

The background of the page is a high-angle aerial photograph of a city. The image shows a mix of residential areas with single-family homes and larger apartment complexes, commercial buildings, and industrial facilities. The city is organized into a grid-like street pattern. In the foreground, there are several large, modern-looking buildings, possibly office or retail spaces, with parking lots in front. The surrounding area includes green parks and other urban infrastructure.

*Chapter 6:*

# LAND USE & ZONING

- 6.1—General Provisions
- 6.2—Summary of Content & Standards
- 6.3—Regulating Plan
- 6.4—Land Use Regulations
- 6.5—Form Regulations
- 6.6—Site Standards & Guidelines
- 6.7—General Definitions



*Aerial view of Downtown Watsonville.*



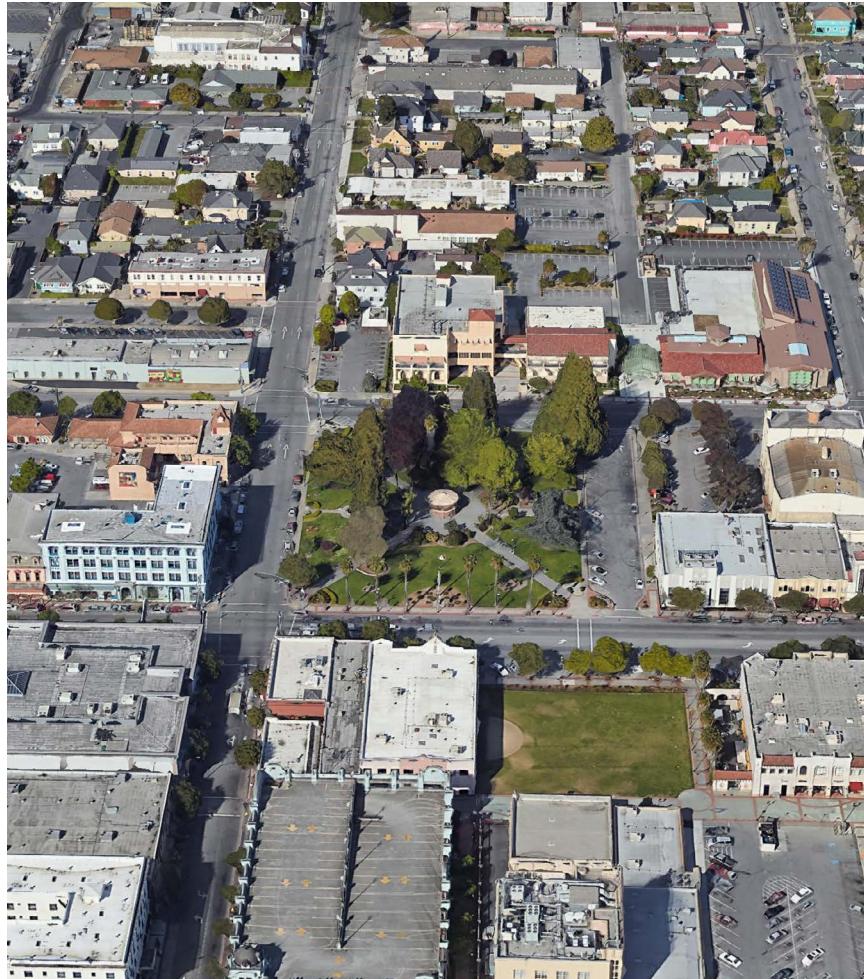
# THE QUALITIES OF BUILDINGS AND THEIR PRIVATE FRONTAGES ARE CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF DOWNTOWN WATSONVILLE AS ENVISIONED BY THE COMMUNITY.

This chapter sets standards and guidelines to regulate future development on privately-owned properties in downtown Watsonville. It establishes standards related to allowed land use, development intensity, height, building frontage design, building placement, open area, and block size. The chapter also includes detailed guidance on the design of ground floors, building facades, building architecture, landscaping character, and other building and site design elements.

## Section 6.1

# GENERAL PROVISIONS

**THIS CHAPTER—LAND USE & ZONING**—implements the community’s Vision, Goals, and Policy Direction for development in Downtown, as described and illustrated in previous chapters.



## A. Authority & Applicability

Unless otherwise noted, the development standards, guidelines, and review processes within this section replace existing zoning for all property within the plan area. This section contains both standards (which are mandatory) and guidelines (which are advisory). Where no clear label is present, the language shall suffice to communicate the intent: “shall” is always mandatory, “may” is permissive, and “should” is advisory, identifying guidance only. “Director” always means the Director of Community Development or designee.

## B. Intent

The purpose of this chapter is to deliver the physical outcomes envisioned for Downtown Watsonville, based on the community’s Vision, Goals, and Policy Direction as described and illustrated in **Chapter 2**.



## C. Administration

Unless otherwise noted, all procedures for the review and approval of planning entitlements shall be in accordance with those set forth in *Watsonville Municipal Code (WMC) Chapters 14.12 and 14.20*. This shall include, but not be limited to, the entitlements listed in **Table 6-1**. Exceptions up to 20% of any measurable standard within this development code, excluding those found in **Section 6.5.B: Building Height**, may be granted through the Design Review Permit Process, provided the project meets the intent of the relevant standard and is consistent with the vision for Downtown identified by this Specific Plan.

**Table 6-1 Administration**

Procedure	WMC Reference
Pre-application Process	Chapter 14-12, Part 2
Administrative Review Permit	Chapter 14-12, Part 3
Design Review Permit	Chapter 14-12, Part 4
Conditional Use Permits: Administrative Use Permits and Special Use Permits	Chapter 14-12, Part 5
Variances	Chapter 14-12, Part 6
Amendments to an Adopted Specific Plan	Section 14-12.905
Modification to approved permit	Chapter 14-12, Part 10
Home Occupation Permit	Chapter 14-12, Part 11
Sign Permit	Chapter 14-12, Part 12
Temporary Use Permit	Chapter 14-12, Part 13
Fence Permit	Chapter 14-12, Part 14
Nonconforming Uses & Structures	Chapter 14-20

## D. General Development Standards

Unless in conflict with specific provisions of this chapter, all standards set forth in *WCM Chapter 14.40* shall be applicable to development within the plan area. This shall include the sections listed in **Table 6-2**.

**Table 6-2 General Development Standards**

Topic	WMC Reference
Accessory buildings	Section 14-40.030
Septic tank area requirements	Section 14-40.040
Building sites	Section 14-40.050
Clear corner triangles	Section 14-40.060
Easements may be included in lot area	Section 14-40.070
Essential services	Section 14-40.080
Frontage required	Section 14-40.090
Height limits	Section 14.40.100
Lots of record	Section 14-40.110
Open spaces required	Section 14-40.120
Projections into required yard areas	Section 14-40.130
Screening	Section 14-40.140
Separate utilities	Section 14-40.150
Signs	Chapter 14-21



## Section 6.2

# SUMMARY OF CONTENTS & STANDARDS



**This development code is organized by topic. Within each topic and sub-topic, development standards and guidelines differ by zone and/or by overlay.** The following summary is included as an overview, but full standards are located throughout the Code.

**Section 6.3**, immediately following this summary, establishes the Downtown Zones and Overlays.

**Section 6.4** regulates Land Use by zone and overlay.

**Section 6.5 contains form-based, quantitative standards. Key tables from Section 6.5 are including on the following pages.** While the following is not an exhaustive list of the form-based standards and guidelines, it serves as a table of contents. It also provides a snapshot of the role of each section and allows standards to be easily referenced alongside each other. Visit the relevant section to find further explanation of the tables and to find additional associated standards and guidelines.

**Table 6-4 in Section 6.5.A**

regulates building placement by zone, to ensure that new buildings are sited and oriented to define and engage the public realm.

	Main Street Overlay	Gateway Overlay	Elsewhere in Downtown
<b>Front street build-to range, according to ground floor use:</b>			
Non-Residential		0' – 10'	5' – 15'
Residential	N/A	N/A	10' – 15'
Retail-Ready	N/A	10'	10' – 15'
Front street buildout (min)		100%	70%
Side street build-to range	N/A		5' – 10'
Side street buildout (corner lots)	N/A	Must meet the build-to range for the first 40' behind the façade; outbuildings must be located on street side.	
<b>Side and Rear Setbacks (min.) - See § 6.5.A.3.b.g-i for additional side and rear setbacks</b>			
Side yard		0'	10% of lot width or 5', whichever is less
Rear (w/ alley)		15' from the centerline of the alley	
Rear (w/o alley)		5'	

**Table 6-5 in Section 6.5.B**

regulates building height by zone, to appropriately scale buildings relative to the Downtown vision. The Neighborhood Transition Overlay overrides the standards of the zone, per Standard 6.5.3.a, in order to establish a height transition to the surrounding neighborhoods.

	Downtown Core	Downtown Neighborhood	Downtown Industrial	Neighborhood Transition Overlay <sup>1</sup>
<b>Allowed Number of Stories</b>				
<b>A</b> Street Façade	2 to 4 stories; 100% of the length of the <b>principal</b> façade can be built up to 6 stories (max)		4 stories (max) <sup>1</sup>	3 stories (max) See Standards 6.5.B.3.a. and 6.5.B.3.b.
<b>B</b> Total Number of Floors	6 stories (max); 5th and 6th floors set back from the <b>principal</b> street façade a minimum of 15 feet		4 stories (max) <sup>1</sup>	3 stories (max) See Standards 6.5.B.3.a. and 6.5.B.3.b.
<b>Ground Floor Level (measured from level of exterior sidewalk)</b>				
<b>C</b> Ground Floor	0 feet	0 to 4 feet		0 to 4 feet
<b>Floor Heights (min - measured from floor to ceiling)</b>				
<b>D</b> Ground Floor	12 feet	8 feet	12 feet	8 feet
<b>E</b> Upper Floor		8 feet		8 feet
<b>Building Base Height (min)</b>				
<b>F</b> Buildings up to 2 stories in height	14 feet	10 feet	12 feet	10 feet
<b>F</b> Buildings 3 or 4 stories in height		16 feet		
<b>F</b> Buildings 5 stories or more in height		25 feet		

<sup>1</sup> See Standards 6.5.B.3.a. and 6.5.B.3.b.



**Table 6-6 in Section 6.5.C** provides standards to ensure that new large developments do not have monolithic façades that feel overbearing to pedestrians. Large façades are broken into 'Massing Increments' to reflect the rhythm and scale of the historic Downtown.

	Downtown Core	Downtown Neighborhood	Downtown Industrial
<b>Applicability</b> Façade length beyond which the Massing Increment standards below become applicable	<i>For façades longer than 100'</i>	<i>For façades longer than 80'</i>	<i>For façades longer than 150'</i>
<b>Massing Increment (max.)</b>	100'	60'	100'
<b>Façade height difference between massing increments (min.)</b>	10% of lesser façade height	10% of lesser façade height	10% of lesser façade height
<b>Building base height difference between massing increments (min.)</b>	2'	2'	2'
<b>Upper floors setback (min.), if provided</b> Distance set back from the primary façade	10'	10'	10'
<b>Bay width</b>	15'-30' (see <b>Section 6.5.D</b> for more on bays)		
<b>Gap between Massing Increments (min.)</b>	N/A	16' wide by 20' deep	N/A

**Table 6-7 in Section 6.5.D** ensures that façades have enough fenestration to engage the public realm and provide eyes on the street.

	Downtown Core			Downtown Neighborhood	Downtown Industrial
	Main Street Overlay	Gateway Overlay	Elsewhere in Zone		
<b>Ground Floor</b>	70% – 95%	50% – 95%	35 – 95%	35 – 90%	25 – 90%
<b>Upper Floors</b>	15% – 70%				

**Table 6-8 in Section 6.5.E** identifies which frontage types are allowed in which overlay, to ensure that the ground floors of buildings properly relate to the public realm.

	Main Street Overlay	Gateway Overlay	Elsewhere in Downtown
<b>Shopfront</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Common Entrance / Lobby</b>	Yes <sup>2</sup>	Yes	Yes
<b>Retail-Ready</b>	No	Yes <sup>1,3</sup>	Yes <sup>1</sup>
<b>Ground Floor Office</b>	No	Yes <sup>1</sup>	Yes
<b>Ground Floor Residential</b>	No	No	Yes <sup>1</sup>
<b>Vehicular Access</b>	No	Yes	Yes

1. Allowed only if a conditional use permit is acquired where necessary for the corresponding ground floor use. See **Section 6.4.A**.

2. Common entries and small lobbies are allowed in Main Street Overlay Zone, but must look like storefronts, with clear glass fronting the street. Lobbies should comprise no more than 20% of the frontage, the remaining length being storefronts.

3. Retail-ready frontage within the gateway overlay is not permitted to contain residential dwelling units, per Section 6.4: Land Use Regulations.

**Table 6-9 in Section 6.5.E**

requires a minimum frequency of building entries to bring pedestrian activity to the sidewalk.

	Main Street Overlay	Gateway Overlay	Elsewhere in Downtown
<b>Frequency of Building Entries (max. distance between entrances)</b>	50'	50'	75'

**Table 6-11 in Section 6.5.F**

regulates architectural elements which may encroach beyond the building façade, to enhance the relationship between the building and the public realm.

	Main Street Overlay <i>Encroachment beyond the façade</i>	Gateway Overlay <i>Encroachment beyond the façade</i>	Elsewhere in Downtown <i>Encroachment beyond the façade</i>
<b>Stoop<sup>1</sup></b>	Not allowed	Not allowed	up to 2' min. from ROW sidewalk
<b>Porch<sup>1</sup></b>	Not allowed	Not allowed	8' min. and up to 2' min. from ROW sidewalk <sup>5</sup>
<b>Terrace<sup>1</sup></b>	Not allowed	Not allowed	
<b>Bay Window<sup>2</sup></b>	2' to 4'	2' to 4'	2' to 4'
<b>Balcony<sup>2</sup></b>	4' to 8'	4' to 8'	4' to 8'
<b>Awning or Canopy<sup>3</sup></b>	Up to 8'	Up to 8'	Up to 8'
<b>Roof Eave / Cornice Assembly<sup>2</sup></b>	Up to 5'	Up to 5'	Up to 5'
<b>Arcade<sup>4</sup></b>	See <b>Table 6-12</b> for standards and guidelines	Not allowed	Not allowed
<b>Gallery<sup>4</sup></b>		Not allowed	Not allowed

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After Section 6.5.F, the Chapter concludes with Site Standards & Guidelines, **Section 6.6**, which are applicable throughout Downtown and General Definitions, **Section 6.6**, which is a glossary of all words in italic blue font found in the chapter.

