

EXHIBIT “A”

ARTICLE 4 DESIGN AND FORM STANDARDS

§ 153.4.1. OPEN SPACE STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS.

- (1) Purpose. This section provides site design standards for key elements that are part of most development sites: open space; screening, lighting; streetscape; site access and internal circulation; and stormwater management. The standards are intended to contribute to the ability of development sites to integrate into the city’s overall plan. The standards and guidelines in this article shall be applied in every zoning district and to every site design to the extent that the component is required by any development regulation or is otherwise proposed as part of the site plan or development. These design standards should be applied in addition to any specific area or design standards contained in other sections of a particular zoning district.
- (2) Application. The requirements of this article are applicable in zone R-4, R-5, R-6, O-1, O-2, C-1, C-2, and MXD. In zoning districts where specific setbacks are specified, any applicable frontage type within that range shall be used. The requirements of Sec. 153.4.5 are also applicable to zones R-1, R-2, and R-3.

Editor’s note—Pursuant to Ord. 2019-03, the reference to 153.4.5 within this subsection refers to provisions now repealed or amended by subsequent ordinances.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.1.1. INTENT.

The open space design standards are intended to provide design solutions that ensure each area of open space in the city serves a specific function and is not merely “left over” or under-utilized space. The design standards are also intended to provide greater access to a wider variety of open spaces. These design standards are to be applied to any area used to meet specific area requirements of the zoning districts and subdivision regulations for open space or green space. They are design and form-oriented; as such, they support Article 7, Buffering, Landscaping, and Tree Preservation of this code.

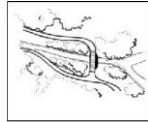
(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.1.2. TYPES OF OPEN SPACE.

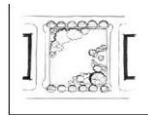
The following indicates the categories, types, and general sizes of open space that can be used to meet the city requirements for open space and green space. Generally, there are two kinds - natural and civic. Natural open space, because the city is already built out, is most appropriate along streams in Balcones Heights. It can also be used at any location where significant natural features warrant preservation. Civic open space is most appropriate in more easily accessed locations. Typically this will be at the center of a residential neighborhood or in a commercial center.

1. Editor’s Note—Former Sections 153.4.5 And 153.4.6 Pertaining To Signage Standards/Regulations And Sign Standards, Were Repealed And Deleted In Their Entirety By Ord. 2017-04, Passed 4-24-17. Prior To The Deletion These Sections Derived From The Following: Ord. 2011-06, Passed 4-11-11; Ord. 2011-22, Passed 11-14-11; Amendment Passed 4-9-12; Ord. 2013-04, Passed

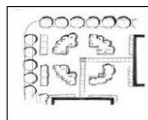
- (1) Trail/greenway (natural open space). An undeveloped area of continuous linear natural features, often following a stream or floodplain. A trail or greenway should be usable for recreation and non-motorized transportation. It includes few constructed improvements except for those to enhance travel or recreational use. A trail should be sized and located based on providing significant continuity throughout the City, connecting to individual developments and to the broader region. All trails shall be accessible for pedestrians and bicycles and shall utilize AASHTO design standards.



- (2) Public green (civic open space). An open space for unstructured recreation or aesthetic landscaping. A “green” is bordered by a public right-of-way, often fronting building facades, and containing formal landscaped elements to define its boundaries. Generally, there are few constructed elements, except for a formal entry to or a focal point for the green, such as a fountain or pavilion. Greens may be relatively small, such as a “village green” in a development project.

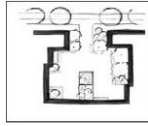


- (3) Plaza (civic open space). An open space for civic purposes and commercial activities. A plaza may be bordered by public rights-of-way or may be centered within a development project. A plaza’s edges are defined by building facades and streets. It is largely constructed of materials that withstand heavy pedestrian traffic, but may contain intermittent lawns, landscape beds, or trees in a formal pattern. The size of plazas is ideally influenced by the height of surrounding buildings, maintaining between a 1:3 and 1:6 ratio of building height to plaza. Plazas generally range between 1/8 to two acres.

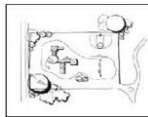


- (4) Courtyard (civic open space). A small open space accessible to the public but generally serving one or a few surrounding buildings. Courtyards are primarily bordered by building facades but may have one side fully or partially boarded by a public right-of-way. Courtyards are often constructed of materials to withstand heavy pedestrian traffic but contain intermittent formal landscape elements. The size of courtyards is ideally influenced by the height of surrounding buildings, maintaining a between a 2:1 and 1:3 ratio of building height to courtyard width. Courtyards generally range between 1,000

square feet to 1/8 acre.



- (5) Playground (civic open space). Open space designed and equipped for structured recreation. Playgrounds are often boarded by a fence or other private boundary (as in the case of a playground internal to a block) but are accessible by common pedestrian path or sidewalk. Alternatively, playgrounds are included as part of a larger civic or natural open space and do not necessarily have borders. Playgrounds may occupy as little as 500 square feet up to an acre or more.



(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.1.3. SCREENING, LIGHTING AND LANDSCAPE MATERIAL.

