



RESOLUTION NO.

OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF EL DORADO

ADOPTION OF MIXED-USE DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

WHEREAS, the County of El Dorado is mandated by the State of California to maintain an adequate and proper General Plan; and

WHEREAS, the County of El Dorado adopted a General Plan in 2004; and

WHEREAS, many General Plan policies, programs, and implementation measures are implemented through the Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolutions of Intention No. 183-2011 and No. 184-2011 authorizing a comprehensive update of the Zoning Ordinance as part of the Targeted General Plan Amendment – Zoning Ordinance Update Project; and

WHEREAS, as part of the comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Update, the County has developed new and/or updated community design standards to augment those standards found in the Zoning Ordinance Update; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the mixed-use development section of the County Zoning Ordinance is to further development that incorporates a range and variety of uses within a single development site while encouraging residents to work, shop and recreate close to where they live, and to encourage non-automobile oriented transportation methods to reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality and help to strengthen neighborhood character; and

WHEREAS, the County has developed a mixed-use design manual for mixed-use development in specified commercial and multi-family zone districts providing an opportunity for a streamlined approval process for mixed-use development projects in those zone districts; and

WHEREAS, mixed-use design standards provide the tools needed to design mixed-use buildings consistent with the historic character of El Dorado County communities and to create inviting public spaces for those communities consistent with community desires for local stewardship of certain aspects of development, as expressed in prior Resolution Of Intention No. 179-2010 (processing of a historic design control combining zone district for the communities of El Dorado and Diamond Springs); and

WHEREAS, a mixed-use design manual can provide clear and graphic direction for proposed mixed-use development and can serve as a tool for an applicant when designing a mixed-use development project; and

WHEREAS, mixed-use design standards can assist staff and applicants with project processing; and

WHEREAS, design standards serve as a basis for quality design resulting in a higher quality of life for residents, business owners and visitors within the unincorporated areas of El Dorado County,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the County of El Dorado Board of Supervisors hereby adopts design standards and guidelines for mixed-use development projects, attached hereto as Exhibit A, identified as the Mixed-Use Design Manual, to apply to the permitting of new mixed-use development projects.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that as the County has recently completed a comprehensive recodification of its entire code of ordinances, code references within the above standards may require minor reformatting, as needed, for consistency with the County's code of ordinances, and to maintain internal consistency within applicable section(s) of the Zoning Ordinance.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of El Dorado at a regular meeting of said Board, held the ____ day of _____ 2015, by the following vote of said Board:

Attest:
James S. Mitrison
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Ayes:
Noes:
Absent:

By: _____
Deputy Clerk

Chair, Board of Supervisors

EXHIBIT A



El Dorado County Mixed-use Design Manual

Adopted October 9, 2015

El Dorado County Mixed-use Design Manual

Adopted October 9, 2015





Acknowledgments

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Introduction

Introduction

The best qualities of historic communities are those that provide connections between the elements meaningful to both the past and future. Those connections could be between people and a sense of community, between places and buildings, or between heritage and growth. The El Dorado County Mixed-use Design Guide describes the unique character and essential characteristics of mixed-use developments that citizens know and cherish. The Guide presents the County's vision for perpetuating those characteristics along with strategies applicable to revitalization and new development projects

that achieve well designed mixed-use projects. As such, this Guide was developed on the expectation that new mixed-use development be harmonious with the unique and historic character and traditions of El Dorado County communities. Future mixed-use buildings planned, designed, and developed using this manual will reflect the good characteristics of the county's existing buildings and public realm.

Good design can help jump start economic and cultural revitalization while respecting historical foundations. Mixed-use development in El Dorado County's communities is a return to their original mixed-use roots. The present and historic characteristics of the communities are the foundation

for design guidelines that attempt to lay a path to the future. For example, current regulations and market conditions may encourage construction of new “suburban-style” buildings that would be significantly larger than historic structures, or require extensive site or parking infrastructure that would seem out of place in these historic communities.

The Mixed-use Design Guidelines are intended to provide clear and useful recommendations for the design, construction, review, and approval of mixed-use development in unincorporated El Dorado County. The benefits of mixed-use development include:

- **More housing options.** Mixed-use development can provide greater housing variety, both in location and cost. El Dorado County has many single-family homes, but that type of housing may not be ideal for singles, young people, and seniors.
- **Shorter trips.** Mixed-use development reduces the distance between housing, workplaces, shops, restaurants, and other destinations.
- **Stronger neighborhood character.** Mixed-use development can bring people together, help promote an identity for the area, and strengthen ties between residents, business owners, and visitors.
- **More cycling and walking.** When home, work, and shopping are all close by, it can be easier and more pleasant to walk or bike. Shifting trips to bicycling and walking reduces traffic and pollution.

Mixed-use development can work well in small communities. Mixed-use development in small communities may be a single apartment over a store, or several cottages behind a small office building. Guidelines and design prototypes in this manual are specifically tailored to encourage mixed-use development for El Dorado County's historic small communities and other appropriate unincorporated areas. The Guide illustrates how to plan and design mixed-use development.

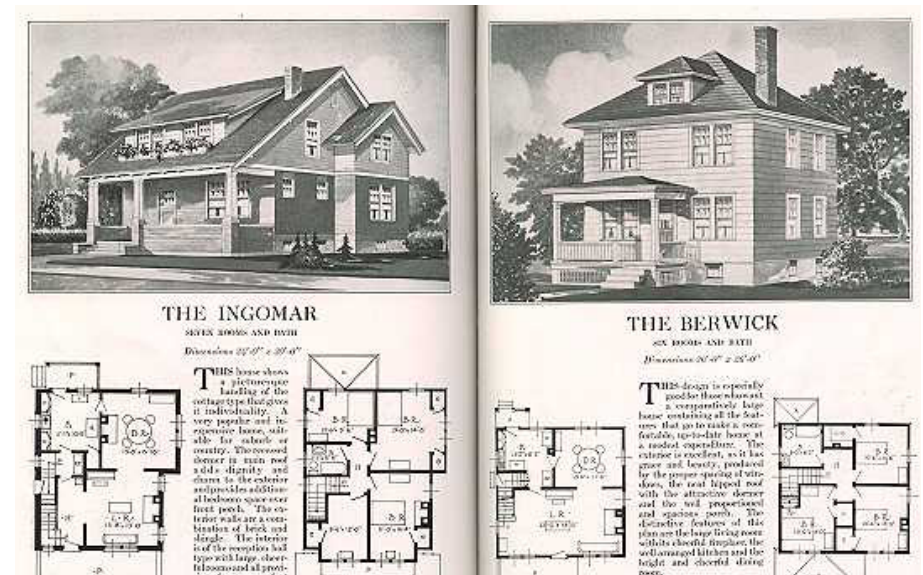
Purpose and Intended Use

Historical Context for the Design Guide

As communities developed throughout the western United States in the 19th and early 20th centuries, they evolved through a series of booms in which thousands of new buildings were constructed. Despite this rapid construction,

buildings were carefully crafted and organized to meet specific needs with public amenities that invited people to interact. It was common for structures to have a variety of architectural styles with proportioned and ornamented facades. Windows, doors, roof forms, and porches all followed a complex, but complementary design principle. Similarly, there was a balance between individual expression of each building and harmony with which they work together to create a unified community form.

This seemingly coincidental outcome of early community development did not occur by chance. Architects, designers, and developers of the time used what are called pattern books or builders handbooks, to design and construct buildings. These pattern books contained the principles for design detail that presented clear direction of traditional styles and established the rules or structure in which each builder interpreted his or her own expression of a building. The result can be seen in the pre-World War II communities, which offers a balance of individual expression and inviting public spaces.



Following WWII there was a major expansion of communities and pattern books fell out of favor. Architects focused on modernist styles in place of traditional architecture, development regulations separated uses, and builders relied on mass production methods to design and build new neighborhoods and communities. Consequently, today's builders often operate without access to the conventions of early pattern books that historically enabled

individual buildings and a mix of uses to work together to create cohesive public spaces.

Newer zoning codes that are based on patterns long established in nearly every town in America incorporate a variety of commercial and residential types and uses into mixed-use zoning. A mix of uses reduces driving distances and makes it easier for people to walk or bike to their daily destinations because homes, workplaces, stores, schools, and services are closer together. Allowing mixed-use development to occur helps encourage residential growth in towns and reduces the likelihood of scattered businesses in rural areas that encourage more spread-out development and fragmented land. These guidelines are intended to use the pattern book tradition to help restore among builders, designers, and property owners a common understanding of mixed-use development that created the character and charm of El Dorado's communities.

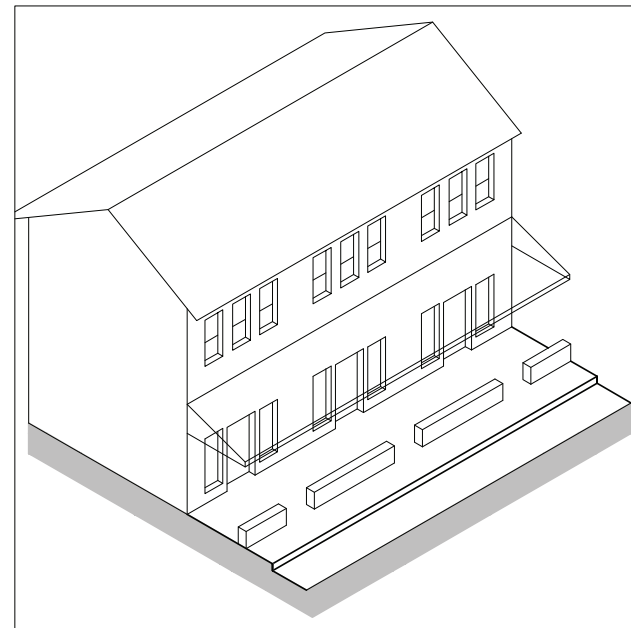


Purpose

These guidelines provide the tools needed to design mixed-use buildings that enhance the historic character of El Dorado communities and create inviting public spaces. They also provide residents and decision-makers a sample of different types of mixed-use development through realistic sketches, or prototypes, of the finished results. The guidelines enable residents and decision-makers to see how new mixed-use development can fit within established communities.

The standards and guidelines contained in this manual are not intended to tell property owners or developers what they can't do. Rather, this document helps envision and provide direction on what they can do in regards to developing mixed-use projects. As such, this document is intended to be proactive, providing an organized set of standards and guidelines for building mixed-use projects that fit the historic context of El Dorado County communities and a set of mixed-use prototypes that spark the imagination and support the design concept for mixed-use development. The Mixed-use Design Guidelines should be viewed as a package of tools that give architects, designers, and builders the flexibility to create a range of mixed-use projects, while still maintaining the distinct characteristics of traditional El Dorado County communities.

The purpose of this manual is to provide guidance for future mixed-use development in El Dorado County. These guidelines are not binding in the same way as zoning ordinance standards, but they are meant to illustrate the County's expectation for successful mixed-use development. This guidebook provides a common sense approach to developing financially feasible, attractive mixed-use developments that are integrated with the character of El Dorado County.



Simple, clear graphics illustrate the standards and guidelines.

This guidebook is for anyone with an interest or stake in mixed-use development in El Dorado County. Real estate developers will find it a useful tool for designing a mixed-use project in the county. County planners will use the guidelines to evaluate the compatibility of proposed projects. Property owners can use this manual to decide if mixed-use development is the right fit for their parcels. Decision-makers will use the guidelines to review mixed-use projects. To make the guidelines and design prototypes accessible to everyone, they include illustrations and straightforward language.

To use this guidebook to the fullest, use the guidelines and standards to inform your mixed-use development project. The descriptions and diagrams in the guidelines should make the Zoning Ordinance standards clearer, allowing you to design and plan your project more efficiently. The design prototypes provide examples of how the guidelines can be applied in a successful, appropriate manner that enhances the project as well as the surrounding community.

The Introduction and Context sections of this Guide describe the setting for mixed-use development within El Dorado County. This is a starting point to become familiar with the county's communities and the design goals of each community. Prospective mixed-use developers and designers should familiarize themselves with the historic character of a community in which a development is being considered and the surrounding buildings that will interact with the new project.

Compliance with the guidelines is strictly voluntary. The guidelines are "performance-based," in that they describe the desired outcome of a particular design element, and offer alternative methods of meeting those requirements. For example, they do not dictate a design style. In some cases it may be possible to meet the basic design intent with means other than those described. The County will consider alternatives when the broader design objectives for the area can still be met.

El Dorado County staff, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors are responsible for the review and approval of each individual project within the unincorporated county. This guide helps to ensure that high quality designs are developed for mixed-use projects.

Guidelines for new construction (buildings, roads, and site development) should emphasize the context and guidelines for rehabilitations, additions, or modernizations and should focus on principles for maintaining historic structures as they exist. In a few communities change has been more substantial and greater flexibility in new construction is appropriate.

Rehabilitation could focus on removing obtrusive alterations, restoring damaged features, and re-purposing older buildings with new uses. The greatest departure from the historic character in some neighborhoods may be the loss of buildings because they are outdated and the cost to upgrade to modern codes doesn't make economic sense.

The guidelines in this book respond to this development atmosphere by modifying the zoning ordinance standards with guidelines that encourage buildings and sites that are appropriately scaled. For each guideline we ask these questions:

- Will the integrity of the community be preserved or enhanced if the guideline is followed?
- Will this guideline help the community meet its economic, cultural, and design goals? A guideline must register a "yes" to each in order to appear in this manual.



Community Context

El Dorado County's Zoning Ordinance has standards for all types of development in the unincorporated county. The standards have a broad reach, and include zoning district definitions, development standards, and allowed uses. The Zoning Ordinance allows mixed-use development in four commercial zoning districts and one residential zoning district:

- **Commercial Professional Office (CPO).** This zone is intended to regulate the development of land suitable for professional, administrative, and business offices, and offices mixed with low-to-high intensity residential uses. It is intended that the zone be used as a transition between residential areas and higher-intensity commercial uses.
- **Commercial, Limited (CL).** This zone designates areas suitable for low-intensity retail and office uses oriented to serving the surrounding residential area while minimizing conflicts with the residential uses and outside traffic into the area. Mixed-use development compatible with surrounding uses would also be appropriate.
- **Commercial, Main Street (CM).** This zone allows a wide range of pedestrian-oriented retail, office, and service uses, and mixed-use development comprised of commercial and residential uses. Flexible development standards are applied to facilitate preservation of historic structures and to encourage new development compatible with the identity of each unique community.

- **Commercial, Community (CC).** This zone provides for the retail sales, office, and service needs of the residents living within the surrounding community and accommodates the commercial and service needs of visitors to the county. Mixed-use development compatible with General Plan densities is appropriate in this zone.
- **Residential, Multi-unit (RM).** This zone identifies those lands which are most capable of supporting the highest density of development within the county. It is applied to regulate and promote the development of multi-unit dwellings, including apartments, condominiums, and townhouses, while ensuring compatibility with surrounding lower-density residential neighborhoods.

The five zoning districts that allow mixed-use development are generally clustered in El Dorado County's communities of Camino, Diamond Springs, El Dorado, Georgetown, Pollock Pines, and Shingle Springs. There are also smaller pockets of mixed-use zoning districts in the county. These zoning districts make up a tiny fraction of all unincorporated land in El Dorado County, but cover some of the most populated areas and busiest business districts.

Mixed-use Context

El Dorado County's communities each have a unique character, and diversity exists within each community as well. In general, these different areas are distinguished by land use, building type, and influences from other regional elements. For example, the central blocks or main street in a town may be composed of traditional commercial storefront buildings, whereas residential areas may be characterized by single family homes or apartments. Architectural surveys helped develop descriptions of individual building styles and components and field surveys to define overall community character and relationships among historic resources. The goal is to describe the features that should be respected and incorporate these descriptions into the guidelines so that everyone can understand the context that will be protected, enhanced, or altered.

Most of El Dorado County's small towns were historically established by Sierra foothill pioneers seeking to tap the region's abundant opportunities in mining, forestry, agriculture, ranching, and railroad building. The rural villages that they formed combined commerce, civic, and residential uses into common buildings or in compact neighborhoods that are core attributes of a mixed-use community.

Today, vertical mixed use in El Dorado County's communities is rare, as single-story buildings are common. In two-story buildings different uses may occupy different floors, but they are typically part of the same establishment. For example, the Georgetown Hotel has hotel rooms above a pub. Some stores have their offices above the store itself. Typically, single-story horizontal mixed-use development is inexpensive, especially if land costs are low. This economic reality has shaped the existing built environment of these communities. In many of the communities, homes often sit next to or behind commercial buildings. While horizontal mixed-use development is less compact and somewhat less walkable than vertical-mixed use development, the small size of these communities ensures that residential uses are near commercial uses.

Community Character

The communities of El Dorado County share a common past that began with the discovery of gold in the Mother Lode region of California in 1848. The influx of wealth and population led to the formation of many new settlements. Directly or indirectly, all of the communities discussed below are a product of the gold rush. Despite the common beginnings, each community developed a unique identity. These divergent identities were in part a result of the different roles each community had in the gold rush. Their unique identities were further established by the nature of the surrounding land. Ranch land, forests, rivers, lakes, and mountains shaped these communities and imbued them with the character that is seen today.

Areas zoned for mixed-use development are primarily located in unincorporated smaller-population centers that are nestled among the rolling foothills and forested Sierras, and are outside the larger communities. These areas, primarily made up of villages and historic towns, have long histories in the county as agricultural, forestry, railroad, and Gold Rush mining centers. The current character of each area feels authentic, individualistic, and organic, rather than master-planned and of uniform character.

The region has grown to become a recreational playground, an emerging high-quality wine production and fruit-growing region, an affordable rural haven for active retirees, a desirable home base for flocks of commuters to regional job centers, and an authentic tourist destination due to the natural beauty and character of historic small towns. The mixed-use standards and guidelines in this manual are sensitive to all of the different users, uses, and historical contexts in today's El Dorado County.

Camino

In its early days Camino served as a stopping point on the Pony Express Route from Sacramento to St. Joseph, Missouri. Camino is located in the Apple Hill area, a community of 55 ranches that produce apples, wine, Christmas trees, and other products. Apple Hill is a tourist attraction, particularly in autumn. Carson Road forms the spine of Camino, a community that now stretches along Highway 50. The heart of Camino is along Carson Road between Larsen Drive and Cable Road. In this area residential density is relatively high, and Carson Road is lined with historic homes and small shops and restaurants.



Diamond Springs

Diamond Springs was founded in 1848 and named for its crystal clear springs. During the gold rush Diamond Springs was one of the richest spots in El Dorado County. Today, lumber, lime production, and agriculture continue to sustain its local economy. As of 2010 Diamond Springs has a population of 11,037 and has been growing rapidly in the past decade. Diamond Spring's main street is along Highway 49, and has historic structures similar to those found in El Dorado. Diamond Springs also has several large areas of undeveloped land near the commercial core that could be developed as mixed-use infill. There is new development in Downtown Diamond Springs along Fowler Lane. This development uses El Dorado County's historic buildings as inspiration for the architecture.



El Dorado

El Dorado, first known as “Mud Springs,” was once an important camp on the old Carson Emigrant Trail. By 1850 it had become the center of a mining district and a crossroad for freight and stage lines. At the height of the gold rush, El Dorado was home to several thousand residents. Today, El Dorado’s business district is clustered at the intersection of Highway 49 and Pleasant Valley Road. El Dorado’s post office, El Dorado Grocery and Deli, Poor Red’s Bar-B-Q, and Bennett Gallery and Awards buildings serve as excellent examples of the historic charm of El Dorado. Mixed-use developers could use them as inspiration for what works well. Several of these buildings have charming arcades along the front facade to welcome pedestrians.



Georgetown

Georgetown was founded in 1848 by George Phipps as Growlersburg, a name that referenced the gold that “growled” in miners pockets and pans. Boarding houses and hotels were built to house the miners that flocked to the mines near Georgetown. One, the American River Inn, is still in operation today. In modern times Georgetown serves as a jumping-off point for visitors taking advantage of all of the recreational opportunities nearby, from rafting to all-terrain vehicle trails. Tourists also come to see the gold-rush charm of Georgetown itself. Georgetown’s business district is located along Wentworth Springs Road and Georgetown Road (Highway 193). Of all of the communities listed in this section, Georgetown has the best preserved historic downtown. It’s structures also form a continuous streetwall along the northwestern side of Wentworth Springs Road. Simple arcades along most buildings help to unify the community’s character.



Pollock Pines

Pollock Pines grew in importance during the gold rush years for its timber resources. Miners needed the wood to shore up mines and build new homes, and Pollock Pines mills met the demand. Timber has always been important to the Pollock Pines economy, but as early as the 1950s, the area began to cater to tourists attracted to the nearby forests, lakes, and streams. As the name suggests, much of the present-day character of Pollock Pines comes from the large pine trees along Lincoln Highway, the community's main street. Many of the commercial buildings are set behind one or more rows of evergreen trees. The businesses along Lincoln Highway are further apart than some of El Dorado County's other communities; the feeling in Pollock Pines is more rural than Georgetown or Diamond Springs.



Shingle Springs

Like many communities in El Dorado County, Shingle Springs began as a bustling California gold mining settlement. The first post office was established in 1853, the first general store in 1865, and the first railroad in 1866. The town boomed as a railroad terminus, but eventually the gold miners moved on. As they left, ranchers arrived to take advantage of the surrounding hills. Today, Shingle Springs is located near the Highway 50/South Shingle Road interchange. Shingle Springs does not have the same historic main street that some of the other communities in El Dorado County have. Instead, most of the commercial development is centered along the Durock Road/Mother Lode Drive corridor in auto-oriented retail buildings.



Other Unincorporated Areas

In addition to the communities described above, mixed-use development may also occur on isolated parcels throughout the county that are zoned to allow mixed use. The character of these areas varies greatly and any proposed mixed-use development would not have the same context as projects located in a community.

Characteristics of Mixed-use Areas

In addition to the characteristics described for each community, the following challenges and circumstances exist in one or more of the communities and/or areas zoned for mixed-use development:

Parcelization

Parcels are located on level or very shallow sloped ground; towns tend to be located in geographically desirable flat areas. In the topographic map below, Georgetown is on a flat valley surrounded by hills.



Utilities

Electric power/communication infrastructure (i.e., power poles/lines) is overhead and on main streets. Power lines and poles conflict with potential or existing second and third floor developments and obstruct the walkability of streets.



Road Network

There are mixed roadway types, ranging from narrow residential streets to two-lane primary or State highways. Roads are generally in good to fair condition, but are rural in character (i.e., limited shoulders, no sidewalks, or open swale gutters). Main streets tend to accommodate local and regional traffic that challenges “architecture in low-speed” (i.e., lower-speeds = more design detail and intimate experience, while higher-speeds = less design detail and are functional).



Community Design

Community architectural styles are varied and ad-hoc. Pre-1950s structures (left) tend to be more decorative and reflective of historic themes, while post-1950 structures tend to be more generic and uniformly suburban (right).

Community landscape character is without a consistent theme. Trees are sparse, canopy-shaded parking is limited, and decorative plantings and vegetative screening is inconsistent in application and design. Modern sidewalks and suburban-type infrastructure in newer developments contrast with established, more historic developments and areas. New construction has altered the “ad-hoc” vernacular character of existing areas. An example is the substantial new suburban-type development with curbs, gutters, and sidewalks in Diamond Springs that is inconsistent with the historic character of the community (bottom).



Assumptions for Mixed Use in El Dorado County

The remarkable history and current conditions of El Dorado's communities require a unique approach to mixed-use development. The type of large, vertical mixed-use project that would work in a city would not work in El Dorado County. The county's communities are small and there is no economic market for large vertical mixed-use projects. Such a project would also not fit the character of El Dorado County. Based on the character and context described previously, the design guidelines for mixed-use development in El Dorado County are based on the following key assumptions:

The historic character of El Dorado County's communities is a valuable asset. Few places in the United States have a history as exciting or iconic as the gold rush towns of El Dorado County. In many communities historic structures still remain and set the tone for their commercial districts. These historic resources should be preserved and enhanced by any mixed-use development.



El Dorado County's communities are rural and rustic. Many of the residents of these communities still make their living from the land, in logging, mining, ranching, or agriculture. A growing number of residents serve the retail and tourism needs of the area. Tourists are attracted to these communities in part because of their proximity to open space. A part of this rustic character comes through in the organization of the communities. They all have an ad-hoc character to them; these towns do not feel master planned. Future mixed-use development should not have an urban feel, but instead look to the rustic character of existing buildings for inspiration. Any developer of a large-scale project should organize the buildings in a way that does not clash with the historic organization of these communities.



El Dorado County's communities are small towns, not suburbs. These communities are independent, both historically and physically. Shingle Springs, El Dorado, and Diamond Springs are all standing in the path of increased suburban growth along Highway 50, and their individual identities are threatened. New mixed-use development should not feel like typical "suburban sprawl," but instead promote the unique character of the town.



Small businesses are an important part of the local economy. Small businesses form the heart of El Dorado County's economy and will continue to do so. New development that includes affordable commercial space for shops, restaurants, and small offices will be a better fit for communities than large corporate offices or manufacturing facilities. New small businesses could inject more life into main streets and help attract more visitors.



