



SINGLE FAMILY DESIGN BOARD GUIDELINES

October 2025 - DRAFT

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Prepared By

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

CALIFORNIA

Originally Adopted in 2007

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the SFDB Guidelines

The Single Family Design Board (SFDB) Guidelines are established to uphold high design standards for single-unit residential development in the City of Santa Barbara. They clarify the SFDB's goals and policies for applicants, design professionals, and the public, and guide the application review process.

These Guidelines are intended to provide direction for SFDB members, City staff, and the public. While they are not legally binding, they serve as an important tool in the design review process. Failure to meet the Guidelines may form a basis for denial of the design of a project; however, noncompliance does not invalidate SFDB actions or constitute grounds for legal claims against the City or its representatives.

Per City Council Resolution No. 07-032, the Community Development Director may make minor or clarifying edits to the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines or the Single Family Design Board Guidelines—such as correcting formatting, updating references, or clarifying language—in consultation with the City Attorney. These amendments do not require City Council adoption.

Nothing in these Guidelines shall be interpreted in a manner contrary to State law or the Santa Barbara Municipal Code. In the event of a conflict, State law or the Municipal Code shall prevail.

Single Family Design Board Purpose

Single-family homes have long contributed to the character of Santa Barbara's neighborhoods. The SFDB is charged with ensuring new and remodeled homes are completed with high-quality designs that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, preserve the City's visual resources, promote long-term sustainability, and contribute to a desirable living environment.

For more on the SFDB's goals related to infill development, hillside neighborhoods, neighborhood compatibility, and sustainability, see the "Introduction" section of the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines.

Single Family Design Board Background

The SFDB was established by ordinance on June 8, 2007, following the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO) and Single Family Residence Design Guidelines Update, which began in 2004. The SFDB is responsible for reviewing single-unit residential projects to ensure they are compatible with neighborhood character and design standards.

The SFDB is composed of five members.

- **At least one member** shall be a licensed architect.
- **Up to three members** of the public at large may be appointed who do not possess professional qualifications in fields related to architecture.

- **The remaining members** shall possess professional qualifications in fields related to architecture or landscape architecture, including, but not limited to, building design, structural engineering, industrial design, urban planning, or landscape contracting.

Single Family Design Board Goals

The SFDB is guided by a set of general goals that define the major concerns and objectives of its review process. These goals are:

- Ensure development is compatible with the site and the neighborhood;
- Enhance neighborhood character by fostering quality and diversity in architectural styles;
- Promote high standards in architectural and landscape design and the construction of aesthetically pleasing structures;
- Ensure new development does not significantly impact adjacent historic resources;
- Ensure new development does not significantly impact the beauty of Santa Barbara's natural and built resources; and
- Preserve public scenic views of the ocean and mountains.

The SFDB reviews single-unit residential projects to ensure they are compatible in size and design with their surrounding neighborhoods. In Santa Barbara—where topography, architectural variety, and zoning regulations vary widely—compatibility doesn't mean uniformity. A home may differ in size or style and still be appropriate if it respects neighborhood patterns and character.

The SFDB evaluates each project holistically, considering massing, scale, materials, site planning, and architectural consistency. While no specific architectural style is required, proposed designs must be high-quality and well-executed examples of their chosen styles. Common styles include Craftsman, Spanish Colonial Revival, Mediterranean, Victorian, Cottage, and Contemporary.

Applicants are encouraged to consult the Neighborhood Compatibility Guidelines (starting on page 15-C of the [Single Family Residence Design Guidelines](#)) and consider the Neighborhood Compatibility Findings in SBMC §30.220.040.E.

Relationship to Other Documents

1. General Plan and Coastal Land Use Plan

The Santa Barbara General Plan provides policies related to visual quality, neighborhood compatibility, and protection of historic resources. It describes the character of individual neighborhoods and sets a vision for promoting sustainable community design. The Coastal Land Use Plan governs land use within the Coastal Zone including policies on coastal access, coastal resource protection, scenic resources, and

public scenic views. The Zoning Ordinance and SFDB Guidelines help implement the goals of the General Plan and Coastal Plan.

2. Municipal Code

The Municipal Code established mandatory development standards. These Guidelines are intended to supplement the Municipal Code by offering additional detail and design direction.

Refer to SBMC Chapter 30.220, Design Review, for the SFDB ordinance, including:

- Projects requiring SFDB review,
- Required findings for approval,
- Projects requiring a mailed notice

Procedures for the processing of all planning applications, including noticing procedures, can be found in SBMC Chapter 30.205, Common Procedures.

3. Relationship to the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines

While the SFDB Guidelines focus on Board operations and procedures, the separate **Single Family Residence Design Guidelines** provide and the primary design criteria for appropriate single-unit residential development throughout the City. The Single Family Residence Design Guidelines are instructive rather than obligatory but should inform the SFDB's required findings to approve or disapprove projects. The Single Family Residence Design Guidelines include illustrative examples and cover topics such as architectural style, massing, and site planning.

Some design topics—such as historic building information and landscape design—are addressed in these SFDB Guidelines but not in the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines.

Relationship to Other Guidelines

Several other city-adopted guidelines provide additional direction regarding architectural appearance, site design, and landscape. These SFDB Guidelines are generally consistent with those documents but may offer more detail on certain topics. If a conflict arises, the guidelines specific to the area or subject matter prevails.

1. Related Guidelines

Fence, Screen, Wall, and Hedge Guidelines: Explains Coastal Zone standards for exceptions to height standards for fences, screens, walls and hedges.

Historic Resource Design Guidelines: Guides design near historic resources to avoid negative impacts.

Lower Riviera Special Design District Guidelines: Ensures compatibility with the existing pattern of pedestrian-friendly bungalow character of the district.

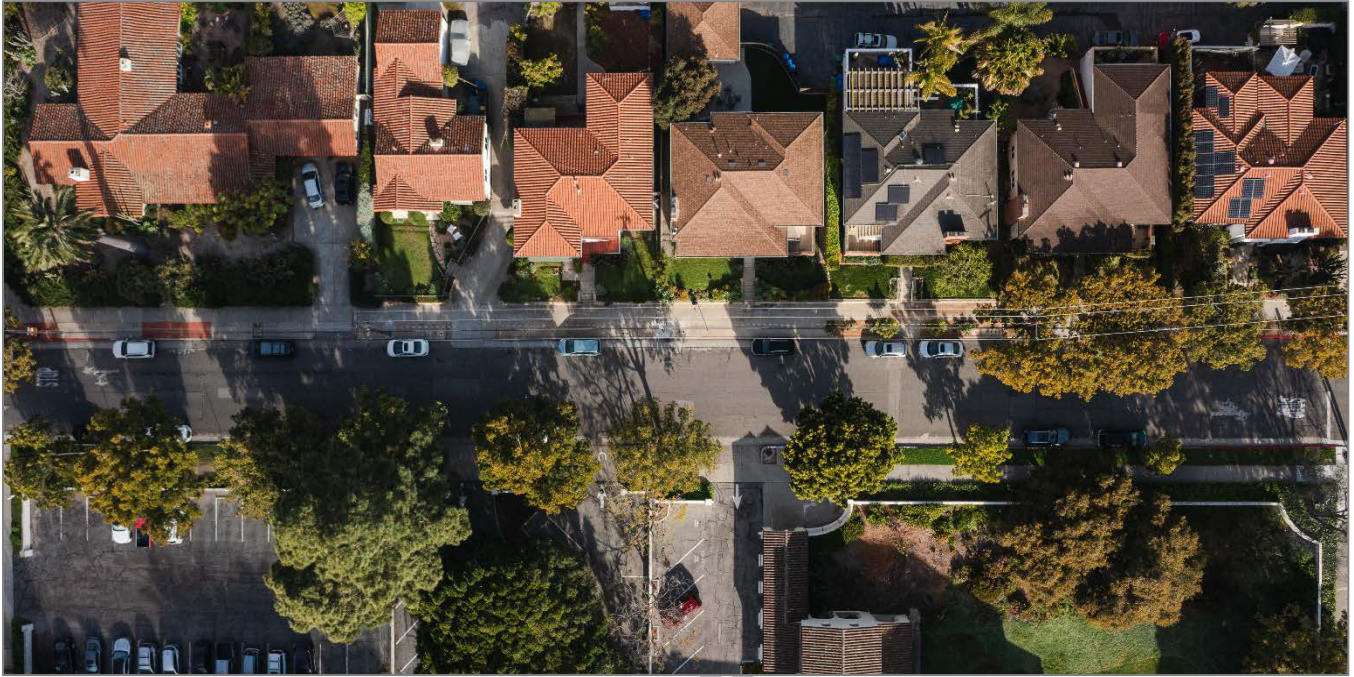
Outdoor Lighting & Streetlight Design Guidelines: Outdoor lighting standards to minimize glare and light trespass.

Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines: Describes the different Upper State Street area neighborhoods and assists the public in designing projects to be compatible with those neighborhoods.

Urban Design Guidelines: Promotes traditional design principles and pedestrian-friendly development in the urban grid.

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SECTION 1: General Information



1.1 SFDB Jurisdiction

Projects on a lot with one single-family residential unit or related accessory structures in any zone are subject to SFDB review pursuant to SBMC §30.220.040.

Projects involving designated and potentially historic homes and homes in Historic District Overlay Zones that would otherwise be subject to review by the SFDB are referred to the Historic Landmarks Commission pursuant to SBMC §30.220.020.

SFDB's purview includes building and site design and does not include land use issues. Building design includes building size, bulk, height, massing, scale, architectural style, and exterior finish materials. Site design includes the placement of buildings on a lot, public views, vehicle access and circulation, pedestrian circulation, parking placement and design, landscaping, and other similar issues, including any topic in these guidelines and other applicable design guidelines.

Topics that are not within SFDB's purview and should not be discussed at public meetings include private views; residential density; the number of bedrooms per residence; the number of parking spaces; traffic and congestion impacts; and construction impacts. See Section 2.5 of these guidelines for information on providing public comment on topics within SFDB's purview.

1.2 Levels of SFDB Review

To ensure an efficient and effective design review process, the Single Family Design Board (SFDB) uses different levels of review based on the scale, complexity, and potential neighborhood impact of a project. This tiered approach allows the Board to focus its time and resources on projects that warrant more detailed scrutiny, while allowing simpler or lower-impact proposals to be reviewed more quickly through streamlined procedures.

1.2.1 Full Board Review

Full Board is the standard level of SFDB review and is conducted by a quorum of at least 3 members, with up to 5 members participating. The Full Board reviews larger or more complex single-unit residential projects including:

- Subdivision grading plans subject to Planning Commission or Public Works review.
- Construction of a new single unit residence.
- Upper-story additions that exceed 500 square feet or result in a second or higher story where one does not currently exist.
- Projects that exceed the maximum allowable floor area ratio (FAR) for the lot size as defined in SBMC §30.20.030.
- Significant site work and grading more than 250 cubic yards of cut or fill or grading on slopes exceeding 20%.

The Full Board may refer a project to Consent Review or Administrative Design Review when appropriate.

1.2.2 Consent Review

Consent Review is intended for minor projects that do not meet the criteria for Administrative Approval but are unlikely to result in significant visual or neighborhood impacts. One SFDB member, assisted by Staff, conducts the review. Decisions are subject to ratification by the Full Board. The SFDB Consent reviewer may refer an item from the Consent Calendar to the Full Board for consideration, or to the Director for an Administrative Design Review decision, when appropriate.

Projects eligible for Consent Review include:

- Additions of 500 square feet or less to existing single-unit residences that do not result in a new story or exceed the maximum floor area ratio (FAR).
- Minor exterior alterations, such as window or door changes, new roof materials, or façade modifications.
- Accessory structures (e.g., garages, carports, sheds) 500 square feet or less.

- Site work involving less than 250 cubic yards of grading and not located on slopes exceeding 20%;
- Landscape changes.
- Any request for a design or development standards waiver, Minor Zoning Exception, or similar allowance, whenever a Design Review body is specified as the Review Authority.

