



# **Yolo County**

## **RESIDENTIAL**

# **Design Guidelines**

**YOLO COUNTY DESIGN GUIDELINES**

# YOLO COUNTY: Residential Design Guidelines

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# **I. INTRODUCTION**

## **A. APPLICABILITY**

The design guidelines in this section apply to any new development in areas zoned Residential Suburban (R-S), Residential One-Family (R-1), Residential One-Family or Duplex (R-2), Multiple-Family Residential (R-3) and Apartment-Professional Zone (R-4) within the unincorporated area of Yolo County.

These guidelines are advisory and are intended to augment, but not conflict with, applicable zoning regulations and General Plan policies. In some cases, the guidelines support policies in the Yolo County 2030 Countywide General Plan that may require specific design features. Where appropriate, the applicable General Plan Policy will be cited. Applicants are advised to consult with Yolo County Environmental Health and the local fire district to ensure project design does not conflict with any applicable standards or emergency requirements.

## **B. PURPOSE AND GOALS**

The purpose of these guidelines is to encourage new residential development, including planned developments and large residential care facilities, to be designed in a sustainable manner that will result in a variety of housing options to meet the needs of a diverse population.

## **C. ORGANIZATION**

This document separates residential design into two main categories: street system and circulation, and site and building design. Subtopics are addressed within each of these categories. Each subtopic begins with a guiding design principle and is supported by specific design guidelines. Visuals are provided for clarification and illustration. A brief section on how to incorporate sustainable building practices is provided at the end of this document.

## **D. CREATIVE DESIGN**

The graphics, examples, and illustrations provided in this document are conceptual and intended to inspire design professionals and promote quality design. In order to provide appealing residential projects in Yolo County, which accommodate a variety of needs, innovative design concepts are encouraged. Design elements should compliment and enhance surrounding development in terms of scale, mass, detailing, and building patterns. New development should respond to (but not necessarily mimic) the traditional development and architectural patterns of the region.

Though these guidelines are advisory, they reflect a strong commitment by the county to create neighborhoods that are attractive and welcoming. They are the standard to which projects will be evaluated. We recognize that for some projects not all of these guidelines can be met. In such cases, county staff is available to discuss these constraints with project proponents as early in the design process as possible. In this way, the spirit and intent of these guidelines can be met while guaranteeing the most effective use of private and public resources during design, review and approval, construction, and subsequent operations.

## **II. STREET SYSTEM AND CIRCULATION**

### **A. ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY**

**1. CONNECTIVITY:** New residential development should provide for both internal and external connectivity, with an emphasis on restoring the traditional street grid. New development should strengthen the connection to town centers, schools, libraries or other civic buildings to promote a sense of stability and identity for residents. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Community Character Policy CC-2.16 requires sustainable design standards as appropriate for projects located within the growth boundaries of the unincorporated communities.

Community Character Policy CC-4.21: *Discourage gated and/or walled communities.*  
Circulation Policy CI-2.4: *The comfort, convenience, and safety of bicyclists and pedestrians are as important as, and should be balanced to the greatest feasible extent with, those same values for drivers.*

Circulation Policy CI-3.8 encourages development that is compact, so as to promote the efficient use of existing transportation facilities.

Circulation Policy CI-3.15 provides for greater street connectivity and efficient movement of all transportation modes.

Circulation Policy CI-3.18: *Ensure adequate access for emergency vehicles.*

Circulation Policy CI-5.5: *Integrate bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities into new developments.*

Circulation Policy CI-5.16: *Construct and maintain bikeways and sidewalks in a manner that minimizes conflicts between bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists.*

Circulation Policy CI-6.2: *Require new development to situate transit stops and hubs at locations that are convenient and accessible to transit users.*

Circulation Policy CI-6.5: *Integrate transit stops into new residential and employment center developments.*

Circulation Policy CI-6.11: *Require new development to include design elements that promote transit use.*

Public Facilities and Services Policy PF-3.5: *Create greenbelts to connect schools, community parks, and residential areas in unincorporated communities wherever possible. Connect community parks to existing trails, walkways, and bikeways where feasible.*

Health and Safety Policy HS-8.1: *Require community design that provides opportunities for safe, healthy, and easily accessible community interaction.*

Health and Safety Policy HS-8.8: *Design communities to promote an active healthy lifestyle, personal fitness, and access to healthy foods.*

**R.G.1: Internal Circulation:** Provide safe internal circulation, with several points of access to connecting corridors.

