Overall

# SAN MATEO

APRIL 6, 2023

# COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

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

## Developer's Roundtable

1. Reducing Massing

### REDUCING MASSING

1. Does building wall variation result in a building feeling appearing less massive? What is the right amount? Can there be too much?

2. What is the best way for the roof form to reduce the apparent massing? What forms are most effective?

3. What other techniques can reduce massing? Are colors/materials effective? Other?

Relate density to design standards

Standards for single-family homes should be different from standards for a type 3 building

There should be height limits for parking and single-family homes

Balconies can achieve rhythm (not when adjacent to freeway)

You should not incorporate balconies next to train tracks as they are not desirable for residents

Upper level stepbacks are harder to achieve and require alternative structural systems

The best place for transitions is at the ground floor where you transition from concrete to wood, depending on site. This might be 3 levels/2? level of concrete.

Best not to prescribe at what level to have a stepback in order to maintain flexibility

Break the massing where it makes sense depending on construction type and site

Roofs: flat roof with parapet around it makes the most sense - you can get as many units as possible and are able to put solar and equipment on roof, without adding mass (like pitched roof)

To reduce massing there needs to be a rhythm to the building. Something needs to catch your eye when you approach the building, ex: Positive or negative space, roof deck highlighted with lighting so you can see from a distance

For wall breaks, giving a realistic range of when the breaks or wall plane stepbacks need to happen is helpful. Realistically you can't have a stepback every unit (or every two units)

Something that has worked well: specifying that unit balconies are able to count as wall breaks

Use all the space you have for transitions to be successful, and to be able to control the property
-sensitivity to plazas/ transitions
-height transitions

Challenge with legacy properties: single-family home zoned in higher density, how do you marry those two? Reconciliation needs to happen

3. Open Space

### OPEN SPACE

1. What does the market prefer - passive vs. active? How does it differ between mixed-use vs. residential and for sale vs. rental?
2. What amenities are desired?
3. What would make it easier to provide open space in a project - location, size, other factors?

Amenities: pool, hot tub, bbq space

For small sites, less than 2-acres, you usually need to use all the space leaving little room for open space

Avoid dictating the exact number of square feet for private and common space

Mix of public and private space depends on site constraints

Flexibility is required to achieve a mix of Internal active recreation space and quiet open space

Different sites/ developments require different amenities: apartments may have pool, condos have lower density

Recommend against requiring every unit to have private open space - can't always meet indoor requirements with patio doors

How can communal space create great places rather than creating more project constraints?

Prescribed at grade open spaces/plazas are very difficult to achieve and can't always be accommodated

Public open space is always hardest to provide, always at grade level and this really reduces what you're able to do in terms of providing housing above. Limits the site and can be very problematic

At grade level open space reduces what you're able to do in terms of providing housing above

2. Good Transitions

### GOOD TRANSITIONS

What creates a good transition to an immediately adjacent building?
-Step backs?
-Greater setbacks for all stories?
-Landscape screening?
-Other?

Transitions (that reduce number of units) can be a direct conflict with Density Bonus law → With setback requirements/wedding cake, developments can't always meet residential square footage requirements

Transitions can sometimes reconfigure the space and open up more open space

4. Pedestrian Connections

### PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

1. What makes an entry residential in character?
   Stoop, porch, landscaping, meeting the street, overhead projection, window, door type?

2. Should paseos be used to break down the size/scale of blocks and provide pedestrian walkways? Do we like them and if so, would we like to see more?

If paseos don't connect to anything they don't really make sense - they need to connect to something → Anything that's one acre needs a paseo going through it

Stoops and overhangs where sidewalks are walkable

Residential entries are site/ neighborhood specific and will vary what you can do with sidewalks and street trees

Paseos don't always make sense because they reduce yield for site ← Paseo makes sense on site that needs more than one podium - paseo between buildings

Maintain the urban fabric of the existing area

Entries on corners maximize visibility. There should be something to highlight the second floor as well

### GENERAL COMMENTS

Standards need to be consistent with each other

FLEXIBILITY = KEY
Sites have unique qualities that you want to celebrate, certain sites have various aspects and adjacencies - finding where everything meshes in terms of affordability, construction, development is key.

Improvements can be made to the plan submittal process
-streamlined process for public vs. private improvements

When density bonus law is implemented - there will still need to be room for flexibility

Have to be careful to not go overboard -> when requirements look good on paper they don't always work when you design a site, ex: 3 different rules that don't mesh

If a project can't meet enough of the standards then a developer might have to drop a project, ODS should not constrain projects.

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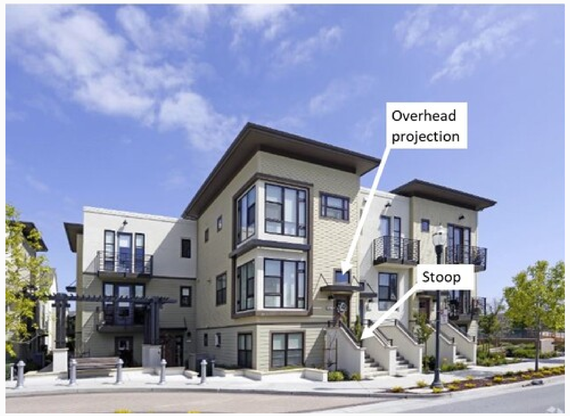


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