- (1) Intent. The screening, lighting, and landscape material sections are intended to create a quality community image, minimize the impact of development on adjacent sites, allow property owners to create comfortable and appropriate private environments, and integrate all development into the overall community plan.
- (2) Screening.
- (a) When required by this article, all mechanical or operating equipment, materials, or activities not contained within a building, such as drive-through equipment, outdoor storage of materials, stationary machinery, cargo/shipping containers, and outdoor servicing activities located in a street yard, shall be enclosed or screened by a wall or fence of solid appearance in sufficient height for this purpose. Such walls or fences may be enhanced with the planting of shrubs.
 - (b) When required by this article or other ordinances screening of a specified operations (e.g., operating equipment) shall be a wall or fence of solid appearance or tight hedge, with greenery year around, not less than six feet in height at maturity.
- (3) Lighting.
- (a) Parking lots with 50 or fewer spaces and open areas requiring lighting for general purposes shall have light poles that do not exceed 20 feet overall height. Parking lots having more than 50 spaces shall have light poles that do not exceed 40 feet overall height. Luminaries of a sharp cut-off design are required to shield light sources above 90 degrees from vertical and providing 1.0 average maintained footcandles with the

following uniformity ratios:

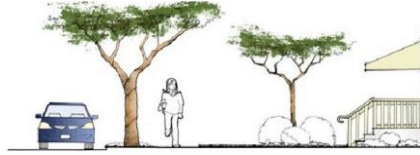
- (i) 3:1 average/minimum * (.33 FC minimum).
- (ii) 12:1 maximum/minimum * (4.0 FC maximum) are required in all cases.

* Maximum or minimum footcandle level at any point lighted area.

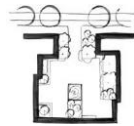
- (b) Any light used to illuminate a parking area shall be so arranged as not to be directed into any or spill over the property line of an adjacent residential use(s), residential district(s), or road(s).
 - (c) Facilities for community, social uses-outdoor, such as lighted ballfields are excluded.
 - (d) A photometric grid shall be furnished by developer at time of building permit application.
- (4) Landscape materials. All undeveloped yards and open spaces required by this appendix, and all-natural screening material, shall be planted according to the specifications in Article 7, Buffering, Landscaping, and Tree Preservation.
- (5) Fencing. Fences are permitted in all zoning districts. A building permit shall be obtained prior to construction of any fence. Fences shall be subject to the standards established in Article 7, Buffering, Landscaping, and Tree Preservation.
- (Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11; Am. Ord. 2017-05, passed 4-24-17)

§ 153.4.1.4. STREETSCAPE.

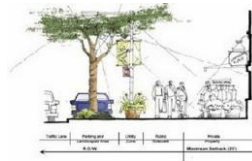
- (1) Intent. Streetscape refers to the area between building facades on opposite sides of the street. It consists of public rights-of-way and private but publicly visible outdoor spaces. The streetscape site design standards are intended to create a smooth transition from the public realm to the private realm, provide a pleasant pedestrian experience, improve the appearance and function of the public rights-of-way, and reinforce and enhance the perception of the City as a unique and livable community.
- (2) Frontage types. The following indicates frontage types that make up the private portion of the streetscape.
 - (a) Yard. Setbacks vary according to zoning district. A yard frontage is located within the building set back depth as measured from the right-of-way line. The yard area is most appropriately used for landscape materials, natural vegetation, or focal points such as art or sculptures. The yard frontage is most appropriate in mixed-use or residential neighborhoods, for residential uses along arterial streets, where a buffer is desired, and for civic land uses in any setting. Civic/public uses with a yard frontage shall have no maximum depth for the front building line.



- (b) Stoop. A stoop frontage is within the building setback close to the right-of-way line, but with the first floor slightly elevated (typically three to five feet) to ensure privacy to occupants of the building. Typically, the closer the building line is to the right-of-way, the higher the elevation of the first floor. The setback area is most appropriately used with an ornamental stair and entranceway to the buildings, potentially with a small usable space or porch at the top. The remaining portion of the setback area can include a small area of landscape material. The stoop frontage is most appropriate for townhomes, higher-density residential blocks, or residential buildings mixed on blocks with non-residential buildings.
- (c) Courtyard. Buildings on front yards shall conform to each zoning district's front yard setback. A frontage with a portion of the building close to the right-of-way line, while the remaining portion is setback from the right-of-way line, providing a pocket of open area in the courtyard. The courtyard area is most appropriately used for landscape material or constructed patios for pedestrian traffic. The courtyard frontage is most appropriate on higher-density residential blocks or for businesses that can utilize formal outdoor space. A portion of a courtyard building, typically more than 50% of the front facade, should be built at or near the right-of-way line.



- (d) Street-front. Street frontage is limited to the set back from the right-of-way line. The ground level of the building predominantly has transparent glass and is appropriate for uses serving the public, thus providing varied and interesting environments to pedestrians. Any setback area is typically designed seamlessly with the right-of-way, with expanded sidewalks, with landscape beds, with street-front seating, or with a covered walkway (awning or canopy). The street-front is most appropriate for non-residential uses in pedestrian-oriented areas.



(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.1.5. SITE ACCESS AND INTERNAL CIRCULATION.

- (1) Intent. Site access and internal circulation standards are intended to balance the need for site-access by vehicles with pedestrian movements. Design elements are intended to create a smooth transition from the public rights-of-way to the private property, and to improve the appearance and function of the public rights-of-way for all users, including pedestrians, bicycles, and automobiles.
- (2) Curb cuts. Curb cuts for property not being subdivided shall be allowed according to the same Lot Access standards established in the Balcones Heights' Subdivision Regulations. When the development process requires access standards different from those standards, either from Sec. 153.4.2 of this article, requirements specified in a traffic study or by variance, the varying standards shall be applied.
- (3) Internal driveways, aisles, and driveway lanes. All driveways shall be set back a minimum distance of three feet from the side lot line, except where shared access driveways are permitted. To the extent practical, all internal driveway aisles should be designed and dimensioned as closely as possible to the public street standards specified in city ordinances, including sidewalks, planting strips, and parking lanes.
- (4) Clear sight lines. Clear sight lines shall be maintained for all lot access points and internal circulation intersections in accordance with the standards for public street intersections specified in the city ordinances.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.1.6. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT.

