City of Kyle Residential Style Guidelines

The city of Kyle has experienced, and continues to experience, transformative growth in the residential sector. The installation of Kyle's first traffic light occurred in 2007, and yet the city has grown to over 38,000 in population to date, with over 4,600 single family units built in the past 10 years alone.

Many aspects of the residential development process are highly-regulated by codes; the subdivision of land, the development of property for construction of infrastructure, and the materials and methods for the eventual assembly of houses are all objectively regulated by statute, written or adopted by reference by the city's leadership.

Certain freedoms in the overall process are specifically reserved to the private sector, mostly because the individual conditions for site placement, architectural style, and other aesthetics are too numerous to effectively fall under the auspices of one parent regulatory code. Also, part of the artistic process is preserved to allow freedom of individual product to capture the prevailing market share in any given sales season.

Once set in motion, left on its own, the development process should be able to function free of artificial constraints. Unfortunately, the City of Kyle has recognized a deleterious pattern of residential home building that it feels cannot be allowed to continue unchecked. In the absence of city oversight, the predominant pattern of residential home construction has regressed to a competition between sellers based seemingly only on price-point, but lacking in any meaningful amenities, architectural style, or core attributes that make communities more than a collection of houses.

Kyle is falling into a building pattern resulting in a bedroom community, removed and detached from the emergent "Kyle" brand, completely dependent on the automobile, without any particular identity or sense of place. Housing projects increasingly lack any kind of permanence or resiliency, and instead concentrate on highest density return for land area available. The concept of 'Live, Work, Play' has been subverted in a way that capitalizes on the immediate housing demand, at the sacrifice of the city's efforts toward sustainable land use planning and a comprehensive plan for quality of life initiatives.

So where does that leave the city? Creating more --and more specific-- regulations will simply result in a homogenous product lacking in creative design freedoms, and in turn, lacking in variety of product that today's buyers seek. And yet, allowing the lowest

common denominator for home construction threatens the future viability of as-yet developed land.

Kyle has chosen to publish this “Residential Style Guide”, a primer that displays the type and style of residential home construction befitting the expectations of the residents and leadership of Kyle. Rather than rigid statute and code, this guide shows the ideas to which residential development should adhere: Concepts for both overall neighborhood design and specific home architecture.

NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN & IMPROVEMENTS

1. Design with nature – Before any layout or structure placement can be drawn for a site, the property should be evaluated for topography, natural water courses and stands of trees. Placement of homes on high ground assists with gravity waste water infrastructure, and avoiding the development of naturalized areas creates the opportunity for subdivision amenities to be located in those areas, for the benefit of all the residents. Maximizing the accessibility of homes allows for fewer roads to be built, saving money on land development and reducing the overall impervious surface area for the project in total.
2. Consider green infrastructure – Utilize storm water right at the source: rather than inserting those waters back into an adjacent stream system, utilize reclaimed storm water to irrigate on-site landscaping or parks amenities. Capitalize on the use of natural filtration via rain gardens and pervious pavement, both of which can reduce the amount and velocity of storm water that does manage to make it off-site. Even residential downspouts can be responsibly connected to the storm sewer system, if those discharges are routed to a pond used for irrigation at the source.
3. Install amenities which serve a dual purpose – storm water management detention (dry ponds) can be utilized as sports fields, as Kyle on average only experiences 49 days per year of measurable precipitation. Retention ponds (wet ponds) can be designed as a source of local irrigation, and also as a focal point or gathering place for a passive recreation park or trail. Street-side tree plantings serve as traffic calming, provide shade & cooling for pedestrians, provide protections in the form of a buffer between pedestrians and vehicle traffic, and recent studies show the shade provided by the over-story canopy actually shades the sidewalk and road pavement, which reduces the expansion and contraction cycle of the hard surfaces, leading to longer time periods between necessary re-surfacing (street infrastructure resiliency). Easements for underground utilities which cannot be built upon with structures can be used for trail systems and bike/pedestrian connections.

4. Avoid mass grading to the greatest extent possible – native landscapes thrive best in undisturbed top soil to which they've grown accustomed. Retain native topsoil, specifically do not strip and later replace topsoil in areas that will not be built upon. Top- and sub-soil cleared and disturbed during the construction process is also much more susceptible to wind and water erosion, leading to siltation of neighboring water bodies. If no built improvements are planned for a particular area of a housing project, segregate those areas as 'no encroachment zones' during the construction process. This saves on labor, fuel, and equipment maintenance costs, with the added benefit of preserving a mature landscape area when the project is complete.
5. Rather than cut & fill near water courses, encourage the installation of trails and passive recreation areas. Residents located in projects too remote to be reached via walking or biking, still need walking and bike trails located near to where they live. Those areas that can't be built upon because of steep slopes, stands of mature forest canopy, or proximity to floodplain and other low sections of land are prime candidates for trails and recreation improvements. For a comparatively low capital outlay, the value of that amenity to a prospective buyer should be considered a necessary investment in any housing project.
6. Avoid cul-de-sacs where at all possible – sometimes despite substantial obstacles, the transportation network in the project should create the most amount of connectivity possible. Through streets which create multiple pathways in, out, and through a project actually lead to lower overall speeds in a neighborhood, and greatly reduce the number of congestion points as compared to a project designed with dead-end cul-de-sacs. Reduced connectivity places a higher stress on those few remaining streets which do connect to adjacent collector and arterial roadways. Relieve the overall traffic demand on the most-popular corridors by creating alternatives for that traffic flow.
7. Where possible, off-street parking for guests should be provided. 90-degree parking spaces located throughout a residential project allow for occasional, temporary parking without taking up room in a private driveway, nor blocking travel lanes in violation of Kyle's life safety requirements for the unobstructed widths of streets. The provision for excess parking *off-street* also allows streets to

