

TOWN OF  
**QUEEN CREEK**  
ARIZONA

Residential Architectural Design  
Standards  
Frequently Asked Question

February 20, 2013



# Question One

## Q1. Are there any alternatives to how the 40% garage requirement is calculated?

- Can a “standard” return width be set, such as 2 feet on either side?
- If the return is proposed to be larger to accommodate additional space in the garage, can that be done if it has a window or other design element?
- Can the width of the garage be “masked” by being behind a design element such as a column for the front porch?

A1. Variations to the design standards need to be requested by an applicant as part of their submittal for a Planned Area Development (PAD) and will be evaluated by the Council as part of their request. Variations can be approved by the Council as part of their package if they determine the intent of the Design Standards has been met.

Page 2 of the Design Standards states: “The only means for deviating from these regulations is to incorporate the request into an applicant for Planned Area Development or an amendment to an existing PAD approval.”



# Tradeoffs

**Q2. Can other design options or alternatives be offered which are focused on producing a more attractive and varied streetscape, rather than focusing on individual homes, as a “tradeoff” to address the 40% garage requirement?**

A2. As described in A1 above, variations from the design standards can be requested by an applicant as part of their submittal for a Planned Area Development (PAD) and will be evaluated by the Council as part of their request. Variations can be approved by the Council as part of their package if they determine the intent of the Design Standards has been met.



# Applicability

**Q3. Do the Design Standards apply in the R1-4 and R1-5 zoning districts?**

**A3. Yes.** Although the R1-4 and R1-5 districts are not identified at the top of Table 5.11-1, the Design Standards are included in the PAD review requirements described on Table 4.10-4



# Four Sided Architecture

**Q4. How many design elements are required to constitute “four sided architecture”?**

**A4.** There is no specific number of design elements that constitute “four sided architecture”. Each elevation is reviewed by staff individually. Items staff is looking for include:

- The number of architectural embellishments from the front elevation that are used on the other three elevations. The home should reflect a theme on all sides.
- The number and placement of doors and windows on the side and rear elevations. At least one window or door should be provided on each elevation.
- Architectural treatment at each door and window that matches the front elevation.
- How the rear porch incorporated into the home as a design element.
- Additional window treatments, colors, etc. to be provided on homes with gables, particularly two story homes.



# Model Home Designs

**Q5. How many design differences should there be between model homes?**

**A5.** The Design Standards contain a list of the “defining characteristics” (pages 14-21) for 8 of the more common architectural styles used in our area. These characteristics should be incorporated into the proposed home designs where possible when using these styles. If the proposed style is not described, it should demonstrate the equivalent characteristics for the new style.



# Flex Space

**Q6. If a model offers “flex space” which the new owner can have finished as a storage room, a den, a casita or a single bay garage, will it be considered to be a garage or living space in the approval of the design for the model home?**

**A6. If the design of the “flex space” incorporates windows or other exterior treatments that would identify it as being part of the livable area, the developer has an exterior option which provides a solid wall as well as a door and the design of the space reflects the potential to be used as livable area, staff will consider the space to be buildable area for the determination of front yard setback and the 5 foot offset between the garage and the livable area of the home.**



# Design Credits

**Q7. Can a builder receive a “design credit” in some other area if they have more than the minimum number of floor plans and elevations required by the Town? (The Town requires a minimum of 4 floor plans, 3 of which must have 2 distinct elevations)**

**A7. No. Having additional floor plans and elevations demonstrate a commitment to quality and diversity that will encourage both staff and Council support the request.**





# Subdivision Entry Signs

**Q8. How much design emphasis should be placed on the design and size of the subdivision entry monument?**

**A8.** The entry monument is the “front door” to the subdivision and should provide a distinctive entry statement for the project. The sign should convey both stability and permanence, reflecting positively on the character of the subdivision and the Town. Staff reviews the design of the entry monument sign as part of the Design Review submittal for a project.

- The design standards for entry monument signs are as follows:
- The sign text area is not to exceed 32 square feet in area or 5 feet in height
- Monument signs can be placed on both sides of a street that serves as an entry to the subdivision. More than one street can be designated as an entry.
- Sign letters and materials must be durable and reflect the architectural character for the project. Wood or plastic signs are not allowed.
- The sign must have at least a 2' base or landscaped planter.
- Additional landscaped materials to accentuate the sign and additional design elements incorporated into the sign which reflect the character of the project are encouraged. Examples might include lighting of trees, adding boulders, varied height of wall elements and masonry types, providing supporting architectural elements such as arches, columns, fountains, etc.
- Sign designs which reflect the Town’s southwestern character and agricultural heritage are encouraged.
- Lighting of the sign is encouraged.



# Front Porches

**Q9. Can the front porch be less than 120 square feet on some models that have other design elements and still encroach in the front yard setback?**

**A9. No. Unless Council approves the change as part of a PAD approval.**



# Private Streets

**Q10. Are there additional design requirements for approval of a gated neighborhood with private streets?**

A10. No. Requests for gated communities are presented and evaluated as part of a PAD application. Items staff looks for in the evaluation of PAD requests include:

Is there anything unique about the property that may limit the ability to provide public streets and make private streets more advantageous?

What will be the interior and exterior appearance of the project?

Subdivision design features such as long cul-de-sacs serving hillside lots, narrower streets with no parking, overall density of lots per street, long term viability of private streets given the projected use and replacement costs, proposed unique subdivision design features



# Xerascaping

**Q11. Do we need to include turf in our landscape plan or can we use entirely xerascaping and no sod?**

**A11.** A mixture of turf and xerascaping can be provided. Turf should be used in highly visible areas, storm water retention areas and adjacent to recreational amenities. Xerascaping can be provided in smaller locations that would be more difficult to maintain such as landscaped islands, narrow strips behind sidewalks, adjacent to walls also occupied by trees, and other areas where turf would be impractical.



# Landscaped Strips

**Q12. Do we need to provide the landscaped strips between the curb and the sidewalk area and plant trees in this area? Can we move the sidewalk behind the curb and plant the trees behind it nearer the homes? As the trees grow that are planted in the strip they tend to buckle the sidewalk.**

**A12. The Council has a policy of encouraging tree lined streets and with the sidewalks separated from the street by a landscaped area. If your subdivision was approved with a landscaped area between the street and the curb it needs to be constructed that way. To relocate the sidewalk and delete the landscaping would require the applicant to file a request for an amendment to the PAD to make the change, which would need to be approved by the Town Council.**



TOWN OF  
**QUEEN CREEK**  
ARIZONA

Thank You

Questions?

Comments?

