DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, April 27, 2016 – 7:00 P.M.
Hillview Community Center, Room 2
97 Hillview Avenue, Los Altos, California

DRAFT

MEETING MINUTES

Attendance
Committee members present: Thomas Barton, Anita Kay Enander, Edward Infante, Pat Marriott, Susan Mensinger, Teresa Morris, Jane Reed, Denis Salmon, Nancy Nealon See
City staff present: Jon Biggs, Community Development Director
Committee members absent: Hillary Frank, Deb Hope

1. Approve minutes from March 31, 2016 special meeting

   Motion: Reed/Salmon: Approved the March 31, 2016 special meeting minutes. Passed 9-0-2-0, absent: H. Frank, D. Hope

   Public Comment: Ron Packard spoke to past zoning changes and supports work and recommendations of Committee

2. Review and approve the Committee report

   Motion: Reed/Mensinger: Approved the Committee's report with the recommended changes. Passed 9-0-2-0, absent: H. Frank, D. Hope

   Request a future special meeting for May 2, 2016 to review feedback from the Community Development Department.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

Final Report 5-4-16

INTRODUCTION

In October 2014, Councilwoman Megan Satterlee recommended that the City Council appoint an ad hoc committee "to determine next steps to ensure new buildings downtown meet community expectations." (See *APPENDIX A* for the committee's charter.)

The impetus for forming the committee was resident reaction to new developments downtown, particularly along First Street. While not all residents dislike the new buildings, many—including some council members and PTC commissioners—were surprised by

- Height, bulk and mass
- Canyon effect created by tall buildings along a narrow street
- Disregard for "village character"
- Lack of appropriate landscaping
- Poor quality materials on some buildings

Council appointed the committee members in February 2015. Meetings began in March. The focus was on determining whether existing codes and guidelines were adequate and to make recommendations to ensure that future development meets community expectations with no surprises.

The committee was instructed to focus on residents' aspirations for the downtown and to exclude economic analysis.

Resources consulted by the committee are listed in *APPENDIX B*.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Tom Barton, Anita Enander, Hillary Frank (resigned), Deb Hope, Edward Infante, Pat Marriott, Susan Mensinger, Teresa Morris, Nan Nealon See, Jane Reed, Denis Salmon

(See *APPENDIX C* for members' expertise and experience.)

SUBCOMMITTEES

Documents, Process & Procedures: Hope, Marriott, Mensinger, Reed

Height, Bulk, Mass: Barton, Enander, Infante, Nealon See

Pedestrian Experience: Morris, Salmon

COMMITTEE GOALS

- Recommend changes to zoning and other requirements that will produce development more aligned with community expectations.
- Improve predictability in future downtown development: ensure there are no surprises for developers or residents.
- Make commercial development smoother and more transparent for all: developers, staff, commissioners, council and residents.
- Expedite the process by clearly defining community expectations.
- Get the quality development we want and deserve.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXHIBITS

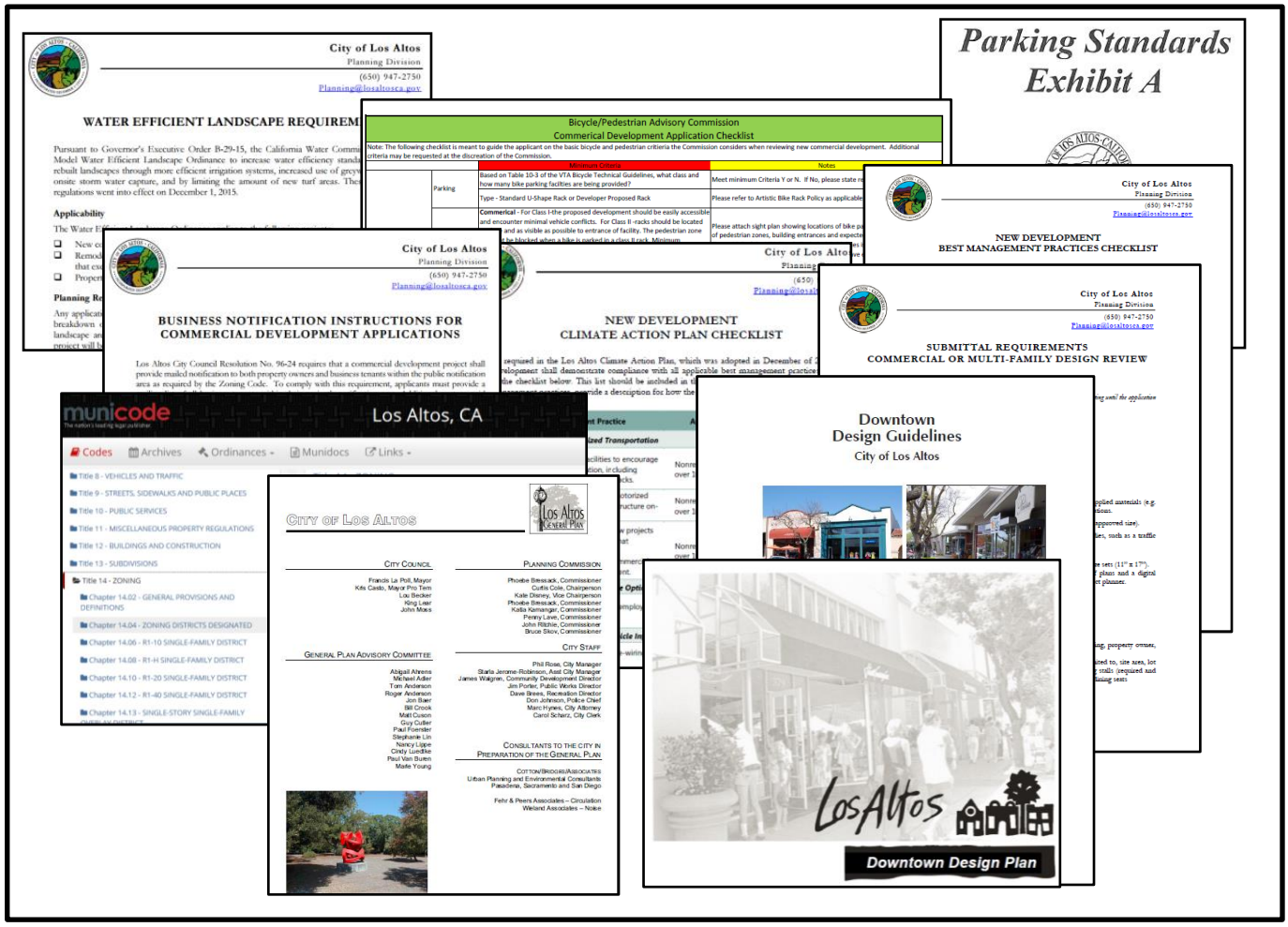
DOCUMENTATION, PROCESS & PROCEDURES SUBCOMMITTEE

1. DOCUMENTATION

FINDINGS:

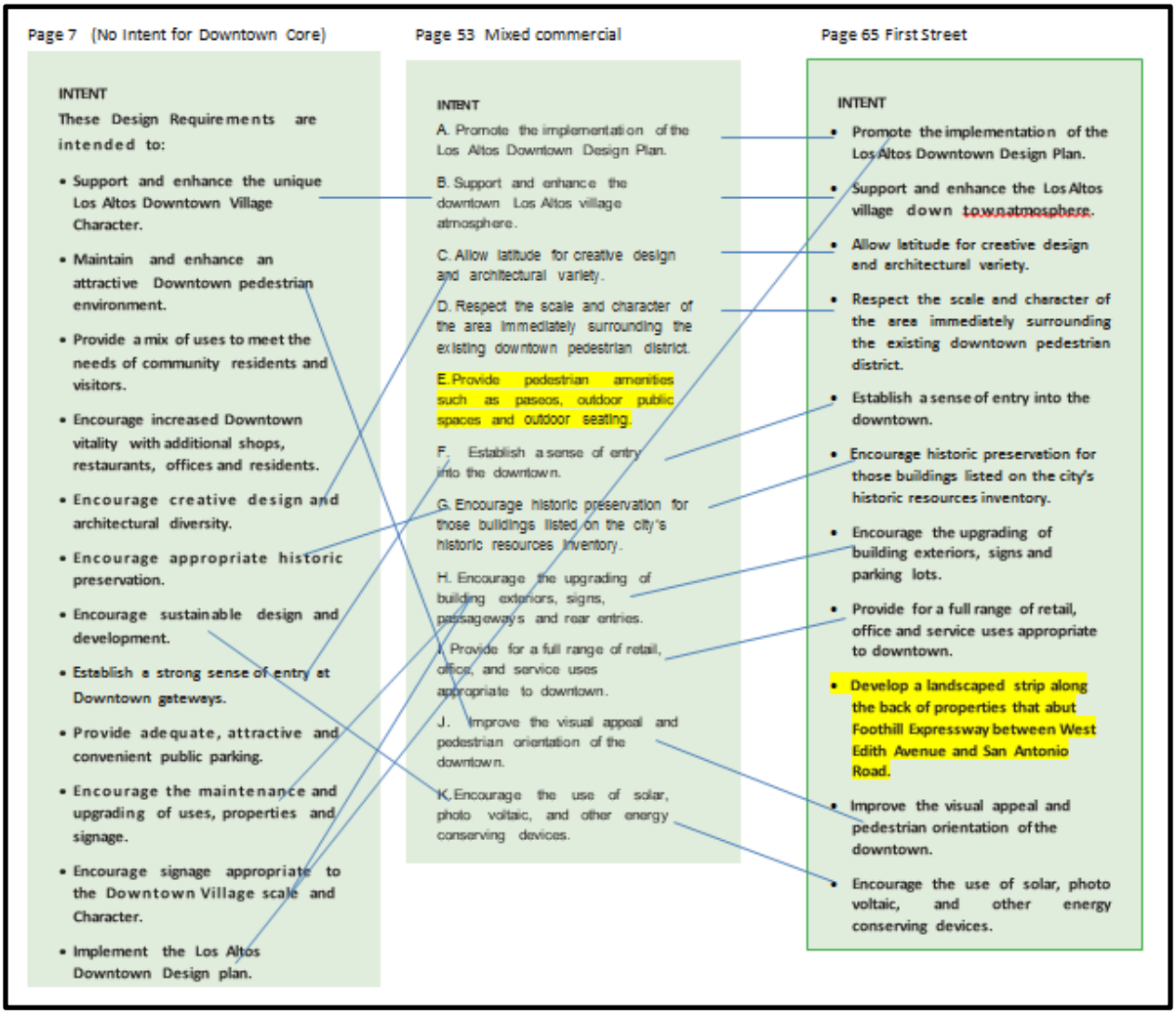
- **Inadequate document management system.**
- **Lack of consistency and coherence across city documents.**

Figure 1: *Some of the documents a developer consults. (See EXHIBIT 1.1 for list of planning documents.)*



These documents go back to the General Plan from 2002. Because they were written and revised over time – by different people – they can be redundant and confusing. Yet there's a consistent thread through them – and through history: the desire to keep our village atmosphere, a pedestrian focus and a human scale.

Figure 2: *Statements of Intent within the Design Guidelines are repeated in a different form throughout the document, all similar to – but slightly different – from the Purpose statements in the zoning code. A similar problem exists in zoning code Purposes.*



The same lack of consistency is evident in the Design Guidelines text, as well as in the zoning code.

Figure 3: *Examples*

- Zones are referred to as districts, e.g., Chapter 14.44 - CD COMMERCIAL DOWNTOWN DISTRICT*
- Specific Purposes in zoning code are similar to Intents in Design Guidelines (Figure 2), i.e., different words in different order.
- 14.44.020 - Specific purposes (CD zone).
  D. Preserve and improve the character of the area immediately surrounding the existing downtown pedestrian district; (There is no "downtown pedestrian district." Should be the Downtown Core District.)

Also, while most measurable requirements (height, setbacks, etc.) are specified in the zoning code, some (courtyard and paseo dimensions) are defined in the Design Guidelines, but not in the zoning code.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Revise the Design Guidelines as follows:

1) Edit for clarification, consistency and future interactive online use. Remove redundancy (see Figure 2 above), streamline content. *EXHIBIT 1.2* outlines modifications. (A draft has already been completed.)

2) Add a Design Guidelines checklist (*EXHIBIT 1.3)* to make it easy for developers, city planners, PTC, Council and residents to ensure a project is conforming – and to recognize when it is not.

3) Combine Mixed Commercial District (Chapter 4) and First Street District (Chapter 5) into the "Perimeter District." Chapters 4 and 5 have only 2 differences:

   - 45-foot height in CH 4, which is specified in the zoning code and should not be in the Design Guidelines.
   - CH 4 calls for underground or roof parking. CH 5 calls for rear parking. These differences are called out in the zoning codes.

B. Revise and update existing planning documents to ensure consistent terminology throughout.

Examples of inconsistencies are illustrated in Figures 2 and 3 above.

C. Discard obsolete documents and keep all documents current.

When downtown visioning takes place, it may be appropriate to discard the existing Downtown Design Plan.

D. Make zoning code the single source for explicit, measurable requirements. Don't duplicate requirements across multiple documents.

Duplicating information in multiple documents is confusing, makes updates more difficult and leads to inconsistencies.

One example is defining "human scale." Our committee found numerous books, papers, videos and other sources of information on this subject. An excellent example from the city of Powell, Ohio provides – in just 10 pages –an overview of key factors. (*EXHIBIT 1.4*) Use this document or one similar to it to define our requirements for pedestrian/human scale.

E. Make more use of illustrations and diagrams in all documents.

Planning, architecture, design, landscape are all visual endeavors. A picture is worth 1,000 words, particularly when multiple people have to agree on complex development concepts. Follow the examples in *EXHIBITS 1.4 and 1.5* to ensure detailed, unambiguous requirements.

F. Put all documents online and make them interactive with links to each other and to relevant city codes.

The city is looking for a new IT manager. This would be an excellent project for him/her to address. A GIS mapping system *(EXHIBIT 1.6)* could be the starting point for accessing the planning system.

EXHIBIT 1.1 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FORMS AND HANDOUTS

http://www.losaltosca.gov/communitydevelopment/page/forms-and-handouts-0

Forms and Handouts

Below is a list of links to commonly used forms and informational handouts.

Forms

General Application
Neighborhood Compatibility Worksheet
Outdoor Display Permit Application & Materials
Tree Removal Permit Application

Handouts

Business Tenant Notification Instructions for Commercial Development
Certificate of Compliance
Childcare - Preschools
Commercial Trash Enclosures
Commercial & Multi-Family Design Review Submittal Requirements
Commercial TI and Minor Additions Design Review Submittal Requirements
Construction Equipment BMP Handout
Construction Hours
Construction Management Plan Submittal Requirements
Family Daycare
Fence Regulations
Historical Commission Review Process
Home Occupation
Lot Line Adjustment Submittal Requirements
New Development Climate Action Plan Checklist
New Development Construction Site BMPs
One-Story Residential Design Review Submittal Requirements
Parking Standards Exhibit A
Preliminary Project Review Submittal Requirements
R1-10 Minimum Subdivision Requirements
R1-10 Single-Family Residential District Regulations
R1-S Single-Story Overlay District
Signs on Private Property
Signs on Public Property
Sign Review Submittal Requirements
Storage In Yards Requirements
Tentative Map Submittal Requirements
Two-Story Residential Design Review Submittal Requirements
Use Permit Submittal Requirements
Variance (Residential) Submittal Requirements
Water Efficient Landscape Requirements
Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance and Appendices
Wireless Facility Submittal Requirements
Zoning Change, General Plan or Code Amendment Submittal Requirements

34 HANDOUTS

EXHIBIT 1.2 REVISIONS TO DESIGN GUIDELINES

REVISE for clarification and consistency.

- Combine Sections 4 (Mixed Commercial District, Zones CD/R3 and CD) and 5 (First Street District, Zones CD/R3 and CRS) into the Perimeter District. These two chapters are practically identical, but written in different words.

MOVE Required Findings to front of document.

REPLACE

- Three repetitive INTENT sidebars with just one.
- Page numbers with section numbers. Page numbers change.
- "Second" story to "upper" story for future flexibility.
- Under Applicability: "The guidelines are in addition to and subordinate to the zoning regulations." with "Design Guidelines are in addition to and support zoning requirements."

ADD

- Purpose
- How to Use
- Checklist
- Zone designations for each district
- Links for future online interactive version
- *"clear"* to requirement for 60% transparent glazing ("Transparent" glass could be tinted. Currently section 3.2.3 g says: "Keep all window glazing transparent. Avoid tinted glass… ")
- Italicized words to Findings: "Exterior materials, finishes and colors convey *high* quality, integrity, permanence and durability and *serve to reduce perceived appearance of height, bulk and* mass. Materials *are harmonious with other structures in the immediate area and the downtown village,* and are used effectively to define building elements such as base, body, parapets, bays, arcades and structural elements.

DELETE

- References to variances. Let's not encourage them.
- References to setbacks and front module widths. Too confusing because they are zone-dependent, not district dependent. Applicant should refer to zoning code.

TBD

- Include additional photographs of examples of THIS is what we want, NOT THAT.
- Determine a consistent map representation that make zones clear.
- Dimensions for courtyards and paseos are specified in the Design Guidelines, but should be in the zoning code.
- Revise to reflect approved changes from other subcommittee recommendations.

EXHIBIT 1.3 DESIGN GUIDELINES CHECKLISTS

(DERIVED FROM DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES)

In an online document system, links would be provided to DG sections and zoning codes.

The applicant shall provide details (method TBD by staff, e.g., callout on architectural drawings) of the specific elements that qualify for each item checked.

For any items not checked, applicant shall explain why and provide possible mitigation.

Section 1 INTENT (applies to all districts/zones in the downtown triangle)

Does the project meet the intent of the Design Guidelines?

- ❑ Support and enhance the unique Los Altos Downtown Village Character.
- ❑ Maintain and enhance an attractive Downtown pedestrian environment.
- ❑ Provide a mix of uses to meet the needs of community residents and visitors.
- ❑ Encourage increased Downtown vitality with additional shops, restaurants, offices and residences.
- ❑ Encourage creative design and architectural diversity.
- ❑ Encourage appropriate historic preservation.
- ❑ Encourage sustainable design and development including use of EV chargers, solar, and other "green" building solutions.
- ❑ Establish a strong sense of entry at Downtown gateways.
- ❑ Provide adequate, attractive and convenient public parking.
- ❑ Encourage the maintenance and upgrading of uses, properties and signage.
- ❑ Encourage signage appropriate to the Downtown Village scale and Character.
- ❑ Implement the Los Altos Downtown Design Plan.

Section 2 VILLAGE CHARACTER (applies to all districts/zones in the downtown triangle)

Does the project provide

- ❑ Landscaping and amenity buffers between pedestrians and parked cars.
- ❑ Diversity in awnings, signage and lighting.
- ❑ Façade setbacks and outdoor seating.
- ❑ Visually interesting entries with natural materials.
- ❑ Variety of building forms.
- ❑ Human scale entries, vestibules, windows, signage, awnings, details and landscape.
- ❑ Upper floor entries on street front.
- ❑ Larger buildings divided into village scale modules according to zoning codes.

Section 3 DOWNTOWN CORE DISTRICT (CRS & CRS/OAD ZONES)

Section 3.1 PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Does the project provide uses and activities to enhance Downtown?

- ❑ Upper floor offices and/or residences
- ❑ Courtyards and/or paseos
- ❑ Opportunities for active evening uses
- ❑ Landscaping and open space
  - Pedestrian frontages accommodate special paving and landscaping
  - Textured paving adjacent to sidewalks
  - Landscaping at tree wells
  - Fountains and public art
  - Benches, shade, lighting and other pedestrian amenities
- ❑ Pedestrian safety
  - Visual clues to alert drivers that pedestrians have right of way
  - No obstructions at crossing points that could limit views of traffic and pedestrians
  - Locate driveway or loading areas away from main pedestrian routes
- ❑ Trash enclosures and private parking areas
  - Integrate trash enclosures into building
  - Low walls and landscaping for parking adjacent to streets and pedestrian walkways

Section 3.2 ARCHITECTURE

Does the project reinforce the existing downtown framework, scale and character?

- ❑ Maintain storefront modules according to zoning codes.
- ❑ Segment larger buildings into smaller components
- ❑ Create continuous building frontages while avoiding blank walls along sidewalks and paseos
- ❑ Create diversity sensitive to adjacent development, while encouraging traditional styles adapted to current needs
- ❑ Design buildings as a whole unit with architectural integrity and continuity, while using details authentic to the style
- ❑ Enhance village character and pedestrian scale with varied storefronts, landscaping and paving
- ❑ Preserve historic structures and worthy elements of existing buildings
- ❑ Provide entry vestibules in a variety of shapes with special paving and wood doors
- ❑ Use human-scale awnings and canopies at windows and entries
- ❑ Provide cornices and building tops consistent with architectural style
- ❑ Provide special entry features for buildings at street corners
- ❑ Emphasize entries and display windows, making them open and inviting

- ❑ Utilize natural materials like wood, real stone and brick
- ❑ Enhance pedestrian experience with interesting details appropriate to architectural style
- ❑ Provide special storefront and façade lighting
- ❑ Design upper floor facades to complement streetscape and village character, relating entries and detail to street level
- ❑ Use operable windows in traditional styles, recessed at least 3 inches from wall face
- ❑ Design entries and facades facing parking lots that are compatible with parking plazas
- ❑ Integrate utilities and building services into overall building design
- ❑ Conceal rooftop mechanical equipment from public view from street or adjacent buildings
- ❑ Design larger structures to be sensitive to the unique scale and character of the downtown
- ❑ Provide special design treatment for visible sidewalls of structures that are taller than their immediate neighbors
- ❑ Design and detail parking structures to complement downtown's village scale and character
  - No parking ingress or egress from Main Street or State Street
  - Provide below grade parking wherever possible
  - Provide commercial uses on ground floors facing pedestrian streets and walkways
  - Provide landscape strips along all edges that do not have active commercial frontages
  - Integrate extensive landscaping into the parking structure edges and entries
  - Integrate pedestrian entries with adjacent commercial uses
  - Provide secondary ground floor pedestrian entries when the structure is adjacent to commercial core service alleys containing rear shop entries or paseo entries
  - Design parking structures to be visually compatible with other commercial buildings
- ❑ Reinforce a sense of entry at downtown gateways, as identified on map

Section 3.3 SIGNAGE

Each sign will be reviewed in the context of project architecture and site. (See Chapter ???? of the Los Altos Zoning Ordinance.)

- ❑ Select signs appropriate to pedestrian scale, oriented to pedestrians rather than motorists
- ❑ Limit information on signs
- ❑ Place signs within a "signable area" that is flat, not containing doors or windows, in proportion to façade, not exceeding 15% of building façade.
- ❑ Use materials that project slightly from the building face
- ❑ Light signs at night
- ❑ Conceal sign and lighting raceways and other connections
- ❑ Keep letter heights to 12 inches or less (18 inches on San Antonio Road)
- ❑ Relate sign colors to building colors
- ❑ Awning signs: Place for easy visibility with a slope of at least 2:1. Avoid backlit awnings
- ❑ Window signs: Limit to maximum of 25% of any individual window and an aggregate area of no

more than 10% of all ground floor windows on any building face. Max letter height is 10 inches

- ❑ Projecting signs: No more than one/business frontage, projecting no more than 36 inches from building face, max size of 5 square feet. Location should be below first floor ceiling line or no more than 14 feet above the side walk, with minimum 8-foot clearance to sidewalk.
- ❑ Hanging signs: No more than one per business, max size 3 square feet, minimum 8-foot clearance to sidewalk.
- ❑ Plaque signs: Locate only on wall surfaces adjacent to entries.
- ❑ Ground signs: Considered on case-by-case basis, primarily along San Antonio Road, within 10 feet of property line, no larger than 5 feet by 5 feet.
- ❑ Free-standing signs: Base, vertical supports and crossbars must fit within rectangle no larger than 6 feet high by 3 feet wide.

Section 4 PERIMETER DISTRICT (CRS, CD & CD/R3 ZONES)

Section 4.1 PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

Provide underground parking where possible. Minimize parking impact on pedestrian circulation and pedestrian environment.

- ❒ For all parking areas:
  - Provide access to parking from passages and less-traveled pedestrian routes whenever possible.
  - Distinguish the parking surface from adjacent sidewalk and pedestrian paving with different textures and/or colors.
  - Limit the width of parking access drives as much as possible.
  - Do not create perpendicular parking spaces that enable cars to drive directly into them from a street driveway or ramp.
- ❒ For surface parking:
  - Create landscape buffers between parking and sidewalks/pedestrian areas. Minimum setback is 5 feet. Buffers may include trees, where possible, or arcades and planters.
  - Provide pedestrian links between street front sidewalks and building entries.
  - For larger buildings with set-back entries or rear entries facing a parking lot, create a strong sidewalk connection from the street to the entry, with landscaping on both sides.
  - Use porous textured paving materials that minimize water runoff on all parking surfaces.
- ❒ Integrate ground floor uses with the streetscape.
- ❒ Observe setbacks specified in zoning code. Residential stairways and entry porches may encroach into this setback up to the property line.

Section 4.2 ARCHITECTURE

Does the project reinforce the existing downtown framework, scale and character?

- ❒ Provide for mixed use now and in future
- ❒ Divide long facades into smaller modules, according to zoning codes, by
  - Separating structures surrounding a courtyard

- Indenting courtyards (See 3.2.1b)
- Changing horizontal or vertical plane
- Creating projections or recesses
- Varying cornice or roof lines
- Providing distinctive entries

❒ Locate primary entry on main street

❒ Vary building heights

❒ Use sloped roofs where possible

❒ Design as much building frontage along streets to screen parking lots

❒ Ensure that architectural style and details are consistent on all sides of structure

❒ Emphasize individual windows or small window groups on upper levels.

- Use vertical window proportions
- Avoid horizontal ribbon windows
- Recess windows a minimum of 3 inches from face of exterior walls

❒ Provide upper floor balconies and decks where possible

❒ Incorporate substantial architectural details in the design, consistent with style of building

❒ Design taller buildings to relate to smaller downtown buildings nearby.

❒ Create buildings that blend with downtown streets and are part of village environment

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Section 4.3 LANDSCAPE

❒ TBD

Section 4.4.1 GROUND SIGNS

❒ Place ground signs at appropriate locations.

❒ Limit information on signs to primary business ID and address number.

❒ Ensure multi-tenant information has same background color and type style.

❒ Ensure visibility from passing vehicles, within 10 feet of front property line.

❒ Limit size, including base, to vertical rectangle no larger than 5 ft. by 5 ft.

❒ Use approved lighting and materials.

Section 4.4.2 FREESTANDING SIGNS

❒ Limit freestanding signs to a single tenant

❒ Limit size, including base, supports and crossbars to vertical rectangle no larger than 6 ft. x 3 ft.

❒ Used approved lighting and materials.

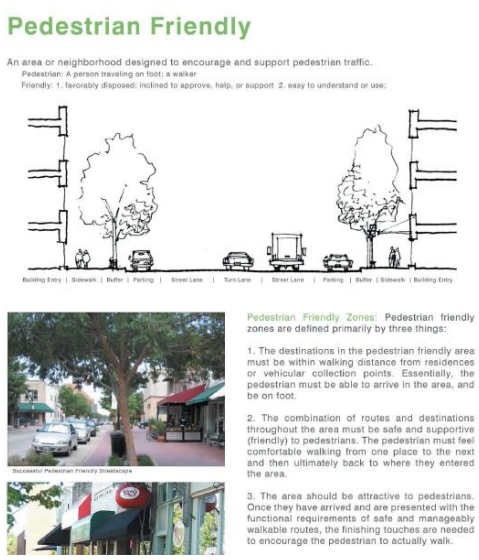
EXHIBIT 1.4 PEDESTRIAN GUIDELINES

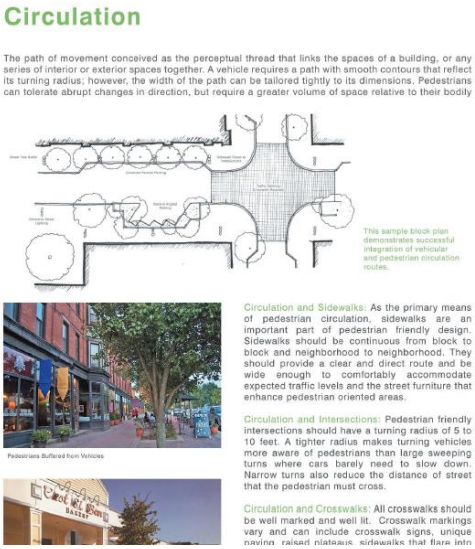
Example: City of Powell, Ohio (population 12,237) Pedestrian Scale Design Guidelines

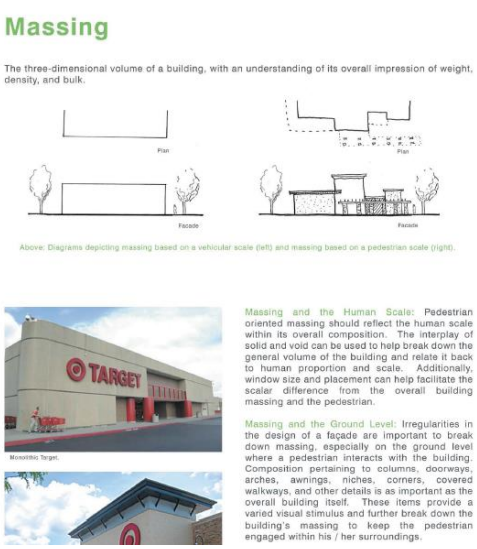
Adopted by Ordinance 2009-27; November 4, 2009

A simple 10-page document focused on the essentials of creating a pedestrian friendly environment, with lots of illustrative diagrams and photos.

http://www.cityofpowell.us/documents/Development_Docs/City%20of%20Powell%20Pedestrian%20Scale%20Design%20Guidelines.pdf



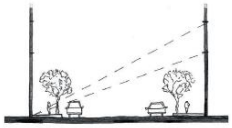




Proportion

The proper or harmonious relation of one part to another or to the whole with respect to spatial quality. Proportional theories have been prevalent throughout architectural history, and remain a guiding force in design. Renaissance architect Alberti called beauty, "the harmony of all parts in relation to one another" and thus analogous to proportion.

A figure ground study of downtown Los Angeles (left) and Irvine California (right) shows how the proportions of city blocks affect walkability.



A street section showing common street width to building height ratios that create visual enclosure.

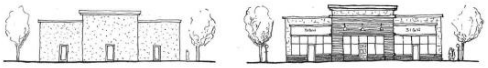
Visual Enclosure.

Proportion and Block Length: New developments should utilize short to medium length blocks. A higher proportion of intersections along a roadway creates more opportunities for pedestrians to cross streets, slows traffic, and provides more relief to the pedestrian than long uninterrupted blocks. Blocks 300 to 500 feet are good for pedestrians. Blocks over 600 feet should not be considered pedestrian oriented.

Proportion and Street Oriented Buildings: The ratio of building height to street width is important for creating visual enclosure for pedestrians. Visual enclosure occurs when bordering buildings on a street occupy most of a pedestrian's cone of vision. Successful visual enclosure creates an "outdoor room" that the pedestrian occupies.

Materiality

The concept of, or applied use of, various materials or substances in the medium of building.



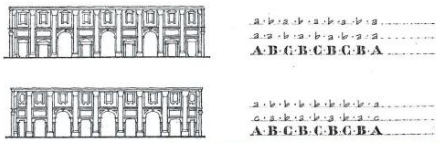
Above: Different material qualities as depicted on the same building.

Materiality and the Pedestrian: Materiality gives a pedestrian tactile experience of the building's façade and streetscape. Weight and scale are perceived differently due to light and sound absorption, therefore, texture and color affect the overall perception of the building's façade. Materiality also adds depth to of how a building is perceived: from afar through a visual understanding of form and color, and from closer inspection through texture and grain.

Materiality and External Elements: Humans are corporal creatures, relying on all of their senses to experience the world. Material differentiation can also be introduced through signage, landscaping,

Rhythm

Movement characterized by a patterned repetition or alternation of formal elements or motifs in the same or a modified form. (F. Ching)



Above: Rhythm diagrams depicting repetitive moments in a building's facade.
Diagrams by F. Ching, *Architecture: Form, Space, and Order.*

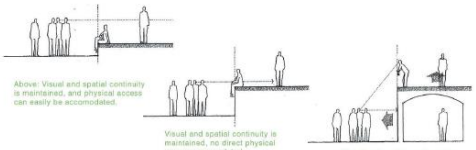
Non-rhythmic facade.

Rhythm and Repetition: Most buildings incorporate elements that are repetitive by nature. Beams and columns create modules of space that are perceived as rhythmic. Likewise, repetitive elements on the exterior of a building, such as window and door spacing, create rhythmic components that are easily read by a pedestrian. Rhythmic pattern alludes to continuity and is vital for pedestrian life.

Vertical vs. Horizontal Rhythm: Most pedestrian friendly buildings incorporate vertical elements or rhythms along the ground floor of the façade. Horizontal rhythms tend to represent a long expanse, leaving the pedestrian feeling overwhelmed with large distance to travel. A better perspective for eye-level is short and staccato vertical elements, such as columns or window framing, that move the pedestrian from " column to column" and keep them engaged with the building's rhythm.

Transparency

The degree of enclosure and openness from one space to the next, implying a visual connectivity and/or an interchange of flow of space.



Above: Visual and spatial continuity is maintained, and physical access can easily be accomodated.

Visual and spatial continuity is maintained, no direct physical access accomodated.

Visual and spatial continuity is disrupted, no connection to the building from ground level.

Diagrams by F. Ching, *Architecture: Form, Space and Order.*

No visual continuity into the building.

Transparency and the Ground Floor: The ground floor façade should be the single most activated interface between city and building. Open and welcoming buildings bring with them a sense of security and accessibility that are important qualities for successful pedestrian life. Views into and out of a building visually connects the building with the pedestrian and the surrounding environment.

Transparency and Exterior Enclosures: Transparency into a building can be generated in a number of ways. Large doors and windows maintain visual connectivity, while openings within the building's overall mass, such as entry courts, create pockets of exterior space that open the building up even further. This visual and physical continuity extends the building's program to its environment and generates a sense of an exterior enclosure or "outdoor room."

Transparency and Programming: Pedestrian

Detail

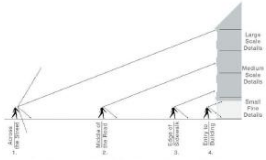
A small elaborated element of a work of art, craft, or design. "Details are much more than subordinate elements; they can be regarded as the minimal units of signification in the architectural production of meanings." –Marco Frascari

1. The majority of the facade is visible and seen as a whole. Materials are seen primarily as a color field.

2. The facade is seen only in fragments. Individual elements are clearer and materials are more clearly expressed.

3. Only a small area of the facade is visible. The joints in materials are visible and details are easily read.

4. Only an individual element is visible. The smallest details are clear and materials are now tactile as well as visual.



A pedestrian's view of a building is greatly reduced as they move closer to the building, but the ability to perceive detail is increased.

