

MULTI-FAMILY GUIDELINES

April 1991



INTRODUCTION

Multi-family development is a valued part of the City of Plano's housing stock. While many types of households may elect to live in apartments, multi-family housing is especially important in meeting the housing needs of small and mobile households. It is also essential in providing affordable housing for Plano's residents.

Multi-family housing should be located throughout the community as a part of Plano's neighborhoods. Multi-family residents require convenient access to the same services, such as schools, parks, and retail uses, as do other households.

These guidelines are designed to promote good development. The guidelines address:

- The proper size and location of new multi-family zoning and development;
- Compatibility and coordination of multi-family developments with adjacent land uses;
- Maintenance of a livable residential environment for tenants.

These guidelines supplement the Zoning Ordinance and other regulations affecting multi-family development. The guidelines are intended to promote good design. Developers are encouraged to review the guidelines prior to submitting an application for multi-family zoning or preparing preliminary site plans. Staff will use the guidelines in addition to appropriate regulations in reviewing zoning and development requests. This review process is flexible. Compliance with the guidelines is not mandatory, except where supported by ordinance. The applicant is encouraged to propose innovative alternatives that accomplish the stated purpose of the guidelines. Upon receipt of a zoning case, preliminary site plan, or site plan, the staff will evaluate how the request complies with guidelines or how effectively it addresses the intent of each section through alternative solutions.

When zoning requests and development plans are presented to the Planning & Zoning Commission and/or City Council, the staff's report and recommendation will address the proposal's conformance to the guidelines and objectives.

SITE APPROPRIATENESS

OBJECTIVE:

Multi-family development should be located on sites which will result in well planned projects.

GUIDELINES:

- Multi-family development should be located in areas designated for residential use on the Comprehensive Plan.
- Multi-family development should be located on the perimeter of a neighborhood, with primary access to arterials or secondary thoroughfares (Type "D" or larger as identified on the Thoroughfare Plan). (See Figure 7.)
- Some areas zoned or planned for commercial or office development may be suitable for multi-family development when they are extensions of a residential area and where adjacent land uses would not adversely impact the development.
- Multi-family development should generally accommodate a minimum of 150 units. Smaller complexes may be appropriate as infill development or to meet special housing needs.
- No more than 500 units should be located in any one area, with a minimum 1,000 foot separation between major concentrations of units. (See Land Use and Housing Elements in the Comprehensive Plan). (See Figure 1.)
- Multi-family development within two or more contiguous neighborhoods should be located so that no more than 750 units are located within a 1,000 foot radius. (See Land Use and Housing Elements in the Comprehensive Plan). (See Figure 1.)
- Multi-family development should not exceed 18 dwelling units per acre and 2 stories in height (MF-2) when located on the perimeter of a typical residential neighborhood.
- High-density residential development of greater than 18 units per acre (MF-3) should be limited to major employment centers. (Refer to Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan).

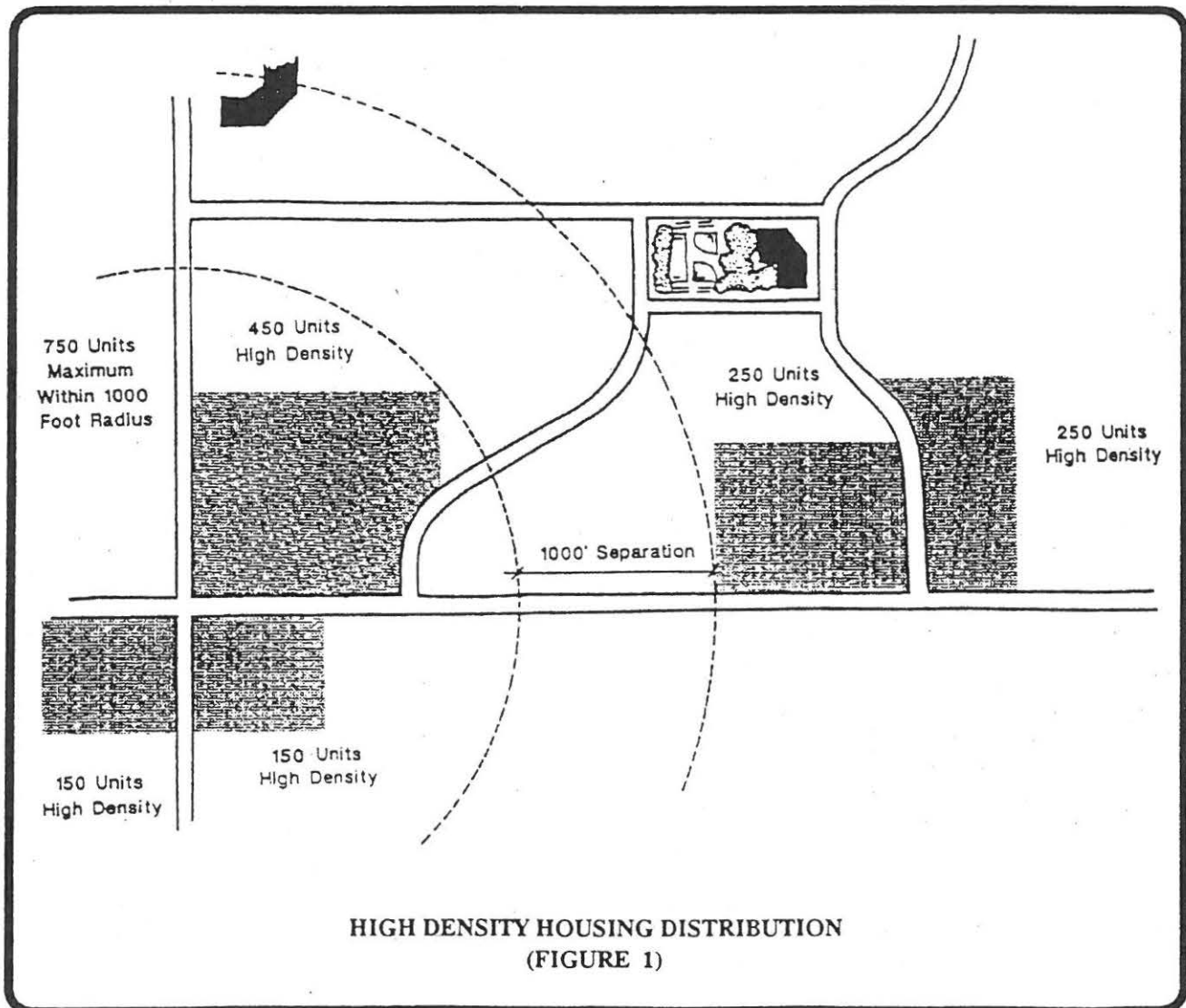
- High density residential developments of greater than 18 units per acre (MF-3) should be limited to areas within the following primary development corridors (Reference corridor locations in the Comprehensive Plan): (see Figure 2)

The Dallas North Tollway Corridor

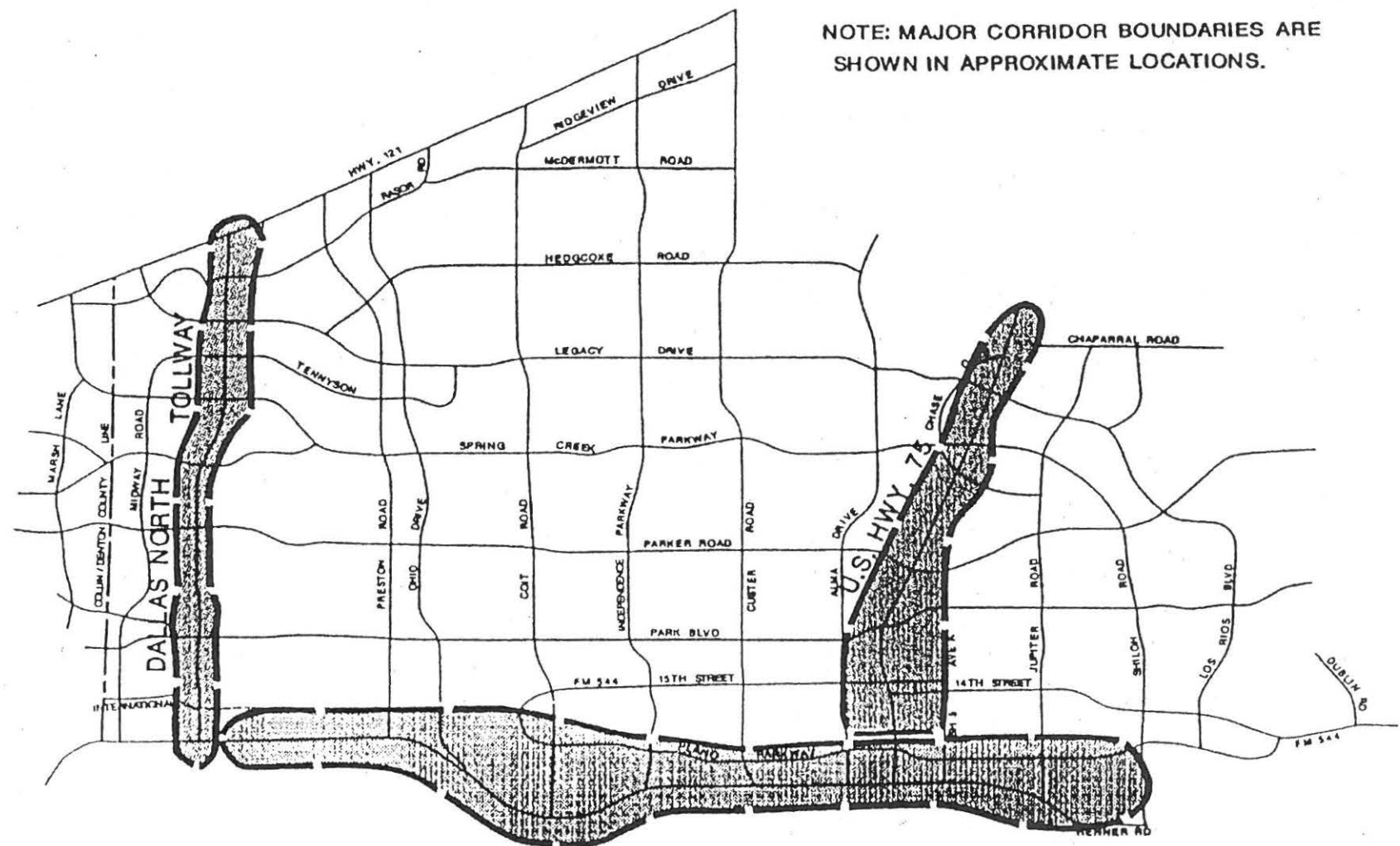
The S.H. 190/Plano Parkway Corridor

The U.S. 75 Corridor, excluding the east side of State Highway 5

- Some sites which are appropriate for multi-family development but have special environmental conditions such as flood plain, mature tree cover and steep slopes, may require special zoning restrictions such as density limits or environmental protection regulations.
- When property zoned multi-family is developed in phases each phase and the remaining property should be evaluated by the guidelines listed above.



NOTE: MAJOR CORRIDOR BOUNDARIES ARE SHOWN IN APPROXIMATE LOCATIONS.



STATE HWY. 190/ PLANO PKWY.

MAJOR CORRIDORS (FIGURE 2)

BUILDING ARRANGEMENT

OBJECTIVE:

Buildings should be arranged to take advantage of the site's natural character, provide a good residential environment and complement adjacent development.

GUIDELINES:

- Buildings should be arranged to take advantage of topography and other natural features of the site.
