

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Community Design chapter addresses the desired visual character of Corte Madera's natural and built environments. It provides an overview of the Town's existing design character and the regulatory framework for managing community design. It examines community design through residential, non-residential and infrastructure issues, and provides a series of goals, policies and implementation actions at the end of the chapter.



#### EXISTING CHARACTER

##### *Built Environment*

The Town of Corte Madera has many unique residential areas (e.g. Christmas Tree Hill, Mariner Cove, Chapman Hill, Madera Gardens). The Town provides a mixture of housing types, styles and densities. While the majority of housing in Corte Madera was built in the 1950s and 1960s, some of the oldest homes were built in the late 1800s, and new homes continue to be built today.

The Town offers shops and small businesses in the historic Old Corte Madera Square, as well as regional, upscale shopping at the Village of Corte Madera and Corte Madera Town Center. Many of the Town's streets are wide and well landscaped, while streets in hillside areas tend to be narrow and winding.



##### *Natural Environment*

The natural environment of Corte Madera is very diverse, ranging from flat wetlands at the bayside to steep terrain on Chapman and Christmas Tree Hill. The natural environment presents challenges when considering design approaches. Conditions such as floodplains and steep topography dictate certain building options and site planning.

#### VISION FOR THE FUTURE

A Community Preferences Survey conducted in 2002 indicated that residents are generally pleased with the existing characteristics of Town design.

Given that there are almost no remaining vacant areas within the Town that can support development due to physical constraints, and that residents are content with the overall existing design character, the focus of Community Design for the future emphasizes opportunities for improvement and enhancement of existing conditions.

### 5.2 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

#### CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE

The California Government Code does not require a Community Design Element as part of a municipality's General Plan. However, the State's General Plan Guidelines suggest that this Element may be useful in providing additional direction, beyond that of the Land Use Element, to the planning area's development pattern. This direction can enhance the sense of place and quality of life in the planning area.

#### TOWN OF CORTE MADERA HOUSING ELEMENT

The Housing Element for the Town of Corte Madera was adopted in 2002, and is a legally mandated component of the General Plan. The Housing Element analyzes housing needs, constraints and opportunities within the Town.

The Housing Element includes policies addressing design and neighborhood preservation. The Housing Element is bound separately from the remainder of the General Plan.

#### TOWN OF CORTE MADERA ZONING ORDINANCE

The most recent update of Town of Corte Madera Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1994. The primary purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is to control and regulate land use in the Town and "to protect and promote the public health, safety, comfort, convenience, prosperity and general welfare" Specific objectives of the 1994 Zoning Ordinance include:

- ◆ To provide a precise guide for the physical development of the Town.
- ◆ To ensure that uses and structures enhance their site and harmonize with the surrounding area.
- ◆ To ensure that the present, unique character of the Town's different neighborhoods is protected and enhanced.

Additionally, in 1994, the Town adopted abbreviated Design Review Guidelines in the Zoning Ordinance to guide the Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator in their analysis of development plans.

**DESIGN REVIEW**

The Town conducts two tiers of design review. The Zoning Administrator conducts minor design review. If the project involves significant issues, the Planning Commission conducts the design review. Design review projects are generally examined on a case-by-case basis, with proposed design and setting among the issues considered in the design review process. Affirmative findings must be made by the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission that the project is in scale and harmonious with the area and that the project will not significantly or adversely affect the views, sunlight or privacy of nearby residences.

**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

The General Plan contains several policies requiring the Town to adopt and then apply a complete set of Design Guidelines. These guidelines will provide design advice to property owners and architects, as well as to Town staff and decision-makers when considering development proposals.

**CHRISTMAS TREE HILL COMMUNITY PLAN**

The Town Council adopted a Community Plan for Christmas Tree Hill in 1989. The Plan addresses specific standards and regulations for the unique development conditions of Christmas Tree Hill (see text box), which are accommodated by the Goals and Policies included in this Element.

