


[PDF] Agenda Item 4 - Capitola Mall Zoning amendments

From Santa Cruz YIMBY <santacruzylimby@gmail.com>

Date Sat 2/21/2026 2:24 PM

To City Council <citycouncil@ci.capitola.ca.us>

Cc Herlihy, Katie (kherlihy@ci.capitola.ca.us) <kherlihy@ci.capitola.ca.us>; hello@santacruzylimby.org <hello@santacruzylimby.org>

 1 attachment (122 KB)

Santa Cruz YIMBY input on Capitola Mall Zoning Code - Agenda 4.pdf;

Mayor, Vice-Mayor and Councilmembers,

Please find attached Santa Cruz YIMBY's input on agenda item 4 regarding Capitola Mall zoning amendments,

Thank you all for your service and commitment to the community.

Thank you,

Rafa Sonnenfeld

Janine Roeth

Volunteer Leads, Santa Cruz YIMBY



To: Capitola City Council
From: Santa Cruz YIMBY
Date: February 21, 2026
Re: Capitola Mall Zoning Code Amendments - Agenda item #4

Dear Mayor, Vice-Mayor and Councilmembers,

Santa Cruz YIMBY advocates for abundant housing at all levels of affordability to meet the needs of a growing economy. The redevelopment of the Capitola Mall represents a unique opportunity to address our regional housing crisis while bringing people closer to services and jobs, strengthening our local economy. We appreciate the extensive deliberations by the Planning Commission and participated in nearly every public hearing regarding the Capitola Mall zoning changes, identifying various technical issues throughout the process. At this time, we are focused on two critical points to ensure the final ordinance is consistent and effective:

Inclusion of All Mall Parcels (Program 1.7) The current draft excludes two specific parcels (APNs 034-261-07 and 034-261-52) within the Mall’s footprint from these new objective standards. This appears to be in direct conflict with Housing Element Program 1.7, which explicitly defines the "Capitola Mall" as all properties bounded by Clares Street, 41st Avenue, and Capitola Road. To ensure the Mall can be redeveloped as a cohesive project, these parcels should be included under the same objective standards as the rest of the site. Maintaining consistency with established definitions respects the public process and provides the certainty housing providers need.¹

Mixed-Use Village and Industrial Zones With the strikeout proposed for 17.82.020 (B) (1)², the Mixed-Use Village (MU-V) and Industrial zones are now subject to the multifamily objective standards. Unlike the Mall, the impact on these zones has not had the Planning Commission or community discussion necessary to understand this proposed change. A cursory look suggests some existing multi-family buildings in the Village would not meet the requirements as currently written. Furthermore, including these zones introduces additional layers of review, such as Coastal Commission oversight, which are not applicable to the Mall parcels. We recommend maintaining the existing language to keep the administrative path for the Mall

¹ The resolution before you says “the Capitola Mall property includes the properties located between Clares Street, 41st Avenue, and Capitola Road” and further describes amendments and objective design standards for “Capitola Mall property” with no exclusion of parcels.

² 17.82.020 (B) (1) has the following proposed modification: “The standards in this chapter apply in all zoning districts except for the single-family (R-1) and, mobile home (MH), ~~mixed use village ((MU-V), and industrial (I) districts.~~”

project clear and straightforward, allowing the community and Council the time needed to fully vet the impacts on the Village and Industrial areas at a later date.

Recommendations:

We respectfully request that the City Council at the February 23rd meeting:

- Advise staff to remove the exclusion of parcels (APNs) 034-261-07 and 034-261-52 from the zoning update. This is achieved by removing the definition and reference to “Capitola Mall Housing Element Sites” in three places (17.160.020, 17.24.035 (D)(1) and footnote [7] for Table 17.24-1)
- Remove the strikeout of Section 17.82.020(B)(1). This maintains the existing code for the Village and Industrial zones, giving the Council and the community the time needed to fully understand the impacts at a later date.

The community is ready for a revitalized Capitola Mall and the new homes it will provide. We all know the developer is eager to move forward. We urge you to approve these amendments with the corrections noted above to get shovels in the ground without further delay.

Thank you for your service and commitment to the community.

Sincerely,
Rafa Sonnenfeld
Janine Roeth
Volunteer Leads, Santa Cruz YIMBY

Santa Cruz YIMBY Mission: We envision a community where our neighbors of all ages, cultures, abilities, and incomes, can make Santa Cruz County their home. In response to the ever-increasing cost of living, we advocate for more affordable housing to meet the needs of our community. Santa Cruz YIMBY is a chapter of YIMBY Action, a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization.