

# **DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDELINES**

---

## **THIRD AND FIFTH SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS**

### **COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE**

**ADOPTED BY  
RIVERSIDE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
ON JULY 17, 2001**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

	<b><u>Page</u></b>
<b>I. <u>Introduction</u></b> .....	iii
<b>II. <u>Residential Standards</u></b>	
A. General Residential Design Standards .....	5
B. Residential Lot Design .....	6
C. Residential Street Design .....	8
D. Neighborhood Entry Statements .....	9
E. Street Medians .....	10
F. Reverse Frontage Treatments .....	10
G. Minimum Street, Median, and Parkway Widths .....	12
<b>III. <u>Nonresidential Standards</u></b>	
A. Commercial Development Design .....	13
B. Industrial Development Design .....	14
<b>IV. <u>Exhibits</u></b>	
A. Single-story design elements for two story houses .....	16
B. Reduced street width/enhanced landscaping .....	17
C. Entry monument and landscaping .....	18
D. Corner cutbacks and entry statements .....	19
E. Median for Commercial Arterial Highways .....	20
F. Median for Residential Arterial Highways .....	21
G. Median for Commercial Urban Arterial Highways .....	22
H. Median for Residential Urban Arterial Highways .....	23
I. Reverse frontage sidewalks and landscaping .....	24
J. Collector street section .....	25
K. Secondary highway street section .....	26
L. Major highway street section .....	27
M. Landscaped berms .....	28
N. Signage .....	29

# I. INTRODUCTION

---

These Development Design Standards and Guidelines for the Third and Fifth Supervisorial Districts (hereafter “the Districts”) of the County of Riverside (hereinafter “Guidelines”) are for the use of those property owners and design professionals submitting development applications to the County of Riverside Planning Department.

These Guidelines have been adopted to advance several specific development goals of the Districts, including:

- ! Ensuring that new homes are constructed in neighborhoods that are interesting and varied in appearance;
- ! Utilizing building materials and enhanced landscaping to promote a look of quality, both at the time of initial occupancy, as well as in future years;
- ! Encouraging efficient use of land while creating high quality communities that will maintain their economic value and long-term desirability as places to live and work.
- ! Incorporating conveniently located neighborhood parks, trails, and open space.
- ! Encouraging commercial and industrial developers to utilize designs and materials that evoke a sense of quality and permanence.

These Guidelines are intended to facilitate these goals. Exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis.

By adhering to the Guidelines, property owners and design professionals may realize a faster and less expensive development application process. To ensure the most efficient use of an applicant’s time and money, and to minimize the amount of effort spent on unworkable development proposals, early consultation with Planning and Transportation staff, as well as the appropriate Planning Commissioner and District staff, is both welcomed and encouraged.

- A. **Applicability.** These Guidelines supplement the minimum specifications for land development found in Riverside County Ordinance No. 348, and will be incorporated by reference in all applicable development Conditions of Approval. These Guidelines pertain to the following types of projects located within the Districts:

1. The “Residential Standards” in this document are required for any Schedule

“A” residential subdivision<sup>1</sup> which is located in the following residential zoning categories: R-1, R-1A, R-2, R-2A, R-3, R-3A, R-4 and R-6.

Where a residential lot is smaller than 7,200 square feet, guidelines related to unit location, setbacks, % of lot coverage and street frontage may be waived if the project applicants demonstrate that they have exceeded the other design guidelines and have addressed the goal of providing residents a sense of privacy and personal space in the layout of the project.

2. The “Commercial Standards” in this document apply to any commercial development.
3. The “Industrial Standards” in this document apply to any development in the IP or MSC zones of Ordinance No. 348.
4. These Guidelines shall apply to existing Specific Plans to the greatest extent possible.

B. Exceptions. These Guidelines shall apply to all applicable development projects throughout the Districts unless:

1. More restrictive standards have been imposed upon an individual development project by the Board of Supervisors.
2. More restrictive standards have been adopted by the Board of Supervisors relative to a particular designated area of their District (e.g., a community plan or specific plan).
3. Physical constraints of a particular site make the application of a particular guideline impractical.

