



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PLANNING COMMISSION
REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 05/13/2026

ITEM NO: 4

DATE: May 8, 2026
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Joel Paulson, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Consider a Request for Approval to Demolish an Existing Single-Family Residence, Construct a New Two-Story Single-Family Residence, and Site Improvements Requiring a Grading Permit on Property Zoned R-1:10. **Located at 116 Vallecitos Way.** APN 407-13-018. Architecture and Site Application S-25-046. Categorically Exempt Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303: New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures. Property Owner: Eyal Tokman. Applicant: Michelle Miner. Project Planner: Ryan Safty.

RECOMMENDATION:

Consider a request for approval to demolish an existing single-family residence, construct a new two-story single-family residence, and site work requiring a Grading Permit on property zoned R-1:10, located at 116 Vallecitos Way.

PROJECT DATA:

General Plan Designation: Low Density Residential
Zoning Designation: R-1:10
Applicable Plans & Standards: General Plan, Residential Design Guidelines
Parcel Size: 12,491 square feet
Surrounding Area:

	Existing Land Use	General Plan	Zoning
North	Residential	Low Density Residential	R-1:10
East	Residential	Low Density Residential	R-1:10
South	Residential	Low Density Residential	R-1:10
West	Residential	Low Density Residential	R-1:10

PREPARED BY: Ryan Safty
Associate Planner

Reviewed by: Planning Manager and Community Development Director

CEQA:

The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15303: New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.

FINDINGS:

- The project is Categorically Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15303: New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.
- As required by Section 29.10.09030 (e) of the Town Code for the demolition of an existing residence.
- The project meets the objective standards of Chapter 29 of the Town Code (Zoning Regulations).
- As required for compliance with the Residential Design Guidelines.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- As required by Section 29.20.150 of the Town Code for granting approval of an Architecture and Site application.

ACTION:

The decision of the Planning Commission is final unless appealed within ten days.

BACKGROUND:

The subject property is located at the terminus of the Vallecitos Way cul-de-sac (Exhibit 1). The property is approximately 12,491 square feet and is developed with an existing 2,150-square foot, single-story residence with a 540-square foot detached garage.

The project is being considered by the Planning Commission due to concerns related to the project's consistency with the Residential Design Guidelines in terms of neighborhood compatibility with massing and design.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

A. Location and Surrounding Neighborhood

The subject property is located at the terminus of the Vallecitos Way cul-de-sac (Exhibit 1). The property is developed with a single-family residence and detached garage. Single-family residential development abuts the property on all sides.

B. Project Summary

The applicant proposes to demolish the existing 2,150-square foot residence and 540-square foot detached garage and construct a new 3,561-square foot, two-story single-family residence with an attached 650-square foot garage (Exhibit 12).

C. Zoning Compliance

A single-family residence is permitted in the R-1:10 zone. The proposed residence complies with the allowable floor area, building coverage, setbacks, parking, and height requirements for the property. No exceptions are requested.

DISCUSSION:

A. Architecture and Site Analysis

Pursuant to Town Code Section 29.40.075, the maximum allowable square footage for the 12,491-square foot property is 3,622 square feet for a residence and 987 square feet for a garage. The applicant proposes demolition of the existing residence and garage and construction of a new 3,561-square foot two-story residence with a 650-square foot attached garage. The residence would be 27 feet, five-inches in height when the maximum height of the zone is 30 feet.

The applicant provided a Project Description and a Letter of Justification summarizing the project (Exhibits 4 and 5). Pictures of the existing site and structures are included in Exhibit 6, and the proposed Development Plans are included in Exhibit 12. The application materials show an attached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) on the ground floor, which is under a separate ministerial permit. Pursuant to State law, the ADU is not being reviewed with this application. Similarly, the ADU floor area is not included in the 3,561-square foot total.

B. Building Design

The proposed residence would be two-stories and in a modern Spanish Revival style, which combines traditional Spanish architectural elements with a refined, contemporary expression (Exhibit 4). Proposed exterior materials include off-white smooth stucco finish; black-clad windows and French doors; stone veneer accent siding at the front and rear porches; and brown clay tile roofing with decorative corbels under the roof eaves (Exhibit 12). A juliet balcony is proposed on the front elevation, over the attached garage, and a 70-square foot balcony is proposed on the east side elevation. A privacy study was prepared for the side balcony, provided on Sheet 21 of Exhibit 12.

