



**Olivette Residential  
Redevelopment and  
Development  
Guidelines**

**Zoning Ordinance**

**Community Design  
Regulations**

**Petition for  
Community Design  
Review**

**List of Minimum  
Submission  
Standards**

CITY OF OLIVETTE  
PLANNING AND COMMUNITY  
DESIGN COMMISSION

# **CITY OF OLIVETTE RESIDENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT and DESIGN GUIDELINES**

A guide to sustainable residential redevelopment

Adopted by Ordinance No. 2329  
Of the Olivette City Council,  
November 14, 2006



# INTRODUCTION

**The City of Olivette** was incorporated in 1930 and has served the St. Louis region as a wonderful community to call home. At the time of incorporation, a majority of the existing houses were either traditional farm homes, with a vertical appeal surrounded by acres of wooded fields, or a collection of dense, urban 50 foot wide lots with horizontal bungalows.

During the 1940's and continuing through the national housing boom of the post-war years, Olivette experienced rapid growth. Approximately 73% of the existing housing stock in Olivette was built between 1940 and 1970. Most post-war homes were built on lots of 10,000 square feet or more. They were unique and ample in size given the time period. The homes ranged from 1,200 square feet to about 2,400 square feet. Most can be architecturally classified as "rambler" homes, a one story, horizontal house with a low-pitched roof.

Historically, Olivette was home to many orchards, greenhouses and nurseries. This agrarian history and heritage resulted in many of the post-war subdivisions featuring wooded lots with substantial shade and tree lined streets. This "tree friendly" approach remains a dominant feature of most Olivette neighborhoods today.

There has been another constant that characterizes Olivette – its location. Ever since Olivette marked the center of the trail linking the ferry crossing the Missouri River to St. Charles County and the St. Louis Riverfront, Olivette has been at the very center of the St. Louis region. Our excellent location, fine schools, and excellent neighborhoods have sparked renewed interest in Olivette for residential redevelopment.

The City of Olivette welcomes and embraces this renewed interest in residential redevelopment. The city, however, wishes to foster this new residential redevelopment interest while maintaining the character and cohesiveness of its existing neighborhoods. Today's new homes tend to be quite different from the original housing stock, and in order to both encourage redevelopment and maintain a harmonious balance between the old and the new, the city has prepared this booklet to encourage creative and good design in an effort to preserve the genuine character of existing neighborhoods.

The Olivette Planning and Community Design Commission is in charge of reviewing applications for new single-family homes in Olivette to ensure the architectural compatibility of new homes is balanced with the surrounding appeal and character of our neighborhoods. With the spirit of renewed interest in redevelopment in Olivette, the Olivette Planning and Community Design Commission has prepared this manual to illustrate the primary design issues that are considered during Site Plan and Community Design Review.





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>                  | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>             | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>IDENTIFYING YOUR CONTEXT</b>      | <b>4</b>  |
| STEP 1: UNDERSTAND YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD |           |
| STEP 2: UNDERSTAND YOUR STREET       |           |
| STEP 3: RESPECT YOUR NEIGHBORS       |           |
| STEP 4: SITE CONDITIONS              |           |
| <br>                                 |           |
| <b>DESIGN PRINCIPLES</b>             | <b>15</b> |
| MASSING                              |           |
| ROOFS                                |           |
| GARAGES                              |           |
| ELEVATION ARTICULATION               |           |
| MATERIALS                            |           |
| SITE AND GRADING                     |           |
| ADDITIONS AND EXTERIOR RENOVATIONS   |           |
| TREE PRESERVATION                    |           |
| <br>                                 |           |
| <b>REVIEW PROCESS</b>                | <b>24</b> |

This manual is intended to encourage new home design that will result in greater long-term value and enjoyment, by both the home owner and neighbors.

# IDENTIFYING YOUR CONTEXT



Redevelopment occurs within a context. A *context*, as used within this manual, is a series of interrelated parts that together create quality residential environments.

Good design principles dictate that when designing within the residential environment, consideration of four basic parts of the overall context can make a significant difference. The four basic parts of the residential context this manual focuses on are:

- (1) neighborhood,
- (2) street,
- (3) neighbors, and
- (4) site conditions.



# IDENTIFYING YOUR CONTEXT: STEP 1 –Understand Your Neighborhood

The first necessary step in considering a design for a new home is to understand your new neighborhood. A substantial part of the appeal of Olivette is its many strong neighborhoods. Each area has its own distinct and unique character and qualities. Begin by identifying the characteristics of your neighborhood. Make sure that the design features of your new home complement and fit into the neighborhood context.