1.2.3 Administrative Design Review

Some minor projects may be approved ministerially by the Community Development Director or their designee without SFDB review. The Community Development Director has the authority to refer any project to the SFDB Consent or Full Board agenda if:

- The project has the potential to have an adverse effect on the architectural integrity of the building, structure or surrounding property, or
- The project does not appear to comply with the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines.
- Projects eligible for Administrative Staff review are listed in Section 6 of these Guidelines.

1.3 Stages of Design Review.

The City of Santa Barbara's design review process is organized into stages that follow the natural life cycle of a project. This structure encourages early feedback, allows for coordination with land use decision-makers, and verifies design consistency at key points in the process—from initial concepts through final construction details.

For detailed submittal requirements at each stage, visit the City's website at [SantaBarbaraCA.gov](https://www.santabarbaraca.gov).

1.3.1 Pre-Application Consultation (One-Time, Optional)

Purpose

The Pre-Application Consultation provides an informal opportunity for applicants to receive early, non-binding advisement prior to submitting a Planning Application. Unlike Concept Review, which involves more developed plans, this consultation is intended to guide applicants at the earliest stage of project planning.

When it Occurs

This consultation is scheduled on the next available agenda and takes place prior to a full Planning Application submittal. Only one hearing will be scheduled per pre-application submittal.

Scope of Review

The SFDB provides broad, preliminary feedback on overall site planning, building placement, massing, scale, and general architectural character. Comments may also highlight potential neighborhood compatibility issues such as privacy, views, or streetscape presence.

Submittal Requirements and Procedures

Applicants must submit a separate pre-application prior to filing a full Planning Application. Sketches or conceptual plans are encouraged. Applications will be processed in accordance with SBMC §30.205.030, Pre-Application Review. Plans submitted for a Pre-Application Consultation are not reviewed for completeness or consistency with the Municipal Code.

Noticing and Appeals

Although mailed noticing is required, Pre-Application Consultation is not a discretionary action. No formal action is taken, and the review is not appealable.

1.3.2 Concept Design Review (Optional)

Purpose

Concept Design Review provides applicants and the community with an early opportunity to evaluate the fundamental design approach of a project before significant resources are invested in detailed plans. The intent is to identify potential issues, provide constructive guidance, and reduce the likelihood of costly redesigns later in the process.

When it Occurs

Concept Review is an optional review stage available after a full Planning Application is submitted but before the application is reviewed for completeness or consistency with the Municipal Code. Unlike the Pre-Application Consultation, which occurs prior to application submittal, Concept Review allows for a more detailed evaluation of the proposed project against applicable City standards and design guidelines.

Recommended Project Types

Concept Review is encouraged for:

- New single unit residences.
- Additions exceeding 500 sq. ft. or 50% of the existing structure.
- Projects involving height or massing changes, such as second-story additions.
- Projects with potential impacts on privacy, views, or neighborhood character.

- Projects requiring discretionary land use approvals by the Staff Hearing Officer, Planning Commission, or City Council.

Scope of Review

The SFDB considers site layout, building orientation, architectural style, compatibility with surrounding development, and consistency with the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines. Unlike the one-time Pre-Application Consultation, Concept Review can occur more than once if needed. However, applicants are encouraged to incorporate feedback received during this stage to support a more efficient review process and avoid more than two Concept Review hearings.

Submittal Requirements and Procedures

To request Concept Review, applicants submit a Planning Application and indicate that a Concept Review hearing is requested. Applications will be processed in accordance with SBMC §30.205.040, Concept Review. Projects with unresolved major zoning issues or policy inconsistencies that require a redesign will not be scheduled for a Concept Review until those issues have been addressed.

Noticing and Appeals

Although mailed noticing is required, Concept Review is not a discretionary action. No formal action is taken, and the review is not appealable.

Forwarding of Comments

If a project requires discretionary land use approval, Concept Review comments are included in the minutes forwarded to the appropriate decision-making body.

1.3.3 Project Design Review (Discretionary Action)

Purpose

Project Design Review is the primary stage of the Design Review process, in which the design of a project is evaluated for compatibility with its surroundings, massing, proportion, siting, and compliance with applicable design guidelines. Project Design Review constitutes the City's discretionary Design Review decision under the State Permit Streamlining Act (Government Code Section 65950 et seq.). Approval at this stage is referred to as Project Design Approval.

When it Occurs

This stage occurs once the application is deemed complete, consistent with development standards, and environmental review has been completed. For projects requiring discretionary land use approval, Project Design Review will only be scheduled after the final land use decision has been made, and plans must reflect all applicable conditions of approval.

Level of Plan Detail Required

Plans must include sufficient detail for the SFDB to evaluate design quality and consistency with applicable guidelines. Required components include site plan and orientation, architectural elevations and materials, landscape plans, exterior lighting, window and door specifications, and roofing and finish materials. Construction-level drawings are not required unless they affect exterior design or are specifically requested.

Submittal Requirements and Procedures

To request Project Design Review, applicants submit a Planning Application and indicate that a Project Design Review hearing is requested. If Concept Review was requested, applicants may resubmit on the same application for Project Design Review after positive Concept Review comments are received. Applications shall be processed in accordance with SBMC §30.205.050, Review of Discretionary Applications.

Noticing and Appeals

Mailed noticing is required for certain projects pursuant to the Santa Barbara Municipal Code. The SFDB's Project Design Review decision is a discretionary action and is appealable to the Planning Commission.

Next Steps After Approval

Following Project Design Approval, applicants may submit for a building permit.

1.3.4 Post-Approval Actions, Generally

1. Purpose

Post-approval actions are decisions or reviews that occur after Project Design Approval has been granted, as described below. The purpose of Post-Approval Actions is to confirm that the final construction documents and any subsequent changes remain consistent with the design approved by the SFDB. This stage ensures that the details of colors, materials, lighting, landscaping, and grading faithfully reflect the approved design intent, and that any revisions are evaluated for substantial conformance.

2. Major Changes

Major changes to an approved project, as determined by the Director not to be in substantial conformance with the Project Design Approval, will be referred to the Design Review body for a revised Project Design Approval, consistent with SBMC § 30.205.130, Changes to Approved Plans.

3. Minor Changes

Minor changes to an approved project will either be acted on by the Director or referred to the Design Review body for a decision.

4. Noticing and Appeals

No mailed noticing is required. Decisions of the SFDB on any post-approval hearing may only be appealed by the applicant to the Planning Commission. Decisions of the Director are final and not appealable.

1.3.5 Final Design Review

1. Purpose

Final Design Review is the formal confirmation that completed working construction drawings are in substantial conformance with the plans granted Project Design Approval. This stage ensures that all final details are consistent with the approved design intent and that all conditions of approval have been incorporated prior to issuance of a building permit. Approval at this stage is referred to as Final Approval.

2. When it Occurs

This stage occurs after Project Design Approval and concurrently with building permit plan check. The Director may refer an application to SFDB for Final Design Review if the Director determines it necessary to ensure substantial conformance to the Project Design Approval or to verify final details.

3. Scope of Review

The SFDB or Community Development Director reviews the completed construction drawings to verify:

- Substantial conformance with Project Design Approval.
- Inclusion of all conditions of approval (if applicable).
- Completeness of final details such as colors, materials, door hardware, and exterior lighting fixtures.

4. Submittal Requirements and Procedures

Applicants must submit completed working drawings with all details, color and material samples, exterior door hardware, fenestration, exterior light fixtures, final site grading and drainage, and final landscape and irrigation plans. All applicable Conditions of Approval shall be included on the plans. Designated Planning staff review all building permit applications subject to Design Review for compliance with the approved plans and conditions, in accordance with SBMC Chapter 30.280, Zoning Clearance.

5. Noticing and Appeals

No mailed noticing is required. Decisions of the SFDB on any Final Design Review hearing may only be appealed by the applicant to the Planning Commission.

1.3.6 Review After Final

1. Purpose

Review After Final Approval provides a formal process for evaluating proposed changes to a project after Final Approval has been granted. The intent is to ensure that any modifications remain consistent with the approved design intent and are clearly documented for the record.

2. Scope of Review

The review is limited to the proposed changes. The SFDB or Community Development Director evaluates whether the revisions are in substantial conformance with the Project Design Approval and Final Approval. If the changes are not clearly shown on the submitted drawings, they cannot be construed as approved.

3. Submittal Requirements

Applicants must submit revised plans that clearly delineate all proposed changes. Plans must include sufficient information to demonstrate how the changes affect the approved design. A Review After Final Approval submittal is subject to additional fees.

4. Procedures

Applications are processed in accordance with Chapter 30.205.155, Review of Administrative Applications. Minor changes may be acted on by the Director; more significant changes may be referred to the SFDB for action.

5. Noticing and Appeals

Review After Final Approval is not a new discretionary action. No mailed noticing is required. Decisions are final and not appealable, except where referral to the SFDB results in a new discretionary action.

1.3.7 Determining Substantial Conformance

In determining whether a change to an approved project is in substantial conformance with the approved project, the Community Development Director considers broad issues such as whether the project was subject to controversy, whether the scope of the proposed changes are separate from the original approval and constitutes a new project, and whether the proposed changes would alter the public's perception of the project. In addition to these broad considerations, all of the following criteria must be

met in order to determine that the revised project is in substantial conformance with the approved project.

Table 1.3.H – Determining Substantial Conformance to Approved Plans

Issue	Substantial Conformance Criteria
Conditions of Approval	Does not conflict with findings or conditions of approval made by the SFDB or Planning Commission on appeal.
Height	For residences less than 25 feet in height, does not result in an overall height which is greater than one foot above the approved height and does not exceed a maximum of 25 feet. For residences between 25 and 30 feet in height, the revised project does not increase the height by more than 4 inches above the approved height. Projects that exceed the height approved by SFDB or Planning Commission on appeal where height was identified as an issue by the appellant or decision maker are not eligible for substantial conformance. In no case shall the building height exceed the maximum building height allowed by the zoning ordinance.
Floor Area	Does not add more than 150 square feet to the approved net floor area.
Grading	Does not result in an increase in grading outside the building footprint greater than 25 cubic yards more than the quantities shown on the approved plans.
Environmental Studies	Alterations do not occur in any biologically sensitive area as identified in the City's MAPS database, unless a technical study prepared by a qualified consultant indicates that the alterations will not have an adverse environmental impact. Does not result in environmental effects not analyzed or discussed at the approval process and does not result in new mitigation measures.
Trees	Any proposed tree removal is consistent with the Administrative Approval Standards for tree removals in Section 6.3.T of these guidelines.
Privacy	Alterations do not result in new or enlarged window or door openings within interior setbacks. Any new or expanded decks or patios are located outside the setbacks.

SECTION 2: Meeting Procedures



2.1 General Information and Procedures

2.1.1 Meeting Dates and Location

Full Board SFDB meetings occur every other Monday at 3:00 P.M. in the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, California. Full Board SFDB meetings are televised live on the local Government Access channel and on YouTube.com. Full Board agenda items are scheduled as time-certain with the final item usually scheduled for no later than 8:00 P.M. Please note that changes may occur to the meeting agendas due to postponement of items as described in Section 2.10.

The SFDB Consent Calendar review occurs at 11:00 A.M. every Monday and it is held in the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street, Santa Barbara, California. SFDB Consent meetings are not televised.

If a holiday falls on a Monday, meetings will be held on the following Tuesday or at the discretion of the Board. Occasionally there is a need to cancel a regular meeting or to hold a special meeting.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if special assistance is needed to participate in an SFDB meeting, the Planning Division should be contacted at (805) 564-5470. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements.

2.1.2 Notice and Posting

Both the Full Board agenda and Consent Calendar are posted for public review at 630 Garden Street adjacent to the David Gebhard Public Meeting Room. Agendas and minutes are also available on the Community Development Department's website at www.santabarbaraca.gov/sfdb.