- Where possible, buildings should be arranged to provide views of open space and natural features.
- Buildings shall be arranged to respect the need for privacy from other units and adjacent properties. Buildings generally should not be closer than 75 feet to one another when placed parallel and in direct opposition (See Figure 3). Angled and offset building arrangement is preferred.
- Buildings should be arranged to provide areas of useable open space suitable for recreational uses. (See Figure 7.)
- The clubhouse and other common facilities should be easily accessible to both tenants and visitors. (See Figure 7.)

Minimum Setback and Building Separation Requirements (As required by the Zoning Ordinance)

Building Separation

In the interior of the development, the minimum distance between apartments shall be as follows (See Figure 3):

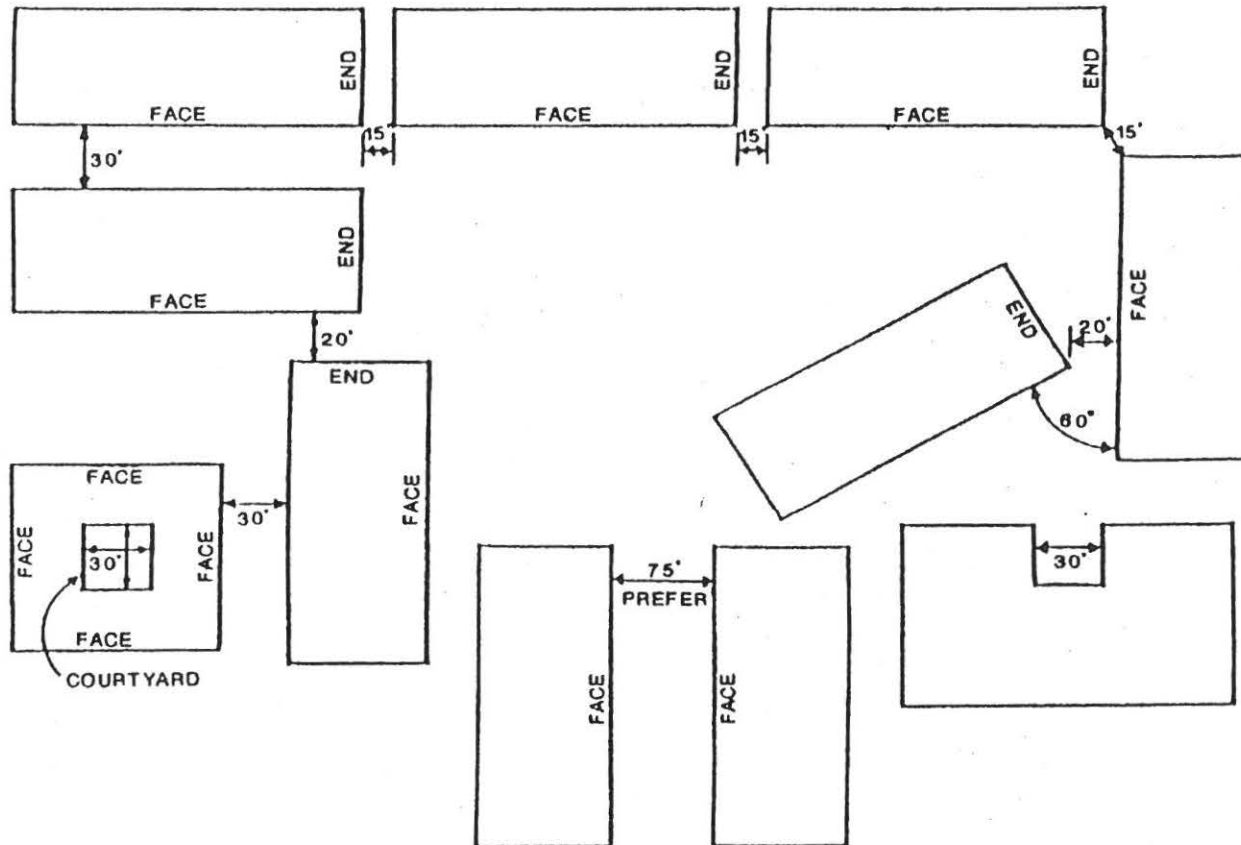
<u>Building Orientation</u>	<u>Distance</u>
Face to Face ¹	30'
Face to End ²	20'
Corner to Corner	15'
Angled Corner to Face (60° to 90° angle)	20'
*Courtyard Face to Face	30'
End to End	15'

