

MULTI-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES



GATEWAY NEIGHBORHOOD



ADOPTED MARCH 24, 2010

March 24, 2010

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**Multi-Family Neighborhood
Residential Design Guidelines
*Gateway Neighborhood***

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Multi-Family Neighborhood Residential Design Guidelines *Gateway Neighborhood*

I. INTRODUCTION / PURPOSE

These Multi-Family Neighborhood Residential Design Guidelines (“Guidelines”) are intended to encourage new residential projects to be compatible with, maintain the integrity, and to preserve the unique character and best features of the Gateway Neighborhood (the “Neighborhood”) by promoting desirable design qualities, guiding change in ways that are compatible with the existing neighborhood development pattern, and respecting the diversity and vitality of the Neighborhood. It is not the intent of these Guidelines to require any particular style of architecture, but rather to respect the variety of architectural styles in the Neighborhood and to encourage interesting design that is integrated with the Neighborhood.

While Title 17 of the Culver City Municipal Code (the “Zoning Code”) sets minimum standards with regard to matters such as setbacks, building height, lot coverage and other development requirements, it does not account for the character of the streetscape that is seen at the block or neighborhood level. These Guidelines reflect a more fine grained understanding of the Neighborhood.

These Guidelines are not a substitute for the requirements of the Zoning Code, but are to be used by City staff, developers, designers and the community to help understand how new developments can more appropriately respond to Neighborhood conditions. Projects that are consistent with these Guidelines will further the City’s goals of encouraging the compatibility of new projects with the existing surrounding neighborhood, promoting high quality developments and enhancing the quality of life and property values within the City.

II. APPLICABILITY

- A. These Guidelines apply to all properties outlined on Map 1.
- B. These Guidelines apply to all single-family and multi-family developments in the Neighborhood, including additions.
- C. These Guidelines are intended to complement the applicable provisions of the Zoning Code, to inform the City’s decision making process, and to encourage the compatibility of new projects with the Neighborhood. When considering specific projects, the City Council, Planning Commission and staff may interpret individual provisions found in these Guidelines with some flexibility, since not every provision may be workable or appropriate for every project. In some circumstances, one provision of these Guidelines may need to be relaxed to allow compliance with

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another provision that is determined to be more important in that particular case. The overall objective should always be to insure that the spirit of these Guidelines is respected.



Map 1

III. NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

These Guidelines were prepared on the basis of a detailed survey of Neighborhood characteristics that was made using the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) and field observations for verification. The GIS survey method uses aerial photography to examine building setbacks, lot coverage and other existing built conditions to help determine the character of a neighborhood. The maps included as part of these Guidelines divide the Neighborhood into 8 blocks (labeled A through H) as outlined on Map 2. A block generally includes lots on both sides of a common street (although Block A only includes lots on the west side of Duquesne Avenue).

These Guidelines have been developed by studying, cataloging and mapping the Neighborhood on a block by block basis in order to understand the prevailing development patterns and the average conditions at the block level and to understand the characteristics of the Neighborhood as a whole. For purposes of these Guidelines, "prevailing" refers to the most frequent or common condition on a block or in the Neighborhood. A number of recognizable development patterns emerged through the

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survey. These patterns are called block or neighborhood level “typologies”. These typologies have provided useful information in preparing these Guidelines and will help inform decision making regarding new development.



Map 2

IV. NEIGHBORHOOD TYPOLOGIES

Development Typologies:

The streetscape of the Neighborhood is characterized by broad planted parkways, public sidewalks, narrow driveways, and front yards with notably generous setbacks that join the parkway to create a continuous landscape effect along the street frontage. Neighborhood parkways generally average 5 feet in width. Lincoln and Madison Avenues are further enhanced with a canopy of mature trees lining both sides of the street.

The Neighborhood includes a diversity of housing types and architectural styles including Craftsman, California Bungalow, Spanish, Mediterranean, Tudor, Monterey Colonial, Modern and Contemporary styles. This richness of architectural diversity enhances the streetscape and contributes to the depth of its character. The

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Neighborhood's best architectural examples have interesting façades and are scaled and massed to create visual interest no matter what the style.

The Neighborhood is divided into two zoning districts, Residential Medium Density (RMD) and Residential Two Family (R2). The R2 portion of the neighborhood contains both single-family homes and duplexes. The earliest of these dates back to the 1900's through the 1920's and are typically low, single-story structures, some of which have City-designated historic status. Many dwellings date from the 1930's through the 1950's; these are often two-story, with the second story located toward the rear half of the structure, or detached two-story structures located at the rear of the property. A number of dwellings include later additions and renovations. Though relatively small in number, the infill developments that have taken place from the 1980's to the present tend to have larger structures that occupy greater portions of the lot and are located closer to the street than is the case in earlier buildings. The R2 zone allows up to two units per lot.

The RMD portion of the Neighborhood, while containing some single family and two family developments, is primarily made up of a mix of (i) larger 3 to 8 unit buildings, sometimes on double wide lots; and (ii) older, small courtyard apartments with up to 6 units arranged around an interior court with significant amounts of landscaping. The RMD zone allows one unit per 1,500 square feet of lot area with a maximum of nine units on any one lot. For example, on a 6,000 square foot lot, a maximum of four units are allowed ($6,000/1,500 = 4$ units).

