

## **RESOLUTION NO. 2023-52**

### **A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREMONT IMPLEMENTING PROGRAM 17 OF THE 2023-2031 HOUSING ELEMENT TO CLARIFY THE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS FOR THE CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES, GLENMOOR GARDENS DESIGN GUIDELINES, MISSION RANCH DESIGN GUIDELINES, MISSION SAN JOSE DESIGN GUIDELINES, MULTIFAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES, NILES DESIGN GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS, AND SMALL-LOT SINGLE-FAMILY DESIGN GUIDELINES (PLN2023-00213)**

WHEREAS, the California Legislature has found that “California has a housing supply and affordability crisis of historic proportions. The consequences of failing to effectively and aggressively confront this crisis are hurting millions of Californians, robbing future generations of the chance to call California home, stifling economic opportunities for workers and businesses, worsening poverty and homelessness, and undermining the state’s environmental and climate objectives” (Government Code §65589.5.); and

WHEREAS, the California Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB 330) and adopted the “Housing Crisis Act of 2019” (HCA) which states that “In 2018, California ranked 49<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 states in housing units per capita... California needs an estimated 180,000 additional homes annually to keep up with population growth, and the Governor has called for 3.5 million new homes to be built over 7 years;” and

WHEREAS, the California Legislature passed the HCA to address the current “housing crisis” in the State with the aim of increasing residential unit development, protecting existing housing inventory, and expediting permit processing; and

WHEREAS, State Housing Element Law (Government Code §65580 et seq.) requires the City to adopt a Housing Element for the eight-year period 2023-2031 to accommodate the City’s regional housing need allocation (RHNA) of 12,897 housing units, comprised of 3,640 very-low income units, 2,096 low-income units, 1,996 moderate-income units, and 5,165 above moderate-income units; and

WHEREAS, on December 22, 2022, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and recommended that the City Council adopt a General Plan Amendment to update the Housing Element; and

WHEREAS, on January 10, 2023, the City Council conducted a public hearing, reviewed the 2023-2031 Housing Element and all pertinent maps, documents and exhibits, including the findings and recommended changes made by HCD, the City’s response to HCD’s findings, public comments, and the Planning Commission’s recommendation, and adopted the Hosing Element after determining it to be consistent with State law and the City’s General Plan; and

WHEREAS, on March 22, 2023, HCD certified the City’s 2023 2031 Housing Element, making Fremont the sixth city in Alameda County to receive State certification; and

WHEREAS, State law requires that the City review its Housing Element as frequently as appropriate to evaluate the progress of the City in implementation of its Housing Element (Government Code §65588); and

WHEREAS, Program 17 of the City's 2023-2031 Housing Element requires the City to clarify the Objective Design Standards for the City's existing design guidelines to provide a predictable basis to review housing projects; and

WHEREAS, such Objective Design Standards will be applicable to housing development projects, as defined by the Housing Accountability Act, and as mandatory standards for all qualifying projects; and

WHEREAS, the Objective Design Standards primarily comprise design rules and design guidelines currently contained in adopted City documents; and

WHEREAS, as an alternative, any applicant of a housing development project seeking exceptions to the Objective Design Standards may proceed with the City's existing discretionary design review process; and

WHEREAS, on October 26, 2023, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing, during which all interested persons were heard, and recommended that the City Council adopt the proposed Objective Design Standards for the Citywide Design Guidelines, Glenmoor Gardens Design Guidelines, Mission Ranch Design Guidelines, Mission San Jose Design Guidelines, Multifamily Design Guidelines, Niles Design Guidelines and Regulations, and Small-Lot Single-Family Design Guidelines; and

WHEREAS, a Staff Report, recommending approval of the proposed Objective Design Standards, was submitted to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, on November 14, 2023, the City Council held a duly noticed public hearing, at which time all interested parties had the opportunity to be heard; and

WHEREAS, proper notice of said hearing was given in all respects as required by law; and

WHEREAS, the City Council heard and considered all said reports, recommendations, and testimony herein above set forth and used its independent judgment to evaluate the project.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FREMONT  
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. CEQA. The City Council finds that the proposed amendments, making miscellaneous, minor administrative, clarifying, and technical revisions to the Citywide Design Guidelines, Glenmoor Gardens Design Guidelines, Mission Ranch Design Guidelines, Mission San Jose Design Guidelines, Multifamily Design Guidelines, Niles Design Guidelines and Regulations, and Small-Lot Single-Family Design Guidelines are exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to, without limitation, each on a separate and independent basis, CEQA Guidelines: §15061(b)(3) in that it can be seen with

certainty that there is no possibility that this action may have a significant impact on the environment.

- (1) §15061(b)(3) [Review for Exemption] in that it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that there is no possibility that this action may have a significant impact on the environment.
- (2) §15183 [Projects Consistent with a Community Plan, General Plan, or Zoning] in that the proposed text amendments are consistent with the development densities and policies in Fremont’s General Plan, for which an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) [SCH #2010082060] was previously prepared and certified, and none of the circumstances necessitating further environmental review are present.

SECTION 2. Objective Design Standards. The City Council adopts this resolution adopting the Objective Design Standards attached as Exhibit “A” and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

SECTION 3. Clarifications and Revisions. The City Council hereby delegates responsibility to the Community Development Director, or their designee, to make miscellaneous, minor administrative, clarifying, technical, or other changes, as necessary, to facilitate implementation of the adopted Objective Design Standards or maintain compliance with State law.

SECTION 4. Effective Date. The effective date of this resolution shall be November 14, 2023.

ADOPTED November 14, 2023, by the City Council of the City of Fremont by the following vote:

AYES: Mayor Mei, Councilmembers Keng, Campbell, Kassan, and Salwan

NOES: None

ABSENT: Vice Mayor Cox and Councilmember Shao

ABSTAIN: None

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor 

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk 

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney 

# Objective Design Standards

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The City has developed the herein “Objective Design Standards” (ODS) from the City’s *existing* design guidelines<sup>1</sup> in response to Program 17 of the City’s 2023-2031 Housing Element. Program 17 requires the City to clarify its existing design guidelines to provide a predictable basis to review housing projects. To satisfy this objective, miscellaneous, minor, administrative, clarifying, and technical revisions are made to the City’s adopted design guidelines to produce the ODS with the intent to facilitate implementation of the City’s *existing* “design rules” and design guidelines. Furthermore, the ODS are provided as a checklist to help reduce delays and uncertainty for property owners and developers by emphasizing the required standards. Therefore, the purpose of the ODS is to comply with State housing law while honoring the City’s *existing* regulations. The ODS are mandatory standards that must be satisfied by all residential development including the residential component of a mixed-use development.

Housing development project applicants who seek exceptions or deviations to the ODS may proceed with the City’s existing discretionary design review process, as provided in the Fremont Municipal Code. The ODS apply to residential development, unless certain residential projects (i.e., accessory dwelling units, two-unit developments, small-scale multifamily developments) are otherwise governed by State law or explicitly controlled by the Fremont Municipal Code. Non-residential development must continue to be subject to both the ODS and the City’s existing design guidelines and standards, as applicable.

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<sup>1</sup> Citywide Design Guidelines, Glenmoor Gardens Design Guidelines, Mission Ranch Design Guidelines, Mission San Jose Design Guidelines, Multifamily Design Guidelines, Niles Design Guidelines and Regulations, and Small-Lot Single-Family Design Guidelines

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## 1. Citywide Objective Design Standards

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
1. A minimum 1.5-foot-wide landscape strip is required along the property line adjacent to a driveway leading to a rear garage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Landscaping, consisting of trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and an automatic irrigation system, shall be provided in the front and exterior side yards on newly constructed or substantially reconstructed homes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Street trees are required on all residential lots per applicable City Standard Details.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## 2. Glenmoor Gardens Objective Design Standards

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			Comments
	N/A	No	Yes	
1. Include a raised brick foundation, or horizontal wood siding for a base, or board-and-batten for gable end walls.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Minimum lot area: 6,000 square feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Minimum lot width: 55 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Minimum lot depth: 100 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Minimum front-yard setback: 20 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Minimum side-yard setback: 5 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Minimum aggregate side-yard setback: 12 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Minimum street side-yard setback: 10 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Minimum rear-yard setback: 25 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Minimum street frontage: 35 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Roof pitch: 3:12 (minimum) to 5:12 (maximum).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
12. Maximum floor area, including garage: 40-percent of lot.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
13. Maximum building height, as measured to the top of the ridge: 17 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Maximum height above grade for finish floor level: 28 inches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### 3. Mission Ranch Objective Design Standards

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
1. Include a raised brick foundation, or horizontal wood siding for a base, or board-and-batten for gable end walls.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Minimum lot area: 8,000 square feet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Minimum lot width: 75 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Minimum lot depth: 100 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Minimum front-yard setback: 25 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Minimum side-yard setback for single-story elements: 7 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Minimum aggregate side-yard setback for single-story elements: 16 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Minimum side-yard setback for second-story elements: 8 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Minimum aggregate side-yard setback for second-story elements: 20 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Minimum street side-yard setback: 12.5 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Minimum rear-yard setback for single-story elements: 25 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
12. Minimum rear-yard setback for two-story elements: 30 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
13. Minimum street frontage: 35 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Roof pitch: 3:12 (minimum) to 5:12 (maximum).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
15. Maximum floor area, including garage, for a one-story residence: 40-percent of lot.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16. Maximum floor area, including garage, for a two-story residence: 30-percent of lot.  A two-story residence is only allowable if the first-floor lot coverage reaches 22 percent but does not exceed 30 percent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17. Maximum building height, as measured to the top of the ridge, for a one-story residence: 17 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
18. Maximum building height, as measured to the top of the ridge, for a two-story residence: 27 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
19. Maximum height above grade for finish floor level, first story over basement: 28 inches.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#### 4. Mission San Jose Objective Design Standards: Residential Properties – Neighborhood Conservation Area

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
1. Maximum building height, as measured to the top of the ridge: 25 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Maximum number of stories: 2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Maximum lot coverage: 2,500 square feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Minimum lot width: 50 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Minimum lot depth: 150 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Minimum front-yard setback: 20 feet.*  <i>* Parking or storage of motor vehicles within the front-yard setback is prohibited.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Minimum side-yard setback: 5 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Minimum rear-yard setback for residential structures: 15 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Minimum rear-yard setback for parking structures: 3 feet.*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
<p><i>* If a residential structure on an adjoining property already exists within 15 feet of that property's rear property line, then the required minimum rear-yard setback for a parking structure shall be 15 feet.</i></p>				
<p>10. Mid-parcel outdoor areas: 1,000 square feet.*</p> <p><i>* This standard is required when a parcel accommodates more than one detached residential unit.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>11. Parking: 2 enclosed spaces per dwelling unit.*</p> <p><i>* Tandem parking within structures or enclosed parking areas is permitted to satisfy this requirement.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## 5. Multifamily Objective Design Standards

The Multifamily Objective Design Standards shall not apply to mixed-use developments and projects within the City’s Downtown District, the City Center District, and the Warm Springs Innovation District.

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
1. Any temporary street stubs intended for future through circulation shall be marked with street signage at the street terminus to reinforce and alert residents of eventual through connection.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Accent elements, made up of trellises, arches, arbors, columns, or low monument features, shall be used to demarcate entrances to the development and common open space areas.  <i>See Multifamily Design Guidelines Section 2, page 20 for an illustration of this concept.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. When buildings are adjacent to a public street, building entrances shall be oriented to face the public street, unless such orientation is obstructed by a required sound wall or a noise mitigation barrier.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. For sites greater than two acres, the majority of required common open space (greater than 50%) shall be consolidated into a primary central open space area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Stormwater treatment facilities shall not be located in areas counted towards minimum common open space requirements, unless such facilities can be designed to accommodate usable open space.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Windows shall be oriented to face onto common open space and play areas to provide informal surveillance and safety. To meet this requirement, at least two	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
windows, no smaller than 24 inches in height by 20 inches in width, shall be provided per building adjoining the common open space areas on the building frontage facing common open space.				
7. Private streets that run along perimeter property lines shall include a minimum six-foot-wide planter to provide landscape feature as well as vegetative separation between developments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Upper stories shall not project beyond the ground floor footprint, except for bays no wider than 50-percent of the primary facade. Bays shall be set within the main facade, not flush with side facades. See Section 2, page 29 for an illustration of this concept.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. The massing of upper stories, particularly those over a garage, shall be modulated by stepping back massing elements a minimum of two feet from the ground floor setback, and/or through the use of projecting bays. See Section 2, page 14 for an illustration of this concept.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Side yards or separation between buildings shall be a minimum of 10 feet wide when the upper story steps back 15 feet or more, and 15 feet wide when second story does not step back.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. For every 100 feet of building length, there shall be a plane-break along the facade comprised of an offset of at least five feet in depth by 25 feet in length. The offset shall extend from grade to the highest story.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Garage entries, loading and service entries, utility rooms, stairs, elevators, and other similar inactive elements shall occupy no more than 20% of the width of a public street facing building façade.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
13. Horizontal eaves longer than 40 feet shall be broken up by gables, building projections, or other articulation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Pedestrian-scaled lighting, less than 16 feet in height, shall be used to illuminate areas used for pedestrian circulation. See Section 2, page 34 for an illustration of this concept.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
15. All illumination shall be controlled with cutoffs that primarily direct light downward.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



## 6. Niles Objective Design Standards

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
<p>1. Second stories of new corner buildings with a frontage on Niles Boulevard shall not extend over a public sidewalk more than three feet, subject to issuance of an encroachment permit. The projection along the face of the building from the property line corner shall not exceed 15 feet in either direction (see 6.2 Corner Building Styles of the Niles Design Guidelines). The vertical clearance of the encroachment shall be a minimum of eight feet, plus one additional foot of vertical clearance for each foot of projection (see Figure 8 of the Niles Design Guidelines).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>2. Awnings shall not extend over the public sidewalk more than five feet, and awnings shall maintain at least an eight-foot vertical clearance above the sidewalk.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>3. Commercial block/corner buildings:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">a. Appropriate materials and colors:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">(1) Building walls, windows, and doors</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">(A) Concrete and plaster (lightly troweled or sand finished).</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">(B) Stucco with deep reveals.</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">(C) New structural and face-brick.</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">(D) Concrete block and brick block (concealed side and rear elevations only).</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">(E) Terra cotta.</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">(F) Decorative ceramic tile, with integral color, used as an accent.</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">(G) Clear glass.</p> <p style="margin-left: 80px;">(H) Wood frame window systems.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(I) Aluminum windows and doors, if substantial.</li> <li>(2) Roofs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Concrete or clay tiles to be single color.</li> <li>(B) Dark-colored metal with standing seam.</li> <li>(C) Composition shingle.</li> </ul> </li> <li>(3) Fences, walls, and gates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Stucco walls.</li> <li>(B) Painted wood fences and gates.</li> <li>(C) Open wrought-iron style fence.</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Inappropriate materials and colors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Building walls, windows, and doors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Glass block.</li> <li>(B) Any rough-hewn or rustic material.</li> <li>(C) Wood siding or hardboard.</li> <li>(D) Synthetic stucco when used to create overly built-up elements, such as column capitals.</li> <li>(E) Baked enamel panels, tiles (except as accents), or other reflective materials.</li> <li>(F) “Narrow line” aluminum window and door systems.</li> <li>(G) Imitation stone.</li> <li>(H) Used brick.</li> <li>(I) Molded foam decorative elements.</li> </ul> </li> <li>(2) Roofs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Cedar shake.</li> <li>(B) Crushed stone.</li> <li>(C) Brightly colored reflective tile or standing seam metal.</li> <li>(D) Slate or slate substitutes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>(3) Fences, walls, and gates</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Concrete masonry units, unless covered with stucco.</li> <li>(B) Chain link.</li> <li>(C) Rough swan or natural wood.</li> </ul>				
<p>4. Mid-block and Victorian-derived styles:</p> <p>a. Appropriate materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Building walls, windows, and doors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Solid body-stained wood siding.</li> <li>(B) Painted horizontal wood shiplap.</li> <li>(C) Painted exterior “hardboard,” resembling shiplap.</li> <li>(D) Any of the original colors used on Victorian style buildings in the Niles, as confirmed by research or filed investigation.</li> <li>(E) Clear glass in doors and in true, divided light systems.</li> <li>(F) Wood frame windows and doors.</li> <li>(G) Cast iron.</li> <li>(H) Ceramic tile with integral color emulating building tiles in Niles.</li> <li>(I) Copper window frames, combined with bulkheads.</li> </ul> </li> <li>(2) Roofs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Composition shingle.</li> </ul> </li> <li>(3) Fences, walls, and gates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Wood picket.</li> <li>(B) Wrought iron, but not combined with only masonry.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>b. Inappropriate materials and color:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Building walls, windows, and doors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Glass block.</li> <li>(B) Cement plaster and synthetic stucco.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(C) Imitation stone.</li> <li>(D) Exterior plywood.</li> <li>(E) Aluminum windows and doors.</li> <li>(F) Baked enamel panels.</li> <li>(G) Brick or brick veneer.</li> </ul> <p>(2) Roofs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Cedar shake.</li> <li>(B) Crushed stone.</li> <li>(C) Brightly colored (e.g., orange, blue) reflective tile or standing seam metal</li> <li>(D) Slate or slate substitutes.</li> </ul> <p>(3) Fences, walls, and gates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(A) Stucco or synthetic stucco.</li> <li>(B) Chain link.</li> <li>(C) Rough sawn or natural wood.</li> <li>(D) Any fence that is not constructed of an open material (i.e., not more than 50-percent visually open), except such fencing is permissible for side and rear yards.</li> </ul>				

## 7. Small-Lot Single-Family Objective Design Standards

The following objective standards apply to lots less than 6,000 square feet in area to allow for development at the densities permitted by the General Plan. The City will rely on these objective standards, in addition to any other applicable objective development standards, to evaluate small-lot, single-family projects.

