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**Development Standards  
 for Single-Family  
 Residences in a  
 Multi-Family Zone**

**Introduction**

The following information should be useful for planning and designing your new house, garage or addition located in a multi-family zone. It draws from two sections of the City’s municipal code -- 1) Article 9, the Zoning Ordinance, and 2) Article 7, Public Works – as well as the City’s General Plan Land Use and Circulation Element, and professional engineering, planning, and architectural policies and practices.

These standards should make it easier to plan your project. Please feel free to raise any questions you may have with a Transportation Planner during a scheduled meeting. Please call (310) 458-8291 to schedule an appointment.

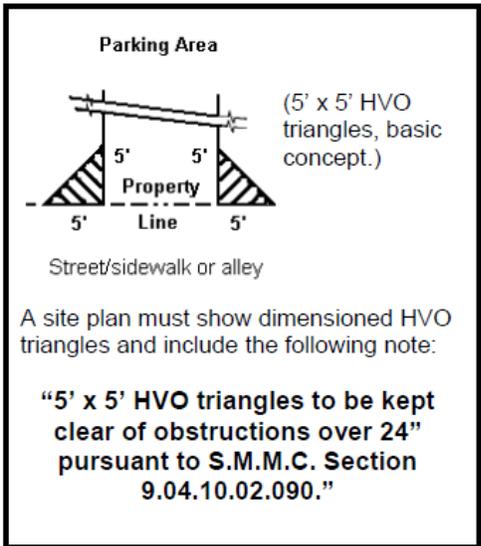
**9.02.030.825 Substantial remodel**

**Substantial remodel:** The alteration of or addition to an existing legal nonconforming building to such a degree that the entire building must conform to all current, applicable zoning regulations including, but not limited to, land use approvals, setbacks, height, and parking. Structures substantially remodeled shall also be considered demolished and subject to Part 9.04.10.6 of Subchapter 9.04.10 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Division determines if a project is a substantial remodel.

**9.04.10.02.090 Hazardous visual obstructions (HVOs)**

These 5’ by 5’ triangular areas free of visual obstructions are required independent of the amount of work that is undertaken. They need to be shown at all entrances and exits from parking, as well as at the corner of a building or property, where it meets a street or sidewalk.

(a) Notwithstanding Section 9.04.10.02.080, no person shall permit any obstruction, including, but not limited to any fence, wall, hedge, tree or landscape planting to obscure or block the visibility of vehicles entering or exiting an alley, driveway, parking lot, street intersection or other vehicle right-of-way or to constitute an unreasonable and unnecessary hazard to persons lawfully using an adjacent pedestrian or vehicle right-of-way. In addition, no obstruction shall be located less than five feet from the intersection of the parcel line with a driveway or garage door, or the intersection of parcel lines adjacent to street or alley intersections unless the obstruction is either less than twenty-four inches above the adjacent vehicle right-of-way or is authorized pursuant to subsection (b) of this Section. No development shall be allowed if it would



otherwise cause an existing obstruction to be in violation of this subsection (a) unless the obstruction is either less than twenty-four inches above the adjacent vehicle right-of-way or the obstruction or development is authorized pursuant to subsection (b) of this Section.

(b) The Zoning Administrator and Transportation Planning Manager may approve encroachments into the five foot hazardous visual area in addition to those specified in subsection (a) of this Section when the property owner submits a written request and satisfactory evidence that:

- (1) Characteristics applicable to the property, including size, shape, topography, location, or surroundings that do not apply to other properties in the vicinity which unreasonably restricts an owner's ability to comply with subsection (a) of this Section; and
- (2) The proposed encroachment will be designed to maintain adequate sight view and/or provide other design elements, such as the use of mirrors and will not constitute a hazard to persons lawfully using an adjacent sidewalk, alley, street or other right-of-way; and
- (3) The strict application of the provisions of this Chapter would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships, not including economic difficulties or economic hardships, or would result in unreasonable deprivation of the use or enjoyment of the property; and
- (4) The granting of the encroachment will not be contrary to or in conflict with the general purposes and intent of this Chapter, nor to the goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan.

