

---

Purpose of Revisions:

Redmond 2050 – Implement standards for towers (per Overlake revision)

---

**Chapter 21.60**  
**CITYWIDE DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES**

21.60.040 Design Concepts.

A. Purpose. The purpose of this section is to establish criteria for building design and review that addresses architectural concepts, [accessibility and universal design](#), building scale, details, materials, colors, blank wall treatment, pedestrian features, and personal safety.

B. Buildings.

...

6. Blank Walls.

a. Intent. To reduce the appearance and mass of large walls through the use of various architectural and landscaping treatments.

b. Design Criteria.

i. Avoid the use of large, blank walls.

ii. All blank walls [below 160 ft](#) shall be treated in one or more of the following ways:

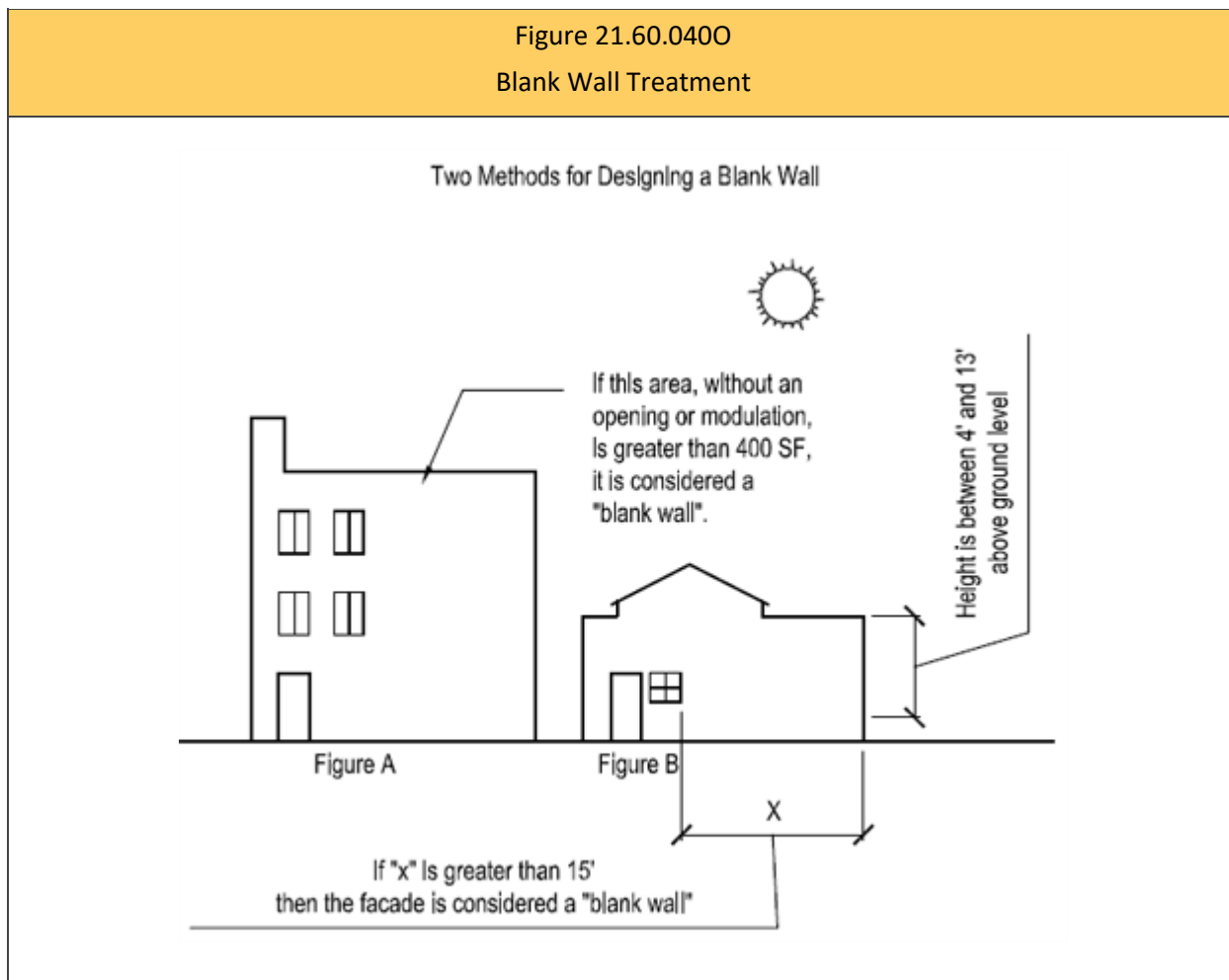
A. Installing windows or a vertical trellis in front of the wall with climbing vines or plant materials;

B. Providing a landscaped planting bed at least five feet, zero inches wide or raised planter bed at least two feet, zero inches high and three feet wide in front of the wall, with plant materials that obscure or screen at least 50 percent of the wall's surface within three years;

C. Providing artwork (mosaic, mural, sculpture, relief, etc.) over at least 50 percent of the blank wall surface;

---

D. Proposing alternative techniques or by providing an architectural justification for the blank wall as part of the Design Review process.



**7. Towers**

**a. Building Step Back and Spacing.**

i. Towers shall be designed to livability of adjacent buildings and to optimize a thin skyline. Use context and conditions to set the elevation of the setback or location of towers, to preserve sightlines or approximately align with the heights of adjacent contextual elements (such as landmark spire or clocktower, a historic building, etc.).