## NEIGHBORHOOD



## STREET



## NEIGHBORS



## SITE CONDITIONS

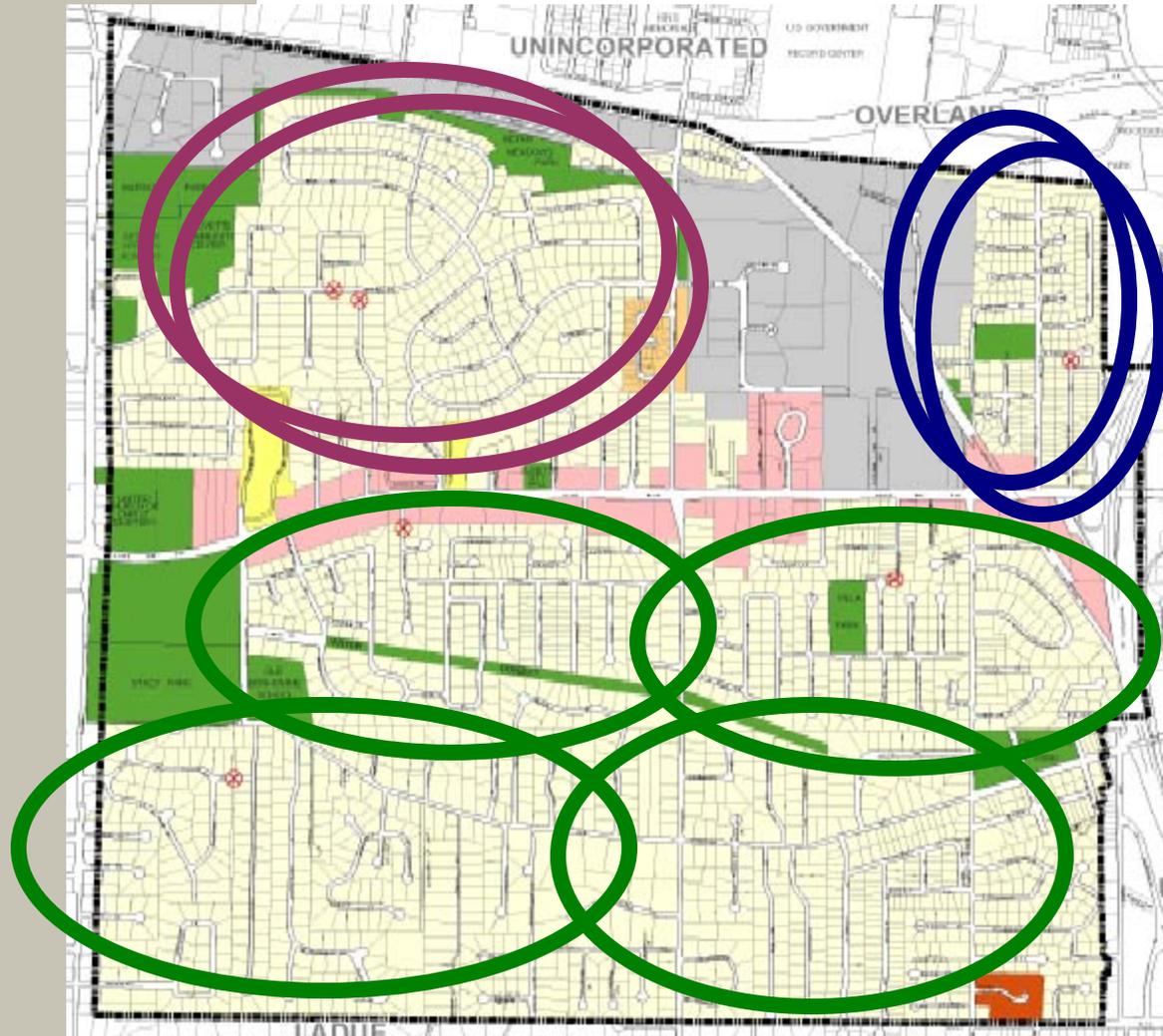




# Step 1: Understand Your Neighborhood



Each of Olivette's many neighborhoods is unique and valuable. Three of the major areas are described here.



**Northeast**

Area 1 is situated to the north of Olive Boulevard near I-170. It consists of pre war bungalows and post-war ranch single-family homes of 1,000 to 2,000 square feet.

**Northwest**

Area 2 consists mostly of the Indian Meadows neighborhood and also extends west to include several neighborhoods accessed from Grandview Drive. Most homes are post-war rambler homes with carports about 1,200 square feet to 2,200 square feet.

**South**

Area 3 includes many different types of neighborhoods on the south side of Olive Boulevard. There is great architectural diversity between neighborhoods. This area also includes some of the City's oldest housing stock and some of the newest housing developments.



**Understand the character of your neighborhood before you decide on your house design.**

# Step 1: Understand Your Neighborhood



The answers to the following questions will help you determine the characteristics that define the identity and distinct appeal of your neighborhood. Remember, good design takes into account prevailing neighborhood features.

**What are the boundaries of the neighborhood?** (streets, parks, creeks, etc.)

---

**What type of development is the neighborhood and when was it built?** (subdivision, eclectic, historic homes, etc.)

---

**What are the zoning designations / limitations?** (setbacks, uses, etc.)

---

**How have the streets and lots been organized?** (square, irregular, winding, etc.)

---

**What characterizes the streetscape?** (horizontal, vertical, trees, sidewalks, etc.)

---

**How many floors do most homes in this neighborhood have?** (1, 1 ½, 2, more)

---

**What are the predominant materials used in the neighborhood?** (brick, siding, stone, stucco)

---

**What are the predominant roof lines, pitches, eaves, etc.?** (1,2,3 ridges, steep or shallow pitch, deep or shallow eaves, etc.)

