo.



Pedestrian walkway in between buildings.

2. Pedestrian Paseos. When provided, pedestrian paseos shall comply with the following:

- a. **Dimensions.** Paseos shall provide a minimum width of 20 feet. Where a paseo serves as required fire apparatus access, a minimum unobstructed clear drivable width of 20 feet shall be maintained at all times and where fire apparatus access is required for buildings exceeding 30 feet in height, a minimum unobstructed clear width of 25 feet shall be maintained. Fire apparatus access shall otherwise comply with the Costa Mesa Fire Apparatus Access Design Standards and adopted codes at the time of construction.
- b. **Access.** Paseos shall provide direct access to a public sidewalk and shall be open and accessible to the general public at a minimum during business hours. The paseo may be enclosed by bollards, fences, and gates but shall be accessible, open, and unlocked during the time that it is open to the public. Vehicular access, with the exception of required emergency access, shall be prohibited.
- c. **Elevation.** Paseos shall match the elevation of the adjoining sidewalk and shall not exceed a grade of five percent.
- d. **Landscape.** A minimum of 25 percent of the paseo shall be planted or landscaped with a minimum dimension of 30 inches in any direction.
- e. **Maintenance.** Paseos shall be privately owned and maintained and require approval of a public access agreement, unless otherwise dedicated and/or agreed upon with the City in regulatory agreement.
- f. **Frontage.** Ground floor residential units, non-residential uses, and/or common residential spaces shall front the paseo and provide access to required primary building entries.



Marked pedestrian crossing and walkway across drive aisle.



Pedestrian paseo along active ground floor uses.

3. Continuous Pedestrian Connections. Pedestrian walkways shall connect in all primary building entries to on-site bicycle and vehicular parking areas, on-site common and publicly accessible open spaces, and other on-site amenities in a development project, as well as to the public sidewalk along each abutting public right-of way. Pedestrian walkways shall be continuous. Where an interruption occurs, such as at a street, driveway, drive aisle, parking aisle, or parking and loading areas, the pedestrian walkway shall maintain a direct accessible connection via a marked crosswalk, decorative paving, or similar crossing feature, as illustrated in Figure 13.

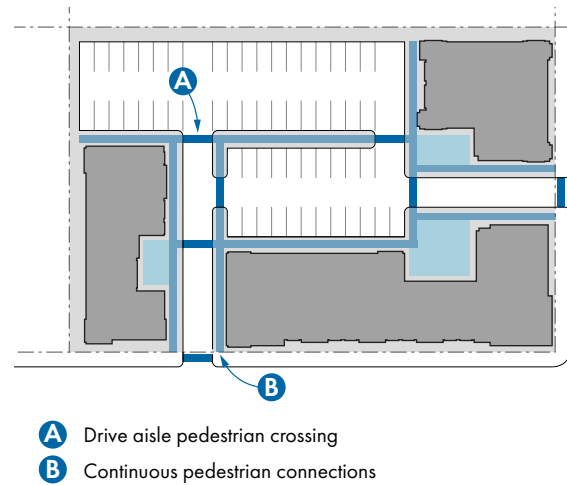


FIGURE 13: Continuous Pedestrian Connections

d) Vehicular Access and Circulation

- 1. Street Access.** In order of priority and as determined by the Community Development Director or their designee, vehicular access shall be provided from (a) an alley or rear street, if present, (b) a side street, (c) an existing or relocated curb cut on the primary street, and (d) a new curb cut on the primary street.
- 2. Private Streets.** When provided, private streets, with the exception of parking aisles, shall be designed and constructed to the same structural, and drainage standards as dedicated local or collector City streets to the satisfaction of the City Engineer or their designee, and shall include required sidewalks, landscaped parkways with trees, and lighting on both sides of the street. Private streets shall connect to the public right-of-way and align with existing signalized intersections, where feasible. Private streets shall not exceed the minimum right-of-way width of a dedicated collector City street.



Continuous, grade separated walkway through parking area.



Private street with active ground floor uses through a development.



Private street through development.

3. OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPING

a) *Intent*

The intent of these Standards is to:

- Augment the applicable standards set forth in CMMC Title 13, Chapter VII (Landscaping Standards);
- Encourage access to outdoor open-air spaces to improve health and wellness;
- Encourage public gathering and activity in visible, safe, and vibrant settings;
- Allow for a balance between built and natural spaces;
- Enhance the natural environment through the sustainable function of natural systems; and
- Provide a transition between public and private spaces, while ensuring the privacy of private spaces.

b) *Minimum Area*

1. Development projects shall provide the minimum required private, common, and/or publicly accessible open space set forth by the underlying base zoning district or applicable overlay zoning district.

c) *Private Open Space*

1. **Dimensions.** Required private open space shall maintain a minimum dimension of 5 feet in any direction.
2. **Location.** Required private open space may be provided at-grade, on upper levels, or on the roof, so long as the open space is contiguous to and directly accessible from the dwelling unit.
3. **Slope.** Required private open space shall not exceed a grade of 5 percent.
4. **Ground Floor Residential Units.** Required private open space when provided at grade for ground floor residential units, when the open space is street-facing, shall be enclosed by a fence, wall, and/or gate of a minimum height of 30 inches and a maximum height of 48 inches.

d) *Common Open Space*

1. **Dimensions.** Required common open space shall provide at least one contiguous area of a minimum of 400 square feet with a minimum dimension of 10 feet in any direction.
2. **Location.** Required common open space may be provided at-grade, on upper levels, or on the roof, so long as the open space is accessible to all residents of the dwelling units in a project.
3. **Slope.** Required common open space shall not exceed an average grade of 10 percent.
4. **Landscape.** A minimum of 25 percent of the required common residential open space shall be planted or landscaped area with a minimum dimension of 30 inches in any direction.



Barbecue area and seating within common open space.



Swimming pool within common open space.

- 5. Water Features.** A maximum of five percent of the required common residential open space shall consist of decorative water features, which may include, but are not limited to, fountains, reflecting pools, or other similar decorative water features as determined by the Community Development Director or their designee. Swimming pools shall not be considered decorative water features.
- 6. Recreational Amenities.** At least one active recreational amenity shall be provided for residential projects consisting of 12 or more units. Active recreational amenities may count towards required common open space and may include, but are not limited to, the following.
- a. Children's play area, with permanent playground equipment such as swings, climbing structures, slides, sandboxes or similar installations;
 - b. Water amenity, such as a common swimming pool, spa, hot tub, or splash pad;
 - c. Barbecue or picnic area with permanent cooking equipment and seating;
 - d. Sports court such as an area designed for tennis, basketball, lawn bowling, racquetball, etc.
 - e. Pet area, such as a fenced-in outdoor dog run with or without a pet washing station, subject to the provisions of CMMC Title 3, Chapter 1 (In General);
 - f. Community garden;
 - g. Other recreational amenity as determined by the Community Development Director or their designee.

e) Publicly Accessible Open Space

- 1. Dimensions.** Required publicly accessible open space shall provide at least one contiguous area of a minimum of 400 square feet with a minimum dimension of 20 feet in any direction.
- 2. Location.** Required publicly accessible open space shall be located outdoors and unenclosed with a minimum of 75 percent of the total area as open to the sky. At least 400 square feet of required publicly accessible open space shall be located on the ground floor at the elevation of the adjoining public sidewalk. Additional required publicly accessible open space may be located elsewhere in a development that is publicly accessible during business hours.
- 3. Access.** Publicly accessible open space shall provide direct access to a public sidewalk, or directly accessible through the entry of the building and shall be open and accessible to the general public, at a minimum during business hours. The open space may be enclosed by bollards, fences, and gates but shall be accessible, open, and unlocked during the time that it is open to the public.



Trees, water features, and seating within publicly accessible open space.

