

# Townhouse Design Standards

## Visual Preference Survey Results



# SURVEY OVERVIEW - BACKGROUND

- The survey asked a series of questions, using a visual format, about townhouse design preferences
- A total of 20 questions were asked
- The April issue of *Currents* included information linking to the survey
- The Townhouse Design Standards project website included a link to the survey
- Survey fliers were passed out at neighborhood meetings and available at the Planning and Community Development Department front desk the month of April
- The survey was open April 1 – 30, 2019



# SURVEY OVERVIEW - QUESTIONS

- Questions 1-10 presented an image of a townhouse project and asked survey respondents to score each image from 0 to 100 in terms of their design preference. A score of 100 indicated the survey respondent felt the project had an exceptional design.
- Questions 11-19 asked survey respondents to rank a series of images (3-6) all relating to the same design element of a project described below:
  - Vehicle access onto a site
  - Pedestrian access onto a site
  - Building orientation
  - Building modulation
  - Façade articulation
  - Location of trash storage and collection
  - Outdoor space
  - Landscaping
- Question 20 asked survey respondents to tell us anything they would like relating to townhouse design standards.



# SURVEY RESULTS - OVERVIEW

- Total responses: 534
- Completion rate: 85%
- Average time spent: 12 minutes
- Total written comments (Question 20): 216



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTIONS 1-2

Please score the following townhouse developments in terms of your design preference. A score of 100 indicates an exceptional design.

- Average Score: 68
- Median Score: 75



Survey Respondents that Answered: 512  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 22

- Average Score: 35
- Median Score: 30



Survey Respondents that Answered: 505  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 29

# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTIONS 3-4

Please score the following townhouse developments in terms of your design preference. A score of 100 indicates an exceptional design.

- Average Score: 29
- Median Score: 20



Survey Respondents that Answered: 497  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 37

- Average Score: 56
- Median Score: 60

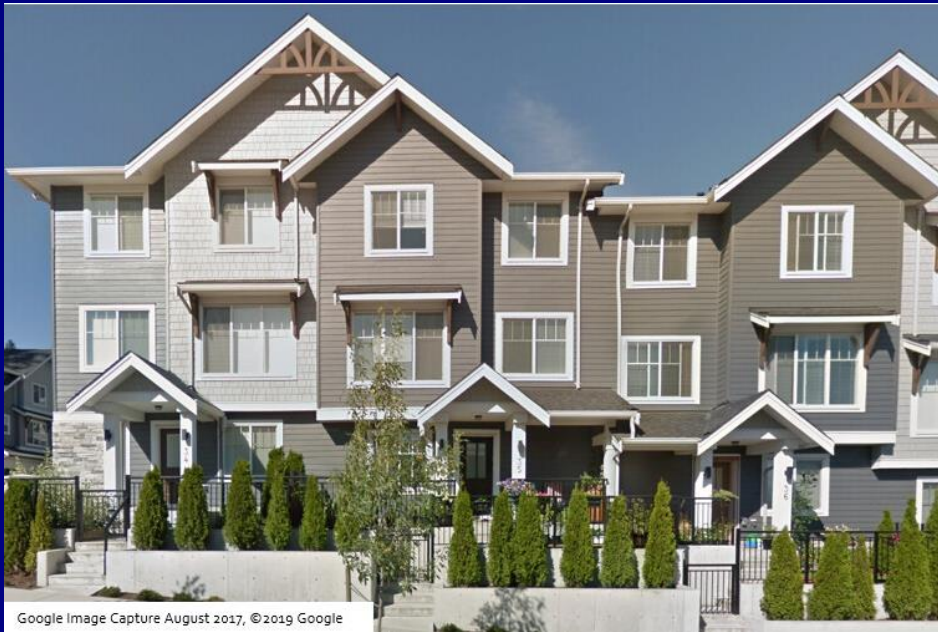


Survey Respondents that Answered: 513  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 21

# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTIONS 5-6

Please score the following townhouse developments in terms of your design preference. A score of 100 indicates an exceptional design.