**R.G.2: Transportation:** Safe access routes to and from new development should accommodate all forms of transportation: walking, bicycling, public transit, automotive travel, and emergency vehicles. Where possible, provide new bus stops or provide convenient access to existing bus stops and public transportation.

**R.G.3: Area Access:** Ensure safe and efficient access to neighborhood commercial areas, employment centers, adjacent subdivisions, natural areas, public open space, and any other nearby amenity.

**R.G.4: Discouraged Development Patterns:** Spatial separation of new development from surrounding neighborhoods by such means as remote location, minimal access points, perimeter sound walls, and abrupt transitions, are all strongly discouraged.

**R.G.5: Gated Communities:** Gated communities in any location are discouraged.



*Integrate logically placed pedestrian pathways that connect new subdivision neighborhoods and multi-family complexes to adjacent shops, restaurants, and other existing residences.*

## **B. TRAFFIC**

**1. TRAFFIC CALMING:** Use traffic calming measures in residential areas.

**R.G.6: Traffic Calming Measures:** Recommended traffic calming techniques may include, but are not limited to:

- Narrow streets, to the extent feasible
- “Slow points,” such as curb- extensions and corner radius treatments
- Pedestrian amenities, street furniture, and landscaping
- Tree lined medians or landscaped strips
- Traffic tables
- Raised crosswalks or crosswalks with varied patterns and textures
- Traffic circles (round-abouts), where applicable

**2. STREET HIERARCHY:** Use a hierarchy of streets in the design of new residential development. This hierarchy should consist of *neighborhood streets*, *collector streets*, and *arterials* in a grid pattern where possible. Supports Circulation Policy CI-1.2: Preserve and continue to develop a fully-connected grid-based circulation system that distributes traffic evenly and avoids excessive concentrations of traffic in any given area.

**R.G.7: Residential Streets:** Locate single-family residences on as narrow neighborhood streets as is possible, without compromising fire and emergency access.

**R.G.8: Collector Streets:** Locate multi-family residential developments, residential care facilities, and public facilities, such as parks and schools, on collector streets, which provide a balanced function of access and mobility.

**R.G.9: Arterials:** Arterials serve as major transportation corridors that provide a high level of mobility. New single-family residential development should not be located on arterial streets; however, denser multiple-family housing can be located along arterials where public transit is available.

## **C. OUTDOOR RECREATION SPACE**

**1. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE:** Integrate public open spaces into every new residential development. A strong public realm is an important part of a healthy community. Developers are encouraged to integrate public open space into each neighborhood instead of paying in-lieu park fees. Supports the following General Plan policies: Community Character Policy CC-2.3: *Include open space corridors and trails throughout each community to provide off-street bicycle and pedestrian access, as well as connections to intra-county corridors and trails.*

Community Character Policy CC-2.13: *Require 5 acres of neighborhood parks for every 1,000 people with each unincorporated community, proximate to residential neighborhoods.*

Circulation Policy CI-5.4: *Establish a looped off-street trail system in each community.*

Public Facilities and Services Policy PF-3.1: *Establish a service threshold of 5 acres of community (neighborhood) park per 1,000 people in each unincorporated community.*

Public Facility and Services Policy PF-3.6: *Construct neighborhood and community parks within walking and bicycling distance of residential areas.*

**R.G.10: Availability:** Public open spaces such as parks, “pocket parks”, jogging paths and “green belts” should be made available and accessible to all residents.

**R.G.11: Access:** Avoid locating public open spaces where residents would have to cross an arterial street.

**R.G.12: Pedestrian Crossing:** Provide well-defined pedestrian crossings with signage, varied pavement texturing, or other traffic calming measures in the vicinity of public open spaces.

