



Laredo Land Development Code

Article 3 Zoning Standards

Contents

24.3.1	General Provisions	58
24.3.2	Access Management.....	59
24.3.3	Blocks, Lots and Yards.....	61
24.3.4	Building Design & Height.....	66
24.3.5	Fencing and Screening.....	75
24.3.6	Landscaping & Tree Preservation.....	76
24.3.7	Parking and Loading	85
24.3.8	Riparian Buffers.....	96
24.3.9	Site Design.....	106
Table 3.2-1	Access Points	59
Table 3.3-1	Setbacks and Yards	62
Table 3.3-2	Encroachments (not permitted in easements).....	64
Table 3.4-1	Frontage Types	68
Table 3.6-1	Street Trees for New Subdivisions	77
Table 3.6-2	Median Planting Locations	77
Table 3.6-3	Planting on Existing Platted Lots.....	78
Table 3.6-4	Plant List.....	83
Table 3.7-1	Shared Parking Ratios	93
Table 3.7-2	Driveway Widths for Parking Areas.....	95
Table 3.8-1	Stream Buffers	100
Table 3.1-1	Maximum Block Perimeter	106
Table 3.1-2	Connectivity and Parking Orientation.....	109

Article 3 Zoning Standards

24.3.1 General Provisions

Purpose: this Article establishes development standards that apply to zoning applications, as indicated in each section. These standards:

- *Implement the Comprehensive Plan;*
- *Implement the purposes established for the zoning regulations;*
- *Ensure that new development, redevelopment, and land uses mitigate their development impacts;*
- *Provide uniform methods for the application of the dimensional, site design, civic space, landscaping, and infrastructure standards established in this Article.*

(a) Applicability. This Article applies to:

- (1) all zoning districts, and
- (2) unless otherwise provided, any application for:
 - a. site plan approval where this Article was not previously applied to a subdivision plat approved for the subject property, or
 - b. building permit or certificate of occupancy where this Article was not previously applied to a subdivision plat or site plan approved for the subject property.

(b) Modification

- (1) The City Council may modify any provision of this Article as a condition of rezoning to any “PD” (Planned Development) district or by the Planning and Zoning Commission as a site plan modification. If PD district is in complete compliance with TND Manual, no additional conditions will be placed on it from City Council or the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- (2) The Planning Commission or Planning Director may modify any other provision of this Article where specifically authorized.
 - a. A modification is permitted only if:
 1. It is consistent with Viva Laredo, and
 2. It is consistent with the public interest, and
 3. The applicant has agreed to conditions that will accomplish the purpose of the regulation to at least the same extent as the modified regulation.
 4. It will not place an unnecessary burden on the City or surrounding neighborhoods.



24.3.2 Access Management

(a) **Applicability.** This section applies to all driveways that access public streets.

(b) **Single-Family Development**

(1) *Single-Family Residential Subdivisions*

a. *Frontage and Access Off a Collector or Thoroughfare.* Residential lots having direct access on a collector or thoroughfare may be platted only if:

1. *Lots Exceeding One (1) Acre.* All lots are greater than one (1) acre in size, have a minimum lot frontage of 100 feet, and provide for permanent vehicular turnaround on the lot to prevent backing onto the roadway. A plat note shall not waive this requirement.
2. *Lots Less Than One (1) Acre.* Access points that permit vehicular access to lots less than one (1) acre in size from a thoroughfare or collector are allowed if a marginal access street or easement is constructed that:
 - a. Provides access to 2 or more lots;
 - b. Is spaced at least 200 feet from a proposed marginal access street or easement, or an existing driveway or street;
 - c. Is designed to allow a motorist to enter the public street without executing a backing maneuver;
 - d. Is designated on the subdivision plat; and
 - e. Is constructed or bonded before the plat is recorded.

(c) **Commercial, Industrial and Medium or High-Density Residential Developments**

(1) Lots proposed for commercial, mixed-use, industrial and multi-family residential developments in the ETJ or in the MX, C-1, I-1 or I-2 zoning districts may have vehicular access from a thoroughfare or collector. The maximum number of access points permitted is based on the criteria and driveway spacing requirements in Table 3.2-1 below, as determined by the Traffic Director:

Table 3.2-1 Access Points

Frontage Length (<i>unrestricted</i>)	Number of Access Points
< 200'	1 access point
≥ 200'	1 access point for every 200' of unrestricted frontage

(2) Commercial development in the ETJ or in MX, C, I-1 or I-2 zoning districts with less than 400 feet fronting an arterial street shall provide for shared access with adjacent lots fronting the thoroughfare. Shared access shall include platted common access easements across the lot or recorded deed covenants providing common access across that lot with adjacent lot(s).

(d) **Location of Access Points.** The Planning Director (or TXDOT or county authority, if appropriate), will determine the specific location of access points when a site plan is reviewed prior to issuance of a building permit.



- (1) The location is based on the following criteria:
 - a. The location shall minimize conflicts with vehicle turning movements;
 - b. The location shall be as far as practicable from intersections; and
 - c. The location shall be at least 50 feet from another driveway location.
 - (2) If this standard is not possible, based upon the frontage of the property, the location shall be directed as far as practicable from other driveway locations.
 - (3) Driveways along a thoroughfare within 400 feet of a major intersection, such as the intersection of arterial streets or the intersection of a collector and an arterial street, may be restricted to right turn movements.
- (e) **Non-Standard Access.** A lot included on an approved plat that does not otherwise limit access and was approved by the City and filed for record as of the effective date of this section, and which does not have sufficient frontage to meet the driveway approach spacing requirements in this section, is allowed one (1) driveway approach.
- (f) **Truck Access.**
- (1) Truck access is not permitted on local residential streets, except as permitted below when within 300 feet of a City designated truck route.¹
 - (2) All access for truck traffic shall:
 - a. Include direct frontage onto a City designated truck route; or,
 - b. Private drive easement to a designated truck route; or
 - c. The lot or private drive easement is located within 300 feet of a designated truck route. (This distance is measured excluding public rights-of-way.)
 - (3) Trucks owned or leased shall not use local residential streets,
 - (4) All driveways not located on a truck route, but within the allowed distance from a truck route, shall be constructed to direct traffic to the truck route and away from residential streets. If more than one block of land for development is involved, all truck traffic shall use one route of access to the truck route.

¹ This is currently limited to the MXD district (§ 24.65.18). Because residents along a residential street would not care where the trucks are coming from, this makes more sense as a general standard.



24.3.3 Blocks, Lots and Yards

(a) **Dwelling Units per Lot.** In the AG, RL-1, and RL-2 districts, only one principal dwelling unit is allowed per lot. This does not apply to accessory dwelling units as provided in Article 6.

(b) Lots

- (1) *Access.* For subdivision plats, each lot shall include adequate access to an existing public street by:
 - a. frontage along that street, or
 - b. connection to a new street, or
 - c. a continuous permanent easement connected to an existing street.
- (2) *Lot Area and Width*
 - a. Minimum lot area and width applies to all conversions and new construction.
 - b. Lot width is measured at the front setback line.
 - c. At least 24 feet of lot width is required unless otherwise allowed through an approved site plan through the PD rezoning process.
- (3) *Placement.* For subdivision plats:
 - a. Side lot lines shall be substantially at right angles or radial to street lines.
 - b. Adjacent lots shall not be placed at right angles to each other if possible.
- (4) *Double and Reverse Frontage Lots.*
 - a. A proposed subdivision plat shall not include double or reverse frontage lots, except where essential to provide separation of residential development from traffic arteries or to overcome specific disadvantages of topography and orientation. A residential service road is not considered a traffic artery for these purposes.
 - b. Double or reverse frontage lots shall include a planting screen easement at least 10 feet wide, or a fence at the property line along the line of lots abutting arterial, collector or higher order streets.
 - c. The plat shall not allow a right of access across the planting screen or fence. To separate residential development from major street rights-of-way, a subdivision application shall include a 1-foot easement prohibiting access as provided in subsection b above.
 - d. Where a planting screen or fence does not allow access for the adjacent residences, the right-of-way normally maintained by the adjoining property owner becomes the responsibility of the city to maintain if within city limits.

(c) Setbacks and Yards

- (1) *Applicability.* This subsection (c) applies to Article 2 (Zoning Districts) and any other provision of this Chapter that refers to or requires a setback or yard. Setbacks and yards are defined as follows:



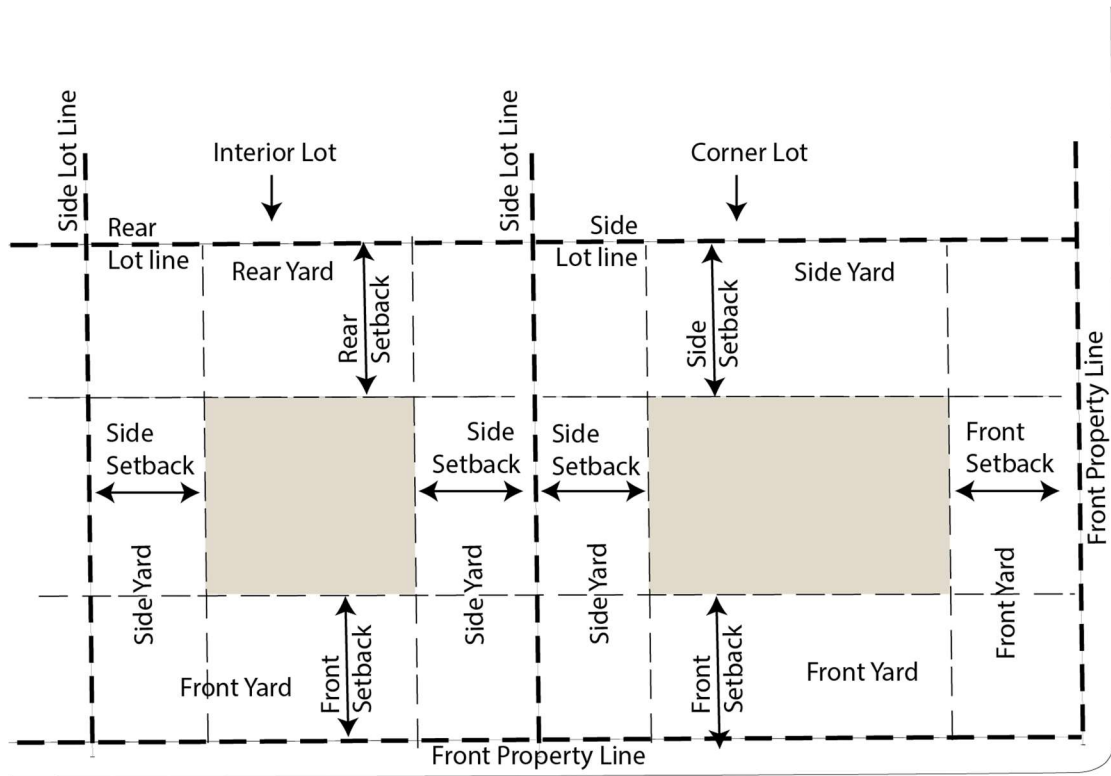


Figure 3.3-1 Setbacks and Yards

Table 3.3-1 Setbacks and Yards

Front Setback A line extending the full width of the building site across its front, with required depth measured at right angles to the front street line of the building site. The front yard is the area lying between the front street line and the front setback.

Rear Setback A line extending the full width of the building site across its rear, with required depth measured at right angles to the rear lot line of the building site. The rear yard is the area lying between the rear lot line and the rear setback.

Side Setback A line extending the full width of the building site across its side, with required depth measured at right angles to the adjacent side lot lines of the building site. The side yard is the area lying between the side lot line and the side setback. In any district where side yards are not required by the district regulations, a side yard shall have the minimum width required by the currently adopted building code, as applicable.

(2) *Corner Lots*

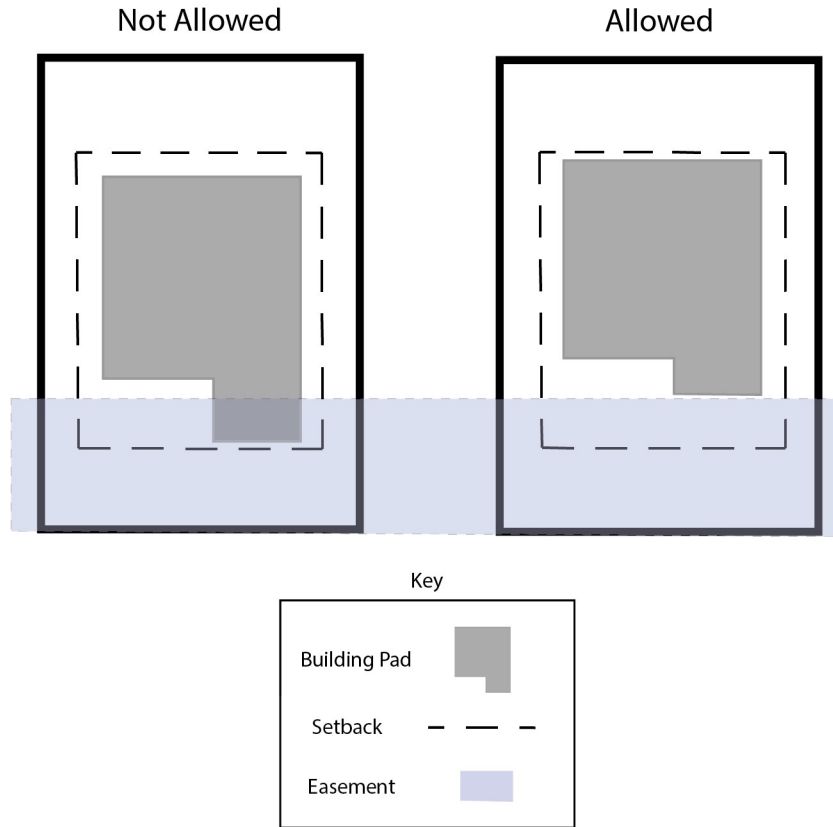
- a. A corner lot has a front yard on each lot line abutting a street, and a side lot line abutting an interior lot.
- b. For residential subdivision plats, corner lots shall have extra width to permit appropriate building setback from and orientation to both streets.



