



05

MIXED USE DESIGN GUIDELINES

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05 MIXED-USE DESIGN GUIDELINES

PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY

The following design guidelines are intended to inform the scale, character and features of horizontal and vertical mixed-use residential and commercial projects in Santa Cruz County. Horizontal mixed-use consists of separate residential and commercial buildings within a single parcel. Vertical mixed-use consists of residential and commercial uses within the same building.

The guidelines provide ideas and best practices for well-designed projects, and should be used in conjunction with the County's General Plan, County Code, and Design Criteria for streets and frontages.

In cases where design guidelines are related to quantitative requirements, links to relevant standards are provided.

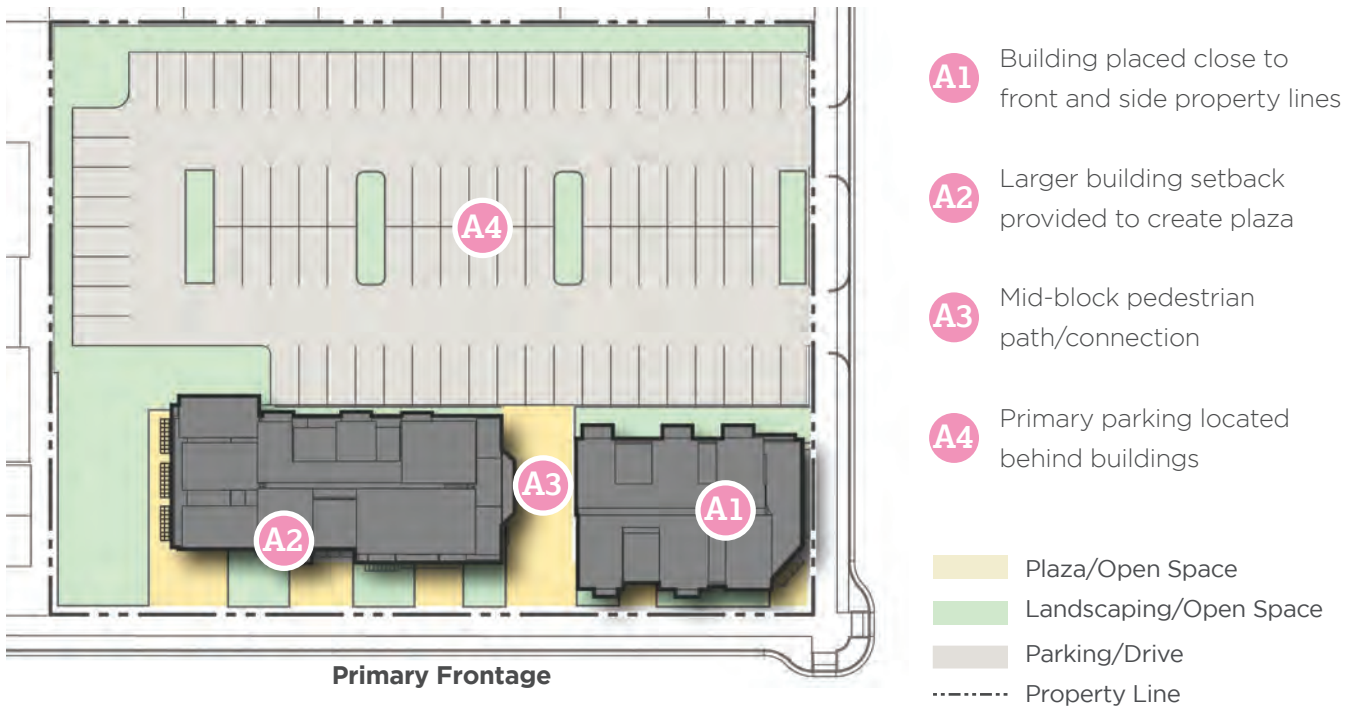
Specific development standards and appropriate design guidelines for mixed-use projects may depend on the street type, zone district, and General Plan land use designation of the parcel where the project is located.

Mixed-use projects should follow both Chapter 2: Overarching Design Guidelines and the guidelines provided in this chapter.