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## Section 6.3

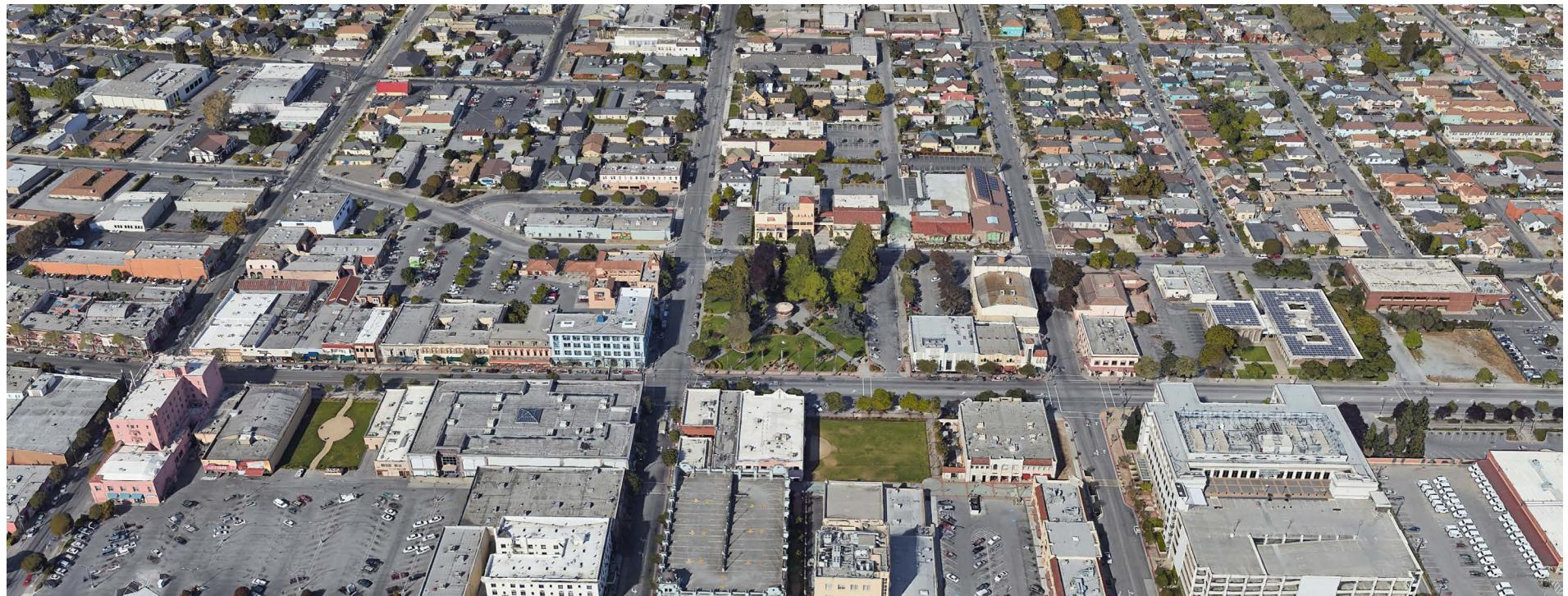
# REGULATING PLAN

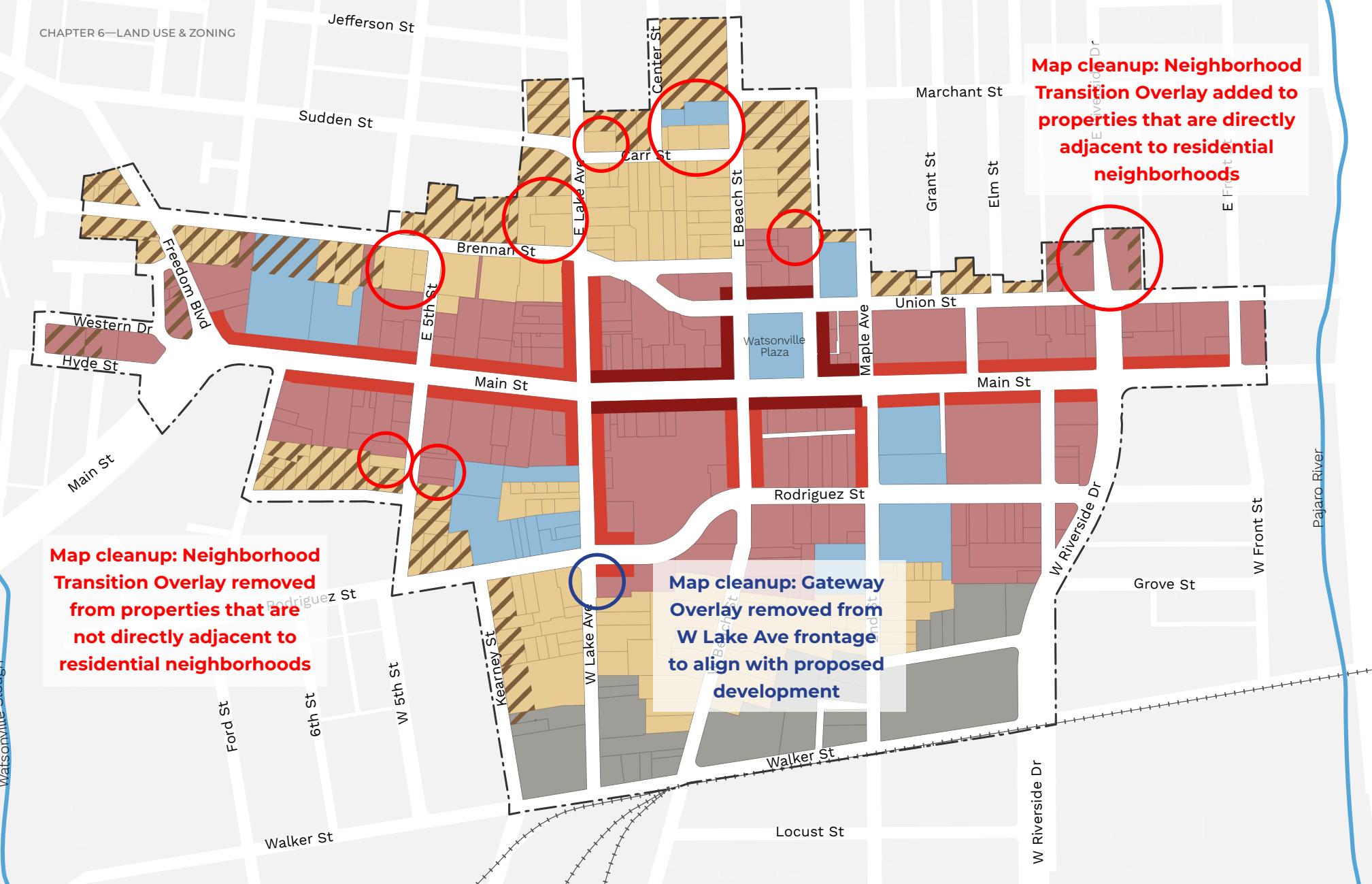
**The Role of the Regulating Plan.** Within each regulatory topic of this Chapter, development standards and guidelines differ by zone and overlay. This is because different areas of the Downtown are intended to have different characteristics, informed by the existing context and future vision as described in previous chapters. The **Regulating Plan (Figure 6-1)** establishes these zones and overlays, whose intent

is summarized in **Sections 6.3.A and 6.3.B** on the following pages. In general, the arrangement of zones and overlays concentrates urban activity and intensity in the center of Downtown and allows development to transition to existing lower-intensity neighborhood fabric at the periphery of Downtown and to industrial activity to the south.

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**RESPECTING AND LEVERAGING EXISTING URBAN PATTERNS**—This aerial of existing Downtown Watsonville shows how a higher concentration of urban intensity around Main Street and the Plaza fades to the lower intensity of the surrounding neighborhoods. The Regulating Plan zones and overlays respect this natural transition and support a range of beautiful, functional, and sustainable urban environments throughout Downtown.





**FIGURE 6-1  
REGULATING PLAN**

Source: City of Watsonville (2022); Santa Cruz County (2021); ESRI (2022).

**ZONES**

- Downtown Core
- Downtown Neighborhood
- Downtown Industrial
- Public Facilities

**OVERLAYS**

- Main Street
- Gateway
- Neighborhood Transition

- Specific Plan Boundary
- Rail Line
- Waterway



0 100' 200' 400' 500'



## A. Zones



DOWNTOWN CORE

### 1. Downtown Core

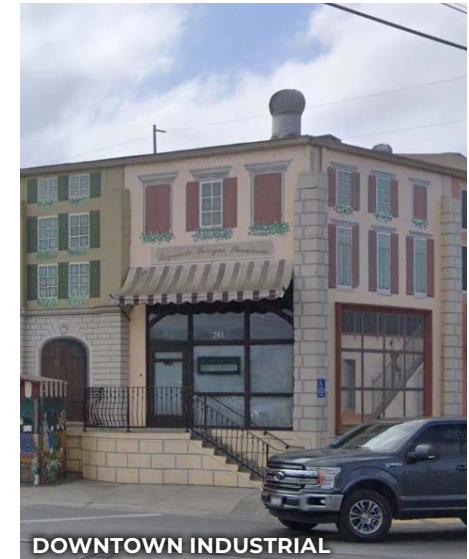
The Downtown Core Zone is an active, walkable environment, characterized by buildings up to 6 stories. This is the heart of Downtown—generally flanking Main Street—where the most active and intense development patterns and uses are anticipated. Upper floors contain residential units or office space. Buildings are close to the sidewalk and have little-to-no side setbacks.

### 2. Downtown Neighborhood

The Downtown Neighborhood Zone is characterized by smaller scale buildings than those of the Downtown Core Zone and generally includes a similar mix of active and residential uses.



DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD



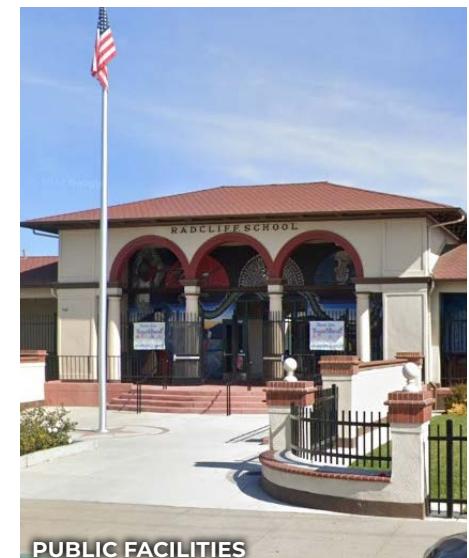
DOWNTOWN INDUSTRIAL

### 3. Downtown Industrial

The Downtown Industrial Zone is where existing industrial uses may continue to exist and operate, while adaptive re-use of those buildings and infill development of a flexible mix of uses—including new housing—are anticipated over time. Per *WMC Section 14-12.400*, all new industrial development, as with all new development, will be subject to required findings of compatibility between adjacent uses related to traffic, noise, odors, visual nuisances, and other similar adverse effects. Additional standards for new residential development in this zone must also be followed.

### 4. Public Facilities

New development on parcels zoned Public Facilities shall be subject to the development and use standards that are set forth in *WMC Section 14-16.800-803*.



PUBLIC FACILITIES

## B. Overlays

### 1. Main Street

The Main Street Overlay is where the most active ground floor uses occur, and the highest quality frontages are required. The overlay is contiguous so that the “main street” environment is concentrated and not interrupted by pockets of less active environments.

### 2. Gateway

The Gateway Overlay is provided to extend some of the characteristics of the Main Street Overlay further down Main Street and onto select cross streets – but with some flexibility.

### 3. Neighborhood Transition

Development within this overlay transitions down in scale to that of the adjoining neighborhoods.





## Section 6.4

# LAND USE REGULATIONS

## A. Use Standards

This section includes land use provisions for all properties within the plan area. **Commercial** uses not listed in **Table 6-3** shall be allowed by right unless prohibited elsewhere in the *WMC*. For example, retail and restaurants are allowed by right throughout the plan area; therefore, they are not included in **Table 6-3**.

Definitions of the uses in **Table 6-3** are in **Section 6.4.B**. All uses are subject to all applicable development standards, State law, and any other applicable requirements that are beyond the scope of this section. Administrative Use Permits, Temporary Use Permits, and Special Use Permits shall be subject to the procedural requirements of *WMC Chapter 14-12, Part 5*. Required determinations for issuances of Conditional Use Permits, including Special Use Permits and Administrative Use Permits, are found in **Section 6.4.C**.

**Table 6-3 Land Use Regulations**

Use	Downtown Core			Downtown Neighborhood	Downtown Industrial <sup>1</sup>
	Main Street Overlay	Gateway Overlay	Elsewhere in the Zone		
<b>Alcohol-Related: Group A</b>	AUP required <sup>1</sup>				
<b>Alcohol-Related: Group B</b>	SUP required <sup>1</sup>				
<b>Antique Shop</b>	Not permitted on parcels fronting Main Street; AUP required elsewhere			AUP required	AUP required
<b>Automobile Service</b>	Not permitted			Not permitted	Permitted
<b>Cannabis Facility</b>	Not permitted				
<b>Church</b>	SUP Required				
<b>Drive-through</b>	Not permitted				
<b>Dwelling Unit<sup>2</sup></b>	Permitted on upper floors; Not permitted on ground floors		Permitted	Permitted	SUP Required
<b>Heavy industrial &amp; Manufacturing</b>	Not permitted			Not permitted	Permitted <sup>2,3</sup>
<b>Light Industrial / R&amp;D</b>	Not permitted			AUP required <sup>2,3</sup>	Permitted <sup>2,3</sup>
<b>Office</b>	Permitted on upper floors; Not permitted on ground floors	Permitted on upper floors; AUP required for ground floors	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
<b>Payday Lenders</b>	Not permitted				
<b>Transit Center</b>	Permitted				
<b>Storage/warehouse</b>	Not permitted			Not permitted	Permitted
<b>Thrift Shop</b>	Not permitted on parcels fronting Main Street; AUP required elsewhere			AUP required	AUP required
<b>Use Code 65</b>	SUP required				
<b>Vehicle fueling facility</b>	Not permitted				

1. Additional requirements for alcohol-related uses found in the City's Alcohol Ordinance, in *WMC Chapter 14-25* apply.

2. In mixed-use developments, residential use must be more than 50% of the total building square footage.

2-3. Per *WMC § 14-12.400*, all new industrial development, as with all new development, will be subject to required findings of compatibility between adjacent uses related to traffic, noise, odors, visual nuisances, and other similar adverse effects.

## B. Use Definitions

**Alcohol-Related:** Group A. Group A includes the following uses: Brewpub (ABC License Type 23, 75), restaurant with beer and wine sales (ABC License Type 41), grocery store with beer and wine sales (ABC License Type 20), and wine bar (ABC License Type 42).

**Alcohol-Related:** Group B. Any alcohol-related use not included in Group A (see above). Group B includes, but is not limited to, grocery store with liquor sales (ABC License Type 21), restaurant with bar/liquor sales (ABC License Type 47), and bars as defined in WMC section 14-18.112 (ABC License Type 48).

**Antique Shop.** A place of business that sells furnishings, utensils, equipment, objects of art, objects having aesthetic value, ornamental objects, curios and like objects of personal value, all of which by reason of age, antiquity, obsolescence, or rarity, are valued principally for decorative, aesthetic, or sentimental value or purpose, or as collector's items, as opposed to the utility value or purpose for which originally manufactured or produced. An antique shall have an age of at least 40 years.

**Automobile service.** An establishment for which the primary purpose is the on-site repair, cleaning, detailing, dismantling, or similar work on cars.

**Cannabis Facility.** Any building or structure used for or related to the cultivation, processing, testing, retail sales, delivery or manufacturing of cannabis, per *WMC 14-53.103*.

**Church.** A facility for which regular religious services are the primary function.

**Drive-through facility.** An establishment where customers are regularly attended while remaining seated within an automobile.

**Dwelling unit.** Any building or portion thereof that is used as an independent living facility for one or more persons.

**Heavy industrial/manufacturing.** An establishment that includes labor-intensive manufacturing, assembly, fabrication, or repair processes that produces odors, noise, vibration, hazardous waste materials, or particulates that may negatively affect other uses on the same site or neighboring properties.

**Light Industrial / R&D.** Non-nuisance industry, business, service, and research work.

**Office.** A building or portion thereof used as a place for commercial, professional, or bureaucratic work that does not depend on regular on-site visits from customers.

**Storage/warehouse.** A facility for which the primary purpose is storage, wholesaling, and/or distribution.

**Thrift Shop.** Any individual personal partnership, firm, or corporation whose business includes buying, selling, trading, taking in pawn, accepting for sale on consignment, or accepting for auctioning, secondhand tangible property.

**Use Code 65.** Commercial amusement and recreational services included in Use Code 65 of the Watsonville Land Use Classification Manual with the exception that adult entertainment uses (6541 and 6542) are not permitted.

