

7 DESIGN GUIDANCE

This chapter provides more specific policies for the design of neighborhoods, streets and storm water detention infrastructure in the Plan Area.

The design guidance below uses both “should” and “shall” to describe the level of conformity expected with the specific policies contained in this chapter. “Shall” indicates that conformance is mandatory. “Should” means that conformance will be strongly encouraged by the City through its design review process and that the guidance is intended to be a recommendation to project applicants about how to implement the goals of the Specific Plan.

A. Neighborhood Structure

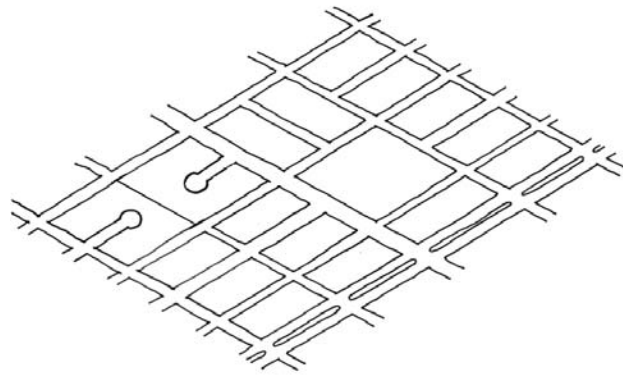
The manner in which new neighborhoods are designed and built can contribute greatly to their ability to become memorable places. The lengths of residential blocks, the development pattern those blocks form, the capability of streets to provide for bikes and pedestrians as well as vehicles, and the provision of multiple routes through neighborhoods are all contributing factors to the creation of safe and active neighborhoods.

General policies for developing the physical structure of the neighborhoods in the Plan Area are described below, including guidance for improving connectivity, creating the street network and defining focal points.

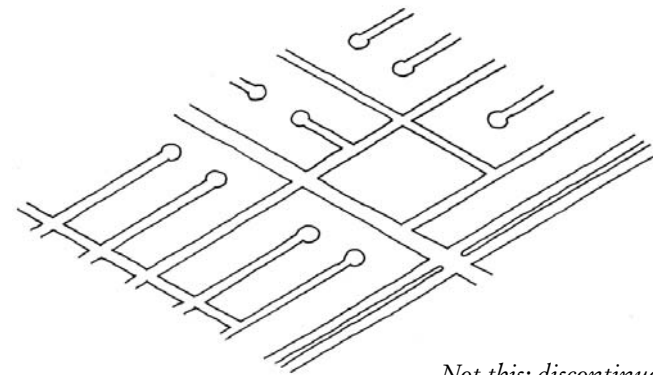
1. Connectivity

Each new neighborhood in the Plan Area shall have multiple access points as well as multiple choices for traveling through them, and few cul-de-sacs. A high degree of connectivity contributes to:

- ◆ **Traffic Dispersal.** Multiple connection points between neighborhoods and arterials help to disperse traffic rather than concentrate it at a few streets and intersections.
- ◆ **Range of Options.** A grid of interconnected streets offers motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists multiple choices for neighborhood access and circulation.



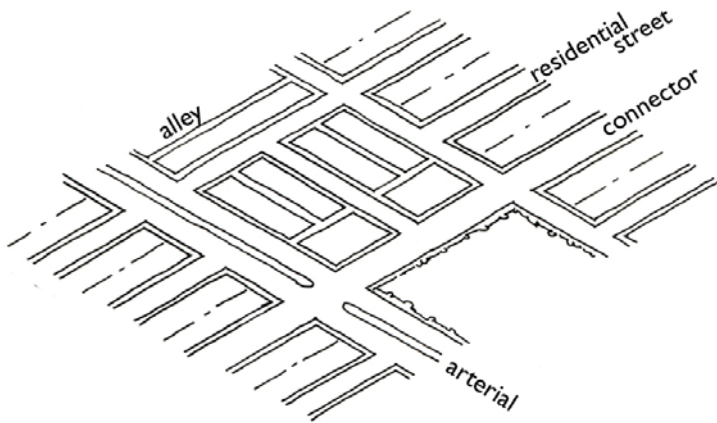
Do this: continuous streets



Not this: discontinuous streets

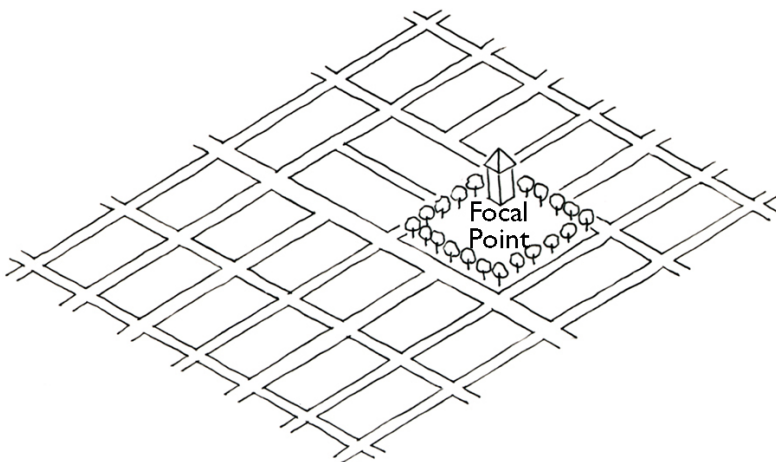
2. Street Hierarchy

All new neighborhoods in the Plan Area should contain streets of a variety of sizes and capacities that contribute to the definition of the neighborhood structure. All streets shall be capable of providing for pedestrians and bicycle circulation.



3. Focal Points

School sites, neighborhood parks and open space amenities should be used as activity nodes that influence the design of a neighborhood.

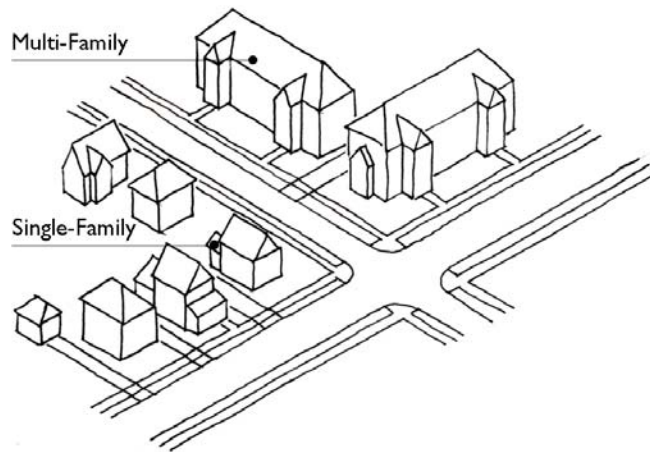


4. Relationships Between Uses

Uses and building types should be varied in neighborhoods. A mixture of single-family and multi-family development should be encouraged, creating a richer and more multi-faceted neighborhood.

In consultation with the Planning Commission, design guidance shall be developed that will maximize privacy in new or existing one-story homes that are adjacent to new or existing multi-story buildings. Design guidelines shall include the use of landscaping, setbacks, parking, and window design and location, and will be developed as an implementation of the Specific Plan.

In consultation with the Planning Commission, design guidance shall be developed that will address adjacencies of light industrial uses and residential or commercial uses. Design guidelines shall include the use of landscaping, setbacks, street alignment, parking, window design and soundwalls, and will be developed as an implementation of the Specific Plan.



5. Solar Orientation

Where feasible, buildings and landscaping shall be oriented and designed to maximize the potential for natural cooling and passive solar principles. Residential buildings should provide adequate southerly roof orientation to accommodate active solar energy systems, where feasible.

B. Storm Water Detention

Storm water detention facilities shall be developed as attractive open space amenities that produce greater value in adjacent properties. The following policies apply to all detention facilities.

1. A Comprehensive Approach

All detention facilities in the Plan Area shall serve multiple property owners. Combining the detention requirements of multiple developments creates the opportunity for a larger and more efficient facility; therefore, less total area is required to meet the aggregate detention needs.



A large detention facility serving multiple properties can also be an open space amenity

2. Multiple Uses

Whenever possible, detention facilities shall be combined with other uses to create open space amenities in the Plan Area. Larger facilities can also serve as a public park or provide wetland functions. Smaller facilities can provide well-landscaped open space areas that provide a visual buffer in the area.



