



Requesting Department:
Development Services

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

THRU: Brett Burningham, Development Services Director

FROM: Erik Swanson, Planning Administrator

RE: **Public Hearing and Possible Action on P21-0089 Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment – Residential Design Review**, an amendment to DS.4 Single-Family Residential by creating a new subsection *F. Approved Product Transferability*, to the Town’s adopted Design Standards

DATE: May 12, 2021

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of P21-0089 Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment – Residential Design Review, an amendment to DS.4 Single-Family Residential by creating a new subsection *F. Approved Product Transferability*, to the Town’s adopted Design Standards.

PROPOSED MOTION

Move to recommend approval of P21-0089 Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments – Residential Design Review, an amendment to DS.4 Single-Family Residential by creating a new subsection *F. Approved Product Transferability*, to the Town’s adopted Design Standards

RELEVANT COUNCIL GOAL



Effective Government

SUMMARY

Yearly, the Town Council conducts a strategic planning session to discuss a variety of items, including opportunities in which processes may be streamlined to create greater efficiency. As part of the 2021 strategic planning session, Planning Staff recommended modifying the Town’s current process for Residential Design Reviews by allowing housing product that has received RDR approval within the past 12 months to be transferred to additional developments with only administrative approval. It is anticipated that by streamlining the design review process an estimated 3-6 months can be removed from the overall approval process for homebuilders.

DISCUSSION

As more communities are developed within the Town and as Staff and the Planning Commission have reviewed and approved numerous housing products, the level of design expectation has increased giving rise to housing product design that may not need additional oversight by the Planning Commission. With the Town already having anywhere between 28-30k residential lots planned, reducing review and approval timeframes has the ability to substantially reduce costs to homebuilders, bring additional housing product to market sooner, and reduce staff review times.

At the April 14, 2021 Planning Commission Work Session, Planning Staff presented to the Planning Commission the proposed amendment to the RDR process. While the amendment was still being developed, Planning Staff recommended the following considerations:

- 1) Housing product that has received RDR approval within the past 12 months could be transferred to another community, requiring only administrative review and approval to ensure consistency.
- 2) Any housing product that was first to a new community would require RDR review and approval by the Planning Commission;
- 3) If housing product has previously been approved and is being requested to be transferred to another community, the housing product would have to meet all applicable conditions of approval for that community (e.g. only single-story homes);
- 4) Product would have to be commensurate with the lot sizes (e.g. a 35' product would not be appropriate on a R1-12 lot);
- 5) The number of housing products/elevations would need to be evaluated prior to approval to ensure sufficient diversity within the community; and
- 6) Product cannot be transferred that has received approval for deviations.

During the Work Session there was discussion pertaining to situations where a master-planned community is developed over a period of years and that on occasion homebuilders will not proceed to another community without first finishing the community that is under construction, and that by only providing an approval timeframe of 12 months, may not be a benefit to some homebuilders. Staff is recommending that the 12 month timeframe remain in place, however add language that homebuilders that are the primary homebuilder within a multi-phased master-planned community can transfer housing product up to three years from final Residential Design Review product approval upon review and approval by the Planning Administrator to ensure that the product is in keeping with current design standards and the community in which the product is proposed. Language will be provided that in the event housing product is not consistent with current design standards that the product will need to receive RDR approval from the Planning Commission.

Considerations

The RDR Design Standards were established to foster a variety of quality residential design for the long-term product sustainability of the Town. The design standards have four goals to achieve this:

1. To encourage a mix of homes and other types of housing within the Town;
2. To permit greater diversity in the types of housing communities;
3. To ensure that all new single family dwellings are compatible with other forms of housing; and
4. To create attractive, enduring and sustainable neighborhoods.

While the amendment has the opportunity to streamline review processes substantially, it is important to ensure that there is sufficient product diversity throughout the community with a variety of product

options. To ensure diversity, Staff is also recommending that approved product can only be transferred a maximum of two times, allowing the same product to be constructed in three developments to ensure sufficient diversity throughout the Town.

ATTACHMENT

1. DS.4 Single-Family Residential Design Standards
2. DS.4 Single-Family Residential Design Standards - *proposed amendment*

of decorative stone veneer, stucco, brick/block materials, etc. to complement the architectural design theme, monumentation and walls of the neighborhood.