---

<sup>1</sup> Per Riverside County Ordinance 460.136, 1/19/97, a Schedule “A” subdivision is defined as “any division of land into 5 or more parcels, where any parcel is less than 18,000 square feet in net area.”

## II. RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS

---

### A. GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

Schedule “A” subdivisions within the Districts shall be designed to promote a varied and interesting streetscape. These required variations shall be accomplished by adherence to the following standards:

1. Long unarticulated building facades shall be avoided by incorporating varying setbacks of the building footprint in a random fashion along the residential street.
2. Architectural design features (e.g. windows, columns, offset roof planes, etc.) shall be used to both vertically and horizontally articulate elevations. These design features shall also be executed on the rear facades and sides of homes to promote continuity of design and attractiveness of views from back yards and exterior roadways.
3. Houses and garages shall be arranged in a manner that creates a harmonious, varied appearance of building heights and setbacks. The visual impact of garages shall be reduced by the use of additional setback from the curb face where garage doors must face the street, and the use of side on and/or rear garages (including detached garages) where possible.
4. Exterior elevations of the various plans shall include use of different exterior materials, e.g., stucco, stone, and siding, so that not all facades look similar.
5. On contiguous lots, structures with the same or similar colors of stucco and/or roofs are not permitted. A scheme of color values on all exterior elements, including roofing material, shall be distinct from one house to the next, with deeper tones encouraged to promote variations.
6. Front yard return walls shall be constructed of masonry (slump stone or material of similar appearance, maintenance, and structural durability) and shall be a minimum of five feet in height. Side yard gates are required on one side of front yard, and shall be constructed of wrought iron, wood, or tubular steel. Side and rear yard fencing shall be of either masonry (slump stone or material of similar appearance, maintenance, and structural durability) or wood construction, however, all wood construction must be of good quality and sufficient durability (Applicants shall provide specifications which shall be approved by the Planning Department), with an approved stain and/or sealant to minimize water staining. All posts shall be set in concrete to a minimum depth of 24 inches with 3 inches of cover on all sides or as otherwise approved by the Planning Department.

7. Projects which will include forty or more residential lots shall have a minimum of three distinct floor plans, not including reversed plans. A minimum of one floor plan shall be provided for each additional sixty lots, or fraction thereof. Each plan shall be designed and constructed with a minimum of three distinct elevations. Please note that adding or deleting false shutters, or similar types of minimal elevation changes will not suffice as one of the required distinct elevations.
8. All projects of ten or more residential lots shall include at least one single-story floor plan. A minimum of one additional single-story plan shall be provided for each additional sixty lots, or fraction thereof. A minimum of 25% of the total number of homes (in a project having more than ten homes) shall be of single-story design, with an additional 15% of the total number of homes incorporating “single-story” design elements (refer to Exhibit “A” for examples). The required mix of two-story and single-story homes shall be evenly plotted within a particular project, with no more than three, two-story homes built next to each other.
9. Front yard landscaping is required, including an automatic irrigation system. Landscaping shall include a combination of turf, trees, and shrubs. A minimum of six, five gallon shrubs, one 24" box tree (minimum 2" caliper), and one 15 gallon or larger tree (minimum 1" caliper) shall be planted in each front yard. Creative use of hardscape and additional landscaping is encouraged.
10. All new residences with garages shall be provided with roll-up (i.e. on tracks) garage doors (either sectional steel or one-piece steel construction), with a minimum thickness of 24 gauge steel. At least 25% of the garage doors in any project shall provide windows.
11. Installation of cast iron, cast aluminum, brick, or slumpstone-encased curbside mailboxes is required. Community mailboxes are not permitted, unless required by applicable United States Postal officials. Each mailbox installation shall serve no more than two residences.

## **B. RESIDENTIAL LOT DESIGN**

All Schedule “A” residential tracts within the Districts shall be designed consistent with the following design standards.

