

2 High Density Residential Development

Applicable Zoning Districts:

- Urban Medium Density Residential (MDR)
- Urban High Density Residential (HDR)

Both the I-94 Corridor and Old Village are expected to experience growth in the form of high density residential development. This growth will be comprised of single-family attached (townhome) development and multi-family residential development, including apartments and condominiums. For residential development, the intent of the design standards is to provide housing of a high aesthetic quality with open or recreational spaces integrated directly into the site.

A. Site Design

Building Placement

Goal: Structures should be located and oriented in a manner that allows for pedestrian accessibility and provides visual interest from the public right of way.

- Buildings are encouraged to be located as close to the public street as possible while still meeting the setback requirement. In addition, the setbacks of adjacent residential buildings are encouraged to be varied slightly to contribute to an interesting streetscape, avoiding monotonous facade or wall depth.
- Buildings should be easily accessed from the street, particularly near commercial or mixed-use development.
- The area fronting the main public street, or front-yard setback area, should be utilized for



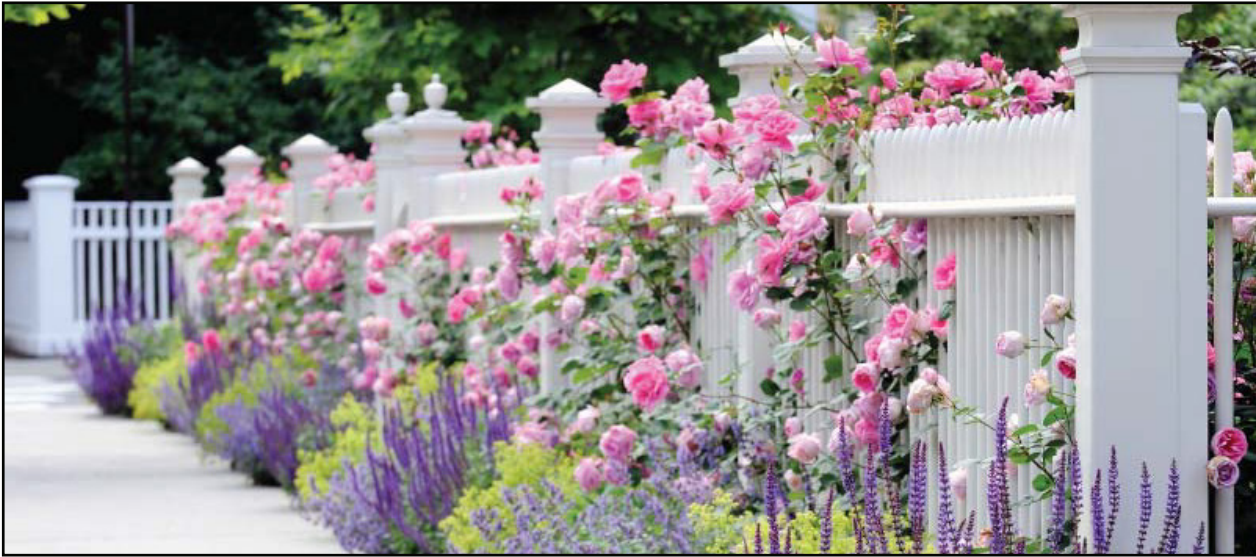
Common open or recreation spaces should be located to the interior or rear of the site.

- entryways, landscaping, porches, patios and other amenities that may be utilized by residents and provide visual interest or a sense of place.
- Recreational and common spaces should be located at the interior or rear of the site to promote access and safety for residents. Keeping these spaces out of the front of the site also helps maintain visual interest and attractive sight lines.
- Some provision of open or common space on the site is required to maintain Lake Elmo's open space character. This provision can be found in §154.454 of the Lake Elmo City Code.



Buildings are encouraged to be sited closer to public streets to promote access and visual interest.

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Decorative fencing provides a nice transition from the public right of way to the entryway.



At left: Pedestrian amenities contribute to an inviting and functional streetscape.

Streetscape

Goal: Residential streetscapes should provide for pedestrian accessibility and safety while offering aesthetically pleasing environments.

