



DESIGN Guidelines 2026





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These updated Design Guidelines would not be possible without the work and commitment from the following dedicated individuals

■ Town Commissioners

Charles W. Burkett - *Mayor*
Tina Paul - *Vice Mayor*
Ruben A. Coto - *Commissioner*
Nelly Velasquez - *Commissioner*
Gerardo Vildostegui - *Commissioner*

■ Planning and Zoning Board Members

Lindsay Lecour - *Chair*
Andrea Travani - *Vice Chair*
Nikol Solares - *Board Member*
Adrian Chavez - *Board Member*
Carlos Aparicio - *Board Member*
Moses Pinto - *Alternate Board Member #1*
Regino Sanchez - *Alternate Board Member #2*

The Corradino Group - *Town Planning Consultants*

Mario Diaz - *Acting Town Manager*

Genesis Guevera - *Deputy Town Clerk*

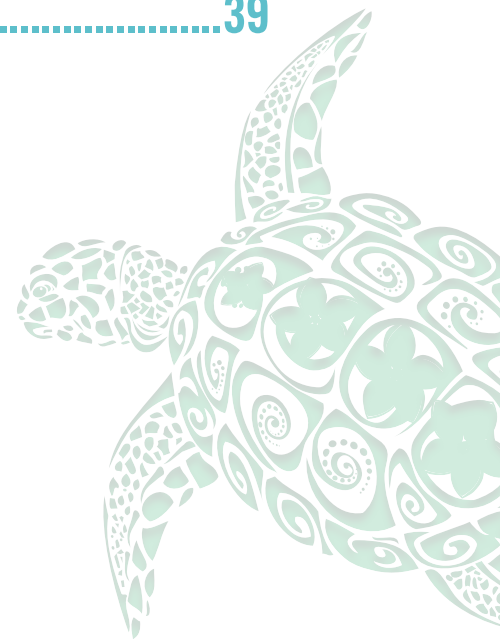
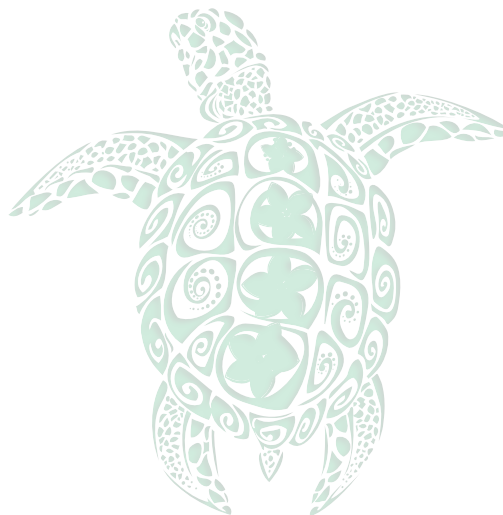




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DESIGN Guidelines 2026

1.

Introduction



INTRODUCTION

The Town of Surfside has compiled these design guidelines to assist homeowners, both present and future, in understanding the Town's history, goals, and attitudes towards its evolving development and in navigating the development process. The guidelines state what is important to the Town and spell out its higher, overarching goals.

The primary objective of this document is to offer clear and practical recommendations for designing, constructing, reviewing, and obtaining approval for development projects in the Town of Surfside. These guidelines are intended to serve as a reference, establishing a shared baseline for minimum design quality expectations. They are provided as tools to help create projects that meet and exceed established community standards in scale, proportion, compatibility, and functionality. These guidelines will provide a framework for the execution of quality design and make the review process more efficient and effective for the applicants.

The organization of this document begins with this introduction. The second section provides the Town's definition of terms. The third section spells out the guidelines for renovations of existing homes. Finally, there are the guidelines for new construction. It is preferred that the refurbishment of existing properties be considered first before the complete redevelopment and construction of a new home.

■ Historic Context

For 150 years South Florida has been an epicenter for development, transforming from nearly empty, uninhabitable land to the first region to develop in one of the nation's fastest-growing and most populous states.

Nestled along South Florida's scenic shoreline, Surfside is a small coastal town with a rich and evolving architectural identity. With architecture dating back to the beginning of development in the area and shaped initially by the elegance of Mediterranean Revival styles in the early 20th century, the town's single-family homes have since mirrored the broader design movements that swept through the region. By the post-World War II era, Surfside embraced Mid-Century Modern architecture's clean lines and functional beauty, heavily influenced by the iconic Miami Modern (MiMo) style. These homes, often single-

story structures and open in layout, feature expansive windows, flat roofs, and a seamless connection between indoor and outdoor spaces—a reflection of South Florida's unique climate and lifestyle. More recently, Surfside has become a destination for luxury single-family residences, especially along its prized waterfront. These contemporary homes balance modern aesthetics with sustainable design, blending cutting-edge materials with environmental sensitivity to meet the needs of today's homeowners. Surfside's architectural landscape continues to evolve, honoring its past while shaping a forward-thinking coastal community.

■ Core Values

Surfside has several Core Values regarding the development or redevelopment of its land.

- **Promote** the preservation of the Town's Legacy Homes before complete redevelopment. The legacy homes of Surfside are more than just residences—they are living expressions of the Town's rich architectural history and cultural identity. Built between the 1920s and 1970s, these homes showcase iconic styles and the evolving elegance of early Contemporary design. Their value lies not only in their distinctive aesthetics but also in the way they reflect thoughtful proportions, human-scale design, and a strong connection to light, air, and the coastal environment—qualities that continue to inspire and guide contemporary design in Surfside.
- **Preserve** and enhance the tree canopy.
- **Create** a compatible built environment that allows for distinct styles of architecture. In contrast, designs that disregard Surfside's historic context or the human scale of its neighborhoods are strongly discouraged. Homes that introduce incongruous architectural styles, overpowering massing, or incompatible materials can undermine the cohesion and character of the streetscape.
- **Consider** our neighbors and neighborhoods when designing a structure. Overly large additions, mismatched finishes, or features that ignore the legacy proportions and open, breezy layouts of the Town's historic homes compromise both the aesthetic and cultural value that make Surfside's neighborhoods distinctive.

- **Encourage** the highest quality architecture. The Town has no preference for any architectural style; the quality and coherence of the architecture is key.

■ Regulatory Process

To obtain a permit to develop in Surfside, an application is made to the Town's Planning Department and is reviewed for adherence to the Comprehensive Plan and the municipal zoning regulations as found within Chapter 90 (the "Zoning Code"). Ultimately, a staff recommendation is provided to the Planning and Zoning Board, the decision-making body in charge of reviewing applications for new homes and additions to existing homes in the residential district. The Design Guidelines aim to provide a framework for Board review while providing clear guidance, options, and insights conforming to the Town's goals.

The Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code must be adhered to when entering the development process. In the event of a conflict between the Town's Zoning Code and these Design Guidelines, the provisions of the Zoning Code shall prevail. It is critical that each applicant consults with the Town's Planning Director in a pre-application meeting, understands the rules and regulations of their property's individual zoning district, and makes sure they respond to these laws.

This document supplements the Town's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code and is not meant to be repetitive of them. It strives to answer the questions the development community most frequently has regarding property renovation, redevelopment and new construction in order to maintain relevance, it is recommended that the Town review these guidelines at least every five years and consider updates as may be needed at that time.

■ Comprehensive Plan

The Town's Comprehensive Plan establishes the allowable land uses and maximum residential density on each parcel of land. The Future Land Use Map provides the distribution of land uses within the Town. Future Land Use Element Policy 1.1 identifies the maximum dwelling units per acre for each residential land use. Policy 1.1 also lists permitted land uses within each land use category. The Comprehensive Plan is maintained on the Town Website.


■ Zoning Code

The Town Zoning Code is included in the Town's Code of Ordinances as Chapter 90. The Zoning Code (Chapter 90) is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan, but can be more restrictive. The Zoning Code includes information on definitions, development review requirements, conditional uses, variances, Zoning Districts, setbacks, maximum building height, non-habitable understory, fences and walls, signs, off-street parking, landscaping, religious land use relief procedures, and other development-related requirements. Check the Town website for the latest adoption of ordinances and the Code of Ordinances.

■ Renovation or New Construction

As stated, the Town prioritizes renovation over new construction, because of the abundance of "Legacy Homes", which are defined as the homes built from the Town's inception in the 1920s through the 1970s. These Legacy Homes represent many architectural styles, none preferred or emphasized. What is selected and highlighted is the insistence on high-quality architecture of any style desired by the homeowner. When feasible, adaptive reuse and sensitive modernization of existing homes is encouraged as a sustainable alternative to demolition. Renovations may incorporate contemporary upgrades to improve energy efficiency, functionality, and comfort, provided such improvements respect and retain defining architectural elements of the home's original character. Preserving and rehabilitating existing homes supports the Town's sustainability goals by reducing construction waste and resource consumption while maintaining the distinct sense of place and community continuity that defines Surfside's neighborhoods. Additions should appear subordinate to the primary structure and, whenever possible, be located toward the sides or rear of the property to minimize visual impact from the street. The scale, rooflines, proportions, and materials should be consistent with and reinforce the original design. New architectural styles, design elements, or materials that are incompatible with the existing residence are discouraged.

In cases where new construction is pursued, designs should demonstrate a strong sensitivity to context. New homes should be compatible with neighboring properties in terms of scale, style, and overall massing. Contemporary interpretations of traditional styles are acceptable when



thoughtfully executed and when they contribute to the visual coherence of the block. Each new development should respect and reinforce the established rhythm, proportions, and material quality that collectively define Surfside's unique neighborhood character.

Through thoughtful renovation, preservation, and context sensitive new design, Surfside seeks to foster neighborhoods that celebrate the Town's architectural legacy while accommodating the evolving needs of present and future residents.

■ Primary Challenges

More so than in most communities, development in Surfside presents a set of unique challenges that necessitate careful guidance. First and foremost are the lot sizes. At approximately 5,600 square feet per interior lot, these compact sites create significant constraints for a low-density, single-family neighborhood that is already fully built out. The scale of many legacy homes, often designed for smaller, more modest lots, can make it difficult to balance additions or new construction without overwhelming neighboring properties or disrupting the established rhythm of the streetscape. Preserving the historic architectural character of these homes requires careful attention to proportion, form, and materials, as even minor deviations can undermine the visual cohesion of the neighborhood.

Another significant challenge is adapting homes to meet contemporary standards for livability, accessibility, and resiliency, particularly in light of climate considerations. Many projects now require elevating the first floor above predicted flood levels, with the Base Flood Elevation in Surfside's single-family areas at 8.00 feet plus a freeboard of 2.00 feet, totaling 10.00 N.G.V.D. Achieving these modern requirements while respecting the historic scale, open layouts, and breezy character of legacy homes demands a delicate integration of contemporary engineering solutions with traditional architectural forms. The combination of tight lots, historic context, and resiliency requirements makes thoughtful, context-sensitive design essential to maintaining the Town's distinctive identity and enhancing its long-term quality of life.

■ Patterns

The Town pattern within the single-family residential neighborhood, includes three lot configurations.

1. Interior Lots: Most of the area consists of interior lots (neighbors on both sides), platted as 5,600 square foot lots. These lots are considered the "heart" of Surfside.

2. Corner Lots: The lots at the intersections of streets are corner lots, which are generally the same size as the interior lots, but have street frontage on two sides of the property, one short and one long.

3. Waterfront Lots: These are the larger lots along the perimeter with rear yards on Biscayne Bay, Point Lake and other water bodies.

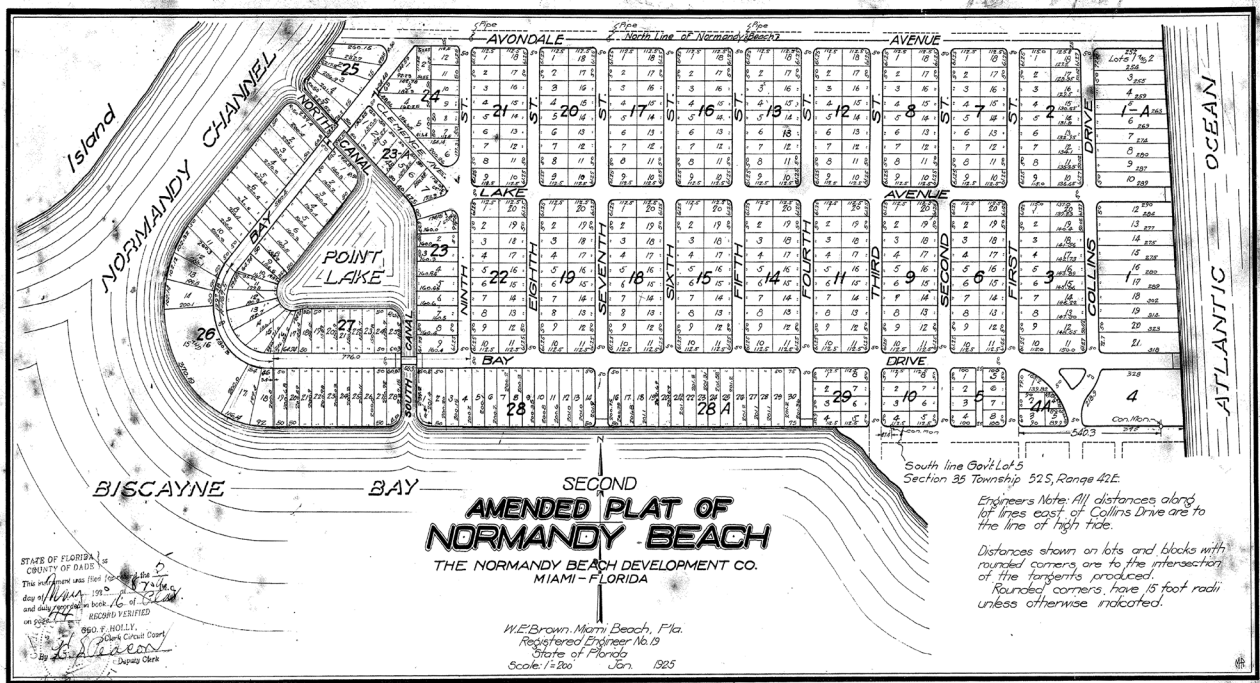
■ Architecture

The goal is to promote a harmonious and visually appealing neighborhood by emphasizing exterior architectural quality and appearance while forming a pleasing, consistent, blended built environment. When seeking compatibility and contextuality, it is essential to highlight a language of architectural details developed in the neighborhood over time, creating a specific cultural identity of a place. It is critical to uphold the preservation of the neighborhood's existing quality and character. In doing so, the Town has introduced the concept of three hundred sixty (360) degree architecture, where architectural details and materials on the front façade should continue on all facades of the structure. Architectural information and materials turn respective edges and corners for depth along facades. Architectural elements, such as overhangs, trellises, projections, banding, awnings, insets, material, texture, and color, should create shadow patterns contributing to a building's character. Avoid blank walls on any side of a structure. Each applicant will be asked to consider the appropriateness of the massing, streetscape, and building articulation.

■ Landscape

All projects must meet or exceed the Town's Florida-Friendly Landscape requirements. They should achieve a harmonious equilibrium between the visual appeal and the efficient utilization of landscape areas while prioritizing water conservation in planting design. As a Biophilic City and Tree City USA, Surfside highly values its existing tree canopy and encourages homeowners to preserve as many trees and plantings as feasible when designing a new home. In addition, the use of landscaping as a design element, as well as a screen for neighbors is highly encouraged, especially along the side setbacks.

1. Introduction





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2. Glossary



GLOSSARY

These following terms are defined and provided herein to assist in reading this document, without resorting to other texts. In any instance where there may be a conflict with a similar term defined in Chapter 90 (the “Zoning Code”), the Zoning Code definition will prevail.

- **Awning:** A detachable, roof-like cloth cover supported from the walls of a building to protect against the sun or weather.
- **Building:** Any structure with a roof supported by columns or walls for the shelter or enclosure of persons or property.
- **Bulk:** A composite characteristic of a given building or structure as located upon a given lot, not definable as a single quantity but involving all these characteristics:
 - 1) size and height of building or structure,
 - 2) location of exterior walls at all levels about lot lines, streets, or to other buildings or structures,
 - 3) all open spaces allocated to the building or structure, and
 - 4) amount of lot area provided per dwelling unit, and
 - 5) lot coverage.
- **Canopy:** A permanent, roof-like cover made of cloth, metal, vinyl, or other permanent material supported from the ground or deck or floor of a building, and from the walls of a building for protection from sun or weather.
- **Carport:** A roofed and usually wall-less shed projecting from the side of a building, used as a shelter for automobiles.
- **Compatibility:** Design that utilizes accepted site planning (building placement, orientation, and siting) and the elements of architectural composition within the context of the surrounding area and existing neighborhood prevalent architecture. The characteristics of different uses or activities or design allow them to be located near or adjacent to each other in harmony. The sensitivity of new development in maintaining the character of existing development.
- **Design Guidelines:** The Design Guidelines, as adopted by the Town of Surfside, are intended to provide direction and suggestions for all development.
- **Dwelling:** A building or portion, designed or used exclusively for residential occupancy.
- **Environment:** The physical conditions that exist within the area that will be affected by a proposed project, including land, air, water, noise, structures, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.
- **Façade:** That portion of any exterior elevation on the building extending from grade to the top of the parapet, wall, or eaves and the entire width of the building elevation.
- **Fenestration:** An opening in a surface (such as a wall) and the arrangement, proportioning, and design of windows and doors within a façade.
- **Frontage, street:** The distance along a street line from one intersecting street to another or from one intersecting street to the end of a dead-end street.
- **Frontage, lot:** The distance between the front lot line and street line coincides.
- **Impervious area:** An area covered by a material that does not permit infiltration or percolation of water directly into the ground.
- **Legacy home:** A single-family residence built between the 1920s and 1970s, embodying the rich architectural heritage of Surfside, Florida. These homes reflect iconic styles—Mediterranean Revival with its red-tile roofs and arched doorways, the clean lines of Mid-Century Modern, the geometric flair of Art Deco, and the evolving touches of early Contemporary design. Typically single-story with stucco exteriors, carports or modest garages, they feature open floor plans, wide porches, large windows, and breezy layouts that invite natural light and ventilation. Rooted in craftsmanship and climate-conscious design, Legacy Homes play a significant role in defining the character of the Town’s neighborhoods.

- **Lot:** A parcel of land occupied or which may be hereafter occupied by a building, buildings, and any accessory buildings, together with such open spaces and parking spaces or area as are required under this article and having its principal frontage upon an officially approved street or place. "Lot" includes the words "plot," "parcel," "tract," or "site."
- **Lot, corner:** A lot abutting upon two or more streets at their intersection.
- **Lot, front:** Shall be construed as the portion nearest the street. For corner lots, the lot front shall be the narrowest portion abutting the street.
- **Lot, interior:** A lot other than a corner lot.
- **Lot width:** The horizontal distance between the side lot lines measured at the required front yard line and parallel to the front street line, or measured at the street line if no front yard is required.
- **Main Entry:** The entranceway of a residence (single-family structure) highlighted by prominent architectural treatments situated closest to the public street or sidewalk.
- **Pervious area:** Area maintained in its natural condition or covered by a material that permits infiltration or percolation of water directly into the ground. Pavers or pervious hard materials, including concrete, shall not be utilized to calculate the pervious area.
- **Proportion:** The harmonious relation of parts to each other or the whole concerning quantity, size, scale, and degree.
- **Scale:** Structures shall relate harmoniously to the form and scale of architecture in the vicinity. Buildings taller than one (1) story shall carefully consider the site design about adjacent residential structures.
- **Setback:** The minimum distance required by a zoning district that all structures shall be from front, side, and rear lot lines. Setback areas are the same as "yards," "required yards," "minimum required yards," or "minimum yards," and regulations referencing "setbacks" shall be interpreted to apply to "yards."
- **Story:** That portion of a building other than a basement, included between the surface of any floor and the surface of the floor next above it; or, if there be no floor next above it, then the space between such floor and the ceiling next above it.
- **Street:** A public thoroughfare that affords the principal means of access to abutting property.
- **Structure:** Anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires rigid location on the ground or attachment to something having a permanent location on the ground, including, but not limited to buildings, individual units within a building, trailers/construction trailers, signs, backstop for tennis courts, swimming pools, fences, screen enclosures, speedbumps, memorials and pergolas.
- **Substantial Improvement, or Substantial Renovation:** Any combination of repairs, reconstruction, alteration, or modifications to a building, taking place during five years, in which the cumulative cost equals or exceeds fifty (50) percent of the appraised value of the building. For further information, refer to Town code section 90-2.
- **Three hundred sixty (360) degree architecture:** The architectural elements should apply to all sides of a building and every effort should be made to avoid blank walls on any side of a building. Architectural details and materials on lower walls related to the human scale, such as arches, trellises, or awnings, should be utilized. Architectural information and materials turn respective edges and corners for depth along facades. Architectural elements, such as overhangs, trellises, projections, awnings, insets, material, texture, and color, to create shadow patterns contributing to a building's character. Buildings are encouraged to be designed so structures do not "turn their backs" to the street.
- **Vertical Plane:** The continuous surface of a wall or building façade, including protrusions such as balconies/terraces.
- **Zoning Code:** A zoning code is a set of local regulations that governs how single-family residential properties may be developed and used. It establishes standards for lot size, building placement, setbacks, height, density, and other aspects of home construction to ensure that development is compatible with the character of the neighborhood and maintains the health, safety, and welfare of the community. For further information, refer to Chapter 90 of the Town's code.



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3. Renovations & Single-Family Home Additions



3. Renovations & Single-Family Home Additions

RENOVATIONS & SINGLE-FAMILY HOME ADDITIONS

Surfside’s charm lies in its diverse yet cohesive architectural character—a tapestry of styles woven together across decades. From Mediterranean Revival to Mid-Century Modern, Art Deco, and early Contemporary design, the Town’s residential neighborhoods reflect a legacy of thoughtful, climate-conscious craftsmanship. Many of these homes, built between the 1920s and 1970s, are now considered Legacy Homes. Though no style is favored, these residences share common design features—modest massing, open layouts, generous porches, and architectural details that respond to the subtropical environment.

As such, the Town of Surfside strongly emphasizes the renovation and thoughtful expansion of existing homes rather than wholesale redevelopment. Legacy Homes are viewed as vital contributors to the Town’s identity and are to be preserved, respected, and complemented—not overshadowed—by new construction. Therefore, these guidelines shall encourage the substantial improvement thresholds as found within the Town’s Zoning Code.

This chapter outlines design principles for single-family home additions and renovations, guiding building form, scale, and contextual integration. The goal is to ensure that all modifications respond sensitively to the surrounding neighborhood fabric, maintaining the scale, rhythm, and character that define Surfside’s residential streetscapes.

For all single-family home additions or renovations involving legacy homes, every effort should be made to preserve the original structure’s existing architectural style, form, scale, and materials. The introduction of a new or incompatible architectural style is highly discouraged. Proposed designs should utilize building materials consistent with and complementary to the original finishes of the residence to ensure architectural cohesion and respect for the home’s original character.

■ Building Façade(s)

The character and identity of Surfside’s single-family neighborhoods are defined by the thoughtful proportions, materials and details of their Legacy Homes. Maintaining this architectural integrity is essential when renovating existing residences, ensuring that each structure complements its neighbors and

contributes to a cohesive streetscape. This section provides guidance on façade treatments, materials, massing, and fenestrations to help designers create homes that honor the Town’s historic context while accommodating modern needs.

■ Architectural Style, Cohesion and Harmony

- Façade treatments should adhere to the architectural style of the home and be consistent throughout the property. New or incongruous architectural elements are discouraged. Design should respect neighboring façade rhythms, including window spacing, porch placement, rooflines, and heights, while maintaining proper proportions and hierarchy within each façade to create a visually cohesive and balanced streetscape.

■ Materials and Ornamentation

- Use high-quality, durable materials that are compatible with Legacy Homes, such as stucco, wood accents, smooth cement finishes, native stone, metal, or glass block. “Faux” materials such as tile or metal that look like wood are discouraged.
- Decorative elements – including porches, columns, railings, trellises, and planters – should maintain consistent style, scale, and materials throughout the structure. Avoid excessive ornamentation or materials that conflict with the architectural character of the home.

■ Massing, Proportions and Scale

- Design buildings to maintain balanced massing and visually harmonious proportions. Avoid overly dominant or recessed elements, strong vertical or horizontal emphasis, or oversized features. Strategies to moderate massing include material or texture changes between floors, architectural banding, an careful placement of vertical dividing features. When adjacent to other buildings, facades should be designed as part of a cohesive, well-organized whole.

■ Fenestrations and Active Facades

- Provide windows, doors and transitional spaces (porches, porticoes, colonnades) that are proportionate in scale and style to existing fenestrations, ensuring

3. Renovations & Single-Family Home Additions

facades are active and visually engaging. Blank wall sections should be minimized, with all elevations aiming to exceed a minimum of 10% wall openings. Garage doors do not count toward this requirement.

■ Corner Articulation and 360 Degree Design

- Three hundred and sixty (360) degree architecture encouraged to be incorporated on all residences. Architectural elements and materials should wrap around corners, ensuring all visible sides of the building are thoughtfully designed. Avoid blank walls longer than 10 feet, and ensure every elevation interacts positively with the street or surrounding context. Features such as overhangs, projections, trellises, awnings, and varied textures should be used to create shadow patterns and enhance character.

■ Garage and Frontage Proportion

- The horizontal width of the front elevation should maintain a 65% to 35% proportion, with front-facing garages occupying no more than 35% of the total façade width. Garage walls should not dominate the street-facing elevation.

■ Color and Texture Palette

- Select a harmonious palette of colors and textures that complement the architectural style of the home and the surrounding neighborhood. Selected paint colors for zoning districts that allow single-family homes shall adhere to the adopted paint color palette and code standards as found within Town code section 90-50(9). Avoid colors or materials that conflict with the historic character of Legacy Homes or the natural environment of Surfside.

■ Main Entry Feature(s)

The entry porch is a defining feature of Surfside’s legacy homes. Renovation projects and single-family additions should carefully preserve and thoughtfully enhance the main entry, ensuring that porches, stoops and courtyards remain compatible with the home’s architectural style, neighboring properties and the street frontage. This section provides guidance on maintaining appropriate proportions, roof forms, and pedestrian connections, while encouraging design elements—such as off-center entries and covered roof structures—that reinforce

visual interest and the distinctive character of Surfside’s streetscapes.

- Any renovation or home addition on a property with a street-facing porch should make every effort to preserve the existing porch structure. If the porch is to be renovated, the new design should integrate a comparable and similar porch feature—such as a projecting or under-eave element—to preserve the visual consistency and architectural rhythm of the neighborhood.
- Ensure proposed porches are compatible with the eave heights of existing and neighboring homes. Every effort should be made to maintain similar proportions, scale, balance, and architectural materials while complementing the home’s established architectural style.
- Match the pitch of entry roofs with adjacent roofs, using porch designs that align with and reinforce the building’s overall roof character.
- The main entry should be the most prominent feature within the façade. Serving as a distinguished characteristic within the primary elevation to create visual emphasis.
- The emphasis of the primary entrance, scaled appropriately to the individual dwelling, shall function as a protective covering from rain or sun. This is important to create a pedestrian-oriented environment linked by a walkway to the street.
- Any renovation or home addition affecting any street-facing façade is encouraged to designate the main entry element of the façade to be intentionally positioned off-center, either to the left or right side of the elevation, rather than placed at the center, to support a more dynamic and context-sensitive front façade design.
- Highlight entries with lighting, low walls, columns, or landscaping rather than excessive height or ornamentation.
- Grand staircases at main entry areas facing the street frontage should be avoided. Where entry stair risers will be affected by a renovation project, applicants are encouraged to reference the new-construction guidelines for appropriate landing breaks and relief.

3. Renovations & Single-Family Home Additions

- The main entry area is encouraged to feature a distinct, single-story roof element that defines and shelters the front entry of the home. The height of the main entry roof structure should not exceed the habitable interior ceiling height of the home's first story.
- A dwelling should include a covered front porch, a stoop, or a front courtyard at the main entrance. The main entry area should be accessed directly from the street and have a walkway connecting it to the street.
- The recommended area of a porch, stoop, landing, or courtyard is 25 square feet in size.
- For double-frontage lots, both street-facing façades are encouraged to include an entry porch structure consistent with the design standards outlined above.

■ Windows and Doors

Windows and doors are critical elements that define the character and visual rhythm of Surfside's legacy homes. When renovating or adding to these homes, careful attention must be given to their proportion, placement, materials and detailing to ensure consistency with the original architectural style. Thoughtful selection and alignment of fenestration not only preserves the home's historic character but also reinforces façade articulation, scale and hierarchy, while maintaining compatibility with neighboring properties.

- Building facades should be clearly articulated, using windows and doors that reflect the chosen architectural style in terms of materials, form, scale, and proportion.
- Select window and door proportions that match the scale and rhythm of the original structure. While their size may vary depending on the room, consistent window height across the building is also encouraged.
- Use divided lights or mullions only if reflective of the home's original architectural style. Window frame materials and colors should remain uniform on a building.
- Align window headers and sills with adjacent openings to ensure visual cohesion. New windows should be cohesive with existing windows.

- Avoid oversized or irregularly shaped windows that disrupt architectural harmony.
- Impact-resistant window and door systems should be used for all fenestration openings. Every effort shall be made to select window/door exterior systems that match the color, frame finish, and style of the existing home's windows/doors. Choose styles and materials that are in keeping with the home's overall design (e.g., casement, awning, or fixed pane windows with simple muntins).
- Use window proportions that maintain a balanced scale; two-story-high windows can overemphasize the building's massing and vertical plane, particularly in two-story window bays.
- Upper-level windows should be more subdued than those on the ground floor to establish a clear visual hierarchy in the facade.
- Windows should be operable and may include single-hung, double-hung, sliding, or casement styles.
- When in line with the architectural style, windows should be set back from the building wall to create shadow and depth on the façade.
- Maintain alignment in window placement, horizontally or vertically, for a visually cohesive appearance.

■ Garages and Driveways

Garages and driveways play a critical role in shaping the street-facing character of Surfside's legacy homes. When renovating or adding to these homes, it is essential to design garages that are proportionate, subordinate to the main façade and consistent with the home's original architectural style. Driveways should be carefully scaled and aligned with the residence, minimizing impervious surfaces while reinforcing the property's overall character, maintaining green space, and preserving the rhythm and visual harmony of the neighborhood streetscape.

- Any renovation or home addition affecting any street-facing façade with an established garage(s) may incorporate a similar garage element. Any proposed garage should be designed in harmony with the home's original design, such as scale, massing,

3. Renovations & Single-Family Home Additions

proportion, and balance, to reflect and reinforce the established building's architectural character. Building elevations with garages should restrict the proportion of the garage wall facing the street to no more than 35% of the proposed overall horizontal width of the facade.

- Garage walls should be scaled proportionately so the exterior wall of the garage does not become the prominent feature within the overall façade.
- Property lots consisting of 75 feet or less of street frontage are limited to one (1) car garages.
- Property lots consisting of 75 feet or more of street frontage are limited to two (2) car garages.
- Three (3) car garages along any street frontage elevation are discouraged.
- Exterior garage walls should be single-story structures not exceeding the habitable interior height of the first level of the principal residence.
- Any renovation or home addition shall use single-car garage doors or segmented bays to maintain scale; avoid double-wide front-facing doors in all cases.
- Attention should be given to the portion of wall located immediately above any garage door. Disproportionate and blank expanses over garage doors are discouraged.
- Garages with independent flat roofs or with active roof decks are encouraged to incorporate a continuous landscape planter along all edges of the terrace/deck area.
- Limit driveway widths to reduce curb cuts and preserve green space. Narrow driveways are encouraged.
- Driveways should be consistent with the building's overall architectural style and incorporate a two-percent cross slope for appropriate containment of drainage onsite.
- Paving accessible for parking in the front setback area should be limited to the width required to access a garage or other required parking spaces. Keep driveways no wider than necessary for safe and

efficient vehicular access to minimize impervious area.

- Enhance driveways using various textures, such as stamped concrete, pavers, coral stone or other, or grasscrete. Create landscape pockets next to buildings, walls, or fencing along driveways.
- If proposing circular a driveway, integrate it into the property design, connecting to the street at two locations to define a front yard area.

■ Awnings, Canopies, and Carports

Awnings, canopies and carports should be thoughtfully integrated into the design of legacy homes, serving as complementary architectural elements rather than afterthoughts. Materials, scale, and placement must align with the home's original style to maintain visual cohesion and harmony with the surrounding neighborhood. This section provides guidance for selecting appropriate materials, proportions, and locations to ensure these features enhance the façade without overwhelming or detracting from the character of the residence.

- Awnings and canopies must be coherent and complementary to the building's architectural style.
- Design awnings and carports as integral architectural features, not add-ons.
- Use materials consistent with the primary structure (e.g., metal, wood, or tile-clad canopies).
- The covering materials of awnings or canopies placed upon, attached to, or forming any part of any building in any residential district should be made of canvas, cloth, vinyl, natural materials, or other similar permanent materials, and the supporting structure of the awning or canopy may be made of fiberglass, aluminum, plastic, wood material, metal or other man-made materials. Carports should not be constructed of concrete, concrete block, or PVC pipe.
- Carport canopies and free-standing canopies are discouraged.
- Awnings erected over garage openings or porte-cochere vehicle openings are encouraged to not

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extend out from the outside wall of the building more than six (6) feet.

■ Site Grading & Landscaping

Site grading and landscaping are essential elements in preserving the character, scale and human experience of Surfside’s legacy homes. Thoughtful design of grade transitions, planting layers and entry sequences help integrate homes into the street while softening structural elements such as stem walls and staircases. By using native plantings, layered gardens, and permeable materials, Single-family home addition projects can enhance visual appeal, improve environmental performance and maintain proportional, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes that honor the Town’s historic character.

- **Layered Landscaping:** Use terraced planting beds, raised planters, or berms to integrate elevation changes visually. Planters incorporated along the base of the stem walls will reduce the overall height of the wall and provide appropriate scale.
 - Incorporate landscaping to soften and partially obscure entry stairs visually.
 - Use natural grading with a series in 2 to 3-step increments to transition between elevation changes seamlessly.
 - The user experience from the sidewalk to the main entry shall be a subtle and smooth walking activity.
 - Landscaping should be installed in layers, creating gardens that layer smaller plants facing the street frontage and increasing in size by zones where larger plants are planted toward the building to create depth.
 - Mix multiple plant species to create biodiversity within planting beds.
 - Use South Florida native plants that grow naturally in the region require less fertilizer and pesticides.
- **Architectural Screening:** Incorporate low walls, railings, or green screens to conceal stem walls partially.
- **Entry Sequences:** Design gracious entry stairs with landings, integrated seating, or shade structures to enhance the human scale and street interaction.
 - Minimize grand staircases at main street-facing entries to maintain a welcoming and proportional façade.
 - Entry stair risers should incorporate landing breaks to prevent long, continuous flights and promote safe, comfortable use.
- **Grade Transitions:** To provide a more natural rise to the entry, utilize gentle slope transitions, retaining walls, or tiered walkways.
 - Slope the front yard by one (1) foot to decrease the podium height effect so that it may be less apparent.
 - Raise the front yard to create a level, landscaped area that meets a low retaining wall (12 inches to 24 inches) at the property line. This method would reduce the number of stair risers at the main entry of the residence.
- **Material Variation:** Apply contrasting or textural materials to stem walls to break up massing and reduce visual impact. Varying surface treatments will distinguish the stem wall from the vertical wall continuation from above.
- **Permeable (Pervious) Materials:** Impervious surfaces, such as concrete and asphalt, prevent water from soaking into the ground. This leads to increased stormwater runoff, which can contribute to flash flooding and carry pollutants into storm drains, harming ecosystems and posing risks to public health. These surfaces also absorb and retain heat, raising local temperatures and increasing energy demands for cooling.
 - Pervious surfaces are designed to let water pass through, helping to reduce or even eliminate runoff. Beneath these permeable materials is often a structural layer that supports loads and temporarily stores stormwater, allowing it to filter into the ground gradually. Permeable pavers are highly encouraged in all front yard areas.

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For those renovations and single-family home additions that do not require raising the minimum finished floor elevation, the guidelines at a minimum request the following:

- Preserve natural site topography and integrate gentle grading transitions where needed. Provide green buffer zones and soft edges between properties.
- Use native or drought-tolerant plantings that enhance curb appeal and require minimal irrigation.
- Maintain green front yards and limit hardscape coverage; balance softscape and impervious areas.

■ Lighting

Surfside values a subtle night-time lighting scheme. The location and design characteristics of proposed lighting fixtures should be compatible with the home's overall style and are encouraged to be non-intrusive to neighboring properties.

Exterior lighting should enhance the architectural features of legacy homes while providing safe, well-lit pathways and entries. Fixtures should be carefully selected and placed seeking to complement the home's style, scale and materials without creating glare or visual disturbances to adjoining properties.

Light Fixtures

Functional light fixtures serve a utilitarian purpose and are strategically placed to illuminate areas for nighttime use. Examples include driveways, wall-mounted luminaires, and downlights in covered walkways.

Decorative light fixtures should be selected to complement the architectural style and character of the home, enhancing both aesthetics and nighttime visibility. Fixtures should be appropriately scaled to the building façade and placed at key locations such as entries, garages, and pathways to provide balanced illumination without excessive glare. Warm, soft lighting is encouraged to maintain a residential ambiance, and all exterior lighting should be shielded or directed downward to minimize light spill onto adjacent properties and the street.

These fixtures are evaluated based on the following key criteria:



- **Light Color:** Warmer color lighting is preferred, with 3000 Kelvin being the highest preferred color temperature.
- **Light Control:** Avoid using strip lights and soffit lighting. Wall-mounted sconces are encouraged to highlight architectural features, but they should be used sparingly. Provide project lighting that is soft/complementary and not overly intrusive. Ensure light does not overflow to neighboring properties.
- **Appearance:** Functional fixtures should be compatible with their surroundings and suit their intended use.
- **Safety:** Fixtures must provide sufficient illumination to address safety concerns effectively.

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- **Consistency:** Maintain consistent light intensity over the intended illuminated area.
- **Design:** Prioritize lamps with a natural color rendering index, avoiding monochromatic color rendering. Encourage using metal halide or similar lamps while discouraging high-pressure sodium lamps. In specific situations, fluorescent lamps may be acceptable. Fixtures should be consistent with the architectural style.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Emphasize energy efficiency while considering installation costs. Consider the choice of fixtures with an eye toward energy conservation.
- **Front and Rear Entries:** Ensure front and rear entries are adequately illuminated without excessive brightness.
- **Concealment:** The outdoor lighting fixtures must be concealed so that the light is directed downward and does not spill beyond the property line. This is especially necessary when installing lighting elements in the eaves of two-story homes, as unshielded lights may have a greater spill distance. New fixtures to be installed at existing homes must also be concealed in this manner. In cases where concealment is impractical, light fixtures should be chosen to blend with the facade design and conform to the Town's standard lighting. Except for motion-sensor activated safety lighting, outdoor lighting fixtures, including roof eaves or overhangs, shall be shielded or employ shielded fixtures so that light sources do not spill beyond the property line to adjacent properties or rights-of-way.
- **Neon Lighting:** Neon lighting is not permitted in residential areas.
- **Exterior Uplighting:** Using exterior uplighting can highlight specific architectural details.
- **Motion-Sensor Lighting:** May be used for security and safety, but sensors should be calibrated to prevent excessive activation and minimize disturbance to neighbors.
- **Landscape Lighting:** Accent lighting may illuminate trees or accentuate other natural features. In general, fixtures should be positioned and shielded to direct



light only where needed. Ensuring the system is effective without creating glare or intruding on adjacent properties.

An outdoor lighting plan is required for new single-family homes. This plan should include landscape lighting and fixtures affixed to the house. Outdoor lighting shall adhere to Town code section 90-62. The site plan submittal package shall include an outdoor lighting plan and all project lighting fixture details for staff review and board consideration.

■ Balconies, Terraces, and Decks

Balconies, terraces and decks can enhance the usability and character of legacy homes when designed with sensitivity to scale, style and context. Renovations should ensure these features are visually integrated with the residence, respect neighboring privacy and incorporate landscaping or other elements to soften edges and maintain the overall harmony of the property.

- Second-floor balconies, decks, and terraces are allowed as long as the scale and architectural style are coherent with the entire property and the placement is sensitive to neighbors.
- Integrate decks and terraces into the building mass by considering forms that are visually cohesive and do not rely on large, cantilevered platforms.
- Second-floor balconies, decks, and terraces should be located to minimize direct views into neighboring residences and actively used outdoor spaces of neighboring properties.

