



HOUSING ELEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

Program 1.1
Zoning Code Amendments
PTC Public Hearing

October 11, 2023

www.cityofpaloalto.org

MEETING PURPOSE

1. Action Item to consider Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Amendments
2. Recap proposed zoning amendments pursuant Program 1.1A and 1.1B
3. Introduce changes to draft zoning amendments in response to August 2023 comment letter from HCD and necessary changes to Sites Inventory

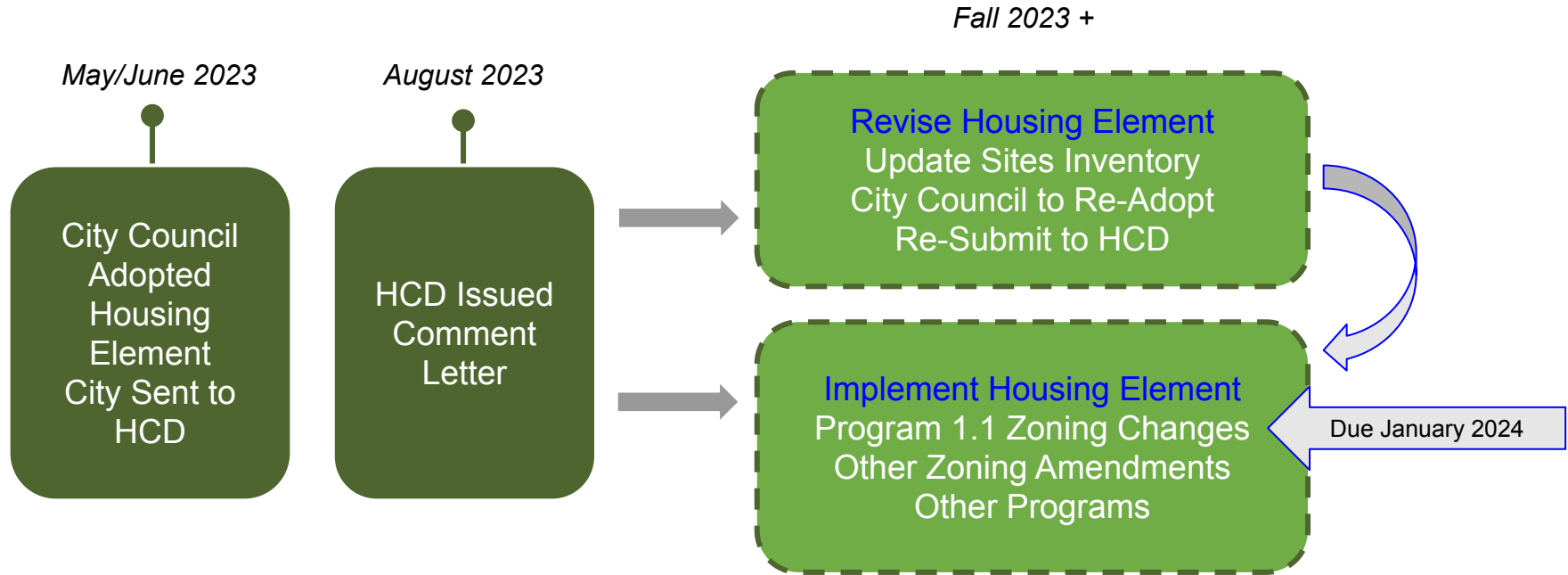
PTC FEEDBACK FROM 9/13 STUDY SESSION

- General support for applying draft standards only to the Housing Element opportunity sites
- General support for proposal to create a separate chapter in the Zoning Ordinance
- Concerns about potential stormwater management/flooding impacts in the GM/ROLM focus area due to potential increases in lot coverage and changes in landscape coverage requirements
- Concern that new and higher-density development standards would result in focus areas looking different and potentially inconsistent with the rest of Palo Alto
- Need for neighborhood services in this GM/ROLM area, including parks, schools, transit, and services
- Concern about the prevalence of townhomes and suggested higher minimum density standards
- Desire to see other Housing Element programs implemented as part of this zoning ordinance update