- (1) Intent. The intent of this section is to provide for stormwater management in site design. The primary management strategy should be infiltration of all runoff created by development through natural systems and constructed natural systems, to the extent practical. Should infiltration not address stormwater management for the site adequately, retention and/or detention of run-off will be required. This section also seeks to incorporate any stormwater management system into the design of the site as a natural or aesthetic amenity.
- (2) General requirements. All site plans shall be designed with surface drainage provisions in accordance with state law, the Balcones Heights subdivision regulations, construction, building, or grading permits, and any other city ordinance regarding the effects of stormwater.
- (3) Design standards. Stormwater detention ponds/areas shall be screened from direct view from all abutting properties by installation and maintenance of living plants at least 36 inches in height at time of planting, and achieve a height of not less than six feet in three years after planting. Outer slopes of detention ponds shall not be steeper than four feet horizontal to one foot vertical. Where water depth and time of detention is sufficient to require safety fencing, such fencing shall be installed behind required screening, on the pond side.
- (4) Alternative designs.

(a) Waiver conditions. Standards of this appendix and any standard of this appendix that relates to the City of Balcones Heights' subdivision regulations may be waived to accommodate an alternative stormwater design system provided that:

- (i) The alternative stormwater design provides for an infiltration system that incorporates at least 80% of the runoff from impervious surfaces into the groundwater on the site and results in an overall reduction in impacts on streams in the watershed.
- (ii) The alternative stormwater design addresses stormwater on an area-wide or watershed basis, making stormwater management on individual lots or within the site unnecessary.
- (iii) Natural elements on the site are incorporated into a natural storm drainage infrastructure, minimizing or eliminating the need for detention ponds and other constructed storm drainage. Constructed elements of the natural drainage system shall be limited to artificial wetlands, bio-filters, and dry swales. To the extent that it does not damage the function of the natural drainage system, natural elements should serve additional community purposes such as trails or greenways, parks or aesthetic screens.
- (iv) Any waiver of standard to accommodate the alternative stormwater design proposes an equal or better alternative for meeting the intent of the waived standard.
- (v) The alternative stormwater design is accompanied by a plan, produced by a registered engineer, testifying to its accuracy and sustainability.
- (vi) The alternative stormwater design plans include provisions for long-term maintenance and operation of the alternative design, including easements, covenants, restrictions and an acceptable legal entity to oversee long-term maintenance; and
- (vii) The alternative stormwater design plan shall accompany a site plan for the entire development.

(b) Waiver approval procedures. The plan and any waivers to the standards of this appendix shall be approved according to the procedures and standards for the site plan.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.1.7. [RESERVED]²

§ 153.4.2. MIXED-USE DISTRICT (MXD) DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS.

Intent. The mixed-use district (MXD) development guidelines are intended to create a

2. Editor's note—Former section 153.4.1.7 pertaining to exterior colors and deriving from Ord. 2018-15, passed 10-22-18, was repealed and deleted in its entirety by Ord. 2024-08, passed 6-24-2024.

character that exhibits a distinctive pedestrian-oriented development, with pedestrian-oriented uses, such as retail or similar uses on the ground floor, and supportive uses, such as office or residential uses on upper floors.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.2.1. APPLICABILITY.

The requirements under this section shall apply to all developments located within the MXD zoning district, subject to this article.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.2.2. BUILDING PLACEMENT IN MXD DISTRICTS.

- (1) New buildings. Within the MXD District, new buildings and the renovation of buildings under section 153.4.3 of this article shall be constructed to a specified setback (or "build-to" line) from all public streets or sidewalks as defined in this appendix. Slight variations in the setback may be allowed at building or business entrances.
 - (a) Required setbacks.
 - (i) Intersection areas within MXD District. Subject to fire access requirements prescribed by other city ordinances, buildings located on property within the MXD district and within 400 linear feet of the center of a signalized intersection within the city limits, shall be constructed to a maximum 20 feet, and minimum five feet setback (or "build-to" line) from the front property line. There shall be no maximum setback from side property lines, but a minimum rear property setback of five feet shall be required.
 - (ii) Non-intersection areas within MXD District. Buildings located on property not located within an intersection area above shall have a maximum setback of 20 feet ("build-to" line) from the front property line. There shall be a maximum setback of 15 feet from side property lines, but a minimum rear property setback of five feet shall be required.
 - (b) Enclosing walls at courtyards. In the case of outdoor public spaces, cafes or courtyards in front of, or on the side of buildings, the "build-to" requirement may be met by including an appropriate wall or fence at the lot line.
 - (i) Subject to the requirements of section 153.4.1.5 regarding clear site lines, the wall or fence shall be continuous, except for the pedestrian entrance, which shall not be less than five feet in width. In no case shall the pedestrian entrance exceed more than 20% of the linear footage of the front lot line.
 - (ii) The wall or fence may be transparent, such as metal ornamental fencing, a masonry wall, or a combination of a masonry wall topped with metal fencing.
 - (iii) The wall or fence shall not be over four feet high.
 - (iv) A wall or fence used to meet the "build-to" requirement shall include architectural features in the design that reflect the architectural theme of the

building.

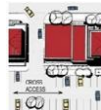
(v) Wood, concrete masonry units and chain-link fences are not permitted.

(vi) An optional landscape element may be incorporated into the design of the wall or fence for aesthetic purposes.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11; Ord. 2026-08, passed 2-23-2026)

§ 153.4.2.3. PARKING AND SERVICES IN MXD DISTRICTS.

