

The New Ground Floor: Getting the Regs Right

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SPUR



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www.livablecity.org

Livable City works to create a San Francisco of great streets and complete neighborhoods, where walking, bicycling, and transit are the best choices for most trips, where public spaces are beautiful, well-designed, and well-maintained, and where housing is more plentiful and more affordable.

– Livable City's Mission Statement





Euclidean Zoning

- 1916 Zoning Resolution, New York City
- Standard State Zoning Enabling Act, 1921
- Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co., 1926

Elements

- Height, setback, and bulk limits
- Use restrictions
- Density controls
- Parcel size
- Parking and loading requirements
- Conditional uses and variances



Generators of Diversity

- Primary mixed uses
 - Small blocks
 - Buildings of different ages
 - concentration
- Jane Jacobs, *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1962



Uses of Sidewalks

- safety
- contact
- assimilating children

– Jane Jacobs, *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1962

**A - Attractive**

Small units, many doors (30-40 units per 100 m)
Diversity of functions
No closed or passive units
Interesting relief in facades
Quality materials and refined details

**B - Pleasant**

Relatively small units (20-30 units per 100 m)
Some diversity of functions
Only a few closed or passive units
Some relief in the facade
Relatively good detailing

**C - Somewhere-in-between**

Mixture of small and larger units (6-10 units per 100 m)
Some diversity of functions
Only a few closed or passive units
Uninteresting facade design
Somewhat poor detailing

**D - Dull**

Larger units with few doors (2-5 units per 100 m)
Little diversity of functions
Many closed units
Predominantly unattractive facades
Few or no details

**E - Unattractive**

Large units with few or no doors
No visible variation of function
Closed and passive facades
Monotonous facades
No details, nothing interesting to look at

City Quality at Eye Level - The ground floor facade

The quality of the building frontages facing the footway is an extremely important factor for the quality of an urban area. Good ground floor facades are rich in detail and exciting to walk by, interesting to look at, to touch and to stand beside. Activities inside the buildings and those occurring on the street enrich each other. In the evening, friendly light shines out through the windows of shops and other ground floor activities and contributes to both a feeling of security as well as genuine safety. Interesting ground floor facades also provide good reasons for walking around in the city in the evenings and on Sundays, engaging in the age-old pastime: window shopping. Blank walls, on the contrary, undermine the utility of visiting the city outside working hours.

