



OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS CHECKLIST **For Multi-Family and Mixed-Use Residential Projects**

APPLICABILITY

This checklist is a user-friendly compilation of all Walnut Creek Design Review Objective Design Standards applicable to projects with residential units. Objective Design Standards are mandatory for housing development projects, defined as projects which use consists of:

- Single family homes if the home requires Design Review pursuant to 10-2.4.1203.1;
- Mixed-use projects with 2/3 of the square footage dedicated to residential units; and
- Transitional or supportive housing projects

Applicants may seek exceptions or modifications to these standards by electing to process the development application through the discretionary Design Review process. Generally, these standards will apply to all new residential development within the City, as well as qualifying modifications to existing developments. Objective Design Standards are applicable to projects requesting approval pursuant to any provision of state law that references objective design standards (including, but not limited to, the Housing Accountability Act or other provisions of Planning and Zoning Law).

INTENT

These standards establish the priority criteria for how site, building, landscaping, and other improvements shall be designed. These Standards are intended to provide design professionals, property owners, residents, staff, and decision-makers with a clear and common understanding of the City's expectations for the planning, design and review of development proposals in Walnut Creek. These standards are pulled from a variety of sources. Where there is a discrepancy between standards amongst the various documents, the stricter requirement applies.

DISCRETIONARY DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

If a project applicant seeks exceptions or modifications to the Objective Design Standards contained herein, the project becomes subject to the discretionary Design Review process.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Building Standards and other requirements included in the Municipal Code also apply, though not included herein, such as Stormwater Quality requirements.

APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY

Applicants are responsible for accurately filling out and confirming the applicable Objective Design Standards checklist items, and that conditions of approval are met. Please review each criteria and mark with an "X" to identify whether or not your project complies. If a specific Objective Design Standard is not applicable to your project, please mark an "X" in the "N/A" column.

EXISTING OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

Standards highlighted in this color are extracted from 2018 Addendum

Checklist Items		Applicant Evaluation			Staff Evaluation
		Yes	No	N/A	By:
Site Planning					
II	Site Relationships				
C	Grading				
2	Proposed cut and fill slopes shall be rounded off both horizontally and vertically.				
5	Wood retaining walls shall not exceed 2 feet in height.				
6	Wood retaining walls shall be set back from the property line, at a minimum, the distance of their height.				
E	Pedestrian and Vehicular Circulation				
6	Where pedestrian circulation crosses vehicular routes, a change in grade materials, textures or colors shall be provided to emphasize the conflict point and improve its visibility and safety.				
Bike Parking					
AD 1	Except in the case of individual locking bicycle lockers and attended bicycle parking, all bicycle parking spaces shall provide a means of securing the bicycle frame and at least one wheel to a securely anchored rack.				
AD 2	Where bicycle parking is not visible from the street, directional signage shall be included at the main building entrance.				
Vehicular Parking					
AD 1	Controlled entrances to parking facilities (gates, doors, etc.) shall be located a minimum of 18 feet from the back of sidewalk, in order to accommodate one vehicle entering the facility.				
AD 2	Except for garage entrances, structured parking shall not be visible from the street, or any adjacent public park, publicly accessible outdoor space or designated open space area. The public-facing elevations of parking structures				