- Average Score: 55
- Median Score: 60



Survey Respondents that Answered: 511  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 23

- Average Score: 37
- Median Score: 31



Survey Respondents that Answered: 508  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 26

# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTIONS 7-8

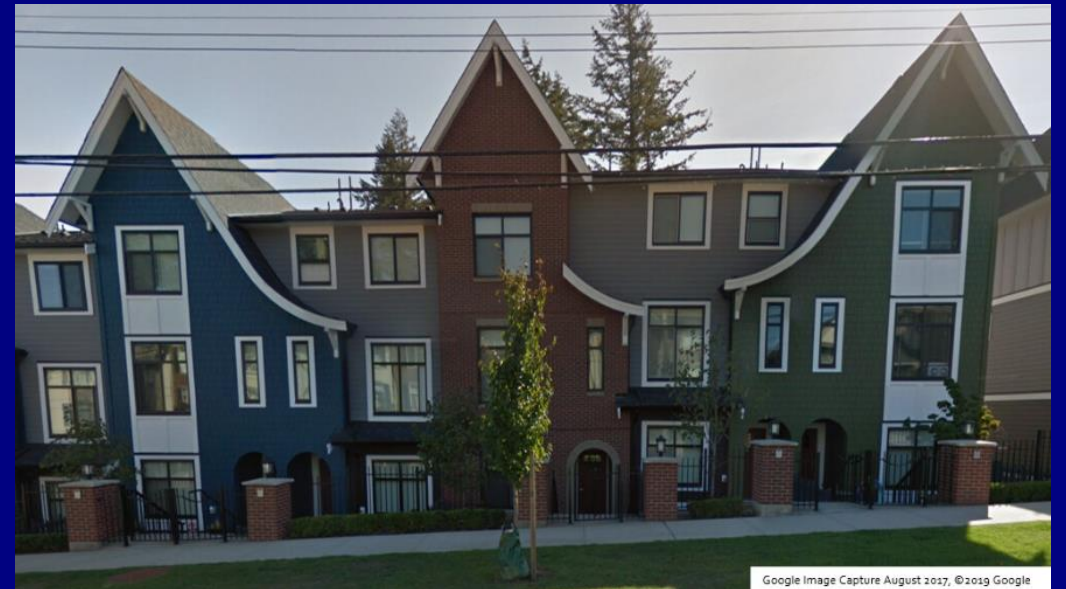
Please score the following townhouse developments in terms of your design preference. A score of 100 indicates an exceptional design.

- Average Score: 37
- Median Score: 34



Survey Respondents that Answered: 508  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 26

- Average Score: 51
- Median Score: 55



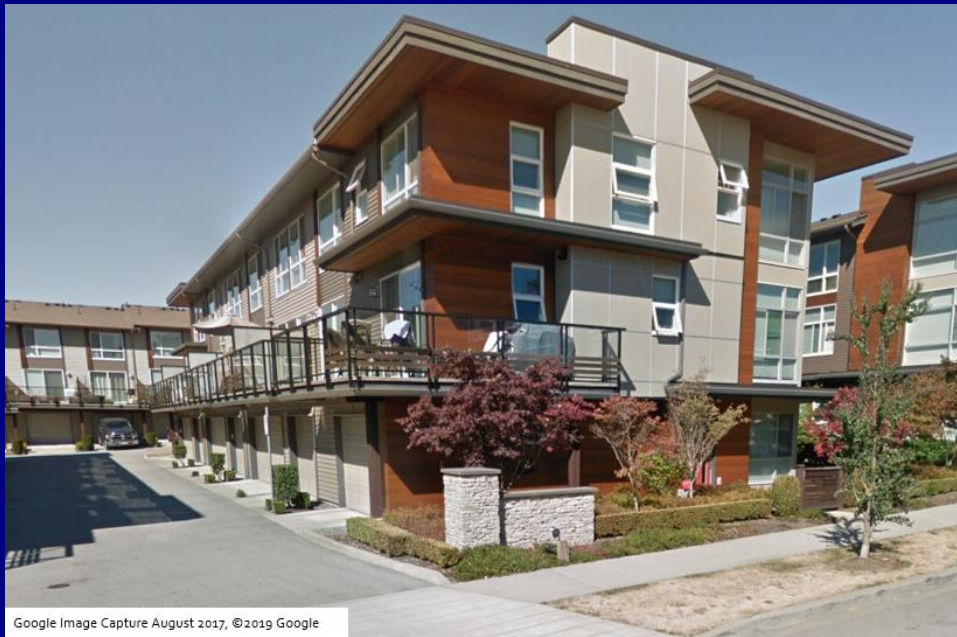
Survey Respondents that Answered: 510  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 24