4. **Maintenance.** Publicly accessible open space shall be privately owned and maintained and require approval of a public access agreement, unless otherwise dedicated and/or agreed upon with the City in regulatory agreement.
5. **Landscape.** A minimum of 25 percent of the required publicly accessible open space shall be planted or landscaped area with a minimum dimension of 30 inches in any direction.
6. **Water Features.** A maximum of five percent of the required publicly accessible open space shall consist of decorative water features, which may include, but are not limited to, fountains, reflecting pools, or other decorative water features. Swimming pools shall not be considered decorative water features.
7. **Seating.** A minimum of one seat per 300 square feet of required publicly accessible open space shall be provided, where seating is calculated as 1 seat per 30 linear inches and may be permanent or movable and may be in the form of chairs, benches, ledges, low walls, seat walls, seating steps, or similar usable seating elements.

4. WALLS, FENCES, AND HEDGES

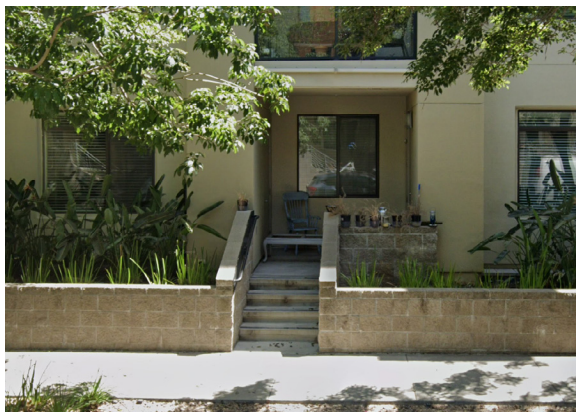
a) Intent

The intent of these Standards is to:

- Augment the applicable standards set forth in CMMC Title 13, Chapter V (Development Standards), Article 9 (General Site Improvement Standards);
- Ensure compatibility between residential and non-residential uses located adjacent to each other;
- Ensure connectivity and access between developments and public streets and sidewalks.
- Promote harmony in design between building and site elements within each development project; and
- Ensure the livability, privacy, and security of ground floor residential units.

b) General Requirements

1. **Along Street-Facing Frontage.** Walls, fences, or hedges along street-facing frontages shall be limited to 40 inches maximum in height, such that ground floor residential units, common residential spaces, and non-residential uses front/be oriented towards the street and provide a pedestrian walkway to the street.
2. **Gated Communities.** "Gated communities," characterized as developments with primarily residential uses that are designed or appear to function as entirely enclosed where private streets or private drive aisles are limited to private access by use of walls, fences, gates, hedges, guardhouses, or similar access-control features, shall be prohibited.



Ground floor residential unit with elevated walled porch.



Ground floor residential unit with elevated fenced porch.

5. BUILDING EQUIPMENT AND UTILITIES

a) *Intent*

The intent of these Standards is to:

- Augment the applicable standards set forth in CMMC Title 13, Chapter V (Development Standards), Article 9 (General Site Improvement Standards);
- Promote harmony in design between building and site elements within each development project; and
- Minimize visual clutter by screening building equipment and utilities from public view;

b) *General Requirements*

1. All ground-, wall-, and roof-mounted building equipment shall be located or incorporated within a building or structure whenever possible or screened so as not to be visible to the public from any street, common or public open space, and adjacent property according to these Standards. For purposes of these Standards, building equipment shall include all mechanical, plumbing, and electrical equipment, such as, but not limited to, antennas, heating and air conditioning units, utility meters, cable equipment, telephone entry boxes, backflow preventions, irrigation control valves, irrigation controllers, electrical transformers, pull boxes, exhaust fans and ventilators, vents, and ducting, and similar equipment.

c) *Roof-Mounted Equipment*

All exterior roof-mounted equipment shall be screened from public view including from on-site parking areas, adjacent public streets, and adjacent properties according to the following:

1. **For flat or partially flat roofs.** Equipment located on a roof shall be screened from public view by use of utility room enclosures, roof mansards, or parapets on all sides of the roof, or other screening devices as determined by the Community Development Director or their designee. Parapets shall have a minimum height of 6 inches greater than the roof-mounted equipment and shall match and/or complement the architectural style, color, material, or finish of the building and roof. Parapets shall be capped with metal or masonry coping, continuous banding, or projecting cornices, dentils, or similar edge treatment.
2. **For pitched roofs.** Heating and air conditioning units and related mechanical equipment shall not be permitted on any portion of a pitched roof that is visible to public view.
3. **Solar energy systems.** Roof-mounted solar energy systems are exempt from these Standards.

