



PLANNING DIVISION

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STAFF REPORT

TO: PLANNING & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

FROM: John Lusardi, Planning Manager **DEPARTMENT:** Planning &
Community Environment

DATE: December 7, 2005

SUBJECT: Zoning Ordinance Update (ZOU) – Joint Study Session of Pedestrian/Transit
Oriented Development Overlay District Development Standards, Context
Based Design Criteria and Permitted Land Uses

RECOMMENDATION

This meeting is a joint study session with the Planning and Transportation Commission (P&TC) and the Architectural Review Board (ARB) to discuss the overall framework and specific elements for the California Avenue Pedestrian/Transit Oriented Development (PTOD) Overlay district. No action from the P&TC and ARB is required at this meeting.

Historic Resources Board member Susan Haviland has also been invited to attend this study session. Board member Haviland is on the Design & Environment Working Group. The Working Group consists of two P&TC members and one Board member each from the ARB and HRB.

BACKGROUND

On November 9, 2005 the P&TC reviewed the preliminary documentation of the PTOD overlay zone. On November 30 the Design & Environment Working Group met to discuss the proposed overlay zone. On December 1, 2005 reviewed the overall framework and specific elements of the PTOD. The ZOU urban design consultants have developed and presented key elements of the PTOD at each of these meetings. The urban design consultants are Van Meter Williams Pollack (VMWP) and Kevin Gardiner & Associates.

Staff has presented the overall framework of the PTOD to both the P&TC and ARB, and further discussion can continue at the joint study session. Staff is recommending that the P&TC/ARB focus on two specific elements of the proposed overlay zone.

The first is a review of the Development Standards and Context Based Design Criteria that is proposed by the staff and urban design consultants. As proposed by the urban design consultants, the application of a PTOD overlay rezoning will establish specific development standards to

provide for an overall “building envelope” for specific development sites. Specific development standards would not be required at this stage of the process. The PTOD zoning requires P&TC and City Council (CC) review and approval. With this review process, the applicant would be required to present to the P&TC and CC the following development materials; proposed land uses, densities, a development program, consistently with the Comp Plan Policies and the PTOD development standards and environmental review.

Concurrent with the application for the overlay zone, the ARB would be reviewing a Preliminary Design application. With approval of the PTOD overlay zoning, the proposed development would require ARB review and recommendation (historic structures would also require HRB review). The ARB would review the project based on the PTOD development standards and context based design criteria, as well as the ARB standards of review. The consultants recommend this development review process for the PTOD area to better accommodate context based design review, mixture of housing types, pedestrian components, open space, and connectivity. The ARB would use the context based design criteria to insure appropriate transitions and relationships to create a pedestrian and transit oriented environment.

Attachment A contains the proposed Development Standards and Context Based Design Criteria. Based on the ARB review at their December 1 meeting, staff will be providing some revisions to the standards and criteria at the joint study session.

The second element that staff is proposing for discussion at the study session is the proposed permitted uses in the PTOD. The Comprehensive Plan defines this land use as a residential land use. The PTOD zoning district is providing for either all residential or mixed use of non-residential and residential. An all non-residential development would have to develop under the base zoning. The only non-residential use that would be permitted in the PTOD zone would be for a hotel use. Live work land uses would also be allowed as a conditional use.

Attachment B contains a table of land uses and regulations proposed for the PTOD overlay zoning district.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS:

Approximately 2,900 notices were mailed out for the both the PTC/ARB joint study session and the December 14 P&TC meeting. Upon input from the P&TC and the ARB at the joint study session, staff will proceed to develop an ordinance in the form of a new California Avenue PTOD Chapter of the Zoning Ordinance for the P&TC’s review and recommendation to the City Council. For the December 14 PTC meeting, staff would also be recommending that the PTC initiate the Comp Plan land use map amendments and rezoning to P/TOD for the two housing opportunity sites at Park Boulevard and Page Mill Road.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Draft PTOD Development Standards and Context Based Design Criteria
- B. Draft PTOD Land Uses

COURTESY COPIES:

Zoning Ordinance Update Binder
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18.66.040 Pedestrian Transit Oriented Combining District (PTOD) Regulations

- (a) Properties in the PTOD combining district are subject to the following regulations:

Table 2: Development Standards

STANDARDS	PTOD - California Ave
Max Dwelling Units ¹ :	40 DU/AC 50 DU/AC with bonus ²
100% Residential FAR	1.0:1 1.5:1 w/bonus ³
MU FAR ⁴	1.25:1 1.5 w/bonus ³
MU Non-Res. FAR Cap	0.3-0.35
Height:	40' (50' w/ bonus BMR)
Parking: 18.83.050	Rates established by use, per 18.83.050
Parking Adjustments: (18.83.120)	See 18.66.040 (d)
¹ Maximum dwelling units represents the "ceiling" that a project can develop to, even with all bonus FAR and densities ² Transition areas between higher and lower density can consider the Village Residential housing type. ³ Maximum FAR is the "ceiling" that a project can develop to, even with all bonus FAR and densities ⁴ 100% Non-residential, with the exception of Hotels, must be developed per the underlying zoning district regulations.	

18.66.050 PEDESTRIAN TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT COMBINING DISTRICT (PTOD) CONTEXT-BASED DESIGN CRITERIA

(A) Contextual and Compatibility Criteria

Development in a Pedestrian Transit Oriented Development Combining District shall be responsive to its context and compatible with adjacent development, and shall promote the establishment of a pedestrian and transit oriented neighborhood.

1. Context

- a. Context as used in this section is intended to indicate relationships between the site's development to adjacent street types, surrounding land uses, and on-site or nearby

natural features, such as creeks or trees. Effective transitions to these adjacent uses and features are strongly reinforced by Comprehensive Plan policies.

- b. The word “context” should not be construed as a desire to replicate existing surroundings, but rather to provide appropriate transitions to those surroundings. “Context” is also not specific to architectural style or design, though in some instances relationships may be reinforced by an architectural response.

2. Compatibility

- a. Compatibility is achieved when the apparent scale and mass of new buildings is consistent with the pattern of achieving a pedestrian and transit oriented neighborhood, and when new construction shares general characteristics and establishes design linkages with the overall pattern of buildings so that the visual unity of the street is maintained.
- b. Compatibility goals may be accomplished through various means, including but not limited to:
 - (1) siting, scale, massing, materials;
 - (2) the rhythmic pattern of the street established by the general width of the buildings and the spacing between them;
 - (3) the pattern of roof lines and projections;
 - (4) the sizes, proportions, and orientations of windows, bays, and doorways;
 - (5) the location and treatment of entryways;
 - (6) the shadow patterns from massing and decorative features;
 - (7) the treatment of landscaping

(B) Context-Based Design Considerations and Findings

In addition to the findings for Architectural Review contained in Section 18.76.020(d) of the Zoning Ordinance, the following additional findings are applicable in the Pedestrian Transit Oriented Development Combining District:

1. Pedestrian Environment

The design of new projects shall promote pedestrian walkability and connectivity through design elements such as:

- a. Connectivity with external and internal (if any) streets;
- b. Pathways that present a clear hierarchy and connectivity pattern both within a project and to adjacent sidewalks;
- c. Streetscape or pedestrian amenities that contribute to the area’s streetscape environment such as street trees, benches, and landscape elements;
- d. Ground floor uses that are appealing to pedestrians, such as retail, personal service, restaurants, outdoor cafes, and residences;
- e. For primary pedestrian routes such as Park Boulevard and California Ave., climate and weather protection where possible, such as covered waiting areas, building projections and colonnades, and awnings;
- f. Wide sidewalks (built as easements beyond the property line if needed) along Park Boulevard to reinforce the street as a primary pedestrian linkage to the multimodal station.

2. Street Building Facades

Street facades shall be designed to provide a strong relationship with the sidewalks and the street(s), to create an environment that supports and encourages pedestrian activity through design elements such as:

- a. Facade articulation reflecting the rhythm of nearby commercial and residential areas such as California Avenue;
- b. Placement and orientation of doorways, windows, and landscape elements to create strong, direct relationships with the street;
- c. Facades that include projecting eaves and overhangs, porches, and other architectural elements that provide human scale and help break up building mass;
- d. Entries and windows that face onto the street;
- e. Entries that form the predominant feature of front facades, and that have a scale that is in proportion to the size of the building and number of units being accessed; larger buildings should have a prominent, centralized building entrance;
- f. Residential units and storefronts that have a presence on the street and are not walled-off or oriented inward.

3. Massing and Articulation

Buildings shall be designed to minimize massing and provide for articulation and design variety through elements such as:

- a. Buildings that include pedestrian-scaled detail, articulation and craftsmanship of the façade;
- b. Rooflines that emphasize and accentuate significant elements of the building such as entries, bays, and balconies.
- c. Corner buildings that incorporate special features to reinforce important intersections and create buildings of unique architectural merit and varied styles.

4. Low-Density Residential Transitions

Where new projects are built adjacent to existing lower-scale residential development, care shall be taken to respect the scale and privacy of adjacent properties through:

- a. Transitions of development intensity from higher density development building types to building types that are compatible with the lower intensity surrounding uses, such as Village Residential land uses;
- b. Massing and orientation of buildings that respect neighboring structures by stepping back upper stories to minimize visual impact;
- c. Respecting privacy of neighboring structures, with windows and upper floor balconies positioned so they minimize views into neighboring properties;
- d. Minimizing sight lines into and from neighboring properties;
- e. Limiting sun and shade impacts on adjacent properties;
- f. Design creativity to address compatibility with adjacent structures;
- g. Pedestrian paseos and mews to create separation between uses.

5. Project Open Space

Private and public open space shall be provided so that it is usable for the residents, visitors, and/or employees of a site.

- a. The type and design of the usable private open space shall be appropriate to the character of the building(s), and shall consider dimensions, solar access, wind protection, views, and privacy;
- b. Open space should be sited and designed to be active, versatile, accommodating different activities and groups;
- c. Open spaces should connect to the pedestrian pathways and existing natural amenities.

6. Parking Design

Parking needs shall be accommodated but shall not be allowed to overwhelm the character of the project or detract from the pedestrian environment, such that:

- a. Parking is located behind buildings, below grade or, where those options are not feasible, screened by landscaping, low walls, etc.;
- b. Structured parking is fronted or wrapped with habitable uses when possible;
- c. Parking that is semi-depressed is screened with landscaping and/or architectural elements that enhance the streetscape such as stoops and balcony overhangs;
- d. Landscaping such as trees, shrubs, vines or groundcover is incorporated into surface parking lots;
- e. Street parking is utilized for visitor or customer parking and is designed in a manner to enhance traffic calming on the street.

7. Large (multi-acre) Sites

Large (in excess of two acres) sites shall be designed so that street and building patterns are consistent with those of the surrounding neighborhood, and such that:

- a. New development of large sites maintains and enhances connectivity with a hierarchy of public streets, private streets, walks and bike paths (integrated with Palo Alto's Bicycle Master Plan, when applicable);
- b. The diversity of building types increases with increased lot size (e.g., <1 acre=1 housing type; 1-2 acres=1-2 housing types; 2-4 acres=2-3 housing types; >4 acres= 3 housing types minimum).
- c. Where the site includes more than one housing type, each housing type should respond to its immediate context in terms of scale, massing, and design (e.g., Village Residential building types facing or adjacent to existing single-family residences).

8. Sustainability and Green Building Design

Consider: Project design and materials to achieve sustainability and green building design should be incorporated into the project. Green building design means considering the environment during design and construction. Green buildings aim for compatibility with the local environment: to protect, respect and benefit from it. In general, sustainable buildings are energy efficient, water

conserving, durable and nontoxic, with high-quality spaces and high recycled content materials. The following considerations should be included in site and building design:

- a. Optimize building orientation for heat gain, shading, daylighting, and natural ventilation.
- b. Design landscaping to create comfortable micro-climates and reduce heat island effects.
- c. Design for easy pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access.
- d. Maximize onsite stormwater management through landscaping and permeable pavement.
- e. Use sustainable building materials.
- f. Design for efficient energy use through lighting, plumbing and equipment use.
- g. Create healthy indoor environments.
- h. Use creativity and innovation to build more sustainable environments.

9. Historic Preservation (cross-reference HP Ord.)

**18.66.030 PEDESTRIAN TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT
COMBINING DISTRICT (PTOD) LAND USES**

- (a) The following land uses shall be permitted in the California Avenue Pedestrian Transit Oriented Development (PTOD) Combining District, subject to limitations outlined in Sections 18.66.040 and 18.66.050.

**Table 1
PTOD Combining District Land Uses**

Land Uses	PTOD – California Avenue
Village residential housing	P
Multiple family residential housing	P
Mixed Use development, where residential and non-residential uses are combined	P See Sec. 18.66.030(b) below for specific uses
Live/Work Units	CUP Subject to limitations of Sec. 18.66.040(b)
Hotels	P Subject to limitations of Sec. 18.66.040(c)

- (b) **Mixed Use development**, where residential and non-residential uses are combined, may include two or more of the following uses:
1. Village residential
 2. Multiple family residential
 3. Non-residential uses, limited to:
 - a. Retail and personal services
 - b. Eating and drinking services
 - c. Other non-residential uses except on the ground floor where an (R) overlay exists:
 - Offices
 - General business services
 - Business and trade schools
 - Private education facilities
 - Day care center
 - Community center
 - Commercial recreation
 - Convalescent facility

- Research and development, limited to sites where the underlying zoning district is GM and involving the use and storage of hazardous materials in quantities less than those allowed by Title 15 of the Municipal Code.
- (c) The following uses shall be prohibited in the California Avenue PTOD:
1. Single-family and two-family uses, other than as part of a Village Residential housing use.
 2. Manufacturing, processing, warehousing and distribution.
 3. Research and development where hazardous materials are used or stored in excess of exempt quantities specified by Title 15 of the Municipal Code (Section 105.8 of the Uniform Fire Code).
- (d) Land use restrictions imposed by a Retail Shopping (R) Combining District shall apply to any site where the (R) District is applicable.
- (e) All land uses must be reviewed and approved by the Planning and Transportation Commission and City Council at the time of rezoning to PTOD.

18.66.040 Pedestrian Transit Oriented Combining District (PTOD) Regulations

- (a) See Table 2 (Development Standards) on separate page.
- (b) **Live/Work Units**
1. A live/work unit, for the purposes of this chapter, is defined as a rental or ownership unit comprised of both living space and work area, with the living space occupying a minimum of 60% of the total gross floor area of the unit, and such that the resident of the living space is the owner/operator of the work area.
 2. The work area shall be located on the ground level, oriented to the street and provide for at least one entrance/exit separate from the living space. The work area may be used for office, retail, personal services, or handcrafted goods (unless otherwise limited by this Chapter), but shall not be used for restaurants or cafes or for any business involving the storage or use of hazardous materials in excess of exempt quantities specified by Title 15 of the Municipal Code.
 3. A maximum of two (2) employees not living on the site may work at the site.
 4. Signage shall not exceed the requirements of the City of Palo Alto Municipal Code and shall require approval and recommendation by the Architectural Review Board prior to approval by the Director.
 5. Parking requirements shall include two spaces for the residential unit, plus one space per 200 square feet for the gross square footage of the work area,

less one space from the total (to reflect the overlap of the resident and one employee).

6. Live/work units are subject to the development standards of the PTOD zone outlined in Table 2 for a 100% residential development, except that the maximum non-residential FAR is limited to 0.40.
7. The maximum size of a live/work unit shall be limited to 2,500 square feet.
8. The design of street frontage of a live/work unit shall be consistent with the context-based criteria outlined for street frontage in Section 18.66.050 below.
9. A live/work unit may be converted to an entirely residential unit where residential use on the ground floor is not otherwise prohibited.

(c) . Hotels

1. Hotels that provide for kitchens in 10% or more of the rooms shall be considered residential and are limited by the development standards outlined in Table 2 for 100% residential uses or by the standards for mixed use where the ground floor is devoted to allowable non-residential uses.
2. Hotels that provide kitchens in less than 10% or more of the rooms may be constructed to a maximum FAR of 2.0 and a maximum height of 50 feet.
3. All hotels are subject to the context-based design criteria outlined in Section 18.66.050 below.

