



Fraternity and Sorority House Design Guidelines

The following Design Guidelines apply to any construction or improvement of the Fraternity and Sorority Housing at Mississippi State University. These guidelines identify elements and requirements to be included in the design and siting of the proposed houses. The collective product will be a unique neighborhood based on thematic structure, which is perceived as being in harmony with the setting that it occupies.

1. Design Review: Proposed construction of or improvements/modifications to any properties shall receive prior approval from the Master Plan Development and Advisory Committee, Office of Planning Design and Construction Administration (OPDCA) and the Master Plan Development Advisory Committee – Design Review Subcommittee (DRC). Additionally, OPDCA will review Construction Design documents prior to any work proceeding on this site to ensure that the project meets University guidelines/standards. Written authorization should be obtained from the Director of OPDCA prior to commencement of any construction/demolition on a Greek lot.

2. Building Design: Each fraternity/sorority house shall be designed primarily for residential purposes and shall express a traditional residential style. Materials and details shall be consistent with a residential scale. The vision for the subdivision is a thematic look that retains the unique personalities of the chapters residing there. As such, care should be taken to repeat the finishes used by neighboring lots. Materials that are used on the front of the houses shall also be used consistently on the side and rear of the structure. Materials should be selected for ease of long-term maintenance.

Foundations shall be brick.

- a. Brick is encouraged on at a minimum of 3 sides of the building. Vinyl siding is not allowed.
- b. Front porch/portico elements are recommended as a feature to reinforce the residential/neighborhood character of the street frontage.
- c. Gutters shall be copper or aluminum to match the trim color.
- d. Indoor Fireplaces are strongly discouraged. Chimneys are allowed as architectural features.
- e. No flat roofs. All shingles to be dimensional unless otherwise approved by DRC.
- f. All exterior colors, including shingles, shall be pre-approved by the OPDCA and the DRC.

3. Building Construction: Only one Greek house, two stories in height, shall be built on any lot unless otherwise approved. The height may be increased to three to four stories if approved by the DRC and OPDCA. Walkout basements may also be added if the lot permits. Written approval from OPDCA shall be obtained before any clearing, grading, or construction of any kind begins.

4. Accessibility: Each house should comply with federal law related to accessible design; in addition the university wishes to promote equal access to all students, faculty, staff, alumni and guest. These high standards lead to some additional requirements for Greek housing.

- a. An elevator shall be provided in structures with more than one story; each level of the structure should be accessible via an elevator or ramp.
- b. New construction that is attached to existing structures shall provide an elevator that allows access to the existing structure.
- c. Accessible parking should be provided for each house; coordinate with OPDCA and Parking and Transit Office.
- d. Allowing each entrance to the house to be accessible is highly encouraged; but the main entrances shall be accessible.

- e. Access throughout the entire house is highly encouraged.
- f. An accessible suite with private accessible bathroom shall be provided in each house.
- g. Each public restroom shall provide accessible fixtures.
- h. Any water fountains that are provided shall be accessible.

5. Fire Alarm and Sprinkler System: Each building shall include a fire alarm system and fire sprinkler system designed to meet University specifications for Student Housing. Current design standards will be made available to designers.

6. Location of Buildings on Lots: Each building erected on any lot must be situated in accordance with building setback lines shown on the site plan. The lot does not include the portion of curb and sidewalk in front of the house. Building setbacks for all lot lines is 20'. DRC, OPDCA and General Counsel may allow variance from a setback with legitimate design limitations on a lot; however these variances are highly discouraged.

7. Walls and Fences: No fence or wall shall be constructed on any lot without approval of the DRC and OPDCA. Walls and fences shall be constructed of materials that are consistent with the architectural character of the house. Exact materials for walls and fences should be labeled and detailed for submittals to the DRC and OPDCA. Any exposed culverts shall be treated with a material consistent with building design.

8. Patios and Walkways: Any patio must be constructed at grade level and shall be constructed of durable materials such as brick, stone, or concrete. All walkways must be constructed of concrete or brick. All walks and patios are highly encouraged to be 100% accessible.

9. Out Buildings/Auxiliary Structures: No out structure use shall be constructed on the lot without prior approval of the DRC and OPDCA. Out Structures are highly discouraged.

