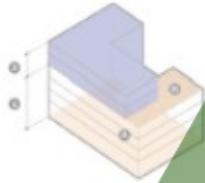




Site Design



Massing



Modulation



Facade Articulation

# OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

Multifamily &  
Mixed Use Housing

*ARB Study Session*

April 7, 2022 (continued from March 10)

# BACKGROUND

1. ARB recommended approval of the Objective Standards project in April 2021
2. Council motion on November 8, 2021
3. Two previous ARB hearings on the topics:
  - January 20, 2022
  - March 10, 2022



# AGENDA

1. Recap March 10th ARB Comments
  - Public comments
  - Privacy standards
  - Contextual height step back
2. Key (remaining) topics from Council action:
  - Menu of option choices
  - Capturing missing standards



# PUBLIC COMMENTS (3/10/21)

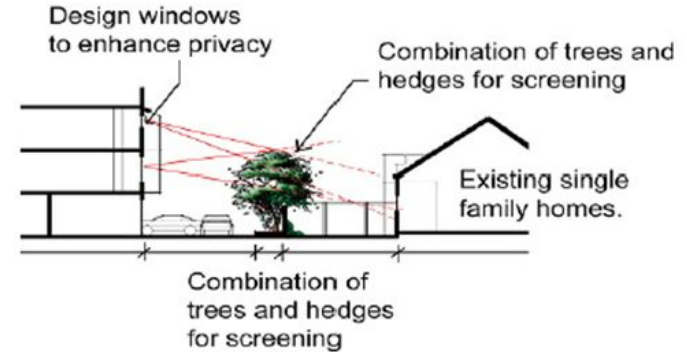
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- Privacy important for all residences regardless of lot size, location, or zoning district
- Clarify how sight lines will be defined
- Clarify how proposed standards will truly be objective (e.g. tree foliage, facing windows)

# ARB RECOMMENDATION 3/10: PRIVACY & SIGHT LINES: ADD INTENT STATEMENT

*Add to Building Massing Intent statement based on context-based design criteria:*

“(6) Maintain privacy of residential uses through design strategies such as offset windows, reduced glazing, landscape screening, and site planning that extends setbacks to residential uses.”



# ARB RECOMMENDATION 3/10:

## PRIVACY & SIGHT LINES: WINDOW STANDARDS

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Within 30 feet of facing windows (except garage or common space windows) or private open space on an abutting residential building, facing windows on the subject site shall meet the following:

- Window sills at and above the 2nd floor shall be at least 5 feet above finished floor; OR
- Windows shall have opaque or translucent glazing at or below 5 feet above finished floor; OR
- Windows shall be angled up to 15 degrees (parallel to window) to face away from abutting privacy impacts;

AND

- Landscape screening shall be 24-inch box size or larger and 8+ feet height at planting; 50% evergreens; and located to align with proposed second floor windows at maturity

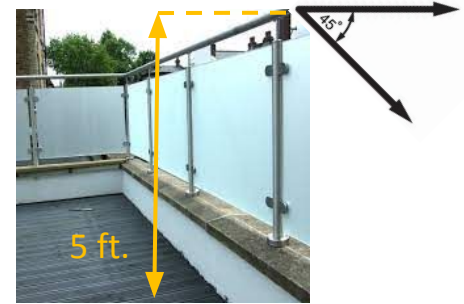


# ARB RECOMMENDATION 3/10:

## PRIVACY & SIGHT LINES: BALCONY STANDARDS

Within 30 feet of residential windows or private open space on an abutting residential building, balconies and decks on the subject site shall be designed to prevent views:

- No sight lines are permitted within 5 feet of finished floor and a 45 degree angle downward from balcony railing
- Submit section view of proposed balcony/deck and abutting residential windows and/or private open space
- Provide balcony/deck design measure which may include:
  - Minimum 85% opaque railing
  - Obscure glass railing
  - Barrier with min. 18" horizontal depth from railing (e.g., landscape planter)





# ARB RECOMMENDATION 3/10: CONTEXTUAL HEIGHT STEP BACK: DRAFT STANDARDS

When the height of the subject building is more than 20 feet above the average height of an adjacent building and the two buildings are separated by 20 feet or less:

- Upper Story Step Back (**Front Façade**) - current draft standard; AND
- Upper Story Step Back (**Facing Façade**) - proposed new standard based on 3/10 feedback, AND
- Daylight Plane (where does not exist; i.e., abutting commercial mixed use zones) - 25 ft. above grade, 45 degrees (no setback unless otherwise required)

