

Carmel Design Traditions Project 1.5



Strategy Paper



September 20, 2022

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INTRODUCTION TO THE STRATEGY PAPER

Carmel is engaged in updating its Design Guidelines for its residential areas and the downtown. The guidelines are key tools in shaping the character of the community and are used in the Design Review process that is part of project permitting. This project also includes potential revisions to some zoning code standards that influence design. The existing Design Guidelines were produced as part of the city's "Design Traditions Project" in 1997 through 2001 and therefore this update is named "Design Traditions 1.5" to indicate that it builds on those materials. This working paper describes the scope of the edits that are proposed to be made to the existing design guidelines and zoning code standards.

Steps in the project

The Design Guidelines project is being conducted in two phases: The first phase is designed to confirm the scope of the amendments to be executed. It includes a review of existing conditions, startup meetings with staff and decision-makers as well as community engagement. It culminates with this Strategy Paper, which sets the direction for the second phase. In the second phase, formal revisions to the documents will be drafted and submitted for public review and then will be considered for adoption by the Planning Commission and City Council.

Structure of the Strategy Paper

This Strategy Paper describes revisions to the Design Guidelines and zoning code that are recommended. It outlines the general approach to the revisions and provides some examples of specific changes to be made. The material is presented in these sections:

- I. Design in Carmel: Its Design Traditions
- II. Respecting Carmel's Design Traditions
- III. Current Issues
- IV. Summary of key recommendations
- V. Strategy for the Downtown Design Guidelines
- VI. Strategy for the Residential Design Guidelines
- VII. Strategy for zoning code amendments
- VIII. Strategy for review process and administration amendments
- IX. Next steps

How the Strategy Paper was developed

A working team of city planning staff and consultants developed the Strategy Paper, with advice from a project Steering Committee appointed by City Council. The recommendations reflect information collected from many sources. This includes initial study sessions with the City Council and the Planning Commission as well as important information gathered from community outreach and meetings and from other city departments.

In June 2022, members of the community engaged in two workshops in which they conveyed their ideas about community character and the various design variables that influence compatibility. Many participants met at the Sunset Center while others joined online. The first workshop, held on June 21, focused on residential areas. The second workshop occurred the following day and focused on the downtown.

Previously in 2018 and 2019, a working committee of the Planning Commission developed suggestions for amendments to guidelines and zoning and these also were reviewed. Comments received from individual citizens in letters, emails and phone calls also informed the recommendations. Finally, the city posted an on-line survey in mid-July 2022. More than 350 respondents participated in the survey and that information was analyzed.

How the Strategy Paper will be used

The intent of this paper is to outline potential revisions to the Design Guidelines and zoning code standards. The community will have an opportunity to comment on the recommendations in a forthcoming workshop tentatively scheduled for early October, 2022. The Planning Commission and City Council will then provide direction to the project team about how to proceed with drafting the proposed revisions.

I. DESIGN IN CARMEL: ITS DESIGN TRADITIONS

The Design Guidelines and standards in Carmel focus on maintaining the community's unique character which is so highly cherished. Some features are listed below which people have described as part of Carmel's design traditions and which inform the approach to the revisions. This list will be edited to be included in the introductions to the residential and downtown design guidelines in order to inform the guidelines that then follow.

Some defining characteristics of Carmel

Carmel is a Village in the Forest which is:

NEIGHBORHOOD

Subdued: No one thing is attention-grabbing; a building fits within the context of its block, its neighborhood and the city at large.

Exploratory: There is a sense of discovery along each street. One must experience a block in space and time, by moving along or through it.

Historic: A rich mix of historic and other traditional buildings, representing a range of styles is found throughout the community.

ARCHITECTURE

Genuine: A sense of authenticity is conveyed in natural building materials and design.

In scale: Buildings are human-scaled in their forms, materials and details.

Crafted: Buildings are of high quality and durable. This also is expressed in design details of buildings.

Diverse: There is variety in the range of building styles that fit in with the character of being a Village in the Forest.

Nestled: Buildings fit in with and are subordinate to the forest setting.

LANDSCAPES

Informal: Landscapes contribute to the forest character.

Walkable: Landscapes are pedestrian-scaled and enhance the public realm.

Connected: Properties connect to the public right-of-way with landscape details that extend the forest character. They are not walled off.

DOWNTOWN

Pedestrian-friendly: Buildings are human-scaled with details at the street level that invite exploration.

Open and welcoming: Storefronts, courtyards and landscapes enhance the interplay of indoor and outdoor spaces.

