

# **OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS**

## **An Addendum to the City of Monte Sereno Design Guidelines**

**Adopted by the Monte Sereno City Council  
January 18, 2022**

**Resolution No: 22-3841**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Objective Design Standards is to provide property owners and developers with a clear understanding of the City's design requirements for development. Objective design standards, as set forth in this addendum to the Design Guidelines, apply to building design for all proposed residential development subject solely to ministerial review, specifically projects submitted under Monte Sereno Municipal Code section 10.05.080 and Government Code section 65852.21; Monte Sereno Municipal Code chapter 13.06 and Section 66411.7 of the Government Code; projects subject to streamlined, ministerial review under Government Code section 65913.4, and accessory dwelling unit (ADU) projects submitted under Monte Sereno Municipal Code section 10.06.140, except those subject to mandatory approval under Government Code Section 65852.2(e). All proposed projects must also comply with all applicable development requirements in the Municipal Code, including but not limited to building permit requirements, zoning code requirements, grading permit requirements, and development standards such as height and setbacks.

## **A. Definitions**

**Articulation** - The fragmentation of a building's form and facade treatment with architectural features, such as changes in materials, patterns, and building mass projections, to prevent monotonous or blank facades.

**Corbel** - An architectural component that projects from a wall to support an architectural structure or feature above it.

**Mullion** - A vertical bar between the panes of glass in a window.

**Muntin** - A bar or rigid separating strip between adjacent panes of glass.

**Outdoor Open Area** - An area within a parcel designed and intended for the use of all residents of the development.

**Private Outdoor Open Area** - A ground-floor area or upper-floor balcony that is accessible to an individual dwelling unit.

**Retaining Wall** - Any fence or wall built or designed to retain soil or other materials.

**Vision Triangle** - An area of unobstructed vision at street intersections and driveway access points from streets.

## **B. Site Design**

### **1. Landscaping**

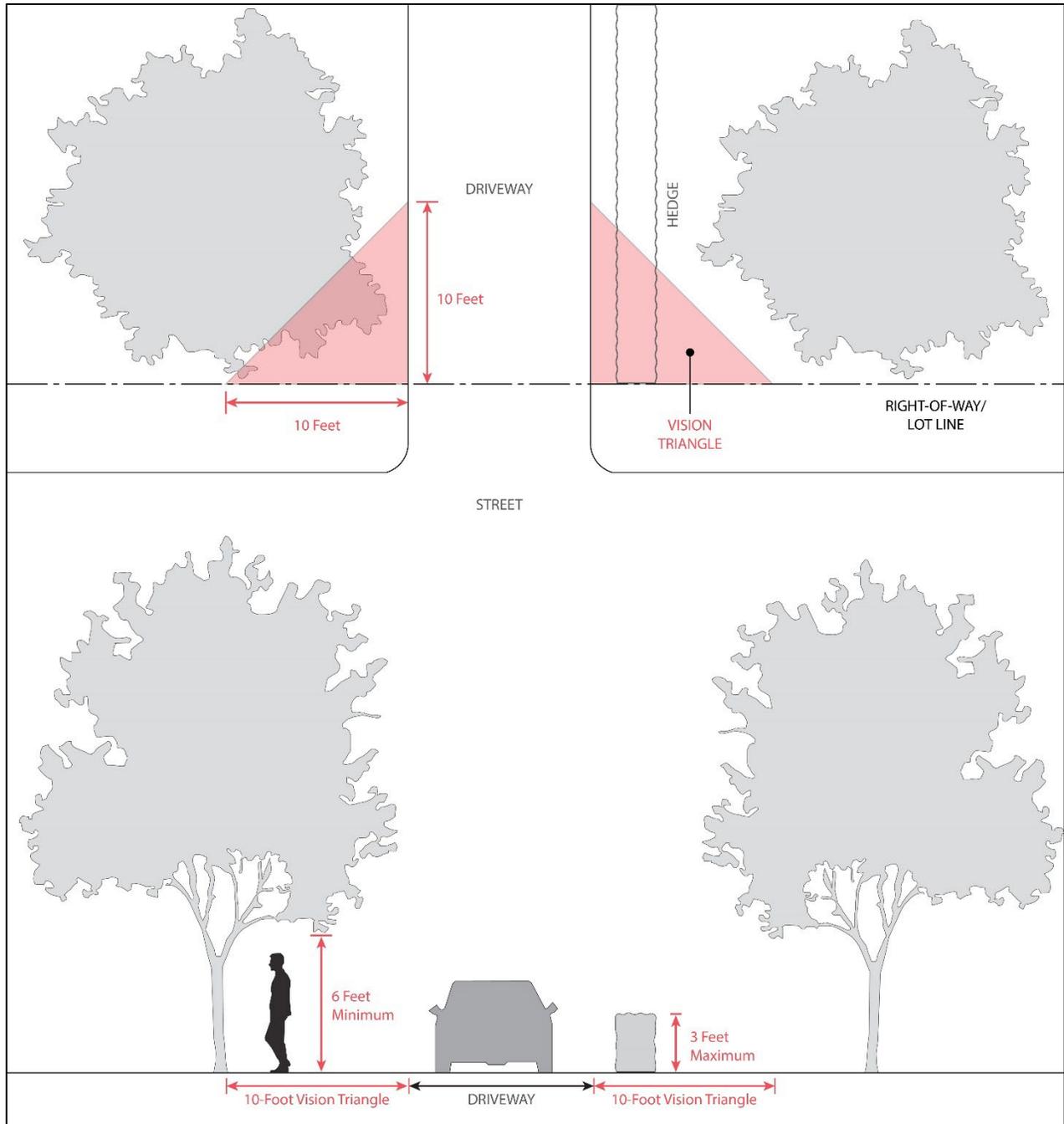
- 1.1. To facilitate privacy, projects shall have a minimum of 1 tree per 300 square feet in the side and rear setbacks that abut a residential use.
- 1.2. On parcels for which sports courts (Municipal Code 10.18), pools, decks, or balconies are constructed, trees, landscape screening, or trellises shall be located between the feature(s) and the adjoining parcel. Landscape screening shall be a minimum 24 inch box size when planted. A trellis or other constructed screening shall be a minimum of 6 feet in height.
- 1.3. Any multi-family residential development shall provide a minimum of 500 square feet of outdoor open area for each unit, including a minimum of 50 square feet of private outdoor open area that is accessible only to each individual unit.
- 1.4. A maximum of one ground floor private outdoor open area is allowed in the front yard.
- 1.5. Projects with more than 4 units shall provide outdoor open areas, including private area(s) accessible to each unit and shared areas that are accessible to multiple units within the development. A minimum of 10 percent of the developable area of the parcel shall be used as outdoor open area that is accessible to all residents of the project and not for the use of vehicle parking. All ground floor private areas shall be delineated by one or more of the solutions contained in B.1.3.
- 1.6. Landscape material shall be planted along the street-facing side of any fence over three feet high located in the front setback.