PUBLIC COMMENT AT 9/13 STUDY SESSION

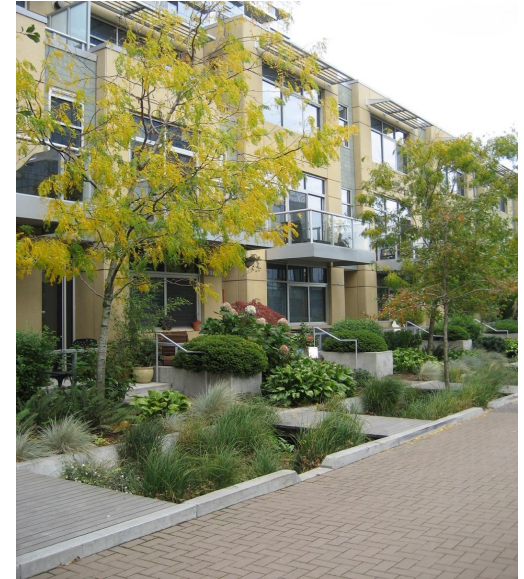
- General support of zoning changes to develop more housing and streamline project review process
- Several commenters support extending zoning amendments to apply citywide
- Some community members objected to the RHNA projections in light of changes to projections of jobs and jobs/housing ratio in the city
- Some commenters had ideas for specific improvements to Housing Element policies and zoning regulations including: development of City-owned parking lots for housing; greater use of Section 8 vouchers; and regulations for union construction labor, including wages and health care provisions
- Some commenters expressed concern that some opportunity sites are not viable within the next 8-year cycle
- Some commenters requested less complexity in the regulations, and better alignment between zoning regulations and the (higher-density) projects that are currently being approved/constructed in the city

HOUSING ELEMENT STATUS



PROGRAM 1.1A: ADEQUATE SITES INVENTORY

1. Rezone R-1, ROLM, RP, GM, and PF districts to allow multiple-family housing as a permitted use
2. Upzone to increase density/floor area ratio
3. Modify standards to reduce constraints and ensure development is feasible at planned densities
4. Complete other statutory requirements (e.g., allowing 100% residential uses and 50% residential for mixed use)



PROGRAM 1.1A: ADEQUATE SITES INVENTORY

- Density: 20-50 → 30-50 du/ac (or not regulated)
- FAR: 0.5-1.25 → 1.25-2.5 (or higher in focus areas)
- Allow landscape coverage requirement to be met above the ground-level



PROGRAM 1.1B: GM/ROLM FOCUS AREA

- Density: 30 → 90 du/ac
- FAR: 0.5-1.25 → 2.5
- Height: 35-50 → 60 feet
- Modifications to lot coverage and landscape coverage
- Parking reduction for 2+ bedroom units

→ integrated planning will be required to support related improvements to transit, parks, services, etc.



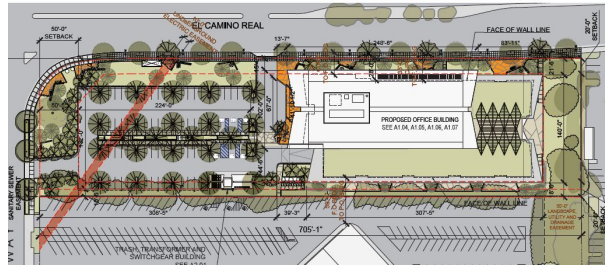
PROGRAM 1.1A: STANFORD SITES

- Program 1.1A (Adequate Sites Inventory) calls for specific changes to three Stanford University-owned sites: higher FARs and densities expected

****Current proposal is to expand this program to account for more sites in this area of El Camino Real (Parmani Hotel and potentially Palo Alto Square)**