Lot Pattern:

The Neighborhood contains rectangular lots along a linear grid street pattern. There are no cul-de-sacs or alleys within the Neighborhood; however Lincoln Avenue and Madison Avenue dead end at the Ballona Creek. The front portion of the residences typically faces the primary street (Duquesne, Lincoln, or Madison) in the block, except for some units that are located on corner lots or reverse corner lots and face Braddock or Farragut. The properties adjacent to the Ballona Creek are more irregular in shape, and some of these lots are slightly larger than those in the rest of the Neighborhood. The lots on Duquesne Avenue have depths of 125 feet or 135 feet, with shorter dimensions resulting from City-required street dedication of an additional 10 feet for Duquesne Avenue.

Lot Size:

The prevailing lot size in the Neighborhood is 50 feet (width) x 135 feet (length), for a total of 6,750 square feet. Of the 258 lots within the Neighborhood, 214 (approximately 84% of the total) are 6,750 square feet in area. An additional 19 lots measure 50 feet (width) by 125 feet (length) for a total of 6,250 square feet, having dedicated 10 feet to the City's existing street right-of-way for Duquesne Avenue. There are 9 smaller lots

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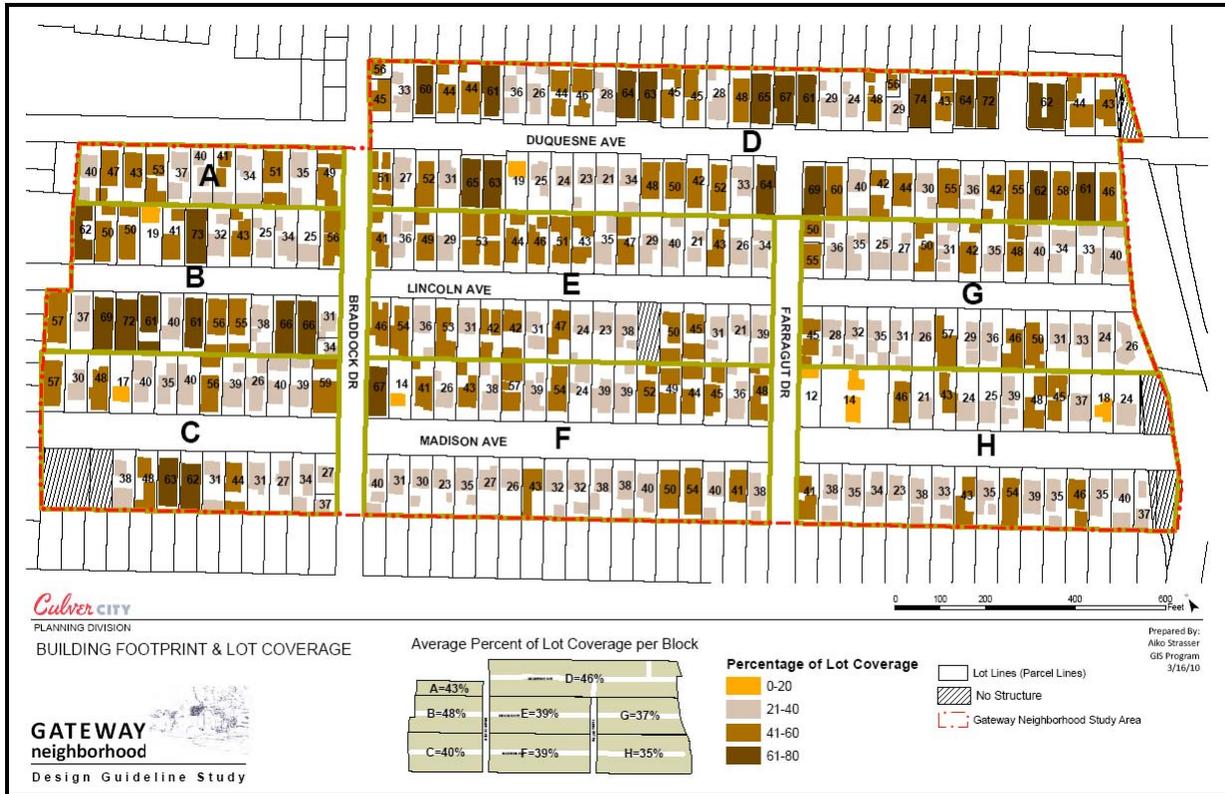
ranging in size from 2,000 to 5,000 square feet, 16 larger sized lots ranging in size from 8,500 to 10,900 square feet, and one lot with 20,250 square feet. The smaller lots are usually corner lots or reverse corner lots. The larger lots include a few double- wide lots and several irregularly shaped lots adjacent to the Ballona Creek.

Lot Coverage:

Lot coverage refers to the ratio of the size of a building footprint to the total size of the lot on which it is located. Although lot coverage varies significantly in the Neighborhood, the prevailing lot coverage is in the medium range of 21-40%. Approximately half of the lots in the Neighborhood (and over 60% in the R2 zone) have lot coverage of 21-40%. Slightly more than 1/3 of the lots have lot coverage of 41-60%, while approximately 10 percent of the lots (all located in the RMD zone) have lot coverage of 61 - 80%. Seven lots in the Neighborhood have lot coverage of 20% or less and there are several vacant lots. The table below summarizes average lot coverage and the prevailing lot coverage per block. Map 3 illustrates the building footprints and percentage of lot coverage for each lot and the average lot coverage per block.