DS.4 Single-Family Residential Standards

A. *Purpose.* The purpose of this Section is to guide architectural integrity in order to assure that these neighborhoods are sustainable and continue to make a positive contribution to the community in the years to come. Neighborhoods designed according to these principles increase in value as they mature, rather than requiring ongoing public reinvestment that is often needed in poorly designed neighborhoods where there is little pride of ownership and lack of property maintenance. The purposes of these provisions are:

1. To supplement the zoning regulations applied to site built, modular and manufactured homes with additional standards and procedures which will promote a satisfactory living environment for residents of single

family homes, and encourage a mix of homes and other types of housing within the Town;

2. To permit greater diversity in the types of housing communities; and,
3. To ensure that all new single family dwellings are compatible with other forms of housing.
4. To create attractive, enduring and sustainable neighborhoods.

B. *Applicability.*

1. These Standards apply to all new single-family structures on individual lots, including new subdivisions, custom homes and master planned communities. These Standards do not apply to subdivisions or master planned communities with approved development agreements, the conditions of which would preclude the ability to fully comply with these guidelines. These Standards are provided for the use of homeowners, builders, contractors, designers, Town staff and Town decision makers.

2. Small-scale development may propose alternative design standards to the Planning Administrator. Alternative design standards may include design character and features from previously approved developments adjacent to proposed small-scale development.

C. *Residential Design Review Application/Approval Process.*

1. Prior to submitting an application for Design Review approval the applicant shall attend a Pre-Application Meeting with a representative of the Development Services Department.
2. Applications for Design Review shall be filed with the Development Services Department on form(s) provided and shall include all of the information identified in the application form(s), Design Regulations, and any other data that may be required by the Planning

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Administrator that is needed for review of the application.

3. Applications shall be signed by the property owner(s) or an authorized agent of the property owner(s) and all applicable fees shall be paid when applications are submitted.
4. The Planning Administrator shall review the application submittal for compliance with all applicable guidelines within this ordinance. The approval of said application shall be in accordance with Article 3, Section 3.3.C and 3.3.D.2 of the Town Zoning Ordinance.
5. In the event of a denial, no development activities shall be authorized until a new application for Design Review approval has been submitted and approved.
6. The approval date of the Design Review approval shall be the date on which the application was approved by the Planning Commission. Design Review approvals are tied to other development approvals (i.e. Building Permit, Standard Plan Building Permit Review), which will be identified in the notification of Design Review approval.
7. *Amendments to previously approved Design Review Applications.* Up to two (2) additional production home plans may be approved by the Planning Administrator if the proposed plans are in substantial conformance with the initial submittal. No more than two (2) additional plans shall be approved per calendar year.

D. *Design Guidelines.*

1. *Neighborhood Character.* Each neighborhood type (Rural/Estate, Suburban and Urban) has a unique character based on the existing landscape, topography, lot size and development pattern. Guidelines are provided to communicate the three primary types of neighborhood character found in Queen Creek. The balance between manmade and landscape elements will also help to reinforce each type of character.

- a. In Rural and Estate Neighborhoods (A-1, R1-190, R1-145, R1-108, R1-54, R1-43), the balance between the buildings and landscaping should substantially favor the landscaping. In general, open space and vegetation dominate; architectural and man-made elements are apparent, but secondary. Rural uses, such as horses and view fencing, hedgerows along property boundaries and generous setbacks from the street will visually contribute to the rural and estate character.



- b. In Suburban Neighborhoods (R1-35, R1-18, R-15, R1-12), the man-made and open space elements of the community should be balanced. Internal open space and external transitioning shall be maximized to provide the necessary balance with the man-made elements. Setbacks for and between buildings and along public ways become more pronounced. Solid fencing or walls should be partially limited, with the area adjacent to the community open space in a partial-view style of fencing.
- c. In Urban Neighborhoods (R1-9, R1-7, R1-5, and R1-4), architecture and the man-made elements are the predominant features and thus must be carefully crafted to avoid becoming generic and stale in form. Setbacks for and between buildings are reduced proportionately to the size of the lots. Front yards may be reduced and street presence becomes more prominent for porches and architectural elements if the garage/auto area is proportionately recessed from the

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street. Privacy is generally obtained in the interior spaces of small walled courtyards or fenced yards. Sufficient open space shall be provided between or within developments for effective contrast and balance to the buildings and the land.