---

**Is the neighborhood wooded, with substantial shade?** (predominant tree stock, shade affecting street, adjacent properties, etc.)

---

## STEP 2 – Understand Your Street



The character of your street is the next crucial part of the context you must identify and understand. A good design will consider the street at two levels, site plan and elevation.





## Step 2: Understand Your Street



The following questions will help you understand the qualities of your street that should be respected.

**How old are the houses on your street? What percentage, if any, have been redeveloped or rehabilitated?**

---

**Is your street the same as others in your neighborhood or is it unique in some way?**

---

**What vertical pattern or predominant theme is formed by the roof heights on the street?**

---

**What architectural features do you see repeated?** (porches, dormers, window patterns, front door treatment, etc.)

---

**How are garages treated?** (Attached, Detached, Recessed, Side Entry, etc.)

---

**Where are garages located?** (along the front, side or rear)

---

**How are the homes aligned along the streetscape?** (single line, diversity of setbacks, protruding fronts and elevations, etc.)

---

**What is the dominant elevation along the street?** (the main home footprint, the entry porch, garage, etc.)

---

**What landscaping features characterize the street?** (tree types, maturity of trees, amount of shade, variety, spacing, bushes, etc.)

---

The streetscape will help you identify the pattern of houses that line the street.

Streetscape is most simply described as the visual appearance of the homes and landscaping on a street.

Elements include:

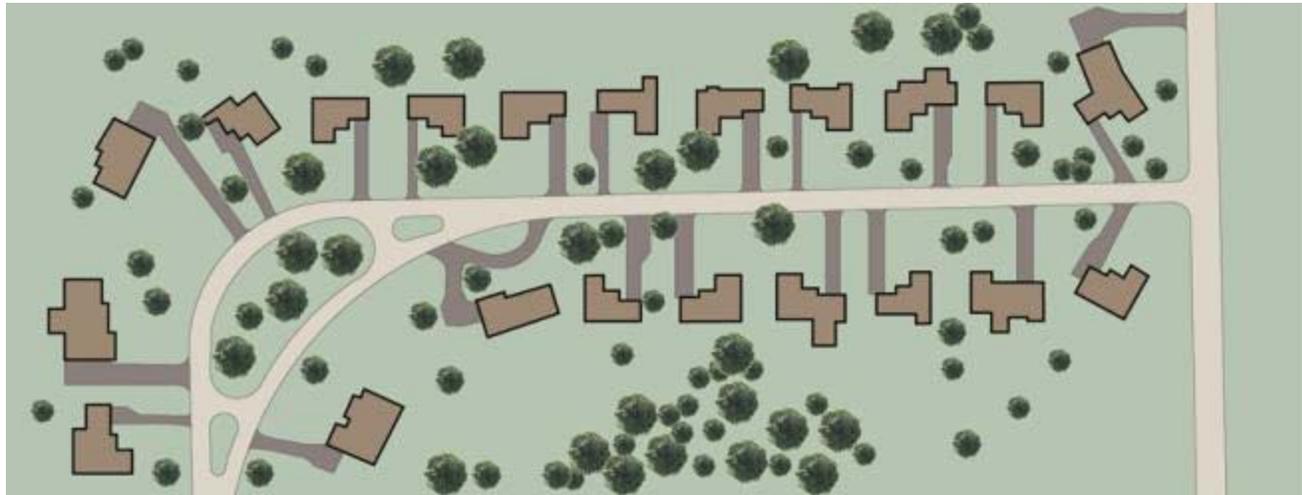
- Setbacks of buildings
- Height of structures
- Building materials
- Pattern of roof lines
- Pedestrian entryways
- Orientation of garages
- Location of driveways
- Street Trees and landscaping



## Step 2: Understand Your Street

### Identifying Street Characteristics

Olivette has setback requirements, but we also require that new homes respect the prevailing setbacks of other homes on the street. Our homes generally are set further back on the site, creating a very open and spacious views down the street. Many of our existing homes have front entry garages but only have one or two doors. Today, when garages are often much larger, we prefer that they not become a dominant feature from the street.



### Easy Tools:

An aerial view of your street can help identify street conditions that you need to respect. Maps like this one can be found at [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com), [www.terraserver.com](http://www.terraserver.com) and [www.co.st-louis.mo.us](http://www.co.st-louis.mo.us). All you need is your address!



### Maintaining Harmony

A crucial element of good design is harmony. Make sure your new home is in harmony with the character of your street. This means you should not build a house that is radically different in terms of roof line, roof pitch, building height, garage projection, garage size, building materials, design elements, etc. Work hard to make sure your new home is a *PART* of your street, and don't build a home that is in stark contrast to those of your neighbors'.

## STEP 3 – Respect Your Neighbors



By following good design principles, you can make your new home a great asset to your new neighborhood. To do so, you must respect the architectural qualities of your neighbors' homes.

Make sure you make every effort to design a home that does not dominate or overshadow your neighbors' home. A new home site should not be mounded, nor should a new houses tower over a neighbor's house.





## Step 3: Respect Your Neighbors

Your project will affect your neighbors immediately. The following questions will help you identify qualities in the adjacent homes that must be respected.

**What type of home sits on either side of your property?** (ranch, two story, split-level, age, condition)

**What characterizes the roof lines and slopes of the homes on both sides of your property?** (multiple ridges, steep or shallow slope)

**How are driveways, turnarounds, and garages situated for your neighbors?**

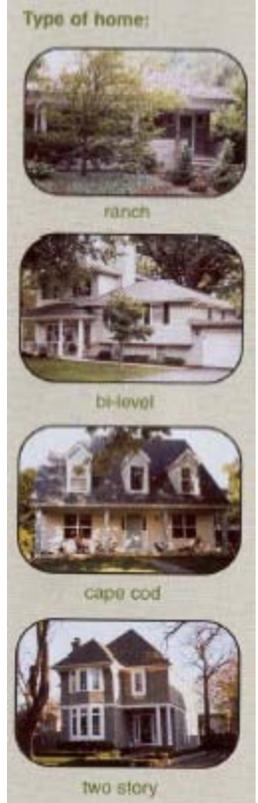
**How are the homes situated on their properties?** (close to the street, far away, further to one side, centered, etc.)

**What landscape features are adjacent to your property, and do landscape features on your property affect your neighbors?** (shade trees, etc.)

**What materials are used on your neighbor's homes?**

**What special or unique features are worth repeating?**

**What elements in your home are designed to recognize and respect the size and height of your neighbors' homes?**



## IDENTIFYING YOUR CONTEXT: STEP 3 – Design A Home to Fit Your Site, Not A Site To Fit Your Home

### NEIGHBORHOOD



### STREET



### NEIGHBORS



### SITE CONDITIONS



No two sites are exactly the same. Since Olivette is an established community, new homes will be built on sites that cannot be significantly changed or modified without adversely impacting adjacent properties

Your new home must be designed to fit into existing site conditions. Given Olivette's character and lot sizes, there is not much room to change a site without affecting those around you.

Never artificially mound a site or substantially regrade a site to fit a house. Design a home to fit your site, not a site to fit your home.



## Step 4: Site Conditions

The answers to these questions will help you determine the site conditions of your lot and that of the overall neighborhood. Remember, good design includes taking into account and building within existing site conditions.

**What is the existing topography of the site?** (flat, sloped, etc.)

---

**Does the design of the home fit the conditions of the lot described above or is substantial alteration necessary to fit the home?** (the topography is flat and the home needs no adjustment, the topography is sloped and the home has been adjusted and stepped to conform with the existing topographical conditions, etc.)

---

**Where does the a majority of the stormwater on the site drain?** (to the street, property corner, etc.)

---

**How are adjacent lots graded?** (flat, mounded,stepped, etc.)

---

**How many sizable trees are on the lot?** (1, 2, 3, etc.)

---

**Where is the highest point on the lot?** (by the street, rear corner, etc.)

---

**What is the elevation of the sewer lateral and what is the elevation of the basement floor?** (is there enough fall between the two, will there be a grinder pump, etc.)

---

**Where do the downspouts drain?** (drain to street, drain to swale, etc. ) **Are the downspout release points at least 10 feet from the property line, including the street?**

---

**Is the existing site properly graded? Or does runoff from the existing site create standing water or problems for your neighbors?**

---

Changes to the existing natural terrain through grading should be kept to a minimum to preserve the inherent characteristics of the site.

Grading should be kept to a minimum and should be performed in a way that respects significant natural features and blends visually with adjacent properties. Building pads should disturb natural contours as little as possible. Balanced cut and fill volumes are desirable, and alterations to natural land forms should be minimized. Factors to be considered in the development of a grading plan are:

- The natural features of the site;
- Slope and soil characteristics;
- Vegetative cover;
- Access to the site;
- Drainage;
- Orientation and visibility of both the site and the proposed development; and
- Drainage.

CITY OF OLIVETTE

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY  
DESIGN COMMISSION

## DESIGN PRINCIPLES: Elements to be Reviewed

Architectural design is a combination of art and science. These guidelines are neither permissive, nor prohibitive. While they express the principles we want you to consider for your house, they are intended as a starting point for creative and diverse design. Some design elements may work well in one context, but not work in another. A house design is not judged solely on the basis of conformity to the guidelines, but how well all of the design elements combine and work together in the context of your site, your street and your neighborhood.

An important part of the City's review and approval of new homes relates to elements of design. There aren't always clear rules telling us what "good" design looks like, and it is hard to explain the design principles the City wants to encourage in words alone. But there are common design elements that provide for compatibility with existing neighborhoods.

The following pages explain and illustrate what the City of Olivette desires to encourage in the design of new homes. The City's evaluation of the proposed design of your new home will generally focus on the elements described in the next seven pages.

