



# Site Design (Table 2) Fact Sheet & Focus Questions:

## **BACKGROUND**

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### **WHAT IS SITE DESIGN?**

Site design refers to the arrangement of buildings and open spaces on adjacent sites to maximize the shared benefits of sunlight, circulation and views.

### **WHY IS SITE DESIGN IMPORTANT?**

Proper site design can further establish the identity of a neighborhood or area through sensitive placement of structures, grading, fencing and walls, drainage, parking, trash enclosures, and landscaping.

### **WHAT ELEMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS ARE IMPORTANT TO SITE DESIGN?**

The following list of items plays an important role in the location of a building on a site:

- Topography and Grading
- Setbacks
- Parking Location and Driveways
- Landscaping, fencing and walls and hardscape materials
- Water Management
- Views and Privacy

## **RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING GUIDELINES AND THE LAND USE DEVELOPMENT CODE**

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The existing Board of Architectural Review (BAR) Guidelines for Summerland contains elements (i.e. Scale and Orientation and Views and Privacy) that influence Site Design. In addition, the Land Use Development Code (LUDC) contains several sections that further dictate building location and required facilities (i.e. setbacks, parking and landscaping). The topics following this discussion are geared toward the elements of site design and the appropriate BAR Guidelines that currently exist.

### **URBAN AND RURAL AREAS**

The Summerland Community Plan established two subareas for the community. These two areas are the **Urban Area** where principally urban land uses exist and the **Rural Area** where land uses are rural or agricultural in nature. An understanding of the character and land uses plays an important role in the development of new design guidelines. When considering Site Design, it is important to recognize the different characteristics of each area and the important issues of each.

## **TOPOGRAPHY AND GRADING**

Topography is a term used to refer to the slope or relief of a site. Generally, slope is measured rise over run, or the elevation for point A and point B divided by the linear distance between the two points. The LUDC (§ 35.62, Ridgeline and Hillside Development Guidelines) encourages architectural design and landscaping that conforms to the natural topography. Guidelines apply to structures where a 16 foot drop in elevation occurs within 100 feet in any direction from the proposed building footprint.

Grading has both technical and aesthetic aspects. While some grading is often necessary to prepare sites and ensure proper drainage, a proposed development should strive to preserve and enhance the natural environment and any existing aesthetic qualities of the site. Since geological considerations may be crucial to your project, careful review of the site's geology is mandatory.

## **ISSUES TO CONSIDER**

- Should more specific criteria be established for steeply sloped properties?
- Should design guidelines differentiate between **Urban** and **Rural Areas**? If so how?
- What topographic features are important?
- The extent of grading allowed in the **Urban** versus **Rural Areas**
- Important topographic features

## **SETBACKS**

Summerland's residential areas are located on the steep, ocean facing hillside above the commercial strip and on small hills and canyons to the west, north and east of the **Urban Area**. In the **Urban Area** there is a mix of high density, a mobile home park, multifamily apartments, duplexes, small cottages, and large new single family homes. The **Rural Area** to the west, north and east of the **Urban Area** are single family homes on larger (15 acre) and agricultural uses (primarily orchards).

Residential zones existing in the Summerland Community Plan area include the following:

- R-1: Single Family Residential
- R-2: Two Family Residential
- RR: Rural Residential
- DR: Design Residential
- E-1: Single Family Estate Residential
- MHP: Mobile Home Planned Development
- M-RP: Industrial Research Park
- TC : Transportation Corridor
- AG: Agriculture

## **General Development Standards**

Residential Development within the various zones shall be designed, constructed, and established in compliance with the applicable requirements of each zone. Development standards include allowable density, setbacks, parking requirements and other similar regulations. Staff will provide the Development Standards in Table 2-11 and all applicable standards in Article 35.3 through Article 35.7 of this Development Code. These standards apply within the Coastal Zone and Inland area, except where noted.

### Community Plan Overlay Requirements

Section 35.28.210 (Community Plan Overlays) establishes additional requirements and standards that apply to development and uses located in an applicable community or area plan as specified in Section 35.28.210 (Community Plan Overlays).

The Summerland Community Plan established twelve (12) goals that were incorporated into the 1992 BAR Guidelines for Summerland. All goals will be carried over into the New Residential Design Guidelines:

#### Goals of the Summerland Design Guidelines

1. To protect the scenic character of Summerland.
2. To preserve the natural and/or agricultural environment.
3. To preserve the architectural and historic qualities of Summerland.
4. To promote visual relief throughout the community by preservation of scenic ocean and mountain vistas, creation and preservation of open space, and variation of styles of architecture, setbacks and landscaping.
5. To promote neighborhood compatibility.
6. To promote high standards of architectural design and the construction of aesthetically pleasing structures.
7. To encourage the protection of public and private views.
8. To encourage the protection of privacy for individual residences.
9. To encourage the development of safe, quiet and attractive residential areas in a variety of housing styles.
10. To encourage the development of attractive and appropriate commercial or mixed use development and the signage therein.
11. To encourage necessary and appropriate landscaping of slopes of 20% or greater featuring drought tolerant native landscaping wherever possible.
12. To encourage appropriate lighting that provides for safety while respecting adjacent light-sensitive uses, especially at nighttime.