be paved with less width required, reducing impervious surface area and lowering development costs.

STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY DWELLING UNITS

Styles –

1. Avoid homogeny of product types in close proximity to one another - Vary architectural styles, exterior building cladding, or colors for homes along the same block or development phase.
2. Residential architecture should stay true to a specific style (Queen Anne, Craftsman, Victorian, Colonial, etc.), and not unnecessarily mix styles.

Siting –

1. Respect the scale of homes along the same block – do not place two homes of disparate scale/height alongside one another without appropriate separation, as that breaks up the predominant rhythm of the block from a pedestrian scale. No structure may exceed the height of an adjacent structure by more than one floor. Similarly, front building setbacks should be complimentary along the block.
2. Alley loading should be encouraged for all new housing projects, similar to the housing pattern established in Kyle's downtown. The greatest and most obvious benefit to this development style is a much reduced reliance on front-loaded, auto-oriented dwelling units.
3. Corner lots should take vehicular access from the more minor of the two intersecting streets.

Materials/Construction –

1. All homes will feature exteriors of a masonry material on all four sides. This includes brick, natural stone, stucco, cementitious siding/panels, or other approved masonry cladding. Doors, windows, porch decking, and other architectural accent features are not required to be made from masonry materials.
2. As new technologies emerge in the building industry, materials may be introduced that resemble traditional building materials in appearance, especially regarding exterior cladding. New, composite materials (typically a combination of wood and plastic fibers) may be considered for use as long as they can meet or

exceed the performance of the material they are imitating. It is important that alternate materials closely replicate original materials in size, texture, profile and surface treatment.

3. The application of faux veneer panels, such as brick, Dryvit, EIFS, and engineered plywood is prohibited.
4. All single-family and two-family structures must provide a garage for the dwelling unit(s). The minimum size for garages shall be three hundred eighty (380) square feet; homes with garages that measure fewer than 430 square feet shall additionally provide an on-site detached storage structure, with floor area of no less than 140 square feet; homes with garages that measure at least 430 but less than 480 square feet shall additionally provide an on-site detached storage structure, with floor area of no less than 80 square feet; homes with garages that measure 480 or more square feet shall have no such requirement to provide any additional on-site storage structure.
5. Front-loaded garages shall not be located any closer than twenty (20) feet to a front property line. Driveways will provide adequate room for parking without the need to block any sidewalks.
6. The dominance of the garage door(s) on front-loaded home architecture should be minimized above all else. Kyle strongly encourages alley-loaded, rear-facing garage type products, as well as the consistent use of side-loading garages, as well as garages serviced from the rear of the property but accessed from the front of the property.
7. Detached garages or other accessory structures must be located in the rear yard.
8. In no case should the enclosed garage be the portion of the home closest to the front property line. Garages accessed from the front yard should be setback from the front plane of the home by a distance of no less than five (5) feet, and from any front plane in the case of multiple front planes. Forward facing garage door(s) should be clad in a neutral color, noticeably darker so as not to draw primary attention to the façade, and yet complimentary to the overall aesthetic of the home. The door(s) should present architectural features like hinge straps, windows, and/or decorative handles.

9. The façade of a building facing or visible from public right-of-ways shall contain a combination of architectural treatments, windows, returns, and doors such that the maximum allowable unbroken façade distance for each building or side of building visible from the right-of-way shall be twenty (20) feet. Such controls shall pertain to both the vertical and horizontal elevations. “Blank facades” that do not feature windows, doors, or architectural treatments are strictly prohibited. Exposed vents, electric meter boxes, and similar utility functions do not qualify as architectural treatments. It should be noted that for fire-rated walls, penetrations are not required to meet this standard, so the standard is still valid in all cases.
10. The reveal (exposed portion) of siding will be a minimum of four (4) inches and shall not exceed six (6) inches.
11. Corner boards should have the same width and depth as the siding reveal, and are not permitted to be more than two (2) inches greater than the siding reveal, or less than one (1) inch less than the siding reveal.
12. If appropriate to the architectural style, covered front porches of at least 120 square feet and at least eight (8) feet in depth are strongly encouraged.
13. Window shutters, whether functional or decorative, shall be scaled as if to cover the window to which they are adjacent.