

Chapter III

multi-family building cluster

Multi-Family Residential

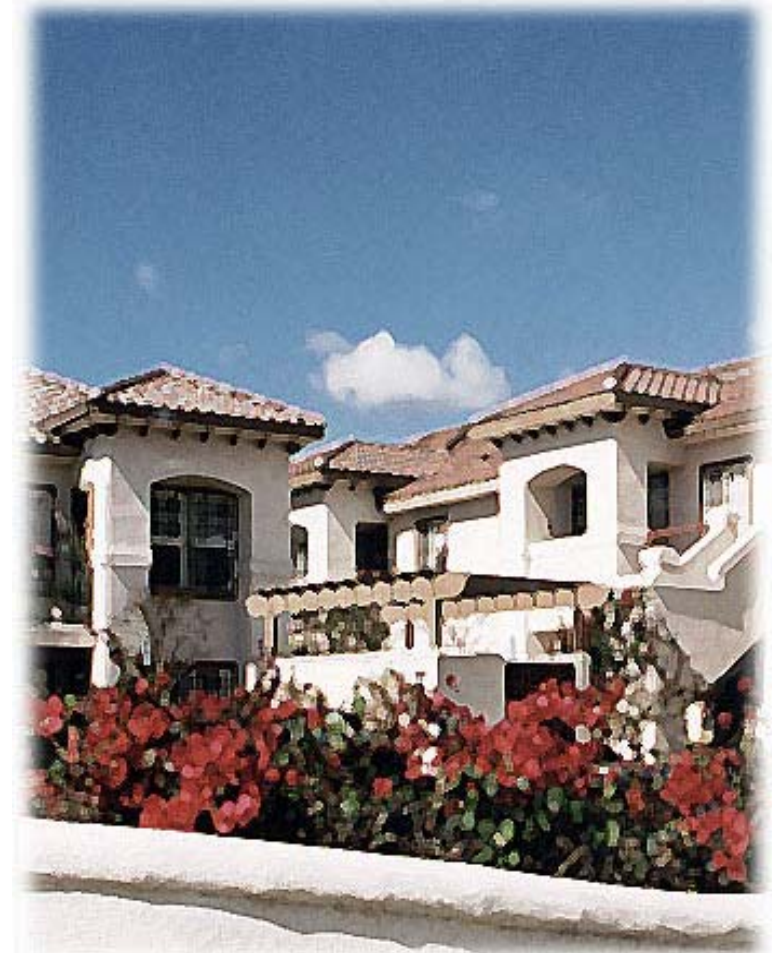
A. Introduction

In the past, multi-family developments have comprised a small percentage of San Juan Capistrano's residential town-fabric. In recent years however, community goals for preservation of open space and viewsheds, coupled with the need for provision of affordable housing have resulted in an increase of development proposals for multi-family projects.

Multi-family developments, if not properly designed can dominate their surroundings. Extensive parking and circulation areas can negatively impact the site and adjacent areas. Private and common open space areas within the project could be relegated to undevelopable left over areas.

These design guidelines implement the Design Principles set forth in Chapter 1, and are applicable to infill and master planned multi-family development proposals. They are intended to encourage solutions that produce a sense of timelessness, elegance and quality in the design of apartments, townhomes and attached condominium residential developments.

Standards and guidelines for master planned developments shall take precedent over the following guidelines. Where site-specific standards or guidelines are silent, these guidelines will serve as a supplement.

