



## Memorandum

To: Planning & Zoning Commission  
From: Wes Morrison, City Planner  
Date: February 17, 2014  
Re: Residential Multi-Family & Commercial Zoning District Amendments

---

City Council has directed staff to draft changes to our commercial zoning districts to increase the quality of development within the City. Based on discussions with a few Council members' staff was able to get guidance on a particular theme for these design standards. Staff's goal was to draft a document that utilizes some characteristics of a coastal designed community but also allow for flexibility within the design so that everything does not look too similar or to reduce the "theme park" feel of the community.

In December 2013, staff presented draft changes to the Commercial zoning districts which mainly consisted of increasing the design standards for commercially zoned properties. Overall the Commission seemed supportive of the proposed changes and asked staff to research two specific areas:

1. How to apply these changes to buildings being altered.
2. The process for allowing deviations from the new standards based on compatibility issues.

In addition to these changes, staff has also added provisions for buildings fronting on interior streets and accessory buildings.

Additionally, staff has prepared draft design standards for residential multi-family properties as well. In review of our current zoning map, most of the City's multi-family property that is available for development falls under a Planned Unit Development which has their own design standards; however there are about 20 or 30 acres within the City that is zoned residential multi-family and does not have any design standard control in place. Staff wanted to make sure that any future multi-family project would be required to meet a certain level of design standard as well. We have attached those standards for your review and we will be prepared to brief you on that draft.

## Sec. 125-72 Commercial and Mixed Use Districts

---

### Sections:

- 125-72.A. Purposes
- 125-72.B. Land Use Regulations
- 125-72.C. Development Regulations
- 125-72.D. Commercial Design Standards
- 125-72.D-E. Review of Plans

*This section establishes regulations for four commercial and mixed use district types: Neighborhood Commercial (CN), General Commercial (CG), Commercial Office (CO), and Commercial Mixed Use (CM). It also outlines design standards for commercial development within three different roadway classifications: Freeway, Arterial Streets, and Collector & Local Streets.*

### Sec. 125-72.C. Purposes

The specific purposes of the Commercial and Mixed Use Districts are to create, maintain, and enhance commercial and mixed use areas that serve as local activity centers for surrounding neighborhoods as well as regional centers serving city and area residents. Commercial and mixed use areas are typically located on or near the City's major arterial roads and represent a range of development scales and intensities that may include residential uses where appropriate. Four Commercial and Mixed Use Districts are established:

- **CN Neighborhood Commercial.** This district is intended to provide for areas of smaller-scaled and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood-serving commercial and mixed use development (typically with floorplates of less than 10,000 square feet) that includes retail, services, office, eating and drinking, housing, smaller-scaled public uses, etc.
- **CG General Commercial.** This district reflects existing and future areas of larger-scaled pedestrian- and auto-oriented commercial development (typically with floorplates of more than 10,000 square feet) located on the City's major arterial roads and include a wide variety of community-serving uses that include retail, services, office, auto-related businesses, eating and drinking, recreation and entertainment, public and semi-public uses, etc. Residential uses are not permitted in this district.
- **CO Commercial Office.** This district is intended to provide for areas of large-scale integrated professional office development of quality design in a landscaped setting serving high technology, and research and development. Secondary support uses—such as business services and institutional uses—serving the development are encouraged.
- **CM Commercial Mixed Use.** This district is intended to provide for areas of large-scale pedestrian- and auto-oriented region-serving mixed use development that includes a mix of retail formats (both large and small), office and business services, commercial lodging, office-oriented research and development, recreation and entertainment, etc. Multi-family residential uses are permitted in this district. Development in this district will occur under a master development plan.

## Sec. 125-72.B. Land Use Regulations

Schedule 125-72.B below prescribes the land use regulations for *C Commercial and Mixed Use Districts*. The regulations for each district are established by letter designations as follows:

"P" designates permitted use classifications.

"L" designates use classifications that are permitted, subject to certain limitations prescribed by the additional use regulations in Article IV, Division 1: Standards for Specific Uses. Number designations refer to the specific limitations listed at the end of Schedule 125-72.B.

"S" designates use classifications permitted after review and approval of a Special Use Permit by the City Council. These uses are also subject to certain limitations in Article IV, Division 1: Standards for Specific Uses.

Use classifications are defined in Article V, Division I: Use Classifications. In cases where a specific land use or activity is not defined, the City Planner or designee shall assign the land use or activity to a classification that is substantially similar in character. Use classifications not listed in the Schedule below are prohibited.

### Schedule 125-72.B: Use Regulations – Commercial and Mixed Use Districts

<i>Use Classifications</i>	<i>CN</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>CM</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
<b>Residential</b>					
Residential Dwellings					Refer to Section 125-90.B.
<i>Multi-Family Residential</i>	L1	—	—	L1	
<i>Single-Family Residential</i>	L1	—	—	—	
<u><i>Live-Work Units</i></u>	<b>P</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>P</b>	
Residential Care Facilities					
<i>Small Residential Care Facilities</i>	P	—	—	P	
<i>Residential Care Rooming Facilities</i>	P	—	—	P	
<i>Residential Care Apartment Facilities</i>	P	—	—	P	
<b>Public and Semipublic</b>					
Clubs or Lodges	S	P	S	P	
Colleges, Public or Private	S	P	P	P	
Cultural Institutions	P	P	P	P	
Day Care	P	P	P	P	
Educational Research and Development	—	P	P	P	
Government Offices and Facilities					
<i>Large-Scale</i>	—	P	P	P	
<i>Small-Scale</i>	P	P	P	P	
Hospitals	S	P	P	P	
Parks and Recreation	P	P	P	P	
Public Maintenance Facilities	—	S	—	—	Refer to Section 125-90.D.

**Schedule 125-72.B: Use Regulations – Commercial and Mixed Use Districts**

<i>Use Classifications</i>	<i>CN</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>CM</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
Public Safety Facilities	P	P	P	P	
Religious Assembly	L2	P	P	P	
Schools, Public or Private	P	P	P	P	
<b>Commercial</b>					
Alcoholic Beverage Sales					
On-Premise Consumption	S, L3	S, L3	S, L3	S, L3	
Off-Premise Consumption	—	P, L3	—	—	
Ambulance Services	—	P	P	P	
Animal Sales and Services	S	P	—	S	
Automobile/Vehicle/Equipment Sales and Services					
Automobile/Vehicle/Equipment Sales and Rental	—	P	—	S	
Automobile Rentals	L4	P	L4	P	
Car Wash	—	P	—	P	
Gas and Service Stations	<u>L10</u>	P	—	S	
Light Vehicle Service	S	P	—	S	
Auto Repair and Other Heavy Vehicle Service	—	S	—	—	
Banks and Other Financial Institutions	L5	P	P	P	Refer to Section 125-90.A.
Bed and Breakfast Establishment	P	P	—	P	
Building Materials Sales and Services	—	P	—	P	Refer to Section 125-90.D.
Business Services	P	P	P	P	
Catering Business	S	P	P	P	
Convention Center	—	P	P	P	
Eating and Drinking Establishments					
<i>Full Service</i>	P	P	S	P	
<i>Limited Service</i>	P	P	S	P	
<i>With Drive-Through Facilities</i>	S, L5	P	S	P	Refer to Section 125-90.A.
<i>With Live Entertainment</i>	S	P	S	S	
<i>With Outdoor Seating</i>	L6	L6	S	L6	
Food and Beverage Sales	P	P	—	P	
Home Improvement Sales and Services	L7	P	—	P	Refer to Section 125-90.C.
Hotels and Commercial Lodging					Refer to Section 125-90.F.
<i>Full Service Hotel</i>	—	P	S	S	
<i>Limited Service Hotel</i>	S	P	S	S	
<i>Residence Hotel</i>	—	P	S	S	
Laboratory, Commercial	S	P	P	P	
Maintenance and Repair Services	P	P	P	P	

**Schedule 125-72.B: Use Regulations – Commercial and Mixed Use Districts**

<i>Use Classifications</i>	<i>CN</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>CM</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
Massage Establishments and Massage Services	P	P	P	P	
Nurseries and Garden Supply Stores	P	P	—	P	Refer to Section 125-90.C.
Offices	P	P	P	P	
Parking Facilities	S	P	P	P	
Pawn Shops	—	L8	—	S	
Personal Instructional Services	P	P	—	P	
Personal Services	P	P	S	P	
Recreation and Entertainment					
<i>Large-Scale</i>	S	P	S	S	
<i>Small-Scale</i>	S	P	S	P	
Recreational Vehicle Park	—	S	—	—	Refer to Section 125-90.E.
Retail Sales	P	P	—	P	Refer to Section 125-90.C.
Self Storage	—	P	—	P	Refer to Section 125-90.D.
Undertaking, Funeral and Interment Services	S	P	—	P	
<b><i>Industrial</i></b>					
Production Industry					
Artisan	S	S	S	S	Refer to Section 125-90.D.
Limited	—	P	—	S	
Research and Development	—	S	S	S	
Warehousing and Storage					
Indoor Storage	—	P	S	S	Refer to Section 125-90.D.
Wholesaling and Distribution					
With Store Facilities	—	P	—	P	Refer to Section 125-90.D.
Non-Store Facilities	—	P	S	S	Refer to Section 125-90.D.
<b><i>Transportation, Communication, and Utilities</i></b>					
Communication Towers and Structures	—	L9	L9	L9	
Transportation Facilities					
<i>Marinas, Docks</i>	P	—	—	P	
<i>Marinas, Private</i>	P	P	—	P	
<i>Marinas, Public</i>	P	P	—	P	
<i>Transportation Passenger     Terminals</i>	S	P	P	P	
Utility, Minor	P	P	P	P	
<b><i>Agriculture and Extractive</i></b>					
Excavation and Mining	S	S	S	S	Refer to Chapter 98
<b><i>Pipelines, Oil and Gas Wells</i></b>					
Gas Well Drilling	S	S	S	S	Refer to Sec. 125-90.G.
Oil Well Drilling	S	S	S	S	Refer to Sec. 125-90.G.
Pipelines	S	S	S	S	Refer to Sec. 125-90.H.

**Schedule 125-72.B: Use Regulations – Commercial and Mixed Use Districts**

<i>Use Classifications</i>	<i>CN</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>CM</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
Pump Stations	S	S	S	S	Refer to Sec. 125-90.I.
<b><i>Specific Use Limitations</i></b>					
L1 Permissible if not a ground floor use. The ground floor use shall not be an accessory use to the multi-family.					L2 If the total floor plate of all accessory uses exceeds 50 percent of the floor plate of the sanctuary, then a Special Use Permit is required.
L3 Permissible if in accordance with Section 10 of the City of League City Code of Ordinances and the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) Code..					L4 No outdoor storage or washing of vehicles.
L5 If property adjoins non-residential zoning district, submit traffic impact analysis to be approved by the City Engineer and Special Use Permit is not required.					L6 Hours of operation may be limited.
L7 Floorplates limited to a maximum of 10,000 square feet.					L8 Permissible if in accordance with the Texas Pawnshop Act (Texas Finance Code, Title 4, Chapter 371).
L9 Permissible if in accordance with the Communications Towers and Structures Ordinance and requires SUP.					<u>L10 Maximum of 8 fuel pumps permitted per site.</u>
<b><i>Accessory Uses and Structures</i></b>				See Article IV, Division 2	
<b><i>Temporary Uses</i></b>				See Article IV, Division 3	
<b><i>Nonconforming Uses and Structures</i></b>				See Article IV, Division 7	

**Sec. 125-72.C. Development Regulations**

Schedule 125-72.C below prescribes the development regulations specific to for ~~C~~ Commercial and Mixed Use Zoning Districts, including building scale, building form and location, pedestrian orientation, vehicle accommodation, and open space and landscaping lot size, building height, setback requirements, and landscaping. The letter number designations in the right-hand column refer to the additional regulations listed at the end of Schedule 125-72.C. Refer also to Article IV: Regulations Applicable in All or Several Districts Schedule 125-72.D: Commercial Design Standards for additional building design criteria specific to street frontage.

**Schedule 125-72.C: Development Regulations -- Commercial and Mixed Use Districts**

<i>Development Standards</i>	<i>CN</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>CM</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
<b><i>Building Scale – Intensity of Use</i></b>					
Minimum Lot Area (sq. ft.)	5,000	10,000	10,000	<del>25,000</del> <u>10,000</u>	
Minimum Lot Dimensions (ft.)					
<i>Width</i>	25	75	75	<del>100</del> <u>75</u>	
<i>Frontage</i>	25	75	75	<del>100</del> <u>75</u>	
<b><i>Building Form and Pedestrian Orientation</i></b>					
Maximum Height (ft.)	30	<del>125</del> <u>60</u>	60	<del>125</del> <u>60</u>	
Minimum Yards (ft.)					
<i>Front</i>	--	20	20	--	
<i>Side (Nonresidential/Residential)</i>	10/15	15/30	10/20	<del>20/40</del> <u>15/30</u>	

**Schedule 125-72.C: Development Regulations -- Commercial and Mixed Use Districts**

<i>Development Standards</i>	<i>CN</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>CM</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
<i>Street Side (Corner Lot)</i>	10	15	10	15	
<i>Rear (Nonresidential/Residential)</i>	15/20	20/40	15/30	20/40	
Maximum Lot Coverage (Percent)	90	85	80	80	(1)
<u>Limitations on Blank Walls</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<del>(2)</del>
<u>Minimum Storefront Continuity (Percent)</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>25</u>	=	<u>25</u>	<del>(3)</del>
<u>Building Transparency (Percent)</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>25</u>	<del>(4)</del>
<i>Choose Option A or B:</i>					
<u>Option A</u>					
Minimum Build-to Lines (Percent)	50	50	50	50	<del>(5)</del> (2)
Location of Parking and Loading	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	<del>(6)</del> (3)
<u>Option B</u>					
Landscape Setback (ft.)	10	10	10	10	<del>(7)</del> (4)
<b><i>Open Space and Landscaping</i></b>					
Minimum Landscaped Area (Percent)	10	15	15	15	
<b><i>Other Standards</i></b>					
Accessory Uses and Structures				See Article IV, Division 2	
<u>Lighting</u>				<u>See Article IV, Division 4</u>	
Off-Street Parking and Loading				See Article IV, Division 5	
Landscaping and Buffer Yards				See Article IV, Division 6	

