

### 3.1 Design Guidelines

**Purpose and Intent:** The project Design Guidelines (provided as Exhibit E) are intended to supplement the City’s existing Zoning Ordinance and Community Design Guidelines by providing design requirements that are specific to the buildout of the project. The guidelines contain general performance criteria, standards, and design objectives that are to be considered by the City, Design Committee, Planning Commission, and the City Council when evaluating individual development proposals within the project boundaries.

**Items Addressed:** The Design Guidelines document addresses several components of the project:

- Development Standards,
- Conceptual plotting (by product type),
- Residential neighborhood design guidelines,
- Architectural guidelines and approval process,
- Commercial center guidelines,
- Street and arterial corridor landscaping, and entrance features,
- Specific details that define the character of the project area, which are not found in existing Citywide documents.

**Design Guidelines Discussion Items:** The discussion below does not address all topics in the Design Guidelines document, but instead, highlights some of the key elements of the project design, and other noteworthy items. The Guidelines are currently in draft form, as staff and the applicant are continuing to refine language in the “Architectural Approval Process” and Development Standards Section. Details of the changes being worked on are provided below.

#### **Key Design Elements:**

- **Community Theme (p. 2):** The design intent of the project is to create a community with a pedestrian-friendly character. Execution of this design intent is reliant upon high-quality design and amenities throughout the various residential neighborhoods with an emphasis placed on orienting living and entry areas toward the front of each home. A seamless transition between neighborhoods is also important to ensure the continuity and “flow” of the project from one neighborhood and product type to the next.
- **Neighborhoods and Product Types (begins on p. 5):**

- Neighborhood One: Attached three-story “flat pad” townhouse product (alley-loaded). The flat pad products are grade-separated from the public sidewalk by 18 to 24 inches in elevation (approximately two risers). The minimum front yard setback (measured from back of sidewalk) for the flat pad products is five feet (three feet for units fronting park sites).



- Neighborhood Two: Attached two-story “tuck-under” townhouse product (alley-loaded). The tuck-unders are grade-separated by approximately eight risers (five feet on average). The minimum setback from the sidewalk is five feet (three feet for units fronting park sites).



- Neighborhood Three: Attached two- and three-story “cottages” (alley-loaded). The cottages have been designed with attached garages, but separated living space. This design concept provides the appearance of more traditional detached single-family homes from the street, while providing opportunities for increased densities. The cottages are grade-separated from the street by two to three risers (18” to 24”), with minimum setbacks of five feet (three feet for units fronting park sites).



- Neighborhood Four: Alley-loaded detached single family. This product is more similar to a “traditional” subdivision, with two-story, alley-loaded, single-family detached homes. These products are generally at-grade with thirteen-foot minimum front yard setbacks and three-foot side yard setbacks.



- Neighborhood Five: “Conventional” single-family detached (front-loaded). This product type consists of two-story, front-loaded (i.e., driveways and garage in front), single-family detached homes. The proposed setbacks are thirteen foot front yards, three-foot side yards, and ten-foot (single story) and fifteen-foot (two story) rear yards.



Neighborhoods One through Four are alley-loaded, with a majority of units fronting on internal pedestrian paseos or neighborhood park sites. The sidewalks in these neighborhoods are detached from a vertical curb and separated by a four to five-foot (depending on street configuration) landscape planter and street trees (see page 26 for a tree planting schematic). Detached sidewalks and paseo sidewalks are five feet wide; the attached sidewalks in Neighborhood Five are four feet wide.

➤ **Pedestrian Bicycle Features**

An off-street bike trail has been provided on Wood Meadow Drive and “B” Way in an effort to facilitate bicycle movement from the south end of the project to the elementary school, commercial center, and potential university / employment center on the north end of the project. The trail system is planned to connect to a segment of Class 1 bike trail within the open space on the south end of the project site. The Class 1 trail, which is identified in the City’s Bicycle Master Plan, will connect to existing trail stubs at Foothills Boulevard and west of the project site. Planning and Transportation staff are satisfied with the internal trail system; however, additional off-street facilities would have also been desirable along New Meadow Drive and “H” Way. Doing so, however, would significantly disrupt the lotting pattern, street grid, and product type design.

➤ **Architectural Approval Process**

All product types within the project will be subject to design review. In summary, all attached products will require a Design Review Permit, approved by either the Planning Commission or Design Committee. Detached product types will be reviewed and approved by the Planning Director prior to the issuance of model home permits and/or plot plan approval. Architectural approval for detached product design found to be inconsistent with the Design Guidelines may be referred by the Planning Director to the Design Committee. The applicant is in agreement with the approval process; however,

the Guidelines were still being revised at the time this report was printed. The completed Design Guidelines will be provided to the Commission at the April 27<sup>th</sup> workshop.

➤ **Development Standards**

Page 4 of the Guidelines identifies the development standards proposed for the various product types. The proposed development standards are consistent with the proposed product types and neighborhood design intent, with one exception. The required setback for street-fronting garages is identified in the Development Standards as 18 feet from the edge of paving. The setback should be measured 18 feet from the balk of walk, so that a vehicle parked in the driveway will not obstruct the public sidewalk. Staff is continuing to coordinate this change with the applicant and will report back to the Commission at the April 27<sup>th</sup> workshop.

