



Attachment 1

Union City Multi-Family Objective Development Standards Project

Study Session Review Draft

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Introduction

Project Overview

Union City is creating Objective Development Standards for multi-family housing and mixed-use development in order to achieve high-quality building design. The standards will also apply to nonresidential development located in mixed-use residential zoning districts. The Project objectives are multifaceted and include:

- Implement City housing goals
- Enable quality designed development projects
- Add predictability and direction for developers and the community
- Provide consistency with state law

This document introduces the approach, organization, and contents of the Draft Objective Development Standards. The standards may be modified based on community and decision-maker feedback prior to City Council adoption.

Process and Community Outreach

The draft standards reflect input from community members through public outreach efforts, analysis of the City's neighborhoods and development context, and best practices for objective standards implementation. The project began with analysis and assessment of housing development, design standards, and policy objectives in Union City. This included interviews with architects and developers with completed housing development projects in the city to understand their experience using the City's Zoning Ordinance and perspectives on development standards.

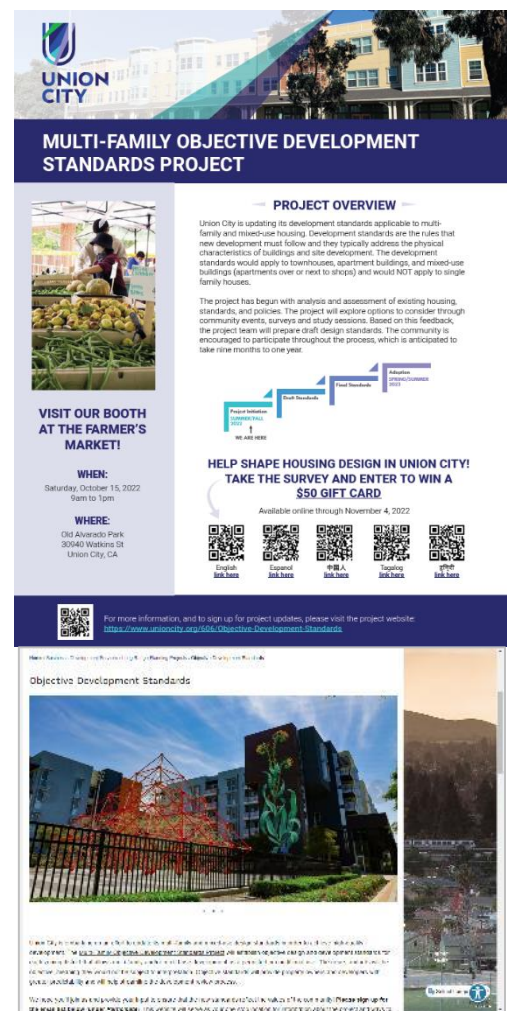


City staff and consultants (the project team) held workshops, hosted tables at community events, conducted a community-wide survey, and held meetings with decision-makers, as detailed below:

- **Community Survey:** An impressive 643 participants responded to a survey about design preferences for multi-family housing and mixed-use development. For example, participants

generally wanted to see buildings with varied shapes, roofs, heights and divisions to break down the size and scale. The survey was conducted in English, Spanish, Chinese, Hindi and Tagalog.

- **City Events:** In October 2022, the project team reached over 100 community members at in-person City events, including the Farmer's Market, the Running Dead 5k Fun Run, and the Halloween Carnival. The project team shared information about the project, solicited input through a quick visual preference exercise, and encouraged participants to visit the project website and complete the online survey to provide additional feedback.
- **Flyers:** Electronic and paper flyers describing the project, survey, and other ways to get involved were distributed via email, the project website, social media platforms and at in-person events described above. Flyers were available in five languages to maximize their reach within the community.
- **Study Sessions.** The Planning Commission and City Council held study sessions to learn about the project, provide preliminary feedback, and discuss ways to participate.
- **Website:** The project website, www.unioncity.org/606/Objective-Design-Standards, provides information about the project, upcoming meetings and ways to stay involved. The website serves as a document library, with interim and final deliverables posted for review. Community members are encouraged to sign up on the website so they can be alerted when opportunities to provide input arise.



A summary report on community outreach is available on the project website. It includes findings for the community survey and further details about individual events, participants, and input received.

Approach and Applicability

The objective development standards will apply to development occurring in multi-family residential and mixed-use zoning districts. Based on decision-maker and community feedback, the Project team determined an approach to developing standards with the following objectives:

- Build on existing zoning regulations, standards, and guidelines;
- Reflect community input and design preferences;
- Incorporate best practices and consider options that reflect market conditions;
- Provide flexibility as priorities, design approaches, and multifamily living evolve; and
- Align with City policy goals for walkable, connected neighborhoods.

