

Neighborhood Side Design Standards -- Very Preliminary Draft

The recently enacted Design Standards ordinance focuses on the façade of new construction on CTCs and other main roadways, the ordinance contains no standards for the neighborhood side of buildings. This lack of requirements is especially a problem for commercial development adjacent to residential, both MF and SF. Other cities, such as Colorado Springs, have crafted such guidelines to make new development alongside established residential neighborhoods more neighborhood-friendly.

1 Parking Visibility

All parking garages and ramps to the rear of commercial properties shall be shielded from view from adjacent residential properties, for a height of 35 feet from the ground level, measured at the rear of the commercial property line. This can be accomplished through the use of screening vegetation or camouflage of the garage so that its rear elevation resembles a building elevation, including glazed windows. The goal of this provision is to prevent neighbors from looking out onto an exposed concrete parking garage or to exposed vehicles.

2 Infrastructure Location

Commercial project infrastructure placement shall respect all aspects of the compatibility standards where a property abuts residential property, or is located across an alley from residential property. This would include placement of stormwater retention or detention facilities; placement of air handling equipment (in particular fans); parking garage exhaust fans; dumpsters; loading docks; and kitchen exhaust outlets. All air handling equipment shall be positioned so that it cannot be heard on adjacent property, preferably located on the roof of the structure or parking garage.

All stormwater retention or detention facilities shall be designed and kept in working order, to prevent infestation by mosquitoes.

3 Accessibility

Driveway access into the commercial project's parking areas shall be designed to minimize impact on the adjacent neighborhood. Where the development makes use of a side street for access, signs shall be posted that discourage exiting traffic from turning into the neighborhood, and encourage vehicles to take the shortest possible route to a collector street.

4 Neighborhood Traffic Impact

In situations where additional density results, the developer shall be charged a traffic impact fee to the equivalent of \$500 per parking space. Funds generated from this requirement are to be used by the City of Austin to mitigate traffic impact in the immediate neighborhood, such as construction of traffic circles, signage discouraging through traffic, traffic humps, and other traffic calming devices.

5 Exterior Lighting

Exterior lighting and lighted signage shall be shielded to prevent light pollution impacting adjacent properties.

6 Solar Access

Development of commercial properties shall not in any way impact the solar access rights of adjacent properties.

7 Reflective Materials

Reflective building materials or reflective glazing shall not be used on the neighborhood side of commercial developments.

The neighborhood side of 31 Guadalupe, adjacent to residential

