



## STAFF REPORT

**TO: PLANNING COMMISSION**

**PREPARED BY: Corey Simon, Senior Planner**

**APPROVED BY: Karen Majors, Assistant City Manager, Community & Economic Development**

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**APPLICANT:** RCD – Resources for Community Development; Deni Adaniya

**ARCHITECT:** KTGy Group Inc Architecture; Jill Williams AIA.

**CURRENT OWNER:** Earl & Joanne Dunivan Trust.

**LOCATION:** 301 Buckley Street (Block bounded by Berrellesa, Buckley, Richardson and Foster Streets; APN: 373-243-001)

**GENERAL PLAN:** Residential 12+ units/acre

**SPECIFIC PLAN:** Downtown Martinez Specific Plan; *Downtown Shoreline* - Residential; 17-35 units/acre

**ZONING:** DS- Downtown Shoreline (Residential, generally equivalent to R-2.5/Downtown Overlay: 2,500 sq. ft minimum site area, 1,250 sq. ft minimum site area with use permit approval).

**PROPOSAL:** Workshop to review preliminary plans for the construction of a 49 unit apartment project for seniors (55 years of age or older), with all rents restricted to affordable levels (i.e. all rents to be limited to 50% of Area Median Income, or less). Proposal will require approval of a Use Permit to allow density and height above the 17/unit/acre, 2 story/30' height limits normally permitted in the DS – "Downtown Shoreline" zoning district.

### RECOMMENDATION

Review proposal, accept public comment, and provide input and direction to staff and the applicant on the proposal.

The purpose of the workshop is to allow for preliminary project review. No Planning Commission action is required at this time.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION and INTRODUCTION

The applicant proposes to develop and manage a 49 unit "affordable senior housing" apartment complex. Eligible tenants would be limited to those seniors citizens (55 years of age and over), whose income is less than 50% of the area's median income. Rents will be restricted to an "affordable" portion of the tenants' income (typically 30% of income); a range of units will be offered to those with incomes ranging from 50%, down to 20%, of the area's median income. The attached outline/summary from the applicant (Attachment B) and booklet provide a more full background and introduction to the project, including the "affordable" nature of the project.

The applicant has held two evening "open houses" at the Martinez Senior Center (December 16, 2008 and January 29, 2009) with neighboring property owners within 300 feet of the project site at Buckley, Berrellesa, Richardson and Foster Street, to help introduce the proposal to the Community. Comments received at these meetings were incorporated into the project design and are outlined in the Discussion portion of the report.

Procedurally, the project is to be viewed pursuant to the following regulations and policies:

- Downtown Specific Plan. The site under consideration is within the "Downtown Shoreline District" of the recently adopted *Downtown Specific Plan*. This proposal will be the first residential project to be considered in this new residential district that was previously zoned "Industrial". Notwithstanding the nature of "rental apartment" as compared to "ownership condominium" (as per the Downtown Shoreline District regulations, and discussed further, below under *State Mandated Density Bonus Law*), multi-family housing is a permitted use in the new District. Excerpts from the *Plan* are provided as Attachment C. Ultimately, the applicant will provide additional information regarding compliance with the Specific Plan's *General Design Standards and Guidelines*.
- Development Standards within the Downtown Shoreline Zoning District. Generally, the *Downtown Shoreline District* allows multi-family construction up to 2 stories, and to a density standard of 2,500 sq. ft of site area per dwelling unit (i.e. 17 unit/acre acre.). With approval of a use permit, properties in the *Downtown Shoreline District* can be developed to a density standard of 1,250 sq. ft of site area per dwelling unit (i.e. 35 unit/acre.), and to a height of 3 stories and 40'. Approval for such a Use Permit will require the special findings as outlined in Section 9.5.4 of the Downtown Shoreline regulations (again refer to Attachment C), generally addressing the need for superior design and view preservation, if development at the upper end of the *Downtown Shoreline District's* density range is to be approved.
- City's Development Standards Modified by State Mandated Density Bonus Law. Superseding all local agencies' regulations are State mandated regulations regarding the mandatory granting a "*density bonus, concession, incentive and/or*

*development standard waiver*” for projects, such as RCD’s proposal that qualify as having 100% “affordable” units. For this project, such allowances would include:

