



# SAN FERNANDO

## Design Guidelines

*Adopted by Ordinance # 1585  
November 17, 2008*

### Volume 2: Multi-Family Residential



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November, 2008

To Owners and Designers:

Welcome to the City of San Fernando! We want to help you with your building improvement plans so that the design of your multi-family residential building fits well into your chosen neighborhood. In the interest of maintaining and improving the neighborhood that brought you to San Fernando, we are pleased to present these design guidelines for your use as part of the city's site plan review application process.

San Fernando has a long and rich heritage of architectural and garden design. We value that heritage as seen in our historic buildings and neighborhoods. It is important that new buildings and improvements to existing buildings and sites be compatible with the character of the community.

These guidelines were written to enhance the creative process. We believe that the use of a few concise principles and many photographs makes the guidelines interesting and instructive. We hope you agree.

The City Council has made a commitment to good design, with the realization that each project can be expected to influence our environment for a very long time. We appreciate your efforts to improve your property in a manner that will contribute positively to the neighborhood and the community.

Sincerely,

Steven Veres  
Mayor





# Design Guidelines

## Multi-Family Residential

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### 1. Neighborhoods of San Fernando

Like other desirable communities, San Fernando has experienced significant changes in long-established neighborhoods. Houses are being remodeled, expanded, or completely replaced by larger houses and multifamily projects. The City appreciates the positive statement this makes about living in San Fernando. At the same time, we need to maintain the attractive aspects that draw people into the city and keep them here.

The neighborhoods of San Fernando offer a variety of house, apartment, and condominium styles. Also, within most neighborhoods there is a mix of styles. Increasingly, new multi-family residential projects result in striking contrasts between the existing residential structures on site and on neighboring properties and the size of the proposed multi-family building. These problems are more apparent when new multi-family residential structures are introduced in medium to high density neighborhoods that have historically been developed with single-family residential structures on individual lots.

In addition, many of the existing multi-family residential structures lack many of the design details that are consistent with the high architectural quality of existing residential buildings in their surrounding neighborhood. It is the intent of the design guidelines to seek to improve the level of design quality of existing and proposed multi-family residential structures in order to maximize design opportunities and provide for a more harmonious fit with their neighborhoods. By doing so, new multi-family buildings can be developed within the community's historic neighborhoods in a manner that retains the small town character of San Fernando.

**2. Purpose of These Guidelines**

The City's Zoning Code sets minimum setbacks, limits on building sizes, and other regulations to prevent neighborhood disruption by overly large projects. As a companion to that regulation, these guidelines seek to improve the level of design quality of multi-family residential projects by focusing on important design principles. This is not an academic exercise, but a direct application of principles to problems that are common to this time and place. The following section presents some of the major problems, along with the design principles.

At the project level, these design standards and guidelines are meant to encourage multi-family residential projects that accommodate their users' needs while contributing to an attractive environment. Respect for context is central to this historic city's purpose, but it should never discourage striving above that context. Even the smallest improvement of an existing property is welcome, and it is not the City's intent to require an increase in a project's scope through use of these guidelines.



**Guideline:** All projects should be designed according to basic design principles, to maximize design opportunities and to fit harmoniously into their neighborhoods.

*One reason new architecture and landscape design can prove to be disruptive is that fundamental principles of design are no longer generally observed. Mutual awareness of a few principles, laid out in the following pages, will assist in the design and review of all projects.*

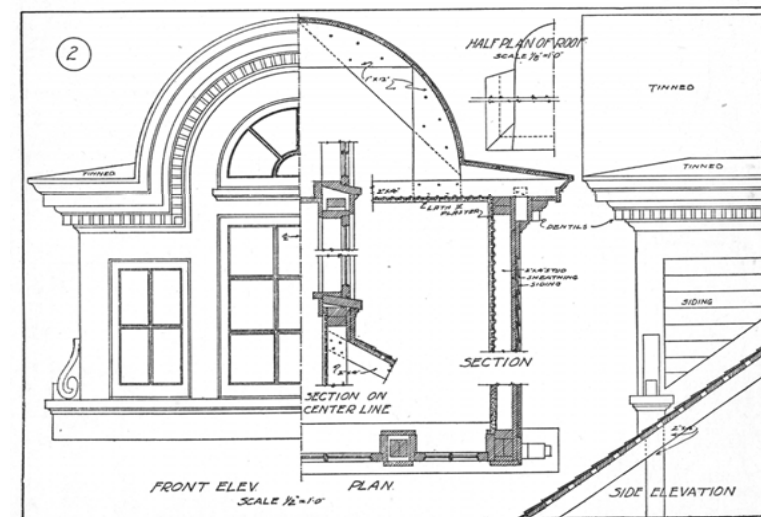
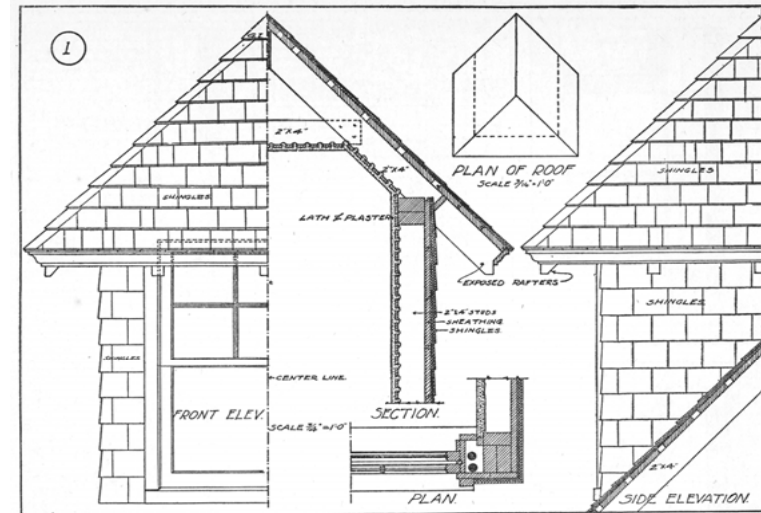
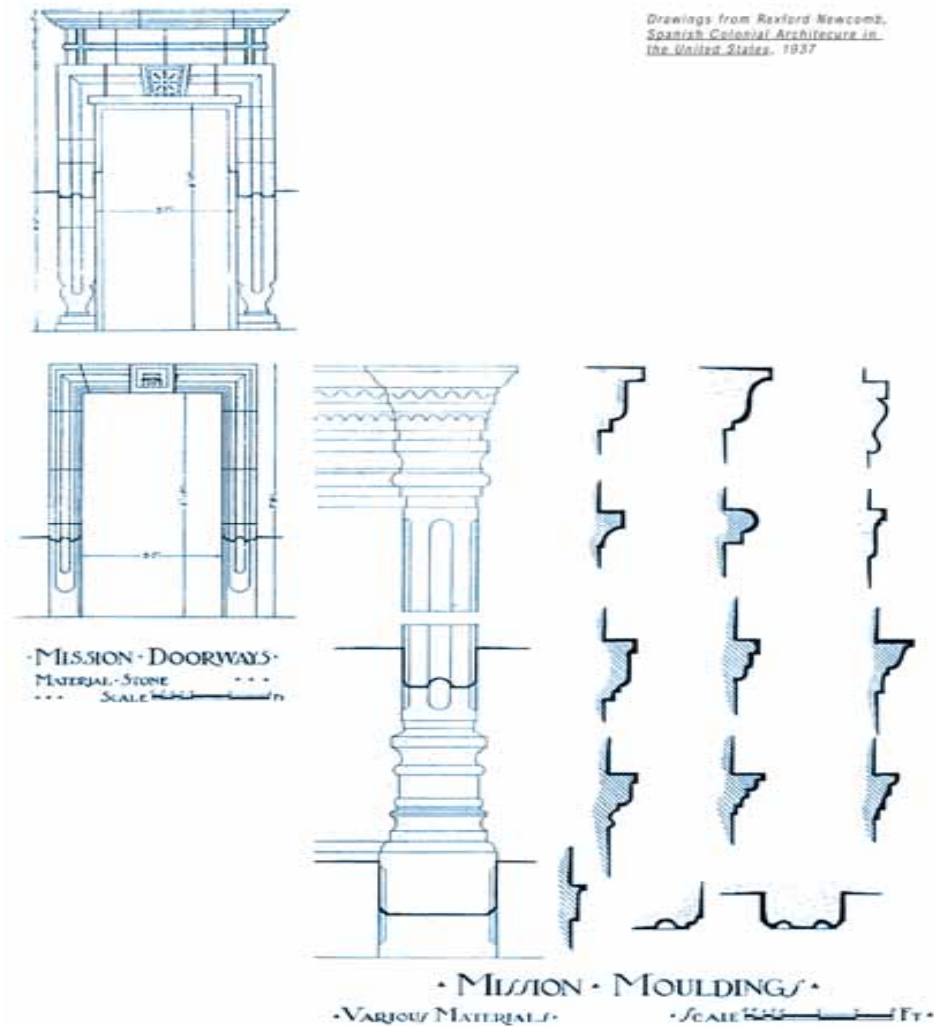


