



Strategic and Transportation Planning
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***Development Standards
for Small Multi-Family
Residences in a
Multi-Family Zone.***

Introduction

These standards are for those planning a small multi-family residential project, defined here as a project with less than 21 required parking spaces. This often means a development of less than 10 units of market rate housing. There are minor differences between a small project with condominiums and apartments, as noted throughout this handout. The standards are also essentially the same for affordable housing, although the number of living units may be greater due to a reduced number of required parking spaces per unit.

These standards are drawn principally from two sections of the Santa Monica Municipal Code -- 1) Article 9, the Zoning Ordinance, and 2) Article 7, Public Works; also, the City's General Plan Land Use and Circulation Element, and professional engineering, planning, and architectural policies and practices serve as the basis for some guidelines or requirements.

Please feel free to raise any questions you may have with a Transportation Planner at the public counter or during a scheduled meeting. The public counter has limited hours, so please call ahead to verify the schedule. The Transportation Management Division's main telephone number is (310) 458-8291.

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.

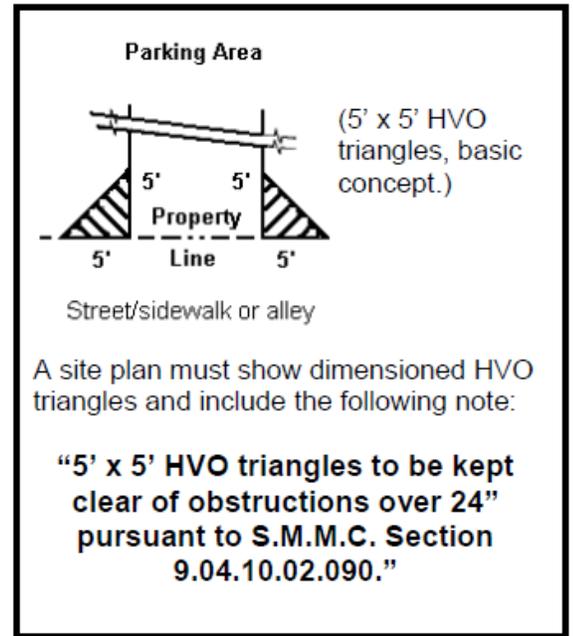
9.04.18.020 Legal, non-conforming buildings

A **non-conforming** multi-family residential building may be added to or enlarged if additional parking is provided for each new "bedroom". See Section 9.04.10.08.030(j) for a comprehensive definition; in short, a room that is 100 square feet or larger may be considered a bedroom. However, a unit with 2 or more bedrooms and 2 parking spaces may add additional bedrooms without requiring additional parking spaces.

9.04.10.02.090 Hazardous visual obstructions (HVOs)

These 5' by 5' triangular areas free of visual obstructions over 24 inches in height 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 the corner of a building or property, where it meets a street or sidewalk, driveway intersections and along parking spaces that back up directly into the public right-of-way.

(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. The applicant is responsible for trimming back or removing non-permanent fixtures/landscaping in the HVO on his/her

property. In certain cases of minor additions or insubstantial remodels, TMD will approve projects that have non-conforming obstructions identified on the plans. For all new projects or *substantial remodels*, TMD will not give its approval until the project is designed in accordance with the HVO Ordinance.

9.04.10.08.040 Number of parking spaces required

	<i>Condominium</i>	<i>Apartment</i>
<i>Studio, no bedrooms</i>	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
<i>1 bedroom</i>	2 spaces per unit	1.5 spaces per unit
<i>2 or more bedrooms</i>	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit
<i>Visitor Spaces*</i>	1 per 5 units	1 per 5 units

*Applies to projects of 5 units or more. This requirement is always rounded down (i.e. 4 units = 0 visitor spaces, 9 units = 1 visitor space, etc). Only visitor spaces may be compact, and the percent of compact spaces shall not exceed 40% of total visitor spaces.

A parking space for a condominium must be covered; for an apartment, there is no requirement that the space be covered. See more below, under Design Standards.

Low-income housing: Please see the Municipal Code for information on deed restricted low-income parking requirements. Please also see SMMC 9.56 for more information about the City’s affordable housing requirements.

Small multi-family residential projects are not big enough to require large numbers of guest spaces that may be compact; therefore, only **non-required** parking (40% maximum) may be **compact**.

Interim Ordinance 2252: This ordinance modifies the City’s density bonus and affordable housing incentives in accordance with California state density bonus law. Applicants who provide additional affordable units may be able to take advantage of these density bonuses and concessions, one of which is the ability to provide fewer parking spaces or spaces in tandem. Please contact the City Planning Division for more information.

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.

Required parking spaces for condominiums have to be covered in a carport or a garage; for apartments, parking spaces can be uncovered. A **carport** is a permanently roofed structure providing space for parking and enclosed on no more than three sides. Garages are typically subterranean (or semi-subterranean) for new construction projects, depending on the size. A standard two-car **private garage**, when on a multi-

family lot, must have a minimum unobstructed inside dimension of 18 feet in length by 20 feet in width by 7 feet in height; a garage door, typically a minimum 16 feet wide, should be **centered on the garage**. The door can be slightly offset (up to six inches); for a greater offset on a standard sized garage, the applicant should use 22 foot turning radii to illustrate the proposed vehicle maneuvering 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).