- A 35% “Density Bonus” above the “35 units/acre” is possible with use permit approval, allowing a maximum of 49 units. While the “density bonus” is mandatory pursuant to State Law, the “base line” density bonus is applied to (35 unit/acre) is a discretionary action subject. Possible factors for consideration of such a use permit are provided in the following “Discussion” below.
- A waiver of the requirement that the project be built to “condominium standards” (requiring parking, open space and storage areas above and beyond what would otherwise be required for multi-family housing in the DS-Downtown Shoreline District) and subdivided to allow for possible individual sale of the units is also allowed pursuant to State Law.

## **Discussion**

### **TOPIC ONE – RELATIONSHIP OF “DENSITY” TO UNIT SIZE and PROJECT POPULATION**

Most agencies’ land use regulations as based upon “residential units per acre” as the major criteria, with the general assumption that the greater the number of “unit per acre” the greater the density and possible impact on a neighborhood regarding the new structures’ bulk, mass and height, and possible traffic and parking impacts. While such an assumption may be typically true for “market rate” multi-family units intended for the general public - where unit sizes range from 1,000 sq. ft. to 1,500 sq. ft. and typically house 2 adults with cars. RCD’s proposed project is made up of smaller units, and the “senior” population, which runs counter to this assumption:

- **Aggregate floor area comparable to that of project with lower density (e.g. fewer units per acre)**

Each of the 49 one-bedroom units will be approximately 500 sq. ft., which is half the size of the 1,000 sq. ft. 2-bedroom units (4 of the 8 total) at the nearby “Villa Del Sol” project recently completed at the corner of Berrellesa Street and Marina Vista, and one third the size of the 4 larger 1,500 sq. ft. 3-bedroom units at “Vista Del Sol” (as well as being one third the size of all 12 units at the recently completed “1111 Haven Street” project). When including the approximate 5,000 sq. ft. of indoor common spaces and 25-car garage, the proposed project, at a density of 48 unit/acre, will have a total gross floor area of approximately 40,000 to 45,000 sq. ft.

For comparison of actual total gross floor area of those nearly “market rate projects” (including the 300 sq. ft. to 500 sq. ft. in each “market rate unit” for the entry and/or garage space on the ground floor), the 8 unit “Villa Del Sol”, on a parcel  $\frac{1}{4}$  the size of the proposal’s parcel size, has a total gross floor area of approximately 12,000 sq. ft., greater than  $\frac{1}{4}$  of proposal’s total floor area. With “Villa del Sol” built at the density at 35 units/acre (8 units on 10,000 sq. ft.), the equivalent “market-rate” building mass of the applicant’s proposal - were it to be built within the same gross

floor area as is being proposed but with individual units the same size as those at "Villa Del Sol" - would appear the same as a project built with a density closer to the 25-30 unit/acre range. Furthermore, using the generally larger "1111 Haven Street" units for comparison, that 12 unit project on a parcel 1/2 of the proposal's parcel size, has a total gross floor area of approximately 24,000 sq. ft. over 1/2 of the proposal's total floor area. With "1111 Haven" built at the density at 26 units/acre (12 units on 20,000 sq ft.), the equivalent "market-rate" building mass of the applicant's proposal - were it to be built within the same gross floor area as is being proposed, but with individual units the same size as those at "1111 Haven" - would appear the same as a project built with a density closer to the 20-25 unit/acre range.

- o **Fewer residents will own cars, creating relatively less traffic and demand for parking**

Pursuant to the City's parking regulations, only .35 parking spaces are required for each unit within "subsidized or assisted senior citizen" project. Approximately .6 spaces per unit (29 total; 25 in garage, 6 exterior) are proposed. Additional background regarding trip and parking demand will be provided by the applicant for the pending CEQA analysis. It should be noted that concerns over the need for guest/visitor parking were raised at the public "open house" meetings; the applicant has offered to include expanded "on-street" angled parking on Richardson Street as an option.

#### **TOPIC TWO – VIEW CORRIDOR PRESERVATION**

One of the standards required by the Downtown Shoreline Zoning District to approve any development exceeding the 17 unit/acre limit generally permitted is "*preserving or creating view corridors from public street...*" The applicant will have visual simulations from the Richardson and Berrellesa Street perspective at the workshop. Given that the building will only appear as a two story structure from the corner of Buckley and Richardson Streets, view blockage is not anticipated to be a significant concern.

