

Residential Home Design and Site Plan Requirements

The following is a summary of important City requirements and not an exhaustive list.

Full code language can be found at www.cityoftwinoaks.gov.

1. Home Size, Height & Placement (“A” Single Family Dwelling District)

- Living Area Floor Space: A new single-family one-story home must provide a **minimum of 1,500 square feet of finished living area** (excluding unfinished basements, attics, and attached garages). Two-story homes must have a first floor area minimum of 1,100 square feet and a second floor minimum of 750 square feet.
- Building Height: Dwellings are **limited in overall height to 35 feet** to preserve the low-density, suburban scale of the street.
- Property Area Regulations and Setbacks:
 - Minimum lot size: 12,000 square feet
 - Front Yard Setback: The front elevation of the home must be set back 35 feet from the front street property line
 - Side & Rear Yard Setbacks: 11 feet minimum buffer distances are required between your home's exterior walls and neighboring side lot lines and 50 feet is required in the rear.
 - Where any side or rear yard abuts a park district boundary, an additional buffer strip of at least 20 feet in width and planted with trees, shrubs or similar vegetation is required.
 - No more than 15% of the lot area may be occupied by a building and accessory structure.

2. Architectural Appearance, Exterior Features & Screening

- Street-Facing Entrance: The main front door and architectural front facade must face the primary public street address to promote an appealing street appearance.
- Exterior Material Quality: Construction must utilize high-quality, durable materials specified by code:
 - **Acceptable Materials:**
 - Brick
 - Stone
 - Concrete with approved texturing, scoring, and detailing
 - Clear glass
 - Metals (copper, steel, aluminum) when used for roofing or detail elements (awnings, door/window frames, decorative applications)
 - Fiber cement panels and siding
 - **Unacceptable (Prohibited) Materials:**
 - Vinyl or plastic siding
 - Metal siding
 - Exposed concrete block or masonry units
 - Stucco
 - Mirrored or tinted glass

- Canvas or other fabric materials
- **Colors & Facade Continuity**
 - Primary exterior materials and colors must wrap all exposed facades of the home (not just the front elevation).
 - Color Palette: Exterior colors must feature a harmonious range emphasizing earth tones and natural colors. Bright colors designed to draw attention to an individual building are prohibited.
- **Roof Pitch & Design**
 - All roof sections across the main structure must maintain consistent roof pitches.
 - Recommended Pitch: Roof pitches between 4:12 and 6:12 are explicitly recommended where feasible.
- **Building Entries, Windows & Exterior Detailing**
 - Primary entryways must feature prominent structural detailing, such as architectural canopies, overhangs, or recessed entries.
 - Building corners must be articulated through fenestration, material placement, and structural detailing.
 - Windows must be grouped or set in horizontal/vertical bands. Window frames must be simple rectangular shapes with clear delineation between fixed and operable panes.
 - Building projections (such as bay windows or porches) must follow consistent modules. Arbitrary or random wall projections are prohibited.
- **Equipment & Utility Screening:**
 - Exterior mechanical equipment (air conditioning units, heat pumps, backup generators) must be placed in side or rear yards and screened from street view using shrubbery or decorative fencing.
 - Satellite dishes exceeding 24 inches in diameter are prohibited in front yards and must be ground-mounted in rear yards with full visual screening.
 - Trash and recycling containers must be stored indoors or behind visual screening walls when not placed out for collection day.

3. Garages, Driveways & Off-Street Parking

- **Driveway Size & Access Points:**
 - Lots are limited to one driveway curb cut with a maximum entrance width of 25 feet. Circular driveways require a minimum of 96 feet of street frontage. Curb cuts for a circular driveway cannot exceed 13 feet in width, and must be separated by more than 50 feet.
 - Driveway edges must stay between 1 and 10 feet away from side property lines (depending on lot frontage) and cannot cross lot lines.
 - Driveway pavement cannot occupy more than 35% of the total front yard area.
 - Driveways cannot extend past the rear wall of the home unless connecting to a detached rear garage.