- (1) Parking behind building. Off-street parking areas subject to this section shall be behind the building if technically feasible.
- (2) Rear services. Services and deliveries shall utilize secondary or rear entrances to the building whenever possible.
- (3) Cross access. To the extent commercially reasonable and in the case of common ownership, rear parking areas shall have shared cross-access lanes or alleys between adjacent properties.



(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.2.4. SITE ACCESS IN MXD DISTRICTS.

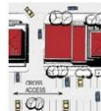
- (1) Pedestrian sidewalks. Public pedestrian sidewalks on or adjacent to property subject to this section shall have a minimum width of seven feet. At all times a minimum of seven feet of unobstructed pedestrian access shall be maintained for all pedestrian walks in MXD Districts. Americans with Disabilities Act standards shall be met at all times.
- (2) Additional setback. An eight-foot wide zone shall be provided from the inside edge of the public sidewalk (and/or property line) as the setback or “build-to” line in intersection areas, under Sec. 153.4.2.2(1)(A). This zone may be used at the property owner’s discretion, subject to city ordinances, for seasonal or promotional activities and amenities, such as outdoor seating and eating areas, sidewalk sales, bicycle racks, or landscape enhancements. At the property owner’s discretion this zone may also have well-maintained permanent landscape treatment, subject to the requirements of this article and other applicable city ordinances.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.2.5. STREETSCAPE AND LANDSCAPE IN MXD DISTRICTS.

In addition to landscape requirements in Article 7, Buffering, Landscaping, and Tree Preservation, this section provides guidelines for private streetscape and landscape design in mixed-use areas.

- (1) Consistency. Private landscaping elements shall be consistent with public streetscape plants and materials required for MXD Districts.
- (2) Portable planters. Seasonal amenities such as portable planters, street trees or other landscaping are permitted and encouraged as long as pedestrian movement is not hindered.
- (3) Perimeter parking landscape. Any off-street parking area that directly abuts a pedestrian walkway shall incorporate landscape features along the perimeter of the parking lot. A minimum five-foot landscape area shall be maintained between the public right-of-way and the off-street parking area. Landscaping shall include combinations of ground cover, seasonal color, trees, and ornamental fencing.
- (4) Parking lots along sidewalks. Parking lots, when adjacent to pedestrian walk and sidewalks in the MXD district shall preserve the presence of the required setback or “build to” line by means of a wall, fencing and/or landscape element, subject to the requirements of Sec. 153.4.1.5 regarding clear site lines.
 - (a) Subject to other code requirements, the wall, fence and/or landscape element shall be continuous, except for the pedestrian and vehicle entrance. The pedestrian and vehicle entrance shall not exceed more than 20% of the linear footage of the wall or fence line, except that a minimum five-foot pedestrian entrance and 12-foot vehicle entrance is required.
 - (b) The wall or fencing shall be transparent, such as wrought iron ornamental fencing with masonry pylons terminating the fencing at each end or corner of the parking area or a combination of masonry wall topped with wrought iron fencing. Landscape elements shall be of a sufficient density that prevents access by pedestrians.
 - (c) The wall or fencing shall include architectural features in the design that reflect the architectural theme of the adjacent building.
 - (d) The wall or fence shall not be over four feet high.
 - (e) Wood and chain link fences are not permitted.
 - (f) All off-street parking areas shall be required to provide internal landscaped islands according to the requirements of Article 7, Buffering, Landscaping, and Tree Preservation and city ordinances.



(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.2.6. SCREENING IN MXD DISTRICTS.

- (1) Provide screening. For buildings and property subject to this section, waste receptacles,

dumpsters, cargo/shipping containers, and ground level mechanical equipment shall be screened from public view by walls, with an operable door or gate permitted for access.



- (2) Architectural compatibility. Whether on-site or incorporated into the building, the required screening treatment is a solid wall enclosure compatible with the materials, colors and architectural style of the building. No wood fencing shall be allowed.
- (3) Landscaping. Additional landscape screening around the enclosure is permitted when feasible. The required landscape buffer shall be irrigated and maintained to help plantings survive.



- (4) Rear location. Screened areas shall be located to the rear or secondary side of the building in order to minimize visual impacts.
(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.2.7. BUILDINGS IN MXD DISTRICTS.

Intention.

- (1) Building scale. The relative size or mass of a building in relation to adjacent buildings is one of the primary ways to achieve continuity of design along the mixed-use corridors in Balcones Heights. Buildings of different scale should transition smoothly along a block whenever possible.



- (2) Building uses in MXD District. In order to promote street level pedestrian activity in mixed-use areas:
 - (a) Ground floor areas along the street corridors shall be used only for retail, restaurants or offices and establishments that promote pedestrian traffic. Buildings that are 100% residential (e.g., multi-family) shall have visible lobby oriented to the street, subject to the requirements of this section;
 - (b) Upper floors of buildings may be used for (i) offices or residences; or (ii) as an upper level of retail or restaurants or offices that are related directly to ground floor use.



- (3) Building materials. A variety of building materials are appropriate for new development along the mixed-use corridors. The design of a new building shall have dominant material on its facades, with secondary materials providing architectural accents.
- (a) A single, dominant building wall material shall cover greater than 70% of all exterior building faces, exclusive of glazing.
 - (b) Secondary materials may be used only to accent the architectural character of the building.
 - (c) Wood, vinyl siding, unfinished concrete block are not permitted as the primary material on any exterior building face.
- (4) Architectural detailing. Architectural detailing may be used to embellish a single dominant building material:
- (a) Architectural detailing in the form of soldier or sailor courses, corbels, other decorative applications or materials, such as terra cotta, wood, or metal may be used to contribute scale and texture to a building facade.