#### **TOPIC THREE – DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS & COMMON OPEN SPACE AREAS**

The proposal is consistent with the Downtown Shoreline Zoning District's requirement for a minimum 10' front, street-side side yard (applicable to all 4 sides). As part of the requested "concessions" pursuant to the State's Density Bonus law, the applicant will request a minor exceptions to the normally permitted maximum coverage of 45% site coverage (approximately 50% is proposed); and a reduction in the *Minimum Usable Open Space per unit* standard, where 400 sq. ft. is normally required and 226 sq. ft. per unit is proposed. Despite what appears as a significant reduction, the courtyard space of over 10,000 sq. ft. is actually much greater than the open space areas that have been provided in the above motioned "market rate" development, which when approved as "Planned Developments," provided no common recreation area.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- "A" Site Context Map
- "B" Applicant's background statement
- "C" Downtown Specific Plan excerpts

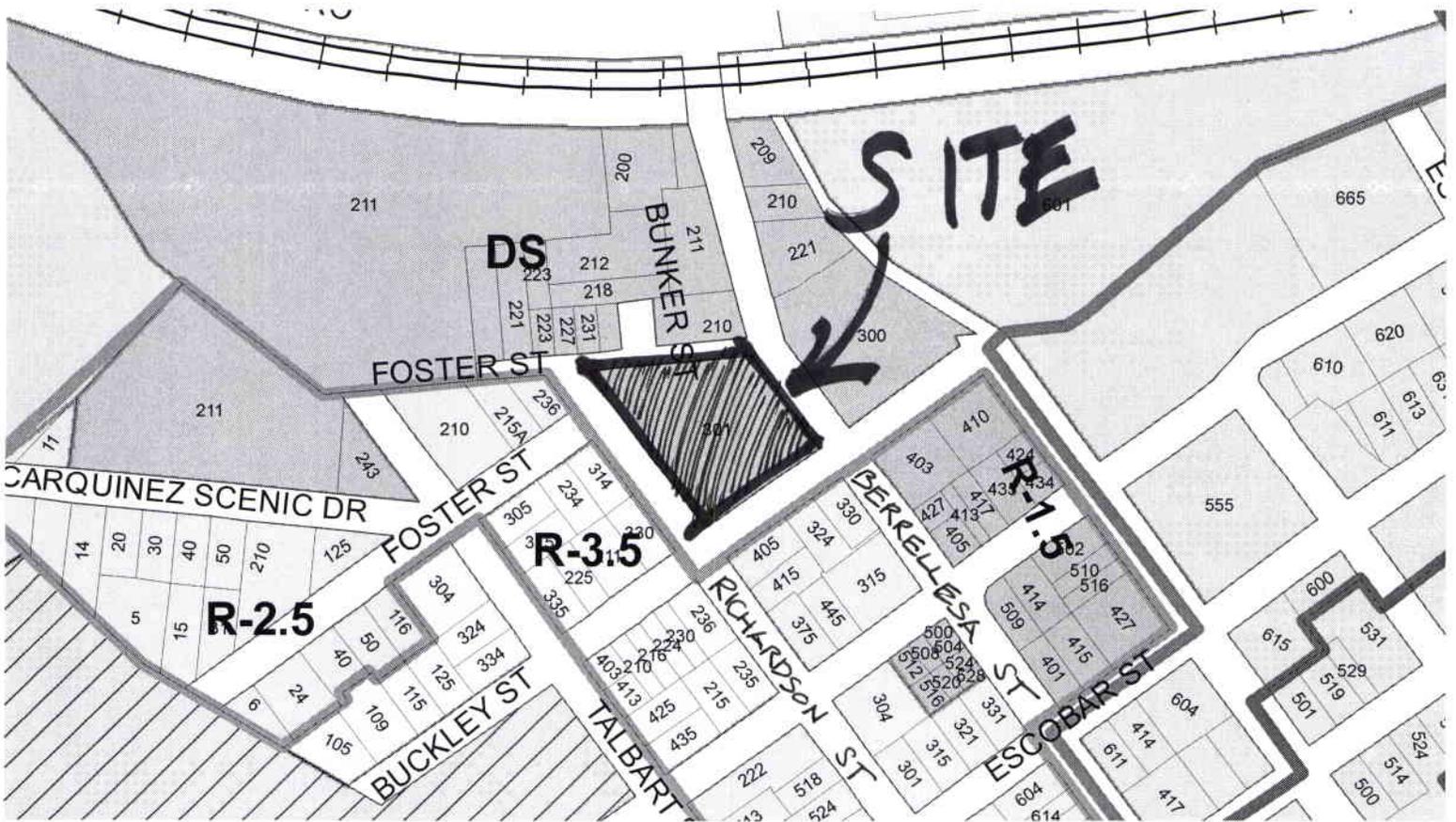
## **EXHIBITS**

Applicant's proposal (booklet format)

F:\Community Development\All Projects\RESIDENTIAL\Berrellesa St, 310 - RCD\RCD@Berrellesa-StdySesnRpt 2009.02.24.doc

# ATTACHMENT A

RCD SENIOR HOUSING  
301 BUCKLEY ST @ BERRELESA ST.



## SITE VICINITY MAP

ATTACHMENT A (CONT.)



ATTACHMENT B



February 17, 2009

Donna Allen, Commissioner  
AnaMarie Avila Farias, Commissioner  
Harriett Burt, Commissioner  
Lynette Busby, Commissioner  
Mark Hughes, Commissioner  
Frank Kluber, Chair  
Fred Korbmacher, Vice Chair  
Michael Marchiano, Commissioner

City of Martinez  
525 Henrietta Street  
Martinez, CA 94553

Dear Members of the Martinez Planning Commission:

Resources for Community Development (RCD) is pleased to present its concept proposal to the Martinez Planning Commission to create 49-units of permanent affordable housing for seniors (55 years of age and over) in Downtown Martinez. RCD proposes to redevelop the parcel at 310 Berrellessa Street, a currently an underutilized block surrounded by Berrellessa, Buckley, Richardson and Foster Streets.

Martinez Senior Apartments will provide local seniors an opportunity to enjoy high quality new homes within walking distance of downtown retail and commercial services with peace of mind that rents are set at levels appropriate to their income, whether still working or retired and on a fixed income. Working with the award-winning architectural firm of the KTG Y Group, Martinez Senior Apartments will be