

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN JOSE (1) APPROVING THE “SAN JOSE EICHLER NEIGHBORHOOD OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS”, AND (2) DELEGATING AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, BUILDING, AND CODE ENFORCEMENT TO ADMINISTRATIVELY UPDATE OR REVISE THE “SAN JOSE EICHLER NEIGHBORHOOD OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS” PROVIDED THEY ARE LIMITED TO MINOR CLARIFICATIONS, CORRECTIONS OR TECHNICAL CHANGES TO THE TEXT

File Nos. PP24-012

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of San Jose ("City"), adopted the “Your Old House Guide for Preserving San Jose Homes” on August 19, 2003, which is used to review alterations to single family houses listed in the San José Historic Resources Inventory under Part 9 of Chapter 20.100 of Title 20 and Chapter 13.48 of Title 13 of the San Jose Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, San José has seven residential tracts that were developed by Eichler Homes in the 1950s and 1960s, which form five neighborhoods that have local, state, and national significance as an important concentration of Mid-Century Modern residential architecture; and

WHEREAS, the "San Jose Eichler Neighborhood Objective Design Standards" (“Eichler ODS”) have been prepared to provide project design requirements and additional voluntary guidance that apply to the rehabilitation, modifications, or additions to Eichler homes listed in the Historic Resources Inventory (“HRI”); and

WHEREAS, “Your Old House: Guide for Preserving San José Homes” focuses primarily on earlier architectural styles such as Italianate, Queen Anne, Craftsman, and Tudor

Revival, and the Eichler ODS provides needed guidance for the unique characteristics of Mid-Century Modern design; and

WHEREAS, the Eichler ODS sets forth "Standards" as objective requirements that are quantifiable and verifiable, as well as "Guidelines" as best practices and overarching design guidance; and

WHEREAS, projects in a HRI-listed Eichler neighborhood requiring a Single Family House Permit under Part 9 of Chapter 20.100 of Title 20 and Chapter 13.48 of Title 13 of the San José Municipal Code must comply with Standards set forth in the Eichler ODS, unless other adopted plans or policies prevail; and

WHEREAS, the Eichler ODS align with recent State housing legislation requiring clear, measurable standards, streamline the City's design review process, and ensure consistency with professional preservation practices and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, and will implement the historic preservation policies of the Envision San José 2040 General Plan; and

WHEREAS, a project website, community meeting and written notice were provided to receive comments on the Eichler ODS; and

WHEREAS, on November 6, 2024, the Historic Landmarks Commission for the City of San José ("Historic Landmarks Commission") reviewed the Eichler ODS and received public comment; and

WHEREAS, on October 1, 2025, the Historic Landmarks Commission conducted a public hearing on the Eichler ODS, notice of which was duly given; and

WHEREAS, on November 5, 2025, the Planning Commission for the City of San José ("Planning Commission") conducted a hearing on the Eichler ODS, notice of which was duly given; and

WHEREAS, at said hearings, the Historic Landmarks Commission and Planning Commission gave all persons full opportunity to be heard and to present evidence and testimony respecting said matter, and made recommendations to the City Council respecting said matter based on the evidence and testimony; and

WHEREAS, on December 2, 2025, this City Council conducted a hearing on the Eichler ODS, notice of which was duly given, and at said hearing gave all persons full opportunity to be heard and to present evidence and testimony respecting said matter; and

WHEREAS, at said hearing, this City Council received and considered the reports and recommendations of the Historic Landmarks Commission, Planning Commission and Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement for the City of San José; and

WHEREAS, said public hearing before the City Council was conducted in all respects as required by the San José Municipal Code and the rules of this City Council; and

WHEREAS, prior to making its determination on this Resolution, the Council reviewed and considered the Categorical Exemption under the provisions set forth in Title 14 Cal. Code Regs. Section 15331 of the State Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN JOSE:

1. The above recitals are incorporated herein as findings for approval of the San José Eichler Neighborhood Objective Design Standards.
2. The San José Eichler Neighborhood Objective Design Standards, attached hereto as Exhibit "A", are hereby adopted for all applicable Planning applications submitted after the Effective Date.
3. The Director of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement is hereby authorized to administratively update and/or revise the San José Eichler Neighborhood Objective Design Standards provided the update and/or revisions are limited to making minor clarifications, corrections, or technical changes to the text and diagrams. All administrative updates and revisions shall be immediately published on the Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement webpage.
4. The Effective Date of this Resolution is thirty (30) days after approval by the City Council.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

DISQUALIFIED:

MATT MAHAN
Mayor

ATTEST:

TONI J. TABER, MMC
City Clerk

SAN JOSÉ EICHLER NEIGHBORHOODS OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

PREPARED FOR:
City of San José
Planning Division
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FINAL

August 2025



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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT?

The San José Eichler Objective Design Standards (ODS) provide project design requirements and additional voluntary guidance for property owners, design professionals, and City staff when planning and reviewing projects involving exterior changes. The ODS are intended to supplement San José’s existing project review process, utilizing the “Your Old House: Guide for Preserving San José Homes,” by establishing a clear set of rules (objective design standards) for property alterations. Objective design standards are a set of measurable and verifiable requirements that guide the design and development of projects. They aim to provide a clear, consistent, and predictable process, eliminating subjective interpretations and ensuring projects meet specific criteria before they are submitted for approval. Objective design standards have been prepared to comply with California state housing legislation and streamlined review requirements. While focused on objective design standards, this document also includes some additional recommendations (optional design guidance) for property alterations.

San José has seven residential tracts that were developed by Eichler Homes in the 1950s and 1960s, which form five neighborhoods: Morepark (1952-53), Fairglen (1957-59), Fairglen Additions (Units 1, 2, and 3; 1959-61), Hudson (1961-63), and Fairhaven (1961-63).¹ Eichler-designed tracts have local, state, and national significance. Eichler Homes founder Joseph Eichler was inspired by the affordable housing designs of Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the most influential 20th-century American architects. The houses were meant to be affordable, giving middle-class Americans a chance to own a Modern-style home. Built in the postwar period, Eichler houses also represent the optimism that Americans

¹ Seven Eichler tracts were developed in San José. Three of those tracts (Fairglen Additions Units 1, 2 and 3) make up the one neighborhood “Fairglen Additions,” which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

shared after World War II. Their architectural style is unique to California, and their features allow homeowners to take full advantage of California’s climate and abundant sunlight.

Like all buildings, San José’s Eichler residences require maintenance to remain in good condition. In addition, property owners and residents may desire to make alterations in order to adapt the buildings to contemporary needs. New construction is anticipated, including additions to Eichler houses and new home construction in Eichler neighborhoods. The ODS seek to accommodate growth and change in San José’s Eichler neighborhoods while guiding alterations of existing buildings and new development to maintain the area’s historic character.

WHERE AND WHEN DOES THIS DOCUMENT APPLY?

The ODS apply to Eichler tracts in San José that have been listed in the San José Historic Resources Inventory (HRI). As of 2025, only one of San José’s five Eichler neighborhoods, Fairglen Additions, is listed on the HRI, because the neighborhood was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register; # 100004036) in 2019. **As such, the ODS only apply to properties located within the Fairglen Additions historic district and any additional Eichler tracts in San José that are listed on the HRI in the future.**

This document covers proposed exterior changes to properties, focusing on changes seen by the public; they do not cover changes to the interior of houses or backyard landscaping. **Only when homeowners propose a new project requiring a building permit for exterior changes or Single-Family House Permit (SFHP) do the ODS apply.** The ODS do not require homeowners to change their existing houses or to bring their homes into alignment with the ODS unless they apply for a planning permit for exterior change.

METHODOLOGY

The effort to develop the ODS was initiated in 2016 when a group of Fairglen Additions residents formed the Fairglen Additions Preservation Committee and began meeting with the aim of listing the Eichler neighborhood on the National Register. To aid this effort, Fairglen Additions Preservation Committee co-chair Sally Zarnowitz prepared a National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) for the “Housing Tracts of Joseph Eichler in San José, California, 1952-1963” in 2018. An MPDF is a form used to nominate groups of related significant properties.² The Fairglen Additions neighborhood was listed on the National Register using the MPDF on June 6, 2019 and subsequently listed on the HRI.³

Following the listing, the Fairglen Additions Preservation Committee developed draft design guidelines for the maintenance, repair, and modification of existing Eichler homes, as well as to guide the design of new construction in a way that preserves the distinctive characteristics of the Fairglen Additions neighborhood. Setting forth guidelines for preserving and restoring Eichler houses is not unique to San José. The California cities of Orange, Palo Alto, and Sunnyvale have similar guidelines in place. These cities’ guidelines served as references for this document.

In 2024, the City of San José hired Page & Turnbull as a qualified consultant to review the draft design guidelines prepared by the Fairglen Additions Preservation Committee and transform them into objective design standards to streamline the Planning permit review process for projects in any Eichler neighborhood in San José that is listed on the HRI.

The ODS were prepared based on the San José Eichler MPDF and Fairglen Additions National Register nomination. No additional archival research was conducted as part of this project. The ODS were also informed by meetings between Page & Turnbull, members of the Fairglen Addition Preservation Committee, and City staff to discuss key issues and common concerns regarding projects in Eichler neighborhoods. Input from the Historic Landmarks Commission and the community was also considered and incorporated into the document.

A site visit to take photos for illustrations was conducted on April 25, 2024. All photographs were taken by Page & Turnbull, unless otherwise noted. **Photographs are primarily of Eichler homes in San José but may include some Eichler homes of similar models in other jurisdictions.**

The ODS incorporates edits based on comments from City staff, Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) commissioners, and the public during an HPC hearing held on October 24, 2024 and a Historic Landmarks Commission meeting held on November 6, 2024.

All graphic illustrations were prepared by Page & Turnbull, unless otherwise noted.



Figure 1: Cover of brochure for Fairglen Additions, Unit 1 (1959). Source: Courtesy of Sally Zarnowitz.

An excellent resource to help with preserving or restoring an Eichler home is www.eichlernetwork.com.

2 Sally Zarnowitz, “Housing Tracts of Joseph Eichler in San José, California, 1952-1963,” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, June 7, 2019.

3 Sally Zarnowitz, “Fairglen Additions (Unit 1, Unit 2, and Unit 3),” National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, June 7, 2019.

PREPARER QUALIFICATIONS

The ODS were prepared by Page & Turnbull of San Francisco, California. Page & Turnbull staff responsible for this report include: Christina Dikas Brobst, Principal; Hannah Simonson, Senior Cultural Resources Planner, project manager; and Clare Flynn, Senior Associate Cultural Resources Planner, primary author, all of whom meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards (36 CFR Part 61) for Architectural History.

HOW DO OTHER PRESERVATION TOOLS WORK WITH THE DESIGN STANDARDS?

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR’S STANDARDS

The ODS are based on the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* (SOI Standards), and the associated *Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (SOI Guidelines). Established by the National Park Service, the Secretary’s Standards and Guidelines are nationally recognized best practices for historic preservation. Federal agencies use the Standards and Guidelines in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities. State and local officials use them in reviewing both federal and non-federal rehabilitation proposals.

The SOI Standards include concepts about maintaining, repairing, and replacing historic materials, designing new additions, or making alterations. The SOI Guidelines offer general design and technical recommendations to assist in applying the SOI Standards to properties while the ODS provide direction specific to San José’s Eichlers.

The ODS are written to be consistent with the SOI Standards and Guidelines, so projects found to conform with the ODS generally are considered in conformance with the SOI Standards.

For more details about the SOI Standards and Guidelines and additional publications on preservation guidance, please refer to Appendix C.

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL BUILDING CODE

The City of San José has adopted use of the California Historical Building Code (California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 8) for historic properties. The intent of the California Historical Building Code (CHBC), as stated in the code, is to “provide solutions for the preservation of qualified historical buildings or properties, to promote sustainability, to provide access for persons with disabilities, to provide a cost-effective approach to preservation, and to provide for the reasonable safety of occupants or users.”⁴ The CHBC requires the City to consider alternative solutions that are reasonably equivalent to the traditional building code when dealing with qualified historical properties. A qualified historical property is any building, site, object, place, location, district or collection of structures, and their associated sites, deemed of importance to the history, architecture, or culture of an area by an appropriate local, state or federal governmental jurisdiction. Contributors in the Eichler neighborhoods listed in the HRI are qualified historical properties.

One of the benefits of the CHBC is that it does not require historic buildings to meet energy requirements for building envelopes, though new mechanical equipment and lighting fixtures would have to comply with state energy codes. It also allows keeping original features and fabric, even if they are not compliant with current codes, so long as they pose no safety hazards. For example, the CHBC allows in-kind repair or replacement of windows and sliding doors—original features that contribute to the character of qualified Eichler homes—as doors and windows in qualified historic buildings do not need to meet the California Energy Code. The City’s Building Official determines the appropriate use of the CHBC. If you anticipate that your project will require use of the CHBC, please contact the City’s Historic Preservation Officer early in the process.

4 2022 California Historical Building Code, Title 24, Part 8, Section 8-101, “Title, Purpose and Intent,” accessed August 19, 2024, <https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/CAHBC2022P1/chapter-8-1-administration#:~:text=The%20CHBC%20is%20intended%20to%20provide%20solutions%20for,the%20reasonable%20safety%20of%20the%20occupants%20or%20users.>

CHAPTER 2: USING THE DESIGN STANDARDS & GUIDANCE

HOW IS THE DOCUMENT ORGANIZED?

The ODS document begins with three informational chapters:

- Chapter 1: Introduction, with background information on why the ODS were developed.
- Chapter 2: Using the Design Standards & Guidance explains key principles in the ODS document.
- Chapter 3: History & Characteristics of San José’s Eichler Tracts summarizes the history of Eichler Homes, Inc. and the five neighborhoods in San José. It also outlines the features that characterize the neighborhoods.

Chapters 4 through 7 are the Objective Design Standards, arranged by features or project types:

- Chapter 4: Objective Design Standards for Original Eichler Features
- Chapter 5: Objective Design Standards for Additions & Accessory Structures
- Chapter 6: Objective Design Standards for Non-Contributing Buildings
- Chapter 7: Objective Design Standards for New (Infill) Construction

Appendix A contains recommended Design Guidance for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), Solar Panels & Skylights.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

Chapters 4 through 7 outline broad concepts that should inform the thought process behind a project’s development. The concepts are organized by feature or type of project, and then into **objective design standards (“shall,” “must”)**. In addition, this document includes **optional guidance (“should,” “appropriate,” “encourage,”)** that will assist with design decisions. The standards and guidance cannot anticipate every specific case that will arise, and not all will apply to specific projects. Nevertheless, they represent design objectives that can be applied to many different situations and result in a project that is integrated into its Eichler neighborhood context. Each standard or guideline is often followed by additional and clarifying information in a bulleted list.

Components of the Objective Design Standards (Example)

4.1 ROOFS

4.1.1. Original roof lines and forms shall be preserved.

- a. The narrow profile of the roof edge, which reflects the building’s light-weight construction, shall be retained.
- b. Altering the shape of the original roof to a different shape or form is prohibited (i.e. modifying a flat roof to sloped roof, a low pitch to a high pitch, etc.).
- c. Raising a roof above its original height is prohibited.