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
1. Minimum building separation*: a. A single-story residence adjacent to a single-story residence: 10 feet. b. A single-story residence adjacent to a two-story residence: 12 feet. c. A two-story residence adjacent to a two-story residence: 15 feet.  <i>* Zero-lot line configurations are preferred, making more useful side yard spaces.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Minimum front-yard setback: 10 feet.*  <i>* Porches may encroach a maximum of three feet into the minimum front-yard setback.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Minimum rear-yard setback: 15 feet. a. Minimum setback for ancillary buildings shall be sufficient for fire and safety. b. Garages along alleys shall provide a minimum setback/apron of 4 feet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Minimum street side-yard setback shall match the minimum front-yard setback for a lot with both conditions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Front yard parking aprons shall not be considered yard area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Objective Design Standard	Complies?			
	N/A	No	Yes	Comments
6. Street trees shall be provided no more than 25 feet on center along each side of the street.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. The minimum size of all street and yard trees shall be 24-inch box.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Front yards shall include a minimum of one, 24-inch box tree. Tree species shall be selected from the City's list of approved street trees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. The minimum dimension of the rear yard shall not be less than 15 feet by 20 feet. The minimum rear yard area shall not exceed a 10-percent slope.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



Development and Environmental Services Department  
39550 Liberty Street  
P.O. Box 5006  
Fremont, California 94537-5006

# NILES DESIGN GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS

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Niles Historic Overlay District  
City of Fremont, California



Adopted by the City Council on June 11, 2002 for use on an advisory basis.  
Amended by Council Resolution 2023-52 adopted November 14, 2023  
(see PLN2023-00213 2023 Code Update - Housing Element Implementation Citywide)

# NILES DESIGN GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS

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## Niles Historic Overlay District City of Fremont, California

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## **PURPOSE OF THE NILES DESIGN GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS**

The Niles Design Guidelines and Regulations are intended to assist in conservation and revitalization of commercial properties located in the Niles Historic Overlay District (see Figure 1, page 9) for an illustration of the areas to which the Guidelines apply). They provide a consistent framework for reviewing both modifications to existing structures and for infill buildings, consistent in scale and materials with the character of the Niles Historic Overlay district.

The guidelines and regulations are also intended to facilitate an expeditious project review process for applicants, by informing them at the earliest possible stage in project development of recommended or required design features. The City's administrative and review bodies will use these guidelines and regulations to evaluate the acceptability of a project. Projects that incorporate recommended or required design features will minimize delays, which oftentimes are caused by the need to redesign projects that do not meet the intent or requirements of the guidelines and regulations.

Adoption of the Design Guidelines and Regulations is not intended to create non-conforming properties or uses.

## **APPLICABILITY OF THESE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS**

These design guidelines and regulations apply to commercial properties within the core area of the Niles Historic Overlay District as shown on Figure 1. Future amendments to these guidelines are anticipated as part of the master planning processes for the former Union Pacific property as well as those properties along Mission Boulevard that may be converted to commercial use in the future.

In addition, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation apply to properties designated as Primary

Historic Resources on the General Plan. See the General Plan Atlas and General Plan Text (Appendix I) for locations and list of designated Primary Historic Resources, which include sites, buildings and landscape features. The Secretary's Standards allow for some flexibility in both interpretation of the language of the standards and their application. The Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation are included as Appendix 1.0 of this document. In addition, Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings are available from the National Parks Service and can be viewed at the Development Services Center permit counter.

This document contains both mandatory regulations and interpretive guidelines. Certain words, as defined below, are key to determining whether the directives are regulatory or discretionary:

- The words "shall" and "will" mean that the requirement is a mandatory regulation. The requirement can only be overridden by approval of a variance pursuant to Article 29 of the Zoning Ordinance, or by means of a written finding of the appropriate City administrative agency. Such finding must state that the proposed project design meets the intent of the Design Guidelines and Regulations; or that enforcement of the subject requirement would result in an economic hardship that clearly outweighs the benefit to be gained by application of the specific guideline or regulation; or that the proposed project design represents a superior means to achieve the objectives intended by the specific guideline or regulation. Such finding must be supported by substantial evidence in the record.
- The word "prohibited" means an action that is not allowed.
- The word "should" means an action that is required unless a determination can be made that the intent of the guideline is

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being satisfied by some other means or that the guideline can be set aside if the administrative body recognizes overriding considerations.

- Words such as “may” and “encourage” are advisory or suggestive in nature. Projects whose designs are clearly responsive to the guidelines and regulations are generally far more apt to secure discretionary approval from the City than those that are not.

Although this document includes both guidelines and regulations, it may be referred to as the “guidelines” throughout.

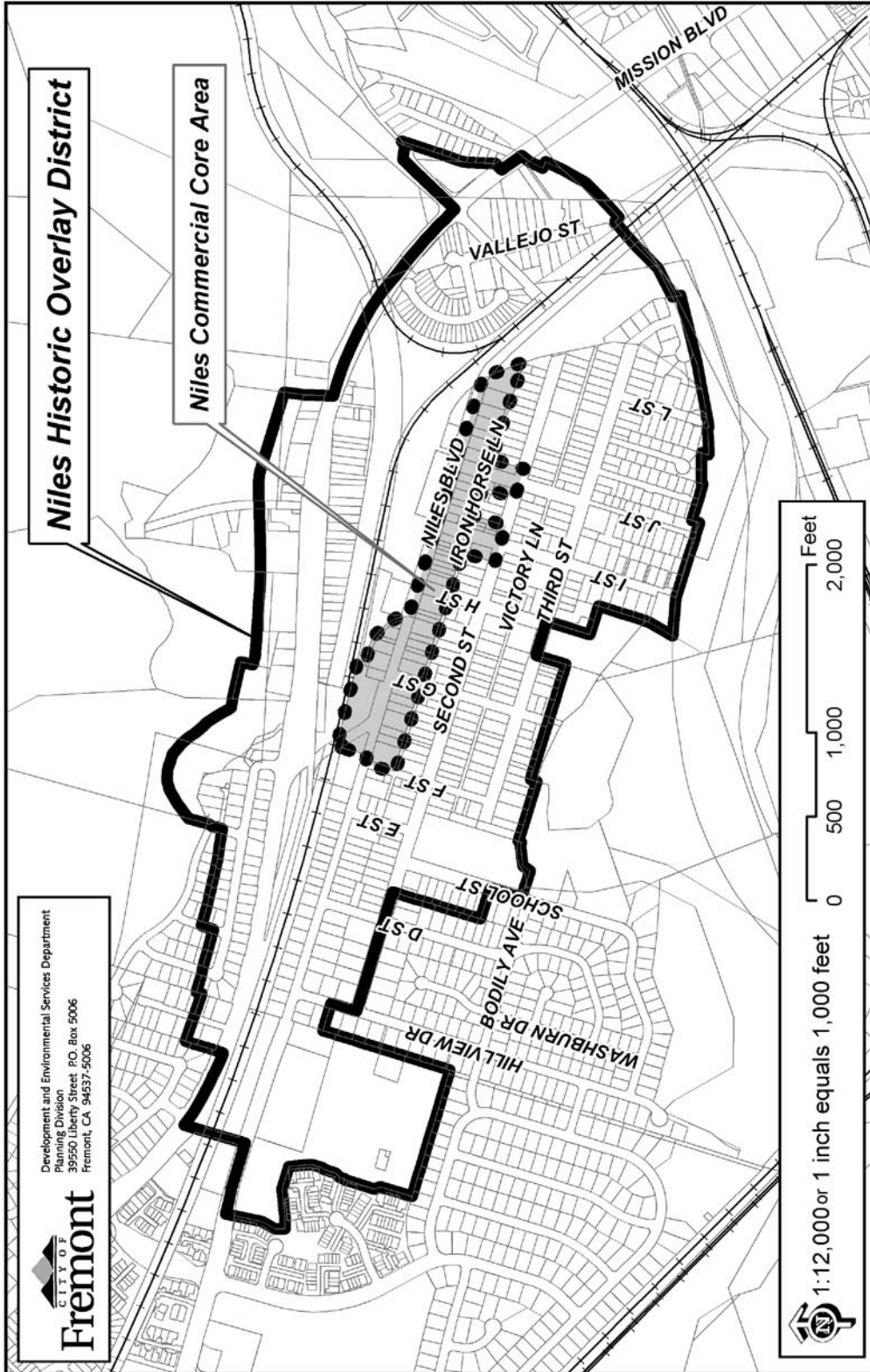


Figure 1. Niles Historic Overlay District and Commercial Core Area





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## RELATIONSHIP OF THESE GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS TO OTHER CITY REQUIREMENTS

These guidelines and regulations augment other ordinances, requirements and procedures of the City of Fremont. Should any inconsistencies arise as a result of these guidelines, it is the City's intent to amend the appropriate City ordinances to allow implementation of these Guidelines. Persons developing new projects or rehabilitating existing properties in the Niles Historic Overlay District should become familiar with the full scope of the City's regulatory mechanisms early in the application process.

The specific nature of a proposed project will determine the applicable requirements as provided in, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. City Zoning Ordinance

The City of Fremont Zoning Ordinance governs land use, and therefore includes standards and regulations for site development, parking and signs.

2. State Historical Building Code

In the case of qualifying historic resources, the State Historical Building Code provides alternative means for dealing with standard building code requirements, such as those governing seismic strengthening and fire safety and exiting. Significant cost savings can result from the use of the State Historical Building Code. A qualifying historic resource also is exempt from compliance with the State's energy conservation standards.

3. Unreinforced Masonry (URM) Ordinance

Unreinforced masonry structures located in the Niles Historic Overlay District are subject to the earthquake retrofit requirements

of the City's Unreinforced Masonry (URM) Ordinance, which provides certain standards, a timetable and incentives for compliance.

4. Access Requirements

Buildings in which commerce takes place must be made accessible to persons with disabilities, pursuant to requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The State Historical Building Code takes precedence over other State regulations governing accessibility.

5. Other

As additional regulations and requirements may be applicable to a proposed project, staff should be consulted early in the approval process to obtain all relevant materials.

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## **REVIEW PROCESS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THESE GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS**

The review process is facilitated by adequate preparation of submittal materials, including use of recommended drawing scales, sufficient detail and use of photographic images to show the relationship of the proposed project to the adjacent building characteristics. With the exception of single-family residential properties, all development projects in the Niles Historic Overlay District are subject to review by one or more of the following City bodies:

1. **Development Organization**  
The Development Organization is the City's site plan and architectural approval agency, and consists of staff from the City's Departments of Development and Environmental Services, Maintenance and Recreation Services, Fire and Police. With the exception of single-family residences in subdivisions or on existing lots, the Development Organization reviews all new development projects, including exterior modifications to existing commercial buildings.
2. **Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB)**  
HARB reviews exterior changes to designated Primary Historic Resources and exterior features of proposed new commercial projects and additions to existing commercial properties located within the City's two Historic Overlay Districts. When such projects are subject to review and action by the Planning Commission or City Council, HARB acts only in an advisory capacity. Some minor exterior alterations to properties in the Districts are reviewed by staff only.
3. **Planning Commission and/or City Council**  
Projects which require review and action by the Planning Commission and/or City Council, such as General Plan Amendments and Zoning Changes, Conditional Use Permits and Planned Districts, are assessed for conformance with the guidelines and regulations by staff prior to consideration by these bodies

The context for these guidelines and regulations is the community of Niles itself, its larger physical setting between the Niles hills and Alameda Creek, and its more immediate setting between the railroad alignments and the residential grid of the Niles neighborhood. The guidelines recognize that rehabilitation is the appropriate approach to retaining contributing historic structures in the Niles Historic Overlay District, and that infill development must be consistent with the existing texture, scale and character of Niles.

### HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

**Vallejo Mills** The town of Niles is located on the north side of Alameda Creek, the historic boundary between the 17,000 acre Rancho Arroyo de la Alameda and the ex-Mission San Jose lands. The rancho was raided by both Fremont and Sutter for horses and food supplies during the Mexican-American War. Don Jose Vallejo's flour mills at the mouth of Niles Canyon were active from 1842 to 1884, during which time the mill townsite was widely known as Vallejo Mills and was the area's social center.

**Agriculture** The rancho was held by Jonas Clark from 1865 to 1884, when it was divided and sold to become Dry Creek Ranch, the California Nursery and the railroad town of Niles. Prior to the sale the lands were leased for cattle ranching and mixed farming. Vegetable growing by Portuguese and Italians for the San Francisco market commenced in the 1870's near Niles, taking advantage of the new rail service and starting a gardening tradition that continues today. The floodplains south of Niles supported record wheat yields in the first years of American settlement and were the first location for orchards, nurseries and field crops in Alameda County.

**Orchards** The Niles area has an extraordinary heritage as a result of its historic nurseries. The Shinn orchards (1871), famous for its new fruit

varieties, bounded the west side of what is now the Niles Historic Overlay District. Acquired by a San Francisco firm in 1888, it opened a packing yard at the Niles Depot, making Niles their distribution station. In 1907 it was being operated by the Ellsworth family.

**California Nursery Company** The California Nursery was established in 1865 in Santa Clara but relocated in 1884 to the mile-square parcel east of the newly platted town of Niles. Advantages included excellent soil, artesian wells and its own rail-loading facility at what is now Nursery Avenue. By the early 20th century it was the largest nursery on the West coast, famous for its citrus, olives, roses and exotic introductions. It was acquired in 1917 by the Roeding family, owners of a major nursery operation in Fresno. In the 1930's they restored the Vallejo Adobe for visitors to the nursery and its famous spring flower event; in 1939 they supplied all the planting stock for the World's Fair at Treasure Island.

**Transcontinental Railroad** The railroad era began in 1866 when Central Pacific built a line connecting Oakland and San Jose. In 1868, McLoughlin built the Niles Canyon to Altamont Pass section of railroad. This alignment was acquired in 1869 by the Central Pacific Railroad as the last section of the first transcontinental railroad. Until a railroad ferry crossing was installed across the Sacramento River in the 1870's, this was the only railroad link to the east. The station was named "Niles" after Judge Addison C. Niles, one of the railroad's pioneer officials. A railroad town was planned at the junction but was not officially platted and named as Niles until 1888. Front Street was built wide enough for turning of wagons delivering to the freight holding and shipping areas. The railyard included an icehouse for the early refrigerator cars shipping fresh fruit, a water tower, a partial roundhouse, train repair shops and at one time had its own jail.

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**Railroad Passenger Era** In 1901 the Niles Depot was built with greatly expanded waiting rooms, similar to other stations built at the same time by Southern Pacific between Oakland and the Del Monte Hotel at Monterey. Niles became a destination for city daytrippers that came for picnics and dances in Niles Canyon. Passenger trains to Niles had largely ceased by 1941. The Feather River Route on the Western Pacific alignment (1910) maintained a Niles passenger stop on the south side of Alameda Creek into the 1960's.

**Silent Movie Era, 1913 – 1916** Niles was the site of the first movie studios west of the Mississippi and also served as a stage set for hundreds of silent western movies. The Essanay Film Manufacturing Co. (founded in 1907 in Chicago) established a film studio in Niles, located at First and “G” streets. The studio also built eight bungalow cottages at the rear of the property to house the actors and staff. In 1914, Essanay Studios hired Charlie Chaplin, who stayed until 1915 after filming some seven films including the “Little Tramp”. During its heyday, the studio was filming up to one movie every two days. Many of these were the cowboy movies made famous by Bronco Billy Anderson, as well as those with Ben Turpin and other early movie pioneers. The studio went out of business in 1916, and its buildings were demolished in 1939. The studio bungalows were turned around and relocated to Second Street.

**Industry in Niles** The early gravel pits on the banks of Alameda Creek were linked by a railspur to the railroad junction at Niles and supplied the construction of railbeds through Niles Canyon. In addition to the long-lived California Nursery Company and the short-lived Essanay Studios; companies such as the Farwell Stone Quarry (1879), Ellsworth Packing Company, Ellsworth Planing Mill, Schuckl cannery (1923), Kimber Poultry (1925), Pacific Mushroom Company, Ames Mfg. Co./Victory Ironworks, California Brick Company, Kraftile (1926), Pine Nursery, California

Pottery (1930), Pacific States Steel (1937), Laclede-Christy refractories (1948), Inland Aggregate (1948) and Kaiser Gravel (1949) were operating in the immediate Niles railroad corridor, many for over 50 years.

**County Roads and Bridges** By 1914 the first underpass was built and Niles had a paved Front Street and concrete sidewalks, as well as a courthouse and jail. During the late 1930's Niles was the focus for significant investment in bridges, underpasses and county roadways, as part of a highway bypass program. As part of that project Niles lost its direct bridge crossing over Alameda Creek at the south end of Niles Boulevard.

## HISTORY ALIVE TODAY

Today, the compact, seven-block long commercial main street that borders Niles Boulevard retains its historic integrity. Stores in historic buildings line the street, many of which sell antiques and other objects from the community's rich local past. The residential neighborhood abutting the commercial area has numerous examples of houses dating from the 1880s Victorian era to the bungalow style homes built in the 1915s to the 1930s.

Today the volunteers of the Pacific Steam Locomotive Association have restored steam engines, passenger cars and other rolling stock and operate regular excursions through Niles Canyon between Sunol and Niles. Especially popular are the spring wildflower runs and the evening Polar Express events. The new Altamont Commuter Express now uses the old Feather River Route. The Amtrak Capitol Corridor Service and freight trains share use of a mainline track through downtown Niles on property owned by the Union Pacific Railroad.

The California Nursery and Shinn legacy of large and unusual trees and a long-standing gardening tradition are celebrated with the Niles spring wildflower event and garden tours every May. The Essanay Studios

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history has a life of its own with Charlie Chaplin Day and the Silent Movie events held every June.

## **CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT**

### **Unique Open Character of Central Blocks**

The distinctive character of Niles rests upon its unique combination of two central commercial blocks being not just one-sided but their having an immediate visual connection to the open railyard lands. These two central blocks are 300 feet long each. While the open character extends somewhat beyond the two core blocks, they are essentially framed by double-sided blocks 500 feet long that function as gateway elements to the middle of town. The sense of gateway is strongly reinforced by the railroad underpasses at each end of town.

### **Strong Sense of Place**

The strong sense of place found in the center of the Niles townscape is centered by a grandly scaled flagpole, visible from all major sightlines in town. The outward views from this central area are dramatic in the closeness of the hillviews, the distinctiveness of the tree silhouettes and the occasional loud drama of trains. In this framed setting, trains take on the character of a slow moving backdrop to the scene.

### **Variety of Building**

The commercial district of Niles has a great diversity in its architectural styling and detail relative to its small size. While categories such as Commercial Block, False Front, Victorian and Vernacular apply throughout the commercial district there are as many exceptions to these categories as there are those that fit. This variety is essential to the character of Niles. Adding or modifying buildings within this quirky assemblage requires attention to relative characteristics such as scale, texture, form and contrast, rather than adherence to a particular style category.

### **Distinctive Roofline Profile**

The profile of the commercial frontage is distinguished in Niles by past investment in widely-spaced, substantial Commercial Block buildings, typically brick or stucco, and each distinctive in its use of materials, windows, roof-style and design detail. Given the investment required, these structures are typically located at intersections. Mid-block commercial buildings and the first corner buildings were more likely to be constructed of wood and may have a parapet or false-front concealing much of the roof, but they may also be of masonry construction and/or have a visible peaked roof. The variety in facade heights from 20 to 40 feet and the subsequent visibility of interesting roofs in Niles are essential in its avoiding the appearance of being a painted one-dimensional stage set.

### **Storeframes Unify Commercial Frontage**

The commercial character of Niles is strongly unified by the repeating elements of the storefront frames found on most buildings, regardless of overall facade height. Typically with balanced proportions and keyhole entries, these storefronts exhibit tiled bulkheads and individual detailing, and strongly reinforce the pedestrian scale along the street.

### **Tree Silhouettes Define Railroad Land**

The original extent of the railroad yards is defined with large sycamores at one end and other tall trees elsewhere along its boundaries. Large palms define the location of the original railroad depot site. Silhouetted against the hills, these wonderful trees define the sense of arrival in the core area of Niles. Double plantings of palms are characteristic of entry points elsewhere in Niles, such as at the entrance road to the California Nursery.

### **Street Grid Unique to Niles Historic District**

The 300 foot long central blocks and alleys date back to the original 1888 platting of the center of Niles. Later block lengths were platted at 500 feet.



*Figure 6 Historic bungalows on Second Street west of G street*

This combination grid and its alleys also defines the adjacent neighborhood of Niles.

### **Niles Neighborhood**

Although not covered by the guidelines, the core area of Niles (Figure 1, page 9) includes historic residential areas in addition to the historic commercial district. Second Street includes residential units with architectural styles dating from 1870 through the 1930s. The area east of H Street reflects the 19th century era of Victorian houses. The area west of H Street reflects the early 20th Century era which includes Craftsman Bungalow (Figure 6) and Spanish Revival style architecture. Between G Street and School Street are the Mission Revival style school and Veterans building.

### **Contextual Design**

It is essential that modifications for both existing buildings and infill new buildings are designed in their immediate context and in the larger context of the Niles Historic District. The district is small in scale yet it is distinguished by landmark buildings at most intersections. The tension between variety in small-scale details for storefronts and rooflines versus the contrasting variety of one-of-a-kind styles for corner and stand-alone buildings defines the design hierarchy for existing commercial buildings in Niles.

## **THE VISION FOR THE NILES HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Niles is a historic railroad junction point located at the mouth of Niles Canyon and off the main highway. The vision for Niles is to revitalize it as an attractive and lively destination for visitors and residents alike, to strengthen both its pedestrian scale, its small town character and its local economy. The vision also holds that railroad passengers will stop again in Niles.

The core area of the Niles Historic District has sufficient integrity and inventory of historic buildings to potentially qualify for nomination as a National Register Historic District. A complete professionally prepared survey would be required to initiate the process. The vision in these guidelines for the Community Commercial area is to retain the eclectic character and diversity of the Niles Historic District, encourage revitalization with both the rehabilitation of existing buildings and the construction of new buildings, appropriately scaled and designed for the Niles context.

To achieve the vision, the guidelines and regulations encourage rehabilitation of storefronts and facades, provide direction for appropriate building modifications, require the design of buildings and landscapes to reinforce the gateways and the strong sense of place found in Niles, to retain the strong connections to the hills and creek, to encourage restaurants, outdoor dining and a central town square, and to promote public spaces and parking areas that are safe, clean and easily accessible.

# DESIGN GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS

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The guidelines and regulations address the following topics:

1. Setbacks
2. Outdoor Areas
3. Parking Facilities
4. Areas for Service, Loading and Mechanical Equipment
5. Design Styles
6. Building Form and Height
7. Facades and Storefronts
8. Awnings
9. Signs and Lighting
10. Materials, Colors and Ornament
11. Landscaping

Each topic is introduced by a statement of *intent*, followed by individual discretionary guidelines or mandatory regulations. These italicized introductions to each topic also constitute “guidelines” for purposes of project review by the City of Fremont.

## 1. SETBACKS

*Intent:*

*Buildings should define the street as an active public space. Historically, commercial buildings have been built to the front property line, adjacent to the sidewalk. This continuity of building frontage should be retained and continued in new construction and additions.*

*Niles in the 1920's and 30's began to fill in along Front Street, as Niles Boulevard was then known, replacing or remodeling Victorian cottages and wooden saloons with commercial buildings adjacent to concrete sidewalks. While this infill process is still evident today, the overall continuity of business frontages on the sidewalk is characteristic of the Niles Historic District and should be retained.*

*The 1888 survey of lots, in what is now the central core of Niles, were 25 feet wide, 12 of these creating 300 foot long blocks extending back 150 feet to a twenty foot wide alley. Occasional*

variations in the setback serve as a reminder of this pattern, as do the modulated surfaces in the building storefronts. The alley width is narrow by present standards and opportunities to increase safe access and egress should be encouraged.

### 1.1 Front Setback

Zoning Ordinance Section 8-21104 (f) does not require any front, side or rear yard setbacks in the Community Commercial District, except adjacent to residential uses. The zero-foot setback from the front property line should be maintained for commercially zoned parcels fronting on Niles Boulevard, and on commercially zoned properties facing side streets.

### 1.2 Second-Story Encroachments Above Public Sidewalks

Second stories of new corner buildings with a frontage on Niles Boulevard shall not extend over a public sidewalk more than three feet, subject to issuance of an encroachment permit. The projection along the face of the building from the property line corner shall not exceed 15 feet in either direction [see also 6.2 Corner Building Styles]. The vertical clearance of the encroachment shall be eight (8) feet, plus one foot for each foot of projection (Figure 8). Unique tower elements for corner buildings are encouraged.

### 1.3 Recessed Entrances

Recessed entrances to buildings should not be set back more than five (5) feet from the face of the building. This guideline applies to corner buildings as well as mid-block buildings.

### 1.4 Historic “Keyhole” Entries

Historic angled entryways found in many storefronts in Niles should be retained when any addition or modification is made to such storefronts (Figure 19, page 30), including modifications to meet

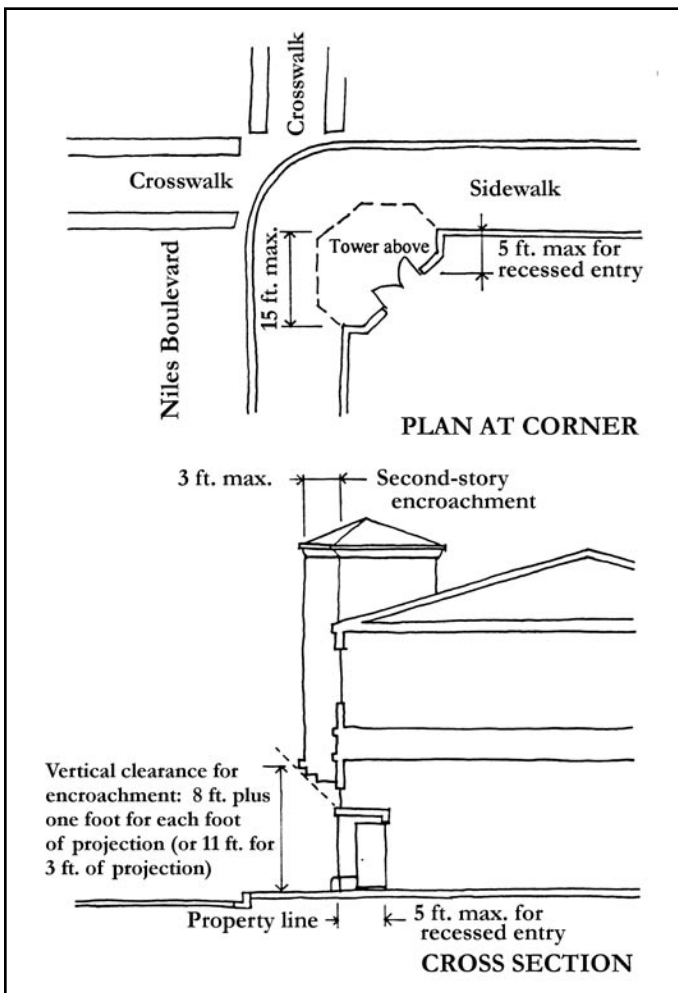


Figure 8 Recessed entries and allowable encroachments over public sidewalks



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ADA requirements. The original angle of entry walls should be retained. Keyhole entryways are encouraged for new storefronts, consistent with the balanced proportions recommended in guideline 7.1. See also guideline 10.5 regarding tiled entries.

### **1.5 Encroachments into Existing Front Yards for Residential Conversions**

If a residential property is converted from residential to commercial use, existing front and side setbacks shall be retained (Figure 9). However, certain encroachments into front yards may be necessary, including improvements to satisfy requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and minor improvements to entrances to meet building code and commercial occupancy requirements. For additions to historic buildings, the State Historical Building Code should be consulted to make improvements which minimize alteration of historic building fabric. Encroachments into front yards are allowed for certain uses, such as outdoor dining. Outdoor dining is encouraged in front setback areas.



*Figure 9 Additions or alterations to existing historic buildings shall not encroach into established front yard setbacks.*

### **1.6 Alley Setback**

There is no consistent pattern to building development along Ironhorse Alley, unlike the continuity of business frontages. This variation in functional width creates conflicts for safe vehicle access and egress. A minimum setback from the 20 foot alley width should be encouraged during major modification of existing buildings and construction of new buildings. Facade and other minor improvements should not trigger nexus for a rear setback. This minimum setback would not be for parking but would be added to the maneuverable space on the alley and posted.

An alley setback is encouraged for adequate access and egress of loading and service vehicles, as well as for adequate emergency vehicle and maintenance access to both businesses and residences. Minor

improvements to existing buildings and individual buildings eligible as Primary Historic Resources would be exempt from this requirement.