	shall be lined with residential uses on all levels (commercial may be used on the ground floor when allowed by zoning).																	
AD 3	Structured parking shall be designed such that interior lighting shall be fully shielded and automobile headlamps shall not be visible from adjacent buildings, parcels, streets, public parks, publicly accessible outdoor space or designated open space area.																	
AD 4	<p>A portion of the required number of parking spaces shall be made available for use by guests, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.10 spaces per dwelling unit for affordable projects (defined as projects reserving at least 50% or more of the units for income-restricted households, as defined under California Law). • 0.15 spaces per dwelling unit for all other projects. <p>These guest parking spaces shall be located outside of any security gates or other access limitation devices unless provisions are made to allow a resident to remotely communicate with and provide access to the visiting guest (such as through an intercom and remote control gate, or other similar devices).</p>																	
AD 5	In the Core Area, no surface parking shall be located between the main building and any street.																	
Private Outdoor Space																		
AD 1	<p>For the purposes of this standard, private outdoor space is defined as outdoor space that is usable and accessible only to building residents and their visitors, but not to the general public.</p> <p>A minimum amount of private outdoor space shall be provided for residential projects as identified in the rate expressed in the table below, and applied to the development as a whole.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Locations</th> <th>Project Type</th> <th>Private Outdoor Space Requirement</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Core Area</td> <td>Affordable</td> <td>100 SF per Unit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Others</td> <td>150 SF per Unit</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Outside Core Area</td> <td>Affordable</td> <td>150 SF per Unit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>All Others</td> <td>200 SF per Unit</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Locations	Project Type	Private Outdoor Space Requirement	Core Area	Affordable	100 SF per Unit	All Others	150 SF per Unit	Outside Core Area	Affordable	150 SF per Unit	All Others	200 SF per Unit				
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	<p>is met, the private outdoor space standard applicable to affordable projects would apply to all the units in the project, whether or not they are affordable.</p> <p>Private outdoor space may be provided as a combination of “personal” and “common” outdoor spaces, defined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Common" outdoor space shall be provided with shared access for all building tenants. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Courtyards, gardens, play areas, outdoor dining areas, Recreation amenities, rooftop amenities • "Personal" outdoor space shall be provided with direct access from the dwelling unit which it serves. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Balconies, private gardens, private yards, terraces, decks, porches 				
AD 2	Unless located on the rooftop, common outdoor spaces shall be designed to be visible from inside the building, such as windows located at building entrances and/or dwelling unit windows.				
AD 3	For each common outdoor space provided, a minimum 15-foot dimension is required in at least one direction, with a minimum dimension of at least 10 feet in all other directions.				
AD 4	Up to 15% of the common outdoor space may be landscaped using required stormwater treatment planters that are contiguous with the common outdoor space.				
AD 5	For each personal outdoor space provided, a minimum dimension of 5 feet is required in any one direction.				
II	Landscape Design				
A	General				
4	Dense landscaping and/or architectural treatments shall be provided to screen unattractive views and features such as storage areas, trash enclosures, freeway structures, transformers, generators, and other similar elements.				
5	Electrical transformers which are installed as part of a new project shall be located to the rear of the site or underground. Existing transformers located at the front of the site shall be screened by				

	substantial landscaping and/or an architectural barrier.				
AD 1	<p>Required stormwater treatment facilities can be located in publicly accessible outdoor spaces, but shall not be located in private outdoor spaces (common or personal), public rights-of-way, or public access easements. Exceptions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permeable paving (as defined by applicable stormwater management standards), which can be used in private (common or personal) outdoor space. • Landscaped required stormwater treatment planters, which may occupy up to 15% of the common outdoor space. 				
B	<i>Parking Lot Landscape</i>				
1	Landscaping shall permit adequate sight distance for motorists and pedestrians entering and exiting a site and shall not interfere with circulation patterns (see Muni Code Sections 3-5.116 and 3-5.1702).				
2	Landscaping shall be provided adjacent to and within parking areas to screen vehicles from view and to minimize the expansive appearance of parking fields.				
3	Landscape planting areas shall be provided an average of every 10 parking stalls within a surface parking lot to provide visual relief and summer shade. Landscape planting areas which are used for separation between banks of parking stalls shall be a minimum of 4 feet in width.				
4	The minimum clear inside dimension of a landscape planting area shall be 2 feet measured from back of curb. However, trees (with the exception of shrub standards) shall not be planted in areas of less than 4 feet in width.				
5	Reinforced Portland cement concrete curbing shall be used at the edges of all planters and paving surfaces adjacent to auto circulation or parking areas.				

	7	A 2.5-foot auto overhang is allowed over landscape areas which shall not be less than 4 feet in width measured from back of curb.				
C	<i>Landscape Design Standards</i>					
	2	<p>All street trees or parking lot trees shall be a minimum of 24-inch box size. In other areas proposed trees shall meet the following standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-14 trees proposed: 50% shall be 24-inch box size min., remainder shall be 15 gallon size min. • More than 14 trees proposed: Of the first 14 trees, 50% (or seven trees) shall be 24-inch box size minimum, and the remaining seven trees shall be 15 gallon minimum size. 30% of the remaining trees proposed shall be 24-inch box size min., and the remainder shall be 15 gallon size min. 				
	5	All proposed shrubs except accent, color or ground cover planting shall be a minimum of 5 gallon size.				
	8	No irrigated landscape area will be allowed under existing oak trees or other highly protected species which would be adversely effected. (See City of Walnut Creek Tree Preservation Ordinance.)				
D	<i>Construction Requirements</i>					
	2	Landscaping plans shall show all obstructions such as street lights, meters, backflow devices, utility covers, transformers, and similar objects which may affect plant placement and installation limitations.				
	6	When installing street trees, Standard City Specifications regarding grate size, staking, etc. shall be consulted (Walnut Creek Municipal Code Sec. 7-1.406 – 7-1.407 and Engineering City Standards MS-3, MS-4-1, MS-4-2, MS-5-1, MS-5-2 and MS-6).				
E	<i>Street Trees – Planting Standards – Residential Districts</i>					