MIXED USE DESIGN GOALS

- 1 Provide flexibility to allow for a wide variety of mixed-use developments to enhance the County's overall economic vitality.
- 2 Ensure active and inviting ground floor commercial spaces that support a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- 3 Create visual interest through design variation, architectural details, and high-quality materials.
- 4 Provide well-designed housing that is affordable to residents of a variety of income levels and is located within walking distance to stores, services, jobs, and community amenities.
- 5 Enhance public safety through increased natural surveillance and eyes on the street.
- 6 Create well-designed public and semi-public gathering places that support social interaction and community cohesion.
- 7 Accommodate parking and circulation on site to maximize connections between different land uses.

A. SITE PLANNING - VERTICAL MIXED USE



A1. Building Placement. Place buildings along the edge of the sidewalk to activate the pedestrian realm, especially along Main Streets and Active Connectors.

A2. Building Setbacks. Site buildings close to the required setback to provide street definition, unless a greater setback distance is appropriate to enhance the public realm (outdoor retail, plaza, etc.) or to avoid noise or traffic impacts.

See SCCC 13.10.334(A) for mixed-use setback requirements.

A3. Mid-Block Pedestrian Paths. Create enhanced internal pedestrian crossings delineated with materials or colors to prioritize pedestrians within developments. Provide mid-block pedestrian paths between and through buildings.

See SCCC 13.16 and County Design Criteria for pedestrian path and parking design requirements.



A. SITE PLANNING - VERTICAL MIXED USE



A4. Parking Location. Ensure parking is clustered to the rear of the site, allowing the building to activate street frontages and provide shared parking opportunities with adjoining properties. Building frontages should not face parking areas along Main Streets and Active Connectors when the option to front the street is available.

A5. Building Orientation. Orient buildings toward public streets with the primary entrance(s) to the site or to commercial uses directly accessible from the sidewalk. Include multiple entrances from Main Street sidewalks. Buildings with primary entrances oriented toward an internal public space rather than a public street may be appropriate if they enhance the pedestrian experience.

A6. Ground-Floor Uses. Encourage ground-floor spaces fronting primary streets to be primarily occupied by retail, restaurant, and personal service uses that generate pedestrian activity and engage the sidewalk to create an active and enjoyable pedestrian environment.

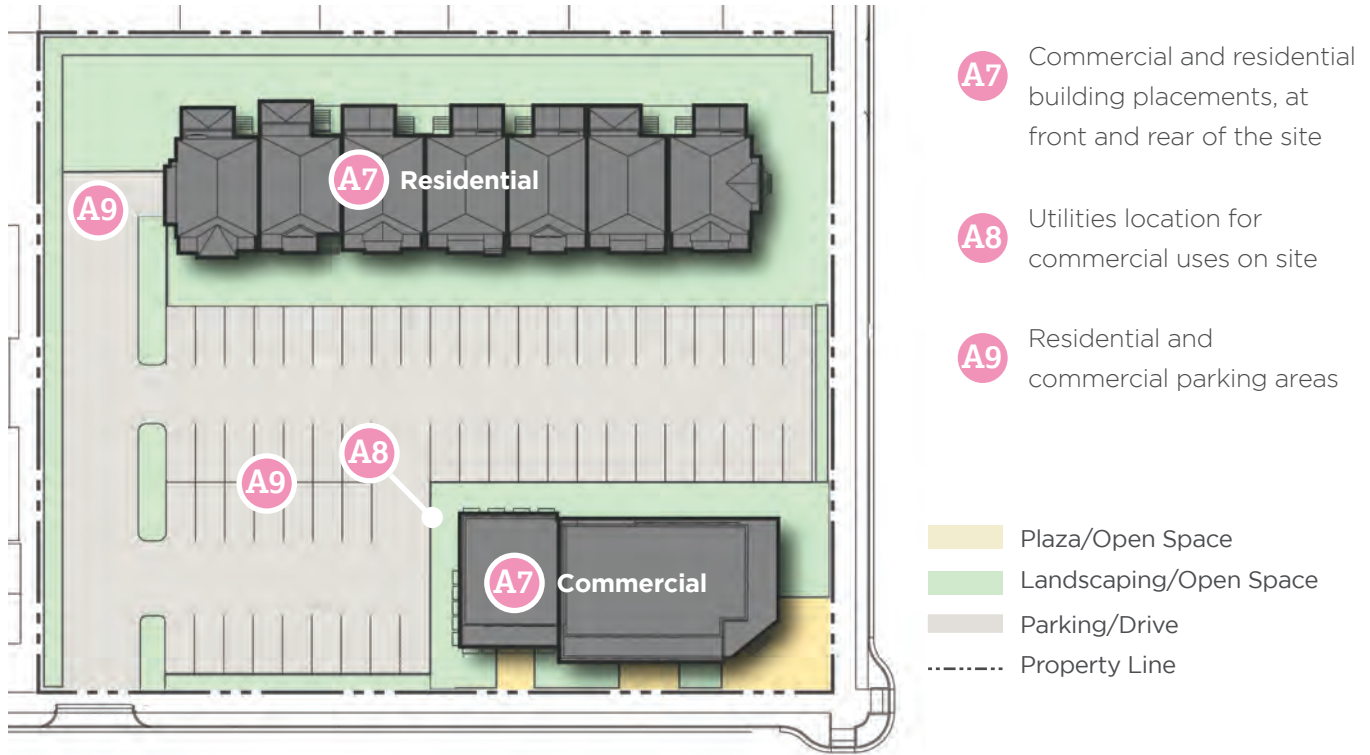
See SCCC 13.10.334(C) for ground floor use requirements.