2.1.3 Staff Contact

Community Development Department

Planning Division

630 Garden Street

Phone: (805) 564-5470

Website: www.santabarbaraca.gov

Email: SFDBSecretary@santabarbaraca.gov

2.2 Agenda Organization

Full Board meeting agendas are organized on an approximate "time certain" basis. An item cannot be heard more than 15 minutes before its scheduled time on the agenda. The following agenda order usually applies.

A. General Business

1. General Public Comment.
2. Approval of minutes.
3. Ratification of Consent Calendar Actions.
4. Announcements: Announcements such as requests by applicants for continuances and withdrawals, and future agenda items.

B. Discussion Items

C. Appeals Referred Back to SFDB from Planning Commission

D. One-Time Pre-Application Consultation

E. Concept Review (continued items first, followed by new items)

F. Project Design Approval (continued items first, followed by new items)

G. Revised Project Design Approval

H. Items Referred from the Community Development Director

I. Items Referred from Consent

J. Subcommittee Reports: Standing and Ad Hoc Subcommittees. (These reports are brief announcements and do not involve general SFDB discussion or actions. If members wish to discuss

the substance of a subcommittee report, members must request that staff properly agendaize the topic under “Discussion Items” at a future meeting of the SFDB.)

Note that the agenda order and item times are subject to change in that an item may be heard either earlier or later than noted in the approximate schedule. It is recommended that people arrive at least 15 minutes before the approximate time for their item of interest because the actual timing of items is subject to change based on the length of other agenda items. Applicants who arrive late for their scheduled agenda item may have their project postponed indefinitely unless the SFDB agrees to hear the item and if time permits. It is the applicant’s responsibility to request that staff reschedule the item for consideration.

2.3 Public Notice

2.3.1 Consent and Full Board Items

Some projects require a public mailed notice for the meeting at SFDB. The purpose of this notice is to provide an opportunity for adjacent property owners and occupants to comment on development proposals that may impact their property. When a noticed hearing is required, written notice of the hearing is mailed to the applicant, the owners and occupants of any lot within 300 feet of the project site and interested parties in the City database. In addition to the required mailed notice, the City may request a “Notice of Development” sign to be posted on the site of the proposed project. If a project requires another land use decision by the City Council, Planning Commission, or Staff Hearing Officer, the notice for the first Design Review hearing shall comply with the notice requirements for that hearing body. (See Santa Barbara Municipal Code §30.220.005.D for the types of applications that require a noticed hearing and the specific noticing requirements.)

If the Community Development Director determines that plan substitutions constitute a substantial change from the previously noticed plan (including, but not limited to, changes to the project’s, size, bulk, scale, form, or design), the Community Development Director may require the project to be re-noticed for another hearing. The Community Development Director will also require an additional noticing fee to be paid by the applicant in these cases.

2.4 Project Presentation and Plan Substitution

2.4.1 Project Presentation by the Applicant

Consent and Full Board projects require applicant presentation of the project. If no one is available to present an item on behalf of the applicant, the agenda item shall be continued to a date certain.

2.4.2 Plan Substitution

Plans originally submitted and filed for a particular meeting or review are not allowed to be substituted by applicants at the time of the scheduled meeting date. Plan substitutions (also known as “slip sheets”) must be submitted at least one week in advance of the hearing date and are subject

to Community Development Director acceptance for review. This policy is intended to ensure that approvals are not obtained without proper Staff oversight and to ensure an adequate opportunity for public review prior to the meeting.

2.5 Public Meeting and Public Comment

2.5.1 Procedure

Each regular meeting of the SFDB includes an opportunity for general public comment, which is limited to items not on the meeting agenda, and an opportunity for item-specific public comment for each agenda item. The Chair will announce the opportunity for item-specific public comment prior to SFDB questions and comments on the project. The SFDB Secretary will call on members of the public who have submitted requests to speak or who have indicated they wish to speak on the virtual meeting platform (for Full Board only). Speakers who wish to comment on a project are limited to no more than two minutes. The SFDB Chair may reduce the two minute public comment time based on the number of people who wish to speak and the length of the agenda.

2.5.2 Public Comment Topics

The City recommends that interested neighbors work together either to organize their comments or to select one person to represent the neighborhood and speak on the group's behalf. The following examples of public comment types are appropriate:

- aesthetic issues
- project design and size issues
- neighborhood compatibility
- compliance with the "Good Neighbor Guidelines"
- public views

Comments on topics that are not within the SFDB's purview, such as the following, should not be discussed:

- site land use or zone designation
- project affordability
- private views
- parking/traffic
- residential density

The SFDB shall consider public comments directly related to aesthetic issues involving neighborhood compatibility, architecture, and landscape. The Board may also consider neighborhood input

regarding Neighborhood Compatibility Findings, such as grading, tree removal, and mass, bulk, and scale of the development.

2.6 Scope of Project Review

For projects within its jurisdiction, the SFDB has authority to approve, conditionally approve, or deny projects as follows:

2.6.1 Standard Review

If a single-family residential project requires Design Review per the City's Municipal Code, then the SFDB has purview to review all exterior aspects of the project. For example, if a project requires SFDB review due to a second story addition and site work unrelated to the addition is proposed, then both the addition and the site work are under SFDB's purview. The scope of review is the project's consistency with the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines topics of site planning and structure placement, neighborhood compatibility, two-story design concepts, Hillside Housing Guidelines, and Good Neighbor Guidelines, as well as consistency with these SFDB Guidelines and the SFDB findings in the Municipal Code.

2.6.2 Focused Review – Fences and Walls

When construction of a fence, wall, or gate is the only project component that triggers Design Review, then only the fence, wall, or gate will be reviewed.

Construction Without Permit (“As-Built”)

The SFDB shall review unpermitted (“as-built”) projects with the same degree of scrutiny and consideration afforded other proposed new projects using the following criteria:

- As-built work should comply with all adopted design guidelines or be made to comply.
- As-built work is subject to denial if the work is deemed unacceptable.
- Materials used and architectural quality shall be evaluated by the SFDB when determining if the as-built work is acceptable as constructed.

2.6.3 California Government Code Provisions Regarding Manufactured Homes

According to Govt. Code §65852.3, the SFDB's purview is limited when reviewing a manufactured home certified under the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. Secs. 5401 et seq.). When SFDB review is triggered for such homes, requests for building design changes are limited to its roof overhang, roofing material, and siding material. In addition, such homes are subject to the same zoning standards that a conventional single-family home on the same lot would be subject to.

2.7 SFDB Role in Commenting on Zoning Modifications

2.7.1 Modifications, Generally

Requests for modifications to the Zoning Ordinance for individual projects are approved by either the Staff Hearing Officer or the Planning Commission in accordance with SBMC §28.92.110 or Chapter 30.250. When a project requires both a Zoning Modification and SFDB review, SFDB comment on the Zoning Modification typically occurs at an SFDB Concept Review hearing prior to the request being heard by the Staff Hearing Officer or Planning Commission. The SFDB's role in commenting on the Modification is limited to whether the proposed Modification poses aesthetic issues, such as inconsistency with neighborhood development patterns, or presents conflicts with the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines. General support or lack of support of a Modification is a land use decision and is not the purview of the SFDB. The following is an example of an appropriate SFDB comment on a Modification request:

"The proposed Modification is/is not aesthetically appropriate. The proposed Modification poses/does not pose consistency issues with Single Family Residence Design Guidelines (if applicable, include guideline reference number or numbers for reference)."

2.7.2 Zoning Modifications of Open Yard

For Modifications of open yard regulations, the SFDB's role is to comment to the Staff Hearing Officer or Planning Commission on whether the Modification is consistent with existing patterns of development in the neighborhood, and ensures adequate light, air, and open space for each residence, enhancing livability and developing and sustaining a suitable residential environment.

2.8 Subdivision Grading Plan Considerations

Subdivision grading plans involving cut or fill on lots in single-family zones must be referred to the Single Family Design Board (SFDB) for review, as required by SBMC Section 30.220.040. Following any applicable Pre-Application Review Team (PRT) review, the SFDB evaluates the following key aspects of the project.

- 1. Site design** considerations include consistency with the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines (SFRDG), specifically Guidelines 1 (Environmental Setting and Landscaping), 2 (Site Planning and Structure Placement), and 33 (Neighborhood Compatibility). The Board reviews the layout and suitability of lots for future development, including building pads and envelopes, and assesses the preservation of natural topography per hillside protection findings. Additional elements include proposed roadway improvements, pedestrian sidewalks, and parkways; driveway alignment and pavement extent; entryway and front door pathways; site access for visitors; pedestrian connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods; and the preservation of public scenic views. The SFDB also examines compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods in terms of lot sizes, building heights, massing, and overall design. Additional information may be requested to complete this analysis.

2. **Grading** is reviewed for consistency with grading findings and SFRDG Guidelines 30 and 31. This includes evaluating the appropriateness of grading quantities, and the location of cut and fill to avoid visible scarring.
3. **Retaining walls, fencing, and entry gates** must align with SFRDG Guideline 35 in terms of height, length, materials, and placement. The lot configuration should follow natural terrain to avoid excessive retaining walls or unusual fencing on steep slopes. The neighborhood compatibility of any proposed security gates is also considered.
4. **Site landscaping**, evaluated through a conceptual landscape plan, must be consistent with SFRDG Guideline 1. This includes the selection and placement of street trees, preservation of existing trees, mitigation of any removals, and appropriate site screening where needed.
5. **Site drainage facilities** are reviewed for consistency with SFRDG Guideline 4, focusing on maximizing permeability. The design and suitability of drainage conveyance and retention systems, including fencing, and compliance with the Storm Water Management Program are also reviewed.
6. **Site utilities** such as electrical equipment, transformers, gas meters, fire backflow prevention devices, and central mailbox locations (if applicable) are also evaluated for appropriate placement.
7. **Parking design** is assessed for both on-street and off-street configurations, ensuring alignment with SFRDG Guideline 5 on parking aesthetics.
8. **Privacy design** is reviewed to ensure lot layouts provide adequate setbacks between structures, preserving privacy and supporting consistency with the Good Neighbor Guidelines.
9. **Solar access** is examined for consistency with SFRDG Guideline 3, ensuring homes are oriented to support passive and active solar energy use. The impact of existing trees on solar potential is also considered.

Lastly, several elements fall outside the purview of the SFDB and are instead under the authority of the Staff Hearing Officer or Planning Commission. These include compliance with the State Subdivision Map Act, the City's General Plan, Municipal Code Title 27, appropriate residential density and lot sizes, street design, traffic impacts, public improvements, placement of building envelopes, and the protection of public view corridors from streets, trails, parks, and beaches.

2.9 Historic Significance Evaluation – All Structures

Prior to submittal of a development application, the potential historic significance of existing structures should be researched, and plans must show consideration for these elements if they exist on the property. Evaluation and protection of archaeological or historic resources is governed by policies, laws, and regulations of the City Charter and Municipal Code, and state and federal laws.

- Existing historic sandstone walls and stairways, and wrought iron gates should be preserved and included as a part of an overall plan where feasible.
- Consultation with the City's Architectural Historian is required for structures over 50 years of age. If the Architectural Historian determines that the structure is eligible to be included on this Historic Resources Inventory, then the development application will be reviewed by the Historic Landmarks Commission instead of the Single Family Design Board.
- In cases where the Architectural Historian has determined that a structure adjacent to a proposed SFDB project is included or eligible for inclusion on the Historic Resources Inventory, the SFDB may evaluate the project for consistency with Chapter 3.2 of the Historic Resource Design Guidelines for new construction adjacent to historic resources.

2.10 Procedure for Continuances, Postponements, Referrals, and Absences

2.10.1 Continuances

A continuance is the carrying forward of an item under discussion to a future meeting. To be considered for a continuance, the applicant must attend the meeting and make a presentation. An application may be continued at the request of the applicant or by action of the SFDB. Unless a continuance is necessary for the SFDB to receive reports or other information, the SFDB Chair should offer the applicant the option of agreeing to the continuance or requesting that the SFDB approve or deny the project at the present meeting.

