

**St. Paul City-wide Design Standards**  
**Neighborhood Planning Committee recommended amendments, 10/7/09**

**Sec. 61.401. Site plan review generally.**

A site plan shall be submitted to and approved by the zoning administrator before All applications for building permits are issued for all new buildings or building expansions. Building permit applications for new buildings or building expansions shall be accompanied by a site plan; and building elevations drawn to scale and specifications, showing the following:

- (3) The existing and intended use of the zoning lot and of all such structures upon it, including, ~~in~~ for residential uses areas, the number of dwelling units the building is intended to accommodate.

**Sec. 61.402. Site plan review by the planning commission (all districts).**

**Sec. 63.110. General Building design standards.**

~~The following design standards shall be used in site plan review, as applicable, unless the applicant can demonstrate that there are circumstances unique to the property that make compliance impractical or unreasonable. For property with local historic site or district designation, compliance with applicable historic guidelines shall be sufficient to meet the requirements of this section.~~

- (a) ~~New development shall relate to the design of adjacent traditional buildings, where these are present, in scale and character. This can be achieved by maintaining similar setbacks, facade divisions, roof lines, rhythm and proportions of openings, building materials and colors. Historic architectural styles need not be replicated.~~
- (ab) A primary building entrances on all new buildings of principal structures shall face the primary abutting public street or walkway, or be linked to that street by a clearly defined and visible walkway or courtyard. Additional secondary entrances may be oriented to a secondary street or parking area. Entries shall be clearly visible and identifiable from the street, and be located within the front third of the structure; be delineated with elements such as roof overhangs, recessed entries, landscaping, or similar design features; and have a direct pedestrian connection to the street. In addition, for one- and two-family dwellings, a primary entrance shall either: 1) face an improved abutting street; or 2) be located off of a front porch, foyer, courtyard, or similar architectural feature, and set back at least eight (8) feet from the side lot line.
- (b) For principal buildings, except industrial, production, processing, storage, public service and utility buildings, above grade window and door openings shall comprise at least fifteen (15) percent of the total area of exterior walls facing a public street or sidewalk. In addition, for new principal residential buildings, above grade window and door openings shall comprise at least ten (10) percent of the total area of all exterior walls. Windows in garage doors shall count as openings; the area of garage doors themselves shall not count as openings. For residential buildings, windows shall be clear or translucent. For nonresidential buildings, windows may be clear, translucent, or opaque.
- (c) ~~In pedestrian-oriented commercial districts (generally characterized by storefront commercial buildings built up to the public sidewalk), the following standards for new~~

~~construction principal structures shall apply: (1) Buildings shall be as close to the sidewalk as practical have a maximum setback of fifteen (15) feet from a commercial front lot line. (2) At intersections, buildings shall "hold the corner," that is, have street facades at or near the sidewalks of within fifteen (15) feet of the lot line along both streets, or the site plan shall have vertical structural elements that "hold the corner." A primary entrance shall face a primary abutting public street.~~

~~(3) Buildings shall have a direct pedestrian connection to the street.~~

~~(4) No blank walls shall be permitted to face the public street, sidewalks, or other public spaces such as plazas.~~

~~(5) Buildings shall have window and door openings facing the street; windows facing parking lots are also encouraged.~~

~~(d) Residential uses at street level shall generally be set back far enough from the street to provide a private yard area between the sidewalk and the front door. Landscaping, steps, porches, grade changes, and low ornamental fences or walls may be used to provide increased privacy and livability for first floor units.~~

~~(d) Building materials and architectural treatments used on sides of buildings facing an abutting public street should be similar to those used on principal facades.~~

~~(e) All The visibility of rooftop mechanical equipment shall be reduced through such means as location, screening, or integration into the roof design from view from adjacent streets, public rights-of-way and adjacent properties. Rooftop equipment shall be screened by the building parapet, or shall be located out of view from the ground. If this is infeasible, the equipment shall be grouped within a single enclosure. This structure shall be set back a distance of one and one-half (1½) times its height from any primary facade fronting a public street. Screenings shall be of durable, permanent materials (not including wood) that are compatible with the primary building materials. Exterior mechanical equipment such as ductwork shall not be located on primary building facades.~~

~~(f) For property with local historic site or district designation, compliance with applicable historic guidelines shall be sufficient to meet the requirements of this section.~~

~~(f) Attached garages shall be set back at least five (5) feet behind the principal front facade of the building unless topographic conditions or lot configuration make this impractical. Detached garages shall be located consistent with the prevailing pattern on the block or within the neighborhood, unless physical conditions make this impractical.~~

~~(g) If transit facilities are needed to serve existing or proposed development, provisions shall be made, where practical, for location of a bus stop or sheltered transit waiting area in a convenient and visible location.~~

~~(h) The number of curb cuts shall be minimized, and shared curb cuts for adjacent parking areas are encouraged.~~

### **Sec. 63.310. Entrances and exits.**

Adequate entrances and exits to and from the parking facility shall be provided by means of clearly defined and limited drives. The number of curb cuts shall be minimized, and shared curb cuts for adjacent parking areas are encouraged. When driveways no longer lead to legal off-street parking, the driveway and curb cut shall be removed and landscaping and curbing shall be restored.