**2. NATURAL AREAS:** Preserve and restore existing site amenities such as wetlands, waterways, plant and animal habitats, existing native vegetation, and culturally significant landscapes in order to maintain a healthy ecosystem, maintain the local character of the area, and enhance the design of new projects. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Community Character Policy CC-1.5: *Significant site features, such as trees, water courses, rock outcroppings, historic structures and scenic views shall be used to guide site planning and design in new development. Where possible, these features shall become focal points of the development.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-1.1: *Expand and enhance an integrated network of open space to support recreation, natural resources, historic and tribal resources, habitat, water management, aesthetics, and other beneficial uses.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.1: *Consider and maintain the ecological function of landscapes, connecting features, watersheds, and wildlife movement corridors.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.3: *Preserve and enhance those biological communities that contribute to the county's rich biodiversity including blue oak and mixed oak woodlands, native grassland prairies, wetlands, riparian corridors, aquatic habitat, agricultural lands, heritage valley oak trees, remnant valley oak groves, and roadside tree rows.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.9: *Protect riparian corridors to maintain and balance wildlife values.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.10: *Encourage the restoration of native habitat.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.11: *Ensure that open space buffers are provided between sensitive habitat and planned development.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.16: *Existing native vegetation shall be conserved where possible and integrated into new development if appropriate.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.22: *Prohibit development within a minimum of 100 feet from the top of banks for all lakes, perennial ponds, rivers, creeks, soughs, and perennial streams. The setback will allow for fire and flood protection, a natural riparian corridor (or wetland vegetation), a planned recreational trail where applicable, and vegetated landscape for storm water to pass through before it enters the water body. Exceptions to this action include irrigation pumps, roads and bridges, levees, docks, boat ramps, and similar uses.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-2.31: *Protect and enhance streams, channels, seasonal and permanent marshland, wetlands, sloughs, riparian habitat and vernal pools in land planning and community design.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-4.1: *Identify and safeguard important cultural resources.*

**R.G.13: Preservation:** Preserve and incorporate the above site amenities into public open space facilities wherever possible and appropriate.

**R.G.14: Riparian Areas:** Keep riparian zones in their natural state. Introduction of non-native plants near a riparian zone is strongly discouraged.

### **III. SITE AND BUILDING DESIGN**

#### **A. WALLS AND BUFFERS**

**1. PREFERRED BUFFER TECHNIQUES:** Use commercial areas, public facilities, or open space areas as the primary interface between arterials and residential districts. Supports Community Character Policy CC-4.29: *Provide appropriate buffers or barriers between incompatible residential and non-residential uses. The last-built use shall be responsible for design and construction (and/or other related costs) of the buffer/barrier.*



**R.G.15: Sound Wall Buffer:** The use of sound walls alone as a buffer is discouraged because sound walls interfere with the visual cohesion of the overall area, and do not provide inviting environments that encourage safe pedestrian traffic.

**2. SOUNDWALL GUIDELINES:** When sound walls are necessary they should have sufficient architectural variety to make them less objectionable.

**R.G.16: Sound Walls:** Sound walls should, where feasible:

- Incorporate a landscaped buffer that is a minimum average of 20' (twenty feet) wide, and never less than 10' (ten feet) wide.
- Have architectural variety, such as offsets or use of varied materials and colors.
- Be landscaped with vines, shrubs, or trees.
- Incorporate frequent breaks, where appropriate, for pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
- Be of the minimum length to accomplish the needed result.
- Be used in conjunction with landscaping berms.

## **B. ORIENTATION**

**1. BUILDING ORIENTATION:** Position buildings to benefit from solar access and micro-climates. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-7.9: *Require that new site and structure designs maximize energy efficiency.*

Housing Policy HO-6.1: *Encourage site and building design that conserves natural resources.*

**R.G.17: Solar Access:** Building orientation should accommodate placement of windows on the north and south sides of the building. This will allow for more controlled solar access for winter heating and natural ventilation for summer cooling.

**2. VISUAL EMPHASIS:** Visually emphasize the main living area or entrance to the home. Supports the following General Plan Policies:

Community Character Policy CC-4.18: *Front exterior living spaces of a usable size (e.g. front porches, large front-facing windows, balconies, etc.) are highly desirable.*

Community Character Policy CC-4.20: *Discourage garage-forward and/or garage dominated residential design.*

**R.G.18: De-emphasize Garage:** Use human scaled design features to visually de-emphasize the garage or parking areas. Methods to accomplish this include:

- Placing a porch at the front of the house.
- Projecting the second story out over the garage.
- Locating a detached garage behind the house.
- Recessing the garage further from the street than the main living area.
- Providing rear garage access from a private alley.



*Both homes have a porch as the prominent feature. A recessed second story (left) makes homes of varying sizes architecturally compatible.*



*Compact development can make use of garages located on a private alley to the rear of the homes. The lack of garages visible to the street makes for a more inviting human scaled neighborhood (above right and left). Windows overlooking the alley increase safety (lower left). One private alley serves garages for homes on two different streets (lower right).*

**R.G.19: Resident Parking:** Unless there are superseding environmental or topographic concerns, locate parking for residences as close as possible to the house to allow for easy resident access. This is especially important in multi-family complexes, where residents may be required to park in a parking lot.