<u>Block/ Zone</u>	<u>Avg. Coverage</u>	<u>Prevailing (Most Frequent)</u>	<u>Block/ Zone</u>	<u>Avg. Coverage</u>	<u>Prevailing (Most Frequent)</u>
A (RMD)	43%	41-60%	E (R2)	39%	41-60%
B (RMD)	48%	*21-80%	F (R2)	39%	21-40%
C (RMD)	40%	21-40%	G (R2)	37%	21-40%
D (RMD)	46%	41-60%	H (R2)	35%	21-40%

*The block is evenly divided between 21-40%, 41-60%, and 61-80% lot coverage



Map 3

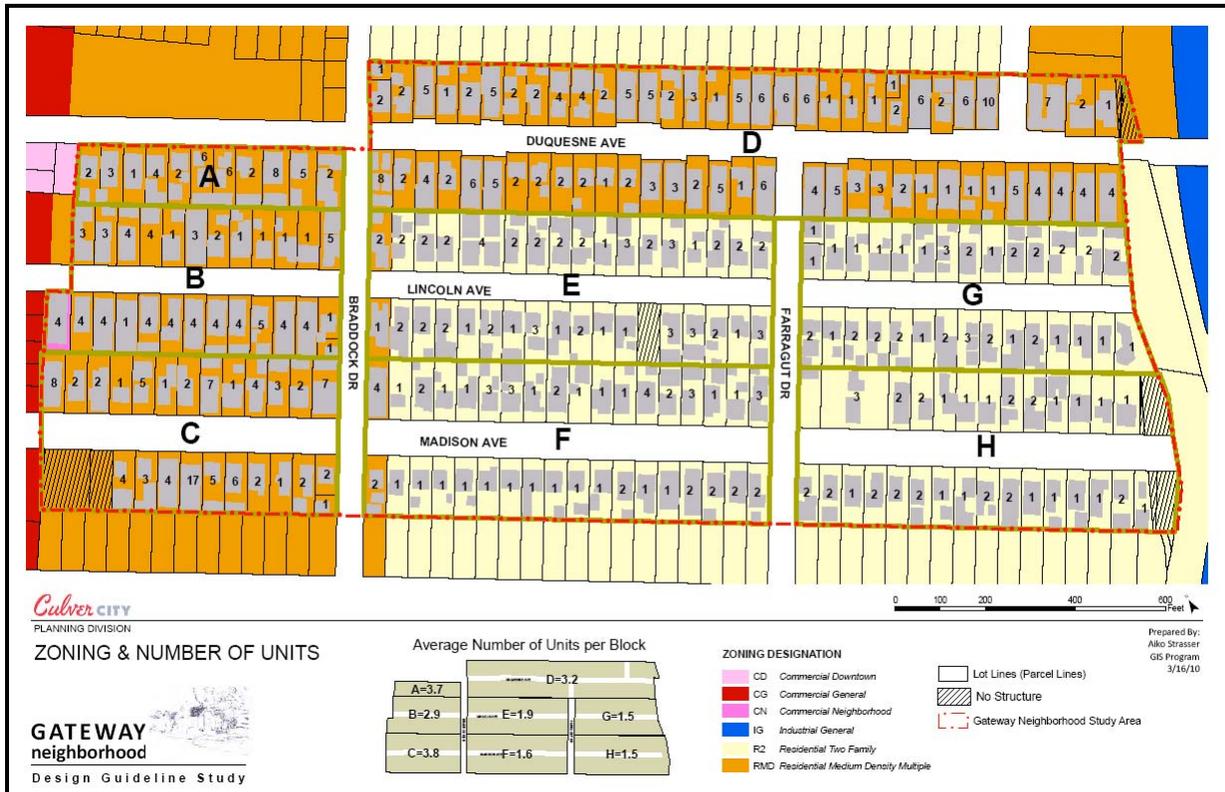
Use Pattern:

In the Neighborhood, blocks A through D are zoned Residential Medium Density (RMD), with the exception of one lot at the north end of Lincoln Avenue which is zoned Commercial Neighborhood (CN). Blocks E through H are generally zoned Residential Two Family (R2). However, the lots on the northerly end of Blocks E and F, fronting on Braddock Drive, are zoned RMD, while they have a General Plan Land Use designation of Residential Two Family.

Although zoned for higher density, more than 1/3 of the lots in the Neighborhood are developed with single-family dwellings. The next most common development type in the Neighborhood is two-family dwellings, which occur on slightly less than 1/3 of the lots. Single family structures are located on a majority of the lots in the R2 zone. Even in the RMD zone single family dwellings are mixed in with larger condominium and apartment buildings. The table below summarizes average number of units and the prevailing unit type per block. Map 4 illustrates the zoning and number of units on each lot and the average number of units per block.

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<u>Block/Zone</u>	<u>Avg. #Units</u>	<u>Prevailing (Most Frequent)</u>	<u>Block/Zone</u>	<u>Avg. #Units</u>	<u>Prevailing (Most Frequent)</u>
A (RMD)	3.7	2 units	E (R2)	1.9	2 units
B (RMD)	2.9	4 units	F (R2)	1.6	1 unit
C (RMD)	3.8	2 units	G (R2)	1.5	1 unit
D (RMD)	3.2	2 units	H (R2)	1.5	1 unit



Map 4

Building Setbacks:

Lots in the Neighborhood share common traits such as generous front setbacks, extensive landscaping, open courtyards and uninterrupted landscaped parkways that exceed the Code requirements. While the Zoning Code requires at least a 15-foot front setback in the R2 zone and at least a 10-foot setback in the RMD zone, most blocks in the Neighborhood have an average front setback of 21 feet or more. The only exception is Block B, with an average front setback of 18 feet. In the R2 portion of the Neighborhood, the average front setback ranges from 25 to 28 feet. In the RMD portion of the Neighborhood, the average front yard setback ranges from 18 and 24 feet. The

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table below summarizes average setbacks and the prevailing setback per block. Map 5 illustrates the individual lot setbacks and the average setback per block.