Please understand that other elements may also be considered in accord with the guidelines about neighborhood, street, neighbors and site already explained.





# Massing



## Principles to Design By...

The appeal of Olivette has been the strength and character of our neighborhoods. The strength of these neighborhoods lies in the architectural relationships between each home. When one home dominates another in sheer size and shape, the character of the neighborhood is weakened.

Consider the following elements in addressing mass:

Building height

Building width

Breaks in building plane

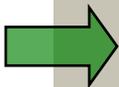
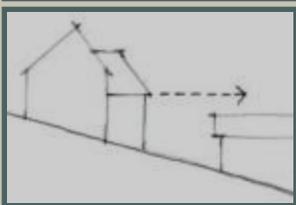
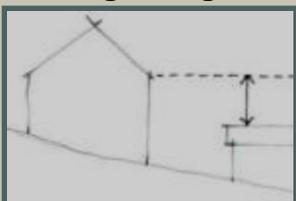
Window treatment

Use of material

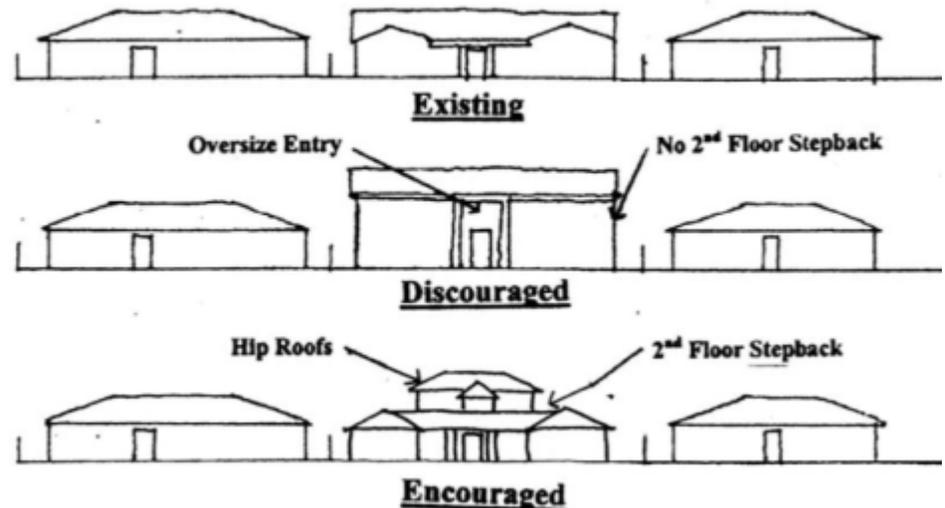
Roof proportions

Architectural Detail

Site grading

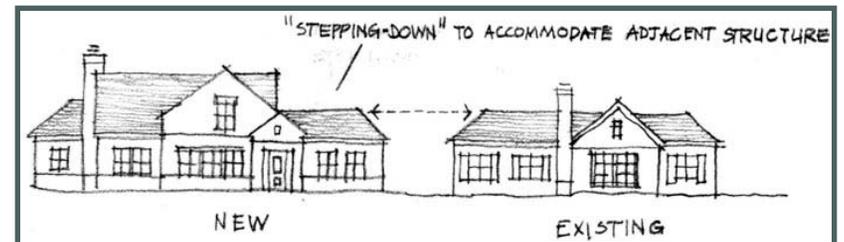
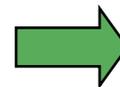


### Relationship to Neighbors Break down the mass of your home to avoid towering over your neighbors



### Step down the rooflines

When you respect the height of adjacent homes, your home looks better and your neighbors won't feel overshadowed. The example shown below illustrates a desirable approach.



**“Mass” does not simply mean size, though the size of your new home is an important element. Mass, more importantly, refers to the appearance of your new home as compared to your neighbors. The design of your new home should not dominate, tower above or overshadow your neighbors.**



# Roofs



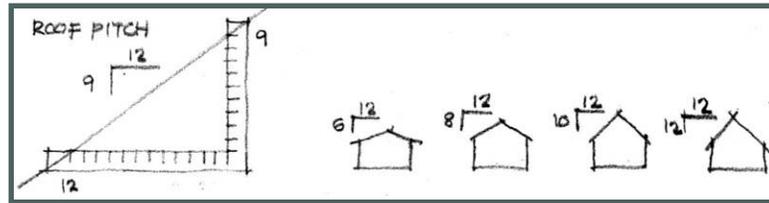
## Principles to Design By...

Your rooflines should not be the dominating architectural theme of your new home. Instead, the roof line can be used to help your home **harmonize** with the roof patterns of the street without calling attention to itself.