- OVERARCHING BUILDING FEATURE OR TYPE OF PROJECT
- OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARD
- CLARIFYING BULLET LIST WITH SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Optional Guidance

Blue boxes contain optional design guidance, which offers further direction and recommendations to address certain scenarios. Design guidance is also provided for projects that include Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), solar panels (solar photo-voltaic), or skylights, which are not subject to a Planning Permit per current California state laws. Property owners or design professionals may choose to use this guidance to design a project that is sensitive and compatible to the Eichler neighborhood’s historic character. Some of the additional design guidance also offers options that could provide more flexibility to project applicants who are not seeking streamlined project review.

Useful Information

Green boxes highlight additional useful information that may be helpful when planning a project at an Eichler property.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

The following are guiding principles for the ODS:



1. NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER: Changes may occur at individual properties so long as the cumulative changes do not diminish the historic district’s character.

Refer to the “Typical Characteristics of Eichler Residences” in Chapter 3 to learn more about the unique characteristics that set Eichler neighborhoods apart from other residential neighborhoods.



2. ROOF FORMS: The original roof forms of Eichler homes are one of the unique features that define the style of each house and therefore shall not be significantly altered. While minor alterations to improve drainage or to add insulation are generally acceptable, the roof shape must generally appear as it did originally for that Eichler model. Modifications affecting the roof, including atrium covers, mechanical equipment, or HVAC ductwork must follow the roof form and be kept as low and tight to the roof as possible.



3. UNIQUE MODELS: Each Eichler model is authentic unto itself. Changes that are considered appropriate may vary between models. A unique feature or material that is original to one model may not be appropriate to another.



4. ORIGINAL FEATURES: Original features and materials shall be retained and preserved. If an original feature or material exists, the preferred option is to retain it in place and repair as needed. In-kind replacement of the feature is considered when repair is not possible. The replacement shall match the original in design, proportion, texture, detail, and finish.

Refer to the diagrams showing “Examples of Primary Original Features” at the end of this chapter, as well as the “Typical Characteristics of Eichler Residences” and “Illustrations of Typical Eichler Characteristics” in Chapter 3 to help identify original features of your property.

5. COMPATIBILITY: When changes are considered, such as replacing an altered feature, adding a new element, or changing an original feature, they must be compatible with the aesthetics of the Eichler tracts. Compatibility shall consider the scale, proportions, rhythms, patterns, spatial relationships, solid-to-void relationships, limited materials palette, and overall philosophy of the original Eichler houses, which emphasized simple, affordable, well-designed, mass-produced homes that connected the interior to the exterior while offering privacy from the public sphere and other properties.

KEY CONCEPTS

Contributor vs. Non-Contributor

A different range of standards are used for contributing versus non-contributing properties in Eichler neighborhoods listed on the HRI. Contributing and non-contributing buildings are identified through a historic resource survey and historic district or conservation area nomination. A **contributor** is a house constructed by Eichler Homes when the tract was originally developed (the neighborhood’s period of significance) and retains integrity. “Integrity” means it retains the primary design elements and materials that allow the building to convey its associations with the original Eichler development through its historic materials and forms. Contributing buildings are historically significant.

A **non-contributor** is a house either constructed outside of the period of significance for the tract’s development, or its primary features have been altered so much that it no longer retains integrity as an original Eichler design. Non-contributing buildings are not historically significant within the context of the neighborhood. However, because changes to non-contributors have the potential to affect the character of the original Eichler development, proposed changes are reviewed for compatibility.

Public vs. Private Realm

The ODS recognize a distinction between the “public” and “private” realms of residential properties. The **public realm** generally refers to the portion of a property visually accessible “from the street,” which in this document means from the public street, sidewalk, and parkway. This includes the front facade, front yard, roof, and portions of the side facades and side yards. Since San José’s Eichler neighborhoods were designed as cohesive tracts with clear patterns of setbacks, massing, roof lines, and yard layouts, these features contribute to the historic neighborhood character.

The **private realm** generally refers to the interior of the residence, while **semi-private** refers to the side and rear yards. These areas are private to the homeowner and/or resident, and do not directly contribute to the experience of the neighborhood from the street. Nonetheless, what occurs in the rear and side of the building and the lot has the potential to affect neighboring properties, especially since the Eichler homes have large window walls at the back of the buildings.

Primary & Secondary Original Features

Despite the variety of models constructed by Eichler in San José and throughout California, there are several common characteristics found among Eichler homes that uniquely define them. The ODS distinguish between those that are primary original features and those that are secondary original features.

Primary features are essential physical features, often architectural components, that establish the dominant visual character of the property. Alterations to primary features have the potential to change significantly the building’s character, and in turn, the neighborhood’s character. These include the one-story massing, roof forms, exterior cladding, placement of the garages and carports, and the location and sizes of openings.

Secondary features are those physical elements original to the Eichler designs and contribute to the character of the buildings, but they may be modified without compromising the design integrity of the Eichler house. There is more flexibility for changes to secondary features without substantially compromising the character of the building or neighborhood. These include the front entry door and garage doors, among others.

For a property to be a contributor, the primary features that enable a property to convey its historic integrity must be evident. Given the number of models, and the sometimes subtle variation among the models, a property must clearly contain enough of those primary characteristics original to the specific model, and the features must also retain sufficient integrity.

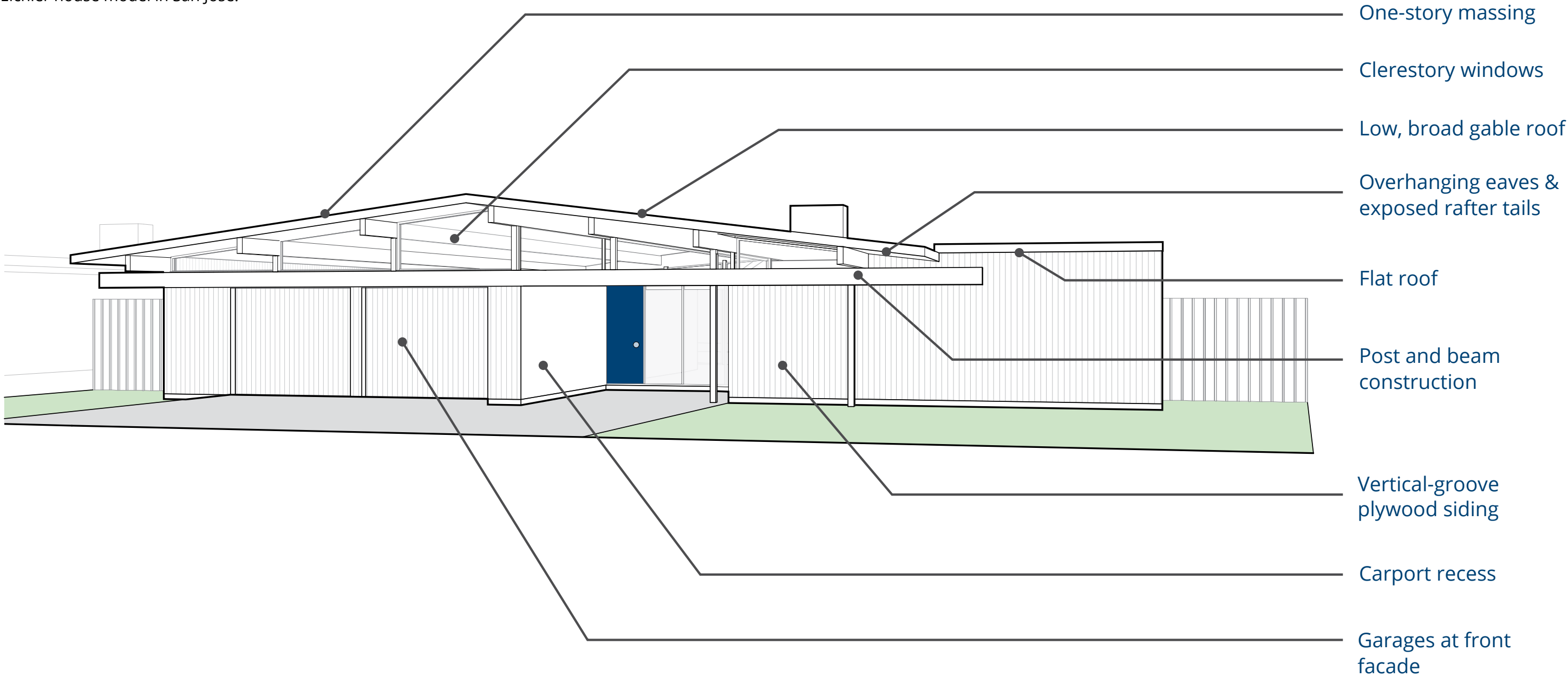
Definitions

Objective Design Standards are standards that a project in a designated Eichler neighborhood, which requires a building permit for exterior alterations or Single-Family House Permit (SFHP), must meet.

Design Guidance consists of optional additional recommendations that may be used to design a project that is visually sensitive and compatible to the Eichler neighborhood’s historic character.

EXAMPLES OF PRIMARY ORIGINAL FEATURES

*Note: The illustration on this page is intended to be a generic representation of an Eichler house. It does not depict a specific Eichler house model in San Jose.

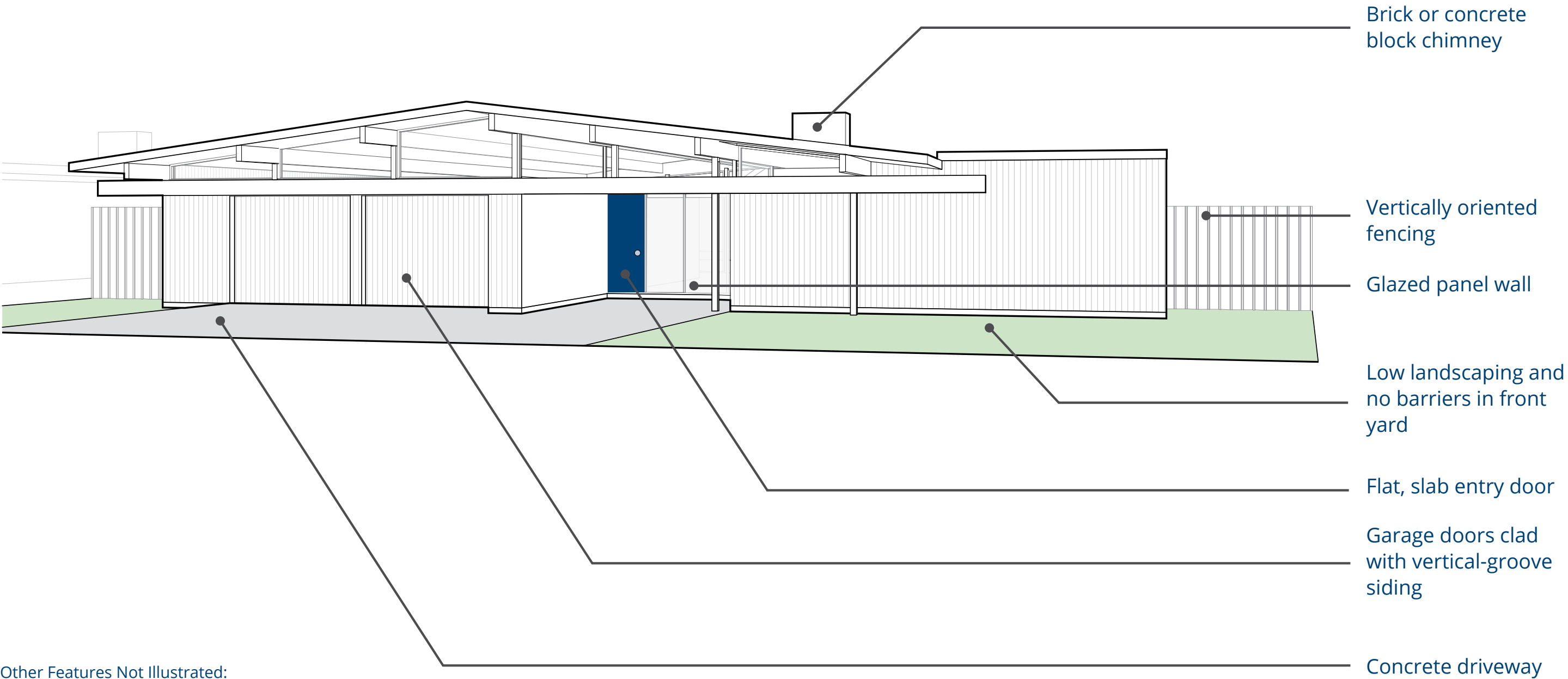


Other Features Not Illustrated:

- Ratio of windows to solid surfaces
- Other roof forms original to specific models
- Other original cladding types

EXAMPLES OF SECONDARY ORIGINAL FEATURES

*Note: The illustration on this page is intended to be a generic representation of an Eichler house. It does not depict a specific Eichler house model in San Jose.



Other Features Not Illustrated:

- Other window types

CHAPTER 3: HISTORY & CHARACTERISTICS OF SAN JOSÉ’S EICHLER TRACTS

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EICHLER HOMES, INC.

The post-World War II period was a time of dramatic transformation in many areas of the United States, and California was no exception. Across the country, speculative housing tracts were planned and built rapidly in suburban areas to accommodate a growing number of American middle-class consumers. Residential designs constantly adopted newly available materials, consumable goods, and aesthetic trends that promised to transform the lives of Americans for the better—to make living easier but also more fulfilling. California’s varied landscape and favorable climate formed an ideal setting for the suburban dreams many Americans harbored as the postwar era progressed.

No American real estate developer may have better embodied the forward-thinking and entrepreneurial spirit of this period than Joseph Eichler. When Eichler began to build houses in the San Francisco Bay Area in the late 1940s, he aimed to provide the highest quality of houses and amenities to a professional class who, in large part, had not been able to afford progressive architectural design in the past. Eichler’s company, Eichler Homes, Inc. marketed three important concepts—design, affordability, and community—to Californians for two decades.

He chose talented designers—first San Francisco’s Anshen & Allen, then Los Angeles-based Jones & Emmons, and finally Claude Oakland & Associates—who shared Eichler’s interest in Modern design, which was unconventional for postwar suburban tract housing.

While Eichler was not the only builder who held the principle that well-designed homes should be affordable and would provide many with a high quality of life, he enacted this principle at an impressive scale. Prolific throughout California, Eichler constructed over 11,000 homes during his career as a merchant builder.¹



Figure 2: Joseph Eichler. Source: A. Quincy Jones papers, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

¹ Paul Adamson. *Eichler: Modernism Rebuilds the American Dream* (Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith, 2002).