PLATE 22—ROOF DORMER WINDOWS



The Design Principles cover all aspects of design. In particular, they address the most common characteristics of recent designs that tend to be problems in terms of the multi-family residential project fitting into its surroundings. These are some of the key items addressed in the following Design Principles sections:

- a. **Pedestrian entry too small compared to vehicle entry**  
(Principle 1, Shelter)

- b. **Uninteresting or awkward roof design**  
(Principle 1, Shelter)

- c. **Inadequate planting; overbearing front yard fences**  
(Principle 2, Transition)

- d. **Lack of common entry and private spaces**  
(Principle 2, Transition)

- e. **Balconies poorly designed or located**  
(Principle 2, Transition)

- f. **Building too big for setback and screening**  
(Principle 3, Balance)

- g. **Complete symmetry**  
(Principle 3, Balance)

- h. **Proportion between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors**  
(flattened first floor, or floating base over basement parking)  
(Principle 3, Balance)

- i. **Lack of detail, or badly scaled detail**  
(Principle 4, Detail)



*c, d, e, f, g, h, i, l, m*



*d, g, h, i, l*



- j. **Badly organized windows and doors**  
(Principle 6, Integrity)

- k. **Front facade has too much ornamentation relative to other facades**  
(Principle 6, Integrity)

- l. **Flat facade; no recessing of windows; inadequate column dimensions**  
(Principle 7, Substance)

- m. **Inappropriate style for neighborhood, without mitigating setbacks and planting**  
(Principle 8, Character)

*The City's eight design principles follow . . . .*

**Guideline:** Sloped roofs, porches or entry alcoves, should generally be used to express the sheltering character of multi-family buildings.

*At the most basic level, a sloped roof is the most powerful visual clue to a residence. Few flat-roofed houses exist in San Fernando; these are typical of commercial buildings. Multi-family residences should generally follow the example of houses rather than commercial buildings. On residences, the roofs typically have more intricate form, as well as small-scaled materials such as shingles or barrel tiles.*



*Beneath the sloped two-story roof, this project uses clear views on two levels to create an inviting entry.*



*This stair is used as an expressive element to mark an entry from a side street.*

*Even without sloped roofs, such elements as marquee awnings and roof terraces provide a welcoming gesture and create interest.*

#### *Treatments to avoid:*



*An oversized gable is tacked onto the building, without detail, dwarfing the entry.*



*No unit entry should be this incidental, particularly facing the street.*



*This new building's ornate facade dwarfs its incidental entry.*



*Transition to the yard and support for the balconies above are missing from this ramp.*



*Porches, entry alcoves, and outreaching walls and plantings are also shelter elements, encouraged in their role in expressing residential character. However, this role as a sheltering feature is lost when the porch or alcove is too high. For security purposes, it is important to keep the entry visible from the street and neighboring properties.*



*The towers create a focus from a distance, while the entry arches lower the scale to welcome the visitor.*



*This courtyard approach is coupled with a vehicular ramp to create a dramatic and spacious entry.*



*A central vehicular entry is placed below a courtyard, with mutual emphasis. Planter walls reach out to the street.*



*Modernist residences feature high, open pavilion elements to express open invitations.*



#### *Treatments to avoid:*



*This entry has generous dimensions, but no welcoming features and wasted space behind the mailboxes.*



*These entries are not prominent or marked by sloped roofs or other shelter devices.*



**Guideline:** Building and landscaping should form a transition from one to another by placing garden structures and shrubs next to the structure, and with streetscape planting forming a transition to neighboring properties.