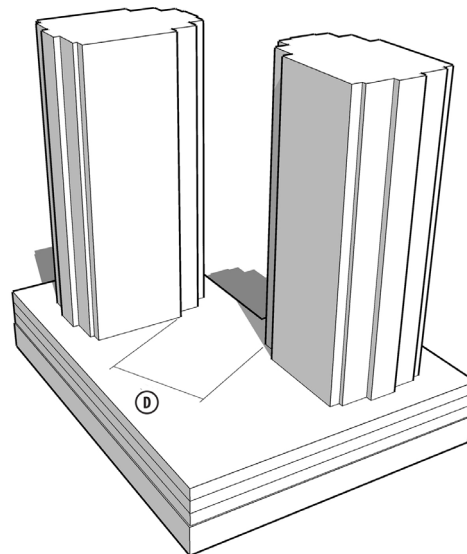
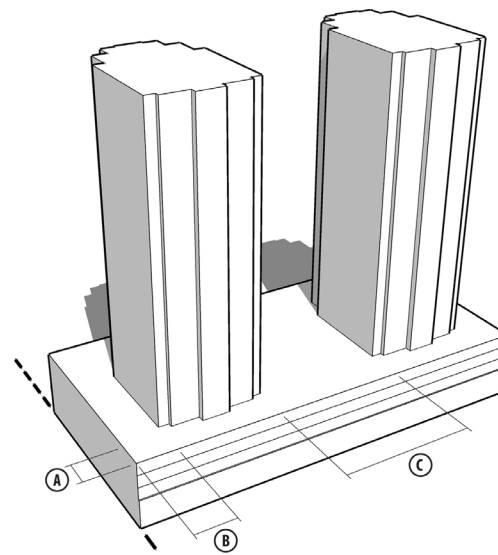
ii. Any towers (above the podium) shall be offset a minimum of 20 feet horizontally from the building edge at the street frontage except allowed in RZC 21.60.040.7.c. The

tower shall be offset 20 feet horizontally from all other property lines (see Figure 21.60.040P).

iii. Towers shall be placed with a minimum of 80 feet separation face-to-face and a minimum of 60 feet separation corner-to-corner from all towers on site, as well as buildings on adjacent properties above 6 stories (see Figure 21.60.040P)

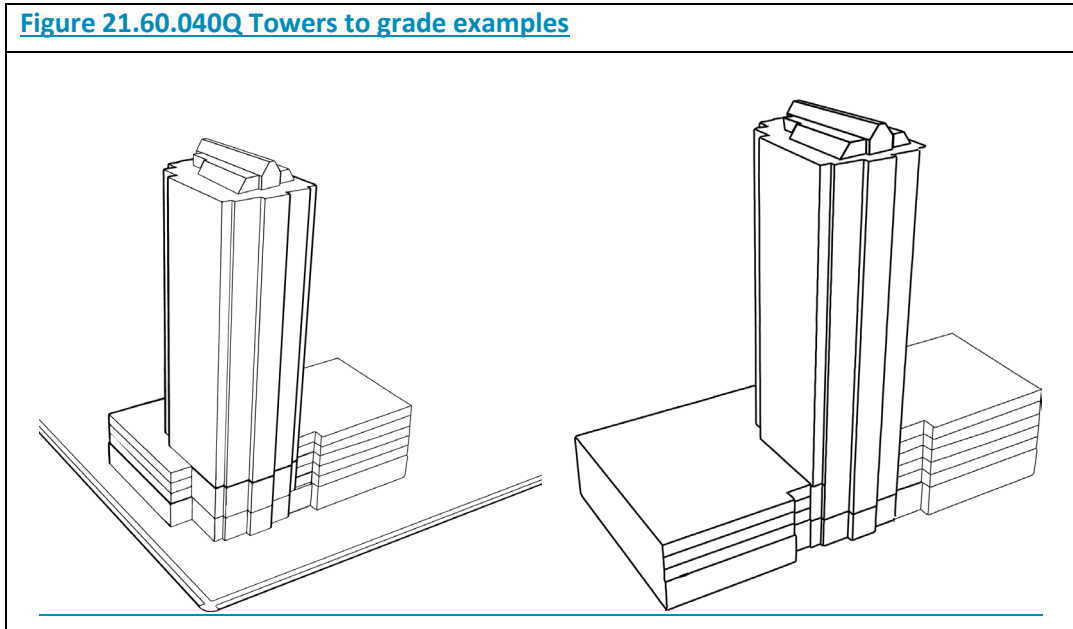
**Figure 21.60.040P Tower Separation**

- (A)** Building Edge  
Offset from street  
frontage: 20 ft. min
- (B)** Building offset  
from all other  
property lines: 20 ft  
min.
- (C)** Tower separation:  
80 ft face-to-face
- (D)** Tower separation:  
60 ft corner-to-corner



**iv. A tower may be brought directly to grade if it meets one of the following criteria:**

- a. When the tower is placed in the middle of a long block, to assist in modulation and create a clear center of the building; or**
- b. When the tower is placed on the corner of two streets, to create a visual landmark at the entrance and a larger public realm element at an intersection (see Figure 21.60.040R).**