EICHLER TRACTS IN SAN JOSÉ

Eichler developed seven residential tracts in San José between 1952 and 1963:

- 1. Morepark Eichler Homes Tract (1952-1953)
- 2. Fairglen Eichler Homes Tract (1957-1959)
- 3-5. Fairglen Eichler Homes Tract Additions No. 1, 2, and 3 (1959-1961)
- 6. Hudson Eichler Homes Tract (1960-1962)
- 7. Fairhaven Eichler Homes Tract (1962-1963)

The tracts contain a total of approximately 480 single-family residences located in five suburban neighborhoods. Houses developed by Eichler Homes in the 1950s and 1960s were designed by the architectural firms of Anshen & Allen, Jones & Emmons, and Claude Oakland & Associates.

For more information about Joseph Eichler, Eichler Homes, and Eichler developments in San José, refer to the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form for “Housing Tracts of Joseph Eichler in San José, California, 1952-1963” and the associated National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for “Fairglen Additions (Unit 1, Unit 2, and Unit 3),” both of which were prepared by Sally Notthoff Zarnowitz and dated October 26, 2018.

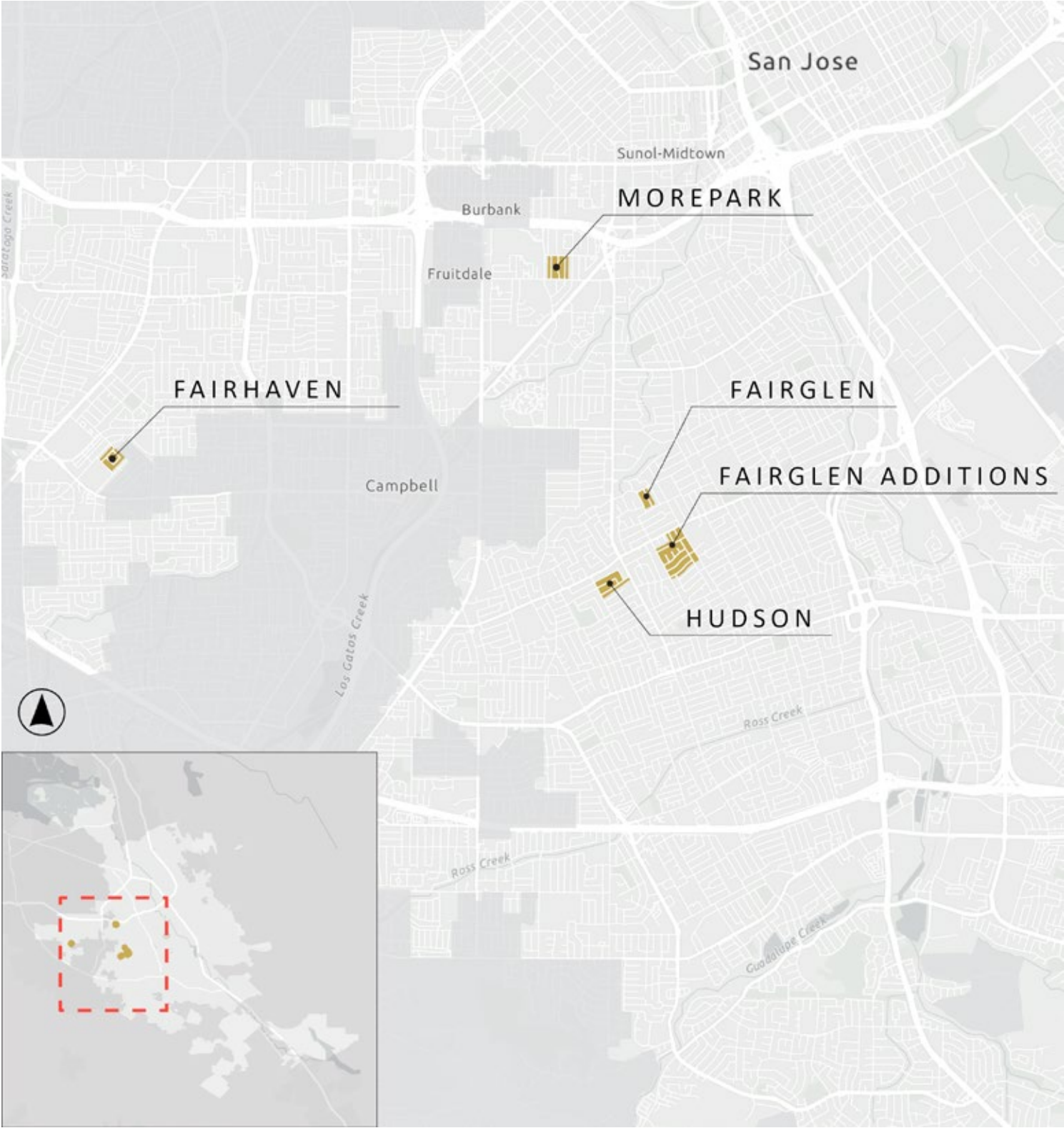


Figure 3: Map of Eichler Tracts in San Jose. Source: City of San Jose, 2024.

TYPICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EICHLER RESIDENCES

Although there are many different designs of Eichler homes built in California, there are several important similarities found among the homes that distinguish them from surrounding neighborhoods that were constructed in the same era.

Construction Technique

One of the most characteristic aspects of Eichler homes is their post and beam construction method, built on a concrete slab foundation. “Post and beam” is a type of timber construction in which vertical posts and horizontal beams create a framework that carries both the floor and roof loads. The post and beam construction method can often be identified by the exposed rafter tails under roofs of Eichler homes. Eichler’s architects recommended this approach because of three primary benefits: houses could be built quickly one after the other, it offered a great deal of flexibility for the interior arrangement of spaces, and it allowed for large, uninterrupted expanses of glazing on the rear facades.

Form & Massing

Eichler homes are primarily one story in height and feature a horizontal orientation and box-like massing, with clean orthogonal or angular lines. Floor plans are often relatively square and organized around a central atrium or courtyard, U-shaped around a rear patio or front carport/courtyard entry, or L-shaped. The houses were also carefully arranged by Joseph Eichler and his architects so that they uniquely fit each individual lot and so that windows do not directly face their neighbors, fostering a sense of privacy within each property.

Roofs

The roofs of Eichler homes are also instantly identifiable. In any Eichler neighborhood, one sees a variety of roofs: often gables and flat roofs, but also combination roofs that incorporate flat roofs with shed roofs and provide an asymmetrical design. Slopes are typically quite shallow, often at a ratio of 2:12. Roofs are typically covered with visually flat materials such as tar and gravel or rolled roofing. Though relatively uncommon, shingled roofs are found on some Eichlers with sloped roofs.

Cladding, Materials & Features

The original material palette on Eichlers was generally quite simple. The most common cladding material seen on exteriors is vertical, tongue-and-groove redwood board or scored redwood plywood—although there is no typical width of the boards or scoring as the Eichler catalogue contained many widths. In some cases, houses also incorporate concrete block. Older Eichler tracts, including Morepark, may also incorporate horizontal wood siding. Original paint colors included earth tones with brighter colors for accent features, such as on lintels, exterior exposed carport beams, and/or doors. Other elements frequently seen on Eichlers include exposed roof rafters underneath extended eaves, which convey their post-and-beam structural systems, and wide fascia boards.



Figure 4: Promotional photographs from the original brochures for Fairglen Eichler Homes Tract Additions, Units 1 and 2 (1959-1961). Source: Courtesy of Sally Zarnowitz.



Figure 5: Example floor plan of an Eichler model with a courtyard or atrium (outlined in dashed red line). Source: Courtesy of Sally Zarnowitz. Edited by Page & Turnbull.



Figure 6: Example floor plan of an Eichler model with an L-shaped plan. Source: Courtesy of Sally Zarnowitz.

Windows

There are typically few windows at the front facade, consisting primarily of clerestory windows, which may be horizontally oriented or triangular-shaped at gable ends and have vertically divided plate glass. Primary facades also feature punched rectangular windows, oriented vertically or horizontally. Textured glass is occasionally used at windows facing the street. Eichler houses distinctively feature full-height windows at the rear, using large expanses of plate glass with vertical wood divisions. Windows are typically fixed with wood frames or sliders with aluminum frames.

Entry Doors & Garage Doors

Original garage doors are typically clad with vertical wood boards, often of narrow width to match the exterior siding, while original front entry doors are solid wood. Rear entry doors are typically fully glazed aluminum sliding doors, set within full-height window walls.

Carports & Garages

Viewed from the street, one of the most visible elements is the garage, which is always placed on the front facade but carefully incorporated into the roof form. Eichler homes may feature a side-by-side two-car garage or one-car garage that is paired with a carport. In some properties, the carports lead to glazed walls that define a courtyard or atrium beyond.

Interior Plans & Features

Eichler homes were unique at the time of their construction for their use of open floor plans with a living/dining room and a kitchen/multi-purpose room. Communal living spaces typically connect directly to the rear yard. There are typically three to four bedrooms. Radiant heating is embedded in the concrete slab flooring, similar to Frank Lloyd Wright's techniques with his Usonian houses. Walls often feature mahogany paneling.

Landscape & Streetscape Patterns

Eichler homes are typically placed on their lots with consistent setbacks from the street. The topography is generally flat, and streets are often curvilinear rather than laid out on a strict grid. Streets tend to be broad with concrete sidewalks and driveway curb cuts. A parkway (landscape strip) is located between the street and the sidewalk. Some streets feature a mature tree canopy of regularly spaced street trees. Historically, front yards typically featured lawns and low groundcover, low shrubs, and a specimen tree or two, though a greater variety of landscaping exists today. Paved driveways typically lead directly to the garage or carport, and walkways lead directly to the front entrance. Fences sometimes enclose the front courtyard and use vertical or horizontal wood.

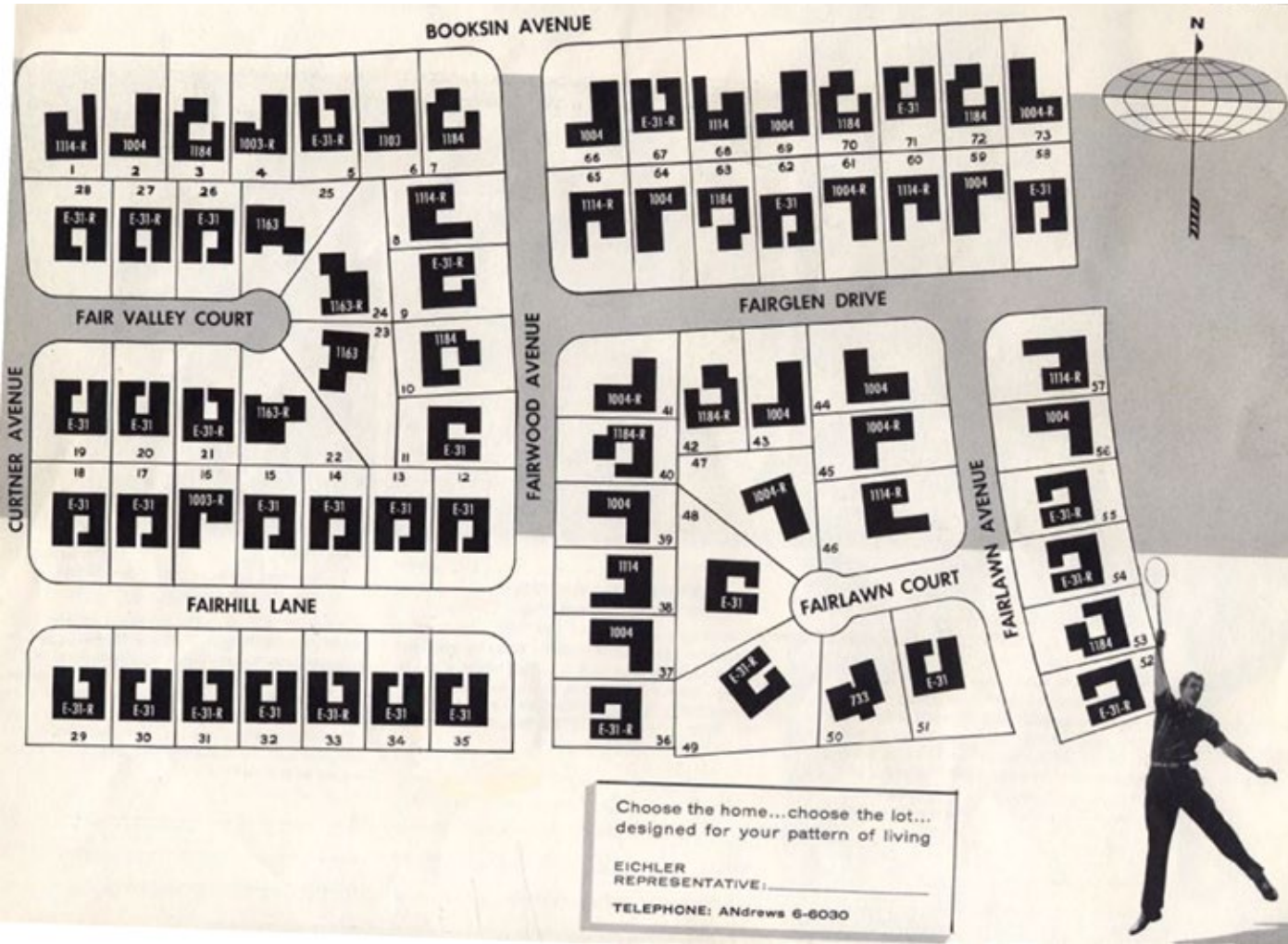


Figure 7: 1959 brochure for the Fairglen Additions tract, showing typical streetscape patterns for an Eichler neighborhood. Source: Courtesy of Sally Zarnowitz.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF TYPICAL EICHLER CHARACTERISTICS

While the many variations of Eichler designs are mentioned above, the homes have some unifying character-defining features. These features include massing, roof form, siding, window type, orientation, and construction method. The following general Eichler house types are based on the primary roof form that is visible from the street, rather than on model type, as the roof form has a strong visual impact on the house’s individual street presence and overall character of the Eichler neighborhood.



FRONT GABLE EICHLER

Character-defining features at Front Gable Eichlers may include, but are not limited to:

- One story in height
- Strong horizontal emphasis
- Front-gabled roof, typically low pitched (often at ratio of 2:12)
- Carport and/or enclosed garage
- Overhanging roof eaves
- Exposed beams or braces under gables
- Clerestory windows under gabled roof
- Wood siding (typically vertical)
- May include a flanking concrete masonry unit (CMU) wall
- Entry door is often recessed, or on the side (rather than the primary) facade
- Entry courtyard or atrium





FLAT ROOF EICHLER

Character-defining features of Flat Roof Eichlers may include, but are not limited to:

- One story in height
- Strong horizontal emphasis
- Flat roof with or without overhanging eave
- No parapet
- Carport or enclosed garage
- Exposed beams
- Clerestory windows above garage
- Narrow, vertical fixed windows
- Wood siding (often vertical)
- May include concrete masonry unit (CMU)
- Sidelites next to entry door
- Entry courtyard or atrium





FLAT-WITH-SHED ROOF EICHLER

Character-defining features of Flat-with-Shed Roof Eichlers may include, but are not limited to:

- One story in height
- Strong horizontal emphasis
- Low pitched shed roof over one bay, and flat roof over other bay.
- Carport or enclosed garage
- Overhanging roof eaves
- Exposed beams
- Clerestory windows under gabled roof, and/or over garage
- Wood siding (typically vertical)
- May include concrete masonry unit (CMU)
- Entry door is often recessed





FLAT-WITH-GABLE ROOF EICHLER

Character-defining features of Flat-with-Gable Roof Eichlers may include, but are not limited to:

- One story in height
- Flat roof with steeply pitched gable roof over entry
- Carport or enclosed garage
- Overhanging roof eaves at gable portion with exposed beams
- Clerestory windows under gable roof
- Narrow, vertical fixed windows
- Wood siding (often vertical)
- May include concrete masonry unit (CMU)
- Sidelites next to entry door
- Entry courtyard or atrium, if present

CHAPTER 4: OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS FOR ORIGINAL EICHLER FEATURES

This chapter addresses the original features common to San José’s Eichler homes. The construction techniques, design elements, and materials originally used were considered forward looking, yet affordable to keep the construction and purchase cost low in order to attract middle-class home-buyers. The characteristic features of Eichler homes are simple and not elaborate, and the overall palette of materials is fairly consistent across neighborhoods, so even minor changes have the potential to alter the character of the houses and the neighborhoods. At the same time, the buildings are at the age where they require maintenance and repair; in some cases, elements have reached the end of their natural life cycles.