### **2. Fencing and Walls**

- 2.1. Fencing shall be made of non-reflective materials or painted surfaces.
- 2.2. Chain link, barbed, and razor wire fences are prohibited; chain link material is not prohibited when used specifically as enclosure fencing for sports courts.

### 3. Other Site Features

3.1. **Driveway visibility.** All driveways that intersect with a public right-of-way shall maintain a vision triangle delineated by sides of 10 feet along the right-of-way and 10 feet perpendicular to the right-of-way measured from the edges of the driveway. Within this vision triangle, structures, landscaping, and other obstructions shall have a maximum height of 3 feet. Trees are permitted within the vision triangle provided their canopy maintains a clearance of 6 feet above ground level.



- 3.2. **Driveway materials.** A minimum of 15 percent of the paved areas of driveways and walkways shall be made of brick, pavers, stone, decomposed granite, or turf block.
- 3.3. **Creek setback.** Any proposed construction, alteration or grading within 50 feet from the top of bank of any watercourse (as defined in Municipal Code 10.21.050) or creek shall comply with Santa Clara Valley Water District Design Guidelines.

## C. **Building Design**

### 1. **Height and Scale**

- 1.1. Structures on parcels with a slope, as slope is defined in Municipal Code 13.01.040, greater than 10 percent shall not cantilever more than 20 feet away from the natural slope.
- 1.2. Two-story building walls that face a public right-of-way or publicly accessible easement shall implement a minimum of 3 of the following components:
  - a. When the upper floor façade length exceeds 75 percent of the ground floor façade length, a minimum of 40 percent of the upper floor façade length shall be set back from the ground-floor facade by at least 6 feet.



- b. Changes in the wall plane with a minimum change in depth of 2 feet at intervals of no more than 30 feet.
- c. Provide a bay window that protrudes from the building façade a minimum of 2 feet on either the ground floor or upper floor.
- d. Provide a balcony on the upper floor; buildings with more than one unit on the upper floor shall provide one balcony per dwelling unit.
- e. Provide a ground-floor porch that extends a minimum of 8 feet from the façade for a width of 12 feet or greater.

