

Santa Monica Municipal Code							
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Article 9 PLANNING AND ZONING Division 2: Base and Overlay Districts Chapter 9.08 MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS							

9.08.030 Development Standards

Table 9.08.030 prescribes the development standards for the Multi-Unit Residential Districts. Additional regulations are denoted with Section numbers in the right-hand column or with individual letters in parentheses. Section numbers refer to other Sections of this Article, while individual letters in parentheses refer to subsections that directly follow the table.

TABLE 9.08.030: DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS—MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS				
Standard	R2*	R3*	R4	Additional Regulations
<i>*For development standards within specified areas, see Section 9.08.030(A)</i>				
Parcel and Density Standards				
Minimum Parcel Size (sq. ft.)	5,000	5,000	5,000	
Maximum Parcel Size (sq. ft.)	See 9.21.030(B)(C)	See 9.21.030(B)(C)	See 9.21.030(B)(C)	
Minimum Parcel Width (ft.)	50	50	50	
Minimum Parcel Depth (ft.)	100	100	100	
Minimum Parcel Area (sq. ft.) per Unit				
Tier 1—Base Standard	2,000 (or 4 total units, whichever is less)	1,500 (or 5 total units, whichever is less)	1,250 (or 6 total units, whichever is less)	For parcels consolidated to provide courtyards, the maximum allowable number of units shall be based on the total maximum number of units allowed on each of the parcels prior to consolidation.
Tier 2—With Provision of Community Benefits	NA	1,250	900	Chapter 9.23, Community Benefits
100% Affordable Housing Projects	1,500	1,250	900	
Building Form and Location				
Maximum Number of Stories				
Tier 1—Base Standard	2	2	3	
Tier 2—With Provision of Community Benefits	NA	3	4	Chapter 9.23, Community Benefits
100% Affordable Housing Projects	No limit on number of stories as long as building complies with height limit.			
Maximum Building Height (ft.)				
Tier 1—Base Standard	30. See (B)	30. See (B)	30. See (B)	
Tier 2—With Provision of Community Benefits	NA	40. See (B)	45. See (B)	Chapter 9.23, Community Benefits
100% Affordable Housing Projects	30. See (B)	40. See (B)	45. See (B)	
Maximum Parcel Coverage				
Ground Floor	45	50	50	
Upper Stories (% of allowable ground floor coverage)	90 - 2nd flr.	90 - 2nd/3rd flr.	80 - 2nd flr. 60 - 3rd flr. 50 - 4th flr.	
Additional Stories Authorized for 100% Affordable Housing Projects (% of ground floor coverage)	90	90	50	
Minimum Setbacks				
Front (ft.)	20 See (C)(E)	20 See (C)(E)	20 See (C)(E)	
Interior Side (ft.)—Parcels 50 feet or more in width	8 See (E)	8 See (E)	8 See (E)	
Interior Side (ft.)—Parcels less than 50 ft in width	4, or 16% of parcel width, whichever is greater. See (E)	4, or 16% of parcel width, whichever is greater. See (E)	4, or 16% of parcel width, whichever is greater. See (E)	
Street Side (% of parcel width)	15 See (C)(E)	15 See (C)(E)	15 See (C)(E)	
Rear (ft.)	15	15	15	
Parking	See Sections 9.28.070, Location of Parking and 9.28.120, Parking Design and Development Standards			
Transition Requirements Adjacent to R1 District	See (D)	See (D)	See (D)	
Open Space & Landscaping				
Minimum Outdoor Living Area per Unit (sq. ft.)—Sites with Three or More Units				Section 9.21.090, Outdoor Living Area
Private	60	60	60	
Total	150	150	100	
Courtyards—Parcels over 99 feet in width	No less than 10% of the total parcel area. See (F)	No less than 10% of the total parcel area. See (F)	No less than 10% of the total parcel area. See (F)	
Minimum Planting Area (% of parcel area)	30. See (G)	25. See (G)	20. See (G)	Chapter 9.26, Landscaping
Additional Standards				
Accessory Dwelling Units	Section 9.31.025, Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units			
Accessory Structures	Section 9.21.020, Accessory Buildings and Structures			
Exceptions to Height Limits	Section 9.21.060, Height Exceptions			
Fences and Walls	Section 9.21.050, Fences, Walls, and Hedges			
Home Occupation	Section 9.31.160, Home Occupation			
Junior Accessory Dwelling Units	Section 9.31.025, Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units			
Landscaping	Chapter 9.26, Landscaping			
Lighting	Section 9.21.080, Lighting			
Off-Street Parking and Loading	Chapter 9.28, Parking, Loading, and Circulation			
Projections into Required Setbacks	Section 9.21.110, Projections into Required Setbacks			
Screening	Section 9.21.140, Screening			
Signs	Chapter 9.61, Signs			