The goal is to assist owners, City staff, and design professionals in understanding where changes can or should occur, where they cannot or should not, and how changes can be made while maintaining the essential feeling and character of the Eichler neighborhoods, while also streamlining the review process via use of the ODS.

4.1 ROOFS

The simple roof form is a primary feature for both an individual Eichler home and neighborhood cohesion. The different forms offer a degree of visual variety that nonetheless creates a recognizable pattern that ties an Eichler neighborhood together.

The roof and its components, such as the slope, fascia, and beam ends, reinforce the architectural style of the residence, while the unassuming roofing materials (often, tar and gravel) support the modest appearance of the home.



- 4.1.1. Original roof lines and forms shall be preserved.
 - a. The narrow profile of the roof edge, which reflects the building’s light-weight construction, shall be retained.
 - b. Altering the shape of the original roof to a different shape or form is prohibited (i.e. modifying a flat roof to sloped roof, a low pitch to a high pitch, etc.).
 - c. Raising a roof above its original height is prohibited.
- 4.1.2. Overhanging eaves, exposed beam ends, exposed tongue-and-groove roof decking, and wood fascia boards are visual hallmarks of Eichlers that shall be retained and repaired.
 - a. If needed, a wood preservative may be applied to exposed beam ends to preserve them and prevent deterioration.
 - b. If thin metal caps meant to protect the tops of the exposed beams are added, they shall be installed tight to the beams and painted the same color as the beam to reduce visibility.
 - c. Boxing in the exposed beam ends or applying aluminum or vinyl fascia that cover the original wood fascia is prohibited.
- 4.1.3. If overhanging eaves, exposed tongue-and-groove roof decking, or wood fascia boards are deteriorated beyond repair and replacement is required, replacement shall be in-kind, matching the original feature in form, dimensions, finishes, and textures.
- 4.1.4. If exposed beam ends are deteriorated beyond repair and replacement is required, use one of the following treatments:
 - a. Replace the deteriorated beam ends in-kind, matching the original beams in form, materials, dimensions, finishes, and textures.
 - b. Splice a new wood end onto the existing deteriorated beam to replace deteriorated material. The new wood beam end shall match the form, dimensions, finishes, and textures of the original beam end.
 - c. Replace the deteriorated beam ends with a durable new material that matches the form, dimensions, finishes, and textures of the original beam and provides the visual appearance of wood.



Figure 8: Preserve the original roofline and form.



Figure 9: Raising a roof above its original height is prohibited.

4.1.5. If replacing roofing materials, the new roofing materials shall be one of the following:

- a. For flat roofs and low-pitched gabled or shed roofs:
 - Built-up roofing
 - Membrane roofing
 - Rolled roofing
 - Foam
- b. For steeply pitched roofs with a slope greater than 2:12:
 - Composite (asphalt) shingles

4.1.6. If replacing the roofing material, the following replacement roofing materials are prohibited on all roof forms:

- Clay tile
- Concrete tile
- Slate (natural or synthetic)
- Standing-seam metal roofing
- Wood or metal shingles

4.1.7. Foam membrane roofing with its typical highly visible white color is prohibited on steeply pitched roofs.

4.1.8. Original roof openings in overhangs shall not be enclosed.

4.1.9. Covers, enclosures, shades, trellises, or small pop-up additions are permitted over existing central atria and courtyards if they meet all of the following design standards:

- a. Have a roofline that matches the form and slope of the existing roofline; and
- b. Are low-profile and rise no higher than 6 inches above the original roofline; and
- c. Retain the original features of the street-facing facades.

4.1.10. Removing walls that face an atrium or courtyard is prohibited.



Figure 10: Preserve roof openings.



Figure 11: Concrete tile roofing is prohibited.

Figure 12: Aerial view, showing various acceptable strategies for shading, covering, or infilling an atrium or courtyard:

- A. Partially enclosed and flush with roofline
- B. Retractable cover (shorter than 6 inches above roofline)
- C. Enclosed with skylights and flush with roofline
- D. Canvas shades

Source: Google Maps, 2025.

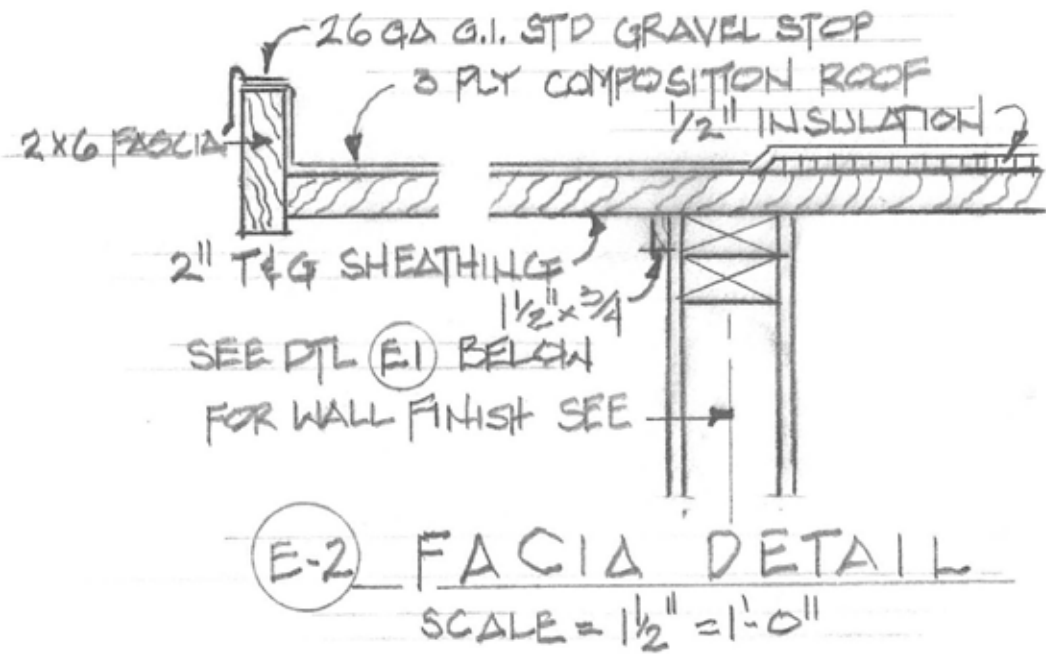


Optional Guidance for Roofs

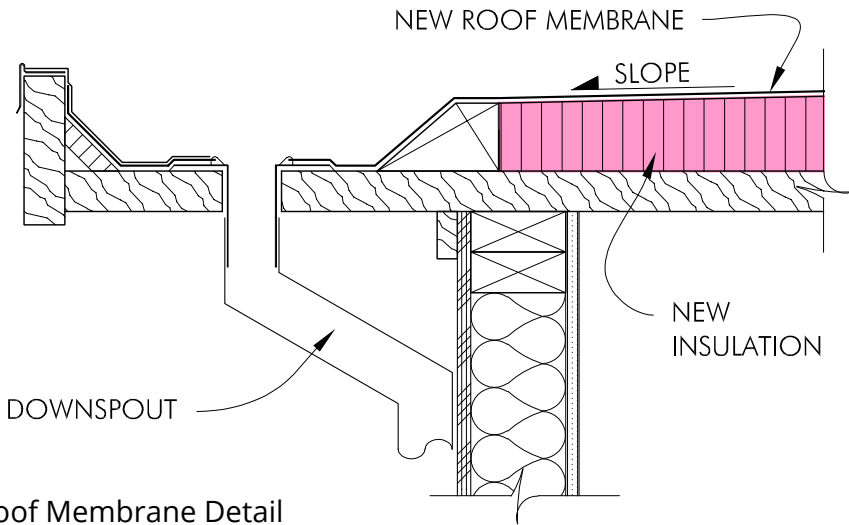
The roof on an Eichler home is an important primary feature, but it is also a place where improvements and changes can and should occur when the roofing has reached the end of its service life, which typically is every 20-30 years. The important features of the roof to retain includes its shape, structure, and its lightweight, planar form.

When replacing roofing, consider incorporating other improvements, such as:

- Insulating the roof as the preferred way to improve the house’s energy efficiency and comfort, well before replacing original windows with double-pane glass or improving the wall insulation.
- Addressing leaks or ponding with subtle drainage or design changes that do not affect the overall appearance of the roof.
- Updating or installing additional electrical conduits, especially for equipment like ductless HVAC systems and ceiling lights.
- Installing or replacing outdated or inefficient HVAC systems or solar panels with up-to-date options that do not require ductwork or are less visually intrusive. Often, old equipment from 20 or 30 years ago is significantly less energy-efficient than current models.



Original Detail



Example New Roof Membrane Detail

4.2 EXTERIOR CLADDING MATERIALS

The Eichler homes in San José were originally clad with a vertical-groove plywood siding that was finished with an opaque stain. Select models included a wall at the front facade with either cedar shingles or concrete block. Some earlier Eichler models, such as in Morepark, have sections of original horizontal wood siding. As a primary original feature, the distinctive vertical-groove cladding contributes significantly to the appearance of both the home and the neighborhood. The secondary cladding materials offer occasional variety and help to distinguish between models. Together, the consistency of the siding, along with the limited palette of exterior materials, are major hallmarks of the San José Eichler tracts that are important to maintain.

- 4.2.1. The original exterior cladding shall be retained.
 - a. Original vertical-groove plywood siding, where it exists, shall be the primary exterior cladding material.
 - b. Models originally with secondary exterior cladding materials shall maintain the original mix of materials.
 - c. To avoid a false sense of history, cladding materials unique to other Eichler models shall not be added to a model that did not originally utilize them.
- 4.2.2. Original exterior cladding materials shall be maintained and repaired.
 - a. Original siding shall be patched and repaired. The repairs shall be blended with the surrounding siding so they are not highly visible.
 - b. Concrete block exterior walls shall be repaired using new blocks with dimensions, surface texture, and mortar pattern (joint width and depth) that match the original.
 - c. Cladding materials that were not originally finished (i.e. concrete block) shall not be painted or stained. Similarly, elements that were originally painted or stained shall not be stripped of those finishes, so as to protect those materials from deterioration.
 - d. Sand-blasting and high-pressure power-washing original cladding materials is prohibited.



Figure 13: Preserve the original exterior cladding material palette.

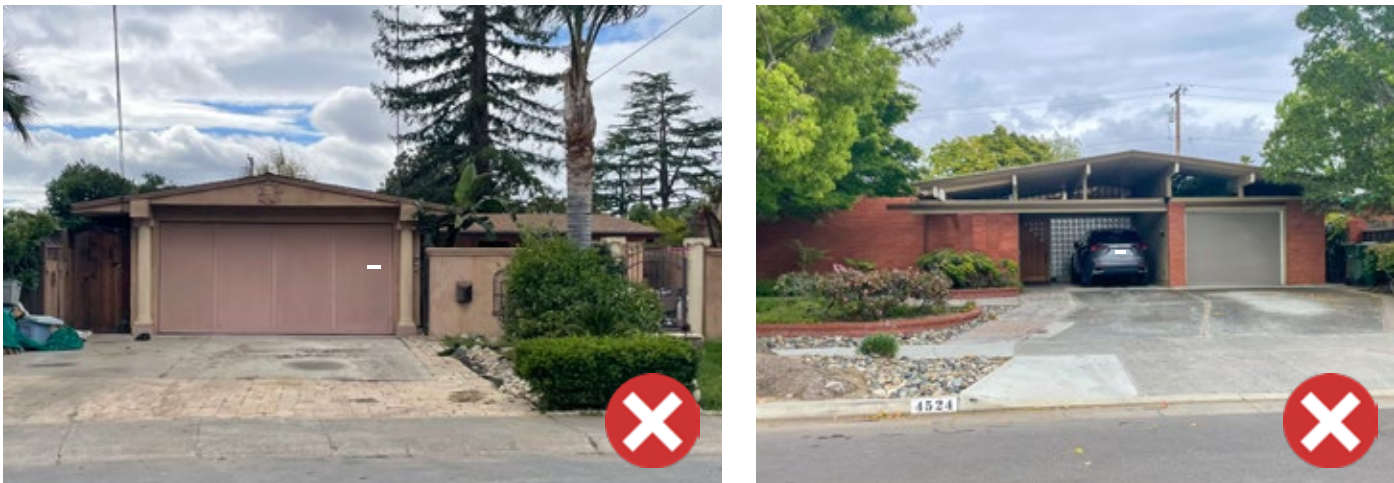


Figure 14: Replacing original cladding materials with stucco, stone, brick, shingles (unless used historically), or synthetic materials is prohibited.

- 4.2.3. Original cladding materials that are deteriorated beyond repair shall be replaced with cladding materials that match the original in kind.
- a. In-kind replacement cladding materials shall match the historic material, scale, size, proportion, finish, texture, profile, and orientation of the original cladding material. Original cladding materials to replicate (where existing) include, but are not limited to:
 - Vertical groove plywood siding
 - Stacked bond concrete masonry units (CMU)
 - Stained wood shingles
 - Wide profile vertical and/or horizontal wood siding
 - Smooth Masonite boards
 - b. Stucco, stone, brick, shingles (unless used historically), and synthetic cladding materials are prohibited.
- 4.2.4. Where original cladding materials have previously been replaced with non-original cladding materials, the following replacement options are allowed:
- a. Remove non-historic cladding materials and replace with replica cladding materials that match the original cladding material of the house in design, material, scale, size, proportion, finishes, texture, profile and orientation.
 - b. Use a new cladding material that matches the material type (wood, concrete block, etc.) and orientation (vertical, horizontal, etc.) of the original cladding material and which has a flat, smooth profile.
 - For example, where original vertically oriented wood siding was previously replaced with a different, non-original material, new cladding should also be wood siding that is vertically oriented and has a flat, smooth finish.