Detail and Architecture: Buildings in pedestrian oriented areas are experienced more intimately than buildings in higher speed car oriented areas. At close range and low speed, the pedestrian has time to admire rich textures, fine materials and subtle variations in design. This experience can also extend into the building through the transparency of the entry and display windows along the elevation. Pedestrian friendly buildings should provide these kinds of details for by passers.

Detail and Street Furniture: As an important part of walkable neighborhoods, the design of street furniture should also enrich the pedestrian experience. Decorative lamp posts, bollards, tree grates, benches, bike racks, and even parking meters add interest and approachability in pedestrian zones. Many of these items are necessary for legal, maintenance, or safety reasons so it requires only a little extra effort to detail them so that they become an asset as well as a

EXHIBIT 1.5 EXAMPLE OF DETAILED ILLUSTRATIONS

http://m.losaltosca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/Community%20Development/page/429/downtown_land_use_plans_for_website_revised.pdf

Downtown Land Use and Economic Revitalization Plans 12-18-13

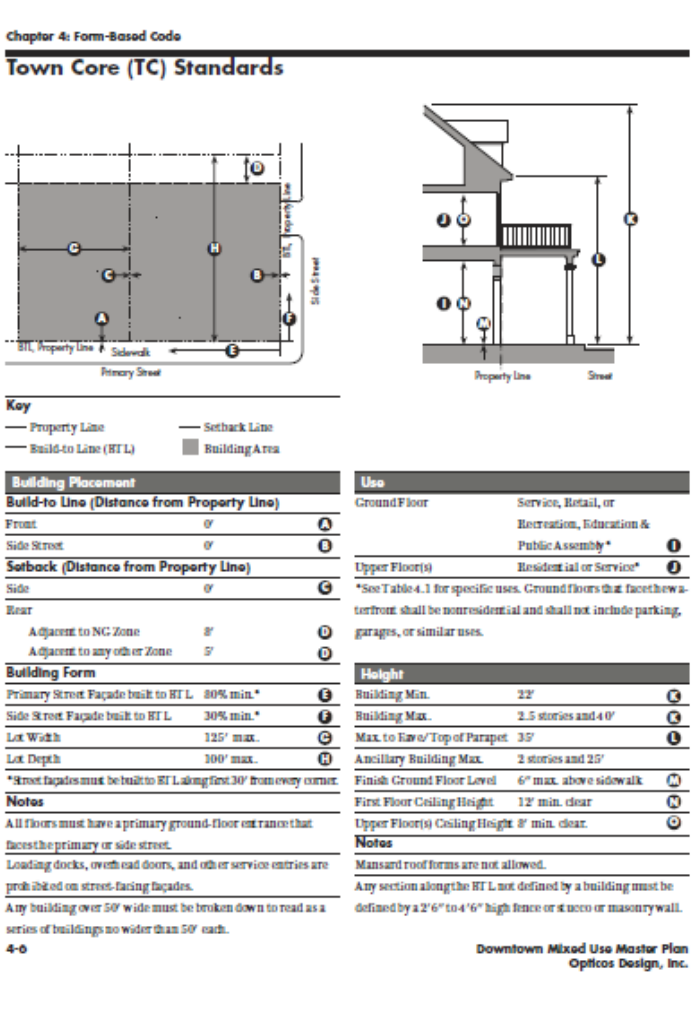
Page 8: "The other major effort undertaken … was the establishment of form-based zoning for all commercial districts in the Downtown triangle, and specifically the CD/R3 zoning for First Street."

Per Zach Dahl: "The use of design review findings, removal of lot coverage and floor area limits, and the simplification of use definitions in each zone district were intended to move Los Altos toward a more form based approach to zoning that was less prescriptive. But I wouldn't say that Los Altos is using purely form based zoning because we still have parking requirements, setbacks and other site standards."

Whether or not we apply pure form-based zoning (http://formbasedcodes.org/definition) or a hybrid methodology, it would be beneficial to incorporate explicit illustrations in codes and guidelines.

Example from Benicia, page 4-6:

http://formbasedcodes.org/content/uploads/2014/02/benicia-downtown-mixed-use-master-plan.pdf



Chapter 4: Form-Based Code

Town Core (TC) Standards

Key

Property Line — Setback Line
Build-to Line (BTL) — Building Area

Building Placement		
Build-to Line (Distance from Property Line)		
Front	0'	A
Side Street	0'	B
Setback (Distance from Property Line)		
Side	0'	C
Rear		
Adjacent to NC Zone	8'	D
Adjacent to any other Zone	5'	D
Building Form		
Primary Street Façade built to BTL	80% min.*	E
Side Street Façade built to BTL	30% min.*	F
Lot Width	125' max.	G
Lot Depth	100' max.	H

*Street façades must be built to BTL along first 30' from every corner.

Notes

All floors must have a primary ground-floor entrance that faces the primary or side street.

Loading docks, overhead doors, and other service entries are prohibited on street-facing façades.

Any building over 50' wide must be broken down to read as a series of buildings no wider than 50' each.

Use		
Ground Floor	Service, Retail, or Recreation, Education & Public Assembly*	I
Upper Floor(s)	Residential or Service*	J

*See Table 4.1 for specific uses. Ground floors that face the waterfront shall be nonresidential and shall not include parking, garages, or similar uses.

Height		
Building Min.	22'	K
Building Max.	2.5 stories and 40'	K
Max. to Eave/Top of Parapet	35'	L
Ancillary Building Max.	2 stories and 25'	
Finish Ground Floor Level	6" max. above sidewalk	M
First Floor Ceiling Height	12' min. clear	N
Upper Floor(s) Ceiling Height	8' min. clear.	O

Notes

Mansard roof forms are not allowed.

Any section along the BTL not defined by a building must be defined by a 2'6" to 4'6" high fence or stucco or masonry wall.

EXHIBIT 1.6 MAPPING TOOLS

Example from Los Gatos:

http://www2.lynxgis.com/Html5Viewer/Index.html?configBase=http://www2.lynxgis.com/Geocortex/Essentials/REST/sites/Los_Gatos/viewers/LosGatosPublic/virtualdirectory/Resources/Config/Default

Email from the Los Gatos planning manager:

"The Town has had a GIS mapping system for over 15 years and Lynx is the company that maintains and updates technical aspects of the system for us. Other jurisdictions have much more robust GIS capabilities and resources to manage their systems. The Town's GIS is a work in progress and we continue to try to link various information from existing Town resources to make it more useful for both our staff and citizens. GIS really has nearly unlimited benefits across all departments for storing and displaying a wide range of information and can be queried to pull out specific information for research purposes.

"The main benefits are the various information that you can get in one location which is very useful for staff in various departments, citizens, realtors, developers, and our decision makers. Our staff uses the system for their day to day work answering questions via e-mail, telephone, and at the counter. Additionally, it is used for our public noticing and creating a wide variety of graphics for various projects."

2. ACCESS/TRANSPARENCY

FINDINGS:

- **Currently, the only way to view project plans is through links in the PTC agenda or searching Granicus.**
- **Few people understand that Granicus is separate from the city website. Thus, using the city web search will not produce any results if the documents are located in Granicus.**
- **We can and should make it easier for residents to access staff reports and developer submissions so they can provide input at every stage. It's better for everyone if residents offer feedback early in the process vs. waiting until presentation to Council.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Revise the existing planning page on the city website to include all steps in the process and provide links to relevant documents, e.g.,

Detailed web page with links.

PROJECTS UNDER REVIEW:

Below is a list of projects currently in the planning pipeline with key review dates.

The public is encouraged to participate in the development process by

- Reviewing submitted plans and staff reports (links below)
- Attending Planning & Transportation Commission (PTC) meetings
- Attending City Council meetings

Comments on any project—at any stage—should be sent to the Community Development Director.

Comments made early in the process, before plans are completed, will benefit the community, the city staff and the developer. Public input is also welcome at any of the above meetings.

To be notified of meetings, go to http://www.losaltosca.gov/subscribe

Location	Description	PTC meeting	Council Meeting	Permits Applied	Permits Issued	Documents
999 Fremont	Commercial Design Review, Use Permit and Tentative Subdivision Map for a three-story, mixed-use project with commercial on the first story and five multi-family residential condominiums on the second and third stories.	6/4/15 Recommended for denial	7/28/15			links
995 Fremont		6/18/15 Study Session				links

B. As a long term goal, provide the means for developers to make submissions online.

3. PROCESS/PROCEDURES

FINDINGS:

- **There has a been a lack of adherence to documented community standards in recent developments.**

  Our review focused on the following new developments:

  - 400 Main Street
  - Safeway
  - Enchante Hotel
  - Packard Foundation
  - 100 First Street
  - 396 First Street
  - 240 Third Street

  As shown in *EXHIBIT 3.1*, the Downtown Plans and Design Guidelines were not consistently followed in approving these buildings. In addition, *Exhibit 3.2* indicates that staff Findings for these and other buildings are not specific to each building, but simply the boilerplate requirements from Chapter 14.78 of the Municipal Code and the Downtown Design Guidelines.

  Findings establish how the City has evaluated a project, and document a project's conformance to local plans, regulations and other criteria. If legally challenged, the findings help bridge the gap between evidence and decisions and must be supported by substantial evidence in the record. For these reasons, specific project findings are very important when acting on a project.

- **City has limited internal expertise on commercial and multi-family projects, often resulting in "design thrash" as a project goes through the approval process.**

  Recent examples include 999 Fremont and 1540 Miramonte.

- **PTC has a broad charter. Commercial and multi-family design expertise varies depending on each commissioner's background and time in office.**

  The PTC advises Council on planning and transportation issues including "automobile circulation, pedestrian, bicycle and handicapped access, and public transportation on all public streets, roadways and paths within the city limits of the City of Los Altos. The PTC advises the Council on existing and proposed City policies related to traffic calming and traffic enforcement." http://www.losaltosca.gov/planningtransportcommission

  Note that there is no mention of architectural/landscape review in the job description. Though strong in residential design, City staff has limited commercial design experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Build accountability into our processes to ensure that commercial development is consistent with village character and human/pedestrian scale.

A. Provide detailed checklists for developers at every step of the planning process for consistency and accountability.

Checklists are a straightforward way to confirm that everyone – developers, staff, commissioners, council members – is in agreement as to standards being met or, when appropriate, variances approved.

The Submittal Requirements document is already in a checklist format, but should be more detailed. (See *EXHIBIT 3.3.*) It should also have links to other documents when the city initiates online documents.

B. Attach the completed Design Guidelines checklist to each staff report.

This will confirm that the guidelines have been read and understood, showing design elements are in sync with community standards.

C. Create a standard template for staff reports.

EXHIBIT 3.4 shows that staff reports vary.

Recognizing that there is a different focus for project reviews by different groups and for different purposes, a standardized format would ensure that all parties – Council, PTC, BPAC, etc. – see the same information at every step of the process.

This will ensure that all requirements are covered in every staff report and reflect the original Submission Requirements.

A proposed template is shown in *EXHIBIT 3.5.*

D. Require an early stage design review for new commercial and multi-family projects and major remodels in the downtown triangle. This design review to be done with consulting professionals having specific expertise, paid for by the developer.

Residential projects go through a design review to protect our neighborhoods. The same detailed focus on architecture and landscape should be required for commercial and multi-family residences, which are typically seen by more people and have a bigger impact on the community.

We are <u>not</u> recommending a sitting commission, committee, or board, since Los Altos does not have a constant stream of commercial development at this time.

We do recommend that a consulting architect and a landscape architect review each project—focused solely on design – in an advisory capacity. This would occur early in the planning cycle, as soon as the applicant has a basic site plan, concept, rough elevations and materials to present. There could be several iterations.

Major benefits:

- Early review focused on quality design is advantageous to all parties. It forestalls "design thrash," ensures alignment with our plans and guidelines, and closes the gap between expectations and outcomes.
- Using design professionals shifts the conversation from legislating taste (personal opinions) to ensuring predictability in meeting community design standards (codes and guidelines).
- Consulting experts function as a resource for staff, in an advisory capacity, to promote quality aesthetics and harmonious development.
- Architects and developers expect such a review—and are willing to pay for it—because it can save them time and money.
- There is no cost to the city, and the potential exists to save city money.

If Council agrees that this early-stage design review would benefit the city, implementation details would be worked out with our Community Development Director. Specific elements would include:

- Defining a process for selecting a pool of consulting architects and landscape architects.
- Determining what level of changes would require a remodel to go through the design review. We don't want to create barriers to building refurbishment, but if the exterior of a building is significantly altered, a review would be appropriate.

- Scheduling the design review as early as possible in a way that integrates with the PTC study session.
- Ensuring the process is efficient and worthwhile for all parties.

It should be noted that commercial design review is an established part of best practices in most cities. Some have a sitting board (Palo Alto) while others use consultants (Los Gatos and Mountain View).

EXHIBIT 3.6 describes Los Gatos' use of a single architectural consultant to review a project, providing a balanced and well-informed perspective. A landscape architect would ensure that new development has appropriate aesthetic appeal.

We contacted the community development director in Los Gatos and asked about the commercial design review process. He wrote:

> *"The use of a Consulting Architect has been effective and has helped the development process be more efficient when it comes to architectural review. … we don't get a lot of push back from decision makers or applicants which in part probably has to do with the fact that we have been requiring it so long that it is expected, and many other jurisdictions require a similar review.*
>
> *"We have been using our current Consulting Architect since 2002 and time was dedicated early on in the process by staff and decision makers to ensure that he was familiar with and appreciated the special character of the Town."*

E. To ensure that Council-approved DBC recommendations are implemented in a timely way, create a workplan with measurable milestones for each to track progress.

Many committee members are willing to continue their work by aiding staff in implementation.

EXHIBIT 3.1 SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE'S REVIEW OF RECENT BUILDINGS

Lack of adherence to Downtown Design Plan

Page	Section	Says	Buildings
1	Goals	Improve the visual quality of the area and create an attractive pedestrian environment	Safeway, Hotel, 400 Main
3	Special Character	1 & 2 story buildings, parking plazas, give Downtown low density atmosphere	Safeway, Hotel, 400 Main, 396 First, 240 Third
4	Assets	Small town village character, architecturally and historically interesting buildings	Safeway, Hotel, 400 Main, 396 First, 240 Third
7	Design Concepts	Externalize character of the village to increase awareness of downtown character	Safeway, Hotel, 400 Main
10	First Steps	Entries & Edges: appearance consistent with small-scale pedestrian core	Safeway, Hotel, 400 Main
11		Pedestrian Friendly	Hotel, Safeway, 400 Main, 100 First
13	Entries	Will be most unifying if all are variation of strong concept & theme	400 Main, Safeway, 240 Third, 396 First
19		Re plants: Rather than completely blocking motorists views of downtown, … plants allow filtered views	Safeway, 400 Main, 100 First, Hotel
21	Anchor Stores	Not necessarily large square-footage chains	Safeway
23	Public Space	Form, scale design that accommodates pedestrians.	400 Main, Safeway, 100 First
34	Main & San Antonio Entry	Respond to the presence of City Hall across the street	Hotel
35	First & Main Entry	Development would be expected to continue the established Main Street development patterns… street edge setback & character consistent with adjacent streets. Along Main & First, character should be consistent with that of Main Street…	400 Main, Safeway
39	Parking Garages	Garage elevations at street should be harmonious with pedestrian street environment … reduce scale of the cave-like vehicle entrance	Safeway

Lack of adherence to Downtown Design Guidelines

Page	Section	Says	Buildings
7	Community Expectations	Community wishes to support & enhance unique character of downtown. Property owners & developers will be expected to fit their projects into that existing fabric with sensitivity to their surroundings, & a recognition that the sum of the whole is more important than any single building or use. Buildings should be seen as unique, identifiable, and distinct from other buildings, but this distinction should be subtle, not dramatic. A high quality of traditional architectural and landscape design is expected with abundant detail carried out in a manner that is authentic to the architectural style selected by the applicant.	400 Main, Safeway, 396 First

Page	Section	Says	Buildings
7	Intent	▪ Support & enhance unique village character ▪ Maintain & enhance attractive pedestrian environment ▪ Provide adequate, attractive & convenient public parking	Hotel, Safeway, 400 Main, 240 Third
8	Districts	First St District: is more strongly vehicle-oriented than the retail core area.	In fact, it's much narrower than Main
17	Core	▪ Building mass is articulated to relate to the human scale, both horizontally & vertically. ▪ Landscaping is generous & inviting.	400 Main, Safeway
17	Core	Exterior materials and finishes convey quality, integrity, permanence and durability	396 First
23	Core	Continue the pattern & scale established by existing buildings	Hotel, 400, Safeway
28	Core	Size store entries and entry door heights to the human figure. Avoid over-scaled, tall entries	400 Main, Safeway
37	Core	Avoid architectural styles & monumental building elements that do not relate to the small human scale of downtown. PHOTO: Don't use large arches.	400 Main, Safeway
65	First St District	Owners of properties & businesses in this district should review guidelines for Core. 50-foot module (width), except for lots in CRS zone.	Safeway, 400 Main, 100 First
65	Intent	▪ Promote implementation of downtown design plan ▪ Support & enhance downtown village atmosphere ▪ Respect scale & character of area immediately surrounding existing downtown pedestrian district ▪ Improve visual appeal & pedestrian orientation of downtown	Safeway, 400 Main, 100 First
66	Pedestrian environment	This district is very much a part of the downtown village. Guidelines allow larger buildings & onsite parking while doing so in a manner that reinforces downtown village scale & character	Safeway, 400 Main, 100 First
67	Integrate w/streetscape	Soft landscaping is required for a minimum of 60% of front setback.	Safeway, 400 Main, Hotel
68	Architecture	▪ Design to village scale ▪ Avoid large box-like structures ▪ Keep focal points small in scale ▪ Provide substantial small scale details	Hotel, 400 Main, Safeway
69	Architecture	Design structures to be compatible with adjacent existing buildings.	400 Main, Safeway, Hotel

EXHIBIT 3.2 BOILERPLATE FINDINGS IN STAFF REPORTS

Findings for all of these buildings – and possibly others – are not specific to the building. Rather, they are the boilerplate requirements from Chapter 14.78 of the Municipal Code and the Downtown Design Guidelines.