## 2. Architectural Elements

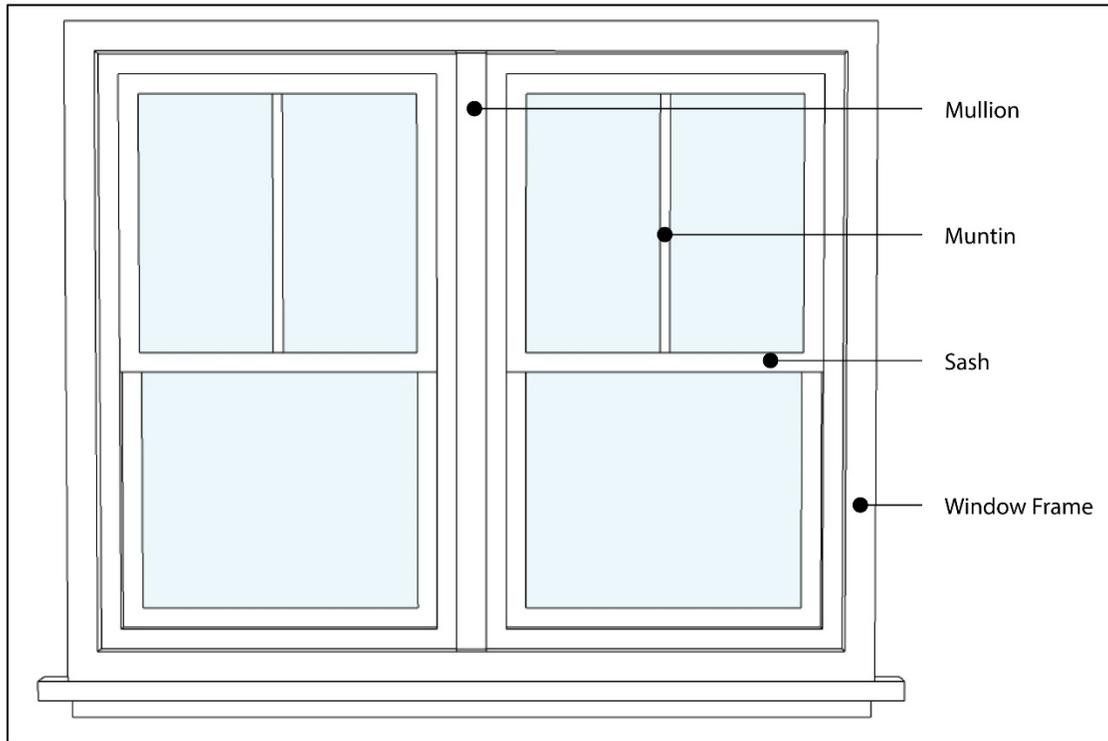
2.1. Street-facing facades of new buildings or additions greater than 1,200 square feet shall have no more than 25 feet in a horizontal direction without an articulation. Buildings shall utilize any combination of the following components to achieve a minimum of 15 points:

- a. Porch that extends a minimum of 8 feet from the façade for a width of 12 feet or greater – **8 points**
- b. A recess in the façade plane of at least 2 feet for a minimum of 5 feet and for the full height of the façade – **6 points**
- c. A column or pilaster that protrudes from the façade a minimum of 8 inches for the full height of the facade – **6 points**
- d. One-story front entry that is a maximum of 12 feet high, and is recessed at least 3 feet – **5 points**
- e. Hip roofs with overhangs that are at least 18 inches deep – **5 points**
- f. A bay window or similar pop-out from the building façade that protrudes a minimum of two feet from the building façade – **3 points**
- g. Juliet balcony that protrudes a minimum of two feet from the building façade – **3 points**
- h. Change in building material or façade color – **3 points**

2.2. A porch associated with the primary entrance and constructed outside the primary building mass shall be a minimum of 50 square feet and covered by a roof.