TABLE 9.08.030: DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS—MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Standard	R2*	R3*	R4	Additional Regulations
*For development standards within specified areas, see Section 9.08.030(A)				
Solar Energy Systems	Section 9.21.150, Solar Energy Systems			
Refuse and Recycling Screening and Enclosure	Section 9.21.130, Resource Recovery and Recycling Standards			

A. Development Standards, Specified Areas. The following development standards shall govern in the areas defined below.

1. For Multi-Unit Residential District parcels located north of the Pier and west of Ocean Avenue, the following development standards shall apply in lieu of the corresponding land use regulations specified in Table 9.08.020 and development standards specified in Table 9.08.030:

a. **Uses.**

- i. Permitted Uses: One Single-Unit Dwelling per lot placed on a permanent foundation (including Manufactured Housing); Accessory Dwelling Unit; Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit; Single-Room Occupancy Housing; Congregate Housing; Senior Citizen Multiple-Unit Residential; Senior Group Residential; Family Day Care, Small; Supportive Housing; Transitional Housing; Hospice, Limited; One-Story Accessory Building and Structures up to 14 feet in height; Public Parks and Playgrounds.
- ii. Uses Subject to Minor Use Permits: Hospice, General; One-story accessory living quarters up to 14 feet in height on parcels having a minimum area of 10,000 square feet.
- iii. Conditionally Permitted Uses: Bed and Breakfast; Day Care Center; Group Residential; Residential Care Facility; Offices and Meeting Rooms for Charitable, Youth, and Welfare Organizations; Schools.

b. **Maximum Building Height.** Maximum building height shall be 40 feet, except that:

- i. No portion of the building may project beyond the site view envelope. The site view envelope is a theoretical plane beginning mid-point at the minimum required beach setback line and extending to a height of 30 feet, and then running parallel with the side parcel lines to a point located 5 feet in height above the top of the Palisades bluff immediately behind the pedestrian railing.
- ii. No portion of the building above 23 feet for a flat roof, and 30 feet for a pitched roof may exceed 30 feet in width. Multiple projections above 23 feet for a flat roof and 30 feet for a pitched roof shall be separated by a minimum 20-foot wide unobstructed view corridor. No projections, connections, or mechanical equipment may be placed in the view corridor.

c. **Maximum Unit Density.** For parcels 4,000 square feet or more, the maximum unit density shall be one dwelling unit for each 1,500 square feet of parcel area, or 4 total units, whichever is less. For parcels less than 4,000 square feet, no dwelling units shall be permitted, except that one dwelling unit may be permitted on any legal parcel which existed on September 8, 1988. No more than one dwelling unit shall be permitted on a parcel 40 feet or less in width. Accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units established in accordance with Section 9.31.025 shall be deemed to meet the allowable density for the parcel on which the accessory dwelling unit or junior accessory dwelling unit is located.

d. **Maximum Parcel Coverage.** 50% of the parcel area.

e. **Front Yard Setback.** The minimum required front yard setback shall be either 20 feet or shall comply with the minimum front yard setback for the district as set forth in the Official Districting Map, whichever area is greater. At least 30% of the building elevation above 14 feet in height shall provide an additional 5-foot average setback from the minimum required front yard setback.

f. **Beach Rear Yard Setback.** 15 feet for parcels 100 feet or less in depth and 55 feet for parcels over 100 feet in depth.