## 2. OUTDOOR AREAS

*Intent:*

*The outdoor vision for Niles has as a central focus that there be a lively, central town square, outdoor dining and safe places to walk. Retaining panoramic views to the hills across the rail yards from the central area of Niles is essential to this vision. Outdoor dining may also be encouraged to be a part of restaurant operations that extend into front and rear courtyards.*

### 2.1 Outdoor Dining on Public Sidewalks

The City allows chairs and tables to be placed on the public sidewalk immediately adjacent to an indoor cafe or restaurant, subject to a Zoning Administrator Permit, and compliance with the standards contained in the City's Sidewalk Dining ordinance. The use of molded plastic for outdoor furniture is discouraged. Umbrellas, interesting planters and plant material are encouraged.

### 2.2 Defensible Space

Public areas should be designed with attention to "defensible space", including controlled access points, good lighting of entrances and corridors, cut-away corners and glazing around recessed doorways so that persons may be easily observed entering and exiting, and avoidance of places for persons to hide (Figure 10).

### 2.3 Commercial Uses on the North Side of Iron Horse Lane

Outdoor areas and courtyards in the rear yards of commercial storefronts, adjacent to the alley named Iron Horse Lane, enjoy good southern exposure. However, indoor and outdoor dining on the rear portions of lots adjacent to Iron Horse Lane should be allowed only when it can be shown that residents living within 100 feet of the commercial property boundary would not be unduly disrupted by restaurant or cafe activity, and that loading and servicing requirements can be met (Section 4). Replacement of old accessory structures in rear yards with usable commercial space and/or outdoor dining areas is encouraged.

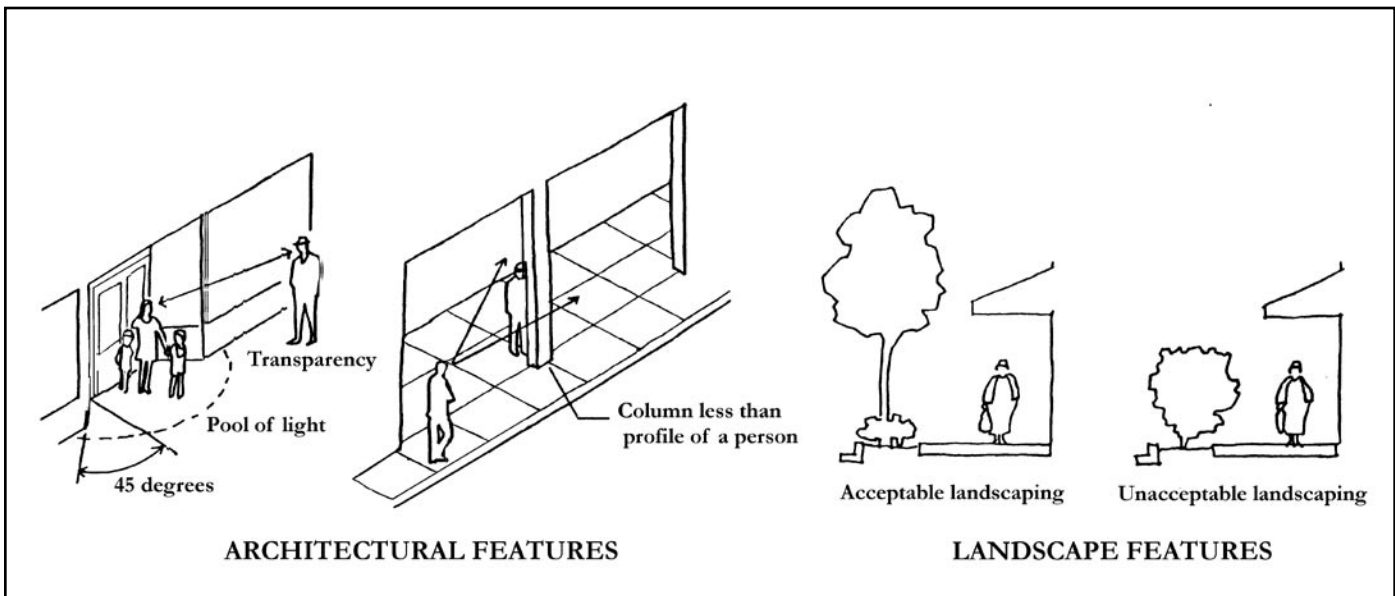


Figure 10 Outdoor areas feel more secure when they are fully visible.

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### **3. PARKING FACILITIES**

*Intent:*

*Safe, clean, adequate and accessible parking is essential to the vision for Niles. Niles is unique locally in its Parking Assessment District. The centrally located parking lots were installed with federal funds in the early 1970's and contain approximately 176 spaces in addition to the spaces located on street.*

*The ordinance creating the parking district did not contemplate expansion of the area or of existing or new businesses. In accordance with the Niles Concept Plan, a parking study is currently underway to evaluate current and future parking needs for the core area of Niles. The study will form the basis for parking ordinance modifications and reformulation of the parking assessment district for the area. The following guidelines are intended to ensure that parking lots are accessible but do not unnecessarily intrude upon the historic townscape and pedestrian character of the district.*

#### **3.1 Parking Lots on Niles Boulevard**

No new private parking lots fronting directly onto Niles Boulevard are permitted in the area covered by the Guidelines. Existing access points from Niles Boulevard may be used to reach rear parking facilities.

#### **3.2 Parking Behind Businesses**

Required on-site parking should generally be located behind businesses where the nature of the business and the design of parking is consistent with any nearby residential units. Vehicular access to on-site parking lots from alleys is allowed. Vehicles using rear area parking lots adjacent to Iron Horse Lane shall be allowed to back up into the alley right-of-way, unless the City Engineer determines that such maneuvers are unsafe.

### 3.3 Shared Parking

Private parking on the rear of parcels which front on Niles Boulevard may be consolidated, where feasible and allowed by Zoning Ordinance. Recording of reciprocal access easements among participating property owners may be required when such consolidation is approved.

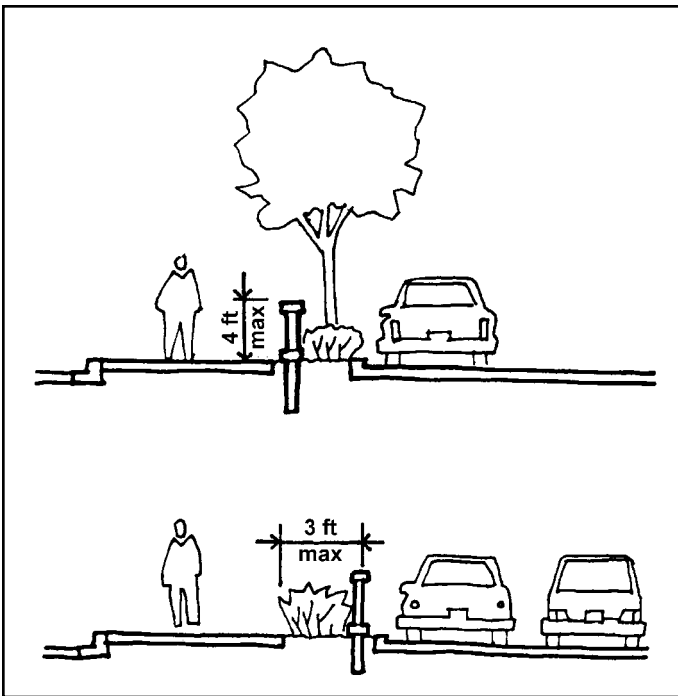


Figure 11 Alternative ways of screening parking lots which are located adjacent to sidewalks.

### 3.4 Screening of Parking Lots

A commercial property with an existing parking lot adjacent to a public sidewalk shall not be modified or have a change in use without installation of a fence to partially screen parked vehicles from view. The screening material should not be so opaque or so high as to block views of the parking lot from passing cars, but, on the other hand, opaque enough to maintain visual continuity of the street

wall adjacent to the sidewalk. Installation of a substantially constructed and painted low wood picket or wrought iron fence, is encouraged (Figure 11). A maximum three-foot (3") wide landscaped buffer strip, placed either in front of or behind the fence, should be included with the installation of the fence. The landscaped buffer strip shall include an automated irrigation system. Landscaped berms and masonry walls are prohibited, as they are deemed to be inappropriate to the district's historic setting. This guideline also applies to new parking lots located on side streets. Design solutions for the fence, may vary depending upon the character of adjacent buildings.

### 3.5 Recycling Containers in Parking Lots

Clean parking areas are consistent with the vision for Niles as a preferred destination. Recycling containers are encouraged in addition to regular garbage containers in parking areas. Containers should be located conveniently for public use and pick-up.

### 3.6 Lighting in Parking Lots

Safe parking areas are consistent with the vision for Niles as a destination with evening activity. Adequate lighting for pedestrian safety should be provided in parking lots. Lamp standard design should be compatible with, or same as, the Niles streetscape design.

### 3.7 Parking Signage

Refer to Guideline 9.16

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## 4. AREAS FOR SERVICE, LOADING, AND MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

*Intent:*

*The guidelines for the design of areas used for service activities, loading and mechanical equipment are intended to protect nearby residents, businesses, pedestrians and motorists from noisy, unsightly and odoriferous and noxious activities. Rooftop and ground mounted mechanical equipment and appurtenances are subject to screening requirements of Zoning Ordinance Section 8.22148.1 Mechanical Equipment.*

### 4.1 Loading Access

When at all feasible, loading areas should be accessible from side streets or the rear of buildings rather than from Niles Boulevard. Such areas should be separated from parking and pedestrian walkways.

### 4.2 Screening of Loading Areas and Waste Receptacles

Loading areas shall be located and designed to minimize their visibility from public areas and nearby private properties. Substantially-constructed, opaque wood fences should be used to screen public view of dumpsters.

### 4.3 Location of Mechanical Equipment

a) Small-scale mechanical equipment, either existing or similarly scaled, is encouraged for buildings in Niles undergoing rehabilitation, provided it is consistent with previous character. The amount of screening should be similar to the previous character of the building. New buildings should be compatible with their immediate context in regard to building details related to exterior mechanical equipment.

b) Existing utility metering equipment located on building exterior is appropriate in Niles.

c) Large-scale mechanical equipment shall be screened or hidden from major pedestrian areas. Conversion of contributing historic buildings such as some of the large corner buildings offer little opportunity for concealment in the sloping roof area. The Historic Building Code and reasonable judgement should be used to meet both the need to retain the building design integrity and to provide for upgrading of mechanical systems.



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## 5. DESIGN STYLES

### *Intent:*

*Identification, retention, and preservation of historic buildings in the Niles Historic District is the first step in maintaining the existing array of design styles. The Niles district has buildings dating from several historical periods which are reflected in different architectural styles. The widths of the district's buildings usually were dictated by the original narrow parcel sizes. Normally, where parcels were combined, the buildings were divided into individual stores reflecting the original parcel module.*

*The district's commercial buildings can be grouped into five principal types or styles.*

#### *a) Mid-block Commercial*

*These buildings generally consist of simple wood frame and masonry structures with low-sloping gable roofs oriented to the street, but hidden behind false fronts (Figures 13 and 14). The false front façades present the building's primary architectural features in an attempt to make the building appear larger and more prominent. The building's principal façade frequently was ornamented with decorative features and shaped parapets. This type of building was limited to interior lots built to side property lines along Niles Boulevard. Their architectural embellishments are reflective of the period in which they were built or remodeled. Often, whole storefronts have been replaced with more current designs.*

#### *b) False Front Stand-Alone*

*Construction of False Front Stand-Alone buildings generally occurred on side streets perpendicular to Niles Boulevard. These buildings are the same as the mid-block commercial, except that their side walls were left exposed, were plain and contained few openings.*

#### *c) Commercial Block Buildings Corner Buildings*

*Corner buildings represent a wide range of architectural styles and building materials. The first large scale corner buildings were Victorian wood-frame buildings. These include the first I.O.O.F. Hall (Ford Hall, 1894), distinguished by its gambrel roof and now located behind Munoz Hall, and the Wesley*



Figure 13 Mid-Block False Front style buildings on Niles Boulevard between I and J Streets



Figure 14 A remaining example of a Mid-Block 1880's False Front style building on the north side of Niles Boulevard

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*Hotel (1907), with its distinctive bay windows. At the time of their construction Niles supported a planing mill. Wood saloons constituted the rest of the corner buildings in 1913.*

*By the 1920's and 30's the other corner lots had been built upon in a variety of Commercial Block styles that used local brick. The Fremont Bank building with its imposing windows has been called Federalist (1929). The Ellsworth Building is a rare example of Moorish Revival (1926/29) and was the first office building in Niles. The Bonde Lumber Building (Niles Hall) has Art Deco elements (1937). Joe's Corner is Spanish Colonial Revival (1930's) and is the only building with a tower element in Niles. These corner buildings have upper-story elements, are typically constructed with local clay products and are located at corners.*

#### *d) Vernacular Buildings*

*A fourth category describes other buildings that contribute to the Niles Historic District. These vernacular buildings are typically underscaled structures and includes a lot of low stucco buildings such as the early gas-stations, the courthouse and jail, the small apartments on the side streets, as well as the wooden railroad buildings and even the train car.*

*Niles also has industrial buildings located at each end of the commercial area, but these are not zoned C-C. Nonetheless, small-scale industrial character is part of the Niles arrival experience and should not be discouraged as an inspiration for new buildings outside the central core of the Niles Historic District.*

#### *e) Residential Buildings*

*This category recognizes existing residential uses in the C-C zone. These include Victorian cottages, Craftsman bungalow and various apartments.*

*These historic styles are recommended for inspiration in the design of new commercial buildings. Attention should be given to the scale, proportion, and articulation of historic buildings and their use of materials, rather than to design details which mimic historical styles. New buildings, designed to look like or be confused with old buildings, are not acceptable.*

## **5.1 Corner Buildings**

The design of any new corner building should be responsive to the scale, mass and form of existing Commercial Block corner buildings.

## **5.2 Franchise Design Adapted**

The use of corporate image design, such as that used for national franchise businesses, is prohibited unless the building form, materials, signs, logos, colors and other identifying features of the national franchise are made compatible with the overall design character of the district.



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## 6. BUILDING FORM AND HEIGHT

*Intent:*

*A key component of historic preservation goals in Niles is the retention of the existing building form and height relationships, including maintaining the interesting and distinctive profile along the street front.*

### 6.1 Building Heights For Mid-Block Buildings

Mid-block parcels should continue to be regulated by the 40 foot height limitation in the existing C-C zoning ordinance.

Building elements significantly taller than the main structure, such as false fronts and vertical theatre signage, are appropriate for existing mid-block buildings that can document these original features. Also see Guideline 9.12 on neon signs.

### 6.2 Building Height for Corner Buildings

- a) Corner parcels should continue to be regulated by the 40 foot height limitation.
- b) New corner buildings may be encouraged to include a tower element. This feature should relate to vertical continuity of the facade and should fit within the 40 foot high envelope.
- c) Rooftop weathervanes and flagpoles are appropriate where they can be documented for existing buildings and may be considered as design elements for new buildings.

### 6.3 Interesting Roof Forms

A variety of roof shapes are encouraged in Niles. There should be no roof-slope maximum provided in the guidelines. Some flat roofs and mansard roofs may be inappropriate for the central portion of the Niles commercial area, and should be evaluated for their fit in the historic context.

### 6.4 Horizontal Articulation

Horizontal articulation should wrap around a corner building, continuing the storeframe character to the side street. Large cutaway corner features that reduce building frontage area should not be permitted for corner entrances of new buildings unless exceptionally distinctive design elements are used at the street level.

### 6.5 Continuity of Façade Elements

Vertical continuity of facade elements is a character-defining element in Niles commercial facades and should be given particular attention in the rehabilitation of existing buildings and the construction of new buildings. This vertical continuity applies to any tower and signage elements, as well as to the relationship between the store frame and upper facade.

