

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

PART 1: RESIDENTIAL DENSITY STANDARDS AND INCENTIVES

INTRODUCTION

The neighborhood is a key element in the structure of the city. It is where people live and raise their families. Neighborhoods combine to weave the fabric of the community and establish a need for employment, commercial, and recreational activities.

Purpose

The purpose of this set of density standards and design guidelines is to clearly define and communicate those features that combine to establish strong neighborhood environments. It is intended that these guidelines will serve as an educational tool for the public, as a planning and design guide for the development sector, and as a policy guide for the review of proposed developments.

The information provided here is specific to residential developments. This information is supplemental to the *City of Pleasant Hill Comprehensive Plan*, the Zoning Ordinance, and the Subdivision Regulations, all available at the office of the City Clerk in Pleasant Hill City Hall.

This design guide is neither a project file nor a simple recipe for success. Rather, it is an expression of community expectations regarding the importance of providing quality residential neighborhoods. The purpose is to encourage applicants to use these guidelines and to seek innovative and sensitive design solutions most appropriate to the needs of the immediate and surrounding neighborhoods.

Process

Although considerations should be given to the overall development process, including zoning district change, platting and site plan procedures this program is specifically geared to address the development of residential site planning/platting. For more specific rezoning, platting, and site planning information see the City of Pleasant Hill Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.

This program encourages an analytical and conceptual planning and design process. Applicants should use the recommended site analysis required site plan criteria (see City of Pleasant Hill Zoning Ordinance) as a basis in developing a conceptual plan. The site analysis and conceptual plans are extremely useful in pre-application meetings. Probably the most important step in the development process is obtaining correct and clear information in the initial stages of design. As such, applicants are required to meet with staff and the Planning Commission prior to application submittal. This affords the applicant an ability to discuss initial concept plans, necessary approvals, and design and development criteria prior to submitting an application. **Table 6-7, Residential Lot Area and Density Regulations** outlines the minimum lot area (size) allowed in the City's various zoning districts, as well as the maximum density allowed for multifamily dwellings in the R-3 District. Reductions in the minimum lot sizes, or increases in the

CITY OF PLEASANT HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Six: Land Use Plan

development density, can be granted with approval of a ‘P-D’ Planned Development Overlay District to reward projects offering amenities and design enhancements.

Table 6.7 Residential Lot Area and Density Regulations

Land Use Category	Description			
	Zoning Classification	Minimum Lot Area	Minimum Lot Area in a ‘P-D’ Overlay District	Targeted Development Percentage*
Single-Family Residential				
Ag-density	Ag	10-acres	NA	100% of rural areas only
Large-lot	R-S	1-acre	NA	
Low-density Residential (One-family). Public uses, such as schools, libraries, churches, fire stations, parks and open space are allowed.	R-1 A	12,000 sq. ft.	10,000 sq. ft.	Up to 75% of the City’s density
	R-1	10,000 sq. ft.	8,400 sq. ft.	
Other Residential				
Moderate-density Residential (One and Two-family)	R-2	10,000 sq. ft. (one-family)	8,400 sq. ft. (one-family)	Up to 25% of the City’s density
		14,000 sq. ft. (two-family)	12,000 sq. ft. (two-family)	
High-density Residential (One and Two-family, Multifamily, and Apartment House). Public uses and accessory uses subordinate to apartment complexes are allowed.	R-3	14,000 sq. ft. (two-family)	12,000 sq. ft. (two-family)	
		Maximum density of 8-units per acre, or approximately 5,445 sq. ft. per unit. (3 units and up)	Maximum density of 12-units per acre, or approximately 3,360 sq. ft. per unit. (3 units and up)	
* Targeted Development Percentage indicates the community’s desired mix of residential density within the entire City. Each development should strive to provide a mix residential uses that help the community achieve this mix.				

Conceptual plans, the site analysis, and discussions with staff and the Planning Commission should then be used to generate site plans. Site plan application may then be submitted according to the approved Application Submittal and Review Schedule of the Planning Commission available at the office of the City Clerk in Pleasant Hill City Hall. Each development proposal should be evaluated by the **Evaluation Forms** in this appendix, and bonus density awarded on that basis.

Earning Density Bonuses through Design Incentives

Each residential development, whether single-family, two-family or multifamily, entails different site characteristics, impacts, and opportunities. It is the responsibility of the planner, architect, and developer to provide the highest quality neighborhood environment. However, the City recognizes that developing high-quality residential uses comes at an added cost. In order to help offset these added costs and encourage high-quality residential development this document provides for density bonuses through the use of design incentives. This is a mechanism to recognize unique and innovative developments and reward good design. This approach acknowledges the value and potential costs of incorporating certain design elements within a neighborhood, and is subject to “caps” as expressed in minimum lot sizes:

Within each residential zoning district a range of densities (dwelling units per acre) are permitted. By meeting the minimum requirements of the residential district, the lowest project density for that district is achieved. By meeting the minimum requirements of the district and applicable design objectives (listed on the following pages) project densities may reach the upper end of the density range. For example, in the R-1 zoning district, single-family development which meets only the minimum requirements of the district should be rewarded only with a maximum density of one-to three-units per acre. Single-family development that meets the intent of the design objectives listed herein should be allowed to reach a maximum density of five units per acre (see **Table 6.7: Residential Lot Area and Density Regulations**). Units-per-acre are expressed as “gross density” which includes rights-of-way and easements for streets and utilities, which—as a rule of thumb—comprise between 25 percent and 30 percent of the land in a typical subdivision. Gross density does not include common areas dedicated to public or private use, such as areas or “reserves” for storm detention and recreation.

If higher densities are desired, they may be achieved through the successful incorporation of the design incentives and bonuses listed herein. To earn design incentives, the applicant must apply for each specific incentive as part of the site plan or planned development application. In doing so, the applicant must supply the necessary information to represent the requested design incentives. Once received, the Planning Commission will review each incentive and will approve or deny of the requested incentive. When considering each of the incentives, it should be clear that bonuses are not a right.