**b. Floorplates.**

**i. The floorplate size for a tower shall be based on use per table xxx and calculated as an average of the total cumulative tower floorplate area of all levels divided by the number of tower stories. Floorplate shall be measured by the exterior of the enclosed wall.**

| <b><u>Primary Use</u></b>              | <b><u>Below 180 ft</u></b>  | <b><u>180 ft – 240 ft</u></b>  | <b><u>Over 240 ft</u></b> |
|--|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b><u>Office / Non-Residential</u></b> | <b><u>Average of 35,000 sq ft, 45,000 sq ft max per tower</u></b> | <b><u>20,000 sq ft max</u></b> |                           |

|   |            |                         |                         |
|---|------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>Residential, Mixed-Use, or Hotel</u> | <u>N/A</u> | <u>12,500 sq ft max</u> | <u>10,500 sq ft max</u> |
|---|------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|

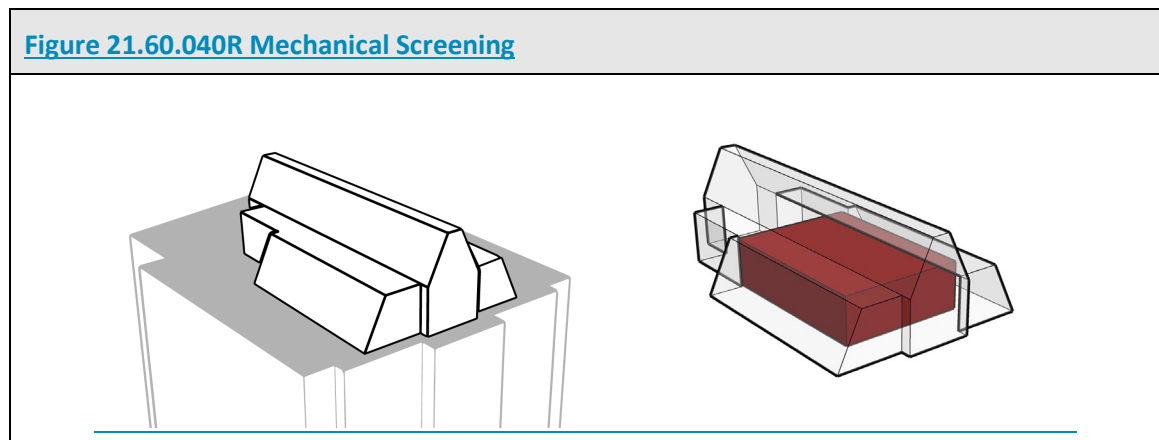
ii. For sites with multiple towers, tower height and floorplate size should vary to provide visual interest and avoid monotony.

**b. Tower Rooftop**

i. The top of each tower shall use unique architectural expressions, additional step back, double height elements, etc. to contribute to a unique city skyline.

ii. Rooftop amenities, including green roofs, are encouraged. All amenity spaces shall be accessible for all ages and abilities.

ii. All mechanical elements must be screened or placed within a parapet to the top height of the mechanical equipment (see Figure 21.60.040Q) and provide an architectural contribution to the building.