**Christmas Tree Hill Development Conditions**

- Steep, narrow and winding roads
- Limited off street parking
- Heavy vegetation and older, wooden structures resulting in high fuel loading and severe fire hazard
- Limited emergency access to residents and property
- Limited ability of infrastructure to accommodate additional development
- Preference for retention of the single family residential character
- Preference for a variety of physical, economic, and social living environments

**OLD CORTE MADERA SQUARE DESIGN CRITERIA**

In 1991, the Town Council adopted design criteria for facades fronting on Old Corte Madera Square. These criteria address building scale and proportion, pedestrian orientation, building materials and colors, entryways, building heights and elevations, and rooflines and parapets (see text box).

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

### 1991 Old Corte Madera Square Design Criteria

- Harmony in the scale and proportions with existing Old Corte Madera Square buildings. This may include limitation in height to a maximum of 30 feet and minimal front setbacks.
- An inviting openness at street level. Windows oriented to enhance pedestrian interest. Humanly scaled detailing at street level, including the pedestrian amenities (awnings, benches, tables, chairs, landscaping, etc.).
- Continuous building facades along block fronts around the park (i.e., park facing facades should be unbroken by driveway approaches).
- The use of warm, inviting materials and colors (earth tones, wood and stone materials emphasized).
- The main entry of each structure is oriented towards the Square.
- Sensitive articulation of detail to create variety and diversity among various elevations. The historical detailing and character of all buildings preserved in any renovation. Facade design shall carry around to the perimeter elevations of buildings where possible, particularly on corner lots where sides are visible.
- The rooflines and parapets will be an integral part

### CORTE MADERA BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

Founded in 1922 by citizens interested in enhancing the community, the Corte Madera Beautification Committee is a group of volunteers who help maintain the beauty of the Town.

Regular projects sponsored by the Committee include hanging baskets, Oktoberfest at Old Corte Madera Square, Bulb Planting Day, and the Street Tree Project, which provides trees to homeowners free of charge to be planted in the grassy strip between the sidewalk and the front of the home. The Committee is also involved in various projects to provide Town improvements, such as park benches and dog stations.

## 5.3 RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

With Corte Madera's residential neighborhoods nearly built out, the focus in the coming years turns to improving the neighborhood character of these areas. Growing families and the expensive real estate market in Marin County add to ever increasing pressures to expand the size of existing homes and improve an aging housing stock. Proper design can enhance neighborhood character when new development is proposed on the few remaining vacant lots or when existing homes are expanded or otherwise remodeled. The evaluation and analysis of new or expansion projects must balance the needs of the home owner with potential neighborhood impacts affecting views, sunlight, privacy and safety. This balance must be determined on a case-by-case basis. The residential design Goals and Policies included in Section 5.6 reflect the guiding principles discussed below.

#### *Livability*

An attractive quality of life for the citizens of Corte Madera includes a scale and pattern of development that emphasizes "livability." Characteristics of a livable community include visual interest, safety, resource efficiency, sense of place, neighborhood pride and ownership, and recognition of changing economic trends such as Home Occupations, and connectivity. Residential design Goals and Policies emphasize community-building

through improvements that physically connect residential neighborhoods to one another, to schools, shopping and other community centers.

### *Strong Neighborhood Character*

Residential design Goals and Policies emphasize maintenance and enhancement of the Town's many unique neighborhoods that range from bayfront water oriented areas to grassy and wooded hillsides, while also recognizing the merits of allowing individual design themes in new residential construction.

### *Designing with the Natural Landscape*

To a large extent, neighborhood character in Corte Madera derives from the natural setting, as seen in neighborhoods situated adjacent to the San Francisco Bay, the older residential enclaves in and around Town Center, and the hillside neighborhoods in areas such as Chapman and Christmas Tree Hill. The residential design Goals and Policies of the General Plan provide for strengthening the visual and physical connection between the Town and its surrounding landscape, including respect for natural landforms through appropriate site planning.

### *View Preservation*

Corte Madera has some of the most beautiful and captivating views of any Bay Area community. With a backdrop of Mount Tamalpais to the west, with San Francisco Bay in the foreground to the east, and with its rolling hills and natural ecological systems at various points in-between, view preservation is a very important community amenity. Views from residential properties add to property values and enhance quality of life. At the same time, such viewsheds can also create conflict for owners seeking to develop their properties, remodel or construct additions to their homes when construction may impact views from nearby properties. This issue should be regulated with standards that allow for a reasonable amount of development while minimizing significant negative impacts to neighbor's views. View issues tend to be linked to potential impacts on neighbor's expectation of privacy and access to sunlight. These issues must be balanced and evaluated on a case-by-case basis when reviewing a development project.

