

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

City of Tukwila - Permit Center
6300 Southcenter Blvd Suite 100
Tukwila, WA 98188
www.tukwilawa.gov/departments/permit-center/



New single-family, middle housing, and accessory dwelling unit (ADU) developments are required to meet design standards found at Tukwila Municipal Code (TMC) 18.60.060. Middle housing refers to small-scale, multi-unit housing types compatible in scale with single-family homes. Examples include duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, cottage courts, and stacked flats.

Review is conducted as part of the construction permit process. Use this checklist in conjunction with the full code and associated design guidance.

For information regarding development in the Community Residential (CR) district, refer to our [CR Development Standards](#) and [CR Development Checklist](#). Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) have additional development standards, refer to the [ADU checklist](#) for more info.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

1. ENTRANCES

- A. **Purpose:** To ensure that entrances are easily identifiable, clearly visible, and accessible from streets, sidewalks, and common areas, to encourage pedestrian activity and enliven the street.
- B. **Applicability:** The following standards apply to all residential building facades that face a public or private street, except those that are separated from the street by another building.
- C. **Standard:**
 - 1. Each residential structure must have at least one main entrance fronting a public or private street, or within 10' of street facing building facade.
 - 2. Each unit with individual ground-floor entry and all shared entries must have a covered porch or stoop that is at least 25 square feet with the minimum dimension of 3'.

2. WINDOWS

- A. **Purpose:** To maintain a lively and active street face while increasing safety and general visibility to the public realm.
- B. **Applicability:** The following standards apply to all building facades that face a public or private street, except those that are separated from the street by another building.
- C. **Standard:**
 - 1. Windows shall be provided in façades facing public or private streets, comprising at least twenty percent of the façade area (Fig. 1).
 - 2. Window area is considered the entire area within, but not including, the window casing, including any interior window grid.
 - 3. Windows in pedestrian doors may be counted toward this standard.
 - 4. Windows in garage doors may not be counted toward this standard.
 - 5. Open areas within covered porches may be counted toward this standard.

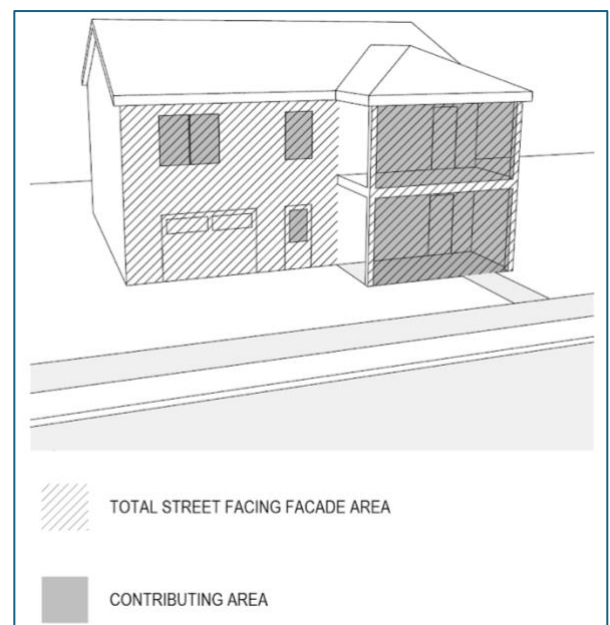


Figure 1: Windows contributing to >20% area of facade

3. BUILDING ARTICULATION

- A. **Purpose:** To ensure that buildings along any public or private street display the greatest amount of visual interest and reinforce the residential scale of the streetscape and neighborhood.
- B. **Applicability:** The following standards apply to all building facades that face a public or private street, except those that are separated from the street by another building.
- C. **Standard:**
1. Horizontal street-facing facades wider than forty feet must include at least four of the following design features per façade. At least one of these features must be used every forty feet (Fig. 2).
 - a. Varied building heights
 - b. Use of different materials
 - c. Different colors
 - d. Building perimeter offsets minimum of 4'
 - e. Projecting roofs (minimum of twelve inches)
 - f. Recesses, minimum of 3'
 - g. Bay windows, must project a minimum of 1' and cover at least 10% of the facade. May project as much as 2', and cover up to 35% of the facade
 - h. Variation in roof materials, color, pitch, or aspect
 - i. Balconies, minimum of 25 square feet
 - j. Covered porch or patio
 - k. Dormers

