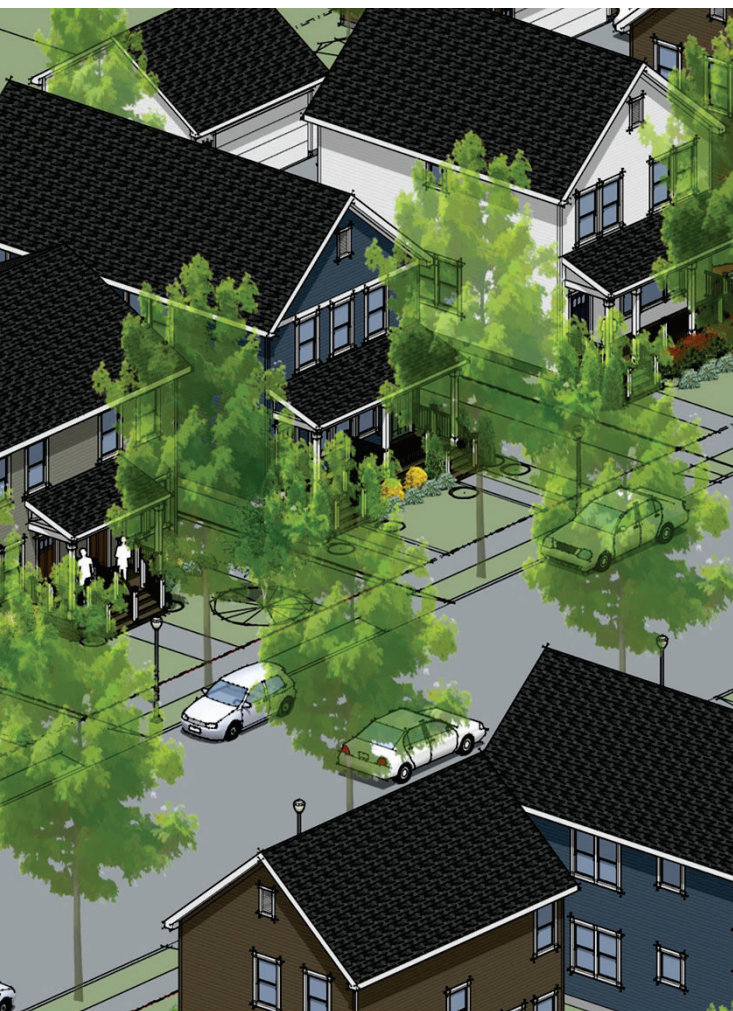


CITY OF AKRON RESIDENTIAL HOUSING STANDARDS MADE IN AKRON PATTERN BOOK





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*Many of the Housing Standards criteria apply to all residential housing types. The shared criteria are illustrated in the Single-Family Detached and Two-Family Homes section of this Pattern Book. The criteria that apply only to Townhouses and Multi-Family Apartments are illustrated in the second half of this document.



Message from Akron Mayor Shammias Malik

The City of Akron is very excited to share the Made in Akron Pattern Book, the result of a collaboration between the City, the Summit County Land Bank, and Grassroots Architecture, an Akron-based architecture firm. As a companion piece to the Made in Akron Home Plans, the Pattern Book provides guidelines for new residential development in Akron.

Walking around Akron, we can see the classic homebuilding patterns that have shaped our city and how elements like welcoming front porches, generous windows, and tree-shaded sidewalks create better blocks and a better city. This Pattern Book is an important piece of the City's Living Together strategy that is focused on improving quality housing opportunities in Akron. The Made in Akron Pattern Book will help ensure that new homes will contribute to building stronger neighborhoods across our city.

Message from Akron Planning Director Kyle Julien

The Made in Akron Pattern Book illustrates in a clear format the City of Akron Housing Standards for both single-family and multi-family residential development. The Housing Standards are the framework the Planning Department uses to evaluate residential housing development in the City and ensure that new buildings provide value for their owners and occupants while also enhancing their neighborhood. Development on land acquired from the City or receiving City subsidy is required to meet these Housing Standards. The Standards incorporate best practices in urban design as well as concepts from the field of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).

The Housing Standards encourage development that supports a strong public realm, provides space for cyclists and pedestrians, and promotes public safety by enabling "eyes on the street." The Architect Louis Kahn states that buildings should be built so that they shape great city blocks and great neighborhoods. The Made in Akron Pattern Book is intended to help guide prospective homeowners and builders towards constructing homes and creating streets that become true "community rooms."

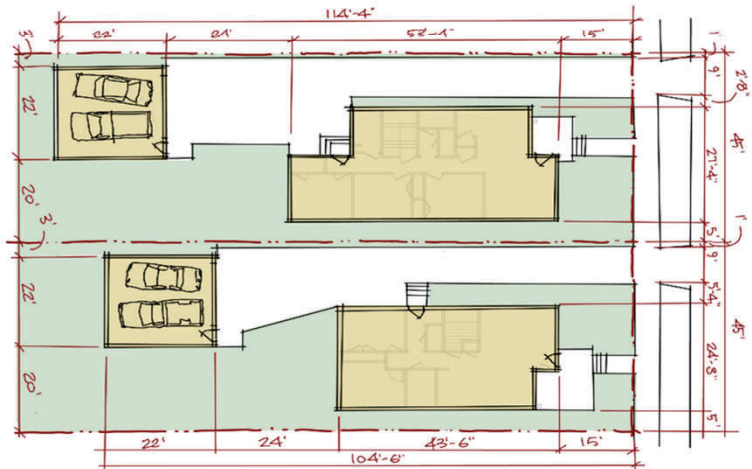
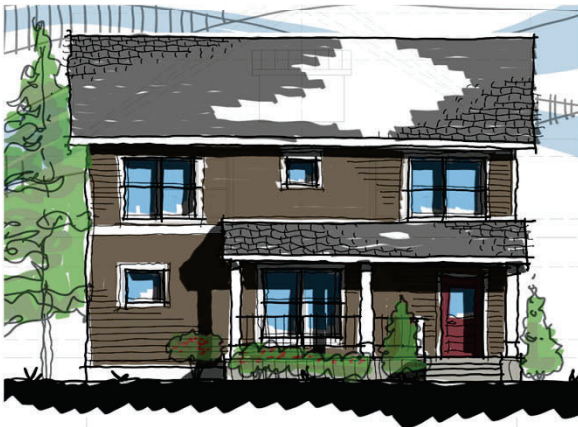
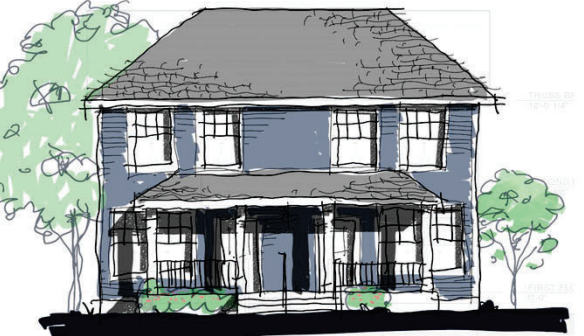
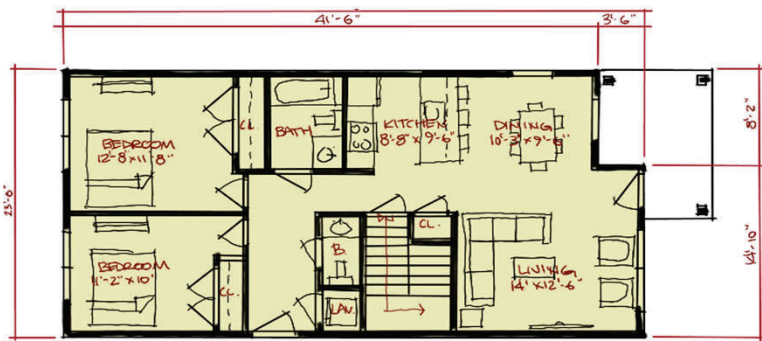
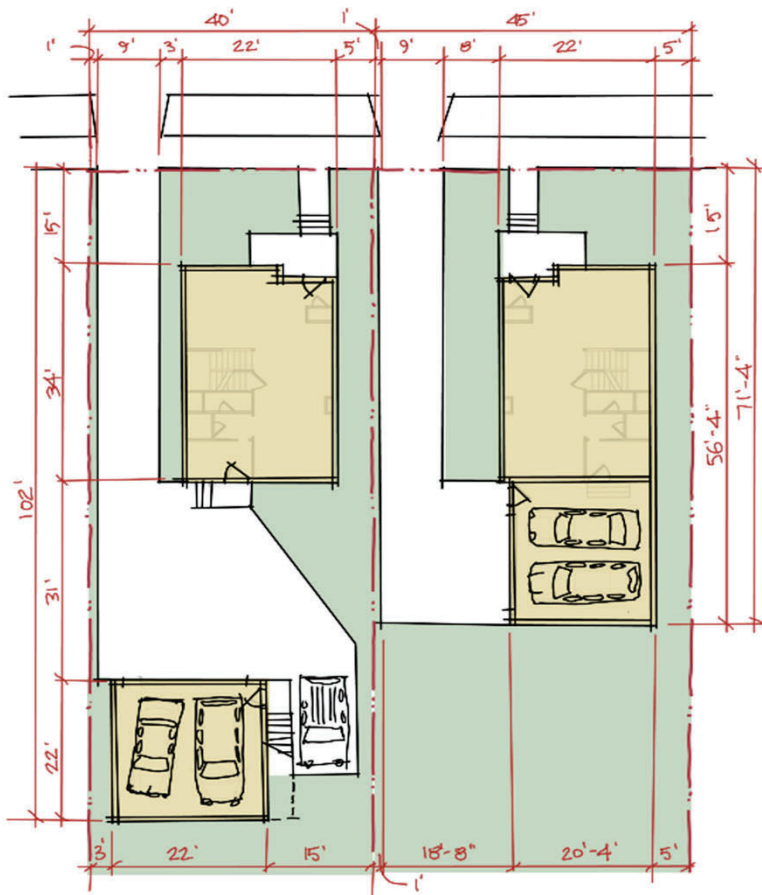
Message from Summit County Land Bank Executive Director Patrick Bravo

The Summit County Land Bank is proud to partner with the City of Akron on this important initiative to strengthen neighborhoods through thoughtful, high-quality residential development. This Pattern Book represents more than a collection of housing designs – it is a shared commitment to creating homes that respect Akron's architectural character while supporting future growth and investment.

By providing accessible design guidance and pre-reviewed concepts, we hope to encourage new construction that is both practical and reflective of the unique identity of Akron's neighborhoods. Strong communities are built through collaboration, intentional planning, and investment in quality housing opportunities for residents.

We are grateful for the partnership of the City of Akron, Grassroots Architecture, and all those who contributed to the development of this resource. Together, we are helping shape neighborhoods that are welcoming, sustainable, and built to serve generations to come.





Great Housing Shapes a Strong Community

A guiding principle for the City of Akron Planning Department is that private development has a responsibility to shape and enhance the public realm, which is the Street. If we are to have a great city with strong neighborhoods, then each new home built must contribute to the community and be a good neighbor on its street.

The Street

*"In a city the street must be supreme. It is the first institution of the city.
The street is a room by agreement, a community room,
the walls of which belong to the donors, dedicated to the city for common use.
Its ceiling is the sky."
- Louis Kahn, Architect*

City of Akron Housing Standards:

The Planning Department has developed a set of Housing Standards to help ensure that new development achieves the following goals:

1. Support development of new residential housing that helps achieve the goals and values of the Akron community.
2. Provide clear expectations and predictability about housing regulations and permitting requirements for existing residents, new residents, contractors, and developers.
3. Encourage the construction of new homes on vacant City-owned lots.

There are specific architectural elements of residential buildings that enable them to contribute to the creation of great neighborhoods. These building elements can be identified, measured, and then repeated in new homes. These essential building elements are spelled out in the The City of Akron Housing Standards. The City of Akron Housing Standards apply to new residential development using City funds or built on City-owned land. Homes not using City funds or land are not required to meet the Standards, but they are encouraged to do so in order to help the city meet the above goals. Meeting the requirements ensures that new homes fit appropriately into existing neighborhoods and truly feel like they were "Made in Akron."

The Housing Standards help meet community goals:

Equity

The Standards support the use of, and access to, all transportation modes, including alternatives to driving like transit, biking, and walking. This is especially important for those that do not have access to a car, like younger or older residents.

Safety

Windows on the fronts of houses enable “eyes on the street” observation of surroundings. Front porches allow residents to see who is on the street in their community.

Sense of Community

Front porches also provide a place where for residents to greet their neighbors.

Sustainability

The Standards support the option to walk, bike, or take transit by providing sidewalks with shade trees. Preservation of the tree canopy mitigates air pollution, cools the neighborhood, reduces energy consumption, and sequesters carbon.

Resident Health

The Standards encourage walking by ensuring streets are visually interesting and feel safe.

Affordability

The Standards support the construction of a mix of housing types, including duplexes, townhouses, and small apartment buildings, to meet the needs of different family types and different income levels.

Where did the Housing Standards come from?

- Feedback from the community
- Portions of the City Of Akron Form-Based Zoning Code
- LEED For Neighborhood Development Standards
- CPTED Guidelines - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
- Other Best Practices in Urban Design
- Observation: Studying the patterns and DNA of great neighborhoods

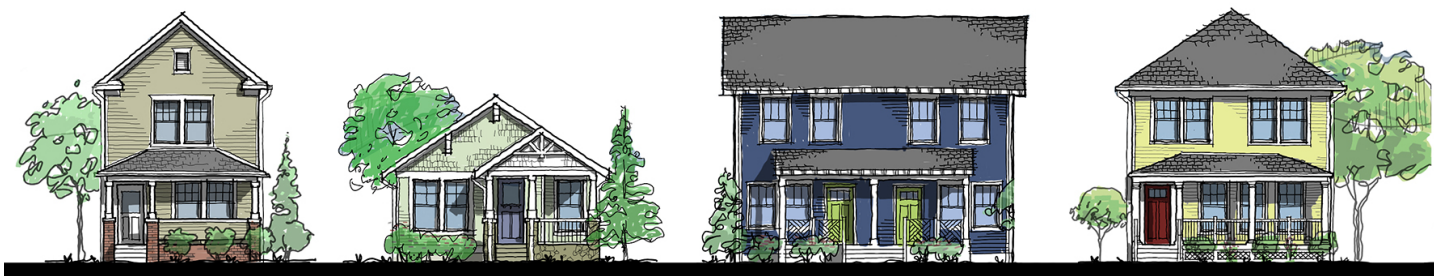
What is the Made In Akron Pattern Book?

The Pattern Book illustrates, using drawings and example photos, each of the requirements listed in the City of Akron Housing Standards. The required architectural elements allow new homes to fit seamlessly into existing streets in order to build stronger neighborhoods. This reference is not intended to be restrictive; rather, it serves as a collection of examples and explanations to help builders and prospective homeowners to better understand the requirements.

Made In Akron Housing

The Made in Akron Pattern Book is one component of a broader initiative by the City of Akron's Department of Planning and Urban Development to help expand and enrich the city's housing stock, and to reduce barriers to new home construction.

The City is also offering a series of Pre-Reviewed Home Plans for use by developers and residents that want to build their own home. These home designs meet all of the Housing Standards requirements. For more information on the Pre-Reviewed Home Plans, see the Made in Akron website, or contact the Planning Department at planning@akronohio.gov or call 330.375.2090.



City of Akron Housing Standards

SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED HOMES & TWO-FAMILY HOMES

For Projects Receiving City Of Akron Funding Or Land
Creating A Community That Is Healthy, Equitable, Beautiful, And Resilient

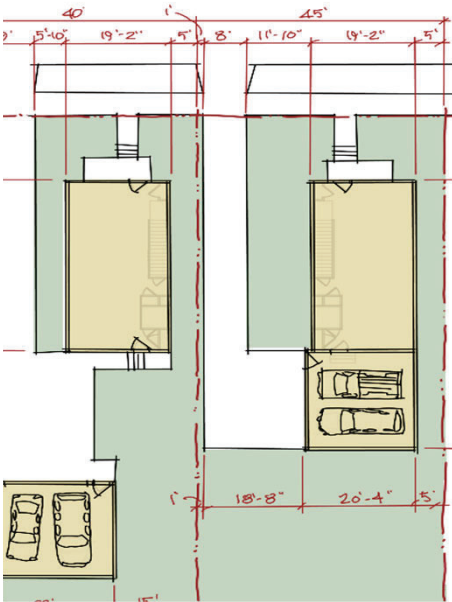
ELEMENT	REQUIREMENT
1. Lot Size	- Design the dwelling unit to fit on a typical lot size or standard lot of record in the neighborhood. - Combining standard sized lots to create a large building lot for a single dwelling unit is not permitted.
2. Block Length & Connectivity in Multi-Unit Developments	- Connect new streets and sidewalks to the existing street network using streets, sidewalks, or pedestrian/bike paths, when feasible. - Provide street or pedestrian/bike connections to achieve: - Block Length: 500' maximum - Block Perimeter: 1600' maximum.
3. Street Lights on New Streets	- Furnish street lights on all new streets per City of Akron requirements. - Installed by Ohio Edison, as selected from their standard fixtures and poles. - Achieve average maintained illumination on the pavement of 0.25 foot-candles. - Color Temperatures to be standard ODOT 3000K. - Distance from face of poles to face of curb: 24" min.
4. Public Sidewalks & Tree Lawns	- Provide a public sidewalk with tree lawn at the right of way line for each building. - Infill Development: Match existing sidewalk and tree lawn width. - New Site Development: 5' sidewalk width, 5' tree lawn width, minimum.
5. Tree Canopy	- Preserve existing healthy, mature site trees, 12" or greater in diameter. - Protect existing street trees throughout construction. - Where no street tree exists, provide a new street tree in front of each new building. - Species as determined by City Arborist.
6. Stormwater Structures in Multi-Unit Developments	- Design visible stormwater structures, such as detention basins and retention ponds, as public or resident amenities. Examples include water features such as ponds and fountains, and green infrastructure components such as rain gardens and bioswales. - Dry detention basins are not permitted within a front yard, side street yard, or fronting on a Primary or Side Street. - Stormwater structures that are fully underground and have a landscaped surface at grade level are exempt from these requirements.
7. Driveways	
a) Location	- If the lot abuts an Alley, vehicular access shall be from the Alley. - On corner lots without an Alley, garage doors shall not face the Primary Street. - On interior lots without an Alley or side street, vehicular access can be from the Primary Street.
b) Width	10' maximum at the public right of way on Primary and Side streets.
8. Garages	
a) Location	Garages shall not project beyond the street-facing façades of the home.
b) Garage Doors	- Garage behind the house and facing an interior side lot line (side loaded): No requirements. - Garage in the rear half of the lot and facing the Primary Street: No requirements. - Garage in the front half of the lot and facing the Primary Street: - Garage door shall be set back 15' minimum from the front façade of the home. - Provide 20% glass in the garage door, minimum. - Garage door facing a Side Street (corner lot): - Garage door shall be set back 20' minimum from the street right of way line. - Provide 20% glass in the garage door, minimum.