All applicants must show HVOs and call out any non-conforming obstructions that are to remain, if any, even if on the neighbor's property. In certain cases of minor additions or insubstantial remodels, the TMD will approve projects that have non-conforming obstructions. For all new projects or *substantial remodels* the TMD will not give its approval until the project is designed with HVOs in conformance with the Municipal Ordinance.

#### **9.04.10.08.040 Number of parking spaces required and 9.04.10.08.060 Design standards**

The design, location or position of any parking layout, entry, driveway, approach or accessway from any street or alley shall be approved by the Parking and Traffic Engineer.

**Two spaces in a garage** are required for a detached single-family dwelling unit alone on a lot, regardless of the zone. A minimum unobstructed inside dimension of 18 feet in length by 20 feet in width by 7 feet in height shall be provided in a private two-car garage. **On lots of 30 feet or less in width**, the City may permit two **tandem** spaces in a garage.

A private two-car garage lawfully in existence on May 5, 1999 may be maintained if the garage serves a single-family residence and has an unobstructed inside dimension of at least 18 feet in width by 18 feet in length.

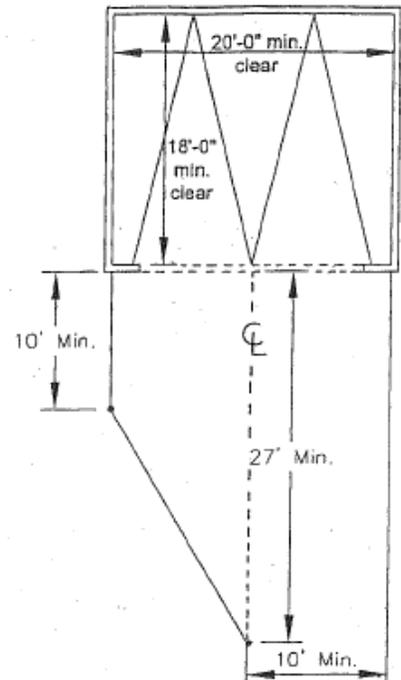
A single-family dwelling unit on a parcel with another dwelling unit(s) is not subject to the garage requirement and may have uncovered parking, in the rear half of the lot and is subject to the number of parking spaces required pursuant to SMMC 9.04.10.08.040 for multi-family residences or condominiums, as appropriate.

The driveway for a two-car garage with its doors facing the alley should have a 1% to 5% slope running down towards the alley from the garage. Backing-out is permitted onto the alley. The width of the driveway is generally at least as wide as the width of the garage; however, for purposes of calculating the HVO, the assumed width is the same as the width of the garage door, typically 16 feet.

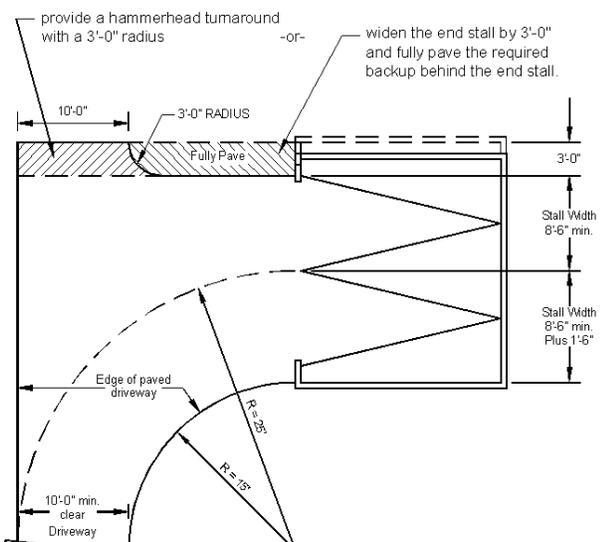
Street access is permitted under limited circumstances. With street access, the configuration of a typical driveway depends on garage location or position and turn-around. If a garage is positioned with its doors facing the side or backing onto the street is prohibited, the driveway has to have a turn-around. With turn-around, there should be a 10-foot wide hammerhead turn-around with a 3 foot radius (or the end stall should be widened to 11 feet 6 inches). The minimum **outside turning radius** for a driveway is 25 feet.

