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Introductory Chapter: How To Use The Design Guidelines Manual



Purpose and Authority

The purpose of creating the City of Chico Design Guidelines Manual is to lend predictability in the design review process of private and public development projects, facilitating applicants and City decision-makers in the design review process. The Manual is intended to guide the aesthetic qualities of development in Chico and maintain its dignified visual character by integrating timeless architectural and landscape design with the natural beauty of its surrounding environment. Use of the Manual is intended to continue the high priority that the community places on the design of development since Chico adopted its first architectural design ordinance in 1955.

In reviewing projects subject to the requirements of Chapter 19.18 (Site Design and Architectural Review) of the Chico Municipal Code the Planning Commission, Architectural Review Board, and the Planning Services Director are required to refer to any design guidelines adopted by the City, and to base determinations of development proposals on certain findings that include consistency with adopted design guidelines. Similarly, the Chico Municipal Code requires that a Design Guidelines Manual be available to the public for its use in seeking approval for projects subject to Chapter 19.18. Applicants who observe the design guidance that the Manual offers can rely on a speedier and more predictable design review and approval process.

Flexibility of The Design Guidelines Manual

This Manual is intended for use by the general public, project applicants, designers, City Officials, and staff, providing guidance and solutions to design challenges for a wide spectrum of project types. Project applicants considering to develop property, or seeking approval of a project subject to site planning and architectural review, should consult the Manual early in the design phase of a project.

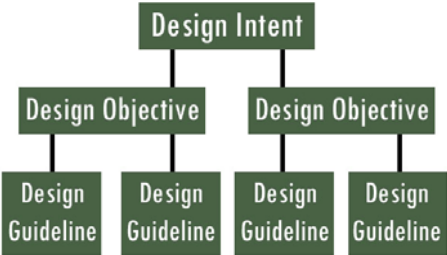
The Manual is not assumed to include solutions to every design challenge and is not intended to stifle creativity or innovation. Therefore, while the Guidelines in the Manual provide viable options for meeting a design challenge, **an applicant may propose alternate solutions not identified in the Manual.** If alternate solutions are proposed, applicants will need to demonstrate that applicable Design Objectives stated in the Manual have been met, and **project planners will ensure that the unique circumstances and appropriate findings leading to the alternate solution are documented in the project record.**

Organization and Use of The Design Guidelines Manual

Chapters in the Design Guidelines Manual are organized by *Project Type* and begin with a statement of *Purpose*. It is important to note that Chapter 1: Community Design provides design guidance for aesthetic issues shared on a community-wide basis. Therefore, **Chapter 1: Community Design should be used in conjunction with all chapters in the Manual.**

Chapter Organization

Each chapter is divided into two sections: *Site Design* and *Architecture* (with the exception of Chapter 1: Community Design, which is divided into eight sections). A statement of **Design Intent** is provided with each section. The Design Intent statement broadly captures the desired result of a project design.



Each section is divided into subsections. Under each subsection is a **Design Objective** followed by a series of supporting **Design Guidelines**. Each Design Guideline is assigned a unique number beginning with the acronym “DG”, followed by the respective chapter number, the section number, the subsection number, and finally the Design Guideline number. Photographs of existing projects are provided to illustrate how a guideline may achieve an objective. Renderings are included in some cases to illustrate concepts of certain guidelines. A cross-reference of related General Plan policies and development standards codified in Title 19 of the Chico Municipal Code (CMC) is provided when applicable in the colored margins below the design guidelines. To further clarify certain design guidelines, photographs of less than successful design solutions are included and noted as “Not Recommended”.

Design Objectives and Design Guidelines

To effectively use the Design Guidelines Manual, it is important to understand the hierarchy and relationship between a Design Objective and the respective Design Guidelines.

A **Design Objective** is defined as “The desired outcome of a design element. A Design Objective is the qualitative measure for determining the success of a certain design solution.”

A **Design Guideline** is defined as “An adopted design approach which supports or accomplishes a Design Objective.”

Glossary of Terms and Key Phrases

A glossary of terms and key phrases is provided at the end of this Manual to assist the reader. The glossary includes definitions of operational terms and phrases used in the Manual, as well as the definitions of common architectural terms.

Design Review of Single-Family Residential Project Types

While usually not subject to discretionary review, the design of detached single-family residential projects may require approval as part of a Planned Development Permit, Specific Plan, or in certain infill situations such as development of new residential flag lots.

As noted in Chapter 4: Residential Project Types of this Manual, **detached single-family dwellings are exempt from discretionary design review unless they are part of a Planned Development Permit, Specific Plan, or development of a new residential flag lot.**