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- Any upper story terraces and decks (roof included) situated above the ground floor of the structure shall consider a continuous landscape planter along all edges of the terrace/deck area.

■ Rooflines

Rooflines are a defining feature of Surfside's legacy homes, shaping both the individual residence and the overall streetscape. Renovation and additions should maintain roof forms, pitches, heights and materials that are consistent with the home's original architectural style and compatible with neighboring properties. Thoughtful roof design reinforces visual harmony, preserves historic character, and ensures that new work integrates seamlessly with the scale and forms of the adjacent neighborhood.

- Any renovation or home addition should use a roof-in the same spirit as the original home's architectural design. Maintain roof pitches and profiles consistent with Legacy home styles (e.g., gabled, hipped, low-slope).
- Consider roof heights and forms that maintain compatibility with nearby buildings and reinforce a cohesive streetscape.
- Select roofing materials for Legacy homes that are compatible with their historic character; standing seam metal roofs are generally not recommended.
- Avoid implementing flat roof systems if the original home's design did not already include a flat roof system for the principal structure.
- Keep roof plans, overhangs, colors, and materials consistent with the existing architectural style.
- The color and material of sloped roofs become their most distinguishing feature. Lighter colors and flat tiles are typically most appropriate, but tile material should reflect the architectural style of the proposed home and existing residential neighborhood.
- Roof designs should employ a consistent pitch to ensure a unified appearance.

- Traditional roof forms like gables, hips, and dormers are preferred; more severe forms like domes and steep chalet gables are discouraged.
- Use appropriate roofing materials that match the character and architectural style of the Legacy home. Consideration shall be given to the existing roofing style and material of the adjacent Legacy home site on either side of the subject property.
- Roof types like torch-down roofs, corrugated metal, and gravel roofs are prohibited.
- Limit gable dormers to no more than half the total roof width; shed dormers may be wider.
- Express detail and rhythm through exposed rafter tails and/or other roof elements.
- Avoid excessive use of corbels or brackets; if used, carefully consider their placement and design.
- Flat roofs should have internal or scupper drainage systems through a parapet wall. Flat roofs with a drip edge are discouraged.
- Flat roofs should utilize the minimum parapet height necessary to accommodate roofing details.

■ Service and Mechanical / Utility Areas

Mechanical equipment, utilities, and service areas should be carefully sited and screened to preserve the visual character and livability of legacy home neighborhoods. Whenever feasible, equipment should be concealed, enclosed, or positioned away from street frontages and neighboring properties, and all utilities should be installed underground. Thoughtful placement, screening, and landscaping help maintain the architectural integrity, minimize noise and visual impact, and ensure compatibility with the surrounding residential context.

- Equipment on rooftops must meet line-of-sight regulations as codified within the Town's zoning code.
- Service bays, mechanical equipment, garbage, and delivery areas should be concealed, enclosed, or positioned within the property's interior whenever feasible. These spaces



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should remain hidden from any street frontage and neighboring properties for residential use.

- The town's code requires architectural visual and acoustic screening for all outdoor equipment installations.
- All utilities must be installed underground, including telephone, cable, and electrical systems.
- Large transformers should be located on the first floor or ground level and enclosed within pad mounts, enclosures, or vaults.
- Any above-ground facilities, such as electrical

raceways and transformers, must be fully concealed and screened with landscaping.

■ Sustainable Design

The Town of Surfside recognizes the need to incorporate design in an effort to improve the overall environment, and the health and well-being of its residents. Therefore, the design guidelines highly encourage all proposed development to commit to the sound and practicable objectives as achieved by the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) and/or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). All proposals shall adhere to Town code section 90-50.1 Sustainability and Resiliency.



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NEW CONSTRUCTION

This section outlines design principles for new single-family homes in Surfside, focusing on building form, massing, and scale to ensure harmonious integration within the town's established neighborhood context. A rich architectural heritage, including styles such as Mediterranean Revival, Mid-Century Modern, Art Deco, and early Contemporary design, characterizes Surfside. While the Town does not mandate adherence to a specific architectural style, it emphasizes maintaining a cohesive and distinctive neighborhood character. All new development should thoughtfully respond to the scale, style, and context of surrounding homes to preserve and enhance Surfside's unique residential identity.

■ Building Façades

The character and identity of Surfside's single-family neighborhoods are defined by the thoughtful proportions, materials and details of their Legacy Homes. Maintaining this architectural integrity is essential when constructing new residences, ensuring that each structure complements its neighbors and contributes to a cohesive streetscape. This section provides guidance on façade treatments, materials, massing, and fenestrations to help designers create homes that honor the Town's historic context while accommodating modern needs.

■ Understory Designs

- Non-habitable understory areas, as defined pursuant to Town Code Section 90-2, shall be designed to maintain human scale, reduce visual impact of elevated construction, and reinforce a pedestrian-oriented relationship between single-family residences and the public right-of-way. Refer to the Site Grading and Landscaping section of these guidelines for acceptable transition strategies.
- Understory designs should avoid a "house-on-stilts" appearance. The ground level facing the street should not consist solely of open parking or exposed structural elements.
- Blank, uninterrupted understory walls along the street frontage are discouraged.
- A minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the street-facing

ground plane should incorporate one or more of the following treatments:

- Enclosed habitable or accessory space
- Architectural screening elements
- Integrated landscape walls or planter system
- Lattice, louvers or greens screen elements
- Planter-integrated walls
- Low walls with a maximum height of thirty-six (36) to forty-two (42) inches
- Slatted screens, perforated panels, or architectural grilles

■ Corner Articulation and 360 Degree Design

- Three hundred and sixty (360) degree architecture encouraged to be incorporated on all residences. Architectural elements and materials should wrap around corners, ensuring all visible sides of the building are thoughtfully designed. Avoid blank walls longer than 10 feet, and ensure every elevation interacts positively with the street or surrounding context. Features such as overhangs, projections, trellises, awnings, and varied textures should be used to create shadow patterns and enhance character.

■ Architectural Style, Cohesion and Harmony

- Façade treatments should adhere to the architectural style of the home and be consistent throughout the property. New or incongruous architectural elements are discouraged. Design should respect neighboring façade rhythms, including window spacing, porch placement, rooflines, and heights, while maintaining proper proportions.
- Hierarchy within façade elements helps to create visual rhythm and movement, enhancing character and interest. This can be achieved by emphasizing key features – such as the first floor of a home - through strategies like distinguishing the lower and upper levels or increasing the spacing between the foundation and second-story windows.

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■ Materials and Ornamentation

- Use high-quality, durable materials that suit the architectural style and climate, such as stucco, wood accents, smooth cement finishes, native stone, metal, or glass block. “Faux” materials such as tile or metal that look like wood are discouraged.
- Decorative elements – including porches, columns, railings, trellises, and planters – should maintain consistent style, scale, and materials throughout the structure. Avoid excessive ornamentation or materials that conflict with the architectural character of the home.

■ Massing, Proportions and Scale

- Design buildings to maintain balanced massing and visually harmonious proportions. Avoid overly dominant or recessed elements, strong vertical or horizontal emphasis, or oversized features. Strategies to moderate massing include material or texture changes between floors, architectural banding, and careful placement of vertical dividing features.
- While dimensions and roof heights may differ, the relationship between a structure’s bulk, width and height should remain visually harmonious. When adjacent to other buildings, facades should be designed as part of a cohesive, well-organized whole.
- Double-height spaces are discouraged within the front and street-side elevations of all facades. Building forms and massing to be designed to minimize tall structures from street frontage.
- Two-story facades are encouraged to mitigate the vertical plane(s) massing, volume and scale by incorporating one or more architectural treatments such as:
 - Change in material or texture between floors
 - Locate vertical dividing features carefully to diminish structure height and not accentuate them.
 - Use landscaping with differing layers and heights to help building scaling along the street frontage.

- The use of trellises, planters or similar decorative features are encouraged.

■ Fenestrations and Active Facades

- Provide windows, doors and transitional spaces (porches, porticoes, colonnades) that are proportionate in scale and style to existing fenestrations, ensuring facades are active and visually engaging. Blank wall sections should be minimized, with all elevations aiming to exceed a minimum of 10% wall openings. Garage doors do not count toward this requirement.
- Façade elevations facing side yards (infill lots) immediately adjacent to single-family zoned properties should incorporate wire mesh green landscaped friendly structures on facades to soften the edges of walls facing existing single-family homes.
- Elevations are encouraged to design green niches within side yard elevation areas to feature unique and distinctive landscaped plantings to further buffer between residential uses and create shadow patterns that contribute to a building’s character.
- Integrate accessibility features into the façade design, ensuring universal design principles are followed.

■ Garage and Frontage Proportion

- The horizontal width of the front elevation should maintain a 65% to 35% proportion, with front-facing garages occupying no more than 35% of the total façade width. Garage walls should not dominate the street-facing elevation.

■ Color and Texture Palette

Select a harmonious palette of colors and textures that complement the architectural style of the home and the surrounding neighborhood. Selected paint colors for zoning districts that allow single-family homes shall adhere to the adopted paint color palette and code standards as found within Town code section 90-50(9). Avoid colors or materials that conflict with the historic character of Legacy Homes or the natural environment of Surfside.

■ Main Entry Features

The entry porch is a defining feature of Surfside’s legacy homes. New single-family construction should carefully consider and thoughtfully accentuate main entry area(s) within street-facing facades, ensuring that porches, stoops and courtyards remain compatible with neighboring properties. This section provides guidance on maintaining appropriate proportions, roof forms, and pedestrian connections, while encouraging design elements—such as off-center entries and covered roof structures—that reinforce visual interest and the distinctive character of Surfside’s streetscapes.

- The main entry should be the most prominent feature within the façade. It should serve as a distinguished characteristic within the primary elevation to create visual emphasis.
- The emphasis of the primary entrance, scaled appropriately to the individual dwelling should function as a protective covering from rain or sun. This is important to create a pedestrian oriented environment linked by a walkway to the street.
- The main entry element of the façade may be intentionally positioned off-center, either to the left or right side of the elevation, rather than placed at the center, to support a more dynamic and context-sensitive front façade design.
- Grand staircases at main entry areas facing the street frontage should be avoided. Entry stair risers should incorporate landing breaks to prevent long, continuous flights and promote safe, comfortable use. Architectural site design is encouraged to subtly slope the site with various relief area(s) or landings, integrated seating, or shade structures to enhance the human scale and street interaction.
- The main entry area is encouraged to feature a distinct, single-story roof element that defines and shelters the front entry of the home. The height of the main entry roof structure should not exceed the habitable interior ceiling height of the home’s first story.
- A dwelling should include a covered front porch, a stoop, or a front courtyard at the main entrance. The main entry area should be accessed directly from the street and have a walkway connecting it to the street.