1. Face - Exterior plane of a building that is 60 feet in length or greater.

2. End - A secondary exterior plane of a building that is less than 60 feet in length.

* Refer to Zoning Ordinance definition section.

ALL MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS OCCUPYING THE SAME LOT MUST BE SEPARATED FROM ONE ANOTHER BY THE MINIMUM DISTANCES ILLUSTRATED BELOW. ROOFS MAY EXTEND BEYOND THE MINIMUM SEPARATION; HOWEVER, NO PORTION OF A BUILDING MAY BE CLOSER THAN 10' TO ANOTHER BUILDING.



BUILDING SEPARATIONS (1, 2 & 3 STORY)
(FIGURE 3)

Front Yard

Minimum front yard setbacks shall be as follows:

<u>Building Orientation</u>	<u>Distance</u>
One-Story	25'
Two-Story	25'
Three-Story	100'

Side and Rear Yard

Minimum side and rear yard setbacks from adjacent non-residential and multi-family zoning shall be as follows:

<u>Building Orientation</u>	<u>Distance</u>
One-Story	15'
Two-Story	25'
Three-Story	25'

Additional Setbacks from Certain Residential Uses When Not Separated By A Street

The minimum setback from the zoning district boundary* for an apartment building adjacent to land proposed (as shown on an approved land study), developed or zoned for single-family, patio home or two family development shall be:

<u>Building Orientation</u>	<u>Distance</u>
One-Story	20'
Two-Story	60'
Three-Story	150'

* Zoning district boundaries typically follow property lines or center lines of streets, creeks or other natural features.

ACCESS

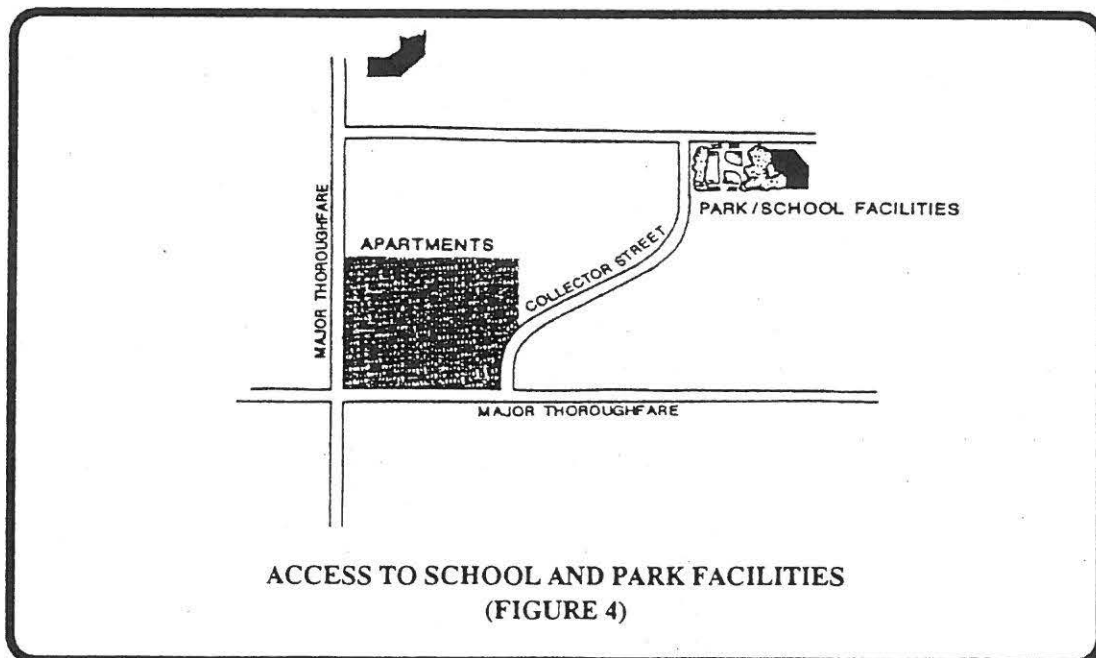
OBJECTIVE:

Multi-family development should have safe and efficient access.

GUIDELINES:

- A minimum of two points of access should be provided to the site.
- Where permitted by the Thoroughfare Standards Ordinance, drives on a divided thoroughfare should be located at median openings providing left turn access to and from the site. (See Figure 7.)
- Drive openings should be coordinated with existing and proposed developments as shown on a valid development plan.*
- Multi-family developments should not typically have access to local streets (Type "G").
- Where possible, multi-family development should have access to collector streets connecting to neighborhood schools and parks. (See Figure 4.)
- Interior sidewalks should be connected to public sidewalks adjacent to multi-family developments.

