



PURPOSE-BUILT SHARED HOUSING DESIGN CRITERIA

CITY OF HUNTSVILLE, TEXAS

2019

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CHAPTER 1.

GENERAL

Sections:

- 1.101.00 General
- 1.102.00 Development Review Process

Section 1.101.00 GENERAL

Section 1.101.01 Authority

The Huntsville City Council adopts these Design Criteria pursuant to the powers granted in the City Charter and the Texas Local Government Code, including Chapters 211 and 212.

Section 1.101.02 Effective Date

The provisions of these Design Criteria become effective on April 16th, 2019, except as otherwise expressly stated.

Section 1.101.03 Applicability and Jurisdiction

The provisions of these Design Criteria apply to all public and private purpose built-shared housing developments within the corporate limits of the City of Huntsville, except as provided by state or federal law or as otherwise expressly stated in the City Development Code.

Section 1.102.02 Interpretation, Administration, and Enforcement

- A. **Interpretation.** In the interpretation and application of these Design Criteria, all provisions must be:
 - 1. Liberally construed in favor of the City; and
 - 2. Deemed neither to limit nor repeal any other powers granted to the City under state statutes.
- B. **Administration**

The Director of the Department of Development Services is authorized by the City Council to interpret, administer, and enforce the provisions of the Purpose-Built Shared Housing Design Criteria. The provisions of this document shall be interpreted in a manner that best fulfills the spirit and intent of this manual and the Huntsville Horizon Comprehensive Plan.
- C. **Enforcement.** See City Development Code Article 14 ENFORCEMENT.

Section 1.102.03 Appeals

Any applicant who wished to appeal an administrative decision shall follow the procedures set forth in City Development Code Section 12.1000 APPEALS OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS.

Section 1.102.04 Changes to this Document

These Design Criteria shall serve as a working technical document that is intended to be updated as community needs and the real estate market evolve. This document may be amended by a majority vote of the Planning Commission.

Section 1.102.00 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The purpose of this chapter is to establish the application, review, and granting/denial procedures for Conditional Use Permits (CUP) and modifications to CUPs to properly evaluate and condition purpose-built

shared housing. Purpose-built shared housing developments generally have a unique and distinct impact on the area in which they are located and/or are capable of impacts to adjacent properties unless given special review and conditions. CUPs may be granted at the discretion of the City Council, and are not the automatic right of any applicant. CUPs go with the land and are nontransferable to another location.

Section 1.102.01 CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REVIEW

- A. Process.** The Conditional Use Permit Review process is generally as follows:
1. CUP application with Site Development Plan materials is submitted by applicant.
 3. The application will be routed to City divisions for comments, compliance review, and consistency with these Design Criteria.
 5. The applicant and any interested party requesting information will be provided with the preliminary Site Development Plan Review conditions. Final conditions will be issued ten (10) days after the preliminary notice if the applicant consents to conditions; the period may be extended during the resolution of any outstanding issues.
 6. All Site Development Plan Review conditions and decisions can be appealed pursuant to the procedures of *Development Code Section 12.1000 APPEALS OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS*.
- B. Site Development Plan Requirements.** Each Site Development Plan shall be accompanied by plot plans at a workable scale based on the project parameters, and all submittal requirements prescribed by the Director of Development Services. Plans shall provide detail of all the following items:
1. Elevation, floor plans, and location of the proposed buildings.
 2. Physical features such as landscaping, trees, hydrants, electric and telephone poles, lights, driveways, fences, and signs.
 3. Use and treatment of ground around such buildings or structures.
 4. Proposed drainage facilities.
 5. Identification of location and number of off-street parking spaces.
 6. Utility plan and demonstration of water compliance measures.
 7. A materials board displaying proposed building materials shall also be required at time of application. The materials board may be submitted electronically.
 8. Other pertinent project information identified by the applicant or deemed necessary for project processing purposes by the Development Advisory Committee.
 9. One CD, DVD, OR flash drive containing digital files of all materials submitted. Online file-sharing services may not be used to meet this requirement.

- C. **Required Fees.** A fee in the amount specified on the City’s fee schedule shall accompany Conditional Use Permit applications for Purpose-Built Shared Housing Developments.

CHAPTER 2.

DESIGN GOALS AND POLICIES

Sections:

- 2.201.00 Core Principles
- 2.202.00 A Vision for Shared Housing

2.201.00 CORE PRINCIPLES

These Design Criteria were developed through the active participation and collaboration of many different stakeholders, including City officials, management, and staff; representatives from Sam Houston State University, local property owners, and members of the community. This planning effort reflects a united desire to further advance “smart growth” efforts within the City of Huntsville.