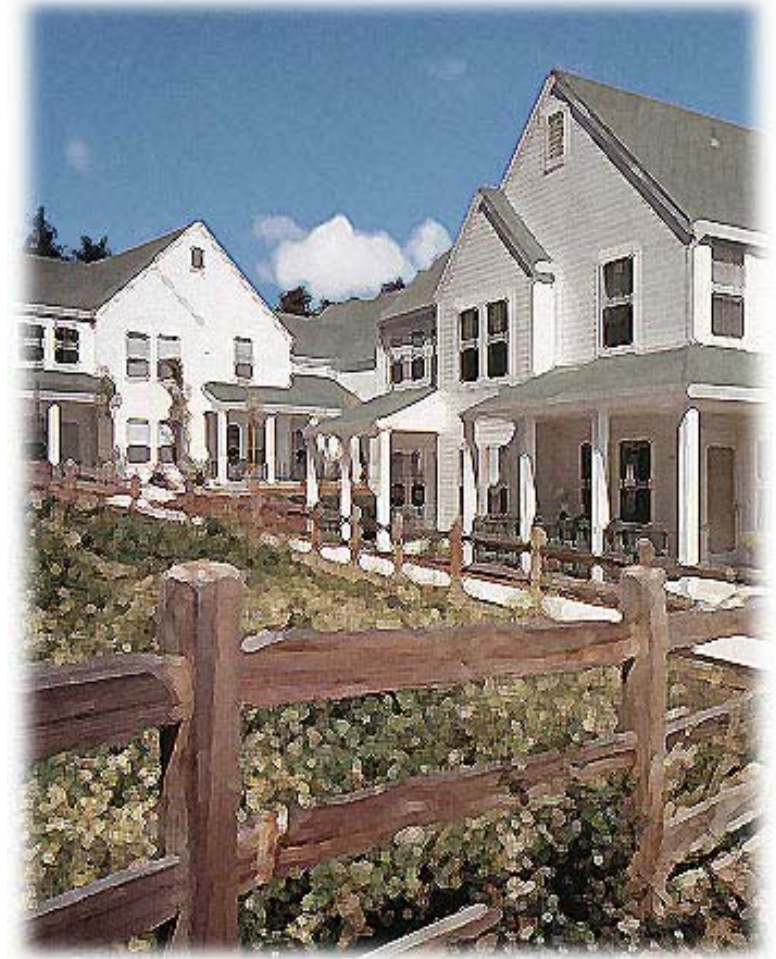


B. General Design Objectives

Multi-family residential developments in San Juan Capistrano shall:

- Respect the character and scale of existing development
- Establish aesthetically pleasing, pedestrian friendly, imaginative and functional site arrangements of buildings, open space, recreation areas and parking areas that reflect high quality architectural and landscape design
- Provide stylistically diverse and creative architectural design solutions which convey a sense of timelessness and elegance
- Create visual interest and exhibit individual unit identity, while maintaining a sense of harmony and “human scale” building proportions
- Provide adequate private and public open space
- Maximize privacy between units and surrounding developments
- Provide on-site parking facilities
- Incorporate unique site amenities such as hillside and ocean views, and mature vegetation
- Recognize the historic, cultural and archeological importance of a particular site by preserving and/ or incorporating structures, elements or features indigenous to the site as part of the project development proposal

***multi-family developments should provide a
“sense of place” and community***



C. Site Planning

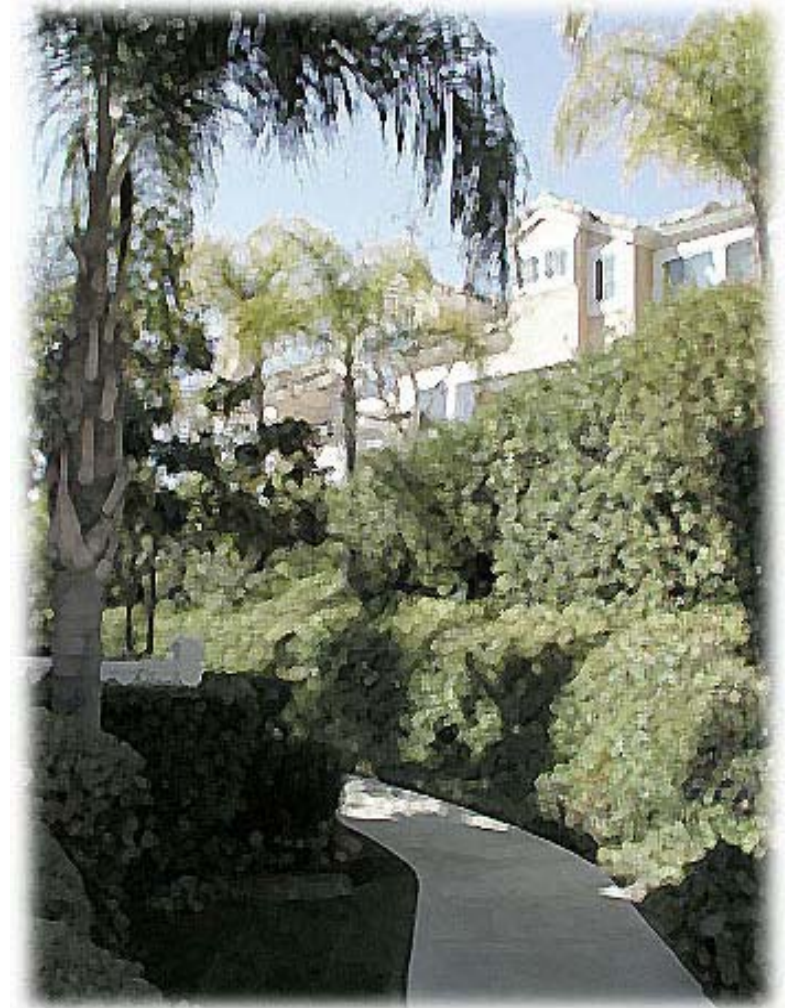
1. Grading

- a. Landform preservation should shape and guide site development of multi-family residential proposals. Grading should not substantially alter natural grades to increase the area of developable land. Grading of or within characteristic topographical areas such as ridgelines, unique hillside features and creeks is prohibited.
- b. Innovative grading techniques such as contour grading that incorporate use of variable slopes, both vertical and horizontal, and meandering tops and toes of slopes are encouraged.
- c. Smooth, gradual transitions between manufactured and natural slopes are recommended.
- d. Use of retaining walls should be minimized. Where use of retaining walls cannot be avoided, they should be screened to the maximum extent possible and use of plantable retaining walls systems should be employed as part of the design solution.