Recommendations for Cleaning Historic Materials

- Do not use harmful treatments, such as sandblasting or harsh chemicals when cleaning the exterior of a home, since these treatments can damage historic fabric.
- Use the gentlest means possible for removing dirt, stains, or paint from building surfaces.
- Low-pressure water and natural bristle brushes (rather than metal) are recommended.
- Chemical cleaning agents should be tested on a small representative test area of the building in an inconspicuous location prior to extensive use.
- Tightly cover all openings and seal masonry cracks or joints when cleaning to avoid moisture penetrating the building’s surface, which can lead to long-term deterioration.
- Additional information can be found in National Park Service Preservation Brief 6: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings at: <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/upload/preservation-brief-06-abrasive-cleaning.pdf>.

Original Cladding Features

The original cladding of Eichler homes have a limited palette of materials:

- Primary cladding was typically stained vertical-groove plywood finished at corners with a corner trim piece; also matching on garage doors. Grooves are cut into the plywood.
- Rectangular and square concrete block are on some models. Concrete blocks are in stacked bond with aligned vertical joints. Joints are 1/4" wide, flat, and slightly recessed (known as raked joints).
- Concrete block or brick chimneys at the rear or side are typical
- Other original cladding types seen on some models include:
 - Wood shingles, sometimes as an accent wall
 - Smooth Masonite board located between windows
 - Horizontal wood siding on some earlier models
 - Concrete masonry units (CMU)
 - Wood shingles



Figure 15: Original vertical groove plywood cladding.



Figure 16: Original square concrete block cladding.



Figure 17: Original rectangular concrete block cladding.

Optional Guidance for Exterior Cladding

- Most of the San José Eichler homes retain their original vertical-groove wood siding. The siding was originally stained, though most have since been painted. For those where painting has occurred, new paint should be applied sparingly, as excessive paint coatings diminish the character of the vertical grooves and the original texture.
- Deterioration of the siding, such as splintering or delamination, is often due to water infiltration or sun damage, particularly at west- and south-facing facades. If replacing deteriorated materials, refrain from replacing more than is necessary to complete the required repairs. Spot repairs should be tried first. Replacing sections with matching plywood (same groove pattern and dimensions) is also possible if the damage is beyond repair or repairs are extensive.
- Find logical places and breaks to replace sections of cladding. In some cases, the removal of full-height sections may be required to avoid a visible horizontal seam, but the replaced section may be only a few grooves wide. Small sections located close to the ground may be replaced without the horizontal seam becoming highly visible. The replaced sections should be finished to best match the adjacent siding, as excessive and dissimilar patching will ultimately diminish the consistency and simplicity of the original appearance.
- The small, wooden corner trim piece was not intended to stand out or be an architectural accent, so it should blend with the surrounding siding. Limit new penetrations and openings into the siding, since any patching will be visible. This includes everything from enlarging or creating new window openings to small holes for a mini-split system’s water piping.
- The exterior walls originally contained fiberglass insulation. Adding insulation at the roof (see section 4.1 Roof in this chapter) is often easier than opening walls to replace or add wall insulation.
- When repainting exterior cladding, though not required, consider researching the home’s original color scheme or referencing the color palettes used historically in Eichler homes. Eichler Homes, Inc. used Cabot Stains’ Ranch House Hues and accent colors by Dunn-Edwards. The Eichler Network published a partial list of exterior and body accent colors that closely match original colors (shown at right). Accent colors are recommended for features such as doors, exterior beams, lintels, and roof fascia boards. **These colors are provided for historical reference and inspiration purposes, and are not required by the City of San José.**

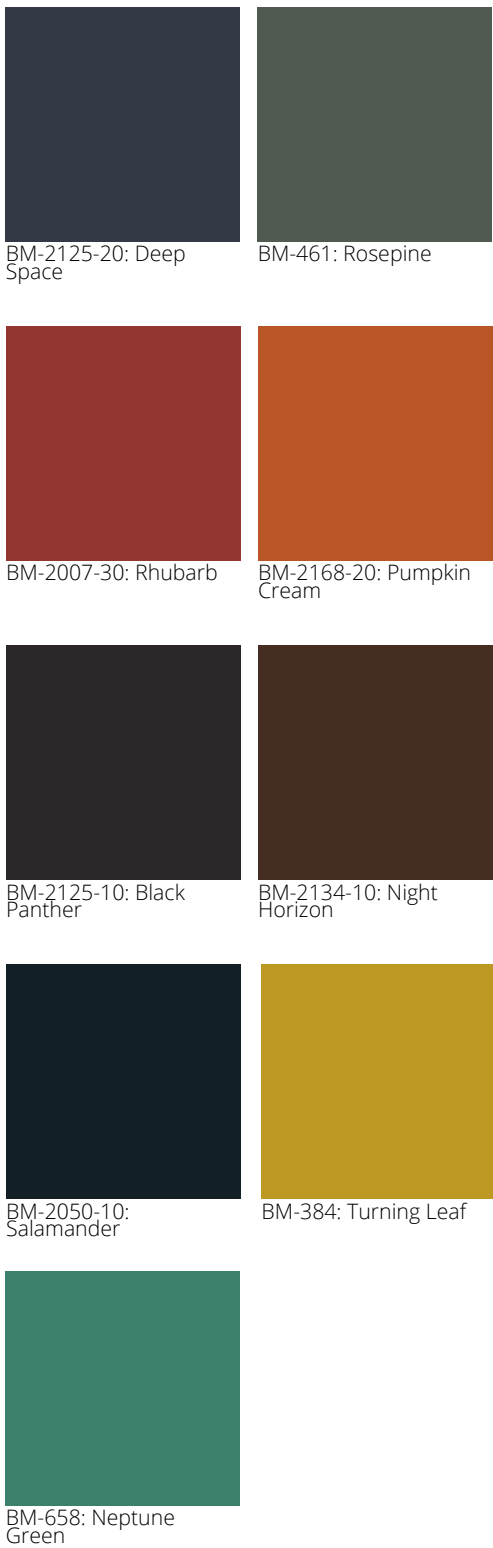
Local San Francisco Bay Area businesses manufacture and sell replacement Eichler style wood siding and can be consulted to find an appropriate match for replacement siding.

Optional Exterior Paint Colors for Reference

Original Eichler
Exterior Body Stain Colors by Cabot Stains (Partial List)



Original Eichler
Exterior Accent Paint Colors by
Dunn-Edwards (Partial List)



Note: Colors may be distorted due to the variety of printer and computer monitor settings. Please refer to the indicated numbers and manufacturers’ in-store printed catalogs for accurate paint chips.

Source: Swatch graphic based on information provided by Eichler Network: <https://www.eichlernetwork.com/article/house-many-colors?page=0,5>

4.3 CARPORTS

Carports are featured on many models of the Eichler homes, providing covered parking in addition to or in lieu of an enclosed garage. Carports, which are primary features, create a void that distinguishes those models, providing relief and variation on the building front. They also continue the connection to the outdoors, as often the atrium is located behind a glass-panel wall at the back of the carport. The carport affords an enhanced sense of lightness and openness at the front of the home while still providing privacy.

- 4.3.1. Carports shall be retained in place and shall not be enclosed, except to create an ADU as allowable per California state laws (Refer to Appendix A), either by new walls or fencing.
- 4.3.2. Enclosing openings above the carport walls is prohibited, except to create an ADU as allowable per California state laws (Refer to Appendix A).
- 4.3.3. Canopies are prohibited in driveways.

Optional Guidance for Carports

Some carports have been enclosed to gain more space, either as a garage or living space. Enclosing the carport area typically creates a false appearance of an Eichler model that never existed. It can also trigger other code requirements. If additional space is needed, rear or side additions that are minimally visible from the street are preferred over enclosure of the carport.

For ADUs and JADUs, also refer to the design guidance in Appendix A.



Figure 18: Carports shall not be enclosed.



Figure 19: Carports shall not be enclosed.



Figure 20: Enclosing carports and openings above carport walls (outlined in dotted red line) is prohibited.

4.4 GARAGE DOORS

Garages on San José Eichler homes were positioned at the front facade, facing the street. The placement and number of garage doors are important primary features that help to distinguish different house models in the Eichler tracts. The garage doors were typically clad with vertical-groove plywood to match and blend in with the rest of the house. Though the door material is a secondary feature, garage doors are highly visible at the front of the houses. Inappropriate replacements can negatively impact both the appearance and integrity of a residence and the neighborhood.

- 4.4.1. The original placement of garages at the front facade shall be preserved.
 - a. Locations, sizes, patterns, and proportions of original garage openings shall not be altered.
 - Replacing garage door openings with solid walls is prohibited. If an ADU or JADU is constructed within an existing garage, the garage door openings and visual appearance of the garage doors shall be retained at the street-facing exterior. Refer also to Appendix A.
 - b. If replacing two side-by-side doors with a single double-wide door, the new double-wide door shall have an applied center post that provides the visual appearance of two garage doors when in the closed position.
- 4.4.2. Original garage doors shall be maintained and repaired, or retrofitted as needed.
 - a. Retrofitting sliding doors to tilt-up or roll-up doors is allowed if it meets Standard 4.4.3, 4.4.4, and 4.4.5, as relevant.
- 4.4.3. If original garage doors are too deteriorated to repair, or if they have been replaced in the past, replace the garage door in-kind or replace the garage door with a new garage door that has either:
 - a. A flat surface with no raised or recessed panels, or
 - b. Cladding that matches the original exterior cladding of the house (if existing).
- 4.4.4. If glazing is desired in replacement garage doors, it must meet all of the following criteria:
 - a. Be rectilinear in shape, and
 - b. Be limited to 25% or less of the garage door surface, and
 - c. Have undivided panes.
- 4.4.5. The following are prohibited in replacement garage doors:
 - a. Raised or recessed panels
 - b. Horizontal or diagonal wood boards.



Figure 21: Preserve and maintain original garage doors.



Figure 22: Preserve and maintain original garage doors.



Figure 23: Infilling garage door openings is prohibited.



Figure 24: Paneled garage doors are prohibited.



Figure 25: Stained horizontal or diagonal wood doors are prohibited.

4.5 EXTERIOR ENTRY DOORS

Exterior entry doors of the San José Eichler homes are secondary original features and are generally limited to three types: solid slab-type doors at the front entry often paired with flanking sidelites; stained wood veneered hollow core doors at other entrances; and aluminum-framed, sliding glass doors. The front entry door was most often painted in a contrasting color creating a distinguishing hallmark for the Eichler facade. As distinctive features of the Eichler home, original entry doors and hardware must be protected and maintained when possible.

Objective Design Standards for Entry Doors Visible from the Street

- 4.5.1. The original placement of entry doors facades visible from the street shall be preserved.
- a. The location, size, pattern, proportions, and detailing of original entries that are visible from the street shall not be altered.
 - Enlarging a door opening that is visible from the street and eliminating original sidelites is prohibited, unless required for ADA compliance. Double doors are prohibited.
 - b. Glazed sidelights and transoms shall be retained where they exist adjacent to entry doors that are visible from the street.
 - Transoms shall remain as clear glazing; obscured glazing at the sidelights is allowed.
 - Solid infill of sidelights and transoms is prohibited.
 - Removal of sidelites is prohibited unless required to widen a doorway for ADA compliance.
 - Use of glass blocks and other divided glazing, including stained or leaded glass, at sidelights is prohibited.
 - c. Adding new door openings in areas that are visible from the street is prohibited.
 - If enclosing a carport to create an ADU or converting a garage to create a JADU, as allowable per California state laws, refer to Appendix A.



Figure 26: Preserve original placement of entries.



Figure 27: Adding new door openings at the front facade is prohibited.

- 4.5.2. Original front entry doors that are visible from the street shall be maintained and repaired or retrofitted as needed.
- a. If an original door that is visible from the street is deteriorated beyond repair, or if it has been replaced previously, replace it with one that matches the original or that has all of the following characteristics:
 - Painted wood or metal material
 - A flat planar surface
 - Rectilinear and undivided glazing or no glazing.
 - b. The following features are prohibited in replacement front entry doors that are visible from the street:
 - Raised or recessed panels
 - Fan lights
 - Divided lites (glass panes with muntins)
 - Beveled or art glass
 - Rustic-style or Colonial-style doors.

Optional Guidance for Front Entry Doors

While many original front entry doors remain, some have been replaced. Due to the consistency and prominence of original Eichler entry doors, inappropriate replacements can have a significant impact on the overall appearance and design of an individual residence and the neighborhood as a whole.

- The simplicity of the original slab-type door can easily be replicated and is widely commercially available. Similar replacement hardware can still be obtained through the original manufacturer.
- Replacements that reflect both the individuality of the homeowner’s preferences, yet maintain the simple, clean character of the Eichler home entry door are acceptable.
- Where an original door is replaced, owners are encouraged to salvage and store the door (and/or its hardware) to allow for future restoration of the feature or offer it to other Eichler owners for reuse.



Figure 28: Maintain and repair original front entry doors that are visible from the street.



Figure 29: An appropriate replacement front entry door with a flat planar surface and rectilinear glazing.



Figure 30: An appropriate replacement front entry door with a flat planar surface and rectilinear glazing.



Figure 31: An appropriate replacement front entry door with a flat planar surface and rectilinear glazing.



Figure 32: Replacement front entry doors with raised panels are prohibited when visible from the street.



Figure 33: Replacement front entry doors with beveled art glass are prohibited when visible from the street.

- 4.5.3. Retain original entry door hardware (knob and escutcheon plate) where remaining and repair as needed.
- a. The following options are allowed when replacing original entry door hardware that is missing or damaged beyond repair, that has previously been replaced, or that needs to be retrofitted to meet accessibility standards:
- Replica hardware that matches the original entry hardware
 - New hardware that closely approximates the appearance and finish of the original
 - Unornamented lever handles
- b. Security screen doors added to the front entry are prohibited. Use other security features that do not obscure original features, such as hardware, lighting, sensors, cameras, etc.

Objective Design Standards for Exterior Entry Doors at Secondary or Rear Facades

- 4.6.4. New exterior entry doors may be added to secondary or rear facades but must match the size, proportions, and material type of existing original doors on the same facade or other secondary facade, if no original doors exist on the same facade.
- 4.6.5. Solid (non-sliding glass) exterior entry doors at secondary or rear facades that are not visible from the street may be infilled or relocated.