* Previously approved plans may be void as defined in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance.



CIRCULATION AND PARKING

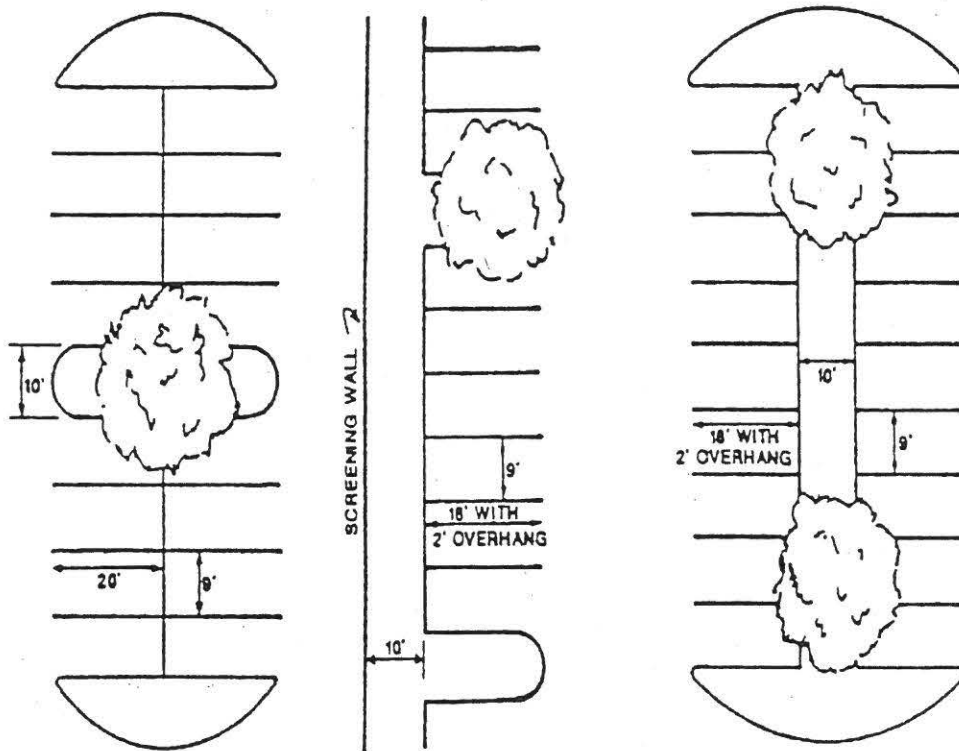
OBJECTIVE:

Multi-family development should have ample parking and efficient and safe drives and sidewalks.

GUIDELINES:

- Straight circulation aisles in excess of 500 feet should be avoided.
- Parking should not be located between the street and building face unless screened from the street by landscaping or berms. (See Figure 7.)
- Parking areas should be landscaped. Seventeen square feet of landscaping for each parking stall should be provided within the paved boundaries, including one tree per each ten parking spaces. (See Figure 5.)
- Parking spaces should be arranged to allow five foot wide access ways within 20 feet of entrances to buildings.
- Drives and parking areas should be separated from the buildings by open space and landscaping (6 feet minimum, 10₊ feet desirable).
- Boats, campers, trailers, and other recreational vehicles should be prohibited unless oversize parking areas are provided and designated. These areas should be screened from adjacent streets and residences. Special vehicle parking may not be used to meet the standard parking requirements.
- Dead end parking exceeding a depth of six parking spaces (54 feet) is discouraged.
- Barrier free sidewalks should be provided throughout the development and should connect major activity centers.
- Parking spaces should be provided near mail boxes.
- Required parking spaces for the handicap units shall be conveniently located and designed per the handicap parking standards.
- Garages may be used for a maximum of 50 percent of the required parking.
- All garages must be set back a minimum of ten feet from the circulation aisle.

- Drives and parking aisles should be designed to meet the following criteria:
 - a. Allow two-way directional flow.
 - b. Meet curve and turning radii standards required for service and emergency vehicles.
 - c. Avoid acute angle intersections less than 80° (90° intersections are preferred).
 - d. Avoid creating visibility problems affecting vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- Security gates and entrances can be used only if provision is made for the turnaround of vehicles before the gate and emergency ingress and egress.



17 SQUARE FEET OF LANDSCAPED AREA IS REQUIRED PER PARKING SPACE. ONE 3" CALIPER TREE PER 10 SPACES IS REQUIRED. ADDITIONAL LOW SHRUBS ARE RECOMMENDED. PAVEMENT SHOULD NOT BE PLACED CLOSER THAN 5' FROM THE TRUNK OF A TREE.

PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENTS
(FIGURE 5)

BUILDING ELEMENTS

OBJECTIVE:

Multi-family developments should be consistent in design throughout the development.

