

Design Guidelines and Standards For The Historic Character Overlay District (D-2.4)

Update Adopted by City Council

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INTRODUCTION

CONCEPT OF THE GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

The Guidelines and Standards are intended to help protect the historic buildings and character, architecture and sites that reflect the heritage of Arroyo Grande. It is intended that the Guidelines and Standards be consulted at early stages of any renovation or new development proposal to help create an overall approach to the design of the project.

Guidelines are statements that indicate preference or principles indicated by descriptive statements including “should”, “is encouraged”, “is desired” and “may”.

Standards are indicated by language that is unequivocal and that prescribe minimum acceptable limits. Statements such as “shall”, “is required” and “must” are standards.

The Guidelines and Standards are based on the concept that historic resources, like natural resources, are important to the human community and should be identified and protected. This is not an exercise in nostalgia, but is a methodical attempt to identify important resources from Arroyo Grande’s past and offer recommendations and policies that will help assure their preservation and enhancement.

The protection of historic districts, including homes, offices and businesses within the Village area of Arroyo Grande, will help preserve and enhance the unique qualities of the City for the enjoyment, pride, education and economic benefit of its citizens, businesses and visitors. These Guidelines and Standards are intended to preserve and enhance not only the most grand or impressive resources of the past, but the recognizable character composed of individual elements in the Village.

Developers of Arroyo Grande included merchants and farmers, entrepreneurs and employees. Most homes, offices and business establishments were modest in scale and utilitarian in function, and these structures are an important part of the fabric of the City.

Objectives

To help preserve and enhance historic resources, the following objectives are reflected in the Guidelines and Standards:

- Safeguard the heritage of Arroyo Grande.
- Encourage public knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the City’s past.
- Enhance the visual character of the City and the Village by preserving and promoting diverse and harmonious architectural styles and designs that reflect historic character and stages in the development of the City.
- Conserve valuable material and energy resources by continued use of the existing built environment.
- Protect property values and increase financial and economic benefits to the owners, businesses and residents of Arroyo Grande.
- Ensure that new construction and renovation of existing buildings are compatible with the historic character of the Village area and surrounding neighborhoods.

The Guidelines and Standards are intended to provide a variety of design choices and encourage creativity. They are not intended to dictate preconceived or uniform design solutions, but to assist design for building in the historic district and encourage the use of existing design elements. The intent is to

increase visual elements that buildings have in common, and stress a “sense of fit” for both new and renovated buildings. The Guidelines and Standards offer practical solutions beneficial for the community as a whole as well as for individual property owners within the Village area.

HOW THE GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS WERE DEVELOPED AND AMENDED

The Guidelines and Standards focus on both existing design issues in the Village historic districts and on issues that may be expected to arise in the future. Although much of the land in these districts has been developed, there is still substantial opportunity for infill development on vacant lots and partially developed properties. Additionally, some property owners may wish to restore, remodel or rehabilitate existing structures to prepare them for new uses. To address both current issues and potential future concerns, the Guidelines and Standards consider existing conditions, recognize past development patterns, and reflect future potential for growth and change.

The Guidelines and Standards are based on features of the existing built environment. These features were documented in the Historical Resource Survey, 1991, by the City of Arroyo Grande and Catherine Graves, showing existing historic structures in the Village historic district of Arroyo Grande (Appendix A). This survey recorded addresses, building types, ownership, and focused on architectural characteristics that contribute to the visual quality of the buildings and to the entire area surrounding them. These characteristics include height, roof configuration and material, exterior wall materials, window and door type, chimneys, and porches. Also documented were surrounding land uses and potential threats to the site or historic building.

The survey reveals that there is not one particular style that determines the overall character of the Village historic districts in

Arroyo Grande. There is, however, a common “vocabulary” of building elements that helps to create an impression of consistency and continuity. These elements are used frequently and in combination with different architectural styles.

These Guidelines and Standards were comprehensively updated by the Community Development Department in 2002-2003. The update process included six community workshops and several public hearings to facilitate public participation. The Guidelines and Standards were updated again in 2008 – 2009 to address large home size in residential districts located within the Historic Character Design Overlay District D-2.4.

For the purposes of these Guidelines and Standards, the historic period of the Village is 1870-1939.

HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

The Guidelines and Standards have been prepared to aid City decision makers, private design professionals and property owners. As the design is developed further, the Guidelines and Standards can be used to determine which specific procedures have a bearing on the project. The Guidelines and Standards suggest characteristics for design of details and elements, such as signs, rear entrances, landscaping, height, building mass, construction materials and other components that compose the project’s relationship to its surroundings.

Exceptions to Guidelines

Exceptions to GUIDELINES in this document may be approved if both of the following findings are met:

1. The alternative design or materials do not detract from adjacent buildings or the historic character and diversity of the Village area.

2. The mass and scale of the project is appropriate to the location considering the history and diversity of the area and the concept of the Village area.

An example of an exception to a guideline may be for an internally illuminated sign. See *Sign Illumination* on page 35, which allows externally illuminated signs. Findings may be made approving a sign if the applicant demonstrates that the sign maintains a historic character with internal illumination.