Factors that may distinguish one neighborhood from another:

While many characteristics of Carmel are “universal” in that they appear throughout the entire village, differences exist among neighborhoods. For example, most residential streets are similar in their forested character but some streets near the Mission are more open. Another example is along Scenic which has its own distinguishing features. Some of the variables that may define different neighborhoods, or “contexts” are listed below. These factors will be edited to be included in an introduction to the Design Guidelines discussing how to consider the context of a project:

1. The amount of light available: This relates to the character of the tree canopy and street widths.
2. The extent of the tree canopy: Most streets are intended to have a sense of enclosure with a healthy tree canopy, but a few were planned to be more open, such as in the Mission area.
3. Street widths: This influences where on-street parking occurs and street edges are treated. Most are of similar widths, but narrower ones exist and others are wider, such as near the Mission.
4. Variations in topography: This may be in the slope of a street itself or of lots, which may occur as “uphill” and “downhill” conditions. This influences the location of garages, how building forms may be stepped on a site and the way in which view opportunities exist.
5. Street layout: Most street are laid out in a grid with informal street edges. A few actually are laid out with curves such as Ridgewood Rd. and a portion of 14th Avenue.
6. The different phases in which the City has developed: Carmel City began in 1888 as a community of approximately 40 blocks. It more than doubled with annexation in 1900 of the Pescadero Canyon area and the Original Carmel-by-the-Sea in 1902. Other lands were added during the 1920s and 1930s until more than 200 blocks were included. The last annexation occurred in 1967. To some extent, differences in the periods of construction appear in the architectural styles found in these areas.

II. RESPECTING CARMEL'S DESIGN TRADITIONS

While there are many aspects of the character of Carmel that are to be addressed in the Design Guidelines, there are some high level design principles that apply citywide and that set the stage for the Design Guidelines. They are Guiding Principles for respecting Carmel's Design Traditions which each improvement project should meet. Those principles are listed below. This list will be edited to be included in introductory material to the design guidelines.

1. Maintain a healthy forest character: Plan landscapes in both the public and private realms to sustain the Village in a Forest and restore areas that are in need. The compatibility of many buildings also is improved with more forest-like front yards.
2. Enhance the forest: Provide layers of landscaping (varying plant and tree heights) between the street and each home and use drought-tolerant plants and fire-resistant materials while continuing to convey the forest character.
3. Keep it modest: Design buildings and landscapes to be human-scaled and fit in with their surroundings rather than stick out.
4. Respect historic precedents: Retain traditional buildings that convey the history of the community.
5. Fit with the context: "Remember your neighbors" is an important principle. This varies by neighborhood. Key design factors include:
 - Building size (height and width)
 - Building form and proportion
 - Percentage of solid-to-void (ratio of windows to wall)
 - Building materials
 - Roof form
 - Color
 - Fit with the topography
6. Pay attention to detail: Convey excellence and authenticity in materials and design. Add value with well-crafted work that is visible to the community and promote the use of natural materials.
7. Encourage a "compatible diversity" in design: Avoid repetition in building designs and site features. Express individuality in subtle ways while respecting surroundings.

III. CURRENT ISSUES

These are some issues that have been identified and which are addressed in the recommended revisions. They are grouped into three categories: (1) **Design**, in terms of the character of the built environment, (2) The **Content** of the Design Guidelines and standards that regulate design, and (3) **Administration**, which is the way in which reviewers apply the standards and guidelines in the permitting process.

DESIGN ISSUES

In General:

1. Some recent projects don't fit in. They don't respect some of the key design variables that relate to fitting in.
2. How to address diversity in design while maintaining character. Diversity is a part of Carmel's design traditions, but within limits for fitting in. How can one define the range of diversity that is appropriate?

In Residential areas:

3. There is a question about architectural style: Some feel "modern," or "contemporary" buildings don't fit in. Others point to recent projects that do fit. Is style the issue, or is it the deviation from too many key design variables that define Carmel that is the problem (e.g.: Is a new building too visible from the street with a lack of appropriate landscaping)? Or is it a lack of understanding of the key design variables and how to apply them?
4. Erosion of forest character is a concern at the upper and lower canopy levels. This occurs in various places:
 - In the Right-of-Way (ROW)
 - In front yard landscaping, between the ROW and a house
 - In landscaping on a site in general
5. Some front yard fences and walls cut off views into yards and weaken the sense of connection with the street.

In the Downtown:

6. Inappropriate mass and scale of some new buildings and additions in the downtown makes them appear too large. Can new buildings that occupy more than one lot fit in while avoiding a sense of false facades? What are the key variables that they must respect to do so?

ISSUES WITH THE DESIGN GUIDELINES DOCUMENTS

In General:

7. More specific "yes and no" examples are needed in the illustrations. This would help users better understand the intent of the guidelines.
8. The documents need to be easier to navigate.

9. The Design Guidelines documents need better cross-referencing to relevant zoning standards and other regulations.

10. More guidance is needed about design in the Right-of-Way. A limited amount of design guidance is provided in the Design Guidelines documents. Other, more detailed, standards exist in a separate document which is used by Public Works. How are these best coordinated?

The Residential Design Guidelines:

11. Many topics are already addressed in the Design Guidelines and yet seem to be overlooked when designs are developed. Is it the lack of clarity or direction in some of the guidelines? Or is it in their application by owners and those reviewing their designs?