The following six core principles were established by this collaborative group to guide development of the Purpose-Built Shared Housing Design Criteria:

- Neighborhood Livability and Walkability
- Economic Diversity and Vibrancy
- Distinctive Community Character
- Generous, Quality, and Interactive Open Space
- Enhanced Transportation Solutions
- Environmental Sustainability and Hazard Mitigation

Based on these core principles, this Chapter outlines specific goals and policies that will guide development so that all individual projects contribute to the larger vision of an economically and environmentally sustainable community. A goal identifies the physical, economic, and social ends that the community desires to achieve; a policy establishes a course of action for decision-makers to follow, which will fulfill the community’s desired goals.

2.202.00 A VISION FOR SHARED HOUSING

The intent of these criteria is to support the responsible and creative development of Purpose-Built Shared Housing. These developments will provide increased housing opportunities, which are central to a flourishing local economy, and will complement Sam Houston State University and other surrounding uses. The proposed landscaping, open space, and emphasis on walkable streets will provide ample recreational opportunities for residents and will encourage non-vehicular circulation. Collectively, these developments will showcase the unique community character and university setting of Huntsville and reinforce a strong sense of local identity.

A. Neighborhood Livability and Walkability

1. **Goal.** Provide a concentrated and vibrant mix of land uses for diverse groups of people to “live, work, and play.”
2. **Policies.**
 - a. Provide open spaces and connections to public spaces, such as sidewalks, gathering plazas, community centers, urban parks and recreational trails.
 - b. Activate areas through a variety and density of uses that attract people and promote activities throughout the day and night.
 - c. Provide a mix of affordable, universally-accessible and green housing types for people of all socio-economic and household groups (including students, faculty, families, singles, seniors, and disabled).
 - d. Encourage a variety of easily accessible transportation choices to reduce overall dependence on personal vehicles and reduce on-street parking.

- e. Allow flexibility in land use and building design to accommodate future changes in market conditions and real estate needs.

B. Economic Diversity and Vibrancy

- 1. **Goal.** Provide flexibility in project design and approval to encourage the development of a variety of housing and commercial uses to expand the choices available to the citizens of Huntsville, as well as students and faculty of Sam Houston State University.
- 2. **Policies.**
 - a. Allow flexibility in design and land use constraints to adjust for evolving market conditions, in order meet the economic, environmental, educational and social needs of the community of Huntsville.
 - b. Provide for reduced parking standards to facilitate shared parking, “park-once” strategies, and alternative transportation options.
 - c. Encourage, support, and where practical, require renewable energy solutions and significant energy conservation in all buildings and public spaces.
 - d. Support the integration of a compact and diverse mix of uses into individual project design. Retail commercial, restaurants, lodging, entertainment and other support service uses facilitate a community benefit from private housing development.

C. Distinctive Community Character

- 1. **Goal.** Create a vibrant local community, with a variety of uses that attract citizens of all ages and interests, with a special emphasis on providing housing, services, restaurants and entertainment for both students and faculty of Sam Houston State University.
- 2. **Policies.**
 - a. Provide a variety of housing types and land uses with sufficient density and spatial compactness to create an urban environment and neighborhood core.
 - b. Facilitate sustainability in design, construction, and in energy conservation.
 - c. Provide community-serving retail, restaurants, and entertainment services.
 - d. Provide pedestrian connections to neighboring communities.
 - e. Provide flexibility in land use and building design to accommodate changes in market conditions.
 - f. Create a community with a variety of transportation options for its residents, tenants, and visitors

D. Generous, Quality, and Interactive Open Space

- 1. **Goals.** Create an integrated green infrastructure of urban parks, recreational trails/pathways, street tree systems, community gardens, gathering spaces, and waterways. Use landscape to treat stormwater run-off, to conserve water, to create animal habitat, and to reduce “heat island effect.”
- 2. **Policies.**
 - a. Create permeable land area such as bio-swales, permeable surfaces, and rain gardens, and other landscape features to allow for infiltration of stormwater, to address stormwater management and water quality.
 - b. Protect creeks and waterways from untreated project run-off.
 - c. Encourage connection to existing parks, trails, and plazas through pedestrian-oriented sidewalks and non-vehicular areas.
 - d. Create abundant vegetated areas to enhance site contributions to natural ecological processes, sustain air and water resources, promote bio-diversity and reduce heat island effects.
 - e. Use native plants as a first-tier choice in landscaping to preserve the character and integrity of the unique Texas Piney Woods ecosystem.

E. Enhanced Transportation Solutions

1. **Goal.** Reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve accessibility and connectivity between surrounding uses, and encourage pedestrian and bicycle commuting.
2. **Policies.**
 - a. Provide pedestrian and bicycle linkages between core residential and commercial areas. Projects should provide infrastructure and support programs that supply local alternative transportation information and facilitate shared vehicle use and car-pooling.
 - b. Provide bicycle parking and storage.
 - c. Provide pedestrian oriented sidewalks.
 - d. Provide preferred parking for carpools, vanpools and renewable and hybrid or similar low-energy vehicles.