**R.G.20: Apartment Parking:** Provide covered parking for residents in apartment parking lots.

**R.G.21: Guest Parking:** Evenly distribute guest parking throughout the neighborhood to accommodate guests.

**R.G.22: Reduce Paved Parking Ares:** In higher density areas, reduce the amount of land consumed by driveways and parking. Techniques include:

- Shared driveways, which allow for one driveway to provide parking and garage access for two or more homes.
- Rear access parking through use of a private alley. Locate windows in the rooms over the garage to face the alley for increased visibility and safety.

**2. PERMEABLE SURFACES AND SWALES:** Allow storm water to percolate back into the water table through the use of permeable parking surfaces and/or landscaped swales. Consult with Yolo County Environmental Health if landscaping within a leach field area. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Public Facilities and Services Policy PF-2.4: *Encourage sustainable practices for storm water management that provide for groundwater recharge and/or improve the quality of runoff through biological filtering and environmental restoration.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-5.17: *Require new development to be designed such that nitrates, lawn chemicals, oil, and other pollutants of concern do not impair groundwater quality.*

**R.G.23: Permeable Surfaces:** Use permeable parking surfaces (such as porous asphalt or porous concrete, “Grasspave,” “Gravelpave,” interlocking concrete blocks or high-strength recycled plastic grids) where feasible to allow water to infiltrate back into the water table. Where impermeable surfaces are utilized, keep to a minimum. The resulting runoff should pass through a permeable surface or be diverted to a landscaped swale before entering the storm drain. Consider any potential adverse impacts to groundwater.

**R.G.24: Landscaped Swales:** The use of landscaped swales or “bioswales” is encouraged to capture and filter storm water before it enters the storm drain system. Features of swales include:

- A drainage course with gently sloped sides (less than 6 percent), either meandering or straight designed to maximize the time water spends in the swale.
- A landscaped element filled with vegetation, compost and/or riprap designed to remove silt and pollution from surface runoff water.



*The driveway for this house is semi-pervious, using gravel in the center, to avoid excess runoff. The garage is recessed from the house, making the front porch and entry the prominent view.*

## **D. LANDSCAPING**

**1. PLANT CHOICE:** At least 25 percent of new plantings should be native and drought tolerant, while existing vegetation should be retained where feasible. See Appendix A *General Landscaping Design Guidelines and Plant Selection Grid* for information regarding plant species that meet landscaping guidelines. County improvement standards for visibility requirements at intersections and driveways must be adhered to. Landscaping should not obscure or interfere with any fire hydrant requirements or access to fire department connections. Consult with Yolo County Environmental Health if landscaping within a leach field area. Supports Community Character Policy CC-2.16 that requires sustainable design standards, as appropriate.

**R.G.25: Native and Drought Tolerant Plants:** Use native and drought tolerant plants in residential areas to reduce the need for excessive water consumption and fertilizer use.

**R.G.26: Existing Vegetation:** Retain mature trees and other prominent existing plants when building new residential developments.

**R.G.27: Lawns:** Minimize lawn size to no more than 25 percent of the yard area, and use to accent a primary landscaping area that consists of native, drought tolerant plants.



*Yards consisting of native, drought tolerant landscaping can be lush and green, easy to maintain, and use less water than traditional lawns.*

**2. TREE PLACEMENT:** Use trees to shade streets, parking areas, and reduce the cooling loads of home air conditioning units. See Appendix A for information regarding plant species. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Community Character Policy CC-4.8: *Require measures to minimize “heat islands” by requiring light-colored and reflective roofing materials and paint; “green” roofs; light colored roads and parking lots; extensive numbers of shade trees in parking lots; and shade trees and/or overhangs on the south and west sides of new or renovated buildings.*

Circulation Policy CI-5.10: *Institute requirements for the establishment and maintenance of extensive tree canopy over community roadways to create shade.*

Conservation and Open Space Policy CO-7.5: *Require all new parking lots to significantly increase shading to relieve the potential for “heat islands.”*

**R.G.28: Shade Tree Canopy:** Place a minimum of one large shade tree per house along the street side to create a shade canopy over the street in single-family residential zones.