Nob Hill Park in Chico, shown in the two photographs above, provides both drainage and recreational opportunities

3. Attractive Design

All facilities shall be attractively designed and landscaped. Large holes in the ground surrounded by fencing is not an appropriate design option. All surface detention facilities in the Plan Area shall have 5:1 slopes in order to ensure public safety in and around the facilities. Suitable subsurface designs may be allowed with appropriate surface landscaping.



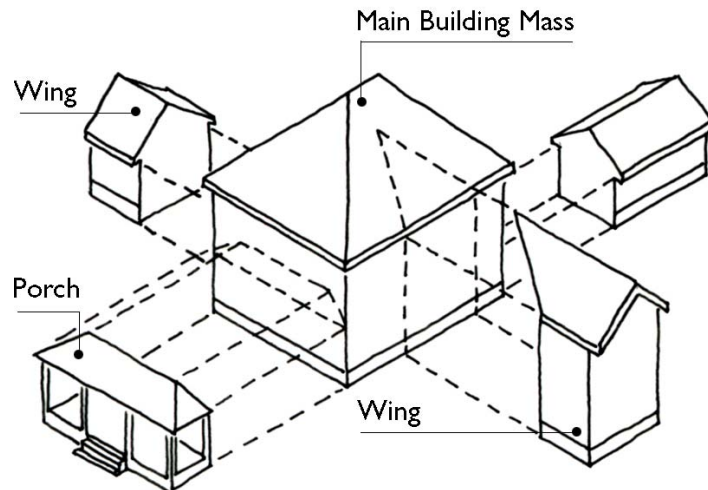
Even smaller detention facilities can be attractively designed and landscaped

C. Single-Family Residential

In order to create active streets and vibrant neighborhoods in the Plan Area, new single-family residential development shall be consistent with the following design guidance to the extent feasible. New single-family development along Center Street must be consistent with the following design guidance.

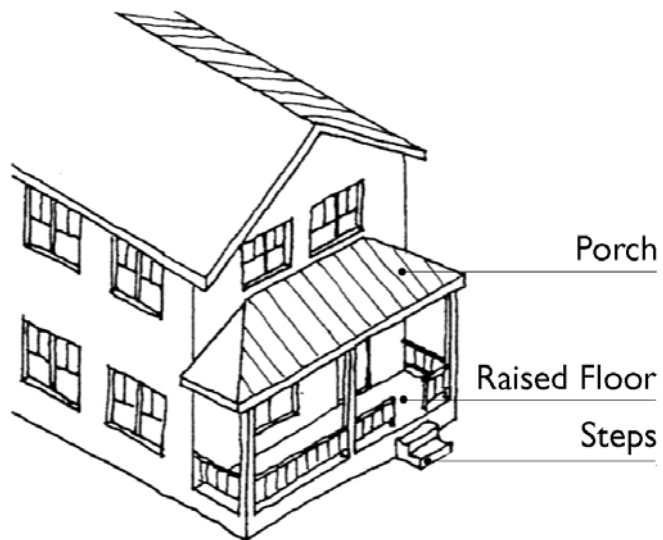
1. Massing

Houses should be composed of a variety of forms, such as porches and wings, as shown below.



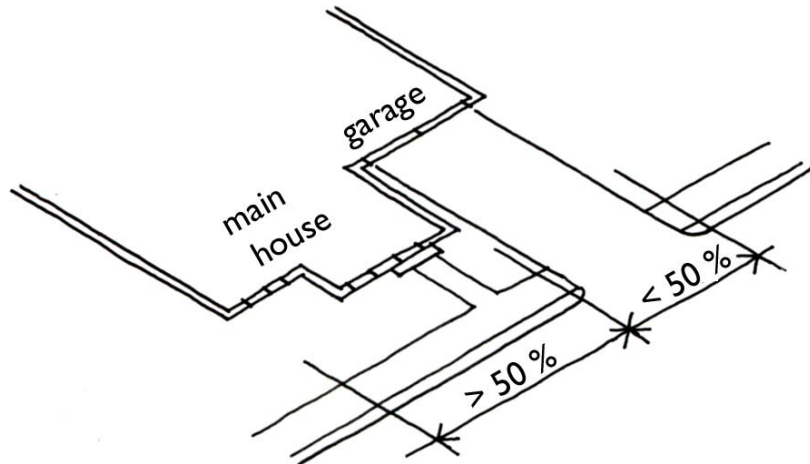
2. Façade Components

Building façades shall be visually interesting, and include amenities such as porches that address the street. Facades should also be at a pedestrian-friendly scale. An illustration of one way this can be achieved is shown below. Along Center Street, homes must have raised front porches (or porches that appear raised through the use of grading).