specially designed with features tailored to this population such as a large meeting/community room, computer learning center, exercise room, and a landscaped patio, courtyard and gardening areas. Special attention has been paid to the exterior architecture and the building's relationship to the historic neighborhood. Finally, Martinez Senior Apartments will utilize state of the art technologies to create a project that will serve as a model for environmental sustainability in a new development. As with most of RCD's recent developments, RCD will pursue a GreenPoint Rated certification for Martinez Senior from Build It Green, a statewide green building association. [www.builditgreen.org](http://www.builditgreen.org)

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*Project Developer*

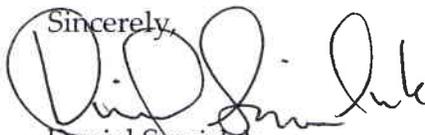
Resources for Community Development (RCD) is a nonprofit housing development company whose mission is to create and preserve affordable housing for people with the fewest options. Founded by East Bay community members in 1984, RCD has since developed more than 1,500 units with an additional 500 units currently in development throughout Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano Counties. Over 450 of RCD's homes are located in nearby Contra Costa County communities such as Walnut Creek, Concord, Pacheco and Pittsburg. RCD's developments serve a spectrum of housing needs from workforce families to seniors to first-time homebuyers. One of RCD's newest developments is Villa Vasconellos, a 70-unit GreenPoint Rated development for seniors in Walnut Creek that opened in February 2008.

RCD owns and oversees operations of all of its developments for the long term. We are committed to proactively managing and maintaining each community so that they not only offer the highest quality living environments to our residents but also positively contribute to the surrounding area. Martinez Senior will be managed by The John Stewart Company, a well-respected property management company with extensive experience managing mixed-income housing for seniors. <http://www.jsco.net/>

*Target Population*

Martinez Senior Apartments will provide much needed housing to low-income seniors as well as seniors with disabilities who are working or retired and on fixed incomes. Rents are expected to range from approximately \$260 to \$760 per month and increases over time are strictly limited. Most households will pay no more than 30% of their income toward rent and utilities leaving the majority of income available for other expenditures, investments and savings.

Thank you very much for your consideration. We look forward to working with the City of Martinez on this exciting new development.

Sincerely,  
  
Daniel Sawislak  
Executive Director

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**“Martinez Senior Apartments”  
Proposed Housing for Senior Citizens**

- Project Description:** Resources for Community Development (RCD) proposes to redevelop the parcel at 310 Berellessa Street in Martinez, California to create Martinez Senior Apartments. The new community would provide 49 apartments for seniors (55 years of age and over) with rents at levels affordable to working as well as retired households.
- Target Population:** Lower-income seniors as well as seniors living with disabilities who are working or retired and on fixed incomes.
- Affordability:** Rents are expected to range from approximately \$260 to \$760 per month and increases over time are strictly limited. Most households will pay no more than 30% of their income towards rent and utilities leaving the majority of income available for other expenditures, investments and savings.
- Design Features:** A large meeting/community room, computer center, exercise room, and a landscaped patio, courtyard and gardening areas. In addition, Martinez Senior Apartments will utilize state of the art technologies to create a project that will serve as a model for environmental sustainability.
- Developer:** Resources for Community Development (RCD) is a nonprofit housing development company whose mission is the creation and preservation of affordable housing for people with the fewest options. Founded by East Bay community members in 1984, RCD has developed more than 1,500 units with an additional 500 units currently in development throughout Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano Counties. Over 450 of RCD’s homes are located in nearby Contra Costa County communities such as Walnut Creek, Concord, Pacheco and Pittsburg.
- Architect:** KTGy Group, Inc.
- Property Management:** The John Stewart Company, a well-respected property management company with extensive experience managing mixed-income housing for seniors.
- Project Timing:** Construction is projected to begin in the Spring 2010, with completion anticipated for Summer 2011.

*If you have any questions or need more information regarding this proposal, please contact Deni Adaniya, Associate Director of Housing, at 510-841-4410, ext. 19.*

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## Chapter 9 – Downtown Shoreline

This chapter defines the land uses, development standards and design standards and guidelines for the Downtown Shoreline area. This chapter is organized as follows:

- 9 Downtown Shoreline
  - 9.1 Purpose and Process
  - 9.2 Uses
  - 9.5 Development Standards
  - 9.6 Design Standards and Guidelines

### 9.1 PURPOSE

The intent of the Downtown Shoreline area is to provide for a variety of residential uses in an environment that is transitioning from industrial to residential uses. This area serves as a transition area between the urbanized portion of the Downtown and the open space of the Martinez Regional Shoreline to the north. The standards and guidelines for this area are intended to protect and enhance the environmentally sensitive areas of the Shoreline, and contribute to the economic revitalization of Downtown, by permitting a sufficient intensity of development to provide an economic incentive for industrial uses to relocate.

### 9.2 USES

The uses in the Shoreline area shall be those allowed in the new Downtown Shoreline zone district, and shall generally consist of the uses allowed in the City's existing multiple residential zones.

### 9.5 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

#### 9.5.1 General

All new development shall be in accordance with the standards of the new Downtown Shoreline District. All new multiple residential development in this District shall be processed concurrently with a subdivision map, so that individual units can be offered for sale, and shall meet the requirements for new condominium units as contained in Chapter 21.54 of the Municipal Code.

#### 9.5.3 Maximum Height

The maximum building height in the Downtown Shoreline area shall be 40 feet, or three stories, for development approved at an R-1.25 density, and 30' or two stories, for development approved at a R-2.5 density. In some areas, such as transition areas near

existing single family residential areas, a two-story maximum height may be determined to be appropriate by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission may approve taller buildings by use permit.

#### **9.5.4 Density**

The basic allowable density shall be 17 units per acre, equivalent to R-2.5 density. The Planning Commission may approve a higher density, up to a maximum of 35 units per acre, by use permit.

