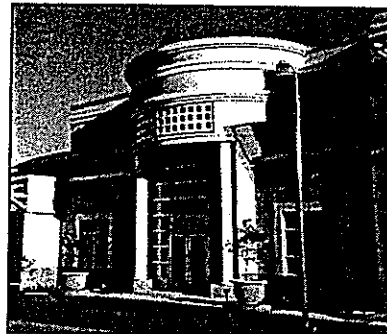
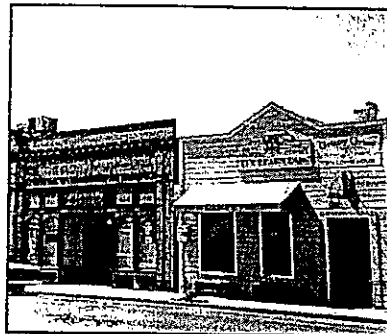
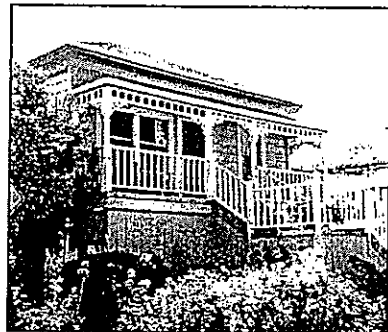


# Old Town Design Guidelines



Adopted  
Feb. 4, 1997  
via City Council  
Resolution  
106-97

# Old Town Design Guidelines

## Updates 3.16.21

1. *The introduction to Section 3 is replaced in its entirety to read as follows:*

“The design guidelines which follow are to be used as an advisory tool, except where the Municipal Code makes compliance with these guidelines mandatory. The design guidelines are intended to further a dialogue between architects, designers, developers and community representatives about the appropriateness of specific design proposals.

The design guidelines indicate the design elements that should be present in an architecturally compatible Old Town building and focus attention on those design and land use elements that encourage a comfortable pedestrian environment. The design guidelines cannot be used as a checklist, but require interpretation on the building site and the existing architecture.

The guidelines will be applied through the design review process established by the Municipal Code. If there is any inconsistency between these guidelines and the Municipal Code, the Municipal Code shall control.”

2. *The first sentence of Section 3.1 is amended to read as follows:*

“Guidelines which employ the word ‘should’ are intended to be mandatory.”

3. *The first sentence of Section 4.2(B)(4) on page 15 is amended to read as follows:*

“Blank walls or loading areas shall not face public streets.”

4. *The first sentence of Section 4.2(C)(2) on page 16 is amended to read as follows:*

“New buildings are encouraged to contain three parts: a base, a mid-section, and a top.”

5. *The first sentence of Section 4.4(A)(7) on page 25 is amended to read as follows:*

“Native and drought resistant plants, shrubs, and trees shall be used.”

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## ***Section 1: Introduction***

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In December of 1995 the City Council appointed a fifteen member Old Town Design Guidelines Review Committee. The committee's broad charge was to draft a set of design guidelines that would help enhance the positive qualities of Pinole's commercial downtown and protect the livability of its residential neighborhoods. The committee members were chosen for their varied perspectives and the knowledge and skill they would bring to this process.

These design guidelines were drafted to assist those people engaged in the design, construction, review and approval of development projects in the City of Pinole. They are intended as a reference point from which all persons involved in the development process can gain a common understanding of the minimum design expectations in the City of Pinole. Architects, designers and developers are urged to become familiar with these design guidelines and to apply them to the design of projects from the very beginning. Architects, designers and developers are also urged to recognize that these design guidelines are minimums.

These design guidelines identify techniques and minimum standards for achieving the level of design quality the citizens of Pinole have come to expect in commercial and residential development within Old Town. They are offered as one way of achieving attractive and functional projects which compare favorably with the established community character. No claim can be made, however, that these design guidelines encompass every possible technique for achieving a high level of design quality. Architects, designers and developers are therefore, encouraged to use their own creativity and experience to improve upon the means for achieving individual objectives.

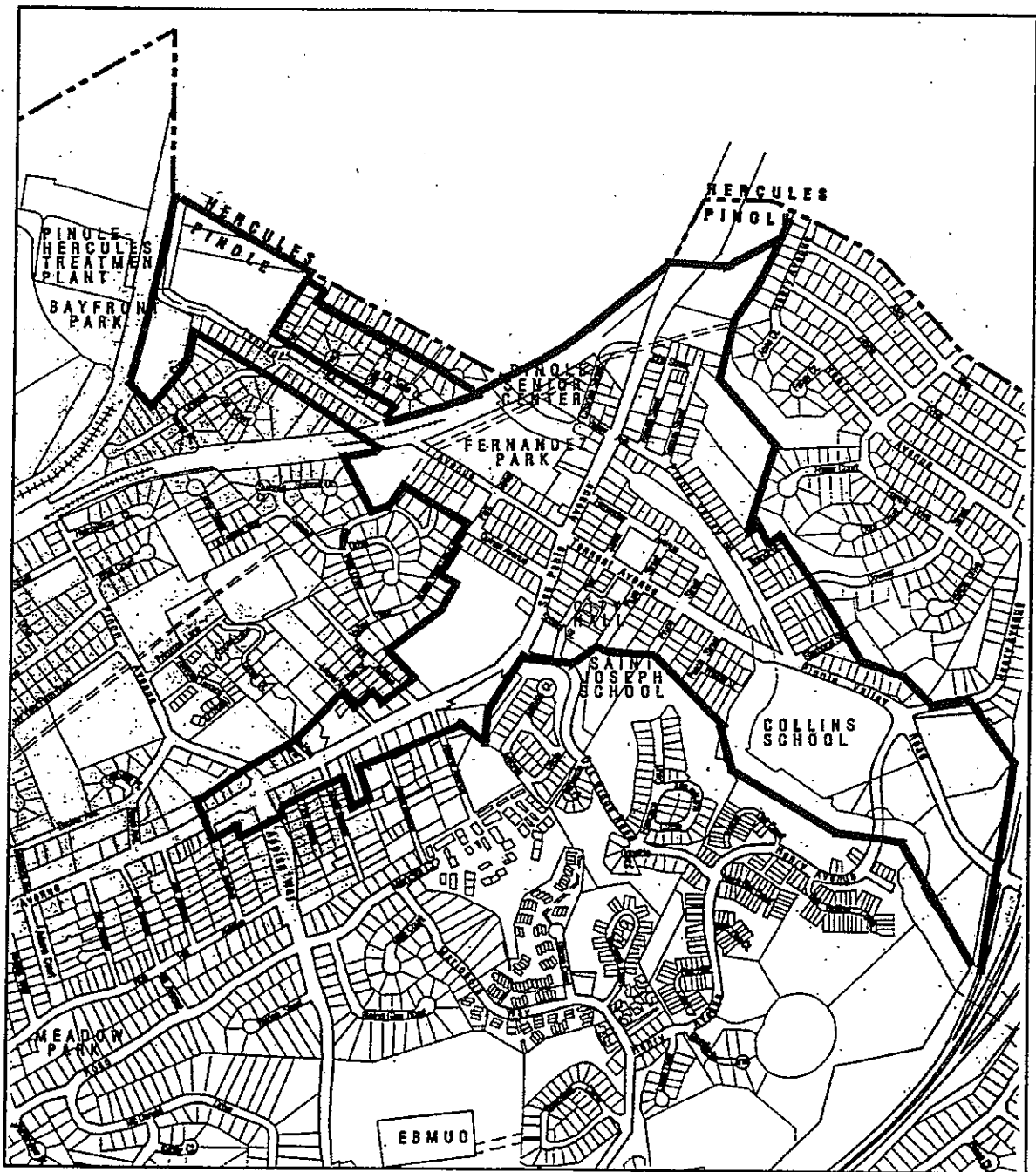
## **1.1 The Boundaries**

The area affected by these design guidelines is called the Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District. The area's boundaries extend north from Interstate 80 along Pinole Valley Road and Tennent Avenue to San Pablo Bay and west from the Hercules/Pinole border along San Pablo Avenue to Second Avenue. Refer to Map 1.

The Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District contains Pinole's greatest concentration of historic commercial and residential buildings, especially along San Pablo Avenue which forms the spine of this area. These buildings serve as a link to Pinole's cultural heritage and establish a model for design ideas. In some cases certain downtown buildings are connected with notable people and events. Others help establish a street scene that conveys a sense of place and time. They also provide a richness of character, texture and human scale that is one of Pinole's greatest assets. The Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District was proposed in recognition that development within this area should be managed in a way that protects Pinole's heritage and enhances its economic viability.

## **1.2 Goals**

These design guidelines establish a special commitment to maintaining and enhancing the visual character of the area located within the boundaries of the Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District. As discussed above, these design guidelines are intended to put in place an explanation of the expected design standards when commercial and/or residential development is planned within the boundaries of the Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District. The general goals of these design guidelines are to:



Map 1: Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District

- Preserve the integrity of the historic architectural features of individual commercial and residential buildings located within the Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District.
- Minimize alterations and new construction that weaken the historic integrity of individual commercial and residential buildings and of the Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District.
- Encourage new commercial and residential development that respects and enhances the visual characteristics of the Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District.
- Instill a sense of “pride of place” built upon Pinole’s unique history and character.
- Create an attractive environment which is active throughout the day and evening.
- Maintain a consistently high level of design quality.