ELEMENT	REQUIREMENT
9. Building Location Front Yard Setback	- Match the established front yard setback within the neighborhood. - Where no context exists: 15' minimum. - The garage alone shall not be used to meet the setback requirement.
10. Roof Form	- Roof shape, slope, and orientation shall be similar to those found on existing typical homes in the neighborhood. - For example, use front-facing gables, side gables (ridge parallel to the street), or hip roofs in neighborhoods where these are the predominant roof forms.
11. Finished First Floor Height	- Match neighborhood context, or 24", whichever is greater. - Required ADA accessibility compliance is exempted.
12. Active Use Living Spaces	- Provide Active Use living spaces on 50% minimum of the building's First Floor facade facing the Primary Street. - Active Use living spaces include living, dining, kitchen, family room, home office. - Uses that are not considered Active Uses include garages, bedrooms, bathrooms, storage, mechanical, utility, non-habitable spaces, and similar.
13. Glass Windows	
a) Exterior Facades	- Primary Street facade, First Floor: Windows shall be 30% of wall area, minimum. - Upper Floor, Side, and Rear facades: Windows shall be 15% of wall area, minimum. - Wall and glass area are measured between the height of 3' and 7' above Finished Floor. - Glass area includes all clear, non-tinted, non-frosted glass in windows & doors. Frosted glass in bathroom windows are acceptable. - On the Side and Rear facades, the window area on all floors may be combined to meet the 15% window requirement. Windows at stair landings count towards meeting the 15% requirement.
b) Bedrooms	- Provide 22 sf of windows in all bedrooms, minimum. - Typically, two 36" x 60" windows meet this requirement.
c) Bathrooms	Provide an operable window in full bathrooms, when the room has an exterior wall.
14. Doors	
a) Front Door	Provide a front door facing the Primary Street.
b) Back Door	- Provide a door to access the back yard from the First Floor. - Provide stairs to reach grade level.
15. Front Porch	- Provide a front porch facing the Primary Street. - The porch shall have a roof entirely covering it.
a) Porch Dimensions	- Depth: 6' minimum; 8' preferred. - Floor Area: 48 square feet, minimum.
b) Porch Columns	- Provide at least 2 columns per porch - Column width: 8" minimum, 10" preferred, or equivalent. - Examples of single column equivalent: (2) 4" diameter turned posts or a pair of 4" square columns
c) Porch Railings	- Provide railings on porches. - If vertical spindles are used, attach spindles between top and bottom rails. Do not attach spindles to the front or back of the horizontal rails.
d) Front sidewalk	- Provide a sidewalk that connects the front porch to the public sidewalk. - The sidewalk shall be separate from the driveway.
16. Window & Door Trim	- Provide head trim, side casings, and sills at all windows and doors on street-facing facades; 3½" minimum trim width. - Provide expressed masonry lintels at masonry window and door openings.
17. Vinyl Siding, if used	- Thickness: .040", minimum. - Through-color vinyl. - Cornerboards and window and door trim shall have integral J-channels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ELEMENT	RECOMMENDATION
1. Exterior Cladding Materials	- Preferred Materials: Brick; stone; dimensional siding, shingles, or shakes made of wood, cement board, or similar. - Use a limited number of different exterior cladding materials.
2. Trim	- Use more durable trim materials such as wood, cement board, Azek, or similar. - Recommend using these materials especially at the most visible portions of the home, such as front porches, and at window and door trim on the front facade. - Also recommend use at fascia boards, rake boards, cornices, and other trim. - Aluminum brake metal trim is not recommended.
3. Column Detail	Provide an articulated base and top (capital).
4. Porch Beam Depth	Typically, the beam should be at least as deep as the width of the columns that the beam rests on.

How To Use This Pattern Book



Site and Building Selection



Site Elements and Addressing the Street



Building Elements



Recommendations

1. Select your neighborhood.
2. Select your property and determine the site boundaries.
3. Review the zoning map to determine the type of building allowed in the neighborhood. Many areas in Akron permit only single-family homes, while others allow two-family homes and apartment buildings. For assistance in determining the zoning of a lot, contact Zoning staff at zoning@akronohio.gov or 330.375.2350.
4. Next, identify the zoning setbacks; these can be found in the [City of Akron Zoning Code, Section 153.305 E](#) and in the [City of Akron Form-Based Zoning Code District tables, Division 2.3](#). The required front, side, and rear yard setbacks will define the buildable area permitted by the zoning code. Once the setbacks and allowable building types are understood, an appropriate building selection can be made.
5. Finally, an evaluation of the surrounding homes—their placement, style, size, and scale—can help inform the final design so the new structure fits comfortably within its context.

As part of becoming a seamless element of the existing fabric in one of Akron's many neighborhoods, it is essential that a new home feels appropriate to its setting—belonging to and continuing the established rhythm of the street. Elements such as street lights, street trees, garage placement, drives, and sidewalks all contribute to public spaces that feel pleasant, coherent, and intentionally designed. The City of Akron Housing Standards lists requirements regarding site and building elements. The Pattern Book graphically illustrates these items.

In an effort to make Akron's neighborhoods safe, livable, walkable, and active, the City has established Housing Standards for the primary architectural elements of a home. This section provides guidance on the design of porches, windows, railings, floor heights, and roof forms—key components that shape how a house contributes to the character and comfort of the surrounding community.

Design quality matters. The recommendations in this section offer ways to enhance the details of your home so its character, charm, and overall design are elevated. These guidelines highlight small but meaningful choices that contribute to a more cohesive, welcoming, and enduring architectural expression.

Site and Building Selection

First, select your neighborhood. Identify your property and determine the site boundaries.

Then, by reviewing the zoning map, determine the type of building allowed in the neighborhood. Many areas in Akron permit only single-family homes, while others allow two-family homes and apartment buildings. Next, identify the zoning setbacks; the required front, side, and rear yard setbacks will define the buildable area permitted by the zoning code.

Once the setbacks and allowable building types are understood, an appropriate building selection can be made.

Finally, an evaluation of the surrounding homes—their placement, style, size, and scale—can help inform the final design so the new structure fits comfortably within its context.

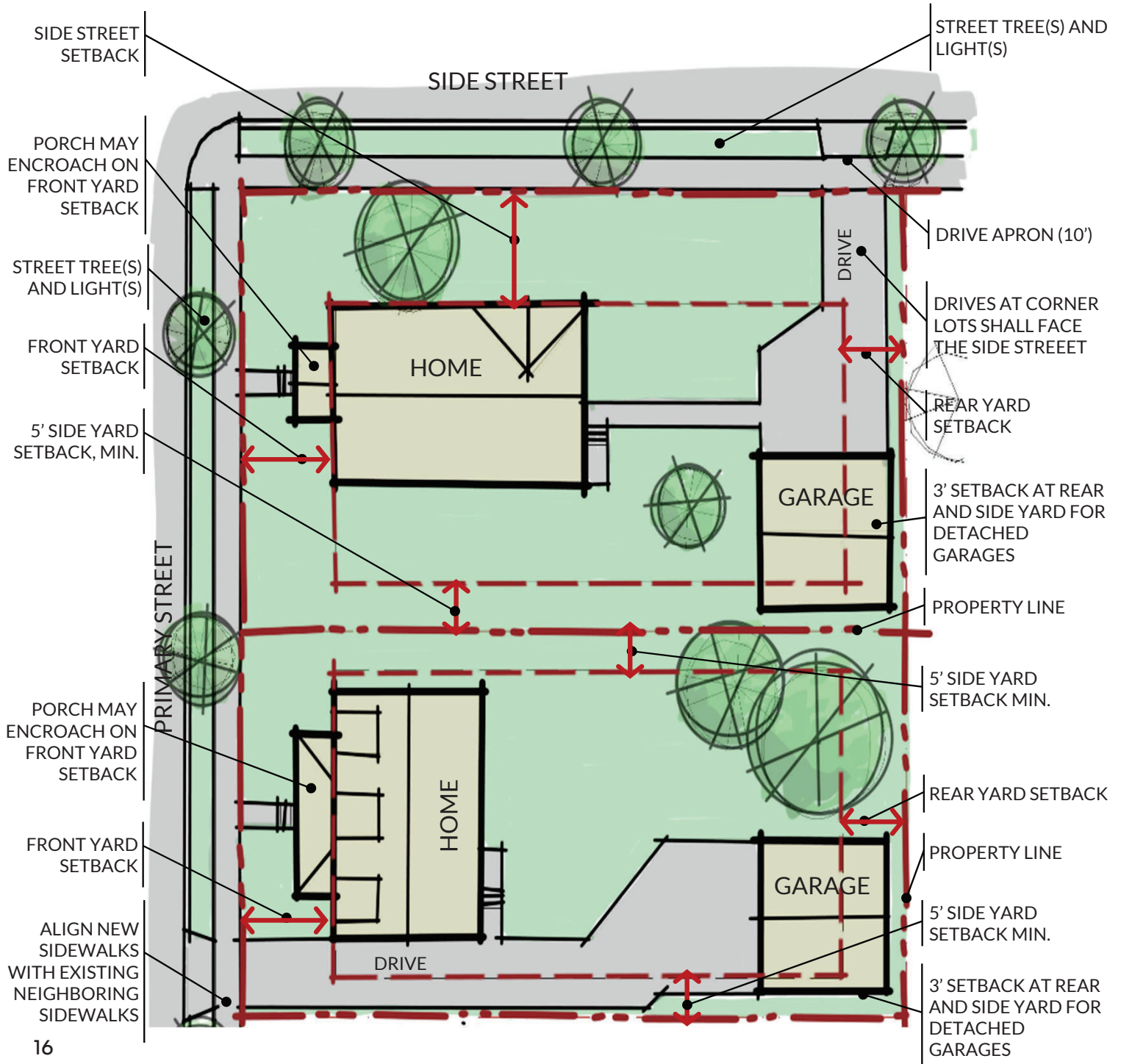
ELEMENTS OF SITE DESIGN

LOT SIZE REQUIREMENTS

BLOCK LENGTH AND CONNECTIVITY

Elements of Site Design

- Property line
- Front yard setback
- Rear yard setback
- Side yard setback
- Vehicle drive and apron
- Sidewalk



Lot Size Requirements

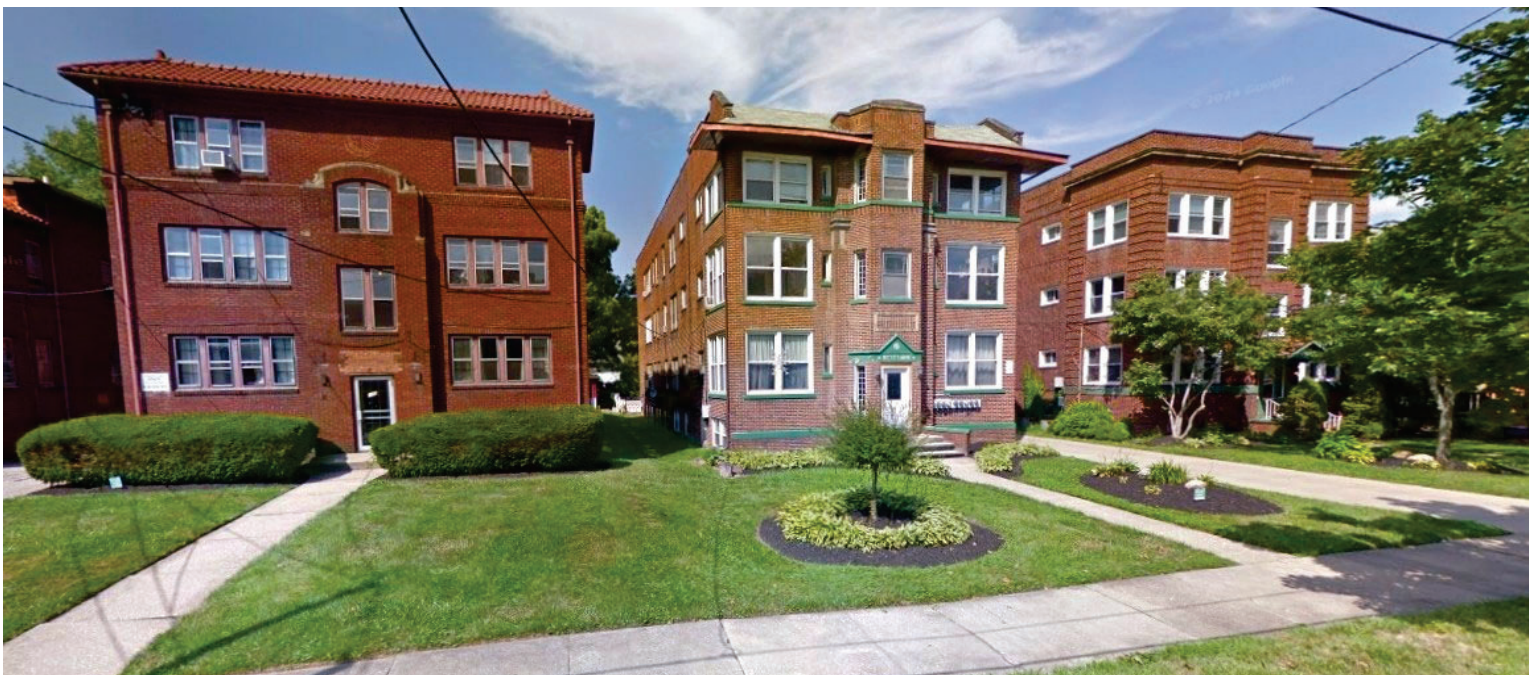
Design the dwelling unit to fit on a typical lot size or standard lot of record in the neighborhood.

Combining standard lots of record to create a large building lot for a single dwelling unit is not permitted.

Why is this important?

These requirements allow infill housing to fit in with the existing rhythm of house placement.

A large lot development has fewer houses and residents, so it is not compact enough to support retail amenities like coffee shops, beauty salons, and pharmacies that residents often say they want in their neighborhoods.





Street connections and pedestrian paths make getting around easier.



Block Length and Connectivity in Multi-Unit Developments

Provide street or pedestrian/bike connections to achieve the following:

Block Length: 500 feet maximum and a block perimeter of 1,600 feet maximum.

Connect new streets and sidewalks to the existing street network using streets, sidewalks, or pedestrian/bike path, when feasible.

Why is this important?

These requirements increase neighborhood walkability, providing more equity for pedestrians and cyclists.

Small block sizes encourage residents to go for an easy 5-10 minute “walk around the block”, enabling them to know their neighbors and improve their physical and mental health.

Additionally, small block sizes provide alternate vehicular route choices, reducing congestion on arterial streets.

Site Elements and Addressing the Street

A new home should feel appropriate to its setting—belonging to and continuing the established character of the street. Elements such as street lights, trees, garages, drives, and sidewalks all contribute to public spaces that feel pleasant, coherent, and intentionally designed. The Pattern Book provides direction regarding these items.

STREET LIGHTS

SIDEWALKS

STREET TREES

PUBLIC SIDEWALKS AND TREE LAWNS

DRIVEWAYS

GARAGES

BUILDING LOCATION AND FRONT YARD SETBACK

Streetlights

Furnish streetlights on all new streets per City of Akron requirements.

- Achieve average maintained illumination on the pavement of 0.25 foot-candles
- Color temperatures to be standard ODOT 3000K
- Distance from face of poles to the face of curb shall be 24" minimum
- Installed by Ohio Edison, as selected from their standards.

Why is this important?

Well-lit streets improve neighborhood safety

Sidewalks and Street Trees

Provide a public sidewalk with a tree lawn at the right of way line for each building

- Infill development: Match the existing sidewalk and tree lawn width
- New Development: 5-foot sidewalk width and a 5-foot tree lawn width minimum.

Preserve existing healthy, mature site trees that are 12" in diameter or greater

Protect the existing street trees throughout construction

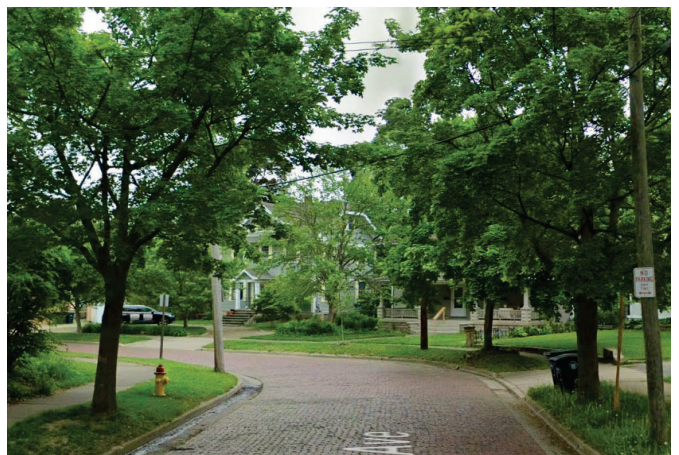
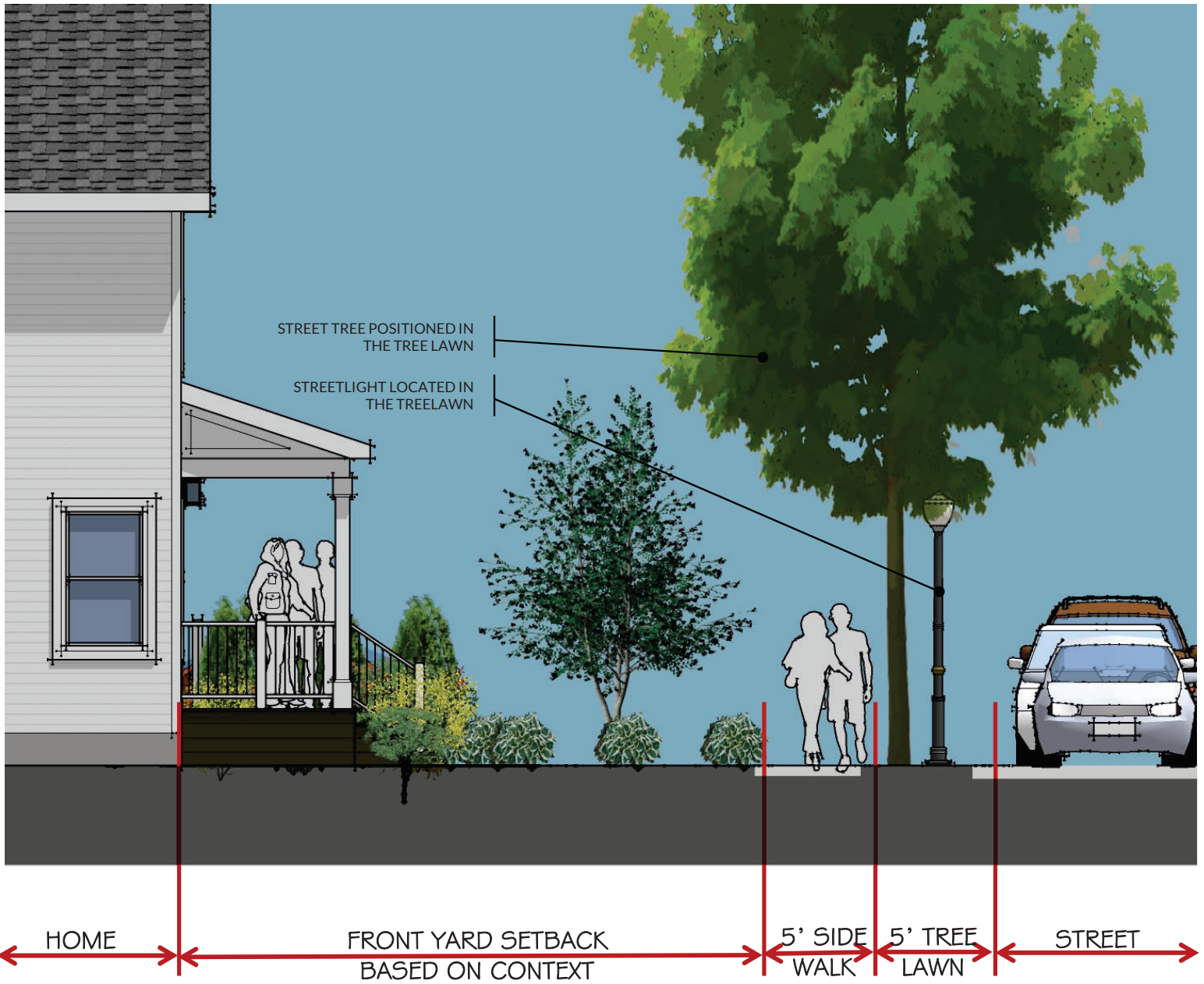
Where no street trees exist, provide a new street tree in front of each new building. Species to be determined by the City Arborist

Why is this important?