- 1 Main
- 400 Main
- 100 First
- 396 First
- 467 First
- Safeway
- 4940 El Camino
- 1540 Miramonte

These example comes from the 9-14-10 council approval of the Enchante Hotel at 1 Main Street:

http://los-altos.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=4&clip_id=298&meta_id=19421

1. With regard to Design Review application 10-D-04, the Planning Commission finds in accordance with Chapter 14.78 of the Municipal Code that:

   A. The proposal meets the goals, policies and objectives of the General Plan and any specific plan, design guidelines and ordinance design criteria adopted for the specific district or area;

   B. The proposal has architectural integrity and has an appropriate relationship with other structures in the immediate area in terms of height, bulk and design; building mass is articulated to relate to the human scale, both horizontally and vertically.

   C. Building elevations have variation and depth and avoid large blank wall surfaces. Residential or mixed-use residential projects incorporate elements that signal habitation, such as identifiable entrances, stairs, porches, bays and balconies;

   D. Exterior materials and finishes convey quality, integrity, permanence and durability, and materials are used effectively to define building elements such as base, body, parapets, bays, arcades and structural elements;

   E. Landscaping is generous and inviting and landscape and hardscape features are designed to complement the building and parking areas and to be integrated with the building architecture and the surrounding streetscape. Landscaping includes substantial street tree canopy, either in the public right-of-way or within the project frontage;

   F. Signage is designed to complement the building architecture in terms of style, materials, colors and proportions;

   G. Mechanical equipment is screened from public view and the screening is designed to be consistent with the building architecture in form, material and detailing; and

   H. Service, trash and utility areas are screened from public view, or are enclosed in structures that are consistent with the building architecture in materials and detailing.

EXHIBIT 3.3 PROPOSED REVISIONS TO 12/17/15 SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

http://www.losaltosca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/Community%20Development/page/3751/commercial_multi-family_design_review_submital_requirements.pdf

Note: In an online document system, links would be provided to DG sections and zoning codes.

City of Los Altos
Planning Division

(650) 947-2750
Planning@losaltosca.gov

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS
COMMERCIAL OR MULTI-FAMILY DESIGN REVIEW
APPLICATION FORM, FEE & REQUIRED MATERIALS

Prior to preparing plans, please review all City Code Zoning requirements, applicable Specific Plan(s) and Design Guidelines. The following is a listing of the minimum requirements for the submittal of plans to the Community Development Department. Applicants should use this as a checklist to ensure completeness of the proposal.

All items are required at time of submittal. The project will not be scheduled for a public meeting until the application has been reviewed by a planner and is deemed complete.

1. **General Application Form**

2. **Filing Fee(s)**

Application	$_____
Environmental Review	$_____
Other:_____	$_____
TOTAL	$_____

Make checks payable to the City of Los Altos. Fees are not refundable.

3. **Public Notification**

Two (2) sets of blank postage paid postcards (Post Office approved size).

Planning staff will determine the required number of postcards in each set.

4. **Materials Board**

a. Initial submittal: Provide color photos on an 8.5" x 11" sheet showing roofing material, siding, applied materials (e.g. stone, brick), trim, etc., and identify manufacturer and product specifications.

b. Once application deemed complete: Provide product samples of proposed materials and colors on an 11" x 17" board and, if necessary, applied material mockups to illustrate the appearance of materials together.

5. **Technical Studies**

Depending on the nature of the project, technical studies, such as a traffic impact assessment, arborist report or acoustical analysis, may be required.

6. **Climate Action Plan Checklist for New Development**

7. **Color Renderings and 3D Model**

   a. Provide a sufficient number of perspective color renderings of the proposed structure, photo simulated within the existing context of the built and natural surroundings, to represent how all elevations of the building will appear at a pedestrian scale/level.

   b. Provide a digital model (using SketchUp or a similar program) of the proposed development and adjacent buildings within the broader streetscape area that can be presented and manipulated to represent the three dimensional qualities of the proposed building within the existing context of the built and natural surroundings.

8. **Architectural Design Plans** *(see checklist below)*

   a. Initial submittal: Five (5) full-size sets (24" x 36") and five (5) half-size sets (11" x 17").

   b. Once application deemed complete: 14 additional half-size sets of plans and a digital copy in .pdf format on a CD, a USB data key or emailed to the project planner.

9. **Completed Design Guidelines Checklist.**

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PLANS

1. **Cover Sheet**

- ❑ Vicinity Map (clear and legible)
- ❑ Table of Contents
- ❑ General Project Information (project description, general plan, zoning, property owner, design professionals, etc.)
- ❑ A summary of land development calculations including, but not limited to, site area, lot coverage, setbacks, impervious surfaces, building floor area, parking stalls (required and proposed), and, when appropriate, number of beds, students and/or dining seats
- ❑ Rendering or graphic of proposed project

2. **Site Plan** (⅛" = 1' scale)

- ❑ Subject property showing all property lines, easements and adjacent streets
- ❑ Location of all existing structures on subject property
- ~~❑ Location and dimensions of parking, driveway, and loading areas~~
- ❑ Location and dimensions of driveways and off-street parking spaces, interior clear dimensions of garage including stall size, aisle widths, back up distance, curbs, and surfacing materials.
- ❑ Location and size of handicapped spaces where applicable.
- ❑ Loading spaces where applicable.
- ❑ Location, size, type and proposed disposition of all existing trees over four-inches in

diameter

- ❑ Landscape areas, walkways, fences, retaining walls, utility areas, and trash facilities
- ❑ Public improvements, both existing and proposed, including streets, curbs, gutters, street lighting, street paving and fire hydrants.
- ❑ TBD: Shadow study diagram for upper story elevations, clearly illustrating effect on streets, sidewalks and structures on adjacent properties.

3. **Floor Plans** (¼" = 1' scale)

- ❑ ~~Show existing and proposed development~~
- ❑ Show all buildings, existing and proposed, including:
  - dimensioned floor plans;
  - indication of the use of all areas;
  - which buildings (or portions thereof) are to be removed;
  - existing and proposed grades.
- ❑ Identify details such as balconies, roof gardens, cabanas, etc.
- ❑ ADA compliance

NOTE: Floor plans for single-story buildings may be shown on the site plan.

4. **Floor Area Calculation Diagram** (⅛" = 1' scale)

- ❑ Gross floor area - measured to outside edge of wall and including all space enclosed by walls (habitable space, non-habitable space, accessory structures, basements)
- ❑ Net floor area - excluding all inner courts and/or shaft enclosures (stairwells, elevator shafts, etc)
- ❑ Existing floor area of structures to be removed

5. **Building Elevations** (¼" = 1' scale)

- ❑ Elevations of all sides of all existing buildings to be removed, existing to remain and proposed.
- ❑ Building materials and design details
- ❑ Roof pitch
- ❑ ~~Roof-mounted equipment~~ Location and method of screening of roof-mounted mechanical equipment. Note peak height.
- ❑ New signage being proposed
- ❑ ~~Height~~ Building height, including height plane for properties on sloping lots.
- ❑ Specify height for all features proposed for height exemption under code 14.66.240.
- ❑ Color(s)
- ❑ Fencing

6. **Building Cross-Sections** (¼" = 1' scale)

Provide at least two (2) cross-sections, taken from the highest ridge, showing existing and proposed grades, finished floor levels, wall plates, and building height – including ancillary structures that exceed height per 14.66.240 – to existing grade.

7. **Roof Plan** (¼" = 1' scale)

- ❑ Roof pitch
- ❑ Existing roof to remain and new roof area
- ❑ All rooftop mechanical equipment and screening location(s)

8. **Landscape & Lighting Plan** (¼" = 1' scale)

- ❑ A conceptual planting plan that identifies all existing and proposed trees and plants
- ❑ Color photos of proposed trees, plants and other landscape features
- ❑ Hardscape, walkways, fences and retaining walls
- ❑ Utility areas and trash facilities
- ❑ A calculation showing:
  - Total hardscape area
  - Total softscape area
- ❑ Exterior lighting plan
  - Location.
  - Style of fixtures.
  - Intensity (wattage and type of light source).
  - Height of pole-mounted fixtures

Note: Additional details may be added pending Council's approval of landscape recommendations.

9. **Grading and Drainage Plan** (⅛" = 1' scale)

NOTE: The Grading and Drainage Plan shall be prepared by a registered civil engineer or a licensed architect.

- ❑ Location and elevation of benchmarks
- ❑ Location of all cuts and fills
- ❑ Elevation at street and neighboring property lines
- ❑ Pad elevation for all buildings.
- ❑ Finished floor elevation
- ❑ Tree location(s)
- ❑ Lot drainage pattern

- ❑ Existing and proposed contours
- ❑ Stormwater management measures to retain stormwater on site in accord with the Best Management Practices
- ❑ All existing and proposed underground utilities lines, meters and adjacent infrastructure
- ❑ Interim erosion control measures

10. **Construction Management Plan**

Prepare a preliminary construction management plan that identifies anticipated truck routing and staging, construction worker parking plan (on-site and off-site) and pedestrian routing (sidewalk closures, detours, etc.). *See Construction Management Plan handout for more specific direction.*

11. **Streetscape Elevation**

Render proposed structure(s) in relation to development on adjoining properties. In the case of a corner lot, a streetscape of each street is required. Include all features where height exemption under 14.66.240 is claimed.

12. The use of both passive and active solar energy measures is a high priority with the City. Each proposal must be designed to maximize such measures to include the pre-plumbing and installation of solar collectors, window locations and building siting to maximize natural conditions, and proper use of roof overhangs. A written statement must accompany the application that clearly describes these measures.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

1. **Mailed Notices** – All properties within 500 feet of the project site will receive a mailed notice of the public meeting 10-14 days before the meeting. The Planning Division will provide an area map showing all properties within a 500-foot radius. The applicant must provide two sets of blank stamped postcards (post office approved size) for all properties within the 500-foot radius.

   NOTE: Notification for Commercial Districts, by City Council resolution, requires notification of all commercial tenants within the 500-foot radius area. The applicant is responsible for providing a name and address list of all commercial businesses within the notification area. Additional blank stamped postcards for this address list will also be required

2. **On-Site Posting Requirement –** In addition to the mailed notices, a public notice billboard (four feet by six feet) with color renderings of the project will need to be installed at the project site at least 10 days prior to the first public meeting date. *See Public Notice Billboard handout for more specific direction.*

3. **Story Poles** – All new development projects are required to install story poles on the site at least two weeks prior to the first public meeting. *See Story Pole handout for more specific direction.*

CITY ACTION

The project will be reviewed at public meetings before the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC), the Planning and Transportation Commission (PTC) and the City Council (CC). BPAC will hold a public meeting to provide a recommendation regarding the project's bicycle and pedestrian amenities. The PTC will hold a public meeting to review and provide a recommendation on all components of the project, and the City Council will review and take a final action on the project.

In order to approve the project, the PTC and CC must make specific findings on each of the following issues:

1. The proposal meets the goals, policies and objectives of the Los Altos General Plan and any specific plan, design guidelines and ordinance design criteria adopted for the specific district or area.
2. The proposal has architectural integrity and has an appropriate relationship with other structures in the immediate area in terms of height, bulk and design.
3. Building mass is articulated to relate to the human scale, both horizontally and vertically. Building elevations have variation and depth, and avoid large blank wall surfaces. Residential or mixed-use residential projects incorporate elements that signal habitation, such as identifiable entrances, stairs, porches, bays and balconies.
4. Exterior materials and finishes convey high quality, integrity, permanence and durability, and materials are used effectively to define building elements such as base, body, parapets, bays, arcades and structural elements.
5. Landscaping is generous and inviting, and landscape and hardscape features are designed to complement the building and parking areas, and to be integrated with the building architecture and the surrounding streetscape. Landscaping includes substantial street tree canopy, either in the public right-of-way or within the project frontage.
6. Signage is designed to complement the building architecture in terms of style, materials, colors and proportions.
7. Mechanical equipment is screened from public view. Screening is designed to be consistent with the building architecture in form, material and detailing and meets height limits.
8. Service, trash and utility areas are screened from public view, or are enclosed in structures that are consistent with the building architecture in materials and detailing.

EXHIBIT 3.4 INCONSISTENT STAFF REPORTS

STUDY SESSION FORMATS

6-18-15 PTC study session 999 Fremont

DATE: June 18, 2015

AGENDA ITEM # 2

TO: Planning and Transportation Commission

FROM: David Kornfield, Planning Services Manager

SUBJECT: Study Session for 995 (981-991) Fremont Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction to the applicant

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a pre-application design review, study session for a mixed-use project at 995 Fremont Avenue. The purpose of the study session is to provide early design input from the Planning and Transportation Commission.

The project combines several parcels into a 28,584-square-foot site with contiguous frontage on Fremont Avenue and secondary frontage on A Street and B Street. The project proposes approximately 6,900 square feet of commercial area and 20 multiple-family condominiums.

The design concept is to develop a single building that is broken down into what appears as separate buildings each with its own architecture. The project uses a uniform Tuscan style tile roof, cement plaster siding, wood and iron and masonry details within each architectural expression. The commercial spaces have frontage on Fremont Avenue and A Street. A hidden courtyard provides secondary access to the commercial space and access to the residential units on the second and third stories. Most of the commercial parking spaces are located at-grade and accessed from a driveway on Fremont Avenue and B Street. The remaining parking is located in a below-grade parking garage accessed from B Street.

DISCUSSION

Zoning

The project appears to meet the required building setbacks with the building face set to the back of sidewalk along Fremont Avenue and A Street and with an approximately 20-foot rear set back from B Street. The project exceeds the 30-foot height limit to the top of the flat roof deck by approximately two feet. The Code uses the average, roof height measurement only for sloping gable, hip or gambrel roofs. The project appears to provide the required parking spaces with 71 parking spaces, where the code requires 67 spaces.

10-15-15 PTC study session 1540 Miramonte

DATE: October 15, 2015

AGENDA ITEM # 1

TO: Planning and Transportation Commission

FROM: David Kornfield, Planning Services Manager

SUBJECT: Study Session for 1540 Miramonte Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction to the applicant

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a pre-application design review, study session for a mixed-use project at 1540 Miramonte Avenue. The purpose of the study session is to provide early design input from the Planning and Transportation Commission.

The project is located in the Loyola Corners Specific Plan area at the corner of Miramonte Avenue and B Street. The project proposes to replace an automobile service station with a mixed-use building with approximately 1,300 square feet of retail area at the ground level and four apartments at the second story.

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION:	Neighborhood Commercial
ZONING:	CN (Commercial Neighborhood) LC/SPZ (Loyola Corners Specific Plan)
PARCEL SIZE:	0.37 acres (13,400 square feet)
MATERIALS:	Standing seam metal roof, shiplap and tongue-and-groove wood siding, re-sawn plywood, wood trim

	Existing	Proposed	Required/Allowed
SETBACKS:			
Front (B Street)	48 feet	10 feet	0 feet
Rear	58 feet	76 feet	20 feet
Exterior Side (Miramonte)	38 feet (to building)	6 feet	0 feet
Right Side	2 feet	5 feet	0 feet
HEIGHT:	15 feet	25 feet[1]	30 feet
PARKING:	10 spaces	16 spaces	14 spaces

STUDY SESSION WITH PTC

DATE: October 15, 2015

AGENDA ITEM # 1

TO: Planning and Transportation Commission

FROM: David Kornfield, Planning Services Manager

SUBJECT: Study Session for 1540 Miramonte Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction to the applicant

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This is a pre-application design review, study session for a mixed-use project at 1540 Miramonte Avenue. The purpose of the study session is to provide early design input from the Planning and Transportation Commission.

The project is located in the Loyola Corners Specific Plan area at the corner of Miramonte Avenue and B Street. The project proposes to replace an automobile service station with a mixed-use building with approximately 1,300 square feet of retail area at the ground level and four apartments at the second story.

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION:	Neighborhood Commercial
ZONING:	CN (Commercial Neighborhood) LC/SPZ (Loyola Corners Specific Plan)
PARCEL SIZE:	0.37 acres (13,400 square feet)
MATERIALS:	Standing seam metal roof, shiplap and tongue-and-groove wood siding, re-sawn plywood, wood trim

	Existing	Proposed	Required/Allowed
SETBACKS:			
Front (B Street)	48 feet	10 feet	0 feet
Rear	58 feet	76 feet	20 feet
Exterior Side (Miramonte)	38 feet (to building)	6 feet	0 feet
Right Side	2 feet	5 feet	0 feet
HEIGHT:	15 feet	25 feet[1]	30 feet
PARKING:	10 spaces	16 spaces	14 spaces

REPORT TO PTC

DATE: January 21, 2016

AGENDA ITEM # 2

TO: Planning and Transportation Commission

FROM: David Kornfield, Planning Services Manager

SUBJECT: 15-D-07, 15-UP-03—1540 Miramonte Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend approval of Design and Use Permit applications 15-D-07, 15-UP-03 to the City Council subject to the findings and conditions

BACKGROUND

This is the reconsideration of a design review and use permit application for a project at 1540 Miramonte Avenue. The project is for a mixed-use building with 1,466 square feet of retail commercial space at the ground level and four residential apartments at the second story.