El Dorado's communities are cultural and recreational gateways. Many visitors use these communities as "jumping off" points to excursions in the nearby open space. New development should preserve as much open space as possible and take care to maintain views. If a new development is built near a historic or cultural site, the development should be respectful of the site and view it as an asset or amenity.



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Mixed-use Design Guidelines and Standards

This section of the Mixed-Use Design Guide contains development standards and design guidelines, which can help property owners, designers, architects, and developers achieve the County's goals for mixed-use development. Communities are complex systems consisting of many different elements. The most appealing and remarkable communities are those in which harmony exists among these elements, such as the widths of sidewalks, the placement and height of buildings, the architectural character, and the landscape details. The following standards and guidelines illustrate the important relationships among the various elements that make up a mixed-use development project.

Organization

The guidelines in this manual are divided into four topic areas:

- **Project Dimensions.** Guidelines in this topic area focus on designing mixed-use projects with the right size and shape for the context.
- **Development.** Guidelines in this topic area focus on the site and elements within it, including site amenities, signage, paths, and parking.

- **Environment.** Guidelines in this topic area focus on three of the largest potential conflict points in mixed-use developments: light, noise, and odor.
- **Building Design.** Guidelines in this topic area focus on the design of the buildings, including windows, entrances, and facades.

Within each topic area, guidelines are broken up further into topics. Topics each have four sections:

- 1. Context.** This section defines the topic in relation to mixed-use development and describes the current state of the topic in El Dorado County's communities. For example, the context section for "Entrances" describes the typical arrangement of entrances in existing buildings, and any historical precedents for entrances.
- 2. Standards.** This section describes the standards found in the Zoning Ordinance.
- 3. Guidelines.** The guidelines recommend ways to meet the standards in the Zoning Ordinance while preserving and enhancing the character of El Dorado County's communities.
- 4. Diagrams and images.** Many of the topics feature diagrams and images that illustrate the guidelines.

Guidelines provide recommendation to create high-quality buildings and site plans that will result in attractive, pedestrian-friendly, and historically-sensitive mixed-use districts. The guidelines aim to be prescriptive enough to create a framework for design and respect the historic character of El Dorado County's communities, but flexible enough to allow for creativity in design and planning. The development standards in the Zoning Ordinance must be met, but guidelines are recommendations and are not required, just encouraged.

GENERAL

Mixed-use Definitions

Standards

- H V L** Mixed-use development shall be defined as any development that incorporates two or more different use categories on one parcel or in one structure. Valid use categories include: residential, retail, or office. Mixed-use development must include residential uses unless the uses are stacked in a vertical mixed-use configuration.
- H** Horizontal mixed-use development shall be defined as any development that incorporates two or more different use categories alongside one another, either in one mixed-use building, or as two or more separate buildings on one parcel.
- V** Vertical mixed-use development shall be defined as any development that incorporates two or more different use categories stacked in one multi-story mixed-use building.
- L** Large-scale mixed-use development shall be defined as any development that incorporates two or more different use categories on a parcel larger than two acres. Large-scale mixed-use development must include a residential component and/or a vertical mixed-use component.

Each standard and guideline has one or more letters in black boxes directly to its left. These letters indicate whether the standard or guideline is applicable for horizontal mixed-use development (H), vertical mixed-use development (V), or large-scale mixed-use development (L). If a letter appears next to a standard or guideline, that standard or guideline applies to that mixed-use project type.



This **horizontal** mixed-use development features retail, offices, and residences spread across one parcel.



This **vertical** mixed-use building stacks offices above retail.



Large-scale mixed-use developments in El Dorado County may consist of single-family homes with a town center, all surrounded by forests, hills, or agriculture. (Source: Middle Green Valley Specific Plan)

PROJECT DIMENSIONS

Residential Density

Context

Single-family homes make up the vast majority of El Dorado County's housing stock. As a result, El Dorado County's communities have a low residential density. Some of the homes closer to commercial centers are closer together, but lot sizes can be one acre or more within one half mile of a commercial center.

Standards

H V L The maximum density for the residential use component shall be 20 dwelling units per acre in Community Regions and ten dwelling units per acre in Rural Centers or developments without a public sewer connection.

L Projects with a residential component shall be built at a minimum residential density of eight dwelling units per acre in Community Regions.

a. Calculation: Residential density should be measured as an average over the gross land area of only the residential portion of the planned site or assembly of parcels.

b. Exemption: When residential uses in a mixed-use project are all contained in vertical mixed-use buildings, the project should be exempt from this minimum residential density requirement and be considered as part of the maximum allowed FAR.

c. Credit for Residential Density in Vertical Mixed-Use Buildings: When a project contains land area devoted to residential uses in single-purpose buildings, any additional residential dwelling units contained in vertical mixed-use buildings within the Mixed-Use project may be credited toward meeting this minimum residential density standard.



The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

PROJECT DIMENSIONS

Maximum Building Height

Context

Most of the buildings in El Dorado County's communities are one or two stories tall. Single-use buildings are common, particularly single-family homes and one-story retail and office buildings. In the historic commercial areas, it is common to see two-story buildings with residential uses or offices above retail uses.

Standards

H V L The maximum allowed building height for mixed-use buildings shall be 50 feet. (Section 17.22.030)

H V L Chimneys; church spires; elevator, mechanical and stair housings; flag poles; towers; vents; and other similar structures which are not used for human activity may be up to 20 percent higher than the allowable maximum height in all zones where the excess height is not prohibited by Section 17.27.020 (Airport Safety Combining Zone). The use of towers or similar structures to provide higher ceiling heights for habitable space shall be deemed a use intended for human activity. No such structure shall be employed for any commercial or advertising use unless specifically allowed by the applicable zone, except that antennas and associated equipment may be located within such structures. (Section 17.30.040)

Guidelines

H V L Do not exceed 125 percent of the average height of buildings located on the same and facing block faces.

H V L When a planned mixed-use building is wider than the buildings nearby, vary the building height in a manner that reflects historic lot widths.

H V L Provide a sensitive transition between land uses of different intensities by limiting building height to 40 feet within 100 feet of a single-story home.



Spires, chimneys, and other projections can exceed the maximum building height by up to 20 percent.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Floor Area Ratio

Context

The communities of El Dorado County have a range of Floor Area Ratios (FAR). Floor area ratio (FAR) is the ratio of the gross building square footage on a lot to the net square footage of the lot¹. The FAR defines the maximum allowable gross building area on a given lot. The historic mining-era districts have a relatively high FAR due to the smaller lot sizes and building coverage. For example, along Main Street in Georgetown, these historic, one-story structures can result in FARs around 0.8. In newer development or older structures further away from the historic cores, it is not uncommon for FARs to be 0.2 or less.

Standards

H V L The FAR of mixed-use districts is as follows:

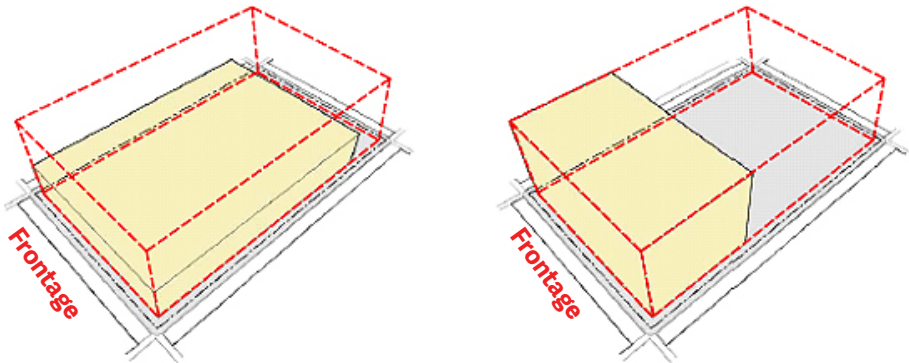
	CPO	CL	CM	CC	RM
Floor Area Ratio	0.85	0.85	2.0	0.85	N/A

(Sections 17.22.030, 17.24.030)²

Guidelines

H V L Use the maximum FAR allowed in the zoning district to promote walkable, successful mixed-use districts.

¹ FAR Definition from the El Dorado County General Plan: Ratio of allowable floor area (square footage) to site area (square footage). The FAR can be calculated over an entire integrated development rather than on a project-by-project basis under the following circumstances: 1) the aggregate average FAR within applicable land use designations does not exceed the General Plan maximum; or 2) satisfactory evidence is provided that demonstrates on a site-specific basis that measures will be imposed to keep traffic at levels associated with the applicable FAR threshold.



A floor area ratio of 0.85 can result in two different building forms on the same lot. The building on the left lot covers 85 percent of the lot with a one-story building, while the two-story building on the right lot covers 42.5 percent of the lot.

² General Plan Policy 2.5.1.3: Areas within Community Regions and Rural Centers shall also be analyzed to identify opportunity sites where clustering of development may be appropriate, including increases in the allowable floor-to-area building ratio (FAR) in Community Regions.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:
H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

PROJECT DIMENSIONS

Lot Dimensions and Coverage

Context

Lot dimensions and lot coverage varies widely in El Dorado County's communities. In commercial centers lots are smaller and buildings cover a majority of the lot. In rural contexts lots are larger and buildings do not cover a majority of the lot.

Standards

	CPO	CL	CM	CC	RM	RM (Corner lot)
Minimum lot size (in square feet)	6,000	4,000	None	4,000	2,000	3,500
Minimum lot width (in feet)	60	60	20	60	20	20

(Sections 17.22.030, 17.24.030)

H V L Locate parking lots behind buildings, where possible, and to the side of buildings when a rear parking lot is not feasible.

Guidelines

V L Complement the sizes of nearby lots when subdividing a lot for mixed-use development.

L Create new lots at the minimum allowable dimensions to improve walkability and provide additional density.

H V L In historic commercial areas, cover more than 50 percent of the lot with buildings to complement the coverage of nearby lots.



The lots at left locate parking to the rear, while the lots at right surround buildings with parking on all sides. Building fronts should be located directly adjacent to streets and parking lots should be located at the rear of a lot.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Setbacks

Context

The historic areas in El Dorado County’s communities have buildings with narrow front and side setbacks, or no setbacks at all. Some of the historic buildings reflect the rural character of the area and are set back significantly from one or more sides of the parcel. Typically, newer buildings have larger setbacks.

Standards

H V L Front setbacks in mixed-use districts shall conform to the table below:

Street Classification	Minimum (ft)	Maximum (ft)
Local Road	0	5
2-Lane Regional Road	0	5
Major 2-Lane Road	0	10

H V L Mixed-use buildings shall have no minimum side and rear setbacks if the buildings have a fireproof wall with no openings that meet building and fire code requirements. Otherwise, a five foot minimum side and rear setback applies.

H V L Separate parking lots from adjacent residences and buildings by no less than five feet.

Guidelines

H V L Design buildings with commercial uses at the back edge of the public sidewalk in a “zero lot line” configuration, except as necessary to allow room for outdoor seating and service areas, outdoor sales and displays, landscaping, emphasized

entryways integral to the building design, and similar pedestrian and customer amenities. If the historic context includes large setbacks, or if the site is constrained, a different setback may be considered.

H V L Where a front setback is necessary, hardscape and landscape the area to accommodate uses that keep the public realm active, such as outdoor dining or seating.

H V L For residential structures use the area between the property line and the front of the building to provide space for privacy, landscaping, private courtyards/open areas, emphasized entryways integral to the building design, and similar residential amenities.

H V L In large buildings incorporate varied setbacks to reflect the scale of nearby buildings and provide visual interest.

H V L If neighboring buildings have no side setbacks, design mixed-use buildings to meet the neighboring building at the lot line to create a continuous street wall.

H V L Place buildings at the front of lots and leave room at the back of the lot for parking and other site amenities.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use

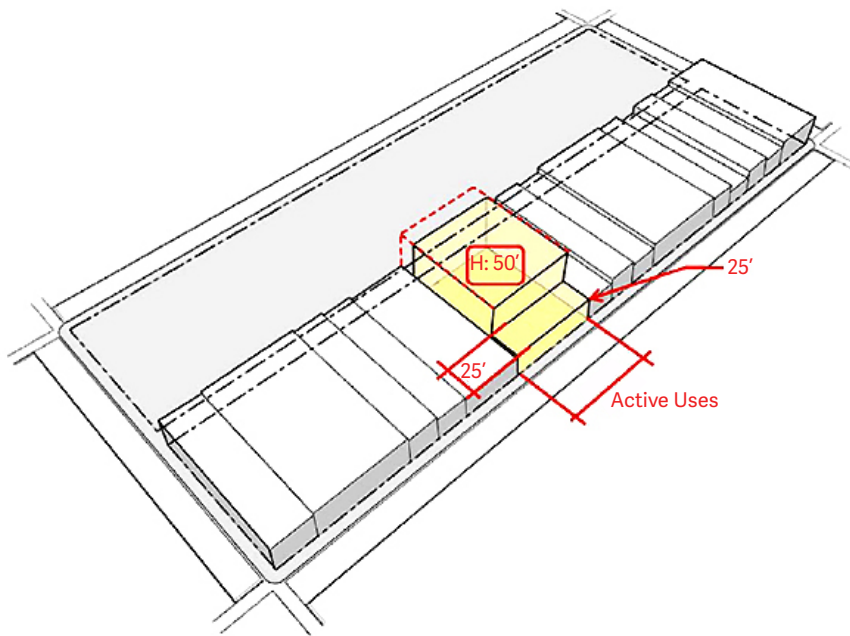
V Vertical mixed-use

L Large-scale mixed-use

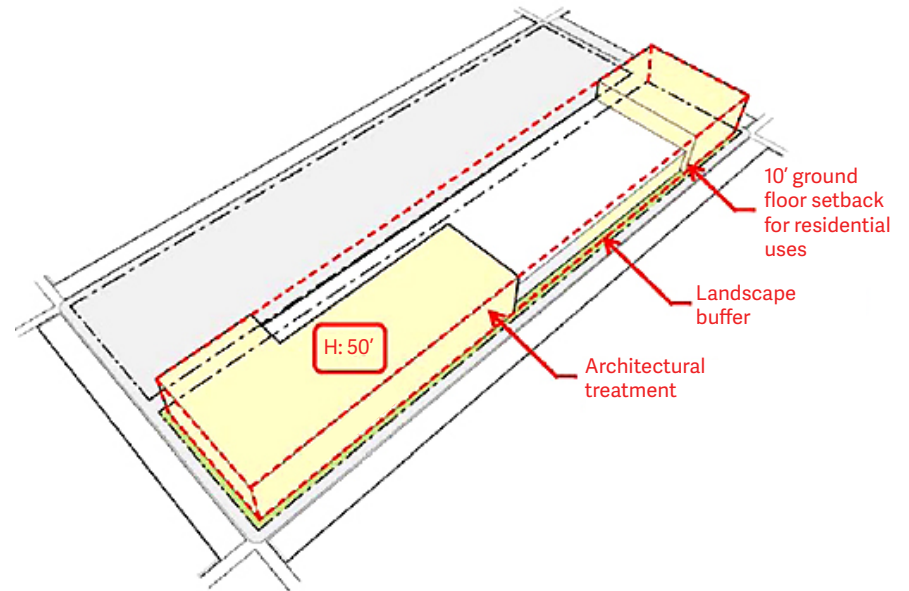
Setback Diagrams

Project dimensions standards and guidelines place some constraints on building form and massing, but also provide opportunities for contextually-sensitive projects. The five example projects in this section demonstrate how setback standards and guidelines can be respected while creating viable mixed-use projects. Building volumes are shown in yellow. The five example projects also relate directly to the five prototype designs found in Chapter 3: Design Prototypes.

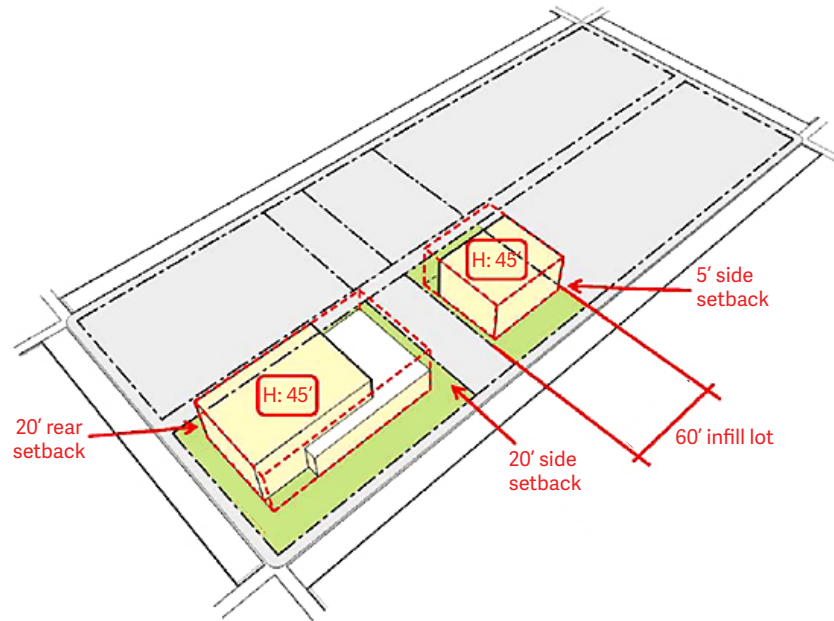
Historic Main Street Infill



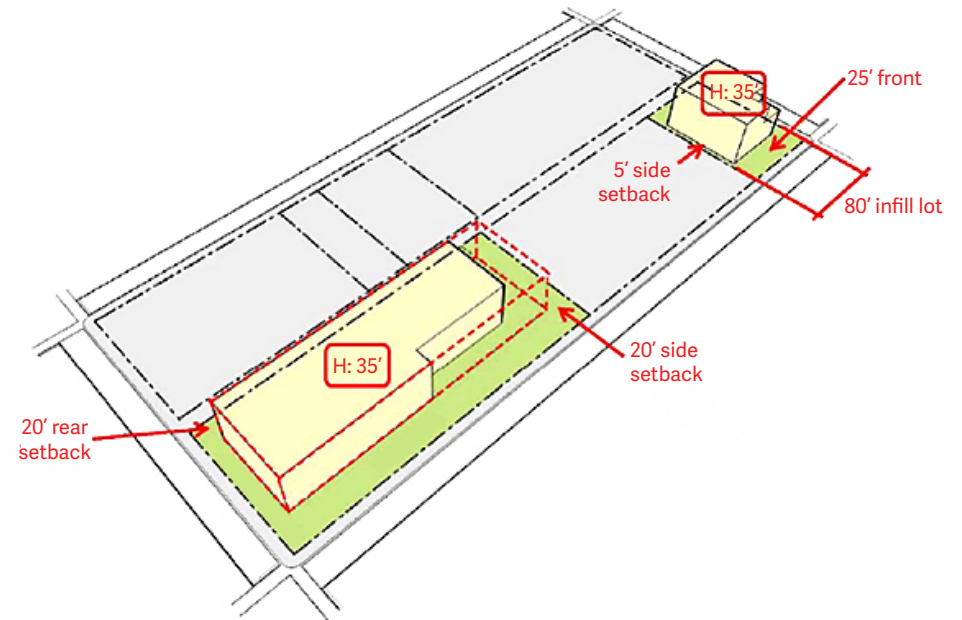
Historic Main Street Conversion



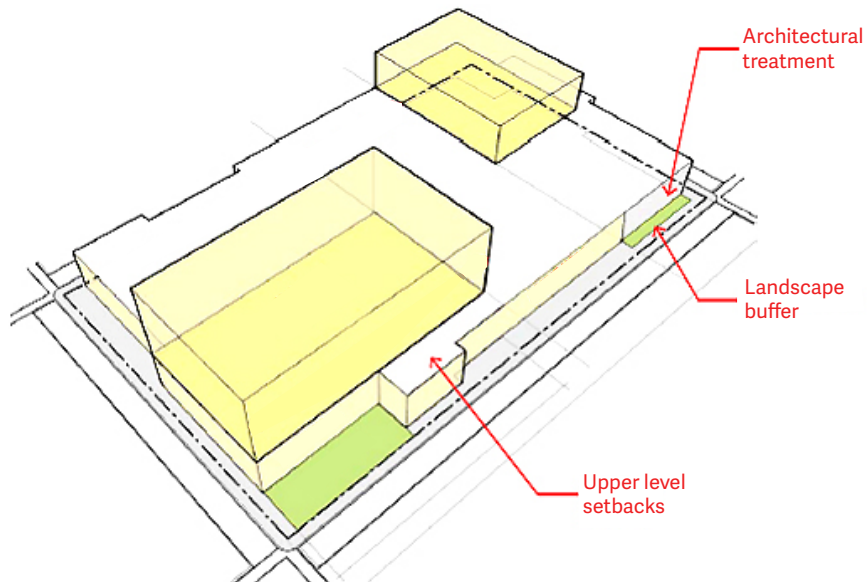
Cottage or Multi-family Addition



Small-scale Phased Development



Large-scale Phased Development



Screening

Context

Sidewalks and paths along trash receptacles, large parking lots, and other unattractive site features can discourage walking. Pedestrians are key to vibrant mixed-use districts, so the screening of unattractive features is important to supporting the vitality of these districts.

Standards

H V L At least 50 percent of off-street surface parking spaces visible from adjacent properties and from adjacent streets shall be screened from view. Screens shall be built to a minimum height of 36 inches.

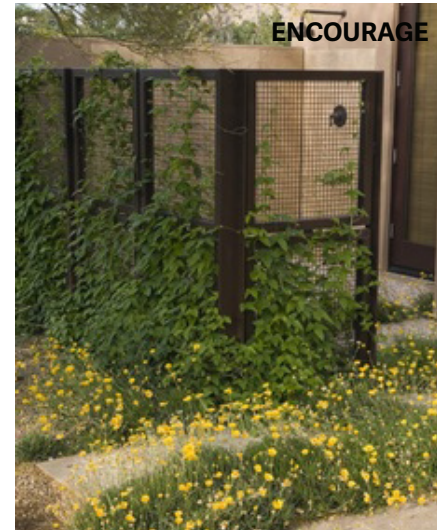
H V L Trash enclosures, loading docks, utility equipment, and similar uses that are visible from a street or neighboring property shall be screened from view.

H V L Rooftop mechanical equipment must be screened using parapets, pitched roofs, or other appropriate screening devices.

Guidelines

H V L Use berms, plantings, and/or picket fences, walls, or similar structures as screening devices.

H V L Design screens to be compatible with the design details and composition of the building facade.



The fence in the photo at left screens trash receptacles while complementing the rustic character of El Dorado County. Unscreened trash receptacles are an eyesore.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Landscaping

Context

Attractive landscaping can enhance a mixed-use project and the entire surrounding area. Landscaping can provide shade, buffer parking areas and trash receptacles from pedestrians, and create a soft edge along buildings. In El Dorado County's historic communities, landscaping reinforces the rustic, ad hoc nature of the built environment. These guidelines do not recommend neatly manicured flower beds, but instead recommend California-native plants that fit the context and climate.

Standards

H V L Refer to Section 17.33 – Landscaping Standards for landscaping standards.

Guidelines

H V L Emphasize building entrances with special architectural and landscape treatments.

H V L Design site landscape treatments to be attractive, with a consistent design throughout the project.

H V L Design landscaped areas to serve as stormwater management areas (e.g., bioswales) as well as visual amenities.

H V L Select California native, drought-resistant, hardy plants for landscaped areas.



ENCOURAGE

This landscaped area acts as a bioswale. Bioswales remove silt and pollution from surface runoff water.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Parking Lot Design

Context

These standards and guidelines are intended to encourage landscaped off-street surface parking lots that will improve the appearance of a mixed-use project by breaking up expanses of paved areas, reduce the significant solar heat gain from parked automobiles and paved parking areas, improve the management of storm water run-off, and provide a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

Standards

H V L Refer to Section 17.33 – Landscaping Standards for off-street parking lot design standards.

Guidelines

H V L Use permeable paving materials (e.g., crushed stone, open paving blocks, permeable paving blocks).

H V L Design parking access points to minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic. Shared drives are encouraged and curb cuts should be located away from intersections.

H V L Limit the use of raised concrete curbs and depress planters to capture parking lot drainage using bioswales.

H V L Use wheel stops or similar devices (e.g., railroad ties, large timbers, logs, stones) as necessary to prevent damage to the trees and landscaped planters from vehicle overhang.

H V L Design for continuous circulation within a parking lot that requires drivers to back out when no spaces are available.

Additional Guidelines for Large Parking Lots (Greater than 20 Spaces)

H V L Provide a pedestrian walkway that extends from the furthest row of parking to either a building entrance or a sidewalk leading to the entrance every 400 linear feet of surface vehicle parking area as measured perpendicular to the walkway.

H V L Provide parking lot trees as follows: at least 1 tree for every 8 parking spaces in lots with 48 spaces or fewer; and at least 1 tree for every 10 spaces for parking lots with 49 spaces or more.

H V L Distribute trees evenly throughout the parking lot to create a canopy effect in the parking lot and locate trees to divide and break up expanses of paving and long rows of parking spaces.

H V L Terminate parking rows and bays in an “island” planter that spans the length of two parking spaces or in “finger” planters that span the length of one parking space.



This parking lot features trees, landscaping, and a bioswale.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Parking

Context

Parking poses a significant challenge to mixed-use development in El Dorado County's unique rural towns. Surface parking requirements can dominate a site or building frontage and reduce the options for site and building design. El Dorado's historic communities did not have large parking lots when they were first established, and satisfying parking standards while complementing historic structures can be challenging. There are a number of strategies and techniques that can be used to meet these challenges. The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure the provision, location, and design of off-street parking areas that accommodate motor vehicles while balancing the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

Standards

H V L Mixed-use parking standards:

Use type	Minimum Standard
Accessory Dwelling Unit	None
Commercial Uses	1 space per 400 square feet
Civic Uses	1 space per 400 square feet
Industrial Uses	1 space per 500 square feet
Residential Uses	1 space per dwelling unit
Live/Work	1 space per dwelling unit, plus the lesser of: 1 space per 400 square feet or 1 space for each non-resident employee

H V On-street parking spaces located within 400 feet of the project may be credited to meet up to 50 percent of the minimum required off-street parking spaces. On-street parking allowed by this provision shall not be counted toward the maximum amount of parking allowed.

H V

The Planning Director may reduce the minimum off street parking requirements by up to 100 percent for mixed-use projects meeting at least one of the following requirements:

- The project is sited within one-quarter mile of a public or private parking lot that can accommodate the off-street requirements.
- The project developer or owner contributes into a "municipal parking lot development fund" based upon the number of required off-street parking spaces.

H V L

The use of shared parking may be allowed when the project is under the control of a single owner/developer, contains commercial, retail, office, institutional, or public uses with staggered peak parking demands, and the site is arranged so all uses can share a parking lot.

H V L

Neighboring property owners may form a shared parking agreement, subject to approval by the Planning Director and recorded prior to issuance of a building permit. This agreement must be recorded as a deed restriction on all participating properties and cannot be modified or revoked without the consent of the Planning Director. If any requirements for shared parking are violated, the affected property owners must provide a remedy satisfactory to the Planning Director or provide the full amount of required parking for each use.

H V L

A minimum of three bicycle parking spaces shall be provided for any mixed-use project with more than 2,000 square feet of commercial or industrial space.

V

Mixed-use developments shall provide bicycle lockers equivalent to 0.5 spaces per unit in mixed-use developments with residential units.

H V L Bicycle parking facilities shall be located no further than 100 feet away from a building entrance and be visible from the uses they serve. Facilities shall not be located in places that impede pedestrian or automobile traffic flow or would cause damage to landscaping.

H V L When a mixed-use project site is adjacent to a designated bike route, the Planning Director may reduce the required minimum number of off-street parking spaces by 1 off-street vehicle space for every 5 bicycle spaces, up to a maximum reduction of 5 percent.

H V L When on-site showers/changing rooms and bicycle lockers are provided in a mixed-use development, the Planning Director may reduce the required minimum number of off-street parking spaces by 1 off-street vehicle space for every 5 bicycle parking spaces, up to a maximum reduction of 10 percent.

H V L Buildings shall not be demolished to create parking.

Guidelines

H V L Design short-term bicycle parking spaces to make it easy for a bicyclist to secure their bicycle by means of a lock. An inverted "U" rack (also known as a "staple" rack) is preferred.

H V L Ensure short-term bicycle parking spaces are in public view, close to building entrances, and with sufficient lighting.



Ample bike parking encourages cycling.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Loading

Context

Businesses often need driveways, loading docks, or parking spaces for delivery trucks. These facilities are essential to commerce and need to be accommodated in mixed-use developments. Trucks and loading activities can create a nuisance for nearby residents, however, and any impacts should be minimized.

Standards

H V L Mixed-use developments shall screen dedicated loading and service areas from view.

Guidelines

H V L Design internal streets and driveways to accommodate vehicles commonly used for loading and unloading.

H V L Use buildings, plantings, walls, that are compatible with the architectural style and character of the area to screen loading and service areas.

H V L Design loading zones and docks to minimize queuing issues in parking lots and adjacent streets.

H V L Locate loading zones and docks in an area to minimize nuisances (e.g., noise, odor) for residential users.

H V L Post signs requesting truck drivers turn off their engines to reduce the sound and odor of an idling engine.



This loading dock's roof screens loading activities from the uses on the second level.



Designated on-street loading zones can minimize queuing issues.

Mobility and Access

Context

Every business and residence needs safe, convenient connections to the street system. The guidelines in this topic focus on pedestrian and bicycle connections, as they are often not given the same attention as connections for cars. Mixed-use development works best when pedestrians and bicyclists are given safe, convenient access.

Standards

H V L Mixed-use developments longer than 300 feet shall provide a mid-block pedestrian pass-through. Design the pass-through to be safe and visually interesting. Pedestrian pass-throughs shall not be enclosed or locked. Alleys and service areas shall not be considered pedestrian pass-throughs, although alleys may be designed with pedestrian walkways.

H V L Mixed-use developments shall provide safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access from existing public bike paths or greenways located adjacent to the site.

H V L Mixed-use developments shall provide pedestrian access by connecting internal pedestrian circulation to any sidewalks or walkways on adjacent properties or in the public right-of-way. Locate these access points to make building entryways directly visible from the public right-of-way.

L Large-scale mixed-use developments shall provide an on-site system of pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, and bikeways that provide continuous access to all land uses within a project site and to land uses on adjacent properties. On-site pedestrian connections shall be provided to and between the following points:

- a. The primary entrance or entrances to each building housing a principal use;
- b. Existing or planned transit stops, stations, and park-and-ride locations;
- c. Greenways or trail systems; and
- d. On-site amenities, as provided according to the Design Guidelines.

Guidelines

L Suburban concrete curb and gutter designs are discouraged. Use alternative surfaces, barriers, edgings and drainages in rural, historical, or other locations of similar character.

H V L Design pedestrian walkways with a minimum unobstructed width of five feet, and eight feet for paths expected to serve pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

H V L Design pedestrian walkways to create a safe and uninterrupted pedestrian way and avoid frequent crossings by driveways or streets.

H V L Design buildings to include arcades in areas where they are common. If a new mixed-use building is adjacent to a building with an arcade, design the building to continue the adjacent arcade.

H V L Walkways should provide relief from the paved expanses of parking lots and streets. Design pedestrian walkways as amenity areas with landscaping, benches, lighting, signage, and attractive street furniture.

H V L

Within a mixed-use district, vehicle drivers on the adjacent public rights-of-way should be able to recognize the increased presence of pedestrians and bicyclists, who in turn should perceive the improved accommodation of alternate-mode travel and increased personal safety in these places. All new projects with parking lots on site should incorporate the following guidelines:

- a. Provide reduced street widths and travel speeds;
- b. Incorporate bulb-outs to reduce the exposure time for a pedestrian to cross the street, slow traffic, and notify the automobile driver of the presence of pedestrians;
- c. Reinforce smaller curb returns (to prevent damage from delivery trucks jumping the curb when turning);
- d. Incorporate medians and islands into streets for pedestrian refuge;
- e. Incorporate on-street parking, which may be diagonal or parallel;
- f. Enhance mid-block and intersection crosswalks with respect to paving treatments, curb cuts, and similar elements; and
- g. Integrate a pedestrian walkway system into the project's on-site circulation patterns. Emphasis should be placed on connections between front doors and parking.



Arcades create protected pedestrian zones and shape the character of El Dorado County. Restricting access poses a safety risk.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Site Amenities

Context

Site amenities such as patios, plazas, squares, and greens help create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. Many of these are not common in El Dorado County's communities, but they would fit well with the community character and help create an environment suitable for walkable, mixed-use development. In many of El Dorado County's communities, pedestrians do not have any significant space dedicated for their exclusive use; site amenities will help make them feel welcome. Site amenities can also reinforce a community's civic image and special character.

Guidelines

- H V L** Design patios, plazas, mini-parks, squares, and greens to be a proportional size to the project.
- H V L** Ensure site amenities are visible and easily recognizable as an area that encourages outdoor assembly. Site amenities may be framed by a view corridor, be placed on a high point, or be visually related to a multi-use trail or other walkway.
- H V L** When a building will be adjacent to a pedestrian plaza, patio, mini-park, square, or green, include at least one of the following elements on the wall facing the amenity:
 - a. A building entry;
 - b. Windows facing onto the outdoor amenity;
 - c. Arcades along the edges of the outdoor amenity;
 - d. Outdoor seating areas; or
 - e. A similar feature that will bolster security and encourage pedestrian use of the outdoor amenity.



Amenities such as benches and public art create an attractive pedestrian experience.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Signage

Context

Private signs are placed because they advertise businesses, but they have other potential as well. Signs are a form of graphic design, and sometimes of sculptural design. If they are treated as an art form that provides information, they can contribute strongly to the liveliness and variety of street environments and establish a district identity. Poorly done, signs can detract from the overall character of a place.

Standards

- H V L** In live/work units, on-premises signs are limited to no more than two non-animated, non-illuminated wall or window signs collectively not exceeding four square feet in total area.
- H V L** Signs shall be maintained in good condition, always clean and free from graffiti or other disfigurements.
- H V L** Lighting for signs shall be extinguished or reduced at night in the vicinity of residential uses to minimize the impact of commercial activity on residents.
- H V L** Temporary signs and banners, including "A-frame" signs, shall not be allowed.

Guidelines

- H V L** Design sign elements with a recognizable character that contributes to the design of the building. Reflect the project character through consistency of materials, illumination, sizes, proportions, and locations.



ENCOURAGE



AVOID

This sign at left complements the facade, features context-appropriate lighting, and uses an easy-to-read font. Temporary banner signs are discouraged.

- H V L** Use harmonious colors, simple lettering, and durable materials to create an context-appropriate sign.
- H V L** Integrate signs carefully within the site, landscape, and architectural design context. Make size, shape, and proportions of the signs compatible with the size and scale of the surroundings and do not obscure other design features of the site.
- H V L** Locate signage at the primary entrances of buildings and parking lots.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use



Avoid using “A-frame” signs; they often block the pedestrian way and do not reflect the character of El Dorado County. Historically-sensitive hanging signs leave the sidewalk free for pedestrians.

H V L Design signs to create and enhance a rich pedestrian and interpretive experience. Design signs to deemphasize the importance of the automobile.

H V L Design signs to safeguard and protect the public health, safety, and general welfare of the community. Avoid signs that create traffic safety hazards caused by visual distractions or obstructions.

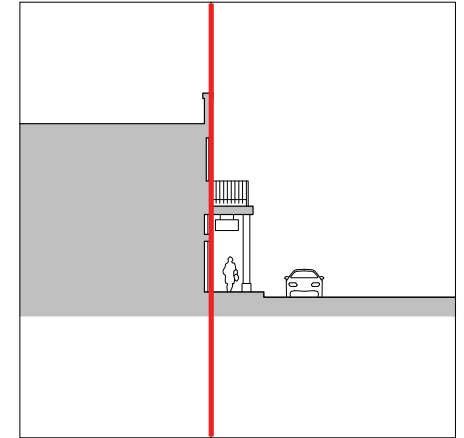
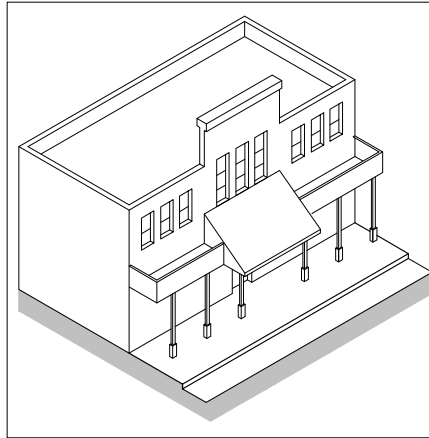
H V Preserve historic painted signs. These signs are often on the side of buildings and contribute to the history of the community.

Building Frontages

Building frontages are the places where mixed-use buildings meet the public realm. Successful building frontages encourage pedestrian activity, contribute to the character of the community, and provide an attractive face to the street. This section introduces several frontage types suitable for mixed-use development in El Dorado County. Red lines indicate the right-of-way line.

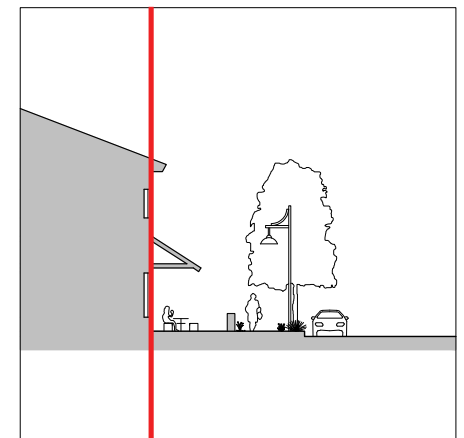
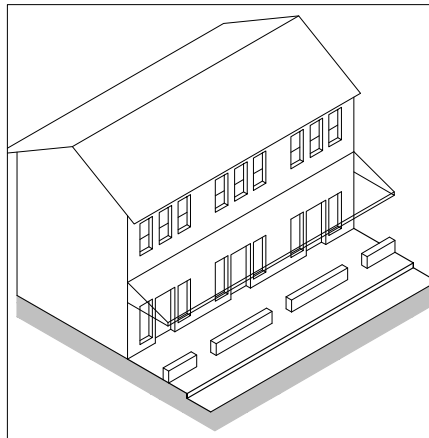
Gallery

Galleries are storefronts with an attached colonnade that projects over the sidewalk. This frontage type is ideal for retail use, but only when the sidewalk is fully covered by the colonnade so that a pedestrian cannot bypass it.



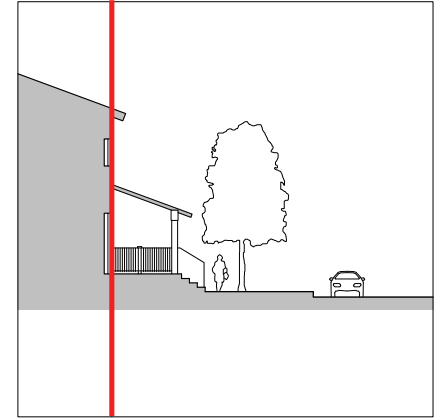
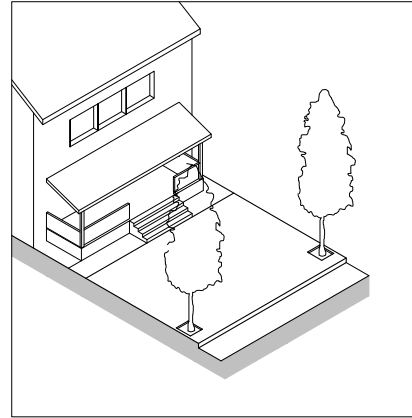
Storefront

Storefronts are facades placed at or near the right-of-way line, with the entrance at sidewalk grade. Storefronts often have cantilevered shed roofs or awnings. The entrance at sidewalk grade makes residential uses incompatible; residential uses would be more appropriate above the ground floor or behind the storefront use.



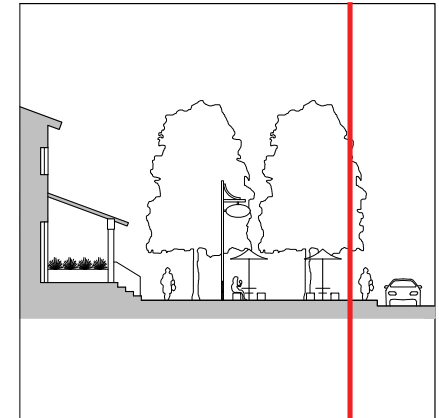
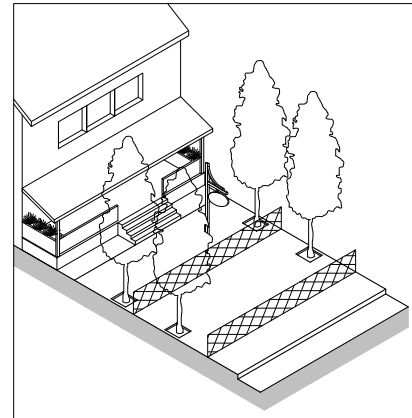
Porch

In mixed-use buildings a porch can be used for outdoor display or modified as a courtyard area. A decorative wall at the property line may be used to define the private space of the yard for a café outdoor seating area. A porch may also be attached to the facade. A great variety of porch and fence designs are possible, including a raised front yard with a retaining wall at the property line with entry steps to the yard.



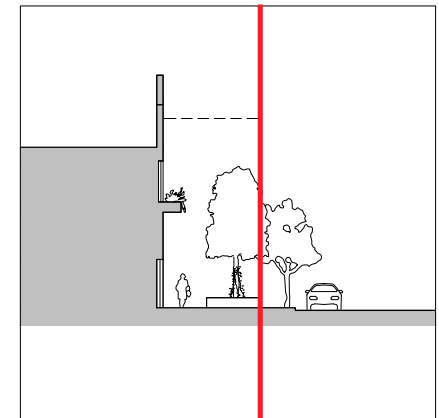
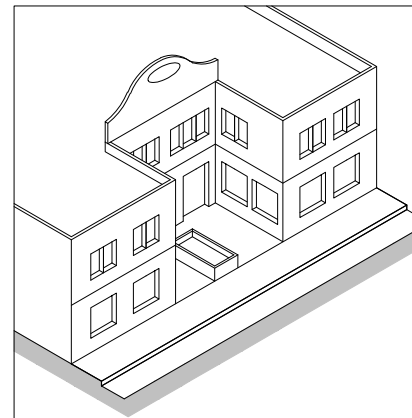
Yard

A court is an area with the facade set back a minimum of 15 feet from the property line or frontage line. The front yard created remains unfenced and is visually continuous with adjacent yards, supporting a common landscape. The setback area provides a location for bike parking, outdoor dining, loading, or other uses that mix office, retail, and residential uses.



Forecourt

Forecourts are uncovered courts within a storefront, gallery, or arcade frontage where a part of the facade is recessed from the building frontage. The court is suitable for gardens, vehicular drop-offs, and loading. A fence or wall may be used to define the property line. The court may also be raised from the sidewalk, creating a small retaining wall at the property line with entry steps to the court. This type should be used sparingly and in conjunction with storefronts.



Lighting

Context

Lighting in a mixed-use project is a major determinant of nighttime activity. It should create a sense of safety, particularly for pedestrians, and emphasize key features of the site. At the same time mixed-use projects need to balance the lighting needs of the different uses on the site and reinforce a unified image and identity for the project.

Standards

L A project-wide lighting plan shall be submitted for review at the time a mixed-use concept plan is submitted. A project-wide lighting plan shall address at a minimum the general location and types of lighting and include the following: public and private street lighting, pedestrian lighting, parking lot lighting, residential area lighting, signage lighting, and lighting for service and delivery areas.

H V L Lighting of commercial uses adjacent to or within the immediate vicinity of residential uses shall be designed with fixtures and poles that illuminate commercial uses while eliminating light spillover into residential areas.

Guidelines

H V L Use light fixtures along streets that contribute to a coordinated, attractive streetscape that works well with street trees, curb cuts, signage, street furniture, and other site amenities.

H V L Use fully-shielded lighting fixtures in all parking areas, service and delivery areas, and residential areas.

H V L Emphasize the safety and location of pedestrian areas by using pedestrian-scale lighting. Choose pedestrian-scale lighting that promotes the architectural character of the project and community.

H V L Use a greater number of lower fixtures instead of fewer tall fixtures.

H V L In parking lots use lighting that complements the lighting of adjacent streets and properties. Ensure that parking lot lighting does not overpower the quality of pedestrian-area lighting nearby.



These shielded lights are low for pedestrians and add character.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Noise and Odor

Context

Noise presents a greater concern in mixed-use developments than in other types of development. Traditional zoning, with its clear division of uses, came from the idea that people did not want to live near uses that produced nuisances like noise, odor, and pollution. By placing two different use types next to each other, there is a potential to recreate the nuisance problems that separated them in the first place. Guidelines for mixed-use development need to identify ways to mitigate any noise nuisance.

Some commercial uses generate odors residents in a mixed-use development may find unpleasant. Successful mixed-use projects should minimize odors from non-residential uses to ensure the comfort of residents.

Standards

H V L Refer to Section 17.37 – Noise Standards for noise standards.

Guidelines

H L Construct common walls between residential and non-residential uses to minimize the transmission of noise and vibration.

H V L Locate mechanical equipment and other sources of noise away from building areas and exterior spaces designed for use by residents.

H V L Ventilate non-residential spaces (e.g., dining establishments) to prevent odors from spreading to residential uses.

H V L Locate trash receptacles far from residential uses to minimize the nuisance of refuse odor to residents.



This trash receptacle is screened and located far from residential buildings to minimize unpleasant odors.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Windows

Context

The correct amount and location of windows in a building can improve public safety and pedestrian activity. Windows in a facade allow occupants to look out on to the public space, enhancing safety. Windows along the ground floor of a building create a pedestrian-friendly experience by encouraging strolling and window shopping. These standards and guidelines ensure that mixed-use projects have the correct ratio of windows to solid wall.

Standards

H V L Mixed-use buildings shall avoid tinted, mirrored or textured glass windows for non-residential uses. Such windows obscure views into and out of a building.

H V L Mixed-use buildings shall be designed with windows comprising 60 percent of the street-facing building facade between two feet and eight feet in height.

H V L Mixed-use buildings shall be designed with ground floor windows so their bottom edge is located no more than three feet above the adjacent sidewalk.

Guidelines

H V L Internally light display windows to enhance transparency and visual interest.

H V L Design upper story windows to complement the historic character of the communities (e.g., use smaller windows and divided lites).

H V L Use deep-set windows to create shadow lines and add visual interest to the facade.

H V L Avoid the use of low-quality window and door trim, such as anodized aluminum. Trim materials should complement the historic character of the community.

H V L To meet energy standards, specify the use of projecting covers, awnings, or other similar devices or building features, not mirrored, reflective, or tinted glass.



Design upper story windows to complement the historic character of the communities.



The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Entrances

Context

Building entrances in El Dorado County follow the same placement pattern as buildings anywhere. Historic buildings, or buildings in a more urban location, have at least one entrance on an internal or perimeter street with pedestrian access. Newer buildings with large parking lots typically have their main entrance facing the parking lot.

Standards

H V L Provide a commercial entrance along the facade that is parallel to the primary street. When located on the corner of a block, mixed-use buildings shall either locate the main entry at the corresponding corner of the structure or provide an entrance that faces each street.

H V L Separate entrances shall be provided for residential and commercial uses in a single building.

H V L When parking is provided at the rear of a building, a rear entrance may be provided. The rear entrance shall reflect the design and architectural character of the street-facing entrance. If parking is provided and a rear entrance is not provided, the site shall include a pedestrian walkway to the front entrance at a minimum of five feet wide.

Guidelines

H V L Make the primary public entry to the building visually obvious through the use of architectural treatments such as differing colors or materials, arches or arcades, covered walks, arbors, signs, or protecting canopies.

H V L Create safe entrances for residential uses by providing adequate lighting and sturdy doors with locks. Avoid creating shadows near the entrance or providing other places for assailants to hide.



This corner-lot building faces its entrance at the corner and the turret above the entrance signals its location. A side entrance (circled) offers separate access for residential uses.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Facades

Context

Facades are the exterior faces of buildings and are often the principal contributors to a community's character. Facades in many of El Dorado County's historic communities reflect its heyday in the mid-to-late 19th century. The facades of new buildings should respect the historic context while contributing to the establishment of walkable, mixed-use communities.

Guidelines

- H V** Design new infill buildings to reflect traditional design patterns of adjacent buildings. Creative interpretations of traditional elements are encouraged.
- H V L** Include rustic materials (e.g., wood or composites, corrugated metal, rusted or antiqued steel, random stone, brick or similar materials) in the facade.
- H V L** Stain or texture (board-formed, streaked, or washed) any visible concrete.
- H V L** Use horizontal elements such as porches, balconies, and coursing to break up the vertical mass of the facade wall.
- H V L** If a building is to be wider than those traditionally seen in the area, divide the building into modules that express the typical dimensions of the area.
- H V L** Design facades to have a solid-to-void ratio that appears similar to the established community context.
- H V L** On corner lots wrap facade elements around the building.



This new mixed-use building uses facade materials similar to those used in historic buildings. The different facade treatments help break up the long building.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

Ceiling Height

Context

Commercial tenants typically prefer tall ceilings, and without tall ceilings developers will have a difficult time attracting quality commercial tenants. Vacancies can severely harm the viability of a mixed-use district, so significant effort should be made to accommodate commercial uses. Older buildings that do not meet this standard could be allowed to be retrofitted, upgraded, or remodeled to maintain a variety of building stock and a range of lease and ownership costs that support the County's broad demographics.

Standards

H V L Mixed-use buildings shall be designed with commercial ground floors to be 14 feet tall as measured from the finished floor to the finished ceiling and 12 feet tall for ground floor residential uses to accommodate future conversion or adaptation for non-residential use.

Guidelines

H V L Design buildings with floor-to-floor heights similar to those in nearby historic buildings.