2. *Streetscape.* It is the street that defines the character of the neighborhood. Therefore guidelines have been created to introduce sufficient variety to create interest without becoming excessive to the point of creating a chaotic street scene. It is also important to create a clear transition from the public space of the street to the private space of the home. Clearly identifying paths for people to move through this sequence creates space that enhances community while maintaining privacy. The following streetscape guidelines shall apply:

- a. A customized entrance should be provided at the entry street intersecting the arterial or major collector which should include architectural features such as, water feature, sculpture, monument signage, special landscaping, specialty pavement, enhanced fence wall details or a boulevard median.
- b. Production home builders are required to provide landscaping in all planted areas within the front yards of single-family detached home lots prior to a certificate of occupancy.
- c. For model home complexes, production home builders are required to:

- 1) Offer at least three (3) significantly different front yard landscape options per plan, one of which shall be a low-water usage xeriscape option.
- 2) The use of drought-tolerant trees, shrubs and groundcovers is required.
- 3) The predominant use of grass is prohibited. Limit turf areas (including artificial turf) to a maximum of 30 percent of the total lot. Where turf is provided, the grass area should be large enough to be useable and watered efficiently.
- 4) Model home complex parking lots shall contain trees and landscaping consistent with the landscape design of the lots that contain the model homes. Landscaping should be used to screen and soften the parking areas and long expanses of privacy walls.

- d. Repetitious elevations shall be avoided. The same elevations shall not be utilized across from or adjacent to each other. A sufficient number of plans to create variety and diversity shall be provided. All tract home subdivisions shall have a minimum of four (4) floor plans with three (3) unique elevations per floor plan. Unique elevations shall be structurally different with different roof types facing the street as described in subsection DS.4.C.2.e below.
- e. Monotonous, uniform roof forms shall be avoided. Roof forms shall be varied by incorporating different building heights and / or ridgeline orientation.



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- f. The front elevation shall feature a pedestrian scaled entry which is clearly visible when standing at the front property line. Pedestrian scaled entry may include gates, arbors, portal, and similar features with courtyard forward plans.
- g. Color in new subdivision development:
 - 1) The primary exterior body colors should be neutral earthy colors. No bright, bold or primary colors shall be used for primary body colors. The trim and accent colors should complement the primary body color.
 - 2) A minimum of seven (7) distinct combinations of colors and roof materials shall be provided to further promote visual interest. There shall not be a predominant singular color. Less color combinations may be considered in smaller subdivisions.



- h. Open gable roofs emphasizing the lack of detail should be avoided. The home shall have a pitched roof with a slope of not less than 3:12 pitch. The exception to the roof pitch requirements is for Santa Fe/Pueblo or other flat roof dominant architectural styles. The roof overhang shall not be less than one (1) foot measured from the vertical side of the dwelling unit. When carports, garages, porches or similar structures are attached as an integral part of the dwelling unit, the Planning Administrator may waive the eave requirement.
- i. Development should provide visual interest through the use of accent materials (such as stone or brick veneer) such that the application

replicates the authentic means of construction (for example, all visible sides of an architectural element are covered as if the entire element was constructed of masonry). When continuing the material around a corner from a front to side elevation, it should be terminated by an architectural element such as an offset, column, intersecting wall or fence.

- j. All on-lot fencing facing a public street should be designed to match the standard plan's materials and primary color or that of the subdivision theme wall.
- k. Driveways for three-car or larger forward-facing garages shall incorporate alternative paving design elements stamped concrete, concrete engraving, intricately sawed or grooved patterns, concrete pavers, and colored concrete to soften the appearance of large impervious surfaces.
- l. Alley loaded garages are encouraged, especially for small lot subdivisions.



3. *Building Design.*

- a. All residential buildings shall have a permanent foundation and a garage to store a minimum of two (2) vehicles. Interior dimensions of a garage shall be a minimum of twenty (20) feet wide by twenty (20) feet deep.
- b. The dwelling unit shall have a garage with roofing and siding complimentary to the primary structure.