2.10.2 Postponements

A postponement is deferral of the consideration of an agenda item to a future meeting. A postponement must be indefinite and cannot be to a date certain. No discussion or presentation takes place on the date a postponement occurs. If an application has been postponed more than twice, the SFDB may deny the application “without prejudice” to a future application. “Without prejudice” means the SFDB will have no reservations or pre-formed opinions in reviewing a resubmitted project. To request a postponement, a project applicant must contact SFDB staff as early as possible prior to the scheduled hearing date and state the justification for the request.

To allow for timely agenda processing, requests for postponement must be made prior to 4:30 p.m. on the Tuesday prior to the meeting date. Items subject to a postponement will be postponed indefinitely. It is the applicant's responsibility to contact staff in order to reschedule the item for consideration. Re-noticing and postponement fees apply to postponed projects.

2.10.3 Referral from Consent Calendar to Full Board.

All actions on Consent Calendar items are subject to ratification by the Full Board. SFDB members may request that a Consent Calendar item be referred for Full Board review. SFDB must state the

reasons for the referral request. Referrals from Consent may be scheduled for Full Board on the same day or on a later hearing date. If a motion to refer an item from Consent to Full Board on the same hearing date carries, the item will be heard after the last item on the Full Board agenda.

2.11 Decisions

2.11.1 Project Approvals

In order to grant Project Design Approval for a project heard by the SFDB pursuant to SBMC §30.220.040.B, the SFDB shall make the applicable findings in SBMC §30.220.040.E. If a project is approved administratively by staff per provisions in these SFDB Guidelines, then findings are not required.

2.11.2 Project Denials

The SFDB may deny a project that is inconsistent with any applicable finding. The SFDB shall state the reason for a project denial in the motion for denial, referencing the specific findings that could not be made.

2.12 Appeals, Extensions, and Expiration of Approval

2.12.1 Time Limits & Extensions on Approvals

Conceptual comments are generally valid for one year from the date of the hearing, at the Community Development Director's discretion and in compliance with SBMC §30.205.040.F. An SFDB Project Design Approval is valid for three years from the date of the approval unless a time extension has been granted in accordance with SBMC §30.205.120 or a building permit has been issued.

2.12.2 Appeal of SFDB Decision

Any action of the SFDB on an application for Project Design Review may be appealed to the Planning Commission in accordance with SBMC §30.220.005 and Chapter 1.30 of the Municipal Code. If an appeal of an SFDB decision is filed, the letter of appeal stating the reasons for the appeal must be filed with the Planning Division within ten (10) calendar days of the contested action together with the appropriate appeal fee.

To appeal an SFDB decision, a letter outlining the reasons for the appeal must be filed with the Planning Division, along with the appropriate fee, within ten (10) calendar days of the contested action.

2.12.3 Re-Filing a Denied Project Design

Changes to a denied project design re-filed within one year must mitigate the reason for denial of the project design. A new application and new application fees are required.

Section 3: Meeting Conduct for SFDB Members



3.1 Officer Election

1. **Chair.** The SFDB shall annually elect a Chair from its membership, with elections held as soon as practical after January 1st or upon any Chair vacancy.
2. **Vice-Chair.** Following the election of the Chair, the SFDB shall elect a Vice-Chair who will conduct meetings in the absence of the Chair.

3.2 Subcommittees/Advisory Committees.

The SFDB shall not establish a subcommittee without the approval of the Community Development Director and City Attorney.

3.3 General Meeting Conduct

1. **Rosenberg's Rules of Order.** Rosenberg's Rules of Order, a set of parliamentary procedures used to run meetings efficiently and fairly, shall govern the conduct of meetings unless otherwise provided by these Guidelines or as may be determined appropriate by the Chair of the SFDB.

- 2. Brown Act.** Meetings of the SFDB and its standing subcommittees shall be governed by the Ralph M. Brown Act (Govt. Code §54950 et seq.), a California law that ensures transparency and public access to meetings of local government bodies. The Brown Act governs when, where, and how meetings are noticed and conducted, requiring agendas to be posted in advance and allowing the public to attend and participate.
- 3. Discussions Outside of Regularly Noticed Meetings (Ex-Parte Communication).** Private discussions regarding particular projects between applicants and SFDB members, or groups of two or more SFDB members, shall not be initiated or encouraged by SFDB members. SFDB members shall inform the SFDB of such ex-parte communication at regularly scheduled meetings.
- 4. Quorum.** Three members shall constitute a quorum of the SFDB. A member who remains present but abstains from voting counts as part of the quorum while a member who steps down (and is required to leave the room) does not count towards the quorum. Any member with a disqualifying conflict pursuant to the Political Reform Act shall step down and not be counted toward achieving a quorum.
- 5. Abstention on Continued Items.** A board member who was absent from a previous review should only comment on a continued project if they have reviewed the previous plans, reviewed the video of the previous hearing, and read the minutes of the relevant portions of that meeting. If a board member is not fully informed of the prior SFDB review, the member should abstain from commenting or voting on the project. For Consent projects and minor projects which received a very brief review, a board member shall read the minutes and review the plans of the previous hearing since Consent meetings are not televised.
- 6. Reconsideration.** A motion to reconsider any action taken by the SFDB may be made only at the meeting at which the original action was taken or at the next regular meeting of the SFDB. A motion to reconsider may be made only by a board member who voted with the prevailing side on the original action. In order to allow for compliance with Brown Act requirements, if a motion to reconsider is not made during the meeting at which the original action was taken, a board member who wishes to make such a motion must provide staff with a written request to place the motion to reconsider on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the SFDB before the end of the second business day following the day on which the original action was taken.
- 7. Conflict of Interest.** Members must comply with all laws and regulations prohibiting participation by officials in making decisions for which they may have a conflict of interest under State law, in particular the Political Reform Act of 1974.
- 8. Staff Assistance.** Staff shall assist the SFDB and the general public through the SFDB process. Any Staff comments shall be stated at the beginning of each review.

- 9. SFDB Member Attendance.** If a member cannot attend a meeting or must step down from a particular item due to conflict of interest, the member is asked to contact Staff at the earliest possible opportunity prior to the meeting date. The purpose for this staff notification is to ensure a minimum quorum of members is maintained for review of all items.
- 10. SFDB Member Compensation.** SFDB members may receive compensation for attendance in accordance with the approved budget for the Community Development Department.
- 11. SFDB Member Site Visits.** A site visit may be conducted to a proposed development site when additional site information is required prior to SFDB comment or action on a project. Staff shall notify SFDB members and the public of scheduled, organized, or drive-by site visits via notation on the meeting agenda.
- 12. Story Pole Site Visit Coordination.** If the project requires a land use approval in addition to Design Review, coordination with the Planning Commission or Staff Hearing Officer for story pole placement and site visit is recommended. The installation shall follow the City's adopted criteria for story pole placement and installation standards. See Section 4 (Visual Aids, including Story Poles) for more information about residential story pole requirements.

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SECTION 4: Submittal Requirements and Visual Aids



Rendering: Donaldson + Partners

4.1 Application Submittal Requirements

4.1.1 Standard Submittal Requirements

All project plans must meet standard submittal requirements as listed in the Project Plan Submittal Guide handout available at the Planning and Zoning Counter and on the City's website (SantaBarbaraCA.gov) on the Planning Forms and Handouts page. SFDB application submittal requirements include: site plan, floor plan, elevations, site sections, site and neighborhood photographs, and application forms signed by the property owner.

Application materials should accurately and fully represent the proposed project. The applicant has the burden of demonstrating how the proposed project is consistent with the applicable design guidelines, municipal code, and City policies. The SFDB may request additional submittal items beyond those outlined in the submittal requirement handouts to determine project consistency with required findings for any project. Staff may make recommendations to both the SFDB and applicants regarding the potential applicability of submittal requirements for any project. The SFDB may also

waive additional submittal requirements listed in the handout if the submittals would not help the Board determine consistency with required findings for a project.

4.1.2 Additional Submittal Requirements Related to FAR Maximum

1. Projects over 85% FAR. Projects proposed to be over 85% of the maximum floor area ratio (FAR) are required to submit at least one of the following:

- i. Street Silhouette Elevation. Street silhouette elevation showing adjacent building outline silhouettes (roof and exterior wall lines). All homes to be shown in same amount of detail.
- ii. Panoramic Photo Simulations. Panoramic streetscape photographic presentation with a simulation of the proposed project superimposed on the streetscape panoramic photographs.
- iii. 20-Closest Home Survey. Provide a map and a survey of FAR information for the 20 closest lots to the subject property. The map must show the 20 (or fewer, as determined by SFDB) closest lots and label the floor area of each building. The survey should be in a table, such as an Excel file, or you can use the City's 20 Closest Lots Calculator, and must include the following information:
 - a. Address and APN. Include the addresses and APNs of the 20 closest lots. Exclude any properties that are not single-unit residences, such as commercial properties or apartments.
 - b. Floor Area. Include the square feet of the buildings on each of the 20 lots. If possible, provide the garage floor area separately from the house floor area.
 - c. Lot Area. Include the lot area in square feet of each of the 20 lots. (Assessor's data is often shown in a decimal, multiply the acreage decimal by 43,560 to obtain lot size square feet.)
 - d. FAR. Provide the FAR for each lot ($\text{FAR} = \text{net floor area of the buildings on a lot} \div \text{net lot area}$).
 - e. Sort Parcels. Sort the lots from largest to smallest FAR.
 - f. Calculate Average. Provide the average house size and the average FAR for all 20 lots. Information for properties in the City of Santa Barbara is available online through the City's web-based mapping tool, MAPS. MAPS includes a link to the County Assessor Parcel Information with floor area and lot size. Or you can contact the County Assessor's Office at 105 E. Anapamu St. 2nd floor at (805) 568-2550 and request property information worksheets.

- 2. Projects over 100% FAR.** In addition to the above requirements, story poles are required for any project requesting a waiver to exceed one hundred percent (100%) of the maximum floor area ratio (FAR). The story poles must be installed 10 calendar days prior to the first Project Design Review hearing unless this requirement is waived by the SFDB at Concept Review prior to the application being deemed complete.

4.1.3 Additional Submittal Requirements for Projects over 250 Cubic Yards of Grading

Projects that propose grading outside the main or accessory building footprint must meet the following requirements for application completeness:

For projects over 250 cubic yards of grading, a licensed architect, civil or structural engineer must prepare the grading plans. For projects proposing more than 500 cubic yards of grading, a three-dimensional model or three-dimensional topographic rendering of the project is required if grading is proposed to exceed 500 cubic yards outside of the main building footprint.

4.2 Visual Aids: Purpose & Definitions

4.2.1 Purpose

In addition to the submittal requirements listed above, all proposed new single family residential structures and additions/alterations to existing single family residential structures are encouraged to provide visual aids to assist interested neighbors, staff, and the SFDB (and, if the proposal is appealed, the Planning Commission) determine consistency with the required Neighborhood Compatibility Findings.

4.2.2 Definitions

“Visual aids” may include, but not be limited to, story poles, photo simulations, renderings, models, and/or other means to assist in understanding a project’s size, bulk, and scale in relation to the neighborhood and/or its effects on important public scenic views. See the Visual Aids & Story Poles supplemental application online at the City’s Planning Forms & Applications webpage (SantaBarbaraCA.gov).

4.3 Types of Visual Aids.

When used in conjunction with the building elevations, sections, and site and floor plans required for an SFDB application, supplemental visual aids can be extremely helpful. For larger projects such as a new two-story house, it is highly recommended to include at least one supplemental visual aid in the application.

The SFDB may request visual aids such as photo simulations, three-dimensional massing models, perspective drawings, rendered streetscape elevations, and/or comparative building massing studies, as well as story

poles. SFDB visual aid requests are made on a case-by-case basis based on the SFDB's determination of what method will satisfy cost effectiveness and explanatory goals.

4.3.1 Photo Simulations

Photo simulations (also called visual simulations or 3D renderings) are images that combine real-world photography with digitally (or manually) added elements to simulate how a proposed change—such as a building, infrastructure, landscape feature, or other development—will look once completed. These may be requested on a case-by-case basis, as determined by the Planning Division or SFDB. Photo simulations shall be completed using either panoramic photographs or several photographs put together. Search engine street view images are not acceptable as they may not be current.