The use of the design requirements, design objectives, and design incentives outlined within this document do not insure that applications will receive the maximum density permitted. Rather, permitted density and density bonuses will be also be greatly influenced by considerations such as compliance with the Future Land Use projections, land use compatibility, zoning patterns, environmental impacts, traffic impacts, and other relevant considerations. As a result, the Planning Commission may require proposed densities to be reduced as part of their deliberations during the Site Plan Review process. This may occur even if the application has implemented some or all of the standards set forth in this document.

The amount of density bonus awarded for the successful incorporation of a design incentive is entirely at the city's discretion, based on consideration of the development's compliance with these regulations, the ***Comprehensive Plan***, land use compatibility, zoning patterns, environmental impacts, and traffic impacts.

CITY OF PLEASANT HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Six: Land Use Plan

It is the intent of the guidelines to require the maximum possible density be achieved through the application of bonus incentives from more than one category of the guidelines.

Design Objectives and Density Standards/Incentives

The following density and design standards and incentives articulate design principles common to strong neighborhoods. These criteria should be applied throughout the design process and will be applied in review of all residential projects.

Design standards and incentives are organized into design objectives, and density incentives. Design requirements represent minimum standards and are codified into other sections of the Zoning Regulations. Design objectives (listed herein) reflect community design expectations and are policies to be followed in project review. Density incentives (listed herein) are design strategies that may be incorporated to achieve higher unit densities.

Transitions between Large-Lot and Urban Subdivisions

The planning and design of areas adjacent to large-lot residential developments is important in providing an orderly and appropriate transition to higher density developments and differing lot sizes. Transitional development designs should achieve a character and appearance comparable to the large-lot subdivision. Extra sensitivity must be used when locating a subdivision with urban densities adjacent to existing, platted, large-lot residential subdivisions.

New developments should provide an orderly and appropriate visual and physical transition between the developments with different densities. Urban residential lots adjacent to large-lot developments should be similar in size, with a gradual reduction in lot sizes as the distance from the large-lot development increases. The developments should be designed to create a seamless visual transition. A strong visual divider between the two types of development is highly discouraged. New lots in the first tier adjacent to an existing, platted, large-lot subdivision should be similar in total area and have a comparable width at the building line. The area differential should be no greater than one-quarter (1/4), but may not be required to exceed a lot area of more than one (1) acre. The width and depth of lots adjacent to existing platted large lots significantly greater than an average of one (1) acre will be reviewed with appropriate standards determined on an individual basis.

As lots transition beyond the first tier adjacent to a large-lot subdivision, the area differential of lots in the second tier should be no less than fifty (50) percent of the typical lot area in the adjacent large-lot subdivision. The width of the lot at the building line should continue to remain comparable in appearance. Lots beyond the second tier may transition to smaller lot sizes at higher densities as typically found in conventional urban subdivisions.

Existing natural features, tree areas, and/or hedgerows should be preserved and incorporated as buffers whenever possible. Utility easements must not be placed within the drip area of trees to be preserved. Planned zoning districts should be used in all areas adjacent to large-lot subdivisions.

SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DENSITY STANDARDS

The zoning ordinance references the *Comprehensive Plan* as a guide for future zoning decisions. The land use categories of the Future Land Use Map are defined in **Table 6.2** of the plan and are replicated in **Table 6.7** to indicate zoning bonus density available to be awarded developments that meet the intent of the *Residential Density Standards and Design Guidelines*. The bonus densities would be allowed based on Site Plan Review approval by the City, given amenities provided by the developer to meet, good urban design to accommodate:

- Neighborhood Infill;
- Natural features;
- Open space;
- Building orientation;
- Pedestrian circulation;
- Landscaping;
- Grading;
- Architectural design; and
- Appropriate transitions between neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Infill

Existing residential neighborhoods in Pleasant Hill have strong patterns of form, activity, and character. Infill development should strive to strengthen these characteristics and enhance the positive elements of neighborhoods. For the purpose of these standards, infill residential projects shall be any development proposed within an existing, established residential area.

A. Design Objectives

1. The physical form and pattern of existing, established residential neighborhoods should be maintained to the greatest extent possible. Infill design should incorporate the following principles:
 - a. Building orientation should reflect the predominant neighborhood pattern. The front-to-front, back-to-back relationship of typical residential neighborhoods establishes security, privacy, and a very identifiable streetscape that should be maintained.
 - b. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns should be maintained by infill projects.
 - c. Neighborhood open space patterns, and side, front, and rear yards should be visually preserved. The spacing of infill units (front, rear, and side yards) should generally reflect the spacing of existing homes in the neighborhood.
 - d. Building heights should be compatible with the average height of homes in the neighborhood. Each project should be particularly sensitive to planning and design of contiguous parcels.

CITY OF PLEASANT HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Six: Land Use Plan

- e. The streetscape and landscaping should be designed to reflect existing neighborhood forms, rhythm and spacing.
2. The visual character of a neighborhood is, in part, formed through residential architecture and various activities, such as parking. Infill development should:
 - a. Provide parking and garages in a matter and scale similar to the surrounding neighborhood. Parking should be screened from view to minimize its negative visual impact. Infill development should maintain consistent placement and orientation of garages as those within the neighborhood.
 - b. The architectural design of infill development should strengthen the existing forms of the neighborhood. Architecturally, project design should represent compatible building form; roof types, slope, and overhand; horizontal and vertical proportions; exterior materials, finishes, and details.
 - c. The style and image of the neighborhood should be reinforced by infill development. Where style and image may be lacking, infill design has more latitude and should strive to achieve a stronger neighborhood image.