**Vehicle fueling facility.** A gas station. This does not include electrical fueling stations, which are permitted but still subject to the standards of this Chapter.



## C. Required Determinations for Conditional Uses

**Required Determinations** for Issuance of Conditional Use Permits, including Administrative Use Permits and Special Use Permits.

### 1. Intent

**The intent of the Downtown Specific Plan is to enable a lively and dynamic mix of diverse land uses within in a safe, comfortable, human-scale, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use downtown environment.** The intrinsic value and amenity of fine downtowns derives in large measure from their concentration of relatively high intensities of diverse uses within a relatively small area. The vision, policies, standards and guidelines of this Plan are structured and organized to require development patterns and building forms and configurations within which the permitted land uses—as identified in **Section 6.4.A**—can comfortably coexist and add value to one another by their proximity and connectivity, without generating any undue conflicts between adjacent uses and users.

In order to potentially further expand the range and diversity of uses in Downtown Watsonville, for uses so designated in **Table 6-3**, the Director may grant an Administrative Use Permit (AUP) or the Planning Commission may grant a Special Use Permit (SUP) upon conducting a special review in accordance with **Section 14.12.500** of the Watsonville Municipal Code (WMC). The special review shall be for the purpose of determining that each such proposed use is, and will continue to be, compatible with surrounding, existing, or planned uses; and for the further purpose of establishing such special conditions as may be necessary to insure the harmonious integration and compatibility of such uses in the Downtown and with the surrounding area.

The Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission, as provided in **14.12.500**, may approve, conditionally approve, or deny an application for a conditional use and, in granting conditional approval, may impose such requirements and conditions with respect to site design, architectural design, construction, maintenance, operation, and duration as may be deemed reasonable and necessary for the protection of adjacent properties and the public interest. The granting of a Conditional Use Permit shall not exempt the applicant from complying with the requirements of other provisions of this Specific Plan, the WMC, the Building Code, or other local, state, or federal requirements.

## 2. Required Determinations

The following determinations shall be made and appropriate conditions applied to ensure:

- a.** That the proposed use will not become a public nuisance, resulting in disturbances of the peace, illegal drug activity including sales or possession thereof, public drunkenness, drinking in public, harassment of passersby, gambling, prostitution, public urination, curfew violations, theft, assaults, batteries, acts of vandalism, illegal parking, excessive littering, excessive noise (particularly between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.), noxious smells or fumes, lewd conduct, or frequent police detention, citations or arrests, or any other activity declared by the City to be a public nuisance determined by California law to be public nuisance.
  - i. That the proposed use will not generate noise, light, glare, dust, noxious odors or other similar adverse effects on surrounding uses. For the purposes of this requirement, “surrounding uses” shall include occupants of neighboring buildings, occupants of other floors within the same building, and pedestrians passing along the sidewalk in front of the subject property.
  - ii. By the design and construction of buildings and by hours of operation of the subject use, noise that would be disruptive to residents of dwellings beside or above the proposed use shall not be permitted between the hours of 11:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M.
- b.** That the proposed use will not generate access and parking requirements in excess of those provided for in **Chapter 4: Public Realm & Transportation**.
- c.** That perceived privacy and/or security requirements of the proposed use will not lead building users to maintain rarely opened opaque window coverings on street-facing windows, nor to routinely utilize rear or side entries rather than street-facing front doors as the primary means of access and egress to the building.
- d.** That the ground floor rooms adjacent to the street frontage will be occupied during much of the day and occupied and/or lighted during most evenings.
  - i. For all retail, restaurant and indoor recreational uses, display windows shall not “wall off” views into retail interior spaces, and the interiors of dining rooms and activity rooms shall be clearly visible to passing pedestrians.
  - ii. For office uses, front rooms should include lobbies, waiting areas, and office spaces in which window blinds are typically open.
  - iii. For residential uses, front rooms should include living rooms and dining rooms, and not include bathrooms, closets and other uninhabited spaces.



## Section 6.5

# FORM REGULATIONS

**FORM REGULATIONS**—This Section ensures that all new buildings contribute to the Downtown environment, respecting its context and building on its history. The Lettunich Building (shown below) is a great existing example of a Downtown contributor.



## A. Building Placement

### 1. Intent

The standards and guidelines of this section seek to ensure that, to the extent practical, new buildings are sited and oriented to appropriately define and engage new and existing *streets*, public spaces, *courts*, and *paseos* (See Section 6.7 for a glossary of all words in italic blue font).

### 2. Applicability

The standards and guidelines of this section apply to all projects which include the construction of new *primary buildings*.



**BUILDING PLACEMENT**—This example block shows buildings sited and oriented (with yellow arrows representing building orientation) to define and engage streets, with parking to the rear of buildings.

### 3. Standards

**a. Frontage Buildout.** New *primary buildings* shall be set in relation to the *build-to ranges* in compliance with **Table 6-4** and the text of this section. The following elements may recess from or break the ground floor façade and constitute allowed exceptions to the *frontage buildout requirement*.

- Forecourts**, subject to **Section 6.6.E.3**, can span up to 35% of a lot's frontage buildout requirement.
- Entrances—no wider than 12'—to *paseos, passages*, or *side yards* (§ 6.6.E).
- Exterior staircases and associated landing areas.
- Chamfered corners, provided they include an entrance or stairway.
- Specific to frontage outside of the Main St and Gateway Overlays: up to 70 feet of surface parking frontage may abut a street. Including sidewalks and any landscaping, the distance between buildings on either side of the surface parking shall be 100' or less. Any portion of the surface parking lot adjacent to the street—apart from any driveway width—must be set back 5 feet from the sidewalk, or as far back as the building face, whichever is greater. A wall or hedge that is between 3 and 3.5 feet in height must be located within this setback area, but shall be no closer than 1.5 feet to either the sidewalk or to the edge of the surface lot. Screening may be interrupted only for vehicular and pedestrian access & visibility.
- In select locations, and only if needed to support a new primary building(s) which is located in and meets the standards of the Main St and/or Gateway Overlays, up to 75% of the block's frontage may be surface parking. Allow locations are limited to: on the south side of Union St, between Maple Ave and Riverside Dr; on the north side of Rodriguez St, between Lake Ave and Beach St; and on the north side of Rodriguez St, between 2nd St and Riverside Dr. This surface parking shall be screened per § 6.5.A.3.a.v and shall feature trees throughout the parking lot.

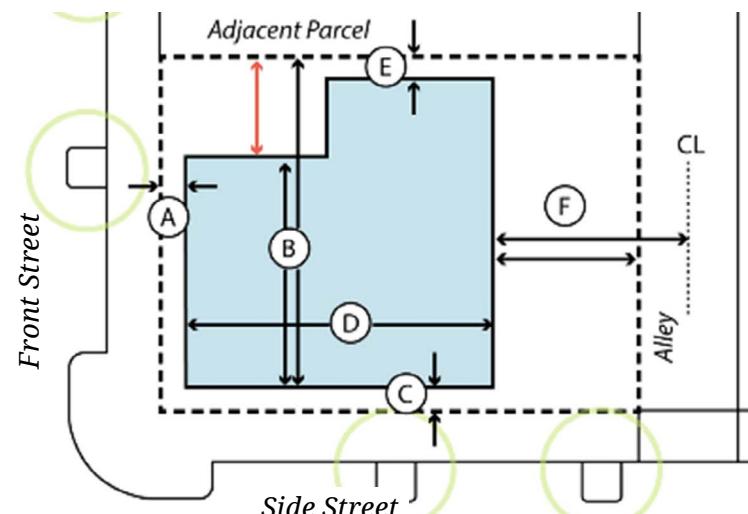
**Table 6-4**  
**Building Placement**

	<b>Main Street Overlay</b>	<b>Gateway Overlay</b>	Elsewhere in Downtown
<b>A</b>	<b>Front street build-to range, according to ground floor use:</b>		
Non-Residential	0' – 10'		5' – 15'
Residential	N/A	N/A	10' – 15'
Retail-Ready	N/A	10' <sup>2</sup>	10' – 15'
<b>B</b>	<b>Front street buildout (min)</b>		100%
<b>C</b>	<b>Side street build-to range</b> <sup>1</sup>		5' – 10'
<b>D</b>	<b>Side street buildout (corner lots)</b> <sup>1</sup>		Must meet the build-to range for the first 40' behind the façade; outbuildings must be located on street side.
<b>Side and Rear Setbacks (min.)</b>			
<b>E</b>	<b>Side yard</b>		0' 10% of lot width or 5', whichever is less <sup>3</sup>
<b>F</b>	<b>Rear (w/ alley)</b>		15' from the centerline of the alley
<b>F</b>	<b>Rear (w/o alley)</b>		5' 5' <sup>3</sup>

1. Side street standards are only applicable to corner lots. See Standard 6.5.A.3.f for more.

2. Retail frontages in the Gateway Overlay may contain non-residential uses, but they may not contain ground floor residential dwelling units, per the Land Use Regulations (see Table 6-3).

3. See § 6.5.A.3.g-h for additional side and rear setbacks in the Downtown Neighborhood and Downtown Industrial Zones.





**b. Parking and Vehicular Access.** Apart from the exceptions stated above (Standards 6.5.A.3.a.v and 6.5.A.3.a.vi), all surface parking shall be located behind the primary building, to the rear of the lot. Structured ground floor parking shall be set behind at least 30 feet of occupiable ground floor liner space. Vehicular access into the ground floor of a building, where allowed, comprises part of a building's frontage buildout and is regulated by **Section 6.5.E** (the Vehicular Access frontage type). Vehicular drives into a lot do not comprise part of the frontage buildout and are subject to the following standards:

- i. They are not exceptions to the buildout percentage;
- ii. They shall be no wider than 10' if one-way or 18' if two-way;
- iii. They are not allowed in the Main Street overlay or anywhere an alley is present.

**c. Building Orientation.** Buildings, in order to properly orient toward and engage the public realm, shall take access from and front the public realm per **Section 6.5.E**.

**d. Front Setback and Encroachments.** The design of the front setback area is regulated by **Section 6.5.E**. Allowed encroachments into the front setback are regulated in **Section 6.5.F**. Allowed encroachments into required side and rear setback areas are identified in *WMC Section 14.40.130*.

**e. Exceptions to Required Setbacks and Build-To Ranges.** The Director may grant exceptions to the standards of **Table 6-4** in the case of adaptive reuse of existing buildings, provided that the ground floor frontage is calibrated, to the extent practical, according to the standards and guidelines of **Section 6.5F**.

**f. Corner Lots.** Side street standards are only applicable to corner lots. Corner lot applicants shall identify which street is their front street and which street is their side street, typically following the pattern of nearby blocks. Main St shall never be treated as a Side Street; frontage along Main St is always subject to the Front Street standards. For projects which comprise more than 60% of a block's area, that project shall treat all adjacent streets as Front Streets.



**SURFACE PARKING**—In some locations, a limited amount of surface parking is allowed in new development to abut a street in support of new active Downtown buildings. See standards 6.5.A.3.a.v and 6.5.A.3.a.vi for where surface parking is an exception to buildout requirements.



**VEHICULAR ACCESS INTO A BUILDING**—Vehicular access into the ground floor of a building is a frontage type and is regulated by **Section 6.5.E**.



**VEHICULAR DRIVE INTO A LOT**—Vehicular drives are to be located and designed so as to preserve the beauty and function of a walkable Downtown environment. See Standard 6.5.A.3.b.

**g. Side and Rear Setbacks for New Residential Uses in the Downtown**

**Industrial Zone.** Any new residential building in the Industrial Zone (where allowed by SUP per Section 6.4.A) shall be arranged so as to minimize adverse impacts on dwelling units from neighboring industrial uses. Any new residential unit shall be set back a minimum of 10' from the property line of any adjacent industrial use. This setback shall include landscaping and/or site walls (subject to §6.6.C.5) which minimize adverse impacts.

**h. Side and Rear Setbacks for New Industrial Uses.** Any new industrial building on a lot with a property line that abuts the Downtown Neighborhood Zone shall have a rear setback of 10' (min). This setback shall include landscaping and/or site walls (subject to §6.6.C.5) which minimize adverse impacts.



## B. Building Height

### 1. Intent

These standards and guidelines are intended to implement the physical vision that is articulated in **Chapter 2**.

### 2. Applicability

The standards and guidelines of this section apply to all new buildings within the plan area.

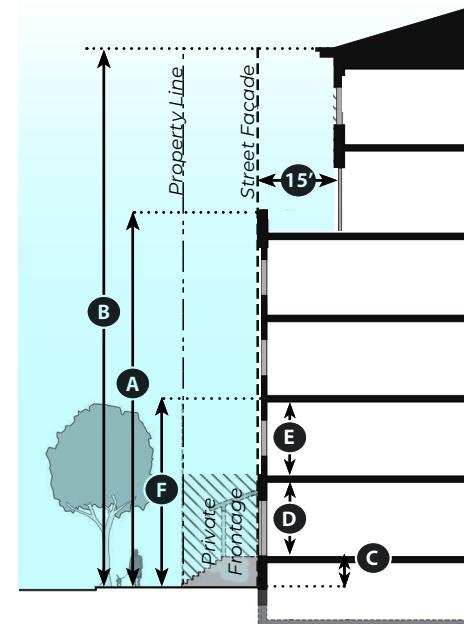
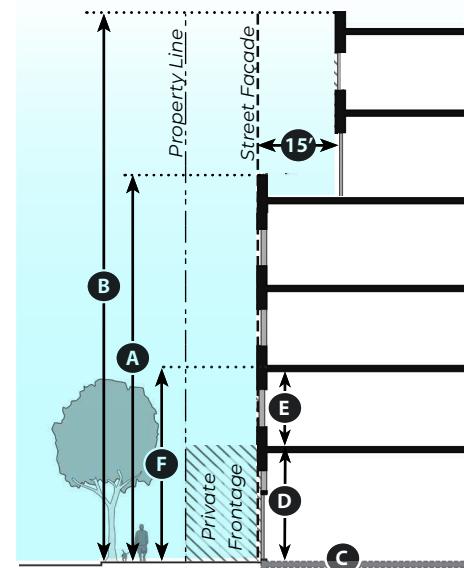
### 3. Standards

- a. Building height and upper floor stepbacks shall conform to the standards of **Table 6-5**, except as noted in b. below.
- b. Where applicable per the Regulating Plan (**Figure 6-1**), the Neighborhood Transition Overlay overrides the Zone for the first 100 feet from the nearest property line outside the Downtown Plan Area, as follows:
  - Where there is a street or alley between the subject parcel and the nearest parcel outside the Downtown Plan Area, all floors above the third floor the fourth floor shall be set back an additional 12 feet from the building face facing the street or

**Table 6-5**  
**Building Height**

Allowed Number of Stories				
	Downtown Core	Downtown Neighborhood	Downtown Industrial	Neighborhood Transition Overlay
A Street Façade	2 to 4 stories; 300% of the length of the principal façade can be built up to 6 stories (max)	4 stories (max) <sup>1</sup>	3 stories (max) See Standards 6.5.B.3.a. and 6.5.B.3.b.	
B Total Number of Floors	6 stories (max); 5th and 6th floors set back from the principal street façade a minimum of 15 feet	4 stories (max) <sup>1</sup>	3 stories (max) See Standards 6.5.B.3.a. and 6.5.B.3.b.	
Ground Floor Level (measured from level of exterior sidewalk)				
C Ground Floor	0 feet	0 to 4 feet	0 to 4 feet	
Floor Heights (min - measured from floor to ceiling)				
D Ground Floor	12 feet	8 feet	12 feet	8 feet
E Upper Floor		8 feet		8 feet
Building Base Height (min)				
F Buildings up to 2 stories in height	14 feet	10 feet	12 feet	10 feet
F Buildings 3 or 4 stories in height		16 feet		
F Buildings 5 stories or more in height		25 feet		

<sup>1</sup>. See Standards 6.5.B.3.a. and 6.5.B.3.b.



alley. If a fifth or sixth floor is provided, these floors will be setback an additional 12 feet from the fourth floor building face.