*The transitions between the project's units, unit groups, and neighborhood are central to creating a secure, sociable, and attractive multi-family residential building and site.*

*Generous landscaped setbacks create this transition from the street and neighboring properties. Architectural and landscaping elements achieve strong building entries, as well as inviting transitions between indoor and outdoor areas, and among outdoor spaces. Elements include entry courts, garden structures, foundation shrubs, screen planting, focal planting, and procession planting.*



*The vehicular entry and pedestrian entry to this neo-Craftsman project use stone accents, varied landscaping, and gently winding courses to achieve a rich effect with constantly changing views.*



*The landscaping allows the courtyard to spill out across the front yard, marking the transition from public to communal space in an inviting manner.*



*This row of front porches forms a socially active buffer, with views across to neighbors as well as forward to the street.*

*Views of this entry courtyard from up and down the street show how finely detailed treatment of small space can create an attractive transition from street to court to building.*



*Lush landscaping along the side of the building facing the driveway is attractive and easily achieved.*



#### *Treatments to avoid:*



*Balconies on massive buildings do not form adequate transition.*

*A straight path without landscape features is not an attractive transition.*



*Complicated structures in the front yard are not encouraged.*





**Guideline:** Entries, open spaces, and windows should be designed to provide mutual security, desirable social contact, and both privacy and quiet.

*Multi-family developments should be more than individual units packed together on a site. The development should be a mini-community. A community allows for individual privacy, but it also provides mutual security of their shared homes, and opportunities for social contact with other residents, both deliberate and by chance.*



*Stairs and landscaping form a graceful transition from the street as well as a soft buffer to the neighboring property. The use of towers as markers is a time-honored and effective design device.*



*A plain building gains character and a welcoming pose through the use of stepped walls*



*A deck over a parking basement can become a positive architectural base if modest in height.*



*A stair-stepped wall expresses the stairs beyond and half-frames the courtyard.*



*Upper right:*

*The arch's strong form is softened by the landscaping gracing the sides of the path, while also being reinforced by the niche at left.*

*Lower right:*

*A walking path traverses a parking court, leading to layers of landscape, gates, and inner gardens visible from the street.*



### **Treatments to avoid:**



*A recent building with an industrial aesthetic displays attitude, but nothing to provide lasting quality of shelter or transition.*

*Central parking aisles are generally discouraged, and in no case should have unit entries coupled with garages and no landscaping as seen here.*



**Guideline:** Building massing and site design should maintain pleasing proportions, and should balance mass with setback and screening, avoiding monumental symmetry.

*Balance is important on many levels. On the neighborhood level, a multi-family project should not create an imbalance when viewed with other residences in the block. Where one-story residences are common, taller buildings need to have special attention to massing and setbacks that introduce the taller massing gently. This can maintain a balance of scale within the neighborhood.*



*The principal elevations of this extensive project are composed well, with a balance of horizontal and vertical elements. The symmetry of the short end elevation is less desirable, but of limited effect due to narrow dimensions. Repetition of the principal bays down the long front elevation is only partially mitigated by varying trim, windows, et cetera.*



*Formal expression of a base to the entire grounds is provided by the top of a parking garage, while the building itself has subtle base expression. The steep hipped roofs allow the mass to taper, and fine details are provided at the higher portions of the facade. This wing is nearly symmetrical, but is part of a larger asymmetrical composition and is balanced by a perpendicular mass.*



*A large building mass is moderated by the use of simple geometric wall articulation on the end tower, and of finer and more intricate articulation of the higher portions of the building.*

## Treatments to avoid:



*These two projects show the static effect of both symmetry and straight axial views. More careful design can provide refinement to break the symmetry but keep its balance. As seen in the preceding sections, small-scale landscaping enhancements can prevent the static effect of a straight path down the middle.*



*This nicely articulated building would have been much more attractive if the ground floor had been taller than the floors above.*



*Similar masses or features can balance each other on both sides of a building. Subtle balance, involving dissimilar but well-proportioned masses or features, is encouraged. For example, balance can be achieved between a horizontal mass and a vertical accent. On buildings with more than one story, a relatively higher ground floor achieves attractive proportions, balancing the upper floors' tendency to overpower.*

*Asymmetrical overall massing and open space design support an informal neighborhood setting and help a project fit within the context of a block. Symmetrical projects tend to become self-contained islands or monuments rather than joining the parade of houses on the block.*



*This project achieves a balanced and picturesque arrangement of masses. (It would benefit from better detailing and window depth.)*



*Small features, such as this notched wall, allow higher masses to become better balanced within the landscaped setting.*



*This exposed rear elevation of the project on the preceding page shows the maintenance of a balance of horizontal and vertical masses.*

#### *Treatments to avoid:*



*This building fails to successfully balance its massing elements. The balconies provide horizontal masses that overwhelm their vertical neighboring masses as well as the apparent support.*



*The compressed lower floor is a visual problem that is not corrected by massive cantilevers or oddly placed windows.*



*The corner balconies are not balancing the vertical mass.*

## 4. Rhythm

1. shelter 2. Transition 3. Balance 4. Rhythm 5. Integrity 6. Substance 7. Detail 8. Character

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**Guideline:** Repetition of major elements should establish a rhythm, and should generally not exceed seven in number, to avoid monotony.

*The repetition of building bays, row trees, or other major building and landscape elements is valuable for the achievement of rhythm and sense of place. However, the perception of repeated elements changes from pleasant order to monotony if the sequence is too long.*



*The use of porches and planter walls allows the building rhythm to extend to the street as a positive feature.*

*The simple rhythm of these mid-century structures becomes positive through generous landscape separations.*



*Simple and integral bay design achieves a strong rhythm. It is positive because it is of limited length.*



*Although the windows and bays are varied, they have a common rhythm that gives order within variety.*

*Comfortable bay width and proportions allow this punctuated facade to attain positive rhythm.*



### Treatments to avoid:



*With such simple and pronounced forms, even small numbers of repetitions create too regimented a rhythm.*



*The other extreme is a composition that has little integrity and such variety of spacing and forms as to establish no rhythm.*





## 5. Integrity

1. shelter 2. Transition 3. Balance 4. Rhythm 5. Integrity 6. Substance 7. Detail 8. Character

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**Guideline:** Integrity of building and site design should allow durable design features to resonate, establish rhythm, and to be carried forward to all views as appropriate.

"As is the small, so is the great." Integrity is the reflection of the small elements in the overall design, and vice versa. A multi-family residential design is tied together through integrity, including appropriate completeness of detail on all elevations.