F. Environmental Sustainability and Hazard Mitigation

1. **Goal.** Design Purpose-Built Shared Housing developments to balance environmental responsibility, resource efficiency, occupant comfort and well-being, and community sensitivity. Emphasize alternative transportation resources.
2. **Policies.**
 - a. Design buildings to achieve maximum practicable energy efficiency through any number of best practices, including but not limited to, building envelope, appropriate mechanical equipment sizing, weather-proofing and efficient appliances.
 - b. Design buildings to take advantage of climate conditions for reducing building energy load.
 - c. Require all new traffic lights, street lights, parking structure lighting to use energy saving technologies, including but not limited to, light-emitting-diodes (LED) or other highly efficient technology.
 - d. Reduce heat island effect from roof, non-roof and right-of-way areas through any combination of strategies, including but not limited to, landscaping, shade structures (including photovoltaic panels, canopied walkways, vine pergolas, etc.), paving and hardscape materials with a high reflectance, and “cool-roof” technologies.
 - e. All post-project run-off flow rates and durations shall not exceed pre-project run-off flow rates and durations per the *City Development Code* and the Engineering Division *Standards, Specifications and Design Criteria*.
 - f. Treat every drop of water as a precious natural resource. Group plants by water needs and design irrigation systems by hydro-zones. When irrigation is necessary, utilize highly efficient irrigation systems (e.g., drip irrigation, low-angle spray heads, multi-programmable irrigation clocks or weather-based irrigation controllers, or the latest available efficient technology), and consider the use of non-potable water (such as captured rainwater) for irrigation uses.
 - g. Reduce consumption of non-local, non-renewable, non-recyclable and non-durable materials.
 - h. Reduce waste by designing buildings that have flexibility in potential uses to allow for durability and flexibility in reuse to minimize future demolition and waste creation.
 - i. Reduce embodied energy and carbon footprint associated with construction by prioritizing the use of local materials extracted and manufactured or assembled within 500 miles.
 - j. Utilize durable, salvaged, refurbished, reused materials, materials with recycled content or made from rapidly renewable sources for construction to the greatest extent possible.
 - k. Provide open air places with easy access and proximity to community residents and visitors.

CHAPTER 3.

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA

Sections:

3.301.00	Density
3.302.00	Development Standards
3.303.00	Landscaping
3.304.00	Lighting
3.305.00	Waste Management
3.306.00	Infrastructure and Public Improvements
3.307.00	Signage and Public Art

Section 3.301.00 DENSITY

Density refers to the average number of people living on one acre of land and is an important aspect of how cities function. There are social, economic, convenience, and environmental benefits of living in places of higher density - if they are designed to be mixed-use, walkable, and convenient to transit. Density for proposed projects will be determined by the regulations in this manual, including, but not limited to, building height, parking, landscaping, lighting, sidewalks, and architectural design. In order to address the scale and impact of purpose-built shared housing, which may not be reflected by the number of units alone, density for purpose-built shared housing developments shall be regulated by the number of bedrooms per acre.

Section 3.301.01 Determining Density

Before granting a Conditional Use Permit for a Purpose-built Shared Housing development, the City Council shall consider the following factors when determining if the proposed density for a specific project is appropriate:

Purpose-built Shared Housing, Attached and Detached
The proposed density meets the criteria of the regulations found in this manual.
Compliance with all applicable building and fire codes.
Compliance with the Huntsville Horizon Comprehensive Plan, City of Huntsville Development Code, and any other adopted city plans or policies.
Mitigation of any adverse effects on adjacent property or neighborhoods
The location of the development in relation to alternative transportation networks to and from the university including sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit networks.

Section 3.302.00 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Section 3.302.01 Residential Development Standards

- A. **Development Standard Compliance.** The new development, construction, or establishment of land uses meeting the definition for “Purpose-built Shared Housing” shall conform to the regulations of Table 3.302.01-1. Principal and accessory structures shall meet the same development standards unless otherwise modified by these Design Criteria.

- B. **Conditional Use Permit Requirement**
 - 1. “Attached” Developments. A Conditional Use Permit shall be required when:
 - a. a project does not conform to the criteria of this manual
 - b. a project is to be developed on property located within 200 feet of the Neighborhood Conservation District
 - c. the project exceeds a density of 29 dwelling units per acre.
 - 2. “Detached” Developments. A Conditional Use Permit shall be required when a project does not conform to the criteria of this manual as it pertains to “Detached” projects

- C. **Permitted Projections.** See section *City Development Code* Section 5.705.B (Allowed Setback Encroachments) for permitted projection standards relevant to Purpose-built Shared Housing.

- D. **Other Site Features.** Accessory structure placement and encroachments shall be governed by *City Development Code* Chapter 4.201 (Accessory Uses and Structures).

- E. **Architectural Compatibility.** All buildings, including secondary and accessory structures, walls, and fences located on a building site, shall be designed and constructed to be architecturally compatible with the primary residential building. Thematic architectural design shall be evident for all structures on a site.