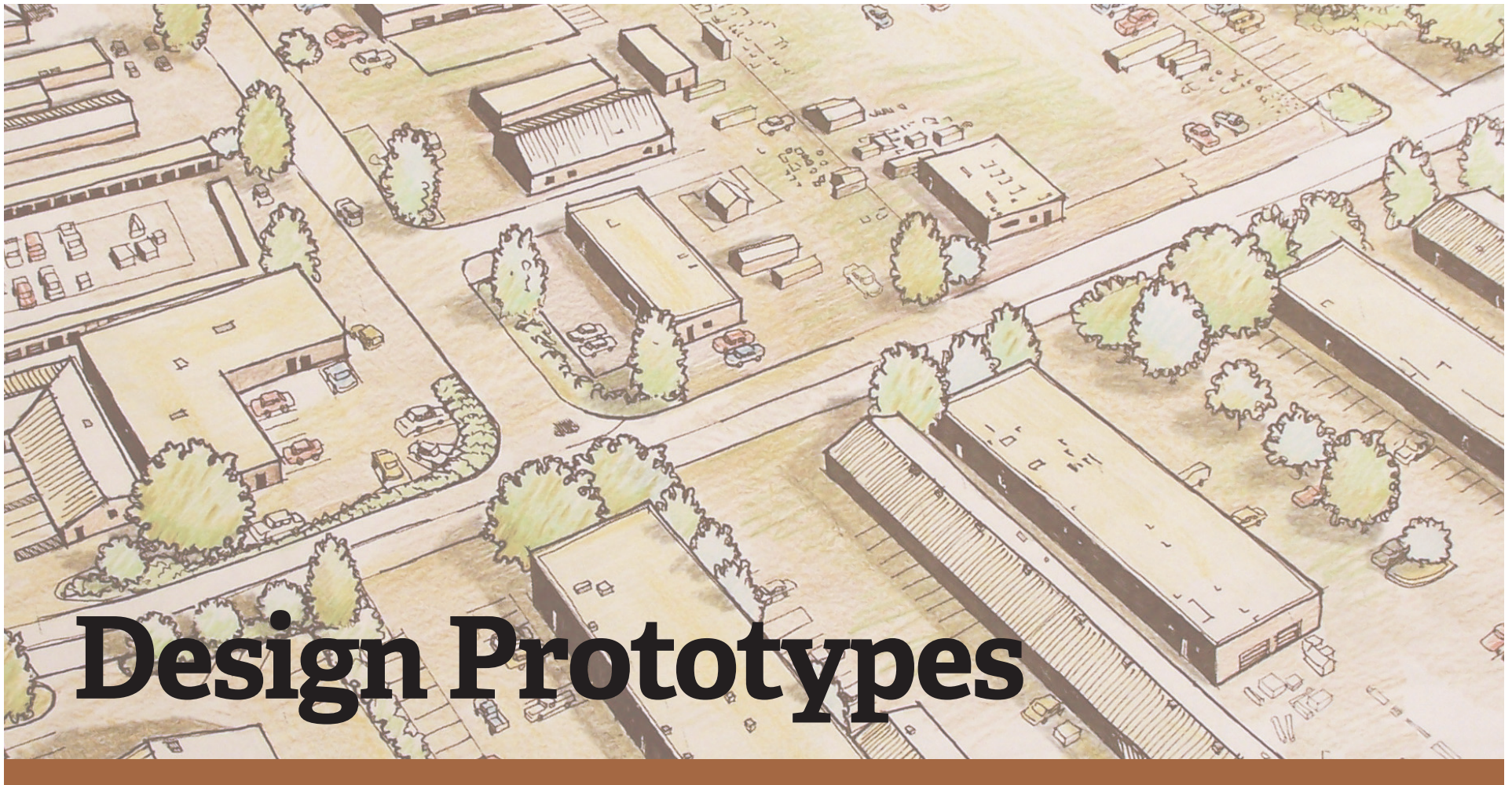


Retail stores and restaurants prefer high ground-floor ceilings.

The standard or guideline is applicable for:

H Horizontal mixed-use **V** Vertical mixed-use **L** Large-scale mixed-use

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Introduction

Design prototypes provide another layer of guidance for developing successful mixed-use projects. The standards in the previous chapter set the legally-required standards for mixed-use development in El Dorado County. If a project fails to conform to those standards, it will not be built. The guidelines, while not required for development approval, present the County's expectations for the design of mixed-use projects. Projects that follow the design guidelines will respect the historic character of El Dorado County's communities and build on the county's assets. The design prototypes take those standards and guidelines

and apply them to a range of potential mixed-use development scenarios. The scenarios represent distinct opportunities for mixed-use development at a variety of scales and locations within a community. The design prototypes primarily use graphics to show what the standards and guidelines look like applied to each scenario.



The aerial photo above is the example community. It is composed of a collage of other communities in the Sierra Foothills region. It was created for this guide to illustrate a range of developments that could occur for mixed use in El Dorado County's communities.

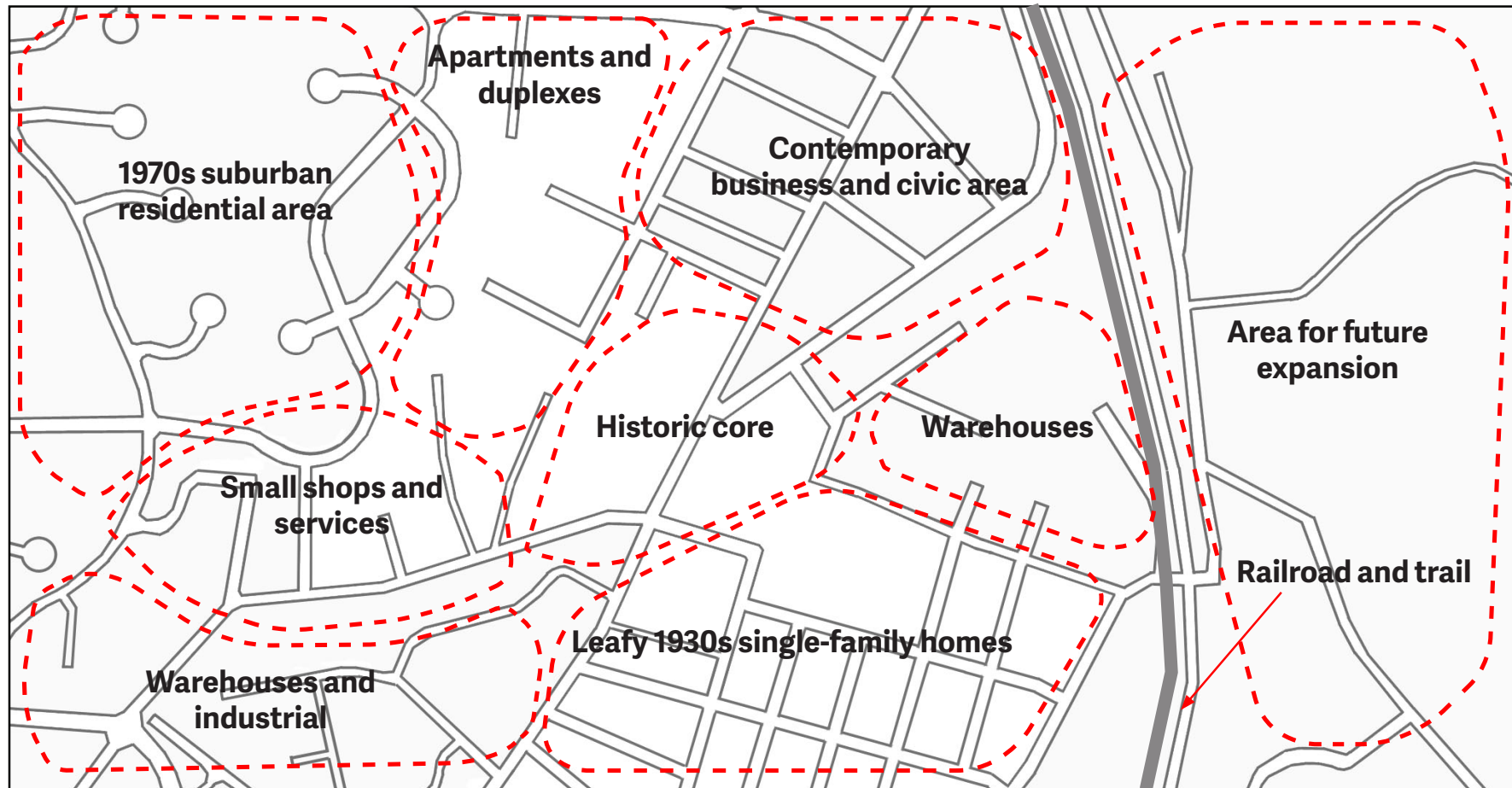
The Example Community

Successful mixed-use projects, more than other types of development, need to respond to the surrounding context. Many of the standards and guidelines in this manual refer to neighboring buildings and the local context. The design prototypes follow this context-sensitive approach.

In order to give each prototype context, the development of this guide included the creation of an example town. Each of the five prototypes exists in the same example community. This community is a composite that does not exist in the real world, but contains many of the characteristics found in El Dorado County's communities.

The example community was carefully designed to reflect the historic evolution of towns with gold rush roots. Just like El Dorado County's communities, the example community reflects an ad hoc development pattern influenced by many eras of history. The origins of the example community are in the stagecoach era, with its downtown at the intersection of two old roads. Later development incorporated a loose grid pattern common of community planning in the 1920s. The example community grew further in the prosperous post-war era from 1950 to 1970, and growth slowed after 1970.

The example community is designed to be familiar and representative of as many of the unique attributes of El Dorado County's communities as possible. At the same time, no part of the example community is drawn from El Dorado



Neighborhoods and districts within the example community.

County. This ensures that the example community is representative without prescribing mixed-use development on a real El Dorado County parcel.

The Setting

The example community is surrounded by rolling topography, but the community sits on relatively flat ground. The nearby habitat consists of native oak woodlands, savannah grasslands with scrub oaks, and riparian areas. Land outside the community is divided into undeveloped lots, large farm or ranch plots, paved parking lots without landscaping, and gravel and/or compacted soil storage yards and parking lots.

Lot Patterns

Within the community lots are based on several patterns and influences that include smaller, odd shaped lots (i.e., gridiron plat extensions), composite lots from historical mergers, modern master-planned lots, and railroad tract and section lots.

Buildings

The buildings in the example community have diverse characters and ages. All buildings are two stories or smaller. Recent buildings are suburban-style franchise character buildings: gas stations, fast food restaurants, and strip

shopping centers. Recent housing is suburban 1970/80s single-family homes in developer-planned cul-de-sac neighborhoods. Closer in to the community core, gridded, tree-covered streets are lined with pre-World War II single-family homes. The example community also includes a few apartment buildings and duplexes. Commercial and industrial buildings include aged warehouses and shops; aged retail, office, and professional buildings; service buildings including fire stations, banks, library, and gas stations; and several abandoned or underutilized buildings.

Transportation

Many of the roads in the example community are gravel and older asphalt local streets with intermittent sidewalks and limited drainage. In the newer suburban-style areas, streets have an isolated curb and gutter with concrete sidewalks. The pre-1900 historic parts of town have streets with intermittent wooden boardwalks and raised paved areas. The community is located at the junction of two rural routes that provide residents with access to a local expressway. A railroad line cuts through the community.

Using the Prototypes

El Dorado County residents live in their own unique communities and have experienced and created their own histories, stories, and culture. The mixed-use guidelines and standards have been specifically drafted to guide, encourage, and inform future community growth in real-world projects that when added together over time, will enrich neighborhoods and amplify quality growth for both the current and next generation of residents.

Each prototype includes a mixed-use development story that shares the background and process of the unique owners and their partners, their visions, development strategies, and the challenges to overcome and successfully build the projects. It provides a behind-the-scene insight to each step in developing a mixed-use project.

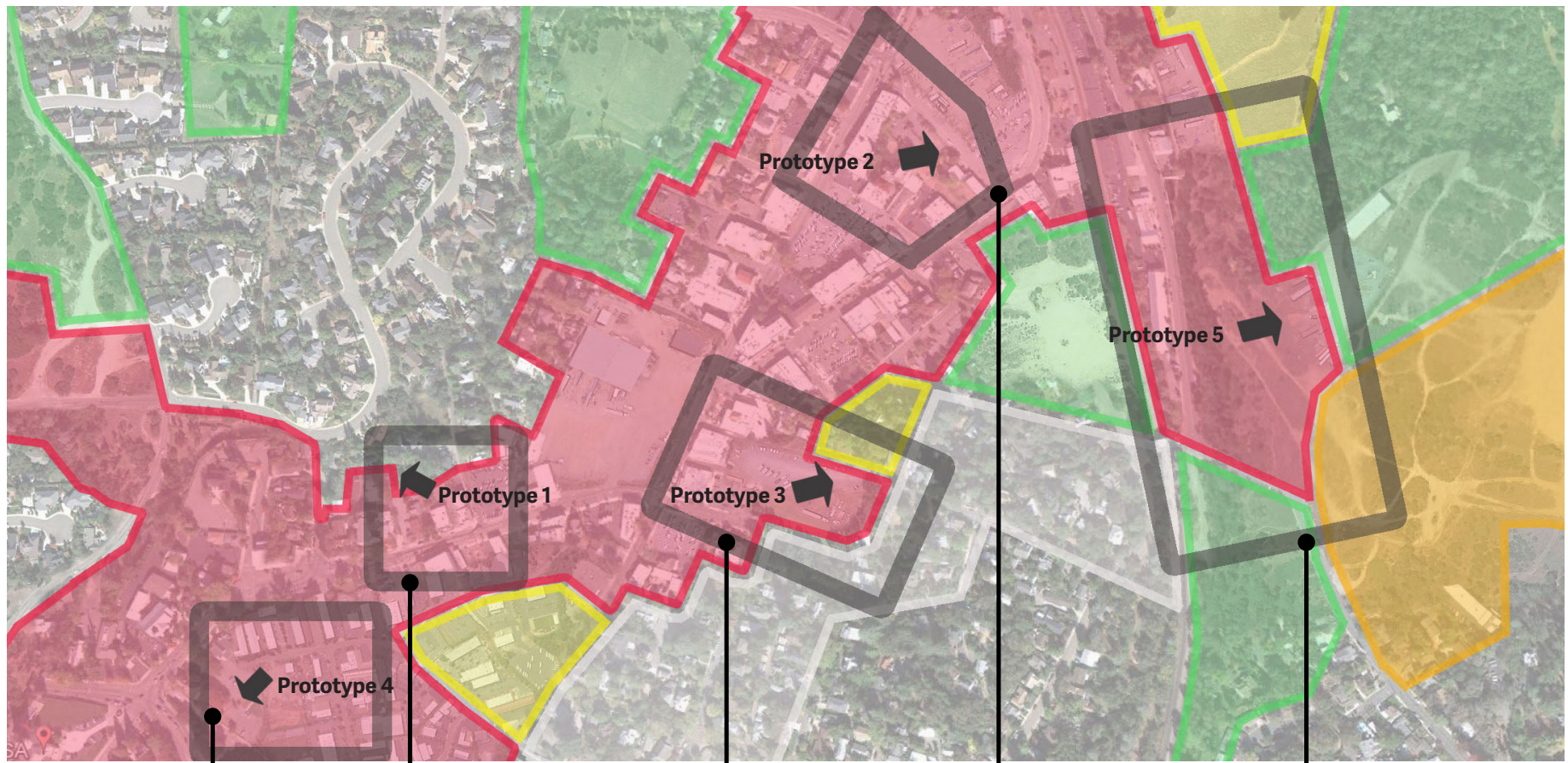
Key to a Successful Mixed-use Project

The path to a successful mixed-use project requires a creative and experienced team. Unlike single-use projects, mixed-use developments require that property owners, project developers, and project designers and architects be resourceful, inventive, and innovative. At the same time they must acknowledge and build upon the character and charm of the surrounding neighborhood and community. While the planning and design of mixed-use developments can be a challenge, equally difficult can be the complex project financing and ownership structures that come with multiple-uses. Finding willing lenders and amenable project partners is a critical element of any project before it can begin to take shape. Finally, due to the nature of mixed-use developments, the completed project can face challenges. Leasing the finished space or units to prospective tenants and residents requires creativity and savvy marketing. And, how the ongoing operational management of the project is carried out is critical to its long-term success.

Successful projects also rely on strong political and government agency partnership and support structures. Without a positive endorsement of a mixed-use development from the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and County officials and staff already, difficult projects can be made that much more challenging. County officials and representatives should provide constructive feedback and assistance to mixed-use developers to help navigate planning, design, entitlements, and permitting processes. Likewise, the County should be a partner in facilitating a dialogue with existing community members about the benefits and changes that come with mixed-use developments.

As described in the “development story” accompanying each prototype in these Guidelines, successfully carrying out each project requires unique skill sets, circumstances, and individuals. Most importantly, all the characters in these stories, from the property owners to project developer to public officials, maintained an open mind and a creative “can-do” attitude.

The Prototypes



Small-scale Phased Development. This prototype provides a mixed-use project example that requires assembling several smaller parcels into a small-scale development. The current pace of development in El Dorado County suggests that a project of this size would be phased.

Historic Main Street Infill. This prototype demonstrates how small vacant or underused parcels within a historic town can be developed to support the existing historic character of the community.

Cottage or Multi-family Addition. Many larger parcels in El Dorado County could support the addition of residential units. This prototype presents one way to add a residential building to an unused portion of a developed parcel.

Historic Main Street Conversion. This prototype demonstrates how mixed-use development could work on parcels that have an existing structure.

Large-scale Phased Development. This prototype provides a mixed-use project example for greenfield sites or projects that assemble larger or multiple parcels into one large site. This prototype would likely be phased.

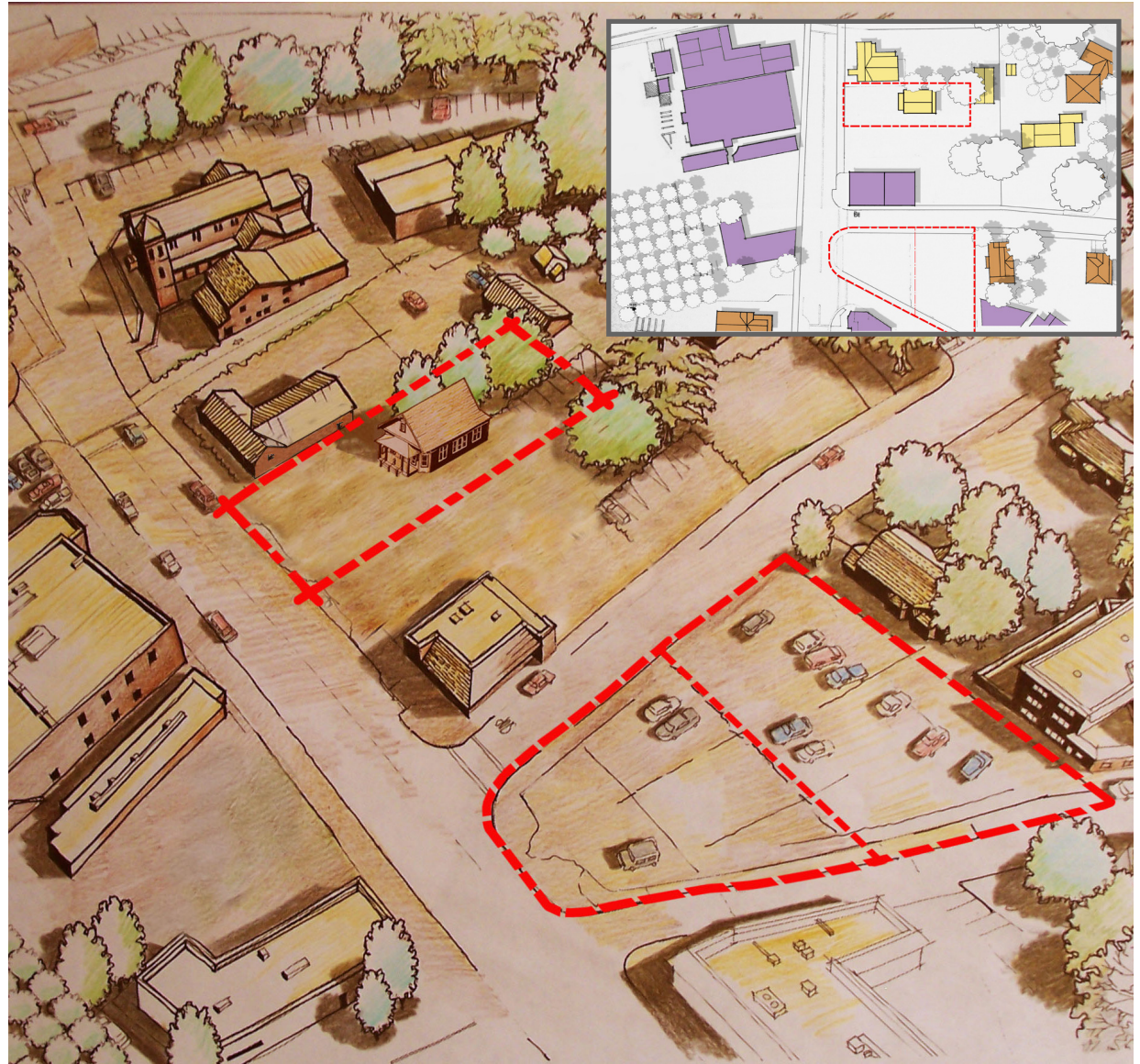
Historic Main Street Infill

Introduction

This prototype is located in downtown or main street areas of the example community and involves the development of an underutilized parcel containing an existing structure(s). The development includes an additional separate one- to two-story small structure(s) or accessory dwelling units (known as “granny flats” or “carriage houses”). This prototype includes on-site parking.

About the Neighborhood

This prototype illustrates mixed-use infill projects in the historic commercial center of the example community. This part of the community has a mixture of older historic buildings that date back to the late 1870s, including Victorian row houses now used for retail shops and some housing; converted to barn structures and sheds for retail and auto repairs; storefront buildings for small office and retail tenants; and several 1960/70s-era small commercial buildings for retailers, bars, and local restaurants. This area is located at the convergence of several streets and small blocks with parking lots, developed walkways, old-style sidewalks, boardwalks, and memorials of the town’s historic gold-rush era roots. This commercial neighborhood lacks architectural cohesion and distinction due the mix of building types and styles, incomplete infrastructure, and decades of limited private and public investment. Parking requirements of conventional zoning codes have further inhibited development. Yet, this neighborhood has potential due to the authentic charms of its remaining historic buildings and its rustic character.





Development Story

This prototype has two separate projects that together represent how the right projects can bring momentum back to a neighborhood and jump-start neighborhood transformation.

The first project includes one mid-block parcel with a small Victorian row house with a rear yard garden and picket fence. It was set back from the main street in the center of the narrow parcel with a reasonable amount of available land behind the structure. That land was inaccessible from the main street and of no functional use to the occupant of the house. The existing structure had been a rental home or shop for over 30 years and showed decades of neglect. It also endured several destructive additions with no regard to its Victorian heritage. The house was purchased by a small builder from the area as an investment.

The other project is located at the end of the block down the street on a high-visibility vacant corner lot. This parcel was owned by an out-of-state family trust that had inherited it 20 years ago. Neglected and left unused, the parcel was used by roadside marketers as a parking lot and occasionally as a staging area for local community events. Periodic efforts to sell the parcel had failed for years. The parcel was finally sold to a local realtor that had a vision to transform the neighborhood and build a building for his office and a place for a coffee shop and few upstairs apartments or additional offices.

The builder of the first project had not contemplated the full opportunity of his Victorian

house when the realtor from the corner lot approached him and asked for his input on the development of the corner parcel. The result was a vision to use both of their projects to significantly transform the neighborhood and inspire other building owners from their success.

The Victorian row house was a historic resource and required that all appropriate renovations be approved by the local historical board. The resulting plan raised and moved the house forward on the lot, and then renovated and restored it to an appropriate standard. The rear of the lot was developed as a two-story building with a lower floor for retail or a restaurant and the second floor for residential ownership flats. The site area between the front and rear buildings was landscaped as an intimate dining patio with water features and planter boxes.

