

To: Chair and Planning Commissioners  
From: Lee Quintanta  
Re : September 14, 2022, Agenda Item 3

Planning Commission:

1. Attached as Attachment 1 are my comments submitted for the August 24th Planning Commission on the Draft Objective Standards. I have added additional comments in red.
2. I concur with Exhibit 17 attached to the Staff Report.
3. I agree with most of the comments contained in Exhibit 16 and Exhibit 17. The following are my Comments on Draft Objective Standards and to the included Exhibits 16, 17, and 18. Both Exhibits 16 and 18 raise indicate that further work is needed for clarity in the areas of landscaping, private and community recreation space and the question of line drawings/photos.
4. Below are a few additional suggestions to increase the understanding of these Objectives. Many of the suggestions are based on Section 18.24 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code Project Contextual Design Criteria and Objective Standards. While I understand that it is not the intent of the Town's Objective Standards to include Contextual Design Criteria, I none the less suggest considering the following ideas taken from of the Palo Alto Code be incorporated into the Town's Objective Standards Document.
  - *Purpose:* Purpose of the Objectives:
    - The purpose of these Objective Design Standards is to establish the intent of and objective design criteria and their intent for project that qualify for the streamlined approval review of Housing Development Projects eligible as defined by the Housing Development Act., ie eligible for ministerial approval (as defined by Cal. Gov. Code 65589.5)
    - Include an statement of intent prior to each section of the Objectives b (before A.1, A.2 etc) to provide guidance as to what the objectives are intended to achieve. (18.24.010 Purpose and Applicability)
    - Include a statement that diagrams are illustrative only, that They are not intended to convey a required architectural style. Rather the objective standards aim to accommodate a variety of styles, construction types.
  - *Applicability:* Suggestions:
    - Include a list of the zoning districts in which Housing Development Projects (as identified in California Gov. Code) and add a statement that the Objective Standards applies to both new construction and renovations.
    -

Page 2

- Include a statement to the effect that the streamlined approval process applies only if all objective standards are met, both those in these Objective Design Standards, and those in all other Town Regulation etc. (i.e. as listed on page one of the Objective Standards.
5. In order to submit this by 11:00 my additional comments on landscaping, private and common space and illustration/photos will follow tomorrow.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lee Quintana

To Planning Commission  
Item 2 August 24th Planning Commission Meeting  
From: Lee Quintana

COMMENTS ON TOWN OF LOS GATOS  
DRAFT OBJECTIVE STANDARDS,  
AUGUST 24, 2022

### **GENERAL COMMENTS:**

Comprehensive stand alone document: It is my understanding, from previous public discussions of the Objective Guidelines, that the Objective Standards would be a comprehensive “stand alone” document containing the objective standards from all relevant documents and regulations. It is difficult to assess the Draft Objective Standards without knowing what other objective standards also apply to “qualified projects”. At a minimum, please consider adding a list of *all* objective standards contained . Consider adding a Table of all other objective standards that would apply to multi-family and mixed-use residential projects and include hyper-links to the individual standards.

### **PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY**

This section defines “qualifying project” and where the definition can be found in the California Government Code. However it does not define “Objective Standards” as defined by the Government Code. Most importantly, it does not explain how these apply to the approval process for “qualifying projects”.

Please delete and revise the first paragraph to better define the purpose of Objective Standards, (streamlining approval process? .

Delete and ~~receive revise~~ the second paragraph and to include the following as part of that paragraph:

Gov. Code 65559.5 identifies Qualifying Housing Development Projects:

- Multi-family housing developments.
- Residential Mixed Use Housing developments with a minimum of two-thirds of the square footage is designated for residential use.
- Supportive and transitional housing development

Delete and revise the last paragraph as follows:

A Qualifying project shall be approved through a ministerial review process when the project complies with these Objective Site Standards as well as complying with all existing objective development regulations in the Town., including but not limited to the following:

- General Plan

- Town Code
- Guideline and Standards Near Streams
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- Parks and Public Works Standards
- Santa Clara County Fire Department Regulations.

## ORGANIZATION

The Following Objective ~~Design~~ Standards are organized into two primary sections:.....

## KEY TERMS

*Community recreation space* Delete and replace with: **Note: Separate the definitions for Community Recreation space in mixed use developments and multi-family developments as individual definitions.**

*Community recreation space in a mixed use residential development* means public gathering spaces such as: plazas, outdoor dining, squares, pocket parks, or other community areas for the use of the **general** public.