- The recommended area of a porch, stoop, landing, or courtyard is 25 square feet in size.
- For double-frontage lots, both street-facing façades are encouraged to include an entry porch structure consistent with the design standards outlined above.

■ Windows and Doors

Windows and doors are critical elements that define the character and visual rhythm of Surfside’s legacy homes. New single-family construction should give careful attention to their proportion, placement, materials and detailing to ensure consistency within the context of the neighborhood. Thoughtful selection and alignment of fenestration reinforces façade articulation, scale and hierarchy, while maintaining compatibility with adjacent properties.

- Frame materials should remain uniform on a building.
- Window size and proportions are key in preserving and complementing the architectural style. While their size may vary, depending on the room, consistent window height across the building is encouraged.
- Avoid using two-story-high windows, as they tend to accentuate the bulk and vertical plane of a structure, particularly in the case of two-story window bays.
- Use window proportions that maintain a balanced scale; two-story-high windows can overemphasize the building’s massing and vertical plane, particularly in two-story window bays.
- Upper-level windows should be more subdued than those on the ground floor to establish a clear visual hierarchy in the facade.
- When in line with the architectural style, consider setting back windows from the building wall to create shadow and depth on the facade.
- Maintain alignment in window placement, horizontally or vertically, for a visually cohesive appearance.

■ Garages and Driveways

Garages and driveways play a critical role in shaping the street-facing character of Surfside’s legacy homes. It

is essential that new single-family construction design garages that are proportionate, subordinate to the main façade and consistent with the home's architectural style. Driveways should be carefully scaled and aligned with the residence, minimizing impervious surfaces while reinforcing the property's overall character, maintaining green space, and preserving the rhythm and visual harmony of the neighborhood streetscape.

- Building elevations with garages should restrict the proportion of the garage wall facing the street to no more than 35% of the proposed overall horizontal width of the facade.
- Garage walls should be scaled proportionately so the exterior wall of the garage does not become the prominent feature within the overall façade.
- Property lots consisting of 75 feet or less of street frontage are limited to one (1) car garages.
- Property lots consisting of 75 feet or more of street frontage are limited to two (2) car garages.
- Street-facing elevations are encouraged to limit garage bays. If a third garage is included, it is recommended to be side-loaded and screened from view from the nearest street frontage.
- Exterior garage walls should be single-story structures not exceeding the habitable interior height of the first level of the principal residence.
- Attention should be given to the portion of wall located immediately above any garage door. Disproportionate and blank expanses over garage doors are discouraged.
- Garages with independent flat roofs or with active roof decks are encouraged to incorporate a continuous landscape planter along all edges of the terrace/deck area.
- Driveways should be consistent with the building's overall architectural style and incorporate a two-percent cross slope for appropriate containment of drainage onsite.
- Paving accessible for parking in the front setback area should be limited to the width required to

access a garage or other required parking spaces. Keep driveways no wider than necessary for safe and efficient vehicular access to minimize impervious area.

- Enhance driveways using various textures, such as stamped concrete, pavers, coral stone or other, or grasscrete. Create landscape pockets next to buildings, walls, or fencing along driveways.
- If proposing a circular driveway, integrate it into the property design, connecting to the street at two locations to define a front yard area.

■ Awnings, Canopies, and Carports

Awnings, canopies and carports should be thoughtfully integrated into the design of all homes, serving as complementary architectural elements rather than afterthoughts. Materials, scale, and placement should align with the home's style maintaining visual cohesion and harmony with the surrounding neighborhood. This section provides guidance for selecting appropriate materials, proportions, and locations to ensure these features enhance the façade without overwhelming or detracting from the character of the residence.

- Awnings and canopies should be coherent and complementary with the building's architectural style.
- The covering materials of awnings or canopies placed upon, attached to, or forming any part of any building in any residential district should be made of canvas, cloth, vinyl, natural materials, or other similar permanent materials, and the supporting structure of the awning or canopy may be made of fiberglass, aluminum, plastic, wood material, metal or other man-made materials. Carports constructed of concrete, concrete block or pvc pipe are discouraged.
- Carport canopies and free-standing canopies are discouraged.
- Awnings erected over garage openings or porte-cochere vehicle openings are encouraged to not extend out from the outside wall of the building more than six (6) feet.

■ Site Grading & Landscaping

Site grading and landscaping are essential elements in preserving the character, scale and human experience of Surfside's neighborhoods. Thoughtful design of grade transitions, planting layers and entry sequences help integrate homes into the street while softening structural elements such as stem walls and staircases. By using native plantings, layered gardens, and permeable materials, Single-family home addition projects can enhance visual appeal, improve environmental performance and maintain proportional, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes that honor the Town's historic character.

To comply with FEMA regulations, new homes in Surfside must elevate their finished floors to approximately +10.00 NGVD, resulting in floor levels 5 to 7 feet above the adjacent crown of the road. This elevation difference often places new construction significantly higher than adjoining legacy homes, creating a visually stark and sometimes imposing front elevation.

To address this challenge, designs should carefully consider the transition from street to home. By applying sound strategies, designers can meet regulatory requirements while maintaining a welcoming, cohesive, and context-sensitive streetscape. Strategies to soften the perceived height difference and improve pedestrian experience include:

- Layered Landscaping: Use terraced planting beds, raised planters, or berms to integrate elevation changes visually. Planters incorporated along the base of the stem walls will reduce the overall height of the wall and provide appropriate scale.
 - Incorporate landscaping to soften and partially obscure entry stairs visually.
 - Use natural grading with a series in 2 to 3-step increments to transition between elevation changes seamlessly.
 - The user experience from the sidewalk to the main entry should be a subtle and smooth walking activity.
 - Landscaping should be installed in layers, creating gardens that layer smaller plants facing the street

frontage and increasing in size by zones where larger plants are planted toward the building to create depth.

- Mix multiple plant species to create biodiversity within planting beds.
- Use South Florida native plants, which grow naturally in the region, that require less fertilizer and pesticides.
- **Architectural Screening:** Incorporate low walls, railings, or green screens to conceal stem walls partially.
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- Entry stair risers should incorporate landing breaks to prevent long, continuous flights and promote safe, comfortable use.
- **Grade Transitions:** To provide a more natural rise to the entry, utilize gentle slope transitions, retaining walls, or tiered walkways.
 - Slope the front yard by one (1) foot to decrease the podium height effect so that it may be less apparent.
 - Raise the front yard to create a level, landscaped area that meets a low retaining wall (12 inches to 24 inches) at the property line. This method would reduce the number of stair risers at the main entry of the residence.
- **Material Variation:** Apply contrasting or textural materials to stem walls to break up massing and reduce visual impact. Varying surface treatments will distinguish the stem wall from the vertical wall continuation from above.
- **Permeable (Pervious) Materials:** Impervious surfaces, such as concrete and asphalt, prevent water from soaking into the ground. This leads to increased stormwater

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runoff, which can contribute to flash flooding and carry pollutants into storm drains, harming ecosystems and posing risks to public health. These surfaces also absorb and retain heat, raising local temperatures and increasing energy demands for cooling.

- Pervious surfaces are designed to let water pass through, helping to reduce or even eliminate runoff. Beneath these permeable materials is often a structural layer supporting loads and temporarily storing stormwater, allowing it to filter into the ground gradually. Permeable pavers are highly encouraged in all front yard areas.

■ Lighting

Surfside values a subtle night-time lighting scheme. The location and design characteristics of proposed lighting fixtures should be compatible with the home's overall style and are encouraged to be non-intrusive to neighboring properties.

Exterior lighting should enhance the architectural features of legacy homes while providing safe, well-lit pathways and entries. Fixtures should be carefully selected and placed seeking to complement the home's style, scale and materials without creating glare or visual disturbances to adjoining properties.

Light Fixtures

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These fixtures are evaluated based on the following key criteria:

- **Light Color:** Warmer color lighting is preferred, with 3000 Kelvin being the highest preferred color temperature.
- **Light Control:** Avoid using strip lights and soffit lighting. Wall-mounted sconces are encouraged to highlight architectural features, but they should be used sparingly. Provide project lighting that is soft/complementary and not overly intrusive. Ensure light does not overflow to neighboring properties.
- **Appearance:** Functional fixtures should be compatible with their surroundings and suit their intended use.
- **Safety:** Fixtures should provide sufficient illumination to address safety concerns effectively.
- **Consistency:** Maintain consistent light intensity over the intended illuminated area.
- **Design:** Prioritize lamps with a natural color rendering index, avoiding monochromatic color rendering. Encourage using metal halide or similar lamps while discouraging high-pressure sodium lamps. In specific situations, fluorescent lamps may be acceptable. Fixtures should be consistent with the architectural style.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Emphasize energy efficiency while considering installation costs. Consider the choice of fixtures with an eye toward energy conservation.
- **Front and Rear Entries:** Ensure front and rear entries are adequately illuminated without excessive brightness.
- **Concealment:** The outdoor lighting fixtures must be concealed so that the light is directed downward and does not spill beyond the property line. This is especially necessary when installing lighting elements in the eaves of two-story homes, as unshielded lights may have a greater spill distance. New fixtures to be installed at existing homes should also be concealed in this manner. In cases where concealment is impractical, light fixtures should be chosen to blend with the facade design and conform to the Town's standard lighting. Except for motion-sensor activated safety lighting, outdoor lighting fixtures, including roof eaves or overhangs, should be shielded or employ shielded fixtures so that light sources do not

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spill beyond the property line to adjacent properties or rights-of-way.

- **Neon Lighting:** Neon lighting is not permitted in residential areas.
- **Exterior Uplighting:** Using exterior uplighting can highlight specific architectural details.
- **Motion-Sensor Lighting:** May be used for security and safety, but sensors should be calibrated to prevent excessive activation and minimize disturbance to neighbors.
- **Landscape Lighting:** Accent lighting may illuminate trees or accentuate other natural features. In general, fixtures should be positioned and shielded to direct light only where needed. Ensuring the system is effective without creating glare or intruding on adjacent properties.