Without turn-around and with a garage located in the rear yard, facing the street, the minimum width of the driveway is 10-foot, running along to within 27 feet of the garage doors, at which point it begins to flare and continues to widen for the next 17 feet until at a point 10 feet from the garage door, it is a minimum width of 20 feet. (This must be modified to access narrower or wider garages, and for garages located within 27 feet of the front property line.)

Driveways on lots from which backing onto the street is prohibited should use this design to facilitate on-site turn-around.



If the driveway does not extend beyond the end prolongation of the outer side of the end stall width then either:



**Back onto Prohibited Streets.** If access is provided from specified high volume/high speed/high accident streets, vehicles must be able to enter a parking area driving forward and return to the street driving forward. The site must allow for complete vehicle turn around.

Backing onto the following streets or street segments is prohibited:

4 <sup>th</sup> St. (Pico to Wilshire)	California (Ocean Ave. to Lincoln)	Ocean Avenue
7 <sup>th</sup> St. (Olympic to n. city limit)	Centinela (s. city limit to Wilshire)	Ocean Park Boulevard
11 <sup>th</sup> St. (Marine to Montana)	Cloverfield (Ocean Park to Santa Monica)	Olympic
14 <sup>th</sup> St. (Pico to Montana)	Colorado	Pacific Coast Highway
17 <sup>th</sup> St. (Pico to Montana)	Lincoln (s. city limit to Montana)	(Palisades Beach Road)
20 <sup>th</sup> St. (Ocean Park to Montana)	Main Street (s. city limit to Colorado)	Pico
23 <sup>rd</sup> St. (s. city limit to Wilshire)	Marine (Neilson Way to 4th, Lincoln to 11th)	San Vicente
26 <sup>th</sup> St. (Cloverfield to n. city limit)	Michigan (East of 26th)	Santa Monica
Arizona Av. (Ocean Ave. to 26th St.)	Montana	Stewart
Broadway	Neilson Way	Wilshire

Any street onto which commercial or industrial property fronts.

A 16-foot wide garage door should be **centered on the garage**. The door can be slightly offset (up to six inches) but for anything more the applicant should illustrate the proposed turning movement and demonstrate that a two-car, full-sized garage can be accessed safely and conveniently. If the garage is wider than the minimum 20 feet, then the offset can be greater (in direct proportion to the extra width, etc.).

**Storage** areas may be located above the parking space provided that they do not encroach into the length of a parking space by more than 3 feet 6 inches and provided that the storage area is at least 4 feet 6 inches above the floor.

All **non-required parking** must be in the rear half of the lot and should be 18 feet in length by 8 feet 6 inches in width. If the space is next to a wall (or other obstruction, e.g., a fence or hedges) another 1 foot and a ½ width needs to be added for each wall.

A **parallel parking stall** at an alley must be 10 feet from the centerline of the alley and 10 feet wide (11' 6" wide if next to a wall).

**Security Gates** positioned to cause vehicles to stop and wait over public sidewalks or to block alleys or streets will not be allowed.

**Access to parking lots and structures in all districts**

Pursuant to the SMMC Section 9.04.10.08.060 (d): "The design, location or position of any parking layout, entry, driveway, approach or accessway from any street or alley shall be approved by the Parking and Traffic Engineer."

In considering whether to approve the location of the driveway, staff considers safety, functionality and consistency with the General Plan Land Use and Circulation Elements.