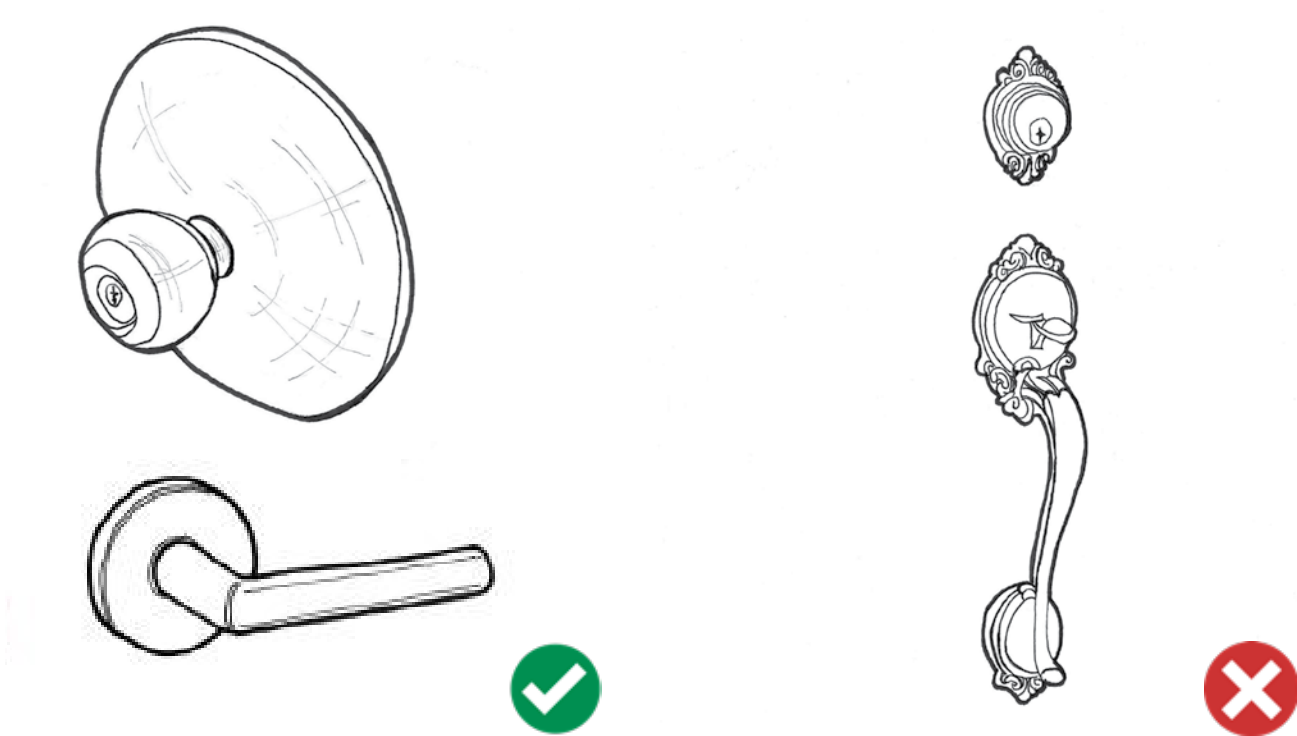


Figure 34: Replacement door hardware may consist of new hardware that closely approximates the appearance of the original or unornamented lever handles.

Objective Design Standards for Sliding Glass Doors

San José’s Eichler homes typically featured a large number of sliding glass doors to enhance the indoor/outdoor experience. Doors were frequently incorporated into extensively glazed walls, both in the atrium and at the rear of the house. The thin profiles and aluminum finish of the original doors reflect both the technology and design intent prevalent at the mid-20th century.

- 4.5.6. Original sliding glass doors at secondary or rear facades shall not be infilled or replaced with solid doors to the extent that more than 50% of the original glazed window wall becomes infilled or opaque.
- 4.5.7. Individual sliding glass doors may be replaced with new glass doors if they match the original or have all of the following characteristics:
 - a. Fully glazed door panels with metal frames; and
 - b. Undivided glazed panes. Single-pane, double-pane, low-E, and/or tempered glass are all appropriate for replacement sliding glass doors; and
 - c. Frame color that matches the original frame color.

Optional Guidance for Sliding Glass Doors

Aluminum frames are susceptible to corrosion, particularly at the exterior, which appear as pitting or white spots; cleaning with the gentlest means possible and clear coating may improve the overall appearance. Proper maintenance of the doors’ glide wheels and locking mechanisms is also important, as replacement parts are often difficult to obtain.

- Consider adding high-quality films on the existing glazing to improve safety and to reduce thermal heat gain.
- Consider having damaged or deteriorated components custom made or replicated. These are becoming increasingly accessible and affordable through new technologies and means of connecting with fabricators.
- Consult with professional metal restorers to address corrosion issues.
- Repair the locking mechanism when possible, or use alternative means to secure the door before replacing.
- Clean existing tracks and maintain or replace damaged glide wheels as needed.

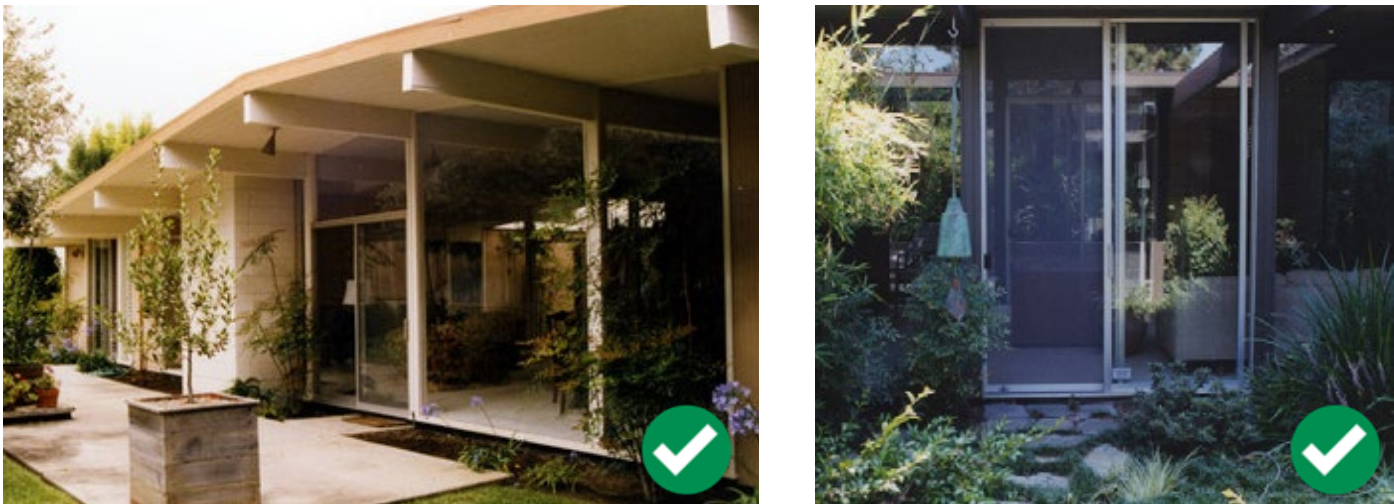


Figure 35: Original sliding glass doors shall not be infilled to the extent that more than 50% of a glazed window wall becomes infilled or opaque. Images courtesy of the Orange Public Library Local History Collection.

4.6 WINDOWS

Most Eichler models in San José include minimal window openings at the front facade, with expansive glass walls and windows at the atrium and rear of the house. This distinctive design approach afforded the Eichler homes with maximum transparency, while maintaining a high level of privacy. As such, the original overall window pattern, especially at the front facade, is a primary feature.

The front facade typically features fixed clerestory windows below the eaves. Some models also have narrow, vertical windows with fixed glass. Other models feature a glazed panel wall with obscured glass indicating the atrium or courtyard behind.

The majority of the home’s glazing consists of fixed glass panels spanning between structural elements. Full-height window walls extending to the bottom of the roof are found at the rear and within the atrium. The sides of the houses typically have smaller, commercially produced windows, which provide ventilation for the bedrooms.

The following object design standards are organized into two categories: windows that are visible from the street and those that are not.

Objective Design Standards for Windows Visible From the Street

- 4.6.1. The original window pattern and openings on facades that are visible from the street shall be preserved.
 - a. The location, number, size, proportion, and dimensions of original window openings visible from the street shall not be altered.
 - b. Original window openings that are visible from the street shall not be infilled; areas that were historically glazed shall remain glazed.
 - c. New window openings shall not be added to front facades, except in garage doors that meet the standards in section 4.4 Garage Doors.
- 4.6.2. Original windows, including clerestory windows and glazed walls along the front of an atrium, shall be maintained and repaired or retrofitted.
 - a. If changing original fixed windows that are visible from the street to operable windows, replacement windows shall have undivided panes.



Figure 36: Preserve the original pattern of window openings at facades that are visible from the street, including transom and clerestory windows.



Figure 37: Adding new windows at front facades is prohibited.



Figure 38: Clerestory windows under roof eaves shall not be infilled.

- 4.6.3. If an original window that is visible from the street is deteriorated beyond repair or has been previously replaced, or if energy or operability upgrades are desired, replace the window with one that has all of the following characteristics:
- Size, dimensions, proportion, and glazing pattern that match the original window; and
 - Clear single-pane, double-pane, or laminated glazing (unless the original window did not have clear glazing); and
 - Use the same frame material type as the original window (i.e. replace metal with metal)
- a. The following features are prohibited in replacement windows that are visible from the street:
- Divided glazing, simulated divided lites, glass blocks, reflective or non-clear glass
 - Vinyl or fiberglass frame materials
 - Projecting bay windows and garden windows
 - Shutters
- b. Glass walls enclosing courtyards or atria shall not be removed and must be repaired or reconstructed if deteriorated beyond repair.



Figure 39: Vinyl windows, windows with divided glazing, and shutters are prohibited.

Optional Guidance for Windows

The glazed panels in the Eichler homes were originally fitted with non-tempered, single pane glass. This may pose both a safety and security consideration for some owners. The large expanses of single-pane glass also lack the insulative values found in today’s dual-pane glazing. As a result, the heat transmission both in summer and winter can impact the interior comfort of the home. The high levels of direct sun exposure can also cause significant fading of interior finishes.

Clear films are cost effective ways to address many issues without changing the appearance of the building. The California Historic Building Code does not require qualified historic buildings to meet energy requirements except for new equipment and lighting and has provisions to allow for retaining original features and fabric that may not meet current codes. However, as today’s building code prohibits the use of non-tempered glazing for this type of installation, most glazers will only replace damaged or removed panels with new tempered glass. Because of the simplicity of the original detailing, fixed glazed panels can often be replaced with dual glazed systems set into similar wood stops, without significantly altering the home’s appearance.

For the metal sash windows, lack of routine maintenance and aging can also affect the appearance of the steel and aluminum frames. While rust is typically not a problem, oxidation can create pitting and an overall uneven appearance in their finishes. The “bonderized” steel is likely weathering and may be losing its protective coating. Commercially produced replacements for operable windows are widely available, but maintaining the thin profiles of the original frames can prove difficult. The original proportions between the glazing and the thickness of its frame greatly contributes to the clean-line character of the house.

- To improve safety and energy efficiency, consider applying high-quality clear films on the original single-pane glass.
- If a specialty glass type was used originally (such as textured obscure glass) and requires replacement, investigate a replacement that matches the original in texture and appearance.
- Minor blemishes to the appearance of original steel windows can be made less apparent through cleaning and clear coating. Consult with a professional metal finish restorer for more guidance.

Objective Design Standards for Windows at Secondary or Rear Facades

- 4.6.4. New windows may be added to secondary or rear facades and must match the size, proportions, and material type of existing original windows on the same facade and have undivided panes.
- 4.6.5. Full-height fixed windows and window walls at secondary or rear facades shall not be infilled to the extent that more than 50% of a window wall is infilled.
 - a. Individual windows may be replaced with glass doors as long as transparency is retained.
- 4.6.6. Smaller windows at secondary or rear facades may be infilled, replaced, or enlarged. Replaced or enlarged windows must match the material type of existing original windows on the same facade and have undivided panes.



Figure 40: Original full-height fixed windows and window walls at secondary and rear facades shall not be infilled. Photo courtesy of Sally Zarnowitz.



Figure 41: Small (not full-height) windows at secondary or rear facades may be infilled.

4.7 MECHANICAL SYSTEMS

Modifications for heating, cooling, and other systems in Eichler homes often present significant challenges. The original construction of the buildings—including the lack of attic spaces, limited insulation, single-pane windows, and large expanses of glass—can create interior climates that are not always comfortable. The radiant heating system originally placed within a home’s concrete slab and plumbing pipes under the slab can be difficult to repair without causing a highly invasive intervention. Modifications and improvements of the original systems of an Eichler residence can cause significant visible impacts to the exterior.

- 4.7.1. Exterior mechanical equipment shall be installed in locations that are minimally visible from the street and neighboring properties. Exterior mechanical equipment is allowed in the following locations:
 - At ground level to the rear or side of the residence
 - Mounted on a side or rear facade that does not face the street
 - Rear half of roof
 - For plumbing, pipes may be embedded into the rigid roof insulation
- 4.7.2. Mechanical equipment installed at the side or rear of a residence that is visible from the street or neighboring residents shall be placed behind a screening feature that is at least as tall as the mounted height of the mechanical equipment. The following screening features are allowed:
 - Vertical wood fences or CMU walls
 - U-shaped shrub plantings
 - Other screening features that display materials and colors used in the residence
- 4.7.3. If mechanical equipment must be placed on the roof, the new systems must be screened and painted to match the roof and located at the rear half of the roof.
 - a. Mechanical equipment and screening mounted on the roof shall be no taller than 1.5 feet.
- 4.7.4. Window-mounted mechanical equipment is prohibited on front facades.



Figure 42: Roof-mounted mechanical equipment must be installed on the rear half of the roof to minimize visibility.

4.8 SECURITY

- 4.8.1. The installation of security bars or other barriers within window openings or above glass-panel walls that are visible from the street is prohibited, as they are highly visible and not compatible with Eichler aesthetics.
- 4.8.2. If security improvements are desired, use motion sensors, cameras, and other devices that provide an increased level of security but are minimally visible from the street.

Optional Guidance for Mechanical Systems

Before adding new mechanical systems, explore options that reduce the need for air conditioning, such as window coverings, insulation, plantings that provide shade, clear window films, and portable in-room air conditioning units that reduce heat transmission. Exterior or interior roller shades may also may be considered.

All: Attach mechanical equipment using the least invasive method and least amount of removed primary original features possible.

Heating & Cooling: The original radiant heating systems within the concrete slabs are nearing or have surpassed their service life. While repairing or retrofitting the radiant heating system is sometimes possible, it is often impractical.

If existing radiant floor heating has failed, investigate whether the system can be repaired in place. If a new heating system is required, choosing a system that does not require visible, exterior equipment is encouraged.

New heating and cooling systems, such as ductless (“mini split”) systems, no longer require installation of large ductwork or rooftop equipment. The systems are more energy efficient than older central air systems, and typically result in less impact to the home’s appearance. As systems installed in the past become outdated, there is the opportunity to replace them with more efficient equipment and remove much of the ducting. If replacing an outdated heating or cooling system, removing visible ducting and other equipment from rooftops is encouraged.

Plumbing: New techniques for the repair of pipes utilized in Eichlers may be possible without the invasive removal of concrete. If considering new plumbing over the roof of a home, residents are encouraged to place the new plumbing where it will not be highly visible from the street, such as embedded into the rigid roof insulation when installing a new roof.