Exceptions to Standards

Exceptions to STANDARDS in this document may be approved if all of the findings for Exceptions to Guidelines are met AND by obtaining a Minor Exception Permit, per Section 16.16.120 of the Development Code. The Minor Exception requires noticing property owners within 300 ft. of the project. The Community Development Director approves a Minor Exception with a recommendation from the ARC. If the project requires Planning Commission approval, the Minor Exception will be processed concurrently. A Minor Exception may be approved if all of the following findings are met:

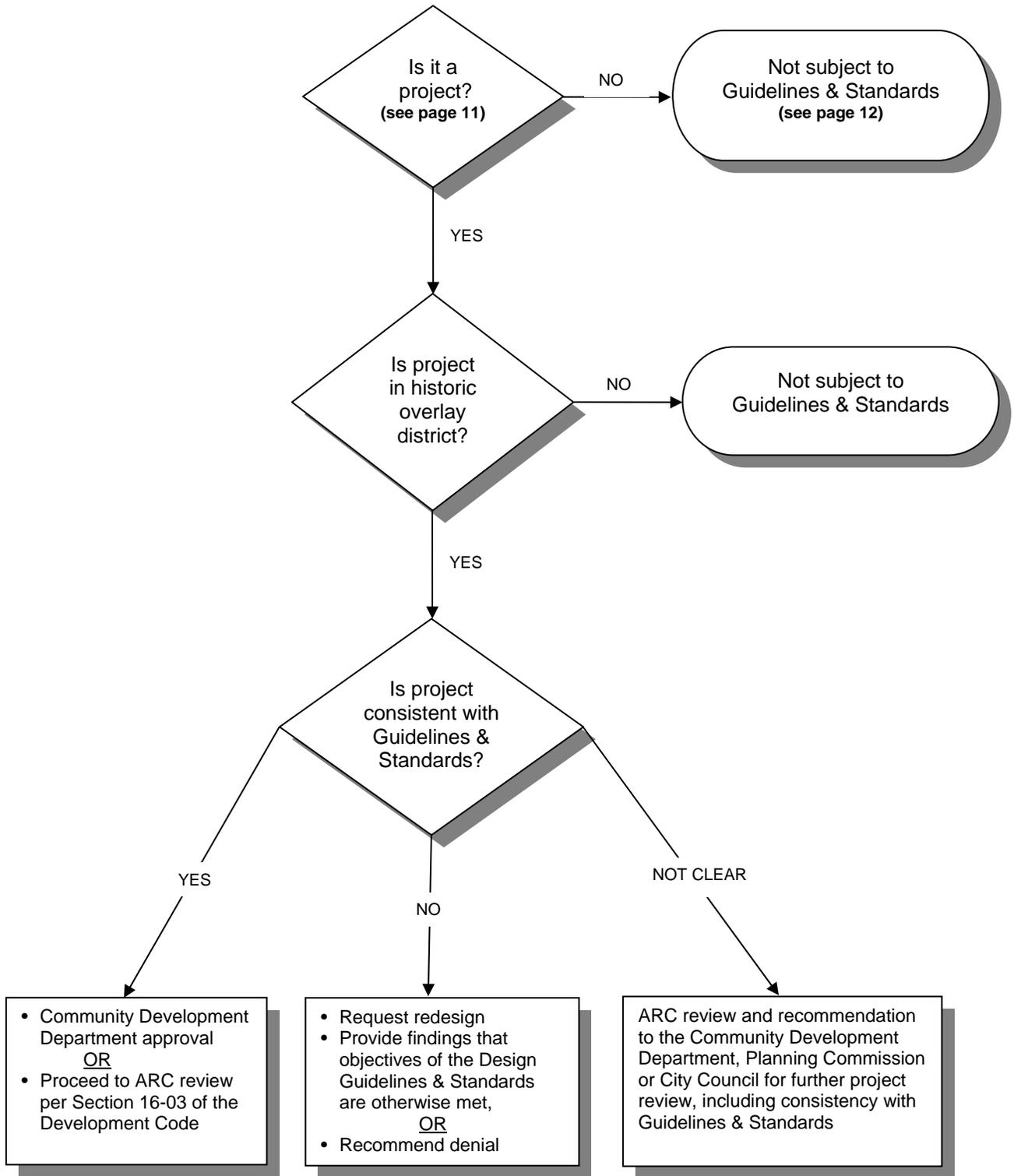
1. The strict or literal interpretation and endorsement of the specified regulation would result in practical difficulty or unnecessary physical hardship;
2. There are exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the property involved, or to the intended use of the property, that do not apply generally to other properties in the same district;
3. Strict or literal interpretation and enforcement of the specified regulation would deprive the applicant of privileges enjoyed by other property owners in the same district;

4. The granting of the minor exception will not constitute a grant of special privilege inconsistent with the limitations on other properties classified in the same district and will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare, or materially injurious to properties or improvements in the vicinity;
5. The granting of a Minor Exception is consistent with the objectives and policies of the General Plan and the intent of this title.

The Guidelines and Standards are NOT intended to provide all necessary information for development projects within the Village area. The Guidelines and Standards only address generalized design issues. It is essential that other requirements in Title 16 (Development Code) and other portions of the Municipal Code (Development Code) be followed for each project. Nothing in the Guidelines and Standards is intended to supersede requirements of the Development Code. Questions regarding the relationship between the Guidelines and Standards and Development Code provisions should be referred to the Community Development Department.