- Where the subject parcel and the nearest parcel outside the Downtown Plan Area are immediately adjacent (i.e., no street or alley between the parcels), **all floors above the second floor** the third and fourth floors shall be set back **an additional 12 feet** from the building face facing the shared property line. The fifth and sixth floors, if provided, shall be setback an additional 25 feet from the fourth floor building face.
- b. Throughout Downtown, Within 30 feet of the closest property line, buildings may not exceed one story more than the allowed height of a neighboring zone. For the purpose of this standard, “neighboring” shall mean a property abutting, directly across a street from, or directly across an alley from the subject property.
- c. Except for retail-ready ground floors (**Section 6.5.E.7**) and accessible ground floors at sidewalk level, all residential ground floors shall be raised between 1.5 and 4 feet from sidewalk grade.
- d. The **building base** shall be measured from the sidewalk grade to the (lower) cornice, string course, or horizontal plane break. In absence of any of these elements, the mid-point between the topmost point of the first-floor openings and the lowermost point of the second-floor openings shall serve as an upper reference point.
- e. Upper-floor terraces and rooftop decks are allowed.
- f. The upper floor setback area may be covered by an open structure—such as a **trellis** or **upper floor loggia**, shown below—with a front façade that is no more than 10% solid, excluding any parapet wall height.
- g. Ground floor units throughout the Downtown Core shall be 12' feet tall, floor to ceiling, and designed so that future compliance with the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* (*ADA*) for commercial use is not precluded. See the Retail-Ready frontage type in **Section 6.5.E.7**.
- h. Specified architectural elements may exceed the height limit in accordance with *WMC Section 14-40-100*.
- i. Pitched roofs, if provided, should be symmetrical, and sloped no less than 4:12, except that roofs for porches and other attached shed roofs which should be no less than 2:12. Gables facing the public realm should not exceed 30 feet in width.

**BUILDING BASE**—Highlighted in blue below are the bases of buildings.

Building base heights are regulated in **Table 6-5**.



**OPEN STRUCTURES IN UPPER-FLOOR SETBACKS**—The upper floor setback area may be covered a trellis (right) or upper floor loggia (left), outlined in yellow below.





## C. Building Massing

### 1. Intent

The standards in this section are intended to ensure that new large developments do not have massive, monolithic façades that feel overbearing to pedestrians. This is mitigated by requiring large developments to create the look and feel of multiple smaller buildings despite being a single large development. This will reflect the rhythm and scale of the historic Downtown. New buildings whose primary building façade exceeds the length listed under *Applicability* in **Table 6-6**, which varies by Zone, shall be divided into smaller 'Massing Increments' with maximum lengths in accordance with **Table 6-6**. Massing Increments are visually discrete design compositions that are: a) distinguishable from each other and b) have a coherent look and character from the ground to the top of the façade. Not only does subdividing a long building façade make for a more dynamic and interesting streetscape, but it makes the building more

resilient. Should the market change in the future, the building can be configured to be easily modifiable by Massing Increments. Changes can be made incrementally in this way, in order to meet the needs of different tenants or to adapt to other uses. Buildings that take this more sustainable approach are a better investment because they tend to last longer, as opposed to conventional developments that get completely demolished and replaced in order to start over. Massing Increments in the Downtown Core and Downtown Industrial zones shall be differentiated from each other in accordance with Section 6.5.C.2.a; Massing Increments in the Downtown Neighborhood zone shall differentiated from each other in accordance with **Section 6.5.C.2.b**.

If a project is less than the length identified in **Table 6-6** under *Applicability* for its zone, its façade does not need to be broken into multiple Massing Increments.



**INTENT:** New development must reflect massing increments (B) which relate to the widths of existing buildings in Downtown Watsonville, such as the Mansion House (shown above).



**AVOID:** This façade would feel inappropriately massive and monotonous in Downtown Watsonville. Façades whose overall length (A) exceeds that listed under *Applicability* in **Table 6-6** need to be broken into multiple Massing Increments.

**Table 6-6 Massing Increment Dimensional Standards**

	Downtown Core	Downtown Neighborhood	Downtown Industrial
<b>A</b> <b>Applicability</b> Façade length beyond which the Massing Increment standards below become applicable	<i>For façades longer than 100'</i>	<i>For façades longer than 80'</i>	<i>For façades longer than 150'</i>
<b>B</b> <b>Massing Increment (max.)</b>	100'	60'	100'
<b>C</b> <b>Façade height difference between Massing increments (min.)</b>	10% of lesser façade height	10% of lesser façade height	10% of lesser façade height
<b>D</b> <b>Building base height difference between massing increments (min.)</b>	2'	2'	2'
<b>E</b> <b>Upper floors setback (min.), if provided</b> Distance set back from the primary façade	10'	10'	10'
<b>F</b> <b>Bay width</b>	15'-30' (see Section 6.5.D for more on bays)		
<b>G</b> <b>Gap between Massing Increments (min.)</b>	N/A	16' wide by 20' deep	N/A

## 2. Standards

a. **Downtown Core and Downtown Industrial.** Massing increments within the Downtown Core and Downtown Industrial Zones shall be differentiated in the following ways:

- Two of the following three differentiation standards shall be incorporated:
  - The façade height of each massing increment—as measured from the adjacent sidewalk level to the eave, cornice, or parapet—shall differ from the façade height of its neighboring massing increment(s) per Table 6-6. Upper floors which are set back from the primary façade per the ‘upper floor setback’ listed in Table 6-6 are not considered part of the façade height. The resulting setback area may be covered by an open structure—such as a trellis or upper floor arcade—with a front façade that is no more than 10% solid, excluding any parapet wall height (Illustrated in Section 6.5.B).
  - A forecourt—subject to the standards in Section 6.6.E.3—satisfies this standard as the façade height at the forecourt is effectively 0'.
- The height of the building base—as defined in Standard 6.5.B.3.D—of each Massing Increment shall differ from the building base height of neighboring Massing Increment(s) per Table 6-6.





3. Upper floors which are set back from the primary façade per the 'upper floor setback' listed in Table 6-6 are not considered part of the façade height. The resulting setback area may be covered by an open structure—such as a trellis or upper floor arcade—with a front façade that is no more than 10% solid, excluding any parapet wall height (Illustrated in Section 6.5.B). It should be noted that this "upper floor setback" is distinct from the setback requirement for the fifth and sixth floors in the Downtown Core Zones.

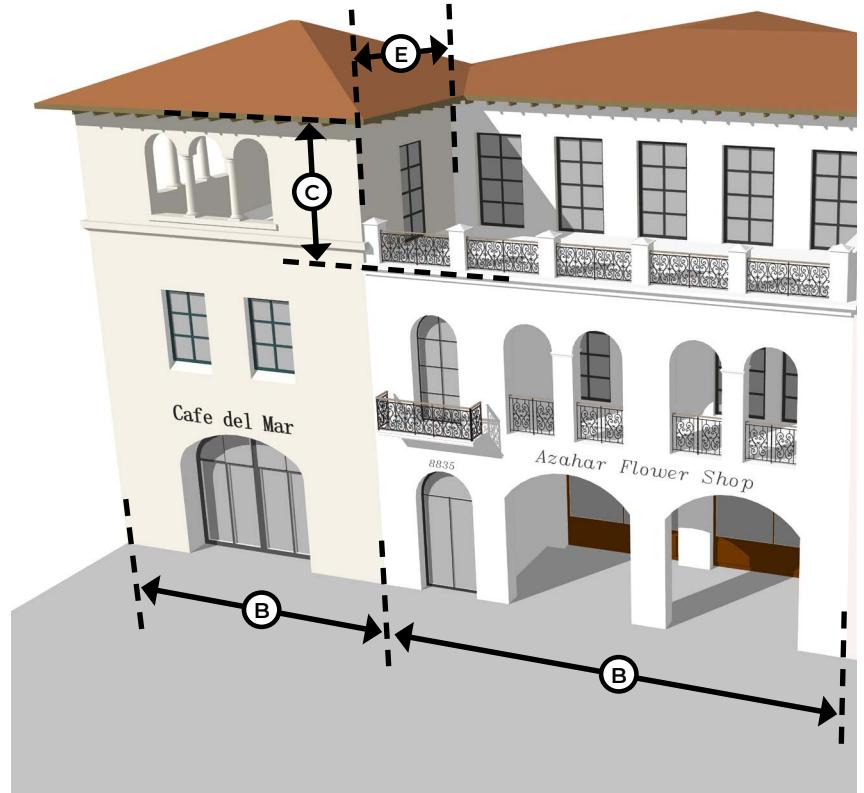
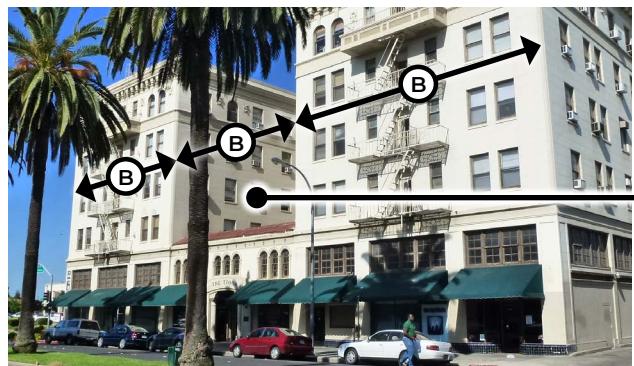
A. A **forecourt**—subject to the standards in **Section 6.6.E.3**—satisfies this standard as the façade height at the forecourt is effectively 0'.

B. Exception: If all upper floors above the building base are set back to create an upper-level forecourt (see the precedent below), the building base height of the module which contains the upper-level forecourt may match its neighbors.

ii. Façade elements—such as openings and balconies that are typically vertically organized into bays—shall not overlap the division between Massing Increments. The entire façade composition must be contained within its massing increment.

iii. Only one massing increment design may be repeated on the same project elevation. Repeated massing increments may not be immediately adjacent to each other. A repeated increment may appear a maximum of 3 times on the same project elevation.

iv. A clearly noticeable difference in façade material is encouraged but not required.



**UPPER FLOORS SET BACK**—The upper level of the right portion of the building is set back (E) in order to create an adequate difference in façade height (C) between the two Massing Increments (B).

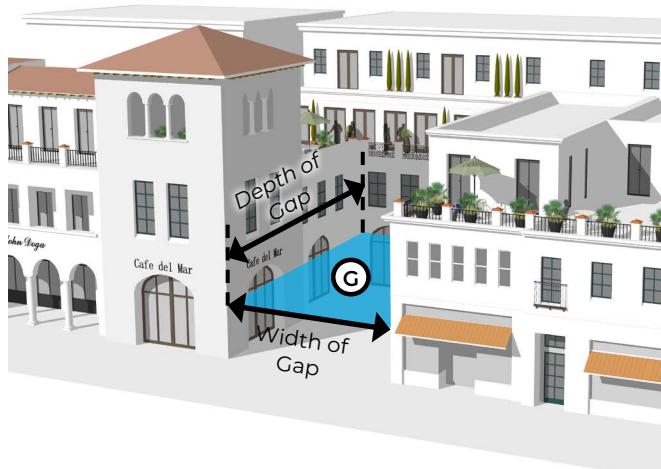
**UPPER-LEVEL FORECOURT**—All upper floors above the building base are set back to create an upper-level forecourt which creates an adequate differentiation between Massing Increments (B).

- v. Any other differentiation that meets the intent of the standard is encouraged.

**b. Downtown Neighborhood.** Massing Increments within the Downtown Neighborhood Zone shall be differentiated in the following ways:

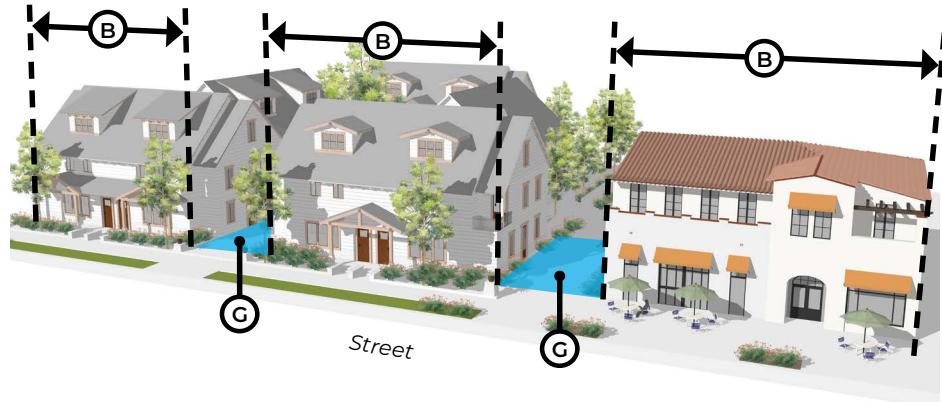
- i. Massing Increments shall be separated by a gap (G) of no less than 16' wide by 20' deep, per **Table 6-6**.
- ii. Only one massing increment design may be repeated on the same project elevation. A repeated increment may appear a maximum of 3 times on the same project elevation.
- iii. Architectural style variation between massing increments is encouraged to reinforce a pattern of individual, neighborhood-scale buildings, to better fit in with existing buildings in this zone.
- iv. The use of pitched roofs are encouraged to further relate the buildings to the residential neighborhood scale.
- v. Any other differentiation that meets the intent of the standard is encouraged.
- vi. Gaps between massing increments may—but are not required to—serve as entries to paseos, courts, side yards, or any other on-site open space. Gaps may also serve as small courts or yards and be surrounded on all sides by building, as illustrated below.

**EXAMPLE**—This Gap between Massing Increments serves as a small forecourt, surrounded on all sides by building.

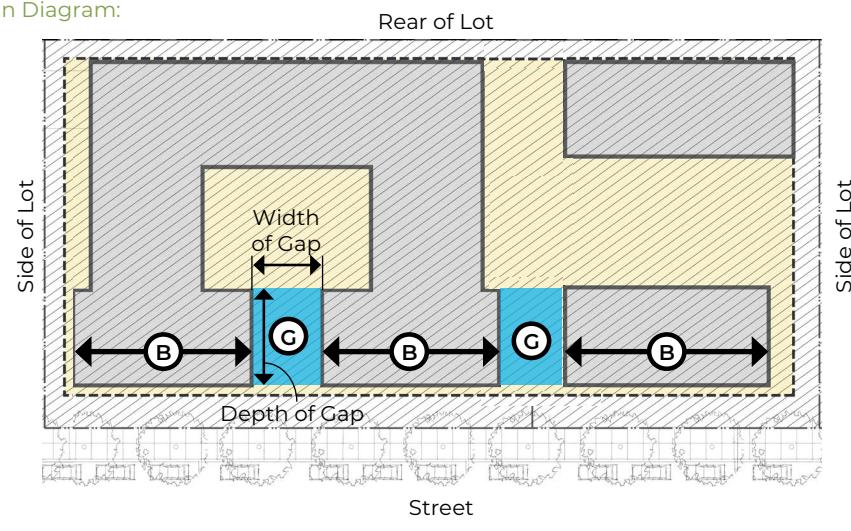


### MASSING INCREMENTS IN THE DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

Perspective View:



Plan Diagram:



- Property Line
- Property
- Buildable Area
- Building Footprint in Downtown Neighborhood zone
- Massing Increment (See **Table 6-6** for dimensions)
- Gap between Massing Increments (See **Table 6-6** for dimensions)



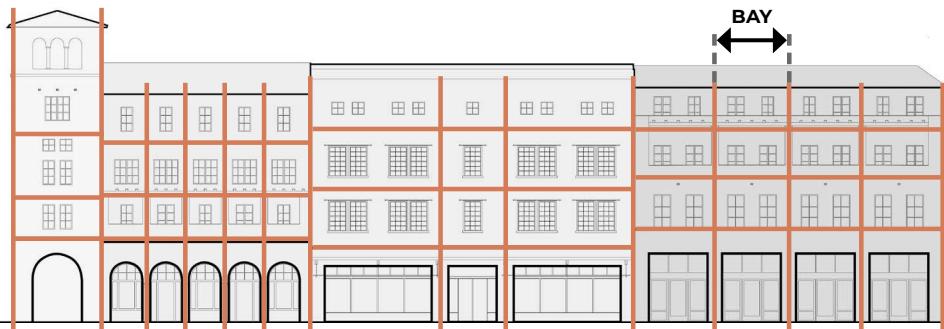
## D. Façade Design

**Building façades are the walls of the outdoors rooms of the community.** In order to appropriately reflect and evoke the heritage of Downtown Watsonville as a town-scale traditional district, new façades should reflect the historic patterns and sensibilities.