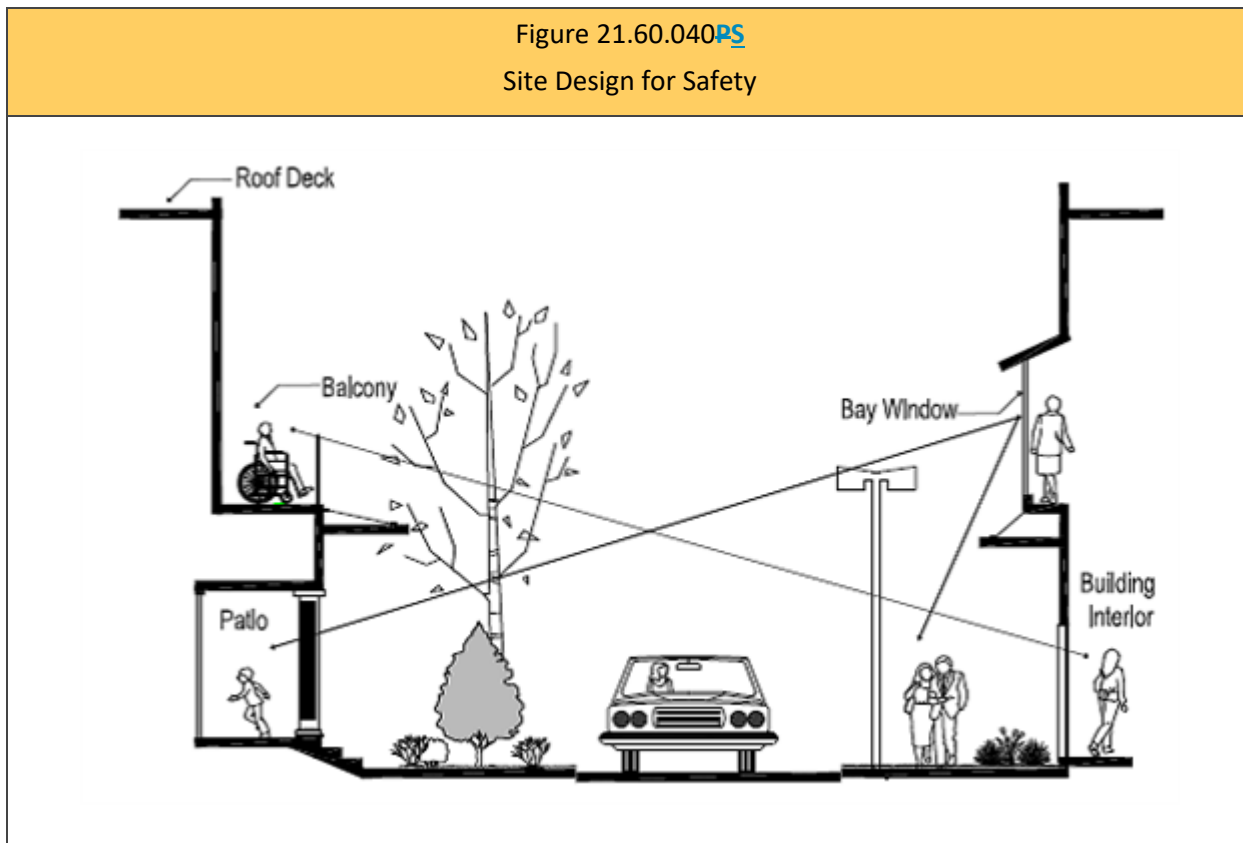


**87. Building Design for Safety.**

a. Intent. To promote building designs which increase safety of employees, residents, and visitors.

b. Design Criteria.

i. Building design should allow for informal observation of exterior semipublic and public areas, including play areas, open spaces, pathways, and parking lots.



- ii. Areas such as laundry rooms and fitness rooms should incorporate windows to increase visibility.
- iii. Doors to stairways, parking, and similar areas should be open or have windows to allow users to see through to the other side.
- iv. Increase personal safety by considering the following in the design of building entries.
  - A. Avoid hidden building entries and ensure good sight lines into entries.
  - B. Sufficiently light doorways and alcoves.
- v. When security surveillance devices are proposed, they should be designed to blend with the site and buildings to the extent possible.

C. Landscaping.

- 1. Planting Design.

a. Intent.

i. Planting design is an integral part of the overall site and community design, and ~~should~~shall complement the architecture, other site elements and the visual appearance of the neighborhood, as well as the Northwest environment. The landscape plan should help reduce impacts to and create a transition to adjacent natural features, such as critical areas and shorelines. The landscape plan should be based on a well-defined concept, addressing criteria for function, design, horticulture, maintenance, and irrigation.

ii. The planting design ~~should~~shall be a composition of plant materials that creates an appropriate visual character, such as stylized, formal, informal, or natural. The design should include a suitable combination of trees, shrubs, groundcover plants, vines, lawns, and herbaceous material, including native and Northwest-adapted plants. The number, size, and arrangement should be carefully selected to balance color, texture, form, line, proportion, and scale in both the horizontal and vertical plane.

b. Design Criteria.

i. Retention and Enhancement of Existing Vegetation. Preserve as much native noninvasive vegetation as possible, particularly adjacent to buffers of critical areas and shorelines. Replant developed areas with stands of non-dwarf evergreens in natural and random patterns where possible.

ii. ~~Usable~~-Open Space and Public View Corridors. Provide space on-site for active or passive recreational purposes. When located in an identified public view corridor, this open space may also provide views through a development to important features, such as the Lake Sammamish, Sammamish River, and the river valley; Bear Creek; or panoramic mountain views.