The Town's Consulting Architect reviewed the proposed residence in November 2025 and noted that the property is located on a short cul-de-sac in a neighborhood of modest one- and two-story traditional style homes (Exhibit 9). In the Issues and Concerns Section of the report, the Consulting Architect notes that the proposed house is designed with a traditional architectural style with details authentic to the style, and sees only a few elements of the proposal that would not be consistent with the Residential Design Guidelines (RDG), as follows:

1. *RDG 3.3.2 – Height and bulk at front and side setbacks.* The Consultant noted that the ten-foot, first and second-story plate heights were not consistent with the neighborhood.
2. *RDG 3.6.3 – Design entries with sensitivity to the surrounding neighborhood.* The form and materials of the proposed projecting front entry would not be consistent with the neighborhood.
3. *RDG 3.2.2 – Design for architectural integrity.* The use of stone on the front entry should be carried consistently around all sides of the home.
4. *RDG 3.7.4 – Design the windows with attention to matching the traditional details of the architectural style.* Window and doors will need trim added or will need to be recessed from the wall surface.
5. *RDG 3.2.2 – Design for architectural integrity.* The black color of the downspouts seems distracting from the unity of the design.

In the Recommendations Section of the report, the Consulting Architect provided five recommendations to address each of the issues and concerns. The applicant provided written responses to each of these recommendations (Exhibit 10). The recommendations identified by the Consulting Architect are provided below, followed by the applicant's summarized response in italics.

1. Lower the floor-to ceiling heights to reduce the structure's height to be more compatible with the other homes in the immediate neighborhood (RDG 3.3.2).
 - *The second-floor plate height was reduced from 10 feet to nine feet.*
2. Simplify the entry form and details, and add shed roof to match the main roofs (RDG 3.6.3).
 - *The entry is designed as a Spanish Revival focal element consistent with the architectural style of the home. The neighbor at 109 Vallecitos Way also has a prominent tall stone entry.*
3. Eliminate the stone on the front façade entry (RDG 3.2.2).
 - *The stone on the entry serves as a traditional Spanish architectural accent. The stone will be similar in color to the stucco, and this same stone was repeated on the rear and right-side elevation for consistency.*
4. Substantially recess all windows and doors to be consistent with RDG 3.7.4.
 - *Windows will be deeply recessed black-clad windows consistent with the Spanish Revival style.*

5. Subdue the downspouts prominence to better blend with the wall color (RDG 3.2.2).
 - *The gutter and downspouts are intentionally finished in black to coordinate with the black fascia, window frames, and metal detailing, which creates a unified architectural accent system consistent with the Spanish Revival homes that use dark metal elements to provide contrast against light stucco walls.*

The applicant further responded to the Consulting Architect’s recommendations, stating:

The proposed residence reflects high architectural integrity, authentic Spanish Revival detailing, and thoughtful massing modulation. The reduction of the second-floor plate height, deep window recesses, contextual entry design, and coordinated material palette demonstrate responsiveness to the Town’s Residential Design Guidelines while maintaining a cohesive and stylistically appropriate design. We respectfully request that the project proceed with the design as proposed, incorporating the refinements noted above (found in Exhibit 10).

Additional justification for the home design, height, and massing compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood can be found in Exhibit 5.

C. Neighborhood Compatibility

The immediate neighborhood contains a mix of one- and two-story residences. Based on Town and County records, the residences in the immediate area range in size from 2,270 square feet to 3,068 square feet. The floor area ratios (FARs) range from 0.131 to 0.332. The proposed residence would be 3,561 square feet with a FAR of 0.285. Pursuant to Town Code, the maximum allowable square footage for the 12,491-square foot lot is 3,622 square feet with a maximum FAR of 0.290. The following table reflects the current conditions of the immediate neighborhood.

FAR Comparison - Neighborhood Analysis							
Address	Zoning	House	Garage	Total FAR	Lot Size	FAR	No. of Stories
116 Vallecitos Way (Ex.)	R-1:10	2,150	540	2,690	12,491	0.172	1
116 Vallecitos Way (Prop.)	R-1:10	3,561	650	4,211	12,491	0.285	2
115 Vallecitos Way	R-1:10	2,321	400	2,721	17,754	0.131	1
111 Vallecitos Way	R-1:10	2,552	0	2,552	12,780	0.200	1
109 Vallecitos Way	R-1:10	3,048	450	3,498	9,825	0.310	1
105 Vallecitos Way	R-1:10	3,068	703	3,771	9,240	0.332	2
136 Via De Tesoros	R-1:10	2,270	554	2,824	10,126	0.224	1
112 Vallecitos Way	R-1:10	2,992	440	3,432	10,206	0.293	2
108 Vallecitos Way	R-1:10	2,272	462	2,734	11,178	0.203	2
104 Vallecitos Way	R-1:10	2,427	528	2,955	10,416	0.233	1
100 Vallecitos Way	R-1:10	2,528	588	3,116	11,400	0.222	1

The proposed residence would comply with the maximum allowed floor area and height for the property; but would be the tallest home in the immediate neighborhood; and would be the largest home in the immediate neighborhood in terms of square footage. RDG Section 2.1 – General Neighborhood Design Principles – states that residential development shall be similar in mass, bulk, and scale to the immediate neighborhood.

