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Townhouse Design Standards

The City of Milwaukie has adopted design standards for townhouses which require a minimum level of design. Detailed standards are located in Milwaukie Municipal Code (MMC) Subsections 19.505.1 and 19.505.5. The standards apply to all new townhouses with a street-facing facade and townhouse developments.

This handout provides an overview of the following standards for townhouses:

Part 1: Development Standards

Part 2: Required Design Standards

Part 3: Detailed Design Features

Part 1: Development Standards

All new townhouses must meet the standards in Table 1. Additional details about each standard are located in MMC 19.505.5.

TABLE 1. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Required Elements	Proposed	Comments Staff Use Only
All new townhouses		
Number of Town Houses Allowed: No more than 4 consecutive townhouses are permitted.		
Lot Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Min. lot size per townhouse: 1,500 sq ftMin. lot width: 20 ftMin. lot depth: 70 ftMin. street frontage: 20 ft		
Height: R-MD <ul style="list-style-type: none">Max. building height: 35 ftSide yard height plane: 20 ft/45 degrees R-HD <ul style="list-style-type: none">Max. building height: 45 ftSide yard height plane: 25 ft/45 degrees		
Setbacks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Min. side setbacks (end units): 5 ftMin. front setback: 20 ftMin. rear setback: 15 ft		
Lot Coverage, Vegetated Area: R-MD <ul style="list-style-type: none">Max. lot coverage: 45%Min. vegetated site area: 15% R-HD <ul style="list-style-type: none">Max. lot coverage: 50%Min. vegetated site area: 15%		

Parking (if required): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Min. vehicle parking for 8 or more townhouses: 0.5 spaces 		

Part 2: Required Design Standards

All new townhouses must meet the standards in Table 2. Additional details about each standard are located in MMC 19.505.1 and 19.505.5.

TABLE 2. REQUIRED DESIGN STANDARDS

Required Elements	Proposed	Comments Staff Use Only
All new townhouses:		
Building Articulation: All new structures and expansions that add 200 sq ft or more to the street-facing façade, or add 20 linear ft or more to the street-facing façade, must comply with the following requirements, based on the building's street frontage width: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 30 ft: Not required 30-60 ft: Minimum 1 element More than 60 ft: Minimum 1 element every 30 ft Elements: (choose 1 or more for buildings more than 30 ft wide): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Porch at least 5 ft deep <input type="checkbox"/> Balcony at least 2 ft deep and accessible from an interior room <input type="checkbox"/> Bay window that extends at least 2 ft wide <input type="checkbox"/> Section of façade recessed by at least 2 ft deep and 6 ft long <input type="checkbox"/> Gabled dormer 		
Eyes on the Street: All new structures and expansions that add 200 sq ft or more to any street-facing façade must comply with this standard. For expansions that add more than 75 sq ft and less than 200 sq ft, the expanded façade area must meet this standard. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 12% of any street-facing building face (whether front or street-side face) must be windows or entrance doors. Up to 50% of garage door windows count towards this requirement. 		
Main entrance: All new structures and expansions that include a new main entrance must meet these standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All buildings must include a main entrance oriented to the street or that opens onto a porch of at least 25 sq ft. Entrance cannot be more than 8 ft behind the longest street-facing wall of the building. 		
Privacy and screening – applies to entire site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanical and communication equipment and outdoor garbage and recycling areas must be screened so they are not visible from streets and common open spaces. Utilities such as transformers, heating and cooling, electric meters, and other utility equipment must not be located within 5 ft of a front entrance and must be screened with sight-obscuring materials. 		