### *Privacy Preservation/Sunlight Preservation*

Owners seeking to develop their properties, remodel or construct additions to their homes may impact the privacy and/or access to sunlight previously enjoyed by nearby neighbors. During the development review process, these issues should be regulated with standards that allow for a reasonable amount of development while minimizing or mitigating significant or adverse privacy and/or sunlight impacts.

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

### *Flexibility*

The variation in topography, access, and styles in the existing built environment of Corte Madera calls for flexible design strategies. Residential design Goals and Policies therefore encourage design creativity to better reflect site planning opportunities and constraints.

## 5.4 NON-RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

While most of Corte Madera's non-residential properties are already developed, potential remains for reconstructing underutilized sites or for new construction when land use changes are proposed. The non-residential Goals and Policies included in Section 5.6 reflect the three guiding principles discussed below.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

#### *Mixed-Use Development and Multi-Use Structures*

Sustainability principles promote environmental, social and economic vitality. In keeping with the General Plan intent to build a strengthened sense of community and to implement sustainability concepts, the Town seeks to make commercial and office locations pedestrian-friendly and more than just places to live, shop or work. Additionally, mixed-use development decreases dependence on the automobile.

#### *Emphasis on Scenic Attributes*

The town character and scenic views that Corte Madera is known for are as important to non-residential development as they are to residential development. Good, non-residential design can create active, visually interesting areas that invite pedestrian activity. Consequently, Goals and Policies for non-residential design deemphasize hardscape (areas devoid of natural vegetation), optimize connectivity to other areas, and promote visual interest, safety, social interaction, resource efficiency, and quality design.

### *Flexibility*

The variety of landscapes and commercial development existing in Corte Madera necessitates flexible design standards, as well as definitive principles to promote good design. As such, non-residential Goals and Policies include flexibility in their direction and interpretation.



### KEY DESIGN ISSUES

The following points are addressed within the Goals and Policies (Section 5.6), and are emphasized here because they are considered among the most pertinent issues facing Corte Madera's non-residential design.

#### *Floor-Area Ratio*

The 1989 General Plan prescribed a 0.34 maximum Floor-Area Ratio (FAR) for commercial development. In preparing this General Plan update, the Town determined that a higher FAR would be appropriate in some instances, particularly as a means of provided greater design flexibility and as an improved opportunity for economic development and housing. Approaches for establishing an FAR Ordinance have been established in the Land Use section of the General Plan (Chapter 2).

#### *Connectivity*

Overall, Corte Madera has well-designed neighborhoods and non-residential centers; however, some parts of the Town are physically disconnected. This separation of uses is convenient for vehicular circulation but discourages walking and bicycling. Non-residential development should provide pedestrian and bicycle pathways to improve connectivity between land uses and as a means of reducing vehicular travel.

#### *Mixed-Use*

Mixed uses allow residential development in conjunction with commercial uses, to promote efficient use of land resources, energy and materials, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods, reduced traffic congestion and associated vehicle emissions, and compatibility with existing community character.

## 5.5 INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN

In addition to the community design issues associated with residential and non-residential construction, design policy should also encompass public utilities, streets, and other infrastructure that affect the appearance of the community. The infrastructure design Goals and Policies included in Section 5.6 reflect the following guiding principles.

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### *Design According to the Natural Setting*

Protecting and enhancing the community's natural setting, as noted earlier in this chapter, is important to the Town. Infrastructure, such as roads, open storm drain channels and pump stations, should be designed to respect the surrounding natural landscape while achieving specific goals relative to provision of infrastructure improvements.



### KEY DESIGN ISSUES

#### *Linkages*

Public facilities, such as storm drainage channels, can be used to create green linkages that provide continuity and connection through the community. Green linkages can include paths, creek ways, and other linear open spaces, as well as habitat areas for water birds and other species.

#### *Scenic Corridors*

Certain roadways within Corte Madera can be developed as scenic corridors, including Tamalpais Drive, Paradise Drive, Corte Madera Avenue and San Clemente Drive, as a means of improving the visual quality of the community and creating attractive public places.