**Table 3.302.01-1
Purpose-built Student Housing, Attached, Residential Development Standards**

Development Standards	Management (M) District	Within 200 Feet of Neighborhood Conservation (NC)	Additional Use Regulations/Notes
Maximum Density			
Attached Developments	None		Section 3.301.00
Detached Developments			
Minimum Lot Size			
Attached Developments	7,500		
Detached Developments	7,500		
Building Height			
Minimum	2 stories or 35 feet	2 stories or 35 feet	Alternative Compliance Available (see Section 3.302.03(G))
Maximum	4 stories or 50 feet	2 stories or 45 feet	Alternative Compliance Available (see Section 3.302.03(G))
Building Setbacks			
Street	25 feet		Alternative Compliance Available (see Section 3.302.03(H))
Property Boundary (adjacent to a separate lot or District)	10 feet		Alternative Compliance Available (see Section 3.302.03(H))
Interior/Private Streets (Interior PL)	10 feet		
Between Buildings	10 feet		Or distance required by Building and Fire Codes, depending on structural design
Parking (Any Property Line)	5 feet	8 feet	
Durable Building Material Area (Exterior Cladding)			
Primary Material	80% max.		Bare metal may not exceed 40% of exterior cladding
Secondary Material	20% min.		
Blank Wall Area	25 ft. max.		
Infrastructure and Public Improvements			
	Required		Section 3.306.00
Refuse/Recycling Area			
	Required		Section 3.305.00 and <i>City Development Code</i> Section 7.600 (Garbage and Recycling Dumpsters)
Parking & Garages			
Attached Developments	1.1 space/bedroom*		Section 4.403.00
Detached Developments	1.5 space/bedroom*		Section 4.403.00
Landscaping			
	Area equal to 20% of the total lot area		Section 3.303.00 and <i>City Development Code</i> Article 7 (Landscaping and Buffers)

Notes:

1. All standards are minimums unless otherwise noted.
2. Street setbacks are measured from all lot lines that abut a street. On corner lots, street setbacks apply along both streets.
3. Side (interior) setbacks are measured from all side lot lines that do not abut a street. Interior side setbacks do not apply to attached or abutting walls in a townhouse project.

*Parking must be provided for all land uses occurring on-site. Parking rates for additional uses found in *City Development Code*.

Section 3.302.02 Purpose-built Shared Housing Development Design Guidelines

The standards of this section are intended to facilitate development of superior-quality purpose-built shared

housing that is sensitive to the surrounding properties and enhances the quality of life in Huntsville. Design guidelines and criteria for purpose-built shared housing are provided to ensure that quality architectural design and construction are achieved from project inception to completion. The following guidelines shall be used to encourage purpose-built shared housing design to be functional in use, to be enhanced by architecturally pleasing massing and building orientations, and to maximize open space areas and other facilities.

- A. **Applicability.** This section pertains to the development and establishment of new land uses, and all conversions of units, meeting the definition of Purpose-built Shared Housing, in any district in the City of Huntsville where such land uses are permitted.
 - 1. Prior to project design and application, a pre-application meeting with the applicant/representative and City staff shall be required to discuss guideline criteria and specific project application direction.
 - 2. Site Development Plan Review Required. All residential developments meeting the definition of Purpose-built Shared Housing, including all projects that comply with the allowed land use and development standards of this chapter, shall be submitted for Site Development Plan Review to the Planning Division; see *City Development Code* Chapter 12.800 (Conditional Uses).

Section 3.302.03 Purpose-built Shared Housing Building Design Guidelines

Purpose-built Shared Housing building arrangements should function like individual small neighborhoods. Successful design of shared housing developments balances site planning, architectural design, and massing with open space and pathways to create a cohesive, enjoyable neighborhood. To achieve this design intent, consistent with the applicability identified in Section 3.302.02(A), each of the following design categories shall be addressed in all purpose-built shared housing projects:

- A. **Site Planning and Building Orientation.** Site planning for all purpose-built shared housing developments shall do the following:
 - 1. Minimize the incidences of one (1) building shading another.
 - 2. Minimize overlook of private backyards and patio areas from second-story units and windows.
 - 3. Design and orient buildings adjacent to public streets to promote “eyes on the street”; see Image 3.302-1.
- B. **Building Form and Relief.** The following features shall be used in building and site design:
 - 1. Orient buildings to create pedestrian pathways and active spaces (park, plaza, pocket park, paseo, or open space feature).
 - a. Pedestrian/common open spaces shall be directly and logically connected to exterior streets.
 - b. Orient windows, entries, and architectural features toward these spaces to activate the space and maintain safety; see Image 3.302-2.
 - c. Vary building height, roof heights, or roof forms to create visual breaks in the roof line; see Image 3.302-3.
 - 2. Use varied massing to reduce building scale and monotony of form; see Image 3.302-4. Incorporate the following techniques in every purpose-built shared housing project:
 - a. Incorporate stepped massing between stories within the same building or between

- building plans.
- b. Use layered wall planes and building projection offsets.
- c. Stagger units at different setbacks.
- d. Design landscaping to add depth and variation in building elevations and layout.