g. **Side Yard Setback.** The minimum required side yard setback shall be determined in accordance with the following formula, except that for lots of less than 50 feet in width, the minimum required side yard shall be 10% of the parcel width, but in any event not less than 4 feet:

$$5' + \frac{(\text{stories} \times \text{parcel width})}{50'}$$

At least 25% of the side elevation above 14 feet in height shall provide an additional 4-foot average setback from the minimum required side yard setback.

h. **Minimum Parcel Size.** 5,000 square feet. Each parcel shall contain a minimum depth of 100 feet and a minimum width of 50 feet, except that parcels existing on September 8, 1988 shall not be subject to this requirement.

i. **Development Review.** Except for projects listed in Section 9.40.020(B), a development review permit shall be required for any development of 10,000 square feet or more in floor area.

j. **View Corridor.** A structure with 70 square feet or more of frontage parallel to Pacific Coast Highway shall provide an unobstructed view corridor between Pacific Coast Highway and the ocean. The view corridor shall be a minimum of 20 feet in width and 40 feet in height measured from the property line parallel to the Pacific Coast Highway.

k. **Parking.** Uncovered parking may be located in the front half of the parcel and within the minimum required front yard setback.

l. **Private Open Space.** Any project containing 4 or more residential dwelling units shall provide the following minimum open space: 100 square feet per unit for projects with 4 or 5 units, and 50 square feet per unit for projects of 6 units or more. For purposes of this requirement, "residential dwelling unit" shall mean any unit 376 square feet in area or larger. Affordable housing projects may substitute one square foot of common open space for each square foot of required private open space.

m. **Projections into Beach Rear Yard Setback.** For parcels 100 feet or less in depth, balconies, decks, porches, and similar structures that are open and unenclosed on at least 2 sides shall be allowed to extend to the rear property line in the beach rear yard setback but not within the minimum side yard setbacks.

2. For Multi-Unit Residential District parcels bounded by Neilson Way to the east, Ocean Park Boulevard to the south, Barnard Way to the west, and up to and including the parcels on the north side of Wadsworth Avenue to the north, the following development standards shall apply in lieu of the corresponding land use regulations specified in Table 9.08.020 and development standards specified in Table 9.08.030:

a. **Uses.**

- i. Permitted Uses: One Single Unit Dwelling per parcel on a permanent foundation (including Manufactured Housing); one Duplex (including a detached second unit when located on a parcel containing one Single Unit Dwelling) on any legal parcel that existed on August 31, 1975; Accessory Dwelling Unit; Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit; Family Day Care, Small; Family Day Care, Large; Hospice, Limited; Supportive Housing, Transitional Housing; Public Parks and Playgrounds.

- ii. Uses Subject to Minor Use Permits: One-story accessory living quarters up to 14 feet in height on parcels having a minimum area of 10,000 square feet; Hospice, General.

- iii. Conditionally Permitted Uses: One-story accessory buildings over 14 feet in height or two-story accessory buildings up to a maximum of 24 feet.

b. **Maximum Building Height.** 2 stories, not to exceed 23 feet for a flat roof or 30 feet for a pitched roof. A "pitched roof" is defined as a roof with at least 2 sides having no less than one foot of vertical rise for every 3 feet of horizontal run. The walls of the building may not exceed the maximum height required for a flat roof. There shall be no limitation on the number of stories of any affordable housing project, as long as the building height does not exceed the maximum number of feet permitted in this Section.

c. **Maximum Unit Density.** A minimum of 1,500 square feet of parcel area for each dwelling unit, or 4 units total, whichever is less. However, one duplex shall be permitted on any legal parcel that existed on August 31, 1975. Accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units established in accordance with Section 9.31.025 shall be deemed to meet the allowable density for the parcel on which the accessory dwelling unit or junior accessory dwelling unit is located.

d. **Maximum Parcel Coverage.** 60% of the parcel area.

e. **Minimum Parcel Size.** 3,000 square feet. Each parcel shall have a minimum depth of 100 feet and a minimum width of 30 feet, except that parcels already developed and existing on September 8, 1988, shall not be subject to this requirement.

f. **Front Yard Setback.** 10 feet.

g. **Rear Yard Setback.** 15 feet.