### **Sec. 63.316. Paving.**

All parking spaces, driveways and off-street parking facilities shall be paved with standard or pervious asphalt or concrete, or with brick, concrete or stone pavers, other durable, dustless surfacing or of material comparable to the adjacent street surfacing, in accordance with other specifications of the zoning administrator. ~~The parking area shall be paved within one (1) year of the date of the permit except as provided in section 61.402(e).~~ For one-family and two-family dwellings, driveway pavement may be limited to wheel tracks at least two (2) feet wide.

For one-family through four-family dwellings, and for townhouses with garage doors that face and front on a public street, driveways in front yards shall be no more than twelve (12) feet in width, except that a driveway may be up to four (4) feet wider than the garage door within 30 feet of the garage door. The total amount of paving for surface parking spaces for one-family and two-family dwellings shall not exceed fifteen (15) percent of the lot area or one thousand (1000) square feet, whichever is less.

### **Sec. 63.501. Accessory buildings and uses.**

(b) Accessory buildings, structures or uses shall not be erected in or established in a required yard except a rear yard. The following additional standards shall apply to residential parking:

(1) Access to off-street parking shall be from an abutting improved alley when available, except where it is determined in the review of a site plan application that there are circumstances unique to the property that make this impractical, unreasonable, or harmful to the public safety. On corner lots, access to parking may be from the side street.

(2) Off-street parking spaces shall not be located within the front yard.

(3) Garages shall be set back from the front lot line at least as far as the principal structure (in the case of attached garages, this refers to the non-garage part of the structure).

(4) Except in the rear yard, garage doors that face a public street shall be no more than nine (9) feet in height and shall not exceed sixty (60) percent of the width of the principal structure facing the same street.

(5) Passenger vehicles may be parked on an approved driveway in front or side yards provided they are located on an approved driveway that leads to a legal parking space.

(c) On corner lots, accessory buildings, structures or uses shall be set back from the street a distance equal to that required of the principal structure.

When an accessory building, structure or use is constructed in a rear yard which adjoins a side yard or front yard, the accessory building, structure or use shall be set back from the interior lot line a distance equal to the minimum side yard required of the principal structure.

On all other lots, accessory buildings shall be set back at least three (3) feet from all interior lot lines, and overhangs shall be set back at least one-third (1/3) the distance of the setback of the garage wall or one (1) foot, whichever is greater.

(d) This setback requirement from all interior lot lines for accessory buildings in rear yards shall be waived when a maintenance easement is recorded as to the affected properties,

when proof of such recorded easement is provided at the time of application for a building permit and when the accessory building is located at least three (3) feet from any building on an adjoining lot. The recording of the maintenance easement shall be interpreted to mean that the following intents and purposes of this setback requirement are met:

- (1) Adequate supply of sunlight and air to adjacent property;
- (2) Sufficient space for maintenance of the building from the same lot; and
- (3) Prevention of damage to adjoining property by fire or runoff from roofs.

A recorded common wall agreement is permitted in lieu of a maintenance easement if the accessory structure is attached to an accessory structure on an adjoining lot.

§63.501, renumber paragraphs (c) through (g) as paragraphs (e) through (i).

**Sec. 60.103. Intent and purpose.**

This code is adopted by the City of Saint Paul for the following purposes:

- (a) To promote . . .
- ~~(p)~~ To protect water resources, improve water quality, and promote water conservation;
- ~~(q)~~ To provide for the adaptive reuse of nonconforming buildings and structures and for the elimination of nonconforming uses of land;
- ~~(r)~~ To define the powers and duties of the administrative officers and bodies;
- ~~(s)~~ To provide penalties for violations of the provisions of this code or any subsequent amendment thereto; and,
- ~~(t)~~ To provide for a board of zoning appeals and its powers and duties.

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**[proposed language without strikeouts and underlines]**

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**Sec. 61.402. Site plan review by the planning commission.**

**Sec. 63.110. Building design standards.**

- (a) A primary entrance of principal structures shall be located within the front third of the structure; be delineated with elements such as roof overhangs, recessed entries, landscaping, or similar design features; and have a direct pedestrian connection to the street. In addition, for one- and two-family dwellings, a primary entrance shall either: 1) face an improved abutting street; or 2) be located off of a front porch, foyer, courtyard, or similar architectural feature, and set back at least eight (8) feet from the side lot line.
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- (c) In pedestrian-oriented commercial districts characterized by storefront commercial buildings built up to the public sidewalk, new principal structures shall have a maximum setback of fifteen (15) feet from a commercial front lot line. At intersections, buildings shall “hold the corner,” that is, have street facades within fifteen (15) feet of the lot line along both streets, or the site plan shall have vertical structural elements that “hold the corner.” A primary entrance shall face a primary abutting public street.
- (d) Building materials and architectural treatments used on sides of buildings facing an abutting public street should be similar to those used on principal facades.
- (e) The visibility of rooftop mechanical equipment shall be reduced through such means as location, screening, or integration into the roof design. Screening shall be of durable, permanent materials that are compatible with the primary building materials. Exterior mechanical equipment such as ductwork shall not be located on primary building facades.
- (f) For property with local historic site or district designation, compliance with applicable historic guidelines shall be sufficient to meet the requirements of this section.

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  - (2) Off-street parking spaces shall not be located within the front yard.
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