



OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS CHECKLIST **For Single Family 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.				
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.				
C	Landscape Design Standards				
5	All proposed shrubs except accent, color or ground cover planting shall be a minimum of 5 gallon size. (Applicable to front and corner side yard landscaping only.)				
8	No irrigated landscape area will be allowed under existing oak trees or other highly protected species which would be adversely affected. (See City of Walnut Creek Tree Preservation Ordinance.)				
D	Construction Requirements				
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.				
E	Street Trees – Planting Standards – Residential Districts				

	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.				
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.				
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.				
16	Approved address numbers shall be provided so that they are legible to the public from the street fronting the property.				
II	Residential				
B	<i>Single Family Residential Guidelines</i>				
1	Houses with identical building elevations and/or floor plans shall not be located on adjacent lots or directly across the street from each other.				
2	Design elements and detailing shall be continued completely around the structure. Such design elements shall include window treatments, trim detailing, and exterior wall materials.				
9	All vents, gutters, downspouts, flashings, electrical conduits, etc., shall be painted to match the color of the adjacent surface. Downspouts or rain water leaders shall be located on the inside corners of the structure.				
10	Driveways which are designed to serve more than two cars in width (i.e., a three car garage or wider) shall be required to incorporate alternative treatment including pavers, colored concrete, aggregate or brick banding.				
12	Each home shall be provided with a location for the storage of trash receptacles (waste wheelers, etc.) which is screened from public view.				
D	<i>Hillside Residential Development</i>				
1	No buildings or structures shall encroach within a 100 foot vertical drop of the ridgeline of a visually prominent ridge or in such a manner than it breaks the skyline of any visually prominent ridge				

	(as defined in the Hillside Performance Standards).				
	3 The proposed grading shall create a naturally sloped or terraced effect resulting in smaller pads and varied footprints that conform to the topography and reduce the need for large visible retaining or skirt walls.				
E	<i>Small Lot Single Family Infill Developments</i>				
	1 The main entry feature (which shall not be the garage door) must be prominently placed on the elevation facing the street.				
	5 Linear, repetitive streetscape appearance and building facades shall be avoided by providing variations between the front elevations and through the landscaping plans.				
	8 Fences which occur parallel to the street, such as those between units, shall be of an “open” type. Any other fencing above four feet in height shall also be of an “open” design such as lattice, posts, or other visually penetrable designs.				
	9 Each home shall be provided with a location for the storage of trash receptacles (waste wheelers, etc.) which is screened from public view.				
V	Special Environmental Constraints				
B	<i>Historic Preservation</i>				
	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.				

Checklist Items		Applicant Evaluation			Staff Evaluation	
		Yes	No	N/A	By:	
1	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:					
	a	That plant material is utilized which will be capable of healthy growth within the given range of soil and climate.				
	d	That a plan for an automatic irrigation system be provided which assures that all plants get adequate water. In unusual circumstances, a manual or quick coupler system may be used.				
	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	WALNUT BOULEVARD & WHITECLIFF				
	None. See Specific Plan for Development Standards and COAs.				
2	BRIDLE LANE				
	None. See Specific Plan for Development Standards and COAs.				
3	GEARY ROAD, HALL LANE, & FIRST AVE				
	None. See Specific Plan for Development Standards and COAs.				
4	NORTHGATE				
	Placement of Structures: In an effort to enhance the visual character of the area, all new homes built adjacent to North Gate and Castle Rock Roads must face these roadways. Homes shall be single story, no higher than 20 feet, with required front yard setbacks of 40 feet from the edge of right-of-way, where possible. Minimum lot sizes for these homes shall be 40,000 square feet.				
	Front Yard Fencing: New fencing shall not be more than three feet in height at the front property boundary, and/or within the front yard setback. Fencing shall be an open-rail design, as shown in Figure 4.				

<p>Rear/Side Yard Fencing: To minimize the visual impacts of perimeter lot fencing, fencing on slopes greater than 15% shall be open wire or open rail. Fencing along property boundaries between the agricultural preserve land is permitted to be barbed wire to keep grazing animals from wandering into residential areas.</p>				
<p>See Specific Plan for Development Standards</p>				