CHAPTER 5: OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS FOR ADDITIONS & ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

The Eichler residences in San José were originally constructed as one-story buildings with a strong horizontal emphasis. The repeated pattern of one-story homes with generally consistent side and front setbacks throughout the Eichler tracts is one of their distinctive characteristics. Additions, particularly vertical or front additions, and detached accessory structures (garages, sheds, pool houses, etc.) that are large in scale or placed in visually prominent locations can dramatically alter the appearance of a building from the street, as well as the privacy of neighboring properties. As such, second-story additions are strongly discouraged. Additions can also result in the loss of historic materials and features in the original building, so they must be carefully designed to respect the design of the original building.

Additions and new accessory structures must be visually compatible with the historic character of the original house; however, they should also include materials and design elements that subtly differentiate them as contemporary, rather than historic, construction. As such, greater flexibility in exterior materials is allowed when designing additions and accessory structures than when repairing or altering the exterior of an original Eichler house. If planning a second-story addition, check the covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&R’s) in your property deed to determine whether there are additional restrictions on the height or number of stories for an addition beyond those contained in this document.

For design guidance related to accessory dwelling units (ADUs), which are subject to specific review requirements according to California state housing laws, refer to **Appendix A**.



Figure 43: Side addition (outlined with dotted line) using the same roof form and slope as the original building. Setting this addition back from the main house’s front facade would have further increased its compatibility.

5.1 ADDITIONS & ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

- 5.1.1. Ground-level additions and accessory structures are permitted if they meet all of the following criteria:
- a. Placement:
 - Located at side or rear areas of the property. Additions (except for ADUs) and accessory structures are prohibited at front facades and in the front yard (Refer to Appendix A).
 - Set back side additions at least 3 feet from the front facade of the house.
 - At rear additions, a reveal (inset) of at least 2 inches is required such that the addition is not flush with the existing original wall of the main residence.
 - b. Form: Rectilinear
 - c. Size: Smaller footprint than the original house
 - d. Roof form (one of the following):
 - Flat
 - Skillion (split shed roofs)
 - Shed or gabled roof with pitch that matches original building
 - If the main house did not originally have a shed or gabled roof, a shed or gabled roof with maximum 2:12 slope
 - e. Roof cladding (one of the following):
 - For flat roofs and low-pitched gabled or shed roofs:
 - Built-up roofing
 - Membrane roofing
 - Rolled roofing
 - Foam
 - For steeply pitched roofs with a slope greater than 2:12:
 - Composite (asphalt) shingles
 - f. Height: No taller than the main house
 - g. Cladding:
 - Vertical or horizontal painted or stained wood siding
 - Stacked bond concrete masonry units
 - Rectilinear fiber-cement panels

Optional Guidance for Additions & Accessory Structures

New additions to Eichler homes and detached accessory structures can be appropriate when they are carefully planned. Those that are highly visible from the street, not compatible with the surrounding scale, mass, and style of the neighborhood, and cause extensive removal of historic materials or features are generally inappropriate as they can negatively affect the existing character of the neighborhood. Modest, single-story additions and accessory structures, which are located to the sides or rear of existing buildings, are more appropriate, as they maintain and reinforce the original aesthetics of the neighborhood.

Privacy: Eichler homes were originally designed to provide maximum transparency to the outdoors, while also affording a high level of privacy to the occupants. This was achieved through limited windows at the front/street facade, with floor-to-ceiling walls of glass opening onto the atrium and backyard. Whether one or two stories in height, tall additions at the rear of Eichler homes can significantly impact the privacy to both the interior and exterior of adjacent properties.

As such, every attempt should be made to preserve the privacy of neighboring properties when building new additions and accessory structures.

- Avoid placing window openings or glazing in locations that align with windows in adjacent existing residential buildings.
- Avoid placing exterior lighting in locations where it shines directly into the interior of adjacent existing residential buildings.

Second-Story vs. Two-story Additions: A vertical addition on an Eichler home has the potential to negatively impact the simple roof forms and low-scale, horizontal massing. Vertical additions that extend significantly above the original roof line are generally not appropriate. However, a well-placed and thoughtfully-designed addition or detached accessory building within the Eichler tracts may be possible on certain properties. Consider sound transmission and the impacts of interior and exterior lighting on adjacent existing residential building to preserve the maximum amount of privacy possible.

Atrium and Courtyard Covers/Pop-ups: Similar to vertical rooftop additions, due to their visual impact on the characteristic low-scale form and horizontal massing of Eichler homes, it is encouraged to remove existing additions or covers over atria or courtyards that are tall and highly visible from the street.

- h. Windows:
 - Rectilinear shape
 - Wood or metal frame
- i. Doors:
 - Wood or metal

5.1.2. Second-story additions are allowed if they meet all of the following criteria:

- a. Placement: Limited to the rear half of the roof, leaving the front half of the roof unaltered
- b. Roof: Flat, shed, skillion (split shed roofs), or gabled roof with a slope that matches the slope of the original house or has slope no steeper than 2:12
- c. Form: Rectilinear
- d. Floor Heights: 8-foot floor-to-ceiling maximum
- e. Cladding: Must match the primary material of the main house
- f. Windows: Wood or metal frame.

5.1.3. The following features and materials are prohibited in all additions and accessory structures:

- a. Roofs:
 - Compound roofs with multiple forms
 - Steeply pitched roofs, even when found on the original house
 - Arched, hipped, butterfly, or mansard roof forms
 - Clay tile, concrete tile, slate (natural or synthetic), metal or wood shingles, or standing seam metal
 - Roof decks
- b. Cladding:
 - Stone (real or imitation)
 - Stucco
 - Brick
 - Vinyl
 - Aluminum
 - Exposed concrete

Note: When planning a second-story addition, check the covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&R's) in your property deed to make sure there are no additional restrictions on the height or number of stories for an addition.



Figure 44: This addition is set back from the front facade with a floor height that is lower than the original house.



Figure 45: This addition has a skillion roof form, cladding, and windows that are allowed. However, the design would be improved by setting it further back from the front facade and reducing the floor heights.



Figure 46: This addition not set back from the front facade and has a floor height that is taller than the original house.



Figure 47: While this addition is set back and has a low-pitch roof form and appropriate cladding and windows, the floor heights are too tall.

c. Windows:

- Divided-lite windows or simulated divided light windows
- Fanlights
- Round windows
- Bay windows
- Dormers
- Metal security bars

d. Doors:

- Vinyl frame doors
- Doors with raised or recessed panels
- Fan lights
- Divided lights
- Bevel or art glass
- Rustic- or Colonial-style doors

- 5.1.4. Additions shall not remove or alter original features and materials except to the extent required to construct an addition.
- 5.1.5. Additions, enclosures, or covers over existing atria or courtyards are allowed if they meet the following standards:
- a. Have a roofline that matches the form and slope of the existing roofline; and
 - b. Are low-profile and rise no higher than 6 inches above the original roofline; and
 - c. Retain the original features of the street-facing facades.



Figure 48: This atrium cover is low and has a flat roof like the original house.



Figure 49: This atrium cover is too tall.

CHAPTER 6: OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS FOR NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

The non-contributing buildings in San José’s Eichler historic district(s) are typically houses built originally by Eichler Homes, Inc. but their features have been significantly altered to the point that they are no longer recognizable as Eichler designs. Buildings constructed as infill or replacement buildings at a later date (i.e. after the district’s period of significance and not by Eichler Homes) are also non-contributing properties. While such buildings do not contribute to the historic significance of the Eichler neighborhood, exterior alterations to them have the potential to further impact the overall character of the neighborhood. As such, many of the design standards in previous sections apply to altered non-contributing Eichlers, particularly those related to previously altered features and new compatible replacements.

Property owners are encouraged, but not required, to restore altered features on non-contributing building to improve the home’s historic integrity. If owners are interested in restoring non-contributors to the point where they may be considered a contributor, please contact the Historic Preservation Officer for more information.

6.1 ROOF FORMS

- 6.1.1. If remodeling to a non-contributing building will impact the roof, the project must comply with one of the following:
 - a. Retain and maintain the existing roof form.
 - b. If the house is a non-contributing altered Eichler house that retains its original roof form, retain and maintain the original Eichler roof form according to the standards in section 4.1 Roofs in the Standards for Original Eichler Features.



Figure 50: These altered Eichler residences have non-original roof forms and would be considered non-contributing properties.

- c. If the house is a non-contributing Eichler house with an altered or non-original roof form, a proposed new or altered roof must match the form (flat, front gable, flat-with-shed, etc.) of the original roof and be covered with roofing materials that meet standards 4.1.5 and 4.1.6 of the Standards for Original Eichler Features.
- d. If the house is an existing non-contributing infill house (not an altered Eichler), new roofs must comply with the standards in section 7.4 Roofs in the Standards for New (Infill) Construction.

6.2 CLADDING MATERIALS

- 6.2.1. If remodeling a non-contributing building will change exterior cladding, the project must comply with the following:
 - a. If the house is a non-contributing altered Eichler house with original exterior cladding, retain and maintain the original Eichler cladding material according to the standards in sections 4.2.1-4.2.3 in the Standards for Original Eichler Features.
 - b. If the house is a non-contributing altered Eichler with non-original exterior cladding materials, use standard 4.2.3 in the Standards for Original Eichler Features.
 - c. If the house is an existing non-contributing infill house (not an altered Eichler), use the standards in section 7.5 Cladding Materials in the Standards for New (Infill) Construction.

6.3 GARAGES, DOORS & WINDOWS

- 6.3.1. Retain and maintain original Eichler garage doors, carports, front doors, and windows (if existing). Use the relevant sections in the Standards for Original Eichler Features in Chapter 4.
- 6.3.2. If the house is a non-contributing altered Eichler house, replacement garage doors, entry doors, or windows on street-facing facades must meet the following standards:
 - Garage Doors: Standards 4.4.3-4.4.5.
 - Doors: Standards 4.5.2 and 4.5.3
 - Windows: Standard 4.6.3
- 6.3.3. If the house is an existing non-contributing infill house (not an altered Eichler), replacement garage doors, entry doors, and windows standards on street-facing facades must meet the following Standards for New (Infill) Construction:
 - Garage Doors: Standards 7.6.1-7.6.2
 - Doors & Windows: Standards 7.7.3 and 7.7.4
- 6.3.4. New window and door openings that do not restore original openings are prohibited on street-facing facades of all non-contributing residences.

- 6.3.5. New windows and doors may be added to side and rear facades not visible from the street if they meet standards 7.7.3 and 7.7.4 in the Standards for New (Infill) Construction.

6.4 ADDITIONS

- 6.4.1. Non-contributing buildings shall comply with the Standards for Additions and Accessory Structures in Chapter 5.

6.5 MECHANICAL

- 6.5.1. Non-contributing properties shall comply with section 4.7 Mechanical Systems.



Figure 51: This altered Eichler residence has non-original painted shingle cladding. While some Eichler houses have wood shingles in select locations, painted shingle cladding across all facades is not original.

CHAPTER 7: OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS FOR NEW (INFILL) CONSTRUCTION

Although infrequent, new homes within Eichler neighborhoods may be constructed if a parcel becomes vacant. In these instances, special attention should be paid to developing a new house design that is compatible with the architectural character of the surrounding neighborhood, since incompatible infill construction can easily disrupt the cohesive character of Eichler neighborhoods. A new house design should incorporate carefully selected materials with a compatible architectural style and building form. While the identical replication of original Eichler designs is not necessary, or even appropriate, to achieve compatibility, those interested in building a home should look to original Eichlers for inspiration and design guidance.

7.1 SITE DESIGN

- 7.1.1. Site new buildings to align with the front setbacks of adjacent contributing buildings and comply with City code requirements for rear setbacks.
 - If the setbacks of adjacent contributing buildings differ, the setback shall be aligned with one of the adjacent contributors or between the setbacks of adjacent contributors.
- 7.1.2. Driveways leading to garages shall be straight in form.

Optional Guidance for New Construction

For new buildings in Eichler neighborhoods, incorporating features that are characteristic of original Eichler buildings is highly encouraged to improve the visual compatibility between original and new buildings.

For roofs, broad roof overhangs with exposed beam ends underneath the eaves are encouraged and will increase compatibility.

For exterior cladding, using vertical-groove wood siding is recommended, as this cladding is typical of many original Eichler homes in San José.

Entries should feature a clear progression from public to private spaces that flows from the public sidewalk to semi-private front yard to a main entryway that leads into the residence. Recessed entrances, atria, or entrance courtyards are encouraged at the front of houses.

7.2 HEIGHT, MASSING & FRONT ENTRIES

7.2.1. New infill housing shall adhere to the following options for height, massing, and front entries:

- a. Height
 - One-story height; with floor-to-ceiling height no higher than 10 feet; or
 - Two-story height with second story set back a minimum of 10 feet from front facade and floor-to-ceiling height no higher than 8 feet
- b. Massing:
 - Simple square, rectangular, L-shaped, or U-shaped rectilinear massing that appears as one unified form, rather than a composite of diverse attached volumes or components
- c. Front entry
 - Even facade plane at the front facade, with or without a recessed front entry (unless an L-shaped footprint)
 - Recessed entrance courtyards are permitted.
 - Projecting front entries, raised porches, and porticoes are prohibited.

7.3 ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

Eichler neighborhoods are defined by a Mid-Century Modern aesthetic. New infill construction shall be designed in a contemporary style that incorporates simple massing and roof forms, minimal detail, and straight rather than curved lines.

- 7.3.1. Historicist architectural styles (such as Mediterranean Revival, Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Neo-Traditional, Neo-Eclectic, etc.) are prohibited.



Figure 52: Neo-Eclectic style residence is not appropriate within an Eichler neighborhood, and is out of scale with the one-story character.



Figure 53: An example of a new house with compatible massing, contemporary style and flat roof, but too many diverse volumes. The portico at the front entry and modulated front facade are also not appropriate for an Eichler neighborhood.

7.4 ROOFS

- 7.4.1. Roof forms and materials for new homes shall be based on historic roof precedents found on surrounding Eichler homes.
- a. Allowable roof forms include:
 - Flat
 - Shed, skillion (split shed roofs), or gabled roofs with a maximum roof slope of 2:12
 - b. Prohibited roof forms include:
 - Compound roof forms with more than two roof forms or pitches
 - Roof types not typically found on contributing buildings in Eichler tracts, including: hipped, dormer, gambrel, Mansard, jerkinhead, Dutch gable, M-shaped, and butterfly
- 7.4.2. Roofing materials shall have a flat, visually unobtrusive appearance. Allowable roofing materials different roof forms are:
- a. Flat roofs:
 - Built-up roof
 - Membrane roofing
 - Rolled roofing
 - Foam
 - Green roof
 - b. Shed, skillion (split shed), or gabled roofs:
 - Composition (asphalt) shingle
 - Built-up roofing
 - Membrane roofing
 - Rolled roofing
 - Foam
 - Standing seam metal
 - Green roof
- 7.4.3. The following roofing materials are prohibited on all roof forms:
- Clay tile
 - Concrete tile
 - Slate (natural or synthetic)
 - Wood or metal shingle

7.5 EXTERIOR CLADDING MATERIALS

- 7.5.1. Exterior cladding materials for new infill construction shall have a simple, clean visual and textural quality, in order to relate to the minimalistic architectural character of Eichler neighborhoods.
- a. Allowable exterior cladding materials include:
 - Vertical or horizontal wood boards or siding
 - Fiber cement panels
 - Flat metal panels
 - Stacked bond concrete block
 - Smooth-finished stucco
 - b. Prohibited exterior cladding materials include:
 - Board and batten wood siding
 - Wood shingles
 - Textured stucco
 - Corrugated or standing seam metal
 - Masonry, including brick, stone, or imitation stone
 - Vinyl and other synthetic materials not listed in 7.5.1(a)
 - c. No more than two exterior cladding material types shall be allowed on the street-facing facades of new infill construction.

