12.2 DPA 1 – MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Category **Amend #2095**	**Form and Character/ Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions**
Justification	The justification for this designation is to ensure that Council has the ability to secure necessary information and establish conditions for multi-family developments to ensure that their form and character is of high quality and compatible with surrounding uses. A high standard of design can help to integrate new forms and higher densities of housing into existing neighbourhoods. It can also create more livable residential development that contributes positively to the urban form and encourages a strong sense of neighbourhood. The benefits of well designed, well built multi-family development are long-term. To encourage a high standard of livability and overall quality that meets the community's and occupants' expectations for medium and high density housing types, development permits will be required for new multi-family development.
Objective	The objective of this Development Permit area designation is to ensure that new multi-family residential development: 1. Provides a healthy, safe and livable environment for residents; 2. Minimizes its impact on the local environment; 3. Provides for vehicular as well as pedestrian needs in a safe manner; 4. Is compatible with surrounding land uses; 5. Complements the social and environmental goals of this Plan; and 6. Is constructed to high standards, both materially and aesthetically.
Application	Where some element of the design does not comply with a guideline, a justification stating the divergence and the reason should be made. The City may diverge from the guidelines where a compelling rationale, which preserves the intent of the guidelines, is supplied. Variances may be considered for: required setbacks from front, rear, and/or side yard lot lines, and where the intent of the variance is to create an improved building envelope, minimize environmental impact, better relationship between buildings within a multi-family residential development, or where a setback is adjacent to park land or existing uses where the impact of the variance(s) being sought relate to the variance would be minimal or minimized through screening or a significant change in elevation. Variances may also be approved for pedestrian sidewalk location and width, and for lighting requirements.
Guidelines	The following guidelines are specifically applicable to multi-family residential sites. *Applicants should provide a checklist or statement indicating how their proposal complies with these guidelines. Where some element of the design does not comply with a guideline, a justification stating the divergence and the reason should be made. Council may diverge from the guidelines where a compelling rationale that preserves the intent of the guidelines is supplied.*
Integration with the Existing Area	The orientation, scale, form, height, setback, materials, and character of new intensive residential developments are controlled by development permits to ensure compatibility with existing neighbourhoods and the surrounding

community.

- The orientation, scale, form, height, and materials proposed for multi-family residential developments should reflect characteristics that are consistent with the context, scale and character of the surrounding neighbourhood to achieve visual harmony and neighbourliness. Sites in older neighbourhoods should be developed in a manner that improves the neighbourhood.

Orientation

Site design is one of the most critical aspects of a successful project. Decisions made at the conceptual design stage have repercussions throughout the design development process.

- New multi-unit residential development should:
  - Maintain, enhance, or create view corridors or vistas (e.g. between buildings, along/ from roadways, and to natural features such as Mt. Prevost and Mt. Tzouhalem, Somenos Marsh, and the Cowichan River).
  - Allow sunlight penetration.
  - Ensure that units have their façade facing the street.
  - Minimize visual intrusion onto the privacy of surrounding homes.
  - Minimize the casting of shadows onto the private outdoor space of adjacent residential units.
- Apartment buildings should have at least one common entrance or foyer facing the street, at street level.
- New housing should front or appear to front abutting roadways.
- Townhouse buildings should, when oriented to the street, have at least one unit with an entrance facing the street, and appear to front onto the public road through the use of exterior treatments and through the provision of pedestrian walkways linked to the street.
- Pedestrian walkways to building entrances, parking, and/or recreational areas should have a hard slip resistant surface with a defined border of alternate material or texture to distinguish the sides or ends of paths. Layouts, width and grading must accommodate people with disabilities. Safety considerations must include clear sight lines to and from as many points as possible, such as parking lots and road entrances.
- Visual privacy will be achieved by such measures as:
  - fencing of all parking areas that face neighbouring residences with a solid material to prevent headlights disturbing neighbours;
  - locating private outdoor space so that it is not overlooked from roads or other residential buildings; and
  - locating, staggering or recessing entrances to individual units.