### 6.6 Geometric Building Elements

The historic pattern in Niles of rectangular massing of major building forms and features should be maintained. A variety of secondary building element shapes are found in Niles, such as a curving gambrel roof, triangular gable peaks visible behind cornices and pediments, Islamic and Roman arch forms and protruding bay windows. As Niles is neither large nor over-scaled, these elements take on more prominence. The most distinctive rectangular format in Niles is its grid street pattern.

A quirky variety of geometric shapes is encouraged in rooflines, facades and other building elements. These should be individualized and not be repetitive of existing buildings in the immediate vicinity.

### 6.7 Blank Walls

Except for short distances, e.g., five (5) feet or less, the use of blank, unadorned walls on ground floor street frontage is strongly discouraged. Commercial

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frontage should be the location for display windows and entries, and should be finished with high quality materials and architectural ornamentation, to both highlight building elements and provide visual interest for pedestrians and motorists.

#### **6.8 Visual Interest on Side and Rear Elevations**

Side and rear facades of buildings exposed to view from public areas should be designed to create visual interest by incorporating windows, articulated wall surfaces, ornament, murals, landscaping or similar devices, appropriate to the character of the district.

#### **6.9 Roof-Top Enclosures**

Flexibility with the building height envelope of up to 40 feet as suggested in recommendations for Guidelines 6.1 and 6.2 allows for adequate height for screening of elevator equipment that may be required for barrier-free access.

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## 7. FACADES AND STOREFRONTS

*Intent:*

*Historic preservation in Niles begins with identifying, preserving and retaining the storefronts and facade character in all their eclectic variation, especially their varied roof elements and colorful bulkhead tile work. Maintaining storefront proportions, continuity in the facade and relative continuity between storefronts is essential to preserving the character of Niles commercial frontage.*

### 7.1 Storefront Design

Identify, preserve and retain storefront characteristics of existing buildings when undergoing rehabilitation and modification.

New storefront design should be variations of the storefront formats (Figure 19, page 30) using interpretations that promote interest and delight, that may be whimsical and eclectic in their variation, and do not replicate existing storefronts.

### 7.2 Horizontal and Vertical Continuity

A new building facade or a rehabilitation of an existing facade should be designed as a harmonious unit. Horizontal elements such as awnings, sign bands and cornices should be approximately aligned but not identical with similar features on the facades of adjacent buildings. Features on the ground level should align, if appropriate, with features above, such as windows in multistory buildings (Figure 20, page 30).

### 7.3 Storefront Width

Storefront widths between structural columns or other divisions in the facade ranging between 15 and 25 feet are encouraged (Figure 18, page 30).

### 7.4 Storefront Height

Storefront frames of 12 to 15 feet in height are encouraged.

### 7.5 Storefronts Frames Recessed

Recessing new storefront from the face of building or structural pilasters a distance of six to twelve inches (6-12") is encouraged so that the storefront is framed to maximum advantage. The use of a recess of this dimension will strengthen the presence and identity of the individual storefront.

### 7.6 Indirect Lighting

a) The use of low-glare indirect lighting should be considered at storefront divisions of the facade to accent storefronts and to illuminate the sidewalk. If building frontage lighting is used, the entire facade should be indirectly lit and should not leave the upper facade in shadows. Lamps should be mounted at least eight (8) feet above the sidewalk, and should be designed or shielded to prevent glare for pedestrians (Figure 20, page 30).

b) Decorative lighting such as the existing holiday lighting of parapet outlines with twinkle lights is encouraged. The use of interesting doorway lanterns is encouraged, such as those found on many of the Commercial Block buildings. The use of gooseneck lamps on facades may be appropriate on small-scale buildings. The use of linear neon around windows is discouraged.

### 7.7 Entry Orientation

Primary building entrances should face the front sidewalk rather than the side of the building, even in a situation where on-site parking is located beside the building. Exceptions to this may occur for a primary entrance on a new corner building or where buildings are oriented to a town square or plaza.

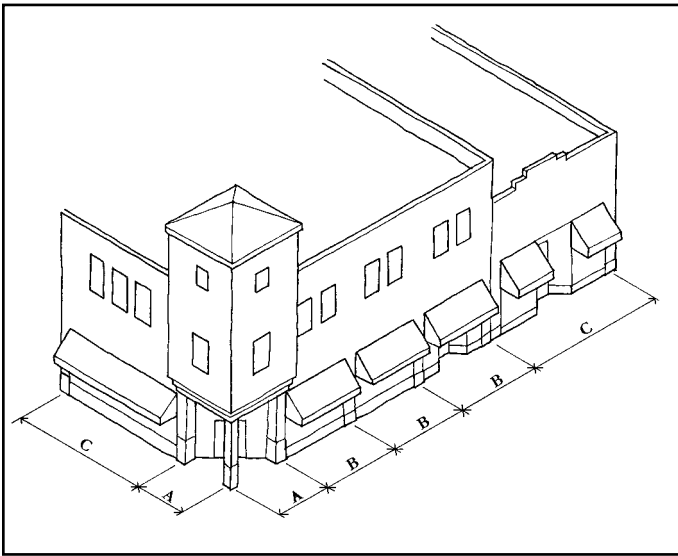


Figure 18 Building facades should be proportioned to reflect the scale, variety, and rhythm of historic commercial buildings in Niles

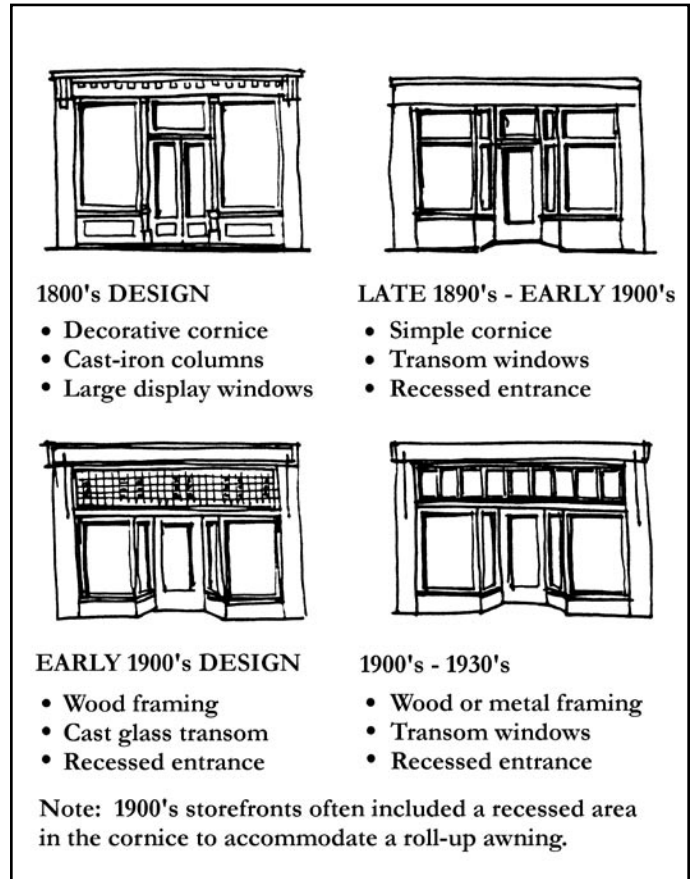


Figure 19 Evolution of historic storefront designs

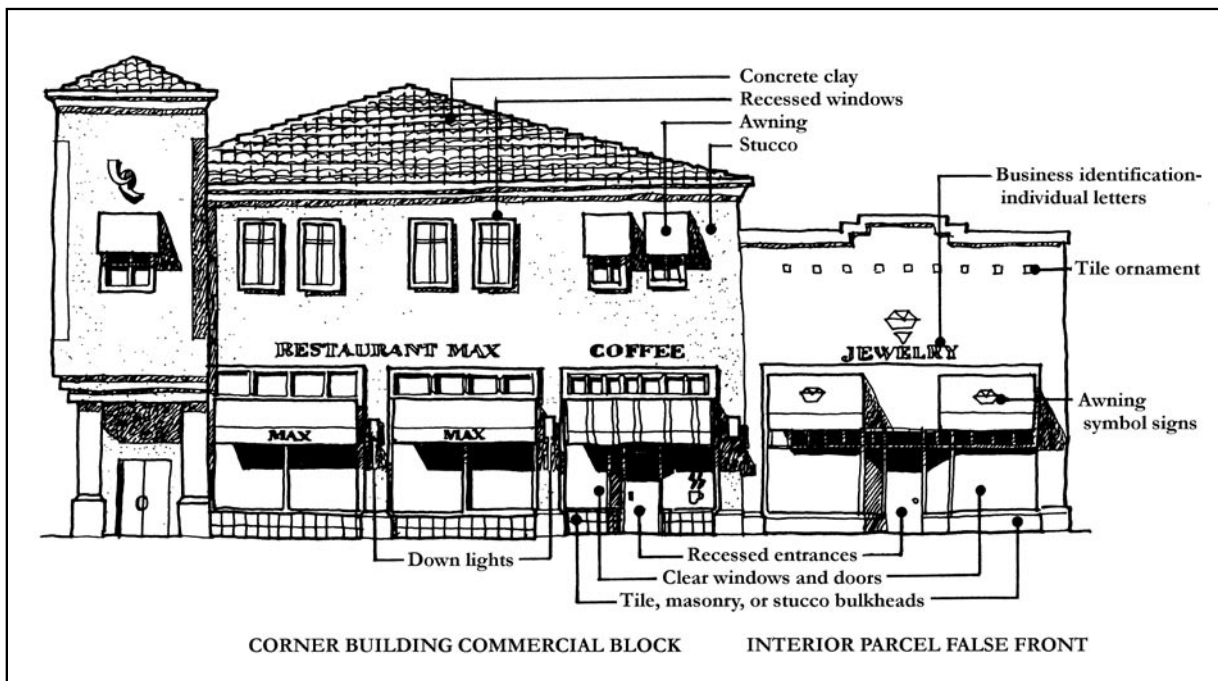


Figure 20 An example of a project with appropriate design features

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## 7.8 Recessed and Lighted Entries

The use of interesting doorway lanterns is encouraged. See Guidelines 1.3, Recessed Entrances, and 2.2, Defensible Space.

## 7.9 Shadow Lines

- a) Existing or previous textural finishes and details should be retained or restored during restoration of existing buildings, with the exception that imitation brick veneer always be removed.
- b) Strongly contrasting shadow line effects on new buildings should take into consideration adjacent building context.

## 7.10 Proportion of Window Areas to Façades

- a) Original window sizes should be restored during rehabilitation of existing storefronts to restore original balanced proportions, including the restoration of transom windows. These original proportions should not be restricted by formulas. These original proportions should guide changes and additions to existing buildings. The hierarchy of glass pane sizes should be retained.
- b) The following formulae for window area is provided as a guideline for new construction. For the first story of mid-block buildings, approximately 45 to 60 percent of the façade should be maintained as windows, and for Commercial Block buildings, window areas should be between 60 and 80 percent of the facade. Windows area in the second story of either type of building should be between 12 and 25 percent of the second story façade area.
- c) New construction should use a hierarchy of glass pane sizes in designing store-frames, including transom windows. The use of disproportionate, large, undivided panes should be avoided.
- d) Corner building storefront window facades

should wrap around to the side street using similar proportions as the front facing store-frame. See also Guideline 6.8.

## 7.11 Bulkhead

- a) Retain original window/bulkhead relationship in rehabilitation of existing storefronts.
- b) Bulkhead design for storefronts of new buildings should relate to the overall proportions of the storefront and the adjacent buildings, but should not be identical. (See Guideline 8.2) A bulkhead height of 12” to 24” is encouraged for new storefronts, but a height from 0” to 45” may be appropriate in some contexts.
- c) Restore original bulkhead design as part of building rehabilitation, including removal of brick veneers and restoration of original surface with same or similar material, typically tile.

## 7.12 Door and Window Systems

- a) Window and door frames should be made of substantial, sturdy materials such as solid wood or steel. “Narrow line” aluminum and/or vinyl window framing and mullion systems should not be used.
- b) Glazing for windows should be clear or only very slightly tinted, so that businesses “read” to customers, clients and passersby as friendly, inviting places. Where display windows or doors are divided into panes, true divided light (separate pane) systems should be used.
- c) Retain existing relationship between bulkhead and window elements in upgrading of existing storefronts. Avoid replacing minimally recessed sills with larger sills. Expressed window heads and sills are encouraged for new buildings.

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d) Restoration of transom windows is encouraged above both window and door elements, to regain the full storefront frame proportions. Transom windows are encouraged to be used in the storefront frame design of new buildings.

e) Kick plates are encouraged on wood doors of existing and proposed buildings.

f) Unusual window and door systems such as functional shutters, side-sliding garage doors and top-opening Dutch doors are encouraged to be retained where existing, and to be used as design elements in new projects.

g) Unusual decorative window shapes and niches may be appropriate on upper stories and side facades as part of an overall decorative treatment.

### **7.13 Security Grilles**

Consistent with applicable building and fire code regulations, removable or sliding security grilles may be used for doors and windows if they are located on the interior of the building.

### **7.14 Electrical Boxes, Conduits and Switch Boxes**

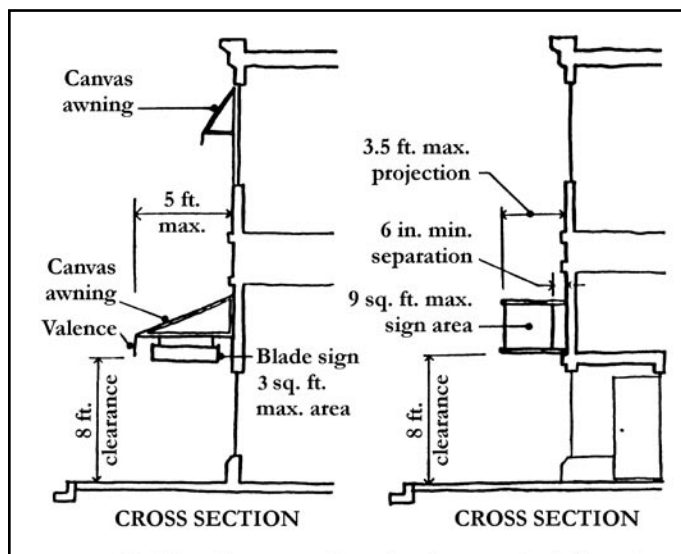
In new buildings electrical boxes and conduits, including those belonging to utility companies and public agencies, should be concealed from public view.

## 8. AWNINGS

*Intent:*

*The use of colorful awnings on commercial frontage in Niles is strongly encouraged. Historically, canvas awnings and wood canopies were common along storefronts on Niles Boulevard, providing shade and weather protection and asserting a pedestrian scale along the street. However, awnings and canopies require regular replacement and this has not always been possible in the past. Many storefronts retain the original awning hardware and boltholes, and during the rehabilitation process for older buildings these should be replaced.*

*Painted wood canopies may be appropriate where these were part of the original storefront design, although new canopies may not be able to fully extend over the sidewalk as the original may have. Awnings and canopies should be encouraged for new buildings. All awnings and canopies should be adequately strengthened.*



*Figure 23 Cross-sections of commercial building facades, showing maximum dimensions for awnings, blade signs, and projecting signs*

### 8.1 First-floor Awnings and Canopies

See (Figure 23)

- a) Canvas awnings and wood canopies are recommended to be retained or restored where original to the building frontage. Canvas awnings and painted wooden canopies are encouraged to be part of the design of new buildings. New awnings and canopies should avoid conflict with streetscape elements in the public right-of-way.
- b) Awnings shall not extend over the public sidewalk more than five (5) feet, and shall maintain at least an eight-foot (8') clearance above the sidewalk.
- c) The dimension of the valence (vertical flap) on ground-floor awnings should be approximately 12 inches. (See guideline 9.10 regarding lettering size on valence.)
- d) Awnings and canopies should be adequately designed for strength.
- e) If a metal awning or canopy can be documented as original to a storefront it may be considered as part of a rehabilitation of a storefront. Metal awnings may be appropriate for new buildings or conversion of industrial buildings in Niles.