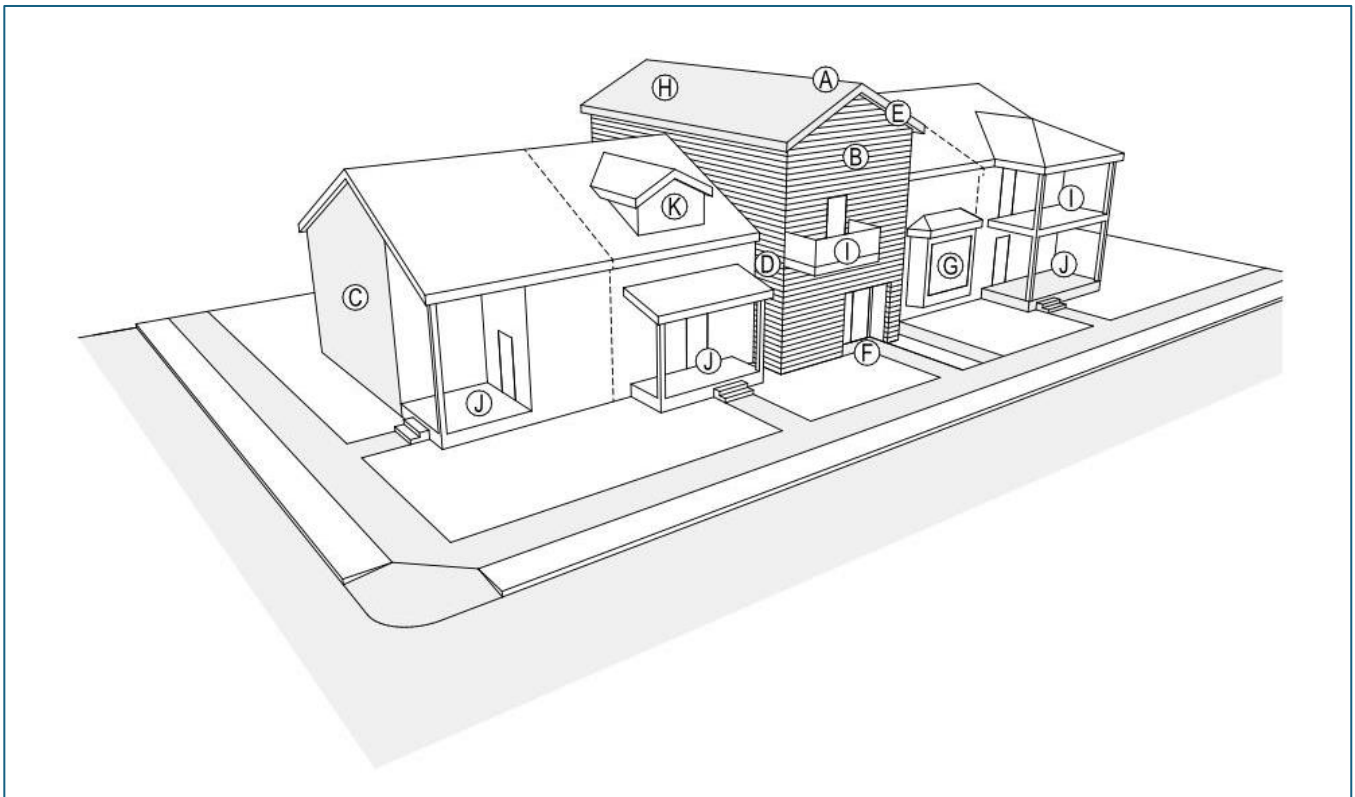


Figure 2: Building articulation examples.

4. PARKING FACILITIES

- A. **Purpose:** To integrate parking facilities with the building and surrounding residential context, promote pedestrian-oriented environments along streets, reduce impervious surfaces, and preserve on-street parking and street tree opportunities. To minimize the visual impact of garage entrances. Garage entrances are limited as a percentage of the building facade but a single car garage is always allowed. The provision for allowing the garage door to be set back from front porches also incentivizes front porches.
- B. **Applicability:** The following standards apply to all garage entrances that face a public or private street.
- C. **Standard:**
1. The combined width of all street-facing garage doors may be up to fifty percent (50%) of the length of the street-facing building façade or ten feet per unit, whichever is greater (Fig. 3). For attached housing, this standard applies to the combined length of the street-facing façades of all units. For all other lots and structures, the standards apply to the street-facing façade of each individual building.
 2. Street-facing garage walls must be set back at least three feet from the primary street-facing building façade or five feet from a covered porch.
 3. Garage entrances shall use materials and colors that match the residence.
 4. Parking structures, garages, carports, and parking areas other than driveways shall not be located between the principal structure and streets.

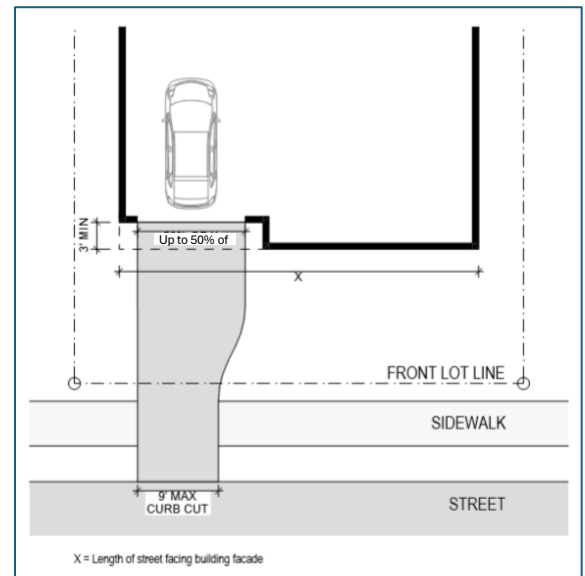


Figure 3: Curb cut and garage calculations.

5. PORCHES

- A. **Purpose:** To maintain a lively and active street face, reinforce the residential scale of the streetscape and neighborhood, while providing visual interest and community cohesion.
- B. **Applicability:** The following standards apply to all residential building facades that face a public or private street, except those that are separated from the street by another building.
- C. **Standard:** Covered porches may project eight feet into the front yard setback, measured from supporting columns. Covered porch eaves may project an additional two feet (Fig. 4)

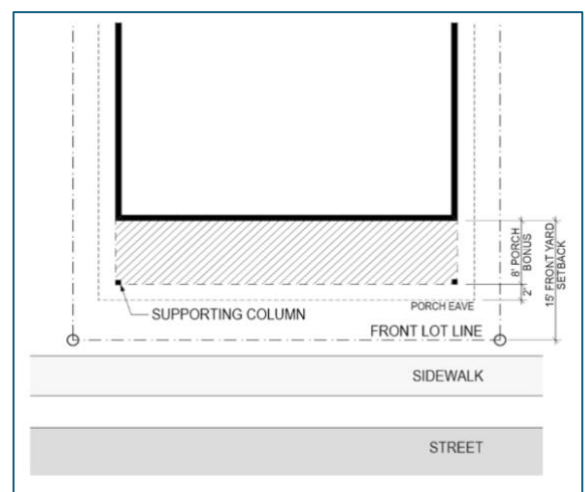


Figure 4: Permitted porch location within setback.

6. BALCONIES

- A. **Purpose:** Ability to stack balconies over porches makes structural logic and provides useful space for stacked flat and townhouse typologies.
- B. **Applicability:** The following standards apply to all balconies in single-family and middle housing development.
- C. **Standard:** Balconies are permitted to stack over porches or other balconies.

7. BAY WINDOWS

- A. **Purpose:** Bay windows create visual interest and create usable interior square footage without increasing a building's overall street presence.
- B. **Applicability:** The following standards apply to all residential building facades.
- C. **Standard:**
 - 1. Bay windows may project up to two feet into side or front yard setbacks.
 - 2. Each bay window may be up to twelve feet wide and up to sixty percent of the façade.



Figure 5: Contributing area of bay windows, up to a maximum of 60%.

8. DORMERS

- A. **Purpose:** Dormers create visual interest and create usable interior square footage without enlarging a building's overall street presence.
- B. **Applicability:** The following standards apply to all residential building roofs.
- C. **Standard:** Each dormer may be up to nine feet wide and the total length of all can add up to 40% of the building length.

UNIT DENSITY BONUSES

Middle housing projects are permitted a density bonus of one additional unit beyond the baseline units allowed if they are within 1/4 mile of major transit or offer at least one unit on the parcel as affordable for rent or ownership.

For Community Residential zoned properties (previously LDR or MDR) this looks like the following:

CR properties more than 1/4 mile from Major Transit Stops		
Lot Size	Baseline units allowed	Total units allowed with affordable housing bonus
Less than 6,500 sqft	3 units	4 units
6,500 to 7,999 sqft	4 units	5 units
8,000 sqft or greater	5 units	5 units (no bonus)

The level of affordability required to receive the unit bonus is based on the area median income (AMI) for the county. Specifically, rental units must rent to be affordable for households at no more than 60% AMI and for sale units households at no more than 80% AMI. Examples of maximum rents (including utilities) by number of bedrooms [can be seen here](#).