On December 17, 2015, the Planning and Transportation Commission held a public hearing and continued its review subject to the following direction:

- Provide more articulation and architectural detail in the building design;
- Address the clock tower element to define it better;
- Provide more contrast in the building materials;
- Make the upper story appear more residential;
- Reduce the bulk by adding windows on the north and south second story elevations;
- Add a street tree on B Street and a Chinese Pistache on Miramonte Avenue;
- Make the building openings on the rear (west) building elevation more symmetrical;
- Provide actual material samples such as the stained wood siding;
- Add more landscape where possible such as in the parking lot;
- Add images of landscaping into the plans;
- Add more landscaping at the base of the building; and
- Consider comingling restrooms for the retail areas for a more commercial floor plan potential.

REPORT TO COUNCIL

CITY OF LOS ALTOS
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
February 23, 2016

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Agenda Item # 6

SUBJECT: Approve design review and use permit applications for 1540 Miramonte Avenue subject to the listed findings and conditions

BACKGROUND

This is a design review and use permit application for a project at 1540 Miramonte Avenue. The project is for a two-story, mixed-use building with 1,466 square feet of retail commercial space at the ground level and four residential apartments at the second story. Design review is required for the new building. A use permit is required for the expansion of the building area. The project was submitted prior to the development moratorium for the Loyola Corners Neighborhood Specific Plan area.

Following an initial study session on October 15, 2015 and a review by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission on November 4, 2015, the applicant addressed recommendations to modify and add more bicycle racks. The project was reviewed twice by the Planning and Transportation Commission at public hearings on December 17, 2015 and January 21, 2016, with the applicant addressing many of the Commission's recommendations. At its January 21, 2016 meeting, the Planning and Transportation Commission unanimously recommended approval of the project to the City Council subject to the following direction:

1. Revise the landscape plans on the Miramonte Avenue and B Street frontages to reflect the street tree types shown in the Loyola Corners Concept Plan;
2. Revise the landscape plan on the B Street frontage to show the expanded planter on the street side of the sidewalk as per the Loyola Corners Concept Plan;
3. Omit the signage on the elevator tower;
4. Revise the privacy walls on the north side of the building by extending them if possible and/or using alternative materials for them;
5. Consider adding a clearstory window in the bedroom at the northwest corner of the building; and
6. Update the renderings to reflect the most recent changes.

The Memorandum to the Planning and Transportation Commission and the minutes of the January 21, 2016 meeting are attached as Attachments 2 and 3, respectively.

EXISTING POLICY

Loyola Corners Neighborhood Specific Plan (adopted in 1990, amended in 1993).

On March 24, 2015, the City Council adopted a story pole requirement for commercial, multiple-

EXHIBIT 3.5 PROPOSED STAFF REPORT TEMPLATE

Based on the staff report for 1540 Miramonte to PTC on 1-21-6 and on 2-23-16 to Council

http://los-altos.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=4&event_id=268&meta_id=45365

DATE:

AGENDA ITEM #

TO:

FROM:

SUBJECT:

RECOMMENDATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION: xxx

ZONING: xxx

PARCEL SIZE: xxx

MATERIALS: xxx

SETBACKS:	Existing	Proposed	Required/Allowed
Front	x feet	x feet	x feet
Rear	x feet	x feet	x feet
Right side	x feet	x feet	x feet
Left side	x feet	7 feet	x feet
HEIGHT:	x feet	x feet	x feet
PARKING:	x spaces	x spaces	x spaces
DENSITY:	x units	x units	x units

BACKGROUND

EXISTING POLICY

PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION

DISCUSSION

PUBLIC CONTACT

FISCAL/RESOURCE IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION

ALTERNATIVES

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Project plans
2. Submittal Requirements Checklist
3. Design Guidelines Checklist if project is downtown
4. xxxx

FINDINGS: ***ALL FINDINGS TO BE LISTED UNDER THE APPROPRIATE TOPIC HEADING. Numbers relate to the Submittal Requirements document.***

4 Materials

5 Technical Studies

- **Traffic impact assessment**
- **Arborist report**
- **Acoustical analysis**
- **Other**

6 Climate Action Plan Checklist

7 Color renderings and 3D model

8 Architectural Design Plans and Design Guidelines (Refer to checklists on attached Submittal Requirements document. Note any missing or nonconforming items, exemptions and variances.)

PARKING

CONDITIONS

EXHIBIT 3.6 LOS GATOS ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANTS

http://www.losgatosca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/13593

RESOLUTION 2014 -040
RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS GOVERNING THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS AND CLARIFYING THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ARCHITECTURAL CONSULTANT AND RESCINDING RESOLUTION 2002 -25

WHEREAS, the Town of Los Gatos Town Council has determined that there is a need to modify the Town's design review process last adopted in 2002; and

WHEREAS, a goal of the Town is to ensure full public and policy maker consideration of design alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the use of an architectural consultant may assist applicants, Town staff, and decision -makers in achieving architectural excellence in designs submitted to the Town for review; and

WHEREAS, architectural consultants have been used in the past and may be engaged by the Town to review the architecture for fixture development proposals at the expense of project applicants;

WHEREAS, the architectural consultant is qualified to review and critique architecture and may be requested to work with applicants, Town staff and decision makers to provide input on designs which have been submitted to the Town, to answer questions about the submitted design and/ or design alternatives, and otherwise serve as a resource to decision makers;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council that the following policies shall govern the architectural review process:

A. The architectural consultant may review plans upon request by Town staff, the Planning Commission and/ or the Town Council and provide input regarding the plan' s consistency with applicable design standards and guidelines, specific plans and the General Plan. Staff reports on projects that have been reviewed by the architectural consultant will include any recommendations or alternatives presented by the architectural consultant, and any alternative, including the original reviewed design, submitted by the applicant.

B. Town staff, the Planning Commission and the Town Council may consider the architectural consultant' s recommendations or alternatives as one of a number of factors used in the consideration of any development project submitted to the Town.

C. Town staff, the Planning Commission and the Town Council may use their independent discretion in evaluating the recommendations of the architectural consultant and may approve any design that meets all applicable Town Design Guidelines, ordinances, specific plans and the General Plan.

D. Whenever possible, the Planning Commission and/ or the Town Council should seek

to resolve design issues that arise during the hearing by crafting motions to deny, continue with direction to revise, or to approve with appropriate conditions. When necessary, the Planning Commission and/ or the Town Council may continue an item to a future meeting and request the presence of the architectural consultant to address specific issues or questions. Any costs associated with the delay and requested presence of the architectural consultant will be paid by the applicant
PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Town Council held on the 16a` day of June, 2014, by the following vote:

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
AYES: Marcia Jensen, Diane McNutt, Joe Pirzynski, Barbara Spector, Mayor Steven Leonardis
NAYS:
ABSENT:
ABSTAIN:
MAYOR OF THE TO OF OS GATOS
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA
ATTEST:
CLERK ADMINISTRATOR THE TOWN OF LOS GATOS
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA

CONCLUSION/OUTCOMES

Putting the above recommendations into practice will:

- Expedite the commercial development process by
  - clearly defining community expectations
  - providing easy checklist to ensure conformance
  - building enforcement and accountability into the process.
- Create more transparency for residents during the multiple phases of the commercial development approval process.
- Improve predictability to ensure there are no more surprises for the developer or residents, while attracting high-quality commercial development.
- Give residents the quality development they deserve.

This work will also further the visioning process leading to a Downtown Plan that specifically defines community needs and expectations.

Such a plan is needed to create a level playing field for developers and to ensure objective decision-making. It will prevent piecemeal approval, project by project, which has given us the negative aspects if First Street.

Council should take whatever steps required for maximum enforceability and timely execution to ensure the vision is implemented.

HEIGHT, BULK, AND MASS
&
PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE SUBCOMMITTEES

4. HEIGHT, BULK, and MASS

FINDINGS:

- **The maximum allowed building envelope increased significantly after 2010 when zoning changes increased maximum heights and eliminated FARs.**

  New maximum envelope ('block of clay') is now 200-300% greater than the prior maximum cubic footage (depending on site dimensions, planned use, and parking solution).

  These zoning changes placed new expectations on staff, PTC and Council to negotiate reductions to the proposed mass of buildings and achieve a design that fits the community.

- **Taller buildings constructed to minimum setback along narrow streets with NW/SE orientation create dark shadows and sense of "tunnel."**
  - Distance from building front to building front across Main Street is about 78 feet (11-foot sidewalks and tree wells and 56 feet of street). For State Street, building-to-building is about 65 feet (14 foot sidewalks and 36 foot street). This compares to 35-45 feet on First Street (5-6 foot sidewalks and 22-40 foot street width). (See *EXHIBIT 4.1.)*
  - Eliminating front parking lots and bringing building fronts to minimum setback (current staff policy) will create even more "tunnel" effect.
  - By comparison, few buildings in the CRS zone are built to the lot line along their entire length; many have recessed display windows and/or fronts plus well-articulated entries.

- **"Flexibility" in design and approval demanded by developers, staff, and PTC has not created a welcoming, pedestrian-friendly village that meets community expectations.**

- **Interrelated factors affect community acceptance: height/bulk/mass, human scale, pedestrian experience, landscaping, shadows, views, materials.**

  (See *EXHIBIT 4.2*, Analysis of resident feedback with table of recent survey results for each building, and *EXHIBIT 3.1*, Summary of committee's review of recent buildings.)

- **Reducing maximum heights while retaining current form-based zoning will allow larger buildings than could be built prior to 2010, while reducing adverse impacts on other factors and retaining flexibility in design.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Amend the height limits for the CD and CD/R3 zones so that commercial and mixed-use structures do not exceed 30 feet in height and entirely residential projects do not exceed 35 feet in height.

> **14.44.120 - Height of structures (CD).**
>
> No structure shall exceed ~~forty-five (45)~~ thirty (30) feet in height. The first story shall have a minimum interior ceiling height of twelve (12) feet to accommodate retail use, and the floor level of the first story shall be no more than one foot above sidewalk level.

14.52.100 - Height of structures (CD/R3).

~~No structure shall exceed forty-five feet (45) feet in height.~~ For entirely residential projects, no structure shall exceed thirty-five (35) feet in height. For commercial and mixed-use projects, no structure shall exceed thirty (30) feet in height. Commercial and mixed-use projects that include ground floor commercial floor area shall provide a ground floor with a minimum interior ceiling height of twelve (12) feet.

NOTE: setbacks required in 14.52.060 for CD/R3 already differentiate between "entirely residential projects" – which require "minimum depth of the front yard shall be ten (10) feet…."– and "mixed-use and commercial" – which require "minimum depth of front yards shall be two feet…."

B. Adopt an ordinance establishing a temporary moratorium on new construction in the CD and CD/R3 zones that does not meet the height limits recommended above, pending completion of the process needed to act on and implement the zoning changes.

The committee recognizes that reducing maximum heights would add to the number of non-conforming buildings downtown, although previous Council action has already done so when the method for measuring height was changed following construction (e.g. 160 First Street and 1 Main Street). Objections that making a building non-conforming creates adverse impacts on its value has not prevented owners from making further capital improvements (e.g. installing solar, which required Council approval of a variance for the Harman Building) or gaining Council approval for special uses to expand business offerings (1 Main).

EXHIBIT 4.1 RELATION OF BUILDING HEIGHT TO STREET WIDTH AND PEDESTRIAN WALKWAYS

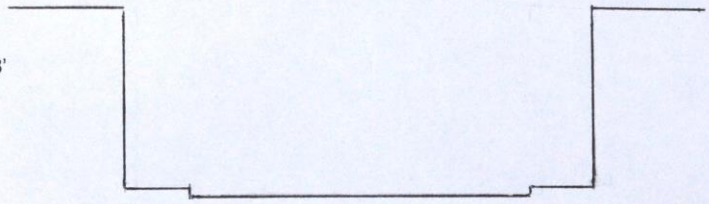
The primary streets of the CD and CD/R3 zones (First, Second, and Third Streets) are considerably narrower than those of the CRS zone (Main and State Streets), contributing to adverse impact of taller buildings.

- Exacerbates the adverse impact of taller buildings in CD and CD/R3 compared to if they were built in CRS (e.g. a building that seems of good scale on Main St. will seem out of scale on First Street, given the narrower street and narrower sidewalks).
- Impacts include adverse shade projection, and potential tunnel effects as narrower rights of way (assuming street parking is retained) currently limit sidewalks to approximately 5 feet.

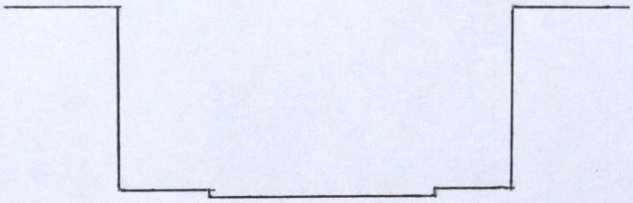
Please see next page for diagrams.

Representative sketches of street/building cross-sections at maximum build-out under current zoning (excludes height exceptions for roofline, mechanical equipment screening, etc.)

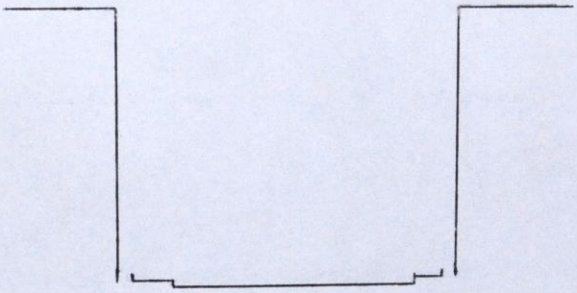
Main Street
Building-to-building: 78'
Street: 56'
Sidewalk: 11'
Setback: 0'
Max. height: 30'
Ratio: 1:2.6



State Street
Building-to-building: 65'
Street: 36'
Sidewalk: 14'
Setback: 0'
Max. height: 30'
Ratio: 1:2.17



First Street (South)
Building-to-building: 50-58'
Street: 40'
Sidewalk: 5'- 8'
Setback: 2'
Max. height: 45'
Ratio: 1:1.2 (at 54')



First Street (North)
Building-to-building: 36'
Street: 22'
Sidewalk: 5'
Setback: 2'
Max. height: 45'
Ratio: 1:0.8

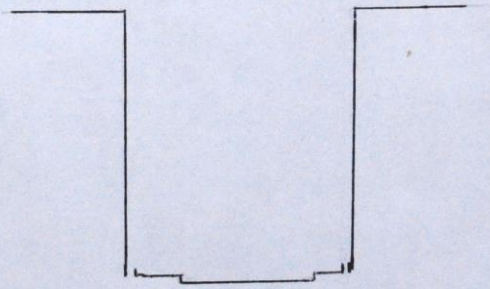


EXHIBIT 4.2 RESIDENT FEEDBACK

Analysis of feedback from recent resident survey: A majority of residents (51%) favor no further development or development not greater than 30 feet/two stories (integrating data from Q 10 and 14 from recent survey)

- 23% want no additional development downtown;
- 28% want no more than 30 feet;
- 33% would allow 3 stories or 45 feet or more;
- 16% have various other, unidentified, opinions.

The data presented in the survey results can be confusing without the additional information that Q14 was asked of all survey participants (n=401), but Q10 was asked ONLY of those who answered Q14 by favoring either of the two specific locations for "Continued redevelopment…" options (n=245).

Q10 thus provided more specific information about the height limits only from those who favored further development.

To integrate the information into a correct statistical interpretation, Q14 results show 23.3% of the total sample (n=401) want "No additional development downtown" and 14.3 % (9.0 + 2.9 + 2.2) had mixed or no opinion.

The remaining 62.6% (32.6 + 30.0) who favored some "Continued redevelopment..." were then asked Q10 regarding height, so the percentage of responses for that question shown must be multiplied by 62.6% to arrive at a correct percentage of the TOTAL survey sample with respect to opinions on additional development height: "Stay the way it is/allow 30 feet…" at 44.7 x 62.6 = 27.9% and "Allow 45 feet in height…" at 52.8 x 62.6 = 33.1%.

The remaining 2.7% who answered A10 with Mixed opinions, neither, and DK/NA thus need to be added (2.7 x 62.6 = 0.17%) to the "other opinions" to get a complete picture.

Perceptions of Individual Developments by Mean Score

Source: Godbe Research 2015 Survey

Shown in ranked order

2 = strongly like; 0 = neutral; –2 = strongly dislike

Building	Mean score
242 Second Street (Packard Foundation)	1.10
170 First Street (Safeway)	0.66
1 Main Street (Hotel)	0.54
400 Main Street (Cetrella/Pharmaca)	0.39
240 Third Street (Schwab)	0.34
100 First Street (condos at old Post Office site)	0.19
396 First Street (condos at old Adobe Animal Hospital site)	–0.01

5. HEIGHT EXCEPTIONS PER 14.66.240

FINDINGS:

- **City zoning language and guidelines are outdated and are insufficient to define and limit height exceptions for parapets, chimneys, towers, skylights, penthouses, screening walls, etc. Such features under current code contribute to undesired height.**
  - Lack of uniform instruction on how to measure the allowable heights for such exceptions leads to confusion and inconsistent application of the rule (e.g. to peak or to mid-point of sloped roofs or ??).
  - Current submittal requirements call for cross sections at the "highest ridge" with no call-out of any proposed height exceptions under 14.66.240. These are easily overlooked or receive insufficient attention during design review.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Amend 14.66.240 (A) and (E) to group structures that are related to building design, equipment or mechanical screening separate from other structures (e.g. flag poles and antennae). Make the maximum height for such structures 8 feet instead of 15.

14.66.240 - Height limitations—Exceptions.