Form, Character, and Building Materials

New buildings should respect the scale and character of neighbouring properties to achieve some visual harmony and neighbourliness.

- New multi-unit residential development should utilize:
  - Variations in the character of rooflines (e.g.: gables and dormers).
  - Complementary roof styles and pitches.
  - Screened rooftop mechanical equipment incorporated into overall architectural treatment of building.
  - Building materials that are compatible with, and enhance, surrounding development.
  - Building materials that contribute towards an appearance of solid, quality construction and long term durability.
  - Stepped or alternate massing to break up the volume of a building to avoid a boxlike appearance.
  - Articulated walls detailed with varied cladding material, windows and doors, and patio features to create visual interest.
  - Window trim or casings and details on the fascia of the building, such as belt-courses, to enhance visual interest.
  - Complimentary exterior finishes including roofing materials, window treatments, door styles and other finishing details.
  - Maximized sound attenuation between units, between public roads and units, and between adjacent land uses and units.
  - Porches and windows overlooking the street to increase personal interaction and safety.
- Where multi-family units face single-family areas, buildings should be designed to convey a single-family appearance. This may be achieved by design features such as stepping back the building mass from the street or providing pitched roofs with varied roof lines.
- The size and siting of buildings should reflect the size and scale of adjacent development and complement the surrounding uses. To achieve this, height and setback restrictions may be imposed as a condition of the development permit.
- Multi-unit residential buildings or mixed commercial/ residential buildings in commercial areas with a zero front setback should be designed so that the upper storeys are stepped back from the building footprint, with lower building heights along the street front.
- Site lighting should provide personal safety for residents and visitors and be of the type that reduces glare and does not cause the spill over of light onto adjacent residential sites. Generally, lighting should be evenly distributed with night time visibility for 20 metres.
  - Safety will be addressed by such means as; making entrances visible to other residents and the public road; avoiding dark or shadowy spaces on the site; and ensuring adequate lighting in all public and semi-public areas.

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- With the exception of HardiePlank and similar cementatious sidings, use of artificial materials (those that are made to appear as something they are not such as vinyl siding) is not permitted.

Landscaping

- Landscaping should be provided with the objective of providing:
  - An effective transitional buffer through the use of open space, landscaping and edge treatment, where practical, to protect the privacy of occupants of properties adjacent to residential development.
  - A consistent visual image between adjacent properties along the streetscape.
  - Low-height vegetation between adjacent driveways to mitigate the visual impact of paved surfaces.
  - Some effective screening at the time of planting.
  - Landscaped pedestrian walkways to and from buildings and parking areas.
  - An attractive streetscape to screen off-street parking, services, and storage areas, and to enhance the overall development.
- All areas not covered by buildings, structures, and parking should be fully landscaped.
- Natural vegetation should be retained where possible to enhance the character of the development and integrate it with the existing landscape.
- Significant stands of trees, where present, should be preserved.
- An underground irrigation system should be incorporated into landscaping except for areas left in a natural state.
- Landscape screening should be provided along all property lines abutting neighbouring properties at least 1.5m high.
- Garbage containers and utility kiosks should be screened by solid fencing or landscaping or a combination of the two.
- The use of plant species which are native and may be considered drought resistant is encouraged in all landscaping.
- Landscaping should be designed to maintain sight lines for personal safety, and to avoid physical obstructions for people with disabilities.

Loading Areas, Utility and Storage Structures

- Loading areas, utility and storage structures (including garbage receptacles) should be located in a safe and convenient location on-site (preferably not in any required front or exterior side yard setback) so that they do not impede vehicular or pedestrian traffic or sight lines, where possible cluster these structures.
- Utility and storage structures (including garbage receptacles) in landscaped areas should be permitted only when integrated with the landscaping in a manner that is unobtrusive, does not deteriorate the plantings and landscape material within the landscaped area; and does not interfere with sight lines.
- Loading areas, utility and storage structures (including garbage receptacles) should be screened from adjacent roads and residential properties either by decorative fencing or by landscaping, or a combination of the two, with a minimum height of 1.8 m. The use of chain link fencing is not encouraged.