A5 Buildings oriented toward frontages

A6 Active ground floors with open facades and active space



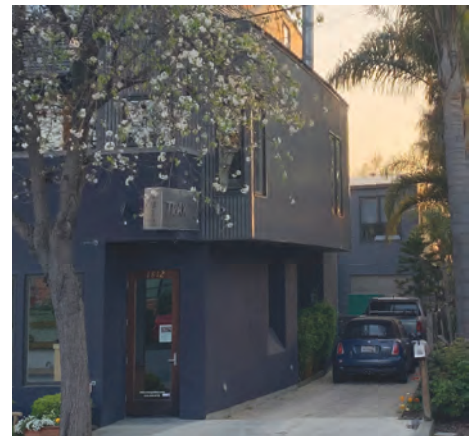
A. SITE PLANNING - HORIZONTAL MIXED USE



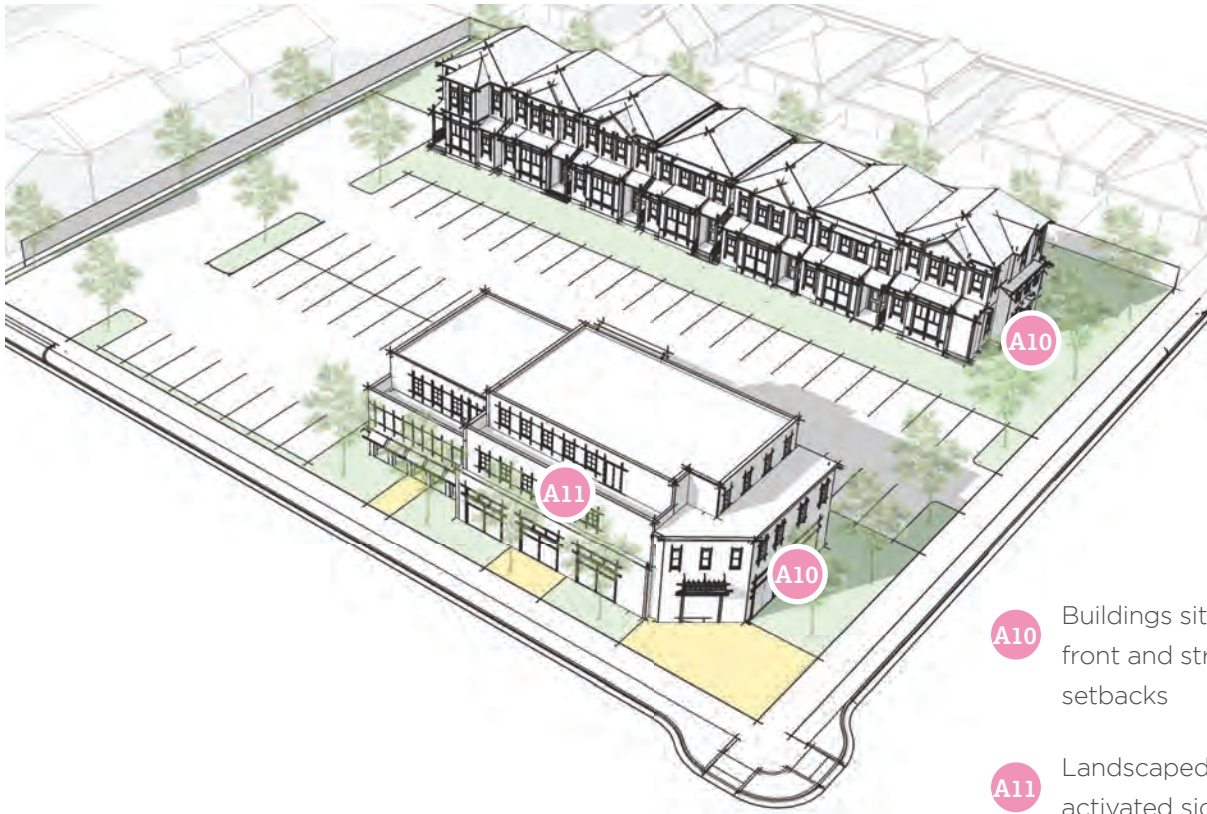
A7. Building Placement. Prioritize placement of commercial buildings along the edge of sidewalk to activate the pedestrian realm, especially along Main Streets and Active Connectors. Residential structures may be most appropriate along the rear or side of the site.

A8. Mixed-Use Compatibility. Design and locate service entries, loading areas, and trash areas associated with commercial uses so they minimize conflicts with residential uses located on site.