Policy T25.2 of the LUCE states: “Require that parking be accessed only from alleys, where alley access is available.”

The reason for preference of alley access over street access is that it minimizes inevitable conflicts between pedestrians and project auto traffic, and generally provides improved opportunities for on-street parking and parkway landscaping.

All properties are entitled to access from the public right of way. The City of Santa Monica encourages this access from the alley because the alley is a low-speed right-of-way, and access from the alley does not require vehicles to cross a defined pedestrian walkway (i.e. sidewalk) each time they enter and leave the parking area. Use of the shared alley rather than individual site driveways, channels the property access conflicts from a whole block into specific, predictable locations, specifically intersections of the alleys with the street and sidewalk. In this way alley access is superior to individual driveways at the street for the safety and convenience of pedestrians.

**Allowable maneuvers.** Use of a required parking space shall not require more than two maneuvers. The first maneuver is counted when the vehicle has entered the parking area, come to a stop, and changes direction.

**Setbacks from the alley.** The city requires a 15 foot setback from the centerline of the alley for all perpendicular parking that is accessed from the alley, unless otherwise provided for in the zoning ordinance (see, for example, 9.04.10.02.100(b) *One-story accessory buildings*).

#### **9.04.10.08.080 Parking access in multi-family residential districts**

The following parking access requirements apply in multi-family residential districts:

(a) **No curb cuts** for purposes of providing street access to on-site parking spaces shall be permitted **except** where a project site meets at least one of the following conditions:

(1) The site has no adjacent side or rear alley having a minimum right-of-way of fifteen feet.

(2) The topography or configuration of this site or placement of buildings on the site precludes reasonable alley access to a sufficient number of parking spaces to the extent that use of the property is restricted beyond otherwise applicable Property Development Standards, as determined by the Zoning Administrator and Transportation Planning Manager or the Planning Commission or City Council, depending upon which body is charged with making the determination;

(3) The average slope of the parcel is at least five percent;

(4) The Zoning Administrator and the City Transportation Planning Manager determine that a curb cut is appropriate due to traffic, circulation or safety concerns.

(b) **If curb cuts** are required, curb cut widths shall be **kept to the minimum width** required. (See Section 7.04.180)

(c) On lots with adequate alley access, projects with new buildings or substantial remodels shall be required to replace any existing curb cuts or driveway aprons with a new full height curb. (See Sections 7.24.050 and 7.24.060)

#### **9.04.10.08.100 Driveways**

In multi-family residential districts driveways shall conform to the following:

Single driveway      10-foot minimum, with 12-foot minimum apron

In all districts, the Zoning Administrator and the Transportation Planning Manager may reduce the driveway width as necessary and appropriate such that circulation, traffic and safety concerns are adequately addressed. This is done during the Plan Check process.

Driveways and ramps shall be maintained free and clear of all obstructions.

#### **9.04.10.08.110 Surfacing**

All driveways and parking areas shall be surfaced with a minimum thickness of two inches of asphaltic concrete over a minimum thickness of four inches of a base material or alternative permeable material approved by Neal Shapiro in the Environmental Programs Division at 310.458.2213 ext. 8223. Alternative permeable paving may not be used for the driveway if the driveway serves as the required pedestrian access to the residence.

#### **9.04.10.08.170 Slope**

A driveway with a **1% to 5% slope** running down towards the property line needs to be noted on the drawings. A profile for a driveway exceeding 5% needs to be shown on the drawings and shall not exceed 20%. A driveway will be permitted provided the slope fits within specific parameters, illustrations of which are available separately.