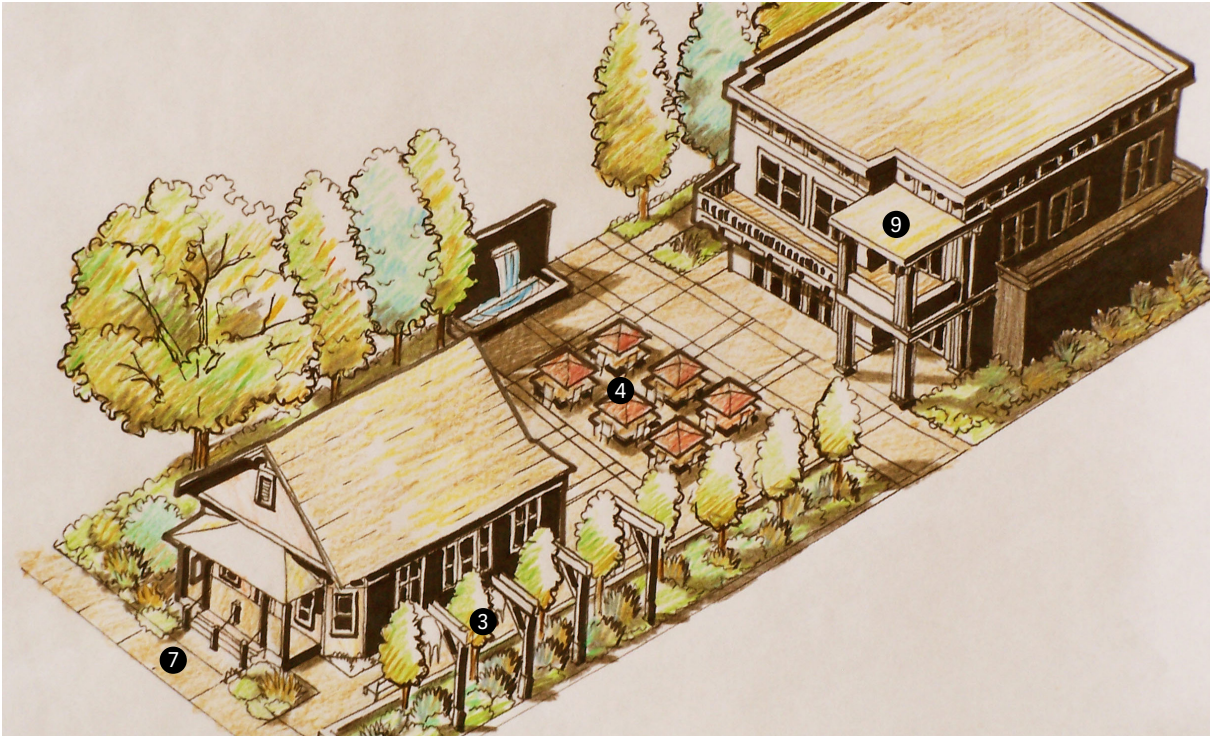
The mixed-use code allowed the builder of the corner lot to develop the site with an 0.85 floor-to-area ratio without any on-site parking requirements if off-site parking was available nearby. The corner lot was developed as a stepped two-story building with tower feature, balconies, and a landscaped street-corner outdoor café patio sitting area. The building's design was developed to bridge the basic styles, materials, and details found on the older historic buildings as well as some of the materials of the 1960/70s neighborhood buildings. Both the realtor's and builder's parcels were connected with a cross block rear access corridor of a landscaped path that crossed the two adjacent parcels to spur the creation of the first phase of a future pedestrian mid-block passage. The adjacent building owners were supportive of the walkway corridor on their parcels when County Planning officials outlined the benefits of the mixed-use zoning possibilities on their own parcels. The new cross-block corridor terminates at this building and provides access to a new landscaped and modern parking area for the use of both the Victorian and new corner lot users. The parking lot has extra spaces that are rented to local business owners nearby that help to provide more on-street spaces in the area for their customers.

Ownership Structure

Individual ownerships, common project builder, historic grant funding, bank lender funding. County Planning Department negotiated reciprocal parking agreements and cross-block pedestrian access corridor coordination.

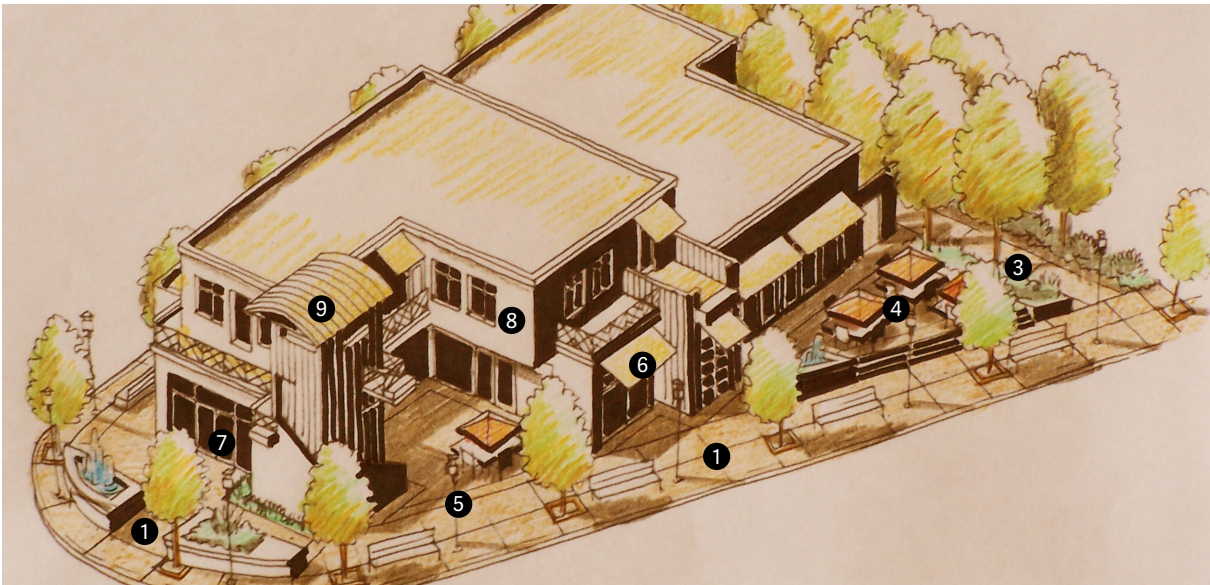
Key Standards and Guidelines

1. **Setbacks:** Where a front setback is necessary, hardscape and landscape the area to accommodate uses that keep the public realm active, such as outdoor dining or seating.
2. **Parking:** On-street parking spaces located within 400 feet of the project may be credited to meet up to 50 percent of the minimum required off-street parking spaces. On-street parking allowed by this provision shall not be counted toward the maximum amount of parking allowed.
3. **Mobility and Access:** Mixed-use developments shall provide pedestrian access by connecting internal pedestrian circulation to any sidewalks or walkways on adjacent properties or in the public right-of-way. Locate these access points to make building entryways directly visible from the public right-of-way.
4. **Site Amenities:** Design patios, plazas, mini-parks, squares, and greens to be a proportional size to the project.
5. **Lighting:** Use light fixtures along streets that contribute to a coordinated, attractive streetscape that works well with street trees, curb cuts, signage, street furniture, and other site amenities.
6. **Windows:** To meet energy standards, specify the use of projecting covers, awnings, or other similar devices or building features, not mirrored, reflective, or tinted glass.
7. **Entrances:** Provide a commercial entrance along the facade that is parallel to the primary street. When located on the corner of a block, mixed-use buildings shall either locate the main entry at the corresponding corner of the structure or provide an entrance that faces each street.
8. **Facades:** On corner lots, wrap facade elements around the building.
9. **Facades:** Use horizontal elements such as porches, balconies, and coursing to break up the vertical mass of the facade wall.



Mid-block Project Summary

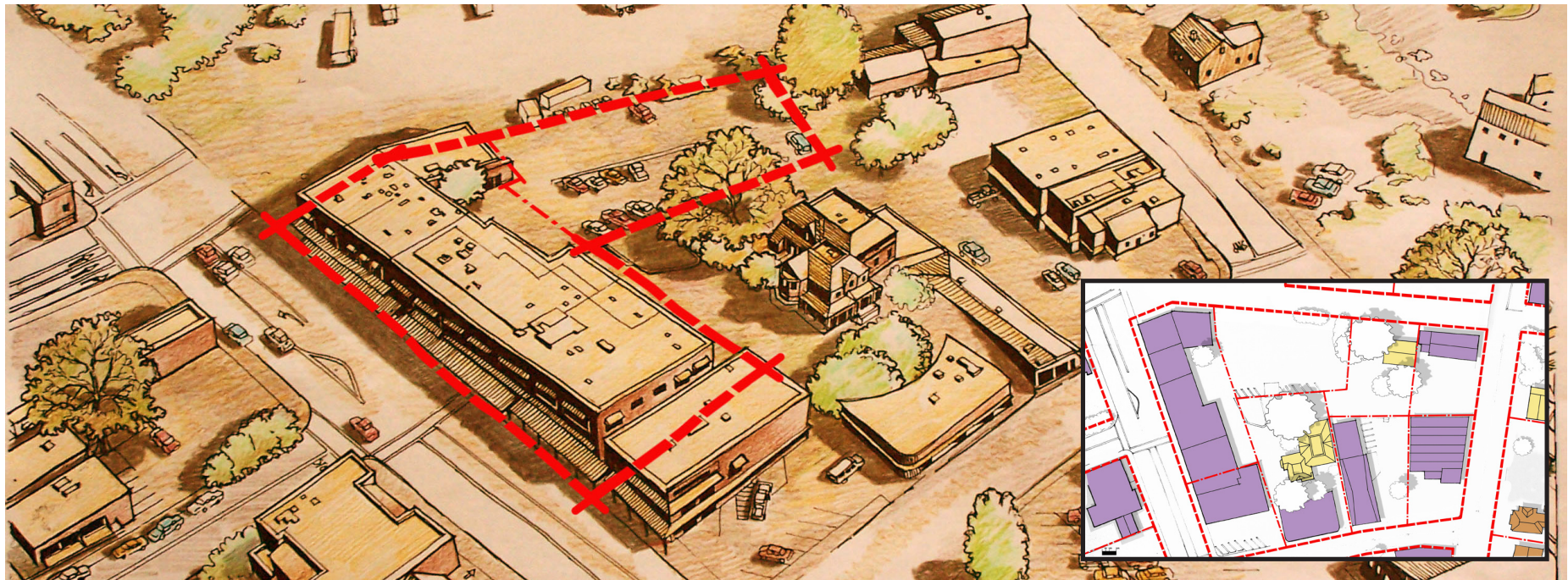
- Renovated, historically remodeled, and relocated an existing 1870s Victorian house as open interior structure suitable for a commercial rental function.
- Newly constructed two-story “Victorian-complementary” designed rear zero lot line retail/condo building and courtyard landscape.
- Constructed a mid-block pedestrian corridor linking parcels to an off-site parking lot and public roads.
- Upgraded existing streets with new curbs, sidewalks, lighting, and on-street parking spaces.



Corner Lot Project Summary

- Removed old parking lot and replaced with upgraded and landscaped lot.
- Constructed a mid-block pedestrian corridor linking parking lot to other parcels in neighborhood.
- Upgraded existing street corner with new curbs, sidewalks, lighting and on-street parking spaces.
- Constructed two-story café/office and apartment building with outdoor landscaped patios.

Historic Main Street Conversion

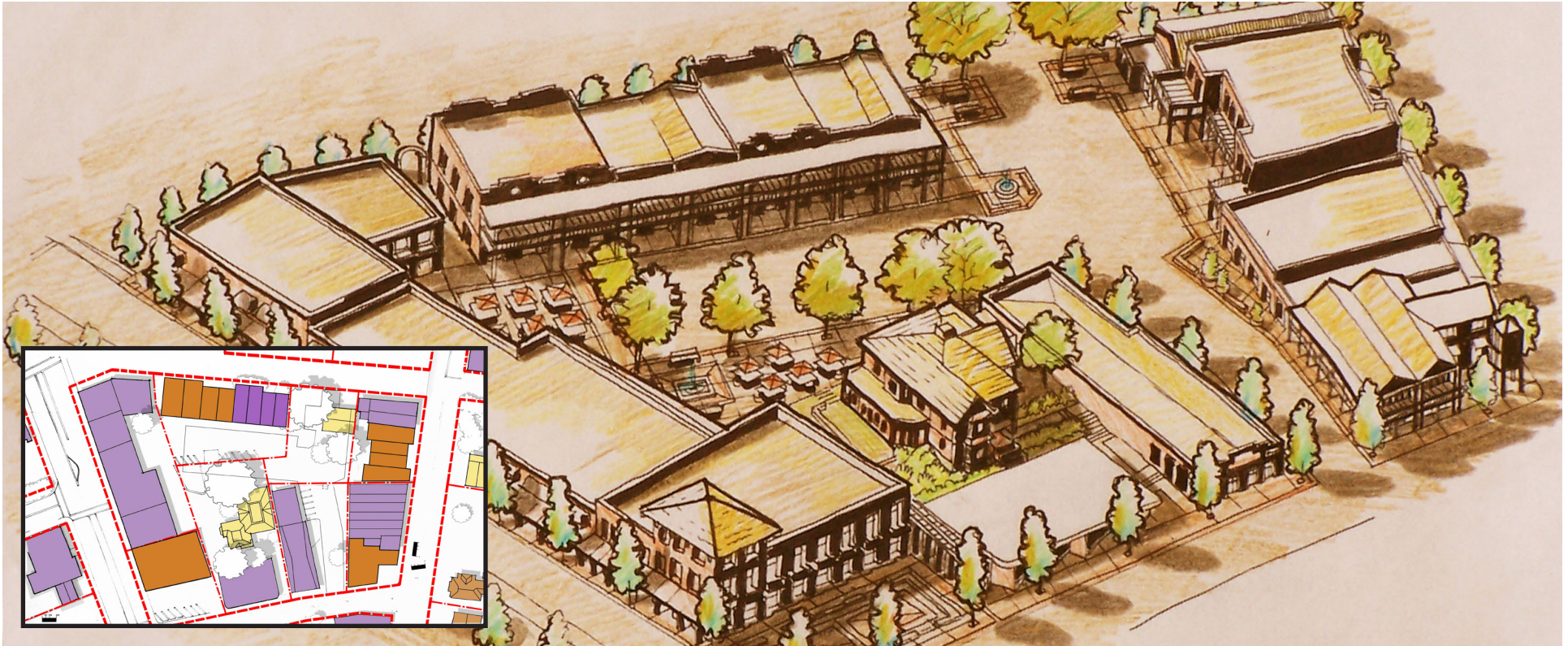


Introduction

This prototype applies to areas typically located near downtown or main street areas and involves the conversion of existing structure(s) to accommodate both residential and commercial uses in a vertical mixed-use format. This prototype includes on-site parking.

About the Neighborhood

This neighborhood is located in a newer area of the example community; most buildings were built from 1950 to 1990. This part of the community is unique as the main commercial street splits into two commercial blocks of buildings used for retail shops, civic structures, fire station/post office, banks and small offices. Unique to this area are small storefront parcels, second story older apartments, alleys with parking lots, and several vacant parcels that offer opportunities for development. Several fragments of older buildings exist alongside repurposed 1980s spare and basic buildings that create an ad-hoc neighborhood without the charm of the historic buildings. Yet, this neighborhood is home to a thriving and active business establishment. Parking is fiercely guarded by each business for their parcel's tenants and customers.



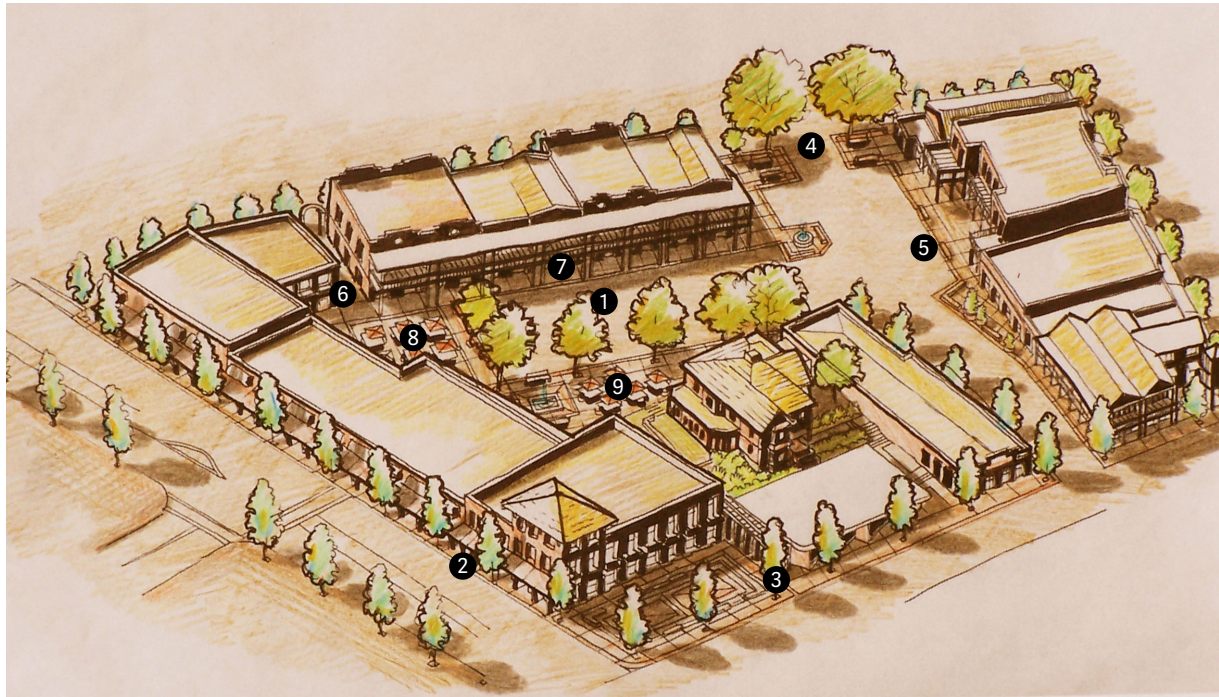
Development Story

A large commercial block in this area was organized into a single master-planned vision by majority of the block's parcel owners. They were seeking a cohesive way to transform the entire block into new uses that would appeal to new users and tenants that could afford higher market-rate rents. The 2008 recession stalled the owner group's original well-intentioned planning efforts and plans were revised to include the housing opportunities of the mixed-use zone for at least 65 percent of the block. New "town-square" apartments were constructed from converted office spaces of two of the larger buildings. Due to fire codes and other contemporary building codes, the buildings were retrofitted into two-story apartments with required separations from retail or office uses in the adjacent buildings. New infill, "active retirement" apartments

are planned in the same block for active retired suburban couples that seek an authentic small-town foothill lifestyle in close proximity to services such as cafes, retail, and health care, as well as the County's outdoor recreational options. The owners converted the undeveloped land area of the block's center into parking and landscaping, and they have included "perforated" pedestrian connections to all sides of the exterior neighborhood via patios, courtyards, and gardens paths. The apartment buildings are also planned for a potential hotel use if the apartment use does not succeed in the market.

Ownership Structure

Five majority owners and 11 smaller Individual ownerships, common project builder, historic grant funding, bank lender funding. County Planning Department funding partnerships for the construction of street and utility upgrades and improvements.

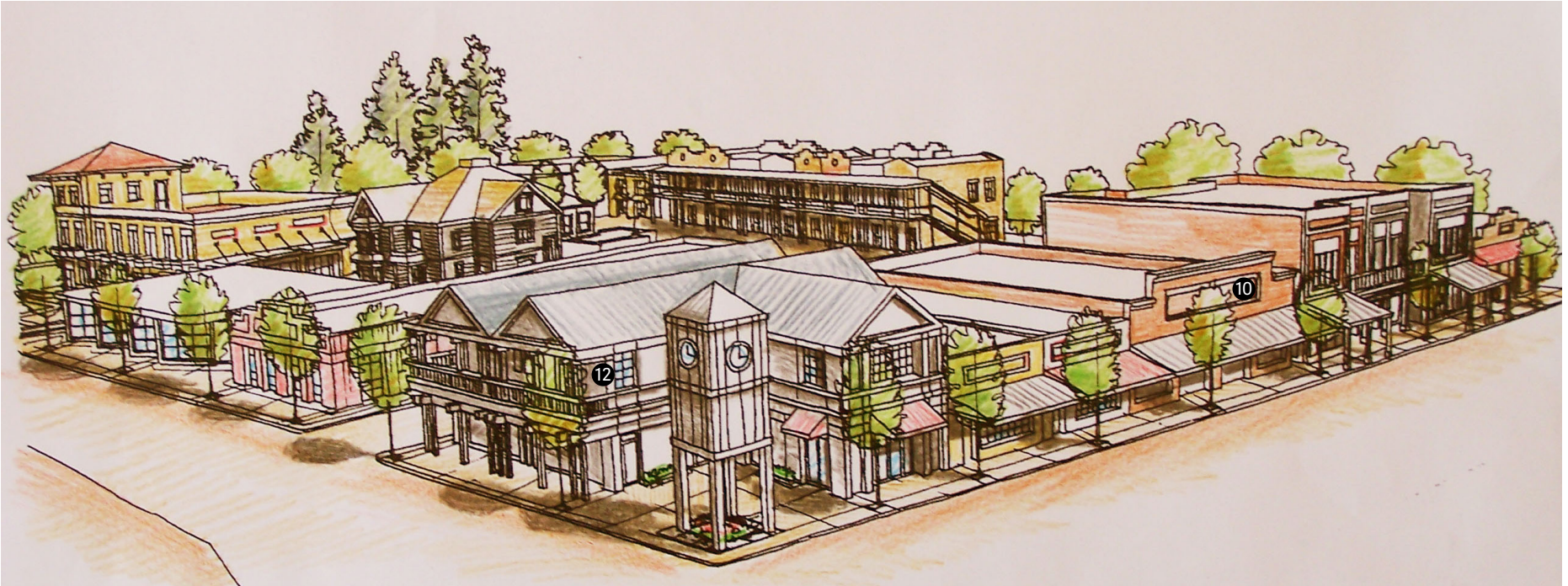


Project Summary

- Reconstructed the core block exterior area for parking, landscaping, and full block connections.
- Converted two large two-story office buildings into mid-market rate apartments or hotel units.
- Upgraded existing streets with new curbs, sidewalks, lighting, and on-street parking spaces.
- Constructed one two-story apartment building with outdoor landscaped patios.
- Upgraded the exterior facades (windows, siding, details, and signage) of all sides of block perimeter.

Key Standards and Guidelines

1. **Lot Dimensions and Coverage.** Locate parking lots behind buildings, where possible, and to the side of buildings when a rear parking lot is not feasible.
2. **Setbacks:** Place buildings at the front of lots and leave room at the back of the lot for parking and other site amenities.
3. **Landscaping:** Design site landscape treatments to be attractive, with a consistent design throughout the project.
4. **Parking Lot Design:** Design parking access points to minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic. Shared drives are encouraged and curb cuts should be located away from intersections.
5. **Parking:** The use of shared parking may be allowed when the project is under the control of a single owner/developer; contains commercial, retail, office, institutional, or public uses with staggered peak parking demands; and the site is arranged so all uses can share a parking lot.
6. **Mobility and Access:** Mixed-use developments longer than 300 feet shall provide a mid-block pedestrian pass-through. Design the pass-through to be safe and visually interesting. Pedestrian pass-throughs shall not be enclosed or locked. Alleys and service areas shall not be considered pedestrian pass-throughs, although alleys may be designed with pedestrian walkways.
7. **Mobility and Access:** Design buildings to include arcades in areas where they are common. If a new mixed-use building is adjacent to a building with an arcade, design the building to continue the adjacent arcade.
8. **Site Amenities:** Ensure site amenities are visible and easily recognizable as an area that encourages outdoor assembly. Site amenities may be framed by a view corridor, be placed on a high point, or be visually related to a multi-use trail or other walkway.
9. **Site Amenities:** Design patios, plazas, mini-parks, squares, and greens to



be a proportional size to the project.

10. **Signage:** Integrate signs carefully within the site, landscape, and architectural design context. Make size, shape, and proportions of the signs compatible with the size and scale of the surroundings, and do not obscure other design features of the site.
11. **Windows:** Mixed-use buildings shall be designed with windows comprising 60 percent of the street-facing building facade between two feet and eight feet in height.
12. **Windows:** Design upper story windows to complement the historic character of the communities (e.g., use smaller windows and divided lites).