<p>Sustainability:</p> <p>In order to promote more sustainable development, developments that include new building(s) must incorporate the following elements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building orientation that does not preclude utilization of solar panels, or an ecoroof on at least 20% of the total roof surfaces. • Windows that are operable by building occupants. • Window orientation, natural shading, and/or sunshades to limit summer sun and to allow for winter sun penetration. 		
<p>Townhouse Design Standards</p> <p>Townhouses must include an area of transition between the public realm of the right-of-way and the entry to the private dwelling. The entry may be <u>either</u> vertical or horizontal, as described below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A vertical transition shall be an uncovered flight of stairs that leads to the front door or front porch of the dwelling. The stairs must rise at least 3 ft, and not more than 8 ft, from grade. The flight of stairs may encroach into the required front yard, and the bottom step must be at least 4 ft from the front lot line. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A horizontal transition shall be a covered porch with a depth of at least 6 ft. The porch may encroach into the required front yard, but it must be at least 4 ft from the front lot line. 		

Part 3: Detailed Design Features

In addition to the required standards of Table 1, new single-family dwellings and duplexes must incorporate a minimum of 5 detailed design features from Table 3, below. These requirements are not applicable to expansions of an existing structure. An architectural feature may be used to comply with more than one standard. See page 3 for examples of each design feature.

TABLE 3. DETAILED DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

All dwellings shall include at least 5 of the following design features:		
Detail Design Features (check 5 or more)	Description	Comments Staff Use Only
<input type="checkbox"/> A. Covered porch	Minimum 5' deep and 5' wide	
<input type="checkbox"/> B. Recessed entry	Minimum 2' deep and 5' wide	
<input type="checkbox"/> C. Offset building face	Minimum 16" from one exterior wall surface to the other	
<input type="checkbox"/> D. Dormer	Minimum 4' wide and integrated into roof form	

<input type="checkbox"/> E. Roof eaves	Minimum 12" projection from intersection of roof/exterior walls	
<input type="checkbox"/> F. Roof line offsets	Minimum 2' from top surface of one roof to the other	
<input type="checkbox"/> G. Tile or wood shingle roofs		
<input type="checkbox"/> H. Horizontal lap siding	Between 3"-7" wide (visible portion once installed) and made of wood, vinyl or fiber-cement	
<input type="checkbox"/> I. Brick, cedar shingles, or stucco siding at street-facing façade	Minimum 40% of building elevation visible from the street	
<input type="checkbox"/> J. Gable, hip, or gambrel roof design		
<input type="checkbox"/> K. Window trim	Minimum 3" wide and 5/8" deep at all windows on any street-facing façade	
<input type="checkbox"/> L. Window recesses	Minimum 3" from face of façade (all windows)	
<input type="checkbox"/> M. Balcony	Minimum 3' deep x 5' wide, accessible from an interior room	
<input type="checkbox"/> N. Roof pitch to south	Minimum 500 sq ft area, 30° to true north/south	
<input type="checkbox"/> O. Bay window	Minimum 2' deep and 5' long	
<input type="checkbox"/> P. Attached garage 35% or less of front façade*	35% or less measured from inside garage door frame	
<input type="checkbox"/> Q. Universal access. Dwelling must be built to meet universal access as follows: <input type="checkbox"/> a) Dwelling must have a bedroom on the ground floor. <input type="checkbox"/> b) A ramp complying with R311.8 Oregon Residential Specialty Code (ORSC) must be provided to the main entrance of the dwelling. <input type="checkbox"/> c) Doors must have a minimum clear width of 32". <input type="checkbox"/> d) Horizontal and vertical grab bars must be provided in one bathroom on the main floor at the toilet, bath and shower. (See ANSI A117-1 section 609 for size and location requirements.)		

* To be considered a detailed design feature, the width must not exceed 35%. If the width is increased to 40%, at least 5 other detailed design elements in Table 2 must be included in the design of the street-facing façade. If the width is increased to 50%, at least 7 other detailed design elements must be included. Please see Part 3, Attached Garage and Carport Standards, for more information.

Driveway Access and Parking requirements (MMC 19.505.5.F):

https://library.qcode.us/lib/milwaukie_or/pub/municipal_code/item/title_19-chapter_19_500-19_505.