2. Compatibility

- a. The placement of structures, circulation patterns and open spaces should complement the project site's characteristics.
- b. Natural site features such as streams, scenic vistas and strands of mature trees should be integrated into the design of the project.
- c. Culturally and architecturally significant structures should be preserved and incorporated in the project development proposal.
- d. Infill development should relate to the surrounding built environment in pattern, function, scale, character and materials.
- e. Increased setback buffers, intensified landscaping and appropriate building orientation should be utilized to attain the greatest degree of compatibility between multi-family residential developments and adjacent land uses.

open space, building siting and circulation should be sensitive to the land form



3. Site Entry and Edge Design

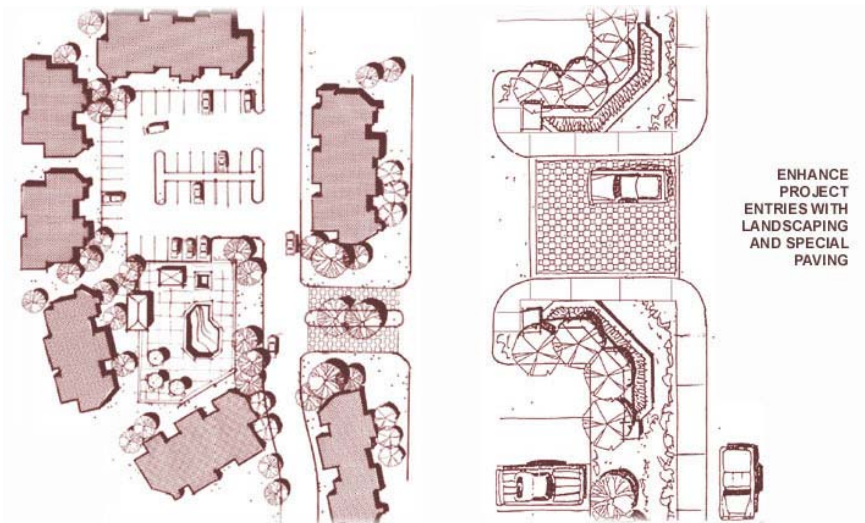
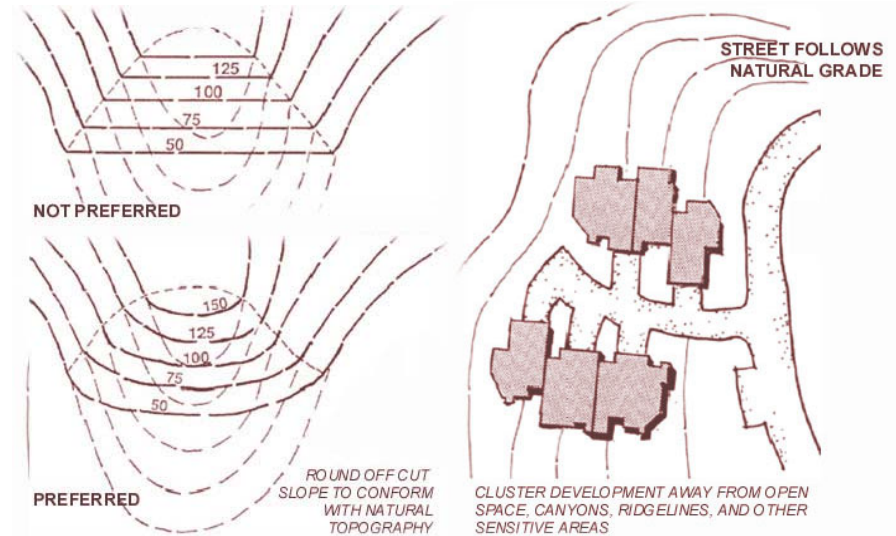
- a. Ornamental landscaping, open space areas, architectural monumentation and enhanced paving should be utilized to create a unique design statement.
- b. Site entry gates should be architecturally integrated within the overall project design theme.

4. Building Siting

- a. Variable building setbacks in conjunction with “parallel to the street” building orientation should be utilized to attain a visually interesting street scene.
- b. Clustering of multi-family units is encouraged. Large projects should be divided into groups of structures.
- c. Site buildings to create courtyards and open space areas.
- d. Multi-family buildings and individual units should be designed and oriented to maximize the privacy of the multi-family and surrounding developments residents.

5. Vehicular Access/ Circulation/ Parking

- a. Site access and circulation should promote pedestrian and vehicular traffic safety and convenience.
- b. Driveway access points should be located as far as possible from street intersections.
- c. A continuous circulation network should be provided throughout the site to the greatest extent possible. Dead-end driveways should be minimized.
- d. Vehicle maneuvering, stacking, and emergency access shall be provided on site.

