

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 214-7 OF THE CODE OF ROCKDALE COUNTY, GEORGIA, AS AMENDED, AND INCORPORATE SECTION 214-14, TO BECOME AND BE MADE A PART OF THE CODE OF ROCKDALE COUNTY, GEORGIA, SO AS TO ESTABLISH MINIMUM ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL USES; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Rockdale County is charged with the protection of the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Rockdale County; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the authority granted by general law and the Rockdale County Code of Ordinances, the County is charged with exercising the powers of zoning; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners desires to establish minimum architectural standards for residential uses to promote high-quality design, protect property values, enhance community character, and ensure new development contributes positively to the overall appearance and livability of the County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Board of Commissioners of Rockdale County, Georgia, and it is hereby ordained by the authority of same as follows:

Sec. 214-7. Exterior building materials

(c) Attached and Detached Single-Family and Manufactured Home Building Exterior Finish Materials

- (1) Exterior building materials shall be primarily brick, stone, other masonry, glass, wood, or cementitious fiberboard. Vinyl shall be prohibited except for window frames (head, sill, jambs).
- (2) All exposed foundation walls, including a water table between 18 and 24 inches above finished grade on all sides of the building, shall be faced with brick, stone, or other masonry material. Where grade slopes toward a basement condition, the brick or stone water table shall extend along the sides and rear of the home to match the height established on the front façade.
- (3) All brick, stone, or other masonry shall be full- or half-depth. Simulated veneer panels are prohibited. Simulated masonry that are individually stacked or applied are acceptable.
- (4) Metal shall be permitted only as standing seam metal roofing or as an architectural accent comprising a maximum of ten percent (10%) of any one facade. Acceptable metal materials are limited to architectural metal panels, architectural metal cladding, metal mesh, and perforated metal. Examples of metal materials not permitted include but are not limited to stock PEMB metal skins commonly referred to as 'R-panel' and sheet metal systems with exposed fasteners, except as required for perforated metal.
- (5) Concrete masonry units are prohibited.
- (6) Industrial metal siding is prohibited.
- (7) Exposed plywood/OSB/pressed wood sheathing is prohibited.
- (8) Exposed neon, LED or other types of exposed bulb accent lighting is prohibited.
- (9) Equipment screens for ground mounted units shall have a finish that is consistent with the finish materials of the building façade or provide vegetative landscape screening immediately around the units. Screening shall not resemble mechanical louvers.

- (10) Equipment screens for wall mounted units shall have finishes that is consistent with the finish materials of the building façade, or vegetative landscape screening shall be provided immediately in front of the equipment units. Screening shall not resemble mechanical louvers.
- (11) Equipment screens for roof mounted units and appliances shall be a material consistent with the finish materials of the building facades. Screening shall not resemble mechanical louvers.
- (12) Exterior Color Requirements.
 - i. No more than three (3) different exterior finish materials or applied wall colors may be used on any single building elevation. Additional colors or materials may be used for architectural elements such as balconies, foundations, decks, doors, patios, porches, and windows, and shall not count toward the maximum.
 - ii. Bright or fluorescent colors are prohibited.
- (13) As related to Manufactured Homes, these standards shall apply to all Class A, Class B, and Class C manufactured homes, as defined by this UDO.

(d) Multifamily Residential Building Exterior Finish Materials

- (1) Exterior building materials shall be primarily brick, stone, other masonry, glass, wood, or cementitious fiberboard. Vinyl shall be prohibited except for window frames (head, sill, jambs).
 - (2) Building walls shall incorporate brick, cast stone, and/or stone for at least 30% of the non-fenestration façade area in the first and second story. Exposed basement walls shall be considered part of the first story.
 - (3) All brick, stone, or other masonry shall be full- or half-depth. Simulated veneer panels are prohibited. Simulated masonry that are individually stacked or applied are acceptable.
 - (4) Metal shall be permitted only as standing seam metal roofing or as an architectural accent comprising a maximum of 20 percent (20%) of any one facade. Acceptable metal materials are limited to architectural metal panels, architectural metal cladding, metal mesh, and perforated metal. Examples of metal materials not permitted include but are not limited to stock PEMB metal skins commonly referred to as 'R-panel' and sheet metal systems with exposed fasteners, except as required for perforated metal.
 - (5) Exposed concrete masonry units are prohibited.
 - (6) Exposed plywood/OSB/pressed wood sheathing is prohibited.
 - (7) Exposed neon, LED, or other types of exposed bulb accent lighting shall be prohibited, unless otherwise authorized by this UDO.
 - (8) Equipment screens for ground mounted units shall have a finish that is consistent with the finish materials of the building façade or provide vegetative landscape screening immediately around the units. Screening shall not resemble mechanical louvers.
 - (9) Equipment screens for wall mounted units shall have finish that is consistent with the finish materials of the building façade, or vegetative landscape screening shall be provided immediately in front of the equipment units. Screening shall not resemble mechanical louvers.
 - (10) Equipment screens for roof mounted units and appliances shall be a material consistent with the finish materials of the building facades. Screening shall not resemble mechanical louvers.
 - (11) Exterior Color Requirements
 - a. No more than three (3) different exterior finish materials or applied wall colors may be used on any single building elevation. Additional colors or materials may be used for architectural elements such as balconies, foundations, decks, doors, patios, porches, and windows, and shall not count toward the maximum.
 - b. Bright or fluorescent colors are prohibited.
- (e) Where any requirement of this section conflicts with a standard or requirement expressly stated within a specific zoning or overlay district, the standard or requirement of the district shall govern.

These provisions are intended to supplement, and not supersede, the applicable standards of the underlying zoning district unless otherwise expressly stated.

Sec. 214-13 Mailbox support structures

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Sec. 214-14 Architectural Design Standards

(a) Applicability

- (1) The architectural standards established by this ordinance shall apply to all zoning districts where residential uses are permitted.
- (2) As related to Manufactured Homes, these standards shall apply to all Class A, Class B, and Class C manufactured homes, as defined by this UDO.
- (3) Where any provision of this ordinance conflicts with a standard or requirement expressly stated within a zoning or overlay district, the standard or requirement of the district shall control. The provisions of this ordinance are intended to be supplementary to, and not in lieu of, applicable zoning district standards unless otherwise expressly stated.

(b) Architectural Design Standards for Multifamily Residential Buildings

(1) Design Composition

- a. Building designs shall incorporate a composition of features. Features include, but are not limited to, columns, windows, doors, balconies, pilasters, changing rooflines, plan offsets, cornice, porch entrances, tower elements, architectural patterns and texture, cupolas, and dormers. The maximum wall length without façade features shall not exceed fifty (50) feet along street-facing façades.
- b. The appearance and materials of the rear and side walls shall be similar to and compatible with the front of the building.
- c. Building entrances shall be well-marked and identifiable from the building form.
- d. Common walls and common floors ceiling between units shall be constructed to meet a sound transmission coefficient (STC) rating of 50 or higher.
- e. Building designs with greater than three (3) stories shall incorporate at least one significant color change, material change, or architectural feature on either the lower story or upper story. This requirement shall not apply to corner elements, entrance features, or other architectural projections, provided such features are clearly designed to emphasize building entrances or articulate a special architectural volume.
- f. Exterior burglar bars and steel roll-down curtains are prohibited.
- g. Ground mounted electrical, mechanical, and like utility equipment shall be screened. Screening height shall be equal to the height of the equipment. Screening shall not resemble mechanical louvers.
- h. Wall mounted electrical, mechanical, utility meters, and other utility equipment shall be screened. Screening height shall be equal to the height of the equipment. Screening shall not resemble mechanical louvers.
- i. All roof mounted equipment, such as mechanical units, vent hoods, communication devices, and/or other building system(s) equipment, shall be screened from view on all sides of the building. Roof screening height shall be equal to the height of the equipment. Screening shall not resemble mechanical louvers.

(2) Additional Requirements Applicable to Multi-Family Residential Buildings

- a. Utility equipment and service meters are to be located away from high visibility and usage areas and effectively screened from view. The use of enclosed structures or interior access to utility equipment and meters is encouraged. The use of utility closets on exterior walls is prohibited.

- b. All roof vents, pipes, antennas, satellite dishes, and other roof equipment (except chimneys) shall be located on the rear elevations and, except for satellite dishes, be painted to match the color of the roof or, if technical considerations prevent installing satellite dishes on the rear elevation, then such equipment shall be installed where it will have minimal visual impact as seen from the street.
- c. Trash enclosures in amenity areas shall be screened from view on at least three (3) sides by a solid wall or fence of at least six (6) feet in height, and on the fourth side by a solid gate no less than five (5) feet in height.

(c) Architectural Design Standards for Attached and Detached Residential Buildings

(1) Design Composition

- a. Building designs shall incorporate a composition of features. Features include, but are not limited to, columns, architectural windows, balconies, pilasters, changing rooflines, cornice, ornamental roof brackets, porch entrances, tower elements, material patterns, cupolas, and dormers.
- b. Ground mounted electrical, mechanical, and like utility equipment shall be screened. Screening height shall be equal to the height of the equipment.
- c. Wall mounted electrical, mechanical, utility meters, and other utility equipment shall be screened. Screening height shall be equal to the height of the equipment.
- d. All roof mounted equipment, such as mechanical units, vent hoods, communication devices, and/or other building system(s) equipment, shall be screened from view on all sides of the building. Roof screening height shall be equal to the height of the equipment.
- e. Garages on Detached Residential Uses:
 - i. Front-facing garage doors shall not take up more than 40 percent (40%) of the linear width of any street-facing façade.
 - ii. Front-facing garage doors shall be offset from the front façade by a minimum of five (5) feet. This offset may be achieved through conditioned interior space or a porch.
- f. Garage doors on any residential building shall incorporate fenestration, decorative hardware, or other architectural detailing. Alternative treatments may be approved by the Director of Planning and Development if they provide equivalent visual interest.
- g. The front façades shall have architectural modulation and detail that includes features such as varied materials and wall planes, varied roof forms and roof lines, balconies, porches, bay windows, varied window sizes and shapes, shutters, entrance doors, sidelights, pilasters, varied garage door designs, and other features to provide visual interest.
- h. Residential structures along existing public right-of-way shall require any side or rear façade that is visible from the public right-of-way to include the same exterior finish materials and similar landscaping as the front of the structure. In addition, it shall include windows and architectural features similar to the front façade, including but not limited to, awnings, cornice work, edge detailing, or other decorative finish materials.
- i. Stoops and porches, where facing streets or open spaces, shall be a minimum of four feet deep.
- j. All chimneys and fireplace enclosures on the exterior of the façade shall extend to the ground and a minimum of 3 feet above the roof line.

(2) Site Requirements.

a. Required Driveway Depths:

- i. Driveways shall be constructed to provide sufficient space for a standard passenger vehicle. Vehicles are prohibited from overhanging or obstructing any adjacent sidewalk or the public right-of-way.

- b. All sidewalks internal to a development shall be least five (5) feet in width and shall be located on both sides of any public or private street.
- c. Utility Requirements.
 - i. Individual systems for water, fuel/gas, and HVAC shall be required for each unit.
 - ii. Individual metering shall be provided for water, electric, and fuel/gas utilities.
 - iii. Easements for utility lines shall be provided in the common ownership area where lateral service connections shall take place.
- d. All roof vents, pipes, antennas, satellite dishes, and other roof equipment (except chimneys) shall be located on the rear elevations and except for satellite dishes be painted to match the color of the roof or, if technical considerations prevent installing satellite dishes on the rear elevation, then such equipment shall be installed where it will have minimal visual impact as seen from the street.
- e. Trash enclosures in amenity areas shall be screened from view on at least three (3) sides by a solid wall or fence of at least six (6) feet in height, and on the fourth side by a solid gate no less than five (5) feet in height.

(d) Manufactured Homes Standards

- (1) Any replacement of a pre-existing manufactured home or mobile home with a new manufactured or mobile home shall be permitted in accordance with O.C.G.A § 36-66-7 et seq. Furthermore, an existing, nonconforming industrialized home that was lawfully permitted prior to the effective date of this unified development ordinance may be replaced with a new manufactured home, notwithstanding the architectural bulk standards herein, provided the replacement is done so within 12 months of the date of removal of the existing mobile home and all conditions and requirements of O.C.G.A § 36-66-7 et seq are met.

All ordinances or resolutions or parts thereof in direct conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed. This ordinance shall be in force and take effect upon adoption.

This the 9th day of September, 2025.

ROCKDALE COUNTY, GEORGIA
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BY: Janice Van Ness
Janice Van Ness, Chair and CEO

BY: Tuwanya Smith
Tuwanya Smith, Commissioner

BY: Doreen Williams
Doreen Williams, Commissioner

Attest:

BY: Jennifer Rutledge
Jennifer Rutledge, Clerk

Approved as to form:

BY: M. Qader A. Baig
M. Qader A. Baig, County Attorney

First Reading: 8.12.25

Second Reading: 9.9.25