A. ~~Towers,~~ Sspires, ~~cupolas, chimneys~~, flagpoles, radio and television antennas, and transmission towers, except as noted below, may be erected to a height not more than fifteen (15) feet above the height limit prescribed by the regulations for the district in which the site is located provided no such structure shall be used for dwelling purposes or for commercial or advertising purposes.

[B-D omitted]

E. Towers, cupolas, chimneys, ~~C~~completely enclosed penthouses or other similar roof structures for the housing of elevators, stairways, tanks, or electrical or mechanical equipment required to operate and maintain the building, and parapet walls and skylights may project not more than eight feet above the roof and the permitted building height, provided the combined area of all roof structures does not exceed four percent of the gross area of the building roof. However, no tower, cupola, chimney, penthouse or roof structure or any space above the height limit shall be allowed for the purpose of providing additional usable floor space for dwelling, commercial, advertising, retailing, or storage of any type.

NOTE: Recommendation to require all exceptions be called out on Submittal Requirements is in EXHIBIT 3.3.

B. Remove language in guidelines and plans that encourage towers (Downtown Design Plan p. 11, 22, 35). Direct staff to prepare and add definition for "penthouse" and "tower" to the general definitions at 14.02.070. Specify that penthouse is not a habitable or commercial space but is intended to provide an architecturally pleasing cover to stairwells, elevator equipment, etc.

14.02.070 - Definitions.

For the purposes of this chapter, certain words and phrases used in this chapter are defined as follows:

…..

"Penthouse" means….

….

"Tower" means….

PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

In addition to building height and mass, the pedestrian experience has been negatively affected by:

- insufficient articulation
- narrow and obstructed sidewalks
- poor landscaping
- inadequate building materials
- extensive shadows
- obstructed views

All of these can be mitigated. Specific findings and recommendations follow.

6. ARTICULATION

FINDINGS:

- **Pedestrian experience, human scale, and village character have been negatively affected by insufficient articulation.**
  - Articulation is currently required only for buildings over 75 feet wide, which is too great for human scale in the village environment; downtown core requirement is 25 feet.
  - Staff encourages building to the minimum setback and placing parking in the rear, which exacerbates "tunnel" effect.
  - Lack of articulation in some buildings fails to mitigate height, bulk, and mass.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Amend Design Control to require articulations for every building over 50 feet wide and require changes of plane in the horizontal and vertical aspects.

> **14.44.130 – Design Control (CD) and 14.52.110 – Design Control (CD/R3)**
>
> B.2. Every building over ~~seventy-five (75)~~ fifty (50) feet wide should have its perceived height and bulk reduced by dividing the building mass into smaller-scale components by:
>
> i. A change of plane, effecting changes in both the horizontal and vertical aspects.
>
> ii. A projection or recess;
>
> iii. Varying cornice or roof lines;
>
> iv. Other similar means

Note: DBC does not recommend applying these requirements to the CRS zone, which, as noted in 14.48.020.C, continues "the pattern and scale established by existing buildings…that express the underlying twenty-five (25) foot frontages originally established…."

B. Through development requirements and guidelines, encourage variation in building-entrance configuration and other aspects of the front of the building, upper levels, and roofline, to avoid a "tunnel" that would result from having all buildings constructed to the minimum setback. Instruct Staff and PTC to encourage creative articulations at street level rather than building to the minimum setback.

7. SIDEWALKS

FINDINGS:

- **In much of the CD and CD/R3 zones, it is impossible to walk side-by-side, enjoying a positive walking experience.**
  - Most sidewalks in CD and CD/R3 are 5 feet wide.
  - Signage and utility poles obstruct pedestrian traffic. "Barriers" at the minimum setback (hardscape walls or tall/dense landscaping) reduce usable sidewalk width.
  - Greater consistency in sidewalk width throughout the downtown triangle would encourage pedestrian traffic to flow easily from one street to another and to move beyond the downtown core.
- **Bringing the south end of First Street sidewalks into conformance with those on the north end would improve the visual appeal and pedestrian orientation of the downtown.**

  This would allow room for pedestrian traffic and amenities to coexist in areas in front of buildings, encouraging visitors and adding vibrancy to these streets.
- **In a few parcels, modifications to side or rear setbacks that abut public rights of way may be needed to enhance pedestrian safety. For example, 400 Main has no pedestrian walkway on the Pharmaca side to get from rear parking to the entrance, requiring people to walk in the traffic right of way.**

  EXHIBIT 7.1 contains excerpts of sidewalk design recommendations from the Federal Highway Administration, National Association of City Transportation Officials, and Americans with Disabilities Act.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Require minimum sidewalk width of 6 feet that is generally clear of all obstructions such as signage and utility poles (consistent with streetscape plan previously implemented for the north end of First Street).

This may require dedication of approximately 1 foot from the developer as properties are developed. This recommendation should be incorporated in any future streetscape plan for the portion of First Street from Main to San Antonio, but should not be dependent on the development or implementation of such plan.

B. Where sidewalks are not more than 6 feet wide, prohibit walls or any obstructing hedges or similar plantings within the first two feet of setback. This is advisable because pedestrians avoid the 24 inch area next to a wall of any height and also avoid 18 inches near the curb. This effectively leaves only 18 inches of a 5-foot wide sidewalk for walking. (See *EXHIBIT 7.2.*)

C. Where code currently requires side or rear setback of 2 feet where property adjoins public right of way, change language to require setback of at least 2 feet and as much as 5 feet if needed to create safe pedestrian walkways, supplemented with suitable landscaping. (See below.)

Landscape-only requirements for 2-foot setbacks are appropriate only if there are otherwise safe walkways. This is needed to avoid problems such as have been noted at the north side of 400 Main.

14.44.070 - Side yards (CD). and 14.52.060 – Side yards (CD/R3)

No side yards shall be required, except when the side property line of a site abuts a public street or a public parking plaza, in which case the minimum width of the side yard shall be at least two and as much as five feet as may be needed for pedestrian safety. ~~and shall be landscaped~~. Landscaping shall be integrated with pedestrian safety requirements.

EXHIBIT 7.1 SIDEWALK GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTED PLANNING

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Chapter 4 - Sidewalk Design Guidelines and Existing Practices

"Sidewalks form the backbone of the pedestrian transportation network."

4.1 Location Research

Designers and builders are beginning to realize that the standard pedestrian is a myth and that, in reality, sidewalk users are very diverse. However, there remains a need to provide information to designers and builders on ways to develop accessible facilities within the constraints of existing facilities, as well as in new construction.

4.3 Access Characteristics

The design of a sidewalk can be described by a variety of characteristics. This report focuses on sidewalk characteristics that have the greatest impact on accessibility, such as grade and surface type. Other characteristics such as location, type of street, and climate also affect the pedestrian friendliness of a sidewalk but do not directly impact access. Access characteristics directly affect usability of a sidewalk. The amount of attention paid to these details will determine whether a facility is accessible or not. Even mildly difficult features in combination can add up to an inaccessible pathway.

4.3.3 Width

The widths of sidewalks not only affect pedestrian usability but also determine the types of access and other pedestrian elements that can be installed. For example, a 1.525-m (60-in) sidewalk is probably wide enough to accommodate pedestrian traffic in a residential area, but a much wider sidewalk would be necessary to include amenities such as street furniture or newspaper stands. Design width is defined as the width specification the sidewalk was intended to meet; it extends from the curb or planting strip to any buildings or landscaping that form the opposite borders of the sidewalk. Minimum clearance width is defined as the narrowest point on a sidewalk. An inaccessible minimum clearance width is created when obstacles such as utility poles protrude into the sidewalk and reduce the design width. A reduction in the design width could also create a minimum clearance width.

Although most guidelines require sidewalk design widths to be at least 1.525 m (60 in) wide, larger design widths can accommodate more pedestrians and improve ease of access. The AASHTO Green Book, the Oregon Department of Transportation guidebook, and other guidelines recommend wider design widths in areas with high volumes of pedestrians. The sidewalk width often depends on the type of street. In general, residential streets have narrower sidewalks than commercial streets.

The guidelines and recommendations that were reviewed for minimum clearance width are included in Tables 4-2.1 through 4-2.4 at the end of this chapter. Most of the guidelines reviewed concur with ADAAG, which specifies that the minimum passage width for wheelchairs should be 0.815 m (32 in) at a point and 0.915 m (36 in) continuously (ADAAG, U.S. Access Board, 1991). Additional width is necessary for turning and maneuvering.

The width of the sidewalk is also affected by pedestrian travel tendencies. Pedestrians tend to travel in the center of sidewalks to separate themselves from the rush of traffic and avoid street furniture, vertical obstructions, and other pedestrians entering and exiting buildings. Pedestrians avoid the edge of the sidewalk close to the street because it often contains utility poles, bus shelters, parking meters, sign poles, and other street furniture. Pedestrians also avoid traveling in the 0.610 m (24 in) of the sidewalk close to buildings to avoid retaining walls, street furniture, and fences (OR DOT, 1995). The sidewalk area that pedestrians tend to avoid is referred to as the shy distance. Taking into account the

shy distance, only the center 1.830 m (6 ft) of a 3.050-m (10-ft) sidewalk is used by pedestrians for travel, as shown in Figure 4-7. Thus, the effective width of a sidewalk, not the design width, constitutes the sidewalk area needed to accommodate anticipated levels of pedestrian traffic.

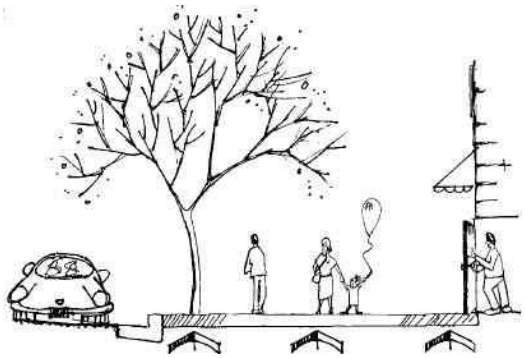


Figure 4-7: Most pedestrians prefer to travel in the center of the sidewalk.

When right-of-way is acquired for sidewalk construction, it is important that adequate width be included to make the facility accessible. If sidewalks are not currently included, the agency responsible for sidewalk construction might consider purchasing additional right-of-way to anticipate future construction. When improving existing facilities, designers should consider purchasing additional right-of-way or narrowing the vehicle portion of the roadway.

4.3.4 Passing Space and Passing Space Interval

Passing space is defined as a section of path wide enough to allow two wheelchair users to pass one another or travel abreast (Figure 4-8). The passing space provided should also be designed to allow one wheelchair user to turn in a complete circle (Figure 4-9).

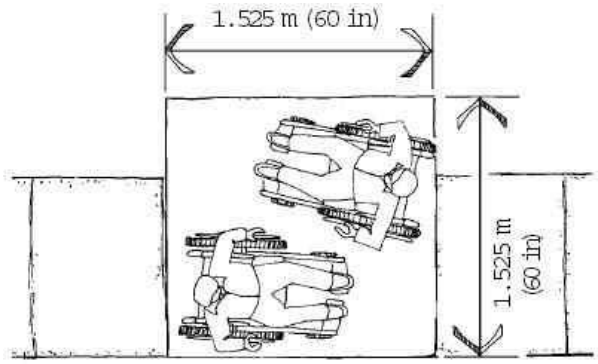


Figure 4-8: Passing spaces should be included at intervals on narrow sidewalks to allow wheelchair users to pass one another.

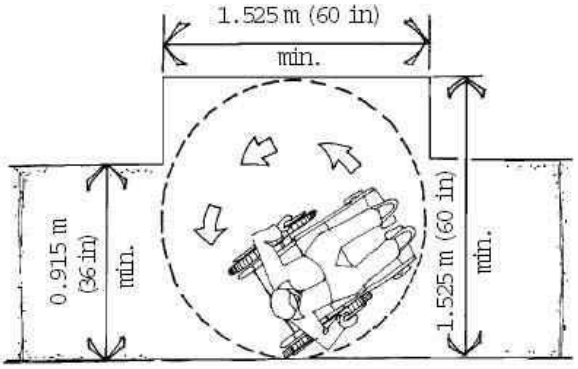


Figure 4-9: Wheelchair users require 1.525 m x 1.525 m (60 in x 60 in) to maneuver in a complete circle.

Passing space interval is defined as the distance between passing spaces. Passing spaces should be provided when the sidewalk width is narrow for a prolonged extent because of a narrow design width or continuous obstacles.

Many agencies and private organizations do not provide guidelines for passing space or passing space intervals. Those that do provide guidelines concur with ADAAG Section 4.3.4, which specifies that accessible routes with less than 1.525 m (60 in) of clear width must provide passing spaces at least 1.525 m (60 in) wide at reasonable intervals not exceeding 61 m (200 ft). If turning or maneuvering is necessary, a turning space of 1.525 m x 1.525 m (60 in x 60 in) should be provided (ADAAG, U.S. Access Board, 1991).

4.3.7 Grates and Gaps

A grate is a framework of latticed or parallel bars that prevents large objects from falling through a drainage inlet but permits water and some debris to fall through the slots (Figure 4-12).A gap is defined as a single channel embedded in the travel surface of a path. Gaps are often found at intersections where railroad tracks are embedded into the road surface.

Figure 4-12: Wheelchair casters and cane and crutch tips can easily get caught in wide grates.

Wheelchair casters and crutch tips can get caught in poorly aligned grate and gap openings. ADAAG specifies that grates located in walking surfaces should have spaces no greater than 13 mm (0.5 in) wide in one direction. It also states that gratings with elongated openings should be oriented so that the long dimension is perpendicular to the dominant direction of travel (ADAAG, U.S. Access

Board,1991). Although ADAAG does not directly address gaps, the similarity of a gap to a single grate slot suggests that ADAAG's grate specifications also apply to gaps.

NOTE: Also included in chapter 4 of the Federal Highway Administration chapter four about sidewalks and accessibility are topics such as slope, elements, obstacles, curb ramps, driveways and so on.

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/sidewalks/chap4a.cfm

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CITY TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS

Sidewalks play a vital role in city life. As conduits for pedestrian movement and access, they enhance connectivity and promote walking. As public spaces, sidewalks serve as the front steps to the city, activating streets socially and economically. Safe, accessible, and well-maintained sidewalks are a fundamental and necessary investment for cities, and have been found to enhance general public health and maximize social capital.

Just as roadway expansions and improvements have historically enhanced travel for motorists, superior sidewalk design can encourage walking by making it more attractive. Sidewalks are an essential component of the urban environment and serve as key corridors for people, goods, and commerce.

Numerous studies have shown that good pedestrian network connectivity and walkability have a positive impact on land values.

Critical

Sidewalks have a desired minimum through zone of 6 feet and an absolute minimum of 5 feet. Where a sidewalk is directly adjacent to moving traffic, the desired minimum is 8 feet, providing a minimum 2-foot buffer for street furniture and utilities.

Sidewalk design should go beyond the bare minimums in both width and amenities. Pedestrians and businesses thrive where sidewalks have been designed at an appropriate scale, with sufficient lighting, shade, and street-level activity. These considerations are especially important for streets with higher traffic speeds and volumes, where pedestrians may otherwise feel unsafe and avoid walking.

Relocation of fixed objects, such as utility poles, light fixtures, and other street furniture should not impinge on or restrict the adjacent walkway. Walkways must be clear of fixed objects in coordination with ADA accessibility guidelines.

Recommended

If a sidewalk is directly adjacent to the roadway, 2 feet should be added to the absolute minimum clear path width to ensure that there is sufficient space for roadside hardware and snow storage.8 Parking provides a valuable buffer between the pedestrian and vehicle realm. Urban arterials or high- volume downtown streets directly abutting the pedestrian realm should be buffered in some capacity, whether through a street furniture zone, parking, cycle track, or other feature. Sidewalks of minimum dimensions directly adjacent to the traveled way should be avoided.

About NACTO

The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit association that represents large cities on transportation issues of local, regional and national significance. NACTO views the transportation departments of major cities as effective and necessary partners in regional and national transportation efforts, promoting their interests in federal decision-making. We facilitate the exchange of transportation ideas, insights and best practices among large cities, while fostering a cooperative approach to key issues facing cities and metropolitan areas. As a coalition of city transportation departments, NACTO is committed to raising the state of the practice for street design and transportation by building a common vision, sharing data, peer-to-peer exchange in workshops and conferences, and regular communication among member cities. We believe that by working together, cities can save time and money, while more effectively achieving their policy goals and objectives.

ADA REQUIREMENTS:

Sidewalk located at least 2 ft. from a curb should be a minimum of 5 ft. wide. Exceptions may be made for local conditions, but ADA requirements must be met.

A sidewalk proposed within 2 ft. of a curb will be placed adjacent to the curb and be a minimum of 6 ft. wide. Exceptions may be made, but ADA requirements must be met.