Public sidewalks and tree lawns safely separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic and encourages walking, which improves resident health

Maintaining and infilling the tree canopy provides numerous benefits:

- Increases property values
- Reduces storm water runoff
- Mitigates air pollution
- Reduces heat island effect
- Reduces energy consumption
- Sequesters carbon
- Provides shade that encourages walking
- Street trees act as a traffic calming device increasing pedestrian safety



Garages

Garage Location:

The garage shall not project beyond the street facing façade of the home

Garage Doors Facing a Primary Street

Garages behind the house and facing an interior side lot line (side loaded): No requirements

Garages in the rear of the lot and facing the street: No requirements

Garages in the front half of the lot and facing a primary street:

- Garage door shall be set back 15' minimum from the façade of the home
- Provide 20% glass in the garage door minimum

Garage doors facing a Side Street (corner lot):

- Garage door shall be set back 20' minimum from the street right of way
- Provide 20% glass in the garage door minimum

Why is this important?

Garage Location:

Ensures that active living spaces in the home take precedence over the inactive areas for car storage

Inactive, unoccupied uses make the street less safe

Garage Doors:

Garage doors behind the house and facing interior side lot lines are not visible from the street and do not negatively impact the street

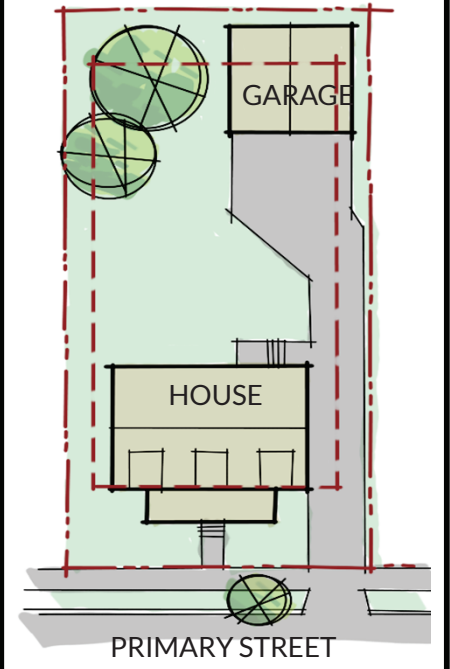
Mitigates the negative impact of blank garage doors close to the street

Houses with prominent garage doors are less interesting, which discourages walking in the neighborhood

Ensures parked cars in front of the garage door do not block the sidewalk

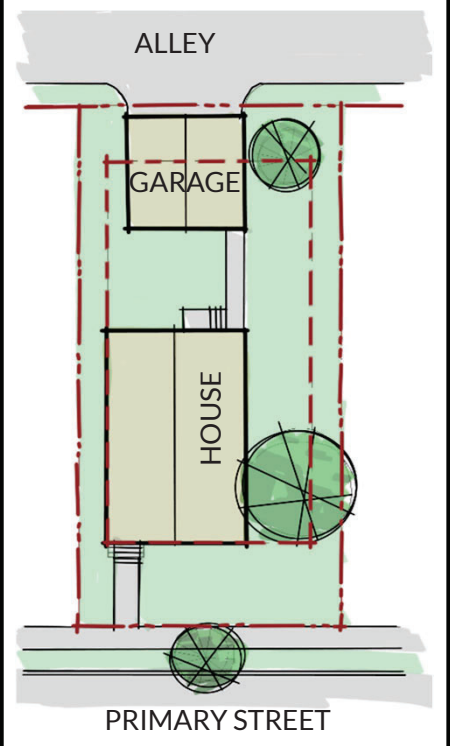
INNER LOT:

- Garage is rear half of the lot is preferred
- No requirements



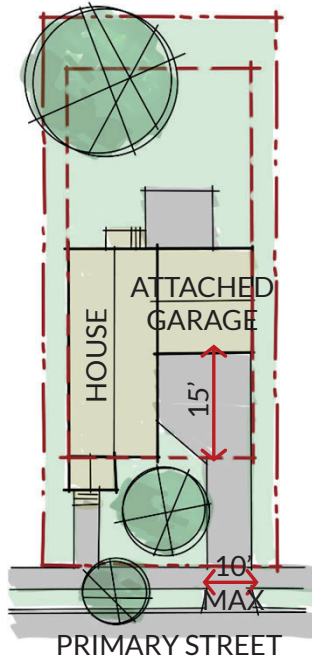
ALLEY LOT:

- Vehicular access shall be from the alley



INNER LOT GARAGE ON FRONT HALF OF LOT:

- 15' setback (minimum) front the front of the house
- 20% glass on garage door



Driveways

Driveway Location:

If the lot abuts an alley, vehicular access shall be from the alley

On corner lots without an alley, garage doors shall not face the primary street

On interior lots without an alley or side street, vehicular access can be from the primary street

Driveway Width:

10 foot maximum at the public right of way on primary and side streets

Why is this important?

The location of the drive:

Minimizes the negative impact of cars and garages on the street character

Reduces vehicular / pedestrian conflicts

Improves compatibility with context.

The 10' width requirement:

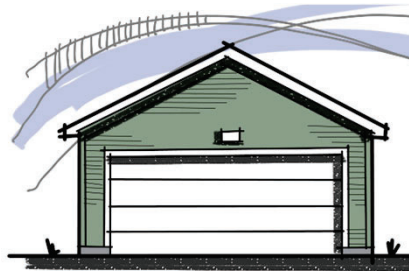
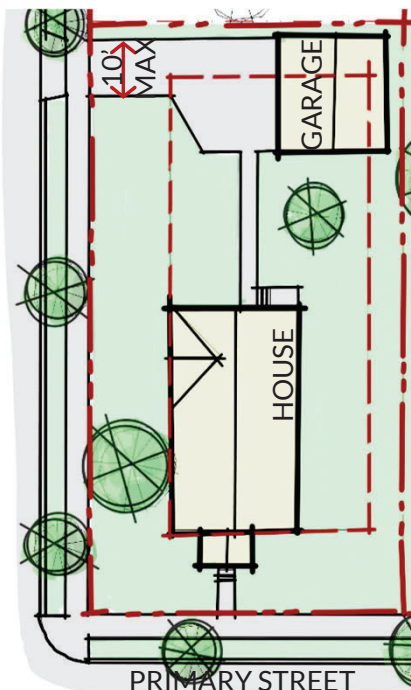
Decreases stormwater runoff by limiting the amount of impermeable surface

Leaves more room for landscaping

Limits the width of the drive apron, which increases the amount of curb length available for on-street guest parking

CORNER LOT:

- Garage shall face the side street
- 20% glass on garage doors



0% GLAZING



20% GLAZING

Building Location - Front Yard Setback

Match the established front yard setback within the neighborhood

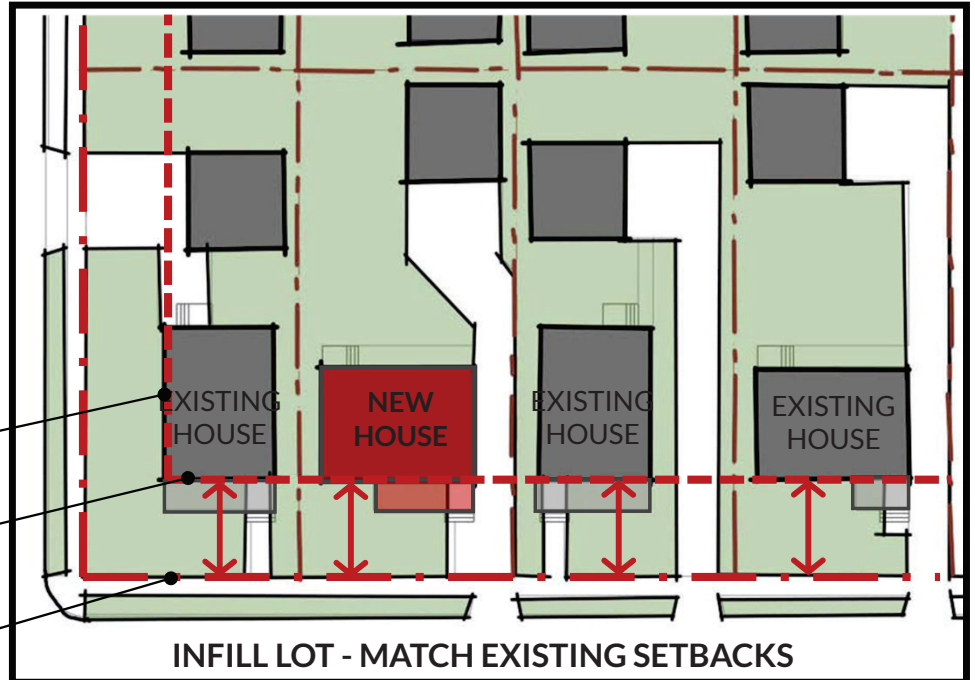
Where no context exists provide a minimum 15-foot setback

The garage alone shall not be used to meet the setback requirement.

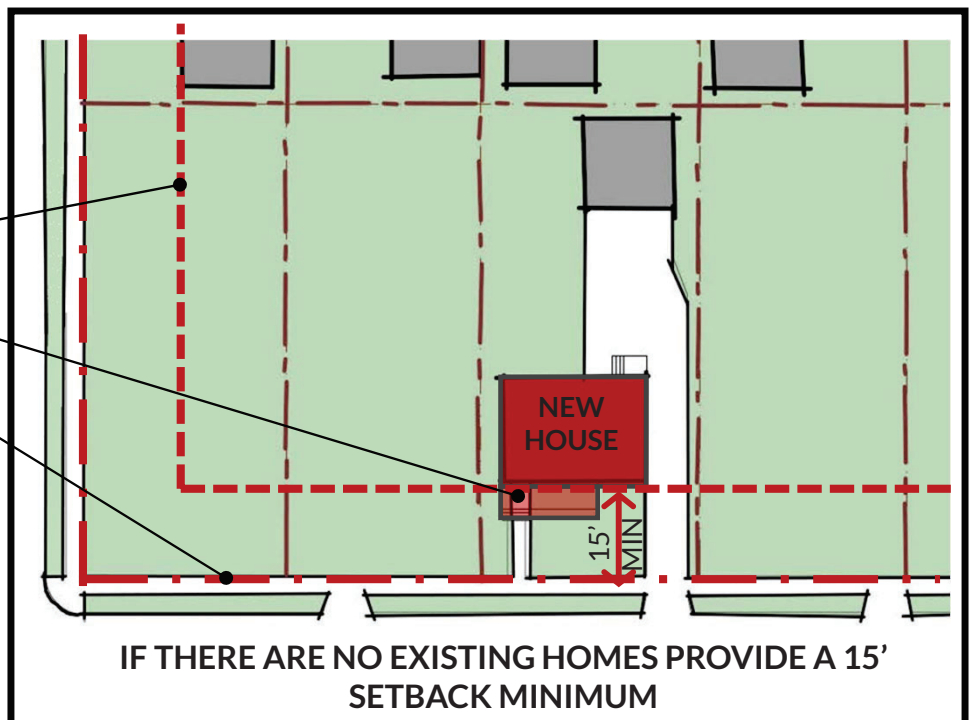
Why is this important?

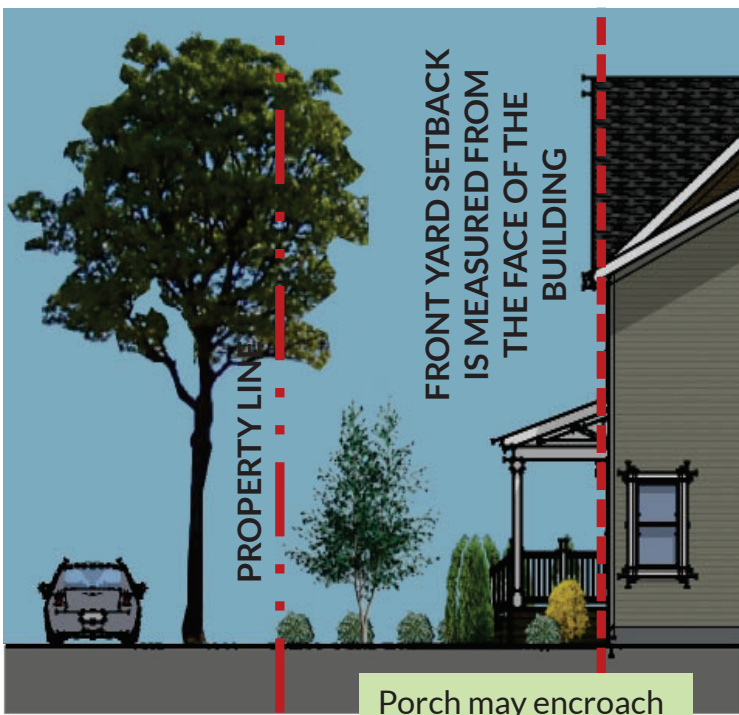
This requirement strengthens the compatibility of the new housing unit within the existing neighborhood

BUILDING SETBACK LINE
PORCH CAN ENCROACH ON BUILDING SETBACK
PROPERTY LINE
TYPICALLY, THE PROPERTY LINE IS THE BACK SIDE OF THE SIDEWALK



BUILDING SETBACK LINE
PORCH CAN ENCROACH ON BUILDING SETBACK
PROPERTY LINE





Porch may encroach
/extend into the
front yard setback



Building Elements

In an effort to make Akron's neighborhoods safe, livable, walkable, and active, the City of Akron has established Housing Standards for the primary architectural elements of a home. This section provides guidance on the design of porches, windows, railings, floor heights, and roof forms—key components that shape how a house contributes to the character and comfort of the surrounding community.

ACTIVE USE LIVING SPACE

ROOF FORMS

GLASS WINDOWS

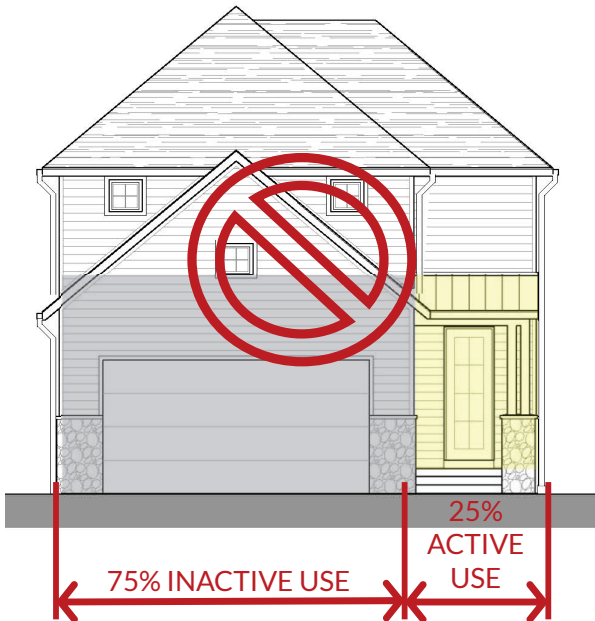
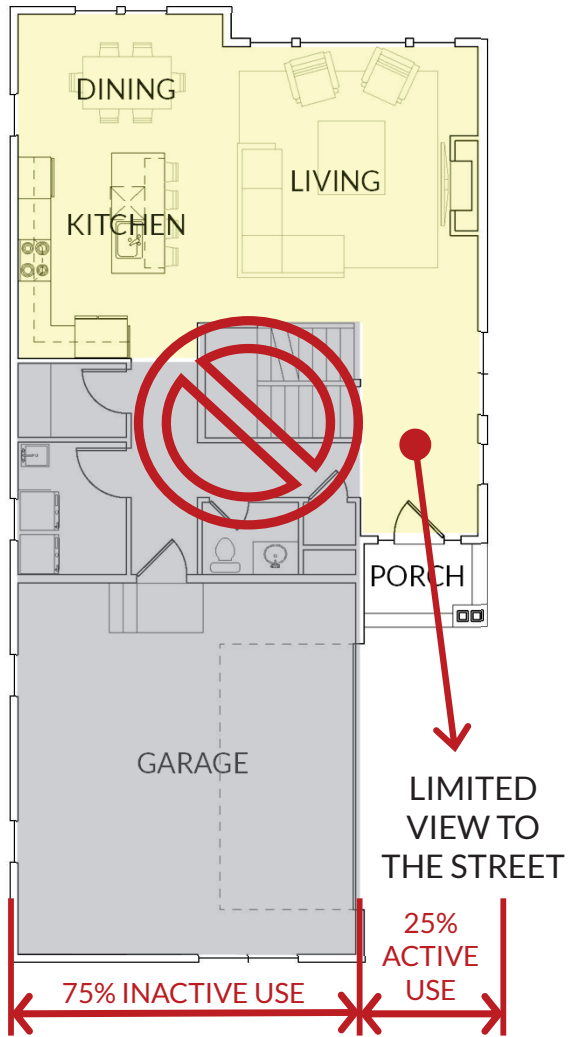
DOORS

FRONT PORCHES

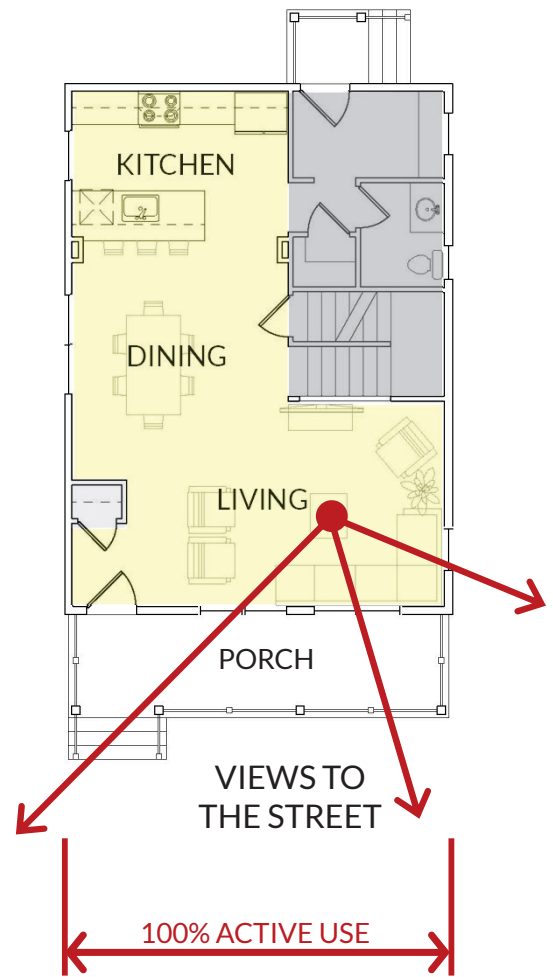
PORCH COLUMNS AND RAILINGS

WINDOW AND DOOR TRIM

VINYL SIDING



NON-COMPLIANT ACTIVE USE LIVING SPACE



COMPLIANT ACTIVE USE LIVING SPACE

Active Use Living Space

Provide active use living spaces on a minimum for 50% of the building's first floor façade facing the primary street.