12. Some guidelines lack clarity which complicates their interpretation. They sometimes are vague or the language is too passive.

The Downtown Design Guidelines:

13. The commercial guidelines lack sufficient detail to provide clear guidance in decision-making. They were developed separately from the residential guidelines, have a different format and provide only high-level principles.

14. The current guidelines focus on commercial buildings, but other types are permitted in various zone districts. Multifamily buildings and hotels are examples. How can the guidelines address these?

ISSUES WITH ADMINISTRATION OF DESIGN REVIEW

15. Some people believe that at times the guidelines aren't followed closely enough during design review. How can predictability in the review process be improved and how can confidence in the system be enhanced?

16. Some changes to projects are made during construction without approval. This is primarily an enforcement issue, but improving clarity in the guidelines could help in determining violations or in making revisions to approved documents.

17. Some people also have suggested that re-establishing a Design Review Board would improve the process.

IV. SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

This section lists at a high-level some key recommendations for improvement which apply across the board in both the residential and commercial zoning areas. To some extent they relate to the issues listed in the preceding section, but not necessarily in a direct one-to-one correlation. More specific recommendations appear in later sections of this Strategy Paper.

Improve the organizational structure of the Design Guidelines to facilitate their use.

Currently there are two books of guidelines for residential areas and a third one for the downtown. These are recommended actions:

1. Combine the two residential Design Guidelines documents into one book. Edit the text as needed and improve illustrations. (See more detailed recommendations that follow.)
2. Develop a separate book for the downtown. This would be a substantial re-write of the existing document. It should address the different building types found in the four zoning districts that exist in the downtown.
3. Add more cross references to other codes and regulations. Some cross references exist and should be updated. Other cross references are needed for newer documents. Referencing the City's new Climate Action documents is an example.
4. Improve "wayfinding" in the documents. Include a chart in the introductions to help users determine which sections to use and add a more detailed Table of Contents.
5. Add more visual examples of appropriate and inappropriate designs. Use "grids" of images with examples of appropriate and inappropriate design alternatives. Use sketches or computer models, rather than photos, where they would be more effective, such as for illustrating massing of new buildings.
6. Include more narrative text describing how to evaluate "context."
7. Address Design Guidelines for the ROW. Some brief guidelines addressing the Right-of-Way are in the existing documents. Other guidelines exist in a separate document that is used by Public Works. Include some material in the Design Guidelines that speaks at a "qualitative" level and also reference the existing standards used by Public Works where more prescriptive standards appear. (The Public Works standards also should be updated as a separate project.)

Improve administration of the Design Guidelines and standards.

The objectives for improving administration of the Design Guidelines and standards are: (1) To build confidence in the review process, and (2) To assure informed, consistent decision-making. These are recommended actions:

1. Consider moving some guidelines that address key design variables to the zoning code as standards that clearly require compliance.
2. Re-establish a Design Review Board. In the recent community survey, respondents rated their preference for three alternatives for review and decision making:
 - Continue to have the Planning Commission conduct design studies. However, enhance the role of the Planning Commission in design review by providing improved guidelines and standards. Also use a “checklist” in decision-making to assure that the guidelines are well-met. Many respondents indicate support for this approach.
 - Alternatively, re-establish a separate Design Review Board that can focus specifically on application of the design guidelines, but have it serve as an advisor to the Planning Commission, which would continue to make the final decisions. Many respondents also indicate support for this approach. (Note that the Historic Resources Board serves in this advisory role for projects in the Downtown Conservation District.)
 - A third alternative is to re-establish a Design Review Board and have it make the design review decisions. A smaller number of survey respondents support this alternative.

When survey responses to the two variations on the type of Design Review Board are considered in combination, a significant percentage favor some form of Design Review Board. This alternative, along with the first option of continuing with the Planning Commission only, merits further discussion.

V. STRATEGY FOR THE DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section summarizes the approach recommended to update the Design Guidelines for Downtown Carmel. The Downtown actually includes four zone districts: (1) CC - Central Commercial, (2) SC - Service Commercial, (3) RC – Residential and limited commercial, and (4) R-4 Multi-family residential. While the Central Commercial zone district forms the core along Ocean Avenue, the area considered Downtown actually is larger (approximately 20 blocks), with the SC, RC and R-4 zone districts acting as transitions to the single family neighborhoods. The Design Guidelines must consider all of those districts and the related building types that can occur in them.

Re-write the Downtown guidelines, following the format of the residential guidelines.

The focus of the existing Downtown guidelines is on the commercial buildings along Ocean Avenue as a design context. They are brief and don't address several important topics. For example, they don't address building types other than traditional commercial structures. Limited Commercial or Multifamily building types that are permitted in some Downtown zone districts are not addressed.