➤ **Residential Unit Articulation**

The Design Guidelines (Page 19) require that units on corner lots or facing perimeter edges be designed with enhanced façade treatments that include a variety of window treatments, roof forms, massing, wall plane variation, and wrap-around porches. The Guidelines further require (Page 12) that the rear and side elevations of detached units not on a corner lot or perimeter edge incorporate enhanced architecture (e.g., window trim, varied massing and color blocks, etc.) due to the close proximity of the units to each other. It is staff's opinion through observation of other smaller lot products that the architectural enhancements and treatments described in the Guidelines significantly enhance the livability and architectural quality of a neighborhood. Furthermore, given the densities proposed, staff firmly believes that the short and long-term viability of the project relies on successful architectural execution. The applicant agrees with staff and has written the Design Guidelines accordingly.

➤ **Neighborhood Commercial Center**

Due to the uncertainty in future tenants, a design for the commercial center has not been provided for City review and approval in association with the project. Rather, the commercial center will be processed through a separate Design Review Permit. Staff would have preferred to design the center comprehensively with the residential component of the project in order to ensure key design objectives were met, including pedestrian connectivity and a "Main Street" retail feel similar to that observed in the Rivermark project.

In absence of a commercial center design, it is important that the Guidelines contain specific design objectives for the center, against which a future DRP would be evaluated for consistency. In response to this direction, the Guidelines provide design recommendations. In summary, the Design Guidelines contain the following language/key points to address the design of the commercial center:

- The center is not to be a traditional strip mall (i.e., oriented only to arterial roadways).
- The design intent is for a "Main Street" or "Village" retail center that is equally oriented to the residential neighborhood as the arterial roadways (Blue Oaks and Woodcreek Oaks).
- Encourage two-sided retail buildings with storefronts oriented both toward the neighborhood and internally to the commercial center where feasible.
- Describe the relationship between the plaza park, residential, and commercial center.
  - Retail storefronts *shall* front onto the park to take advantage of outdoor dining and seating areas.
  - Food use should be targeted for the tenant spaces fronting the plaza park.
  - Design a seamless transition between the commercial center and plaza park.
- Discuss the architectural theme or styles to be incorporated into the center.
  - Materials / color palette should be complimentary to surrounding residential development.
  - Types or roof tile (varied roof tiles), massing, detailing, offset wall planes, shade & shadow control, asymmetrical facades, varied coloration, etc.

- Strong correlation between the exterior facades, sidewalk surfaces, and landscape planting.
- Tree-lined, wide, ample sidewalks.
- Fountains and/or other public art.
- Use of awnings, iron work, formal and informal outdoor seating, tables, umbrellas, pennants, and other special treatments used to create a sense of place and a comfortable, inviting environment.

Staff has requested that the applicant incorporate one other key point into the commercial center guidelines as follows:

- Discourage fast food and automotive related uses (i.e., gas canopies) on the corner of Blue Oaks/Woodcreek Oaks and Blue Oaks/Wood Meadow Drive.

Staff recommends that automotive-related uses (i.e., gas stations and drive-thru) be discouraged from the corner of Woodcreek Oaks and Blue Oaks Boulevards, consistent with the goal of providing a “village” retail center that focuses equally on the surrounding neighborhood. The applicant is not in agreement with this recommended addition to the guidelines.

Staff believes that the key points already incorporated, along with the recommended addition, will ensure that the commercial center is cohesive with the proposed mixed-use community.

### ➤ **Landscape Design Guidelines**

Beginning on Page 25 of the Design Guidelines document, the landscape design guidelines outline the streetscape and planting concept (internally and along arterial corridors), recommended plant list, entry features, and fencing. The guidelines identify a minimum tree size of 15-gallon and 24-inch box containers (mixture) and a mixture of one and five-gallon containers for shrubs. The mix of tree and shrub size will create a more immediate landscape presence, similar to that observed in the Rivermark project.

### **3.2 Park Design and Layout**

Seven neighborhood parks are proposed within the project, ranging from one-half acre to almost nine acres in size, with many of the park sites being directly “fronted” by residential units. The park layout is identified on the Master Site Plan (Exhibit D) and Land Use Exhibit (Exhibit G). Conceptual design plans for each park site are identified in Exhibit T. The advantages to having units front directly onto the park site include increased security and surveillance, as well as providing open space or “urban relief” within each neighborhood that is easily accessed by pedestrians.

The smaller park sites are designed with some active, but mostly passive recreational amenities including picnic areas with shade structures, gathering areas and plazas, turf areas, play structures, and small hard courts (i.e., basketball) in certain locations. Due to the small size of the proposed residential lots, the smaller neighborhood parks will likely serve as yard space for many of the residents within the project.



The larger nine-acre community park will be programmed with more active recreational amenities, including two soccer fields, and a larger picnic area. The community park will be located adjacent to the elementary school site, which will provide joint-use opportunities, consistent with past agreements between the City and Roseville City School District.