Image 3.302-1
Orient buildings toward adjacent public streets and layer wall planes for architectural interest.



Image 3.302-2
Orient windows and doors toward active streets or open spaces; vary building massing and roof lines to create interest along the street and pathways.

- C. **Site Features.** Site-enhancing architectural features and supporting elements shall be incorporated into each purpose-built shared housing project. These can include the following features:
 1. Architectural elements: tower structures, gated entries, or other similar architectural features;
 2. Display elements: identification monuments, fountains, reflecting ponds or pools, and entry statement walls.
 3. Open space elements: private recreational open space areas and/or facilities, plazas, greenbelts.
 4. Landscape elements: enhanced fences and/or driveways and special landscape treatments.

- D. **Architectural Projections.** Architectural projections create shadows and provide strong visual focal points for design. The design, materials, and colors of buildings within a project shall use varied materials that complement one another. The project shall be harmonious with surrounding properties/structures. Use of projections is encouraged and may include the following:
 1. Functional massing elements such as balconies, porch elements, eave overhangs, and projecting second- or third-story masses.
 2. Architectural massing elements such as towers, bay windows, recessed windows, and shed roof elements.
 3. Aesthetic elements such as Bermuda shutters, awnings, and window/door surrounds.
 4. Other compatible features.



Image 3.302-3

Varied building heights and roof forms with stepped massing elements and staggered front setbacks create a visually interesting building.



Image 3.302-4

Architectural projections and varied wall planes reduce building scale and create interest along the elevation.

E. **Featured Architecture.** All building elevations oriented toward public streets or other sensitive areas (i.e., recreation areas, common open space areas, adjacent properties) shall have an upgraded architectural treatment with emphasis on details, such as recessed entries, broad and stepped overhangs, staggered building planes, and changing roof elevations.

1. Additional architectural detailing such as wood-style window, door, and eave trim or comparable feature shall be used to soften the architectural statement of the buildings.
2. Windows, doors, and other openings shall be architecturally treated to provide a visual break in the building.

F. **Design and Materials.** To reinforce the quality of the development, all elements and structures shall be considered in project design. The following standards shall apply to all buildings and structures:

1. All balconies visible from public streets and adjacent properties may consist of solid walls or heavy-gauge open railings; however, the design shall be decorative and complementary to the architecture of the building.
2. Accessory structures, including recreation facilities, shall be compatible in design and materials with the main building(s).
3. Roofing materials shall be complementary to the architectural style of building.

G. **Building Height**

1. **Minimum Two-Story Requirements**
 - a. Minimum two-story requirements apply to the first 30 feet of the building and may include a roof top patio where a minimum of 60% of the patio is covered.
 - b. A building with a single story measuring a minimum of 25 feet from finished floor to finished ceiling can satisfy the minimum two-story requirement.
 - c. **Intent.** The intent of the two-story minimum requirement is to ensure that the building scale is compatible with other structures and the relationship of the building to the public space. A minimum building height also serves to promote a mixture of uses.

- d. **Alternative Compliance Findings.** The City Council may allow an alternative to the

minimum two-story requirements, subject to the following findings:

- i. The approved alternate meets the intent of the minimum two-story requirements;
- ii. The approved alternate conforms with the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted City Plans

2. Additional Stories

- a. **Alternative Compliance Findings.** The City Council may allow additional stories for purpose-built student housing developments, subject to the following considerations:
 - i. The additional stories provide an opportunity for one or more professional office or commercial space providing employment opportunities;
 - ii. The additional stories provide an opportunity to deliver a building that is rated a minimum of a silver in the LEED green building program;
 - iii. The additional stories provide an opportunity to include child care within the facility;
 - iv. The additional stories provide an opportunity to add public parking in or adjacent to the downtown or Sam Houston State University main campus;
 - v. The additional stories provide an opportunity to include on-site publicly accessible open space in excess of the open space required under Section 3.302.02(B).
 - vi. The project proposes architectural elements that mitigate any effects on adjacent properties or the pedestrian experience from the street level.

H. **Reduced Setbacks.**

1. **Intent.** The intent of reduced setbacks is to ensure that building placement is compatible with pedestrian-scale development and the relationship of the building to the public space. A reduced setback serves to produce a more complete human environment through a vibrant streetscape and public sphere.
2. **Alternative Compliance Findings.** The City Council may allow a reduced setback for purpose-built student housing developments, subject to the following considerations:
 - a. The project provides an opportunity for additional professional office or commercial space providing employment opportunities;
 - b. The project provides an opportunity to deliver a building that is rated a minimum of a silver in the LEED green building program;
 - c. The project provides an opportunity to include child care within the facility;
 - d. The project provides an opportunity to add public parking in or adjacent to the downtown or Sam Houston State University main campus;
 - e. The project provides an opportunity to include on-site publicly accessible open space in excess of the open space required under Section 3.302.02(B).
 - f. The project proposes architectural elements that mitigate any effects on adjacent properties or the pedestrian experience from the street level.