The applicant should be aware that staff has no choice but to deny approval for a project that does not meet these standards and should design his or her project accordingly.

Parking space dimensions:

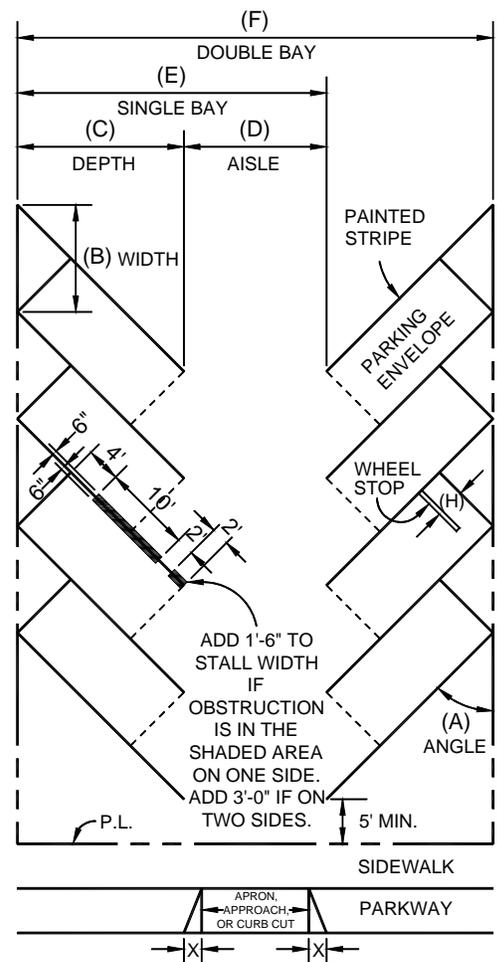
<i>Type of space</i>	<i>(Width x Length x Height)</i>
Standard:	8'6" x 18' x 7'
Compact (visitor only, 40% max)	7'6" x 15' x 7'
Accessible (may be required)	14' (9'+5') x 18' x 8'2"
Accessible Van (may be required)	17' (9'+8') x 18' x 8'2"
Parallel Parking	8'6" x 26' x 7' (single or end stalls)
	8'6" x 22' x 7' (in-between stalls)
Wall Stall:	Add 1'6" for each wall
Corner or End Stall:	Add 3 feet

Wall-mounted storage cannot encroach more than 3'6" into the length and must be a minimum 4'6" off the ground. *Includes shelves, racks & cabinets only; no permanent installations are permitted in this area.* SMMC 9.04.10.08.060

A **column** ≤ 12" wide placed entirely within the non-shaded area (see diagram to right) is permitted without requiring any stall widening.

All parking must be located outside the front yard setback (unless underground) and take alley access **if the parcel has an alley** that is at least 15' wide. SMMC 9.04.10.08.080

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



Aisle Widths and Angled Parking Design Dimensions

(A) PARKING ANGLE	(B) WIDTH		(C) DEPTH		(D) AISLE		(E) SINGLE BAY		(F) DOUBLE BAY	
	Compact/Standard	Compact/Standard	Compact/Standard	Compact/Standard						
90	7'-6"	8'-6"	15'-0"	18'-0"	20'-0"	22'-0"	35'-0"	40'-0"	50'-0"	58'-0"
85	7'-7"	8'-6"	15'-7"	18'-8"	19'-0"	21'-0"	34'-7"	39'-8"	50'-2"	58'-4"
80	7'-8"	8'-7"	16'-1"	19'-2"	18'-0"	20'-0"	34'-1"	39'-2"	50'-2"	58'-4"
75	7'-9"	8'-10"	16'-5"	19'-7"	17'-0"	19'-0"	33'-5"	38'-7"	49'-10"	58'-2"
70	8'-0"	9'-0"	16'-9"	19'-10"	16'-0"	18'-0"	32'-9"	37'-10"	49'-6"	57'-8"
65	8'-4"	9'-4"	16'-10"	19'-11"	15'-0"	17'-0"	31'-10"	36'-11"	48'-8"	56'-10"
60	8'-8"	9'-10"	16'-9"	19'-10"	14'-0"	16'-0"	30'-9"	35'-10"	47'-6"	55'-8"
55	9'-1"	10'-4"	16'-7"	19'-7"	13'-0"	15'-0"	29'-7"	34'-7"	46'-2"	54'-2"
50	9'-10"	11'-1"	16'-4"	19'-2"	12'-0"	14'-0"	28'-4"	33'-2"	44'-8"	52'-4"
45	10'-7"	12'-0"	15'-11"	18'-8"	11'-0"	13'-0"	26'-11"	31'-8"	42'-10"	50'-4"
40	11'-8"	13'-2"	15'-5"	18'-0"	10'-0"	12'-0"	25'-5"	30'-0"	40'-10"	48'-0"
35	13'-1"	14'-10"	14'-8"	17'-2"	10'-0"	11'-0"	24'-8"	28'-2"	39'-4"	45'-4"
30	15'-3"	17'-0"	14'-0"	16'-2"	10'-0"	10'-0"	24'-0"	26'-2"	38'-0"	42'-4"

California State Bill 1025 (Effective July 1, 2005)

Many small multi-family projects do require accessible parking spaces. For information regarding these requirements, please contact the Building and Safety Division at 310/458-8355.