*This project also achieves a high level of integrity between its front and entry side elevations.*



*These residential structures feature elements that are compatible with, and reinforce, each other. These elements extend to side and rear elevations. However, this architectural integrity is marred by the overbearing security gate in the left photograph.*

### *Treatments to avoid:*



*This composition does not involve anything more than an arbitrary assembly of forms.*



*The forms lack enough detail to provide lasting interest, and do not reinforce each other.*



*This highly visible garage elevation lacks features or depth. The cantilever adds to the utilitarian appearance.*



*The highly developed features of the front elevation are not at all extended around the sides. This creates a superficial appearance that negates all of the effort in front.*

**Guideline:** Dimensions shall be given to design elements -- to give the building the appearance of structural substance; to select a tree or bench light enough to avoid overpowering a garden -- as appropriate to the setting.

*Often, a building's structural elements can be large enough to meet building code requirements, but still be too small to provide the aesthetically pleasing appearance of being substantial.*



*A shared feature of these projects is the expression of deep openings in key positions. This example also uses an unusual tile cap on a modest furred-out wall, enlivening the entire elevation.*



*This new building has with a cupola that has satisfying thickness and an attractive view of its ceiling. (Unfortunately, that care was not taken with the balconies, which should have pilasters below or other means of expressing substance.)*



*Window and archway openings enhance the simple elevations above.*

#### Treatments to avoid:



*Unsupported bulky gables; an unsupported "masonry chimney"; a cantilever that unattractively extends to the edge of the building.*



*Two examples of parking ramps undercutting buildings with inadequate visual support...*



*Projecting fascias and balconies give an applied appearance that could be improved through use of pilasters and struts.*







*Opportunities for accents displaying substance include a corner projection, balconies, and windows.*



*Treatments to avoid:*



*Some of the numerous examples of wall openings appearing too flat and balconies hovering without adequate visual support*



*Large surrounds do not substitute for recessed windows in creating an appearance of substance.*

**Guideline:** Detail shall be used as essential small-scale elements of residential character.

*Detailed façade elements are essential to express the personal feeling that makes a residence rather than just a building. It is also important to keep the scale of the detail small, and to avoid generic details.*



*This building uses exposed rafter tails on only the corner bays. This provides a level of detail focusing on the most critical portions of the building, a strategy that can be effective where such a focus is appropriate.*



*This mix of paving tile, planter wall tile, screen wall grille, and metal grate is accented by a lacy clinging vine for the finest level of detail at a project entry.*



*Detail need not be ornate to add a touch of refinement. This finely dimensioned molding graces an Art Deco residence.*



*Balconies wrapping around the sides of buildings are a dynamic way of unifying front and side elevations.*

## Treatments to avoid:



*This recent building has no depth or detail. A good rendering can make such a project appear attractive at the drawing stage, but then the built reality endures.*



*Mock gables are discouraged. This example shows an especially distasteful treatment as bulky elements with no detail.*



*Without some refinement, geometric trim shapes resemble cartoon images.*



*Quatrefoils have been overused to the point that they are trite. More imaginative trim should be used.*





*It is the small details that make a residential project special.*

*Detail that is carefully designed and delicately proportioned speaks quietly and intimately to us.*

*Narrow fascia boards and small columns should be used, with more than simple flat wood shapes.*

*Recessed windows should be used, with more than planted-on moldings to make them look recessed.*

*Encouraged detail elements include:*

- Scupper strips or tiles
- Canopies of simple shape
- Exposed rafter tails
- Narrow, detailed moldings
- Benches, fountains, planters
- Finely detailed plants near eye level



## *Treatments to avoid:*

*Overly generic details prevent new buildings from achieving refinement or charm. Also common is the problem of overly large or inadequately detailed trim, particularly fascia boards, and flat single-panel glass.*



**Guideline:** Through composition using the other principles as appropriate, and observing the best aspects of San Fernando's heritage the project's character shall improve its context.

*Character is the sum of the parts. The first seven principles determine much of a multi-family project's character. Character determines whether the project will continue the tradition of its neighborhood, improve it, or degrade it.*

*Respect for the project's setting is the most fundamental aspect of sensitive residential and landscape design. This need not result in direct copying or referencing of design components, and contrast can be as valid an approach if compatibly achieved. Character-defining features should be protected and complemented by any addition.*

*Aside from the eight design principles, style is a major factor in a project's character. At this point in the early 21st century, remnants of many architectural trends of past decades are found in new designs. Strict adherence to style according to academically correct criteria is rare. The eclectic approach - within a neighborhood and within a single building - is acceptable if executed in a sensitive manner. Careful consideration of the design principles can help in that effort.*

*It is hoped that the principles and examples will reinforce the designer's creative desires and skills.*



#### Treatments to avoid:



*Despite desirable features like recessed windows and detailed brackets, these buildings remain boxes of varying levels of decoration.*

*This building's character has a pop vitality that is fun upon a first visit, but not the repeated visits of a resident.*







*Regardless of style, good residential structures and landscaping typically use several of the preceding seven principles, adding up to attractive character. This is an art, not a science, as is the City's role in evaluating multi-family residences and outdoor spaces to ensure that San Fernando's living environments are protected and improved over the years. In the following section are the General Plan Policies the City must uphold in order to grant design approval. These Policies are necessarily more general than the Design Principles.*



#### *Treatments to avoid:*



*These buildings exhibit some common traits that destroy a residence's character: Floating masses, depressed entries, prominent parking aisles, symmetry, monumentality, and lack of interesting or humanizing detail.*

*Novelty buildings are fun for the designer and the first-time viewer, but not for the neighbors, regular passersby – or, eventually, the residents.*



**Guideline:** All projects should be designed according to basic design principles, to maximize design opportunities and harmonious fit into their neighborhoods.

### 1. Shelter

Sloped roofs, and small-scaled porches or entry alcoves, should generally be used to express the sheltering character of multifamily buildings.

### 2. Transition

Building and landscaping, site and surroundings, should form a visual transition into each other, designed to provide mutual security, desirable social contact, privacy and quiet.

### 3. Balance

Building massing and site design should maintain pleasing proportions, and should balance mass with setback and screening, avoiding monumental symmetry.

### 4. Detail

Detail shall be used as essential small-scale elements of residential character.



### 5. Rhythm

Repetition of major elements should establish a rhythm, and should generally not exceed seven in number in order to avoid monotony.

### 6. Integrity

Integrity of building and site design should allow durable design features to resonate, to establish rhythm, and to be carried forward to all views as appropriate.

### 7. Substance

Dimensions shall be given to design elements -- to give the building the appearance of structural substance; to select a tree or bench light enough to avoid overpowering a garden -- as appropriate to the setting.