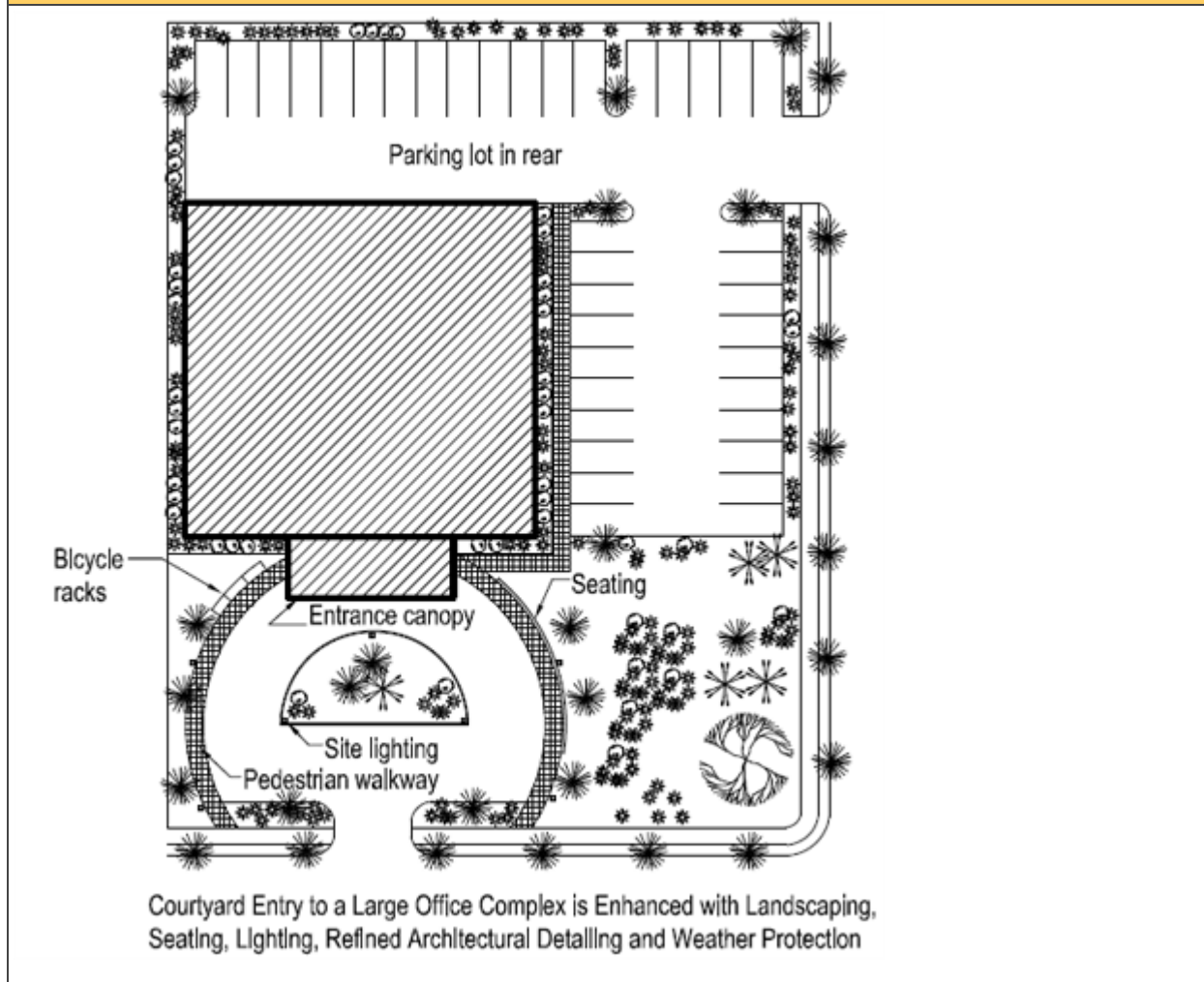
iii. Transition. Provide plantings that provide a clear transition in design between adjacent sites, within a site, and from native vegetation areas. To lessen impacts and provide transitions to natural areas, use native plants as much as possible adjacent to the buffers of critical areas and shorelines. Design foundation plantings to create an effective change from public to private space and from the vertical to horizontal plane at building edges.

iv. Mitigation of Adverse Visual Impacts. Provide planting to soften the visual impact of less desirable development and structures, such as large blank walls, dumpster areas, service areas, and large areas of pavement.

v. Definition or Emphasis. Use planting to highlight significant site features and to define site use areas and circulation corridors without interfering with the use of such areas. Examples include site and building entrances, pedestrian walkways, and focal points, such as gathering areas or plazas.

---

Figure 21.60.040QT Landscaping



- vi. Safety. Use planting landscaping which minimizes disruption of sight lines along pathways.
- vii. Water Conservation. Plants and techniques that reduce water consumption are encouraged.
- viii. Design. Plants should be selected and arranged according to the following design criteria:
  - A. Variety. Select a variety of plants providing interest, accent and contrast, using as many native species as possible.
  - B. Consistency. Develop a planting design conforming to the overall project design concept and adjoining properties.
  - C. Appropriateness. Select plants with an awareness of their growth requirements, tolerances, ultimate size, preferences for soil, climate, and sun exposure, and negative impacts.



D. Density. Provide adequate plant quantity, size, and spacing to fulfill the functional and design objectives within the stipulated time.

2. Parking Lot Landscaping.

a. Intent.

- i. To improve the aesthetic appearance of parking lots;
- ii. To reduce the summertime heat and glare buildup within and adjacent to parking lots;
- iii. To provide landscaped areas within parking areas in addition to landscape buffers around the perimeter of parking lots;
- iv. To provide screening and break up the expanse of paved areas.

b. Design Criteria.

- i. Cluster interior parking lot landscaping when possible to conserve significant portions of existing tree cover as an amenity to the site. (See also RZC 21.32, Landscaping.)
- ii. Disperse interior parking lot landscaping throughout a parking lot when no significant existing vegetation exists.
- iii. Shade trees shall be used to shade parking lots and driveways to reduce summer heat loads.
- iv. Provide landscaped areas within parking areas in addition to landscape buffers around the perimeter of parking lots to effectively screen vehicles.
- v. All parking lots shall be planted with sufficient trees so that within 10 years 50 percent of the surface area of the lot is shaded. Additionally, parking lots shall be screened from streets by non-bermed landscaped treatments.