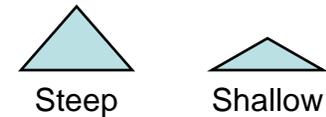
Many of our neighborhoods have homes with shallow roof pitches. A new home with a steep roof pitch can really stand out. It is the intent of the Commission to ensure that rooflines do not detract from the overall streetscape. **The primary roof pitch of the new home shall not be greater than twice the roof pitch of any adjacent home and shall not exceed a 10:12 pitch.**

Consider the following elements of roof design:

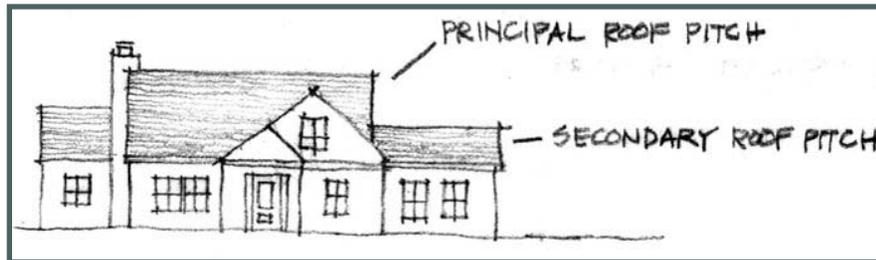
- Roof pitch
- Principal roof pitch
- Secondary roof pitches
- Edge treatment
- Gables
- Predominant roof pitch in the neighborhood
- Roof patterns in the neighborhood



**Roof pitch:** The angle or “pitch” of a roof is expressed in inches of rise (vertical) for every 12 inches of run (horizontal).



**Less vertical expression compared to a more desirable expression next to a one-story home**





# Garages

## Principles to Design By...

Much of the original housing stock in Olivette was constructed with a single car garage or carport aligned with the main building plane or behind the front elevation. Understanding that the modern day family has at least two vehicles, the design for indoor off-street parking should be sensitive to the fact that garages in Olivette are not necessarily the dominate architectural feature of a building elevation and do not necessarily dominant the streetscape of a neighborhood.

Oversized garages, front entry garages and double width garage doors call negative attention to a home. Even more so, a garage that projects beyond the main front building plane towards the street centers attention on the garage and not the home.

During the Community Design review, it is a priority of the Commission to ensure that the garage is not the primary architectural feature of any elevation, and that the garage does not detract from the general streetscape. **Any projection of a garage 15-feet or more beyond the main front building plane is discouraged.**

### What to do with the cars?

Garages are for storing cars, tools and lawn equipment. A well designed home does not have the primary architectural feature a garage projection or door. Instead, place your garage around back and show off your beautiful home instead!

Consider the following elements of garage design:

Building setback

Street entry

Side entry

Garage door face

Number of garage doors

Overall mass, size and placement of the garage compared to the rest of home

Predominate garage types in the neighborhood

Garage layouts in the neighborhood

## Encouraged

Recessed Front Entry Garage



Front Entry Garage



Rear/Side Entry Garage



## Discouraged

Protruding Garages





# Elevation Articulation



## Principles to Design By...

A good home design pays equal attention to all four building elevations: the front, two sides and rear.

Consider the following elements when designing an elevation:

Building width

Building articulation

Building mass

Avoid the void

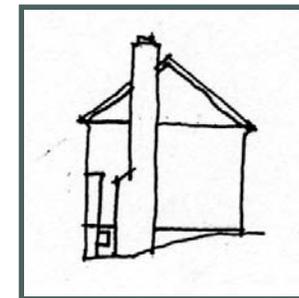
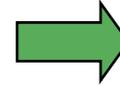
Ban the bland

Keep all four sides interesting

Design a home on all sides

### Side and Rear Elevations

You don't see the sides or back of your home from inside your house, but your neighbors DO! Remember to address basic design on the sides and rear of your home. **Good architectural design includes design features and articulation – walls that include elements of architectural interest, not a blank wall.**



No Articulation

The appearance of your new home at each elevation is an important element in good design. Good design principles dictate that your new home provides elevations on all sides that help foster a sense of community and respect for your new neighbors.



# Materials



## Principles to Design By...

To reflect the quality of our communities we expect building materials to be of the highest quality, reflecting the material use and patterns of the neighborhood.

We prefer to see and routinely favor an elegant, well-considered palette of materials that reflects the proportion and use of materials used in the neighborhood.

Consider the following elements when considering building materials:

Brick and stone (or high quality substitutes)

Siding, including wood or aggregate substitutes such as hardi-plank, or restoration grade vinyl profiles *may be acceptable*

Painted wood trim

### Elegant Use of Materials

Limiting the number of materials makes it easier to harmonize colors and textures.



### Complex Use of Materials

The more materials you use, the harder it is to make them look good together.