3150 El Camino Real



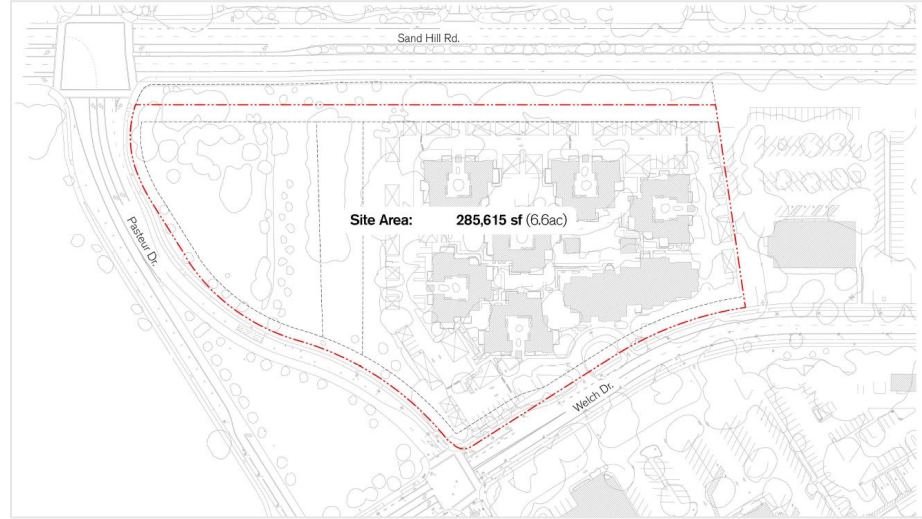
3300 El Camino Real



Welch/Pasteur/Sand Hill Rd.

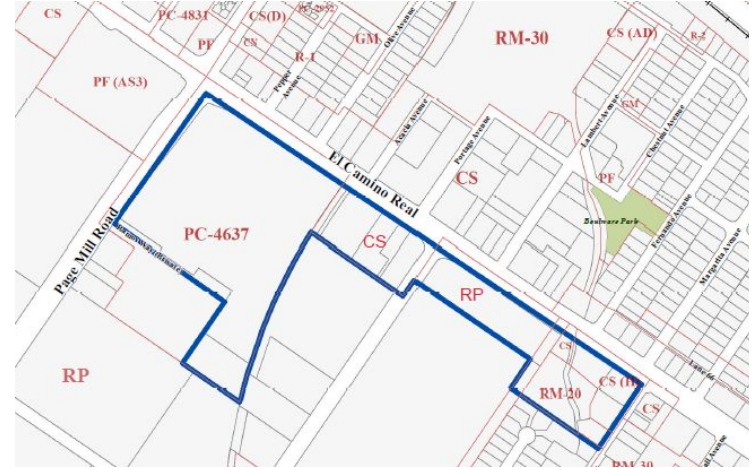
PASTEUR DR. (STANFORD)

- Redevelop existing housing
- Stanford affiliates only
- Maintain landscaped setback
- Existing utility easement provides break in facade length
- Inclusionary housing fee payment
- Must meet Objective Standards (as modified)



EL CAMINO REAL FOCUS AREA

Identify opportunity sites taking into consideration HCD feedback, existing potential development plans and legal uncertainties related to builder's remedy



DRAFT REGULATIONS (EL CAMINO FOCUS AREA)

Maximum FAR	4.0
Maximum Lot Coverage	70%
Maximum Density (du/ac)	None
Maximum Height	85
Daylight Plane or Step Back	Upper story stepback on El Camino Real. Daylight planes and height transitions abutting R-1 zone district
Open Space	100 sq. ft/unit (any combination of common and/or private)
Minimum Parking	1 space/unit

- **Incentive:** Standards are an *alternative* to State Density Bonus Law
- **Design Review:** Projects must go through Architectural Review whether meeting Objective Standards or Context-Based Design Criteria
- **Affordability:** Project must provide 20% Inclusionary Housing (on-site) @ 80% AMI
- **Other Standards:** See base zoning district (i.e., RP, RM-20, CS)

OPPORTUNITIES & CONTEXT

- Few adjacencies/existing residents
- Excellent access to transit, jobs, shopping, services, and Stanford
- Motivated property owners
- Builder's remedy and pre-applications submitted