A9. Parking Location. Locate parking for on-site commercial uses at the center of the site, allowing the parking to provide a buffer from on-site residential uses and maximize shared parking opportunities between residential and commercial uses. Dedicated private residential parking areas should be located in a private area away from public commercial parking.



A. SITE PLANNING - HORIZONTAL MIXED USE



- A10** Buildings sited toward front and street side setbacks
- A11** Landscaped and activated sidewalk along commercial frontage

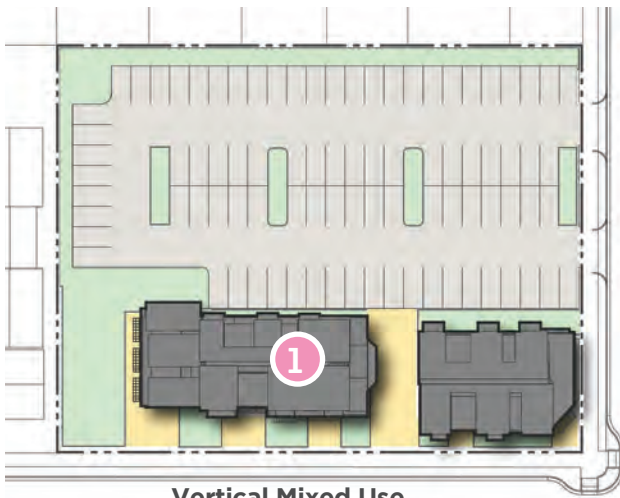
A10. Building Setbacks. Site buildings close to the required setback, unless a greater distance is being used to enhance the public realm (outdoor retail, plaza, etc.).

See 13.10.334(A) for mixed-use setback requirements.

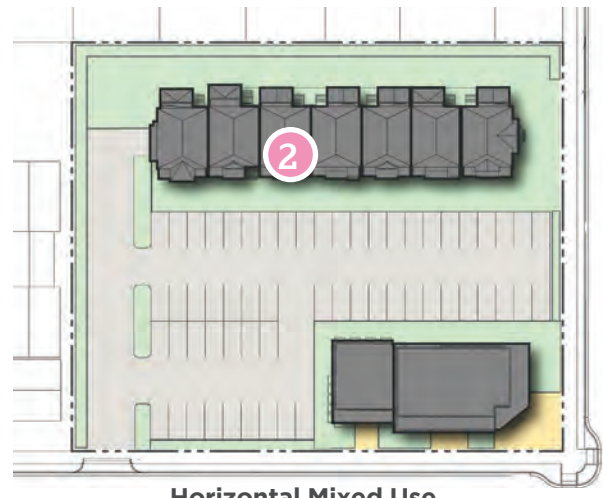
A11. Sidewalk Activation. Ensure that buildings with high pedestrian traffic uses (retail, restaurant, commercial services, community-serving uses, or other active uses) face public streets and engage the sidewalk to create an active and enjoyable pedestrian environment. Maximize opportunities for temporary and permanent retail uses along sidewalks fronting Main Street and Active Connectors.



A. SITE PLANNING - RESIDENTIAL USE CONSIDERATIONS



Vertical Mixed Use



Horizontal Mixed Use

A12. Residential Location. In vertical mixed-use developments, locate residential uses on the upper floors above ground floor retail or office. In horizontal mixed-use developments, locate residential uses along Local Residential Streets or at the rear of the site to provide visual privacy and complement existing residential uses.

A13. Residential Spaces. Place active residential spaces such as entrance lobbies, recreation spaces, and amenity areas along public streets.

A14. Floor Height. For development flexibility, consider designing ground floor to have a floor-to-floor height of 10 to 14 feet, with a minimum subsequent floor(s) height of 9 to 10 feet.

A15. Utilities - Accessibility. Ensure that utilities are conveniently located and accessible from tenant spaces but screened from the street and other pedestrian areas.

See SCCC 13.11.070(C)(1) for utility design requirements.

- 1** Upper-floor residential
- 2** Residential structures detached from commercial structures

- Plaza/Open Space
- Landscaping/Open Space
- Parking/Drive
- Property Line



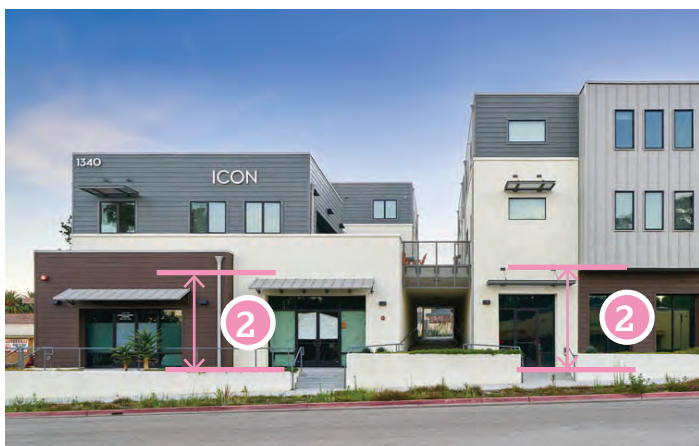
A. SITE PLANNING - COMMERCIAL USE CONSIDERATIONS



A16. Commercial Use Location. Place retail spaces and office entry lobbies and meeting spaces along active street frontages.

See SCCC 13.10.334(C) for ground floor commercial use requirements along Main Streets, Active Connectors and Multimodal Corridors.

A17. Ground-Floor Height. For development flexibility, consider providing ground floor minimum floor-to-floor height of 15 feet to best support retail and office uses.



A18. Office Depth. Encourage ground floor office space in a mixed-use building to have a depth of between 45 and 60 feet. Where possible, multiple smaller offices should be created in favor of a single large office space.

A19. Retail Depth. Encourage ground floor retail uses in a mixed-use building to have a depth of at least 45 feet. Where possible, encourage 60 foot depths to accommodate a wider range of tenants, especially food tenants.

1 45'-60' depth **2** 15' ground floor height



A20. Pop-Up Retail. Provide small pop-up retail spaces where the minimum depth for commercial uses is not possible.