Active use living spaces include living, dining, kitchen, family room, and/or home office.

Uses that are not considered active include garages, bedrooms, bathrooms, storage, mechanical, utility, non-habitable spaces and similar.

Why is this important?

Ensures that the living spaces have a presence on the street

Prevents garages from becoming the dominant element of the home

Living spaces facing the street allow for 'eyes on the street' that provides increased neighborhood security and sense of community



Inactive uses make walking less interesting and reduce neighborhood safety

Active use living space adds interest and activity to the street

Roof Form

Roof shape, slope and orientation shall be similar to those found on existing typical homes in the neighborhood.

For example, use front-facing gables, side gables (ridge parallel to the street), or hip roofs in neighborhoods where these are the prominent roof forms.

Why is this important?

This requirement improves compatibility with context

Protects the character of historic neighborhoods





Finished first floor height

Match existing neighborhood context, or 24" above finish grade, whichever is greater.

Required ADA accessibility compliance is exempt.

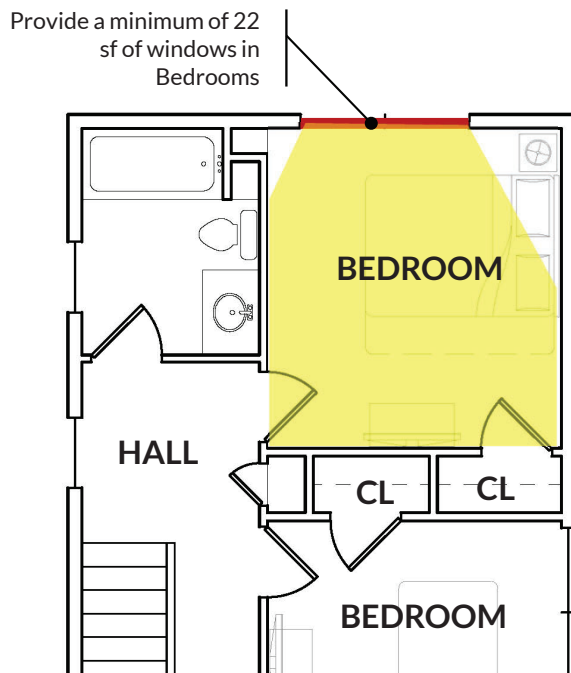
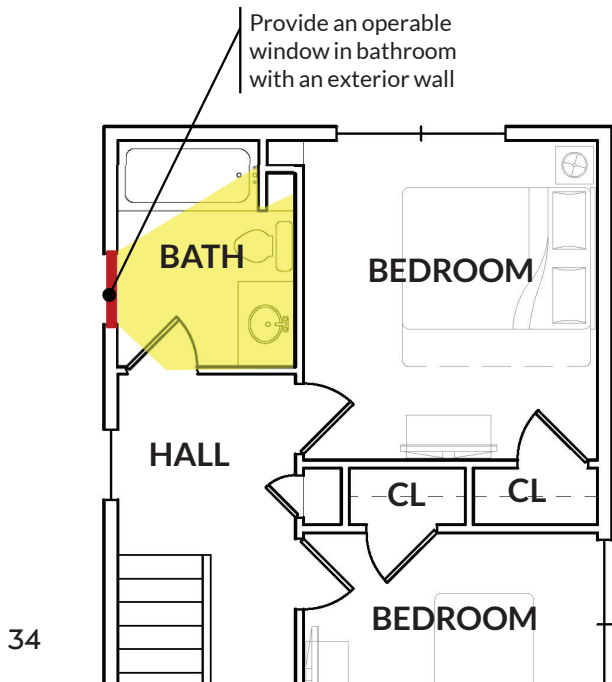
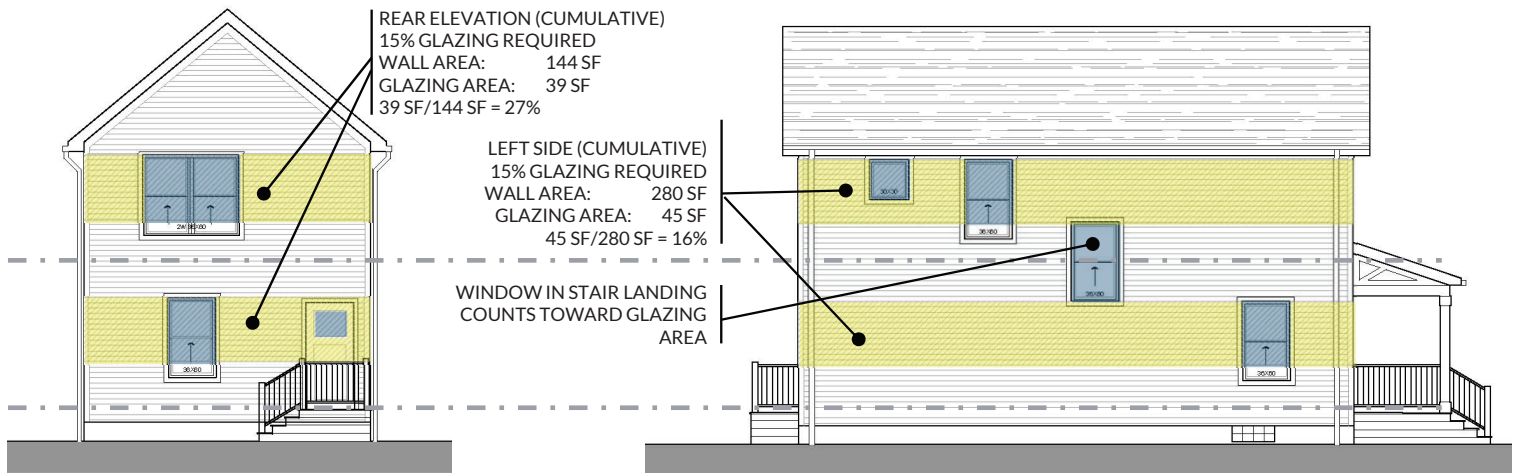
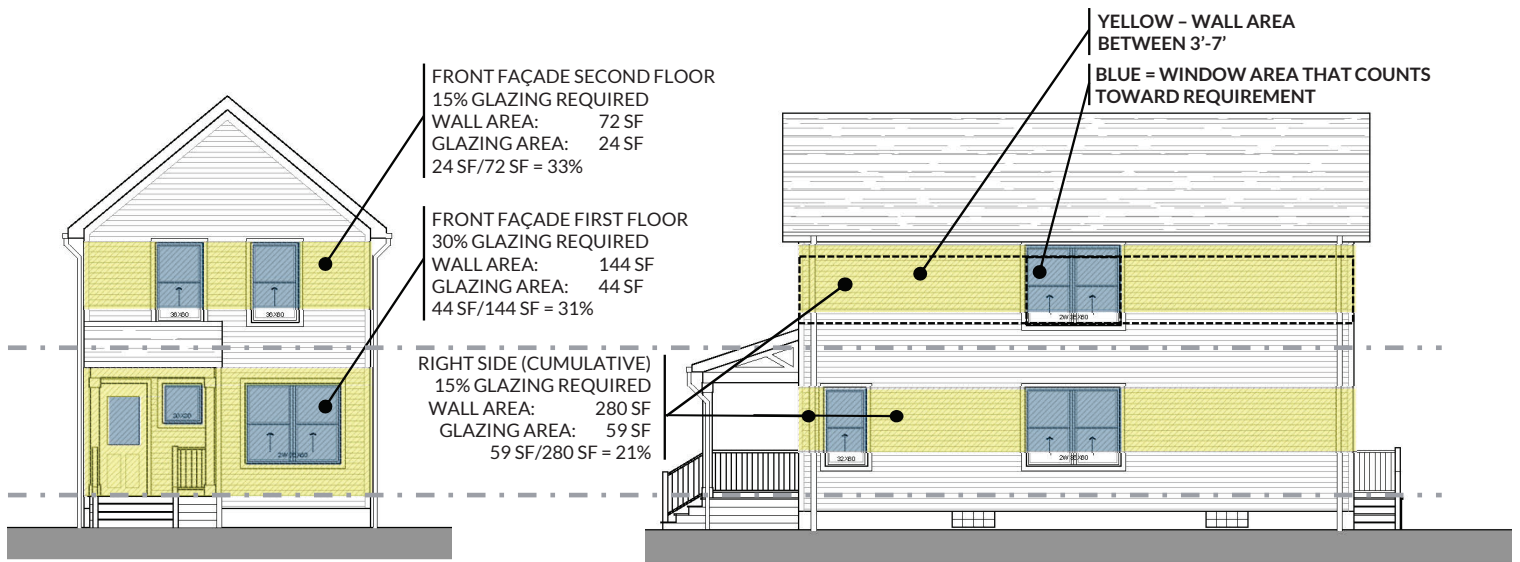
Why is this important?

Elevated floor height increases resident privacy and security.

Elevated floor height ensures that the scale of the new home is compatible with existing homes.



Consistent first floor heights. New construction matches existing.



Glass Windows

The primary street façade's first floor shall have a minimum of 30% glass as compared to the wall area

Upper floors, side and rear facades shall have a minimum of 15% glass as compared to the wall area

Bedrooms shall have 22 square feet of windows, minimum. Two 36" x 60" windows typically meet this requirement

Provide an operable window in full bathrooms with an exterior wall

- Wall and glass area are measured between the height of 3 feet and 7 feet above the floor
- Calculations for rear and side facades are cumulative of both floors
- Glass area includes all clear, non-tinted, non-frosted glass in windows and doors except in bathrooms, where frosted glass is acceptable
- Windows in stairs, when landing outside of the prescribed 3-7 feet wall areas, count toward the required glazing area

Why is this important?

Provides 'eyes on the street', improving neighborhood safety

Windows facing streets increase the visual interest of the house, making walking more likely to occur

Requirements for windows in bedrooms bring in more light and allow for better ventilation Plentiful windows make rooms feel larger and improve home values



Doors

Front Door:

Provide a front door facing the primary street

Back door:

Provide a door to access the back yard from the first floor

Provide stairs to reach grade level



Back door is not usable with railing blocking door and no steps to grade.

Why is this important?

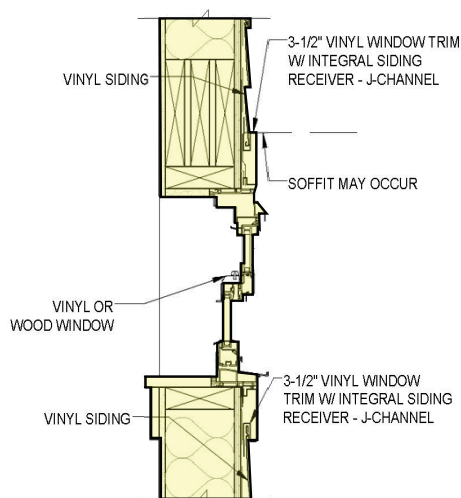
A clear front entry location provides wayfinding cues and a sense of security for visitors

Improves equity by ensuring that those arriving by foot, bike, or transit, and those with mobility impairments, have safe, direct access to the home

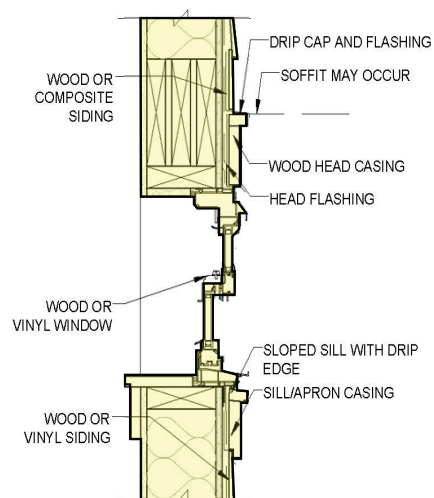
Back doors allow residents and guests to easily access outdoor living spaces



INTEGRAL J-CHANNEL DETAIL



WOOD CASING DETAIL



Window and Door Trim

Provide head trim, side casings, and sills at all windows and doors on street-facing facades; minimum 3 ½" trim width.

Provide expressed masonry lintels at masonry window and door openings.

Why is this important?

Improves durability by shedding water away from the building

Improves compatibility with context

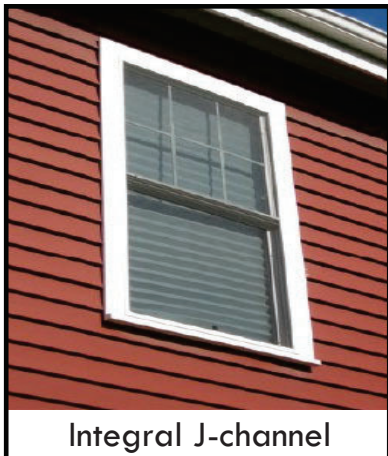
Adds depth, texture, and shadows that make a building more interesting



Traditional Trim



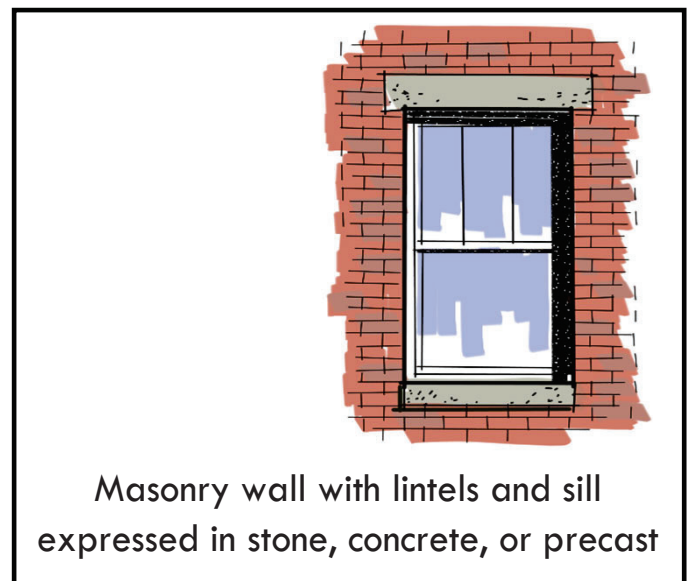
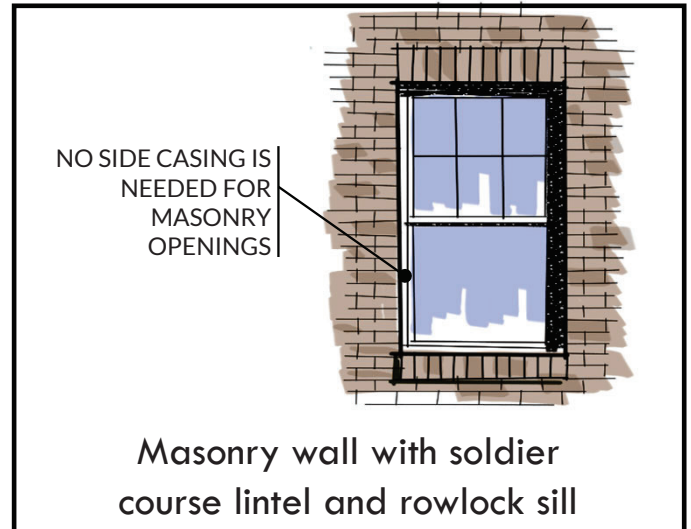
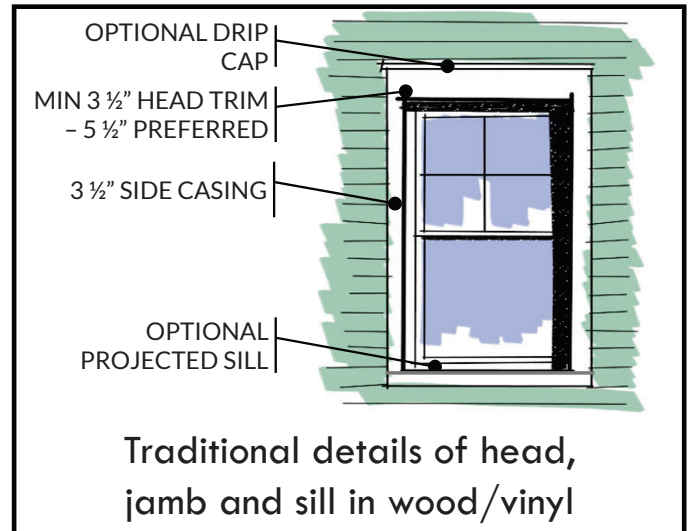
Exposed J-channel

