

# ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW GUIDELINES

PART 1: ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN  
PART 2: LANDSCAPE DESIGN  
PART 3: MEETING PROCEDURES



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CALIFORNIA

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## **Architectural Board of Review Goals**

The Architectural Board of Review (ABR) is guided by a set of general goals that define the major concerns and objectives of its review process. These goals are:

- A. to protect the historic and architectural qualities of Santa Barbara;
- B. to protect the beauty and ecological balance of Santa Barbara's natural resources;
- C. to insure development and building consistent with the policies of the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance;
- D. to promote high standards in architectural design and the construction of aesthetically pleasing structures;
- E. to improve the general quality of the environment and promote conservation of natural and manmade resources of the City;
- F. to encourage planning which is orderly, functionally efficient, healthful, convenient to the public, and aesthetically pleasing;
- G. to promote neighborhood compatibility;
- H. to encourage the preservation of pre -1925 and Hispanic styles of architecture;
- I. to promote visual relief throughout the community by preservation of public scenic ocean and mountain vistas, creation of open space, and variation of styles of architecture;
- J. to preserve creek areas through restoration, maintenance, and enhancement, and to discourage removal of significant trees and foliage removal; and
- K. to encourage landscape design that utilizes water-wise plants and the most efficient irrigation technology available for the protection and conservation of our water resources.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose of the ABR Guidelines

The Architectural Board of Review (ABR) Guidelines set have been developed to guide development proposals to ensure high standards of design are maintained in development and construction in the City of Santa Barbara. The Guidelines are also intended to assist public understanding of the stated goals and adopted policies of the ABR. In addition to ABR-specific guidelines, there are Supplemental Design Guidelines found in a series of separate documents. These Supplemental Design Guidelines provide more detailed direction for some projects. However, many ABR projects are not in an area with supplemental guidelines. These guidelines clarify ABR criteria for reviewing plans throughout the City.

### SECTION 1 Architectural Board of Review Background, Purpose, and Interpretation

- 1.1 **Background.** The ABR was established by ordinance on July 16, 1925, and met for seven months before being dissolved. It was re-established by ordinance in 1947. In 1949, the ABR was designated a Charter Committee by popular vote. Currently, the ABR consists of nine members, two of whom must be licensed architects, one a landscape architect, and three other professionals in related fields such as design or engineering. A quorum consists of four members, one of whom is an architect.
- 1.2 **Objective.** The ABR is charged with the responsibility for "the protection and preservation as nearly as is practicable of the natural charm and beauty of the area in which the City is located and the historical style, qualities and characteristics of the buildings, structures and architectural features associated with and established by its long, illustrious and distinguished past". Santa Barbara has, for many years, enjoyed a widespread reputation for its distinctive buildings and the generally pleasing inter-relationship of these buildings with plantings, parks, beaches and the harbor, against a background of gently rounded foothills and mountains. The beauty and charm of this picture has enhanced the basic attraction of its year-round mild and equable climate.

Santa Barbara's distinctive architecture is a regional style with a Mediterranean influence. It reflects the City's historic past and compliments its setting in the natural environment. The successful adaptation of these architectural forms, with ingenious variations to meet modern needs, using simple materials, generous landscaping, human scale and soft colors, has resulted in the achievement of an architectural harmony that distinguishes Santa Barbara from other cities. It is essential for rational and continued improvement of our community that these important facts be recognized. It is paramount that property owners, architects and builders use initiative and their best judgment and talents toward development of buildings of character that

harmonize with their surroundings and are suitable for proposed sites.

## **SECTION 2            Guideline Interpretation and Application**

The ABR is guided by a set of general goals that define the major concerns and objectives of its review process. These goals are listed on the back side of the cover of this document. These guidelines help to define how ABR carries out the goals.

These Guidelines are designed to provide direction to the ABR members and to the public as a whole; they are not intended to be binding in nature. Although failure to meet the Guidelines can form a basis for denial of a project, non-compliance with these Guidelines shall not be grounds to invalidate any action taken by the ABR, nor shall such non-compliance constitute a cause of action against the City or its officers, employees or agents concerning any matter.

All questions regarding the proper interpretation and application of these Guidelines shall be resolved by the ABR or, upon appeal, the City Council.

**Relationship to the General & Coastal Plans.** The Santa Barbara General Plan contains policies and direction regarding the visual aspect of development, neighborhood compatibility, and landscaping. General and Coastal Plan policies and direction prevail over both the Zoning Ordinance and ABR Guidelines.