h. **Side Yard Setback.** The minimum required side yard setback shall be determined in accordance with the following formula, except that for lots of less than 50 feet in width, the minimum required side yard setback shall be 10% of the parcel width, but in any event not less than 4 feet:

$$5' + (\text{stories} \times \text{lot width})/50'$$

i. **Front Yard Paving.** No more than 50% of the area of the required front yard setback, including driveways, shall be paved.

j. **Private Open Space.** Any project containing 4 or more residential dwelling units shall provide the following minimum open space: 100 square feet per unit for projects with 4 or 5 units, and 50 square feet per unit for projects of 6 units or more. For purposes of this requirement, "residential dwelling unit" shall mean any unit 376 square feet in area or larger. Affordable housing projects may substitute one square foot of common open space for each square foot of required private open space.

3. For Multi-Unit Residential District parcels bounded by Appian Way to the east, Vicente Terrace to the south, Ocean Front Walk to the west, and Seaside Terrace to the north, the following development standards shall apply in lieu of the corresponding land use regulations specified in Table 9.08.020 and development standards specified in Table 9.08.030:

a. **Uses.**

- i. Permitted Uses: Single-Unit Dwellings placed on a permanent foundation (including Manufactured Housing); Multi-Unit Dwellings; Accessory Dwelling Unit; Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit; Single-Room Occupancy Housing; Congregate Housing; Senior Citizen Multiple-Unit Residential; Senior Group Residential; Family Day Care, Small; Supportive Housing; Transitional Housing; Hospice, Limited; One-Story Accessory Building and Structures up to 14 feet in height; Public Parks and Playgrounds.

- ii. Uses Subject to Minor Use Permits: One-Story Accessory Living Quarters up to 14 feet in height on parcels having a minimum area of 10,000 square feet; Hospice, General.

- iii. Conditionally Permitted Uses: Bed and Breakfast; Day Care Center; Group Residential; Residential Care Facility; Community Assembly; Emergency Shelter; One-Story Accessory Buildings over 14 feet in height or Two-Story Accessory Buildings up to a maximum of 24 feet; Offices and Meeting Rooms for Charitable, Youth, and Welfare Organizations; Schools; Convenience Market; Bicycle and Skate Rental Facilities; Underground Parking Structures provided the parcel was occupied by a surface parking lot at the time of adoption of this Chapter, the parcel is not adjacent to a parcel in the NC District, the ground level above the underground parking structure is used for residential or public park and open space uses, the structure is associated with an adjacent commercially zoned parcel, and the vehicle access to the underground parking is from the commercially zoned parcel and as far from the residentially zoned parcel as is reasonably possible.

b. **Maximum Building Height.** 2 stories, not to exceed 30 feet, except that there shall be no limitation on the number of stories of any affordable housing project, as long as the building height does not exceed 30 feet.

c. **Maximum Floor Area Ratio.** 1.0.

d. **Maximum Unit Density.** For projects on parcels of 4,000 square feet or more, one dwelling unit for each 1,500 square feet of parcel area shall be permitted, or 5 units total, whichever is less. For parcels less than 4,000 square feet, no dwelling units shall be permitted, except that one dwelling unit may be permitted if a single-unit dwelling existed on the parcel on September 8, 1988. Accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units established in accordance with Section 9.31.025 shall be deemed to meet the allowable density for the parcel on which the accessory dwelling unit or junior accessory dwelling unit is located.

e. **Maximum Parcel Coverage.** 50% of the parcel area.

f. **Minimum Parcel Size.** 5,000 square feet. Each parcel shall contain a minimum depth of 100 feet and a minimum width of 50 feet, except that parcels existing on September 8, 1988 shall not be subject to this requirement.