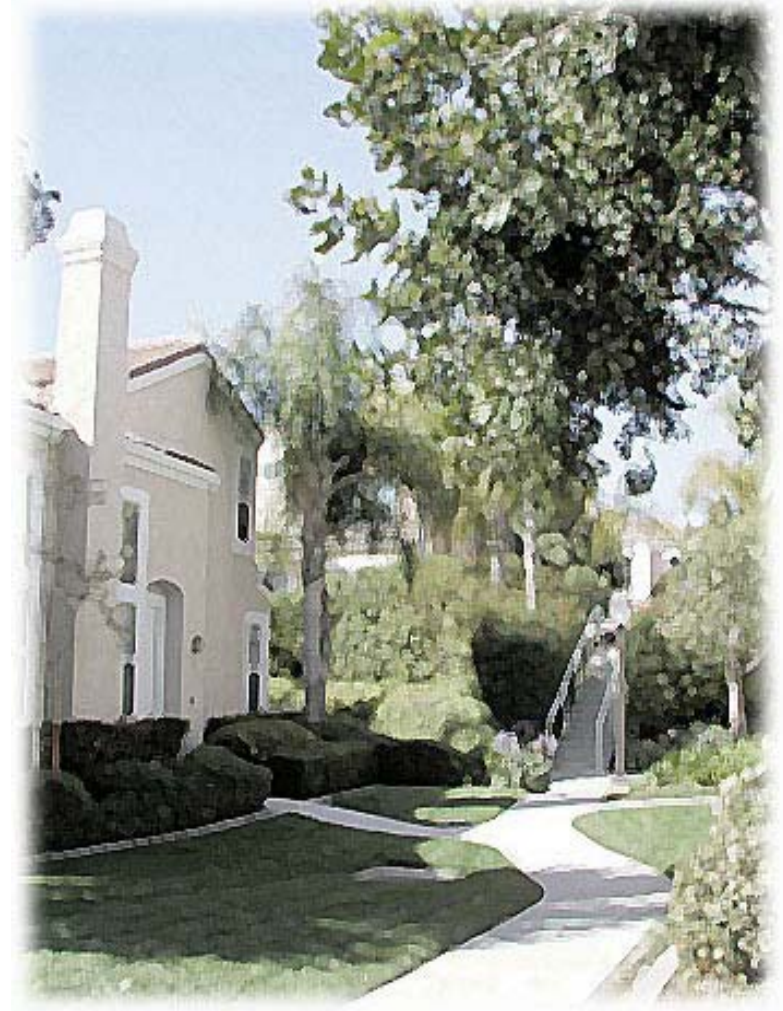


- e. Parking areas should be separated from buildings by a raised walkway and landscape strip of adequate width to fulfill functional and aesthetic needs.
- f. Parking areas should be clearly defined by landscaping, lighting, building massing, and pedestrian/ vehicular circulation areas.
- g. Large parking areas should be divided into a series of connected smaller parking courts.
- h. Adverse visual impacts of parking areas, carports, and garage doors should be minimized by proper siting and design.
- i. A designated resident car wash area should be incorporated within the parking area design.
- j. Driveway entrances should be aligned with existing or planned median openings and driveways on the opposite side of the roadway.

6. Pedestrian Circulation

- a. The site design should facilitate pedestrian access and circulation. Vehicular entrances should incorporate sidewalks on both sides of the driveway.
- b. Pedestrian linkages should be provided between adjoining residential, commercial projects, and other compatible land uses/ facilities.
- c. Pedestrian walkway linkages should be provided between dwelling units and common open space areas, recreation areas, parking areas and the street. Use of curvilinear paths are generally preferred over long, straight walkway alignments.
- d. Walkways should provide a 4 ft. (min) clear width.
- e. Pedestrian walkways should be safe, attractive, and well defined by landscaping.

pedestrian linkages should be provided throughout the site



- f. Use of decorative pavement to delineate pedestrian crossings at driveways and parking aisles on private property areas, is encouraged.

7. Open Space

- a. Open space areas should be of large meaningful size, not leftover fragments, and sited to maximize their accessibility and use by residents.
- b. The design of private open space areas should take advantage of prevailing breezes and sunlight.
- c. All private open space areas should be located adjacent to the units they serve. The design of private yards, balconies and patios should contribute in the establishment of defensible open space areas.
- d. Children's play areas should be located in a manner that allows for maximum surveillance and visibility from residential units.

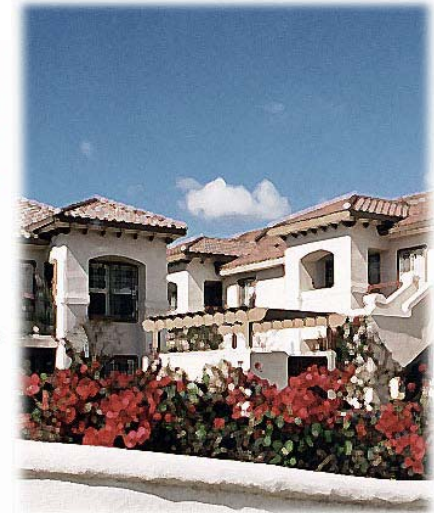


8. Utility and Mechanical Equipment

- a. Mechanical and utility equipment should be fully screened. The design of all screening devices should compliment building architecture as well as materials and colors of adjacent structures.
- b. Care should be taken to minimize the visual impact of transformers, valves, timers and other utility apparatus from public rights-of-way. Transformer units which are required to be installed along street frontages should be undergrounded or otherwise screened from public view with landscaping.

9. Refuse, Storage Areas and Mail-boxes

- a. Trash, storage enclosures and other ancillary structures such as grouped mailboxes should be architecturally compatible with the project theme.
- b. Landscaping should be provided adjacent to trash storage and ancillary enclosures to minimize potential adverse visual impacts.