Although there are three other two-story homes in the cul-de-sac which makes up the immediate neighborhood, the proposed residence would be approximately four feet taller than the other two-story homes. The proposed home would be 27-feet, five-inches in height, while the other two-story homes at 105, 108, and 112 are approximately 23-feet, six-inches in height. Additionally, although the home complies with maximum allowed FAR and three other homes in the immediate neighborhood have larger FARs, the proposed home would be the largest in the immediate neighborhood by 493 square feet.

The application has provided justification for the proposed massing and home size in Exhibit 5, noting that the property is at the end of a cul-de-sac, which is developed with mature trees that soften views and reduce the visual prominence. Exhibit 5 includes renderings showing the neighborhood context and view of the property from the beginning of the cul-de-sac for added context. Additionally, the applicant notes how the proposed design articulation and second-floor step-back further reduces the perceived mass.

D. Grading

The project includes site improvements with grading quantities exceeding 50 cubic yards, which requires approval of a Grading Permit. The Town's Parks and Public Works Engineering staff have included a condition of approval requiring submittal and evaluation of a Grading Permit in parallel with the required Building Permits (Exhibit 3).

E. Tree Impacts

The Consulting Arborist reviewed the development plans, visited the property, and prepared a report for the project, noting that there are 13 protected trees on site (Exhibit 7). The proposed plan includes the removal of one exempt fruit tree and three protected trees. Of the protected trees, two are immediately adjacent to the new building footprint, and one is along the rear property line that has been severely pruned by utility companies and is suggested for removal by the Consultant for safety reasons. The remaining trees are to be protected during construction, and the recommended tree fencing locations are included in the updated project plans in Exhibit 12. The Draft Conditions of Approval include a condition that all recommendations of the Town Arborist be implemented by the applicant prior to issuance of a Building Permit (Exhibit 3).

F. CEQA Determination

The project is Categorical Exempt pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15303: New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

The applicant provided a summary of their neighborhood outreach (Exhibit 11). Written notice of the Planning Commission hearing was sent to property owners and tenants within 300 feet of the subject property. At the time of this report's preparation, the Town has not received any public comment.

CONCLUSION:

A. Summary

The applicant is requesting approval of an Architecture and Site application to demolish an existing residence, construct a new 3,561-square foot, two-story single-family residence with an attached 650-square foot attached garage, and site work requiring a Grading Permit (Exhibit 12). The project complies with the objective standards of the Town Code related to allowable floor area, height, setbacks, lot coverage, and on-site parking requirements. The project was reviewed by the Town's Consulting Architect who provided recommendations for the revised project to refine the design and massing to be more compatible with the immediate neighborhood and the Town's Residential Design Guidelines (Exhibit 9). In response to the recommendations of the Consulting Architect, the applicant addressed some of the issues identified in the report through revisions to the proposed residence and provided justification for not making the other recommended modifications (Exhibit 10).

B. Recommendation

Based on the analysis above, and if the Planning Commission agrees with the design and massing justification provided by the applicant, staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the application by taking the following actions:

1. Make the finding that the proposed project is Categorical Exempt, pursuant to the adopted Guidelines for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Section 15303: New Construction (Exhibit 2);
2. Make the findings as required by Section 29.10.09030 (e) of the Town Code for the demolition of existing structures (Exhibit 2);
3. Make the finding that the project complies with the objective standards of Chapter 29 of the Town Code (Zoning Regulations) (Exhibit 2);

4. Make the finding that the project complies with the Residential Design Guidelines (Exhibit 2); and
5. Approve Architecture and Site application S-25-046 with the conditions contained in Exhibit 3 and the development plans in Exhibit 12.

C. Alternatives

Alternatively, the Planning Commission can:

1. Continue the matter to a date certain with specific direction; or
2. Approve the application with additional and/or modified conditions; or
3. Deny the application.

EXHIBITS:

1. Location Map
2. Required Findings and Considerations
3. Recommended Conditions of Approval
4. Project Description
5. Letter of Justification
6. Property Pictures
7. Consulting Arborist Report
8. Applicant Response to Consulting Arborist Report
9. Consulting Architect Report
10. Applicant Response to Consulting Architect Report
11. Applicant's Neighborhood Outreach
12. Development Plans