10. Signage: No permanent signage shall be put up on any lot, building or building windows, without prior written approval OPDCA and DRC. Each house shall be clearly identified with street numbers and organization name, in both Greek letters and spelled out in English. Any letters that are a permanent part of or affixed to the exterior of the house must be approved and situated above the 2nd story so they are inaccessible. Signage for the back of the house is recommended, consistent with lot signage used on the front of the house.

11. Screening: Unsightly items such as garbage cans, utility boxes, and mechanical equipment shall be screened to conceal them from view of neighboring lots and streets. Screening shall consist of approved fences and/or landscape buffers; brick is highly encouraged on enclosures.

12. Antenna: Any antenna placed upon a Greek lot shall be reviewed for placement, size and style requirements. Antenna shall be reviewed and approved by the Campus DRC and Master Plan Committee before installation. All DRC submittal procedures should be followed.

13. Trailers/Vehicles: No trailers, boats or vehicles may be stored on any of the lots.

14. Garbage and Refuse Disposal: Trash, garbage or other waste shall not be kept except in rigid, sanitary containers. Location of the dumpster shall be approved by DRC during Design Review. For every two lots, two garbage dumpsters and one recycling dumpster are allowed. No additional collection bins or dumpsters will be permitted without approval. These should be screened under item 11 of these guidelines.

- 15. Exterior Lighting:** Exterior lighting shall be designed to contain the light within a given lot while avoiding disturbance of neighboring lots. No open floodlights should be seen from the street or surrounding lots. Exterior lighting is highly encourage to follow Mississippi State University Design and Construction Standards.
- 16. Landscape:** Each lot shall be fully landscaped with grass, shrubbery, and trees consistent with the residential neighborhood character. An irrigation system is encouraged to be installed on lot that provides 100% coverage. No water features/pools will be considered. A landscaping and irrigation plan shall be presented at Design Review for approval of the DRC and OPDCA; these plans should be stamped by a registered landscape architect. Any changes to the landscaping plan shall go back to DRC for review. Each house shall be responsible for the on-going maintenance of landscape within its lot area. The University will share responsibility for landscape maintenance for all common areas of the subdivision. (See 18 for definition of common space)
- 17. Parking:** Parking will be constructed by the University, adjacent to Greek lots at a time at which funding is available and those lots have been approved by the DRC and OPDCA. "House Proctor" and "Greek President" may have 1 spot designated at each house for parking; no additional designated spots will be accommodated or approved. All designated spots must be marked per OPDCA standards. Each Greek organization will responsible for funding the appropriate markings.
- 18. Common Areas:** The University shall retain the authority to approve any use of, or improvement on, any common area within the Subdivision site. Common Space is any space outside of the lot boundary limits per the plat that is filed with the county.
- 19. Low Impact Design:** Construction each lot is encourage to follow low impact design principles and practices that promote public health, safety, and welfare by providing greater protection for and conservation of water resources, ecological processes, environmental quality, and community character. Preserving water resources will help protect quality of life and promote environmentally sustainable growth.
- 20. Utilities:** MSU has developed a set of Utility Standards that shall be followed in all construction operations. Any requirements for increased utility infrastructure due to additions or modifications will be funded and provided by the construction project, and shall comply with the MSU Utility Standard up to and including the point of metering. Any renovation or modification will require the house to upgrade all existing systems up to and including the point of metering to comply with the MSU Utility Standards.
- 21. Building Code Compliance:** New and renovated structures are required to meet current Federal ADA design standards, current University adopted building code (IBC) and structures are encouraged to follow Mississippi State University Policy OP 01.27; to exceed ASHRAE 90.1 energy standard by 30%. All construction projects on Greek lots must be submitted to OPDCA for review and acceptance of construction documents prior to commencement of any construction on a Greek Lot. All projects will be reviewed and comments issued within 30 business days of submittal to OPDCA. The State Fire Marshal is the Authority Having Jurisdiction when it comes to Life Safety compliance.
- 22. Other Uses:** The University shall retain the authority to develop unused building lots for other University purposes.

These guidelines may be amended to address identified concerns, additions to or alternate building products and clarification of the intended thematic elements.