### 8. Character

Through composition using the other principles as appropriate, and observing the best aspects of San Fernando's heritage, the project's character shall improve its context.





## 1. PLANT SELECTION

Residential landscape design should complement the architecture. The design should also fit in with the neighborhood and the surrounding environment. Conserving existing, established plant materials is almost always the best approach. Borrowing from the existing plant theme and the environment makes the new design fit in. The new design should also group plants with similar water, nutrient, and sun needs so as to avoid any growth problem.

### SAMPLE PLANTING PALETTE

Recommended plants include the following, but additional selections are encouraged for variety:

#### Canopy trees:

*Cinnamomum camphora* (Camphor Tree)  
*Pistachia chinensis* (Chinese Pistache)  
*Platanus acerifolia* (London Plane Tree)  
*Platanus racemosa* (California Sycamore)  
*Quercus agrifolia* (Coast Live Oak)  
*Quercus engelmanni* (Engelmann Oak)  
*Tipuana tipu* (Tipu Tree)  
*Ulmus parvifolia* (Chinese Evergreen Elm)

#### Specimen trees:

*Agonis fluxuosa* (Peppermint Tree)  
*Eucalyptus* ssp.  
*Ginkgo biloba* (Maidenhair Tree)  
*Olea europaea* (Olive Tree)  
*Pinus eldarica* (Afghan Pine)  
*Pinus pinea* (Italian stone pine)  
*Platanus racemosa* (California Sycamore)  
*Schinus molle* (California Pepper)

#### Flowering trees:

*Albizia julibrissin* 'Rosa' (Silk Tree)  
*Cassia leptophylla* (Gold Medallion Tree)  
*Cercis occidentalis* (Western Redbud)  
*Jacaranda mimosifolia* (Jacaranda)  
*Koelreuteria bipinnata* (Chinese Flame Tree)  
*Koelreuteria paniculata* (Goldenrain Tree)  
*Lagerstroemia indica* (Crape Myrtle-multi)  
*Malus 'Prairiefire'* (Prairiefire Crabapple)  
*Pyrus kawakamii* (Evergreen Pear)  
*Prunus* ssp.  
*Tabebuia impetiginosa* (Pink Trumpet Tree)

#### Palm trees:

*Archontophoenix cumminghamiana* (King Palm)  
*Phoenix* spp. (Date Palm)  
*Washingtonia filifera* (California Fan Palm)  
*Washingtonia robusta* (Mexican Fan Palm)



Coast Live Oak



Olive



California Sycamore



California Pepper



Mexican Fan Palm



Western Redbud



California Fan Palm



Silk Tree

### Plant materials to avoid:

The following plants should be avoided due to either widespread overuse (*rhamphiolepis*), inappropriate maintenance and planting (*nandina*), safety issue (*syagrus*), or lack of any historical or environmental significance (*cupaniopsis*). Whenever possible, these species should be replaced with more appropriate plant material.

#### Trees:

*Chorisia* spp. (Floss Silk Tree)  
*Cupaniopsis anacardioides* (Carrotwood)

*Lagerstroemia* spp. (as street trees)  
*Magnolia* spp.  
*Mahonia* spp.

*Fraxinus* spp. (Ash)  
*Syagrus romanzoffianum* (Queen Palm)



## Shrubs: (\* denotes value as screening plant)

*Azalea* spp. (Azalea)  
*Arbutus unedo* (Strawberry Tree)  
*Alyogyne heugelii* & cvs (Blue Hibiscus)  
 \* *Bamboo* spp.  
*Buddleia davidii* (Butterfly Bush)  
 \* *Camellia* spp. (Camellia)  
*Cassia splendida* (Golden Wonder Senna)  
*Ceanothus* var. (Wild Lilac)  
*Cistus purpureus* (Orchid Rockrose)  
 \* *Cocculus laurifolius*  
 \* *Cotoneaster* spp.  
*Echium fastuosum* (Pride of Madeira)  
 \* *Escallonia* spp.  
*Euphorbia characias* 'Wulfenii'  
*Euphorbia rigida*  
*Gardenia* spp.  
 \* *Grevillia* spp.  
 \* *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*  
 (Chinese Hibiscus)  
 \* *Myrtus communis*  
 (True Myrtle)  
 \* *Osmanthus* spp.  
*Penstemon spectabilis*  
 (Showy Penstemon)  
 \* *Podocarpus* spp.  
 \* *Prunus caroliniana*  
 (Carolina Laurel Cherry)  
 \* *Pyracantha* spp. (Firethorn)  
 \* *Rosa* spp. (Rose)

## Groundcovers:

*Arctostaphylos hookeri* (Monterey Manzanita)  
*Ceanothus griseus horizontalis* (Carmel Creeper)  
*Cistus* spp. (Rockrose)  
*Cotoneaster dammeri* 'Lowfast'  
*Lantana* spp.  
*Lavandula* spp. (Lavender)  
*Liriope muscari* (Big Blue Lily Turf)  
*Mahonia repens* (Creeping Mahonia)  
*Pelargonium* spp. (Pelatum)  
*Rosmarinus officinalis* (Rosemary)  
*Salvia* spp. (Sage)  
*Santolina chamaecyparissus* (Lavender Cotton)  
*Trachelospermum jasminoides* (Star Jasmine)  
*Verbena* spp.

## Vines:

*Bougainvillea* spp.  
*Distictis buccinatoria* (Blood-Red Trumpet Vine)  
*Distictis laxiflora* (Vanilla Trumpet Vine)  
*Distictis 'Rivers'* (Royal Trumpet Vine)  
*Jasminum polyanthum* (Jasmine)  
*Pyrostegia venusta* (Flame Vine)  
*Rosa* cultivars (Rose)  
*Thunbergia alata* (Black-eyed Susan Vine)

## Low accent plants:

*Aloe* spp.  
*Hemerocallis* hybrids (Daylily)  
*Iris* spp.  
*Kniphofia uvaria* (Red-hot Poker)



Rockrose



Royal Trumpet



Aloe



Lavender



Cotoneaster dammeri



Bougainvillea



Rose



Lantana



Orchid Rockrose



Salvia



Wild Lilac

## Plant materials to avoid:

### Shrubs:

*Agapanthus* spp. (Lily-of-the-Nile)  
*Diets* spp. (Fortnight Lily)  
*Dodonaea viscosa* (Hopseed Bush)  
*Euonymus* spp.  
*Tulbaghia* spp.