**R.G.29: Shade Trees:** In addition to street side shade trees, place another shade tree, where appropriate, to provide shading for the house’s roof and south-facing windows from summer sun.

**R.G.30: Landscaped Islands in Parking Lots:** Include landscaped islands in parking lots in multi-family residential areas. The landscaped islands should include adequate tree plantings to shade the parking lot by at least 50% within 10 years.

**3. SCREENING AND BUFFERING:** Use plants for screens and buffers where appropriate. See Appendix A for information regarding plant species. Supports Community Character Policy CC-1.8: *Screen visually obtrusive activities and facilities such as infrastructure and utility facilities, storage yards, outdoor parking and display areas, along highways, freeways, roads and trails.*

**R.G.31: Fences:** Fenced courtyards and decorative gates create a sense of entry and may be provided at building fronts.

**R.G.32: Privacy Screening:** Use trees, shrubs or vines to provide privacy where home windows face public facilities, collector streets, or arterials.

**R.G.33: Equipment, Utility Boxes, and Sound Walls:** Use shrubs or other ornamental plantings to screen mechanical equipment, sound walls, and utility boxes.

## **E. LIGHTING**

**1. FIXTURE DESIGN AND SCALE:** Street lighting fixtures should be appropriate to the architectural style of the residential development and should provide lighting without glaring onto adjacent properties or the night sky. Lighting shall be as per local jurisdiction or utility standards.

**R.G.34: Street Lighting:** The design and scale of lighting fixtures should be compatible with existing lights. Where no lights previously exist, the fixtures should be human scaled and attractively designed to compliment the architectural style of the homes.

**R.G.35: Orientation and Configuration:** All lighting fixtures should provide adequate lighting where required, yet be oriented in a manner that does not produce glare into homes or at oncoming traffic. The fixture configuration should prevent the escape of light pollution into the night sky.

**R.G.36: Walkway Lighting:** Vandal resistant lights mounted on short posts are encouraged along walkways. Where overhead lighting is used, mount fixtures low enough to create a safely lit walkway while providing a reasonable balance between fixture height and the number of fixtures required.

## **F. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN**

**1. EXTERIOR DESIGN:** Buildings should respect and contribute to an environment that is enjoyable for the inhabitants and neighbors. Place entrances and fenestration to enhance the streetscape and provide for public safety. Supports Community Character Policy CC-4.19: *Within community areas, houses shall front on the street.*

**R.G.37: Architectural Style:** Exterior elevations should demonstrate a design style or a logical combination of styles and utilize architectural detailing that is consistent with that style. If the adjoining neighborhood has a style of architecture that has historically contributed to an enjoyable streetscape, new development should respect the style of the existing community. New construction need not mimic existing homes; innovation and creativity are encouraged.

**R.G.38: Door Orientation:** Orient home entrances toward the predominant public view; front doors of residences should be visible from the street.

**R.G.39: Window Orientation:** Window orientation should afford “eyes on the street.” Orient windows facing adjacent properties in a manner that ensures privacy of neighboring residents. Windows of adjacent houses should not directly align with each

other. In circumstances where windows unavoidably impose on a neighboring resident's privacy, provide landscape screening or trellises.

**R.G.40: Streetscape Enhancements:** Design homes to enliven the streetscape and provide "eyes on the street." Methods include:

- Bay windows
- Porches and verandas large enough to provide usable space and a view to the street
- Overhangs and arbors

**R.G.41: Facades:** New development should compliment and/or enhance the style of existing nearby development, where feasible.

**2. ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS:** To create residential areas that are attractive and interesting, individual structures should include a variety of architectural details, complimentary colors, and the use of quality materials. Supports Community Character Policy CC-4.17: *Avoid the repetition of residential facades/designs within subdivisions and abrupt changes in facades between adjoining developments.*

**R.G.42: Recommended Materials:** Traditional housing materials and design are encouraged in order to enhance the existing architecture of the community, while supporting the use of sustainable design products.

**R.G.43: Design Elements:** Each structure should include a variety of complimentary design elements. Examples of design elements that can be used to create visual interest include:

- Adding dormers with windows or vents.
- Decorating windows with false balconies, flower boxes and/or shutters.
- Using a variety of window mullion patterns and mullion thicknesses.
- Adding recessed or bay windows.
- Incorporating "pop-outs," overhangs, and/or trellises made of various materials such as exposed wood, painted wood or composites.
- Facade detailing such as false beams, angled braces, corbels, trim, and brick or stone veneers (veneers covering the entire height of the first story are strongly encouraged).
- Using decorative attic vents to add architectural detail.
- Using structural members as a design element.

