



# NEW MULTI-FAMILY AND RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

**CITY COUNCIL HEARING**

NOVEMBER 20, 2023

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE OF OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS (ODS)
2. PROCESS TO CREATE ODS
3. STRUCTURE OF OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS AND RELATIONSHIP TO ZONING CODE AND SPECIFIC PLANS
4. ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS
5. PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT
6. PLANNING COMMISSION & STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## OBJECTIVES + OUTCOMES



# OBJECTIVES + OUTCOMES

- Create and adopt new standards to regulate the **design** of multi-family and residential mixed-use development projects within grant funding timeline
- Meet criteria required by State law
- Listen to and learn from the community
- Achieve superior multi-family residential design
- Streamline review for compliant projects





# OBJECTIVES + OUTCOMES

- Implement Housing Element Programs and Actions:
  - Adopt Objective Design Standards
  - Amend Zoning Code to allow residential projects with up to 25 units to be approved administratively
- June 5 , 2023 City Council Housing Element Study Session
  - Council directed commitment for code amendments to allow administrative approval of up to 25 units



# WHAT DEVELOPMENTS QUALIFY?

All Multi-Family and Residential Mixed-Use projects, including:



Two Houses on  
One Lot  
(e.g., SB9 or  
SFD and ADU  
concurrently)



Duplexes  
+  
Triplexes



Townhouses  
+  
Rowhouses



Mid-Rise and  
High-Rise  
Apartments +  
Condominiums




Mixed-Use  
Developments  
with at least 2/3  
Residential  
Component




*\*Does not apply to projects that apply before effective date.*

*Projects can also opt out and choose discretionary design review or use State Density Bonus concessions and/or waivers*

# HOW WILL THE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS BE IMPLEMENTED?

 CITY OF  
**SAN MATEO**  
CALIFORNIA City of San Mateo Law Library

[City of San Mateo Law Library](#) > [San Mateo Municipal Code](#)

> Title 27   

## Title 27 ZONING

### Chapter 27.02 GENERAL PROVISIONS



27.02.010 TITLE.

[This title](#) shall be known and may be cited and referred to as the "San Mateo City Zoning Code."



October 2023  
PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT

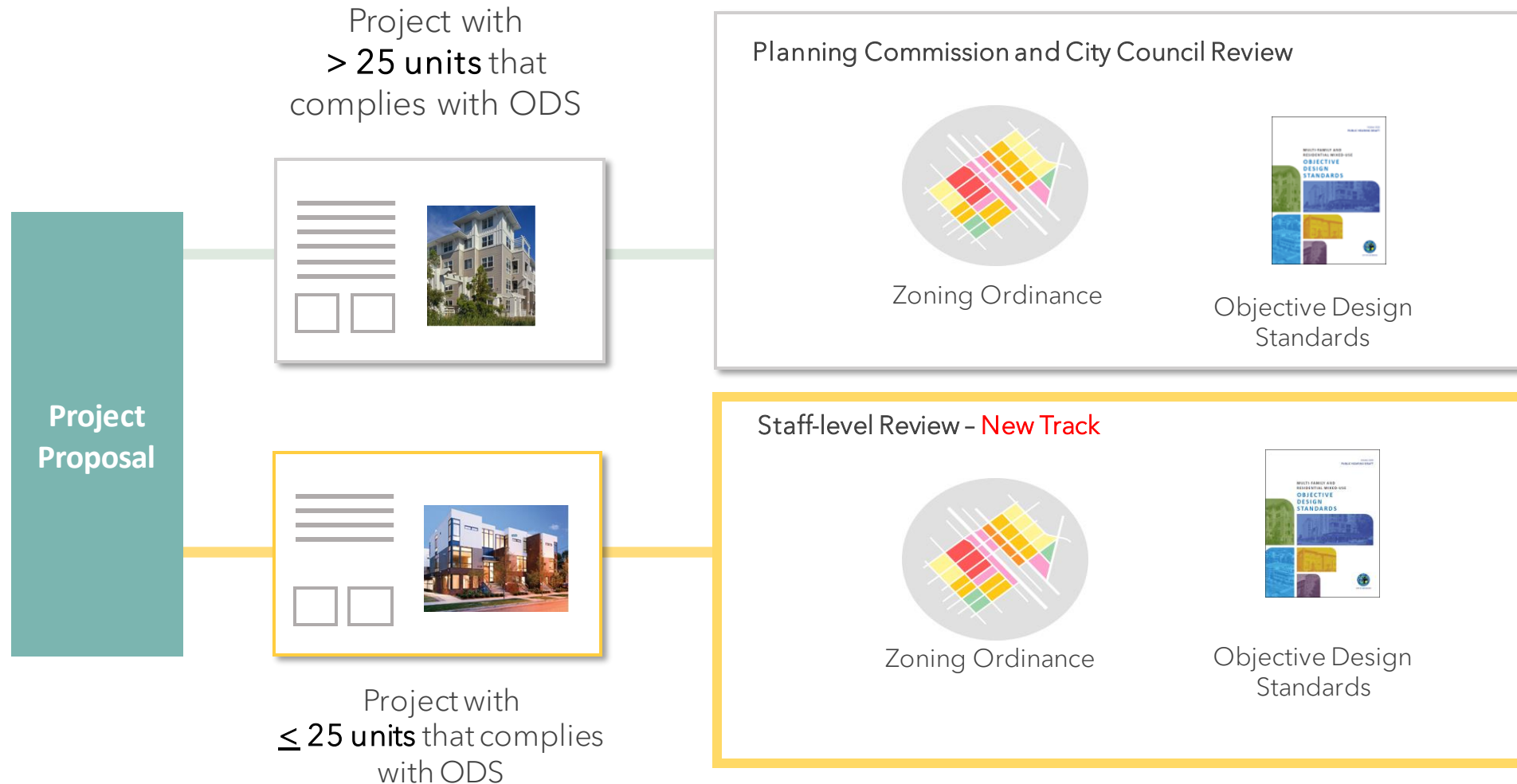
MULTI-FAMILY AND  
RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE  
**OBJECTIVE  
DESIGN  
STANDARDS**



CITY OF SAN MATEO  
CALIFORNIA

# HOW WILL THEY WORK?

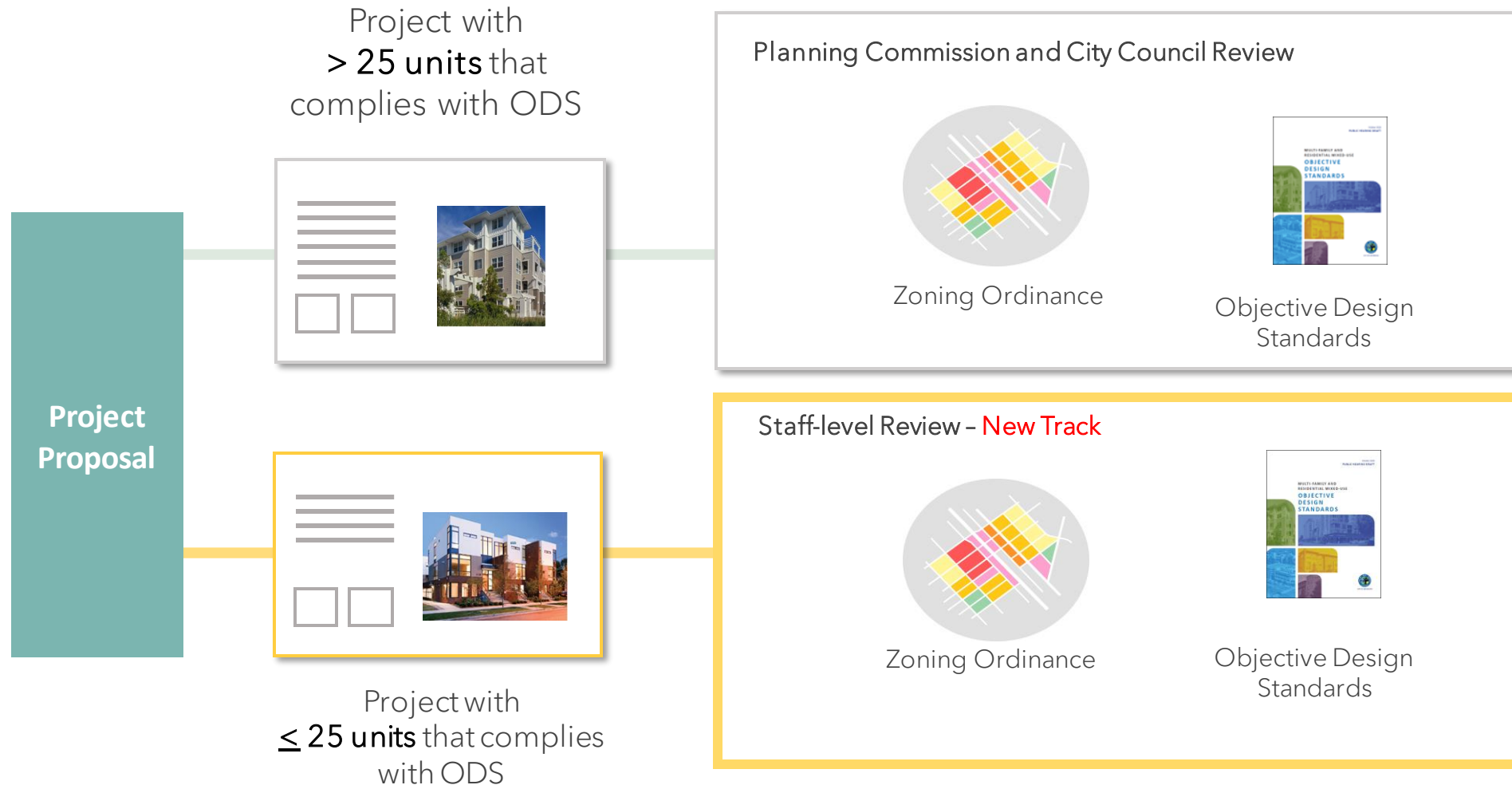
## DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS





# HOW WILL THEY WORK?

## DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS



Also applies to applications opting out of ODS

# THE PROCESS

## PHASE I DISCOVERY

Research Best Practices

Analyze Existing Guidelines and Specific Plans

Focus Group Meetings

Planning Commission Study Session

Spring 2020 – Summer 2021

## PHASE II PUBLIC INSIGHTS

Define ODS Approach for San Mateo

Residents' Input

Development Community Input

Summer 2021 – Summer 2022

## PHASE III PUBLIC REVIEW - Draft Standards

Draft Objective Design Standards

Draft Graphics/Exhibits

Planning Commission Study Session (August 8, 2023)

Summer 2022 – Summer 2023

## PHASE IV ADOPTION

Final Revisions

Planning Commission Hearing

City Council Hearing (adoption required before December 31, 2023)

Summer - Winter 2023



# SCOPE OF ODS DOCUMENT



# TOPICS ADDRESSED

## 1. ORGANIZATION

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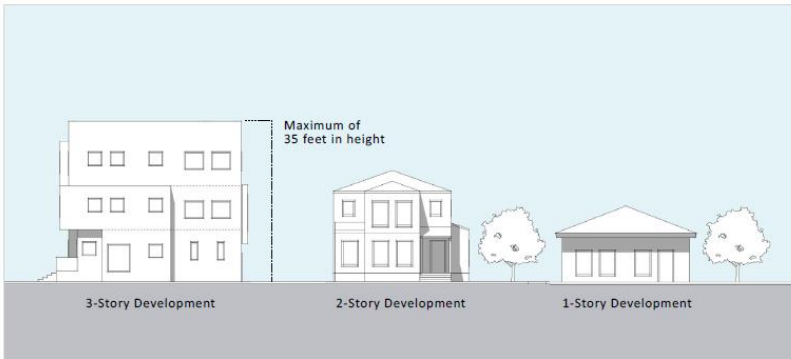
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## 8. DEFINITIONS .....

# APPROACH

## Low-rise Buildings

- 3 stories
- 35 ft. maximum height



## Mid-rise Buildings

- Between 4 -7 stories
- 90 ft. maximum height



## High-rise Buildings

- 8+ stories
- Over 90 ft.