GUIDELINES:

- High quality, low maintenance building materials should be used, primarily masonry.
- Facades and roof lines should be consistent throughout the development in design, color, and materials.
- Gabled roofs with a minimum 5:12 pitch or hipped roofs should be used on one and two-story apartments.
- The use of flat roofs is discouraged.
- Mansard roofs may be appropriate for three story apartments to reduce the mass of the third story.
- Apartments built in and around historic downtown should be architecturally compatible with older structures in terms of general scale, roof lines, windows, and building materials.
- Building designs including porches, patios and balconies are encouraged.
- Screening walls should complement the development's architectural design.
- Painted screening walls should be avoided.
- Wrought iron fences are suggested for pool enclosures, and must meet all building code and safety requirements.

UTILITIES/MECHANICAL/SERVICE FACILITIES

OBJECTIVE:

Utilities, mechanical functions and service areas should be integrated into the multi-family development.

GUIDELINES:

- Utilities should be underground from the right-of-way to buildings to reduce visual clutter.
 - Utility meters should be clustered for each building.
 - Utility conduit and meter boxes should be painted to match building color.
 - All mechanical units should be screened.*
 - Satellite dishes should be located outside of areas counted as usable open space and should be screened.*
 - Dumpsters or compactors should be conveniently located. Dumpsters or compactors should not be located within 20 feet of doors, windows and balconies of the apartment units, or within 20 feet of a single-family or two-family lot line.
 - Dumpsters or compactors should not be visible from public streets.
 - Compactors should be enclosed with an eight foot masonry wall with gates.
 - Landscaped screens, maximum 40-inches in height, should be provided between all parking areas and public streets. If parking is located more than 75 feet from the street right-of-way, no screening is required unless needed for a headlight screen.
 - All dumpsters should be enclosed on three sides with six foot high walls constructed of the same materials and finishes as the buildings.
 - Dumpsters or compactors should be located so as not to restrict visibility within drive aisles.
 - Dumpsters or compactors should be easily accessed by sanitation trucks.
- * Screening should include a living screen of shrubs or building materials compatible to those used on the apartment buildings.

LANDSCAPE

OBJECTIVE:

The location and design of landscaped areas, entrances and edges should effectively reinforce the development's character and quality, identify its entry points, and soften the impact of large paved areas.

GUIDELINES:

- Landscape areas should generally consist of a combination of trees, shrubs, ground cover, berms and other landscape elements.
- Minimum 3" caliper native trees* are recommended.
- Artificial plants should not be used.
- Existing mature trees should be preserved where possible.
- Landscaping should be used to highlight entrances.
- Mechanical irrigation systems should be installed to ensure maintenance of plant materials.
- Drought and freeze resistant trees and shrubs should be used.
- Trees should be placed at least every 50± feet along screening walls to provide additional buffering.
- A landscape edge, a minimum of 10 feet in width, should be placed adjacent to all public streets. Trees, shrubs and flowers should be incorporated within this area. One tree per 500 square feet of landscaped edge is recommended. (See Figure 6.)
- A larger landscaped edge may be required as indicated in the Comprehensive Plan.
- One tree per 1,000 square feet of required open space is recommended.

* Suggested native trees are live oak, red oak, cedar elm, and bald cypress. Other plants may be acceptable.

- Landscaped screens, maximum 40-inches in height, should be provided between all parking areas and public streets. If parking is located more than 75 feet from the street right-of-way, no screening is required unless needed for a headlight screen.
- Landscaped screens may include a combination of plant massing, earth berms and walls.
- When fences are used along street frontages, wrought iron and brick column fences, in combination with landscaping, are recommended.
- Trees must be placed a minimum of five feet from utilities, aisles, sidewalks or other pavement.

PLANT LIST

Trees

<u>Size</u>	<u>Height</u>
*Live Oak	3" cal. 12'-14'
*Cedar Elm	3" cal. 12'-14'
*Bald Cypress	3" cal. 12'-14'
*Red Oak	3" cal. 12'-14'
Pecan (Deep Roots)	3" cal. 12'-14'
Japanese Black Pine	3" cal. 12'-14'

Ornamental Trees

*Crape Myrtle	2"-2 1/2" cal. 6'-7'
*Yaupon Holly	2"-2 1/2" cal. 6'-7'
*Bradford Pear	2"-2 1/2" cal. 6'-7'