#### **9.04.10.08.190 Location of required parking spaces**

Parking requirements may not be met by providing parking in the front one-half of a parcel in a residential district except:

- (1) In a garage. If the garage faces the front lot line, the garage doors shall not be more than eighteen feet wide for each seventy-five feet or fraction thereof of lot width. A door to a single space shall not be less than eight feet or more than nine feet wide, and a door to two spaces shall be sixteen feet wide. Not more than one double garage may be entered from the side street of a corner or a reversed corner lot in compliance with Section 9.04.10.08.070(c). Any garage on the front one-half of a lot or on the side street side of a corner or a reversed corner lot

shall be fully enclosed within the architecture and structure of the main building except for entrances;

- (2) In multi-family residential districts, where the parcel has no alley, provided that no part of a required front yard shall be used for parking purposes.

**7.04.180 Driveways from public streets onto private property and  
7.04.200 Variances from provisions of Section 7.04.180**

(Please see *Section 9.04.10.08.180, Parking access in multi-family residential districts* to determine if Section 7.04.180 is applicable. This section is most likely **not applicable** if access is from the alley.)

The Transportation Planning Manager shall **not approve** a driveway for a single family residence on a **lot zoned for multiple residential use** under the provisions of Chapter 9.04, Article 9 of the Zoning Code, which **would exceed in total width 28% of the width of said lot**, said 28% to be measured between the bottoms of the vertical tapers in the curb, except that on any lot with street frontage less than 50 feet a single driveway not to exceed 14 feet in width shall be permitted. Concrete wings, equal in width to the length of the vertical taper in the curb, may be constructed extending from the curb to the sidewalk. Said wings also may extend from the back edge of the sidewalk to the street property line. The total width of concrete wings and driveway at the point where the driveway crosses the property line shall be the same as the width of concrete wings and driveway at the curb. **The minimum width of the driveway shall be 12 feet.** (In keeping with the General Plan's emphasis on public safety, urban design, and keeping on-street parking, driveway width should be kept to a minimum for easier approval.) The length of the vertical taper in the curb shall vary with the curb height at the driveway location and shall conform to the dimensions shown in the table below. (For an illustration of the driveway apron, please see Civil Engineering Drawing 4008.)

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Sections 7.04.180 of the Zoning Code, the Transportation Planning Manager may, with discretion, grant variances from this Section under the following circumstances.

- (a) Where street widening adversely affect existing driveways on private property;
- (b) Where existing driveway approaches are being reconstructed or remodeled to join existing driveways on private property less than the required minimum and width;
- (c) Where a lot is of such size that the above requirements cannot be complied with; or
- (d) Where the variance requested arises from unusual or extraordinary physical conditions which do not apply generally to other lots, the granting of the variance requested will not be contrary to the public safety, convenience and general welfare, the granting of the variance requested will not adversely affect the rights

of adjacent property owners or tenants, and the granting of the variance requested is necessary to do substantial justice and to avoid unnecessary hardship or results inconsistent with the general purposes of said Sections.

A variance request may be made at any time during the application process, though the earlier in the planning process the better. A variance request made with the Plan Check application will be reviewed concurrently with the overall project and its denial may require a complete project revision.

**7.24.050 Removal of abandoned driveway apron and  
7.24.060 Notice to repair**

When there is constructed, erected or maintained any building or any fence, post or other barrier or structure on any property in such a manner as to preclude the use of any driveway, access to which driveway is by means of a driveway apron, to such an extent that such driveway cannot be used for the parking thereon of at least one standard-sized passenger automobile and said driveway apron does not provide vehicular access to said premises or any structure located thereon, said driveway apron shall be presumed to be abandoned.

When any driveway apron is presumed to be abandoned pursuant to the provisions of the 7.24.050 the owner or person in possession of the property fronting upon or abutting said driveway apron shall remove said driveway apron and restore or install curbing, parkway, and sidewalk adjoining such abandoned driveway apron.

During plan check, show all existing driveway aprons and whether they are to remain or be abandoned and repaired. Add the following note:

***“Existing driveway aprons will be abandoned and repaired pursuant to Santa Monica Municipal Code Sections 7.24.050 and Sections 7.24.060.”***