

# RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES



CITY OF RANCHO CUCAMONGA  
PLANNING DIVISION

# ***INTRODUCTION***

These guidelines were prepared in response to the needs of many users: developers, property owners, architects, planners, landscape architects and civil engineers. Each of these interests plays a vital role in the successful design of a residential project.

The City of Rancho Cucamonga's goal is to foster the quality design that enhances the community. The more familiar you are with the City's expectations for design, the more prepared you will be and the better able we will be to help guide your project through to its successful completion.

The guidelines presented here are intended to inspire residential development of lasting quality. This manual will also serve as a guide for staff in reviewing your application. A summary, *The Development Review Process*, is also available from the Planning Department.

These guidelines are intended to be used only in combination with the City's Development Code and General Plan design policies and standards.

# SITE PLANNING

## ■ MULTI-FAMILY

*Well thought-out site planning is crucial in the development of successful projects. In addition to the standards outlined in the Development Code, the following should be considered. ■*

Relate the location of site uses with adjoining properties to avoid possible conflicts and take advantage of mutual potentials.

Consider sharing curb cuts with adjoining properties.

Buildings which are skewed in relationship to each other can create variety of view orientation and streetscape interest.

Provide adequate common open space, including recreation facilities, tot lots, and large open lawn areas.

Logical pedestrian connections between open spaces and dwelling units, and to perimeter streets, enhance quality of life, are safer, and lower maintenance costs.

Create logical circulation system which is readily understandable to the user.

Treat drive aisles like the streetscape: curvilinear lanes and parkway trees.

Screen parking areas from the street with mounding, landscaping, low profile walls, and lowering grade of parking areas below street.

Screen exterior trash areas, storage areas, utilities, etc. from view using elements compatible with architecture and landscaping.

Strengthen project entry statements with expanded accent landscaping, decorative paving and special architectural features incorporated into perimeter walls or monument signs.

Terminate entry statement at an interior focal point, such as unique architecture or landscape elements, fountains, plazas, stream and/or waterfall elements or landscape treatment which take aesthetic advantage of variation in grade.

Consider street setbacks on adjacent properties, yet vary setbacks whenever possible.

Preserve existing healthy trees in place, creating a natural focal point.

Provide two means of ingress and egress, not including emergency only access.

Orient buildings to focus on good views.

Consider visitor parking beyond minimum code requirements.

Distribute parking evenly throughout project.

Avoid dead-end drive aisles over 150 feet in length.

## ■ SINGLE -FAMILY

*Placement of houses in single family subdivisions is an important element in creating a functional, quality living environment. ■*

Provide larger side yard setback (i.e., 10-12 feet minimum) on garage side of lot to allow vehicular access to the rear yard.

Provide greater variation in front yard setback on larger lots (i.e., 1/2 acre or larger).

Locate driveways as far as possible from intersections.

Substantially vary front yard setbacks.

Provide two means of ingress and egress, not including emergency only access.

Orient buildings to focus on good views.

Vary garage treatments, such as side entry, detached and semi-detached, rear entry, etc.

On flag lots, use 12-foot width for that portion of driveway providing access to the garage to minimize concrete and maximize landscaping potential.

Pair garages to create larger front yards, greater separation between driveways and create variety along the streetscape.

Taper three or four car garage driveways down to a standard two-car width at street. ■■

## ***SUBDIVISION***

***The proper layout of a subdivision's circulation, drainage, and lot pattern is important to the success of the project. ■***

Provide two means of ingress and egress.

Use side-on-cul-de-sacs, as opposed to standard cul-de-sacs, when adjacent to streets or pedestrian trails.

Curvilinear streets to be used whenever possible. Avoid grid pattern.

Maximum 800-foot straight section to avoid long straight streets.

Right-of-way width, street section, street radius, and intersection spacing to conform to the Street Design Policy available from the Engineering Department.

Corner lots to be wider than interior lots.

Relate lots and streets to one another to create neighborhoods.

Relate development to adjacent development relative to street design and lot pattern.

Avoid long flag lots, key lots, and lots which side on to the rear of other lots.

If the tract is bordered or surrounded by undeveloped land, prepare a conceptual subdivision plan for those properties to indicate that logical circulation and drainage can occur.

Avoid double-frontage lots on interior streets.

Four-way intersections are generally preferred over offset "T" type on collector or larger streets.

Avoid four-way local-to-local intersections.

Intersections, including knuckles, to be perpendicular (radial on curves).

The maximum length for cul-de-sacs is 600 feet in length for single-family and 300 feet for multi-family developments.

Local streets to be a minimum of 150 feet apart.

Align intersections with existing streets or provide adequate spacing between intersections.

Only use private streets where through traffic is not necessary and where the private street is gated.

Private gated entrances to provide adequate turn around space in front of the gate and a separate visitor lane with call box to avoid cars stacking into the public right-of-way. ■■

# SINGLE FAMILY

*Single family residential development should promote an attractive streetscape through architectural and site planing design elements that create variety and interest. Housing tracts characterized by repetitious street scenes of nearly identical two-story houses built at the minimum setback lines are not desirable. Generally, it requires the use of a combination of design concept solutions to achieve the goal of creating varied, interesting and attractive streetscapes. ■*

- Avoid excessive repetition of single family homes with near identical floor plans and elevations. Vary floor plans and elevations as follows:

<u>Number of Single Family Dwellings</u>	<u>Minimum Number of Floor plans*</u>	<u>Minimum Number of Elevations/Floor plans**</u>
5-10	3	2
11-20	4	3
21-40	5	3
41-60	6	4
61-80	7	4
81-100	8	4
Over 100	1 Additional for Each 40 DU's Over 100	

\*The following may be counted as additional floor plans:

1. Reverse footprints.
2. Alternate orientation of 90 degrees or greater
3. Alternate garage orientation (i.e., side entry or detached).

\*\* Reverse footprints shall not count as additional elevations. Variations in the following design elements, which create a significant difference in streetscape appearance, shall count as additional elevations:

1. Plans with different architectural styles.
2. Plans with changes in massing and scale.
3. Plans with roof ridges running in different directions.
4. Plans with significant changes in roof pitch appropriate to the style.

- Vary lot size and lot width in order to provide designers with opportunities to include significant variations in house orientations that balance livable open space with mass. For example, a wider lot creates opportunity for greater separation between homes and accommodates side entry garages.
- Substantially vary setback and footprint orientation.
- Design house size and mass in proportion to the lot size and lot dimensions. Houses which project a two-story volume straight up at the minimum setbacks on small lots are inappropriate.
- Provide extra deep setbacks for two-story houses on corner lots. ■■

# GRADING

*Proper grading techniques that are sensitive to natural conditions must be utilized for reasons of public safety, maintenance, aesthetics, and environmental protection. The following guidelines are suggested. ■*

Undulate berms to screen parking areas. ■■

Minimize the amount of site grading needed for development and utility construction through proper site planning.

Grade land and landscape in workable increments to avoid exposing vast expanses of bared earth at any given time to minimize soil erosion.

Development in the foothills to relate to the slope in order to preserve the integrity of the hillside and minimize disruption of natural ground form. Adapt all structures in such areas to natural ground form through the use of split pads, built-up foundations, stepped footings, stem walls, etc.

In hillside areas, development to be designed to preserve open spaces, protect natural features, and offer views to residents.

Roadway alignments and gradients to be designed and located to avoid excessive grading and to reflect the existing land forms.

Round off and contour all graded slopes to blend with the existing terrain, and present a more natural appearance.

Establish proper soil management techniques to reduce the adverse effects (i.e., erosion) of grading.

Provide driveways with maximum slope of 15 percent.

Provide 18-foot area in front of garage that does not exceed 5 percent.

Minimize slopes between lots to preserve privacy. Where slopes cannot be minimized, mitigate concerns through other means - landscaping, fencing, etc.

Minimize disruption of existing natural features, such as trees and other significant vegetation, natural ground forms, rock outcroppings, water, and views.

# ARCHITECTURE

*The City of Rancho Cucamonga seeks well thought-out design solutions which reflect the best of a particular style, respect the community's heritage, and relate well to their surroundings. ■*

Provide architectural treatment to all elevations (i.e., 360 degree architecture), including details and materials on sides and rear.

If the front of a house is sided, then provide siding to the other sides of the house.

Consider compatibility with surrounding architectural character, including harmonious building style, form, height, size, color, material, and roof line.

Develop individual expression in single buildings in harmony with neighborhood. Refrain from architectural gimmicks that sacrifice the integrity of the streetscape to a single structure.

Design house size and mass in proportion to the lot size and lot dimensions. Articulation (significant horizontal movement of wall planes) is expected to avoid "boxy" houses that project a two-story volume straight up.

Roof lines are critical to the visual impact of a home. Provide roof lines which respond to the general design of other roofs along the street. Vary roof massing and/or heights on larger buildings.

Roof material shall be tile.

Upgrade design treatment of carport structures to reflect the architectural design of the dwelling units.

Vary roof designs along rear elevations of units backing up to perimeter streets to provide a pleasant and varied streetscape.

Coordinate exterior building design on all elevations from building to building to achieve the same level of design quality. Enhance architectural elements exposed to public view.

On small lot subdivisions, avoid diverse architectural styles. Keep the design statement, materials, and details consistent. The use of mixed incompatible architectural styles is strongly discouraged. For example, a Cape Cod style is incompatible with a Spanish style.

Choose colors consistent with the chosen design theme. Avoid "trendy" colors which become quickly outdated. Low-key and earthy colors work best for primary colors; use of more vibrant colors should be limited to accents.

Provide lockable storage space for multiple family units.

Use a 2-car garage with bonus room on some floor plans or offset the third car space to avoid garages that dominate streetscape. For multi-family projects, garages should be architecturally designed to compliment the residences; consider varying the door treatment on multiple garage structures.

1-story homes should comprise 10-20% of the mix, greater if the surrounding neighborhood is 1-story. 1-story massing is preferred on corner side yards.

Shadow patterns created by architectural elements such as overhangs, trellises, reveals and recesses, and awnings; contribute to a building's character while aiding in climate control.

Avoid identical or similar elevation schemes plotted on adjacent lots or across the street from one another. Avoid identical color schemes plotted on adjacent lots.

Integrate screens for all roof-mounted equipment into the building design (i.e., extend parapet walls) rather than as an afterthought.

Design roof line in conjunction with building mass for consistent composition.

On hillsides, design the form, mass, and profile of buildings and architectural features so as to compliment the natural topography.

Use native rock for fieldstone. Other forms of stone may be manufactured products.

Design chimney stacks with accent materials used on house, such as brick or stone, except interior chimneys.

Porches should be functional with a minimum 6-foot depth.■

# LANDSCAPING

***The appropriate use of landscape materials is an important element of successful development. Plant materials should be used extensively to reinforce community identity, to create a pleasant and livable environment, to control erosion, to provide protection from wind and hot summer sun, and to tie new development into the surrounding context. ■***

Include existing mature trees worthy of preservation in the landscape concept.

Select plant materials for their suitability to the environment and compatibility with Xeriscape principles (i.e., water conservation).

Select plants that are tolerant of local conditions (i.e., hot summers and seasonal winter high winds) and relatively free of pests and disease. General criteria for selection includes low maintenance, drought tolerance, heat tolerance, wind tolerance, and fast growing species.

Select plants of appropriate size at maturity for their intended use to minimize maintenance or replacement when the plant outgrows available space.

Avoid plants that have messy fruit/seed/flower drop or brittle branches near paving, as they are a potential safety hazard and a long term maintenance liability.

Locate plant materials in response to architectural design and site planning. Plants can be used to keynote entries, contrast with or reinforce building lines and volumes, and soften the hard lines or blank wall expanses of architecture.

Group plants according to their watering needs.

Use plants to define outdoor spaces such as street edge or outdoor eating areas, or movement paths between parking and dwelling units.

Simple plant palettes are preferred over complex schemes.

Use deciduous trees on southern and western exposures to screen summer sun yet permit winter light.

Use evergreen trees to block winter winds and decrease heat gain.

Provide landscape adjacent to and within parking areas in order to shade parking and pavement areas, and to minimize the expansive appearance of parking areas.

Maintain adequate sight lines for motorists at intersections and driveways.

Densely landscape to screen unattractive views and features, such as parking lots, storage areas, trash enclosures, freeway structures, utility equipment (i.e., transformers, meters, backflow valves), and air conditioning units.

Trees should be planted to achieve a continuity of form. General guidelines for the use of landscaping to achieve this continuity include:

- Using the same tree form (i.e., columnar of round headed) along streets of the same type to reinforce the hierarchy of street types.
- Planting trees in similar patterns on streets of the same type.
- Using the same species for the entire length of a street or throughout an entire area.

Landscape front yard on lots averaging 4,500 square feet or less.

Treat driveways with decorative hardscape.

Use low maintenance plant materials on corner side yards that will be privately maintained. ■■

# *FENCING*

*Fencing should reflect quality and be complimentary to the architectural style. Fencing materials should be selected for permanency. The following guidelines are suggested. ■*

Provide decorative perimeter fencing (i.e., masonry) at tract edges and along streets.

"Decorative" means stucco finish, split face block or similar textured surface. Smooth precision block is not acceptable.

Vary wall setbacks adjacent to major thoroughfares to increase visual interest.

Retaining walls exposed to public view to be decorative masonry.

Construct block walls between houses (i.e., along interior side and rear property line), rather than wood fencing for permanence, durability, and design consistency.

Slope fencing along side property lines may be wrought iron or black plastic-coated chain link to maintain an open feeling and enhance views.

Provide minimum 5-foot setback between fencing on corner side yards and sidewalk.

All walls to be decorative masonry and compatible with the architectural style. If more than one style of house design exists, then a simple wall design is preferred. ■■

# *TRAILS*

*The City of Rancho Cucamonga is placing significant emphasis on the development of regional, community, and local feeder trails. The General Plan establishes a trail system to provide an interconnected network of trails linking parks, schools, shopping and employment centers with residential areas. To this end, the following guidelines should be considered. ■*

All new developments to be designed in accordance with the Master Plan of trails and adopted trail standards.

Maintain trails on natural surfaces (i.e., no grading) and located along natural features wherever possible.

Consider existing bicycling, pedestrian, and equestrian access and traditional travel routes through the property, particularly routes to schools.

Within the Equestrian/Rural Area, provide trail connections through easements in order to connect disconnected trails and for needed access to recreation activities.

Provide local feeder trails on the rear of residential lots for equestrian access and related equestrian service access within Equestrian/Rural Area.

Provide a means of public access in subdivisions to regional trails.

Within subdivisions, provide an internal loop trail system of local feeder trails.

Plot houses such that there is reasonable rear yard opportunity for the keeping of horses and other animals within the Equestrian/Rural Area.

Provide a 24-foot x 24-foot corral area in the rear yard of all residential lots within the Equestrian/Rural Area.

Grade access from the corral area to trail with a maximum slope of 5:1 and a minimum width of 10 feet. ■■