3. Garage Placement

Garages shall be set back from the main façade. Garages should and comprise a lesser percentage of the street frontage than the residence, in order to reduce the visibility and dominance of the automobile along roadways in the Plan Area. If a garage occupies more than 50 percent of the total front elevation it shall not exceed 22 feet in width.



D. Multi-Family Residential

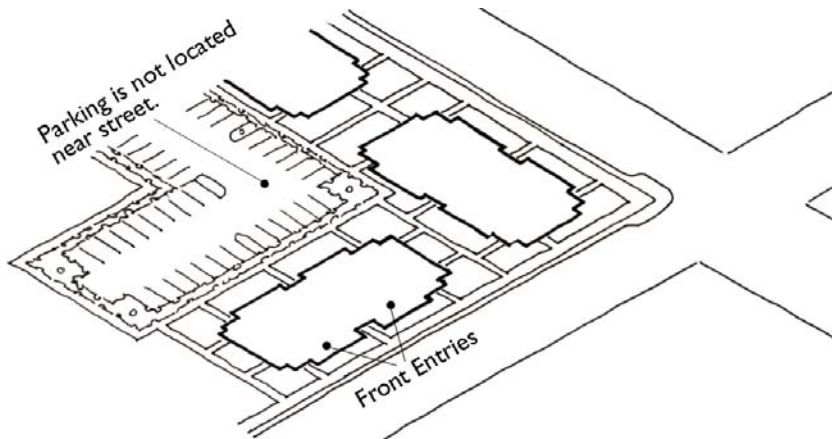
In order to create appropriately-scaled residential neighborhoods, all multi-family residential development in the Plan Area shall be consistent with the following policies.

1. Entry Orientation

Building entries should directly access a public street.

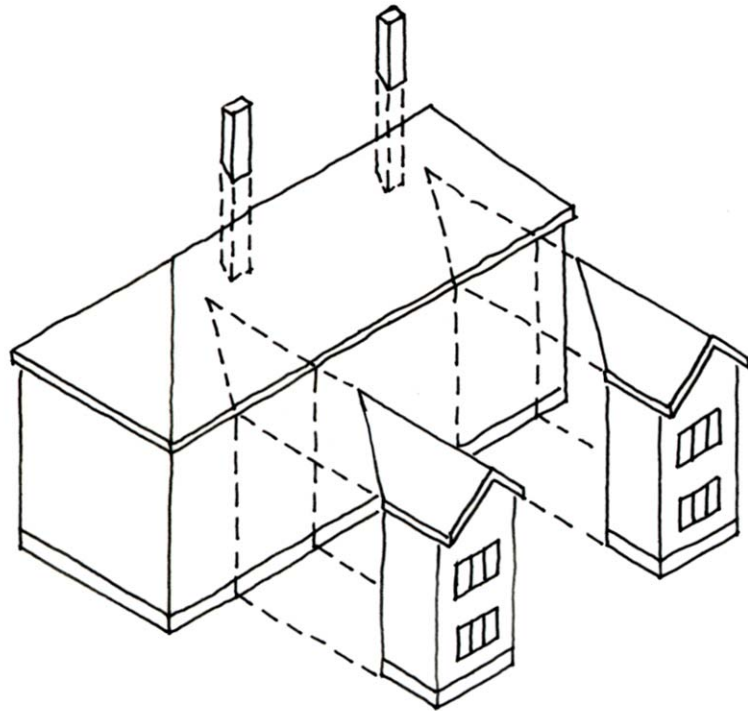
2. Location of Parking

Parking shall not be located between the buildings and the street.



3. Massing and Scale

Large buildings should be broken into smaller components that provide a fine-grained scale and fit the context of residential neighborhoods and streets. One solution is to model multi-family buildings on large single-family homes, as shown below.