Corbel

- (b) A tower or a pediment at a building's cornice line may also be used to enhance the character or massing of a facade, providing its design contributes to a consistent architectural style for the building.



Pediment

- (5) Roofs. Building roof provide protection from weather, but also can enhance or detract from the design image of the building and its surrounding area:
- (a) Flat, arched, sloped or slightly sloped roofs (for drainage) may be used for primary building roofs along the mixed-use corridors.



- (b) Parapets may be incorporated on any facade to provide screening for mechanical equipment or for aesthetic reasons.



- (c) A variety of roof forms may be used in secondary conditions, such as a roof over an outdoor eating area or a building entrance canopy.
- (6) Awnings/canopies. Canopies or awnings are prominent elements in an active street environment. They provide sun control, protect the store window, add color, and, in some instances, may be used for signage:
- (a) Awnings fixed or retractable, of opaque fabric, or solid metal material shall be on a securely mounted metal frame.
 - (b) Awnings shall be mounted above the pedestrian walk with their lowest point ranging from seven feet and six inches minimum to nine feet and zero inches maximum. Exceptions may be made for awnings above sloped sites or sidewalks.
 - (c) Awnings shall be the same color, pattern, and have the same mounting characteristics for a single business. Awnings on a single building shall have a consistent horizontal alignment across the front of the entire building, unless the slope of the pedestrian walk or ground requires a horizontal stagger.
 - (d) Permanent canopies or marquees may be used at the primary building entry, particularly at places of assembly or restaurants. To be approved, the design of canopies or marquees shall be consistent with the design theme of the building and the block.
 - (e) Awnings shall receive routine and proper maintenance so that they remain free of rips, holes, stains or fading at all times.



- (7) Enhanced entrances. A front entrance shall be emphasized as a special and unique place on the building's front facade in order to draw pedestrian traffic into the buildings.



- (a) Entrances may be recessed, slightly projected or enhanced through color, materials, or special paving treatment.
 - (b) Rear or secondary public entrances may be provided from rear parking areas and public access alleys.
 - (c) Reserved.
 - (d) Glazing, at or near the door, may be incorporated at rear entrances.
- (8) The Building Front. Building front fenestration, the arrangement of doors and windows, helps communicate the nature of a building's use and character. All buildings subject to this Section shall comply with the following requirements:
- (a) All buildings or businesses shall have a primary public entrance that faces a public street.
 - (b) The ground level of a storefront shall be "transparent" with a 50% clear glass minimum.
 - (c) Storefront displays shall be uncluttered and artistic. Storefront displays shall incorporate decorative accent lighting for nighttime use.
 - (d) Upper floors shall not have greater than 40% windows glazing.
 - (e) Glass on upper floors shall be transparent, not mirrored or colored, except for solar protective tinting.
 - (f) Building lighting should be incorporated on all building facades facing a public street, alley or on-site parking to enhance the building's architectural detailing and/or to light the pedestrian walk, alley or parking area.
 - (g) Building lighting shall be compatible with the building's architectural theme.
 - (h) Standard "wall pack" lighting systems, non-white color lighting and lighting systems that emit glare are prohibited.
- (9) Specialty equipment and functions. Specialty equipment that is necessary to support the uses in the building may be designed and used inside the building as an integral part of the building (e.g., baking oven or printing press or safe). Keeping specialty equipment out of the public view can minimize the negative visual impact caused by the accumulation of a large number of equipment facilities that are necessary to support the activities areas the MXD district. Property or buildings shall comply with the following requirements:
- (a) Equipment such as satellite dishes, antennas and other specialty equipment shall not be mounted on any building facade.
 - (b) Any roof-mounted specialty or mechanical equipment shall be screened from public view. The screening treatment shall be integrated with the overall building design with the use of complementary materials, colors and architectural style of the building.



- (c) Drive-thru windows shall not occur on a primary building facade or building front. Drive-thru windows shall be located to the rear or side of the building.
 - (d) Window air-conditioning units shall not be allowed on any facade.
 - (e) Pipes, conduits, and cables are limited to the back facade of buildings if conditions do not allow for them to be enclosed within the building itself. They shall be located as far away from public view as practical.
 - (f) Notwithstanding requirements of building or fire code requirements to the contrary, exterior stairs (if any) shall be located to a rear or secondary side of a building to minimize the visibility of the stairs.
- (10) Reserved.
- (11) Only one message shall be used on a primary sign, either the name of the business or building. Address, phone numbers, products or other information shall not be included on a primary sign.
- (12) Corporate logos or registered trademarks may be used in a primary sign in addition to the business or building name. The logo or trademark shall be included in the maximum sign area.



Logo Incorporated

- (a) Innovative or artistic signs. Signs can make a positive contribution to the surrounding environment, as well as help identify and define a district, area or neighborhood. Imaginative and innovative sign designs are considered community enhancement.
- (b) Creative, detailed, artistic and unique signage is permitted and will be considered in the context of the building on which the sign will be located, surrounding uses, sign design (color, materials, scale, detailing), and appropriateness in meeting and reinforcing the goals and purposes of the MXD district.



Creative Sign

- (i) Materials and mounting.