These design guidelines address issues of compatibility, project function and aesthetics. They also help to ensure that any new commercial development will preserve and improve the positive character of existing neighborhoods and that any negative impacts on nearby residences are minimized or avoided. Finally, these design guidelines will encourage the provision of efficient vehicular movement and pedestrian circulation.

### **1.3 Organization**

Design guidelines for new commercial and residential construction and for the renovation of existing commercial and residential buildings comprise the bulk of this document. A special section which discusses a regionally serving commercial area, located within the Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District boundaries, is also included. This special section is quite different



from the commercial section which deals primarily with the commercial buildings located along San Pablo Avenue.

Special sensitivity to scale and use are required when developing along Pinole Creek. Several concepts to be used are described within the commercial, residential and regional sections. The Old Town Design Guidelines also include regulations for sign design. Sensitive design of signage will improve the visual quality and functioning of the downtown area.

## ***Section 2: The Setting***

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The City of Pinole is located in West Contra Costa County, adjacent to the San Pablo Bay. Interstate 80, which traverses the City, connects the San Francisco/Oakland metropolitan area with Sacramento and points east. Pinole is linked to Central Contra Costa County and the cities of Martinez, Concord and Pleasant Hill by State Route 4, which begins just north of the City and connects with Interstate 680.

Surrounding communities include the unincorporated areas of Montara Bay, Rancho Road and El Sobrante, and the cities of Richmond and Hercules. The planning jurisdictions in the West County Planning Area, as defined in the Contra Costa County General Plan, are comprised of the cities of Pinole, El Cerrito, Richmond, Hercules, San Pablo and Contra Costa County.

### **2.1 History of Pinole**

Native American settlement of the West Contra Costa shoreline began at least 5,000 years ago. The Pinole region was home to the Huchium Indians, whose territory extended from Berkeley to somewhere between Rodeo and Crockett. The recorded history of Pinole dates back to the early 1700s when a Spanish commandant, Don Pedro Fages, led an exploration through Contra Costa County. With a small band of soldiers and a Native American guide, Don Pedro Fages left Monterey and traveled northward until he reached the area known today as Pinole.

In 1823 Don Ignacio Martinez, commandant of the Presidio of San Francisco, received a land grant from the Mexican government. This land grant comprised over 17,000 acres and was known as "El Pinole."

During the 1850s Bernardo Fernandez started a trading facility on the shores of San Pablo Bay and eventually built the historic Fernandez Mansion which still stands

today at the end of Tennent Avenue. From these early beginnings a small but thriving community grew into the city we now know as Pinole.

One of the earliest Anglo-American settlers in Contra Costa County was Dr. Samuel J. Tennent who married Rafaela Martinez, the daughter of Ignacio Martinez. In 1851 the Tennents built their home one half mile from the Tennent Avenue Creek bridge on Valley Road. Dr. Tennent and his wife Rafaela owned much of the vacant land in Pinole.

The advance of the Southern Pacific Railroad allowed the California Powder Works Company to move to what became Hercules, Pinole's neighbor to the north. The company built both the plant and its houses and became the largest producer of dynamite in the world by the turn of the century. The town of Pinole became a service center for the plant and the success of the plant directly impacted the development of Pinole.

Edward M. Downer came to Pinole in 1889 and went to work as a dispatcher and station agent for the Southern Pacific train depot, located at the end of Tennent Avenue. He became one of the most influential and prominent business figures in Pinole and its surrounding areas including Rodeo, Crockett, Port Costa, Richmond, El Cerrito and Albany. His great success was due to a chain of banking houses which he established in these cities and to his civic efforts and successes. A house built by the Downer family stands today along San Pablo Avenue, at the east end of Old Town.

The Old Town area of Pinole is unique. Despite rapid growth since the 1950s, Old Town has retained a great deal of its historic and architectural character. A large number of historic residences, primarily Queen Anne and Italianate cottages, remain in good condition. Many of the old commercial buildings are still in use today.

## 2.2 Commercial Design Themes

The historic commercial buildings include two story masonry structures, false front type wood frame structures and stucco or plaster structures. Many of these structures were built in the early twentieth century with the shift of the commercial area away from the wharf to San Pablo Avenue, which was the major artery north from the East Bay. The buildings are located on San Pablo between Tennent Avenue and Valley Avenue. The best example of this early period is the Bank of Pinole Building located on San Pablo Avenue.

In addition to the historic commercial buildings, discussed above, there are a number of more modern buildings that were built between 1960-1990. These buildings are either masonry, wood sided or stucco structures. Many of these buildings do not add to the historic quality and character exemplified by many of the older commercial buildings.

## 2.3 Residential Design Themes

The main historical residential design themes present in Pinole can be categorized as follows:

- Queen Anne Cottages (1880 - 1905)
- Hip Roof Cottages (1870 - 1910)
- Bungalows (1915 - 1930)

All of these homes were built for individuals who worked in Pinole or at the Hercules Powder Plant, the main industry from 1879 to the 1970s. Due to the stability of this main industry, Pinole's residential neighborhoods were not exposed to major changes created by land development or speculation. These homes are simple in character and gain their importance by their neighborhood groupings.

Remaining examples of the Queen Anne Cottage style of architecture in Pinole illustrate a unique evolution of the style from a rural farmhouse with earlier Italianate

Cottage features (tall narrow windows and hip roof) to the more common Queen Anne Cottages of the 1890s. The uniqueness of this collection is that they were all built at the same time and still illustrate the past and future of American housing fashions at that time.

The Hip Roof Cottages are less identified with a specific time period. The subtle stylistic details are the only features that establish the age of the buildings. The earliest examples are of the Italianate era, they have tall narrow windows and a small flat area at the roof peak. The major distinguishing feature is the porch design and detail features which vary according to what was available for decoration at the local lumber yard when they were built.

The Bungalow or Craftsman Bungalow was the predominant housing style between 1915 and 1930. In Pinole these houses are dispersed throughout Old Town as infill. Good unaltered examples of this housing style are located along Pinole Valley Road.

## ***Section 3: Process***

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The design guidelines which follow are to be used as an advisory tool. All projects must be submitted to the Design Review Board for review and approval. Compliance with these guidelines is strongly encouraged.

The design guidelines are intended to further a dialogue between architects, designers, developers and community representatives about the appropriateness of specific design proposals.

The design guidelines indicate the design elements that should be present in an architecturally compatible Old Town building and focus attention on those design and land use elements that encourage a comfortable pedestrian environment. The design guidelines cannot be used as a checklist, but require interpretation based on the building site and the existing architecture.

The Design Review Board will meet to review project proposals against the adopted design guidelines. A written record of the review and recommendation will be forwarded to the Planning Commission. For projects requiring staff review, a written record will be kept on file in the Community Development Department. Built into the proposed process is an annual evaluation, by the Planning Commission, to gauge the effectiveness of the process and the adequacy of the guidelines.

### **3.1 Language**

Guidelines which employ the word '**should**' are intended to be applied as stated. Guidelines using the word '**encouraged**' are desirable but not mandatory. Guidelines using the word '**discouraged**' should be strictly adhered to. Guidelines using the word '**must**' are based on an existing regulation that must be followed.

## **Section 4:**

### **Commercial Guidelines**

#### **New Construction**

---

Commercial development, within the boundaries of the Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District, should be especially sensitive to issues of compatibility. Indeed, the economic success of Old Town businesses is in many ways dependent on maintaining the architectural character and quality that sets the downtown apart from other shopping areas in Pinole. For this reason, architectural design guidelines for new buildings are proposed in this section.

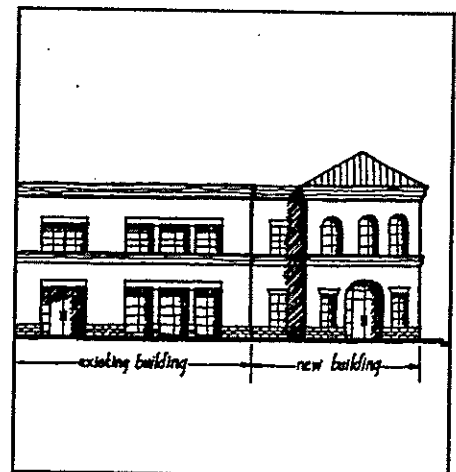
#### **4.1 The Setting**

The existing buildings and landscape of Old Town are the frame of reference for new development. To the extent that the scale and texture of new buildings blends with what is already there, the city is continuously woven together. Conversely, the blatant disregard of the existing pattern disrupts the essential character of the city.

##### **A. Surrounding Area Character**

- ❖ **All new structures and uses should be compatible with the character of the existing neighborhood.**

1. New development **should** complement the architectural styles, building forms and landscape patterns of neighboring development.
2. New development **should** incorporate representative characteristics of the surrounding area, when the area exhibits a positive and distinctive architectural style and/or established functional pattern.



*Figure 1: Similar materials, proportions and scale employed on a new building adjacent to an historic one.*

3. New development **should** respect existing structures, in the immediate area, through the use of similar materials and proportions and the avoidance of overwhelming scale and visual obstruction, Refer to Figure 1.

## B. Site Character

### ❖ Site amenities should be preserved and should become part of a new project.

1. Natural amenities such as views, mature trees, creeks and similar features, unique to a site, **should** be preserved and incorporated into development proposals.
2. Structures which are historic, or are otherwise distinctive, **should** be preserved and incorporated into development proposals.
3. Buildings should not back onto natural amenities. High activity areas, such as restaurant dining areas or major pedestrian routes, **should** be oriented to create a connection between the amenity and the project. Refer to Figure 2.

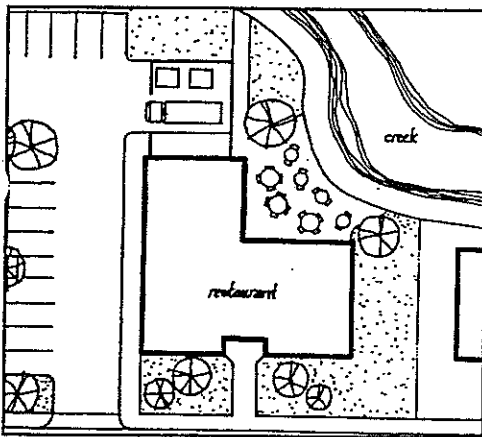


Figure 2: Site plan incorporating a natural amenity.

## C. Interfaces

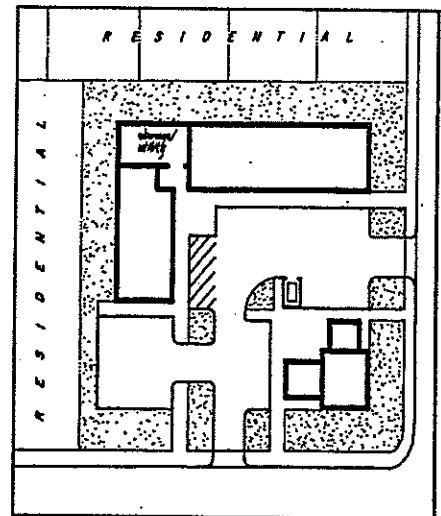
### ❖ Structures and activities should be located and designed to avoid creating nuisances and hazards for adjoining properties.

1. Noise, traffic, odor generating activities and hazardous activities **should** be located adjacent to similar activities on adjacent properties, whenever possible.



The location of these activities next to residential or other sensitive uses **should** be avoided.

2. Loading areas, access and circulation driveways, trash areas, storage areas and rooftop equipment **should** be located as far as possible from residential or other sensitive uses. These uses **should** never be located next to residential properties without fully mitigating their negative effects.
3. Residential and non-residential uses, except when located in the same structure, **should** be segregated in order to maintain a livable residential environment through the use of masonry walls, landscaping, berms, building orientation and activity limitations.
4. When residential and non-residential uses can mutually profit from a connection rather than a separation, applicable connective elements such as walkways, common landscaped areas, building orientation and unfenced property lines **should** be used and are strongly **encouraged**. Refer to Figure 3.



*Figure 3: Loading and trash collection located away from residential properties; utilities and storage incorporated into building.*

## 4.2 Structures

The design and placement of a new building **should** respond to the general characteristics of its surrounding area, to the architectural standards of the larger community and to the opportunities and limitations of its site.

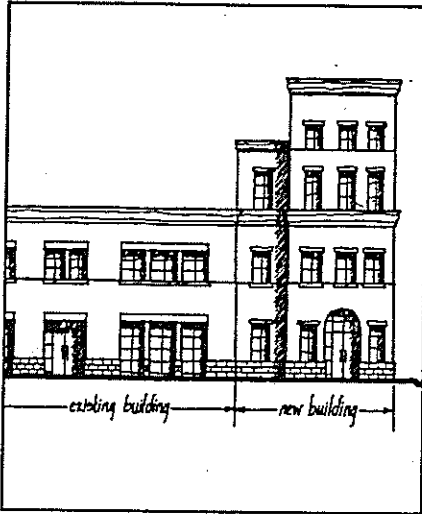


Figure 4: A gradual height transition.

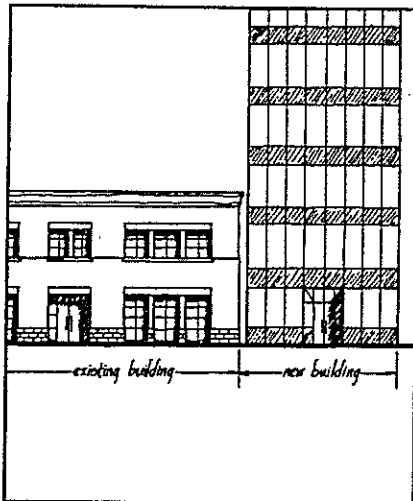


Figure 5: Abrupt height transitions or changes in mass should be avoided.

## A. Height and Mass

❖ Height transitions between existing and new buildings should be gradual. Refer to Figure 4. The height and mass of new projects should not create abrupt changes from those of existing buildings. Refer to Figure 5.

1. Minimum building height **should** not be less than seventy five percent of the highest adjacent building.
2. Maximum building height **should** be two stories and thirty five feet.
3. A maximum building height of three stories and forty feet may be remitted if the third story volume is enclosed by a pitched roof, if the third story is setback a minimum of ten feet from all street-fronting elevations or if the third story serves as a transition between adjacent structures of similar height. Note: A variance may need to be obtained to allow a building to be more than two stories or thirty five feet in height.

## B. Building Orientation

❖ Buildings should be oriented parallel to streets and, with some exceptions, should be placed as close to the street as established setbacks permit. Refer to Figure 6

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1. Buildings **should** be generally placed at their front setback lines in order to define and enliven the streets. The front wall of a building may be set back a maximum of five feet from the front property line if seventy five percent of the front wall of the building is parallel to the property line. Exceptions may occur when features of an architecturally significant building are obscured by a building placed directly on its front property line.
2. Side setbacks are **discouraged**. If a building is setback from a side property line the minimum setback from the adjoining structure should be six feet, to allow for pedestrian access.
3. Corner buildings **should** have a strong tie to the setback lines of each street. The primary mass of a building should not be placed at an angle to the corner. This does not preclude angled or sculpted building corners. Corner entrances may be cut back up to six feet to create a diagonal at the ground level and/or upper levels.
4. Blank walls or loading areas, **should** not face public streets. Blank walls without windows and doors are only permitted on the interior side of a building, when such walls are blocked from view from a public place. Blank walls visible from a public place may be allowed if the wall is treated architecturally or with a wall graphic. Refer to Figure 7.

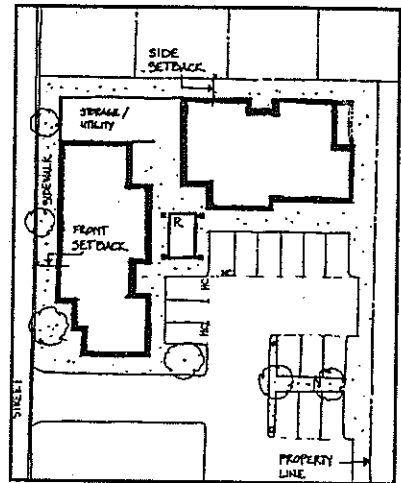


Figure 6: Building edges placed at minimum front setback line.

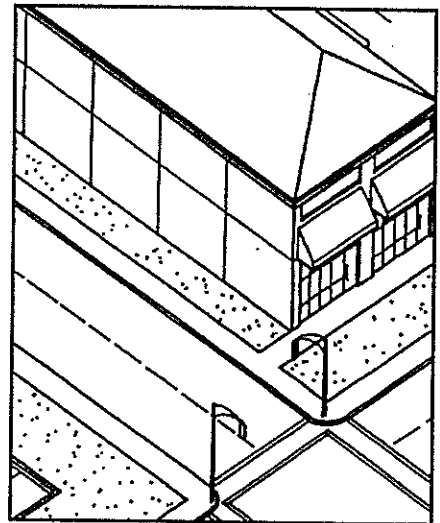


Figure 7: Blank building walls should not face public streets

### C. Building Form and Scale

- ❖ The elements of a building should relate logically to each other, as well as to surrounding buildings, to enhance the given or potential characteristics of a particular building and area.