	1	The master street tree planting plan specifies approved tree species for each residential street. Property owners shall install and maintain street trees consistent with this plan.				
	2	In residential areas, street trees shall normally be planted at 40-foot intervals.				
	3	In residential areas, street trees shall be planted at least 3 feet away from a public sidewalk, at least 10 feet away from sewer or water lines, and at least 5 feet from a driveway, except in an existing parkway area as approved by the Community Development Department or the Design Review Commission.				
	4	All street trees in residential districts shall be installed at a minimum of 24-inch box size.				
III	Off-Street Parking Design					
A	Site Design					
	3	Pedestrian pathways shall be separated from auto circulation routes.				
	4	Bicycle parking spaces shall be provided within commercial development in convenient and secure locations. The ratio of bicycle parking to auto parking spaces shall be 2%.				
B	Dimensions and Materials					
	1	Continuous Portland cement concrete curbing and vehicle stall striping shall be provided for all parking areas.				
	3	Trees installed in parking lots shall be protected from vehicle damage by concrete curbing which surrounds the landscape pocket.				
	4	Driveway entrances shall provide 10-foot clear behind sidewalk prior to starting the first parking space.				
IV	Fencing and Screening Design					
A	Design Standards					
	3	Utility lines are required to be undergrounded within the Core Area, along identified scenic corridors and gateways (as identified in the General Plan).				

	4	Electrical transformers and similar utility structures shall be undergrounded or placed in the rear of the site. If undergrounding is infeasible due to preexisting site conditions such as high water table, the facility shall be enclosed within the building or adequately screened from view. Screening will preferably use solid materials, such as berming or enclosures rather than reliance on solely on plant materials.				
	6	Rooftop mechanical and electrical equipment, microwave antennae, or building elements to screen such equipment shall be designed as an integral part of the building architecture.				
	AD 1	Chain link, barbed wire, and razor wire fencing is prohibited.				
B	Trash Enclosures					
	1	Trash enclosures shall be constructed of sturdy, durable, opaque materials (with trash receptacles screened from view).				
	2	Trash enclosures shall include adequate, accessible and convenient areas for collecting and loading recyclable materials. Dimensions of the recycling area shall accommodate receptacles to meet the recycling needs of the project. To determine the appropriate dimensions needed for dumpsters and waste wheelers, contact the solid waste and recycling management representatives.				
	3	Areas for collecting and loading recyclable materials shall be adjacent to the solid waste collection areas.				
V	Exterior Lighting Design					
	2	Exterior light of the building and site shall be designed so that light is not directed off the site and the light source is shielded from direct offsite viewing.				
Architecture						
I	General Architectural Guidelines					
	7	Exterior materials shall be durable and of high quality. Non-durable materials such as thin layer synthetic stucco products shall not be used within 8 feet of ground				

	level unless specially reinforced or located away from pedestrian accessible areas.				
11	All vents, gutters, downspouts, flashing, electrical conduits, etc., shall be painted to match the color of the adjacent surface, unless being used expressly as a trim or accent element.				
12	Soffits and other architectural elements visible to the public but not detailed on the plans shall be finished in a material compatible with other exterior materials.				
16	Approved address numbers shall be provided so that they are legible to the public from the street fronting the property. Commercial address signs in the downtown area shall be illuminated.				
Building Articulation					
AD 1	Buildings over three stories tall shall have major massing breaks at least every 100 feet along any street frontage, adjacent public park, publicly accessible outdoor space, or designated open space, through the use of varying setbacks, building entries and recesses, courtyards or structural bays. Major breaks shall be a minimum of 5 feet deep and 10 feet wide, and shall extend at least two-thirds of the height of the building. Exceptions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For buildings with upper stories (above first floor) stepped back at least five feet, the major break need only extend two-thirds of the height of the portion of the front façade that is not stepped back. 				
AD 2	Buildings shall have minor massing breaks at least every 50 feet along the street frontage, through the use of varying setbacks, building entries and recesses, or structural bays. Minor breaks shall be a minimum of 18 inches deep and four feet wide and extend the full height of the building.				
AD 3	Rooflines shall be vertically articulated at least every 50 feet along the street				