d) *Ground- and Wall-Mounted Equipment and Utilities*

1. **Ground- and wall-mounted equipment and utilities.** All exterior ground- or wall-mounted equipment and utilities shall be prohibited within street-facing setback areas, except when required by a public utility, City Engineer or their designee, and shall otherwise be screened from public view using solid walls, fences, or landscaping unless otherwise specified in these Standards. Walls and fences shall match and/or complement the architectural style, color, material, or finish of the development projects.



Roof-mounted mechanical equipment concealed behind screens.

6. TRASH AND RECYCLING AREAS

a) Intent

The intent of these Standards is to:

- Augment the applicable standards set forth in CMMC Title 13, Chapter V (Development Standards), Article 9 (General Site Improvement Standards);
- Promote harmony in design between building and site elements within each development project;
- Minimize potential environmental nuisances, such as visual, noise, and odor impacts; and
- Allow for adequate, accessible, and convenient areas for depositing, storing, and hauling trash, recycling, and organic materials.



Shared trash and recycling enclosure.

b) General Requirements

1. Trash and recycling areas shall not obstruct building entries, walkways, sidewalks, driveways, streets, alleys, and other required means of access and shall be prohibited within required parking areas, required landscaped areas, and required open space areas.
2. Where the development project abuts an alley, trash and recycling areas shall be directly accessible from the alley except when access is infeasible as determined by the Community Development Director or their designee.
3. All applicable development projects shall provide either individual and/or shared trash and recycling areas that adequately accommodate required receptacles for trash, recycling, and organics.



Trash enclosure designed in the same style as primary building.

c) Individual Trash and Recycling Areas

1. When located exterior to the building, trash and recycling areas individual to residential units shall be screened from view utilizing solid walls, fences, and/or landscaping.

d) Shared Trash and Recycling Areas

1. Shared trash and recycling areas shall be enclosed and screened from view, whether the areas are located interior to a building, such as a dedicated space within a garage, or exterior to the building on site.
2. Enclosures shall be constructed on all sides by solid walls of a minimum height of 6 feet with solid and latching gates or doors to prevent theft of materials. When located exterior to the building, enclosures shall provide a roof structure to protect against adverse environmental conditions, such as rain and wind.
3. Enclosures shall be located within 150 feet of the building's access point they serve, while maintaining required vehicular access for hauling.
4. Enclosures shall be constructed to match and/or complement the architectural style, color, material, or finish of the development project they serve.

7. OUTDOOR LIGHTING

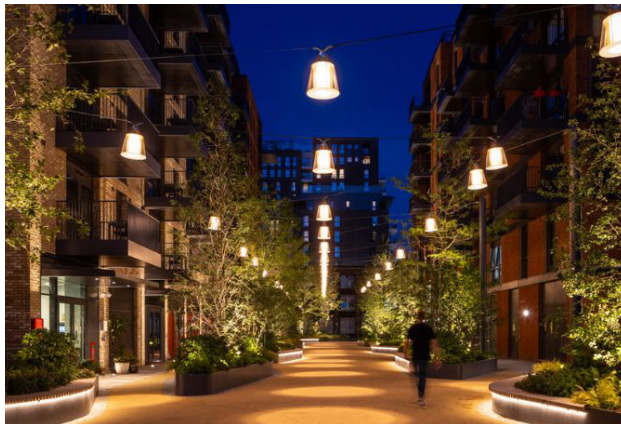
a) *Intent*

The intent of these Standards is to:

- Augment the applicable standards set forth in CMMC Title 13, Chapter V (Development Standards), Article 9 (General Site Improvement Standards);
- Minimize potentially adverse impacts to adjacent residential uses; and
- Provide sufficient illumination for use, access, and security.

b) *General Requirements*

1. Outdoor lighting fixtures shall be installed and maintained to match and/or complement the architectural style, color, material, and finish of the development project.
2. Outdoor lighting shall not blink, flash, or oscillate.
3. Outdoor lighting shall be provided and maintained for all building entries, pedestrian pathways, off-street parking and loading areas, trash and storage areas, and other common and public areas.
4. Outdoor lighting shall be directed downward (i.e., not above the horizontal plane), recessed, and/or shielded to prevent light or glare beyond the required area and onto an abutting property, except within the public right-of-way.
5. Pedestrian scaled outdoor lighting, such as light poles, bollards, bistro/sting lights, shall be provided along required pedestrian pathways at least every 30 linear feet and shall not exceed 15 feet in height.



