

CHAPTER 5.0

Architectural Design Guidelines: Single and Multi-Family Residential Structures

5.1 Which Style is Appropriate?

As input to the preparation of this design guidelines manual, a visual survey was held on April 4, 2000 wherein members of the community viewed over 100 images of buildings with varying architectural styles and scales and then voted for their preferences. In terms of residential development preferences, the results showed strong desire to maintain the vernacular mix of housing styles present in San Juan. Participants revealed a preference for homes with Queen Anne, Bungalow, and Classic Vernacular influence, as well as some with an authentic Spanish/Mission flair (e.g. not suburban subdivision adaptations). Monterey styles and accurate Mission style architecture were discussed as possible preferred styles for multi-family units, with the overall desire for units that were single-family scaled. Distaste for ranch-style houses, phony Mission architecture, and houses with street fronting garages was also expressed.

Ultimately, choosing which architectural style, including contemporary styles, to use is a matter of choice - keeping in mind the existing context and vocabulary of adjacent development, as well as the will of the community to maintain and strengthen its eclectic, vernacular image and preserve traditional neighborhood design. The residential design guidelines are applicable throughout the City of San Juan Bautista.

Residential architecture
in San Juan Bautista



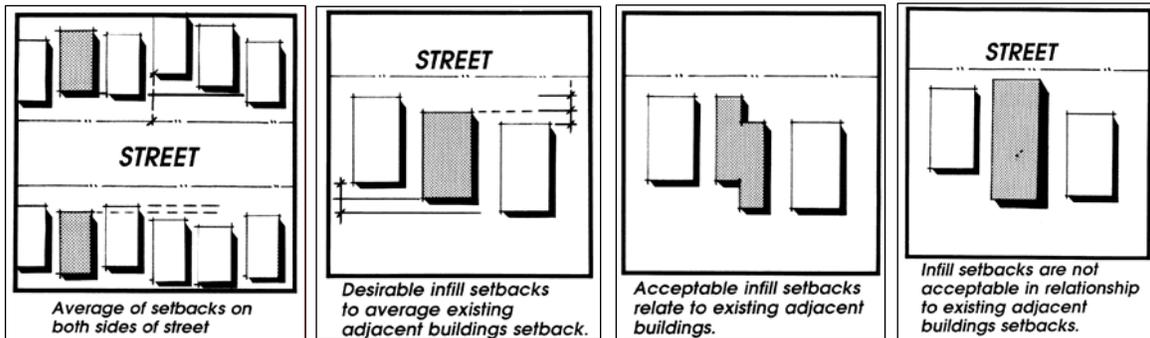
5.2 Single Family Residential – Infill Development

A number of opportunities for single family infill development exist within the Historic District and throughout the community. The following guidelines are intended to ensure that new infill development respects the existing pattern, scale, and character of San Juan Bautista’s existing neighborhoods. Within this context, the single most important issue related to infill development is one of style and scale compatibility. When new, potentially larger, homes are developed adjacent to older single family residences there are concerns that the height and bulk (scale) of the new infill houses will have a negative impact on their smaller scale neighbors.

Site Plan Considerations New infill houses should continue the functional, on-site relationships of the surrounding neighborhood. For example, some of the common site configurations found in San Juan Bautista are prominent entries facing the street, front porches, ample front yards and detached garages located toward the rear of the property.