3000 EL CAMINO REAL (PALO ALTO SQUARE)

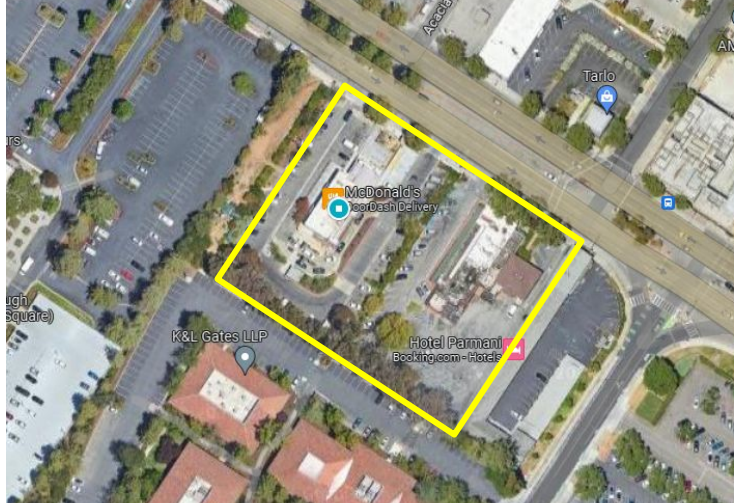


- PC Zoning (PC amendment required)
- Existing uses/buildings to remain
- Opportunity to redevelop parking lots



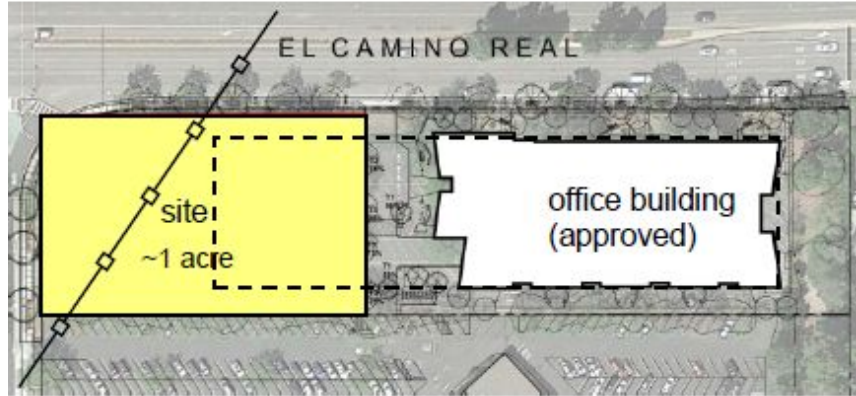
CITY OF
PALO ALTO

3150 EL CAMINO REAL (McD's/FISH MARKET)

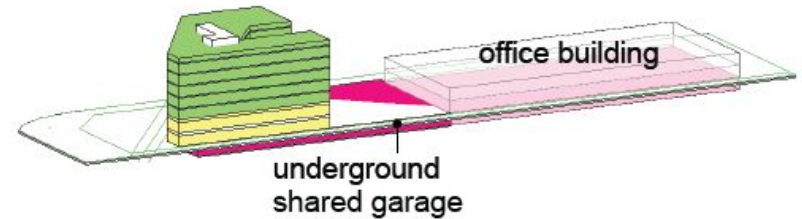


- Builders' remedy application filed (380 units, 84 feet/7 stories, 477 parking spaces)

3300 EL CAMINO REAL



- Half of site entitled for office
- PG&E utility easement constrains remainder of site
- Sand Hill Properties notes concerns with the 20% inclusionary rate



3400 EL CAMINO REAL (CREEKSIDO INN)



- Creek/creek setbacks
- Existing hotel buildings (may remain)
- Several on-site trees likely to be removed
- R-1 neighborhood abutting to the rear
- Pre-application submitted (builder's remedy)



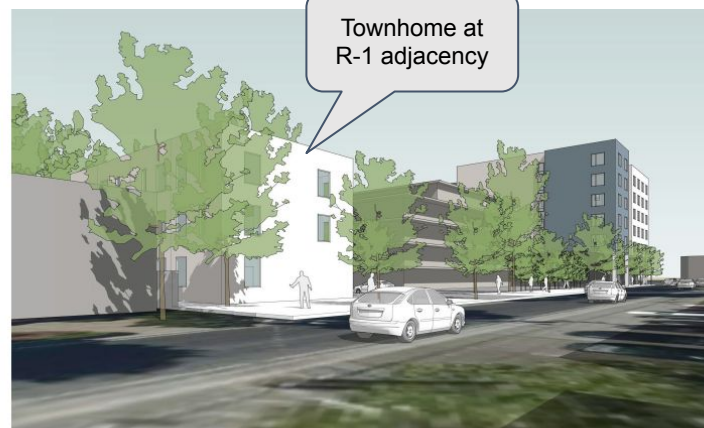
3400 EL CAMINO REAL



Surface parking at R-1 adjacency



VIEW FROM ACROSS EL CAMINO REAL



VIEW FROM THE WEST ALONG MATADERO

FOCUS AREA: POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- **Traffic** - unlikely to be VMT impacts under CEQA, but LOS needs to be analyzed to determine operational impacts; analyses are underway
- **Trees** - several trees on these sites will need to be removed as a result of redevelopment; Tree Protection Ordinance provides for mitigations