**R.G.44: Neighborhood Design Elements:** Neighborhoods should include houses with a variety of architectural styles that represent the diversity of Yolo County. From house to house, vary the color, style, and materials of:

- Front doors
- Garage doors
- Gutter profiles
- Wall textures, such as board and batten, lap siding, stone, brick, and/or stucco
- Trim elements
- Porches
- Roofing and rooflines
- Windows

**R.G.45: Structure Color Schemes:** Paint each structure a minimum of three complimentary colors (one base color and at least two accent colors).

**R.G.46: Neighborhood Color Schemes:** Neighborhoods should include buildings with a variety of color schemes. For example, entire neighborhoods where all buildings are painted a variety of beige are discouraged.

**3. ROOF DESIGN:** Architecturally integrate roofs and materials with the design of the dwelling.

**R.G.47: Roof Styles:** Architectural interest at the roofline may be created by varying heights, directions and pitches. A roof pitch of 5:12 or greater is encouraged. Additional roof details and embellishments such as cupolas, dormers, louvers, vents, lanterns, pinnacles, finials, compounded fascias, parapets cornices, and eave moldings are encouraged.

**R.G.48: Roofing Materials:** Use a variety of roofing materials such as, but not limited to, stone, slate, concrete or clay tiles, metal, or architectural grade high-profile asphalt shingles throughout the neighborhood. The use of photo-voltaic cells, whether or not integrated into the roofing, is encouraged.

**R.G.49: Sustainable Materials:** Use sustainable roofing materials and green building technologies where possible.

**R.G.50: Mechanical Equipment:** Roof mounted mechanical equipment is discouraged where visible. Screen mechanical equipment with architecturally compatible materials and colors, with noise attenuation measures incorporated into the design.

**R.G.51: Architectural Details:** The following photos illustrate some of the architectural details that are encouraged in Yolo County.



- Use of complimentary colors (one base color and two accent colors)
- Detailed garage doors with windows
- Brick, stucco, and lap siding
- Architecturally compatible light fixtures that enhance overall design



- Angled braces and corbels
- Shutters on windows
- Board and batten below roof
- Shake siding on second story
- Use of brick veneer on entire first story
- Mullions in windows
- Variation of roof materials between homes



- Emphasized trim above garage door and entrance doorways
- Stone facade on porch
- Vents used as decoration
- Architecturally compatible street light fixture
- Trellis over the window
- Wrought iron metal accents
- Paneled garage door with windows

**4. MASS AND SCALE:** Building mass and scale should be complimentary to the existing community.

**R.G.52: Large Wall Expanse:** Include architectural design elements on exterior walls to break up large expanses of wall.

**R.G.53: Building Placement:** Vary building placement along the front setback to provide interest and an aesthetically pleasing streetscape.

## **G. AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**1. INTEGRATION WITH OVERALL DEVELOPMENT:** Integrate affordable housing with market rate housing in new residential development, and include the provision of similar amenities. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Community Character Policy CC-4.30 encourages corner residential lots to have duplex or other multi-family units with entries on each street face.

Housing Policy HO-1.1: *Include a mix of housing types, densities, affordability levels, and designs.*

Housing Policy HO-5.1: *Plan communities to avoid the concentration of affordable housing projects, while ensuring that affordable housing has access to needed services and amenities.*

**R.G.54: Separation Discouraged:** Disperse affordable units throughout the development. Separate groups of affordable homes with a distinctly dissimilar appearance from the rest of the development are strongly discouraged.

**R.G.55: Half-Plexes:** Integration of affordable units in terms of scale can be accomplished by creating half-plexes or “zero-lot line” homes throughout the development.

**R.G.56: Lot Size:** Reduced lot size is encouraged as a technique to provide affordable housing.

**R.G.57: Private Yards:** Where feasible, each affordable unit should have access from the living area to usable private open space.



*Both pictures illustrate integration of affordable (duplex) housing within neighborhoods of single-family homes.*

**2. APPEARANCE:** Visually blend affordable houses with market rate houses in terms of style, detailing, and materials.

**R.G.58: Architectural Style:** Use architectural styles and techniques, such as step backs, varied rooflines and wall surfaces, to create interest and blend affordable housing with market rate housing.

