

# Visual Elements

Revised 2-11-09

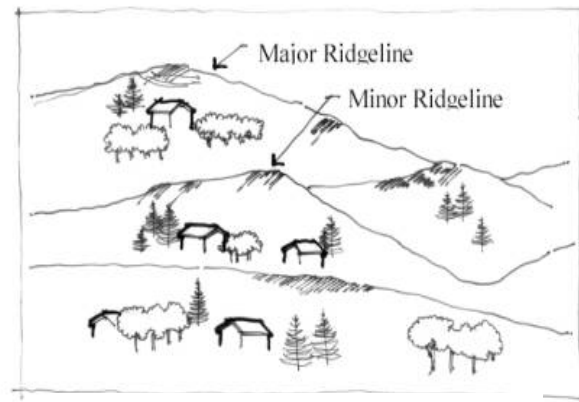
This chapter is divided into three distinct sections:

- A) Natural skyline preservation
- B) Natural viewshed protection
- C) Promote softening of urban development

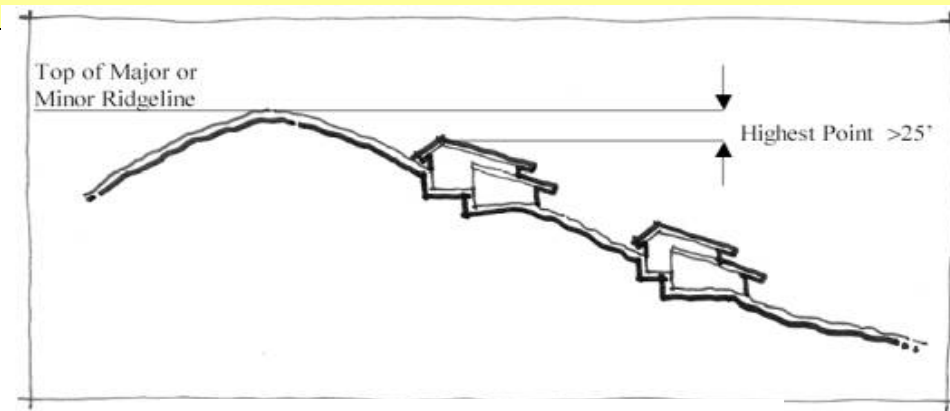
Additional introductory material will be developed in concert with other elements of the Livability section of the code.



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Viewshed Protection, Napa County, CA



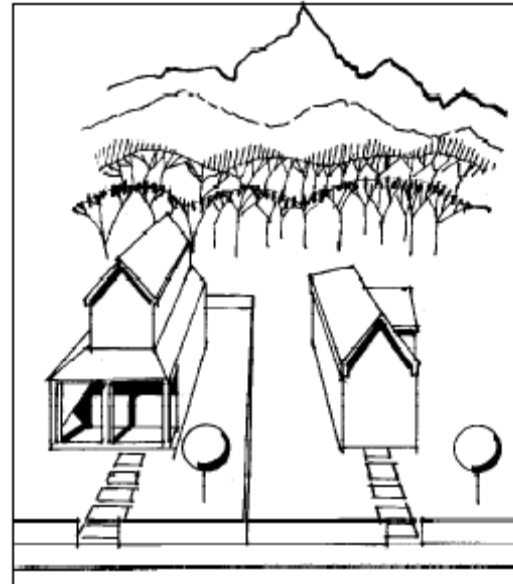
Restricted Development Area, Napa County, CA