Summary of Draft Standards

Contents

The objective development standards establish the parameters for building envelopes, including height, massing, and density. In addition, the standards address site design and building design, and the relationship between the project, adjacent buildings, and the public realm. (See the *Objective Development Standards Focus Areas* figure below). The intent of the standards is to result in amenity rich development with engaging ground levels, articulated façades, ample landscaping, and inviting gathering areas. As envisioned, new development designed using the standards would benefit residents and visitors to the city, as well as surrounding development (both existing development and future development).

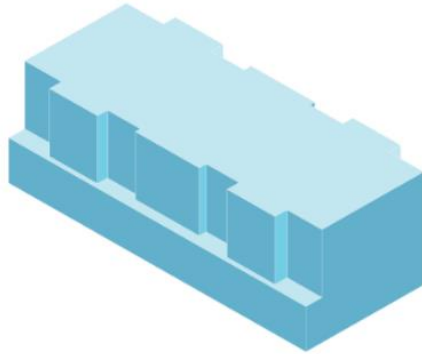
Organization

The objective standards are proposed as a new section of the Zoning Ordinance, within Chapter 18.24: Bulk Regulations. As proposed, they will apply to all zoning districts that allow multi-family and residential mixed-use development. These standards will replace existing design criteria in each chapter of the Zoning Ordinance included in the specific zoning district chapters. The standards will also apply to standalone nonresidential development in these mixed-use districts; but will not apply within the mixed-use employment districts (SEE, and soon to be created CMUE).

Within these generally applicable regulations, there are standards that apply to specific building types to differentiate features of townhomes, stacked flats, and mixed-use buildings with ground-floor retail, and standalone nonresidential development. Similarly, there are standards that apply to different

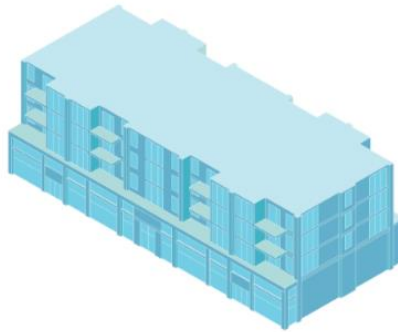
locations, such as Mission Boulevard and the Historic Alvarado District, to achieve specific design objectives and evoke the existing character of these unique neighborhoods.

Objective Development Standards Focus Areas



Development Standards

- Height
- Massing
- Setbacks
- Minimum Parcel Size
- Min/Max Density
- Floor Area Ratio (FAR)



Building Design

- Articulation
- Blank Walls
- Building Materials
- Roof Lines
- Windows



Site Design

- Entrances
- Parking
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Relation to other buildings

Flexibility in Design

To provide flexibility and reflect the variety of design styles, locations, and lot configurations in Union City, options for acceptable methods of meeting the standards are provided where appropriate. Additionally, the regulations allow for reductions and modifications to specific standards through a discretionary review process and required findings by the decision maker. The intent is to allow applicants who demonstrate they cannot meet specific standards, or that standards are infeasible due to specific situations regarding their site or project, to propose alternate ways to achieve design objectives.

Building Design

Orientation and Entrances

The objective standards require that buildings orient to the street with regular, emphasized entrances. A menu of acceptable methods of highlighting residential entrances, including projections and recesses, is provided to allow flexibility in meeting the standard and encourage variety.

For residential units, standards are included to address buildings with shared entrances, those with is a common entrance with a lobby, and buildings with ground level entrances to individual units where the transition between the public and private realm is a consideration. In the Historic Alvarado District, double doors are required at primary entrances of ground-floor non-residential uses to reflect the existing design features present.

Building Articulation

The objective standards include requirements for building offsets, window trim, façade detailing, colors, and materials to create visual variety and avoid a large-scale and bulky appearance.

Standards require either projections or recesses in the façade to create visual interest. Specific requirements for Mission Boulevard and the Historic Alvarado District stipulate design features, color, materials, and to support the architectural design of those unique neighborhoods. Additional standards are proposed for attached townhomes to create variety across units through a menu of options, including façade depth, roof orientation, and changes in materials.



Roof Lines

Roof lines are proposed to be varied, enhance the building's architecture, and designed to minimize the bulk of a building and screen roof-mounted equipment. Standards include roof offsets to allow for visual interest and variety.