An outdoor lighting plan is required for new single-family homes. This plan should include landscape lighting and fixtures affixed to the house. Outdoor lighting shall adhere to Town code section 90-62. The site plan submittal package shall include an outdoor lighting plan and all project lighting fixture details for staff review and board consideration.

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- Second-floor balconies, decks, and terraces are allowed as long as the scale and architectural style are coherent with the entire property and the placement is sensitive to neighbors.
- Integrate decks and terraces into the building mass by considering forms that are visually cohesive and do not rely on large, cantilevered platforms.
- Second-floor balconies, decks, and terraces should

be located to minimize direct views into neighboring residences and actively used outdoor spaces of neighboring properties.

- Any upper story terraces and decks (roof included) situated above the ground floor of the structure should consider a continuous landscape planter along all edges of the terrace/deck area.

■ Rooflines

Rooflines are a defining feature, shaping both the individual residence and the overall streetscape. New construction should incorporate roof forms, pitches, heights and materials that reflect the intended architectural style and remain compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Thoughtful roof design reinforces visual harmony, preserves historic character, and ensures that new work integrates seamlessly with the scale and forms of adjacent properties.

- Keep roof plans, overhangs, colors, and materials consistent with the chosen architectural style.
- Design new home roofs with forms and pitches similar to surrounding homes. Sloped (typically hipped) roofs should fit cohesively and harmoniously with single-story Legacy Homes.
- The color and material of sloped roofs become their most distinguishing feature. Lighter colors and flat tiles are typically most appropriate, but tile material should reflect the architectural style of the proposed home and existing residential neighborhood.
- Roof designs should employ a consistent pitch to ensure a unified appearance.
- Traditional roof forms like gables, hips, and dormers are preferred; more severe forms like domes and steep chalet gables are discouraged.
- Roof types like torch down roofs, corrugated metal, and gravel roofs are prohibited.
- Limit gable dormers to no more than half of the total roof width; shed dormers may be wider.
- Express detail and rhythm through exposed rafter tails

and/or other roof elements.

- Avoid excessive use of corbels or brackets; if used, carefully consider their placement and design.
- Flat roofs should have internal or scupper drainage systems through a parapet wall. Flat roofs with a drip edge are discouraged.
- Flat roofs should utilize the minimum parapet height necessary to accommodate roofing details.

■ Service and Mechanical / Utility Areas

Mechanical equipment, utilities, and service areas should be carefully sited and screened to preserve the visual character and livability of neighborhoods. Whenever feasible, equipment should be concealed, enclosed, or positioned away from street frontages and neighboring properties, and all utilities should be installed underground. Thoughtful placement, screening, and landscaping help maintain the architectural integrity, minimize noise and visual impact, and ensure compatibility with the surrounding residential context.

- Equipment on rooftops must meet line-of-sight regulations as codified within the Town's zoning code.
- Service bays, mechanical equipment, garbage, and delivery areas should be concealed, enclosed, or positioned within the property's interior whenever

feasible. These spaces should remain hidden from any street frontage and neighboring properties with residential uses.

- Architectural visual and acoustic screening is highly encouraged for all outdoor equipment in accordance with the Town's code for installations at grade and rooftop level(s).
- All utilities, including telephone, cable, and electrical systems, must be installed underground.
- Large transformers should be located on the first floor or ground level and enclosed within pad mounts, enclosures, or vaults.
- Any above-ground facilities, such as electrical raceways and transformers, must be fully concealed and screened with landscaping.

■ Sustainable Design

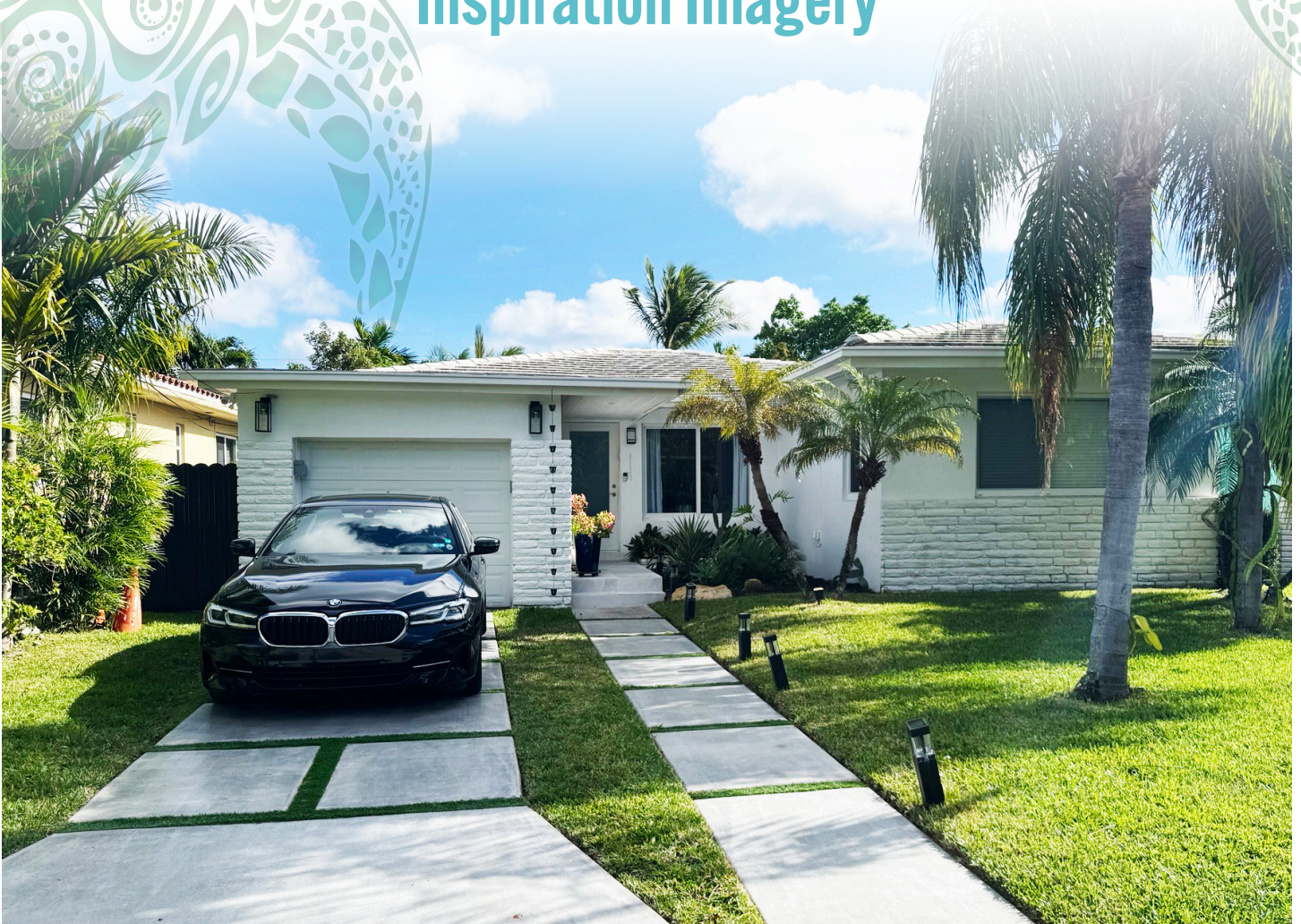
The Town of Surfside recognizes the need to incorporate design in an effort to improve the overall environment, and the health and well-being of its residents. Therefore, the design guidelines highly encourage all proposed development to commit to the sound and practicable objectives as achieved by the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC) and/or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). All proposals shall adhere to Town code section 90-50.1 Sustainability and Resiliency.



DESIGN Guidelines 2026

5.

Existing Legacy Home Inspiration Imagery



5. Existing Legacy Home Inspiration Imagery

■ **Property Address**
8951 Hawthorne Avenue

■ **Year Built**
1937

■ **Lot Size**
5,600 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Interior



5. Existing Legacy Home Inspiration Imagery

■ **Property Address**
8874 Dickens Avenue

■ **Year Built**
1938

■ **Lot Size**
6,860 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Corner



■ **Property Address**
825 88th Street

■ **Year Built**
1939

■ **Lot Size**
6,860 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Corner



5. Existing Legacy Home Inspiration Imagery

■ **Property Address**
9173 Froude Avenue

■ **Year Built**
1950

■ **Lot Size**
5,600 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Interior



■ **Property Address**
8918 Garland Avenue

■ **Year Built**
1950

■ **Lot Size**
5,600 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Interior



5. Existing Legacy Home Inspiration Imagery

■ **Property Address**
924 Surfside Boulevard

■ **Year Built**
1950

■ **Lot Size**
8,137 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Corner



■ **Property Address**
1001 89th Street

■ **Year Built**
1951

■ **Lot Size**
6,860 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Corner



5. Existing Legacy Home Inspiration Imagery

■ **Property Address**
9017 Garland Avenue

■ **Year Built**
1951

■ **Lot Size**
5,600 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Interior



■ **Property Address**
9025 Garland Avenue

■ **Year Built**
1951

■ **Lot Size**
5,600 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Interior



5. Existing Legacy Home Inspiration Imagery

■ **Property Address**
925 90th Street

■ **Year Built**
1952

■ **Lot Size**
6,160 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Corner



5. Existing Legacy Home Inspiration Imagery

■ **Property Address**
8934 Garland Avenue

■ **Year Built**
1952

■ **Lot Size**
5,600 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Interior



■ **Property Address**
8951 Garland Avenue

■ **Year Built**
1952

■ **Lot Size**
5,600 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Interior



5. Existing Legacy Home Inspiration Imagery

■ **Property Address**
9133 Garland Avenue

■ **Year Built**
1953

■ **Lot Size**
5,600 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Interior