- c. Trash enclosures should be easily accessible for trash collection but sited in a manner that prevents obstruction of general access and circulation patterns during loading operations.

10. Walls and Fences

- a. Walls and fences exposed to public view should be architecturally enhanced and complimented by adjoining landscaping.
- b. Tiered planting should be provided adjacent to project or community perimeter walls along street frontages to soften their appearance.
- c. Pedestrian access points should be incorporated in community perimeter wall or fence design solutions to facilitate access to desirable adjacent uses.
- d. Walls should be eliminated or sited to provide additional setback areas at project entries in order to accommodate landscaping, ornamental gateways, signage and street furniture. Where walls at corner locations cannot be eliminated, they should be curved or angled.
- e. "Saw-tooth" fence design solutions are discouraged.

11. Paving

- a. Driveway entries, pedestrian walkways and crosswalks on private property should incorporate decorative paving.
- b. Use of pavers that allow water infiltration is encouraged. Use of stone and brick is acceptable, where such materials are deemed appropriate and would complement the overall architectural theme. Use of stamped and color concrete treatments are discouraged but may be considered and permitted on a case-by-case basis.
- c. Noise impacts that may result from use of certain types of pavers should be considered during the materials selection process.

fence design enhanced by adjacent landscaping



12. Lighting

- a. The type and location of site and building lighting should prevent direct glare onto adjoining properties.
- b. Use of pedestrian-scale lighting along pedestrian routes is recommended.
- c. “High mast” poles are discouraged. Use of decorative light fixtures is encouraged.
- d. The selected light fixture design should complement the project’s architectural style.

light pole design should complement the architectural theme



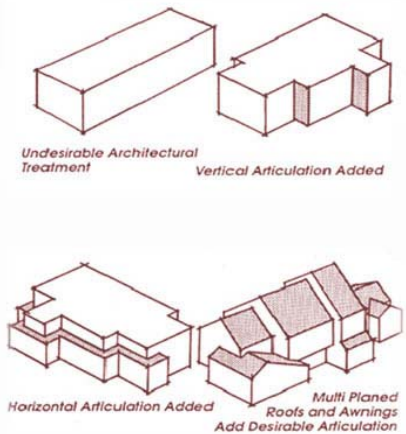
D. Architectural Guidelines

1. Architectural Imagery

- a. San Juan Capistrano's residential neighborhood fabric is comprised of an eclectic mixture of architectural styles, thus, in keeping with the existing character of the residential community, no particular architectural "style" is required for multi-family residential structures. The primary focus is on developing a high quality residential environment.
- b. The buildings' massing and dimensional ratios of building components should create a harmonious visual balance and contribute to the architectural rhythm.
- c. Architectural elements such as bay windows, balconies, verandahs and porches that add visual interest, scale and enhance the architectural character of the neighborhood are encouraged.
- d. The design of auxiliary facilities such as recreation areas and laundry buildings should be architecturally compatible with the overall architectural theme.

2. Building Façade and Roof Articulation

- a. Larger buildings should be designed to give the appearance of a collection of smaller structures.
- b. Variable heights and façade offsets should be included as part of the building design in order to reduce visual massing impacts of multi-story structures.
- c. Rooflines should be segmented and varied within an overall horizontal context. Use of vertical elements such as towers may be used to accent horizontal massing and provide visual interest.
- d. Unarticulated, boxy and monotonous building facades that lack "human scale" are strongly discouraged. Gratuitous architectural building treatments are not permitted.