1. ***Maximum Lot Coverage.*** Includes buildings, parking areas, and driveways and maneuvering areas, but excludes common open space amenities and landscaped areas.
2. ~~***Blank Walls.*** No blank walls greater than 15 feet in length, excluding garage doors, shall be permitted on all street frontages excluding alleys. Building surfaces shall include an offset, recess, or projection providing shadows or visual interest for at least 25 percent of the frontage.~~
3. ~~***Storefront Continuity.*** Ground floor of retail buildings shall have a storefront appearance along all street frontages excluding alleys.~~
4. ~~***Building Transparency.*** Ground floor of buildings shall have views into occupied space provided by windows, displays, or doors along the primary street frontage.~~
5. **(2) *Minimum Build-to Lines.*** Ground floor of buildings shall be built to the sidewalk along the primary street frontage.
6. **(3) *Location of Parking and Loading.*** Parking shall be located behind or at the side of buildings, except for passenger drop-off areas which may be located at the building entry. Loading areas shall be screened so as not to be visible from public streets. Where the building abuts a residential district, the preferred location of loading facilities shall be the side away from the residential district boundary.

7. **(4) Landscape Setback.** A minimum 10-foot-wide landscaped area shall be located between all portions of the parking lot and the street and shall contain both (a) and (b) below:
  - a. One shade tree for every 30 feet of linear street frontage, excluding driveways. Trees may be planted in clusters or spaced linearly rather than being on 30-foot centers. The minimum size of the tree should be 1 ½ - inch caliper (15 gallons) upon installation.
  - b. A continuous hedge consisting of shrubs that are not less than 3 feet or more than 4 feet in height and planted in 3- or 5-gallon container stocks upon installation. The landscape hedge shall be set back a minimum of 3 feet and a maximum of 6 feet from the perimeter of any parking space, driveway, or any access aisle.
  - c. In lieu of a landscape hedge noted in (b) above, a berm measuring not less than 3 feet or more than 4 feet in height from finish grade of the parking lot may be utilized. The berm shall be set back a minimum of 3 feet and a maximum of 6 feet from the perimeter of any parking space, driveway, or any access aisle.
5. **Internal Streets.** Buildings facades that face an internal street or private driveway shall be subject to the standards consistent with Collector and Local Streets.
6. **Accessory Structures.** All accessory structures, including gas station canopies, shall be subject to the standards in this section and must be architecturally and aesthetically compatible with the primary structure on the site.
7. **Roll-up Doors.** Bay doors and metal roll-up doors shall not be visible from any public right of way.
8. **Alterations to Existing Buildings.**
  - a. Any alterations to existing buildings or additions that are more 75 % or more of the existing structure must comply with the standards in this section. Alterations or additions that are less than 75% of the existing structure must be compatible with the character and appearance of the existing building.
  - b. The City Planner or designee may approve alterations or additions of more than 75% with review of the site plan. At the discretion of the City Planner or designee, additions or alterations that are found to be substantial and significant would require approval of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

#### **Section 125-72.D. Commercial Design Standards**

This Section applies to properties located within all commercial zoning districts with the exception of those properties located within the -RNC or -HC overlay districts. The Commercial Design Standards are intended to promote a coastal aesthetic for new development which is characterized by architectural features that are typical of seaside communities. Coastal architecture responds to its location with building forms and materials that are suited to a coastal climate and are therefore inherently sustainable.

Historically, coastal communities took advantage of indigenous materials and utilized architecture to promote air circulation, ventilation, and withstand heavy winds. Covered outdoor spaces including porches, verandahs, and colonnades, were intended to take advantage of coastal breezes and provide protection from the elements. Operable shutters served to protect interior spaces from heavy winds while cupolas and dormer windows served to cool buildings by allowing hot air to escape. Architectural features which evoke a coastal aesthetic, such as clapboard siding, shutters, dormer windows, cupolas, and metal roofs are encouraged within these design standards.



Commercial design standards are based upon roadway classification as defined by the League City Master Mobility Plan. If a property has frontage on two streets with different roadway classifications, the street with the highest priority shall be considered the primary street and shall dictate the design standards. The priority of street frontages shall be as follows: Arterial Streets have the highest priority, Collector and Local Streets have the second highest priority, and Freeways have the lowest priority.

**1. Building Materials.**

- a. Building elevations shall include a minimum percentage of preferred materials according to Schedule 125-72.D.
- b. All principal elevations shall include a minimum of three preferred materials in addition to the required area of transparency.
- c. Preferred materials shall include:
  - Natural wood
  - Stucco
  - Fiber cement lap siding
  - Natural stone
  - Unpainted brick
- d. At least one of those preferred materials must be:
  - Natural wood
  - Stucco
  - Fiber cement lap siding
- e. Prohibited materials shall not be used as an exterior finish on any commercial building. Prohibited materials shall include:
  - Plastic siding
  - Fiberglass panels
  - Plywood
- f. Corrugated metal siding is prohibited as an exterior finish on principal elevations only and EIFS shall be used only as an accent material.
- g. The Planning and Zoning Commission may approve additional materials that are compatible with the character of a site and that will not have a negative impact on the neighboring development, or that are comparable in in quality and appearance to preferred materials with no fee and no public notification requirement. For example, if the existing context of a particular site includes primarily metal buildings, the Planning and Zoning Commission may approve metal as a preferred material in that location.

