



Design Theory



Figure 1. Cayucos Beach

and windows of the home, while the sand closely matches the light tan shade of the building.

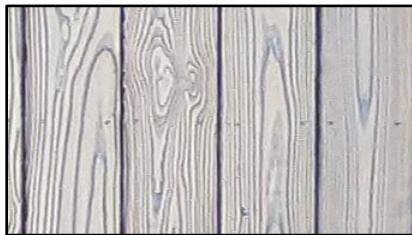


Figure 2. Façade

The architectural style, elements, and façade material fit well with the surrounding landscape. A modern, contemporary home with simple ornamentation and clean lines blends with the Cayucos beach and ocean elements rather than a home sticking out from or being apart from the natural elements of the area. For example, when viewing the Cayucos beach (see figure 1) the grey-blue ocean and sky parallels the grey trim

While contemporary in grey-tone and linearity, an important element of the façade is that it shows a connection to nature through use of wood grain. To complement this façade (see figure 2), exterior elements (patios, walkways, seat walls) would do well to choose natural elements such as natural stone for the hardscape rather than simple poured concrete squares typical of modern homes that don't relate to nature well.



Figure 3. Modern Home example with less connection to natural elements.

Figure three shows a typical modern home of metal, glass, and concrete where forms show clean lines yet don't speak to nature. In the design package for this Cayucos home, Design Option 1 is suggested as it includes natural limestone/sandstone materials. Design Options 2 and 3, which show different surfaces, are given for consideration. Yet, pure concrete surfaces in options 2 and 3 don't quite hit the mark in my opinion of connecting to natural elements and the California natural environment, as this home seems to be pointing toward.

Design Option One

For this description, please refer to the three boards (perspective views), ‘Design Option 1 – Pacific Ave. Frontage, Side Path, and Courtyard’.

Pacific Ave Frontage

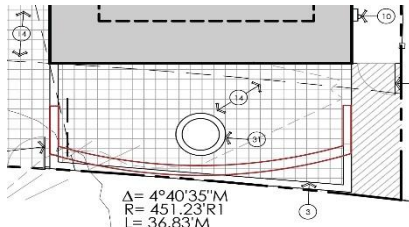


Figure 4. The seat wall arc in red

Hardscape/structures: the seat wall arc is centered on the front house wall with two straight sides that run toward the house (see figure 4). The sides of the seat wall stop before the building wall to allow 5 ft. wide entrances (clearances) into the patio from the side paths. Five feet wide pathways are standard widths for sidewalks where two people can walk side-by-side or for a comfortable, non-narrow walkway for one person.

A standard seat wall height ranges from 18-20” for comfortable seating. A standard width of the capstone or seat area (width of the top of the wall) is 15-18” (seat wall widths can range from 12-24”). The width of the wall depends on how large the seating area is preferred and consideration of any cushions placed on the wall, etc. (cushions can come in custom sizes).

Inspiration for the patio stone material comes from California’s environments and matches the color tone of the home. For example, limestone, a sedimentary rock created in marine environments from ancient coral reefs, sea creature remains, shells, etc. is found throughout the state such as in Monterey Co. and the Klamath Mountains of Northern California (see figure 5).



Figure 5. Marble Mountains formed from metamorphosed limestone, Siskiyou County, CA

Limestone, a white rock and sandstone, light tan, matches the home’s light whitish grey palette and thematically pairs with Cayucos as a beach town – limestone being a marine rock. If choosing among limestone/sandstone products from several companies, I would trend toward materials in the lighter ranges (rather than medium to darker tans) as light colors would match the tone of the home well.

In the design, the limestone/sandstone, natural stone slabs of the patio are large squares and rectangles in form (how they are cut), each stone being one to several feet across. Larger stone

sizes match a simple, modern look more than smaller-sized materials, such as bricks, pavers, etc., which can draw attention to themselves and look busy over large areas due to their small size.

Functionally, I prefer this first design option of hardscape due to the closed joints between the stones (the space/gap or joint between each stone is concrete). The second and third design options show 'open-joint' systems, where the spaces between each slab are filled with gravel or artificial turf. Unless permeability is a requirement from the city (I didn't see that it was when reviewing the original landscape plan which shows a solid paver patio), a closed joint patio would be easier to walk on, place furniture on, etc.

Standing still or walking on the joints (turf areas or gravel areas) between concrete slabs can be uncomfortable, thus reducing the actual usable area. In contrast, this first design option has closed joints and a continual, smooth surface across the entire patio. Open-joint patios may get dust and weed seeds blown in the joints, requiring more maintenance.

The wall face of the seat wall includes limestone/sandstone-tones of several colors. The capstone or seating area is concrete. The step from the back, sliding door is a concrete tread and the riser and side of the steps use the same material as the side of the seat wall.

The gravel of the planting bed is about ¾" to 1" stone size and includes light white, golden, and tan shades.

The fence matches the light grey, wood tone of the home and the boards are a contemporary, cross-buck style. The fence is 2.5 ft. tall.

Plants: species are chosen for low-maintenance and water use. Plants are kept low (naturally low growing) to maintain views from the home to the street and ocean. The taller plants are along the neighbor's fence.

Throughout the site, various succulents are used for their sculptural appearance and to keep with a plant palette that is less of a 'leafy, foliage' feel. The large, *Agave americana* is placed several feet from the patio so as it grows it will not reach into the seat wall area. This plant, the *Aloe aculeata*, and the *Agave ovatifolia* 'Frosty Blue' give a grey-blue, whitish tone.

Jasminum polyanthum can be planted on the other side of the seat wall and climb to spill over the wall, useful for its fragrance for people sitting on the wall. *Bougainvillea* 'San Diego Red' climbs on the fence. True reds look good against whitish backgrounds. *Muhlenbergia capillaris* blooms pink throughout late summer to fall. *Kumara plicatilis* includes interesting sculptural fans. *Yucca linearifolia* works with the fine-textured *Muhlenbergia*.

Courtyard

Hardscape/structures: the patio uses the same hardscape material as the Pacific Ave. frontage side of the home, keeping with light limestone/sandstones. The 2.5' crossbuck, grey wood fence is along the garage and a taller, 6 ft. privacy fence blocks views into the courtyard from the street. The steps have a concrete tread and the sides of the steps use the same stone material of the seat wall in the front. If there is a 1.5-2 ft. gap between the patio and the garage wall, vines can be planted here and a trellis can have its posts in this thin garden bed. This white, wooden trellis on both sides of the garage door can be freestanding and not attached to the garage wall. The gold-colored gravel of the planting bed is the same material from the front.

Plants: species selected in the foreground give a seaside/pool courtyard feel while having low water needs. *Encephalartos lehmannii* has interesting leaf forms and a cycad base without being too large. *Aloe aculeata*, *Senecio serpens*, and *Kalanchoe fedtschenkoi* are blue-toned succulents. *Rosa 'Claire Austin'* grows on the trellis and the fence. In the background, the shorter palms *Phoenix roebelenii* and *Rhapis excelsa* give a poolside feel to this hot tub area.

Side Path

Hardscape/structures: a 6 ft. privacy fence matches the grey-toned wood of the home. The top of this fence includes small cross shapes which match the crossbuck style of the low, 2.5 ft. fence along the property, seen in this view as well.

The pathway includes smaller stones that tie in with the side of the seat wall of the front view, and the horizontal lines of this pathway complement the vertical lines of the façade. This pathway material is inspired from a limestone path of several different stone hues from the Lurie Garden in Chicago, which is a great resource to look at as this famous garden matches the grey wood tone of the Cayucos home in its woodwork of boardwalks, and it uses limestone edging and pathways to compliment these grey wooden deck elements. This park is also in modern/contemporary style.

Plants: plants are low growing to not block views from these windows to the street or ocean. The one taller plant, *Kumara plicatilis* is placed midway on the wall portion without windows so as not to block views. The main planting design feature of this side path could be named a 'succulent walk', as it includes interesting sculptural forms of a variety of succulents in grey, green, and red such as *Agave attenuata*, *Agave potatorum* 'Kichiokan', *Aloe aculeata*, and *Cistanthe grandiflora*, which has pink blooms.

Festuca glauca is a small perennial grass, which also is low-maintenance such as the succulents. Rows of one species of perennial grass are popular in modern designs.

Design Options Two and Three

Design option two includes hardscape of concrete squares/rectangles with gravel in the joints. Design option three includes concrete forms with artificial turf in the joints. As previously stated, going this pure modern, non-naturalistic route with the hardscape would not speak as well to the color and material of the home in my opinion. Additionally, the open joints are less comfortable for walking on or furniture. Yet, these views are presented as options.

Thank you,

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