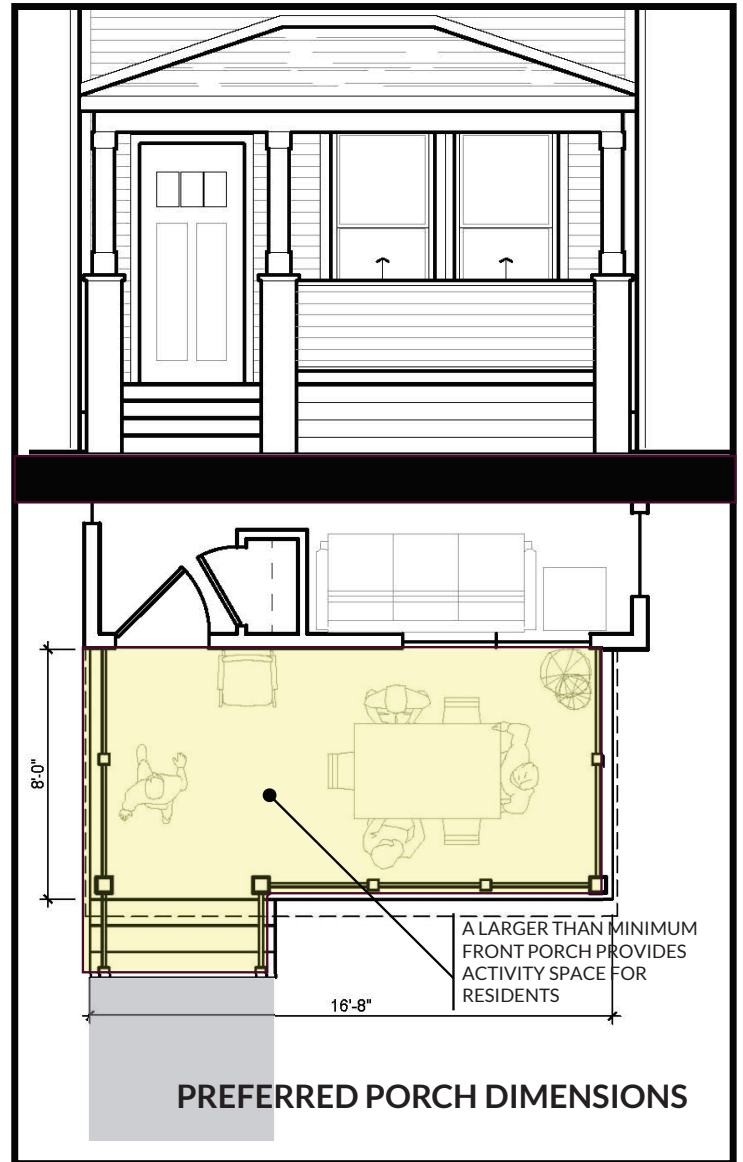
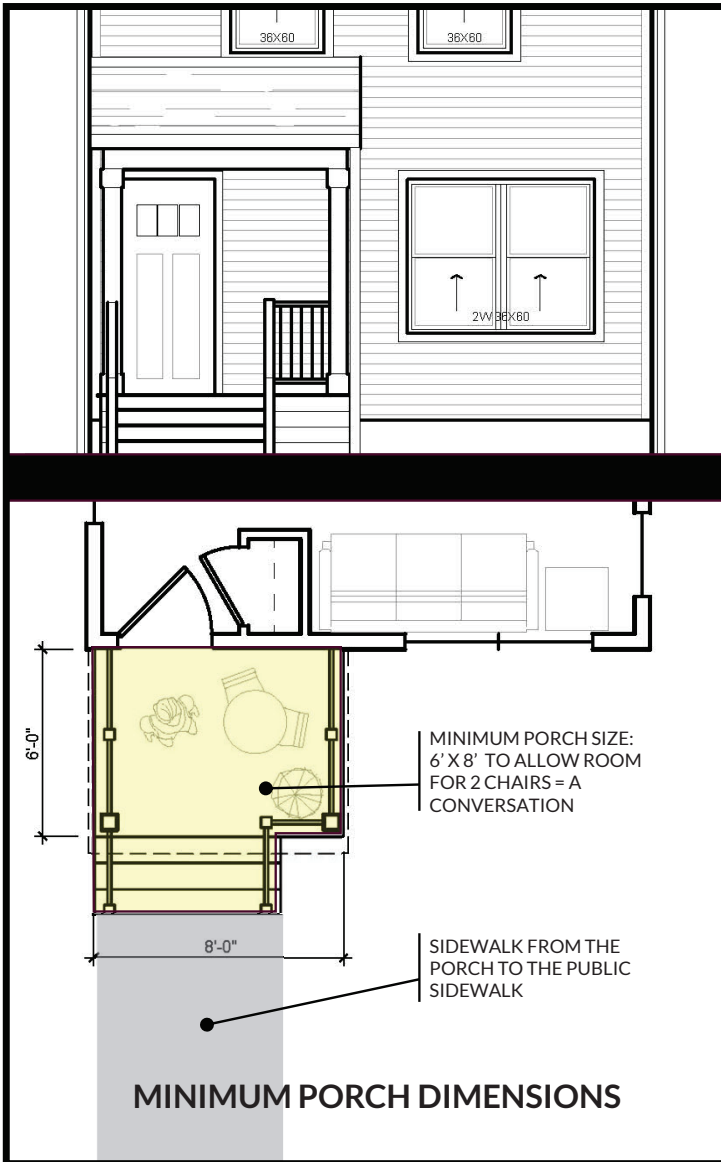


Integral J-channel



Exposed J-channel





Front Porch

Provide a front porch facing the primary street. The porch shall have a roof entirely covering it.

Porch Dimensions:
Depth: 6 feet minimum, 8 feet preferred

Floor Area: 48 square feet minimum

Provide stairs to reach grade level



A GARAGE PROMINENT
FRONT FAÇADE
WITHOUT 'EYES ON
THE STREET'

THE SIDEWALK
EXTENDS ONLY TO THE
DRIVEWAY,
DISCOURAGING
PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

A FULLY COVERED
USABLE FRONT PORCH
THAT ENGAGES THE
STREET AND
NEIGHBORHOOD

A SIDEWALK THAT
EXTENDS TO THE
PUBLIC SIDEWALK



Why is this important?

A front porch facing the primary street:

Provides 'eyes on the street' for increased neighborhood security

Encourages occupants to engage with neighbors, building community

Improves compatibility with context by providing a semi-transparent, additive form to the home, similar to those found in typical neighborhoods



Front Porch Components

Porch Columns:

Provide at least 2 columns per porch

Column width: 8" minimum and 10" preferred, or equivalent, such as (2) 4" diameter turned posts or a pair of 4" square columns qualify as equivalent to one 8" column

Front Sidewalk:

Provide a sidewalk that connects the front porch to the public sidewalk

The sidewalk shall be separate from the driveway



Why is this important?

Porch Columns:

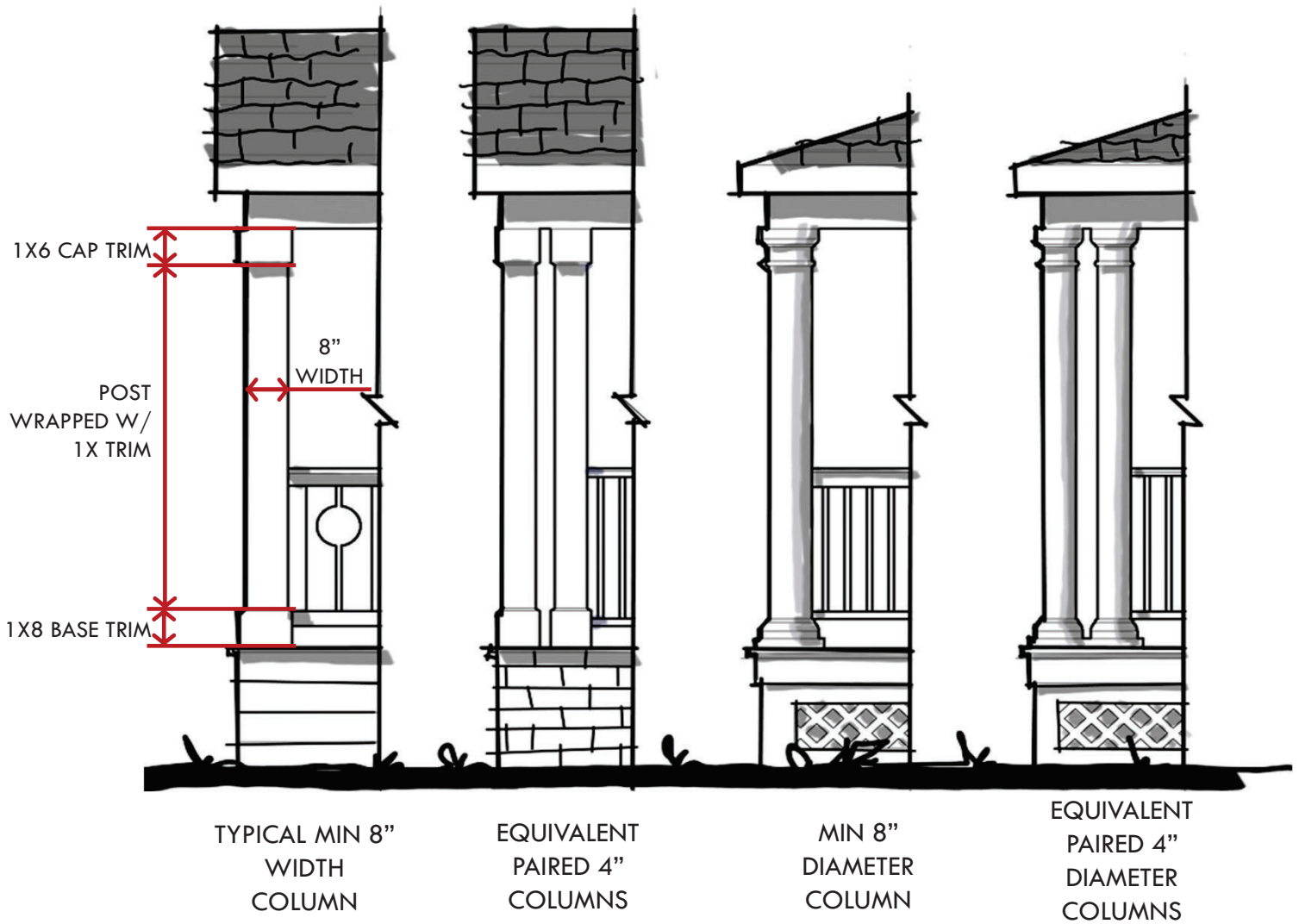
Substantial columns give a sense of enclosure to the porch as an outdoor room, making it more likely to be used.

Ensures that the columns are adequate in width to visually support the porch roof.

Sidewalk:

A separate sidewalk to the front door provides a safe and welcoming path to the home for pedestrians





Small porch columns and a lack of railing discourages residents from using the porch.



Substantial columns and railings make this porch a welcoming outdoor room.

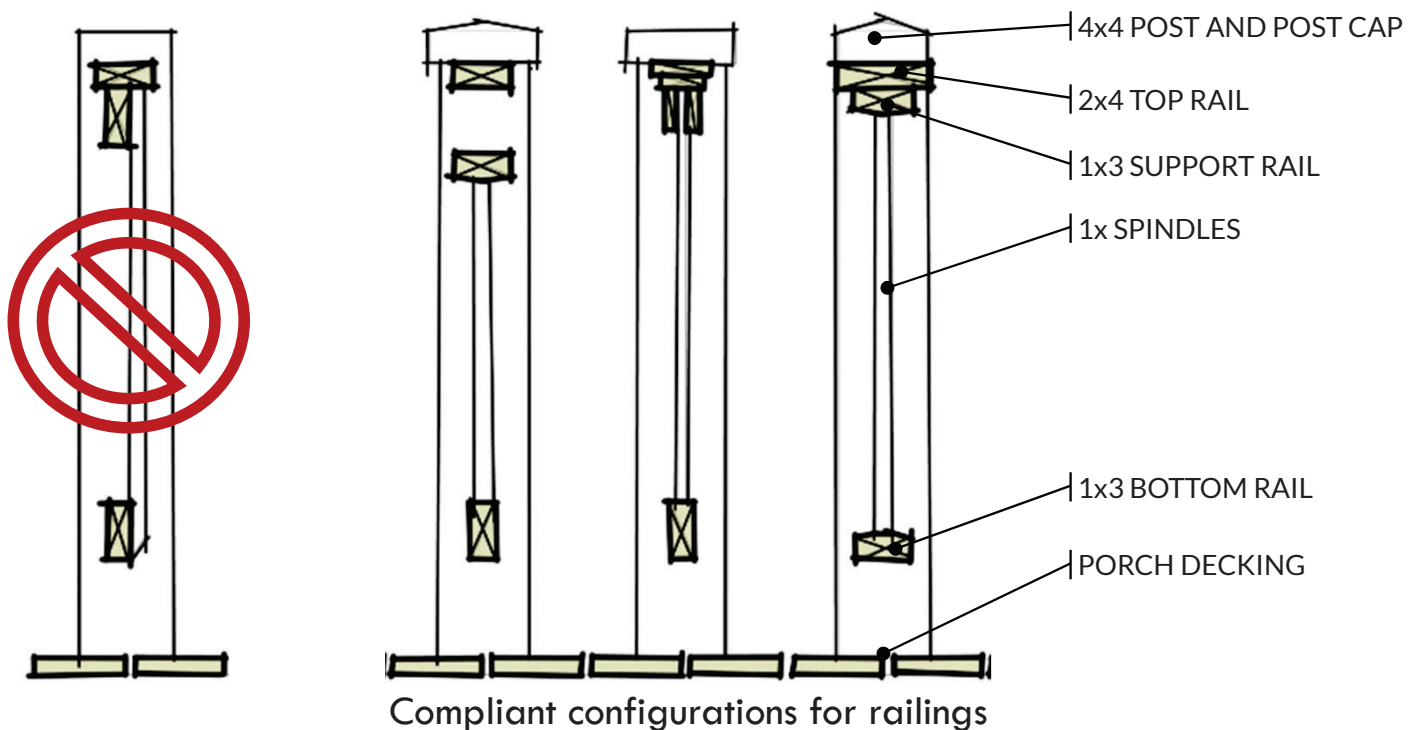
Front Porch Components

Porch Railings:

Provide porch railings on porches. If vertical spindles are used, attach spindles between top and bottom rails. Do not attach spindles to the front or back of the horizontal rails.

Why is this important?

Porch Railings provides a sense of semi-privacy, so residents don't feel exposed to the street when using the porch, making it more likely to be used.



Vertical spindles shall be attached between the top and bottom rails. Do not attach railings to the front or back of the horizontal rails

Porch railings
can come in
many styles
that add
personality and
character to a
home.



Vinyl Siding

Vinyl siding, if used, shall be 0.04" minimum thickness and a through color vinyl composition

Cornerboards, window trim, and door trim shall have integral J-channels.

Why is this important?

Improves durability

Improves compatibility with existing homes

Allow siding to slip behind integral J-channel trim, minimizing the visibility of exposed J-channels

Recommendations

The Pattern Book recommendations provide guidance with material selection, design suggestions, and preferences that, if utilized, will achieve an elevated level of durability and provide interest and distinctive characteristics to homes. We recognize that some elements may come at additional cost, but if these suggestions are used thoughtfully, they add value to the home and allow it to be more compatible to the existing neighborhood context.

EXTERIOR CLADDING MATERIALS

TRIM

COLUMN DETAILS

PORCH BEAM DEPTH

Exterior Cladding Materials

Preferred materials:

Brick

Stone

Dimensional siding, shingles or shakes

Siding made of wood, cement board or similar

Use a limited number of exterior cladding materials



Why is this important?

Improves durability

These materials are more easily repaired compared to vinyl, metal, and synthetic stucco products

These materials are more compatible in character to those found in most neighborhoods

Trim

Use more durable trim materials such as wood, cement board, Azek or similar:

Recommend using these materials especially at the most visible areas of the home, such as front porches and at window and door trim on the front façade.

Also recommend use at fascia boards, rake boards, cornices, and other trim.

Aluminum break metal trim is not recommended.



Why is this important?

Wood and Azek trim boards have cleaner details at joints and corners, mimicking construction methods of typical homes.

Aluminum break metal trim can have appearance issues, such as buckles, oil canning, and ill-fitting joints.

Column Detail

Provide an articulated base and top (capital).

Porch Beam Depth

Typically, the beam should be at least as deep as the width of columns that the beam rests on.

Why is this important?

Articulated column details provides visual interest and distinct character to the homes and improves compatibility with context.

An appropriate beam depth gives the beam enough substance to visually support the roof.





PORCH BEAM DEPTH SHOULD BE SUBSTANTIAL ENOUGH
TO VISUALLY SUPPORT THE ROOF

A VARIETY OF COLUMN DETAILING
CAN BE USED TO ENHANCE THE
CHARACTER OF THE HOME

Townhouse and Multi-Family Apartment Standards

The principles that allow a single-family home to contribute to its block and shape a strong neighborhood should guide multi-family residential development as well. Careful site planning and the placement of doors and windows are just as critical for apartment buildings as they are for single-family homes. And given the larger scale of multi-family buildings, they have even more responsibility to create and enhance the public space of the street.

Just like single-family and two-family homes, townhouses and apartments should have a strong presence on their street, with a front entrance that is clearly connected to the public sidewalk, and plenty of windows to provide visual interest and security.

The site layout should make it clear where kids play and people walk, and where cars should drive and park. And those should be two separate spaces. Living spaces for people should face the street and parking should always be behind the building. Builders should not assume that all tenants and visitors will use a car every trip. Sites and building design should encourage using other forms of transportation. Site layouts should reflect the needs of transit riders, cyclists (including providing bike parking), and pedestrians.

The front door of every building should face the front doors of other buildings on the site or on the street to shape a shared public space. The public-facing front door should never open on to the private back side or garage of another building.

Where townhouses and apartments sit next to other types of properties—whether less intense (single-family) or more intense (retail or commercial)—appropriate buffers and transitions to protect all inhabitants should be incorporated through careful site planning, building placement, and landscaping.

The City of Akron Housing Standards are not intended to be restrictive, rather they are a set of guidelines for enriching our communities and enhancing safety as new developments are constructed in our neighborhoods. Many of these criteria overlap with the requirements previously presented in the Single-Family Detached Homes and Two-Family Homes section of this Pattern Book. In those instances, please refer to the earlier pages for full detail. The criteria that apply only to Townhouses and Multi-Family Apartments are illustrated in the following pages.

SITE CONSIDERATIONS AND ADDRESSING THE STREET

VEHICULAR ELEMENTS

BUILDING ELEMENTS

City of Akron Housing Standards

TOWNHOUSES AND MULTI-FAMILY APARTMENTS

For Projects Receiving City Of Akron Funding Or Land
Creating A Community That Is Healthy, Equitable, Beautiful, And Resilient

ELEMENT	REQUIREMENT
1. Project Location - Proximity to Transit	- Recommended for all development; Required for Affordable, Workforce and Senior Housing: - Locate development within a 5-minute walk (1300') of a bus line that has 30-45 minute frequency, minimum.
2. Block Length & Connectivity	- Connect new streets and sidewalks to the existing street network using streets, sidewalks, or pedestrian/bike paths, when feasible. - Provide street or pedestrian/bike connections to achieve: - Block Length: 500' maximum - Block Perimeter: 1600' maximum.
3. Street Lights on New Streets	- Furnish street lights on all new streets per City of Akron requirements. - Installed by Ohio Edison, as selected from their standard fixtures and poles. - Achieve average maintained illumination on the pavement of 0.25 foot-candles. - Color Temperatures to be standard ODOT 3000K. - Distance from face of poles to face of curb: 24" min. - Distance from all other underground utilities: 24" min.
4. Public Sidewalks & Tree Lawns	- Provide a public sidewalk with tree lawn at the right of way line for each townhouse unit and apartment building that faces a street. - Infill Development: Match existing sidewalk and tree lawn width. - New Site Development: 5' sidewalk width, minimum 5' tree lawn width, minimum.
5. Tree Canopy	- Preserve existing healthy site trees, 12" or greater in diameter. - Protect existing street trees throughout construction. - Where no street tree exists, provide a new street tree in front of each dwelling unit or at 50' on center, minimum.
6. Usable Open Space	- Front facades of buildings shall face streets, pedestrian paths, or usable open space. - Front facades shall not face parking lots. - Building layout shall create open space that is useful to residents. - Examples include courtyards, gardens, or play spaces - For apartment buildings, 30% usable open space is required per the Zoning Code.
7. Stormwater Structures	- Design visible stormwater structures, such as detention basins and retention ponds, as public or resident amenities. Examples include water features such as ponds and fountains, and green infrastructure components such as rain gardens and bioswales. - Dry detention basins are not permitted within a front yard, side street yard, or fronting on a Primary or Side Street. Dry detention basins do not count towards usable open space requirements. - Stormwater structures that are fully underground and have a landscaped surface at grade level are exempt from the above requirements.