### 1. Façade Composition Standards

a. **Façade elements shall be organized by a grid.** Patterns of openings within each individual façade or Building Increment—when required per Section 6.5.C—shall be organized into a grid per the standards below.

- Horizontal alignment of elements.** Rooflines, openings, and materials within each façade or façade module must align horizontally, and be generally consistent in style across the entire width.
- Vertical alignment of openings into bays.** The entirety of a building's façade or Massing Increment shall be clearly divided into vertical bays, subject to the following standards:
  - Façade bays shall extend from the ground to the top of the façade.
  - Each bay must be between 15' and 30' wide.
  - Openings shall be stacked within bays as illustrated below. Openings should typically be arranged symmetrically within bays.



**FAÇADES ORGANIZED BY A GRID** of floors and bays. Each bay in this example features a shopfront on the ground floor with 1 or 2 columns of upper floor windows stacked above. This pattern is especially appropriate for the Downtown Core.



b. **Buildings shall have a base, middle, and top.**

- The building base should read as visually supportive, with materials that appear solid and strong. Building base heights are scaled to the size of the building; their height is regulated alongside building heights in Section 6.5.B. The building base is the primary portion of the façade observed from the street, so it should feature details and materials which are pleasing to the pedestrian. The building base should be differentiated from the rest of the façade—whether by a string course, change in material, change in type of openings, or a combination of these elements.
- The middle of the building features floors which should be generally repetitive, with only minor variations between each floor.
- The top of the building should feature some form of capping element(s), such as a cornice, enhanced ornamentation, or a decorative parapet. In larger buildings, such as the Lettunich Building shown below, the upper floor may be visually incorporated into the building top.

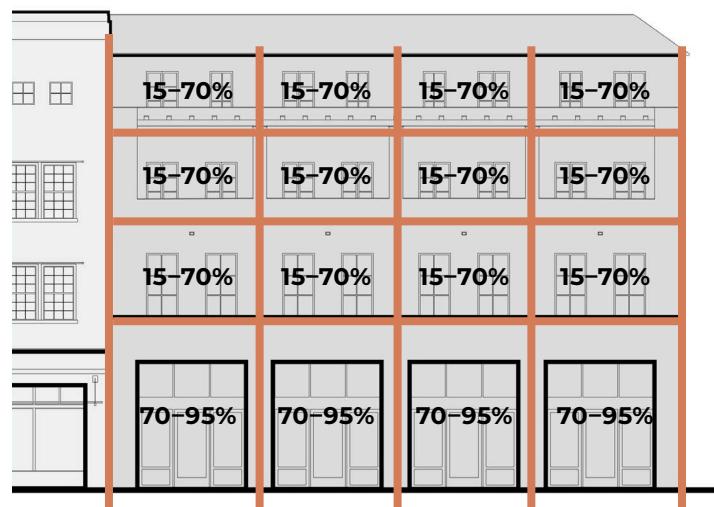
## 2. Façade Fenestration Standards

- a. Façades shall be designed with fenestration—openings on the façade, including windows and doors—in the amounts identified by **Table 6-7**.
  - i. Fenestration amount is calculated as a percentage of openings—including all windows and doors on the façade—to an area of façade. Each portion of the façade grid, as defined in the **Section 6.5.D.1.a**, must have a fenestration percentage which falls within the range identified by **Table 6-7**. This is illustrated in the façade diagram to the right.
  - ii. Per **Table 6-7**, the required fenestration amount varies by Zone and Overlay (where applicable) and by location on the façade.
- b. General to all floors:
  - i. Except for shopfront or bay windows, all glass should be set in a minimum of 4 inches from the main façade plane.
  - ii. Windows should have an external reflectance of less than 15%, and a transparency higher than 80%. Opaque windows are prohibited.
  - iii. Non-operable shutters—known as ‘faux shutters’—are discouraged.
  - iv. The horizontal distance between wall openings should not exceed 15 feet within a façade or massing increment.
  - v. Exterior doorways count as fenestration when calculating percentage of fenestration of a façade.
- c. Specific to ground floors:
  - i. The façade area of the ground floor is the first ten vertical feet of a building, multiplied by its width.
  - ii. When ground floor façades have over 90% glass, the illusion of the upper floors resting on a glass box must be avoided. Structural elements should be visible in order to show that the upper floors are supported, whether it is by slender steel column or piers framing or in front of clear glass, or more substantial masonry piers between display windows.
  - iii. Bedroom and bathroom windows are not allowed on the ground floor façade along any new or existing street.
  - iv. Display windows which block views into interior spaces may only comprise up to 25% of the required fenestration.

**Table 6-7**  
**Fenestration Requirements**

	Downtown Core			Downtown Neighborhood	Downtown Industrial
	Main Street Overlay	Gateway Overlay	Elsewhere in Zone		
Ground Floor	70% – 95%	50% – 95%	35 – 95%	35 – 90%	25 – 90%
Upper Floors	15% – 70%				

**FENESTRATION**—Each portion of the façade grid must meet the applicable fenestration requirement. This example displays Main Street Overlay requirements.

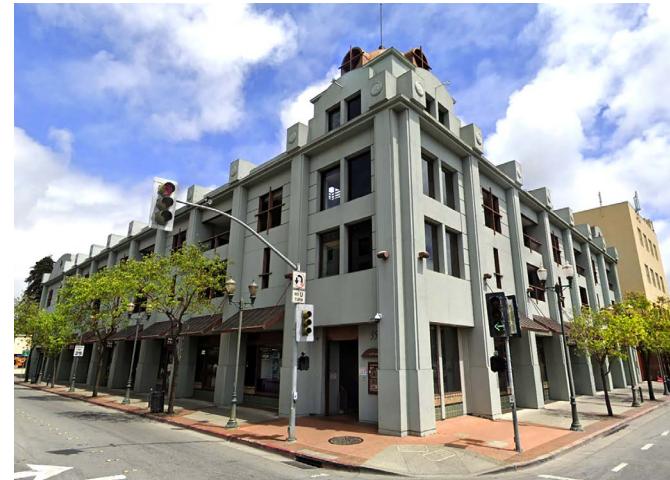


- v. Ground floor window sills should be no more than 5' above the grade of the sidewalk.
- vi. **Section 6.5.E** establishes further ground floor fenestration requirements, beyond the base standards in **Table 6-7**, to create a balance between privacy and transparency according to frontage type.
- d. Specific to upper floors:
  - i. Wall openings should generally not span across stories (vertically) or bays (horizontally).
  - ii. Upper-floor wall openings should be taller than they are wide.



### 3. Parking Structure Façade Standards

- a.** Parking structures shall either be designed with façades that meet the standards of **Sections 6.5.C** and **6.5.D**, or be faced by art walls (murals, decorative or sculptural material, etc.) by the approval of the Director.
- b.** The façades of parking structures should fit into the urban context, and when not faced by art walls, they should look similar to any other Downtown building.
- c. Future-Proof Parking.** Parking garages which can easily convert to accommodate other uses—such as offices or housing—if and when the need for parking diminishes, are encouraged. Features which enable such 'future-proof' flexibility include:
  - i. Level floors, apart from necessary ramps
  - ii. Floors with 8' minimum clear height from floor to ceiling
- d. Ground floor façade.** Per Standard **6.5.A.3.b**, structured ground floor parking must be set behind at least 30 feet of occupiable ground floor liner space. Vehicular entries are subject to the standards of **Section 6.5.E.10**.



The façade of the existing parking structure at the corner of Beach and Rodriguez Streets in Downtown Watsonville is organized like a typical Downtown building and the ground floor is lined with occupiable space.



This parking structure is designed like a typical Downtown Building, and any ground floor parking is set behind commercial space with shopfronts lining the street. This building could easily accommodate other uses—such as



This garage façade features attractive architectural detailing.



This parking structure is designed like a typical Downtown building.

## 4. Façade Materials

- a. Fiberglass or plastic (false) architectural elements or ornamentations are discouraged.
- b. Materials used on shopfronts should be smooth and non-abrasive to touch.
- c. Rough-cast and sand-finishes are discouraged on all building surfaces that are visible from a street.
- d. Where more than one material is used for the façade, the heavier material must be used below the lighter material (e.g. brick below siding, not vice versa).
- e. Modulations, color schemes, balconies, and other façade elements should be consistent within an individual façade or within an individual Building Increment, when required per Section 6.5.C.



Fiberglass classical ornamentation and poorly applied.



Rough-cast finish.



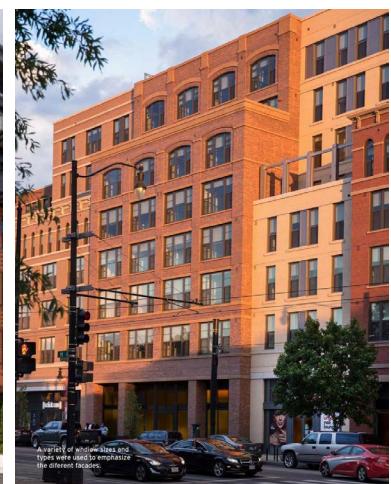
Sand-finish.



Heavy stone used below lighter siding material.



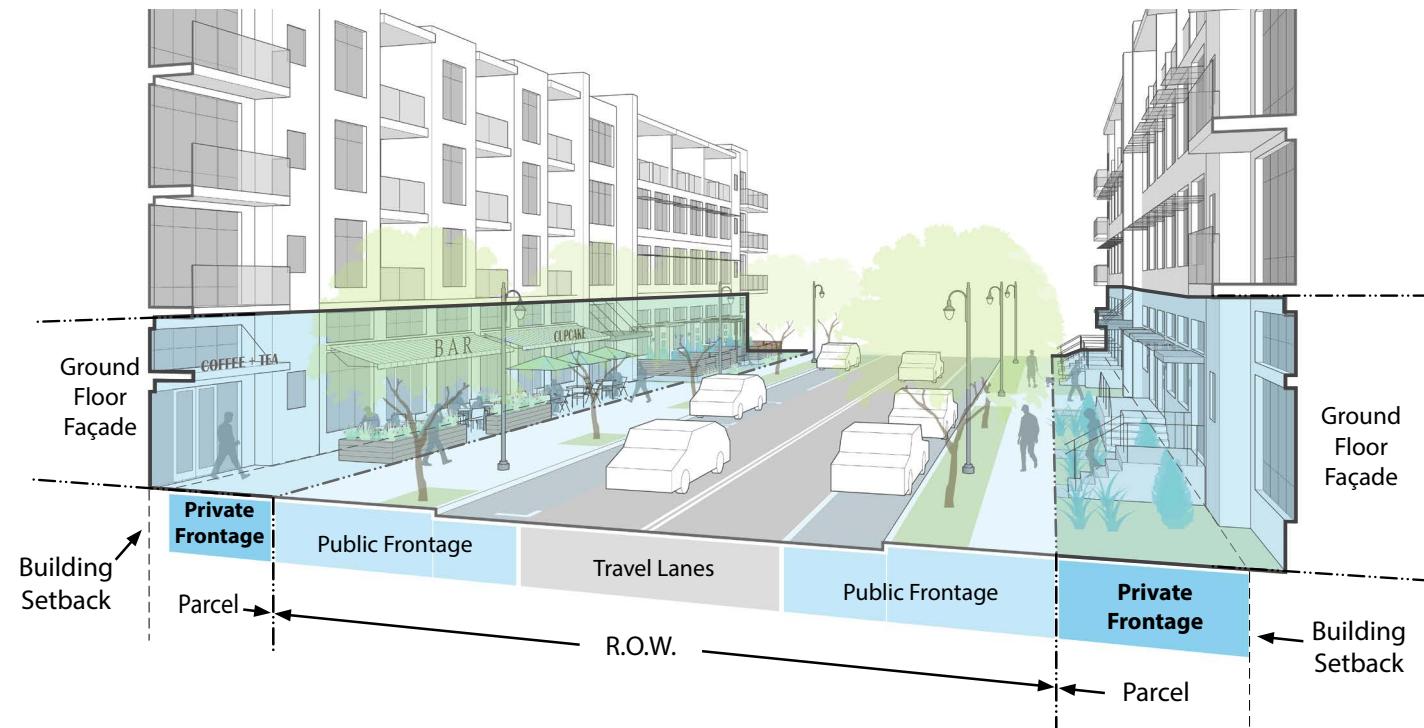
Materials and design are consistent within each Building Increment.



## E. Private Frontages: Building Access and Ground Floor Design

### 1. Intent

Downtown Watsonville is to be an active, pedestrian-oriented urban environment that is comfortable, safe, and easy to navigate by foot, bicycle, or any mode of vehicular transit. As such, careful attention must be given to the way that buildings shape and front Downtown's network of public streets, paseos, and open spaces—also known as the "Public Realm." The space between the travel lanes of a street and the building, and including the building's ground floor façade, is defined as "frontage." In order to create a high-quality urban environment, the design of that frontage must be calibrated to the ground-floor use of the adjacent buildings and to the unified Downtown character envisioned in this Plan. Frontages must be designed to provide an appropriate degree of privacy or transparency relative to the needs of the public-facing ground-floor use. Commercial shops and spaces rely on more exposure for their success,



while ground-floor residences need added privacy so they aren't forced to close their blinds and can therefore provide encourage "eyes on the street." This section provides the design standards and guidelines for the private portion of this frontage,

while Chapter 4: Public Realm & Transportation provides strategies and recommendations for the public right-of-way.

## 2. Applicability

The standards and guidelines of this section apply to any new building or façade renovation along a street or public open space in the Downtown Plan Area. The entire ground floor façade facing a public street or public open space is required to consist of the frontage types allowed in this section.

**Private Frontages** are defined as the ground floor building façade and the area between that façade and any property line along a street or public

open space. This area serves as the transition and interface between the building interior and street environment. **Table 6–8** identifies six Private Frontage Types which are regulated by Overlays, with design standards and guidelines for each type provided on the following pages. These frontage types can be used in combination with encroaching architectural elements that will be noted under each frontage type.

**Table 6–9 Frequency of Pedestrian Entries**

	Main Street Overlay	Gateway Overlay	Elsewhere in Downtown
<b>Frequency of Building Entries (max. distance between entrances)</b>	50'	50'	75'

## 3. Building Access

A key role of private frontages is to provide pedestrian access from the public realm into the building. The following standards apply:

- a. Access occurs via one of the allowed frontage types per **Table 6–8**.
- b. All buildings must take primary pedestrian access from the public sidewalk or from private on-site open spaces (see **Section 6.6.E**) that directly connect to public realm.
- c. Pedestrian entrances into residential units may not be located more than 250 feet from the tenant/visitor parking space(s) assigned to that unit, as measured along walking paths.
- d. **Frequency of Pedestrian Entries.** The quantity of building entrances on a street has a drastic effect on the perceived liveliness of a street. The frequency of entrances is regulated by **Table 6–9**.
- e. **Vehicular Access.** Where an alley is present and provides vehicular access to a lot, that lot shall take rear vehicular access (as necessary) and may not take vehicular access from the street. See **Section 6.5.E.10** for the Vehicular Access frontage type.