D. Accessory Standards.

1. Screening for Garbage/Recycling Enclosures and Rooftop Mechanical.

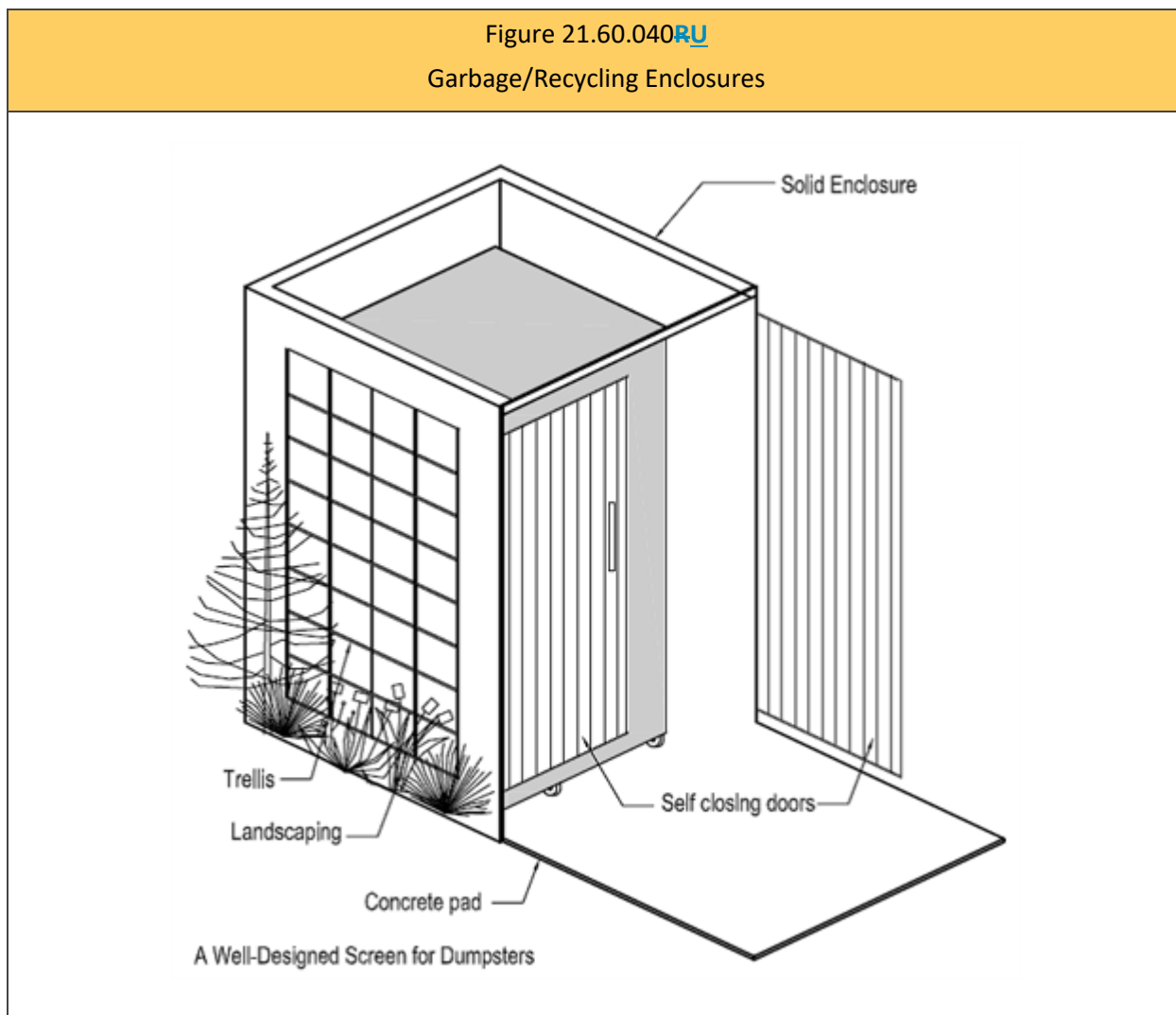
a. Intent.

- i. To reduce the visual and physical impacts of service areas, mechanical equipment, trash and recycling containers, and other similar uses on other on-site uses, the street environment, adjacent shoreline areas, and other public open spaces, and adjacent properties, while maintaining accessibility for service providers and users.
- ii. To mitigate the off-site visual impacts of service and mechanical equipment areas when siting alone does not adequately mitigate impacts.

b. Design Criteria.

---

- 
- i. Services and outdoor storage areas, large utility cabinets and mechanical equipment, and waste receptacles (trash dumpsters, compactors, and mechanical equipment) shall be located away from highly visible areas, such as streets, pedestrian walkways, and public shoreline areas, to minimize visual, noise, or physical impacts on the site, street environment, adjacent public open spaces, and adjacent properties.
  - ii. All garbage receptacles and recycling bins not located within parking garages shall be enclosed by a freestanding enclosure that is architecturally consistent with the building. Locate waste receptacles in areas convenient for on-site use and accessible for collection.
  - iii. Service elements and outdoor storage areas (dumpsters, refuse, and recycling collection areas) shall be screened from view with a solid visual barrier, using materials and colors consistent with the design of the primary structure(s) on the site, and at a minimum shall be as high as the service element being screened. Utility cabinets and small-scale service elements may be screened with landscaping or structures.
-

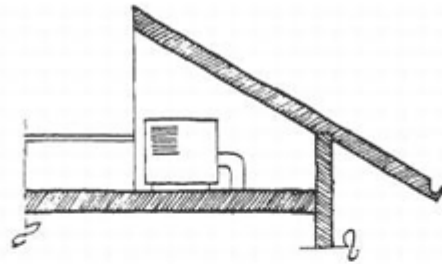


iv. All mechanical equipment, including air conditioners, heaters, vents, and similar equipment, rooftop and ground-mounted, shall be fully screened from public view both at grade and from higher buildings with the exception of solar panels and roof-mounted wind turbines. Screening shall be located so as not to interfere with operation of the equipment. All mechanical equipment shall meet the applicable requirements of the Uniform Mechanical Code and Uniform Plumbing Code and:

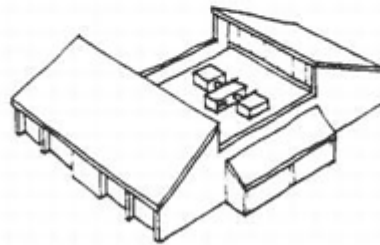
- A. The screening materials shall be of material requiring minimal maintenance, and shall be as high as the equipment being screened.
- B. For ground-mounted equipment, landscaping may be used if a solid screen is provided at time of planting.
- C. For rooftop equipment, all screening devices shall be well integrated into the architectural design through such elements as parapet walls, false roofs, roof wells,

clerestories, or equipment rooms (see RZC 21.60.030 for tower rooftop mechanical screening). Screening walls or unit-mounted screening is allowed but less desirable. Wood generally shall not be used. Louvered designs are acceptable if consistent with building design style.

Figure 21.60.040SV Rooftop Screening

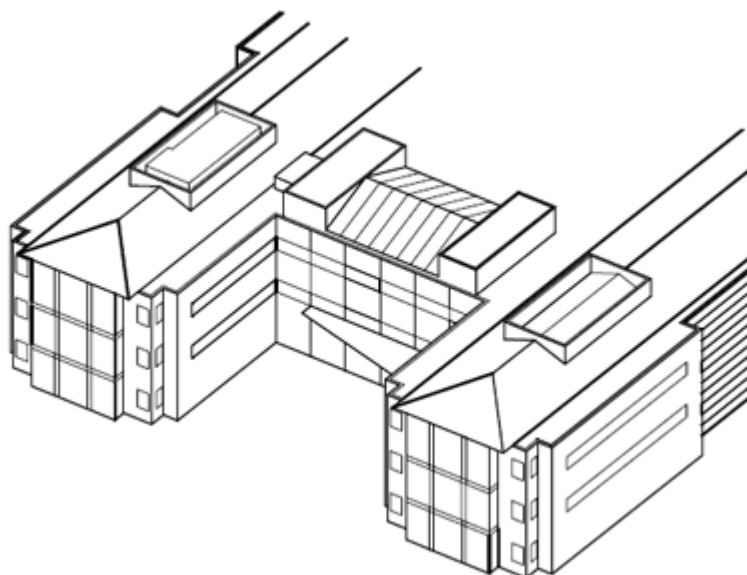


Section of mechanical penthouse.



Mechanical equipment screen by clerestory roofs and parapets.

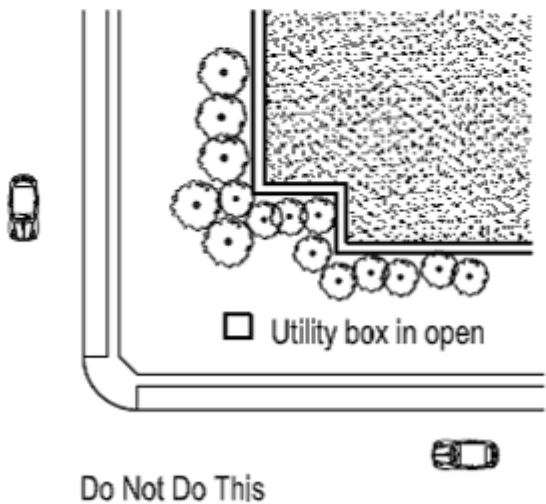
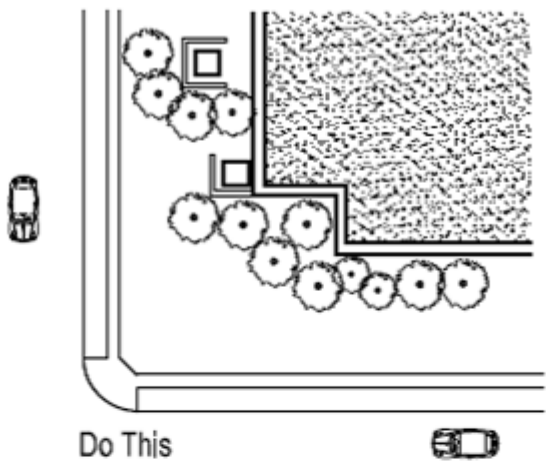
Figure 21.60.040T Rooftop Screening

Figure 21.60.040<sup>SV</sup> Rooftop Screening

Roof wells conceal mechanical equipment

- v. Design screening with consideration of views from adjoining hillsides and from other areas of high public visibility, such as streets and shoreline areas, with special consideration for views from SR 520, Redmond Way, other major arterials, Marymoor Park, and the Sammamish River Trail.
- vi. Design and select landscaping and structural materials of sufficient size, quantity, and height to effectively screen service elements and to make those elements meet the requirements of iv above.
- vii. Screening should incorporate landscaping.
- viii. All utility meters shall be fully screened from view from a public right-of-way. If enclosed in cabinets visible from public rights-of-way, exterior surfaces shall be finished with material compatible and complementary to the architecture of the building.

Figure 21.60.040 [UW](#)  
Screening of Utility Vaults and Mechanical Equipment



Use Landscaping and Other Site Design Methods to Screen Utility Vaults and Mechanical Equipment.