ELEMENT	RECOMMENDATION
8. Vehicular Access	
a) Location	- At a development site that abuts an Alley, vehicular access shall only be from the Alley. - At a development site with access to a Side Street, but not an Alley, all vehicular access shall be from the Side Street only. - At a development site without access to an Alley or a Side Street, vehicular access may be from the Primary Street.
b) Driveway Width	- Driveway serving one dwelling unit: 10' maximum. - One-way driveway serving multiple dwelling units: 11' maximum. - Two-way driveway serving multiple dwelling units: 22' maximum. - Driveways at Alleys: No maximum. - All driveway widths are measured at the public right of way.
c) Public Sidewalks at Driveways	- Public sidewalks at the street right of way shall be continuous across driveways and at the same elevation as the adjoining sidewalk. - Drive apron shall slope down from sidewalk level to meet street pavement level.
9. Off-street Parking	
a) Number of Parking Spaces	- Recommended for all development; Required for Affordable, Workforce, and Senior Housing: Limit the number of parking spaces constructed to the minimum needed to adequately serve the facility. - The number of parking spaces provided shall not exceed the number required by the Legacy Zoning Code.
b) Surface Lot Location	- Locate parking behind the building, when feasible. - Parking is not permitted within the front yard setback. - When parking is visible from a Primary Street, parking shall be set back 20' from the Building Line, min.
c) Screening	- When parking is in the front half of the lot and visible from the street, provide a wall or fence that screens the view of the parking. - Screen height: 3' high min., 6' high max. - Above the height of 4', maximum opacity of the screening is 50%.
10. Garage Doors, Vehicular Entries, Service Access	
a) Townhouse Garage Door Location	20' minimum from the Building Line.
b) Townhouse Garage Door or Opening Width	- Facing an Alley or rear drive: No maximum. - Facing Primary or Side Streets: 9' total width per dwelling unit.
c) Apartment House Garage Door, Parking Access, and Service Access Width	- Facing an Alley: No maximum - Facing Primary or Side Streets: 20' total width per building
d) Garage Door Transparency	Garage doors facing a Street: 20% windows, min.
11. Building Location - Front Setback	- On Infill Sites: Match the established front yard setback within the context. - Where no context exists: No minimum setback. Locate buildings close to the Primary Street lot line so that they define the street and have a relationship with the sidewalk.

ELEMENT	RECOMMENDATION
12. Building Facade Buildout Width	- Building façade shall occupy 65% of the lot width facing a Primary Street, minimum. - Buildout Width is measured at the Setback Line.
13. Building Height, Form, and Massing	On infill sites, building height, form, and massing shall be compatible with the existing neighborhood.
14. Finished First Floor Height	- Match context, or 24" minimum, whichever is greater. - Townhouses on high traffic volume streets (ADT > 7500): 30" minimum - Required ADA accessibility compliance is exempted. - Apartment Houses may have entrances, building lobby, and common spaces at grade level.
15. Active Use Living Spaces, First Floor	- Provide Active Use living spaces on 55% minimum of the Primary Street Façade Buildout. - Minimum depth of the Active Use: 9' - Active Use living spaces include living, dining, kitchen, family room, office, lobbies, community rooms, exercise rooms, other common spaces. - Uses that are not considered Active Uses include garages, bedrooms, bathrooms, storage, mechanical, utility, non-habitable spaces, and similar.
16. Glass Windows	- First Floor Primary Street facade: 30% of wall area, minimum. - First Floor Side Street façades: 20% of wall area, minimum. - Upper Floor Street facades: 20% of wall area, minimum. - Glass area is measured between the height of 3' and 7' above Finished Floor. - Glass area includes all clear, non-tinted, non-frosted glass in windows and doors. - Frosted glass in bathroom windows is acceptable. - Provide 22 sf of windows in all bedrooms, minimum. - Typically, two 36" x 60" windows meet this requirement.
17. Front Door	
a) Townhouses	- For each dwelling unit, provide a front door facing a Primary Street, Side Street, or pedestrian path. - For units with a property line on an existing street, the front door shall be oriented toward that street. - The front door of a unit shall not face the rear façade, garage door, or driveway of another unit.
b) Apartment Houses	Provide a front door facing the Primary Street or a pedestrian path.
18. Frontage Feature	- Townhouses: - Provide a stoop or front porch on each dwelling unit. - Apartment Houses: - None required; Stoop, porch, or awning recommended.
a) Porch Characteristics	- Depth: 5' minimum; 8' preferred. - A porch shall have a roof entirely covering it.
b) Porch Railings	- Provide railings on porches. - If vertical spindles are used, attach spindles between top and bottom rails. Do not attach spindles to the front or back of the horizontal rails.
c) Front sidewalk	- Provide a sidewalk that connects the frontage feature to the public sidewalk. - The sidewalk shall be separate from the driveway.
19. Column Width	- If provided, columns shall be 8" wide, minimum, or equivalent. - Examples of single column equivalents: (2) 4" diameter posts - A pair of 4" square columns

ELEMENT	RECOMMENDATION
20. Window & Door Trim	- Provide head trim, side casings, and sills at all windows and doors on street-facing facades; 3½" minimum trim width. - Provide expressed masonry lintels at masonry window and door openings.
21. Vinyl Siding, if used	- Thickness: .040" minimum. - Through-color vinyl. - Cornerboards shall have integral J-channels - Window and door trim shall have integral J-channels

RECOMMENDATIONS

ELEMENT	RECOMMENDATION
1. Exterior Cladding Materials	- Preferred Materials: Brick; stone; dimensional siding, shingles, or shakes made of wood, cement board, or similar. - Use a limited number of different exterior cladding materials. - In general, use changes in materials to delineate the parts of the building, e.g. delineating the base, gable, cornice, or other features; distinguishing the first floor from upper floors; emphasizing special elements or rooms, such as the entry or large interior spaces.
2. Column Detail	Provide an articulated base and top (capital).
3. Beam Depth	Typically, the beam should be at least as deep as the width of the columns that the beam rests on.
4. Trim	- Use more durable trim materials such as wood, cement board, Azek, or similar. - Recommend using these materials especially at the most visible portions of the building, such as front porches, and at window and door trim on the front facade. - Also recommend use at fascia boards, rake boards, cornices, and other trim. - Aluminum brake metal trim is not recommended.
5. Bathroom Windows	Provide an operable window in all bathrooms, when the room has an exterior wall.

Project Location Proximity to Transit

Recommended for all developments; Required for Affordable, Workforce, and Senior Housing:
Locate development within a 5-minute walk (1300') of a bus line that has 30-45 minute frequency, minimum.

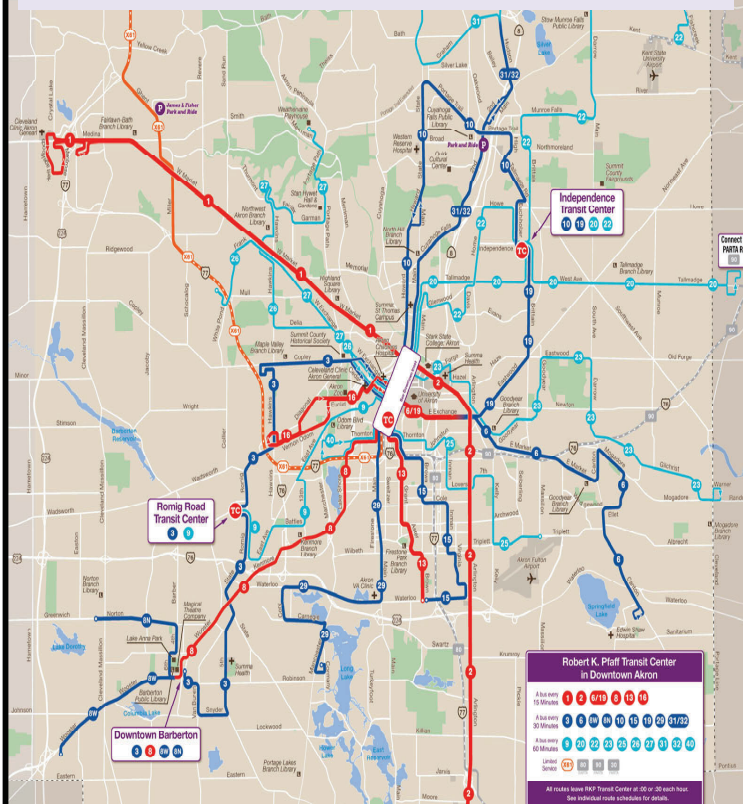


Why is this important?

Provides affordable transportation options for residents; especially for those without access to a car, such as young or older residents.

Helps support viability of transit system by locating housing density near bus lines.

LOCATE HOUSING NEAR METRO RTA RED AND BLUE ROUTES WITH 15 OR 30 MINUTE FREQUENCY



Stormwater Structures

Design visible stormwater structures, such as detention basins and retention ponds, as public or resident amenities. Examples include water features like ponds and fountains, and green infrastructure components such as rain gardens and bioswales.

Dry detention basins are not permitted within the front yard, side street yard, or fronting a Primary or Side Street. Dry detention basins do not count towards usable open space requirements.

Stormwater structures that are fully underground and have landscaped surface at grade are exempt from the above requirements.

Why is this important?

Supports creation of a walkable environment

Enhances and beautifies the public realm

Provides wildlife habitat and improves water quality.

Usable Open Space

Front facades of buildings shall face streets, pedestrian paths, or usable open space

Front facades shall not face parking lots

Building layout shall create open space that is useful to residents. Examples include courtyards, gardens, or play spaces

For apartment buildings, the Zoning Code requires 30% usable open space



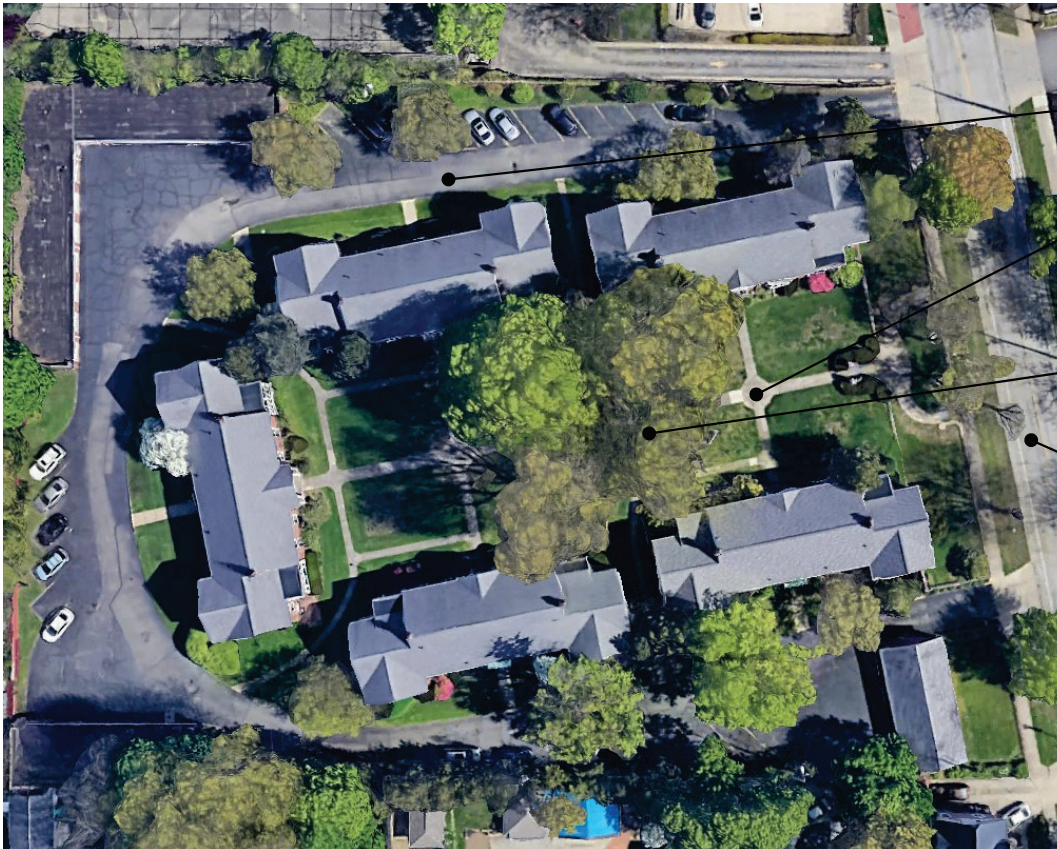
TOWNHOUSE DEVELOPMENT LAYOUT THAT
FACES A GREENSPACE



TOWNHOUSE DEVELOPMENT THAT DOES
NOT ADDRESS THE STREET

Why is this important?

Improves health, safety, and a sense of community by incorporating open space that can be used and shared by residents



PARKING LOCATED BEHIND
THE BUILDINGS

BUILDING FACES AN OPEN
SPACE THAT IS USEFUL TO
RESIDENTS

MINIMUM OF 30% OF THE
PROPERTY IS GREEN SPACE

PRIMARY STREET

Vehicular Access

Location:

- At a development site that abuts an Alley, vehicular access shall only be from the Alley.
- At a development site with access to a Side Street, but not an Alley, all vehicular access shall be from the Side Street only.
- At a development site without access to an Alley or a Side Street, vehicular access may be from the Primary Street.

Why is this important?

Minimizes negative impact of cars and garages on street character

Reduces vehicular/pedestrian conflicts

Improves compatibility with neighborhood context

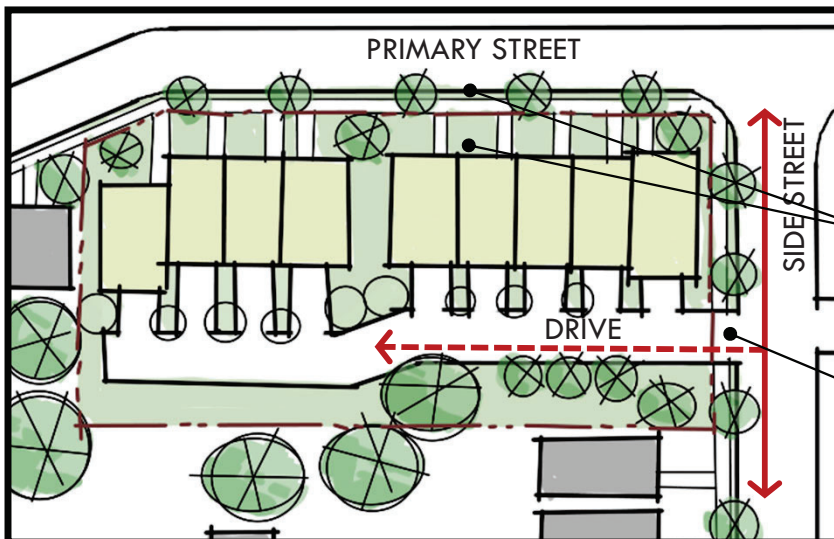


ACCESS DRIVE IS POSITIONED ON A SIDE STREET

REAR PARKING LIMITS VISIBILITY OF THE CARS FROM THE PRIMARY STREET

BUILDING IS POSITIONED SO AN ACTIVE AND USABLE GREENSPACE IS A PROMINENT FEATURE

NEW SIDEWALKS CONNECT TO THE SIDEWALK AT THE RIGHT OF WAY



ELIMINATING FRONT DRIVEWAYS LEAVES ROOM FOR ON STREET PARKING AND FRONT YARD GREEN SPACE

FOR TOWNHOUSE DEVELOPMENT, GARAGES FACE A COMMON REAR DRIVE THAT IS ACCESSED FROM A SIDE STREET



Public Sidewalks at Driveways

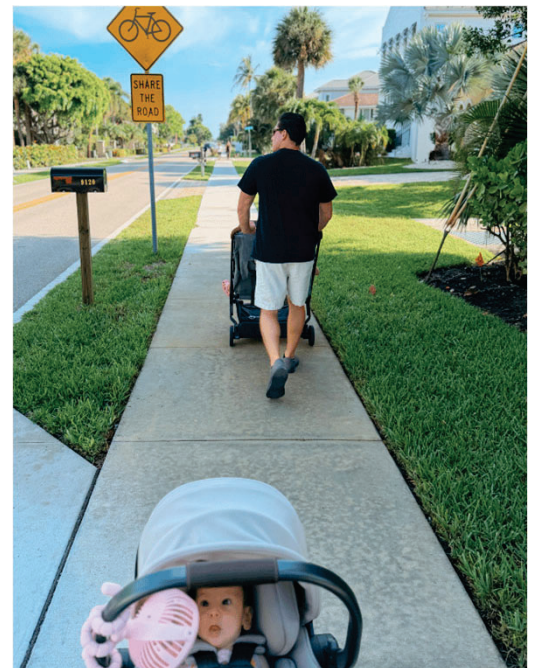
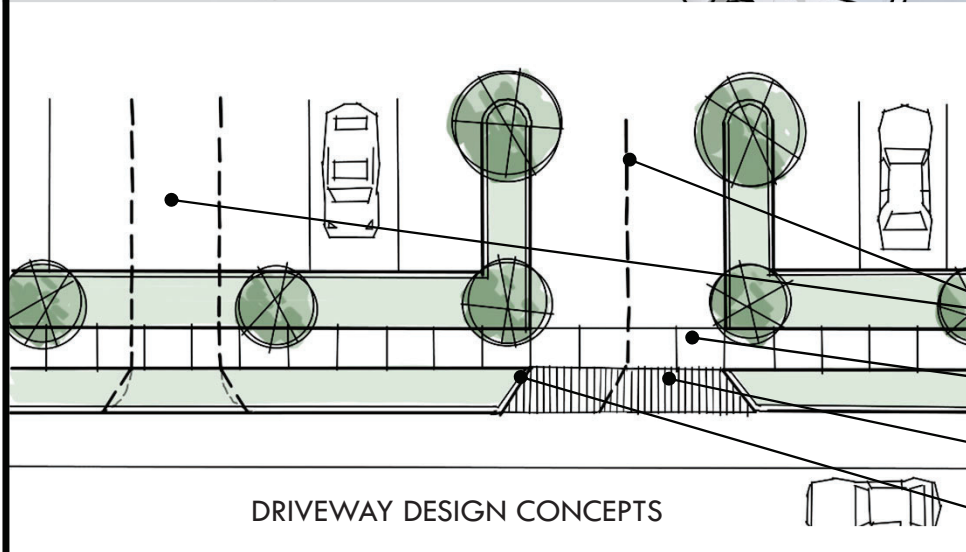
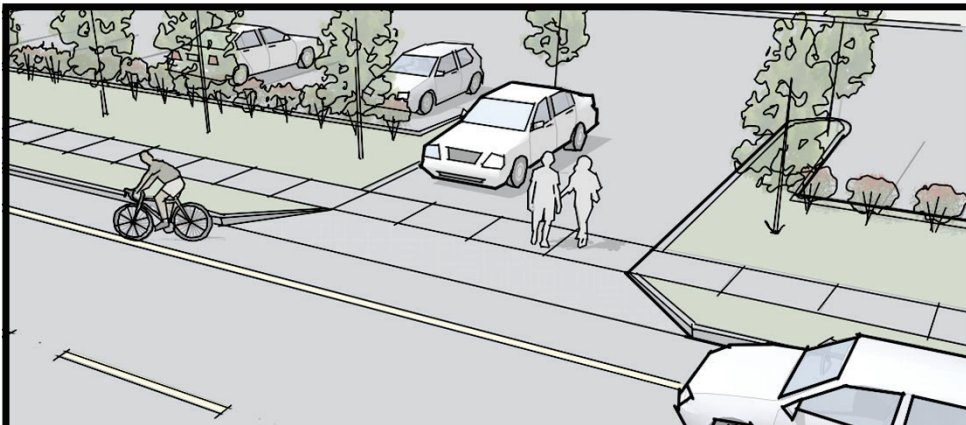
Public sidewalks at the street right of way shall be continuous across driveways and at the same elevation as the adjoining sidewalk

The drive apron shall slope down from the sidewalk level to meet the street pavement level

Why is this important?