Language in the existing Downtown guidelines should be brought forward as guiding policies on which new, more detailed guidelines will be based. This will assure continuity in policy while providing more clarity and predictability. Also add more graphics, including sketches and photographs, to illustrate the guidelines. These should show positive and negative examples.

Focus the guidelines on respecting the valued features of Downtown.

The expanded Downtown guidelines should emphasize these principles:

1. Successfully meeting all key design variables, including: building size, ratio of solid to void, materials, roof form, color and proportions
2. Promoting variation in massing and articulation of building form to reduce perceived scale in a manner that is authentic (not a fake series of false fronts)
3. Using high quality materials
4. Incorporating well-crafted, durable details
5. Assuring street level appeal (landscaping, screening mechanical equipment, etc.) and pedestrian scale
6. Enriching the interplay between indoor and outdoor spaces
7. Providing a welcoming sense of discovery along the street

Outline for the Downtown Guidelines

With the focus of the guidelines in mind, a recommended outline for the Downtown Design Guidelines follows. This will be refined at the outset of Phase 2, in which a draft of the guidelines will be produced.

1. Introductory material
 - a. How to use the guidelines
 - b. How they are organized, etc.
 - c. Relationship to other regulations and permitting processes
2. Design character of downtown
 - a. A description of styles found traditionally in the downtown
 - b. A description of key features which are valued and should be respected in all work in the downtown
3. Key principles that all projects should follow, including...
 - a. Maintain street level interest
 - b. Maintain the perceived low scale of buildings
 - c. Encourage use of natural materials
 - d. Accommodate a diversity of design within a range that is compatible
 - e. Respect the topography
4. Guidelines for all building types
 - a. Materials
 - b. Street level interest
 - c. Awning and canopies
 - d. Lighting
 - e. Service areas
 - f. Utilities and rooftop equipment
5. Guidelines for specific building types
 - a. Commercial
 - b. Mixed-use
 - c. Multifamily
 - d. Hotel/Motel
 - e. Limited commercial
 - f. Single family houses (where permitted in existing zone districts)
6. Landscaping (on both public and private lands)
 - a. Plant beds
 - b. Planters
 - c. Paving (changes in)
 - d. Trees
7. Outdoor spaces (courtyards and intra-block walkways)
 - a. Design features
 - b. Relationship to building size
 - c. Proportions
8. Signs
 - a. The standards are in the code.
 - b. The guidelines should focus on character and location of signs.
 - c. The illustrations should appear to comply with the code.

Specific edits that are recommended for the Downtown design guidelines

Within the framework of the outline presented above, these are some specific edits, which are in three categories:

Clarify existing guideline text.

In these cases, the general principles exist and remain valid, but need more explanation. Examples include:

1. Enhancing street level interest and a pedestrian orientation
2. Using appropriate high quality building materials, including man-made materials
3. Maintaining traditional scale in new buildings
4. Window design

Illustrate an existing guideline more effectively.

In these cases, better graphics (photographs and sketches) would help in interpreting the guidance. For example:

1. Show the range of ways to enhance street level interest, including storefronts, display cases, planters and outdoor use areas.
2. Illustrate how a simple variation in building heights of one and two stories for portions of a new building can help maintain the traditional scale of the street.
3. Provide examples of well-crafted, high-quality building details.

Add new Design Guidelines topics.

In this case, new language and illustrations address topics that presently are overlooked. For example, provide guidelines for:

1. Mixed-use buildings with limited commercial buildings
2. Multifamily buildings
3. Single family buildings in downtown districts
4. Landscaping in the public Right-of-Way and in private outdoor spaces

VI. STRATEGY FOR THE RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

This section summarizes the approach to updating the Design Guidelines for the R-1 residential zones in Carmel.

Refine the existing guidelines as a base for the update.

The existing text remains valid in many ways. Retain most of this language in the update, editing and expanding it as needed to improve clarity and interpretation.

Add new topics that are now important.

For example, a note is needed about how the guidelines apply to potential Accessory Dwelling Units and how State law sets some limits on review. Other topics need further clarification and explanation. For example, guidelines exist about maintaining a “forest” image in front yards, but more detail is needed to explain this topic. Guidance for minimizing fire hazards also should be addressed.

Add a discussion of “context” and how the guidelines should take it into consideration.

The guidelines frequently refer to “context” but there is little explanation of what that means especially with respect to the Village-in-a-Forest concept. There is some recognition that context varies in different parts of the city, but again there is little description of these differences.

Focus the Design Guidelines on key principles.

The refined residential guidelines should emphasize these principles:

1. Maintaining forest character

This is a universal principle, but there are differences in how to apply it based on context.

For example, Scenic Road and some areas near the Carmel Mission are very different from other neighborhoods and specific guidance is needed for such conditions. Also include a definition of the term “forest character” to facilitate interpretation of related guidelines.