1. For residential lots 7,200 square feet or more, the net usable area shall not be less than 7,000 square feet. For residential lots smaller than 7,200 square feet, the net usable area shall not be less than 97% of each lot.
2. No residential lot within a Schedule “A” housing tract shall have a lot coverage of greater than 50% (including the garage).

The following table provides the maximum lot coverages permitted by lot size and dwelling unit:

<b>Housing Type</b>	<b>Lot Size</b>	<b>Max. % Lot Coverage</b>
Single-story Homes	7,200 square feet or more	50%
Single-story Homes	Less than 7,200 square feet	45%
Two-story Homes	7,200 square feet or more	45%
Two-story Homes	Less than 7,200 square feet	40%

3. For each lot within a Schedule “A” housing tract, with a minimum lot size of 7,200 square feet, the street frontage shall not be less than 65 feet. For each lot less than 7,200 square feet, the minimum lot frontage shall not be less than 50 feet. Cul-de-sac bulb or street knuckle lots may have a minimum frontage of thirty-five (35) feet, measured along the face of curb. For purposes of satisfying the minimum frontage requirement, corner lots with angle cuts shall be measured at their rear property line.
4. Building and lot layouts shall conform to Riverside County standards regarding minimum garage setbacks from access streets, minimum yard requirements, maximum height requirements, and other county standards, unless specific variances therefrom are granted.
5. The minimum depth of back yards for lots 7,200 square feet and larger shall be 20 feet, into which a patio and patio cover may extend by right up to 10 feet (no Planning permit required, only Building and Safety Department permit.) The minimum depth of back yards for lots smaller than 7,200 square feet shall be 15 feet. For all lots, swimming pools and swimming pool equipment may extend into the backyard, with a setback adjustment, to within five feet of the property line.
6. Spacing between dwelling units on adjoining lots shall be a minimum of ten feet. Yard encroachments permitted under Section 18.19 of Ordinance No. 348 may interrupt this spacing. However, on lots less than 7,200 square feet, such encroachment into the side yard may occur in only one side yard, and the side yard into which the gate opens must remain a minimum of five feet in width. In no case shall spacing between dwelling units on adjoining lots be less than 10 feet.
7. Residential plans that feature attached garage designs whose entries are from the side (“side-loaded garages”) are encouraged. If side-loaded garages are utilized, a reduction in front yard setback of up to five feet is permitted if approved in conjunction with the approval of the tract. If the additional setback is not requested until after construction has commenced, setback adjustments may be requested for up to 30% of the total lots.

8. Where lot layout or physical constraints of the site will not permit a side-loaded design, a garage design which hides or de-emphasizes the garage entry's view from the street is acceptable. Detached garages located at the rear of the property, or "drive through" garages are also encouraged. In no case shall a garage whose entry faces the street be located closer than 20 feet measured from the back of planned or future sidewalk.

### **C. RESIDENTIAL STREET DESIGN**

Residential streets shall be designed with the goal of facilitating the desired General Residential Design Concepts. The following elements shall be used to accomplish this goal:

1. Curvilinear streets are required in the interiors of all Schedule "A" subdivisions. Recognizing that the amount of "curve" required for Schedule "A" streets within the Districts will be somewhat subjective, and acknowledging that not all parcels of land will lend themselves to "curvilinear" street design, all applicants are requested to consult with Transportation and Planning Staff concerning an acceptable street design concept. Examples of prior acceptable designs are available upon request.
2. The use of short cul-de-sac streets is strongly encouraged in order to create a small neighborhood feeling for residents. However, no cul-de-sac streets shorter than 150 feet measured to center of bulb are allowed. Also, no cul-de-sac streets longer than 1,320 feet (660 feet in a high fire hazard area) measured to center of bulb shall be permitted.
3. "Tee" intersections are a preferred design alternative to "four-way" intersections wherever two local streets or a collector and a local street intersect.
4. In certain circumstances (as approved by the Transportation Department), a reduction in the width of a local street may be appropriate to reduce traffic speeds on internal residential streets. However, such a reduction in pavement width must be utilized to accomplish other design objectives, e.g., enhancing the buffer treatment of reverse frontage lots, providing for sheltered parking opportunities, or incorporating bus stop turnouts.
5. In certain circumstances (as approved by the Planning Department), and for the purpose of providing more landscape area, the minimum interior local street width may be reduced from the sixty foot standard to no less than fifty-six feet. Any approved reduction shall be accomplished by reducing the width of the asphalt travel lanes by two feet in each direction. Any reduction in street width shall be used solely to augment landscape areas on the exterior street and shall be done on a 1 to 1 basis. For example, in the case of supplementing reverse frontage lots with four feet of extra width for landscaping, walkways, etc., a four foot reduction on a single local street may be allowed. Reductions in local street width on multiple streets may only be possible if there are multiple corresponding enhancements of landscape areas. For example, in the case of supplementing an exterior street with nine feet of additional parkway, a four foot reduction on two local streets may be allowed. See Exhibit "B" for an example of an appropriate street width reduction.