Specific standards apply to the Historic Alvarado District to emulate parapets and roof forms that are typically found in the district. Similarly, roof type and pitch requirements for Mission Boulevard are intended to support the Spanish and Mission-style character along the corridor.



Façade Details

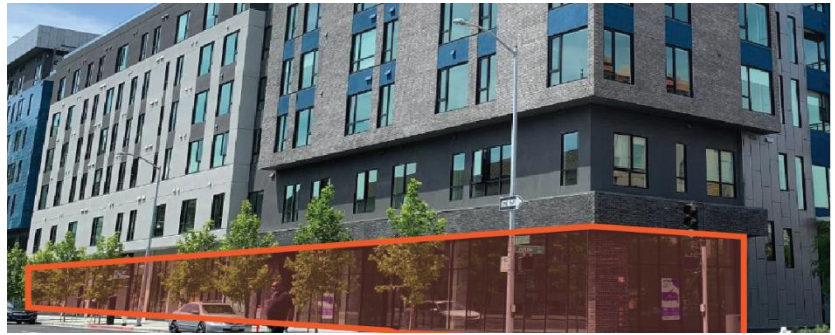
All façades would require detailing and variation in colors and materials to create visual interest. Façades must incorporate design details, including window trim, cornices, changes in materials, and projections such as awnings and balconies. Blank walls over 30 feet are prohibited without a window or door. Vents, gutters, and building lighting must be visually aligned and detailed so that they are integrated into the architectural design.

A list of allowed building materials helps ensure quality and durability over time, and evokes specific characteristics in the Historic Alvarado District and along Mission Boulevard. A menu of options for meeting façade design standards encourages creativity and variety in how these standards are implemented.



Windows and Openings

In mixed use buildings, objective standards require a minimum percentage of window openings on ground-floor non-residential façades to encourage transparency into merchandise displays, work areas, and other active spaces.



Minimum depth of window trim and recesses are required for residential uses to create shadow lines and visual interest.

Space Requirements

Objective standards also regulate requirements for interior space heights, amenity space, and exterior areas, namely open spaces to ensure that these spaces are usable. Minimum ground-floor heights and depths for non-residential tenant spaces enable adequate leasable space for retail and restaurants, specifically.

Standards propose to add an amenity requirement, in the form of a menu of options, to provide additional benefits such as in-unit washer dryers, storage areas, and/or public art.

“Activity” standards require the provision of open spaces and recreation area, but allow flexibility in how they are configured and what specific amenities are



included (e.g., playground, pool). The regulations specify design parameters for indoor and outdoor open spaces to ensure that they are adequate sized, accessible, and finished with durable materials.



Site Design

Frontage and Site Improvements

The objective standards link development projects with the off-site, sidewalk, and other frontage requirements of the General Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, development strategy, and other applicable plans. This allows for frontage improvements to be consistently applied to development projects and furthers implementation of the City's adopted policy documents.

Design and performance standards for lighting and utilities aim to prevent off-site impacts and ensure visual consistency between building and infrastructure elements. Lighting standards identify minimum lighting levels and maximum heights for light poles to prevent spillover. Utility standards require integration into the building design, or else screening with enclosures or landscaping.



Public Open Space

Where provided, public open spaces must be designed to be visible and accessible, with direct visual and physical access from buildings/uses and sidewalks. A tree canopy shading requirement enables cooling and comfort during warmer months. Standards for paseos aim to encourage passageways with connections between uses, minimum lighting requirements and dimensions that enable safety and visibility.



Parking and Loading

Parking area location and design standards encourage active street frontages. Driveways must be separated from pedestrian entries and finished with enhanced treatment to ensure safety and visual distinction. Generally, structured parking areas are to be located behind active uses.

Structures visible from the street must be constructed with high-quality materials and/or be able to support vertical planting. On wider lots, surface parking, carports, and garages are limited to 40percent of the street frontage. Design treatments are required for street-facing residential garages in order to avoid a massive appearance. Where feasible, parking areas must be accessed from an alley or secondary street and loading must be located inside a building with closable doors.



In addition, Chapter 18.28 (Off-Street Parking and Loading) is being amended to include consistent objective standards for bicycle parking for residential and nonresidential projects. This includes standards for short-term and long-term bicycle parking.

Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian regulations establish objective standards to create safe connections that encourage walking and gathering.

Standards require pedestrian walkways to connect buildings, any on-site open spaces, and pedestrian amenities, such as benches and bicycle parking. Connections are required to adjacent transit stops and public sidewalks. Distinctive paving and grade changes are required for walkways that cross parking and loading areas, and travel lanes to provide visual separation.