- (3) *Modification.* The Planning Commission may modify the front and rear setbacks through the subdivision approval process, based on the criteria identified in Section 24.3.1(b) above.
- (4) *Contextual Front Yard Adjustment.* When existing buildings are closer to the front property line than the minimum requirements, the required front setback for a new building or building extension is the average depth of the existing structures along that block front, but no closer to the property line than fifty (50) percent of the minimum front setback required by the applicable zoning district.
- (5) *Side Yards for Cumulative Side Setbacks.* Where a total or cumulative side setback is indicated, the side setback on one lot line may drop to zero (0) feet if the sum of both setbacks meet the total required setback.
- (6) *Rear Yards for Commercial or Industrial Buildings.* Where the rear yard of a commercial or industrial building abuts a public street or alley, a rear yard setback of at least 10 feet is required.
- (7) *Setback Based on Building Height.* If the height of a proposed structure on a lot abutting a more restricted district is greater than that allowed in the more restricted district, the minimum side and/or rear yard requirements for the structure in the less restricted district is increased by 1 foot for every two 2 in height that the proposed structure exceeds the height requirement in the more restricted district up, to a maximum of fifty (50).
- (8) *Downtown / Regional Mixed-Use Center (MX-3).* In the MX-3 district, no front building setback is required. However, that a minimum 8 foot wide unobstructed sidewalk is required for all new construction. Side or rear building setbacks are not required, except as required by Table 503 of the International Building Code.
- (9) *Setbacks Conflicting with Easements.*
 - a. Easements shall supersede setbacks requirements. No structure shall be placed within an easement if the setback encroaches in the easement.



- b. Setbacks conflicting with easements are illustrated in Figure *** to show what is allowed and is not allowed.



(d) Setback Encroachments

- (1) Except as provided below, yards shall be unoccupied and unobstructed from 3 feet above the general ground level of the lot upward. This applies to any overhang or projection from a building or structure except as provided in subsection (2) below.
- (2) The features designated and as conditioned below may encroach into a required yard subject to height, intersection visibility, easements, and building code separation requirements:

Table 3.3-2 Encroachments² (not permitted in easements)

Feature	Yards where encroachment is permitted	Encroachment (max – i.e., may encroach up to this distance inside the yard)	Setback from property line (min – i.e. must stay at least this distance from the property line)
Accessory building	Side	--	2½ feet
Arbors (maximum footprint of 80 sf and maximum height of 12')	Any yard	No restriction	--
Architectural projections of sills, belt courses, cornices, buttresses, eaves, spouts/gutters, brackets, pilasters,	Any yard	2 feet	2½ feet from side lot line

² A check mark (✓) indicates currently permitted encroachments.

Feature	Yards <i>where encroachment is permitted</i>	Encroachment <i>(max – i.e., may encroach up to this distance inside the yard)</i>	Setback from property line <i>(min – i.e. must stay at least this distance from the property line)</i>
grill work, trellises and similar architectural features (unenclosed*) ³			
Basketball goal	Any yard	No restriction	--
Bird houses, dog houses	Any yard	No restriction	--
Balcony (upper floor), wing walls, stoops, landings, and patios (unenclosed*) ⁴	Front, Rear	--	50% of minimum setback
	Side	--	2½ feet
Palapa, Canopies, Freestanding	Front, Rear	10 feet into yard	6 feet
Canopy, awning or other window shading (unenclosed*)	Side	--	2½ feet
Carport (unenclosed*)	Front, Rear	--	--
	Side	--	2½ feet
Chimney	Front, Side	--	50% of minimum setback
	Side	--	5 feet
Clothes line (up to 2 poles)	Rear/Side	No restriction	--
Decks, covered	Rear	30 inches into yard	--
Decks, uncovered	Rear/Side	5 feet into yard	--
Driveways	Any Yard	No restriction	--
Equipment, ancillary (Residential or Commercial / Mixed Use districts)	Interior Side/Rear	No restriction	--
Equipment, ancillary (non-residential districts)	Interior Side/Rear	No restriction	--
Fences, walls, poles, posts and other customary yard accessories, ornaments and furniture	Any yard	No restriction	--
Open fire escapes / enclosed outside stairways / handicap ramps required by the building code	Any	3½ feet	--
	Rear:	5 feet into rear yard	--
Flag Pole	Any yard	No restriction	--
Garage, attached or detached and loaded from an alley	Rear	No restriction	12 feet
Gates	Any yard	No restriction	--
Pool equipment, generators, HVAC units	Side/Rear	No restriction	Per currently adopted IBC codes
Landscaping, lawns, berms, trees, shrubs	Any yard	No restriction	--
Light Poles	Any year	No restriction	--
Mailboxes	Any year	No restriction	--
Playground equipment, trampolines	Any yard	No restriction	--
Open pools, screened or enclosed pools, spas, and uncovered decks or patios, up to 20 feet from a dwelling unit on an abutting lot	Rear/Side	No restriction	--
Other solid projections not listed in this table	Side	--	5 feet
Parking areas, subject to zoning district regulations and this Article	Any	No restriction	--
Porch (enclosed)	Side	--	5 feet
Porch (unenclosed*)	Front, Rear	--	50% of minimum setback
Projecting overhangs on the ground floor not listed above	Any	No restriction	Per currently adopted ICC codes
Projecting windows such as bays, bows, oriels, or dormers	Any yard	5 feet	Per currently adopted ICC codes
Ramps for citizens with impairments	Any	No restriction	--
Retaining Walls	Any	No restriction	--
Sidewalks	Any	No restriction	--
Stairway or fire escape (outside, unenclosed*)	Side	--	5 feet

³ Currently limited to roof eaves – this expands the list of architectural features and allows encroachment into front and rear in addition to side lot line.

⁴ Currently limited to upper floor balconies.



Feature	Yards <i>where encroachment is permitted</i>	Encroachment <i>(max – i.e., may encroach up to this distance inside the yard)</i>	Setback from property line <i>(min – i.e. must stay at least this distance from the property line)</i>
	Rear	5 feet	--
Stormwater detention or retention facilities or ditches, unless the Director finds that underground stormwater management facilities are not currently available	Rear (MX), Any yard (all other districts)	No restriction	--
Terraces (unenclosed*)	Front, Rear	--	50% of minimum setback
Vending Machines (including ice machines, video rental machines), ATMs	Side/Rear	No restriction (prohibited in a required buffer)	--

Notes:

* Where indicated with an asterisk (*), “unenclosed” means that all sides are open with walls no higher than three (3) feet

(e) Lot Grading

- (1) Lot grading in developments will be such that lots drain toward the street. Accordingly, all lots graded within developments will be sloped such that a minimum grade of one-half of one percent exists from the property lines to the rear of the lot. In the event it is not practical to drain lots to the street (rear to front) then an alternate drainage plan may be submitted for approval by the City of Laredo Engineering Department.
- (2) If drainage from adjacent property crosses such development, drainage from adjacent property will be physically diverted to adequate drainage facilities or handled with the run-off from the development itself.
- (3) A lot grading plan shall be made part of the final plans and shall be considered an improvement for the development. Construction of same shall be a condition precedent to the final acceptance of the development by the City Engineer.



24.3.4 Building Design & Height

(a) Building Design

- (1) *Principal Entrances.* If a maximum front setback applies, the principal entrance of every principal building must be located along the primary façade and directly face a street or civic space. Public space may include a central garden or courtyard when that public space opens directly onto the primary Street. Additional building entrances are permitted.
- (2) *Frontage Buildout.* Frontage buildout is the percentage of the property width that is occupied by the building facade within the front yard.
- (3) *Wide Façades.* Building façades longer than 50 feet shall be varied with at least one change of architectural expression. These changes in expression may include a vertical element running from the ground plane to the roof, a change in fenestration, color, or texture, or a break in building façade plane or roof line.

(b) Frontage Types

- (1) *Applicability*
 - a. The frontage is the area of a property that faces a street or other public space and an assembly of components within that area. Frontage components include:
 1. The building facade; and
 2. Structures that project from the facade such as porches, terraces, stoops, awnings, canopies, and bay windows.
 3. Where required, any front yard landscape elements between the building facade and the public street or space.
 - b. This subsection applies to any application for a rezoning, conditional use permit, building permit or certificate of occupancy where building design is regulated by Article 2 and the applicable zoning district.
 - c. The application for approval shall designate the frontage type for all proposed buildings.
 - d. Each building shall comply with the standards for the required frontage type when new construction or substantial improvement is proposed, when the frontage type is changed, or when the primary frontage of the property is re-designated to another street on a corner lot.
 - e. New additions to existing buildings are not required to designate frontage types.
- (2) *Frontage Types Required.* The frontage elements shown in Table and defined in subsections (3) through (9) are required for the following use categories in the RM, RH and MX districts:



Table 3.4-1 Frontage Types

Frontage Type	A <i>Multi-family</i>	B <i>Mixed-Use</i>	C <i>Commercial</i>
*Gallery	--	■	■
*Common Yard	■	--	--
*Forecourt	■	■	■
*Stoop	■	○	○
*Shopfront	--	■	■
*Porch	--	■	--
Tower	○	○	■

Notes:

- One of these elements is required.
- Element is allowed but not required.
- Element is prohibited.

The use categories in Table 3.4-1 refer to the following uses, where permitted in the applicable RM, RH and MX districts (see Use Chart, § 24.2.17):

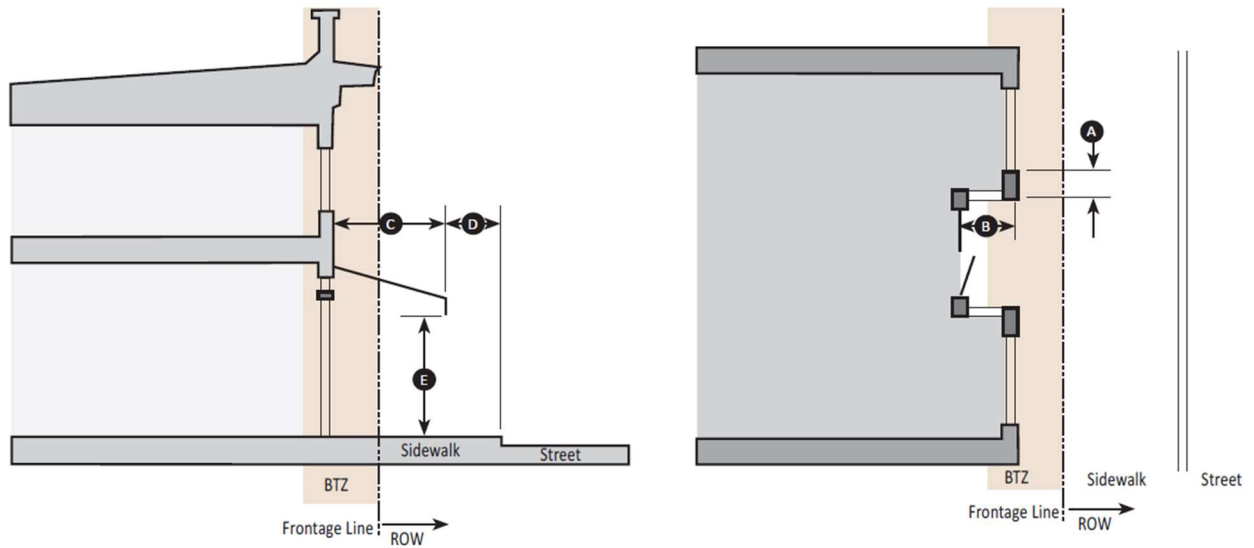
- A Multi-Family:** Any use under the Residential category other than Single-Family Detached Dwelling, Manufactured Home, Manufactured Housing Park or Zero Lot Line House.
- B Mixed-Use:** Any Mixed-Use Building or Live-Work Dwelling (which may also use a Multi-Family frontage type).
- C Commercial:** Any use under the Commercial / Mixed-Use category (except Mixed-Use or Automotive).

This section does not require frontage types for any use in the Public/Civic/Institutional, Industrial / Production, Infrastructure, Agriculture, Accessory, or Miscellaneous categories.

Description and standards for frontages appear below:



(3) Shopfronts



Key
 Build-to-Zone (BTZ)
 Frontage/Property Line

Description: The front façade of the building is within the front yard and covered by an awning, canopy, marquee, second floor balcony, arcade / colonnade, or inset into the main body of the building.