Pedestrian paseo with pedestrian-scaled lighting.



Outdoor lighting along pedestrian pathway.

8. PARKING AND LOADING

a) *Intent*

The intent of these Standards is to:

- Augment the applicable standards set forth in CMMC Title 13, Chapter VI (Off-Street Parking Standards);
- Minimize conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles;
- Minimize traffic in between properties;
- Encourage human-scaled design that is pedestrian-friendly; and
- Reduce the visual impacts of parking by screening parking facilities from public view.

b) General Requirements

1. Location of Parking. Parking and loading areas, with the exception of driveways and drive aisles, shall be prohibited along street-facing frontages, and shall instead be located on the interior side or rear side of the site where it is located behind a building or within a structure, as illustrated in Figure 14.

2. Parking Structures. Above-grade vehicular parking structures shall not exceed a length of 130 feet along street-facing lot lines, exclusive of alley-facing lot lines, as illustrated in Figure 15, unless if ground-floor residential or commercial uses are located in front of or “wrap” the parking structure, such that the parking structure is screened from public view.

3. Screening Parking Structures. Street-facing facades of the parking structure shall utilize screening treatments, including, but not limited to the following, such that the parking structure is screened from public view:

- Green or living walls where walls attain at least 95 percent coverage within one year of installation, and where walls are maintained free of weeds and debris.
- Lattices, louvers, or similar decorative facade treatment.
- Public art/murals in compliance with CMMC Title 13, Chapter VIII (Signs) and reviewed by the Arts Commission.
- Signage in compliance with CMMC Title 13, Chapter VIII (Signs).

4. Abutting Residential Uses. Where parking areas share a rear or interior side property line with a residential use, the following shall be maintained for privacy purposes along the abutting property lines, except within required streets, driveways, drive aisles, and walkways:

- A solid masonry wall of a minimum of 6 feet in height; and
- A minimum 5 feet wide landscaping edge, strip, or planter consisting of hedges and/or trees with a minimum mature height of 8 feet.