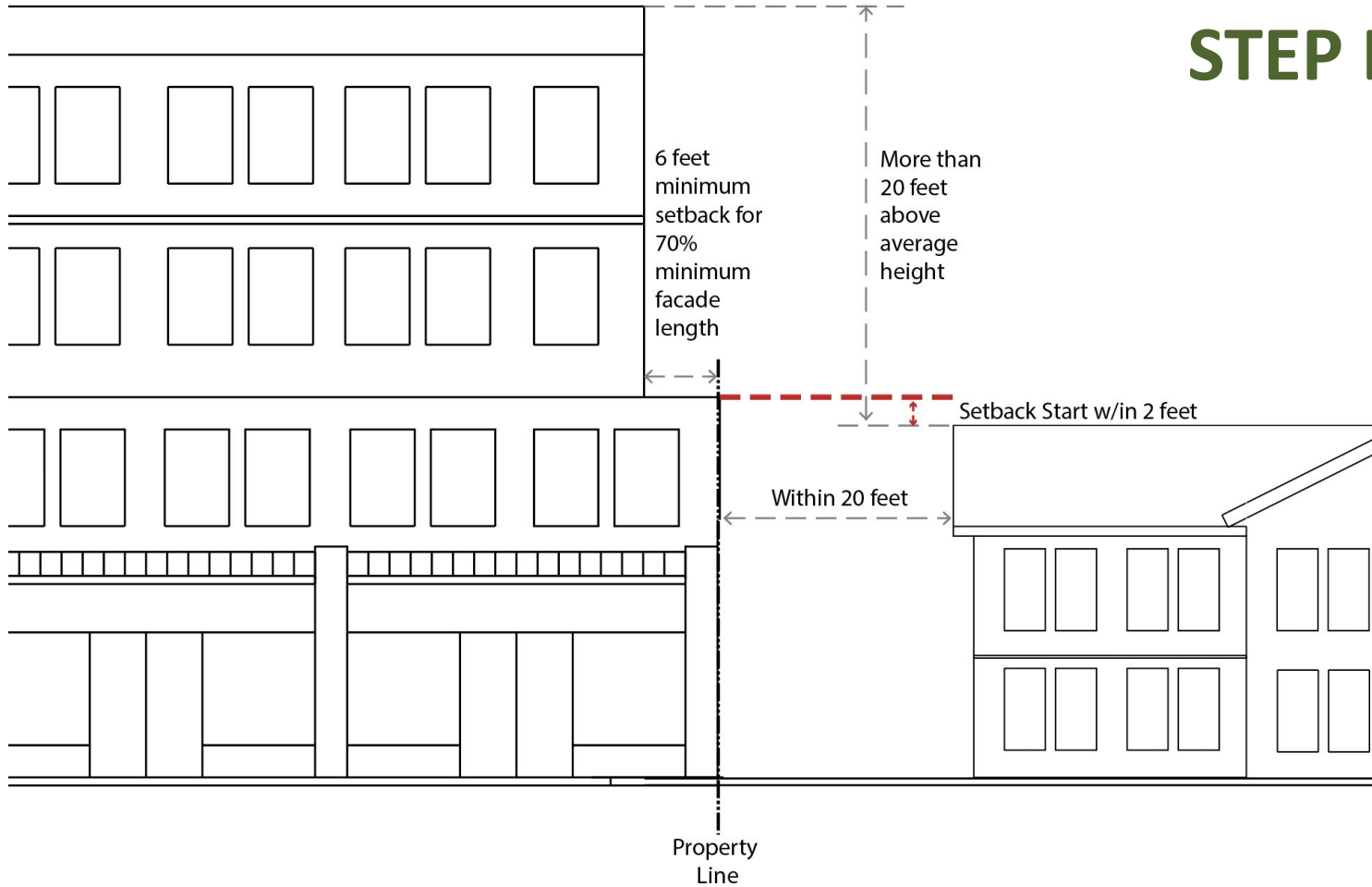
Facing Façade  
Step Back

Front Façade  
Step Back

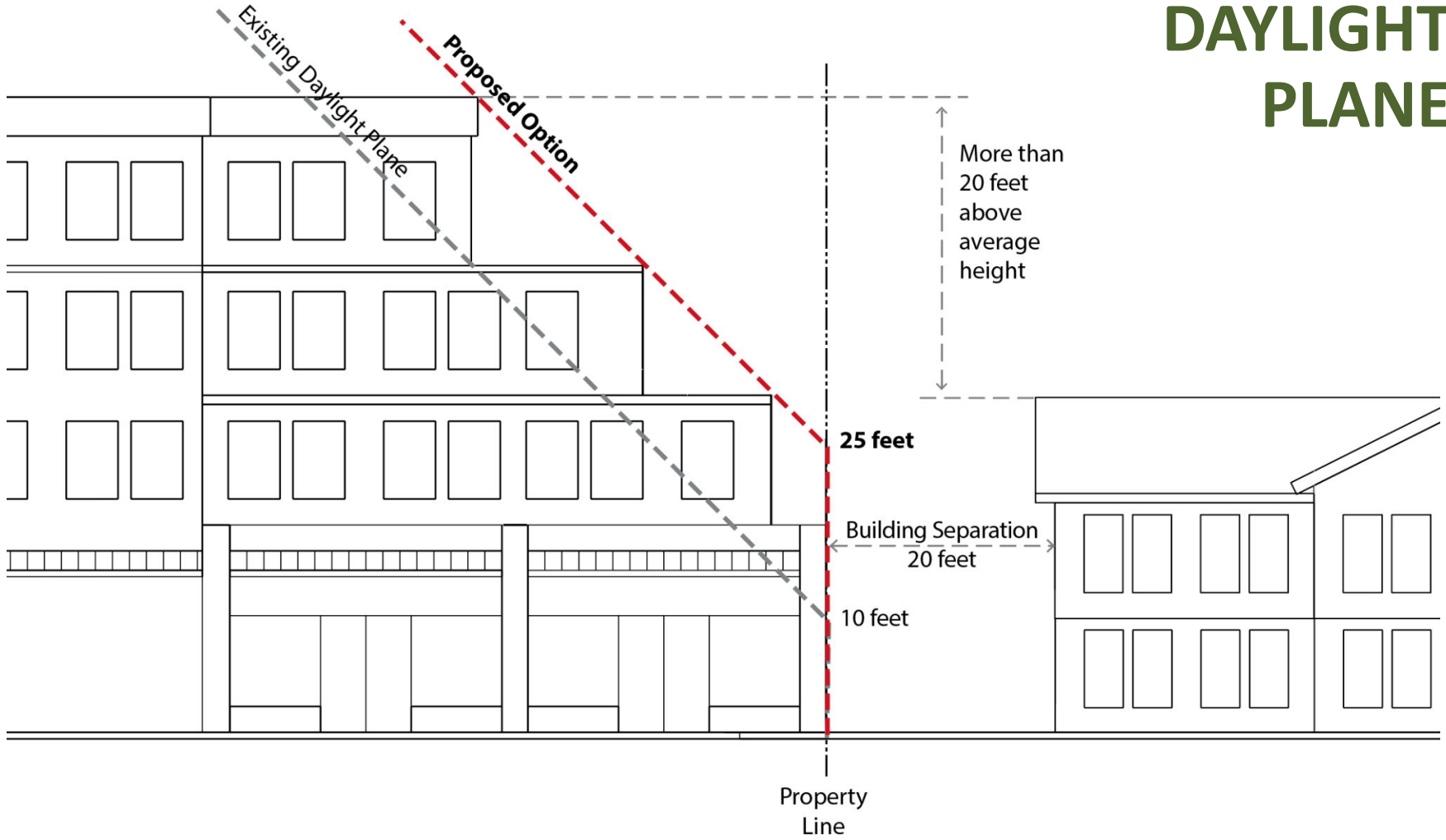




# SIDE STEP BACK



# DAYLIGHT PLANE



# MENU OF OPTIONS

## Council Motion (11/8/21):

In Building Massing/Facade sections, where there is a menu of choices, increase the number of required choices per category

- Identify additional choices for building massing and facade design
- Determine how many choices must be selected
- Summary checklist can be used as a guide

City of Palo Alto Objective Design Standards: Checklist

## Objective Design Standards Checklist (DRAFT for ARB)

### 18.24.050 Building Massing

Check	Standard	Sheet #	Applicant's Justification
<b>(b)(1) Upper Floor Step Backs</b>			
Pick One	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. When the height of the subject building is more than 20 feet above the average height an adjacent building, an upper floor step back shall start within 2 vertical feet of the height of the adjacent building. The step back shall be a minimum depth of 6 feet along the primary building frontage, and the step shall occur for a minimum of 70% of the facade length.		
	i. Proposed building height: _____ feet		
	ii. Average building height of the adjacent building(s): _____ feet		
	iii. Building height where upper floor step back begins: _____ feet		
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Except, when adjacent to a single-story building, the upper floor step back shall occur between 33 and 37 feet in height.		
<b>(b)(2) (A)(B)&amp;(C) Transition to Lower Density Building Types</b>			