An example of an exception to a standard may be for a sign with gold detailing that is a predominant shiny sign material. See *Sign Materials* on page 34, which does not allow high gloss, shiny or reflective surfaces as predominant sign material. If the applicant demonstrates that the sign maintains a historic character, then a Minor Exception may be processed concurrent with the sign application.

PROCESS FOR IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS IN HISTORIC DISTRICTS



DESIGN REVIEW IN ARROYO GRANDE

Community Development Director

The Community Development Director is responsible for administering Title 16 Development Code, as described in section 16.08.090 of the City's Municipal Code. The Community Development Director processes all applications, conducts environmental reviews and approves minor use permits including permits such as viewshed reviews, design reviews and plot plan reviews.

Architectural Review Committee

The Architectural Review Committee (ARC) is a five member advisory committee appointed by the City Council to assist the Community Development Department, Planning Commission and the City Council by review of projects and comments regarding the aesthetics, site planning and architectural design of development proposals in the City. The ARC includes three members with technical design, planning, architectural and/or landscaping design knowledge and experience reading and interpreting site plans, architectural and engineering drawings as they relate to the appearance of proposed buildings, signage, structures and landscaping upon a site and the surrounding community. The two other members of the Committee may, but need not, have technical design and/or landscaping design knowledge and experience.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission consists of five members appointed by the City Council. The Planning Commission makes recommendations to the City Council regarding the General Plan, growth management and development of the City, preservation and conservation of open space, the expenditure of public funds relating to the General Plan and many other mandatory responsibilities.

The Planning Commission has been assigned the responsibility to review and approve projects including the following:

- Conditional Use Permits
- Surface Mining Permits
- Variances
- Tentative Maps
- Vesting Tentative Maps
- Lot Line Adjustments
- Lot Mergers
- Reversions to Acreage
- Certificates of Compliance
- Notices of Violation
- Planned Sign Programs
- Viewshed Review Permits
- Planned Unit Development Permits
- Extensions of Time (for projects originally approved by Planning Commission)
- Architectural Review
- Appeals of Community Development Director Determinations

The Planning Commission also makes recommendations to the City Council on the following:

- General Plan Amendments
- Development Code Amendments
- Specific Plans and Amendments to Specific Plans
- Amendments to Zoning Districts
- Development Agreements
- Permits, Licenses or other entitlements within an approved Planned Development

City Council

The City Council reviews and approves the following:

- General Plan Amendments;
- Specific Plans and Amendments to Specific Plans;
- Amendments to Zoning Districts and other provisions of this title;
- Development Agreements;
- Appeals of Planning Commission determinations;

- Permits, licenses or approvals within an approved Planned Development;
- Extensions of Time (for projects originally approved by City Council);
- Concurrent applications.

REQUIRED APPLICATION SUBMITTAL DOCUMENTS AND MATERIALS

Applicants must submit adequate documentation in order for the City to properly evaluate and process applications. Drawings should be to scale and clearly depict the character of the proposed work. Submittal documents vary depending on what the project involves, however, the following documentation is generally required:

- Completed application form;
- Payment of fee established by the City Council to cover typical processing costs for the specific type of application (payable to the City of Arroyo Grande);
- Site photographs showing topography, vegetation, existing and adjacent structures, and views from the site;
- A scaled Site Plan drawing including a north arrow showing existing and proposed conditions including adjacent development patterns (the number of copies depends on the type of application submitted);
- Elevations showing all visible sides and the relationship of proposed building(s) to adjacent structure(s) and the types of exterior materials to be used;
- Samples of building materials showing actual colors, textures and types (*Computer printouts used as examples of colors and materials are not acceptable, actual material samples must be provided*);

- A model of proposed commercial or mixed use buildings;
- Any available or required historic information relating to the project;
- Demolition plans, if applicable; and
- Any other data requested or required by the Community Development Department, Architectural Review Committee, Planning Commission or City Council, as needed.

The Community Development Department may require submittal of amended plans if substantial changes are required before final consideration for approval. Plans that do not show all the proposed changes or materials may delay the project until the applicable information is provided.

PROJECTS SUBJECT TO THE GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

The Design Guidelines and Standards for Historic Districts are incorporated by reference in the Development Code (Section 16.08.010(1)). All parcels within a Historic Design Overlay district are subject to the Development Code and these Guidelines and Standards.

As shown on the Design Overlay District Map, these Guidelines and Standards apply to all commercial, mixed use and residential construction and renovation projects within the Village Core Downtown (D-2.4) Single Family Low-Medium Density (D-2.4), Single-Family Medium Density (D-2.4), Multi-Family Medium-High Density (D-2.4), Mixed Use and Community Facility (D-2.4) zoning districts, as shown on the official zoning map.

Design Overlay District 2.11, remains subject to the Design Guidelines for Historic Districts (1994), until such time as a separate set of Guidelines and Standards

pertaining to the Traffic Way Corridor is adopted.