**2. Transparency.**

- a. Facades shall include a minimum percentage of transparency as according to Schedule 125-72.D.
- b. Building transparency shall be provided by highly transparent, non-reflective glass which provides views into occupied spaces. Opaque or solid doors, glass block, and reflective or tinted glass shall not count as transparent.
- c. The percentage of required transparency on any building elevation shall count toward the required percentage of preferred materials.

**3. Architectural Features.**

- a. All building designs shall incorporate a minimum number of architectural features according to Schedule 125-72.D.
- b. Approved architectural features shall include:
  - Functional wood shutters (proportioned properly based on the size of the window opening)
  - Dormer windows
  - Cupola
  - Wooden balustrade
  - Exposed rafter tails
  - Brackets or corbels
  - Arbor
  - Arcade

- c. The approved architectural features on this list are intended to promote a coastal aesthetic and are intended to be used as authentic, functional architectural elements. Architectural features that are false or inauthentic shall not meet the architectural features requirement.
- d. All buildings shall have a distinct base, middle, and top. For example, the design should incorporate a brick or masonry plinth course or water table at the ground level and a masonry cornice at the top of the building.

**4. Building Articulation & Blank Wall.**

- a. No building shall extend horizontally for a distance greater than the assigned percentage of height as listed in Schedule 125-72.D. without having an offset equal to or greater than the dimensions listed in Schedule 125.72.D. For example, if a primary façade fronting a freeway is 40 feet tall and 160 feet long, a 4'x6' articulation would be required every 80 feet.
- b. If the horizontal expanse of a unadorned wall between required building articulations is greater than the assigned percentage of the height of the structure as listed in Schedule 125-72.D, the blank wall must be mitigated through any combination of the following architectural features:
  - Window(s) or door(s)
  - Pilaster(s) or engaged column(s)
  - Shutters
  - Decorative tile or artistic mural
  - Arcade,
  - Arbor or trellis
  - Awning or canopy
  - Offset in the wall plane greater than 2 feet wide and 1 foot deep

**5. Primary Entrance.**

- a. Primary entrances shall have a covering that extends at least 3 feet from the door and must be at least as wide as the door. The covering may extend into a City right-of-way.
- b. The primary entrance to all structures must face the principal street.
- c. The primary entrance must be emphasized through projecting or recessing building forms and/or a change in material on all properties fronting an arterial street or freeway.
- d. If the structure has more than one entrance and neither entrance is dedicated as a primary entrance, the structure shall be constructed in a manner that both entrances meet the requirements of a primary entrance.

**6. Roof Shape & Parapet.**

- a. All flat roofs shall have a parapet wall which wraps around the entire building. A flat parapet wall shall extend horizontally no more than three times the height of the wall without having a change in shape or height. The variation in height shall be no less than 1 foot, and no more than twice the height of the parapet. The parapet must be capped with a cornice in a different material or color than the body of the parapet.
- b. If the roof is pitched, the area of the roof that is visible shall be counted in the total square footage of the elevation as it relates to the preferred materials requirement.
- c. Preferred roofing materials shall include:
  - Barrel tile roofing
  - Standing seam metal roofing

**Schedule 125-72.D: Commercial Design Standards**

Schedule 125-72.D below prescribes the development standards for *Commercial and Mixed Use Districts*.

