

CHAPTER 2.0

General Non-Residential Site Development Guidelines

The following guidelines address how buildings should present themselves to the street and to adjacent buildings and spaces. San Juan Bautista's pattern of development is characterized by closely spaced, small structures in a variety of architectural styles with commercial structures sited adjacent to the street and residential structures slightly setback from the sidewalk edge. Buildings are often situated on parcels to create a feeling of openness, allow views to the surrounding hillsides, and provide areas for trees and landscaping. This pattern of development reinforces the rural, vernacular character of the area and should be maintained and strengthened.

The intent of these site development guidelines is to continue to reinforce the historic development patterns, and to create increased opportunities for pedestrian activity, open space, landscaping, and to preserve views to the hillsides. These guidelines apply to new and infill non-residential development in San Juan Bautista, including mixed-use and commercial developments, public buildings, and residential conversions. The guidelines, generally, do not apply to residential development; certain sections are applicable to multi-family developments and are noted within Chapter 6.0.

2.1 Building Siting/Orientation

Orientation Generally, the front building wall should be built parallel to the street with the main entrance oriented to the public sidewalk. Exceptions may be allowed to accommodate outdoor dining, plazas, and courtyards. (See related guidelines in Sections 2.3 and 2.4.)

Building should be oriented and provide facades that:

- ❖ Create active building frontages along the public sidewalk
- ❖ Provide inviting indoor and outdoor spaces from the sidewalk and street.
- ❖ Provide display windows to showcase merchandise and allow views into the businesses.
- ❖ Avoid blank walls and other dead spaces along street frontages.

Front Building Wall Setback San Juan Bautista exhibits two traditional variations relative to front yard setbacks as the figure ground study helps to illustrate (Figure 2.1). Projects should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for exceptions to these guidelines, but generally, the following shall apply:

❖ *Third Street Commercial Core* Traditionally, buildings in the commercial core of Third Street (Franklin Street to Muckelemi), including side streets, have either been built to, or very near to, the front property line. This trend of building to the sidewalk should be continued with any infill development. No front yard setback shall be required.



Very few front yard setbacks exist along Third Street

❖ *Outside Commercial Core* The remainder of the historic district and the community at large exhibit varying degrees of front yard setbacks.



Slight front yard setbacks exist on numerous parcels throughout the City

This setback character should be respected in all new non-residential development. Buildings should be set back from the front property line a minimum of five (5) feet and a maximum of twenty-five (25) feet, unless otherwise specified

in the zoning ordinance. Outdoor dining areas, plazas, and similar public open space areas may extend to the front property line. Parking is not allowed between the front building wall and the front property line.



Figure 2.1 Figure-Ground Study of San Juan Bautista Historic District Illustrating Varied Setbacks
 Note how buildings reinforce the street edge along Third Street. Elsewhere in the Historic District, setbacks vary.

Side Building Wall Setback With the exception of the Third Street commercial area, the side elevations of buildings should not be set on the property lines unless buildings on the adjoining parcel are either currently built to the property line or new buildings are being designed/developed approximately at the same time and are also to be constructed on the property line in approximately the same location. The purpose of the guideline is to avoid situations where buildings are constructed on property lines with large expanses of blank walls and no roof overhangs because of Building Code requirements for fire safety.

In situations where buildings are separated, whether on the same parcel or on different parcels, the minimum separation should be four (4) feet unless a greater separation is specified in the zoning ordinance or is required to preserve a particular view, provide solar access, or other reasons as determined by the Planning Commission. Again, Third Street commercial area, where no side yards are required, is an exception to this guideline.

Converted Residence When converted to a commercial use, existing residences that are set back from the street should make use of the front yard area. Porches, trellised entries, and courtyards are methods to enhance the pedestrian connection between the building and the street. Parking is not allowed in the setback area.



2.2 Parking and Circulation

Location Where parking lots are necessary, they should be designed to be as visually unobtrusive as possible. This usually means locating the parking at the rear of the building where it may not require as high a degree of screening from the public view. Parking lots may be located to the side of a building when properly screened from public view. The maximum width of a parking lot adjacent to a street should be the width of one two-way drive aisle and one parking bay (approximately 45-50 feet). Parking lots shall not be located between the front building façade and the street.

Parking Lot Screening Parking lots adjacent to the street should be screened from view densely planted landscaping maintained at three (3) feet average height. Landscape screening shall be a minimum of five (5) feet in width from the property line and should include generous plantings.

Converted residences should make use of the existing front yard setback



Parking lots should be visually unobtrusive

Parking Lot landscaping Trees should be distributed throughout the parking area to provide maximum amounts of shade and visual enhancement. Trees should also be provided around the perimeter of the parking area (see Parking lot screening above).



Trees should be
Provided in parking areas

Driveways Driveways should be kept to the absolute minimum number and width required for the project (generally limited to one driveway).

Connections Between Lots Where parking lots are deemed necessary, they should be designed to provide access between adjacent parcels so the vehicles do not need to enter the public right-of-way to circulate between businesses. New developments should anticipate the need to accommodate future connections to adjacent parcels if they are not currently developed.

2.3 Courtyards, Passages, and Pedestrian

Amenities

Courtyards Encouraged New developments and existing developments that are adding new buildings are encouraged to incorporate plazas, courtyards, and other outdoor pedestrian spaces into their site plans and to establish linkages to other similar spaces on neighboring sites.



Courtyards should be visible from the street

Location Courtyards should be located to be visible from the street or linked to the street by a clear circulation element such as an open passage or covered arcade.

Courtyard Activity The edges of courtyards should contain retail shops, restaurants, offices, public art or other pedestrian-related activities. Blank walls and dead spaces without pedestrian interest should be minimized.



Opportunities for plaza activity are encouraged

Courtyard Elements Characteristics of courtyards that are encouraged:

- ❖ Sculpture or fountain as a focal point
- ❖ Movable seating and tables
- ❖ A choice of shaded and sunny areas
- ❖ Several doors opening onto the courtyard
- ❖ Variety of texture and color
- ❖ Covered and uncovered outdoor passages



Provide pedestrian seating and other amenities

Pedestrian Amenities The use of pedestrian amenities (benches, shelters, drinking fountains, lighting, trash receptacles, and bicycle racks) is strongly encouraged. These elements should be provided in conjunction with pedestrian open spaces and should be well integrated into the development's site plan as primary features, not afterthoughts that are tacked on to artificially dress up a proposal.



Fountains and special paving enhance plaza areas

2.4 Landscaping

Integrate Landscape Concept

Landscaped open spaces should be planned as an integral part of the overall project and not simply located in left-over areas on the site. Landscaping should be considered an important design element in the overall plan for any new or redeveloped development site. An abundance of trees, flowers, and other plant materials will help reinforce the small scale, historic atmosphere envisioned for San Juan Bautista.



Effective landscaping defines edges and outdoor spaces

Use of Landscaping Landscaping, including trees, flowers, vines, and shrubbery is encouraged to help define outdoor spaces, emphasize places for pedestrian use, soften the appearance of structures, buffer incompatible uses, and to screen parking, loading, storage, and equipment areas.

Landscape Groupings Plants should be grouped in combinations based on the image desired and on common environmental conditions, such as soil type, water, sun, temperature limitation, etc.

Choose Appropriate Trees and Plants Trees and plants native to the area or those which flourish in the northern California environment should be selected when possible. An established City Tree and Plant list and Tree Ordinance may provide standards for planting.



Climbing vines, flowers, shrubs, and other plantings enhance development and soften the appearance of structures



The following provides a partial list of trees appropriate for San Juan Bautista's climate and character. Plant materials should also be selected for their water conserving and low maintenance qualities. (To be updated)

- ◆ Silk Tree, Mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*)
- ◆ Incense Cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*)
- ◆ Chesnut (*Castanea*)
- ◆ Hackberry (*Celtus*)
- ◆ Chitalpa (*Chitalpa tashkentensis*)
- ◆ Camphor Tree (*Cinnamomum camphora*)
- ◆ European Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)
- ◆ Ash (*Fraxinus*)
- ◆ Australian Willow (*Geijera parviflora*)
- ◆ Maidenhair Tree (*Ginko biloba*)
- ◆ Honey Locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*)
- ◆ Jacaranda (*Jacaranda mimosifolia*)
- ◆ Sweet Bay, Grecian Laurel (*Laurus nobilis*)
- ◆ American Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)
- ◆ Pistache (*Pistachia* or *Pistacia*)
- ◆ Plane Tree/Sycamore (*Platanus*)
- ◆ Oak (*Quercus*)
- ◆ Pepper Tree (*Schinus*)

Use Uneven Spacing In order to foster a more natural look, uneven plant/tree spacing is recommended except when plants are being used to create screening or a massed shrub or ground cover bed.

Landscape Elements Structures, such as arbors and trellises, can be used to identify entries and other pedestrian use areas. The design of these elements should be consistent with the design of other project structures.



Decorative structures help to identify entrances

Existing Trees New development should preserve and protect existing healthy mature trees which add to the special aesthetic quality of San Juan Bautista.



Use flowers to enhance pedestrian ways



Existing trees should be protected and incorporated in new designs when possible

2.5 Land Use Buffering

Because of San Juan Bautista's compact nature, commercial uses often abut residential uses. Care should be taken to ensure that activities on the commercial site do not negatively impact residential neighborhoods.

Orientation of Uses Outdoor activities on a commercial site should be oriented away from adjacent residential uses. Parking lots, refuse storage areas, and similar activities should be physically separated from residential uses by solid masonry walls and landscaping. Outdoor equipment (e.g. air conditioning equipment) and outdoor uses (e.g. trash collection) should be located as far away from residential as possible.



Residential neighborhoods should be protected from commercial disturbances



The use of low walls incorporated into the project may be used to create a buffer.

Screening Screening should be used to buffer and separate incompatible uses from one another for the purpose of decreasing noise, or visual impacts and to provide privacy. The need for screening should be considered early in the design process so that screening elements (i.e. walls, landscaping, etc.) can be effectively integrated into the overall project design and not added later as an afterthought.

Protect Residential Privacy The design of commercial buildings should take into consideration the placement of second story windows and balconies so that the privacy of adjacent residential uses is not compromised. This may require that special attention be paid to the layout of interior spaces to accommodate the proper placement of windows and balconies to protect the privacy of residential uses.



Care should be exercised in the design of new developments to protect the privacy of adjacent residences

2.6 Fences and Walls

The use of low fences and walls to screen and separate activities, provide decoration, and create areas for landscaping is a unique design feature found throughout the community. Especially noticeable is the use of rockwork and adobe to create distinctive walls and planters such as that along Second Street and that adjacent the garden on Third Street. Also noticeable are low picket fences defining front yard edges of residential and converted residential structures.



Adobe-style brick fencing is encouraged where walls are appropriate



Height Walls should be kept as low as possible while still performing their intended security or screening functions. Maximum wall heights are governed in the Municipal Code.

Design Compatibility Wall materials and color should be consistent with the architectural theme of the main buildings on the site.

Materials Consistent with existing walls and fences, the incorporation of decorative rock and adobe-style bricks into the design of walls and planters is encouraged. Wooden fencing is preferred choice of fence material.

San Juan rockwork



Appropriate use of picket fences
in San Juan Bautista



2.7 Refuse, Storage, and Equipment Areas

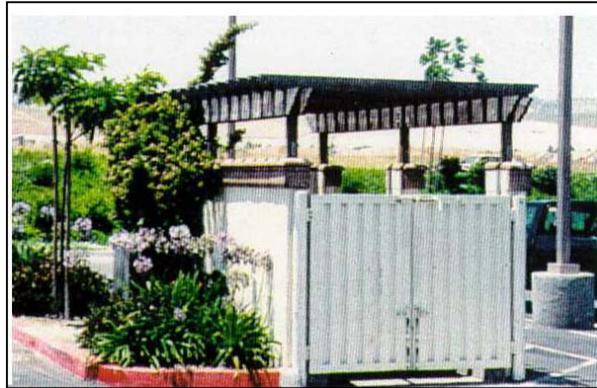
Location Refuse storage, service, and loading areas should be located out of view from the general public and so that their use does not interfere with parking and circulation.

Refuse Storage Areas for the storage of refuse containers should be incorporated into the design of the building whenever possible. When this is not possible, such areas should be completely screened with decorative walls, trellises, and abundant landscaping. Wall materials and colors should be compatible with the architectural theme of the main buildings on the site.

Refuse storage areas that are visible from upper stories of adjacent structures should have an opaque or semi-opaque horizontal cover/screen to mitigate unsightly views. The covering structure should be compatible with the architectural theme of the site's buildings.



Trash enclosure using a solid wall



Covered wood trash enclosure