Improves pedestrian safety by slowing vehicles as they enter and exit a site

Improves pedestrian and wheelchair user comfort by maintaining a level travel surface at driveways



Off-Street Parking Number of Parking Spaces

Recommend for all development; Required for Affordable, Workforce, and Senior Housing:

- Limit the number of parking spaces constructed to the minimum needed to adequately serve the facility
- The number of parking spaces provided shall not exceed the number required by the Legacy Zoning Code

Why is this important?

Uses limited funding resources to house people rather than to park cars

Decreases stormwater runoff by limiting the amount of impermeable parking surface

Maximizes the use of available land



EXCESSIVE PARKING INCREASES THE AMOUNT OF HARD SURFACE ON THE SITE, RESULTING IN INEFFICIENT LAND USE, EXCESS STORMWATER RUNOFF, AND CHALLENGING PEDESTRIAN ACCESS.

Off-Street Parking Surface Lot Location

Locate parking behind the building, when feasible

Parking is not permitted within the front yard setback

When parking is visible from the Primary Street, parking shall be set back 20' from the Building Line, minimum

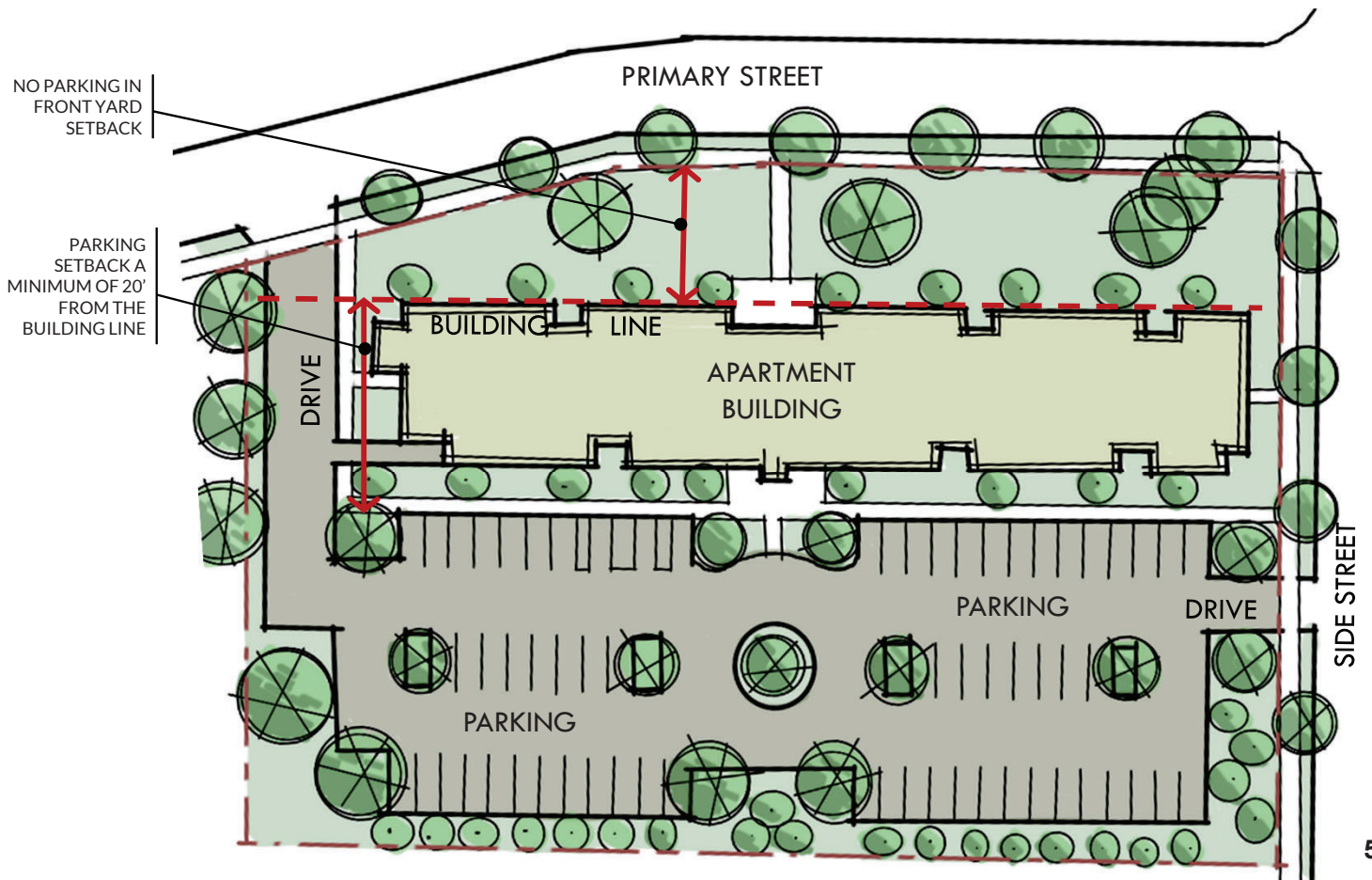
Why is this important?

Limits the negative impact of parked cars on the street character and pedestrians

Makes the street more interesting, and therefore more walkable



PARKING POSITIONED BEHIND BUILDINGS MAKES THE STREET MORE INTERESTING AND WALKABLE



Off-Street Parking Screening

When parking is in the front half of the lot and visible from the street, provide a wall or fence that screens the view of the parking

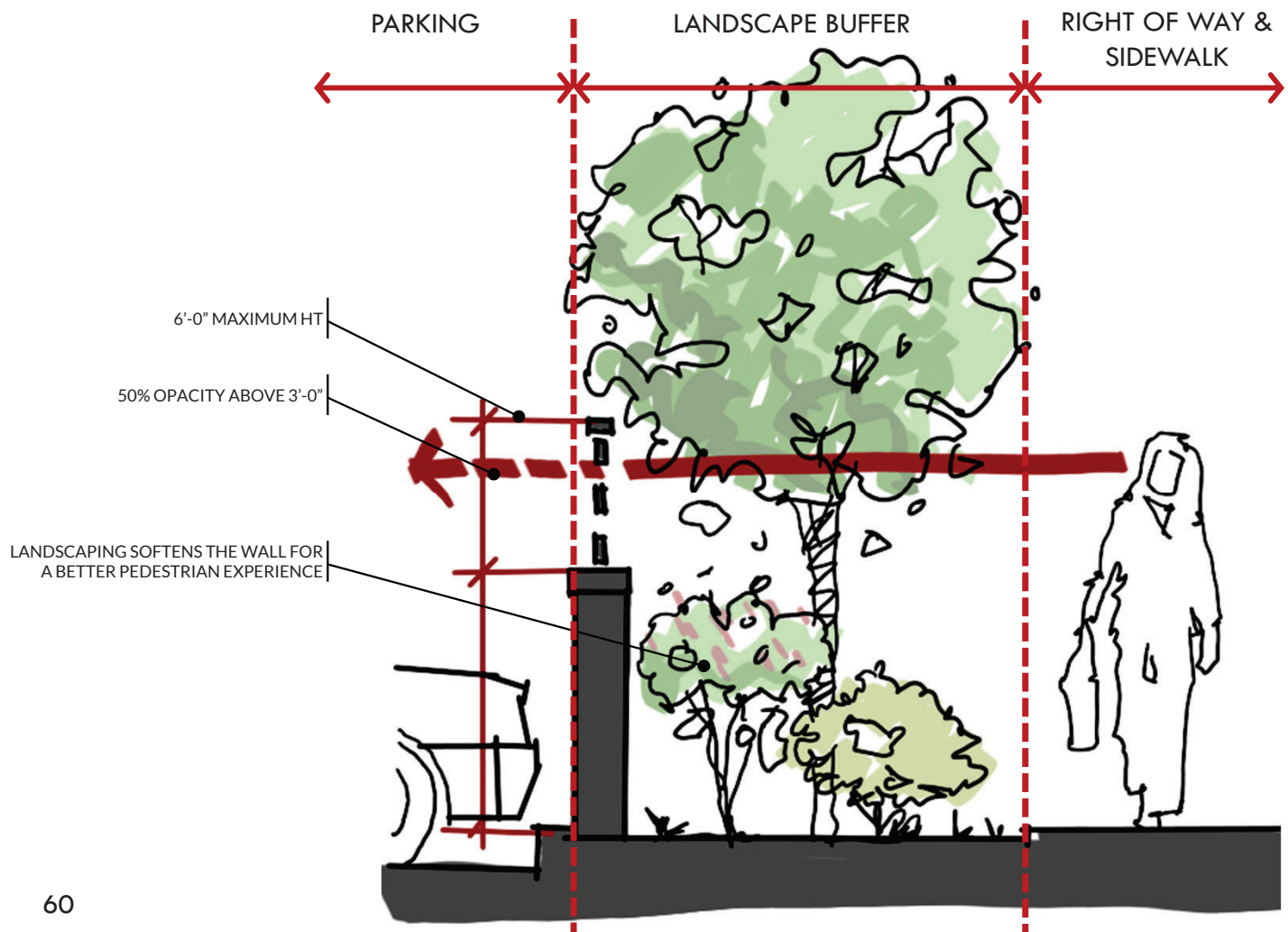
Screen height: 3' high minimum, 6' high maximum

Above the height of 4', maximum opacity of the screening shall be 50%



Why is this important?

Limits the negative impact of parking cars on the street character and pedestrians



Garage Doors

TOWNHOUSE GARAGE DOOR LOCATION

20' minimum from the Building Line

Why is this important?

Ensures that Active Living spaces take precedence over the inactive area for car storage

Inactive, unoccupied uses make the street feel less safe and interesting



Garage doors located directly on the street right of way line compromise sidewalks and create safety issues for pedestrians.



Garage doors located at the rear of the townhomes ensure Active Living Spaces are located at the street to provide a more pleasant and engaging street experience.



Garage doors facing the street and flush with the building façade limit greenspace in front of the home and make walking less interesting.

Garage Doors

TOWNHOUSE GARAGE DOOR OPENING WIDTH

Facing an Alley or rear drive: No maximum

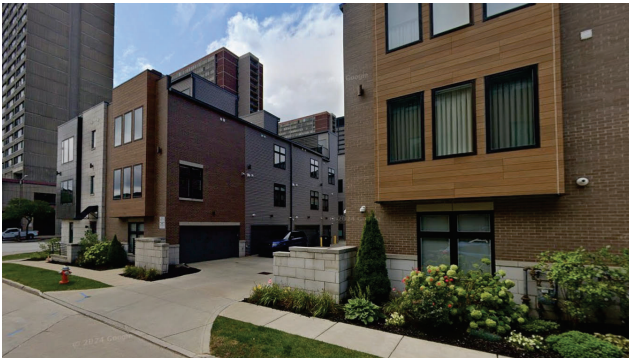
Facing a Primary or Side Street: 9' total
width per dwelling

Why is this important?

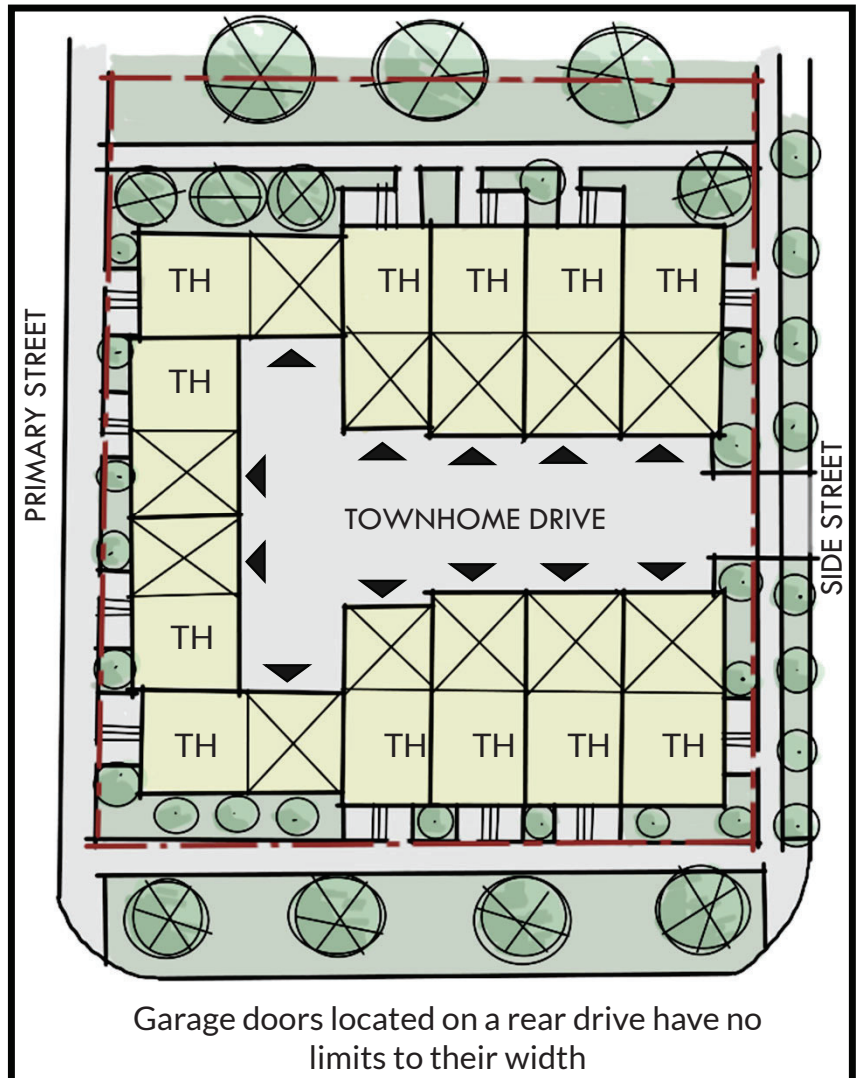
Limits the negative impact of parking cars
on the street character and pedestrians



Large townhouse garage doors facing the street
create a place for cars instead of people.



Larger garage doors can be positioned on
an interior drive for better screening



Garage doors located on a rear drive have no
limits to their width

Garage Doors, Vehicular Entries & Service Access

FOR APARTMENT HOUSES

Facing an Alley: No maximum width

Facing a Primary or Side Street: 20' maximum width per building

Why is this important?

Reduces the negative impact of large garage doors facing the street

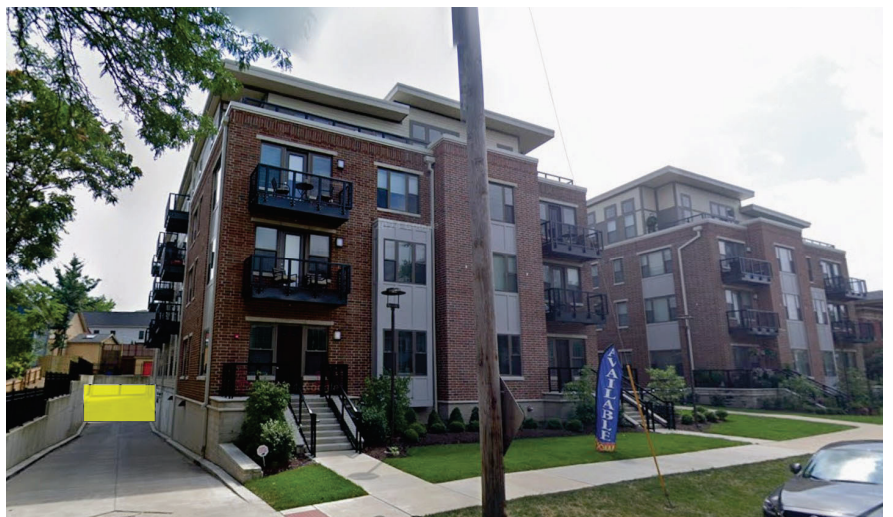


20' MAXIMUM
OPENING

PRIMARY FACE OF APARTMENT BUILDING



Large street-facing service access makes for an unsafe and unpleasant pedestrian experience.



Discrete parking and service access makes a more pleasant community experience.

Building Façade Buildout Width

Building façade shall occupy 65% of the lot width facing a Primary Street, minimum

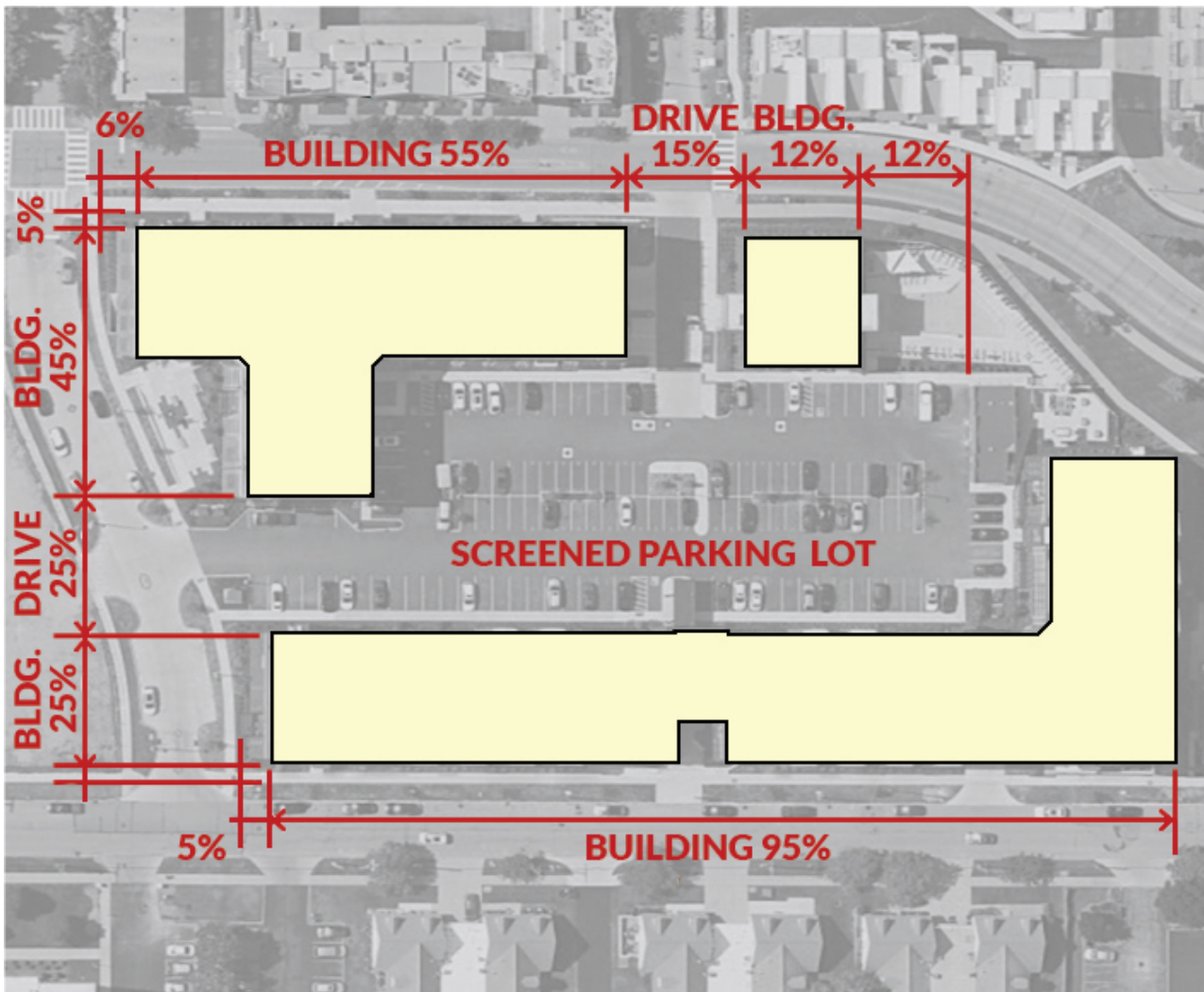
Why is this important?