For sidewalk widths less than 5 ft., a 5 ft. by 5 ft. passing space is to be provided at intervals no greater than 200 ft. http://epg.modot.org/index.php?title=642.1_Sidewalk_Design_Criteria

EXHIBIT 7.2 SIDEWALKS

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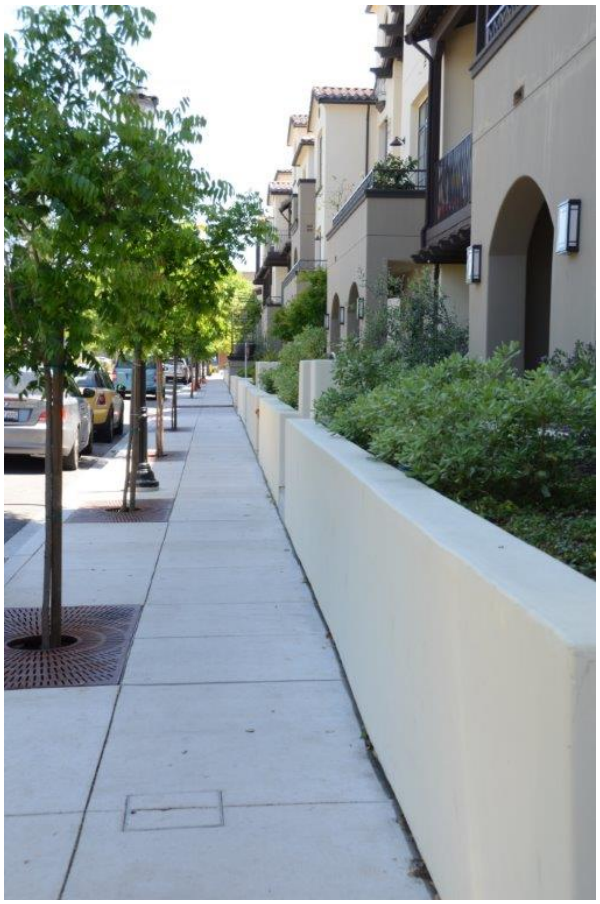

Provide room for people to walk comfortably. Pedestrians walk 24 inches away from walls of all heights (CH 4: Sidewalk Design Guidelines & Existing Practices, Federal Highway Administration)

8. LANDSCAPE

FINDINGS:

- **The City has various inconsistent requirements regarding landscaping:**
  - The "City Action" section of the Submittal Requirements, item 5, requires a finding that

    "Landscaping is generous and inviting, and landscape and hardscape features are designed to complement the building and parking areas, and to be integrated with the building architecture and the surrounding streetscape. Landscaping includes substantial street tree canopy, either in the public right-of-way or within the project frontage."
  - There are requirements for landscaping in setbacks in CD (4.44.060, .070, and .080) and CD/R3 (14.52.060).
  - Guidelines describe "Community Expectations" of "A high quality of traditional architectural and landscape design…. " (p. 7).
  - The Downtown Design Guidelines provide additional guidance for landscaping in the Mixed Commercial District (p. 59) and First Street District (p. 66-67), which together cover the CD and CD/R3 zones, but there are substantial challenges with narrow setbacks and the adverse shadow effects described elsewhere.
  - The Downtown Design Plan (p. 40) does not address landscaping for the CD and CD/R3 areas, other than through general comments.
- **These requirements and their enforcement are insufficient:**
  - Street trees (both newly planted and more mature) are inconsistent in size and quality.
  - Lack of companion plantings in tree wells crates a sense of starkness as opposed to one of lushness.
  - Walls and non-transparent surfaces rarely incorporate effective plantings.
  - Landscaping is sparse and/or slow growing in many areas because of neglect or because selected plants receive insufficient light. Compass orientation of major streets in CD and CD/R3 results in significantly different light availability on opposite sides of the street. Tall buildings exacerbate the problem.

  EXHIBIT 8.1 shows examples of both desirable and unacceptable landscaping.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. When full landscape plans are submitted for city review, city staff should convene a small group composed of a landscape designer or architect, arborist (if plan involves trees), and city maintenance employee with plant-care expertise to review the plan and provide input to the planning staff and subsequent reviewers. Factors to be considered are:

- City landscaping guidelines
- Provide continuity in the downtown
- Best plant size to use
- Best plant for location
- Lighting exposure and number of hours given shadows of adjacent/opposing buildings
- How plants and trees complement adjoining landscaping
- Maintenance required for healthy growth and longevity

B. Task the city arborist to develop a list of recommended trees and minimum sizes for each.

Listed trees should be appropriate for soil and light conditions in downtown Los Altos and represent a variety to avoid the complete wipe out if a disease affects a specific species. Proposed size to be planted for a given project should be reviewed by the city arborist or a certified arborist with relevant experience. The following general guidelines should apply:

- Minimum 8 feet height when planted
- 15-25 foot canopy after 8-10 years
- At least 15 gallon size when planted
- Light exposure for each planting that will allow selected species to thrive

C. Require that plans for care and maintenance be submitted along with landscaping plans.

Enforceable rules need to be in place regarding the watering and care of trees not maintained by the city, with replacement if trees do not thrive.

D. Implement companion plantings that will contribute to the desired Downtown Guideline that recommends an appearance of abundant and substantial landscaping.

Companion plantings will fill in and hide the tree well. Companion plantings will also help to protect tree trunks from sun and pedestrian damage.

E. Enforce current Design Guidelines (Section 3.1.2a) that recommend "use [of] abundant landscaping" for wall covering and store front landscaping. Provide "now" and "later" (+5 years) landscaping photos plus photos of desirable landscapes and those that are unattractive.

Enforcement will create a fuller/denser landscaping vision and improve aesthetics downtown.

F. Increase landscaping in the front of buildings. (Also refer to Recommendation 7B.)

This can be done by adding at least 1 foot up to a much-preferred 3 additional feet to the current 2-foot setback for CD and CD/R3 mixed-use buildings.

The proposed setback, with wider planting beds and cutout in hardscape or vertical elements, allows for landscaping which is pedestrian-friendly and softens the impact of the building's size. It also helps to mitigate pedestrian inclination to walk closer to the street due to perceived restrictions of movement close to buildings without landscaping, and attract interest to each storefront.

G. Create a list of suggested plants for the developer to consider when creating the landscape design. The suggested list should be developed by the city arborist and gardening staff, with experience derived from caring for plantings in downtown.

Include sections that address all micro-climates of the downtown area. Some examples are: shade areas, full-sun areas, and areas adjacent to parking lots and driveways. A plant list will:

- Be a useful guide that can eliminate guesswork for the developer and landscape designer.
- When combined with "now" and "later" pictures, will help alleviate confusion about what to plant as well as what the city expects with regard to landscaping for new and refurbished development.

Follow a format similar to the one guiding "The Care of Oak trees in Los Altos," per the Environmental Commission.

H. Incorporate requirements for amenities and landscaping in the setback and along building fronts in any future streetscape plan for First Street between Main and San Antonio, and encourage additional setbacks for landscaping.

EXHIBIT 8.1 EXAMPLES OF LANDSCAPING

CORNER PLANTINGS

THIS …

Photo 1

NOT THIS …

Photo 2

FREE STANDING PLANTERS

THIS …

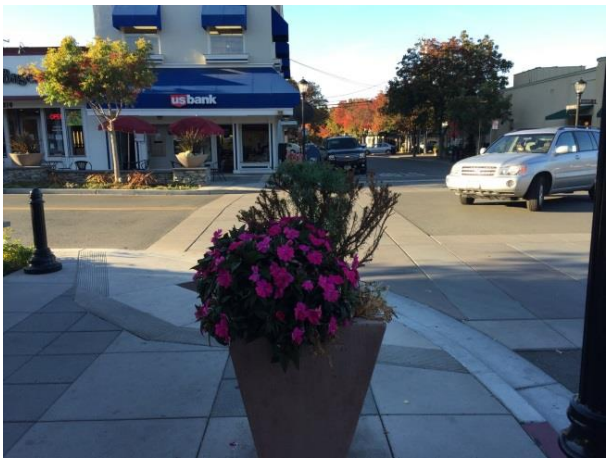

Photo 3

NOT THIS …

Photo 4

WELL-MAINTAINED PLANTING IN FRONT OF BUSINESSES

THIS …

Photo 5

Photo 6

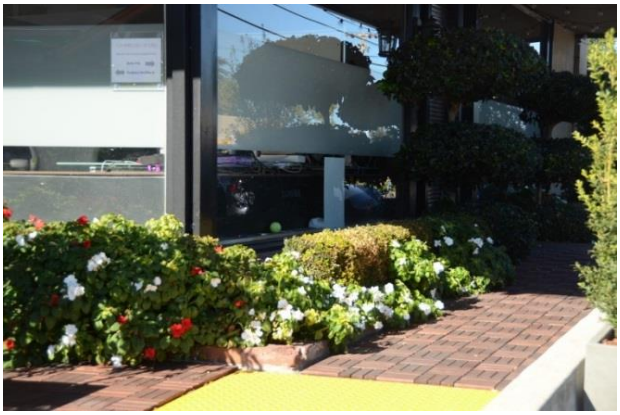

Photo 7

Photo 8

NOT THIS …

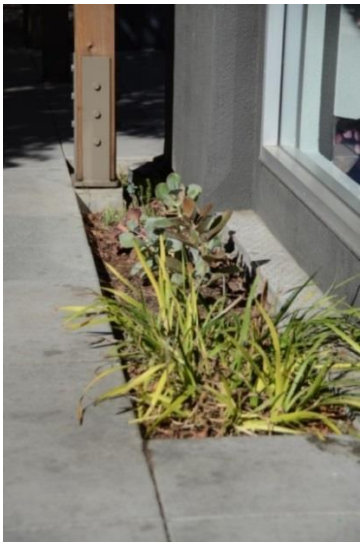

Photo 9

Photo 10

FOR INVITING PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

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Photo 11

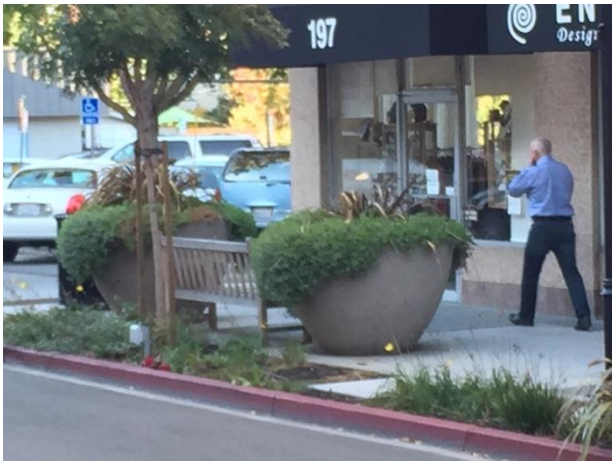

Photo 12

NOT THIS …

Photo 13

MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

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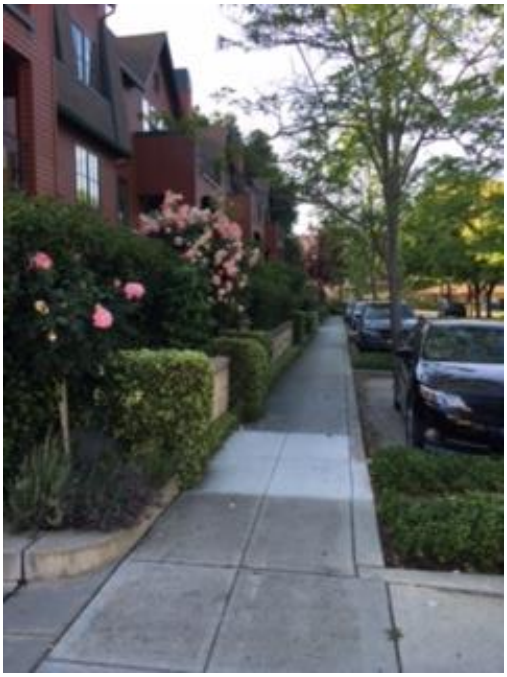

Photo 14

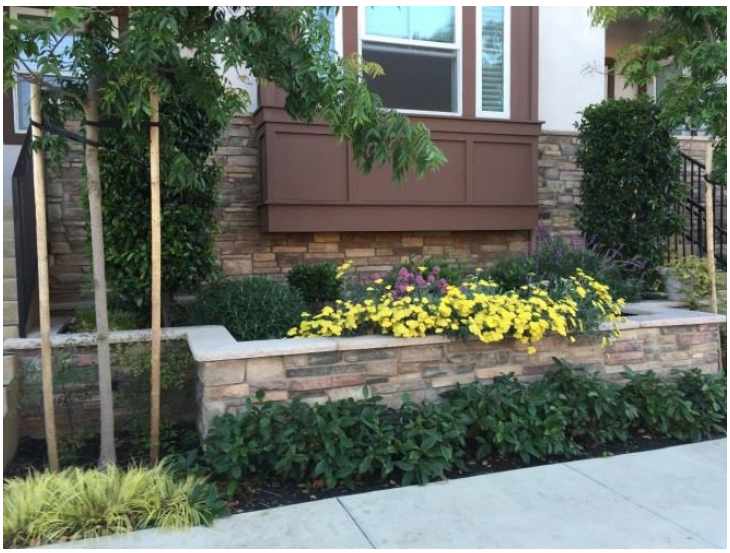

Photo 15

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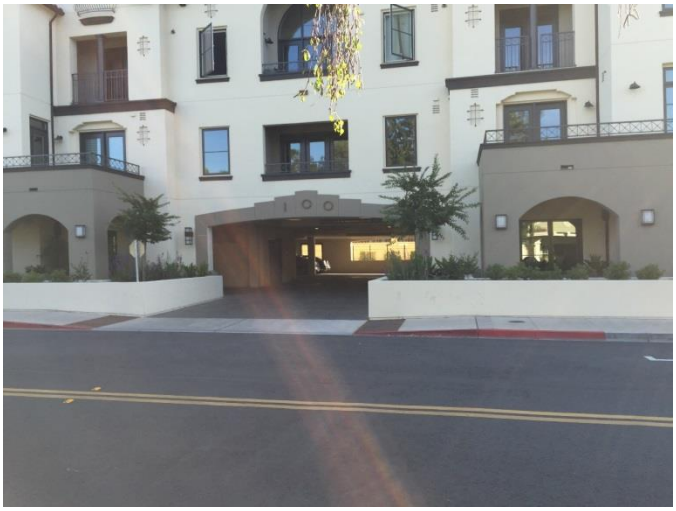

Photo 16

CURB PLANTINGS

THIS …

Photo 17

Photo 18

Photo 19

Photo 20

NOT THIS …

Photo 21

Photo 22

SIDEWALK AND BUILDING FRONTAGE

THIS …

Photo 23

NOT THIS …

Photo 24

MIXED USE

THIS …

Photo 25

NOT THIS …

Photo 26

Adding a foot or two creates space for lush planting.

BUILDING ENTRY

THIS …

Photo 27

Photo 28

Photo 29

Photo 30

BUILDING ENTRY

NOT THIS …

Photo 31

Photo 32

Photo 33

DOWNTOWN ENTRY POINTS

THIS …

Photo 34

Photo 35

NOT THIS …

Photo 36

Photo 37

Photo 38

9. QUALITY OF BUILDING MATERIALS

FINDINGS:

- **The quality of building materials contributes significantly to a welcoming pedestrian experience and to maintaining the village character of Los Altos.**
- **Current practice is not well-codified, and existing guidelines are inadequate.**
  - The current Design Review process requires the following finding (Submittal Requirements. City Action):

    "4. Exterior materials and finishes convey quality, integrity, permanence and durability, and materials are used effectively to define building elements such as base, body, parapets, bays, arcades and structural elements."
  - The Downtown Design Plan includes the statement that "Color schemes should be harmonious with surrounding structures and consistent with the original time period of the building."
  - The Downtown Design Guidelines include a reference to a "wide variety of natural materials" as one feature of Village Character (p. 11) and warn that "Corporate Architecture" will not be approved with "...materials, or colors that do not relate to the site, adjacent development, or Los Altos' community character" (p. 23).
  - Guidelines for the First Street District (p.68) refer to use of "materials that are common in the downtown core."
- **Although the quality of exteriors on the new buildings have generally been viewed favorably, the residential project at 396 First St. is viewed as one example of exterior materials and finishes that fall below the desired level of quality and integrity.**
- **The community is highly dependent on staff for the evaluation of proposed materials because no regulation or guideline specifies acceptable – or prohibits any unacceptable – colors and textures or types of exterior finishes for buildings in the Downtown area.**
- **Current Submittal Requirements for design review require a Materials Board with color photos of exterior materials as well as a color rendering and 3D digitally generated model (presented as 2D image). There is no requirement for actual materials (or for samples of adequate size for evaluation), nor do any guidelines require digital or 3D modeling to assist in the evaluation of materials/colors.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To ensure that the color and texture of exterior finishes reflect an appropriate relationship with other buildings, are consistent with the village character, and coordinate with other architectural elements to minimize apparent height, bulk, and mass:

A. Modify the required finding as follows:

> "Exterior materials and finishes convey high quality, integrity, permanence and durability, and materials are used effectively to define building elements such as base, boy, parapets, bays, arcades and structural elements. Materials, finishes, and colors used serve to reduce perceived appearance of height, bulk and mass, and are harmonious with other structures in the immediate area and in the downtown village."

B. Amend "Submittal Requirements Commercial or Multi-Family Design Review, item 7 Color Renderings and 3D Model" and/or the Design Guidelines to require that proposed buildings in the Downtown district be modeled using 3D and other forms of digital simulation that depict the Materials Board and allow for closer consideration of proposed colors and textures of exterior finishes in context.

C. Require submission of a physical Materials Board of samples of colors, materials and finishes in the submission requirement checklist.

The recommended Materials Board requirement was incorporated in the November 2015 revision of the "Submittal Requirements."

D. Require submission of larger scale samples and/or examples of uses of the materials and finishes in prior projects for materials and finishes not in common use in the Downtown district.

10. SHADOWS

FINDINGS:

- **Buildings on First, Second, and Third Streets cast greater shadows on sidewalks, streets, and opposing buildings than would occur with the same type of development in the core on Main and State because of the differences in compass orientation.**
  - Shadows cast by new construction contribute to negative public reaction of a "tunnel" experience on First Street.
- **Many cities require proposals to show shadow impact on adjacent/opposing buildings and spaces in accordance with standard practice for such evaluations. Palo Alto has recently used such expertise to resolve concerns over shadows.**
- **Shadow projections are a simple task in today's digital systems.**
- **Los Altos has never required shadow information and has no experience considering it as part of a development proposal. PTC and Council members expressed surprise at the deep shadow effects of some recently completed buildings.**
- **Excessive shadows affect the type and success of landscaping , which is not considered in the building structure or landscape plan.**

(See additional resources regarding shadow studies in *EXHIBIT 10.1*.)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. As neither staff nor PTC have such expertise, the city should engage a specialist with knowledge of standard practice for evaluating daylight/shadow impacts in a commercial setting. Scope of work should include identifying the tools and recommending a process for evaluating the impact of proposed developments on the streetscape, sidewalks, adjacent/opposing buildings, and landscape plans. Create a process for including such evaluation in the decision making process.