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

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*). Walls adjacent to a subterranean ramp must also have a 15' setback.

9.04.10.08.070 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.

Prohibited to Back-onto Streets. Typically, access is from the alley; however, 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. Complete on-site turn-around uses a minimum **outside turning radius** of 22 feet; 25 feet is preferred.

Backing onto the following streets or street segments is prohibited:

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

9.04.10.08.190 Location of required parking spaces

Required off-street parking shall be located on the parcel or building site. 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. **However**, no vehicle shall be parked or left standing on the front one-half of any lot in a residential district except on an approved driveway, and a driveway will only be approved if it leads to parking in outside the front yard setback, or to a garage as described above. (See SMMC Section 3.12.1050 Prohibition of Vehicular Parking on Front Lawns.)

Allowable maneuvers. Per SMMC Section 9.04.10.08.070, use of a required parking space (either entering or exiting) shall not require more than two vehicle maneuvers. To comply with this requirement, some parking spaces may require additional width and/or

aisle space. When entering, the first maneuver is counted once the vehicle comes to a stop and changes direction. Notwithstanding the above, for all uses with 20 or more parking spaces, up to 5% of the total number of parking spaces, with a maximum of 10 spaces, may require four turning maneuvers. Such spaces shall be distributed around the parking area(s) on the parcel.

Exits from any subterranean or semi-subterranean parking structure shall provide **sight distance** which complies with 1) the Hazardous Visual Obstruction Ordinance (See Section 9.04.10.02.090) 2) City approved slope requirements (see Section 9.04.10.08.170, below), 3) driveway width requirements (See Section 9.04.10.08.100, below), and 4) other design standards applicable to the safe use of driveways. For example curved driveways or subterranean ramps less than 20 feet in width will not be allowed unless motorists at each end can see each other. Notification and signal systems are not a substitute for geometric design requirements.

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**. (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 (and ramps)

For a small multi-family development, a **driveway** shall be a minimum 10 feet wide. A driveway that leads to a parking area with more than 20 spaces should be 20 feet wide; however, the Zoning Administrator and the Transportation Planning Manager may reduce this width as necessary and appropriate such that circulation, traffic and safety concerns are adequately addressed.

If it leads directly from an alley or street to a subterranean parking area (without passing through a parking level, or parking area), it is a **driveway, not a ramp**. A **ramp** leads from one parking area level to another, and must be 14 feet wide at a minimum (20 feet wide if it leads to a parking area with more than 20 parking spaces). Unlike a driveway,

the Transportation Planning Manager or the Zoning Administrator cannot reduce the required width of a ramp. Instead, the applicant has to request a variance.

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 the City's Urban Runoff Management Coordinator at 310.458.8223. Alternative permeable paving may not be used for the driveway if the driveway serves as the required pedestrian access to the residence, and may not be appropriate for larger high-volume projects.

9.04.10.08.120 Marking of Parking Spaces

All parking spaces, except in a garage or carport containing two or fewer parking spaces shall be striped in a manner clearly showing the layout of the intended parking stalls. The striping shall be maintained in a clear and visible manner. Guest (and any compact or handicap spaces) must be marked as such.

9.04.10.08.130 Wheel Stops

Wheel stops, or continuous curbing at least six inches in height shall be required for parking spaces abutting landscaped areas or walls. Unless otherwise stated by the applicant, for head-in parking, these should be arranged to accommodate the front-overhang, which is 2 – 3 feet for the typical car. If a wheel-stop is shared between two cars, it must be a minimum of six feet long.

9.04.10.08.150 Landscaping

Landscaping shall comply with the provisions of Part 9.04.10.04, which includes a requirement that fifty percent of the required front and side yard setback shall be landscaped, except that for parcels less than fifty feet in width, fifty percent of one side yard shall be landscaped. Landscaping requirements sometimes constrain parking design options, especially in subterranean parking. (An applicant should confer with the City Planning Division and read the full text of the landscaping provisions of Zoning Ordinance for more information.)

9.04.10.08.170 Slope

Areas used for parking, excluding inter-connecting ramps, shall be designed and improved with grades not to exceed six and two-thirds percent (6-2/3%) slope.

Slopes of all driveways and ramps used for ingress or egress shall be designed to fit within the following established standards:

(See additional handout for further information and diagram.)

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 or driveways for a multi-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** and the maximum width shall be 35 feet. 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.”