# Site and Grading

We consider the following elements of a site design:

- Topography
- Top of foundation
- Avoid mounding
- Storm-water discharge
- Existing and proposed grades
- Proposed
- Downspouts
- Neighboring property lines
- Street accessibility
- Landscaping, trees and shading
- Tree preservation

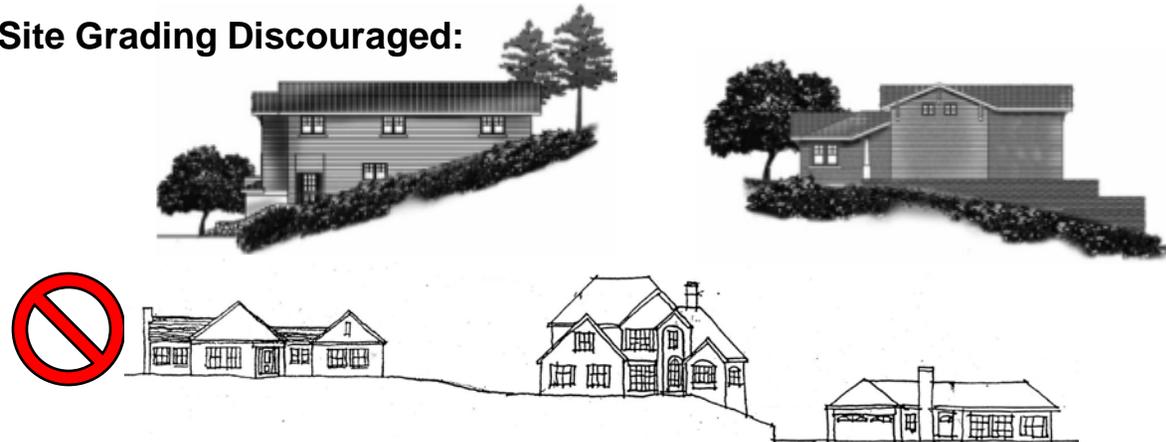
## Principles to Design By...

You should expect to address, and hopefully solve, site drainage problems that already exist. Ignoring drainage patterns or increasing the amount or velocity of storm-water runoff to adjacent properties is not acceptable.

### Site Grading Encouraged:



### Site Grading Discouraged:



Remember, good design means taking advantage of existing grades. Too much grading on a site can alter the character of a lot and severely and negatively affect neighbors.

**Do** design your house for the lot.  
**Don't** alter the lot for the house.

# Additions and Exterior Renovations

Consider the following elements when considering building additions and exterior renovations:

Topography and avoiding mounding

Top of foundation and foundation wall exposure

Storm-water discharge

Existing and proposed grades

Stormwater/Drainage impacts

Exterior articulation and building finishes

Neighbor, subdivision and community design impacts

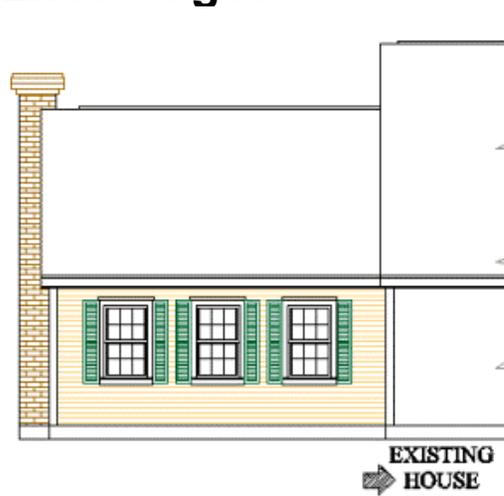
CITY OF OLIVETTE

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY  
DESIGN COMMISSION

## Principles to Design By...

Residential building additions and exterior alterations should compliment the existing home design and blend within the surrounding environment and neighboring structures. Any building addition or exterior alteration should follow the same design principles encouraged for massing, roofs, elevation articulation, materials, and site grading as noted in this report.

