



CITY POLICY AND STANDARDS - RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

CITY OF SANTA MARIA - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

110 South Pine Street, #101, Santa Maria, CA 93458-5082

(805) 925-0951, PLANNING EXT. 244, BUILDING EXT. 241.

Residential Development Standards

The Zoning Ordinance of the Santa Maria Municipal Code (Title 12) classifies and regulates the use of land, buildings, and structures within the City in accordance with the General Plan. The Zoning Ordinance also provides standards for the individual residential zoning districts and for specific types of residential development.

The Zoning Ordinance includes the following six residential zoning districts:

District*	Zoning Ordinance Chapter
RA Residential Agricultural	Chapter 12-5
R-1 Single-Family Residential	Chapter 12-6
RSL-1 Single-Family Small Lot Residential	Chapter 12-6a
R-2 Medium-Density Residential	Chapter 12-7
R-3 High-Density Residential	Chapter 12-8
RMH Residential Mobile Home Park	Chapter 12-9

* Please see the attached Residential Zoning Standards Matrix for General Plan density maximums by zoning district

Consult Zoning Ordinance Chapters 12-5 through 12-9 for the development standards for the individual zoning district. These chapters may be accessed from the City’s website by clicking on the “Zoning Ordinance Chapter” numbers in the table above. These chapters include sections regarding the building site, density and open space, setbacks, and height, as well as architectural and aesthetic standards for that residential zoning district. For a side-by-side comparison of residential design standards, please see the zoning standards matrix, attached.

The zoning code includes definitions pertinent to residential development, such as providing definitions to determine the various lot lines of a parcel, the various types of dwelling units, and defining what constitutes a “residential use” of property. These and other definitions may be found in [Chapter 12-2](#).

Design Criteria

The information below cites individual design standards that may be pertinent to the development of residential projects within the City of Santa Maria. These requirements cover the most common situations, but special circumstances may exist and the Planning Division should be consulted. Any questions regarding these requirements should be reviewed with the Planning Division, which is located at the Community Development Department, 110 South Pine Street, Room 101 (first floor), Santa Maria, CA 93458, (805) 925-0951, extension 244.

Site Design and Improvements

Site Plan:

City of Santa Maria's Basic Site Plan Standards are available on the City website, on the Development Application Form Catalog page.

<http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/40557.shtml>

Accessibility:

Any proposed multi-family development must comply with the provisions of the California Disabled Access Regulations and depict accessibility compliance for handicapped persons, including such features as adequate placement and number of accessible parking spaces, entrance to the building, and path of travel. For additional information regarding disabled access regulations, please contact the Building Division, 110 South Pine Street, Room #101 (first floor), Santa Maria, CA 93458, (805) 925-0951, extension 241.

Alley Improvements, Easements:

Approval of an [encroachment permit](#) is required before performing work within public right-of-way, street, alley, or utility easement. Encroachment permits are issued at the City of Santa Maria Public Works Engineering Division Office at 110 South Pine Street, Room 221 (second floor), Santa Maria, CA 93458, (805) 925-0951, extension 225.

On-Site Storm Drainage Retardation Basins:

City of Santa Maria's Grading & Drainage Standards are available on the City website, on the Development Application Form Catalog page.

<http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/40557.shtml>

Landscape:

Preliminary Conceptual Landscape Plan Standards, and the standards for screening of backflow prevention devices, are available on the City website, on the Development Application Form Catalog page. <http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/40557.shtml>

Please see the Santa Maria Municipal Code [Chapter 12-44](#), Landscape Standards, for policies and regulations for landscape development, including residential projects.

Signs:

Santa Maria Municipal Code [Chapter 12-34](#), Signs, provides the policies and regulations for all signs within the City, including those for new residential developments.

Walls and Fences:

[Chapter 12-27](#), Accessory Structures, provides regulations applicable to all accessory structures, including walls and fences, located in residential zoning districts.

Corner Cutback:

Santa Maria Municipal Code Section 12-27.03, within [Chapter 12-27](#), Accessory Structures, addresses standards regarding the height and location of structures and other obstructions at street and driveway intersections.

Tree Removal:

Section 12-44.04(n) of City of Santa Maria Municipal Code [Chapter 12-44](#) provides regulations regarding the removal and replacement of existing trees.

Trash/Recycle Enclosures:

Residential development proposals should indicate the location, quantity and orientation of trash/recycle enclosures. City policy regarding multi-family development requires that a trash enclosure be located within 200 feet walking distance of any dwelling unit. All enclosures shall comply with the City's minimum requirements for construction of trash/recycle enclosures as depicted in the City [Standard Drawings](#). For additional information regarding residential trash and recycling requirements, please refer to Santa Maria Municipal Code [Chapter 8.11](#), and contact the Department of Public Works Engineering Division, 110 South Pine Street, Room 221 (second floor), Santa Maria, CA 93458, (805) 925-0951, extension 225.

Parking and Circulation

Parking:

For information regarding the number of off-street parking spaces required for residential uses, please see Santa Maria Municipal Code Section 12-32.03(a) within [Chapter 12-32](#). This chapter also provides design and dimension standards for driveways, parking spaces, drive aisles, access and maneuvering areas, and other components of parking design.

Garage Opening Setback:

[Chapter 12-32](#), Section 12-32.13, provides for a minimum setback from a garage's vehicular opening to obstructions.

Carports:

Information and standards regarding carports are available in Santa Maria Municipal Code Sections 12-32.19.c. ([Chapter 12-32](#), Off-Street Parking and Loading) and 12-44.04.l.4. ([Chapter 12-44](#), Landscape Standards).

Building Sites:

[Chapter 12-28](#), provides minimum requirements for building including improvements to frontages and alleys.

Parking and Paving within Front Yards:

For information regarding parking and the maximum paved area within the front yards of residentially zoned properties, please see Santa Maria Municipal Code Section 12-32.27 within [Chapter 12-32](#), Off-Street Parking and Loading.

Entry Gates:

Development standards for residential project security entry gates are available on the City's website, on the Development Application Form Catalog page.

<http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/40557.shtml>

Condominium Development Standards

Section 12-46.04 of [Chapter 12-46](#), Residential Condominiums, Stock Cooperatives, Community Apartments, and Planned Unit Developments, provides development standards specific to these types of residential developments.

Mixed-Use Project Development Standards

[Chapter 12-49](#) of the City Zoning Ordinance provides standards for projects that include a combination of permitted uses and other compatible uses not permitted in a single established zoning district, including residential uses and residential zoning districts. Section 12-49.08 provides the development standards that apply to all mixed use projects.

Specific Plans

The City of Santa Maria has adopted fifteen Specific Plans for various areas within the City. Select specific plans allow for residential development and include residential design standards where applicable. The adopted specific plans may be accessed on the City's website:

<http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/40560.shtml>



ZONING STANDARDS MATRIX RESIDENTIAL

The following are general building site, zoning and setback requirements for the individual zone districts. These requirements cover the most common situations, but special circumstances may exist and the Planning Division should be consulted. Any questions regarding these requirements should be reviewed with the Planning Division, which is located at the Community Development Department, 110 South Pine Street, Room 101 (first floor), on Heritage Walk, Santa Maria, CA 93458, Phone No. (805) 925-0951, extension 244.

NOTE: CHAPTER 12 (ZONING) OF THE SANTA MARIA MUNICIPAL CODE (SMMC) IS THE PRIMARY INFORMATION SOURCE AND DIRECT CODE REFERENCES MAY BE NOTE ON THE BACK (SECOND PAGE)