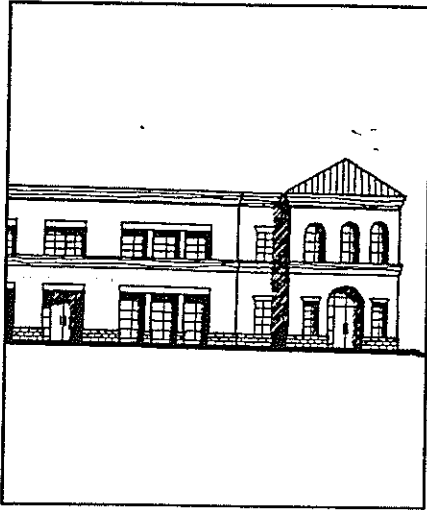


Figure 8: Base, mid-section and top treatment for low-rise building.

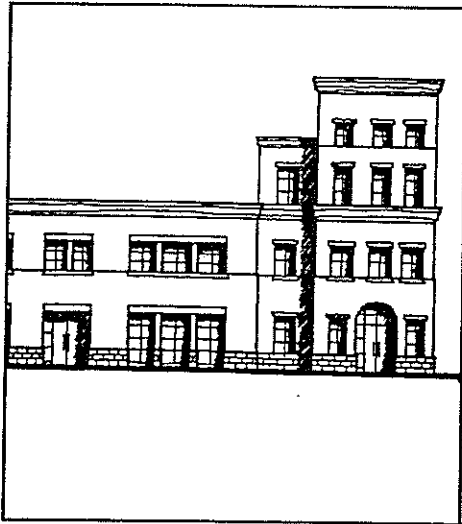


Figure 9: Base, mid-section and top treatment for taller structure.

1. New buildings **should** reflect the characteristic rhythm of surrounding building facades.
2. New buildings **should** contain three parts: a base, a mid-section and a top. On low-rise buildings, the different parts may be expressed through detailing at the building base and eave or cornice line. Refer to Figure 8. On taller buildings, different treatment of the first, middle and top stories **should** be used to define the three parts. Refer to Figure 9.
3. When new buildings are built immediately adjacent to or between existing buildings the design of the new building **should** respond to the existing buildings, through the use of architecture that provides transitional treatment between old and new. Such treatments may include matching cornice lines, a continuing colonnade and using similar materials and/or similar building proportions.
4. The scale of a new building **should** be compatible with, but not necessarily the same as, adjacent buildings. Special care, however, should be taken to achieve compatibility next to small scale buildings; techniques **should** include limiting size, building articulation and shadow patterns.

#### **D. Complexity/Unity**

- ❖ **A building should be stylistically consistent. Architectural style, materials, colors and form should all work together to express a single theme.**

1. Each building **should** be stylistically consistent.
2. The exterior building design, including roof style, color, materials, architectural form and detailing, **should** be consistent on all elevations of a building.
3. Monotony of building design **should** be avoided; on the other hand to busy of a design **should** also be avoided. Variation in wall plane, roofline, detailing, materials and siting may be used to prevent a monotonous appearance in buildings. Roof and wall plane variations, including building projections, bay windows and balconies, are **encouraged** to reduce scale and bulk.
4. Accessory structures **should** be architecturally consistent with the primary structures on a site.

#### **E. Roofs**

- ❖ **Roofs should be an integral part of the building design and overall form of the structure. Roofs should respond to the general design and nature of other roofs along the street. Refer to Figure 10.**

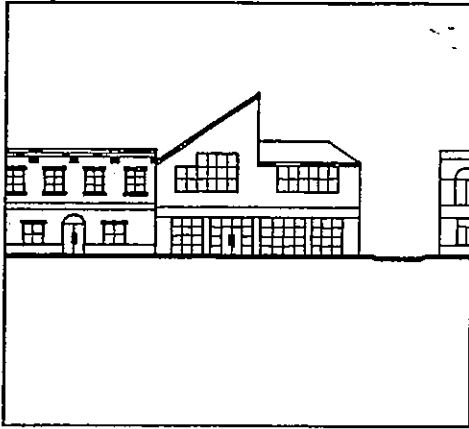


Figure 10: Roof types incompatible with adjacent roof types should be avoided.

1. The rooflines of buildings on adjacent properties **should** be considered when designing a new building so that clashes in style and materials are avoided.
2. Special attention **should** be given to the finish of parapets when buildings have flat roofs. Parapets **should** be finished with cornices, other horizontal decoration and/or clean edges with no visible flashing, depending on the architectural style of the building
3. Roof forms and materials **should** be stylistically consistent with the overall design theme of the building.
4. Roofs and rooflines **should** provide visual interest and should complement the overall facade composition.
5. Decorative roof elements **should** continue all the way around the building. Roof elements may be combined with wall or other roof elements which will work together on all sides of the building.

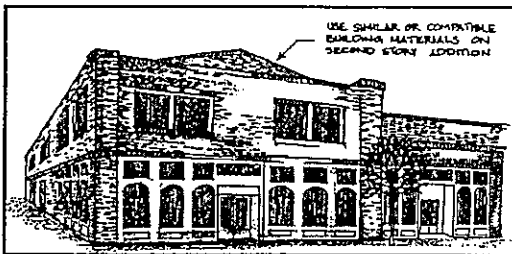


Figure 11: Use of building materials which are similar to those used on existing buildings.

## F. Materials and Colors

- ❖ The choice and use of building materials and colors **should** be balanced and should enhance the substance and character of the building. Refer to Figure 11.

1. Building materials that are similar in texture to those established in the District **should** be used.
2. Materials and colors **should** be varied to provide architectural interest. The number of materials and colors **should** not exceed what is required for contrast

and accent of architectural features and **should** be generally limited.

3. The exterior materials and architectural details of a building **should** relate to each other in ways that are traditional and/or logical. For example, heavy materials **should** appear to support lighter ones.
4. Appropriate building materials include:
  - Stone and Stone Veneers
  - Stucco and Plaster
  - Brick
  - Horizontal Wood Siding
  - Split-Face Concrete
  - BlockWood Shingles
  - Ceramic Tile
5. Inappropriate building materials include:
  - Vertical Wood Siding
  - Aluminum
  - Reflective Glass/Sheathing Glass
  - Simulated Finishes
  - Plywood Siding
6. Trim colors should contrast with building colors.
7. The color palette chosen **should** be compatible with the colors of adjacent structures.
8. Large areas of intense white color **should** be avoided.
9. Bright colors **should** be used sparingly. Fluorescent paints and garish colors are **discouraged**.

10. The number of colors appearing on a structure's exterior **should** be minimized. Small structures **should** use no more than three colors.

### 4.3 Facade Composition

The basic commercial facade **should** consist of three parts: the storefront, with an entrance and display windows; the upper facade, with regularly spaced windows; and the cornice, which caps the building.

#### A. Building Entrances/Facades

##### ❖ Building entrances **should** be clearly defined and accessible.

1. Building entrances **should** be prominent and easy to identify.
2. Second floor entrances **should** be placed at the rear or side of the building. Second floor entrances **should** be easily identifiable and distinguishable from first floor entrances.
3. Buildings designed to include prominent corner entrances are **encouraged**.
4. Side and rear building facades **should** have a level of trim and finish compatible with the front facade, especially if they are visible from streets, adjacent parking areas, public spaces, pedestrian spaces or residential buildings.



## B. Storefronts

❖ Buildings with inappropriately designed storefronts can clash with each other, visually damaging the overall character of the entire District. Proper design of the storefront is a high priority concern. Refer to Figures 12 and 13.

1. Storefronts **should** have their own base, roofline and pattern of door openings.
2. A panel of tile or other special material is **encouraged** below display windows.
3. The storefront **should** be composed almost entirely of glass, creating visual openness, balanced by more wall and less glass on the upper facade.
4. Recessed entries are **encouraged** as another traditional element of the storefront.
5. Doors **should** be substantial and well-detailed. They should be compatible with the building materials and with the design and character of the windows.
6. Visual elements **should** be provided at the second floor to differentiate the storefront from upper levels of the building.

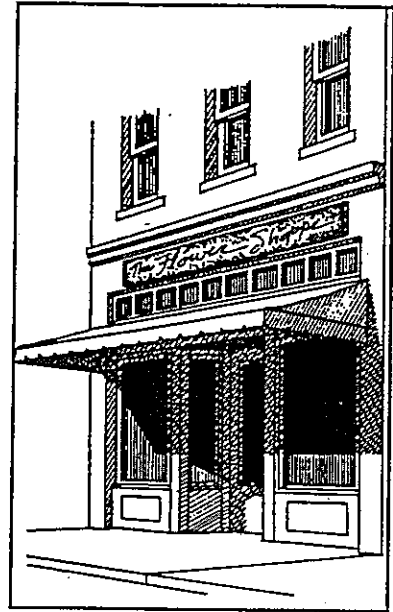


Figure 12: Well designed store front.