- g. **Front Yard Setback.** The minimum required front yard setback shall be either 20 feet, or shall comply with the minimum front yard setback for the district as set forth in the Official Districting Map, whichever area is greater.
- h. **Rear Yard Setback.** 15 feet.
- i. **Side Yard Setback.** The minimum required side yard setback shall be determined in accordance with the following formula, except that for lots of less than 50 feet in width, the minimum required side yard setback shall be 10% of the parcel width, but in any event not less than 4 feet:

$$5' + (\text{stories} \times \text{lot width})/50'$$
- j. **Development Review.** Except for projects listed in Section 9.40.020(B), a development review permit shall be required for any development of 10,000 square feet or more in floor area.
- k. **Private Open Space.** Any project containing 4 or more residential dwelling units shall provide the following minimum open space: 100 square feet per unit for projects with 4 or 5 units, and 50 square feet per unit for projects of 6 units or more. For purposes of this requirement, "residential dwelling unit" shall mean any unit 376 square feet in area or larger. Affordable housing projects may substitute one square foot of common open space for each square foot of required private open space.
- l. **Upper-Level Stepback Requirements.**
- Additional Front Stepback Over 14 Feet in Height.** For new structures or additions to existing structures, any portion of the front building elevation above 14 feet exceeding 75% of the maximum buildable front elevation shall be stepped back from the front setback line an additional average amount equal to 4% of parcel depth, but in no case resulting in a requirement stepback greater than 10 feet. As used in this Section, "maximum buildable elevation" shall mean the maximum potential length of the elevation permitted under these regulations, which includes parcel width or length (as applicable), minus required minimum setbacks.
 - Additional Side Stepback Over 14 Feet in Height.** For new structures or additions to existing structures, any portion of the side building elevation above 14 feet exceeding 50% of the maximum buildable side elevation shall be stepped back from the side setback line an additional average amount equal to 6% of parcel width, but in no case resulting in a required stepback greater than 10 feet.
 - The upper-level stepback requirements may be modified subject to the review and approval of the Architectural Review Board if the Board finds that the modification will not be detrimental to the property, adjoining properties, or the general area in which the property is located, and the objectives of the stepback requirements are satisfied by the provision of alternative stepbacks or other features which reduce effective mass to a degree comparable to the relevant standard requirement.
- B. **Additional Stepback at Upper Stories.** The maximum building height shall not exceed 30 feet in the R2 District, 40 feet in the R3 District, and 45 feet in the R4 District, and shall be subject to the following standards:
- R2 District.** No portion of the building volume above 23 feet shall encroach into a daylight plane starting at 23 feet above the front setback line and sloping upward at a 45-degree angle toward the rear of the parcel. The 23-foot height measurement shall be taken from the same reference grade as determined for the subject site pursuant to Section 9.04.050.
 - R3 District.** No portion of the building volume above 35 feet shall encroach into a daylight plane starting at 35 feet above the front setback line and sloping upward at a 45-degree angle toward the rear of the parcel. The 35-foot height measurement shall be taken from the same reference grade as determined for the subject site pursuant to Section 9.04.050.
 - R4 District.** No portion of the building volume above 40 feet shall encroach into a daylight plane starting at 40 feet above the front setback line and sloping upward at a 45-degree angle toward the rear of the parcel. The 40-foot height measurement shall be taken from the same reference grade as determined for the subject site pursuant to Section 9.04.050.
 - The covered portion of all stories above the second story in any multi-unit structure shall be set back an average of 10 feet from the second floor front façade.
- C. **Front and Side Setbacks.**
- The front yard setback on Arcadia Terrace and Seaview Terrace shall be 30 feet measured from the center line of the walkway.
 - In the R2, R3, and R4 Districts, the street side setback shall be at least 15% of the parcel width but no less than 6 feet and is not required to exceed 10 feet.
 - Where a corner parcel in an R2, R3, or R4 District abuts a parcel in an R1 District, the street side setback shall be at least half of the required front setback in the adjacent R1 District.
- D. **Transition Requirements Adjacent to R1 District.** Where an R2, R3, or R4 District adjoins an R1 District, the following standards apply:
- The maximum height within 25 feet of an R1 District is 23 feet for a building with a flat roof. A building with a pitched roof may be built to the maximum height.
 - The building setback from an R1 District boundary shall be 10 feet for interior side setbacks and 20 feet for rear setbacks.
 - A landscaped planting area, a minimum of 5 feet in width, shall be provided along all R1 District boundaries. A tree screen shall be planted in this area with trees planted at a minimum interval of 15 feet.
- E. **Special Project Design and Development Standards.** The new construction of or new addition to a principal building shall comply with the following standards:
- Street-facing pedestrian entries shall not be located below grade, and any excavation to access the entry shall be prohibited.
 - An additional 5-foot setback beyond the minimum front yard setback set forth in Section 9.08.030 is required for at least 25% of the width of the front façade. This setback shall be fully integrated into the building through balconies, decks, or other elements that articulate the front of the building.
 - All required setbacks set forth in Section 9.08.030 shall be open to the sky except for permitted architectural projections contained in Section 9.21.110.
 - Mezzanines shall be concealed within the building and shall not appear as an additional story on the exterior building façade.
 - An additional 2-foot average side yard setback from the minimum requirement set forth in Section 9.08.030 shall be provided at each story. Setback areas greater than 5 feet in depth from the minimum side yard setback, or the area used to comply with the additional setback requirements of this Section, shall not be used to satisfy compliance with this requirement.
 - The allocation of allowable parcel coverage area shall be distributed to provide clear delineation between individual units through: changes in wall plane, in plan or section; use of additional stepbacks; use of decks or balconies; or other architectural and spatial manipulation. A change in plane to differentiate individual units shall be a minimum of 12 inches. However, more than one but no more than 3 units may be grouped together for the purpose of providing a shared entry, balcony or other common exterior space.
- F. **Courtyards.** Parcels having a width greater than 99 feet and located in the R2, R3, or R4 District shall provide a courtyard on the lot. Courtyards shall comply with the following design criteria:
- Courtyards shall be no less than 10% of the total lot area and in no case less than 1,000 square feet with a minimum width and length of 18 feet measured parallel to the front and side parcel lines. Required setback area shall not count toward the minimum width and length or 1,000 square foot requirement.
 - Courtyards shall be open to the sky, but may include permitted projections set forth in Section 9.21.110 for side yard projections. If mechanical or utility equipment is placed in the courtyard, it shall be screened visually and acoustically and shall not encroach into the minimum courtyard area.
 - A minimum of 50% of the courtyard's perimeter shall be enclosed by a building.
 - Courtyards shall be visible and accessible from the sidewalk and each ground floor unit. Courtyards shall be visible from the street with a minimum 10-foot wide opening that is open to the sky. For openings less than 18 feet in width into courtyards, the depth of the opening shall not exceed twice the width of the opening.
 - At least 50% of courtyard areas shall be planted pursuant to Sections 9.26.060 and 9.26.070. Planting shall be at grade or in finished planters not exceeding 18 inches above finished grade. At least one canopy tree in a tree well providing a minimum soil volume pursuant to Section 9.26.050(A)(3) shall be planted in all courtyards.
 - The majority of primary entrances to all ground floor units shall be accessed from the street frontage or courtyard.
- G. **Planting Areas.** The following areas shall be landscaped and may count toward the total area of site landscaping required by Table 9.08.030.
- Setback Areas Adjacent to Streets.** All visible portions of a required setback area adjacent to a street that are not used for driveways or walks shall be dedicated for planting areas or landscaping. These areas shall be planted with the appropriate number and sizes of trees as necessary to provide shade and to increase a project's energy efficiency. Recreational vehicles, utility trailers, unmounted camper tops, boats, cars, trucks, motorcycles, or other vehicles shall not be parked or stored within a required planting or landscape area.
 - Interior Side Setback Areas.** At least 50% of each required setback area shall be planting area, except that for parcels less than 50 feet in width, 50% of any one interior side setback area shall be planted.
 - Adjacent to R1 Districts.** A continuous planting area having a minimum width of 5 feet is provided along interior parcel lines when an R2, R3, or R4 District is adjacent to an R1 District. (Added by Ord. No. 2486CCS §§ 1, 2, adopted June 23, 2015; amended by Ord. No. 2520CCS § 5, adopted June 14, 2016; Ord. No. 2536CCS § 17, adopted February 28, 2017; Ord. No. 2576CCS § 2, adopted June 12, 2018; Ord. No. 2649CCS § 9, adopted September 8, 2020)

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