<b>Freeway</b>	
Building Materials	Preferred materials must be utilized on at least 60% of the primary façade, at least 60% of all principal elevations, and at least 20% of any subordinate elevations. At least three different preferred materials must be used on all principal elevations, and at least one of those must be wood, stucco, or fiber cement lap siding.
Transparency	At least 30% of the wall area below 10 feet, and at least 10% of the wall area above 10 feet on the primary façade must be transparent. At least 10% of any principal elevations below 10 feet shall also be transparent.
Architectural Features	All buildings must include at least two approved architectural features and must have a distinct base, middle, and top.
Building Articulation & Blank Wall	No building wall shall extend horizontally for a distance greater than twice the height of the wall without having an offset equal to or greater than 6 feet wide and 4 feet deep. If the horizontal expanse of wall between required building articulations (above) is greater than 125% of the height of the wall, the blank wall must be mitigated.
Primary Entrance	The primary entrance must be emphasized through projecting or recessing building forms and/or a change in material and must have a covering that extends at least 3 feet from the door. The primary entrance must face the principal street.
Roof Shape & Parapet	If the roof is flat, it must have a parapet wall, and the parapet must be capped. A flat parapet wall shall extend horizontally no more than three times the height of the wall without having a change in shape or height.
<b>Arterial Streets</b>	
Building Materials	Preferred materials must be utilized on at least 80% of all principal elevations and at least 40% of any subordinate elevations. At least two different preferred materials must be used on all principal elevations, and at least one of those must be wood, stucco, or fiber cement lap siding.
Transparency	At least 40% of the wall area below 10 feet, and at least 20% of the wall area above 10 feet on the primary facade must be transparent. At least 20% of the wall area below 10 feet, and at least 10% of the wall area above 10 feet on any principal elevations shall be also be transparent.
Architectural Features	All buildings must include at least three approved architectural features and must have a distinct base, middle, and top.
Building Articulation & Blank Wall	No building wall shall extend horizontally for a distance greater than 150% of the height of the wall without having an offset equal to or greater than 4 feet wide and 2 feet deep. If the horizontal expanse of wall between required building articulations (above) is greater than the height of the wall, the blank wall must be mitigated.
Primary Entrance	The primary entrance must be emphasized through projecting or recessing building forms and/or a change in material and must have a covering that extends at least 3 feet from the door. The primary entrance must face the principal street.
Roof Shape & Parapet	If the roof is flat, it must have a parapet wall, and the parapet must be capped. A flat parapet wall shall extend horizontally no more than three times the height of the wall without having a change in shape or height.
<b>Collector &amp; Local Streets</b>	
Building Materials	Preferred materials must be utilized on at least 80% of the primary façade, at least 60% of all principal elevations, and at least 30% of any subordinate elevations. At least three different preferred materials must be used on all principal elevations, and at least one of those must be wood, stucco, or fiber cement lap siding.
Transparency	At least 40% but not more than 80% of the primary façade below 10 feet shall be transparent, and at least 10% of the primary façade above 10 feet shall be transparent. At least 20% of any principal elevations below 10 feet shall be transparent.
Architectural Features	All buildings must include at least two approved architectural features and must have a distinct base, middle, and top.
Building Articulation & Blank Wall	No building wall shall extend horizontally for a distance greater than the height of the wall without having an offset equal to or greater than 24 inches wide and 12 inches deep. If the horizontal expanse of wall between required building articulations (above) is greater than 75% of the height of the wall, the blank wall must be mitigated.
Primary Entrance	The primary entrance must have a covering that extends at least 3 feet from the door and must face the principal street.
Roof Shape & Parapet	If the roof is flat, it must have a parapet wall, and the parapet must be capped. A flat parapet wall shall extend horizontally no more than three times the height of the wall without having a change in shape or height.

## **Sec. 125-60 Residential Multi-Family Districts**

---

### **Sections:**

- 125-71.A. Purposes
- 125-71.B. Land Use Regulations
- 125-71.C. Development Regulations
- 125-71.D. Residential Multi-Family Design Standards
- 125-71.D.E. Review of Plans

*This section establishes regulations for 2 residential multi-family district types: Residential Multi-Family 2 (RMF-2) and Residential Multi-Family 1.2 (RMF-1.2). The development standards generally reflect current standards.*

### **Sec. 125-60.A. Purposes**

The specific purposes of the **RMF Residential Multi-Family Districts** are to create, maintain, and enhance neighborhood residential areas with multi-family housing that is typically located near the City's major arterial roads, is part of mixed use development, and is characterized by a mix of attached housing in small and large multi-unit buildings. While future development will be primarily residential in nature, some small-scale public and non-residential uses may be on the ground floor in a mixed use building on an arterial street may be permitted in certain districts. Two **RMF Residential Multi-Family Districts** are established:

- **Multi-Family Residential (RMF-2).** This district reflects existing multi-family areas of the City and is intended to provide for medium density residential development with a maximum density of 22 dwelling units per acre. Future development may take the form of two-family dwellings (duplexes), multiplexes, and townhouses.
- **Multi-Family Residential (RMF-1.2).** This district is intended to provide for high density multi-family residential development with a maximum density of 36 dwelling units per acre. Future development may take the form of multiplexes and apartments.

## Sec. 125-60.C. Development Regulations

Schedule 125-71.C below prescribes the development regulations for **RMF Residential Multi-Family Districts**, including building density, building form and location, open space, and vehicle accommodation. The number designations in right-hand column refer to the additional regulations listed at the end of Schedule 125-71.C. Refer also to Article IV: Regulations Applicable in All or Several Districts.

### Schedule 125-71.C: Development Regulations – Residential Multi-Family Districts

<i>Development Standards</i>	<i>RMF-2</i>	<i>RMF-1.2</i>	<i>Additional Regulations</i>
<b><i>Building Density</i></b>			
Maximum Dwelling Units per Acre	22	36	
Minimum Lot Width (ft.)	75	75	(1)
Minimum Unit Size (sq. ft.)	850	650	
<u>Maximum Units per Building</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>(2)</u>
<b><i>Building Form and Location</i></b>			
Maximum Height (ft.)	42	48	
Minimum Yards (ft.)			
<i>Front</i>	20	25	<del>(2)</del> (3)
<i>Side (1/2/3+stories)</i>	15/20/30	15/20/30	
<i>Street Side (Corner Lot)</i>	20	25	
<i>Rear (1/2/3+stories)</i>	15/20/30	20/25/30	<del>(3)</del> (4)
<b><i>Open Space</i></b>			
Maximum Lot Coverage (Percent)	50	60	<del>(4)</del> (5)
<u>Minimum Common Outdoor Space per Unit (sq. ft.)</u>	<u>450</u>	<u>400</u>	(6)
<u>Minimum Private Outdoor Space per Unit (sq. ft.)</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>50</u>	(7)
<b><i>Other Standards</i></b>			
Accessory <u>Structures and Uses</u>	See Article IV, Division 2		
<u>Lighting</u>	<u>See Article IV, Division 4</u>		
Off-Street Parking and Loading	See Article IV, Division 5		
Landscaping and Buffer Yards	See Article IV, Division 6		