- Garbage receptacles should be stored outdoors with a solid enclosure on all sides, which cannot be seen through, with a minimum height of 1.5m.
- The storage of toxic, combustible or potentially hazardous material such as liquid petroleum products, fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides outside buildings is prohibited.
- Wiring (on-site and existing) should be placed underground where possible.

Parking

- New multi-family residential developments are required to provide private off-street parking in accordance with the City of Duncan's Zoning Bylaw.
- Parking areas should be located away from the street, whenever feasible, to create a more aesthetic and functional design.
- Private parking areas must be designed with the following features:
  - close access to main building entrances;
  - clearly marked, well lit pedestrian routes;
  - appropriate signage to assist people in locating pathways and building entrances;
  - adequate lighting that eliminates dark or shadow areas; and
  - opportunity for casual surveillance from a number of locations.
- Parking areas and internal access roads should be constructed using a permeable surface, alternatively other rainfall capture facilities (catch basins and landscaping) should be used to mitigate the environmental impact of the first 30 minutes of peak runoff flows (see also Policy 10.3.3).
- Internal access roads should be wide enough to permit easy negotiation to parking areas by automobiles and emergency vehicles and should clearly form and efficient circulation system.
- Parking areas should be made attractive by:
  - Breaking up surface parking areas and other large areas of paved surfaces with landscape planting. Ideally, parking should be separated by landscaped areas into clusters of no more than 6 to 10 parking spaces.
  - Considering staggering parking landscape islands and introducing curves to parking aisles, in larger sites and in areas with a strong natural landscape character, to further break the rigid geometry of parking areas.
  - Using contrasting paving materials to mark clear pedestrian routes through large parking lots, or from the street to the building and placing special emphasis on points of conflict between people and cars to improve visibility, enhance safety, and provide aesthetic appeal.
  - Considering parking lots as pedestrian spaces first, with cars as a secondary use (this can lead to a design which enhances pedestrian safety and comfort).
- Underground parking will be provided for any multi- unit residential buildings exceeding four storeys.

Open Space and Amenity Areas

- Open space must be provided that allows for active play areas and/or passive activities such as enjoying sunlight, views, and landscaping.
- The provision and location of play and recreation areas should reflect the needs of the anticipated residential population.
- Design features such as entry courts or seating in open areas should be encouraged to foster social interaction and a sense of community within medium or high density residential development.
- In developments intended for family living, adequate storage and places for outdoor play should be provided. Play areas must be safely accessible without interference by vehicular traffic and are to be located to permit visual supervision by residents.
- Where appropriate, safe and distinct pedestrian routes should be provided connecting to other residential and commercial land uses in the community and to parks, open spaces and trails.
- Spaces should be defined through design features to differentiate private, semiprivate, and public use areas within and around the project. This may be achieved through use of material changes, grade changes, exterior walls, screening, and landscaping.

Personal Safety

- The impact the design of the building has on the individual safety should be considered, e.g. avoid recesses, dark alcoves, the creation of hiding spots, and isolated areas. Refer to the Checklist for Safety Planning and Design (Appendix 9).
- The basic principals of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) should be incorporated into building and site planning/ design.

Environmental Impact

- New multi-family residential developments should minimize the impact on their environment, where practical, by siting buildings in such a way that residential units are sited around, in harmony with, and compatible with the natural topography and existing natural features (such as mature trees).

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- New multi-family residential developments should reduce greenhouse gas emissions by incorporating any or all of the following strategies: building siting; choice of building materials and colours; energy efficiency measures; highly insulated building envelope; use of renewable energy for heating and cooling; bicycle parking and storage facilities; electric vehicle parking and support facilities; and reduced automobile parking in accordance with relevant Bylaw provisions.
- The City may approve variances where the siting of buildings can be shown to lessen environmental impact.