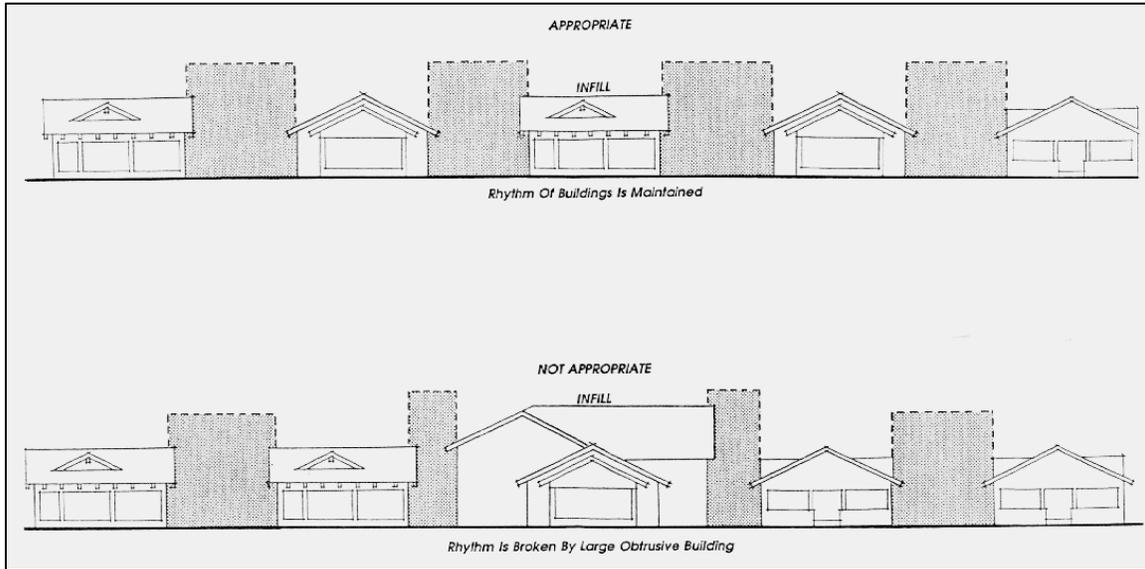
Minimum front yard setbacks are established in the Zoning Ordinance. However, in order to maintain a consistency within a neighborhood, front yard setbacks for new infill should follow either of these criteria when possible:

- ❖ They should be consistent with the average setback of all houses on both sides of the street as the new house; or
- ❖ They should be consistent with the average setback of the two immediately adjacent houses. In this case, the new house may be averaged in a step pattern.



Front yard setbacks for single family infill housing

Moving past a sequence of buildings, one experiences a rhythm of recurrent building masses in relation to spaces (setbacks) between them. This rhythm is necessary in maintaining the element of harmony in a neighborhood’s development pattern. The existing development pattern may establish either a regular or irregular pattern. New projects should be respectful of the existing open space pattern and should provide side yards that respect the existing pattern (see figure on next page).



Consistent side yard setback patterns help maintain scale in single family infill development

Architectural Considerations

1. Building Design

The architectural style of a new house may be contemporary (see discussion later in this section) or the style may be reflective of one of the historic styles within San Juan Bautista (see Chapter 3.0) or another historic style that was popular in California. Whatever architectural style is selected, the primary consideration should be that it respects the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhood.

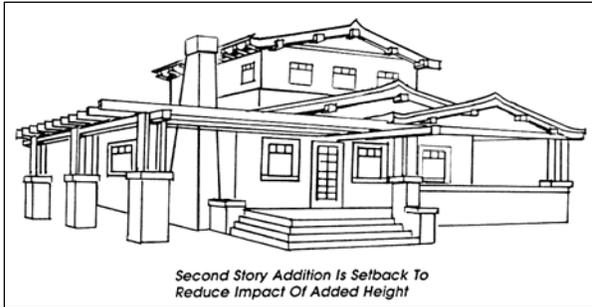
In adopting a historic architectural style it is not necessary, nor desirable, to achieve an exact replication of the style with all of its characteristic details and decoration. Rather, the goal should be to incorporate the most distinctive character defining features of the style. For instance, Queen Anne houses typically have steeply pitched roofs, wood siding, and are very vertical in their overall appearance. By incorporating these and other prominent architectural and site planning features, a new house can be a welcome addition to San Juan's neighborhoods.



Vernacular – Pointed Style
45 Monterey

New builders should become familiar with the various architectural styles in the

community and particularly with those in the immediate vicinity of their property. Height and scale of existing homes should be considered. Height and scale are important considerations because new infill houses are sometimes taller than one story and their height and bulk can impose on adjacent residences. The height of new houses should be



considered within the context of their surroundings. Buildings with greater height should consider setbacks at the second story to reduce impacts on adjacent single story residences.

Front porches are commonly found architectural features on most of San Juan Bautista’s historic homes. The incorporation of porches on new houses is encouraged for both practical and aesthetic value. These elements should be integrated to break up large front facades and add human scale.



Front porches are encouraged (Lovett House)

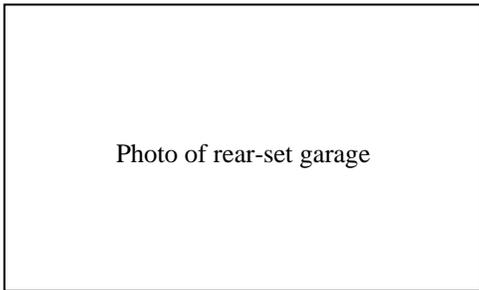


Photo of rear-set garage

Rear-set garages are encouraged

Garages are generally not visible or prominent part of the City’s historic homes. Where possible, garages should be constructed near the rear property of new homes. At a minimum, garages fronting the streets should include double doors to break up the surface, and should be located behind the primary façade of the residence rather than exhibit only a large blank wall.