#### *Undergrounding*

Where possible, infrastructure and utilities can be placed underground to better preserve the natural landscape and views.

## 5.6 GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS FOR COMMUNITY DESIGN

### COMMUNITY DESIGN

#### GOAL CD-1

Community design that recognizes the environmental, aesthetic and social benefits of the natural scenic qualities of Corte Madera.

#### POLICY CD-1.1

Develop and implement Design Guidelines for residential, non-residential and infrastructure development that provide design and site planning approaches, landscaping, site grading and similar architectural and site planning criteria that will add design excellence, visual quality and interest to the community.

*Implementation Program CD-1.1.a: Adopt Design Guidelines*

Adopt and apply Design Guidelines, applicable throughout the Town. The Guidelines shall include sections focused on architecture, size and scale of structures, building materials and colors, landscaping, grading, views and similar development subjects.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	Three years for adoption; On-going application
Resource:	General Plan Maintenance Fee

#### POLICY CD-1.2

Require residential, non-residential and infrastructure design that respects natural areas and ecosystems within Corte Madera.

*Implementation Program CD-1.2.a: Natural Site Design*

Apply the following site planning and design provisions in the Design Guidelines:

- Discourage development that would have detrimental effects on ridgelines.
- Encourage hillside development to follow the natural slope of the landform.
- Require development in the vicinity of creeks, wetlands, or the Bay to respect the natural integrity of those areas.

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

- Encourage the use of building materials that incorporate natural visual elements of the project's particular environment.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department

Timeframe: Three years

Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fees

### POLICY CD-1.3

Encourage the use of building design and materials that conserve energy and material resources.

#### *Implementation Program CD-1.3.a: Site Plan and Design Review*

Incorporate the following site planning and design provisions in the Design Guidelines:

- ~~Encourage~~ Siting, design and orientation of buildings that includes optimal solar use, enhances natural ventilation, and reduces overall energy demand.
- ~~Encourage~~ Standards for the use of drought-tolerant landscaping and recycled water.
- ~~Encourage the use of~~ Standards for Green Building materials and practices.
- Provide for administrative approvals of roof-top solar panel installation, consistent with provisions of the Design Guidelines.
- Prohibit the use of reflective materials and encourage the use of landscaping and other design features to minimize glare.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department

Timeframe: Three years

Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fees

### POLICY CD-1.4

Provide for community and neighborhood activity centers at appropriate locations that create recreational opportunities, encourage social interaction, and provide a sense of public space and centers for neighborhood gatherings.

#### *Implementation Program CD-1.4.a: Activity Centers*

Identify and prioritize locations (including upgrades to existing activity centers) that can serve as appropriate community and neighborhood activity centers, which may include:

- Menke Park,
- Town Park,
- Paradise/San Clemente Community Plan area,
- Town Center and The Village shopping centers,
- School sites (through joint-use provisions with the applicable School District).

Include provisions for enhancement of these locations in required Community Plan areas and in Capital Improvement Program budget updates.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	On-going
Resources:	General Plan Maintenance Fees; Application Fees; CIP Budget

**POLICY CD-1.5**

Preserve the value of the community’s night sky and avoid unnecessary light and glare from signage, building and landscape illumination, or other sources of outdoor lighting.

*Implementation Program CD-1.5.a: Reduce Lighting Levels*

Revise the Zoning Ordinance and other appropriate sections of the Municipal Code to limit lighting levels, and to establish acceptable types of lighting, fixtures, and the location of lighting in relation to nearby properties. Include the following in the Design Guidelines to reduce lighting levels:

- a requirement that outdoor lighting of nonresidential uses shall be designed to be turned off when not in use where security and safety are not a concern.
- When streetlights are locate along the perimeter of the community Plan areas, overhead lighting shall be shielded to minimize lighting of adjacent properties.
- Roadway, commercial, and residential lighting shall be limited to the minimum amount needed for public safety and shall be designed to focus light where it is needed.
- Street light fixtures should be designed to block illumination of adjoining properties and to prohibit light emitted from the fixtures above the horizontal plane.

