SITE DESIGN PRINCIPLES

HOW TO LAY OUT HOME CATALOG PLANS ON YOUR LOT

While architectural plans can be pre-approved, all pre-approved programs require a site-specific permit plan to show how the plans will be utilized on your specific site. Site design will be site specific and likely constrained by practical factors. Start your project by thinking about the following high-level considerations.

1 PRIORITIZE THE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

- Design your site for a human scale, promoting connectivity and community interaction.
- Keep parking secondary—people go in the front of your site and cars go in the back. Side driveways and on-street parking can minimize front yard parking, even on lots without built-out alleys. Note that the Zoning Ordinance requires at least one off-street parking space per dwelling unit. (See example case study site plans on the following pages: 101, 109, 111)
- Ensure clear, direct connections between building entrances and sidewalks to reinforce accessibility and movement.

2 CHARACTER AND CONTEXT IS CRITICAL

- Integrate multiple plans within a single site through thoughtful building placement and setback design to achieve efficient housing and create a positive place.
- At the same time, don't feel bound to strictly adhere to existing neighborhood fabric; good urbanism can accommodate variation when it complements the surrounding context throug building shape, form, and placement.
- Position buildings closer to the street to maximize use of your lot and reduce the distance (and cost) of utility connections.
- Landscape yards lushly: low maintenance native shrubs and perennials maintain front porch privacy and improve curb appeal for residents and neighbors alike.
- Consider how stormwater moves across the entire block. Avoid building within or altering natural drainage paths, and make sure water flow patterns remain consistent before and after development.

3 BALANCE SECURITY AND PRIVACY

- Orient windows and doors toward public spaces to foster natural surveillance and community interaction—eyes on the street make safer neighborhoods.
- Maintain privacy for adjacent properties while keeping homes open and connected to their surroundings. Use fencing and plants to screen as necessary.
- Consider the orientation of spaces—use the "active" side of the homes with primary windows to face one direction, and utilize frosted glass and planting to create a "passive" side of the street and public areas of each house.

4 MAKE OPEN SPACE MEANINGFUL

- Every unbuilt area should contribute to the overall site design—prioritize shared or private outdoor spaces that enhance everyday living.
- Provide paved service areas located beside or behind the house or garage for mechanical equipment, trash and recycling bins, and outdoor storage.
- For larger projects, organize the site so that open space is a focal point, not an afterthought—avoid letting parking lots define the experience.
- Whenever feasible, preserve existing trees by keeping buildings, paving, and construction activity out of their dripline (the area beneath the canopy).

5 BUILD FOR LONGEVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Select durable, high-quality materials that weather gracefully and contribute to a lasting presence. Design the site with longevity and ease of maintenance in mind, suitable for the local climate of seasonal temperature fluctuations, freeze-thaw cycles, snow removal requirements, and periodic heavy rainfall.
- Incorporate passive design strategies and energy-efficient technologies to lessen environmental impacts. For example, planting shade trees on the south side of the house and over parking areas can help keep the home comfortable in the summer heat, while deep porches provide window shading and create affordable outdoor living spaces.
- Approach stormwater management thoughtfully—integrate permeable surfaces such as interlocking concrete pavers, grass and gravel pavers, and porous asphalt; as well as landscape solutions like rain gardens, infiltration trenches, and rain barrels to mitigate runoff.
- Be mindful of surrounding properties— design the site to ensure you don't create drainage, access, or privacy issues for your neighbors.



A neighborhood utilizing the same stock plan and various facade designs for neighborhood variety. University Heights Neighborhood, Fayetteville, AR.
Source: Flintlock LAB, Photography by Kevin Wilkerson