Block/ Zone	Avg. Setback	Prevailing (Most Frequent)	Block/ Zone	Avg. Setback	Prevailing (Most Frequent)
A (RMD)	21 ft.	15 ft.	E (R2)	25 ft.	25 ft.
B (RMD)	18 ft.	15 ft.	F (R2)	26 ft.	25 ft.
C (RMD)	23 ft.	25 ft.	G (R2)	26 ft.	25 ft.
D (RMD)	24 ft.	20 ft.	H (R2)	27 ft.	25 ft.



Map 5

Building Height

Both the RMD and R2 zones permit two story buildings with heights of up to 30 feet. Although a few buildings in the Neighborhood are 30 feet high, a majority are smaller scale, one and two story buildings ranging in height from 14 to 20 feet. Two story buildings generally prevail in the RMD zone while one story buildings prevail in the R2 zone. The table below summarizes the average building height and the prevailing number of stories per block. Map 6 illustrates the height and number of stories for each structure and the average building height per block. The average heights are based on

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the buildings that are located nearest the front property line to better reflect the character of the streetscape.

<u>Block/Zone</u>	<u>Avg. Height</u>	<u>Prevailing (Most Frequent) # of stories</u>	<u>Block/Zone</u>	<u>Avg. Height</u>	<u>Prevailing (Most Frequent) # of stories</u>
A (RMD)	16 ft.	1	E (R2)	18 ft.	1
B (RMD)	20 ft.	2	F (R2)	18 ft.	1
C (RMD)	18 ft.	2	G (R2)	15 ft.	1
D (RMD)	20 ft.	2	H (R2)	19 ft.	1



Map 6

V. GENERAL DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The objectives of these Guidelines are to encourage new projects to:

- A.** Reflect the development patterns and the character of the Neighborhood and the block, relative to prevailing lot size, building orientation, building setbacks, building height, yards, open space and lot coverage.
- B.** Design buildings that exhibit well-developed details, materials and lighting to give structures integrity as design objects, to provide visual interest and to contribute to overall architectural quality.
- C.** Harmonize building bulk and mass with the scale of the block.
- D.** Protect the privacy of neighboring residences and their access to sunlight and natural ventilation.
- E.** Preserve existing parkways, mature landscaping and street trees to maintain the character of the neighborhood and minimize disruptions to the street frontage.
- F.** Integrate the placement of landscaping to complement building architecture.
- G.** Minimize the percentage of lot area devoted to parking and driveways and locate parking so as to reduce visual impacts and maximize open space and landscaping as defined in the Zoning Code.
- H.** When used, provide lighting that is functional and aesthetically pleasing while providing a sense of security.

VI. GUIDELINES

A. Site Design

- 1. Building Location.** To further the objective of respecting neighboring properties and views from the public rights-of-way from the visual impact of a proposed development, new projects are encouraged to:
 - a. Establish setbacks that are consistent with the prevailing setbacks along the block where the project is located.

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~ Establish setbacks that are consistent with prevailing setbacks~

- b. Orient buildings towards the street.



~ Orient building towards the street with entry facing the street ~

- c. Locate the primary entry area for each residential unit so that it faces the public street or a common courtyard and so that the entry relates to the pedestrian scale of the Neighborhood.
- d. Locate new structures or additions in areas that minimize the impacts on neighboring structures.
- e. Establish building lot coverage that is sensitive to the prevailing lot coverage for the block.

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- f. Be considerate of neighboring properties' views and access to sun light and natural ventilation.

2. Building Privacy. In order to further the objective of maintaining privacy and minimizing the disruption of outdoor activities of adjacent sites, new projects are encouraged to:

- a. To the extent feasible, locate windows where they will not directly align with existing neighboring windows.
- b. To the extent feasible locate windows away from, or screen windows from direct views of private outdoor areas of neighboring properties.
- c. Locate second floor balconies and decks in areas that minimize the loss of privacy for neighboring properties.
- d. Provide landscape screening along rear and side property lines where neighbors' privacy may be affected.

3. Parking. In order to further the objective of locating parking to reduce visual impacts and minimizing the percentage of lot area devoted to parking and driveways, new projects are encouraged to:

- a. Avoid adversely affecting the character of residential streets by the visual impact of parking areas and garage openings. Examples of negative visual impacts are: large blank walls, expansive garage doors, driveway openings that dominate the street frontage, and parking areas located in the front yard.