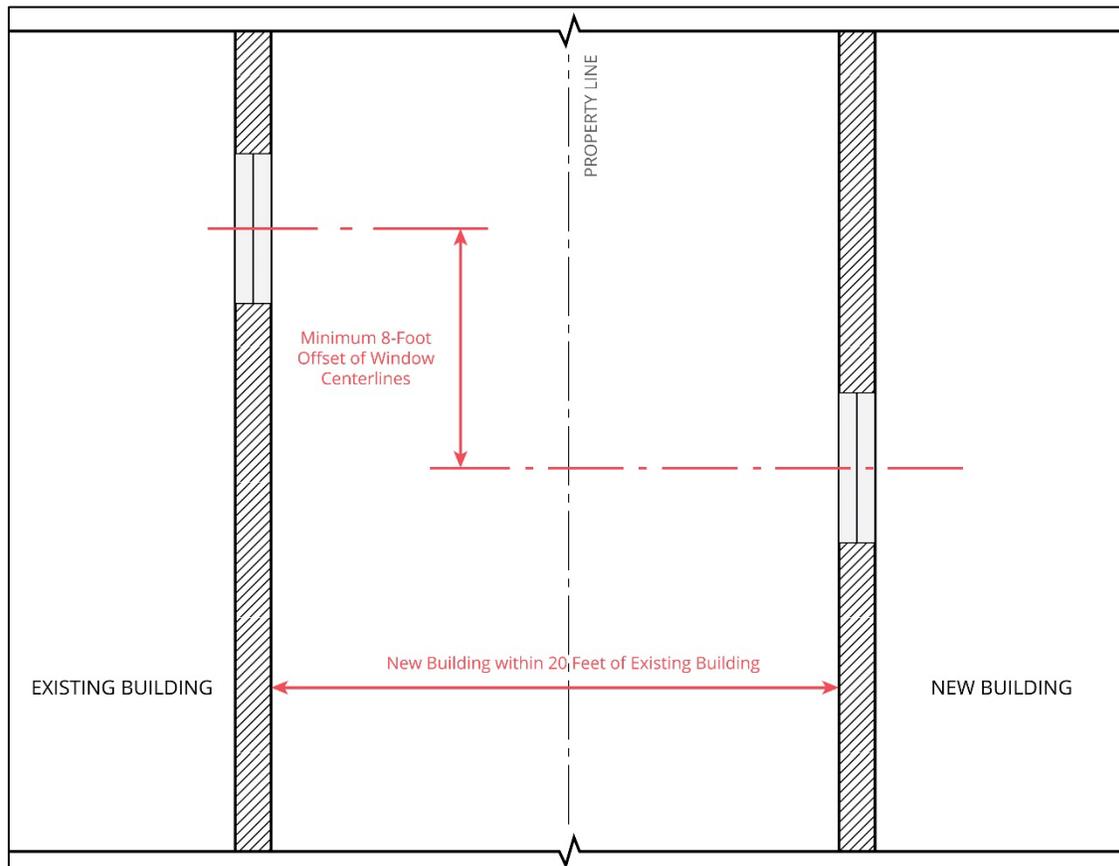
2.3. Stairways to upper-level primary entries shall be incorporated within the building envelope.

2.4. Vinyl window frames, mullions, and muntins are prohibited.



2.5. For building walls within 15 feet of the side or rear parcel line, upper-level windows that face onto or overlook an adjoining residential property shall maintain a bottom windowsill height of no less than 42 inches above finish floor.

2.6. For any new building within 20 feet of an existing residential building, the centerline of the proposed upper-floor windows, balconies, and decks shall be offset from the centerlines of the existing building's upper-floor windows, balconies, and decks by no less than 8 feet. Any window with a minimum sill height of 60 inches above the finished floor is exempt from this standard.



2.7. Balconies and decks located above the ground floor shall not encroach into the parcel setback.

2.8. Chimneys shall incorporate materials and colors that are utilized by the primary structure.

2.9. Rooftop mounted mechanical equipment shall be hidden from view from the public right-of-way by placing equipment in an enclosure or behind a pitched roof or parapet. Rooftop solar energy collection panels are not required to be hidden from public view.

2.10. Mechanical equipment located on the ground plane shall be hidden from view from the public right-of-way by placing equipment in an enclosure or behind opaque screening no less than the height of the equipment.

2.11. Accent elements a maximum of 12 feet in height shall be used to demarcate building entrances by using at least one of the following:

- a. Awning
- b. Canopy
- c. Overhang
- d. Trellises
- e. Arches
- f. Porch
- g. Columns
- h. Moldings

### **3. Materials**

3.1. The exterior of the building shall include at least two of the following materials. Any one material must comprise at least 20 percent of the total material on each building facade.

- a. Wood
- b. Wood Composite
- c. Stone
- d. Slate
- e. Cor-ten steel
- f. Zinc
- g. Stucco
- h. Wrought iron

3.2. Corbels, brackets, and any other architectural elements that protrude from a façade to support a roof or eave shall incorporate materials and colors that are utilized by the primary structure. Plastic or vinyl materials are prohibited.