### 8.2 Second-Story Awnings

Canvas awnings are recommended to be retained or restored where original to the building frontage. Canvas awnings are encouraged to be designed for new buildings.

### 8.3 Size, Shape and Placement of Awnings

Awnings located within store frames and should maintain overall balance and proportion. Awnings located within bays should fit within the defined

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space and should not extend over the structural division.

#### **8.4 Straight-Sloping Awnings**

Awnings which curve downward from the façade, instead of sloping downward as a uniform plane, shall not be allowed.

#### **8.5 Retractable Awnings**

Installation of retractable awnings is encouraged for use on the somewhat dark, north-facing windows of historic storefronts located on the south side of Niles Boulevard. Some of the historic facades possess built-in provisions for roll-up awnings.

Installation of retractable awnings is encouraged for all Niles storefronts, consistent with revitalization of the historic character of Niles. Where possible, re-use of built-in features for awnings should be utilized. Awnings located between the transom windows and main windows allow for maximum light penetration into storefronts.

Awnings should be adequately designed for regular retractable use.

#### **8.6 Colorful Awnings**

A variety of colorful and striped awnings over display windows and entrances should be considered, varying from storefront to storefront. Interesting logos are appropriate on the flat portion of the awning, see Guideline 9.10.



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## 8.7 Inappropriate Awnings

(See figure 25)

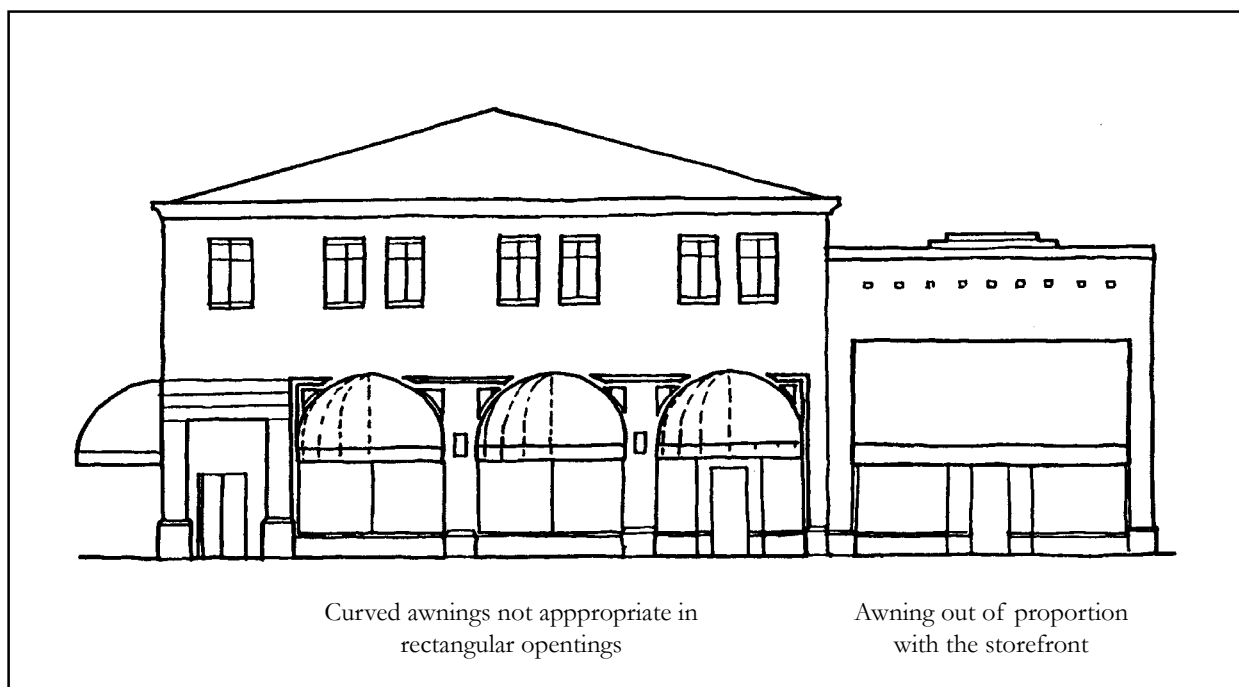
Vinyl awnings shall not be used in the historic district.

Awnings shall not be internally illuminated, including awnings in which signs on the valence are back lit.

Fixed aluminum awnings and awnings that simulate mansard roof forms are prohibited.

Existing wood canopies should be retained and restored. Painted wood canopies may be appropriate where these were part of the original storefront design. New painted wood canopies should not extend more than 5 feet over the sidewalk. Wood canopies may be appropriate

for new buildings. All wood canopies should be appropriately strengthened, weatherproofed and drained. Balconies are not permitted over the public right-of-way.



*Figure 25 Examples of awnings whose shape and size are inappropriate for the district*



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## 9. COMMERCIAL SIGNS AND LIGHTING

Note: This section was adopted by City Council on January 11, 2000. Adherence to these Guidelines and Regulations is therefore required.

### *Intent:*

*Signage systems should take into consideration the building style and storeframe design. Wall mounted signboards have a well-documented history in Niles, as do protruding neon signs and parapet signs. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards state that identifying, retaining and preserving historic storefronts, along with their functional and decorative features such as signs, is important in defining the overall historic character of the building. The continuity of storefronts in Niles requires that this approach be taken to retain and preserve the character of the historic district.*

*Signage type, size, material and location should be designed as integral to the overall building design and not as afterthoughts. Building name signage should be encouraged for Niles historic buildings, separate from business signage.*

*Article 21 of the Zoning Ordinance, Section 8-22101 (B) Building Signs, limits total sign area based upon the length of business frontage, but the City's Development Organization can reduce the allowed area of individual signs to make them "proportional and visually balanced".*

### 9.1 Exceptions to Sign Guidelines and Regulations

Exceptions to the above Guidelines and Regulations related to signs may be granted by the Historical Architectural Review Board or other approving agency, based on special circumstances related to the building or lot, including size, shape, topography, location, surroundings, or to accommodate unique or unusual signs.

### 9.2 Wall Mounted Signs

Business identification signs, principally designed to identify ground-floor businesses, should be sized to fit within the proportions of the building facade and should not crowd the top of a building wall or parapet. A preferred location for such signs on an historic storefront is along a first floor cornice line, above an awning or transom windows. Signs should be centered within storefront bays and not extend beyond the limits of the storefront or over elements such as columns, pilasters or transoms.

### 9.3 Sign Protrusion

Signs should not protrude above rooflines, eaves or parapets. Signboards protruding above rooflines, eaves or parapets may be appropriate if this can be adequately documented as the original location for a building name sign. Protruding signboards existed for Victorian and railroad buildings in Niles. Refer to Guideline 9.17.

### 9.4 Die-Cut Letter Signs

Individual die-cut letters may be appropriate for building and business identification signs for new buildings. Individual die-cut letter signage should not be encouraged for most existing buildings in the Niles Historic District, except where it can be documented as appropriate.

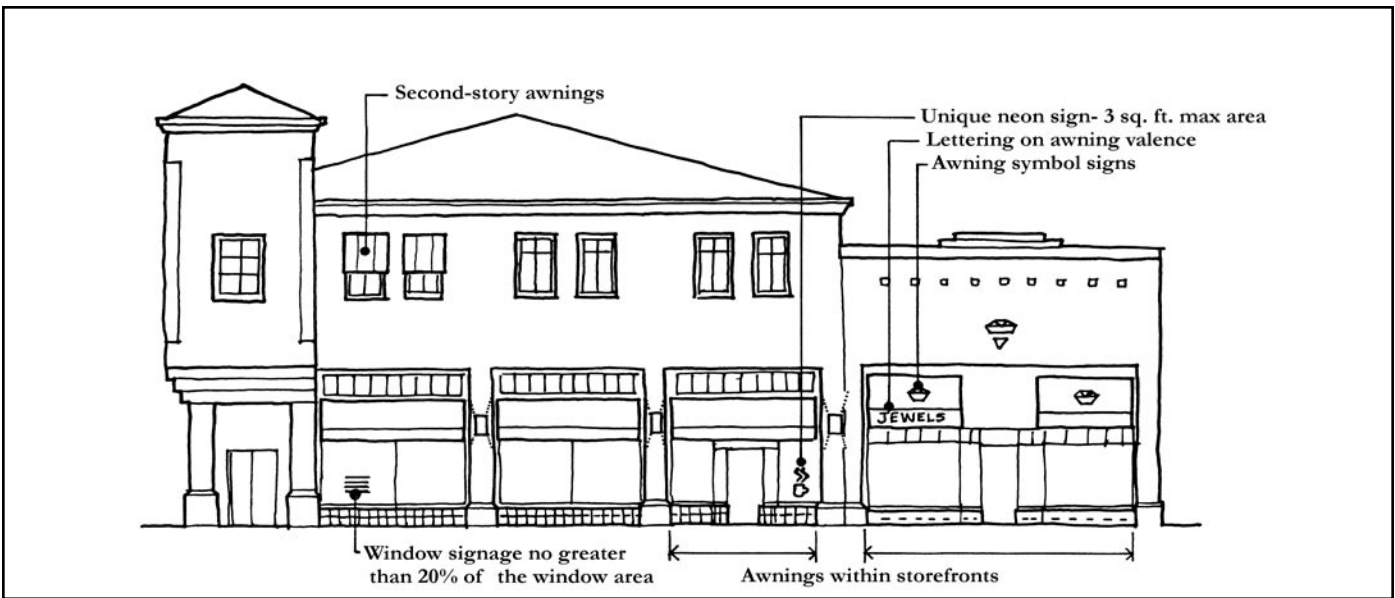


Figure 24 Examples of appropriate awning size, shape, and placement, and storefront signage

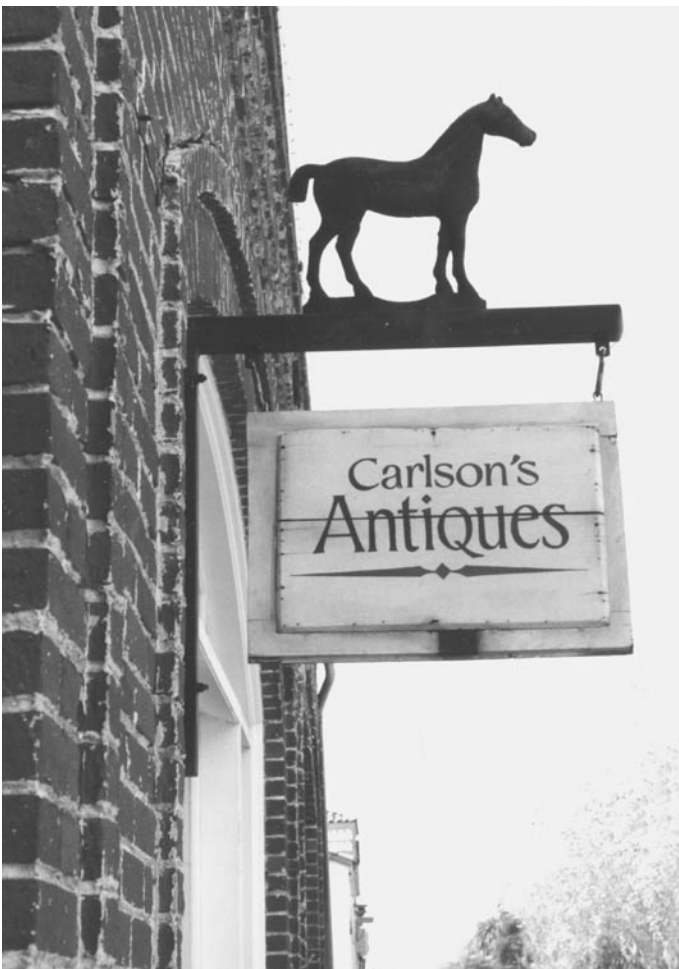


Figure 26 An example of an iconographic sign which is designed uniquely for the business

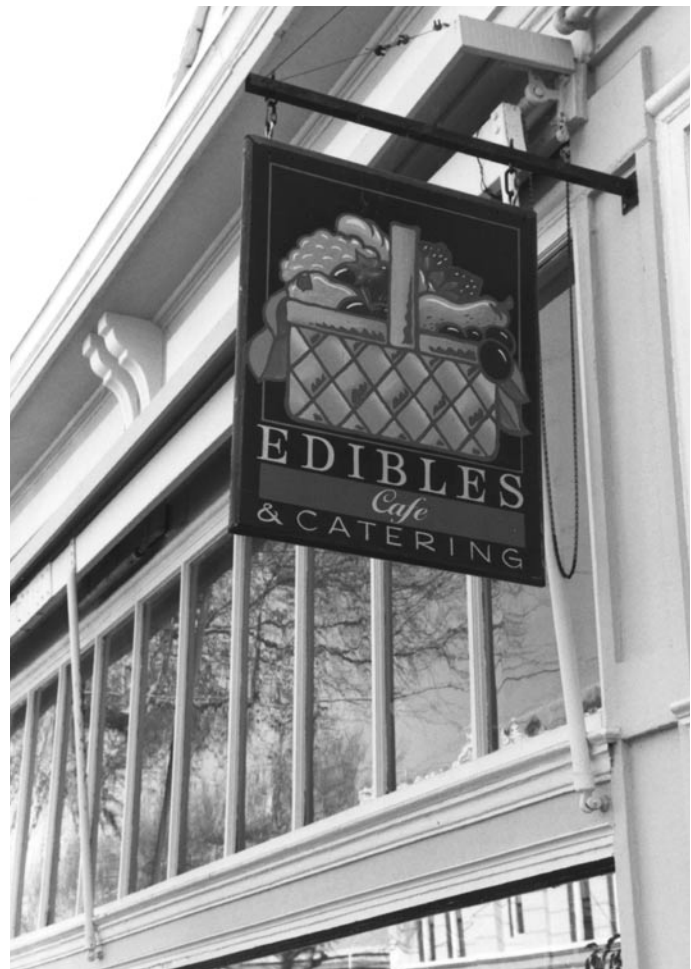


Figure 27 An example of a unique projecting sign which is both attractive and informative to the passerby

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## 9.5 Fascia-Mounted Signs

Signs mounted along a roof fascia should not extend above or below the fascia. Individual die-cut letters attached directly to the fascia are preferred. Sign boards mounted on the fascia are strongly discouraged. The vertical measure of the die-cut letters should be less than the surface dimension of the fascia, and the overall sign area should not exceed 10 square feet.

## 9.6 Typeface Legibility and Colors

- a) Simple and readable lettering styles are encouraged for maximum clarity.
- b) Lettering should contrast strongly against its background.
- c) Typeface size should vary relative to the potential reader distance. Larger lettering is appropriate for building signs read from the road, but is not appropriate for window signage.

## 9.7 Projecting Signs

(See also Guidelines 9.12)

- a) The use of projecting signs, which utilize or incorporate iconographic imagery is strongly encouraged. Graphic imagery with subservient text also is encouraged (Figures 26 and 27, page 38).
- b) Projecting signs shall not exceed nine (9) square feet in area, and shall extend a maximum of 42 inches (3 and ½ feet) from the face of the building. A minimum clearance of six (6) inches between the sign and the face of building is required. Such signs shall maintain an eight-foot (8') minimum clearance above the public right-of-way (Figure 23, page 33).
- c) Projecting signs should be firmly anchored to the building façade with attractive, noncorrosive hardware that is integral to the design of the sign

and that does not cause undue damage to the façade of the building when the sign is removed or changed to accommodate new commercial tenants.