2. Respecting diversity in design

People note that diversity in architecture is a part of Carmel’s design traditions (albeit within a range that fits within the forest character.) This needs careful explanation such that blatantly inappropriate designs do not occur. The guidelines should explain how to respect the design variables that relate to fitting in.

Specific edits (organized by the type of edit)**Clarify** existing guideline text.

General principles are embedded in the Concept Phase guidelines, but they need to be more clearly stated. Update the general principles, to include more recent input from the community.

Several guidelines related to specific topics also need clarification. For example:

1. Being subordinate and fitting in
 - Explain the concept and include a definition of the term “subordinate.”
2. Views and solar access
 - Clarify how view opportunities are to be shared among neighbors.
3. Landscaping in the front yard
 - Emphasize how the concept of “layered” planting schemes should apply.
 - Update specifications related to tree protection.
4. Driveway paving
 - Strengthen language related to the use of pervious materials, including interlocking pavers with spacers and driveway strips.
5. Color
 - Emphasize the use of muted, earth tones.
 - Clarify how white and black color schemes may and may not be appropriate.
6. Building form
 - Discuss how simple variations in massing should be applied in ways that appear to be authentic, rather than creating overly-busy forms with superficial wall off-sets.
 - Step the building with the topography.
7. Synthetic materials
 - The guidelines currently say “avoid” synthetic materials. Some new materials, however, can appear to be authentic and are fire-resistant. Expand the discussion of how and when to use them.
8. Use of stone
 - Clarify how to use stone as a “base” material with lighter materials above such that it appears to be authentic, rather than a fake veneer.

Illustrate existing guidelines more effectively.

1. Add new photos to address new topics. Examples are:
 - Provide examples of windows with good detailing, of various styles.
 - Also provide examples of alternative driveway paving designs.
 - Add photos of more recent compatible infill, with an explanation of why they fit in.
2. Add sketches where this is a better tool than a photo. For example:
 - Illustrate the concept of “layered” landscaping with additional sketches.
 - Also illustrate the concept of “balancing” key design variables, especially in building design.

Add new Design Guidelines topics that are now important. Examples needed for new material are:

1. Converting a garage in front to an ADU (and in code)
 - Discuss how to determine “compatibility” of an ADU with the main building as provided in state law.
 - Also discuss how an existing driveway may be repurposed if a garage is converted into an ADU.
2. Using Carmel stone (or similar) for retaining walls, including those for driveways
3. Designing cool roofs (those intended to reduce heat gain, sometimes of lighter colors)
4. Installing heat pumps
5. Planning rain gardens (planted areas designed to retain rain water runoff)
6. Installing solar panels

Change existing guidance if needed. Some examples:

1. Roof material

The current guidelines encourage the use of wood or composition shingles. Today, these are not recommended for fire resistance. To consider:

- Permit low-profile, painted metal roofs, with the color to be muted.
- Permit metal roofs with an aged patina that eliminates glare (but prohibit copper roofs for environmental concerns).
- Permit cool roofs (with considerations of visual impacts).

2. Roof form

The current guidelines state that flat roofs should be used only on smaller, one-story portions of a building. Revisit this guidance. (Note that zoning standards contradict this policy.)

3. Retaining walls

- Strengthen language to promote, or even require, stone as the exposed surface material on retaining walls in the front setback.
- Strongly discourage, or even prevent retaining walls in the ROW, except in extreme unstable slope conditions.
- Strengthen language limiting retaining walls in the front setback that lead to below-grade garages.

VII. STRATEGY FOR ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS

Some edits to the zoning code are recommended as part of the Design Traditions Project whereas other revisions to the zoning code are to be addressed in the work program of the planning staff later. Zoning code edits to address in the Design Traditions Project include:

Clarify how the design review process applies to ADUs.

The state law provides for limited and objective review to assure compatibility with the main house on the property. One issue to address is how review may apply when converting a garage that is in front. (Note that a garage that encroaches into the front setback is a special condition approved by the Planning Commission and if a conversion to one of these can occur needs further clarification.)

Clarify how paving materials apply to calculating site coverage.

Some paving is needed for functional requirements. Review the standards to assure that the materials are permeable.

Expand standards for fences.

Review the standards for fences to clarify some basic questions: (1) Can a non-conforming fence be replaced in kind, or must a replacement comply with current standards? Also clarify the range of appropriate fence types: Unpainted wood is preferred. Are other materials appropriate? Does this vary by context? For example, where might a white picket fence appropriate? May fire-resistant materials be used?

Re-evaluate Volumetric standards.

An important standard is the regulation of the exterior volume of buildings on a property. The intent is to keep building size subordinate in relation to the forest and neighborhood context. Some people have noted that the current formula encourages only a small number of roof pitches, especially on larger buildings and ones that differ from traditions in other key variables, such as materials and windows designs. Others find the calculations too complicated. Consider these alternatives:

1. Continue to use the volumetric system but simplify how it is calculated.
Also adjust the system to encourage various degrees of pitched roofs. The advantage of this approach is that using volumetrics is long-established and an update would be easier to understand and predict the potential outcomes.
2. Change to a bulk plane (building envelope) system.
This system defines a three-dimensional area within which a building may occur. It can have any pitched form, to encourage varied sloped roofs (while potentially permitting appropriately scaled flat roofs). This would require some study to assure that the desired volumes would be permitted. Applying it to the various sloped site conditions in Carmel also is a challenge to evaluate.