- a. Sidewalks shall be provided parallel to public streets in order to ensure pedestrian accessibility and circulation.
- b. Sidewalk materials should be attractive and low-maintenance, such as concrete or decorative pavers.
- c. Boulevard areas should be planted with turf grass and/or other attractive, low-maintenance ground cover. In addition, boulevard trees should be provided in regular intervals.
- d. Site furnishings such as benches, pedestrian-scaled lighting, decorative fencing, trash receptacles and other amenities are recommended. Applicants are encouraged to utilize design elements and site amenities from the Lake Elmo Branding & Theming Study.
- e. Paths and access points/entryways should be clearly visible and well lit at night.

Landscaping

Goal: To enhance the visual aesthetic of the built environment and reduce impervious surface, thereby aiding storm water management practice.

- a. Shade and ornamental trees and other plant material should be installed within the front setback area.
- b. Bare soils should be planted or mulched with bark, stone or other suitable material to avoid unnecessary runoff.
- c. Plant species are encouraged to be native, low-maintenance and suitable to the Lake Elmo climate.
- d. Making use of similar plant materials as adjacent properties and public spaces is encouraged to create continuity.
- e. Mature trees located on building sites should be retained whenever possible.
- f. Service, storage, utility and parking areas should be buffered by plantings to reduce visual impact.
- g. Parking areas should include landscaped islands or plant beds to reduce the visual impact, break up monotonous hardscape and retain storm water.



Lighting should be down-cast and shielded to prevent glare or spill-over onto adjacent properties.

Parking

Goal: To accommodate automobile parking in a manner that reduces visual impact, supports pedestrian circulation and maintains good sight lines along the public right of way.

- Parking areas should be located to the rear, side or within primary buildings whenever possible.
- Structured or underground parking is encouraged.
- The linear measurement of surface parking areas parallel to the public street may not exceed more than 50% of primary street frontages. Sites or projects that are unable to meet this requirement will be required to install berms and/or additional landscaping to buffer areas of surface parking adjacent to the primary street frontage.

- Access to parking areas should be designed in a way that does not impede pedestrian traffic.
- Parking should be screened from adjacent structures with landscaping strips not exceeding 4 feet in height in order to ensure pedestrian safety.
- Lighting must be provided in parking areas at night for safety purposes. However, direct glare, spillover or other forms of light pollution directed at adjacent properties are prohibited.
- Parking facilities must be ADA compliant when deemed necessary.

Delivery, Service, Storage and Utility Areas

Goal: To minimize the visual impact of storage and utility areas within residential developments.

- Exterior storage and utility areas should be located in low trafficked areas and screened from adjacent properties.
- Trash enclosures should be located so that noise and odor do not affect nearby residents or adjacent properties.
- Screening of storage and utility areas may include landscaping and architectural features that match the primary structure.
- Storage areas should match the architectural design of the primary structure.
- Utilize directional signage for storage and trash areas when appropriate.

B. Building Design

Form and Facade

Goal: Standards are intended to ensure high quality design, encourage creativity and promote visually appealing development, thereby cultivating a sense of place and identity.

- Blank facades without windows and doors are discouraged. All sides of the structures shall have architectural treatments.
- Window and door styles should reflect the prevailing architectural style of the structure.
- Window sills and trim are required for all exterior windows.
- Flat panel exterior and garage doors are discouraged.
- Garages should be recessed from the facade of the principal structure whenever possible to draw visual attention away from parking areas.
- If there are multiple garages within a structure, they should be varied in their location to minimize the visual impact of a row of garage doors.



Attached units on a public street benefit from individual entries.

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- g. Detached garages shall be architecturally consistent with the principal structure.
- h. Finished exterior materials shall be applied to all wall facades above 18 inches from the finished grade line, where unfinished exterior foundation may be visible.
- i. Ground level of multi-family structures should be distinguished architecturally from upper levels to provide human-scale elements for pedestrians.
- j. Living space below the main building level, such as a walkout structure, may not be visible from the front side of the structure facing the main public street.
- k. Split entry type structures are discouraged.
- l. Where individual units face a public street, each unit should be designed with a walkway from the sidewalk to the front entry feature.
- m. Entryways to individual units should contain an entryway feature, such as a porch or portico.

Building Materials

Goal: To offer a variety of attractive and quality building materials that will shape the identity and visual interest of residential development in Lake Elmo.

- a. All structure facades should utilize multiple building materials.
- b. Changes in facade building materials should occur at clean horizontal and vertical separations, such as at building levels or architectural features.
- c. Siding materials should emphasize horizontal lines to reduce the appearance of height and mass.
- d. Multiple facade colors are encouraged as long

as they are balanced and consistent.