~ Discourage driveway and garage doors that dominate the street frontage~

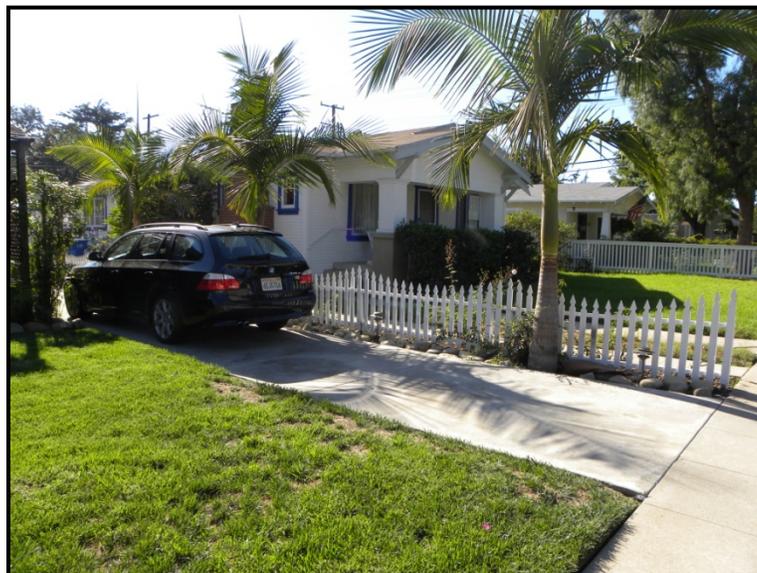
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- b. Locate on-site parking at the rear of the site, if feasible.



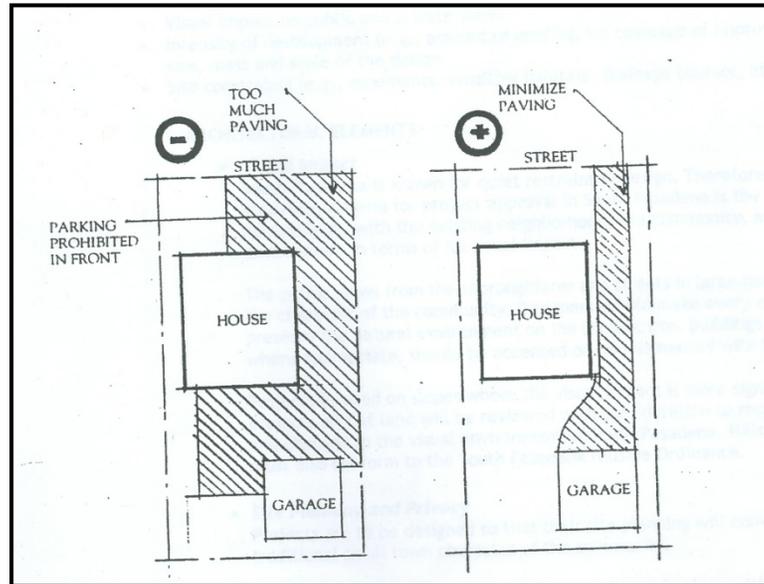
~Parking located at rear of site encouraged~

- c. Minimize the size of the driveway apron, driveway and paved areas.



~Minimized Driveway paving~

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~ Minimize Paved Areas and Provide Parking at Rear of Site ~

- d. Design carports and garages as an integral part of the project architecture and relate them to the primary building in terms of materials, color and detail.
- e. Design driveways and vehicle maneuvering areas into sub-areas by thoughtful use of pattern and such materials as integral color concrete, slate, brick or areas of permeable surface.
- f. Locate driveways on the side of the project lot so that the driveway is not the central feature visible from the street. However, if a mature tree is located where the driveway would be placed, an alternate driveway location may be appropriate. Where feasible, the retention of existing driveways and landscaping is encouraged. The location of driveways that will require the removal of trees is discouraged.
- g. Use landscaping to screen parking areas from the street.
- h. Where subterranean parking is used, locate it entirely below grade with the driveway located to the side of the lot. In order to allow opportunities for landscaping on grade rather than over a structure, subterranean parking utilizing more than 3/4 of the site is discouraged. Exposed portions of the subterranean structure which are visible from the street, including grills and ventilation openings, are discouraged.
- i. Minimize the parking footprint to allow for more on-grade landscaping.

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4. Landscaping and Open Space. Landscaping and open space are an integral part of any project. Landscaping can be used as a unifying element within a project to obtain a cohesive appearance and to help achieve compatibility of a new project with its surroundings. In order to further this objective, new projects are encouraged to:

- a. Utilize landscaping that includes a variety of plant materials which provide color and contrast, and shade. Desirable landscape elements include pedestrian-scaled lighting, fountains, decorative paving, and seating opportunities, such as raised planters and walls.
- b. Utilize landscape elements and materials that complement the architectural style and are proportional to the size of the primary structure.
- c. Develop landscaping to contain a combination of low, medium and tall plant materials. For example, low planting may be used in the foreground, proceeding back to the tallest in the background.



~ Appropriate combination of low, medium, and tall plant materials ~

- d. Landscape all unpaved surfaces on the building site, such as building and property edges and spaces between structures with trees, shrubs, ground-cover, gravel or decomposed granite, or other appropriate surfacing material.
- e. When limited space is available, use raised planters, window boxes, pergolas or trellises to encourage the softening of architectural edges with plant material.