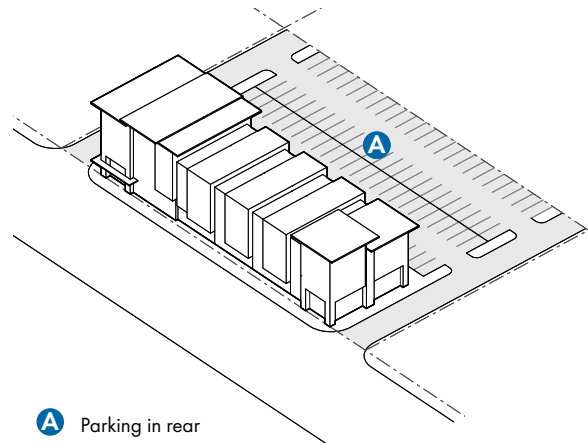


FIGURE 14: Location of Parking

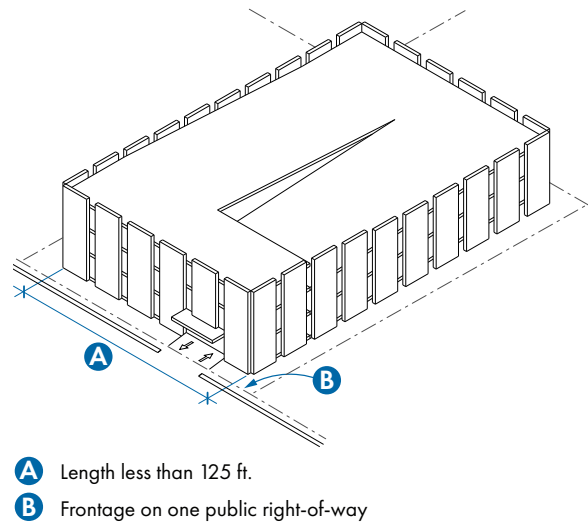


FIGURE 15: Parking Structures

D. DEFINITIONS

B

BLANK WALL: A portion of a building facade without a window, door, or other facade opening. A blank wall is measured in length horizontally along the facade at each story of the building.

BUSINESS HOURS: The customary hours of operation for non-residential uses associated with a publicly accessible open space, but in no event for fewer than 12 hours per day between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.

F

FACADE: The above-grade areas of the exterior of the building, also referred to as the building face or building elevation of a building, including all exterior walls and their openings and other architectural elements, such as balconies, windows, coverings, etc.

FACADE BREAK: A facade break is a projection (i.e., pushing out) or recess (i.e., pulling in) in the entirety of the facade for all upper-level floors not inclusive of the ground floor, where the depth of the facade break shall be measured perpendicular to the facade and the length of the facade break is measured parallel to the facade.

FACADE LENGTH: The horizontal distance across a continuous building facade, including covered but open areas along the building.

FACADE MODULATION: The variation of a building facade by projecting (i.e., pushing out) and/or recessing (i.e., pulling in) portions of the building facade. Facade modulation shall be measured as the percentage of facade area that is projected or recessed relative to the total area of that facade.

FRONTAGE: The portion or length of a property and building on a property that directly abuts a street.

G

GREEN OR LIVING WALL: A vertical planting system where vegetation is grown on or within a structure attached to a building wall, building facade, or freestanding structure, consistent with the specified requirements in these Standards.

GRADE: As defined in CMMC Title 13, Chapter I, Article 2 (Definitions).

GROUND FLOOR: The lowest story of a building having its floor surface closest to grade on the side of the building adjacent to a street, pedestrian walkway, paseo, or other exterior publicly accessible space.

M

MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL BUILDING: A building that contains two or more residential units (consistent with California Government Code Section 65913.4).

O

OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS: As defined by the State of California, standards, requirements, or regulations pertaining to the design of developments “that involve no personal or subjective judgment by a public official and is uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant or proponent and the public official before submittal” (California Government Code Section 65913.4 and 66300(a)(7)).

OPEN SPACE, COMMON: As defined in CMMC Title 13, Chapter I, Article 2 (Definitions).

OPEN SPACE, PRIVATE: As defined in CMMC Title 13, Chapter I, Article 2 (Definitions).

OPEN SPACE, PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE: As defined in Title 13, Chapter I, Article 2 (Definitions).

OPEN TO THE SKY: An area with no permanent overhead projection of the building or roof as to permit direct, vertical exposure to the sky above.

P

PEDESTRIAN PASEO: A privately owned and maintained outdoor space that is pedestrian-oriented, provides public access through or between developments, and which may be active (i.e., lined by storefronts) and/or passive (i.e., lined by residential uses), consistent with the specified requirements in these Standards.

PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY: A paved, unobstructed route for pedestrians providing access between buildings, sidewalks, the public right-of-way, parking areas, common areas, and other publicly accessible spaces.

PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY: As defined in CMMC Title 13, Chapter I, Article 2 (Definitions).

S

STREET: As defined in CMMC Title 13, Chapter I, Article 2 (Definitions).

SITE: A parcel or aggregate of contiguous parcels that comprise a development.

T

TRANSPARENCY: Provision of transparent or clear glazing along a building facade, such as windows, doors, or other facade openings, that permit views into interior spaces.

TOWNHOUSE: As defined in CMMC Title 13, Chapter I, Article 2 (Definitions).

U

UPPER STORY SETBACK: The required distance that the upper stories of a building above the first story must be located from a property line or lot line. A setback is measured from the ultimate property line, as defined by CMMC Title 13, Chapter I, Article 2 (Definitions).