B. Generalized modeling should be done of the light and shadows for the downtown area as currently built and at full build-out under specified zoning. (See Section 12, Physical and Digital Models.)

C. If warranted based on the full-city model, establish light plane guidelines for commercial development. [Note: There are light plane guidelines in place for residential buildings.]

EXHIBIT 10.1 SHADOW STUDIES

An animated example of a shade study is at

http://gardenbleu.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/shadow-study_Feb20.gif

Animation of shadow study in part of San Francisco:

http://www.washingtonpost.com/posttv/business/animation-shows-potential-shadows-creeping-across-san-francisco/2015/05/04/cdef896e-f299-11e4-bca5-21b51bbdf93e_video.html

Example detailed requirements for shade studies where development affects public open space:

http://www.sf-planning.org/ftp/files/publications_reports/Shadow_Analysis_Memo-07-10-14.pdf

Article about the increasing attention paid by cities to shadow issues:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/05/04/in-the-shadows-of-booming-cities-a-tension-between-sunlight-and-prosperity/

11. VIEWS

FINDINGS:

- **The downtown treescape and views of the southwest foothills are valued features of the downtown triangle for both motorists and pedestrians.**
- **The primary streets in CD and CD/R3 zones roughly parallel the foothills, so that development on these streets tends to be more obstructive to views than building in the downtown core.**
- **Some recent developments obstruct views of the southwest foothills, to the surprise of residents and those who review or approve projects.**
- **There is no process for evaluating the impact of a proposed project on the foothill vistas or treescape, and the true rendering of a proposal against the local area with the foothills is not required.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Make preservation of existing views of the surrounding hills and downtown tree canopy a part of the Design Review process for buildings in the Downtown triangle.

Two cities similarly proximate to the Santa Cruz mountains have successfully implemented requirements regarding views:

> Los Gatos: "Views to the surrounding hills should be maintained especially at signalized intersections." (Los Gatos Commercial Guidelines, pg. 42, # 5A.1 http://www.losgatosca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/325)
>
> Town of Woodside: " SCENIC CORRIDORS. (a) Lands visible (if currently visible, or if visible if existing vegetation was removed) from the driving surface of the following (state-designated) scenic highways: …(Town of Woodside 153.221)"

B. Specify views to protect, with emphasis on the foothills as seen from Southbound San Antonio Road and treescape from State and Main. Document the selected views in the design guidelines and include photographs. Specify how submittals should address the issue of views.

Photographic examples of key views are shown in *EXHIBIT 11.1.*

EXHIBIT 11.1 VIEWS

PROTECT REMAINING VIEWS LIKE THESE …

View 1: San Antonio Road toward Foothill

View 2

AND THESE …

View 3: Main Street

View 4 : State Street

AND THIS …

View 5: San Antonio southbound past hotel

HERE YOU SEE THE VIEW

View 6: Here today …

SOON YOU WON'T

View 7: Gone tomorrow.

12. DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL MODELS

FINDINGS:

- **The City had little experience with commercial and mixed-use projects when the projects reviewed by DBC were approved.**
- **Some council members and PTC commissioners, as well as residents, were surprised by the adverse impacts created by these buildings.**
- **Existing planning tools and project submittal requirements lag current technology, which can better show the impact of proposed development, both for individual projects and build-out under different zoning requirements.**
- **Current requirements (*EXHIBIT 12.1*) for individual project submissions are inadequate, in that they do not:**
  - provide realistic views (2D compression of 3D "Google Street View" perspective that is wide angle rather than natural human vision)
  - show shadow impacts (especially problematic with narrow, NW/SE-oriented streets). See additional resources regarding shadow studies in *EXHIBIT 9.1*
  - fully place individual project in context
  - allow evaluation of impact on streetscape and views
- **Decision makers lack good visualization tools from which to evaluate impact of build-out under different zoning scenarios.**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Undertake a project to identify 3D modeling software that:

- Provides standard 2-D GIS parameters (e.g. lot lines, rights-of-way, zoning map overlay) to tie in to other online information .
- shows accurate 3-D rendering of existing buildings, with flexibility to begin at LOD 2 and increase to LOD 3, based on the GML3 international standard for urban 3D modeling (See *EXHIBIT 12.2)*
- models shadow impact on adjacent/opposing buildings and spaces at standardized dates and times. (See Section 9 "Shadows" above.)
- allows pedestrian view of treescape/skyline to aid evaluation of impacts. (See section 10 "Views" above.)
- is extensible for modeling sections of the city and for a future "smart cities" project.
- allows generalized 3D visualizations (initially LOD 2) for scenarios selected by decision makers (e.g. full build-out under specified zoning).
- can generate 3D "printed" [physical] model of specified area (e.g. downtown triangle), with ability to "print" and replace specific buildings for proposed development. This will allow decision-makers and the community to visualize the proposal and its impact.

B. Develop digital and physical model of the downtown triangle using parameters specified by Council.

C. Require developers to provide data necessary to model their proposal to the digital system described above.

EXHIBIT 12.1 CURRENT 3-D SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

"Submittal Requirements, item 7 – Color Renderings and 3D Model

"a. Provide a sufficient number of perspective color renderings of the proposed structure, photo simulated within the existing context of the built and natural surroundings, to present how all elevations of the building will appear at a pedestrian scale/level.

"b. Provide a digital model (using SketchUp or a similar program) of the proposed development and adjacent buildings within the broader streetscape area that can be presented and manipulated to represent the three dimensional qualities of the proposed building within the existing context of the built and natural surroundings."

The above are provided as 2D images. There are no requirements as to the perspective to be presented vis a vis "wide" angle or natural human eye view (generally 42-52 mm in standard 1:1 lens).

EXHIBIT 12.2 SUMMARY OF LEVEL OF DETAIL STANDARD FOR 3D MODELING

Different 3D modeling applications define "Level of Detail" differently. The following is a general description, used in the CityGML as an example:

- LOD 0: 2.5D footprints
- LOD 1: Buildings represented by block models (usually extruded footprints)
- LOD 2: Building models with standard roof structures
- LOD 3: Detailed (architectural) building models
- LOD 4: LOD 3 building models supplemented with interior features.

Some basic information is at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3D_city_models

More about CityGML: http://www.citygmlwiki.org/index.php/Basic_Information

Useful research paper that outlines some issues in defining level of detail: http://www.gdmc.nl/publications/reports/GISt62.pdf

Follow-up paper on the above:

http://www.gim-international.com/content/article/redefining-the-level-of-detail-for-3d-models

APPENDIX A: AD HOC DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS COMMITTEE CHARTER

October 14, 2014 Los Altos City Council Meeting Item #13

http://los-altos.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=4&clip_id=848&meta_id=39634

RECOMMENDATION from then-Mayor Satterlee:

1. Council form an ad hoc committee of nine voting members to review recently completed buildings in downtown Los Altos in the context of the current zoning regulations, the adopted Downtown Design Guidelines and Downtown Design Plan, and the results of the 2012 and 2014-15 downtown surveys, and to determine next steps to ensure new buildings downtown meet community expectations. Next steps should include a statement of the expected outcome.

2. Given both the importance of downtown to the community and the interest in downtown, Council appoint this committee using the same process as we do for appointing commissioners: namely, advertise the openings, accept applications, and conduct public interviews.

3. The make-up of the committee be residents of the City of Los Altos whose only property interest downtown is their primary residence, no more than 25% of the committee live within the downtown triangle, the committee include two current Planning and Transportation (PTC) Commissioners, and it be facilitated by a nonvoting Councilmember, whose role will be limited to chairing the meetings.

4. The committee hold noticed meetings and allow public participation during one meeting prior to deliberating on their recommendations, and again after they have draft recommendations, before they make their final recommendations.

5. The committee's recommendations be reviewed by the Planning and Transportation Commission before being considered for adoption by Council.

6. Staff be directed to update the Downtown Design Plan with input from the committee.

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES

Committee members consulted professionals in Los Altos and neighboring cities, as well as zoning codes, design plans, articles and books relevant to the charter.

Meetings/ Contacts	Profession	Location	Purpose
5	Developers/Architects	Palo Alto, Mt. View	Feedback on checklists, ARB
2	Landscape Architects/arborists		Feedback on checklists, ARB, landscape
5	Planner	Los Altos	Feedback on process and documents
3	Council Member	Los Altos	Individual meetings, each w/3 committee members
2	Planner	Los Gatos	Feedback on process and documents
1	Planner	Mountain View	ARB/Design Review
1	ARB member	Palo Alto	ARB/Design Review
1	Planner	Powell, OH	Feedback on process and documents
5	Planners/Architects	Los Altos, Mt. View, SF, Houston, London	3D modeling for city planning and development projects.

Documents Reviewed	City/Agency	Purpose
Downtown Design Guidelines	Los Altos	Clarity/consistency
Downtown Design Plan	Los Altos	Clarity/consistency
Zoning Code	Los Altos	Clarity & Consistency with Design Guidelines, applicability to review buildings
Zoning	Carmel	
	Los Gatos	
	Pacific Grove	
	Pismo Beach	
	Saratoga	
Design Guidelines and Submittal Req's	Benecia	Comparison
	Capitola	Comparison
	Carmel	Comparison
	Cupertino	Comparison
	Los Altos Hills	Comparison
	Los Gatos	Comparison
	Mountain View	Comparison
	Pacific Grove	Comparison
	Palo Alto	Comparison
	Pismo Beach	Comparison
	Portola Valley	Comparison
	Saratoga	Comparison
	Sunnyvale	Comparison
	Woodside	Comparison
	NYC	Light planes/shadows
	Powell, OH	Comparison, esp. pedestrian scale, 3D modeling and GIS-zoning links
Driveway Specs	Caltrans	Driveways
Title 23	Cal Water	Water efficient landscapes

Books/Articles	
Light and shadow	▪ http://gizmodo.com/do-we-have-a-legal-right-to-light-1455302177 ▪ http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/49911 ▪ http://billmoyers.com/2014/11/28/new-skyscrapers-forever-changing-central-park/ ▪ http://www.wbdg.org/resources/form.php ▪ http://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Long-shadows-create-political-hurdle-for-S-F-7382467.php
Human Scale	▪ http://www.community-design.com/ ▪ http://id2126le2012.pbworks.com/w/page/54812242/Space-Scale ▪ http://toto.lib.unca.edu/findingaids/mss/housing_authority_city_asheville/haca_publications_local/1981_devel_guidelines_montford/mont_dg_jpg/HACA_mont_dg_020_mod.jpg ▪ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_scale ▪ http://www.planetizen.com/node/67761
3D model of San Francisco	http://www.cnet.com/news/3d-printed-san-francisco-the-next-great-tool-in-city-planning/
Landscaping glossary	https://www.asla.org/nonmembers/publicrelations/glossary.htm
Landscape architect, arborist, etc.	http://lesliehalleck.com/garden-library/articles/what-is-a-horticulturist-what-is-a-landscape-architect-you-mean-they-are-di
Human scale	http://www.changelabsolutions.org/childhood-obesity/human-scale-building-facade
Article: *It's the Ceiling Heights*	Author: David Baker http://www.dbarchitect.com/us/press/15/It%27s%20the%20Ceiling%20Heights%2C%20for%20One%20Thing.html
Article *How do you Define Community Character?*	Author: Gary Pivo, PhD, Professor School of Landscape Architecture and Planning, COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING, AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE http://www.u.arizona.edu/~gpivo/Character.pdf
Book *Creating Carmel: the Enduring Vision*	Authors: Harold & Ann Gilliam
Book *The Buildings of Main Street*	Author: Richard Longstreth, PhD, architectural historian and a professor at George Washington University
Vision Capitola	http://goodtimes.sc/santa-cruz-news/eyeing-a-change/ http://visioncapitola.com/

APPENDIX C: MEMBERS' EXPERTISE & EXPERIENCE

Thomas Barton: 45 year resident of Los Altos and LAH. Yale BA, Northwestern JD, Stanford MBA. Booz Allen consultant. Law practice for five years in Los Altos with Macleod and Fuller and thirty five years in Palo Alto, retiring as a Manatt, Phelps and Phillips partner. Developed May Lane in Los Altos and Barton Court in LAH. Represented Miller Properties and the Triad companies which owned and developed many properties in Los Altos in the 1970's. Founder and CEO of Neurex Corporation and other local ventures which he took public. Grandfather who loved to walk his children – and now walks his grandchildren – in the Pet Parade.

Anita Enander: Resident of Los Altos 38 years. MBA, Organizational Development. Owner, international magazine and digital media company (4 years). Owner, private management consulting firm, public and private sector clients in US, Europe and Japan (15 years). Founder, past chair, and director of two non-profit research organizations. Board vice president and president (6 years) of international K-8 private school. Project manager for structural retrofit and major exterior remodel of 30-year old, 24-unit townhome development. Project manager for expansion of private school, including increase in enrollment under use permit, extension of utilities, specs and installation of 6 portable classrooms. Owner-builder single-family residences, including one on 30% grade, and complete restoration of historic home. Owner, breeder, trainer of Arabian horses. Married, one adult daughter.

Deb Hope: Grew up in Los Altos, returned in 2006. Licensed California Real Estate Broker. Certified Commercial Investment Member (CCIM, an educational institute focused on providing professionals in commercial real estate with training in investment analysis, market analysis, financial analysis, and user decision analysis.) Owner-builder in 2 residential constructions. Manage family's commercial real estate. Completed Urban Land Institute's training program in Real Estate Development, I, II, & III. LEED Certification. Attended Presidio School pursuing a Master's in Public Administration in Sustainable Management. Member, Urban Land Institute. Founding member of *Los Altos Forward*, a ground-up citizen involvement group focused on increasing vibrancy of downtown Los Altos and providing community education about best practices in community development.

Hon. Edward A. Infante (Ret.) is a former Chief Magistrate Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California who has more than 30 years of dispute resolution experience. He is known for his ability to mediate complex cases involving a wide range of issues, having served as a mediator and Special Master in a variety of complex business disputes including antitrust and intellectual property cases and securities class actions. Judge Infante currently works with JAMS Arbitration, Mediation and ADR Services.

Pat Marriott: Los Altos resident 7 years. BA Physics Sonoma State, MS EE/Computer Science UC Berkeley. Software developer at IBM and HP. First software product manager at Apple. Manager software product marketing team for Apple Lisa. Appointed to Apple Quality of Life Committee to preserve corporate culture. One of first 5 employees at Electronic Arts. Director of marketing (product management, tech support & training, marketing/corporate communications) at Adobe. VP Marketing at eBrary (eBook search), Presidio Systems (clinical trials software), Vantive (integrated customer service applications). Consultant in organizational behavior, corporate culture, product management, documentation, messaging, branding, web content, online Help systems. Los Altos LEAD graduate.

Susan Mensinger: Los Altos Resident for 18 years. AB Stanford, JD Stanford Law School, MBA Stanford. Salomon Brothers corporate finance and mergers & acquisitions. Merchant bank private equity. Founder and CEO of Boothe Capital Group, providing merger & acquisition services to middle market companies. Worked with corporate and not-for-profit and government entities on key financial, strategic, operational and organization issues across a range of sectors including healthcare, natural resources and financial services. Member of the Stanford Law School Board of Visitors. Former Member Stanford University Trustee Committee on Land and Building Development (the planning commission for Stanford). Published law journal article on the use of exclusionary zoning regulations. Graduate of Los Altos LEAD program. Active in local not-for-profit organizations.

Teresa Morris has lived in Los Altos for 12 years. She owns her own consulting business helping parents with the sleep and behavior challenges they encounter with their infants and small children. Her career background is that of a small business owner, as well as working in small business management. She has built businesses from the ground up as well as acquired and managed a variety of retail and restaurant establishments. Her educational background includes psychology, child development and holistic health. Teresa is also an active member of her Loyola Corners neighborhood group, Los Altans for Neighborly Development (LAND).

Nan Nealon See's professional experience spans 20 years operational and financial management of businesses in the financial services, management consulting, wine and hospitality industries. A few of her key accomplishments include overseeing the renovation and restoration of a pre-prohibition winery, working with small business owners aligning operational processes and improving financial performance to achieve growth goals. As a new resident of Los Altos she brings an objective perspective combined with an interest in preserving the community qualities that drew her and her husband to Los Altos as the place to call home and raise a family.

Jane Reed is a former Mayor, a past member of the Los Altos City Council and a past member of the Los Altos Parks and Recreation Commission. She is currently President of "The Terraces at Los Altos" Advisory Board and a member of the Rotary Club of Los Altos. She is a past Executive Director of the Los Altos Village Association and an active community volunteer. Jane holds a B.A. in Liberal Arts with an Art major from the University of California, Berkeley; Secondary Teaching Credential from California State, Hayward; and a Masters Certificate in Museum Studies from JFK University.

Denis Salmon is an attorney who has lived in Los Altos for over 30 years. He was the managing partner of the Palo Alto office of Gibson Dunn & Crutcher, LLP, an international law firm, and chair of its intellectual property practice. He directed the architectural design and construction of the firm's offices on Page Mill Road. His legal experience includes land use, environmental and real estate litigation. His past community activities include service on the boards of the Los Altos Educational Foundation, the Santa Clara County Bar Association and the Silicon Valley Campaign for Legal Services.