Natural Features

A. Design Objectives

1. The following elements should be used to strengthen the neighborhood recreation areas, internal and external focal points, and provide physical separations and buffers. Natural site features should be used to create neighborhood amenities and may include:
 - a. Floodplains and surface drainage channels;
 - b. Bodies of water;
 - c. Prominent ridges, bluffs, or valleys, and
 - d. Existing vegetation.
 - e. Implement stream buffer standards as presented in the ***Comprehensive Plan***.
2. Every reasonable effort should be made to preserve existing tree cover including tree masses, wind rows, and significant individual trees. These features should be incorporated as neighborhood amenities.
3. In most cases, excessive cut and fill, and similar changes to the site's natural topography are not acceptable. Site planning and building orientation should work with natural slopes and grades to create individual neighborhoods.

B. Design Incentives

1. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a two percent (2%) increase in density may be approved, if existing significant natural features in unimproved common

area are preserved, and stream buffer standards are met if applicable. (Unimproved common area does not include private patios, narrow strips of land around and between units, areas reserved for the exclusive use of an individual tenant, and setbacks at site perimeters.)

Open Space

A. Design Objectives

1. Sufficient neighborhood open space should be provided to meet active and passive use requirements of the neighborhood.
 - a. Open space is any parcel or area of land or water set aside, dedicated, designated or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment, or for the use and enjoyment of owners and occupants of land adjoining or neighboring such open space. Open space may include common, active and landscaped areas, as well as, areas of passive/natural preservation. Unpaved land areas within private or public street rights-of-way are not considered as open space unless such areas are in excess of minimum right-of-way standards.
 - b. Common areas should be centrally located within, and highly accessible to the neighborhood. Such areas should be of adequate size, and designed to reduce impacts of various functions and activities. Common areas may include pools and larger recreational paths.
 - c. “Active” or “landscaped” open space is that part of the net site area of a development that may be improved or set aside, dedicated, designated or reserved for recreational use such as swimming pools, play equipment, ball fields, picnic tables, sports courts, etc. Such open space may also include turf/lawn areas, shrubs and trees, walkways, paved terraces, sitting areas and outdoor recreational areas.
 - d. “Passive” or “natural” open space is essentially unimproved land or water area, not individually owned, that is part of the net site area of a development and is designed and intended for the common use or enjoyment of the residents of a development. Such open space may include natural features which are physical characteristics of properties that are not man-made (e.g. soil types, geology, slopes, vegetation, surface water, drainage patterns, aquifers, recharge areas, climate, floodplains, aquatic life, and wildlife).
2. In some instances it may be appropriate to use open space (common and semi-common areas) to buffer negative impacts.
3. Where possible, open space should be designed to provide linkages with larger community open space systems.
4. Pedestrian access to open space should be provided using sidewalks or recreation trails that link sidewalks along area streets with the open space areas.

CITY OF PLEASANT HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Six: Land Use Plan

5. Every attempt should be made to minimize the amount of unusable and unassigned open space.
- B. Density Incentives
1. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a four percent (4%) density increase may be allowed for developments that provide outstanding open space, which may include one of the following:
 - a. The dedication of acceptable public park land which significantly exceeds the City's minimum land area dedication requirements.
 - b. A minimum of fifty (50) percent of the open space area is improved as "active" open space for recreational use by all persons who reside in the subdivision. Such area does not include common areas for storm detention or retention.

Pedestrian and Vehicular Circulation

- A. Design Objectives
1. Pedestrian access should be designed to provide reasonable linkages of dwelling units to neighborhood facilities such as parks and open space, recreation, services, mail, and neighborhood retail services.
 2. Pedestrian systems should incorporate landscaping details to increase the visual interest and character of the neighborhood.
 3. The design of pedestrian facilities should respond to their intended use and meet the following design standards:
 - a. Sidewalks along streets and drives shall be a minimum five (5) feet in width.
 - b. Recreational and bike paths shall be a minimum ten (10) feet in width.
 4. The design of streets should respond to topography, intended traffic speed, and views. The following points apply:
 - a. Streets should not fight the topography or ignore local conditions for purposes of maximizing the number of units in a development. Align the street with local conditions such as topography, watercourses, greenways, and existing street systems of neighboring developments.
 - b. Excessively straight and wide streets encourage high speed traffic and do not have a residential scale. Streets should be laid out such that their use by through traffic will be discouraged. However, the street network must consist of interconnecting streets with alternative routes through the neighborhood to diffuse automobile traffic and shorten walking distances.

- c. As streets serve as primary open space, the views along and within streets are important. Views along residential streets should be clearly defined. Street trees, building orientation and street layout should create a residential scale and character.

B. Density Incentives

1. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a four percent (4%) density increase may be allowed for neighborhood circulation systems which provide outstanding design and which may include:
 - a. Pedestrian paths within the development and to the development edge that link with amenities, open spaces, parks, and other destinations.
 - b. Pedestrian path linkages to regional walking path improvements.

Landscaping

Landscaping should be designed in sufficient form, quantity, and location to reduce to the greatest extent possible negative impacts affecting the site and adjacent properties, and to increase the sense of neighborhood scale, character, and identity.

A. Design Objectives

1. Landscaping is an important element of the site plan. A diversity of plant materials including overstory and understory trees (deciduous and coniferous), shrubbery, ground cover and turf should be used. A successful landscaping plan should include:
 - a. Overstory and understory trees which can be used to provide enclosure through the tree canopy. Larger trees can reduce the perceived scale of larger structures.
 - b. Understory trees and shrubbery provide eye-level vegetation. Typically these materials should be used as foundation plantings, which tie the structure to the ground and soften hard edges, create visual focal points to frame desirable views, and provide privacy screens.
2. Landscaping should define the neighborhood by providing:
 - a. Scale and enclosure of open space (streets, parks, and recreation areas).
 - b. Visual separation and screening of interior and exterior private areas.
 - c. Gateways and defined entries to the neighborhood.
 - d. A minimum of two (2) trees for every single-family lot. The trees shall be no less than two (2)-inch caliper deciduous shade trees, as measured six inches (6") above the ground and conifers, six to eight feet in height; as specified by the American Association of Nurserymen.

CITY OF PLEASANT HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Six: Land Use Plan

- e. Attractive streets by the use of street trees. Such trees when placed along a street provide shade for streets and sidewalks, improve aesthetics, and generally encourage pedestrian use of sidewalks. Street trees also maintain a ceiling or canopy that further imbues a pedestrian scale to the streetscape.
 - f. Well landscaped perimeters of the development through the installation of a master landscape buffer plan. Well-landscaped areas along a neighborhood's perimeter have a tremendous impact on the perception and impression of resident's experience in their daily lives.
3. Environmental and site impacts should be minimized through landscaping by:
 - a. Buffering adjacent higher and lower intensity uses such as commercial and single-family residential.
 - b. Addressing regional and micro-climatic factors which include reducing radiant heat and heat gain, providing solar access and wind protection.
 - c. Reducing perceived density through establishing view corridors, providing visual focal points, and softening and enhancing pedestrian paths and open areas.
 4. Berms and walls, or a combination thereof, can be used with landscaping to increase neighborhood privacy, security and to reduce negative impacts along adjacent major roadways and adjacent properties. Walls should be designed to be compatible with neighborhood materials and forms.

B. Density Incentives

Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a maximum five percent (5%) density increase may be permitted for site landscaping in addition to the required minimum landscaping standards set forth in The City of Pleasant Hill Zoning Ordinance.

- a. Installation of street trees, in addition to the required number of trees per single-family lot. Street trees shall be placed a maximum average of forty (40)-feet on-center along the street. The trees shall be no less than (2 ½)-inch caliper deciduous shade trees, as measured six (6)-inches above the ground and conifers, six to eight (6-8) feet in height; as specified by the American Association of Nurserymen.
- b. Installation of a master landscape/buffer plan around the perimeter of the development adjacent to major roadways. Perimeter landscapes shall include a mixture of shade, coniferous/evergreen and ornamental trees to provide a variety of foliage, shade and seasonal interest. Earth berms and shrubbery should be used to accentuate the landscape improvements.

Grading

A. Design Objectives

1. Berms, channels, swales, etc., should be designed and graded to be an integral part of the landscape.
2. The maximum slope of any grade should not exceed three feet in the horizontal to one foot in the vertical (3':1'). Grade changes in excess of 3':1' should be made by natural or constructed retaining walls.
3. Where retaining walls are required, they should be of a material compatible with the primary building architecture. The extensive use of railroad ties and gabion type retaining walls should be avoided.
4. Grading should occur in a manner to preserve existing trees, vegetation, and natural topographic features as much as possible.

Architectural Design

The architecture of residential development is a key element in determining the character and function of a neighborhood. The character of a neighborhood should create a strong feeling of identity. The function of housing should meet the needs of the occupants and be specifically tuned to regional and site features.

Building designs that create variety and do not look monotonous if replicated throughout the development are required. Such designs should include the following:

1. Side and rear building elevations, garages, carports, and all accessory structures with the same level of design, aesthetic quality, and architectural detailing.
2. Porches, varied rooflines, and varied facade depths to create variety and individuality of each dwelling within the building.
3. Windows and projecting wall surfaces to break up larger wall surfaces and establish visual interest and to provide visibility of the street and other public spaces to encourage social interaction.
4. Garages designed to be integrated with the building design, rather than projecting in front of the habitable living space, so as to avoid monotonous rows of garage doors. Garages shall be oriented so that they do not visually dominate the building facade or the streetscape.

A. Design Objectives

1. The architectural design of each unit or building should be designed to a residential neighborhood scale. Specifically, architecture should respond to perceived density, building mass, and details.
 - a. A strong sense of neighborhood should be created by reducing the perceived density of a project.
 - b. Use porches, railings, fascia boards, and trim to enhance buildings' character.
 - c. Locate and orient garages so they are de-emphasized and do not visually dominate the building facade or the streetscape. Alternative garage orientations may include access from the side or rear of the structure, or setback a minimum

two (2)-feet from the front wall of the habitable living space for front-oriented garages.

- d. Decorative durable building materials on the front facade, and all other facades visible from the street.
- e. A useable covered front entry porch, with a minimum depth of seven (7) feet and a minimum area of seventy (70) square feet.
- f. Heavy textured dimensional roofing material.
- g. The sense of scale is another factor in establishing a strong sense of neighborhood. Architecturally, the massing of individual building should reinforce a neighborhood scale providing vertical and horizontal offsets in units. This serves to break up rooflines, define private outdoor areas, allow greater views, light, and air to unit interiors.

B. Density Incentives

Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a five percent (5%) density increase may be allowed for enhanced architectural design for homes within the development that meets the stated objectives of these regulations, or by including other architectural design elements determined by the Commission to represent enhanced design quality above and beyond the quality that is otherwise found in a typical Pleasant Hill single-family residential subdivision.

Neighborhood Transitions

A. Design Objective.

New developments should provide an orderly and appropriate visual and physical transition between the developments with different densities. Urban residential lots adjacent to large-lot developments should be similar in size, with a gradual reduction in lot sizes as the distance from the large-lot development increases. The developments should be designed to create a seamless visual transition. A strong visual divider between the two types of development is highly discouraged.

New lots in the first tier adjacent to an existing, platted, large-lot subdivision should be similar in total area and have a comparable width at the building line. The area differential should be no greater than one-quarter (1/4), but may not be required to exceed a lot area of more than one (1) acre. The width and depth of lots adjacent to existing platted large lots significantly greater than an average of one (1) acre will be reviewed with appropriate standards determined on an individual basis.

As lots transition beyond the first tier adjacent to a large-lot subdivision, the area differential of lots in the second tier should be no less than fifty (50) percent of the typical lot area in the adjacent large-lot subdivision. The width of the lot at the building line should continue to remain

CITY OF PLEASANT HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Six: Land Use Plan

comparable in appearance. Lots beyond the second tier may transition to smaller lot sizes at higher densities as typically found in conventional urban subdivisions.

B. Design Incentive.

Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a five percent (5%) density increase may be allowed for the effective transition of subdivision density from one subdivision development to the next that meets the stated objectives of these regulations.

Table 6.8 Project Evaluation Form—Single-family Development

Category	Have appropriate Design Objectives Been Met		Have sufficient steps been taken to achieve objectives		Possible Incentive	Density Bonus	
	Yes	No	Yes	No		Number	Total
Neighborhood Infill					N/A	--	--
Natural Features					2%		
Open Space					4%		
Pedestrian and Vehicular Circulation					4%		
Landscaping					5%		
Grading					N/A	--	--
Architectural Design					5%		
Transition between Subdivisions (if applicable)					5%		
Total Bonus (if applicable)							

Note: The maximum total density bonus shall allow for a reduction in the minimum lot area. However, the minimum lot area shall comply with Table E-1: Residential Lot Area and Density Regulations.

MODERATE-DENSITY AND MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DENSITY STANDARDS

The zoning ordinance references the *Comprehensive Plan* as a guide for future zoning decisions. The land use categories of the Future Land Use Map are defined in **Table 6.2** of the plan and are replicated in **Table 6.7** to indicate zoning bonus density available to be awarded developments that meet the intent of the *Residential Density Standards and Design Guidelines*. The bonus densities would be allowed based on Site Plan Review approval by the City—which should be conducted at the same time the preliminary plat is considered. The developer should propose amenities to meet good urban design, which is meant to accommodate:

- Neighborhood infill;
- Natural features;
- Open space;
- Building orientation;
- Vehicle circulation and parking (including access management);
- Pedestrian circulation;
- Landscaping;
- Grading;
- Noise;
- Architectural design; and
- Appropriate subdivision transitions.

Each development proposal should be evaluated by the *Evaluation Forms* in this appendix, and bonus density awarded on that basis.

Neighborhood Infill

Existing residential neighborhoods in Pleasant Hill have strong patterns of form, activity, and character. Infill development should strive to strengthen these characteristics and enhance the positive elements of neighborhoods. For the purpose of these standards, infill residential projects shall be any development proposed within an existing, established residential area.

A. Design Objectives

1. The physical form and pattern of existing, established residential neighborhoods should be maintained to the greatest extent possible. Infill design should incorporate the following principles:
 - a. Building orientation should reflect the predominant neighborhood pattern. The front-to-front, back-to-back relationship of typical residential neighborhoods establishes security, privacy, and a very identifiable streetscape that should be maintained.
 - b. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns should be maintained by infill projects.

- c. Neighborhood open space patterns, and side, front, and rear yards should be visually preserved. The spacing of infill units (front, rear, and side yards) should generally reflect the spacing of existing homes in the neighborhood.
 - d. Building heights should be compatible with the average height of homes in the neighborhood. Each project should be particularly sensitive to planning and design of contiguous parcels.
 - e. The streetscape and landscaping should be designed to reflect existing neighborhood forms, rhythm and spacing.
2. The visual character of a neighborhood is, in part, formed through residential architecture and various activities, such as parking. Infill development should:
- a. Provide parking in a matter and scale similar to the surrounding neighborhood. Parking should be screened from view to minimize its negative visual impact.
 - b. The architectural design of infill development should strengthen the existing forms of the neighborhood. Architecturally, project design should represent compatible building form; roof types, slope, and overhand; horizontal and vertical proportions; exterior materials, finishes, and details.
 - c. The style and image of the neighborhood should be reinforced by infill development. Where style and image may be lacking, infill design has more latitude and should strive to achieve a stronger neighborhood image.

Natural Features

A. Design Objectives

1. The following elements should be used to strengthen the neighborhood recreation areas, internal and external focal points, and provide physical separations and buffers. Natural site features should be used to create neighborhood amenities and may include:
 - a. Floodplains and surface drainage channels;
 - b. Bodies of water;
 - c. Prominent ridges, bluffs, or valleys, and
 - d. Existing vegetation.
 - e. Implement stream buffer standards as presented in the ***Comprehensive Plan***.
2. Every reasonable effort should be made to preserve existing tree cover including tree masses, wind rows, and significant individual trees. These features should be incorporated as neighborhood amenities.
3. In most cases, excessive cut and fill, and similar changes to the site's natural topography are not acceptable. Site planning and building orientation should work with natural slopes and grades to create individual neighborhoods.

CITY OF PLEASANT HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Six: Land Use Plan

B. Design Incentives

1. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a two percent (2%) increase in density may be approved, if existing significant natural features in unimproved common area are preserved,; and stream buffer standards are met if applicable. (Unimproved common area does not include private patios, narrow strips of land around and between units, areas reserved for the exclusive use of an individual tenant, and setbacks at site perimeters.)

Open Space

A. Design Objectives

1. Sufficient neighborhood open space should be provided to meet active and passive use requirements of the neighborhood.
 - a. Open space is any parcel or area of land or water set aside, dedicated, designated or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment, or for the use and enjoyment of owners and occupants of land adjoining or neighboring such open space. Open space may include common, active and landscaped areas, as well as, areas of passive/natural preservation. Unpaved land areas within private or public street rights-of-way are not considered as open space unless such areas are in excess of minimum right-of-way standards.
 - b. Common areas should be centrally located within, and highly accessible to the neighborhood. Such areas should be of adequate size, and designed to reduce impacts of various functions and activities. Common areas may include pools and larger recreational paths.
 - c. “Active” or “landscaped” open space is that part of the net site area of a development that may be improved or set aside, dedicated, designated or reserved for recreational use such as swimming pools, play equipment, ball fields, picnic tables, sports courts, etc. Such open space may also include turf/lawn areas, shrubs and trees, walkways, paved terraces, sitting areas and outdoor recreational areas.
 - d. “Passive” or “natural” open space is essentially unimproved land or water area, not individually owned, that is part of the net site area of a development and is designed and intended for the common use or enjoyment of the residents of a development. Such open space may include natural features which are physical characteristics of properties that are not man-made (e.g. soil types, geology, slopes, vegetation, surface water, drainage patterns, aquifers, recharge areas, climate, floodplains, aquatic life, and wildlife).
2. Pedestrian access should be provided using sidewalks or recreation trails linking sidewalks along the street or private drive with open space areas.
3. Private areas should be provided for multifamily dwellings and be screened and enclosed to insure privacy. Private areas typically include yards, balconies and patios.

