



**Transitional District Design Standards  
For Townhomes<sup>1</sup>  
Site Design Checklist**

**Project Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Permit No.** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Reviewed by:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SITE DESIGN**

Minimum Standard	Project Standard
<b>Site Design</b>	
<b>Pedestrian Connections</b>	
1. A comprehensive system of pedestrian walkways that are at least four feet in width shall link all site driveway entrances, townhome entries, parking facilities, and common outdoor spaces with the public sidewalk.	
2. Clearly defined pedestrian connections shall be provided between public sidewalks and building entrances when buildings are not located directly adjacent to the sidewalk.	
3. Pedestrian connections within the site shall be reinforced with pedestrian scale lighting that is installed and maintained to aid in pedestrian way finding.	
4. Materials used for pedestrian walkways, including where walkways cross vehicular use areas, shall be consistent within a development, and be distinct from vehicular use areas. The walkway shall be of a different material than asphalt and visually distinct from any adjacent vehicular driveway.	
5. Where transit stops occur in the public right-of-way, pedestrian walkways shall provide a clear and direct paved connection from the development to the transit stop.	
<b>Screening of On-Site Service Elements</b>	
1. All outdoor trash collection facilities shall be screened from the public right-of-way and from adjacent properties by a visual barrier. This standard does not apply to an individual townhome's trash	

<sup>1</sup>See the Transitional District Areas Design Standards at <https://www.cityofmlt.com/DocumentCenter/View/18390/Transitional-District-Design-Standards?bidId=> for a full copy of text and associated illustrations.

containers that are brought outside on trash collection days and otherwise stored indoors.	
2. Each townhome must have access to a designated trash collection area on-site, whether indoors or outdoors.	
3. Utilities and other facilities must be located, and as applicable, screened to avoid visual prominence from the public right-of-way.	
4. All screening shall reflect building architecture and shall include consideration of proportion, color, texture, and materials.	
<b>Site Landscaping Areas</b>	
1. All areas not otherwise devoted to landscape required by the Transitional Uses District regulations and site design standards shall be retained or replanted.	
2. Native, non-invasive vegetation is preferred for planting or replanting.	
3. Perennials and/or annuals are encouraged to provide special interest and highlight pedestrian areas such as building and site entrances, public open space, plazas, and major pedestrian connections.	
4. Rocks, pebbles, sand, and similar non-living materials may be used as groundcover substitutes, and as accent features provided such features do not exceed a maximum five percent of the total landscape area.	
5. To help ensure that any trees will be suitable for their site at maturity, tree locations and species must be approved by the City, either as part of the site plan or subsequently by the Director.	
6. Underground irrigation shall be provided for street trees and on-site landscape areas not specifically maintained by an individual townhome. Irrigation or a hose bib shall be provided for any townhome that has a privately maintained landscape area.	
<b>Sidewalks in Right-of-Way</b>	
1. Public sidewalks shall be at least five feet in width and greater where required for intersections and other special functions.	
2. Sidewalks shall be adequately lit using pedestrian scale lighting.	
3. Sidewalks within the public right-of-way shall be concrete, two and a half foot grid, standard	

Mountlake Terrace sidewalk color, and finish, per the current Mountlake Terrace Engineering Standards.	
<b>Street Trees and Landscaping in Right-of-Way</b>	
1. Street trees shall be planted in the right-of-way in the landscape zone between the curb and public sidewalk.	
2. Street trees shall be spaced approximately 30 feet on center. The tree species type may be specified by the City.	
3. Street trees shall be planted in a planting area of at least 5x5 feet. Any additional area in the landscape zone that is not comprised of a sidewalk, approved walkway, or pavement for street furniture shall be planted in groundcover, low-scale shrubs or a combination thereof.	
4. All landscaped areas shall be properly prepared as directed by the Department (for example, for soil mix and planting standards). Tree grates may be used, or required, when deemed appropriate, such as near mailboxes and street furnishings.	
5. If a street already has street trees or a distinctive species, then new street trees should match the planting pattern and species.	
6. Selected vegetation and street trees should help create continuity within a neighborhood by displaying a strong repetitive form and/or seasonal interest with color, interesting bark, branching pattern, or flowers.	
7. Where tree grates are used or required, they shall be ADA accessible and of a similar size and material as tree grates found in adjacent developments.	
8. Where on-street parking is provided, the abutting landscaped areas shall have hard surface connections at least two feet in width every 10 feet on-center, unless a larger spacing is deemed more appropriate.	
9. Trees and vegetation in street frontage planting areas shall be irrigated with an underground system on an automatic controller that is the responsibility of the townhome owners association or all townhomes collectively. Townhome developments are subject to maintenance requirements of MTMC 19.130.250.	
<b>Front Yards and Entrances</b>	
1. A clearly defined pedestrian route of travel to the front entrance of each townhome shall be provided	