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTIONS 9-10

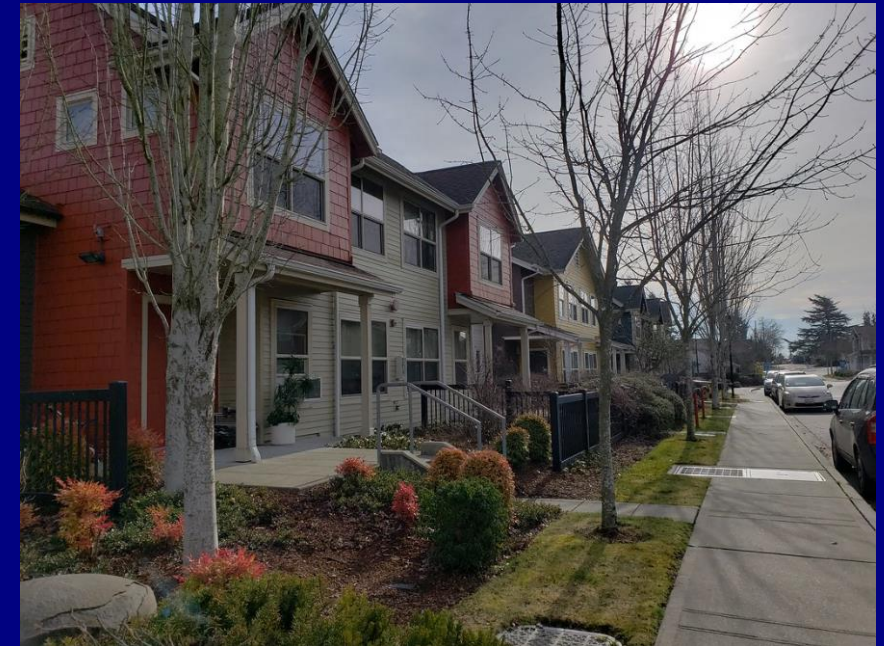
Please score the following townhouse developments in terms of your design preference. A score of 100 indicates an exceptional design.

- Average Score: 34
- Median Score: 30



Survey Respondents that Answered: 506  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 28

- Average Score: 66
- Median Score: 75



Survey Respondents that Answered: 515  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 19

# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 11

- **Vehicle Access:** Please rank the following images in terms of your design preference. One (1) is your most preferred design option, while four (4) is your least preferred design option.

Ranked #1: Vehicle access behind building, garage parking



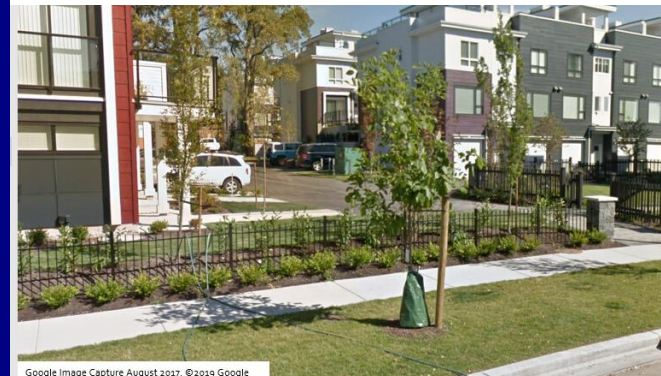
Ranked #2: Vehicle access to side of building



Ranked #3: Vehicle access in front of building



Ranked #4: Vehicle access behind building, surface parking



Survey Respondents that Answered: 503  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 31

# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 12

- Pedestrian Access: Please rank the following images in terms of your design preference. One (1) is your most preferred option, while four (4) is your least preferred design option.