## 4. Frontage Types

The following pages provide design standards and guidelines for the allowed private frontage types in Downtown. The standards specific to each frontage type apply wherever such type occurs.

**Table 6–8 Allowed Frontage Types by Overlay**

	Main Street Overlay	Gateway Overlay	Elsewhere in Downtown
<b>Shopfront</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Common Entrance / Lobby</b>	Yes <sup>2</sup>	Yes	Yes
<b>Retail-Ready</b>	No	Yes <sup>1,3</sup>	Yes <sup>1</sup>
<b>Ground Floor Office</b>	No	Yes <sup>1</sup>	Yes
<b>Ground Floor Residential</b>	No	No	Yes <sup>1</sup>
<b>Vehicular Access</b>	No	Yes	Yes

1. Allowed only if a conditional use permit is acquired where necessary for the corresponding ground floor use. See **Section 6.4.A**.

2. Common entries and small lobbies are allowed in Main Street Overlay Zone, but must look like storefronts, with clear glass fronting the street. Lobbies should comprise no more than 20% of the frontage, the remaining length being storefronts.

3. Retail-ready frontage within the gateway overlay is not permitted to contain residential dwelling units, per Section 6.4: Land Use Regulations.

## 5. Shopfronts

Shopfronts are characterized by large ground floor openings, including windows and entries, which provide transparency and connection between the public realm and ground floor uses such as shops and restaurants. The primary entrance is typically at sidewalk grade, unless ADA accessibility is accomplished by other means, and provides direct access to the ground-floor use. The basic architectural elements comprising the storefront are large clear windows, doors with glass, and transom windows. If storefronts have a setback, the setback is typically treated as an extension of the sidewalk.

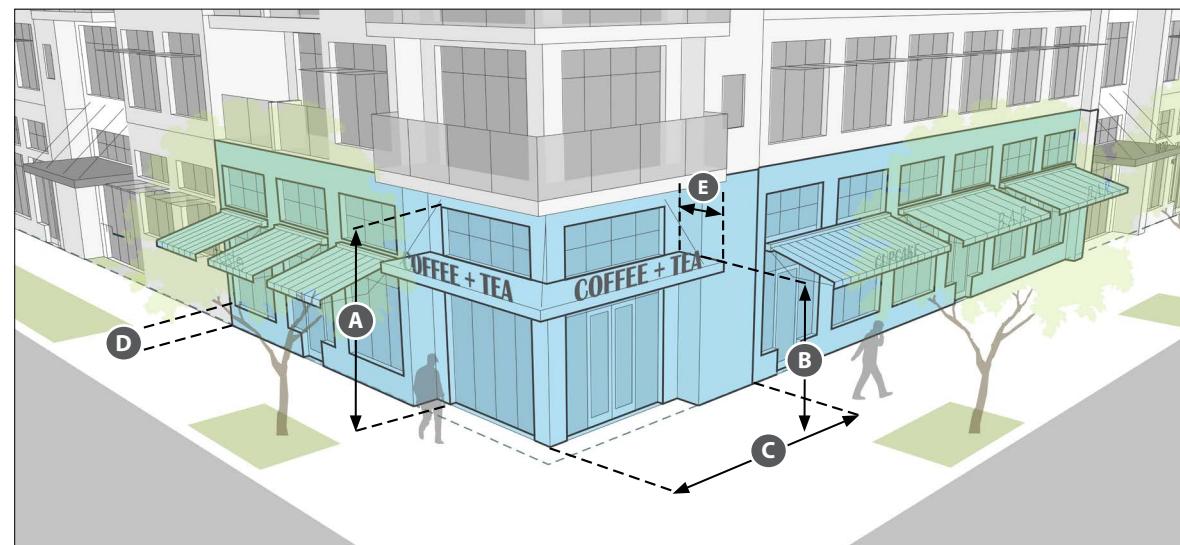
### Design Standards

- a. Shopfront openings shall be organized into bays, with upper floor windows stacked above, per the standards **Section 6.5.D**.

### Design Guidelines

- b. Where permitted, storefronts may be used in combination with **Galleries** or **Arcades**, or where the setback is sufficient and context is appropriate, in combination with a **Dooryard**, **Terrace**, or **Porch** (see **Section 6.5.F** Encroaching Architectural Elements).
- c. Ground floor windows should have a minimum transparency of 80% and an external reflectance of less than 15%.
- d. If a storefront is recessed or otherwise setback, and is not designed in combination with a **Dooryard**, **Terrace**, or **Porch** (as allowed in **Section 6.5.F**), the resulting setback should be designed as a seamless continuation of the sidewalk, not as a landscaped area or buffer.

**Figure 6-2 Shopfront**



Where permitted, this area may be used for outdoor dining and merchandising.

- e. All shade should be provided on the exterior of the building; the majority of the interior space should be visible from the right of way.
- f. With minor exceptions, all storefront openings should provide visibility into the interior space, and not be visually obstructed by signage, merchandising racks, storage shelves, etc.
- g. Window sills of non-entry bays should be no higher than 2 feet from adjacent sidewalk grade.

Design Guidelines		MIN	MAX
<b>A</b>	Height to top of transom	12'	16'
<b>B</b>	Height to bottom of canopy / awning	8'	10'
<b>C</b>	Width of each storefront bay	10'	25'
<b>D</b>	Height of storefront base	1'	3'
<b>E</b>	Awning/Canopy Depth	4'	-

## 6. Common Entrance / Lobby

Common entrances and lobbies, like shopfronts, should have a strong connection to the public realm. While not always open to the wider public, they are spaces that are shared by all tenants which rely on them for building access. Access to individual units (ground and upper floors) is provided via a shared hall/corridor within the building.

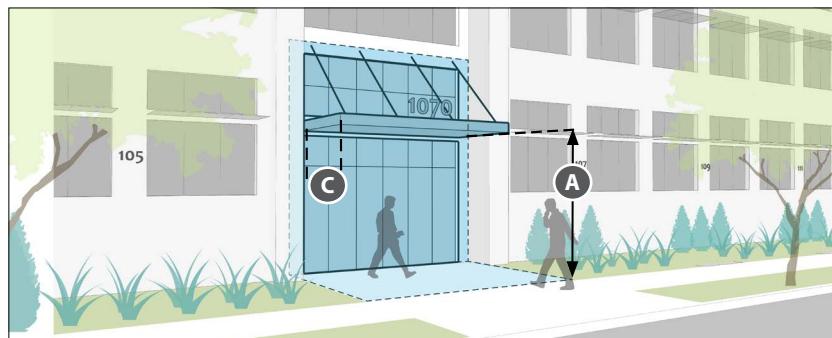
### Design Guidelines

- Common entrances should be conspicuous and designed as a focal-point of the ground-floor façade. Designs that engage multiple floors and/or help modulate the façade of the main building are encouraged (See also **Section 6.5.C/D** for Building Massing and Façade Design Standards and Guidelines).
- Lobbies should be visible from the public right of way. Ground floor windows shall have a transparency higher than eighty percent and an external reflectance of less than fifteen percent. Window sills may be no higher than 2 feet from adjacent grade. All shade should be provided on the exterior of the building. See **Section 6.5.D.2** for more fenestration requirements.
- In some cases, a Common Entrance may include or be combined with a semi-private yard or open space to provide a comfortable, attractive outdoor public transitional space that allows congregation off of the sidewalk, standards for which are provided in **Section 3.10** Site Standards.

**Figure 6-3 Commercial Common Entrance / Multiple Floor Lobby**



**Figure 6-4 Residential Common Entrance/Lobby**



- Common entrances may also be used with a Porch, Dooryard, Terrace, Arcade, or Gallery (See **Section 3.6.5** Encroaching Architectural Elements).

Frontage Element Recommendations		MIN	MAX
<b>A</b>	Height to top of transom	10'	20'
<b>B</b>	Height to bottom of canopy/awning	8'	-
	Distance to back of sidewalk	-	20'
<b>C</b>	Area of outdoor space*	80 sf	-
	Awning/Canopy Depth	4'	-

\* Does not include public R.O.W.



## 7. Retail-Ready

Retail-Ready frontage is a versatile type that might host office or residential uses (where permitted) in the near-term and be easily converted into shopfronts in the future if the market improves for commercial uses.

### Design Guidelines

- a. The ground floor should be at or with 6" of the level of the sidewalk, to allow ADA access to the entry with little to no ramp necessary.
- b. The ground floor fenestration amount should be between 50% and 95%.
- c. The setback should be designed and landscaped to provide privacy when the frontage hosts uses which require privacy, such as residences or offices.
- d. When in residential use, ground floor bedroom and bathrooms windows are prohibited along the front façade.
- e. When in retail use, if a dooryard or terrace is not used and the entry is at ground level, the setback is typically treated as an extension of the sidewalk.
- f. When in retail use, the ground floor fenestration should be transparent and provide visibility to the interior spaces per **Section 6.5.E.5** Shopfronts.

**Figure 6-5 Retail-Ready Dooryard**



**Figure 6-6 Retail-Ready Terrace**



## 8. Ground Floor Office

The private frontages of ground floor offices, where allowed in Downtown, must be carefully designed to ensure that they appropriately contribute to the active public realm environment of downtown. Like ground floor residential, they typically require some level of privacy, but they still have the opportunity to give life to the street.

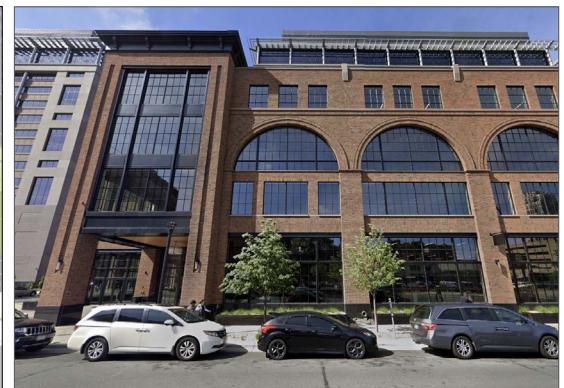
### Design Standards

- When located in the Gateway Overlay, ground floor offices shall conform to all Retail-Ready standards and guidelines.
- Fenestration shall be calibrated according to overlay. See **Section 6.5.D.2** for more information.

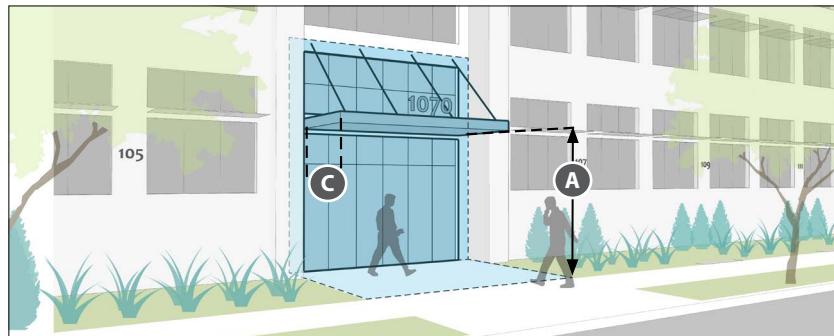
### Design Guidelines

- In general, the most public-friendly office functions such as reception and waiting area or office amenity space should be located closest to the primary façade. Areas for private functions, such as examination rooms, should not be located on the primary façade.
- Ground floor offices may take access directly from the sidewalk and/or from a Common Entrance or Lobby (See **Section 6.5.E.6**).
- The setbacks of ground floor offices at or near the level of the sidewalk may feature a dooryard or simple landscaping, or they

**Figure 6-7 Office Common Entrance / Multiple Floor Lobby**



**Figure 6-8 Office Common Entrance/Lobby**



may be designed as extensions of the sidewalk if privacy is not desired.

Raised ground floor offices may use a Terrace, Porch, or Stoop. See **Section 6.5.F** Encroaching Architectural Elements.

**Table 6-10 Common Entrance / Lobby**

Frontage Element Recommendations		MIN	MAX
<b>A</b>	Height to top of transom	10'	20'
<b>B</b>	Height to bottom of canopy/awning	8'	-
	Distance to back of sidewalk	-	20'
<b>C</b>	Area of outdoor space*	80 sf	-
	Awning/Canopy Depth	4'	-

\* Does not include public R.O.W.



## 9. Ground Floor Residential

Ground Floor Residential frontages provide a transition from the public sidewalk to semi-private or private space. These frontages moderate the balance the privacy needs of the residential unit with the need to provide eyes on the street to ensure a safe and activated public realm environment. Accordingly, the closer the ground floor façade is to the street, the more carefully designed the frontage must be. Ground floor units are either entered through a common entry (such as an entry lobby or shared private court) or directly from the public sidewalk, typically through a transitional entry element such as a dooryard, porch, terrace, or stoop.

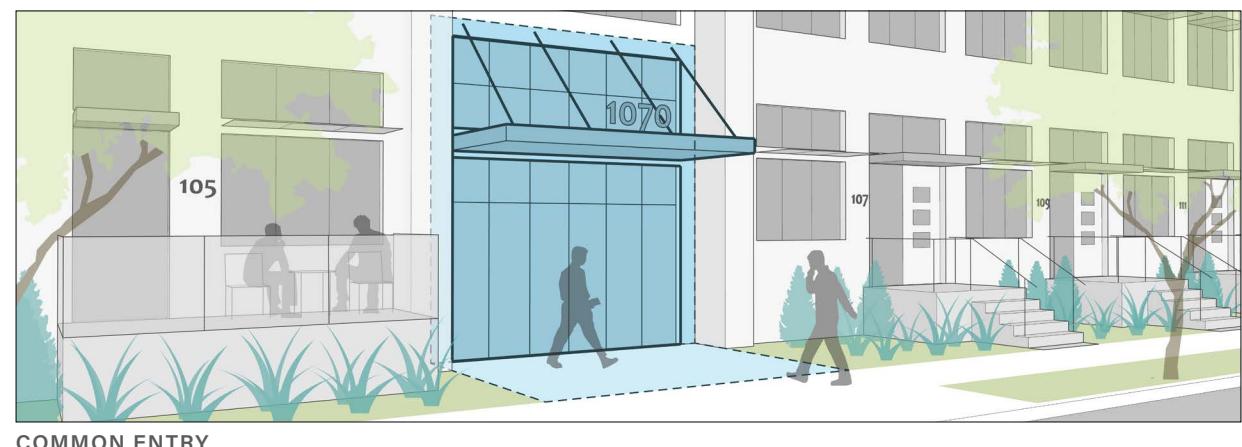
### Design Standards

- a. For required residential setback requirements see **Section 6.5.A** and **Table 6-4** Building Placement.
- b. See **Section 6.5.D** and **Table 6-7** Fenestration for residential fenestration standards.
- c. Ground floor bedroom and bathrooms windows are prohibited along the front façade in the Downtown Core.
- d. If access to ground floor units is directly from the public sidewalk, entry may be provided via a Dooryard, Terrace, Porch, or Stoop. See **Section 6.5.F** Encroaching Architectural Elements.
- e. If direct access is not provided, entry may be via a Common Entry with shared passageways.

**Figure 6-9 Ground Floor Frontages and Entry Type Variations**



**DIRECT ENTRY TYPES (DOORYARD AND TERRACE)**



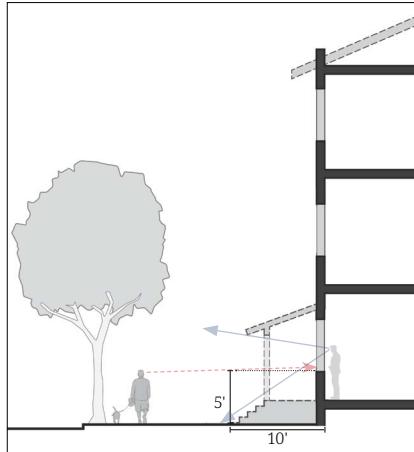
**COMMON ENTRY**

### Design Guidelines

- f. Privacy for ground floor residential spaces is achieved through a combination of elevation, landscape, and setbacks. Residential units with direct entries should have a first floor level that is 1.5' to 4' above the level of the sidewalk, unless the unit is meant to be ADA accessible or Retail-Ready.