- Please clarify whether this applies to non-residential and residential parts of a mixed use residential project or just to the non-residential part.
- **Note: Residential uses in a mixed use development should have some opportunity for gathering space as do residents in a MF only development. - please modify here and in objective standards to include this.**
- Should the Community space require a public access easement. **?**
- 

*Community recreation space in multi-family developments* means gathering spaces such as: play areas, pool areas, patios, rooftop decks, and other community areas available for the use of all residents.

- Please clarify whether this applies to projects just with MF zoning designation or applies to the multi-family part of a Mixed Use Residential Project **See Note above.**

*Mixed Use* means a development project where a variety of uses such as office, commercial, or institutional, ~~and residential~~ are combined with residential use(s) in a single building or on a single site in an integrated project.

*Private recreation space above ground level* means an outdoor balcony, or rooftop deck, ~~or similar~~, accessible from a single dwelling unit.

similar” = subjective. Delete or replace with more specific language

**Note: Add a space to separate above and at ground private recreation space**

*Private recreation space at ground level* means ~~a single~~ an outdoor enclosed patio or deck accessible from a single dwelling unit.

Objective Standard means.....(add language)

## **A .SITE STANDARDS**

### **A.1 Pedestrian Access**

1.2 & Figure A.1.1: Is there a minimum width for the sidewalk? Or for the planting strip

### **A.2 Bicycle Access**

2.4. 1.2 was “modified from walkway” to “pathway”. Should 2.4 also be changed to “pathway as well?”

### **A.3 Vehicular Access and A.4 Parking Location and Design**

Figure A.3.1, A.3.1 and A4.3 need clarification

What is the difference between aisle to aisle circulation (A3.1) and parking areas (Figure A3.1)? Does Figure A.3.1 represent multiple parking areas (see A.4.2) or aisle-to-aisle circulation of A.3.1.

4.3 *Comment:* Consider decreasing spacing between trees. Aside from aesthetic value, the shading trees decrease radiation from the parking lot surfaces

*Note: Shading from trees also lowers the temperature in cars. Consider adding a standard to ensure X% of parking spaces are shaded, or that addresses of trees to optimize shading (relates to Climate Change, energy, resiliency etc)n*

4.4 Move 4.4 up under 4.1

*Note:*

*I still suggest moving 4.4 up under 4.1 or combining the two as follows:  
Except for driveways to access surface parking lots or carports, surface parking lots and carports shall not be located between ~~the~~ a primary building frontage and the street.*

### **A.5 Parking Structure Access**

Add a standard for pedestrian access to a parking garage

### **A.6 Utilities**

6.3-Delete and separate ground and rooftop:

6.3 Views from the street of ground level utility cabinets, mechanical equipment, trash enclosures shall be screened from view.

- a. Screening shall be provided by landscaping, fencing or a wall.
- b. The screening shall be at least the same height as the utility being screened.  
*Comment:* Should they also be screened from within a site? Or at a minimum from common areas?

6.4 Rooftop mechanical equipment shall be screened from view from the street

- a. Solar equipment is exempt from this requirement

Consider a height exemption of the area required for an elevator shaft.

**Note:** I still think my comments under A.6, including screening utilities from within the site, are valid and should be incorporated.

### **A.7 Landscaping and Landscape Screening**

A.7.2.c *Comment:* Is there a requirement for planting between the trees?

**Note:** Suggest requiring shrubs between the trees X high at planting

### **A.10. Landscaping, Private, and Community Recreation Spaces**

A10.1. The following landscaped, private, and community recreation spaces shall be ~~are~~ required for all qualifying projects and ~~are~~ shall be calculated independent of each other:

### **A.11 Building Placement**

~~41.1. 10.c.~~ 10.c. How shade is calculated needs to be more specific.

**Note:** Break this paragraph up into:

- Minimum dimensions.....
- % of to sky
- % shading

### **B.4 Facade Design and Articulation**

4.3 Change format consistent with the rest of the document

## **B. BUILDING DESIGN**

**B.1.3.e and Figure B.1.3..e**

**Comment:** I don't understand this one. The illustration does not fit my understanding of a courtyard. Is this intended to be private the private use of the dwelling units? Is this an illustration of B.1.3 (Townhouse)

**B.2.2** If the intent is to prevent full transparency into the structure, should there be a minimum as well as a maximum?

### **B.3 Roof Design**

Figure B.3.3 *Comment:* This figure looks more like the gable illustrated in Figure.3.1 than it looks like a dormer

### **B.4 Facade Design and Articulation**

B.4.3 Why change in format?