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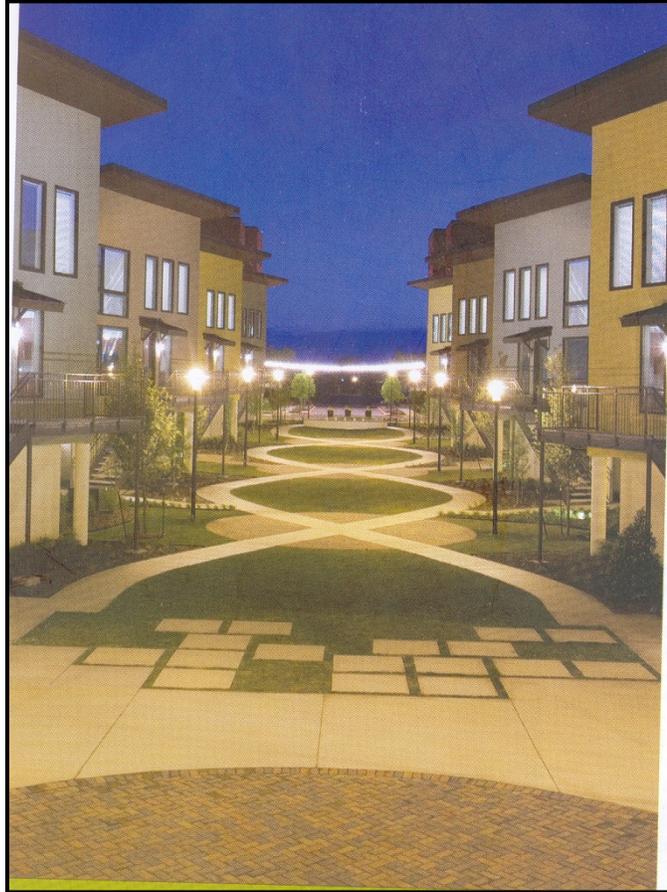
- f. Use planting to soften or screen parking areas, alleyways, trash, and service areas.



~ Soften or screen parking areas, alleyways, trash, and service areas ~

- g. Fence and wall materials, colors and detailing should be consistent with the architectural style of buildings on the site.
- h. If included, front yard fences and walls should be consistent with the fence or wall patterns of homes on the block and they should be setback at least one foot from the sidewalk with lower plantings placed between the sidewalk and the fence or wall to preserve the public parkway environment.
- i. Accommodate and retain existing mature street trees and on-site trees, when feasible. Removal of existing street and on-site trees is discouraged.
- j. Locate landscaping on grade rather than over structure to facilitate the use of large trees and shrubs.
- k. Integrate and connect the design of public and private open space areas to maximize the openness of the development.
- l. Use courtyard design or other designs that increase open space and landscaping.

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~ Courtyard design ~

- m. Design common open space to be open to the sky. Patio covers, building projections and similar enclosures that block sunlight and air in a common courtyard or the front setback are discouraged.
- 5. Lighting.** Lighting can be used to complement and enhance the architecture and landscape of projects. In order to further this objective, new projects are encouraged to:
- a. Avoid lighting that spills, reflects, or produces glare onto neighboring properties, into windows, or onto public rights-of-way.
 - b. Design any exterior lighting to contribute to the aesthetic quality of the project. Lighting of a building façade that diminishes architectural features is discouraged.

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~ Lighting that is compatible with the architectural style ~

- c. Utilize lighting fixtures that are compatible with the architectural style, materials, and color of the project.

B. Building Design and Architecture

1. Mass and Scale. A structure that is out of scale with its site and the other buildings on the block tends to be incompatible with its surroundings. New projects are encouraged to:

- a. Harmonize building scale with the existing prevailing scale of the block to produce a structure that is compatible with the proportion, size, mass, and height of neighboring houses. For example, when prevailing structures on the block are single-story, a multi-story project should be designed to include one-story height along the street frontage, stepping back to the upper floor.
- b. Reduce the perceived height and bulk of multi-story buildings by dividing the building mass into smaller-scale components. Perceived height and bulk can also be reduced by stepping back the upper floors, reducing floor area and building mass and scaling architectural details on the upper story to relate to the overall building composition. Features such as projecting eaves, dormers porches, balconies and other elements appropriate to the proposed style are encouraged.

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~ Discourage Single Massing ~



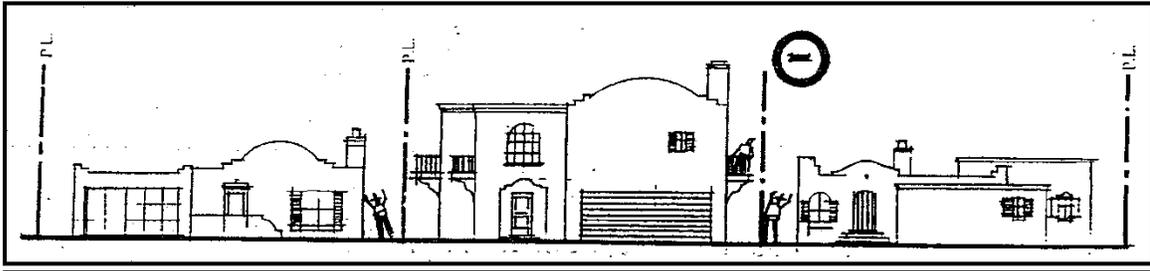
~ Encourage Multiple Massing ~

- c. Anchor the base of the building in order to establish a strong visual connection to the ground and the site, and design the upper story of the building to appear less massive than the buildings' base.
- d. Relate buildings to the pedestrian scale by incorporating sufficient small scale elements (such as entry ways, stoops, steps, windows, canopies, etc.) into the lower portions of multi-story buildings that are adjacent to streets or public pedestrian areas. Large entries that dominate the front façade and appear to be two-stories are discouraged.

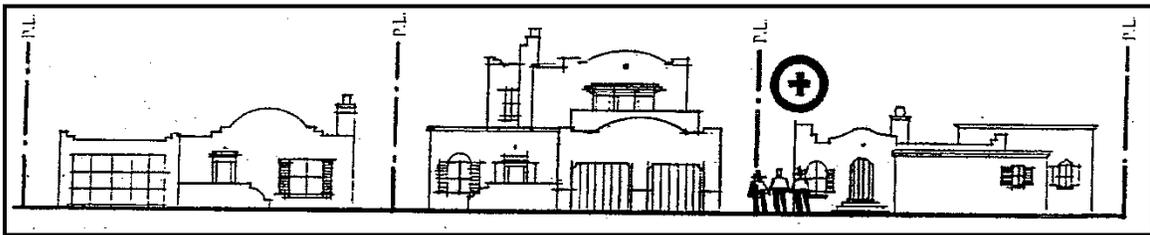


~ Pedestrian oriented design elements ~

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~Two story building out scale with adjacent buildings ~



~ Two story building with up floor stepped back ~

2. Building Façade. Façade treatment and building details provide visual interest and can contribute to the overall architectural quality of a building. It is not the intent of these design guidelines to require any particular style of architecture, but rather respect the diversity of architectural styles in the Neighborhood and encourage interesting design that is integrated into the Neighborhood. Thoughtful, considerate design can provide for the needs of the project while maintaining existing qualities of adjacent properties and the neighborhood. In order to further this objective, new projects are encouraged to:

- a. Design buildings to be attractive from all directions. Consistently apply architectural details and exterior materials on all sides of the structure. Consider the use of details and exterior materials in relation to all possible views of the building. Visual conflicts between the street facade and side or rear views are discouraged.
- b. Design façade details to be appropriate to and consistent with the building's architectural style. Have them carry through the entire structure and any accessory structures. For additions or alterations to an existing structure, use materials and finishes (including windows and doors) that compliment and relate to the existing structure.
- c. Articulate the building façades by appropriate use of reveals, changes in surface pattern or texture and variations in the building plane, while maintaining the integrity of the architectural style, to sustain visual interest. Areas of flat, blank walls and lack of architectural details are discouraged.

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~ Changes in surface texture and variation in the building ~

- d. Avoid the use of surface materials that produce excessive reflected glare which could adversely affect the comfort or safety of pedestrians, drivers or neighbors.
- e. Design accessory structures to be consistent in material and color with the primary structures on the site.
- f. When developing multiple lots or double lots, except in the case of courtyard developments, individuate and vary the building forms by change of style or change of massing and articulation, either of which can accentuate the Neighborhood's architectural diversity.

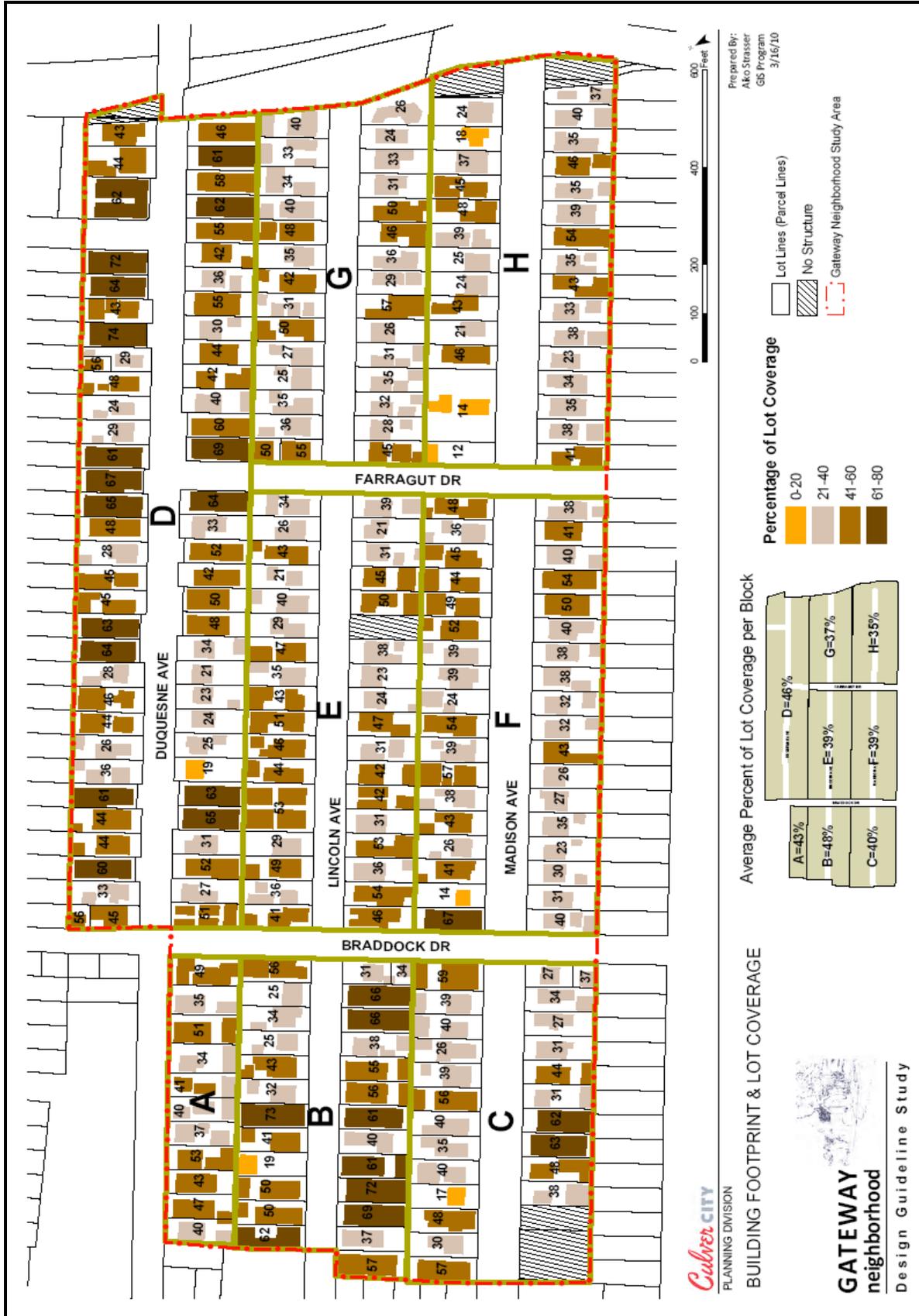
VII. ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Neighborhood Area Map
- 2) Lot Lines and Block ID Map
- 3) Building Footprint and Lot Coverage Map
- 4) Zoning and # of Units Map
- 5) Setback Survey and Right of Way Map
- 6) Height and # of Stories Map