Size

A	Distance between glazing or min. 4" break in the wall plane	2' (<i>max</i>)
B	Door recess (a recessed entry may be designed in a variety of configurations (recessed door, sawtooth pattern, etc.) and may be located on the front facade or the corner of a building.	5' (<i>max</i>)

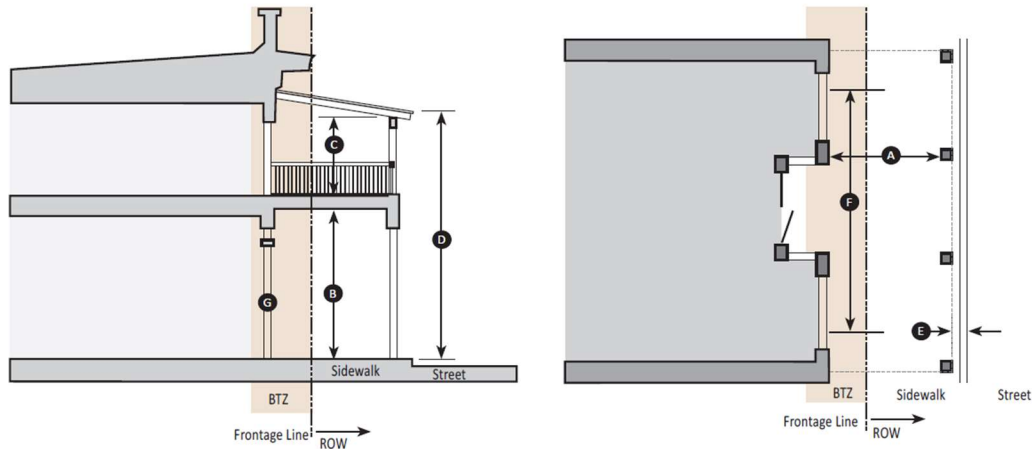
Canopy or Awning

C	Depth	4' (<i>min</i>)
	Width, Cumulative	70% of façade width (<i>min</i>)
D	Setback from curb	2' (<i>min</i>)
E	Height, Clear	8' (<i>min</i>)

Entryways and Habitable Space

	Interval between doors or entrances for public access	50' (<i>max</i>)
	Depth of habitable space shall be provided behind each shopfront on the primary façade	15' (<i>min</i>)

(4) Gallery



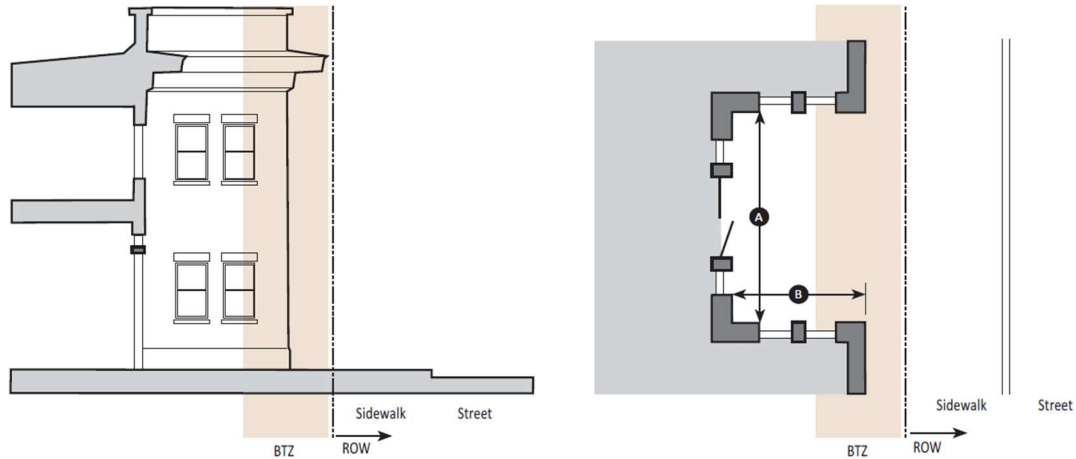
Key
 Build-to-Zone (BTZ)
 Frontage/Property Line

Description: The front façade of the building is in the front yard (build-to-zone or BTZ in the figure above) and the gallery element overlaps the sidewalk, eliminating the need for an awning or canopy. This frontage type is intended for buildings with ground-floor commercial or retail uses and may be one or two stories in height.

Size		
A	Depth, Clear	8' min.
B	Ground Floor Height, Clear	9' min.
C	Upper Floor Height, Clear	9' min.
D	Height	2 stories max.
E	Setback from Curb	2' min.
F	Width	75% of façade width min.
Miscellaneous		

G Galleries must also follow all the rules of the shopfront frontage type.
 Arcades must have a consistent depth along a frontage.
 Arcades with more than 2 floors of habitable space above the colonnade must not encroach onto a public right-of-way, and must be located so that they abut the right-of-way.

(5) Forecourt



Key
 Build-to-Zone (BTZ)
 Frontage/Property Line

Description: The primary portion of the building’s main Facade is in the front yard (at the Build-to-Zone or BTZ in the image) while a small percentage is set back, creating a court space. This space can be used as an apartment or office entry court, garden space, or for restaurant outdoor dining.

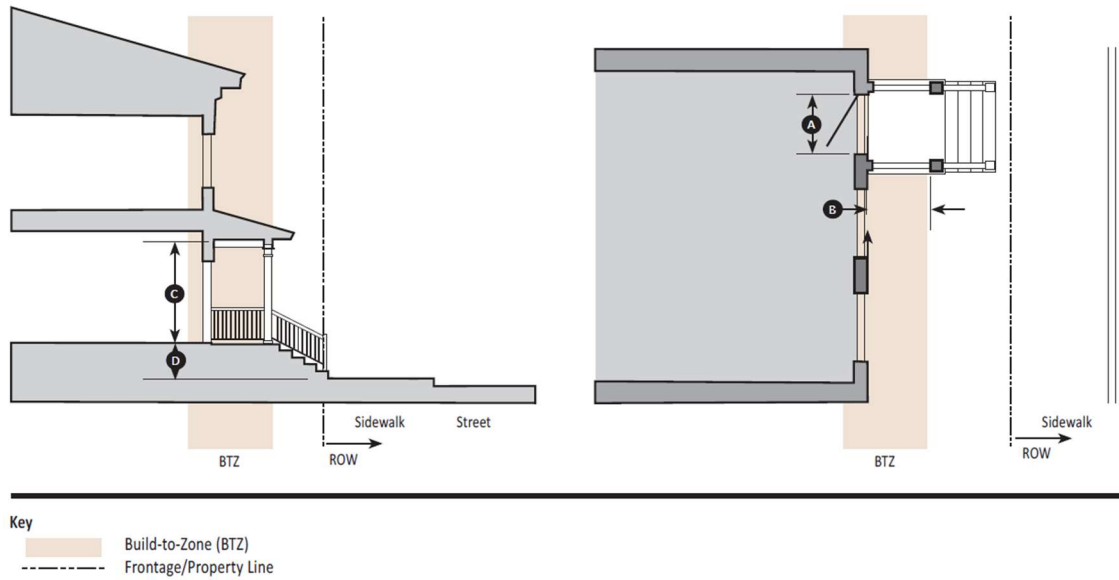
Size

A Width, Clear	12' (<i>min</i>)
B Depth, Clear	12' (<i>min</i>)

Miscellaneous

Forecourts are especially useful along larger, more auto-dominant streets in order to provide well-shaped, intimately sized public outdoor spaces. The proportions and orientation of courtyard spaces must be carefully considered for solar orientation and user comfort.

(6) Stoop



Description: The main façade of the building is in the front yard (at the Build-to-Zone or BTZ in the image) and the elevated stoop projects forward. The stoop is used to access a first floor that is elevated above the sidewalk to ensure privacy within the building. Stairs from the stoop may descend forward or to the side. Stoops may extend beyond the front yard and into the Right-of-Way if a 6' minimum clear zone is maintained for pedestrians on the sidewalk.

Size

A	Width, Clear	5' (min) 8' (max)
B	Depth, Clear	5' (min) 8' (max)
C	Height, Clear	8' (min)
D	Finish Level Above Sidewalk	24" (min)

Miscellaneous

A stoop is appropriate for residential uses with small setbacks.

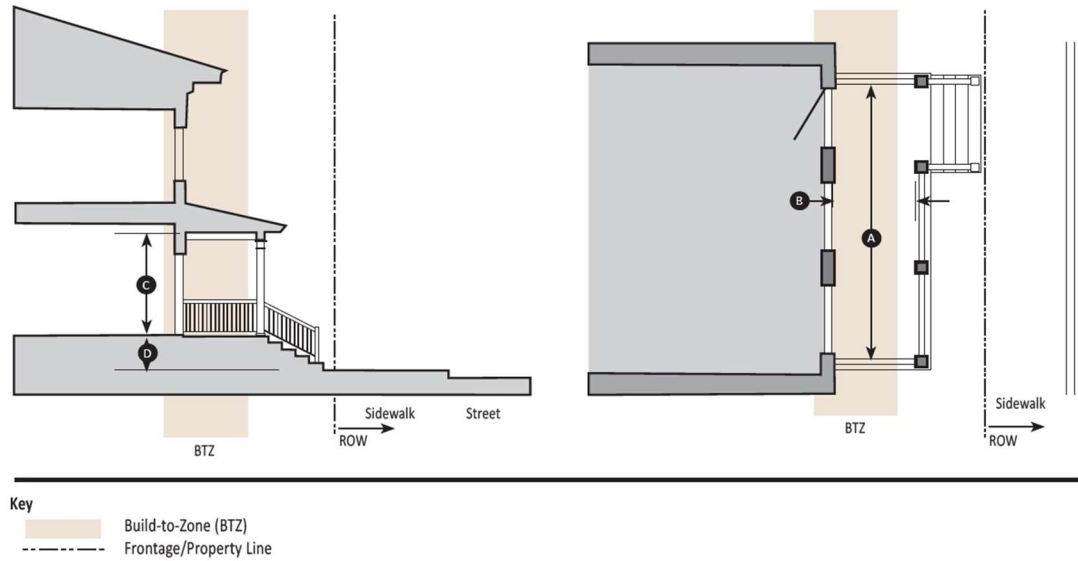
Stairs may be perpendicular or parallel to the building facade.

Gates are not allowed.

All doors must face the street.



(7) Porch

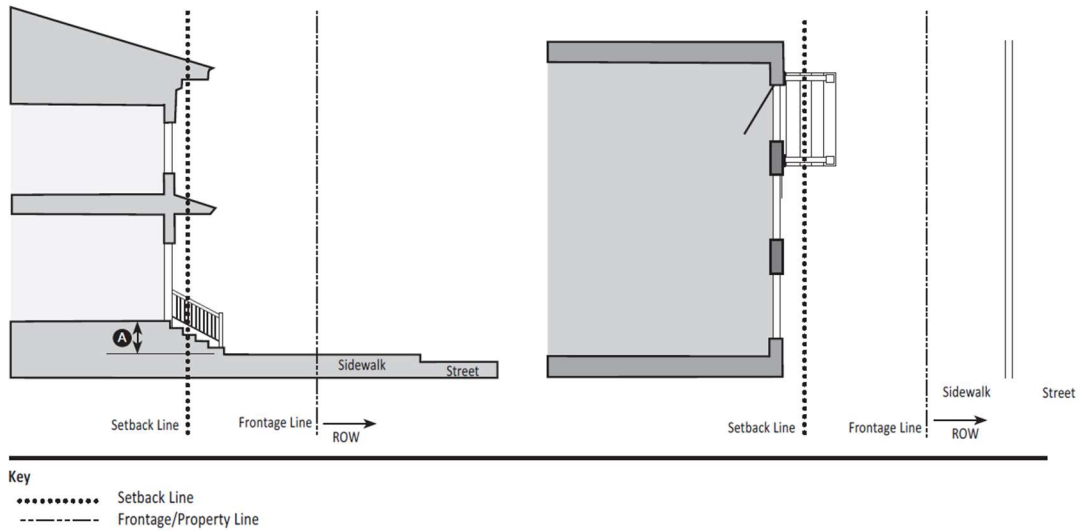


Description: The main Façade of the building is in the front yard (at the Build-to-Zone or BTZ in the image) and the elevated porch projects forward. The porch is used to access a first floor that is elevated above the sidewalk to ensure privacy within the building. A porch is large enough to function as an outdoor living space. Stairs from the porch may descend forward or to the side. Porches may extend into the min front setback, but only the stairs from the porch may extend into the Right-of-Way if 6' minimum clear zone for pedestrians is maintained on the sidewalk.

Size		
A	Width, Clear	10' (min)
B	Depth, Clear	8' (min)
C	Height, Clear	8' (min)
E	Finish Level Above Sidewalk	24" (min)



(8) *Common Yard*

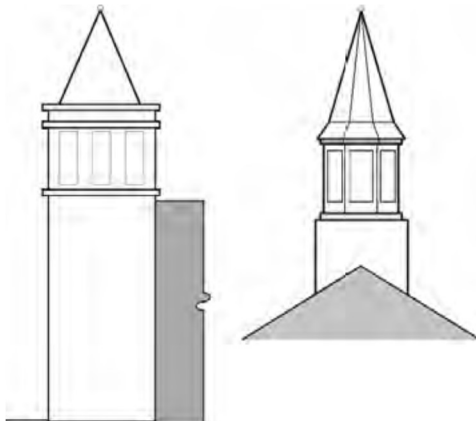


Description: The front façade is set back from the front lot line with a planted front yard. The front yard is unfenced and visually continuous with adjacent yards, supporting a common landscape.

Size

A Finish Level Above Sidewalk 24" (*min*)

(9) *Tower*



Description: These features are designed to extend above the roofline, and are generally intended to be visual landmarks.

Height / Size

If a terminated vista is indicated on an approved site plan, towers are required and extend up the following distance above the designated height limit:

- Towers with a footprint smaller than 30 feet x 30 feet 30' (*max*)
- Towers with a footprint smaller than 20 feet x 20 feet 40' (*max*)

In all other locations:

- Footprint 30 feet x 30 feet (*max*)
- Height encroachment above maximum height 20' (*max*)

(c) Height Measurement. Height is measure as follows:

- (1) *Buildings-Measured in Feet.* For buildings, and where height is measured in feet, height is the distance from the average elevation of the proposed finished grade at the front of the building to the highest point of the roof for flat roofs, to the deck line of mansard roof and the mean height between eaves and ridge for gable hip and gambrel roofs.
- (2) *Buildings-Measured in Stories.* For buildings, and where height is measured in stories:
 - a. A “story” is as defined in the adopted building code. [*Note: the 2012 International Building Code defines a “story” as: “[t]hat portion of a building included between the upper surface of a floor and the upper surface of the floor or roof next above.... It is measured as the vertical distance from top to top of two successive tiers of beams or finished floor surfaces and, for the topmost story, from the top of the floor finish to the top of the ceiling joists or, where there is not a ceiling, to the top of the roof rafters.”*]
 - b. Habitable attics (space within the roof structure), basements and underground parking are not considered stories.
 - c. A single floor level exceeding 14 feet, or 25 feet for ground floor commercial, counts as 2 stories. Mezzanines extending beyond 33% of the floor area count as an additional story.
- (3) *Towers and Structures.* For towers or other structures, height is the distance from the finished grade of the parcel to the highest point on the tower or other structure, including the base pad and any antenna.

(d) Height Exceptions. The height regulations prescribed in this Chapter do not apply to television and radio towers, church spires, belfries, monuments, water tanks, chimneys, or smokestacks and flag poles.

24.3.5 Fencing and Screening

(a) Fencing (Generally)

- (1) *Materials.* Plywood, sheet metal, and corrugated steel fencing is prohibited.
- (2) *Construction.* All fences shall test plumb and square at the time of installation.
- (3) *Maintenance.* All fences shall be maintained by the property owner free of accumulations of trash, advertising, and graffiti.
- (4) *Chain Link.* Chain link fencing is prohibited in the RS-1, RM, RH-1, and RH-2 districts.



(b) Fence Height

- (1) Fences exceeding 4 feet in height:
 - a. shall be located within the front yard along any collector, arterial or thoroughfare, and
 - b. at least 8 feet from the back of curb to provide for pedestrian circulation.
- (2) Fences located along side and rear lots lines adjoining public streets shall not be located within the visibility triangle on any corner lot, and shall be set back from the curb line at least 8 feet to provide for pedestrian circulation.
- (3) Fences exceeding 7 feet in height or masonry walls exceeding 30 inches in height require issuance of a building permit.

(c) Screening Required

- (1) *Non-Residential Uses Abutting Residential Property.* All non-residential uses which abut or adjoin any residential property or zoning district, or which abut or adjoin a school, park, or church, shall provide an opaque fence or wall at least 7 feet in height along all side or rear property lines which abut or adjoin that property.
- (2) *Non-Residential Uses Abutting Residential Property.* No screening fence is required for non-residential property adjoining vacant land in an MX-1, MX-2, MX-3, C-1, I-1 or I-2 district.
- (3) *Outdoor Operations and Storage.* All outdoor operations and storage shall be screened from adjacent, more restrictive zoning districts with an opaque fence of at least 7 feet in height. (As amended 2/26/90, Ord. #90-0-36 and 2/22/93 Ord. #93-0-229)

(d) Screening Fences. All screening fences required under this section shall be constructed of brick, stone, masonry, cement, stucco, cinder block or pressure treated weather resistant lumber, and shall be structurally reinforced to resist wind damage. They shall be constructed in such a manner as to provide visual screening.

24.3.6 Landscaping & Tree Preservation

(a) Applicability

- (1) *Development that Requires Landscaping.* This section applies to:
 - a. new subdivisions (subsection 24.3.6(c) only), and
 - b. building permits for the construction or expansion of non-residential structures of at least 1,000 square feet or 25% of an existing structure, whichever is more.
- (2) *Exemptions.* This section does not apply to:
 - a. the reconstruction, modification or addition to property used for single family residential purposes, and
 - b. subdivisions approved before October 19, 1998 where the street tree or money-in-lieu of requirement is met,
 - c. construction or expansions of structures that do not meet the thresholds in subsection (1) above.

(b) New Subdivisions



- (1) *Street Trees Required.* The owner or subdivider of property in new subdivisions shall plant, or require the planting of the total number of street trees (T) required under the following calculations, whichever is greatest:

Table 3.6-1 Street Trees for New Subdivisions

Formula	Applies to -	
$T = (L \times 2) / 30$	Street dedication plat and/or where the property to be platted lies adjacent to both sides of a public street.	L = the length of the public street measured in linear feet at the centerline of the street
$T = L / 30$	The plat lies adjacent to only one side of a public street.	
$T = Y \times 2$	The property is proposed to be platted into single-family residential lots. Y = the number of single family residential lots included in the proposed plat.	

- (2) *Plat Notes.* Where the subdivider proposes to plant trees required by this subsection in conjunction with construction or development of the property, this requirement shall be noted on the plat. The note does not relieve the subdivider of the responsibility to plant trees along any collector or arterial where a new single-family residential subdivision abuts a collector or arterial street along the rear property line of any single-family residential lot.
- (3) *Planting Locations.* Trees required under this section shall be planted within the public rights-of-way, within landscape or other reserves restricted for the purpose, or on private property within the 10 feet parallel and adjacent to a local street right-of-way, or on private non-residential property within 25 feet parallel and adjacent to a major thoroughfare.
- (4) *Median Planting*
- a. Trees or shrubs planted within a median shall comply with the following:

Table 3.6-2 Median Planting Locations

Street Category	Location
Major arterial	> 75' from the nose of the median
Minor arterial	> 50' from the nose of the median
Any median	> 50' from any mid-block opening in the median > 5' from the back of the final approved design line for the curb

- b. Trees in medians shall be spaced at intervals of at least 30 feet and no more than an average of 60 feet.
- (5) **Visibility Maintained**
- a. Within the visibility triangle no shrub, tree, plant or structure shall exceed a height greater than 24 inches measured from the centerline of the adjacent roadway.



- b. Trees shall be kept trimmed so that all branches or growth are at least 10 feet above the adjacent roadway measured from the centerline of that roadway.

(c) Street Tree Planting in Existing Subdivisions

- (1) Required planting on existing platted lots is as follows:

Table 3.6-3 Planting on Existing Platted Lots

Use of Lot	Number of Trees	Location
Single-family residential	2	Public right-of-way, within a landscape or other reserve restricted for the purpose, or on private property 10' parallel and adjacent to a local street right-of-way.
Non-residential or multi-family residential	1 per 30' of public street right-of-way	10' parallel and adjacent to a local street right-of-way, or within 25' parallel and adjacent to a major thoroughfare

- (2) Trees shall be planted within the public rights-of-way, within landscape or other reserves restricted for the purpose, or on private property within locations specified above.

(d) Surface Parking Lots

- (1) *Number of Trees Required*
 - a. New surface parking lots with more than 15 parking spaces require 1 eligible tree for every 10 parking spaces or fraction thereof. The trees shall be located within and/or on the perimeter of the parking lot.
 - b. Existing parking lots that are expanded to comply with 24.3.7 (Parking and Loading) and that contain more 15 parking spaces after the expansion shall provide 1 eligible tree for each 10 additional spaces or fraction thereof. The trees shall be located within and/or on the perimeter of the parking lot.
 - c. A permeable area with a radius of at least 3 feet measured from the trunk of each eligible tree shall be maintained, and each eligible tree shall be protected from automobiles by curbs or tire stops located at least 3 feet from the tree trunk.
- (2) *Perimeter Landscaping*
 - a. Parking surface areas adjacent to the public street right-of-way shall have shrubs planted at regular intervals along the perimeter of all parking surfaces adjacent to the right-of-way, exclusive of driveway entrances, pedestrian walkways and cutback areas.
 - b. The shrubs shall be maintained at a height of at least 18 and no more than 36 inches. The minimum number of shrubs provided the total number of required street trees multiplied by four. Seventy-five percent (75%) or more of the required shrubs shall be planted along the perimeter of the parking surface.

(e) Tree Preservation Credit



- (1) Applicants are awarded a credit toward the tree requirement at the rate of two (2) street trees for each existing healthy tree actually preserved.
 - (2) The owner or subdivider shall provide reasonable measures to ensure the continued survival of existing trees for which credit is claimed.
 - (3) Any eligible tree for which credit is claimed shall have a minimum caliper of 6 inches.
 - (4) The owner or subdivider of the property may request credit for the planting of up to 50% of the trees required under this code.
 - (5) If the preserved tree dies, the tree must be replaced with a minimum 3-inch caliper tree.
- (f) Removal, Replanting, and Replacement of Protected Trees**
- (1) *Protected Trees.* All trees on public land within the city limits of Laredo with a caliper of 8 inches are considered protected trees.
 - (2) *Removal of Protected Trees.* No person or corporation shall remove or cause the removal of any protected tree without first securing approval from the Tree Board as provided in subsection (3) below.
 - (3) *Tree Board Approval*
 - a. When site plan approval is required by Building Services Department for any improvements on public land, the actual or schematic location of existing protected trees shall be shown on those site plans for review by the Tree Board. The Tree Board shall submit their order regarding the proposed plan within 14 days of the date the plans were received by the Board.
 - b. The Tree Board shall review site plans for all improvement projects from any city, state, and federal government agency. The Tree Board's approval of these public projects constitute approval for the removal of any protected tree indicated on the project plans.
 - (4) *Standards for Removal of Protected Trees.*
 - a. The Tree Board shall approve removal of a protected tree located on public property if:
 1. The tree is diseased, severely damaged, dead on the site, or constitutes a hazard.
 2. The tree's location prevents reasonable access to the property or precludes reasonable and lawful use of the property.
 - b. The Tree Board may approve the removal of a protected tree in connection with construction, maintenance, or repair of public facilities in or upon a public street, alley, right-of-way, greenbelt, or other public land under one or more of the following conditions:
 1. The location of the tree prevents the opening of reasonable and necessary vehicular traffic lanes.
 2. The location of the tree prevents the construction of utility lines or drainage facilities which may not be feasibly rerouted.



(5) *Replacement Trees*

- a. The Tree Board may require replacement trees where deemed necessary to mitigate the loss of protected trees.
 - b. Where replacement trees are required:
 1. The minimum diameter of replacement trees shall be at least 3 caliper inches, unless otherwise approved by the Tree Board.
 2. When it is found impractical to relocate or replace the removed trees on the same property, replacement may be made upon any public owned property, property of non-profit organizations, public parks, or right-of-ways, subject to the approval of the Tree Board.
 3. Tree species used for replacement shall conform to subsection (j) and Table 3.6-4 of this Section.
- (6) Any person aggrieved by the decision of the Tree Board may appeal the decision to the City Council by filing a written appeal, specifying the reasons thereof, within 30 days of the time the order is issued.

(g) **Special Requirements**

- (1) Any tree on privately owned property that is found to be a nuisance shall receive a notice to abate such nuisance as described in Chapter 21 of the Code of Ordinances, City of Laredo.
- (2) All utility franchise holders shall present scheduled tree pruning plans to the Tree Board prior to the start of pruning work.
- (3) (Unless specifically authorized by the Tree Board, no person shall remove, intentionally damage, mutilate, allow any gaseous liquid or solid substances which are harmful to protected trees, to come in contact with them; or set fire or permit any fire to burn that will injure any portion of any protected tree.
- (4) All applicants for permits to work on public trees must comply with State and Local liability insurance requirements, workmen's compensation and safety codes.

(h) **Alternate Planting Proposals**

Purpose: It is the intent of the City to provide an opportunity for the development of exceptional or unique landscape designs which cannot meet the express terms of this Section. Special consideration is given to exceptional landscape designs that preserve and incorporate existing vegetation in excess of the minimum requirement and/or in innovative ways.

- (1) Applicants for approval of an alternate tree/shrub plan may demonstrate that the intent of this article is more effectively met in whole or in part through an alternate tree/shrub plan.
 - (2) An alternate landscape plan shall be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission and, if approved, substituted in whole or in part for a landscape plan meeting the express terms of this section.
- (i) **Money-In-Lieu of Trees.** Up to thirty percent (30%) of the total planting requirements may be met by depositing, with the Parks and Recreation Department, a sum of money equal to the cost of the required trees and their planting. This money shall be placed in a special fund



designated for the purposes of planting of eligible trees in city parks or public rights-of-way. The cost per tree shall be determined by the Tree Board on an annual basis. The remaining seventy percent (70%) of the trees shall be planted as required by this ordinance.

