

B. FUTURE LAND USE (CONTINUED)

CHARACTER AREAS

>> HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (CONTINUED)

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

See Design Considerations for All Residential Character Areas on page 43 (Low Density Residential Character Area). In addition, the following considerations should be applied to high density residential character areas.

Regulations for these areas should be more flexible so as to not necessarily require that they match existing traditional architectural styles. Current Zoning Code requirements relating to lot area should be revised to encourage more traditional urban forms and densities, including increasing the maximum lot coverage and adjusting minimum lot size requirements to allow for various arrangements of multiple units.

New apartment buildings or complexes should avoid suburban style, auto-oriented site designs. Development proposals often include at least one parking space per unit, reflective of developers, financiers, and the broader culture being conditioned to accept a car-centric built environment. However, there are many examples of apartment buildings within the city that have functioned for decades with less than one parking space per unit. Developers should demonstrate that they are designing first for pedestrians and the urban surroundings, not for vehicular access and storage.

Rochester also has investment programs dedicated to multi-family, low- or mixed-income housing projects. The City should continue its progress in raising standards for architectural design, use of quality materials, pedestrian-oriented site design, and consistency with the historic built environment of cities. The nature of subsidized housing developments does not have to translate to substandard designs and materials.

Numerous examples in other cities demonstrate that through creativity and a commitment to quality, dignity and pride in design can be present despite the absence of market rate rents. As with market rate projects in other Character Areas, high-quality, pedestrian-scale architectural detailing and materials should be prioritized over the use of EIFS, vinyl, large fiber cement panels or similar large-scale, out-of-context techniques. The use of quality glass, brick, stone, and similarly fine-grained, pedestrian-scaled materials is especially important for first floor facades and if possible, all other highly visible portions of the building.

In addition, authentic and time-tested techniques to break up large building masses should be employed rather than seemingly random color/material changes disguised as a contemporary aesthetic. A significant part of desired urban building design is a strong attention to detail at corners, entryways, fenestrations, and cornice lines. This is a standard that is compatible across multiple architectural styles, not just traditional aesthetics.

Lastly, the above standards should be applied to market rate multi-family and mixed-use projects. Higher standards for design are not necessarily incompatible with a relatively weak real estate market. However, the community should expect that market conditions, along with evolving architectural tastes and practices, will not typically result in replicating traditional buildings of the 19th and early 20th Centuries.



HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