5. Existing Legacy Home Inspiration Imagery

■ **Property Address**
9175 Bay Drive

■ **Year Built**
1955

■ **Lot Size**
5,160 SF

■ **Lot Type**
Corner





DESIGN Guidelines 2026

6. Appendix of Approved Homes for Reference



6. Appendix of Approved Homes for Reference

■ Type of Lot: Interior

■ Lot Size: 5,617 SF

■ Home Size: 3,056 SF

■ Total FAR: 0.54



6. Appendix of Approved Homes for Reference

■ Type of Lot: Interior

■ Lot Size: 5,625 SF

■ Home Size: 3,020 SF

■ Total FAR: 0.53



6. Appendix of Approved Homes for Reference

■ Type of Lot: Interior

■ Lot Size: 5,629 SF

■ Home Size: 3,020 SF

■ Total FAR: 0.53



6. Appendix of Approved Homes for Reference

■ Type of Lot: Corner

■ Lot Size: 6,041 SF

■ Home Size: 3,472 SF

■ Total FAR: 0.57



6. Appendix of Approved Homes for Reference

■ Type of Lot: Corner

■ Lot Size: 6,060 SF

■ Home Size: 3,646 SF

■ Total FAR: 0.60



6. Appendix of Approved Homes for Reference

■ Type of Lot: Corner

■ Lot Size: 12,460 SF

■ Home Size: 7,080 SF

■ Total FAR: 0.56



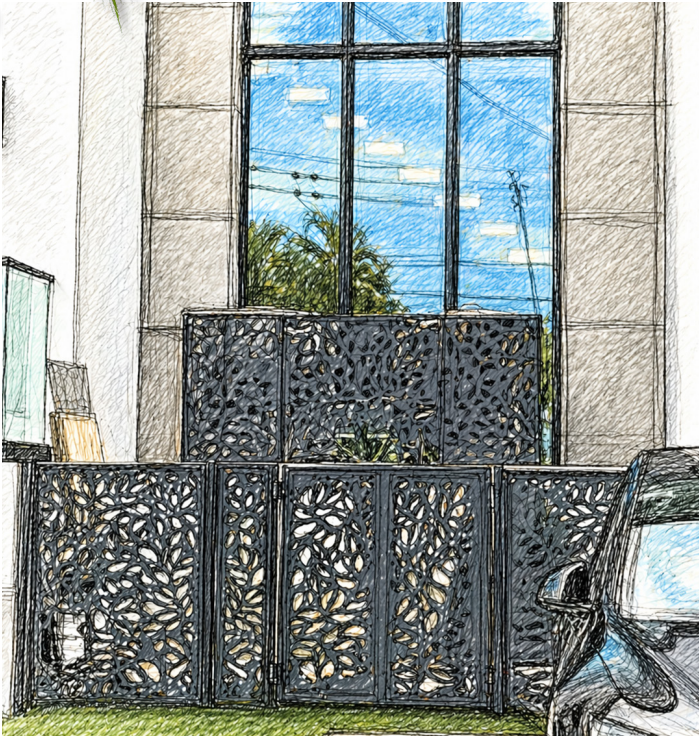


DESIGN Guidelines 2026

7. Things to Avoid



7. Things to Avoid



- Double height window @ front facade
- 2-Story vertical plane prominent
- Bulk of structure out of context
- Gate not 50% opaque
- Wall sconces



- No 360 degree architecture
- Scale of garage wall (above door)
- Wall proportions out of context
- No green niche @ side walls
- Mechanical equipment not screened and doesn't meet code

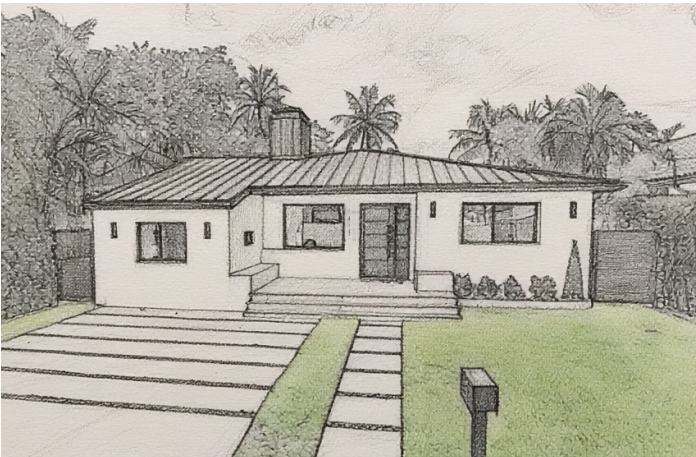


- No prominent main entry
- No 360 degree architecture
- Driveway covers much of the front yard
- No permeable materials for rainwater
- More landscape is desirable

7. Things to Avoid



- Bulk and mass out of context
- Balcony design out of context
- No 360 degree architecture
- No side yard landscaping
- Design of retaining wall
- Pool is elevated and out of scale



- Incompatible metal roof on Legacy home
- Main entry feature not prominent
- Driveway width should be limited to complement Legacy home design
- Lacks landscape and plantings within front yard



- Home addition not compatible
- Tinted windows not desirable for an art deco home
- Driveway likely not to code

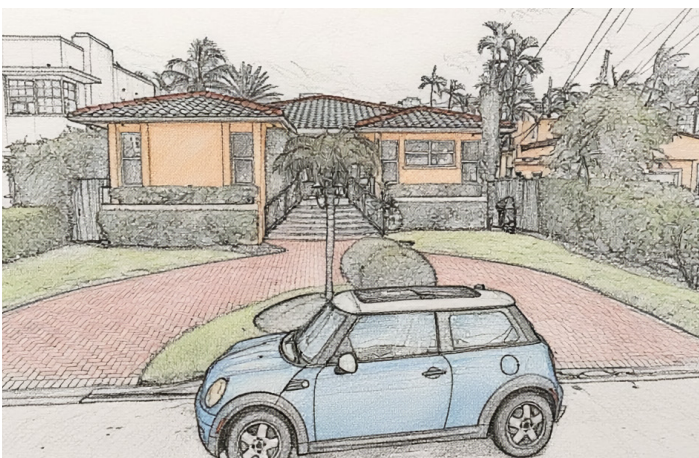
7. Things to Avoid



- Incompatible architectural design on Legacy home
- Façade treatment and architectural style not consistent for SFR addition
- Main entry feature not prominent
- No 360 degree architecture
- Massing and Proportions out of scale
- Windows not consistent in height. Out of rhythm.



- Main entry feature not prominent
- Driveway width should be limited to complement Legacy home design
- Driveway setbacks encroachment
- Lacks landscape and plantings within front yard



- Main entry feature not prominent
- Grand entry staircase at main entrance
- Driveway width should be limited to complement Legacy home design
- Lacks landscape and plantings within front yard

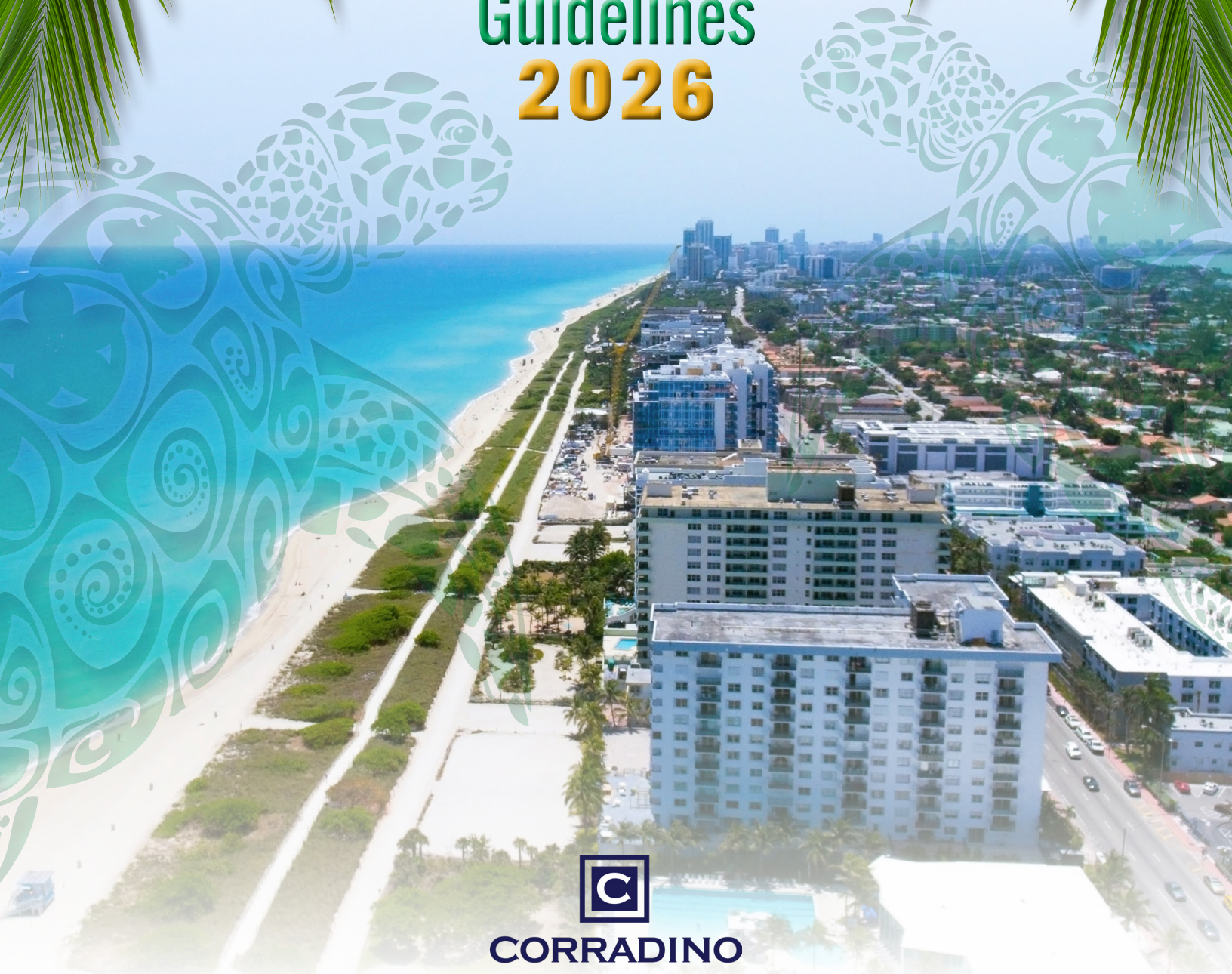
7. Things to Avoid



- Main entry feature not prominent
- Grand entry staircase at main entrance
- Garage not limited to 35% of façade
- Lacks landscape and plantings within front yard
- Bulk of structure out of context
- Rooftop A/C Equipment visible from street level



DESIGN Guidelines 2026



CORRADINO

4055 NW 97th Avenue, Suite 200, Doral, FL 33178
305.594.0735 • www.corradino.com