Section 3.302.04 Purpose-built Shared Housing Operational Standards

Consistent with Section 3.302.02(A) (Applicability), the following operations standards shall apply:

A. **On-Site Circulation.**

1. For projects of twenty-five (25) units or more, a display and unit location map shall be installed at each major driveway entrance and any major walkway entrance to the project as an aid to emergency personnel and a convenience to visitors. An auto turnout lane shall be provided adjacent to the directory map to eliminate blocking the driveway entrance.
2. Central pedestrian/bike paths shall provide convenient access to bus stops, green belts, and public facilities. Walkway systems within the project can be linear or meandering systems, in keeping with the architectural building style.
3. Pedestrian crossings shall be provided at appropriate locations along main drives and shall be accentuated by a change in surface textures. The minimum width dimension of any on-site walkway shall be four (4) feet wide, unless otherwise waived or modified by the Director or the City Council.
4. Walkways adjacent to automobile parking spaces shall be wide enough to maintain a four (4)-foot-wide clear walking surface free from the intrusion of front bumper overhangs.
5. Parking requirements and standards for purpose-built shared housing developments are addressed in chapter 4.201 (Off-Street Parking and Loading).

B. **Mechanical Equipment.** All mechanical equipment and vents (including public utility boxes) shall be attractively screened by an enclosure structure that is architecturally similar to the residential unit style and appearance, or located within utility closets where feasible.

1. Exterior-wall-mounted air conditioning units shall be architecturally harmonious with the building exterior color and finishes.
2. Rooftop vents shall be painted a color that is the same as the roof color and finish materials. Such vents and rooftop mechanical units should be located away from the building elevations that have street frontage, whenever and wherever possible.

C. **Laundry Facilities Required.** All developments of five (5) units or more shall be required to provide a laundry room, unless laundry facilities are provided within each unit.

D. **Storage.**

1. Unenclosed outdoor storage is prohibited.
2. Any proposed metal buildings must be designed to have an exterior appearance of conventionally built structures. Exterior surfaces shall be stucco, plaster, glass, stone, brick, or decorative masonry. Architectural metal accents are permitted as an integral feature of the building design, subject to Director approval.

E. **Mailboxes.**

1. Mailboxes should be located in highly visible, heavy-use areas for convenience and safety purposes.
2. Incorporation of the project's architectural design features is strongly encouraged.

F. **Maintenance Agreement Required**

The developer shall produce a common area maintenance agreement for landscaping and parking areas, defining the responsibility of landlord and tenant concerning the standards for the operation and

maintenance of the development, or similar rules and regulations intended to preserve the integrity of the development for the length of its existence. This agreement shall be filed for record with the Walker County Clerk's office.

Section 3.303.00 LANDSCAPING

All purpose-built shared housing developments must comply with *City Development Code Article 7 Landscaping and Buffers*, unless otherwise expressly stated in this manual. Landscaping shall be shown on the submitted site plan and shall be subject to the approval of the City Building Official.

A. Criteria for Attached and Detached Purpose-Built Shared Housing

The following landscaping criteria, subject to requirements of Table 3.302.01-1, shall be incorporated into the design of all purpose-built shared residential projects regardless of Development District:

1. A minimum of 10% of required landscaping must be adjacent to the public Right of Way.
2. Landscaping can be natural or improved and may be located on the roofs of structures on the subject property. The use of native species plantings is highly encouraged.

B. Criteria for Detached Purpose-Built Shared Housing

1. Each detached purpose-built shared housing development shall include two canopy trees. Required trees may be preserved from site-clearing or planted as part of the development.
2. At least one of the required canopy trees must be located in the front yard of the property.

Section 3.304.00 OUTDOOR LIGHTING

Lighting for safety purposes shall be provided at entryways, along walkways, between buildings, and within parking areas. Lighting is important to the visibility, identity, and safety of all developments. The following standards are intended to minimize glare, conflict, and light pollution and to provide performance standards to promote the visibility and safety of all premises in the community. Projects that provide adequate on-site lighting reinforce the quality of life and sense of community. Multifamily residential projects shall provide lighting in accordance with this chapter. All exterior and parking lot lighting fixtures shall be approved by the City Building Official as part of the Conditional Use permitting process.

A. General Standards. The following general lighting standards shall apply to all purpose-built student housing developments:

1. A photometric lighting plan shall be submitted to the City Building Official during the development review process. This plan shall show illumination levels and points of intersection between fixtures, as well as use of energy-efficient exterior lighting.
2. Any lights used in conjunction with a permitted use shall be shielded or directed away from adjacent residential uses.
3. Use of the lowest wattage and highest energy efficiency available is required.
4. Shielded fixtures with well-defined cut-offs directing light downward toward ground surfaces

shall be used to confine illumination to on-site areas only. Landscape and signage lighting shall be exempt from this standard.