Strengthen standards for garage encroachment in the front setback.

Criteria for documenting the need for an encroachment exist but are listed as a “high level” in the code, but without detail that would help assure that the required conditions are met. Among the criteria to clarify:

1. Site features that limit other alternatives
2. Topographic constraints
3. Saving a tree, or maintaining other important open space
4. Maintaining variation in building setbacks in a block

Strengthen standards for cut & fill.

Not all cut-and-fill work requires Planning Commission approval at present. The current threshold for requiring a PC hearing is removal of 25 cubic yards. Consider reducing the threshold and providing more specific conditions for approval, including how the changes affect front yard character.

Strengthen standards for exterior lighting.

Address how light levels are measured. (New light sources are rated in lumens and Kelvin scales.) Also strengthen requirements for shielding light sources. Also consider incorporating concepts from the International Dark Skies Association

VIII. STRATEGY FOR REVIEW PROCESS AND ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENTS

An objective is to assure that a skilled and well-informed design review body applies the standards and guidelines consistently.

Refine the decision-makers' role.

Further study these alternatives:

1. Enhance the process for the Planning Commission to **continue** conducting design review. The advantage is that design is considered in the context of other planning commission issues. Improved guidelines and standards would help assure that decisions follow adopted policies.
2. Re-establish a Design Review Board as an **advisory** body. This provides a focused review but it adds a step in the process. It still retains the PC as the decision-making body.
3. Establish a Design Review Board as the **decision-making** body. While there would be two steps in permitting, the topics would be separated between the Design Guidelines and the zoning standards. The DRB would determine compliance with the design guidelines and could advise the PC about the appropriateness of any requests for exceptions to zoning standards. Complications may arise when projects needing design approval also require other entitlements that must be granted by the Planning Commission (e.g. Variances).

Provide a review structure which assures all guidelines are adequately met.

Regardless of who reviews and determines compliance, some structural improvements could enhance predictability. These are some recommendations:

1. Identify key guidelines related to compatibility as "priorities" to assure that they are fully met.
2. Use a checklist for review that highlights the priority guidelines. This also would help assure that those guidelines are met.

Provide opportunities for community comment.

In addition to having public comment at a commission hearing, provide for a regular review by the community of the **process**. Holding a bi-annual review of the system is recommended. This would be a community meeting and also would include an on-line survey.

Assure that the reviewers are skilled in applying design guidelines.

While some board or commission members may be experienced designers themselves, reviewing designs is a skill to be learned. Training in design review should be a regular requirement. Conducting an annual design review training for the board or commission is recommended. Also include annual training for staff.

IX. NEXT STEPS

Many of the recommendations put forth in this Strategy Paper can be executed directly after public comment and guidance from decision-makers. Others will require further study and discussion.

The Strategy Paper will be reviewed by the community, and some of the recommendations will be discussed in an upcoming public workshop. They also will be discussed in work sessions with the Planning Commission and City Council.

Based on information gained from those meetings, the approach will be adjusted as needed. Drafting of the updates will then begin. When public review drafts of the updates are prepared, they will be presented for discussion in a subsequent public workshop. Revisions to the drafts, based on community input, will follow. The final drafts will then be introduced for adoption by the Planning Commission and City Council.

Sample edits to illustrations:

The following pages (pg 20-26) provide examples of potential changes to how illustrations could appear in the updated Guidelines. The intent of these changes would be to make the illustrations easier to see and more useful to readers.

1. Using multiple images

Below is an example of a “grid” of images could be added that illustrate appropriate design solutions for a specific topic. In this case, residential gates are shown. Note that the preceding text is as it exists today, with only a few edits to strengthen language.

THE FOLLOWING IS ONLY AN EXAMPLE***Gates and Arbors***

When a fence or low wall is used at the street frontage, the entry is often marked by a gate or arbor. These features should be small and intimate in their proportions and should be an integral part of the overall landscape design. Fences, gates and arbors provide an opportunity to include unique details that reflect a hand-crafted design. Creative design approaches are encouraged when they are subtle and well-integrated with the site. Gates and arbors that appear to be mass produced or machined are inappropriate.

11.6 A gate shall help create a sense of entry and therefore should be distinguishable from the adjoining fence or wall.

- Use distinctive design details to express individuality and craftsmanship.
- Gates shall have open or transparent qualities that allow filtered views into the property.

Appropriate gates (EXAMPLE ONLY)



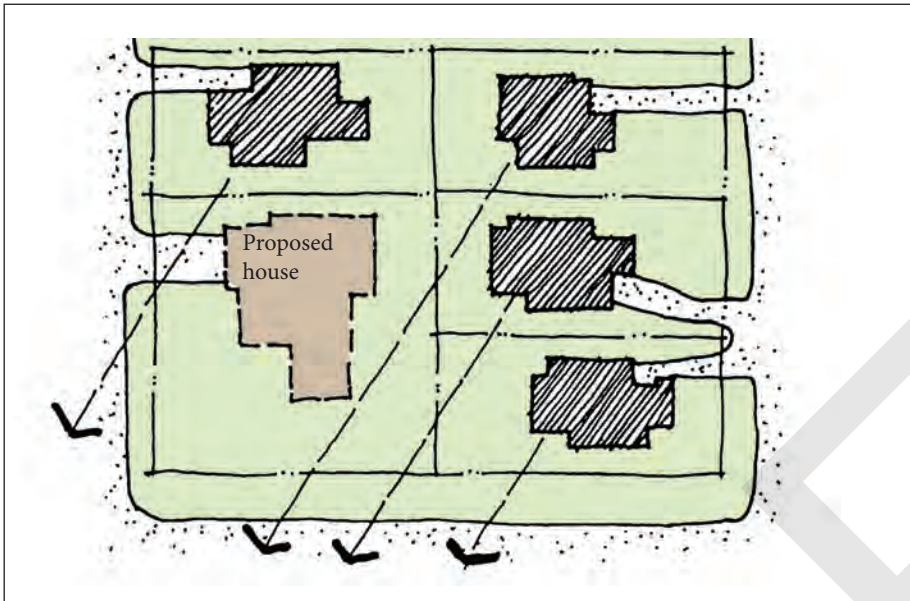
Inappropriate gates (EXAMPLE ONLY)



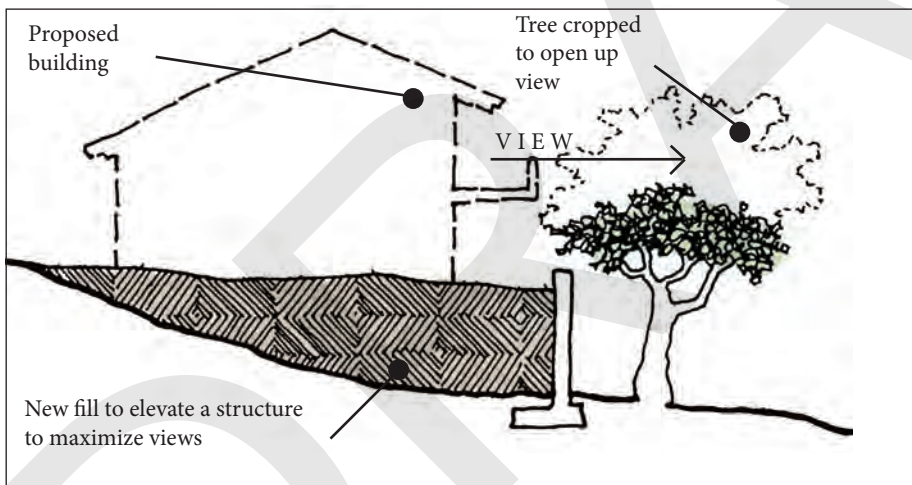
2. Adding color to existing guidelines

In many cases, existing residential guidelines may have some minor edits, both graphically and in text. An example is included in the following pages. Some potential text edits are shown here. Updates to illustrations include substituting older black-and-white photographs with new color examples and adding color to original sketches. Potential edits could also include "X's" and "Checks" to clearly indicate appropriate designs.

THE FOLLOWING IS ONLY AN EXAMPLE



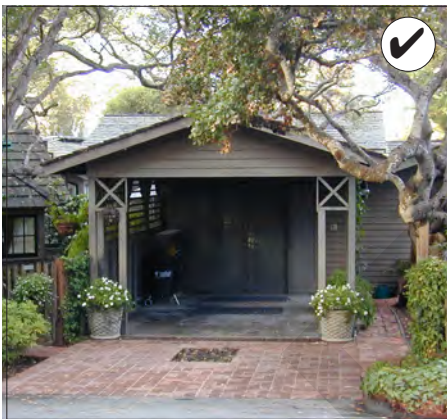
Appropriate: A new building is sited to maintain views from existing houses.



Inappropriate: Elevating a site to maximize views.



In limited circumstances a garage may be located under a structure when the visual impacts will be minimized. This garage is clearly subordinate to the main building mass.



Consider using a carport for variety along a block.

Add reference to code here

6.0 Parking and Access

Traditionally, parking was a subordinate element in Carmel's residential neighborhoods, both on an individual parcel and along the street in general. Today, providing access for an automobile on a site is often a necessity, and doing so is encouraged, as a means of reducing on-street parking pressures. Nonetheless, it should remain subordinate to the overall character of the site.

Usually a garage was a subordinate element in a site plan and often was detached from the house. The wide variety of garage positions contributed to the diversity of the street scene: Many were located at the front property line, while others were sited in the rear. In later years, the garage was often attached, but remained subordinate to the main mass of the house. These traditions of diversity and subordinate character should be continued.

In some cases, it appears that owners positioned their garages away from prominent views. In particular, they located them uphill, away from downhill views to the ocean. When locating a garage, consider view impacts, the relationship to open space on the lot, and the relationship to that of neighboring properties.

Objectives for this section:

- To minimize the visual impacts of cars on a site
- To minimize the extent of hard, impervious surfaces
- To avoid garage structures that dominate the site and building design

6.1 Facilities for parking shall not dominate the design of the house or site.

- The mass of a garage shall be subordinate to that of the house.
- Garages that are subordinate design elements are appropriate.
- Garages that are not visible from the street are appropriate.
- Garages integrated into the building design are encouraged.

- On smaller lots, with a garage visible from the street, provide a single, one-car garage door.
- Avoid moving established driveways if trees or significant vegetation would be harmed.

6.2 Parking facilities that maintain or enhance variety along the street edge are encouraged.

- Consider using a detached garage or carport.
- In some cases, parking facilities may be located in the front setbacks (as a conditional use)

Driveway paving

6.3 Minimize the amount of paved surface area of a driveway.

- In general, the width of a driveway should not exceed 9 feet.
- Also consider using paving strips, or “tire tracks,” for a driveway. This is especially appropriate for a long drive that runs to the rear of a property.
- Except for corner sites with a “through driveway,” only one curb cut and one driveway should be provided for a site. Sharing a driveway with an adjacent property is an alternative that also may be considered.
- Avoid large expanses of paving for vehicles visible from the street.



Consider using a shared driveway to minimize the amount of paving area.

6.4 Separate a driveway from a front walkway to reduce the visual impacts of paved surfaces.

- Install plant materials to separate a walk from a driveway.



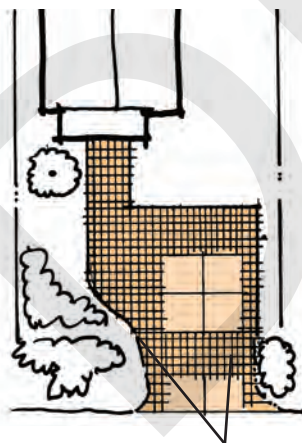
Position a garage (or carport) to maximize opportunities for open space, views and privacy.

Garage location

6.5 Position a garage to maximize opportunities for open space, views and privacy.

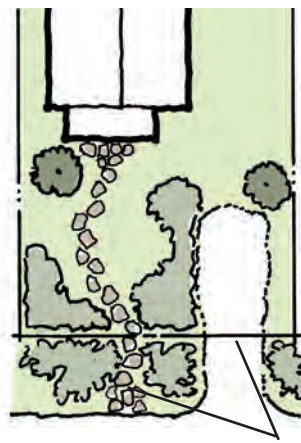
- Locate a garage to maintain larger contiguous areas of open space on a site.
- Locate a garage to screen activity areas on adjacent properties to enhance privacy.
- Locate a garage to maintain views through the property.

Inappropriate



A walkway and drive are combined, increasing the apparent size of paved area.

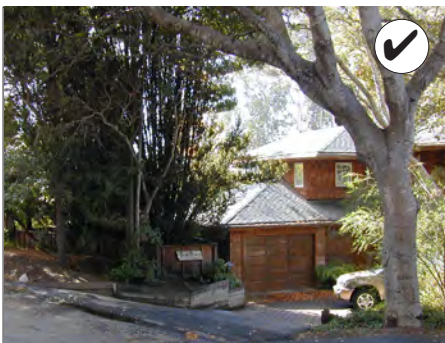
Appropriate



The walkway and drive are separated, reducing the apparent amount of paved area.



Preferred: Locating a detached garage at the rear of the lot



Preferred: Orienting the garage door away from the street.



Inappropriate "ramp" driveway

6.6 Locate a garage to minimize its visual impacts.

Three options should be considered:

1. Detached, at the rear of the lot.
2. Detached, in front, along the property line is acceptable, when other design traditions objectives are met. This option should not be repeated to excess within a block.
3. Under the house, when other design tradition objectives are met. (See below.)

6.7 In limited circumstances a garage may be located under a structure when the visual impacts will be minimized.

- The garage door should not dominate the front of the house. It shall not contrast highly with the color or materials of the house. A door perpendicular to the street is best in this condition, and...
- The driveway shall not dominate the front yard and may not create a "ramp" effect or introduce tall or massive retaining walls. A sense of a front yard must be maintained.



When a garage is located under the house, the driveway should not create a ramp effect. The garage door also should not dominate the front.