Demolition or Relocation Permit

Request for Demolition or Relocation Permits within the Historic Overlay Districts shall be subject to prior review by the Community Development Director for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and to determine if renovation would be possible and preferable. Prior to issuance of permit for the demolition or relocation of any building, notices shall be given to the ARC and the Planning Commission. This does not apply to demolition determined by the building official to be necessary to protect public health or safety.

Plot Plan Review

New construction or exterior alterations, additions or modifications of any building or structure in the *Village Residential*, *Village Core Downtown* and *Village Mixed Use* districts may require Plot Plan review by the Community Development Director before a building permit is issued.

The applicant shall include complete site plans, elevation details and specifications, a plot plan, and other information that is needed to describe their project and are required by the Community Development Director.

PROJECTS NOT SUBJECT TO THE GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

- Residential or commercial projects that consist only of routine maintenance, or repair that do not involve a change of design or exterior material, and does not significantly change the outward appearance of the structure.
- Projects where less than 15% of the façade is physically changed and where a significant feature of a historic structure is not impaired.

- Construction, alteration or removal of any feature that has been determined by the building official to be necessary to protect health or safety.
- Projects that include the renovation or non-structural alteration of interior spaces only, and will not result in an alteration of the outward appearance of the structure.
- Demolition of any structure found by the Building Official to be necessary to protect health or safety of the public is exempt. Replacement of any demolished structure will be subject to all provisions of the Guidelines and Standards, and all applicable City codes and ordinances.
- Repainting of a commercial or mixed use building is subject to review by the Community Development Director to determine if it involves a substantial color change and may be referred to the ARC for a recommendation. For example, a change from one earth tone to another earth tone is not considered a substantial change.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

HISTORY OF ARROYO GRANDE

The history of the Arroyo Grande Valley is firmly rooted in the natural resources that abound in the area. The first known inhabitants of the area were the Obispeno Chumash, who established a territory that covered much of Central California, extending as much as 60 miles inland from the ocean. Evidence has been found locally that suggests their presence dates back at least 9,000 years. Over 1,200 archaeological sites have been discovered in the Arroyo Grande Valley. The abundance of food included seafood and fish from the tidal flats, abundant wildlife in the surrounding hills and lush natural vegetation.

The first Spanish explorer, Juan Cabrillo, arrived on the Central Coast of California in 1542, and his narrative describes many Chumash Villages and a large population of native residents.

Spanish residence in the area commenced in 1771, when the mission was established at San Luis Obispo de Toloso. The priests of the mission established a garden and “plantation” in the Arroyo Grande Valley in 1780, where they raised large quantities of corn, beans, potatoes and other crops to supply food for the mission. At that time, however, the Arroyo Grande Valley was not the wide expanse of fertile farmland it was later to become. The area, which was to be the City of Arroyo Grande, was one large “monte” covered with willows and brush.

The area remained under the control of the Spanish government until the Mexican revolution and independence in 1822, when California became a territory of Mexico.

To encourage settlement in the “California Territory” the Mexican Government granted large parcels of land to individuals wishing to settle in the area. Early landholders in the

Arroyo Grande area included William G. Dana, John Wilson, John Price, Francis Z. Branch, and Issac J. Sparks. Francis Branch had the most extensive holdings in the valley, including the Arroyo Grande and Santa Manuela grants, and a part of the Pismo grant. To help in clearing and settling the land, Francis Branch gave farmers the use, for five years, of every acre they would clear and cultivate.

The San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors established the township of Arroyo Grande in 1862. In 1867, the town consisted of a schoolhouse, blacksmith shop, and stage stop on the line to Santa Barbara. By 1876 there were two hotels, two stores, two saloons, a wheelwright and blacksmith shop, a schoolhouse, post office, livery stable and several residences. An influx of new settlers arrived in 1877, drawn by the rich fertile soil and mild climate that encouraged agricultural pursuits.

Transportation improvements contributed substantially to the success of agriculture in the valley. The Meherin brothers, who were local merchants, and other investors wishing to promote the Arroyo Grande Valley, built the Pismo Wharf in 1881. Stock was issued to finance the wharf, and 800 shares were sold at \$20.00 each to farmers and landowners. When finished, the wharf extended 1,600 feet from shore, where the water was 27 feet deep at low tide. In 1882, thirty-eight ships were loaded at the wharf, saving local farmers over \$35,000 in freight charges.

Also in 1881, the Pacific Coast Railroad was extended from San Luis Obispo to Arroyo Grande, further stimulating the agriculture industry and encouraging substantial growth and development.

Arroyo Grande was incorporated as a City in 1911, at which time the population was approximately 1,200. The reputation of the area continued to lure residents, and agricultural enterprises gave way to residential development. Eventually, the

small separate settlements of Arroyo Grande, Pismo Beach, Shell Beach, Grover Beach and Oceano expanded to reach each other's borders, creating a large urbanized area, sometimes called Five Cities, which is far different from what early settlers experienced.

Much remains in Arroyo Grande that reflects its heritage and past, however. Many older homes and buildings that remain reflect their utilitarian heritage, with vernacular architecture common. Some agricultural operations remain within the city, many of these in proximity to the Village area. The Village of Arroyo Grande still reflects many aspects of its history today, although most residents are no longer involved in the historic enterprise of agriculture.