Photo simulations should use accurate base photography taken from key viewpoints to best represent common or sensitive public perspectives. Base photography should be taken at eye level (typically about 5 feet above grade) so that it accurately represents the project from the perspective of a person standing in a public area such as a street or sidewalk. 3D models should be aligned correctly with base photographs, using the same focal length, height, angle, and GPS coordinates as base photos. 3D models should accurately depict building massing, building height, plate height, and roof pitch according to the architectural plans. Avoid over-editing renderings to maintain realism. Include reference elements like people, vehicles, trees, or other objects to provide a reference for scale. Label the image clearly as a photo simulation or 3D rendering and include the date and viewpoint location. Include a map or plan showing the locations from which the base photos were taken and the direction of the photos (i.e., with an arrow), keyed to the photos.

4.3.2 Panoramic Streetscape Elevations

In some cases, a panoramic streetscape elevation may be requested, especially when new development is proposed adjacent to a historic resource or if new development will be considerably taller or larger than adjacent development. This is a comparatively simple, low-cost alternative that can provide a useful massing comparison of the project with the adjacent structures. The elevation should show the proposed new building and may need to show all of the buildings on the block. This elevation should be no less than 1/8" scale and should be in color. An additional plan sheet might include building elevations that are color-coordinated to show the setback from the street (0 to 5 feet, 5 to 10 feet, etc.).

4.3.3 Three-Dimensional Massing Model

In some cases, a massing model showing both the project and structures in the immediate neighborhood may be requested, as determined by the Planning Division. Design details are not required; however, all roofing variations, wall articulation, and eave lines (including plate heights)

must be shown. Major trees should also be included as part of the model. Changes in topography in the area covered by the model must be shown accurately.

4.3.4 Perspective Drawings

In some cases, perspective drawings from one or more prominent viewpoints may be requested, as determined by the Planning Division or the SFDB. All roofing variations, wall articulation, and eave lines (including plate heights) must be shown. Major trees should also be shown. These drawings must be drawn from the viewpoint of a person (approximately 5 feet above grade).

4.3.5 Comparative Building Study

In some cases, a scaled comparison to existing buildings, typically either the existing residence or neighboring houses, may be requested. This will assist in visualizing the size of a proposed house in comparison to the existing house and adjacent houses.

4.3.6 Story Poles

Story poles are an expensive visual tool and should be used sparingly. Digital tools have come a long way in helping to more accurately depict proposed development, and are generally preferred over story poles.

Story poles can be installed to show various levels of detail, from the basic size and bulk of a proposed building to the details of its massing, including rooflines. Subsection 4.3 below explains the three levels of detail in story pole installations. Other visual aids may be requested in addition to or as an alternative to story pole placement to avoid high cost and added time to single family projects. Story poles must be requested at the first SFDB hearing on projects that do not exceed 100% Maximum FAR or the right to require story poles is waived.

Story poles are required for projects requesting SFDB review of a waiver to exceed 100% Maximum FAR, unless SFDB waives this requirement using the considerations below.

4.3.7 Waiving Story Pole Requirements

The SFDB shall consider the following criteria to determine if an exception from the story pole requirement for projects exceeding 100% Maximum FAR will be granted:

1. Alternative visual aids have been submitted that provide adequate information.
2. The proposed structures are clearly consistent in terms of size, bulk, and scale with other buildings in the surrounding neighborhood.
3. The proposed structure is the same height or smaller than other existing buildings or homes in the immediate neighborhood.
4. The proposed structure will not obstruct scenic view corridors, including those of the ocean and mountains, and clearly comply with the Good Neighbor Guidelines.
5. The proposed structures will not be on or project above a topographic ridgeline.
6. The existing condition of the site (dense vegetation, existing buildings, etc.) does not allow for adequate story pole installation. If this is the case, one or more of the other types of visual aids will be required.

4.4 Levels of Story Pole Installations

If the SFDB requires story poles for a project, the SFDB shall specify the appropriate level of story pole installation using the descriptions below.

4.4.1 Full Level

All major building forms, corners, ridges, eaves, rakes, outer plate heights (not the outer edge of the eaves), and ridgelines shall be shown with vertical poles and string lines. In addition, stake and string or chalk the property lines where they are not clear and outline the building footprint(s) with stakes and strings or chalk lines. All roof planes shall be outlined to show the full body of the structure. Also, mark all trees proposed to be removed with bright tape or stakes. This level should be used sparingly due to cost and the more detailed digital options available.

4.4.2 Standard Level

Selected building forms as determined by the Board or Commission shall be shown with vertical poles and, where requested, string lines. Poles at all building corners at correct heights are to outline portions of selected roof forms. Show the location of any stakes or chalk/string lines used to outline the building footprint.

4.4.3 Basic Level

Selected locations at highest building elements as determined by the Board or Commission shall be shown with vertical poles only. Poles are to have colored flag/tape markers at specified heights and at the highest ridge roof point where there is the greatest view impact. Locate any stakes or chalk/string lines used to outline the building footprint.

SECTION 5: Landscape Design Guidelines



5.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Landscape Design Guidelines is to provide general and specific guidelines for landscape plan design and installation throughout single-family neighborhoods in the City. Landscaping should be used as a unifying element within a project to enhance a building site and help achieve project compatibility with existing surroundings while complying with applicable policies and regulations.

5.2 Landscape Plan Applicability and Requirements

5.2.1 Applicability

A landscape plan is required for the following SFDB projects:

1. Subdivision Grading. All subdivision grading plans involving grading on a lot, or lots located in Residential Single Unit Zones.
2. Grading-Only Permits. Any grading permit application for a vacant lot, or a lot subject to design review under this section, when not submitted in connection with a building permit for construction or alteration of a building or structure on the same lot.
3. Slope-Sensitive Sites. Any grading permit application where the average slope of the lot or building site is 20 percent or more, as determined under Section 30.15.030, Determining Average Slope.

4. Vegetation Removal Permits. Applications for vegetation removal permits pursuant to Chapter 22.10.
5. Alterations to Approved Landscape Plans. Applications for a permit to alter an approved landscape plan pursuant to Chapter 22.11.
6. Alternative Landscape Designs requested pursuant to SBMC 30.140.118.I.

Notwithstanding the above requirements, the SFDB may request a landscape plan be prepared for projects when necessary to determine consistency with applicable findings.

Landscape Plan Contents

Landscape plans must be submitted prior to the SFDB Project Design Approval hearing. See the City's website (SantaBarbaraCA.gov) Planning Forms and Handouts webpage for the Landscape Plan Submittal Guide.

5.2.3 Landscape Plan Preparation Licensing Requirements

1. License Required

Final Grading and Drainage Plans. Per Business and Professions Code §5641, only a licensed landscape architect, registered or licensed engineer, architect, land surveyor; or landscape contractor who is contracted to install the landscaping may prepare construction documents, details, or specifications for the tangible objects or landscape features, and alteration of site requiring grading and drainage plans. For example, drainage plans are sometimes required for Storm Water Management Plan compliance.

2. No License Required

In the following circumstances, landscape and/or irrigation plans may be prepared by an unlicensed person:

1. Property owners preparing plans for their own property are exempted from the licensing requirement by Business and Professions Code §5641.1.
2. Concept Review Plans. Per Business and Professions Code §5641, no license is required to prepare landscape plans for projects for conceptual design and placement of tangible objects and landscape features or plans, drawings and specifications for the selection, placement, or use of plants for a single family dwelling.
3. Project Design Review Plans - General. Per Business and Professions Code §5641, plans presented for Project Design Approval which do not require grading or drainage plans may be prepared by unlicensed persons.

4. Plans for Own Property. Per Business and Professions Code §5641, any person may prepare conceptual or Project Design Review plans for any landscape project on a property they own.
5. Irrigation Plans. Property owners or irrigation consultants may prepare irrigation plans per Business and Professions Code §5641.6.
6. Advisories. The SFDB may recommend, but may not require, that an applicant hire a licensed landscape architect to prepare plans for projects in the following circumstances:
 - i. The plan submittals are determined inadequate or otherwise do not meet minimum review standards; or
 - ii. The proposed project involves extensive grading, revegetation, or improvements with unique or sensitive habitats or environments.

5.3 General Landscape Design Guidelines

Landscape is considered an integral part of a project's design. Landscape can enhance the City's natural beauty and can complement new development as well as provide neighborhood cohesiveness. Landscape embellishes and enhances new construction. Landscape plans should reflect consideration of overall site aesthetics and the environment. However, avoid using landscape to correct problems of project design or size. The architecture of a building should be of sufficient aesthetic quality to stand alone regardless of potential landscape changes over time. Landscape improvements should complement architecture, provide outdoor privacy areas, provide screening for undesirable views, provide usable and functional open space; and should incorporate trees, use appropriate water-wise or native plants, limited turf, and efficient irrigation design principles. The following general guidelines apply to all types of landscape proposals:

5.3.1 Site Layout and Massing

Landscape massing refers to plant material that creates an appearance of substantial vegetation. The landscape plan should balance plant material and hardscape site elements such as walkways and walls.

1. Landscape Coverage

Landscape massing shall provide for a generous overall percentage of plant landscaping in relation to the site and lot hardscape/impervious areas. Paved areas should be minimized and planting areas maximized.

2. Screening

Where appropriate, consider screening plants, such as hedges, to create privacy between neighbors. Special care should be taken to ensure that mature hedge heights and sizes will fit the space and ensure that only a minimal amount of pruning will be necessary for maintenance. Hedges shall comply with applicable height standards in SBMC Titles 28 and 30.

3. Trees

Mature canopy trees shall be provided for shade and weather protection.

4. Limit Lawn Size

Use turf/lawn grass only in areas where appropriate for recreational uses. Consider natural lawn alternative species.

5.3.2 Plant Selection

Plant selection for the landscape plan should consider principles of sustainable landscaping and be sensitive to the elements described below.

- 1. Blend with Existing Vegetation:** Blend the type, coloring, size, and height of proposed vegetation into existing vegetation.
- 2. Growth:** Consider appropriate plant selection and location to:
 - Reduce the potential for normal plant material growth to significantly block an adjacent property's primary scenic view or sunlight (solar access).
 - Achieve privacy screening and produce a desired aesthetic result. Select plants that can grow to the necessary screening height without having to be pruned.
 - Ensure vegetation scale consistent with public view preservation called for in the Coastal Land Use Plan and General Plan.
- 3. Adaptability:** Emphasis shall be placed on the concept of "Right Plant/Right Place." Select plants that are naturally adapted to the growing conditions of the site such as soil type, slope, climate tolerance, space limitations, etc.
- 4. Native Plants:** Use native plants whenever possible. Where non-native species are used, emphasize plants from other Mediterranean climate regions.
- 5. Fire Resistant Landscape:** Use fire resistant landscaping where possible. See Section 3.6 for High Fire Hazard Area Landscape Design and the City Website (SantaBarbaraCA.gov) for information about High Fire Hazard Area landscaping requirements. A list of plants which are highly flammable and should not be planted in the High Fire Hazard Area is included in the High Fire Hazard Area Landscape Plan Requirements handout, available on the City website.
- 6. Invasive Plants:** Avoid invasive plant use, especially in or adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas. Carefully select plants to avoid species that might migrate from the landscape and become "weeds." (Refer to the California Invasive Plant Council website (www.cal-ipc.org) for an up-to-date list of invasive plants.

- 7. Plant Spacing & Height:** Space plants according to their mature size, allowing for plant maturation without crowding or root damage. Consider mature plant height to avoid unnecessary pruning and hedging, especially under windows and eaves of structures and along property lines.
- 8. Group by Plant Needs:** Plants with similar cultivation, watering, and sun/shade requirements should be grouped together into hydrozones and designated to separate appropriate valve types.
- 9. Natural Plants:** Plant landscaping should consist of real plants. Artificial plastic plants or the use of non-living ground cover including artificial turf is not allowed in parkways. The use of artificial turf may be approved at other less visible areas on private property but is generally discouraged.