PROTOTYPE 3

Cottage or Multi-family Addition

Introduction

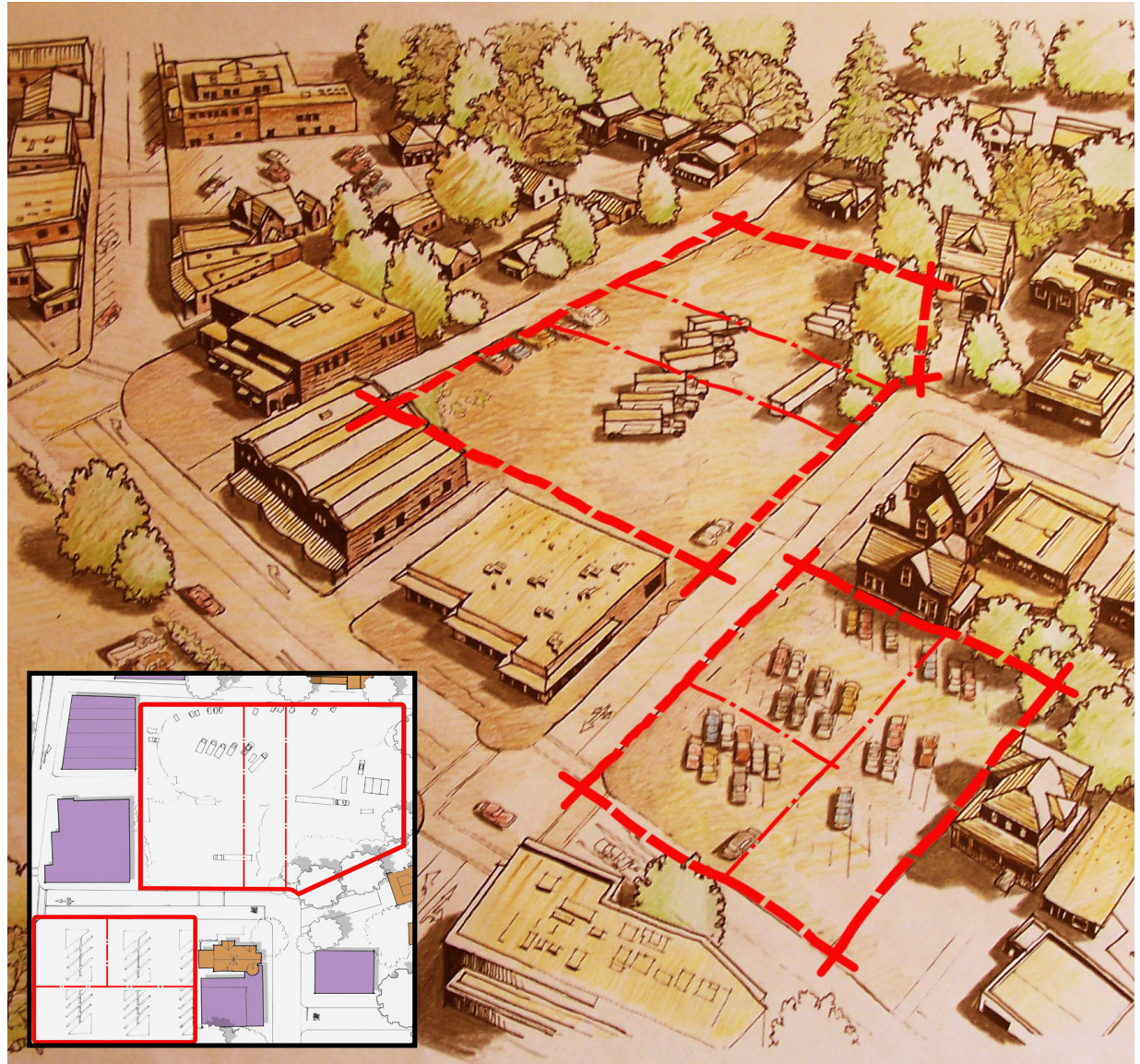
This prototype applies to a village, downtown, or main street area and includes the development of small groupings (4 to 12) of attached or detached residential structures (700 to 1,200 square feet), fronted by a commercial use or a horizontal mixed-use structure. This prototype includes reciprocal and/or flex parking, either on- or off-site.

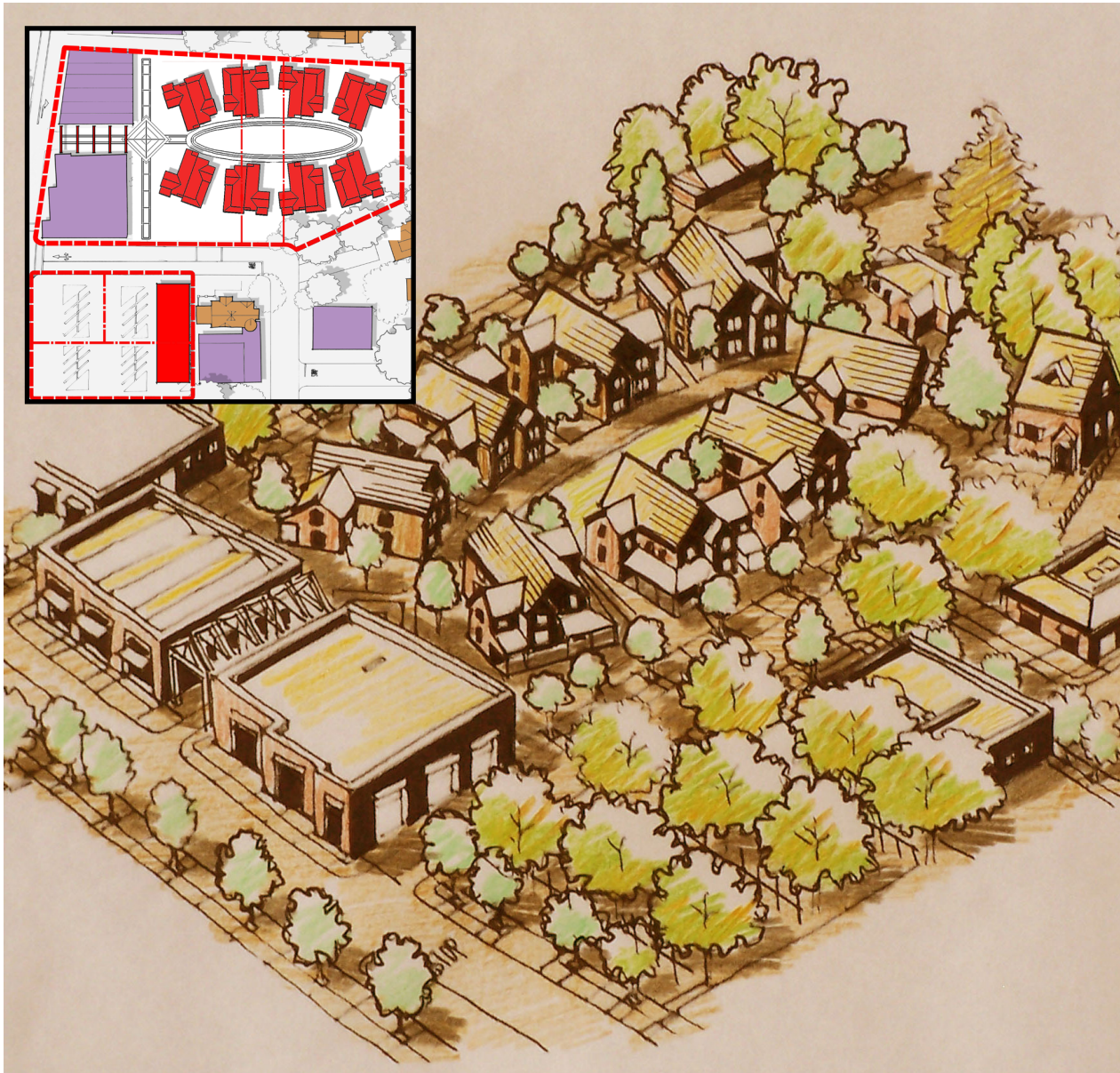
About the Neighborhood

This neighborhood is on a small commercial street that is directly adjacent to a well-tended, leafy, 1930s neighborhood of small single family bungalows and front yard homes. A popular neighborhood, the area supports a range of family types. This residential area has direct walkable linkages to a commercial street with a range of smaller buildings. The commercial street has a variety of empty or underutilized land plots that effectively have constrained development for decades due to their odd shapes, sizes, or locations. Parking requirements of conventional zoning codes have further inhibited development.

Development Story

Two local land owners came together with a vision for the development of their adjacent underutilized land. One was the owner of a long established small business on the commercial street who owns two buildings side-by-side and one vacant parcel of land





in back that is rented for a truck storage yard and a parking place for his customers and staff. The other owner was a small local developer that purchased two vacant parcels adjacent to the building owner's truck storage rental yard and three small vacant lots on the main commercial street next to his partner's two small commercial buildings. The combined three parcels are paved over by a poorly maintained parking lot that is day-rented and used for hourly parking by several businesses in the neighborhood.

The developer and the business owner partnered to assemble the various parcels into one holding, build eight small village homes and a common central landscaped park, and redevelop the two commercial buildings into multi-tenant office and retail rental spaces. The business owner moved his shop into a more efficient space within one of the renovated buildings. The cottages and commercial buildings share pedestrian connections to the commercial street and to the older residential leafy neighborhood. The mixed-use code allowed the parking for the cottage homes and the commercial buildings to share a newly upgraded and landscaped parking lot in the place of the older rented parking lot. The back of the parking lot has garages for eight cars, one for each cottage unit. On-street parallel parking was added to the inventory of public parking spaces along the newly upgraded local streets on each side of the cottage development. Sidewalks, street lights, and crosswalks were also added.

Ownership Structure

Limited partnership that combined each owner's land and building equity, conventional bank and SBA 504 funding for commercial building renovations.



Project Summary

- Renovated and remodeled two existing 1940s commercial buildings and a landscaped forecourt.
- Removed old parking lot and replaced with upgraded and landscaped lot and eight-car garage structure.
- Upgraded existing streets with new curbs, sidewalks, lighting, and on-street parking spaces.
- Constructed eight cottage homes, common landscaped core and connection pathways.

Key Standards and Guidelines

1. **Lot Dimensions and Coverage:** Locate parking lots behind buildings, where possible, and to the side of buildings when a rear parking lot is not feasible.
2. **Setbacks:** Design buildings with commercial uses at the back edge of the public sidewalk in a "zero lot line" configuration, except as necessary to allow room for outdoor seating and service areas, outdoor sales and displays, landscaping, emphasized entryways integral to the building design, and similar pedestrian and customer amenities. If the historic context includes large setbacks, or if the site is constrained, a different setback may be considered.
3. **Setbacks:** For residential structures use the area between the property line and the front of the building to provide space for privacy, landscaping, private courtyards/open areas, emphasized entryways integral to the building design, and similar residential amenities.
4. **Parking Lot Design:** Provide parking lot trees as follows: at least 1 tree for every 8 parking spaces in lots with 48 spaces or fewer; and at least 1 tree for every 10 spaces for parking lots with 49 spaces or more.
5. **Parking Lot Design:** Distribute trees evenly throughout the parking lot to create a canopy effect in the parking lot and locate trees to divide and break up expanses of paving and long rows of parking spaces.
6. **Parking:** On-street parking spaces located within 400 feet of the project



may be credited to meet up to 50 percent of the minimum required off-street parking spaces. On-street parking allowed by this provision shall not be counted toward the maximum amount of parking allowed.

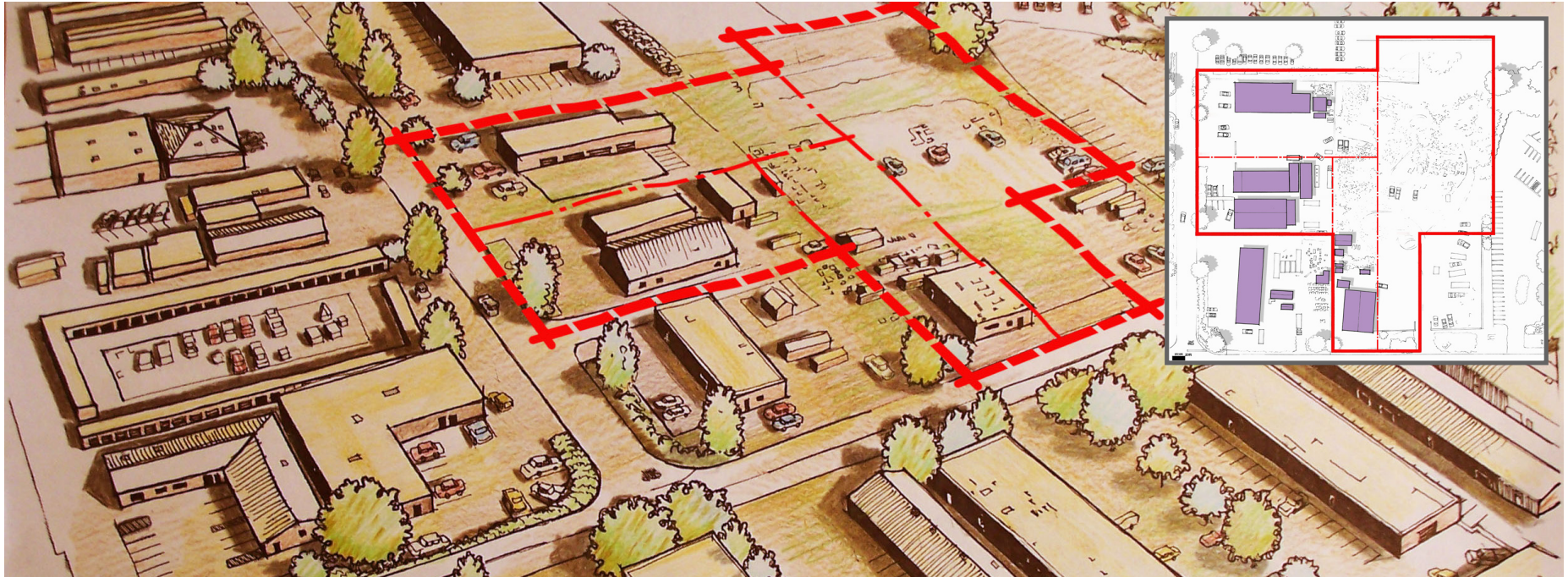
7. **Signage:** Design signs to create and enhance a rich pedestrian and interpretive experience. Design signs to de-emphasize the importance of the automobile.
8. **Signage:** Locate signage at the primary entrances of buildings and parking lots.
9. **Lighting:** Lighting of commercial uses adjacent to or within the immediate vicinity of residential uses shall be designed with fixtures and poles that illuminate commercial uses while eliminating light spillover into residential areas.

10. **Noise and Odor:** Locate trash receptacles far from residential uses to minimize the nuisance of refuse odor to residents.

11. **Windows:** To meet energy standards, specify the use of projecting covers, awnings, or other similar devices or building features, not mirrored, reflective, or tinted glass.

12. **Entrances:** Make the primary public entry to the building visually obvious through the use of architectural treatments such as differing colors or materials, arches or arcades, covered walks, arbors, signs, or protecting canopies.

Small-scale Phased Development



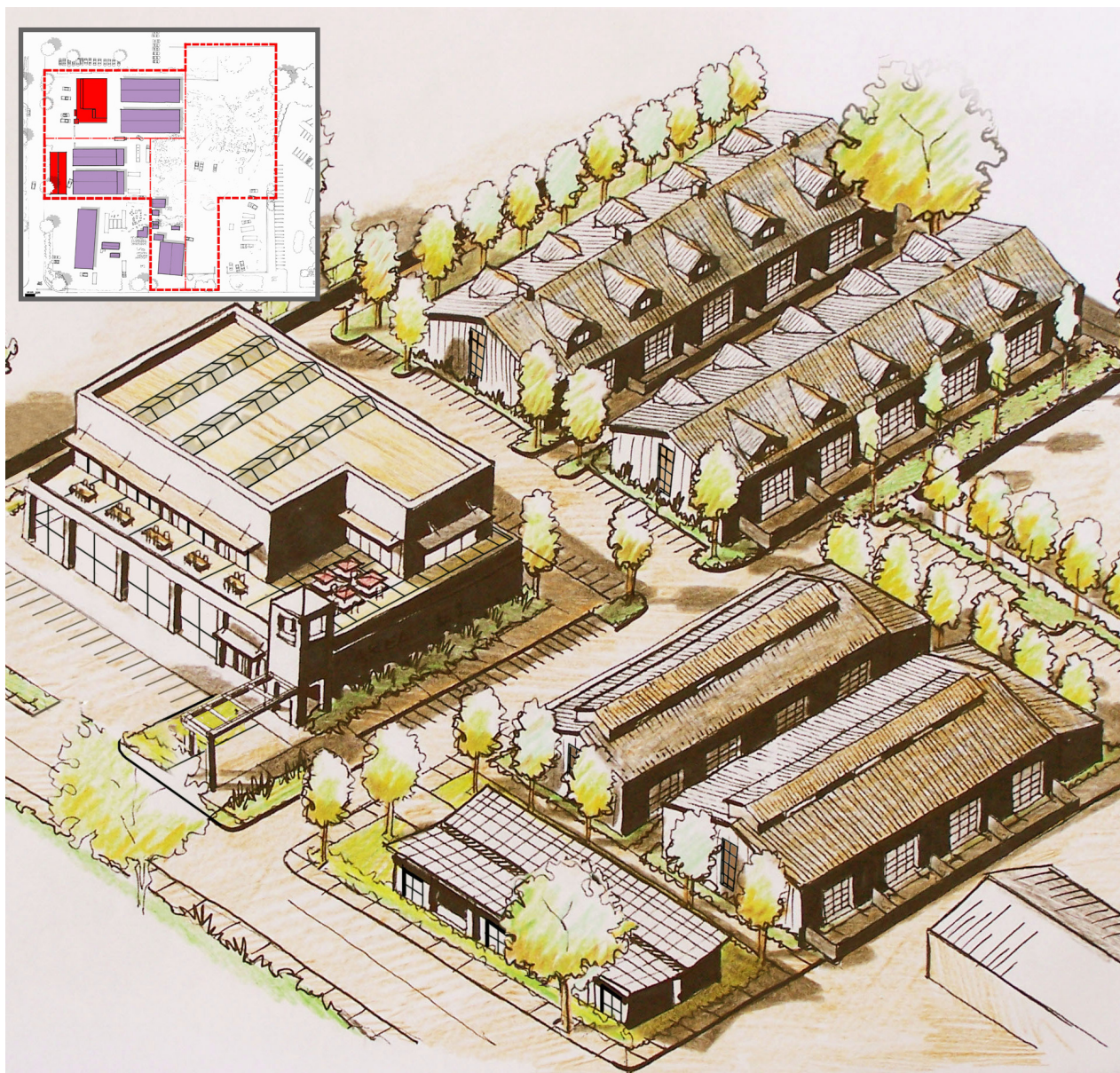
Introduction

This prototype applies to largely developed areas and involves the development of a vacant parcel in a vertical mixed-use configuration. The parcel would be developed in phases in order to reflect realities of real estate economics in the region. This prototype includes a mix of one- to three- story structures and include on-site or on-street parking.

About the Neighborhood

This neighborhood is the workhorse for the town – a place of 1940s to 1960s metal shop buildings, abandoned industrial forestry and milling operations,

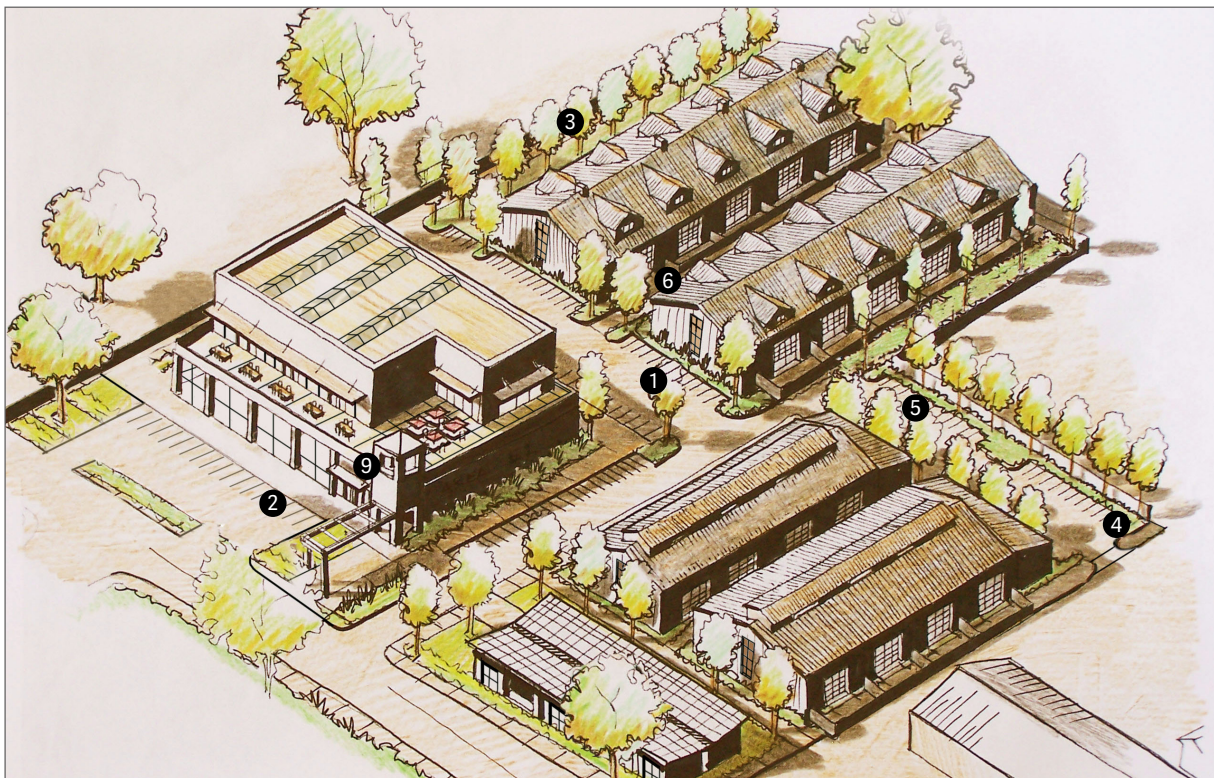
utilitarian warehouses, large underutilized gravel paved storage yards, and more recent concrete “tilt-up” type industrial buildings. The neighborhood, while being business-oriented, has become a favorite shop space for local craftspersons, artists, and specialty food makers, such as a small brewery/distillery, and a backstage home for a few wine makers that source grapes from foothill vineyards. Increasingly, many of these shop owners have renovated the interiors of warehouses into alternative lifestyle loft-style apartments with coffee bars, bike racks, and even a rock-climbing fitness center – all behind roll-up industrial metal doors. The district topography is flat, largely undeveloped, and benefits from its edge-of-town proximity to regional roads and linkages to a freeway several miles away. Overlooked for decades, the district is in an ideal location with close proximity to the primary small commercial street and the popular leafy neighborhood of small well-tended homes.



Development Story

The long-time owner of several warehouses and parcels retired after scaling down his 40-year catalog contract furniture-making operation. He had begun to market his five warehouses as rentals when he was contacted by a Bay Area craft beer brewer that was planning to relocate his operation and staff to a less-expensive and scenic Sierra foothills community. The brewery owner was familiar with several renovated warehouse projects in the Bay Area that were transformed into innovative “industrial-artist” loft apartments and homes. After discussions the warehouse owner decided to invest his equity as a full owner of the parcels and buildings into the beer-making operation. Together, they planned a transformation of the entire site into a newly formed district named after the signature beer, “Route 49.”

The mixed-use standards allowed the entire 12.5 acre multiple-parcel site to be constructed in phases as long as some housing was included as a part of the initial phase. Phase one cleared and cleaned the existing warehouses, added underground utilities, and constructed the large metal-sided brewery building with its tasting roof deck. Phase two transformed the adjacent front two warehouses into eight mezzanine-filled apartments with outdoor patios and landscaping. Phase three transformed the rear large warehouses into twenty “live-work” loft apartments with landscaping, additional parking lots, and site landscaping. Phase four constructed a new showcase building for three small craft food makers that relocated to produce and market their hand-made products in the building and on a large rear



Project Summary

- Renovated and remodeled four large metal warehouse buildings into multi-unit apartment buildings with outdoor landscaped patios.
- Upgraded existing 12.5 acre site with new utilities, parking and landscaping.
- Constructed one two-story industrial metal brewery building, offices, sandwich bar, tasting exterior deck.
- Constructed one single story industrial metal building for retail and specialty food production.

plaza and seating area. The brewmaster lives in an apartment in one of the warehouse buildings and the retired warehouse owner ended up crafting all of the project's cabinets and specialty items; he also brought in several local area tradespeople to weld custom windows, doors, and the other elements used in the warehouse-to-loft housing transformations. The project has sparked new energy to the neighborhood and several other warehouse owners are planning similar transformative projects that appeal to the community's young population and new transplants that have moved to the area from outside the county.

Ownership Structure

Limited partnership that combined each owner's land and building equity, conventional bank and SBA 504 funding for commercial building renovations. Owner cash investments.