B. BUILDING DESIGN

B1. Step Backs. Step back at least 50% of third floor exterior walls an additional 10 feet from the minimum required setback to break up building bulk, especially abutting non-commercial parcels. In no case should a third story be stepped back less than the first and second stories

See SCCC 13.10.333 for third story setback requirements abutting non-commercial parcels.

B2. Blank Walls. Discourage any unarticulated/blank building wall that exceeds 10 feet in length. Specifically encourage building articulation associated with entrances, building projections or recesses, doorway and window trim, and other details that provide architectural design interest.

Different methods can be employed, including varying wall planes, heights, contrasting materials and colors, awnings, canopies, and arcades.

Enhance visual interest by incorporating architectural relief, architectural detail, or landscaping.

B3. Entrances. Provide multiple commercial and residential entrances into buildings, particularly into ground-floor uses.



B. BUILDING DESIGN



B4. Ground-Floor Building

Transparency. Transparent windows or doors for ground floor commercial spaces are encouraged. Ground floor transparency should offer views into the building for at least 60 percent of the building's length along primary and secondary frontages. Position windows for visibility by both pedestrians and motorists at street level in order to create interest in commercial activities and improve safety.



B5. Expansion into Sidewalks.

Encourage doors or sliding windows that enable ground-floor restaurants and retail to expand into outdoor amenity zone areas along publicly-accessible sidewalks with appropriate permits and while meeting County Design Criteria and maintaining a sidewalk pedestrian zone for unobstructed travel.



B. BUILDING DESIGN

B6. Design Consistency. Provide visual interest and design continuity throughout all sections of the project - including residential and commercial sections - through similar architectural styles, materials, colors, and other treatments.

B7. Storefront Width. Reduce the perceived size of larger buildings to maintain pedestrian scale and rhythm. Consider limiting the width of building bays to maximum 50 feet.

B8. Signage. Signage should be located and scaled so it can be read and accessible to motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists as appropriate. Signage and other advertisement displays and installations should be primarily affixed to commercial portions of the project.

See SCCC 13.10.581 for sign design requirements.

B9. Adaptive Reuse. Encourage the adaptive reuse of older buildings. Encourage historical buildings to maintain important façade or architectural features during retrofits and expansion projects. Similarly, development of buildings next to historic or culturally significant buildings should respect the architectural character of existing historical buildings.

See SCCC 16.42 for historic preservation requirements.



C. OPEN SPACE



C1. Commercial Open Space. Where space allows, integrate public plazas into the design of commercial portions of mixed-use projects, creating large activity zones.

See also Open Space guidelines in Chapter 4, Commercial Guidelines.

C2. Residential Open Space. Provide a total of at least 50 square feet of private and/or common open space per dwelling in mixed-use projects. Common open spaces should have a minimum dimension of 15 feet. Private open spaces should have a minimum dimension of six feet.

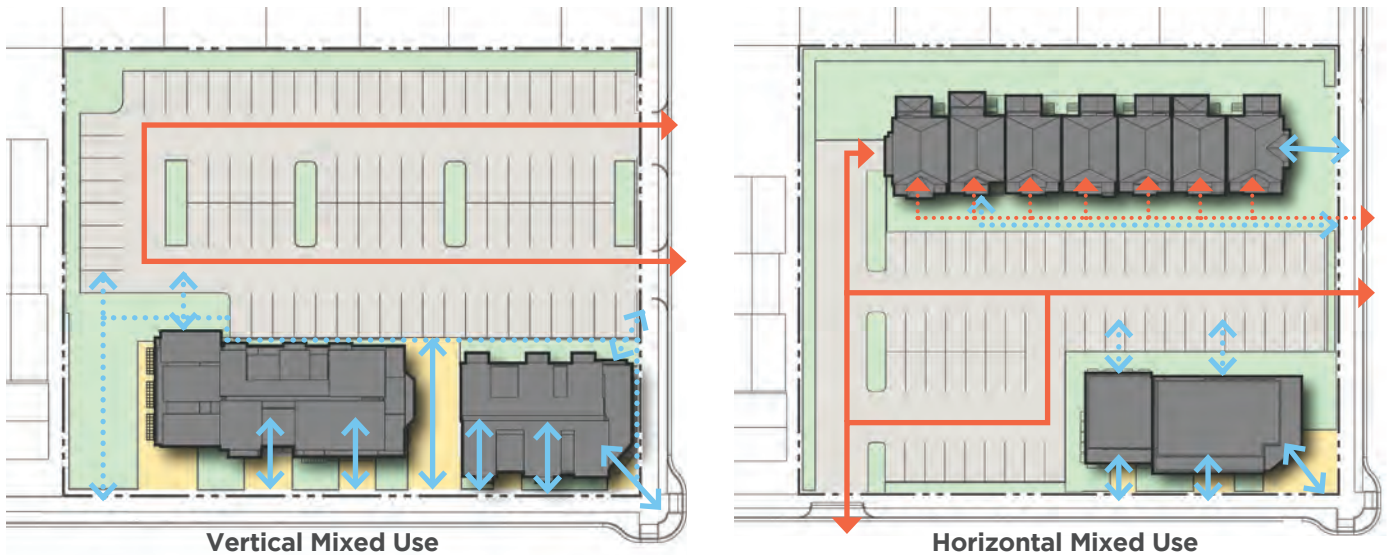
In some cases, it may be appropriate to locate common open spaces along street frontages adjacent to commercial uses and make these open spaces available to the public.