5.3.3 Sustainability Principles

Guidelines throughout this document support sustainability principles. Landscape and irrigation system design should reflect consideration of sustainable landscaping principles and be sensitive to elements described below. Also, see the sustainability concepts in Special Area Guidelines, Section 3.6.

- 1. Preserve Existing Vegetation:** Preserve existing vegetation and significant trees as much as possible (See Section 5.4, Tree and Vegetation Preservation).
- 2. Protect Natural Features:** Avoid unnecessary grading and removal of soil. Protect existing natural features and re-vegetate graded areas as soon as possible.
- 3. Passive Heating & Cooling:** Use landscaping to control sun and wind. For example, the use of deciduous trees and/or vines on the south sides of buildings can provide passive heat in the winter and cooling in the summer.
- 4. Prevent Erosion:** Consistent with the Safety Element, non-native species that add weight to a hillside or coastal bluff (such as ice plant) shall be avoided on steep hillsides or adjacent to bluff top areas susceptible to erosion. Deep-rooted species that assist in stabilizing slopes and control erosion are encouraged.
- 5. Water Efficiency:** Water-efficient landscaping and irrigation is mandatory per SBMC Chapter 14.23. Landscape and irrigation shall be planned with consideration for water conservation through use of water-wise plant species, water-efficient irrigation systems, and other methods, including using drip irrigation, mulching, and designing irrigation to minimize runoff.
- 6. Minimize Waste:** Sustainable landscape planning that protects the environment by using minimal resources and creating minimal waste is encouraged.

- 7. Stormwater Management Program (SWMP):** Santa Barbara neighborhoods most commonly drain to local creeks, which then flow to the ocean. Urban runoff pollution such as pesticides and fertilizers from lawns, heavy metals from driveways, and pet waste, pose a significant threat to the quality of life on our beaches and streams. Use methods to retain water on the site to recharge groundwater and to use for future watering. Bioswales, infiltration areas, vegetated filter strips, porous paving, rainwater cisterns, and rainwater gardens should be incorporated into site design to allow biofiltration of sediment and pollutants, to slow down potentially damaging flows, and to increase the presence of nature within the community. These measures are aesthetically attractive, low tech, low cost, low maintenance, and provide significant benefits to our environment. Appropriate choice of plantings and irrigation for the site helps reduce urban runoff and subsequent water pollution.
- 8. Permeability and Percolation:** Use urban runoff/pollution control Best Management Practices to maximize the water permeability of sites and on-site percolation of runoff. For example, design projects to minimize paved areas, collect runoff on-site, or maximize hardscape area permeability with brick or pavers on sand.
- 9. Drainage Flow:** Use natural watercourses, earth swales, v-ditches, drywells, and water dissipation devices to enhance drainage flow on and through the site.

5.3.4 Street and Driveway Design

Street and driveway designs should use the following design concepts.

- 1. Grading & Retaining Walls:** Design streets or driveways to limit grading quantities of cut and fill. Avoid steep, exposed excavations and minimize or avoid the use of retaining walls where possible.
- 2. Limit Paving:** Limit street and driveway widths to reduce paving quantity and encourage slower vehicle speeds, while providing adequate access. Consider the use of ribbon driveways, permeable pavers and other materials that decrease the amount of pavement and increase permeability. Please note: applicants must consult with the Fire Department and Transportation Division regarding alternative paving methods.
- 3. Garage Orientation:** Where possible, orient driveways and garages to be street-friendly, so that garage or carport openings are not facing directly onto streets.
- 4. Sidewalk Widths:** Provide street sidewalk widths that allow for landscaped parkways to buffer pedestrians from street traffic where feasible.
- 5. Street Trees:** City street trees should be incorporated into a project when none exist and/or at locations recommended by the SFDB or City Arborist and the Street Tree Master Plan. Any

street tree removal is subject to Parks & Recreation Commission approval. Consult with the Parks & Recreation Department for information on Street Trees.

- 6. Planting in Parkways:** Water-wise plants are required and turf is prohibited in parkways. Drip irrigation or low precipitation rate sprinklers/ bubblers are encouraged and irrigation must be designed to minimize runoff. See the City's list of recommended plants for parkways on the City website at SantaBarbaraCA.gov.

5.4 Tree Preservation

Preservation and protection of existing trees should be a primary goal of the landscape and site design. Development should be sensitive to existing mature trees as they are a valued community resource. One of the Environmental Resources Element's policies is to protect and maintain urban and native trees. Mature trees should be integrated into project design rather than removed. All feasible tree preservation and protection options should be exhausted prior to tree removal. The removal and replacement of trees may require Design Review, Street Tree Advisory Committee and Parks & Recreation Commission review and approval, and/or a building permit. The following standards apply to projects involving tree removal or replacement.

5.4.1 General Tree Replacement Standards

If preservation of existing trees is not possible, replacement trees may be required pursuant to the replacement ratios and size guidelines below.

Tree Replacement Ratios

Trees four inches in diameter or greater measured four feet, six inches above grade that are proposed to be removed shall be replaced on site on a minimum one-to-one basis, unless an alternative replacement ratio is deemed necessary as part of the environmental review process. The standard recommended mitigation for tree loss is a 3:1 ratio replacement. This standard can also be increased up to 10:1 depending on the type of tree removed, lot size, and size and expected survival rate of replacement trees.

Tree Replacement Size

The appropriate replacement size shall be determined through the environmental review process in conjunction with SFDB review depending on the size and biological value of the tree and on-site conditions. See Tree Protection and Replacement Standards, below.

5.4.2 Tree Protection and Replacement Standards

Consistent with Environmental Resources Element Biological Resources policies ER11 and ER12, 1979 Conservation Element Visual Resources Policies 1.0, 2.0 and 4.0 and 1979 Conservation Element

Biological Resource policies 4.0 and 5.0; efforts shall be made to preserve trees, particularly native trees including oak trees. Projects involving work in the vicinity of trees are subject to the following standards.

Earth Disturbance Prohibitions

No earth disturbance is allowed within a radius as measured from the trunk equal to one-third the distance that the tree canopy extends from the trunk. For example, if the tree canopy extends 30 feet out from the trunk, no work can be done in the first 10 feet from the outside edge of the trunk in all directions. In the remaining area under the canopy/dripline, soils may only be disturbed with hand tools.

Arborist's Report

Any work within the general vicinity of the dripline of a tree may require an Arborist's Report. If an Arborist's Report is required, the SFDB may defer to the report's recommendations.

Paving

Paving and other non-permeable surface encroachment under native tree canopy/driplines should be minimized. For oak trees, minimal paving is allowed under the canopy due to the sensitivity of their shallow surface roots and their sensitivity to disturbance. If paving or other non-permeable surfaces encroach within a canopy, no more than 25% of the total area beneath the canopy/dripline can be covered and paving may only be placed by hand or with hand tools.

Distance from Structures

The edge of all new structures should be placed a minimum of five (5) feet from the expected mature native tree canopy/dripline at the time the structure is approved.

Protection Notes

Proposed projects which may impact existing native trees are required to submit Tree Protection notes as part of the final landscape submittal. Notes shall be located on all site and/or grading plans.

Replacement Dimensions

If it is determined that a native tree is to be removed, the diameter of the required replacement tree(s) will be equal to or greater than one-quarter the diameter of the existing tree trunk (e.g., a 16-inch-diameter oak will be replaced with one measuring no less than 4 inches). Smaller tree replacement sizes than this formula may be specified in some cases to ensure replacement tree availability.

Tree Root Barrier Guideline

The SFDB may suggest or condition that an applicant study or confer with a tree expert (landscape architect, the City arborist, or certified arborist) to offer recommendations as to whether a root barrier should be required to be installed. Root barriers may be suggested for a proposed tree location where

the roots are within four feet of any hardscape, on-site or off-site, and may potentially affect buildings, sidewalks, paved pathways, curbs, etc. Palm trees do not need root barriers. Barrier placement is not recommended for tree installation when existing trees are in close proximity because installation may damage roots of those trees.

Condition of Approval for Specific Tree or Planting

The SFDB may conditionally approve projects to maintain specific plantings or trees. The specific planting or tree aspects of a plan to be maintained are noted on plans. Alterations to plantings or trees specifically noted to be maintained on an approved landscape plan require Design Review and/or a building permit.

5.5 Definitions

5.5.1 Original Planting Purpose:

The function or purpose of a tree or plant(s) on an approved landscape plan, sometimes explicitly stated, sometimes not. For example, tree or planting purposes can include: privacy protection, preservation of solar access, shade provision, visual framing of a building, style consistency, visual interest, historic preservation, erosion control, appropriate species near a biologically sensitive area, etc.

5.5.2 Substantially Similar Tree or Landscaping Replacement:

Replacement trees or landscape shall be considered “substantially similar” and therefore eligible for administrative design review if they meet either of the following sets of criteria:

1. Is the same species of tree or plant(s) as the tree or landscape being replaced; and
Can be replaced with a reasonably proportionate tree per Item 2.a., below; and
Is at least as large as the approved landscape plan tree or plant(s) planting size, and a minimum of five-gallon planting containers for trees; OR
2. The replacement tree or landscape is a different species than the approved landscape species to be replaced and the proposed species meets the following criteria:
 - a. Measurement of trees proposed for removal are less than 12 inches in diameter at 4 feet, 6 inches above the ground and less than 20 feet tall; and
 - b. The area of cumulative changes to conditionally approved plants is less than 1,000 square feet in the front yard and less than 20% of the total landscaped area; and
 - c. A vegetation removal permit is not triggered per SBMC Chapter 22.10.
 - d. Characteristics of the proposed replacement tree or plant(s) continue to achieve the original planting purpose as defined in Section 3.5.A.

5.6 Special Areas

5.6.1 Hillside Residential Landscape Design

Landscape in hillside areas should be sensitive to the community's view of the new development, as well as the view from the subject property. Plantings should soften the appearance of a new home, major addition, and retaining wall project components. The following guidelines are specific to hillside areas of the City.

- **Appearance.** Landscaping should visually diminish the mass of structures as viewed from the community. Plantings should be selected from a palette of California native plants or Mediterranean plants that blend into the hillside and frame views. Plantings should not distract from the natural hillside profile. For example, palm tree installation would be discouraged, especially along ridgelines. Also, brightly colored flowers such as bougainvillea planted to cover large areas of publicly visible fences and walls would be discouraged because they contrast with the surrounding hillside when viewed from a distance.
- **Natural Surroundings.** Oak woodlands, steep slopes, bluffs, creeks, watersheds, or other native habitats should be evaluated by a biologist, arborist, or landscape architect to determine the appropriate landscape plant selection and maintenance to minimize negative effects on natural areas.
- **Grading.** Grading should be minimized.
- **Slope Failure Mitigation.** In the event of slope failure, a soils engineer, geologist, or landscape architect may be required to recommend appropriate mitigation for plantings and/or irrigation installation as well as erosion control measures.
- **Erosion Control Measures.** Erosion control measures should also be included on hillside landscape plans.

5.6.2 Creeks and Wetlands

Projects near creeks and wetlands are subject to the following guidelines. These projects should also be designed with special consideration for consistency with the Sustainability Principles outlined in Section 5.2.C.

- **Degradation Prohibition.** Development adjacent to creeks and wetlands shall not degrade the creeks, wetlands, or their riparian environments.
- **Native Plant Species.** Protect, maintain, enhance, and restore native plant species and vegetation in areas along creeks and wetlands.
- **Immediately Adjacent Landscaping.** Only native, non-invasive vegetation shall be planted immediately adjacent to creeks and wetlands. Consult a licensed landscape architect or

biologist to provide recommendations and specifications to plant, protect, or revegetate a site adjacent to a creek or wetland. If there are impacts to the creek or wetland from development, a biologist will be required to prepare a restoration plan.

- **Buffer Landscaping.** Vegetative buffers shall be provided between natural areas and developed or high-use areas. Buffer vegetation should be native to California.