Key Standards and Guidelines

1. **Lot Dimensions and Coverage.** Locate parking lots behind buildings, where possible, and to the side of buildings when a rear parking lot is not feasible.
2. **Setbacks:** Where a front setback is necessary, hardscape and landscape the area to accommodate uses that keep the public realm active, such as outdoor dining or seating.
3. **Setbacks:** For residential structures use the area between the property line and the front of the building to provide space for privacy, landscaping, private courtyards/open areas, emphasized entryways integral to the building design, and similar residential amenities. Landscaping: Emphasize building entrances with special architectural and landscape treatments.
4. **Parking Lot Design:** Design for continuous circulation within a parking lot

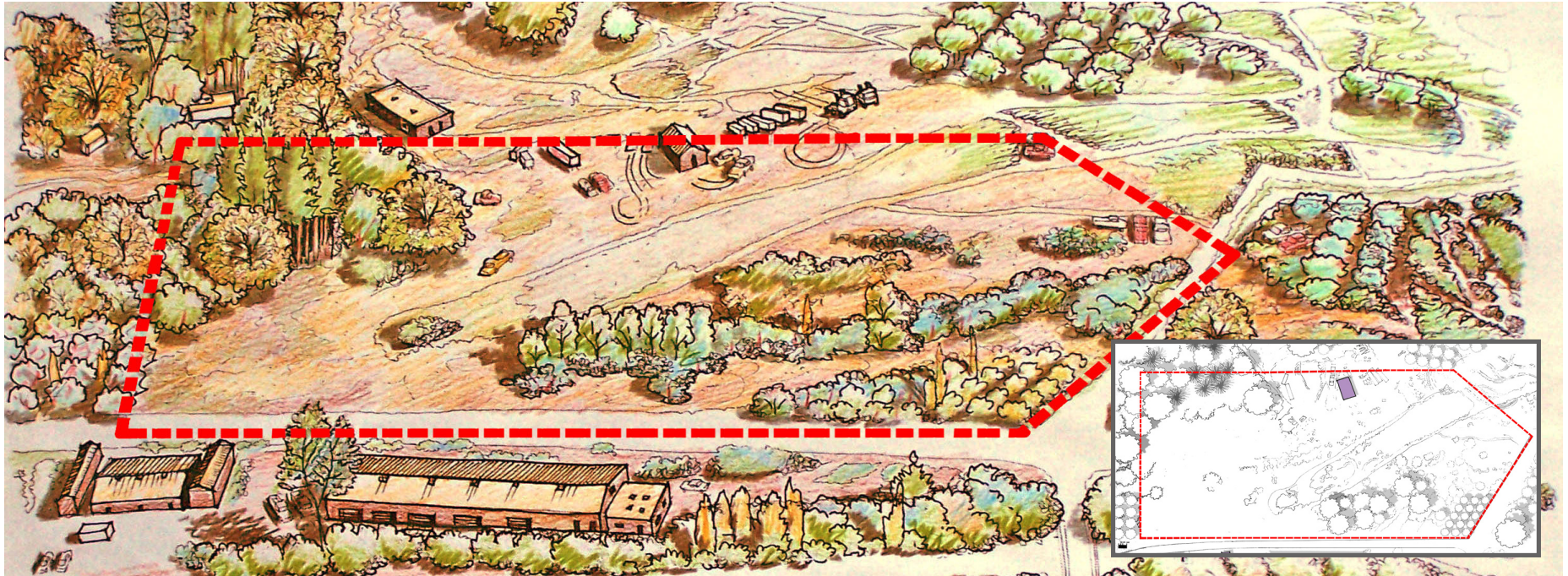


that requires drivers to back out when no spaces are available.

5. **Parking Lot Design:** Distribute trees evenly throughout the parking lot to create a canopy effect in the parking lot and locate trees to divide and break up expanses of paving and long rows of parking spaces.
6. **Mobility and Access:** Mixed-use developments shall provide pedestrian access by connecting internal pedestrian circulation to any sidewalks or walkways on adjacent properties or in the public right-of-way. Locate these access points to make building entryways directly visible from the public right-of-way.
7. **Windows:** Mixed-use buildings shall be designed with ground floor windows so their bottom edge is located no more than three feet above the adjacent sidewalk.

8. **Entrances:** Provide a commercial entrance along the facade that is parallel to the primary street. When located on the corner of a block, mixed-use buildings shall either locate the main entry at the corresponding corner of the structure or provide an entrance that faces each street.
9. **Entrances:** Make the primary public entry to the building visually obvious through the use of architectural treatments such as differing colors or materials, arches or arcades, covered walks, arbors, signs, or protecting canopies.
10. **Facades:** Use horizontal elements such as porches, balconies, and coursing to break up the vertical mass of the facade wall.

Large-scale Phased Development

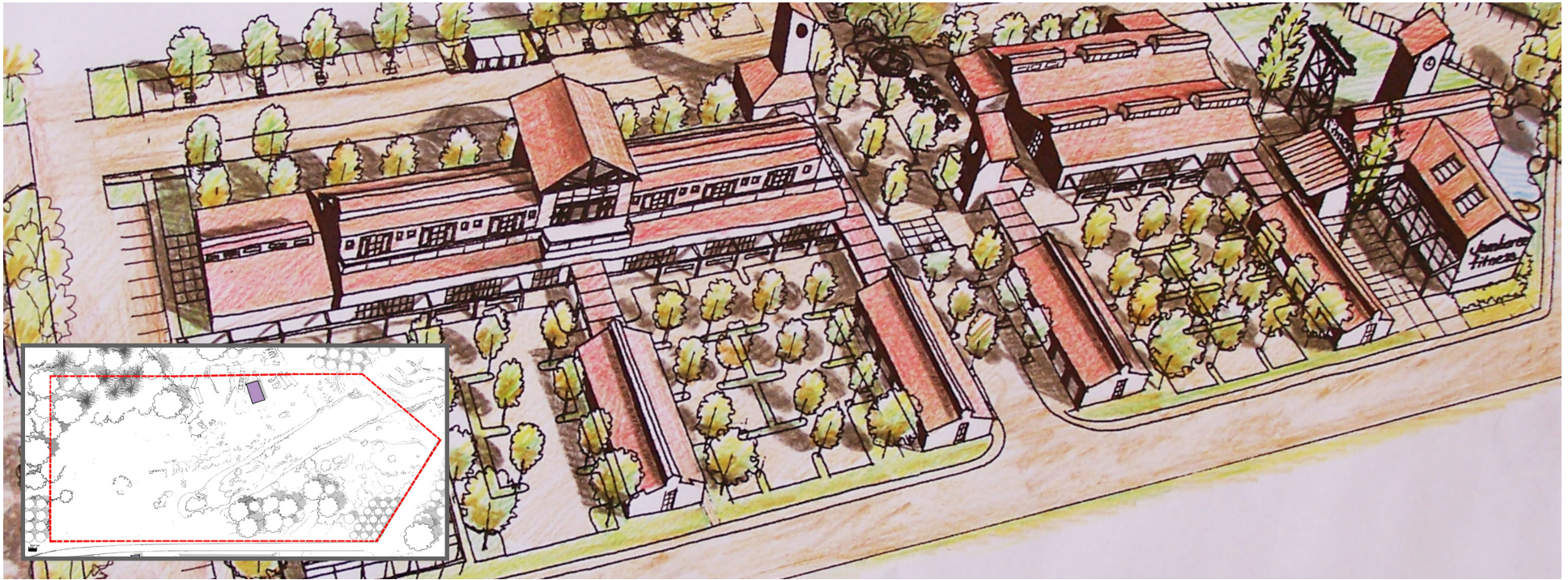


Introduction

This prototype demonstrates the development of large vacant parcels or groupings of parcels in a vertical and horizontal mixed-use configuration. The development would occur in phases in order to reflect realities of real estate economics in the region. This prototype includes a mix of one- to three-story structures, new streets/right-of-way/public spaces, and parking on streets and in lots within 300 feet of development.

About the Neighborhood

This large, “greenfield” 22-acre site is located on the other side of the Southern Pacific railroad track that for decades has acted as a barrier that has restrained the example community’s growth and expansion opportunities. Owned by a local logging and forest products corporation, the parcel was the historic staging and railcar loading area for milled lumber that was brought to the site from the company’s other regional locations, and then packaged and loaded onto rail cars for shipment. Changes in the marketplace for lumber ended the company’s local operations and the site was cleared. The bare site was held for future investment by the company for over a decade in anticipation of future real estate development and town growth.

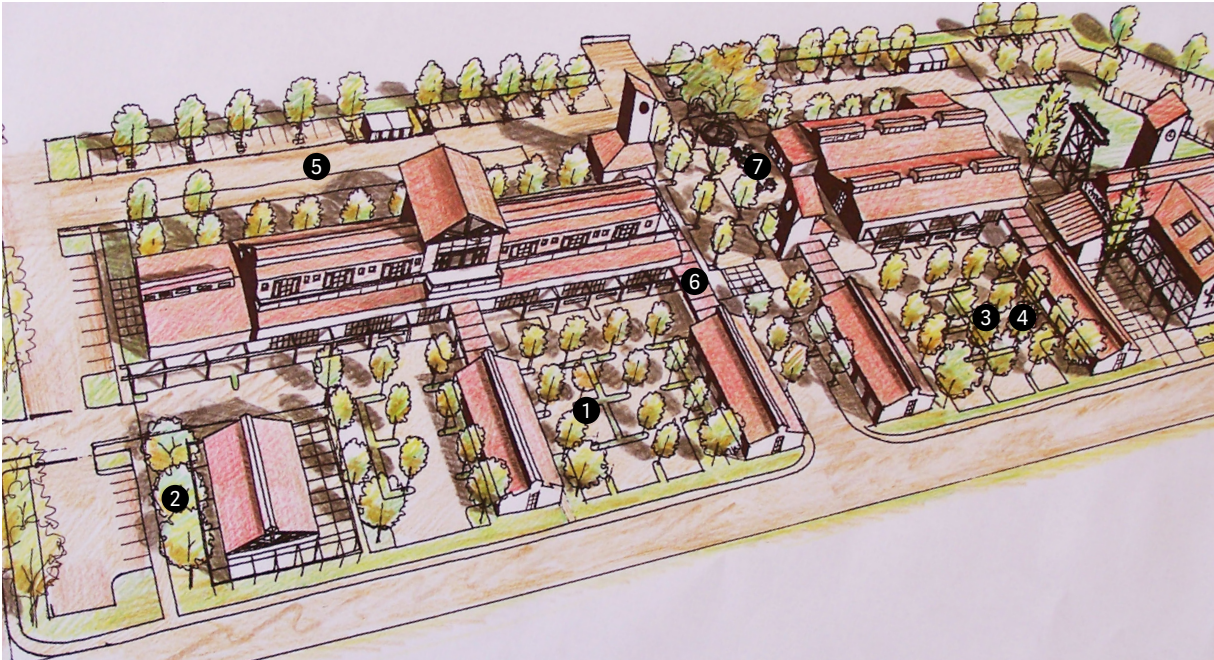


The geography of the site is located on a gentle slope that is visible from most of the town. Due to this visibility, suburban-type regional retail center developments have found no support in the community. The site and its adjacent areas are in the path of growth and considered an important opportunity to influence new developments in the town in ways that are unique to the region's lifestyle and character. Due to the railroad track proximity, traditional for-sale housing and similar development uses had limited the parcel to a single commercial use.

Development Story

When the new mixed-use standards were established by the County, the parcel owners saw an opportunity to start over with their development planning. They

conceptualized a cost-effective, uniquely-styled, and phased development of twelve railroad shed-styled buildings on a rustic but lushly landscaped site with exterior courtyards, patios, and trellis-covered overhead patios. The design they created drew inspiration in equal parts from traditional farmer's markets, fruit-packing shed, timber-frame railroad shops, and festival marketplaces. Materials included red corrugated metal roofs, wood board and batten siding, large industrial metal windows, and sliding barn type doors and raw interiors. The project has two phases. Phase one split the parcel down the middle. This created a ten-acre site and parking area for three roadside shed-styled buildings, a corner destination restaurant building, and a main building with a large 40,000 square foot floorplate main building. This building included 24 loft apartments with private view balconies, open-beamed rustic ceilings, and interior mezzanines. The ground floor is occupied by several retailers, a café, a regional supermarket's new "micro-market" concept store, and the new



Project Summary

- Developed bare parcel with utility infrastructure, roads, and public road modifications and upgrades.
- Built phase one, a 10-acre area of the parcel, to fully improved condition.
- Constructed one 40,000 square foot, two-story apartment and commercial building with outdoor landscaped patios.
- Constructed four 12-15,000 square foot retail/restaurant buildings with outdoor landscaped patios.
- Extensively landscaped and detailed the site with a forward-thinking design character and flexible layout.

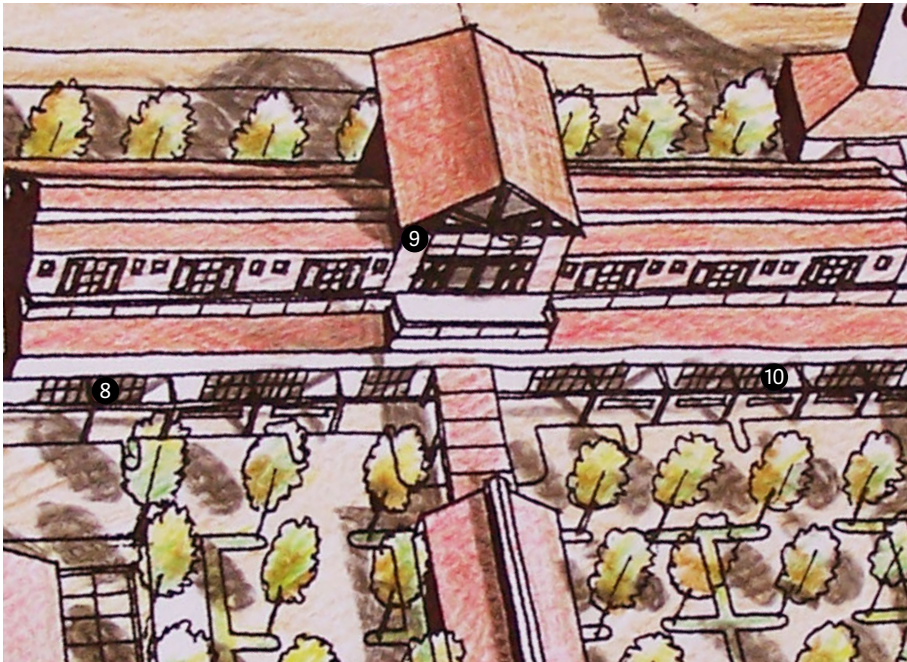
“Sierra Fitness Jamboree” – a fitness center concept that uses a jamboree-styled terrain of boulders, timber poles, rope walks, pools, and nature-inspired obstacle courses as equipment. The second 12-acre phase of seven buildings will expand the concept and allow additional uses, including up to 30 more apartments. Although railroad noise was a limiting development concern, there is generally no horn sound as the railroad does not operate their horn except in emergencies. Owners of the apartments state that the apartments have a long waiting list from the target middle-income demographic in the community who are seeking a more unique lifestyle than found in traditional garden apartments complex. Open-air parking for apartment residents is located in the rear of the site and is secured by a card-key gate specifically for tenant use. Landscaped areas include bioswale planters in the parking area, lush plantings of foothill native species, mature relocated oak trees, stained concrete paving, and reclaimed lumber for some building siding. The project earned a LEED silver ranking.

Ownership Structure

Corporate structured partnership between original forest products company and a regional development company. Institutional venture funding. Professionally managed and operated. County and Southern Pacific Railroad operational agreements.

Key Standards and Guidelines

1. **Lot Dimensions and Coverage:** Locate parking lots behind buildings, where possible, and to the side of buildings when a rear parking lot is not feasible.
2. **Landscaping:** Design site landscape treatments to be attractive, with a consistent design throughout the project.
3. **Parking Lot Design:** Distribute trees evenly throughout the parking lot to create a canopy effect in the parking lot and locate trees to divide and break up expanses of paving and long rows of parking spaces.
4. **Parking Lot Design:** Provide parking lot trees as follows: at least 1 tree for every 8 parking spaces in lots with 48 spaces or fewer; and at least 1 tree for every 10 spaces for parking lots with 49 spaces or more.
5. **Loading:** Design internal streets and driveways to accommodate vehicles commonly used for loading and unloading.
6. **Mobility and Access:** Large-scale mixed-use developments shall provide



an on-site system of pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, and bikeways that provide continuous access to all land uses within a project site and to land uses on adjacent properties.

7. **Site Amenities:** Design patios, plazas, mini-parks, squares, and greens to be a proportional size to the project.
8. **Windows:** Mixed-use buildings shall be designed with windows comprising 60 percent of the street-facing building facade between two feet and eight feet in height.
9. **Facades:** Design new infill buildings to reflect traditional design patterns of adjacent buildings. Creative interpretations of traditional elements are encouraged.
10. **Ceiling Height:** Design buildings with floor-to-floor heights similar to those in nearby historic buildings.



This prototype shows how large-scale mixed-use projects can reflect the industrial heritage of an area and create a pedestrian-oriented environment. The photo above shows project that accomplished both successfully.





Next Steps and Implementation Recommendations

Introduction

The publication of this document is an important step toward encouraging mixed-use development in the communities of El Dorado County. Taken together, they provide a nuanced framework for designing mixed-use developments. They also set the stage for further action by the County to promote mixed-use development described in “Next Steps” below. For example, the standards and guidelines in this manual are designed to be adapted in a community plan process. They can also be modified to support form-based codes if the County wishes to pursue that option for regulating development.

This section provides recommendations for subsequent actions the County can take to improve the regulatory setting for mixed-use development.

Next Steps

Community Plans

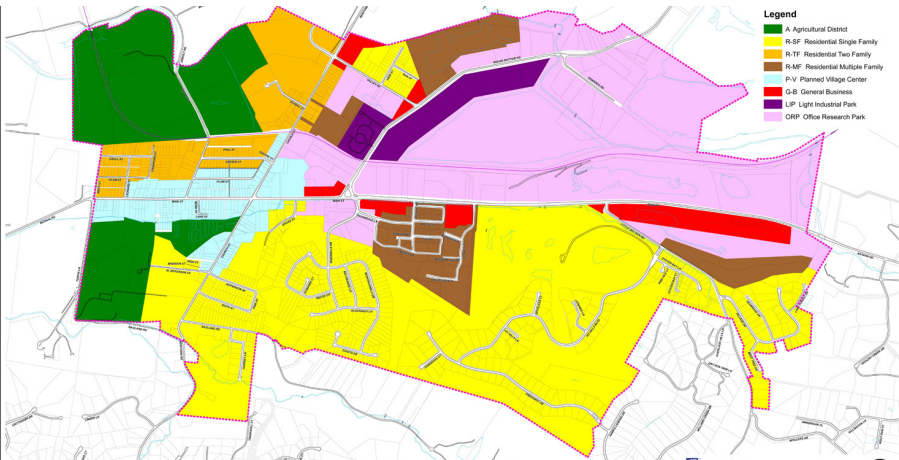
The standards and guidelines in this manual are designed to be applicable for all areas in El Dorado County zoned to allow mixed-use development, with

special attention given to areas where most of this zoning occurs. This includes the communities of Georgetown, El Dorado, Diamond Springs, Camino, Pollock Pines, and Shingle Springs. Though these standards and guidelines will work well for all of El Dorado County's communities, residents may decide they would like more input on the design and development of their individual communities.

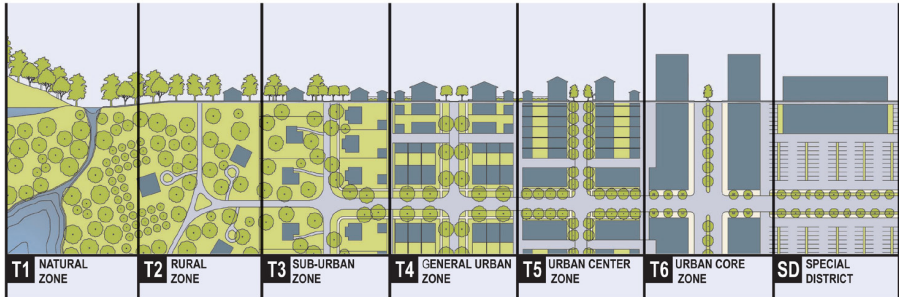
To customize the standards and guidelines and create new policies in the General Plan, residents could initiate a community planning process. Through the planning process, residents would define the boundaries of the community, establish a vision for the future, and develop general plan policies, new or revised zoning standards, and design guidelines to achieve their vision. Community members may decide to create mixed-use overlay zones that apply to entire areas, instead of using the mixed-use zoning districts in the Zoning Ordinance. Mixed-use overlay zones could allow for more clarity and flexibility in mixed-use development without the effort of future rezoning to allow for mixed-use development. The community would work in cooperation with El Dorado County planning staff on the community plans, and the County Board of Supervisors would adopt the completed community plan. The standards and guidelines in this manual are written with community plans in mind. They are clear and simple, and make an excellent starting point for community revisions, additions, and deletions.

Form-based Codes

Form-based codes use the physical form of the building, not the building's use, as the organizing principle of the development standards in the Zoning Ordinance. Form-based codes address the relationship between building facades and the public realm, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, and the scale and types of streets and blocks. Form-based codes work well for mixed-use development because they are not based on the idea that different uses should remain separate. As long as the mixed-use development adheres to the standards for building form, massing, and relationship, it is allowed by right. The standards and guidelines in this manual serve as a bridge between the typical Zoning Ordinance standards for mixed-use development and any future adoption of form-based codes. These standards require and guidelines recommend mixed-use developers carefully consider form, massing, and context when designing a mixed-use development, while still maintaining the traditional system of zoning. If El Dorado County decides to use form-based codes, everyone involved in the mixed-use development process will already be used to the concept and its impact on mixed-use projects.



Typical zoning ordinances divide the land in a community by use, shown in the example above. To accommodate mixed-use development, communities can create mixed-use zones, allow mixed-use development in certain districts, or create mixed-use overlay districts.



Many form-based codes use a transect like the one above. Land is zoned by intensity and building form, not use. Mixed-use development is allowed by default.

Other Recommendations

The County can use the recommendations in this section as additional tools to encourage mixed-use development. Unlike the “Next Steps,” the recommendations do not need to be implemented in any particular order.

Adopt Historic Preservation Standards and Guidelines

Many of the structures in El Dorado County are historically significant and contribute to the character of the county and its communities. Developers may propose a mixed-use project on a site with a historic building. Currently, buildings on a site within a historic design review combining district would need to go through the design review process for any mixed-use project on that site. This process can slow the development process and make mixed-use development less attractive to developers. The County could adopt historic preservation standards and guidelines that would give developers a clear idea of what development is appropriate for sites with historic buildings. The County could retain the design review process, but the developer could enter the process with more confidence in their project. Alternatively, the County could eliminate the design review process if a project complied with enough of the historic preservation guidelines.



The developers of this building retained the historic facade while rebuilding the rest of the structure. New historic preservation standards could allow this modification to preserve historic character while removing barriers to mixed-use development.

Implement Performance Standards

Residents who live near commercial centers may object to any new mixed-use development. To ease their concerns, the County could adopt performance standards to measure and control noise, parking, lighting, and other development-related concerns. These standards would focus on the perceived impacts or concerns, like traffic or parking, rather than specific occupations or uses, to avoid the subtle bias that can sometimes arise.

Conduct Parking Supply and Demand Studies

Despite their small populations, parking demand in El Dorado County's communities is high. Many old buildings do not have their own parking lots, so on-street parking is often at a premium, even in districts where angled or perpendicular parking is the norm. Businesses place signs in front of on-street spaces to claim them and prohibit patrons of other businesses from using them. To sort out the parking issues in El Dorado County, the County could conduct a study of all available parking in downtown and commercial districts, and implement a parking management plan or “park once” district to encourage shared parking and to use parking more efficiently. When parking is developed at appropriate levels, uses can be more compact, and the community can add design amenities like streetscaping, which makes business locations more attractive.



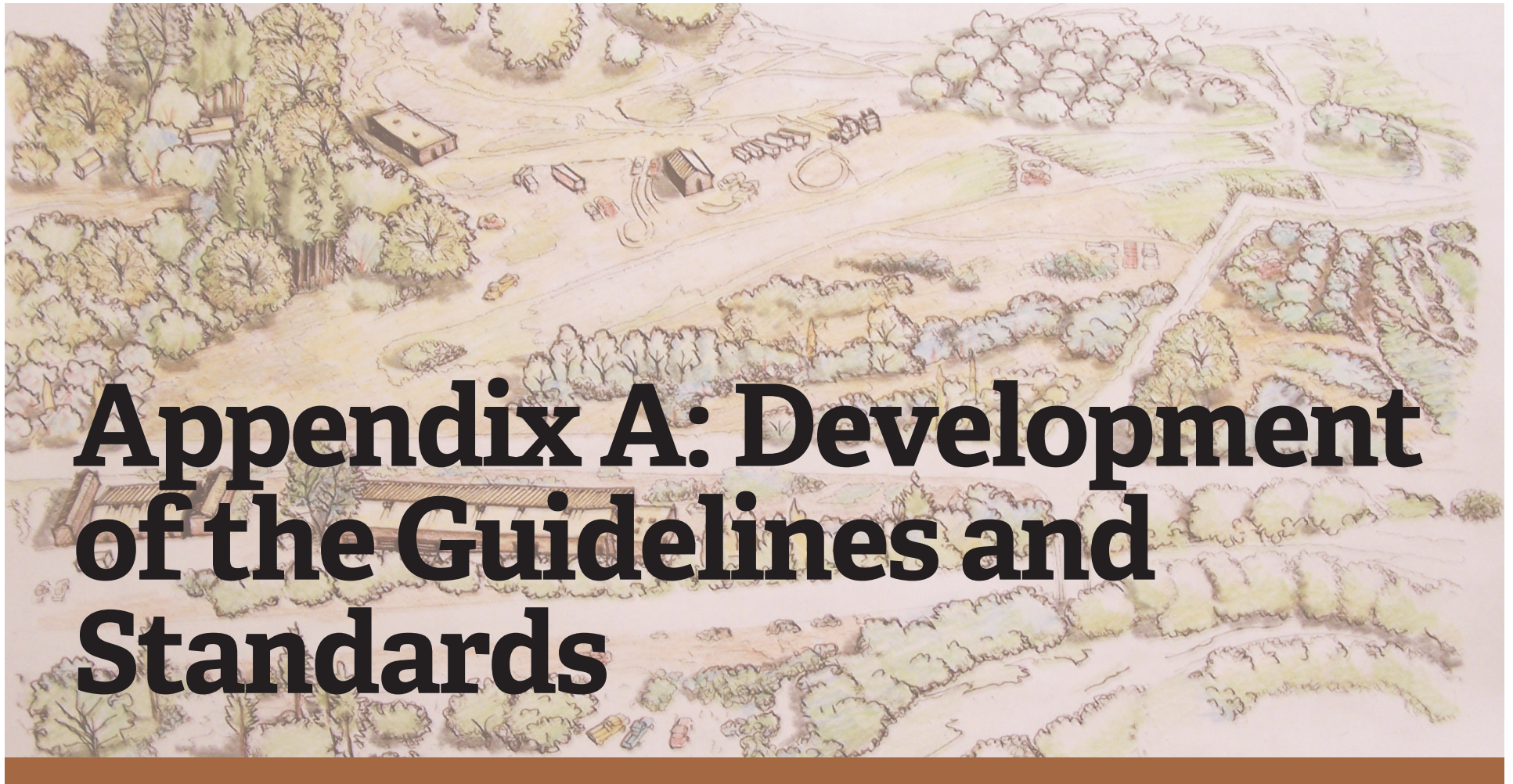
Reserved parking signs are common in El Dorado County's communities, even in parking lots.

Offer Limited Time Only Incentives

Mixed-use development, even with the aid of this manual, may not be planned and built in a timely manner. Incentives may be used to encourage and facilitate mixed-use development. Incentives could include a reduction or elimination of systems development charges, density bonuses, or parking requirement reductions. However, even incentives may not be enough to encourage a significant number of new projects. Some developers may assume that the incentives will be around forever and won't consider a project in the near future. To make incentives a catalyst for projects, the County should consider offering incentives for a limited time. The time frame could be for three to five years, and only apply to one community at a time. This time and location focus would concentrate developer interest and result in substantial, cohesive change for the targeted community.

Review the Design and Improvement Standards Manual

El Dorado County can help developers of mixed-use projects by ensuring streets, sidewalks, and related public areas provide safe and convenient access via walking and bicycling. El Dorado County's Design and Improvement Standards Manual sets the engineering standards for public property, including standards for street and road design. County staff should compare the standards for street design with the guidelines and standards in this manual to determine if the street design standards are supportive of mixed-use development. Special attention should be paid to the minimum right-of-way widths for streets, street design detail drawings, and internal subdivision street layouts. Staff may also amend the Design and Improvement Standards Manual to include standards and detail drawings for mid-block pedestrian crossings, mid-block pedestrian walkways (paseos), roadside bioswales, and alleys.



Appendix A: Development of the Guidelines and Standards

The Process

Capturing the unique character of El Dorado County's communities in the context of the mixed-use design guidelines was a challenging task, one that required a thorough process of documentation, consideration, and analysis. The project team, consisting of El Dorado County planners and planning consultants, used the following process for creating the Mixed-use Design Guide.

In order to define the character of the community, the project team started by conducting a simple, objective survey of the existing character of El Dorado County, developed an understanding of the historic character of communities in the county, and compared the historic and existing character of development. The project team surveyed the buildings and streets located in areas that allow mixed-use development and determined the degree of historical integrity of each community. The team defined the building and site development characteristics that helped to create each community and identified desirable elements that may have been lost over time. For example, the team noted that secondary structures may have been demolished, leaving lots with rear yards that are in fact perceived as being larger than they

were historically. This may suggest that the construction of new secondary structures would be in keeping with historic development patterns. The historic scale of a building and its density were also considered when establishing guidelines that would bring new structures to the area. For example, some communities now contain few early “historic” structures but instead are collections of buildings that have very little historical value and are bound together by older street layouts and groupings.

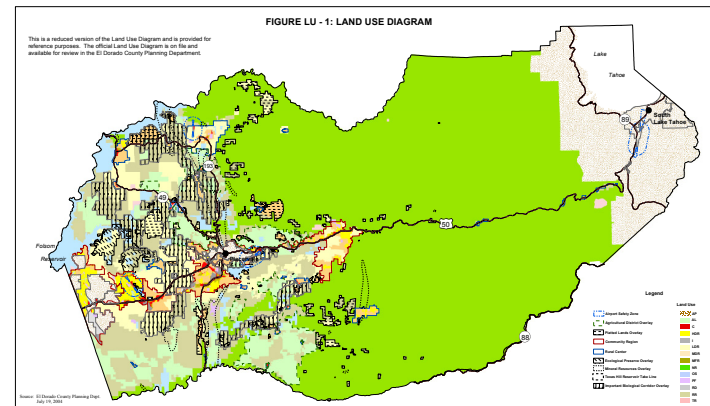
By comparing historic and present-day contexts, the project team developed some broader preservation and growth goals for the community and identified important characteristics that should be respected, enhanced, and celebrated. The degree of change between the historic character and present-day characteristic defines the degree of “integrity” of the community. This influenced standards, guidelines, and the design of future development. For example, in an area where the neighborhood is virtually intact with respect to its historic character, codes may be quite strict about the character of new construction, stipulating that they very closely match the context. In other areas where greater change has occurred, more flexibility in design may be allowed.

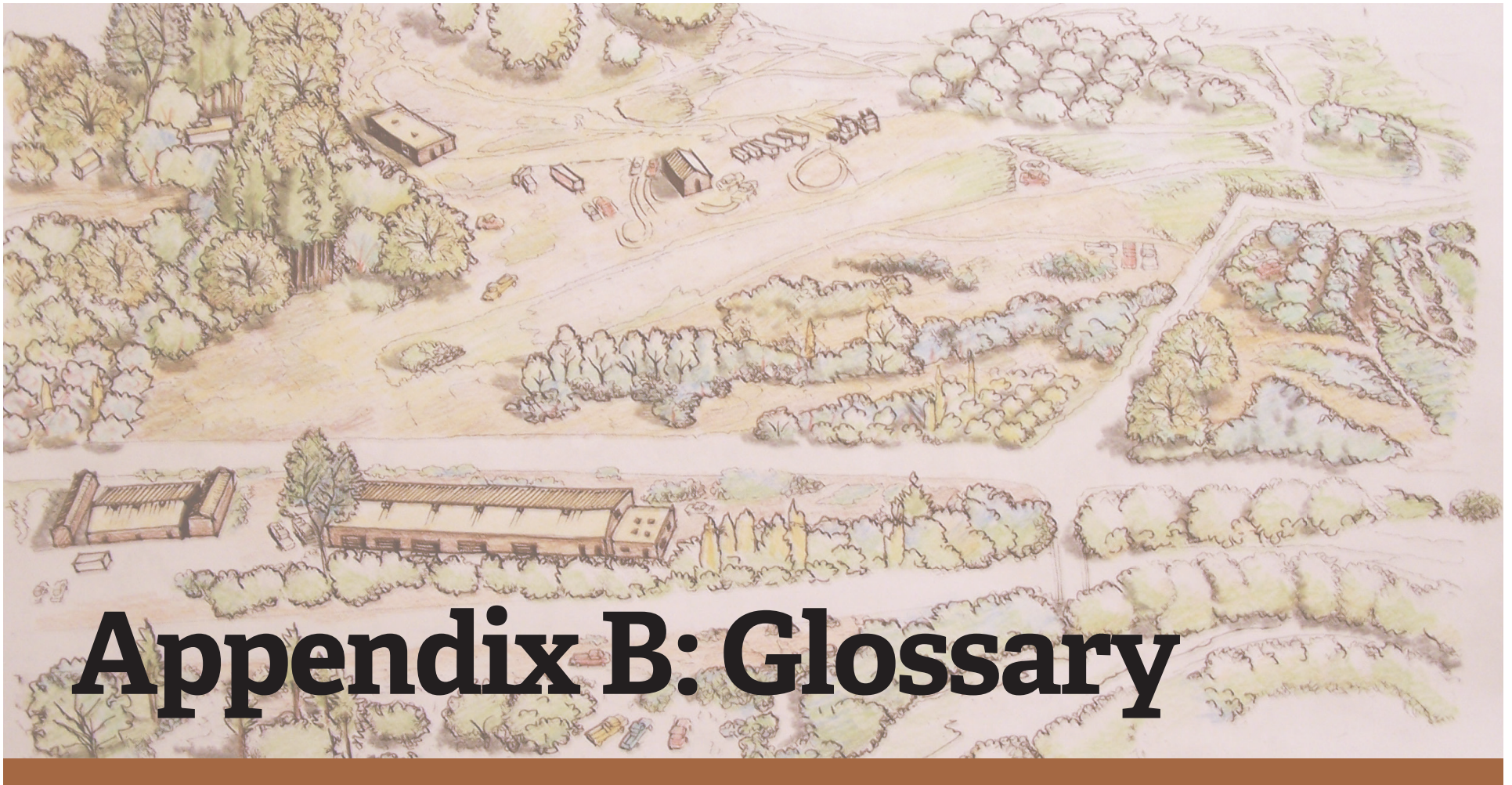
Relationship to Other Plans and Documents

This manual is one of several land use documents in El Dorado County. The County’s overall land use strategy is established in the General Plan, adopted in 2004. The General Plan is the County’s “blueprint” for development and addresses topics such as land use, transportation, housing, public services, public health, noise, open space, agriculture, forestry, parks, and economic development. The General Plan has a broad reach and provides direction on each topic area in its goals and policies. For mixed-use development the General Plan’s Goal 2.1 states that El Dorado County should promote “mixed and balanced uses...” Several policies then get more specific, stating that “Mixed use developments... are permissible and encouraged...”

While the goals and policies of the General Plan provide policy direction, the Zoning Ordinance provides the detailed development standards. The Zoning Ordinance establishes zoning districts that correspond to land use designations in the General Plan. Each zoning district has design, development, and environmental standards for the uses allowed in the district. The El Dorado County Zoning Ordinance allows mixed-use development in five zoning districts: Commercial, Professional Office (CPO); Commercial, Limited (CL); Commercial, Main Street (CM); Commercial, Community (CC); and Residential, Multi-unit (RM).

This document complements the Zoning Ordinance and is intended to make the mixed-use development process easier. Zoning Ordinances are technical and dense, with few illustrations or examples. This document is intended to provide an illustrated guide that consolidates the required standards for mixed-use development, provides optional guidelines, illustrates the guidelines and standards, and presents design prototypes as examples.





Appendix B: Glossary

Glossary of Key Terms

Access: The right to cross between public and private property, allowing pedestrians and vehicles to enter and leave property.

Accessory Structures: A structure detached from a principal building, located on the same lot and incidental to the principal use.

Acre: A land area of 43,560 square feet.

Adaptive Reuse: Rehabilitation or renovation of existing building(s) or structures for any use(s) other than the present use(s).

Affordable Housing: Housing units where the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for housing costs, including taxes and utilities.

Alley: A public or private way permanently reserved as a secondary means of access to abutting property.

Amenity: Aesthetic or other characteristics of a development that increase its desirability to a community or its marketability to the public. Amenities may differ from development to development, but may include such things as a unified building design, recreational facilities (e.g., a swimming pool or tennis courts), security systems, views, landscaping and tree preservation, or attractive site design.

Articulation: The dividing or segmenting of building elements into smaller components to create a sense of minor detailing. Articulation may be described in terms of roughness of materials, number of openings, patterns in materials, differences in materials, and massing.

Bicycle Facilities: A general term denoting improvements and provisions to accommodate or encourage bicycling, including parking facilities, maps, all bikeways, and shared roadways not specifically designated for bicycle use.

Bioswale: A landscape feature constructed of natural, water-permeable materials intended to channel and direct the flow of storm water runoff.

Block: A unit of land bounded by streets or by a combination of streets and public land, railroad rights-of-way, waterways, or any other barrier to the continuity of development.

Block Face: The portion of a block that abuts the street.

Board of Supervisors: A county's legislative body. Board members are elected by popular vote and are responsible for enacting ordinances, imposing taxes, making appropriations, and establishing county policy. The board adopts the general plan, zoning, and subdivision regulations.

Buffer Strip: A portion of a lot or a land area used to visually separate one use from another through the use of vegetation, screening, and distance; to shield or obstruct noise, illumination, visual or other incompatibilities or nuisances. A buffer is measured from the common property line of the different uses.

Building Coverage: A percentage figure referring to that portion of a lot covered only with principal and accessory buildings.

Building Footprint: The outline of the total area covered by a building's perimeter at the ground level.

Build-to Line: The line at which construction of a building facade is to occur on a lot. A build-to line runs parallel to, and is measured from, the front property line and is established to create an even (or more or less even) building facade line on a street or other defined set-back line.

Built Environment: The elements of the environment that are generally built by or made by people as contrasted with natural processes.

Business District: An urban downtown district that has design features and a diversity of uses not found in the commercial and office districts. Such uses include government buildings, cultural facilities, hotels, apartments, retail shops, and ancillary uses.

By Right: Uses requiring a permit with no public hearing required.

Commercial District: Neighborhood, community, highway/tourist, and service commercial zoning designations or their equivalent specific plan zoning designations.

Commercial Project: Projects that primarily accommodate large retail establishments, which may provide major durable goods shopping, and serve either local or regional needs of El Dorado County. Commercial projects contain a mix of supporting uses, including multi-family dwellings, office, entertainment and retail uses, medical offices and clinics, and civic uses. The mix provides viable pedestrian and bicycle access and circulation.

Community: A subarea of the city consisting of residential, institutional, and commercial uses sharing a common identity.

Compatible: Any property, use, or service that is capable of direct association with certain other uses because it is complementary, congruous, or otherwise non-detrimental.

Curb: A stone, timber, log/railroad tie, or concrete boundary usually marking the edge of a roadway or paved area.

Curb cut: The length of an opening in the curb along a roadway that allows vehicular access to an abutting project site.

Density: The number of dwelling units per unit of land.

Design Continuity: A unifying or connecting theme or physical feature for a particular setting or place, provided by one or more elements of the natural or created environment. The use of design continuity helps to avoid abrupt and/or severe differences with adjacent properties.

Design Review: The comprehensive evaluation of a development and its impact on neighboring properties and the community as a whole, from the standpoint of site and landscape design, architecture, materials, colors, lighting, and signs, in accordance with a set of adopted criteria and standards. Design review usually refers to a system set up outside of the zoning ordinance, whereby projects are reviewed against certain standards and criteria by a specially established design review board or committee.

Design Standards: A set of guidelines regarding the architectural appearance of a building, or improvement, that governs the alteration, construction, demolition, or relocation of a building or improvement.

Developer: That person who is improving a parcel of land within the city and who may or may not be the owner of that property.

Development: Any human-caused change to improved or unimproved real estate that requires a permit or approval from any agency of the city or county, including, but not limited to, buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, drilling, grading, paving, excavation, or drilling operations, and storage of materials.

Development Standards: Regulations that limit the size, bulk, or siting conditions of particular types of buildings or uses located within any designated district.

District: A section or sections of the city for which the regulations and provisions governing the use of the buildings and lands are uniform for each class of use permitted therein.

Divided Lite: Division of window glass by the use of muntin bars. Divided lite windows may be authentic, where muntin bars separate individual panes of glass, or simulated, where muntin bars are applied to each side of a single pane of glass.

Drive-up Facility (also known as “drive-in” or “drivethrough” facility): An establishment that by design encourages or permits customers to receive services, obtain goods, or be entertained while remaining in their motor vehicles.

Easement: A grant by a property owner to the use of land by the public, a corporation, or persons for specific purposes as the construction of utilities, drainage ways, and roadways.

Facade: The exterior wall of a building exposed to public view or that wall viewed by persons not within the building.

Facade Pass-through: A passage way for vehicles with appropriate dimensional clearances to allow rear or internal parking lot access from a street to a parking and utility area. The building facade would be at least 2+ stories and have usable floor space above the pass-through opening.

Flag Lot: Lots that are approved with less frontage on a road easement or right-of-way than is normally required under the development standards for the zone and where the “flag pole” portion of the lot is used as an access corridor.

Floor Area Ratio: The total floor area of all buildings or structures on a zoning lot divided by the area of said lot.

Focal Point: A visual landmark. It commonly identifies the center of a project or area for public gathering, and contributes to establishing the character of the project. The focal point may be a statue, a plaza, a pavilion, or some other structure or focused area.

General Plan: A comprehensive declaration of goals, policies, and programs for the development of the city and which has been adopted by the city council.

Ground Floor: The first floor of a building other than a cellar or basement.

Guideline: A recommended level of appropriate activity that will preserve the historic and architectural character of a structure or area.

Hardscape: Typically involves street infrastructure, including paving elements such as roads, sidewalks, fountains, shelters, and medians.

Height Limit: The vertical limit of a structure measured from the average ground level at the base.

Historic District: An area designated as a “Historic District” by ordinance and which contains within definable geographic boundaries, properties or buildings, that may or may not be landmarks, but which contribute to the overall historic character of the designated area.

Household: A family living together in a single dwelling unit with common access to, and common use of, all living and eating areas and all areas and facilities for the preparation and storage of food within the dwelling unit.

Human Scale: The relationship between the dimensions of the human body and the proportion of the spaces that people use. This is underscored by surface texture, activity patterns, colors, materials, and details. The understanding of walking distances and spatial perceptions at a human scale determines the most positive placement of buildings, and the physical layout of the community.

Infill: Development or redevelopment of land that has been bypassed, remained vacant, and/or is underused as a result of the continuing urban development process.

Internal Street: Public or private streets located internal to a project site, and which may connect at one or both ends to a perimeter public street. The internal street system is intended to provide vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle access and circulation to all uses within a project site.

Land Use: A description of how land is occupied or used.

Land Value: The value of land as established for the tax base by the property appraiser's office.

Landscape Buffer: The use of landscaping, berms, fences, walls, or any combination of these, to buffer and screen a more intense land use from an adjacent, less intense land use.

Lighting: Any fixed source of light emanating from a man made device, including but not limited to, incandescent mercury vapor, metal halide, LED, or sodium lamps, spotlights, street lights, construction, or security lights.

Live/Work Unit: A residential use type that combines a dwelling and a commercial space under single ownership in a structure.

Lot (Parcel): An individual, legal parcel of land intended to be separately owned, developed, and otherwise used as a unit and does not include an administrative parcel used by the Assessor for tax purposes.

Lot Frontage: The horizontal distance between the side lot lines measured at the point where the side lot lines intersect the street right-of-way. All sides of a

lot that abuts a street shall be considered frontage. On curvilinear streets the arc between the side lot lines shall be considered the lot frontage.

Massing: The distribution of building volumes in regard to the building's relative location on the site and the height, width, depth of the elements of a building relative to each other.

Mixed-use: Properties on which various uses, such as office, commercial, institutional, and residential are combined in a single building or on a single site in an integrated development project with significant functional interrelationships and a coherent physical design. A "single site" may include contiguous properties, and shall include separate lots created for commercial and residential components.

Mullion: A vertical divider in a window.

Noise: Any sound that is undesirable because it interferes with speech and hearing, or is intense enough to damage hearing, or is otherwise annoying. Noise, simply put, is "unwanted sound."

Nuisance: Any use or structure which is injurious to health and safety, or is indecent or offensive to the senses, or an obstruction to the free use of property so as to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property.

Odor: A distinctive smell, possibly unpleasant.

Off-street Parking: Space occupied by automobiles on premises other than streets.

On-street Parking: The storage space for an automobile that is located within the street right-of-way.

Open Space: Includes all landscaped areas, yards, patios, swimming pools, putting greens, and other recreational-leisure facilities; areas of scenic or natural beauty and habitat areas; hiking, riding, or off-street bicycle trails; and landscaped areas.

Orientation: The direction that various sides of a building face.

Parking Lot: An authorized area not within a building where motor vehicles are stored for the purposes of temporary, daily, or overnight off-street parking.

Party Wall: A wall common to but dividing contiguous buildings; such a wall contains no openings and extends from its footing below the finished ground grade to the height of the exterior surface of the roof.

Pedestrian Pass-through: A feature providing unrestricted public pedestrian access through a building or structure or between buildings or structures.

Pedestrian-oriented Development: Development designed with an emphasis primarily on the street sidewalk and on pedestrian access to the site and building, rather than on auto access and parking areas. The building is generally placed close to the street and the main entrance is oriented to the street sidewalk. There are generally windows or display cases along building facades which face the street. Typically buildings cover a large portion of the site. Although parking areas may be provided, they are generally limited in size and they are not emphasized by the design of the site.

Perimeter: The aggregate of frontage lines of the surrounding lots.

Perimeter Street: A public street that abuts the perimeter of a project site or zone. Perimeter streets provide access to the internal street system, providing access and circulation to principal uses located in the interior of the project site.

Permit (Special Use): A specific approval for a use that has been determined to be more intense or to have a potentially greater impact than a permitted or conditional use within the same zoning district.

Phasing Plan: A graphic and narrative document that displays the sequence and/or timing of intended project. Phasing is used to sequence the provision of public facilities.

Planned Development: Land under unified control to be planned and developed as a whole in a single development operation or as a programmed series of development operations or phases. A planned development is built according to general and detailed development plans that include not only streets, utilities, lots, and building locations, but also construction, use, and relationships of buildings to one another, and plans for other uses and improvements on the land, such as common or public open space areas. A planned development includes a program for the provision, operation, and maintenance of such areas, facilities, and improvements that will be provided for common use by the occupants of the planned development or for use by the general public, if applicable.

Planner: Under general supervision, performs professional duties in current or long-range planning and performs related work as required.

Planning Commission: A body, usually having five to seven members, created by a city or county in compliance with California law, which administer planning and land use regulations for the city or county and provide recommendations on a wide array of land use-and land-use policy issues.

Private Realm: The area in a community belonging to or restricted for the use or enjoyment of particular persons. The area not owned by a government agency.

Private Street: Any right of way or area set aside to provide vehicular access within a development that is not dedicated or intended to be dedicated to the city and that is not maintained by the city.

Project: A particular development on an identifiable parcel of land.

Property Line: Any line bounding a lot.

Public Facility: A use conducted by, or a facility or structure owned and managed by, the government of the United States, the State of California, or the County of El Dorado that provides a governmental function, activity, or service for public benefit.

Public Realm: The area in a community meant for public use. Parks and streets are common areas of the public realm.

Residential Density: The number of dwelling units per gross area devoted to residential development.

Right-of-way: A public or private area that allows for the passage of people or goods. Right-of-way includes passageways such as freeways, streets, bike paths, alleys, and walkways. A public right-of-way is a right-of-way that is dedicated or deeded to the public for public use and under the control of a public agency.

Rural: A sparsely developed area where the land is primarily used for farming, forestry, resource extraction, very-low density residential uses (one unit per 10 acres or less) or open space uses.

Setback: The minimum distance by which any building or structure must be separated from the street right-of-way or lot line.

Sign: A structure or device designed or intended to convey information to the public or to identify or direct attention to a business, profession, commodity, service, or entertainment in written or pictorial form.

Specific Plan: A definite statement adopted by ordinance of policies, standards, and regulations, together with a map or description defining the location where such policies, standards, and regulations are applicable pursuant to the requirements of the State.

Standard: Requirements in a zoning ordinance that govern building and development as distinguished from use restrictions (i.e., site-design such as lot area, height limit, frontage, landscaping, floor area ratio).

Street: A public thoroughfare (street, drive, avenue, boulevard) that has been or is intended to be dedicated for public use and has been accepted or is acceptable into the state system.

Streetscape: An area that may either abut or be contained within a public or private street right-of-way or access way that may contain sidewalks, street furniture, landscaping or trees, and similar features.

Subdivision: The division of land into two or more lots. A development consisting of subdivided lots.

Transitional Area: An area in the process of changing from one use to another or an area which functions as a buffer between land uses of different types or intensity.

Trash Enclosure: An accessory use of a property where trash and/or recyclable material containers, or any other type of waste or refuse container is stored.

Undergrounding: The placement of utility lines below ground, with the removal of above-ground poles, wires, and structures as applicable.

Unit (Housing): A single unit providing complete, independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

Urban: Of, relating to characteristic of, or constituting a city. Urban areas are generally characterized by moderate and higher-density residential development (i.e., three or more dwelling units per acre), commercial development, and industrial development, as well as the availability of public services required for that development, specifically central water and sewer, an extensive road network, public transit, and other such services (e.g., safety and emergency response). Development not providing such services may be “non-urban” or “rural.”

Zero Lot Line: A planned unit development in which a structure is sited on two or fewer lot lines with no yard, permitting site design flexibility while increasing the quantity of usable open space on the lot.

Zoning: The division of a city or county by legislative regulations into areas, or zones, which specify allowable uses for real property and size restrictions for buildings within these areas. Also a program that implements policies of the General Plan.

Zoning District: Any section or sections of the city or county for which the regulations governing the use of land and the use, density, bulk, height, and coverage of buildings and other structures are uniform.

Zoning Ordinance/Code: An ordinance enacted by the city or county pursuant to State law that sets forth regulations and standards relating to the nature and extent of uses of land and structures, which is consistent with the comprehensive plan of the city, includes a zoning map, and complies with the provisions of State law.