5. Security lighting shall use high-efficiency fixtures and lamps and shall be located in entries, pathways, and parking areas.
6. Lighting in parking areas, garage areas, and carport areas shall be maintained with a minimum of one (1) foot candle of illumination during the hours of darkness.
7. Property perimeter lighting not affiliated with the lighting of parking lots shall not exceed one-half (0.5) foot candle at any point along the property line of the subject or adjacent parcel.
8. Fixtures shall be pole mounted a maximum of twenty-five (25) feet above paved surfaces.
9. Lighting levels shall emphasize on-site walking areas so as to clearly identify the pedestrian walkway and direction of travel. Stairway steps and changes of vertical level shall be clearly identified and safely lit. Lighting must be at a height appropriate for a pedestrian pathway system.
10. Lighting fixtures placed on a building shall be architecturally integrated as part of the overall design of the building.
11. On-site walkway areas shall maintain a minimum illumination level equivalent to one-quarter (0.25) foot candle during the hours of darkness.

B. Prohibited Lighting.

1. Light producing varying intensities or colors, moving lights, and search lights are prohibited in all Development Districts. Holiday lighting appropriate to the season is exempt.
2. Flood lighting

3.305.00 WASTE MANAGEMENT

- A. **Attached Purpose-built Shared Housing.** Garbage and recycling dumpsters must be placed on concrete pads and be screened from view of streets and all abutting parcels with a solid fence or wall at least 6 feet in height. Dumpster locations and designs must comply with all applicable Solid Waste Services Division requirements and be indicated on required site plans.
- B. **Detached Purpose-built Shared Housing.** Garbage and recycling receptacles shall be screened from view of the public Right of Way at all times except on designated collection days. At no time other than designated collection days shall discarded items, such as furniture, mattresses, or other large items, be placed on curbs or sidewalks or in view of the public right of way.

3.306.00 INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

All purpose-built shared housing developments must comply with *City Development Code Article 10: Infrastructure and Public Improvements*, unless otherwise expressly stated in this manual.

A. Drainage

Developers are responsible for designing and installing drainage and stormwater management facilities in accordance with the *Standards, Specifications and Design Criteria*. Drainage and stormwater management facilities shall be subject to the approval of the City Engineer.

1. Detention must be provided for all detached purpose-built shared housing developments.

2. No more than 50% of the front yard of any detached purpose-built shared housing development may be paved or otherwise covered in impervious material.

B. Sidewalks

Developers are responsible for constructing sidewalks on all street frontages for purpose-built shared housing developments.

3.307.00 SIGNAGE

All purpose-built shared housing developments must comply with *City Development Code Article 8: Signs*, in addition to the criteria listed below.

A. Rules for Permanent Signs

1. **Maximum sign area allowed, excluding window signs.** The total area of all permanent signs for any establishment shall not exceed:
 - a. maximum of two (2) square feet per lineal foot of building frontage, OR
 - b. maximum of three hundred (300) square feet, whichever is less, except that:
 - i. A minimum allowance of one hundred (100) square feet of sign area is provided per establishment; different establishments using the same space and the same or overlapping personnel must share the available display space.
 - ii. Coverage ratio: The maximum allowable sign copy area shall be seventy-five percent (75%) of the total display area of the sign.
2. **Freestanding Signs.** Maximum freestanding sign area and height for any one (1) sign shall be limited to a maximum of fifty (50) square feet in area and ten (10) feet in height.
3. **Maximum window sign area – Window signs.** All window signs combined, permanent and temporary, shall not exceed an area one-third (1/3) the area of frontage window area.
4. **Number/Type of Signs.** The following standards establish the maximum number of each type of sign per each establishment:
 - a. One (1) freestanding sign per frontage.
 - b. One (1) projecting sign per frontage.
 - c. Number of wall and window signs is limited only by the total square footage allowed on-site.
 - d. Where signs per frontage are allowed, those signs shall be placed at some point along the frontage that qualifies them.

B. Comprehensive Sign Program Requirement

A comprehensive sign program shall be submitted for purpose-built student housing developments consisting of two (2) or more land uses.

1. The purpose of the program shall be to integrate signs with building and landscaping design into a unified architectural unit and to act as a guide for future tenants. This shall be achieved by:
 - a. Using the same type of cabinet supports, or method of mounting for signs of the same type, or by using the same type of construction material for components, such as sign copy, cabinets and supports, or by using dissimilar signing, determined compatible by the Director of Development Services, to achieve the intent of

- producing a unified architectural unit.
 - b. Using the same form of illumination for all signs, or by using varied forms of illumination, determined compatible by the Director of Development Services, to achieve the intent of producing a unified architectural unit.
- 2. The Comprehensive Sign Program document shall include the following information:
 - a. method of mounting for signs of the same type
 - b. permitted and prohibited forms of illumination
 - c. color palette
 - d. permitted typography
 - e. building elevation showing locations for permitted signage
 - f. maximum sign dimensions and permitted location for individual commercial tenants

C. Prohibited Signs Specific to Purpose-Built Shared Housing

In addition to signs prohibited by City Development Code Section 8.200 PROHIBITED SIGNS, pole signs are prohibited for purpose-built shared housing developments, unless a project has frontage on the I-45 Corridor.