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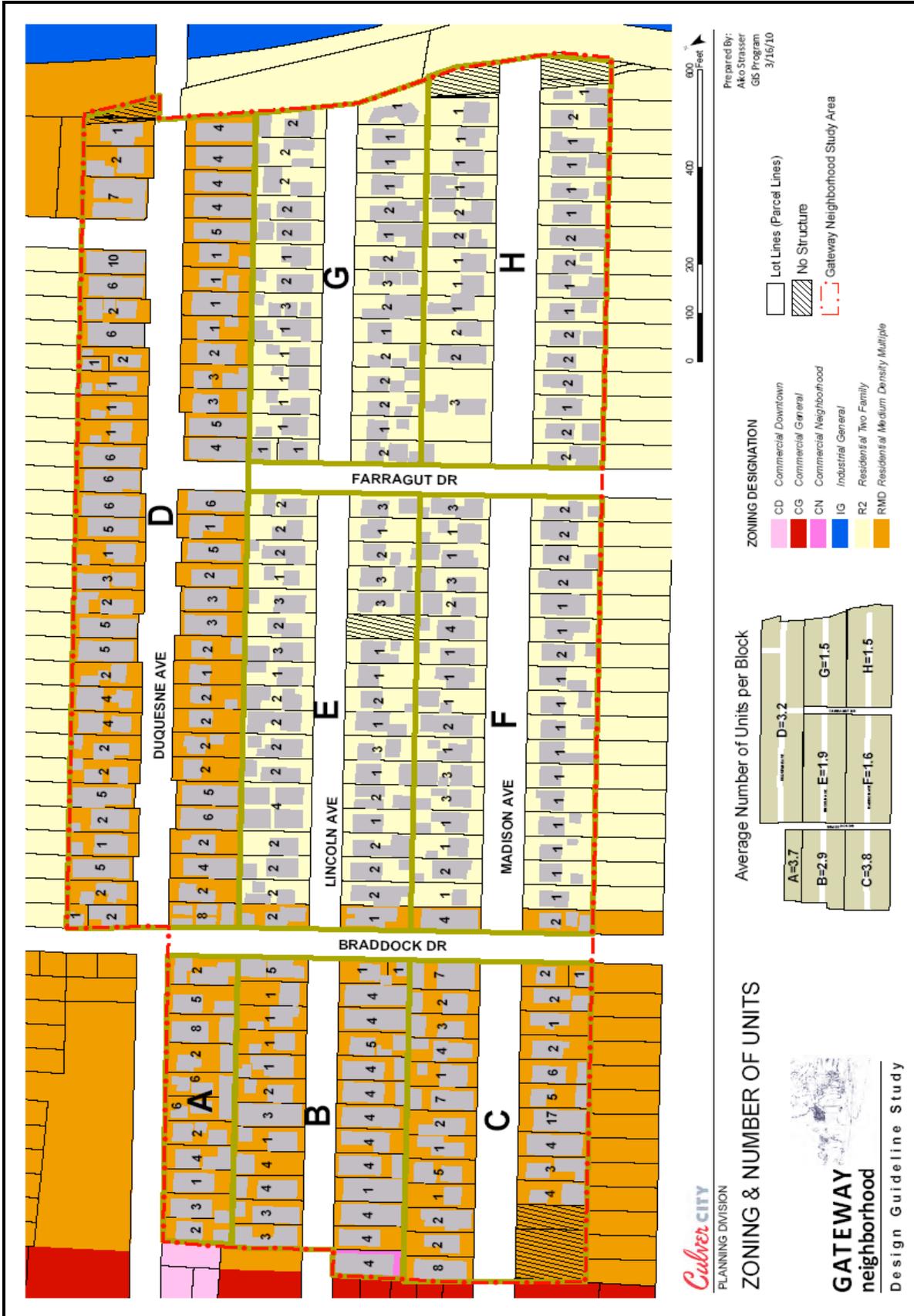


BUILDING FOOTPRINT & LOT COVERAGE



GATEWAY neighborhood

Design Guideline Study





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