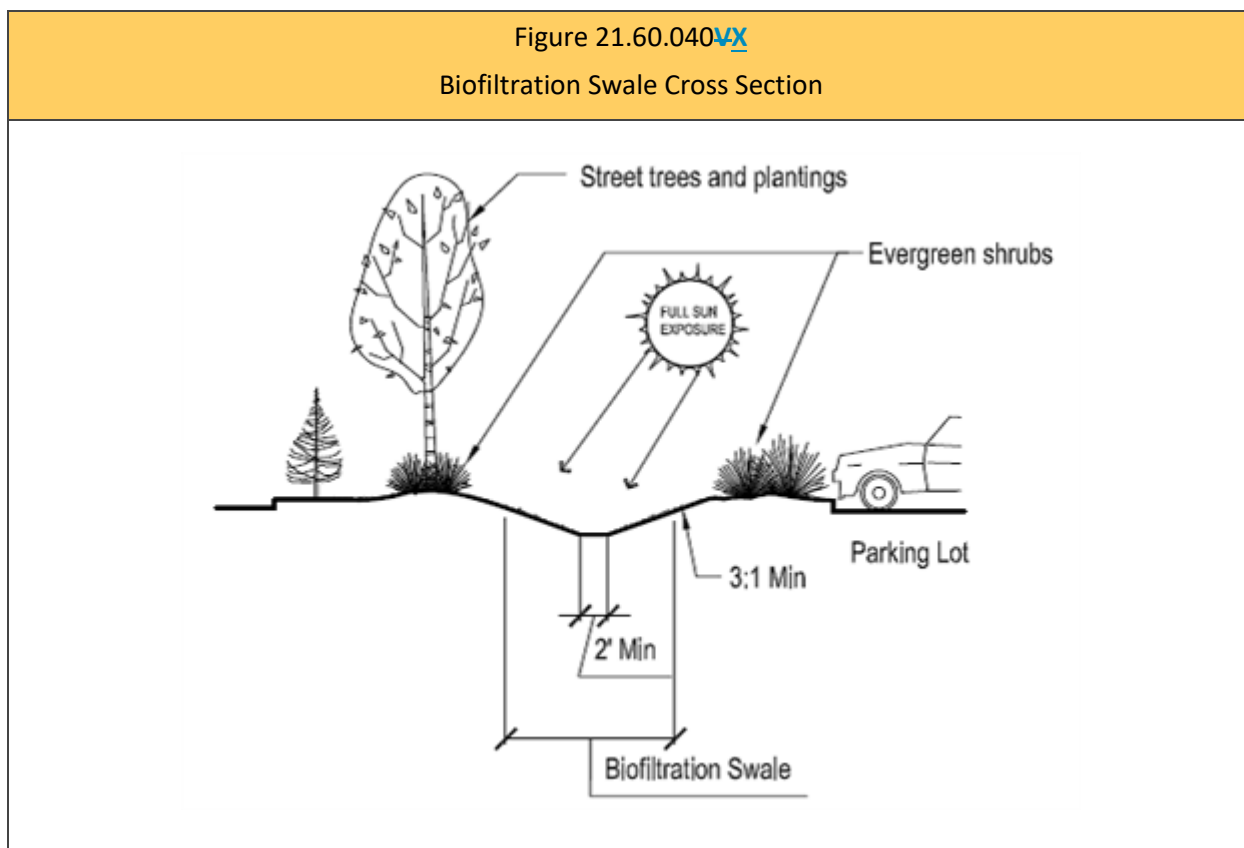
A. Screening structures shall comply with the Building Code, and a building permit may be required. Applicants may wish to contact the Building Division for all requirements.

2. Stormwater Facilities.

a. Intent.

- i. To provide options for stormwater facilities that are visually attractive;

- ii. To incorporate open stormwater facilities into project site design and landscaping as a design amenity for active or passive recreation;
  - iii. To avoid potential hazards between persons and stormwater facilities.
- b. Design Criteria.
- i. Design stormwater facilities to appear as naturally occurring features.
  - ii. Stormwater facilities shall be designed to address the following:
    - A. Incorporate screening elements and landscaping into biofiltration swale design so the swale is located and designed as an attractive landscaping feature.
    - B. The swale or pond shall be oriented so it does not impede pedestrian circulation or shared parking between two or more properties.



- C. Trees may be planted near biofiltration swales as long as they are a minimum of eight feet from the swale, and they will not inhibit vegetative growth within the swale.

- D. Drainage swales shall be planted with shrubs or grasses (sedges, for example) which are tolerant to standing water or wet conditions.
- E. Pedestrian bridges are acceptable where such crossings are necessary.
- F. Incorporate landscaping and screening to visually enhance the swale without reducing maintainability and sun exposure.
- G. Adjacent to natural shoreline areas, above-ground stormwater facilities shall be landscaped with native plants, and should include snags, nest boxes, or other habitat features as appropriate for the scale, function, and location of the facility. (Ord. 2753)

Effective on: 6/18/2018

The Redmond Zoning Code is current through Ordinance 3059, passed August 17, 2021.

Disclaimer: The City Clerk's Office has the official version of the Redmond Zoning Code. Users should contact the City Clerk's Office for ordinances passed subsequent to the ordinance cited above.

Note: This site does not support Internet Explorer. To view this site, Code Publishing Company recommends using one of the following browsers: Google Chrome, Firefox, or Safari.

City Website: [www.redmond.gov](http://www.redmond.gov)

Code Publishing Company