- g. Windows on ground floor residential are typically similar to those found on upper floors of the façade.
- h. Ground floor bedroom and bathrooms windows should not be located along the front façade anywhere in Downtown.

**Figure 6–10 Pedestrian and Resident Interface**



The raised elevation of the ground floor from sidewalk level, and taller ground floor sill heights (generally above eye-level), allow residents to overlook the street outside, while preventing passers-by from seeing into private interior spaces.

- i. Privacy Modulation. The distance from the sidewalk to the façade and first floor windows is used to maintain a balance between resident comfort level and neighborhood security and activity. The closer a residential unit is to the sidewalk, the higher the ground floor elevation should be to maintain a sense of privacy. See **Table 6–5** for ground floor height standards. However, this height is affected by ground floor fenestration standards. See **Section D.2.C.V** for more information.

#### PRIVACY MODULATION EXAMPLES



**Shallow Setback (Very Urban Condition)** The façade is close to the sidewalk (less than 5ft), so the unit's ground floor is raised high enough that pedestrians must look up to see into the interior. The opaque front door and the landscaping is used to ensure privacy. However, the lower bushes and ground cover soften the wall in a nod to the neighborhood context.



**No Setback (Atypical Urban Condition)** The façade is immediately at the back of walk, but window sill height is above eye level of the passerby, maintaining privacy within the unit while allowing the tenant to overlook the street.



**Comfortable Setback/Elevation (Typical Urban Condition)** The combination of modest setbacks and ground floor elevation - in the form of semi-private dooryard/terraces - provides sufficient privacy and a comfortable buffer between the sidewalk and large glass openings of the living room, with more private bedrooms on the second floor.



**Generous Setback (Less Urban Condition)** These ground-floor units are at-grade with the sidewalk, with low sill-height. In this case, generous landscape setbacks (15ft) provide a sufficient privacy buffer from the street allowing residents to look out onto the public realm.

## 10. Vehicular Access

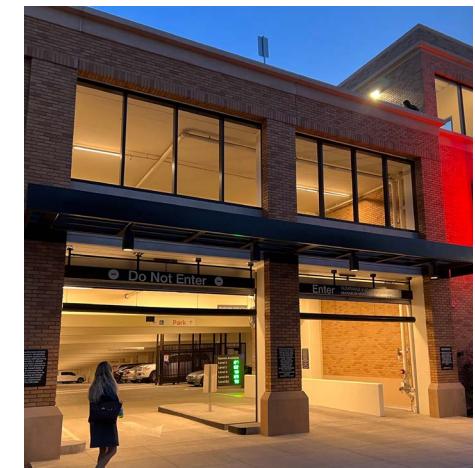
Vehicular Access frontages are entries for vehicles into the ground floor façade of the building. They typically provide access to parking garages or through a building to rear service areas or surface parking. Because of their utilitarian nature, their design is often neglected. However, they require particular care in their design as their sheer size and presence along the street wall can make them one of the most disruptive elements to the quality of the pedestrian environment.

### Design Standards

- a. **In the Main Street Overlay**, Vehicular Access frontage on a street is not permitted.
- b. **Outside the Main Street Overlay**, Vehicular Access frontage on a street is only allowed when no alley provides access to the lot. The provision of alleys makes higher quality frontages possible and are highly encouraged.
- c. **Openings and Bays**. Vehicular Access shall be organized into openings which are proportioned and detailed to appear similar to Shopfronts (**Section 6.5.E.9**). These openings shall be organized into vertical bays in coordination with the overall façade per **Standard 6.5.D.1.a.ii**.
- d. **Width**. Vehicular Access openings shall be no more than 13 feet wide. Where adjacent openings are necessary to provide entry and exit, they shall be separated by a pier (a portion of wall) of at least 2 feet in width.
- e. **Buildout**. Vehicular Access frontage may comprise no more than 40% of a building's required buildout (per **Table 6-4** in **Section 6.5.A**), and a single project may have no more than 2 Vehicular Access openings on any one street.
- f. **Parking Structures**. For standards related to parking structure façades, see **Section 6.5.D.3**.



Vehicular Access can be organized into attractive, well-proportioned bays, just like storefronts.



### Design Guidelines

- g. Entries should be at least 50 feet from the corner of a block.
- h. Gates or doors which secure vehicular entries should be designed as attractive urban elements, just like pedestrian entry doors.

**Figure 6-11 Vehicular Access**

Frontage Element Recommendations		MIN	MAX
<b>A</b>	Width of Opening	-	13'
<b>B</b>	Width of pier/wall between openings	2'	-
<b>C/D</b>	Percentage of building's required frontage (C divided by D)	-	40%



## F. Encroaching Architectural Elements

Certain **encroaching architectural elements** may be combined with appropriate private frontage types—as regulated in the previous section, **6.5.E**—to form interesting, cohesive, and active ground-floor environments. These may extend beyond the build-to range—identified in **Section 6.5.A**—into the front setback and, in some cases, into the public right-of-way. **Table 6-11** identifies where these encroachments are allowed and how much they may encroach beyond the surface of the façade. The table and notes below identify which elements may encroach into the public right-of-way, and under what conditions they may do so.

**Table 6-11**  
**Encroaching Architectural Elements**

	Main Street Overlay	Gateway Overlay	Elsewhere in Downtown
	<i>Encroachment beyond the façade</i>	<i>Encroachment beyond the façade</i>	<i>Encroachment beyond the façade</i>
<b>Stoop<sup>1</sup></b>	Not allowed	Not allowed	up to 2' min. from ROW sidewalk
<b>Porch<sup>1</sup></b>	Not allowed	Not allowed	8' min. and up to 2' min. from ROW sidewalk <sup>5</sup>
<b>Terrace<sup>1</sup></b>	Not allowed	Not allowed	
<b>Bay Window<sup>2</sup></b>	2' to 4'	2' to 4'	2' to 4'
<b>Balcony<sup>2</sup></b>	4' to 8'	4' to 8'	4' to 8'
<b>Awning or Canopy<sup>3</sup></b>	Up to 8'	Up to 8'	Up to 8'
<b>Roof Eave / Cornice Assembly<sup>2</sup></b>	Up to 5'	Up to 5'	Up to 5'
<b>Arcade<sup>4</sup></b>	See <b>Table 6-12</b> for standards and guidelines	Not allowed	Not allowed
<b>Gallery<sup>4</sup></b>		Not allowed	Not allowed

1. May not encroach into the public right-of-way
2. May encroach into the public right-of-way on upper floors
3. May encroach into the public right-of-way provided that the resultant sidewalk width, covered by the arcade or gallery, is at least 10 feet clear from the inside of the post, column, or pier to the ground floor building face. In most cases, this requires that the ground floor façade be set back more than 0' and results in a wider sidewalk than currently exists.
4. May encroach into the public right-of-way if they provide a clear sidewalk width, covered by the arcade or gallery, of at least 10 feet from
5. As a result, a Porch or Terrace may only occur within setbacks of 10' or more.



Projecting Roof Eave



Shop Awnings



Bay Windows

## 1. General to All

If utilized, these elements should comply with the following suggestions:

- a. Materials, style, and design should be consistent with the architecture of the building and neighborhood character.
- b. Deep eaves, balconies, bay windows, and projected rooms of traditionally styled buildings should have visible supports in the form of projecting beams or braces. Balconies on contemporary styled buildings may simply project.
- c. Glazing on doors should be clear glass with at least 90 percent visible light transmission. Glazing should not be reflective (mirrored).
- d. Landscaping should be appropriate to the architecture and scale of the building.
- e. Five of the listed architectural elements—those which extend to the ground—carry additional recommendations. These are the Stoop, Porch, Terrace, Arcade, and Gallery.

## 2. Stoop



A stairway and landing leading directly from the right of way to an elevated building entrance.

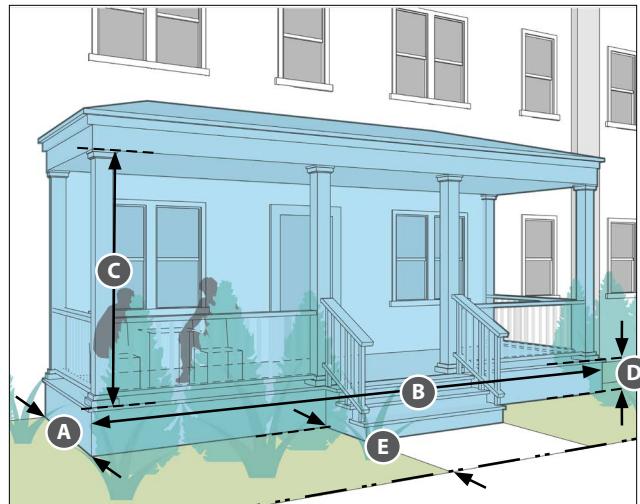
Recommended Dimensions		MIN	MAX
<b>A</b>	Stoop width	4'	8'
<b>B</b>	Stoop depth (not including stairs)	4'	8'
<b>C</b>	Stoop floor height <sup>3</sup>	1.5	3'
<b>D</b>	Planter/fence height	-	3'
<b>E</b>	Setback from Sidewalk	2'	6'

### Additional Suggestions

- The exterior stairway may be perpendicular or parallel to the adjacent sidewalk. When parallel to the sidewalk, landscape of 1-2 feet should be provided between the side of stair/stoop and the sidewalk.
- Adjoining stoops should be limited to two entries. A stoop may also provide access to a common entry.
- Gates are discouraged.



### 3. Porch



Porches are roofed, unenclosed rooms attached to the exterior of a building that provide access and comfortable semi-private outdoor social spaces that help activate the public realm.

Recommended Dimensions		MIN	MAX
<b>A</b>	Porch depth (excluding stairs) <sup>1</sup>	8'	-
<b>B</b>	Porch width	10'	-
<b>C</b>	Porch height <sup>2</sup>	8'	12'
<b>D</b>	Floor height <sup>3</sup>	1.5'	3'
<b>E</b>	Between porch and front PL	2'	-

#### Additional Suggestions

- Porches may be used to provide access to multiple front doors of ground-floor units.
- Porches may also wrap around building corners. This is particularly appropriate on corner lots.

#### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Between building façade and end of porch deck.
- <sup>2</sup> From porch floor to top of porch columns.
- <sup>3</sup> Measured from grade at right of way.

### 4. Terrace



An enclosed area outside of an elevated ground floor, usually enclosed by a low wall or fence.

Recommended Dimensions		MIN	MAX
<b>A</b>	Depth, clear	8'	-
<b>B</b>	Finish level above sidewalk	-	3'
	Length of terrace	-	150'
<b>C</b>	Distance between stairways	-	50'

#### Additional Suggestions

- Door and window design should be appropriate for street-fronting façades.

## 5. Arcade



## 6. Gallery



The Mansion House in Downtown Watsonville has a gallery which once featured classical details corresponding to the architecture of its façade, as can be seen in the upper right historic photograph.

**Table 6-12 Arcades and Galleries: Standards**

	Arcade	Gallery
<b>Definition</b>	Arcades are extensions of upper floors over a sidewalk, supported by structural elements such as piers, columns, or arches. Arcades provide shade, glare control, and weather protection.	Galleries are appendages to building façades that extend over sidewalks, providing shade for pedestrians and often providing balcony space above. They are supported by structural elements such as piers, columns, or arches which extend to the ground.
<b>Location</b>	Arcades and Galleries may only be permitted in the Main Street Overlay. They are especially encouraged on south- and west-facing façades in order to shade the sidewalk from sunlight. The required dimensions result in a sidewalk wider than currently exists in most of the Main St Overlay.	
<b>Encroachment</b>	Arcades and Galleries shall extend to a distance of 2 feet from the curb face.	
<b>A Sidewalk</b>	The resultant sidewalk width, covered by the arcade, shall be at least 10 feet clear from inside of the vertical support to ground floor building face.	
<b>B Vertical Supports</b>	Vertical supports may be piers, columns, or arches. Vertical supports may not exceed 3 feet in width. Typically, the width of the support should not exceed 1/5th of the distance between supports.	
<b>C Openings</b>	The openings between vertical supports, as seen from the street, should be taller than they are wide. Openings shall correlate with façade bays (see <b>Section 6.5.D</b> ).	
<b>D Clearance</b>	The minimum vertical clearance at each opening shall be a minimum of 12', excluding decorative brackets, spandrels, and/or lower portions of arches.	
<b>E Height</b>	Only floors 2, 3, and 4 may extend over the sidewalk. Any floor above the 4th floor shall be at or behind the build-to range.	Galleries may be single or double-story, and should correlate with building floors.

# SITE STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

## A. Introduction

### 1. Intent

The following site standards and guidelines are generally intended to inform the design and location of elements of site for the purpose of the health, safety, and general welfare of the immediate occupants of each building, and for the neighborhood.

### 2. Applicability

The following standards apply to all new development, or whenever below-mentioned features are introduced to an existing development. The sections below shall be applied as standards unless strict compliance is determined by the Zoning Administrator to be incompatible with the requirements of other departments or agencies, in which case they may be applied as guidelines. In cases where the Zoning Administrator determines that deviations from the strict interpretation of any standard in this section is appropriate, the Zoning Administrator shall also seek to ensure that the obvious intent of each standard is still met.

## B. Specific to Waste & Utility Placement

### 1. Utility access and equipment

- a. Utility access and equipment such as back-flow preventers, transformer boxes, gas and electric meters, and other utilities should be placed within or adjacent to and be accessed from the alley, subject to the requirements and approval of the associated utility company. On lots with no alley, meters and similar equipment should be underground vaults or in utility rooms/closets within buildings, were possible. If such locations are infeasible, these services should be in inconspicuous locations along the sides of project sites and should be thoroughly screened from public view.

### 2. Mechanical and electrical equipment

- a. All mechanical and electrical equipment – including, but not limited to, air-conditioning units, antennas, garage door motors – whether roof-mounted, ground-mounted or otherwise, should be screened from public view or located so as not to be visible from streets. Such equipment and related screening should be designed with materials and colors that conform to and are an integral part of the design of the building.
  - i. Mechanical equipment that generates noise, smoke or odors, should not be located on or within 10 feet of a public right of way or any on-site common open spaces.
  - ii. Noise- and odor-generating equipment and containers should be located in areas that will not create a nuisance to adjacent properties, with bins being covered when possible. Openings to trash enclosures should always be shielded from public rights of way.

### 3. Telecommunication Devices

- a. Telecommunication devices (such as satellite dishes or other equipment) should be screened from public view or located so as not to be visible from streets. Applicants are encouraged to work with satellite providers to locate satellite dishes out of view on building roofs and/or on rear yard or side yard facing façades if adequate signal strength and quality can be achieved. In multi-family and multi-tenant buildings, conduits should be provided from such a location to each unit.

### 4. Wet Utilities

- a. Wet utilities should typically be located in the street but may be located in the alley to address topographical, efficiency or other engineering reasons. If “wet” and “dry” utilities are co-located in the alley, proper trench separation and utility access must be ensured. On lots with no alley, all “wet” utilities should be in the street or public right-of-way. Utility meters and entrances should also be provided below-grade in the street or sidewalk and should be flush with the surrounding grade.

### 5. Service Entrances & Waste Disposal Areas

- a. Service entrances, waste disposal areas, and other similar service areas should be located adjacent to alleys and take their access from them. On lots with no alley, these areas should be located as far away from – and screened from views from – the public right of way as practical.