1. **Minimum Lot Width.** The minimum lot width may be reduced to 20 feet for<sub>2</sub> duplex<sub>2</sub> and townhouse dwellings.
2. Maximum Units per Building. The minimum number of units may be increased to 72 for developments with an urban footprint.
3. **Front Yard.** The minimum front yard may be reduced to 20 feet for duplex, and townhouse dwellings.
4. **Rear Yard.** The minimum rear yard may be reduced to 10 feet for attached single family, two-family, and townhouse dwellings where a rear alley is provided.
5. **Maximum Lot Coverage.** Includes buildings, parking areas, and driveways and maneuvering areas, but excludes common open space amenities and landscaped areas.
6. Common Outdoor Space. The minimum common outdoor space may be reduced to 200 square feet per unit for developments with an urban footprint. At least 60 percent of all common outdoor

space shall constitute a purposeful, programmed outdoor area (e.g., children’s playground, sports court, community garden, barbecue pit, etc.)

7. **Private Outdoor Space.** Each unit shall have its own private outdoor space which shall be directly accessible from inside the unit. The depth of such outdoor space shall be no less than 10 feet.

## **Sec. 125-60.D. Multi-Family Design Standards**

This Section applies to properties located within all Residential Multi-Family zoning districts with the exception of those properties located within the -RNC or -HC overlay districts. The Residential Multi-Family Design Standards are intended to promote a coastal aesthetic for new development which is characterized by architectural features that are typical of seaside communities. Coastal architecture responds to its location with building forms and materials that are suited to a coastal climate and are therefore inherently sustainable.

Historically, coastal communities took advantage of indigenous materials and utilized architecture to promote air circulation, ventilation, and withstand heavy winds. Covered outdoor spaces including porches, verandahs, and colonnades, were intended to take advantage of coastal breezes and provide protection from the elements. Operable shutters served to protect interior spaces from heavy winds while cupolas and dormer windows served to cool buildings by allowing hot air to escape. Architectural features which evoke a coastal aesthetic, such as clapboard siding, shutters, dormer windows, cupolas, and metal roofs are encouraged within these design standards.

### **1. Site Design Standards.**

- a. All common buildings and shared spaces must connect to individual units via a path or walkway.
- b. All sidewalks and pathways within a development must be lighted.
- c. Apartment complexes must be surrounded on all sides by fence that is at least 6 feet in height. Such fences shall be transparent above 48 inches. Chain link fencing is not permitted.
- d. Carports are prohibited in all multi-family developments. Covered parking may be provided by enclosed garages only.
- e. Multi-family development site planning should integrate the principles of "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design," (CPTED) to the maximum extent possible. Applicants are encouraged to consult with the League City Police Department and Planning Department regarding implementation of CPTED principles to multi-family developments.

### **2. Building Materials.**

- a. Refer to Schedule 125-71.D for required percentages of preferred materials on building elevations.
- b. Preferred materials shall include:
  - Natural wood
  - Stucco
  - Fiber cement lap siding
  - Natural stone
  - Unpainted brick
- c. If a building contains both shared spaces and private residences, the building shall be designed to meet the materials requirement for common buildings and shared spaces.
- d. Prohibited materials shall not be used as an exterior finish on any building. Prohibited materials shall include plastic siding, fiberglass panels, corrugated metal siding, and plywood. EIFS shall be used only as an accent material.
- e. The Planning and Zoning Commission may approve additional materials that are compatible with the character of a site and that are comparable in quality and appearance to preferred materials

with no fee and no public notification requirement. (For example, if the existing context of a particular site includes primarily metal buildings, the City Planner may approve metal as a preferred material in that location.)

**3. Transparency.**

- a. Refer to Schedule 125-71.D for required percentages of transparency on building elevations.
- a. Building transparency shall be provided by highly transparent, non-reflective glass which provides views into occupied spaces. Opaque or solid doors, glass block, and reflective or tinted glass shall not count as transparent.
- b. If a building contains both shared spaces and private residences, the building shall be designed to meet the transparency requirement for common buildings and shared spaces.
- c. The percentage of required transparency on any building elevation shall count toward the required percentage of preferred materials.