STANDARDS	R-1 ¹ Single Family	RSL-1 ¹ Single Family Small Lot	R-2 ¹ Medium-Density Residential	R-3 ¹ High-Density Residential
GENERAL PLAN MAXIMUM DENSITY ²¹ Project size more than 1 acre Project size less than 1 acre	4 to 8 dwelling units (du) per acre ² ----- -----	8 dwelling units per acre ^{2,3} ----- -----	----- 8 to 12 dwelling units per acre ^{2,3} 3,000 sf net land area per du ²⁰	----- 22 dwelling units per acre ^{2,4} 2,000 sf net land area per du
BUILDING LOT SIZE INTERIOR LOT: LOT WIDTH: CORNER LOT: LOT WIDTH:	minimum 6,000 sq. ft. ⁵ 60 ft. minimum 7,000 sq. ft. ⁵ 70 ft.	minimum 4,500 sq. ft. ⁵ 45 ft. minimum 5,000 sq. ft. ⁵ 50 ft.	minimum 6,000 sq. ft. 60 ft. minimum 7,000 sq. ft. 70 ft.	minimum 7,000 sq. ft. 60 ft. minimum 7,000 sq. ft. 70 ft.
FRONT YARD SETBACK ^{6,7} FRONT ENTRY GARAGE ¹⁰ SIDE ENTRY GARAGE	20 ft. 20 ft. ¹⁰ 15 ft.	20 ft. 20 ft. ¹⁰ 15 ft.(minimum lot width of 48 ft)	20 ft. 20 ft. ¹⁰ 15 ft.	20 ft. ⁹ 20 ft. ¹⁰ 15 ft.
SIDE YARD SETBACK ^{6,7,8} INTERIOR LOT: CORNER LOT:	5 ft. one side ¹¹ 10 ft. on other side ¹¹ 5 ft. interior side ¹¹ 15 ft. street side ¹¹	(zero side yard is req'd) 3 to 5 ft. easement 15 ft. on other side 3 to 5 ft. interior side 15 ft. street side	5 ft. one side ¹¹ 10 ft. on other side ¹¹ 5 ft. interior side ¹¹ 15 ft. street side ¹¹	10 ft. ¹¹ 10 ft. ¹¹ 10 ft. interior side ¹¹ 15 ft. street side ¹¹
REAR YARD SETBACK ^{6,7,8}	10 ft. for 1 story 20 ft. for 2 story ¹²	10 ft. for 1 story 15 ft. for 2 story	10 ft.; 20 ft. when rear yard adjoins R-1 zone	10 ft.; 20 ft. when rear yard adjoins R-1 zone ¹⁹
HEIGHT	30 ft.	25 ft.	30 ft.	35 ft. ¹⁸
PARKING ¹³	2 spaces, covered, 19' _W x 20' _D ¹⁴	2 spaces, covered, 19' _W x 20' _D ¹⁴	Refer to notes 14 and 15.	Refer to notes 14 and 15.
LANDSCAPE	-----	-----	20% of site area ¹⁶	20% of site area ¹⁶
OPEN LANDSCAPE AREA	na	na	300 sf per dwelling unit ¹⁷	250 sf per dwelling unit ¹⁷
ACCESSORY BUILDINGS	Refer to Chapter 27 of Title 12 of the Santa Maria Municipal Code.			

FOOTNOTES FROM THE RESIDENTIAL ZONING STANDARDS MATRIX:

1. A Planned Development (PD) designation combined with the zone district designation is intended to permit a flexible design approach to the development of a total community environment equal to or better than that resulting from traditional lot by lot development. Approval of the design of the project is subject to Planning Commission review..
2. Refers to gross acre which is the total land area of a parcel or parcels exclusive of existing public right-of-way (streets, sidewalks, alleys, etc.) ; any density bonus provisions applicable under SMMC Section 12-48.
3. Maximum density depending on land use designation (LWDR-4, LDR-5, LMDR-8, or MDR-12).
4. Senior citizen housing may be allowed at a maximum density of 30 dwelling units per acre subject to a conditional use permit and the development standards specified in SMMC Section 12-8.18.
5. In the case where a number follows the zoning designation, that number specifies the minimum lot size (e.g., R-1 6,000 specifies a 6,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size).
6. Yard setbacks are measured from the property lines.
7. Architectural projections are encouraged and may be allowed, pursuant to SMMC Section 12-26.03, as follows:
 - a. Architectural features on the main building, such as cornices, eaves and canopies, may extend a maximum of 30 inches into any required yard provided that combustible material is located away from the property line as specified in the Uniform Building Code.
 - b. Eaves and canopies may extend to 1/3 of the length of the front yard up to a maximum of 5 feet on the front of the building, or 6 inches for each foot of the side yard or rear yard on the sides or rear of the building provided that combustible material is located away from the property line as specified in the Uniform Building Code.
 - c. A bay window, fireplace, and minor projection of floor area, each not exceeding 8 feet in width, may extend a maximum of 30 inches into any required yard provided that combustible material is located away from the property line as specified in the Uniform Building Code.
8. Patio covers and trellises:
 - a. Patio covers, open on 3 sides, and trellises shall have a minimum setback of 5 feet from the *side* property line in residential developments with zero side yards, provided the structure is not higher than 10 feet nor longer than 20 feet.
 - b. Patio covers and trellises shall have a minimum setback of 5 feet from the *rear* property line in the R-1 and RSL-1 districts, provided the structure is not more than 20 feet wide.
 - c. Open trellises and arbors, not exceeding eight feet (8') in height and two hundred (200) sq. ft., may be located in the rear yard setback, adjacent to one side and/or rear property line(s) provided the setback for the trellis and/or arbor, including supports, is not less than three feet (3') to the property line.
9. In an R-3 zoning district, developments that encompass entire blocks or two or more sides of a block require a minimum 20-foot setback on the sides fronting the street.
10. Front entry garages with roll-up (sectional) doors may be set back a minimum of 18 feet from front property line.
11. Refer to SMMC Section 12-31-12 for lots less than 55 feet in width.
12. The required rear yard setback may be reduced when either of the following conditions exist:
 - a. The rear yard setback for a two-story structure may be reduced to 15 feet provided the projecting portion of the structure does not exceed 20 feet in width.
 - b. Rear yard setbacks may be reduced to 10 feet when the rear yard adjoins a flood control facility or property in the OS zoning district.
13.
 - a. Each parking space shall maintain a minimum net clear interior dimension of 9 ½ feet wide by 20 feet deep.
 - b. Single car garages and carports with side walls between spaces shall be 11 feet wide by 20 feet deep. These spaces shall be free and clear of any appliances or other structure.
 - c. If a building, a block wall or other obstruction is adjacent to the side of a parking space, the space shall be a minimum of 10 feet in width.
 - d. Clothes washers, dryers, furnaces, water heaters, and other appliances are not permitted to encroach into the net 19 by 20 dimension.
14.
 - a. Single-family dwelling: 2 parking spaces within a garage or carport net clear interior dimensions of 19 feet wide by 20 feet deep.
 - b. Two-family or multifamily dwellings: 2 parking spaces per unit. A minimum of 1 covered parking space per unit as noted in 13, above.
 - c. Clothes washers, dryers, furnaces, water heaters, and other appliances are not permitted to encroach into the net 19 by 20 dimension.
15. Condominium and planned unit developments require 2 covered parking spaces per dwelling unit, plus 1 guest parking space for each 2 dwelling units. The guest parking spaces shall be distributed throughout the development at locations approved by the Community Development Department.
16. The 20% site landscaping requirement includes required yards.
17. The landscaped open area does not include required yards.
18. The Planning Commission may approve buildings up to the 35-foot maximum height in the R-3 zoning district. The maximum allowable building height may be increased from 35 feet to a maximum of 55 feet subject to approval of a Conditional Use Permit or Planned Development Permit by the Planning Commission and City Council when (a) the project is a mixed-use development and (b) the Planning Commission and City Council make required findings (SMMC Sections 12-8.09(b)(i-iv)).
19.
 - a. In the R-3 zoning district, setback guidelines for buildings exceeding 35 feet: front, side and rear building setbacks may increase a minimum of five (5) feet to property line for each incremental increase in height of ten (10) feet, at each floor, above 35 feet in height, beyond what is required under Section 12-8.10.a, b and c.
 - b. A reduction in required setback for mixed use projects may be permitted pursuant to Section 12-49.09(c).
20. In the R-2 zoning district, any lot of 6,000 square feet or less of net land area may have two dwelling units provided all setback, open space, landscaping, and parking requirements of the R-2 zone can be met. (SMMC Section 12-7.08(d))
21. Density is exclusive of additional density allowed through a development agreement for the provision of affordable housing, as provided under SMMC Section 12-48.