Responsibility:	Planning Department
Timeframe:	Two years

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

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Resource: General Plan Maintenance Fee

### **POLICY CD-1.6**

Establish an Administrative Code Enforcement program as a means of retaining a desirable and aesthetically attractive community.

*Implementation Program CD-1.6.a: Code Enforcement*

Provide necessary staff to enforce development standards and reduce visual blight through Code Enforcement actions.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: On-going  
Resources: General Fund

### **RESIDENTIAL DESIGN**

#### **GOAL CD-2**

**Distinctive residential neighborhood character.**

#### **POLICY CD-2.1**

Develop and implement residential Design Guidelines.

*Implementation Program CD-2.1.a: Adopt Design Guidelines*

Adopt and apply Design Guidelines, applicable throughout the Town, with focused design approaches for specific residential neighborhoods, including Mariner Cove and Christmas Tree Hill. The Guidelines shall include sections focused on architecture, size and scale of structures, building materials and colors, landscaping, grading, views and similar development subjects.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: Three years for adoption; On-going application  
Resource: General Plan Maintenance Fee

#### **POLICY CD-2.2**

The Design Guidelines shall include consideration of the perception of visual bulk in evaluating the form of new residential construction. Visual bulk in residential development may be decreased by stepping structures up and down hillsides, limiting the height and mass of the wall plane, allowing a maximum of two stories visible from every elevation, and similar approaches.

***Implementation Program CD-2.2.a: Reduce Visible Building Bulk***

Incorporate options to reduce visible building bulk in the residential Design Guidelines.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: Three years  
Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fees

**POLICY CD-2.3**

Require new residential construction, including large additions, to respect the scale and character of nearby structures by minimizing abrupt or excessive difference in appearance or scale.

***Implementation Program CD-2.3.a: Residential Scale and Character***

Include the above provisions in the Design Guidelines.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: Three years  
Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fee

***Implementation Program CD-2.3.b: Design Flexibility***

Review and, as necessary, revise the Zoning Ordinance development standards to ensure flexibility and promote the use of innovative site planning and design solutions.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: Two years  
Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fee

**POLICY CD-2.4**

Allow second story construction involving new single-family homes, additions to existing residences, new second residential units and two-story detached accessory structures where site and view conditions warrant.

***Implementation Program CD-2.4.a: Second Story Construction***

Apply the following design criteria for second story construction in the residential Design Guidelines:

- Setbacks from property lines.
- Design approaches that break the mass of wall planes, including features such as recessed second story above the first floor, variation in wall plane, use of dormers, substantial eave overhangs, varied roof lines, etc.

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

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- The use of quality architectural design and materials compatible with the main body of the home and with the neighborhood.
- The location of the proposed second story relative to placement of residences on adjoining properties, including those properties located across a driveway or street from the subject property.
- Limiting the impact of the proposed second story on privacy to adjoining residences and yards through features such as window size and placement, physical screening, decks, etc.
- Limiting the impact of the second story on short- and long-range views. (See General Plan view policies.)
- The type, extent and quality of views and number of properties that may be impacted.
- The extent to which existing trees or landscaping will screen or soften the appearance of the second story from adjoining residential properties.
- Limiting the impact on solar access.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: Three years  
Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fees

### POLICY CD-2.5

Ensure new residential development incorporates views in site design and architectural planning.

#### *Implementation Program CD-2.5.a: View Definitions*

The Town's Design Guidelines and the design review process shall place greater emphasis on long-range views than on short-range views. For the purposes of considering views, the Town shall be guided by the following:

- A "view" is a scene from a residence and/or its active use area (such as a yard or deck), and includes both upslope and downslope scenes.
- Views can be categorized as either short-range or long-range. Short-range views are those predominantly limited to the particular neighborhood of the project. This can include a nearby view toward a park or include view corridors of substantially open spaces. Conversely, long-range views encompass broader and significant viewsheds of sites further away, such as views towards Mount Tamalpais and substantially open ridgelines or hillsides, and views toward San Francisco Bay, bridges and distant cities.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: Three years  
Resources: Application Fee; General Plan Maintenance Fee

**POLICY CD-2.6**

Consider the impacts to long-range views created by proposed or existing landscaping on and adjoining a project site.