Ranked #1: Pedestrian access from public sidewalk



Ranked #2: Pedestrian access from path that connects to public sidewalk



Ranked #3: Pedestrian access next to driveway



Ranked #4: Pedestrian access from driveway



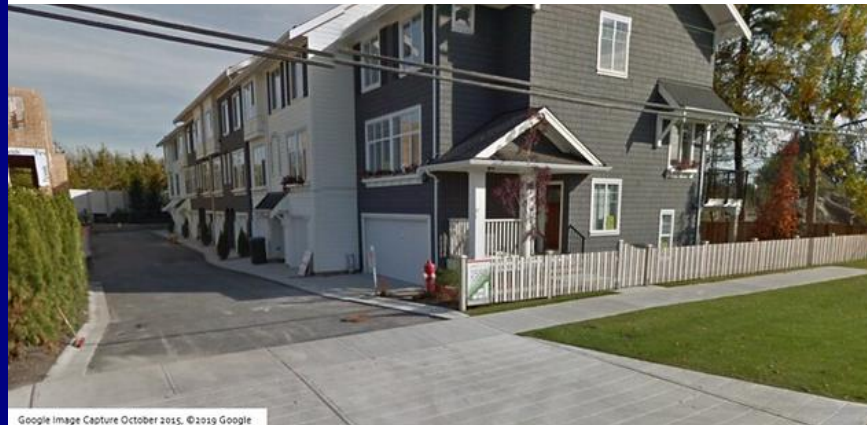
# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 13

- Building Orientation: Please rank the following images in terms of your design preference. One (1) is your most preferred option, while four (4) is your least preferred design option.

Ranked #1: Front of building oriented to street



Ranked #2: One unit of the building oriented to the street, the rest oriented to driveway



Ranked #3: One unit of the building oriented to street, the rest oriented to alley



Ranked #4: Side of building oriented to the street



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 14

- Building Modulation: Please rank the following images in terms of your design preference. One (1) is your most preferred option, while three (3) is your least preferred design option.

Ranked #1: Building offsets



Ranked #2: Building stepbacks



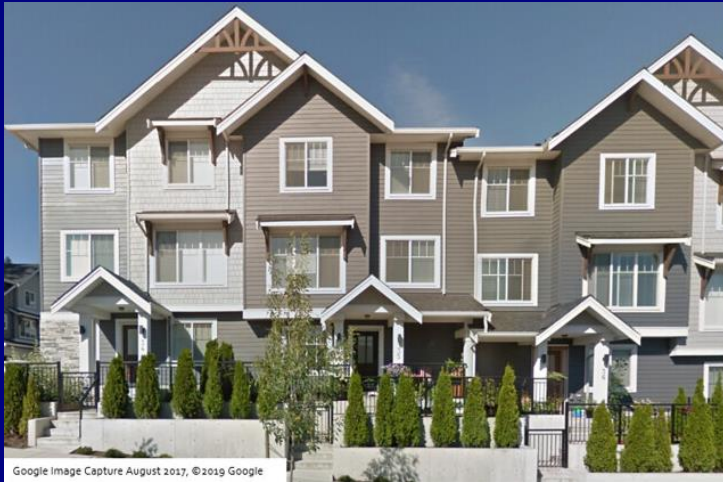
Ranked #3: Building projections



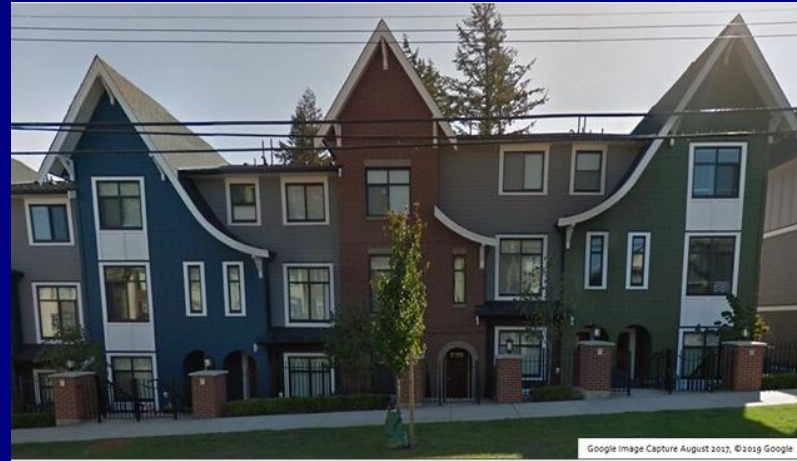
# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 15

- Façade Articulation: Please rank the following images in terms of your design preference. One (1) is your most preferred option, while three (3) is your least preferred design option.

Ranked #1 Roofline variation 1



Ranked #2: Roofline variation 2



Ranked #3: Window trim



Ranked #4: Glazing (windows)



Survey Respondents that Answered: 474  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 60

# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 16

- Façade Articulation: Please rank the following images in terms of your design preference. One (1) is your most preferred option, while three (3) is your least preferred design option.