	frontage, through the use of architectural elements such as parapets, varying cornices, reveals, clerestory windows, and varying roof height and/or form.				
II	Residential				
C	Multiple Family Residential				
	Residential and Mixed-Use Building Frontages				
AD 1	Primary building entrances and associated paths of travel shall be visible from the adjacent street.				
AD 2	Within the Core Area, any mixed-use building street frontage greater than 150 feet in length shall have multiple pedestrian entrances to access the businesses or residences in the building. The maximum distance between building entrances along the same frontage shall be no more than 75 feet.				
AD 3	Blank walls (facades without doors, windows, landscaping treatments) shall be less than 30 feet in length along sidewalks, pedestrian walks, or publicly accessible outdoor space areas.				
AD 4	Storefronts in new mixed-use developments shall contain clear openings and windows for a minimum of 60% of the total area of the first floor facades facing sidewalks, pedestrian walks, or publicly accessible outdoor space areas.				
V	Special Environmental Constraints				
B	Historic Preservation				
1	Architecturally or historically significant structures and sites shall be preserved and restored as a physical record of the City's heritage.				
2	The renovation of a historical structure shall retain or reveal its historical characteristics. Removal or alteration of any historical material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.				
	Air, Light, and Privacy				
AD 1	Conform to the rear and side setback and courts requirements for primary living room and bedroom windows contained in				

	the MU-R zone, section 10-2.2.2203 of the municipal code. Required private (personal and common) outdoor space and required stormwater treatment facilities may be used to satisfy this requirement.				
AD 2	If a dwelling unit has windows on multiple building frontages, operable windows shall be provided on at least two building frontages.				
E	Materials				
AD 1	Mirrored glass is prohibited in order to minimize off-site glare and maximize transparency.				
AD 2	Buildings over three stories must provide a ground floor elevation that is distinctive from the upper stories by providing a material change between the first floor and upper floors along at least 75% of the building façade with frontage upon a street, adjacent public park or public open space.				
AD 3	Window frames must be recessed a minimum of two inches from the surrounding wall plane.				
AD 4	At least two materials shall be used on any building frontage, in addition to glazing and railings. Any one material must comprise at least 20% of the building frontage, excluding windows and railings. A change in material must be offset by a minimum of six inches in depth.				

STANDARD DESIGN REVIEW CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

		Applicant Evaluation			Staff Evaluation
		Yes	No	N/A	By:
1	Checklist Items				
	Final building and site development plans shall be reviewed and approved prior to the issuance of a building permit. All such plans shall ensure:				
	a Standard commercial or residential security requirements as established by the Walnut Creek Police Department are provided.				

e	All plans shall insure that all mechanical equipment, including electrical and gas meters, is architecturally screened from view, and that electrical transformers are either underground, enclosed within the building, or placed behind the building so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.				
l	All plans shall insure that the noise standards established in the General Plan shall be applicable to all developments. These noise standards apply to exterior and interior noise levels.				
m	No new buildings or remodeling of existing buildings shall use non-colored metal window or door frames unless specifically requested by the applicant and specifically discussed and approved for the project.				
2	Final landscape plans, irrigation system plans, tree preservation techniques, and guarantees shall be reviewed and approved by the staff prior to issuance of the building permit. All such submittals shall ensure:				
g	That all cut and fill slopes graded and not constructed by September 1 of any given year are hydroseeded with perennial or native grasses and flowers, and that stock piles of loose soil existing on that date are hydroseeded in a similar manner.				
h	That the area under the drip line of all existing oaks, walnuts, etc, which are to be saved are fenced during construction and grading operations are restricted under them to prevent soil compaction around the trees and to protect them from damage.				
3	Final inspection or occupancy permits will not be granted until all construction and landscaping is complete in accordance with approved plans and the conditions required by the Commission, or a bond has been posted to cover all costs of the unfinished work.				

RELEVANT SPECIFIC PLANS

Checklist Items		Applicant Evaluation			Staff Evaluation
		Yes	No	N/A	By:
1	ALMA PARK Specific Plan Objective Standards				
2	All utilities must be undergrounded (pg 11).				
	All projects are required to provide 1 parking space per bedroom, but in no case fewer than 1.25 spaces per unit				
2	LOCUST STREET Specific Plan Objective Standards				
	Active ground level commercial is required (see Figure 10 - pg 31, pg 39).				
	New structures along Mt Diablo and N CA Blvd shall be set back so that sidewalks have an average width of 15 feet as measured along the property frontage from the existing face of curb. In no case shall the dimension of the sidewalk be less than 12 feet (page 32, 75).				
	Along Cypress Ave and Locust St new development shall be set back so that sidewalks have a dimension no less than 12 feet. To achieve this dimension, many new buildings will need to be set at least five feet behind the public right-of-way (pg 32, 75).				
	To create a well-defined and active street edge that promotes retail continuity, new structures shall be built to the applicable front property line or setback line (see Figure 7 - pg 29, pg 32.)				
A	Site: Locust Street/Mt. Diablo Boulevard				
	Paseo/Plaza: This site shall incorporate a significant courtyard or plaza on the ground level that is directly accessible from the public sidewalk. (p 40)				
	No new curb cuts are permitted on Mt Diablo Boulevard (p 41).				
	Development shall be set back from the alley to allow WB-40 trucks to pass between Cypress Street and Mt Diablo Boulevard (p 41).				
	At such time as the Post Office building redevelops, the existing sidewalk shall be widened along the garage driveway to 10				

	feet in width to further encourage through-block pedestrian movement to the Duncan Arcade walkway (pg 41).				
B	Site: 1373-75 Locust Street				
	To provide for the public pedestrian access to the parking garage and for a future paseo between N California Boulevard and Locust Street, the southernmost 20 feet of the property shall be dedicated and improved as a pedestrian paseo (Figures 18 and 24) at the time of redevelopment (pg 60).				
	All service and parking access to the property should be from the planned north-south service alley or from the existing access easement on the property, located at the southwest corner of Cypress Street and Locust Street. No curb cut or driveway access will be permitted from Locust Street (pg 62).				
3	NORTH DOWNTOWN Specific Plan Objective Standards				
	Electrical Vehicle Charging				
MB 1.29	Require developers to provide on-site electric vehicle charging stations for any development project with 20 units or more (pg 163).				
	Bicycle Parking Standards for New Development				
1	Multi-family residential. For multi-family residential uses, 0.05 spaces per bedroom or studio unit will be required for short-term bike parking and 0.50 spaces per bedroom will be required for long-term bike parking (pg 165)				
3	Bike parking minimum. At least one short-term and one long-term bicycle parking space will be required for all projects. Small projects with fractional requirements will be required to provide at least two spaces (pg 165).				
4	For each short-term bicycle parking space required, a stationary object shall be provided to which a user can secure both wheels and the frame of a bicycle with a user-provided 6-foot cable and lock. The stationary object may be either a freestanding bicycle rack or a wall-				

	mounted bracket. To discourage theft, security provisions shall be considered when locating stationary objects to lock bicycles to. Short-term bicycle parking should be placed in visible, well-lit areas, located within 50-feet of the entrance to the building they serve (pg 165).				
6	Long-term bicycle parking spaces shall be located within a covered and secured area where access is limited to the residents or employees of the facility. This requirement can be met with lockable bicycle lockers, secured indoor room or areas (including parking garages) that contain lockable bike racks, or other similar methods approved by the Transportation Administrator. Long-term bicycle parking spaces must have minimum dimensions of two feet in width by six feet in length, with a minimum overhead vertical clearance of seven feet; reductions to these minimum dimensions may be approved by the Transportation Administrator in the case of vertically-mounted bicycle racks (pg 165).				
Private Residential Outdoor Space Standards					
DSG 4.22	Total amount of residential outdoor space. All new residential development projects shall provide a minimum of 150 square feet of usable private outdoor space per unit, on average. The space may be provided as a combination of personal and common outdoor areas.				
Publically Accessible Outdoor Space Standards					
DSG 4.8	Projects that provide public outdoor space must still comply with the City's requirements for park dedication and in lieu fees.				
DSG 4.9	Publicly accessible outdoor spaces shall be designed to be inviting, visible from adjacent buildings and streets, ungated and open to the public during daylight hours.				