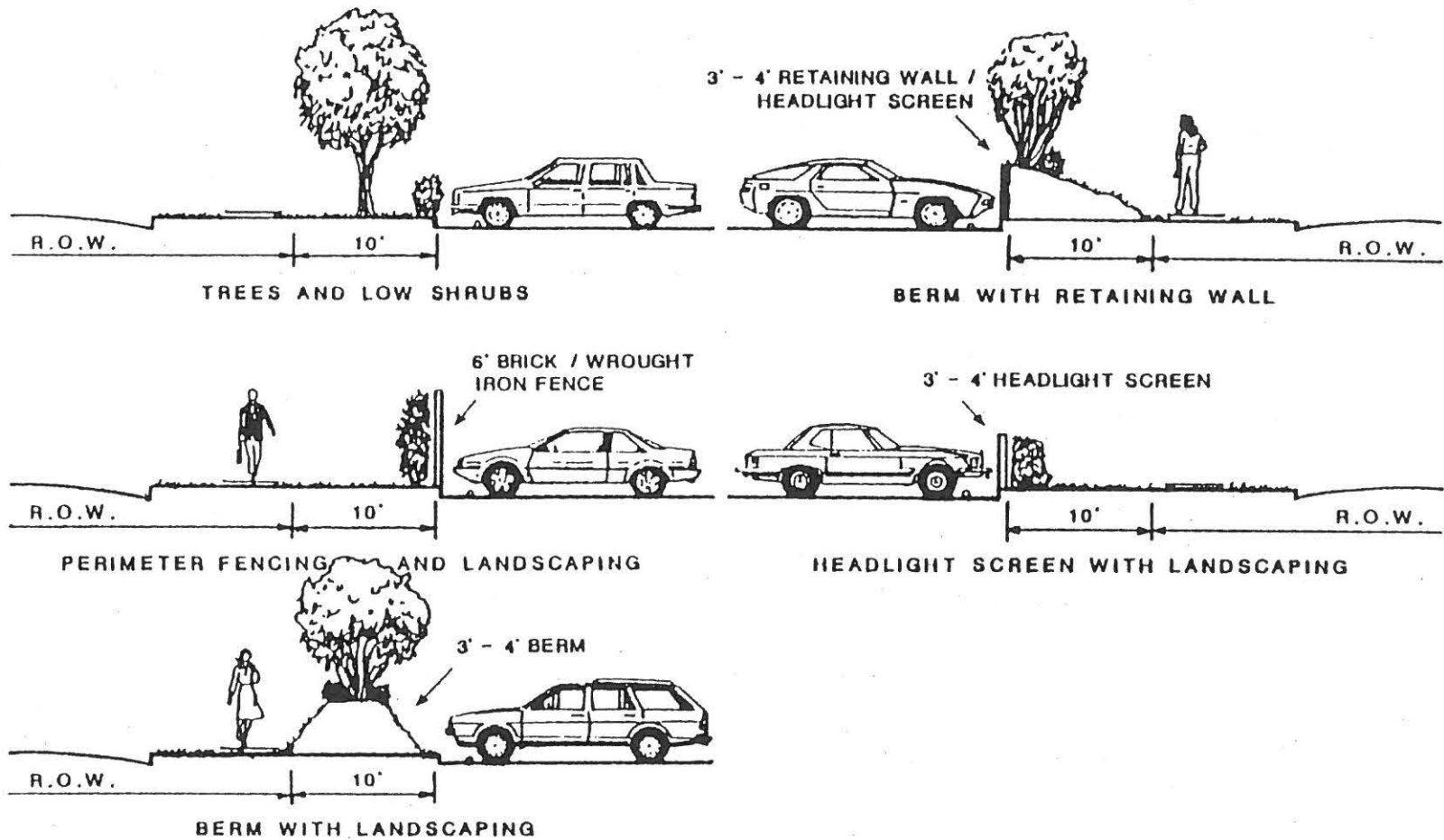
Shrubs

*Photinia Fraseri	5 gal. 36" (at planting)
*Dwarf Burford Holly	5 gal. 36" (at planting)
*Dwarf Yaupon Holly	5 gal. 12" (at planting)
Nandina Domestica "Compacta"	5 gal. 36" (at planting)
Harbour Dwarf Nandina	5 gal. 12" (at planting)
Eleagnus Pungens	5 gal. 36" (at planting)

Groundcover

*Asian Jasmine	4" pot
Honeysuckle	4" pot
*Liriope	4" pot

*Recommended



TYPICAL LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING TECHNIQUES
(FIGURE 6)

OPEN SPACE

OBJECTIVE:

Open space areas should be accessible, useable, and attractive.

GUIDELINES:

- Open space should be accessible to all residents. If located to the rear of the buildings, convenient access should be provided from each building. (See Figure 7.)
- Useable open space should be a minimum width of 15 feet.
- Where multi-family developments are adjacent to creeks, slopes, and other natural amenities, every effort should be made to maintain these resources and incorporate them into the project.
- When adjacent to parks, greenbelts, or private open space and recreation areas, multi-family developments should be designed to take advantage of these amenities.
- Up to 10% credit may be given when adjacent to a City park. The park must be visible and accessible to the apartment units, and shall not be separated from the apartments by a divided thoroughfare. (Section 3-104 of the Zoning Ordinance).
- Active open space areas and recreational facilities should be located to minimize noise problems for adjacent residential properties. (See Figure 7.)
- Storm water retention areas should be incorporated into the open space system and should not detract from the quality of the landscape design. The slopes of retention areas should be as gentle as possible.
- Activity areas should be defined by landscaping.