*Implementation Program CD-2.6.a: Landscaping Code Provisions*

Include provisions in the Design Guidelines to ensure consistency with this policy approach. In general, existing landscaping that matures and results in partial loss of views is considered acceptable, while new site landscaping associated with a development project shall ensure protection of off-site views.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: Three years  
Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fees

**GOAL CD-3**

**An integrated residential community that fosters a strong sense of place.**

**POLICY CD-3.1**

Require pedestrian-scale improvements for new residential developments and large additions, such as front porches and placement or orientation of the garage away from the street.

*Implementation Program CD-3.1.a: Pedestrian Design*

Apply the above provisions in the Design Guidelines.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: On-going  
Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fees

**POLICY CD-3.2**

Install pedestrian and bicycle path connections between residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, schools, parks and other key community activity nodes, where feasible. Require these improvements to be made as part of new development projects.

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

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### *Implementation Program CD-3.2.a: Connectivity*

Consider potential activity node connections for each new development project involving single-family residential or non-residential construction. The Town may require submittal of title or other information from a project applicant to assist in completing the review.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: On-going  
Resources: Application Fees

### *Implementation Program CD-3.2.b: CIP Budget*

Include provisions for pedestrian and bicycle path connections in the Town's Capital Improvement Program budget.

Responsibility: Public Works  
Timeframe: On-going  
Resources: CIP Budget

## **POLICY CD-3.3**

Create attractive front yards in residential neighborhoods, open to the street.

### *Implementation Program CD-3.3.a: Fences on Street Frontages*

Amend provisions of the Town's Municipal Code and include criteria in the Design Guidelines discouraging the use of tall solid fences or walls along street frontages of individual lots, particularly within the required front yard setback.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: Three years  
Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fees

## **POLICY CD-3.4**

Discourage development of walled or gated communities.

### *Implementation Program CD-3.4.a: Gated Communities*

Amend provisions of the Town's Municipal Code and include criteria in the Design Guidelines discouraging walled or gated communities.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: Three years  
Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fees

**NON-RESIDENTIAL DESIGN**

**GOAL CD-4**

**Innovative non-residential designs that incorporate appropriate size and scale of development.**

**POLICY CD-4.1**

Adopt non-residential Design Guidelines that address commercial, office, light industrial and public facility land uses. The intent of the Guidelines is to add design excellence, green building strategies that reduce resource use and exposure to hazardous materials, visual quality and interest to the community while using custom design approaches particular to site development constraints.

*Implementation Program CD-4.1.a: Adopt Design Guidelines*  
Adopt non-residential design approaches in the Design Guidelines.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	Three years
Resources:	General Plan Maintenance Fee

**POLICY CD-4.2**

Encourage non-residential development to utilize a unified or consistent design theme, particularly when involving multiple structures as part of one project. Thematic and stylistic diversity may be allowed when the overall project design achieves a harmonious effect.

*Implementation Program CD-4.2.a: Unified Design Theme*  
Apply the above policy provisions in the Design Guidelines.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	Three years
Resources:	General Plan Maintenance Fees

**POLICY CD-4.3**

New construction or remodeling actions at The Village and Town Center regional shopping centers shall be given special consideration to ensure exceptionally high quality design, to support mixed-use development proposals, and in providing flexibility to developers to meet particular market needs.

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

### *Implementation Program CD-4.3.a: Shopping Center Design*

The Design Guidelines shall incorporate special site planning and architectural criteria for the shopping centers that allow flexibility in design approaches while ensuring an exceptionally high design quality, in accordance with the Town's Green Building Guidelines, particularly in support of those projects providing mixed land uses.

Design proposals for The Village and Town Center shall recognize the unique site characteristics and qualities of each center, utilize architectural styles and approaches that provide consistency with overall established design themes at the malls. The Design Manuals required by the original approvals for the shopping centers shall be updated from time to time through the Design Review Permit approval process. Remodeling projects that are consistent with the approved Design Manuals and which are not visible from outside the respective shopping centers and which do not appreciably increase on-site parking demand may be allowed without Design Review applications.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	Three years
Resources:	General Plan Maintenance Fees

### **POLICY CD-4.4**

Discourage the use of corporate architecture that is incompatible with the design character of the project site or area, or which is inconsistent with the Design Guidelines.