Example of an appropriately placed double standpipe connection in the base of a building at the sidewalk.



**AVOID**

Example of inappropriately placed ground-level utilities in a parkway.



Example of mechanical equipment well-screened by an architectural element incorporated into the building's composition.



**AVOID**

Example of inappropriately placed utility boxes in a parkway.



Wherever possible, mechanical/utilities equipment should be placed in alleys. In this example, they are further shielded by architectural elements and a hedge.



**AVOID**

Example of inappropriately placed check valves and other utility devices in the front yard of a commercial building.



## C. Specific to Site Walls

### 1. Fence and Wall Heights

- a. Fence and wall heights shall be measured from the grade directly below. In cases where the grade differs on either side of the fence or wall, the lower measuring point shall be the average between the grades of the sides. Fences and walls (including retaining walls) must be set back at least 18 inches from the sidewalk.

### 2. Entrance Arbors

- a. Entrance arbors up to 9 feet in height and 5 feet in width may be permitted.

### 3. General to frontages

- a. Fence and wall posts within the front setback shall be limited to 3.5 feet in height.
- b. Retaining walls may not have more than 3 feet of difference between the grade on either side. Fences or walls up to 3.5 feet in height may be erected above retaining walls provided that:
  - i. Any fence or wall more than 3.5 feet as measured from the sidewalk is at least 50% open.
  - ii. At no point does the fence intrude into the line of visibility between the landing of the entrance(s) of the primary building(s) and the sidewalk. This shall be measured from point that are 5 feet above said landing(s) and 5 feet above the sidewalk.

### 4. Specific to Corner Lots

- a. On corner lots, fences and walls may reach 6 feet in height to enclose the private rear yard from the side street, but must be set back at least as far back as the building face of the primary building. Fences and walls may reach 8 feet in height, provided that any portion of the fence or wall that is more than 6 feet in height is at least 50% open.

### 5. Specific to interior side yards and rear yards

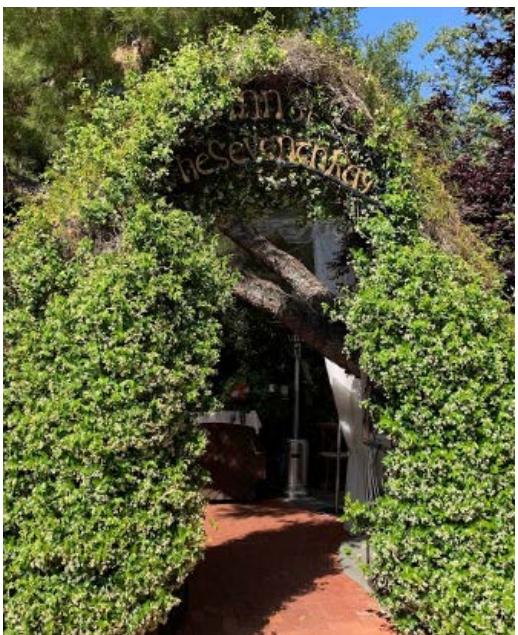
- a. Fences and walls may reach 6 feet in height and flush with the façade of the primary building. Interior side and rear fences and walls may reach 8 feet in height, provided that any portion of the fence or wall that is more than 6 feet in height is at least 50% open.
- b. Any rear fence or wall along any alley shall be so constructed as to provide a space in the rear yard that is sufficient in length, depth, and height to house trash bins off of the alley. If another area within the rear yard meets this requirement, it shall not be necessary to incorporate such a space for trash bins into the fence or wall.
- c. Gates and doors on rear fences shall not open outward towards the alley but shall be designed to open inward to the property.



Landscape  
retaining wall  
and fence.



Landscape  
fencing set back  
from sidewalk



Entrance arbor.



Cafe rearyard  
with a wood  
fence.



## D. Specific to Lighting

### 1. General to All

- a.** Site lighting should be shielded by permanent attachments to light fixtures so that light sources are not visible from a public way and to prevent off-site glare.
- b.** Wall-pack types of lighting are not recommended, but if proposed must be provided with full cutoff shields and must contribute to the architecture of the building.
- c.** Specific to residential ground floors: site and building-mounted luminaires should produce initial illuminance value no greater than 0.04 horizontal and vertical footcandles.
- d.** Specific to nonresidential ground floors: site and building-mounted luminaires should produce a maximum initial illuminance value no greater than 0.1 horizontal and vertical footcandles at the boundary with adjoining residential lots, and no greater than 0.01 horizontal footcandles 10 feet beyond that boundary.



On-site light sources should be shielded from the public right-of-way.



Shielded and/or frosted lighting avoids off-site glare.

## E. On-Site Open Space

### 1. Introduction

On-site open space is private or shared outdoor space that exists for the enjoyment and use of building tenants, and sometimes the public. It can also provide comfortable paths through which pedestrian access is provided from the street to any buildings (or portions of buildings) that lack direct street frontage. This Section identifies a series of open space types and design characteristics of each type.

### 2. Court

- a. Description.** A court is an open space surrounded by one or more buildings, for use by residents or tenants, or for activation as a public plaza or outdoor dining area. It can provide visitor access from the street to dwellings, retail, office spaces, or buildings within the lot that lack direct access from the street.
- b. Guidelines.** A court's perimeter should be coherent and well-defined by walls on at least three sides. Courts should include a minimum of one shared amenity, such as a seating area, fountain, BBQ island, or outdoor fireplace.

A court may provide access to private residences or amenity spaces.



### 3. Forecourt

- a. Description.** A forecourt is a court that abuts the public sidewalk. Where forecourts give access to retail and other public uses, they function as an extension of the public realm. Where forecourts grant access to residential or other private uses, they function as transitional spaces between the public and private realms.
- b. Guidelines.** Forecourts should be a minimum of 15' x 15' in size.
- c. Build-Out Requirements.** A forecourt is a permitted exception to the build-out requirement for a lot. See **Section 6.5.A.**

Forecourts help transition from the public to private realm.





## 4. Side Yard

- a. Description.** A side yard is an open space along one side of a building. It can serve as a semi-private space through which visitor access is provided to one or more buildings or dwellings, or it can be a private space for the exclusive use of the residents of one or more dwellings.
- b. Guidelines.** Side yards should be defined by buildings on a minimum of two sides. Side yards should not exceed twenty-five feet in width where adjacent to streets or public open spaces.
- c. Build-Out Requirements.** An entry to a side yard is a permitted exception to the build-out requirement for a lot. See **Section 6.5.A.**

Single- and multi-family residences separated by side yards.



## 5. Rear Yard

- a. Description.** A rear yard is a private, landscaped open space located behind a building. It is for the use of the residents or users of one or more dwellings.
- b. Guidelines.** For buildings with two or more units, a rear yard may be divided into separated private yards, provided each private yard is directly adjacent to the dwelling unit.

Rear yards can contain amenities for multi-family buildings.



## 6. Passage

- a. Description.** Passages provide a pedestrian connection between or through buildings, from the street to a court, building entrance, or rear parking lot. Passages may be covered or uncovered. They may be gated or completely open to the street. Passages which provide public access through a block are known as *paseos* (See **Chapter 4**).
- b. Guidelines.** Passages should be a minimum of six feet in width.
- c. Build-Out Requirements.** An entry to a passage is a permitted exception to the build-out requirement for a lot. See **Section 6.5.A**.

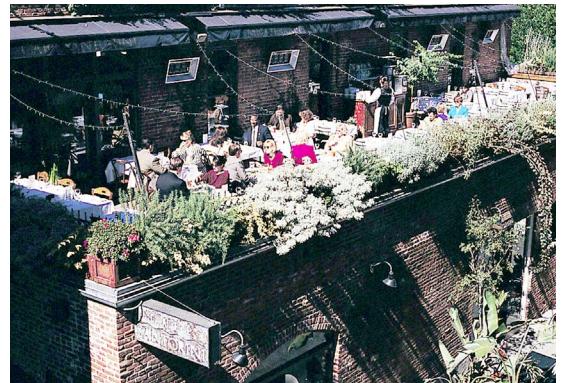
A passage may provide access to residential units.



## 7. Roof Deck/Terrace

- a. Description.** A roof deck or terrace is an outdoor gathering space that may be assigned to individual units or shared by all residents or tenants of a building.
- b. Guidelines.** Roof decks should include a minimum of one amenity and design element, such as a trellis, seating area, fountain, landscaping, or outdoor fireplace to encourage their use as an outdoor gathering place.

A roof deck/terrace used as a dining area for restaurants.





## Section 6.7

# GENERAL DEFINITIONS

**Introduction.** The following definitions are supplemental to those in the Watsonville Municipal Code. When in conflict, the definitions herein shall prevail.

**Access Drive.** A private right of way primarily intended as vehicular access to on-site parking or loading.

**Alley.** A narrow service street which provides secondary access to the rear of lots within a block. Driveways, parking aisles, and fire lanes are not alleys.

**Arbor (entrance arbor).** A wooden structure that is intended to define an entrance into an on-site outdoor space, such as a front yard or parking lot.

**Arcade.** A façade with a ground floor colonnade supporting the upper stories of the building, intended to provide shade, glare control, and weather protection.

**Bay.** A fifteen- to thirty-foot wide division of a façade that extends from the ground to the top of the façade. Bays are typically internally symmetrical.

**Bay Window.** A window that projects from any building elevation.

**Block.** An aggregation of lots which are bound on all sides by public rights of way. Block dimensions are measured along private property lines.

**Building Base.** The visually unified horizontal portion of a building that begins on the ground and extends one or more floors, typically ending at an architectural feature like a cornice or string course. The building base appears to be holding up the upper floors.

**Building Length.** The length of the building as measured parallel to the front property line.

**Build-to range.** The conceptual range parallel to a front or side-street property line that a specified percentage of the building face must

fall within (see Frontage Buildout Requirement).

**Close.** A dead-end street which contains a landscaped median. Rather than having a turnaround bulb at its terminus, the landscaped median within a close maintains a consistent width along its entire length.

**Chamfered corner.** A bevel where two perpendicular building faces meet, resulting in a third face at a 45-degree angle.

**Civic Building.** A private or public structure of civic importance that is noncommercial in nature. This includes, but is not limited to, schools, places of worship, libraries, museums, city hall, or any other building type that has historically been prominently featured in traditional cities and towns as a center of public life. Civic buildings do not include retail or

mixed-use buildings, residential buildings, day care facilities, privately-owned office buildings, or municipal yards.

**Civic Space.** Outdoor space that is either owned by the City and intended for public use, or is on a private parcel, immediately adjacent to a right of way, and functions as public open space.

**Court.** A court is an open space surrounded by one or more buildings, for use by residents or tenants, or for activation as a public plaza or outdoor dining area. It can provide visitor access from the street to dwellings, retail, office spaces, or buildings within the lot that lack direct access from the street.

**Director.** The Director of Community Development, or designee.

**Dormer Window.** An individual roofed window that protrudes out of a sloped roof.

**Drive Aisle.** A vehicular lane within a parking lot that provides access to the individual parking spaces.

**Driveway.** A vehicular lane within a lot that leads to on-site parking.

**Encroachment.** Any structure extending beyond the build-to range into a required setback area or, in some cases, into the public right-of-way.

**Fenestration.** All openings on the façade, including windows and doors.

**Fire Lane.** An on-site right of way required by the Fire Marshal for the access of emergency vehicles.

**Forecourt.** A court that abuts the public sidewalk. Where forecourts give access to retail and other public uses, they function as an extension of the public realm. Where forecourts grant access to residential or other private uses, they function as transitional spaces between the public and private realms.

**Frontage Buildout Requirement.**

The requirement that a specified portion of building façade meet the build-to range along a street-adjacent property line.

**Frontage, Private.** The ground floor building façade and the area between the building façade and any property line along a street or public open space.

**Frontage, Public.** The space between any street-adjacent property line and the first travel lane in the roadway.

**Gallery.** A ground-floor colonnade that supports a shed roof or deck that covers the sidewalk, intended to provide shade, glare control, and weather protection.

**Gratuitous complication (façades).**

Façade modulations that have no discernible function or meaning. This does not refer to architectural ornamentation, which might include eaves, entablature, bay windows, oriels, window and door surrounds, light fixtures, canopies, balconies, or other historically purposeful aesthetic embellishments.

**Ground Floor.** The floor of a building located nearest to the level of the existing grade around the building.

**Half-Story.** The uppermost story of a building in which the sloping roof forms the walls. These are often lighted by dormer windows and include knee walls under roof slopes.

**Industrial Building.** A building or portion of building for which the primary use is industrial in nature, and includes manufacturing, assembly, fabrication, or repair processes.

**Local Symmetry.** The balanced distribution of equivalent forms or spaces on either side of an imaginary central vertical line. A locally symmetrical condition occurs only on a portion of the building, and does not refer to the entire building or façade.

**Lot.** A portion of land delineated from others to host an allowed development.

**Lot Line.** A front, side, or rear edge of a lot. For the purpose of this code, lot line is synonymous with property line.

**Loggia.** A gallery or room with one or more open sides. It may be a portion of a house which has a side open to a terrace or garden, or it may be a portion of an upper floor of a building open to the street.

**Massing Increment.** An internally coherent façade composition that is visually distinguishable from an adjacent façade composition of the same project.

**Outbuilding.** A building on the rear of a property but separate from, and smaller in scale than the building which contains the primary use of the site.

**Open work fence.** A fence in which the solid portions are evenly distributed and constitute no more than 50 percent of the total surface area.

**Paseo.** A pedestrian path that provides a connection from one right of way or civic space to another. They are publicly-accessible but may be privately maintained or dedicated to the City.

**Passage.** An on-site pedestrian path.



**Pergola.** A wooden structure that is intended to either provide a small area of shade or define an entrance into an on-site outdoor space, such as a front yard or parking lot.

**Pier.** The vertical elements which, when dividing shopfronts, often define bays or Massing Increments.

**Primary Building.** A building situated towards the adjacent street or public open space that accommodates the primary use of the site. This is distinguished from an outbuilding, which is ancillary in use and form, and sits near the rear of the site.

**Primary Entrance.** Doors that include direct access from the sidewalk into a building, or into a zaguán that leads to a court.

**Primary Façade.** The outermost consistent plane of a building face along a street.

**Podium Building.** A building wherein units are constructed atop a concrete podium that contains parking and/or commercial space.

**Retail-Ready. (Syn. Flex Unit)** A private frontage type that is designed to be easily convertible to a retail/service use. This entails high ceilings, a shopfront frontage assembly, and design that does not preclude future commercial ADA compliance.

**Rosewalk.** A wide paseo with residential frontages on either side.

**Rowhouse Building.** A building containing an array of side-by side units.

**Shopfront.** A ground-floor frontage assembly that includes an arrangement of large transparent windows and a conspicuous entrance that leads directly into a retail unit. Shopfronts are spatially defined on either side by vertical elements called piers.

**Side Yard.** The required side setback area between a side property line and a structure.

**Street.** A right of way that provides multi-modal throughput and primary points of access to buildings. Driveways, parking aisles, fire lanes, and alleys are not streets.

**Street, Front.** The side of the lot that is adjacent to a street. For the purpose of this code, any frontage along the Main Street Overlay or Gateway Overlay shall be considered the front. A property may have multiple fronts.

**Street, Side (applicable only to corner lots).** The side of the property that is adjacent to a street that is not considered a front, except that frontage along Main Street shall never be treated as a side street. (also see Street, Front).

**Through Lot.** A lot which extends from one street frontage to another, across the entire span of the block.

**Tower Element.** A part of a building that has a relatively small footprint in relation to, and is taller than, the rest of the building.

**Trellis.** A framework of light wooden or metal bars, chiefly used as a support for fruit trees or climbing plants.

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