- a. All signs shall be securely mounted.
- b. The following sign materials are required:
 - 1. Wood (carved, sandblasted, etched, and properly sealed, primed and painted or stained).
 - 2. Metal (formed, etched, cast, engraved and properly primed and painted or factory coated to protect against corrosion).
 - 3. High density pre-formed foam or similar material if properly designed in a manner consistent with these guidelines and painted or otherwise finished.
 - 4. Custom neon tubing in the form of logos or lettering.
- c. The following sign types are also allowed:
 - 1. Individual cut-out letters or graphics mounted directly on a wall or contrasting surface and projecting no more than 1 foot from the wall or contrasting surface.
 - 2. Letters or graphics mounted, carved, or painted on a contrasting surface that forms the outline of the sign.
 - 3. Non-illuminated letters or graphics painted or mounted directly on an interior window surface. Interior window signs should not exceed the lesser of 10 square feet or 30% of the area of the window in which it is mounted.
 - 4. Architecturally integrated sign boards.
 - 5. Box and cabinet signs shall not be used.
- d. No signs, except flags and pedestrian signs shall be suspended by chains or other devices that would allow the sign to swing due to wind action. Signs shall be anchored to prevent any lateral movement that would cause wear on the sign face or supporting members or connections.
- e. All electrical transformer boxes and raceways shall be concealed from public view. If a raceway cannot be mounted internally - behind the finished exterior wall - the exposed metal surfaces of the raceway shall be finished to match the background wall or integrated into the overall design of the sign.
- f. All exposed conduits shall be concealed from public view.
- g. Surrounding environment. Signs shall be designed and located so that they have little or no impact on adjacent residential neighborhoods.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11; Am. Ord. 2017-04, passed 4-24-17)

§ 153.4.3. COMMERCIAL RENOVATION STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS.

The intent of these renovation standards and regulations is to provide property owners and the City of Balconies Heights with a policy to implement a consistent and higher quality design character in commercial zones and for multi-family properties.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.3.1. DEFINITION: SUBSTANTIAL CONSTRUCTION OR RENOVATION.

(1) These regulations shall be applicable only in instances of substantial construction or renovation of an existing building or site. Substantial construction or renovation exists in any building or site when either one of the following occurs:

- (a) Fifty percent floor area. At least 50% of the building's floor plan by area is subjected to renovation or alteration; or
- (b) Fifty percent assessed value. When the cost of renovation or construction exceeds 50% of the assessed valuation of the structure prior to the construction or renovation. "Cosmetic" improvements, such as painting, acquisition of new furniture, changing light fixtures, maintenance for normal "wear and tear," or similar minor alterations do not typically constitute substantial construction.

(2) If a determination has been made that a state of substantial construction or renovation exists, then the property owner will be subject to the design regulations for both the building's facade and its property or site.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.3.2. PLACEMENT OF NEW OR ADDITIONAL BUILDINGS ON A PROPERTY.

Intent. This regulation establishes a building placement pattern that shall be used regardless of the size, scale, or location of new development within a site. For all new buildings or building additions, the following shall apply:

- (1) New buildings or additions. New buildings or building additions shall be constructed to a specified setback (or "build-to" line) from all public streets or sidewalks as defined in Article 3 by Table 3.4.1. With city approval, slight variations in the setback may be allowed at building or business entrances.
- (2) [Reserved]
- (3) Courtyards. In the case of outdoor public spaces, cafes or courtyards in front of or on the side of buildings, the "build to" requirement may be met by including an appropriate wall or fence at the lot line.
 - (a) The wall or fence shall be continuous, except for the pedestrian entrance, which shall not be less than five feet in width. In no case shall the pedestrian entrance exceed more than 20% of the linear footage of the front lot line.
 - (b) The wall or fence may be transparent, such as metal ornamental fencing, a masonry

wall or a combination of a masonry wall topped with metal fencing.

- (c) The wall or fence shall not be over four feet high.
- (d) A wall or fence used to meet the “build to” requirement shall include architectural features in the design that reflect the architectural theme of the building.
 - (i) Wood and chain link fences are prohibited.
 - (ii) An optional landscape element may be incorporated into the design of the wall or fence for aesthetic purposes.
- (e) If the need to provide parking or unique site considerations makes it difficult or impossible to meet these building placement guidelines, then the city shall work with the property owner to achieve the “spirit” or “intent” of the guidelines to the extent possible.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.3.3. SITE.

It is the intent of these regulations to support design continuity among sites for all properties in Balcones Heights subject to this article.

- (1) Parking. For sites in which no new buildings are constructed, and buildings have a front yard setback, the following guidelines shall apply:
 - (a) Existing parking in front of or on the sides of buildings that is required to comply with the zoning ordinance is allowed to remain. It is the intent of these guidelines to create a single parking area among adjacent sites in a block interior or behind buildings whenever possible.
 - (b) Cross-access easements and shared parking between parking lots on adjacent properties are desirable. This reduces automobile movement and minimizes curb cuts at the street. The city shall require the creation of cross-access easements when practical, allowing access to adjacent property owners, present or future, as a condition of development approvals.
 - (c) Pedestrian connections are required between parking lots on adjacent properties, when feasible.
 - (d) Parking requirements shall be as established by Article 6, Vehicle Parking and Loading Requirements.
- (2) Protection of adjacent residential uses. Adjacent residential uses and districts shall be protected from intrusion from commercial uses:
 - (a) All parking, loading, delivery or service facilities behind buildings shall be separated from any residential use on adjacent property by a minimum 15-foot landscaped buffer. The landscaped buffer shall provide a year-round visibility screen from the site for the adjacent residential uses and minimize light and sound impacts from the site;