- d) A historic neon sign from the district which is restored for use in its historic setting shall be exempt from signage area calculations. Historic neon signs shall be required to comply with clearance and anchoring standards. Anchoring on historic buildings shall be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

## 9.8 Blade Signs Under Awnings

(See also Guideline 9.10)

- a) Blade signs located under awnings are appropriate, as long as a minimum clearance of eight (8) feet above the sidewalk is maintained, and the area of the sign does not exceed three (3) square feet.
- b) Blade signs may be hung from the awning or mounted on the building (Figure 23, page 33). Historically-styled, colorful painted wooden signs and appropriate suspension hardware are preferred.
- c) Blade signs located under awnings shall not be directly illuminated.

## 9.9 External Illumination of Signs

Where illumination is desired for business identification signs, an external light source shall be used. Signage illumination should be focussed on the sign and not have a spillover effect. Signage illumination may be combined with indirect illumination of facades as part of a lighting program. Temporary signs should not have spot illumination.



*Figure 28 An example of an appropriate kind of graphic symbol painted on the sloping face of an awning*

## 9.10 Signs on Awnings

- a) Signs on the valence (vertical flap) of an awning facing the street should be composed of individual letters painted directly on the fabric. Awning letters shall not exceed 10 inches in height, and shall not occupy a total area of more than 10 square feet.
- b) The only types of signage that may be installed on the sloping surface of an awning are small graphic symbols or logos unique to a business (Figure 24, page 38 and Figure 28).
- c) Signage and logos should not be used on second-story awnings.

## 9.11 Window Signs

Signs on windows that use high quality materials such as paint or gold leaf, or that are etched into the glass, are encouraged. “Window coverage” means that percentage of the area of all clear doors and windows on any building frontage, taken in the aggregate, which is occupied by building signs. The total area of such signs, including temporary signs on the inside of windows, shall not exceed 20% of total window area. The window sign area for upper story windows should be calculated based on all upper story windows. (See Figure 24 page 38 for an illustration of an acceptable window sign). Window sign area shall be counted against allowable building sign area (Article 21, Zoning Ordinance).

## 9.12 Neon Signs (See also Guideline 9.7)

One neon sign not exceeding three (3) square feet in area shall be allowed for an eating, drinking or entertainment establishment, subject to design review (see Figure 24, page 38). Such signs shall be oriented to pedestrians rather than to vehicles. Pictorial and unique images related to the particular business are strongly encouraged. A historic neon sign from the district which is restored for use in its historic setting shall be exempt from sign area

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calculations. Standard neon signs announcing “open” are not allowed. However, the “open” message may be incorporated into a larger sign custom designed for a specific business. The use of linear neon (for example, around display windows or the storefront frame) is discouraged.

### 9.13 Fabrication and Installation

For the benefit of the entire district, as well as the individual business or property owner, all business and building signs should meet professional standards for design and lettering, fabrication and installation.

### 9.14 Prohibited Sign Types

The following sign types, when visible from a public right-of-way, are prohibited for use in the Niles Historic Overlay District:

- Individually illuminated or backlit letters (“halo lighting”);
- Internally illuminated, plastic box-type signs;
- Animated, flashing, blinking, or reflecting signs;
- Electronic reader boards and other similar sign types;
- Changeable copy signs other than for use with a movie marquee and chalkboards, or blackboards other than for use in a restaurant or on a cafe menu board;
- Portable signs such as “A”-frame signs;
- New freestanding commercial signs (directional signs for customer parking on private property excepted);
- Off-site and general advertising signs (“billboards”);
- Standard product and logo signs provided by national distributors (merchants are encouraged to create their own unique signs symbolic of their personal business);
- Signs, other than graphic symbols or logos

unique to a business, located on the sloping surface of awnings;

- Signs, other than real estate notices, on vacant or closed buildings;
- Temporary signs and promotional decorations such as pennants and balloons, without special permits (holiday signs excepted), or that remain after a permit period or holiday has passed;
- Political signs that are not removed after election day;
- Signs on privately-owned benches;
- Signs using florescent material; and
- Private signs on public property.

### 9.15 Other Sign Regulations

In addition to these guidelines, all signs shall conform to the City of Fremont Sign Regulations, except where modified by these guidelines. Design approval and a sign permit must be obtained prior to sign design and fabrication.

### 9.16 Directional Signs for Parking Lots

- a) Directional signs marking entries and exits to customer parking lots should contain no more than one commercial image, logo, or message, which should be subservient to text identifying “customer parking”. Monument signs no higher than three (3) feet should be used. The area of each sign should not be greater than seven (7) square feet. Each driveway should have no more than one directional sign, located on private property near sidewalks.
- c) Directional parking lot sign boards and supports should be made of wood materials and should have individual die-cut lettering or graphics, which can be made of materials other than wood.

d) Offsite directional signage to customer parking facilities should be part of an overall signage plan for the district. Directional signs should not be internally lit but should be visible from both traffic lanes.

### 9.17 Building Name Signage

While Niles will never be a museum, the story of its construction is reflected in its building names and dates. Building name signs should be identified and reinstalled where previously existing. New nameplates and devices such as tiled entryways should be encouraged in entryways for both existing and new buildings.

a) Primary building entryway signage is encouraged, including the use of tiled entryways and name plaques in the entry area. Where original building name signage can be documented it should be restored and replaced. Unique plaques relating to building history are also encouraged. Plaques should be of permanent materials, one foot square or less, well-detailed and located at eye-level. All such building name signage should be excluded

from calculation of business signage area. Refer to Guideline 1.4 regarding 'keyhole entries' and Figure 22.

b) A signboard protruding above roofline, eave or parapet may be appropriate if it can be adequately documented as the original location for a building name sign. These were characteristic of some Victorian and railroad buildings in Niles. Refer to Guideline 9.3.

### 9.18 Directional and Informational Signs for Historic Resources, Trails and Parks

The Niles Historic Overlay district is rich in historical parks, open space and trails. Directional signage to these nearby destinations is consistent with the visitor destination vision for Niles. A signage program is encouraged for providing information on location of parks and trails in the Niles historic corridor, including directional signs to Vallejo Mills, the California Nursery, Shinn House, Niles Canyon, the reclaimed gravel quarries and the Alameda Creek Regional Trail at the south end of Niles Boulevard.

The Niles area is rich in historic buildings, both in its downtown and the surrounding area. History tours have been a popular aspect of the annual festivals in Niles for many years and a variety of walking tours exist. A street signage and building plaque program is appropriate to promote walking tours in Niles and is consistent with the Niles vision. A street signage and building plaque program is encouraged to celebrate history in Niles.



Figure 22 *An example of a tile-clad bulkhead and recessed entry to a Niles restaurant*



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### **9.19 Public Signs**

The Niles Sign Plan, describing the conceptual location and design of public signage was adopted by the City Council on October 12, 1999. Consistent with this Plan, public signage should:

- Include design elements that relate to the history of Niles, such as agriculture, railroads, film industry, and antiques;
- Reflect the eclectic character of the district;
- Have a timeless look, not specific to any one historical period;
- Appear to have been placed over time, not newly installed; and
- Look informal and not “designed” for Niles.

Public signs may include directional signs, promotional signs, placemaking signs, gateway signs, and a public information kiosk.

### **9.20 Surviving Historic Signs**

Surviving historic signs should be retained and restored and the original sign message should not be modified. Surviving historic sign area shall not be counted against the total sign area allowed for a commercial building, as defined in the Zoning Ordinance.



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## 10. MATERIALS, COLOR AND ORNAMENT

### *Intent:*

*Niles is celebrated for its colorful tile and brick making heritage. Kraftile, one of Niles' largest employers, produced tile products between 1926 and 1996. Brightly glazed decorative tile was mass-produced until about 1939, the same period when many of the present storefronts in Niles were being rebuilt or newly constructed. The color and design of this tile work was often influenced by the Art Deco and Modern styles of the day. The Ellsworth Building is unique in its Moorish Revival design and Spanish tile work. Storefronts lacking tiled bulkheads today in Niles may have been built outside this time period or have been refaced in the 1960's for a frontier look.*

### 10.1 Graffiti-Resistant Materials

The potential task of removing graffiti from buildings and storefronts should be considered in the selection of exterior finish materials, particularly at the ground level.

### 10.2 New Construction

- a) Brick veneers should be avoided for corner buildings, with the exception of where there is a close match in scale and color to local brick. Where brick is used it should be continuous in the various facade elements and should not be used for only a portion of the building surface. Cross-reference to Guideline 7.5 on Continuity of Facade Elements.
- b) In general, new mid-block buildings should consider the use of wood, consistent with the False Front or Victorian styles (Figure 14, page 25).
- c) In general, the use of plain or "beaded" stucco with some ornamentation would be acceptable for buildings constructed within the Niles commercial district.

### 10.3 Composition of Commercial Building Façades

- a) Proportions of original storefront frames, transoms and the depth relationship between bulkhead and windows should be retained and restored. Extension of the storefront base outwards may be appropriate for new buildings.
- b) New commercial buildings should be designed with attention to three distinctive parts of the front façade: the storefront, the portion of the façade above the storefront, and upper culmination of the façade. The storefront needs to read as a distinct element, with particular attention paid to design and materials of the base or bulkhead, side piers or columns, transom area (if any) and sign panel area. The base should extend out from the face of the building a few inches to provide a visual foundation to the structure. It should be finished with durable materials, such as tile. Design and use of materials on the middle portion of the façade should be straightforward and functional, and, in particular, it should not compete for attention with the storefront portion. The upper portion should acknowledge the design features of adjacent buildings, in terms of their parapets and rooflines.

### 10.4 Building Colors

- a) Building colors in the commercial district are either faded or dark and murky, with the exception of those buildings which are finished with tiles, brick, and stucco. Richer, more saturated colors should be used. At the same time, dark colors are inappropriate for large.
- b) Tinting stucco to achieve dark or rich colors is inadvisable, because the stucco normally becomes pastel or chalky.
- c) Avoid the use of dark colors in the Niles Historic District, except where it can be documented as appropriate for existing

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structures. Richly saturated colors in tile and brick should be used. Avoid dark colors on large wall areas.

- d) Avoid the use of tinted stucco. Where painted stucco is a color other than white, it should be a different color than the paint colors already found on stucco buildings in the Niles Historic District. Where stucco storefronts are adjacent, they should contrast in color to maintain the rhythm of 20' - 25' storeframes along the street.
- e) Color schemes on mid-block store fronts or Victorian buildings should incorporate a minimum of three colors, not including color of the roofing material. Use of one principal color and a minimum of two colors for trim, ornament or other features are encouraged. Façade elements such as tile bulkheads should not be counted as one of the three contributing colors.

### 10.5 Tile Work and Other Ornament

The history of tile design in California is rooted in the Arts and Crafts movement. While the clays in the Niles area largely lent themselves to functional rather than decorative tile manufacture, both deeply glazed and molded tiles were popular for exterior and interior uses for commercial buildings in Niles in the 1920's and 30's. Kraftile produced these using the monolithic method, greatly increasing the bond between tile and glaze. Several brick factories operated in the immediate vicinity, including one owned by the Ellsworth family. The Ellsworth building in Niles is particularly distinctive in its combined use of brick, stucco and tile in an interpretation of the Moorish Revival. Other brick buildings in Niles used terracotta ornament, mass-produced at Kraftile and elsewhere in California during this time period. The history of local tile-

making and existing tile work on buildings in the Niles district should be drawn upon when designing additions and new construction. See Figure 29.

### 10.6 Appropriate and Inappropriate Materials and Colors

High quality, durable exterior finish materials, compatible with those present on Primary Historic Resources, should be used. The following lists of materials should be considered. Other materials may be acceptable, subject to Design Review.

#### Appropriate Materials For Commercial Block/Corner Buildings

- a) Building Walls, Windows and Doors
  - Concrete and plaster (lightly troweled or sand finished).
  - Stucco with deep reveals.
  - New structural and face-brick.
  - Concrete block and brick block (concealed side and rear elevations only).
  - Terra cotta.
  - Decorative ceramic tile, with integral color, used as an accent.
  - Clear glass.
  - Wood frame window systems.
  - Aluminum windows and doors, if substantial.
- b) Roofs
  - Concrete or clay tiles to be single color.
  - Dark-colored metal with standing seam.
  - Composition shingle.
- c) Fences, Walls and Gates
  - Stucco walls.
  - Painted wood fences and gates.
  - Open wrought-iron style fence.



Figure 29 Decorative brick, tile, and painted coffer ceilings on commercial buildings in Niles

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**Inappropriate Materials For Commercial Block/  
Corner Style:**

- a) Building Walls, Windows and Doors
  - Glass block.
  - Any rough-hewn or rustic material.
  - Wood siding or hardboard.
  - Synthetic stucco when used to create overly built-up elements, such as column capitals.
  - Baked enamel panels, tiles (except as accents), or other reflective materials.
  - “Narrow line” aluminum window and door systems.
  - Imitation stone.
  - Used brick.
  - Molded foam decorative elements.
- b) Roofs
  - Cedar shake.
  - Crushed stone.
  - Brightly colored reflective tile or standing seam metal.
  - No slate or slate substitutes.
- c) Fences, Walls and Gates
  - Concrete masonry units, unless covered with stucco.
  - Chain link.
  - Rough sawn or natural wood.

**Appropriate Materials For Mid-block And  
Victorian-Derived Styles:**

- a) Building Walls, Windows and Doors
  - Solid body stained wood siding.
  - Painted horizontal wood ship-lap.
  - Painted exterior “hardboard”, resembling ship-lap.
  - Any of the original colors used on Victorian Style buildings in the Niles, as confirmed by adequate research or field investigation.
  - Clear glass in doors and in true, divided light systems.
  - Wood frame windows and doors.
  - Cast iron.
  - Ceramic tile with integral color emulating building tiles in Niles.
  - Copper window frames, combined with tile bulkheads.
- b) Roofs (where visible)
  - Composition shingle.
- c) Fences, Walls and Gates
  - Wood picket.
  - Wrought iron, but not combined with substantial masonry.

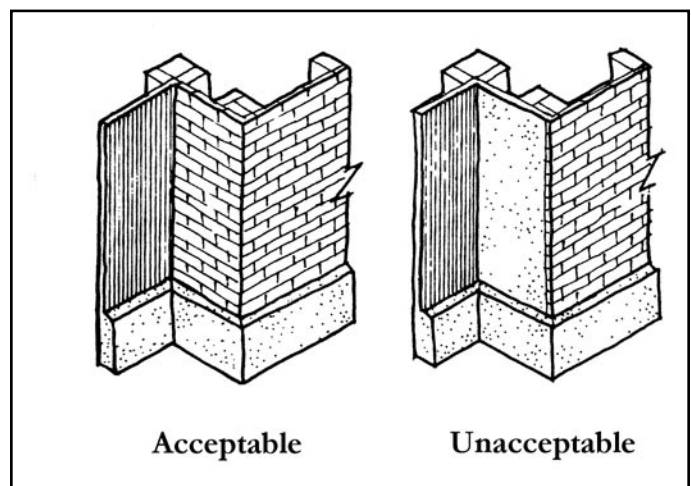
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## Inappropriate Materials For Mid-block And Victorian-Derived Styles:

- a) Building Walls, Doors and Windows
  - Glass block.
  - Cement plaster and synthetic stucco
  - Imitation stone.
  - Exterior plywood.
  - Aluminum windows and doors.
  - Baked enamel panels.
  - Brick or brick veneer.
  