EXISTING SINGLE FAMILY ELEVATIONS



INAPPROPRIATE MULTI-FAMILY INFILL

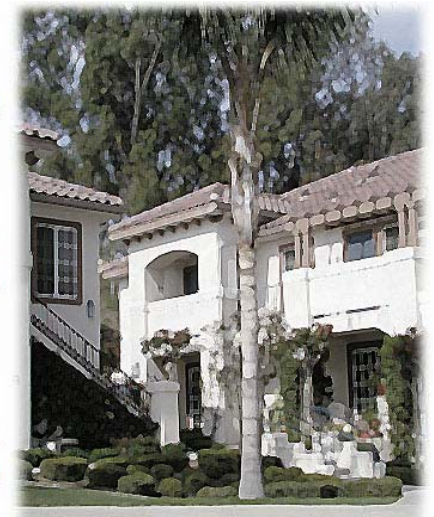


MULTI-FAMILY ADDITION DOES NOT CONFORM TO CHARACTER OF EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD

APPROPRIATE MULTI-FAMILY INFILL



MULTI-FAMILY STRUCTURE BLENDS WITH CHARACTER OF EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD



- e. The number and mix of units per structure should be varied. The maximum number of attached dwelling units per building should not generally exceed 8 units.
- f. The design of multiple-family structures that contain 3 or more attached dwellings in a row should provide at a minimum one of the following:
 - One architectural projection not less than 2 ft. from the wall plane and not less than 8 ft. wide, per dwelling unit. Projections should extend the full height of single story buildings, at least one-half the height of the two-story building, and two-thirds the height of a three-story building; or
 - One wall plane offset of at least 3 ft. and no less than 12 ft. wide for each two units.
- g. Distinctive architectural elements, materials and colors should be used to denote primary building entries or individual unit entries.
- h. Full hip or gable roof designs are preferred over mansard roofs and partial, segmented applications of pitched roof elements along building edges.
- i. Combining one, one and a half, and two story units within the same building creates variation and visual interest and is encouraged.
- j. Roofs should project a residential appearance through use of pitched design solutions and use of appropriate roofing materials.
- k. Verandahs, porches and other types of covered outdoor areas should be used to provide human scale proportions to building façades and establish defensible space area boundaries.
- l. Exterior access corridors and balconies are discouraged.
- m. Carport roof design should incorporate roof slope and materials complimentary to the selected architectural theme. Flat carport roofs are generally discouraged.

***variable heights and massing offsets
are encouraged***



III - Multi-Family Residential

- n. Use of pilasters, awnings and comparable architectural embellishments is encouraged.
- o. Ancillary structures such as carports, detached garages, recreational buildings and storage structures should be designed as an integral part of the project architecture. Accessory and service structures should be similar in material, color, and detail to the primary buildings.
- p. The design of exterior stairways should be enhanced by solid wall portions, columns and decorative details. Prefabricated metal stairs are strongly discouraged.
- q. All mechanical equipment should be screened from view. All screening enclosures should be compatible with the architecture, colors and materials of the main building(s).

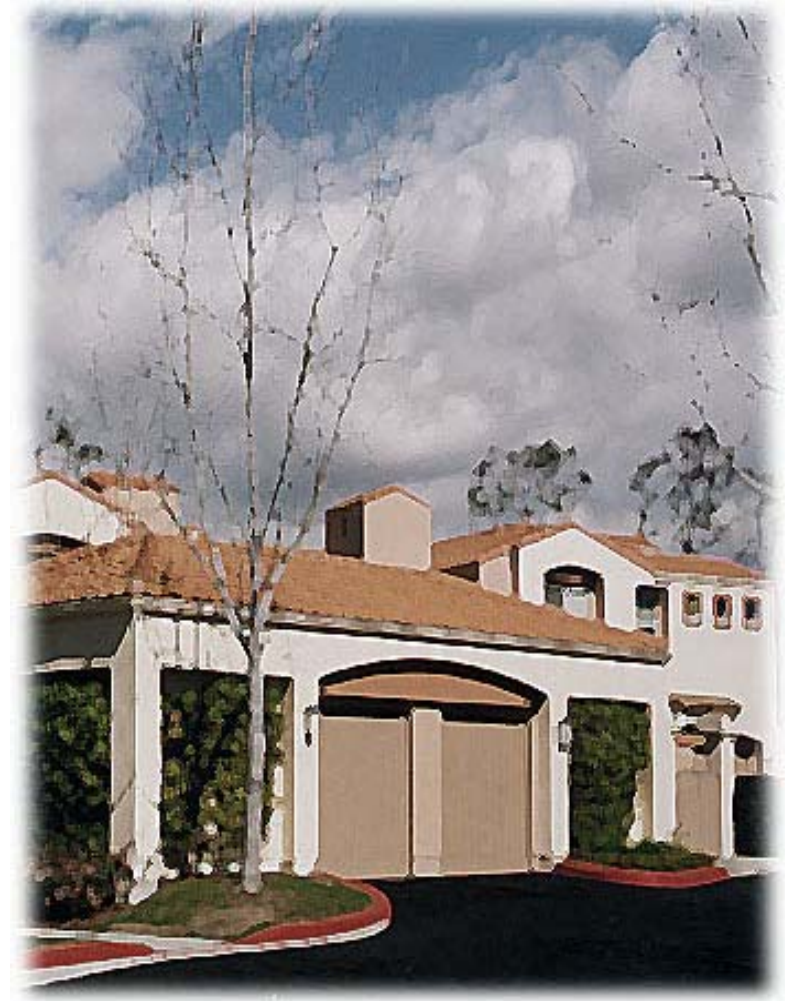
3. Fenestration

- a. The placement of fenestration elements on a building's façade should be coordinated vertically and horizontally. Consistent use of the same or complimentary window and door styles on a building is recommended.

4. Garage Design

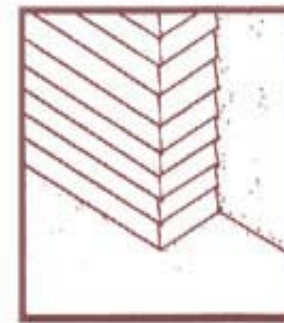
- a. The placement and architectural design of garages should minimize adverse visual impacts to the streetscape. Recess garage doors and/or utilize multiple panel door, windows or other architectural detailing to articulate and enhance garage frontages.
- b. Use of building massing offsets in conjunction with single story garage design elements is encouraged.
- c. Use of architecturally enhanced security gates on garage structures are encouraged. Where simple, unarticulated gates are proposed, appropriate colors should be employed to minimize any adverse visual impacts.