Check All	1. Buildings that abut a side and/or rear property line with a RE, RMD, R-1, or R-2 zoned parcel or a village residential or existing single-family residential use, the building breaks down the abutting facade by meeting all of the following:		
	<input type="checkbox"/> a. A landscape screen that includes a row of trees with a minimum 1 tree per 25 linear feet and continuous shrubbery planting. This screening plant material shall be a minimum 72 inches (6 feet) in height when planted. Required trees shall be minimum 24" box size.		
	<input type="checkbox"/> b. A minimum facade break of 4 feet in width, 2 feet in depth, and 32 square feet of area for every 36 to 40 feet of facade length		
	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Within 40 feet of an abutting structure, no more than 15% of the confronting facade area shall be windows or other glazing. Additional windows are allowed in order to maintain light, if fixed and fully obscured		

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CITY OF  
**PALO ALTO**

# DETAILED CROSSWALK

- Compares existing context-based criteria to draft objective standards and purpose statements
- Helps identify missing criteria

City of Palo Alto

## Objective Design Standards Project

### Crosswalk Matrix of Existing and Proposed Design Regulations

February 10, 2022

This document compares existing context-based design criteria and the standards and purpose statements proposed to replace them, for "housing development projects." The criteria are organized by zoning district, with the existing criteria in the left-hand column and the proposed standard or purpose statement in the right-hand column.