# MASSING AND ARTICULATION

- Horizontal Wall Plane Breaks
- Vertical Wall Plane Breaks
- Flat Plane Variation



*Figure 24: Wall plane treatments shall be incorporated into the design of mid-rise buildings. (Section 4.1.6.B)*

# MASSING AND ARTICULATION

Define a base, body, and top



*Figure 23: Mid-rise buildings of six (6) or more stories in height shall have a base, body, and building top. (Section 4.1.6.A)*

# MASSING BREAKS – RULE OF THIRDS



*Figure 21: Possible ways to divide a horizontal mass into three elements (Section 4.1.4)*



# TRANSITION AREAS – SETBACKS AND STEPBACKS

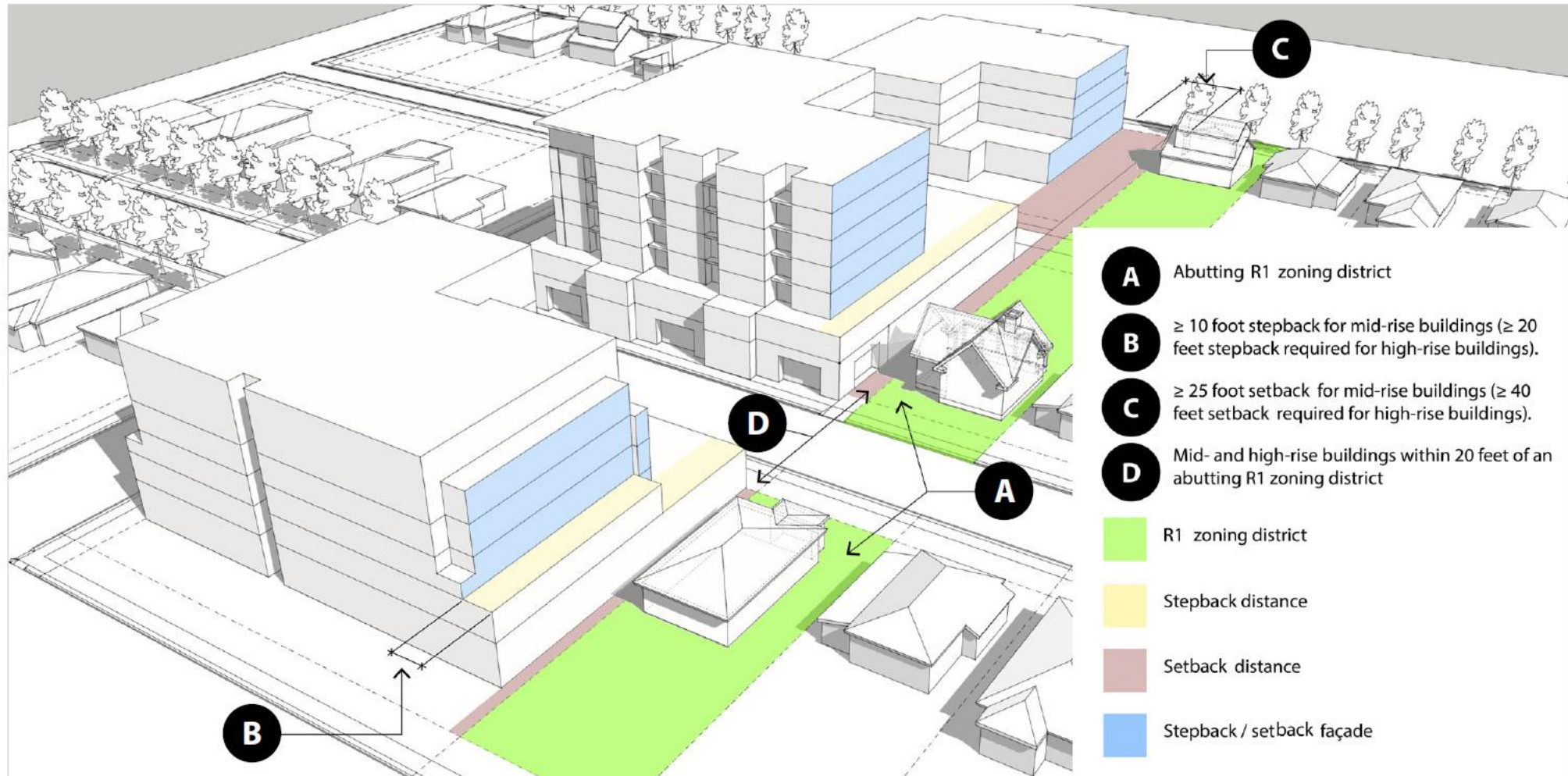


Figure 36: Illustrated mid-rise and high-rise stepback (Section 4.4.1.B)