***garage design complimenting
the overall architectural theme***

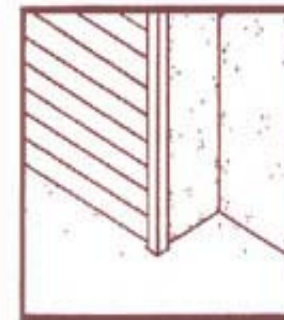


5. Building Materials and Colors

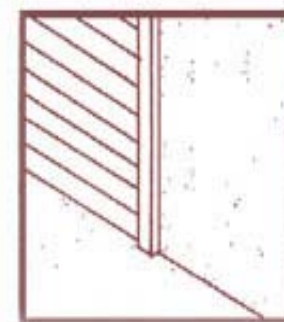
- a. Building materials should convey a sense of quality and permanence. Materials should be chosen to compliment the overall project design and context.
- b. The selected exterior building materials and colors should be stylistically authentic and complimentary to the overall architectural design. Frequent changes in materials should be avoided.
- c. Material changes should occur at changes in wall planes, preferably at interior corner locations, to avoid a “tacked-on” appearance.
- d. Use of colors that reduce and eliminate reflectivity and blend structure(s) into the terrain is recommended. Use of muted colors and deep hues which reflect the project site’s context are encouraged.
- e. The colors and materials for accessory structures, trellises, porches or colonnades should be compatible with those of the main building.
- f. Gutters and downspouts should be colored to match fascia or wall materials, unless designed as an outstanding architectural feature.
- g. Use of building materials, such as brick, wood siding, wood shingles, stone, copper, is encouraged. Painting over natural building materials is generally discouraged but may be considered on a case-by-case basis.



**CHANGE IN PLANE WITH
CHANGE IN MATERIAL
RECOMMENDED**



**MATERIAL OR COLOR
CHANGE AT OUTSIDE
CORNER
NOT RECOMMENDED**



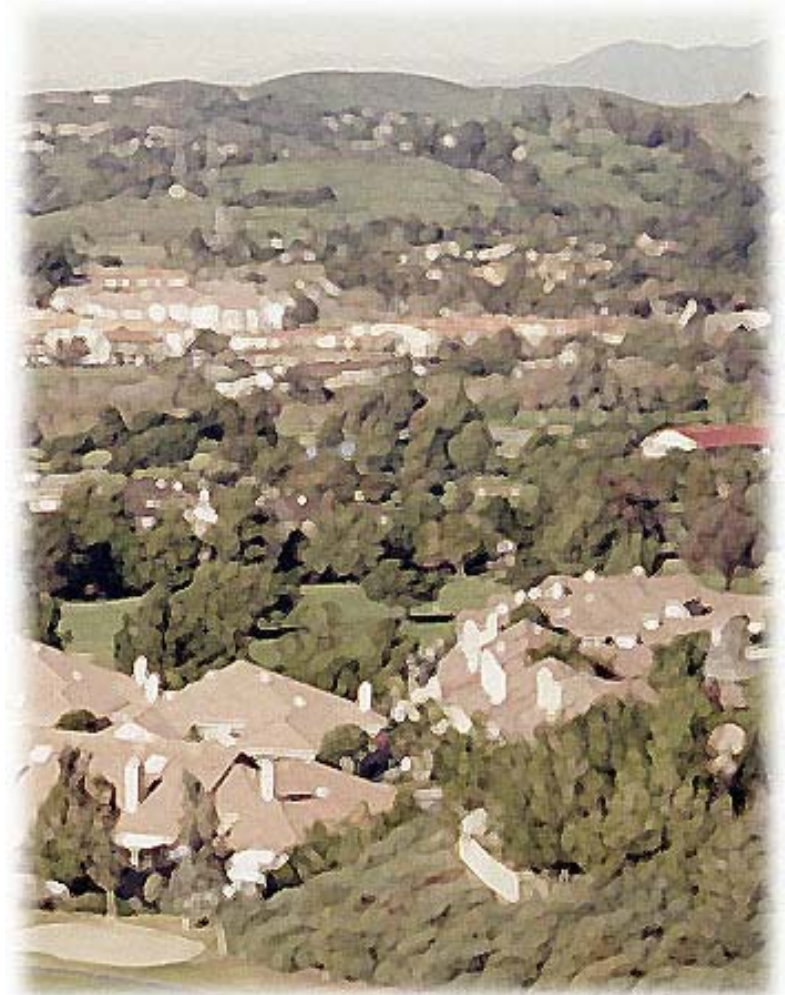
**CHANGE OF MATERIALS
ON SAME PLANE
NOT RECOMMENDED**

E. Landscaping Guidelines

1. Standard Guidelines

- a. Landscaping should frame, soften and embellish the quality of residential environment, buffer units from noise or undesirable views, and break up large expanses of parking.
- b. Project landscaping should be designed to contribute towards achieving an overall cohesive appearance and compatibility with its surroundings.
- c. Tiered planting (tree-shrub-turf) and decorative hardscape should be utilized to enhance the visual character of the project.
- d. The following planting design concepts are encouraged:
 - Specimen trees (12-16 ft. high min. from finish grade, or as recommended by conditions of approval) in informal groupings or rows at major focal points
 - Use of flowering vines both on walls and arbors or trellises
 - Use of planting to soften building lines with shadows and patterns
 - Use of “canopy-trees” in parking areas and passive open space areas
 - Use of berms, plantings, and walls to screen parking lots, trash enclosures, storage areas, utility boxes, etc.
- e. Provision of landscaping adjacent to buildings’ perimeter areas is encouraged.
- f. Landscaping should be protected from vehicular and pedestrian encroachment.
- g. Provision of vines and climbing plants, integrated upon buildings, trellises, and perimeter walls, is encouraged.