5.6.3 High Fire Hazard Area Landscape Design

- **Defensible Space.** Meet defensible space requirements around structures as required by the Fire Code, consistent with Fire Department High Fire Hazard Area Landscape Requirements (Appendix B). The requirements specify drought-tolerant, fire-resistant plants and plant placement to reduce wildfire hazards. Please consult with the Fire Department's Wildland Fire Specialist.
- **Native and Fire Resistant Vegetation.** Native and fire resistant vegetation must be used for major cut and fill slope landscaping where development occurs on hillsides. Within vegetation management areas as identified in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (Vegetation Management Units) vegetation shall be designed to reduce the amount of flammable vegetation. Please consult with the Fire Department's Wildland Fire Specialist.

SECTION 6: Administrative Approval Standards



6.1 Administrative Approval Procedures

6.1.1 Procedure

Projects are eligible for administrative staff review and approval as a ministerial action by the Community Development Director without full review by the SFDB if the project complies with the applicable administrative approval standards in sections 6.2 and 6.3. The Administrative Approval Standards are comprised of standards that are based on a specific project's scope (Section 6.2) and standards that apply to all projects (Section 6.3). Projects that may involve risk of an adverse environmental effect and projects that require public noticing per SBMC §30.220.040 are not eligible for administrative approval. The Community Development Director may approve, conditionally approve, or deny an application for administrative approval.

Evaluating Projects Using the Administrative Approval Standards

The following procedure is used to determine whether a project application is eligible for administrative staff approval:

1. Review the project scope of work and plan sheets carefully to determine which Project-Specific Administrative Approval Standards apply.

2. Once the applicable Project-Specific Administrative Approval Standards have been identified, review each part of the scope of work for consistency with the criteria in the corresponding Project-specific standard.
3. Review each part of the scope of work for consistency with the General Administrative Approval Standards.
4. If the project is consistent with all applicable project-specific standards and the general standards, it may qualify for administrative approval.

Example: If the project scope includes a first-story addition, a new window, a pool, and new landscape, review the following project-specific standards in Section 6.2: First-Story Additions (B), Hardscape & Landscape Alterations (J), Pools and Spas (N), and Windows (W). It must also meet the applicable general standards in Section 6.3: Design Style (A), Alterations (B), Colors (C), Scale (D), Landscape (E), and Consideration of Neighbors (F). If the project meets all the criteria in each of the project-specific standards and is consistent with the applicable general standards, it may be eligible for administrative approval.

Note: Even if a project appears to meet all applicable project-specific and general administrative approval standards, Staff may refer any project application submitted for administrative approval consideration to the SFDB for review if the project poses neighborhood compatibility issues.

6.2 General Administrative Approval Standards

To be eligible for administrative staff review, a project must comply with the following general standards as well as the applicable project-specific standards listed in section 6.2 above.

- **Design Style.** Style is expressed through architectural elements such as windows, doors, lighting, railings, trim, eaves, roof pitch, element proportions, and materials. The style of the proposed work should be stated on the project plans and should match the existing style or result in a cohesive new style. Wherever this document references a requirement for style compatibility, the following method is used to determine style compatibility. Staff will check for consistency of style of a structure's proposed elements with the elements for the chosen style. Staff may reference A Field Guide to American Houses or similar reference materials to confirm the proposed style classification. Staff will also check that any patterns or materials created by the existing elements are repeated in the proposed work. Proposed exterior materials must either visually match the existing design style or be consistent with the new style that is proposed.
- **Alterations.** Alterations must match the current architectural style of the building or result in one architectural style. Projects proposing multiple alterations to the exterior that result in a different architectural style may be approved administratively if the design intent is clear and the project results in a cohesive style.

- **Colors.** Additions must match the existing colors of the building, house siding, or trim. Simple color changes can be approved administratively where original colors are substituted with colors from the Santa Barbara Colors Guide. Proposals for bright colors or colors that do not match the house may not qualify for administrative approval.
- **Scale.** The scale of all additions must be compatible with the scale of the house, style of the building, and neighborhood. The scale of a project must be consistent with the prevailing development patterns in the neighborhood. The review criteria used to determine correct scale shall include the degree of project visibility, plate heights, roof pitch, and maximum building heights. See SFRDG 17-C for additional guidance. Additions or alterations out of character with the neighborhood or incorrectly sited on the lot will be referred to the SFDB.
- **Landscape.** Alterations to an approved landscape plan must be consistent with the original planting purpose. The original planting purpose is the function or purpose of a tree or plant on an approved landscape plan, sometimes explicitly stated, sometimes not. For example, tree or planting purposes may include: privacy protection, preservation of solar access, shade provision, visual framing of a building, style consistency, visual interest, historic preservation, erosion control, appropriate species near a biologically sensitive area, and more.
- **Consideration of Neighbors.** The project must be generally consistent with the Good Neighbor Guidelines in the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines. Development must be sited and oriented to minimize privacy issues, including adverse noise and lighting impacts.
- **Changes to Approved Plans.** Minor changes to approved plans may be approved administratively if they meet the criteria in Section 1.3.F of these Guidelines, “Changes to Approved Plans – Determining Substantial Conformance.” Changes that the Community Development Director finds not in substantial conformance with the approved plans shall be referred back to SFDB for a revised Project Design Approval.
- **Home Hardening (fire resistant construction).** Generally, projects using Fire Marshall approved materials in High Fire Hazard Areas will be reviewed with greater flexibility regarding materials than projects outside High Fire Hazard Areas. Projects located in High Fire Hazard Areas are required to use construction materials that are on the State Fire Marshal Listed Wildland Urban Interface Products list or comply with Chapter 7A of the California Building Code. For example, proposed roofing systems must be Class A Fire Rated; windows must be dual pane, with at least one pane being tempered glass; and decking material within 10 feet of the building must be fire-retardant treated wood or fire-retardant composite material.

6.3 Project-Specific Administrative Approval Standards

Projects requesting administrative approval must comply with each applicable set of project-specific standards identified in this Section 6.2 as well as the applicable general standards in section 6.3. The project-specific standards are organized alphabetically by project element. See the table below to help navigate to the standards applicable to your project.

A. Accessory Buildings (Excl. ADUs)	M. Mechanical Equipment: Rooftop
B. Additions: First Story	N. Pools and Spas
C. Additions: Second or Higher Story	O. Porches
D. Awnings	P. Retaining Walls
E. Chimneys	Q. Roofs and Reroofs
F. Color Changes: Exterior	R. Screening and Screening Waivers
G. Decks	S. Skylights
H. Doors	T. Tree Removal
I. Fences and Site Walls	U. Tree Removal, Emergency/Hazardous
J. Hardscape and Landscape Alterations	V. Trellises, Pergolas, Patio Covers, & Sunshades
K. Lighting: Exterior	W. Windows
L. Mechanical Equipment: General	

6.3.1 Accessory Buildings (Excluding accessory dwelling units)

New, altered, and expanded accessory buildings may be reviewed and approved administratively if the following criteria are met. Note, these standards do not apply to accessory dwelling units.

1. The accessory building does not exceed 800 square feet.
2. The accessory building does not exceed one story or 17 feet in height.
3. Project does not exceed 85% of the Maximum FAR (floor area ratio; FAR only applies to two-story development on lots less than 15,000 square feet);
4. Any mechanical equipment meets the mechanical equipment administrative approval design standards listed below in subsections 6.2.L and 6.2.M.
5. The accessory building does not include a roof deck.

6. Carports must have supporting columns with a diameter of at least 4 inches (thin support poles are not eligible for administrative approval).
7. The accessory building is not proposed to be located in the front yard. Exception: Carports and garages, including garages converted to a residential accessory use pursuant to SBMC §30.140.112, located in the front yard that are not publicly visible due to site topography or existing or proposed screening may be administratively approved. This exception does not apply to sheds, workshops, and other accessory buildings not used for covered parking.
8. Accessory buildings such must match the architectural style of the main house if they are publicly visible. If an accessory building is not publicly visible, then it does not need to match the architectural style of the main house.

6.3.2 Additions: First Story

First-story additions may be reviewed and approved administratively if the following standards are met:

1. Additions and any alterations are less than 17 feet in height, measured from existing grade;
2. Addition does not exceed 800 square feet on lots developed with less than 4,000 net square feet of floor area;
3. Addition does not exceed 250 square feet on lots developed with more than 4,000 net square feet of floor area;
4. Project does not exceed 85% of the Maximum FAR (floor area ratio; FAR only applies to two-story development on lots less than 15,000 square feet);
5. Any retaining walls proposed in conjunction with the addition must meet the development standards for retaining walls in SBMC §30.140.110.G and the Administrative Approval criteria for retaining walls in subsection 6.2.P.
6. The project does not include a vegetated roof.
7. Additions must not significantly alter the front/street-facing façade in terms of massing, scale, and architectural style.
8. Additions in the Hillside Design District must not result in a taller apparent height than the existing structure (see Section 29, p. 53-H of the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines for information on apparent height).

6.3.3 Additions: Second or Higher Story

New second story additions on existing one-story residences are not eligible for administrative approval. Additions to existing second or higher stories may be reviewed and approved administratively if the following standards are met.

1. Addition does not exceed 250 square feet.
2. Project does not exceed 85% of the Maximum FAR (floor area ratio; FAR only applies to two-story development on lots less than 15,000 square feet);
3. Any retaining walls proposed in conjunction with the addition must meet the development standards for retaining walls in SBMC §30.140.110.G and the Administrative Approval criteria for retaining walls in subsection 6.2.P.
4. Additions must not significantly alter the front/street-facing façade in terms of massing, scale, and architectural style.
5. Additions in the Hillside Design District must not result in a taller apparent height than the existing structure (see Section 29, p. 53-H of the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines for information on apparent height).

6.3.4 Awnings

Awnings no larger than 9 square feet over window or door openings that are compatible with the style and the colors of the existing house may be approved administratively. Shiny or reflective awning materials are prohibited. See subsection 6.2.V below for standards on patio covers.

6.3.5 Chimneys

The following standards must be met for administrative approval:

1. Chimneys are consistent with the style of the existing structure and use masonry, stone, stucco, or metal pipe.
2. Wood material is not used on chimneys.
3. Metal flues are of traditional design and are painted to match the roof color.
4. Exposed pipe beyond the top of the chimney shall be limited to the minimum required by Building & Safety.

6.3.6 Color Changes: Exterior

The project is consistent with 6.3.C “General Administrative Approval Standards, Colors”.

6.3.7 Decks

Decks are defined pursuant to SBMC §30.300.040 “D”. Rooftop decks are not eligible for administrative approval. The following standards must be met for administrative approval of other decks.

1. If the proposed deck is a first story deck, it is no larger than 400 square feet.
2. If the proposed deck is an elevated deck, it is no larger than 250 square feet.
3. If the proposed deck is an elevated deck, it is located at least 15 feet from any interior lot line.

4. Proposed deck railings are no higher than the minimum required by Building & Safety.
5. Deck wood is proposed to be left in a natural condition to weather or is proposed to be treated with a neutral or wood color stain or sealer or painted to match the color of the house or trim. Decks not made of wood are constructed of a quality material such as a wood-simulating composite and are neutral or earth tone in color.
6. Shiny or reflective decking and railing materials are prohibited. Glass railing treated to eliminate glare may be approved administratively.

6.3.8 Doors

The following standards must be met for administrative approval:

1. In door pairs, both doors and any sidelights have the same width.
2. Doors and sidelights are placed symmetrically within architectural elements if appropriate for the architectural style.

6.3.9 Fences and Site Walls (Excluding Retaining Walls)

Chicken wire, sheet metal (except quality COR TEN/weathering steel), corrugated metal, plastic, vinyl, and wire mesh fence materials are not eligible for administrative approval. Gabion wall (rock and wire mesh) and unfaced cement block site wall materials are not eligible for administrative approval. Fence and site wall materials not identified in the preceding sentences may be approved administratively if the following criteria are met.