Ranked #1: Color variation and material change



Ranked #2: Color variation, but no material change



Ranked #3: No material change or color variation



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 17

- Trash, Recycling and Compost Storage and Collection: Please rank the following images in terms of your design preference. One (1) is your most preferred option, while three (3) is your least preferred design option.

Ranked #1: Trash, recycling and compost is stored in the garage of each unit and collected from the alley



Ranked #2: Trash, recycling and compost is stored in an outdoor enclosure and collected from the driveway



Ranked #3: Trash, recycling and compost is stored in the garage of each unit and collected from the street





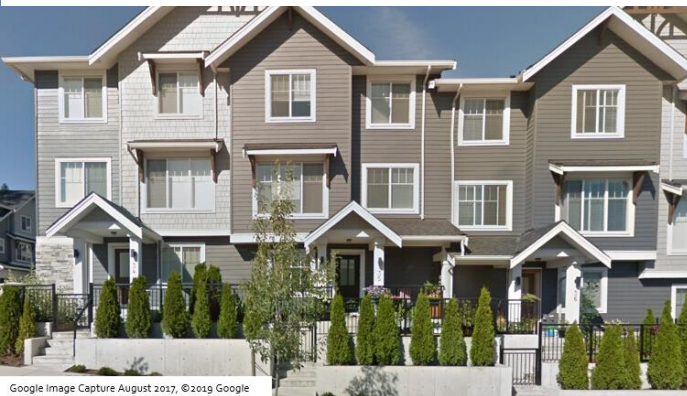
# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 18

- Outdoor Amenity Space: Please rank the following images in terms of your design preference. One (1) is your most preferred option, while six (6) is your least preferred design option.

Ranked #1: Rear patio with yard



Ranked #2 (tie): Front porch stoop with landscape screening



Ranked #2 (tie): Common garden area



Ranked #5: Upper story balcony



Ranked #3: Common open space



Ranked #4: Rooftop balcony



Survey Respondents that Answered: 463  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 71

# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 19

- Landscaping: Please rank the following images in terms of your design preference. One (1) is your most preferred option, while four (4) is your least preferred design option.

Ranked #1: Front yard landscaping with screening



Ranked #2: Foundation landscaping and vertical greening



Ranked #3: Front yard landscaping



Survey Respondents that Answered: 461  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 73



Ranked #4: Minimal landscaping



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 20

20. If you have anything you would like to tell us relating to townhouse design standards, please enter it here, thank you!

- Many respondents covered multiple topics in their feedback, including:
  - Design of townhouses (167 comments)
  - Comments on other zoning related issues (e.g., required parking, density, tree preservation) (45 comments)
  - Topics not easily categorized (17 comments)
  - Survey design (8 comments)
  - Thanked the City for having a survey (9 comments)



Survey Respondents that Answered: 216  
Survey Respondents that Skipped: 318

# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 20

20. If you have anything you would like to tell us relating to townhouse design standards, please enter it here, thank you!

- Design of townhouses common themes included:
  - Consideration for accessibility and aging in place
  - Consideration for families with children
  - Fit with neighborhood character
  - Importance of landscaping and open space
  - Dislike of “sideways” building orientation
  - Variation in design between and within developments (“avoid cookie-cutter”)
  - Dislike of certain materials or styles (some like modern style, others dislike it)
  - Lack of modulation (“box-like structures”)
  - Screening/placement of garbage bins for collection



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 20

20. If you have anything you would like to tell us relating to townhouse design standards, please enter it here, thank you!

- Design of townhouses sample comments:

- “Townhouses need to be accessible. Steps must not be only for the young and fit. Every effort should be made to avoid stairs too steep for small children or older adults.”
- “An architectural fit to each neighborhood shouldn't be ignored. The modern-minimalist looks out of place in Ridgecrest area among 1950's bungalows.”
- “The garbage cans should not be visible and we shouldn't be looking at large empty sides of building. Vegetation, trees and screening should be a priority.”
- “Please don't let more townhouses that have front doors out of sight. All units should have front door entrances visible from the street.”
- “Anything that can be done to mitigate the overall bulk of the building, using setbacks, varying rooflines, etc. to break up the facade would be most welcome.”
- “Please don't create design standards that result in all townhouses looking alike. We prefer variety.”