Garage not visible from front façade of this home in San Juan Bautista



Color schemes for new houses should consider house color in the surrounding neighborhood in order to maintain compatibility and harmony. Refer to the discussion in Chapter 4.6 regarding color for more guidance.

In taking the above factors into account, it is possible that a compatible design scheme will be thoroughly contemporary, without any overt historical references. Quality contemporary designs and materials are permitted, provided they pass the tests for compatibility.



Where there is no alternative for a rear-set garage, double doors are encouraged in single family infill

The use of an architect or design professional is highly encouraged in the design of new infill construction. It is possible to approach this design challenge of compatibility while remaining within desired economic parameters. Good design need not mean extra expense.



Existing residential architecture in San Juan Bautista

2. Screening

The construction of a new house offers many opportunities to screen mechanical and other equipment through the proper placement of such items. The following items should be considered:

- ❖ All flashing or sheet metal should be painted to match the material to which it is attached.
- ❖ All vent stacks and pipes should be painted to match the roof or wall material from which they project.
- ❖ Satellite dish antennas should be screened from view from the street.
- ❖ Any solar panels should be integrated into the roof design or hidden from street level view.
- ❖ All mechanical and electrical fixtures and equipment shall be adequately and decoratively screened. The screen shall be considered an element of the overall design of the project and shall blend with the architectural design of the new house.

5.3 New Single Family Neighborhoods

The intent of these design guidelines is to allow flexibility in the design of new residential neighborhoods (subdivisions), and provide for the protection of San Juan's intimate, traditional neighborhood character by encouraging architectural variety, promoting pedestrian activity, protecting existing natural features, and providing meaningful open space. These design guidelines supplement existing Zoning Ordinance requirements for new construction.



Appropriately scaled and designed neighborhood

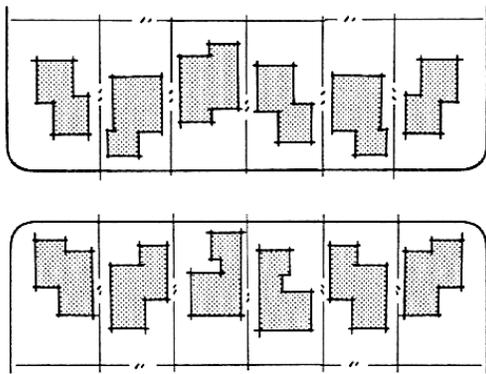
Site Planning Considerations

The relationship of individual residential units in a new neighborhood should be functional, attractive, and create visual variety along the projects streets.

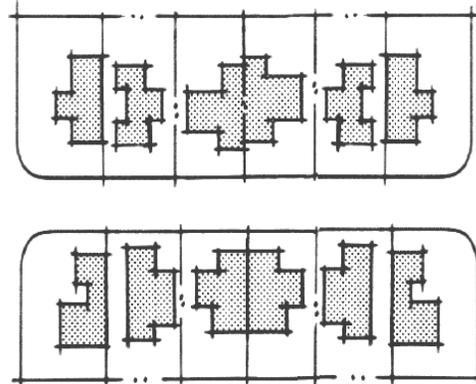
1. Variation of Development Patterns

Variation of development patterns within new neighborhoods is necessary to achieve visual diversity and avoid the appearance of monotonous development. One or more of the following techniques should be incorporated into the project's design to help achieve diversity.

- ❖ Varied front yard setbacks – Placement of homes and garages close to or back from the street creates different patterns of visible open space. The structures themselves, when close to the street, also add diversity to the view.
- ❖ Varied side yard setbacks – Varying the distance between adjoining homes, or between homes and fences results in different types of yards and private patio areas.

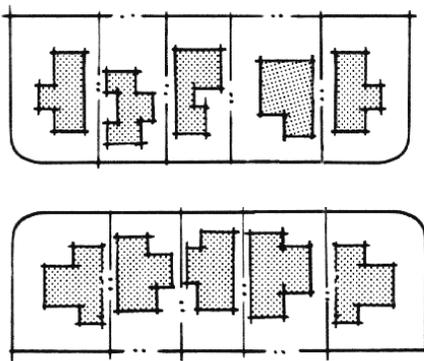


Varied Front Setbacks



Varied Side Yard Setbacks

- ❖ Varied lot widths – Making some lots wider, and some narrower, than the average lot provides different amounts of open area between structures. It also allows placement of different sizes and shapes of homes which can give a neighborhood more character and individuality.
- ❖ Varied garage placement and orientation – In order to prevent garages from dominating the front of the house and to maintain traditional home building in San Juan Bautista, they should be variably placed, preferably in rear yards or oriented with a side entry.



Varied Lot Widths

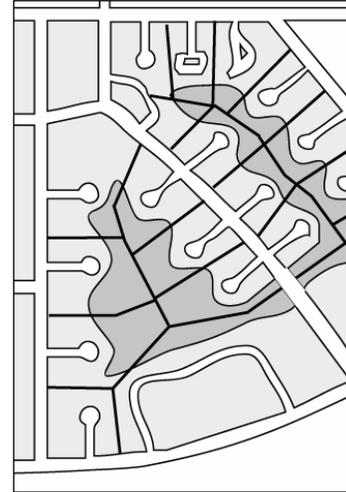


Varied Garage Placement and Orientation

2. Traditional Neighborhood Streets

While new residential development streets need not exactly replicate existing San Juan Bautista neighborhoods, the general pattern of block lengths, widths, and shapes should bear some resemblance to the older parts of town.

- ❖ Traditional grid-style streets with short rectangular or square blocks are preferred for new neighborhoods. Suburban curvilinear streets, cul-de-sacs, T-turnarounds, gated and/or dead-end streets should be avoided. New project streets should connect with existing City streets to form a continuous network of streets whenever possible.
- ❖ Streetwidths of adjacent neighborhoods should be continued, where appropriate.
- ❖ Less than 40 foot-wide streets are encouraged
- ❖ Residences and other structures should help define the street environment and the transition between public and private space.
- ❖ Rolling curbs are discouraged. Vertical-faced curbs, consistent with existing San Juan Bautista neighborhoods, are encouraged.
- ❖ Landscaping and the use of parkways and planted medians should be used to frame, soften, and embellish the quality of residential streets. Refer to Chapter 2.4 for additional recommendations regarding landscaping.



Cul-de-sac streets conflict with the existing residential character of San Juan Bautista

3. Walls

- ❖ Walled and gated communities contradict the charm and friendly character of San Juan Bautista. New neighborhoods with perimeter gates and walls are strongly discouraged.
- ❖ In some circumstances, low walls and landscaping may be used to create land buffers from adjacent incompatible uses. Refer to Chapter 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6 for additional details.

Architectural Considerations

1. Building Design

- ❖ While no specific style of architecture is required for residential structures, the existing architectural styles described in Chapter 3.0 should be consulted. In general, the architecture shall consider compatibility with surrounding character, including

building style, form, size, color, material, and roofline. Individual dwelling units should be easily distinguishable from one another.

- ❖ The design of houses shall be varied within new neighborhoods to create diversity and interest. A significant difference in the massing, composition, and architectural style (not just finish materials and colors) of each adjacent house shall be accomplished. One design should not be repeated more frequently than every fourth house. Buildings with greater height should consider setbacks at the second story to reduce impacts on adjacent single story residences.



Garages should ideally be
Located at the rear of residential lots

- ❖ If a side or rear elevation faces a street, it shall be designed with the same care and attention to detail, and preferably using the same materials as the front elevation.
- ❖ Building design should feature the residential living space as the primary element, rather than allowing the garage door to dominate the home's front elevation. Ideally, some garages should be detached and located at the rear of residential lots. Where attached garages are included, side entries or recessed front entries are encouraged, as well as the use of double garage doors. No more than fifty percent (50%) of a home's front elevation shall be devoted a garage.

2. Façade and Roof Articulation

- ❖ The articulation of facades and the massing of structures give them interest and scale. Long, uninterrupted exterior walls shall be avoided on all elevations. The integration of varied textures, openings, recesses, and design accents on building walls is strongly encouraged to soften the architecture.

- ❖ Rooflines shall be representative of the architectural design and scale of the units underneath them. Full sloped roofs and roof articulation are encouraged. Roof articulation may be achieved by use of traditional roof forms such as gables, hips, and dormers. Flat roofs on residential structures are discouraged.



Front porches are encouraged in new neighborhoods

- ❖ Front porches are common architectural features found in San Juan Bautista's existing

neighborhoods. Incorporating verandas and porches on new residential structures is encouraged. The use of balconies on two story units is also encouraged. These elements should be integrated to break up large front facades and add human scale.

3. Building Materials

- ❖ The choice of building materials is important in providing an attractive dwelling unit. Materials should be consistently applied and shall be chosen to work harmoniously with adjacent materials. Piecemeal embellishment is to be avoided.
- ❖ Exterior materials and architectural details shall relate to each other in ways that are traditional and/or logical. For example, heavy materials should appear to support lighter ones. A single building should remain stylistically consistent. For example, Mediterranean Revival details are consistent with stucco houses and clay tile roofs; period trims on otherwise contemporary buildings are generally inappropriate.
- ❖ Paint color should vary in new neighborhoods to avoid monotony and homogeneity. For guidance in color selection, refer to Chapter 4.6.

4. Screening

- ❖ The construction of a new house offers many opportunities to screen mechanical and other equipment through the proper placement of such items. See section 5.2 for guidelines.

5.4 Multi-Family Residential Developments

Multi-family dwellings or developments, because of their higher densities, tend to generate larger parking areas, bulkier structures, and an overall decrease in private open space. However, well-designed multi-family and outdoor spaces can also contribute to a visually pleasing environment that supports San Juan's local character and promotes social interaction and pride among its residents. The following guidelines, while not exhaustive, are intended to help alleviate some of the concerns associated with multi-family dwellings.

Site Plan Considerations All new multi-family development should respect the context and fabric of the existing neighborhood, reflect its best design features, and generally be compatible with surrounding quality development.

1. Context

- ❖ Natural amenities, including views, mature trees, or other similar features unique to the site should be preserved and incorporated into developments whenever possible.
- ❖ Development of sloped properties shall generally follow the natural contours of the land. Terraced parking lots, stepped building pads, and larger setbacks should be used

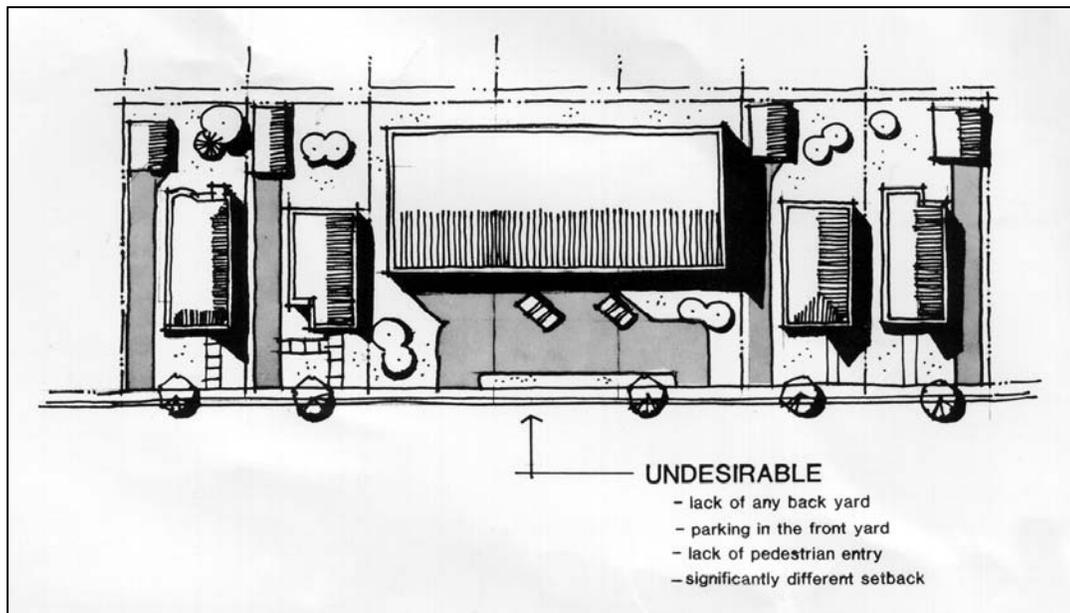
to preserve the general shape of natural land forms and to minimize grade differentials with adjacent streets and with adjoining properties.

- ❖ Developments should relate to the adjacent street and present an attractive and interesting façade to passersby, and appear interesting. Developments that ignore the street and create an isolated enclave, such as gated apartment communities, are strongly discouraged. When fences and low interior-oriented walls are used, they should be consistent with overall design. Refer to Chapter 2.0 for more detail.

2. Building Siting

Appropriate building siting can reduce the perceived density of multi-family developments, maximize open space areas, provide “eyes on the street” surveillance, and enhance neighborliness by creating community gathering spaces.

- ❖ The siting of buildings should consider the existing neighborhood. Developments should be oriented parallel to the street with setbacks of new units consistent with the prevailing setbacks of the surrounding area.
- ❖ In addition to a street orientation, the clustering of multi-family units should be a consistent site planning element. Whenever possible, buildings shall be configured around courtyards, gathering areas and open spaces.



Undesirable site orientation of multi-family development

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- ❖ Portions of the development not oriented to the street shall be well integrated into the project's overall site design.
 - ❖ Buildings should be oriented to provide some privacy, yet still relate to the street and the existing community. Doors should be visible from the street and windows should allow residents to maintain views of the sidewalk and street environments.

3. Open Space and Landscaping

Common open space provides opportunities for casual social interaction, safe play areas for children and reduces the perceived density for residents. Private open space serves as an outdoor room for residents and a place for toddlers to play.

- ❖ Residents should have access to useable open space, whether common or private, for recreation or social activities. Open spaces should be conveniently located for the majority of units.
- ❖ Open space areas should be sheltered from the street or other incompatible uses. They should have well-defined edges, such as walkways, buildings, or landscaping and should provide seating and other pedestrian amenities. A series of connected open space areas of varying shape, appearance and function are encouraged if space permits.
- ❖ Private open space, such as a small yard, patio, or balcony that is visible and can be entered from inside the dwelling is encouraged. Buildings should be sited and designed so that windows of neighboring units do not overlook the private open spaces.
- ❖ Provision of on-site outdoor play areas is strongly encouraged. Children's play areas should be visible from as many units as possible. Direct convenient access from ground level private space to play areas is encouraged.
- ❖ Hardscaped play areas for bike riding, basketball, skating, etc. for older youth should be provided if possible.



Desirable site orientation and landscaping details of a multi-family project

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- ❖ Mailboxes shall be located in highly visible, heavy use areas (open space, courtyards, etc.) to allow for casual interaction and to promote safety. A trash receptacle should be provided adjacent to the mailboxes. Incorporation of design features consistent with the overall architectural style is encouraged.
 - ❖ Trash and storage areas shall be screened from public view. See Chapter 2.7 for details.
 - ❖ Refer to Chapter 2.4 for specific landscape design guidelines.

4. Parking and Circulation

- ❖ Main vehicular access into multi-family developments should be through an entry drive. Special landscaping accents that define the main entry are encouraged.
- ❖ Parking shall avoid one large parking area where cars would dominate views and increase perceived density. When feasible, parking areas should be divided into a series of smaller parking courts with convenient access to adjacent dwelling units.
- ❖ Parking areas should be located in the development's interior and not along the street frontage wherever possible. Driveway openings along street frontages should be minimized.
- ❖ Parking structures or carports should be located to not obstruct natural surveillance. Where parking is tucked under the building, the need for natural surveillance and visibility should be considered. Carports, detached garages, and any accessory structures shall be designed as an integral part of the architecture, similar in material, color, and detail.
- ❖ Blank walls or rows of garage doors which face the street should be avoided. Single car garage doors, rather than double-car are encouraged. Tuck-under parking spaces should provide ground space for landscaping.
- ❖ Entry drives should have an adjacent pedestrian entry path. Additionally, where appropriate, developments should provide safe pedestrian connections to adjoining neighborhoods, commercial projects and other compatible land uses.
- ❖ Pedestrian walkways should be located so pedestrians do not impact the privacy of nearby dwellings and yards.

Architectural Considerations

1. Building Scale and Height

- ❖ Buildings shall incorporate smaller-scale architectural forms, such as recessed or projecting balconies, dormers, or bays to visually reduce the height, bulk and scale of the building and emphasize definition of individual units. Architectural elements such as porches, projecting eaves, awnings, and similar elements that add visual interest are also strongly encouraged.



Porches and projecting eaves add visual interest

- ❖ In order to “scale down” facades that face the street, common open space, and/or adjacent residential uses, it may be desirable to articulate the upper stories of the new multi-family buildings.

- ❖ Varied building heights are encouraged to provide visual interest, give the appearance of smaller



structures, reduce bulk,

Buildings should provide a variety of forms/shapes, setbacks, and roof pitches with offsets
Building provides variety of forms/shapes, setbacks, and roof pitches with offsets.

and create a traditional neighborhood effect. Building heights at the development’s edge should be considered within the context of the project’s surroundings, adjacent uses, and the distance from adjacent buildings. The new development’s building height should transition from the heights of the adjacent existing residential, rather than form abrupt height changes.

2. Façade Modulation

- ❖ Boxy and monotonous facades that lack human scale dimensions and have large expanses of flat wall planes should be avoided. Likewise, long “motel-style” architecture should also be avoided.

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- ❖ Architectural treatments, such as recessed windows, moldings, balconies, decorative trim, iron grille work, trellises, and overhangs should be used to add visual interest. Exterior materials and architectural details shall relate to each other in ways that are traditional and/or logical. For example, heavy materials should appear to support lighter ones. Buildings should remain stylistically consistent. For example, Mediterranean Revival details are consistent with stucco houses and clay tile roofs; period trims on otherwise contemporary buildings are generally inappropriate.



Architectural treatments should include balconies, overhangs, and/or other decorative exterior detail.

3. Building Entries

- ❖ Individual entries should have a strong relationship with a fronting street, internal walkway or courtyard, as appropriate to the overall siting concept. Entries should be emphasized and differentiated through architectural elements such as stoops, porches, trellises, roof canopies, and detailing such as paint color, trim, materials, or awnings. Opportunities to personalize entries, such as ground level space for potted plants, etc. are encouraged.
- ❖ Where one building entry serves a cluster of dwellings, the number sharing should be no more than four units.
- ❖ Courtyard doors or gates used at building entries shall be attractively designed as an important architectural feature of the building or development.

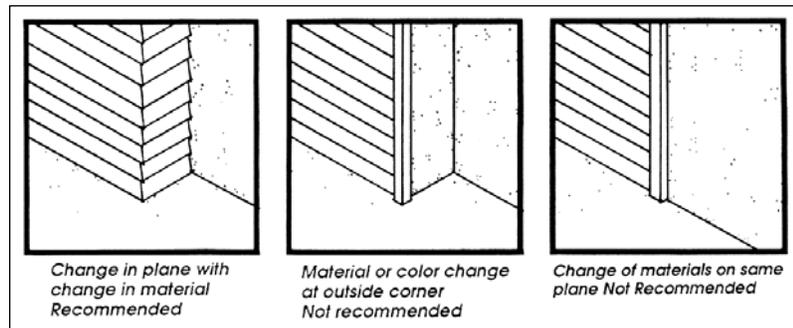
4. Stairs

- ❖ Whenever possible, second floor dwelling units should be served by individual flights of stairs. Where appropriate to the architectural style, the stairway should be open to allow views for natural surveillance.
- ❖ The design and materials used for the stairway shall be consistent with the overall building design.

5. Building Materials

- ❖ The dwelling units, community facilities, and parking structures should be unified by a consistent use of building materials, textures, and colors. Exterior columns or supports for site elements such as trellises, and porches shall utilize materials and colors that are compatible with the rest of the development.
- ❖ Building materials should be durable, require low maintenance, and be of comparable quality to what is use in the surrounding area and region.
- ❖ Color is an important design element in the development's appearance. Natural or muted tones are preferred with compatible accent colors. See Chapter 4.6 for additional guidance on paint colors.

- ❖ Veneer materials should turn corners and avoid exposed edges which otherwise cause an artificial appearance.



6. Roofs

- ❖ The design of a structure's roof strongly influences its image as a quality, permanent structure. Roof pitches and materials shall appear residential in character, and should consider the prevailing roof types in the neighborhood. Structures with full-pitched roofs project more of a small town image and reinforce the desired pedestrian orientation for San Juan Bautista.
- ❖ Rooflines should be broken up and varied within the overall horizontal plane. Combinations of roof heights that create variation and visual interest are encouraged. The roof pitch for a porch may be slightly lower than that of the main building.
- ❖ Carport roofs visible from the buildings or streets should incorporate the roof pitch and materials of adjacent buildings.
- ❖ Roof-mounted equipment shall be screened from public view in a manner consistent with the appearance of the building.
- ❖ Roof flashing and vents exposed to public view should be painted to match adjacent surfaces or concealed in a manner consistent with the building's appearance.