## **D. NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRY STATEMENTS**

Entry Statements shall be designed to create a visual perception of a particular residential development. This perception should be distinctive enough for passing motorists to easily identify the development and attractive enough to compliment the overall appearance of the greater community of which it is a part. See Exhibit “C” for an example of an entry monument and landscaping. The following criteria apply to Neighborhood Entry Statements:

1. Corner cutbacks shall be included at all intersections of General Plan roads classified as Secondary Highway or higher with all designated tract entrances. A minimum curb return radius of 35 feet shall be provided at these intersections (Exhibit “D”).
2. All intersections of General Plan roads classified as Secondary Highway or higher shall have tract entrance designations. A tract entrance designation shall consist of a neighborhood identification sign on a decorative wall or monument, with at least a twelve foot depth of landscaping (measured from the right-of-way line) surrounding the wall or monument (Exhibit “D”). No elements of the tract entrance designation shall be placed within the public right-of-way. The developer shall create private party maintenance arrangements for these elements at the time the project is built.
3. Similarly, at all designated residential tract entrances off of roadways classified as Secondary Highways or higher, a landscaped entry median shall be installed consistent with the following:
  - a) For residential tract entry roads which come to a “Tee” intersection with the first intersecting street within the tract, a landscaped entry median at least ten feet in width (curb to curb), including landscaping six feet in width, and 20 feet in length is required. The median shall be up-lighted and heavily landscaped with turf, trees, shrubs and flowers. Stamped concrete (or an acceptable alternate) roadways shall be constructed on both sides of entry medians from median curb to entry road curb, along the entire length of the entry median (see Exhibit “D”). Also, a minimum transition distance of 35 feet from the flowline/curb face of the General Plan road to the nose of the entry median shall be provided.
  - b) For residential tract entry roads which are through streets beyond the first intersecting street within the tract, a landscaped entry median at least six feet in width (curb to curb), including landscaping four feet in width, and ten feet in length is required. The median shall be heavily landscaped with turf, trees, shrubs and flowers. Stamped concrete roadways shall be constructed on both sides of entry medians from median curb to entry road curb, along the entire length of the entry median (see Exhibit “D”).
  - c) Also, a minimum transition distance of thirty-five feet from the flowline/curb face of the General Plan road to the nose of the entry median shall be provided.

- d) All entry statements shall be maintained by a property owners' association or other mechanism which insures ongoing maintenance at no cost to the County of Riverside.

## **E. STREET MEDIANS**

Where required, landscaped street medians shall be constructed for the following road classifications within the Districts, consistent with the following Exhibits:

Exhibit "E"	Commercial Arterial Highway
Exhibit "F"	Residential Arterial Highway
Exhibit "G"	Commercial Urban Arterial Highway
Exhibit "H"	Residential Urban Arterial Highway

Decorative trees and shrubs planted in medians should be clustered in random patterns rather than planted in evenly spaced locations. Other acceptable median treatments include stamped concrete or river rock between landscaped areas, turf, and/or flower beds.