### *Implementation Program CD-4.4.a: Corporate Design Themes*

Apply provisions of the Design Guidelines that discourage use of corporate design themes in non-residential development when incompatible with the project site or its surroundings.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	Three years
Resources:	General Plan Maintenance Fees

### **POLICY CD-4.5**

Floor area ratios for non-residential development shall adhere to Town design policy.

### *Implementation Program CD-4.5.a: Floor Area Ratio*

The following criteria will be addressed in the non-residential floor area ratio (FAR) standards in Community Plans, updates to the Zoning Ordinance and in the Design Guidelines:

- Compliance with the FAR limits prescribed by the underlying General Plan land use designation and standards of any adopted Specific Plan.

- Size and location of the subject property.
- Freeway visibility of the proposed building(s); properties fronting on Highway 101 shall be permitted higher FAR's only where visual impacts to the Highway corridor are minimized.
- Building placement on a lot.
- Architectural design (including proposed building heights and amount of visual bulk of buildings).
- View impacts.
- Extent of impervious surface being created.
- Resultant traffic impacts of the proposed use.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
 Timeframe: Two to three years  
 Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fees

**POLICY CD-4.6**

Control the extent of non-residential visual bulk in new construction.

*Implementation Program CD-4.6.a: Non-Residential Design Guides*  
 Control visual bulk in new non-residential construction projects, including redevelopment of existing commercial centers. Develop provisions in the Design Guidelines that emphasize creative placement of structures on a project site, including clustering of structures, limiting the height of one or more structures of the project, through appropriate design of expansive wall planes, and similar architectural and site planning approaches.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
 Timeframe: Three years  
 Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fees

**POLICY CD-4.7**

Development standards shall be drafted to encourage flexible interpretation and application of development standards, to promote the use of innovative site planning and design solutions, and to facilitate renovation of existing commercial centers and mixed land use approaches.

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

### *Implementation Program CD-4.7.a: Flexible Development Standards*

Revise the Zoning Ordinance to ensure provision of flexible development standards for non-residential development and to facilitate Design Guidelines implementation. Include provisions for redevelopment of existing commercial and office centers where mixed land use approaches are proposed.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	Two years
Resources:	General Plan Maintenance Fees

### **POLICY CD-4.8**

Ensure that new non-residential construction conforms to the desired design character of the Town.

### *Implementation Program CD-4.8.a: Contribution to Architecture*

Through the Design Guidelines, require new non-residential construction, including large additions, to positively contribute to the Town's architectural character, and to complement design approaches in the project's general neighborhood.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	Three years
Resources:	General Plan Maintenance Fees

### **GOAL CD-5**

**Non-residential development that promotes pedestrian activity and provides community-gathering locations.**

### **POLICY CD-5.1**

Ensure that non-residential development provides amenities that promote pedestrian activity and community gathering.

### *Implementation Program CD-5.1.a: Pedestrian/Community Gathering Locations*

Implement the above Policy for pedestrian and community gathering locations for non-residential developments through the following:

- Require new development or redevelopment of existing commercial and office complexes to provide pedestrian pathways from parking areas to storefronts and buildings, and, where land ownership and site conditions allow, provide connections to adjoining residential neighborhoods and public facilities.

- Require building placement within new development or redevelopment of commercial and office complexes to allow for creation of pedestrian areas.
- Identify and address within the Design Guidelines opportunities for placement of art in public places and in new business and office developments.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
 Timeframe: On-going  
 Resources: Application Fees

**POLICY CD-5.2**

Redesign the existing governmental facilities along Tamalpais Drive as a Town Commons, consistent with overall objectives of the Design Guidelines and view policies.

*Implementation Program CD-5.2.a: Town Commons Design*

Ensure any Town Commons redevelopment actions are consistent with the design, site planning and view objectives of this chapter, and those in the Land Use Chapter.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
 Timeframe: On-going  
 Resources: CIP Budget

**POLICY CD-5.3**

Consistent with Land Use Chapter Policies, prepare Community Plans for the Old Corte Madera Square, Paradise Drive/San Clemente Drive, and Fifer/Tamal Vista areas that establish design standards for those areas.