- Driveway Materials: Driveways must be paved with hard, permanent surfaces—such as concrete, asphalt, or decorative interlocking pavers. Gravel, dirt, or crushed stone driveways are prohibited for new construction.
- Every home must include space for at least two paved off-street parking spaces (such as an attached garage and driveway pad).
- Both an attached and detached garage are allowed on a single lot, each up to a maximum of seven hundred (700) square feet, provided that the lot and structures thereon comply with the area regulations outlined in Section [400.150](#) (minimum 12,000 s.f. lot, 15% lot coverage, setbacks dependent on lot size, etc.)
- Garages may not be constructed to contain a dwelling unit
- Carports are prohibited.

4. Fences, Sheds & Detached Structures

- Installing a fence requires a separate fence permit from the [City of Twin Oaks](#) under Municipal Code Chapter 510:
 - Fences in front yards are prohibited.
 - New Fence materials (such as barbed wire or chain-link) are prohibited.
 - Fences must be installed with the "finished side" (decorative face) turned outward toward neighboring properties or streets.
- Detached Sheds & Garages: Accessory structures must be located in the rear yard behind the main home, meet property line setbacks, and match or complement the color and exterior materials of the main residence. Accessory structures cannot be used as living quarters or short-term rental units. Only one accessory structure per lot is allowed.

5. Lighting, Underground Utilities & Trees

- Shielded Outdoor Lighting: Exterior wall fixtures, post lamps, and landscape lighting must be aimed downward or fully shielded to prevent light trespass onto neighboring yards or public streets. Security lighting cannot exceed 250 HPS equivalent in wattage.
- Underground Utilities: All electric power, telephone, cable, and internet service lines must be placed underground. Utility transformers and ground pedestals cannot be placed in the front yard.
- Tree Preservation: Tree removal and site grading are governed under Chapter 216. Existing mature trees should be protected where practical, and silt fencing must be maintained throughout construction to control soil runoff.

6. Sidewalk Requirements

- The City requires sidewalks, or space for future sidewalks, as part of many new home construction and redevelopment projects.
- **When Are Sidewalks Required?** Sidewalk requirements may apply when:
 - Building a new home on a vacant lot.
 - Constructing a home as part of a new subdivision.

- Redeveloping property along a public street.
 - Making other improvements that require development review or site plan approval.
- **What If There Are No Sidewalks Nearby?** In some areas, there may not be an existing sidewalk network for a new sidewalk to connect to. In those situations, the City may allow the property owner to:
 - Reserve space for a future sidewalk by granting a sidewalk easement; or
 - Dedicate additional right-of-way along the street.
- **How Much Space Is Needed?**
 - Where a future sidewalk corridor is required, the City will typically require a minimum **5-foot-wide easement or right-of-way dedication** along the street frontage. Additional temporary construction space may also be needed when sidewalks are eventually installed.
 - If your project involves new construction or significant redevelopment along a public street, plan for either a sidewalk or an area reserved for a future sidewalk. Early coordination with the City can help identify the specific requirements for your property.

7. Erosion & Sediment Control

- **Land Disturbance Permit:** Clearing, grading, excavation, filling, or other activities that disturb the ground may require a Land Disturbance Permit under Chapter 407.
- **Ordinary Land Disturbance:** Residential projects disturbing less than one acre are considered Ordinary Land Disturbances. Projects disturbing one acre or more, or that are part of a larger development that will ultimately disturb one acre or more, are considered Major Land Disturbances and are subject to additional requirements.
- **Erosion & Sediment Control:** Appropriate erosion and sediment control measures must be provided during construction to prevent sediment from leaving the site and must be maintained as required until the site is stabilized.

8. Drainage & Stormwater

- Site grading must not adversely affect drainage on neighboring properties or public rights-of-way.
- Changes to existing swales and drainage paths that cause damming, ponding, erosion, or damage to adjoining properties may require a Land Disturbance Permit.
- Stormwater conveyances (such as drainage pipes, swales, and channels) must be designed in accordance with applicable City, St. Louis County, and Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District (MSD) criteria, and necessary permits must be obtained.
- Projects affecting a creek, waterway, or other drainage feature may be subject to additional requirements.