# ARCHITECTURAL STYLE REQUIREMENT – DOWNTOWN AND VISION OF THE GATEWAY



*Figure 58: Building facing of light-colored stucco shall be used to achieve a Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style. (Section 7.1.2)*



*Figure 59: Tile and stone are acceptable materials to use to achieve a Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style. (Section 7.1.2)*



*Figure 60: Rounded tower (Section 7.1.2)*



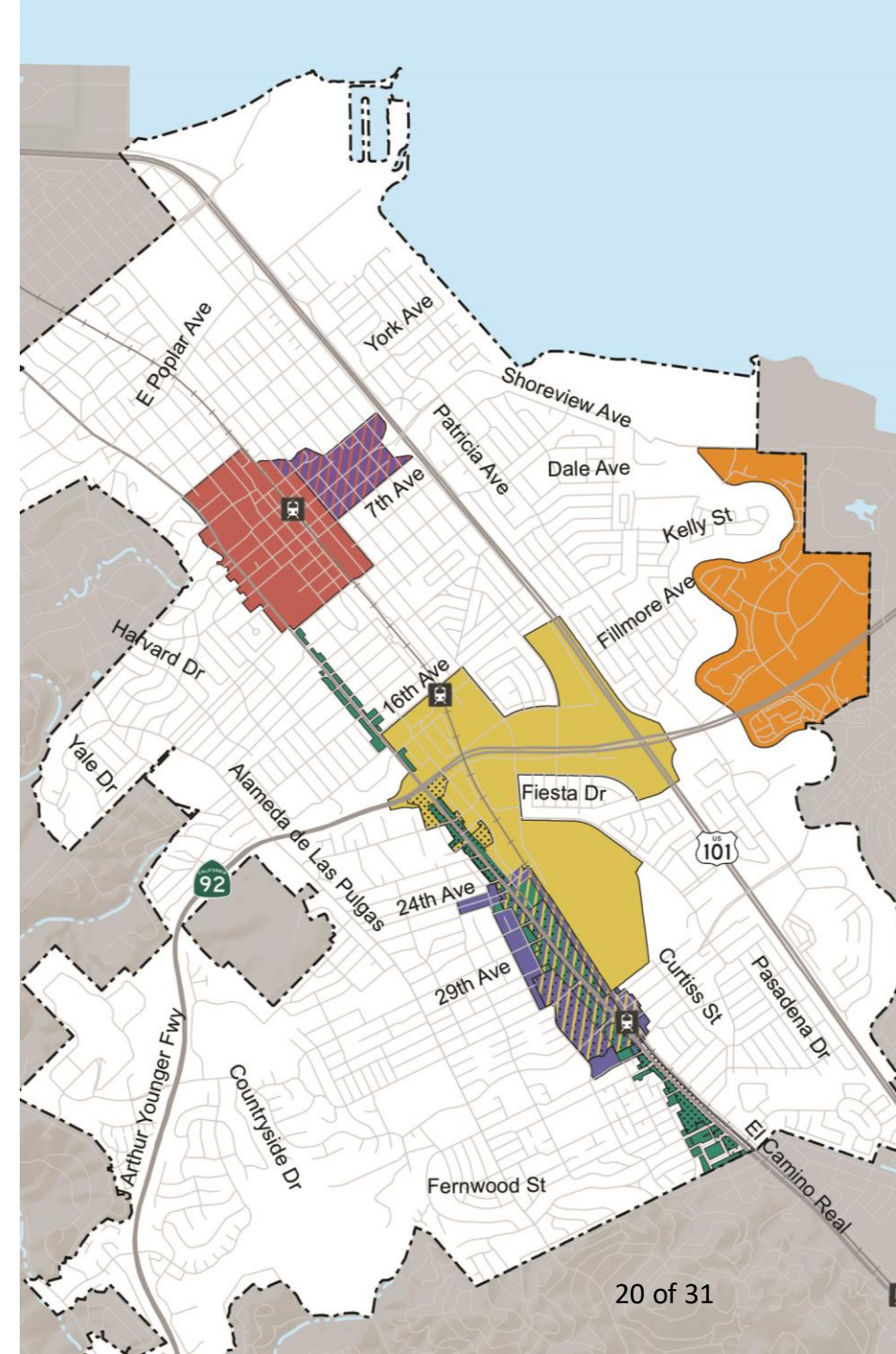
# COLORS & MATERIALS



*Figure 20: A mid-rise building with different colors and materials on the building façade to avoid a monochromatic color scheme and use of materials. (Section 4.1.3)*