4. In some instances it may be appropriate to use open space (common and semi-common areas) to buffer negative impacts.
5. Wherever possible, open space should be designed to provide linkages with larger community open space systems.
6. Every attempt should be made to minimize the amount of unusable and unassigned open space surrounding buildings, including small narrow strips in front of and between units.

B. Density Incentives

1. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a five percent (5%) density increase may be allowed for the effective use of open space in the development that meets the stated objectives of these regulations.
 - a. The dedication of acceptable public park land which significantly exceeds the City's minimum land area dedication requirements.
 - b. A minimum of fifty (50) percent of the open space area is improved as "active" open space for recreational use by all persons who reside in the subdivision. Such area does not include common areas between buildings, or areas for storm detention or retention.

Building and Land Use Variety

A. Design Objectives

1. The siting of individual buildings should help to establish neighborhoods and sub-neighborhood clusters. High quality residential areas include a variety of housing styles and land uses.
 - a. A variety of multifamily housing types, including duplex and multiplex, townhomes, condominiums, and apartment buildings should be intermixed throughout moderate-density and high-density neighborhoods. Such neighborhoods should not consist of only one housing type.
 - b. Individual identity should be reflected through architectural design within each sub-neighborhood. Architectural details should be used consistently throughout the community but should reflect a unique character within each sub-neighborhood.
2. Within moderate-density and high-density neighborhoods, buildings should be oriented to:
 - a. Minimize unusable and unassigned open spaces. Open space can be "assigned" through the use of low walls, landscaping, and window and entry orientation.
 - b. Ensure privacy of interior and outdoor areas and provide a sense of neighborhood security.

- c. Define open space including common areas, semi-common areas, and pedestrian areas; i.e., clustering of buildings around a central common area.
 - d. Primary orientation to parking areas should be avoided. Each unit should allow a "front yard" and a "rear yard."
3. Site topography should be addressed in building design and orientation. Every attempt should be made to incorporate architectural designs and orientations which work with the site; i.e., buildings which step down with the grade, two-and three-story units, integrated garages, etc.

B. Density Incentives

No bonus density increase may be allowed for the effective use of building orientation, rather, it should be a site plan review consideration to meet the stated objectives of these regulations.

Vehicular Circulation and Parking

Paved areas, both street and parking, should be designed with the objectives of ensuring (1) safe operation of vehicles within the neighborhood, (2) sufficient and convenient parking of vehicles, (3) protection and sheltering of vehicles, and (4) reduction of negative environmental and visual impacts.

A. Design Objectives

1. The organization of the street system of the neighborhood should provide a hierarchy of (a) quiet residential (local) streets feeding into (b) collector which then access (c) arterial streets (see *Comprehensive Plan*). Collector streets should not feed into lower intensity residential (local) streets.
2. The design of streets should respond to topography, intended traffic speed, and views. The following points apply:
 - a. Streets should not fight the topography or ignore local conditions for purposes of maximizing the number of units in a development. Instead, streets should align with local conditions such as topography, watercourses, greenways, and existing street systems of neighboring developments.
 - b. Excessively straight and wide streets encourage high speed traffic and do not have a residential scale. Streets should be laid out such that their use by through traffic will be discouraged. However, the street network must consist of interconnecting streets with alternative routes through the neighborhood to diffuse automobile traffic and shorten walking distances.
 - c. As streets serve as primary open space, the views along and within streets are important. Views along residential streets should be clearly defined. Street trees, building orientation and street layout should create a residential scale and character.

3. The design of open parking areas needs to respond to specific site features, functional requirements, and visual/aesthetic considerations. Parking areas should be designed to provide convenient access to the residents they serve. Generally, the parking should be located within 200 feet of the respective dwelling units. The overall layout and configuration of parking areas should be designed to control excessive amounts of paved area. The following points apply:
 - a. Double-loaded parking areas along private streets or drives are generally not acceptable. Every attempt should be made to cluster and separate parking areas from the street. Landscaping, changes in grade, etc. should be used to break up these spaces.
 - b. Clustered parking spaces should not exceed 100 spaces in total. Any area consisting of two double-loaded parking aisles should have a landscaped area separating each aisle. Perimeter areas should be substantially screened from view (see Landscaping).
4. The location and design of covered parking dramatically affects the character of the site. It is important to plan for the covered parking requirements at an early stage to avoid structures that detract from the neighborhood image.
 - a. The location and grouping of parking enclosures should compliment the primary building arrangement and design. In clustered parking areas, carports should be used to provide enclosure. The larger the parking area, the greater the need to break it up with carports and landscaping.
 - b. Carports can also be used to reduce negative off-site impacts such as noise. In this manner, carports can form a visual enclosure which increases the security of the neighborhood.
 - c. On sloping sites, carports can be integrated into the site. This can be used to accommodate changes in grade, minimize the visual appearance of the carport, and buffer negative impacts.
 - d. The materials and structural members of the carport should be of a dimension that ties the structure to the ground. Some carports appear spindly due to the proportion of the materials to the height of the structure.

B. Density Incentives

1. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a five percent (5%) density increase may be available for parking design and layout which provides additional physical structure, berming, screening, or landscaping to significantly reduce negative impacts.
2. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a one percent (1%) density increase may be provided for the provision of each two percent (2%) of the required

CITY OF PLEASANT HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Six: Land Use Plan

parking spaces in the form of attached garages. Attached garages shall reduce the total impermeable surface area, and negative visual impact of parking by providing covered parking spaces as an attached structure to the dwelling unit.