### Hebe spp.

*Juniperus* spp. (Juniper)  
*Nandina domestica* (Heavenly Bamboo)  
*Phormium tenax* (New Zealand Flex)  
*Photinia* spp.

### Groundcovers:

*Aptenia cordifolia* 'Red Apple'  
*Festuca* spp. (Fescue)  
*Gazania* spp.  
*Hedera canariensis* (Algerian Ivy)  
*Juniperus* spp. (Juniper)



**2. HARDSCAPE DESIGN**

*The hardscape components should reflect a cohesive design that focuses on safety and overall unity with the architectural and planting. The materials should look more natural such as brick, stone, decomposed granite, or colored concrete.*

**3. SITE AMENITIES**

*Residential site amenities include the following: flower pots, benches, trellis, BBQ, shade structure, fence, fire pit, lighting, steps, seats, and water features.*





*In addition to the Design Principles, the following guidelines apply to multi-family residences. These guide the City's actions. Additionally, the City's R-2 or R-3 multi-family residential zoned development standards that regulate the more numerical aspects of residential buildings, such as height, setbacks, and floor area.*

*The following design features are "encouraged", "acceptable", and "discouraged". Those items listed as "encouraged" will usually be allowed, and those that are listed as "discouraged" will generally be required to be revised. Items listed as "acceptable" will be allowed as long as it is demonstrated that there is justification for the design choice, and that the choice does not prevent the design from fitting into its surroundings.*

Site Quality . . .	ENCOURAGED	ACCEPTABLE	DISCOURAGED
<b>Access / Parking:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reciprocal access</li> <li>- Rear garage</li> <li>- Pedestrian walkway separate from driveway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Side-loaded front garage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Semicircular driveway</li> <li>- Front-loading front garage</li> </ul>
<b>Building Siting:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pedestrian entry facing street</li> <li>- Increased setback at highest building mass</li> <li>- Natural grade maintained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Side-loaded pedestrian entry visible from street</li> <li>- Minimal fill to finish grade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pedestrian entry hidden from street view</li> <li>- Substantial (more than 1 foot) fill to finish grade</li> </ul>
<b>Open Space &amp; Fencing:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Courtyards, especially visible from street</li> <li>- Open view across front yard to adjacent yards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Courtyards behind tall wall (behind setback line)</li> <li>- Low hedges within 20' front setback (3' max.)</li> <li>- Front yard fence, simple design of wood or dark metal, set back behind landscape strip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ground floor raised more than 3 feet above street</li> <li>- Tall front yard hedges</li> <li>- Front yard fence on property line, of ornate design, and/or white painted metal</li> </ul>
<b>Landscaping:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Native plants</li> <li>- Drought tolerant / low water usage plants</li> <li>- Appropriate groupings of plant materials</li> <li>- Consistency in style/design of paving &amp; site amenities</li> <li>- Screening of utility structures, trash enclosures, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water features, depending on maintenance</li> <li>- Plants with moderate water use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Overused, generic plants &amp; high water-use plants (see list on pp. 22-23)</li> <li>- Inconsistent design style of paving &amp; site amenities</li> <li>- Inconsistent style and/or compatibility of plants</li> </ul>



Building Quality . . .	ENCOURAGED	ACCEPTABLE	DISCOURAGED
<b>Massing:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Big setback or driveway at highest mass</li> <li>- Tall first floor proportions</li> <li>- Large porch and/or alcove</li> <li>- Balanced symmetry, open to neighbors</li> <li>- Layering / detail / depth</li> <li>- Vertical/horizontal balance</li> <li>- Vertical accent at entries / street corners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simple mass if well-detailed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tall entry</li> <li>- No entry porch or alcove</li> <li>- Symmetry (overall)</li> <li>- Applied ornament as substitute for integrity or interest of massing</li> <li>- Large unbroken massing</li> <li>- “Floating” elements (no visible support)</li> </ul>
<b>Roofs &amp; Parapets:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sloped roofs</li> <li>- Hide 2<sup>nd</sup> floor behind roof / use dormers</li> <li>- Large eave overhangs</li> <li>- Flat roof behind detailed parapet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mansard roofs</li> <li>- Clipped eaves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flat roofs</li> <li>- Varying roof pitches</li> <li>- Tall wall on one side of gable</li> <li>- Visibly thin parapets</li> <li>- Prominent generic arch or gable parapets</li> </ul>
<b>Facade Elements:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Base &amp; cornice expression</li> <li>- Detailed balconies</li> <li>- Simple canopy shapes</li> <li>- Recessed windows with dimensional muntins</li> <li>- Custom ornamentation</li> <li>- Narrow, detailed moldings</li> <li>- Delicate, detailed posts</li> <li>- Simple garage doors</li> <li>- Detail at side and rear, not only front</li> <li>- Recessed windows &amp; doors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Irregular canopy shape</li> <li>- Layered screening panels</li> <li>- Tinted glass</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flush windows / false muntins</li> <li>- Oversized, novelty, or generic ornament</li> <li>- Flat fascia boards</li> <li>- Flat plant-on window surrounds</li> <li>- Plastic garage door window inserts</li> <li>- Permanent or exterior security grate/bars</li> </ul>
<b>Materials &amp; Colors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wood, stone, etc. if fitting context &amp; style</li> <li>- Brick</li> <li>- Smooth stucco</li> <li>- Mission or barrel tile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Other subtle stucco textures</li> <li>- Ledge stone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Color Saturation + Brightness over limit (see Community Development Dept.)</li> <li>- Modular units (tiles, blocks, etc.) too large for building scale</li> <li>- Metal</li> <li>- S-tile</li> </ul>
<b>Style:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Authentic period styles as compatible with context</li> <li>- Modern with depth of planes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eclectic</li> <li>- Generic classicism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mimicry of mission bells, etc.</li> <li>- Novelty/ deconstructivist</li> </ul>

**DEFINITIONS :**

**Alcove:** a small area cut out of a larger mass, such as an entry porch

**Asymmetry:** different on one side than on the other

**Brightness:** a numerical index of the amount of white in a color

**Cantilever:** a portion of a building extending out beyond its supporting wall or column

**Clipped eaves:** eaves that have a minimal projection over the wall below

**Context:** the character-defining surroundings of a site

**Craftsman:** an early 1900s style popular in California, using broad eaves, shingles, rustic brick foundations, generous porches, and fine wood detailing