# SPECIFIC PLAN AREAS

- Subjective design standards for private properties rewritten to be objective without changing intent
- Applicants will still need to consult both a specific plan and the ODS
- No amendments to specific plans are proposed as part of this effort



# PROPOSED CODE AMENDMENTS

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Municipal Code Section		Proposed Change
1	27.060.020 “Zoning Administrator Powers and Duties”	<p>Increase the Zoning Administrator power and duties to approve projects from less than six residential units to up to twenty-five residential units for projects that meet objective design standards.</p> <p>Increase fence height from six feet to over seven feet for rear and side yards when Zoning Administrator Approval is required, to align with the Building Code.</p>
2	27.060.040 “Planning Commission Jurisdiction”	Clarify that the Planning Commission would review projects with over twenty-five units that meet objective design standards and all projects six or more units that do not meet objective design standards.
3	27.08.030 “Site Plan and Architectural Review (SPAR)”	Increase the threshold for when fences require a SPAR from six to seven feet in height, to align with the Building Code.
4	27.21.030 “Rules of Procedure”	Revise findings for SB 9 projects to require compliance with other adopted plans, policies, or standards (which would include ODS).
5	27.39.120 “Residential Development Standards”	Clarify that residential uses permitted as part of mixed-use developments are subject to ODS.





# OCTOBER 24, 2023 PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS





# PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4-1 recommended approval with modifications
  - Articulation Details and Windows (reduce depth of details and window recesses)
  - Materials and Colors (allow additional materials and reduce minimum required colors)
  - Massing Breaks (rule of thirds, flat plane variation, and base, body, and top distinction)
  - Mixed-use Buildings (cohesive design and ground floor units)
  - Neighborhood Transitions (screening trees)
  - Roof Form (remove requirements)
  - Specific Plan Standards - Downtown Plan Area (window alignment)





# PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

- Two community workshops & roundtables with developers
- Two study sessions with Planning Commission
- Published three versions of draft ODS, each at least 10 days prior to public meetings



# PUBLIC NOTICING

- Newspaper notice
- Posting at public facilities
- Email to interested parties list
- Planning eNewsletter & City eNewsletter
- Social media posts (Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor)



# COMMENTS RECEIVED

- 18 comments since July 2023
- 6 comments since Oct. 2023 Planning Commission hearing
- Focused on open space, exterior lighting, building articulation, inclusion of architectural styles, building height limits, historical preservation, and the specific plan areas.



# ADDITIONAL MODIFICATIONS RECOMMENDED

- Section 4.6.1.C – Window and Door Alignment
- **C. Window and Door Size.** The following shall apply to all windows and doors except for curtain wall windows and commercial storefront windows.
  2. For ~~non~~-residential uses, vertical window elements shall be maintained through proportionality and divide ~~lights~~ lites.





# ADDITIONAL MODIFICATIONS RECOMMENDED

- Section 5.1.1.B – Private Open Space for Individual Units
  1. The fronts and sides of balconies shall consist of ~~obscured~~ glass, slats or partially transparent grating or railings that is at least fifty (50) percent visually open.
  2. Enclosed private ground-floor open spaces fronting a public street and/or sidewalk shall have an enclosure between three (3) and four (4) feet in height. Enclosure materials shall be limited to the following:
    - b. Wrought iron or dark colored steel, aluminum, or cable fencing



# ADDITIONAL MODIFICATIONS RECOMMENDED

- Addition to Section 2.2 – Applicability

F. An applicant may propose a master plan, specific plan, or similar site-specific document for a large project site that propose site specific objective design standards in-lieu of the standards contained within this document. If approved by the City, future development shall show compliance with these site-specific objective design standards.



# ANNUAL UPDATES TO COUNCIL

- Annual implementation update reports
- Comprehensive review provided within 3 years

# RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION

1. Determine the project qualifies for an exemption pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3);
2. Introduce an Ordinance to amend the Zoning Code (Title 27) related to ODS and review processes for multi-family and mixed-use residential projects; and align fence height standards to match building code standards;
3. Adopt a Resolution to establish ODS for multi-family and mixed-use residential projects with additional modifications as presented; and
4. Incorporate an annual report back to City Council on the implementation of ODS