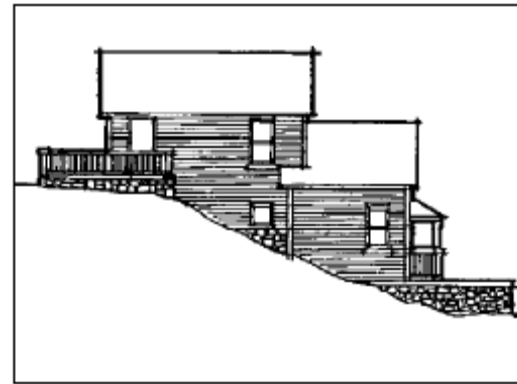
A. NATURAL SKYLEINE PRESERVATION

		ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS			References/Commentary	Code Examples/Citations
		Bronze (Good)	Silver (Better)	Gold (Best)		
	Remove Obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify specific skyline areas and critical vantage points for evaluating development for skyline impacts</li> <li>Remove code provisions that promote skyline development or inhibit the avoidance of skyline development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish base understanding through purpose and intent provisions and key definitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define techniques for projecting view line and measuring degree of intrusion into the skyline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Napa County, CA defines minor and major ridgelines and critical definitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Napa County, <i>Viewshed Protection Ordinance</i>. <a href="#">Available online</a>. Retrieved 1-30-09.</li> </ul>
	Create Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define examples of roof designs, color pallets and vegetative screening to mitigate skyline development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend code to lessen criteria for variances that minimize or avoid skyline development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow administrative approval of reduced dimensional limitations (i.e., minimum lot size and setbacks) to minimize or avoid skyline development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Castle Rock, CO skyline provisions contain procedures and standards for variances that are specific to the skyline rules</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Castle Rock, Colorado. <i>Skyline/Ridgeline Protection Regulations</i> <a href="#">Available online</a>. Viewed 1-30-09.</li> </ul>
	Enact Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>require new structures on existing lots to be located to avoid skyline development to the maximum extent possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigate impact through height limitations, massing, exterior color, form, earth moving and landscaping.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibit skyline penetration with subdivision design using building envelopes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teton County, WY requires location of new structures on previously platted lots to avoid skyline impacts if a building site is possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teton County, <i>Natural, Agricultural, Scenic and Tourism Resources Protection ordinance</i>. <a href="#">Available online</a>. Retrieved 1-30-09</li> </ul>

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Buildings should be sited to maximize views.



Building forms should reinforce the perception of the natural topography.

Telluride, Colorado, *Transitional Hillside Treatment Area and Hillside Overlay*



B. NATURAL VIEWSHED PROTECTION

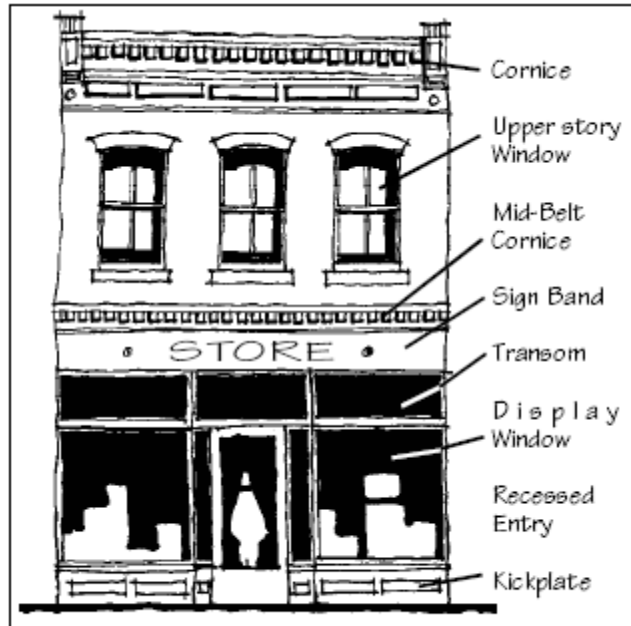
		ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS			References/Commentary	Code Examples/Citations
		Bronze (Good)	Silver (Better)	Gold (Best)		
	Remove Obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify specific view shed areas and critical vantage points for evaluating development for view shed impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish base understanding through purpose and intent provisions and visual illustrations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow administrative approval of reduced dimensional limitations (i.e., minimum lot size and setbacks) to minimize or avoid development impacts on view sheds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telluride, CO illustrates designing development to fit natural contours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telluride, CO. <i>Transitional Hillside Treatment Area and Transitional Hillside Overlay</i>. <a href="#">Available online</a>. Retrieved 1-30-09.</li> </ul>
	Create Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define examples of development patterns (i.e., cluster development) and vegetative screening) that minimize or avoid development impacts on view sheds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow administrative review of development meeting minimal level of view shed protection, and Council approval of higher levels of view shed impact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow density increase in return for clustering development in the rear of the view shed near of vegetative or topographic break</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>San Rafael, CA allows administrative approval of minor development in Hillside Protection Area</li> <li>Santa Clara County has a three tier approval process for development in view shed areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>San Rafael, CA, <i>Hillside Protection Area</i>. <a href="#">Available online</a>. Retrieved 1-30-09.</li> <li>Santa Clara, CA. <i>Santa Clara Valley Viewshed Ordinance</i>. <a href="#">Available online</a>. Retrieved 1-30-09.</li> </ul>
	Enact Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt deep setbacks from roads along critical view shed corridors</li> <li>Require development to parallel natural contours and minimize site disturbance on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require visual analysis as part of application submittals to illustrate impacts of view shed development</li> <li>Establish vegetative screening standards and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require development to locate along rear of view shed to maximum extent possible, then along side of view shed to accommodate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>View shed development in Teton County, WY must be located on the edge of the foreground to minimize</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teton County, WY. <i>Natural, Agricultural, Scenic and Tourism Resources Protection ordinance</i>. <a href="#">Available</a></li> </ul>