- (b) If permitted by the zoning district, no loudspeaker in such area shall be located within 100 feet of a property line of a residential use and shall be directed away and imperceptible from the residential property.
 - (c) All light sources in such areas shall be directed away from residential use by shields, so that no direct light source is viewable from the property line of the residential use.
- (3) Site access. Sites in Balcones Heights shall be accessible by a variety of methods:
- (a) Curb cuts onto a site's front yard shall be minimized. Access to sites by a single mid-block entrance with cross access easements or by alleys behind buildings is required wherever feasible.
 - (b) No more than one curb cut per site shall be allowed onto an arterial-type street, unless the front property dimension exceeds 300 feet in length. The city may allow a temporary curb cut for access to an arterial until site access can be achieved through a cross-access easement. When such access is obtained, the temporary curb cut shall be removed.
 - (c) Curb cuts on an arterial-type street may not be located closer than 150 feet, centerline to centerline, unless unique physical site constraints or lot dimensions require a shorter distance and are approved by the city.
 - (d) No curb cut on an arterial-type street shall be allowed within 150 feet of a street intersection, unless unique physical site constraints or lot dimensions require a shorter distance and are approved by the city.
 - (e) If another governmental entity has an established standard for curb cuts in the city that differs from Balcones Heights' standard, then the greater of the two dimensions will govern.
 - (f) A continuous pedestrian walk shall be required along all public streets:
 - (i) The pedestrian walk may only be interrupted by vehicle access lanes. Accessible curb cuts and designated crosswalks shall be provided at each such location. Pedestrian walk interruptions at such crosswalks shall be limited to no greater than 22 feet wide for each public street frontage.
 - (ii) Pedestrian walks shall be a minimum of seven feet in width. Properties on streets covered by the streetscape standards in the public realm chapter shall conform to those standards. Americans with Disabilities Act standards shall be met at all times.
 - (g) In addition to the pedestrian sidewalk along public streets, a "storefront" pedestrian walk shall be provided according to the following regulations:
 - (i) It shall be at least seven feet in width.
 - (ii) It shall be continuous across the entire frontage.

(iii) It shall connect to pedestrian walks along the street via a pedestrian sidewalk;

(4) Landscaping. See Article 7.

(Ord. 2011-06, passed 4-11-11; Am. Ord. 2011-22, passed 11-14-11)

§ 153.4.4. EXTERIOR CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN STANDARDS.

A. Intent. It is the intent of these design criteria to provide guidelines for new construction in order to provide an aesthetically pleasing appearance as well as ensure sound construction quality.

B. Applicability. The provisions of this section are deemed to be minimum standards and shall be applicable to the following:

1. All new buildings within the corporate limits of the City for the building types listed; and
2. Building expansions for the building types listed which cumulatively increase the gross floor area more than 25% of the original building area.

C. Industrial Buildings.

1. Applicability. This section shall apply to buildings with industrial use.

2. Exterior Building Materials. Buildings must comply with one of the following:

a) At least 80% of each wall (excluding windows and doors) shall be finished in one or more of the following materials:

- * Brick
- * Stone
- * Faux brick or stone
- * Concrete tilt wall
- * Split face CMU
- * Stucco
- * Tile; or

b) 100% of the front facade (facade adjacent to or facing a public street) and a total of 75% of the entire building (excluding windows and doors) shall be finished in one or more of the following materials:

- * Brick
- * Stone
- * Faux brick or stone
- * Concrete tilt wall
- * Split face CMU

- * Stucco
- * Tile

3. Glazing. All buildings must comply with one of the following:

- a) At least 15% of the front facade (facade adjacent to or facing a public street) shall be comprised of windows or glass doors. For buildings that are adjacent to or face two or more public streets at least 15% of each facade adjacent to or facing a public street shall be comprised of windows or glass doors. For buildings that are not adjacent to or face a public street, but instead face or front a private drive, the facade that faces or fronts on the private drive that provides for primary access shall be considered as the front facade; or
- b) Windows and doors may be spread around the building, the minimum amount of required windows or glass doors is calculated as 30% of the front facade (facade adjacent to or facing a public street). For buildings that are adjacent to or facing two or more public streets the minimum amount of required windows or glass doors is calculated as 20% of the total area of the facades adjacent to or facing public streets.

4. Articulation and architectural features.

- a) Horizontal articulations or offsets are required on any wall greater in length than 100 linear feet, which is adjacent to or facing a public street.
 - (1) The depth of the articulation or offset shall be a minimum of two feet (2'). Articulations or offsets can be of varying depth as long as the minimum two feet (2') is met.
 - (2) The length of the new plane created by the articulation or offset shall be a minimum of 20% of the total length of the entire wall.
- b) Vertical articulations or elevation changes are required on all walls and should be designed to screen rooftop equipment.
 - (1) The height of the articulation or elevation change shall be a minimum of two feet (2'). Articulations or elevation changes can be of varying depth as long as the minimum two feet (2') is met.
 - (2) The length of the new plane created by the articulation or elevation change shall be a minimum of 20% of the total length of the entire wall.

5. Roof Treatments. Facade articulations shall provide for vertical and horizontal screening of air-conditioning units and all mechanical equipment located on rooftops. The minimum height of the screening shall be equal to the height of the tallest rooftop equipment.