1. If a fence is proposed, it is 8 feet or less in height, and if a site wall is proposed, it is less than 5 feet in height.
2. Height added to existing fences must match existing fence materials and contribute to a cohesive fence design.
3. If the fence is constructed of wood, it is constructed of smooth cedar, redwood, high-quality pressure-treated pine, or comparable material and left in a natural condition to weather or is treated with a neutral or wood color stain or sealer, or painted as described in number 4 below.
4. If the fence is proposed to be painted, the paint color either matches the predominant color of the siding or trim of the main building or is painted a neutral/earth tone color to blend with the surroundings.
5. If the fence is constructed of chain link, it is dark colored or hot dip galvanized chain link fencing located outside of any front yard. Chain link fences that are publicly visible must be screened with vegetation such as vines or shrubs to soften the appearance of the fence.

6.3.10 Hardscape and Landscape Alterations, Including Grading

Alterations including walkways, on-grade patios, driveways, planters, barbecues, firepits, fountains, and other yard amenities may be approved administratively provided they meet the following criteria:

1. Grading does not exceed 50 cubic yards outside the building footprint.
2. Grading does not occur on portions of the lot with an average slope of 15 percent or greater.
3. Grading does not occur within setbacks.
4. Paving for driveways is minimized to the extent required for ingress and egress per the Access & Parking Design Standards.
5. Paving materials are concrete, asphalt, pavers, flagstone, or similar hard surface and are neutral or earth tone in color.
6. New paved parking areas are screened from public viewing areas through fencing, landscaping, or other structures that also qualify for administrative approval.
7. Alterations do not occur on slopes of 30% slope or greater;
8. The landscape planting alteration generally meets the original planting purpose;
9. The landscape planting alteration does not alter or amend a condition of approval;
10. Alterations do not occur within 50 feet from the top of creek bank or within a designated creek buffer as established on an approved plan and section drawing;
11. A vegetation removal permit is not triggered pursuant to SBMC Chapter 22.10;
12. Any proposed retaining walls must meet the standards for retaining walls in SBMC §30.140.110.G and the Administrative Approval criteria for retaining walls in subsection 6.2.P.
13. Alterations do not occur in any environmentally sensitive habitat area as identified in the City's MAPS database, unless a technical study prepared by a qualified consultant indicates that the alterations will not have an adverse environmental impact.

6.3.11 Lighting: Exterior

The following criteria must be met for administrative approval:

1. Lighting fixtures and placement meet the standards in the Outdoor Lighting Ordinance (SBMC Chapter 22.75), including that the fixtures must generally be shielded to prevent sky glow and light trespass onto adjacent residential properties.

6.3.12 Mechanical Equipment: General

The following criteria must be met for administrative approval:

1. The equipment's property line decibel level must be consistent with the Noise Ordinance (SBMC Chapter 9.16).
2. New equipment is screened from view consistent with SBMC §30.15.120. Landscape screening is indicated on project plans to be maintained.
3. New equipment attached to a structure is not publicly visible, as defined in Section 6.4. Attached mechanical equipment that is publicly visible is not eligible for administrative approval.

6.3.13 Mechanical Equipment: Rooftop

Telecommunications facilities and antennas are not eligible for administrative approvals. Other rooftop equipment must meet the following criteria for administrative approval:

1. Equipment is screened pursuant to SBMC §30.15.120. The screening proposal must present an integrated appearance with the overall building.
2. If equipment will be visible from off-site locations despite screening, or in cases where only vegetative screening is used, the equipment must be painted the same color as the roof or adjacent background, as specified by staff.

6.3.14 Pools and Spas

Soil excavated for a below-grade swimming pool, or soil located within five feet of an exterior wall of a building that is excavated and recompact, shall not be included in the calculation of the volume of grading outside the building footprint. Above-ground pools are not eligible for administrative approval unless they are not publicly visible. Pools and spas may be approved administratively if the following criteria are met:

1. The pool or spa is screened or not publicly visible as defined in Section 6.4.
2. Site grading outside the footprint of the pool or spa does not exceed 50 cubic yards.
3. Any proposed retaining walls associated with the pool or spa must meet the administrative approval standards for retaining walls in subsection 6.2.P.
4. Any proposed mechanical equipment meets the mechanical equipment administrative approval criteria listed in subsection 6.2.L and 6.2.M.

6.3.15 Porches

Residential porches may be approved administratively if the following criteria are met:

1. If the porch is publicly visible as defined in Section 6.4, the porch roof is not higher than 12 feet.

6.3.16 Retaining Walls

Retaining walls may be approved administratively if the following criteria are met:

1. Less than 5 feet tall. Exception: If the project involves reconstruction of an existing, permitted retaining wall, then the retaining wall may be rebuilt at the same height and length using the same materials that were permitted or replaced with cut sandstone or stucco.
2. Similar in character in terms of height, length, and materials with other retaining walls visible in the neighborhood from public viewing locations.
3. Hillside Design District retaining walls must be screened with vegetation or finished in neutral colors to blend with the natural surroundings.
4. Retaining walls must meet the development standards for retaining walls in SBMC 30.140.110.G.
5. Any grading or landscape alteration associated with retaining wall construction complies with the administrative approval standards for hardscape and landscape alterations in subsection 6.2.J.

6.3.17 Roofs and Reroofs

Reroofs and projects proposing to replace existing two-piece clay Mission-Style tile with a different material are not eligible for administrative approvals. S-tile (one-piece) roofing material is not eligible for administrative approval unless it is replacing existing, permitted S-tile. Vegetated roofs are prohibited in High Fire Hazard Areas. In order to be approved administratively, new roofs and re-roofs must comply with the following criteria:

1. Shiny or reflective roofing materials are not used.
2. The type of roofing material and color is compatible with the architectural style of the structure. Neutral colors and earth tones are generally acceptable for administrative approval. See the Santa Barbara Colors Guide for examples.
3. Vegetated roofing is prohibited in High Fire Hazard Areas.

Roofing Materials Guidance. Roof materials generally eligible for administrative approval are listed in the table below by architectural style. Note: the table below is not an exhaustive list; roofing materials not listed below may be considered for administrative approval on a case-by-case basis. Additional guidance on appropriate roof materials can be found in A Field Guide To American Houses.

Architectural Style of Main House	Roofing Materials
Any Style	Match Existing Material
Contemporary (Ranch, Midcentury, American Vernacular, tract homes)	Composition Shingle, Standing Seam Metal
Craftsman	Composition Shingle
Mission	Clay Two-Piece Terra Cotta Mission Tile
Spanish Revival	Clay Two-Piece Terra Cotta Mission Tile
Victorian (Queen Anne, Stick, Folk Victorian)	Composition Shingle

6.3.17 Screening and Screening Waivers

Screening elements such as fences, hedges, walls, and landscape planting may be administratively approved provided that they are no higher than necessary to fully screen the mechanical equipment, automobile parking spaces, or other item they are intended to screen. The requirement for screening may be waived if the item being screened is not publicly visible or is already screened by existing screening elements, location on the lot, or topography. Refer to the Administrative Approval Standards for fences for approvable materials.

6.3.18 Skylights

Skylights may be approved administratively if the following criteria are met:

1. Skylights are flat and made of non-reflective materials; or
2. Are screened by the building form, landscaping, or a parapet.

6.3.19 Tree Removal

Tree removal or replacement may be approved administratively if the following criteria are met:

1. The tree removal or replacement meets the original planting purpose as defined in Section 6.4 of these Guidelines.
2. The tree removal or replacement does not alter or amend a condition of approval.

3. No more than three trees are proposed to be removed or replaced.
4. No historic tree or specimen tree is proposed for removal. (Historic and specimen trees are specially designated and are reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Department.).
5. No setback tree shall be administratively approved for removal unless it has received required approvals at Street Tree Advisory Committee and Parks & Recreation Commission.
6. No skyline or mature native tree (such as a Coast Live Oak/*Quercus agrifolia*) is proposed for removal.
7. Replacement does not occur within 50 feet from the top of creek bank as established on an approved plan or section drawing.
8. A vegetation removal permit is not triggered pursuant to SBMC Chapter 22.10.
9. If tree removal does not include replacement trees, it may still be approved administratively if it meets any of the following criteria:
 - a. An appropriate number and size of other trees would remain on the project site after the requested removal, in keeping with the original planting purpose; or;
 - b. A sufficient number of adjacent trees exist on City Property (i.e. the Public Right of Way including parkway planters) to maintain desirable tree density in the area; or
 - c. The tree or trees have been determined by a qualified arborist to be negatively affecting the structural integrity of real property including fences, structures, or paving; or
 - d. The tree or trees have been determined by a qualified arborist to be negatively affecting the structural integrity or health of other adjacent trees; or
 - e. The tree or trees have been determined by a qualified arborist to be unable to survive or thrive in its current location.

6.3.20 Tree Removal, Emergency/Hazardous

Removal of a tree that presents an apparent hazard to life or property, as verified in writing by a certified arborist, may be approved administratively if any of the following criteria are met:

1. The main trunk of the tree is less than four inches in diameter at a point four feet, six inches above the highest natural grade adjacent to the trunk; or
2. The tree is diseased, and the tree's condition is a source of present danger to healthy trees in the immediate vicinity; or
3. The tree is so weakened by age, disease, storm, fire, or any injury so as to cause imminent danger to persons or property; or

4. The tree is dead; or
5. The Fire Department has ordered the tree removed in order to maintain required defensible space on the lot or to comply with the City's Wildland Fire Plan.

6.3.21 Trellises, Pergolas, Patio Covers, and Sunshades

Chain link, chicken wire, shiny or reflective material, corrugated metal, plastic, vinyl, wire-mesh, and unfaced cement block materials are not eligible for administrative approval. Trellises and pergolas are eligible for administrative approval if the following criteria are met:

1. The trellis or pergola covers less than 250 square feet and is less than 12 feet in height.
Exception: If the trellis or pergola is not publicly visible as defined in subsection 6.4, then it may be up to 500 square feet.
2. Constructed of smooth cedar, redwood, high-quality pressure-treated pine, or comparable material and left in a natural condition to weather or be treated with a neutral or wood color stain or sealer. Structures not made of wood must be constructed of a quality material such as a wood-like composite (e.g. Trex). Structures that are painted must match the paint color of the siding or trim of the main building.

6.3.22 Windows

Projects involving the replacement of original wood windows with vinyl windows are discouraged and may not be eligible for administrative approval, especially if the proposed vinyl windows are publicly visible. Repair of existing wood windows is preferred when feasible. Projects proposing to remove a publicly visible Special Design Window (as defined in Section 6.4) are not eligible for administrative approval. Projects involving the replacement or installation of windows may be administratively approved if the following criteria are met:

1. The type, color, size, and scale of proposed windows are compatible with the architectural style of the house.
2. Windows of additions visually match the predominant windows of the house.
3. The window location, size, and scale generally comply with Good Neighbor Guidelines for privacy.
4. Where adjacent windows are "divided light" type, the new windows are also divided light to match the existing windows.
5. Proposed divided light windows must use an external grid and not have faux mullions or an "internal grid" where the grid is sandwiched between the two pieces of glass.

6.4 Definitions

Any terms used in these Guidelines that are not specifically defined below shall be as defined in the Municipal Code.

6.4.1 Publicly Visible

The condition when a building, structure, or land use is within the area between a front lot line and up to 35 feet behind any front lot line and is either (1) observable by the public along any abutting public area or (2) is observable by the public from a public area on the other side of an abutting street or right-of-way.

6.4.2 Special Design Window

A window that uses quality materials such as wood or steel and is constructed using a unique or artistic design style is considered a Special Design Window. Such windows are an important component of a building's character and may be an enhancement to the entire neighborhood. Such windows include, but are not limited to, leaded glass windows, stained glass windows, multi-pane wood windows with elaborate muntin patterns, or non-rectangular accent windows.



6.4.3 Skyline Tree

A tree that is at least 50 feet tall that is publicly visible from multiple viewing locations and contributes to the character of a streetscape or neighborhood. Skyline trees are generally taller and more noticeable than adjacent trees and structures.