All the goals noted above, except goal 11, influence site design for both **Urban and Rural Areas**. The development standards noted above establish the main building envelope. The application of the BAR goals further guide the location of the building and the elements required by development standards.

#### **ISSUES TO CONSIDER**

- Repetition of existing setbacks in **Urban Areas**
- Appropriate setbacks for various architectural features in the **Rural Area**
  - Residential structures
  - Gates and Fences
  - Accessory Structures
- Appropriate setbacks for various architectural features in the **Urban Area**
  - Residential structures
  - Gates and Fences
  - Accessory Structures
- Appropriate setbacks for various natural features within the **Rural Area**

### **PARKING LOCATION AND DRIVEWAYS**

Parking layout and location is regulated by various sections in the LUDC (§35.36.100). The Residential Design Guidelines may guide the design and treatment of required parking. This may be addressed through guidelines for garages and carports to the materials used for driveways and uncovered parking spaces.

### **ISSUES TO CONSIDER**

- Guidelines for the treatment of parking areas in transition areas, **Rural and Urban Areas**
- Spacing between parking lot driveways to minimize loss of on-street parking
- Encouraging shared parking areas
- Appearance and scale of a garage or carport

### **VIEWS AND PRIVACY**

Public Views are an important aspect of the character of Summerland. Although private views are not legally protected by the County, they should be taken into consideration in the design. The Summerland Community Plan contains the following policy:

*Policy VIS-S-3: Public views from Summerland to the ocean and from the Highway to the foothills shall be protected and enhanced. Where practical, private views shall also be protected (page 139).*

The BAR Guidelines also contains the following requirements for review when the County BAR finds that a project has the potential to create significant view or privacy impacts, the Board and applicant should consider the following as possible mitigation for view and privacy protection:

- a. Reduction of building height.
- b. Excavation of building into site.
- c. Hip roofs / direction of roof pitch / break up roof mass.
- d. Siting of new structure.
- e. Footprint of new structure.
- f. Reducing the mass of the second story and adding to the first story.
- g. Control of window, deck or balcony placement.
- h. View blockage of only "secondary" views (i.e. Bedroom instead of living room).

In addition, the Board shall make all of the following findings prior to approving a project that may impact adjacent views or privacy:

- a. The applicant has designed a project which limits impacts on his/her neighbor's views.
- b. There are no feasible means to further mitigate the project's obstruction of views and privacy without reducing overall square footage.
- c. The project is consistent with the adopted FAR's and Design Standards.

There are policies and findings weaved through various documents that regulate development in the residential corridor in Summerland. Based on this, structures should to the extent feasible, allow for view corridors between buildings and through the use of appropriate roof slopes. This can help emphasize human scale and points of reference.

### **ISSUES TO CONSIDER**

- Do these existing policies and findings appear to be sufficient?
- Will placing them in one document assist in design development?
- Other considerations?

### **WATER MANAGEMENT: STORMWATER AND DRAINAGE**

The amount of impervious surfaces used at a project site influences the amount of Stormwater runoff at a site. Runoff, if not directed and diffused, can cause significant damage to structures, the site and nearby creeks due to siltation. Measure and guidelines can help engineers, architects and designers address drainage early in the design through the minimization of impervious surfaces and opportunities to direct, slow and diffuse runoff.

### **ISSUES TO CONSIDER**

- Drainage patterns and topography
- Difference from Urban and Rural
- Adjacent creeks
- Erosion

### **LANDSCAPING AND HARDSCAPE MATERIALS**

Landscaping can enhance the character of a residence, screen elements that may be less desirable (i.e. parking and trash enclosures), or provide a means to reduce privacy issues. Landscaping can add texture, color and smell to enhance the residential area of Summerland. Landscaping should compliment and add to good architecture rather than hide poor architecture.

A "landscape plan" is required for certain areas of residential development. The landscape plan must meet the minimum requirements outlined in the LUDC (35.34.060).

### **ISSUES TO CONSIDER**

- Role of landscape and design
- How landscape enhances the quality of the area
- Landscape types to encourage (i.e. texture, color, smell)
- Drought-resistant varieties (consider time to grow, and appropriateness of trees once they reach mature size)
- Native non-invasive species
- Firewise Landscaping

### **FOCUS QUESTIONS**

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1. *What are important factors for building location issues for residential? **Urban versus Rural?***
2. *What types of landscaping does the community wish to recommend? What elements are important?*
3. *What are the parking problems or concerns in the residential areas of Summerland?*

4. *What other issues related to site design should be addressed? Why?*
5. What important grading issues are important in the **Rural Area**?
6. What are important grading issues are important in the **Urban Area**?