(j) Selection and Plant List

- (1) All trees and shrubs planted in accordance with this Article shall be a native or naturalized species as recommended in the Plant List (Table 3.6-4) below, and shall be planted and maintained in accordance with the standards established in subsection (k) below.
- (2) The Plant List not all-inclusive and may be updated as needed by the Tree Board without formal amendment to this section.

(k) General Planting and Maintenance Standards

- (1) *Planting*
 - a. All trees shall be planted in holes 2 to 2 times wider than the rootball diameter. The depth of the hole shall not exceed that necessary to set the plant at the same depth it was in the nursery. All shrubs shall be planted in holes at least 6 inches wider on each side than their root spread, whether container grown or balled and burlapped. This enables the plant to extend the small roots in the first few weeks in the ground.
 - b. Place the tree or shrub in the hole. If the tree is container grown, pull the container away from the rootball. Do not pull the tree by its trunk. Pulling the tree out of the container by its trunk will damage the small roots within the ball. Place the tree or shrub in the center of the hole and adjust it so that it is straight and at the proper level.
 - c. For balled and burlapped plants, pull the top and sides of the burlap away from the ball after the hole has been partially backfilled but before watering. Do not attempt to pull the burlap out from under the ball under any condition. All wire and surplus binding from the top and sides of the ball should be removed.
 - d. Backfill with the original soil and firm the soil until approximately two-thirds (2/3) full. Before completing, fill the hole with water and allow the soil to settle around the roots. After the water has been absorbed, add topsoil to bring up to grade and form a watering basin around the tree.
 - e. An earth basin, approximately 4 inches in height, shall be formed around the tree or shrub pit to help retain water and protect the trunk from mower damage. Individual plant pits shall be completely encircled by the basin, except on steep slopes where the basin is formed on the downhill side to serve as a dam.
 - f. Trees taller than 4 feet may need to be staked. Rubber hose shall be used to protect the tree from the staking wire.
 - g. The trees and shrubs must be watered immediately after planting and as needed during the first 2 growing seasons. A thorough soaking is preferred over light, frequent soakings.



Table 3.6-4 Plant List

Common name	Scientific name	Characteristics
Recommended Trees		
Short Trees (6 to 25 feet tall)		
Huisache+	Acacia smallii	Deciduous; Delicate leaves
Jerusalem Thorn+	Parkinsonia aculeata	Deciduous; yellow flowers; Fast growing and hardy
Mexican Buckeye+	Ingnadia speciosa	Deciduous; Rose colored flowers; Fall leaf color
Wright's Acacia+	Acacia wrightii	Deciduous; Rounded crown; Flowers in spring
Small Trees (20 to 35 feet tall)		
Desert Willow*	Chilopsis linearis	Flowers in summer
Eldarica Pine+	Pinus eldarica	Best for alkaline soils; Christmas tree shaped
Honey Mesquite*	Prosopis glandulosa	Lacy spreading form
Mexican Plum*	Prunus mexicana	Spring flowers
Texas Ebony*	Pithecellobium flexicaule	Airy foliage and flowers
Wild Olive*	Corida boissieri	White flowers and bold foliage
Large Trees (above 35 feet tall)		
Bald Cypress*	Taxodium distichum	Deciduous conifer; Fall color
Chinquapin Oak*	Quercus muhlenbergi	Round-topped tree; Bold foliage
Honey Locust	Gleditsia triacanthos	Thornless varieties available
Live Oak*	Quercus virginiana	Evergreen shade tree
Shumard Oak*	Quercus shumardii	Fall color
Texas Red Oak*	Quercus texana	Fall color
RECOMMENDED SHRUBS		
Dwarf Shrubs (1 to 3 feet tall)		
Autumn Sage+	Salvia greggii	Evergreen; Full to part sun; Flowers
Dwarf Pittosporum	Pittosporum tobira w.	Small, round evergreen
Mealy Blue Sage+	Salvia farinacea	Evergreen; Blue flowers
Mountain Sage+	Salvia farinacea	Evergreen; Sun; Flowers spring thru fall seasons
Rosemary	Rosmarinus officinalis	Fragrant blue-green foliage; Blue flowers; Herb
Small Shrubs (3 to 5 feet tall)		
China Rose	Rosa chinensis	Hardy; Long-blooming; Pest resistant
Dwarf Palmetto*	Sabal minor	Trunkless, bushy palm
Sotol+	Dasyllirion texanum	Evergreen; Flowers; Cactus-like narrow leaves
Tea Rose	Rosa odorata	Pest resistant; Flowers; Hardy
Medium Shrubs (6 to 9 feet tall)		
Agarita*	Mahonia trifoliata	Yellow spring flowers; Red edible berries; Evergreen
Catclaw Acacia+	Acacia greggii	Deciduous; Delicate leaves
Central Texas Sage*+	Leucophyllum sp.	Evergreen foliage; Summer flowers



Common name	Scientific name	Characteristics
Green Pittosporum	Pittosporum tobira	Large evergreen shrub
Italian Jasmine	Jasmine humile	Sprawling evergreen; summer flowers
Pomegranate	punica granatum	Orange flowers; Edible fruit
Roemer Acacia+	Acacia roemeriana	Deciduous; Delicate leaves
Variegated Pittosporum	Pittosporum tobira variegata	Green/white variegated evergreen
Large Shrubs (10 to 25 feet tall)		
California Fan Palm	Washingtonia filifera	Tree-like palm; slow growth
Cherry Laurel*	Prunus carolina	Tree-like evergreen
Oleander	Nerium oleander	Summer flowers; Evergreen
Possumhaw*	Ilex decidua	Deciduous holly; Red berries
Texas Mountain Laurel*	Sophora secundiflora	Tree-like evergreen; Spring flowers
Texas Palmetto*	Sabal texana	Tall palm
Texas Persimmon*	Diospyros texana	Tree-like; Fruit edible by animals
White-Thorn Acacia+	Acacia constricta	Deciduous; Delicate leaves; Filtered shade
Windmill Palm	Tachycarpus fortunei	Tree-like



24.3.7 Parking and Loading

Purpose: This section provides the standard specifications required for the design and layout of off-street parking facilities in the City of Laredo. These specifications provide for the minimum adequate level of internal vehicular movement and maneuvering, ingress and egress, and patron security and convenience.

(a) Applicability

- (1) *Generally.* This section applies to all private surface or structured parking facilities in the City, except as provided below.
- (2) *Exemptions.* The following are exempt from this section:
 - a. Facilities owned or operated by the City of Laredo.
 - b. Any use or development in the MX-3 district. However, any off-street parking constructed shall comply with this Section.
- (3) *Change or Enlargement of Use (Commercial Parking Lots)*
 - a. This subsection applies if a building or structure Commercial / Mixed-Use (excluding a mixed-use building) or Lodging / Short-Term Rental (excluding short-term rentals) categories in the Use Chart:
 1. is constructed, or
 2. changes its use to another use in the categories listed above, or
 3. expands its use by an increase in floor area, number of employees, number of dwelling units, seating capacity, or
 4. otherwise creates a need for an increase in the number of existing parking spaces.
 - b. Any use subject to this subsection shall provide additional parking spaces as needed to accommodate the new use, expansion, or additional parking demand.
- (4) *Construction and Layout.* See the *Layout and Design Standards for Parking Lots* (City of Laredo Engineering Department, June 1990) (“Parking Layout and Design Standards”) and Ordinance No. 90-0-107 (adopted July 16, 1990), which documents are incorporated by this reference and made a part of this Chapter.

(b) General Requirements

- (1) *Parking Spaces for Persons with Disabilities.* Parking for persons with disabilities shall comply with the applicable requirements of the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (United States Department of Justice, September 15, 2010), as amended. This applies to both new construction and the alteration of existing parking facilities as provided in 28 CFR Part 36, Subpart D (§§ 36.401 – 36.406), as amended.
- (2) *Drainage.* All parking and loading areas shall provide for proper drainage of surface water to prevent ponding and the drainage of such water onto adjacent properties or walkways.
- (3) *Maintenance.* The owner of property used for parking and/or loading shall maintain the area in good condition without holes and free of all dust, trash, and other debris.
- (4) *Lighting.* Commercial parking lots used during non-daylight hours shall be illuminated so that the parking space and aisle markings are visible from the inside



of a parked automobile. Any lights used to illuminate a commercial parking lot shall be arranged to deflect the light away from adjoining residential property.

- (c) **Building Permit.** A building permit is required for the construction of a commercial parking lot unless the parking lot is authorized by a building permit for another building or structure. [*See Article 12 for Construction Plan and Parking Plan submittal requirements.*]
- (d) **Number of Parking Spaces.** The number of required parking spaces is calculated based on existing or proposed principal and accessory uses on site as provided below.
 - (1) Surface parking lots shall not occupy more than 20% of a lot, parcel or development. No contiguous surface parking lot shall occupy more than 2 acres. This area includes only the paved surface of the parking lot, and does not include landscaped buffers or islands.
 - (2) Up to 50% of the minimum required parking spaces are reduced if the principal and accessory uses provide valet parking during times of operation, and the combined number of spaces on-site and in the valet facility equals at least half of the spaces otherwise required.
 - (3) Where the number of parking spaces required is based on occupancy loads, those loads are calculated according to the adopted building code. [*Note: this is currently Section 1004 of the International Building Code 2012.*]



Table 3.7-1 Parking Ratios

Use Category	Parking Minimum
Residential	
<i>Residences</i>	
Accessory Dwelling Unit	1/dwelling unit
Dwelling, Single-Family Detached	1/dwelling unit
Dwelling, Two-Family (Duplex)	1/dwelling unit
Dwelling, Multi-Family	1/dwelling unit
Live/Work Dwelling	1/dwelling unit
Manufactured Home	1/dwelling unit
Manufactured Housing Park	1/dwelling unit
Townhouse	1/dwelling unit
Zero Lot Line House	1/dwelling unit
<i>Group Living</i>	
Rooming/Boarding House	1 + 1/3 bedrooms
Community Housing	1 + 1/3 bedrooms
Life Care or Continuing Care Services	1 + 1/3 bedrooms
Retirement Home	1 + 1/3 bedrooms
Residential Care Facilities	1 + 1/3 bedrooms
Lodging / Short-Term Rental	
Bed and Breakfast	1 + 0.75/bedroom
Hotel / Motel	0.75/guestroom
Recreational Vehicle Park	1/4 recreational vehicle or camping spaces
Commercial / Mixed Use	
<i>Animal Services</i>	
Animal Hospital (Indoor)	3/1000 sf
Animal Hospital (Outdoor)	3/1000 sf
General Animal Services	3/1000 sf
<i>Day Care</i>	
Adult Day Care	2/1000 sf
Child Day Care	2/1000 sf
<i>Financial Services</i>	
Automated Teller Machine (ATM)	N/A
Financial Institution	2/1000 sf
Pawnshop	2/1000 sf
Payday Lender	2/1000 sf
<i>Food & Beverage Sales / Service</i>	



Use Category	Parking Minimum
Alcohol Sales	2/1000 sf
Bar	9/1000 sf
Food Market	2/1000 sf
Food Preparation	3/1000 sf
Food Service	2/1000 sf
Mobile Vendor	N/A
Restaurant	4/1000 sf
Smoking Establishment	3/1000 sf
Snack or Beverage Bar	N/A
<i>Mixed Use</i>	
Mixed-Use Building	1/1000 sf
<i>Office, Business & Professional</i>	
Office	2/1000 sf
<i>Personal / Business Services</i>	
Bail Bond Services	2/1000 sf
Buildings or Home Services	2/1000 sf
Business Support Services	2/1000 sf
Crematorium	2/1000 sf
Day Labor Service	1/1000 sf
Funeral & Interment Services	2/1000 sf
General Personal Services	2/1000 sf
Maintenance and Repair Services	2/1000 sf
<i>Retail Sales</i>	
Agriculture sales and service	1/1000 sf
Building Materials Sales and Storage	2/1000 sf
Convenience Store	4/1000 sf
Convenience Store (with Gasoline Sales)	4/1000 sf
Drug and Tobacco Paraphernalia Shop (Head Shop)	2/1000 sf
Flea Market	1/2000 sf land area
Machinery and Equipment Sales, Rental, and Leasing	2/1000 sf
General Retail	2/1000 sf
<i>Automotive</i>	
Aircraft Repair	N/A
Auto and Truck Repair	2/1000 sf
Auto Repair, Minor	2/1000 sf
Automobile or Vehicle Sales	2/1000 sf
Heavy Equipment Sales and Service	2/1000 sf
Car Wash	1 per stall



Use Category	Parking Minimum
Gasoline or Diesel Fuel Sales	1/2 fuel pumps
Nationalization/"Nacionalizacion" of Vehicles Enterprise	N/A
Truck Stop	3/1000 sf
Public/Civic/Institutional	
<i>Assembly</i>	
Cemetery/Mausoleum	N/A
Civic Club	2/1000 sf
Exhibition, Convention, or Conference Facility	2/1000 sf
Religious Land Use	9/1000 sf
<i>Government / Non-Profit</i>	
Civic Building	2/1000
Correctional Facilities	2/1000 sf
International Bridge Facility	N/A
Public Safety Facility	2/1000 sf
Rehabilitation Facility and Services	2/1000 sf
Social Assistance, Welfare, and Charitable Services	2/1000 sf
Postal Services	4/1000 sf
Vehicle / Equipment Maintenance Facility	2/1000 sf
<i>Education</i>	
Business College / Technical or Trade School	3/1000 sf
College / University	3/1000 sf
Personal Instructional Services and Display	3/1000 sf
School (Public or Private)	3/1000 sf
<i>Medical</i>	
Hospital	2/1000 sf
Clinic (Dental or Medical)	4/1000 sf
<i>Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation</i>	
Adult Entertainment	4/1000 sf
Amusement Redemption Machine Establishment	5/1000 sf
Civic Space	0.25/1000 sf
Cultural Facility	2/1000 sf
Day Camp	2.5/1000 sf
Entertainment Facility	9/1000 sf
Health/Fitness Club	4/1000
Indoor Amusement	2/1000 sf
Outdoor Amusement	8/acre
Shooting Range	2/1000 sf



Use Category	Parking Minimum
Studio	4/1000 sf
Industrial / Production	
<i>Manufacturing & Employment</i>	
Contractor	1/1000 sf
Extraction	0.5/1000 sf
Manufacturing, Artisan	0.5/1000 sf
Manufacturing, Light	1/1000 sf
Manufacturing, Heavy	1/1000 sf
Industrial Launderer	1/1000 sf
<i>Warehousing, Storage & Distribution</i>	
Oil and Gas Storage	N/A
Outdoor storage	N/A
Railroad Freight Depot	N/A
Self-Service Storage Facility	0.25/1000 sf
Vehicle Towing and Storage Facility	0.5/1000 sf
Wholesale distribution and sales, warehousing, and storage	0.5/1000 sf
Wholesale distribution and sales, warehousing, and storage (Vehicular)	0.5/1000 sf
Infrastructure	
<i>Transportation / Parking</i>	
Airport	N/A
Ground Passenger Transportation	N/A
Heliport and Miscellaneous Air Transportation	N/A
Parking Facility	N/A
Parking Garage	N/A
Parking Lot	N/A
Railroad Facilities	N/A
Railroad Right-of-Way	N/A
Passenger Terminal	N/A
Transit shelter	N/A
Truck Lot	N/A
<i>Utilities</i>	
Utility (Major)	1/1000 sf
Utility (Minor)	1/1000 sf
<i>Communications Facilities</i>	
Antenna	N/A
Communication Tower	N/A



Use Category	Parking Minimum
Telecommunications Facility	N/A
Weather / Environmental Monitoring Station	N/A
<i>Waste-related</i>	
Hazardous Waste Disposal	N/A
Hazardous Waste Transfer	N/A
Recycling Plant	0.25/1000 sf
Transfer Station	N/A
Junkyard	0.25/1000 sf
Solid Waste Facility	N/A
Agriculture	
Agricultural Sales	N/A
Farming and Ranching	N/A
Livestock Sales	N/A
Plant Nursery	2/1000 sf
Accessory	
Accessory Building or Structure	N/A
Accessory use (generally)	N/A
Construction Yard	N/A
Home Occupation A	N/A
Home Occupation B	N/A
Model Home	N/A
Outside Storage	N/A
Parking garage, private	N/A
Recycling drop-off center	N/A
Miscellaneous	
Special Events (Temporary)	N/A

(e) **Location of Parking Spaces.** The following regulations govern the location of off- street parking spaces and areas:

- (1) This subsection describes the permitted location of required parking. Where parking spaces are allowed within a defined distance off-site, measurement is from the property line of the primary use to the driveway of the off-site parking lot using the shortest path between the demarcation points that can be lawfully traveled by foot (including pedestrian corridors, and street crossings at designated crosswalks or on local streets).
- (2) Parking spaces for all single-family detached dwellings shall be located on the same lot as the use which they are intended to serve.
- (3) Parking spaces for all other residential uses shall be located no more than 300 feet from the principal use.



- (4) Parking spaces for commercial, industrial, or institutional uses shall be located no more than 1,000 feet from the principal use.
- (5) In the “H” (Historic) district:
 - a. On-street parking spaces dedicated and reserved for public use immediately adjacent to the frontage are counted toward required off-street parking.
 - b. The Building Official shall determine the off-street parking space credit at the time of building permit approval.
- (6) Where an increase in the number of parking spaces is required by a change in use or enlargement, or where those spaces are provided collectively or used jointly by two or more activities or establishments, the required space may be located up to 1,320 feet (1/4 mile) from the principal use.
- (7) All required parking must be permanent, and not provided in a temporary manner. The user must reserve the off-premises parking as provided in subsection (f)(3) below.
- (8) Parking areas shall not be located in way that destroys required landscaping, such as trees, shrubs, or lawns. The Building Official may reduce the parking space requirements by up to 25% and waive maneuvering space requirements as needed to accommodate this requirement.

(f) Shared Parking

- (1) *Applicability.* The off-street parking facilities required by two or more uses may be combined and used jointly.
- (2) *Location.* The joint spaces shall be located –
 - a. On the same building site, or
 - b. Within 1,320 feet of the building or area that includes each use.
- (3) *Reservation of Spaces.* The user of off-premise spaces must demonstrate that they are reserved for the use in a lease agreement or other written, enforceable contract or agreement. The instrument reserving the spaces shall remain in effect during the life of the use that reserves the spaces.
- (4) *Number of Spaces*
 - a. The off-street parking facilities shall be adequate to provide the sum total of the facilities required for all of the uses.
 - b. Two or more owners or operators of buildings or uses requiring off-street parking or loading facilities may collectively use those facilities if the total minimum number of parking or loading spaces conform with this section when computed separately for each use or building type.
 - c. An off-street parking area required for any building or use may be used as part of an off-street parking area required for another building or use where peak use periods do not overlap, as provided below. The required parking spaces are reduced as follows:
 1. Determine the minimum parking requirements in accordance with Table 3.7-1 for each land use as if it were a separate use (refer to Section 24.2.16,



Table 2.16 1 (Use Table) and Article 10 of the UDC for use categories and definitions of specific uses),

2. Multiply each amount by the corresponding percentages for each of the five time periods set forth in Columns (B) through (F) of Table 3.7-1 below,
3. Calculate the total for each time period, and
4. Select the Column with the highest total. This is the required number of spaces.

Table 3.7-1 Shared Parking Ratios

(A) Land Use	Weekday		Weekend		
	(B) Daytime (9 a.m. - 4 p.m.)	(C) Evening (6 p.m. - midnight)	(D) Daytime (9 a.m. - 4 p.m.)	(E) Evening (6 p.m. - midnight)	(F) Nighttime (midnight 6 a.m.)
Office Business & Professional or Industrial / Production	100%	10%	10%	5%	5%
Retail	60%	90%	100%	70%	5%
Lodging/Short-Term Rental	75%	100%	75%	100%	75%
Restaurant	50%	100%	100%	100%	10%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreational	40%	100%	80%	100%	10%

- d. If an office and retail use share parking and the office space comprises at least 35% of the space and at least 2,000 square feet, the parking required for the retail use is reduced to the lesser of –
 1. 80% percent of the parking spaces otherwise required, or
 2. 1 parking space per 500 square feet.
- e. If a residential use shares parking with a retail use, the parking required for the residential use is reduced by 30 percent or the minimum parking required for the retail and service use, whichever is less.
- f. If an office and residential use share off-street parking, the parking requirement for the residential use is reduced to the lesser of –
 1. 50 percent of the parking normally required for the residential use, or
 2. 1 space per 1,000 square feet.
- g. No parking spaces are required for any residential uses located in the upper floors of a mixed-use building if the ground floor is occupied by retail or office uses.

(g) Parking Space Dimensional Requirements

- (1) *Single-Family Dwellings.* The dimensional standards for parking spaces required for single-family detached and two-family (duplex) dwellings and manufactured homes, are 8 feet wide and 16 feet long. Stacking of spaces directly behind another



and/or using concrete runners 2' wide for each tire track, is permitted. All spaces for single family dwellings and duplexes shall be paved with concrete or brick.

- (2) *All Other Uses.* Parking space dimensional requirements for all other uses shall comply with the *Parking Layout and Design Standards*.
- (3) When off-street parking facilities are located adjacent to a public alley, one-half (½) of the alley width is counted toward maneuvering space requirements.

(h) Loading Space Requirements

- (1) One off-street loading space shall be provided and maintained on the same lot for every separate occupancy requiring pick-up and delivery of goods and having a modified gross floor area of over 5,000 square feet.
- (2) A loading space shall have minimum dimensions of at least 10 feet with the apron and total offset provided below, and a clearance of at least 15 feet.
- (3) One loading space shall be provided for each additional 20,000 square feet. For businesses not required to have a loading space, any loading space constructed shall comply with minimum dimensions listed above.

(i) Design and Construction Requirements for Parking and Loading

- (1) *Applicability.* This subsection applies to all parking spaces, except for single-family detached and two-family dwellings.
- (2) *Generally.* Driveway approaches, paving, and lighting of parking lots shall comply with the *Parking Layout and Design Standards*, except as provided below.
- (3) *Delineation*
 - a. The parking lanes and spaces shall be clearly marked by traffic paint, buttons or other materials meeting specifications and standards set forth by the Texas Department of Transportation minimum standards and *Parking Layout and Design Standards*.
 - b. *Signs and Markings.* Parking areas having more than one aisle or driveway shall have directional signs or marking in each aisle or driveway.
- (4) *Wheel Blocks.* Whenever a parking lot extends to a property line, wheel blocks or other suitable devices shall be installed to prevent any part of a parked vehicle from extending beyond the property line.
- (5) *Access and Maneuvering Space Requirements.* All parking areas shall be designed so that any vehicle leaving the parking area travels in a forward motion. Access driveways for parking areas or loading spaces shall be located so that any vehicle entering or leaving the area is clearly visible for a reasonable distance to any pedestrian or motorist approaching the access or driveway from a public or private street.

(j) Driveways

- (1) *Applicability.* This subsection applies to the MX-1, MX-2, C-1, I-1 and I-2 districts.
- (2) *Generally.* Access driveways shall comply with the *Parking Layout and Design Standards*, except as provided below.
- (3) *Marking.* The entrances and exits to the parking area shall be clearly marked.



- (4) *Width.* Entranceways or exits shall maintain the following minimum standards:

Table 3.7-2 Driveway Widths for Parking Areas

Type of Driveway Approach	Width	
	Min	Max
One-way traffic	12 feet	n/a
Two-way traffic	24 feet	30 feet

Note: this standard supersedes the driveway approach standards of the Parking Layout and Design Standards.

- (5) *Distance from Intersection.* The nearest edge of any driveway shall be at least 50 feet from the property corner nearest the intersection.
- (k) **Dead Storage Parking Lots.** Where the sole purpose of a commercial parking lot is dead storage, and the parking lot does not abut a residential district or development, paving shall be provided as follows:

- (1) There shall be a concrete apron at the entrance of the parking lot.
- (2) Landing pads shall be provided. The landing pads shall be paved with:
 - a. Concrete,
 - b. Asphalt,
 - c. Turf,
 - d. Pervious pavement,
 - e. Grasscrete or grass pavers, or
 - f. Other surface approved by the Building Official that provides a durable, dustless and continuous (from point of access to edge of public street) all weather surface that is appropriately structured and bordered for permanence.
- (3) All unpaved dead storage parking areas shall be covered in caliche.
- (4) Unpaved areas shall be covered in caliche and treated with oil or an oil base compound at least once a year.
- (5) A solid opaque wall of at least 10 feet in height shall be erected around the parking lot.

(l) Modification of Parking Requirements

- (1) *Applicability.* The Board may authorize a reduction of all of these parking requirements.
- (2) *Exception.* For a change in use in a “C” district that requires additional parking, the additional parking and maneuvering space requirements shall not be waived or reduced, where access is to major streets listed on the current, functional classification map of the City.
- (3) *Criteria.* The modification:
 - a. must demonstrate that following the parking requirements would create an undue hardship
 - b. shall not infringe on vehicular or pedestrian traffic safety,



- c. include conditions that protect adjoining residential areas, and
- d. be consistent with all other provisions of this Chapter and the City's Comprehensive Plan.

24.3.8 Riparian Buffers

Purpose: this section establishes minimal acceptable requirements for the design of buffers to protect the streams, wetlands and floodplains of Laredo, Texas; to protect the water courses, reservoirs, lakes, and other significant water resources within Laredo, Texas; to protect Laredo's riparian and aquatic ecosystems; and to provide for the environmentally sound use of Laredo's land.

(a) Applicability

- (1) *Geographic Scope.* This section applies to the City of Laredo.
- (2) *Activities Covered.* This section applies to:
 - a. development subject to this Chapter, and
 - b. surface mining operations, except that the design standards do not apply to active surface mining operations that are operating in compliance with an approved U. S. Department of the Interior surface mining permit.
- (3) *Exemptions.* This section does not apply to:
 - a. development that does not contain a stream system, or
 - b. activities that were initiated prior to the effective date of this ordinance and:
 - 1. has a valid, unexpired permit in accordance with development regulations; or
 - 2. has a current, executed public works agreement; or
 - 3. has a valid, unexpired building permit; or
 - 4. has a complete, unexpired plat application; or
 - 5. has a current, approved master plan on file with the City of Laredo Planning Department; or
 - 6. is platted property.

(b) Preservation and Buffering Requirements

- (1) All third order and higher stream systems including the Rio Grande shall be preserved and buffered in accordance with this section.
- (2) First and Second order stream systems which include any of the following criteria shall be preserved and buffered in accordance with this section unless the requirements of subsection (f)(conservation plans) are satisfied.
 - a. An environmentally sensitive area.
 - b. Wetlands and protected waters according to the Wetland Map.
 - c. Existing trees with a caliper equal to or greater than 8 inches (excluding salt cedar) within the stream channel or potential stream buffer.

(c) Protected Waters

- (1) *Generally.* As used in this section, "protected waters" means:



- a. All waters which are currently used, were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide;
 - b. All interstate waters, including interstate wetlands;
 - c. All impoundments of waters otherwise identified as protected waters under this section;
 - d. All tributaries (as defined in subsection (3)c of this section) of waters identified in subsections (1)a through c above;
 - e. All waters adjacent to a water identified in subsections (1)a through d above, including wetlands, ponds, lakes, oxbows, impoundments, and similar waters;
 - f. All waters located within the 100-year floodplain of a water identified in subsections (1)a through c above and all waters located within 4,000 feet of the ordinary high water mark of a water identified in subsections (1)a through d above where they are determined on a case-specific basis to have a significant nexus to a water identified in subsections (1)a through d above. For waters determined to have a significant nexus, the entire water is a protected water if a portion is located within the 100-year floodplain of a water identified in subsections (1)a through c above or within 4,000 feet of the ordinary high water mark. Waters identified in this subsection shall not be combined with waters identified in subsection (1)e above when performing a significant nexus analysis. If waters identified in this paragraph are also an adjacent water under subsection (1)e, they are an adjacent water and no case-specific significant nexus analysis is required.
- (2) *Exclusions from Protected Waters.* The following are not “protected waters” even where they otherwise meet the terms of subsection (1) above.
- a. Waste treatment systems, including treatment ponds or lagoons designed to meet the requirements of the federal Clean Water Act. This exclusion applies only to manmade bodies of water which neither were originally created in protected waters (such as disposal area in wetlands) nor resulted from the impoundment of protected waters.
 - b. Prior converted cropland, as determined by the Planning Director.
 - c. The following ditches:
 - 1. Ditches with ephemeral flow that are not a relocated tributary or excavated in a tributary.
 - 2. Ditches with intermittent flow that are not a relocated tributary, excavated in a tributary, or drain wetlands.
 - 3. Ditches that do not flow, either directly or through another water, into a water identified in subsections (1)a through c of this definition.
 - d. The following features:
 - 1. Artificially irrigated areas that would revert to dry land should application of water to that area cease;



2. Artificial, constructed lakes and ponds created in dry land such as farm and stock watering ponds, irrigation ponds, settling basins, fields flooded for rice growing, log cleaning ponds, or cooling ponds;
 3. Artificial reflecting pools or swimming pools created in dry land;
 4. Small ornamental waters created in dry land;
 5. Water-filled depressions created in dry land incidental to mining or construction activity, including pits excavated for obtaining fill, sand, or gravel that fill with water;
 6. Erosional features, including gullies, rills, and other ephemeral features that do not meet the definition of tributary, non-wetland swales, and lawfully constructed grassed waterways; and
 7. Puddles.
- e. Groundwater, including groundwater drained through subsurface drainage systems.
 - f. Stormwater control features constructed to convey, treat, or store stormwater that are created in dry land.
 - g. Wastewater recycling structures constructed in dry land; detention and retention basins built for wastewater recycling; groundwater recharge basins; percolation ponds built for wastewater recycling; and water distributary structures built for wastewater recycling.
- (3) *Definitions.* In this subsection, the following terms apply:
- a. *Adjacent.* The term adjacent means bordering, contiguous, or neighboring a water identified in subsections (1)a through d of this definition, including waters separated by constructed dikes or barriers, natural river berms, and the like. For purposes of adjacency, an open water such as a pond or lake includes any wetlands within or abutting its ordinary high-water mark. Adjacency is not limited to waters located laterally to a water identified in subsections (1)a through d of this subsection. Adjacent waters also include all waters that connect segments of a water identified in subsections (1)a through d or are located at the head of a water identified in subsections (1)a through d of this subsection and are bordering, contiguous, or neighboring such water. Waters used for established normal farming, ranching, and silviculture activities (see 33 U.S.C. 1344(f)) are not adjacent.
 - b. *Neighboring.* The term neighboring means:
 1. All waters located within 100 feet of the ordinary high-water mark of a water identified in subsections (1)a through d of this subsection. The entire water is neighboring if a portion is located within 100 feet of the ordinary high-water mark;
 2. All waters located within the 100-year floodplain of a water identified in subsections (1)a through d of this subsection and not more than 1,500 feet from the ordinary high-water mark of such water. The entire water is



neighboring if a portion is located within 1,500 feet of the ordinary high-water mark and within the 100-year floodplain;

- c. *Tributary and tributaries.* The terms tributary and tributaries each mean a water that contributes flow, either directly or through another water (including an impoundment identified in subsection (1)c of this subsection), to a water identified in subsections (1)a and b of this subsection that is characterized by the presence of the physical indicators of a bed and banks and an ordinary high-water mark. These physical indicators demonstrate there is volume, frequency, and duration of flow sufficient to create a bed and banks and an ordinary high-water mark, and thus to qualify as a tributary. A tributary can be a natural, man-altered, or man-made water and includes waters such as rivers, streams, canals, and ditches not excluded under subsection (2) of this subsection. A water that otherwise qualifies as a tributary under this subsection does not lose its status as a tributary if, for any length, there are one or more constructed breaks (such as bridges, culverts, pipes, or dams), or one or more natural breaks (such as wetlands along the run of a stream, debris piles, boulder fields, or a stream that flows underground) so long as a bed and banks and an ordinary high-water mark can be identified upstream of the break. A water that otherwise qualifies as a tributary under this subsection does not lose its status as a tributary if it contributes flow through a protect water that does not meet the definition of tributary or through a non-jurisdictional water to a water identified in subsections (1)a and b of this subsection.
- d. *Wetlands.* The term wetlands means those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.
- e. *Significant nexus.* The term significant nexus means that a water, including wetlands, either alone or in combination with other similarly situated waters in the region, significantly affects the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of a water identified in subsections (1)a and b of this subsection. The term “in the region” means the watershed that drains to the nearest water identified in subsections (1)a and b of this subsection. For an effect to be significant, it must be more than speculative or insubstantial. Waters are similarly situated when they function alike and are sufficiently close to function together in affecting downstream waters. For purposes of determining whether or not a water has a significant nexus, the water’s effect on downstream subsections (1)a and b waters shall be assessed by evaluating the aquatic functions identified in subsections 1 through 9 of this below. A water has a significant nexus when any single function or combination of functions performed by the water, alone or together with similarly situated waters in the region, contributes significantly to the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of the nearest water identified in



subsections (1)a and b of this subsection. Functions relevant to the significant nexus evaluation are the following:

1. Sediment trapping,
 2. Nutrient recycling,
 3. Pollutant trapping, transformation, filtering, and transport,
 4. Retention and attenuation of flood waters,
 5. Runoff storage,
 6. Contribution of flow,
 7. Export of organic matter,
 8. Export of food resources, and
 9. Provision of life cycle dependent aquatic habitat (such as foraging, feeding, nesting, breeding, spawning, or use as a nursery area) for species located in a water identified in subsections (1)a and b of this subsection.
- f. *Ordinary high water mark.* The term ordinary high water mark means that line on the shore established by the fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as a clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas.

(d) Design Standards for Stream Buffers. The width for vegetative buffers depends on the order of the stream developed.

Table 3.8-1 Stream Buffers

Stream Order	Buffer Width	
	(min)	(max)
	<i>(measured from either side of the centerline)</i>	
First and second order streams	55 feet	105 feet
Third order stream or above	55 feet + 25 feet for each level of increase in stream order. <i>(Example: a fourth order stream has an 80-foot buffer, a fifth order stream has a 105-foot buffer, etc.)</i>	105 feet
Rio Grande	Lesser of the 100-year flood plain or 300 feet from the centerline of the watercourse	n/a

- (1) The applicant shall install permanent boundary signs approved by the ESD Director after construction is completed.
- (2) All development shall comply with the City’s Floodplain Management Ordinance (2002-O-164) and Storm Water Management Ordinance (99-O-186)
- (3) The buffer width on each side of the stream may vary (in both width and length) if the total square footage of the buffer remains the same for the stream order. However, the buffer shall not fall below 25 feet on any side.

- (4) The first 30 feet of buffer immediately adjacent to the centerline of streams and first 125 feet adjacent to the Rio Grande centerline containing undisturbed native vegetation, is restricted to permitted road, utility crossings, storm water management facilities and recreational facilities approved by the city. The remainder of the buffer, also containing native vegetation, is restricted to utility right of ways, designated biking/hiking paths, storm water management facilities, and recreational facilities by the City.

(e) Design Standards for Existing Ponds and Buffers

- (1) Existing ponds may be used as storm water management facilities, in accordance with Section 24.4.5, if a conservation plan is submitted (see Article 12). An existing pond used as a storm water management facility shall have a buffer width of at least 20 feet in addition to the Maintenance Access Easement requirements (see Section 24.4.5(c)(5) (Stormwater Management - Retention / Detention Facilities)).
- (2) The area of the 20-foot buffer may include the embankment as long as the total square footage is maintained.

(f) Tree Mitigation. Where disturbance of protected first or second order stream systems are proposed and trees are removed:

- (1) All 4-inch caliper or greater trees removed must be replaced by an equal caliper sized tree of the same species except salt cedar; or smaller trees of the same tree species that equal the caliper of the removed tree (i.e.: 4 one inch trees to replace a 4-inch caliper tree).
- (2) The replacement tree(s) must be located within the stream system or buffer on the property where the removed tree was located.
- (3) Twenty-five percent of the original tree species must be replaced with the same species. The remaining 75% of original tree species may be replaced with favorable species determined and listed by the Tree Board.

(g) Buffer Management and Maintenance

- (1) *Management.* Protected stream systems and vegetative buffers shall be managed to enhance and maximize the unique value of these resources. Management includes specific limitations on alteration of the natural conditions of these resources. The following practices and activities are restricted within the vegetative buffer:
 - a. Clearing of any existing vegetation;
 - b. Soil disturbance by grading, stripping, or other practices;
 - c. Filling or dumping;
 - d. Use, storage, or application of herbicides.
- (2) *Activities in Buffer.* The following structures, practices, and activities are permitted in the vegetative buffer, with specific design or maintenance features:
 - a. *Roads, Bridges, Sidewalks, and Utilities.*
 1. These facilities may be constructed if:
 - a. they are required by the City;



- b. access to the property would be hindered or compromised because of the property's location; or
 - c. if conditions specific to the land require it.
 - 2. In any of these instances the ESD Director may administratively grant approval or deny the request for the construction of the structure/s. The applicant may appeal a denial of the request to the Planning and Zoning Commission whose decision is final.
 - 3. The right-of-way shall be the minimum width needed to allow for maintenance access and installation.
 - 4. The angle of the crossing shall be as near to perpendicular as allowed by the ESD Director. The applicant may appeal a denial of the proposed angle crossing to the Planning and Zoning Commission whose decision is final.
 - 5. The applicant shall minimize the number of road crossings within each subdivision. No more than one road crossing is allowed for every 1,200 feet of buffer.
- b. *Storm Water Management*
- 1. Stormwater management facilities may be constructed if they are required by the City, the facilities are necessary for flood control or significantly improves water quality or habitat in the stream. In any of these instances the ESD Director may administratively grant approval or deny the request for the construction of the structure/s. The applicant may appeal a denial of the request to the Planning and Zoning Commission whose decision is final.
 - 2. The applicant shall observe "best management practices" (i.e., BMPs) when constructing storm water management facilities. The area cleared is limited to the area required for construction and adequate maintenance access as outlined in the most recent edition of City of Laredo Storm Water Management Ordinance.
 - 3. Material dredged or otherwise removed (during construction or maintenance) from a storm water management facility shall be stored outside the buffer.
- c. Stream restoration projects approved by the ESD Director are permitted within the vegetative buffer.
- d. Water quality monitoring and stream gauging are permitted within the vegetative buffer as approved by the ESD Director.
- e. Individual trees within the buffer that are in danger of falling, causing damage to dwellings or other structures, or causing blockage of the stream, may be removed. Other tree cutting techniques approved by the ESD Director may be undertaken within the vegetative buffer under the advice and guidance of the Tree Board if necessary to preserve the riparian forest from extensive pest infestation and disease infestation.



- f. Selective clearing for health and safety purposes is allowed as determined by the Fire Chief and/or the Health Department Director.
- (3) The Final Plat and all right-of-way plans shall clearly show the extent of any vegetative buffer on the subject property.
- (4) All protected vegetative buffer areas and stream systems shall run with the land and continue in perpetuity. Protected vegetative buffer areas and stream systems may be dedicated to the public by separate instrument (which must be submitted to the City Engineer for approval and recorded in the land records) unless the protected vegetative buffer area and stream system is dedicated to the public on the face of an approved plat. If the owner of the property desires to keep the stream system and buffer private, there shall be a covenant (which must be submitted to the City Engineer for approval and recorded in the land records) restricting the use of the stream system and buffer to uses set forth herein, and the owner must ensure that the stream system and buffer shall be maintained by the owner, his heirs, successors and assigns as long as the stream system and buffer remain private.
- (5) The ESD shall inspect the buffer annually and immediately following severe storms for evidence of sediment deposition, erosion, or concentrated flow channels. Corrective actions shall be taken to ensure the integrity and functions of the vegetative buffer.
- (6) The City of Laredo will maintain all vegetative buffer and stream systems that are created pursuant to Section 24.4.1(b)(2)(Standard Technical Specification Manual - Optional Specifications) and dedicated to the public.

(h) Incentives

- (1) *Conservation Plan Waiver.* If buffer widths on first and second order streams are strictly adhered to, the conservation plan requirement shall be waived.
- (2) *Park Development.* Credit shall be given as determined by the Planning Director for the development of Linear Parks around natural drainage and wooded areas that provide potential recreational uses. Criteria for flood plain areas (based upon a hundred-year flood plain) that is dedicated as parkland, will be given credit as determined by the Parks and Recreation Director by meeting the following requirements:
 - a. Flood plain and natural drainage area shall generally not exceed 25% of total parkland dedication.
 - b. At least 75% of required dedicated parkland shall have slopes in range of < 5%, be well-drained, and suitable for active use.
 - c. The Director of the Parks and Recreation Department shall determine whether land offered for dedication complies with the standards for dedication as provided in the Parks Master Plan.
- (3) *Storm water discharges into large creeks.* For development adjacent to the main stem of Sombrerito Creek, below Middle Pasture Lake, and Chacon Creek below Lake Casa Blanca, storm water discharge does not require detention facilities if there is



compliance with the floodplain management ordinance and storm water management ordinance.

- (4) *On-site detention within the plat boundaries of residential subdivision*
 - a. For detention ponds in residential developments voluntarily created to enhance the protection of 1st & 2nd order streams, the required private maintenance shall extend to the warranty period as provided by other ordinances.
 - b. When a first or second order stream within development is voluntarily protected, a R.O.W. section may be similarly modified as provided below
- (5) *Commercial subdivisions distributed detention*
 - a. Distributed detention on commercial subdivisions where streams are to be voluntarily protected is allowed, deferring the construction of required storm water detention facilities to the building permit (construction) phase, if the deferral is approved at final platting and covered by a note on the face of the plat.
 - b. If a development includes a protected stream system, the required detention volume may be distributed over the site if the plat is annotated with a note indicating the “Q” (volumetric discharge) of each lot.
 - c. The required private maintenance period for off-line detention facilities shall extend to the warranty period. Warranties shall remain in effect as provided by other ordinances.
 - d. For developments where all lots are at least one acre in area, minimum storage requirements for detention as well as maximum discharge rate requirements shall be included on the plat for each lot, specifying the requirement for each lot to individually meet the requirements of the Storm Water Management Ordinance included in the City of Laredo Land Development Code during the building permit process. A note approved by the City of Laredo Planning Department indicating the requirement shall be included on the face of the plat. Calculations for the lot storage volumes and discharge rates shall be approved by the City Engineer in conjunction with their review of the improvement plans for the development during the platting process.
- (6) *Park credit transferability*
 - a. Voluntary protection of first and second order streams entitle the owner to a park credit for the stream system protected and its surrounding buffer on an equivalent square footage basis. If the following criteria is met:
 - 1. Flood plain and natural drainage area shall generally not exceed 25% of the site;
 - 2. At least 50% of the buffer shall have slopes in the range of 2% and not to exceed 5%, be well drained and suitable for active use;
 - 3. Additional park requirements, if any, shall be incorporated (be adjacent) to any buffer.



4. The buffer and the park space shall be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Director to ensure that the buffer and park space requirement comply with the City Standards for Dedication as a park and buffer.
 5. If the buffer and park meet the requirements of this subsection, the Parks and Recreation Director shall make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the acceptance of said buffer and park.
- b. Mandatory protected third order streams and higher qualify for a park credit for the surrounding buffer on an equivalent square footage basis. If the following criteria is met:
1. Flood plain and natural drainage area shall generally not exceed 25% of the site;
 2. At least 50% of the buffer shall have slopes in the range of 2% and not to exceed 5%, well drained and suitable for active use;
 3. Additional park requirement, if any, shall be incorporated (be adjacent to) any buffer.
 4. The buffer and the park space shall be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Director to ensure that the buffer and park space requirement comply with the City standards for dedication as a park and buffer.
 5. If the buffer and park meet the requirements set forth herein the Parks and Recreation Director shall make a recommendation to the City Council regarding the acceptance of the buffer and park.
- c. Park credits obtained pursuant to this provision are transferable but may only be used within the Council District in which they were originally acquired.
- d. If there is first or second order stream systems located on a tract of 10 acres or smaller and the owner or said tract voluntarily preserves the stream system, the owner is entitled to a park credit.
- e. Any decision by the Parks and Recreation Director which does not favor the acceptance of park and buffer may be appealed to the Planning and Zoning Commission for a recommendation regarding the acceptance of the park and buffer to the City Council.

(i) Waivers / Variances

- (1) The ESD Director may grant a variance for the following:
 - a. Those projects or activities for which it can be demonstrated that strict compliance with the ordinance would result in a practical difficulty.
 - b. Those projects or activities serving a public need where no feasible alternative is available
- (2) The City of Laredo may, as deemed appropriate by the ESD Director, give credit towards the average buffer width on the platted property for the restoration of riparian habitat and/or installation of a wetlands area within the property boundaries if the installations are ecologically integrated with the riparian system.



The square footage of the restored area or wetlands area shall be credited toward the square footage required for the buffer zone.

- (3) The applicant shall submit a written request for a variance to the ESD Director. The application shall include specific reasons justifying the variance and any other information necessary to evaluate the proposed variance request. The ESD Director may require an analysis demonstrating undue hardship would result from a strict application of the ordinance.
- (4) In granting a request for a variance, the ESD Director may require site design, landscape planting, fencing, and signs.

(j) **Appeals Procedures.** See Article 5.

(k) **Conflict with Other Regulations.** Where the standards and management requirements of this buffer ordinance are in conflict with other laws, regulations, and policies regarding streams, steep slopes, erodible soils, wetlands, floodplains, timber harvesting, land disturbance activities, or other environmental protective measures, the more restrictive standard applies.

24.3.9 Site Design

(a) **Applicability.** This section applies to any application for a site plan or subdivision plat approval. For purposes of this section, a “street” includes public streets created by a subdivision plat, or private drives that conform to public street standards.

(b) **Blocks**

- (1) *Maximum Block Perimeter.* Blocks shall not exceed the length around their perimeter established in Table 3.9-1 below. This standard applies to blocks formed by public streets in subdivisions, or by private streets or drives in multi-use or mixed-use developments as provided in subsection (2) below.

Table 3.9-1 Maximum Block Perimeter

	Express way	Multiway Boulevard	Principal Arterial	Minor Arterial	Collector	Industrial Collector	Main Street	Yield Street
Agriculture (AG)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Residential Low (RL-1)	n/a	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	n/a	4,800	4,800
Residential Low (RL-2)	n/a	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	n/a	4,800	4,800
Residential Medium (RM-1)	n/a	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	n/a	2,400	2,400
Residential High (RH-1)	n/a	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	n/a	1,800	1,800
Residential High (RH-2)	n/a	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	n/a	1,800	1,800
Mixed Use (MX-1)	n/a	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	n/a	1,200	1,800
Mixed Use (MX-2)	n/a	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	n/a	1,200	1,800
Downtown (MX-3)	n/a	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	n/a	1,200	1,800
Commercial (C-1)	n/a	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	n/a	1,200	1,800
Industrial Light (I-1)	n/a	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	n/a	1,200	4,000



Industrial Heavy (I-2)	n/a	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	n/a	1,200	4,000
Redevelopment (RD)	n/a	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	n/a	1,200	1,800
Planned Development District (PD)	n/a	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	n/a	1,200	1,800
ETJ (Subdivision Plat)	n/a	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	n/a	1,200	1,800

- (2) *Block Measurement.* For purposes of this subsection, blocks are measured from curb to curb, regardless of whether the street is public or private.
- (3) *Walkways.* Walkways within a pedestrian access easement or tract are required at the end of cul-de-sacs or closed end streets and at the approximate midpoint of any block exceeding six hundred feet (600') in length. The required access easements or tracts must be at least 15 feet wide and contain a paved path at least 8' wide.

(c) Lots

- (1) If a proposed residential subdivision abuts a collector, arterial, boulevard or expressway street, smaller lots and lots reserved for attached dwelling units may abut those streets.
- (2) Lots that abut riparian buffers or passive open space shall exceed the average lot size in a subdivision plat by at least 20%.

(d) Street Network and Connectivity

Purpose: This subsection ensures that street layouts respond to local conditions such as topography, watercourses, greenways and the existing street systems of neighboring developments. Local street patterns may discourage through traffic but should also include interconnecting streets with alternative routes throughout the neighborhood to diffuse automobile traffic and shorten walking distances. A well-connected street network spreads traffic efficiently, and provides greater opportunities for access and circulation of motor vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle modes of travel.

- (1) *Network.* Buildings and sites exceeding the thresholds identified in Table 3.9-2 below shall include a street and block network.
- (2) *External Connectivity*
 - a. Where adjoining areas are not subdivided, the arrangement of streets in a subdivision shall provide for the extension of streets into the unsubdivided areas.
 - b. The site design shall arrange parcels to allow the opening of future streets and logical further subdivision.
 - c. Proposed streets shall extend to the boundary lines of the tract to be subdivided or developed, unless prevented by topography or other physical conditions, or unless the Planning Director determines that the extension is not necessary or desirable to coordinate the subdivision or development layout with the existing layout or the most advantageous future development of adjacent tracts.
 - d. At least 1 street shall extend to the boundary line of the tract for each 600 linear feet of the boundary line with adjoining tracts. This section does not require designated local streets to extend into riparian buffers, tree save areas, or other

natural features or existing development that does not accommodate the connection.

(3) *Internal Connectivity*

- a. The following terms are defined for purposes of this subsection only:
 1. A “**Street Link**” is that portion of a street that lies between 2 nodes.
 2. A “**Node**” is the intersection of two (2) or more streets, a cul-de-sac head or a dead-end. The following are not considered Nodes:
 - a. An **eyebrow**. An eyebrow is a semicircular shaped portion of a street that is configured so that a circle with a radius of thirty (30) feet can fit within the confines of the paved portion of the surface.
 - b. **External intersections**. The intersection of a local street within the proposed subdivision with an external public street that connects to the proposed subdivision is not considered a node in computing the connectivity ratio.
 3. A “**Pedestrian Connection**” is a pedestrian accessway or portion of a development’s trail system that connects a dead-end street, cul-de-sac, or T-intersection to another public street or to a commercial or office development that is built, approved, or designated as part of the proposed development. Pedestrian accessways or trails that connect only to parks, greenways or recreational areas are not counted as a pedestrian connection for purposes of calculating the connectivity ratio.
- b. Streets within any proposed subdivision or site plan with a network of private drives shall provide a connectivity ratio as provided in Table 3.9-2 below. The connectivity ratio is computed by dividing the number of street links and pedestrian connections by the number of nodes within the development.
- c. The Planning and Zoning Commission may modify the connectivity ratio by counting a feature as a street link or pedestrian connection or reducing the required ratio if:
 1. Existing topography or natural features make the required number of connections impractical, and
 2. The applicant provides alternative solutions that substantially accomplish the purposes of this section.

(e) **Orientation.**

(1) *Buildings*

- a. Principal buildings on a site shall orient to a street, civic space, or open space. A principal building shall not orient to a parking lot except to the extent permitted by Table 3.9-2 below. For purposes of this subsection:
- b. Principal buildings shall orient to the fronts of other buildings, or the sides where necessary. Buildings shall not orient to the backs of other buildings.

(2) *Parking.* To create an interesting street frontage and to deemphasize front-loaded parking, the number and percent of parking spaces located between the principal



building and a public or private street (other than an alley) shall not exceed the number specified in Table 3.9-2 below.

Table 3.9-2 Connectivity and Parking Orientation

Zoning District	Connectivity Ratio	Threshold for Street Network*	Front-Loaded Parking Space Limit	
			Number (max)	Percent (max)
Agriculture (AG), Residential Low (RL-1), Residential Low (RL-2)	1.2 (Base Option) n/a to Cluster or Conservation Option	n/a	n/a	n/a
Residential Medium (RM-1)	1.2	1 acre or 35 DU	n/a	15%
Residential High (RH-1), Residential High (RH-2)	1.3	1 acre or 35 DU	10	15%
Mixed Use (MX-1)	n/a	1 acre or 30,000 sf	15	10%
Mixed Use (MX-2)	n/a	1 acre or 30,000 sf	10	5%
Downtown (MX-3)	n/a	1 acre or 30,000 sf	0	0%
Commercial (C-1)	n/a	3 acres or 60,000 sf	60	20%
Industrial Light (I-1), Industrial Heavy (I-2)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Redevelopment (RD)	n/a	1 acre or 30,000 sf	20	15%
Planned Development District (PD)	n/a	3 acres or 60,000 sf	60	15%
ETJ (Subdivision Plat)	n/a	1 acre or 30,000 sf	30	15%

* All subdivision plats must include a street network.