*Implementation Program CD-5.3.a: Community Plan Design*

Ensure the preparation of community plans for the Old Corte Madera Square, Paradise Drive/San Clemente Drive and Fifer/Tamal Vista areas are consistent with the design, site planning and view objectives of this Chapter and with Land Use policies of Chapter 2 of the General Plan.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
 Timeframe: Three to ten years  
 Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fee

**INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN**

**GOAL CD-6**

**Public facilities and infrastructure that recognize the value of the natural environment.**

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

### POLICY CD-6.1

Support infrastructure improvements that meet service objectives while considering sensitivity to natural systems.

***Implementation Program CD-6.1.a: Criteria for Infrastructure***

Include criteria for site improvements for installation of infrastructure in the Design Guidelines. This shall include provisions weighing the need for the infrastructure improvements with any particular site constraints pertaining to design and the natural environment. Where practical, designs should minimize visibility of infrastructure improvements from public rights-of-way and adjoining properties through site planning and use of landscaping and berms.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	Three years
Resources:	General Plan Maintenance Fee

### POLICY CD-6.2

Whenever and wherever possible, convert overhead utility lines to underground and require underground utilities in areas of new development.

***Implementation Program CD-6.2.a: Underground Utilities***

Convert overhead power and utility lines to underground facilities, where feasible and consistent with provisions of Sections 14.04 and 15.40 of the Municipal Code.

Responsibility:	Public Works Department
Timeframe:	On-going
Resources:	CIP Budget

### POLICY CD-6.3

Ensure that public utility facilities, including electric power substations, switching and control facilities are screened, landscaped and/or otherwise obscured and integrated into the surrounding environment.

***Implementation Program CD-6.3.a: Utility Providers***

The Town shall work cooperatively with utility providers to ensure design of infrastructure improvements incorporates appropriate site planning and screening measures. This program includes regulating the location and design of wireless communications facilities, satellite dishes and other miscellaneous antennas in accordance with Town Ordinance No. 866 and the Federal Communications Act.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	On-going
Resources:	General Fund; Application Fees

**POLICY CD-6.4**

Develop gateway entry features at key locations in the Town.

*Implementation Program CD-6.4.a: Design of Gateways*

Identify locations for construction of gateway features (see Land Use Chapter) and include appropriate design criteria. Include gateway design features in the Design Guidelines addressing materials, colors, schematics of design features, etc.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	Completion in five years
Resources:	General Plan Maintenance Fee; CIP Budget

**POLICY CD-6.5**

Develop scenic roadway corridors on the following key roadway segments: Tamalpais Drive, Paradise Drive, Corte Madera Avenue, Redwood Highway and San Clemente Drive. Identify scenic bicycle and pedestrian corridors.

*Implementation Program CD-6.5.a: Scenic Corridors*

Adopt the above-noted selected roadways as scenic corridors in the Town, and establish scenic corridor design standards for development and maintenance of scenic corridors, including bicycle and pedestrian corridors. Include scenic corridors design criteria within the Design Guidelines.

Responsibility:	Planning and Building Department
Timeframe:	Three years
Resources:	General Plan Maintenance Fees

**POLICY CD-6.6**

Adopt Town street design and construction standards.

*Implementation Program CD-6.6.a: Roadway Design*

The Design Guidelines shall include roadway design standards, as appropriate, to ensure the following:

- Facilitate vehicular access.
- Allow for emergency vehicle access.
- Allow for the development of a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle network.
- Encourage transit and non-single occupant vehicle travel.

## 5.0 COMMUNITY DESIGN

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- Address aesthetic and environmental characteristics as well as function and safety.

Responsibility: Planning/Bldg & Public Works Departments  
Timeframe: Three years  
Resources: General Plan Maintenance fees

### **POLICY CD-6.7**

Establish design guidelines for trails, marshes and open spaces.

*Implementation Program CD-6.7.a: Trail and Marsh Design*

Include provisions in the Design Guidelines for trails, marshlands and open space areas that minimize disturbance of natural areas, reduce visual impacts as seen from off-site and which facilitate appropriate public use.

Responsibility: Planning and Building Department  
Timeframe: Three years  
Resources: General Plan Maintenance Fee