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 20

20. If you have anything you would like to tell us relating to townhouse design standards, please enter it here, thank you!

- Comments on other zoning related issues common themes included:
  - Desire for increased onsite parking for residents and visitors
  - Desire for increased setbacks
  - Desire for decreased density
  - Desire for decreased building height
  - Desire for decreased building coverage
  - Desire for tree preservation



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 20

20. If you have anything you would like to tell us relating to townhouse design standards, please enter it here, thank you!

- Other zoning related issues sample comments:
  - “There needs to be off-street parking for two vehicles.”
  - “Where are their guests going to park if they have anyone over?”
  - “Please decrease the amount of units that are allowed to be crammed onto a lot.”
  - “The city should increase the required space between a structure and neighboring property line.”
  - “No building from lot line to lot line.”
  - “Preserve tall mature trees or require the planting of, with a focus on natives.”
  - “Don't like the townhomes that are built right up to the sidewalk and tower over the pedestrians and street.”



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 20

• 20. If you have anything you would like to tell us relating to townhouse design standards, please enter it here, thank you!

- Topics not easily categorized varied:
  - Some referenced, or provided links, to materials
  - Some emphasized the need to build more housing, any housing
  - Others said no more townhouses





# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 20

20. If you have anything you would like to tell us relating to townhouse design standards, please enter it here, thank you!

- Topics not easily categorized sample comments :
  - “Top priority = build MORE. Shoreline will never be affordable until we build more, dense housing options. More apartment buildings, more condos, more townhomes, more multi-family residences. Build them all!”
  - “Have a look at the very successful projects created by architect/developer Jonathan Segal in San Diego <http://www.jonathansegalarchitect.com/projects>”
  - “Don't build them!”
  - “NO MORE TOWNHOUSES”
  - “I don't want ANY townhouses, condos, or apts. built! City of Shoreline is ruining our beloved neighborhood, Let Seattle trash their city, but please do not do this to our city.”
  - “Why is everything townhouses in the first place?”
  - “Local builders/developers that build townhome should be meaningfully engaged in feasibility of implementing any new standards.”



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 20

20. If you have anything you would like to tell us relating to townhouse design standards, please enter it here, thank you!

- Survey design comments:
  - “Asking citizens who are not necessarily informed about townhouse best practices is not necessarily a robust tool for informing decision making.”
  - “I have a lot of thoughts on topics that were not covered in the survey.”
  - “Of all of the photo examples you used - I liked none of them! They do not fit into the existing look of my neighborhood. Better projects might have sold the concept of townhomes to me. What you showed me were reasons not to except townhomes. Staff needs to get a better feel for the city they work in!”
  - “I am concerned that all of the questions about design features that had images will be very challenging to interpret - many people will be responding to the look of the home in the photo rather than the generalizable design features you are asking about. Please don't assume those responses are more valid than they are.”



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 20

20. If you have anything you would like to tell us relating to townhouse design standards, please enter it here, thank you!

- Survey design comments:
  - “This was a stupid survey. Many factors determine building design. Lot width, topography, depth, etc. all are factors that dictate a design. Projected sales cost is also a factor. Not one design fits all situations. If the city dictates certain design standards, all the new buildings look the same. Architects are not able to be creative and the result is a boring street scape, or units no longer affordable to moderate income families.”
  - “your survey was broken. the my ranking numbers disappeared on many of my selections.”
  - “Something simple but very important. Please remember that you are surveying people who most likely are not architects, engineers, or planners. Use words that the average person understands. What is articulation, modulation, etc?”
  - “My answers here are based on photos provided, but site specific conditions might affect my answer in actual conditions.”



# SURVEY RESULTS – QUESTION 20

20. If you have anything you would like to tell us relating to townhouse design standards, please enter it here, thank you!

- Thanked the City for having a survey sample comments:
  - “Thanks for the cool survey! That was fun!”
  - “Great Survey – Thanks!”
  - “I appreciate the opportunity to provide input into the design standards.”
  - “Glad the City is reviewing design standards for townhomes and that we were given the opportunity for community input.”



9 comments thanking Shoreline for having this survey

# Townhouse Design Standards

## Visual Preference Survey Results

Full survey results are available on the project website:  
[shorelinewa.gov/townhousedesign](http://shorelinewa.gov/townhousedesign)



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT