

SB35 Multifamily Residential Design Standards

SB35 DESIGN STANDARDS – PURPOSE

The purpose of the SB35 Design Standards initiative is to prepare and adopt clear and objective multifamily residential design standards that respond to SB35 and are sourced from the City's Design Guidelines. New multifamily residential development is currently required to go through the City's discretionary Design Review process, which includes review for compliance with the City's Design Guidelines. The Design Guidelines are subjective in nature to demonstrate preferences while allowing discretion and flexibility, and as such, cannot be enforced through the SB35 streamlined ministerial process. The proposed SB35 Multifamily Residential Design Standards aim to incorporate the intent of the Santa Rosa Design Guidelines to the greatest extent possible, while complying with the intent of SB35 to facilitate and expedite the construction of housing in Santa Rosa.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS IN ZONING CODE:

All projects reviewed pursuant to SB35 are subject to currently adopted development standards in the Zoning Code, including but not limited to the following: [Development Standards](#), [Lighting Standards](#), and [Landscaping Standards](#).

While the Zoning Code has specific parking requirements for multifamily residential uses, only one parking space per residential unit is required under SB35. For projects that meet the requirements specified in [Government Code Section 65913.4\(d\)\(1\)](#), no residential parking is required. Mixed-use projects must provide parking for the commercial component of the development as required by the [Parking and Loading Standards](#) in the Zoning Code.

PROPOSED SB35 MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS:

The following are the proposed SB35 Multifamily Design Standards that would apply to projects within the City of Santa Rosa that are eligible for processing under SB35:

NEIGHBORHOOD COMPATIBILITY

1. Multifamily projects located across the street from single-family neighborhoods shall orient the buildings to the street with individual entries, patio areas and landscaping facing the single-family homes. Parking lot areas and carports shall not be located along these street frontages.
2. New construction within or abutting a Preservation District, shall be designed to be compatible in height with adjacent structures. Construction proposed within 50

feet of an existing single-family use shall be no taller than one-story above the highest point of the adjacent existing dwelling(s).

3. Duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes developed within single-family neighborhoods shall include individual front doors and interior stairs.
4. When necessary, sound walls shall include an earth berm and landscaping. Walls between buildings shall be extended to create pockets of protected common space avoiding long continuous walls for the entire length of a project site.

BUILDING DESIGN

1. Materials shall remain consistent on all sides of buildings.
2. Affordable units shall have the same level of details and materials as market rate units, in the same development.
3. Blank walls (facades without doors, windows, landscaping treatments) shall be less than 30 feet in length along sidewalks, pedestrian walks, or publicly accessible outdoor space areas.
4. Buildings over three stories must provide a ground floor elevation that is distinctive from the upper stories by providing a material change between the first floor and upper floors along at least 75% of the building façade with frontage upon a street, adjacent public park or public open space.
5. Window frames must be recessed a minimum of two inches from the surrounding wall plane.
6. Trim surrounds shall be provided at all exterior window and door openings.
7. At least two materials shall be used on any building frontage, in addition to glazing and railings. Any one material must comprise at least 20% of the building frontage.
8. A minimum of 5/8 inch is required for panel siding. Battens are required to be incorporated into the design for a board and pattern appearance.

MASSING/ARTICULATION

1. A minimum of two features such as balconies, cantilevers, dormers, bay windows, patios, individualized entries, and accent materials shall be incorporated into the project design.
2. A minimum three-foot offset is required for any wall plane that exceeds 30 feet in length.
3. Buildings over three stories tall shall have major massing breaks at least every 100 feet along any street frontage, adjacent public park, publicly accessible outdoor space, or designated open space, through the use of varying setbacks and/or building entries. Major breaks shall be a minimum of 30 inches deep and four feet wide and extend the full height of the building.
4. Buildings shall have minor massing breaks at least every 50 feet along the street frontage, through the use of varying setbacks, building entries and recesses, or structural bays. Minor breaks shall be a minimum of 18 inches deep and four feet wide and extend the full height of the building.
5. Rooflines shall be vertically articulated at least every 50 feet along the street frontage, through the use of architectural elements such as parapets, varying cornices, reveals, clerestory windows, and varying roof height and/or form.