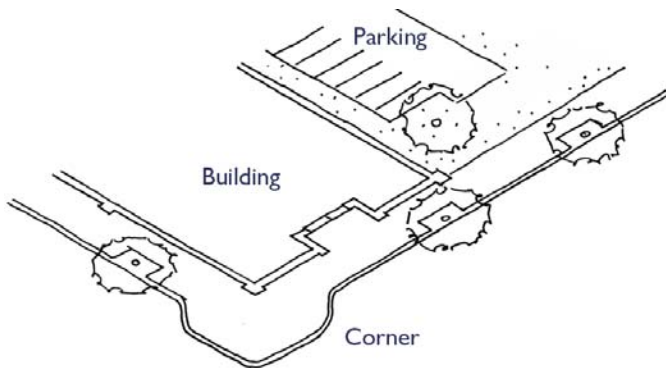


E. Mixed-Use Development

All new development within areas shown as Mixed-Use Commercial in Figure 4-1 shall be consistent with the following design guidance.

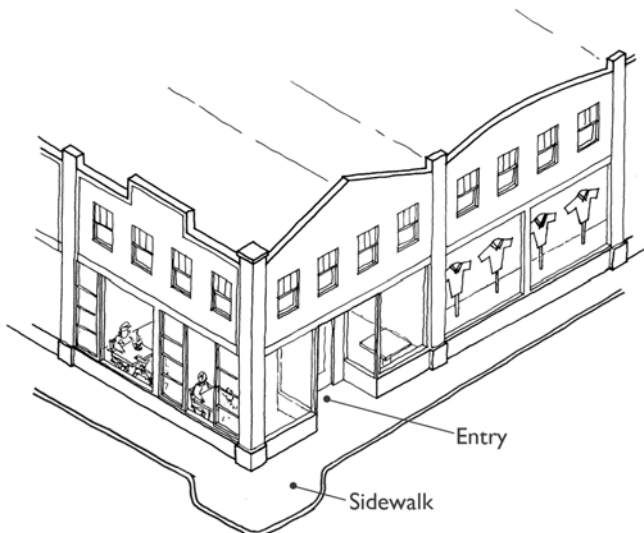
1. Definition of the Street

Buildings should be placed at the edge of the sidewalk, particularly on corner sites.



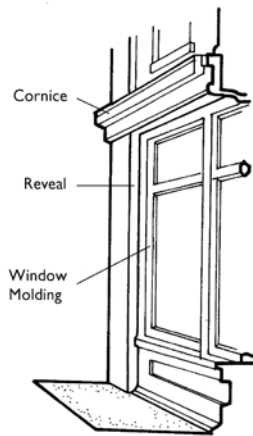
2. Building Orientation

Building entries should open directly to the sidewalk and front façades should contain a high percentage of fenestration.



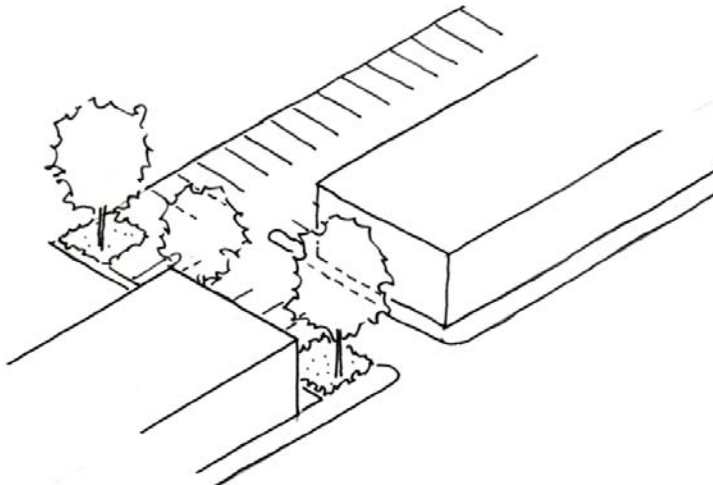
3. Pedestrian Scale

Buildings shall include features such as detailed windows with reveals, articulated rooflines, trim designs, balconies and well-defined entryways that create visual interest at the pedestrian level.



4. Location of Parking

Parking areas shall not be placed between the building and the street.



5. Vertical Mix of Uses

Higher density housing or office uses should be included above first floor retail uses for multiple story buildings that help frame streets and public spaces.



An example of a vertical mix of uses

6. Activation of Public Spaces

Ground floor uses that generate high volumes of foot traffic should be incorporated into new development to enliven sidewalks and street frontages.



7. Business Signs

Signs for businesses should be conducive to the scale and activities of pedestrians.



8. Minimize Parking

Where possible, parking facilities should be shared among uses.