OVERALL DESIGN FRAMEWORK

Design issues in the Village area are not limited to individual buildings or projects. While the community structure may not be of concern to an individual renovation project, it should be considered for larger projects that have the capacity to change the structure of the Village. The structure of the Village is an expression of the type, intensity and arrangement of activities and physical structures in the community. How the resident or visitor experiences the structure, depends on the clarity of the community's physical organization.

Are there landmarks for points of reference and recognizable "meeting spots?" Are travel routes clear and continuous and are separate areas recognizable for their individual character? These issues, and others, help to define the community's structure.

To help illustrate the structure of the Village of Arroyo Grande, and its problems and potential, visual elements, first described by author Kevin Lynch, can be used to explain the existing "image" of the Village area. These elements are defined and examples supplied to illustrate how they are expressed in the Village of Arroyo Grande. Designers and decision makers should consider these elements, and determine how they will be affected by development projects.

GATEWAYS

There are visual "clues" that tell an observer that they have entered the Village. They are a change in the quality of space on a path, where adjoining areas are distinguished from the distinct and separate Village area that the traveler is entering. Gateways can be natural or man-made, and can range from the first views of historic residences when approaching from Branch Mill Road or East Branch Street to the triangle park at the

intersection of Nelson Street and Traffic Way. Preservation and enhancement of gateways is important to help define the special quality of the Village area. The change of character, as one enters the Village on East Branch near Crown Hill, Mason Street or Traffic Way are "gateways".

LANDMARKS

There are features in the community that stand out because of their unique visual character. They are often used as reference points, to help guide a traveler through the Village. Landmarks are notable for the physical characteristics that separate them from their surroundings, and often, for their contribution to the historic fabric of the community. Landmarks in the Arroyo Grande Village include natural features such as Crown Hill and Arroyo Grande Creek to historic structures such as the old Methodist Episcopal Church, the I.O.O.F. Hall, the Olohan Building, and the Swinging Bridge. Care should be taken in the design of new projects to preserve the effect of existing landmarks, and to assure that new "landmarks" created are harmonious with their surroundings. A design element can unintentionally become an unwelcome landmark if its style, bulk, or color overwhelms the surrounding development or obscures an existing "landmark".

NODES

There are strategic spots in the Village that an observer considers the center or concentration of activity or junction of paths. The public parking area next to the creek, with the gazebo and Swinging Bridge or Village Green and historic museum area are illustrations of such a concentration of activity, especially during community festivals and farmer's market days. New development designs that incorporate pedestrian space and visual interest to attract activity can create such "nodes".

DISTRICTS

There are areas of the community with a unique character that distinguishes them from the adjoining areas. An observer can identify certain districts from inside, and often from outside the district. The historic development of Arroyo Grande, and the activities that occur in different areas of the Village, contribute to its division into districts.

There are distinct differences between the historic commercial buildings of the Village Core Downtown area, and with the nearby Village Residential area. The Village Residential area, with many historic homes and large mature trees, differs from the surrounding, more modern, developments. Both new development and renovations should be sensitive to the architectural elements that contribute to neighborhood character and to distinctive “districts”.

PATHS

There are paths for various types of movement. It is not necessary for an observer to actually travel on the path for it to be a major visual image. This is especially true in Arroyo Grande, where major arterials pass through the Village (Highway 227) or did pass through in earlier times, Traffic Way.

Branch Street has been the “main” street in the Village, and still serves as a major link to Lopez Lake and adjoining areas. Traffic Way, Bridge, Nevada and Mason Streets are additional vehicle paths through the Village, as are Olohan Alley and LePoint Street. Smaller connections for circulation include Short Street, several walkways and historic routes such as Hart Lane or Creekside promenades.

Design elements, such as street furniture, signs, trees and lighting can all contribute to the “importance” or purpose that is assigned to a particular “path”.

EDGES OR SEAMS

There are linear elements that are not paths that represent breaks in continuity that may be perceived as barriers between districts or “seams” where districts are joined. They may have a feeling of an edge, as with the steep hills to the north of the Village along LePoint Street, or a seam, like Arroyo Grande Creek, joined by bridges.

“Edges” or “seams” can be less defined but still apparent such as at Crown Terrace east of The Village or Traffic Way on the west.

NATURAL AREAS

There are areas within the Village that remain “natural” as opposed to built areas, man-made parks, plazas or gardens. In urban areas, the preservation of natural areas is often a challenge. Protection of large, landmark trees and the riparian areas adjoining Arroyo Grande Creek contribute substantially to the overall experience and enjoyment of the Village. Every effort should be made to preserve and enhance “natural areas”.

ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

This section illustrates various architectural styles found within the Village Historic Design Overlay District. These styles represent much of the existing architecture in the Village and shall be used as a guide for future development and renovations in the area. For the Spanish Eclectic Style, use this section as a guide for residential remodels for existing Spanish Eclectic style homes or mixed use/commercial construction (See Appendix "A" for additional examples); construction of new Spanish Eclectic homes is allowed in the HCO residential district subject to conditional use permit approval.

Most of the historic architecture does not follow one specific style, but is influenced by many. The commercial style development in the Village area is an eclectic mix of buildings, but there is a similar vocabulary in the building design and construction materials. The development for the residential and commercial buildings generally fits within one or more of the following architectural styles.

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES

Bungalow



The Bungalow style is a unique house type that borrows from other cultures, but is a truly American design. Developed on the west coast, the Bungalow reduces the distinction between inside and outside space, reflecting the open practical living possible in California. It is generally a low, small house that used natural materials and relied

on simplified design. The roof structure is most often broad gables, often with a separate lower gable covering the porch, although hipped roof structures are also common. There is little ornamentation, and what is found is of simplified design. The first Bungalow development period was from 1895 to 1915.

Cottage



A Cottage is basically a small frame single-family home that does not use any particular architectural style or ornamentation pattern. Roof styles vary, but most often use gable, hip or a combination of the two. This is a style that often borrows elements from classic styles, but does not incorporate other elements that make the style unique.

Craftsman



An extension of the early Bungalow, the Craftsman design included a low-pitched gabled roof with a wide, unenclosed eave overhang. Roof rafters are usually exposed and decorative beams or braces are commonly added under gables. Porches are either full or partial-width, with a roof often supported by tapered square columns. The most distinctive features of this style are the junctions where the roof joins the wall,

where the most ornamentation occurs. This was the dominant style for smaller homes from 1905 to early 1920's. The popularity of the style faded quickly, however, and few were built after 1930.

Folk Victorian



The Folk Victorian style uses a simple, folk type house style that is often one story and has a roof that is gabled or hipped (pyramidal). It lacks the intricate, irregular roof structure of the Queen Anne style, but includes ornamentation common to Victorian-style detailing, especially spindle work. Facades are generally symmetrical.

Queen Anne

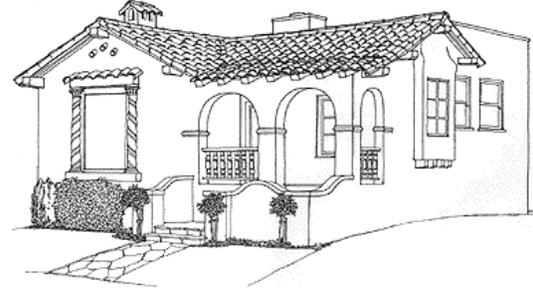


The Queen Anne architectural style was common from about 1880 to 1910. Identifying features include a steeply pitched, irregular shaped roof, often with a

dominant front-facing gable, patterned shingles, cutaway bay windows, and other features to avoid a smooth walled appearance. The decorative detailing is usually of two types:

1. Spindle work includes turned posts and may also include decorative gables and ornamentation under the wall overhangs.
2. Free classic detailing uses classical columns, instead of delicate turned posts, and other ornamentation is less "lacy" and delicate than that found in spindle work. This style became common after 1890.

Spanish Eclectic



For the Spanish Eclectic Style, use this section as a guide for residential remodels for existing Spanish Eclectic style homes or mixed use/commercial construction (See Appendix "A" for additional examples); construction of new Spanish Eclectic homes is allowed in the HCO residential district subject to conditional use permit approval. The Spanish Eclectic style uses decorative details borrowed from all aspects of Spanish Architecture. The roof is low pitched, usually with little or no eave overhang, or flat. The roof covering is S-shaped or 2-piece unglazed clay tile. Typically one or more prominent arches are placed above the door or principal windows. Windows are typically recessed. The wall surface is usually smooth plaster, and the façade is normally asymmetrical.

* Sketches from the Architectural Styles section are from Realty Advocates at www.realtyadvocates.com.

COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES

Late Nineteenth Century Commercial



Characteristics included in late nineteenth century commercial architecture are double storefronts that are generally 25 to 50 feet wide with one or two entrances. Flat roofs and rooflines with detailed cornices, recessed entrances flanked by large display windows on the first floors and smaller vertical rectangular windows on the second floors are common as well. Materials of the time the historic commercial buildings in Arroyo Grande were built include stone, brick and wood.

Future renovations and development within the Village Core shall use similar materials and color to fit within the historic character of the Village.

Olohan Building



IOOF Building



Old Brisco Hotel



CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

This section provides examples of the most commonly found building materials used in the Village area of Arroyo Grande. There are also examples of construction materials under the Village Core and the Residential sections specific to those areas.

All new projects shall use materials that fit within the character of the Village (see following examples). Using similar materials or replicating these materials on all projects and restorations will extend the existing character extended throughout the Village.

All restorations shall use materials that match or complement the original structure facilitating compatibility and preservation of its character.

WEATHERBOARD OR CLAPBOARD WOOD SIDING

Most of the original housing and a few of the commercial buildings used horizontal wood siding or vertical board and batten for the exterior walls and trim of the buildings. Wood siding gives the buildings a sense of historic character, adding detail and texture.



CEMENT PLASTER

Cement plaster (including stucco) is not as common as wood or brick, however some of the commercial and residential buildings within the Village have plaster exteriors. Cement plaster buildings require detailing that gives them a historic “Village” feel. Buildings with plain plaster walls and no ornamentation are not appropriate for The Village.