Continuous building frontages screen parking from view, making streets feel safer and more walkable

Continuous building frontages make efficient use of land. Efficient land use supports transit and local retail



When buildings take precedence and access drives are tucked between, the buildings define a more interesting public realm.



Building Height, Form and Massing

On infill sites, building height, form and massing shall be compatible with the existing neighborhood

Why is this important?

Strengthens the compatibility of the new infill development with the existing neighborhood character



New buildings that reference the existing neighborhood in massing and form create a more cohesive environment and add to the character of the community. Mimicking scale, building shape, building profiles, window opening sizes and materials can provide references to the existing context without copying them directly.



Front Doors on Townhouses

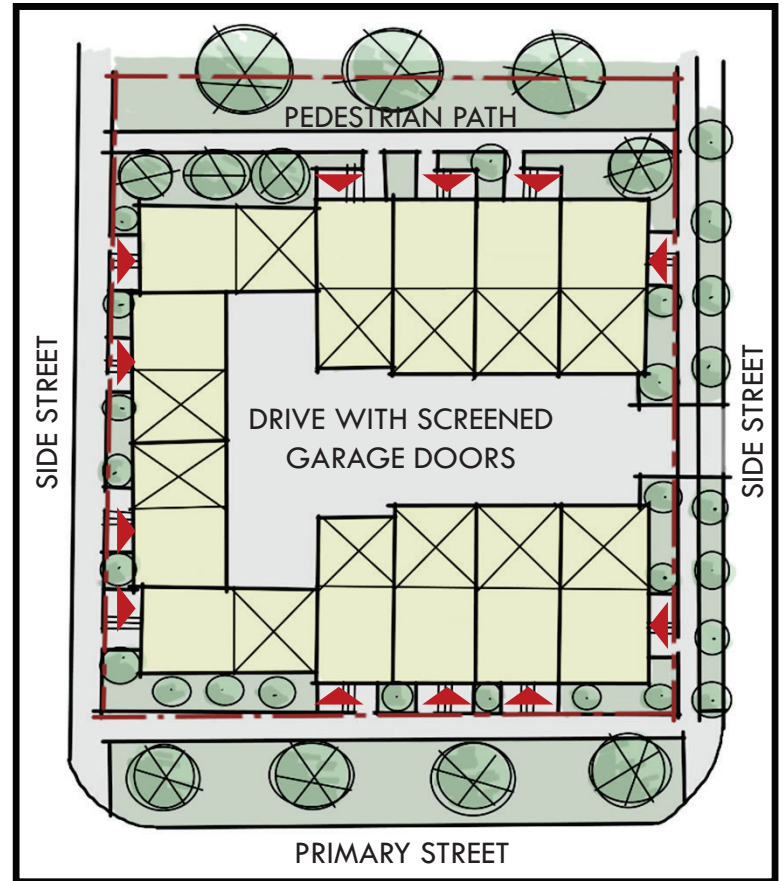
For each dwelling unit, provide a front door facing the Primary Street, Side Street, or pedestrian path

For units with a property line on an existing street, the front door shall be oriented toward that street

The front door of a unit shall not face the rear façade, garage door, or driveway of another unit

Front Doors on Apartment Buildings

Provide a front door facing the Primary Street or a pedestrian path



Townhouses with front doors facing the Primary Street allow residents to be a more visible part of their community.



Why is this important?

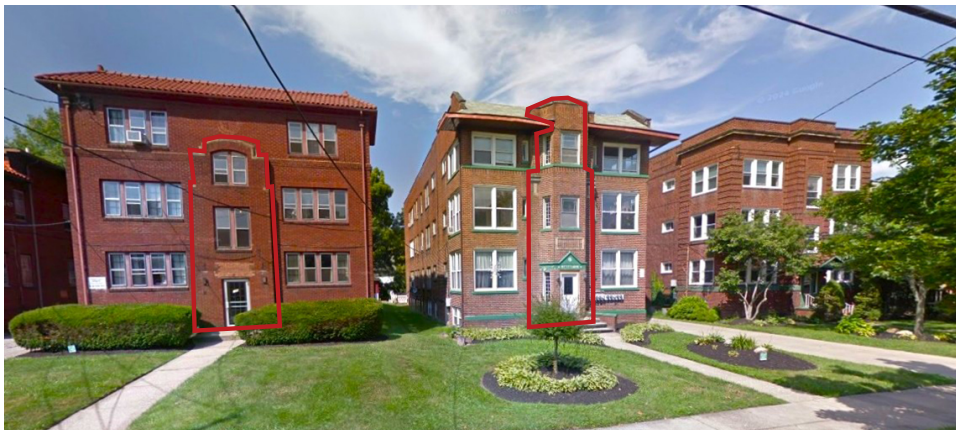
A clear entry location provides wayfinding cues and a sense of security for visitors.

Improves equity by ensuring that those arriving by foot, bike, or transit, and those with mobility impairments, have safe, direct access to buildings.

Increases sidewalk activity, making the street feel safer.

Separates vehicular and pedestrian traffic, reducing conflicts.

Ensures resident privacy



Frontage Feature

Townhouses: Provide a stoop or front porch on each dwelling unit

Apartment Houses: None required; Stoop, porch, or awning recommended

PORCH CHARACTERISTICS:

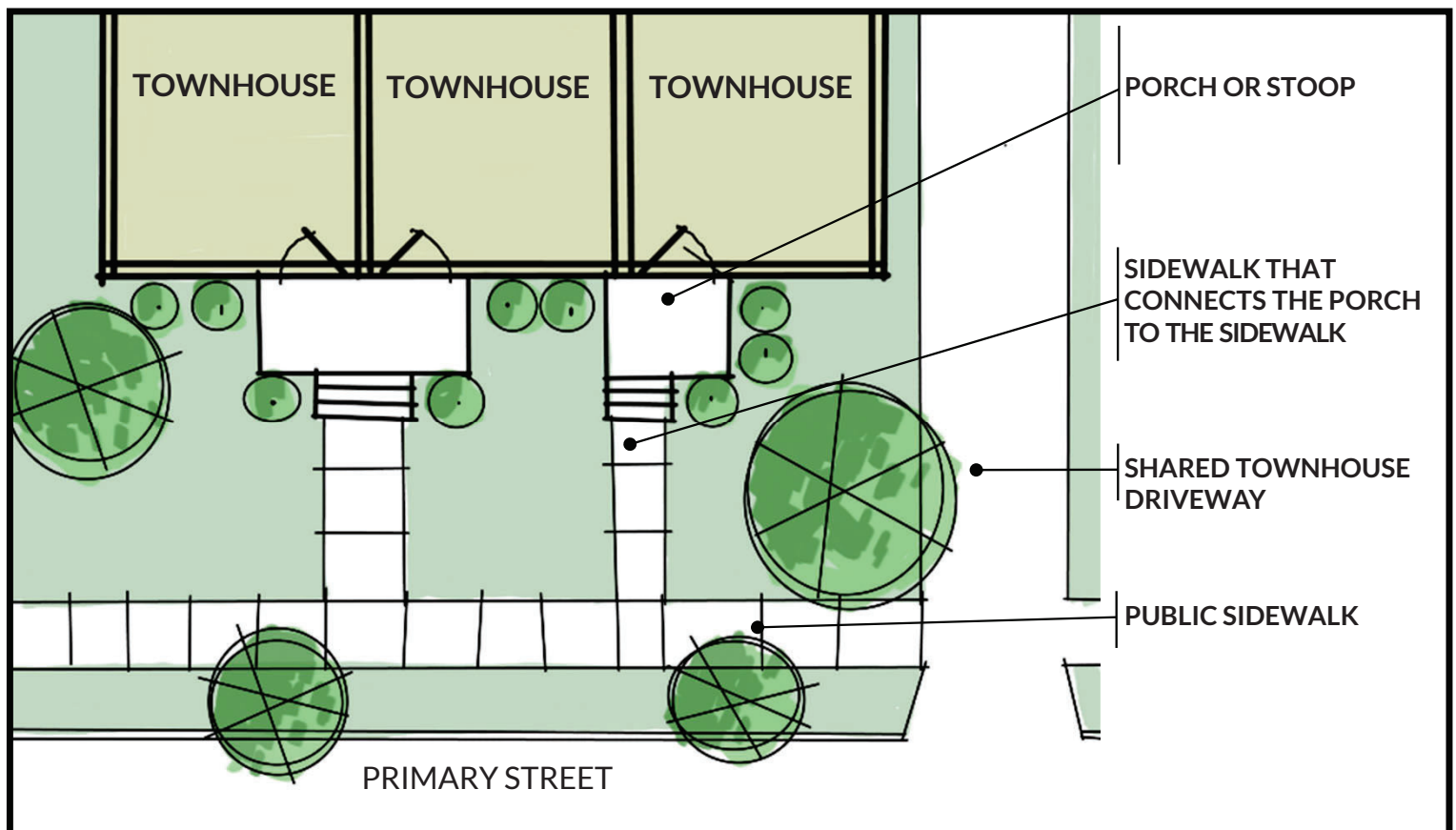
- Depth: 5' minimum; 8' preferred
- A porch shall have a roof entirely covering it

PORCH RAILINGS:

- Provide railings on porches
- If vertical spindles are used, attach spindles between top and bottom rails.
- Do not attach spindles to the front or back of the horizontal rails

FRONT SIDEWALK:

- Provide a sidewalk that connects the frontage feature to the public sidewalk
- The sidewalk shall be separate from the driveway





Frontage Features, like porches and stoops, enhance the neighborhood and reinforce a sense of community by increasing resident visibility.



Why is this important?

Provides 'eyes on the street' for increased neighborhood security

Encourages occupants to engage with neighbors, building community

PORCH CHARACTERISTICS:

This is the minimum floor area that allows for room for sitting and ensures the outdoor space is usable

A roof shelters the entry from the elements and expands the usability of the porch by allowing use on sunny or rainy days

PORCH RAILINGS:

Provides a sense of semi-privacy, so residents don't feel exposed to the street when using the porch. This makes the porch more likely to be used

Railings with spindles attached to the front or back of the vertical rails are less compatible with typical neighborhood contexts

FRONT SIDEWALK:

Provides a safe and welcoming path to the front door

Step-by-Step Guide to Building a Home in Akron

Neighborhood and Property Selection

Choose your neighborhood.

- Akron is a city of great neighborhoods that offer a diverse array of amenities like shopping districts, parks, community centers.
- Look around the city and identify a neighborhood that has the character and amenities you are looking for and feels like a place that you want to become a part of.

Select your property.

- The City of Akron has vacant properties available for sale through its Welcome Home Akron program. Additional information on available properties can be found [here](#).
- The Summit County Land Bank also has vacant properties available for sale through its Welcome Home program. Additional information on available properties can be found [here](#).
- Vacant properties can also be acquired through private land sales.

Review Zoning Requirements

Review the zoning map to determine the type of home that is allowed on the selected lot.

- Some areas in Akron permit only single-family homes, while others allow two-family homes, townhouses, or apartment buildings.
- Summit Lake and the Merriman Valley are regulated under the [City of Akron Form-Based Zoning Code](#), which allows more flexibility in the types of homes that are allowed to be built in these neighborhoods.
- If you want to build a two-family home, townhouse, or small apartment building in a neighborhood that is zoned Single Family, in some instances you may be able to get Conditional Use approval to build these multi-family home types. For more information, see the [Zoning applications and forms page](#) on the City of Akron Department of Planning and Urban Development website.
- The zoning map is available on the [Zoning Map page](#) on the Planning and Urban Development website.
- For assistance in determining the zoning of a particular lot, contact zoning staff at zoning@akronohio.gov or 330.375.2350.

Determine the zoning setbacks.

- These are the required front, side, and rear yards for the lot. The setbacks define the area on the lot where a home may be built.
- Typically, the front yard setback matches the front setback of the other homes on the street.
- Typically, the side yards are required to be 5 feet minimum. The minimum driveway width is 9 feet.
- The minimum rear yard is 15 feet.
- If you are using the Made in Akron Home Plans, the plans include a typical site layout. The lot size shown is the smallest lot that the home type can fit on while meeting the minimum setback requirements.
- More specific information on required setbacks can be found in the City of Akron Zoning Code, [Section 153.305 \(E\)](#) and in the City of Akron Form-Based Zoning Code District tables, [Division 2.3](#).

Home Selection

Once the setbacks and allowable home types are understood, an appropriate home plan can be selected.

Select a home that fits your size requirements, lifestyle, and other needs.

Confirm that the overall dimensions of the home will fit within the required setbacks on the lot.

Use the Made in Akron Pre-Reviewed Home Plans.

- The plans have been developed to fit on the different size lots that are available in the city and to suit various living styles and arrangements. There are plans for various sizes of single family detached homes, a two-family home, and a small apartment building.
- The Made in Akron Home Plans are available free of charge for construction within Akron and Summit County. They are available through the [Planning Department website](#).
- The Made in Akron plans as drawn meet all requirements of the City of Akron Housing Standards and have been pre-reviewed by the Summit County Division of Building Standards. This should make the actual permit review process go more quickly and smoothly.

Changes to the Pre-Reviewed Home Plans

- Minor variations, such as changes in exterior siding material, interior finishes, or kitchen cabinet layout, are permitted.
- Significant changes to the plans would require modification by the design architect, Grassroots Architecture, for an additional fee. Grassroots Architecture can be reached at 330.618.9190 or ryan@grassrootsarch.com.
- Significant changes to the plans would also require additional review by the City of Akron and Summit County Division of Building Standards.
- Significant changes include, but are not limited to: changing the exterior dimensions of the home, moving interior walls, eliminating windows, modification to the porch or porch columns, etc.

Develop your own home plan with the help of a builder or Architect.

- New residential development using City funds or built on City-owned land is required to meet the City of Akron Housing Standards.
- Homes not using City funds or land are not required to meet the City of Akron Housing Standards, but they are encouraged to do so.
- An evaluation of the surrounding homes—their placement, style, size, and scale—can help inform the final home design, so the new structure fits comfortably within its context.

Select a Builder or Contractor

Select a builder or contractor to construct your home.

- The Summit County Division of Building Standards offers [Tips for Hiring a Contractor](#) including:
 - Contact and interview several contractors before selecting one.
 - Request a list of references and a list of other homes they have constructed.
 - Require a written contract that includes total price, detailed list of work to be performed, and agreed upon schedule and completion date.
 - Request information on warranties provided for the work. Request that the contractor provide proof that they have insurance.
 - Confirm with the builder or contractor that they are registered to do work in the City of Akron.

Prepare a Site Plan

The homeowner should hire a registered surveyor or civil engineer to prepare a site plan showing the selected home on the specific lot it will be built on.

- The Made in Akron Home Plans have been pre-reviewed for Building Code compliance, but the site plan included in the permit set is illustrative for a typical lot only. More specific information is needed for a building permit.
- The city keeps a list of civil engineers and surveyors that regularly work in Akron. Contact the zoning staff for more information.
- If you are working with a builder or contractor, they may have engineers or surveyors that they are familiar working with.
- The Home Plans have been designed for typical lots. Lots with significant slope or other special site conditions may necessitate modifications to the plans.

The permit site plan will show:

- Property lines, parcel number, required building setbacks, any easements
- Overall home dimensions, location on the lot, finished floor elevation
- Driveway location, dimensions, and construction material
- Garage or vehicle parking location
- Public sidewalk
- Sidewalk connecting the front door to the public sidewalk
- Existing trees on the site that are 12" diameter and larger
- Site grading and drainage
- Site utilities, including water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, electric, and gas
- Existing structures on the site, such as garages and retaining walls
- Existing features within the right-of-way such as street curb, drive apron, utility poles, fire hydrants, utility boxes, street trees, etc.
- Existing public or private utilities within the right-of way
- All new homes must apply for a new street address through the [Plans and Permits website](#).

Apply for a Building Permit

The builder or contractor should take responsibility for submitting the site plan and the home plan for building permits.

- Plans must be submitted to both the City of Akron and Summit County.
- Plans can be submitted to Akron and the County at the same time.

Submit the site plan and home plan to the City of Akron Plans and Permits.

- Submit through their [Permit Web Portal](#).
- City of Akron departments will review the plans as appropriate.
- Plans and Permits will issue a letter to the applicant indicating any concerns or additional information needed.
- Once City of Akron review is complete, Plans and Permits will issue a plan review approval letter.

Submit the site plan and the home plan to the Summit County Division of Building Standards for building code review.

- Submit through the [Summit County online Permit Portal](#).
- Once both Akron and Summit County reviews are complete, Summit County will issue the building permit.

Build the Home!

Ensure the contractor builds the home per the approved permit drawings.

- The Made in Akron homes as drawn meet the City of Akron Housing Standards and the Residential Building Code.
- Minor variations are permitted, such as changes in exterior siding material, interior finishes, or kitchen cabinet layout.
- Major changes that would require City of Akron and Summit County Division of Building Standards review include, but are not limited to: changing the exterior dimensions of the home, moving interior walls, eliminating windows, modification to the porch or porch columns, etc.
- Planning staff will conduct on-site project review to ensure that exterior home details are built per the approved permit drawings. Unauthorized variation from the approved drawings may jeopardize any city funding.

Post-Construction

City of Akron Tax Abatement

- Residential homes are eligible for property tax abatement on the improved value of the property (the value of the new home). The property owner will still pay property taxes on the value of the land.
- More information on tax abatement, see the Planning website [here](#).

Important Contacts:

City of Akron Planning

Questions on the Pre-Approved Home Plans or the Housing Standards: planning@akronohio.gov

330.375.2090

City of Akron Zoning

zoning@akronohio.gov

330.375.2350

Summit County Land Bank

madeinakron@summitlandbank.org

330.926.2513

City of Akron Plans and Permits

plans&permits@akronohio.gov

General Questions - 330.375.2010

Inspections - 330.375.2055

Summit County Division of Building Standards

inspections@summitoh.net

330.630.7280