3. Landscaping (See Landscaping).

Pedestrian Circulation

A. Design Objectives

1. Pedestrian access should be designed to provide reasonable linkages of dwelling units to neighborhood facilities such as recreation, services, mail, and parking.
2. Pedestrian systems should incorporate landscaping details to increase the visual interest and character of the neighborhood.
3. The design of pedestrian facilities should respond to their intended use and meet the following design standards:
 - a. Sidewalks along streets and drives shall be a minimum for five (5) feet in width.
 - b. Interior and private walkways along parking areas shall be a minimum of three (3) unobstructed feet in width.
 - c. Recreational and bike paths shall be a minimum ten (10) feet in width.
 - d. The maximum slope of any walkway shall not exceed eight (8) percent.
 - e. Exterior steps should have a rise between four and six inches (4" to 6"), and a tread between 13 inches and five feet (13" to 5').

B. Density Incentives

Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a four percent (4%) density increase may be allowed for neighborhood circulation systems which provide outstanding design and which may include:

- a. Pedestrian paths within the development and to the development edge that link with amenities, open spaces, parks, and other destinations.
- b. Pedestrian path linkages to regional walking path improvements.

Landscaping

Landscaping should be designed in sufficient form, quantity, and location to reduce to the greatest extent possible negative impacts affecting the site and adjacent properties, and to increase the sense of neighborhood scale, character, and identity.

A. Design Objectives

1. Landscaping is an important element of the site plan. A diversity of plant materials including overstory and understory trees (deciduous and coniferous), shrubbery, ground cover and turf should be used. A successful landscaping plan should include:
 - a. Overstory and understory trees which can be used to provide enclosure through the tree canopy. Larger trees can reduce the perceived scale of larger structures.
 - b. Understory trees and shrubbery provide eye-level vegetation. Typically these materials should be used as foundation plantings, which tie the structure to the ground and soften hard edges, create visual focal points to frame desirable views, and provide privacy screens.
 - c. Ground cover and turf should be used to reduce unnecessary paved area(s) and to control erosion and surface drainage.

2. Landscaping should define the neighborhood by providing:
 - a. Scale and enclosure of open space (streets, parking areas, and recreation areas).
 - b. Separation of neighborhoods and building clusters.
 - c. Gateways and defined entries to the neighborhood.
 - d. Attractive streets by the use of street trees. Such trees when placed along a street provide shade for streets and sidewalks, improve aesthetics, and generally encourage pedestrian use of sidewalks. Street trees also maintain a ceiling or canopy that further imbues a pedestrian scale to the streetscape.
 - e. Well landscaped perimeters of the development through the installation of a master landscape buffer plan. Well-landscaped areas along a neighborhood's perimeter have a tremendous impact on the perception and impression of resident's experience in their daily lives.
 - f. Visual separation and screening of interior and exterior private areas.

3. Environmental and site impacts should be minimized through landscaping by:
 - a. Buffering adjacent higher and lower intensity uses such as commercial and single-family residential.
 - b. Addressing regional and micro-climatic factors which include reducing radiant heat and heat gain, providing solar access and wind protection.
 - c. Reducing perceived density through establishing view corridors, providing visual focal points, and softening and enhancing pedestrian paths and open areas.

4. Berms and walls, or a combination thereof, can be used with landscaping to increase neighborhood privacy, security and to reduce negative impacts along adjacent major roadways and adjacent properties. Walls should be designed to be compatible with neighborhood materials and forms.

CITY OF PLEASANT HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Six: Land Use Plan

B. Density Incentives

1. Landscaping that exceeds minimum landscape design objectives may include paved area landscaping and site landscaping.
 - a. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a ten percent (5%) density increase may be permitted for paved area landscaping within multifamily developments, which meets the following criteria.
 - (1) Parking areas must be screened from street view to a minimum height of three (3) feet (maximum 6'0") above the highest finished grade of the parking area. Berms, walls, or a suitable combination thereof may be used.
 - (2) A ten (10)-foot minimum landscaped perimeter shall be provided to separate parking areas from any public or private street, and any building.
 - (3) A landscaped area shall separate, on average, each 85 feet or ten contiguous parking spaces in any parking area. The landscaped area shall be a minimum of 150 square feet in area.
 - (4) Double-loaded parking aisles shall be separated by a minimum seven-(7) foot wide landscaped area (except where carports are used).
 - (5) Two trees shall be provided within the parking lot for every required parking space. Credit may be received for other parking lot landscaping required, per the zoning Ordinance.
 - b. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a maximum seven percent (5%) density increase may be permitted for site landscaping in addition to the required minimum landscaping standards set forth in The City of Pleasant Hill Zoning Ordinance.
 - (1) Installation of street trees, in addition to the required number of trees per dwelling unit. Street trees shall be placed a maximum average of forty (40)-feet on-center along the street or private drive. The trees shall be no less than (2 ½)-inch caliper deciduous shade trees, as measured six (6)-inches above the ground and conifers, six to eight (6-8) feet in height; as specified by the American Association of Nurserymen.
 - (2) Installation of a master landscape/buffer plan around the perimeter of the development adjacent to major roadways. Perimeter landscapes shall include a mixture of shade, coniferous/evergreen and ornamental trees to provide a variety of foliage, shade and seasonal interest. Earth berms and shrubbery should be used to accentuate the landscape improvements.