**4. Architectural Features.**

- a. Refer to Schedule 125-71.D for required number of architectural features.
- a. If a building contains both shared spaces and private residences, the building shall be designed to meet the architectural features requirement for common buildings and shared spaces.
- b. Approved architectural features shall include:
  - Functional wood shutters (proportioned appropriately for the size of the window opening)
  - Dormer windows
  - Cupola
  - Wooden balustrade
  - Verandah or rap around porch
  - Exposed rafter tails
  - Brackets or corbels
  - Arbor
  - Awning
  - Arcade
- c. The approved architectural features on this list are intended to promote a coastal aesthetic and are intended to be used as authentic, functional architectural elements. Architectural features that are false or inauthentic shall not meet the architectural features requirement.
- d. All buildings shall have a distinct base, middle, and top. For example, the design should incorporate a brick or masonry plinth course or water table at the ground level and a masonry cornice at the top of the building.

**5. Building Articulation & Blank Wall.**

- a. Refer to Schedule 125-71.D for building articulation and blank wall requirements.
- b. Blank walls may be mitigated using any combination of the following architectural features:
  - Window(s) or door(s)
  - Pilaster(s) or engaged column(s)
  - Shutters
  - Decorative tile or artistic mural
  - Arcade,
  - Arbor or trellis
  - Awning or canopy
  - Offset in the wall plane greater than 2 feet wide and 1 foot deep

**6. Entrances.**

- a. Except in developments with an urban footprint, residential multi-family developments or complexes shall have only one primary means of ingress and egress, and that entrance must face the principal street.
- b. Primary entrances to all common buildings shall have a covering that extends at least 3 feet from the door and must be at least as wide as the door. The primary entrance must be emphasized through projecting or recessing building forms and/or a change in material.
- c. All entrances to individual units that are visible from the exterior of the building shall have a covering that extends at least 2 feet from the door and must be at least as wide as the door, or must be emphasized through projecting or recessing building forms and/or a change in material.

**7. Roof Shape & Parapet.**

- a. If the building has a pitched roof, the area of roof that is visible shall be counted in the total square footage of the elevation as it relates to the preferred materials requirement.
- b. Preferred roofing materials shall include:
  - Barrel tile roofing
  - Standing seam metal roofing

DRAFT



**Schedule 125-71.D: Residential Multi-Family Design Standards**

Schedule 125-72.D below prescribes the development standards for Residential Multi-Family Zoning Districts.

<b>Common Buildings &amp; Shared Spaces</b>	
Building Materials	Preferred materials must be utilized on at least 80% of all elevations. At least three different preferred materials must be used on all elevations, and at least one of those must be wood, stucco, or fiber cement lap siding.
Transparency	At least 50% of the wall area below 10 feet, and at least 30% of the wall area above 10 feet on all elevations must be transparent.
Architectural Features	All buildings must include at least four approved architectural features and must have a distinct base, middle, and top.
Building Articulation & Blank Wall	No building wall shall extend horizontally for a distance greater than twice the height of the wall without having an offset equal to or greater than 4 feet wide and 2 feet deep. If the horizontal expanse of wall between required building articulations (above) is greater than the height of the structure, the blank wall must be mitigated.
Primary Entrance	The primary entrance must be emphasized through projecting or recessing building forms and/or a change in material and must have a covering that extends at least 3 feet from the door. The primary entrance must face the principal street.
<b>Buildings Containing Private Residences</b>	
Building Materials	Preferred materials must be utilized on at least 60% of all elevations. At least three different preferred materials must be used on all elevations, and at least one of those must be wood, stucco, or fiber cement lap siding.
Transparency	At least 40% of the wall area below 10 feet, and at least 30% of the wall area above 10 feet on all elevations must be transparent.
Architectural Features	All buildings must include at least three approved architectural features and must have a distinct base, middle, and top.
Building Articulation & Blank Wall	No building shall extend horizontally for a distance greater than the height of the wall without having an offset equal to or greater than 4 feet wide and 2 feet deep. If the horizontal expanse of unadorned wall between required building articulations is greater than 75% of the height of the structure, the blank wall must be mitigated.
Entrances to Individual Units	All entrances to individual units that are visible from the exterior of the building shall have a covering that extends at least 2 feet from the door and must be at least as wide as the door, or must be emphasized through projecting or recessing building forms and/or a change in material.
<b>Accessory Structures</b>	
Building Materials	Preferred materials must be utilized on at least 40% of all elevations. At least two different preferred materials must be used on all elevations, and at least one of those must be wood, stucco, or fiber cement lap siding.
Architectural Features	All buildings must include at least one approved architectural feature and must have a distinct base, middle, and top.
Building Articulation & Blank Wall	No building shall extend horizontally for a distance greater than 1.5 times the height of the wall without having an offset equal to or greater than 2 feet wide and 1 foot deep. If the horizontal expanse of unadorned wall between required building articulations is greater than 75% of the height of the structure, the blank wall must be mitigated.

**Sec. 125-60.E. Review of Plans**

All development is subject to development review in accordance with the City’s applications and procedures, pursuant to Article II, Division 2: Applications and Procedures.