YELLOW INDIGENOUS SANDSTONE

This type of stone is used on the old I.O.O.F. Hall on Bridge Street and the Old Brisco Hotel on East Branch Street. It is a golden stone that is shaped in large irregular chunks. The color of this natural stone adds a warm variety and individuality to the area.





BRICK AND STONE BLOCK

Brick and stone blocks are most common on commercial buildings in the Village. Brick is an old construction material that was used in the late 1800s and early 1900s when the bulk of the historic commercial buildings in Arroyo Grande Village were built. The use of exposed plain concrete block is not permitted in the Historic Village Core District.



WINDOW SASHES AND DOOR FRAMES

Doors should be made of wood or a material that resembles an older style wooden door. For commercial areas, large industrial style glass doors and windows with metal frames are not appropriate. Doors with wood trim and windows with wood framing should be used. Aluminum and other frames that have a modern metal look are not appropriate for the Village.



VILLAGE CORE DOWNTOWN (VCD)



This section of the Guidelines and Standards applies to all parcels in the Village Core Downtown area and may also be applicable within Community Facilities (including Public Facilities and Parks), and Mixed Use districts as shown on the Design Overlay District Map.

An objective of the Village Core Downtown area is to enhance and maintain a compact, active street frontage with commercial uses that attract pedestrians. A visual continuity should be maintained through site design and compatibility of scale and materials.

MIXED USES WITHIN THE DISTRICT

There are properties within the Village Core, Mixed Use and Community Facilities overlay districts that have residential architectural styles, and are currently being used as stores, shops, residences, or offices. In order to preserve and enhance mixed use, the character of any new building or renovation shall be consistent with the surrounding area.

EXISTING CHARACTER

Many of the Downtown district historic commercial buildings were erected in the period from 1885 to 1910, and represent a variety of architectural styles. Although building material and detail differ, there are definite patterns that should be respected and incorporated into new development and

renovation. Common elements of design include façade height and structure, strong pedestrian orientation, and attention to ornamentation.



Similarity in Height, Mass and Scale

Most buildings are one or two stories high and range from about eighteen to thirty feet in height. The majority of the buildings in the Village on Branch Street between Traffic Way and Mason Street are also narrow as well, which emphasizes their vertical character.

The most common façade design is two stories high, although some buildings use a “false front” to achieve the impression of height. This façade treatment, when used on a relatively narrow building, stresses the strong vertical elements in the structure and creates an impressive image.

Buildings are also made to appear larger by creating a series of attached facades, linking several smaller structures to create the appearance of one large building. These techniques lead to a more impressive appearance without losing pedestrian scale or blocking views and light.



Similarity of Material

Brick and stone masonry construction is common, especially along Branch and Bridge Streets. Although some exteriors have been painted, such as the Olohan Building, the buildings retain many architectural details of “brick front” construction. This was one of the most popular storefront types of vernacular design, and incorporated commercial establishments on the ground floor with storage, offices or living quarters on the second level. An unusual vernacular style that uses locally quarried yellow stone is also found in the Village Downtown district. The unifying element is the stone itself, which calls for simplicity of construction and ornamentation, but the buildings using this material vary significantly in design. Another common material is wood siding, especially clapboard or weatherboard.

Sense of Experimentation

Although similar architectural styles are evident, and many elements are common, there is no one predominant architectural style, and elements are often combined in creative ways. The historic character, however, is maintained.

Pedestrian Orientation

Most commercial buildings have large display windows and a main entrance that faces the street, oriented to pedestrian traffic. There is no setback from the sidewalk, and buildings are generally designed and detailed to human scale, contributing to an atmosphere where pedestrians feel comfortable.

Variety in Building Form

There is sufficient variety in height, mass, scale and proportion to create visual interest in the Village Core Downtown Area. There is also a mixture of uses that includes retail

establishments, cafes, restaurants and offices, often within the same block.



DESIGN GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Mixed Use Projects Within the Village Core Downtown

Mixed use projects within the Village Core Downtown shall be predominantly commercial in character. Upper story residential and office uses designed to be compatible with ground floor retail uses are appropriate. Design of mixed use projects shall not impede pedestrian flow or disrupt concentration of retail, cultural and entertainment uses.

The following building elements shall **NEITHER** overpower the project or detract from the visual continuity of the streetscape or neighborhood **NOR** produce redundancy in feature or pattern that is discordant with the historic character of the district:

- Building scale
- Building form
- Building façade
- Building entrance
- Roofline
- Fencing, rails or trellis
- Archways, columns or towers
- Doors and windows
- Signage or feature designed for sign placement
- Colors

Site Design

1. All new projects or renovations shall adhere to the site development standards of the Development Code.
2. The existing front setbacks of zero to fifteen feet (0' to 15') shall be required with main entries facing the street. A majority of the building frontage shall face the street and incorporate design features oriented to the pedestrian.
3. Streetscape improvements shall complement the existing design sidewalk paving, lighting schemes and street furniture within the district.
4. All enclosures for service areas, trash or recycling containers shall be designed as part of the overall project or building. Materials, textures and colors should be consistent with those of the proposed project and compatible with adjacent buildings.
5. Landscaping shall retain existing trees and plants as much as possible. Street trees and sidewalk planters shall be incorporated where feasible and pedestrian circulation will not be obstructed. (Streetscape elements within the public right-of-way, require an Encroachment Permit from the Public Works Department.) Landscaping in parking areas shall conform to the requirements of Title 16 of the Municipal Code (Development Code).