**Dimensional:** having enough depth and width to appear substantial

**Dormer:** a structure with walls extending up from a roof, housing one or more windows

**Eave:** the extension of a roof beyond an exterior wall, with no enclosed area underneath it

**Eclectic:** of mixed styles

**Elevation:** a two-dimensional view of the front, side, or rear of a building or wall

**Fascia:** the board enclosing the edge of an eave

**Gable:** a wall beneath the exposed end of one or more sloping roofs

**Guidelines:** regulations that can be required flexibly as appropriate to each project or situation

**Hardscape:** pavement and other ground treatments other than plant materials

**Integrity:** having enough consistency to be perceived as an “integral” unit

**Layering:** having different elements in different planes, forming layers, rather than a simple wall.

**Linkage:** a path of travel or visual path that links two or more different areas

**Mansonization:** building a house too big for its lot, or too ornate or formal in its appearance

**Mission or barrel tile:** a half-circular roof tile that is used alternately face-up and face-down

**Monumentality:** the appearance of trying to appear too important or imposing for its context

**Muntins:** narrow strips that form a division between window panes

**Nested Gables:** one gable placed beneath another, usually off-center

**Overdesigned:** too ornate for its size or surroundings

**Pilaster:** a column (structural or decorative) placed against a wall

**Pitch:** the slope of a roof, expressed in inches of rise against 12 inches run (as in 4:12)

**Porte-Cochere:** a roofed structure, open on the sides, extending over a driveway and attached to the house

**Project:** any physical work upon a property requiring City approval

**S-tile:** a roof tile attempting to simulate the effect of mission or barrel tile with multiple curves

**Saturation:** a numerical index of the intensity of a color

**Scale:** size relative to other portions of a building, landscape, or surroundings, or to viewers

**Shed Roof:** a simple roof of a single slope

**Site amenities:** benches, fountains, garden structures, and other items added to an open space to enhance its use and enjoyment

**Substantial:** having enough visual depth to appear visually and structurally sound

**Symmetry:** the same on both sides

**Underdesigned:** too simple to offer any interest to the viewer

**Vine pocket:** a small area allowing the planting of a vine; often attached to a wall

**REFERENCES :**

*(available from the Community Development Department)*

- Development Regulations
- Development Review Application Checklist
- Historic Residence Guidelines





# Appendix

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## Multi-Family Residential Design Guidelines

1. Historic Resources	A-2
2. Architectural Styles	A-4
3. Development Review Process	A-6
4. Acknowledgments	A-9

*The preservation of historical resources maintains the rich aesthetic elements of the City of San Fernando. Properly designed multi-family residential buildings can promote the city's preservation efforts. The recognition, preservation, protection, and use of historical resources in the city in a manner consistent with the objectives of the Historical Preservation Element of the General Plan are necessary to:*

- Protect and enhance the historic resources that represent distinctive and important elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political, archeological and architectural history...
- Foster civic pride in the beauty and notable accomplishments of the past by promoting private stewardship of historic resources that represent these accomplishments...
- Encourage and promote preservation and rehabilitation of historic resources for the culture, education, enjoyment and economic welfare of the city's inhabitants...
- Insure that historic preservation planning is inclusive and reflective of the unique background and diversity of the city...
- Integrate historic preservation into community economic development strategies for the sustainable development and to promote adaptive reuse of historical structures...
- Preserve neighborhood character...



## *Criteria for designation of historic resources*

**Historic Resource- A property or location may be considered for designation as an historic resource if it meets at least one of the following criteria...**

- It is associated with events or lives of persons that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the city, region, state or nation...
- It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a historic property type, period, architectural style or method of construction, or represents the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose work is significant to the city, region, state or nation...
- It has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in the history of the city, region, state, or nation...



**Historic Resource (interior) – Public or semi-public spaces and features for an interior to a building may be designated as a historic resource if it meets all of the following criteria:**

- Historically, the space has been open to the public
- The materials, finishes or detailing are intact or later alterations are reversible
- The plan, layout and features of the space are illustrative of its historic function
- Its form and features articulate a particular concept of design
- There is evidence of distinctive craftsmanship



**Historic District- an area of the city including more than one property may be considered for designation as a historic district if it meets the following criteria:**

- Any of the criteria identified in the Historic Resource and Historic Resource (interior)
- A grouping of related properties possessing a concentration of historic, scenic or thematic sites that aesthetically contribute to each other and possess distinct architectural quality.
- Reflects patterns associated with different eras of settlement, particular transportation modes, or distinctive example of community planning
- Is an established and familiar visual feature of the city, possessing a unique location and distinctive physical characteristics





*The design guidelines below do not prescribe specific styles for new buildings. Rather, these guidelines are set up to allow for a range of architectural styles and types, so as to encourage creativity in design. The Guidelines set up a framework for quality design by establishing a framework for good urban design relationships between buildings and an assured level of quality in construction.*

### Elements of Mission architecture:

- Plain, smooth stucco siding
- Large square pillars and twisted columns
- Timberwork, wood framing and balustrades
- Bell or corner towers
- Sloping, low-pitched or hipped roofs or flat roofs with parapets.
- Red roof tiles, wood shingles or clay tiles.



### Elements of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture:

- Stucco, brick, wood, or combinations of these materials.
- Little or no overhanging eaves
- Deeply inset windows within thick stucco walls
- Arches, especially above doors, porch entries and main windows
- Decorative ironwork, particularly at balconies, porches and on roof forms.
- Courtyards, porches, pergolas and other shaded or sheltered outdoor areas
- Red tile roofs



### Elements of the Victorian (Queen Anne and Eastlake) styles:

- Asymmetrical facades
- Elaborate spindlework ornamentation
- Corner or curved towers
- Extensive, wrap around porches on the first floor
- Surfaces with a variety of patterning, i.e. clapboard or patterned shingles
- Protruding bay windows
- Steeply pitched roofs



### Elements of the Craftsman style:

- Full- or partial-width porches
- Pedestal-like, tapered columns
- Overhanging eaves and exposed roof rafters
- Low-pitched gabled roof
- River rock exterior elements
- Horizontal wooden clapboard siding
- Smooth stucco or concrete



### Elements of the California Bungalow house:

- An offset entryway
- A projecting bay on the façade
- Large front porch with square columns
- One or one and a half stories
- Low-pitched roof
- River rock exterior elements
- Horizontal wooden clapboard siding
- Smooth stucco or concrete building exterior



*Residential influences in San Fernando are eclectic, ranging from Spanish-inspired styles to east coast influences. New residential buildings should build upon these roots, and draw from the broad menu of residential styles the city has to offer. These include Mission, Mediterranean, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Monterey Mediterranean styles; as well as Southern California variations on the Craftsman, bungalow and various Victorian styles.*