OUTDOOR/Common SPACE

1. Each multifamily unit shall have a minimum of 40 square feet of semi-private open space directly adjacent to the unit.
2. Common useable open space is required for all multifamily projects with more than 10 units.
3. A minimum of 70% of the common open space shall be provide as a landscaped green area or garden, with the remaining area in hardscape.
4. Provide outdoor seating at the following locations: common open spaces, child play areas, teenage play areas, laundry rooms and along heavily used sidewalks.
5. Multifamily developments (except Senior restricted ones) exceeding twenty-two (or more) bedroom units shall have two open space areas, one for adults and one for a child play area.

6. Multifamily developments (except Senior restricted ones) exceeding 100 units shall have three open space areas, one for adults, one for teenagers, and one for younger children.
7. Play equipment for children under the age of five shall be included in child play areas. The play area must be visible to as many units as possible to provide casual surveillance and be separated from traffic. Benches or picnic tables for adults that are accompanying younger children shall be provided.

SITE DESIGN

1. Common facilities including laundry rooms, community rooms, and play areas shall be located to the interior or rear of project site.
2. Dwellings and windows of kitchen/living/dining rooms shall be oriented to overlook common open space and play areas.
3. Primary building entrances and associated paths of travel shall be visible from the adjacent street.
4. Garages and carports shall be designed to include a minimum of two of the following from the main building(s): materials, detailing, roof materials, and colors.
5. Garages and carports shall be located behind the main buildings on the major public street of the project site.
6. Controlled entrances to parking facilities (gates, doors, etc.) shall be located a minimum of 18 feet from the back of sidewalk, in order to accommodate one vehicle entering the facility.
7. Where bicycle parking is not visible from the street, directional signage shall be included at the main building entrance.
8. When a parking lot abuts a public street, provide a landscaped planter strip. This planter strip should be no less than 15 feet wide (from the back of sidewalk or street curb to the parking lot paving, whichever is greater.)
9. Screen parked cars from public street frontage. Screening may be of landscaping, a planted earth berm, planted fencing, or some combination of the above. The screening shall be to a height of not less than 4 feet above the adjacent sidewalk (or curb if there is no sidewalk) to obscure the greater portion of each parked vehicle.

ACCESSORY ELEMENTS

1. Perimeter fencing utilized along public street shall be constructed of decorative iron, pre-painted welded steel, or wood picket material.
2. Barbed wire or razor wire at the tops of fences is prohibited.
3. The height of solid fencing between private yards and common open spaces shall be limited to 4.5 feet in height. If a six-foot fence is desired, the top 18 inches should allow for vision in and out of the yard.
4. Screen roof top equipment from visibility. The point of view for determining visibility shall be 5 feet above grade at a distance of 200 feet. If the roof structure does not provide this screening, include an equipment screen in the design.
5. Screen all exterior trash, recycling, and storage utility boxes, wood service poles, electric and gas meters, fire sprinkler valves and backflow preventers and transformers.
6. Refuse Containers:
 - a. Four units or less may be served by individual garbage containers. When individual garbage cans are used, they must either fit in the garage or into a special enclosure.
 - c. When there are five units or more, provide dumpsters for garbage collection within a special enclosure.
 - d. When dumpsters are to be used, designers shall coordinate with the refuse pickup provider to determine the size and number of dumpsters required. A rule of thumb is to allow for between 30 and 90 gallons per unit per week, depending on size of the unit.
 - e. Shield all dumpsters within an enclosure a minimum of six feet tall. Allow adequate size to accommodate the needed dumpsters and recycling containers. All enclosures and gates should be detailed to withstand heavy use. Provide wheel stops or curbs to prevent dumpsters from banging into walls of enclosure.
 - f. Make allowances within the enclosure for stacking recycling crates (in small projects) and recycling dumpsters (in large projects)
 - h. Provide an opening so that pedestrians can access the dumpsters without opening the large gates.
 - i. Provide lighting at trash enclosures for night time security and use.

j. Locate dumpster enclosures so that no dwelling is closer than 20 feet (including those on abutting properties), or more than 100 feet from a residential unit.