Grading

A. Design Objectives

1. Berms, channels, swales, etc., should be designed and graded to be an integral part of the landscape.
2. The maximum slope of any grade should not exceed three feet in the horizontal to one foot in the vertical (3':1'). Grade changes in excess of 3':1' should be made by natural or constructed retaining walls.
3. Where retaining walls are required, they should be of a material compatible with the primary building architecture. The extensive use of railroad ties and gabion type retaining walls should be avoided.
4. Buildings should be located above adjacent street and parking areas. The average grade adjacent to a structure should slope away from the structure for a minimum of ten feet (10') at a five percent (5%) slope.
5. Grading should occur in a manner to preserve existing trees, vegetation, and natural topographic features as much as possible.

Noise

A. Design Objectives

1. Site planning should be sensitive to off-site noise sources affecting the neighborhood. Every attempt should be made to reduce off-site noise impacts such as interstate highways by:
 - a. Increasing the distance from the noise source.
 - b. Planting dense overstory and understory landscaping.
 - c. Building solid walls between the noise source and receiver.
 - d. Constructing berms between the noise source and receiver.

B. Density Incentives

1. Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a two percent (2%) density increase may be allowed for the effective reduction of off-site noise.

To qualify for incentives, the off-site noise affecting the site should be greater than 75 dBA (typically a thoroughfare or interstate highway). To reduce exterior noise the applicant may use perimeter screening blocking the line of sight between the noise source and the receiver. Walls, berms, or a combination thereof may be used. If walls are used, they must be of heavy construction and without cracks or breaks.

Architectural Design

The architecture of residential development is a key element in determining the character and function of a neighborhood. The character of a neighborhood should create a strong feeling of identity. The function of housing should meet the needs of the occupants and be specifically tuned to regional and site features.

Building designs that create variety and do not look monotonous if replicated throughout the development are required. Such designs should include the following:

1. Side and rear building elevations, garages, carports, and all accessory structures with the same level of design, aesthetic quality, and architectural detailing.
2. Porches, varied rooflines, and varied facade depths to create variety and individuality of each dwelling within the building.
3. Windows and projecting wall surfaces to break up larger wall surfaces and establish visual interest and to provide visibility of the street and other public spaces to encourage social interaction.
4. Protective entry courts, common vestibules, covered breeze ways, or enclosed stair halls to reduce the number of visible doors, unless designed in a row house or townhouse manner oriented toward the street.
5. Garages designed to be integrated with the building design or sites so as to avoid long monotonous rows of garage doors and building walls. Locate and orient garages so they are de-emphasized and do not visually dominate the building facade or the streetscape.

A.Design Objectives

1. The architectural design of housing units should be designed to meet the regional climate and specific site characteristics. The regional climate is temperate and requires protection from wind, rain and snow. Although there is a significant number of heating and cooling days, there are moderate temperatures. As a result, the following architectural elements should be provided.
 - a. Protective entry courts, covered breeze ways, or enclosed stair halls;
 - b. Sufficient roof overhang to shield summer sun and still allow winter sun penetration, where applicable; and
 - c. Individual units with adequate outside air ventilation. Double-loaded units typically do not offer adequate natural air flow.
2. Specific site characteristics such as topography and amenities should help determine the building footprint.
 - a. Steep sloping sites may require variations of two or three-story units and attached garages.
 - b. Elongated sites with linear amenities may require linear building footprints.

- c. Clustered units are well suited for both flat and sloping sites. Clustering offers greater site efficiency and well-defined common areas.
 - d. The rectangular, double-loaded building configuration should be avoided. These designs typically lack interest and fail to create a strong sense of neighborhood.
3. The architectural design of each unit or building should be designed to a residential neighborhood scale. Specifically, architecture should respond to perceived density, building mass, and details.
- a. A strong sense of neighborhood should be created by reducing the perceived density of a project. Common vestibules and enclosed breeze ways can reduce the number of visible doors.
 - b. The sense of scale is another factor in establishing a strong sense of neighborhood. Architecturally, the massing of individual building should reinforce a neighborhood scale by:
 - (1) Providing vertical and horizontal offsets in units. This serves to break up rooflines, define private outdoor areas, allow greater views, light, and air to unit interiors. If horizontal/vertical offsets are to be used, they should be of sufficient dimension to achieve the desired effect.
 - c. Use porches, railings, fascia boards, and trim to enhance buildings' character.
 - d. Locate and orient garages so they are de-emphasized and do not visually dominate the building facade or the streetscape. Alternative garage orientations may include access from the side or rear of the structure, or setback a minimum two (2)-feet from the front wall of the habitable living space for front-oriented garages.
 - e. Decorative building materials on the front facade, and all other facades visible from the street.
 - f. A useable covered front entry porch, with a minimum depth of seven (7) feet and a minimum area of seventy (70) square feet.
 - g. Heavy textured dimensional roofing material.

B. Density Incentives

Upon the recommendation of the Planning Commission, a fifteen percent (15%) density increase may be allowed for enhanced architectural design in the development that meets the stated objectives of these regulations, or by including other architectural design elements determined by the Commission to represent enhanced design quality above and beyond the quality that is otherwise found in a typical Pleasant Hill moderate-density and multifamily residential development.

CITY OF PLEASANT HILL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Six: Land Use Plan

Table 6.9 Project Evaluation Form—Moderate-density and Multifamily Developments

Category	Have appropriate Design Objectives Been Met		Have sufficient steps been taken to achieve objectives		Available Incentive	Density Bonus	
	Yes	No	Yes	No		Number	Total
Neighborhood Infill					N/A	--	--
Natural Features					2%		
Open Space					5%		
Building and Land Use Variety					N/A	--	--
Vehicular Circulation & Parking							
▪ Parking Buffers					4%		
▪ Attached Parking					1% for each 2%		
Pedestrian Circulation					4%		
Landscaping							
▪ Paved Area					5%		
▪ Additional Materials					5%		
Grading					N/A	--	--
Noise					2%		
Architectural Design					15%		
Total Bonus (if applicable)							

Note: The maximum total density bonus shall allow for a reduction in the minimum lot area (or an increase in density for High-density Residential). However, the minimum lot area (or density) shall comply with Table E-1: Residential Lot Area and Density Regulations.