7.6 GARAGES & CARPORTS

- 7.6.1. New infill construction may include an attached garage or carport.
 - a. Garages shall be contained within the primary roof form of the residence and designed to occupy less than 50% of the length of the front facade.
- 7.6.2. Garage doors shall have a clean appearance and texture.
 - a. Garage doors shall have a flat planar surface with no raised or recessed panels.
 - b. Any glazing in garage doors must be rectilinear in shape and horizontally placed.

7.7 EXTERIOR DOORS & WINDOWS

- 7.7.1. Exterior entry doors shall be located on the front facade, facing the street.
- 7.7.2. Main entries shall not have a separate roof from the main residence. If additional shelter or visual interest is desired at the front entry, recess the entry rather than using a roof form that projects forward from the house or rises above its roof.
 - a. Raised front porches and porticoes are prohibited.
- 7.7.3. Exterior doors shall be simple in design and shall have a solid flat surface.
 - a. Glazing in exterior doors may consist of basic rectangular windows placed in the door or vertical sidelights placed next to a door.
 - b. Paneled doors are prohibited.
 - c. Arched and/or divided-light windows are prohibited.
- 7.7.4. Windows shall be:
 - a. Shape: Rectilinear, or trapezoidal for clerestory windows below a pitched roof
 - b. Material: Wood, metal, fiberglass
 - c. Glazing: Undivided
 - Reflective glass is prohibited.
 - Simulated divided lites are prohibited.

7.8 MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

- 7.8.1. Infill construction shall comply with section 4.7 Mechanical Systems in the Standards for Original Eichler Features.

Additional Guidance for Doors & Windows

The design and placement of doors and windows can impact how well a new building visually fits into an Eichler neighborhood. The placement of windows can also impact the privacy of neighboring residences. Consideration of the following design guidance will aid in designing new buildings that are aesthetically compatible with surrounding Eichler residences and respectful of the privacy of other residents.

Privacy

- Place windows and doors to avoid direct views into a neighbor’s interior and exterior spaces.

Design

- Design and arrange windows to reinforce the Mid-Century Modern aesthetic of Eichler neighborhoods.
- Employ the same solid-to-void ratio at the front facade of the new building as seen on adjacent or the nearest contributing Eichler houses.
- Arrange windows in regular rows, not in a random pattern.

**APPENDIX A: OPTIONAL DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR
ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUS/JADUS),
SOLAR PANELS & SKYLIGHTS**

California state laws require streamlined review of projects that add new accessory dwelling units (ADUs), junior accessory dwelling units (JADUs), solar panels, or skylights to a property. As such, these projects are not subject to ODS or other discretionary planning permits (such as SFHP permits). Nevertheless, these projects have the potential to impact the historic character of Eichler neighborhoods. The optional design guidance in this chapter are intended as a tool to help guide the development of such projects in ways that respect and are compatible with the unique qualities of Eichler-designed homes and neighborhoods.

Note: Under California state housing laws, the San Jose Planning Department cannot prohibit the conversion of garages to ADUs or JADUs.

8.1 ADUs & JADUs

Design Guidance for Site Design

- 8.1.1. ADUs and JADUs should be located in the backyard at the rear of the property whenever possible.
 - a. Note: By definition, JADUs must be part of the existing structure of the main home.
- 8.1.2. Detached ADUs are the most appropriate as they do not require the removal or alteration of any original Eichler materials or features.

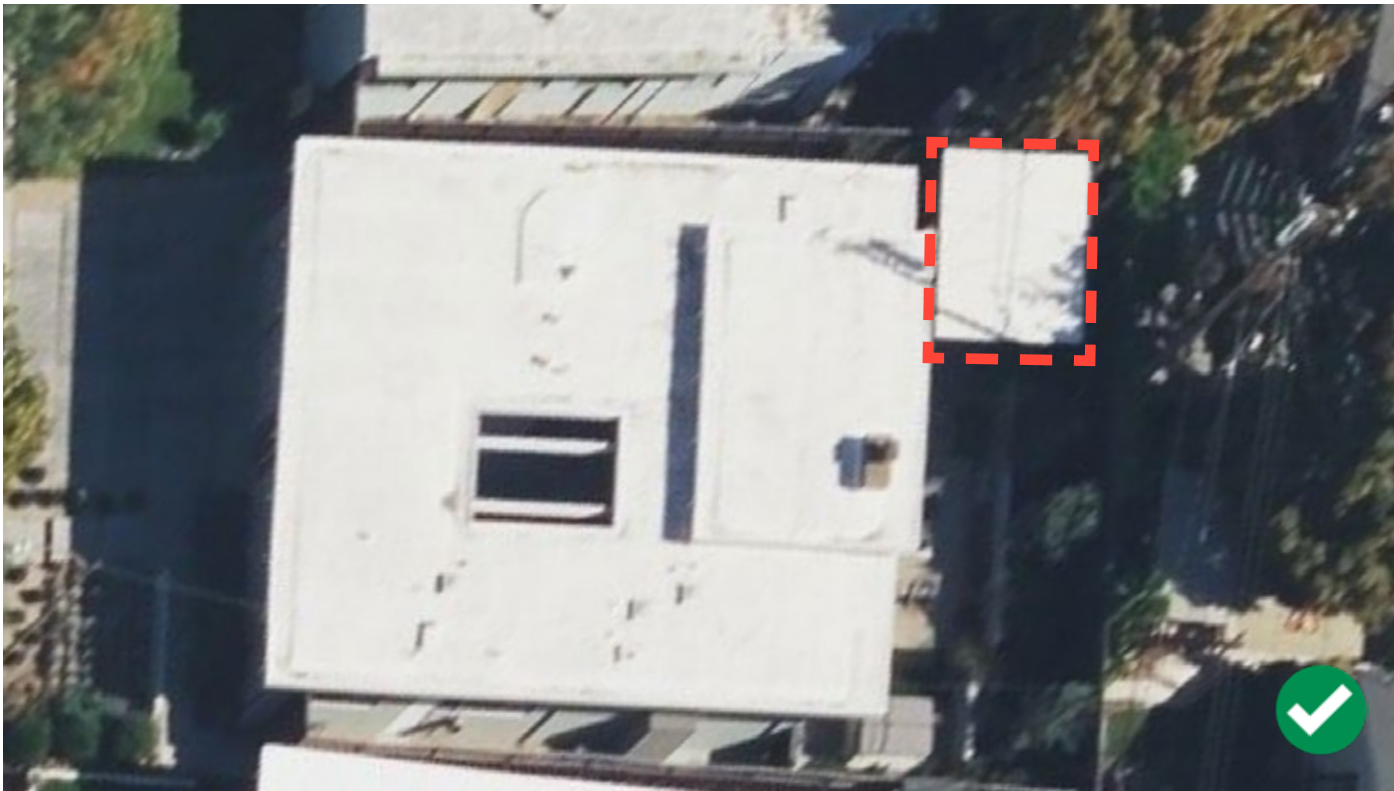


Figure 54: ADUs should be placed at the rear or side of a lot. Source: Bing Maps.

8.1.3. ADUs and JADUs that are visible from the public right-of-way are discouraged.

- a. If an ADU or JADU is built in a side yard, it should be set back from the front facade of the house, preferably behind fencing to minimize its visibility from the street.

8.1.4. Privacy with neighboring properties should be preserved when planning ADUs and JADUs.

- a. Consider the sizes, alignment, and transparency of glass to afford maximum privacy to neighboring properties.
- b. Consider sound transmission and impacts from interior and exterior lighting.

Design Guidance for Height & Massing

8.1.5. ADUs and JADUs should be visually subordinate to, compatible with, and differentiated from the original house.

- a. Height:
 - The roof of an ADU or JADU should not rise above the highest part of the original house.
 - If a two-story ADU or JADU is desired, the floor heights should match the floor height of the original house.
- b. Form:
 - ADUs and JADUs should have a simple orthogonal or geometric form (square, rectangular, L-shaped, or U-shaped).

Design Guidance for Architectural Style

- 8.1.6. A contemporary style with a simple, minimal design that draws inspiration from the design of the neighborhood’s Eichler homes is highly encouraged.
- 8.1.7. Using historicist architectural styles (such as Mediterranean Revival, Colonial Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Neo-Traditional, Neo-Eclectic, etc.) is not appropriate.

Design Guidance for Roofs

- 8.1.8. Roofs of ADUs and JADUs should reference original roof shapes and slopes found on the main Eichler residence.
- a. Steeply pitched roofs on the addition are discouraged, even when found on the original house.
- b. Using roof forms not commonly found on Eichler Homes (i.e. arched, hipped, or mansard roof forms) is not appropriate.
- c. Compound roof forms with more than two roof forms or pitches are not appropriate.



Figure 55: A rear ADU (indicated by white arrow) that has a similar height and roofline to the Eichler house at the front of the property. Source: Eichler Network.



Figure 56: An ADU with a roof form and detailing inspired by the original Eichler house on the lot. Source: Eichler Network.



Figure 57: An ADU with a roof form and detailing inspired by original Eichler houses. Source: Eichler Network.

- 8.1.9. If the ADU/JADU is attached to the existing Eichler residence, the roofing materials should match the existing roofing material.
- 8.1.10. Roofing materials should have a flat, visually unobtrusive appearance. Recommended roofing materials for detached ADUs/JADUs include:
- a. Flat roofs:
 - Built-up roofing
 - Membrane roofing
 - Rolled roofing
 - Foam
 - Green roofing
 - b. Shed or gabled roofs:
 - Composition (asphalt) shingle
 - Built-up roofing
 - Rolled roofing
 - Foam
 - Standing seam metal
 - Green roofing
- 8.1.11. Textured, patterned, or decorative replacement roofing materials are not appropriate on any roof form, including but not limited to:
- Clay tile
 - Concrete tile
 - Slate (natural or synthetic)
 - Wood or metal shingles

Design Guidance for Exterior Cladding Materials

- 8.1.12. Exterior cladding materials for ADUs and JADUs should have a simple visual and textural quality, in order to relate to the minimalistic architectural character of the Eichler neighborhood.
- a. Recommended exterior cladding materials include:
 - Vertical or horizontal wood boards or siding
 - Fiber cement panels
 - Flat metal panels
 - Stacked bond concrete block
 - Smooth-finished stucco



Figure 58: An ADU with a shed roof and vertical wood siding, which are compatible materials with Eichler homes. Source: Historic Shed.



Figure 59: The size, shed roof, and detached character of this ADU are compatible with Eichler residences. However, the use of stone veneer cladding is inconsistent with the aesthetic of Eichler designs. Source: Architectural Designs.

- b. Textured, patterned, decorative materials and those that relate to historicist architectural styles are not appropriate, including but not limited to:
 - Board and batten wood siding
 - Wood shingles
 - Textured stucco
 - Corrugated or standing seam metal
 - Masonry, including brick, stone, or imitation stone
 - Vinyl or other synthetic materials not listed in 8.1.12(a)
 - Exposed concrete

Design Guidance for Doors & Windows

- 8.1.13. Exterior doors should be simple in design and have a solid flat surface.
 - a. Glazing in doors should consist of basic rectangular windows placed in the door or vertical sidelights placed next to a door.
 - b. Arched and/or divided-light windows in doors are not appropriate.
 - c. Raised or recessed door panels are not appropriate.
- 8.1.14. Windows should be designed and arranged to reinforce the Mid-Century Modern aesthetic of Eichler neighborhoods.
- 8.1.15. The following window details are recommended:
 - a. Type: Sash, casement, awning, sliding, and fixed windows
 - b. Material: Wood, metal, fiberglass
 - c. Glazing: Undivided, clear glass
- 8.1.16. Enclosing an original Eichler carport is discouraged. However, if enclosing a carport to create an ADU or converting a garage to create an ADU or JADU, these features should still read as a carport or garage from the exterior.
 - a. In such cases, using the same exterior cladding as the main residence is recommended.
 - b. The garage door and/or former carport entrance should read as a garage door from the exterior, even if fixed in place.
 - c. Adding new door or window openings in garage doors or enclosed carports that are visible from the street to create an ADU or JADU is strongly discouraged.

Design Guidance for Other Architectural Elements

- 8.1.17. Decorative architectural elements from other architectural styles (Craftsman, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, etc.) are not appropriate.
 - a. Aprchitectural features that are not compatible with Eichler-designed properties include wood roof eave brackets, turned wood or decorative iron railings, roof gables with half-timbering, window shutters, or Classical columns.



Figure 60: The size and scale of this ADU and use of horizontal wood siding are suitable for properties with Eichler residences. However, doors and windows with divided lites and decorative elements from other architectural styles, such as wood roof eave brackets, are discouraged, as they are inconsistent with Eichler designs and neighborhoods. Source: wemodallas.com.

8.2 SOLAR PANELS

- 8.2.1. Solar panels should be installed where they are least visible from the street and neighboring properties.
 - a. Solar panels should be placed toward the least visible portions of the building, away from the street and neighbor’s views.
 - b. Consider placing solar panels on non-historic elements, such as detached accessory structures or patio covers that are not highly visible.
 - c. Solar panels should not rise substantially higher than the existing roof to minimize their visual impact from the street.
 - d. Be considerate of sight impacts on neighboring properties, especially those from adjacent rear properties with large expanses of windows.
- 8.2.2. Solar panels should be installed parallel to the roof plane whenever feasible and should not overhang or alter existing roof lines.
 - a. On sloped roofs, solar panels should not extend over 10 inches above the roof surface.
 - b. For models with steeply pitched roofs, solar panels are encouraged to be placed on flat roof sections as much as possible.
 - c. On a flat roof, consider installing panels flat or with a low slope, and at the least visible portion of the roof.
 - d. Solar panels should be arranged neatly in a rectangular format.

8.3 SKYLIGHTS

- 8.3.1. Skylights or light tunnels should have a flat, low profile and be placed to minimize their visibility from the street.
 - a. Domed/bubble skylights or sky tunnels are discouraged.



Figure 61: These rooftop solar panels do not rise substantially above the roofline, are parallel to the roof plane, and are minimally visible from the street.



Figure 62: These rooftop solar panels rise noticeably above the roofline and are highly visible from the street.

APPENDIX B: REFERENCES

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An excellent resource to help with preserving or restoring an Eichler home is www.eichlernetwork.com.

APPENDIX C: SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR’S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Read More: “The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties: Rehabilitation as a Treatment and Standards for Rehabilitation,” National Park Service, February 1, 2024. Accessed June 2025, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/treatment-standards-rehabilitation.htm>.

**SAN JOSE EICHLER NEIGHBORHOODS
OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS**