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c. The dwelling shall be covered by an exterior material of a color, material, and appearance that is compatible with those of existing single-family dwellings including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) Residential cementation lap siding; brick, stone or masonry veneer;
- 2) Frame or block stucco siding; skip trowel preferred;
- 3) Other siding materials which are determined by the Planning Administrator to be compatible with the above-referenced materials;
- 4) The building materials of a project shall be durable, require low maintenance, and be of a substantial quality. Organic wood products for decorative architectural elements and / or siding should be discouraged; and,
- 5) Flat or corrugated sheet metal shall not be used for exterior siding material.

d. All street side elevations of a structure shall provide visual interest by incorporating overhanging eaves, recessed windows, or other building details.



e. The building materials of a project shall be durable and require low maintenance.

f. Windows should be balanced, equally-spaced and equally-proportioned in the building mass. All windows on a home

shall comply with at least one of the two requirements below:

- 1) Windows shall be recessed a minimum of 2" from the face of the adjacent wall plane; or,
- 2) Windows shall have style-appropriate trim detail at the sill, head, and jambs. Windows with no recess or no trim are not allowed.

g. Window treatments shall have an Architectural theme that is carried through on all sides of the structure.

h. An all-weather, hard surfaced, covered outdoor rear patio area of not less than five (5) percent of the home square footage for any single-family detached home on a lot eighteen thousand (18,000) square feet or less. The rear patio shall not be less than six (6) feet in depth and shall be designed to be integrated with the architecture of the home, including the primary structure material, colors and roof design, and be appropriately related to open areas of the lot for the purpose of providing suitable outdoor living space to supplement the limited interior spaces.

i. Canopies and awnings should be attached to any home and patios can be enclosed and used for recreation or sun room purposes. When enclosed for living purposes, such shall be considered as part of the home and a permit required, issued by the Planning Administrator, before such enclosure can be used for living purposes.

j. Windows and doors should be in proportion to one another, and aligned on each elevation to bring a sense of order.

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k. A durable, low-maintenance roof consisting of non-reflective materials customarily used for residential construction shall be provided, and if following a traditional architectural style, in accordance with the defining characteristic as shown in Section DS.2 of this document.

l. *Garage Frontage and Location.*

- 1) Front loaded garages shall be recessed a minimum of five feet (5') from the front plane of the living area to provide interest and relief from the street.
- 2) Significantly recessed garages, detached garages, and side entry garages are encouraged.
- 3) A minimum of three (3) distinctly different garage door designs shall be provided as a standard feature for all plans of production homes.
- 4) In the R1-5 and R1-7 zoning districts, the garages should be varied in order to reduce repetition and prevent monotony. Variations may include orientation, change in garage plane, and / or alternative architectural and material treatments.
- 5) The garage shall match the architectural style, roof type, and material palette of the primary structure.
- 6) Vehicular access to rear yards with sufficient space to store cars, small boats and recreational vehicles should be provided wherever possible. Storage areas shall be completely screened through the use

of masonry fence walls, solid gates and landscaping.

- 7) RV garages and oversize garage doors should be set back at least ten (10) feet from the primary structure.

m. *Garage Dominance.* Homes and buildings in Queen Creek should have a timeless look to their architecture, and should not be dominated by large garage doors on the front of the home or building. Garages have become a desirable element of modern homes and are used for both parking and storage. Because garages often are accessed by a single door sixteen feet (16') wide or wider, their appearance can easily dominate the entire façade of a home especially on smaller, narrower homes or buildings. While a home or building need not go to extraordinary measures to hide a garage door, the use of the following techniques are recommended to minimize their appearance.

- 1) The front elevation shall prominently feature an entrance for persons rather than automobiles through superior design. Garage doors shall be de-emphasized and not be the most prominent architectural feature of the house.
- 2) Front facing garages shall be recessed by a minimum of five feet (5') from the front plane of the home in order to provide interest and relief for the streetscape.
- 3) Provide engaging architecture on the rest of home (covered porch, large recessed picture window with brick sill or tile surround, stone or brick veneer).
- 4) Avoid ornate detailing (such as a Mission parapet) on the garage mass. Remove decorative detail (brick or stone wainscot) from the garage mass and add it on the livable mass of the home.

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- 5) Provide one and a half or two story massing so that the garage is a smaller part of the overall front façade of the home.
- 6) When style appropriate provide balcony or deck on the second level to provide interest over the garage.



- 7) Avoid large gables over the garage. Use hip roofs, shed roofs or flat roofs instead to minimize the garage massing.
- 8) Turn the garage ninety degrees to the street and make the front façade appear as a livable portion of the home.



- 9) When possible accentuate it with massing (tower), color, lighting and architectural detail.
- 10) Provide coach house details to the garage door so that it appears to be wooden or style appropriately divided into smaller elements. Avoid a single large blank element.
- 11) Provide a pergola (trellis, lattice, or arbor) above the garage door to vary the shade and shadowing on the door.