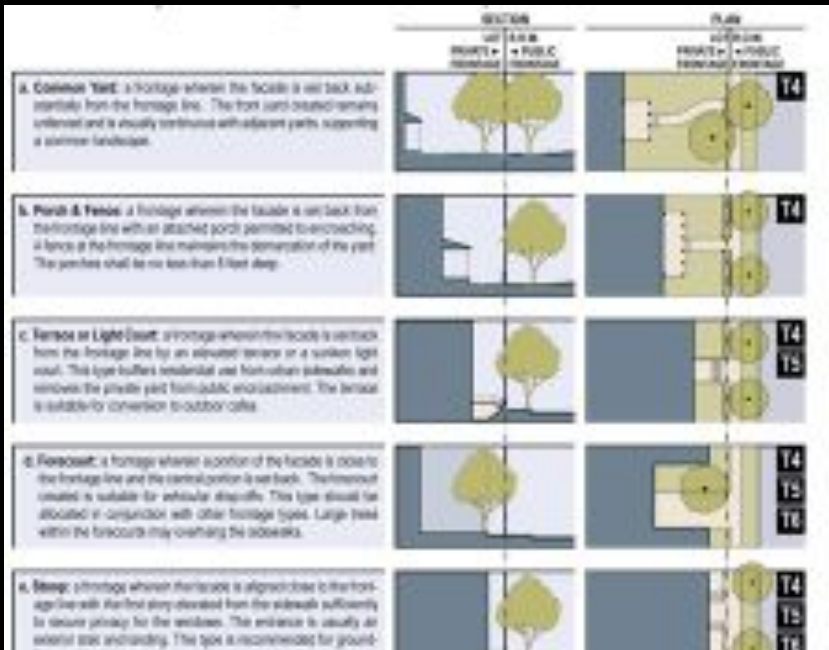


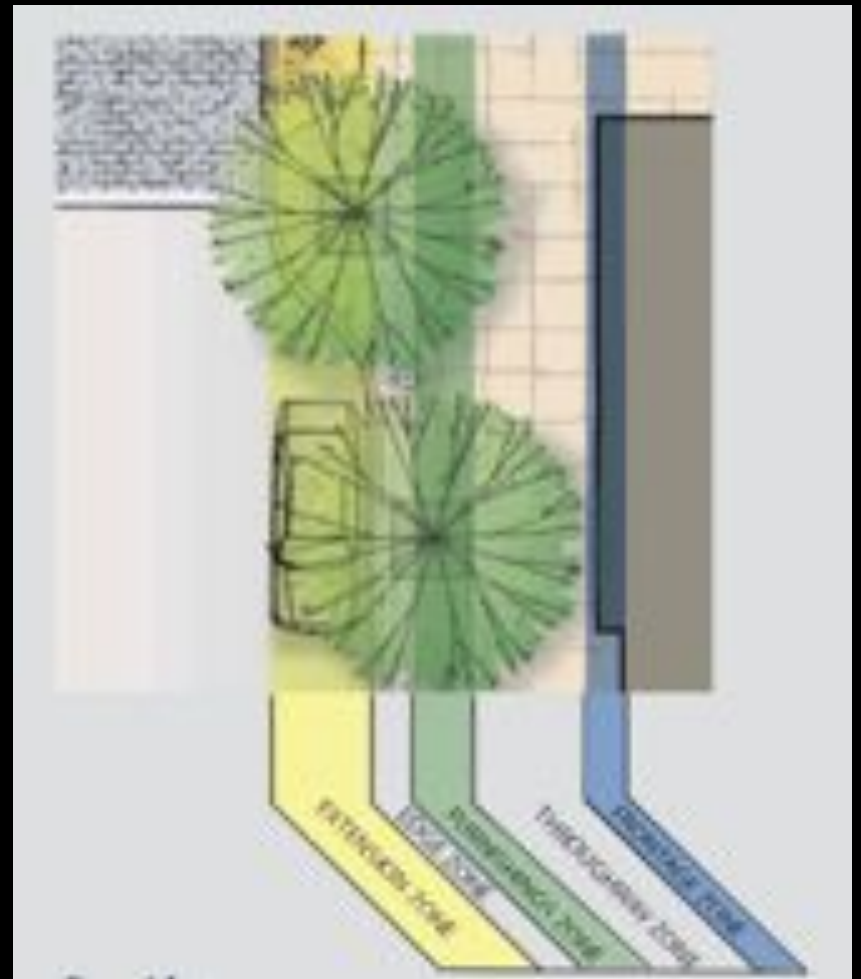
Form-Based Codes

- Regulating Plan
- Public Space Standards
- Building Form Standards
- Administration
- Definitions

may include

- Architectural Standards
- Design Standards
- Signage Standards
- Environmental Resource Standards
- Annotation





Street Frontage requirements

- Planning Code Section 145.1
- Applies to new construction, major additions, and some major changes of use
- Created for NC-T and Eastern Neighborhoods Mixed Use Districts (2008)
- Extended to all NC, C, RC, and Mixed-Use districts (2010)
- Active street-fronting ground floor use (no storage of goods or vehicles or utility installations).
- Tall ground floors (14-18 feet) except in 40' and 50' height districts.
- Driveways limited to the lesser of 20' or 1/3 of street frontage.
- Ground-level spaces must be close to sidewalk level at principal entrances.
- 60% transparent windows and doors along the ground floor for non-residential and non-PDR uses.
- Gates, railings, and grillework over windows must be 75% open to perpendicular view.
- Exceptions permitted for historic buildings.





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Reform of Parking requirements

- Eliminate minimum parking requirements in transit-rich areas
 - 1998 Mission Bay
 - 2005 Rincon Hill
 - 2006 Downtown
 - 2008 Market & Octavia and portions of the Eastern Neighborhoods plan areas
 - 2010 Chinatown, North Beach, Broadway NCD, Telegraph Hill (residential only)
 - 2011 SoMa Mixed Use Districts, Upper Market NCD
 - 2012 Glen Park NCD
 - 2013 Excelsior - Outer Mission NCD
 - pending: Divisadero and Fillmore NCDs, Residential-Commercial Districts, non-residential uses in Chinatown and Broadway and North Beach NCDs
- Allow space-efficient parking (valet, lifts, stackers) by right (2005 Rincon Hill, 2006 Downtown, 2008 citywide)
- Separate, or unbundle, parking costs from housing costs (2005 Rincon Hill, 2006 Downtown, 2008 citywide)
- Permit Zoning Administrator to grant administrative exceptions from parking requirements in Neighborhood Commercial districts (2010)
- Allow the addition of a single unit without adding a parking space (2010)



4080 18th Street, before



4080 18th Street, after

Relaxing zoning restrictions on active uses

- 5' height bonus in 40' and 50' height districts (2008 NC_T districts; later extended to NCDs on Outer Mission, Randolph/Broad, Upper Market, 24th Street – Noe Valley, Geary, Clement, Balboa, Taraval, Noriega and Judah streets – Supervisorial districts I, 4, 8, and 11)
- Permit retail accessory to PDR uses in PDR districts (2008)
- Relax restrictions on sidewalk seating (2009?)
- Permit new corner retail in denser residential districts (2008 RTO districts; 2012 RM-3 and RM-4 districts)
- Simplify controls for Eating and Drinking uses and establish 'good neighbor' requirements (2011)
- Relax restrictions on production uses accessory to retail uses in NC districts (2011)
- Permit reactivation of former storefronts in Residential districts (2012)

Thank you

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