the San Juan Capistrano residential landscape

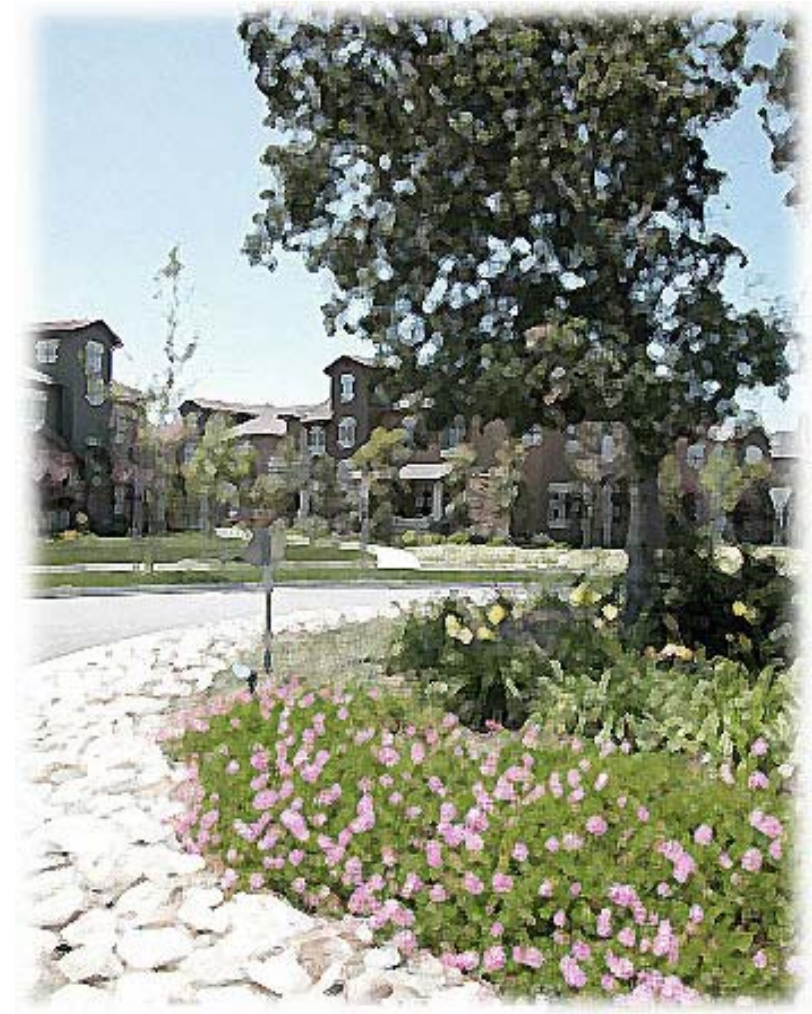


- h. Existing mature, healthy trees should be preserved and incorporated within the overall landscaping plan.
- i. Common area landscaping and maintenance should ensure the natural quality and appearance of selected planting materials.
- j. Trees and large shrubs should be placed as follows:
 - 8 ft. (min) between center of trees and edge of driveway, 6 ft. from water meter or gas meter and sewer laterals.
 - 25 ft. (min) between center of trees and beginning of curb returns at intersections.
 - 25 ft. (min) between center of trees and large shrubs to utility poles and street lights
 - 8 ft. (min) between center of trees or large shrubs and fire hydrants and fire department sprinkler and standpipe connections
 - Root-barriers (guards) are required to be installed between planting and adjoining hardscape areas. A 5 ft. (min) clearance should be provided between root barriers and adjacent hardscape areas

4. Slope Vegetation and Erosion Control

- a. All proposed slopes with a gradient greater than 6:1 with a vertical height of 3 ft. or greater, should be vegetated within 30 days of completion of finish grading.
- b. All plant materials should be appropriately spaced to control soil erosion.
- c. Trees, shrubs, and ground covers should be planted in undulating groupings to improve the character of manufactured slopes.
- d. New or vegetated slopes should include permanent irrigation systems.

***tiered planting and decorative hardscape
enhance the overall project design***



5. Vegetation Fuel Modification Zone

- a. A fuel modification zone area, ranging in width from 50 ft. - 100 ft. should be provided for any development requiring a building permit for the primary structure where the property is located immediately adjacent to mature flammable vegetation, pursuant to Orange County Fire Authority regulations.
- b. The first 50 ft. (wet zone) of vegetation fuel modification must consist of irrigated landscaping.
- c. Plant materials within the wet zone area must be fire resistant and preferably drought-tolerant. Plant materials outside of the wet zone must be fire resistant.