

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING
APPLICATIONS SUBJECT TO THE INDIVIDUAL REVIEW PROGRAM**

This statement of understanding is required for all IR preliminary review meetings and applications and shall be signed and submitted at the beginning of an IR preliminary review meeting and along with the submittal of a formal IR application.

The Single Family Individual Review (IR) Program for two-story homes is required for the purpose of meeting the IR Guidelines and the zoning regulations adopted by the City of Palo Alto. The following is a description of the process and the purpose of the steps involved in this review. This signed statement of understanding is a *required* element of any IR application submittal.

IR Preliminary Review Meetings

IR Preliminary Review meetings are not mandatory, but are highly encouraged. The purpose of these meetings is:

- (a) To provide project proponents with the opportunity to obtain early, non-binding preliminary comments on development projects to encourage sound and efficient private decisions about how to proceed on issues related to the IR guidelines and zoning regulations. One preliminary meeting is encouraged per project. If a second meeting is requested by an applicant, it may be scheduled only after the planner verifies the applicant has significantly redesigned the project.
- (b) To focus on the issues of greatest significance to compliance with the IR guidelines and zoning regulations. These procedures are not intended to permit or foreclose debate on the merits of approval or disapproval of any given IR project, nor do they consider specific neighbor concerns, nor allow for full consideration of neighborhood context.
- (c) To facilitate orderly and consistent implementation of the city's development regulations, while acknowledging staff's limited ability to review plans fully in the preliminary meeting format.
- (d) To allow property owners and designers to ask questions about the review process and regulations and obtain related information and advice at an early stage of the project design.

IR Formal Review

The next steps:

- 1. Application Submittal & Public Notice
 - a. An appointment is required for application submittal, and often must be made several weeks in advance of the submittal date. Please call 650-329-2441 to schedule an appointment.
 - b. Notice is sent to neighbors within 150 ft. of the subject property within 3 business days of the application submittal.
 - c. Neighbors have 21 days in which to provide written comments. (Note: staff may act on an application after this period, but will accept additional public comment up until a decision on an application has been made.)

2. Staff Review & Response

- a. City staff may take up to 30 days from submittal date to review the application for completeness, zoning conformance, and compliance with the Individual Review Guidelines and to provide comments, but is obligated to wait until the end of the public comment period to provide official comments.
- b. A meeting can be arranged to discuss staff comments if necessary prior to resubmittal. Additional meetings will only be scheduled at staff's discretion. If additional information is needed, or revisions are required, please review staff comments in their entirety and consider some revisions prior to scheduling a review meeting with your planner.
- c. A lack of applicant response to a comment letter within 90 days of mailing may result in a request from city staff for a formal withdrawal of the application. Staff's letter would set a time limit of 30 days for responsive action by the applicant. Action would typically be a full revised submittal in response to review comments, or withdrawal of the application.
- d. Partial re-submittals via email may not be accepted for review.

3. Decision

- a. Once a decision letter has been completed and mailed, the decision is not considered effective until the end of the 14-day request for hearing period, and only then if no hearing is requested by the owner, applicant, or adjacent neighbor.

4. Building & Demolition Permits

- a. Building permit(s) may be applied for prior to the conclusion of the 14-day request for hearing period at the applicant's risk. Plans submitted for building permit are required to include the approval letter and be in substantial conformance with the plans approved through the IR process. Additional planning review and fees may be required for revisions, as determined by the Current Planning Manager.
- b. Demolition permits may not be issued prior to building permit approval. The planning department may consider signing off on the demo permit in advance of the building permit if the project includes deconstruction or salvage of building materials. To do so the standard Green Building Application (type 3) should be submitted as well as a contract from a deconstruction/salvage company and any other applicable documentation, such as an inventory of items to be removed/salvaged from the existing house prior to demo. Once those materials are submitted planning will review them and a decision can be made.

ACKNOWLEDGED BY:

(Applicant/Property Owner)