- *Blue italics indicate staff comments*, which identify redundancies, proposed deletions, and elements that are not addressed.
- *Green text indicates purpose statements*, which convey design priorities and clarify the intent of design standards.
- Draft standards are shown in normal black text
- Revisions to standards/purpose statements compared to the version reviewed by the City Council on November 8, 2021 are shown in underline/strikeout format.

RM Zones - 18.13.060 Multiple Family Context-Based Design Criteria	
Existing Context-Based Design Criteria	Proposed Standard or Purpose Statement
<b>(1) Massing and Building Facades:</b>	
Massing and building facades shall be designed to create a residential scale in keeping with Palo Alto neighborhoods, and to provide a relationship with street(s) through elements such as:	18.24.050(a) Building Massing Intent Purpose Statement To create buildings that are compatible with and enhance the surrounding area through the consideration of building scale, massing, and bulk. Massing should create a human-scale environment that is of high aesthetic quality and accommodates a variety of uses and design features. Building massing should include elements that: (1) Break down large building facades and massing to create a human-scaled building that enhances the context of the site (2) Are consistent in scale, mass and character to adjacent land uses and land use designations (3) Reinforce the definition and importance of the street (4) Provide rooflines and massing that emphasize and accentuate significant elements of the building such as entries, bays, and balconies, and shading elements where appropriate. (5) Provide harmonious transitions between abutting properties
A. Articulation, setbacks, and materials that minimize massing, break down the scale of buildings, and provide visual interest (Figure 1-1).	18.24.050(a)(1): Break down large building facades and massing to create a human-scaled building that enhances the context of the site 18.24.050(a)(2): Are consistent in scale, mass and character to adjacent land uses and land use designations  18.24.050(b)(2) When a building abuts a side and/or rear property line with a RE, RMD, R-1, or R-2 zoned parcel or a village residential or existing single-family residential use, the building shall break down the abutting facade by... (B) A minimum facade break of four feet in width, two feet in depth, and 32 square feet of area for every 36 to 40 feet of facade length.



# DETAILED CROSSWALK - MISSING STANDARDS

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1. The **diversity of building types** increases with increased lot size (e.g., <1 acre = minimum 1 building type; 1-2 acres = minimum 2 housing types; greater than 2 acres = minimum 3 housing types)
2. RM District Only: Multifamily projects may include a **variety of unit types** ...in order to achieve variety and create transitions to adjacent existing development...
3. RM District Only: Each detached unit shall have **at least one usable side yard** between the house and fence to provide outdoor passage between the front and rear yards
4. PTOD District Only: Maintaining **view corridors** from Colorado Avenue and El Dorado Avenue west to the hills

# STAY INVOLVED

**Height  
Transition  
Ordinance &  
RM-40 Setbacks  
(1st Reading)**

City Council  
Hearing

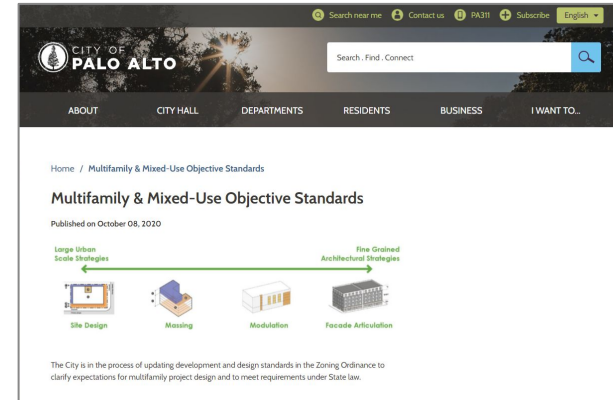
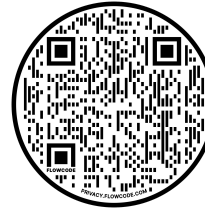
**April 11, 2022**

**Objective  
Standards  
Ordinance  
(1st Reading)**

City Council  
Hearing

**May 2022**

[bit.ly/ObjectiveStandards](https://bit.ly/ObjectiveStandards)



# STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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Discuss key topics from Council action:

1. Menu of option choices
2. Capturing missing standards