FOCUS AREA: POTENTIAL BENEFITS

- **Affordability** - Opportunity for mixed income buildings, including on-site Lower Income housing
- **Design Review** - Compliance with City's development and design standards and Architectural Review process
- **Mixed of Uses** - Exclusively residential permitted on sites inventory sites. Ground-floor retail permitted. Office limited to 5,000 sf in CS zone.



EFFECTS OF PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES

- ❑ Meets State Housing Element law requirements & timeline
- ❑ Completes Program 1.1A & 1.1B in the Housing Element
- ❑ Improves physical feasibility to meet densities and increase unit yield
- ❑ Increases affordable housing production and generate more in-lieu fees
- ❑ Resets the “base” density and density bonus allowed under State Density Bonus Law
- ❑ Adds complexity: need to look in two chapters for applicable standards



POTENTIAL STORMWATER/FLOOD IMPACTS

Existing Impervious Context



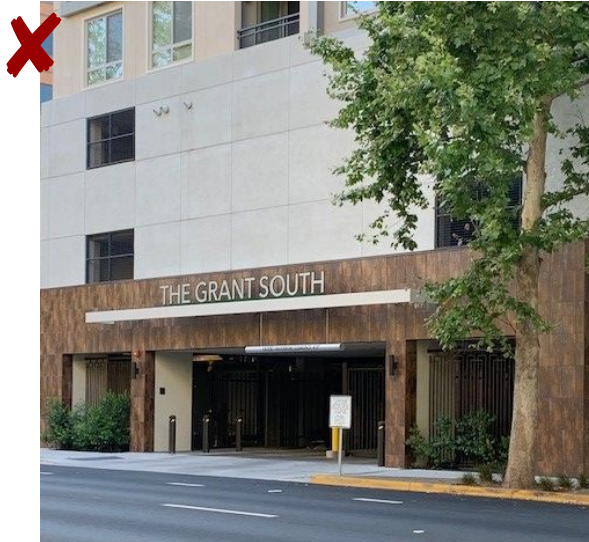
Required Stormwater Management



DESIGN IMPACTS: OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

*Example:
Parking
Standards*

Not Permitted



Permitted



IMPACTS OF MINIMUM DENSITY STANDARDS



15 du/ac



39 du/ac

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

- Zoning changes necessitate revisions to Land Use Element to allow higher density uses
- Attachment A annotates amendments to the Land Use Element to permit higher FARs and densities, as stipulated in the Zoning Ordinance
- **Next revision will account for El Camino Focus Area and allowing multi-family on R-1 faith-based sites**



except on Housing Element opportunity sites, for which higher density standards may be specified in the Zoning Ordinance.

RESIDENTIAL

Single-Family Residential: This designation applies to residential neighborhoods primarily characterized by detached single-family homes, typically with one dwelling unit on each lot. Private and public schools and churches are conditional uses requiring permits. Accessory dwelling units or duplexes are allowed subject to certain size limitations and other development standards and duplexes may be allowed in select, limited areas where they would be compatible with neighborhood character and do not create traffic and parking problems. The net density in single family areas will range from 1 to 7 units per acre, but rises to a maximum of 14 units on parcels where second units or duplexes occur. Population densities will range from 1 to 30 persons per acre.

Multiple-Family Residential: The permitted number of housing units will vary by area, depending on existing land use, proximity to major streets and public transit, distance to shopping and environmental problems. Net densities will range from 8 to 40 units and 8 to 90 persons per acre. Density should be on the lower end of the scale next to single-family residential areas. Densities higher than what is permitted may be allowed where measurable community benefits will be derived, services and facilities are available, and the net effect will be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Population densities will range up to 2.25 persons per unit by 2030.