Sustainable Community Development Code Framework

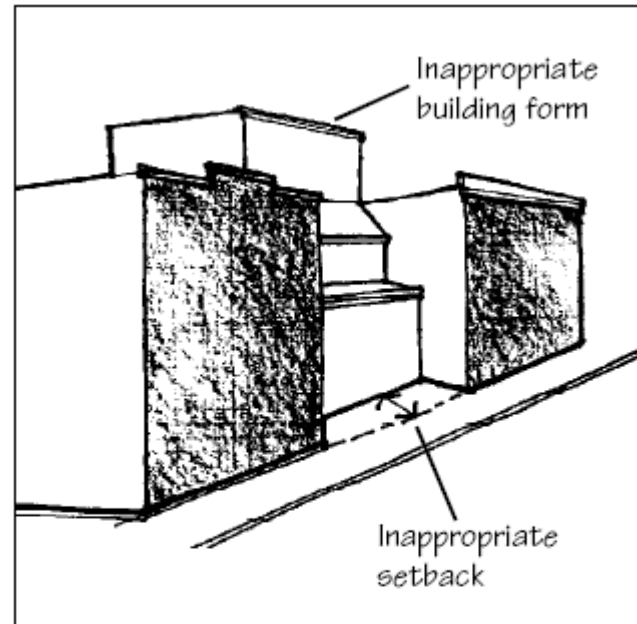
VISUAL ELEMENTS

		hillsides	building forms to minimize impacts of view shed development <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Prohibit development on hillsides steeper than 25% grade</li></ul>	remaining entitled development	intrusion into the scenic area	<a href="#">online</a> . Retrieved 1-30-09.
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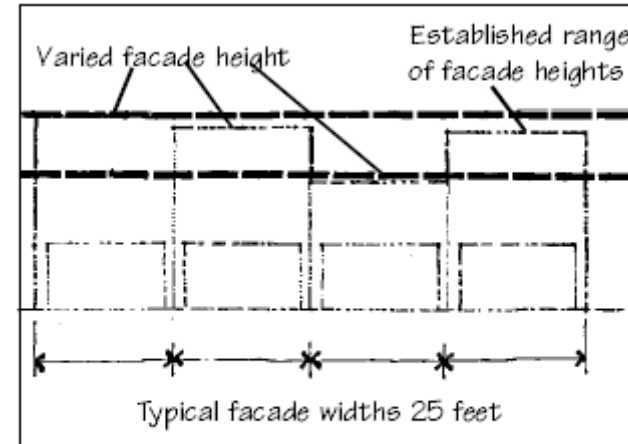
VISUAL ELEMENTS