CHAPTER 4.

TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

Sections:

- 4.401.00 General
- 4.402.00 Emergency Access
- 4.403.00 Parking Standards

4.401.00 GENERAL

All purpose-built shared housing developments must comply with *City Development Code Article 6 PARKING AND DRIVEWAY ACCESS*, unless otherwise expressly stated in this manual.

4.402.00 EMERGENCY ACCESS

- A. To reduce fire hazards and facilitate emergency response, new development will be required to meet all applicable fire department requirements, including building codes, roadway standards, and water supply provisions.
- B. For projects of twenty-five (25) units or more, a display and unit location map shall be installed at each major driveway entrance and any major walkway entrance to the project as an aid to emergency personnel and a convenience to visitors. An auto turnout lane shall be provided adjacent to the directory map to eliminate blocking the driveway entrance.

4.403.00 PARKING STANDARDS

A. Purpose-Built Shared Housing, Attached

- 1. Developer shall be responsible for the construction of **1.1 on-site spaces per bedroom** (sp/br)
- 2. Developer shall be responsible for the construction of off-site parking spaces for all land uses occurring on site.

Example: A 300-bedroom complex with a 300 square foot rental office and 3,000 square foot retail space would be required to provide 343 off-street parking spaces.

B. Purpose-Built Shared Housing, Detached

Developers shall be responsible for the construction of **1.5 on-site parking spaces per bedroom** (sp/br).

C. Alternative Compliance

- 1. **Alternative Compliance Findings.** The City Council may allow a reduction in the minimum off-street parking requirements by up to 10%, whichever is greater for purpose-built student housing developments, subject to the following considerations:

- a. The parking reduction provides an opportunity for one or more professional office or commercial space providing employment opportunities;
- b. The parking reduction provides an opportunity to deliver a building that is rated a minimum of a silver in the LEED green building program;
- c. The parking reduction provides an opportunity to include child care within the facility;
- d. The parking reduction provides an opportunity to add public parking in or adjacent to the downtown or Sam Houston State University main campus;
- e. The parking reduction provides an opportunity to include on-site publicly accessible open space in excess of the open space required under Section 3.302.02(B).
- f. The parking reduction supports architectural elements that mitigate any effects on adjacent properties or the pedestrian experience from the street level.

2. Landscaping in Lieu of Off-Street Parking

- a. The City Planner is authorized to reduce minimum off-street parking requirements by up to 10% or 1 space, whichever is greater, in order to accommodate minimum parking lot landscaping requirements.
- b. The City Planner is also authorized to reduce minimum off-street parking requirements by up to 10% or 1 space, whichever is greater, for developments that exceed minimum landscaping requirements, provided that at least one additional 3-inch caliper tree is provided for every parking space eliminated.

3. Motorcycle Parking In parking lots containing over 20 motor vehicle parking spaces, motorcycle or scooter parking may be substituted for up to 5 automobile parking spaces or 5% of required motor vehicle parking, whichever is less. For every 4 motorcycle or scooter parking spaces provided, the motor vehicle parking requirement is reduced by one space. Each motorcycle and scooter space must have minimum dimensions of 4 feet by 8 feet.

D. Shared Parking See *City Development Code Section 6.402 SHARED PARKING*.

CHAPTER 5.

DEFINITIONS

Bedroom

A room intended for occupancy by a single occupant and meeting the requirements of the International Residential Code and the International Building Code.

Density

The average number of bedrooms per acre (br/ac) for the entire development, including streets.

Elevation

an orthographic projection drawing that shows one side of a structure. The purpose of an elevation drawing is to show the finished appearance of a given side of the structure and furnish vertical height dimensions. Four elevations are customarily drawn, one for each side of the structure.

Exterior Cladding

A construction material applied over another to provide a skin or layer and used to provide a degree of thermal insulation and weather resistance, and to improve the appearance of buildings. Examples include brick, stone masonry, wood, stucco, and vinyl siding.

Massing

The arrangement of forms of a building, which affect the perception of the general size, shape, and form of a building.

Monument Sign

A type of freestanding sign that is mounted directly on the ground, not exceeding ten (10) feet in height and that is supported by a base not exceeding twenty-five percent (25%) of the sign area.

Purpose-Built Shared Housing, Attached

Two or more attached dwelling units on an individual lot, rented by the bedroom through individual leases, for which an approved building permit was issued after (implementation date), which is occupied or intended to be occupied by more than two (2) unrelated persons.

Purpose-Built Shared Housing, Detached

One or more detached dwelling units on an individual lot, rented by the bedroom, for which an approved building permit was issued after (implementation date), each detached dwelling unit having three (3) or more bedrooms and which is occupied or intended to be occupied by more than two (2) unrelated persons.