

***SMALLER LOT RESIDENTIAL
DESIGN STANDARDS***

***FOR THE CITY OF
MOUNTLAKE TERRACE***

MAY, 2008



Introduction

Intent

The intent of the Smaller Lot Residential Design Standards is to encourage attractive, pedestrian-oriented design for detached homes on lots of a certain size.

Applicability

The following standards apply to any new residential lot of a size less than 7200 square feet that is created under the ordinance adopting the Smaller Lot Residential Design Standards. This specifically relates to the designated smaller lot overlay district. The degree to which each standard applies to a particular project shall be evaluated by City staff on a case-by-case basis in an effort to achieve the overall intent of the Smaller Lot Residential Design Standards.

Each page of these design standards includes illustrations of ways in which the intent of a particular standard can be met. The illustrations do not override the plain language of the written standards.



Site Design

Sidewalk and Pedestrian Landscape Area

Intent

To ensure a pleasant, walkable environment that: (a) includes a smooth walking surface for people of all abilities; (b) buffers pedestrians from vehicular traffic; and (c) provides green space and minimize stormwater run-off.

Standards

1. A pedestrian landscape area of a minimum five-foot width shall be created in the public right of way between the street curb and the sidewalk and extend for at least the length of the property parallel to the street.¹
 - a. The pedestrian landscape area shall be comprised of a minimum 40% ground cover and one or more approved trees.
 - b. The ground cover may be lawn or other plant material that can be maintained at a low height and is suitable to the Northwest climate.
 - c. Every 25 to 30 feet on center, a tree shall be planted in the pedestrian landscape area. Trees must be of a species approved by the Department for compatibility with the street environment, including the need for vehicle and pedestrian clearance and visibility. Planting must in a proper manner, per Department guidance, to help ensure the health of the tree.
 - d. Up to 60% of the pedestrian landscape area may be comprised of a hard surface, such as pavement or paver blocks for the driveway, stepping stones, brick paths, and similar materials. Pebbles, gravel, sand, or other loose materials are not allowed.
2. A sidewalk five feet in width shall be provided next to the pedestrian landscape area and along the length of the property parallel to the street.
 - a. The walkway surface must be concrete on a 2.5-foot grid, standard Mountlake Terrace sidewalk color and float finish.
 - b. Where the sidewalk required by the design standards does not align with an existing sidewalk on either side of the property, the new sidewalk shall extend past the property line in a manner that creates a transition to the existing sidewalk.



¹ A deviation may be approved by the Department if geographic site constraints, such as steep slopes, make the location of both a five-foot pedestrian landscape area and a five-foot sidewalk or transition infeasible.

Site Design

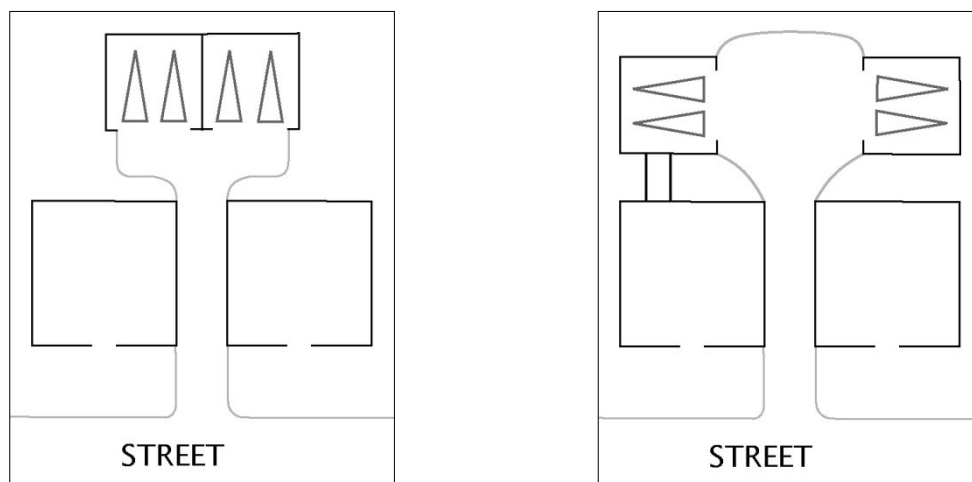
Driveways

Intent

To conserve on-street parking capacity and minimize the amount of impervious driveway surfaces.

Standards

1. Driveways are encouraged to be constructed with pervious techniques and materials that absorb stormwater and are attractive and easy to maintain over time.
 - a. Pervious techniques and materials are preferred. They include but are not limited to:
 - 1) A combination of live ground cover and pavers (such as “grass-crete”).
 - 2) Pavement ribbons with live ground cover in the middle.
 - 3) Special pervious pavement.
 - b. Traditional asphalt or concrete is allowed.
 - c. Gravel, sand, and other loose materials are not allowed.
2. Driveway aprons anywhere within the public right of way shall be no more than twenty (20) feet wide, including at the intersection with the street.
3. Shared driveways are allowed. (Shared access easements for this purpose will not be deducted from the lot area for purposes of calculating minimum lot area.) When located between two homes, a shared driveway should have a clear width of at least twelve (12) feet.



Other layouts are possible

Building Design

Building Scale

Intent

To ensure that homes do not appear over-sized for the lot.

Standards

Each building on a lot shall be no more than two stories, with a **maximum height** of thirty feet, measured from average grade as approved by the Department. (A “story” does not include a basement or attic; however, in any case, the maximum height limit applies.)

The maximum **floor area ratio** (FAR)² for any home is 0.6.



² The FAR is that number resulting when floor area is divided by lot area. As applied in these standards, “floor area” includes the total floor area of both home and garage. A basement that is mostly underground may be excluded from the calculation.

Building Design

Design Features

Intent

To enhance residential character and a sense of place (avoiding “cookie cutter” look).

Standards

Each home shall have a floor plan that is different than the adjacent house. A reversed or flipped floor plan does not count as being different.

The roof pitch of any house or garage must have a minimum pitch of four feet of rise to twelve feet of run (4:12) for at least eighty percent (80%) of the structure.

The front-facing façade of an attached garage shall have articulation from the rest of the façade. This may be provided by a setback, trellis, change in roof line, or other architectural technique approved by the Department.

All buildings on the same lot should generally use similar materials and styles to provide a cohesive appearance. They may vary in individual features and accents.

Carports and tent structures for vehicles or storage are not allowed.



Building Design

Relationship to Street

Intent

To encourage community interaction and security that includes “eyes on the street” and to provide an attractive residential appearance.

Standards

At or near the ground level, each home must have a front entry door and one or more transparent windows facing the street. The front entry door shall be visible from the front property line. The transparent window area at ground level should be eight (8) square feet or greater.

On a corner or through lot, the “non-front” façade of the home that faces and is within fifty (50) feet of the street shall include at least one window or door with glass pane(s) totaling eight square feet in area. Any accessory structure with a façade greater than twenty (20) feet in length that directly faces and is visible from the street shall include glazing in a total amount of at least eight (8) square feet.

The garage of a home shall comprise no more than 2/3 of any street-facing façade of the home.