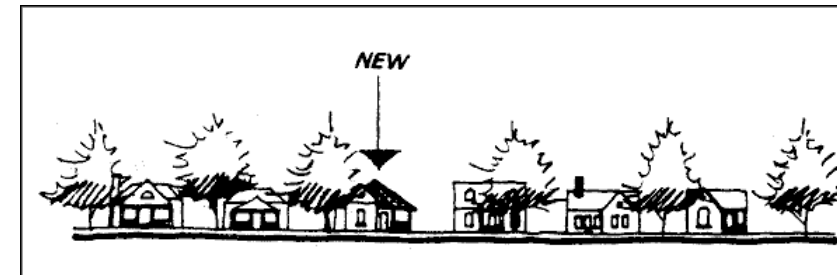
Typical storefront facade elements.



Facades should be aligned at the sidewalk's edge. Locating entire building fronts behind the established storefront line is inappropriate.



Facade heights should be within the established range of heights for the block.



Facade images from Telluride, CO. Infill compatibility (below) from Fort Collins, CO.



C. PROMOTE SOFTENING OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

		ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS			References/Commentary	Code Examples/Citations
		Bronze (Good)	Silver (Better)	Gold (Best)		
	Remove Obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe and illustrate building types that are vernacular to the community</li> <li>Establish policies, purpose and intent provisions aimed at preserving community character and creating vibrant urban spaces and pedestrian environments</li> <li>Delete or amend codes that contain dimensional and parking standards that impede use of urban design principles or inhibit mixed use development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish Urban Design Districts that illustrate area specific design character and principles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow administrative approval of reduced development limitations (i.e., setbacks; parking) to permit urban development that achieves the purpose and intent provisions</li> <li>Allow administrative approval for development that achieve adopted urban design principles and Council approval for deviations from design principles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Belmont defines and illustrates vernacular architecture</li> <li>Telluride, CO defines and illustrates urban development policies</li> <li>Madison, WI and Austin establish Urban Design Districts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="http://www.cityofbelmont.org/webroot/departments/show/16">http://www.cityofbelmont.org/webroot/departments/show/16</a></li> <li>Telluride, CO. Main Street Commercial Treatment Area. <a href="#">Available online</a>. Retrieved 1-30-09.</li> <li>Madison, WI. Zoning Ordinance. See urban design districts. <a href="#">Available online</a>. Retrieved 1-30-09.</li> <li>City of Austin, TX. <i>Design Guidelines</i>.</li> </ul>

Sustainable Community Development Code Framework

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						<a href="#">Available online.</a> Retrieved 1-30-09.
	<b>Create Incentives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permit large scale retail buildings provided they meet certain design standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow taller buildings if they comply with a sky plane view angle or contain setbacks for upper floors to preserve pedestrian scale of structures at street level</li> <li>Adopt build to lines to preserve consistent streetscape</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow larger buildings when building mass is assembled to minimize visual impact and maintain pedestrian scale at the street front</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Palm Beach County, CA adopted Large Scale Commercial design standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Palm Beach; County, CA. <i>Design Standards.</i> <a href="#">Available online.</a> Retrieved 1-30-09.</li> </ul>
	<b>Enact Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt average façade height and setback standards to maintain community character while allowing flexibility to fit the context of the development site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt standards that require infill development to match scale and character of surrounding development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt nonresidential design standards for architectural treatment of façades, rooflines and fenestration</li> <li>Establish view cones aligned toward identified landmarks or image setting natural features</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For Collins, CO enacted neighborhood compatibility standards</li> <li>Palm Beach County, CA adopted comprehensive architectural design standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fort Collins, CO. Land Use Code, compatibility standards. <a href="#">Available online.</a> Retrieved 1-30-09.</li> <li>Palm Beach County, CA, <i>Design Standards.</i> <a href="#">Available online.</a> Retrieved 1-30-09.</li> </ul>