Village Residential: Allows residential dwellings that are designed to contribute to the harmony and pedestrian orientation of a street or neighborhood. Housing types include single-family houses on small lots, second units, cottage clusters, courtyard housing, duplexes, fourplexes and small apartment buildings. Design standards will be prepared for each housing type to ensure that development successfully



FEEDBACK FROM 10/4 CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

1. Overall support for El Camino Focus Area where higher densities and taller heights are permitted
2. Several Councilmembers expressed concerns about Stanford's Pasteur Dr. site being limited to Stanford affiliates due to property tax impacts and lack of availability to the general public
3. Some Councilmembers expressed concerns about Creekside Inn site, because of adjacency to an R-1 zoning district and location of the creek
4. Some Councilmembers requested additional transportation demand management (TDM) measures to promote alternative modes of transportation given proposed reductions in parking standards
5. Some Councilmembers were interested in including the east side of El Camino Real in the Focus Area
6. Public comment generally supportive of Focus Area; some requested to see it replicated elsewhere

CONSIDERATIONS IN RESPONSE TO COUNCIL FEEDBACK

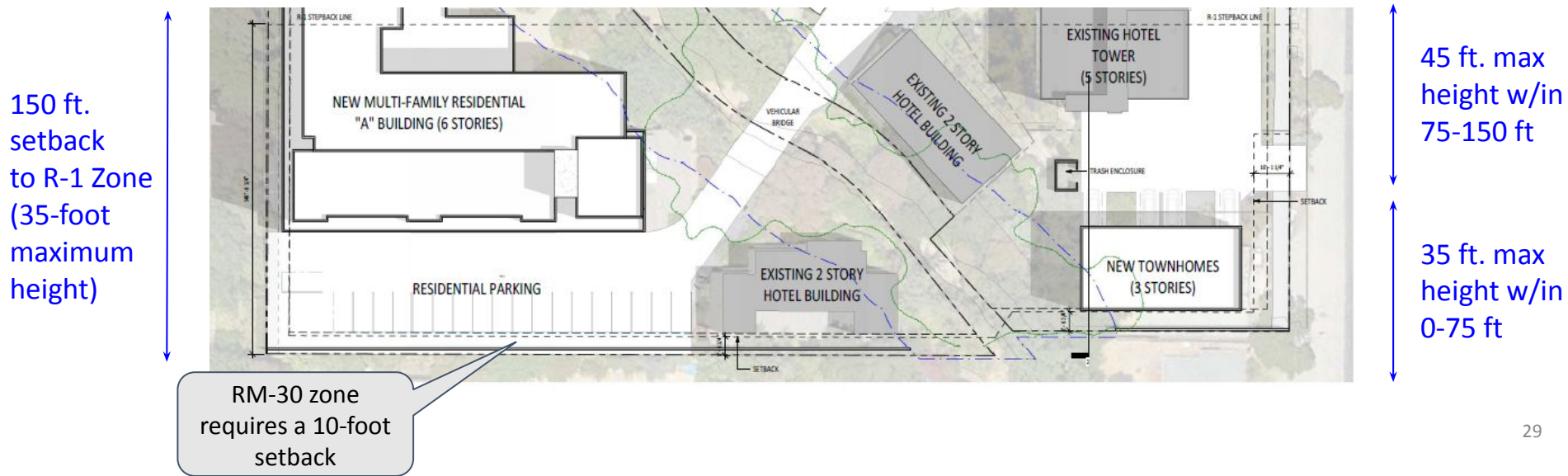
As part of a separate process, prepare objective TDM measures for parking below code requirements (and no lower than 1 space/unit):

- 1 free transit pass per unit
- % requirement for large bicycles (e.g., cargo)
- % requirement for electric bicycles (outlets)
- Bicycle amenities (e.g. repair station)



CONSIDERATIONS IN RESPONSE TO COUNCIL FEEDBACK

- Creek Protections: Staff is securing a consultant to evaluate Comp Plan programs related to stream corridor protections, including setback standards; current code requires a 20-foot top of bank setback.
- Height Transitions: Height limits adjacent to R-1 zoning district



STAFF RECOMMENDATION & NEXT STEPS

1. Recommend to City Council adoption of:
 - Comprehensive Plan amendments
 - Draft Zoning Ordinance amendments
2. Next Step: November 13th City Council public hearing