See also Open Space guidelines in Chapter 3, Multifamily Residential Guidelines. However, note that minimum required residential open space for mixed-use projects is less than that for multifamily projects due to the combination of uses on site

See SCCC 13.10.334(A) for mixed-use open space requirements.



D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING



Circulation

- Primary Pedestrian Access
- Secondary Pedestrian Access
- Primary Vehicle Access
- Secondary Vehicle Access

Open Spaces

- Plaza/Open Space
- Landscaping/Open Space

- Parking/Drive
- Property Line

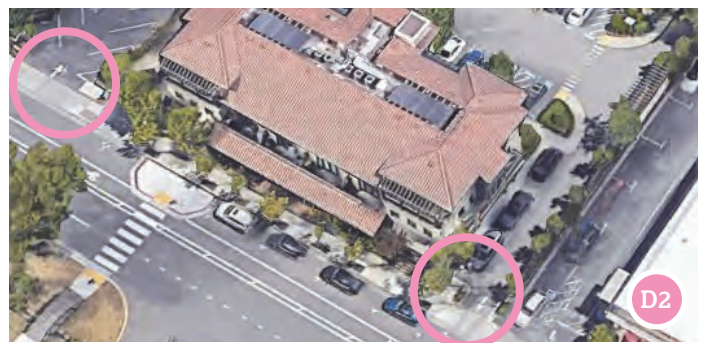
D1. Shared Parking. Maximize opportunities for shared parking between residential and commercial uses that have parking demand at different times of day, to reduce the overall parcel footprint devoted to parking.

See SCCC 13.16.070(B) for shared parking standards.

D2. Curb Cuts. Minimize pedestrian and vehicle conflicts by limiting the number of curb cuts to a maximum of two per project if possible.

See County Design Criteria for curb cut design requirements.

D3. Well Connected Spaces. Link different commercial, residential, and open space areas with internal pathways.



D. ACCESS, CIRCULATION AND PARKING



D4. Parking Location. Provide vehicle drop-off areas and limited short term, retail-friendly teaser parking along sidewalks. The remainder of the parking should be behind the building or in underground or structured parking.

See SCCC 13.16 and County Design Criteria for vehicular parking design requirements.



D5. Screening. Screen surface parking located adjacent to roadways with a decorative wall, hedge, trellis, or landscaping. Also screen surface parking from residential neighborhoods to reduce the visual impact of large parking areas.

See SCCC 13.16.060 and SCCC 13.11.070(D) for parking screening requirements.



D6. Bicycle Parking. Provide convenient and secure exterior bicycle parking adjacent to commercial building entrances. Provide convenient and secure indoor bicycle parking for residents. Whenever possible, bicycle parking areas should be covered and clearly visible to site users.

See SCCC 13.16.040 for bicycle parking design requirements.

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