**R.G.59: Materials and Architectural Details:** Affordable units should include the same types of materials and architectural details as market rate homes.



*Small cottages, which are integrated into neighborhoods with larger homes, can provide affordable housing for seniors, singles, and small families.*

*This example of compact development shows attached units with garages facing the main street. Note that the garages are recessed farther from the street than the porch.*



## **H. UNIVERSAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

**1. ACCESSIBILITY:** Design residential units with accessible design features in order to meet existing and future housing needs for all county residents. Supports the following General Plan policies:

Community Character Policy CC-4.16: *Encourage “visitability” accommodations in new residential development.*

Health and Safety Policy HS-8.9: *Encourage builders to incorporate universal building design techniques that enable seniors and persons with disabilities to remain in their homes.*

Housing Policy HO-4.1 promotes the development of housing to meet the needs of special needs groups, including seniors and people living with disabilities.

Housing Policy HO-4.5 ensures new units to comply with visitability standards.

**R.G.60: Housing Diversity:** Distribute a variety of home types and sizes with accessible features throughout new development to provide housing for a diverse population.

**R.G.61: Interior Features:** Locate counters, storage, and cabinetry to allow use and access by all individuals, regardless of mobility impairments.

**R.G.62: Hardware:** Provide lever type hardware and fixtures, such as door levers, faucets, and rocker type controls, in all residential units.

**R.G.63: Grab Bars:** Provide blocking in bathroom walls to permit the installation of grab bars in the shower and near the toilet. Provide additional blocking behind towel bars, toilet paper holders, and other wall mounted accessories.

**2. WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY:** Design residential units in a manner that is accessible for wheelchairs.

**R.G.64: Hall and Doorway Width:** Hallways should be at least 42 inches wide in order to accommodate wheelchairs. Doors should be a minimum of 32 inches wide, except entrance doors which should be a minimum of 36 inches wide.

**R.G.65: No-Step Entrances:** Design at least one entrance to each unit without stairs, with level landings and accessible thresholds, to allow for wheelchair access.

**R.G.66: Bathrooms:** Bathroom layout should allow for “adaptability.” Design considerations should include, but are not limited to:

- Floor space to maneuver a wheelchair. Locate toilets 18 inches from the side wall to the center of the toilet, with a clear space of 36”x48” in front of the toilet.
- Roll-in shower with removable curb (collapsible curbs are available for glue-in application.)
- Removable or fold back cabinet doors to provide knee space under the sink
- Shelves, accessories, storage, and mirrors placed at an accessible height. Place medicine cabinets to the side of the sink countertop instead of behind it, to lessen the “reach” distance.

## **IV. SUSTAINABLE BUILDING PRACTICES**

### **A. DEVELOPMENT LOCATION**

If feasible, place new residential developments either immediately adjacent to or within existing infrastructure. This has numerous benefits for builders and residents, such as reduced infrastructure costs and increased availability of transportation alternatives. See Appendix B: *Sustainability Design Guidelines* for more detailed information.

### **B. BUILDING ORIENTATION**

To the extent feasible, situate residences on an east to west axis and orient in a manner that allows them to take advantage of passive solar lighting and heating. See Appendix B for more detailed information.

## **C. GREEN BUILDING PRACTICES**

Building practices should be considerate of environmental impacts. This can be done using a number of simple methods such as recycling job site construction and demolition waste, donating unused building materials, and substituting solid lumber with engineered lumber. See Appendix B for more detailed information.

## **D. ENERGY CONSERVATION FEATURES**

Design and build new residences with energy consumption in mind. Installing energy efficient windows, insulation, and Energy Star rated appliances can reduce energy use. In addition, installing light colored roofing, whole house fans, solar panels, and efficient HVAC units can significantly reduce heating and cooling loads. Provide an 18- to 24-inch roof overhang and apply glazing to reduce solar gain through the walls and windows during summer. See Appendix B for more detailed information.

## **E. SUSTAINABLE SITE DEVELOPMENT**

Several strategies have been developed to manage and cleanse storm water before allowing it to empty into the storm drain system or permeate down into the water table. Bioswales and “cleansing biotopes” (a man-made catchment area containing gravel and aquatic plants to remove sediments and nutrients from the water), are encouraged and should be considered as alternatives to underground culverts and concrete swales. Consult with Yolo County Environmental Health before landscaping within a leach field area.