Building Design

1. The height of new buildings shall not exceed development standards allowed in Title 16 of the Municipal Code. Scale and massing of any building within this area shall be consistent with that of the neighboring buildings, as described above in "Similarity in Height, Scale and Massing".

2. The existing pattern of building façades shall be incorporated into new development projects. Dominant façade designs incorporate either brick front elements or parapet features. Roof patterns generally associated with residential buildings such as gable, hip or gambrel are generally not appropriate for commercial building frontages in the Village Core Downtown District.
3. For retail commercial buildings, display windows should complement the design of surrounding historic buildings and shall be oriented to pedestrian traffic.
4. Transoms are common over display windows, and were used for light and ventilation. When possible, transoms should be incorporated into new building design, and existing transoms should be used in building renovations.
5. New construction should include elements such as cladding, roof structure and ornamentation common to the district. All new projects shall use materials – including roof materials – that fit within the character of the Village Core Downtown district. By using similar materials or replicating these materials on all projects and restorations, the existing character will be reinforced and extended.
6. Decorative fixtures, including awnings, signs, and lighting, shall be integrated with other design elements of the structures.

Construction Materials

1. Brick and stone masonry are the most common façade materials used on historic character structures in the Village Core Downtown district, and are acceptable façade materials. Some brickwork has been painted, and this is consistent with design style of the 1870-1939 period.

Other acceptable façade materials include yellow sandstone (such as that on the I.O.O.F. building), and wood cladding. Wood cladding shall be of painted clapboard, painted weatherboard, or board and batten styles.

Materials of similar design, color and texture may be considered. Smooth plywood panels are not appropriate unless detailed for the historic period.

2. Window sashes shall be of wood or painted steel, and consistent with the historic period. Materials that approximate the appearance of original materials may be substituted subject to the approval of the Architectural Review Committee, but unfinished aluminum is not allowed.
3. Door materials were traditionally wood panel and glass, either single or double. New or replacement doors shall be wood or an approved substitute material that approximates the appearance of original materials. Aluminum entry doors with large glass panels are inappropriate for the Village Core Downtown District.
4. Original decorative details should be retained during renovation. If the original materials have deteriorated and must be removed, they shall be replaced with materials that match as closely as possible the original in design, color, and texture.
5. Reflective glass is not appropriate in the Village Core Downtown District. Stained glass may be used as an accent material if it is consistent with the historic period of the building.

Building colors

1. The number of colors used on a building should be kept to a minimum.

2. While bright colors may be used for limited accent, their use is subject to review by the Architectural Review Committee (ARC).
3. Color samples shall be submitted as part of Plot Plan Review or Conditional Use Permit process.
4. The use of fluorescent, “neon” or “day-glo” colors on building facades is not appropriate, historic base colors should be used instead.
5. Accent colors used for ornamentation, awnings, dentils, friezes or other details shall harmonize with the predominant building color.
6. Color palettes shall complement the majority of the neighboring buildings and be consistent with the historic period.

DEFINITIONS

Guideline: Advisory instructions for a future course of action.

Historic Period: For the purposes of these Historic District Guidelines, the historic period of the Village is 1870-1939.

Preservation: The treatment of an existing building to stop or slow deterioration, stabilize the structure and provide structural safety without changing or adversely affecting its original character or appearance.

Rehabilitation, Renovation: The process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or change, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those parts and features of the property important to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.

Remodel: The change of original features of a building or structure.

Restoration: The careful return of a building to its original appearance or to a particular time period by removal of later work and replacement of missing earlier work.

Scale: The interrelation of the size of architectural spaces, masses, elements, construction units, with the size of the human figure.

Standard: Mandatory requirement of the Development Code or other City adopted regulation, plan or details (usually worded “shall” or “must”).

Sign (externally illuminated): A Sign that does not use an artificial light source behind its face to make the message readable.

ARCHITECTURAL TERMS

Bay: A rectangular area of a building defined by four adjacent columns; a part of a building that projects from a façade.

Cladding: A material used as the outside wall enclosure of a building.

Cornice: The exterior detail at the meeting of a wall and a roof overhang; a decorative molding at the intersection of a wall and a ceiling.

Dentil: Alternate square block and blank spaces on a cornice or portico that gives the appearance of teeth.

Eave: The horizontal edge at the low side of a sloping roof.

Façade: The exterior face of a building, often distinguished from other surfaces by elaboration of architectural features or ornamental details.

Kick plate: A wood panel or portion of wall below a large display-type window.

Parapet: The region of an exterior wall that projects above the level of the roof.

Sash: A frame for a pane of glass in a door or window.

Shingle: A small unit of water-resistant material nailed in overlapping fashion with many other units to make a wall or sloping roof watertight.

Transom: A window above a door or other window built on or hinged to a horizontal crossbar.

Vernacular: Of or being an indigenous building style using local materials and traditional methods of construction and ornament, especially as distinguished from academic or historical architectural styles.

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