- 12) Deeply recess the door twelve to twenty-four inches (12" - 24") with an appropriate sized beam or structural element to hold up the home or roof over the large opening in historic building techniques.
- 13) Use two single car garage doors rather than one two-car garage door to create smaller massing.
- 14) Use pavers or decorative paving to break up or reduce the visual impact and glare from a typical concrete driveway.

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- 15) Make the door color match or darker than the body color of the home so that it recedes visually. Do not use accent colors on the garage door.

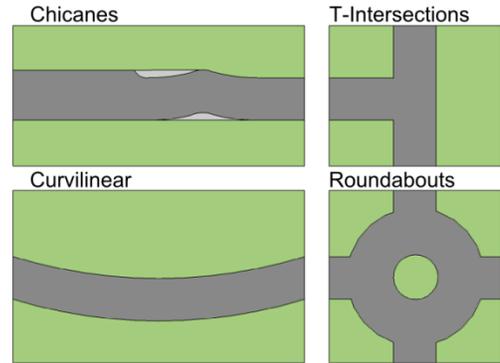
4. *Open Space.*

- a. Turf shall be utilized for active open space within a neighborhood.
- b. The use of turf is discouraged in areas of passive open space and along streets.
- c. Refer to Section 5.5 of the Zoning Ordinance for Open Space Requirements.
- d. Tot Lots or playground equipment shall be centrally located for ease of accessibility for the neighborhood and be covered by shade structures or mature landscaping.



5. *Access and Circulation.*

- a. T-type intersections are encouraged on local streets.
- b. Pedestrian connectivity should not be impeded if cul-de-sac streets are utilized
- c. Local streets shall be curvilinear if exceeding over one-thousand (1,000) feet in length or shall utilize traffic calming measures such as chicanes, chokers, and roundabouts.



- d. Flag lots in residential subdivisions may be permitted so long as sufficient fire safety access is provided, subject to review and approval by the Planning Administrator.

E. *Manufactured / Modular Homes.*

1. Any manufactured or modular home on an individual lot shall conform to the same building setback standards, side and rear yard requirements, standards for enclosures, access, vehicle parking, and square footage standards and requirements to which a conventional single-family residential dwelling on the same lot would be subject.
2. The dwelling shall be attached to a permanent foundation system in compliance the International Conference of Building Officials "Guidelines for Manufactured Housing Installation," as may be amended, and the following requirements:
 - a. All wheels, hitches, axles, transporting lights and removable towing apparatus shall be permanently removed prior to installation of the dwelling unit;
 - b. The foundation shall be excavated and shall have continuous skirting or backfill leaving no uncovered open areas excepting vents and crawl spaces. The foundation shall be exposed no more than twelve (12) inches above grade;
 - c. For homes which are narrower than sixteen (16) feet in width, the unit shall be oriented on the lot so that its long axis is parallel to the street.

DS.4 Single-Family Residential – PROPOSED AMENDMENT

F. Approved Product Transferability:

1. Housing product that has received RDR approval within the past 12 months from the Planning Commission can be transferred to another community upon administrative review and approval to ensure design consistency, so long as the following criteria is met:

- a) Any housing product that is first to a new community requires RDR review and approval by the Planning Commission;*
- b) If housing product has previously been approved and is being requested to be transferred to another community, the housing product shall meet all applicable conditions of approval for the community in which it is being proposed;*
- c) Proposed product being transferred shall be commensurate with the lot sizes of the community in which the product is being transferred;*
- d) The number of housing products and elevation types will require administrative evaluation prior to approval to ensure sufficient diversity within the community;*
- e) Product cannot be transferred that has received approval for deviations; and*
- f) Product which has approval shall only be allowed to be transferred to two additional communities, assuming all other conditions are met.*

2. Homebuilders that are the primary homebuilder within a multi-phased master-planned community can transfer housing product up to three years from final Residential Design Review product approval upon review and approval by the Planning Administrator to ensure that the product is in keeping with current design standards and the community in which the product is proposed. In the event that housing product is deemed to not be consistent with current design standards, the product will need to receive Residential Design Review approval from the Planning Commission.

3. In order to receive administrative review and approval, all housing product shall be submitted along with a narrative describing the product, where it is currently approved, what product is being transferred, how many lots the product will be developed on, how the product complies with adopted design standards, and how sufficient diversity is being provided.