### **Elements of Mediterranean architecture:**

- Asymmetrical shape with cross-gables and side wings
- Carved doors
- Ornate detailing including molded decoration, carved wood and stonework, or cast ornament
- Spiral columns and pilasters
- Carved stonework or cast ornaments
- Patterned tile floors and wall surfaces
- Flat roof and parapets, or a hipped roof



### **Elements of the Streamline Moderne style:**

- Horizontal building orientation
- Technological and nautical themes / references
- Smooth, rounded building corners
- White or light in color
- Long bands of windows
- Rounded edges, corner windows, and glass block walls



### **Elements of the Monterey style:**

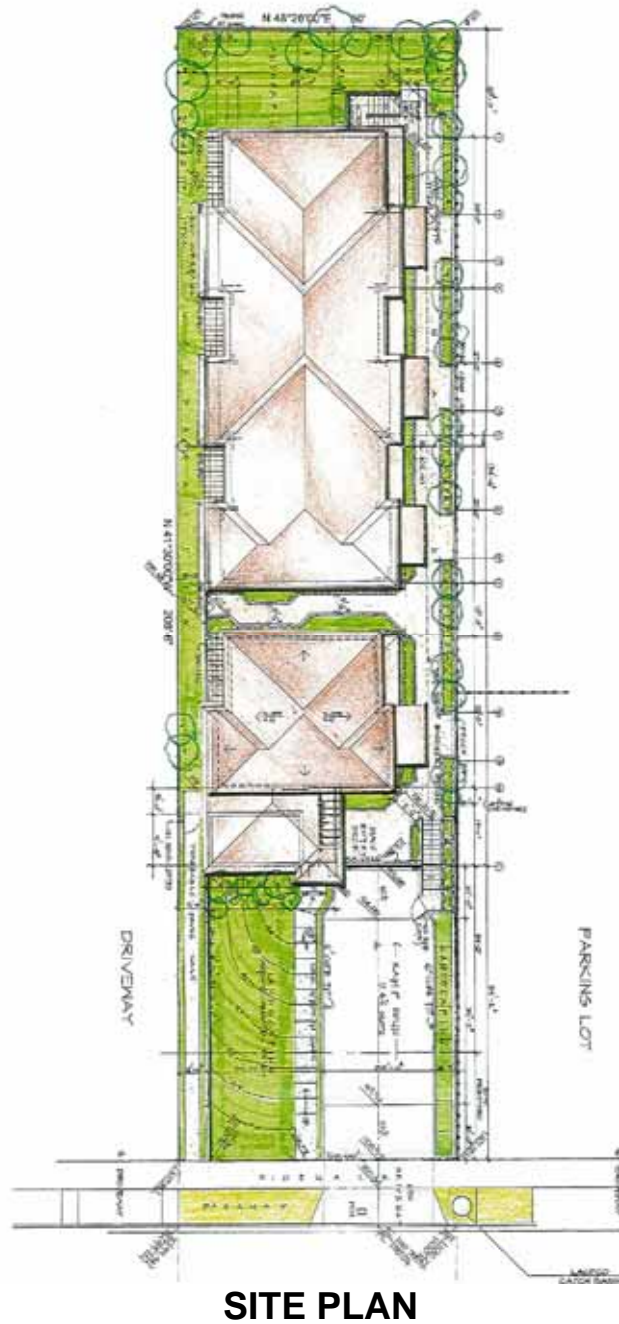
- Paneled doors with sidelights
- Double-hung windows with mullions
- Ornate wood spindlework
- Projecting continuous balconies or porches on upper-stories
- Wooden verandas
- Low pitched, hipped or gabled roofs, often covered with shingles



### **Elements of the Art Deco style:**

- Angular form, often with stepped back façade
- Symmetrical or asymmetrical massing
- Strong vertical accents
- Use of glass or tile on wall surfaces
- Bands of design and carving
- Ornament in cubic forms and zigzag designs, often in colorful terra cotta





*The development procedure enables the various city departments and divisions to check development proposals for conformity in the manner in which they are applied. The review process is intended to ensure that each development proposal is designed to be compatible with any existing structures and neighboring properties. The application of this method preserves the quality and economic health of the city's residential, commercial, and industrial districts.*

#### Pre-Submittal/ Informal Review

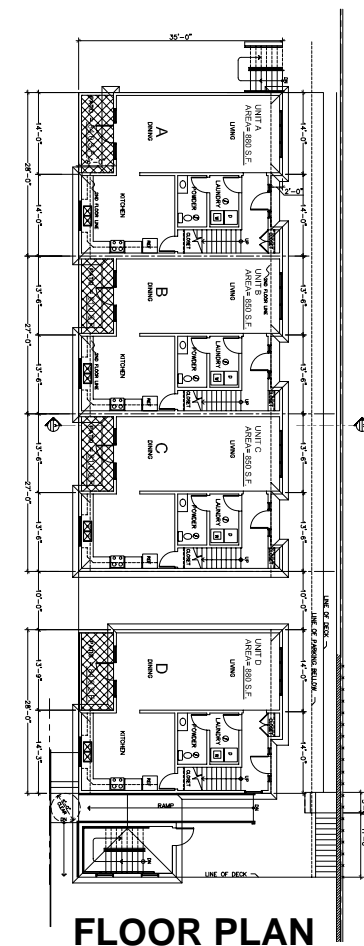
- Applicants are encouraged to actively discuss any project proposal with the Community Development Department to receive determinations on achieving project approval.

#### Site Plan Review Process

- Applicants are required to submit **eight (8)** sets of *site plans, floor plans, conceptual landscape plans, roof plans, and elevation drawings* to the Community Development Department, including a completed Site Plan Review Application and required filing fees.

#### Final Review Process

- If a project requires approval from the Planning Commission or Redevelopment Agency, then applicants are required to submit **fifteen (15)** sets of all necessary plans to the Community Development Department, along with Site Plan review application and filing fees.





#### Plan Checking and Permit Issuance

- Applicants are required to submit **two (2)** sets of complete construction plans and documentation to the Building & Safety Division, including plan check fees.
- Permits are issued after all requirements are satisfied for all divisions and departments involved in the process.
- Permit fees are determined by the type of construction and cost per square foot. Additionally, any Public Works or Los Angeles Unified School District Building Fees must be paid for at this time.



**FRONT ELEVATION**



**REAR ELEVATION**



**EAST ELEVATION**





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# Acknowledgments

November, 2008

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