For the portion of the Downtown Shoreline District south of the railroad tracks (Opportunity Sites #3, 4 and 5), in order to approve a density above the lower end of the density range, the Planning Commission would need to find that in addition to meeting the above minimum requirements, the proposal is superior in terms of two or more of the following criteria:

- Assembling all or most of the contiguous parcels into one project, and designing the project as a new neighborhood
- Design and appearance
- Minimizing impacts on adjacent public lands
- Providing onsite amenities for the future residents
- Preserving or creating view corridors from public streets such as Talbart, Buckley, Marina Vista, Carquinez Scenic Drive, Castro and Berrellesa.
- Utilizing green building practices to the maximum extent possible
- Providing a variety of housing types, including detached single family residential, where feasible, as a transition in areas near existing single family neighborhoods.
- Providing a new public street system that improves access to the Regional Shoreline and Alhambra Creek, potentially by extending Alhambra Avenue along the creek, and vacating Berrellesa.

In order to approve a density at or near the upper end of the density range, the Planning Commission would need to find that the proposal is superior in terms of all or almost all of the above criteria.

## 9.6 DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

These standards are in addition to the standards for new development contained in Chapter 10 of this Plan.

### 9.6.1 Character Defining Statement

The character of the Downtown Shoreline area is defined by its proximity to Downtown residential neighborhoods to the south and the Martinez Regional Shoreline to the north. This is primarily a district for residential uses, including semi- and/or fully-attached single-family homes, live-work uses, and small multifamily structures. New development should be planned to create views of the Shoreline from Downtown where possible. Large industrial uses are encouraged to relocate out of the District, but smaller, self-contained service commercial uses may coexist with existing and new residential uses.

### 9.6.2 Site Planning

#### Building Orientation

- a) Buildings should have a traditional residential orientation to the street.
- b) In new buildings, the first floor building levels should be set slightly above the sidewalk level (up to four feet above grade) to create a sense of transition from the public space to the private realm. Accessible routes may be provided from rear alleys.
- c) Privacy between residences should be preserved by offsetting windows from windows in adjacent buildings.
- d) New streets should be oriented where possible to provide views into the waterfront.

### 9.6.3 Architecture

#### Style

- a) New buildings should have a traditional residential style, reminiscent of existing residences in the adjacent Downtown Neighborhood District.
- b) A consistent architectural style should be used for a building and the elements that relate to it, such as trellises, carports, roof forms, windows and detailing. While specific architectural styles are not dictated, several styles predominate in the Downtown Neighborhood District and the other residential parts of Downtown Martinez and should provide inspiration to help maintain Martinez' unique character. Styles need not be replicated literally, but should be clearly reflected in a proposed project.
- c) For buildings with more than six residential units, or projects with more than two residential buildings, design shall be varied, not uniform or monotonous.

**Scale**

- a) New buildings should respect the overall massing scale of the neighborhood.
- b) Long blank walls should be avoided.

**Roof Design**

The typical roof in this area should be of a pitched design reflective of nearby residences.

**Windows**

All windows on a building should be related in operating type, proportion and trim. Unifying elements such as common headers and sills are encouraged.

**Colors and Materials**

- a) The predominant materials should be stucco, wood siding, shingle roofing, and wood framed windows and doors.
- b) Colors should be appropriate to the style of the building. For example, Craftsman styles use muted earth tones, while Victorian styles use brighter, more contrasting colors.

**9.6.4 Landscaping**

**Plant Types**

- a) Plant types should be typical of residential plantings, with foundation shrubbery and limited use of small-scale trees as accents.

**Scale**

Pedestrian scale plantings should predominate, with larger plantings used as accents.

**Relationship to Development**

- a) Plantings should be arranged to frame the architecture, provide a green carpet between the street and the building, and soften the view of the building foundation.
- b) The public parkway along the street should be landscaped and maintained.
- c) Pathways, pergolas and trellises that are in character with the architectural style of the building to add shade and interest are encouraged.
- d) Landscaped areas should be regularly maintained to prevent deterioration of the property.

**Hardscape**

- a) Paving should be on a small scale and limited to walkways, driveways, and rear yard parking areas.

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- b) Varied paving textures and/or elevation changes should be used to define entrances, pedestrian areas, and crosswalks.