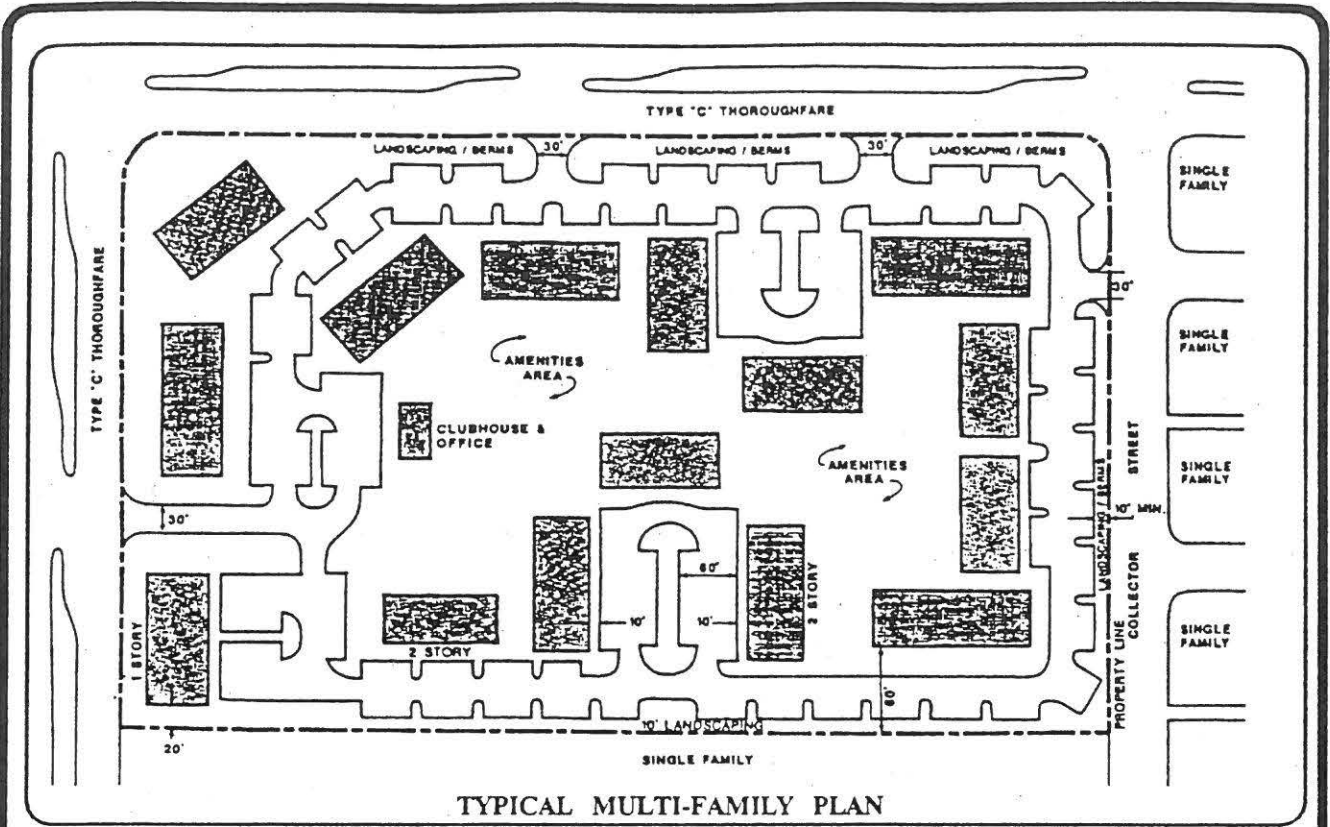
SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING

OBJECTIVE:

Proper location, size and design of signage and lighting should effectively reinforce the development's image and create a safe and secure environment.

GUIDELINES:

- Monument signs or attached panel signs are required.
- Assigning names to circulation aisles is discouraged. However, if street names are to be used, they must be noted on the site plan and approved by the City.
- Building identification and directional signs should be provided and be consistent throughout the development in color, design, and mounting.
- Lighting with an illumination of 0.5 foot candle should be provided along all walkways and recreation areas.
- Low mounted lights (not to exceed 15 feet in height) with an illumination of 1.0 foot candle should be used for large parking areas to enhance security and safety.
- Building identification signs should be lighted directly or indirectly to be readable at all times.
- All lighting shall be designed so as not to reflect or shine on adjacent properties (Ordinance 85-5-27).



TYPICAL MULTI-FAMILY PLAN

Site Appropriateness

Multi-family developments should be located on the perimeter of a neighborhood, with primary access to arterials or secondary thoroughfares (Type "D" or larger as identified on the Thoroughfare Plan).

Building Arrangement

Buildings should be arranged to provide areas of useable open space suitable for recreational uses.

The clubhouse and other common facilities should be easily accessible to both tenants and visitors.

Access

Where permitted by the Thoroughfare Ordinance, drives on a divided thoroughfare should be located at median openings providing left turn access to and from the site.

Circulation and Parking

Parking should not be located between the street and building face unless screened from the street by landscaping or berms.

Open Space

Open space should be accessible to all residents. If located to the rear of the buildings, convenient access should be provided from each building.

Active open space areas and recreational facilities should be located to minimize noise problems for adjacent residential properties.

(FIGURE 7)

REFERENCES

Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance, City of Plano, Texas

Comprehensive Plan, City of Plano, Texas

Thoroughfare Standards Ordinance, City of Plano, Texas

Uniform Fire Code, City of Plano, Texas

Code of Ordinances, City of Plano, Texas

Uniform Building Code as adopted by City Council