**Relationship to Zoning Ordinance.** The Zoning Ordinance contains many standards which plans must comply with prior to ABR review. In using the Design Guidelines, Code requirements prevail over the guidelines. These guidelines are intended to augment the Municipal Code by providing guideline details to complement topics in the Code, as well as to provide guidelines on additional topics.

**Relationship to Other ABR Guidelines.** A number of other ABR Guidelines, described below under "Special Guidelines," also include direction regarding architectural appearance, site design and landscaping. This set of ABR Guidelines is compatible with those guidelines. These ABR Guidelines are more detailed on some subjects than the supplemental guidelines. However, where there are two guideline sets applicable to a project addressing the same issue, supplemental specific area or supplemental special district guidelines would prevail over these ABR guidelines. (See SBMC 22.68.060).

**Guideline Organization.** The ABR Design Guidelines are divided into three parts in addition to this introduction. Part 1 contains the Architectural Design Guidelines. Part 2 contains guidelines for projects which require landscape plans. Part 3 explains the ABR Meeting Procedures and Staff's role in ABR agenda preparation.

### SECTION 3 Supplemental Design Guidelines

In addition to the basic guidelines outlined in the ABR's Architectural & Landscape Guidelines, other guidelines for specific types of development and for specific areas of the City have been prepared with input from the ABR, Landmarks Commission, Planning Commission, and others. These supplemental guidelines are contained in separate documents and include the following:

- A. **Haley-Milpas Design Manual.** The purpose of these guidelines is to assist the people in the Haley-Milpas area in improving the appearance of their property. Goals in this area are to provide a more human-scaled and pedestrian environment; to give more attention to details to provide more interest and feeling; and to encourage mixed-use development to accommodate the mix of uses already existing in the area. U.S. Highway 101, Santa Barbara, Ortega, Salsipuedes and Haley Streets, and the properties facing Milpas Street bound this area.
- B. **Airport Design Guidelines.** These Guidelines were established to recognize the aviation-oriented architecture in this area and to protect the theme established by the Mediterranean style of the airport terminal. The Guidelines apply to all property in the airport area.
- C. **Waterfront Area Design Guidelines.** These Guidelines establish a general design theme, which emphasizes the area's proximity to the ocean and Harbor areas. These Guidelines apply to all property in the area of the Harbor and Pershing Park, as well as properties south of U.S. Highway 101 between Castillo Street on the west and the City limits on the east.
- D. **Upper State Street Area Design Guidelines.** These Guidelines apply to the Upper State Street Area, an area generally on both sides of State Street from Constance Avenue to the westerly City limits. It also includes upper De la Vina Street from Constance Avenue to State Street; commercially developed areas along Hope Avenue, Hitchcock Way and La Cumbre Road and the commercial areas along Calle Real and Pesetas Way. The Upper State Street area is divided into 6 separate neighborhoods. It is recognized each of these is different and requires unique architectural solutions. These Guidelines describe the different neighborhoods and provide assistance for design development to remain compatible with the neighborhoods. In addition, there are special landscaping guidelines for the Upper State Street Area.
- E. **Sign Review Guidelines.** These guidelines itemize acceptable standards for the placement of signs throughout the City. The guidelines describe specific points of Sign Committee review, which promote aesthetic signing, and graphic design that enhances the architectural style or historical quality of a building.

- F. Outdoor Lighting Design Guidelines. These guidelines itemize acceptable standards for outdoor lighting installations throughout the City. The guidelines recommend specific outdoor lighting design standards to avoid excessive glare.
- G. **Urban Design Guidelines.** These guidelines apply to the City's Urban Grid. The intent of the guidelines is to ensure traditional design principles and pedestrian-friendly design concepts are incorporated into development proposal designs. The guidelines provide design criteria illustrations usable by design professionals, the public, and the ABR to evaluate development proposal consistency appropriate design principles.
- H. **Outdoor Vending Machine Design Guidelines.** These guidelines establish design standards for screening, location, signage, illumination and appearance of outdoor vending machines to minimize negative visual impacts related with these installations.
- I. **Wireless Communication Facilities/Antenna Design Guidelines.** These guidelines establish design standards for the screening, location, and appearance of wireless communication facilities to minimize adverse visual impacts related with these installations.
- J. **Lower Riviera Special Design District Guidelines.** These guidelines regulate development within the Lower Riviera Special Design District in order to ensure its continuing compatibility to the proposed Bungalow Haven Historic District, which lies within its core. The guidelines define project designs that would be appropriate, compatible with the historic streetscape and character of the Special Design District.