### Encouraged



### Discouraged



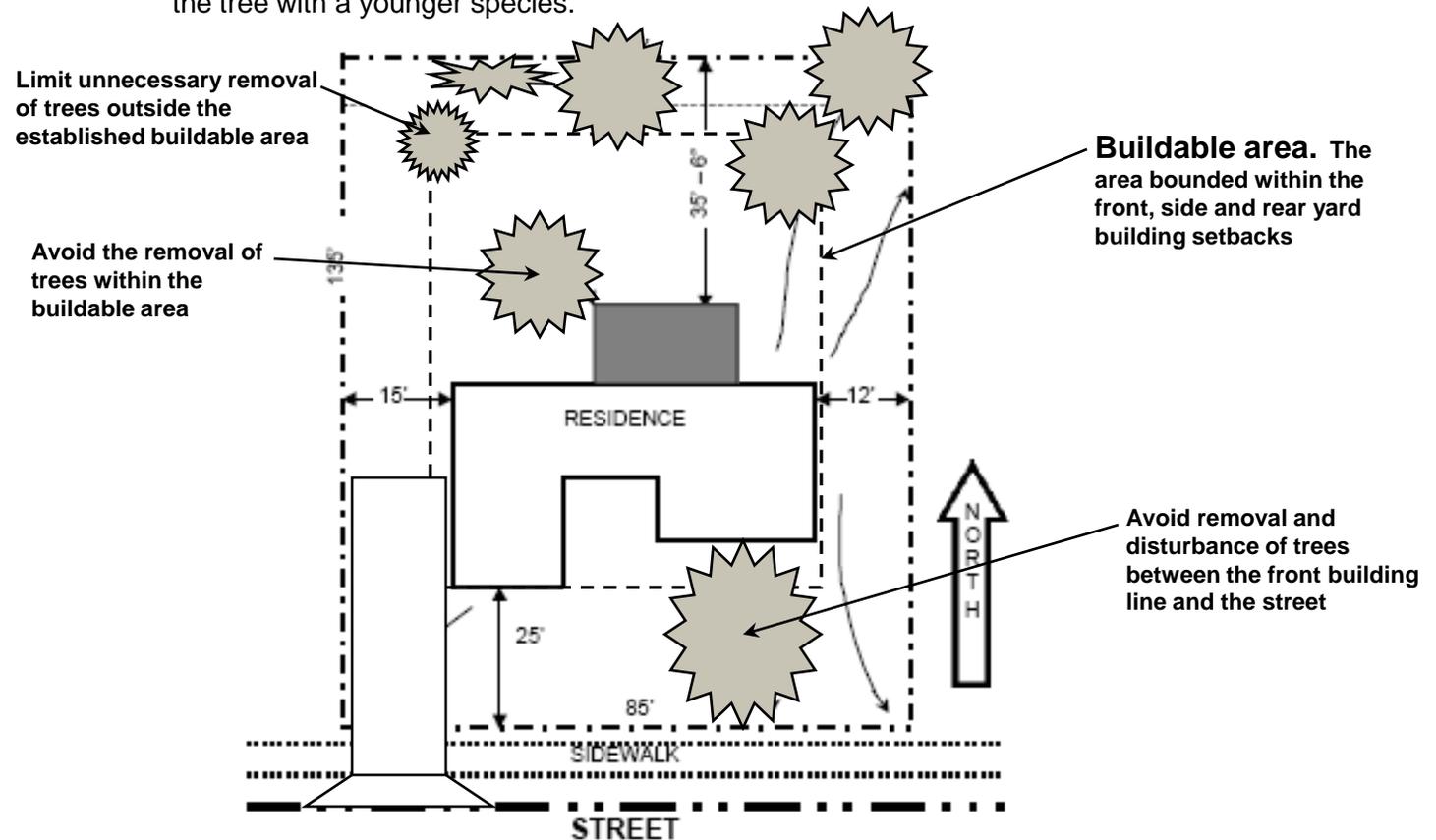
A good addition should look as if it were part of the original house structures. Exterior alterations should compliment the existing home and the neighboring structures.

# Tree Preservation

## Principles to Design By...

One of the many unique qualities of Olivette's residential neighborhoods and residential streets are the proliferation of countless varieties of mature trees and their spanning canopies arching over streets and yards. When designing your home, consider the location of the home on the lot and limit the unnecessary removal of mature trees. Consider the following four principles as you configure the placement of your home and the grading of your lot:

1. Try to avoid mature trees within the buildable area established by the zoning district. The buildable area is the area bounded within the front, side and rear yard setbacks.
2. Avoid the removal of trees and disturbing the ground area within a tree drip line/canopy between the front building line and street.
3. Limit the unnecessary removal of trees outside the buildable area established by the zoning district.
4. If removing a tree outside the buildable area established by the zoning district, consider replacement of the tree with a younger species.



Assess the health of trees on your property.

Trees add value to property and are an essential element in preserving a neighborhood's overall character.

Unhealthy trees deter from the value of property and pose a public hazard.

Avoid unnecessary damage to trees during construction. Trees should be marked and fence enclosed. Periodically inspect the fence enclosures throughout the construction process to limit damage.

# Review Process



## Requirements:

Before submitting a petition for a new single family home or residential addition/exterior alteration, make sure you review the following items:

1. Olivette Residential Redevelopment and Design Guidelines
2. Zoning Ordinance of the Olivette Municipal Code
3. Community Design regulations of the Olivette Municipal Code
4. Petition application for Community Design Review.
5. List of Minimum Submission Standards for PCDC Review

Also, don't forget to notify and contact adjacent neighbors and your subdivision's trustees.

---

**Schedule of PCDC:** The Planning and Community Design Commission reviews new home petitions on the third Thursday of each month. Deadline for submission is thirty (30) days prior to a scheduled meeting.

Petitions for single family residential additions and exterior alterations are reviewed on the first and third Thursday of each month. Deadline for submission is fifteen (15) days prior to a scheduled meeting.

---

**Review:** Once a petition is received, staff will review the petition for completeness and provide the Petitioner general comments regarding zoning compliance and design. Incomplete petitions shall be returned without review and resubmission shall be necessary.

If the petition is deemed complete by staff, the petitioner will have ten days to resubmit revised plans addressing staff's issues. Revised petitions will be placed on the Commission docket for review.

The Commission has sixty (60) days to take action on a petition approved by staff. If the Commission does not act within sixty (60) days, the petition is deemed automatically approved.

---

**Approval:** Once a petition has been approved by the Commission, an application for a building permit may be submitted. Community Design Review approval is valid for 12 months. If a footing inspection is not complete within 12-months from the date the Community Design Review petition is approved, a new petition review will be necessary.

Building permits generally take ten (10) working days for initial review. All comments are forwarded to the architect of record on the plans received.