- e. Primary building materials for residential structures should include brick, finished wood, stone, quality metals, glass, cast-stone, or pre-cast concrete panels with aggregate, banding, texturing, or other similar decorative finish.
- f. Exposed exterior building materials such as brick, stone, wood, or stucco should be authentic. Simulated materials may also be used if demonstrated to be of high quality and approved by the City.
- g. Materials which are prohibited as the primary facade material include the following:
 - Vinyl siding
 - Unpainted galvanized metal
 - Corrugated metal, plastic, or fiberglass
 - Plain, unpainted, or painted concrete block
 - Prefabricated concrete panels
- h. Roofing materials should consist of composition shingles, wood shakes, or clay or stone tiles. Metal used as a roofing material must incorporate ribs or standing seams to be acceptable.

Scale and Mass

Goal: To establish parameters for building horizontally and vertically with a human scale in mind.

- a. Building volume should be broken up with recesses and projections such as balconies, bay windows, dormers, porches, and other features that provide variation and identity.
- b. Mass should be reduced through facade articulation, breaking up the wall area into smaller

sections.

- c. Architectural elements, such as dormers, decorative windows and trim, porch details, decorative shutters, and wainscoting, can reduce the appearance of bulk and mass by providing visual interest.
- d. Building mass should be broken up with multiple roof and ridgelines perpendicular with one another.
- e. Structures of two-stories or higher should have articulated facades to minimize the appearance of mass, as well as multiple roof lines with corresponding gables.
- f. Scale should be reduced by utilizing “step-down” methods towards the public street. Porches, entries, window-bays or bump-out are effective in this regard.



Building Mass is reduced by breaking the building up into smaller sections and “stepping-back” levels above the ground floor. Source: www.minnpost.com

Roof Design

Goal: To break up monotonous roof lines, add architectural detail and screen rooftop equipment.

- a. All rooftop equipment and must be screened using materials consistent with the overall architecture, particularly on roofs that are visible from adjacent buildings.
- b. Multiple peaks and ridgelines are encouraged to promote greater visual interest.
- c. Dormers are encouraged to break up continuous rooftop.
- d. Providing architectural detail on soffits and fascias are encouraged.

Entries

Goal: To encourage entryways of high architectural quality that emphasize access, safety, and a human scale.

- a. Primary building entries shall be visible and connected to the street sidewalk by the most direct route practical. However, some curvature in design for aesthetic purposes is allowed.
- b. Each building should have one or more clearly identifiable “front doors” that address the street and include signage denoting property address.
- c. Building entries should incorporate design elements or architectural treatments, such as awnings, columns or cornices to emphasize the primary entryway.
- d. Primary communal entryways are encouraged to be recessed to offer shelter from inclement weather. Units with individual exterior entries

are encouraged to include porches, covered recesses or covered stoops.

- e. Ground floor residences that adjoin a public street or open space shall have direct access to the public street or open space.
- f. For units with individual exterior entries, small, landscaped private entry yards afford an attractive appearance on the street side and allow residents to take pride in these areas.

Lighting

Goal: To provide for safety and visual interest, while respecting the City’s dark sky ordinance.

- a. Lighting should be provided in all common areas, including parking, vehicular and pedestrian entries, walkways and common facilities (mailboxes, pools, etc.).
- b. Lighting height shall be consistent with the City’s exterior lighting standards.
- c. Service area lighting shall be confined within the service yard boundaries and enclosure walls.
- d. Spill-over light from storage or service areas is not allowed. Lights at service or exit doors shall be limited to low wattage, downcast or low cut-off fixtures that remain on throughout the night.
- e. Accent lighting should be used to draw interest to architectural features or entryways and not to exhibit or advertise buildings. Architectural lighting must be downcast and shielded to prevent light pollution.
- f. Bare bulb or exposed neon lighting is not allowed for accentuating building form.

Signage

Goal: Residential signage should be subtle in nature and utilized to promote building identity and to properly direct automobile and pedestrian traffic.

- a. Signs shall be consistent with the architectural style of the building on which they are placed, including scale, lighting levels, color and material.
- b. Signs shall be constructed of quality materials.
- c. All signage should be illuminated and clearly visible after dark.
- d. Signs are encouraged to be creative in the use of two and three-dimensional forms, lighting and graphic design, and use of color, patterns, typography, and materials.
- e. Interior vehicle and pedestrian routes should be clearly marked.
- f. All buildings are encouraged to incorporate elements of community theming in appropriate signage, supporting district and city identity.