## **F. REVERSE FRONTAGE TREATMENTS**

Where reverse frontage occurs on Schedule "A" residential streets within the Districts, the following guidelines shall apply:

1. The reverse frontage is the parkway and sidewalk widths combined.
2. Wider reverse frontage treatments may be employed on General Plan roadways with more than eighty-eight feet of right-of-way or where design considerations would make them appropriate (e.g., where project amenities like bike or jogging paths are included). Acceptable widths of reverse frontage treatments in these instances may range from twenty-five feet to fifty feet.
3. If sufficient width of frontage is available, meandering walks shall be constructed to provide a random influence to the rigid geometry of the adjoining street scene. Adequate parkway widths (at least twenty-one feet) are required to assure that the sidewalks create unique landscaping opportunities and do not take on a cramped, arbitrary appearance. Meandering walks which are designed to make use of existing mature trees or other natural aspects, e.g., large boulders, are encouraged.
4. Meandering sidewalks are encouraged and should be incorporated at the Specific Plan Map/Tentative Tract Map stage of project development. When a meandering sidewalk is appropriate along a particular reverse frontage, it shall be constructed consistent with the standards and examples shown in Exhibit "I." The following minimum treatment width is required to implement meandering sidewalks on the following roadway classifications:

collector street, secondary highway or major highway - thirty-one feet (measured from curb face to right-of-way as shown in Exhibits “J-L”).

5. Equestrian or hiking trails and bikeways and other recreational facilities shall be integrated into such treatments wherever required by current adopted local and regional trails system plans.
6. The location of lakes, parks, and other open space assets adjacent to major roads and other community entry points is encouraged to enhance community appearance and identity.
7. Reverse frontage treatments shall also be maintained by a property owners' association or other mechanism which insures maintenance at no cost to the County of Riverside.
8. Community perimeter (or theme) walls shall be solid walls located where view opportunities are not available. Plain concrete block walls are not permitted along reverse frontage areas. Wood, stucco-covered, or other like-material walls are not permitted along reverse frontage areas. Brick, slump stone, tile, textured concrete or other material walls which require little or no maintenance are required. Use of ivy or other vegetative material to soften and punctuate the appearance of walls and reduce the likelihood of graffiti is strongly encouraged. The use of capping in conjunction with other vertical design elements to temper the top line of the wall is also required.
9. Where privacy of views is not an issue, powder coated tubular steel or wrought iron sections should be constructed in perimeter walls in order to take advantage of casual view opportunities. A combination of a two foot to three foot high solid wall base with a wrought iron or tubular steel fence section between solid pilasters is a recommended design alternative.
10. The typical maximum height of walls or fencing shall be six feet. Note that a greater height for perimeter walls may be required where noise mitigation or other special circumstances would dictate.

## G. MINIMUM STREET, MEDIAN, AND PARKWAY WIDTHS

The following table shows the minimum street, median, and parkway widths (refer to the Exhibit indicated in the Exhibit column for illustrated sections of these requirements):

Street Type	Standard Street ROW Width	Minimum Additional Parkway Width per Side	Total Width:		Median Width	Total Minimum Parkway Width per Side	Landscaping	Side walk	Exhibit
			ROW	Curb to Curb					
Local	60	-2'	56'	36'	Not required	10'	5'	5'	B
Collector	66'	4'	74'	44'	Not required	15'	10'	5'	J
Secondary	88'	6'	100'	64'	Not required	18'	13'	5'	K
Major	100'	9'	118'	76'	12'	21'	16'	5'	L
Arterial (Commercial)	110'	9'	128'	86'	18'	21'	15"	6'	E
Arterial (Residential)	110'	9'	128'	86'	18'	21'	16'	5'	F
Urban Arterial (Commercial)	134'	9'	152'	110'	14'	21'	15'	6'	G
Urban Arterial (Residential)	134'	9'	152'	110'	14'	21'	16'	5'	H

### III. NONRESIDENTIAL STANDARDS

---

#### A. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT DESIGN

Applicants for all commercial development within the Districts shall utilize the following design elements:

1. Plot plans shall incorporate traffic circulation patterns that flow efficiently and safely, with outlets onto highly traveled streets kept to a minimum.
2. Parking lot lighting fixtures other than the standard “shoe box” types wherever possible, but especially in parking lots that are viewed from major streets. In addition, enhanced light coverage is to be encouraged, especially in areas where low pressure sodium fixtures are required. The height of parking lot light poles shall be the minimum practicable and in any case, no higher than 25 feet.
3. Building elevations shall be varied, articulated, interesting, and utilize different materials and textures. Above all, in whatever architectural style is pursued, a sense of quality is the desired objective. Pallet boards shall be submitted to the Planning Department and shall show type, color, and texture of materials. Typical “mansard” style elevations are disfavored. Authentic styles are desired, e.g., “tight sand” or smooth stucco (Santa Barbara type) as opposed to lace finishes on Spanish or Mediterranean style facades. Also, wrought iron light fixtures and two-piece clay roof tile are encouraged for this type of architectural style. Similar “traditional” architectural elements for various other architectural styles are desired.
4. Along streets adjacent to a commercial development, a sufficient number and size of shade trees and other landscaping shall be provided to minimize visual impact on nearby residential areas.
5. Trees shall also be provided in adequate number and size to shade off-street parking areas, and shall meet or exceed the shading requirements of Ordinance No. 348.
6. Where appropriate, landscaped berms adjacent to streets shall be used to minimize the visual effect and negative impacts of shopping centers on adjacent uses (See Exhibit “M” for examples).
7. Gas stations located at intersections shall be oriented so that the building is located adjacent to the intersection corner. Gas pumps shall be located in the interior of the site, with access drives located as far from the intersection corner as possible. Adequate sight distance shall be maintained at intersections for all traffic movements.
8. A commercial development signage plan or program must be submitted for review at the time of the initial project application. A uniform and consistent theme shall be required for all signage programs.

9. Identity signs for commercial and industrial projects shall utilize low profile monument signs rather than pylon or pole signs (See Exhibit “N”).
10. Individual tenant spaces within a particular project shall utilize channel lettering (i.e., where the sign lettering projects and is internally lighted beyond the flat plane to which it is installed) rather than “canned” lettering (i.e., where a flat plastic lens with identifying information covers a back-lit box). For examples of acceptable sign types, please refer to Exhibit “N”.

## **B. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT DESIGN**

Industrial development within the Districts shall be compatible with adjacent land uses. To achieve compatibility, industrial projects may be required to include mitigation measures necessary to avoid or minimize project impacts on adjacent uses. Such mitigation may include muffler systems, insulation, block walls, berms, landscaping, additional setbacks and/or wall and landscaping combinations, and other measures which may be indicated by project-related noise or environmental studies.

Night lighting, for security purposes, shall be installed consistent with the applicable provisions of Ordinance 655. Such lighting shall be hooded and directed so as not to directly illuminate adjacent properties. The support structures for such lighting shall not project significantly above the wall and/or landscaping treatment on the perimeter of the project and, in any case, be no higher than 40 feet.

In all new industrial development:

1. Vehicular access shall be limited to General Plan roadways classified as Industrial Collector and above. No access to adjacent local streets shall be permitted. No off site parking along adjacent local streets shall be permitted.
2. A minimum fifteen (15) foot parkway treatment along the perimeter streets with landscaping and sidewalk shall be provided in addition to the landscaped strip referenced in Sections 10.4.d and 11.4.e(2) of Ordinance No. 348.
3. On each property line that adjoins any residentially zoned parcel, an enhanced combination masonry wall and earthen berm treatment shall be installed prior to occupancy, if more than 200 square feet of outside storage (materials or equipment) is approved.
4. In all new industrial development including warehousing, truck terminals or freight transfer:
  - a) Truck parking areas shall be screened by a combination wall and berm to a height of 20 feet, the outside of which shall be densely landscaped.
  - b) Each truck parking area shall provide electrical connections for truck refrigeration units so that trucks are not left idling for extended periods.