- b) Roofs
  - Cedar shake.
  - Crushed stone.
  - Brightly colored (e.g., orange, blue) reflective tile or standing seam metal
  - Slate or slate substitutes.
  
- c) Fences, Walls and Gates
  - Stucco or synthetic stucco.
  - Chain link.
  - Rough sawn or natural wood.
  - Any substantially opaque fences except for side and rear yards.

### 10.7 Change of Materials

Wall materials should be applied to convey solidity. Materials should not change at outside corners or in the same wall plane (Figure 30).



*Figure 30 Examples of acceptable and unacceptable changes in exterior wall materials*





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## 11. LANDSCAPING

*Intent:*

*Historic preservation in the Niles Historic Overlay District applies equally to its planted heritage. New development in the district shall take existing significant trees into consideration and design around them. The importance of these Niles landmarks requires an ongoing tree management program.*

*New planting selections shall include exotic species and horticultural varieties first introduced and developed by the Shinn family, John Rock and the Roeding family over a century of nursery management in the Niles area. By the middle of the 20th century the Roedings carried over 400 rose varieties, including being selected to bulk grow the Peace Rose for Western suppliers the year of the United Nations first convening in San Francisco.*

*Landscape design should be appropriate to its context in the Niles Historic Overlay District. Lawns are characteristic of residential areas only, with the exception of the Niles Depot, which had a lawn area during the days of railroad passenger travel in Niles. Dramatic specimen trees are appropriate to define edges and focal areas in the railroad land area, whereas foundation style plantings are inappropriate for most railroad buildings.*

### 11.1 Trees

- a) Selection of new plantings should use plant materials appropriate to Niles history and to the proposed planting location. Depending on the proposed site this may include specimen flowering trees and unusual flowering shrubs, roses, bulbs and perennials. Use of disease and insect resistant varieties may be appropriate.
- b) Use of locally made or terracotta-style planters for seasonal flower displays are encouraged for outdoor dining areas and entryways. Paired planters are appropriate for symmetrical storeframes for a balanced consistency. Windowboxes may be appropriate if 3 - 4 feet above the ground.

### 11.2 Water Conservation

Plant selection shall consider rates of water consumption. Proposed projects shall comply with the Development Policy for Water Conservation for New Developments, adopted by Resolution 7866 of the City of Fremont City Council, May 22, 1990.

### 11.3 Heritage Trees

Significant trees should be identified, managed, protected during construction and retained in the Niles Historic Overlay District in an ongoing tree management plan. The Landmark Tree list should be updated and new nominations made to the list.



## 1. THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

### *Introduction:*

*By the nature of the City's designation, all primary historic resources in the Niles Historic Overlay District are subject to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards. These standards are mandatory and have been developed to guide work undertaken on historic buildings. In their full scope, they address many actions that may be taken with respect to historic buildings and properties, including acquisition, protection, stabilization, preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction.*

*Rehabilitation is the most applicable action that may occur in the Niles Historic Overlay District and, therefore, the Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation (codified in 36 CFR 67) are included in this section of the guidelines and regulations document. "Rehabilitation" is defined as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values."*

*Initially developed by the Secretary of the Interior to determine the appropriateness of proposed project work on registered properties within the Historic Preservation Fund grant-in-aid-program, the Standards for Rehabilitation have been widely used over the years—particularly to determine if a rehabilitation qualifies as a Certified Rehabilitation for Federal tax purposes. In addition, the Standards have guided Federal agencies in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities for properties in Federal ownership or control; and State and local officials in reviewing both Federal and nonfederal rehabilitation proposals. They have also been adopted by historic district and planning commissions across the country.*

*The intent of these Standards is to assist the long-term preservation of a property's significance through the preservation of historic materials and features. The Standards pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes,*

*and occupancy. They apply to both the exterior and interior of the building as well as to related landscape features of the site and more general environment. Finally, the Standards also apply to attached, adjacent, or related new construction. To be certified for Federal tax purposes, a rehabilitation project must be determined by the Secretary to be consistent with the historic character of the structure(s), and where applicable, the district in which it is located.*

*The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation, Rehabilitation, and Restoration are not adopted as part of the Niles Historic Overlay District guidelines and regulations document. They are referenced in the bibliography and should be consulted when such actions are required by Primary Historic Resource Properties.*

### 1.1 The Standards

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive material or alterations of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, shall not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

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6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used.

8. Archeological resources shall be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Reference: *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. Revised by Gary L. Hume, H. Ward Jandl, and Kay D. Weeks. U. S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington D.C., 1990.

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## 2. SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY HISTORIC RESOURCES

*Intent:*

*The following supplemental guidelines for Primary Historic Resources in the Niles Historic Overlay District are intended to provide additional direction for compliance with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. They are not intended to supplant or weaken any of the Standards.*

### 2.1 Attic and Basement Space

Existing attic or cellar space in a building listed as a Primary Historic Resource may be converted to active uses, including offices and apartments, provided that any exterior modifications are consistent with the historic character of the building per The Secretary's Standards.

### 2.2 New Signs on Historic Buildings

a) New signs should be compatible with the character of an historic building, by use of a design and materials, which are responsive to the building's period and style.

b) Signboards are considered appropriate for rehabilitated storefronts; however, individual die-cut letters are considered preferable (Commercial Guideline 10.3). If signboards are used, they should be placed within an area framed by existing architectural elements (e.g., above transom windows and between pilasters).

c) A signboard should not exceed two (2) feet in height, and approximately 60% of the signboard area should be devoted to lettering. Letters whose vertical dimension is eight to 15 inches are considered to be sufficiently large, whether individually cut and mounted or painted onto a

signboard.

d) Signboards should be fabricated from marine exterior plywood and should use high quality, durable finish materials. A narrow molding around the signboard may be used to enhance its appearance.

### 2.3 Documented Historic Signs

a) Documented (physical or photographic) historic painted signs, neon signs and wall signs can be replicated when they are:

- Associated with historic figures, events or places.
- Significant as evidence of the history of the product, business or service advertised.
- Significant as reflecting the history of the building or the development of the historic district. A sign may be the only indicator of a building's historic use.
- Characteristic of a specific historic period, such as gold leaf on glass, neon or stainless steel lettering.

b) Surviving historic signs should be retained and restored and the original sign message should not be modified. Surviving historic sign area shall not be counted against the total sign area allowed for a commercial building, as defined in the Zoning Ordinance.

### 2.4 Window Replacement

High quality materials and detailing should be used when plans call for replacements. For example, wood frame windows should replace aluminum frame glazing. New windows should have sash and frame thicknesses and window depths, which are similar to those of original or historic windows. Such detailing introduces shadow, which allows

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façades to become more substantial in their appearance.

## **2.5 Paint Colors**

Rehabilitation and maintenance of existing structures should consider original colors. Investigation of the existing colors should be made by carefully scraping away the various coats of paint in a small area. White, although not an inappropriate color for Victorian Era buildings, was not used as much as it is today.

## **2.6 Historic Features**

Existing details or ornament should not be removed or obscured with signs, awnings or facade changes.

## **2.7 No Painted Masonry**

Natural or previously unpainted surfaces, such as brick, tile or terra cotta, should not be painted or treated with other coating materials.

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### 3. LANDMARK TREES OF THE CITY OF FREMONT, NILES DISTRICT

38848	Cherry Lane	<i>Picea pungens</i> 'glauca' (COLORADO BLUE SPRUCE)
315	I St.	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i> (COAST LIVE OAK)
331	I St.	<i>Acer saccharum</i> (SILVER MAPLE)
160	J Street on Second Street side	<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i> (CAROB)
38416	Mission Blvd.	<i>Ulmus americana</i> (AMERICAN ELM)
39128	Mission Blvd.	<i>Platanus racemosa</i> (CALIFORNIA SYCAMORE)
39700	Mission Blvd.	<i>Schinus molle</i> (CALIFORNIA PEPPER)
36696	Niles Blvd.	<i>Albizia julibrissin</i> (SILK TREE OR MIMOSA)
	West side of Niles Blvd. at H St.	<i>Pinus pinea</i> (ITALIAN STONE PINE)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Abies cephalonica</i> (GREEK FIR)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Acer davidii</i> (DAVID'S MAPLE)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Araucaria bidweillii</i> (BUNYABUNYA)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Brachychiton populneum</i> (KURRAJONG BOTTLE TREE)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Cryptomeria japonica</i> (JAPANESE CRYPTOMERIA)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Cupressus macrocarpa</i> (MONTEREY CYPRESS)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i> (BLUE GUM)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i> 'Compacta' (DWARF BLUE GUM)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'purpurea' (COPPER BEECH)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Melaleuca styphelioides</i> (MELALEUCA)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Picea pugens</i> "glauca" (COLORADO BLUE SPRUCE)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Picea smithiana</i> (HIMALAYAN SPRUCE)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Pinus canariensis</i> (CANARY ISLAND PINE) (1 tree)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Pinus canariensis</i> (CANARY ISLAND PINE) (5 trees in group)
36501	Niles Blvd., California Nursery	<i>Quercus suber</i> (CORK OAK)
101	Niles Canyon Road	<i>Platanus racemosa</i> (CALIFORNIA SYCAMORE)
1251	Peralta Blvd., Shinn Park	<i>Acer palmatum dissectum atropurpureum</i> (RED LACELEAF JAPANESE MAPLE)
1251	Peralta Blvd., Shinn Park	<i>Cryptocarya miersi</i> (CHILEAN BELLOTA)
1251	Peralta Blvd., Shinn Park	<i>Ficus macrophylla</i> (MORETON BAY FIG)
1251	Peralta Blvd., Shinn Park	<i>Ginkgo biloba</i> (GINKGO)
1251	Peralta Blvd., Shinn Park	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i> (ENGLISH HOLLY)
1251	Peralta Blvd., Shinn Park	<i>Jubaea spectabilis</i> (SYRUP PALM or MONKEY COCONUT)
1251	Peralta Blvd., Shinn Park	<i>Magnolia soulangeana</i> (SAUCER MAGNOLIA)
1251	Peralta Blvd., Shinn Park	<i>Metasequoia glyptostroboides</i> (DAWN REDWOOD)
585	Pickering Ave.	<i>Araucaria heterophylla</i> (STAR PINE)
841	Rancho Arroyo Parkway	<i>Cupressus macrocarpa</i> (MONTEREY CYPRESS)
3700	Second St.	<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i> (CAMPHOR)
37112	Second St.	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i> (TULIP TREE)
37587	Second St.	<i>Castanea sativa</i> (SPANISH CHESTNUT)

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37891	Second St.	Cupressus macrocarpa (MONTEREY CYPRESS)
	Shinn St. by railroad tracks	Quercus suber (CORK OAK)
37899	Third St.	Jubaea chilensis (WINE PALM)
37929	Third St.	Acacia melanoxylon (BLACKWOOD ACACIA)

Source: Fremont City Beautiful Committee, Landmark Trees of the City of Fremont, 1973



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## 4. REFERENCE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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California Preservation Foundation, “Preservation for Profit”

California Preservation Foundation, “What’s in it for You? Capitalizing on Historic Resources with the Mills Act and Other California Preservation Incentives”

California State Office of Historic Preservation, Resource Documents (916-653-6624):

1. “Certified Local Governments in the National Register Program”, National Register Bulletin 26.
2. “Questions and Answers About CLG Grants from SHPOs, An Introductory Guide”, Pamphlet from U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Cultural Resources.
3. “Certified Local Government Program, Technical Assistance Bulletin #2, Level of Participation”, California State Office of Historic Preservation.
4. “Certification for Certified Local Ordinances/Local Historic Districts and Certified Local Governments”, California State Office of Historic Preservation.
5. “Model Historic Preservation Ordinance, Certified Local Government Program”, California State Office of Historic Preservation.
6. “Certified Local Governments in the National Historic Preservation Program”, California State Office of Historic Preservation.

City of Fremont Plans and Ordinances:

1. General Plan, Niles Historic Overlay Zoning District, Primary Historic Resources, 1981, 1987, and 1990.
2. Municipal Code, Articles 18.4, “(H) Historic Overlay District and Historical Architectural Review”; 19.1, “Historical Architectural Review Board”; 19.2, “Historical Resources”; and 20, “Parking, Loading Areas and Regulations Pertaining to Vehicle Storage in Various Zoning Districts”.
3. Council Resolution 3401, Standards and Procedures of the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB), February 5, 1974.
4. Zoning Ordinance, Article 21, “Sign Regulations”.
5. Unreinforced Masonry (URM) Ordinance
6. Policies for Water Conservation, Resolution 7866, adopted May 22, 1990

McAlester, Virginia & Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, NY., 1990.

State Historical Building Code, The State of California, “Health and Safety Code” Part 2.7, Sections 18950 through 18961.

State Historical Building Code, “Alternative Handicapped Provisions”, Chapter 8-13. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Historic Preservation Projects With Guidelines for Applying the Standards, W. Brown Morton III and Gary L. Hume, 1976; revised and expanded by Kay D. Weeks and Gary L. Hume, 1983; further

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revisions by Gary L. Hume, Kay D. Weeks and H. Ward Jandl following public comment period, 1992.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings, promulgated in 36 CFR 67, 1990. It should be noted that the minor revisions to the Standards for Rehabilitation will not affect their application so that a project which previously was acceptable would continue to be acceptable.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring & Reconstructing Historic Buildings, Kay D. Weeks and Anne E. Grimmer, 1995 (a revision of the 1992 volume).

Preservation Briefs constitute a series of technical publications prepared by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The following Preservation Briefs, as indicated by number, are available from the State Office of Historic Preservation, P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001 (916-653-6624):

1. The Cleaning and Waterproof Coating of Masonry Buildings
2. Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Brick Buildings
4. Roofing for Historic Buildings
5. The Preservation of Historic Adobe Buildings
6. Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings
7. The Preservation of Historic Glazed Architectural Terra-Cotta
9. The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows
10. Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork
11. Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts
14. New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns
17. Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving their Character
22. The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco
23. Preserving Historic Ornamental Plaster
25. The Preservation of Historic Signs
27. The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron
30. The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs
31. Mothballing Historic Buildings
32. Making Historic Properties Accessible
35. Understanding Old Buildings: The Process of Architectural Investigation
37. Appropriate Methods of Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Housing
38. Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry

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## **REVIEW PROCESS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THESE GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS**

The review process is facilitated by adequate preparation of submittal materials, including use of recommended drawing scales, sufficient detail and use of photographic images to show the relationship of the proposed project to the adjacent building characteristics. With the exception of single-family residential properties, all development projects in the Niles Historic Overlay District are subject to review by one or more of the following City bodies:

1. **Development Organization**  
The Development Organization is the City's site plan and architectural approval agency, and consists of staff from the City's Departments of Development and Environmental Services, Maintenance and Recreation Services, Fire and Police. With the exception of single-family residences in subdivisions or on existing lots, the Development Organization reviews all new development projects, including exterior modifications to existing commercial buildings.
2. **Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB)**  
HARB reviews exterior changes to designated Primary Historic Resources and exterior features of proposed new commercial projects and additions to existing commercial properties located within the City's two Historic Overlay Districts. When such projects are subject to review and action by the Planning Commission or City Council, HARB acts only in an advisory capacity. Some minor exterior alterations to properties in the Districts are reviewed by staff only.
3. **Planning Commission and/or City Council**  
Projects which require review and action by the Planning Commission and/or City Council, such as General Plan Amendments and Zoning Changes, Conditional Use Permits and Planned Districts, are assessed for conformance with the guidelines and regulations by staff prior to consideration by these bodies