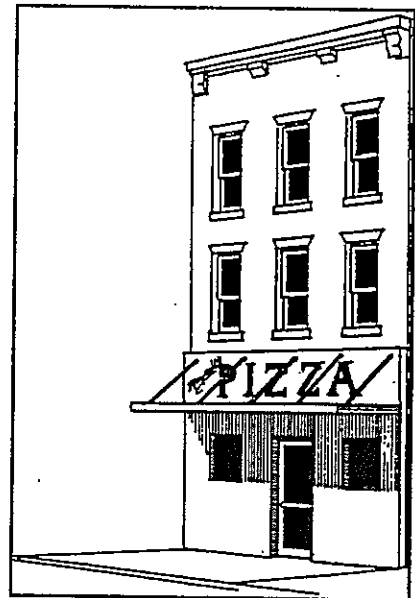


Figure 13: Poorly designed store front.

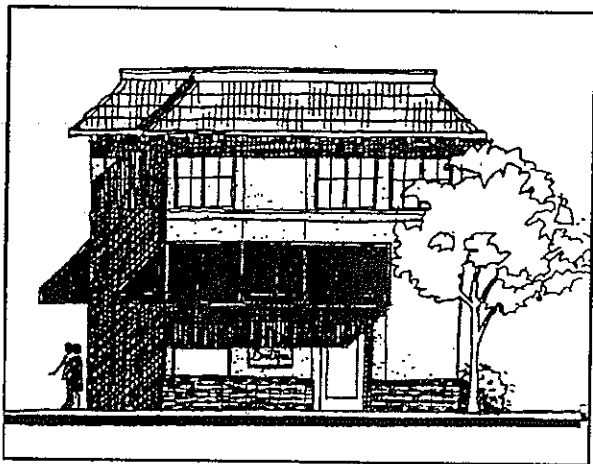


Figure 14: Awnings to reinforce store front openings are encouraged.

### C. Awnings

❖ The use of awnings is an important design element of the traditional storefront. They can be used to add complexity and shade storefront glass. Awnings should be mounted over a metal structure that is framed.

1. Awnings obscuring the architectural features of buildings are **discouraged**. Awnings should reinforce the design of the storefront. Refer to Figure 14.
2. Awnings **should** be in scale with the building.
3. Awnings **should** be placed a minimum of seven and one half feet above the sidewalk and project no more than seven feet from the building wall.
4. Awnings **should** be located above windows and doors, but below the storefront cornice or sign.

### D. Windows

❖ Window frames, transoms and first-floor display windows should align horizontally along the street creating a strong visual tie between buildings.

1. The horizontal alignment of the first floor transom and display windows **should** be maintained. Refer to Fig. 15.
2. The pattern created by upper-story windows should be maintained.



Figure 15: Horizontally aligned windows.

3. The clear distinction between the first floor and upper floors **should** be maintained. The first floor should have large areas of glass and upper floors should emphasize solid walls.
4. Clear glazing is strongly **encouraged**. Reflective glazing is strongly **discouraged**. If tinted glazing is used, the tint **should** be kept as light as possible.
5. Muntins or mullions are **encouraged** whenever their use would be architecturally compatible with the overall design of the building.  
"Snap-in" muntins or mullions are **discouraged**.

#### **E. Lighting**

- ❖ **Lighting should be used to create a sense of security and safety for on-site areas.**
1. Lighting **should** be adequate but not overly bright. All building entrances **should** be well lighted.
  2. All lighting fixtures **must** be shielded to confine the light within the site boundaries.
  3. The design of light fixtures and their structural supports **should** be architecturally compatible with the main structures on the street. Light fixtures **should** be integrated in the architectural design of the building.
  4. All light fixtures **should** be designed and for pedestrian activities.

## 4.4 Landscaping

Planted areas are used to frame and soften buildings, to define site functions, to enhance the quality of the environment and to screen undesirable views.

### A. General

❖ **Landscaping should work with the surrounding buildings to make a positive contribution to the aesthetics and function of the specific site and the area.**

1. All areas not covered by structures, service yards, walkways, driveways or parking spaces **should** be landscaped.
2. Landscaping **should** generally consist of live plants. Gravel, colored rock, tan-bark and similar materials are acceptable as mulch but not as ground cover. Plazas and other areas subject to pedestrian traffic may be paved with decorative materials, such as brick or cobblestone, in conjunction with live plants.
3. Landscaping **should** be used to define specific areas, define the edges of various land uses, provide a transition between neighboring properties and provide screening for loading and equipment areas.
4. Unity of design **should** be achieved by repetition of certain plant varieties and other materials and by coordination with adjacent landscaping, where appropriate.
5. Existing mature trees, creeks and riparian corridors **should** be preserved and incorporated into landscape plans.

6. Landscaping incorporated into a building design is **encouraged**. Trellises, arbors and cascading terrace landscaping should be considered.
7. The use of native and drought resistant plants, shrubs and trees is **encouraged**.

## 4.5 Parking and Circulation

A properly functioning parking lot is a benefit to property owners, their tenants and their customers. A parking lot needs to allow customers and deliveries to reach the site, circulate through the parking lot and exit the site easily and safely. Clear and easy to understand circulation should be designed into the project to allow motorists and pedestrians to move through the site without confusion.

### A. General

- ❖ **Parking lots should be designed for convenient parking and safe circulation.**
  1. Parking lots **should** be accessed from commercially developed streets.
  2. Surface parking lots **should** be located to the rear or side of buildings. Refer to Figure 16.
  3. Screen walls must not be located where they block the sight lines of drivers entering, leaving or driving through a site.
  4. Shared parking between adjacent businesses and/or developments is highly **encouraged**, whenever practical.

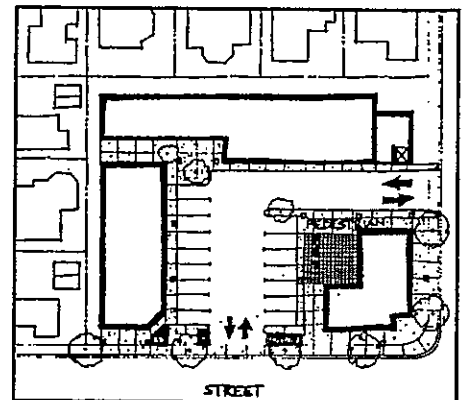


Figure 16: Rear parking lot accessed from a commercially developed street.

5. Parking areas **should** be landscaped, receiving interior as well as perimeter treatment, and designed in a manner which links the parking area to the street sidewalk system.
6. All parking areas **should** be well lighted.

## **B. Parking Structures**

### **❖ Parking structures should be designed to minimize negative impacts on adjoining properties and on the streetscape.**

1. Parking structures **should** be no taller than the principal building(s) they serve and **should** be complementary in form and materials.
2. Vehicles **should** be screened so as not to be visible above the principal building(s).
3. Every attempt **should** be made to screen parking structures from view from adjoining properties.
4. Parking structures **should** be architecturally consistent with the project and/or surrounding area. Plain or blank wall surfaces **should** be avoided. Ramped floors should not be visible from the street.
5. Setbacks for parking structures **should** match the setbacks for other on-site buildings.
6. Light fixtures within parking structures **should** be designed so the light source is not visible from off-site locations.

7. Lighting on the top deck of a parking structure **should** be architecturally integrated with the building and should not be mounted on tall poles.
8. Parking structure walls, adjacent to residential properties, **should** not have any openings through which sound may be transmitted.

### C. Pedestrians and Bicyclists

#### ❖ Safe and convenient facilities and means of access **should** be provided for pedestrians and bicyclists.

1. Pedestrian pathways **should** be provided through parking areas. Refer to Figure 17.
2. Bike racks **should** be provided at all commercial centers and at other retail and office sites large enough to attract and accommodate bicyclists.
3. Provisions for access by disabled persons **should** be incorporated into the overall pedestrian circulation system. The overall project design **must** be in compliance with The American Disability Act and Uniform Building Code.
4. Direct pedestrian access **should** be provided from main thoroughfares and/or side streets to the building entrance.

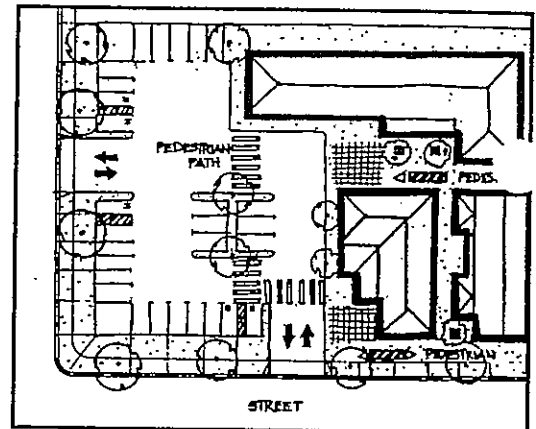


Figure 17: Dedicated pedestrian pathway through a parking lot.

5. Service access from side streets **should** be preserved and enhanced, wherever possible. Trash and loading areas **should** be centralized and screened from thoroughfares, side streets and properties to the rear.
6. Pedestrian corridors between buildings are **encouraged** where through block access is appropriate.
7. Signage indicating pedestrian routes **should** be provided.



## Section 5: Commercial Guidelines Regional Development

This section addresses those design issues related directly to regional commercial development, located along Pinole Valley Road between Henry Avenue and Interstate 80. Regional commercial development has its own set of characteristics which have been acknowledged and treated separately in this section. These guidelines are intended to improve the overall design quality of and emphasize the distinguishing characteristics of regional commercial uses, that may locate within this portion of the Old Town Design Guidelines Overlay District. The commercial design guidelines set forth in Section 4 also apply to all regional commercial development. This section is intended to review issues, specific to regional commercial development, not discussed in Section 4.

### 5.1 Regional Development

The major design problem facing regional commercial development is the interface between a commercial center's service activities and adjacent residences. The following section provides several techniques for mitigating the negative effects imposed by regional commercial development on adjacent residential uses.

#### A. Building Setbacks

❖ Refer to Figure 18.

	Non-Residential Interface	Residential Interface
Street	25'	25
Interior	5'	1½' : 1'

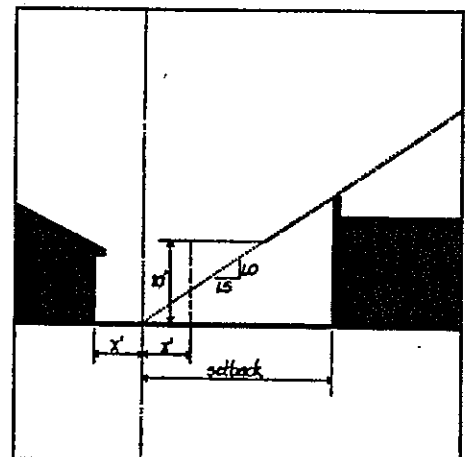
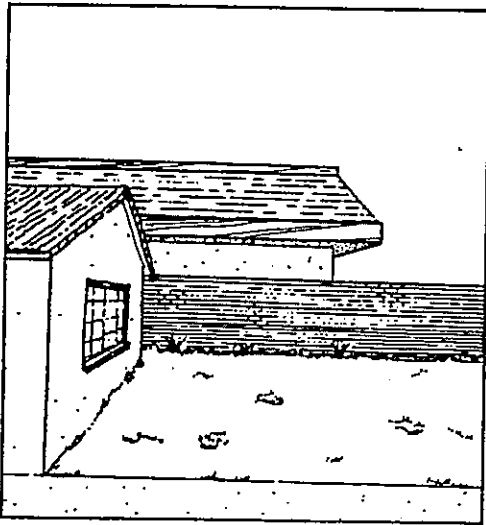


Figure 18: One and one half feet of setback from residential for each foot of building height.

## B. Site Orientation

1. All buildings on the same site **should** have a strong spatial and functional relationship to each other.
2. Multiple buildings in a single project **should** be varied in size and mass.
3. Portions of primary buildings and free standing buildings should be located at the street setback lines.
4. Parking **should** be provided within convenient walking distance to all commercial tenants.

## C. Building Design



*Figure 19: Commercial use compatible with adjacent residential use.*

1. Building elements, such as large blank building walls or loading areas, which disrupt the continuity of shops and businesses **should** be avoided.
2. Where long buildings are unavoidable, their linearity **should** be mitigated by changes in the building height, wall plane and spatial volumes and by varied use of window areas, arcades, materials and roof elements.
3. Portions of buildings adjacent to and visible from residential properties **should** always be architecturally compatible with surrounding residential uses. Refer to Figure 19.

## ***Section 6:*** **Residential Design Guidelines** **New Construction**

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As discussed in Section 2, Pinole's historic residential design themes include: Queen Anne Cottages, Hip Roof Cottages and Bungalows. Although many of these buildings have retained some of their original character, others have been poorly remodeled or completely altered in appearance. The goal of this section is not to replicate Pinole's historic styles but to encourage new construction that acknowledges the architectural style of existing structures.

### **6.1 The Setting**

The existing buildings and landscape of the city are the frame of reference for new development. To the extent that the scale and texture of new buildings blends with what is already there, the city is continuously woven together. Conversely, the blatant disregard of the existing pattern disrupts the essential character of the city.

#### **A. Surrounding Area Character**

- ❖ **All new structures and uses should be compatible with the character of the existing neighborhood.**

1. New development **should** complement the architectural styles, building forms and landscape patterns of neighboring development.



Figure 20: New development **should** incorporate representative characteristics of existing structures.

2. New development **should** incorporate representative characteristics of the surrounding area, when the area exhibits a positive and distinctive architectural style and/or established functional pattern. Refer to Figure 20.
3. New development **should** respect existing structures, in the immediate area, through the use of similar materials and proportions and the avoidance of overwhelming scale and visual obstruction.

## B. Site Character

- ❖ Site amenities **should** be preserved and **should** become part of a new project.
1. Natural amenities such as views, mature trees, creeks and similar features, unique to a site, **should** be preserved and incorporated into development proposals.
  2. Structures which are historic, or are otherwise distinctive, **should** be preserved and incorporated into development proposals.

## 6.2 Structures

The design and placement of a new building **should** respond to the general characteristics of its surrounding area, to the architectural standards of the larger community and to the opportunities and limitations of its site.

**A. Height and Mass**

- ❖ **The height and mass of a new residence should be compatible with the height and mass of the existing residences in the neighborhood and should respect the streetscape as a whole.**

1. Minimum building height should not be less than ten feet. New residential construction should be compatible with adjacent structures in story height.
2. Maximum building height should be two stories or thirty five feet.
3. A maximum building height of three stories may be permitted, in single-family or multi-family buildings, if the third story volume is enclosed by a pitched roof. Refer to Figure 21. Double-pitched roofs of any kind and mansard or gambrel roofs are acceptable. Single-pitched "shed" roofs are not appropriate and will not qualify for an exception. Note: A variance may need to be obtained to allow a building to be more than two stories.



*Figure 21: Maximum building height of three stories may be permitted if compatible with existing residences.*

**B. Building Orientation**

- ❖ **The siting of a new residence should be compatible with the siting of the residences along the street on which the new residence fronts.**

## Front Setbacks

1. All buildings **must** be setback a minimum of twenty feet from their front property line.
2. A curbside planting strip four feet wide and a minimum of a four foot wide sidewalk **should** be provided as part of all new development. A public easement **should** be established along the area between the existing street right-of-way and the back edge of the sidewalk.
3. Open porches and stairs may extend a maximum of five feet into the front setback area.
4. Architectural elements that add interest may encroach up to five feet into the front setback area.
5. A variance may need to be obtained to allow a building to encroach into the front setback area.
6. The required depth of the setback abutting a street may be reduced to the average depth of such yard on the adjoining lots if the adjoining lots are developed with residential buildings or if the reduction does not conflict with an already recorded plan line. Refer to Figure 22. Note: A variance may need to be obtained to reduce the depth of the setback abutting a street.

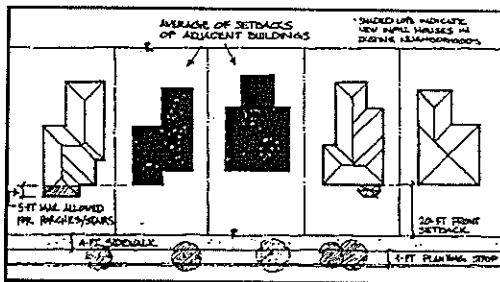


Figure 22: Infill lot front setback should be average of adjacent buildings.

### Side Setbacks

7. Buildings **must** be setback a minimum of five feet from the property line on both sides. On the street side of a corner lot, side yards **must** not be less than twenty percent of the lot width. Side yards on streets **must** not be less than ten feet and need not exceed twenty feet.

### Rear Setbacks

8. Principal buildings or main structures **must** be setback a minimum of ten feet or twenty percent of the lot depth and need not exceed twenty feet. Refer to Figure 23.
9. Accessory buildings, including garages, but excluding second units, may have a setback of zero feet, provided that the setback from the rear of the principal building is a minimum of eight feet and has a seventy five foot front setback. Freestanding garages **should** be unobtrusive, preferably located at the rear of properties to minimize visual impact.
10. Second units **must** not be less than eight feet from the principal building or main structure and setback not less than five feet.

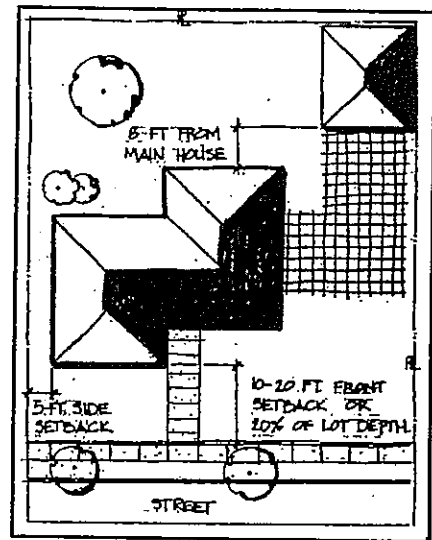


Figure 23: Building setback minimums.

### C. Building Design

- ❖ New residential construction should be compatible with the predominant architectural styles in the neighborhood.

1. Architectural elements that add interest, such as courtyards, porches, balconies, trellises, bay windows and planter boxes are **encouraged**.
2. Entrances to buildings **should** be visible from the street. The entryway should be well defined and lead from the sidewalk to an entry door.
3. Each developed parcel **should** provide at least one side or rear yard space of at least five hundred square feet. The yard **should** be based on a rectangular configuration, with no dimension less than eighteen feet in length.
4. Long uninterrupted flat-faced exterior walls should be avoided on all structures. All exterior walls should have architectural relief to help create an interesting design. The use of different textures, relief and design accents on building walls can help improve architectural design.
5. All stairs **should be** boxed and framed by attractive stepped solid walls or balustrade railings. Open porches **should** have attractive solid or open railings and a roof that complements the pitch and materials of the building's main roof. Supporting structures for these elements should be enclosed by solid walls or skirting.
6. The roof form **should** complement building mass. Pitched roofs, dormer windows, chimneys and other traditional residential forms are **encouraged** to add variety and make roofs attractive.

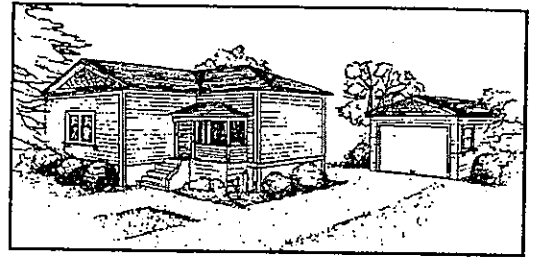




#### **D. Accessory Building Design**

- ❖ **Accessory buildings should be compatible with the main residential structure. They should be secondary in importance to the primary structure.**

1. Accessory buildings, including garages and carports, **should** have architectural treatments derived from the main building: surface materials, trim, fenestration, roof, materials and color. Refer to Figure 24.
2. Single-car garage doors are encouraged, with windows, surface panels, trim and other forms of architectural detailing to reduce their impact and scale.



*Figure 24: Compatibly designed accessory building/garage.*

#### **E. Materials and Colors**

- ❖ **The building materials and colors should be similar to those already in use.**

1. Appropriate building materials include:
  - Stucco
  - Brick
  - Horizontal Wood Siding
  - Wood Shingles
2. Inappropriate building materials include:
  - Vertical Wood Siding
  - Aluminum Siding
  - Vinyl Siding
  - Plywood Siding
  - Simulated Masonry Finishes

3. The color palette chosen **should** be compatible with the colors of adjacent structures.
4. Fluorescent paints and garish colors are **discouraged**.
5. A single body of color with a brighter and/or lighter accent color is usually the choice for most houses. A good rule of thumb when one desires to use a bright color is "one light, one bright," the bright color being used sparingly as the accent.

## F. Windows

### ❖ Windows should reflect the window patterns of the District.

1. All windows within a building, large or small, **should** be similar in operating type, proportions and trim. Other unifying elements should be used, such as common sills. Refer to Figure 25.
2. Built-up sills and trim **should** be used to create surface relief and texture.
3. Glass **should** be inset from the exterior surface to add relief to the wall surface, this is especially important for stucco buildings.
4. Special windows such as bays and dormers **should** be used to add interest and a domestic expression to the facade.

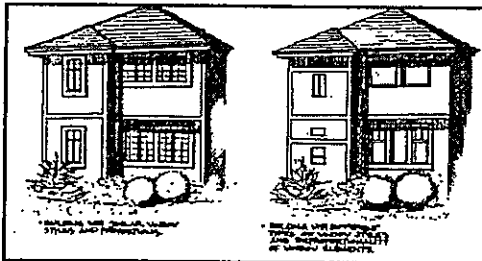


Figure 25: Building window style, consistent and inconsistent.

## G. Lighting

- ❖ **Lighting should be used to create a sense of security and safety for on-site areas.**

1. Ornamental lighting for porches and walks is **encouraged** to add attractiveness, safety and security.

## 6.3 Landscaping

Planted areas are used to frame and soften structures, to define site functions, to enhance the quality of the environment and to screen undesirable views.

### A. General

- ❖ **Landscaping should work with the surrounding buildings to make a positive contribution to the aesthetics and function of the specific site and the area.**

1. Existing mature trees, creeks and riparian corridors should be preserved and incorporated into landscape plans.
2. Items such as trellises, arbors and special landscape materials that add character to yard spaces and accent the entry sequence are **encouraged**. Items such as low hedges, fences or entry gates are **encouraged** to define the edge between the public street and private property. Refer to Figure 26.
3. The use of native and drought resistant plants, shrubs and trees is encouraged.

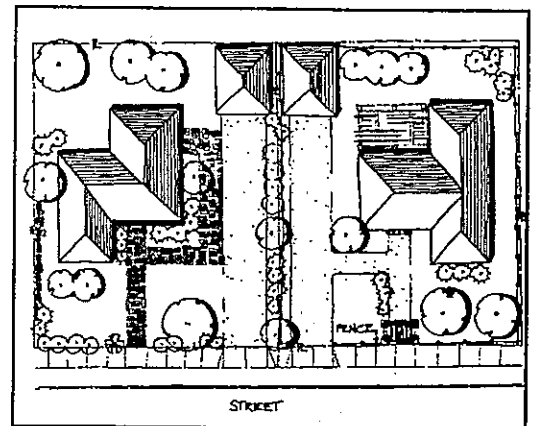


Figure 26: Use of trellises and arbors are encouraged as entry accents.

## 6.4 Vehicular Access

### A. Driveways

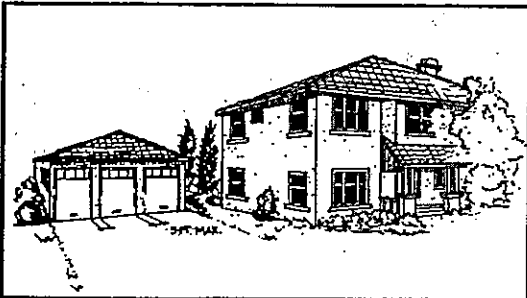
- ❖ The placement and design of a driveway should respect adjacent structures and properties.

1. All ramps **should** have a maximum grade of sixteen percent.
2. Setbacks from adjacent properties **should** be a minimum of five feet.
3. Setbacks from adjacent buildings **should** be a minimum of three feet.

### B. Parking

- ❖ Garages should be part of the overall residential design.

1. Single-family residences **should** have enclosed garages.
2. Multi-family residences **should** have covered parking.
3. Parking spaces for second dwelling units may be uncovered.
4. Freestanding garages **should** be located to the rear of principal buildings. Individual garage doors **should** be provided. A maximum of three garage doors may be lined up consecutively; a space of five feet **should** be provided between each group of three doors. Refer to Figure 27.



*Figure 27: Detached garage located near rear of property using individual garage doors.*

## ***Section 7: Rehabilitation***

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The design guidelines enumerated hereinafter are based on the Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior's "Standards for Rehabilitation". The Secretary's "Standards" are a set of ten general criterion developed to provide a practical guide for historic rehabilitation projects.

Care should be taken to preserve those historic buildings that make Pinole unique. The guidelines discussed in the previous sections, coupled with these ten principles, should be used by architects, designers and developers to ensure that Pinole's unique character is maintained. All projects, new construction and rehabilitation, are subject to the guidelines set forth in this document and will be considered by the Design Review Board.

### **7.1 Guidelines**

1. Every reasonable effort **should** be made to provide compatible use for a property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.
2. Destruction of the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment is **discouraged**. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features **should** be avoided when possible.
3. All buildings, structures, and sites **should** be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis or which seek to create an earlier appearance are **discouraged**.

4. Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance **should** be recognized and respected.
5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship which characterize a building, structure, or site **should** be treated with sensitivity.
6. Deteriorated architectural features **should** be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material **should** match the material being replaced in composition design, color, texture and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features **should** be based on accurate duplications of features substantiated by historic, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.
7. The surface cleaning of structures **should** be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials are **discouraged**.
8. Every reasonable effort **should** be made to protect and preserve archeological resources affected by or adjacent to any project.
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties **should not** be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment. Refer to Figure 28.

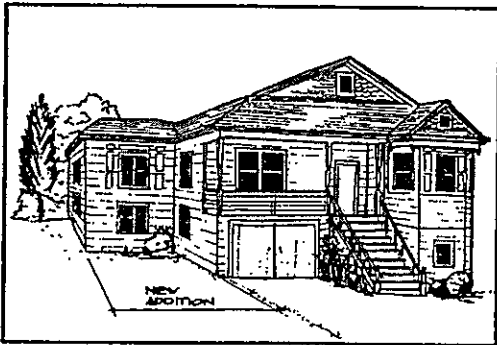


Figure 28: Contemporary addition designed to be compatible with historical structure.

10. Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to structure **should** be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.



## **Section 8: Sign Guidelines**

The functions of a sign are to identify the location of a business, to promote the merchandise or service within the business and to attract customers to the business.

Large and flashy signs disrupt the visual character of Old Town and obscure architectural features. Small signs can serve the needs of businesses, while contributing to both the image of individual building and to the overall character of the Design Guidelines Overlay District.

### **8.1 Design**

The following guidelines are meant as a supplement to the City of Pinole's Sign Regulations (Pinole Municipal Code Chapter 17.28). The objective of these sign guidelines is not uniformity, but elimination of elements that result in a cluttered and unattractive setting. The guidelines provide basic parameters for creative signs that may be as unique as the business they represent.

#### **A. Design**

- ❖ Every structure and commercial complex should be designed or rehabilitated with a precise concept for adequate signing. Provision for sign placement, sign scale and sign readability should be considered in developing the signing concept. All signage should be highly compatible with the building and site design relative to color, materials and placement.

1. Signs **should** be designed, built and installed by a licensed sign contractor.
2. Keep signs subordinate. They **should** not overwhelm the facade of the building. Refer to Figure 29.
3. Signs **should** fit within the existing features of the facade and **should** not cover architectural elements such as windows, transoms or cornices.
4. Signs **should** be simple and have a direct message. Cluttered signage is difficult to read and may confuse the passersby. Refer to Figure 30.
5. Sign colors, shapes, materials and size should reinforce the overall composition of the facade.
6. Careful consideration **should** be given to minimizing and simplifying every sign's supporting structure.
7. Large signs designed to attract the attention of motorists on the freeway are not permitted, except for shopping center signs or such other similar regional complexes.
8. Signs within a shopping center or other complex **must** be designed as part of the entire project.
9. Consider using simple straight forward shapes that get the message across clearly. Signs as symbols are **encouraged** because they are easily read and enhance the pedestrian quality of the downtown.

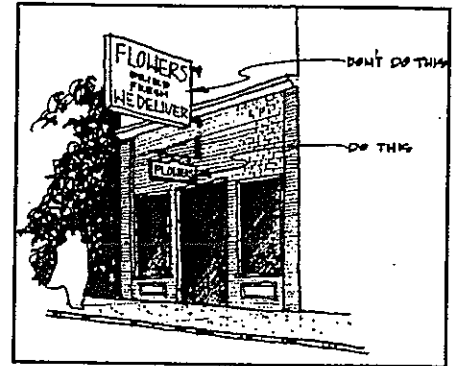


Figure 29: Example of appropriate and inappropriate sign size and sign placement.

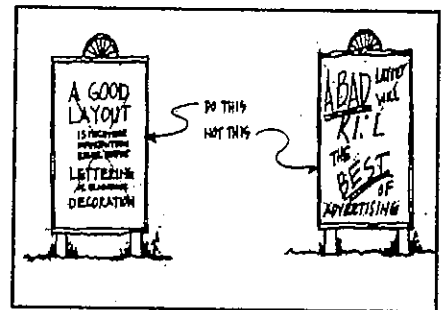


Figure 30: Example of cluttered signage and clear signage.

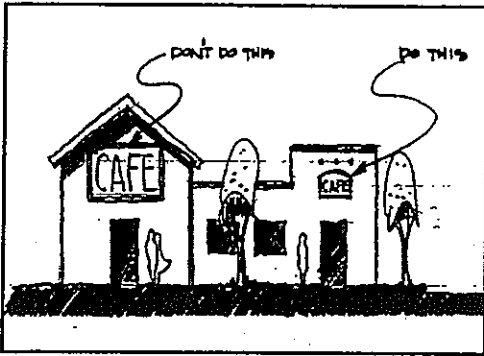


Figure 31: Example of appropriate and inappropriate sign placement.

## B. Sign Placement/Position

- ❖ Signs on storefronts should be located above display windows or awnings. Large signs near the top of building facades are discouraged. Refer to Figure 31.

1. Signs **should** be positioned so as not to obscure any architectural details. When several businesses share a building align all signs or use a directory.
2. Signs **must** not extend above the height of the immediately adjacent roof line or parapet.
3. Signs **must** not be mounted on or attached to the roof.
4. No part of a sign attached to or mounted on a building **should** project out more than thirty-six inches from the surface of the building to which it is attached.
5. Signs **must** not extend above the eave line. In case of a mansard roof, the sign may be incorporated in the roof if such sign is an integral part of the design of the building.
6. In multiple story structures, signs **should** be mounted somewhere above the display window or awning and below the second floor window sills.
7. Signs **must** not be located in a manner which may obstruct or interfere with the view of a traffic signal or other traffic regulatory signs.

### **C. Materials and Color**

- ❖ **Sign materials should be durable and easy to maintain. In general, building colors should be coordinated with sign colors.**

1. Appropriate sign materials include:
  - Routed, Carved, Sandblasted, Painted or Engraved Wood
  - Custom Cut and Applied Wood Letter
  - Precast Epoxy Letters
  - Metal
  - Slate or Marble
  - Vinyl
2. Sign colors **should** be coordinated with the colors of the building.

### **D. Sign Clarity**

- ❖ **Text should be kept to a minimum. The objective is to eliminate elements that result in a cluttered and unattractive setting.**

1. Letter styles of signs **should** be simple and easy to read.
2. The number of letter styles **should** be limited. Use of one or two letter styles is **encouraged**.
3. Letter forms **should** occupy no more than a maximum of seventy five percent of the total sign area.

## **E. Permitted Signs**

### **1. Permitted signs include:**

- Projecting Signs
- Flat Mounted or Painted Wall Signs
- Blade Signs Suspended from Canopies or Awnings
- Signs on Awnings or Canopies
- Monument Signs
- Pole Signs - A pole sign shall only be permitted when otherwise permissible freestanding monument sign would not be sufficiently visible due to obstruction or where there is no space in which to place the sign between the sidewalk and the building.
- Window signs with Painted or Vinyl Letters

## **F. Prohibited Signs**

### **1. Prohibited signs include:**

- Flashing Signs
- Signs with banners, flyers, pennants, pinwheels or two or more light bulbs in a wire string
- Portable Signs
- Board Signs
- Mobile Signs
- Moving Signs
- Non-accessory signs
- Reader Boards

## **G. Sign Lighting**

❖ **Sign illumination should be designed so as to avoid glare and light intrusion onto other signs or premises. Brightly illuminated signs are discouraged.**

1. Illumination external to the sign surface with lighting directed at the sign is encouraged. External lighting makes possible the illumination of architectural features. The bottom edge of light fixtures mounted on a building must be at least seven and one half feet above the sidewalk or finished grade.
2. Other types of sign lighting that may be acceptable include:
  - External incandescent sources
  - Small light sources placed inside of opaque projecting letters
  - Internally illuminated signs
3. Exposed neon **should** be carefully and sparingly used in signs.

## **H. Public Art**

❖ **Public artwork can lend identity, a sense of place and pride in a community. Artwork in outdoor public places, unlike gallery art, must be conceived as part of an overall architectural and landscape architectural design for a particular setting.**

1. Wall murals incorporating historic advertising art are **encouraged** to be painted on blank walls in Old Town.

# Glossary

The terms listed below have been defined to assist the reader in more fully understanding the Old Town Design Guidelines.

**Alteration:** Any addition or modification of any portion of the exterior of a building or designated feature that changes the architectural style, arrangement, texture or material of the building or feature or significantly changes the color, if such change, addition or modification is visible from a public street, sidewalk, alley or park

**Balustrade:** A railing consisting of a series of small columns connected at the top by a coping; a row of balusters.

**Berm:** A bank of earth, as the piled-up earth along a canal or against a masonry wall.

**Building Alignment:** A line usually parallel to a property line beyond which a structure may not extend. This generally does not apply to uncovered entrance platforms, porches, terraces, or steps.

**Cornice:** Any moulded projection which crowns or finishes the part to which it is fixed.

**Dormer:** A vertically set window on a sloping roof; the roofed structure housing such a window.

**Gable Roof:** A roof having a gable at one or both ends; a ridged roof that slopes up from only two walls. A gable is the triangular portion of the end a building from eaves to the ridge.

**Hipped Roof:** A roof with four pitched sides; a roof which rises by inclined planes from all four sides of a building.

**Massing:** Refers to the building shape; the combination of the different elements of the resulting bulk and shape of the building.

**Mullions:** A vertical or horizontal primary member dividing a window into 'lites', each of which may be further sub-divided into panes.

**Muntins:** The secondary member or stile in the framing of a paneled door, screen, as distinct from horizontal member or members called rails.

**Parapets:** a low protective wall on a bridge, gallery, balcony or above the cornice of a building.

**Pitch:** The angle, or degree, of slope of a roof.

**Roofline:** The contour or shape of a roof.

**Scale:** Refers to building size; the size of a structure relative to the size of the surrounding structures.

**Setback:** The minimum distance between a property line and a building, or portion thereof, as required by ordinance or code.

**Transom:** A horizontal member dividing a window.

**Window Panes:** A flat sheet of glass, cut to size for glazing a window or door