<p>from the public sidewalk. The required pedestrian route shall be at least 48 inches wide and of an improved surface, not comprised of asphalt, that is of a material or color distinctive from the driveway surface.</p>	
<p>2. The primary pedestrian entrance of each townhome must: (a) be protected from the weather by an overhanging roof or other architectural feature; (b) have exterior lighting that is energy efficient and shielded from illuminating the night sky and adjacent properties.</p>	
<p>3. Pedestrian scale lighting and/or bollards shall be installed to create and maintain a safe pedestrian route to the entry of each townhome. The lighting must meet City engineering standards where applicable for pedestrian purposes or otherwise be approved by the Director.</p>	
<p>4. Functional, accent lighting should be used to highlight special focal points, building/site entrances, public art and special landscape features.</p>	
<p>5. Landscape areas between the sidewalk and the townhome development, or parking lot, shall be designed and maintained with plant material that, with reasonable maintenance, will not exceed three feet in height above the sidewalk, provided that the Director may approve occasional areas of taller landscaping that is not likely to extend into or over the sidewalk and for townhomes is not likely to visually block windows, doors and architectural features.</p>	
<p>6. Within the landscape area between the public sidewalk and the development, all landscape areas should include a range of plant materials including perennials, flowering shrubs and native shrubs and groundcovers. Accents of seasonal color are encouraged.</p>	
<p><b>Private Outdoor Spaces</b></p>	
<p>1. Private outdoor spaces may be provided by such features as decks, patios, balconies, porches (excluding steps), yards, rooftop decks and gardens that are associated with an individual residential unit.</p>	
<p>2. Each townhome’s outdoor space should include some visual shielding from the outdoor spaces of other townhomes in the development and from the street. Shielding may consist of walls, railings,</p>	

fences, berms or landscaping. Visually permeable elements, such as open rails, ironwork or trellis treatment are encouraged.	
<b>Site Lighting for Townhomes</b>	
1. Lighting within vehicular parking areas and pedestrian routes within townhome developments shall enhance safety and be evenly distributed to create adequate visibility at night.	
2. Night lighting shall be provided where stairs, curbs, ramps, abrupt changes in walk direction and crossing vehicle lanes occur.	
3. All outdoor lighting shall be energy-efficient, glare-free and shielded from the night sky and adjacent properties to eliminate or minimize off-site spillover.	
4. Either freestanding or lighting mounted on building may be used to satisfy on-site lighting requirements. The lighting must be maintained in good operating condition.	
<b>Driveways and Vehicular Entrances</b>	
1. Depending on site characteristics and difficulty of access, developments shall limit the number of vehicular access points to reduce traffic impacts and the amount of site area devoted to roadways.	
2. Vehicular entrances shall be designated in coordination with the pedestrian circulation system.	
3. If the vehicular entrance is the primary access to the site, signage identifying building address(es) shall be clearly identifiable and visible to maximize way finding.	
4. Vehicle circulation and parking should be integrated into the building design and concentrated on the interior of the development. Circulation design (scale and location) should be compatible with the adjacent neighborhood.	
5. Driveways and garage entrances shall be designed with a manner that discourages the parking of vehicles that would block the pedestrian route.	
<b>Fences</b>	
1. Chain link fencing is not permitted.	
2. Fencing in townhome is subject to the following: a) Up to three (3) feet in height and at least 75% transparent along the front façade of the townhome	<i>(explain how you meet the requirements for each option that you propose)</i>

<p>with within ten (10) feet of the back of sidewalk on side yards not primarily facing the street, where such fencing is provided.</p> <p>b) Up to six feet in height along the rear lot line. Where a property line abuts a different residential district, a six-foot sight-obscuring fence is required.</p> <p>c) Up to six feet in height on side yards that are not primarily facing the street, provided that any portion of fence that is five feet or more in height is at least 50% transparent.</p> <p>d) Between individual townhome units and on side yards that are not primarily facing the street, fencing may be up to 5 feet tall, provided that any portion of the fence four feet or more in height is at least 50% transparent.</p>	
<p>3. Fencing of Commercial Parking Lots is subject to the following:</p> <p>a) Fencing or a wall, 30-36 inches in height, is required along any street frontage.</p> <p>b) All commercial parking lots shall have a six-foot, sight-obscuring fence, or wall, along any property line abutting a RS 4800, RS 7200 or RS 8400 residential district.</p> <p>c) Side or rear yard fences (or walls) abutting properties other than in the RS 4800, RS 7200 or RS 8400 residential districts, shall provide fencing at least three feet in height, maximum five feet, with the portion of the fence above three feet in height a minimum of 75% transparent.</p>	
<p><b>Storm Drainage</b></p>	
<p>1. Stormwater facilities, such as detention ponds and biofiltration swales shall be integrated into the overall project design. Use of a variety of facilities shall be considered in the design, such as rain gardens, street tree detention wells, and bioretention, biofiltration, and infiltration swales.</p>	
<p>2. Stormwater facilities shall provide a more naturalistic form and/or appearance through layout, design, and landscape treatment. An effort shall be made to provide facilities that are site amenities, without the need for fencing.</p>	
<p>3. Stormwater facilities located within landscape areas that meet other planting requirements.</p>	
<p>4. Stormwater bioretention, biofiltration, and infiltration swales that are integrated into interior</p>	

landscape areas within parking lots and that meet square footage requirements, as well as landscaping requirements, shall count toward the interior parking lot landscape requirement.	
5. Innovative stormwater treatment solutions should be considered in the site design to treat stormwater on-site.	