D. Commercial Buildings.

1. Applicability. This section shall apply to buildings with commercial use.

2. Exterior Building Materials. Buildings must comply with the following:
 - a) At least 80% of each wall (excluding windows and doors) shall be finished in one or more of the following primary materials:
 - * Brick
 - * Stone
 - * Faux brick or stone
 - * Tile
 - * Stucco
 - * Concrete tilt wall
 - * Split face CMU.
 - b) Stucco may be used in conjunction with one of the other approved primary materials. Stucco cannot be used for more than 50% of each facade.
 - c) Concrete tilt wall and split face CMU may be used in conjunction with one of the other approved primary materials. Concrete tilt wall and split face CMU cannot be used for more than 30% of each facade.
3. Glazing. All buildings must comply with one of the following:
 - a) At least 30% of the front facade (facade adjacent to or facing a public street) shall be comprised of windows or glass doors. For buildings that are adjacent to or face two or more public streets at least 30% of each facade adjacent to or facing a public street shall be comprised of windows or glass doors. For buildings that are not adjacent to or face a public street, but instead face or front a private drive, the facade that faces or fronts on the private drive that provides for primary access shall be considered as the front facade; or
 - b) Windows and doors may be spread around the building, the minimum amount of required windows or glass doors is calculated as 60% of the front facade (facade adjacent to or facing a public street). For buildings that are adjacent to or facing two or more public streets the minimum amount of required windows or glass doors is calculated as 50% of the total area of the facades adjacent to or facing public streets.
4. Articulation and architectural features.
 - a) Horizontal articulations or offsets are required on any wall greater in length than 30 linear feet, which is adjacent to or facing a public street, or adjacent to or facing a side lot line of the property.
 - (1) The depth of the articulation or offset shall be a minimum of two feet (2'). Articulations or offsets can be of varying depth as long as the minimum two feet (2') is met.

- (2) The length of the new plane created by the articulation or offset shall be a minimum of 20% of the total length of the entire wall.
- b) Vertical articulations or elevation changes are required on all walls and should be designed to screen rooftop equipment.
 - (1) The height of the articulation or elevation change shall be a minimum of two feet (2'). Articulations or elevation changes can be of varying depth as long as the minimum two feet (2') is met.
 - (2) The length of the new plane created by the articulation or elevation change shall be a minimum of 20% of the total length of the entire wall.
- 5. Roof Treatments. Facade articulations shall provide for vertical and horizontal screening of air-conditioning units and all mechanical equipment located on rooftops. The minimum height of the screening shall be equal to the height of the tallest rooftop equipment.

E. Office/Public Buildings.

- 1. Applicability. This section shall apply to buildings with a professional office or public use.
- 2. Exterior Building Materials. Buildings must comply with the following:
 - a) At least 75% of each wall (excluding windows and doors) shall be finished in one or more of the following materials:
 - * Brick
 - * Stone
 - * Faux brick or stone
 - * Tile
 - * Stucco
 - * Concrete tilt wall
 - * Split face CMU
 - b) Concrete tilt wall and split face CMU may be used in conjunction with one of the other approved primary materials. Concrete tilt wall and split face CMU cannot be used for more than 30% of each facade.
- 3. Glazing. All buildings must comply with one of the following:
 - a) At least 25% of the front facade (facade adjacent to or facing a public street) shall be comprised of windows or glass doors. For buildings that are adjacent to or face two or more public streets at least 20% of each facade adjacent to or facing a public street shall be comprised of windows or glass doors. For buildings that are not adjacent to or face a public street, but instead face or front a private drive, the facade that faces or fronts on the private drive that provides

for primary access shall be considered as the front facade; or

- b) Windows and doors may be spread around the building, the minimum amount of required windows or glass doors is calculated as 50% of the front facade (facade adjacent to or facing a public street). For buildings that are adjacent to or facing two or more public streets the minimum amount of required windows or glass doors is calculated as 40% of the total area of the facades adjacent to or facing public streets.

4. Articulation and architectural features.

- a) Horizontal articulations or offsets are required on any wall greater in length than 50 linear feet.
 - (1) The depth of the articulation or offset shall be a minimum of two feet (2'). Articulations or offsets can be of varying depth as long as the minimum two feet (2') is met.
 - (2) The length of the new plane created by the articulation or offset shall be a minimum of 20% of the total length of the entire wall.
- b) Vertical articulations or elevation changes are required on all walls and should be designed to screen rooftop equipment.
 - (1) The height of the articulation or elevation change shall be a minimum of two feet (2'). Articulations or elevation changes can be of varying depth as long as the minimum two feet (2') is met.
 - (2) The length of the new plane created by the articulation or elevation change shall be a minimum of 20% of the total length of the entire wall.

- 5. Roof Treatments. Facade articulations shall provide for vertical and horizontal screening of air-conditioning units and all mechanical equipment located on rooftops. The minimum height of the screening shall be equal to the height of the tallest rooftop equipment.

F. Multifamily Buildings.

- 1. Applicability. This section shall apply to buildings with a Multifamily Use.
- 2. Exterior Building Materials. Buildings must comply with one of the following:
 - a) At least 80% of each wall (excluding windows and doors) shall be finished in one or more of the following materials:
 - * Brick
 - * Stone
 - * Faux brick or stone
 - * Tile; or

- b) 100% of the front facade (facade adjacent to or facing a public street) and a total of 80% of the entire building (excluding windows and doors) shall be finished in one or more of the following materials:

- * Brick
- * Stone
- * Faux brick or stone
- * Tile

3. Articulation and architectural features.

- a) Horizontal articulations or offsets are required on any wall greater in length than 10 linear feet.

- (1) The depth of the articulation or offset shall be a minimum of two feet (2'). Articulations or offsets can be of varying depth as long as the minimum two feet (2') is met.
- (2) The length of the new plane created by the articulation or offset shall be a minimum of 20% of the total length of the entire wall.

- b) Vertical articulations or elevation changes are required on all walls and should be designed to screen rooftop equipment.

- (1) The height of the articulation or elevation change shall be a minimum of two feet (2'). Articulations or elevation changes can be of varying depth as long as the minimum two feet (2') is met.
- (2) The length of the new plane created by the articulation or elevation change shall be a minimum of 20% of the total length of the entire wall.

4. Roof Treatments. Facade articulations shall provide for vertical and horizontal screening of air-conditioning units and all mechanical equipment located on rooftops. The minimum height of the screening shall be equal to the height of the tallest rooftop equipment.

(Ord. 2017-03, passed 4-24-17)